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ABSTRACT
This essay adopts Ben Jonson’s famous disparagement of Pericles as a “mouldy tale” in order to explore an important yet overlooked material prosthesis of poetic authority in the late medieval and early modern period: the tomb. Aiming to work around the critical preoccupation with the authorship of Pericles, I argue that, in contrast to modern, post-Romantic models of abstracted literary genius, the choric figure of Gower represents a premodern tradition wherein the graves of dead poets offer fertile ground, and their tomb monuments solid foundations, for the simultaneous dissolution and rebirth of poets. Moldy tales arising from moldy tombs thus find convention and innovation to be not agonistically opposed but fruitfully — if perhaps incestuously — interdependent.

For the subject of [stage plays] is borrowed out of our English Chronicles, wherein our forefathers valiant actes (that haue lyne long buried in rustie brasse and worme-eaten bookes) are reuived, and they themselves raysed from the Graue of Obliuion, and brought to pleade their aged Honours in open presence. (Nashe 1592, sig. H2)

Here I entomb my flesh, that it betimes
May take acquaintance of this heap of dust. (Herbert 2007, ll. 3–4)

Moldy authority

Early modern culture monumentalized medieval authors. When we think, for example, of Geoffrey Chaucer, it is likely that we see him much as he is depicted in modern editions like The Riverside Chaucer, which feature portraits of the author famously derived from the Ellesmere and Hoccleve manuscripts — goateed and gowned, holding pen and beads. We typically imagine him, in other words, as an isolated figure, a subject without a material setting. Yet in Thomas Speght’s 1598 and 1602 editions of Chaucer’s Workes, the famous portrait of Chaucer, complete with pen and beads, is presented as an inset in an elaborate and explicitly sepulchral framework (Figure 1). Modern editions conspicuously omit this monumental setting, but it is crucial to Speght, who presents “the true portraiture of Geoffrey Chaucer” erected upon the tomb of his son, Thomas, and surrounded by an aristocratic pedigree roll of “The Progenie of Geoffrey Chaucer,” illuminated by heraldic coats of arms.
hanging from vines supported by a trellis. Subsequent pages relate a poetic dialogue, “The Reader to Geoffrey Chaucer,” in which the dead poet, speaking from the grave, praises Speght as “The selfe same man who hath no labor spar’d / To helpe what time and writers had defaced” (1598, no sig.). As Speght’s early modern book recreates the medieval tomb, the past merges with the present such that “old words, which were unknown of many” have become “So plaine, that now they may be known of any” (1598, no sig.). “Throughout these prefatory texts,” writes Stephanie Trigg, “Speght resurrects a Chaucer who was once

Figure 1. Chaucer portrait with family crests and son’s tomb, from Speght’s 1602 edition. RB 99594, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
virtually lost in the mists of time, but whom he now redeems and presents to a modern audience through his own labours of love” (2008, 107). Whereas we tend to abstract poets away from their tombs, early moderns often found and situated literary authority precisely at the locus of the dead poet’s interment. Entombment somehow brought the author to life and into closer proximity.

Examining the choric figure of John Gower in William Shakespeare and George Wilkins’s *Pericles*, this essay recuperates the funereal accoutrements often associated with dead poets in order to demonstrate their significance to late medieval and early modern notions of authorship. Epitaphs, funeral orations, elegies, and imitations of ancient inscriptions were the hallmarks of the humanist classical revival both in England and on the Continent. But as Seth Lerer observes, in the late Middle Ages, “the encryption of the praised poet takes on a specific quality beyond the status of a literary trope”; and by the sixteenth century, “it becomes part of an obsession with the actual crypts of famous poets” (1993, 152; see also Prendergast 2004, 34–37). What drew early modern poets to the graves of their medieval forebears were, I argue, the complex temporalities of monuments. Indices of deterioration and decay, tomb inscriptions yet have a singular power to arrest time and movement. The popular early modern epitaphic formula — “As you are now, so once was I / As I am now, so shall you be” — fixes the reader in time and space; its first-person address blocks “physical motion (‘Stay, reader’) in order to inspire a different mode of moving — emotional and behavioral” (Newstok 2009, 30, emphasis in original).

Simultaneously recording and resisting the passage of time, monuments resemble Walter Benjamin’s “constellations.” In his “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” Benjamin rejects the Burckhardtian view of history as a homogenous “sequence of events like the beads of a rosary” and seeks instead to grasp the irregular “constellations” that form between and disrupt successive epochs. These constellations coalesce around pieces of the past; the ruin of *Trauerspiel* is an example, but it can be any shard that resists the sweep of the current of “homogenous, empty time” (1969, 263–64). Rather than signaling the advent of another epoch’s renewal, Benjamin’s messianic historical materialism, writes Jonathan Gil Harris, “qualifies historicism’s investment in orderly temporal succession” (2009, 94). This essay will consider Gower’s tomb as an illustrative “constellation” whose temporal obstinacy appealed to Wilkins and Shakespeare as they wrote *Pericles*.

I argue that the tombs of dead poets were vital prostheses of *auctoritas*; and like Benjamin’s obdurate historical materialist, the authors of *Pericles* imagine their own act of inscription as an exhumation of the long buried yet potent remains of Gower from England’s monumental past. For it is not simply the figure of “ancient Gower” but also Gower’s moldy tomb that is the means — the very material means — of the authorship of *Pericles*. Modernity, as Patricia Ingham reminds us, has curiously purified novelty, separating it from copying and fabrication, whereas the Middle Ages viewed tradition and repetition as productive of, rather than as opposed to, new objects, technologies, and ideas (2015, 15; see also Grady 2002, 1–15). Aligning itself with this older concept of innovation, *Pericles* proposes a model of Renaissance authorship that entails a profound investment in, and a sense of connectedness to, the past — and to the tombs of dead poets in particular.

Scholars and editors of *Pericles* often refer to Gower’s tomb without fully considering its singular importance as a medieval artifact to the play’s early modern authors. Suzanne Gossett’s Arden Third Series edition, for example, cites Catherine Duncan-Jones’s suggestion that “it was seeing Gower’s tomb in St. Saviour’s, now Southwark Cathedral, where
[his brother] Edmund was buried, that led Shakespeare to ‘summon up’ the ancient figure in Pericles, but as the church was close to the Globe the tomb would have been a familiar sight to both authors” (as cited in Gossett 2004, 60). Stephen Orgel elsewhere observes that the play “signals its commitment to the fabulous from the outset by recalling Gower from the grave to narrate it” (2001, xxxviii). Bruce Smith, who is keenly attuned to the material presence of the medieval past in early modern London, includes a photograph of the tomb in his recent essay on “Shakespeare's Middle Ages” and proposes, “Perhaps it was from this very tomb that Shakespeare and spectators at the Globe imagined Gower being resurrected to speak the Prologue” (2013, 19).

In the sixteenth century, Gower’s social status was, like that of Pericles in the play, questioned and debated, and was only resolved through recourse to his tomb monument (Figure 2). John Leland’s antiquarian notes, though unpublished, circulated after his death in 1552 and became the basis for John Bale’s Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytannie (1557–59). Bale’s entry on Gower declared the poet to be a knight of eminent lineage and cited, albeit erroneously, his tomb effigy with its “golden torque and the corona of ivy and roses, the first signaling knightly, and the second, poetic, rank” (Echard 2008, 103). In his 1598 Survey of London, however, John Stow set the record straight: “Iohn Gower was no knight neither had he any garland of Iuie & Roses but a Chaplet of foure Roses only” (Echard 2008, 102), reads a gloss of his entry on the poet. Stow’s detailed description of Gower’s tomb further testifies:

John Gower, a learned Gentleman and a famous Poet, (but no knight as some haue mistaken it) was then an especiall benefactor to that worke [the church of St Mary Overies, (later to become St. Saviour’s)], and was there buried on the North side of the said church vnder a tombe of stone, with his image also of stone lying over him: The haire of his heade aburne, long to his sholders, but curling vp, a small forked bearde, and on his head a chaplet, like a Coronet

Figure 2. Gower’s tomb in Southwark Cathedral. Photo courtesy of Siân Echard.
of foure Roses, therevpon an habite of purple, damasked downe to his feet, a collar of Esses gold about his necke, vnder his heade the likenesse of three bookes, which hee compiled. (as quoted in Echard 2008, 102.)

According to Siân Echard, “Stow’s description was then repeated and incorporated into the many literary histories and biographies which followed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” (102). Medieval tomb effigies thus underpin early modern — and indeed modern — notions of authorship and biography in very material ways, though by abstracting the autonomous Renaissance subject as much from the world of objects as from the Middle Ages, we have lost sight of the connection (see de Grazia 2007, 459–60).

Gower was closely associated not only with his tomb, but the “mouldy” soil of the grave as well. When his 1629 comedy *The New Inn* failed miserably to please playgoers, Ben Jonson famously took up his pen to relieve his irritation and wrote “Ode. To Himself,” which bitterly complains that audiences now have more of a taste for the bygone than for the new:

No doubt some mouldy tale,
Like *Pericles*, and stale
As the shrieve’s crusts

... May keep up the play-club. (as quoted in Rudrum, Black, and Nelson 2000, 160)

We have accepted the term “mouldy” as mere disparagement of the play as indeed Jonson intended it (on Jonson’s own archaisms, see Hillman 1985, 463n10; Cooper 2010a, 363; van den Berg 2000, 10). But I wish to recuperate its fuller, paradoxical meaning for its distinct hermeneutical value to the text and authorship of *Pericles*. Jonson elsewhere equates the term “mouldy” with the ground, the body, base physical entertainment, staleness, and decrepitude (see OED, “mouldy,” adj.1 2a) and seems to find it a fitting adjective for the age of Gower and Boccaccio; indeed, he has Volpone complain of “the rabble of these ground ciarlitani that spread their cloaks on the pavement as if they meant to do feats of activity, and then come in lamely with their mouldy tales out of Boccaccio, like stale Tabarin, the fabulist” (2.2.50–54) (Jonson 1999, 143).

To be moldy, however, is not simply to be “stale”; it carries the possibility of being both old-fashioned and innovative. Simultaneously a term used to describe the rotting and decayed remains of the human body and the earth of the grave as well as the fertile organic topsoil of cultivated land or garden, “mould” covers a richly divergent semantic field (see OED, n.1). The significance of mold therefore lies both in its materiality and in the temporal obstinacy that arises from it: as both decayed remains and fecund soil, a locus of death and birth, mold leavens the authority of the past with the promise of the future to confound what Benjamin later identified as the sweep of diachronic history. According to Steven Mullaney, *Pericles* itself represents an important point of origin for our modern notions of authorship. The play, he argues, “attempts to imagine a purely aesthetic realm governed by a purely aesthetic and not yet available figure, that of the author” (1988, 147; cf. Jones 2009, 207). The metaphor of lordship and mastery is telling of the kind of Burckhardtian tradition to which Mullaney’s concept of authorship, and ours, is indebted (see de Grazia, Quilligan, and Stallybrass 1996, 2–5; and Nagel and Wood 2005). Moldy authority in *Pericles*, however, resists the modern author’s lordship over the past and opposes “attempts to imagine a purely aesthetic realm governed by a purely aesthetic … author.” Instead, authority is sublimated, diffused, and distributed across an invented (in both the classical and modern senses of that term) literary community (see Martelli 2013, 222–29).
Let us imagine the probable staging of the play’s opening scene. The stage trapdoor opens. Through it emerges the King’s Men’s familiar tomb property (see Dessen and Thomson 1999, 232–33), but it is painted to look like Gower’s tomb in nearby St. Saviour’s. A collective gasp of breath, or possibly a reverent silence, greets the supine body of the courtier-lover dressed in his fourteenth-century crimson tunic. They see his hands folded in prayer and his head, wreathed with a chaplet of roses, resting on actual copies of his three great works. He rises, selects the Confessio amantis, and begins to speak of his rematerialization: “From ashes ancient Gower is come” (1.0.2). In this way, the resurrection of Gower is more than rhetorical. The audience bears witness to theater’s miraculous power of bodily revivification, both in the sense that the actor re-presents the dead poet and the tomb rematerializes the traditional dramatic conventions of the mystery and miracle plays (see Cooper 2010b; Schreyer 2014; Williamson 2009, 61; Womack 1999). Thomas Nashe’s 1592 pamphlet Pierce Penniless famously celebrates the theatrical power of reanimating what is “aged,” “rustie,” and “worme-eaten”:

How would it have ioyd braue Talbot (the terror of the French) to thinke that after he had lyne two hundred yeare in his Tomb, he should triumphe againe on the Stage, and haue his bones new embalmed with the teares of ten thousand spectators at least (at seuerall times) who in the Tragedian that represents his person, imagine they behold him fresh bleeding (sig. H2r).

Yet the tomb property in Pericles is something further still, for it is an effigy of an effigy; it, too, represents John Gower, who very likely designed the monument for the church (see Allen 1995).

The opening lines of Gower’s prologue advertise not the originality of the play but its antiquity:

To sing a song that old was sung  
From ashes ancient Gower is come,  
Assuming man’s infirmities  
To glad your ear and please your eyes.  
It hath been sung at festivals,  
On ember eyes and holy ales,  
And lords and ladies in their lives  
Have read it for restoratives.  
The purchase is to make men glorious,  
Et bonum quo antiquius eo melius.  
If you, born in these latter times  
When wit’s more ripe, accept my rhymes,  
And that to hear an old man sing  
May to your wishes pleasure bring,  
I life would wish, and that I might  
Waste it for you like taper light. (1.0.1–16)

No sooner is the “ancient” figure of Gower resurrected than he declares the obsolescence of the tale he is about to unfold (see Echard 2008, 101; Hoeniger 1982; Oesterlen 2004; Yeager 2009). It is not only unfashionable, it is unsophisticated and therefore must be excused by those “born in these latter times / When wit’s more ripe.” This apparent recognition of historical difference seems to align itself with familiar narratives of the sophistication of the early modern and the benightedness of the premodern, or the Middle Ages. It is, however, preceded by a medieval (and ancient) view of history in which Eden or the Golden
Age lies in the past, and progress brings decline: *Et bonum quo antiquius eo melius*, or “the older a good thing is, the better.” Gower’s claim that “lords and ladies in their lives / Have read it for restoratives” gilds archaic tales with an aristocratic veneer. More important, it asserts the authority of the past by encouraging the practice of exemplarity. The tale may serve as a “restorative” or tonic to soothe present ills, and the audience may profit from it by witnessing a pattern of glory or fame (“The purchase is to make men glorious”). As the play opens, therefore, it stages the tomb of old Gower as a foundation for the value and authority of the past.

The prologue speech endows a medieval subject with what would later be denied to the Middle Ages altogether: historical consciousness (see de Grazia 2007, 456–57). As he recites his hoary metrics, Gower is aware that he is anachronistic, out of his proper historical moment, and that he is about to begin a tale that “old was sung” (1.0.1; see Morse’s account of Gower’s “pastness” [2002, 129–48], as well as Roebuck and Maguire 2010; van Es 2013, 45–47). The song, he says, “hath been sung at festivals, / On ember eves and holy ales” (1.0.5–6); and in doing so, he reminds the audience of the Old Faith’s system of keeping time. Those days had been celebrated not only with music but with various forms of religious drama, including biblical pageants, miracle plays, and saints’ plays. Gower, then, is not only anachronistically misplaced in terms of diachronic history but also insofar as he is associated with the cycle of the liturgical calendar rather than the linear secular time of the commercial London stage (see Jensen 2008; Marshall 1991, 61–85). Gower brings with him from the Catholic past a ceremonial way of telling time, which perhaps partly explains the play’s appeal to the troupe of Yorkshire players who were arrested and charged in 1610 with the seditious promotion of Roman Catholicism for performing *Pericles* and *King Lear*. The play also confers upon Gower tremendous authority as to its own history, its own narrative story. As Christine Dymkowski has noted, “he speaks 307 of the play’s 2245 lines, about 13–14% of the total, although his presence is more dominating than that figure suggests” (2007, 244). This archaic figure, then, is unmistakably manipulative of historical, present, and fictional time.

**Speaking tombs**

Resurrecting Gower from his Southwark grave not only provides a fantastic opening spectacle for the play; it also serves as the means of exploring premodern conventions of authorship. And yet before we examine more closely why *Pericles* resurrects both the poet Gower and a likeness of the entombed Gower, we should first attend to the complex memory systems that off-stage tomb monuments represent. “A Monument,” wrote John Weever in his 1631 *Ancient Funerall Monuments*,

> is a thing erected, made, or written, for a memoriall of some remarkable action, fit to bee transferred to future posterities. And thus generally taken, all religious Foundations, all sumptuous and magnificent Structures, Cities, Townes, Towers, Castles, Pillars, Pyramides, Crosses, Obeliskes, Amphitheaters, Statues, and the like, as well as Tombes and Sepulchres, are called Monuments. (sig. B1v)

Weever’s description calls attention to the fact that, more than mere receptacles, funerary monuments are heralds who declare great things and great people “to future posterities.” Crucially, they speak “to future posterities” about “some remarkable action” or person from the past; and in doing so, they are temporally vectored and yet likewise polytemporal.
Furthermore, as things “erected, made, or written,” tomb effigies and lapidary verses aim to confound the scandal of the flesh and retain the identity of the deceased person through the material means of heraldry, armor, masonry, statuary, and inscription. “Stripped of these prostheses,” Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass explain, “the body returned to shameful anonymity” (2000, 270). Faced with this base indignation shared by all classes, the body entombed in an aristocratic tomb is monumentalized — much like the speaker of Shakespeare’s Sonnet 74, who claims that the poem will monumentalize his body. In Sonnet 55, the speaker famously outdoes even this claim: “Not marble nor the gilded monuments / Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme” (1–2).

In the case of Gower’s tomb, this insight takes on added significance. As Rosamund Allen explains,

The tomb presents a double paradox. Gower’s constant theme — ‘all things pass’ — and his concluding moral in Confessio Amantis [that only divine love may save the body] are challenged, even negated in his tomb, which attests the eternally pristine quality of poetic fame in the face of worldly dissolution (1995, 147).

Tombs, and particularly Gower’s sepulcher, which materially manifests and preserves his fame as a poet, must have been an attractive artifact for the playwrights who competed for patronage and profit in the environs of Southwark (see Burrow 2010; Bradbrook 1960). Notwithstanding Sonnet 55’s disparagement of aristocratic monuments, the poet who sees “unswept stone” (4) as a rival to his immortalizing verse is particularly attuned to its ability to resist the decaying forces of “death and all oblivious enmity” (9).

The tomb property staged in Pericles cannot “wear this world out to the ending doom” (12), but it, too, creates the double paradox Allen describes. It is both a dramatic carryover from pre-Reformation religious drama and a theatrical imitation of a medieval artifact and a recognizable piece of the present-day urban landscape of Southwark (see Jones 2009, 209). A past and present object, it confounds the diachronic view of time whereby the new and fashionable ever succeeds what is timeworn and obsolete. As in Sonnet 74, where “The worth of that [the body] is that which it contains, / And that is this, and this with thee remains” (13–14), the moldy tomb of Gower is the condition for his poetic afterlife on stage.

Tombs have given voice to poets from antiquity, and Shakespeare and Wilkins would have found numerous authoritative precedents for Gower’s speaking effigy in classical poetry. Exiled from Rome, Ovid opens his autobiography, that is, book 4, poem 10 of his Tristia, declaring:

Ille ego qui fuerim, tenerorum lusor amorum, quem legis, ut noris, accipe posteritas.

Sulmo mihi patria est, gelidis uberrimus undis, milia qui noviens distat ab urbe decem. (Fairweather 1987, 186)

Listen, reader, and learn that I am he who toyed with tender passions. Sulmo is my native land, many are its icy waters, ninety miles from the city of Rome. (translation mine)

Ovid borrows the phrase “Ille ego qui,” used here and in Tristia 3.3, from Roman grave inscriptions in which the deceased person is memorialized by epigraphic lists of titles, offices, and achievements, and is made to speak a direct address in the first person. According to Fairweather, he may also have proposed the phrase for his own epitaph.

Sixteenth-century English humanists quickly learned from Ovid that the ille ego sum/qui formula was a powerful way to poetically summon the dead to speak, but he was not the only ancient poet to adopt it. According to Christer Henriksén, “there is one instance
in Vergil, two in Tibullus, seventeen in Ovid, four in Silius, two in Valerius Flaccus, five in Statius, and one in Juvenal. It recurs also in the alternative (and certainly false) opening of the Aeneid (Ille ego, qui quondam gracili modulatus avena / carmen ['I am he who once played a tune on a slender reed']), which was probably intended as an inscription beneath a portrait of Vergil on the front page of a copy of the work” (2012, 9). Martial’s epigrams offer further ancient exempla for poets ventriloquizing other authorities, living and dead (Henriksén 2012, 213–14).

With its monumentalizing force and its inherent ability to commemorate a former or deceased patron or artist and to ventriloquize a dead poet, the ille ego sum/qui formula was readily adopted by poets and sculptors writing lapidarian epitaphs. As a result, ancient and medieval tombs began to speak, as Benedetto da Maiano’s 1490 monument to Giotto in Florence Cathedral vividly attests (Figure 3). The cenotaph was, like Pericles, a collaboration; and humanist Angelo Poliziano’s inscription, although almost certainly unknown to Shakespeare, is an illustrative “speaking epigram” — a self-conscious, first-person, post-mortem address by the artist himself:

Ille ego sum per quem pictura extincta revixit
cui quam recta manus tam fuit et facilis
naturae deerrae nostrae quod defuit arti
plus licuit nulli pingere nec melius
miraris turrim egregiam sacro aere sonantem
haec quoque demodulo creuit adastra meo
denique sum iottus quid opus fuit illa referre
hoc nomen longi carminis instar erat. (as quoted in Nagel and Wood 2010, 397)

Figure 3. Cenotaph of Giotto di Bondone. Duomo, Florence, Italy. ART339595. Photo credit: Nicolo Orsi Battaglini / Art Resource, NY.
I am he through whom painting, dead, returned to life
and whose hand was as sure as it was adept.
What my art lacked was lacking in nature herself.
To no one was it given to paint better or more.
Do you admire the great belltower resounding with sacred bronze?
This too on the basis of my model has grown to the stars.
After all, I am Giotto. What need was there to relate these things?
This name has stood as the equal to any long poem. (translated by Nagel and Wood 2010, 123)

In such funereal inscriptions, Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood note, “the represented person speaks about the past but from a permanent present tense” (2010, 125). Like Gower in Pericles, the monument to Giotto invokes tropes of resurrection (“per quem pictura extincta revixit”). Yet while the inscription brings the great Florentine artist into the present, the monument is temporally complicated by the fact that in Maiano’s portrait, Giotto works in the ancient medium of mosaic rather than paint. There is, in fact, a kind of futurity as well as antiquity to mosaic for, according to Vasari, “its long life can almost be eternal,” whereas painting is “extinguished over time” (as quoted in Nagel and Wood 2010, 130). “The tesserae did not fade,” Nagel and Wood explain; “and if they fell, they could easily be replaced one by one by a moderately skilled craftsman, with no impairment of the image’s reference to origins” (129). Just as “ancient Gower,” who “from ancient ashes is come,” and who will continue to live on with each new theatrical performance, the figure of Giotto is simultaneously antiquated, current, and perpetual.

Neither anterior to the monument nor an obstacle to later creative production, Giotto’s artistic authority is born of the collaboration of two modern artists, the humanist Poliziano and the sculptor Maiano; yet it is also modeled — or as Shakespeare would say, molded — after ancient Roman tomb inscriptions (see OED, “mould,” v.1 3a). Though the inscription declares the name of “Iottus” to be so self-sufficient as to make a long poetic tribute redundant, nevertheless the authorship celebrated by the tomb is not the private claim of an originator or founder (however singular and exceptional the monument itself declares him to be), but is instead communal and dispersed. On the one hand, Giotto stands alone for his talent (“plus licuit nulli pingere nec melius”). On the other hand, he provided only the model for the great bell tower; other skilled hands caused it to rise to the stars (“haec quoque demodulo crevit adastra meo”). Maiano’s decision to represent Giotto holding a mosaic cube rather than a paintbrush may be intended to further diffuse creative authorship. Whereas brush strokes record the trace of the artist’s hand as a kind of signature that recalls the historical moment of production, mosaic tiles, like stage properties in a theatrical performance, call attention to themselves as objects in a material medium without a unique temporal or authorial origin (see Nagel and Wood 2010, 129–30).

In the opening chorus of Pericles, Gower does not lay claim to originality; instead, he situates himself in a diffused, anonymous community of storytellers, which is underscored by the passive voice of his first lines: “To sing a song that old was sung / From ashes ancient Gower is come” (1.0.1–2). Faced with an audience who may wish to see something new, the play opens with the claim that the tale is moldier even than ancient Gower himself. In fact it moves outside of diachronic models of authorship, which, as Roland Barthes noted, are predicated upon novelty and origins such that “book and author stand automatically on a single line divided into a before and an after” ([1968] 2001, 1468, emphasis in original; see also Lynch 1998, 63). As Dymkowski (2007, 243) reminds us, the chorus Gower conspicuously shares productive agency with other dead poets as well as readers and audience:
“It hath been sung at festivals / … / And lords and ladies in their lives / Have read it for restoratives / … / If you, … / … accept my rhymes” (1.0.5, 7–8, 11–12, emphasis added). The elision of the classical ille ego sum/qui formula in favor of a self-introduction in the third person underscores the dispersion of authorship: Gower is a link in a historical continuum of stories and speakers. The tale has no single point of origin; begotten again and again, it is timeless. As with the inscription on Giotto’s cenotaph, Pericles is “a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture”; and “the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original” (Barthes [1968] 2001, 1468). Novelty is one of modernity’s most popular fictions. Ancient and medieval tombs, by contrast, are monuments to the futility of novelty, and their genius lies in the fact that, in their materiality, they sublimate and distribute creative authority even as they constitute a rebirth of the celebrated poet — begetting him that did them beget.

Moldy books

In medieval London, as in Florence, tombs could serve as the foundations for the rebirth and afterlife of poets and artists, even when — particularly when — the inscriptions on them were subjected to the ravages of time. For this reason, early English books fostered the connection between printed texts and moldy tombs; and in doing so, they revived ancient legends of the author’s book found uncorrupted within his tomb (see Lerer 1993, 153–60; Newstok 2009, 5–7; Trapp 1973). In his 1602 edition of Chaucer’s Workes, Speght transcribes several inscriptions, or “old verses,” that “were written on [Chaucer’s] grave at the first.” This includes those written “About the ledge of which tombe … now clean wore out”:

Si rogites quis eram, forsan te fama docebit:
Quod si fama negat, mundi quia gloria transit,
Hac monumenta lege. (1602, sig. c.i.v)

If you want to know who I was, perhaps the report of Fame will teach you;
But if you refuse to listen to Fame, because the glory of the world is fleeting,
Then read this monument. (translation mine)

Speght co-opt the inscription to promote his book: once aimed at pilgrims to the Abbey, it now invites prospective readers to buy the printed monument of Chaucer’s Workes. Yet, crucially, the book and the tomb co-operate rather than compete in the formation of poetic identity. Speght himself sees this, for he follows these transcribed epitaphs with several passages borrowed from Thomas Hoccleve, claiming:

Now it shall not be amisse to these Epitaphes, to adde the judgements & reports of some learned men, of this worthy and famous Poet. And first of all Thomas Occleue, who liued in his daies, writeth thus of him in his booke De Regimine Principis (1602, sig. c.ii.; 1598, c.i.v).

In this way, Speght both restores verses no longer legible on the tomb itself and adds to them, as if the prefatory matter of his volume were a material and temporal extension of the Abbey monument. Indented and printed in a “nostalgic” (Lesser 2006, 120) blackletter, the quotations from Hoccleve appear as gothic tomb inscriptions on the page.

Both the 1598 and 1602 editions lavishly attempt to recreate the funereal monument of “our Antient and learned English Poet, Geoffrey Chaucer” (Speght 1598 and 1602, title pages). In addition to “the true portraiture of Geffrey Chaucer” discussed at the beginning of this essay, the title pages are ornamented, as we might expect, with massive columns, plinths,
cornices, scrolls, and even an ancient funerary urn (Figures 4 and 5). More significant, these otherwise cold, hard, and lifeless edifices, impressive as they are, are thickly festooned with vines bearing heavy clusters of grapes. Palms, cornucopia, and other vegetative growths sprout wildly and almost uncontainably from the monument surrounding the table of contents, thus lending a rich graphic illustration to the inscription surmounting it in some variants of the edition:
CHAVCER: Out of the old fields, as men sayth,
Commeth all this new corn, fro yere to yere:
And out of old books, in good fayth,
Cometh al this new science that men lere. (Speght 1598, title page)

Joining soil and text, the inscription contends that novelty (“new corn” and “new science”) is not a departure from the past, but is in fact rooted in and nurtured by “old fields” and “old books” (Speght 1598, title page). Highlighting (like the figure of Gower in Pericles) the restorative power of books, and especially old books, Speght’s editions are material monuments, complete with numerous inscriptions that address the viewer-reader.
In Book 4 of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser (1978) also considers the co-operative relationship between poems and tombs, and in particular Chaucer’s time-worn grave (next to which his own body would later rest):

> Whylome as antique stories tellen vs,
> Those two were foes the fellonest on ground,
> And battell made the dredest daenourous,
> That euer shrilling trumpet did resound;
> Though now their acts be no where to be found,
> As that renowned Poet them compyled,
> With warlike numbers and Heroicke sound,
> Dan Chaucer, well of English vndefyled,
> On Fames eternall beadroll worthie to be fyled.

> But wicked Time that all good thoughts doth waste,
> And workes of noblest wits to nought out weare,
> That famous moniment hath quite defaste,
> And robd the world of threasure endlesse deare,
> The which mote haue enriched all vs heare.
> O cursed Eld the cankerworme of writs,
> How may these rimes, so rude as doth appeare,
> Hope to endure, sith workes of heauenly wits
> Are quite deuourd, and brought to nought by little bits? (4.2.32–33)

These two stanzas strategically capitalize on the problem of time. Although they seem to lament the gradual yet inevitable defacing of Chaucer’s tomb, and with it poetic fame itself, a second reading uncovers an important ambiguity: if time is so implacable, then how do “antique stories” survive to us? And how is Chaucer’s fame still potent enough to be said to be more “heauenly” than Spenser’s “rimes so rude”? The very threat of time, which is to say the fact that Chaucer is dead, entombed, and growing moldy, presents Spenser with a poetic opportunity: he deploys the commonplace of time as the destroyer of worlds in order to couple his poem to Chaucer’s works — and to Chaucer’s poetic fame, which is still preserved, despite the ravages of time, in stone and print. A number of words therefore underscore the degenerative effects of time, including “waste,” “out weare,” “defast,” and “robd.” Lamenting the apparent waning of Chaucer’s fame, Spenser offers his own palliating verses as what the Chorus figure of Gower calls “restoratives” (*Pericles*, 1.0.8) for the dead poet’s supposedly declining reputation. For just as he perpetuates Chaucer’s vernacular poetic project of championing the “warlike numbers and Heroicke sound … of English vndefyled,” he revives Chaucer by boldly daring to resume and complete the famously unfinished Squire’s Tale.

More than gloomy monuments to time and death, late medieval and early modern tombs are often fertile sites for poetic resurrection and birth. As late as 1679, when Restoration critics were beginning to represent native English poets like Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare as innovative alternatives to French neoclassical taste, an edition of Spenser’s *Works* annexed its printed text to the dead poet’s tomb with a stately frontispiece that occupies the full folio page opposite the title page (Figure 6). Its inscription reinforces the connection between tomb and book: “Heare Iyes (expecting the Second comminge of our Saviour Christ Iesus) the body of Edmond Spencer the Prince of Poets in his tyme whose Divine Spirit needs noe othir witnesse then the works which he left behind him.” Though the book lavishly reproduces the tomb monument with a large engraving, the printed tomb inscription abandons the traditional role of epigraphic witness to the tomb’s contents and instead points to the
pages of the subsequent folio text that encase “the works which he left behind him.” So, too, the inscription added at the bottom of the engraving points from tomb to text telling the reader,

Such Is the Tombe the Noble Essex gave  
Great Spencer’s learned Reliques, such his grave.  
How “ere ill-treated in His Life he were,  
His sacred Bones Rest Honourably Here.

The ambiguity of the final word is strategic: book and tomb co-operatively share the role of providing a space for Spenser’s “learned Reliques” to rest — and to be revived. Like the tomb, the book becomes a memorial artifact, an incised receptacle from which the “divine spirit” of the dead poet communicates to modern readers; but in doing so, it also becomes a dramatic space where, in Lerer’s terms, the “drama of mourning” becomes “a drama of reading” (1993, 154; see also Prendergast 2015, 53–57 on the erection of Spenser’s monument).

Though he disparaged *Pericles*, Jonson himself was well aware of the productive bibliographic coupling of book and tomb, as his commendatory poem in the 1623 First Folio, “To the memory of my beloved, The Author, Mr. William Shakespeare” (Greenblatt et al. 2016, A28), attests:

My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by  
Chaucer or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie  
A little further to make thee a room;  
Thou art a monument without a tomb.
And art alive still while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read and praise to give. (19–24)

Jonson’s poem performs an act of *translatio*, moving Shakespeare’s body from its remote Warwickshire crypt to the proximate pages of the Folio being thumbed by would-be buyers in the book stalls of St Paul’s (cf. Lerer 1993, 157 on Surigonus’s epitaph on Chaucer). The material text of the folio, Jonson claims, has the power to resurrect and bestow poetic immortality on his “beloved” friend. Thus “alive still,” or continually “while thy book doth live,” Shakespeare is a “monument without a tomb,” an ever-living poetic presence whose book will allow him to avoid the anonymity of the grave in the same way that an aristocratic tomb effigy monumentalizes the deceased person. Yet Shakespeare’s fame is neither self-evident nor essential; it is discursively created by Jonson’s poem. Conjuring Shakespeare to “rise,” Jonson is the agent of resurrection. He, and by extension the readers who will buy the folio, will determine where Shakespeare will “lodge” and how long he will live (cf. Prendergast 2015, 60–63).

**Armorial identity**

Beyond Gower’s chorus speeches, the play demonstrates its interest in older systems of identity and poetic reputation both in Pericles’s rusty armor and in his tournament sigil. Like monumental aristocratic tombs, armor serves as a polytemporal material prosthesis of genealogical identity that confounds the death of successive generations (see Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 251). Far removed from his kingdom and his family, the shipwrecked Pericles might as well be — and would have been suspected to be — a banished nobleman. Arriving on shore without armor, his loss of identity is complete, and he apostrophizes:

Wind, rain, and thunder, remember earthly man
Is but a substance that must yield to you,
Let it suffice the greatness of your powers
To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes,
And, having thrown him from your wat’ry grave,
Here to have death in peace is all he’ll crave. (2.1.2–3, 8–11)

Far from invoking the majestic plural, Pericles speaks of himself as an insignificant third person. He is not simply a “man,” but, crucially, an “earthly man” and “a substance” that yields to the forces of nature; he is clay or mold without a grave. “Bereft” of the title of “prince,” when he later addresses the fishermen he can’t even speak the word: “What I have been, I have forgot to know” (2.1.70, emphasis added). The bluntness of the statement reflects the hollowness he feels toward himself, and these ruminative rustics have more to do with court matters than he does at this moment in the play.

Lacking aristocratic accouterments, he, like Edgar, feels the full weight of his mortality and the utter lack of personhood (see de Grazia 1996, 24). Here at the nadir of his fortunes, Pericles desires not merely death but oblivion — burial without a tomb monument. Having been thrown from a watery grave, he begs the poor fishermen: “when I am dead, / For that I am a man, pray see me burièd” (2.1.75–76). Lacking effigy or inscription, a grave is an index of mutability, for it lacks a monumental prosthesis that, like a father’s bequeathed armor, would provide the living scion with the genealogical soil from which to flourish amid the exigencies of the world.
The play thus signals its keen interest in the form of Pericles's catastrophe. As with Thaisa's coffin, Pericles's peripeteia in Act Two, Scene one is a resurrection. When his father's armor is recovered, we witness the immediate resuscitation of his aristocratic personhood as his social identity comes flooding back to him in a tide of first-person pronouns:

Thanks, Fortune, yet, that after all thy crosses
Thou givest me somewhat to repair myself!
It was mine own, part of my heritage,
Which my dead father did bequeath to me
With this strict charge, even as he left his life:
“Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield
Twixt me and death”—and pointed to this brace.
“For that it saved me, keep it. In like necessity,
From which the gods protect thee, may't defend thee.”
It kept where I kept, I so dearly loved it,
Till the rough seas that spares not any man
Took it in rage, though, calmed, have given't again.
I thank thee for’t—my shipwreck now's no ill,
Since I have here my father gave in his will. (2.1.119–32)

The armor that once protected his father from death in battle will now shield Pericles from the social death of ignominy and baseness. As Jones and Stallybrass point out, “it is the armor that is both the identifier of his status, however decayed, and, at the same time, the material mnemonic that joins him to his father” (2000, 258). The sea has not, however, “given’t again” (2.1.130) in the same condition as when his father wore it. It now has something of the grave about it, as if Pericles will remain in some ways the “earthly man” (2.1.2) he was when he washed up on the shore of Pentapolis.

For the armor is now covered with rust, the metallic form of corrosion and decay — that is to say, mold. As Thomas Roebuck and Laurie Maguire explain, “This armour complicates any simple narrative of historical recovery; instead it embodies historical contradictions. The armour is rusty and old. It is remade in the present. It is a restorative which provides hope for the future” (2010, 38). Furthermore, it is the moldiness of Pericles’s armor that sets him apart:

It is this rusty armor that enables Pericles to participate in the tournament that Simonides holds for his daughter, Thaisa’s, birthday, and it is thus the precondition for his wooing and wedding of Thaisa. But the armor’s decay marks him out to the spectators as “the meane Knight. Pericles’s armor is indeed the subject of mockery” (Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 258).

One of the Pentapolis lords jests that “by his rusty outside he appears / To have practied more the whipstock than the lance” (2.2.48–49), while another hopes to see the rust scoured from the armor “in the dust” of defeat (2.2.53). But the play, like king Simonides, finds virtue not in fashion but in mold and rust: “Opinion’s but a fool that makes us scan / The outward habit for the inward man” (2.2.54–55). Mold, as we have seen, is a sign of flourishing as well as deterioration.

In addition to his rusty armor, Pericles bears a shield emblem and motto that reflect his recent restoration and his budding hope: “In hac spe vivo [I live in this hope]” (2.2.43). His heraldic axiom is emblazoned on the background or “field” of the escutcheon — what in the fifteenth and sixteenth century was termed the “mould,” for armorial coats are metaphorically associated not only with genealogical trees and flowers, but also with meadows and soil (see OED, s.v. “mould” 6; and MED, s.v. “mold[e]” n. 1, 4). Observing the stranger knight’s sigil, Simonides says to his daughter,
A pretty moral!
From the dejected state wherein he is,
He hopes by you his fortunes yet may flourish. (2.2.43–45)

In Act 1, Antiochus's riddle, like a tomb inscription, had been juxtaposed with the memento mori of the tyrant's previous victims whose “dead cheeks advise [Pericles] to desist / From going on death's net” (1.1.40–41). Pericles’s “withered branch that's only green at top” seems likewise imperiled (2.2.42). But as Frederick Kiefer notes, it “evokes a genealogical tree, a symbol long used to represent a family’s lineage” (1991–92, 210). It is therefore a moldy badge, a seemingly dead yet living branch that heralds a fruitful match between Thaisa and Pericles.

The incestuous womb/tomb

In Pericles, the fruitfulness of moldy poetic soil allows Shakespeare to rework the scandalous theme of incest from Gower’s tale into a productive reflection on the mechanism of vernacular authorship that subverts early modernity’s growing demand for, in Ingham’s words, “innovation as utterly distinct from the old” (2015, 3). The play considers “not the new as opposed to what has gone before, but entwined with it” (17, emphasis in original). For incest itself is “untimely,” that is, temporally obstinate as it refuses to conform to the linearity of generational succession. As Pericles observes:

Where now you’re both a father and a son
By your untimely clasplings with your child—
Which pleasures fits a husband, not a father—
And she an eater of her mother’s flesh
By the defiling of her parents’ bed. (1.1.128–32)

Here in the opening scene in Antioch, incest is genealogically disastrous, an unproductive and self-consuming act. Yet before the scene closes, Pericles, refusing Antiochus’s demand for an answer to the riddle, declares, “All love the womb that their first being bred— / Then give my tongue like leave to love my head” (1.1.108–9). Throughout his career, Shakespeare explores Ovid’s collocation of womb and tomb, generation and degeneration. Beginning with this strange appeal to the womb, the play begins a process of recuperating incest that will culminate in the Act 5 reunion of Pericles and Marina. Editors and critics often note the incestuous incongruity of Pericles’s aphorism in Act 1, Scene 1, but what has been overlooked is its conception of the tongue, the organ of poet and player alike. Like a child in the womb of its mother, the tongue is vitally enclosed within the head, the locus of memory, inspiration, and invention. Nourished by its mother’s body to which it is vitally tethered, the child-poet cannot speak apart from that body.

The play returns to the mother’s womb in Gower’s Act 3 chorus; this single use of the word “mold” in the play is used to describe the begetting of Marina: “Hymen hath brought the bride to bed, / Where by the loss of maidenhead / A babe is molded” (3.0.9–11). Further implicating gestation and demise, this same choric speech sets the stage for Thaisa’s death and burial at sea. Antiochus’s daughter, described by Pericles as a “glorious casket stored with ill” (1.1.78), is thereby replaced by Thaisa, whose cofined body emits “a delicate odor” and is “Shrouded in cloth of state, / Balmed and entreasured with full bags of spices” (3.2.59, 62–63). Yet the play is keenly aware that the sea, as Cyrus Mulready explains, “provides an unfit place to lay a ‘monument’ to Thaisa”; and Pericles’s grief “comes, in part, from his
not being able to perform proper burial rites on land” (2013, 159–60). In contrast to her mother’s full and “entreasured” casket, Marina’s empty tomb in Tarsus bears a misleading epitaph “writ / By wicked Dionyza” (4.4.32–33), falsely declaring that the ocean, which once flooded the shore in joy at Marina’s birth, now devours the coast in anger at her death.

When Pericles is ultimately reunited with his daughter, he is repeatedly struck by Marina’s resemblance to her mother:

My dearest wife was like this maid, and such a one
My daughter might have been: my queen’s square brows,
Her stature to an inch, as wand-like straight,
As silver-voiced, her eyes as jewel-like
And cased as richly, in pace another Juno. (5.1.98–102)

He later tells her directly “thou lookest / Like one I loved indeed” (5.1.115–16). She is not an “eater of her mother’s flesh” like Antiochus’s daughter, but a reanimation of Thaisa. It is not until she verifies her identity as his daughter that the destructive incest of Antiochus is fully recalled and recuperated. Pericles describes his restoration to health and happiness in terms of reproduction and resurrection:

Oh, come hither,
Thou that begett’st him that did thee beget,
Thou that wast born at sea, buried at Tarsus,
And found at sea again. (5.1.184–87)

These lines conspicuously recall — and refute — the false account of Marina’s death on her tomb in Tarsus. They also achieve the resolution of the play in distinctly incestuous terms — as a return of what had been repressed (cf. Williams 2002, 617; Segall 2008). Indeed, she herself becomes a funereal tomb effigy:

…thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings’ graves and smiling
Extremity out of act. (5.1.128–30)

Having seen Marina survive many threats, the audience knows, as Pericles does not (yet), that she has a miraculous talent for outfacing extremity. Yet Pericles’s simile imagines her as an effigy able to withstand death itself. That is, he monumentalizes her. Significantly, Pericles’s monumentalizing of Marina at line 129 must occur before she can “beget” him at line 185.

Marina’s restoration of Pericles is not a daughter feeding “of her mother’s flesh / By the defiling of her parents’ bed” (1.1.131–32), but is instead a daughter giving birth to her father. Whereas Zurcher argues that in Marina “the present solidifies as already retrospective, static and dead” (2003, 920), I am suggesting that, according to the play’s moldy logic, whereby generation and degeneracy are inextricably linked, diachronic lineage is essential to the achievement of this circular reproductive logic. As Larry Scanlon argues concerning Gower’s “Tale of Apollonius,” the reunion of father and daughter is “a fusion of identity, whereby she takes on his mastery and initiates his recognition precisely by invoking his lineage, that is, her embodiment of his patriarchal accomplishment.” In this way, he adds, “incestuous desire cannot ultimately be separated from familial devotion. It is only through the discourse of lineage that the ambiguity gets resolved” (1998, 122). To be clear, this is by no means a univocal triumph of diachronic generation tantamount to Burckhardtian teleology; it is more akin to Benjamin’s “weak messianism,” whereby an oppressed past makes possible a hopeful
future. As Scanlon explains, in achieving its resolution the narrative does not demonstrate the essential justice of the patriarchal law of exogamy. On the contrary, the narrative comes to resolution by demonstrating the law’s essential injustice, then counterpoising it with the figure of the good daughter, who absorbs that injustice and transcends it (123).

It is Marina that makes Pericles a father, not Pericles himself. What further guarantees the restoration of his patriarchy also has nothing to do with him: it is the return of the mother, Thaisa, whom Marina so closely resembles. And no sooner does Pericles see his wife — which is to say, no sooner is she brought to life again — than he wishes to bury her: “Oh, come, be buried / A second time within these arms” (5.3.43–44).

In Pericles, authorial incest — the recycling of literary material from author to author — is shown to be as natural and productive as a mother nourishing the child in her womb. Gower’s opening chorus compares it to medicinal “restoratives” whose “purchase is to make men glorious” (1.0.8–9). In Scanlon’s terms, authorship, like the paternity of Pericles, “is by no means some ineradicable essence. On the contrary, it is an entirely discursive structure” (1998, 123) in which a modern writer begets his poetic identity upon the figure of the ancient authority to whom he gives, and from whom he receives, life. And the site for this revivification is none other than the moldy tomb of the dead poet. Like Barthes’ modern scriitor, Gower and Shakespeare are not paternal subjects who predicate distinct textual progeny; rather, they are poets who are begotten simultaneously in the same intertextual bed of language, “which ceaselessly calls into question all origins” ([1968] 2001, 1468). The authority of the dead poet is not an obstacle to be overcome by the living poet. The deceased author is brought to life — restored “from ashes” (1.0.2) — by his successors in order to facilitate the modern act of inscription, to fertilize the present poetic field with his moldy remains. In the play’s Epilogue, Gower, who in the opening chorus had named the present age “more ripe” (1.0.12), now speaks in modern iambic pentameter as if he has finally, at the close of the play, been drawn fully into the present moment of performance and come to fruition.

**Conclusion: Et in Arcadia ego**

This essay has argued that Wilkins and Shakespeare’s encounter with the tomb of Gower may have been an experience so powerful that they channeled and conjured it into the dramatic voice of their play, the Chorus figure of Gower (a role which Shakespeare himself may have played). But the term “resurrection,” which I and other scholars have used to describe the rematerialization of Gower in Pericles is, in the final analysis, not quite apt. It assumes that the body of Gower (the medieval object) was dead and that Shakespeare (the Renaissance subject) revived him. But in Pericles, it is the medieval artifact, the tomb of Gower, which is the essential, moldy soil for the creativity of the Renaissance author. Moldy authority makes possible a double vision of the past: as both departed and yet mysteriously alive to the present as it refuses to stay dead (cf. Davis 2010; O’Connell 1999). The enormous success of Pericles may have had something to do with this phenomenon as well; for as Orgel observes, it stages the figure of ancient Gower “not merely to provide a narration, but to insist that its action is the realization of a book” (2001, xl). Perhaps Jonson was right: London playgoers wanted a “mouldy tale.” Pericles satisfied their taste for the out-of-date and allowed them to touch the past through a direct encounter with Gower’s theatrically reanimated effigy.
We are mistaken when we associate tombs merely with death and decay. Like the monument in Poussin’s famous painting, the moldy graves of dead poets not only have their place in Arcadia, but they also assure the early modern poet will have one as well. Consequently, this essay ends where many studies of Pericles begin: with the question of its shared authorship. Whether or not Shakespeare collaborated with George Wilkins on the text, the play finds its author — its authority — in the tomb of John Gower.

Notes
1. All quotations of Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets are from Greenblatt et al. 2016, and hereafter will be cited parenthetically in the text.
2. Speght does not include this inscription in the 1598 edition, and indeed it is difficult to know what he means when he claims that the verses were inscribed on Chaucer’s grave “at the first”; for he must have known, as William Camden’s 1600 guidebook to the monuments and epitaphs of the Abbey records along with this same inscription, that the monument does not mark Chaucer’s original resting place and had been erected less than half a century before. See Camden, Reges, reginae, nobiles, & alij in ecclesia collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterij sepulti (London, 1600), sig. IIv.
3. The verse is not featured on the title page of the 1602 edition, though the edifice bears more verdant growth. As Frank Grady has pointed out to me, this passage from Chaucer’s Parlement of Foules conspicuously represents his “new” dream-vision poem as arising from an encounter with Macrobius’s “old” book — that itself preserved an older text, namely Cicero’s Dream of Scipio from the conclusion of The Republic. On the manner in which Chaucer “explicitly casts intellectual endeavor as a metaphorical harvesting of ‘new corn’ out of ‘old fields,’” see Ingham 2015, 117–19.

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