Roman Tymoshevskyi

The Discourse of Kingship in John Gower's and Thomas Hoccleve's Mirrors of Princes

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies.

Central European University

Budapest

May 2019

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Roman Tymoshevskyi

(Ukraine)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

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I, the undersigned, **Roman Tymoshevskyi**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the discourse of kingship of John Gower's (c. 1327–1408) and Thomas Hoccleve's (c. 1367–1426) mirrors of princes, that is, Book 6 of Gower's *Vox Clamantis,* Book 7 of his *Confessio Amantis*, as well as Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*. It will analyze the main concepts and ideas about kingship employed in Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors in the light of the tradition of *specula principum* writing. The thesis analysis will be built upon the four main questions: What are the components of Gower's and Hoccleve' discourse of kingship? What were the sources of the discourse? To what extent the authors' background reflected on their writing? How Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors and their kingship discourse can be related to the medieval tradition of the mirrors of princes genre? Following these questions, I will claim that the authors' own social background largely influenced both literary form and the content of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors, resulting in a creative way of the fashioning of the authors' poetic personae. In case of the discourse, I will argue that there are two main elements defining Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship: the theory of the king's double accountability to his people and God, as well as the moral paradigm of the king's duties and limitations of his power. In turn, these elements linked Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors to the two different strands of the genre tradition based either on the morality-oriented vision of kingship or on the more practical Aristotelian view on governance.

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Table of contents

List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations

Introduction

"So as Fortune hir tyme sette,
My liege lord par chaunce I mette;
[…] Amonges othre thinges seyde
He hath this charge upon me leyde,
And bad me doo my busynesse
That to his hihe worthinesse
Som newe thing I scholde booke"

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*[1]

"Now syn thow me toldist
My lord, the Prince, is good lord thee to,
[…] Woost thow what to do?
Wryte to him a goodly tale or two,
On which he may desporten him by nyght,
And his free grace shal upon thee lyght."

Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*[2]

These are fragments of the lengthy poems written in England in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. The first one was composed by London lawyer John Gower, while the authorship of the second belongs to Thomas Hoccleve, clerk of the Privy Seal office. What united the poems written in a different time by the authors of a seemingly different background? The obvious answer is that both of them were writing to the king or prince. In these poems, both authors intended to set a list of advice, which, as they thought, would be useful for their lords. Besides, quoted passages show different ways of the authors' presenting their writing. Gower asserts that his poem was directly requested by the king, emphasizing the importance of both his writing and himself as an author honored by the royal audience. Hoccleve's verses present the image of the poet who was not originally intended to write to the prince until he was advised so in order to gain the prince's favor. Moreover, he deliberately belittles the

[1] John Gower, "Confessio Amantis," in *The Complete Works of John Gower: The English Works*, vol. 1, ed. George C. Macaulay (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), 3–4, line 41*–42*, 47*–51*.
[2] Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, ed. Charles R. Blyth (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999), 1898–904, accessed May 12, 2019, http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/blyth-hoccleve-regiment-of-princes

seriousness of his writing. These features perfectly demonstrate different ways of Gower's and Hoccleve's fashioning of their literary personae, which constitute the main peculiarity of their writing.

John Gower's and Thomas Hoccleve's poetic works are imbued with political themes. It is especially evident in the works addressed to the king or prince whose subject matter implies the authors' concern with the questions related to politics. In terms of genre, these works can be considered as a part of a broader tradition of advice literature, in particular, that which belongs to the so-called *specula principum* (mirrors of princes) genre. Since the main subject of mirrors of princes is the king and his rulership, by writing in this genre Gower and Hoccleve concerned themselves with shaping the discourse of kingship. My thesis aims to analyze Book 6 of Gower's *Vox Clamantis* and Book 7 of *Confessio Amantis*, as well as Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* through the prism of their discourse of kingship. Moreover, by analyzing the discourse within these poems, I will establish the place of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors in the medieval *specula principum* tradition.

Although the shared characteristics of the genre provide the main reason for analyzing Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors together, the common ground of their writing is not limited to their chosen genre. Even more relevant is their social background. Although both of them were well educated, they did not have a university education in philosophy and theology, neither did they occupy the ecclesiastical offices. Thus, in contrast with most of the authors of works belonging to this genre, both Gower and Hoccleve come from a secular background. In addition, both of them were affiliated with the royal court in some way. Hoccleve's courtly affiliation is evident from his position in the Privy Seal, although the question of his direct royal patronage is debatable. At the same time, Gower was close to the royal court during his time under the patronage of Richard II, and later of Henry IV.[3]

[3] I will elaborate on Gower's and Hoccleve's biography and their courtly affiliation in the second chapter.

Other important aspects which bring Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors together include their strategy of the fashioning of their own literary personae. Besides, as will be demonstrated, the main sources of their mirrors are the same. Finally, to further nuance the intricate relationship between the two works, it is notable that Hoccleve was definitely acquainted with Gower's works. All these not only make their discourses of kingship very similar, but also place their respective *specula* in a special place together within the greater tradition of the mirrors of princes writing.

In this vein, my analysis will consist of two parts. First, I will examine the literary frames of Gower's and Hoccleve's kingship discourse, paying special attention to the authors' strategies of fashioning their literary personae –the creation of their fictional selves–, that is, their self-fashioning in the text. The authors' way of using authorities, as well as their ready employment of styles and literary forms other than those typical in the *specula principum* genre will be of special interest here. Simultaneously, I will look beyond the texts to contextualize them, and briefly examine the authors' social background and relationships with the court. This will provide enough ground to correlate the authors' real social status with that of their literary persona through which they admonish the king. Second, I will return to the text and analyze Hoccleve's and Gower's discourse of kingship. The term "discourse" is fraught with ambiguity and has been used to designate a wide range of very different concepts in scholarship, even within the same discipline. This thesis generally follows the classic Foucauldian definition of "discourse" as a practice "which systematically form the object of which they [groups of signs] speak". [4] However, the scope of this thesis does not allow going into all the complexity of the discourse so I will treat the term rather as a set of basic ideas and concepts defining the object—in this case, kingship—which appear in certain configurations in the text. In other words, by writing advice to the king Gower and Hoccleve not only draw the ideal image of the king but

[4] Michael Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 55.

also express their own understanding of what kingship should be. Due to the poetic form of their writing, their ideas were not expressed in the concrete terms but analyzing the text, the discourse and its origins can be reconstructed. In particular, these can be examined through identifying the basic categories defining kingship, such, as sources and foundations of the king's power, its limitations, and the king's main duties. Thus, these categories will form a skeleton of my analysis.

The structure of the work is fully informed by its methodology. The thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the examination of the development of the *specula principum* genre and its kingship discourse in the Middle Ages. This chapter provides grounds for further analysis of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors. The second chapter examines literary aspects of the mirrors in question and defines the main genre features of Gower's and Hoccleve's works. However, the main focus of this chapter is the authors' self-fashioning. Feeding off of the conclusions and findings of the first two chapters, the third chapter concentrates on their respective discourse of kingship.

The question merits study for various reasons. The kingship discourse in Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* is seldom discussed in previous scholarship, mostly due to the fact that other approaches to Hoccleve's works dominate the scholarship. First and foremost, studies tend to concentrate on what John Bower designates in his article title as "politics of tradition," that is, the portrayal of previous English poetic tradition in Hoccleve's works.[5] In this strand, particular attention is paid to Hoccleve's representation of "maistir Chaucer" in the *Regiment of Princes*. This question, posed as early as in Jerome Mitchell's 1966 article, continues to draw scholars' attention, being, for example, one of the main concern of Sebastian Langdell's most

[5] John M. Bowers, "Thomas Hoccleve and the Politics of Tradition," *The Chaucer Review* 36, no. 4 (2002): 352–69. See also John M. Bowers, "Hoccleve and Chaucer," in *Chaucer Traditions: Studies in Honour of Derek Brewer, e*d. Ruth Morse and Barry Windeatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 54-61; David R. Carlson, "Thomas Hoccleve and the Chaucer Portrait," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 54 (1991): 283-300.

recent study on Hoccleve.[6] Hoccleve's poetic persona and his construction of self, which reflects upon autobiographicaml data of his works is another main avenue of research.[7] Others look at Hoccleve's works from the perspective of his own social position and bureaucratic affiliation, as they are contextualized, for example, in Ethan Knapp's study.[8] Most frequently, however, Hoccleve's works, especially, the *Regiment of Princes*, are analyzed through his relationship with the royal court.[9] This approach is predominantly concerned with the political aspects of his writing, thereby, it is closely related to the main topic of my thesis. While this line of inquiry is concerned with the extent to which Hoccleve's writing reproduces patterns of official discourse of Lancastrian rulership, only a handful of studies relate the *Regiment of Princes* to the broader field of the literature of the king's advising.[10]

The scholarship concerning Gower is far more extensive. Similarly to Hoccleve, one of the main points of scholarly interest is Gower's courtly affiliation and different aspects of his literary relations with the power institutions. For instance, Gower's engagement in the reciprocal discourse of the great household is examined in Elliot Kendall's study.[11] At the same time, David Carlson concentrates on the authors propagandistic writing in support of Henry

[6] Jerome Mitchall, "Hoccleve's Supposed Friendship with Chaucer," *English Language Notes* 4 (1966): 9-12; Sebastian J. Langdell, *Thomas Hoccleve: Religious Reform, Transnational Poetics, and the Invention of Chaucer* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018).

[7] David C. Greetham, "Self-Referential Artifacts: Hoccleve's Persona as a Literary Device," *Modern Philology* 86, no. 3 (1989): 245; John M. Bowers, "Autobiographical Poetry in the Middle Ages: The Case of Thomas Hoccleve," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 68 (1982): 389-412;

[8] Ethan Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and The Literature of Late Medieval England* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001). See also Lee Paterson, "*What is me*?: Self and Society in the Poetry of Thomas Hoccleve," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 23 (2001): 437–70; Helene K. Spencer Killick, "Thomas Hoccleve as Poet and Clerk" (PhD diss., University of York, 2010).

[9] See Derek Pearsall, "Thomas Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*: The Poetics of Royal Self-Representation," *Speculum* 69 (1994): 386–410; Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation 1399–1422* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1998), 173–195; Jenni Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 109–120; Larry Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority and Power: The Medieval Exemplum and the Chaucerian Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) 299–322.

[10] Judith Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 137–159; Nicholas Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes: Counsel and Constraint* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2001), 50–85.

[11] Elliot Kendall, *Lordship and Literature: John Gower and the Politics of the Great Household* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008).

Bolingbroke's seizure of the throne.[12] Much of the scholarship focuses on the intertextuality of Gower's works, including mirrors of princes. In this regard, special attention is paid to the influences of particular genres and literary sources on his writing. This includes Eleonor Johnson's work on Boethian influences, Alastair Minnis's study on Gower's employment of the rhetorical form of Old Testament prophecy, or Kathryn McKinley's article on Ovidian elements in *Confessio Amantis*.[13] While these works are invaluable for my own discussion here, the examination of Gower's political ideas, especially, that of kingship is particularly scattered, concentrating on individual aspects of his political discourse, especially, on those related to the major topics of ethics and love.[14] Thus, the complex analysis of Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship, albeit necessary, has been hitherto largely neglected.

The investigation of Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship can demonstrate the possible ways of understanding and interpreting politics on the level of popular poetry. Therefore, by examining the peculiar way of employment of different political ideas and concepts in Gower's and Hoccleve's writing, this research may contribute to the understanding of the process of adaptation of the elements of sophisticated political discourse in the popular poetry.

[12] David R. Carlson, *John Gower: Poetry and Propaganda in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2012), 121–227.

[13] Eleanor Johnson, *Practicing Literary Theory in the Middle Ages: Ethics and the Mixed Form in Chaucer, Gower, Usk, and Hoccleve* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 183–201; Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 168–90; Kathryn McKinley, "Lessons for a King from John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*," in *Metamorphoses: The Changing Face of Ovid in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Allison Keith and Stephen Rupp (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 107–28.

[14] George R. Coffman, "John Gower in his Most Significant Role," in *Elizabethan Studies and Other Essays in Honor of George F. Reynolds*, ed. E.J. West (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 1945), 51–62; Elizabeth Porter, "Gower's Ethical Microcosm and Political Macrocosm," in *Gower's Confessio Amantis: Responses and Reassessments*, ed. Alastair J. Minnis (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1983), 135–62; Conrad van Dijk, *John Gower and the Limits of the Law* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013), 49–139; Matthew Giancarlo, "Gower's Governmentality: Revisiting John Gower as a Constitutional Thinker and Regimental Writer," in *John Gower: Others and Self*, ed. Russell A. Peck and R.F. Yeager (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), 299–322.

Chapter 1. Medieval Tradition of The Mirrors of Princes Genre

1.1 Definition of the genre

During the Middle Ages, the mirrors of princes genre underwent several important developments in terms of formal literary features, as well as the political thought contained in it. Although the comprehensive analysis of genre development should take into account both aspects, due to the subject matter of the present study, this chapter will mainly concentrate on the evolution of kingship discourse in medieval mirrors of princes. I will examine early and late medieval branches of the mirrors of princes tradition, trying to show how different combinations of the sources of these mirrors lead to different accents of their kingship discourses. Since John Gower's and Thomas Hoccleve's works are located at the latter part of this development, the main focus in the chapter will be the mirrors of princes writing in the Later Middle Ages with the special emphasis on authors whose direct influence is traceable in Gower's and Hoccleve's writing. This chapter may seem too general and too descriptive, but, as mentioned in the introduction, it is necessary to establish Gower's and Hoccleve's position in the context of this tradition.

The definition of the *speculum principum* as a genre remains vague in the scholarship. There are different features, which were put forward as a distinct characteristic of *specula principum*. Some scholars emphasize the moralizing character of the works, designed to instruct the ruler in ethical behavior, hence the didactic purpose.[15] Others suggest the description of the image of the ideal ruler as the main feature of the mirrors of princes.[16] This ambiguity of the definition raises the question of whether mirrors of princes can be treated as

[15] See Wilhelm Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegel des Hohen und Späten Mittelalters* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1938), 12; Hans H. Anton, "Fürstenspiegel," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 4 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), 1041.

[16] See Jean-Philippe Genet, "L'évolution du Genre des Miroirs des Princes en Occident au Moyen Âge," *in Religion et Mentalités au Moyen Âge: Mélanges en l'honneur d'Hervé Marti*, ed. Sophie Cassagnes-Brouquet et al. (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 531.

a distinct genre.[17] For instance, mirrors of princes may be treated as a subgenre of the broader parenetic literature, which admonishes readers in their moral behavior, or that of political philosophy treatises.[18] It is obvious that the definition depends on the concept of literary genre, which is itself a point of discussion. Taking a different approach to defining literary genres, Jónsson argues that *specula principum* do not constitute a separate genre neither according to their formal literary features, nor according to the "mirror" metaphor, their mutual influences, or the thematic field. Certainly, defining the genre solely based on formal literary features, the "mirror" title or metaphor is problematic. As will be shown, mirrors of princes works took various literary forms and titles from the very beginning. The subject matter of these works can provide more solid ground for the definition. There are at least two interrelated distinguishing features which unite all works of the genre, namely, their didactic character and addressing the ruler. Building on this, Bratu's definition seems to be the most comprehensive. According to him, mirrors of princes are writings which provide moral and political guidance to the ruler, giving instructions on his life and government, as well as presenting the image of the ideal king to be imitated.[19] It is this definition that will be followed in the present study.

The ambiguity in the definition is also reflected in the question of the genealogy of *specula principum* writing. There are diverging variants of the chronological starting point of the genre. For example, Born sees the first mirrors of princes already in Antiquity, including Isocrates's instructions to King Nicocles, Plutarch's *Address to an Unlearned Prince*, Cicero's *On Duty*, *Republic*, and others.[20] In the same way, Bratu defines *Deuteronomy 17:14–20* as a

[17] For the separate genre opinion, see Wojciech Fałkowski, "The Carolingian *Speculum Principis*: The Birth of a Genre," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 98 (2008): 5–27; Cristian Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes (Western)," in *Handbook of Medieval Studies*, ed. Albrecht Classen, vol. 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 1921–49. Einar Már Jónsson "Les «Miroirs aux Princes» Sont-ils un Genre Littéraire?" *Médiévales* 51 (2006): 153–66.

[18] Michel Senellart, *Les Arts de Gouverner*: *du Regimen Médiéval au Concept de Gouvernement* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 45.

[19] Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes (Western)," 1921.

[20] Lester K. Born, "The Specula Principis of The Carolingian Renaissance," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 12 (1933): 583–84.

mirror of princes "in terms of content."[21] The birth of the genre has also been situated in the eighth century, when a number of didactic works addressing the king appeared during the rise of Carolingian kingship and revival of the literary production; as well as in the twelfth century, when the term mirror appeared for the first time in the title of Godfrey of Viterbo's *Speculum Regum*.[22] This chronological diversity suggests that mirrors of princes writing had had a long pre-history before the Middle Ages and was deeply rooted in Antiquity. Attributing a Carolingian origin of the genre, however, is the most reasonable. The relevant literary works in this period demonstrated a new departure point for didactic writing concerning the rulership. They began to be composed predominantly by learned members of the clergy. The authors of the early *specula* relied in their writing almost exclusively on the Scripture and the Church Fathers, which shows a sharp break from the antique literary foundations of the genre. However, the main reason for taking the Carolingian era as the departure point of *specula principum* writing lies in a single shared characteristic. As Fałkowski correctly points out, it is exactly in this period when the works about good rule ceased to be theoretical elaborations about the government and its nature, and began to offer advice to the rulers.[23]

1.2 *Specula principum* of the Early Middle Ages

Although, there are short writings marking the rise of the genre in the eighth century, which can be with a little exaggeration considered as *specula principum* such as the letter of monk Cathwulf to Charlemagne written in 775, the first mirror of princes is usually ascribed to Alcuin.[24] He wrote a series of exhortation letters addressed to different, predominantly Anglo-Saxon, rulers of his time. Two of these seem to be the most interesting here: the letter

[21] Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes (Western)," 1924.
[22] Fałkowski, "The Carolingian *Speculum Principis*," 5–27; Jónsson "Les « miroirs aux princes » sont-ils un genre littéraire?," 161–62.
[23] Fałkowski, "The Carolingian *Speculum Principis*," 14.
24 Born, "The Specula Principis of The Carolingian Renaissance," 588–89. On Cathwulf's letter, see Joanna Story, "Cathwulf, Kingship, and the Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis," *Speculum* 1 (1999): 1–21.

to Aethelred, king of Northumbria, and to Charlemagne, written in 793 and 799 respectively. Apart from the exposition of the sins affecting contemporary society and the whole humanity in general, in his letter to Aethelred Alcuin admonishes the rulers to be virtuous, that is, to avoid vices, to love God and obey his commandments.[25] In the letter to Charlemagne, he asserts that the king is obliged "to renew the Church, to set people on the right path, correctly reward persons with honors, to defend oppressed, to establish the law, to support pilgrims, and to show everywhere the way of the age of truth and heavenly [eternal] life to every person".[26] Thus, Alcuin presents the ideal image of the Christian ruler, who should lead a virtuous life in order to attain prosperity for his subjects and eternal glory in heaven for himself. He also elaborates on this idea in his lengthy treatises *De virtutibus ac vitiis liber* and *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*.[27] The former one is especially remarkable since Alcuin uses here the metaphor of the mirror—albeit in relation to the Bible— saying that "everyone can examine oneself through it, as in the mirror".[28] There were four more *specula principum* written in the ninth century: Smaragdus of St. Michael's *Via Regia*, written in 814 for Louis the Pious; *De Institutione Regia* by Jonas of Orleans, written in 830–831; Sedulius Scottus' *De Rectoribus Christianis*, composed between 855 and 859 and dedicated to Lothair II, King of Lorrain; *De Regis Persona et Regis Ministerio* written in 873 by Hincmar of Rheims upon the request of Charles the Bald. Similar to Alcuin's, all of these treatises contained a vision of good rulership, which implies the king's duty to follow the main Christian virtues—mercy, piety, justice, patience, charity, humility— to avoid evil friends and advisers, and to defend the people and

25 Alcuin [Alcuinus], *Opera Omnia*, Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina 100, ed. J.- P. Migne (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1851), col. 157–60. [Hereafter: Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina = PL]

26 "Regna gubernare, justitias facere, ecclesias renovare, populum corrigere, singulis personis ac dignitatibus justa decernere, oppressos defendere, leges statuere, peregrinos consolari, et omnibus ubique aetatis veritatis et coelestis vitae viam ostendere," Alcuin, *Opera Omnia*, in PL 100, col. 305.

27 See Douglas Dales, *Alcuin: Theology and Thought* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2013), 143; Fałkowski, "The Carolingian Speculum Principis," 21–25.

28 "In his enim quasi in quodam speculo homo seipsum considerare potest," Alcuin, *Opera Omnia*, in PL 101, col. 616.

the Church.[29] The upsurge of the mirrors of princes writing in the ninth century was followed by an almost three-hundred-year break, which was connected to the decline of the Carolingian state and subsequent establishment of the feudalism accompanied by the new distribution of power between the ruler and nobility.[30]

The Christian vision of kingship was predominant in the Carolingian mirrors of princes. Probably, this vision originated from the common sources that were extensively used in all of the aforementioned *specula*. The main source was the Bible, in particular, the Old Testament, which became the general foundation of their vision of kingship, providing iconic images of the ideal ruler embodied by Solomon and David, as well as a set of quotations.[31] Another common source was the treatise *De Duodecim Abusivis Saeculi*, written in Ireland in the seventh century by an anonymous author—also known as Pseudo-Cyprian—which is sometimes treated as a *speculum principum*.[32] It presents twelve forms of the vices existing in the world, one of which is the unjust king. In the context of the vices that make an unjust ruler, this work also lists virtues necessary for a good ruler, which was picked up by the Carolingian authors.[33] The works of the Church Fathers, especially, Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, were as influential as the Bible. The idea that the ruler's use of coercive power over his subjects is necessary because of humans' sinful nature lays the foundation of the Augustinian conception.[34] In Book 5, chapter 24, Augustine presents a clear image of the ideal ruler, who should follow the path of virtues and love God.[35] Therefore, the idea of kingship contained in the *specula* is essentially Augustinian.

[29] Born, "The Specula Principis of the Carolingian Renaissance," 592–612.
[30] Genet, "L'évolution du Genre des Miroirs des Princes en Occident au Moyen Âge," 534.
[31] John M. Wallace-Hadrill, "The *Via Regia* of the Carolingian Age," in *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*, ed. Beryl Smalley (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), 22–41.
[32] Fałkowski, "The Carolingian *Speculum Principis*," 8–14.
[33] Rob Meens, "Politics, Mirrors of Princes and The Bible: Sins, Kings and the Well-Being of the Realm," *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998): 349–51, 354–57.
[34] Paul Wiethman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 237–40, 245–47.
[35] Augustin [Augustinus], *De civitate Dei contra Paganos*, in PL 41, col. 170–71.

Thus, it is the moral paradigm that defines the kingship discourse of the early medieval mirrors of princes. The virtuous life of the king was automatically equated with the well-being of the whole realm. Of course, some of the virtues, such as justice, keeping the law, and the defense of the country, imply a certain practical dimension of government. Nevertheless, in the case where political virtues are fully equated with the Christian virtues, morality remains dominant. For example, some Carolingian *specula* picked up the idea of the global cosmic consequences of the ruler's sins originally found in the *De Duodecim Abusivis*. In this view, the king's sins and misdeeds can directly affect the cosmic order, resulting not only in social calamities in the realm but also in natural disasters such as crop failure and floods.[36] This takes us to the second crucial element of the *specula* kingship discourse, the king's special relationship with God.

The mirrors of princes authors saw the king's rule as directly instituted by God's grace, following the general trend in the Carolingian political thought. In this case, one should take into account the political context which brought about this idea. At the time of its ascendance, especially during Charlemagne's reign, the Franks' empire was closely intertwined with the Church, which provided ideological legitimation for the Carolingian rulers.[37] Moreover, as mentioned above, the authors of the *specula* themselves were the members of the Church. In their writings, the divine grace enables the king to gain a special insight into God's will, allowing him to guide all his subjects accordingly.[38] It is not by chance that the king was described as a vicar of Christ, for example, by Smaragdus.[39] In turn, this engendered the tension

[36] Meens, "Politics, Mirrors of Princes and The Bible," 345–357.
[37] See Michael E. Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300-850* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 286–328.
[38] Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and The Idea of Kingship* (London: Methuen and Co., 1969), 43–64.
[39] Smaragdus, *Via regia*, in PL 102, col. 958.

between royal and ecclesiastical authority. Although different *specula* authors found different ways to resolve this problem, they recognized the superior authority of the Church.[40]

The theory of divine grace had a peculiar implication for the ruler's superior position towards the people. While, according to the mirrors of princes, he was obliged to provide justice and defend his people—for the sake of God—the main duty of the people was to be fully obedient to the king. Therefore, a revolt against the ruler was considered as a revolt against God's will.[41] For instance, Hincmar of Rheims clearly expresses this by quoting Gregory the Great's *Regula Pastoralis,* which suggests that "for when we do wrong towards the superiors, we oppose the order of Him who set them over us".[42] It is in this context that Alcuin, in one of his letters, admonishes Charlemagne that "those people who tend to say that the voice of people is God's voice should not be listened, since the turbulence of people is usually close to madness".[43] Thus, in most of these treatises kings were considered accountable to God alone. Combined with the moral paradigm, the Carolingian mirrors of princes represented, as Ullmann calls it, a descending order of rulership, strictly based on the Pauline idea that all power comes from God.[44]

Having discussed the political components of the Carolingian mirrors, it is also necessary to say a few words about their literary features. From the earliest times, the genre included mirrors written in the form of treatises and in the form of epistles, as in Alcuin's case. The structure of the works depended on the list of virtues of a good ruler. Another notable variable is the authors' own personae presented in the text. In most cases, the authors start their

[40] Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes (Western)," 1931–34.
[41] Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaisance and The Idea of Kingship*, 50-54.
[42] "Nam cum in praepositis delinquimus, ejus ordinationi qui eos nobis praetulit obviamus," Hincmar of Rheims [Hincmarus Rhemensis], *De Fide Carolo Regi Servanda*, in PL 125, col. 979–80; Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis Liber*, in PL 77, col. 56.
[43] "Nec audiendi qui solent dicere: Vox populi, vox Dei; cum tumultuositas vulgi semper insaniae proxima sit," Alcuin, *Opera Omnia*, in PL 100, col. 438. Later in the present thesis, "vox populi, vox Dei" concept will be employed in the opposite sense by Hoccleve and Gower.
[44] Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaisance and The Idea of Kingship*, 51.

works with a short preface, usually describing the purpose of writing and little information about their own background, often just a name, as, for instance, in Jonas of Orleans's case.[45] Although it may be treated as a general feature of early medieval literature, it is important here that the authors' own personae completely hidden in the text. Probably, it is due to the idea that the king should directly compare himself to the mirror's ideal ruler based on fundamental authorities such as the Bible. In order to achieve this effect, the author's mediation had to be as invisible as possible.

1.3 Late medieval revival of the genre

As briefly noted above, the twelfth century marked the beginning of the new stage in the mirrors of princes writing. One of the important factors of writing *specula* from the twelfth century onward was a rediscovery of Aristotle's works. It is from about 1130 that the active translation of Aristotle's works into Latin began. The first large set of his works –*Posterior Analytics, Metaphysics, Physics, De Anima*– was translated from Greek between 1130 and 1150 by James of Venice.[46] In the same period, Gerard of Cremona independently translated the same works from Arabic. The formation of Latin *Corpus Aristotelicum* was finished in the thirteenth century, when Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, made first full translation of *Nicomachean Ethics* (in the 1240s), and William Moerbeke by 1260 translated Aristotle's *Politics*.[47] As will be demonstrated further, most of the late medieval *specula* were to a various degree influenced by Aristotle's works, especially, by *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*.

The first political manual was John of Salisbury's very influential high medieval *Policraticus*. It was completed in 1159 and dedicated to John's patron, Thomas Becket,

[45] Jonas of Orleans [Jonas Aurelianus], *De Institutione Regia*, in PL 106, col. 279.
[46] John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), 51.
[47] Robert Pasnau, "The Latin Aristotle" in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, ed. Christopher Shields (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 666–7; Eckart Schütrumpf, *The Earliest Translation of Aristotle's Politics and The Creation of Political Terminology* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2014), 9–25.

archbishop of Canterbury. It is still debated in the scholarly literature whether the *Policraticus* can be treated as a *speculum principum* proper. For instance, as opposed to Bratu, Duby argues that it is a manual of the court—*speculum curiae*—which is justifiable to assume since five of the eight books of the treatise are devoted to courtly affairs.[48] In books four to seven John examines the image of the good ruler and its main components so this part of the treatise can be attributed as a mirror of princes.

John of Salisbury's *speculum* is especially remarkable since the main features of the kingship discourse manifest in the text would become the model for some of the subsequent mirrors. Alongside the Bible and the Church Fathers, in the *Policraticus* John also borrows from the philosophic works of Aristotle (mainly the *Organon*), from Cicero, as well as from the poetry of Ovid, Virgil, Horace, and Lucan.[49] For the mirror of princes, he uses *Deuteronomy* 17:14–20, and Pseudo-Plutarch's *Institutio Trajani*, whose authenticity is dubious because references to it can only be found in John's writing.[50] These set of sources left an imprint both on John's political ideas and the literary features of the work. In the text, he intensively uses *exempla*, that is, the didactic stories aimed to illustrate the author's arguments. He draws them predominantly from the aforementioned Latin poets. The *exempla* add a practical dimension to John's theoretical discourse, allowing him to demonstrate the implication of theoretical ideas to real life circumstances. Therefore, the *exempla* are an important part of John's text, aiming to persuade, rather than entertain the reader.[51] John's persona is almost dissolved in the text. Although, compared to the early medieval mirrors, in

[48] Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 266. For the opposite point of view see Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes (Western)," 1935.
[49] On the sources of John's *Policraticus*, see David Bloch, *John of Salisbury on Aristotelian Science* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 27–63.
[50] Some scholars persuasively proved that *Institutio Trajani* may be John's own invention, see Hans Liebeschütz, "John of Salisbury and Pseudo-Plutarch," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 9 (1943): 33–39.
[51] For John's usage of *exempla*, see Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority and Power,* 88–105.

the prologue to the *Policraticus* he pays much more attention to the discussion of the authorities on which he relies.

Self-discipline and virtuous life occupy an important place in the discourse of kingship in the *Policraticus*. John asserts necessity for the ruler to follow four main Aristotelian virtues—temperance, courage, prudence, and justice— to worship and fear God, as well as to love his subjects.[52] The virtuous ruler will use his power in a moderate way, being able to rightfully punish moral misdeeds of his subjects. Among all royal virtues John distinguishes justice, that is, giving each person his due. The king should "imagine himself permitted to do nothing which is inconsistent with the equity of justice".[53] In turn, justice should be promoted through the moderation of the positive—human— law and in accordance with the divine law.[54] Therefore, John suggests that the ruler's position is above the positive law. It is the virtue of justice and divinely inspired wisdom of the king that should ensure the appropriate use of this position.[55] In addition to moral obligations, the main duties of a good ruler include "education of officials and those in power".[56]

One of the important points of John of Salisbury's kingship discourse is the body metaphor, representing the realm as a human body where the king plays the role of the head. According to this conceptualization, if the parts of the body, each symbolizing an estate, fulfill their function in relation to the other parts, the whole body will achieve the common good.[57]

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[52] John of Salisbury [Ioannis Saresberiensis], *Policraticus sive De Nugis Curialium, et Vestigiis Philosophorum, Libri Octo* (Leiden: Ex Officina lantiniana apud Franciscum Raphelengium, 1595), 195, 210. For John of Salisbury's political ideas, see John Dickinson, "The Medieval Conception of Kingship and Some of Its Limitations, as Developed in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury," *Speculum* 1 (1926): 308–37; Quentin Taylor, "John of Salisbury, the Policraticus, and Political Thought," *Humanitas* 19 (2006): 133–157; Cary J. Nederman, "John of Salisbury's Political Theory," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, ed. Christophe Grellard and Frederique Lachaud (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 258–289.

[53] "Nihil sibi […] licere opinetur, quod a iustitiae aequitate discordet," John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 178. Translation in John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 29.

[54] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 189–194.

[55] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 178–179.

[56] "Disciplinam officialium et potestatum," John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 215; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. Nederman, 68.

[57] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 213–215, 326.

The interactions between all parts of the body should be based on the principle of justice. Hence, the king, as a main mediator of justice, together with his responsibility to God, becomes also more responsible towards his subjects. This is particularly visible in John's introduction to the concept of tyranny. He defines the tyrant as "one who oppresses the people by violent domination" and "supposes that nothing is done unless the laws are canceled and the people are brought into servitude", while the just king is "one who rules by the law" and "fights for the laws and liberty of the people".[58] Thus, the tyrant violates justice, breaking the main principle of the interactions between all parts of the body of the realm. Therefore, John suggests the legitimate possibility of people's resistance to the tyrannic rule, since "tyranny is, therefore, not only a public crime, but, if this can happen, it is more than public".[59] Therefore, resistance to the tyrant becomes a duty of all people and "whoever does not prosecute him transgresses against himself and against the whole body of the earthly republic".[60]

While John's *Policraticus* incorporated only some Aristotelian ideas, subsequent *specula principum* borrowed more elements of the Aristotelian political discourse. Among the first of such *specula* was *De Regno Ad Regem Cypri* of Thomas Aquinas.[61] It was finished in 1267 and dedicated to the King of Cyprus, probably, Hugh II of Lusignan. *De Regno* was heavily influenced by Aristotle's *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*.[62] This *speculum* is characterized by Aquinas's philosophical writing style guided by strict logical reasoning. He

[58] "Qui violenta dominatione populum permit, sicut qui legibus regit princeps est; […] princeps pugnat pro legibus et populi libertate tyrannus nihil actum putat, nisi legis euacuet, et populum deuocet in seuitutem,"John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 538-39; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. Nederman, 190–91.

[59] "Tyrannis ergo non modo publicum crimen, sed si fieri posset, plus quam publicum est," John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 175; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trand. Nederman, 25.

[60] "Quisquis eum non prosequitur, in seipsum, et in totae republicae mundanae corpus delinquit," John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 175; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. Nederman, 25.

[61] While the authorship of this treatise is still disputed, majority of the scholars follow the idea that after writing the first book and four chapters of the second book Aquinas dropped it in 1267; the text was finished by Tolommeo of Lucca; see Alfred O'Rahilly, "Notes on St Thomas. IV: De regimine principum," *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 31 (1929): 396–410; Alfred O'Rahilly, "Notes on St Thomas. V: De regimine principum," *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 31 (1929): 606–614.

[62] For Aquinas's theory of kingship and its Aristotelian components, see Holly H. Bleakley, "The Art of Ruling in Aquinas' *De Regimine Principum*," *History of Political Thought* 4 (1999): 575–602; Theresa H. Farnan, "Virtue and Kingship in Thomas Aquinas's *De Regno*" (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1998).

devoted the first part of his mirror not so much to advise the ruler as to discuss the different kinds of government, their main principles, merits, and dangers. Only in the second part, does the author touch upon some practical advice to the ruler on the economic and geopolitical aspects of the foundation of the city or kingdom. The analysis of Aquinas's mirror is beyond the purview of the present study, instead, it behooves the rest of this chapter to consider in more detail the *speculum* of one of his students, Giles of Rome, whose ideas of kingship were closely related to those of Aquinas's. Giles's mirror is all the more important since it was one of the most widely readable by the authors of the subsequent mirrors, including Gower and Hoccleve.[63]

Giles of Rome wrote *De Regimine Principum* in 1277–1280 upon the request of Philip III of France. It was dedicated to Philip, the heir of the French throne at the time. Fashioned after the Aristotelian division of practical sciences, the mirror consists of three books. The first book is devoted to the proper behavior of the ruler and each person in general, thereby corresponding to Aristotelian ethics. The second one is dedicated to the rule of the household and family, that is, economics. The third book describes the rule over the realm or the city, that is, politics. Giles's main sources can be perfectly demonstrated by the number of quotations, the majority of which—approximately 503—are from Aristotle's *Politics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *Rhetoric*.[64] At the same time, quotations from the Scripture and the Church Fathers are very rare, which is unusual for medieval mirrors. Additionally, Gile's *speculum principum* demonstrates the strong influence of Thomas Aquinas's *De Regno*, *Summa Theologiae*, *Sententia Libri Politicorum*, since he presents many Aristotelian political ideas through

[63] *De Regimine Principum* was translated into several languages, including French, Italian and English, the latter by John Trevisa in c. 1400, see Charles F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum: Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University c. 1275-c. 1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 20–53, 74–108, 152–180.

[64] Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum*, 11.

Aquinas's interpretation.[65] As one of the longest medieval mirror, *De Regimine* includes not only a wide range of practical advice for the prince, but also a deep insight into political theory. Thus, Giles seems to provide the prince with the basic philosophical knowledge necessary for developing of the prince's intellect, which, in his view, together with the law constitute the main guiding principles of good rulership.[66]

There are few things to be noted about Giles's kingship discourse. As in the other medieval mirrors of princes, the love of God, the defense of the subjects, and virtuous life remain the king's main duties. Virtuous life is the most important since only through this are the king and his people able to achieve the common good, which, according to Giles, should be the ultimate goal of human society. Similarly to Aquinas, the concept of the common good is crucial for Giles's theory of kingship.[67] He suggests about the king that "if he excels in the virtuous deeds, he will take care of common profit".[68] Moral goodness allows the king to be an example for his people and to direct them towards virtuous life and, thus, towards the common good, since "how excellent the king is, so are the people".[69] This is peculiar to Giles's vision of rulership. It is not enough for the king to know how to rule himself, he should also know how to rule other people in practice. For Giles, the king's proper rule of himself is the first step towards the virtuous rulership, based on which the king should move on to the next steps, learning how to rule the household and the country.

[65] Roberto Lambertini, "Philosophus videtur tangere tres rationes: Egidio Romano lettore ed interprete della Politica nel terzo libro del De regimine Principum," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 1 (1990): 287–304.
[66] Giles of Rome [Aegidius Romanus], *Ad Francorum regem Philippum IIII cognomento Pulchrum* (Rome: Antonius Bladus Pont. Max. excursor, 1556), fol. 2.
[67] See Matthew S. Kempshall, *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 131–156. For Giles political ideas, see Roberto Lambertini, "Political Thought," in *A Companion to Giles of Rome*, ed. Charles Briggs and Peter Eardley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 255–275.
[68] "Si excellat in actionibus uirtuosis, procurabit comune bonum," Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.7 fol. 276.
[69] "Qualis est princeps, talis est populus," Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, I.i.11 fol. 23.

In order to fulfill his obligation towards the people, the king should keep justice among them, that is, to provide and keep the law, and to punish its transgressors.[70] Thus, just as John of Salisbury and Aquinas, Giles assumes the king's position above the law. In turn, if the king takes good counsel, aligns his law with the common good, and conducts a virtuous life, he will not abuse his superior position.[71] Also, Giles suggests that for the kings to keep their people in obedience "each of the two is necessary: to be loved and to be feared", although, "it is rather more needed to desire to be loved than feared".[72] The concern about the preservation of the good king's power perfectly shows the practical dimension of Giles's discourse of kingship.

De Regimine Principum employs the concept of tyranny. For Giles, the tyrant is the ruler who reigns for the sake of his own individual good, instead of the common good, which should be always preferable. Thus, the tyrant violently oppresses his people to meet his own needs, including material ones.[73] Although Giles asserts the possibility to rise against the tyrant, he does not raise this issue to the level of the citizens' moral duty as John of Salisbury does.[74] In part, he uses it as an instructive warning for Prince Philip to persuade him to follow the virtuous path.

Another popular *speculum principum* of this time is the *Secretum Secretorum* whose authorship was mistakenly attributed to Aristotle by the medieval authors. It is, however, debatable whether this work can be justly considered as a part of the late medieval tradition since it was composed much earlier and in a totally different cultural environment. The base text of *Secretum* was hypothetically written in the Hellenistic or Roman era, translated into Arabic in the eighth century and at the turn of the eighth and ninth centuries reworked into the

[70] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.27 fol. 311–312.
[71] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.6 fol. 309–310; III.ii.29 fol. 315
[72] "Utrumque enim est necessarium timeri et amari"; "sit necessarium amari tamen debent magis appetere quem timeri, " Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.36 fol. 327.
[73] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.9 fol. 280–281.
[74] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.9 fol. 287–288.

mirror of princes.[75] The main reason for mentioning the *Secretum* here is the chronology of its translation into Latin and further dissemination in Europe. The first full translation was undertaken in c. 1230 by Philip of Tripoli and was subsequently revised by Roger Bacon.[76] In turn, it is Bacon's edition that was used by Gower and Hoccleve in their mirrors.[77]

The *Secretum* is based on Aristotle's epistles addressed to Alexander and it is aimed to instruct him in the art of rulership. The author's use of authorities in this mirror is particularly interesting. The author not only heavily relies on Aristotelian authority, as many late medieval authors do, but he uses the text to cover his own identity and, very likely, to lend more credence to his work.

Regarding the western tradition of the mirrors of princes writing, the *Secretum* occupies an ambiguous position in terms of the kingship discourse. On the one hand, the moral paradigm fully dominates the discourse. It includes the same duties of the ruler discussed above, as well as a new one, namely, the moral obligation to keep the oath. In the *Secretum*, kingship is oriented towards God, representing the descending type of government, which harkens back to the early medieval mirrors. This orientation is especially visible where the author compares the king to the rain, saying that "king in his rule is similar to the rain on the earth, which provides God's grace, heavenly blessings, the vitality of the earth".[78] On the other hand, the author also includes some practical advice for the king: to take care of his reputation—the love and fear of his subjects—to choose advisors and ministers wisely, which, in turn, is more akin to the late medieval mirrors.[79] Moreover, the *Secretum* includes detailed advice on the king's daily life,

[75] Mahmoud Manzalaoui, "The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Kitāb Sirr al-asrār*: Facts and Problems," *Oriens* 23/24 (1974): 157–166; Steven J. Williams, *The Secret of Secrets*: *The Scholarly Career of a Pseudo-Aristotelian Text in the Latin Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), 7–31.
[76] Williams, *The Secret of Secrets*, 60–109; Steven J. Williams, "Roger Bacon and His Edition of the Pseudo-Aristotelian Secretum Secretorum," *Speculum* 69 (1994): 57–73.
[77] Allan H. Gilbert, "Notes on the Influence of the Secretum Secretorum," *Speculum* 3, no. 1 (1928): 84–98.
[78] "Rex est in regno sicut pluvial in terra, que est Dei gracia, celi benediccio, terre vita […]," Robert Steele, eds., *Opera Hactenus Inedita Rogeri Baconi, Fasc. V* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), 53.
[79] *Opera Hactenus*, 53, 137–139.

including nutrition, dressing, and courtly manners. According to the author, the king should also be equipped with some knowledge of physiognomy and astrology.[80] The special emphasis on the broad education of the king is the most striking characteristic of the *Secretum*. It does not just abstractly mention the necessity of the ruler's education, but actually includes necessary knowledge in the text.

The kingship discourse of the *Secretum Secretorum* perfectly demonstrates the main features of early and late medieval mirrors of princes. At both stages of the genre evolution, the moral element remained an important part of the discourse. As demonstrated above, for all the early and late medieval mirrors, the life of virtues and obedience to God were basic duties for princes. However, while for the Carolingian authors this was enough for the good government, the later mirrors tended to add to this the obligations more closely related to the practice of the prince's governance over his people. This is evident from the idea of the king's accountability. In the early medieval mirrors, the king is predominantly accountable to God —who is the direct source of the royal power— primarily for his own sins and salvation, and then for the salvation of the people. Some of the later *specula*, as of Giles of Rome, John of Salisbury, inherited this idea only in part. For their authors, in addition to his own moral behavior, the king became responsible for the well-being —the common good— of his subjects, hence, the practical advice on economic and political matters, as well as the emphasis on the king's education and knowledge of the sciences. Thus, the king is directly accountable to God regarding his sins, and to his people —and through them towards God— regarding the common good. This is how the idea of the ruler's double accountability is constructed. Although it does not mean that all late medieval *specula* employed this idea, it is a major trend. This dichotomy corresponds to Senellart's distinction between early medieval kingship, where the king's main task is to guide people's souls towards salvation, and its late medieval variant,

[80] *Opera Hactenus*, 164–172.

where the king—who rules over the people and not over their souls—should primarily care for the preservation of power.[81] The idea of double accountability is also related to the elaboration of the concept of tyranny in some of the later *specula*, whose authors suggested at least the possibility of the resistance to the tyrannic rulers.

[81] Senellart, *Les Arts de Gouverner*, 65–210.

Chapter 2. The Authors' Self-Fashioning

A close look at Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors immediately reveals some literary features quite unusual for the *specula principum* tradition. First, they are written in the poetic form most familiar to both of the authors, instead of the prose usual for this genre. The obvious implication of this on the kingship discourse is the restriction of its expression by the rhyme structure. Second, Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* includes a prologue, which can be hardly attributed to the mirrors genre; while Gower's mirrors are themselves the parts of the larger works of slightly different genre. These peculiarities require some notes on the genre definition of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors.

2.1 Gower's and Hoccleve's *specula principum*

Although the *Regiment of Princes* consists of two different parts the whole work can be still classified as a mirror of princes. The definition of the genre made in the previous chapter, based on the didactic aim of the author's writing and subject matter, is especially salient here. The title of Hoccleve's work, as well as its structure arranged according to the exposition of the necessary royal virtues and vices to be avoided, both suggest that its main subject is the proper government of the king. This also corresponds to the main aim of his work. When addressing the prince, he suggests that "it be no maneere of neede yow to consaille what to doon or leeve" (2136-37).[82] At the same place Hoccleve asserts that he composed the *Regiment*, which he presents as a mere compilation of three other sources, in order that Prince Henry may "beholde heer and rede that in hem thre is scatered fer in brede" and if the prince "list of stories

[82] Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2136–37.

taken heede, sumwhat it may profyte, by your leeve" (2132-39), which explicitly demonstrates the didactic purpose of Hoccleve's writing to the prince.[83]

Only some parts of Gower's works can be ascribed to the *specula principum* genre, namely chapters 7–18 of Book 6 of the *Vox Clamantis* and, especially, Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis*. In the case of the *Vox Clamantis*, the genre features are more evident. In the text, Gower asserts that "for the honor of my king, I intend to set down a rule of conduct taken from many writings" (587–88), clearly asserting the aim to instruct young King Richard II—whom the work addresses—in the rule of conduct.[84] The *Vox Clamantis* consists of eight books altogether, representing Gower's moral critique of each social estate, while Book 1 contains the author's allegorical dream vision of the Great Rising of 1381. In turn, Book 6 (chapters 7–18) has its own internal structure, exposing the division usual for mirrors of princes according to the main moral advice. Moreover, while the other books predominantly consist of a critique of the social estates, chapters 7–18 of Book 6 concentrate more on the advice. According to Carlson, Gower may have composed the *Vox Clamantis* from different pieces written as separate poems earlier. Relying on the witness of the manuscript catalog of John Bale (1495-1563), Carlson argues that chapters 8–18 of Book 6 can be written as a distinct mirror of princes in the form of epistles, bearing the title *Epistola ad Regem*.[85]

The status of Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis* within the whole poem is more complicated. The *Confessio Amantis* is dedicated to King Richard II, who commissioned it. The poem is written in the form of the confession of Amans, lover, to Genius, chaplain of Venus. It consists of eight books, each one corresponding to a major sin confessed by Amans.

[83] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2132–39. Hoccleve cites Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*, *Secreta Secretorum,* and Jacob de Cessolis's *Libellus de Ludo Scachorum* as his main sources for the compilation.
[84] "Quod normam scriptis de pluribus ortam regis ego laudi scribere tendo mei," George C. Macaulay, eds., *The Complete Works of John Gower: The Latin Works* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1902), 247. Translation in Eric Stockton, trans., *The Major Latin Works of John Gower* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 233.
[85] David R. Carlson, "Gower's Early Latin Poetry: Text-Genetic Hypotheses of an *Epistola ad Regem* (ca. 1377–1380) from the Evidence of John Bale," *Medieval Studies* 65 (2003): 293–317.

By means of Amans's confession and Genius's didactic instructions, united by the general topic of love as a chief moral virtue, Gower tries to reveal the problems and the moral decline of contemporary society. According to the prologue, this work should be thematically treated as a direct continuation of his previous major works: the *Vox Clamantis* and the *Mirour de l'Omme*. However, while most of the text is the dialogue between Amans and Genius, the narration in the Book 7 is conducted on the behalf of Genius, who, answering to Amans's request at the end of the previous book, describes "the scole […] of Aristotle and ek the fare of Alisandre, hou he was tauht" (3–5).[86] Genius asserts that thereby he will digress from the main subject of the poem, since " it is noght to the matiere of love" (7-8).[87] In turn, Amans appears only at the end of Book 7 to announce that Genius's exposition of Aristotelian wisdom, which he had thought could distract him from the pain of love, did not really help and they should return to the confession.[88] This suggests that Book 7 is contained within clear frames in the whole poem.[89] Additionally, it also conveys the idea that the content of this book was not really intended for Amans's sake, but for the person whom this work addresses, namely, for Richard II.

The appointment of Genius as an exclusive narrator of the book and the unusually passive role of Amans make Book 7 very similar to the mirror of princes where the author exposes the knowledge and advice necessary for the king through monologic narration. Although it remains the point of debate with which of the two characters, Genius, Amans, or

[86] Gower, "Confessio Amantis," vol. 2, 233.
[87] Gower, "Confessio Amantis," vol. 2, 233.
[88] Gower, "Confessio Amantis," vol. 2, 385, lines 5410–29.
[89] For the discussion on the status of Book 7 in the poem, see Mahmoud A. Manzalaoui, "'Noght in the Registre of Venus': Gower's English Mirror for Princes," in *Medieval Studies for J.A.W. Bennett: Aetatis Suae LXX*, ed. P. L. Heyworth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 159–83; Porter, "Gower's Ethical Microcosm and Political Macrocosm," 135–62; James Simpson, *Sciences and The Self in Medieval Poetry: Alan of Lille's Anticlaudianus and John Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 198–229.

both Gower associates himself closely, Simpson rightly points out that in Book 7 Gower seems to claim the role of Genius for himself. [90]

In Book 7, Gower turns from the question of ethics to the political matters of kingship. However, it is not an abrupt shift from ethical discourse, since, as I will discuss in the next chapter, Gower's vision of politics is based on ethics. Gower's moral concerns in Book 7 allow some scholars to interpret the seventh book as an apex of the poem.[91] In this regard, it is important to note, that, although it has some connections to the whole poem, structurally and partly thematically Book 7 differs from the rest of the poem and can clearly be classified as a mirror of princes.

As mentioned above, both authors' mirrors have specific addressees: King Richard II in the *Vox Clamantis* and originally in the *Confessio Amantis*; and Henry, Prince of Wales, in the *Regiment of Princes*. However, only the *Confessio Amantis* states explicitly in the first prologue that it was commissioned by the king—presumably, between 1385 and 1390—when he met Gower on Thames and invited him to his barge.[92] It remains debatable whether the commission really took place or it is Gower's invention since the *Confessio Amantis* is the only evidence for this episode. In turn, there is no information about the royal commission of Gower's *Vox Clamantis* and Hoccleve's *Regiment*. This raises the question of the way for addressing their works to the king, especially, when it was not commissioned by him. As I will argue, the literary forms of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors depend on their own social background, hence, on the ways of the authors' self-fashioning. Identifying and delineating the kingship discourse in these mirrors is also in order since the authors' kingship discourse was not something automatically pulled together from various pieces of preexisting sources, but it was Gower and Hoccleve who shaped it.

[90] Simpson, *Sciences and The Self in Medieval Poetry*, 279–84.
[91] Russell A. Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit in Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), 139–140.
[92] Gower, "Confessio Amantis," vol. 1, 3–4, l. 34*–60*.

2.2 Prophetic and preaching Gower

The details of Gower's life remain unclear since neither the official records nor his own writing provides us with sufficient information on this matter. Nevertheless, there is enough to draw the general picture of Gower's social background. According to one of the hypotheses, Gower may have been educated at the Inns of Court of London, which correlates with the passage of the *Mirour de l'Omme* where Gower portrays himself wearing a garment with striped sleeves similar to the traditional attire in the law courts.[93] This might explain Gower's special concern with the legal aspects of sovereignty and the king's relation to the law in his mirrors. He continued his career as a lawyer and seemingly succeeded in it since he was able to purchase a few manors in London, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Kent.[94] In the 1370s Gower seems to have entered into the higher social circles of London. In 1378 Gower, together with another lawyer, Richard Forester, was granted Chaucer's power of attorney for the duration of Chaucer's trip to Italy.[95] From the 1370s, after the composition of the *Mirour de l'Omme*, Gower's writing activities are associated with the priory of St. Mary Overie in Southwark and its community of Augustinian canons. It is argued that Gower permanently resided there, having abandoned the lawyer position, although there is no direct evidence to support this.[96] As Pouzet argues, the priory may have contributed to the writing of the manuscripts of Gower's works and their transmission through the network of Augustinian monasteries since some of the copies of his works, especially that of the *Vox Clamantis* and the *Confessio Amantis* can be found there.[97]

[93] John Hines, Nathalie Cohen, and Simon Roffey, "Iohannes Gower, Armiger, Poeta: Records and Memorials of His Life and Death," in *A Companion to Gower*, ed. Sian Echard (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), 24; George C. Macaulay, eds., *The Complete Works of John Gower: The French Work* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), 233, 21772–74.

[94] John H. Fisher, *John Gower: Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer* (New York: New York University Press, 1964), 52–3, 64.

[95] Fisher, *John Gower*, 61.

[96] Fisher, *John Gower*, 58–60.

[97] Jean-Pascal Pouzet, "Southwark Gower: Augustinian Agencies in Gower's Manuscripts and Texts; Some Prolegomena," in *John Gower, Trilingual Poet: Language, Translation, and Tradition*, ed. Elisabeth Dutton, John Hines, and R. F. Yeager (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2010), 17–22.

Hypothetically, Gower may also have used the resources of the library situated in St. Mary's Priory, which certifiably contained some of his sources, such as Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophie*.[98]

By 1381 Gower finished *Vox Clamantis,* including the mirror of princes part. He probably planned it to be composed of six books (Book 2-7 in the final version), some of which, if we take Carlson's hypothesis, were written as separate works. After the Uprising of 1381, Gower added one more book. Although the mirror in the *Vox Clamantis* is predominantly devoted to the admonition of the king, Gower also tries to criticize the king's government. Gower begins his address to the king stating that "the people must atone for whatever errors the great commit, since a weak head makes the members suffer" (497-8), and that "people have perished because of a king's sins" (501).[99] Nevertheless, he relieves the king of the responsibility for the people's suffering due to Richard II's youth, shifting it instead to the royal court.[100] However, in the second version of the poem, which was revised in c.1393 when Gower took himself off from royal patronage, he directly blames Richard for the troubles of the realm.[101] There is no information on whether Richard II read the *Vox Clamantis.* During the alleged meeting on the Thames, as Gower describes in the *Confessio Amantis,* Richard II asked him to write "som newe thing […] after the forme of my writing" (51*-53*), referring to one of Gower's previous works, which may have been the *Vox Clamantis*.[102] In turn, Gower's instructive tone, not to mention his critique of the royal court, is directly connected with his model of literary self-fashioning.

Similarly to most of the medieval *specula principum*, the obvious ground for Gower's instruction of the king is Richard's inexperience due to his young age, to which he frequently

[98] Pouzet, "Southwark Gower," 11–17, 23–24.
[99] "Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi, nam caput infirmum membra dolere facut"and "propter peccatum regis populi perierunt," Gower, *Latin Works*, 243–44; *Major Latin Works*, 231.
[100] Gower, *Latin Works*, 243–44, v. 493–512.
[101] For the year of revision, see Stockton, *The Major Latin Works*, 13.
[102] Gower*, Confessio Amantis,* vol. 1, 4.

appeals throughout the mirror; as well as Richard's counselors' inability to advise him well.[103] However, in Book 6, Gower never mentions his own mature age and wisdom, which would be logical for weighing his position in contrast to the inexperienced king. He hints at it only in the prologue of Book 2, which was originally conceived as a prologue for the whole poem: "if old age is wise in any way or teaches what it has learned earlier, its voice hardly receives the welcome of a youth's" (35–36).[104] Apart from the wisdom of the old age, Gower most likely did not have any theological or philosophical background to provide him with formal authority for instructing the king. Instead, Gower uses self-representation to assume a superior position towards the king in his admonition.

According to Minnis, Gower adopts the literary *forma prophetalis*, stylistically imitating the exegetic writing found in Biblical prophets, primarily in St John's Apocalypse and the Book of Daniel.[105] The prophetic style can be found in the dream vision in Book 1, where Gower allegorically describes the madness of the crowd. In the prologue to Book 2, he attributes the main authority of his writing to God, reserving for himself the role of a man whose writing transmits the truth by divine grace. Besides, a direct reference to Prophet Isaiah is noticeable in the poem's title. Gower's prophetic-preaching style is also evident in the mirror of princes part. Concluding his *Epistola ad Regem,* Gower asks Richard to "receive these writings, which I have composed with humble heart for you […] as gifts of God for your praise, for this instruction is not so much mine but His" (1193*–1195*).[106] In the same prophetic manner, in the last lines of Chapter 7 Book 6, which opens the mirror of princes part, he also

[103] By the time Gower finished *Vox Clamantis*, Richard was fourteen years old.
[104] "Set modo siqua sapit docet aut prouisa senectus, vix tamen hec grata vox iuueniles habet," Gower, *Latin Works*, 83; *Major Latin Works*, 97.
[105] Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 168–177; Russell A. Peck, "John Gower and The Book of Daniel," in *John Gower: Recent Readings: Papers Presented at the Meetings of the John Gower Society at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, 1983-88*, ed. R.F. Yeager (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989) 159–87.
[106] "Hec tibe que humili de corde paraui, scripta tue laudi suscipe dona dei: non est ista mea tantum doctrina, sed eius," Gower, *Latin Works*, 266; *Major Latin Works*, 249.

mentions global decline saying that "the wickedness of these men corrupts the thoughts of the whole world, for which reason God's anger rages" (577*–8*).[107]

Since both of aforementioned passages were rewritten in the second recension of Book 6, Gowers' prophetic image is less visible in this version. Instead of frequent mentions of the divine agency in his writing, Gower shifts to referring to the voice of people, which cries out everywhere about the evils and wrongdoings of the king. [108] It is not entirely new: in fact, the references to the voice of people are traceable in the first version as well, for example, when he says that "a voice of doleful expression now speaks to the ears, and it says that there are many burdens in these days" (545*-46*).[109] As I will demonstrate below, similar references also appear in *Confessio Amantis*. However, this does not cross out Gower's adherence to the prophetic form.

In the prologue of Book 2, Gower asserts that many mouths, that is authors, informed his writing.[110] In his mirror of princes Gower mostly borrows from the Bible and its rhymed version, the *Aurora*, by Peter Riga, and to a lesser extent from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Tristia*, as well as Alexander Neckam's *De Vita Monachorum*.[111] While he relies on other authors, God's authority remains central. The mirror of princes in the *Vox Clamantis*, thus, clearly demonstrates Gower's literary self-fashioning after the image of a Biblical prophet, which allows instructing the king from the morally superior position. This way of self-representation perfectly corresponds with the miniature placed at the beginning of three *Vox Clamantis* manuscripts (see Figure 1). It depicts an archer, presumably Gower, targeting a

[107] "Scelus ferter maculare figuras tocius mundi, quo furit ira dei," Gower, *Latin Works*, 247; *Major Latin Works*, 233.
[108] Gower, *Latin Works*, 247, v. 577–78.
[109] "Nunc magis ecce refert verbi clamantis ad aures vox, et in hoc dicit tempore plura grauant," Gower, *Latin Works*, 245; *Major Latin Works*, 233.
[110] Gower, *Latin Works*, 84, v. 77-79.
[111] *Major Latin Works*, 444–53.

globe composed of water, sky, and earth, which may represent three estates of medieval society. The image accompanied by a short description, which reads:

> I send my darts at the world and simultaneously shoot arrows;
> But mind you, wherever there is a just man, no one will receive arrows.
> I badly wound those living in transgression, however;
> Therefore, let the thoughtful man look out for himself. [112]

This image is the pictorial representation of Gower's literary self-image of a prophet admonishing medieval society, including the king, with his arrows of sermons. In addition to his text itself, Gower took part in the creation of this image.[113]

By the 1380s Gower's poems were well known in the London circles. For instance, at this time Chaucer dedicated his *Troilus and Criseyde* to "moral Gower," presumably referring to his moralizing poetry.[114] Similarly, during the aforementioned meeting on the Thames, Richard II is also shown to express his awareness of Gower's previous works. It is probably from this time onwards that Gower enjoyed royal patronage. In 1390 he finished the first recension of the *Confessio Amantis* and dedicated it to Richard II. During the next two years, he revised books 5, 6, and 7, adding a dedication to Henry of Lancaster.[115] After Richard II's quarrel with Londoners in 1392 Gower withdrew himself from the royal patronage and gave his support to Henry Bolingbroke, under whose patronage he remained until his death.[116]

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[112] "Ad mundum mitto mea iacula dumque sagitto at ubi iustus erit nulla sagitta ferit. Sed male uiuentes hos uulnero transgredientes conscius ergo sibi se speculetur ibi," in John Gower, *Vox Clamantis*, Glasgow University Library MS Hunter 59, fol. 6v. Translation in Joyce Coleman, "Illuminations in Gower's manuscripts," in *The Routledge Research Companion to John Gower,* ed. Ana Saez-Hidalgo, Brian Gastle, and R.F. Yeager (Routledge: London and New York), 119.

[113] Coleman, "Illuminations in Gower's manuscripts," 118–121.

[114] Fisher, *John Gower*, 61.

[115] In this recension only a few tales was added to Book 7, namely, "The Tale of the Jew and the Pagan" (after line 3162), The Example of Dante's "Rebuff of the Flatterer" (after l. 2329), and The Examples by James, Cassiodorus, Cicero, and Alexander (after l. 3136), although they do not make serious changes to Gower's discourse of kingship, see Peter Nicholson, "Gower's Revisions in the *Confessio Amantis*," *The Chaucer Review* 19 (1984): 123–143.

[116] Gower, *Latin Works*, 247, v. 577–578.

Figure 1. John Gower, *Vox Clamantis*, Glasgow University Library MS Hunter 59, fol. 6v (between 1399 and 1408). [117]

[117] John Gower, *Vox Clamantis*, Glasgow University Library MS Hunter 59, fol. 6v, accessed May 6, 2019, http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/manuscripts/search/detail_i.cfm?ID=157

Compared to the *Vox Clamantis*, the mirror of princes of the *Confessio Amantis* is much more developed in terms of content and the range of used sources. As for the contents, Gower not only inserts some new ideas and advice in it, but also changes the form of their representation by the active use of *exempla*. Although the function of *exempla* in the poem can be interpreted differently, it seems that their role in the text is similar to that of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, namely, to introduce the practical angle into Gower's moral advice.[118] By the time of writing the *Confessio Amantis* the king was no longer a young inexperienced boy, and when Gower met him, Richard asked him to write some new things. Moreover, if the poem's commission occurred in reality, it created the formal purpose of Gower's writing for Richard II. In the general framework, some features of *forma prophetalis* are still traceable, for example, in the prologue, which very much repeats the *Vox Clamantis*'s apocalyptic vision of social decline. Many ideas of the mirror of princes in the *Confessio* also repeat that of the *Vox Clamantis*. Nevertheless, the aforementioned circumstances at the time of writing the *Confessio Amantis* brought about some changes in Gower's self-fashioning.

While in the *Vox Clamantis* there is one single mention of other authorities than God, Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis* shows definite signs of the role of Aristotle's authority. Basically, Gower fashions the text of Book 7 as an exposition of "hou Alisandre was betawht of Aristotle" (2411-12), heavily relying on the *Secretum Secretorum*.[119] It should be noted that Gower's knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy is based on secondary sources, namely, on the Pseudo–Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*, Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*, and Brunetto's *Li Livres du Tresor*.[120] In this regard, Gower's mirror of princes comes very close to the late medieval *specula principum*, many of which—for instance, Giles of Rome—are

[118] See Kurt O. Olsson, "Rhetoric, John Gower, and the Late Medieval Exemplum," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 8 (1977): 185–200; Allan J. Mitchell, *Ethics and Exemplary Narrative in Chaucer and Gower* (Cambridge: D.S.Brewer, 2004), 36–79.
[119] Gower*, Confessio Amantis,* vol. 2, 232.
[120] George L. Hamilton, "Some Sources of the Seventh Book of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*," *Modern Philology* 9, no. 3 (1912): 323-346.

more like commentaries of Aristotle's works. At the same time, some ideas of Book 7 are not Aristotelian. Gower's explicit proclamation of the Aristotelian basis of the work gives more authority to his *speculum principum*.

In the *Confessio Amantis* Gower adopts the form of moral exhortation known from paraenetic literature. Johnson argues that this form was heavily influenced by Boethius's *Consolation*—one of Gower's other main sources—references to which can be found throughout the poem, including the mirror of princes part.[121] In Book 7, Genius does not directly exhort Amans, as he does in other books. In Gower's exposition of Aristotelian wisdom written as his address to the king, the book—at least in part—adopts a character of exhortation, even preaching. Throughout the poem, the figure of Genius as a wise confessor assumes a superior position towards Amans, whom he admonishes in moral behavior. This allows Gower's literary persona to assume a similarly superior position in the instruction of Richard II.

Though in his mirrors of princes, Gower's ways of fashioning his literary persona slightly differ, they share several common features. The two modes of self-representation are both aimed at lending more authority to Gower's writing and his advice to the king. For this, he heavily relies on others' authorities, such as Aristotle or, through the Scripture, even God. His strategies of fashioning his persona either as a prophet or a wise confessor allow him to admonish the king from a morally higher position.

2.3 Thomas Hoccleve: the king's humble servant

Unlike Gower's case, the records concerning Hoccleve allow reconstructing his biography in more detail. Most of the surviving information about Hoccleve is preserved in the

[121] See Johnson, *Practicing Literary Theory in the Middle Ages*, 183–201.

records of Exchequer and Chancer.[122] Additionally, many of his own poetic works reveal valuable autobiographical information. However, official records begin to mention him only after his appointment to the office of the Privy Seal. As in the *Regiment of Princes* he points out that by that time he had been working in the Privy Seal for twenty-four years he must have begun working there in c.1387.[123] His knowledge of Latin and French necessary for the employment in the Privy Seal suggest that he acquired some kind of education, although, there is no direct evidence for this. Since university education was very rare among the ordinary clerks, it is argued that he was definitely not a university graduate.[124] The main functions of the Privy Seal office at the time were writing and authenticating of the king's official letters, as well as sending warrants to other offices, such as Exchequer and Chancery, upon the king's request.[125] Hoccleve worked in the Privy Seal for quite a long time until his death in 1426. Interestingly enough, his scribal work allowed Hoccleve to get acquainted with Gower's works, particularly, the *Confessio Amantis*, since he took part in its copying.[126] Besides, he directly praises Gower in the prologue of the *Regiment of Princes*.[127] His literary activity mostly comes from the fifteenth century, and his earliest datable poem, *Letter of Cupid*, is usually attributed to 1402. His best-known poetry include *La Male Regle* written in 1406 and the so-called *Series* written just before his death, which consist of two of Hoccleve's own poems and three translations.

In 1410–1411 Hoccleve wrote the *Regiment of Princes*, dedicating it to Henry, Prince of Wales, who in 1413 ascended to the throne as Henry V. It is still widely debated whether we

[122] For the collection of documents related to Hoccleve, see Frederick J. Furnivall and I. Gollancz, eds., *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Limited, 1892).
[123] John A. Burrow, *Thomas Hoccleve* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), 2. Some scholars based on new documents argue that he may started to work at the office even before 1387, see Linne R. Mooney, "Some New Light on Thomas Hoccleve," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 29 (2007): 293–340.
[124] Spencer Killick, "Thomas Hoccleve as Poet and Clerk," 71–72.
[125] Spencer Killick, "Thomas Hoccleve as Poet and Clerk," 60.
[126] Bowers, "Thomas Hoccleve and the Politics of Tradition," 356.
[127] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 1975–78.

can treat Hoccleve's mirror as Lancastrian propaganda, which reinforced the ideal image of their kingship, particularly, that of Henry V.[128] As was mentioned, it is impossible to accurately establish the fact of the work's formal commission by the royal court. Nevertheless, one should not dismiss the possibility of an unofficial commission, which may have occurred during Hoccleve time at the Privy Seal. The author's dedicatory words at the beginning of the mirror of princes suggest that his sympathies lay with Henry.[129] He tries to emphasize Henry's positive features as a future ruler. For instance, he suggests that the prince may already be acquainted with three sources of Hoccleve's poem—Giles' *De Regimine Principum*, *Secretum Secretorum,* and De Cessolis' *Libellus de Ludo Scachorum*—pointing out Henry's "innat sapience" (2130).[130] Moreover, Hoccleve assumes that there is actually no need to advise Henry, hinting that he already has all the necessary knowledge.[131] However, the general royalist orientation of the work does not exclude the possibility of the author's veiled critique of the current government, as it was in the case of John Gower's *Vox Clamantis*.

The purpose of the *Regiment of Princes* is closely connected with Hoccleve's way of self-fashioning in the text. The main peculiarity of the poem is the strong personal frame created by the two-thousand-line prologue to the mirror of princes proper. As discussed in the previous chapter, in most of the mirrors the author's persona is hidden in the text. The prologue of the *Regiment of Princes* describes the author waking up after struggling with night insomnia and walking outside where he meets the Old Man to whom the author reveals his financial troubles. Thus, the prologue builds the image of a living person with his working background,

[128] For pro-Lancasterian point of view, see Pearsall, "Thomas Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*," 386–410; Bowers, "Thomas Hoccleve and the Politics of Tradition," 352–69; Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 173–195. For the view of Hoccleve's independent position and critique of Lancasterian regime, see Ferster, *Fictions of Advice*, 137–159; Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*, 109–120.
[129] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2016–156.
[130] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2130.
[131] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2136–37.

financial issues, and even psychological problems. This poses a question of how to connect this prologue to the proper *speculum principum*.

The problematic connection of the poem's two parts is already visible in the manuscripts' history. Most of the copies of the *Regiment of Princes* contain both parts, which suggests that they were originally conceived as parts of a single work.[132] However, their internal rubrication varies: in some manuscripts, the whole poem is labeled as the *Regiment of Princes*, while in others only the last three thousand lines occur under this rubric.[133] As Knapp argues, similarly to Hoccleve's other poems, the *Regiment of Princes* can be considered as a combination of a begging poem and a mirror of princes.[134] In turn, there are different interpretations of the relation between the two. For instance, Ferster views the prologue as an instrument of Hoccleve's critique of the royal financial policy—government's failure to pay their debts—as well as a tool for emphasizing his status as a representative of the common people, hence, an authorized adviser.[135] Scanlon describes the conversation with the Old Man as a transition from the person-centered narrative concerned with the financial aid to moral advice, equipping Hoccleve with the moral authority to speak to the prince.[136] The complaints at the beginning of the poem (the prologue) continue with moral exhortation —the mirror of princes proper— could be also influenced by Boethius's *Consolation*, from which Hoccleve frequently borrows.[137]

It seems that Hoccleve indeed had the real purpose to ask for financial assistance from the prince. At the time of writing the *Regiment of Princes* Hoccleve was not paid his annuity

[132] See Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes,* 151–155.
[133] Greetham, "Self-Referential Artifacts," 245.
[134] Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse*, 81. On begging poem, see Dave Henderson, "The Medieval English Begging Poem" (PhD diss., University of Missouri-Columbia, 2008), 122–178.
[135] Ferster, *Fictions of Advice, 147–59.*
[136] Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority and Power*, 300–8.
[137] See Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse*, 93–106; Nicholas Perkins, "Haunted Hoccleve? *The Regiment of Princes*, the Troilean Intertext, and Conversations with the Dead," *The Chaucer Review* 43, no. 2 (2008): 103–139.

and was not regularly working at the Privy Seal.[138] Therefore, the supplication at the beginning of the poem could be a consequence of real financial hardship. However, Hoccleve does not directly ask the prince for financial assistance, which would have been too bold probably. It is the Old Man who advises him to write to Henry:

> Syn my lord the Prince is, God holde his lyf,
> To thee good lord, good servant thow thee qwyte
> To him, and treewe, and it shal thee profyte. […]
> Kythe thy love in mateere of sadnesse.
> Looke if thow fynde canst any tretice
> Growndid on his estates holsumnesse.
> Swich thyng translate and unto his hynesse,
> As humblely as that thow canst, presente (1944-6, 1948-52)[139]

Here through the Old Man Hoccleve reveals the plan of his writing. In fact, at the same time, these lines summarize the strategy of Hoccleve's self-fashioning in the rest of the poem, too. Moreover, with the help of the Old Man as a literary character Hoccleve avoids the potential dangers of begging in writing. First, he avoids a direct request for money which would make his approach to the prince sound mercenary. Thereby, he also shields himself from the reputation of the flatterer, which may arise from his expressed humility. It should be noted in this regard that the Old Man advises Hoccleve to write firstly to "kythe" (show) his love to the prince as a good servant, and only secondly in order that "it shal thee profyte".

By writing to the king in a pleading fashion, Hoccleve puts himself in a fully inferior position, which, in turn, corresponds to his social status as a clerk, that is, the king's servant. This creates the frames for the mirror of princes proper of his work. Hence, from the very beginning of the address to the prince, Hoccleve asserts that he is a "humble servant and obedient unto your estat hy and glorious"(2019-20).[140] He can no more assume a morally

[138] Annuity paid by the king was the main source of clerks' income, see Mooney, "Some New Light on Thomas Hoccleve," 313.
[139] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 1944-6, 1949-52.
[140] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2019-20.

superior position of the preacher or prophet, thus, he continues to fashion himself as a poor and humble servant, advising the king from this position.

Two of the *Regiment of Princes* manuscripts contain the same image depicting the author kneeling before the king and presenting him the poem (see Figure 2).[141] In both cases, the image appears right before Hoccleve's foreword to the prince (line 2017), that is, at the beginning of the mirror of princes proper. The miniature is definitely related to the literary tradition of mirrors of princes: similar images are included in the manuscripts of *De Regimine Principum* or the *Secretum Secretorum* (see Figure 3,4), too.[142] The author's kneeling figure illustrates Hoccleve's own self-fashioning. The literary image of his persona emulates the graphic representation of a kneeling and obedient adviser. In this regard, it becomes even more important since one of the manuscripts—British Library MS Arundel 38—may have been made under Hoccleve's supervision.[143]

Hoccleve's strategy of self-fashioning in this way leads to belittling his own authorship. In the foreword to the mirror of princes proper, Hoccleve acknowledges his main sources, suggesting that he merely intended to "translate"(2114) and "compyle out of this authours olde" (2188).[144] Of course, this does not diminish Hoccleve's real role as an original author. However, by relying on these authors, he acquires the authority for his advice to the prince, that is, for the content of his mirror. Similarly, he emphasizes his modesty and humility by apologizing to the prince for "dul conceit" and "childhede," because of which "this pamfilet noon ordre holde ne in him include, nat greeved be, for I can do no bet"(2057-62).[145]

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[142] *Secretum Secretorum*, British Library Additional MS 4768, fol. 10v, accessed May 6, 2019, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_47680_fs001r; Giles of Rome, *Livre du gouvernement des rois et des princes*, Walters Art Gallery MS W. 144, fol. 2r, accessed May 6, 2019, https://art.thewalters.org/detail/2652/a-kneeling-giles-of-rome-dressed-in-the-black-habit-of-an-augustinian-monk-presenting-the-book-to-a-seated-philip-the-fair-2/

[143] Thomas Hoccleve, *Selections from Hoccleve*, ed. M. C. Seymour (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), xxxv.

[144] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2114, 2188.

[145] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2057–2062.

Figure 2. Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, British Library MS Arundel 38, fol. 37r (between 1411 and 1432). [146]

[146] Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, British Library MS Arundel 38, fol. 37r, accessed May 6, 2019, https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IllID=47663; For the other manuscript containing the similar image, see Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, British Library Royal MS17 D VI, fol. 40r, accessed May 6, 2019, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=royal_ms_17_d_vi_f040r.

Figure 3. Secretum Secretorum, British Library Additional MS 4768, fol. 10v (1326–1327)

Figure 4. Giles of Rome, Livre du gouvernement des rois et des princes, Walters Art Gallery MS W. 144, fol. 2r (early 14th century)

Though Hoccleve and Gower employ different strategies of self-fashioning for their mirrors of princes, they have the same reasons behind them. While the majority of *specula principum* were written like manuals or philosophical treatises, Gower and Hoccleve combine the mirrors of princes genre with other literary genres and styles, such as Boethian *Consolation*, "begging poem" or *forma prophetalis*. Importantly, unlike most of the authors of mirrors of princes, neither Gower nor Hoccleve came from an ecclesiastical background. One of the most important implications of this on their works is that they did not have the institutional authority of the Church, that would allow to admonish and even criticize the ruler from a morally superior position. This fact, combined with the specific circumstances and purposes of their writing, forced them to come up with ways of self-fashioning that were unusual for the genre. In other words, their creative self-fashioning was the result of seeking new ways of asserting their authority in their texts through literary means.

Chapter 3. Constructing Ideal Kingship in Gower's and Hoccleve's Mirrors of Princes

The very genre of Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*, as well as Book 6 of John Gower's *Vox Clamantis* and, especially, Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis*, implies the authors' participation in the late medieval discourse of kingship. In this chapter, I will try to situate their works within the generall mirrors of princes discourse of kingship. For this, I will reveal the twofold nature of Gower's and Hoccleve's views on royal accountability and will demonstrate how they attempted to resolve contradictory implications for the limits of royal power resulting from that duality. Also, I will argue that due to the commonality of the main concepts concerning kingship, it is possible to talk about one discourse of kingship in Gower's and Hoccleve's works, which was defined by the literary and intellectual tradition of *specula principum* writing.

3.1 Foundations and sources of kingship

The basic element of the political theory of kingship is the foundations of the royal power over his subjects, or, to put it differently, the king's sovereignty. As mentioned above, due to the moralizing inclination in Gower's and Hoccleve's works, their views about royal sovereignty are not so clear. Out of the two, Gower's views are perhaps more detectable. Discussing generosity as one of the main virtues pertinent to all men and especially to the king, in Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis*, Gower connects the origin of kingship with the division and appropriation of the common good:

> The worldes good was ferst comune,
> Bot afterward upon fortune
> Was thilke comun profit cessed,
> For whan the poeple stod encresced
> And the lignages woxen grete,
> Anon for singulier begete
> Drouh every man to his partie;
> Wherof cam in the ferste envie

With gret debat and werres stronge,
And laste among the men so longe[…]
Til ate laste in every lond
Withinne hemself the poeple fond
That it was good to make a king[…] (1991-2000, 2003-5)[147]

This passage perfectly demonstrates the twofold nature of kingship in Gower's interpretation. The emergence of royalty, according to Gower, was the result of the fall and the sinful nature of the humankind. He situates the division of the common good not long after the fall when the human population started to increase. Thereby, the sins of avarice, envy, and war caused by them become the main premises for the emergence of royalty. This corresponds to the main concern of this part of the *Confessio Amantis*—the opposition of generosity to avarice—as well as to the general moralistic character of the work. Thus, for Gower, kingship becomes the necessary remedy for the situation. This idea has clear Augustinian roots: for Augustine sinful individual possession of the common property and endless conflicts became the necessary justification for rising of the executive rulership among the people.[148] It is hard to determine whether Gower used Augustine's works since he never references them. Although, Gower may be to some extent acquainted with Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* and even borrowed the story of "Alexander and the Pirate" contained in Book 4 of the *Confessio Amantis*.[149] Moreover, some pieces of Augustine's writing could be included in one of the manuscripts to be found in St. Mary priory at Gower's time.[150]

Gower suggests that kingship was founded by the people of each land. In other words, it is the community of the land that delegates supreme executive power to the king. According to Conrad van Dijk, this idea distinguishes Gower's vision of rulership from Augustine's

[147] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 281.
[148] Herbert A. Deane, *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963), 103–107, 118–154.
[149] Yoshiko Kobayashi, " Letters of Old Age: The Advocacy of Peace in the Works of John Gower and Philippe de Mézières," in *John Gower: Others and the Self*, ed. Russell A. Peck and R.F. Yeager (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2017), 218; Donald G. Schueler, "A Critical Evaluations of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*" (PhD diss., Louisiana State Univeristy, 1962), 75.
[150] Pouzet, "Southwark Gower,"24.

doctrine, which suggests that rulers' power was ordained on people by divine grace.[151] However, as I will argue Gower does not totally dismiss the role of the divine providence in it. As for the source of this idea, Giancarlo suggests Gower took it from Latini's *Trésor*.[152] In the description of the government of cities, Latini states: "for as soon as Nimrod the giant took over the kingdom and the country, and greed sowed war and mortal hatred among people of the world, it was necessary for men to have lords of different types; some were rightfully elected and others took power by force."[153] Although, for Gower, the election was the only means of rulership foundation, while for Latini forcible foundation was also possible. Moreover, Gower also suggests that this election was done for specific purposes: "appesen al this thing and give riht to the lignages in partinge of here heritages and ek of al here other good" (2006–9).[154] In fact, these short lines reflect the main royal function in relation to the community, that of mediation and distribution of justice and keeping the peace.

Thus, Gower seems to assume people as a source of the king's power. Nevertheless, he frequently refers to the common concept of the divine sanction of royalty. For instance, the passage in Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis* about the necessity for the king to have pity upon his subjects reads:

> Thei scholde his Pité most beholde
> That ben the lieges of his lond,
> For thei ben evere under his hond
> After the Goddes ordinaunce
> To stonde upon his governance (4176–80).[155]

[151] Van Dijk, *John Gower and the Limits of the Law*, 107.
[152] Giancarlo, "Gower's Governmentality, 235.
[153] "Car des lors que Nembroth li grans gayans sorprist premierement le regne et le pais, et que convoitise sema la guerre et les mortels haines entre les homes et les gens dou siecle, il convint as homes que il eussent seignors de plusors manieres, selonc ce que li un furent esleu a droit et li autre par lor pooir," Polycarpe Chabaille, eds., *Li Livres dou Tresor par Brunetto Latini* (Paris: Imprimerie Imperiale, 1863), 576. Translation in Paul Barrette and Spurgeon Baldwin, trans., *Brunetto Latini: The Book of the Treasure* (New York and London: Taylor & Francis, 1993), 351.
[154] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 281.
[155] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 352. For the similar notion in *Vox Clamantis*, see Gower, *Latin Works*, 262, l. 1093–4.

This introduces the tension between the divine and popular accountability of the king, which can be traced throughout Gower's mirrors of princes, where he frequently describes the main elements of the king's virtuous behavior as pleasant to his people and therefore to God, and vice versa. Of course, this discrepancy may be explained by the poetic inconsistency. However, the tension can be easily resolved if we treat both ideas as complementary components of his twofold interpretation of the nature of royalty. There is no necessary contradiction in stating that kingship was created both by God and by the people if one assumes that the popular foundation of the monarchy was a result of divine providence working to repair the consequences of humanity's fall.

As opposed to Gower's more transparent ideas, Hoccleve's view about the nature of royalty is hard to detect. He does not directly formulate it anywhere in the text. Such restraint of his political expression in comparison with Gower may have been caused, on the one hand, by his lack of authority to address the prince in a highly instructive tone; and, on the other hand, by his conscious choice of subduing position in his literary self–fashioning. Unlike Gower, whose usage of the preaching style narration and heavily reliance on the Aristotle's authority let him go into speculation about the origin of kingship, Hoccleve's adaptation of the role of the king's humble servant for his literary persona, as well as more pragmatic character of the work, does not allow to expand on this topic.

There is only one brief mention of the appropriation of the common profit when Hoccleve states that the Romans' prosperity fell into decay because "they hem drow to profyt singuler and of profyt commun nat weren cheer" (5249-50).[156] However, he makes no connection between this and the emergence of kingship. Although he does not go in depth about the origin of kingship, his position towards the foundations of royal power can be

[156] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes,* 5249–50.

detected indirectly. The frequent references to God "of whom al rightwys power is deryved" (2568) obviously implies the divine sanction of the king's power. Simultaneously, he states that the king is called so "for that he peple hath in governance" (2551). Although it may seem very obvious, in terms of the royal accountability this reference is for a special interest. What can be said with certainty, in this case, is that Hoccleve connects the divine sanction of the king's power with the wealth of his subjects. As Langdell suggests, Hoccleve tries to link the king's duty to the people with his reverence to God.[157]

Thus, for Hoccleve and especially Gower, divine and popular elements of kingship were in very close connection, in which divine sanction seems to be dominant. Thus, in their view, the king's power was framed by its relations with God and with the community of the realm. This idea is especially visible in their use of the concept of *vox populi vox Dei*, which will be demonstrated later. While these are very abstract categories, Gower's and Hoccleve's works also contain more precise means to define royal power. In this case, morality and law seem to be crucial. They play an important role in the authors' discourse of kingship since they are inextricably connected with the question of the limits of royal power.

3.2 The king's main duties and the limitations of power

The tension between morality and law as a means of limiting royal sovereignty was one of the main concerns of the late medieval theory of kingship. In late medieval legal system morality was mainly associated with *ius naturale* and *ius divinum* in opposition to *ius civile,* the law of nations. [158] Their combinations led to various notions of the limitations of royalty in medieval political thought and, as a consequence, to different views on the royal office in general. Usually, the inclination towards morality as the main limiting principle in some works

[157] Langdell, *Thomas Hoccleve*, 119.
[158] See J. H. Burns, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350 – c. 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 424–477.

discussing kingship may have lead to the notion of relative indefinite nature of royal power. In turn, this engendered the concept of *legibus solutus*, according to which the king is unbounded by law and rules only in accordance with his good will.[159] At the same time, the shift towards law may lead to the idea of rulership restricted by law and in different ways controlled by the citizens, namely, to the mixed constitution.[160] This tension is well observed in Gower's and Hoccleve's kingship discourse. As I will discuss, they resolve the tension in favor of morality, making the law part of it. In this, they follow the *Secretum Secretorum*, which treats morality as a main limiting principle.

While the question of Hoccleve's views on the limitations of kingship is largely neglected by the scholarship, in Gower studies this question remains very controversial. The previous scholarship in one or another way connected the question with Gower's idea of law. For instance, Van Dijk in the detailed examination of the legal aspect of Gower's work suggests that law was one of the cornerstones of Gower's political thought. Giancarlo approaches the question from the slightly different perspective, assuming that justice was the main concept which defines Gower's discourse of kingship and his political theology.[161] Although I agree that the concept of justice, as well as the legal aspect, play a very important role for both Gower and Hoccleve, they seem to be only structural components of the moral paradigm of royalty. These concepts were derivatives of Gower's and Hoccleve's views on the king's dual responsibility.

Gower's and Hoccleve's vision of the legal limitations is defined by their treatment of the king's position towards the law. Gower clearly asserts that the king's power is above the

[159] J. H. Burns, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, 482–488;
[160] James M. Blythe, *Ideal Government and the Mixed Constitution in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton university Press, 1992), 180–203.
[161] See Giancarlo, "*Gower's Governmentality*," 225–260; Van Dijk, *John Gower and the Limits of the Law*, 89–139. For the Hoccleve's case, see Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority and Power*, 299–322.

human law. For instance, in the *Vox Clamantis*, he admonishes King Richard II: "you are above the laws, but live as a just man" (613).[162] He also refers to the general supremacy of the king in one of the *Confessio Amantis* tales, the one immediately preceding Gower's exposition of Aristotle's five parts of politics. When the Persian King Darius asks three counselors whether king, wine or women possesses the greatest power, one of the counselors says that the king is "myhtiest of alle thinges"(1826) and "stant himself of lawe fre"(1845)[163]. Here, the king's supreme power stands in the direct connection with his superiority over the law.

Hoccleve does not express his acknowledgment of royal supremacy over the law directly. On the one hand, he asserts that "kyng have habundance of might in his land at his lust"(2563–64)[164]. On the other hand, his statement about the king's obligation to keep the law suggests the opposite:

> Prince excellent, have your lawes cheer;
> Observe hem and offende hem by no weye.
> By ooth to keepe hem, bownde is the poweer
> Of kyng, and by it is kynges nobleye sustened.(2773–77)[165]

Although, at first sight, it may seem that Hoccleve, here, is moving closer to the legal limitations of the royalty, he does not reach this idea. An oath to keep the law bound the king's power and not the law itself. In Hoccleve's view, the obligation to keep the oath is one of the main moral virtues pertained to the king. Thereby, Hoccleve treats royal commitment concerning the law as a part of morality. This feature is very important for his vision of royalty limitations, since by this Hoccleve admits that law is incapable to limit kingship.

The way in which Gower and Hoccleve construct their vision of kingship heavily depends on their sources, which in many cases are the same texts. They both take over the

[162] "Tu super es iura, iustus set uive sub illis," Gower, *Latin Works*, 248; *Major Latin Works*, 234.
[163] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 282–83.
[164] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2563–64.
[165] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2773–77.

moral paradigm of royal power from the *Secretum Secretorum* and in part from Giles of Rome. Since Gower and Hoccleve theoretically acknowledge the superiority of the king's power over the law, morality is the only means to limit kingship. The dominance of the moral paradigm is evident from the very structure of the *Confessio Amantis* and the *Regiment of Princes*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Hoccleve's mirror of princes proper is structured according to the main virtues to be followed and vices to be avoided by the king. The mirror of the *Confessio Amantis* is presented in a form of exposition of the Aristotelian division of philosophy. It consists of theory, the first part of philosophy, which includes theology, physics, and astronomy; rhetoric as the second part; and practice, the third part of philosophy, to which Gower devotes the most of the mirror. This division does not come from Aristotle's works directly, but was borrowed from Latini's *Trésor*.[166] The practice includes ethics (governance of self), economics (governance of the household), and politics (governance of the state). Out of the three, Gower predominantly elaborates on politics. However, while for Latini and Giles, whose mirrors are also built upon such tripartite division, politics implies practical skills necessary for ruling the kingdom or the city, for Gower, politics basically turns into the king's moral self-governance, that is, ethics.[167]

Echoing the author of the *Secretum*, for Gower and Hoccleve, virtuous rulership is a fundamental part of royal dignity. Therefore, the king main duty is to follow the path of virtues. Gower's and Hoccleve's lists of main royal virtues are pretty similar to the other mirrors of princes. In Gower's case, it includes truth, generosity, chastity, justice, and pity. In their demonstration, Gower seems to rely mostly on the *Secretum*. The *Regiment of Princes* presents a similar list of virtues with the addition of mercy, prudence, and patience. This reflects Hoccleve's loosely following of Giles of Rome. Both of the authors acknowledge the king's

[166] Latini, *The Book of the Treasure*, 3–5. On *Confessio Amantis* division of philosophy, see Simpson, *Sciences and the Self in Medieval Poetry*, 211–17.
[167] See Latini, *The Book of the Treasure*, 350–81; Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III. fol. 237–368.

duty to worship and be obedient to God, as well as protect the people and not to offend them. In the *Confessio Amantis* Gower also emphasizes the necessity for the king to be well educated with Aristotelian sciences.

Gower and Hoccleve assert that the king is obliged to maintain the rights of the Church. In case of Gower's mirrors, acknowledgment of the royal obligations towards the Church briefly appears in the *Vox Clamantis*, when he says that the king should "be eager to foster the Church with great piety" (739).[168] Similarly, Hoccleve advises the king to defend the Church and keep the liberties of the clergy, especially encouraging him to support free election of the bishops in the cathedral churches.[169] In this regard, Gower is more modest in emphasizing of this duty. This is due to the fact that he was critical of the Church and its authority, which is explicit from his blame of clergy and the papacy in Book 3 of the *Vox Clamantis*, as well as from the tale of Pope Boniface in Book 3 of the *Confessio Amantis*.[170] Also, Gower may be influenced by Wyclif's criticism of the Church, since he may get acquainted with Wyclif's *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae* in the library of St. Mary priory.[171] At the same time, Hoccleve's emphasis on the protection of the Church is strictly connected with his general concern with the preserving of the orthodoxy of faith from the constant danger of heresy. It is especially evident from the prologue of the *Regimen of Princes*, where the Old Man discusses the execution of Lollard John Badly.[172] In his later poems, such as *Balades* and *Remonstrance to Oldcastle*, Hoccleve presents the king as the main protector of the Holy Church.[173]

[168] "Ecclesiam studeas multa pietate fouere," Gower, *Latin Works*, 252; *Major Latin Works*, 237.
[169] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2899–933.
[170] Gower, *Latin Works*, 102–65; Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 206–13, l. 2803–3110. See Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority and Power*, 248–67.
[171] Pouzet, "Southwark Gower," 14.
[172] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 281–322. See Langdell, *Thomas Hoccleve: Religious Reform*, 138–176.
[173] Jenni Nuttall, "Thomas Hoccleve's Poems for Henry V: Anti-Occasional Verse and Ecclesiastical Reform," Oxford Handbook Online, accessed May 6, 2019, https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935338.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935338-e-61

Thereby, Gower and Hoccleve return to their concern about the divine and popular elements of kingship. On the one hand, following all of the aforementioned duties becomes the ruler's main obligation before God, that is, a necessary condition of the divine sanction of royal power. This logic is best expressed by Hoccleve when he states that "syn a kyng by way of his office to God ylikned is [...] than may the vice of untrouthe nat in a kyng appeere" (2409–12).[174] On the other hand, the very reason for the king's office is to govern people for the sake of the common profit (common good). This is how Gower and Hoccleve bound the divine and the popular element together. The general guiding principle here—common profit— may be borrowed from Giles of Rome. For Giles, the Aristotelian notion of common good constitutes the rightful regal rule in opposition to despotism and is equal to the virtuous life of both the king and his subjects.[175] Similarly, Gower and Hoccleve suggest that the king's moral behavior stems from seeking the common good, lack of which was the main reason for the kingship foundation.

According to Gower and Hoccleve, it remains the king's own choice to act in accordance with the principle of the common good or not. Bearing in mind the peculiarity of royal power, both of them appeal to the king's own willingness to follow the virtuous path, warning him about possible harmful consequences otherwise. This is especially evident in Gower's writing. For example, in the *Vox Clamantis*, he asserts: "you who subdue others, work to subdue yourself; if you wish to be a king, rule yourself and you will be one" (605-6).[176] Thereby, the first step towards just rulership and the common good requires the moral behavior from the king himself. According to Nicholson, this fully corresponds to the idea that runs through all Gower's works, namely, that reforms of society start from a moral improvement of

[174] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2409–12.
[175] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.6. fol. 275–276.
[176] "Qui superas alios, temet superare labora; si rex esse velis, te rege, rex et eris," Gower, *Latin Works*, 248; *Major Latin Works*, 234.

each individual, including the king.[177] The idea of individual moral development also corresponds to Gower's way of literary self-fashioning.

3.3 *Vox populi vox Dei*

Thus, by achieving the common good of the realm and his subjects ruler automatically pleases God, approving the divine sanction of his office. In this way, Gower and Hoccleve try to explain the ruler's simultaneous responsibility towards his subjects and God. Their use of the *vox populi vox Dei* concept is of special interest here, since it perfectly demonstrates the way in which Gower and Hoccleve articulate connection between the objects of royal accountability. Although Gower's appeal to the voice of people is sometimes interpreted as an attempt to give authority to his own poetic voice; he may have also deployed the concept to undergird his political agenda.[178] In his mirrors of princes, he only hints on the necessity for the king to listen to this voice. For example, in the *Vox Clamantis*, listing contemporary social problems of young Richard II's reign, Gower writes: "everywhere the voice of the people of today, who are placed in doubt in the face of the enormity of evil, cries out about such things" (578-7).[179] In a similar way, he does not point out the connection between the voice of the people and that of God. However, this concept is not totally alien to him since in Book 3 of the *Vox Clamantis*, while criticizing the Church, he does equate the voices of the people and that of God.[180] Hoccleve is more consistent in this case, openly declaring that "peples vois is

[177] Peter Nicholson, *Love & Ethics in Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 120–122.
[178] Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 191–210. Ferster, *Fictions of Advice*, 130–32.
[179] "Vox populi conclamat vbique moderni in dubio positi pre gravitate mali," Gower, *Latin Works*, 247; *Major Latin Works*, 233.
[180] "Vox populi cum voce dei concordat, vt ipsa in rebus dubiis sit metuenda magis"(1267–1268), Gower, *Latin Works*, 141.

Goddes voice, men seyn"(2886).[181] In turn, the employment of this concept by both authors have few important implications for their kingship discourse.

It is directly connected with the king's duty to listen to advice. Hoccleve devotes a special section of his mirror to this topic, while, Gower touches upon it in the several *exempla* of the *Confessio Amantis*. For both of them, the king should be not only willing to listen to advice, but, also should be able to choose faithful counselors. He should avoid flatterers, seeking for those councilors who will tell him unpleasant, but necessary truth. This is explicit from Gower's tale of King Ahab who rejected the truthful prophecy of Micaiah about the future war, following flattery of Zedekiah, which led the king to defeat.[182] However, it is even more important that the councilor should play the role of intermediary, delivering the commune voice to the king. It is for this reason that Hoccleve admonishes the king to choose the councilors regardless of their social estate: "if that a man of symple degree, or poore of birthe, or yong, thee wel conseille, admitte his reson and take it in gree" (4880–82).[183] The intermediacy of council can be perfectly illustrated by Confessio Amantis tale of Emperor Lucius asking steward and chamberlain about his reputation among the people.[184] While the steward says that the king has a good reputation, the chamberlain asserts that people condemn his councilors and excuse the king. Finally, the fool presented in the meeting says to the king: "if that it were so […] that thou thiselven were good, thi conseil scholde noght be badde" (3994–97).[185] Following saying of the fool, the king removed vicious councilors, bringing to the end people's oppression. This tale is usually read as Gower emphasizing the king–people relations, rather than the problem of evil counselors; or as Gower's negotiation of reciprocity of the political

[181] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2886.
[182] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 302–6, l. 2527–686.
[183] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 4880–82..
[184] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 346–48, l. 3945–4026.
[185] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 347.

capital within the traditional social hierarchy.[186] However, in the tale, Gower explicitly says that the fool's revelation was divinely inspired.[187] Thereby, this once again confirms the connection between the voice of people and that of God in Gower's discourse of kingship.

The other implication of the *vox populi vox Dei* concept is that the king should strive to win a good reputation and love of his people. For example, in the *Vox Clamantis* Gower urge the king to "believe that a good name is better than treasures; it upholds honor, banishes scandal, and flourishes in esteem" (781–2).[188] Hoccleve also acknowledges that love of people "excedith al tresor in prys"(4826) since if people "love him nat in no manere of weye […], in hir hertes is smal obeissance, and unto God they conpleyne hir grevance" (4820–23).[189] Thus, by using this concept Hoccleve and Gower do not merely say that the ruler should acquire a good reputation among his lieges; they also assert that otherwise he will be justly punished. For instance, immediately after declaring that the people's voice is God's voice, Hoccleve writes that the king's "labour shal nat ydil be ne veyn", since "no good dede unrewarded is or qwit, ne evel unpunysshid"(2889-91).[190] In turn, the practical implication of such punishment may suggest the revolt or, even, the king's deposition, which will be discussed further. Thus, Gower, as well as Hoccleve, treats the voice of the people as a certain indication whether the king's rule is virtuous or not, asserting the king's responsibility to listen to this voice.[191]

3.3 The concept of tyranny and the ruler's deposition

The moral limitations of royalty play an important role for both authors. Asserting it, they could come to the conclusion that if the king is virtuous, his power may be almost

[186] Ferster, *Fictions of Advice*, 128; Kendall, *Lordship and Literature*, 259–261.
[187] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 347, l. 3990.
[188] "Nomen, crede, bonum gasas precellit, honorem conseruat, remouet scandala, laude viget," Gower, *Latin Works*, 253; *Major Latin Works*, 238.
[189] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 4820, 4822-23, 4826.
[190] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 2886.
[191] Note the contrast with Alcuin's treatment of the concept.

unlimited; as, for instance, Giles states this.[192] Aforementioned passages suggest that if the king's rule is against the common good, there is some possibility to restrict his power, which raises the question of the practical implication of such an idea. As will be discussed further, there are two things that are key for Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship, namely, the question of law and royal deposition.

As it was mentioned, Gower acknowledges the king's superiority over the human — positive— law. However, the law remains a logical component of the discourse. It is justice which directly links the king's moral restrictions with the duty to keep the law.[193] For Gower, justice is one of the main divine virtues, which means that it is obligatory for the king to follow. Here he clearly follows the *Secretum* idea that "a king in his jusitice is likened to the Most High".[194] Therefore, for the sake of the common good, justice should be the framework for the execution of royal power. In order to keep his virtuous rule, the king should "ferst be lad of lawe, and forth thanne overal so do justice in general"(3086-88).[195] This causes an important dilemma in Gower's idea of kingship: if the king transgresses the law, could he be justly punished? Gower's position is ambiguous in this case. On the one hand, he asserts that king firstly justifies before God, since "his astat is elles fre toward alle othre in his persone, save only to the God alone"(2732–4).[196] On the other hand, he frequently repeats that if the king violates moral virtues and the common good, he can be overthrown. He seems to compare justified deposition to God's wrath. In the *Confessio Amantis*, especially, in the tale of the rape of Lucrece by Aruns, son of Roman King Tarquin, Gower clearly expresses the possibility of

[192] Aegidius Romanus, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.3. fol. 270r.
[193] For the detailed elaboration of this question, see Van Dijk, *John Gower and the Limits of the Law*, 106–139; Giancarlo, "Gower's Governmentality," 230–245.
[194] "Rex assimilatur in justicia simplici Altissimo," *Opera Hactenus*, 124. See Gilbert, "Notes on the Influence of the Secretum Secretorum," 84–98.
[195] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2,317.
[196] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 307–308.

deposition of the unvirtuous king by the "comune clamour" of people.[197] Thereby, Gower presents the ruler's deposition by people as God's punishment.

Hoccleve includes human law into the moral conception of the kingship in ways similar to Gower. He also employs the Aristotelian notion of justice in order to bind the ruler's power to the law. According to Hoccleve, it is mainly justice that protects people's property and shields them from oppression.[198] However, in comparison with Gower, he makes one more step to develop his idea of justice further. He connects justice with the royal duty to keep the oath: "a kyng is by covenant of ooth maad in his coronacioun bownde to justices sauvacioun" (2518–20).[199] Though the general idea of keeping the oath could be taken from the *Secretum*, its connection to the royal coronation is rooted in the contemporary political context. The oath to keep the law was one of the crucial elements of the coronation ritual.[200] Thereby Hoccleve seems to allude to the existing practice of the royal deposition in England. Acting against the coronation oath was one of the main points of accusation at Richard II's deposition in 1399.[201] It is obvious that the coronation oath usually referred to the community of the realm. By doing this, Hoccleve emphasizes the king's responsibility to his subjects. Similarly to Gower, he deems the deposition of unvirtuous ruler possible. Relying on Aristotelian authority he writes "what kyng that dooth more excessyf despenses than his land may to souffyse or atteyne shal be destroyed"(4404–6).[202] In comparison with Gower, Hoccleve is more straightforward about

[197] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 367–77, l. 4754–5130.
[198] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes*, 2513–14.
[199] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes*, 2518–20.
[200] See H.G. Richardson, "The English Coronation Oath," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* vol. 23 (1941): 129– 158.
[201] H.T. Riley, eds., *Johannis de Trokelowe, et Henrici de Blaneforde, Monachorum S. Albani, Necnon Quorundam Anonymorum: Chronica et Annales* (London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866), 267. See Chris Given-Wilson, "The Manner of King Richard's Renunciation: A 'Lancastrian Narrative'?," *The English Historical Review* 108, no. 427 (1993): 365–370; William H. Dunham and Charles T. Wood.,"The Right to Rule in England: Depositions and the Kingdom's Authority, 1327-1485,*" The American Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (1976): 742–48.
[202] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes*, 4404–06. Here he paraphrases in English and directly quotes (in Latin glosse) *Secretum Secretorum*, see *Opera Hactenus*, 44.

this because he already witnessed the king's deposition in 1399, while Gower wrote his mirrors prior to these events.

Thus, for Hoccleve, as well as for Gower, human law is part of moral rulership through the concept of justice. The king may be overthrown not because of violating the law, but because he failed to obey justice. It adds a practical angle to the abstract concepts of the common good and moral virtues.

Gower's and Hoccleve's usage of the term "tirant" and "tiranny" is for a special interest regarding the king's misrule. Hoccleve, as well as Gower in the *Vox Clamantis*, mentions this term only a few times, while in the *Confessio* it is more commonly used. However, in most cases, both of them use it in a similar way. In the *Confessio* and the *Regiment*, the term appears in the discussion of the virtue of mercy, since "power withouten mercy a kyng torneth into a tirant" (3410–11).[203] For Gower and Hoccleve, the concept of tyranny is predominantly related to the cruelty of the ruler. For example, Gower mentions this in the context of the tale of warlike King Spertachus, violently killing whomever he conquered, or in the story of tyrant Siculus, who constructed a brass bull to torment his people.[204] Moreover, in the tale of Lucrece's rape, he demonstrates that the tyranny can be engendered by the king's excessive indulgence of his lust.[205] Only once in the *Vox Clamantis* Gower defines the tyranny in an abstract way, saying that "he who rules unjustly amidst corruption is a tyrant" (1004).[206] Thus, in most cases by the means of tyranny, the authors label the ruler's physical violation of his subjects. This does not correlate with Gower's and Hoccleve's main sources. The *Secretum* does not use the term tyrant at all. In turn, Giles defines tyranny in Aristotelian terms: as a government of the ruler

[203] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, 3410–11.
[204] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, 328–9,332–4.
[205] Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, l. 4754–5130.
[206] "Qui regit in viciis, ipse tirannus erit," Gower, *Latin Works*, 259; *Major Latin Works*, 243.

who does not care for the common good, preferring it to the personal profit.[207] Such definition may include not only the ruler's violence, but also a transgression of the law, prodigality, and other royal vices preventing achievement of the common good. In Gower's and Hoccleve's case, tyrannic cruelty becomes the most blatant sign of the ruler's evil will. For them the concept of tyranny plays a didactic role of intensifier for certain *exempla*; in other words, the tyranny emphasizes the border of complete abuse of rulership.

3.4 The crown symbolism.

As a part of *specula principum* literary traditions, Gower's and Hoccleve's guide of the rulership includes the bundle of metaphorical and symbolic elements emphasizing its most important points. Therefore, some of these elements may help to shed additional light on the main components of the kingship discourse. One of the most interesting symbols, appearing in the *Confession* and the *Regiment*, is the crown.

The importance of the image of the crown for Hoccleve is indicated by the fact that he puts it at the beginning of the main part of his mirror. He encourages the prince to think about the burden of responsibilities that the king's office implies in anticipation "that the corone honure yow with rial dignitee"(2157–8), that is, in anticipation of coronation.[208] Proceeding further, Hoccleve quotes from Cessolis' *Libellus de Ludo Scachorum* the saying about the burden of royal power represented by the crown, which was pronounced by a certain king after his coronation.[209] Hoccleve treats the crown as a symbolic concentration of dignity, power, and responsibilities imposed on the king. Although, he does not expand on its meaning in details.

[207] Giles of Rome, *Ad Francorum Regem*, III.ii.3. fol. 270v.
[208] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes,* 2157–58.
[209] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes,* 2175–84; Compare Marie Anita Burt, eds., "Libellus de Moribus Hominum et Officiis Nobilium ac Popularium super Ludo Scachorum" (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1957), 65.

The crown also took a chief place in the symbolic expression of the king's office in Gower's writing. At the beginning of the *Confessio* passage about the truth as the first part of policy, he discusses the symbolic meaning of each element of the crown. The passage most probably was borrowed from Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon.*[210] The gold of the crown symbolizes the ruler's "excellence, that men shull don him reverence as to here liege soverein"(1751–3). Gems are described in three ways: their firmness symbolizes the king's constancy; the brightness of their colors symbolizes his good reputation; and, finally, they symbolize the obligation of truthful keeping the royal promise. The circle fo the crown designates "al the lond, which stant under his gerarchie, that he it schal wel kepe and guye"(1772–4).[211] Thus, for Gower, the moral obligation of the king seems to be crucial in the crown symbolism, as he writes:

> "king himself schal reule
> Of his moral condicion
> With worthi disposicion
> Of good livinge in his persone,
> Which is the chief of his corone"(1654–8).[212]

In this case, Gower and Hoccleve use the *topos*, which was common in medieval literature and political writing. Although it was always connected with the symbolization of the royalty, the general meaning of the crown differed depending on what aspect of royal power it designates. For instance, it could designate the whole realm and the king's responsibility to protect it, the financial and jurisdictional prerogative of the king, or, even, royal domain.[213] In

[210] Mainzer, *A Study of The Sources of The Confessio Amantis of John Gower*, 209; Godfrey of Viterbo [Gotifredi Viterbiensis]. *Opera*, ed. G. Waitz, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptorum 12 (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Avlici Hahniani, 1872), 275.
[211] *John Gower: The English Works*, 280–281.
[212] *John Gower: The English Works*, 278.
[213] See Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 336–358.

late medieval England concept of the crown acquires a public character, representing the political body of the realm – the king, piers, barons, etc. [214] On the contrary, in Gower's and Hoccleve's works the symbolic crown stands exclusively for the king's office. Of course, for Gower, it also represents the territories of the kingdom; however, it is the royal government that united them.

According to Kantorowicz, such symbolization entails the temptation of separating the king as an individual human being from the crown. [215] It is exactly what Gower's and Hoccleve's writing seems to suggest. In Hoccleve's case, it can be traced in aforementioned saying about the burden of royal power: "whoso the peril kneew, and charge and fere that is in thee [crown], thogh thow at eerthe lay, he wolde nat thee up areise or rere"(2178–80).[216] Moreover, he frequently refers to the king and to his office associated with the crown as to the separate notions. Gower expresses this idea even more explicitly, stating that the crown symbolizes the king's superiority – *excellence*– over his subjects. In the *Confessio* part about chastity he also refers to it, saying that the king "mot be more magnified [praised] for digneté of his corone, than scholde another low persone, which is noght of so hih emprise"(4248–51).[217] In this regard, the moral paradigm, which he introduces to the crown symbolism, become the main element and criteria, granting the royal dignity to the king.

It is difficult to understand from the texts where exactly the authors draw a line of the separation. Certainly, this does not go as far as to completely separate the king and the crown. Although such precedents occurred in the early fourteenth century when in 1308, attempting to depose Edward II' s favorite Gaveston, the barons tried to legitimize their protest against the king by the fact that their oath of allegiance referred not to the king, but to the crown of the

[214] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies,* 358–364.
[215] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies,* 364–365.
[216] Hoccleve*, The Regiment of Princes,* 2178–80.
[217] *John Gower: The English Works*, 354.

realm.[218] For Gower and Hoccleve, the king receives royal dignity through the crown, which is the quintessence of the royal office. Moreover, according to Hoccleve, the king is granted with the divine grace – divine sanction of royalty– through his office and not through his person. He mentions it in the connection with *imitatio Christi* concept: the king should imitate Christ as a concentration of all moral virtues since he "by way of his office to God ylikned is"(2409–10).[219] Thus, notions of the crown and the king's office may serve two aims in Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors. First, the abstract royal office, separated from the individual ruler, can designate everlasting character and continuity of kingship. It is especially relevant for Hoccleve's attempt to contribute to the legitimization of the Lancastrian dynasty. Second, this emphasizes the moral restrictions of kingship is an important part of the royal office.

Through the principles of the common good and moral rulership, Gower and Hoccleve reconcile the divine and popular elements of kingship. Since, for them, the restriction of royal sovereignty bears a moral character, they are ready to accept that a virtuous ruler has unlimited power. Though Gower's and Hoccleve's moral vision of politics was mainly informed by their source, it can be also related to the political context of their time. In fact, moralizing about kingship in writing was rooted in late medieval political culture. Most of the accusations which legitimized the depositions of Edward II and Richard II were formulated to carry a moral message. King Edward II was accused of failing to listen to good advice, as well as of his pride and greed which prevented him from doing justice to his subjects.[220] Similar, although slightly extended, list of moral misdeeds – breaking the oath, unjust rule, cunning withdrawal of

[218] *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, 501.
[219] Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*,2409–10.
[220] See Geore B. Adams and H. Morse Stephens, eds., *Select Documents of English Constitutional History* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1901), 99.

people's money, inconsistency in behavior and others– underlies accusations against Richard II.[221]

Although Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse is composed of different, sometimes slightly contradictory, concepts, all of them are built around the core idea of the king's double accountability to God and people. In turn, both sides of the royal responsibility are inextricably linked to each other. The authors' adherence to this idea can be explained by the influence of the sources, most of which either elaborate or allude to it. In this case, Gower and Hoccleve follow a tendency in the political thought, starting from the late thirteenth century, which describes the royal power as created by people and inspired by God.[222] Moreover, their choice of this idea to some part may be informed by the experience of Richard II's rule, the second half of which was marked by the absolutist aspirations of the king. In his attempts to put forward the concept of people's complete obedience to the king, Richard tried to eliminate his responsibility to the community, emphasizing his exclusive relations to God.[223] Thus, the idea of double responsibility offered a premise based on which Gower and Hoccleve could establish that authoritarian rulership goes against correct political order.

Thus, Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship places their mirrors in the ambiguous position towards the previous tradition of the genre. On the one hand, their adherence to the idea of the king's double responsibility relates them to the late medieval branch of the tradition started from the twelve century onward. On the other hand, the moral paradigm of their views on the king's main duties and limitations of his power is rather similar to the kingship discourse of the *Secretum Secretorum* and early medieval mirrors.

[221] *Chronica et Annales*, 252–287.
[222] Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 103.
[223] Saul Nigel, "The Kingship of Richard II," in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, ed. Anthony Goodman and James Gillespie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 37–59.

Conclusion

This thesis demonstrates the double function of Thomas Hoccleve's and John Gower's mirrors of princes. On the one hand, their mirrors served as a tool of the author's communication and self-representation to the king or prince. On the other hand, Gower's and Hoccleve's poems mirror prevailing ideas about kingship and the main elements of which they were composed. In turn, these ideas are transmitted in refracted light, that is, through the authors' own interpretation. Thus, Gower and Hoccleve appear to be engaged in shaping of the kingship discourse.

The analysis of Gower's and Hoccleve's *specula principum* reveals the authors' creative way of fashioning their literary persona. In *Epistola Ad Regem* of the *Vox Clamantis* Gower employs a prophetic style of writing, fashioning his persona after a preaching prophet who gained his wisdom primarily through the divine agency. In the mirror of the *Confessio Amantis* his poetic persona (Genius) appears as a preacher admonishing the king with Aristotelian wisdom. In both cases, Gower consciously adopts a morally superior position in advising the king. Hoccleve's self-fashioning in the *Regiment of Princes* is very different: rooted in reality, his occupation as a clerk and in part his real financial troubles frame the poetic persona in this work. He represents his persona as the prince's humble servant who decided to translate for the prince the advice of authorities as a demonstration of his love and faithfulness. Although very different in their positioning, it is notable that both authors resorted to the literary styles and forms borrowed from other genres, such as Boethian *Consolation*, begging poetry, or even prophetic writing. Another shared, and equally determinant characteristic is that while *specula principum* authors were typically affiliated with the Church, which provided them with authority in their advice writing to the ruler, both Gower's and Hoccleve's creative fashioning of their literary persona was a result of the lack of such institutional authority.

Turning to the closely interrelated subject of their kingship discourse, I have argued that the similarity of Hoccleve's and Gower's vision of kingship, as well as the same sources of their writing, allows treating the discourses together as parts of the same discourse known and employed by both. The central place in both Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship is occupied by the idea of the king's double accountability, that is, that the king should be responsible for his political decisions towards both his people and God. This idea defines the authors' vision of the foundation and sources of the king's power, which is especially explicit from Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. The idea of double accountability is present through all main elements of the discourse and expressed by the author's use of *vox populi vox Dei* concept, which calls the king to listen to his people and to achieve a good reputation among them.

In their respective discussions of the king's main duties, both Gower and Hoccleve follow the moral paradigm presented in Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum* and, especially, in the *Secretum Secretorum*. For Gower and Hoccleve following the principal royal virtues and seeking the common good of both the king and his subjects are the basic elements designating the good rulership. Even the seemingly practical obligation of the king to follow and keep the law turns into an important virtue of justice, thereby, becoming a part of the moral paradigm of kingship. Subsequently, morality is only mean of limitation of the royal power in Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors.

The moral limitations of royal power are not just highly theoretical constructions in these works, since, as they point out, the king's failure to follow his duties has very practical implications. Importantly, in this case, both authors assert the possibility of the king's deposition. It is due to the fact that in their time this idea gradually became the part of the political practice which resulted in Richard II's deposition in 1399. It is especially relevant in Hoccleve's case, since he wrote the *Regiment of Princes* eleven years after the deposition, so the experience of this event may find its way into his writing. Additionally, both of the authors

employ the concept of tyranny which for them designates the highest degree of power abuse, namely, the excessive use of physical violence by the ruler.

The kingship discourse of Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors was largely informed by their main sources. However, the difference between the sources content and their authors' approach to political matters resulted in the combination of a moral paradigm of kingship with the double accountability theory. While the latter was the main feature of works I refer to as late medieval mirrors in this study, linking Gower's and Hoccleve's mirrors to a separate strand within the genre tradition, the former one still harkens back to *Secretum Secretorum* and the early medieval tradition.

On a final but important note, Gower's and Hoccleve's moralizing politics can be explained by the fact that the main field of their writing was popular poetry and not political treatises. Therefore, their mirrors may be treated as attempts to take sophisticated ideas about kingship down to the readers. Due to the poetic form of their writing, Gower and Hoccleve express complicated political ideas in a fairly simplistic way. However, despite the lack of philosophical education, their notion of these ideas was quite profound.

Thus, Gower's and Hoccleve's discourse of kingship is a complex construction involving different factors of influence. As I have demonstrated, the form and the content of their discourse were mainly informed by the author's own background, contemporary political context, as well as their sources. Thus, this thesis examined their discourse from the angle of its formation, while the other side of the question, namely, reception of Gower's and Hoccleve's works, remains open for the further research.

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