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IV

Middle English: Chaucer

VALERIE ALLEN AND MARGARET CONNOLLY

This chapter has four sections: 1. General; 2. *Canterbury Tales*; 3. *Troilus and Criseyde*; 4. Other Works. The ordering of individual tales and poems within the sections follows that of the Riverside Chaucer edition.

1. General

Mark Allen and Bege K. Bowers continue to oversee the production of 'An Annotated Chaucer Bibliography 2001' (*SAC* 25[2003] 459–546); for the electronic version see the New Chaucer Society webpage: http://artsci.wustl.edu/ ~chaucer/ or http://uchaucer.utsa.edu.

Chaucer's language and Chaucer's politics prove to be two subjects of most vibrant scholarly enquiry this year. Although Tim Machan's sociolinguistic study of *English in the Middle Ages* is not primarily concerned with literature, he gives a detailed reading of *The Reeve's Tale* in his fourth chapter, which asks the question: 'What's a dialect before it's a dialect?' (p. 111). Noting that Chaucer's use of language is usually fairly homogeneous, Machan tries to explain the presence of dialect in the tale and to demonstrate how the status of a language can figure in cultural activity; there is also passing reference to other parts of *The Canterbury Tales* and the dream poems in this chapter, as well as a detailed analysis of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Elsewhere in this thought-provoking book Machan explores the relationship between languages, dialects, and nations, using Henry III's issue of two English letters in 1258 (nicely presented in a fold-out facsimile) as his starting point when attempting to determine how the status of a language such as Middle English comes into being.

Another monograph study, this time wholly devoted to the subject of *The Language of the Chaucer Tradition*, is presented by Simon Horobin. The first introductory chapter offers useful thumbnail sketches of recent developments in Chaucer manuscript studies and Middle English dialectology. Chapter 2 considers the place of Chaucer's language within the London dialect of Middle English in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and how scribes responded to this Type III London English. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the manuscripts of

The Canterbury Tales. Horobin evaluates the evidence offered by the Hengwrt and Ellesmere manuscripts for Chaucer's own linguistic practices, and also localizes all of the fifty-four complete manuscripts of the *Tales*, affording provincial products the same respect as metropolitan ones, and compiling a wealth of information about provenance. The three final chapters look, in different ways, at the history of Chaucer's verse after his own time: chapter 5 surveys the Chaucer printed tradition from Caxton to the Riverside edition, noting editorial strategies that maintain linguistic accessibility; chapter 6 shows how changes in English grammar affected scribal understanding of metre and rhyming practices; and chapter 7 charts the influence of Chaucer's language on later English poets such as Hoccleve and Lydgate, and on the Scottish scribes who copied Chaucer's work. Earlier versions of parts of chapters 3 and 4 have previously appeared in article form (see *YWES* 81[2002] 249; 82[2003] 205–6), but otherwise this clearly written and wide-ranging study is wholly new. This is a brilliant analysis of Chaucer's language that shows up—in the nicest possible way—the inadequacies of former studies. Some of the scaffolding of the argument betrays the book's origins as a thesis, but this also contributes to its clarity. At fewer than 200 pages this is not a big book, but it comes to some big conclusions. Horobin identifies three major areas, all pertinent to Chaucerians, which require renewed attention: the development of the London dialect needs to be reconsidered; traditional assumptions regarding the authorship of certain works need to be revisited (essentially, the *Equatorie* may be out of the canon, and the whole of the *Romaunt* may be in, on which see also his article 'Pennies, Pence and Pans' below); and finally the vexed question of dating Hengwrt and Ellesmere, as well as the consequences of this for the editing of *The Canterbury Tales*, rears its head again. An even bigger issue, and one that Horobin is not afraid to confront, is our ever-increasing reliance on the Riverside Chaucer, which, with its hybrid text, provides a convenient but lazy and inaccurate touchstone. Throughout this book Horobin argues for the crucial importance of seeing Chaucer's work and language within the context of its manuscripts; his attention to precisely this matter has produced a rare study that will interest both linguists and literary critics, whether or not they are Chaucerians.

There is also the usual clutch of articles treating aspects of Chaucer's language. Chaucer's usage of *ye* and *thou* forms is analysed in a posthumously published essay by David Burnley, 'The T/V Pronouns in Later Middle English Literature' (in Taavitsainen and Jucker, eds, *Diachronic Perspectives on Address Term Systems*, pp. 27–45). Burnley warns that we cannot be certain that pronoun choice belongs to the author's original text, and that our knowledge of the socio-historical factors that influenced linguistic usage is incomplete. Nevertheless he concludes that pronominal address forms tend to collocate with specific lexical items, and finds that the plural pronoun *ye* as an address form for a singular addressee is restricted to courtly genres; in other types of discourse, including learned, religious, and unsophisticated, speakers used the singular pronoun to address a singular addressee. In the courtly genre the plural address form was further restricted to non-intimate addressees of greater age or higher status. Switches between *ye* and *thou* may be explained on the basis of affection, rhetoric and genre. In another essay in the same volume, "And if ye wol nat so, my lady

sweete, thanne preye I thee ....": Forms of Address in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* (in Taavitsainen and Jucker, eds., pp. 61–84), Thomas Honegger discusses the seemingly arbitrary variation between *ye* and *thou* in the ritualistic addresses to deities in this tale. Honegger argues that pronominal forms must be investigated within a broader context that takes account of the situational status of the interactants, and incorporates not just linguistic but non-linguistic elements of adversion such as self-reference, gesture, and spatial position. Elsewhere Verena Jung and Angela Schrott examine speech act shift in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue* in 'A Question of Time? Question Types and Speech Act Shifts from a Historical-Contrastive Perspective: Some Examples from Old Spanish and Middle English' (in Jaszczolt and Turner, eds, *Meaning Through Language Contrast*, vol. 2, pp. 345–71). Combining historical pragmatics with translation studies, they take two of the Wife's most infamous statements and note whether the sentence focus of the original is maintained or altered in two intralingual translations of the text (modern English versions by Coghill and Lumiansky) and two translations into modern German (by Kemmler and Lehnert).

Mary Catherine Davidson writes on 'Code-Switching and Authority in Late Medieval England' (*Neophil* 87[2003] 473–86) using approaches adapted from studies of multilingualism in linguistics to investigate patterns of mixed-language speech in *The Canterbury Tales*, *Piers Plowman*, and *The Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft*. She finds that choice of language is bound up with social motivation, and that mixed-language speech can be used to construct authority. R.D. Eaton writes on 'Gender, Class and Conscience in Chaucer' (*ES* 84[2003] 205–18), comparing occurrences of the term *conscience* in *The Canterbury Tales* (principally in *The Second Nun's Tale*, *The Legend of Good Women*, and *Troilus*, and concluding that the perceived diversity in Chaucer's use of this term is linked to factors of gender and class. Simon Horobin builds an interesting case on the word *panne* in 'Pennies, Pence and Pens: Some Chaucerian Misreadings' (*ES* 84[2003] 426–32). Far from meaning 'dish' or 'pan', as has been suggested for various contexts in *The Reeve's Tale* and *The Friar's Tale*, Horobin argues that the form 'panne' is a common variant of the form 'penny' in Middle English, particularly in the Essex and London dialects; the discovery of an attestation of the form in a London Guild Return of 1389 makes his argument compelling, and carries some implications for critical interpretation. Horobin further argues that if we are to accept the greater linguistic variety found in London English of this period then the evidence for Chaucer's authorship of the later part of the *Romaunt* needs to be reconsidered.

Turning to Chaucer's politics, not one shred of positive evidence exists to suggest that Chaucer was bumped off nor does this book produce any, but in *Who Murdered Chaucer? A Medieval Mystery* Terry Jones and his team of researchers (Terry Dolan, Juliette Dor, Alan Fletcher, and Robert Yeager) spin a 400-page yarn of circumstantial evidence arguing that in the paranoia of the new Lancastrian regime Chaucer's work appeared ideologically suspect, and that the poet and his work were actively suppressed by the real villain of the moment, who was not Henry IV but Thomas Arundel, reinstated archbishop of Canterbury. The first six chapters focus on Richard II, and piece by piece dismantle the edifice, constructed in the chronicles after 1399, that portrays Richard as the unpopular,

irresponsible, luxurious tyrant who sold England down the river in the Hundred Years' War. The chronicles' picture of a loyal Bolingbroke who returns to reclaim his birthright and unwillingly accepts the mantle of power thrust upon him by the nation is also contested. Instead, Bolingbroke is presented as having come under the influence of Arundel while on the Continent in exile; usurpation seems intended from the beginning. In light of the need of Henry's administration for court poets to write serious propaganda, Chaucer's *Complaint to his Purse* looks measly at best in comparison to Gower's self-serving hyperboles. Arundel embarks on a systematic elision of treason with heresy, and things that could be debated and written in the 1380s become a death warrant in 1400.

Seen thus, Chaucer's anti-ecclesiastical satire acquires a dangerously subversive edge, and the Parson seems increasingly to look like everything Arundel is not. The earliness of Hengwrt is accepted, and the authors suggest that its occasional hastiness in composition indicates Chaucer's efforts to leave behind a full corpus of his poem. Early damage to the manuscript also suggests that it was hidden during the early years of Henry's reign. Ellesmere, on the other hand, appears to have been appropriated by Henry after careful censorship; the illustrations of the Monk and Friar have been over-washed to remove signs of the luxury and vice of the pilgrims. Where Chaucer survived the political crisis of 1387 by lying low, he moves into the eye of the storm in 1399 by his association with Westminster Abbey, a focal point of opposition to Henry. The *Retraction* is reconsidered as a possible forced confession elicited by Arundel. Evidence for 1402 as Chaucer's real death date is seriously considered, and the case closes with the chilling picture of Chaucer dying, not peacefully in a Westminster garden with birds twittering, but starving to death in Arundel's prison, Saltwood Castle, or meeting a sticky end in a back-street alley.

Cast as a law suit, the case assembled by Jones and his team, which is not uniformly convincing but in places intriguingly so, reminds us that to allow our imaginations to be circumscribed by such positive evidence as propagandist policies, chance, and the mice have left us is to impoverish history. Absolute reliance on empirical verification asks 'Why?' This book asks 'Why not?' This is a great read, revisionist history at its cheekiest and most instructive.

Worth mentioning alongside the book is Alan Fletcher's long article, 'Chaucer the Heretic' (*SAC* 25[2003] 53–121), so closely connected are the thoughts of both. Fletcher's premise is that Chaucer's poetry appears much more contentious than it now seems when considered in light of contemporary religious radicalism. He begins by examining the theological resonances of *error* in the *ABC* and of *heresye* in *The Legend of Good Women*. Fletcher then considers the religious pilgrims systematically in light of contemporary anti-mendicant writings; the Pardoner, who has a good innings this year, emerges as not a regular reprobate but a dangerously ambivalent character. Although there is no evidence to suggest a direct alignment between Chaucer and Lollardy, the poet nonetheless raises the very same questions that the Lollards ask explicitly. He could certainly have been suspected in his time of Lollard sympathies, and the rising climate of conservative reaction at the turn of the century could not have improved his standing with Arundel. Considering Alcuin Blamires' choice of title from an essay published in 2000, 'Chaucer the Reactionary' (*YWES* 81[2002] 248), it is clear that current

criticism is doing some serious re-evaluation of the political commitments of this poet of many masks, and that opinion is not unanimous. The 'Chaucer of the margin' who so dominated the thinking of the late 1980s and 1990s is transforming into a figure of more dangerous and colourful extremity.

Elizabeth Fowler revisits the theoretical status of *Literary Character: The Human Figure in Early English Writing*. To distinguish the object of her enquiry from the usual nomenclature of 'type' or 'character', she adopts the phrase 'social person', by which term we understand the inscription of the individual figure into an implied cluster of cultural conventions and expectations. 'Character' offers too individualistic an understanding of the person, and 'type' too discrete a cultural category, for persons cut across different types in conflicting and contradictory ways. Taking the Knight and Prioress as illustration, Fowler considers the various categories by which they are interpreted: in the Knight's case, pilgrim and crusader; in the Prioress's, pilgrim, nun, and lady. It is telling that the characters worth Fowler's consideration cause us 'to feel a density in the character' (p. 9); modern distaste for the purely conventional and typical, which so mark medieval characterization, still shows. Unless an ideal contains 'internal contradictions' (p. 15), it does not hold our interest.

In this early part of Fowler's discussion, it is hard to see what was new, the theoretical framework is unclear, and the difference not apparent between Fowler's new vocabulary of character analysis and that of, for example, Jill Mann in *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire* (*YWES* 54[1975] 113), despite the author's claims to the contrary. All this changes once Fowler turns to legal distinctions between 'natural person', 'juridical person', which designates a corporation or institution, and *persona*, which inhabits both terms by referring to both a real person and a legal status. In the sphere of legal *persona*, the modern individual fades out of relevance, leaving new avenues of exploration in the authors Fowler discusses. Although legal thought is only one of a number of aspects of Fowler's social person, it is the one that most productively speaks to literary analysis. In her first chapter, she analyses the social, commercial, and institutional habits of the Pardoner as social person. She ably shows how pardoners in general summed up the Church's contradictory position on need for funds and contempt for wealth. In the Pardoner 'we see a monstrous production of the divided structure of the canon law itself' (p. 54). Fowler's interest is essentially in psychological interiority, and she locates its most radical and insightful analysis within (Chaucer's) poetry rather than theological or penitential discourse, within the 'superior resources of fiction' (p. 87).

Caroline M. Barron's substantial study of *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People 1200–1500* contains surprisingly little specific reference to Chaucer, but provides detailed information about the urban context of his writings. Equally brief in its treatment of Chaucer is Anthony Low's monograph *Aspects of Subjectivity: Society and Individuality from the Middle Ages to Shakespeare and Milton*, where it is surprising, given the study's wide-ranging nature, to find only the Pardoner and the Parson represented in the appended 'Further Considerations on Penance' (pp. 203–9).

In a clearly written and logically ordered study of *The Orient in Chaucer and Medieval Romance*, Carol F. Heffernan aims to show how the Orient and its

people are represented in late medieval romance. After an initial chapter in which she introduces her thesis that there is a remarkable Oriental influence in medieval romance, and canters through various concepts of obvious relevance such as the Crusades, pilgrimage, and trade, Heffernan begins her literary analysis with a chapter on *The Man of Law's Tale*. Here she demonstrates how faith and commerce intersected in the medieval eastern Mediterranean. She also explores evidence of Christian–Muslim tensions within the narrative, and pays attention to the analogues written by Gower and Boccaccio. Chapter 3 focuses on the representation of Cleopatra and Dido in *The Legend of Good Women*, showing that these two North African queens are depicted as purveyors of sexual excess, while ostensibly being praised as models of true love; their claim to sainthood is thus deeply ambiguous. In the next chapter, on *The Squire's Tale*, Heffernan stands back slightly from her thesis, suggesting that, although the content of the tale is Oriental, its structure is firmly European, and that any structural resemblances between Western interlace and Eastern frame narratives are merely coincidental, not indications of particular influence. Two further chapters treat *Floris and Blancheflour* and *Le Bone Florence of Rome*, before a brief conclusion, and an afterword that gestures towards the appearance of the Orient in Elizabethan literature and drama, and in Johnson's *The History of Rasselas: Prince of Abyssinia*. Earlier versions of chapters 4 and 6 have already been published (see *YWES* 78[1999] 249–50). Overall this is an East-meets-West study which manages to be both concise and comprehensive, and which contains useful surveys of previous scholarship on each topic. However, its conclusion is too tame, and Heffernan's statement that Western writers of imaginative literature were inspired by Eastern culture seems unlikely to inspire a reaction to her call for a reconsideration of textual and cultural links between medieval European literature and the East.

Glenn Burger brings together much of his earlier work and more in *Chaucer's Queer Nation*. Earlier work appeared in (*YWES* 74[1995] 163–4, 78[1999] 244, 79[2000] 217, and 82[2003] 209, 212). The nation at issue is less the political entity, although that is certainly addressed, than community in its broadest social sense. Between the binary poles of essentialist and social constructionist views of identity, Burger finds a third way in queer theory, which, in employing laboured terms such as 'antihomophobia', aims by means of the double negative in the term to resist lapsing into counter-essentialism. Thinking 'queerly' entails thinking 'impurely and productively' (p. xviii). A strong theme in his consideration of the community is marriage, which he portrays as an emerging category that is 'good to think with' for the middling group of society, the lower gentry. Some time is spent on the historical background of medieval marriage, especially the Gregorian reform of the eleventh century, which helped fix the lines of distinction between lay marriage and clerical celibacy. The growing emphasis, however, on individual consent helped to unsettle fixed essential identities by enabling figures such as the Wife of Bath to disturb gender hierarchies. *The Merchant's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale* are also seen to undo traditional notions of masculine agency. In many ways the book is about subjectivity rather than nation or community, though clearly the terms imply each other, and Burger threads his discussion of subjectivity through the tales, ending

with a consideration of the final tales, where the poem's unfinished state illustrates the performative and ongoing manner in which identity is constructed.

Almost all of the essays in Lawton, Scase, and Copeland, eds., *New Medieval Literatures* 6, are relevant either to Chaucer or to the context of his works. Daniel Birkholz's lengthy essay, 'The Vernacular Map: Re-Charting English Literary History' (pp. 11–77), is about cartography and manuscripts, specifically the thirteenth-century Gough map and Thomas Butler's sixteenth-century copy of it in Yale University Beinecke Library MS 558. This wide-ranging discussion is also about astrology, geography, and commonplace books; it is not about Chaucer, but its suggestion that English literary history might be re-charted means that 'the name of the master (Our Father of English Literature)', must necessarily be invoked (p. 71). Clementine Oliver offers a richly historical study of 'A Political Pamphleteer in Late Medieval England: Thomas Favent, Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Usk, and the Merciless Parliament of 1388' (pp. 167–98). She questions the identity and affiliation of Thomas Favent, the author of the late fourteenth-century polemical tract, *Historia mirabilis parliamenti*, arguing that he was not, as has been believed, a pro-Appellant propagandist. She finds some similarities between Favent's career and Chaucer's, and compares both authors' astuteness in dealing with factionalism and with the political failures of Thomas Usk. Although she discusses the pamphlet only briefly, she offers a revisionist account of its impact, and uses it to explore historiographical issues related to the way in which historians have read later medieval English political writings. Oliver's essay is followed by another historically informed piece, 'Commonalty and Literary Form in the 1370s and 1380s' (pp. 199–221), in which Emily Steiner discusses the Good Parliament of 1376 and *Piers Plowman*. This essay is not about Chaucer, but, as Steiner herself points out, its argument could easily be expanded to include *The Parliament of Fowls*. Similarly Jeremy Tambling's study of 'Allegory and the Madness of the Text: Hoccleve's *Complaint*' (pp. 223–48) draws analogies between Hoccleve's melancholia and that of Arcite in *The Knight's Tale*. *The Canterbury Tales* also feature briefly in Bruce W. Holsinger's 'Analytical Survey 6: Medieval Literature and Cultures of Performance' (pp. 271–311). The issue also contains essays on the Pardoner and *The Clerk's Tale*, reviewed below.

Voaden, Tixier, Sanchez Roura, and Rytting, eds., *The Medieval Translator*, contains twenty-eight essays on medieval translation, four of which take Chaucer as their principal focus. In the first of these David Wallace considers 'Chaucer and Deschamps, Translation and the Hundred Years' War' (pp. 179–88), arguing that Deschamps's acclamatory ballade (no. 285) to Chaucer must be read in the context of Anglo-French relations and conflict rather than in isolation. Maria K. Greenwood explores 'What Dryden Did to Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale*, or Translation as Ideological Input' (pp. 189–200), finding that Dryden's 'improvements' in *Palamon and Arcite* result in distortions of Chaucer's text, with a consequent loss of meaning and quality. Thomas G. Duncan compares different senses of translation between *Troilus* and *The Testament of Cresseid* in 'Calculating Calkas: Chaucer to Henryson' (pp. 215–22), arguing that Henryson's reconstructions serve to promote a charitable and compassionate reading of Cresseid. And Michael Alexander brings the benefits of practical

experience translating medieval verse to an evaluation of 'Dante and *Troilus*' (pp. 201–13). Describing Dante as a 'concentrated ingredient' (p. 202) in Chaucer's poetry, he looks briefly at three areas of *Troilus* (the Invocations to each book, the lore of Hell, and ideas about Love), providing a list of the parallel passages from Dante's *Commedia* in an appendix. Alexander repeats some of his more general points about Chaucer and Dante in another short piece, 'Poets in Paradise: Chaucer, Pound, Eliot' (*PNR* 29[2003] 6–7).

Benson and Ridyard, eds., *New Readings of Chaucer's Poetry*, contains ten essays, introduced very briefly and in characteristically urbane manner by Derek Brewer (pp. 1–6). Most of Chaucer's poetry is represented in this collection, though *The Canterbury Tales*, unsurprisingly, receives most attention. The first two essays are both by Helen Cooper. She discusses first 'Chaucerian Representation' (pp. 7–29), and then 'Chaucer's Poetics' (pp. 31–50). In the first piece she argues that poetry for Chaucer was above all a matter of imitating other authors, rather than imitating life. In the second essay she considers why Chaucer aligned himself with English rather than French, comparing the status of fourteenth-century English to that of modern-day Welsh, and then offering readings of the dream poems in which she suggests a much later date for *The House of Fame* than is usually assumed. Chaucer's learning is praised by John V. Fleming in 'The Best Line in Ovid and the Worst' (pp. 51–74), who also charts various (surely well-known?) influences on *The Wife of Bath's Tale*. The next piece, by Traugott Lawler, 'Delicacy vs. Truth: Defining Moral Heroism in *The Canterbury Tales*' (pp. 75–90), is a lexical study which notes Chaucer's use of terms connected with *delit* in *The Canterbury Tales*, and argues that these words are used to convey a sense of decadence. William Provost looks closely at five of 'Chaucer's Endings' (pp. 91–105), namely those of *An ABC*, *Book of the Duchess*, *House of Fame*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, and *The Canterbury Tales*, finding that the endings of the earlier poems are better constructed than their beginnings, whereas in his later works Chaucer has a tendency to begin strongly and then run into trouble with his conclusions.

Three further contributions on *The Canterbury Tales* follow. In the first, '"Beth fructuous and that in litel space": The Engendering of Harry Bailly' (pp. 107–18), John Plummer speculates about the Host's interest in the sexuality of some of his fellow pilgrims, in particular the Nun's Priest, the Monk, and the Pardoner. William E. Rogers and Paul Dower have been 'Thinking about Money in Chaucer's *Shipman's Tale*' (pp. 119–38), wondering whether Chaucer is praising or blaming money, and suggesting that it is our own modern problematic relationships with money and language that complicate our understanding of the tale. And thirdly, Celia Lewis writes about the medieval preoccupation with mortality in 'Framing Fiction with Death: Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and the Plague' (pp. 139–64), looking closely at the tales of the Physician and the Pardoner, and ultimately proposing that Chaucer's work rejects any notion that fiction can order and prolong life. John Hill's essay on 'Aristocratic Friendship in *Troilus and Criseyde*: Pandarus, Courtly Love and Ciceronian Brotherhood in Troy' (pp. 165–82) contends that the friendship between Troilus and Pandarus is to be understood in terms of Cicero's *De amicitia*. Finally in the briefest contribution to the collection R. Barton-Palmer looks at 'Chaucer's *Legend of*

Good Women: The Narrator's Tale' (pp. 183–94), arguing that this poem should be seen as part of Chaucer's work in the French tradition, and outlining the way in which its most important structural features depend upon Guillaume de Machaut's *Jugement dou roy de Navarre*. Overall this is a worthy, if rather unexciting, collection of essays whose new readings are not those of current theoretical fashions.

The university presses of both Oxford and Cambridge offer companions to Chaucer this year. *The Oxford Companion to Chaucer*, edited by Douglas Gray, is a brand new, attractively packaged, and weighty addition to the reference shelf. Organized alphabetically in the manner of a mini-encyclopedia, this volume offers succinct and informative assessments of all aspects of Chaucer's life and writing, including his works, their characters, main themes and influences; language and metre; discussion of contemporary authors, genres, and philosophies; and details of Chaucer's critical reception over six centuries. Adorned with sixteen illustrations, the volume comes complete with maps, a chronology, and ample pointers to further reading, and is copiously (occasionally irritatingly), cross-referenced. Though it is surprising to find no entries on what is omitted from an offering as rich as this, it is churlish to complain about what is 'scribe' and 'translation', and to be redirected in a search for 'manuscripts' ('see book', p. 309). There are individual entries on Ellesmere and Hengwrt, but other important codices go unmentioned, and the representation of modern editors, printers, and illustrators is patchy: Skeat and Furnivall are afforded entries, as is William Morris, but not Manly and Rickert nor Mary Haweis. However these quibbles should not detract from Gray's achievement; with over two thousand entries this volume will surely achieve its stated aim to be a practical guide to readers of Chaucer at every level.

Boitani and Mann, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Chaucer* is the other type of literary companion, comprising a set of critical essays. This volume first appeared in 1986 (*YWES* 67[1988] 169–70) and has become a true staple of undergraduate bibliographies, so its revamped reappearance is most welcome. Although the structure of the book remains essentially the same, the original contributors have rewritten and updated their essays, and there are some new commissions that take into account recent trends in literary theory as well as in Chaucer studies. There are now seventeen essays, some orientated towards specific texts, and others of a more general and contextual nature; a handy chronology has also been added. The opening piece by Paul Strohm sets 'The Social and Literary Scene in England' (pp. 1–19). This is followed by twin studies of Chaucer's European background: Ardis Butterfield outlines 'Chaucer's French Inheritance' (pp. 20–35), and David Wallace does the same service for 'Chaucer's Italian Inheritance' (pp. 36–57).

Piero Boitani's elegant discussion of Chaucer's bookish world, 'Old Books Brought to Life in Dreams: *The Book of the Duchess*, *The House of Fame*, *The Parliament of Fowls*' (pp. 58–77), is the first of the text-specific essays. This is followed by two studies of *Troilus*: Mark Lambert's account of 'Telling the Story in *Troilus and Criseyde*' (pp. 78–92) focuses on the poem's narrative techniques and the figure of the poet-narrator, while Jill Mann compares 'Chance and Destiny in *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Knight's Tale*' (pp. 93–111).

The complexities of 'The *Legend of Good Women*' are highlighted by Julia Boffey and A.S.G. Edwards (pp. 112–26) in a newly commissioned discussion that is underpinned by reference to the poem's manuscript context. Five essays on *The Canterbury Tales* follow. In the first, 'The *Canterbury Tales*: Personal Drama or Experiments in Poetic Variety?' (pp. 127–42), C. David Benson offers an overview of the dynamic diversity of the fictional pilgrims and the doubly fictional figures who populate their stories. The generic variety of Chaucer's story collection is then explored in four successive essays that treat romance (by J.A. Burrow, pp. 143–59), comedy (by Derek Pearsall, pp. 160–77), pathos (by Robert Worth Frank, Jr, pp. 178–94), and exemplum and fable (by A.C. Spearing, pp. 195–213). The final essays, which are mostly new, resume a more general approach. Barry Windeatt surveys 'Literary Structures in Chaucer' (pp. 214–32), while Christopher Cannon offers an appreciation of 'Chaucer's Style' (pp. 233–50). In 'Chaucer's Presence and Absence, 1400–1550' (pp. 251–69), James Simpson considers aspects of the reception of Chaucer's poetry, particularly in the early modern era. A final substantial chapter, by Carolyn Dinshaw, offers a selective survey of 'New Approaches to Chaucer' (pp. 270–89), concentrating on feminist, queer, and postcolonial readings of the medieval poet. The collection concludes with 'Further Reading: A Guide to Chaucer Studies' (pp. 290–306), a discursive bibliography compiled and thoroughly updated by Joerg O. Fichte.

Another useful addition to general undergraduate reading lists that comes from the same stable is Dinshaw and Wallace, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing*. References to Chaucer's works are to be found *passim*, as in Daniel T. Kline's survey of 'Female Childhoods' (pp. 13–20), which is heavily dependent upon literary examples drawn from *The Canterbury Tales* and *Pearl*. More sustained discussion is offered by Barbara Hanawalt, whose legalistic essay on 'Widows' (pp. 58–69) summarizes the varied options open to women such as Criseyde, Alison, and the poor peasant widow of *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, and by Alcuin Blamires, who begins his chapter, 'Beneath the Pulpit' (pp. 141–58), a summary of the rights, limitations, rituals and contributions of women in relation to the Church, with the narrative of Mabel in *The Friar's Tale*.

Matthew Boyd Goldie has made a range of historical texts, cultural documents, and images available in *Middle English Literature: A Historical Sourcebook*. Both well-known and less familiar writings are included: parliamentary and local acts and trials, letters and testimonies, moral, homiletic and educational tracts— items otherwise difficult to access, chosen for their intrinsic significance and for the light that they can shed on the context of Middle English literature. Documents are translated or glossed as necessary, and furnished with useful introductions; other supporting materials (a timeline, map, bibliographies, explanations of currency, prices, measures), are present in abundance. The collection has some weaknesses: the selection is self-confessedly narrowly English, excluding material on Ireland, Wales and Scotland, and the illustrations, principally from manuscripts, are perhaps the least exciting offerings to students of Chaucer since they comprise the most obvious and frequently reproduced images (from Ellesmere, the Hoccleve portrait, the *Troilus* frontispiece). Despite

this, students will find this a helpful compendium when attempting to understand the realities of life in later medieval England.

Editor Wendy Harding's *Drama, Narrative and Poetry in the 'Canterbury Tales'* brings together essays that consider the poem's aesthetic organization. C. David Benson opens the first section, dealing with general aesthetic issues, with 'Trust the Tale, Not the Teller' (pp. 21–33), in which he seeks to de-emphasize the influence of the pilgrims and their alleged naturalism in understanding their tales as poetry. Pasolini's *I racconti di Canterbury* is becoming an ongoing interest (see *YWES* 83[2004] 210), and in 'Narrative Play and the Display of Artistry in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*' (pp. 35–50), Agnès Blandeau finds that the mannered fictionality of the film's stories enables a fresh consideration of the irony and narrativity of Chaucer's poem. Leo Carruthers reminds us of the ongoing and controlling presence of Harry Bailly in 'Narrative Voice, Narrative Framework: The Host as "Author" of *The Canterbury Tales*' (pp. 51–67). Despite obvious differences between the Host's aesthetic sensibility and that of Chaucer, whether as poet or pilgrim, the Host does much of the work of an author, makes insightful enough criticisms of the tales, and adds complexity and resonance to Chaucer's artistic intention. John M. Ganim borrows a phrase from Northrop Frye in 'Drama, Theatricality and Performance: Radicals of Presentation in *The Canterbury Tales*' (pp. 69–82). The term indicates the multiple meanings at work in 'audience', which refers equally to the audience of a performance and to the readership of a book. When we consider that Chaucer may have read aloud to listeners, the inadequacy of our terminology becomes evident, and, in a revision of Kittredge's conception of the pilgrimage as roadside drama, Ganim speaks of the theatricality of Chaucer's poetry.

In 'Linking *The Canterbury Tales*: Monkey-Business in the Margins' (pp. 83–98), Laura Kendrick conceives of the verbal tomato-throwing between pilgrims as a textual example of the kind of rude humour that exists between the text and the illustrated margin, such as we see in the Rutland Psalter (British Library MS Add. 62925). The high point of such marginal slapstick illumination was a century before Chaucer, and thus Chaucer's playful narrative represents the textual internalization of the illuminated page. In its reduction of everything to 'discourse', contemporary criticism largely and wrongly overlooks the difference between poetry and prose, argues Derek Pearsall in 'Towards a Poetics of Chaucerian Narrative' (pp. 99–112). Colette Stévanovitch takes this point to heart and concludes the section on general aesthetics in an accessible and informative consideration of 'Polysyllabic Words in End-of-Line Position in *The Franklin's Tale*' (pp. 113–24). Polysyllabic words, being largely of French extraction, are frequently placed at the end of lines by Chaucer, and offer considerable flexibility and nuance not only in metrical but also in semantic terms, for polysyllabic nouns are frequently abstract. Her prosodic analysis neatly highlights the thematic centrality of *gentilesse*.

Derek Brewer opens the book's second section, which treats of individual tales, with 'Knight and Miller: Similarity and Difference' (pp. 127–38). The two tales represent Chaucer at his two extremes, and the close juxtaposition of the extremities reveal the gothic aesthetic of his verse. In 'The Wife of Bath's

"Wanderynge by the Weye" and Conduct Literature for Women' (pp. 139–55) Juliette Dor shows how Alison's considerable failings act out many of the warnings of conduct books, a genre often ignored in consideration of her make-up. Lesley Lawton writes about the various levels at which language works in "Glose whoso wole": Voice, Text and Authority in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*' (pp. 157–74). The misogynist convention that women are natural manipulators of language is both confirmed and undone by Alison, yet at the same time, Lawton argues, the Wife is not so much an 'ontologically conceived character' as a textual composite (p. 170). Noting a certain ambivalence in fourteenth-century marriages on the subject of female agency, Elizabeth Robertson nonetheless finds Chaucer a sympathetic proponent of it in 'Marriage, Mutual Consent, and the Affirmation of the Female Subject in *The Knight's Tale*, *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, and *The Franklin's Tale*' (pp. 175–93). Susanna Fein traces philosophical patterns of contrariety, crisis, and union in 'Boethian Boundaries: Compassion and Constraint in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* and *The Pardoner's Tale*' (pp. 195–212). In 'Poetry and Play in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale*' (pp. 213–26) David Raybin notes the many voices of Chaucer: in the case of *The Pardoner's Tale* it is multiple and playful. Together, the narrative range enacts the philosophical requirement that poetry should offer both *sentence* and *solaas*. André Crépin notes the correlations between Chauntecleer, the Nun's Priest, and Chaucer as expositors of the text in 'The Cock, the Priest, and the Poet' (pp. 227–36). Finally, Hélène Dauby notes the presence of—but comes to no clear conclusion about—'The Generation Gap in *The Canterbury Tales*' (pp. 237–41).

John C. Hirsh's new anthology *Medieval Lyric: Middle English Lyrics, Ballads, and Carols*, is predominantly a collection of anonymous lyric texts, but with two embedded lyrics from *The Canterbury Tales*. The topic of Chaucer's metrics has attracted little scholarship this year. An exception is Michael Redford's investigation of word stress in 'Middle English Stress Doubles: New Evidence from Chaucer's Meter' (in Fikkert and Jacobs, eds, *Development in Prosodic Systems*, pp. 159–95). Focusing on 'stress doubles' in *The Canterbury Tales*, that is, words that sometimes have initial, and sometimes final, stress, Redford asks whether these provide evidence for Middle English stress or for Chaucer's metrical style. He demonstrates that the distribution of stress doubles is very regular—Strong-Weak line internally and Weak-Strong at line-internal phrase boundaries and at the end of a line—and concludes that word stress in Middle English was initial, except at the end of phrases, where both syllables were prominent. In the same volume Wim Zonneveld's essay, 'Constraining S and Satisfying Fit' (pp. 197–247) is focused mainly on *The Life of St Lutgart* and the metrics of Middle Dutch poetry, but his analysis involves numerous comparisons with Chaucer's works.

Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger advocate more extensive pedagogical use of queer theory in their essay 'Queer Chaucer in the Classroom' (in Agathocleous and Dean, eds, *Teaching Literature: A Companion*, pp. 31–40). They begin with a brief survey of the impact that gay/lesbian/queer studies have had on medieval literary criticism, noting that queer theory has now extended to emphasize

the unstable relations between normative social categories and complexly lived experiences. They propose that attention be shifted away from the usual focus on the Pardoner to other aspects of *The Canterbury Tales*, including the marriage group and the idea of Chaucer the pilgrim. In this way, they hope, queer theory may be used to call into question the set of relations between our current position as readers of Chaucer and medieval constructions of sexuality and identity.

A different type of teaching aid is surveyed by Teresa P. Reed in 'Overcoming Performance Anxiety: Chaucer Studio Products Reviewed' (*Exemplaria* 15[2003] 245–61). The Chaucer Studio's recordings emerge very favourably from this review. Reed offers anecdotal evidence of her own use of various audio tapes in the classroom, and is obviously more pleased with their effects than were the other reviewers she cites. William F. Woods puts Chaucer and freshmen writing composition together in 'The Chaucer Foundation: Composition, Social History, and *The Canterbury Tales*' (*SMART* 10[2003] 51–85). Freshman composition aims to train the student in techniques of research, argumentation, and exposition, and content is thus secondary. Woods speaks of his experiences of using social history and Chaucer as the occasion for freshman writing training: what works and what does not. There are many good topic ideas and useful references in the article, although the narrative never rises above the anecdotal to achieve a thesis as such. A detailed syllabus concludes the piece. In 'Teaching *The Squire's Tale* as an Exercise in Literary History' (*SMART* 10[2003] 5–18), Alan Ambrisco notes the popularity of the tale up to the eighteenth century, and the waning in critical acclaim since then, despite recent consideration of its interest in the exotic and national otherness. He poses the tale to the students as an unsolved problem in reception, thereby dispatching them as critical detectives to do their homework on new-critical reception (the Squire's use of rhetoric and the tale's unfinished state), pre-modern reception (Hengwrt and early commentary on the tale), and modern concerns (Orientalism).

Discussed here rather than along with other critical essays on the Wife of Bath is Merrill Black's 'Three Readings of the Wife of Bath' (in Freedman and Frey, eds., *Autobiographical Writing across the Disciplines: A Reader*, pp. 85–95). The three readings refer not to different critical stances but to the three times Black encountered the *Prologue* and *Tale* in her reading experience, as a high-school student, undergraduate, and postgraduate. The autobiographical note is sounded of course in the volume's title, and the author proceeds to weave a connection between Alice and her own experiences as a former battered wife: Alice's deafness and Black's ruptured spleen, what women want, split consciousness, etc. The essay cuts clean across the divide between creative and critical discourse in a way that raises important questions for the convention of objectivity in academe—an effect that is clearly the aim of the entire collection. Taking the editors' challenge seriously will surely affect not only what we require of ourselves when writing but also what we expect of our students.

The presidential address at the 2002 New Chaucer Society conference was given by Helen Cooper and is printed, more or less verbatim, in this year's *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* (25 [2003] 3–24). Entitled 'After Chaucer', this essentially comprises a few thoughts on Chaucer's various later translations and adaptations in verse and drama, and, more recently, film. Cooper begins with an extended

and rather unedifying account of the design that adorned the 2002 advance programme cover (not even, it turns out, the programme that was actually distributed at the conference), before moving on to plead for a rehabilitation of the fifteenth century, still, she insists (despite mountains of recent work), the Cinderella of Chaucer studies. She concludes by offering the full text of the broadside ballad, "The Wanton Wife of Bath' (c.1600), lightly annotated but otherwise without comment, aside from her judgement that this is 'one of the most delightful translations ever made After Chaucer' (p. 20). Thinking broadly along the same lines, A.E.B. Coldiron writes about 'Paratextual Chaucerianism: Naturalizing French Texts in Early Printed Verse' (*ChauR* 38[2003] 1–15), discussing the translator's prologue to *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1509. The translator uses rhyme royal and a number of recognizably Chaucerian conventions, presumably to enhance the perceived value of the work, a translation of the anonymous *Les Quinze Joyes de mariage*, and to help it gain an English literary citizenship. And as part of an examination of 'Fifteenth-Century English Collections of Female Saints' Lives' (*YES* 33[2003] 131–41), A.S.G. Edwards suggests that Chaucer's *Second Nun's Tale* may have been the earliest influential model of the separately circulating female saint's life in Middle English verse, a tradition shaped and extended especially within East Anglia by Bokenham, Lydgate, and Capgrave.

Chaucer's afterlife in the sixteenth century continues to attract increasing amounts of critical attention. Robert Costomiris attempts to throw 'Some New Light on the Early Career of William Thynne, Chief Clerk of the Kitchen of Henry VIII and Editor of Chaucer' (*Library* 4[2003] 3–15). He notes that some of Thynne's official appointments were postponed 'for years and sometimes for his entire career' (p. 14), a fact that has previously been overlooked. Thynne therefore had more time to indulge in editing and publishing, and may have seen these activities as an alternative means of self-advancement. Sarah A. Kelen examines what she terms the 'Tudorization' of Chaucer in 'Climbing up the Family Tree: Chaucer's Tudor Progeny' (*JEBS* 6[2003] 109–23). Her essay focuses on the full-page engraving that occurs in Thomas Speght's 1598 edition of Chaucer's *Works* depicting Chaucer's lineage and explicitly associating this with that of the Tudor royal family; she suggests that this may have been a ploy to increase Chaucer's apparent relevance to the Elizabethan reader. If Cambridge University Library, Peterborough B.6.13 is anything to go by, Tudor readers of Chaucer were particularly inept, observes Seth Lerer in 'Unpublished Sixteenth-Century Arguments to *The Canterbury Tales*' (*N&Q* 50[2003] 13–17). Lerer judges the annotations to this printed copy of the poetry, as in, for example, the reader's fascination with the magic gadgets in *The Squire's Tale*; he also notes the emergence of the 'argument' or plot summary as a publishing phenomenon in the sixteenth century, and finds them valuable for the evidence they reveal about the changing nature of post-medieval English vocabulary.

In 'Translating Thebes: Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* and Stow's Chaucer' (*ELH* 70[2003] 319–41), Robert R. Edwards deftly charts the relocation of Lydgate's work of Lancastrian propaganda about kingship in Stow's early Elizabethan discourse of monarchy, nationhood, and debated political authority. Finally, in his

study of 'Robert Henryson's Pastoral Burlesque "Robene and Makyne" (c.1470)' (FCS 28[2003] 80–96) Michael G. Cornelius compares Makyne to the Wife of Bath, and claims that Henryson's poem represents an overwhelming satirical complication of popular literary conventions.

Chaucer's influence on modern literature also continues to provoke critical attention. Julie Carlson gives a few nods towards the importance of Chaucer and the romance revival for the Romantic movement in her account of 'Fancy's History' (ERR 14[2003] 163–76). Solomon Sallfors and James Duban propose a connection between The Miller's Tale and Moby-Dick in 'Chaucerian Humor in Moby-Dick: Queequeg's "Ramadan"' (Leviathan 5[2003] 73–7). Melville, who is known to have enjoyed Chaucer, creates a Chaucerian subtext in his novel by making Ishmael in the image of John the husband (both characters share a number of plot details). Although his resemblance is closest to the superstitious carpenter, Ishmael also possesses Nicholas's scholasticism.

In an issue of SAIL dedicated to Carter Revard, Osage poet and medievalist, Peter Beidler, in 'Louise Erdrich's Lulu Nanapush: A Modern-Day Wife of Bath?' (SAIL 15[2003] 92–103), attempts to free American Indian literature from misconceptions of it as a body of work sealed from the influence of other cultures. In Erdrich's Tales of Burning Love, Beidler suggests the Chaucerian inspiration of the frame-tale structure, and in Erdrich's Love Medicine, he sees a connection between Lulu Nanapush Morrisey Lamartine and the Wife of Bath. Warren Edminster writes about 'Fairies and Feminism: Recurrent Patterns in Chaucer's The Wife of Bath's Tale and Brontë's Jane Eyre' (VN 104[2003] 22–8). In both stories the passing of fairies and elves is bemoaned, and in each case the nostalgia represents both an idealization of the past, and a lost world of feminine power that gives way to masculine rule. Both stories feature rape, in Chaucer's case literal, in Brontë's symbolic, when Rochester intends to wed Jane illegally. And both men must ultimately learn the feminine power of faery. Charlotte Brontë could well have encountered The Canterbury Tales in Pope's modernized version of the poem, despite the fact that she never mentions Chaucer by name.

Meanwhile Patricia Ingham's chapter 'Contrapuntal Histories' (in Ingham and Warren, eds., Postcolonial Moves: Medieval Through Modern, pp. 47–70) charts recent uses of categories of historicist and cultural alterity in medieval cultural studies. Giving first a medievalist reading of the tropes of medieval Britain in Conrad's Heart of Darkness, and then an analysis of the various histories and geographies enshrined within The Man of Law's Tale, Ingham proposes that the contrapuntal histories of her title offer a more mobile historicist method for assessing the complex repetitions of colonial instability and oppositional agency. Larry Scanlon writes on 'Poets Laureate and the Language of Slaves: Petrarch, Chaucer, and Langston Hughes' (in Somerset and Watson, eds., The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity), pp. 220–56), offering a rich theoretical discussion of the strange parallels between Middle English studies and African American studies, in their deep but apparently unrelated current engagement with the issue of vernacularity.

Finally, in a piece received too late for inclusion in last year's review, "Glorie of Spayne": Juan Ruiz through the Eyes of an Englishman' (RCEI 45[2002] 233–44), Eugenio M. Olivares Merino seeks to revive the notion that Chaucer may

have been familiar with medieval Spanish literature, in particular the Libro de Buen Amor. Various possible channels of transmission are identified, based on the patronage of John of Gaunt and his Iberian familial connections, in order to suggest that the perceived similarities between the Libro de Buen Amor, Troilus, and The Canterbury Tales were more than the result of shared authorial temperament and contemporary environment.

2. The Canterbury Tales

Perhaps the largest body of work done this year is on the illustrations through the ages of The Canterbury Tales. Mary Olson's Fair and Varied Forms: Visual Textuality in Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts considers the double aspect of medieval manuscripts as objects both to be read and looked at, and Ellesmere is a chosen example of such doubleness. Given that her previous chapters are devoted to earlier medieval manuscripts, Olson spends some time considering the historical developments of book production to carry her discussion into the early fifteenth century. The general cultural shift is traced towards private reading, which results in a certain bookishness of late medieval manuscripts, a literary self-reflexivity that is clear in such features as the visually distinctive shape of Thopas's tail rhymes, and the Ellesmere glosses, the letters of which are the same size as the main text. For Olson, Ellesmere stands between two cultural modes, oral and literate, telling and writing, and the tension is mirrored in the relationship between the marginal illuminations and text. The portrait of Chaucer himself and his two tales demonstrate the tension at its strongest. Where Thopas calls into question his poetic abilities, his portrait gives him an added air of authority. The Physician's urinal, and individuating details that render them types, such as the respect, Ellesmere stands in contrast to the workmanlike Hengwrt, whose lack of adornment invites a studious reading of text rather than an admiring gaze at images.

Olson's discussion reappears as the opening chapter, 'Marginal Portraits and the Fiction of Orality: The Ellesmere Manuscript' of Finley and Rosenblum, eds., Chaucer Illustrated: Five Hundred Years of 'The Canterbury Tales' in Pictures (pp. 1–35). This is a hefty volume, and remarkably good value considering its number of illustrations and spacious layout. It takes us from the Ellesmere portraits to the twentieth-century illustrations of Rockwell Kent and Eric Gill. The presentation of material tends more towards description and historical context than interpretation. Philippa Hardman discusses the relative dearth of pictorial illustration in the manuscript tradition of Chaucer's poem in 'Presenting the Text: Pictorial Tradition in Fifteenth-Century Manuscripts of The Canterbury Tales' (pp. 37–72). Some were there but have been excised, as is the case with Cambridge University Library MS Gg.4.27, but Hardman argues that the illuminators of both the Cambridge and the Ellesmere manuscripts drew from a common tradition, where the intention was to have presented the tales as an ordered series of differing narrative voices, each one marked with its own portrait at the beginning of its tale. Her survey leads her to affirm conclusions reached by