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THE AFTERLIVES OF ADAM SCRIVEYN: CHAUCER'S SCRIBE IN DANTE'S «INFERNO»

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ABSTRACT
This essay examines *Adam Scriveyn*, a short poem by Geoffrey Chaucer that explicitly addresses the vagaries of textual production, and whose critical history illustrates the unreliability of textual evidence, whether in the age of manuscript, print, or digital copies. The poem's possible debt to Dante underscores the importance of thinking across different linguistic and literary traditions as we assess the contrasting evidence provided by textual witnesses. After considering how access to digital manuscripts of Dante can enrich our understanding of English literary traditions, I show that the afterlife of *Adam Scriveyn*, including its digital presence, foregrounds the challenges and opportunities presented by the widespread availability of digital copies of medieval manuscripts. Digital surrogates transform the ways we think about cultural contact, and prompt us to consider how technologies of textual production shape the questions we pose about literary and textual authority.

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In October 2023, the British Library fell victim to a ransomware attack which resulted in the theft of almost half a million files, and which rendered inaccessible the Library's vast collection of digitised medieval

manuscripts. The attack has had far reaching consequences for all those who use the Library's physical and digital resources for teaching and research purposes, and the clear demonstration of the vulnerability of digital resources has raised challenging questions about how institutions protect their collections for future generations, proving the truth of the maxim that «digitisation is not preservation». As Jonathan L. Zecher has noted, the challenges laid bare by the hacking of the British Library are part of a much longer history of the ways in which technologies of the written word have been used to navigate competing claims about how we preserve the past and make it accessible (Zecher 2024). Zecher suggests that the long-term preservation of digitised resources demands solutions that «uncouple the digital objects from the proprietary viewers used by libraries now, so they can be stored and viewed anywhere, rather than only on library websites» (Zecher 2024). The interdisciplinary nature of medieval studies, which has always required scholars to work across the boundaries of languages, cultures, and archives, is of course deeply invested in shaping a future in which digital resources remain accessible and legible across institutional, disciplinary, and linguistic boundaries. In this essay, I discuss *Adam Scriveyn*, a short poem by Geoffrey Chaucer, which explicitly addresses the vagaries of textual production, and whose critical history provides a fascinating example of the frequent unreliability of textual evidence whether in the age of manuscript, print, or digital copies. Moreover, the poem's possible debt to Dante's *Inferno* underscores the importance of thinking across different linguistic and literary traditions as we consider how to assess the contrasting evidence provided by textual witnesses.

Only a few days before the 2023 ransomware attack, the British Library announced that it had finally completed the digitisation of every manuscript of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer in its collection. While the loss of these digital copies posed a huge challenge to teachers and scholars of Chaucer, I would like to begin by focusing on how the sudden unavailability of one of the British Library's Italian manuscripts even more directly affected the research undertaken for this paper. British Library Egerton MS 943 is an important early 14th century Italian manuscript of Dante's *Commedia*; the appearance of the digital copy in 2015 was a boon for Dante specialists and all those interested in the influence of Dante on later writers, while the manuscript's numerous illustrations were a wonderful resource for teachers and researchers. In an earlier version of this paper, I had discussed the relevance of one of these images to the interpretation of one of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, so the

sudden loss of access to the relevant illustration presented me with a particular challenge. This loss of access was all the more ironic because the Chaucerian poem I sought to examine through comparison with the suddenly inaccessible image was *Adam Scriveyn*, Chaucer's witty poem about the unreliability and challenges of textual transmission in a manuscript culture. After briefly considering how access to digital manuscripts of Dante can enrich our understanding of seemingly unrelated material in an English literary tradition, I will show how the afterlife of *Adam Scriveyn*, including its digital afterlife, raises important questions about the challenges and opportunities afforded by the widespread availability of digital copies of medieval manuscripts, including how these surrogates enable us to imagine moments of cultural contact, and to trace how the technologies of textual production have always informed the questions we pose about literary and textual authority.

Among its many splendid illustrations, British Library MS Egerton 943 contains one illustration that has always struck me as particularly remarkable: its depiction of the alchemists in the circle of the falsifiers, on fol. 52*v*. Like many other manuscripts of the *Commedia*, this depicts the alchemists with the marks of the distinctively painful and itchy dermatological skin disease with which they are punished, leading Griffolino and Capocchio to rub and scratch themselves furiously:

> Io vidi due sedere a sé poggiati,
>   com' a scaldar si poggia tegghia a tegghia,
>   dal capo al piè di schianze macolati;
> e non vidi già mai menare stregghia
>   a ragazzo aspettato dal segnorso,
>   né a colui che mal volontier vegghia,
> come ciascun menava spesso il morso
>   de l'unghie sopra sé per la gran rabbia
>   del pizzicor, che non ha più soccorso;
> e sì traevan giù l'unghie la scabbia,
>   come coltel di scardova le scaglie
>   o d'altro pesce che più larghe l'abbia.

I saw two sitting propped against each other as pan is propped on pan to warm, spotted from head to foot with scabs; and I never saw curry-comb plied by a stable-boy whose master waits for him or by one kept unwillingly awake as each plied on himself continually the bite of his nails for the great fury of the itch that has no other relief, and the nails were scraping off the scabs as the knife does the scales of the bream or other fish that has them larger.

(*Inferno* XXIX, 73-84, Dante 1961, pp. 362-363)

What makes the illustration from Egerton particularly striking is that the manuscript image of the alchemists rubbing and scratching their diseased skin has itself been visibly defaced through rubbing or scraping. In her study of the ways in which medieval manuscripts were touched and handled, Kathryn Rudy demonstrates that acts of deliberate defacement by medieval readers are not uncommon, and that one might use a finger to erase the representation of, say, a devil, torturer, or other antagonist, «and thereby to demonstrate one's moral position toward it» (Rudy 2023, p. 37). While one can only speculate at the motives of whoever defaced the image of Dante's alchemists in BL Egerton 943, we are forcefully reminded that the medieval readers of this particular manuscript were themselves touching animal skin as they witnessed the alchemists rubbing and scratching their flesh in the text and image of folio 57. Sarah Kay has memorably described the distinctive experience of handling a parchment manuscript:

One can tell the flesh side from the hair side of the skin; the backbone remains perceptible as a ghostly imprint [...] tiny veins can often be made out, as can the random discolorations, scars, and insect damage that marked the creature in life. The markers of parchment's organic nature are not solely visual; parchment feels like skin, and an animal odor inheres in the folios still. (Kay 2011, p. 14)

Though clearly visible in digital images of Egerton 943, the rubbing of the image thus reminds us of an aspect of interacting with a medieval manuscript which cannot be recreated by any digital substitute.

Dante's account of the falsifiers, of course, creates a powerful impact whether encountered in an illustrated medieval manuscript or a modern printed edition. It is certainly a part of the *Commedia* that left an impression on Chaucer, who recalls the account of the alchemists on a number of occasions in his own work, such as when he evokes Capocchio's description of himself as a great ape of nature in the *House of Fame*, lines 1212-13. Chaucer's most striking engagement with the passage is arguably in *Adam Scriveyn*, his witty seven-line poem about the perils of textual transmission. To cite the version of the poem printed in the standard scholarly edition as «Chaucers Wordes Unto Adam, His Owne Scriveyn»:

> Adam scriveyn, if ever it thee bifalle
> Boece or Troylus for to wryten newe,
> Under thy long lokkes thou most have the scalle,
> But after my making thow write more trewe,
> So ofte adaye I mot thy werk renewe,

> It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,
> And all is thorugh thy negligence and rape.
>
> (Chaucer 1987, p. 650)

In the poem, the poet lambasts a scribe for his negligence and haste («rape»), which requires him to incessantly correct the scribe's work, rubbing and scraping the parchment. In a vivid analogy, the author curses his scribe, wishing that, should he fail to copy his works more accurately, he should contract the «scalle», an itchy skin disease that will require the scribe to rub and scrape his own skin as the author must rub and scrape the animal skin on which the errors have been made. As I have argued elsewhere, the punishment is a strikingly Dantean *contrapasso*, and one that seems to echo Dante's punishment of the alchemists (O'Connell 2005). Even the reader unfamiliar with Dante's text, however, will recognise how deftly – in seven short lines – Chaucer draws attention to many of the philologist's objects of study: the material surface on which medieval texts were written, the processes of scribal labour and correction; the unstable and contingent nature of textual transmission in a manuscript age, and above all else the complex and interdependent relationship of author and scribe. All of these aspects of the poem, combined with the title's confident assertion that these words are addressed by Chaucer «to his owene» scribe, paint a vibrant picture of the so-called 'Father of English Poetry' struggling to control the reception of his literary output. It is hardly surprising that the text has proved so irresistible to textual scholars and literary critics, or that it has had such a remarkable afterlife.

Following its earliest appearance in manuscript in the fifteenth-century, *Adam* came to occupy a unique place in early printed copies of Chaucer's works and, as Jonathan Hsy has pointed out, has continued to experience «varied afterlives in contemporary scholarship, including its manifestations in printed editions and digital media» (Hsy 2018, p. 289). In the twenty-first century, the poem has emerged as a crux in some of the key debates among scholars of Middle English literature, as the field grapples with the apparent identification of Adam Pinkhurst as one of the most important scribes of Chaucer's work. Both the scribe and the poem apparently addressed to him have been at the centre of a paradigm shift in the field, which has seen extensive methodological reflection on issues such as the identification of scribal hands and the role of scribes in the construction of literary authority; moreover the figure of Chaucer's scribe has been invoked by scholars keen to challenge a conservative philological tradition through the application of new conceptual frameworks,

such as queer theory, as well as the new methodologies made available by the digital humanities. At first glance, the questions of textual integrity raised by *Adam Scriveyn* might seem very remote from the questions addressed by the digital humanities, or indeed from the threats to access posed by the cyber-attack on the British Library. As we shall see, however, the afterlife of the poem sheds light on the ways in which our interpretation of the textual record is mediated through the forms – whether manuscript, print, or digital – in which it is preserved and accessed.

The text of *Adam Scriveyn* is explicitly attributed to Chaucer in a headnote to the poem – «Chauciers words a Geffrey vn to Adame his owen scriveyne» – in the sole manuscript witness of the text: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.20. This paper manuscript, in the hand of the scribe John Shirley, dates from c.1430; a digital copy of the manuscript is now freely available online.[1] While Shirley's manuscript dates from around 30 years after the death of the poet, the attribution to Chaucer has been accepted by most scholars, though this has recently been challenged.[2] Shirley's attributions are admittedly not all reliable; however, Margaret Connolly has demonstrated that Shirley's attribution of *Adam Scriveyn* is persuasive and may reasonably be trusted in the absence of strong evidence to the contrary (Connolly 2017, pp. 81-100). Certainly, a significant majority of Shirley's attributions to Chaucer are beyond dispute; moreover, the short poem is written in rhyme royal, a form in which Chaucer wrote many of his works, including *Troilus and Criseyde*, which, alongside Chaucer's translation of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, is explicitly mentioned among the works the poem's author refers to («Boece or Troylus»). As Connolly suggests, it may be the case that the recent tendency to question the authenticity of the poem is influenced by legitimate concerns about the role the poem has come to play in debates about the transmission of Chaucer's work (Connolly 2017, pp. 87-88). For centuries, indeed, the poem's place in the canon was undisputed, and a clear line may be traced from Shirley's manuscript version of the text to the earliest appearance of *Adam Scriveyn* in print.

It is beyond dispute that MS R.3.20 was the basis for the text of *Adam Scriveyn* printed in the 1561 edition of Chaucer's *Works* by John Stow.

[1] For a detailed account of this manuscript, see Connolly 1998, pp. 69-101. The digital copy is available online at the Wren Digital Library, which also provides links to the catalogue entry and the table of contents: https://mss-cat.trin.cam.ac.uk/manuscripts/uv/view.php?n=R.3.20

[2] Among the most prominent studies that challenge the attribution are Lerer 1993, Boffey, Edwards 1998, and Edwards 2012.

As Connolly has noted, the manuscript belonged at one point to Stow; his hand can be detected in many annotations on the MS, and it was the source of a number of other poems printed by Stow (Connolly 2017, p. 84). The text of the poem in Stow's edition offers a fascinating insight into the afterlife of this poem during the English Renaissance, when the reputation of Chaucer as the Father of English poetry became solidified. The study of these texts has been facilitated enormously by the hugely significant digital resource, Early English Books Online (EEBO), which has transformed the study of early English printed books, by enabling scholars to easily compare different imprints and editions of early modern books.[3] A comparison between the text of *Adam Scriveyn* in Trinity MS R.3.20 and the printed text found in some copies of Stow 1561, indeed, makes for a fascinating case study in the afterlives of medieval texts. We might assume that a poem as brief as *Adam Scriveyn*, surviving in only one manuscript, would be unlikely to present significant challenges to its early editors. Joseph Dane and Seth Lerer have noted, however, that in several copies of Stow's Chaucer, lines 3-4 of *Adam Scriveyn* read as follows:

> Under thy longe lockes þ[ow] must haue the scalle
> But after my mockynge thou write more true.

As Dane and Lerer point out, «other copies of Stow's edition correct "mockynge" to "makynge", and this mid-press run correction has been noticed by several scholars» (Dane, Lerer 1999, p. 473). These variants in the Stow Chaucer yield a very different sense from the words found in the Shirley manuscript. Whereas the manuscript implies that the scribe must suffer the «scalle» unless he writes more accurate copies of the author's works (his «makyng»), the Stow variant implies that the scribe is cursed unless he amends his practice after the poet's mocking critique in this poem. Noting that the word "mocking" gained currency from distinctly biblical and religious contexts in the sixteenth-century, Dane and Lerer argue that the substitution of «mockynge» for «makyng» was a deliberate attempt to rewrite a line whose original force had become lost as, even by the sixteenth century, the sense of Chaucer's original Middle English was becoming opaque. The alteration is fascinating, providing not only another example of the kind of textual instability Chaucer worries about in *Adam Scriveyn*, but also demonstrating the way in which

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[3] http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home

this short poem has been adapted throughout the centuries to reflect the interests of its readers.

Another important aspect of the printing of *Adam Scriveyn* in the Stow edition relates to the placement of the text, and its significance in the canon. Stow's edition has been the subject of a fascinating analysis by Megan Cook, who notes that the text is the last Chaucerian work in the edition (Cook 2016). As Cook points out, Stow changes Shirley's title from «Chauciers words a Geffrey vn to Adame his owen scriveyne» to «Chaucers words vnto his owne Scriuener», shifting the focus away from the more personal relationship suggested by «Geffrey» and «Adam» and towards the more formal and hierarchical relationship between the monumental poet and the erring scribe (Cook 2016, p. 48). More importantly, however, Cook demonstrates that the poem continued to occupy the position of the final Chaucerian text in subsequent editions of the *Works* for hundreds of years; even when other Chaucerian and pseudo-Chaucerian works were added to the *Works*, editors placed them before *Adam Scriveyn*, preserving the short poem as Chaucer's final warning to scribes, printers and readers on the subject of textual transmission. In doing so, the editors demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which the poem neatly juxtaposes the authorial fantasy that his text will circulate as intended with an awareness that the text is subject to the vagaries of textual transmission.

Modern readers can now access the manuscript and early printed texts of *Adam Scriveyn* in a range of digital substitutes, which has enabled a paradigm shift in the way the poem is read and analysed. Arguably, the availability of a digital version of the sole manuscript witness of the poem, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.20, has had a striking impact on the way the text of the poem has been discussed. While the scholarly community previously had to rely on the works of textual scholars with access to the originals, or on a limited supply of facsimile copies, anyone interested in the poem is now free to consult the digital copy in high definition. Recent years, moreover, have witnessed a shift in the way in which the poem has been cited by scholars; whereas earlier scholars generally cited the poem from scholarly printed editions such as the *Riverside Chaucer*, there has been a notable trend in recent years towards attempting to reproduce more precisely the spelling, punctuation, and layout, of the manuscript original.[4] Thus, for example, Alexandra Gillespie cites the text of the poem as follows:

[4] See, for example, Gillespie 2008, p. 271, Edwards 2012, p. 135, Connolly 2017, p. 84.

> Chauciers wordes . a Geffrey vn to Adame his owen scryvene /
> Adam . scryvene / if euer it þee byfalle
> Boece or Troylus / for to wryten nuwe /
> Vnder þy long lokkes / þowe most haue þe scalle
> But after my making / þowe wryte more truwe
> So offt a daye . I mot þy werk renuwe /
> It to correct / and eke to rubbe and scrape /
> And al is thorough . þy necglygence and rape /

Jonathan Hsy has written compelling about Gillespie's practice here, noting that this transcription «returns the modern printed text as close as possible to its manuscript form or originary visual interface» (Hsy 2018, p. 295). Hsy, moreover, draws on queer theory, and specifically the work of Carolyn Dinshaw, to argue that Gillespie's attempt to represent Shirley's manuscript copy in a new typographical medium suggests the possibly of «contact between linguistic fragments beyond time» (Hsy 2018, p. 295). While professional scholars such as Gillespie have access to either the original manuscript or the meticulously transcribed text of the *Variorum* edition, it is worth reflecting further on how the availability of high-quality digital copies of manuscripts may, in future, challenge the traditional role of textual scholarship. The wide availability of digital copies allows readers and scholars to effectively bypass decades (or centuries) of textual scholarship, to present readings based on the original manuscript readings, confident in the knowledge that these readings may be checked by every reader of the scholarly text.

It seems clear that the availability of the digital copy of *Adam Scriveyn* will transform the way in which scholars view this text and its authorship, and this scrutiny is deeply welcome. As Margaret Connolly has noted, «The fact that we have only a single manuscript copy of *Adam Scriveyn,* transcribed some three decades after Chaucer's death, naturally gives rise to doubts about the intrinsic reliability of the text as a source of bibliographical and historical information» (Connolly 2017, p. 85). Indeed, the text of the poem speaks so compellingly to the interests of those involved in the transmission of medieval manuscripts (be they poets, scribes, print editors, or digital editors), that there has at times been suspicion that the poem may not in fact be the work of Chaucer himself, but rather a later copyist or scribe writing in imitation of the Father of English Poetry (unsurprisingly, the most compelling candidate has been John Shirley, the scribe of MS R.3.20). Part of the suspicion has centred on the fact that the poem includes words such as «scalle», which occurs nowhere else in the canon of Chaucer's works

(Edwards 2012, pp. 135-136). This, however, raises the question of what weight, if any, we give to possible literary sources adduced for the poem. If, for example, we accept that *Adam Scriveyn* contains echoes of Dante's account of the falsifiers, we may note that the Italian word «scaglia», which Dante uses in that passage, has a range of meanings that is similar to ME "scal(l)e", referring both to the scales of fish and flakes of skin that become detached due to skin disease.[5] Scholars such as Edwards and Jay Ruud have also noted that the high instance of words beginning in *sc-* (such as «scalle», the words «scriveyn», and «scrape») is highly unusual in Chaucer's canon (Ruud 1992, pp. 123-124). This *sc-* combination may be rare in Chaucer, but it is notably common in the passage cited above from Dante (see for example, «scaldar», «scabbia», «scardova» and «scaglie»). While textual and metrical analysis offer powerful tools to assess the canonicity of *Adam Scriveyn*, I would argue that consideration of parallels with works by other authors and in other languages may provide an important alternative strand of evidence to consider when questioning the place of this text in the canon of Chaucer's works.

Some of the most important questions raised by the recent critical history of *Adam Scriveyn* centre on the relationship between textual scholarship and literary criticism. One approach, championed by scholars such as John Scattergood and Glending Olson, has been to read the poem within a tradition of writers complaining about the failures of their scribes, or to relate the poem to the fascinating genre of the «book curse», in which maledictions are proclaimed against those who steal books or mis-represent their content (Scattergood 2006, Olson 2008). Such accounts have not placed undue attention on the identity of the particular scribe addressed in the poem, but a related approach has focused on the name Adam itself, with several (inconclusive) attempts to identify the erring scribe (dating at least as far back as the competing claims of Bressie 1929 and Manly 1929). For many years, one of the most enduring ways of interpreting the poem drew on the correspondence between the name of the scribe and the name of the first man, with several studies developing increasingly extensive (and at times forced) analogies between the transgressions of the biblical Adam and Adam the scribe.[6] Of course, a seismic change occurred in 2004, when Linne Mooney claimed to have identified one Adam Pinkhurst as the scribe of two of the most important and influential manuscripts of Chaucer's works, *Hengwrt* and *Elles-*

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[5] Battaglia 1994, «*scaglia*» senses 1. and 7.

[6] Important studies in this vein include Kaske 1979, Chance 1985, and Mize 2001.

mere, both of which were probably produced in the early fifteenth-century. *Adam Scriveyn* became a linchpin in the argument Mooney made. If the poem (conventionally dated to the mid-1380s because of its reference to «Boece» and «Troylus») was indeed addressed to Adam Pynkhurst, and if this Adam was indeed Chaucer's personal scribe (as Shirley's title seems to suggest), then scholars suddenly had unparalleled evidence of a long and close working relationship between a major English poet and his scribe, evidence which had huge implications for the authority of two of the most famous manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*.[7]

As Lawrence Warner has shown, Mooney's claim to have identified the scribe of *Hengwrt* and *Ellesmere* as Adam Pynkhurst, and her further claim that Pynkhurst was the addressee of *Adam Scriveyn*, led to a seismic shift in the study of Middle English Literature over the decade and a half that followed (Warner 2018, pp. 1-8). An explosion of scholarly activity has witnessed the attribution of numerous other works to Adam Pynkhurst. The work of scholars such as Mooney, Estelle Stubbs and Simon Horobin in identifying the hand of Pynkhurst (among other scribes) can be seen in the massively influential online database, *Late Medieval English Scribes*, «an online catalogue of all scribal hands (identified or unidentified) which appear in the manuscripts of the English writings of five major Middle English authors: Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, John Trevisa, William Langland and Thomas Hoccleve».[8] These attributions have transformed understanding of relationships among authors, scribes, and the makers and owners of books in late medieval England.[9] While this scholarship, and the online resources they have generated, have been deeply valuable, an increasingly vocal minority of scholars have expressed disquiet not only about Mooney's original claims, but about the rapid pace at which a huge volume of works has now been attributed to Adam Pynkhurst. The most comprehensive attempt to rebut the evidence that Pynkhurst was the scribe of Hengwrt

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[7] The Hengwrt manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales* is housed at the National Library of Wales (Peniarth MS 392D), and a full digital copy is available at: https://www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/manuscripts/the-middle-ages/the-hengwrt-chaucer/. The *Ellesmere* manuscript (MS EL 26 C 9) is housed at the Huntington, and is also available in a digital facsimile: https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p15150coll7/id/2838/.

[8] https://www.medievalscribes.com/

[9] Hsy 2018, pp. 298-300 provides an interesting example of the kinds of analysis enabled by some of the new digital resources that have recently become available, particularly *Networks of Book Makers, Owners and Users in Late Medieval England*: https://www.dhi.ac.uk/projects/networks-of-books/.

and Ellesmere is by Lawrence Warner, who has cast serious doubt on the claims by Mooney and others (Warner 2018, pp. 1-29).

Bearing in mind the doubts that have been expressed about identifying the scribe mentioned in Adam Scriveyn with Adam Pynkhurst, it is worth noting that one of the most striking parallels between Dante's poem and Chaucer's is the fact that one of the falsifiers is called Adam: Adam of Brescia, one of the counterfeiters, who is punished in this circle of hell (*Inferno* XXX, 61), though with dropsy, rather than a skin disease (Dante 1961). Dante's Adam is someone who makes false copies of originals, and Dante articulates an explicit link between Adam's counterfeiting and the falsification of words, when the liar Sinon exclaims:

> «S'io dissi falso, e tu falsasti il conio». *Inferno*, XXX 115

> If I spoke falsly, [...] thou too didst falsify the coin.

Just as many scholars of *Adam Scriveyn* have pondered the analogy between the transgressions of Adam the scribe and the sins of the first Adam, so too the counterfeiter's name has led some Dante scholars to suggest an analogy with the biblical Adam (Shoaf 1983, p. 44).

However we account for them, the parallels between *Adam Scriveyn* and Dante's falsifiers are striking, and provide a useful insight into questions of textual transmission. In the poem, Chaucer imagines himself laboriously poring over texts produced by his erring scribe, having to «rubbe and scrape» the animal skin in order to first erase and subsequently correct the errors. The curse imagined as a suitable punishment for this transgression, the itchy skin disease Chaucer refers to as the «scalle» is imaginatively appropriate because it will require the scribe to furiously rub and scrape his own skin, just as the author has rubbed and scraped the parchment. As Hsy puts it, «the poem renders vividly physical and situationally appropriate a seemingly unexpected conjunction of skin surfaces: the violated, scraped animal parchment and the diseased scalp of the human scribe». (Hsy 2018, p. 293). Digital copies of medieval texts are invaluable aids to scholars, but neither the scholarly edition nor the digital copy of the manuscript can fully equip us to read a poem such as *Adam Scriveyn* as it was originally read. Indeed, in the case of *Adam Scriveyn*, neither the fifteenth-century paper manuscript, the carefully edited twentieth-century copy, nor the twenty-first-century digital copy can recover the most crucial aspect of the poem: the powerful analogy that the poem establishes between the human skin

of the scribe (or indeed the reader) and the animal skin on which the scribe copies the texts of the author's poems.

Adam Scriveyn speaks to the material contexts of medieval manuscript production, and the fraught transmission of texts in any age, and the figure of Adam the scribe has been invoked in relation to questions of best practice in the field of digital humanities. As a digital humanist, Bridget Wheartey speaks powerfully of working in a field haunted by lost books, and offers a thoughtful reflection on the need for those working in digital humanities to carefully preserve as much information as possible, comparing the challenges of the digital humanist to the challenges of medieval scribes like Adam (Wheartey 2018, p. 179). When Wheartey was writing, few scholars could have imagined the extent of the damage to the digital archive caused by the cyber-attack on the British Library in October 2023. This attack makes clear the need to devote as much attention to digital conservation as material conservation, and to protect digital resources in ways that do not depend solely on the proprietary viewers used by libraries (Zecher 2024). As I hope to have shown, both the text and the textual afterlives of *Adam Scriveyn* speak eloquently to the concerns of all those interested in the accurate transmission of texts, from medieval authors and scribes to early modern printers, and from editors and textual critics to the digital humanists of today.

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Norme editoriali

Sin dalla sua fondazione Ecdotica, proponendosi come punto di incontro di culture e sensibilità filologiche differenti, ha sempre lasciato libertà agli autori di indicare i riferimenti bibliografici secondo la modalità **italiana** o **anglosassone**. È fondamentale, tuttavia, che vi sia omogeneità di citazione all'interno del contributo.

I testi vanno consegnati, con la minor formattazione possibile (dunque anche senza rientri di paragrafo), in formato Times New Roman, punti 12, interlinea singola. Le citazioni più lunghe di 3 righe vanno in carattere 10, sempre in interlinea singola, separate dal corpo del testo da uno spazio bianco prima e dopo la citazione (nessun rientro).

Il richiamo alla nota è da collocarsi dopo l'eventuale segno di interpunzione (es: sollevò la bocca dal fiero pasto.[3]). Le note, numerate progressivamente, vanno poste a piè di pagina, e non alla fine dell'articolo.

Le citazioni inferiori alle 3 righe vanno dentro al corpo del testo tra virgolette basse a caporale «...». Eventuali citazioni dentro citazione vanno tra virgolette alte ad apici doppi: "...". Queste ultime o gli apici semplici ('...') potranno essere utilizzati per le parole e le frasi da evidenziare, le espressioni enfatiche, le parafrasi, le traduzioni di parole straniere. Si eviti quanto più possibile il *corsivo*, da utilizzare solo per i titoli di opere e di riviste (es: *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana*; *Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana*; *Griseldaonline*) e per parole straniere non ancora entrate nell'uso in italiano.

N.B: Per le sezioni *Saggi, Foro* e *Questioni* gli autori\le autrici, in apertura del contributo, segnaleranno titolo, titolo in inglese, abstract in lingua inglese, 5 parole chiave in lingua inglese.

Si chiede inoltre, agli autori e alle autrici, di inserire alla fine del contributo indirizzo e-mail istituzionale e affiliazione.

Per la sezione *Rassegne*: occorre inserire, in principio, la stringa bibliografica del libro, compresa di collana, numero complessivo di pagine, costo, ISBN.

Indicare, preferibilmente, le pagine e i riferimenti a testo tra parentesi e non in nota.

Nel caso l'autore adotti il **sistema citazionale all'italiana** le norme da seguire sono le seguenti.

La **citazione bibliografica di un volume o di un contributo in volume** deve essere composta come segue:

• Autore in tondo, con l'iniziale del nome puntato;

• **Titolo dell'intero volume** in corsivo; **titolo di un saggio all'interno** del volume (o in catalogo di mostra) tra virgolette basse «...» seguito da "in" e dal titolo del volume in corsivo (se contiene a sua volta un titolo di un'opera, questo va in corsivo);

• eventuale numero del volume (se l'opera è composta da più tomi) in cifra romana;

• eventuale curatore (iniziale del nome puntata, cognome per esteso), in tondo, preceduto dalla dizione 'a cura di';

• luogo di edizione, casa editrice, anno;

• eventuali numeri di pagina, in cifre arabe e/o romane tonde, da indicare con 'p.' o 'pp.', in tondo minuscolo. L'eventuale intervallo di pp. oggetto di particolare attenzione va indicato dopo i due punti (es.: pp. 12-34: 13-15)

In **seconda citazione** si indichino solo il cognome dell'autore, il titolo abbreviato dell'opera seguito, dopo una virgola, dal numero delle pp. interessate (senza "cit.", "op. cit.", "ed. cit." etc...); nei casi in cui si debba ripetere di séguito la citazione della medesima opera, variata in qualche suo elemento – ad esempio con l'aggiunta dei numeri di pagina –, si usi 'ivi' (in tondo); si usi *ibidem* (in *corsivo*), in forma non abbreviata, quando la citazione è invece ripetuta in maniera identica subito dopo.

Esempi:

A. Montevecchi, *Gli uomini e i tempi. Studi da Machiavelli a Malvezzi*, Bologna, Pàtron, 2016.

A. Benassi, «La teoria e la prassi dell'emblema e dell'impresa», in *Letteratura e arti visive nel Rinascimento*, a cura di G. Genovese, A. Torre, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

S. Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente. Analisi critica*, IV, Berlino-New York, de Gruyter, 2000⁵, pp. 23-28.

Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente*, pp. 25-26.

Ivi, p. 25.

Ibidem

La citazione bibliografica di un **articolo pubblicato su un periodico** deve essere composta come segue:

• Autore in tondo, con l'iniziale del nome puntato
• Titolo dell'articolo in tondo tra virgolette basse («...»)
• Titolo della rivista in corsivo
• Eventuale numero di serie in cifra romana tonda;
• Eventuale numero di annata in cifre romane tonde;
• Eventuale numero di fascicolo in cifre arabe o romane tonde, a seconda dell'indicazione fornita sulla copertina della rivista;
• Anno di edizione, in cifre arabe tonde e fra parentesi;
• Intervallo di pp. dell'articolo, eventualmente seguite da due punti e la p. o le pp.

Esempi:

C. De Cesare, «Una corrispondenza corale. Alcune integrazioni al corpus episto-
lare ariostesco a partire del carteggio del suo luogotenente», *Bollettino di italiani-
stica*, n.s., a. XIX, 2 (2022), pp. 121-134.

M. Petoletti, «Poesia epigrafica pavese di età longobarda: le iscrizioni sui monu-
menti», *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, LX (2019), pp. 1-32.

Nel caso che i **nomi degli autori**, curatori, prefatori, traduttori, ecc. siano
più di uno, essi si separano con una virgola (ad es.: G.M. Anselmi, L. Chines,
C. Varotti) e non con il lineato breve unito.

I **numeri delle pagine** e degli anni vanno indicati per esteso (ad es.: pp. 112-
146 e non 112-46; 113-118 e non 113-8; 1953-1964 e non 1953-964 o 1953-64 o 1953-4).

I **siti Internet** vanno citati in tondo minuscolo senza virgolette (« » o < >)
qualora si specifichi l'intero indirizzo elettronico (es.: www.griseldaonline.it).
Se invece si indica solo il nome, essi vanno in corsivo senza virgolette al pari del
titolo di un'opera (es.: *Griseldaonline*).

Se è necessario usare il termine Idem per indicare un autore, scriverlo per
esteso.

I **rientri di paragrafo** vanno fatti con un TAB; non vanno fatti nel paragrafo
iniziale del contributo.

Nel caso in cui si scelgano **criteri citazionali all'anglosassone,** è possibile ren-
dere sinteticamente le note a piè di pagina con sola indicazione del cognome
dell'autore in tondo, data ed, eventualmente, indicazione della pagina da cui pro-
viene la citazione, senza specificare né il volume né il periodico di riferimento,
ugualmente si può inserire la fonte direttamente nel corpo del contributo.

La bibliografia finale, da posizionarsi necessariamente al termine di ciascun
contributo dovrà essere, invece, compilata per esteso; per i criteri della stessa si
rimanda alle indicazioni fornite per il sistema citazionale all'italiana.

Esempi:

• Nel corpo del testo o in nota, valido per ciascun esempio seguente: (Craig 2004).
   Nella bibliografia finale: Craig 2004: H. Craig, «Stylistic analysis and author-
ship studies», in *A companion to Digital Humanities*, a cura di S. Schreibman,
R. Siemens, J. Unsworth, Blackwell, Oxford 2004.

• Adams, Barker 1993: T.R. Adams, N. Barker, «A new model for the study of the
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• Avellini et al. 2009: *Prospettive degli Studi culturali*, a cura di L. Avellini et al.,
Bologna, I Libri di Emil, 2009, pp. 190-19.

• Carriero et al 2020: V.A. Carriero, M. Daquino, A. Gangemi, A.G. Nuzzolese,
S. Peroni, V. Presutti, F. Tomasi, «The Landscape of Ontology Reuse Approaches»,
in *Applications and Practices in Ontology Design, Extraction, and Reasoning*,
Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2020, pp. 21-38.

Se si fa riferimento ad una citazione specifica di un'opera, è necessario inserire la pagina:

• (Eggert 1990, pp. 19-40) (nel testo o in nota).

In bibliografia finale: Eggert 1990: Eggert P. «Textual product or textual process: procedures and assumptions of critical editing» in *Editing in Australia*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press 1990, pp. 19-40.

• In caso di omonimia nel riferimento a testo o in nota specificare l'iniziale del nome dell'autore o autorice.

Referaggio

Tutti i contributi presenti in rivista sono sottoposti preventivamente a processo di *double-blind peer review* (processo di doppio referaggio cieco) e sono, pertanto, esaminati e valutati da revisori anonimi così come anonimo è anche l'autore del saggio in analisi, al fine di rendere limpido e coerente il risultato finale.

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Since its very beginning Ecdotica, intending to favour different philological sensibilities and methods, enables authors to choose between different referencing styles, the Italian and 'Harvard' ones. However, it is fundamental to coherence when choosing one of them.

All the papers must be delivered with the formatting to a minimum (no paragraph indent is permitted), typed in Times New Roman 12 point, single-spaces. All the quotes exceeding 3 lines must be in font size 10, single spaces, separated with a blank space from the text (no paragraph indent). Each footnote number has to be put after the punctuation. All the footnotes will be collocated at the bottom of the page instead of at the end of the article.

All the quotes lesser than 3 lines must be collocated in the body text between quotation marks «...». If there is a quote inside a quote, it has to be written between double quotes "...". The latter or single quotation marks ('...') may be used for words or sentences to be highlighted, emphatic expressions, paraphrases, and translations. Please keep formatting such as italics to a minimum (to be used just for work and journal titles, *e.g. Contemporary German editorial theory, A companion to Digital Humanities*, and for foreign words.

N.B: For all the sections named *Saggi, Foro* and *Questioni*, the authors are required, at the beginning of the article, to put the paper's title, an abstract, and 5 keywords, and, at the end of the article, institutional mail address and academic membership.

For the section named *Rassegne*: reviews should begin with the reviewed volume's bibliographic information organized by:

Author (last name in small caps), first name. Date. *Title* (in italics). Place of publication: publisher. ISBN 13. # of pages (and, where appropriate, illustrations/figures/musical examples). Hardcover or softcover. Price (preferably in dollars and/or euros).

In case the author(s) chooses the Italian quoting system, he/she has to respect the following rules.

The bibliographic quotation of a book or of an essay in a book must be composed by:

• Author in Roman type, with the name initial;

• The volume's title in Italics type; the paper's title between quotation marks «...» followed by "in" and the title of the volume (if the title contains another title inside, it must be in Italics);

• The number of the volume, if any, in Roman numbers;

• The name of the editor must be indicated with the name initial and full surname, in Roman type, preceded by 'edited by';

• Place of publishing, name of publisher, year;

• Number of pages in Arab or Roman number preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.', in Roman type. If there is a particular page range to be referred to, it must be indicated as following pp-12-34: 13-15.

If the quotes are repeated after the first time, please indicate just the surname of the author, a short title of the work after a comma, the number of the pages (no "cit.", "op. cit.", "ed. cit." etc.).

Use 'ivi' (Roman type) when citing the same work as previously, but changing the range of pages; use *ibidem* (Italics), in full, when citing the same quotation shortly after.

Examples:

A. Montevecchi, *Gli uomini e i tempi. Studi da Machiavelli a Malvezzi*, Bologna, Pàtron, 2016.

A. Benassi, «La teoria e la prassi dell'emblema e dell'impresa», in *Letteratura e arti visive nel Rinascimento*, a cura di G. Genovese, A. Torre, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

S. Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente. Analisi critica*, ivi, Berlino-New York, de Gruyter, 20005, pp. 23-28.

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Ivi, p. 25.

Ibidem

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• The year of the journal in Roman number;

• Issue number (if any), in Arabic numbers;

• Year of publication in Arabic number between brackets;

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Examples:

C. De Cesare, «Una corrispondenza corale. Alcune integrazioni al corpus epistolare ariostesco a partire del carteggio del suo luogotenente», *Bollettino di italianistica*, n.s., a. xix, 2 (2022), pp. 121-134.

M. Petoletti, «Poesia epigrafica pavese di età longobarda: le iscrizioni sui monumenti», *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, LX (2019), pp. 1-32.

When authors, editors, prefaces, translators, etc., are more than one, they should be separated by a comma (e.g. G.M. Anselmi, L. Chines, C. Varotti) and not by a hyphen. Page and year numbers should be written in full (e.g. pp. 112-146, not 112-46; 113-118, not 113-8; 1953-1964, not 1953-964 or 1953-64 or 1953-4). Internet sites should be cited in lowercase without quotation marks (« » or < >) if specifying the full web address (e.g. www.griseldaonline.it). If only the name is provided, it should be italicized without quotation marks like a title of a work (e.g. *Griseldaonline*).

If necessary to use the term "Idem" to indicate an author, write it out in full.

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In case the Anglo-Saxon citation criteria are chosen, it is possible to make footnotes more concise with only the author's surname in round brackets, date, and possibly the page number from which the citation is taken, without specifying the volume or periodical reference. Similarly, the source can be directly inserted into the body of the contribution. However, the final bibliography, to be positioned necessarily at the end of each contribution, must be compiled in full; for its criteria, reference is made to the instructions provided for the Italian citation system.

Examples:

• In the body of the text or in a note, valid for each following example: (Craig 2004).
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• Adams, Barker 1993: T.R. Adams, N. Barker, «A new model for the study of the book», in *A potencie of life. Books in society: The Clark lectures 1986-1987,* London, British Library, 1993.

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All contributions to the journal undergo a double-blind peer review process, whereby they are examined and evaluated by anonymous reviewers, as is the author of the essay under analysis, to ensure clarity and coherence in the final outcome.