

Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*,
Franklin's Tale, and
Physician's Tale

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY 1900 TO 2005

Kenneth Bleeth

The latest volume in the Chaucer Bibliography Series, meticulously assembled by Kenneth Bleeth, is the most comprehensive record of scholarship on Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*, *Franklin's Tale*, and *Physician's Tale*. The bibliography treats each tale as a unit, enables the reader to track the many connections between *The Squire's* and *The Franklin's Tales*, and records the recent resurgence of interest in *The Physician's Tale*. Each bibliographical entry includes an annotation summarizing the content or key argument of the publication. Each of the three chapters includes a section on the work's sources, analogues, and later influence, and is prefaced by an essay that surveys the critical reception of the work. Containing more than two thousand entries, this volume covers publications both major and minor from 1900 to 2005.

KENNETH BLEETH is a professor emeritus in the Department of English as well as the former director of the Medieval Studies Program at Connecticut College.

The Chaucer Bibliographies

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Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*, *Franklin's Tale*, and *Physician's Tale*

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY 1900 TO 2005

edited by Kenneth Bleeth



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For Willard Spiegelman

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∞ General Editor's Preface

The Chaucer Bibliographies will encompass, in a series of some eighteen volumes, a complete listing and assessment of scholarship and criticism on the writings of Geoffrey Chaucer (d. 1400), and on his life, times, and historical context. Eight volumes – on Chaucer's short poems and *Anelida and Arcite*, on the translations, scientific works, and apocrypha, on the *General Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, on the *Knight's Tale*, on the *Tales* of the Miller, Reeve, and Cook, on the *Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, on the *Pardoner's Prologue and Tale*, and on the *Tales* of the Monk and Nun's Priest – have already appeared. The present volume, on the *Tales* of the Squire, Franklin, and Physician, extends the coverage of the *Canterbury Tales* in taking up the two tales that constitute one complete fragment (Group F, Fragment V), and the first tale in the following fragment (Group C, Fragment VI); the latter section complements Marilyn Sutton's volume on *Chaucer's 'Pardoner's Prologue' and 'Tale'* (2000). Additional volumes addressing other groupings of tales (the *Tales* of the Friar and the Summoner; the *Tales* of the Clerk and of the Merchant; the *Tale of Melibee*; and the *Tales* of the Second Nun, Canon's Yeoman, Manciple, and Parson, with the Retraction) are in preparation, and should follow the present volume in a timely fashion. Each volume in the series will continue to center on a particular work, or a connected group of works; most contain material on backgrounds or related writings, and several will be wholly topical in their coverage (taking up music, the visual arts, rhetoric, the life of Chaucer, and other relevant subjects). Although the series perforce places unswerving emphasis on accuracy and comprehensiveness, the distinctive feature of the Chaucer Bibliographies is the fullness and particularity of the annotations provided for each entry. (The present volume offers an especially striking instance of the detail and comprehensiveness of the series.) Annotations have averaged more than one-third of a page in the first seven volumes; these thick descriptions of intellectual and critical activity (as opposed to simple itemizations or arbitrarily telegraphic summaries) have thus constituted more than four-fifths of each volume's content.

The individual volumes in the Chaucer Bibliographies series do not therefore constitute a reference tool in the ordinary sense of that term. While

they will take in virtually every Chaucerian publication worthy of notice, and give complete coverage to materials through the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries, they go far beyond the usual bibliographic compilation, companion, or guide to research. Though the Bibliographies necessarily begin from a database, each volume makes extensive use of the intellectual engagement, learning, and insight of scholars actively at work on Chaucer. The series therefore offers not simply a listing of all relevant titles on a subject, but serves as both an introduction and an advanced guide to the reading and study of Chaucer's poetry. In this, the Chaucer Bibliographies provides innovative and penetrating access to what Chaucer means, and has meant, to his readers in the present, and for the last century and more. The project unfolds the full richness and detail of Chaucer's thought and world for a much wider audience than they have, even after more than one hundred years of energetic scholarship, ever before reached.

Before all else, then, the series provides a means of making practical headway in the study of earlier literature in English and in the appreciation of its broadest cultural contexts. These volumes help make the writing of Chaucer – the earliest figure in the canon of great writers in the English language – more immediate and more directly accessible to readers, whatever their background or level of interest. Although Chaucer has elicited praise for six centuries as a moving, superb, complex writer, even teachers of his writing sometimes feel at a loss when faced with the linguistic, historical, and critical complexities packed into every line. Consequently, despite his canonical stature, Chaucer has often remained unread, or read only in translation or paraphrase. The goal of this project, at its first level, is to increase the numbers of those who read him with genuine understanding and pleasure by increasing the kinds of things that can be readily known about Chaucer. In offering such broad access to specialized knowledge, the Chaucer Bibliographies aspires to expand and enhance how Chaucer gets read, at what levels, and by whom.

As tools for both students and teachers, the Chaucer Bibliographies seeks to intensify the comprehension and enjoyment of beginning readers in university, college, and high school classrooms. The series will move undergraduates more quickly from the generalizations and observations of textbooks and instructors to a direct access to the richness and variety of Chaucer's writing, and to its connections with medieval realities and modern understandings. For graduate students, the books will constitute a crucial resource for course work, exam preparation, and research. For non-specialist teachers of Chaucer in survey, masterpiece, and special topic courses, the series provides the means to a broader base of knowledge and to a more intense and shapely preparation than instructors, given the constraints of their work time, are sometimes able to manage. By clarifying and connect-

ing both recent and long-available materials, and by making them readily accessible, the Chaucer Bibliographies refreshes the teaching and reading of Chaucer, and enables the development of alternative approaches to understanding his writing.

The series holds yet additional resources for specialist readers. The fullness and detail of the annotations in each volume serve, in the first instance, as a check against duplication and redundancy in academic publication; individual scholars, and editors or readers at presses and journals, will be able to chart the place of new or proposed work quickly. Likewise, Chaucerians engaged with a topic or set of issues will be able to advance or situate their work more readily by reference to the materials in the appropriate volumes within the series. In consolidating the massive work that has been done in the last century and more in medieval studies, and particularly on Chaucer, the Bibliographies provide the ground on which new appreciations of Chaucer can build. Their presence in the field will encourage more efficient research on restricted as well as expansive topics, and will likewise facilitate work on the ways in which institutions have fostered and used the reading and study of his writing.

In addition to Chaucerians, the series potentially benefits other specialists in medieval literature in offering ready access to publications on Chaucer that touch on a variety of materials relevant to other fields. Whatever use the materials gathered in these volumes may have for particular queries or problems, they also address interests of a range of scholars whose expertise extends to Chaucer, but whose intellectual concerns may seem stymied by the daunting mass of Chaucer scholarship. The Chaucer Bibliographies places interdisciplinary research before scholars in History, Art History, Philosophy, French and Italian, Cultural Studies, and other related areas, and so makes multidisciplinary, collaborative work more possible and even more likely. In short, the project's collective effort to bring knowledge about Chaucer together strives to open up, rather than to close off, further innovative work on pre-modern culture.

The present volume, on the *Tales* of the Squire, Franklin, and Physician, generously extends the sweeping and meticulous coverage that marks earlier volumes in the series, marshalling some two thousand entries and annotations. Their purview takes in editions of Chaucer's writing, studies of language, manuscripts, and audiences, his sources and their contexts and intellectual connections, directly relevant background materials (e.g., gendered identities, estates satire, medieval science and medicine, generic constraints and innovations, philosophical traditions) and all traceable publications (in whatever language) bearing directly on Chaucer's poetry. The earlier volumes have succeeded in sorting out and making accessible materials that are confused or obscure, including early philological

publications in German and Scandinavian languages, privately printed or scarce volumes, and recent work in Australia, Europe, Japan, and South Korea. But even more strikingly, in bringing together all the materials on specific poems and subjects, these volumes have given new definition to the boundaries of Chaucer studies. Rather than working as a mopping-up operation, telling scholars what they already knew, or students what they might well forget, these volumes attempt to contribute to a new flourishing of Chaucer research and criticism, assisting the creation of fresh and solidly grounded interrogations of the poetry. They stand not simply as the summation of a great tradition, but as an impetus for more intense and expanded understandings of Chaucer. The sweeping vision of late medieval writing offered in each volume represents a reconfiguration of knowledge that justifies and fosters informed work by an expanded community of scholars, of whom Chaucerians form merely the core.

In producing volumes that record all relevant titles and that specify the content and interconnections of Chaucerian criticism, the Chaucer Bibliographies defines a new space for itself as a reference tool in its own field, and potentially within affiliated fields as well. The volumes, published and projected, differ markedly in purpose and use from other introductory bibliographies and cumulative listings. Standard bibliographies – unmarked or minimally annotated compilations – furnish helpful listings of publications, but offer limited assistance to the specialist, and still less orientation or access to the uninitiated. Volumes in the Chaucer Bibliographies project take these publications as a base of information (and make reference to them), but the aim of each volume is to offer in-depth coverage of the work(s) at hand. Contributors initially review annual and collected listings, but acquired learning, developed instincts, and the concentrated reading demanded for the preparation of each volume turn up leads and titles that supplement and complete the search for all relevant materials. The series through its individual volumes seeks to stand as a definitive companion to the study of Chaucer, a starting point from which present work may be assessed, and future work may proceed. It addresses itself to an audience beyond the community of professional Chaucerians, inviting non-Chaucerian scholars and non-specialist teachers and students to take part in the continuous process of understanding Chaucer. The exhaustiveness of the project offers assurance and, we hope, some surprises to both the expert and the novice.

The series achieves this inclusiveness through its inventory of all known publications, its full and strategic commentary, its attention to backgrounds and corollary issues, and its demarcation of interrelationships and connected themes; annotations, cross-referencing, generous indices, and the report of significant reviews help insure this high level of comprehensiveness. Contributors essay to encounter every relevant published item, in all foreign

languages, though these scholars rely on their own expertise and discretion in determining the choice and extent of annotations. Information on a 'ghost' or an inaccessible but pointless item may prove as valuable to users of these volumes as careful assessments of well known books in the field; it is therefore crucial for contributors not to pass over inadvertently or deliberately omit any 'trivial' writings. The specification of items in these volumes should obviate the need for many vain entanglements in the trammels of scholarship as readers of Chaucer pursue their special interests.

The Chaucer Bibliographies is produced through the work of a diverse and distinguished array of experts. Its format – in which the individual efforts of autonomous scholars take their place within a single project's well articulated, coherent framework – accommodates in a peculiarly appropriate way its broad base and intentionally wide appeal. The authors of individual volumes include both distinguished and younger Chaucerians. The comprehensive work for each volume has been carried out over a period of years by an individual scholar or a team in close collaboration, conceiving each volume as a unified intellectual project. Having a collective of more than two dozen Chaucerians actively engaged in the same project has already led to a more thorough cross-checking, a richer array of suggestions and shared information, and a larger number of surprising finds – some obscure, some obvious – than any individual or more limited collaborative effort could have produced.

Since materials for the entire series have been electronically processed and stored, it will be possible for the University of Toronto Press to provide online access to published volumes, to issue supplements and revisions, and eventually to produce a general index to all volumes. Ultimately the complete series and its component parts may be accessible to a wide range of general users and scholars in a variety of formats.

The work of the Chaucer Bibliographies was sustained from 1989 to 1995 by a series of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (USA), through its Division of Research Programs; without NEH support, it would have been impossible for the collective efforts of the project to continue, or for the work of individual scholars to issue in published form. Library staff at the University of Rochester – in particular, Interlibrary Loan, and the Rossell Hope Robbins Library and its Curator, Dr. Alan Lupack – have provided invaluable and unstinting bibliographic and research aid. In the final stages of editing, the Department of English and the Office of Undergraduate Research at the University of Rochester provided crucial material support. Pivotal phases of the research and editing that produced our final copy were resourcefully and meticulously carried out at Rochester by Caroline Callahan-Floeser, John Chandler, Samantha Dressel, and Maria Kane. Kyle Huskin has with painstaking intensity overseen the entire operation

of bringing the manuscript to print, showcasing her own acute intelligence, her ingenuity and foresight, and her technical savvy at every phase of the process.

∞ Preface

The aim of this bibliography is to annotate all books, chapters of books, articles, and notes devoted exclusively or primarily to *The Squire's*, *Franklin's*, and *Physician's Tales*, and all significant discussions of the tales in studies not primarily devoted to these works. Substantive discussions in editions of Chaucer's works are also annotated, as are reviews that comment on the author's treatment of the tales, although I cannot claim to have examined every published review of every book cited in this volume. I have annotated commentaries on the Squire's, Franklin's, and Physician's portraits in *The General Prologue* only when these items have a direct bearing on the interpretation of the tales or on the relation of the narrator to the tales. Scholarship on textual matters has been included on a similar basis; omitted, for example, are discussions of the position of Fragment VI that make no reference to the content of *The Physician's Tale* or its relation to other tales. I have attempted to annotate all doctoral dissertations devoted exclusively to any of the volume's three tales. Other dissertations have been included when their comments on the tales seemed of particular significance, although doubtless some worthy items have slipped through my net. (With one exception, MA theses and their equivalents have been excluded.) Editions and modernizations are included selectively. I record all editions of any textual significance (including several published before 1900) and editions in which the introductions, notes, or glossaries are noteworthy. Modernizations are included when the text or illustrations throw light on a tale's reception. (Translations of *The Canterbury Tales* into foreign languages have been excluded.) In the sections on Sources, Analogues, and Later Influence, I attempt to annotate all significant treatments of these topics, and I list as well selected editions of the tales' certain and conjectural sources. The final sections in each chapter are devoted primarily to interpretive commentaries, but also include selected reference works, manuscript and textual studies, and discussions of the tales' language and dates of composition. Non-specialized encyclopedia entries and study guides, both print and electronic, have been excluded, as have digital files, films, recordings, and student essays and projects posted on Internet sites. In accordance with the guidelines for this series, my

chronological point of departure is 1900. I have, however, included a few important earlier articles, as well as book reviews, references to essay collections, and book chapters incorporating previously published material, and for *The Squire's Tale*, fourteen items (747–57) exemplifying an important recent critical turn, that fall after the 2005 cut-off date. (Post-1900 revisions of pre-1900 publications have been excluded.) I am aware that my coverage of material published in Japan and South Korea is incomplete. I have read and summarized most English-language items, but I have been unable either to examine, or to obtain translations of, others and hence I list only titles and bibliographical information.

A note on the format of this bibliography: entries are arranged chronologically, and alphabetically by author, and by title for editions, within a given year. Page numbers are given for quotations and for summarized material that may be difficult to locate in the source text (e.g., in book-length studies or long articles). Quotations from Chaucer's works are given according to *The Riverside Chaucer* (108), except when they occur in citations from a critic who uses another version of the text. (Line references are to *The Riverside Chaucer* throughout. Unless otherwise identified, line numbers refer to Fragment V in the *Squire's Tale* and *Franklin's Tale* chapters and to Fragment VI in the *Physician's Tale* chapter.) I have also preserved in quotations the author's spelling (e.g., 'Appius'/'Apius') and treatment of terms and titles (e.g., whether italicized or placed in quotation marks). The standard abbreviations of Chaucer's works used in this series have been substituted for the full form in quotations, but not in the titles of books and articles. I have occasionally made minor adjustments in punctuation and capitalization to fit quotations into my own sentences; a few obvious errors have also been silently corrected. Revised editions with unchanged titles are indicated by the dates of the original and the revised editions, separated by a forward slash (e.g., '1968/1987' or '1958/1960, 1990, 1996'). When a revision has been published under a new title, both the original and the new title are given. I cite information about reprints where it seems useful (e.g., when a book has been reprinted by a different publisher or in a paperback edition), but I make no attempt to record the entire publication history of each volume. When an item has been reprinted or published in a revised edition, page references are to the original edition unless otherwise noted. If the entire annotation for an item consists of a reference to another item (e.g., 'See 100'), the relevant material in the former appears in the latter in substantially the same form. Rebuttals, corrections, and direct responses to a publication are cited either in the body of the annotation or in cross-references at the end of an entry.

My primary indebtedness in the making of this volume is to those scholars who compiled the bibliographies, reference guides, and annotated

editions on which my initial research was based. (In the past few years, I have relied heavily on electronic databases, especially Google Scholar and the New Chaucer Society's Chaucer Bibliography Online.) More than once when I was at work on this book, I benefited from a piece of advice that B.J. Whiting, my first Chaucer teacher, claimed to have received from *his* first Chaucer teacher, George Lyman Kittredge: 'When found, make note of.' The staff of Connecticut College's Shain Library has been unfailingly helpful. Several grants from the College's Faculty Development Fund enabled me to visit the British Library, the Harvard University Libraries, the Library of Congress, and the New York Public Library. Two month-long residencies at the Bogliasco Foundation's Centro Studi Ligure provided me with uninterrupted time to work. Uwe Böker, Marianne Børch, C.R. Conradie, Keiko Hamaguchi, Tadao Kobuchi, An Sonjae (Brother Anthony), and the National Library of Ireland, Maynooth, supplied publications unavailable in the United States. Tom Couser and Stephen Orgel helped with library chores closer to home. My students Scott Borchert, Benjamin Courchesne, and Brian Sendrowski checked references. Gregory Foran reformatted a lengthy text, which was improved at a later stage by the copyediting, formatting, and indexing skills of Caroline Callahan-Floeser, John Chandler, Samantha Dressel, Maria Kane, Alexander Zawacki, and (especially) Kyle Huskin. My Power User friend Jeff Strabone solved some word-processing problems, and Andrew Lopez shared his indexing expertise. For help with scholarship in Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, and Spanish, my thanks to Anna Adams, Tim Albrecht, Geoffrey Atherton, Enrique Cucurella, Denis Ferhatović, Lee Fontanella, Marc Forster, Juan-Miguel Godoy, Tek-Wah King, Hisae Kobayashi, Jens Kreinath, Michael Molasky, Fulvio Orsitto, Tad Pioro, and Paola Sica. Lee Patterson encouraged me to take on this project and promised to read the introductions. Had Lee lived longer, this book would have been better for his deep learning and sharp wit. Early on, Monica McAlpine gave good advice, as did Christopher Cannon in a later conversation. Thomas Hahn, general editor of the series, has been warmly supportive throughout – no small feat, considering all the deadlines I missed. Willard Spiegelman has lived with this volume from its inception. It would not have been completed without his daily encouragement.

∞ Abbreviations and Works Cited

GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS

ca	<i>circa</i> , 'about'
cf.	compare
ch., chs	chapter, chapters
col., cols	column, columns
d.	died
dir	directed by, director
diss.	dissertation
ed.	edited by, edition, editor
eds	editors
El	Ellesmere [manuscript]
et al.	and others
fol., fols	folio, folios
gen. ed.	general editor
Hg	Hengwrt [manuscript]
ME	Middle English
ModE	Modern English
MS, MSS	manuscript, manuscripts
n.	note
n.d.	no date [of publication]
no.	number
n.p.	no page number, no place [of publication], no publisher
n.s.	new series
OFr.	Old French
pbk	paperback
r	recto
repr.	reprint, reprinted
reprs	reprints
rev.	revised, revised by
ser.	series
trans.	translated by, translator
UP, U ... P	University Press

v	verso
vol., vols	volume, volumes

LITERARY WORKS CITED

<i>Anel</i>	<i>Anelida and Arcite</i>
<i>Astr</i>	<i>A Treatise on the Astrolabe</i>
<i>BD</i>	<i>The Book of the Duchess</i>
<i>Bo</i>	<i>Boece</i>
<i>CA</i>	<i>Confessio Amantis</i> (Gower)
<i>CkP</i>	<i>The Cook's Prologue</i>
<i>CkT</i>	<i>The Cook's Tale</i>
<i>Cleo</i>	<i>Cleomadés</i> (Adenet le Roi)
<i>CIT</i>	<i>The Clerk's Tale</i>
<i>Consol</i>	<i>The Consolation of Philosophy</i> (Boethius)
<i>CT</i>	<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
<i>CYT</i>	<i>The Canon's Yeoman's Tale</i>
<i>Dec</i>	<i>The Decameron</i> (Boccaccio)
<i>DV</i>	<i>De Virginitibus</i> (St Ambrose)
<i>Equat</i>	<i>The Equatorie of the Planetis</i>
<i>Fil</i>	<i>Il Filocolo</i> (Boccaccio)
<i>FQ</i>	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> (Spenser)
<i>FrT</i>	<i>The Friar's Tale</i>
<i>FranP</i>	<i>The Franklin's Prologue</i>
<i>FranT</i>	<i>The Franklin's Tale</i>
<i>Gent</i>	<i>Gentilesse</i>
<i>GP</i>	<i>The General Prologue</i>
<i>HF</i>	<i>The House of Fame</i>
<i>HRB</i>	<i>Historia Regum Britannie</i> (Geoffrey of Monmouth)
<i>Jov</i>	<i>Epistola adversus Jovinianum</i> (St Jerome)
<i>KnT</i>	<i>The Knight's Tale</i>
<i>LGW</i>	<i>The Legend of Good Women</i>
<i>ManT</i>	<i>The Manciple's Tale</i>
<i>Mars</i>	<i>The Complaint of Mars</i>
<i>Mel</i>	<i>The Tale of Melibee</i>
<i>MerE</i>	<i>Merchant Epilogue</i>
<i>MerT</i>	<i>The Merchant's Tale</i>
<i>MilT</i>	<i>The Miller's Tale</i>
<i>MkT</i>	<i>The Monk's Tale</i>
<i>MLE</i>	<i>Man of Law Endlink</i>
<i>MLT</i>	<i>The Man of Law's Tale</i>
<i>NPT</i>	<i>The Nun's Priest's Tale</i>
<i>PardT</i>	<i>The Pardoner's Tale</i>

<i>ParsP</i>	<i>The Parson's Prologue</i>
<i>ParsT</i>	<i>The Parson's Tale</i>
<i>PF</i>	<i>The Parliament of Fowls</i>
<i>PhyT</i>	<i>The Physician's Tale</i>
<i>Phy-PardL</i>	<i>Physician-Pardoner Link</i>
<i>PrT</i>	<i>The Prioress's Tale</i>
<i>Ret</i>	<i>Chaucer's Retraction</i>
<i>Rom</i>	<i>The Romaunt of the Rose</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Le Roman de la Rose</i> (G. de Lorris and J. de Meun)
<i>RvT</i>	<i>The Reeve's Tale</i>
<i>SGGK</i>	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> (anonymous)
<i>ShT</i>	<i>The Shipman's Tale</i>
<i>SNT</i>	<i>The Second Nun's Tale</i>
<i>Sq-FranL</i>	<i>Squire-Franklin Link</i>
<i>SqH</i>	<i>Squire Headlink</i>
<i>SqT</i>	<i>The Squire's Tale</i>
<i>Sted</i>	<i>Lak of Stedfastnesse</i>
<i>SumT</i>	<i>The Summoner's Tale</i>
<i>TC</i>	<i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>
<i>Tes</i>	<i>Il Teseida</i> (Boccaccio)
<i>Thop</i>	<i>The Tale of Sir Thopas</i>
<i>Truth</i>	<i>Truth: Balade de Bon Conseyll</i>
<i>WBP</i>	<i>The Wife of Bath's Prologue</i>
<i>WBT</i>	<i>The Wife of Bath's Tale</i>

JOURNALS, SERIES, AND REFERENCE WORKS CITED

<i>AB</i>	<i>Anglia</i> Beiblatt
<i>ABELL</i>	<i>Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature</i> (Modern Humanities Research Association)
<i>ABR</i>	<i>American Benedictine Review</i>
<i>Acad</i>	<i>Academy</i> (London, England)
<i>Allegorica</i>	<i>Allegorica: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Literature</i>
<i>ALM</i>	<i>Anuario de letras modernas</i> (Facultad de Filosofía y Letras Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)
<i>Al-Māsaq</i>	<i>Al-Māsaq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean</i>
<i>Anglia</i>	<i>Anglia: Zeitschrift für Englische Philologie</i>
<i>AnM</i>	<i>Annuaire Mediaevale</i>
<i>ANQ</i>	<i>American Notes and Queries: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes, and Reviews</i>
<i>Archiv</i>	<i>Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen</i>
<i>AS</i>	<i>American Scientist</i>
<i>Assays</i>	<i>Assays: Critical Approaches to Medieval and Renaissance Texts</i>

<i>Atlantic</i>	<i>The Atlantic Monthly</i>
<i>Atlantis</i>	<i>Atlantis. Journal of the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies</i>
AUMLA	<i>AUMLA: Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association</i>
BBSANZ	<i>Bulletin for the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand</i>
BFL	<i>Bulletin of the Faculty of Literature (Aoyama Gakuin University)</i>
<i>Bonnes Feuilles</i>	<i>Les Bonnes Feuilles</i>
BPMELLJ	<i>A Bibliography of Publications on Medieval English Language and Literature in Japan (Centre for Medieval English Studies, Tokyo)</i>
BSUF	<i>Ball State University Forum</i>
BYWJC	<i>Bulletin of Yamamura Women's Junior College</i>
C&L	<i>Christianity and Literature</i>
<i>CahiersE</i>	<i>Cahiers Elisabethains</i>
<i>Caligrama</i>	<i>Caligrama: Revista Insular de Filologia</i>
<i>CarmP</i>	<i>Carmina Philosophiae: Journal of the International Boethius Society</i>
CCM	<i>Cahiers de civilisation médiévale</i>
CE	<i>College English</i>
CEA	<i>CEA Critic: An Official Journal of the College English Association</i>
<i>ChauN</i>	<i>Chaucer Newsletter</i>
<i>ChauR</i>	<i>Chaucer Review</i>
CIF	<i>Cuadernos de Investigacion Filologica</i>
<i>Cithara</i>	<i>Cithara: Essays in the Judeo-Christian Tradition</i>
CL	<i>Comparative Literature (Eugene, OR)</i>
<i>Comitatus</i>	<i>Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
<i>Communiqué</i>	<i>Communiqué (University of the North, Pietersburg, South Africa)</i>
<i>Comparatist</i>	<i>The Comparatist: Journal of the Southern Comparative Literature Association</i>
<i>Conradian</i>	<i>The Conradian: The Journal of the Joseph Conrad Society</i>
<i>ContempR</i>	<i>Contemporary Review (London, England)</i>
CR	<i>The Critical Review</i>
<i>Criticism</i>	<i>Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts</i>
CSR	<i>Christian Scholar's Review</i>
CY	<i>Chaucer Yearbook: A Journal of Late Medieval Studies</i>
DA	<i>Dissertation Abstracts</i>
DAI	<i>Dissertation Abstracts International</i>

<i>DelNotes</i>	<i>Delaware Notes</i>
<i>DL</i>	<i>Doshisha Literature. A Journal of English Literature and Philology</i>
<i>DR</i>	<i>Dalhousie Review</i>
<i>E&S</i>	<i>Essays and Studies</i> (London, England)
<i>EBSN</i>	<i>Early Book Society Newsletter</i>
<i>Edebiyât</i>	<i>Edebiyât: Journal of Middle Eastern Literatures</i>
<i>EETS</i>	<i>Early English Text Society</i>
<i>EIC</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism: A Quarterly Journal of Literary Criticism</i> (Oxford, England)
<i>EJ</i>	<i>English Journal</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>ELH</i> (formerly <i>ELH: A Journal of English Literary History</i>)
<i>ELL</i>	<i>English Language and Literature</i> (Korean Society of English Language and Literature)
<i>ELN</i>	<i>English Language Notes</i>
<i>ELR</i>	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>ELWIU</i>	<i>Essays in Literature</i> (Macomb, IL)
<i>EM</i>	<i>English Miscellany</i>
<i>EMSt</i>	<i>Essays in Medieval Studies</i> http://www.illinoismedieval.org/ems/
<i>English</i>	<i>English: The Journal of the English Association</i> (London, England)
<i>Envoi</i>	<i>Envoi: A Review Journal of Medieval Literature</i>
<i>EQ</i>	<i>English Quarterly</i>
<i>ER</i>	<i>English Review</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>English Studies: A Journal of English Language and Literature</i>
<i>ESA</i>	<i>English Studies in Africa: A Journal of the Humanities</i>
<i>ESC</i>	<i>English Studies in Canada</i>
<i>ESK</i>	<i>English Studies</i> (Seoul, South Korea)
<i>ESt</i>	<i>Englische Studien</i>
<i>Exemplaria</i>	<i>Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
<i>Expl</i>	<i>Explicator</i>
<i>Florilegium</i>	<i>Florilegium: Carleton University Annual Papers on Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages</i>
<i>FolkloreC</i>	<i>Folklore</i> (Calcutta, India)
<i>FS</i>	<i>French Studies</i>
<i>Genre</i>	<i>Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture</i>
<i>GRM</i>	<i>Germanisch–Romanische Monatsschrift</i>
<i>HLB</i>	<i>Harvard Library Bulletin</i>
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly: Studies in English and American History and Literature</i>

<i>HSELL</i>	<i>Hiroshima Studies in English Language and Literature</i>
<i>IJES</i>	<i>Indian Journal of English Studies</i>
<i>ILCT</i>	<i>International Journal of the Classical Tradition</i>
<i>InG</i>	<i>In Geardagum: Essays in Old and Middle English Language and Literature</i>
<i>InParen</i>	<i>In Parentheses: Papers in Medieval Studies</i> http://www.yorku.ca/inpar
<i>JAF</i>	<i>Journal of American Folklore</i>
<i>JCERL</i>	<i>Journal of Classic and English Renaissance Literatures</i> (Seoul, South Korea)
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>JELL</i>	<i>Journal of English Language and Literature</i> (Seoul, South Korea)
<i>JMRS</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
<i>JPC</i>	<i>Journal of Popular Culture</i>
<i>JPsy</i>	<i>Journal of Psychohistory</i>
<i>JRMRA</i>	<i>Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association</i>
<i>JWCI</i>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
<i>JWSL</i>	<i>Journal of Women's Studies in Literature</i>
<i>KPAB</i>	<i>Kentucky Philological Association Bulletin</i>
<i>KWSC</i>	<i>Key-Word Studies in Chaucer</i> (Centre for Medieval Studies, Tokyo)
<i>L&H</i>	<i>Literature and History</i>
<i>L&P</i>	<i>Literature and Psychology</i>
<i>Lang&S</i>	<i>Language and Style: An International Journal</i>
<i>LeedsSE</i>	<i>Leeds Studies in English</i>
<i>Lore&L</i>	<i>Lore and Language</i>
<i>LT</i>	<i>Levende Talen</i>
<i>M&H</i>	<i>Medievalia et Humanistica: Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Culture</i>
<i>MÂ</i>	<i>Le Moyen Âge: Revue d'Histoire et de Philologie</i>
<i>MÆ</i>	<i>Medium Ævum</i>
<i>MayR</i>	<i>Maynooth Review</i>
<i>MC</i>	<i>The Monthly Criterion</i>
<i>Mediaevalia</i>	<i>Mediaevalia: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Medieval Studies Worldwide</i>
<i>MedPers</i>	<i>Medieval Perspectives</i> (Southeastern Medieval Association)
<i>Meridian</i>	<i>Meridian: The La Trobe University English Review</i>
<i>MES†</i>	<i>Medieval English Studies: The Journal of the Medieval and Early Modern English Studies Association of Korea</i>
<i>MichA</i>	<i>Michigan Academician: Papers of the Michigan Academy of</i>

	<i>Science, Arts, and Letters</i>
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MLQ	<i>Modern Language Quarterly: A Journal of Literary History</i>
MLR	<i>The Modern Language Review</i>
Mosaic	<i>Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature</i>
MP	<i>Modern Philology: A Journal Devoted to Research in Medieval and Modern Literature</i>
MQ	<i>Mississippi Quarterly</i>
MRDE	<i>Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England</i>
MS	<i>Mediaeval Studies (Toronto, Canada)</i>
MSE	<i>Massachusetts Studies in English</i>
N&Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
Names	<i>Names: Journal of the American Name Society</i>
Nation	<i>The Nation</i>
Neophil	<i>Neophilologus</i>
NLH	<i>New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation</i>
NM	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen: Bulletin of the Modern Language Society</i>
NMS	<i>Nottingham Medieval Studies</i>
NYT	<i>The New York Times</i>
OL	<i>Orbis Litterarum</i>
ParAns	<i>Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas</i>
Parergon	<i>Parergon: Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern [formerly Renaissance] Studies</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PhilosLit	<i>Philosophy and Literature</i>
PLL	<i>Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature</i>
PMAM	<i>Publications of the Medieval Association of the Midwest</i>
PMASAL	<i>Papers of the Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters</i>
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
PMR	<i>Proceedings of the PMR Conference: annual publication of the Patristic, Medieval, and Renaissance Conference</i>
PoeticaT	<i>Poetica: An International Journal of Linguistic-Literary Studies (Tokyo, Japan)</i>
PQ	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
PVR	<i>Platte Valley Review</i>
Quidditas	<i>Quidditas: Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association (formerly Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association)</i>
QPar	<i>Qui Parle: A Journal of Literary and Critical Studies</i>
RCEI	<i>Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses</i>

REALB	<i>REAL: The Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature</i>
REL	<i>Review of English Literature</i>
RenD	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
RenP	<i>Renaissance Papers</i>
RenQ	<i>Renaissance Quarterly</i>
RES	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
Rev	<i>Review</i> (Charlottesville, VA)
RLMC	<i>Rivista di Letterature Moderne e Comparate</i>
RLV	<i>Revue des Langues Vivantes</i>
Romania	<i>Romania: Revue consacré à l'étude des langues et des littératures modernes</i>
RomR	<i>Romantic Review</i>
RPhil	<i>Romance Philology</i>
RSTC	<i>Revised Short Title Catalogue</i>
RUO	<i>Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa</i>
S&T	<i>Sky and Telescope</i>
SAB	<i>South Atlantic Bulletin</i>
SAC	<i>Studies in the Age of Chaucer</i>
SAJMRS	<i>Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
SAQ	<i>South Atlantic Quarterly</i>
SatR	<i>Saturday Review of Literature</i>
SB	<i>Studies in Bibliography: Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia</i>
SCB	<i>South Central Bulletin</i>
SE	<i>Studies in English</i>
SEL	<i>Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900</i>
SELIM	<i>SELIM: Journal of the Spanish Society for English Medieval Language and Literature</i>
SELit	<i>Studies in English Literature</i> (Tokyo, Japan)
SFLL	<i>Studies in Foreign Languages and Literature</i> (Aichi University of Education, Japan)
Shaw	<i>Shaw: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies</i>
SMART	<i>Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching</i>
SMC	<i>Studies in Medieval Culture</i>
SMy	<i>Studia Mystica</i>
SN	<i>Studia Neophilologica: A Journal of German and Romance Languages and Literatures</i>
SoAR	<i>South Atlantic Review</i>
SoRA	<i>Southern Review: Literary and Interdisciplinary Essays</i> (Adelaide, Australia)
SP	<i>Studies in Philology</i>

SPCT	<i>Studi e Problemi di Critica Testuale</i>
<i>Speculum</i>	<i>Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies</i>
SQ	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
SRAZ	<i>Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagrabiensia</i>
SS	<i>Shakespeare Studies</i>
SSEng	<i>Sydney Studies in English</i>
SSF	<i>Studies in Short Fiction</i>
<i>Style</i>	<i>Style (DeKalb, IL)</i>
T&L	<i>Translation and Literature</i>
TCAAS	<i>Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences</i>
<i>Theoria</i>	<i>Theoria: A Journal of Studies in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (Natal, South Africa)</i>
TkR	<i>Tamkang Review: A Quarterly Journal of Comparative Studies between Chinese and Foreign Literatures</i>
TLS	<i>Times Literary Supplement (London, England)</i>
TMR	<i>The Medieval Review</i> https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/3631
<i>Traditio</i>	<i>Traditio: Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought, and Religion</i>
TSL	<i>Tennessee Studies in Literature</i>
TSSL	<i>Texas Studies in Literature and Language</i>
UCC	<i>University of California Chronicle</i>
UoE	<i>Use of English</i>
UTQ	<i>University of Toronto Quarterly: A Canadian Journal of the Humanities</i>
<i>Viator</i>	<i>Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i>
VLang	<i>Visible Language</i>
WS	<i>Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal</i>
WSL	<i>Wisconsin Studies in Literature</i>
WUS	<i>Washington University Studies</i>
YES	<i>Yearbook of English Studies</i>
YFS	<i>Yale French Studies</i>
YWES	<i>Year's Work in English Studies</i>
ZRP	<i>Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie</i>

Chaucer's *Squire's, Franklin's,*
and *Physician's Tales*

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☞ *The Squire's Tale*: Introduction

[*The Squire's Tale*] shows ... how the historical study of criticism itself ... is a thoroughly worthwhile critical discipline. It raises all the questions that need asking.

—David Lawton, 'The Literary History of the Squire's Tale' (1985)

The very incompleteness of the tale makes literary criticism somewhat superfluous.

—Morton Bloomfield, 'Chaucer's *Squire's Tale* and the Renaissance' (1981)

In contrast to those parts of *The Canterbury Tales* that have been perennially valued – *The General Prologue*, the tales of the Knight, the Pardoner, and the Nun's Priest, among others – *The Squire's Tale* has undergone striking shifts in its ranking among the narratives in Chaucer's collection. Admired by Spenser, Milton, and Thomas Warton (who awards it 'the next place' after *The Knight's Tale*), the tale was until the middle of the twentieth century viewed as a largely successful attempt on Chaucer's part to introduce the wonders of romance into the tale-telling competition. Over the next few decades, this untroubled interpretation was called into question by resisting readers: judgments like 'a complete misfire' (505) and 'a sophisticated hoax' (577) appear with some frequency in critical discussions of the tale through the early 1980s. Commenting on this reversal of fortune in the introduction to the 1990 Variorum edition, Donald Baker observes that 'given the constant flux in literary fashion, it would be no great surprise to find *SqT* ... rather soon restored to the rank of those tales of considerable interest in their own right' (112). And so it has proved. In her Biennial New Chaucer Society lecture for 2006, Susan Crane stated that 'in scholarly circles, it's a good moment for *The Squire's Tale*'; emerging from 'a few decades of disrepute as no more than the clumsy utterance of its youthful teller,' the tale is now 'looking much more substantial' (747). The ups and downs of the tale's reputation over the past century are documented in the editorial activity and critical commentary summarized in four of this volume's nine annotation chapters. As is the case with the other contributions to the Toronto Chaucer

Bibliographies, the annotations, in addition to recording the fortunes of an individual work or group of works, will allow readers to track the conventions of interpretation by which Chaucer's writings have been understood over time – that is, the history of Chaucer reception itself, a subject that in recent years has become central to our understanding of the Chaucerian literary text.

The Squire's Tale's critical afterlife has been examined twice before – by David Lawton in 'The Literary History of the Squire's Tale' (598) and in the Variorum edition's Survey of Criticism. Lawton's study was published in 1985, the same year that Baker gives as the *terminus ad quem* for his survey. For a student who seeks a comprehensive history of *The Squire's Tale's* reception, Baker's and Lawton's commentaries are essential reading. The observations that follow build on the work of these two scholars, but focus on items that appeared after 1985. I have, however, attempted to provide sufficient context for my survey of recent scholarship to make visible both continuities with and departures from earlier investigations. Sometimes characterized as an outlier in the Canterbury collection, *The Squire's Tale* resists easy generalizations about the nature of Chaucerian narrative. Lawton is right to say that the tale 'would make an ideal set text for a modern introduction to Chaucer studies.'

Source Study and *The Squire's Tale*

The 'desire for origins' (I'm borrowing the title of Allen Frantzen's polemical history of Anglo-Saxon studies) characteristic of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century medieval literary scholarship encountered a substantial challenge in *The Squire's Tale*. Students of Chaucer conditioned by the bulk of the poet's writings to expect that individual works will be traceable to documented antecedent sources responded to the absence of a definitive point of origin for *The Squire's Tale* with mixture of puzzlement and frustration. In the 1874 edition of four tales that preceded the publication of the Oxford Chaucer, Skeat begins his introduction to *The Squire's Tale* by describing an agon between the text and its annotators – it is this tale 'which *has most resisted* all attempts to discover an immediate original for it' (2; my italics). Writing twenty-four years after Skeat, Pollard employs the language of the whodunit to characterize the tale's silence about its origins: the tale's genesis has 'defied detection' (6), 'baffled investigation' more than any other of the poet's works (9). Even as he concedes the possibility that 'we are here in the presence of one of Chaucer's rare attempts at a more or less original plot' (9), Pollard qualifies his suggestion by linking the tale's unfinishedness – the absence at its end – to a parallel absence at its beginning: unable to draw on

an existent narrative, Chaucer 'broke down for lack of a plot ready furnished to him' (6). The reticence that Pollard displays in presenting *The Squire's Tale* as an original creation is a milder version of the overt skepticism expressed by others. In his 1775 edition of the *Tales*, Thomas Tyrwhitt observed that he 'would be very hardly brought to believe that the whole, or even any considerable part of it, was of Chaucer's invention' (2). Writing in 1896, Manly asserts that he 'can hardly resist the conviction that Chaucer found all his characters named and his scene laid in the source – written or oral – from which he derived his plot' (131; see also 55, 147r, 440). In his 1907 *Notes on Chaucer*, Hinckley proposes a more specific model: 'The immediate original for this *Tale* is likely to have been a French version of a Tartar romance,' perhaps a 'romance of metallurgy' that formed part of a now-vanished cycle devoted to Genghis Khan (380). Although Hinckley's speculation strikes us as particularly farfetched, it nevertheless exemplifies the impulse among scholars at the turn of the century to call into being earlier sources – now lost – that will fill out a work's incomplete backstory. And once orality is admitted into the picture (131, 147), it is an easy (indeed, inevitable) step to positing multiple and fragmentary origins, including what Root calls (with a touch of dismissiveness), 'such scraps of knowledge about Tartary and the Far East as [Chaucer] had picked up in reading or conversation' (378; see also 147, 377). H.S.V. Jones, the most assiduous student of the tale's 'narrative neighborhood' (139), gave his imprimatur to this position in the 1941 *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*: 'The best critical opinion favors the theory that Chaucer derived the material for his *Squire's Tale* from many quarters and worked inventively with a free hand' (174). In abandoning the search for an 'unquestioned source of any portion of the tale' and devoting his chapter to parallels and analogues to some of the tale's features, Jones established the agenda for subsequent commentary, which accepts almost without dissent the conclusion that the tale is a composite, multi-sourced production (108, 582, 598, 601, 602, 631, 635, 698, 743). This consensus governs Vincent DiMarco's chapter on *The Squire's Tale* in the first volume of the revised edition of *Sources and Analogues*, published in 2002 (242). In addition to literary analogues (two passages from Girart d'Amiens' *Meliacin* replace Jones's excerpts from the related romance of *Cleomadés*), DiMarco prints material that contextualizes the treatment of magic in Part 1 of the tale, summarizes historical events involving relations between 'Middle India' and the Mongols of Russia in the fourteenth century, and argues for 'the strong likelihood of Chaucer's dependence on oral reports and reminiscences of travelers and merchants.' By including ethnographic and intellectual frameworks in addition to written texts, DiMarco's presentation extends our sense of what might constitute a source and reminds us as well that Chaucer's relation to his materials was not monolithic; as Stephen Knight remarks in a review of

the revised *Sources and Analogues*, 'Chaucer rarely did the same thing twice: a clear source, much modified, in *The Clerk's Tale*, stands against a range of minor stimuli in *The Squire's Tale*' (242r). Among these stimuli are other Chaucerian works – *The Knight's Tale*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, and *Anelida and Arcite*. For Elizabeth Scala, these recycled texts reflect the tale's quest for its own origins, origins that are nevertheless 'illusory ... demand[ing] construction over and over again' (731). Scala's claim sits comfortably alongside the work of theorists like Judith Butler, Edward Said, and Michel Serres, all of whom, from different perspectives, question the notion of a privileged, stable 'original' text. To read *The Squire's Tale* as (in Knight's words) 'one of Chaucer's most up-to-date efforts, then and now' is to view its 'missing' source not as a puzzle requiring a solution, but rather as part of a pattern of absences that has come to seem a constitutive feature of the poem.

Genre

In a review of the Variorum *Squire's Tale*, Joseph Dane reminds us that, owing to the tale's relation to the genre of romance, 'its reception changes as definitions of the genre change' (112r). The poem's eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century admirers noted both its Gothic elements and its vein of Eastern fancy. For these readers, the poem's hybridity constituted a virtue rather than a problem; in Warton's succinct formulation, the story's 'imagination ... consists in Arabian fiction grafted on Gothic chivalry,' while George Nott (who thought *The Squire's Tale* superior to *The Knight's Tale*) remarks approvingly that the tale's subject, figures, ideas, and machinery 'are all purely Gothic, with a mixture of eastern imagery which gave, at the time of the Crusades, a peculiar colouring to our northern romances' (112).

When Kittredge turned his attention to *The Squire's Tale* a century later, the mixed heritage observed by Warton, Nott, and others had disappeared from view. The tale is for Kittredge 'pure romance, in the medieval sense,' its genre defined by what it excludes – the 'moral or social or matrimonial theorizing' of the neighboring tales that comprise Kittredge's Marriage Group (380; see also 373). Over the next three decades, and occasionally after, critical comments on the tale's genre mostly reiterated Kittredge's judgment (398, 407, 408, 412, 450, 601). The first fully developed alternative to the view of the poem as 'a sustained performance in the romantic vein' (407) appeared in 1948, with the publication of Gardiner Stillwell's 'Chaucer in Tartary' (446). Representing the tale's relation to romance as problematic rather than straightforward, Stillwell focused on the poem's mercurial tone, singling out passages in which we hear the poet 'importing humanity into his story, somewhat to its detriment as a typical romance.' Stillwell's exper-

iment in reading the tale 'closely and realistically' without 'romantic pre-conception[s] of its solemnity' was succeeded by other interpretations that also made room for moments of comic incongruity and imagined Chaucer as temperamentally at odds with romance forms and themes (456, 457, 468, 471, 502, 516). Some critics took the discovery of 'parodic tone' (598) in isolated episodes several steps further, declaring the entire poem a parody or burlesque of romance (502, 504r, 514, 538a, 549, 625, 633r, 640). This claim in turn generated correctives and rebuttals (479, 690, 735, 736), and, in one important instance, historical contextualization. The latter is Joseph Dane's examination of the tale's eighteenth-century reception, in which Dane shows that the poem, although it was acknowledged to contain burlesque passages, 'was never referred to as a parody or a burlesque' by eighteenth-century readers (218). This interpretive position, which admits parodic or incongruous elements into romance without positing a wholesale transformation of the story type, reappears in the work of twentieth- and twenty-first century critics and is where, at least for the moment, the discourse seems to have settled: neither 'pure romance' nor a dedicated send-up of romance, *The Squire's Tale*, especially in its mixture of tones and styles, displays both 'the pleasures and the limits' of the genre (602; see also 598, 602, 611r, 635r, 693, 743, 744).

Among those parts of the tale that fall into both the 'pleasure' and 'limits' categories is the synopsis of coming events that concludes Part 2 (lines 651-70), a passage that, on the one hand, has been used to construct possible scenarios for the poem's unwritten or 'lost' episodes (112) and, on the other, has been read as a joke about the prolixity of romances or about the youthful Squire's unrealistic literary ambitions (394, 471, 515, 601, 634, 693). In a 1942 article entitled 'The Genre of Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*,' Haldeen Braddy cites the Squire's précis as evidence that the poet was modeling his narrative on the oriental framing tale (440). A more widely-accepted hypothesis proposes that the lines contain a plan for an interlaced narrative of the sort usually associated with the French prose romances (112, 528, 581, 629, 635, 736), although Helen Cooper observes that the breathless piling up of events in the Squire's prospectus evokes an 'unsophisticated interlace romance' rather than the 'elegant *entrelacement*' of the best French examples (581; see also 715). While agreeing that the interlaced romance is the tale's primary model, Carol Heffernan revives Braddy's long-dormant theory in her suggestion that the Squire, in choosing the most complex western genre he knows, may be attempting to imitate the equally complicated structure of an Eastern frame story (736; see also 204, 653, 671, 769).

The Squire's Tale's relation to interlaced romance received additional fine-tuning in Jennifer Goodman's claim that Chaucer's poem shares elements of content and structure with late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century

English 'composites of courtly romance,' narratives that attempted to 'rival in verse the complexity of the early prose romances' (582). Building on Goodman's suggestion about the poem's genre, W.A. Davenport extended the notion of 'compositeness' to include the tale's rhetoric, its handling of point-of-view, its inclusion of both human and animal characters, and its attempt (unsuccessful, in Davenport's opinion) to reconcile romance narrative with lyrical *dit* (631). Alert to what Susan Crane calls the 'provisional and protean' nature of medieval romance (670) and to the 'excess of generic markers' present in any literary text (237, p 183), Davenport is less convinced than Goodman that comparisons with extant composite romances will endow *The Squire's Tale* with 'a recognizable genre and a coherent form' and will therefore put to rest misgivings about the poem's imperfect fusion of its disparate elements (see also 551, 637, 666). Implicit in a commentary such as Davenport's is a recognition that (*pace* Kittredge) none of the tales in Chaucer's collection is a 'pure' example of its genre and that a tale can manifest the features of a genre and pass judgment on the genre at the same time.

Teller and Tale

Near the beginning of the chapter entitled 'Some Portraits' in his critical study of *The Canterbury Tales* (601), Derek Pearsall distinguishes between the three tales – those of the Wife of Bath, the Pardoner, and the Canon's Yeoman – that are prefaced by extended autobiographical monologues and therefore ask to be read as developments of or commentaries on the pilgrims' self-revelations, and the rest of the series, in which the perception of a relation between the character of teller and tale is 'a suggestion, a temptation, a provocative juxtaposition or a delusion.' Most readings of *The Squire's Tale* fall into Pearsall's first three categories, with the exception of a flurry of articles and book chapters in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s that propose close connections between tale and teller. In the section on 'The Suitability of *The Squire's Tale* to the Squire' in the Variorum edition (112), Baker examines critical treatments of the tale-teller question from the eighteenth century through the mid-1980s. In what follows, I take a fresh look at the material covered in Baker's survey, adjusting some of his emphases and supplying additional evidence (especially from work published after 1985), and conclude by speculating briefly on future possibilities for thinking about the Squire's presence in his tale.

Until the middle of the twentieth century, critics were almost unanimous in finding an unproblematic relation between the Squire and the tale he tells; extrapolating from the Squire's portrait in *The General Prologue*, they point to the romantic character of the story, its high-minded sentiments, its fas-

ination with the marvelous, and its Eastern setting as aspects of the tale that make it 'perfectly suited' (378) to the temperament of its youthful teller (112, pp 39–45; see also 398, 412, 416). That said, none of these critics pursue Kittredge's 'dramatic principle' – that 'it was Chaucer's artistic duty ... to make the method of delivery correspond to the character of the teller' (1622) – much beyond noting an overlap between the Squire's presumed interests and the themes of his tale. A representative opinion is that of Lumiansky (462), who cites the Squire's contribution as an example of 'the simple suiting of tale and teller ... there are no dramatic complications ... or axes ground' for the performances in this category.

A decade after Lumiansky's book was published, arguments for a less simple relation between the Squire and his tale began to appear, all of which expand the claims for the tale as a uniformly impersonated utterance that represents the distinct subjectivity of the text's fictional speaker ('no other tale is so immediately revealing ... of the mentality assumed for the teller'; 612; see also 596), and almost all of which explain its supposed defects by invoking corresponding flaws in the pilgrim narrator's character: his youth and inexperience (483, 492, 502, 546, 549, 562, 654), his faulty grasp of rhetoric and logical argument (487, 492, 496, 497, 502, 508, 555, 557, 574, 621, 640, 715), his literary and social pretensions (483, 497, 506, 545, 556, 557, 729a), his superficiality (545, 557, 612), and his 'profane' nature (506). The best commentary on this extended episode of Squire-bashing is Lawton's (598). Using the readings of Pearsall (483), Haller (487), McCall (492), and Peterson (506) as his main evidence, Lawton explains how, in a 'progressive crudification of Stillwell's insights' into the poem's unstable tone, 'all the Tale's perceived faults are ... laid at the Squire's door, and all the good things ... are brushed aside, if they are considered at all, as involuntary flashes of Chaucer's genius from behind the mask.' As Pearsall (who revises his earlier 'dramatic' reading of the tale in his 1985 book) points out, the notion that Chaucer deliberately wrote bad poetry to demonstrate a narrator's shortcomings is 'methodologically suspect' – *Sir Thopas* being the exception that proves the rule (601; see also 500, 528, 617, 631, 735). The indiscriminate application of the dramatic principle, moreover, produces a paradoxical effect: even as teller and tale are diminished through irony, the teller's interiorated selfhood, shouldering aside the tale's ostensible topics, *becomes* its subject, the tale's 'artistic infelicities [serving as] Chaucer's means of representing dramatically the as-yet-unstructured mind of the narrator' (612; see also 549).

In a claim like the one I have just cited, the dramatic approach would seem to have run its course (or overstayed its welcome). Dane (112r) is doubtless correct that a topic like 'The Suitability of *The Squire's Tale* to the Squire' no longer represents a fruitful line of inquiry. But questions that seem dated can always be reframed. With recent work on medieval first-person narra-

tive – particularly A.C. Spearing's *Textual Subjectivity* (2005) and its companion volume *Medieval Autographies: The "I" of the Text* (2012) – opening up new ways of conceiving subjectivity as a textual phenomenon, it seems likely that Chaucer studies will have more to tell us about narratorial discourse in 'the story of Cambuscan bold.'

Orientalism and the Exotic

Reviewing scholarship on *The Squire's Tale's* genesis in a 1995 *Speculum* article, Kathryn Lynch points out that 'what all these theories of origin share ... is the centrality of the Oriental motif to the Squire's Tale; the tale wraps itself in an aura of exotic alterity, an insistent Orientalism in much the sense that Edward Said has defined that term' (679). In an essay published five years after Lynch's article and following her lead (727), I examine representative responses to the poem from the eighteenth century to the 1970s and suggest that orientalist discourse – the ways of imagining and describing the East set out in Said's *Orientalism* (1978) – have left their mark on the study of virtually all aspects of the tale: its genre, its sources and analogues, its narrative structure, its 'Squire-specific' features, its incompleteness, and its place in the Canterbury collection. Among the topics I consider (paired here with references to texts that exemplify specific attitudes and critical approaches) are:

- The opposed impulses of wonder before the marvels of the East and the skeptical or rationalist need to demystify the marvelous (Warton; see 112, pp 59–60).
- The essentializing of the East, the conflation of aesthetic and moral judgments, and the association of the East with waywardness and sensuality (Jephson; see 112, pp 61–2).
- The construction of the East as the 'other,' located 'beyond the central realm of sober experience' and thus the West's binary opposite (32, 381, 421).
- The disengagement required of the European spectator of oriental difference and Chaucer's inability in *The Squire's Tale* to maintain this disinterested stance (446).
- A penchant for the exotic as characteristic of late-medieval aristocratic fads and fashions and as a symptom of the waning Middle Ages (520, 545).
- A taste for exotic stories as a sign of an immature imagination, and hence suited to the young and callow Squire (447, 471, 612).
- The outline of coming events at the end of Part 2, which presages a 'monstrous oriental saga' apparently modeled on the Eastern framing

tale, as evidence that the Squire has lost control of his story (440, 483, 490).

- The motif of the East as insidiously dangerous, reflected in Braddy's hypothesis that Chaucer may have discovered an incest narrative in his oriental source, and hence terminated his tale prematurely (440).

The scholarship and criticism I have just summarized (and which I treat at greater length in my essay) incorporates a set of mostly tacit assumptions about the Orient and its relation to European culture. In recent decades, critics have taken a fresh look at the tale's cultural geography, with a more nuanced sense of what's at stake in Chaucer's refashioning of Eastern romance, a self-awareness prompted in part by Said's essential study and the published responses to it.

Although John Fyler's 'Domesticating the Exotic in the *Squire's Tale*' (632) makes no direct reference to Said's work, Fyler's reading demonstrates that some of the impulses Said locates in modern orientalist discourse – the wish to control or assimilate the 'other' and the corresponding resistance of the exotic to demystification, the vacillation between the alien and the familiar – are present as well in Chaucer's tale, reflecting both the paradoxes of romance as a genre and the mixed motives of the Squire as storyteller. Fyler's examples – a Christian European imagining a heathen Tartar, a human being imagining a bird, and a man imagining a woman – establish continuities between the two parts of the tale (a feature often thought to be absent from the poem) and locate the Squire within his narrative while avoiding the reductiveness that compromises many 'dramatic' readings of the tale.

Building on Fyler's observations in her study of Chaucerian romance, Susan Crane (670) introduces gender into the tale's program for managing the exotic: although Cambuskan's daughter Canacee 'is an instance of the exotic for the narrator,' her own relation to the marvelous is contrasted with the masculine desire for appropriation and control. Gender is also one of the subjects of the essay by Kathryn Lynch cited at the beginning of this section; examining the ways in which Chaucer consciously 'out-Easts the East' in *The Squire's Tale*, Lynch sees the Squire as 'setting up an argument about women, pleasure, and the East that the Franklin will dismantle' (679). Like Lynch, Suzanne Akbari reads the two Fragment V tales 'geographically' in her interrogation of Said's paradigm of East and West as mirroring binaries (707). The dominant medieval world division, Akbari maintains, was tripartite (Asia, Europe, and Africa), and uneven; Chaucer's pairing of *The Squire's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale* forms part of her evidence for the gradual emergence, in the late fourteenth century, of the soon-to-be standard dichotomy – a 'cold, dispassionate, northerly Occident' that is the mirror image of an Orient associated with heat and the sun. In her 2006 New Chaucer Society lecture (747; see also 757), Crane returns to and develops

her earlier thoughts about orientalism and romance, examining how, and with what results, 'the orientalized "other" shifts from the Eastern to the animal realm' in the tale's second part. Crane's observations about language (Canacee's magic ring, 'a perfect manifestation of animal orientaling,' turns out not to be entirely necessary for her communication with the tercel) complement Alan Ambrisco's characterization of the Canacee-falcon episode as 'a fantasy of linguistic competence' that serves as a contrast to the ambivalent orientalism of the tale's first part (740).

In their engagement, implicit and explicit, with the issues raised by Said's work, these commentaries on *The Squire's Tale* form part of a larger conversation about the usefulness of postcolonial methodologies for the study of the Middle Ages. Unlike criticism of other Chaucerian texts, which has only in the past few decades taken up the topic of Chaucer's orientalism, interpretations of *The Squire's Tale* have traditionally given space to Chaucer's refashioning of the culturally alien Eastern romance. This record of attention offers an unusually full picture of the premises that have shaped attitudes toward the *Squire's Tale's* oriental subject over time, and provides a historical perspective from which we can judge the impact, both realized and potential, of recent work in cultural studies on the reception of Chaucer's text.

Magic, Science, Technology

In the introduction to his compendium of analogues to *The Squire's Tale's* magical features, W.A. Clouston announces that 'the magical elements in the *Squire's Tale* constitute its great attraction' (129, p 276). Clouston's mildly self-promoting assertion requires some correction, but not much: magic is in fact a recurrent topic in discussions of the poem from the eighteenth century onward. Commenting on *The Squire's Tale* in his *History of English Poetry* (112, 727), Warton traces the magical elements in Western romance to accounts of Arabian astrology and magic and devotes a dozen pages to 'the wonderful discoveries and mysterious inventions' of Eastern learning that parallel the stranger knight's gifts. But Warton's admiration of the tale's glamorous surface is qualified by his ambivalence about the objects brought to Cambyuskan's court. On the one hand, the horse, ring, mirror, and sword are instances of natural magic, 'a favorite pursuit of the Arabians, by which they imposed false appearances on the spectator.' On the other hand, he remarks of the horse of brass that 'by such inventions we are willing to be deceived' (112). Three decades later, Charles Lamb registers a similarly divided response to the tale's representation of magic in a letter to Thomas Manning: "'tis the reading of Chaucer has misled you; his foolish stories about Cambyuskan and the ring, and the horse of brass. Believe me

there's no such things, 'tis all the poet's *invention*; but if there were such *darling* things as old Chaucer sings, I would up behind you on the Horse of Brass and frisk off for Prester John's country' (112). At the beginning of the next century, Root connects the magical objects with the 'limitless fields of pleasing conjecture' that the tale opens up to the reader's imagination: 'the very name of magic has its fascination for our poor race of mortals ... Let the magic horse, the ring, the sword, and mirror be put to practical use ... and they are immediately vulgarized' (378). One practical use to which Root presumably would not have objected is the quest for sources; in studies contemporary with Root's volume, Jones (133) and Lowes (147) cite the flying horse, the mirror, and the ring as evidence of the tale's possible connections with the French romance *Cleomadés* and the *Epistola Presbyteri Johannis*, while, later in the century, Jennifer Goodman (582) notes that these objects also appear in the composite romances that she believes to be examples of *The Squire's Tale's* 'recognizable genre.'

As is the case with other aspects of *The Squire's Tale* examined in this introduction, the poem's treatment of magic receives its first demystifying scrutiny in Stillwell's 'Chaucer in Tartary' (446); alternately 'learned' and 'commonsense,' the courtiers' speculations about the magical objects work against the romance 'naïveté' that, in Stillwell's opinion, is required to sustain our belief in (or to suspend our disbelief about) the announced powers of the stranger knight's gifts. In his first published interpretation of the tale (483), Pearsall reads the tonal incongruities assumed by Stillwell to be Chaucer's (or the tale's) effects as manifestations of the Squire's anti-intellectualism, his 'indignant contempt for what is not understood.' Revisiting the Squire's contribution in his full-length study of the *Tales* (601), Pearsall modifies his earlier position somewhat; he now presents the poem's 'inclination to scepticism and rationalisation' in its treatment of the supernatural as a reflection of 'Chaucer's own individual reception of the genre' rather than as a character trait of the Squire-as-narrator.

The most vigorous argument for the tale's rationalization of magic is that of Vincent DiMarco (684; see also 207, 208, 242, 513, 690), who maintains that there is in fact 'no magic in the SqT'; the gifts are interpreted as magical by 'lewed' observers who fail to understand their scientific or technological basis ... In the accounts of each of the gifts, myth and legend are rationalized scientifically.' Other readers, while acknowledging the episode's striking depiction of scientific curiosity (570; see also 725), stop short of eliminating magic from the tale, arguing instead for a complex interplay of the marvelous and the rational or scientific. Corinne Saunders (743, 744) observes that our belief in the marvelous, initially qualified by the presence of natural science, technology, and astrology, is revived when, in part two of the tale, the ring's power enables Canacee to understand the speech of birds (see

also 637, 686, 750a). For Aranye Fradenburg (742), it is precisely by locating the stranger's gifts at the 'edge of the known and the unknown and on the border between technology and magic' that Chaucer provokes the sense of wonder that is a hallmark of romance narrative. Examining the *Squire's* and *Franklin's Tale's* magical features in her study of gender and Chaucerian romance (670), Susan Crane also designates wonder (rather than 'attempted explanation') as the right response to clerical magic in romance, even as she notes the 'double movement' that strives to protect wonder from demystification and disengages from it at the same time.

In some ways comparable to Crane's exploration of magic as a means of expressing gender difference are readings that invoke courtly ritual and social hierarchy as contexts for interpreting the gift-giving episode. If, as Anne Middleton argues (600), the magical gifts are 'rhetorical devices in material form,' the ability to deploy and respond to these representations becomes a criterion of *gentil* behavior. In his study of courtly *mirabilia* (722), Scott Lightsey also denotes wonder at the objects' marvelous features as 'the aristocratic view,' but observes that the scene also includes 'a more skeptical mechanistic view,' presented from perspective of the sciences and the crafts-classes. For Andrew James Johnston (700), the juxtaposition of wonder and disenchanted curiosity functions as social commentary: the former is an aristocratic virtue, the latter risks the charge of academic pedantry, a deadly trait in the *Squire's* elegant courtly world.

Described in greater detail than the other gifts, the horse of brass has elicited responses from readers of the tale almost as varied as those proffered by the members of Cambuskan's court. In his monograph on the tale's magical elements (129), Clouston devotes twenty-two pages to instances of flying horses in folklore and literary texts. Comparing the opening scene of *The Squire's Tale* to the corresponding episode in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, a poem more to his taste, John Speirs (454) dismisses the horse as 'nothing more than a curious mechanical contrivance, a flying machine.' In a memorable aside, E.T. Donaldson (471) connects the horse's narrative fate with the tale's leisurely plot; having introduced and developed at length the story of Canacee and the falcon, the teller 'will not quickly be able to get the brass horse and the rest out of storage and into action' (see also 543). For Joyce Lionarons (669), the hidden knowledge required to fashion and operate the horse, which blurs the line between magic and technology, foregrounds the device's capacity for deceiving the ignorant. Jane Chance (675) also connects the brass steed with deceit by way of the reference to the Trojan horse, an association redeemed somewhat by the allusion to Pegasus in the same passage. Linked by Ovid and other classical authors with literary origins, Pegasus receives due attention in an article by Craig Berry (238), who interprets the brass steed as 'a figure for the poem' and its creator as equivalent to

'a poetic *makere*' (see also 552, 675). Other metatextual readings argue for parallels between the description of the horse and the structure of the *Tales* as a whole (651) and for the steed's ability to transport its riders to the place of their hearts' desire (V.119–20) as a form of *translatio* similar to the ring's power to transpose bird language into human language (702).

The sixty lines devoted to the brass horse and the courtiers' speculations about it continue to invite new discoveries and fresh critical insights. In *Time and the Astrolabe in The Canterbury Tales* (730), Marijane Osborn advances an argument for the horse as a 'metaphor' for the astrolabe, and proposes a further connection with the constellation Pegasus; 'more than it appears,' the horse-as-astrolabe may have been intended by Chaucer as entertainment for 'the astronomically skilled members of his audience' or as a tribute to Muslim science. Like Osborn, but with different interpretive goals in mind, Crane also takes her argument about the steed of brass beyond the immediate confines of the poem. Alert to the ways in which literary representations encode cultural processes, Crane shows in her chapter on 'knight and horse' in *Animal Encounters* (757) that the apparently 'fully technologized horse' presented to Cambyuskan's court also manifests 'living physicality,' and thus reflects the double function of a knight's warhorse as a 'dream weapon' and as an 'object of chivalric devotion.'

The Squire's Tale, Part 2

Early commentators found more to admire in Part 1 than in Part 2 of *The Squire's Tale*. Speaking for 'every reader of taste and imagination,' Warton expressed regret that, in place of adventures that might have been performed with the assistance of the horse of brass, Chaucer settled for the 'tedious detail' of Canacee's encounter with the falcon (112). Writing in 1874 and 1892, respectively, Skeat and Lounsbury detected in Part 2 lapses in structure and grammar that they attributed to hasty composition (112). Until the middle of the twentieth century, commentary on Part 2 consisted almost entirely of source studies and questionable attempts at historical allegory (112, 166, 174, 373, 403, 404, 432, 440). When it was drawn into the orbit of 'dramatic' readings of the tale, the Canacee-falcon episode joined Part 1 in supplying evidence for the Squire's ostensible failures of artistic control and moral insight (483, 487, 492, 497, 506, 612, 640, 642). And for some critics, it is the poet, not the narrator, who nods; one learned (and outspoken) scholar ranks the 'sentimental avian romance' that comprises most of the tale's *pars secunda* as 'among the worst narrative sequences [Chaucer] ever wrote' (608).

Amid this record of dismissal and neglect, several critics offer more fa-

vorable assessments of Part 2. Of particular note are Jill Mann's nuanced explications of *pitee* and *newefangelnesse* in the falcon's monologue, a passage that for Mann includes Chaucer's most moving representation of his 'ideal of harmonious unity in love' (729; see also 545r, 565, 745, 750). Douglas Gray (561, 620), Charles Owen (657), and – modifying his earlier view (483) of the humanized birds as inadvertently comic at the Squire's expense – Derek Pearsall (601) also read Canacee's dialogue with the falcon as an unironic treatment of essential Chaucerian themes and techniques. One should observe as well that the Canacee-falcon episode appears frequently in illustrated editions and modernizations of *The Canterbury Tales*, where its visual possibilities (especially Canacee holding out her *lappe* to catch the bleeding bird) are treated by the books' artists with imagination and sympathy (5, 11, 20, 37, 39, 43, 52, 53, 63).

The argument for Part 2 of *The Squire's Tale* as worthy of serious critical attention has been strengthened by insights drawn from gender studies and, more recently, animal studies. In monographs on gender and Chaucerian romance that appeared in the mid-1990s, Susan Crane (670; see also 747, 757) and Angela Weisl (681) employ the Canacee-falcon scene to explore, among other significant topics, the association between femininity and the body, the relation of female characters to the romance plot, and the instability of gender categories. In some respects analogous to these gender-focused readings are studies that revisit the tale's representation of animal-human relations. In his notes to the Oxford edition, Skeat maintained that the falcon was probably a princess in animal shape who, if the tale had been completed, would have been restored to her original form by the magic ring (4, 374; see also 378, p 268). A number of subsequent commentaries on Canacee's encounter with the lovelorn falcon, although they do not (as does Skeat) erase the falcon-as-bird from the tale, nevertheless diminish or foreclose possible sympathy for the formel's plight by invoking 'the comic disparity between the avian world and the human world' (599; see also 471, 483, 500, 516, 608, 693). In the past two decades, scholars from a variety of disciplines have questioned such absolute assertions of human/animal difference and put forward alternative paradigms for interpreting the representation of animals in a range of cultural productions, literature included. This shift in perspective can be seen in commentaries on *The Squire's Tale* published between 2004 and 2013 (740, 745–57). Making use of recent thinking about such topics as cross-species contact and cross-species translation, animal agency, female autonomy, female homosocial bonding and 'natural' bonds between human and animal, avian hybridity, and anthropomorphism (enabling, unstable, and 'reversed'), this body of work shows how well the Canacee-falcon scene responds to fresh approaches, and lays a solid foundation for further informed attention to a long-undervalued part of *The Canterbury Tales*.

The Tale as Fragment

No feature of *The Squire's Tale* has received more scrutiny than its lack of an ending. Baker's and Lawton's surveys record the main patterns of response to the tale's incompleteness through the mid-1980s:

- Early admiration for the tale and regret for its incompleteness, as exemplified in Spenser's continuation of the tale in Book 4 of *The Faerie Queene*; in Milton's reference to Chaucer as 'him that left half told / The story of *Cambuscan bold*' ('*Il Penseroso*,' lines 109–10); and in Thomas Warton's lament that the most interesting part of the story, 'the notable achievements ... performed by the assistance of the horse of brass,' was either lost or never written (112).
- Romantic fascination with 'the power of the incomplete' that construes the tale's unfinishedness (whether by accident or by design) as a spur to the readers' 'vague imaginings' (378; see also 650).
- Chaucer deliberately abandoned the tale; he had moved too far in Part 2 from his initial premise (411, 601), lost interest in his subject or recognized that it didn't suit his talents (112, 446, 448, 471, 505, 538a, 586), realized that his original plan was unworkable (112, 436, 483, 582), intended the unwritten portion for the return journey, which itself remained unwritten (129), or discovered in his oriental source an incest motif that brought him to a sudden halt (440).
- The tale is cut off by the Franklin, who attempts diplomatically to end a story that threatens to go on indefinitely, or to let the Squire off the hook when the younger man becomes lost in the labyrinth of his plot (442, 447, 483, 502, 505, 577, 581, 594r, 764, 767, 768, 775, 784a), or to register 'frustrated expectations' as do the Host and the Knight in their more forthright interruptions of *Sir Thopas* and *The Monk's Tale* (506).
- The tale's incompleteness comically mirrors the delayed conclusions of romance narratives (490) or (if read as produced by the Franklin's interruption) satirizes 'the long-windedness and absurdities of the romance-writers' (394).
- *The Squire's Tale* was neither aborted by Chaucer nor intended to be read as interrupted by the Franklin (500, 579, 581r, 765, 781a). Arguing on codicological grounds, Norman Blake maintains that Chaucer probably planned to finish the tale and that it may have been in progress when he died (102, 452, 558, 569, 593, 594).

In the two decades following Baker's survey of criticism, these positions were variously called into question, examined from fresh perspectives, and supplemented with new information. Three interpretive stances dominated the discussion:

- Critics unpersuaded by arguments that Chaucer gave up on the tale or

that attribute its incompleteness to contingent events proposed that the poem is unfinished by design, in accordance with the open-ended nature of frame stories (653); as a way of including a composite romance in the tale-telling competition without actually producing a complete narrative (582); as an analogue to the Squire's own 'unfinishedness' (582, 714); as a feature of the 'roundabout inconclusion' that characterizes the tale as a whole and that contrasts it with the *Franklin's Tale's* conclusiveness (663); as a means of sharpening the reader's curiosity in the manner of oriental tales (671); and as dictated by a 'poetics of Chaucerian fragments' manifested in the intentional unfinishedness of *The Canterbury Tales* itself (694).

- Interpretations of the Franklin's words to the Squire as a deliberate stinting of the latter's tale continued to make an appearance (621, 625, 653, 715, 736, 768, 786, 789, 791), but they are now put forward more cautiously – compare, for example, Pearsall's advocacy of a 'dramatic' reading in 1964 (483; see also 505) with his modified observations twenty years later, which invoke the poet's immediate compositional needs rather than assuming a pre-existent dramatic frame (601). Also absent, for the most part, are the detailed stage directions that characterize some earlier glosses on the episode (e.g., 442).
- Taking issue with the views summarized in the preceding two paragraphs, a number of critics adduced additional evidence that the tale is actually – rather than 'dramatically' or designedly – unfinished. Lawton makes a detailed case for this view, noting, inter alia, that the Franklin's words do not sound like an interruption (598; see also 452, 650, 765, 781a, 783); that the Squire's prospectus of coming attractions 'read[s] like the poet's own notes, jotted down at the time when he laid the work aside'; and that several scribes seem to have expected further copy. In 'Poems Without Endings' (650), John Burrow (who believes Lawton's chapter to be 'the best modern discussion of the tale') juxtaposes the earliest responses by scribes, printers, and poets, all of whom take it for granted that the poem is incomplete, with interpretations by twentieth-century critics that reflect a post-romantic taste for the fragmentary, a modern wariness of definitive closure, and a reluctance to entertain the possibility that 'disinclination or distraction or death' rather than artistic purpose explain the tale's lack of a conclusive ending. Burrow's account finds further support in Joseph Dane's demonstration that early printed books presented the tale not as interrupted but as unfinished or incomplete (710). Published in the same year as Dane's essay, Stephen Partridge's wittily titled 'Minding the Gaps' draws on manuscript evidence rather than printed texts to argue that the blank spaces following *The Cook's Tale* and *The Squire's Tale* and the

notes on the tales' incompleteness may be authorial rather than scribal; the incompleteness of these two tales is thus essentially different from that of *Sir Thopas* and *The Monk's Tale*, the two clearly interrupted tales (713). Completing a trio of commentaries on *The Squire's Tale's* unfinishedness that appeared in the year 2000 is Elizabeth Scala's 'The Deconstructure of the *Canterbury Tales*' (714a). Building on Partridge's evidence for the authorial nature of the manuscript gaps that follow *The Cook's* and *The Squire's Tales*, Scala maintains that these absences should be presented 'as part of the text (rather than as a lack of text).' The tales may thus be considered not simply poems without conclusions, but rather 'poems with blank, and therefore, potential lines written into the page.' Despite its frequently-noted singularity among the Canterbury stories, *The Squire's Tale* is for Scala a paradigm of the entire *Tales*, itself a work fueled by gaps and absences 'that are not only necessary but structurally central.'

∞ *The Franklin's Tale*: Introduction

With the exception of *The General Prologue*, *The Knight's Tale*, *The Pardoner's Tale*, and *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, *The Franklin's Tale* has generated as substantial a body of commentary as any other segment of *The Canterbury Tales*. In these introductory remarks, I attempt to provide an overview of this mass of criticism that will highlight some of its key concerns and suggest something of its richness, variety, and occasional quirkiness. As others have noted, the history of the poem's reception involves a paradox: the seemingly benign figure we meet in *The General Prologue* – sanguine in temperament, an accomplished host, an honored public servant – contributes to the Canterbury competition a tale that has polarized its readers to a striking degree. (A distinguished Chaucerian once remarked in conversation that 'no one likes anyone else's interpretation of *The Franklin's Tale*!') The observations that follow will allow users of this volume to track some of these controversies and to see how they arise not only from the critical allegiances of its interpreters, but also (and perhaps more importantly) from the kind of story that Chaucer assigns to the Franklin. The first section of the introduction surveys scholarship on the tale's sources and analogues. In the second section, I examine five topics and a selection of key passages that have produced some of the most significant critical writing on the tale since 1900. I intend these comments as a kind of tasting menu, a sampling of the thematic emphases and interpretive approaches set out at greater length in the individual entries.

Sources and Analogues of *The Franklin's Tale*

At least since Clouston (129), scholars have recognized that *The Franklin's Tale* is a version of the folktale most commonly designated as 'The Damsel's Rash Promise,' but identified more accurately by Utley as 'Which Was the Noblest Act?' (944). Clouston's investigations were expanded by Aman (258) and Schick (275) and several commentators subsequently examined the tale in the light of its eastern or folk analogues (283, 307, 362, 368, 1275, 1507).

The largest body of work on *The Franklin's Tale's* sources, however, responds to the narrator's claim that he is retelling a Breton lay. Taking the Franklin at his word, Schofield (246) argued for the tale's Celtic origins, pointing to similarities of plot and phraseology between *The Franklin's Tale* and the *lais* of Marie de France that, in his view, confirm the claim for a Breton source. In 1903, Rajna (249) rejected Schofield's analogies as unpersuasive, making a detailed case for the fourth *questione d'amore* in Boccaccio's *Il Filocolo* (and, to a lesser extent, *Decameron* 10.5) as the only texts that offer substantial parallels to Chaucer's poem. Rajna's identification of *Il Filocolo* as Chaucer's primary source has been almost universally accepted. Some critics, however, point out that the poet shapes Boccaccio's narrative to capture the spirit of a Breton lay (252, 267, 338, 862, 1329, 1363a, 1422); the editors of *The Franklin's Tale* chapter in the first edition of *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (281) gave authority to this view by supplementing Boccaccio's *questione d'amore* with excerpts from four French and three English lays. Numerous scholars argue that Chaucer's knowledge of the genre was derived solely from English texts – perhaps exclusively from the lays in the Auchinleck MS (252, 282, 301a, 308, 311, 313, 337, 955, 972). The shift in opinion about the tale's indebtedness to Celtic and French sources is reflected in the second edition of *Sources and Analogues* (367), in which the lays are represented only by the opening lines of the Auchinleck *Lay le Freine*.

The Franklin's identification of his tale as a Breton lay has prompted speculation both about his character and about the kind of story he presents to the pilgrim audience. If, as some critics claim, the Breton lay had lost its vogue in England by the late fourteenth century, the Franklin's choice of genre may mark him as old fashioned and nostalgic for the tales of his youth (311, 909, 955, 958, 1016, 1067, 1069; for a dissenting opinion, see Pearsall [1179], p 146); it may also underline his interest in (or alternatively, his misunderstanding of) *gentillesse* (1003, 1061, 1231, 1349). The tale's announced genre has been invoked in connection with its treatment of astrology and magic (812, 1003, 1248, 1422); its portrayal of human feelings (1426); its pre-Christian setting (1003, 1179); its echoes of ancient chronicle (1230); its investment in fantasy and wish fulfillment (1252); and with Chaucer's desire to give the black rocks a correspondingly full Breton setting (955, 1339), to achieve generic variety in the *Tales* (296), and to introduce contradictory elements into his story (1385). In contrast to those critics who establish links between the Breton lays and Chaucer's handling of his narrative, a smaller number see the poet as working against the grain of known examples of the genre, either by undercutting generic expectations in his treatment of relations between men and women (1409) and its handling of magic (1130), or by deflating the tale's romantic atmosphere (1022, 1259).

Until the middle of the twentieth century, the interest of Chaucerians in

the tale's relation to Boccaccio rarely went beyond confirming – or, in one instance, arguing against (264) – Rajna's identification of *Il Filocolo* as the poem's primary source. When source scholarship began to join forces with interpretive analysis, comparative approaches to *The Franklin's Tale* and its Italian models enabled critics to speak with greater precision about the poem's structure and themes. Among the subjects that have been illuminated by intertextual commentaries are Chaucer's innovations in plot (296, 345); his treatment of character, especially that of Dorigen (335, 345, 834, 838, 880, 890, 1159, 1179, 1189, 1230, 1390); the nature of promises (926, 1179); the tale's moral argument, its ethical complexity, and its open-endedness (1189, 1200, 1230, 1366, 1372); the significance of the garden (830, 852, 994, 1312); and the representation of social, class, and gender issues in the Italian and English versions of the tale (355, 363, 365, 1493).

The substantial body of scholarship on the tale's relation to the Breton lays and to Boccaccio has been supplemented by commentaries on its minor sources. Among these studies, the investigations of Chaucer's use of St Jerome's *Epistola adversus Jovinianum* in Dorigen's Complaint are notable, offering a close look at the poet's compositional habits as he adapts an earlier authority to the needs of characterization and the dramatic purposes of his narrative (298, 304, 358, 367, 847, 850, 863, 912, 921, 943, 1281, 1310, 1459).

The Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Critical Tradition

THE FRANKLIN'S TALE AND THE MARRIAGE DEBATE

In 1912, George Lyman Kittredge proposed that *The Franklin's Tale* provides a solution to a debate on marriage begun by the Wife of Bath and continued by the Clerk and the Merchant (805, 815). Kittredge's remarks established the terms that dominated critical discussion of the tale for the next five decades. The staying power of Kittredge's comments stemmed in part from the satisfying economy of his assertion that the Franklin reconciles the seemingly incompatible claims of courtly love and marriage, but also from his breezily authoritative tone ('The thing is possible. The problem need puzzle us no longer'), and from his belief that, in depicting the requirements for a happy marriage, the Franklin speaks for Chaucer the man. Approximately one-third of the commentaries summarized in the *Franklin's Tale's* chapters of this bibliography engage with the subject of marriage. Not all of these items refer to Kittredge by name. But his observations may be said to have produced – even if indirectly – the ubiquitous focus on marriage in a half-century's worth of writing on the tale.

Some critics are content to cast their vote with Kittredge (315, 829, 861, 865,

867, 889, 896, 939, 1004, 1038, 1132, 1243, 1408). Others begin from his basic premises, but extend his formulations in a variety of directions, particularly toward the claim that the marriage of Dorigen and Arveragus is meant to serve as a model for human relations more generally (854, 942, 1173, 1190, 1248, 1305, 1389). As with any strong interpretation, Kittredge's thesis – that the union of Dorigen and Arveragus provides a model of domestic equality that brings to a satisfying conclusion the preceding conversation on marriage – has generated equally strong resistance, both at the level of detail and in its larger thematic and structural implications. Some scholars chip away at the bedrock of Kittredge's argument by questioning the concept of a coherent Marriage Group of tales (818, 845, 1196). Others take issue with the central tenets of his thesis, claiming that the tale fails to establish a harmonious balance between marriage and courtly love (937, 1165, 1175, 1286, 1355, 1485) or that the poem's penultimate scene, in which Arveragus orders Dorigen to fulfill her promise to the squire, undercuts Arveragus's earlier forswearing of *maistrye*, and thus disqualifies Kittredge's humanistic reading of the marriage contract (852, 1029, 1057, 1097, 1149, 1186, 1196, 1198, 1244, 1288r, 1337, 1339, 1358, 1382, 1495). In one of his first published articles, Donald Howard argued that the Franklin's worldly compromise between *amour courtois* and husbandly authority is unlikely to represent Chaucer's view of marriage, especially in light of the poet's attention to virginity and chaste marriage in *The Physician's Tale* and *The Second Nun's Tale* (each of which follows *The Franklin's Tale* in some manuscripts) respectively (910; see also 977, 1050). Two years after Howard's essay appeared, D.W. Robertson, Jr. advanced a more uncompromising critique of the Franklin's representation of marriage from a Christian perspective in *A Preface to Chaucer* (918; see also 1030). According to Robertson, the Franklin's endorsement of marital equality runs counter to the Pauline doctrine of the husband's sovereignty in wedlock. To commend the Franklin for being ahead of his time in his treatment of the relations between the sexes is, in Robertson's opinion, to indulge in wishful thinking that neglects the historical constraints implied in the subtitle of his book – *A Study in Medieval Perspectives*. The influence of Robertson's argument may be seen in commentaries that propose what their authors believe to be properly historical readings of the Franklin's portrait of marriage (926, 929, 948, 965, 1027, 1109, 1201, 1286, 1293, 1484). Common to all of these exegeses is the severity with which the Franklin is judged for his supposed blindness to the true nature of virtuous Christian unions.

Beginning at mid-century and continuing with increasing frequency to the end of the period covered by this volume, various subjects – noble behavior (865); *trouthe*, *pitee*, *fredom*, and *gentillesse* (900, 880, 955, 969, 1122, 1136, 1339, 1441); honor (928); the sanctity of the pledged word (973); *maistrye* (1029); male bonding (1366); illusion and indeterminacy (1388); human vulnerabil-

ity (1414) – have been proposed as supplements or alternatives to marriage as the tale's center of meaning. Although Chaucerians will doubtless have more to say about the Franklin's treatment of marriage, this topic is no longer an inevitable feature of commentaries on the poem. An essay like V.A. Kolve's iconographic study of magic and poetic fiction (1285), for example, demonstrates that it is possible to write profoundly and at length about *The Franklin's Tale* while avoiding the issue of marriage almost entirely.

THE TELLER AND THE TALE

Another of Kittredge's legacies is his case for the tales as dramatic monologues that reveal the personalities of the tellers. The debates over and revisions of Kittredge's view of the Canterbury narratives as a Human Comedy have produced some of the best writing on the tales, and the subject is by no means a dead one. (For an energetic defense of reading the tales in the light of their tellers, see Lee Patterson's introduction to *Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales: A Casebook* [Oxford, New York: Oxford UP, 2007].) Although no one claims for *The Franklin's Tale* the confessional dimension present in the contributions of the Wife of Bath, the Pardoner, or the Canon's Yeoman, the gradual accumulation of characterological detail as we move from the *General Prologue* portrait to the dramatic interplay of *The Squire–Franklin Link* to the Franklin's own Prologue has encouraged readers to seek in the tale additional evidence for constructing the consciousness of its pilgrim narrator.

For many critics, the Franklin's supposed concern with (for some, his anxiety about) his class status forms the bridge connecting teller and tale. It was Kittredge (758) who first suggested that the Franklin's praise of the Squire's *gentillesse* reveals his own social ambitions. Subsequent variations on this claim range from mild condescension (e.g., the Franklin as an 'unpolished but quietly enthusiastic admirer of fine behaviour' [969]) to outright condemnation (e.g., the Franklin's address to the Squire 'reeks of servile toadying to the aristocracy' [766]); for a representative selection of opinions, see 554, 764, 769, 777, 779, 780, 789, 790, 792, 793, 794, 872, 895, 909, 926, 955, 958, 965, 967, 1000r, 1036, 1042, 1142, 1152, 1205, 1222, 1308, 1317, 1339, 1496, 1503). Such perceived character traits have in turn served as a lens through which the tale is shown to reveal or explain the Franklin's inadequate understanding of *gentillesse* (918, 926, 929, 958, 1036, 1042, 1049, 1050, 1061, 1152, 1222, 1251, 1395, 1449); his vacillation between the courtly and the everyday (872); his projections of a desired social self onto his *dramatis personae* (1030, 1142); his choice of an old-fashioned literary form (909, 958, 1016, 1067); his allusions to *The Squire's Tale* (769); and his intrusions into his narrative (1042).

In 1981, Henrik Specht, building on the work of G.H. Gerould (825), in-

investigated in detail the question of the Franklin's social rank and concluded that the Franklin is a 'worthy and ... unexceptionable' member of the country gentry (1124). Although Specht's study did not, as one reviewer hoped it would (1124r), put to rest the view of the Franklin as a parvenu, interpretations based on this premise gradually became less thick on the ground in the final decades of the twentieth century. Even before Specht's monograph appeared, in fact, some critics were unpersuaded by the notion of a social-climbing Franklin (764, 1056r, 1110). These skeptical voices grew more prominent in the 1980s (1141, 1156, 1179, 1190, 1203, 1248, 1256), and in turn cleared the way for readings of the tale's engagement with social issues that moved beyond the old controversies – for example, Paul Strohm's examination of oaths and social structures (1256), Susan Crane's yoking of class and gender (1261, 1330), and Robert Edwards's intertextual studies of social relations in Boccaccio and *The Franklin's Tale* (355, 363).

Until the publication of D.W. Robertson's *A Preface to Chaucer* in 1962 (918), critiques of the Franklin had for the most part been limited to his supposed class-related ambitions. For Robertson, the Franklin's social instability signifies a more profound moral disorder – a worldly and self-indulgent Epicureanism that manifests itself in a preoccupation with external appearances and a consequent blindness to virtue and truth. Robertson's portrait of the Franklin (developed more fully in 1030) introduced a vocabulary that was assimilated by critics sympathetic to his reading. In addition to 'externals,' 'blind(ness),' and 'worldly,' the key terms are 'appearance,' 'illusion,' 'literal(ism),' 'myopia,' 'self-deception,' 'shallow,' 'superficial,' and 'surface' (918, 929, 948, 949, 958, 965, 967, 970, 1030, 1061, 1076, 1079, 1147, 1149, 1201, 1204, 1205, 1317, 1321, 1371, 1388, 1395). These words acquired the force of mantras that allowed critics to find the Franklin's putative personal and intellectual shortcomings reflected in almost every aspect of his tale, from the most minute to the largest: its handling of personal names (1273), physical setting (1287), treatment of astrology (1061, 1147), representation of magic (956), rhetoric (557, 958, 1061, 1109, 1251), genre (958, 1061, 1349), themes (958), characterization (958, 965, 1030, 1251), ethics (956, 1061, 1109, 1251), and metaphysics (958, 965). For these commentators, the Franklin does not speak for Chaucer, as Kittredge had maintained; rather, the tale encourages its readers to bond with the poet in relishing the ironies directed against the shortsighted pilgrim narrator (926, 958, 967, 1061, 1205, 1388).

The flurry of 'Franklin bashing' (1201r) that followed in the wake of Robertson's book elicited dissenting responses from a number of Chaucerians. In a notably level-headed essay published in 1974, Gertrude White urged a return to Chaucer's own writings – particularly his treatment of *gentillesse*, *freedom*, *honour*, and *curteisie* elsewhere in *The Canterbury Tales* and in his short poems – as a corrective to the 'learned but sometimes misguided and

insensitive historical criticism' on display in Robertsonian approaches to the poem (1033). Others have pointed to the dangers of invoking the Franklin's supposed uneasiness about his social status or of using what Derek Pearsall (1179) calls a 'jaundiced reading' of the *General Prologue* portrait as templates for interpreting the tale (972, 1056r, 1141, 1156, 1190, 1203, 1248). In a move that has become increasingly familiar in the debate over the Canterbury tale-tellers as subjects, these commentators question the critical habit of understanding *The Franklin's Tale* as an expression of its narrator's psychology or values. While acknowledging that some of the poem's themes are anticipated in the *General Prologue* portrait and the Franklin's own Prologue, they also observe that the voice narrating the poem changes in accordance with the subject at hand and cannot be reduced to a set of stable personality traits that we ascribe to the Franklin (874, 1014, 1174, 1248, 1291, 1339, 1437).

CHARACTERIZATION

Although commentators are almost unanimous in their praise of Chaucer's delineation of character in the tale (835, 871, 954, 1248), there has been nothing like a consensus about the motives, actions, and moral attributes of the poem's dramatis personae. Within the critical literature, each of the three male characters exists in versions so different as to seem irreconcilable. The clerk, viewed by some readers as an honorable, rational figure, charitable and selfless in the concluding episode (929, 1122, 1164, 1199, 1246, 1465), is for others deceptive, superficial, 'theologically suspect,' and sexually manipulative (956, 1049, 1204, 1238, 1311, 1330, 1347). The squire Aurelius has been labeled both 'the tale's villain' (1175) and 'the Franklin's real favorite' (1257). Seen through one set of interpretive lenses, Arveragus is honorable and generous (942, 954, 1033, 1248), 'extraordinarily wise and idealistic' (767), the embodiment of integrity and *trouthe* (871, 942, 1033, 1118, 1124, 1199, 1339). For critics who read the tale as questioning the values it appears to espouse, Arveragus's governing traits are moral blindness (948, 967, 1036, 1061, 1343), male egotism and tyranny (1029, 1097, 1186, 1343, 1465), reductive binary thinking (1353), preoccupation with his public image (965), and self-serving hypocrisy (1205).

Although she seems, by the end of the tale, to be excluded from its 'homero-tic economy' (1309), Dorigen has received more attention than any of the poem's male characters. However different their interpretive approaches, commentators agree that Dorigen is depicted with considerable psychological finesse: she is more complex and believable than her counterpart in *Il Filocolo* (335, 834, 838, 1159, 1506) and her conflicting emotions are effectively captured in the stylistic range and subtlety of her speech (979, 1013, 1248). Chaucer's skill in characterizing Dorigen has not, however, guaranteed uni-

versal approval of her actions and motivations. Although a small number of readers express unreserved admiration for her integrity, her selfless love for her husband, and her nobility of soul (871, 1161, 1199, 1200, 1438), commentators more frequently point to Dorigen's shortcomings – lack of patience, instability, imperfect self-knowledge, childishness, egocentricity – either in relation to her gender (904: 'she is only a daughter of Eve'; see also 976, 1012, 1014, 1052, 1402, 1457) or as part of a larger pattern of philosophical or religious meaning that subjects human failings to critical scrutiny (926, 949, 956, 958, 965, 967, 978, 1030, 1036, 1052, 1395). Such stringent judgments of Dorigen's limitations – many of them published in the 1960s and 1970s, the decades that produced the most severe evaluations of the Franklin himself – inevitably generated feminist counter-critiques. Dorigen, it is argued, must be understood as a product of the masculine imagination, a male fantasy that bears little relation to the lived experience of medieval women (1072, 1086). Dorigen's much remarked-on passivity, for example, should be viewed less as a function of character than of situation. A woman in a man's world where homosocial rivalry underlies romantic courtship, Dorigen becomes the locus of male competition (1107, 1300, 1337, 1355, 1366, 1382, 1386, 1389, 1495) and, in the poem's final episodes, is reduced to an object of exchange (1309, 1311, 1339, 1355, 1366, 1370, 1395, 1418, 1464). In the introduction to his revised edition of *The Franklin's Tale*, A.C. Spearing observes that an interpretation of the tale as reflecting the patriarchal repression of female desire is unlikely to have been one that Chaucer consciously intended (1339, pp 59–61). In fact, most recent discussions focus less on the political implications of Dorigen's role than on the degree to which she exhibits agency within Chaucer's narrative. At one extreme of the interpretive spectrum, Dorigen is in control of her own story and free to construct her identity (1306, 1343); at the other, she is wholly subordinated to the tale's male characters (1262, 1311, 1355, 1375, 1386). Less polarized accounts of Dorigen's presence in the tale acknowledge the difficulty of arriving at a 'comprehensive judgment' of her behavior (1339), and depict her at the intersection of competing, even contradictory, discourses: at once passive in a male-dominated world and able to shape her own selfhood (1314, 1377); 'silenced' yet available for 'counter-tales' generated by the reader (1354); both a fully realized subject and a narrative object ineligible for the reader's empathy (1506); deprived of physical agency but intellectually mobile (1390); and transformed by a shift of tone and genre in the poem's final scenes from a plausibly realistic figure to 'a participant in a story' (1053, 1179).

ASTROLOGY AND MAGIC

Two essays by Tatlock (810, 812) established the terms for much subsequent

commentary on these linked subjects. Tatlock unpacks the details of the dense astrological passages and argues for a double perspective on astrology and magic; the Franklin at once provides a fully imagined account of the clerk's magical practices that integrates them into the poem's pre-Christian setting and, as an orthodox contemporary believer, puts space between himself and these pagan rituals. While recognizing that the Franklin is simultaneously drawn to and made uneasy by astrological magic, critics tend to align themselves with one of these two positions. For those who embrace the possibilities of the tale's magic, the clerk is a 'creator-poet' (942, 1011) who embodies aspects of both the Franklin (1236, 1444) and of Chaucer (372, 1339), and who, by means of 'genuine astrological magic' (1238) based on calculations that, as reported by the Franklin, are precise and comprehensible (1131, 1238), produces 'saving illusions' that have the capacity to edify (1113, 1444). More numerous are those critics who are either wary of magic's power to entrap both the tale's characters and its audience (1255) or who echo outright the Franklin's condemnation of astrological magic as 'swich foye / As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye' (lines 1130–1). For these readers, the clerk's magic is the most palpable manifestation of the dangerous *illusioun* that for a time threatens to obscure the tale's central value of *trouthe* (911, 956, 963, 1079, 1114, 1136, 1147, 1189, 1229, 1230, 1312, 1330, 1444, 1489). Represented as bogus science manipulated by the clerk for deceptive ends (1147), it may be no more than a version of the mechanical stage tricks performed by *tregetoures* – the professional conjurers recalled by Aurelius's brother (901, 1076, 1169, 1320) – or, in its astrological guise, merely computational hocus-pocus designed to mystify the clerk's prediction of a high tide that will temporarily hide the coastal rocks (803, 956, 1076, 1147, 1421). Less polemical approaches to the tale's treatment of magic point to its association with rhetorical artifice (957, 1088, 1177, 1213), to the deflation of its traditional aura of wonder by its representation as a 'scientific commodity' (1432, 1433), and to the juxtaposition of the clerk's illusionistic art with the 'truth-telling potential' of Chaucer's own poetic fiction (1285). Particularly compelling, finally, is the claim that the tale is ultimately concerned not with whether the clerk's magic produces its advertised effects but rather with the characters' response to its announced results (1048, 1297, 1482), and the related insight that the tale's real magic lies in human actions and emotions: patience and pity, the transformative power of Arveragus's assertion of *trouthe*, and the squire Aurelius's change of heart (1033, 1133, 1177).

THE TALE'S SETTING

Among the most striking features of the tale is its location in Brittany – in particular the chain of black rocks along the coast. Initially enmeshed in

debates about the poem's Celtic origins (see above, p 21), the Breton setting received its first extended examination in Tatlock's 1914 monograph (812; see also 810); the tale's geography and its pre-Christian context, Tatlock argued, allowed Chaucer to offer a detailed representation of astrology and magic even as he distanced himself from these pagan practices in time and space. In the decades following Tatlock's essay, interest in the poem's physical scene shifted from its possible relation to real topographic features to its symbolic overtones. The rocks have been said to embody Dorigen's loyalty to Arveragus (830, 883); the obstacles that prevent worldly happiness (876, 911, 1360); physical materiality (880, 967, 1170); the perverseness of Dorigen's and Arveragus's marriage (929); the problem of evil (1204); masculine fantasies about female sexuality (911, 1300); Dorigen's sexual repression (1019); a flaw in the divinely ordered course of nature (1264, 1339, 1463, 1489); the 'old simple world of nature' (1471); and personal obsession and illusion (957, 1312). Several critics have entered caveats about symbolic readings of the rocks' possible connotations: Owen (883, 1064), Spearing (955), and Brunetti (1228) observe that the rocks' significance is not static, but rather changes under the pressure of human actions, while Kolve argues that, although the rocks are made to signify something by the despairing Dorigen, 'they must be seen as no more than rocks' (1285; see also 929r). The May garden in which Dorigen makes her promise to Aurelius, on the other hand, carries with it well-established meanings and shows Chaucer shaping conventional tropes – in this case, those of Eden and the courtly paradise of love – to suit his dramatic and thematic needs (913, 942, 949, 950, 955, 957, 963, 994, 1085, 1102, 1017, 1150, 1188, 1285, 1312, 1375, 1463).

SIX PASSAGES

A number of passages in *The Franklin's Tale* have regularly attracted commentary; the changing currents of the poem's reception could be succinctly mapped by using these moments as epitomes of the larger issues that have occupied students of the tale. Such a map would include the following passages, among others:

(1) The Franklin's Prologue (lines 709–28). In the first seven lines of his Prologue, the Franklin offers a snapshot of the Breton lay and announces that he will retell one such lay as his contribution to the Canterbury competition. The thirteen remaining lines are his apology in advance for his lack of rhetorical sophistication. Commentary on this passage has focused on the seeming contradiction between the Franklin's disclaimer and the presence in the poem of the very 'colours of rethoryk' he has just disavowed. Some treat the inconsistency as another black mark in the Franklin's book (958, 1081, 1079). Most readers, however, see it as a conscious irony that allows

the Franklin at once to deprecate and parade his verbal skill (825, 844, 860, 919, 933, 946, 955, 1020, 1046, 1339). The Franklin's remarks have also been viewed as a more mature version of the Squire's apologies for his linguistic ineptness (946) and as a reflection on both the dangers and the truth-telling potential of rhetorical figuration (1046, 1135).

(2) Dorigen and Arveragus's marriage contract (lines 738–98). The apparent establishment of domestic equality and the forswearing of *maistrye* recorded in this passage was for Kittredge (805, 815) a harmonious and definitive conclusion to the debate about wedlock carried on in the preceding Marriage Group tales. Some critics echo Kittredge's view; some build on it, suggesting, for example, that the domestic arrangement provides a model for social relations more generally (see above, p 23). Others, while acknowledging the passage's centrality, supplement or propose alternatives to Kittredge's terms, drawing on medieval doctrines of friendship (1004, 1160, 1295, 1305, 1491) or placing patience and *suffraunce* rather than equality at the center of the depiction of power relations (1133, 1450). The inclusion of these discourses, it has been argued, complicates and compromises the marriage agreement without entirely invalidating it (1305, 1344, 1423). To many commentators, however, the passage has seemed contradictory, evasive, incoherent, or simply irrelevant (1075, 1097, 1136, 1186, 1286, 1325, 1355, 1423). Counterarguments to Kittredge's untroubled reading of the marriage contract include its failure to reconcile the claims of Christian wedlock and courtly love (937, 963, 1065, 1125, 1286, 1355); the undercutting of the passage's depiction of mutuality by the subsequent events of the tale, in particular Arveragus's command that Dorigen fulfill her promise to Aurelius (1057, 1068, 1100, 1136, 1160, 1186, 1198, 1245, 1318, 1337, 1339, 1382, 1485); and (for Robertson and others), the presence of a muddled Epicureanism at odds with the medieval belief in hierarchy (918, 929, 948, 1030, 1109). As with several other passages examined here, the differences between critical evaluations of the marriage agreement are stark; what for one reader is a delicately calibrated 'mutual surrender of *maistrye*' (1450) is for another no more than 'a fine example of double-talk' (872).

(3) Dorigen's two monologues. Dorigen's lament over the coastal rocks (lines 865–93) has been read from a variety of perspectives: as a revelation of character (900, 904, 949, 957, 1036, 1065, 1161, 1230, 1313, 1322, 1332, 1339, 1353); as the speech of a shortsighted pagan (949); as the speech of an enlightened pagan (1002, 1199); as an exploration of fantasy (957, 1209, 1210, 1312); as a commentary on the role of providence (1197, 1339); as an investigation of questions of moral freedom (1230); as an examination of the soliloquy form (1374); as an unanswered question (932, 1128) or a thematic loose end (955, 1122); as a failed consolation (1138); and as evidence of the Franklin's superficiality (1079, 1395). The longer of the two soliloquies – the

complaint against Fortune (lines 1355–1456), with its extended catalogue of women who preferred death to dishonor – is the tale's most commented-upon interpretive crux. Manly's view of the passage as a failed flight of rhetoric (826) has been echoed by later critics, although there is no agreement about whether the misstep is Chaucer's (as Manly believed), the Franklin's, or Dorigen's (833, 839, 843, 847, 934, 953, 958, 1036, 1065, 1127, 1161, 1228, 1358). Others have defended the passage as engaged with serious moral issues (942, 1062, 1110, 1200, 1230). Its rhetorical excesses have been presented as dramatically and structurally functional, marking a shift in the tale's tonal register from tragic to tragicomic or comic (863, 986, 1077, 1088, 1179, 1198, 1347) or from realism to conventionalism (1053, 1179, 1465); as a contrast to the Franklin's concern for his audience in the tale's concluding scenes (957); as a deliberate suspension of the poem's action (1230, 1339); as a dramatic or verbal dead end (918, 1235, 1350); and as a marker to elaborate on Dorigen's dilemma (1023). Although the speech has been read in the light of the Franklin's character (872, 955, 1395), most critics focus on Dorigen's voicing of the monologue and take a variety of positions on her agency as a speaking subject. The lines have been understood as evidence of Dorigen's imperfect understanding of (or of her failure to match) the examples she cites (1089, 1149, 1339, 1406); of her struggle among multiple courses of action (912); of her isolation (1106); of her feminine sensibility (1012); of her moral integrity (1200); of her ability to make independent decisions (1306); of her witty (or evasive) use of the speech to defer a decision (1077, 1164, 1183, 1330, 1339, 1368, 1371); and of her double role as passive subject and self-shaper (1314, 1330). Finally, the lengthy list of virtuous women that constitutes the bulk of Dorigen's speech – a favorite topic for students of Chaucer's use of his sources (see above, p 22) – has also received a number of gender-inflected readings, several of which find in Dorigen's seemingly rote recital a dramatically rendered critique of patristic standards of female virtue (994, 1149, 1281, 1310, 1343, 1347).

(4) The much-admired seasonal vignette (lines 1244–55), proof of Chaucer's familiarity with calendar iconography (841, 880, 902), has seemed to many readers a microcosm of the poem's central concerns: as a foreshadowing of the movement from romance (or illusion) to reality (876, 1017, 1136); as an emblem of the fulfillment of Old Testament *trouthe* by New Testament *freedom* (900, 1339, 1416) or of the primacy of civilized values over natural forces (1179); as the center of 'the seasonal cycle of romance' (1248); as a contrast to the lack of purpose in the protagonists' lives (1258); as an image of the Franklin's balanced sense of life's rhythms (957, 969) or, conversely, of his Epicureanism (1140).

(5) 'Trouthe is the hyste thyng that man may kepe' (line 1479). A student seeking a single line that could serve as a litmus test for a critic's in-

terpretation of *The Franklin's Tale* might well choose Arveragus's invocation of *trouthe*, embedded in his response to his wife's confession of her promise to Aurelius. Few of *The Canterbury Tales* turn as completely as does the Franklin's on a set of key words and concepts; among these (the list includes *freedom*, *gentillesse*, *pacience*, and *pitee*), *trouthe* has received the most attention – as a thematic element, as a plot device, and as a lexical item. All three of these categories are relevant to our interpretation of Arveragus's assertion: partly because of its epigrammatic concision, his proposition serves as the culminating instance of the numerous occurrences in the tale of *trouthe*, *trew*, and *trewely*; it juxtaposes the *trouthe* of Dorigen's pledge to Aurelius (line 998) with her earlier vow of *trouthe* to Arveragus (lines 758–9) and underlies Arveragus's command that Dorigen must fulfill her promise to the squire; and it asks us to sort out the several meanings that have attached themselves to the word in the course of the tale.

For one group of critics, Arveragus's statement demonstrates his mature wisdom and expresses his 'moral solidarity' (1200) with Dorigen; invoking a knightly standard of loyalty to one's pledged word, he honors her integrity and free will (1033, 1118, 1124, 1156, 1221, 1234, 1318, 1359, 1450). In addition, Arveragus's declaration marks the moment at which the tale begins to right itself, signaling a shift away from the dominance of *illusioun* (*trouthe's* opposite) toward the restoration of *freedom* and genuine *gentillesse* (900, 911, 983, 989, 994, 1136, 1229, 1339, 1359, 1451a). As used here, *trouthe* refers to fidelity to a promise, to integrity more broadly, and to the reality of things as they are – the last sense present at the edges of Arveragus's maxim in the line's short form, 'trouthe is the hyeste thing' (880, 942, 983, 994, 1005, 1018, 1103, 1118, 1156, 1200, 1278, 1290, 1318, 1364, 1372).

Other scholars take a more disenchanted view of Arveragus's pronouncement, registering from a variety of perspectives and with varying degrees of force their doubts about an idealized reading. On the mild end of the spectrum, some critics observe that the multiple versions of *trouthe* present in the key phrase are contradictory and remain unresolved (1212, 1289, 1291, 1475, 1483), with the result, according to Spearing, that we are left with 'uncertainty' (not a bad thing, in Spearing's opinion) rather than 'unequivocal doctrine' (1339, p 31). Arveragus's assertion has also been understood as expressing a limited concept of *trouthe* that privileges chivalric values that are of little use to the tale's sole female protagonist at this moment of intense personal distress (899, 1149, 1155, 1160, 1161, 1309, 1314, 1337, 1366, 1375, 1455). Other readings of Arveragus's response to Dorigen's plight interpret his words as a way of salvaging his public reputation (1079) or as a reflection of the Franklin's own social ambitions (1042) and (in the suggestion that Arveragus treats Dorigen's promise as a kind of business contract) his mercantile values (1149, 1228, 1301). Those commentators least inclined to en-

dorse Arveragus's declaration and actions in this scene argue that his application of an 'inhuman, abstract principle' (1100) tied to 'the letter of the law' (1060, 1233), one that requires Dorigen to uphold a 'meaningless' *trouthe* (1061, 1311), is tyrannical, deceitful, immoral, and stupid (1086, 1100, 1315). Such extreme judgments arise in part from a belief that *trouthe* in the poem is absolute and unchanging, a product of unreflexive aristocratic thinking imposed on Dorigen (1155, 1160, 1488). An alternative view, which most readers will find more congenial, is the one put forward by Paul Strohm (1256), Lee Patterson (1290), and (with qualifications) by A.C. Spearing (1339, pp 39–42): that the tale enacts a transformation of *trouthe* from a public, chivalric, 'quasi-feudal' virtue to one grounded in personal integrity and in qualities available to both sexes and to all levels of society.

(6) 'Which was the mooste fre, as thynketh yow?' (line 1622). The Franklin's concluding *demande* has amply fulfilled its implicit purpose of stimulating debate. Critics have cast votes for a particular character (929, 1124, 1164, 1257, 1305, 1306, 1345; 1500); argued that no one is truly *fre* (948, 963, 1027, 1111, 1350, 1456); that the question is a kind of joke (878, 899, 963, 1024, 1111, 1418); that it is not meant to produce a definitive answer (950, 1136, 1144, 1291, 1292, 1304, 1437); that it is intended to resolve questions about marriage and *gentillesse* (1164); that it pointedly omits Dorigen (1262, 1344, 1354, 1375, 1400, 1448); that it suggests Dorigen as the 'mooste fre' (1305, 1306); that *fre* contains its modern sense as well as implying generosity (355, 367); that it sends a mixed message about material possession (1479); that it echoes the literary debates of clerks and knights (1028); that Chaucer envisioned a discussion of the Franklin's question in an unwritten endlink (816); and that it is a social act, moving the poem's focus from private to public, from its characters to its listeners and readers (957, 1272). If we agree with Anne Middleton that, for the Franklin, 'stories ... are social parables whose power lies in the quality of talk they create' (1108), the multiple and often conflicting responses to his final question may stand as a paradigm for the century's worth of 'talk' about the tale summarized in the pages that follow.

∞ *The Squire's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale*: Editions and Modernizations

Nine nineteenth-century editions are followed by a selective listing of twentieth- and twenty-first-century editions and modernizations. Earlier editions, beginning with that of Caxton (ca 1478), are described by Hammond (382), pp 114–49, 202–19. Hammond also lists selections from and modernizations and translations of *SqT* and *FranT* published before 1900 (pp 311–12, 314). (Page numbers for *SqT* include *Sq–FranL*.)

- 1 *A Six-Text Print of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Group F. Fragment VII. The Squire's Head-Link and Tale. The Squire–Franklin Link. The Franklin's Tale.* Ed. Frederick J. Furnivall. Chaucer Society, First Series, 31. London: Trübner, 1868. Repr. New York: Johnson, 1967. [*Six-Text Edition.*] *SqT*: pp 478–99; *FranT*: pp 500–25.

The text is printed in parallel columns as it appears in the following MSS: El, Hg, Cambridge Gg.4.27, Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne. The tales are given in the following order: I (A) II VII (B¹⁺ B²) VI (C) III (D) IV (E) V (F) VIII (G) IX (H) X (I). See also 4, 6, 9, 10, 16, 47, 55, 65, 99, 102, 113, 160.

- 2 *Chaucer: The Prioresses Tale, Sire Thopas, The Monkes Tale, The Clerkes Tale, The Squieres Tale from The Canterbury Tales.* Ed. Walter W. Skeat. Oxford: Clarendon, 1874. Nine rev. eds through 1906. *SqT*: pp 103–27.

The text, explanatory notes, and introductory remarks form the basis for Skeat's treatment of *SqT* in the *Oxford Chaucer* (4). This edition also includes an extended metrical analysis of *SqT* and a full glossary with line numbers.

- 3 *Squieres Tale.* London: Chambers, 1882. Repr. New York: Maynard, Merrill, [1885].

A school edition. Introductory material on Chaucer's life, grammar, and versification. The text of *SqT* is based on El, with explanatory notes and a glossary.

- 4 *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, Edited from Numerous Manuscripts.* Ed. Walter W. Skeat. 6 vols with a supplement, *Chaucerian and Other Pieces* (vol. 7). London: Oxford UP, 1894–7. 2nd ed. 1899–1900. [*The Oxford Chaucer.*] *SqT*: text, 4:461–81; explanatory notes, 5:370–87; *FranT*: text, 4:482–508; explanatory notes, 5:387–400.