

The Probable Date and Purpose of Chaucer's Troilus

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I.

Although it has long been customary to assign a date for Chaucer's *Troilus* during the period 1380-86, preferably toward its close, most Chaucerians have devoted little attention to events in England during that time. Since the poem was probably read before a court audience, some of whom, as Derek Pearsall has indicated, were men who were not only deeply interested but directly involved in those events,¹ we can hardly dismiss the historical situation as being irrelevant.

Generally speaking, it is safe to say that English prestige declined steadily after about 1370, that fears of invasion from abroad reached a kind of climax in 1385 and 1386, and that this situation was widely held to be the consequence of moral decline that led providentially to adversities,² an understandable attitude among men who were, like Chaucer himself, deeply moved by attitudes found in *The Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius. The interests and attitudes of the time undoubtedly had much to do with the shaping of Chaucer's great poem, and unless we can share them, at least in imagination, we shall deprive ourselves of an opportunity to appreciate it. Unless we understand, if only in a general way, the purpose for which it was devised and very carefully crafted, we can hardly appreciate the literary stratagems designed to fulfill it. In the following pages I shall discuss the relevant historical events, some basic attitudes, a few literary stratagems, and finally and very briefly the poem itself.

Concerning the probable character of the audience, Pearsall, in the article referred to above, argues that it included "household knights, career diplomats, and civil servants." Chaucer's own diplomatic missions were carried out under the auspices of the Chamber, which also came to serve eventually as the center of social activity at court, and may have been at least in part responsible for such activity at the time the poem was written.³ Although the Chamber after 1356 no longer served as an administrative office for royal lands, it became increasingly important for its services on "the king's secret business," so that instead of the three Chamber knights in 1377, there were eleven by

1385, and seventeen in 1388. Richard often employed these men on his Council and rewarded them with lands and offices.⁴ They included old followers of Prince Edward and friends of Princess Joan, who gathered about her a group of men interested in reform, and who for this reason have become known as "Lollard Knights," although their sympathies were probably more closely allied with the ideals of Philippe de Mézières than with those of John Wyclif.

It will suffice to mention a few of them and to supply some relevant facts about them, concentrating on the years before 1387. First, Sir Lewis Clifford, perhaps the godfather of Chaucer's son Lewis but in any event a close friend, had been both a squire and knight under Prince Edward, was a Garter Knight in 1377 and became a royal knight in 1381. He was among those appointed to remain with Princess Joan during Richard's foray into Scotland in 1385; and he, his son-in-law Philip la Vache, a Chamber Knight from 1378, Sir John Clanvowe, William Beauchamp, and many others were given livery of mourning for her after her death in August 1385. Clifford was one of her executors. He is said to have joined Philippe de Mézières's Order of the Passion, whose aim was to establish an international crusading movement based on peace between France and England and governed by a strict moral discipline, either in 1385 or shortly thereafter. Clifford was abroad on diplomatic missions in late 1385 and early in 1386, bringing home with him on his return Deschamps's poem in praise of Chaucer.⁵ The French poet had attended a peace conference in 1384.⁶ Clifford's second mission was probably made in connection with John of Gaunt's forthcoming crusade, to which we shall return in a moment.

William Beauchamp, the younger brother of Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (1339-1401), is said to have had a university education. He was Chamberlain between 1378 and 1381, and in May 1380 he, Sir John Clanvowe, Sir William Neville, and two prominent London merchants went with Chaucer before Bishop Sudbury, the Chancellor, to witness Cecily Champaign's release of Chaucer from charges of rape or other trespasses.⁷ His interest in the estate of his deceased friend John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, led to a famous legal dispute, but it was not discreditable to him.⁸ Chaucer probably accompanied him on a mission to Calais in 1387. Sir John Clanvowe, a Chamber Knight since 1382, was to write a transparently Chaucerian poem inspired partly by *The Parliament of Fowls*, and partly by the Knight's Tale, as well as a moral treatise, *The Two Ways*, possibly for the child of a friend or an ecclesiastic engaged in elementary teaching.⁹ He was, like Clifford, busy abroad in connection with arrangements for Gaunt's crusade in the early part of 1386. Also like Clifford, he was one of Joan of Kent's executors. His friend William Neville, a very close companion, had been a knight of King Edward's household and a Chamber Knight after 1381. Toward the close of their careers they participated together in Louis of Bourbon's unsuccessful crusade.

Among the knights closely associated with Princess Joan was Sir Richard Stury, who was ransomed along with another royal squire, Geoffrey Chaucer, after Edward's campaign of 1359. Whereas Chaucer brought only £16 to his captors, Stury, who was praised for his bravery by Froissart, was worth £50. He became a Chamber Knight some time around 1371 and thereafter served frequently on diplomatic missions. Unfortunately, at the "Good Parliament" of 1376, where he served as *prolocutor*, he reported to the king that the Commons were seeking to depose him, and for this indiscreet exaggeration he was banished from the court and lost the friendship of Prince Edward, who was sympathetic with the reformers. The court and Princess Joan soon forgave him, however, and in 1377 he was engaged in peace negotiations with the French, seeking a marriage between young Richard and a French princess, in company with Guichard d'Angle (d. 1380), who was one of Richard's tutors and a friend of both Oton de Granson and Deschamps. With them was Geoffrey Chaucer, probably in a clerical capacity.¹⁰ Stury, who headed a commission of walls and ditches of which Chaucer was a member in 1390, was an active diplomat and member of the Council until his death in 1395. His literary interests are attested by the fact that he owned a copy of the *Roman de la rose* (BL MS Royal 19 B XIII), one of Chaucer's favorite books. Sir John Montagu, a royal knight after 1383 and heir to the earldom of Salisbury through his uncle, was closely associated with these men and was a poet in his own right, admired for his work by Christine de Pisan, a lady of ready if not always astute moral sensibilities.

It is fairly safe to assume that one or more of these men formed a part of the audience who assembled to hear Chaucer read his poem. We should also include John Gower and Ralph Strode, the Oxford logician who had become Common Pleader for the City of London, since both are mentioned at the close of the poem. And if the date about to be suggested is credible it would not be rash to include John of Gaunt and some of those planning to accompany him in Spain, including Chaucer's son Thomas. We should also expect some ecclesiastics like Thomas Rushook, Richard's confessor, who was transferred from Llandaff to Chichester in 1385; clerks of both the royal and Lancastrian households; and ladies, including Philippa Chaucer, with their handmaidens. (The apology to the ladies toward the close of the poem implies their presence.) We have no means of knowing how large the audience was, but we can be fairly certain that it was requested for a specific social occasion, attended by persons of some prominence, that might involve at least five days of festivities. It is unlikely that Chaucer wrote anything very extensive without considering the possibility of an occasion for its public delivery; and it seems very likely that a friend, or group of friends, seeking to help him increase his prestige, asked him to prepare what he had written for presentation at a specific time and place.

II.

Before speculating about the occasion and the individual or individuals responsible for Chaucer's appearance, I shall review briefly certain aspects of events in England that contributed to a loss of national prestige. As George Holmes has well described them, English fortunes had been gloomy before the Good Parliament of 1376.¹¹ King Edward had not kept a firm hand on his government during the last years of his reign, and with the transition to the new reign matters were not much improved, especially from a military point of view. The Aquitaine won by Edward in the Treaty of Bretigny was drastically reduced by French forces under du Guesclin in 1372, and in the early summer of 1373 he retook much of Brittany. The English response, a naval expedition led by the king, lasted only a few weeks, although a force led by Sir John Neville of Raby took and held Brest, which was besieged. In March 1373 Sir William Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, failed to relieve the siege. In July Gaunt undertook his famous march from Calais to Bordeaux but did not relieve Brittany, perhaps because he thought Aquitaine more important. During 1374 and 1375 the French outmaneuvered the English both diplomatically and militarily, so that when the Good Parliament met the lords had no successes to proclaim, there was a very real threat of attack on the coasts by Castilian naval forces, and Charles V was readying his own naval forces to be used on the expiration of a truce. Indeed, in 1377 the French captured Rye, burned Lewes, overran the Isle of Wight, and burned Hastings.¹² The Scots massacred a gathering at a fair at Roxburgh, and the Duke of Anjou successfully invaded Gascony. In that year Peter de la Mare, a protégé of Edmund de Mortimer, Earl of March, who was once more speaker for the Commons in Parliament, complained that English chivalry had once been "most energetic, ardently desirous of great enterprises, each man eager to perform great deeds of arms, one above the other," but, he lamented, it is now "together with all other virtues placed behind; vice is praised, advanced, honored, and not at all chastised" (*RP*, 3:24). We should notice that "chivalry" is here regarded, as it is in Chaucer's description of his Knight, as a virtue, not as a form of outmoded and empty panoply. Memories still lingered of King Edward's cultivation of chivalric virtue in the Order of the Garter and in tournaments to stimulate the courage and dedication of his followers that had produced such obvious success abroad.¹³ The new reign with its child king had nothing to compare with it.

In the following year Gaunt besieged St. Malo, but probably because of the negligence of the Earl of Arundel in preparing a mine the siege had to be abandoned, a fact that sullied Gaunt's reputation. Castilian galleys attacked Cornwall and burnt the town of Fowey, and it became evident that the government was in serious financial difficulties. In 1379 Sir John Arundel, the Marshall, after the south coast had been ravaged by his own troops, set

out for Brittany (according to Walsingham's gossip taking with him nuns seized as companions for his men), only to have his fleet, his troops, and himself, not to mention the alleged nuns, destroyed in a storm. The Scots attacked in the north in 1380. Thomas of Woodstock conducted a great raid from Calais to Brittany, encouraging the disheartened Commons to levy the now-famous poll tax. It was well intentioned enough, designed as a substitute for the old levies of a tenth and a fifteenth that had demanded a fixed sum from each locality and had now become inequitable; but it was so poorly administered that it precipitated the Great Revolt of 1381, which had clearly been brewing before the allegations in Parliament in 1377 concerning "counsellors, abettors, and maintainers in the country," who for their own profit had used "exemplifications out of the Book of Domesday" to cause villeins to refuse their customary services, to menace ministers of their lords, and to gather in "great routs" threatening force (1 R II 7, *SR*, 2:3; cf. *RP*, 3:21).

In his remarkable address to Parliament in 1381 (*RP*, 3:100-101) Sir Richard Waldgrave, the Speaker, painted a depressing picture of the state of the kingdom, urging that "if the government of the realm is not within a short time amended, the realm itself will be completely lost." He spoke of the "outrageous number of familiars" in the household and of corruption in the courts, including the Chancery, the King's Bench, and in the Exchequer. There were, he said, outrageous numbers of quarrels and maintainers (probably referring in part to those who were profitably encouraging villeins to abandon their services) who were like kings in the country so that right and loyalty were made to hardly anyone.¹⁴ In language reminiscent of Archbishop Mepham,¹⁵ he complained of "the purveyors for the said household of the king and of others," referring to the higher nobility, who "pillage and destroy the people,"¹⁶ and of the "subsidies and tallages" levied to their great distress. The ministers of the king and of others, he said, commit "grievous and outrageous oppressions"; great treasure was levied for the defense of the realm, but the people were nevertheless "burned, robbed, and pillaged" by their enemies from abroad, and no remedy was provided.¹⁷ These things and others, he said, had moved the "lesser commons" to riot and make mischief, and he warned that greater mischiefs might ensue. This was a thoroughly reputable analysis.¹⁸ Running through it is the theme that greed and self-interest were corrupting the administration of justice at home and, at the same time, weakening the defense of the realm against its enemies abroad.

Jealousies and factions began to make themselves apparent at court, while the situation abroad deteriorated. When the Revolt shook the kingdom, Gaunt, whose magnificent house in London, the Savoy, was destroyed, had been negotiating with the Scots, who treated him with respectful deference and even offered to assist him when Henry Percy sought to prevent his return to England. A bitter quarrel resulted, resolved only when Percy made a formal apology in Parliament. In 1382 Philip van Artevelde acknowledged Richard to

be king of France, but the forces he assembled against the French were annihilated and he was himself killed. In October Bishop John Gilbert told Parliament that England had never been in greater danger of invasion. Brigandage was rife in the country, and many ships were destroyed off the northern coast. The disastrous crusade of Bishop Despenser of Norwich in 1383 and Richard's failure to assist him after his initial success hardly improved matters, and in 1384 Philip of Burgundy took control of the Netherlands but left Ghent its municipal freedom. England was fast losing its Continental allies and with them the protection of its trade.

At home factionalism grew at court, and morale was shaken by the quick temper of the young king and by his clear tendency to place his personal interests above the common profit of the realm. He was preoccupied with his favorites, the most prominent of whom was the youthful Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who was spoiled by the king and easily moved to jealousy. He was undoubtedly responsible for suborning a Carmelite friar to accuse John of Gaunt before the king of seeking to kill him and seize the kingdom. This incident occurred at the Salisbury Parliament, where Richard told the Earl of Arundel to "go to the Devil" when he criticized the government of the realm. De Vere probably hoped that Richard's quick temper would move him to precipitous action against Gaunt. Indeed, the king is said to have gone into a tantrum and to have thrown his hat and shoes out the window, and Thomas of Woodstock, betraying an equal lack of self-control, is said to have drawn his sword and threatened to kill anyone who called his brother a traitor.¹⁹ Gaunt was able to calm the king. But de Vere tried again early in 1385, this time by arranging a meeting of the Council at Waltham, where he hoped to have Gaunt accused, tried, and executed for treason by suborned justices. But the Duke heard of the plot and refused to attend; instead, he confronted Richard at Sheen with an appropriate military following. The two were finally reconciled by Princess Joan, who brought them together at Westminster, Richard having meanwhile drawn his sword before Archbishop Courtenay when he, together with some members of the Council, sought to reprimand him, as they met on barges on the Thames, for plots like that against Gaunt.

III.

Since *Troilus* is usually assigned to the latter part of the period 1380-86, it will repay us to examine the last two years in some detail, including events in the lives of Chaucer and his family. In France Charles VI assembled a great fleet for the invasion of England and sent 1,600 men under Jean de Vienne to aid the Scots, planning a simultaneous attack on England from the south and the north. These actions produced widespread consternation in England, leading to preparations to defend the coast, to the requisition of convoys for

the wine fleet, and to a depression in the rising cloth trade that lasted until 1388.²⁰ The Chancellor, Michael de la Pole, realizing that the realm lacked financial resources for aggressive action, had been pursuing a determined peace policy toward France since 1383.²¹ He now saw that policy collapsing before his eyes, while the "war party" at court, led by the Earls of Buckingham and Arundel, became more and more restive. Pole now resorted to an unsuccessful effort to raise scutage, which had not been levied for fifty years, to finance a campaign led by the king in Scotland. Richard summoned Gaunt, who led the largest force, to meet him at Newcastle on March 24.

Near York the king's half-brother, John Holland, killed young Richard Stafford, the son of the earl, in a quarrel. Richard was a royal favorite, and the king angrily avowed that he would treat Holland like any other felon, much to the distress of Princess Joan; but Holland fled into sanctuary at Beverley. As the army of almost 12,000 men crossed the border,²² Richard, in a somewhat feeble imitation of Edward III, created two new dukes (his uncle the Earl of Cambridge became Duke of York, and his uncle the Earl of Buckingham, Thomas of Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester) and knighted various other persons. The Scots and their French allies, confronted by much larger forces than their own, prudently retreated northward without a confrontation. Although Richard's articles of war had forbidden attacks on religious,²³ he burned two monasteries and would have burned a third had not Gaunt intervened. The army reached Edinburgh without a battle, and de Vere urged the king to return home, which he did. It is not surprising that Walsingham, echoing a charge at least as old as the *Aeneid*, said that the court circle was made up of "knights of Venus rather than of Bellona."²⁴ (Walsingham is a good source for popular gossip, or for propaganda spread by interested magnates,²⁵ and this probably represents fairly widespread opinion in the countryside.) In November de Vere was made Marquis of Ireland, and the Chancellor hoped to collect sufficient funds from a ransom for John of Blois, the claimant to Brittany, to finance his projected campaign in that country.

The French fleet was prevented from sailing by an action taken by the town of Ghent, which distracted the forces drawn up along the coast. Meanwhile, the news of the Portuguese victory at Aljubarotta, assisted by English archers, had reached England before Parliament met in October. The Commons, dissatisfied with Pole's management of the royal revenues and alarmed by invasion threats, was now prepared to listen favorably to Gaunt's proposals for a crusade in Spain, rejected earlier in favor of Despenser's crusade. A few days before the opening of Parliament Chaucer was appointed to a commission of the peace from Kent. Among his fellow justices was Sir Arnold Savage, who once accompanied Gaunt on a peace mission. He had been a member of the royal household since Richard's accession, his mother having acted as nurse to the young king. He had been knighted in Scotland. To anticipate

a little, he was sheriff of Kent at the time of Chaucer's election to Parliament in 1386. Such elections were not "democratic" in the modern sense, and the sheriff himself, often dominated by any interested magnates, determined the outcome. There is no evidence that Chaucer was a prominent Kentish freeholder, and it is a fair assumption that his election resulted from favorable action on the part of someone of higher rank. Sir Arnold, who probably had some literary interests since he was later to act as executor for John Gower,²⁶ probably found such action congenial. He is said to have later joined Gaunt's crusade.

When Parliament met in October 1385, the government was heavily in debt, the people were not in the mood for heavy taxation, the successes of Edward III on the Continent were now nostalgic memories, clouded by the realization that the advantages he had gained had somehow faded away, and the country seemed hardly capable of defending itself. It was fairly easy to conclude that through "evil counsellors," or household extravagance and corruption, Richard, abetted by his favorites and the chancellor, had frittered away both the moral and the financial resources of his kingdom. Among his "extravagances" was a grant made to Chaucer under the signet (endorsed by de Vere) allowing him to appoint a permanent deputy at the wool wharf.²⁷ A bill introduced by the Commons demanded, among other things, that controllers and other customs officials perform their duties in person and not by deputy, and the entire bill was endorsed by the king. Michael de la Pole did nothing about it and, in fact, was probably responsible for having it removed from the rolls of Parliament. His action, or inaction, was largely responsible for his impeachment in 1386.²⁸ Chaucer and his friends probably knew that this bill was pending some time before Parliament met, and that it would eventually be implemented. The appointment to the peace commission probably resulted from their desire to increase his prominence in anticipation of an eventual loss of his position. In any event, Parliament granted a modest subsidy on the basis of the concessions represented in the bill, and approved Gaunt's crusade in Spain. Neither Richard nor his chancellor wanted a direct confrontation with France, and it is likely that for Gloucester and Arundel, Gaunt's venture represented positive and potentially fruitful action. It is possible also that Richard and his favorites were happy to have Gaunt out of the country, although in 1389, when de Vere was out of the way, Richard was anxious to have him back, and even assumed his livery when he returned. Meanwhile, those actively seeking peace with France may have thought that a diversion in Spain might help negotiations with the French, as indeed Gaunt's initial success in Asturias seemed to do. Meanwhile, however, the situation on the Continent was not improving, for Ghent capitulated to the French in December, assuring French control of the Low Countries.

Some indication of the possible source of influence in assisting Chaucer is provided by the fact that on February 19, 1386, John of Gaunt personally

supervised the admission of Philippa Chaucer, along with his son Henry of Derby (the future Henry IV) and certain other members of his family, including two sons of Philippa's sister Katherine Swynford, into the fraternity of Lincoln Cathedral. (Gaunt was lord of the castle at Lincoln and a patron of the cathedral, protecting its rights in the town.) Henry Percy, perhaps as a gesture of friendship, joined in the same year, and King Richard and Queen Anne joined in 1387 during their ramblings.²⁹ By the time of Philippa's admission to the Lincoln fraternity it had probably already been decided that Chaucer's son Thomas would accompany Gaunt on his crusade, where he evidently performed well, for the Duke granted him an annuity for life dated at Bayonne in 1389. During February John Holland agreed to furnish three chaplains for his victim Richard Stafford and was restored to favor. He allowed himself to be overcome by the charms of Gaunt's daughter Elizabeth, however, seduced her, quickly married her, and as a new member of the Lancastrian family, so to speak, was made Constable of the expeditionary force.³⁰ Meanwhile, Gaunt had obtained a papal bull endorsing his crusade and providing plenary pardons for all those who sided with him. The crusade was proclaimed publicly at St. Paul's on February 18, 1386, and the new bishop of Llandaff, William of Bottlesham, and John Gilbert, bishop of Hereford, roamed through the country preaching it, assisted by Carmelite friars. On Saturday March 25 at an elaborate ceremony of farewell, Richard presented gold crowns to King John of Spain, as Gaunt styled himself, and Queen Constance, who set off soon afterward toward Plymouth with their two remaining unmarried daughters and, probably, with an impressive entourage of household ministers, participants, and well-wishers.

Meanwhile, diplomatic negotiations with the French continued. In February Richard lavishly entertained Leo of Armenia, who was seeking to establish peace between England and France so they could unite in a crusade against the Turks, whose threat to Christian territory was becoming steadily more alarming. The negotiations led to an agreement whereby Richard would meet King Charles and Philip of Burgundy on the Continent in March, and Richard granted Leo an annuity of £1,000.³¹ Charles and Philip proceeded to Bologne, but Richard failed to arrive at Calais, since Michael de la Pole could not convince the French that Gaunt should be allowed to pursue his aims in Spain. Fears of invasion were by no means over in England, and in the spring, commissioners of array were sent to the southern counties, and the ports and the town of Calais were fortified. Military activity lapsed for a time in France, probably because of the illness of the Duke of Burgundy. A truce with Scotland, which had been deserted by Jean of Vienne, who did not like living conditions there, was signed on June 27, removing at least for a time the military threat from the north. But shortly after the departure of John of Gaunt in early July the French buildup on the coast resumed, and by September there was assembled the largest invasion fleet ever seen in Europe,

with some 30,000 men and elaborate equipment for establishing footholds on the English coast. It was compared by one writer with the fleet that attacked Troy,³² a comparison, as we shall see, that was not inappropriate. At some time during this period Clanvowe and his friend Neville were sent to help organize the defense of the south coast, where unpaid soldiers were being troublesome. The king, meanwhile, was rather ostentatiously disregarding the French and devoting his attention to de Vere's preparations for departure for Ireland, showering privileges and benefits on his favorite, who did not in fact depart.

Chaucer was elected to Parliament in September. By the time it met he had probably made arrangements to give up his residence at Aldgate, and on October 15, during the session, he gave his testimony at the Scrope-Grosvenor trial, an event that has led to a great deal of discussion about his assertion that he was "del age xl ans et plus armez par xxvii ans," which affords evidence of his approximate date of birth. The trial actually allowed him to appear before a prominent gathering and, in addition, to make a favorable impression on the Scropes, one of the most prominent families in England.³⁴ John of Gaunt and his followers had given their testimony (in favor of the Scropes) at Plymouth before their departure for Spain, and it is quite possible that the Duke arranged for Chaucer to testify. At Parliament the Commons was ready to join the "war party" at court, demanding the dismissal of Michael de la Pole, whose diplomacy had clearly failed and who had prevented the reforms passed in 1385 from being implemented. After being threatened with deposition at Eltham, where he had retired from Parliament, Richard returned and acceded to the new demands. Pole was replaced by Bishop Thomas Arundel, the brother of the earl,³⁵ and the new treasurer was Gaunt's friend Bishop John Gilbert. Gloucester and the Earl of Arundel were now in effective control of the government. Petitions were introduced in Parliament complaining about the behavior of Richard's friend the London merchant Nicholas Brembre. The Commons also asked that the statute concerning fees and robes for justices be reissued,³⁶ a subject recalled by Chaucer in his description of the Sergeant of the Law, who had often been a justice of assize:³⁷ "Of fees and robes hadde he many oon."

The Commons complained also that lands seized by escheators were regranted before the injured parties could bring their cases to court, and that when they sought a remedy they found that those to whom their lands had been regranted had letters of protection (*RP*, 3:222-23). Richard replied, rather ineffectively, that such persons should seek a remedy from the chancellor, although the practice was in violation of Edward's statute on the subject of escheators (*SR*, 1:367-68). (Richard had a deplorable habit of regranted newly escheated lands to his favorites.) The Commons further asked, again echoing Edward's statute against fees and robes, that no prorogations be granted in cases involving land, causing justice to be delayed. It is clear that

while the lords were thinking nostalgically of Edward's conquests abroad, the Commons was thinking nostalgically about his justice. In December Chaucer was deprived of his position at the Customs House, an eventuality he had probably been anticipating for some time. Considering Richard's obvious extravagance in the use of the signet or secret seal for grants made to his household favorites,³⁸ it seems unlikely that Chaucer would have regarded his own dismissal from what had become a merely nominal office with much resentment.

To extend our glance, very briefly, into the following year, we find that Richard spent some ten months in his "gyrations," during which he obtained legal opinions concerning the legality of the acts of the October Parliament and returned to London only to precipitate what amounted to a civil uprising and the "Merciless Parliament" of 1388, which succeeded, by very crude means indeed, in removing what many regarded as his "evil counsellors" and establishing a short-lived government by Council. Chaucer was not to obtain another lucrative office until after Richard declared himself of age and resumed power on May 3, 1389. In July, this time under the Privy Seal, a warrant was issued naming him Clerk of the Works, an office more eminent than any he had held before.

Chaucer's personal reaction to the October Parliament of 1386 has aroused some discussion. It has, for example, been plausibly argued that his account of the Trojan Parliament in which Antenor is ransomed for Criseyde (*Troilus*, ed. Robinson, 4:141-217) is a reflection of his discouragement at the decisions affecting him.³⁹ But the analogy between the two parliaments is not very convincing. There was no Hector in the English Parliament to oppose the proceedings, which under the circumstances were understandable enough. And in the Trojan parliament Hector is just as blind as anyone else to the behavior of Antenor; he simply objects that Trojans do not sell women, chivalrously fulfilling his obligation to protect Criseyde incurred immediately after her father's defection (*Troilus*, 1:117-23). There is no evidence that King Priam is being either recalcitrant or threatened by his own noblemen, and it can not be seriously argued that Criseyde is promoting the chivalry of Troy, as, for example, Blanche of Lancaster had once done in England. The frequent assertion that the comparison between the spread of the "noise of people" and the spread of fire in straw is an allusion to Jack Straw is not very convincing either, since the "lesser commons" did not attend parliament in England and were not well represented there. The implication seems to be rather that if Troy lacked wise leadership its people were likely to act unwisely, just as the senses are likely to rebel if a man is not governed by reason. The unwise leadership began when the Trojan court welcomed Helen, in effect abandoning Pallas for the sake of Venus. *Troilus* has done exactly the same thing, and at this point has been "burning" for some time. The action of the Trojan parliament is in effect suicidal, and is parallel with the immediate

reaction of Troilus, who, having been misled by his senses, calls on Death to destroy him, foolishly cursing Fortune, whom he says, again foolishly, he has always worshipped above all other gods. Readers of *The Consolation of Philosophy* or, for that matter, of Chaucer's poem "Fortune," should be fully aware of the dangers of this kind of blind devotion, and it is quite likely that many in Chaucer's audience found Troilus ridiculous, if not laughable. It would be difficult to think of Chaucer reacting to his dismissal in a manner in any way resembling the reaction of Troilus.

Again, it is not easy to think of an appropriate date in 1387 to which we could assign the probable delivery of Chaucer's poem, unless we make the unlikely assumption that Richard asked for it while engaged on his travels or during the turbulent period after his return to London. Troy is under siege as Chaucer describes it, and a similar situation existed in England almost at any time between 1377 and the close of 1386. The French, for reasons not well understood, abandoned their invasion plans in December of that year. It is true that in the same month the Council at Amiens determined to renew the effort in 1387, but as it turned out King Charles had only the resources to send some forces into Spain to oppose Gaunt. The Scots attacked in 1388, enjoying a victory at Chevy Chase, but that seems a very late date for the poem. The year 1386 seems more promising than either 1385 or 1387. Gaunt's preparations for departure and the festivities connected with it would have provided a suitable occasion. Specifically, the days before and including that of the "coronation" ceremony arranged by Richard suggest a likely date, although a later date at Plymouth while the expedition was waiting to set forth is another possibility. John of Gaunt, clearly concerned about Chaucer's family, was most probably involved in arrangements for presenting the poet in a favorable light before persons of eminence so that he might find something to replace his income at the Customs House, and in this effort he probably found Chaucer's friends at court ready to cooperate. I do not mean to suggest that Chaucer suddenly composed a long poem for a specific occasion, but that he put the finishing touches on a poem he had been working on for some time at the request of someone who knew about it.

IV.

Before turning to the poem itself I shall discuss its general relevance to England, the kind of ideals we may safely assume to have been held by Chaucer's friends at court and, very briefly, some points concerning literary technique. First, the English, influenced by traditions stemming from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, regarded themselves as inheritors of the traditions of ancient Troy. "Britain" was the realm established by "Brutus," the great-grandson of Aeneas, or as Chaucer called it in his poem addressed to Henry IV, "Brutes Albion," and London was often

called "New Troy." The fall of Troy thus served as a kind of perpetual warning, especially against following the example of Paris, the young Trojan prince who chose Venus over the busy life of Juno or the wise contemplation of Pallas.⁴⁰ Paris is made to say with unwitting irony in Ovid's amusing Epistle (*Heroides*, 16:48-49), "One of the seers said that Ilion would burn with the fire of Paris." Chaucer, in effect, makes Troy burn with the fire of Troilus. Gower, who uses the commonplace association of England with Troy in *Vox clamantis*, complains, near the close of his poem attacking the evils of his time in England, that his country "who was once holy is becoming the goddess Venus herself."⁴¹

That idleness and lecherous self-indulgence were inimical to chivalric endeavor, reflected in Walsingham's remark about Richard's court quoted above, appealed strongly to the medieval mind, and indeed, had antecedents in both Virgil and Ovid. Thus, in a sermon preached at St. Paul's in May 1375, Bishop Brinton of Rochester, having explained that those who wish others to be subject to them should be ruled by reason themselves, said further that the honor of a king depends on military power, sane counsel, clerical wisdom, and the just rule of the people, quoting, with reference to the first, John of Salisbury on the oath of a soldier. He went on to say that the English under Edward were once victorious in war, but because of their sins, God, who "was once an Englishman," had receded from them. (The sins he had in mind were those of idleness and lechery.)⁴² And in the following year, in a sermon praising the recently deceased Prince Edward, he said, "What is surprising, therefore, if the English are unfortunate in war, when in England everywhere reign lechery, adultery, and incest, so that few, and especially lords, are content with their wives."⁴³ In 1346 Bishop Bradwardine, in a famous sermon celebrating English victories, vigorously castigated the French for being soldiers of Cupid and Venus, attributing their defeat at least partly to this fact. The fruit of their lechery, he said, was "a stinking and intense burning."⁴⁴ Chaucer's repeated references to the "fire" that burns Troilus are singularly appropriate. In short, the virtue of chivalry and devotion to Venus were traditionally regarded as being incompatible.⁴⁵

John of Salisbury insists repeatedly throughout the *Policraticus*, a book that Chaucer knew, that self-indulgence and the pursuit of Venus undermine not only military valor but the general efficacy of a prince, using the Terentian braggart soldier as an exemplar for ridiculing the weaknesses of his own contemporaries in England. And in the popular commentary on the *Aeneid* attributed to Bernard Silvestris, the Trojan horse is used as a figure for *luxuria* that brings with it all the other vices.⁴⁶ Troy burned because its leaders led it to desert Pallas for Venus, and it seemed possible that New Troy might burn in the same way for what were thought of as essentially the same reasons. Since the days of Marcabru, moreover, venereal preoccupation had been thought of as one of the worst deterrents to crusading zeal. Hence the

attention accorded it by Philippe de Mézières in *Le songe du vieil pelerin* (1:52-56), where Luxure describes her baleful influence under her mistress Venus.

Chaucer was able to add depth and authority to his poem by suggesting various kinds of what might be called "analogies" or, to use a medieval term, "similitudes," many of which are implied rather than stated. Eugene Vinaver has called our attention to the use of analogy in romances, where one episode may be made to recall and comment upon a much earlier episode in the interwoven fabric of the narrative.⁴⁷ Chaucer's shorter narrative made this technique impractical. But he could and did suggest a number of analogies simultaneously, appealing to the memories of a reasonably literate and sophisticated audience well grounded in the classics and the Scriptures.

First, there is an obvious analogy within the poem itself between the macrocosm represented by Troy and the microcosm represented by Troilus. The fall of Troy and the fall of Troilus take place simultaneously, and the carefully traced fall of the man offers an explanation and a paradigm for the fall of the city. A similar device had been used in the commentary on the *Aeneid* just mentioned, where Troy is made through "moralization" a figure for the human body in order to emphasize the moral causes of its destruction. John of Salisbury had used the analogy between a man and the commonwealth the other way around, to emphasize the interdependence of all of society's "members" or groups and the necessity for reason and wisdom on the part of the ruler, and the further necessity for an interest in the welfare of the whole on the part of the individuals making up the "members." This is a fruitful similitude rather than an "organic theory of the state."⁴⁸ The same kind of analogy is adduced by Gower in the Prologue to his *Confessio Amantis* (945-62), begun at a time roughly contemporary with *Troilus*. In Chaucer's poem, while Pandarus, who protected Paris from Menelaus while Pallas was still guiding Troy,⁴⁹ is busily encouraging Troilus in his self-destructive passion, his brother Calchas is assisting the Greeks in their efforts to destroy the city. And while Antenor, presumably, is seeking the same end, his sister Trojan Antigone helps to bring about the aid of Criseyde in the destruction of Troilus.

A concentration on the microcosm facilitated the development of further analogies from a variety of sources, of which I shall here mention only a few. For example, frequent allusions to ideas and doctrines from *The Consolation of Philosophy*, which Chaucer had probably been translating at about the time he was fashioning his poem, suggest that Pandarus is in part an inverted Lady Philosophy, whose part Stoic and part Epicurean teachings represent, as Philosophy says (1:pr. 3), "cloutes . . . out of my clothes," used to induce Troilus to embrace worldly joys rather than to forego them for the sake of his people.⁵⁰ Again, his assiduousness in urging Troilus on recalls the Terentian parasite who affixes himself to Epicureans in the pages of the *Policraticus*

(especially Bk. 3). Chaucer can also evoke such analogies for a single episode. For example, the ruse Pandarus arranges to bring Troilus and Criseyde together in Deiphebus's house (2:1513-26) is reminiscent of that employed by Jonadab, "a very wise man," to bring together the ill-fated Amnon and Tamar (Douay, 2 Kings, 13). There are, of course, analogies in fourteenth-century life, and these are in some ways the most important of all, since the "background" analogies simply reinforce them by calling forth implications arising from associations in the minds of the audience, made pleasurable by recognition. Thus Pandarus is a counselor to a prince, in fact the only member of Troilus's retinue we meet in the poem. His destructive aid recalls the "false counsellors" who urge princes to follow their own inclinations rather than the dictates of wisdom, vigorously condemned in Chaucer's *Melibeus* and often said to be busy about the English court. Again, Pandarus leads Troilus in prayer and causes him to beat his breast in contrition for his sins against the God of Love (1:932-38) as though he were a priest. (Bishop Brinton had complained bitterly about confessors who failed to correct the sins of magnates guilty of adultery or other similar transgressions.)⁵¹ Pandarus actually offers to help Troilus if he wants his brother's wife (1:676-79) and, after progress has been made with his own niece, acts to "quike alwey the fir" that burns him (3:484).

Troilus is in some ways another Paris, or a transformation of Paris into a similitude of Troy itself. Although less aggressive than either his brother or his rival Diomedes, he repeats his brother's unfortunate choice; and just as Helen betrayed Paris for Deiphebus, whom she in turn betrayed to the Greeks, so Criseyde betrays Troilus for Diomedes. As Mary-Jo Arn has indicated,⁵² the theme of betrayal is introduced early in the poem when Pandarus refers to Oenone's Epistle to Paris in the *Heroides* (1:652 ff.), hardly tempered by his observation that even if he, like Oenone, cannot cure his own frustrated love, he can advise Troilus and will not restrain him even if he wants Helen, with whose character he seems to have been familiar. This action suggests that in a sense he is once more "assisting" Paris in a new guise.

An ominous background to the poem is afforded by both direct and indirect allusions to Theban history and legend, most explicitly in the story of Niobe, which Pandarus characteristically misapplies; in Criseyde's "Romance of Thebes" (2:106), with its story of Amphiarus whose implications (WB Prol. 740-46, "Mars," 245 ff.) Pandarus does not wish to face; and in Cassandra's interpretation of Troilus's dream. The Theban material in the poem, suggestive of the ill consequences of civil or fraternal strife, not, as we have seen, unknown in the English court, has been ably examined by David Anderson,⁵³ and a few details will suffice here. In the Knight's Tale Chaucer shows Palamon complaining about Juno, whom Boccaccio calls the "dea de' matrimonii," angry at Thebes "per gli adulterii da Giove, suo marito, commessi con le donne tebane," because she "hath destroyed wel ny al the blood / Of Thebes." Juno was also said to be inimical to Troy after the judgment of

Paris, as well she might be, and the behavior of Troilus and Criseyde can hardly have pleased her.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Pandarus, after having suggested "That in the dees right as their fallen chaunces, / Right so in love ther come and gon plesaunces," hardly an idea pleasing to Juno, continues ineptly to console Troilus by saying, in connection with Criseyde (4:1116-18),

blisful Juno, thorough hir grete myght,
Shal, as I hope, hir grace unto us sende.
Myn herte seth, "certayn, she shal nat wende."

And Criseyde later (4:1538) amusingly invokes Juno in connection with her sworn intention to return to Troy. It may be that Chaucer thought of Hecuba as the daughter of King Dymas of Thebes. Ovid, immediately after his account of Ceyx and Alcyone, calls her a child of Dymas (*Met.* 11:761), identified by one mythographer as a king of Thebes.⁵⁶ But whether or not Troilus shares the "blood of Thebes," he does share with the Thebans a neglect of Juno, and is hardly kind to Pallas, Apollo, or Diana. Criseyde and Diomedes both have connections with the ill-fated "Seven against Thebes." She, the daughter of Argia (Chaucer's "Argyve"), is the fruit of a Chaucerian union between Calchas and the wife of Polynices, who corrupted the wife of Amphiorus with the "Brooch of Thebes." This also makes her first cousin to Diomedes, the son of Argia's sister Deiphyle. Finally, if Trojan Antigone is Criseyde's niece, her deceased husband must have been a Chaucerian younger brother of Laomedon, the father of Priam, Anchises, Antenor, and Antigone. (Antigone, as we shall see, also had her difficulties with Juno.) It is difficult to escape Anderson's conclusion that "Chaucer added the specter of Thebes to the background of *Troilus* to underscore an implicit theme of the poem, namely that one fallen city may serve as a warning to another not yet fallen. As Thebes should have been to Troy, so Troy should be to England."

Vinaver makes a further point about the romances of Chrétien de Troyes that may be valid for *Troilus* as well, as Ida Gordon has suggested.⁵⁷ He tells us that the French poet "lets the characters enact a line of argument that happens to interest him, no matter what kind of characterisation, real or unreal, may emerge as a result."⁵⁸ Since the analogies to which we have called attention determine the patterns of action to be followed by the characters, Gordon is probably correct, although Chaucer does maintain a reasonable verisimilitude in contemporary terms. Criseyde is widely hailed as a "complex" character, and the motivations of Pandarus have been difficult to explain. But the problems are not so grave as they at first seem. Troilus is a prince distracted from his obligations by a self-indulgent passion, and such princes were not unknown in the fourteenth century. Criseyde, who has a very good opinion of herself (2:746-49) and is rather vain, is easily impressed by a man obviously above her in station who wishes to take advantage of her.

She can, moreover, readily cite salubrious doctrines in all sincerity without understanding their relevance to her own conduct, a not uncommon trait. And Pandarus is not unlike familiar gnathonic persons who attach themselves to their betters, as he does both in his defense of Paris and in his eagerness to satisfy the appetites of his prince.

One further point about Chaucer's technique is, I think, often misunderstood because of a change in taste. In spite of his ultimate seriousness of purpose, Chaucer, again like Chrétien, delights in teasing his audience; and he very seldom writes at any length without a smile. He had undoubtedly read and thoroughly digested John of Salisbury's elaboration of an Horatian maxim (*Satires*, 1:1.23-24) in the *Policraticus* (8:11): "Nothing prevents one from speaking the truth with a smile and from illustrating in fabulous narratives that which may be detrimental to good morals." John is about to relate the story of the widow of Ephesus, and the point is illustrated once more in his obvious admiration for the *Eunuch* of Terence, skilfully used in the argument of *Policraticus* 8 to show that tyrants are actually Epicureans. The basic principle was known even to Harry Bailly, who says in the Prologue to the Cook's Tale (4355), "A man may seye ful sooth in game and pley," although he is himself, being something of an Epicurean, slow to grasp the "sooth" of what he hears.

To return to John of Salisbury, we find him innocent of the idea that a tragedy should be solemn. He had read Boethius, rather than Aristotle, who told him that tragedies portray the downfall of men of high estate who foolishly, and hence from a medieval point of view amusingly, subject themselves to Fortune and suffer the Providential consequences. Thus John was able to write of those who abandon the obligatory "warfare" of "the life of man upon earth" (Job 7:1; 2 Cor. 10:4) as mere players subject to the whims of Fortune as they act out "the comedy or tragedy of this world" (*Pol.* 3:8). Such players are "comic" because their actions are ludicrous, even though the consequences may be providentially "tragic" or disastrous. Even Shakespeare, later, often made his tragic protagonists ridiculous and introduced comic scenes into his tragedies, not as "relief" but as witty thematic reinforcements. The change in taste exemplified in Joseph Wharton's attack on wit and his assertion that the sublime and the pathetic, which are solemn matters, are the true subjects of poetry had not yet taken place. In Chaucer's day wit still reigned.

V.

As we have seen, *Troilus* was most probably written at a time when England was in danger from invasion from abroad, and quite possibly at a time when hopes were raised for a remedy in the crusade of the Duke of Lancaster. Meanwhile the king and his ministers, not to mention ordinary merchants and

peasants, seem to have been guided more by immediate self-interest than by consideration for the welfare of the realm. Chaucer set out to show how "invisible foes," as he calls them at Troy, make possible the destruction of a commonwealth by "visible foes" without, using a negative example to make the positive appeal at the close of his poem more poignant. The example is the story of Troilus, and it will repay us to glance briefly at his behavior as a prince and as a chivalric leader.

When we first meet Troilus he is attending the festival of the Palladium, the sacred image of Pallas, who was regarded in the Middle Ages as the goddess of wisdom, a virtue recognized as being of special importance in a prince or knight, who should be, as Chaucer puts it elsewhere, worthy and wise. Pallas is said to have protected Troy until the Palladium was stolen by Diomedes.⁵⁹ This brings us a further analogy, since it was Diomedes who in effect stole Troilus's image of Venus, Criseyde, plunging the young prince into self-destructive wrath under the inspiration of the "Herynes," who lead him to the "angry Parcas," ministers of destiny. Instead of dutifully paying homage to Pallas, whose festival was traditionally celebrated at Athens, by holding philosophical conversations,⁶⁰ Troilus and his young followers are idly, and I use this word advisedly,⁶¹ "beholding ay the ladies of the Town." Thus Troilus, foolishly defying Venus when, as Chaucer says, "Th'eschewing is only the remedye,"⁶² is practically inviting the arrow of Cupid. As he makes fun of lovers for their labor in winning, their uneasiness in keeping, and their woes and pains at losing, at the same time he is indicating his own condition and his own fate.⁶³

An analogy for this action is a bit of wisdom from Ecclesiasticus (9:7-9): "Look not around thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down into the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not upon another's beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire." He sees Criseyde, her image (Cupid's arrow) sticks to his "hertes botme" bypassing his reason as it usually does, so that he abandons his companions, not to mention Pallas, and retreats to his chamber, where, having defied Ovid's precept (*Rem. am.*, 579) "beware of solitary places!" he begins to burn. He soon resigns his "estaat royale" to her, repeating in effect the Judgment of Paris, so that he ceases to worry about either the siege or his own salvation. He actually decides that death is the only solution to his problem, and he prays to Criseyde, whom he has seen only once and that briefly, and concerning whose character he is completely ignorant, to have mercy on him and save him from "the death." This is silly enough, but when Pandarus comes and offers assistance, Troilus first tells him to go away, for he will die. Love, he says, has overcome him, and his burning desire is so great

That to be slayn it were a gretter joye
To me than kyng of Grece ben and Troye.

These are truly deplorable sentiments in a prince whose nation is under attack, and we can well imagine how Chaucer's audience would have regarded their own companions substituting "France" and "England" for "Grece" and "Troye." We can rest assured, moreover, that this commonplace analogy did occur to them, and that they recognized in Troilus an extreme exemplification of what some of them, in one way or another, had been doing. Since Troilus has no wish to marry, he is reduced to either inaction or subterfuge.

Pandarus is ready to supply the subterfuge, in spite of his own amorous difficulties. He can help, he says, even if Troilus loves Helen, and he advises Troilus not to weep like Theban Niobe. Niobe's seven sons and seven daughters were shot down by Apollo (wisdom or truth) and Diana (chastity) after she defied their mother, Latona, a goddess of wisdom. If anything, this reference emphasizes the foolishness of angering any of these deities, or disregarding the virtues they represent, a point emphasized once more, and again inadvertently and hence amusingly, when Pandarus says that although Troilus may suffer pains as sharp as those suffered by "Ticius in helle," he can still be of assistance. Tityus became a common figure for insatiable libido, for which naturally there is no cure, for he attempted to rape Latona, was shot down by Apollo and Diana, and sent to hell where he suffers the eternal torment of having his liver (Pandarus's "stomak" was thought to be the seat of libido in women) gnawed by "volturis." Having explained that Fortune's wheel always turns and Troilus may yet rise upon it, but omitting the obvious consequence that he will also fall if he rises upon it, Pandarus generously offers in true gnathonic fashion, to get his own sister for him if he wants her. Having discovered that it is his niece, Criseyde, rather than his sister, for whom Troilus burns, he leads him in prayer to Cupid and asserts that if Criseyde does not love in accordance with "natural" love, by which he means what would have been regarded as "natural" after the Fall when human nature was corrupted, rather than "celestial" love, he will hold it a vice in her.

Having grown hotter through encouragement, Troilus prays to Venus for help, although, amusingly, it is the business of Venus to make the fire hot (a fact abundantly evident in the *Roman de la rose*), and, falling upon his knees before his parasite, entrusts his life and death to him, saying, "fy on the Grekes alle!" as though the attack on the city did not matter. He becomes like a lion on the battlefield and friendly and gentle to everyone at home, not to save or encourage his countrymen, but to make an impression on Criseyde. This is almost an echo of Bradwardine's accusation, in the sermon referred to above, that the French, subjecting themselves to Cupid and Venus, seek "a name upon earth" so that "they may be loved by foolish women." The witty satire of this book has been generally neglected in favor of more sentimental and serious concerns.

In the second book, an amusing reflection of contemporary court manner

somewhat exaggerated for effect, Pandarus and Criseyde seek to maneuver themselves into a situation where Troilus can have his will and Criseyde can preserve her "honor," which would suffer if a secret and illicit affair became known. Pandarus paints for her little pictures of Troilus discussing military strategy in "the paleis garden, by a welle," playing idly at darts, and mournfully confessing his sins to the God of Love; or in his bedchamber groaning for love. The military strategy was obviously not the subject uppermost in his mind, although Criseyde, who is flattered, disregards this obvious implication. When she sees him from a window with his battered helm and shield she is impressed by his prowess, his high estate, his reputation, but more than anything else by the fact that his distress is all for her. She argues with herself about the most profitable course she could take, but determines not to take another husband who might be dominating or unfaithful, and is clearly impressed both by her own attractiveness and by the exalted station of her lover. She hears the song of Antigone, who, the mythographers tell us, thought herself to be more beautiful than Juno, so irritating that deity that she turned her hair into serpents, a punishment later mitigated by having her transformed into a stork.⁶⁴ But Criseyde is impressed by the song praising love rather than Junonian marriage, and the later picture of her tearing her "ownded" hair may be reminiscent of this suggested analogy as well as being, along with the hand-wringing, a signal of *tristitia*, or worldly sorrow. When she grants Troilus "love of friendship" the young prince is gladder than if someone had given him "a thousand Troys," again an indication of his lack of any sense of chivalric or princely obligation, what we today might describe as "social conscience." The fire "of which he brente" becomes even hotter. Pandarus develops his plot to bring the two together, involving lies to Deiphebus, to Helen, to Criseyde, and a feigned illness on the part of Troilus. I need not print out that none of the actions in this book has much to do with "chivalrie, trouthe, honour, fredom, and curtesie," although they do illustrate false virtues that resemble these virtues on the surface. Our word for simulated virtue is hypocrisy.

Book III is a comic account of the activities of Venus, "plesauce of love," who is invoked at the outset, along with a brief account of the activities of Jove that so offended Juno and some veiled hints of divine love. As Troilus lies in bed at Deiphebus's house, Criseyde and Pandarus appear, and she, quite properly, asks him for "lordshipe," which is the last thing he has in mind. He asks to be under her "yerde" or dominion, and in fact he plays, from a medieval point of view, a curiously feminine role in the subsequent narrative, consistent with the commonplace idea that passion makes men effeminate. Criseyde says that if he will keep her "honor" (meaning her reputation) she will receive him into her service, providing he will have no sovereignty in love, thus reversing her original proper request. When Pandarus offers to bring the couple together to "speke of love," as he laughingly puts it, Troilus is

overjoyed, but he groans to deceive Helen and Deiphebus entering from the garden, to which Pandarus has cleverly led them. Improper aims lead to worldly stratagems, or, as they are now called, "cover-ups," and under the guidance of Pandarus Troilus becomes adept at them.

When he and Pandarus are alone, the latter seeks to excuse his pandaring, asking that Troilus keep everything secret, since if anyone knew what he had done it would be considered "the werste trecherie." Chaucer's audience knew, of course, and could hardly have escaped making that judgment themselves and the further observation that the "treachery" was not only condoned but encouraged by Troilus. Pandarus also warns against boasting and lying, although it is clear that he is himself a skilled liar. Troilus swears secrecy and promises to serve Pandarus as a slave forever, calling his action "nobility, compassion, fellowship, and trust," and offering to get Pandarus his sister Polyxena, his sister Cassandra, or Helen, or "any of the frape" if he wants one of them.⁶⁵

Thus our prince offers to become an unscrupulous pander himself, as well as a parasite to a man beneath him in status. He devises the stratagem of pretending to be preoccupied with the problem of the siege, in which he has no real interest, at the temple of Apollo when he is actually with Criseyde. The virtues of wisdom and truth, represented by Apollo, are once more carelessly defied. For by lying to Criseyde Pandarus gets her to his house, although she, a kindred spirit, is clearly aware of the lie. Pandarus, however, needs still another lie to bring the lovers together. Troilus, after lurking in a "stewe," feels compelled to say a prayer to Venus, whom he promises to serve until he dies. This self-dedication to idleness and lust is hardly propitious either for himself, for Criseyde, or for the people of Troy, whose "Hector the Second" is thus abandoning them. The amusing ineptitude of the prayer constitutes a kind of witty comment on the speaker, for it is hardly propitious for what he has in mind. He mentions Venus's unsuccessful love for Adonis, the love of Jove for Europa, which had disastrous consequences, the love of Mars for Venus, which led to his great embarrassment, the frustrated love of Phebus for Daphne, and the love of Mercury for Herse, which provoked the wrath of Pallas. He even calls on Diana, who is unlikely to find his enterprise agreeable, and he finally addresses the Fates, ministers of destiny, who shape the ends of all those who lose their free will through passion, including, of course, Troilus himself (5:1-7). There can be little doubt that this ridiculous performance produced laughter in the fourteenth century.

Criseyde, always full of good doctrine, lectures Pandarus at length on the fleeting character of worldly joys and her lover on the evils of jealousy. The young prince faints in confusion and is thrown in bed by Pandarus, actions that further detract from his princely dignity. Even more conversation is necessary before the two lovers subside into the uneasy heaven of Venereal bliss where, unfortunately, both feel that their delights may be mere dreams

or in any event transitory. Criseyde has just pointed out that they are transitory by nature, although it is amusing that neither she nor her lover shows any sign of recognizing this fact. Next morning Troilus thanks Pandarus for having rescued him from "Flegetoun, the fiery flood of helle," a river, as a popular mythographer says, "signifying the fires of wrath and cupidity with which human hearts are inflamed,"⁶⁶ passions later to be elaborated by Chaucer in his portraits of Arcite and Palamon in the Knight's Tale. But Troilus immediately finds himself back in this river, urging Pandarus to arrange a new assignation because, as he says, "I had it never half so hote an now." This constitutes a witty comment on the "rescue."

The unquenchable fire was thought to be one of the disadvantages of lust, not a plaintive comment on the human condition. Thus the plight of Tityrus was thought to illustrate the fact that "when the action is once performed it is not enough for lust, for it always breaks out again."⁶⁷ The idea had been elaborated by John of Salisbury, who said, echoing Terence (*Eunuch*, 2:3),

The touch of the bodies of others, and the more ardent appetite for women is next to insanity. Whatever any of the senses attempt is game and play compared with those things brought about by this frenzy. From it we desire, we are wrathful, we are passionate, we are worried, and after our pleasure has been fulfilled we inflame ourselves again through a certain dissatisfaction, seeking to do that, when we repeat it, leaves us once more dissatisfied. [*Pol.* 8:6].

These points are well illustrated in the remainder of the poem. Although we may feel compassion for those who suffer from spiritual maladies of this kind, as Chaucer says he does at the outset (1:47-51) and as Boethius urges us to do (*Cons.* 4:pr. 4), they are especially dangerous in persons of responsibility and trust, upon whose integrity the welfare of others depends. Chaucer observes, "And thus Fortune a tyme led in joie / Criseyde and eek this kinges son of Troye."

Troilus has abandoned his reason, a fact driven home by his ridiculous corruption of one of the meters of *The Consolation of Philosophy* (2:m. 8; *Troilus*, 3:1744-71), in the course of which he substitutes his own list for the divine love of the original, so that he and his beloved are "Fortune's fools." Hence, as Chaucer assures us in the Proem of Book IV, Fortune blinds fools who listen to her song. Troilus has cursed the day, and the Muses are now the Furies, daughters of Night, together with Mars, the god of wrath and war. The season places the sun in Leo, so that the malignant "dog days" afford a background to the events described.

Parliament makes the exchange we have already discussed, and Troilus like a wild bull butts his head against the wall of his chamber, wishing that Fortune had killed his father, or his brothers, or even himself rather than depriving

him of Criseyde's solaces. This reaction is not only ignoble but treasonable. He can neither support Hector nor carry Criseyde away by force for fear of ruining her reputation and of adding to the ignominy brought upon Troy by Paris, in whose footsteps he has been surreptitiously treading. Soon he is meditating in a temple where, in despair, he confuses simple and conditional necessity in such a way as to defend the proposition that "al that comth, comth by necessitee." This conclusion eliminates moral responsibility along with free choice. Finding Criseyde in a swoon and thinking her dead, he draws his sword to kill himself, thinking thus to defy the gods and Fortune in particular and demonstrating little princely fortitude.

Criseyde recovers in time to prevent this act, thanks Venus for their narrow escape, and suggests they go to bed, where the relief from their difficulties is only temporary. She promises to return to Troy within ten days, calling attention to her father's covetousness and the possibility of peace, concerning which there had been almost continuous negotiations (as there had been between the English and the French). She convinces her lover that they should not "steal away," for such an action would dishonor them, and people would accuse him of "lust voluptuous and coward drede," as though Troilus had not already demonstrated these qualities. They should, she says, "make a virtue of necessity," quoting Boethius, and remember that Fortune overcomes only wretches. As for herself, Criseyde says, rather amusingly, that she loved Troilus only for his "moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe," and because his reason always bridled his delight.

The Fates, ministers of destiny, rule over the last book. Diomedes wins Criseyde's "friendship" by the time the two have reached the Greek camp. Chaucer devoted considerable time to the torments of Troilus, to his bitterness, his frustration, his isolation from his fellows, and to his gradual realization of Criseyde's unfaithfulness. Having scorned Pandarus's Ovidian advice in Book IV (400-27) to find another love, Troilus now disregards the further Ovidian advice to destroy old letters (*Rem. am.*, 718-22) and to avoid places where he has enjoyed Criseyde (*Rem. am.*, 725-26). Toward the close Chaucer remarks that Fortune "Can pull away the fetheres brighte of Troye / Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye."

The city suffers the fate of Troilus. After the treacherous slaying of Hector by Achilles, Troilus becomes convinced of Criseyde's defection to Diomedes, and goes out to fight not to protect the town, but to seek vengeance on Diomedes and his own death. When he has achieved the latter and his spirit has ascended above the mutable realm of the elements, he looks down, laughs at those who wept for his death, and damns all "oure wil that folweth so / The blynde lust, the which that may nat laste." This, Chaucer assures us, is the end of Troilus's worthiness, of his royal estate, of his lust, and of his nobility. He urges the "yonge fresshe folkes" in his audience not to love the transitory attractions of the world, but to love Christ, who will not betray them, and

concludes with a prayer to the Trinity to defend himself and his countrymen from visible and invisible foes.⁶⁹ The visible enemies were at the time threatening to strike, and unless the invisible enemies within were conquered, they might well succeed. The prayer closes with a plea to Jesus to make "us," meaning the English, worthy of His mercy for the love of Mary, who was not only a source of compassion because of her humanity but the traditional sponsor of English chivalry and an appropriate mentor for a crusade.⁷⁰

Chaucer's *Troilus* offers a vivid example of the degrading and ultimately disastrous consequences when a man of noble estate and great physical valor, but little fortitude, places his own private will, misled by the attractiveness of ephemeral satisfactions, above what was traditionally called "the honor of God and the common profit of the realm." When Chaucer enjoins the youth of the realm to abandon "worldly vanyte," he generalizes his lesson, for Venus is a goddess of *luxuria* as well as of *concupiscentia carnis*, in its narrower sense, and the idolatrous lust for a woman had long been a figure typifying any concupiscent passion. Chaucer hints strongly at this principle in his ironic praise of love as being something far better than avarice (3:1373-93) immediately after Criseyde has given Troilus the Brooch of Thebes, and the idea was strongly suggested earlier in Troilus's formulaic criticism of lovers before he saw Criseyde. The fate of Crassus (3:1373-93) and, presumably, all of his imitators forced to drink molten gold, is actually similar to the fate of Troilus and of Troy. Chaucer undoubtedly had in mind the extortionate abuses that King Edward had vainly sought to remedy and that Sir Richard Waldgrave and his successors among the Commons in Parliament had later sought to remedy,⁷¹ as well as the sexual behavior of the chivalrous. He was seeking a renewed dedication on the part of his audience, couched in terms then most likely to be appealing, however they may strike us now, stressing the obligation of the English to set their love where it would lead neither themselves nor their countrymen to the burning destruction that had devastated old Troy, and to behave, as reason then demanded, with due reverence for wisdom and its restraints, now represented by *Sapientia Dei Patris*, or Christ, rather than by Pallas.

In the atmosphere of England in the mid-1380s it is not unlikely that many in his audience were inspired by what he had to say and renewed their own dedication. He had, after all, neither castigated them directly as a preacher might have done, nor cast any aspersions on particular individuals. He had simply urged them, with a great deal of wit and learning, to love as they should not only for their own welfare, but for the welfare of England. A new dedication would have been especially appropriate, in just these terms, for those about to set out for Spain with the Duke of Lancaster.

NOTES

1. See Derek Pearsall's perceptive and cogent article "The *Troilus* Frontispiece and Chaucer's Audience," *YES* 7 (1977), esp. pp. 73-74.

2. See, e.g., John Barnie, *War in Medieval English Society* (Ithaca, 1974), pp. 28, 103, and the sermons cited below.
3. The social importance of the Chamber at a somewhat later date has been discussed by Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers* (Toronto, 1980), chap. 2.
4. See the discussion by J. H. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), pp. 62-85.
5. Information about some of the Chamber knights is available in W. T. Waugh, "The Lollard Knights," *Scottish Historical Review* 11 (1914): 55-92; and in Kenneth McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972). McFarlane is, I think, too quick to attribute "Lollard" views to these men. Cf. F. R. H. Du Boulay, "The Historical Chaucer," in Derek Brewer, ed., *Geoffrey Chaucer* (London, 1974), pp. 45-46; D. W. Robertson, Jr., "Simple Signs from Everyday Life in Chaucer," in John P. Hermann and John J. Burke, Jr., eds., *Signs and Symbols in Chaucer's Poetry* (University, Alabama, 1981), pp. 18-19; and Paul Strohm, "Chaucer's Fifteenth-Century Audience and the Narrowing of the Chaucer Tradition," in Roy J. Percy, ed., *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 4 (1982): 9-13.
6. J. J. N. Palmer, *England, France and Christendom* (London, 1972), pp. 33, 37, 228. The subject of Chaucer's connections with French poets is now being explored by James I. Wimsatt.
7. See Martin M. Crow and Clair C. Olson, *Chaucer Life-Records* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 343, 347.
8. R. Ian Jack, "Entail and Descent: The Hastings Inheritance," *BHHR* 38 (1965): 1-11.
9. These have been edited with an introduction by V. J. Scattergood. *The Works of Sir John Clanvowe* (Totowa, N.J., 1975). The conjecture about the purpose of the treatise is my own.
10. *Life-Records*, pp. 49-53.
11. *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 21-62.
12. See C. F. Richmond, "The War at Sea," in Kenneth Fowler, ed. *The Hundred Years War* (London, 1971), pp. 115-16.
13. The connotations of the word *chivalry* were still very much like those associated with the good knight by John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 6:2-19. Attitudes toward it varied, however. See Barnie's discussion. *War in Medieval English Society*, chap. 3.
14. For the general situation, see J. R. Madicott, *Law and Lordship*, Past and Present Supplement 4 (1978). Edward and his Council had ordained in 1346 (*SR*, 1:303-6) that justices "do equal law and execution of right to rich and poor without having regard to any person," that justices disregard royal letters or other letters contrary to right and justice, that they take fees and robes from no one except the king, that they should counsel great and poor alike, and that they should take no gift "except meat and drink, and that of small value." The justices of assize were to inquire of "sheriffs, escheators, bailiffs of franchises, and their under ministers, and also of ministers, common embracers, and jurors in

- the county, of the gifts, rewards, and other profits which the said ministers do take of the people to execute their office, and for making array of panels, putting in the same suspect jurors and of evil fame, and of maintainers, embracers, and jurors that do take rewards against the parties, whereby losses and damages do come daily to the people, in subversion of the law." Justices were required to take an elaborate oath to fulfill the terms of the ordinance. As Madicott shows, however, the ordinance was not well observed.
15. *Speculo regis Edwardii III*, ed. J. Moisant (Paris, 1891), who attributed the two "recensions" he published to Simon Islip, although they are now usually attributed to Mephham and dated ca. 1330. On the traditional character of the complaints in this work, see G. L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1975), chap. 5.
 16. Edward had issued what has been called "the principal statute of the Middle Ages on the subject" of purveyance in 1362. See Harriss, *King, Parliament*, p. 376. This provided that purveyors for the household now be called buyers, that the prices paid be those of nearby markets, that indentures be used instead of wooden tallies on which the persons, quantities, and prices should be clearly recorded, that no menace be used, no bribes taken, and that a commission be appointed in every county to inquire into abuses. Similar rules applied to the purveyors for the households of magnates. The statute was unfortunately not well observed. Waldgrave's complaint in some ways resembles the petition of the clergy in 1377. See Dorothy Bruce Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy* (London, 1937), pp. 72-73.
 17. Cf. Eleanor Searle, *Lordship and Community: Battle Abbey and Its Banlieu* (Toronto, 1974), p. 345.
 18. We might add that lesser ecclesiastics were increasingly suffering excommunication for failure to pay subsidies. See J. Donald Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm in Medieval England* (Toronto, 1968), pp. 54-57, and the table on p. 68. As the peace rolls reveal, impoverished chaplains were turning to crime. There was, meanwhile, a growing tendency toward oligarchical government in the towns, causing discontent among lesser tradesmen. As R. B. Dobson has observed, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London, 1970), p. 13, the "traditional description of the 1381 rising as a 'Peasants' Revolt' . . . is in itself deceptive."
 19. A vivid account of these events is given by Sydney Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt* (London, 1904; repr. N.Y., 1964), pp. 382-87.
 20. On the cloth trade, see E. M. Carus-Wilson, "Trends in the Export of English Woolens in the Fourteenth Century," *EcHR* 2 Ser. 3 (1950-51): 174. As she puts it, "These were years of panic and confusion in England."
 21. See Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, chap. 3.
 22. Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, pp. 295, 437-9. For the numbers, however, see Palmer, p. 60.
 23. *Black Book of the Admiralty*, ed. Sir Travers Twiss (Rolls Series, 1871), 2:453.
 24. Quoted by May McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1959), p. 438. On the *miles amoris*, see D. W. Robertson, Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton, 1962), pp. 408-10.
 25. Cf. Anthony Goodman, "Sir Thomas Hoo and the Parliament of 1376," *BIHR* 41 (1968):145.
 26. On Sir Arnold Savage, see J. S. Roskell, *The Commons and Their Speakers* (Manchester, 1965), pp. 139, 362. His famous address to the commons is recorded *RP*, 3:456.
 27. *Life-Records*, pp. 168-69. Although de Vere endorsed the petition, he may have been urged to do so by someone else.
 28. For the ordinance of 1385, omitted from the rolls of Parliament for that year, and for the Chancellor's neglect of it, see J. J. N. Palmer, "The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole," *BIHR* 42 (1969), esp. pp. 96-97, 100.
 29. J. W. F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1948), p. 258 and note 4.
 30. He was lavishly rewarded on his return to England and subsequently treated with great generosity by the king, who made him Duke of Exeter in 1397. He participated in a rebellion to restore Richard after his deposition and was beheaded on orders from the Countess of Hereford in 1400.
 31. See Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, pp. 68-69. The material following relies heavily on this study, which sheds new light on the events of 1386 and on the motivation of Richard and his uncles.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
 33. *Life-Records*, p. 370.
 34. Sir Richard had fought at Crécy in 1346 and in other campaigns under Edward. He accompanied Gaunt on his march to Bordeaux in 1373 and was appointed Steward of the Household on Richard's accession. He served as Chancellor in 1378-80 and again in 1381-82. During 1385-88 he was a trier of petitions in Parliament. His son William, who was to serve as Gaunt's Seneschal in Aquitaine and who became the first Earl of Wiltshire in 1397, and his son Stephen were also prominent. Richard was in Gaunt's retinue in Scotland, and William was one of Gaunt's executors.
 35. Bishop Arundel's connections and his political career between 1386 and 1397 are discussed by Margaret Aston, *Thomas Arundel* (Oxford, 1967), chap. 12.
 36. See note 14, above.
 37. Cf. Richard W. Kaeuper, "Law and Order in Fourteenth-Century England," *Speculum* 54 (1979):734-84.
 38. This provoked a complaint in Parliament in 1387 (*RP*, 3:247). Cf. Tuck, as cited in note 4, above.
 39. See John P. McCall and George Rudisill, "The Parliament of 1386 and Chaucer's Trojan Parliament," *JEGP* 58 (1959):276-88.
 40. Cf. *ibid.* and D. W. Robertson, Jr., "The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts," in F. X. Newman, ed., *The Meaning of Courtly Love* (Albany, N.Y., 1968), p. 11; *Chaucer's London* (New York, 1968), pp. 2-4, 150, 167, 178, 221-22; "Simple Signs from Everyday Life in Chaucer," p. 212 n. 27; and David Anderson,

- "Theban History in Chaucer's *Troilus*," in *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 4:133.
41. For the context of this observation, see *Major Latin Works of John Gower*, trans. Eric W. Stockton (Seattle, 1962), pp. 284-86.
 42. *The Sermons of Thomas Brinton, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, O. P., Camden Third Series 85 (1954), pp. 46-48.
 43. *Ibid.*, pp. 346-7; cf. pp. 338-39. For the underlying philosophical principle, see Boethius, *Cons.* 3:m. 5.
 44. The passage is quoted in English in "The Concept of Courtly Love," p. 6.
 45. Cf. the account and the references in *A Preface to Chaucer*, pp. 108-10. The account of *Troilus* in the pages below draws on the discussion in this work and is not inconsistent with it.
 46. *The Commentary on the First Six Books of the Aeneid of Vergil*, ed. J. W. and E. F. Jones (Lincoln, Neb., 1977) pp. 102-3.
 47. Eugene Vinaver, *The Rise of Romance* (Oxford, 1971), chap. 6.
 48. A similar device was employed by Bishop Brinton in his sermon "On Unity," *Sermons*, pp. 109-17.
 49. Cf. Boccaccio, *Genealogie deorum gentilium libri*, ed. V. Romano (Bari, 1951), 1:304.
 50. Cf. Alan Gaylord, "Uncle Pandarus as Lady Philosophy," *PMASAL* 46 (1961):571-95; and John P. McCall, "Five-Book Structure in Chaucer's *Troilus*," *MLQ* 23 (1962):279-308.
 51. Brinton, *Sermons*, Sermon 51, p. 245.
 52. "Three Ovidian Women in Chaucer's *Troilus*: Medea, Helen, and Oenone," *ChauR* 15 (1980):6-9. The citations of Classical story by Pandarus are almost uniformly inept, commenting humorously on what he is trying to say.
 53. See note 40, above.
 54. *Teseida*, ed. A. Roncaglia (Bari, 1941), pp. 446, 383. Cf. Boccaccio, *Genealogie*, p. 438; and the Third Vatican Mythographer in G. H. Bode, *Scriptores rerum mythicarum Latini tres Romae nuper reperti* (repr. Hildesheim, 1968), 1:166.
 55. Second Vatican Mythographer in Bode, 1:143; cf. Anderson, "Theban History in Chaucer's *Troilus*," p. 131.
 56. First Vatican Mythographer in Bode, 1:63. The same source, p. 64, affords authority for Apollo's courtship of Nisa, daughter of Admetus, mentioned in Pandarus's account of Oenone's letter. Nisa may have appeared in a gloss on the Epistle, in an Italian translation, or even in the text itself, which is problematical. Cf. Boccaccio in Roncaglia, *Teseida*, p. 390.
 57. "Characterisation in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," in W. Rothwell et al., *Studies in Medieval Literatures and Languages in Memory of Frederick Whitehead* (New York, 1973), pp. 118-19.
 58. Vinaver, *Rise of Romance*, p. 30.
 59. *Remigii Autissiodorensis commentum in Martianum Capellam*, ed. Cora E. Lutz (Leiden, 1962), 1:183; Boccaccio, *Genealogie*, p. 465; Thomas Walsingham, *Archana deorum*, ed. R. A. van Kluyve (Durham, 1968), p. 189.
 60. See Guillaume de Conches, *Glosae super Platonem*, ed. E. Jeaneau (Paris, 1965), p. 71; and Jeaneau's "*Lectio philosophorum*," (Amsterdam, 1973), p. 239.
 61. On idleness and Venus, see Ovid, *Rem. am.*, 135-68; and for a discussion, Robertson, *Preface*, p. 92 and note 69.
 62. See B. F. Huppé and D. W. Robertson, Jr., *Fruyt and Chaf* (Princeton, 1963), p. 112 and note 16. The basic idea is Pauline.
 63. *Troilus's* reference to the labor in winning, fear in keeping, and sorrow in losing reflect the *De miseria humanae conditionis* of Innocent III (1:15). The first part of this chapter is paraphrased by the Man of Law in the prologue to his Tale (99-119), although that worthy fatuously goes on to describe the joys of the wealthy, abandoning Innocent's characterization of their miseries of which the predicament *Troilus* describes is paramount. Its application to lovers by *Troilus* associates them with the avaricious, treated at length in Innocent's Second Book, which contains chapters on avaricious princes and justices (3-5). *Troilus's* blindness is discussed at length in a forthcoming study by Chauncey Wood. On lust and avarice, see the closing remarks below.
 64. Bode, 1:55, 63, 98.
 65. The "frape" are by no means uniform in character. Polyxena's moving death, in the course of which she seeks to preserve her virgin modesty, is described by Ovid, *Met.*, 13:441-80.
 66. Third Vatican Mythographer, Bode, 1:176.
 67. *Ibid.*, 1:177.
 68. See R. E. Kaske, "The Aube in Chaucer's *Troilus*," in R. J. Schoeck and Jerome Taylor, eds., *Chaucer Criticism*, Vol. II: *Troilus and Criseyde and the Minor Poems* (Notre Dame, 1961), 2:167-79.
 69. Chaucer's contrast between the love of worldly vanity, typified by lust, and the love of Christ may have reminded many in his audience of a widely used school text, the *Cartula* (PL, 184:1307-14), which elaborates this theme. On its use in schools, see Nicholas Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London, 1973), pp. 104-5. If and when this boyhood reminiscence occurred, it was probably pleasant.
 70. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Arthur, widely emulated in England during the fourteenth century, carried an image of the Virgin on his shield. Garter knights wore her image on their shoulders during ceremonials. For the Wilton Diptych as a work commissioned in anticipation of a joint French and English crusade, see *England, France and Christendom* pp. 205, 242-44.
 71. For a more detailed account of later parliamentary complaints, see my forthcoming "Chaucer and the Economic and Social Consequences of Plague," to appear in the Papers of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of CMRS, SUNY Binghamton.