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The Construction of Authorship

Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature

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READING AND WRITING THE RENAISSANCE COMMONPLACE BOOK: A QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP?

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What can the material features of a text tell us about its status as something "authored"? What, more particularly, do those features reveal when the text in question predates a modern notion of copyright and occupies a liminal position with respect to the material system of reproduction (printing) fundamental to that notion? This basic question impels the present study—not as a problem to be solved, but as a *modus operandi*, a way to avoid relying upon modern notions of authorship when approaching texts to which they might not be applicable. In so doing, developing a model of the discursive conditions of poetic production more appropriate to such texts may be possible.

My concerns are particularly related to Renaissance poetry, especially the Renaissance practice of keeping a poetic commonplace book, in which a variety of poetic texts might be "gathered and composed," as Arthur Marotti puts it, typically in a blank "table book," often received as a gift, "in which poems or poems and prose were meant to be transcribed by its owner—usually without a governing plan or arrangement."[1] Most of the time, these poems were transcribed without attribution; sometimes even the compiler of the commonplace book remained anonymous. Peter Beal writes that when names do "become associated with poems" in manuscripts, it is

> for a variety of reasons besides simple authorship. A man's name might become linked with a poem in the course of manuscript transmission because he was the copyist, or because it was written by someone in his circle, or because he added his own stanzas to it, or wrote a reply to it, or set it to music, and so on. There is usually a reason for the association—scribes were not wont to pluck names out of the air at random . . . .[2]

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1 ARTHUR MAROTTI, JOHN DONNE: COTERIE POET 5-6, 7 (1986).

2 Peter Beal, *Shall I Die?*, TIMES LITERARY SUPP., Jan. 3, 1986, at 13.

Attribution clearly has different significance for Renaissance poetic practice than for modern textual scholarship and for modern readers of Renaissance texts. After all, most twentieth-century readers approach Elizabethan poetry through single-author editions (Donne, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, and so forth) or through anthologies, which are also organized by author. An Elizabethan reader's approach to that poetry would be significantly different from a modern reader's approach, even in the poetry's most basic material dimensions. Not only attributions, but also the texts of the poems themselves remained highly variable. As Gerald L. Bruns argues, the manuscript text remains open, malleable, and therefore "tacitly unfinished: it is never fully present but is always available for a later hand to bring it more completely into the open."[3] As a result, poems might exist in several different versions, some produced by deliberate alterations, others by errors in transcription. If collected, the poems would be copied among a variety of other, unrelated poems, and sometimes among non-poetic texts as well.

To account for these features of commonplace books simply as the side-effects of a system of manuscript transmission, however, is to overlook the extent to which they may constitute material traces of textual practices and the conditions which make possible the production of poetry during the Renaissance. In the first section of *A Theory of Literary Production*,[4] Pierre Macherey formulates a theoretical project in which he argues that "in order to identify a form of knowledge, . . . we must seek the conditions which make the emergence of this knowledge possible."[5] He further argues that "the conditions that determine the production of the book also determine the forms of its communication."[6] Macherey traces the complex way in which the material operations of reading and writing help produce the ideologies of knowledge and interpretation, and how those ideologies in turn constrain the praxis of reading.[7] Moreover, he defines a "condition" of production as "the principle of rationality which makes

[3] Gerald L. Bruns, *The Originality of Texts in a Manuscript Culture*, 32 COMP. LITERATURE 113, 126 (1980). Arthur Marotti discussed this issue at length in a paper entitled "Malleable and Fixed Texts: Manuscript and Printed Miscellanies and the Transmission of Lyric Poetry", presented at the 1988 MLA Session "Is Typography Textual?" (Sponsored by the Renaissance English Text Society).

[4] PIERRE MACHEREY, A THEORY OF LITERARY PRODUCTION (Geoffrey Wall trans., 1978).

[5] *Id.* at 8.

[6] *Id.* at 70.

[7] *Id.* at 49.

the work accessible to thought";[8] his project is the recovery of a kind of *mentalite* through consideration of an abstract and ideal principle.

Conditions of production, however, can be material as well. When what is being produced is a text, those conditions can include the physical activities by which writing is produced (by hand or by press) and the manner in which written matter is consumed in the process of reading. These material conditions of poetic production in the Renaissance and their implications for a conception of authorship are what I wish to explore in the remainder of this paper. In order to be able to address these issues with some specificity, I will focus on a single commonplace book, now on deposit in the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetry 148 ("Rawlinson 148").[9]

The manuscript was compiled between 1589 and 1621 by John Lilliat, an Anglican clergyman and cathedral musician. In 1589, it appears, Lilliat received a gift of a blank book, for recorded on the verso of the first leaf of the present manuscript, in a large italic hand, is the inscription:

> *Liber Lilliati.* Anno. 1589. *Maii.* 3.
> *Ex dono Roberti Sharpe./*[10]

At some point, however, Lilliat had the manuscript rebound,[11] and included in the midst of sixty-five leaves of poems copied out in his own careful secretary hand an almost complete printed copy of *The Hekatompathia or Passionate Centurie of Loue*.[12] There is no sharp boundary between the "printed" and "manuscript" portions of Rawlinson 148. The first four leaves contain brief poems and sententiae in manuscript; *The Hekatompathia*, begin-

[8] *Id.*

[9] LIBER LILLIATI: ELIZABETHAN VERSE AND SONG (BODLEIAN MS RAWLINSON POETRY 148) (Edward Doughtie ed., Univ. Del. Press 1985).

[10] *Id.* at 43.

[11] Edward Doughtie notes in his edition of the manuscript that the binding "is similar to other sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century bindings," which leads me to suspect that Lilliat had the manuscript rebound. *Id.* at 33. Whether all the handwritten poems had already been transcribed or whether the rebinding included blank leaves cannot be known.

[12] "THE / E'KATOMΠΑΘΙΑ / OR / PASSIONATE / *Centurie of* / Loue, // *Diuided into two parts: where- / of, the first expresseth the Au- / thors sufferance in Loue: the / latter, his long farewell to Loue / and all his tyrannie.* // Composed by *Thomas Watson* / Gentleman; and published at/the request of certaine Gentle- / men his very frendes." was entered into the Stationers' Register in 1582 and printed the same year. THOMAS WATSON, THE HEKATOMPATHIA OR PASSIONATE CENTURIE OF LOUE (Burt Franklin Press 1967) (1582). "[T]he first (presumably blank) leaf, the fourth leaf (in the first of two signatures marked A), and the last leaf (unprinted, sig. N4) are missing in Lilliat's copy; sig. I is misfolded." LIBER LILLIATTI, *supra* note 9, at 33. The missing leaves are not unusual; quartos often lost the outer leaves (and, as in the case of A4, their conjugates) to wear and tear.

ning with its title page, commences on the fifth leaf. The handwriting, however, does not stop there. More brief poems and sententiae cover the verso of the title page and the bottom margins of the next two leaves, on which the prefatory letters for *The Hekatompathia* are printed. In addition, the printed text has been annotated, marked with indices (pointing fingers: ☞), and heavily underlined. Although the next fifty-six leaves (the printed text of *The Hekatompathia*'s poems) contain no further manuscript poems, the underlining and indexing continues to appear, albeit infrequently. The printed text is then followed by sixty-one leaves of manuscript poetry. Lilliat's hand is literally present throughout Rawlinson 148, writing out poems, underlining printed text in *The Hekatompathia*, or adding annotations and indices alongside printed and handwritten texts alike.

Does the pervasive presence of that hand qualify the copy of *The Hekatompathia* included in Rawlinson 148 as part of the "commonplace book"? There are a few other manuscript commonplace books which incorporate a leaf or two of printed matter,[13] but nothing, to my knowledge, on this scale. Because Rawlinson 148 contains text produced by two different technologies and belongs to what we would define as two different "genres" ("commonplace book" and "sonnet sequence"), for us not to conceive of the sections as discrete texts is difficult. This difficulty is felt even at the level of bibliographic description, where it would be considered inaccurate not to distinguish between the two portions of the volume. Indeed, that the printed text and manuscript text belong to distinct conceptual categories seems self-evident. This assumption is at work in the historical scenario I suggested above (the gift of a table book, subsequently rebound); it is also present in the description of the manuscript by its modern editor, Edward Doughtie:

> The manuscript, now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, consists of a printed copy of Thomas Watson's *Hekatompathia* (1582) bound with additional leaves on which a number of English poems, some songs with music, a letter, some Latin verses and phrases, and other items have been copied. A fair amount of this material has not been published.[14]

It is interesting that even in an edition devoted to the manuscript "items," Doughtie's description conceives of those materials as distinct from and supplementary to the printed text. Furthermore, Doughtie's edition is not the first time that the printed portion of Rawlinson 148 has been privileged over its "additional" manuscript poems. When the "enthusiastic antiquarian and collector"[15] Thomas Hearne acquired the manuscript, he wrote his name and the date on the title page of *The Hekatompathia*.[16] It seems likely that he acquired the volume because of the rarity of the printed collection (eleven copies are extant). (Coincidentally, Hearne acquired the volume in 1709, the year in which the Statute of Anne first legislated copyright.)

The economics of modern editing continue to reinforce a division between the printed and handwritten portions of the manuscript. It would be pointless and expensive for Doughtie to reproduce the text of *The Hekatompathia* since it is available in edited and facsimile versions. Doughtie is not concerned with presenting a facsimile of Rawlinson 148; rather, his aim is to make available a manuscript "in some respects representative of a large body of material which was at times more important for some levels of literary culture than printed books."[17] The inclusion of printed matter in Rawlinson 148 is not representative of the commonplace book tradition, and so, it seems, need not be included in a modern edition.

This observation is not made to fault Doughtie or Hearne, but rather to indicate the extent to which the requirements of reproduction, the categories which govern modern textual practice, lead, not to a reproduction of a certain artifact (the collection of paper and ink that bears the shelfmark Rawl 148), but to its disappearance. Moreover, because those categories (print and manuscript) seem so self-evident, modern textual practices do not address the possibility that a remarkably different textual practice produced the Renaissance textual artifact. In Lilliat's handwriting, however, is the evidence for such a practice, evidence that the "difference" we so readily detect might not have been evident in the same way for a Renaissance compiler. In order to understand those practices, it is necessary to examine more carefully what the process of compilation entailed. Rawlinson 148 is particularly helpful in this examination, for the process of compilation is played out both in Lilliat's assembly of a com-

[13] Marotti, *supra* note 3.
[14] Liber Lilliati, *supra* note 9, at 15.

[15] *Id.* at 34.
[16] "MSS Rawl. Poet. 148" is also written on the title page. This notation may be Richard Rawlinson's own catalogue number or a later addition. The page is also marked with the stamp of the Bodleian Library and with two other apparent catalogue numbers: "MS. num. 50" in Hearne's handwriting immediately beneath his name and date and "E. Pr. 37.," which I have not been able to identify (Doughtie does not mention it).
[17] Liber Lilliati, *supra* note 9, at 16.

monplace book and in the material he incorporated in it, particularly in *The Hekatompathia*.

The title page of *The Hekatompathia* reads approximately as follows:

> THE
> E'KATOMΠAΘI'A
> OR
> PASSIONATE
> *Centurie of*
> Loue,
>
> *Diuided into two parts: whereof, the first expresseth the Authors sufferance in Loue: the latter, his long farewell to Loue and all his tyrannie.*
>
> Composed by *Thomas Watson* Gentleman; and published at the request of certaine Gentlemen his very frendes.[18]

First, the catchy, classicized, title is given prominence, then there is an italicized precis of the contents, in which a generic "Author" is mentioned. But that "Author" is not given agency: the text itself "expresseth the Author's sufferance."[19] The "Author" is a kind of main character, whose adventures with love will be set forth.[20] Thomas Watson's name appears in the following paragraph, which figures him as the *composer* of the "two parts,"[21] not as their author.

To be "composed," in the sixteenth century, is to be made up of parts or to be elaborately or artificially put together; it also

[18] WATSON, *supra* note 12. I have not reproduced the ornament and printer's information which follow the text quoted, nor the elaborate classical border which surrounds it. A naked Venus stands to the left of the title, an armored Mars to the right; cupids with drawn bows and phoenix birds appear across the bottom of the page, and at the top is an elaborate ornament in which the letter "A" (for Amor?) is entwined. The top and bottom borders have symmetrical right and left halves.

[19] *Id.*

[20] A similar analogue might be "Master F.J." in Gascoigne's *Hundreth Sundry Flowres*, whose adventures provide a loose narrative frame by which sonnets are presented. GEORGE GASCOIGNE, A HUNDRETH SUNDRIE FLOWRES (Ruth Loyd Miller ed., Kennikat Press 2d ed. 1975) (1573). What it might mean to be called an author is a question I take up later in this essay. *See infra* discussion accompanying notes 37-38.

[21] From this title page, there is no reason to assume that the contents will be poems. Indeed, the suggestion is that one will find songs and music inside. Lilliat's commonplace book fulfills that expectation, insofar as it includes six musical settings.

means to possess a "settled countenance," according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* ("OED").[22] Thus, the composer arranges and subdues the "sufferance" of the "Author." Composition is a process of mediation as well as a process of production. *The Hekatompathia* makes this mediation clear in its organizational principles. After the prefatory material, each page is composed of a roman numeral; an editorial comment upon the poem which follows, including verses in foreign languages upon which the poem is based or translated; the poem itself; and a printer's device to fill out the page. There are often marginal glosses alongside the poems as well.

Watson's role as a composer subsumes his role as an author. The "louepassions" or "sonnets," which present the stylized fiction of the conventional frustrated lover, are attributed to the "Author" by the title page and by the headnotes. The "Author," who is the speaker in the poems, refers only to the fictive discursive frame, which addresses the beloved or bemoans its condition to itself. The "Author" remains oblivious to the material conditions of his discourse: he could never know that his words exist only as black-letter type on a page. It is the composer who, like the reader, is insistently aware of the materiality and textuality of the "Author's" poetic utterances. The headnotes to poems XI to XVII demonstrate this awareness:

> XI: In this sonnet is couertly set forth, how pleasaunt a passio[n] the Author one day enioyed, whe[n] by chance he ouerharde his mistris, whilst she was singinge priuately by her selfe . . . .[23]
>
> XII: The subiect of this passion is all one with that, which is next before it . . . .[24]
>
> XIII: The Authour descanteth on forwarde vpon the late effect, which the song of his Mistres hath wrought in him . . . And in this passion after he hath set downe some miraculous good effectes of Musicke . . . .[25]
>
> XIIII: The Authour still pursuing his inuention vpon the song of his Mistres, in the last staffe of this sonnet he falleth into this fiction . . . .[26]
>
> XV: Still hee followeth on with further deuise vppon the late Melodie of his Mistres: & in this sonnet doth namelie preferre

[22] 3 OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY 622 (2d ed. 1989).

[23] WATSON, *supra* note 12, at 25.

[24] *Id.* at 26.

[25] *Id.* at 27.

[26] *Id.* at 28.

her before *Musicke* her selfe . . . .[27]
XVI: In this passion the Authour vpon the late sweete song of his Mistres, maketh her his birde . . . .[28]
XVII: The Author not yet hauing forgotten the songe of his mistres, maketh her in this passion a seconde *Phoenix* . . . .[29]

One can imagine the composer becoming increasingly exasperated with the absurdity of the conventional conceits (comparing a woman to "Musicke," making a woman into a bird) to which the "Author"/poet clings so tenaciously in poem after poem. The composer is thus presented as a kind of reader, going through the poems one by one and commenting upon them. This commentary, however, is not neutral, for it situates the text within a particular discursive context and thus constrains the reader's encounter with the text. In the examples quoted above, that constraint is relatively simple, insofar as it reminds the reader of what has already transpired. Elsewhere they are concerned with more complex dimensions of the discursive practices at work in the text:

XL: The sense contained in this Sonnet will seeme straunge to such as neuer haue acquainted themselues with *Loue* and his Lawes, because of the contrarieties mentioned therein. But to such, as Loue at any time hath had vnder his banner, all and euery part of it will appeare to be a familier trueth. It is almost word for word taken out of *Petrarch*, (where hee beginneth, *Pace non truouo, e non ho da far guerra*; *E temo, e spero, &c.*?) All, except three verses, which this Authour hath necessarily added, for perfecting the number, which hee hath determined to vse in euery one of these his Passions.[30]

The "Author" himself never mentions the "determination" referred to above. The composer extrapolates volition from the uniform appearance of the poems because the composer foregrounds the formal materiality of the poem. The extent to which the headnotes call attention to the Latin, Italian, and French sources for the poems, combined with this foregrounded materiality, suggests the extent to which the poems are not merely the products of writing, but of reading as well. *The Hekatompathia* is full of readings and readers. There is the "Author"/poet, who reads and translates Petrarchan love poetry; the composer, who reads the "Author's" poems, as well as their sources, and comments upon them; the slough of readers who have written commendatory verses for the volume—and, in the case of Rawlinson 148, Lilliat, whose reading leaves textual traces as well, in his underlinings, annotations and indices.

[27] *Id.* at 29.
[28] *Id.* at 30.
[29] *Id.* at 31.
[30] *Id.* at 54.

The "reader" of poetry is conditioned by his/her "writing" practices because they are what articulate and implement the conditions of production: writing teaches one what to read for, whether that writing is as brief as the demarcation of a sententiae worth committing to memory, or as lengthy as a response to, alteration of, or translation of a poem encountered and re-produced. The extent to which the writing in *The Hekatompathia* is produced by and presented in the context of reading is one example; the way in which *The Hekatompathia* can be absorbed into a commonplace book is another. Lilliat's annotations to the second dedicatory letter in *The Hekatompathia*, "Iohn Lyly to the Authour his friend,"[31] are particularly instructive. The letter itself is highly metaphoric, and what Lilliat re-marks in his reading are individual tropes, which need have nothing to do with a dedicatory letter. Nonetheless, they are curiously appropriate, for Lily's letter suggests the extent to which it is the reader, not an author, who experiences the (almost orgasmic) pleasure of textualized passion:

My good friend, I haue read your new passions, and they have renewed mine old pleasures, the which brought to me no lesse delight, the[n] they haue done to your selfe commendations. And certes had not one of mine eies about serious affaires beene watchfull, both by being too too busie had beene wanton: such is the nature of persuading pleasure, that it melteth the marrowe before it scorche the skin, and burneth before it warmeth: Not vnlike vnto the oyle of Ieat, which rotteth the bone and neuer ranckleth the flesh, or the Scarab flies, which enter into the roote and neuer touch the rinde.[32]

(This passage is marked not only by underlining, but also by a small index in the right hand margin, pointing to the word "which.") The reader signals, and even participates in, this pleasure by taking pen in hand and writing upon the text. Indeed, amorous pleasure and the "commendations" earned by writing well are conflated both in the passage and in Lilliat's response.

That conflation of reading and writing is not restricted to textual "passion," but is, in fact, a condition of a more general

[31] *Id.* at 7.
[32] *Id.*

textual practice. Near the end of Lily's letter, Lilliat marks the following passage:

> Whereby I noted that young swannes are grey, & the olde white, you[n]g trees tender, & the old tough, young me[n] amorous, & growing in yeeres, either wiser or warier. The Corall in the water is a soft weede, on the land a hard stone . . . .[33]

In the right hand margin there is a vertical line which extends from the phrase underlined to the line on which the reference to "corall" ends, and in the margin Lilliat has written "The Corall." Yet the attention conferred on the coral and the swans by the marginal notation has little to do with their intrinsic meaning or their function in the letter as a whole. Rather, the attention is bound up with their status as memorable, re-markable, rhetorical figures. To understand a reading practice for which this re-markability is central, the reader must move into a text such as Erasmus' *De ratione studii ac legendi interpretandique auctores liber*,[34] which trains the reader to "take careful note in your reading of striking words; archaic or novel expressions; cleverly devised or neatly turned arguments; and any outstanding elegance of style, any adages, historical parallels, and general statements that are worth remembering. These passages should be indicated by some appropriate mark. (You should use several specially designed marks to indicate points of interest.)"

Commonplace books are about memory, which takes both immaterial and material form; the commonplace book is like a record of what that memory might look like. Commonplace books are also about the intimate connection between remembering and re-marking a text—about, that is, a practice of reading contingent upon writing. In turn, as Macherey suggests, the reading mind becomes attuned to sententiae; material praxis produces an ideological formation which then reflects back upon praxis.[35]

[33] *Id.*

[34] ERASMUS, DE RATIONE STUDII AC LEGENDI INTERPRETANDIQUE AUCTORES LIBER, *reprinted in* 24 THE COLLECTED WORKS OF ERASMUS: LITERARY AND EDUCATIONAL WRITINGS 2, at 670 (Craig R. Thompson ed. & Brian McGregor trans., U. Toronto P. 1972).

[35] MACHEREY, *supra* note 4, at 92. Moreover, the act of recording the sententiae supposedly inscribes them in the mind as well; not only does this inscription add the figures to a stock available for further reproduction, but it also simultaneously constitutes the "character" of the reader/writer. Jonathan Goldberg discusses in much greater depth the extent to which the inscription of a person's "character" is bound up with the inscription of the grammatical character. *See* JONATHAN GOLDBERG, WRITING MATTER: FROM THE HANDS OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE (1990).

Particularly important in the context of the material praxis of reading is Lilliat's reaction to the end of Lyly's letter:

> And seeing you haue vsed mee so friendly, as to make me acquainted with your passions, I will shortly make you pryuie to mine, which I woulde be loth the printer shoulde see, for that my fancies being neuer so crooked he would put the[m] in streight lines, vnfit for my humor, necessarie for his art, who setteth downe, *blinde, in as many letters as seeing*.
>
> Farewell.
>
> John Lilliat.
>
> [flourish][36]

Watson's jibe marks the materiality and textuality of his passion, which is visually apparent not in his person, but in the words which express it. Although he makes a conventionally self-deprecatory remark about the crookedness of his own "fancies," he also berates the printer's material practice, which occludes the crooked evidence. Lilliat's marks at this point reinforce the extent to which the evidence of writing is contingent upon its specific material format. Not only has he underlined the clever jibe, but in fact his own name appears stamped in a large italic hand at the end of the letter, a signature produced with a similar technology of imprinting. Is this a claim to authorship? If so, it seems (at least to us), absurd—the epistle is clearly attributed to Iohn Lyly in the title. But Lilliat has a large index pointing to "Iohn Lyly." Coupled with the stamp at the end of the letter, the signature suggests that Lilliat is responding to the homophony between the two names and taking advantage of their similarity to ventriloquize his own praise for Watson through Lyly's words. Moreover, he may be responding to a visual homology, insofar as the printed text and the letters of the stamp bear a distinct resemblance. He signs the words not so much because he claims ownership of them, or claims them as his original discourse, but because he uses *the same physical words* to praise Watson.

The practice of reading, then, is concomitant with and shaped by the practice of writing, and vice-versa. Both of these practices are necessary to the production of the commonplace book, which culls and reproduces already-written material as an integral part of the process of composition, which cobbles together new texts from words others have used. Indeed, the structure of poetic authority is based on a reading practice in

[36] WATSON, *supra* note 12, at 8.

which authority is derived from other writers. In the Middle Ages, that authority was associated exclusively with ancient writers, who were "to be respected and believed. . . . The writings of an *auctor* contained or possessed *auctoritas* in the abstract sense of the term, with its strong connotations of veracity and sagacity. In the specific sense, an *auctoritas* was a quotation or an extract from the work of an *auctor*."[37] By the Renaissance, however, the authority resides in non-classical authors as well, and also in general sententiae, as Erasmus' *De ratione studii* suggests. As Minnis puts it,

> the term *auctor* denoted someone who was at once a writer and an authority, someone not merely to be read but also to be respected and believed. . . . The term *auctor* may profitably be regarded as an accolade bestowed upon a popular writer by those later scholars and writers who used extracts from his works as sententious statements or *auctoritates*, or employed them as literary models.[38]

The status of *auctor* or author, it seems, can only be bestowed posthumously. Moreover, this status is not merely related to the production of texts, but to their consumption as well, because it is a notion which regulates the way in which a text is treated by later readers. Moreover, both writing and reading are processes of selection and collection, as a poetic collection such as *The Hekatompathia* makes explicit. And as the material evidence of Lilliat's writing/reading practice suggests, neither writing nor reading can be identified as the "primary" activity involved in the composition of a commonplace book; they operate simultaneously and interactively as constituents of the conditions of poetic textual production.

What role, then, does authorship, as we might understand it today, play in this model of textual production? Within the commonplace book, Lilliat includes "authorial" markers: Lilliat has signed a number of the poems with his initials (most frequently as "q^{d} Iω.λ."; a curious mixture of the Latin "quod" and Greek initials), and occasionally with his full name; he uses the stamp after several poems; and he attributes a number of other poems to their "authors," sometimes by initials and sometimes by full name, but not always "correctly." A full exploration of the force of ascription and attribution in the commonplace book is beyond

37 ALISTAIR J. MINNIS, MEDIEVAL THEORY OF AUTHORSHIP: SCHOLASTIC LITERARY ATTITUDES IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES 10 (2d ed. 1988).

38 *Id.*

the scope of this paper; but by concentrating on two of the poems signed "Iω.λ.," some idea can be gained of what is at stake.

The poems occur on folios 108r-v and 109r. The first of them, entitled *Dauids Dumpe,*[39] is a version of Psalm 130. It might appear as if Lilliat, or at least .Iω.λ, is claiming the prophetic authority of David; he is certainly incorporating the words of the Biblical source. Moreover, Lilliat does not try to hide this fact; there is no intent to deceive here. *Dauids Dumpe* would surely have been recognizable to Lilliat's friends as a translation of Psalm 130. The poem, indeed, is not unlike Watson's translations in *The Hekatompathia*; it even includes a marginal gloss (although nothing like the copious commentary that precedes Watson's poems) to the left of the antepenultimate and penultimate lines, which reads "psal.132.11." The poem's rendering of Psalm 130 is far from literal (it is, for example, over three times as long, and in rhymed pentameter couplets), and yet this loose rendering does not seem to produce anxiety—until the poem incorporates another biblical text. The form of the "Dumpe" itself, it seems, is subject to extreme variations, but the marginal gloss marks the limit of those liberties, as it works to prevent confusion between Biblical texts, and thus to keep the utterances distinct.

This textual anxiety becomes important in the poem which follows *Dauids Dumpe*. This poem, which is called a "Prophesie"[40] in the title, articulates an unspecific anxiety that upon the death of "good *Elizabeth*" the church will fall, to be replaced by "*Pride*, so hie proceedinge,/Wherin ech state exceedinge,/To Common wealth a foyle"[41] (lines 11-13)—a catastrophe that will eventuate in bloody civil war. Since the poem depends upon the legitimacy of the prophetic voice, the question of authorship becomes an important issue. That need for legitimation literally frames the poem. The title was first written "*Lilliat*, his Prophesie. October 2. 1599." in a particularly careful blend of italic and secretary hand. But in an effort to secure the position, and hence authority, of the prophetic voice, the word "Minister," in a more cramped (perhaps hastier) secretary hand, was inserted after the proper name. Coming from someone ordained to pass along the word of God, the prophecy would carry more weight. The poem

39 LIBER LILLIATI, *supra* note 9, at 125.

40 *Id.* at 125.

41 *Id.*

is doubly, multiply signed: to the left of the usual "q^{d} Iω.λ." Lilliat's stamp has been applied three times. "The self-guaranteed mark must be guaranteed by the situation in which one signs. . . . It will always be *where* the signature is, more than what it looks like, that serves to authenticate it," according to Jonathan Goldberg.[42] The force of the stamp impressed upon the page (and looking at the stamps counterclockwise from the left, the force of the stamp and the quantity of ink seem to increase, producing a more and more blurred name) does not seem to me to betoken ownership or authorship of the poem, but rather bears witness to the occasion which produced it. "Lilliat was *here*," it seems to announce, "and saw that this shall pass."

The force of the "q^{d} Iω.λ." is particularly strong in this poem: it means *said*. Not "wrote," not "according to," not "by." Said. The Latin and Greek letters mark the discursivity of the poems and the fact that they exist within an atmosphere of circulating texts. Other poems in the book are marked with other proper names: "qd Mr Dier," "qd D *Latwoorth*," "qd *Thomas Watson*." Lilliat's own name is attached in this way to texts he did not write, particularly to translations of sententious sayings and of passages from Ovid. Other texts are not marked at all, yet it seems reasonable to assume that Lilliat wrote at least some of them.[43] Why did he not sign those texts as he did so many others? Perhaps he never found occasion to release them into the current of circulating manuscripts or never found the need to authenticate his own voice. Ultimately, "Quod" points to the performative existence and iterability of Elizabethan poetry.

It is perhaps common knowledge in recent literary history that the eighteenth century saw the emergence of the notion of the author as an introspective, self-inspired creator; a notion which has been retrospectively applied to previous authors as well.[44] The function of the writer before this eighteenth century development is too often formulated with "a decided absence of positive propositions:"[45] it is easier to say what the writer was not

42 GOLDBERG, *supra* note 35, at 247-48.

43 Particularly poems which are extant only in this manuscript. *See generally* MARGARET CRUM, *First Line Index of English Poetry 1500-1600 in* Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library (1969) and Doughtie's thorough notes in LIBER LILLIATI, *supra* note 9. Moreover, Lilliat usually marks poems attributable to other poets with a proper name, if not always with the "correct" name.

44 *See* Martha Woodmansee, *The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the "Author"*, 17 EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUD. 425, 427 (1984).

45 Michel Foucault, *What Is an Author?, in* LANGUAGE, COUNTER-MEMORY, PRACTICE 113, 136 (Donald F. Bouchard ed. & trans., 1977).

than what s/he was. However, the evidence of Rawlinson 148 suggests some positive propositions.

Much of Watson and Lilliat's literary production consists of reworking already extant poetry. Sometimes this reworking takes the form of translations from Latin (or Greek, Italian, and French, in Watson's case); at other times it consists of collections of sententious material. Often, Lilliat combines the two modes:

> *Quiere quisque diu quaerit, bene viuere nemo: Ast bene quisque potest viuere, nemo diu.*
> To liue *Longe* evry Man desires, but to liue *WEL*, no Man: Yet eury Man (loe) may liue *Well*, but to liue *Longe*, none can.[46]

Reading and writing seem to have focused on the gathering of sententiae. Lilliat is by no means atypical in his marginal indices and underlinings. The impulse to the sententious is an impulse to gather *auctoritas*, to tap into its didactic power. Perhaps it is that power to which the insistent signing of the "Prophesie" aspires.

In these material practices of composition, as it operates in Rawlinson 148, lie the traces of an epistemological structure, in which reading and writing are both constituent elements in what Macherey would call the "conditions"[47] for the production and consumption of the poetic commonplace book. Ascription, then, becomes important not just as a means to identify the "source" or "author" of the poem, but as a particular manifestation of those writing/reading strategies, for the production of poetry is an act of intervention in a larger discursive realm. It might even be possible to see the compiler of the commonplace book as the paradigm for reading/writing practices in the Renaissance, insofar as the two practices cannot be separated and operate in tandem. The compiler, then, operates in ways similar to Barthes' notion of a reader: "someone who holds collected into one and the same field all of the traces from which writing is constituted":[48] not as someone who acts as a terminus; rather someone who channels the energies of poetic discourse and then reintroduces them into the cultural flow from whence they were written/read.

46 LIBER LILLIATI, *supra* note 9, at 43.

47 MACHEREY, *supra* note 4.

48 Barthes, *The Death of the Author, in* THE RUSTLE OF LANGUAGE 54 (Richard Howard trans., 1989).