"THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHAUCER'S POETIC ART"

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PREFACE

The genesis of this piece of work, which has been in progress since 1960, though the topic was in my mind for a year or two before, is described in the Introduction that follows. Assuredly progress would have been much for his initial encouragement, his great thoroughness and patience in reading through drafts and reports and his innumerable quietly stimulating suggestions. To supervise a student of mature years calls for rare tact and intuition; our happy relationship during these four years is evidence
of the degree to which Dr Craik possesses these attributes.
Finally, I should like to acknowledge the help given by his colleague, Dr C.A. Luttrell, in matters of pronunciation and metre.

The text used is Robinson's edition (1933), to which all line references relate. In the chapter on the "Parliament of Fowls", however, I have used Dr Brewer's text, hence the differences between spellings in that chapter and elsewhere. The only MS consulted has been the facsimile of the Ellesmere MS. in Nottingham University Library. Except where otherwise stated, the authority of Robinson is accepted in dating, punctuation and the text, matters of textual criticism being outside the scope of this study.

The following abbreviations are used:

B.D. Book of the Duchess
H.F. House of Fame
K.T. Knight's Tale
M.L.T. Man of Law's Tale
M.T. Miller's Tale
N.P.T. Nun's Priest's Tale
P.C.T. Prologue to "Canterbury Tales"
P.F. Parliament of Fowls
P.T. Prioress's Tale
R.R. Romaunt of the Rose
R.T. Reeve's Tale
T.C. Troilus and Criseyde

Fil. Il Filostrato
R. de T. Roman de Troylus et Briseide
Tes. Teseida

Any inadvertent inconsistencies over Chaucerian spelling or modern spelling, of titles of poems, are regretted.
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INTRODUCTION

There is no more certain cure for conceit than to look in the catalogue of a university library for works on Chaucer, to note the great names of those who have written on him: Dryden and Coleridge among poets, Saintsbury and Lewis among scholars. One is even more humbled on coming down to 'recent additions' and observing what a great flood of books and articles on Chaucer has poured forth, both in Europe and in America, in the last few years. Well might a friend have remarked, on hearing of this project, 'What can there possibly be left to say about Chaucer?'

The answer is that, to the best of my knowledge, the critical study of Chaucer's poetry as a whole, upon which I was then embarking, does not yet exist. It came with a shock of pleasure, while I was taking an adult class in the "Canterbury Tales", that he was a great poet, not only a storyteller and observer of human life, but a craftsman in words and rhythms. It came also that the books in the class book-box all bore on matters of narrative, characterization or historical and literary background. Much Chaucerian criticism appeared to do everything except honestly state the critic's personal reaction to the words, rhythms and sounds. My ignorance of the immense amount of work in progress on Chaucer, as well as of much done in the past, was fortunate, for a
better-read student might never have had the temerity to attempt to fill what seemed a vacuum. During the years since this work began, I have learned that the reason why no complete critical study of Chaucer as a poet has yet been written is that the task has hitherto been impossible. The time for such a work to be born is not yet.

From Caroline Spurgeon's "Five Centuries of Chaucerian Criticism and Allusion" we can see how the awareness of him as poet was lost, and also by what slow degrees it has been recovered during the two centuries since Tyrwhitt's edition. Much preliminary work was necessary, for there had to be a good text, Chaucer's pronunciation had to be deduced from such evidence as was available, while above all there had to be research upon the critical standards by which the poems were originally appreciated, upon the use made of their sources and upon the audience for which they were intended and the manner in which they were encountered. Not until well into the present century were poetry-lovers in a position to listen to Chaucer's poetic voice.

During this period of gestation it was inevitable that historical enquiries such as that into the alleged occasion of the "Parliament of Fowls" should for some scholars become ends in themselves, that some of Chaucer's early works should be valued according to the ingenuity necessary for their elucidation, rather than by the
criteria of literary excellence that one would apply to poems not needing exegesis. One who had explored a cave at Lascaux would hardly be an objective judge of the merit of a painting discovered in the furthest recesses.

Within the last few years there have been many studies of individual poems or passages from a stylistic point of view. There have been 'scientific', i.e. statistical, studies of various aspects of the author's style, as well as important studies of medieval literary conventions. The nearest approach of late to a study of Chaucer's poetic development as a whole, Professor Coghill's "The Poet Chaucer", though captivating in its enthusiasm and felicitous generalisations, is a popularization, hence written within a small compass. Though no other critical work has such charm, P.F. Baum's "Chaucer: A Critical Study" is detached and, in places, extremely acute. The latter work is, however, neither comprehensive nor exclusively about matters of poetic expression, while it has some judgements that I find disturbing. The studies of medieval convention by Muscatine and Robertson, while so thorough as to be of great value for anyone seeking an introduction to the world of the medieval author, seem to me to overlay the freshness that the simplest reader may note in Chaucer, to make him so much a creature of his time as to rob him of the very individuality for which we still read him.
So began the attempt to see Chaucer steadily and to see him whole - as poet. The original project, begun in enthusiastic innocence, soon proved to have been planned on wrong assumptions. The role of imagery, in the sense of simile and metaphor, turned out to be less important in Chaucer than in any other English poet of the first rank. Sentence structure proved far more critical when his bright and dull patches were compared. The study of his sound-effects, begun in the memory of the great tournament scene in the "Knight's Tale", turned out to be so bestrewn with uncertainties that the statistical tables of sound-effects in Appendix A of this thesis offer no more than the most general clues to what I was seeking. This was the link between Chaucer's imagination and his poetic language and music. When the poet was most plainly inspired, when we were most aware of humour, pathos or beauty, what happened to his words and rhythms? How did those words and rhythms differ from those of the more pedestrian stretches? Moreover, if a great poet did not suddenly spring up without background or tradition -and I did not believe he could - by what elements were his roots nourished? How did his talents develop during his career?

The task, though not perhaps beyond the powers of a full-time research fellow, with a good grounding in several medieval literatures, was a formidable undertaking for a part-time worker equipped only with fading memories
of medieval studies in his own tongue. Apart from the time one wastes in exploring blind alleys while learning the aesthetic criteria appropriate to Chaucer, the sheer bulk of the works is such that to digest them, stand away from then and evaluate them is a long process. Moreover, the background literature, mostly in Old French or Italian, is of comparable vastness. Rather than being content with a hasty and superficial study of the poems, I adopted Dr Craik's suggestion of the more limited field covered in this thesis.

One difficulty facing anyone without a background of previous research on Chaucer is that of carrying out the work while digesting the unfamiliar arguments of the new books on Chaucer constantly pouring out from the university presses, particularly those of American universities. One of the best recent works on his prosody, P.F. Baum's "Chaucer's Verse" was not published until a year after my work began and did not reach our university libraries until the actual writing was well under way. The danger is that the student, while pursuing his own work, may be unduly influenced by an argument he has not yet had time to digest and may not, in the long run, accept.

Some paths seem already too well-worn for further exploration of them to be profitable; such a one was the detailed comparison of the two versions of the "Prologue to the Legend of Good Women". Uncertainties over dating soon made me wary of the schematic account of the poet's artistic development originally in mind.
Though the following study of nine poems spanning Chaucer's career is a more limited project than that originally envisaged, it may have some value in offering suggestions for any more comprehensive critical study of his verse. While engaged upon this pleasant labour, I have become aware of, and tried to show, his universal quality, the fusing power of his imagination which causes all aspects of his style to work together when he is most inspired and to fall apart when he is less so, the value of his rhetorical training even in the writing of his greatest poems and, perhaps most important, the considerable changes in our interpretation of some of his subject-matter which are forced upon us by our knowledge that the works were written to be read aloud. Though these insights are not new or surprising, it is hoped that one or other has here and there enabled me to light up a passage too little regarded, or show a familiar one in a new light.

Throughout, I have tried to hold fast to an awareness of the man and writer as a whole. It has been my deepening conviction that the large, robust, humorous and tender figure of whom one was immediately aware on reading him during boyhood, is the real Chaucer. It is this figure, rather than the austere conventional moralist of much recent criticism, in whom generations of English readers have found such unfailing delight.
PART I

OCTOSYLLABIC POEMS

Chapter One: "Book of the Duchess"

Chapter Two: "House of Fame"

Chapter Three: "Romaunt of the Rose" A.
CHAPTER ONE

"BOOK OF THE DUCHESS"

(i) General Impression

One's first reaction to this earliest extant poem of Chaucer is to feel that it surely goes on too long. Why, for example, should the Black Knight take ninety lines to compare misfortune in love to a lost game of chess? Next, one might notice its unevenness of texture, the way invigorating descriptions and dramatic conversations will alternate with long pedestrian stretches of classical allusion, or laboured lamentations. Third, and most puzzling, is the poem's structure. The proportions seem all wrong, inasmuch as a third of the space is given to an account of the author's sleep, and dreams, before we meet the hero, while the heroine only appears in the last third. The courtship and bereavement of the Black Knight occupy only the last quarter, the heroine's death only one half-line. If the hero is John of Gaunt, we may understand the lack of a clear-cut conclusion to imply that he just goes on living, alone, without understanding why the story of the bereavement of Chaucer's admired patron should be preceded by matter of such length and apparent irrelevance.

One is thus touched by the pathos of the deaths of Ceyx and Alcyone, enchanted by the natural descriptions, held by the fragments of dialogue, but bored by long

(A) 11. 618-709.
(B) 11. 1-442.
(C) Indirectly mentioned 1. 764, not directly until 1. 817.
(D) From 1. 1045.
(E) 1. 1309.
stretches of the poem and mystified by its apparent lack of unity and proportion. What has the first half of the poem to do with the second, why the strange proportions, and why one's very mixed reactions? Finally, what did the poet owe to his French and Latin sources and what original talent does he reveal, at the outset of his literary career?

(ii) Structure

In structure the poem may be compared to a letter E. The horizontals represent the narrator's initial insomnia and falling asleep, his interventions during the Black Knight's tale, his final awakening. The verticals represent the story of Ceyx and Alcyone, which the narrator reads when unable to sleep, and the meeting with and story of the Black Knight.

The framework (the horizontals of the letter E) provides a relief to the narrative by the tossing to and fro of question, reply, and exclamation. Thus the dreary sustained metaphor of the game of chess is cut off by a series of comments and questions by the narrator, and replies by the Black Knight, the speeches becoming briefer and tenser until the latter begins his tale.

(F) 11. 1-61.
(G) 11. 221-290.
(H) Esp. 11. 710-58; 1042-1143; 1298-1309; 1324-33.
(I) 11. 62-214.
(J) 11. 443-709; 799-1041; 1145-1297.
"Why so?" quod he, "hys ys nat soo. Thow wost ful lytel what thou menest; I have lost more than thow wenest."
"Loo, [sey] how that may be?" quod y; "Good sir, telle me al hooly In what wyse, how, why and wherfore That ye have thus youre blyssse lore."
"Blythely," quod he; "come sytte adoun! I telle the upon a condiion That thou shalt hooly, with al thy wyt, Do thyn entent to herkene hit."
"Yis, syr." "Swere thy trouthe therto." "Gladly." "Do thanne holde hereto!"
"I shal ryght blythely, so God me save, Hooly, with al the wit I have, Here yow, as wel as I kan."
"A Goddes half!" quod he, and began:........ (742-58)

The above extract illustrates a second function of the dialogue, that of permitting a modulation from one mood or theme to another, from the Black Knight's lament to the devout account of his service to Love. Such interruptions enable the narrative to move forward with some semblance of reality, so that, for example, the Black Knight's account of his bereavement is drawn out of him. It is the more moving for being so staccato and taciturn, as befits an explanation given unwillingly:

"Bethenke how I seyde here-beforn, 'Thow wost ful lytel what thow menest; I have lost more than thow wenest'- God wot, alies! 'that was she!"
"Alas, sir, how? what may that be?"
"She ys ded!" "Nay!" "Yis, be my trouthe!"
"Is that youre los? Be God, hyt ys routhe!" (1304-10)

The two interior episodes, of Ceyx and Alcyone and of the Black Knight and Blanche, (the verticals of the letter B) are mirror-images of each other; in one case the woman is
bereaved, in the other the man. Each implies that to be deprived of love is the ultimate tragedy. Thus Aloyone, on learning of her husband's death, says merely "Alas!" and is dead in three days, while the narrator's "Hyt ys routhe!" also suggests finality. Having committed ourselves to love, we are nothing without it.

Moreover, the narrator reads of a messenger journeying through a dark, arid valley to awaken Morpheus, and dreams by contrast of a woodland scene in May, "A floury grene ...... ful thikke of gras" (398-99). The link between the two is the bedchamber, which, he dreamed, was lined with pictures of events in mythology or poems such as the "Roman de la Rose". He then dreams of the woodland scene in the "Roman".

The two tales are alike in being supremely pathetic. Even in maturity Chaucer rarely wrote more moving lines than those spoken by Ceyx to Aloyone:

""...My swete wyf,
Awake! lat be your sorwful lyf!
For in your sorwe there lyth no red.
For certes, swete, I nam but ded;
Ye shul me never on lyve yse.
But, goode swete herte, that ye
Bury my body, for such a tyde
Ye mowe hyt fynde the see besyde;
And farewel, swete, my worldes blyssse!
I preye God youre sorwe lysse.
To lytel while oure blyssse lasteth." (201-11)

Though the Black Knight, under pressure, accounts for his
love, traces its progress, he ends in the same blank helplessness as he turns away to the castle. One can only say "Hyt ys routhe!", very likely Chaucer's comment on John of Gaunt's bereavement.

Some sections on similar topics are of comparable length: the two describing the narrator's insomnia (1-61, 221-290); or those conveying Alcyone's request to Juno (76-121), and the narrator's to the Black Knight (710-58). There are anomalies, however: the Black Knight takes virtually as long to complain, be asked to explain and agree to do so (443-709) as he does to describe Blanche (759-1041), and a third of his complaint is taken up with a very barren sustained metaphor (618-709), as though Chaucer followed up what seemed an interesting idea by Machaut without much regard for its importance in the poem.

He had, however, a literary tact which led him to keep the attention of listener or reader by dramatic speech such as the Messenger's "O ho! awake anoon!" (179) or the Narrator's interventions and comments (e.g. 710, 1042, 1298) so that there are nowhere more than 350 lines of uninterrupted narrative. He had also the gift, evident in many who write for the ear, of planting and following up clues.

Finally, we may note the habit of taking longer to relate the preparation for the event than the event itself, so that he takes 283 lines to describe Blanche (759-1041) but only 153 to relate the Black Knight's two courtships and subsequent married life (1145-1297), and only 26 to
relate her death and the Knight's departure (1298-1323).
This acceleration was to be brilliantly effective later yet one cannot acquit him at this time of a schoolboyish lack of grasp of a work as a whole, causing him to spend much time on the relatively insignificant. His listeners must have longed for him to come to the point.

(iii) Rhythm and Metre

As long ago as 1815 Nott remarked that Chaucer "designed his verse to be read . . . . with a caesura and rhythmical cadence." Of particular interest in this, his earliest surviving poem, are his uses of the caesura, enjambement and end-stopping, of metrical variants, the examples of awkward or inapt rhythms and his general control of rhythm. Constant variations in the musical phrasing of his lines enable the poet to achieve many different effects even thus early; the absence thereof seems to coincide with a lack of attention in other respects. Originating perhaps in boredom, it results in monotony.

(a) Caesura This is used in various positions in the line to give a conversational or ruminative tone, in the opening lines:

"I have grete wonde / be this lyght,
How that I live / for day ne nyght
I may nat slepe / wel nygh noght;
I have so many an ydel thoght
Purely for defaut of slepe,
That / by my trothe / I take no kep
Of nothing, / how hyt cometh or gooth ...." (1-7)

I am thinking of this process in Pard. T., esp. 11. 879-88.

Cited by Spurgeon, "Five Centuries of Ch. Crit." p. lvii
A prominent caesura may assist the sense, either by determining the meaning, as in "That will not be / not need be left" (42), or by emphasizing it through phrasing, as in:

"For me thought it (reading) better play
Than play / either at chess or tables". (50-51)

Very marked caesurae are evident in the examples quoted of dramatic or lively speech in the remarks above on the poem's structure. A marked pause can also throw emphasis on a key word, in

"Such a lust anon me took
To see, / that right upon my book
Y fill aslepe, / and there with even ...." (273-75)

where the emphatic repetition would have an enhanced value in a poem written for reading aloud. A similar emphasis can be given by a stressed opening syllable followed by a strong caesural pause, as in

"Lord, h yt maketh myn herte lyght". (1175)

Finally, two or more pauses may give an effect of wonderment or astonishment. Examples include the line on Blanche's countenance:

"For h yt was sad, / simple / and benigne". (918)

Some lines, to a modern ear at least, are "unstopped. These occur where particularly melodious lines are called for, and such lines stand out in the context of stopped lines, as do the first and last lines of this passage:
"The moste solempne servyse,
By noote, that ever man, y trowe
Had herd; for som of hem song lowe,
Som high, and al of oon acord.
To telle shortly, att oo word,
Was never herd soswete a steven,
But hyt had be a thyng of heven."  (302-8)

One cannot help thinking that lines 302 and 308, perhaps 307, would at least have been read with a lighter pause than the intervening ones. Such lines when they consist also of monosyllables can give an effect of simple, poignant speech in:

"I have of sorwe so gret won
That joye gete I never non ...."  (475-76)

Finally, in a context of much-broken speech, they can give a firmer tone to an alternative speaker: thus to the Black Knight's

"I prey the, be not wroth.
I herde the not, to seyn the soth,
Ne I sawgh the not, syr, trewely",

the Narrator replies unhesitatingly,

"A, goode sir, no fors," quod y,
"I am ryght sor yif I have ought
Destroubled yow out of your thought."  (519-24)

(b) **Enjambement and End-stopping**

When followed by a marked caesural pause, enjambement can throw emphasis on a key word, as in:

"For I ne myghte, for bote ne bale
Slep, / or I had red this tale."  (227-28)

In this case, the missing weak syllable at the start of the second line assists the emphasis. Sometimes enjambement can so compel attention to the sense of the whole passage that the verse seems to move forward of its own volition.
An instance is:

"Of founes, sowres, bukkes, does
Was ful the woode, and many roes,
And many swircilles, that sete
Ful high upon the trees and ete,
And in hir maner made festes."  (429-33)

End-stopping is frequent in some of the duller stretches of the poem. These lines may not seem dull in themselves:

"Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and swete,
With flouris fele, faire under fete;
And litel used, hyt semed thus:
For both Flora and Zephirus,
They two that make flouris growe,
Had mad her dwellynge her, I trow:"  (398-404)

but they are wooden compared with many of the lines in the passage following, up to line 443, in which the occasional use of run-on lines combines with the use of longer phrases and sentences to make the verse move forward with its own impetus, so that one attends purely to the sense. Thus the poetry surprises not with itself but with its object.

There are times when an end-stopped line may have a beauty perhaps heightened by contrast with the run-on lines in its vicinity, as in this passage:

"Lord, hyt maketh myn herte lyght,
When I thenke on that swete wyght
That is so semely on to see;
And wish to God hit myghte so bee
That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,
My lady, that is so fair and bryght!"  (1175-80)

The criterion is the degree to which the poet is using any of these devices to suit his purpose in the whole passage rather than working to a mechanical rule.

(Q) v. esp. ll. 429-30, 434-42 (verse-paragraph).
(R)i.ell. 1168-69; 1171-72; 1181-83.
(c) **Metrical Variants**

The principal variants observable in the poem are:

1. a dance-rhythm given by iambics with a weak final stress, together with regularly-placed caesura, in:

   "I sawgh hyr daunce so comily,  
   Carole and synge so swetely,  
   Laugh and playe so womanly,  
   And loke so debonairly";  

   (848-51)

2. variations of accents at a key point, such as the successive accents of "sad, symple and benygne":

   (918)

3. missing first syllables, giving an effect of lightness, or perhaps merely a marked pause.

   (S)

No modern awareness of Chaucer's metre will hide an occasional prosy line, such as "Now understond wel, and tak kep!" (138) or the occasional pointless variant, such as the double accent in,

   "I wolde have hym, hyt nyl hat me".  

   (586)

These defects are trivial by comparison with the astonishing discovery, so early in the writer's career, of the potentialities for speech of the iambic line, one as vital for English narrative and dramatic verse as the wheel for transport. In the messenger's "0 ho! awake anoon" (179) and in the speeches quoted in the remarks on structure above, one can already see the metrist who was to give us "'Tehee! quod she", in the "Miller's Tale" (1. 3740).

(d) **Awkward or Inapt Rhythms**

All poets have occasional lapses of rhythm; the interesting question is when they have them. After the following list of examples in the "Book of the Duchess" the question must be raised whether
Chaucer’s coincide with his occasional lapses into insipidity or garrulity, or whether he is liable to write rough or awkward lines in the most interesting parts of the poem.

(1) **Lines 30-43** contain one or two examples of lines where the metre is only kept by somewhat forced accentuation, such as:

"I holde hit be a sicknesse"; (36)
"Passe we over untill eft"; (41)
"Our first mater is good to kepe" (43).

In the last line a stress on the second syllable of "mater" conforms to usual Chaucerian practice and may therefore be passed over, but the stress on "a" in the first case and on the first syllable of "untill" seems hardly normal even in medieval pronunciation.

(2) **Line 253** "in fyn black satyn doutremer" could be read in regular octosyllabics with accents on "fyn", "sat-", "dout-" and "-er" but would sound more natural if "black" were strong and "-er" weak. There is no reason in the context for counterpointing.

(3) **Lines 270-90** contain several similar examples, such as the natural stress on "skarsl" in "Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus" (284), or on "that" and "met-" in "That he mette, kyng Scipioun" (286), and on "Loo", "thus", "this" and "swev-" in,

"Loo, thus hyt was, thys was my sweven" (290), though in the last example, "sweven" might have been
virtually monosyllabic. This passage is merely introductory, of minor importance, and not therefore one to which the reader should direct attention by counterpointing or significant irregularities.

(4) Lines 570-78 have several examples where the line only scans if accentuation is rather forced. They are:

"Ne hele me may no physicien" (571);
"Whether his hert kan have pitee"; (575)
"Of al the blysse that ever was maked" (578).

If "physicien" were normally pronounced with accents on 'phys-' and '-ien' were pronounced as one syllable, the first example is acceptable, but the second demands accent on '-er' and a silent final 'e' in "have". In the last line "blyyse" must have a silent final 'e' and the 'ed' of "maked" is either unpronounced or counts as an extra syllable. The context is the rather dreary list of unavailing remedies in the Black Knight's complaint.

(5) Lines 948-60 contain several awkwardnesses, such as the elision of 'shuldres' and 'and' if

"Ryght faire shuldres and body long" (952)
is to scan, or the two trochaic opening feet and the successive accents of 'not gret' suggested by the sense of

"Fatyssh, flesy, not gret therwith" (954).

The 'Ryght white' of line 955 is awkward, as is the final 'good brede' of line 956. Finally the second half of the line

"Hyr hippes were, a strëght flat bak" (957)
has three successive accents which it is difficult to avoid in reading, and a general hardness of sound quite inapt for the grace and delicacy the poet is trying to suggest.

Of the above examples (2), (4) and (5) occur in passages adapted from the French, so that allowances must be made both for difficulties of translation and of pronunciation of French words. Only the last passage is of major importance, the others coming in flat or trivial stretches. In the last passage the verse is skilful in itself but the words and rhythms used would suit the miller's daughter in the "Reeve's Tale" more than Blanche.

(e) Control of Rhythm One is sometimes aware in this poem of the verse having suddenly gone flat, or become a hypnotic jingle, and it will be interesting to see whether such a loss of power coincides with poverty of vocabulary and monotony of sentence-structure. Yet by the time he finished the "Book of the Duchess", Chaucer could slow down or speed up the movement of verse, could obtain desired emphases by shift of caesura, could suggest the hesitations of a character and incorporate conversation, even rapid repartee, into iambic lines. In short, he could do things already with rhythm which no other English poet of the time could do.
(iv) Sentence-structure  In the first part of the poem the original passages are naive in the extreme, compared with those adapted from the French. The fifteen opening lines, modelled on Froissart's contain three sentences, (four if the first be counted as ending at line 3) of which the first two (or three) are complex and the last, long one double.

"I have gret wonder, be this lyght, How that I lyve, for day ne nyght I may nat slepe wel nygh noght; I have so many an ydel thoght, Purely for defaute of slep, That, by my trouthe, I take no kep Of nothing, how hyt cometh or gooth, Ne me nys nothyng leef nor looth. Al is ylyche good to me - Joye or sorowe, wherso hyt be - For I have felynge in nothyng, But, as yt were, a mased thyng, Alway in poynt to falle a-doun; For sorwful ymagynacioun Ys alvvay hooly in my mynde." (2)

Compare with this the strings of "and"s and the way co-ordinate clauses succeed each other like beads on a string in lines 44-59, which are almost entirely Chaucer's own:

"So when I saw I might not slepe Til now late, this other night, Upon my bed I sat upright And bad oon reche me a book, A romauance, and he it me tok To rede, and drive the night away; For me thoughte it beter play Than play, either at ches or tables, And in this bok were written fables That clerkes had in olde tyme, And other poets, put in rime To rede, and for to be in minde, While men loved the lawe of kinde. This bok ne spak but of such things, Of quenes lives, and of kings, And many other thinges smale."
No very acute critical sense is needed to perceive the monotony of utterance of the second passage, compared with the constant variation of the first, though the two have such different intentions that the quality of their ideas cannot be compared.

Even where a French original is particularly monotonous in translation, as is the passage from Machaut containing seventeen antitheses, all saying that the Black Knight has suffered a catastrophe (598-651) the fault lies rather in the aim of the passage, in its cheap cleverness and poverty of imagination, than in the actual utterance. It is perhaps because of their having more worthwhile aims that several of the apparently original passages in the poem seem, as regards sentence-structure, to surpass any of the translated passages.

There are indeed in the poem some signs of an increasing sense of shape or purpose, as well as a conscious concern for the holding of the audience's attention. One is the use in a passage (62-75) of a series of clauses rising to a climax. In another similar example he builds an accelerating dialogue around a few lines from the "Roman de la Rose". In the latter passage (710-58), after hearing a monotonous account of the Knight's sorrow, the Narrator cuts in with an exclamation

"A, goode sir ....say nat so4" (714)
and subsequent exhortation which are Chaucer's own.

There follow a series of comically inappropriate classical
allusions taken from the "Roman", before the dialogue already quoted above. This dialogue is built round:

"Blythely", quod he; "com sytte adoun!
I telle the upon a condicioun
That tho shalt hooly, with al thy wyt,
Do thynt entent to herkene hit." (749-52)

Before and after this passage come a series of other exclamatory sentences of increasing brevity and directness which together make the difficult transition from the Black Knight's very artificial lament to his more naturalistic account of his love. Chaucer may well have picked up and improved upon a hint from the French poet.

The even more astonishing fifteen lines of dialogue near the end (1298-1313), with their fourteen sentences of exclamation, question, crescendo and sudden resolution could hardly have been created without a moral awareness of the Black Knight's predicament, of the Narrator's curiosity and sudden dismay on realising the fact of the speaker's grief, both of which dwelt within the poet rather than being picked up from any models. (The dialogue is Chaucer's own).

(v) **Diction** The poet's use of words in the "Book of the Duchess" is very uneven. Often he simply uses too many. On other occasions he shows, compared with his models, a very obvious poverty of resource. Compare, for example, the lines of his own:

"This bok ne spak but of such thinges
Of quenes lives, and of kinges,
And many other thinges smale.
Amonge al this I fond a tale
That me thoughte a wonder thing." (57-61)
with the passage of similar length, and on a not
dissimilar theme, inspired by Machaut:

"Defaute of slep and hevynesse
Hath slayn my spirit of quyknesse
That I have lost al lustyhed.
Suchefantasies ben in myn hede,
So I not what is best to dco." (25-9)

The last line is awkward, but the preceding ones show
much richer and more precise wording. On occasions the
bareness of Chaucer's vocabulary suits the situation, as
in the lines on the shipwreck:

"To tellen shortly, wha that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise,
Such a tempest gan to rise
That brak her mast and made it falle,
And cleft her ship, and dreinte hem alle,
That never was founden, as it telles
Bord ne man, ne nothing elles." (68-74)

The largely monosyllabic and Anglo-Saxon words give a
starkness befitting an incident important in its tragic
consequences rather than in itself.

The difficulty of deciding when Chaucer's wording is
bare out of set purpose or out of inability to be anything
else may be illustrated from the Black Knight's lament:

"I have of sorwe so gret won
That joye gete I never non,
Now that I see my lady bryght,
Which I have loved with al my myght,
Is fro me ded and ys agoon.
Allas, deth, what ayleth the,
That thou holdest have taken me,
Whan thou toke my lady sweete,
That was so fair, so fresh, so fre,
So good, that men may wel se
Of al goodnesse she had no mete!" (475-86)

The preponderance of monosyllables (not appropriate here),
the list of attributes which are those of any medieval
heroine, expressed in very conventional terms ('my lady bryght', 'my lady swete'), make these lines so flat and empty that one wonders whether the author wanted to create an effect of poignant simplicity but had neither the experience nor the judgement so to vary the lines taken from Machaut as to create the simplicity-got-with-art of "allone, withouten any compaignye". However, in the later lines describing Blanche's countenance ('sad, symple and benygne') he achieved just that effect. Did he progress himself during the writing of the poem, or did he intend the Black Knight to become more interesting in his diction as details were drawn out of him? To me, the latter explanation imputes to the author a greater subtlety than he yet possessed. Already he is capable of conveying the suggestion by unobtrusive repetition of the emotive word 'swete', used four times in ten lines by Geyx when awaking the sleeping Alcyone (201-10) though on another occasion the Black Knight's frequent references to the songs he made for Blanche - four in five lines (1157-61) not to mention others further on - do their author no great credit.

In some ways the vocabulary of the poem is not typically Chaucerian. Racy idioms and proverbs from common speech are rare. Though here and there phrases like 'for bote ne bale' (227), 'what ayleth him' (449), or 'mawgree my hed' (1201) remind one of the Canterbury Tales, (T) v.11. 1163, 1171, 1182.
but in general the poem abounds in the terms of courtly love, 'debonaire', 'pleasaunce', 'pity', 'routhe' and so on. One feels that the Anglo-Saxon and Romance vocabularies have not really fused, for it is possible to find passages in which either the preponderance of 'native' words makes the diction not poignant but merely jejune, or the abundance of 'latinate' words results in an excessive artificiality, as in parts of the Knight's lament (597-630).

The lament, in fact, exhibits both tendencies at work. The first few lines are both naive and curiously artificial.

"My song ys turned to pleynynge,
And al my laughtre to wepynge,
My glade thoughtes to hevynesse;
In travayle ys myn ydelnesse
And eke my reste; my wele ys woo,
My good ys harm." ..............(599-604)

'Glade thoughtes' is naively Anglo-Saxon, while in the last three lines empty rhetorical paradoxes are expressed mainly in bald monosyllables. The two unblended vocabularies appear together rather unpleasantly in the later lines on Fortune:

"The trayteresse fals and ful of gyle,
That al behoteth and nothyng halt,
She go upryght and yet she halt,
That baggeth foule and loketh faire,
The dispitouse debonaire,
That skorneth many a creature!
An ydole of fals portrayture
Ys she ...." (620-27)

Note especially the simultaneous crudity and artificiality of lines 623-24. The two vocabularies only blend successfully in occasional phrases like 'sad, symple and benygne'.
The passages that remain in the memory are usually those notable for their use of terse Anglo-Saxon, often monosyllabic, words. They tend to come at moments of emotional climax, such as the appearance of Ceyx to Alcyone (201-10), in which the lady is addressed as "my swete wyf", "goode swete herte", and "my worldes blysse"; other typical expressions here include "I nam but ded" and "in youre sorwe ther lyth no red". Even more striking in this respect is the final dialogue of the poem.

Chaucer's habit of using a cluster of words on a theme, so as to imprint a desired impression on a listener's mind, began early. An example is the groups of words on dreams: "slepe", "sweven", "dremes", "Joseph" (Old Testament), "the avysion of Scipio", "marvaylis" in lines 270-290. The habit might have been picked up through translation. It is interesting to note how his themes sometimes anticipate those of later poems, such as the General Prologue, whose opening lines are prefigured in the series of words on spring and growth in the description of the wood (387-415), "floury grene", "ful softe and swete", "Zephirus", "waxen grene," "swetnesse of dewe had mad hyt waxe". To see how these borrowings from the "Roman de la Rose" blend in the course of many years with Chaucer's own feelings and observations to make possible the uniquely evocative lines on spring in the "Prologue" is a great delight. In the "Book of the Duchess", however, the actual words do not

(U) Cf. also Blanche's slow relenting and acceptance of Bl. Kt. in series of clauses beginning 'and' (11.1260-70) with T.C. V 964-87.
distil any such essence of spring; the pleasure lies in the images, which are borrowed, such as the personification of earth forgetting the poverty winter had made it suffer (411-12). Chaucer learned to handle rhythms sooner than words.

(vi) Imagery This poem has remarkably few metaphors and similes, in fact only about thirty, all occurring in the first thousand lines. Even these few are mostly concentrated in certain passages. The tirade about Fortune (615-709) includes nine, of which one - Fortune as a chess-player - is worked to death. There are seven in the much more entertaining passage describing Blanche (820-982).

A wider definition of the term 'imagery', something like 'visual impressions created in the mind' would allow us also to include the descriptions of the cave of Morpheus (153-65) and the portraiture from the "Roman de la Rose" on the narrator's chamber window (321-43). The keynote of the former passage is sterility; the narrator journeys through a "derke valeye", between "roches tweye" in which neither corn nor grass grew and there was no form of life.

(V) v. 11. 618; 652-61; 668 ff.; 681-86; 723-25 for Fortune as chess-player. Otherwise Fortune walks and is lame (622); is idol (626); monster's head (628); flower-covered filth (629); laughs and weeps (633-34); is a scorpion (636-37).

(W) Blanche is sun amid planets (821-26); "lyves leche" (920); throat is tower of ivory (946); like torch (963-65); "chief mirour of al the feste" (973-74); jewels on crown (980); Phoenix (982).
In the dream-scene taken from the "Roman" (387-443), the picture created is a living, moving one, with birds carolling, hunters exchanging calls, horses and hounds running. The wood is full of huge trees, of deer and mythological animals; it is perhaps a mingling of literary and real forest scenes. Thus by the choice of images and epithets the barreness of sleep is contrasted with the fertility both of literary fantasy and of dream. Yet one notices that the trees are measured in detail (421-6) but not named or differentiated. The landscape is a generalised, 'literary' one, the anthropocentric medieval Nature, though some of the animals may come from real experience. The gift for dynamic, dramatic scene-painting is here only in embryo.

Of the thirty metaphorical expressions a third include an element of colour. Black and white predominate, black satin covering the bed, made of the down of white doves, black also for Morpheus' cave, promised to Morpheus (250), black clothes for the mourning Knight, white for his impressionable heart (779-80) and for the lady herself (948). Presumably white already has its associations of virtue and beauty, for her throat is "like a tour of yvoyre" (946), a comparison borrowed either from the Song of Solomon or a Litany of the Virgin. Other prominent colours are the gold of Blanche's hair (858) and the blue
of the air on the May morning. Light and darkness are everywhere contrasted, especially in the comparison of Blanche to the sun amid the planets (821), or to a torch or mirror from whom the others took light (963-75).

The remaining images include a tactile one, the feel of grass under foot (399), an auditory one, the angelic harmony of the bird-songs (308), but most of them are effective through conventional associations, some associations being very remote from actual experience. Thus a modern reader could imagine Blanche as "my lyves leche" (920) and, given a literary background, could understand the reference to her as the phoenix (982), but would have difficulty in imagining Fortune as a scorpion (636-37).

What does the imagery contribute to the pleasure of the poem? In its wider and looser sense, 'that which brings a picture into the mind', imagery is essential to the passage in which it stands. Without the pictorial imagery of the journey to Morpheus we should be left with 'The messenger went to the cave of Morpheus'. Without that of the chamber window and the May morning in the woods, one of the chief pleasures would be lost, the rich background of southern spring. There would be less curiosity and attention if we could not observe how much the Knight was turning his back on; that he should be indifferent to such natural beauty is a measure of the fulfilment he enjoyed with Blanche, as to him she was more than spring-time to the narrator.
The value of the peculiarly non-natural images used to describe Blanche (crown, tower of ivory, mirror, phoenix, though she is also the sun) is that all these objects are in some way symbolic of her royalty, her uniqueness, her quality of being more than earthly. She is contrasted to the world of Nature seen earlier in the poem; the joy of being with her is greater and leaves the greater desolation. As the Black Knight walks away from the woods to the castle we know that his grief is inconsolable. Alive, she was life-giving as the sun: dead, her memory shrivels up her lover, induces pallor, the torpor of a lifelong winter.

By comparison, the conglomeration of images of Fortune is seen to be a trivial literary exercise, without pattern or coherence. No unifying power of imagination holds together the figures of the chess-player (618, 652, 668, 681-86, 723-25), the one who sometimes walks and is sometimes lame (622), who sees straight and squints (622), the idol (626), the monster's head wrapped (628), the filth with flowers strewn over (629), the scorpion (636). Nor does it contribute to the action, for without this long, tasteless lament the Black Knight would make more impression and receive more of our sympathy.

The last two hundred lines, among the most vital of the poem, are without imagery of any kind. On the whole, the imagery, when well used, may be said to sharpen our sense of the loss with which we are to sympathize, to
impert to the poem its backcloth, but to contribute only indirectly to the narrative. The scene is set, the world renounced and the love lost are painted, and the rest is plain dialogue or hint: "I have lost more than thou wenest."

(vii) Sounds The one quality which might sometimes have marked out the early Chaucer as potentially a great poet was an organizing intelligence enabling him to subordinate the use of literary devices to his total purpose. From time to time one notices the use of alliteration, (Y) assonance, (Z) the choice of vowel and consonant, (AA) of monosyllabic or polysyllabic words, (AB) or the use of onomatopoeia, (AC) or half-rhyme (AD) as an aid to the sense or to create the mood and atmosphere desired at the time, though on occasion his judgement fails. (AE) One is sometimes aware of his roots in the native tradition of alliterative verse, (AF) but he uses sound devices with a

(Y) E.g. 11. 178-79; 201-5.
(Z) E.g. 11. 821-22.
(AA) E.g. 301-2.
(AB) E.g. 848-51.
(AC) E.g. 301-2.
(AD) E.g. 920.
(AE) E.g. 948-57, sounds of l. 948 esp. inapt for noble lady.
(AF) On this point v. Everett: "Ch.'s Good Ear" (in "Essays on Med. Eng. Lit." pp. 139 ff.), though I reached this conclusion before reading this excellent series of essays.
discrimination not perhaps noticeable in previous English poets.

Several questions arise at this point. Does Chaucer's use of, or failure to use, sound effects, follow any recognisable pattern? If he did not learn their intelligent use from English poets, did he learn it from French ones? How far is his use of them in this poem consciously experimental, a musician's apprenticeship? In answer to the first question, it may be noted that sound effects cluster most thickly at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>291-343</td>
<td>May morning</td>
<td>Roman de la R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360-86</td>
<td>Hunting scene</td>
<td>Original;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560-97</td>
<td>Black Knight's lament</td>
<td>Machaut;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1015-41</td>
<td>Blanche's kindness</td>
<td>Mixture orig.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>and borrowed</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>material;</td>
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<td>1221-35</td>
<td>Knight's oath</td>
<td>Mixture;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1308-13</td>
<td>Dramatic dialogue</td>
<td>Original.</td>
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</tbody>
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They are least frequent at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>598-615</td>
<td>Most artificial part of RR</td>
<td>Most artificial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Machaut;</td>
<td>part of RR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>720-57</td>
<td>Narrator's consolatory</td>
<td>Machaut;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>examples from classics</td>
<td>Mixture.</td>
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</table>

Conclusions on such equivocal evidence can be but tentative. It does seem that the finest descriptive and dramatic passages, especially of birds and hunting, are very highly wrought in this sense. Contrariwise, there seems the least concern for sounds where the verse is in any case fanciful, what is said being of little intrinsic value. Some

(AG) Detailed references given in Robinson's Explanatory Notes. For frequency of sound effects, see Appendix A.
comparisons with French verse will be made in the study of the "Romaunt of the Rose"; the question of whether the mature Chaucer uses sound effects most when most in earnest will be considered in the concluding chapter.

(viii) Conclusions It is commonplace of Chaucerian criticism that the "Book of the Duchess" is full of rhetorical devices, so that it seemed pointless to list them or dwell on the matter. What I hope will emerge from my study of this ill-balanced, often boring, sometimes merely clever but often pleasing, occasionally compelling and always fundamentally serious poem, is that its best and worst passages do not completely coincide with borrowed or original material. There are passages where the content is thin, silly or flat, and where the style declines or becomes so artificial that one is aware of it, rather than what is said. In other episodes - the May morning, the final exchanges, the wood, Alcyone's bedside - one is aware of genuine drama or vision, while at the same time the verse seems to move from within, the scene to be lit by a kind of interior glow. Here one often finds several features of style in evidence at once, yet so fused that one is aware chiefly of the sense, of the dance, of Blanche, of the bird-songs. I believe that it is proper, though perhaps unfashionable, to speak of Chaucer's imagination as a kind of heat or energy, which had of itself the power to subordinate style to sense and so to co-ordinate his
use of different aspects of style that he is playing, as it were, with all the instruments in his orchestra in harmony. Where he thought or felt most profoundly, where he saw or heard most keenly, there he wove sentences most skilfully and used words and images most coherently.

Attention is a form of energy; the best verse in this poem results from an emergent power of concentration, the worst from boredom, or the slavish adhesion to his models or to medieval habits such as the purposeless citing of authorities. The study of Chaucer's poetic development will be largely the study of his increasing power to attend to his subject.
CHAPTER TWO
"HOUSE OF FAME"

(i) General

The date assumed here for this poem is about 1379, i.e. ten years after the composition of the "Book of the Duchess". The merits of the poem do not, to me, seem sufficient to justify entering into the complicated arguments as to its intention or occasion. Nor is it my purpose to say more of its abrupt breaking-off than that there is no good reason why it should have been completed. The events, such as they are, have no unity or inner tension demanding resolution, nothing that is happening, of which we demand to know the result. The only part of the poem that I find interesting, the dialogue of the Narrator and the Eagle, has its own completeness, as well as a humorous piquancy stemming from the striking situation and the author's self-mockery, but the safe arrival at the House of Fame is the natural end of the only part of in which either action or dialogue moves inevitably towards a predictable conclusion. The critics who have claimed (A) that the poem as a whole is a comic masterpiece seem to me to have been deceiving themselves; I should expect anyone who read it without having first read and enjoyed the "Troilus" or the "Canterbury Tales" to be bored stiff.

(A) Thus Root ("Poetry of Ch." p.134): "not even in 'Nun's Friest's Tale' is Ch.'s humour more irresistible".
The purposes of the following study will therefore be to see what differences, if any, are observable between the style of the "House of Fame" and that of the "Book of the Duchess" and to offer some comments, with illustrations, on the ways in which the various aspects of its style contribute towards the interest, or more frequent lack of interest.

(ii) Rhythm

Rhythmically this is the most lifeless and mechanical of all Chaucer's long poems. (B) In the Proem, for example, all but three of the sixty-five lines are end-stopped, while the fact that twenty-six have feminine endings, whereas few have in the following Invocation, may indicate that the poet was deliberately experimenting with his endings, rather than their being determined by what he had to say. There are whole stretches in which the iambic metre is absolutely unrelieved. Though the enjambement from time to time results in a momentary hint of passion in Dido's lament, there is little tension in either words or rhythm, so that

"Al hir compleynt, ne al hir moone
Certeyn, avayleth hir not a stre." (362-63)

(B) I say this despite Preston ("Chaucer" p. 42) who admits a decline from B.D. but refers to H.F.'s swifter verse-movement, and Root's reference to its "sponteneity, ease of movement", etc. etc. (loc. cit.)
Not until the Narrator's ejaculation:

"O Crist! ... that art in blysse,
Fro fantome and illusioun
Me save!"

does the verse move of its own inner impulse. The advent of the Eagle introduces the liveliest passage of the poem, but it might be noted in passing that the experiments with feminine endings have the odd effect of making one halt at the end of each of the following lines, instead of moving on towards the grammatical climax of the sentence at "As this fowl" (539), so that one loses the thread of the sentence:

(wonder)
"But never was ther dynt of thonder,
Ne that thyng that men calle fouder,
That smot somtyme a tour to powder, ...." (534-36)

The ensuing passage is livelier because of phrasing which throws emphasis on a key word ("Me, fleyinge, in a swap he hente"), because there are longer stretches of verse in one sequence of ideas, and because of breaks and variations following the natural pattern of a living voice. One may instance the Narrator's lines,

"'O God!' (thoughte I) 'that madest kynde,
Shal I noon other weyes dye?
Or what thing may this sygnifye?
Ineyther am Ennok, ne Elye,
Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede,
That was ybore up, as men rede,
To hevene with daun Jupiter,
And mad the god dys botiller.'" (584-92)

These qualities are even more evident in the Eagle's lines that follow, (605-13), or in his conclusion (699). This
tendency for the verse to run on of its own accord over several lines seems most evident when the thought is most coherent, as in the analogy of the spreading ripples (787-815). At several points, too, there is something of the rapid repartee noticeable in the most dramatic parts of the "Book of the Duchess", especially in:

"...'Unnethe maistow trowen this ?'"
Quod he. 'Noo, helpe me God so wys!'
Quod I. 'Noo? why?' quod he.'For hyt
Were impossible, to my wit,
Though that Fame had alle the pies
In al a realme, and alle the spies,
How that she shulde here al this,
Or they espie hyt'. '0 yis, yis!!
Quod he to me, 'that kan I preve.....'" (699-707)

For the rest, one notices flashes of art, the Miltonic opening to Book III,

"O God of science and of lyght,
Apollo"

the majesty of which is achieved by writing what is virtually a pentameter line with the fifth foot opening the second line; the aptness of the jerky monosyllables in which the Goddess delivers her curses, or her brisk finality,

"I graunte yow alle your askyng",
Quod she, "let your werkes be ded." (1700-1)

Occasionally there is some sense of what is fitting, in, for example, the end-stopped lines designed to convey the

(C) See p. 15-16 above.
dignity of the Hall and the Goddess, or in the groups of lines in which the rhythm rises to a climax. In general, however, octosyllabic verse reaches a degree of flatness and jingling monotony apparent nowhere else in Chaucer.

(iii) Sentence-structure and Rhetoric

The contrast pointed out already between the argument with the Eagle and the narrative and descriptive parts of the poem holds good when the sentence-structure is considered. For the most part, the narrative, especially near the beginning, is full of long, unvaried sentences while the argument is conducted in shorter ones in a close, logical sequence, the sentences often being divided into balancing halves. How rambling, for example, is this one:

"And after grave was, how shee
Made of hym shortly at oo word
Hyr lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord,
And dide hym al the reverence,
And leyde on hym al the dispence,
That any woman myghte do,
Wenynge hyt had al be so
As he hir swor; and herby demed
That he was good, for he such semed." (256-64)

Even the typically Chaucerian turn of phrase in the third line cannot hide the poverty of utterance in the wording and the string of 'and's. True, the Eagle in his long speech sometimes rambles, but in the conversational exchanges there is a liveliness and variety of utterance lacking elsewhere, as in these sentences:

(D) cf. KT 1250
"Telle me this now feythfully,
Have y not preved thus symply
Withoute any subtilite
Of speeche, or gret prolixite
Of termes of philosophie,
Of figures of poetrie,
Or colours of rethorike?
Pardee, hit oughte the to lyke!
For hard langage and hard matere
Ys encombrous for to here
Attones; wost thou not wel this?"
And y answered and seyde, "Yis".
"A hal" quod he, "lo, so I can
Lewedly to a lewed man
Speke, and shewe hym swyche skiles
That he may shake hem be the biles,
So palpable they shulden be.
But telle me this, now praye y the,
How thinketh the my conclysyon?"
....."A good persuasion,"
Quod I, "hyt is; and lyk to be
Ryght so as thou hast preved me." (853-74)

I have quoted at length in order to illustrate not only the variety of length and type of sentence, but also the way the rhetorical patterning of the sentences contributes to their interest, the 'repetitio' of the latter half of the long rhetorical question at the opening, or of "hard langage and hard matere", or the balance of the two halves of the final sentence (the narrator's reply). This is a very much more intelligent use of rhetorical device than the endless use of "Then sawgh I" or the countless lines beginning with "And" which bore us to exasperation during most of the poem. This tendency is especially noticeable in the final book, during which it is difficult to escape the impression that Chaucer was
being wilfully or playfully repetitive out of lack of
real interest in his subject.\(^{(E)}\)

While the range of rhetorical devices employed is no
wider than in the mature works such as "Troilus and
Criseyde", several devices are employed more frequently
within a passage than they would be in the later poems.\(^{(F)}\)
Rhetoric is indeed a substitute for imagination here.

(iv) Imagery and Wording

In several respects the "House of Fame" forms a
complete contrast to the "Book of the Duchess" in respect
of imagery. Though the imagery is sparser, especially
in the incidents from the "Aeneid" in Book I, it is taken
from a wider field, from literature, religion, music,
birds, animals, science, the sea and war, among other
things.\(^{(G)}\) Again, such imagery as there is is almost all
in the original contributions made by Chaucer.\(^{(6)}\) Lastly,
whereas in the "Book of the Duchess" the comparison of
Fortune to a chess-player is the most wearisome passage

\(^{(E)}\) E.g. 1419-1519, 1916-55, 2145-58.
\(^{(F)}\) E.g. repetitio (1961-76 esp.), traductio (823-42).
\(^{(G)}\) E.g. 1041 (Jove), 1384 (beasts of Apocalypse),
696 (cords on instruments), 974 (feathers of Philosophy)
1783-85 (idle cats), 729 (laws of "kynde"),
1034 (tempest), 1643 (pellet from gun). Also
alchemy (1647), fire (2077 ff.), water (790).
Preston (loc. cit.) notices a new freshness of
imagery.
in the poem, the analogy comparing the spreading of fame or rumour to the spreading of ripples in a pool is one of the liveliest parts of the "House of Fame". The difference in quality between the two analogies may be explained on stylistic grounds, the latter analogy being a single unit, developed in continuous verse, leading to a conclusion, where the former one was static, the endless repetition of a single idea. More important, however, is that in the later poem Chaucer was writing on a subject in which he had an original interest. Interest breeds coherence.

Visually, some scenes are quite impressive, notably the general view of the plain, hills, valleys, forests, cities and sea as the Narrator is borne aloft, or the use of mythological references to induce approval of the Eagle's action and character. Weird and striking as is the combination of instruments and musicians in the House of Fame, it does not to me possess the unity apparent in the visual descriptions. Perhaps most impressive of all is the Dantesque symbolism of the Rock with the names thawed away beneath, typifying the transience of the fame of the moderns, as compared to the permanence of that of the ancients.

Chaucerian idiom is rare, only one, "geven noght a leek for fame" (1708), being characteristically picturesque and racy. Likewise there are very few
proverbs, what there are being wry and sceptical bits of folk-wisdom. (H) Most of all, the vocabulary is remarkable for the elaborate repetition of key words in many passages, such as the constant references to dreams in the opening lines, or to air in "soun is noght but ayr ybroken" (765-81). Sometimes the pattern is quite artistic, as in the description of the house under the castle (1916-34), with its successive clusters of repetitions, (out of the castel" (1917), "under the castel" (1919), "so wonderlych" (1922), "so queyntelych" (1923), "this queynte hous" (1925), "as swyft as thoght" (1924), "never mo hyt stille stente" (1926), not to mention the further references to noise (1927, 1931). At other times the repetition becomes simply a verbal gymnastic, as in the thirteen repetitions of "moo" in the Eagle's description of the House of Fame (674-95).

(v) Sounds

The purely narrative and dialogue portions of the poem are thinnest in sound-effects, on the whole the descriptive passages have the smoothest lines, and the philosophic reflections by the Eagle are most closely-organised as regards euphony. A few lines will illustrate this degree of organisation:

(H) E.g. 272 "Hit is not al gold that glareth". See also 1142, 1852-54.
"Soun ys noght but ayr ybroken,
And every speche that ys spoken,
Lowd or pryvee, foul or fair,
In his substaunce ys but air;
For as flaumbe ys but lyghted smoke,
Ryght soo soun ys air ybroke.  (765-70)

"Loo, with the strok the ayr tobreketh;
And ryght so breketh it when men speketh." (778-79)

Notice the alliterating sounds of the opening four lines, (soun, speche, foul, fair, substaunce), the possible assonances of "lowd" and "foul", of "substaunce" and "flaumbe", and the consonance of the last two lines quoted. The only reason for referring to this matter is to show how in yet another way the passage whose subject-matter was obviously most stimulating to the poet also exhibits his style at its best.

(vi) Conclusions

One must ask why this poem is so much less interesting than the admittedly uneven "Book of the Duchess" when the poet was several years richer in experience, had many interesting ideas to ventilate, especially on scientific matters, and was to a greater extent conveying his own reflections - those of a far more powerful mind than Machaut's or de Lorris' - about life. One can only say that, like Shakespeare, Chaucer had very little power to invent situations. The "Book of the Duchess" has a situation which he took over from Machaut in response to the stimulus of his patron's grief, while the "House of
Fame", like the "Squire's Tale", has no situation and the poet was similarly unable to invent one. He could only invent incidents. This is what lies behind the static, repetitive verse of Book III; the poet cannot make the tale move forward, so he pounds the same track.

Perhaps the one reward gained from studying the poem is the pleasure of seeing sketches for the "Knight's Tale", the Temple of Venus (120-39) with its allegorical figures, or the dialogue of the people, (2052-55), anticipating that of the crowd in the lists. (I)

(I) Cf. respectively K.T. 1955-66, 2516-22 (the latter a stylistic, not verbal, resemblance).
CHAPTER THREE

"ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE"  PART A

There has been no lack of critics to point out the influence of the French poem upon Chaucer's moral ideas and characterization. What has been less remarked is its influence upon his style. It is my intention to show that not only some of the characters, but the very types of sentence, evident in the "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales", are to be found in this translation, and that his mode of utterance is directly taken over from the French. So, to a less marked degree, are the various combinations of lines and couplets later found in the great heroic-couplet poems, from the "Knight's Tale" onwards. Feeling these conclusions to be far more important than any others that could be drawn about the style "Romaunt", I have decided to ignore other aspects, except to point out modes of utterance not found in the later works of Chaucer. Although the resemblances between the style of the "Romaunt" and that of late Chaucerian poems, if proven, could affect our view of the date of the translation, the field of dating is one into which I do not feel qualified to venture. Perhaps the only worthwhile comment I could offer in this connection is that the "Romaunt" is comparable with the other octosyllabic poems in frequency

(A) E.g. Robertson, "Preface to Ch."; Coghill, "G. Ch."; Muscatine, "Ch. and Fr. Trad."
(B) See below, p. 328 ff.
(C) See below, p. 245 ff., 307 ff., 353 ff.
of feminine rhymes and end-stopping. (D)

One necessary qualification to be made before the topic of sentence-structure is discussed is that the punctuation of the Robinson edition is assumed to reflect the phrasing with which the lines would be spoken. Likewise, that of the French text is the S.A.T.F. edition is assumed to be reliable. There are, of course, incidental differences between the English and the French in respect of punctuation; one also has to be willing to consider a semi-colon as equivalent to a full-stop, in that it represents a complete break in reading, to be followed by a fresh start, for our concern here is not with the sense but with the needs of the oral reader.

(i) Sentence-structure Different types of sentence predominate in different sections, reflecting the purpose of the section. Thus in lines 1-48 of the English (French 1-44), there are from ten to fifteen sentences, mainly complex, showing altogether a fairly formal and elaborate pattern of clauses such as one might expect in these initial reflections. For example, the following sentences show a pattern respectively of repeating and of antithetical clauses:

(D) See Appendix B
(E) E.g. l. 5 (Eng.) semi-colon, l. 5(Fr.) fullstop; 88 (Eng.) colon, 94 (Fr.) comma; 90 (Eng.) fullstop, 96 (Fr.) semi-colon; etc., etc.
Comparing these lines with the French original, we find that the underlined words in the English have a parallelism not found in the French, where the parallelism is between different groups of words:

"Quiconques cuide ne qui die 
Que soit folor e musardie
De croire que songes aveigne,
Que ce voudra, por fol m'en teigne;" (Fr. RR, 11-14)

In the second sentence Chaucer has strengthened the initial parallelism, but taken over the final antithesis:

"Car endroit moi ai je fiance
Que songes est senefiance
Des biens as genz e des enui;
Car il plusor songent de nuiz
Maintes choses covertement
Que l'en voit puis apertement." (15-20)

The section dealing with the images on the wall of the Garden of Love exhibits both the greatest variety and the closest similarity to the syntax of, particularly, the "General Prologue". In the lines on the image of Hate, the sentences, though containing the rhetorical devices of 'contrarium' (153-54) and 'repetitio' (158-159, 157-160) have a tendency towards brevity and randomness or abruptness similar to that often observable in the "General Prologue":

"And whoso saith or weneth it be
A jape, or elles nycete,
To wene that dremes after falle,
Let whoso lyste a fol me calle.
For this trowe I, and say for me,
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and harm to many wightes,
That dremen in her slep a-nyghtes
Ful many thynge covertly,
That fallen after openly." (11-20)
"Amydde saugh I Hate stonde,
That for hir wrahte, yre and onde,
Semede to ben a moveresse,
An angry wight, a childeresse;
And ful of gyle and fel corage,
By semblant, was that ilk ymage.
And she was nothyng wel arraied,
But lyk a wod womman afaired.
Yfrounced foule was hir visage,
And grumpyng for dispitous rage;
Hir nose snorted up for tene.
Ful hidous was she for to sene,
Ful foul and rusty was she, this.
Hir heed writhen was, ywis,
Ful grymly with a greet towyle. (147-61)

The abruptness of this passage is more apparent if it is read aloud, when the pauses after lines 150, 156 and 158 would be those normally made for a full-stop. The French original is no less abrupt if read orally, though this is not obvious from the punctuation:

"Enz en le mileu vi Haine,
Qui de corroz e d'ataine
Sembla bien estre moverresse;
Corroceuse e tenconerresse,
E pleine de grant ouvertage
Estoit par semblant cele image;
Si n'estoit pas bien atornée,
Ainz sembloit fame forsene.
Rechignie avoit e froncie
Le vis, e le nes segroie;
Hisdeuse estoit e roilliee;
E si estoit entortilliee
Hisdosement d'une toaille. (139-151)

The image of Coveitise, (181-206), however, is described in sentences of medium or considerable length, held together by an elaborate pattern of repetition. The introductory clause "And that is she", occurs only three times (185, 189, 197) but is paralleled by "that eggith folk (182), "that techith" (190) and "that makith" (197).
The equivalent introductory clause in the French is "C'est cele qui" (170, 173, 176, 180, 183). The neat final couplet summing up the quality is like many such in the "Prologue":

"Coveityse, for hir wynnyng, 
Ful leef hath other mennes thing." (205-06) (F)

This couplet has been adapted from three less neat lines in the French, this illustrating how the epigrammatic couplet was genuinely Chaucer's creation. In general, however, the effect of the passage on Coveitise is of a rhetorical elaboration not often found in the later Chaucer, despite the echoing clauses in the opening lines of the "Prologue".

The portraite of Elde exhibits a mixture of the terse and the elaborate. The physical description with which the passage begins is couched in brief, abrupt sentences:

"Elde was paynted after this, 
That shorter was a foot, iwys, 
Than she was wont in her yonghede. 
Unnethe herself she mighte fede; 
So feble and eke so old was she 
That faded was al her beaute. 
Ful salowe was waxen her colour; 
Her heed, for hor, was whyt as flour. (349-56)"

The passage goes on in this style for some time, a style reminding us as vividly of the "Prologue" and the line "A foul, forwelked thyng was she" reminds us of the Old Man in the "Pardoner's Tale". The French is a little less (F) E.g. "P.C.T." 97-98; 307-8, 443-44, 475-76, 501-2. (G) Cf. Pard. T. 738
clipped and more rhetorical, as can be seen from the lines corresponding to those just quoted:

"Apres fu Vieillece portraite, 
Qui estoit bien un pie retraite 
De tel come ele soloit estre; 
A poine qu'el se poot paistre, 
Tant estoit vieelle e redotee. 
Mout estoit sa biaute gastee, 
Mout estoit laide devenue. 
Toute sa teste estoit chene 
E blanche con s'el fust florie."  (339-47)

Nevertheless, in the English one can see how over the Frenchman's style Chaucer superimposes his own manner.

The long 'circumlocutio' in which we are told that Time is ever passing (369-99) is written in sentences of great length and elaboration, full of parentheses and rhetorical devices such as 'repetitio', 'contrarium' and 'praecisio', it is substantially faithful in style to the original.

Thus in these portraits, and particularly that of Elde, we see the armoury of styles from which Chaucer could select, from the elaborate, consciously rhetorical one more noticeable in his early poems to the rather gnomic one which was to enable him to appear so casual in his portraits in the "Prologue". Yet even when translating he is adapting and retouching.

Sometimes he actually adds to the rhetorical elaboration of the original, as though consciously experimenting. His passage about the wall and the garden (475-530), has an early statement "Square was the Wall" (479),

( H ) Repetitio 369, 381, 388, 391, 395; contrarium 373-74, 377-80, 385-87; praecisio 380.
found in the French ("...e toz carrez, 467) balanced by "The closing of that square wall" near the end (527) which is also taken over ("la cloison dou mur carre", 515). For the Frenchman's four references to the garden ("uns vergiers" 469, "oil vergiers" 471, "cel vergier" 477, "si bel vergier" 511 as well as "ou jardin" 500), Chaucer has five, of which four are uniform ("that gardyn" 481, 483, 512, 514). Similarly, the repetition of "blisful" for the birds' songs is written in (496, 500), where the French has "...estoit bele l'acordaunce" (484) only. There are, of course, many turns of phrase reminding us of phrases in the late Chaucerian poems, but the resemblance of the sentence-structure, of Chaucer's 'Romaunt' (which closely follows the practice of the French poet) to that of such late poems as the 'General Prologue', has not to my knowledge been remarked upon before. Such a resemblance would be very apparent if the poems were read aloud.

(ii) **Rhythms and Metrical Form** It is possible in the opening two hundred lines of the "Romaunt" to find almost all the groupings of lines that were used in the great heroic-couplet poems to be studied later. Thus we have the closed couplet;

"Many men sayn that in sweeveninges
Ther nys but fables and lesynges;"

(1-2)

(though the closed couplet with two balancing halves is very rare in the poem) as well as the series of continuous couplets.

(1) E.g.: RR 87-88 and N.F.T. 320-21; RR 108 and F.P. 183; RR 199 and F.C.T. 322; RR 542 and Mil.T. 3245-46.

(RR references to English version).
The section beginning with the second line of a split couplet is also found, the portraits of the images of Felonye, and Vilanye beginning in this way. The three-line group is frequent here, i.e. the group of lines such as,

"Another image set saugh I
Next Covetise faste by,
And she was cleped Avarice."  (207-09)

The isolated line is unlikely to occur when the lines are so short, but the passage in which the sense runs continuously over a number of lines, usually with some enjambement, occurs from time to time, as in,

"Within my twenty yer of age,
Whan that Love taketh his cariage
Of yonge folk, I wente soone
To bedde, as I was wont to done,
And faste I slepte; and in slepyng
Me mette such a swevenyng
That lyked me wonders wel.  (21-27)

In general, such passages come more often throughout the poem in the narrative sections, while the sections on, for example, the images, which are rhetorically elaborate, contain more self-contained lines and couplets.

The first and third of the passages quoted above are modelled exactly on the French, but the second one, on Avarice, shows a change from a couplet plus single line to a three-line group:

"Une autre image i ot assise
Coste a coste de Covetise,
Avarice estoit apelee.  (195-97)

There are other occasions when Chaucer turns a discontinuous passage into a continuous one in the same way.
The three-line group is found, however, in the French, as in;

"Hout sembloit bien estre dolente,  
Car el n'avoit pas este lente  
D'esgratiner toute sa chiere;"  (313-15)

As regards rhythmic devices, the only impression one has is that there is less variety than in the "Book of the Duchess", less use of enjambement and less significant variation in the position of caesurae: how far this is a result of translating the French, I do not feel qualified to say. The use of the rhythm of the carole, in both the French and English versions of the "Roman de la Rose", and its use in the "Book of the Duchess", has already been remarked. (J) Here and there, the phraseology and the rise or fall of a group of lines will remind one of the best-known Chaucerian poems, as

"Hir heer was as yelowe of hewe  
As ony basyn socoured newe"  (539-40)

reminds us of Alison in the "Miller's Tale", or

"And now is Myrthe therynne to here  
The bryddis, how they syngen clere"  (617-18)

of a beautiful line in the "Nun's Priest's Tale",

"Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they synge" (3201). Where the resemblance is one of subject-matter or wording, it is always possible to deceive oneself about rhythm, but there are examples where the resemblance can be seen to be

(J) By Preston, op. cit. p. 21
(K) Cf. Mil. T. 3246, 3269-70.
purely verbal, as in:

"And that of oon thyng namely,
For I entende to nothyng
But to my joye and my pleying"...(596-98)

recalling

...."To yeven hir pens, and namely unto me;
For myn entente is nat but for to wynne,
And nothyng for correccioun of synne." (Pard.T. 402-04)

(iii) Conclusion

Space does not permit a consideration either of other aspects of the style of the "Romaunt" or of parts B and C. What should emerge from the above remarks is that in the octosyllabic poems Chaucer showed that he possessed many of the verbal, syntactical, metrical and rhythmic resources he was to employ in his greatest works. What he did not possess, and later acquired, included:

(a) the imaginative energy, making possible continuous attention to the subject, that give his best work its solidity and, as it were, density;

(b) the power of organisation that enabled him to shape poems as a whole, rather than to weary us with irrelevances at times;

(c) the ability to subdue rhetorical device to his entire design, so that we attend to the subject-matter and hardly notice the device.

These qualities of the great imaginative writer were acquired together with the decasyllabic line that enabled him to transcend the jingling monotony of some octosyllabic verse; indeed, it is arguable that the very gain in power of organisation, coming with experience of his craft, led to thought about its fundamentals and the decision to use the new metrical form. At all events, his octosyllabic poems do not more than fitfully reveal his genius.
PART TWO

RHYME - ROYAL POEMS

Chapter Four  Parliament of Fowls
Chapter Five  Troilus and Criseyde
Chapter Six   Prioress's Tale
CHAPTER FOUR

"THE PARLIAMENT OF FOWLES"

Note The punctuation, spelling and readings used in almost all quotations throughout this chapter are those of Brewer's edition (1960). I have only departed in one instance from Brewer's punctuation, but have in one or two cases restored Robinson's reading where I think it more appropriate. My criteria are purely literary, as I can claim no authority in textual criticism. Any departures from Brewer are indicated in footnotes.

Of all the poems Chaucer wrote, the "Parlement", is perhaps the most beloved of exegetes. The controversy about its alleged occasion seems to have died down, so that the interest apparent in Dr. Brewer's edition of 1960 is in the structure and stylistic qualities. Its style will here be studied in detail, with an attempt to relate the "Parlement" to Chaucer's poetic development. The questions to which answers are to be sought are:

(i) What immediate impression does a reading produce?

(ii) What advances as a poet had Chaucer made since writing the "Book of the Duchess"?

(iii) What are the properties of the RhymeRoyal form as used at this stage of his career?

There will be little discussion of sources, not only because editors have treated the matter very fully, but because the proportion of borrowed lines is smaller than in the "Book of the Duchess".

(i) The reader's immediate impressions must be somewhat varied. Certain features will be familiar if one had read
the earlier works: the arguing birds, the mythological figures, most of all, the adoration of the beloved by her suitors. As with the "Book of the Duchess", the latter half may prove more memorable, since the earlier part contains some apparent irrelevances, tedious in themselves, such as the list of qualities personified in the Temple. Delightful as is the description of the Park, do not the opening lines on Love, however arresting, seem irrelevant to the debate as to who shall wed the Formel Eagle, which the poem is presumably about? Why so gravely announce what seems largely a burlesque of courtly love? Why spend so long expounding classical and medieval conceptions of the life hereafter? In fact, the debate occupies little more than a third of the poem, while the descriptions of Cupid and Venus together take far longer than that of the apparently more central figure of Nature, and Venus' temple twice the space given to describing the Park. Of the various interpretations advanced in explanation of these and other apparent anomalies, the one I find most satisfactory may be summarised as follows:

(A) See above, pp. 1, 15, but esp. 24.
(B) 11. 414-665, even if Nature's decision be included.
(C) 11. 260-77.
(D) 11. 298-305.
(E) 11. 213-94, cpd. to 11. 183-210
The poem is about the moral value of different kinds of love. After remarking on the power, transience, beauty and destructiveness of love, the poet hears in a dream of the reward and punishment meted out hereafter to the unselfish citizen and the criminal or the selfish sensualist respectively. Finding world-and-life denial unpalatable, he sees in another dream the Park showing the innocent delight of love according to Nature's laws, the taking of a mate and the love holding together the universe and society. This is contrasted with the abode of Venus, the goddess of merely sensual love. Superior as the noble and chivalrous dedication of the Tercels is, it raises the question of whether a lifelong dedication, which for the unsuccessful two must be barren, is of any value. The lower orders view the problem with delicacy, coarse commonsense or sheer irrationality, according to the individual; the poet views the lower orders with humorous tolerance. The poem ends with no definite decision, but with a recommendation that the Formel Eagle choose the Royal Tercel, who has perhaps caused some doubt in her mind by addressing her as 'soverayn lady' in courtly-love style, rather than as his life's partner. The poem is a sophisticated court entertainment, a 'demand d'amour'. Its pleasure lies in a question of perennial interest at court, in Chaucer's self-mockery and in gentle satire on the lower ranks of society.

Though I have certain reservations about this interpretation, it seems to me not only to explain the apparent irrelevances pointed out above, but to comprehend the spirit of the poem, at once philosophical, humorous and in its own way ardent. This diversity of mood makes it as iridescent as shot silk, yet one is always aware of unity; an imaginative energy fuses its parts.

(i) One structural resemblance to the "Book of the Duchess" is the way in which the two dreams are mirror-images of each other, the ones in the "Parlement" recommending respectively world-renunciation, and the

(F) Substantially Brewer's (pp. 10-24, esp. 10-13).
taking of a mate as Nature recommends. As in the study of the earlier poem, the style will be considered under the following heads: (1) Rhythm and metre; (2) Sentence structure; (3) Diction; (4) Imagery; (5) Sound qualities.

(1) Rhythm and Metre  The immense advantage of the decasyllabic line over the octosyllabic one need hardly be stressed. Consider the absence of monotonous jingle, the delightful chiming of lightly-stressed iambics, in

"Fyrst tellith it, whan Scipion was come
In Affrik, how he metyth Massynisse,
That hym for ioye in armys hath inome," (36-8)
or the effortlessly lovely combination of chiming iambics, assonance and sibilants in,

"He shulde into a blysful place wende
Ther as ioye is that last withoutyn ende" (48-9)

where octosyllabic lines sometimes jog wearily. The verse moves with the measured tread to which so many generations of readers have become accustomed in Chaucer's successors. The mere fact that more is said in a decasyllabic line, means that less lines are needed, therefore less padding is necessary, therefore the "Parlement" has few examples of unintended garrulity. These are all ample justifications for this momentous innovation.

Other metrical advances are observable.
I Use of Caesura

A pronounced medial caesura and end-stopping can suggest gravity and some degree of tension, as in,

"The lyf so short, / the craft so longe to lerne,
Th'assay so sharp, / so hard the conquerynge,
The dredful ioye, / alwye that slit so yerne," (1-3)

though this but supplements the natural tension produced by the paradoxical subject-matter. A much-broken line can suggest a dramatic fierceness, as in,

"Cum of!" they criede, "allah, ye wele us shende!" (494)

especially as this line is surrounded by regular and almost unstopped lines. This carries further a tendency found in the later sections of the "Book of the Duchess". One of the most beautiful effects produced by caesural variation is the delicate movement, in the final roundel, produced by the proximity of a line with double caesura and unstopped lines.

"Nowe welcome, / somor, / with thy sonne softe,
That hast thes wintres wedres ovireshake,
and drevyne away the longe nyghtes blake." (680-82)

II Enjambement

This is used to produce an easier movement in a passage of lowered tension, such as

"...Not yoore
Agon, in happe de me for to beholde
Upon a bok." (17-19).

It can be combined with the stress on a key word and a following couplet to produce a flowing movement and a ringing finality in,
"Yit was there ioye more a thousent-fold
Than man kan telle; ne nevere wolde it nyghte,
But ay oler day to ony manys syghte." (208-10)

It may be that enjambement is used with humorous effect
when carried over the end of a stanza in,

"And to the iugis dom ye motyn stonde
And therefore, pes! I says; as to myn wit...." (546-7)

though this depends on the bold assumption that the
editorial punctuation (a full-stop after 'stonde')
misrepresents Chaucer's intention. End-stopped lines
are less frequent than in the "Book of the Duchess", being
found in large numbers only in the formal speech of the
Royal Tercel.

III Unstopped Lines Often the difference between
these and lines with a slight caesura is a matter for
conjecture, but apart from the use of at least lightly-
stopped lines in short passages of harmonious verse such
as lines 48-9 or 681-2 quoted above, they can help to
create character. An example is the impression of
lucidity and didacticism in the Tercelet's speech:

"Ful hard were it to preve by resoun
Who lovyth best this gentil formele heere;
For everych hath swich replicacioun,
That non by skillys may been brought adoun.
I can-not se that argumentis avayle;
Thanne semyth it / ther muste be batayle." (534-9)

Here only the last line seems to have a pronounced
caesura.

(H) See Appendix B.
IV Variants

An opening trochee can arrest attention, in, for example:

"Fowles, tak hede of my sentence, I preye", Successive accents can either be used onomatopoically in,

"...'Kek kek', 'kokkow', 'quek quek'" (499) an effect to which the earlier poem does not lend itself, or to give an impression of wonder, in

"....but ay oler day" (210) for which the description of Blanche would have offered scope. A rhythmic contrast can focus attention on contrasting ideas, as in the rising rhythm of

"Be glad/, thow redere;/ and thyn sorwe ofpæste
Al opyn am I; / passe ïn, / and sped the fæste." (132-3)

followed by the falling rhythm of

"Th' eschewing is only the remedy." (140) suggesting respectively encouragement and despair. I am, of course, thinking of the rhythmic rise and fall of the voice, not of the metre. Rhythmic parallelism can link two clauses in a manner not noticeable in the "Book of the Duchess", but often found in later poems, as in,

"Thorw me men gon in to that blysful place
Thorw me men gon onto the welle of grace," (127-129) though the parallelism is primarily rhetorical. Finally, a particularly noticeable regularity can help to suggest an attitude, in this case one of respect, in,
"Ne there nas foul that comyth of engendrure
That they ne were prest in here presence,
To take hire dom and yeve hire audyence."

(306-8) (I)

(2) Sentence-structure  Rhetorical devices in the
"Parlement" are used with greater moderation and control,
so that, for example antithesis (contentio) is used in
short passages. At the same time, sentence structure is
more continuously varied than in the early poems, the
strings of co-ordinating conjunctions or of simple
sentences found in the "Book of the Duchess" or the
"House of Fame" being rare here. The only noticeable
examples of either occur in the description of Africanus'
dream, in lines 43-71, where the recurring "Thanne" or "and"
faintly recalls the endless wearisome reiteration of
"Then saugh I" in the "House of Fame".

The new features of interest include the skilful use
of antithesis and parallelism to create attention, in the
opening three lines, and of a parenthetical statement or
question to give the effect of conversational ease, in,

"Of usage - what for lusté, what for lore,
On bokis rede I ofte, as I yow tolde
But wherfore that I speke al this?  (15-17)

This direct address to listeners is a sign that here the
Chaucer whom modern readers know has emerged from the
translator whom contemporaries knew. Less noticeable is
the change from second to third person to suggest a change

(I) For other metrical variants, see Brewer, op. cit.
pp. 52-54.
of attitude from intimacy to remoteness in Nature's speech, as she turns from the Royal Tercel,

"Myn sone, the choys is to the falle" to the public pronouncement,

"But natheles, in this condicioun
Not be the choys of everich that is heere,
That she agre to his eleccioun", (406-9)
a sign of the aptitude for dramatic situation already noticed in the study of the "Book of the Duchess".

In the same speech by Nature, which is a masterpiece of oratorical decorum, various features anticipate devices used most skilfully in later poems, notably the "Prioress' Tale". One of these is the variation of syntax to hold the attention of listeners and also to suggest the characteristics, especially oratorical skill, of the speaker. The same purpose is served by the reiteration of closing lines. The various characters in the bird-debate are differentiated through the types of sentence used, without any overt statement of character-traits. In the same way, the social classes are differentiated. Continuity is maintained through slight echoes of a phrase or form of sentence previously used, as in the description of the Park. Evidence of all these skills acquired by the poet will be found in the commentaries on selected passages in which this section of the chapter will conclude.

(J) Robinson's 'the' is preferred, as more intimate than 'yow'.
(K) See above, p. 16
(L) See below, p. 231 et seq.
The suggestion of character and status by the mode of utterance or the type of sentence used has hitherto received little attention because of the failure until recent times to realize that the stories were written to be heard and would therefore be encountered in a way more akin to a radio play than to our visual reading.

Diction

The chief advance observable in the "Parlement" is its comparative lack of the bathos, garrulity and verbal poverty or imprecision remarked on in the study of the "Book of the Duchess". The words themselves, rather than their subject, contribute to the evocation of atmosphere in the description of the Park. Moreover, the two vocabularies, Romance and Anglo-Saxon, are used more unobtrusively and more skilfully. Idiom and proverbial language are here more in evidence, particularly in the speeches of the lower orders, where they are most appropriate.

There are several more specific features in the diction of this poem. First, a number of related epithets are used for Nature, who is "a queene" (298), "this noble goddesse" (303), "this noble emperesse" (319), and again "the noble goddesse" (368). However, she is no oriental potentate but like Mary, "ful of grace" (319) and "vicayre of the almyghty lord" (379). The stock epithets so beloved of

For evidence of the custom of oral delivery, see R. Crosby, "Oral Delivery in Mid. Ages" and "Ch. and Customs of Oral Delivery" (Speculum, 1936, 1938).

See above, p. 16-17.
Chaucer are particularly noticeable in the list of trees:

"The byldere ok, and ek the hardy assh;
The pilere elm, the cofre unto carayne,
The boxtre pipere, holm to whippis lasche;
The saylynge fyr; the cipresse deth to pleyne;
The sheltere ew, the asp for shoftys pleyne;
The olyve of pes, and eke the dronkè vyne;
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne." (176-82)

I do not feel, however, either that they give "life and force" to the nouns or that they communicate an ironic suggestion that the garden held both life and death, joy and suffering, not because there is not plenty of evidence that the poet intended this, but because I cannot imagine a few isolated lines of indirect allusion being understood by an audience to counteract the obvious suggestion of the garden's holding lasting joy.

Ironic ambiguity is better conveyed, in the double-edged phrase "I can na moore" (14) or the cluster of words conveying contrary implications about the nature of love, such as "dredful ioye", "hard", "sharp", "dredful", "sore", "crewel" yet "wonderful" in her works. (1-14). This was to be brilliantly used in the "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales".

Though repetition of key words is common enough in Chaucer, it is interesting that all three suitors and the high-minded Turtle repeat the word "serve", which is not used by any of the other commentators or by Nature, as though

(O) Brewer, op. cit., p. 19.
(F) For this argument, see J.A.W. Bennett, "P.F. - An Interpretation".
(Q) Brewer, op. cit. pp. 15-17.
only courtly suitors think of love in this way. "Love" is repeated four times in five lines (451-55) by the possessive Second Tercel, as though there was a hint of irony in the poet's mind about this much-protesting of love. The most intensive linkage through repetition is found in Nature's speech, of which the subsequent analysis will reveal also a new and most brilliant use of contrasting groups of words to convey a constant change of tone and manner of address. Finally, monosyllables are used not only to suggest the simplicity of the lower-ranking birds, but, in the opening three lines, to suggest a certain tight-lipped gravity.

(4) Imagery Of metaphor and simile there is very little, about one per hundred lines, and several of the ones used are conventional. The allegorical personifications are almost all derived, immediately from Boccaccio but ultimately from the "Roman de la Rose". In the dream-imagery (i.e. sights, sounds etc. which if occurring in a description of real life would be regarded as literal fact) the predominant element is colour, though the senses are involved too. The colours have a symbolic value, as in the gold and black letters on the two gates. Likewise there are symbolic actions, such as the body's growing hot on the reading of the gold inscription, and cold on reading the black one (145). Possibly, too, the characters of the various orders of birds represent the ranks of human society.
The great difference between the imagery here and in earlier poems, however, is the fusion of all these elements. One suspects that in the description of the Parlement the reagent is some inner longing or nostalgia making possible the blending of so many diverse elements of Chaucer's reading.

(5) **Sounds** The tables of various sound effects compiled from key passages reveal that in the descriptions, assonance and consonance were more frequent in the description of the Parlement than in that of Cupid and Venus, though alliteration was less common. In the speeches, assonance was most prominent in the speeches of the lower orders, less so in that of Nature, and least so in those of the Turtle and the Royal Tercel. The same was true of alliteration and, less significantly, of consonance.

Monosyllabic lines were, as might be expected, most frequent in those of the Goose and Second Tercel. Though it is surprising that the effects one would expect to find in the most ornate verse are found most often in the speeches of the lower orders, these speeches are so short that too much should not be inferred from them. There is, finally, a high proportion of sound effects in the final roundel, as might be expected.

**Analysis of Selected Passages** Three passages are now studied in detail in order to show how the various elements of the verse style work together to create the total effect.

(R) See Appendix A.
They are: the Park or Garden of Love (169-210); the speech of Nature (383-413), and the Debate (414-616).

**Lines 169-210** Apart from its great beauty, the attraction of this passage for an audience would doubtless be the vitality of its utterance, from the opening

"But, Lord, so I was glad and wel begoon!" (171) onwards, while the degree of continuity with the previous episode must have helped to keep their attention. To take a few examples, the instruction "Be glad ... thyne sorwe of caste ... sped the faste" (132-33) is followed up by "Of **[Africanus' hand]** I confort kaughte, and wente in faste" (170); "grene and lusty May shal evere endure" (130) is caught up in "treis clad with levys that ay shal laste ....... of colour frosoh and greene" (173-74), and the "welle of grace" (129) is followed up by "the colde wellé-stremys" (187). The contrasts are equally significant, between the weir of the black inscription and the river inside, the dried-up fish of the inscription and the teeming fish swimming in the wells. What is indicated metaphorically and in general terms in the gold inscription is realised and to a degree particularised inside.

The poet is most particular in the naming of the trees, though one may doubt whether the epithets do more than focus attention on them. While making no attempt either to identify flowers and fish or to draw them in words, he particularises their colours, the blue, white, yellow and
red of the flowers, the red and silver of the fish.

This brightness, the spring-like freshness, soft breeze, birdsongs and sweet smells blend together to give this portrait its peculiar innocence and wholesomeness. There is something a little heart-rending in this image of Paradise, especially in the line "No man may waxe there sek ne old" (207) or phrases like "but ay cler day" (210). One marvels that a passage seeming so fresh and individual can be composed of the same elements (at least, as regards the animals) as the description from the "Roman de la Rose" used in the "Book of the Duchess". The only differences are that colours are now specified, while trees are merely given names and epithets, not described. If this passage has less visual unity than the earlier one, there is more unity of atmosphere and more of a spiritual dimension, an air of everlastingness. The unity of atmosphere is due to the addition of birdsongs, wind and spices.

On comparing this adaptation of part of Boccaccio's "Teseida" with the translation of the passage from the "Roman de la Rose" in the "Book of the Duchess", one sees how he has acquired the ability to use the details taken from another writer's work as a musician might weave his own fantasia out of folk-songs: the end-product is Chaucer's, richer, more spiritual and artistically on a

(S) See above, pp. 20-21.
higher plane than Boccaccio's. All the details in
Boccaccio are either visual or auditory; Chaucer adds
apices, the winds and soft air, and turns the vague "every
instrument and song" into the precise and apt
"instrumentis of strengis in acord". He transforms the
place from a pagan to a paradisal one by re-introducing a
Christian element, which Boccaccio had dropped when adapting
the original passage from the "Roman de la Rose", in lines
such as

"God, that make is of all and lord,
Ne herde nevere betyr" (199-200) 

and

".....ioge more a thousand fold
Than man can telle". (208-09)

The prayer to Venus is omitted as is her very name.

Even the borrowed details are transformed either in
accordance with the sound-propensities and alliterative
tendency of English, "every newly-blossomed flower"
becoming "blosmy bowys", "greenest plants and fresh grass"
becoming "grenè mede", or, as already suggested, to follow
up the suggestions in the inscriptions, so that "clear
springs" become "colde welle-stremes" and the fish are
added. The colours, too, are Chaucer's own and give a
paradisal brightness as of illuminated manuscripts. The
whole passage is a fine example of the shaping power of the
literary imagination. The vision, perhaps created in

(T) A judgement relevant only to the content of Ch. and
of Bocc., as rendered in translation in Brewer,
op. cit., pp. 138-140.
accordance with the writer's inner longings, has a
distinctively medieval Christian character.

Lines 383-413 The fact that Nature's speech is
delivered "in esy voice" with apparent artlessness would
conceal the felicities of its workmanship from the human
listeners. The initial address to the socially mixed
assembly is a judicious blend of simple, mainly
monosyllabic, words, of an appeal to the audience's
interest ("in fortheryng of youre nede") and of unassuming
courtesy in the request for attention and the promise to be
brief:

"Foulis, tak hed of myn centence, I preye,
and for yore ese, in fortheryng of youre nede,
As faste as I may speke, I wele me spede". (U)

The euphony in these lines results in a smoothness and
cohesion very suggestive of feminine dignity.

The lines following impart a certain courtly
formality by their hint of regular procedure:

"Ye knowe wel how, seynt Valentines day,
By my statut and thorgh my governaunce,
Ye come for to chese..........." (386-88)

and their words taken from parliamentary usage ('statut',
'governaunce', 'ordenaunce') or from courtly love
('plesaunce'). The goddess still keeps the sympathy of
her audience by her apology for the precedence of the
tercel eagle:

(U) Robinson's 'me spede' preferred to Brewer's 'yow
spede', as fitting in better with sense of first
half of line.

(V) Brewer's comment, op. cit., p. 38.
"May I nat lete for al this world to winne,  
That hethat is most worthi shal begynne", (391-2)
a sympathy she is careful to maintain by her repeated
direct addresses:

"The tercel egle, as that ye knowe wel,  
The foul royal, above yow in degre" (393-4)

and

"And after hym by ordre shul ye chese" (400).

Her praise of the usual knightly virtues in the Royal  
Tercel is couched in extremely simple terms:

"The wyse and worthi, secree, trewe as stel" (395)  
compared with the language used in the pictures of the  
ideal knight by other Chaucerian characters. It is spoken  
for the common people.

For the Royal Tercel the goddess speaks in a tender,  
encouraging voice:

"My sone, the choys is to the falle",  
but, when addressing him and the assembly together, assumes  
her more impersonal, rhetorical manner, even less intimate  
than the style in which the people have been addressed, as  
will be seen in the diction of:

"But, natheless, in this condicioun,  
Mot be the choys of everich that is heere,  
That she agre to his eleccioun,  
Whose she be that shulde be hire feere."

Nature shows not only a master of 'decorum', the  
style apt for purpose and audience, but a power of  
compelling attention without histrionics by a quiet but
subtle variation in syntax in each stanza. That each stanza marks one stage in the argument (attention requested 383-85, purpose stated 386-92, Tercel's right of precedence 393-99, other birds' choice 400-06, lady's freewill 407-13) and that each stanza begins with a definite link with the preceding one are obvious enough features of good style, but only close analysis reveals the variation in structure within each stanza. Thus in lines 386-92 the first four lines are on a high-pitched note befitting a proclamation, alternating between "Ye know," , "ye come" on the one hand, and "by my statute" and "as I prike yow with plesaunce" on the other, then the last three lines have a rising note ending in the principal fact, "he that most is worthi shal begynne". The following stanza, about one bird, is a single sentence, interrupted by only the briefest parenthesis, and building up by a series of knightly attributes and a qualifying clause to a final statement which is a more specific version of the statement forming the climax of the previous stanza:

"He shal ferst schese and spekyn in his gyse".

The next stanza, addressed mainly to the birds, consists of several short sentences studded with pronouns of address in the second person, as well as a benediction, and in a final brief sentence to the Tercel Nature makes yet another statement ("the choys is to the falle") linked in meaning to the ends of the previous stanzas. The final
stanza consists again of two proclamations, but this time using the third person, Nature having obtained the audience's consent and as it were resumed again her goddess-like aloofness.

**Lines 414-616**  A court audience would observe Nature's skill in rhetoric. Nor would they miss the author's sense of 'decorum' in the following debate. Each character's rank and degree of 'gentilesse' emerges from his or her manner of speaking and, moreover, the author's unspoken comment emerges too.

The Royal Tercel, whose passion is emblematic of 'fyn lovyng' delivers his mannered oration with princely grace. A master of rhetorical repetition, he repeats a key line from one stanza in the next. The line in his opening stanza, on his choice,

"Unto myn sovereyn, lady, and not myn fere" (416)

is paralleled in,

"As she that is myn lady sovereyne" (422)

in the next stanza, embodying his plea for mercy. In the same stanza,

"Havynge reward only to myn trouthe" (426)

is linked with a line in the third, containing his oath,

"And if that I to hyre be founde untrew" (428),

while the line in the first stanza,

"Whos I am al, and evere wele hire servé" (418)
is paralleled in,

"He nevere for no wo ne shal I lette
To servyn hire, how fer so that she wende".

(439-40)

His actual lines have not only rhetorical repetition but a rhythmic pattern, apparent not only in the half-line groups of syllables in lines such as,

"Whos I am al, and evere wol hire serve,
Do what hire lest, to do me leve or sterve;"

(419-20).

He uses the accepted vocabulary of the 'fyn' lover, speaking of 'merci', 'grace' and 'routhe'.

There may well have been laughter at the blushing of the Formel Eagle, before the Second Tercel's speech. The Second Tercel has much the same vow of service to offer, but betrays his lower rank and less polished manners by his first explosive "That shal nat be!" The intention here is surely humorous, in a declaration of love such as,

"I love hire bet than ye don, by seint Ion,
Or at the leste I love as wel as ye"    (451-52)

addressed, shouted even, directly to the Royal Tercel. There might also be laughter at his blunt "do me hangyn by the hals" (458) and, more quietly, at the irony of,

"And, but I berè me, in hire servyse
As wel as that myn wit can me suffyse" (459-60).

His constant mention of the length of his service would presumably put him out of court as a candidate.
The Third Tercel is different still in that, though he has the humility of the Royal Tercel, and addresses the court properly, he is garrulous and has little idea of building up an argument. Thus after disclaiming the Second Tercel's argument from length of service, he takes the rest of the stanza, in one rambling sentence, to confute it:

"Of long servyse avante I me nothing; But as possible is me to deye today For wo, as that hath ben languyssing This twenty wynter; and as wel happyn may, A man may servyn bet, and more to pay In half a yer, althav it were no moore, Than sum man doth that hath servyd ful yoore."

He has the Royal Tercel's sincerity, but not his precision of utterance. His only argument is that he wants to serve the lady.

The other 'courtly' birds are likewise differentiated by their mode of utterance. The Tercelet's skill is not in oratory in the Royal Tercel's 'aureate' style, but in the gently humorous manipulation of his audience's feelings. He speaks in a placid, melodious style, his short sentences, such as:

"I can not se that argumentis avayle; Thanne semyth it, there mustè be batayle."

being so compelling as to elicit a cry "Al redy!" from the three Tercels, doubtless much to the amusement of the
human listeners. One catches the rhythms of a Mark Antony in his

"Ye don me wrong, myn tale is not ido." (542), with which he stills them. (The "And therefore, pes!" at the beginning of his last stanza, is the touch of Chaucer, the master of mock-heroic, rather than the speaker). Finally, his long sentence describing, and doing all but name, the Royal Tercel, "worthieste.....most of estat.....of blod the gentilleste" (548-50 et seq) is the trick of a skilled speaker who leaves his audience to complete his thought. The Sparrowhawk, finally, is distinguished by supercilious exclamations which, incidentally, contain no answer to the Goose's case, so that Chaucer may be having a joke at the expense of the upper classes to counterbalance his ironic tilt at mobocracy in the cuckoo's

"For I wele of myn owene autorite". (506)

Such an ironic ambivalence would be characteristic of both writer and poem.

There is no need to labour the point that the lower-class birds are similarly individualised, from the coarse commonsense of the Goose to the arrogance of the Cuckoo or the mere abusiveness of the Merlin. Nor need we dwell on the author's fairness in representing the turtle as so much more delicate than some of the birds of prey, or the good-humour he shows in
"Now, pes!" quod Nature, "I commaundé here!
For I have herd al your opynyon,
And in effect yit be we nevere the nere."

(617-19)

This in a man would be paternal. It is tempting to dwell on the cogency of Nature's mode of speech, compared with that of the lower orders, but our chief interest, from a stylistic point of view, must be in the means by which the author represents their speech. A recent report on the thinking process of working-class children stressed the way they thought and wrote in a random, disconnected way, ideas coming separately, like beads on a string, rather than being presented in sequence and leading to a conclusion. This is certainly true of Chaucer's lower orders, of the Goose:

"Pes! Now tak kep every man,
And herkenyth which a resoun I shal brynge!
My wit is sharp, I love no tarynge;
I seye I rede hym, thow he were myn brothir,
But she wele love hym, let hym love anothir!"

(563-67)

It is even truer of the Duck's disjointed questions and exclamations:

"That men shulde lovyn alway causeles,
Who can a resoun fynde or wit in that?
Daunsith he murye that is myrtheles?
Who shulde reyke of hym that is recheles?
Ye, quek," ............
"There been mo sterris, God wot, than a payre."

(590-95)

Even the Turtle begins with an interjection and speaks in brief sentences.

Report by B. Bernstein of London Univ. Education Dept.
The Duok, too, is full of homely, commonsense idioms and proverbs. In their rhythms and turns of phrase, as much as in their philistine common-sense, these lines would be appreciated as mimicry of the speech of the common people. There would perhaps be appreciation of the way the Merlin wanders off the point to indulge in vulgar abuse of the Cuckoo.

Finally, Chaucer caught the sounds of common speech. His Goose, Cuckoo and Duck speak more alliteratively and in more homely, blunt words than any of the other characters. If their vocabulary is limited it is explicit, as will be seen from the lines of the Goose quoted above. The Goose, incidentally, uses much the highest proportion of monosyllabic words.

(iii) Properties of Rõne Royal The new form has the following advantages:

(a) The stanza is long enough to treat a whole topic, such as dreams (lines 99-105) or a list of trees (176-82) without undue length or compression.

(b) Stanzas can for listeners clearly mark stages in a speech (e.g. 414-34) or a description (e.g. 183-210) or narrative (e.g. 36-77, though not well used in this case) in the manner of paragraphs.

(c) The links between the stages of a description are more obvious than in verse written in couplets, owing to the pause between stanzas, thus giving the audience a clearer idea of the structure of the object described. This may be seen in the prepositions "Abouté", "Byfore" and "Withinne" which begin the description of the Temple of Venus (232, 239, 246).
(d) Similarly, logical connections are clear because of similarities or obvious contrasts between the final lines of stanzas, such as those of the Royal Tercel's speech.

(e) The stanza division makes repetitions obvious to a listener.

(f) Rhetorical parallelisms are more obvious yet less tedious than in the verse written in octosyllabic couplets, as in the two inscriptions (127, 140).

(g) The form is very flexible. To take three stanzas as examples, the lines 22-28 contain an image in four lines, and a comment in three; lines 484-490 have five lines on events and two on the passing of time, and lines 8-14 have two containing a disclaimer, two on the poet's reading, one contains his conclusion therefrom, and the last two his comments.

(h) A closing couplet has some of the varied possibilities of a heroic couplet, of which it may well have been the origin. Thus lines 13-14 contain an aphorism, lines 489-90 clinch a piece of narrative, and lines 545-46 clinches an argument.

The form seems to me to have the following disadvantages:

(a) The thought may be distorted to make it fit the stanza-form. Thus, did Chaucer intend to give so many analogies in lines 99-105, or did the form compel him to include them all, so making the lines tediously repetitive? Similarly repetitive is the list of lovers in lines 288-94.

(b) On balance, the rhyme-royal passages of dialogue convey dramatic tension less well than the octosyllabic couplets of the best parts of the "Book of the Duchess". In the lines 505-11, to fit in the brief speech and interruption, the poet has to make the one character's speech end half-way through the stanza and the other's continue over the end, as the lower-caste speakers do not all speak in clear stages occupying seven lines each. The form therefore suits courtly speech better than the more random speech of the lower orders.
The need to organise thought in seven-line passages with a complex rhyme-scheme, could be frustrating. Thus before the list of birds it is clear that the birds sat in ordered ranks, in different localities, yet the list itself is a jumble, in which the stanza-form is wholly irrelevant. The confusion might be deliberate, but I think it more likely to have been imposed by the exigencies of the rhyme-scheme. (v. 323-71).

In the crowd-utterances (491-504), brilliant as this dialogue is, the speakers speak against the grain of the stanza-form. The heroic couplet can accommodate either the thoughts of noble speakers such as Arcite or the more aphoristic speech of the common people, as the poet can use various kinds of couplet or single lines or combinations of both or either.

Rhyme-royal, in short, is well suited to a tale demanding noble speech, sonorous rhetoric or formal description, such as "Troilus and Criseyde" or "The Prioress's Tale" but was less suited for tales embodying dramatic action, common speech or the kind of apparently random description found in the "Prologue".
CHAPTER FIVE

"TROILUS AND CRISEYDE"

My aims in this chapter will be:

I to give an impression of the whole design of the poem;
II to remark certain general features of its style;
III to examine the style of a number of passages in detail;
IV to draw some comparisons with poems previously discussed.

To discuss all the considerable number of books and the vast number of articles written about "Troilus and Criseyde" would be a labour of years. Nobody doubts that the poet's general intention was to tell of the "double sorwe" of the hero, of how from being unattached to any woman he experienced the pain of falling in love, the bliss of love satisfied, and the greater pain of being supplanted by a rival; all that most readers disagree about with regard to the poem as a whole is the moral implication of the action, whether the orthodox Christian view of the action conveyed in the Epilogue can be discovered to be implicit in the earlier parts of the poem, whether therefore the poem has a true unity of aim or whether this unity is not broken by its admixture of paganism and Christianity or of tragedy and comedy, or of romance and psychology. The major arguments are thus not about matters of fact, or inconsistencies of detail, but about the poem as a whole and about the medieval view of life in
general. A fitting prelude to a study of the style would seem to be a general impression which has been formed mainly as a result of repeated readings over a number of years and of a recent detailed comparison of the "Troilus" with a translation of the originals on which Chaucer chiefly drew, but partly through reading a few of the numerous books and articles in which it is discussed. This view is thus admittedly personal and in no way authoritative, comprehensive or supported here by detailed evidence which would drag out this survey to a disproportionate length.

I  General Impression

Without an intimate knowledge of medieval Italian an attempted aesthetic judgement of the "Filostrato" would be almost worthless. Nevertheless, a mere comparison of the stories of the two poems shows that Chaucer's is about more complete human beings who act more significantly, and experience a wider range of emotions, in a larger social and natural setting. It is conceived upon an altogether grander scale and conveys a more profound vision of human life.


(B) Esp. books of Cummings Meech, Patch, D.W. Robertson, Root ("Poetry of Ch."), Whiting, Empson and articles of Fratt, Kittredge, Young, Tatlock, Lewis, as detailed in Bibliography.
This difference in scale and profundity is, first of all, reflected in the characters of the protagonists. The passion of Chaucer's Troilus is more than sensual, more than emotional: it is not so much an appetite as a dedication. He is more patriotic, at times has more self-control and has a speculative intellect not apparent in Boccaccio's hero, being able to reflect on the nature of love, even to make up his own songs. These qualities of chivalry, courage, loyalty and reflectiveness are part of his tragedy, for without them he might either have recovered quickly from the blow of Criseyde's disloyalty, or her appeal to patriotism, when rejecting the suggestion of elopement, might have fallen on deaf ears. Chaucer's Criseyde, too, has qualities not possessed by her counterpart in the "Filostrato": she is of higher rank and consequently better educated, being fond of music and literature, an occasionally amusing conversationalist, less dominated by appetite and more by her ruling emotion of timidity. Even her wrong actions are more natural, being more carefully motivated. She has, moreover, a capacity for shame and remorse apparently lacking in Boccaccio's Griseida, shown not only in her bashfulness during the love affair but in awareness of how others would regard her betrayal of Troilus. Pandarus, as has often been

(C) In the opinion of Dr. H. Lucas, with whom I studied the "Roman de Troylus", Beauvau's Briseide resembles Boccaccio's in being bourgeoise, rather than noble.

(D) For a similar trait, cf. Benoit "Roman de Troie" 20194-340.
remarked, is superior to the Pandaro of the Italian original, in the capacity for feeling (of love and eventually hate) for Criseyde, in shrewdness and rueful benevolence, in humour and pithy wit, as witness his unforgettable

"Thou wretched mouse's herte, Artow agast so that she wol the bite?" (III 736-7) after Troilus' invocation of all the gods. Moreover he is personally involved in the tragic disillusionment to a greater extent. Perhaps Chaucer's re-shaping is most obvious in the character of Diomede, in the way he is differentiated from Troilus by the subtle emphasis on his size and proneness to success, as opposed to Troilus' virtue and inbuilt tendency towards failure. His motive of amorous conquest, his calculation and spurious declaration of his inexperience in love point the irony so often observable in life, that the less complete and less admirable person is successful where the idealist fails. Finally, the subsidiary characters are better realised than Boccaccio's, even down to Calchas, whose welcoming of Criseyde shows a touch of fatherly affection added by Chaucer's adaptation of an incident in Benoit's "Roman de Troie".

Furthermore, the action of Chaucer's poem is both more shapely and on a larger scale. From the opening lines, added by Chaucer,

(E) Cf. similar incident ibid. 13713 ff.
"The double sorwe of Troilus to telden,  
That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye,  
In lovynge, how his aventures fellen  
Fro wo to wele and after out of joie" (I 1-4)

we are aware that the story is to act out the metaphor of Fortune's wheel, in its hero's rise to the pinnacle of fulfilment followed by his accelerating decline. We are aware also that he is a figure of public consequence, involved in a great historical event.

In many ways the balance and parallelism between the two halves of the action, its upward and downward curve, is underlined by Chaucer, the apex of the curve being perhaps marked by Troilus' plea, added by Chaucer as part of some Boethian sentiments inserted in a revision,

"So wolde God, that auctour is of kynde,  
That with his bond Love of his vertue liste  
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste bynde,  
That from his bond no wight the wey out wiste;  
And hertes colde, hem wolde I that he twiste  
To make hem love, and that hem liste ay rewe  
On hertes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe!"  (III 1765-71)

The irony of these remarks is very evident in the light of later events. The action, moreover, involves not merely the appetites but the whole personalities of the two principals. Their relationship at its peak is very like the intertwining of the bodies, hearts, minds and spirits of husband and wife in the ideal Christian marriage, so that it is not surprising to find the comparison between love and religion quietly drawn in many lines added by Chaucer. Not the least of the many strands in the tragedy
is the fact that though Troilus addresses Crisye as "fresshe wommanliche wyf" and treats her as the ideal husband would his wife, they can be parted at the whim of Galchas and the Trojan parliament.

Chaucer's poem does much more than represent a secret love affair to a court audience in an age when the frequency of ill-arranged matches had induced a cult of illicit romance. It opposes by implication and by explicit statement two philosophies still contending for the hearts of the young, the one seeking fulfilment here and now, obeying the pagan poet's dictum.

"While youth is with thee and the rose, (F) Pluck thou the rose; life is as swift for thee," the lover's hope and joy being grounded on his mistress' sworn constancy, while the other insists upon the transience of the pleasure of the senses, the frailty of a bond not ratified by religion, the certainty and everlastingness of divine love and of that love only. Yet whatever the poet's own sympathies in the conflict of the pagan ethos and the Christian one, the love of Troilus and Crisye (G) has been purged of grossness, so that its consummation has the lyrical intensity of the slow movement of a Beethoven symphony; here is earthly love at its most delicate and honourable. We are eventually to be reminded of the transience of a passion such as few human beings enjoy, so that the pity may be the greater when we find that time and (F) Ausonius (Helen Waddell: "Medieval Latin Lyrics" p. 29).
(G) Cf. esp. incident in Fil. II 32 omitted by Chaucer.
circumstances can rot so fine a fabric as this, a fabric so deserving to endure.

As this love at its height is marked by a kind of sacramental symbol, the giving by Criseyde of a brooch with ruby inset, so its end is cruelly marked for Troilus by the finding of the brooch he had given her after the fight with Diomede. Chaucer's additions often lend concreteness to the action, in Diomede's laying his hand on the bridle of Criseyde's horse when they meet, or in his using Petrarch's metaphor of the ship of love as an emblem of Troilus steering first into port and then blown on the open sea towards his doom. Thus not only in its moral implications but in small details of the action, "Troilus and Criseyde" draws upon a great range of human experience, from the trivial banter of old friends and relatives, or the physical gestures and tokens of love to the extremes of tenderness and pathos, the most effervescent humour, the most searching irony, even to philosophic meditation that is sometimes both exalted and of enduring relevance.

Chaucer seems, moreover, to be at more pains to add depth and reality to the drama by playing it against, as it were, a series of gauze curtains through which we

(H) Ch. has Cris, giving ring with ruby, and Tr. finding on battlefield a brooch given by him. Bocc. has gold brooch Fil. VIII 9.

(I) For parallels in Italian literature, see Curtius "European Lit. in Latin Mid. Ages" pp. 128-30.
glimpse all the worlds within which the characters move. The first world illuminated for us is that of the town house in which lives Criseyde, or Helen or any 'grande dame' in any country, one might almost add in any age, with its songs, wit, charming conversation and gracious manners. The second is the country, which we see directly in the valley down which the horses of Criseyde and Diomede wind, or of which we are reminded in the nightingale singing in the cedar tree outside Criseyde's window, or in the frequent references to birds and flowers. The light of Chaucer's imagination rarely shines directly on the wild Nature outside man's gardens, fields and cities, but we do hear the storm rumbling before the consummation in Book III and the references to storms and winds in the imagery ensure that we are aware of the hostile or indifferent natural world as a penumbra surrounding the sheltered area in which the protagonists perform. The storm without deepens our awareness of the ecstasy within. More directly, the poet reminds us of the historical setting of the action, of the impending ruin of Troy from which Calchas flees, from which he tries to save Criseyde, thus precipitating the tragedy. This fear of inevitable defeat is exploited by Diomede to chill Criseyde's heart and make her give up Troilus for lost. In the last three hundred lines one is aware of how Fortune
"Gan pulle away the fetheres brighte of Troie
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joie."  
(V 1546-7)

First Hector is swept away, Hector who had allowed
Crisseyde to remain at first, and pleaded for her to be
allowed to remain afterwards, then one is vaguely aware of
numberless desperate skirmishes until Troilus is killed.
Finally, the light from time to time shines upon the
ultimate things, in the occasional comments in the
prologues to the books, or in such lines added by Chaucer
as:

"And thus Fortune a tyme ledde in joie
Crisseyde, and ek this kynges sone of Troie."

(III 1714-5)

One is almost continuously aware of the instability of
Fate, of Fortune, aware eventually of Heaven, upon which
alone we can rely. Perhaps no Chaucer poem has quite so
much speculation about destiny and freewill. There are of
course, links between local and temporal circumstances and
universal truth in the very archetypal nature of this love-
affair, and in the important part played by dreams which
warn first Crisseyde and then Troilus of the future.

In all these ways Chaucer's poem seems a larger one
than Boccaccio's. By reason of its amplitude, its themes
of universal import, its distinct vision of human life in
its natural and metaphysical setting, its variety of moods
and of kinds of entertainment, its evidence of a high
degree of structural intelligence, it must be accounted
one of the noblest achievements in English literature. One hesitates about placing it alongside a "King Lear" or "Paradise Lost" not because of its incidental absurdities (such as Troilus' detailed instructions for his funeral), for both the masterpieces concerned are full of anomalies and inconsistencies, but chiefly for two other reasons. The first is because of the lack of dramatic development in the hero's character. He seems to decline in stature from the moment when Criseyde rides away and he nobly hides his anger and disappointment. The figure who intermittently weeps throughout Book V, though less melodramatic in his despair than Boccaccio's would-be suicide, is nevertheless very emasculated, a great disappointment after the triumphant knight of the earlier books. One cannot see any process of learning divine wisdom at work in him, as one can in Lear. His tragic errors do not directly

(J) For the opposite view v. Cummings ("Indebtedness of Ch. to Ital. Works of Bocc." ch. V.), though I think he fails to consider the poetic intensity of Tr.'s passion and the frequent remarks on the moral value of love.

(K) That Ch. may have intended deterioration in Tr. may be indicated by his Tr. being less lachrymose than the character in the opening books of Beauvau's "Roman".

(L) The argument that Tr. is here a typical courtly lover is surely weak, in view of the way P. and Cr. scold Tr. for his despondency. Ought we, in any case, to allow extraneous considerations to outweigh the internal evidence of the change in Tr.?
lead to his death; there is only a process of moral disintegration at work, which makes the posthumous revelation of the value of the love of God seem very inconsequential. The addition, in a revision, of Troilus' laughter on viewing the earth from above strikes me as in poor taste even if intended to balance his initial laughter at love. Nor is his long and involved meditation in Book IV a very happy or fitting addition in revision. It merely adds to the inconsistency of the character of the later Troilus, and to the poem's general length and slowness. To carp further at this exquisite, if imperfect, masterpiece would perhaps be a churlish return for one's delight in it.

II General Impression of the Style of "Troilus and Criseyde"

This is perhaps most easily formed as a result again of comparisons with "Il Filostrato" and "Le Roman de Troilus". Chaucer does not add many entire scenes, though one of the finest, that in which Troilus rides back from the battle on horse-back down the end of Crisyea's street (II 1247-1302) is his, as also, alas, most absurdly, Troilus' directions for his own funeral (V 295-322). Still less often does he completely omit a scene, though it is easy to see his intention of avoiding unconvincing melodrama by dropping the scene in which Pandarus has to

(M) Adapted from Arcite's laugh in Bocc: "Teseide" IX 1-3. (Cummings op. cit. p. 82).
(N) v. Robinson's Explanatory Note to T.C. IV 953-1085.
disarm Troilus when the latter tries to commit suicide (0) (V 1281 ff.). Where he reshapes a discussion the amended version is more coherent and leaves one with an enhanced respect for the speaker's character. For example, a brief resume of Criseyde's speech to Troilus after the parliament's decision that she must go, would show her as saying, in Boccaccio's version:

'I must go with Diomede. Peace, or a truce, will soon enable me to visit you. Often at present we go two days without meeting. All my relatives are here except for father, and I must visit them. I cannot stay there for ever among armed men. Father is old and avaricious; if I tell him I can bring gold from here, this will attract him, so he will let me come.' (10)

In "Troilus and Criseyde", the argument would run as follows:

(No reference to Diomede.) 'We must help ourselves, not make this lamentation. We cannot withstand a parliamentary decree. I shall not be far away, and lovers must sometimes have their troubles that they may have joy eventually. Before ten days are past I swear I will come; you can surely wait so long. My relatives are here and my father is not to know whom else I see when I visit them. There is more and more talk of peace, which must make communication easier, I cannot stay, frightened as I am, among armed men. I will give father a valuable present and tell him more could be brought from here; his avarice will make him send me for more.' (F) (V 1254-1400)

(0) Robinson's Exp. Note to V 280 ff. for Ch.'s adaptation of funeral directions from "Tes." Incident omitted is in Fil. VII 33-37.
(F) Fil. IV 128-36; Beauvau op. cit. pp 231-34, discussed in Additional Note No. 10, at end of this thesis.
Although the multiplicity of consolations offered here still gives an impression of Criseyde's self-deception, particularly as she has never shown the initiative and resolution necessary to carry out these plans, it is easy to see the far greater coherence of Chaucer's version, the greater dramatic probability of the last sentence in his version, and the clearer impression given of the speaker's tenderness and wish to strengthen and reassure Troilus. Moreover, in the light of her later capitulation this speech becomes poignantly ironic.

More usually, the re-touching is on a slighter scale. The emotion of a scene is intensified by an additional line or two, as in Diomede's attempt to make Criseyde despair of seeing her Trojan lover again, where the addition of the lines:

"Nor thennes shal nat oon on-lyve come
For al the gold atwixen sonne and se." (V 885-6)

increases the horror of the impending catastrophe, while the line, added by Chaucer

"Trusteth wel and understondeth me" (V 887)

would have just the ring of certainty and personal conviction to persuade a timid listener. Less often, emotion is toned down by Chaucer, as when he cuts out Troilus' swoon on hearing of the parliament's decision (IV 218 ff.), or, adapts Troilus' passionate declaration
of fidelity to Crisseyde in lines having a simple dignity and pathos:

"Thow biddest me I shulde love another
Al fresshly newe, and lat Crisseyde go!
It lith nat in my power, leeve brother;
And though (if) I myght, I wolde nat do so."  (Q)  (456-9)

Here only the last line is adapted from Boccaccio.

Though Chaucer omits all reference to the author's personal life, he comments directly on the action far more often than Boccaccio. The comments may be direct,

"And thus Fortune a tyme ledde in joie
Crisseyde ......."  (III 1714-5)

or may point the irony, of, for example, Troilus' contempt of love,

"This Troilus is clomben on the staire;
And litel weneth that he moot descenden".  (I 215-6)

The comment may be ironic in a more inscrutable way, like the one on Troilus' reputation when the passion of the lovers is at its height,

"That swich a vois was of hym and a stevene
Thoroughout the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up rong unto the yate of hevene."

(III 1723-5)

Here the references to honour and magnanimity, the qualities of a prince, are expected, but what does Chaucer mean by the reference to heaven? Either he is using the word loosely, (which I do not believe) or there is an unspoken comment on the illicit love-affair whose (Q) Cf. Fil. IV 50-62.
psychological consequences are so beneficent but so transitory.

The comments he gives to a character can have a subtlety apparently lacking in "Il Filostrato". Compare the two idiomatic uses by Pandarus of a particular proverbial remark:

"Ye, haselwode!" thoughte this Pandare, And to hymself ful softeliche he seyde, "God woot, refreyden may this hote fare, Er Calkas sende Troilus Criseyde!" (V 505-8)

This is spoken as they journey back from Sarpedon's and Troilus prays that on arriving home he may find Criseyde. Now after they have waited all day for her, while Troilus continues to delude himself, saying,

"Ne felte I swich a comfort, dar I seye; She comth to-nyght, my lif that dorste I leye!" (V 1168-9)

we are told by Boccaccio that Pandaro 'pretended to believe him, but in his heart he said to himself, "The poor fellow expects a wind from Etna.'" Chaucer, however, has;

"Pandare answorde, 'It may be, wel ynough,' And hele with hym of al that evere he seyde. But in his herte he thoughte, and softe lough, And to hymself ful sobreliche he seyde, "From haselwode, ther joly Robin pleyde, Shal come al that that thow abidest heere. Ye, fare wel al the snow of ferne yere!'" (V 1170-76)

Here, turning Pandarus' pretended belief into a mixture of direct and reported speech gives an impression, by the ambiguity of the remark quoted, of the division within

(91) Pratt's comparison No. 277 of T.C. V 1126-30 with Boco. and Beauvau makes it clear that Ch. makes Tr. suggest Cr. delayed by having to dine with Calch., and made P. dubious of this.
Pandarus' mind between disillusionment and a wish to avoid discouraging his friend, while also enabling us better to imagine the subsequent conversation going round and round the same point. Meanwhile, the bitter inward laugh would come while Troilus was still talking hopefully as they rode. Now the Italian analogy is replaced by the English idiom used before, expanded and followed by one which, commonplace in itself, is infinitely pathetic in its context, conveying as it does how beautiful yet how irrecoverable was the relationship that he knows, and we know, and Troilus will soon know, to be broken. The author's power of imaginative re-shaping of matter read is never better displayed than in allusion and embroidery of this kind.

Chaucer never wrote a poem more abounding in felicitous imagery than "Troilus and Criseyde". Felicity and good judgement are as apparent in his omissions as in his insertions. The use of the conventional comparison of love to a fire is severely curtailed and the image of the fiery darts of love dropped. The poem, of which the action could be expressed in the metaphor of Fortune's wheel, as already suggested, is unlike any other Chaucer poem in leaving in the mind certain key images and symbols which recur like leit-motifs, though their recurrence is

(S) Beauvau follows Bocc. in frequency of this image in "R. de T." I.
(T) Cf. T.C. III 1353-58 and Fil. III 36.
neither so frequent nor so pointed as that of the key images in such Shakespeare plays as "Macbeth" or "The Winter's Tale". The two chief ones are of Fortune's wheel, underlined by numerous references to Fortune (and how much more skilfully they are distributed than in the "Book of the Duchess") and of the course of Troilus' passion as a ship. First, in the Petrarch sonnet translated as Troilus' song (I 400-20), the instability of the lover is described in a figure:

"Al stereless withinne a boot am I
   Amydde the see, bitwixen wyndes two,
   That in contrarie stonden evere mo." (I 416-8)

Next, in some lines of his own prefixed to Book II, and clearly using the image in the same way:

"Owt of thise blake wawes for to saylle,
   O wynd, o wynd, the weder gynneth clere;
   For in this see the boot hath swych travaylle,
   Of my connyng, that unneth I it steere.
   This see clepe I the tempestous materre
   Of disespeeir that Troilus was inne". (II 1-6)

Finally, once again in a song, which balances the one in the first book, for it comes when he is again tormented by alternate hope and despair after the separation, the image is used this time with explicit reference to Scylla and Charybdis:

"O sterre, of which I lost have al the light,
   With hertp soor wel oughte I to biwaille,
   That evere derk in torment, nyght by nyght,
   Toward my deth with wynd in steere I saille;
   For which the tenth nyght, if that I faille
   The gydyng of thi bernes bright an houre,
   My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure." (V 638-44)

(U) See above, p. 24.
(V) I cannot agree with Robinson, Exp. Note to these lines, in regarding this felicitous image as merely an accidental mistranslation.
Needless to say, the lines are added by Chaucer, though there are many examples of the use of this metaphor in earlier literature, especially in introductions.

Likewise, the ruby recurs first in a symbolic action, as when Troilus seals his first letter to Criseyde,

"And with his salte teeris gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet"

where the tears and signet are in Boccaccio's lines, but the ruby is Chaucer's, then as a symbolic object,

"But wel I woot, a broche, gold and asure,
In which a ruby set was lik an herte,
Criseyde hym yaf, and stak it on his sherte."

in a stanza added by Chaucer. Finally, Criseyde's empty house is apostrophized as

"O ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle"

thus suggesting that in some sense the ruby is an emblem of passion.

A form of symbolism long used by Chaucer and other medieval writers is the dream. The one he invents for Criseyde, occurring during her sleep after Antigone's song and the nightingale's song under her window:

(W) v. Curtius, op. cit., 128-30, for other examples of the metaphor.
(X) Fil. II 107, Beauvau "R. de T." P. 169.
(Y) v. note (H) above. Brooch bee. Tr.'s gift to Cr.
(Z) cf. its use as emblem of martyrdom in Pr. T. 610.
How that an egle, fethered whit as bon,
Under hire brest his longe clawes sette,
And out hire herte he rente, and that anon,
And dide his herte into hire brest to gon,
Of which she nought agroos, ne nothyng smerte;
And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte"  

(II 925-31)

a representation of the dominance of the lover over his lady's personality and of her willing acceptance, would for a medieval listener have none of the unpleasant overtones that birds of prey have for us in this post-Darwinian era.

It is faintly echoed later in Criseyde's

"And everich egle ben the dowves feere,
And everi roche out of his place sterte,
Er Troilus out of Criseyde's herte.
Ye ben so depe in-with myn herte grave,
That, though I wolde it torne out of my thought,
............I koude nought".  

(III 1496-1502)

Chaucer's imagination added visual detail to Boccaccio's account of Troilus' dream of Diomede, which simply mentions a wild boar, with beneath its feet Criseyde, from whom, to her pleasure, it tore the heart:

(in a forest)
"He mette he saugh a bor with tuskes grete,
That slepte ayeyn the bryghte sonnes hete.
And by this bor, fast in his armes folde
Lay, kissing ay, his lady bryght, Criseyde."

(V 1238-41)

Here an undesirable recollection of Criseyde's dream is avoided by replacing a symbolic action with the direct

(Cf. use of birds of prey to represent nobility in 'P.F.'
statement "Lay, kissyng ay", presumably to make more probable Troilus' violent grief on awakening.

Another interesting use of symbolism is evident in the song of the swallow heard by Pandarus as he awakes on the morning on which he is to tell Criseyde of Troilus' passion and the song of the nightingale heard as she is about to sleep while still undecided as to whether to accept him. The time, May, the subject of the bird's song

"Peraunter, in his briddles wise, a lay
Of love, that made hire herte fresh and gay"

(II 921-2)

and the conjunction of this incident with the dream of the eagle both suggest the inevitable tendency of Criseyde's feelings and also add a haunting overtone apparently missing from "Il Filostrato" at this point, an innocent enchantment associated with this ideal spring-time and youth and ardour.

By making the swallow awake Pandarus "with a sorwful lay"(II 63) Chaucer intended a suggestion as to the issue of Pandarus' soliciting. Certainly the pictures of dawn seem significantly placed. This first one is a somewhat casually conventional one of

(AB) "So shop it that hym fil that day a teene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he wente"

(II 61-2).
...May, that moder is of monthes glade,
That freshe florues, blew and white and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that winter dede made,
And full of bawme is fleyng every mede;
Whan Phebus doth his bryghte bernes sprede,
Right in the white Bole, it so bitidde,
As I shal synge, on Mayes day the thridde."

\[\text{(II 50-56)}\]

on which the sorrowful swallow uneasily jars. Dawn comes next as the "cruel day" that disturbs the lovers after their night of bliss (III 1450), the sun being conventionally chid by Troilus, and again after another such night, (1695), the curse this time being more slightly suggested, then the dawn after Crisneyde's departure is described thus:

"On hevene yet the sterres weren seene,
Although ful pale ywoxen was the moone;
And white gan the orisonte shene white,
Al estward, as it wont is for to doone;
And Phebus, with his rosy carte soone
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare"

\[\text{(V 274-9)}\]

The pallor particularly of the moon blends with the dreariness of the hero's mood. Was it not a sense of design that made Chaucer use Beauvau's revision, when Crisneyde should have come back:

"Ful pale ywoxen was hire brighte face" (V 708)? Colour in general, however, is less noticeable in this poem than in the "Parlement of Fowles" or even the "Book of the Duchess".

One final way in which, visually, Chaucer improves
on Boccaccio is in the adding of visual clarity either by a slight touch, as in inserting the underlined reference in this idiom,

"But also cold in love towards the Thy lady is, as frost in wynter moone, and thow fordon, as snow in fire is soone."

(AC) (I 523-5)

or by adding to a bare statement, (by Pandarus to Crisseyde when trying to persuade her to accept Troilus), a sharp visual image. The statement taken over from Boccaccio is 'Think how age wastes your beauty, and therefore accept love', to which is added:

"The kynges focle is wont to crien loude, Whan that hym thinketh a womman berth hire hye, 'So longe mote ye lyve, and alle proude, Til crowes feet be grown under youre ye, and sende yow than a myrour in to prye, In which that ye may se youre face a morwe!"

(II 400-5)

In the use of imagery and symbolism this poem is the most perfect blend of the dream-vision and Chaucer's later realistic descriptive poetry. Here we have naturalistic scenes of domestic and city life juxtaposed with recurring symbols and, as it were, sacramental acts of love, the whole in an idyllic spring setting. Henceforth the poet could only burlesque chivalric love in springtime, in the

(AD) Fil. II 54. Empson, op. cit. 58-68, has a detailed study of these lines, from a semantic point of view.
tales of the Nun's Priest or the Merchant. The city of Troy is the last and most delicately painted of Chaucer's gardens of the Rose; here the brush-marks are all but invisible.

Perhaps the clearest impression the poem would give on first reading would be of the abundance of general reflections, the 'sententiae' so beloved of medieval writers, and of idiomatic language in the form of analogies and proverbs, often of a homely and illuminating character. A special study of the subject shows that these proverbs and sententiae are present in greater proportion in this poem than anywhere else. While there is little point in going over ground already dug, one may note how the analysis shows the value of language of this type in the creation of the characters of Pandarus and Crisseyde. It is also noticeable that the proportion used by Pandarus declines as he loses his élan in the latter part of the action. All I would add here is a comment or two on the significance of the idiomatic language.

First, in the later books there is a tendency for characters to use it at a time of stress. Apart from the comments by Pandarus already noted, there is Crisseyde's

"But al to late comth the letuarie,
When men the cors unto the grave carie" (V 741-2)

Idea suggested to me by Prof. Cameron, of Nottingham Univ., but instances my own.
when she is longing to be back with Troilus, or the two proverbs thrown off by Troilus in his misgiving at Criseyde's preference of escape from the Greek camp to elopement with him:

"...:...! on thenketh the beere,
But al another thenketh his lederes',"

and "Men may the wise atrenne, and naught atrede". (IV 1453-4, 1456) Secondly, there are several references to love as comparable to Heaven's joy, at the climax of the love affair, as Pandarus' "...thow shalt into hevene blisse wende" (III 704) when summoning Troilus to Criseyde's bedroom, and, on Troilus speaking of the feeling of the uniqueness of each recurrence of desire, Pandarus'

"[he] That ones may in hevene blisse be,
He feleth other weyes, dar I leye,
Thanthilke tyme he first herde of it seye."

(III 1657-59)

This parallel between physical and celestial love, when taken in conjunction with Pandarus' warning shortly before about "Fortune's sharp adversitee", of which the worst kind is

".......to han ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren, whan it passed is"

(AG) (III 1627-28)

may well indicate that Chaucer intended the audience to see (AG) There are references earlier in Bk. III to sadness turning to joy, e.g. 180, 348-49, 351-57, as though an ironic antithesis were being drawn.
the analogy as a false one not merely in the Epilogue, but at this very climax of the love affair. Both the analogy and the comment on Fortune were added by Chaucer.

Less remarked by commentators have been the changes in syntax made by Chaucer in adapting Boccaccio, such changes tending to make the expression more dramatic. A statement may be turned into an exclamation, or a passage of reported speech may be rendered in direct speech. A statement may be given as a metaphor, or turned into a complete visual description. The thoughts of a character may be given as a soliloquy, or a proverb, or a passage of narrative be turned into an apostrophe. In one case, a change of syntax is used to switch attention to a more important character, by reporting the speech of a group of minor characters, while turning the statement of the major character’s feelings into a rhetorical question.

Verbal changes may take the form of an intensification of the feeling, or of the toning down of exaggeration, as when the Italian poet remarks that Fortune turned her angry face to Troilus, while Chaucer says:

"From Troilus she gan hire brighte face Away to writhe ............." (IV 6-9)

In the same stanza he changes ‘She bereft him of the pleasant fruits’ of Criseyde to "And on hir whiel she sette Fil. III 14 "Ella il volse la faccia crucciosa". (AI) "i dolci frutti".
up Diomede" (IV 11), thus incidentally toning down the sensuality of the original in substituting the leitmotif of Fortune's wheel.

A similar change of emphasis, from sensual to moral, is evident in the change from 'and all that had to do with that act' of love], into "Of al that souneth into gentilesse" (III 1414) and elsewhere.

To me the most notable verbal additions by Chaucer were his repeated references to classical or allegorical figures, to Fortune, or, particularly as Troilus is about to make love to Criseyde, to Venus, as though to underline the essentially pagan character of the pleasure that Troilus likens to heavenly joy. It is equally notable that when Criseyde says falsely to Diomede that she has never had a lover in Troy, she twice swears by Pallas Athene, both invocations being inserted as though to emphasize the falsity of her declaration by reference to a false goddess. It is perhaps significant that before meeting him and in swearing fidelity to him before parting she invokes pagan deities. Indeed they meet while enacting "payens corsed olde rites".

(AJ) Fil. III 41 "Cio che a quell'atto appartenir crediano".
(AL) E.g. III. 1184-85, 1289-90, 1322, religious references of which the incongruity is easily noticed.
(AM) N.b. Beauvau (p. 124) inserts "Falas, deesse de Sapience" in his rendering of Fil. I 17. This may have inspired Ch.
Occasional expressions, even in this poem, strike a modern reader as incongruous, such as the line spoken by Calchas,

"Allas, I ne hadde ibrought hire in hire sherte" (AN) (IV 96)

which is a picturesque but inapt way of rendering 'brought her to safety', or the idiom,

"But Troilus, thow maist now, est or west, Pipe in an ivy lef , if that the lest", (V 1432-33) tolerable in the "Knight's Tale", as referring to the unsuccessful contestant in the coming tournament, but merely bathetic as a comment on Troilus' grief at Criseyde's evasion of her vow. The useless 'padding' of "est or west" suggests that this is one of the few examples in the poem in fitting thought to stanza form. Even a medieval audience, finally, might have thought the rendering of 'Troilus embraced her almost weeping' as,

"The blody teris from his herte melte" (III 1445) to be something of an exaggeration!

The strongest single impression one has of the style of the poem, however, must surely be of the difference in quality and interest between the opening book and the rest. The opening book is so slow and pedestrian (AP) compared to the later ones. Is this impression simply

(AN) Fil. IV 8 "nel sicuro".
(AO) K.T. 1838.
(AP) This slowness is much more noticeable in Beauvau's version than in Boccaccio's.
due to the fact that the story has not developed or reached its climax? In the first half of his career Chaucer often seems to write at a lower pitch of intensity in his opening sections. Witness the openings of the "Book of the Duchess", the "House of Fame", or the "Parlement of Fowles". This problem of reaching the core of the action quickly, had not been solved in the writing of the "Troilus". Moreover, there are signs of a failure of narrative skill and concentration, of some preliminary rambling, in Book I, as compared with the later books. Chaucer needed to feel his way into the story, to acquire emotional energy, before he could reach his full measure as an artist. This may be shown by a comparison of three passages of roughly equal length taken respectively from the first, third and fifth books. The first (I 134-1407) describes Troilus' first sight of Criseyde; the second (III 1191-1407) describes their night of love; the third (V 8-196) describes their parting, the first conversation of Criseyde with Diomede, and her delivery to Calkas. For the sake of brevity and coherence, a tabular analysis of each passage is prefixed to the remarks about it.

(AQ) Referring to P.F. 29-98.
(a) \[ 134-322 \) \( (27 \) stanzas) \( \text{Fil. I} \) \( 16-31 \)

**Bocc.** Boccaccio; **Ch.** added by Chaucer

134-47: Fortune's wheel elevates Greeks and Trojans in turn (AR)
Occupatio - Homer's full account of war. (Bocc.)

148-68: Trojans worship Palladion, despite war; (Bocc.)
Description of April when people come for feast; (Bocc. 5 lines)
Many knights and ladies in temple. (Bocc. 2 lines) (Ch. 5 lines)

169-82: Description of Criseyde, esp. black dress and beauty; (Bocc. 4, Ch. 'star' image)
Cris. in black, still, alone (Ch.); near door Bocc.

183-203: Troilus and knights inspect ladies; (Bocc.)
Troilus baits any knight affected by ladies; (Bocc.)
Actual words of taunt; pain of loss after love; (Ch.)

204-31: God of Love's bow ready to hit Troilus, complacent; (Ch.)
Blindness of presumptuous (Bocc.); Troilus in his folly will fall (Ch.);
Horse analogy showing proudest must obey law of nature (Ch.)
Applied to Troilus, who will soon be most subject to love; (Ch.)

232-59: 'Digressio' on love - natural to man, even strongest-effects moral improvement, so must be accepted; (Ch.)

260-66: Ch. reminds himself to turn to Troilus, show his bliss and "cares colde"; (Ch.)

(AR) Bocc. has statement but Ch. adds metaphor of wheel.
267-80: Tr.'s eye looks at ladies, sees Criseyde; (Bocc.)
Tr. struck, struggles to hide emotion; (Ch.)

281-94: Criseyde medium height (tall in Bocc.); womanly, noble; (Ch.)
Criseyde notices Troilus' stare; drops mantle (Bocc.) looks down (Ch.);

295-322: Troilus falls in love, shrinks abashed; (Ch.)
Troilus had scorned love (Bocc.);
deeply moved (Ch.);
Troilus stands silently looking; (Bocc.)
Troilus goes home hiding feelings, repenting mockery. (Bocc.)

None of Chaucer's additions is irrelevant but the
digressions between lines 204 and 259 are too long at that
point for what they have to say; they hold up the story.
In particular, the analogy of Bayard the horse is bad in
that, lively as it is, it focusses attention on Bayard, so
that one recalls with some difficulty that it is intended
to illustrate the statement, made directly and simply in
the following stanzas, that Troilus cannot avoid the human
proneness to love. The lines added about Criseyde (AS)
(170-1; 174-8) include some bathos, 'first in beauty as
the rose surpasses the violet' being altered to, "Right
as our firste lettre is now an A", and do not do more than
repeat that she was beautiful, in black, and alone. The

(AS) Fil. I 19 ".....quanto la rosa la viola
Di belta vince".
simile "Nor under cloude blak so bright a sterre" does not blend with any other imagery in the passage.

Apart from the analogy of the horse, some of the other expressions make for randomness and difficulty in following the passage. Thus in the stanza:

"To Troilus right wonder wel with alle
Gan for to like hire mevyng and hire chere,
Which somdel deignous was, for she let falle
Hire looke a lite aside in swich manere,
Ascaunces, "What! may I nat stonden here?"
And after that her lokyng gan she lighte,
That nevere thoughte hym seen so good a syghte."

(288-94)

'Hire meyng' contradicts the earlier mentions of her stillness, 'which' is not immediately seen to refer to 'chere', which would not have been 'deignous' until after he had admired the face, the word 'ascaunces' seems grammatically unconnected with the surrounding clauses and just what Criseyde did in the last two lines is not quite clear. Moreover the inversion in the first line leads one, especially listening, to think of Troilus as the subject of the later verbs. Similarly, the inversion, or rather contortion, of lines 309 and 310 lead one to expect the rest of the stanza to be about Criseyde, whereas it is about Troilus:

"She, in blak, likynge to Troilus
Over alle thing, he stood for to biholde;"

apart from "this in black" which strikes an English
reader as in poor taste, though it may be acceptable as a French construction.

Finally - and this is only a criticism inasmuch as it betokens a lack at this point of the marvellous shaping power seen in the later passage - the vocabulary of the passage is not distinguished in either vitality or coherence. Up to about line 217 many of the words used are from the language of the Religion of Love: 'debonaire' (181), 'devocioun' (187), 'observaunces' (198), 'penaunces' (201), 'God of Love' (206), then it changes to the homely Anglo-Saxon speech of the 'Bayard' stanza ('skippe', 'lasshe', 'whippe', 'fat', 'shorn') and then in the digression on love (232-59) much of the language used has to do with moral qualities ('wise', 'proude', 'worthi', 'strengest', 'cruel', 'vice', 'shame', 'vertuous') at the point where one might expect the quasi-religious language to reappear. At any rate, apart from Troilus' exclamation "Mercy, God" (276) there is no trace of it in the subsequent section, Troilus' falling in love, where it certainly would be very relevant and would reflect back ironically on his scepticism and mockery on first entering the temple. In short, there is at this point a lack of closely-woven design; the carpet is merely several squares in different, unrelated colours.

(AU) Gallicism pointed out by Dr. Craik.
III 1191-1407 (31 stanzas); Fil. III 29-41

1191-97: Cris. and Tr. like lark and sparrowhawk; poet will now tell of gladness after "hevynesse''.

1198-1211: Cris. shaking, Tr., healed of "cares colde", thanks gods that bring men to heaven; Tr. begs Cris. to yield; she replies she has already "yold".

1215-25: 'Digressio': men must drink bitter medicine to be healed, so distress leads to gladness; sweetness greater after bitterness.

1226-46: Metaphors of feast Cris. makes for Tr., of twining as woodbine round tree, of her talk as like nightingale's song; Tr. and Cris. as though rescued from death.

1247-1302: Tr. fondles Cris.; thinks himself in heaven; he invokes Venus and Hymen; praises love for grace beyond his deserts, offers "lauda", "reverence" for Love's "excellence"; he kisses Cris., seeks his reward, swears fidelity. (AW)

1303-9: Cris., in simpler terms, welcomes him;

1310-47: 'Occupatio' and apology for inadequacy to portray night's bliss.

1338-65: Each assures the other of reality of their 'dream'.

1366-72: Exchange of rings; Cris. gives brooch with ruby inset.

(B) Bocc. and Beauvau place scene at point corresponding to end of Ch.'s Book II. The only correspondences in subject-matter are references to new brides being shamefaced, the large amount of lovers' prattle, and the sun rising earlier than usual. The love in Bocc. is almost wholly sensual or emotional; Ch. supplies physical detail of embrace, but also religious and philosophical element.

(AV) T.C. III 1261-67 may be suggested by Fil. III 79.
1373-93: Poet's curse on misers and those despising love. (largely Bocc.)

1394-1407: Talk over love; "hevynesse turned to gladness; past woe balanced by present joy." (Bocc. last part)

Some allowances must be made for the fact that the subject-matter of this passage is intrinsically more interesting, that it would be dramatically wrong for the earlier passage to have the same intensity of feeling and that its subject-matter does not lend itself to anything comparable to the strains of imagery which contribute so much to the surpassing beauty of the later one, such as the images of birds, Criseyde as the lark, Troilus the sparrowhawk, Criseyde's speech like the nightingale's song (this a most felicitous allusion to the real song of the nightingale under her window when she was deciding whether to accept Troilus). In a passage full of imagery there are other natural ones, such as the lovers twining like the woodbine, several on disease and death, love being the remedy and a number comparing love to the joy of heaven. There are, however, some three respects in which they can be compared, much to the advantage of the later passage.

The first is in the way in which the analogy,

"What myghte or may the sely larke seye,
Whan that the sperhauk hath it in his foot?"

(1191-2)
expressed in two lines instead of the fourteen given to the 'Bayard the horse' analogy and its application in Book I, has a far greater imaginative relevance to its context. The sparrowhawk, conventional image of the nobleman, evokes a picture of triumph, of the successful lover and of grace; it is also relevant to the speech of Troilus, calling for surrender, shortly afterwards. (1206-8) The lark suggests beauty, melody, fragility and perhaps a certain helplessness, characteristic of Criseyde, as well as blending with the later bird-image. The analogy has too a greater relevance, as it introduces a passage in which the imagery of birds, plants and the feast, together with Troilus' invocation of Venus, and the physical detail of love-making, will form a significant contrast to the religious vocabulary and Troilus' invocation of divine Charity (in the same breath as Venus).

How frequent this use of religious terms is may be gauged from the fact that "God" is used six times, "heaven" thrice, "bliss" four times, "blisful" twice,
"grace" three times, "laude" once and "reverence" twice.

More important is the way in which some of these words are woven into patterns. Thus the first closing couplet,

(I moot) "After myn auctour, tellen hire gladnesse,
As wel as I have told hire hevyness"

finds an echo near the end of the scene, in

"....but al swich hevynesse,
I thank it God, was torned to gladnesse",

(1399-1400)

to be followed by the same statement in different words,

"For to recoveren blisse and ben at eise,
And passed wo with joie contrepies."

(1406-7)

These couplets which come at the beginning and end of the scene, indicate one of its three major themes, the way in which joy is proportionate to the sorrow it succeeds. (The latter part of the poem will show how true is the converse.)

The second theme is the power of love to bind, illustrated in terms of the natural world by the imagery of the woodbine and the birds and the literal description of love, and in spiritual terms by Troilus' speech,

"Benigne Love, thow holy bond of thynges" (1261 ff.)

In the same speech occur expressions which not only illustrate the third theme, the affinity between love and

(BE) 1262, 1269, 1349.
(BD) 1273.
(BC) 1273, 1326.
worship, but show Chaucer's word-craft in another way.

"Benigne Love, thow holy bond of thynges,
Who so wol grace, and list the nought honoure, 
Lo, his desir wol fle withouten wynges, 
For noldestow of bownte hem socoure
That serven best and most alwey laboure, 
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn certes, 
But if thy grace passed oure desertes.

"And for thow me, that leest koude disserve 
Of hem that nombred ben unto thi grace, 
Hast holpen, ther I likly was to sterve, 
And me bistowed in so heigh a place 
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace, 
I kan nemore; but laude and reverence 
Be to thi bounte and thyn excellence!"

And therwithal Criseyde anon he kiste, 
Of which certein she felte no disese, 
And thus seyde he, "Now wolde God I wiste, 
Myn swete herte, how I yow myghte plese."

The 'occupatio' a few stanzas further on is followed by an apology in which the author associates the two kinds of love by the simple repetition of the words "reverence" and "excellence":

"And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle, 
That is so heigh that al ne kan I telle!"

"But soth is, though I kan nat tellen, al 
As kan myn auctour, of his excellencie, 
Yet have I seyd, and God toforn, and shal, 
In every thyng, al holy his sentence; 
And if that ich, at Loves reverence, 
Have any word in eched for the beste, 
Doth therwithal ryght as yourselven leste." (1322-30)

One might mention also the way in which the references to kisses link the separate sections, coming after the embrace (1252), after the speech on Love (1275), being exchanged after the simple but moving speeches in which Criseyde

(BF) Fil. III 34.
assures Troilus of the reality of the experience (1350-53), and being given by Troilus at the end, shortly before dawn is described (1403). The link is of some importance because each section has its own vocabulary, the first being the language of the body, sensual:

"Hire armes smale, hir streghte bak and softe,
Hire sydes longe, flesshly, smothe and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte
Hire snowiishe throte, hire brestes round and lite,"

(1247-50)

the second, as already pointed out, the language of religion, spiritual, and the third the simple Anglo-Saxon monosyllables used so often by Chaucer for basic human feelings,

"Troilus said' 'O deere herte, may it be
That it be soth, that ye ben in this place?'
'Ye, herte myn, God thank I of his grace" (1347-49)

The religious allusion in the last line quoted acts as another link. There is, therefore, a kind of verbal decorum which demands a different choice of words in a different context, as in the passage from Book I, but here the repeated sacramental act of love, the kiss, and the allusion to another aspect of love, supply a linkage not found in the earlier passages.

That Chaucer intended to refer to the earlier passage in writing of "cares colde" (III 1202, 1260) seems quite

(cf. I 264, IV 1692, V 1342, 1747. Phrase only found 4 times in Ch. outside TC.)
possible. It is much less likely that by inserting
"the white and ek the rede" (1384) in the lines about the
(BI)
folly of misers who despise love, he intended to refer back
(BJ)
to "And swote smellen floures white and rede" (I 156).
One cannot say, however, what limits there were to his
powers of memory and of perceiving relationships.

The chief difference that anyone sensitive to rhythm
must notice is the greater power, certainty and resource
of the rhythms to be heard in the second passage. Compare,
for example, this stanza on Love

"And trewelich it sit wel to be so.
For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed;
And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
With love han ben comforted moost and esed,
And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed,
And worthi folk maad worthier of name,
And causeth moost to dreden vice and shame."

(I 246-52)

This has a pleasing chime in the assonance of 'trewelich'
and 'therwith', and the recurring feminine rhymes of
'pleased', 'esed', 'apesed' and the probable half-rhyme of
'aldermost' and 'moost', while the breaking up of the stanza
rhythmically by 'And they' and 'And ofte' enables the
divisions of its thought to be easily perceived aurally.

Does it, however, sing itself like:

"Benigne Love, / thow holy bond / of thynges,
Whoso wol grace, / and list the nought / honoureyn"?

(1261-2)

(BI) Fil. III 38.
(BJ) Line by Ch., not found in Bocc. or Beauvau.
The spell these lines cast over one listener, at least, is due not only to their content but to the combination of the rhythmic echo of the three phrases in the first line by the corresponding three phrases in the second (as marked above) with the faint echoes of consonants in 'benigne', 'bona' and 'thynges' in the one line by 'nought' and 'honouren' in the next, as well as the link of 'thynges', 'grace', 'list' and 'nought'. The third line's caesura breaks the melody,

"Lo, his desir wol fle withouten wynges"

but in the fourth and fifth a fresh pattern of echoes is heard,

"For noldestow / of bownte hem so couren
That seruen best / and most alwey labouren". (1264-5)

The last two lines have faintly echoing eleventh syllables such as we have already heard, but now there is a decisive contrast between a sharply-broken sixth line, in whose two equal halves the pitch in each case rises to a final climax, and a virtually unstopped final line marked by the exquisite echoes of 'grace', 'passed' and 'desertes':

"Yet were we lost, / that dar I wel seyn certes,
But if thi grace passed cure desertes."

(1266-7)

The consonants echoing here 'st', 't', 'ss' have been heard in previous lines.

Or consider whether the previous passage's sole piece of speech, that of Troilus, has anything like the blend of
different speech rhythms and cadences in Criseyde's reply to the declaration of fidelity. Here is Troilus,

"I have herd told, pardieux, of youre lyvyng, Ye loveres, and youre lewed observaunces, And which a labour folk han in wynnynge Of love, and in the kepyng which doutaunces; And whan youre prey is lost, woo and penaunces. O veray foolcs, nyce and blynde be ye! Ther nys nat oon kan war by other be." (I 197-203)

This, one hastens to say, is a good specimen of Chaucerian speech, which conveys a living voice by the shift of caesurae, the similar rhythms of the second and fourth lines following the grammatical pattern of the sentence and the epigrammatic comment of the couplet, even though the last line stumbles. It is, however, prosaic beside Criseyde's

"Iwys, 'quod she,' myn owen hertes list, My ground of ese, and al myn herte deere, Gramercy, for on that is al my trist! But lat us falle away fro this matere, For it suffiseth, this that seyd is here, And at o word, withouten repentaunce, Welcome, my knyght, my pees, my suffisaunce!"

(III 1303-1309)

One need hardly point out how the lovely flow of half-lines is broken by 'gramercy', how the accented 'that' and 'al' are followed by the fall of 'my trist', how the dramatic change of the fourth line is marked by the accent on 'falle away' and the virtual lack of pause, and how the rather stark monosyllables of 'this that seyd is here' and the cry of 'Welcome' stand out dramatically from the context. The cadence of the last line is, however, one of the loveliest things in Chaucer, so that it is easy to
overlook the way 'suffiseth' and 'suffisaunoe' enclose the statement of the blessed reality of the present, which Criseyde is concerned to make in reply to Troilus' declaration about the future. The rhetorical 'repetitio' of 'my' adds to the beauty of the line, a reminder that we can too easily dismiss Chaucer's rhetorical training as valueless.

This passage, then, has as wide a range of material as the first, and in it almost all Chaucer's possible styles are found, but there is despite all its diversity a far greater degree of unity and concentration. If it be argued that this is an emotional climax and that the mere fact of the situation facilitates unity, one can but turn to an episode in the last book involving more than two people and more than one place, to show how "Troilus and Criseyde" acquires power and coherence as the poet feels and imagines his way into his story.

(c) V 8-196 (27 stanzas); Fil. V 1-14.

8-14: Sun rises on day of separation, three years after love began; (BK)

15-21: Diomede ready to lead Criseyde, her anguish: (Bocc. 4 lines)

22-56: Troilus waits sorrowfully(Bocc.); will see her no more (Ch.);
Tr. hides sorrow (Bocc.); could hardly sit his horse for sorrow as he waited by gate with others (Ch.);

(BK) Bocc. has three years after war began.
In his anger, Tr. asks himself repeatedly why he endures separation instead of abducting her; his answer, that he does not want her slain. 

57-63: Cris. sighs at leaving Tr. (Bocc.); has no remedy (Ch.)

64-91: Tr. and Knights go some way down valley; Cris. exchanged for Antenor, whom Tr. embraces; Tr. takes leave, imploring Cr. to return and not cause him to die; Tr. turns away; his silence noted by Dio. (Bocc.) (Ch.) (BD)

92-105: Dio. leads Cris. by bridle, decides to speak, and take his opportunity; yet he will not broach topic of love, in case her mind is on Tr. (Bocc.) (Ch.)

106-75: Dio. speaks at random on various topics, feeling his way; tries to find cause of her sorrow, praises Greeks offers friendship; offers brotherhood; points out that both nations serve God of Love; assures her of his previous innocence of love; offers her his service as knight. (Ch.)

176-89: Cris., barely listening, answers little, sees Calkas; Cris. thanks Dio. (Ch.)

190-96: Calkas kisses Cris. twenty times (Ch.); (BM) Cris. is silent and meek (Bocc.) (BN) (BL) Fil. V 12 "non mi far morire", followed by Beauvau. Bocc. has Dio attracted by Cris.

(BM) Fil. V 14 "con gran festa".

(BN) Fil. "tacita e modesta". Ch.'s details follow Benoit "R. de Tr." 13713-19, but Ch. less emotional.
Chaucer omits Criseyde's indignant speech announcing her intention to offer no more sacrifices to Jove until she is re-united with Troilus, and saying as she goes with Diomedes that they have shown themselves enough to people who offer women in exchange for distinguished captives. This would, of course, be out of keeping with her character, as he portrays it. Otherwise, he is faithful to his original, adding lines only, apparently, to fill stanzas, until the invention of Diomedes's speech and the addition of realistic details of Criseyde's meeting with her father. His addition of the details of Troilus being hardly able to sit his horse, though presumably intended to make Troilus a more 'human' figure, almost destroys any impression created of self-control.

The passage offers some basis for comparison with that in Book I, which described the first meeting of Troilus and Criseyde. From the opening stanza this episode is more coherently narrated than the one in Book I. As a look at the analysis will show, the narrative here does not switch about so much from one person to another, or one topic to another. In fact, there are signs of care being taken to avoid needless switching of attention. In the middle of (BO) Fil. V 6-7.
his speech, Diomede says,

"And nere it that we ben so neigh the tente
Of Calcas, which that sen us bothe may," (148-9)

where there could have been a pause for description of
Calcas watching, and a moment later, Diomede says,

"Yeve me youre hond", (152)

instead of something like 'He took her hand', with
perhaps description of Criseyde's look.

Secondly, the stanzas describing Criseyde (15-21) has
five lines ending in the same rhyme ('Diomede', 'lede',
'blede', 'rede', 'rede') followed by a general comment on
her sadness; similarly the following one (22-8) describing
Troilus, has five half-rhymes ('loore', 'forlore', 'more',
'more', 'herebifore') followed again by a couplet
containing a general comment on his sadness. Shortly
after comes one of the few noticeable examples in the poem
of 'conduplicatio', the series of questions beginning
"Why nyl I" (40-49) followed soon after by another one,
the series of 'And's (77-83) as Antenor is exchanged.
There is thus here a degree of deliberate formalism. The
atmosphere changes at once with,

"This Diomede, that ledde hire by the bridel" (92)

and, soon after,

"This Diomede, as he that koude his goode" (106)

Manly, "Ch. & Rhetoricians" p. 15, comments that in
TC, Ch. was returning to rhetorical manner.
Fil. V 4 series of rhetorical questions beginning
"Perche ..."
as one realises that a masterful personality is in command. The poet thus shows a greater control over his material than in the early passage.

He shows it, thirdly, by the way his syntax is varied to suit the immediate purpose. Diomede's thoughts, to himself, beginning,

"...Al my labour shal nat ben on ydel,
If that I may, for somwhat shal I seye.
For at the worste it may yet shorte oure waye.
I have herd seyd ek tymes twyes twelve,
'He is a fool that wole foryete hymselfe'" (94-8)

reveal his purposefulness in the short, terse clauses and the final pithy alliterative sayings. When, however, he is described as talking of various subjects in order to find some starting-point for his approach to Criseyde, the syntax is vaguer and more diffuse:

"This Diomede, as he that koude his good,
Whan this was don, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and exed whi she stood
In swich disease, and gan hire ek biseche,
That if that he encresse myghte or eche
With any thyng hire ese, that she sholde
Commaunde it hym, and seyde he don it wolde."

(106-12)

Soon, he is speaking, presumptuously indeed, but in coherent and persuasive sentences:

"And by the cause I swor yow right, lo, now,
To ben youre frend, and helply, to my myght,
And for that more aquayntaunce ek of yow
Have ich had than another straunger myght,
So fro this forth, I pray yow, day and night,
Commaundeth me, how sore that me smerte,
To don al that may like unto youre herte." (127-33)
Thus the sentence-formation is adapted to its purposes, though it is fair to point out that Diomede is anything but his clear-headed self in his final sentence:

"But myghte me so faire a grace falle,  
That ye me for youre servant wolde calle,  
So lowely ne so trewely yow serve  
Nil non of hem, as I shal, til I sterve." (172-75)

In lines 126-7, quoted above, occurs a possible reference to line 17, "For sorwe of which she felt hire herte blede" and certainly one to lines 62-3,

"What wonder is, though that hire sore smerte,  
Whan she forgoth hire owen sweete herte?"

Referring us further back, to the first meeting of Troilus and Criseyde, in fact, are the description of spring-time and the mention of the Knights accompanying Troilus, but the latter parallel is suggested perhaps by Boccaccio.

A final indication of the greater feeling for style in this passage than in the first one discussed is the gradual increase in the number of terms from the vocabulary of courtly love in Diomede's speech. In his first three stanzas (120-40) he uses the language of friendship or brotherhood, the only courtly love term being "commaundeth me" (132). Shortly afterwards comes the "God of Love" (142) (followed by the appalling inversion 'for love of God') and "yow serve" (146). After the presumed handshake, when they are standing near Calchas' tent, the language of love rushes

(ES) Fil. V 10, "compagni".
out in a flood, "paramours", "my lady deere", "myn owen lady bryght" and so on. Soon he is declaring that (unlike Troilus) he will not strive against the God of Love, but obey him. Rarely has a literary lover proceeded with such speed! If we accept the dramatic probability of the rapid courtship, we must admit the skill with which the appropriate vocabulary is introduced.

Although there is not time or space here for a thoroughgoing comparison of Book I with the later books, it is hoped that this detailed comparison of the three passages will show how the early one falls short of the others in coherence, expression and rhythmic power and resource, and so go some way towards accounting for the boredom one can sometimes feel in reading Book I and the far greater interest of even a less probable episode in Book V. Undoubtedly Chaucer intended Troilus' courtship to proceed in a less headlong manner than it did in "Il Filostrato", and there may even have been good reasons for not reaching the centre of the story in the opening reading of a long poem; it is, however, most unlikely that he would have intended the chief scene of his opening book to be intrinsically less coherent and interesting than the key scenes of later books.
III Detailed Study of Selected Passages

When considering a number of separate episodes in the poem, it is tempting to abbreviate a necessarily lengthy discussion by treating the elements of Chaucer's art, conversation, imagery and so on under those headings, illustrating remarks about conversation, for example, from the passages in which various kinds of dialogue are evident. Though this method is elsewhere used because of the limitations of space, it must here be rejected. Chaucer at his best usually employs a number of features of his style in combination - even the absence of one of them would be significant - and, moreover, generalisations about his imagery, or characterization through speech-rhythms, carry more conviction when the scenes involved are in the mind in their totality. Professor Empson remarks that "understanding a poem is constructing it in one's own mind". As a number of scenes are discussed, one hopes that Chaucer's spirit, wherever it may be housed, will not be provoked to mirth because the wrong scenes are being constructed.

The scenes involved, which, broadly, involve all the features of the poet's art on which I wish to comment afterwards, are:

The fragile, virginal beauty of this scene must touch any sensitive reader, yet close examination reveals the song, as well as the dream, to be both carefully constructed and vital to an understanding of the poem as a whole.

Nowhere else does Chaucer say so little about a character, as he does of Antigone, yet leave so haunting an impression on the mind; the Old Man in the "Pardoner's Tale" is mysterious yet he is described. Here we have nothing but a song and a few words of delicious pretended reproof, quintessentially feminine:

"I have, God woot, a large feeld to eere, and wayke ben the oxen in my plow."

II - 813-931 Antigone's song

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"Do wey, do wey, they woot no thynge of thi!
Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is
Aught faire in hevene (why? for they kan telle),
And axen fenes is it foul in hell."  

(127)

Antigone haunts one because she is a thing of mystery. She leaves us with questions which she does not answer, or questions to which we can give two answers. What is love like? Ask the lovers, who will tell you as clearly as the beings in the next world will tell you. One's mind goes on exploring the implications: can the unsuccessful lovers speak with authority? Can even the successful lovers really tell you? Moreover, Antigone herself is a question to which no answer is given. Why is she singing? She seems to represent something, yet what? Her mystery is thus twofold, on the one hand a matter of ambiguous suggestion, on the other one of symbolisation. She is created by the two aspects of Chaucer's art, each of which in turn critics tend to overlook or deny, word and picture, rhetoric and imagery, the mind and the imagination.

The verses do not say very much. Their argument moves in a circle. (i) I am love's subject. (ii) My lover is attentive. (iii) He is an ideal lover. (iv) I should be grateful. (v) Only those who do not know love can call it slavery. (vi) It can hurt as the sun can burn. (vii) Yet I will love to the end, for ever.
Chaucer borrowed ideas first, yet his borrowing showed original genius, for the song is perfect in its place in the English of this poem, perfect in its rhetoric, its music, its imagery and its application.

This third verse is an example of 'circumlocutio', expanding the concept of the ideal lover. It also exhibits 'conduplicatio' and 'exclamatio', and inversion as well as the conventional metaphors which were part of love-poetry:

"As he that is the welle of worthynesse,
Of trouthe grownd, mirour of goodlihed,
Of wit Apollo, stoon of sikerness,
Of vertue roote, of lust fynder and hed,
Thourgh which is alle sorwe fro me ded,-
Iwisle I love hym best, so doth he me;
Now good thrift have he, wherso that he be!" (841-7)

This would, one imagines, go well with music, because a number of lines have a marked caesura in the middle and a principal stress at the end of the first half-line ('grownd', 'roote', 'best'), even perhaps its alliterative phrases and its half-lines rhythmically echoing each other ('of wit apollo', 'of vertue roote'). The last two lines, despite the pleasing fall at the end, are banal; the imagery is conventional, a re-hashing of what had been said countless times. So is the imagery of the rest of the song, the metaphors of love as feudal service, ('humble subjit', 'for everemo, my hertes lust to rente' 828, 830) as a religious cultus with its god and its bliss, of love as the sun, that

(BU) N.b. also balancing halves and rhet. questns. of II 862-68.
warms yet burns. Place the song in its context, however, and it becomes original, perhaps unique. Criseyde has just been alternately congratulating herself on her liberty, saying:

"I am myn owenewoman, wel at ese" (750)

her liberty to love "this knyght, that is the worthieste" (761), yet her face has next moment been overshadowed as by a cloud

"....when the sonne shyneth brighte
In March" (764-5)

"So that for feere almost she han to falle" (770)
at the thought,

"Shoulde I now love, and put in jupartie
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?" (772-3).

So, as "hire herte quaketh" (809) blowing hot and cold, comes this song with its images of this very knight as the rock, the ground, the sun, the unfailing spring of goodness; how perfectly the final lines speak to her condition, with their promise "that it shal evere laste", their epitome of the transition from fear to security, which chiefly she desires:

"Al dredde I first to love hym to bigynne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne." (874-5)

There are in the song other features, which lead us to the rest of the scene, indeed of the poem. It does, as already indicated, put and answer Criseyde's own inward
arguments against love, even down to using words like (BV) 'thraldom' (856). It touches on the ennobling effect of love observable in Troilus (851-2) and by a series of references, ironic and otherwise, it alludes to this particular love-affair. The words 'my deere herte', 'myn owen knyght' are those used later by Criseyde at the consummation of the love, and the analogy drawn at the end between asking one to describe the "blisse of love" (889) and asking a saint to describe heaven, as well as the phrases "that it shal ever laste" and "No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen" point clearly forward to the Epilogue and back to the opening Proem.

At another level, such phrases as the "welle of worthynesse" or such lines as:

"Whom shulde I thanken but yow, god of Love,
Of al this blisse in which to bathe I gynne?"

(848-9)

combine with the "blosmy bowes" (821) to remind us that this garden is a Park of Love as described in the "Parlement of Fowles" and earlier in the "Roman de la Rose", its metaphors derived from the symbolism of the

(BV) Cf. "thrallen libertee" II 773.
(BW) v. discussion of Proem I, p. 193 and Epilogue p. 196 below.
(BX) v. FF 183-294 and p. 64-5 above.
(BY) For references to RR., v. Robinson's note to PF 127 ff.
dream-vision, its well the ever-creative force of love. The singer is, as it were, a temptress, invoking youth and desire and joy to the undecided widow.

In yet another way the author is working to indicate symbolically the yielding, and the later tragedy, of Criseyde. The nightingale who sings outside the window is later metaphorically used to picture Criseyde at the consummation. The singer gives her heart's "lust" (joy? wish?) as a rent to the god of Love, and sings of

"My deere herte, and al my owen knyght
In which myn herte growen is so faste" (871-2)

while in her dream the white eagle who represents Troilus plucks out her heart and puts in his. The singer is "trewe in myn entente" (828) as Criseyde afterwards hearkened to the bird "in good entente". The words of the song, the setting of the garden, the bird outside and the eagle in the dream thus combine to foreshadow the future, the surrender and the exchange of hearts after which the very bond which is then her joy and her spring will later be her shame when it is betrayed. Love of this intensity is valueless if it does not last.

Thus "Antigone the shene", Antigone "the white", who has been taught the song, as she says ambiguously, by

"......the goodliestemayde
Of gret estat in al the town of Troye,
And let hire lif in moste honour and joye" (880-2)

(BZ) Prob. Helen, but may be Criseyde.
is at once Criseyde's sister, an elusive figure of
girlhood, and in a sense Criseyde herself, or at least a
personification of her present fears, her future resolution
of them and commitment. All this is achieved by freely
adapting a song.

There are lovely things in this passage to which no
attention has been drawn, such as the cadence and sound
of the lines describing the nightingale's song, but in the
two previous stanzas we see some of the best and worst of
Chaucer. The whiteness of Antigone, contrasting with the
green of the garden, has been noticed. Now at dusk,
"white thynges waxen dymme and donne" (908) after sunset.
How perfect this is! Antigone, whose going is not
mentioned, simply fades into the dusk, the vagueness and
gentleness of which this line so simply and perfectly
catches. The moon rises on Criseyde who is alone.

Yet as well as such a vapid line as,
"And voiden weren thei that voiden oughte" (912)
there is a pointless series of 'denominationes' ended by
a self-mockery quite out of place in the context, in

"The dayes honour, and the hevenes ye;  
The nyghtes foo - althis clepe I the sonne" (904-5)

which many lesser poets would not have written.

II 1492-1737  Feigned sickness of Troilus

This scene is dominated by Pandarus, who speaks 105 of

(CA) i.e. metonymies, on the use of which, in TC.,
v. Meech, "Design in Ch.'s 'Troilus'"
its 265 lines. He is here at his most mercurial and inventive; indeed there is hardly a dialogue scene in Chaucer to approach this for charm, humour and adroitness. Even Troilus joins in the fun, showing a ready wit one would not have suspected in him. The Narrator, whose appearances are quite frequent hereabouts, is also in good spirit.

Pandarus, as the most accomplished negotiator in the tale, fittingly shows no less sense of 'decorum' in speaking than does 'Nature' in the "Parlement of Fowles". His preliminary instructions to Troilus have the urgency, the brief monosyllabic phrases given shape by their similar beginnings, and the exclamatory bark, of a general giving instructions the day before a battle:

"Now is tyme, if that thow konne,
To bere the wel tomorwe, and al is wonne.

"Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleyne;
Lat nought for nyce shame, or drede, or slouthe!"

(1497-1500)

(The instructions themselves, for that matter, suggest acting experience.) Like a good general, he frames and answers possible questions from his troops. Pandarus, however, goes one further, for when framing an imaginary question by Troilus,

".....! How sholde I don al this?
For by my cheres mosten folk aspie
That for hire love is that I fare amys;
Yet hadde I levere unwist for sorwe dye!"

(1506-9)
he speaks in almost unbroken lines, but marks the return to his own persona by resuming his own brisk staccato rhythm, as well as his own practical thoughts:

"Now thynk nat so, for thou dost gret folie" (1510) though he speaks less jerkily afterwards.

To Deiphebus his style is quite different, being deferential, even hesitant, the question being built up over several lines:

"......'Wol ye gon, If it youre wille be, as I youe preyde, To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?'" (1601-3) with two parentheses indicating subservience before the suggestion. His confidence comes back when addressing "My lordes and my ladys," and his public manner is aptly indicated by the line used later to describe the Pardoner's preaching,

"He rong hem out a procès lik a belle" (1615) with apparently similarly excitatory effects upon the audience.

The fun is heightened by Pandarus' mixture of courteous explanation, in short phrases, and of orders reiterated, when he is keeping the majority out of the 'sick-room'. The explanation is done in fluent rhythms:

""......the chaumbre is but lite, And fewe folk may lightly make it warm" (1646-7) while the orders come in barks "Now loketh ye" (1648, 1652).

(CB) Pard. Prol. 1. 331 ("rynge it out as round as gooth a belle").
One smiles also at the assumed hesitancy in the first line, of which the first and third parts repeat the same modest remark, and at the 'double entendre' in the fourth line, of:

"I sey for me, best is, as I kan knowe,
That no wight in ne wente but ye tweye,
But it were I, for I kan in a throwe
Reherce hire cas unlik that she kan seye" (1653-6)
as indeed he can! This speech, so casual, shows in its repetitions of turns of phrase, that it is carefully constructed, and not less so in its caesurae which throw the chief accent probably on to 'for me!', 'were I', 'I', 'she'.

To Criseyde, who, like the crowd at the party, was "All innocent of Pandarus entente" (1723, cf. 1665), he is at first lofty and authoritative, in his numerous imperatives and his 'thonken humblely':

"Rys, take with youre nece Antigone,
Or whom yow list ............ ..........
....com forth with me
and loke that ye thonken humblely
Hem alle thre" ...........

(1716-20)

but once she is in, he begins to use a kind of aureate style marked not only by longer and smoother sentences and rhythms, but by a vocabulary appropriate to love:

"Nece, I conjure and heighly yow defende,
On his half which that soule us alle sende,
And in the vertu of corones tweyne,
Sle naught this man, that hath for you this peyne."

(1733-6)

A moment later, however, he can be imagined digging her in
ribs and pushing her in with his "Fy" and his repeated "com of" (1738, 1742, 1750) and his idioms from common speech, his

"While folk is blent, lo, al the tyme is wonne"
(1743)

and his picture of the "titeryng, and pursuyte, and delayes" (1744) which horseplay obviously went on among lovers at the time and which then, as now, betrayed the beginning of love. His "Lest tyme I loste, I dar nought with yow dele" and "bryngeth hym to hele!" (1749-50) stretches comic irony to its furthest point, beyond which it would topple over into farce, for Troilus is, literally, feigning sickness, and Pandarus is keeping up the deception, yet metaphorically he is sick, the state of unrequited love often being described in this way, with the lady as the "leche" who would bring her suitor "hele". The effect on Troilus of Criseyde's eventual yielding will be a gain in vigour and power, so that Pandarus is, knowingly, speaking both falsehood and truth at once.

In this scene, however, Pandarus has a rival, both in variety of speech and forcefulness of character. To Criseyde Helen speaks first in a syntactically confused series of short exclamations of indignation and sympathy that remind one of Shakespeare's Paulina:

".....Joves lat hym nevere thryve,
That doth yow harm, and brynge hym soone of lyve,
And yeve me sorwe, but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe!" (1607-10)
Woman's logic, indeed, truth being 'the attitude which suits my friends', with a vigorous stress perhaps on the ends of phrases 'never thryve', 'soone of lyve' and 'sorwe' in which one can almost hear the Wife of Bath. The question on a rising note is still expressive of indignation, as it is here in:

"Woot ought my lord, my brother, this matere, I meene Ector? or woot it Troilus?" (1626-7)

It is comic, but hardly surprising, that he has to stop this vehement amazon in mid-career with his "Ye, but wole yet now me here?" (1628) for if she went on his plot would go no further. Once in the 'sick-room', however, she is all womanly sympathy and encouragement, urging Troilus to get better and rise, and pleading for Criseyde in a long sentence full of parentheses and again conveying by its somewhat confused syntax the feminine emotionalism already indicated:

"We yow biseke, 
My deere brother, Deiphebus, and I, 
For love of God - and so doth Pandare eke - 
To ben good lord and frend, right hertely, 
Unto Criseyde, which that certeynly 
Receyveth wrong, as woot weel here Pandare, 
That kan hire cas wel bet than I declare." (1674-80)

It is, none the less, the emotionalism of a cultivated lady, essentially courteous in attitude, and speaking in a sentence of upper-class complexity, not the disconnected style of the lower orders in the Debate in the "Parlement of Fowles".

(CC) See above, p. 73-4
This difference between the educated and the uneducated is less obvious in the indignant remarks of the other guests after Pandarus' harangue. If these were inserted into one of the other tales as speech of the common people, the critic might be congratulating Chaucer on the ear for common speech shown in remarks like:

"Anhonged be swich oon, were he my brother! And so he shal, for it ne may nought varien!" (1620-21)

Perhaps the only conclusive way to establish whether he does in fact discriminate between educated mobs and uneducated ones is at a later stage to compare these remarks with those of the parliamentarians and compare them with lower-class speech in other poems.

The editors are surely justified in punctuating the speeches of Pandarus and Troilus in such a way as to bring out orally the difference between them. If the two stanzas when they speak together be examined (1520-30) it will be found that Pandarus' virtually unstopped lines are his first and third, his second, fourth and fifth having a pronounced medial caesura, while in Troilus' brilliant repartee the second and fourth lines have almost no pause. It is conceivable that this would help listeners to be aware of the change of speaker, though it is more likely that Chaucer heard the difference in his imagination than that he consciously intended to place his caesurae as a
musician would place his rests.

The final actor in this bewitching scene is the Narrator. He uses the 'occupatio' to suggest to the imagination what is impossible to state in words, the fuss that Troilus and Deiphbeus made to convince onlookers of the illness (1541-7). He apologises for his slowness,

"But fie we now prolixitee best is" (1564) although he has been preparing the audience for the joke they are to have at the expense of Helen, who,

".......com to dyner in hire pleyne entente. But God and Pandare wist al what this mente." (1560-1)

He then urges himself to hurry up,

"For love of God, and lat us faste go Right to th'effect, withouten tales mo". (1565-6)

He then intervenes to add, to the extravagant praise of Troilus in which the guests had been outbidding each other, that Pandarus

"...naught forgat hire preisyng to conferme" (1589) thus improving the joke at the guests' expense, and possibly his audience's.

After another intervention to point out his own slowness (1595-6) and another reminder of how he is lingering (1622) little is heard of the Narrator until the sudden unexpected grimness of the letter which Troilus gave Helen and Deiphbeus to read and give their opinions,
so that he could advise Hector:

"If swych a man was worthi to ben ded,
Woot I nought who; but in a grisly wise
He preyede hem anon on it avyse."    (1699-1701)

What concerns us here, from a stylistic point of view, is
the lightness with which this topic is introduced, and its
probable effect on the audience. Are we reading into
this the humane attitude we have, of course, imbibed in
this twentieth century about executions, or would "Woot I
nought who" remind the audience of the power wielded by
this young lover feigning sickness, this woman whose
emotions are so easily played upon? The words like
'grisly' and 'he preyede hem ......avyse', the fact that
Hector too wanted advice and the implication that this
would occupy them for a long time seem to suggest that the
poet is implying by a slight touch that behind the elegant
assembly with its court poets and its 'demandes d'amour'
lay the problems the audience knew of power and responsi-
bility. The topic is introduced too flippantly for Chaucer,
whose sympathy was readily aroused by the sight of a pale
face being hurried to execution, unless he meant some
such reminder of the outside world. The most lightly
spoken words in the whole scene are the most serious ones.

Finally, as in the "Knight's Tale", the Narrator
ends his instalment on a question, though a more forcibly
comic one:

"O myghty God, what shal he seye?"    (1757)

MLT. 645-50.
To see this scene as merely charming would be insensitive; to me, it seems one of the most richly comic Chaucer ever wrote, a brilliant imposture, with Narrator coming forward to point the joke in the direction of the audience. From a stylistic point of view it is remarkable because of the astonishing variety of different kinds of speech, for different purposes and expressing different moods, which Chaucer managed to enclose within very regular iambic metre and within the same royal stanza.

Thus ends the Second Book. Though it has nothing to compare with the lingering intensity of the love scene in Book III, it has perhaps the most brilliant scene of Troilus riding on his horse, the most subtle use of words and images, and the most coruscating humour.

III 50-217 Troilus' meeting with Criseyde

Chaucerians nowadays are so aware of the use of conventional rhetoric by the poet that there is some danger of the pointing out of rhetorical devices as an end in itself. On occasion, however, the awareness of rhetoric, indeed of any linguistic forms used, can lead us into the heart of an episode, making us aware of the nature of its action. Such is the case here, at least at the beginning.

The Narrator has already hinted to us that Troilus will have difficulty in finding words to express his love to Criseyde; after she has come in he points out that
Troilus can say nothing coherent, that:

".....he wex sodenliche red,

And sire, his lessoun, that he wende konne

To prayen hire, is thorugh his wit ironne."  (82-4)

How natural, and how delightful! But what was the
"lessoun"? It was a rhetorical exercise, a set speech, if
we are to trust the contours of the sentence in which his
learning is described:

".....thus wol I say, and thus;

Thus wol I pleyne unto my lady dere;

That word is good, and this shal be my shere;

This nyl I nought forysten in no wyse."  (52-5)

The repetitions hint at 'conduplicatio', there is the
conscious choice of words, and the set speech he is
"recordynge" (51).

When Criseyde comes, we have the reference back to the
closing question of the preceding book, in "Wher me be wo,
O myghty God, thou woost", before he begins his oration,
in quite conventional terms:

"Ye, swete herte? alas, I may nought rise,

To knele and do yow honour in some wyse."  (69-70)

Then the silence, and the blush, as soon as he hears her
voice, pronouncing its formal homage and thanks for benefits
allegedly conferred. At this point the Narrator's comment
points the joke of the lover who forgets his rhetoric as
soon as his lady speaks, a situation doubtless familiar to
the audience. All he can manage is a twice-exclaimed
"Mercy". (98).
A tracing of the sentences used by the characters would reveal their changing moods and intentions even if Chaucer had been a dramatist instead of a narrative poet. Thus after his stammering exclamation and subsequent silence ("and stynte a while" 99), Troilus recovers power of speech as, his rhetoric forgotten, he begins to speak earnestly, from the heart, at first in short phrases with pauses between:

"....God woot, / for I have, 
As ferforthly as I have had konnynge, 
Ben youres al, / God so my soule save,/
And shal, til that I, / woful wight, /'be grave!"

and later in a more shapely sentence with more fluent rhythm and enjambment, succeeded by a melodious closing couplet:

"Thus muche as now, O wommanliche wif, 
I may out brynge, and if this yow displese, 
That shal I wreke upon my owen lif 
Right soone, I trowe, and do youre herte an ese, 
If with my deth youre wreththe I may apese, 
But syn that ye han herd me somewhat seye, 
Now recche I nevere how soone that I deye." (96-112)

The very even flow of the closing couplet, not to mention the near-rhymes of 'now', 'yow', 'owen', and 'trowe', or 'deth' and 'wreththe' or the recurrence of the 'thus muche', 'this' and 'that' of his rehearsal, would give the impression of the way he recovers his presence of mind. A look at the structure of the sentences in which he makes his vows of love (127-47) shows them to be exquisitely balanced and blended. Thus after the rhetorical question in which Troilus takes up Criseyde's remark (127), there follows a complex sentence, the first half of which leads up to the
action requested of Criseyde, "Ye wolde somtyme frendly
on me see" and the second half, of equal length, begins
with the action proposed by Troilus "that I may ben he, ".
Then follow a series of suggestions for Criseyde,
"As to my lady right and chief resort"
and for Troilus,
"And I to han, right as yow list, comfort,
Under yowre yerde, egal to myn offence,
As deth, if that I breke youre defence" (136-8)
ending in a sustained sentence repeating all the knightly
virtues, and building up the 'conclusio' "Lo, this mene I".
A similar progression may be traced with Criseyde,
from her rather clumsy little sentence immediately after
the shock of going in to make a petition to a sick man and
receiving a declaration of love:
"I! what?" quod she, "by God and by my trouthe,
I not nat what ye wilne that I seye" (120-21)
to the balanced sentence in which she assures him of her
love, with its flowing iambics, its enjambement, its
antitheses and its alternation from the one protagonist
in the love relationship to the other:
"And shortly, deere herte and al my knight,
Beth glad, / and draweth yow to lustinesse,/
And I shal trewely, with al my myght,
Youre bitre tornen al into swetenesse; /
If I be she that may yow do gladnesse,
For every wo ye shal recover a blisse." (176-81)
Here, of course, is foreshadowed that constant suggestion
in the consummation scene of the movement from sorrow to gladness.

To recapitulate, the type of sentence used, its length, degree of organisation or balance, and the type of rhythmic movement within it are suited to the emotion of the speaker. As he modulates from agitation to calm so the sentences become longer, more flowing, more balanced. If writing poetry were the same kind of craft as running an army, or organising a pageant, one would say that Chaucer drew up a chart detailing the emotional modulations of each character in a scene, and indicating the type of sentence to be used. As it is, one wonders whether he did not first hear the character speaking within his own mind, the character developing his own style as he began to live within the poet's mind and later on the page.

The previous conversation, in Book II, for example, showed that Pandarus had the most vigorous and varied style of anyone. This is so here, too. From his opening solemn benediction "God do boot on al sykel!" (61) he is constantly acting, weeping, exclaiming "Wo bygon al hertes trewe!" (117) imploring,

"For love of God, make of this thing an ende......"

(118)
echoing Criseyde's agitated question "I! What?" (120, 122), reproaching in a passionate, almost incoherent, but

(CB) v. study of love-scene, p. 112 and also of Proems and Epilogue, pp. 193-6.
persuasive sentence, very appropriately invoking a pagan deity:

"Now, nece myn, by natal Joves feste,
Were I a god, ye sholden sterve as yerne,
That heren wel, this man wol nothing yerne
But youre honour, and sen hym almost sterve,
And ben so loth to suffren hym yow serve." (150-4)

When Criseyde has responded he is soon on his knees invoking Jove's daughter and giving thanks in what in another context would strike us as rather stately iambic lines, sentences echoing each other:

"Immortal god, "quod he", that mayst nought deyen,
Cupid, I mene, of this mayst glorifie;
And Venus, thow mayst maken melodie!" (185-7)

Within a second, however, he is beckoning and urging, in deliberately disjointed speech:

"But ho! namore as now of this matere;
For-whi this folk wol comen up anon,
That han the lettre red; lo, I hem here." (190-2)

The following sentences, however, seem a little too long-winded for this situation, with their

"....the Criseyde, and con,
And two, thow, Troilus" (193-4)

perhaps dictated by the exigencies of the rhyme scheme.

Later, of course, Chaucer used lines 190 and 187, or (OF) parts of them, in other contexts. What happens, as it seems, is that he forms a general conception of a character who is to be a consummate actor and full of nervous energy,

(CF) DFT. head-link 2767; PCT 9. Is F's use of 'Venus ....maken melodie' (187) Ch's first attempt at mock-heroic?
weeping, laughing, pointing, begging more intensely than anyone else. Characters do not come alive by being assigned various devices from the store-room of rhetoric; the poet mentally sees a living being, mentally hears him and by a kind of logic of the imagination the character's speech shapes itself so that it is different from another character's, at least in this scene, different from the same character's in the mood and situation of a moment ago. Yet they can only speak in terms the poet has heard their equivalents in real life use, or has long ago in the schoolroom been taught to use. Years, later, the Host will be in a similar situation to Pandarus', that of having to change the subject quickly, to stop someone in mid-flow, and will use the same line. (CG)

The actual choice of words, I think, is more deliberate. Here, the intention from the beginning seems to be to use the accepted terms of courtly love for Troilus' "lesson" ('ycleyn', 'Lady deere'), contrasting with the racy and vigorous vocabulary of the narrative ('quappe', 'ledde hire by the happe'), courtly love again for Troilus' set opening ('swete herte', 'dow yow honour'), rather inarticulate monosyllabic words for Pandarus' and Criseyde's comments (120-4) and eventually the full armoury of courtly love terms for Troilus' vow, feudal terms ('offence', (CG) NPT. loc. cit.)
'deigne', 'honoure', 'commaunden'), moral terms for the virtues of love (141-2, 144). It seems possible that a writer may in his imagination see the actions of a character, in his imagination hear the rise and fall, the flow and pause, of his voice, but choose his words by design from the various conventional vocabularies open to him, whether those of common life (Ang./Sax.) or of the court, (Lat.) the Church, or the field of war. As previously pointed out, the vocabularies of people and court lie side by side uneasily in his first poems, but here the blending is perfectly appropriate.

A final reminder of the decorum of the passage is that as one might expect, Troilus' speech is most full of alliteration, consonance, etc., the narrative the plainest in this regard, and that Pandarus, who exclaims and protests the most, has the most lines consisting entirely of monosyllables.

III 694-951 Preparation for love-scene

Of all the scenes in "Troilus and Criseyde" this offers perhaps the richest in variety of entertainment. It is the point at which the Chaucer of the vision of love, and the mocking creator of the Wife of Bath meet. Like several of these scenes it is enclosed by a kind of frame, Troilus' prayer for grace to "blisful Venus" (705) near the beginning, Pandarus' praise of Venus at the end (951).

(CH) v. above p. 19.
(CI) v. Appendix A.
Within this framework, there is almost everything narrative poetry has to offer: idealistic love-poetry of "hevene blisse" at the beginning, very soon an ever wilder burlesque, as Troilus invokes all the celestial seducers, a toppling over into the most uproarious humour as Pandarus comments cuttingly to the excited youth:

"Thow wrecched mouses herte; Artow agast so that she wol the bite", (736-7)
dialogue as brilliant and patterned as the scherzo of a symphony, imagery and symbolism as evocative as any in the poem, more than one kind of irony, some of it poignant in view of the later events (and one must remember that the original public for this poem would appreciate this, being aware of the later events) and a range of vocabulary which differentiates not so much the characters as the characters as they are at this moment.

Of the dialogue there is not very much to say that is new, since in several previous scenes the poet's use of varied sentence-structure has been noted. What is more apparent here than in most other places is the pattern of repartee and repetition. In Pandarus' urgent conversation with Criseyde, prepared for by a long, breathless monologue as from or from who has to talk at top speed to prevent the other person from thinking (764-798), this flinging back and forth of repartee, artificial as it is, gives an edge or excitement for which

(cf. comments on Arcite's speech, below, p. 273)
the situation calls. Pandarus begins:

"Thus fallen is this cas",

followed by Criseyde,

"Why uncle myn ....who tolde hym this?"

(that she was unfaithful) and Pandarus,

"Ye woot, ye nece myn ....Ye may quenche al this."

In the next stanza (848-54) there is more, and still more further on, this time with more dramatic propriety:

"God help me so, ye hadde hym nevere lief -"

cries Pandarus, followed a few lines later by the indignant Criseyde:

"Hadde I hym nevere lief? by God I weene
Ye hadde nevere thyng so lief!"

(864, 869-70)

Everything in this dialogue is not so appropriate: one questions whether Criseyde would ever have thought of the Boethian sentiments about false felicity (613-40) however one appreciates the verbal skill of the repetitions of "joie" and "selynesse" (625, 627, 631, 632, 633) that remind us of Antigone's song. Finally, of the speech one may add briefly that as we have come to expect, the syntax reflects the mood and intention of the character, Troilus' "wild and whirling words" in his excitement being spoken in broken, exclamatory sentences, and Criseyde's being long, complex ones during her philosophical speech, while Pandarus' equally long ones

(CK) v. above, p. 126 ff., esp. 130-1.
consist of strings of clauses added on to the previous one, as though he is constantly improvising.

To appreciate the imagery and irony of this scene, one needs to keep in mind the setting. The poet carefully prepares by his "apostrophatic" to "Fortune, executrice of wyrdes" (617-23), his astrologically ominous mention of the horned moon with Saturn and Jove joined (625), and his constant reminders of the "smoky rain" and the wind and thunder, which were so loud that "wel neigh no man heren other koude". (626-8, 646, 661-2, 677-9) which first of all leave in the mind a sense of foreboding and secondly to emphasize the isolation of the lovers from exterior reality, from the "meschaunce" (691) of this world, which will, however, break in upon them later. The point, presumably, of creating these impressions at this juncture is that the bliss and poignancy of the love-scene are heightened, especially after the remarks of Criseyde about "false felicitee" and "veyn prosperitee".

We are thus prepared to regard the love scene with a kind of ironic detachment such as one would exercise in reading a similar scene in a Hardy novel. The irony of Pandarus' talk of the consummation as "hevene blisse", followed at once by Troilus' repeated invocation of Venus and of other pagan deities, his mention of the Fates (733) who have shaped his life and are to help him now, will not escape us. Still less will the almost brutal irony of
Pandarus' excuse for bringing Troilus, that the latter suspects Criseyde of unfaithfulness, and her indignant,

"My deere herte wolde me nought holde
So lightly fals. Alas! conceytes wronge..."

(803-4)

followed by her condemnation of the false felicity Troilus was to lose when she did desert him for another. One hopes that Criseyde's "for the love of God" when giving herself and Troilus over to Pandarus' governaunce that she may have honour and Troilus "pleaunce" (941-5) is just conventional, but Pandarus' final mention of God and Venus in successive phrases certainly seems ironic. (951)

The symbol of the ring is first mentioned here, a blue one that elicits from Pandarus the "Haselwodes" idiom he was to use later when commenting bitterly on Troilus' hopes of ever seeing her again. The offer also elicts a demand that the ring

"moste han a stoon
That myghte dede men alyve maken". (891-2)

The literal stone is supplied later that evening when she offers him a ring containing a ruby. The blue ring perhaps stands for honour, the red ruby for sexual passion, at any rate a brooch containing it is given at the consummation. Later, a golden brooch is found fallen from Diomede after she had given herself to him, being the

(CL) On 'haselwodes' v. above, p. 91 Robinson notes, "True blue was the colour of constancy."
symbol of that betrayal to Troilus. The parallels are not exact enough for us to be certain that this was in Chaucer's mind, but the idiom is not used in the poem apart from these two episodes.

Of the vocabulary in this scene, some is completely appropriate, as is Pandarus' use of idioms from country life ('mouse's herte', 'haselwode', 'farewel feldefare') and his analogy of jealousy as being like a fire started by a candle amid straw (855-59), while some is appropriate to the character in this situation, such as Troilus' classical references (very possibly taken over from the 'Teseide'). What is impossible to justify is the use of philosophical terms by Criseyde, indeed the whole speech, (813-40) by Criseyde, even though the author perhaps intended the kind of irony indicated above. She is not the person to talk of "worldly selynesse", "fals felicitee", "muable" and so on.

Apart from the immense amount of repetition of which some indication has already been given, the most unusual feature of the diction of this scene is the way Pandarus uses Criseyde's own terms on occasion. When he says it is shameful to call a man "deere herte" (774) he is using a term Criseyde has used before and will use three more times in this scene (803, 843, 888), and likewise he is using her epithet in referring to Troilus as "youre owen knyght" (CM) cf. III 885-91, 1371-72, V 1661.
(CN) (914). One can only surmise that the intention was to suggest his cunning and persuasiveness in using her own words to her.

One reason for all the repetition may be that between lines 703 and 951 there are only two narrative passages, one a stanza of description of the storm and the entry into the house (743-9) and the other of three lines (799-801). Thus instead of commenting that, for instance, Pandar is flattering Criseyde, the author makes him say "ye ben wise" (937), "ye ben bothe wise" (942) and "worketh in so discret a wise" (943). The poet's situation is thus completely that of a dramatist.

III 1191-1407 Love-scene

Some additional remarks might be made about this scene which, to me, is not only the high-water mark of this poem but the most moving love-scene in English poetry outside Shakespeare. Imperfections and improbabilities it has: how likely is it that Troilus at this juncture would proceed to philosophize as he does (1254-74)? In that discourse is a stanza containing some very bad lines, rhythmically awkward ("After thisself next heried be she" - 1256). Yet these things matter no more than cloudlets in the sky, for Chaucer was aiming not at dramatic realism, but at creating

(CN) For other examples of "my knyght" see III 176, 996, 1309, IV 746.
an idyll. He was, as has been pointed out by several critics, medievalizing the Boccaccio story, turning what in Boccaccio is a beautiful but largely sensual scene into an ideal fulfilment of love in an enchanted place set aside from the storms of the outside world. He was also, I think, being in a way more modern. Though the element of strip-tease in "Il Filostrato" has been removed, the poet here goes into more physical detail (1247-53), balanced, as already pointed out, by imagery taken from religion, by philosophical speculation about the love at the centre of things, by imagery from medicine, plants, birds, the law, in fact many aspects of society and nature. The exalted speculation immediately follows the physical embrace and is followed by both conventional courtly adoration and the simplest human affection. Thus, more aspects of human experience are subsumed under the unity of this love than in 'advanced' modern fiction, which leaves out the divinity. To say that Troilus here is not truly in love is surely wildly wrong-headed. The one defect of this relationship, E.g. Lewis "What Did Ch. Really Do..."ES. 1931; D.W. Robertson "Preface to Ch." p. 281.

v. Note G.

As does D.W. Robertson, "Pref. to Ch." p. 472, 467-8 where he regards Tr. as having turned from God to "fearful....uncertain......joy of passionate love."
of which the irony and the emphasis on the isolation of the place have already made us aware, is that it involves a withdrawal from everyday reality, it is clandestine and fragile, without the cement of wedlock. Hence at a call from Calchas the dream dissolves.

Consequently, presenting a vision of love which though certainly not unique was more illuminating than most, Chaucer was, it seems, particularly concerned with the style of this scene. The imagery, as we have seen, is more varied and abundant here than anywhere else. Even an image taken from the Italian acquires new overtones in English. Thus "la festa", in:

"Lungo sarebbe a raccontar la festa
E impossibile a dire il diletto
Che insieme preser pervenuti in questa" (Fil. III 31)

means just 'pleasure'. "La feste" in the French version (CR)
of Beauvau means simply that. But "feste" in the context of:

"O sooth is seyd, that heled for to be
As of a fevre...........
Men moste drynke,.........
Full bittre drynke; and for to han gladnesse
Men drynken ofte payne and gret distresse....

And now sweetnesse semeth more swete
That bitterness assaied was byforn;
For out of wo in blisse now the flete;
............... (1212-21)

(Criseyde) Made hym swich feste, it joye was to scene" (1228) (CR) I say this on authority of Dr. H.H. Lucas.
acquires the senses of a delicious meal, of a celebration or thanksgiving after recovery, and also of a holy-day or saint's day.

The vocabulary too, as has been pointed out, is both rich and carefully varied. Even though much of the scene is taken from Boccaccio, the double vocabulary of English makes possible contrasts which are not possible in Italian. Compare the underlined words in the Italian with those in the English parallel passages:

(i) "Ma sognar si credean d'esser in braccio;
E l'uno all'altro domandava spesso,
O t'ho io in braccio, o sogno, o se' to desso?"

(Fil, III 34)

"Or elles, lo, this was hir mooste feere,
That al this thyng but nyce dremes were:
For which ful ofte ech of hem seyde: "0 swete,
Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it meete"?

(ii) "Tu legge, o dea poni all'universo
Per la qual esso in esser si mantiene;
Ne e alcuno al tuo figliuolo avverso,
Che non sen penta se d'esser sostiene;
Ed io che gia con ragionar, perverso
Li fui, avai, si come si conviene,
Mi riconisco innamorato tanto,
Ch'esprimere giammai non potrei quanto."

"Benigne Love, thow holy bond of thynges
Whoso wol grace, and list the nought honoureth,
Lo, his desir wol fle withouten wynges.

And for thow me, that leest koude disserve
Of hem that nombred ben unto thi grace

I kan namore; but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thyng excellence!" (1261-74)

(CS) cf. V 524-25.
The second example does not, of course, offer more than a general parallel, but a comparison of the sonority and uniformity of the vocabulary in the Italian extracts, with the divergence of the key words in the English extracts in simple and formal speech or narrative, will show the resources placed by historical accident at Chaucer's disposal, and how he exploited them. Much of the beauty of the second extract is, of course, due to the admixture of abstract terms of Latin origin with the more concrete ones from Anglo-Saxon.

A 'decorum' is observed in sentence-structure similar to that observable in extracts previously dealt with. Thus after the opening rhetorical question (1191-2) the narrative proceeds smoothly in short but complex sentences (1193-1204); the lovers speak in exclamatory ones, interspersed with inversion and repetition of opening words (1206-11); the philosophic verses build up to culminating and summarizing couplets (1259-60, 1266-7, 1273-4); and as already evident, the dialogue of the 'dream' passage is presented in short, simple sentences (1343-4, 1347-9).

**IV 141-217 Meeting of Trojan Parliament**

The first impression one has of this scene is of its brevity (for so prolix a poem), the sheer amount that is said, decided and done in seventy-odd lines. Yet Boccaccio deals with the same events in forty. What does *(CT)* Fil. IV 13-17.
Chaucer add, and whence comes our impression of speed and compactness?

He deals more fully first with Troilus' aims, of reconciling the saving of Criseyde's reputation with resisting the proposed action, where Boccaccio just mentions resistance. Secondly, where Boccaccio reports the inward dialogue between Love and Reason, Chaucer gives it as dramatic speech between two allegorical characters (another case of medievalization, turning metaphor back almost to allegory). Thirdly, he adds the decision to consult Criseyde, fourthly the speech by Hector, happily re-introduced as Criseyde's champion, together with the cries of disapproval from the debaters, and lastly the ironic comment on Antenor's subsequent treachery, in which the Narrator takes on the role of a Greek chorus. He cuts out Troilus' swoon. The effects of these changes are to enhance the manliness of Troilus, to enliven the description of his inner conflict, to increase the chivalric element in his passion, to strengthen the framework of the poem and, of course, to intensify its irony, its sense of doom overhanging Troy. The very passion, unity and practicality of the senators, evident in the debate, achieves this.

However long-drawn-out the rest of the poem, it must here be brief and compressed in expression to convey the speed and relentlessness of the destiny by which Troilus'
happiness is snatched from him in a matter of minutes by his own comrades. Boccaccio possibly had the same thing in mind, for both poets begin swiftly, conveying in the opening stanza three actions, the summoning of the council, the coming of the Greek ambassadors, and the affirmative answer to them. (Boccaccio puts the matter more clearly than Chaucer, whose

"Th'embassadours ben answerd for fyndal
Th'eschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
Hem liketh wel"

(145-7)

is woolly where the Italian is precise.)

Troilus' meditation, nevertheless, is clear and economical:

"...than thoughte he thynges twye,
First, how to save hire honour, and what weye
He myghte best th'eschaunge of hire withstonde"

(158-60)

though if not having to fit the rhyme-royal stanza he need not have added the next line

"Ful faste he caste how al this myghte stonde".

He reports Love's argument but intensifies it briefly, adding

"And rather dyen than she sholde go"

(163)

before quoting Reason, in sharper and more detailed terms than Boccaccio uses, presumably to replace the impression

(CU) "ed egli ambasciadori
Risposer breve: se gli addemandati
Rendesser loro, i lor fosser donati."
of irresolution given in the Italian version by one of unqualified assent to the wisdom of consulting the lady. The following stanza, though an addition, contains the ironic echo "whan that she hadde seyd hym hire entente" of the love-scene (III 1239) and further enhances Troilus' character by the final reference to his dedication in being willing to oppose the world at his lady's behest. Hector, too, is very brief and explicit in lines like

"We usen here no wommen for to selle". (182)
The people have more space but the brief, homely analogy of their noise as being like the flames of burning straw, as well as the racy vigour of "what goost may yow enspyre?" gives a not wholly trustworthy impression of speed and economy. They do, after all, take nine lines to say what could be paraphrased as 'Don't be foolish, Antenor is far more use to Troy than this woman, being a stout fighter. Priam, we say let her go.' The apparent compression is thus due to a certain spareness of descriptive detail, an occasionally epigrammatic succinctness and the general vigour of the dialogue.

Presumably the mention of Antenor's return at the end of each of the last four stanzas (189, 196, 203, 209) and Criseyde's departure at the end of three (188, 195, 210) is to add to the force with which the idea of an irresistible tide of popular will is conveyed. The 'framing' sentences already noticed in previous scenes are apparent here, the comment:
"For infortune it wolde, for the nones
They sholden hire confusioun desire"

being conveyed more specifically in the choric comment at the end:

"For he was after traitour to the town
Of Troye; alas, they quytte hym out to rathe!
O nyce world, lo, thy discrecioun!
Criseyde, which that nevere dide hem scathe
Shal now no lenger in hire blisse bathe;
But Antenor, he shal com hom to towne."

The examples show the terse expression at this point. This is so with the opening narrative stanza (141-7), which has two brief and not over-clear sentences. Troilus' meditation is narrated in a long, rather rambling one extending over two stanzas (148-61) and the style does not change much until Hector's very compressed, epigrammatic speech (179-82). The speech 'from the floor' is cleverly constructed. There is an opening expression of amazement at Hector's 'goost misleading him', followed by a short, somewhat parenthetical, tirade on Antenor, then staccato comments on their need of him, before the opening statement is balanced by "O Ector, lat tho fantasies be!"

The last five lines of the speech are thus somewhat akin to those of the Cuckoo in the "Parlement of Fowls", in their use of short, simple sentences, exclamation, vigorous phrases and a final couplet, though not using rhetorical questions like the Duck, nor the Duck's imagery.

No further conclusions are warranted about Chaucer's ways of

(CV) PP. 605-9, 589-93. See above, p. 73.
portraying common speech, for the term can hardly be applied to that of the Trojan counsellors. Their vocabulary, like that of the characters mentioned in the "Parlement", is of the simplest, full of monosyllables. The choric comment has a fair number of abstract terms like 'sentence', 'deliveraunce', 'desercioun' and the ubiquitous 'meschaunce'. The comment also has the largest proportion of sound effects, the people's speech having the next largest and the narrative, the part taken over from Boccaccio, the least.

The account of the meeting is thus a good example of the range of styles Chaucer could employ in quite a short space and also of the terseness and concentration he was to display in the "General Prologue". Rhyme royal here seems rather irrelevant, the end of the stanza twice coming in mid-sentence.

IV 218-343 Troilus' lamentation

Most of the stylistic interest of this passage lies in the borrowings from Boccaccio and in the changes, which are not always improvements. The general tendency is to soften the violence of the grief. Thus the description of Troilo going to his chamber is taken over minus the comparison "Ch'uum non parea, ma arrabbiata fiera" (seemed not like a man but a raging beast). The comparison of Troilo to a wounded bull is used, but

(CW) v. Appendix A.
(CX) IV 154, and esp. 199.
(CY) Fil. IV 26.
"..... e misere mugghiando
Conoscer fa qual duolo ha conceputo"
(and in his misery bellowing, makes known the pain he has conceived)
becomes "roreth in compleynynge", which phrases, used of a bull, is quaint. The maledictions on Calchas are softened and refined, from:

"O vecchio malvissuto, O vecchio insano, Qual fantasia ti mosse, o quale sdegno" (Fil. IV 38)
(O malicious, O crazed old man, what fancy or rancour moved thee)
to the milder, if slightly ludicrous:

"O cold, unholsom and myslyved man, Calkes I mene, allas! what eileth the?" (330-1)

It is also apt, at this crisis, to introduce the apostrophe to the lovers as being high on Fortune's wheel. (323-4).
The wording of the passage is of unusual interest, as may be seen from the cluster of verbs in the stanza:

"But after, when the furie and al the rage
Which that his herte twiste and faste thruste
By lengthe of tyme somewhat gan aswage.
Upon his bed he leyde hym down to reste.
But tho bygonne his teeris more out breste,
That wonder is the body may suffise
To half this wo, which that I yow devyse." (253-9)

The underlined words, as well as 'faste', are onomatopoeic in their suggestion of a physical twisting and pushing of the heart; they thus reinforce the metaphor implicit in the line which is a continuance of the idea of Troilus beating his breast (243). Another concealed metaphor of this kind, perhaps, is "his peynes hym torente" (341), which continues
metaphorically what had begun as literal action. The sounds of the words underlined also suggest violence and desperation. The passage thus has quite a profusion of images, of which the most beautiful is, I think, the least appropriate. The simile,

"And as in wynter leves ben biraft
Ech after other, til the tree be bare,
So that ther nys but bark and braunche ilaft,
Lith Troilus, byraft of ech welfare,
Thounden in the blake bark of care"

borrowed from Dante would fit the rueful melancholy of Hamlet in the Gravedigger Scene rather than the fury conveyed in the simile of the bull and in the tactile metaphors just discussed. Chaucer here was tempted and he fell!

The long series of apostrophes by Troilus to his spirit, his eyes, Criseyde and Calchas may be more to a rhetorician's taste than a modern reader's, but they are taken over almost verbatim from Boocaccio. So is the sentence division, the progression from long sentences lasting the whole of an epic simile and ending in its tenor, to the series of brief questions the agitated hero asks himself. Here is the Italian of the 'bull' simile:

"Ne altrimenti il toro va saltando
Or qua or la, dappoi o'ha ricevuto
Il mortal colpo, e misero mugghiando
Conoscer fa qual duolo ha conceputo,
Che Troilo facesse, nabilando
Se stesso, e percuotendo dissoluto
Il capo al muro, e con le man la faccia,
Con pugni il petto e le dolenti braccia."

(Fil. IV 27)

(CZ) Noted by Robinson.
The English goes:

"Right as the wylde bole bygynneth sprynge,
Now her, now ther, idarted to the herte,
And of his deth roreth in compleynynge,
Right so gan he aboute the chaumbre sterte
Smtyng his brest ay with his fistes smerte;
His hed to the wal, his body to the grounds
Ful ofte he swapte, hymselfen to confounde."  

(239-45)

One could make a sentence of the final couplet, but in sense and intention it belongs with the earlier lines, and in the Italian is grammatically connected. Later on in Boccaccio's account comes:

"Poi poco appresso comincio a dire
Seco nel pianto: 0 misera fortune,
Chi 't'ho io fatto, che adogni desire
Nio si t'opponi? Non hai tu piu alcuna
Altra faccenda fuor che 'l mio languire?
Perche si tosto hai voltata la bruna
Facchia ver me, che gia t'amava assai
Più ch'altro iddio, come tu crudel sai?"

(Fil. IV 30)

which Chaucer renders as:

"Then seyde he thus; 'Fortune, allas the while!
What have I don? What have I the agylt?
How myghtestow for rowthe me bygile?
Is there no grace, and shal I thus be spilt?
Shal thus Criseyde awey, for that thow wilt?
Allas! how maistow in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruwel and unkynde?"

(IV 260-66)

(The translation is of the first half only, Chaucer having inserted the mention of Criseyde, but our interest here is in the rhetorical structure.)

Chaucer develops the series of rhetorical questions, for whereas in the following stanza the Italian has four more short ones, the English has three, of which the last extends over the final four lines. Then Boccaccio stops using them, whereas Chaucer, in his next stanza, has one extending over
the whole seven lines. Thereafter he follows Boccaccio's syntax closely, using rhetorical questions of the same length (3-4 lines) and in the same places. It may be that Chaucer had momentarily some idea of making Troilus talk in longer bursts as his agitation cooled, but he does not do so for long enough for certainty.

IV 806-945 Criseyde's lamentation

The chief thing of interest here is the diction, which perhaps cloys on the present-day palate, and may have done on that of the discriminating medieval listener. First of all, however, one may note the decided improvement on Boccaccio's description of Criseida, who beats her white breast, weeping and plucking her fair hair, tearing it out. In Chaucer's description,

"...with hire salte teeris
Hire brest, hire face, ybathed was ful wete.
The myghty tresses of hire sonnysshe heeris
Unbroiden, hangen al aboute hire eeris"

(814-7)

the irrelevant detail of the white breast does not distract attention from the tears, and the combination of 'myghty', 'unbroiden' and 'hangen ... aboute hire eeris' creates an impression of disarray and despair more consistent with the Englishman's Criseyde, though Boccaccio's character might conceivably have reacted more angrily. Certainly Chaucer's picture seems more vivid and coherent.

(DA) "bianco petto", Fil. IV 87.
The verbal repetitions are surely overdone. In 35 lines we are told of Criseyde's 'teeris' three times of her 'pleynete' twice, her 'wo' three times, and we hear also of her 'smeart', 'drede', 'annoy', and 'fury'. Then in Pandarus' speech (879-96) come 'sorwe' twice, 'torment', 'rage' and 'wepyng', followed, in Criseyde's reply, by 'sorwe' three times, 'pitously', 'compleyne' and similar words. There is much else in this strain in the remainder of the scene. Admittedly the oral reading of a story necessitates repetition, but one would expect any audience to have grown tired of tears and complaints before the end.

V 8-196 Criseyde's journey to Greek camp

This passage, as will be remembered, showed a remarkable degree of coherence. The latter part is also a fine example of rhetorical decorum. A chain of phrases links together the stanzas of Diomede's speech, as the following analysis will show:

106-12 in swich disese... enoreesse... hire ese; commaunde it hym;
113-19 to don hire herte an ese; we Grekis...folk of Troie;
120-26 thynketh straungeth (120); th'aquayntaunce (122);

(DB) 814, 821 ('tery'), 846. (DG) 825, 826, 827 ('pleynete') 842. (DD) 830, 834, 838 ('woful'), 842. (DE) All in 845. (DF) 879, 883 ('sorwe'). (DG) 886 ('wepyng'), 892. (DH) 903, 906. (DI) 902 (both), also 'distresse' 908, 'hevynesse' 901, 'peyne' 903, though Cr. comments also on Tr.'s sorrow.
Most of his stanzas begin with conjunctions and likewise in the opening words of his sentences he plays variations upon a few conjunctions. His sentences, as has already been pointed out, are usually complex, coherent and usually extend over several lines. Several stanzas, moreover, end with a sentence clinching the argument of the stanza, such as,

"A Greke ye sholde among us alle fynde [as true]
As any Troian is and ek as kynde" (125-6)

and this is enclosed, or almost enclosed, within the final couplet, which thus has something of the ring and mnemonic effect of an epigram. Here successively we have the rhetorical devices of 'traductio', 'repetitio' and 'conclusio'.

(DJ) 'For' 113; 'and' 127, 133; 'for' 141; 'and' 148, 162.
(DK) E.g. 'for' 96, 102, 146, 156, 162; 'but' 124, 151; 'and' 135, 136, 144, 159, in addition to examples at beginnings of stanzas.
The stanza reporting Criseyde's reply consists of a string of brief clauses beginning with 'and' ("repetitio") and is itself the briefest of summaries. The effect sought is clearly than of contrast, Criseyde being disjointed, abstracted, non-committal and vague where Diomede is logical, deliberate, persuasive and assured. The briefest glance at Troilus' declaration of love (III 127-47) will show that though the words ('don yow my servyse' 133, 'me to commanden aught' 140) are much the same as Diomede's, the emotion is deeper, the expression briefer and more direct, the conclusion ('this mene I, myn owen swete herte') more from the heart and less from the head. Diomede's skill and artifice as a rhetorician fit his character as a bold lover winning near his goal. In passing, it may be remarked that Chaucer here shows an awareness of the limitations of the rhetorical methods of writing by the very fact that he uses them so elaborately to depict an unscrupulous character, whereas the rhetorical devices are less thickly laid on in depicting Troilus' more profound emotion. (DL)

V 519-686 Troilus revisiting scenes of courtship

In view of what has just been said, it is worthwhile to look at the opening stanzas of this passage, for they abound with rhetorical ornament. Are we to conclude that in this lament before the empty house Troilus was being insincere?

(DL) Booc.'s Diomede seems to me not to use rhetorical devices but for the initial 'E' (often found in Fil.) of VI 17-2
A recent critical judgement finds the scene to have "lyrical value" but the critic says that Troilus' pathos "lacks its full measure of dignity" so that the scene is "trivial" compared with a similar one in "In Memoriam".

The apostrophe to the empty house is an expansion of two mainly narrative stanzas in 'Il Filostrato' which mention that Troilus was heart-broken on beholding the locked door and the windows. Troilus tries to talk with Pandarus, addressing to him the remarks:

"... lasso, quanto luminose
Era il luogo e piacevol, quando stava
In te quella belta, ch'il mio riposo
Dentro dagli occhi suoi tutto portava;
Or se' rimaso oscuro senza lei,
Nè so se mai riaver la ti dei."

(Fil. V 53)

(Alas, how full of brightness and delight wert thou, O place, when that beautiful lady was in thee, for she bore my peace entirely within her eyes! Now without her thou art left dark nor do I know whether thou art ever to have her again.)

The quotation is given to show that the original does not seem to be compounded of rhetorical ornament, apart from itself being an apostrophe, and that the melody of the echoing vowels of the opening three lines, particularly, could well have moved Chaucer to admiration and imitation. This element of assonance and vowel-variation is very noticeable in "O paleys desolat" (540) and "O paleys empty and disconsolat" (542), as are the sibilants also

(H.R. Patch, "On re-reading Ch." pp.85-6. The author is not criticizing Ch., but suggesting self-indulgence on the part of Tr.

DN) Fil. V 52: ".....la porta serrata
E la finestre".
prominent in the Italian ('lasso quanto luminoso'). To this are added some beautiful effects of consonance, especially the recurring nasals and sibilants found together with recurring vowels in:

"... crowne of houses alle,
Enlumyned with sonne of alle blisse". (547-8)

Of the rhythmic qualities of the Italian I am not competent to judge, but to me the rhythmical variation and cadence of the English lines seems to make them some of the most compelling in all Chaucer. If one says aloud the lines just quoted and the remaining ones in the same stanza:

"O ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle,
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of lisse!
Yet, syn I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse
Thy colde dores, dorste I for this route;
And farwel shryne, of which the seynt is oute!"
(549-53)

one notices that in every line the pause will occur in a different place. The only enjambement comes as Troilus is engaged in the only physical movement, and there is presumably a pronounced caesura before 'dorste'. Finally, the light stress on 'which' and the heavier ones on 'seynt' and 'oute' give a kind of desolation to the line.

Here as well Chaucer added much imagery from earlier scenes, so that the three stanzas (533-53) virtually recapitulate the earlier scenes. The simile "As frost.... his herte gan to colde" may allude to the simile of the winter tree after the meeting of the Trojan parliament; the "ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle" refers back to
the love scene and symbolises the fulfilment of love now denied him; the concentration of imagery of the court and religion represents the two chief aspects of 'fine amour'. Furthermore, the total effect of the "frost", the "colde dores" and the empty shrine is to cast an air of bleakness and barrenness over the scene which contrasts with the imagery of spring used earlier at the onset of Troilus' passion. The words "syn we yet may have namore feste" (524) ring in one's ears. To say that one cannot forget that this speech is address to a house whose owner has "simply gone out of town and that she is shortly to take another lover" seems to deny the intensity of the passion that has gone before and to underrate the deprivation its loss represents. Admittedly, if Troilus really knew Criseyde would be back in a week, this emotion would be exaggerated, but one's own awareness that the lovers have been parted for ever disposes one to accept it.

However, rhetorically the apostrophe is very ornate. The figure of 'conduplicatio' is used here more intensively than anywhere except in the Epilogue, 'O paleys' occurring four times in two stanzas, and 'O hous of houses' at the start of one stanza (541) being echoed by 'whilom crowne of houses' at the start of the next (547). We have also a rather crude antithesis 'whilom day, that now art nyght'(544) and two more subtle ones (545,550). The oftOrepeated 'O' was, of course, used later on to suggest the Pardoner's hypocrisy and pomposity (DO) Patch, op. cit., p. 86.
when preaching, but it hardly seems likely that Chaucer would have put so much serious poetic craftsmanship into the address if he had intended us to think Troilus not sincere. What seems possible is that he intended to portray an emotion which, though intense, had an element of understandable self-indulgence, rather than welling up of itself like the earlier passion. It may be that we are looking through twentieth-century spectacles, but certainly the subtler use of rhetorical devices by Diomede suggests that Chaucer knew that he was making Troilus speak in a very florid style.

It is interesting to compare two highly ornate stanzas from 'Il Filostrato' with their equivalents in the 'Troilus'. The incidents recalled are numbered for ease of comparison, and a literal rendering of each is given immediately after.

(1) "Quivi rider la vidi lietamente; (There I saw her laugh happily)

(2) Quivi la vidi verso me guardando; (There I saw her glance towards me)

(3) Quivi mi saluto benignamente; (There she graciously saluted me)

(4) Quivi far festa e (5) quivi star pensosa; (I saw her rejoice and there turn thoughtful)

(6) Quivi la vidi a'miei soaspir pietosa. (There I saw her turn pitiful of my sighs)

E.g. 'Fard.T.' 498-500.

I differ from Prof. Patch in feeling that we are meant to sympathize with, rather than to judge, Tr. Dr Craik suggests Tr. feels a compulsion to re-visit the palace.

Fil. V 54-55.
Chaucer changes the order of the incidents, presumably to fit the English stanza-form, elaborates some of the incidents to make them more specific, and varies the somewhat mechanical use of 'conduplicatio' in his original by presenting the adverb in various ways. The use of 'yonder' rather than 'there' gives an impression of Troilus' hand pointing. Perhaps the most artistic of all the additions is the mention of the temple, linking this episode with the one when Troilus first saw Criseyde.

"Lo, yonder saugh ich last my lady daunce; And (7) in that temple with hire eyen cleere Me kaughte first my righte lady dere(PS)

And (1) yonder have I herd ful lustyly My dere herte laugh; and (4) yonder pleye Saugh ich hire ones ek ful blissfully. And (5) yonder ones to me gan she seye, "Now goode swete, love me wel, I preye"; And (2) yond so goodly gan she me biholde That to the deth myn herte is to hire holde.

(PS) Numbers in brackets refer to the equivalent numbers in the Italian lines quoted above, while underlined words are the English equivalents of 'quivi' above.
"And at that corner, in the yonder hous,
Herde I myn alderleves st lady deere
So womanly, with voys melodious,
Syngen so wel, so goodly, and so clere,
That in my soule yet me thynketh ich here
The blisful soun; (9) and in that yonder place
My lady first me took unto hire grace."

The additions of singing and dancing recall the Black Knight's
nostalgic reminiscences in the "Book of the Duchess".

The incident is thus more imaginatively treated than in the "Filostrato"; Chaucer shows a better eye for detail, as well as a keener instinct for narrative structure. Rhetorical the passage is, but much more natural-sounding than the original.

The complete passage, of some 160 lines, shows great variety of syntax. As already seen, the apostrophe to the empty house includes a number of exclamations. They are, however, arranged in series to lead to climaxes at the ends of stanzas. The stanzas most recently discussed have a large proportion of clauses connected with 'yonder' or the conjunction 'and', as well as using for variety the device of 'commutatio', or change of order (e.g. 568-70). Later, when Troilus is looking out of the gates (603-16), the rather rambling narrative sentences change to short statements or exclamations, each covering one incident in Criseyde's departure. Similarly, the stanza describing the writing of the song has at least four parentheses, but the song itself (638-44) is a well-organized apostrophe mounting to a conclusion.

(DT) BD 849-54, based on Machaut and RR.
The diction of the passage shows, firstly, a tendency for certain words to be repeated like leitmotifs, not only 'paleys' and 'yonder', but also, for example, 'herte', which occurs nine times. Like the great love-scene in Book III, this scene abounds in verbal contrasts between opposites, such as day and night, sorrow and joy, new and old, dark and light, hope and dread. This is very appropriate since the scene portrays a part of the transition from joy to sorrow, as the love-scene showed the opposite transition. Certain themes recur throughout in the diction, such as light and divinity.

Whatever the quality of the emotion portrayed, this scene must be admitted to show Chaucer's shaping imagination at its most incisive. Little has been said of the melancholy cadences which resound throughout, but enough detail has been given of the rhetorical structure and imagery to show how the two sides of the poet's art could combine to produce a passage full of rhetorical device yet full also of imagination and pathos.

(LV) v. above, p. 112.
(DW) e.g. 'lantern' (543), 'day', 'nyght' (544), 'sonne' (548), 'sterre' (638), 'moone' (648).
(DX) 'shryne, of which the seynt is out' (553), 'wolde blisful God' (608) and several references to pagan deities.
This long section will not here be discussed in detail, nor will a thoroughgoing comparison be made of the respective contributions of Joseph of Exeter, Benoit de St. Maure and Chaucer. The aim rather will be to show how by the imagery and sentence structure in use in the descriptions of Diomede, Criseyde and Troilus, and in the soliloquies and speeches of Diomede and Criseyde, the keynotes of their characters are struck. A subsidiary aim will be to show how there are differences in imagery, syntax and aural qualities, between the narrative, descriptions, soliloquies and speeches.

The differences observable between the 'Troilus' and the corresponding sections of "Il Filostrato" are, broadly, that Diomede and Troilus are differentiated to a greater degree by Chaucer, that Criseyde's treachery, not mentioned directly by Boccaccio, is here indicated by one or two tokens, such as her gifts to Diomede (though she is made to feel remor -se and longing to return to Troy which Briseida does not feel), and that there are signs of a greater flexibility and sense of drama in Chaucer's expression. The previous stanza announcing the subject of the section (764-70) with its matchless idiom,

"For both Troilus and Troie town
Shal knottëles throughout hire herte slide;
For she wol take a purpos for t'abyde"

(768-70)

is largely Chaucer's own. Note the play on the meanings of
'slide', later used in the mention of Criseyde's fault of being 'slydynge of corage' (825), used to mean 'slip', 'unstable' and 'cowardly'. Also Chaucer's own are the constant references, especially in the later stanzas, to his authorities. The longer this episode goes on the more the Narrator intervenes. Though there is an obvious purpose of excusing himself for portraying female treachery to his courtly public, there is also a process of withdrawal and detachment, as though the light on the inner stage is slowly being dimmed out and the footlights are going up on the producer. One gradually loses the feeling of involvement with Diomede and Criseyde.

The terms used in the descriptions throw emphasis on the largeness and force of character of Diomede ('myghty lymes', 'sterne vois', 'of tonge large'), chivalrously though he has spoken, and on the uprightness, youth and freshness of Troilus, strong and hardy though he is. There is perhaps a direct comparison of the two in:

"Al myghte a geant passen hym of myght,  
His herte ay with the first and with the beste  
Stood paregal......" (838-40)

Criseyde is in every respect save one a typical heroine of romance, fair-haired and angelic as Emelye, 'sobre', 'symple' and 'goodly of speche' where Blanche is 'sad, symple and benygne' (EA), 'charitable' and 'estatlich' as the Friarress.

(DZ) E.g. 799, 834, 1037, 1044, 1050, 1051, 1061 (indirectly), 1095.  
(EA) BD 918.  
(EB) FCT 140, 143
Her defect, already mentioned, of timidity, blends well with that of being 'slydyng of corage'. This quality of being larger than life is apparent also in the imagery and idiom of Diomede's speech to Criseyde, in the preponderance of hyperbole. He would not have her shed "a quarter of a tere" for the Trojans, who are "in prisoun" from which they shall not come out "for al the golde atwixen sonne and se", the Manes, the deities of Hell itself, shall be afraid of the Greek vengeance, and Diomede would rather serve her than be "lord of Greces twelve". Enormous exaggeration and confidence are both traits of character and dialectical weapons in this situation. The tendency to hyperbole seems to communicate itself to Criseyde, as though her personality were possessed by the stronger spirit of Diomede, for she is soon telling him that Troy has folk as kind "as any betwixen Orkades and Inde". How far Chaucer intended to suggest this is not clear, though the oaths by Pallas (the Trojan deity in whose honour she came to the temple where she met Troilus) have something of Diomede's vehemence, apart from the obvious irony.

The imagery also brings out the utterly conventional and deliberate nature of Diomede's wooing. "As fressh as braunch in May", he "leyde out hook and line" to "fisshen" Criseyde and bring her heart "into his net". (EC) Cr. is "the ferfullesteste wighte".
She is a flower for him to win from Troilus. However he might proffer service and beg her to command him (792), he thinks of her in the terms of the seducer.

The language of the narrative parts is of no special interest. The description of Diomede is a rather uninteresting catalogue of qualities, except for the cunning "men seyn" he was "large of tonge", which prepares us for his subsequent vaunting. That of Criseyde, a blend of one of the conventional forms of 'effictio' and of 'notatio', while mainly that of a stock heroine of chivalric romance, has two features anticipatory of the "General Prologue". The sentences vary widely, from the long catalogue-sentence of her last stanza (820-6) to the short, bullet-like sentences, apparently thrown off at random, of:

"And, save hire browes joyneden yfere,
Ther nas no lak, in aught I kan espien.
But for to spoken of hire eyen clere,
Lo, trewely, they writen that hire syen,
That paradies stood formed in hire yen,
And with hire riche beaute evere more strof love in hire ay, which of hem was more. (813-9)

The apparent randomness of the remark thrown in at the end,

"But, trewely, I kan nat telle hire age" (826)

is very characteristic of the "General Prologue". The sentences of the description of Troilus give an impression of rambling in, for example, the sudden change of direction at "Yong, fresh, strong and hardy" (830), and in the repetition (ED) v. Coghill's Brit. Council pamphlet for short a/c of different methods of personal desc. in med. tradition.

(ME) v. below, page 328 ff.

(EIF) Eg. FCT 207, 268, 284, 787, some doubtless put in to fit rhyme.
in a different form ('expolitio') of lines 830 to 836, on his daring. This may have been to restrict our interest to noting the difference between his knightly virtues and those of Diomede, or the lack of interest may have been Chaucer's. Presumably the point of giving the descriptions is to build up an expectation in the audience that Criseyde will turn from Troilus to Diomede, though these set pieces are not, perhaps, the happiest features of the poem.

It is in their soliloquies and speeches that Diomede and Criseyde are most clearly differentiated. The thirteen lines of reflection by the former show such variety as to reveal him as a lively and purposeful man, from his opening "Now am I nat a fool?" to the proverbial saying "Men shal nat wowe a wight in hevynesse" to the challenge to himself to win the flower of her heart, and the final resolution:

"Al sholde I dye, I wol hire herte seche!
I shal namore lesen but my speche."

(797-8)

All his sentences are brief and clear-cut. Criseyde's reflections vary in structure. When thinking of her own treachery she begins coherently enough but soon falls into a succession of brief exclamations and statements about her reputation, suitable to her distraught frame of mind:

"Ok, rolled shal I ben on many a tonge!
Thoroughout the world my belle shal be ronge!
And wommen moost wol haten me of alle.
Allas, that swich a cas me sholde falle!"

(1061-4)
Her only really coherent sentence thereafter is the pathetic:

"But syn I se ther is no bettre way,
And that to late is now for me to rewe,
To Diomede algate I wol be trewe."  (1069-71)

The following one is masterly, in its continuation of the series of parenthetical clauses ('syn I') just noted, until the main clause loses itself in parentheses and she breaks off to weep. One can fairly hear the voice faltering and trailing, and see the face puckering, in:

"But, Troilus, syn I no bettre may,
And syn that thus departen ye and I,
Yet prey I God, so yeve yow right good day,
As for the gentileste, trewely,
That evere I say, to serven feythfully,
And best kan ay his lady honour kepe"
And with that word she brast anon to wepe." (1072-8)

The breaking-off is the conventional rhetorical device of 'praecisio'; Chaucer's originality here lies in his judgement of the most appropriate way in which to use it.

A similar difference is evident in the syntactical structure of their speeches. Diomede's, whether short or long, are all coherent and their grammatical pattern adds forcefulness, particularly to his opening ones (971-82). The vitality Chaucer adds to his utterance may be judged from a comparison of Boccaccio's,

"E non crediate che Calcas avesse
Con tanta istanza voi raddomandata,
Se cio ch'io dico non antivedesse" (Fil. VI 18)

with Chaucer's

"What! wene ye youre wise fader wolde
Han yeven Antenor for yow anon,
If he ne wiste that the cite sholde
Destroied ben; Whi, nay, so mote I gon!" (TC V 904-7)
For Boccaccio's complex sentence and imperative verbs we have a mixture of these, plus shorter injunctions, plus rhetorical questions and exclamations. Chaucer's Diomede more clearly repeats himself in order to drive the point home. Thus, after,

"He knew ful wel ther shal nat scapen oon That Troian is" (908-9)

some other arguments, and then,

"For Troie is broght in swich a juparte That it to save is now no remedie" (916-7)

and

"Let Troie and Troian fr youre herte pace!" (912)

is followed at once by

"Drif out that bittre hope." (913)

Diomede, in short, is an accomplished debater who knows exactly what effect to aim at and how to achieve it.

Criseyde, on the other hand, is full of confusion not only in some of her sentences but in their succession. She begins, for example, with a qualified admission that vengeance might fall on Troy, an unproved assertion that it will not, an agreement that her father is wise and that she is grateful, in a tangled remark full of inversions and false starts:

"That Grekis wolde hire wrath on Troie wreke, If that they myght, I knowe it wel, iwis. But it shal naught byfallen as ye speke, And God toforn! and forther over this I woot my fader wys and redy is; And that he hath me bought, as ye me tolde, So deere, I am the more unto hym holde." (960-66)
Thereafter she moves from the Greeks to the Trojans, from them to her dead husband, to Diomede, to herself, back to Diomede and on to the future. Finally, after swearing that she would rather die than love (983-4) and giving a much-qualified promise to admit his love after the war, which she thinks might satisfy Diomede, she offers to discuss the matter the following day. In short, she hedges, and the contortions of the syntax follow the convolutions of her emotions, for thoughts she hardly has.

It is not surprising that the various forms of euphony are found least in the narrative parts, while the largest amount of repetition of various kinds comes in Diomede's speech and thought; the not very artistic descriptions of the two suitors have the least. On the whole, the soliloquies show the most evidence of sound patterns. Monosyllabic lines are found in them too, especially that of Diomede; they are found in his description also. (EG)

If evidence were wanted of the writing of the poem for oral delivery, it would surely come from the way in which the mode of speech of the characters betrays their moods and characteristics, and in the adroitness and concentration of the repetition in this stanza:

"What sholde I telle his wordes that he seyde? He spak inough, for o day at the meeste. It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde Graunted, on the morwe, at his requeste, For to spoken with hym at the leeste,

(EG) v. Appendix A.
So that he nolde speke of swich matere,
And thus to hym she seyde, as ye may her."  

This, tedious if read with the eye, ideally prepares listeners for the speech of Criseyde, giving them an inkling in advance as to what her confused reply will amount to.

V 1590-1685 Criseyde's letter - Troilus' reaction

This section is remarkable not only for the subtle and strange letter from Criseyde, but also, to my mind, for the curious inadequacies of the language used at what one would expect to be one of the crowning moments.

The letter's subtleties include a reference back to the great love scene (EH), in the line

"And helesse, yow sende as yet gladnesse?" (1593) referring both to the movement from sorrow to gladness found so prominently in the wording of that scene, and also to the theme of love as medicinal. It has also irony and some understatements which are particularly unfeeling in this context. The moralising, for example, of

"It semeth nat ye take it for the beste" (1606),

though perhaps anticipatory of

"God leve us for to take it for the beste!" (1750) has the prim cruelty of Regan's reproaches to Lear. So too has the reproach, quite false as it is,

"... ye ne do but holde me in honde" (1615), and the cold words

"As for a frend ye may in me assure" (1624).

(EH) III 1196-7, 1400.
The words "th'entente is all" are not only the letter-writer's conventional apology, but also have an ironic ring, Criseyde's 'entente' being only too clear. Furthermore, they may refer back to some of the numerous earlier uses of that term, such as "and tolde hym her entente" in the love-scene. (EI)

There are strange things in this letter which make one think the poet more clever than wise at this point. First, Criseyde's reproach that Troilus remembered her only for his "plesaunce": this betrays a callousness and wanton cruelty to which the conscience-stricken Criseyde of the last passage discussed could never have stooped; moreover, it contradicts her repeated praise of his "gentiless" (1591, 1617). (EJ)

Equally callous seems her cold remark on the tears on his letter. Nor do these impossibilities seem the result of errors in wording, for the references to earlier episodes are subtle and accurate. What, I think, is wrong is the poet's intention of making Criseyde a rhetorician like Diomede, beginning her letter with repeated examples of 'denominatio' (metonymy), calling Troilus "Cupides sone", "sours of gentilesse" etc., and using something of an aureate style as seen in some expressions that might be found in the Prioress's Prologue, such as

"Gonceyved hath myn hertes pietee" (1598),

expressions having, indeed, something of that passage's

(EI) III 1239.
(EJ) Gr.'s earlier letters, cited in Robinson's Note to 1589ff do not seem to me to explain these difficulties.
(EK) Tears unhappily transferred from Fil. II 122.
majestic rhythm in

"... how that ye requeren me
To come sourney, which yet ne may nat be." (1600-01)

Some of the repetition, of 'gentilesse' near the beginning and end, or of 'beth nat wroth' (1609-14), argues a certain care in writing. What was wrong, I think, was the conception of showing the detachment of Griseyde's affections by having her write with formal 'ars dictaminis', ending in a formal 'diminutio' (self-disparagement) and using the latinate diction of aureate verse, blended with a remark or two so naive as to be quite out of place in such a letter, such as:

"For I have herd wel moore than I wende,
Touchyng us two, how thynges han ystonde." (1611-12)

In short, the diction of this letter is either a subtle way of showing two conflicting personalities, Griseyde-in-herself and Griseyde-under-Diomed's-influence, or else it is quite out of character.

Such super-subtlety would be both un-Chaucerian and inconsistent with some of the inadequacies of language in the rest of the section. These include:

a) idioms lacking Chaucerian directness and pungency, such as
"Ful sodeynly his herte gan to colde"(1659)(EL)

b) the use of such cliches, at a climax, as

(EL) v. study of Fr. Prol. below, pp. 223-8.
(EM) cf. KT 1575 "colde swerde sodeynliche glyde", a much more apt and striking phrase.
Pandarus being "as stille as ston"(1729), or Troilus' inability to 'unloven' Criseyde for "a quarter of a day", or "he wende for to dye";

c) Frequent understatements, such as Criseyde being, "nat so kynde as that hire oughte be"(1643), or Pandarus being ashamed that his "nece hath don amys" (1727).

The numerous proverbs and sententiae are too abstract and general, even trite, such as:

"Men seyen that at the laste
For any thyng, men shal the sothe se." (1639-40)

Another odd thing is the absence of any kind of description, either of Troilus or Pandarus. Yet the passage does not entirely lack distinction, for Troilus' final

"I have it nat deserved"

would have been good enough for Shakespeare. (EN)

There seem five possibilities for the explanation one is impelled to seek of the flatness of the language, viz.:

i) Chaucer was bored, his imagination exhausted at the end of his longest work. It should already be evident that more and more, as the poem goes on, one notices details of rhetoric, rather than the imagery so prominent in Books II and III.

ii) The characters deliberately fade out, become pallid and lifeless as Fate crushes them or tears them apart. The view of life is thus that of the Monk's 'tragedies' of Fate.

iii) Chaucer was not capable of great climaxes of sorrow, but only of a mild pathos.

iv) The sensibility of the audience was such that hints and understatements would be enough.

v) The poet, having changed his view of Troilus, was hastily preparing for a moralizing conclusion.

(EN) cf. Desdemona's

"I have not deserv'da this" ('Oth.'IVi 237).
Though the sentences are joined by more 'and' and 'but' than usual, the variety of syntax, which I believe to be the chief token of the degree of interest taken by the poet, is such that the 'boredom' theory is hardly borne out. There is considerable variation, from the short periodic sentences at the start (1633-9), through the long, rambling ones of the 'coat-armour' narrative (1646-66), to the series of rhetorical questions and comments, becoming gradually longer and more involved, in which Troilus inveighs against Griseyde's faithlessness (1674-1701) and taking up one of her remarks in "al outrely to shewen youre entente" (1694), so answering the bitter question just before. Here "was ther non other broche...?" (1688-91) is answered by the echoing "non other cause" (1692). Then follow two short balanced sentences (1695-8) dealing with Griseyde's disloyalty and his own faithfulness. Nor does the fine sentence culminating in "I have it nat deserved" (1720-22) seem careless.

Soon after, there is a change of style as Pandarus speaks, at first with short remarks, questions and exclamations,

"My brother dear, I may do the namore. What sholde I seyen? I hate, ywis, Griseyde, And, God woot, I wole hate hire evermore!" (1731-3)

followed by a somewhat confused series of comments betraying his own regret and helplessness (1737-43). Finally, comes a
series of balanced reflections, such as

"Grische/ the sone of Tideus,
And Troilus moost wepe in cares oolde",

which starkly enunciate the tragic fact. Boredom or
carelessness must, I think, be dismissed as an explanation.

The second possibility must also, it would seem, be
dismissed. Troilus and Pandarus are indeed unable to find any
course of action other than stoical acceptance, but the best
utterances in the passage are their final ones, which move on
by their very bareness and economy. The speakers' helplessness
before Fate creates such poetry as there is in the
language.

The third one, Chaucer's personal inability to rise to
great tragic climaxes, is more tenable, for despite the
majesty of the lines describing the death of Arcite, it would
be absurd to claim even for this scene the poignancy of the
death-scenes in "Lear" or "Hamlet". Yet the death-scene in
the "Knight's Tale" is a noble achievement and has no trace
of the bathos and inadequacy we find here. Chaucer was no
Shakespeare, but he could do better than this.

That the audience would not have preferred a stately
lament I do not believe for a moment. Nor could they have
been so much more discriminating and imaginative than modern
audiences as to be able to convert vague and flat statements
into distinguished poetry in their own minds. They would
certainly respond to the final utterances of Troilus and
Pandarus, but the previous section would surely have left them cold.

The last possibility, that Chaucer was preparing for the Epilogue, having changed his view of Troilus, would explain some of the more distasteful expressions in Criseyde's letter, especially the accusation that Troilus had simply desired his 'plesaunce'. On this supposition, Criseyde's letter shows love growing cold, turning into superficial good wishes, while Troilus' language descends from great poetry to bathos because he dwindles, being only capable of poetry when enjoying the false felicity of earthly love on which his heart was set. This view likewise, however, is open to objection owing to the considerable poignancy of Troilus' final remarks.

The most satisfactory answer to the problem comes when the latter parts of the poem are surveyed as a whole. What happens after the great love-scene of Book III is that the balance of the two poetic elements, imagination and rhetoric, begins to change. The nature and effect of this change should be more apparent after the survey of the Epilogue and Proems.

The Framework of the Poem

Whether there is anything original left to say of the Epilogue is doubtful, but any attempt to evaluate it involves
some general discussion of the framework supplied by the Proems, as well as some comparison of their styles.

The most superficial study of the diction and subject-matter of the Proems shows that those to Books I, III and IV form a series, into which the one to Book II does not easily fit, while that to Book V does fit in, but is very slight. Such a study, if followed by a more searching one, should help us to decide whether the true end to the poem is the final section just discussed, leading to Troilus' death, or whether the Epilogue is an integral and necessary part.

In Proem I, the keynote of the poem, the "double sorwe", is struck at once. At the end (I 54), we hear of the "double sorwe" which this time is explained more fully. The phrase therefore 'frames' the Proem. The dominant image of the latter books, the revolution of Fortune's wheel, is implicit in the line "fro wo to wele, and after out of joie". (I 4)

Some words in this Proem, when compared with counterparts in the Final Section (V 1590-1785), and with the Third Proem, reveal traces of a deliberate framework of verbal repetition. Thus 'sorwe' occurs both here and in the Final Section, where it is used of Troilus (V 1663), of Pandarus (1739) and of false women (1781). The word 'gladnesse' (I 19, 22) refers forward to the Third Proem (III 6, 47, 49) and to the great love-scene and Criseyde's letter (V 1593). 'Passed hevynesse'

(EP) Term distinguishing Tr.'s death-scene from Epilogue.
(EQ) i.e. of parting from Cr., in remembrance of which brooch given to her by Tr.
(I 21) is found again in the love-scene. More important, however, is the ambiguity of the word Love, meaning the god of sexual love in

"... thynketh how that ye
Han felt that Love dorste yow displese,
Or ye han wonne hym with to gret an ese" (I 26-6)

and the Christian God who is Love, in

"[pray] ... that Love hem brynge in hevene to solas" (I 31),

which may, however, also contain the idea of natural love binding together the universe as indicated in the Third Proem. The idea of Love in the heavenly sense, consoling the unsuccessful lover, is repeated in lines 40-42:

"Thus biddeth God, for his benigne,
So grannte hem scare ownt of this world to pace,
That ben despereird out of Loves grace"

before the prayer for success in love here. Thus the two kinds of love are presented here without preference, while in Proem III the physical and natural (i.e. creative) aspects of love will be praised in that great hymn, and in the Epilogue only the heavenly and eternal kind of love will be praised, the earthly kind being set below it in value, though it is admitted that physical love, desire, grows in "yonge, freshhe folkes".

One might question whether the contempt of earthly love in the Epilogue is really justified, whether all ladies are as false as Griseyde, but without doubt both kinds of love are mentioned in the First Proem as on an equal plane, and respectively predominate in the Third Proem and the

(ER) III, 1399-1400.
Epilogue. This continuity does not, however, apply to the wording. To trace a line between God’s "benignite" (I 40) and that asked of Gower and Strode (V 1859) is to consider too curiously; it seems reasonable, however, to see a line from "That it to Love be worship and pleasure" (I 46) through Venus as "pleasure of love" (III 4) to Crisseyde’s reproach that Troilus remembered only his "pleasure" (V 1608), especially if we have in mind the ‘pleasure’, or Park of Love in the "Parlement of Fowls" (ES). In Proem I ‘pleasure’ is wished for the successful, in Book III Troilus enjoys it, and in Book V he is said to remember it, but in the Final Section, not the Epilogue. There it is not mentioned.

A continuity of subject-matter may also be traced between the implicit metaphor of Fortune’s wheel in Proem I and its explicit use in Proem IV, between the "hele and gladnesse" of Proem III (line 6) and

"...heleles, yow sende as yet gladnesse" (V 1593) in Crisseyde’s letter, between the term "lady bright" (III 39) used here of Venus but otherwise of Crisseyde, and the "brighte face" (IV 8) which Fortune turned away from Troilus and Grieseyde ultimately turned away. The most illuminating comparison, however, is between the 'sententia':

(ES) v. Brewer’s Introd. to his edn. of FF, pp. 21, 28-30, 40-41.
"God loveth, and to love wol nought werne;
And in this world no lyves creature
Withouten love is worth, or may endure" (III 12-14)

and the upward and downward movements of the plot. Commonplace as the 'sententia' is, it illuminates the growth in benignity and knightly prowess by Troilus as his suit progresses, and the deterioration as love is withdrawn from him. It could also be argued that the Epilogue's other worldly sentiment is a logical development from this, in that when earthly love is withdrawn we are driven back upon the love of God, which alone endures.

What all this amounts to is that:

(i) clear threads of thought, wording and imagery run through Proems I, III, IV and the Final Section;

(ii) the threads of wording and imagery do not extend to the Epilogue;

(iii) the thought of the Epilogue could, however, follow from that of Proem III;

(iv) finally, the development from the two kinds of love in Proem I to the natural kind in Proem III and the supernatural kind in the Epilogue, though logical in a superficial way, is dramatically and emotionally unsatisfactory, in that one cannot generalise from Criseyde to all womankind.

Looking at the Proems and Epilogue from a stylistic point of view, we find in them some of the most splendid verse in the 'Troilus' and some of the worst. The opening lines of Proem I have a Miltonic splendour given by the fairly pronounced caesural pause enforced by "Priamus sone", the
absolute construction and pronounced caesura of "In loving/ how..." but above all by the inversion and long-delayed mention of the grammatical subject "my purpose":

"The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen, 
That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troie, 
In lovynge how his aventures fallen 
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie, 
My purpos is, er that I parte from ye." (I 1-5)

There is here the same feeling for the majesty of iambic verse, the same awareness of the possibilities of the sense variously drawn out from line to line, that mark the opening lines of "Paradise Lost". The grand style is not kept up, however, for the second stanza is empty rhetoric by comparison and mechanical in its movement.

The Second Proem likewise shows a tailing-off. The opening stanza moves of its own volition, through the counterpointing of "Out of thise blake wawes", where sense is set against metre, through the repeated 'o wynd' and through the 'contrarium' of the last three lines:

"This clepe I the tempestuous materre 
Of diissepeir that Troilus was inne; 
But now of hope the kalendes begynne"

where the sense runs over the first line-ending. Before the end, however, the iambics are very mechanical, with almost all lines end-stopped and the sense rarely spreading from line to line.

The Third Proem is the finest of them all. The content is essentially that of Troilus's address to Love in (ET) "Par. Lost" 1-32, esp. 1-5, 12-19, 24-6, 27-32.
"Il Filostrato", happily adapted for Chaucer's purpose by the substitution of "blisful light" for 'luce eterna', the insertion of "plesaunce of love" and the Christian application of the 'sententia' (Chaucer's "God Loveth....") which in Boccaccio is applied to Venus, as well as the addition of the final stanza and all the verbal parallels with other episodes. The style appears to be Chaucer's creation, the finest example of his aureate style. Many of the lines have a majestic inevitability brought about in the following example by a mixture of antithesis, alliteration and an exact rhythmic parallelism between the two lines, owing to the position of the caesura, in each case after the second foot:

"In hevene and helle, in erthe and salte see
Is felt thi myght, if that I wel descerne." (8-9)

The breaks in the flow are equally splendid, the pause in the series of invocatory exclamations at 'plesance' in

"O sonnes lief, O Joves doughter deere, (EU)
Plesance of love, O goodly debonaire" (3-4)

or the 'articulus' which might have inspired Milton,

"as man, brid, best, fissh, herbe and grene tree" (10)

or the solemnity of the "God loveth" followed by the repetitions of 'love' which turn the three lines into a unit. Nor is there any of the tailing-off noticed in previous

(EU) Some phrases are less dignified, e.g. "whose stryveth with yow hath the worse".
(EV) of. "Par. Lost" II 621.
Proems. Rarely, indeed, is a word out of place, for this passage has one of the most perfect blends in Chaucer of the latinate vocabulary appropriate to philosophic poetry ("gentil", 'amorous', 'eterne', 'digne', 'benigne') with the 'native' monosyllabic words appropriate for the forms of life listed in line 9. Nowhere is the poet's skill more apparent than in this adaptation which by a few alterations is woven into the texture of the rest of the poem and assimilated to its ironic balance of Christian and pagan love.

The Fourth Proem, though less splendid, has unity both of subject and style. Its melody, though in places mournful, is finely adapted to the theme, as in the falling cadences of all but the fourth line of this stanza, as well as the prominence given to key words, such as "weylawey", by the position of the caesura:

"But al to litel / weylawey the whyle,
Lasteth swich joie, ythonked be Fortune,
That semeth trewest when she wol bygyle,
And kan to fooles so hir song entune,
That she hem hent and blent, traitour commune!
And whan a wight is from hire whiel ythrowe,
Than laugheth she and maketh hym the mowe."

The mournful nasal sounds of 'Fortune', 'entune' and 'commune' are appropriately echoed in the last stanza, in "Heynes", "nyghtes", "doughtren", "endeles compleignen", "pyne" and other words.
Two of the Proems, therefore, fall away from fine opening stanzas and two have more uniformity of style. The Epilogue, however, neither falls away nor maintains a high level; it is thoroughly uneven, spanning the whole gamut from Chaucer's grandest and most moving verse to his flattest and prosiest. That the penultimate stanza should be somewhat prosy is not surprising, since such sentiments as "to the, philosophical Strode" are prose thoughts. What is difficult to explain is the number of metrically awkward lines, at least 10 out of 84, and, still more surprising in a normally lucid writer, the contortions of thought.

"Up to the holughnesse of the eighthe sper" (1809) and "To respect of/pleyn felicitee" (1818) may scan but other Chaucerian lines usually scan more easily. Nor is it easy to unravel the syntax of,

"Go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye,
Ther God thi makere yet, er that he dye,
So sende myght to make in som comedye!" (1786-8)

Moreover, the whole stanza on "payeynes corses rites" (1849-55) is awkward both in expression and rhythm, with a subject without predicate in

"Lo here, the forme of olde clerkis speche
In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche," (1854-55)

which might mean 'If you read old books you would find that what they said is just like the story I have just told you!'

(EW) E.g. 1786,1788,1791,1798,1809,1818,1853,1856,1857,1866.
or 'If you look up the old books you will find what pagan rites were like', but is in any case put in a somewhat slapdash fashion. Nor is the lame

"Of Jove, Apollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille" (1853) the sort of line to find near the end of a great poem.

Yet the twenty-one lines from "Swich fyn, hath, lo, this Troilus" (1828) to "What nedeth feynede loves for to seke" (1848) are magnificent. From hearing the first "Swich fyn", with its almost double accent, its almost assonantial vowels, one's disbelief in Mercury and the spheres is suddenly stilled as a new and deeply earnest voice is heard. It is instructive to watch the gradation from the rhythm of the Boccaccio lines:

"Cotal fine ebbe il mal concetto amore
Di Troilo in Criseida, e coxtale
Fin'ebbe il miserabile dolore
Di lui, al qual non fu mai altro eguale;
Cotal fin'ebbe il lucido splendore
Che lui servava al solio reale;
Cotal fin'ebbe la speranza vana
Di Troilo in Criseida villane" (Fil. VIII 28)

through the French of Beauvau:

"Ceste fin eut Troilus en l'amour de Brisaida. Ceste fin eurent toutes ces miserables douleurs, lesquelles jamais a autre ne furent pareilles. Ceste fin eut le filz du roy, qui estoit bel entre les beaulx, avecques son palaiz royal. Ceste fin eut l'esperance vaince qu'avoit Troilus en la belle Brisaida, faulce, traitresse et desloialle."

(R. de Tr. p.302)

to the English:
"Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!
Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse!
Swich fyn hath his estât real above,
Swich fyn his lust, which fyn hath his noblesse!
Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse!
And thus bigan his lovyng of Criseyde,
As I have told, and in this wise he deyde." 

(V 1828-34)

The number of repetitions in this supreme example of 'conduplicatio' is increased; they are shaped to fall at the beginnings of lines; monotony is avoided by omitting the verb in the fourth line, so that the caesura does not fall in the same place in more than two lines together. Likewise at the end the effect of having so much end-stopping is mitigated by having an almost unstopped penultimate line followed by a final line falling clearly into two halves, with 'and in this' linking the second half with the beginning of the previous line. The melody created by the liquid sounds of the first and fourth lines may have been suggested by the sounds of Boccaccio's third and fourth but the grave march of the lines is Chaucer's.

Peculiar to the English language is the gravity of the abstract terms of the aureate style, 'worthynesse', 'noblesse', 'estât real', though the last two come from Latin and French and express ideas familiar in Romance tongues. What may be either accidental or an overtone added by Chaucer is the ambiguity of 'above', meaning 'his royal position ends in

(EX) i.e. Ch. uses sense of Bocc.'s 'cotal' (such), but rhythm of Beauvau's ceate'.
Heaven' and 'so ends his royal position over the Trojan kingdom', where the Italian simply means 'so ends his prospect of succeeding to the throne.' Certainly deliberate and in keeping with the tone of the whole poem are the omission of the censure of Criseyde begun in the Italian and intensified in the French, the emphasis on Troilus' moral qualities rather than his suffering, the implication that the transience is not peculiar to this love-affair but lies in the nature of earthly love, the 'brotennesse' not Criseyde's alone but the world's. The opening 'double sorwe' is paralleled by the thought of the final couplet here, (a 'conclusio') and this 'framing' tendency is Chaucer's.

Throughout the next two stanzas the gravity, the sense of deep calling to deep, is due to a combination of slow time, an absolute regularity of iambic metre and the earnest Christian tone evident in the whole tenor as well as in details like the alteration of 'l'amoroso disio' (amorous desire, i.e. emotion and sensuality) to 'love'. Attention is retained obviously by the change from the spondaic 'Swich fyn' to the light first and heavy second syllable of 'O yonge', as well as the alliterative phrase and internal rhyme and assonance of that line. More subtly, it is held by the marvellously deft musical phrasing of, for example,
"And of youre herte up casteth the visage
To thilke God/ that after his ymage
Yow made,/ and thynketh al nys but a faire,
This world,/ that passeth sone as floures faire."

First the pitch rises continuously to 'God' (on whom the sense demands that the chief emphasis be placed), then rises almost without break to 'yow made' and then comes a falling half-line to 'faire', with 'this world' added as though in parenthesis, before the grave level tone of the last half-line, falling away after 'floures'.

These stanzas are perhaps the most solemn Chaucer ever wrote, and among the most moving, yet the last two, at least, would be almost equally moving if taken out of context, since they represent one of possible ways of looking at life. The thin links which chain them to the story imperil their validity, for Griseyde's was not a 'feynede love'. The dishonesty is the result of over-simplifying the inference from the events to make it fit a too-narrow and too eschatological theology. The true end of the poem, verbally foreshadowed by the Proems, is at the death of Troilus. What comes after is a divine sleight-of-hand followed by a noble half-truth.
IV Conclusions on Style of "Troilus and Criseyde" - Some Comparisons with Earlier Poems

In any study of the development of a poet's style, there is some danger of seeing every poem as a stage on the way to the writing of some other one, whether actual or ideal. Comparisons of a poem with earlier ones are only valid if one remembers that each poem exists in its own right, with all its qualities, where no poem existed before. The critic's function is rather to convey his vision of and response to the poem that exists than to show how it marks a path towards another one that might have been, or even one that was to be.

The imagery and symbolism of the 'Troilus' has here been studied qualitatively within the context of a number of passages; a very thorough statistical study of imagery throughout the poem has already been done (EY). Metaphor, analogy, natural objects used to build up a mental picture, or as symbols of the state of mind of the characters, or of the progress of the story, as well as dreams and mythological references, are used more deliberately and more memorably here than in any of the early poems.

The whole story, like the medieval conception of tragedy, implies the metaphor of Fortune's wheel, which is explicitly mentioned not only here but in earlier Chaucer poems and by earlier medieval poets. The poet does (EY) Keeoh, op. cit. esp. pp. 246-363.
otherwise seem to be trying to liberate himself from the conventional metaphors and analogies found in his sources, such as the fiery darts of love, or to use them in a new way within his context, or to introduce sharp visual ones of his own. Natural objects, particularly birds, though employed by earlier writers, are here placed most significantly either to represent the changing emotion of a character, or as an unspoken comment on the action. This, one would think, is quite new in Chaucer. The symbolism is thus used more consistently than in previous works, even if the nightingale and swallow are as conventional as the symbols found in the "Book of the Duchess". The dreams found in the poem are simpler and more clear-cut in reference than those in the earlier poems, while the properties of dream-visions such as that of the Park in the "Parlement of Fowls" are here transferred to actual localities in the story: the secluded paradise of love is here the bedroom, its isolation from the external world underlined by the description of the storm. Features distinguishing this poem from earlier ones include also the more subtle use of key images and symbols, recurring like leitmotifs and so in a moment recapitulating earlier episodes, as well as the use of natural imagery and symbolism to set the love of man and woman in the wider framework of

(EZ) v. above, p. 92.  
(FB) p. 98 above. 
(FD) p. 90. 

(FA) p. 93-5 above. 
(FC) p. 91 f. 
(FE) pp. 93-4 esp.
universal love and thus to give an extra dimension to the action.

The same tendency towards extension is found in the diction of the poem. In one direction, the use of popular idiom and proverb imparts a flavour of real life to the speech particularly of Pandarus, and with this only the talk of the lower orders of birds in the "Parlement" is comparable. Even the gradual disappearance of this element has a function, that of showing the decline of Pandarus' vitality. Though the idioms are not always apt, they supply, as in no previous poem, a characteristic and delightful relish to the verse and dialogue. In the opposite direction, the classical references and 'sententiae' so often added by Chaucer impart a philosophic overtone which helps to give a richer meaning to the fiery and impetuous love-affair of the 'Filostrato'. Neither in his sources nor in his own early poems is there quite the same skill in using recurring words to give a more serious overtone to a scene or to remind one of earlier scenes to which the present one is a contrast, so as perhaps to impart an ironic flavour. The reiteration, though occasionally wearisome, as in the "Book of the Duchess", often adds coherence, especially in verse written for speaking.

Chaucer here shows himself a master of 'decorum' in his vocabulary, not only in the simple sense of choosing words carefully when writing in the high, middle or low style, but in a skill, only matched once before in his poems, in the exploitation of the double vocabulary of English in the speeches of a character to different audiences. Moreover, different vocabularies are used more ambitiously than in any of his earlier works - perhaps more than in any of his later ones - to show the same character in different moods, or even to show a character imitating or speaking under the influence of another, though characters do not invariably use words appropriate for them. It is possible to trace progress in the art of using different vocabularies in different parts of a scene, as the poet warms to his tale.

Demonstrably, the double vocabulary of English adds a resource not open to the Italian writer. What, however, is new even in Chaucer is the degree to which the ambiguity of a word is exploited, thus anticipating the "General Prologue" or the equivocation between the possible meanings of a phrase or sentence, though ambiguity is sometimes misused. That it should have been exploited at all at this time is so

(FK) P. 113.
(FK) pp. 114-5.
(FR) P. 157.
(FT) v. below, pp. 334-7.
(FV) P. 200-201.

(FL) pp. 114-5.
(FN) pp. 147-9.
(FT) pp. 152, 187.
(FS) pp. 156, 178-9, 194-5.
(FU) pp. 91-2, 136.
surprising that one would expect a study of other medieval writers from this point of view to yield interesting results; meanwhile, it is impossible to say whether Chaucer is an innovator in this respect.

The syntax of "Troilus and Criseyde" shows an enlargement of the concept of 'decorum' similar to that found in the study of its diction. The frequent changes of syntax in the adaptation of lines from Boccaccio usually enliven the style. Apart from the numerous parallelisms, antitheses and repetitions, a wide range of rhetorical devices occur, but they rarely obtrude, as in, for example, the "Hous of Fame". Examples have been noted in so many places that one need only here point out how Chaucer uses rhetoric, as his servant rather than his master, in the creation of mood or in characterization. He also makes most skilful use of sentences of different lengths and types for different characters, moods and situations, though there are signs of this art in some speeches in the 'Parlement'. How far the social classes are characterized by the sentences employed is debatable. The people in the Trojan parliament certainly never speak so explosively and irrationally as some in the "Parlement of Fowls", but in Boccaccio they are 'barons', i.e. aristocrats. In any case, one cannot found generalisations

(GA) v. above, pp. 57-9, 66-74.
on the evidence of a few lines. There can be no dispute, however, about the masterly way in which a scene, even the whole poem is, as it were, framed by the repetition of words, phrases, sentences at beginnings and ends. This, I think, is new in Chaucer.

The stanza-form suits admirably the romantic epic which, essentially, this poem is; it suits both the poem's idyllic quality in places, and also the contrast drawn between the ideal and the real. In general, one is rarely conscious of the difficulty of writing in Rhyme Royal, but occasionally the form imposes a degree of bathos or verbosity, or is irrelevant to the thought. Sometimes, however, the stanza-form is used with great variety to suggest different speakers. One notices a tendency in this poem to make the final couplet self-contained, so that it thereby emphasizes a key theme or mood, or epitomizes what has just been said.

Much has been said about the way in which the rhythms of the speeches, the varying speeds and pitches, combine with sounds, rhetorical devices and diction, to reproduce the living voices of the speakers. Thus there are variations of rhythm in a scene for different speakers, or even the same speaker imitating another or addressing different people.

(GB) p. 193, esp. (GG) pp. 103, 146.
(GD) p. 163.
(GF) p. 112.

(GB) pp. 137, 137-8.
(GG) p. 117.
(GI) p. 133-5.
The pitch may rise or fall following the contours of the sentence or the changes of mood. Most, perhaps, has been said of the unsurpassed skill of the author in placing the caesura, either in the same place in successive lines of a passage intended to impress, or in different places to suggest a variation of mood, or simply to avoid monotony, or to throw the stress on to key words. The best tribute to the rhythmic flexibility evident in the poem is the fact that one can read so long a work with so little fatigue. One recalls with particular delight some of the cadences or the subtle variations from the prevailing iambic metre. In places a student of later English verse would be reminded of the measured tread of Milton's iambics, though here the most majestic passages are fairly short. Chaucer, in fact, shows himself capable of deploying most of the resources of diction, imagery and rhythm that later poets have used, but never keeps up the grand style for very long. He had, after all, no tradition of heroic verse, no inevitable beat ringing in his ears from childhood days, as his successors have had.

Of the sounds in the poem not much has been said, except when sound-variation combines with other aspects of the poet's art, or when it helps to differentiate
characters or speakers (or different sections of the same person's speech) or to differentiate speech from narrative.

An analysis has, however, been made of the use of sound effects in a number of passages, as far as these effects can be judged.

One or two reflections have been inspired by my experience of studying, or rather living with, this great poem. The first is that the present fashion for stressing the rhetorical and linguistic aspects of Chaucer's art, while of great value as a means of revealing his subtlety and complexity as an artist, may do less than justice to the power of his imagination if it leads us to ignore the evocativeness, the universal quality of some of the imagery and symbolism of "Troilus and Criseyde". Chaucer was a profoundly imaginative, as well as a learned and highly intelligent poet. Secondly, the rhetorical training he received is perhaps too freely abused; he did not escape from the tradition here, but used it more intelligently than it had ever been used before. Thirdly, the balance between the two sides of his art changes during the poem, in a completely appropriate way, though this is more of an impression borne in upon me than a verifiable statement. In studying the earlier part, up to the end of the love-scene in Book III, I found it most often helpful to

(GS) p. 148 and Appendix A. (GT) p. 163.
(GU) p. 185. (GV) Appendix A.
think of the imagery and dramatically varied dialogue, but in studying the latter part I became more and more often conscious of the repetition of past images, or of formal rhetoric, of patterned, rather than evocative language. Perhaps this was what Chaucer intended. Perhaps he intended to show us passion lighting up a world in delicate colours, invigorating and somehow fusing all activities of a lover's body, senses, mind and spirit, then, as the life-giving union was broken, life falling into separate pieces again, speech becoming studied utterance or emotional outburst, rather than a paean which is also a meditation and a lover's address. The second wooing of Criseyde, by Diomede, the poet has therefore made a very deliberate one, carrying out the precepts of teachers of rhetoric on how to persuade.

Perhaps, however, he had no such intention. Perhaps his genius was invigorated by the spiritual experience he underwent while writing the second and third books, its different facets made to work in unison by the energy with which the subject infused him; perhaps, having written more scrappily in the first book because the people and scenes were still having to be consciously summoned by thought, he wrote in a more studied way in the last two books because his vision was fading, his energy waning, as cooling friendship "useth an enforced ceremony". Perhaps, at the end, though deeply stirred by his awareness of the vanity of
trusting to erotic passion for happiness, he was having to
force himself to write the last episode.

The answer we shall never know. While there is
warrant for both explanations, my own feeling is that the
first hypothesis has more of the truth in it, that the poet
was trying, as in the "Book of the Duchess", to show that
without love we are nothing.
CHAPTER SIX

PRIDCESS'S TALE

The method of approach to this, the last of the three Rhyme Royal poems to be considered in detail, will be similar to that adopted in the study of the "Parlement of Fowles", i.e. the chapter will consist of:

(i) The immediate impression formed of the poem as a whole;

(ii) a consideration of the poetic style, some comparisons with that of the "Parlement" and detailed study of selected passages;

(iii) comment on the properties of Rhyme Royal as apparent here. (A date of composition in the thirteen-nineties is assumed for this purpose). Sources have been fully documented and are, in any case, of narrative rather than stylistic interest.

(i) The general view of the poem, which will be implicit in the critical study to follow, does not differ greatly from the traditional one, that the tale is a pious legend, to be taken seriously and to be admired for its tenderness and well-nigh faultless craftsmanship. The recently-expressed view of the humorous intent of parts of the poem is rejected entirely, on evidence to be given later. The only comment which is perhaps individual is that the central figure is not the Little Clergeon but the Blessed Virgin. For this reason, at the moment when she

is about to enter, the language deliberately recalls that of the opening hymn, itself written to establish her majesty and power in our minds before the story opens. I do feel also that the story is more dramatic than it has been given credit for being, much of the characterisation being done through the choice of style for the speakers.

(ii) As in the study of the "Parlement", the style will be considered under the heads of: (1) Rhythm and metre; (2) Sentence-structure and rhetoric; (3) Diction; (4) Imagery; (5) Sounds. Then will come the detailed study of six short passages representing the different types of verse used in the poem.

(1) Rhythm and Metre Though the "Prioress's Tale" does in fact exhibit considerable variety of rhythm, it is remarkable for long 'cantabile' passages befitting the narrator's reverence, rather than for any such conversational informality as the opening of the "Parlement" shows.

A conscious dignity is at once apparent not only in the Prologue:

"O Lord, our Lord, thy name how merveillous Is in this large world ysprad," quod she.....

(453-4)

but in the opening of the tale itself:

"Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee, Amonges Cristene folk, a Jewerye".....(488-89)
I. Use of Caesura

The opening lines of the Prologue, given above, show the dignity given by the double pause of the first line followed by a processional line-and-a-half of almost unbroken verse. This alteration of stopped and unstopped lines goes on throughout the poem and accounts to a degree for its continuous interest. Pronounced caesurae can help to create an impression of character, while a succession of virtually unstopped lines can convey gravity, as, for instance in the final death-scene. Caesural variation can help to give a conversational tone, as in the "Parlement."

II. Enjambement

One is surprised that there should be less in this often ornate poem than in most of the other tales. Perhaps the explanation lies in the very dignity of some of the verse, its remoteness from common speech, hence its clinging to the regular iambic pattern and the emphasis on the rhymes, as a result of the end-stopping. Perhaps the only distinctive uses of enjambement here are in the opening stanza, in which it assists the rhetorical and rhythmic parallelism of,

"For noight oonly thy laude precious
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is .........."

(455-58)

(B) Cf. esp. Pr. T. 514-5 with P. F. 1-3.
(C) v. Appendix B.
and in the Little Clergeon's speech to his schoolfellow, in which the enjambement helps to convey breathless eagerness.

III 'Unstopped' Lines

Of these there are a large number in the Tale. At a narrative climax they alternate with heavily-stopped lines, but their chief use is in emotional passages such as the Prologue or passages such as the apostrophe to the Jews:

"O cursed folk of Herodes al newe, what may youre yvel entente yow availle?" (574-75)

or the emotion-charged lines describing the mother's search (600-02).

IV Variants

Though the opening trochee is found occasionally, sometimes with dramatic force, departures from regular metre are exceedingly rare. This difference from the "Parlement of Fowles" is doubtless due to the very different purposes of the poems. Contrast of character is, however, conveyed through variation of rhythm between speakers, while the detailed studies of passages will show how flexible the iambic metre can be, in the way rising rhythms herald a climax, or the pitch rises continuously in a lyrical passage, while the narrative stanza has no such continuity.

(2) Sentence-structure and Rhetoric

The expression of the Tale seems generally more naïve
than that of most of Chaucer's mature verse, in that more sentences consist of rather loose strings of co-ordinate clauses. The loosely-constructed sentences, however, usually turn out to be in the narrative portions, while the prologue contains a number of formal, even ornate, periodic sentences. Satan's words occur in a long, somewhat tenuous sentence following his exclamatory outburst, a sentence building to a climax of insidious suggestion. Thus the utterance varies according to the immediate purpose.

This is nowhere more evident than in the dialogue of the two schoolboys who, as will be shown later, are differentiated principally by their modes of utterance. Moreover, the Little Clergeon when recounting the final miracle speaks in grave statements contrasting with his eager question and exclamation of the earlier scene, thus giving an impression of remoteness and seriousness befitting his changed state. This kind of 'decorum' was apparent in the "Parlement", in Nature's speech and the subsequent debate, but the opportunities for its subtle employment in the "Prioress's Tale" are less, as the interest is primarily narrative and devotional, rather than dramatic. Indeed, a larger proportion of the tale is given over to narrative, whereas the "Parlement" moves forward mainly by description and dialogue.

Of rhetoric in the "Parlement" very little was said, as the subject had been thoroughly covered by the (D) See above, p. 58.
commentators. In the "Prioress's Tale" there is a good deal. The Prologue alone, for example, contains the following rhetorical figures:

(i) conversio (456, 458 'parfourned is');
(ii) traductio (455, 460 'laude'; 464-65; 457, 466, 474 'bountee'); 470-71, 479 'alighte .... lighte ..lyght');
(iii) pronominatio (467 'mooder mayde ...mayde mooder');
(iv) adnominatio (468 'bush unbrent ....brennynge');
(v) conversio (486-87 'yow preye ...yow seye').

Numerous examples of these and other rhetorical figures occur in the Tale proper. Such figures include:

(vi) interpretatio (495, 501, 503, 571-2, 580, 584, 639, 640, and especially 665, 668);
(vii) repetitio (516, 535-6, 569, 571, 600, 628, 632);
(viii) gradatio (663);
(ix) apostrophatio 574-8;
(x) rhetorical question (537-8; 575; 647-8).

In a necessarily non-realistic story prefaced by a hymn and concluded by a miracle and another hymn the abundance of rhetoric is natural. On this evidence, only a late date can be inferred as the rhetoric is not only appropriate but found in such small amounts as not to obtrude. Prolonged figures such as 'occupatio' are missing.

(3) Diction

What is unusual in the rhetorical structure is the linkage of different parts by the repetition of key words. Thus, as we have seen, the opening hymn to the Virgin is linked with the passage describing her intervention. The 'moodres pitee' of the widow is linked with the prayer to

(E) Cf. similar tendency in "Miller's Tale", discussed in Ch. Nine.
'Cristes moodre' (593, 597) an important linkage. So too the phrasing of the narrative of the widow's ordeal:

"This poure wydwe awaiteth al that nyght
After hir litel child, but he cam noght" (586-87)

recalls

"Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone ytaught
Oure blisful Lady, Cristes mooder deere,
To worship ay ..............."

(509-11)

and blends with her prayer to the Virgin for aid in the search. There are numerous other such verbal links, as detailed study of passages will show. (There are no apparent ambiguities or reiteration of words in different senses, as in the "General Prologue", however). The result of this network, particularly of references to the victim's youth, is an unusual singleness and coherence of impression. It may be that this but echoes a coherence of imagination by Chaucer, rather than a deliberate attempt at unity. In this respect the Tale has more unity than the "Parlement", which, by its very nature, is more diverse in tone and interest.

Other features of the diction which our subsequent detailed study will illustrate are the change of vocabulary coinciding with a change of mood, the use of Romance words to give a sonorous formality, the alternation of Romance and Anglo-Saxon terms even within a character-portrait to draw a contrast between the person and his education, and repetition of phrases to give an impression of inevitability.
Nowhere will there be the use of colour or of a different choice of words for address to different people, as in the "Parlement".

(4) Imagery

The absence of colour in this poem, as compared with the earlier one, is natural in view of its interest being primarily emotional rather than visual. The only clear visual image is the picture of the mother's face, and this stays in our mind not so much for itself as for the universal emotion it typifies. Though there is noticeably more metaphor and simile in this poem (one per twenty lines as against one per hundred), what there is gives a general air of remoteness from concrete reality.

(5) Sounds

On the whole, sounds are used in more varied ways, and to more conscious purpose, than in the "Parlement". One notices especially the smooth-sounding sibilants of the Devil's lines, the harsh sounds in which the Little Clergeon describes the punishments he is prepared to face, the close-knit patterns of sound in the highly-wrought Prologue, the soft sounds in the Virgin's words to the child, and the stark, hard sounds used for the narrative of the killing.

The passages now to be examined in detail include:

(a) the Prologue;

(F) l. 589, with which cf. M.L.T. 645-50.
(G) v. Appendix C.
(b) the narrative stanzas (509-29);
(c) the dialogue of the children (530-43);
(d) the slaying (558-71);
(e) the widow's search (586-606);
(f) the pious comment (607-15);
(g) the dead child's speech and the Abbot's action (649-76).

(a) Prologue  On the supposition that the Tale is to be taken as a demonstration of the benignity and power of the Virgin, these five stanzas of invocation, dedication and prayer seem intended to leave listeners with so powerful an impression that they will realise at the end that she is chief protagonist. The emotion first expressed is awe that "...by the mouth of children, thy bountee Parfourned is, for on the brest soukynge Somtyme shewen they thyth heriynge", changing by Stanza 3 to an almost ecstatic cry of admiration "O mooder Mayde! o mayde Moorde free!" then to a more restrained and formal paean of praise of Our Lady's "bountee", "magnificence" and "grte humylitee" in bringing forth Christ, and finally to a simpler, more personal feeling of inadequacy to praise her. These aims and feelings are reflected in the style of the Prologue.

A study of the sentence-structure of the third, fourth and fifth stanzas will show how it changes and thus contributes to the gradation from restrained ecstasy to impassioned rhetoric and then to personal feeling. In the
third stanza the exclamation

"O mooder kayde! o mayde Mooder free!"
stands on its own as a cry of admiration. The inversion, (slightly ridiculous to our ears), has enough of rhetorical formality to temper the emotion. The long complex sentence that follows begins in the same exclamatory fashion, "O bush unbrent, brennynge in hoyses sighte" but builds up through a series of subordinate clauses to the final prayer

"Help me to tel it in thy reverence!"

At the same time, the words become more formal and abstract, from the "bush unbrent" of the second line to the "Conceyved was the Padres sapience" of the sixth. This strain continues in the fourth stanza, with an opening invocation, followed by a series of praises rising to a climax in the third line:

"Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertue and thy grete humylitee,
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science",
after which come two dependent clauses explaining why the Virgin is beyond praise. The choice of words in the lines above show how the latinate and abstract vocabulary assists the aim. A more personal note is heard in the last line,

"To gyden us unto thy Sone so deere",
and this is continued not only in the simpler, predominantly monosyllabic and concrete Anglo-Saxon vocabulary of the last stanza,
"My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful Queene,
For to declare thy grete worthynesse
That I ne may the weighte nat susteene
But as a child of twelf month oold, or lesse,
That kan unnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therfore I yow preye,
Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye".

but in the sentence-structure. Though still coherent, with connectives like "that" (line 5) and "therefore" (line 6) the sentence is somewhat looser, because of the use of co-ordinate clauses rather than a series of subordinate clauses rising to a single climax. Here there are three lesser climaxes, "That I ne may the weighte nat susteene," "Right so fare I" and "Gydeth my song".

The expression of the whole passage, indeed, is unusually coherent. Thus after an opening stanza of which the sentence-structure is similar to that of the last, the word "Wherefore" is the link with the second.

"In laude
......of the white lyle flour
Which that the bar, and ys a mayde alway"

is taken up in the opening exclamation "O mooder Mayde" in stanza 3, and finally the general statement "Ther may no tongue express in no science" which is the key line of the fourth stanza, is particularized by the opening lines of the fifth, "My konnyng is so wayk ....For to declare".

Grammatically, therefore, the climax of the rhyme royal stanza may come either at the middle or at the end, and may be approached either by a long single series of clauses or by several shorter sentences. The rhythm shows a similar variety of pattern but a similar tendency towards coherence within the stanza. This may be illustrated from the first, fourth and fifth stanzas. In the first stanza:
"O Lord, our Lord, / thy name how merveillous
Is in this large world ysprad / "quod she;
For noght oonly thy laude precious
Perfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Perfourned is for on the brest soukynge
Sometyme shewen they thyn heriynge".

the reader's voice rises continuously to a first climax at 'large world', before dropping away, then rises again to a plateau at 'dignitee' before climbing to 'children' and dropping away, before similarly rising to a lower climax at 'brest soukynge', with a long gradual fall throughout the last line. In the last stanza, quoted above, a similar pattern will be evident, with rhythmic rises to climaxes at 'weights' (line 3), 'so fare I' (line 6) and 'song' (line 7) with in each case a falling away afterwards. This vocal inflection acts against the iambic metre.

"Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertue, and thy grete humylitee,
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science;
For somtyme, Lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benygntee,
And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyere,
To gyden us unto thy Sone so deere." (474-80)

In this more formally rhetorical fourth stanza each of the opening lines has a short group of syllables followed by a longer one, giving a generally mounting pitch, then through the unbroken third line with climaxes at 'express' and 'no' and a slight drop. The rest of the stanza shows the same rhythmic pattern on a larger scale, with lengthening groups of syllables before the momentary halts at the middle and end of line 4, the end of line 5, the middle and end of line 6, but a generally continuously rising intonation throughout
until the major climax of 'Sone' in the last line. So in each stanza the rhythmic texture of the three stanzas accords with the tone and intention.

The wording and imagery of the Prologue contribute greatly to the dignity of its rhetoric. Dissyllabic and polysyllabic words of Latin origin denoting abstract qualities are more in evidence here than anywhere else in the poem, (one could almost say, than anywhere else in Chaucer). Many of these words occur as rhymes and thus add weight to the line-endings, examples being "merveilous... precious" (st. 1), "sapience ...reverence" (st. 3), and single words like "magnificence", "humylitee", "benygnitee" rhyming with "science" in the first case in stanza 4, the section most clearly in the 'high' or 'aureate' style.

The themes of the words chosen, such as generosity ('bounte twice, 'magnificence'), humility ('humylitee', 'humblesse'), value ('worthynesse', 'honour') and learning ('konnyng', 'science', 'sapienee') help to make this passage sonorous and elevated, an effect achieved also by the repetition of words or constructions like 'parfourned is' (st. 1, ll. 4-6).

Finally, the imagery, of which there is more in the Prologue than elsewhere in the poem, contributes to an elevated style, being drawn from the Bible; the Virgin the "bush unbrent, brennynge in loyses aighte", (st. 3).

It comes also from religious or liturgical tradition, in expressions such as "the roote of bountee", the "scules
boote" (st. 2), the "white lyle flour" (st. 2) and the "blisful queene" (st. 5), echoes of the Litany of the Virgin or of hymns and antiphons.

(b) **Lines 509-29**

The intention here is straightforward narrative, tinged by the pious comments of the prioress. What differences are there in detail between the elevated style of the Prologue and the somewhat plainer style of this passage? A subsidiary question might be 'How does the second stanza show itself capable of accommodating these differences in intention?'

The first difference is that the syntax is rather looser, giving an impression not of a formal rising to a climax but of a succession of events. The second stanza will serve to illustrate this:

"This litel child, his litel book lernynge,  
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,  
He 'Alma Redemptoris' herde synge,  
as children lerned hire antiphoner;  
And as he dorete, he drough hym ner and ner,  
And herkned ay the wordes and the noote,  
Til he the firste verse koude al by rote."

Here, although the first two couplets are grammatically alike, the next two lines are about a succession of separate events linked by 'and'.

The second difference is evident also from the above, in a line-by-line variation of rhythmic structure following the sense. Thus the opening line clearly falls into two halves leaving two key words in mind, 'child' and 'book', the word

(H) Three stanzas, lines 509-15 referred to as st. 1, 516-22 as st. 2, and 525-29 as st. 3.
'litel' being repeated to mark the division. The next three lines, being self-contained, are unstopped, but a sound-picture of the successive edgings forward of the child's desk, is conveyed by the short staccato phrases of line 5. The last couplet forms a unity, the pitch rising gently and steadily to 'al by rote' after an earlier peak at 'vers'.

One notices an unusual amount of repetition in these stanzas. Thus, in these twenty-one lines 'child' or 'children' come three times, 'litel' three times, 'yong', 'this song' and 'prayde' twice each. If the poem were intended for reading aloud, the aims of this repetition would presumably be not only to instil the central facts of the story into the listener's mind, but also to prepare him to feel pity and tenderness at the appropriate moment. The first aim would be served by the use of many words on the twin themes of worship and education so that the listener is within a minute very conscious of the boy, the school, singing, the Blessed Virgin and the anthem, all but one of which are involved in

(I) 512, 516, 519.
(J) 509, 516 (twice).
(K) 515, 524.
(L) 526, 527.
(M) 527, 528.
(N) E.g. 'Our Lady', 'Cristes mooder' (510), 'reverence' (515), 'antiphoner' (519), 'Alma Redemptoris' (518).
(O) E.g. 'to expounden' (526), 'to konne' (540), 'grammeers' (536).
the central action. The second aim would be served by the use of formal words for the child's education and the more emotive Anglo-Saxon words for the child himself; words of this type being used as in the last stanza of the prologue.

The narrative style therefore involves a less coherent sentence-structure than the elevated style. It also involves diction and repetitions to establish basic ideas and attitudes, as well as more varied rhythms. From three stanzas any conclusions about the structure of the Rhyme Royal stanza in narrative verse have little warrant, but it does seem that the stanza falls into a longer section of four or five lines and a shorter one involving either a change of action to comment, or from one kind of action to another. The first, for example, has four lines saying that the widow taught the child to honour the Virgin, and three comparing him to St. Nicholas; the second has four saying that he heard the children singing the anthem, and three on his drawing near to learn the words, while in the last stanza the first five lines tell us that the child asked for a translation of the song, and the final couplet adds that he asked many more times.

(P) 'expounded', 'grammeere'.
(Q) 'litel', 'sely' (512), 'yong'.
(R) See above, p.
The chief aim here seems to be to convey a character-contrast between the eager, curious, devout Little Clergeon and his more matter-of-fact companion. The two different attitudes are apparent not only in the sense of what the boys say, but very obviously in its tone. This vivid contrast is achieved mainly by the syntax and rhythmic texture of their remarks. The Elder Boy begins with a long double sentence:

"This song, I have herd seye, 
Was maked ofoure blissful Lady free, 
Hire to salue, and eek hire for to preye 
To been oure help and socour whan we deye,"
giving an impression of somewhat embarrassed formality, not of any personal feeling. The disjointed ending of his speech

"I kan namoore expounds in this mateere; 
I lerne song, I kan but smal grammeere"
further suggests an embarrassed shrugging-off of the questions. The Little Clergeon, on the other hand, begins with a rhetorical question:

"And is this song maked in reverence 
Of Cristes mooder?"

This immediately indicates a greater zest, further apparent in his exclamation,

"Now, certes, I wol do my diligence 
To konne it al er Cristemasse be went."

His final sentence, complex and mounting to a final main clause, accords well in shape with his heroic resolve:
"Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,
And shal be beten thries in an houre,
I wol it konne Oure Lady for to honoure!"
The direct contrast in tone is thus expressed through the syntax.

The Elder Boy's remarks are interesting in the way rhythm, rhyme and metre co-operate. The second and fourth lines of his stanza (see above) which rhyme, are both split by a caesura, while the third and fifth run on without pause. The concluding couplet has an opposite tendency, the first line running straight on while the second has a particularly awkward caesural pause: "I lerne song, / I kan but smal grammeere". The rhyming couplet encloses his refusal to answer more. The whole stanza, however, is in faultless iambics, the metre accommodating itself both to formal exposition and to awkward staccato sentences, the jerkiness being due not to metrical variation but to the pauses at the end of line 6 and the middle of line 7, contrasting with the smooth flow and the enjambement of the second half of line 4 and of line 5, as well as to the lack of connectives and the repetition of 'I kan'.

In the Little Clergeon's stanza one's attention is at once caught by the metrical irregularity of:

"And is this song / made in reverence"

and then by the way the pitch rises continuously to 'mooder', after the run-on past the end of line 1. The double pause to emphasize 'certes' (line 3) may be just the
effect of modern punctuation, but eagerness is well expressed in the enjambement from line 3 to 4 and the slight climax at 'al' followed by the intensified resolve of 'er Cristemasse be went'. After two medially rapid uninterrupted lines the 'to konne it al' will be echoed by 'I wol it konne' followed by a similar caesural pause. The final 'Our Lady to honoure' harks back to the first two lines of the Elder Boy's speech:

".......This song, I have heard seye,
Was maked of our blissful Lady fre."

One should notice, finally, how resolve is apparent not only in the syntax and rhythm of the Litel Clergeon's speech but in the harsh sounds of 'shent' and 'beten'.

(d) **Lines 558-71 (The Slaying)**

Here the aims are more complex. The Devil's craft, the force of his temptation, are to be demonstrated; the Jews are to be kept out as much as possible, otherwise the tale will be too much of an atrocity story and too little of a religious legend, and finally the murder is to be shown as occurring with fearful speed and in very few lines so that the attention will not be too much focussed on the gruesome details.

The Devil's malignity is conveyed by the images of him as serpent and having a wasp's nest. This, I think, is all Chaucer intends by the mixed metaphor.

(S) Baum, op. cit., p. 76-7 is surely reading too much into this when he sees it as a dig at the Friar. Even Shakespeare uses mixed metaphors with no insidious intent.
His insidious menace is conveyed in the series of sibilants which together reinforce the suggestion conveyed by the serpent image, in

"Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas
That hath in Jues herte his waspes nest,
Up swal, and seide ...."  

His craft appears from the form of the sentence in which he tempts the Jews. Beginning with reproachful exclamation:

"O Hebrayk peple, allas!"

he continues with a provocative rhetorical question, in which the rhythmic phrasing is such that his pitch would rise continuously to "Despit" then drops momentarily to rise again to "reverence", the first half conveying the boy's action and the second pointing out that it is not merely insult but blasphemy. Note the free use of enjambement to convey rising indignation:

"Is this to yow a thing that is honest,
That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest
In youre despit, and synge of swich sentence
Which is agayn youre lawes reverence?"

The large number of assonances in the above lines help to make them extremely tightly knit and memorable, therefore persuasive.

The following stanza is notable for the lack of detail of the killing, and the number of events covered in seven lines, for the simple series of clauses joined by 'and' as the climax approaches, giving an impression of a breathless series of events, for the word 'this innocent' so powerfully
suggestive in its context, (the suggestion of Herod, of the enormity of the crime, of divine tenderness to the child) and for the two last lines,

"This cursed Jew hym bente, and heeld hym faste, And kitte his throte and in a pit hym caste,"

in which the monosyllables convey an impression of starkness to which also the hard sounds of 'cursed', 'kitte' and 'caste' contribute. The climax, moreover, is approached and passed with so little pause for detail, that it gives the impression of speed without so focussing attention on the killing as to make the action of the Virgin come as an anti-climax.

(e) **Lines 586-606 (Widow's search)**

The intention of this dramatic highlight of the poem differs from that of the last section in that though the passage includes action, the essential interest is emotional rather than narrative. The single unforgettable visual picture, that of the mother searching,

"With face pale of drede and bisy thoght"

is of universal application. Here is any mother seeking any lost child. As so often in this poem, the personal feeling is conveyed largely by the choice of monosyllabic, simple words creating the bare elemental situation of mother seeking child.
"She frayneth and she prayeth pitously
To every Jew that dwelte in thilke place,
To telle her if hir child wente oght forby.
They seyde "nay"; but Jhesu, of his grace,
Yaf in hir thoght, inwith a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,
Where he was casten in a pit bisyde." (T) (600-06)

The repetitions of 'litel child' (587, 596), of 'hir child'
and 'hir sone' (602, 605) have a similarly emotive effect
and hark back also to the narrative of the Little Clergeon's
hearing of the anthem. (509-29).

Each stanza is a unity in itself, marking a stage in
the action, and leading to a climax of discovery in the last
line, e.g. stanza 1 ends

"Til finally she gan so fer espie
That he last seyn was in the Juerie",

while stanza 2 ends

"........and atte last thus she wroghte,
Among the cursed Jues she hym soghte"

and the third stanza ends in her discovery of the body in
a pit. Each climax is approached by a gradually rising
pitch.

(f) Lines 607-13 (Pious Comment)

The spirit and vocabulary here deliberately recall
the Prologue. They do so for a purpose: as the Virgin
was invoked at the beginning, so she is to act now, and

(T) Purpose of choice of words more obvious when this st.
cpd. with 607-13, in which comment is in style of
Prologue ('parfournest thy laude', 'mouthe of
innocentz', 'thy myght', 'gemme of chastite'), i.e.
'aureate' diction.
our consciousness of her presence is to be revived. The harsh gutturals of "throte ykorven" recall those of the lines describing his slaying:

"And kitte his throte, and in a pit hym caste" (571).

The imagery (emerald, a gem or chastity, ruby of martyrdom) is rich, and remote from the physical fact of death, but fits the pious sentiment of the Prioress, soaked in the liturgy and the Apocalypse.

In lines 1 and 2 the invocation consists of a long phrase running over from the first to the second line, enclosed by two short exclamations. The lines describing the singing are, however, unbroken save for caesurae.

(g) Lines 649-76 (Dead child's speech, Abbot's action)

The author has here set himself a well-nigh impossible task. The child must not talk in the elevated style of the Prioress's opening invocation; he must sound like a child. Nevertheless, he is no longer a schoolboy but a saint miraculously kept alive, sent to disclose a divine mystery. To carp at his manner of speech for being different from that he used in the school would be insensitive and unintelligent: the question is just what difference there should be. Even this is not the only difficulty Chaucer faces here, for he has to convey the Virgin's motherly solicitude and thus soften the horror of the crime, and to do so not through the Virgin's mouth, but through the boy's. Finally, he has to convey the
Prioress's own reverent style of narrative without causing laughter instead of a sympathetic willingness to share her emotion.

The first problem, the most difficult, demands a graver style of speech than the eager questioning of the school episode, yet not a solemn or learned one. Accordingly, the child utters a series of statements unrelieved by question or exclamation. His sentences, however, are a somewhat random series of clauses joined by co-ordinating conjunctions, not the elaborate structures observed in the Prologue. His opening stanza will serve as an example:

"My throte is kut unto my nekke boon,"
Seyde this child, "and, as by wey of kynde, I sholde have dyed, ye, longe tyme agon. But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes fynde, Wyl that his glorie laste and be in mynde, And for the worship of his Mooter deere Yet may I synge 'O Alma' loude and clere."

One notices here the change of direction at "ye" and the series of 'and's; one notices also that the last line, which could be approached by a steady mounting of pitch is, in fact merely like the last of a series of beads on a string.

It is to be expected that the child's vocabulary should be simple, even naive. This is hardly the case, for he uses one or two philosophical or theological terms, 'glorie', 'by wey of kynde', 'worship', 'honour', though
he certainly does not use words so abstract as those of
the Prioress' commentary. There is, in short, a trace of
formality in his vocabulary.

This impression is heightened by the fact that the
sounds of these stanzas are closely knit. Line for line,
there is more use of assonance, consonance and alliteration
here than anywhere in the poem, save for the lines
conveying the Devil's temptation. In the stanza quoted
above, for example, one has:

Line 1: 't', 'k', 'kut unto';
Line 2: 'and as' 'nd';
Line 3: 'd', 'dyed', taken with 'kynde' and 'tyme';
also later 'mynde', 'fynde';
Line 5: 'Mooder deere', 'd', 'r'.

It is noticeable that in the last two stanzas of the child's
speech the horror of death is softened by the repetition
of soft-sounding words, euphemism ('my lyf forlete') and
the references to worship and praise, as though death is
an almost unnoticed transition, rather than an atrocious
crime:

"Wherfore I syng, and syng I moot certeyn,
In honour of that blisful Mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of taken is the greyn".

The Virgin's maternal tenderness is conveyed by her
assurances

"Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake",

(U) v. Appendix A.
by her phrase 'ly litel child' recalling the previous references to him in the school episode, and the gentleness with which the fact of death is put: "now wol I fecche thee". It is conveyed too by the soft sounds: the 'g's of 'greyn', 'tonge', 'agast', the sibilants as in 'agast' and 'forsake', and the 'a's of 'Whan that' and 'nat agast'.

In the stanza describing the abbot's action, (669-76) the repetition of the demonstrative, and the breaking up of the opening lines into three phrases awake us to the new turn of the narrative. The second line

"His tonge out caughte, and took away the greyn"

recalls the previous lines

"He thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my tonge" (662)

and

"Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge ytake" (668)
giving the action the inevitability of ritual, as well as leaving the 'facts' clearly in the listener's mind.

From here on each line flows uninterrupted by anything but the slightest of caesural pauses, to reinforce the impression of death conveyed in the beautifully soft sounds and gentle rhythm of:

"And he yaf up the goost ful softly".

A modern reader is less happy about the onomatopoeic sounds of

"His salte teeris trickled doun .......

(V) cf. P.C.T. 1, where similar softness intended,
".....gruf he fil al plat....."
at which it is impossible to restrain a smile, though I
cannot agree with Baum that a quiet smile at the Prioress
is intended for such humour would be misplaced in an episode
so tender and reverent. The last line is wholly
exquisite in its liquid sounds and long dying away:

"And stille he lay as he had been ybounde."

In the whole stanza one can remark the number of
monosyllabic, as it were, elemental words which should be
apparent from the lines quoted.

There may be reservations about the degree to which
Chaucer succeeded in conveying the reverent quiet of the
boy’s end but in the important lines of the Virgin to the
boy he wonderfully conveys the universal tenderness which
overlays the whole poem. I really doubt whether one can say
he has failed in his first and most difficult aim, that of
conveying the speech of a child miraculously preserved, for
it is surely unlikely that one would notice that the boy’s
education has meantime been completed without the kind of
close scrutiny given here. At all events, if he did not
succeed by the methods adopted, it is hard to see how any
poet would have done.

(iii) Properties of Rhyme Royal

No tale of Chaucer’s was more suitable for the Rhyme
Royal stanza-form than this one, in its remoteness from
everyday reality, its gentle flow of divine action in place
of dramatic conflict, its pious lyricism. Nowhere, I believe, does he more clearly demonstrate the versatility of rhyme royal and his own creative intelligence, than in his employment of it here for a hymn to the Virgin, for both slow and rapid narrative, for dramatic dialogue in which two different characters are revealed without a word of direct comment, for an anguished climax, and for a death-scene of autumnal gentleness.

Further to those made in the study of the "Parlement of Fowles", the following observations may be made here:

(a) The stanza marks stages in the action as in the earlier poem, but one's general impression is that here the stanza-division seems more natural and unobtrusive. One may remark, for example, the opening stanzas, respectively on the city, the school, the hero, or the ones about the killing, which convey first the temptation by Satan, then the murder, then the attempt to hide the deed (558-78). There is, however, no such inevitability about the stanzas of the Prologue.

(b) The links between stanzas are similarly unobtrusive. Thus, in the opening stanzas, we have "at eyther end" (494) and "at the feryther ende" (496), followed by "smale children" (501) and "Among thise children" (502) and finally "As hym was taught" (507) leading to "Thus hath this wydwe .......... ytaughte" (509). Sometimes there will be no formal link but the continuance of a strain of 'repetitio' done rather more subtly than in the early poems, as in the series "she hath .... she gooth .... she cride .... she hym soghte .... she frayneth .... she preyeth" (590-600). The total effect is of a singular yet unforced coherence.

(c) As in the "Parlement" the stanza is very flexible, able to accommodate purposes and shades of mood from the exaltation of the opening to the pathos of the mother's search and the naturalness of the children's conversation.

(W) pp. 74-6 above.
One is rarely or never aware here, however, of padding, or of conversations squeezed into the stanza, or irrelevant to it. In those describing the hero's wonder at the anthem, for example, the first (509-15) falls into groups of four lines (teaching of honour to the Virgin) and three (comparison with St. Nicholas, apparently natural), the second may be similarly divided (hearing the anthem 516-19, drawing near 520-22), the third into two, three and two (ignorance, enquiry, urgency), while in the fourth and fifth (523-36) the conversations fit very easily into their stanzas.

(d) As in the "Parlement", there are repetitions and parallelism, but here they are at a distance, rather than in adjoining stanzas. I am thinking here not of the kind of link described above, but of such parallelisms as that between the opening stanza of the Prologue and that introducing the search by the people (607-13).

(e) One difference from the "Parlement" is that the final couplet standing on its own is very little in evidence. Indeed, one rarely thinks of or remembers lines or groups of lines in isolation. It is as though, having mastered the heroic couplet, Chaucer was here thinking in complete stanzas, rather than in lines or couplets.

(f) Finally, and most important, the "Prioress's Tale" is almost wholly straightforward narrative (of which "Parlement of Fowles" has very little) so that its style is necessarily more uniform with less concentration on individual features.
PART III

HEROIC COUPLET POEMS

Chapter Seven "Knight's Tale"

Chapter Eight Prologue to "Canterbury Tales"

Chapter Nine "Miller's Tale"
CHAPTER SEVEN

Chapter on "Knight's Tale"

In recent years some very full studies have been made of the general aims, form and narrative method of this poem. While some features of such interpretations may be implicit in the remarks made here, very little will be said about the poem in general, the chapter being designed principally to include:

I - a study of the style, with special reference to the heroic couplet form, rhythms and rhetoric;

II - studies of several scenes in which the various aspects of the poet's craft can be observed working together;

III - some observations on the relationship of this poem to works previously studied.

Though no attempt will be made to replace or improve on the standard work on the relationship of the poem to its source, occasional reference will be made to the "Teseida" in discussing stylistic features or particular episodes.

I. Style

Whether or not there were two versions of the "Knight's Tale", one before and one after the "Troilus", there is general agreement that this is Chaucer's first tale in the decasyllabic couplet form used by so many later writers, and that it was written to be read to an

(A) E.g. those of Muscatine and of D.W. Robertson (v. Bibliography).

(B) Cummings, op. cit., whose authority I accept in the matter of additions and omissions by Ch.
audience. While its general aims and form are in dispute, some recent interpretations on the theme of order and disorder in the poem, on its formation and on its value as illustrating medieval ideas do provoke one to see how far these conceptions seem relevant to the style. This section will therefore be divided into the following sub-sections:

(a) the handling of the couplet and its relation to the sense;
(b) the rhythms and sound-qualities of the poem, as far as we can judge them;
(c) the relevance to the style of:
   (i) order
   (ii) rhetorical formalism
   (iii) abstract ideas.

(a) The heroic couplet in the "Knight's Tale" is used not only in the ways in which eighteenth-century poets used it, at the height of its popularity, but also in ways that subsequently proved unprofitable and dropped out of use. Thus we find it in the self-contained or 'closed' form in which the couplet embodies a single observation or thought, as later used supremely in Chaucer's own satiric verse in the "Prologue" or in that of Pope; we find it also as a unit in a series that later developed into the verse paragraph of heroic couplets in the satires of Dryden, the reflective poetry of Johnson or Goldsmith, or the narrative poetry of Crabbe, while
the "Knight's Tale" also contains examples of the two halves of the couplet being set against each other antithetically or in the stichomythic repartee found in early Shakespeare and subsequently abandoned by him. We find also other groupings of lines, (of which some show traces of the habit of thinking in stanzas), as well as single lines, 'split' couplets in which one line ends one episode or speech and another begins the next, and occasional passages in which the form is quite irrelevant to the thought.

The closed couplet is used, firstly, as a 'conclusio', summing up the thought or action of a section, in the way that the concluding couplet of a rhyme royal stanza sometimes does, as in the ending of the passage on Arcite's illness:

"And certainly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,
Fare wel phisik! go ber the man to chirche!"

(2759-60)

More often, the narrator employs one for his modulation from one episode to the next, either simply indicating his intention, as in;

"But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende" (2965-6)

or briefly dismissing the one episode and initiating the next:

"And in his blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wole of Palamon a lite." (1449-50)

E.g. "Richard III", "Henry VI".
The closed couplet announcing or beginning an action is quite rare, one of the few examples being the memorable if inelegant:

"An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Oo!' Til al the noyse of peple was ydo'. (2533-4)

The couplet containing an idiomatic saying and having a consequent flavour of the epigram is also rare as yet, but Theseus has one or two observations like:

"She woot namoore of al this hoote fare By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!" (1809-10)

Akin to this remark are the idea or ironic observations found so often in the "General Prologue" and here most noticeable in the famous remarks on Arcite's soul (2809-14).

Of the forty-six passages examined in detail, the description of the Temple of Diana was found to contain the largest number, while a lament by Arcite, the prayers of Emily and Arcite, the narrative of his accident and the series of exempla in Theseus' final monologue had none.

The analysis of a number of scenes, in Section II of this chapter, will also show that the choice of metrical form is a matter of the design of an individual scene rather than any tendency to use closed couplets for any special purpose such as narrative or description.

The 'verse-paragraph' consisting of a series of couplets, is more in evidence in the later parts of the poem,

(D) See Appendix B(ii).
especially in straightforward narrative. However, however, are there very many such couplets together, without some variant. The couplet containing repartee gives a somewhat slick effect hardly in keeping with the serious context in,

"Whether seistow this in ernest or in play?"
"Nay," quod Arcite, "in ernest, by my fey!" (1125-6)

intensified here perhaps by the use of the same rhyme in feminine form in the next couplet.

The commonest alternative to closed or open couplets is the group of six lines split into two sentences or clauses of three lines each. The break may be a straightforward sentence or clause-ending or a change from statement to direct speech. Also very common is the split couplet in the middle of which ends a speech or a sentence, or an episode. In one case it has a variety of uses, separating action from speech, or two sentences, or speech from the resultant action. The 'overspill' of the thought

(E) Notably in fight in grove (1649-62), and in funeral (2882-917).
(F) This cannot be said, however, in mitigation of:
   2667-8: "She seyde, 'I am ashamed, douteless.'"
   Saturnus seyde, 'Doughter, hoold thy pees'."
(G) E.g. 1360-65.
(H) E.g. 2450-55.
(I) E.g. 1579-80.
(J) E.g. 1587-8.
(K) E.g. 1595-6.
of a couplet to occupy part of a third line, is often found in combination with other forms, and will be considered when combinations of forms are discussed. Very often the single line is a metrical unit, as it often is later in the "General Prologue"; here it is noticeable as a conclusio or a number of single lines may be used where an effect of confusion is desired, as in the battle scene or poignantly in the dying speech of Arcite, a notable example of 'conduplicatio'.

Much of the variety of the tale to the visual reader, at least, is due to the poet's constant changes of form, his combination of the closed couplet with the three-line group, the split couplet, the 'overspill' couplet, the single line(s), or the continuous series of couplets, most of all his passages in which several of these forms are combined. He varies his metrical form in such ways in order to differentiate parallel speeches, such as the three prayers in the temples, or the different parts of a single speech, as in the dying Arcite's lament, which begins with two three-line groups (2765-7, 2568-70), addressed to Emily, before the lamentations begin with a closed couplet and continue in single lines or half-lines (2771-2, 2773-6) until, when commending Palamon, the speaker uses continuous couplets in which the sense runs without break:

(L) 1, 1539.
(M) 2603-20.
(N) 2771-5.
"So Juppiter have of my soule part,  
As in this world right now ne knowe I non  
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,  
That serveth yow, and wol doon al his lyf.  
And if that eve he shul ben a wyf;  
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man." (2792-7)

The different parts of a description may be differentiated in some such way, as in the account of Arcite's illness, where the statement that it is incurable is made in continuous couplets (2743-8), the further details are given in groups of three lines (2749-54) and the account of his ruin given in two single lines (2757-8) before the account concludes with the rather disjointed and facetious closed couplet (2759-60). Likewise comparable descriptions are given properly different metrical forms, so that that of the Temple of Mars (1973-2040) contains a large number of single lines listing the different forms of death, while that of the Temple of Diana (2062-88) has a large number of closed couplets, giving a somewhat more elegant and formal atmosphere. One of the analyses in Section II will show changes from one form to another during a passage of mingled description and action. How far an audience listening to the poem, even allowing for their being more practised listeners, would appreciate these subtleties is very doubtful: it is probable that these are things only the writer or the visual reader would notice.

(0) See Appendix B (ii).
Whether or not the means would be observed, the result, the great vitality of some of the narrative and speeches in this poem is most noticeable. In Theseus' monologue on love, for example, (1785-1814) the changes are constantly rung: he begins with single lines of exclamation and 'sententia' (1785-7), considers the power of love in the three-line group ending with 'divyse' (1790), gives the example of Arcite and Palamon in a couplet followed by several single lines of 'repetitio' (1791-5) ending in a split couplet (1796-7), continues with rhetorical questions in single lines (1798-9), an exclamation in an 'overspill' couplet (1800-2) with another rhetorical question to fill the line, then comments ironically on how Cupid rewards his adherents, in a split couplet ending 'servyse' (1802) the second rhyme being identical with that for the previous comment on Cupid (1790). Enough detail has perhaps been given to show how the variations not only of rhetorical utterance but of couplet-form give the speech a vigour and apparent spontaneity and realism. In real life only a practised and trained speaker could so vary his utterance.

In this, his first essay in the use of the decasyllabic couplet, (or at least the first that has survived) Chaucer therefore showed an astonishing skill in adapting the form

(P) Passage quoted below, p. 257.
for many different kinds of utterance. There are occasions, however, when the clumsy line betrays some difficulty in using the new form, such lines as the obvious insertion for the sake of the rhyme of "startynge as the fir" (1502), or the trite couplet (added by Chaucer)

"That fro thy lord is banysshed on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed" (1725-6)
or the obvious 'fill-ups' like

"Ther as need is they weren no thyng ydel" (2505).

The fact that these lapses do not come in the early part of the poem might indicate either revision, or previous practice in now lost poems, or greater care at the start.

(b) In general, the first striking fact about the rhythm of the "Knight's Tale" is the high proportion of end-stopped lines; time after time one notes enjambement in Boccaccio's text and end-stopping in Chaucer's rendering.

An investigation of Chaucer's practice with regard to enjambment, prompted by this fact, showed that relatively less lines run on in this poem than in the "Book of the Duchess", the "Parliament of Fowls", or even the "General Prologue". Admittedly the shortness of octosyllabic lines might result in involuntary enjambment; the fact that the

Perhaps 884, 974, 1029, 1059 and 1122 are the nearest parallels in the first part, but most are common throughout Ch.

See Appendix B (i).

BD, 14.5%, PF, 15%, PCT 9.7%.
decasyllabic 'Parlement' has more, however, would suggest a tendency for the poet's experience in writing to lead to more use of the device. That the 'Prologue' should have less than the 'Parlement' is understandable in view of its preponderance of self-contained descriptive or ironic lines. That the mainly descriptive 'Prologue' has actually 50% more run-on lines than the largely narrative "Knight's Tale" can only be explained on one of two suppositions: either Chaucer had not mastered the new form or he intended the narrative, description and speech to be static and formal rather than dramatic, essentially a pageant. The first supposition is ruled out by the fact that the use of enjambement decreases as the poem proceeds (unless the first part is a revised version), so we are left with the second. We are left also with the probability that the poet would end-stop more frequently when thinking in couplets than when thinking in Rhyme Royal stanzas, in which the sense is built around the rhymes of the first five lines at least, rather than leading up to them.

Within the line, the rhythm and cadence may be quite varied. The principal determinant of variety is the presence or absence of a marked caesura. The remarks

(T) KT. 7%.  
(U) Part I, 10%; II 6%, III 5% (descriptive verse), IV 6. 7% (all figures approximate).  
that follow, lines not demanding more than a slight pause are for convenience referred to as 'unstopped', despite the probability that very few Chaucerian lines are actually so. 'Unstopped' lines are most noticeable at the initial triumph of Theseus (894-5), conveying its dignity and then ceasing suddenly as he sees the Theban women; during the long sentence ending the speech of Capaneus' widow (939-47) where the light pauses impart a continuity which compels attention; in Arcite's monologue on Destiny (1251-74) in which the lines making general statements (1259-60) and the subsequent analogy, are unstopped, but there are heavier pauses as soon as he begins to apply the remarks to his own case (1265 ff.); while Theseus' anger towards Palamon and Arcite softens (1760-81), so that the verse at this point is most unusually smooth and quiet, and finally in some most impressive lines in Emily's prayer.

The rhythmic variations in the tale of which listeners should be aware are more often due to the alternation of heavily and lightly stopped lines, or changes in the position of the caesura, than to actual metrical irregularities. Thus in the opening scene, apart from the variation noted in the previous paragraph, the line

"But swich a cry / and swich a wo they make" (900)

(W) Discussed in Brewer's Introdn. to edn. of PP. Pauses perhaps indicated by marks in Ellesmere MSS.
(X) E.g. 2298, 2299, 2305-6, 2309-11, 2316-9, 2322-5.
is interesting in the way the two halves of the line seem to follow the contours of a reader's voice. The iambic line shows a similar flexibility in the lament of Arcite on leaving Athens, in the way that, after the emphatic irregularity of the line:

"Thyn / is the victorie of this aventure" (1235)

it can contain the rhetorical question and answer

"In prison ? certes nay, but in paradys!" (1237)

then be used in alternate stopped and unstopped lines, for logical argument:

"For possible is, syn thou hast hire presence,
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaungeable,
Thow maist to thy desir somtyme atteyne." (1240-43)

In the following lines, the more frequent and more pronounced caesurae and other pauses would suit a voice registering increasing emotion:

"But I, / that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace, / and in so greet dispeir,
That ther nys erthe, water, fir, ne eir,
Ne creature that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe / or doon confort in this,
Wel oughte I  sterve / in wanhope and distresse.
Farwel my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse." (Y)

(1244-50)

Such variations give great vitality to such passages as the account of Arcite's illness, where the rhythmic contrast between the beginning and end of the first line

(Y) Cf. similar cadence of "Welcom my knyght, my pees, my suffissaunce" (TC. III 1309).
"Swelleth the brest ...... and the score" (2743) is pointed by the alliteration, while near the end of the passage there is a contrast between the grave, almost unstopped lines (2757-8) on Nature and the violent breaks in the last two lines (2759-60). Similarly, the suggestion of violent swings of mood in the words describing Arcite's 'studie' is reinforced by the antithetical structure of the lines and the pronounced caesurae (1532-8), though the shift of caesura prevents the mechanical antitheses of some passages in Chaucer's early work. Palamon's accusatory speech shortly after shows not only a sharp break in a number of the lines but a tendency for the most important and heavily stressed word to precede it, as in:

"For ire he quook,/ no longer wolde he byde" (1576)  
"Now artow hent/ that lovest my lady so" (1581)  
"I wol be deed,/ or elles thou shalt dye" (1587), etc.

which makes it easy to read in an angry voice.

Theseus' monologue on love (1785-1814) is dramatic and arresting not only because of the constant changes in couplet-structure already mentioned, but because of its constant variation of stress, pitch and pause. To quote but a few of its lines:

"Now looketh,/ is nat that an heigh follye?  
Who may been a fool,/ but if he love?  
Biihoold,/ for Goddes sake that sit above,  
Se how they blede! / be they noght wel arrayed?  
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, ypayed  
Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!" (1798-1803)

is to demonstrate in a few lines almost every possible
position of the caesura, as well as several variants of the iambic foot and a gradation from lines broken by exclamations of humorous wonderment in the middle to more flowing lines at the end, with enjambement and soft consonants.

The majesty of some of the lines in "Troilus and Criseyde" is, if anything, exceeded by the processional beat of:

"The destinee, ministre general" (1663)

in which the assonance and consonance contribute much to the Miltonic splendour. If, as in "Troilus", this is not quite kept up in the following lines, it is at least retrieved in the final line:

"All is this ruled by the sighte above". (1672)

This majesty is suitable not only to the lofty theme of the passage but to its situation immediately before the entry of Theseus and his courtiers. A similar extension of the principle of 'decorum' to the field of rhythm may be seen in the graver but equally processional beat of the lines describing the entry of the mourners (2882-98).

There are rhythmic blemishes such as the monotony of the list of allegorical figures in the Temple of Venus (1925-8) or the general flatness of the rhythm of the account

(Z) For high proportion of which see Appendix A.  
(AA) See above, p. 197-8.
of the reply by Mars to balance such highlights as "Shrighte Emily" (2817) or Palamon's "Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere" (2260) or the mournful cadences of Arcite's final lament, (2765-97) but Chaucer was surely almost born with an instinct for dramatic speech and variation of mood, even if, as one critic points out, there is no dramatic interplay of character here. The change of view enforced by a consideration of the poem as designed for reading aloud will be discussed in the next section.

The metrical and rhythmic variations would, surely, be noticed by listeners though there would be no time to define them: their attention, a sympathetic response to the change of mood, would be compelled. The changes in the couplet form have a less tangible effect on a listener, but it is impossible to believe that anyone would listen through a poem so long as the "Knight's Tale", still less "Troilus and Criseyde", unless the reader's voice exploited all the rhythmic possibilities of the text.

(c) One of the most recent studies of the poem stresses the antithesis in it between order and dissolution, chaos, how the divine and human order is always resisting the

(AB) 2421-34, esp. 2421, 2427, 2434.
(AC) v. above, p. 16, 20-21.
(AD) D.W. Robertson, op. cit. pp. 269-71.
encroachments of decay, anarchy, corruption. Not only would this add meaning to some peripheral and apparently insignificant features, such as the struggle of Theseus, representing order, against the realm in which women rule, and the reconciliation in marriage, but it would illuminate some of the strange moral attitudes, such as Theseus' harshness to the fighting lovers; the evidence of anarchy within his state induces a like anarchy within him, in which his feelings at first prevail but are assuaged as reason reasserts its authority.

This way of looking at the poem illuminates also Chaucer's changes from his original, the change, for instance, from Boccaccio's long and stately succession of combats to the ordered and heralded onset rapidly deteriorating into a chaotic succession of anonymous combats, the apparently irrational and arbitrary accident to Arcite - the lover without law perishes without law.

This constant dialectical struggle influences on occasion the poet's choice of words and idioms. Thus in the description of Arcite's mediation in the grove (1528-39) the day is twice referred to as Friday (Italian 'venerdì') and the connection with Venus explained. Venus is 'gereful', so lovers have "queynte geres" (1531). Connected with the

(AN) v. Ruscattine, op. cit. and article "Form, Texture & RNG. in NT" (PMLA 1950).
changeable weather of Friday in the lover's changeable heart "overcaste" by Venus. Venus has two aspects, one of order, the cosmic love, the 'holy bonde of thynges', the other of disorder, the struggle of lust against reason and law. So lovers are "Now in the crope, now doun in the breres" (1532), a still relevant image of the struggle of order and chaos. So Arcite is now plunged into inward chaos, a change already mentioned as being reflected in the change of rhythm from order to violence.

The struggle is more explicitly mentioned in the imagery of the account of Arcite's illness, added by Chaucer (2743-60). As the extended metaphor is familiar, I will not do more than mention some of the words, the clotted blood which 'corrupeth', the 'venym' which may not be expelled (cf. our modern image of the war of microbes and antibodies), the swelling of the organs and especially the breast, the seat of the emotions, being a region which is "tobrosten", in which Nature (here Natura, goddess of order) has no "dominacioun" (authority, law, rule). The image of the, as it were, Waste Land within Arcite's body links this his end with his refusal of law, and the idiom of the crops and the briars. The grove in which Chaucer places the principal events thus becomes itself a terrestrial paradise, the ordered beauty of the May morning being shattered by the lovers' strife, the whole (AG) Phrase from TC. III 1261.
grovë being replaced by the man-made (logical) order of
the theatre and lists and the battle, the accident to
Arcite being an apparent breach of the natural order but
really sent by Saturn after the healing of the strife in
the heavens, and finally the rites of burial in that very
grove together with the subsequent marriage-rite,
reasserting order on earth. So the concept illuminates
details of the style, which in turn shed further light on
the general structure of the poem.

Secondly, it has of late been the general view that
the "Knight's Tale" is not so much a drama as a pageant,
though it is less so than the "Teseida" because of the
compression and incidental realism of, for example, the
tournament. In other words, it is a pattern realised in
scene and event. For this reason the absurdity of
Chaucer's placing all his major events in the grove does
not strike the reader: he subconsciously accepts the
formalism of the poem and does not ask the kind of question
he would ask in reading a modern novel - 'Could it
happen?'. This formalism is apparent even in a number of
the apparently dramatic scenes, in their structure and
their style.

Structurally it is apparent in the various devices
by which the poet frames his scenes, in other words
balances his beginnings and endings. Two of these are
used in the scene in which Emily sings in the garden
(1033-61). The first is the reference to the two knights
before her appearance in the garden, taken up at the end by
the reference to the "grete tour ....so thikke and
stroong" (1056), joined "to the gardyn wal", behind which
was Emily, and to the "woful" Palamon who saw her. In the
passage following there are these constant contrasts between
garden and tower, Emily and prisoners, a framing by means
of fact as well as word. The second device is verbal:
the 'circumlocutio' saying that Emily rose early on the
May morning (1040-47) is framed by, at the beginning,
"She was arisen and al redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardie a-nyght"
and at the end,
"....doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Yclothed was she fressh ....."
In a 'repetitio' of this kind Chaucer may add one half,
having taken the hint from Boccaccio. In the "Teseida"
Emily's prayer begins "Casta dea", which Chaucer translates
at the beginning as "Chaste goddess", adding "goddesse ....
of clene chastitee". There is a similar framing by the
mention of the Sun at the beginning and ending of the
description of the grove, or of love at the beginning and

(AH) cf. analysis of this passage, below, p. 281 ff.
(AI) Analysed below, p. 274 ff.
ending of Palamon's prayer. The framework may, more obviously, be one of colour, the red and white of Theseus' banner and the red and white flowers Emily gathers in the garden, or of imagery, as when, in the grove, Palamon is referred to as a lion, Arcite as a "cruel tigre", both as "wilde bores" and then Theseus enters the grove in which there is "an hert" to hunt. The most obvious sign of structural formality is, of course, the parallelism of temples and prayers.

Despite constant references to Th. 'gentil hert' formality in the style is not so much verbal as grammatical and rhetorical. When, for example, Cappaneus' widow humbly petitions Theseus she uses eight parentheses in two sentences: the conqueror's questions beforehand and his reaction afterwards (905-11; 952-64) are in direct sentences without parenthesis. When the style seems most formally rhetorical it is often, in a sense, most dramatic. When Venus weeps at Palamon's defeat, a series of rhetorical questions

"What kan now faire Venus doon above? What seith she now? What dooth this queene of love, But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille, Til that hir teeres in the lystes fille?"

(2663-6)

could be put simply and shortly as "Venus wept in heaven".

(AK) cf. also red and white coral of lists, 1. 1910.
(AL) 1649-62; on significance of animals and hunt, v. Robertson, op. cit., 260 ff.
The function of the 'repetitio', the metonymy ("quene of love") the short, direct question followed by a longer one adding detail, the 'gradatio' ("....doon above?....What dooth ...."), even the alliteration of the third line, is very forcibly to direct attention from the thrilling scene below to the dialogue of the gods and to remind us of the previous agreement between them. A more famous device, the immense sentence on Arcite's funeral, the longest example in Chaucer of 'occupatio' seems to me less happy. This is not, or should not be, a humorous scene, yet the audience would surely be grinning and applauding before the end at this display of rhetorical skill. It is another example of the poet's occasional tendency to rhetorical 'showing-off' at the expense of probability and decorum.

To list other rhetorical devices at this point would be tedious, as many will be pointed out in the remarks on scenes, in Section II, but some of the remaining ones are referred to in a note at the end of this chapter. Too much notice should not be taken of the percentage of lines given over to rhetoric in the "Knight's Tale", mentioned in

(AM) Dr. Craik points out, however, the gain in air of antiquity of KT and economy of description, in view of amount described or suggested. I admit former point, but cannot imagine listening without awareness of virtuoso performance in progress.
Manly's lecture, as many of the devices occur at the climaxes of the tale: judgements of literature are always, in the last resort, qualitative.

The most recent interpreter of the poem sees it as an embodiment of abstract ideas, largely moral. His denial of any element of realism in the characterization and scenery would surely not extend to the battle scene, so obviously taken from Chaucer's own experience of tournaments, or to the preparation \(2491-515\) imitated from Boccaccio, its ultimate source presumably being real life, nor to the talk of the crowd beforehand \(2516-22\). The 'moral' interpretation certainly explains much in the outline and detail of the story but does not completely explain the large amount of visual, animal and chromatic imagery in the poem. Why should this be the most predominantly visual of Chaucer's poems of chivalry? Why, for instance, should Lycurgus and Emetreus be described as no minor character in "Troilus" is, or more visual detail be given of the passive Emily than of the more important Criseyde, or even one or two details be given of Palamon, and none of the personal appearance of Troilus? Why should the only recurring imagery in the poem be the slightly inconsistently-

\(\text{(AN)}\) "Ch. and Rhetoricians". Manly says 35% of KT given over to rhetoric.
\(\text{(AO)}\) Robertson, op. cit., esp. 105 ff., 260 ff.
used animal figures for Palamon and Arcite, and the images of colour?

The answer, as far as there is one, is that Chaucer's imagination selected the appropriate field for each poem. Here the field of imagery does not include winds and birds (except the lark, once) nor rivers, well-springs and a park, but visible things, the grove, the sunlight, the "asshy" face of Arcite, the "ruggy asshy" hair of Palamon, the yellow hair of Emily, the fantastic colours of Emetreus. He is weaving a brilliant tapestry or series of illuminations, rather than presenting and relating several different worlds involving all the senses. Over his use of animals and colour, generalisations are difficult to make. In other poems they are used precisely, but, as one of the following analyses will show, we can do little more here than indicate the problem. The red and white that occur in association with Emily and Theseus come so often in Chaucer that one must just say they were his favourite colours.

II Analyses of Passages

(i) 975-1000 Theseus and the Theban women

The first six lines, containing the picture of

(AF) v. below, p. 276-9.


Theseus, are added by Chaucer, the next four (981-4) on the journey summarise forty lines of the "Teseida", the four describing the slaying of Creon summarise a hundred and sixty of Boccaccio, and the nine on the burial of the ladies' husbands summarise thirty-two. The largest space, therefore, is given to an incident, the burial, which is adapted from the shortest part of the Italian account, yet without taking over the necessary explanation as to why the ladies thought the burial worth a war, namely that the souls of the unburied would not be saved.

Having said that, one must pay tribute to the great skill with which the summary is otherwise effected and Chaucer's own lines incorporated. He prefixed two three-line groups balancing each other and presenting the images respectively of Mars, who is to be one of the dominant influences whom Theseus serves, and of the Minotaur, the figure of lust and misrule, whom he has slain. The journey and the slaying are each presented in a pair of continuous couplets, the sacking of Thebes in a closed couplet, the restoration of the bodies in a three-line group and the burial in several continuous lines. The final single line, "But shortly for to telle

(AR) Tes. II 25 et. seq.
(AS) Robertson, op. cit., 105 ff., sees A., as servant of Mars, perishing for that reason. Thes. seems equally so to me.
is myn entente" echoes the "....shortly for to spaken of this thyng" (985) with which the battle narrative began, just as the proper "waymentynge" of the ladies at the funeral (995) echoes the unprecedented "waymentynge" (902) they had made to Theseus beforehand, when denied that right.

So we have here part of the framework of the story, as well as of the battle, while the variation of couplet form both divides the account clearly into sections and avoids monotony.

Interest is also kept by the changes of rhythm and pitch. In the opening six lines, the voice rises throughout the two 'unstopped' lines (976-7), reaching a climax at "feeldes glyteren" with a short fall afterwards, while in the second half its natural climax is "Mynotaur", after which the voice falls away for the rest of the line. The next line is quite different, having a strong medial caesura with two echoing halves:

"Thus rit this duce, thus rit this conquerour". (981) recalling the attention to Theseus by the stresses on epithets, as well as by its dignity. There is little pause in the next two-and-a-half lines until the strong caesura at "Faire in a field", echoing the stress on the 'feeldes' above. Similarly the caesura emphasizes "He faught" (987).
The rhetorical figure of 'occupatio' in the account of the burial is here used for its proper purpose of shortening a narrative, as the 'repetitio' (981) properly drew attention to Theseus' degree and power.

The red and white colour is associated with Theseus and Emily, as well as the lists. The gold of his pennant is associated with kings throughout, being found in the accounts of Lycurgus and Emetreus; it may also carry the significance of blood, as it sometimes did in medieval literature, since it is used of Arcite and is mentioned three times in the account of the forging of weapons for the Tournament. The figure of Mars, whom we later associate with Arcite, is rather confusing. Theseus hunts fierce animals, Diana's pursuit (Diana being the goddess prayed to by Emily), and mocks at Venus (Palamon's goddess) in her capacity as inspirer of sexual love, yet here serves Mars by fighting a just war for the oppressed. Later he swears "by myghty Mars rede" (1747) when angry. Surely we cannot at once associate Mars with wrathful desire and with the just fight of the protector of the oppressed and the philosopher-statesman. Would it not be simpler to reject the moral-astrological interpretation entirely and just consider this as a fine piece of compressed description?

(AT) cf. 2919-66.

(Al Robertson op. cit. p. 260 et. seq.)
This is one of the few instances in the poem of genuinely dramatic dialogue involving an exchange between characters, as distinct from monologue. It is also unusually full of rhetorical figures. The chief interest here will be in its verbal and rhetorical parallels and the answer it offers to the question of how and to what extent the two characters are differentiated.

Palamon's prayer, addressed to Venus-incarnate-as-Eily, has a stately flow, with enjambement in each of its two complex sentences. In two ways it reminds us of what has gone before. Firstly, it twice mentions their imprisonment, so often mentioned in preceding lines, and secondly Palamon's description of himself as a "sorweful, wrecched creature" (1106), and his request for compassion on his lineage "so lowe ybrought by tirannye" (1111) reminds us of the sorrow of the Theban women, pleading for redress of the injustice dealt them by the king Palamon had served. Thus the characters and their sufferings are involved in a cycle of war, revenge and suffering terminated by the union of Athens and Thebes when Palamon marries Emily at the end. The prayer also anticipates the prayer in Venus' temple, in Palamon's humility before his goddess, his willingness to accept a substitute for the object of his prayer.

(cf. 1107, 1109, with 1058, 1063, 1070, 1087, 1097. cf. 1. 921. v. below, p. 279-81.)
The antithesis that follows when Arcite sees Emily:

"That, if Palamon was wounded sore, 
Arcite is hurt as muche as he or moore" (1115-6)

has the same slickness and triteness as the repartee just below (1125-6). In fact, these few lines are the poorest in the episode, as the conventional wording "the fresh beautee sleeth me sodeynly" (1118), the wish "that I may seen hire" (1121) and "I nam but deed" (1122) conflict with the realism in accepting Fortune that he has just enjoined as well as with the rather sardonic wit he displays later. The wish for the "mercy" and "grace" to see her is out of keeping with this situation. The passage is just any few lines of any poem on courtly love.

The two speeches that follow are of very much greater interest. Palamon begins with a conditional statement

"It nere ......no greet honour / For to be fals ...To me...... thy cosyn and thy brother" and a definition of the oath of brotherhood between them (1129-40). His long and involved sentence includes another antithesis, a happier one this time,

"But that thow sholdest trewely forthren me, 
In every cas, as I shal forthren thee -" (1137-8)

before the 'conclusio' "This was thyn ooth, and my also, certeyn" which follows. Now he turns to the particular application of the principle. Before he has said hypothetically that it was dishonourable "to be fals" but
now his accusation is that Arcite would "falsly" love his lady, (1142) and soon the latter is "fals Arcite" (1145). The end of the speech draws together the general or hypothetical statement and its application by reminding Arcite of the oath "or artow fals" (1151). Thus the 'traductio' fits the ordered sequence of the argument. So do the generally complex and orderly sentences.

Arcite likewise proceeds from hypothesis to demonstration.

"Thow shalt .... be rather fals than I; And thou art fals, I telle thee outrely" (1153-4)

and echoes not only Palamon's accusation of falsity but in his

"For paramour I loved hir first, er thow" (1155) which echoes Palamon's "I loved hire first" (1146). Each also reminds the other of being "cosyn and brother ysworn". Arcite's argument is less formally rhetorical both in structure and expression than was Palamon's. He speaks in questions, exclamations, a mixture of simple and complex sentences and uses proverbial sayings, such as "Who shal yeve a loveere any lawe?" (1164) and "Ech man for hymself, ther is noon oother" (1182). He also uses an epigram:

"Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan, Than may be yeve to any erthly man" (1165-6)

as well as the tersely-expressed, if subsequently misinterpreted, analogy of the kite. He has a certain humorous English philistinism about him, in his shrewd hit
at Palamon's "affeccioun of hoolynesse" and his opponent's inconsistency:

"Thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or a goddesse." (1156-7)

His final reminder of their situation,

"Heere in this prisoun moot we endure" (1185)

not only, once again, formally reiterates what he said before Palamon's prayer (1084-5, 1091), and not only supplies a framework to the dialogue, but accords with the picture previously built up of a pragmatic character.

The difference between the two is epitomized in the way Arcite's "Ech for hymself" (1182) echoes Palamon's "ech of us til oother" (1132). Palamon is the logician and the idealist, Arcite the man of the world. The irony is that Palamon is eventually successful, while Arcite fails through the kind of misfortune he counsels Palamon to accept. While admitting that Chaucer made his heroes of equal importance, instead of being more interested in Arcite, and admitting that the characterization is not, by present-day standards, consistent, I cannot agree that there is no difference between them as people. One only has to hear them talk to realise that this is nonsense. Nor is it quite enough to say that their difference is solely one of moral attitude, for Arcite's humour and his manner of speech, lively and varied, rather than serious and formal, again comes out when the speeches are read aloud.
All the verbal parallels drawn between the two speeches, as well as the one or two rhetorical devices pointed out, show Chaucer's originality not in turning his back on rhetoric, but in so using it that often enough when he is being most dramatic he is also being most rhetorical. The rhetorician, the dramatist and the imaginative poet are inextricably intertwined here as elsewhere.

(iii) 1491-1512 The Grove

This scene, one of the most beautiful in Chaucer, has nothing in it which is not paralleled in other medieval descriptions of spring mornings. Why, then, do we enjoy this more than most similar descriptions? We may notice certain obvious features of the structure, the "framing" devices so often observed in this poem by which "fiery Phoebus" riseth to begin the little description of the spring morning and Arcite "is risen" to conclude it, or the description in closed couplets and the action and emotion in continuous forms, or the Fortune which brought Arcite into this snare, (1506) and the "aventure" which brought Palamon there (1516), words so often mentioned in connection with these unlucky lovers, — one can mention all these things and one has not reached the kernel of the scene, or explained its magic. It may be, indeed, that we moderns misconceive one prominent feature. Since

(AY) E.g. Fortune: 915, 925, 1086, 1238, 1242, 1252, 1490, 1861, 2659; aventure: 1074, 1110, 1118, 1235, 1288, 1469, 2537, 2703.
Shelley, we are accustomed to think of the lark as not only pouring forth "melody divine" but a tiny innocent in an impure world. Could it, one wonders, be for Chaucer a bird of ill-omen? Certainly in "Troilus and Criseyde" it sings on the heartlessly beautiful morning on which Criseyde leaves Troy, and here we are told a moment before its song that Fortune has set a trap for Arcite. Moreover, as soon as he begins his song he meets his mortal enemy.

The magic may perhaps lie in three things. The first is visual imagery, the sun, the silver dew-drops, the eastern sky. The second is perhaps the rhythm or cadence. Each couplet is on one topic – the lark, the sun, the dew-drops; the first two couplets are alike in that the light caesura falls after the second foot in the first line and the third foot in the second, while in the third couplet the process is reversed. Perhaps we feel some sense of fitness or balance as we hear them. The six lines have a certain ease and lightness about them, due partly to the light stresses, the rising pitch from "Phoebus" to "laugheth" and partly to the soft consonants, 's', 'f', 'b', 'r', 'l'. Probably the chief factor, however, is the word 'orient'. It could mean at once the eastern sky and the rich east, the wondrous, unvisited part of the world. It marks the

(AZ) To. V 1110 (Nysus' daughter). In LGW 1908 Nysus' daughter betrays her city for her lover. Lark also heralds Queen of Love in LGW/G 141 and occurs without significance in KT. 2210, 2212, PP. 340, RR. 915, etc., etc.
climax to which the narrative has mounted. In the end, one must say that a great poet produces lines like these and if most of us go away and do likewise we do not produce such lines. If 'orient' is not the secret then perhaps the personification 'laugheth' is, in its suggestion of a spring more exuberant than we know.

There are many links between this episode and other parts of the poem, such as the garland Arcite seeks, which Emily sought when she first appeared, on a May morning, or the "sonne shene" which reminds one of "Emily the shene" then, the "observaunce" to May, which Emily did then. In the song of Arcite there is much pattern-making of vowels and consonants, the 'floures', 'faire', 'fresshe', May, the 'grene' and 'May' repeated.

It may be that what delights us above all in this episode is the subject-matter and the situation, the whiff of the countryside in the woodbines and hawthorn-leaves, all the associations of spring mornings with our own youth, the beauty enhanced by our knowledge that Palamon awaits Arcite in this innocent grove. Whenever we think poems can be analysed according to a scientific or statistical formula so as to uncover their secrets, we should read this passage.

(iv) 2128-54; 2155-89. Descriptions of Lycurgus and Emetreus

These two portraits are rather unsatisfying, even tormenting, despite the suggestion that they represent
servants of rival deities. In substituting them for the train of armed knights described by Boccaccio, the poet is obviously increasing the medieval, formal, allegorical elements in the tale. Perhaps fortunately, the colours and the accompanying animals do not seem to make complete sense.

The astrological explanation is sufficient to account for the general darkness of Lycurgus and lightness of Emetreus. There are some parallels in the two descriptions, in the high proportion of closed couplets in each, which suggests formality, and in the general concentration in each on the head, face, accoutrements and accompanying animals. Each has some resemblances to any medieval king, in the gold wreath or trappings. Only a writer's natural desire for variety can explain however, why the account of Lycurgus should be so disorderly, moving from his head and face to his shoulders, then to his gold chariot and the white bulls drawing it, then back to his hair and back again to his animals and followers, while that of Emetreus is quite orderly, moving according to a common medieval practice from his head to the face, the voice, the eagle at his wrist and eventually to animals and followers.

The associations of the animals given in at least the recent book on the subject are that bulls, which draw

(Made, I believe, by Robertson, but I have been unable to trace exact reference.)

(ibid 155 f.)
Lycurgus, represent lechery, the bear, whose skin he carries, stands for sloth, the wolf-hounds for either sagacity or garrulity. Though none of these attributes fits a follower of Palamon, they do vaguely fit the sensual aspect of Venus and wolf-hounds were supposed to hunt the lion, to whose voice Arcite's was compared. If Chaucer intended these associations - and I question whether he ever thought of them - then he was letting the allegorical significances belie the character of Palamon.

Emetreus is described more coherently. His horse's cloth-of-gold covering, his gold hair and golden saddle would fit with Theseus' pennant and the golden accoutrements of the armed knights (2491-2512) to suggest the servant of Mars. The eagle born "for his deduyt" would rather suggest Palamon, Venus' servant. The lion-like appearance, signifying anger or ferocity, would fit, though Palamon, for whom Lycurgus fights, has previously been described as lion-like. His garland would recall the one Arcite sought in the grove and Emily in the garden, but what, one wonders, was the significance of its being of laurel? Simply military prowess?

Both characters carry rubies, which in "Troilus" seemed to stand for passion, which both Palamon and Arcite experience. What, however, is the significance of

(BC) 1656.
(BD) v. above, p. 173.
Emetreus' pearls and Lycurgus' diamonds, or of the animals? The fact that some details in this poem seem to carry an exact moral equivalent makes one vaguely dissatisfied that there is not an explanation for each feature of these memorable, if tantalizing descriptions.

(v) 2221-60; 2297-330; 2373-2420 Prayers of Palamon, Emily, Arcite

The differences between Palamon's prayer here and in the "Teseida" are that Chaucer end-stops all but one of the lines, where Boccaccio's enjambement makes his flow more freely, and that where Boccaccio uses 'contrarium' seven or eight times over several stanzas, Chaucer uses it four times in three lines (2238-40) giving a less florid effect. This stanza from Boccaccio conveys much the same sentiment as Chaucer's prayer, but appears more ornate and more consciously musical:

"Io non ti cheggio in arme aver vittoria
per li templi di marti d'armi ornare;
io non ti cheggio di portarne gloria
di que'contra di' quasi doman provare
mi converra, ne cerco che memoria
lontana duri del mio operare;
io cerco sola Emilia, la qual puoi
donarmi, dea, se donar la mi vuoi." (VII 46)

With the first half one can compare Chaucer's

"I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and doun" (2238-41),

and with the last two lines his

"Yet me my love, thow blisful lady deere" (2260)
to see the loss in verbal melody and the gain in apparent simplicity and depth of feeling.

In fact, Salamon's prayer in the English is another example of the art that conceals art. It has a more formal or logical structure than Boccaccio's beautiful prayer. It consists of an invocation containing a number of metonymies (2221-5), a dedication (2227-36), a petition and confession of humility (2237-47), a declaration of faith (2248-50), a vow of service (2251-3), an acceptance of the goddess' will (2254-8) and the final moving 'conclusio' quoted above. It is full of rhetorical devices such as the metonym and contrarium already cited, antitheses, examples of 'traductio', such as the repetitions at some distance of "I recche nat" or 'interpretatio', 'repetitio' and of course, the 'conclusio', apart from the predictable repetitions of words from the vocabulary of courtly love, 'lady', 'humble', 'herte' and so on.

Moreover there is a skilful gradation from artificiality to apparent simplicity, in the change from the series of closed couplets of the opening (2221-8), through the variety of forms, mostly continuous couplets, in the body of the prayer (2229-2256) to the two closed couplets with which it

(BE) 2246, 2250-56.
(BF) 2245, 2257.
(BG) 2242, 2250.
(BH) 2255, 2257.
(BI) 2260.
ends. There is a gradation, too, from the obviously conventional language of the opening ('bittre teeris smerte', 'the tormentz of myn helle', 'lady bright') to the artlessness of

"Thanne rekke I noght, when I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita wynne hire to his wyf." (2257-8)

even though the sentences of the last fifteen lines are very closely patterned. The whole effect of candour, humility and speaking from the heart is, ironically enough, the result of the substitution of rhetorical and verbal artifice for Boccaccio's lyrical flight.

Emily's prayer is perhaps even more patterned in its balance of opening and close, the "Chaste goddesse" (2297, 2304) of the opening being balanced by Chaucer's addition of "godesse of clene chastitee" (2326) near the end, the initial closed couplet (2297-8) by the final one (2239-30), the "godesse of maydens that myn herte hast knowe" (2360) and

".......wel wostow that I
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,
Ne nevere wol I be no love ne wyf" (2304-6),

from the beginning, by the final

"Syn thou art mayde and kepere of us alle, My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserve, And whil I lyve, a mayde I wol thee serve." (2328-30).

It is more obviously rhetorical than Palamon's in its 'interpretatio' (2305-6), (2308-11), its antithesis (2314-5)

(BJ) viz. "If yow list "2250, "and if ye wol nat so" 2254, "thanne preye I thee" 2255, "than rekke I noght" 2257.
and 'repetitio' (2319-20). There is also a more elaborately mythological setting, with the sacramental washing in the well beforehand, the coronation with the green oak-wreath and the address to the "goddesse of the wodes grene" (2297) and the constant references to hunting and the woods.

Structurally, the prayer is less logical than Palamon's, moving from the desire for perpetual maidenhood at the beginning to the alternative of having the lover "that moost desireth me" (2325) and back to the prayer for maidenhood. It is still wholly a creation of rhetorical artifice and in no way apt for any 'realistic character', with the awareness of destiny and the classical learning involved in it. It is, to me, unexpectedly moving for three reasons. The first is our natural agreement with the wish to have the most devoted lover, and the womanly wish for peace between them, the second the line or two of straightforward and not apparently conventional language in which that wish is expressed, and the third one's awareness of rhythm, rather than logical sense, in some of the lines. In this extract, for instance, the current flows on over the ends of the lines to the stress on, and marked pause after "queynt", while the echoing vowels give an impression of some feeling:
"As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two,
And fro me turne away hir hertes so
That al hir hoote love and hir desir,
And al hir bisy torment, and hir fir
Be queynt, / or turned in another place." (2317-21)

Arcite's prayer resembles the others in general structure, with its opening address, prayer for mercy, petition, vow of service and 'conclusio'. The conclusion "Yif me the victorie ....." is a deliberate parallel to Palamon's. Like Emily's it has a reference near the beginning to a legendary action of the god (2383-90), a digressio'. Like the other prayers it is full of rhetorical device, of 'repetitio', of 'traductio', of antithesis combined with 'conduplicatio' (2403-4) or antithesis alone (2406), to say nothing of the recurring words ('strengthe', 'fir') some the same as those of the other suppliants ('servyse', 'peynes', 'score smerte'). There is no parallel between the couplet-form of beginning and end, as in the others, nor any vow to accept an alternative. The prayer, though more long-drawn-out than Palamon's, resembles it in proceeding by a series of logical steps, mostly in complex sentences, to a conclusion. All three prayers are alike in having a higher proportion of sound-effects, assonance, alliteration and the like, than most passages in the tale. Particularly in the last the

(BK) cf. 2302-3.
(BL) 2379-80, 2383, 2398-400.
(BM) 2407, 2410.
(BN) v, Appendix A.
'e' sound recurs in the dominant words, like 'strengthe', 'temple', 'brenneth' or a whole line, like "That never yet ne felte offensioun" (2416).

To digress for a moment from matters of style alone, any medieval listener would surely have noticed a tremendous difference between the three prayers in spirit, between Palamon's wish for Emily but humble acceptance of death and Arcite's success if it be the goddess' will, Emily's acceptance of marriage if need be but reiteration of her own wish, and Arcite's mention of nothing but his own passion and wish to win. Admittedly Palamon, as Venus' servant, seems more devoted to Venus than to Emily, and Arcite, as Mars' servant whose death was to have a moral import, should have the belief, heretical in the cult of Love, that his own martial strength is enough to win his lady's heart. Nevertheless an audience must have noticed that only Arcite specifically mentions the indifference of the lady, that he seems the most self-centred of the three, constantly talking of "my sacrifysae", "my youthe", "my myght", "I moot ....wynnee", "I ...have victorie", "I wol", the last expression occurring five times in ten lines. If Emily mentions herself frequently, she does show appreciation of the love of the suitors. This is not the same homely, idiomatic style, with short, pithy sentences, that Arcite
used in dialogue in the tower: in fact, there is little difference between the sentences used by the lovers, in the prayers. Nevertheless, there is surely a marked difference in character evident in their attitudes of humility in love's service in Palamon's case and aggression in Arcite's.

(vi) 2599-2620 Battle Description

Although the lines quoted above are stylistically of most interest, the narrative that follows this description does go on for a further thirty lines, so that it is worth pointing out that the account proceeds from this magnificent general description to the particular combats of the suitors and their chief followers. One should also note that Palamon is again compared to the lion for ferocity and Arcite to the tiger deprived of its young for his 'jelous herte' (2628-32).

This, one of the supreme battle-scenes in literature, essays, in twenty lines, the almost uniquely difficult task of picturing order turning into confusion. It moves from the general picture of the field in the initial closed couplet, the stillness and expectancy heightened by the "trompes loute and clarioun", through a passage in which the growing confusion and the change from the general onset to the series of particulars is reflected in the disintegration of the couplets. The first one
"Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est,
In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest"  (2601-2)
is still a unit, but in the next one the two lines are
related only by the general link between spurs going
into horses' flanks and this beginning the test of skill. (p. 2601.1)
The next two are still grammatically units, and in

"Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte"

(2607-8),

the alliteration and the contrast between spears and
swords, as well as a certain exuberance common to
"spryngen" and "silver" holds the couplet together. From
here on, however, the description is a series of separate
lines, until the closed couplets describing the capture of
the first prisoners (2617-8, 2619-20).

Most readers would notice the way the succession of
anonymous figures each referred to as "he" suggests the
confusion, the succession of single, unrelated incidents.
Most would notice that this is the most intensely
alliterative verse in Chaucer, a line like

"Ther shyveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke" (2605)

being pure Anglo-Saxon, and

"He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste"

(2612)
even more alliterative, more suggestive of crude physical
strength. Nor is much perception required to realise how
the sound-properties of consonants are exploited, the jerky, ugly sounds of "Ther stomblen steedes stronge" (2613) suggesting the motion of the pawing horse, "brest the blood" the violence of the combat. The hyperbole of "with stierne stremes" (2610), is scarcely noticed, for the violence of the verbs "shyveren", "spryngen", "tobreste", "tohewen", "toshrede", "threste", "rolleth", "hurtleth" accustoms us to heightened intensity. We need to look quite closely to realise how the various senses are brought in, of sound in the clarion call, of touch, repeatedly, in the spurs in sides, the "prikke" through the "herte-spoon", of movement, in the thrusting, of sight, in the figure rolling under foot. Still less easily does one notice how the observer moves from a general view 'from the stand' as it were, to being near the combat and then withdrawing until he can see prisoners on both sides.

What one discovers last is that the rhetorical figures Chaucer learned at school are here too. The whole description is a kind of 'circumlocutio' for "There was fierce fighting" (BP). 'Repetitio' occurs frequently but always in groups of two or three lines, or in alternate lines. The device of inversion is constantly being used, but alternates with a straightforward subject-verb order, as in these lines:

(BP) 2602-3; 2608, 2610; 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617.
"Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte;
The helmes they tohewen and toshrede;
Out brest the blood with stierne stremes rede;
With myghty maces the bones they tobreaste"

This, in short, is a fine example of how a great writer

(Bq)

will make the rules serve him.

One need only point out the constant shift of accent
apparent in the lines just quoted, in the first line the
accent on "Cut" working against the normal iambic beat,
the regular second line with its climax at "tohewen", in
the third the double accents of "Out brest" and "stierne
stremes" and in the fourth the two halves of the line, each
held together by alliteration.

This most natural of battles, most surely founded on
Chaucer's experience, is most surely the result of artifice
and training.

(vii) 2765-97 Arcite's Dying Lament

This lament is in places so moving that one forgets
how conventional Arcite is in his choice of words,
particularly of epithets for Emily, who is "myn hertes
queene", "myn hertes lady", "my sweete foo" (2775-6, 2780),
and also that he is still the Arcite of the prayer who,
though he loves Emily "the moost", laments first.

"......the wo, the peynes stronge,
That I for yow have suffred and so longe!" (2771-2)

(Bq) cf. Coghill's comment on "how rules obey a genius"
in his analysis of portrait of Friarress (Brit.
Council booklet).
The somewhat obvious figure of 'conduplicatio' in the lines beginning "allas", the rhetorical questions, empty if taken out of context,

"What is this world? What asketh man to have?"

(2777), would, I suspect, bore us but for those features of the lament which are not conventional, which are specifically Chaucerian.

The first, the pathetic "softe taak me in youre armes tweye" (2781) does not concern us here. The second, the mournful cadences, is the result of a working together of rhythmic and sound devices:

"Alas, the deeth! alas, myn Emelye! Alas, departynge of our compaignye!" (2773-4)

Here the lines balance each other rhythmically, for each has two pauses, but the major pause of the first, after "deeth" comes in the middle, where occurs the minor pause of the second, and vice versa. "Departynge", as introducing the consequence of "deeth" is properly connected by the alliteration, as the nasal sounds and 'y' vowels hold together 'myn', 'Emelye', 'departynge' and 'compaignye'. The unforgettable

"Now with his love, now in his colde grave Alone, withouten any compaignye" (2778-9) intensifies the poignancy. The antithesis of the first line is not a grammatical device, but a criticism of reality,
of the insecurity of human life, its sudden reversals or antitheses. 'Love' and 'grave' sound so much alike as to be ironic when taken together. 'Colde', its hard initial consonant and long vowel making it stand out in its line, has itself a mournful suggestion. The line should, of course run over to "Allone", so that the antithesis is not just between life and death but between love and solitude. Now the second line is seen to be an 'interpretatio' or restatement of the idea of solitude, its words connected as above, by mournful nasal sounds. It is also, however, a development from the previously-quoted couplet, in the replacement of "oure campaignye" by "any companignye", and by the extension, in the first question, "what asketh man to have?", of sorrow from the particular instance to the general human condition. "On mourra seul."

Can it be accidental that Arcite turns from the misery of death, the mutability of human affairs, to the praise of his rival, "the gentil man", to whom long before he urged the doctrine "Ech man for hymself"? Or that he interpolates "if evere ye shul ben a wyf", the first suggestion that Emily has any choice? Perhaps, within this speech at least, there is a rudimentary redemptive process at work, a change from an Arcite with human failings to one who transcends them, of the kind so familiar in Shakespeare. One would rather believe that Chaucer, as a
great poet interested alike in philosophy and in human character, chose his words carefully to show Arcite moving from egocentricity and conventional declaration, through an insight into human powerlessness before death, to the very brotherhood he originally scorned, than that he was working out a conventional moral theorem about law and lawlessness. I suppose, however, that it would be unhistorical to allow a medieval poet to have an individual and un-medieval insight of this kind.

(viii) 2843-52 Egeus' Monologue

So many figures of rhetoric are contained in this brief speech that it is worth quoting in full:

"Right as ther dyed nevère man," quod he,
That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lyvede never man," he seyde,
"In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we been pilgrymes, passynge to and fro.
Death is an ende of every worldly soore."

First comes 'commutatio', the reversal of the order of subject and verb in the first two lines. Next comes 'complexio', the echoing of beginning and end in the first and third lines. After that, "on erthe" and "in al this world" are an example of 'interpretatio', while "ther lyvede nevère man", in the third line, and "he ne deyde" are perhaps one of 'contentio'. After a misapplied, or mixed, metaphor (pilgrims would not pass to and fro down a thoroughfare but go towards a destination, and we do not
pass back and forth between life and death), we have a final very empty 'sententia'. Either this is one of Chaucer's tritest passages, padded out with rhetoric, or else his comment afterwards,

"And over al this yet seyde he muchel moore
To this effect, ful wisely to enhorte
The peple that the sholde hem recomforte" (2850-52)
is intended to be ironic.

To me it seems possible that the poet is amusing himself, and us, not only with Egeus but with rhetoric itself. Perhaps it is merely coincidence that Arcite used so much conventional language and a number of figures in order to say something profound, while Ergeus should speak with such apparent profundity to say nothing, and "muchel moore". The rhythm could be adapted to the joke, in the way the first and third lines echo each other so absolutely, the fifth are so impressive in their alliterative phrases and processional beat, the sixth so portentous in its trochaic opening "Deeth is" and its assonance of 'ende and 'every'. All this to say that when you are dead the pain stops! Whether Chaucer should have indulged either in the tremendous 'occupatio' of Arcite's funeral or in such mockery of rhetorical ornament is a debatable point.

(ix) 2987-3074 Theseus' Monologue

In unostentatious but most skilful use of rhetoric is

(BR) On reflection I do not feel either interpretation of speech as serious or as humorous to be completely satisfactory. Latter meets serious objections, e.g. why humour brought in here, and words 'ful wisely to enhorte', former open to objection on grounds stated.
the 'traductio' in Theseus' final monologue (2987-3016) in which "The Firste Koevers" (2987) is repeated as "that same Prince and that Koevers" (2994), "thilke Koevers stable is and eterne" (3004), while (to mention but two more examples) "the faire cheyne of love" (2988) reappears as "that faire cheyne of love" (2991) and both "stable" and "eterne" from line 3004 are repeated respectively in lines 3009 and 3015. Thus the principles of divine love and order remain clearly in the mind after the argument. One must agree with the commentator (whose name I do not know) who said: "Chaucer always does his best things quietly". The device of 'traductio' is continued in the 'exempla' of this sermon. The speech is a more serious treatment of the idea of the mutability of things perhaps guiseed in Egeus' speech. Thus the exemplum on the oak (3017-20) after remarking on the tree's long life, ends

"Yet at the laste wasted is the tree"

echoed in the remark on the stone

"Yet wasteth it as it lyth by the waye" (3023). Similarly, on the death of a good man, he says

"And whoso gruccheth ought, he dooth folye" (3045) and in the application to Arcite,

"Why grucchen we ...." and "Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf?" (3058, 3062) So too he repeats the references to "honour" (3047, 52, 60). The mention of "the foule prisoun of this lyf" in line
3061 may be another means of extending the significance of the story to human life in general. This speech, taken together with its platitudinous predecessor, is thus a kind of literary fuge of recurring words and phrases. A critic's comparison of Chaucer to Bach seems not wholly inapt. The Romance words "stable", "corrumpable", "purveiaunce", "ordinaunce", "progressiouns", "successiouns" which end six successive lines (3009-14) in a passage full of Romance abstractions give a dignified and learned air to the remarks. They are often found in Chaucer's 'aureate' style and usually imply a serious tone. In this case, we find them as Theseus expounds his theme, then they are dropped in the exempla (3017-40) for Anglo-Saxon words but reappear in the conclusion drawn ('vertue', 'necessitee', 'honour', 'excellence' etc.) in lines 3041-56. They are less conspicuous in the application to Arcite (3057-66), in which the vocabulary is a mixture of Romance and Anglo-Saxon terms. Parallel to this one may note the long sentence in which the Romance rhymes occur, with its logical succession of clauses and subsequent 'conclusio' (3016), as compared with the shorter and simpler sentences used for the exempla immediately following (3017-25) and (ES) Preston, "Ch. & Balades Notees of G. de Machaut" (Spec. 1951). (BT) v. Hersand op. cit. The limitation of this statistical study is that it takes no account of the position of words in contexts.
similar 'conclusio' (3026). Thus, like Nature in the "Parlement of Fowles", Theseus varies his vocabulary and sentence-structure according to his immediate purpose, although, unlike Nature, he has no particular audiences in mind.

III Conclusions and Comparisons

The most vital principle in the "Knight's Tale" seems to be that of form. It has been called a tapestry: I wonder whether also it is not appropriately compared to a dance, in the way the heroes through the workings of Fortune, begin together as soldiers and prisoners, swerve apart as the first part ends in its question, come together in the grove, are sentenced and pardoned together after Emily joins them, swerve apart to their separate temples and places in the lists, each in turn taking Emily as partner before the dance ends in the death of one and the wedlock of the other. So many of the crowning moments of the story - Theseus' procession, the hunt, to sacrifices and prayers, the lists, the funeral - involve different kinds of ritual or formality, while the three chief scenes take place on the same spot. The beauty, in short, is often in this formal symmetry, in movements of the action akin in regularity of time and place to the movements of a ballet or symphony.

The principle of form determines the way in which couplets are used in different parts of a scene; in one their
disintegration accompanies the disintegration of the groups of participants. It determines the way in which words are used, to frame an incident, to link incidents together, to link characters, or suggest their differences, by slight changes in a phrase to suggest development in the emotions of a character, or by phrase reminiscent of, but not identical with, earlier ones, to lead us to the wider implications of the action. So too, imagery and symbolism may be used to foreshadow the whole course of events, or to frame a single incident, and both animal or mythological imagery and recurring symbolic colours to add moral significance to the action. This is so even if the use of images and colours is not always clear or consistent. The principle of order finally leads to parallel scenes in which characters speak with deliberate parallelism or contrast of rhetoric or sentence-structure.

The second characteristic of the style is exuberance, brilliant colour - sometimes, as in the descriptions of Lycurgus and Emetreus, over-brilliant - combats larger and fiercer than life, with blood ankle-deep, blood bursting out in streams, tears more bitter, despair more violent, than in life as we know it, an exuberance in the choice particularly of verbs, a delight in the intensity of life.

The last is intelligence. In the best passages the effect results from a combination of rhetorical device, imagery, wording, sounds and rhythms. If occasionally there
is too much display of rhetorical art, if it is used more self-consciously here than in some poems, it is used in places with superb intelligence to create living speech, or character, or even violent action, or humour. It is used best when one is least aware of it. We weary of it when it is thrust before us. The rhetoric in the "Knight's Tale" is evidence that the essence of genius is power to form one's own purposes and to use whatever training or experience is to hand to achieve them.

The tale is most readily compared with "Troilus and Criseyde", and after that, of the poems so far studied, with the "Parlement of Fowles". The "Troilus" extends the implications of the action and scenery, until we see and learn of human life in general by a dynamic recurrence of images and symbols or motifs, the "Knight's Tale" by a dynamic use of words and phrases. Words and phrases recur significantly in "Troilus" but there they link and recall, in the "Knight's Tale" they develop, so as to show us widening implications.

The imagery of the "Knight's Tale", like that of the "Parlement of Fowles", is predominantly visual. In the "Parlement", however, symbols and colours are used more precisely, while recurring strains of imagery are used in "Troilus and Criseyde" with greater clarity. Each of the three poems has an idealized locality, the Park of Love,
the Grove, Crisseyde's Garden. The Park is the most paradisal, its colours and wells and boughs most like those of the illuminated missals, its source the literature embodying human longing for the other world; the Garden is most exquisite in its blend of human song and bird-song, most elusive and mysterious in its dusk and its inhabitants, but the Grove is the most clearly seen, the most like real woodland on a real May morning. We long for the first, hear in the second and see in the third.

The characters of the tale have a flavour of some in the other poems. Arcite in the dialogue recalling the humorous idioms of Pandarus, Theseus' ironic recalling of earlier trials in love reminding us of Pandarus, Palamon recalling Troilus in his idealism, Theseus recalling him in his philosophic reflections, while recalling Nature in wisdom and graciousness. The crowd, however, are quite different, orderly and appreciative where the lower orders in the "Parlement" are cynical and pragmatic, or where the 'parlement' in "Troilus" shout down their leader and vehemently urge disastrous action. If we think their acceptance of a tournament without killing improbable, we can put the blame on Boccaccio!
The heroic couplet, as we have seen, is foreshadowed in the final couplet of the rhyme royal stanza. So too there is a development in the poet's attitude to rhetorical device, from its serious use by the wisest character in the "Parlement", to the most skilled use by the unscrupulous Diomede, the self-indulgently lamenting Troilus, or the insincere Criseyde, in the last book of the "Troilus", to its selective use, its guying or indiscreet display in the "Knight's Tale". Chaucer was perhaps growing to despise it; if so he was ungrateful, for its intelligent use is one of the chief marks of his genius.
CHAPTER EIGHT

PROLOGUE TO "CANTERBURY TALES"

Someone is needed to do for the 'Prologue' what Schweitzer did long ago for the New Testament: to play off the conflicting interpretations against each other and demonstrate that the 'Prologue' is larger than any, that the poet "comes to us as one unknown". All that a lesser scholar can do is to ask of the poem the questions asked of previous poems, to see whether his predecessors have quite said all. They are dull enough questions: 'How is the couplet form used?' 'What happens to the rhythms?' 'Is this poem full of rhetoric too?' 'Are different kinds of sentence used for different effects?' 'How are words used?' 'Are images and colours of much value here?'

In no poem, however, is it more difficult to separate style from content. The very fact that it has been so much discussed, its implications so disputed, is evidence that we cannot simply treat it as a series of character-portraits of the narrators of the various tales. Probably all commentators would agree that the author has assembled this particular group of people, split them into sub-groups and described them in terms obviously implying parallels or contrasts between individuals and sub-groups in order to convey his vision of

(A) From the final passage of "Von Reimarus zu Wrede" ('Quest for the Historical Jesus' - A. Schweitzer.)

(B) Under which heading does one treat the randomness of the details of, e.g. the Cook?
human life in his time, perhaps at all times. He portrays people in a certain light and has something to say about them. Just what he has to say is in dispute, and the conflicting views must be considered, however inadequately, before any valid comments can be offered on the poem's style. They must at least be hinted at because upon our view of the poet's general intention will depend our view of even a tiny detail of its style. For example, one commentator would deduce a number of moral characteristics from the Wife of Bath's widely-spaced teeth, producing much evidence in support of this, while others might say that Chaucer was simply drawing a female face that interested him. Whether we think the 'gat-toth' a sign of his ability to compress much stern moral judgement into a phrase, or simply of his power of minute observation, stemming from his curiosity about people, will depend upon our view of the purpose of the poem as a whole. Fortunately, a poem so worked over need not be gone through once more, nor need one give yet another analysis of the opening description, saying again what others have said more interestingly.

i) Interpretation and Analysis

The numerous possible interpretations may be resolved into the following, though for reasons of space all of them are over-simplified here:

a) The "Prologue is a realistic portrait of a cross-section of the English nation, even to the representation of some historical persons

Whether any of these figures are historical is a question beyond my competence. Certainly some look realistic, such as the Monk, the Merchant or the Miller and Reeve. That the English nation is portrayed here has surely been shown to be untrue. Royalty, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the common soldiery, the 'lazars and swich rascaille' are all missing, to take a few examples of people in whom any historian of the fourteenth century would have to show interest. And which section does the Wife of Bath represent?

b) The variety of the "Prologue", its range of characters, shows the fecundity of life, indicated in the opening lines on spring

Some such view is implicit in the comments on the poet's presentation without condemnation of many figures, like the Cook or the Reeve, of whom we would disapprove if we met them. It is implicit too in the bright colour and the curiosity about details of such immoral or amoral characters, whereas the 'good' ones are left undescribed or are obviously conventional. It becomes explicit in the many accounts of the opening lines. The trouble is that too much is left out by this interpretation. Chaucer does make withering comments on the Friar and the Pardoner; he does most obviously approve of the Parson and the Clerk; his Knight is as much a historical figure as most others, and quite as real during the drama of the Links; they are all on a pilgrimage, whose purpose is indicated quite as clearly in the opening lines. Even his Miller is discussed in terms like 'sin' and 'ribaldry' which presuppose judgement as well as portrayal.

c) In the "Prologue" Chaucer portrays an increasingly worldly society but expresses his nostalgia for the passing age of Chivalry

The Monk "holdes after the newe worlde the space", and so do many others, the acquisitive Merchant and Reeve, the vain Guildsmen, the corrupt Friar and Summoner. Knights and
Parsons are not what they used to be. Feudal society, the Christian civilisation, is passing, and being replaced by a mercantile one, curious and ambitious; eyes are turning away from the next world, monks leaving their cloisters on the slightest excuse. No one has produced any evidence that Chaucer thought all this, or that he thought historically or analysed the social trends of the day at all. Centuries later Donne was still seeing this world as rapidly declining to the final judgement. We are making Chaucer think like Trevelyon. What social tendencies does the Cook exhibit, or the Shipman? He says nothing to show that the fourteenth century is wickeder than other centuries; the Monk's 'newe worlde' is one of many possible excuses for self-indulgence. There have always been professional men and aristocrats like Chaucer himself who were imbued with an ideal of public service and service to God and who were repelled by unscrupulous business men and 'persuaders' and charlatans. They are with us today. This, rather than a historical consciousness is why Chaucer approves of Knight and Clerk and Parson. Incidentally, the gluttonous Franklin has a good claim to be thought of as a survivor from a vanished age.

(d) The "Prologue", despite the verisimilitude of its description and characterization, is in no sense realistic, but expressive of a conventional medieval moral attitude

For this a good deal of evidence is produced, from parallels to the Prioress or the Wife of Bath in the "Roman de la Rose", or analogues of the lines on spring in earlier writings, to examples of the moral, and particularly of the sexual, significance of details of the portraits in illuminated manuscripts and icons. We are even assured that the apparent randomness of the portraits is because their order is that of iconographic or mythographic detail. Much of this evidence is new, so that one's comments are rather tentative. With natural hesitancy about criticizing

(D) Developed in D.W. Robertson, op. cit. (view outlined p.247 after previous presentation of evidence.)

(E) loc. cit.
undigested ideas, I would say:

i) the theory makes more sense of the detail of e.g. the Miller, (F) than any previous one, and it is easy to see the Wife of Bath representing Venus (the olde daunce) and Mars (so wrooth was she); (G)

ii) one may accept the interpretation of the Shipman as akin to Venus, having been at many shipwrecks, sending many "hoom from every lond", loving wine and riding a horse, (H) but the blameless Ploughman rides a mare too, so that here is at least one character whose mare is but a mare, and of no moral significance;

iii) the details in the portraits of such characters as the Cook and the Merchant do not seem any better ordered on this principle than on any other, so that it would seem simpler and more honest to admit that they are random, as the fancy takes the author, as one notices or records, haphazardly in real life;

iv) the order of the details in a number of portraits is explained already on one or more of the principles of description laid down by the rhetoricians, so that further complication is unnecessary;

v) the moral terms in which not only the 'Prologue' but the whole of the "Canterbury Tales" are interpreted are predominantly Pauline and centred on sexual morality, whereas in the portraits of the Knight, Ploughman, Parson, Clerk and Man of Law this aspect is neither explicit nor implicit, the moral terms being rather the Gospel ones of love of God and one's neighbour as against love of the riches of this world; (I)

vi) in a sincere attempt to think of Chaucer in medieval terms a rather neurotic post-Freudian figure has been created, a figure obsessed with sex, seeing fornication on every horse and procreation in every plant, creating not a group of people telling stories about, among other things, love, but a kind of mobile psychiatrist's consulting-room.

(F) ibid, p.243-4 for detail of Discordia, represented by Miller.

(G) ibid, p.134; see also Coghill, "G. Ch." (Brit. Council).

(H) Robertson has a similar interpretation of the Mk., p.253 For significance of shipwreck v. ibid. 371-3

(I) v. esp. ibid, pp. 133-4, 254.
vii) assumptions are made about the audience's literary intelligence and knowledge of artistic and architectural details which could certainly not be made about many audiences at any time.

One of the most provocative things in the theory is the application of the principle of the four-fold interpretation (J) to the opening lines.

There are doubtless other lines of interpretation but these seem the main ones. If a few personal observations may be permitted before we turn to the stylistic matters which are our principal concern, I would say that as Christ is larger than his evangelists, so Chaucer's mind was more inclusive than those of his commentators. To believe that he lived as full and varied a life as he did, yet never drew on his personal experience for his portraits is to be more credulous than a pardoner's audience. He was fascinated by the renewal of life in springtime or he would not have wanted to use so much material on this subject from his reading; he does seem to enjoy the vitality of some of his rogues even while criticising them, to enjoy, for instance, the twinkle of the Friar's eyes. There is a degree of nostalgia in some of the portraits, a dislike of vulgar acquisitiveness but this is found among writers with a generally conservative tendency in all ages. Moreover, there is a degree of detachment, of refraining from personal judgement, in some of the portraits. To say this is to say that he was as observant as most poets, and more sensitive, so that he could evoke the English spring as no other could, that like most administrators he felt (J) ibid, ch. iv. in general but esp. pp. 373.
enough concern for the people he helped to govern to detest swindlers and racketeers yet to find them interesting, to say that he hoped to go to Heaven and enjoyed a dirty story, to say that he had not a modern professional scholar's concern for logical order and absolute accuracy in detail, to say finally that he recombined with his imagination rather than with editorial scissors and paste. If one moral judgement seems apparent throughout it is a generally Christian one that the most admirable characters have in common a denial of the self, of the passion for ownership or for being at the centre of things, so that though they defend, or minister to, or instruct their fellow-men, they are often less remarkable just because they dress plainly, speak quietly, are content to serve God and man rather than make God and man serve them. If the opinion is correct that the characters after the Ploughman were added as an afterthought, the series as originally envisaged would begin with the Christian soldier and end with the Christian priest and his brother the Christian peasant. Thank God for the afterthoughts!

On some such interpretation, the poem could be divided into:

a) Opening lines on Spring 1-18;
b) Narrative (inn) 19-42;
c) Knight, Squire, Yeoman 43-78, 79-100, 101-17; Soldiers
d) Prioress, Monk, Friar, 118-62, 165-207, 208-69; Religious

e) Merchant, Clerk, 270-84, 285-308,  Man of Law, Franklin, 309-30, 331-60; Business/Professional.
f) Guildsmen, Cook, 361-378, 379-87,  Shipman, 388-410 Tradesmen

(g) Physician, Wife of Bath, 411-44, 445-76; Bourgeois

h) Parson, Ploughman, 477-528, 529-41; Priest & Peasant

i) Miller, Manciple, Reeve, 545-66, 567-86, 587-622 Dishonest Trader & Professional Men

j) Summoner, Pardoner, 623-68, 669-714; Dishonest Religious

k) Narrator's Apology or Disclaimer 715-46

l) Host and Proposition 747-821;
m) Beginning of Pilgrimmage 822-58.

It will be noted that within each of these groups there is a tendency for the portraits to be of comparable length, and that groups(j) and (i) could be seen as counterparts to groups (d) and (e) respectively.

ii) Use of Decasyllabic Couplets and Lines (L)

The opening and closing sections compare in respect of the proportion of closed couplets. The characters with a notably large proportion, the Squire, Clerk, Franklin, Guildsmen and Ploughman have little in common except for being ideal or typical, the Franklin being a 'humour' and the Guildsmen forming a class. It would, however, be difficult to find many characters who are not typical or exemplary in some way. Those with the smallest proportion, the Prioress, Merchant, Parson, Miller, Manciple and Summoner have nothing in common.

(L) no. of closed couplets in each section given in Appendix B.
Moreover each of these portraits differs in line-structure; the description of the Prioress is composed equally of single lines, three-line groups and split couplets; that of the Merchant mainly of split couplets, that of the Parson largely of continuous couplets (or verse-paragraphs), that of the Miller largely of single lines, that of the Manciple almost entirely of continuous couplets and that of the Summoner equally of three-line groups and continuous couplets.

To define the terms, closed couplet is self-contained, its thought being either in a unit occupying two rhyming lines, as:

"In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle
That fro the tyme of kyng William were falle" (323-4), or in two halves, the one half being complementary to the other, as:

"For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therefore he lovede gold in special" (443-44), or antithetical, as:

"Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was." (321-2)

In a split couplet the thought begins in the second line of one couplet and is completed in the first line of the next, as:

"His resons he spak ful solemnely,
Sownynge alwey thencrees of his wynnyng..." (274-5)

The term 'three-line group' is self-explanatory, while an example of the passage of continuous couplets one might cite:

"He sette nat his benefice to hyre
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre
And ran to London unto Seinte Poules
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules,
Or with a brotherhood to been withheld;
But dwelleth at home, and kept well his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not myscarcie;
He was a shepherd and nought a mercenarie" (507-14),
in which, whatever the punctuation, a series of couplets,
of which at least the first two clearly mark stages in
the thought, combine to give the impression of selflessness,
the last line summing up the whole moral attitude
as well as summing up the image of shepherd and sheep
which runs throughout the passage. Another example is
the reflection on the Manciple's cunning (576-86).

The closed couplet clearly suits the literary
figure composed of a number of conventional attributes,
such as the Squire, of whom we have closed couplets for
the appearance:

"Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
   Al ful of fresh floweres, whyte and reede" (89-90),
the accomplishments listed in:

"He koude songes make and wel endite,
   Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write"
(95-6),
or his humility:

"Curtail he was, lowely, and servysable,
   And carf biforn his fader at the table" (99-100),
or his cheerfulness:

"Syngyne he was, or floytynge, al the day;
   He was as fressh as is the month of May." (91-2)
The series of quotations has been given in order to show
how, within a dozen lines, Chaucer can use this most
flexible metrical unit first to convey a single image, the
meadow between two half-lines making the statement and
qualifying it, then to give a list, the whole first line being given to the musical skill which was most noticeable, thirdly to complement the remark on the Squire's humility by giving in the other line the evidence, and fourthly to reverse the process by drawing a general inference from his action. And in the same dozen lines are two different arrangements, one of two discrete lines (93-4) and one of a sentence without pause filling the couplet (97-8). This is one reason why so much of the "Prologue" stays in the memory; there is such constant variation of couplet-arrangement and rhythm that the verse never becomes hypnotic, never makes one aware of itself rather than its subject-matter.

To turn back to the portraits in which the closed couplet is little used, it will be conceded that the lines quoted on the Parson are an expansion of the simple statement "But dwelte at hoom": the expansion takes the form of factual details as to what less devoted priests did, and, interwoven with the facts, a traditional biblical metaphor charged with emotion. This mixture of fact and emotion, this reiteration, demands a continuous form of writing, for it is a unit. So too does the similar passage about the Manciple, which, springing from the amazement conveyed in the rhetorical question,

"Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?"  (573-5)
continues for ten lines to pile up details showing how incredible it is that these distinguished men should be outwitted, before reiterating:

"And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe." (586) Again a unit, again fact touched with emotion, this time wonder, but united this time not by a continuous metaphor but by a framework of restatement ('interpretatio').

The single line about the Manciple refers back to a foregoing passage. There are occasions, however, when a single line seems to refer both backwards and forwards. Thus

"Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous" (251) could refer either backwards to the Friar's humility "ther as profit sholde arise" or forward to "He was the beste beggere in his hous", reflecting ironically upon the assumption of a pose of dedication and upon his Order's idea of the religious life. Again,

"Unto his ordre he was a noble post" (214) could refer sardonically either to his own immorality, previously described, or to his ministering to the wealthy and dissolute, described afterwards, as well as reflecting upon the moral qualities of the Order.

There are, of course, many examples of a single line conveying one salient characteristic. It may be a casual afterthought, of no great significance but conveying an idea of ruminative reminiscence, as:

(M) Other possible e.g.s. are: 397, 438, 602.
"For blankmanger, that made he with the beste" (387), or a possibly significant one, such as:

"His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne" (410), which would have a biblical reference if the theory is correct about the Shipman's signifying concupiscence. The detail given may be physical with an obvious moral overtone, such as:

"Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe" (458), or apparently simply physical like:

"Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye." (468)

Just above is a single line referring backwards and apparently harmless, but which in its context conveys the idea of "erring and straying":

"She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye." (467)
The single line may, of course, simply mark a transition.

Apart from the tendency to employ closed couplets for some of the ideal or typical figures, there seems no general law about the use of different line-arrangements. There is a tendency for continuous passages to occur more in the later portraits. The difference in practice seems to be within each group, for the sake of variety, so that, for example, a fair number of the Miller's characteristics are given in single, apparently disjointed lines, such as his nostrils (557), his sword (558), his mouth (559) and his coat and hood (564) while the lines describing his strength (548-50) are rather staccato.

For alleged significance of this, see list of seven moral attributes in Curry, "Ch. & Medieval Sciences", p. 109.
The next portrait, of the Manciple, is built up mainly of continuous lines, while with the Reeve, who follows him, we are back to the single line, the first one sounding the keynote:

"The Reve was a scelndre colerik man" (587)

and the rest of the portrait is made up of single lines, (0) one referring backwards or forwards, (P) or closed couplets, (Q) a complementary couplet, a split couplet, a three-line group consisting of couplet and conclusion, (T) and groups of continuous lines. (U) The Reeve's is about the most varied portrait of all in this respect, but there are marked differences within the other groups, notably between the rather fragmentary split couplets for the Merchant, the closed couplets for the Clerk, the very varied arrangement for the Man of Law, and the closed couplets for the Franklin. Since the punctuation in our editions is modern one can only conclude that the poet heard an ever-varying inner voice which directed these changes of phrasing and couplet-form. He was accustomed to hear the divisions of poetry rather than to see them.

(0) 588-90

(P) 602, 608

(Q) 591-2, 595-6, 613-4, 615-6, 619-20, 621-2.

(R) 593-4

(S) 606-7

(T) 603-5

(U) 597-601, 609-12.
As in the "Knight's Tale" the couplet-arrangement therefore depends on the need of variety within a section rather than on any fixed principle. On the whole the form is used here with more ease, flexibility and power, notably in the closed couplets for the Physician, which are held together in a unity of imagination. The 'fill-up' line is very rare; one can only think of perhaps:

"That proved wel, for over al ther he cam" (547) and one has here an impression of greater tautness, or more being said within a couplet, than in those of the "Knight's Tale". The sense is, on the whole, more connected with the form, there being less cases of the thought 'overspilling' the couplet; perhaps only in the opening lines, where fluidity is desirable, does one notice this happening (6-7, 13-14). Nowhere, I think, in the "Knight's Tale", is the form used with such variety in a short passage as in the portraits of the Squire and the Reeve. (22)

(iii) Rhythms and Sound-patterns

Most readers would agree that it is difficult ever to be bored or lulled by the rhythms of the verse in the 'Prologue', even in the lists of the Knight's battles or the Cook's dishes, such is the poet's resource in using the iambic line. To try
to prove this would be to preach to the converted. Nor is it desirable to use one of the greatest of poems as a laboratory in which to compare specimens with the object of deducing laws about rhythm, for that is from the purpose of poetry or criticism. What is more profitable is to demonstrate some of the ways in which the poet makes rhythm and sound serve his immediate purposes, with the object of increasing awareness of his skill in lines not discussed. After some remarks about his use of various kinds of rhythm and sound-pattern, illustrated briefly from the poem at large, the portrait of the Wife of Bath will be treated in detail, as showing almost all Chaucer's rhythmic skills in a short space.

There are references to the poet's intention to read the "Prologue" aloud. In various ways the stress or movement of the verse aids the appreciation of its sense. In the lines on the Knight, the references to his virtues and pre-eminence occur usually in the stressed word at the end of the end-stopped lines: "and that a worthy man" (43), "the bord bigonne" (52, a less good example), "hadde a sovereyn prys" (67), "as meeke as is a mayde" (69), "parfit gentil knyght" (72). In the portrait on the Franklin, on the other hand, the prominent position at the beginning of the line, before a caesura, is occupied by words conveying important features: "An housholder, and that

\((X)\) E.g.: 35-6, 38, 74, 330, 462, 714, 727, 729.
"a greet" (339), "Seint Julian" (340), "Of fissh, and flesh" (344)
"It snowed" (345), "Ful many" (349), "And many" (350), "Wo was his cook" (351); one would have quite an accurate idea of the Franklin's character if these words were taken in isolation.

Many shades of feeling in narrator or speaker are conveyed in the rhythms. The Narrator's easy tone, already noticed at the beginning of the "Parlement of Fowles", is apparent here in the lines on the arrival at the inn, in the phrasing of

"Bifil / that in that seson / on a day,
In Southwerk / at the Tabard / as I lay
Redy to wenden / on my pilgrimage", (19-21)

or

"The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste" (28-29)

where the virtual lack of caesura fits the pattern of the thought.

It is apparent too, in the varied length of phrase, conveying a flowing discursive tone in,

"But nathelesse, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To tell yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me" (35-9)

The Host's initial tentativeness in propounding his scheme and his growth in confidence as he senses that his listeners are interested, may be imagined as one hears the change from the half-lines, separated by strong caesurae, to smoother lines, in

"Lordynges........now herkneth for the best;
But tak it nought, I pray yow, in desdyn.
This is the poynyt, to spoken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with our weye,
In this viage shal telle tales tweye 
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so, 
And homward he shal tellen othere two; 
Of aventure that whilom han bifalle."  (788-95)

Something of the Narrator's emotion, or perhaps of the Parson's, 
may be gathered from the rise and fall in pitch at the end of 
"...if gold ruste, what shal iren do?"  (500)
or the stresses on "preest" and "lewed (man)" in the two lines 
following. The placing of the caesurae in these lines on the 
Friar seems to go with a tone of indignant sarcasm:

"Therfore / insted of wepyng and preyeres, 
Men mote yeve silver / to the povre freres".  (231-2)

(I have never been able to see this passage as written in any 
other tone but one of indignation.)

The proportion of enjambed lines is half as great again 
as in the "Knight's Tale"; if the explanation of the end-stopping 
given above is correct, it would be natural to find more 
enjambement in a poem less overtly formal and rhetorical in 
character. Here the proportion varies in different sections: 
there is a fair amount in the opening description and narrative, 
very little in the portraits of the tradespeople, and a widely 
varying proportion as between those of the Miller and Reeve, 
which have very little, and that of the Manciple, which has the 
highest proportion. In the latter group this contrast accords 
with the contrast in line and couplet arrangement.

(Y) v. Appendix B.
(Z) v. above, p. 253
(AA) v. Appendix B.
The value of such variation in the portraits of the Miller, Reeve and Manciple is that the two characters physically described are marked off from the Manciple, who is not physically portrayed; perhaps, too, they are linked in the poet's mind, though the audience could hardly notice more than a change in the pace of reading. The value of the enjambement at the beginning lies in the fluidity thus given to an evocative opening passage and a conversational ease to the narrative that follows.

End-stopping is most marked in the lines on the Merchant, of which all but one (276) are end-stopped, and in those on the Yeoman, Ploughman and Miller. The effect is to make the portraits of the Miller and Yeoman seem rather fragmentary, while the Merchant is observed in the haphazard way in which one would notice him in reality - beard, clothes, horse, hat, boots, character - and then "I noot how men hym calle" (284). The lines on the Ploughman are end-stopped in contrast to those on the Parson, on whose existence is contingent. The end-stopping in the case of the Miller is due not to any lack of life but to an accumulation of small separate details, largely of his physiognomy.

The portraits of the Monk and Pardoner are unusual, in that the lines on their characters tend to be end-stopped, while those showing them in action tend to have a more flowing rhythm. The initial lines on the Monk have noticeable pauses which are less marked later.
"A Monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie,
An outrider, that lovede venerie,
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,
And when he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle." (165-71)

The lines on the Pardoner's physical features (684-91) show a
similar tendency, as compared with some of the later ones on
his actions. Since these lines do not come at the beginning of
the portrait, the reason seems to be a desire to emphasize the
physical features by a deliberate manner of reading.

The importance of stress is perhaps most apparent in the
lines on the Man of Law and the Guildsmen. In the former
passage, instead of the usual "A.....ther was" or "Ther was a...",
the character is introduced in this way,

"A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys

Ther was also" (309-11)

possibly to rhyme with the following line ending "Parvys", but
quite possibly because the key characteristics "war and wys", of
which the rest of the portrait is an amplification, are thus
stressed. That this is so seems more likely because of the
later repetition of "wise" at the end of a line (313) before
the account of his judicial function and his sharp practice.

A number of the lines on the Guildsmen have a rather stately
iambic rhythm of which the irony is only apparent in the final
majestic,

"and have a mantel roialliche ybore". (378)

The grand style is being used for good-humoured mockery of pretentiousness.

Apropos stress, part of the magic of the opening lines is in the way the rhythm works against the prevailing iambic metre. Of the several ways of scanning the first and fifth lines, probably the most Chaucerian in its use of a headless line is:

"Whan/ that A/ prille with / his show/ res soote"
"Whan/ Zephrus / eek with / his sweet / e breeth/"

but in either case the effect of the caesurae after "Aprille" and "Zephrus" is so to split the line that one finds oneself barely accenting "with" and, in line 5, stressing "eek".(AD)

Sound-patterns are more noticeable in the early part of the "Prologue", especially in the opening description and the portraits of the Knight and Friar. The contrasts between the soft sounds of the first line and the harshness of "droughte", and the beautiful liquid sounds of "swich licour" (3) and "smaile fowele" (9) have been amply commented on.(AE) There are however, many other felicitous harmonics in this most evocative of Chaucerian descriptions, the softness of "bathes", "every veyne" and "vertu" as contrasted with the harder "priketh" and "corages", the assonance linking "engendred" with "tendre", or "hath (6,8) with "Ram" and "halve" (8) and "halwes" (14), or the alliteration linking "priketh" with "pilgrimages" and "palmeres", and "halwes" with "hooly" and "holpen".

(AD) Some of these lines are fully treated in Baum,"Ch.'s Verse" Esp. Coghill,"The Poet Ch." p. 125
Nowhere else do sound effects cluster in such lovely profusion, but in the portrait of the Knight there are a number of striking alliterative phrases, such as "worthy in his lordes werre", "foughten foroure feith", and "meke as is a mayde" which remind one of Anglo-Saxon verse and alliterative romances, while the two principal traits are thus linked in "worthy, he was wys". Less immediately noticeable is the alliterative linkage between "frere", "fair (langage)", "Ful..... familiar" and "frankeleyns", or the dentals linking "wiste", "pitaunce" and "wiste", "repentant" with "smerte".

In the description of the Wife of Bath Chaucer displays almost all his rhythmic and melodic arts. One notices at one the casual ease of the parenthetical remark "and that was scathe" One might not notice the way the opening lines seem to read not unlike Anglo-Saxon lines, that is in mostly two halves with once or more key words in each half. The position in the line of the key words changes, however, so that at once the leading chief features stand out and our attention is compelled by the variety of the verse. Several of the phrases, too, have alliteration, assonance or consonance to make them memorable:

"A good Wif was ther / of hiside Bathe, But she was somdeel deef / and that was scathe. Of clooth-makying/ she hadde swich an haunt She passed hem of Ypres / and of Gaunt."

(AF) v. Everett, op. cit. and above, p. 25n.
In all the parisses /wif ne was ther noon
That to the ofrynge / before hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, / certeyn so wrooth was she,
That she was oute of alle charitee." (445-52)

The key words are underlined, together with vowels or consonants related to those of the key words.

The ironic significance of the stress on "offrynge", "wrooth" and "charitee" becomes clearer when we notice the words on which the stress falls in the following lines, "coverchiefs...Sonday"...and then "hosen...fyn scarlet reed". Not only anger but display. Then comes the irregular "Boold was hir face and fair and reed of hewe" (458) and in the next line "worthy womman". So the rhythm follows the sense to underline the ironic contrast between the assumption of respectability on the one hand, and the suggestion of anger and lust on the other. Further on come two more alliterative phrases akin to Anglo-Saxon ones, "strauenge strem" (464) and "wandrynge by the weye" (467), both of importance as embodying respectively a reminiscence of the "strange strondes" (13) sought by palmers in the opening lines, and of the Wife's failure consistently to seek the heavenly city, her pilgrimage to the earthly Jerusalem being mere tourism.

Finally, the lines:
"Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an ambleres easily she sat" (468-9)
being with a compound made as unforgettable by its consonance as is the "olde daunce" with which the description ends, and thrown into relief by the two initial
accents. Then comes the rest of the sharply-broken line ending with an alliterative phrase of the kind already mentioned, and this is followed by a second line in which the initial vowel sounds, the jogging almost unbroken movement and the stresses on "amblere" and "esily" seem to suggest the movement of the horse.

One could go on listing the felicities in this description until a catalogue of 'beauties' had been assembled in eighteenth-century style. What is of more value is to notice how the poet uses and combines features of style learned from his reading and education with the almost casual good judgement with which an experienced motorist drives a car. He knows what he wants to remain in our minds and unerringly directs our ears to "wrooth", "charitee", "Sonday", "scarlet reed", "boold" and "worthy".

(iv) Rhetoric and Sentence-structure

The conscious use of rhetoric to suggest character in the last book of "Troilus and Criseyde" suggested a critical awareness of its possible functions, in contrast to a plainer style. In the "Prologue" one realises that there is no general principle governing the mature Chaucer's use of rhetorical ornament and device: the descriptions of some of the best characters include rhetorical figures, (AG) i.e. the precepts of rhetoricians and the portrait of La Vieille in 'RR'.


as do those of some of the worst. That of the Clerk, for instance, includes a "contrarium"

"And he nas nat right fat........
But looked holwe........", (288-9)
as well as various examples of 'repetitio', such as "For he hadde geten", "For hym was levere" (291,293); "But albe that he...", "But al that he" (297,299), "And gladly ... lerne and gladly teche" (308). Perhaps one would expect some rhetoric for a clerk. The Parson's description begins with a 'contentio' or antithesis,

".......a povre Persoun ....
But riche he was of hooly thought....", (478-9)
Continues with a 'conversio'

".......trewely wolde preche
.......devoutly wolde he teche" (481-2)
which is followed by a 'contrarium' (486, 487-9), a rhetorical question(500)and immediately afterwards an 'interpretatio' expanding the thought contained in the metaphor of gold and iron. This formality of language, and the lack of physical detail, give the touch of remoteness of the ideal figure. There are other examples of 'contentio' (504)(514), as well as of 'contrarium' (508-12, 516-20), and 'repetitio', the reiterated 'ne' (516-20). Though all the portraits of ideal characters have rhetorical ornament, so have some of those of the rogues, for example the Monk and particularly the Friar, with its repetitions at intervals of "ordre(s)" (210, 214, 220, 225), or of
"he wiste" (224, 228), its 'commutatio' (236-7), its 'repetitio' of clauses (259, 261). There is no rule; it is a matter of contrast or emphasis, in the latter case perhaps intended to make the sarcasm more biting than it would otherwise be. There is, for instance, no reason other than a desire for contrast which should make the author do without rhetoric when describing the Manciple. If we say that the Miller is imagined with abundant physical detail whereas none is given of the Manciple, as none was of the Parson, we have to explain why the Reeve, of whom considerable physical detail is given and who is quite easily visualised, is described with the aid of 'repetitio' (588-90, 593, 595, 602, 608, 610), and of 'contentio' ("And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood" 612). To contrast the Manciple and Reeve, on the other hand, with the Miller on the other is not even consistent with the former contrasts drawn between the Manciple and the other two. Chaucer just used rhetoric as the spirit moved him. (AF)

There are in the "Prologue" no rhetorical figures designed to provoke emotion, such as the apostrophes and examples of 'conduplicatio' noted in previous poems. The shape of a portrait is sometimes evident, however, in 'framing' devices, as noted in the 'Troilus' and

(AF) For framing devices in TC and KT see above, pp. 193, 262.
"Knight's Tale". The word 'heeld' frames the remarks on monks and cloisters (176-82), likewise 'pacient' (415-18). There might be a framing clause, such as "Whan that......" (1, 18) in the opening description, or phrase, such as "a fair ...." (165, 204) used of the Monk. Finally the framework might be a detail repeated, such as the Prioress' "conscience", mentioned before and after the comments on her animals (142,150). In much of the writing the thoughts or observations have their own logic and need no external shape. If this is not apparent in the extract already quoted from the sketch of the Wife of Bath, it may be in the portrait of the Guildsmen, the fact of their being in company livery leading naturally to details of their accoutrements and the possibility of their achieving distinction in municipal life, and this leading onto the enjoyment of a higher status by their wives.

The long and elaborate sentence with which the poem opens (1-18) has often enough been analysed. It differs, of course, from the mammoth sentences in the "Hous of Fame". Other sections including rhetorical figures include: 1-18 (v. Everett, op. cit.,p;153ff.); Knt. (interpretatio, repetitio); Mk. 181 (praecisio), 185-6 (rhet. qu.), 188 (exclam.), repetitio (numerous); M.of L. 321-2 (commutatio); Plow.536-40 (interpretatio); Summ. 629-33, 636, 645, 648 (repetitio), 640(praecisio), 656-7 (conversio, 661 (contentio). (AJ) Esp. Baum: "Ch. Crit, App. Ch. III and "Ch. Verse".
or even the "Knight's Tale" (AK) in having an extremely logical pattern of clauses ("Whan....Whan...Thanne") as well as in its complexity of thought and rhetorical figure. Less attention has been paid to the sentences in use elsewhere in the "Prologue". On examination, the final narrative passage will be found to contain long sentences (e.g. 822-8, 342-9) which are less elaborately patterned and which give the appearance of a series of thoughts occurring to the narrator one after another, though to talk of a 'stream of consciousness' would be to exaggerate. Inside this narrative are the short and clear sentences of the Host, (828-836) which usually consist of one or two clauses.

In the portraits the sentences are usually short and rather atomistic in effect, this being particularly noticeable if one turns to this poem from the more fluent and elaborate ones of the "Knight's Tale". Again, the lines quoted on the Wife of Bath would serve as an example,(AL) though the opening ones on the Miller are more indicative of the tendency. (Though the editor separates some by semi-colons the effect on listening is as staccato as though full-stops were used.)

"The Millere was a stout carl for the nones;

(AK) E.g. HF 2-52, KT 2918-62.

(AL) Not noticeable in WB Prol. (on which there are interesting remarks in Everett, 153ff.) or in Mil. Prol.
Ful byg he was of brawn, and eek of bones.
That proved wel, for over al ther he cam,
At wrastlynge he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre;
Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed." (545-51)

Some characters are described in more mixed sentences; the Knight in two complex and well-organised ones at the start (43-50) and shorter ones after, when the poet turns to details of his career and appearance; the Prioress in rather loose sentences akin to those in the final narrative (e.g. 122-6, 137-41) mixed with short 'atomistic' ones like those above; the Monk in fairly fluent and complex ones (e.g.168-71, 172-6, 177-81) describing his attitude to the Rule, but shorter ones on his person (193-203); the Manciple in a mixture of short ones and a long, highly organised one (576-86), and the Parson in sentences varying very much in length and type.

Just why the poet chose to describe most of his characters in an apparently disjointed way is a matter for speculation. It could be that he sought an effect of immediacy, such as he had already gained in a speech of Theseus already commented (AM) on. It could be that the real unity of the character lies in the coherence of the physical details (which are most often given in these short sentences), so that he could afford to aim for immediacy and apparent casualness, as the audience would be forming a clear mental image, whereas in a passage

(AM) See above, p. 256
conveying thoughts, feelings or attitudes comprehension would depend on the logic or pattern of the clausal structure. In narrative the events would need to be connected with each other by a series of links such as conjunctions, rather than by, for example, subordinate and main clause conveying cause and effect. On the whole, the narrative clauses here are connected by co-ordinating conjunctions. What can be said is that the sentence-structure of the "Prologue" has the widest, the most audacious variety, yet encountered.

(v) Vocabulary

The most cursory reading of the poem shows that certain words keep cropping up in different portraits. In particular, seventeen, excluding any, such as 'gold', which are, more properly treated under 'Colour'. In order of first appearance, they are:

(1) compai\ynye; (2) worthy\ness); (3) vileynye;
(4) parfit; (5) gentil; (6) fair\e); (7) curteis\ye);
(8) estaat\ly); (9) digne; (10) conscience; (11) char-
it\able)\ee);
(12) solempne\ly); (13) nowher (nys) (noon ys);
(14) reverence; (15) discreet; (16) seemed; (17) felawe.

There is, in addition, 'semely', used several times of the Prioress. The occurrences of these words in the "Prologue" are indicated in the following table.
### Table of Occurrence of Key Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Line Nos.</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) compagnye</td>
<td>24, 717, 764, 331, 461</td>
<td>Pilgrims (as a group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fkl., Wife of Bath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) worthy</td>
<td>43, 47, 64, 68, (-nesse) 50, 217, 243, 269, 279, 283, 360, 459, 579</td>
<td>Knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fkl., W. of B., Manc.'s lawyers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) vileynye</td>
<td>70, 726, 740</td>
<td>Knt., Narrator, Host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) parfit</td>
<td>72, 338, 422, 532</td>
<td>Knt., Fkl. (with 'felicitee')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phys., Ploughman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tabard inn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) fair (e)(adj.)</td>
<td>154, 204, 211, 234, 369, 376, 458, 573, 606</td>
<td>Prioress, Friar (3 times)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guilds.(2), W. of B., Manc.(grace), Reeve (house).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Knt., Sq., Pri., Friar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) curteis(ye)</td>
<td>46, 99, 132, 250</td>
<td>Mk., Pars. (sinners), Manc. (lord) Pilgrims (rel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) (E)staat</td>
<td>203, 522, 572, 716</td>
<td>Pri., Mch. (business)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’estaatly(lich) 140, 281</td>
<td>Pri., Pars. (ne digne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) digne</td>
<td>141, 517</td>
<td>Pri., Clerk, Man of Law, Pars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) reverence</td>
<td>141, 305, 312, 525</td>
<td>Pri. (tendre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) conscience</td>
<td>142, 150, 398, 526</td>
<td>Ship. (nyce), Pars. (spiced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prioress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) charit(able)</td>
<td>143, 462, 532</td>
<td>W. of B. (oute of), Plow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ee)</td>
<td>Fri., Guilds. (fraternity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) solempe</td>
<td>209, 364</td>
<td>Mcht.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Uses of Words Elsewhere in Chaucer

(1) *Comaignye* is used generally to mean 'companionship', and only in the 'Romant of the Rose' to mean 'fellow-lovers', its source being the allegorical figure in the 'Roman de la Rose'.

(2) *Worthy* used often of Theseus, and of Troilus, appears to be a conventional term for a knight, but is used ironically in the Tales of the Wife of Bath, Friar and Summoner, as of the Friar, Merchant and Wife of Bath in the 'Prologue'.

(3) *Vileynye* is used in the "Pardoners Tale" in the sense of contemptuous or arrogant words', as in the first reference here.

(4) *Parfit* is used with 'chastitee' in the "Wife of Bath's Tale", with 'felicitee' by January in the "Merchant's Tale", speaking of marriage, and often with 'penitence' by the Parson and with 'true' and 'false', meaning heavenly or earthly joy, by Boethius.

(5) *Gentil* used in the "Knight's Tale" of Theseus and Palamon (not Arcite), and ironically of Chanticleer and by the Fox, in the "Nun's Priest's Tale". (AN)

(6) *Fair(e)* Used of beloved in 'Knt. T.'

(7) *Curteis(ye)* Probable origin allegorical figure Courtoisie in "Roman de la Rose" but appears in Tales of the Nuns' Priest, Miller, Man of Law, Pardoner, Squire, Merchant and Parson, but usually in either a serious or an ironic sense, of inner attitude, rather than of externals of manners, as in the portrait of the Prioress.

(8) *Estat* mainly of social rank.

(AN) Dr. Craik suggests 'gentil Palamon' would fit rhythm better than 'gentil Arcite'; I think it would also fit sound of 'Palamon' better. Often found in stock phrases, e.g. 'g. duc.
(9) **Digne rare.** Used in Pardoner's Tale of God's bones, as oath and in Clerk's Tale as 'worthy' of reverence.

(10) **Reverence.** Used in Boethius in 'digne of reverence', but there literally, of God. Used in Clerk's sense of 'seriousness,' and in M. of L.'s sense of 'dignity' in "Prioress' Tale".

(11) **Conscience.** 'spiced' in W. of B.'s Tale, 'tendre' in Summoner's, but nowhere apparently save in our religious sense. I therefore agree with Robertson that the word refers only to the Prioress' sense of right and wrong, not her sensibility. (AO)

(12) **Charitable.** As allegorical figure in "Romaunt of the Rose" and both there and later in our religious sense.

(13) **Solemnly.** Used only 7 times as adjective and never elsewhere in any sense of 'pompous' as may be in portrait of Friar; it is used as of Guildsmen's fraternity in Man of Law's Tale".

(14) **Nowhere.** Used in 'Romaunt' with 'bettre felawe' and also of the Garden in Merchant's Tale, which is unique.

(15) **Discreet.** Used often by the Parson in the clerical sense of 'tactful', and by the Clerk in the legal sense of 'reserved'

(16) **Semed.** Is used in the 'Romaunt' both with and without an idea of falsity, and by Boethius as 'Fortune semeth debonayre', so that there is some ground for thinking that the Man of Law is being shown as putting on a false facade.

(17) **Felawe.** Is used with the idea of companionship, as in the Tales of the Knight and Nuns' Priest, but its use here of the Summoner and Shipman is unmistakably ironic. This may well be its first use in this way. (AP) (28)


(AP) Robinson's Note on line 395 attributes suggestion of rascality to word but gives no evidence of colloquial use in this sense.
From the information given above, it follows that certain words appear to be used first in a literal sense of the Knight (of whom is surely impossible to think any criticism is intended) and then in an ironic sense of others. The word 'worthy' thus refers at once to the Knight's character and rank, but is clearly used to draw an ironic parallel between the knightly sense of dedication and the acquisitive attitudes of the Friar and Merchant, the concern with outward show without inward virtue of the Wife of Bath. It may indicate simply the rank or wealth of the Franklin but possibly has a sense of ostentation. 'Gentil' is clearly used ironically of the Manciple's acquisitiveness (AQ) and (rather savagely) of the legally powerful Summoner's loutish appearance and venality, and of the spiritually powerful Pardoner's dishonesty, as compared with the social and moral nobility of the Knight. 'Parfit', used in the descriptions of the Knight and Plowman to refer to moral qualities, (and the Knight's skill), refers ironically to the Franklin's idea of bliss and perhaps ironically to the Physician's lucrative collaboration with the apothecary. The difficulty is that the lines immediately after "verray parfit praktisour" refer straightforwardly to his diagnosis and healing of patients, although 'praktisour' could be ambiguous and (AQ) Also perhaps of Manc. ruling and cheating his superiors, a breach of principle of degree.
'verray' certainly seems to link the Physician with the Knight, with whom have been contrasted other characters whose practice belies their vocation. 'Curteisye', finally, is used of the Knight in the sense of virtue, 'curteis' particularly of the Squire to convey his humility, his sense of what is expected of him. The Prioress' superficial idea of 'curteisye' as 'the externals of upper-class life' and the Friar's willingness to be 'curteis, lowly and servysable' "theras profit sholde aryse" are clearly ironic.

Thus an examination of the recurrence of these key words reveals the implicit contrast between the moral values expected of a gentleman of high rank and those who, without his sense of values, wish to have his respect, social position or influence. It may even be that since the Squire evinces these virtues by his submission to his father, there is some implication of the holding together of society by the transmission of the knightly tradition, and its fragmentation through vulgar acquisitiveness by the irresponsible.

One or two contrasts are also drawn between the Parson or Clerk and less worthy characters. Apart from the two applications of 'discreet', pointed out in the above table his humility is contrasted with the Prioress' pride through his being 'ne daangerous ne digne' compared with her vain, if not blasphemous attempt to be thought
'digne of reverence', as perhaps is his scolding sinners of whatever 'estaat' compared with her being 'estatlich in manere'. The 'reverence' with which the Clerk speaks seems to imply an attitude of high seriousness on his part, as compared with the 'reverence' or seriousness with which the Priorness hopes to be treated and the 'reverence' the Manner of Law's wise words seem to imply, which is the "pompe and reverence" the Parson refuses; the Clerk's is a proper seriousness towards matters of philosophy and theology, the Prioress' personal vanity and the Lawyer's a dignified facade covering the love of power and money. (AR)

The word 'estaat(ly)' may also link the Monk and the Merchant with the Prioress (though the term in the latter case may simply have the harmless meaning 'business-like'). Other words to do with worldly values or appearances are 'solempne(ly)', linking Friar, Guildsmen and Merchant, and 'semed' ('semely') linking Prioress, Man of Law and Guildsmen. The word 'faire' is used with obvious irony of the Monk, in a similar sense of the Friar ('a faire prelaat 204), whose 'faire langage' in its context means 'seductive talk' to 'faire wyves' (234) probably somewhat easily persuaded. As used of the Guildsmen and their wives it implies a concern with ostentation. The Wife of Bath's 'fair' face, in its context, seems to mean both 'handsome' (AR) cf. phrase 'digne of reverence' in Boethius trans., mentioned in above table.
and 'sensual'. The other uses have no implication beyond, perhaps, that the Prioress' French sounds better than it is. The word 'felawe' is used of the Shipman, Summoner and Summoner's 'customer' in a savagely ironic sense, the Shipman being predatory, while the Summoner's fellowship is available only in return for a bribe. To see the term as being contrasted with the 'felaweship' of the Pilgrims, or to see the latter use as ironic, is to consider too curiously.

The point of going in such detail into the uses of these words is that a network of implication is thereby uncovered. The network links one or other of the ideal characters, Knight, Squire, Clerk, Parson or Plowman with most of the others. The only ones not involved are the Yeoman and, oddly enough, the Miller. Some support is given to the theory that Chaucer's original intention was to enclose his portrait-gallery between the Knight and the Parson or Plowman by the fact that 'gentil is used ironically of the final groups of rogues and no-one else, and that the only other word in the group linking the characters after the Plowman with those before is 'felawe', used of the Summoner. The fact that the Miller is not involved would suggest that the idea of continuing the chain of words occurred only when the poet began the sketch of the Manciple, ('gentil' being used there with no
very strong implication) but blossomed when he thought of the bitterly ironic "gentil harlot and a kynde" for the Summoner.

In a less tangible way, contrasting impressions of characters are built up through the themes running through the vocabulary used in their portraits. From the table which follows it will be noted that contrasts are drawn between the Knight, Squire and Yeoman, between the Priorness and Monk, between the Clerk and the others in his group, and between the Miller and Reeve. Less obvious contrasts are between the Parson's giving of his own substance and the Friar's marrying girls at his own cost, or the Wife of Bath's anger and the Parson's lack of it, or the Ploughman's 'parfit charitee', and his 'swynk', and the Monk's refusal to 'swynk'. Less obvious links are those between the Franklin's pre-eminence in his class and that of the Knight and Parson. Less obvious still at first reading is the number of words used in the final narrative which have occurred earlier, though whether any recapitulatory effect is intended is very doubtful. In making this kind of judgement one proceeds from a group of words setting up characters in clearly and sharply definable relationship, to a larger group yielding vaguer suggestions which may or may not be intended, or may even have occurred to the poet in accordance with the promptings of the
unconscious. These, one can but record without being dogmatic.

Table of Themes in Vocabulary (AS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) Spring 1-18</th>
<th>(b) Narrative 19-42</th>
<th>(c) Knight, Squire, Yeoman, 43-78, 79-100, 101-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moisture</td>
<td>showres, licour (cont. droghte) bathed, softe, tendre, sweete, smale, yonge, melodye Zephirus</td>
<td>Knt. chivalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>softness, sweetness</td>
<td>priketh, Zephirus, inspired, longe, seken, (perhaps Nature), (perhaps 'perced'), engendred</td>
<td>honour, fredom, curteisy, gentil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire and creation</td>
<td>pilgrimages, palmeres, halwes, Caunterbury, hooly, blisful, martir, seeke (with 'martir' &amp; 'holpen')</td>
<td>moral qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outdoor life</td>
<td>shoures, droghte, roote, holt &amp; heeth, croppes, sonne, fowoles, nature, shires</td>
<td>worthy, honour, meeke, wys, trouthe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religion</td>
<td>(vertu?) (inspired?)</td>
<td>(AS) Possible comparisons recorded in brackets as (e.g.) 'cf. Pars.', possible contrasts as (e.g.) 'cont. Pars.' Numbers in brackets refer to frequency of use of word in given passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel</td>
<td>fernes, straunge strondes, sondry londes, shires ende.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
rank
worthynesse, degree, no vileynye

pre-eminence
sovereyn prys, no man ferre, the bord bigonne

drabness
bismotered, nat gay

Sq. youth, virility
yonge, lovyere, lustye, delyvere, greet, strengthe, hoot

chivalry
curtys, lowly, servysable (of. Knt.) juste

colourful appearance
embroidered, fresshe flowres, whit & reed (cont. Knt.)

accomplishments
singing, floytyng, write, purtreye, daunce

Y. colourful appearance
brighte & kene, green, gay, silver. (cont. Knt.)

(d) Prioress, Monk, Friar 118-62, 165-207, 203-69

Pr. manners
details of eating, digne, estatlich, of court curteisye (cf. Knt., Sq.)

daintiness, femininity
coy, semely(?), plesaunt, wolde wepe, (2), tretys, smal mouth, softe, reed, fair forheed (ornaments,) amor....

Mk. rank
maistrie, (cf. Knt?). abbot able, lord,(2) prelaat, estaat (cf. Pr.)

masculinity, sensuality (cont. Pr.)
manly, prikasour (-yng) (cf. Spring), hunter, venerie, lust, ballad, fat, love-knote, fat swan

religion (ironic)
enoynt, cloysterle ss (etc.)

wealth
many deyntee horse, grys, fyneste of lond, gold pyn, bootes souple, hors greet estaat

animals
huntyng, grehoundes, (cf. Pr. animals)
rank
licenciat, worthy, cont.
poraille, lazar, beggestere,
and. maister, pope

venality
goode pitaunce, profit....
avounce

colourful appearance
whit(neck), eyes twinklen...

accomplishments
syng, pleye (rote, harpe),
(cf. Sq.),

virility
wrestlynge, strong., champ-
ioun (cf. Sq.), murye

religion
esy...pennaunce, pleasaunt...
absolucioun, moore...curat,
lazars (avoiding) (cont. Pars)

(e) Merchant, Clerk, Man of Law, Franklin, 270-84, 285-308,
309-30, 331-60

Merchant rank, (appearances) worthy, estatly (?) solemp-
nely (business words, 'chevysaunce' etc., not parall-
eled elsewhere)

Cl. meagreness
Leene (horse), nat fat (cont.
Mk.), hollow, thredbare,
(cont. Mk.) litel gold (cont.
Mk., Phys.)

M. of L. ability
riche of excellence, (cont.
Pars.), heigh renoun

Frank. plenty
plentevous, mete & drynke
(cont. Cl.) ful many, fat
(cf. Mk.)

colour
red face, white beard.

(f) Guildsmen, Cook, Shipman

Guilds. appearance
fresh, new, silver, clene,
semed faire, mantel roia-
liche bore (cont. Knt.)
or pretensions

Ck prowess
(details of dishes made)

Ship pre-eminence
noon swych (Knt., Fkl., Fri.)

(AT) This portrait so rich verbally that much has had to
be omitted.
prowess

(g) Physician, Wife of Bath,
Phys. pre-eminence
venality
W. of B.
anger (Mars)
love, sensuality (Venus)
colour
rank & pretensions

knowing draughts of wyn (cf. Ch. d. of ale) for details of experience & travel cf. Knt.
noon hym lyk, verray parfit.. (Knt.)
loved golde in speciale (cont. Cl., cf. Fri.)
wrooth, oute of alle charites
boold, fair, wandrynge(?), olde daunce, companye.
scarlet reed (2- (cf. Sq., cont. Knt.)
worthy....before hire (cont. Knt. 'meke')

(h) Parson, Plowman, 477-538, 529-41
Parson poverty & content
spiritual riches
learning
moral qualities
Flow diligence
holiness

poore, litel thyng.. suffisaunce (cf. Cl., cont. Mk., Fri., Frkl.)
riche hooily thought etc. (cont. Mk., Fri., cf. Cl.)
learned man, clerk (cf. Cl.)
good, hooily, vertuous, looth to cursen (cont. Summ.), ne daungerous ne digne (cf. Knt. Sq.)
swynh, dycehe, delve, thressle (cont. Mk.)
pees, parfit charitee (cont. W. of B.)

(i) Miller, Manciple, Reeve 545-66, 567-86, 587-622
Mil. strengthe, size,
big..brawn..bones,wrestlynge, brood, dore..leve, breke...
(cont. Sq.) cf. Fri.)
sensuality  synne, harlotries, physical details

colour  white cote, blew hood, reed....
        berd, herys, blake..nosetherlies
        (cf. W.of B., contSq.)

'accomplishments'  stelen corn, tollen thries,
                    bagpipe...blowe (cont.Sq.,Fri.)

[Man. business acumen]  wise..in bynge...ay biforn..wit...
                      (cf.Knt., M.of L., Mcht.)

[R. thinness]  shave ny, shorn, long and lene,
               lyk staf sclendre (cont. Mil.,
               Mk., cf. Cl.)

wealth  of riches astored..pryvely
        (cont.Cl.,Pars.)

religion  hair lyk preestes, cote lyk
          friar's (cf.)

colour inspirs fear  grene...trees (house), rusty blade
                   adrad of hym...deeth, colorik

(j) Summoner, Pardoner  623-68, 669-714

Sum sensuality  fyr-reed, saucefleem, hoot,
                 lecherous (cf. W. of B., Mil.)
                 garlic, onions (?)

religion  cherubynmes, wyn reed as blood,
          soule, helle brimstone (?)

colour  fyr-reed face, browes blake,
        whelkes whit (cf. Mil.)

metal  quyksilver, lytarge, brimstone

medical  oynement, oille of Tartre, ceruse,
         boras

moral qualities (ironic)  gentil, kynde
                         harlot

inspiring fear  visage...children aferd (cf. RV.)
So intricate is the network of verbal cross-reference revealed by the above table that any conclusions must radically over-simplify. Some of the undergrowth, as it were, is cut away by looking at words with a sense of the whole tendency of the context. For instance, though the Host is described in terms like those used for the Summoner and the Guildsmen, the passage as a whole does not suggest either sensuality or vanity in him. The fact of his being large and fitted to be a marshal or burgess may, however, indicate a comparison with the Monk as a powerful, masculine figure. The following conclusions do seem warranted by the material:
(i) Ideal Christians are being compared with others whose attitudes to life are in various ways and to various degrees un-Christian. The most predominant virtue is charity, the chief failings greed, self-importance, anger and ruthlessness. The language connects in several ways the Friar with the Squire, the Wife of Bath with the Knight, against whom a number of characters are set.

(ii) Some characters seem idealized, others realistic, but to most the antitheses between outer poverty and inner wealth, or outer display and inner barrenness, sincerity and various facades, selflessness and acquisitiveness, are relevant.

(iii) The language used of the best characters is almost exclusively moral in tendency, whereas that used of the less virtuous often involves visual qualities, accomplishments or idiosyncrasies calculated to make the less virtuous characters interesting.

(iv) While some characters, such as the Squire, are embodiments of allegorical figures, the very mixture of elements in the imperfect figures forbids us to consider them as embodiments of moral abstractions. Still less can we consider them so in view of the author's enjoyment of, for example, the Friar's eyes and songs, or the Wife of Bath's vigour and colour.

(v) The medieval concept of degree underlies the wording of the poem. Society functions because people behave according to their rank and vocation; the worldliness and greed of the Monk is sinful because he is a monk, whereas we should find the same qualities in the Franklin presented without reprehension. Likewise, the Knight does not 'counterfeit' court manners like the Prioress, who denies her rank and vocation in doing so.

(vi) The Romance words, such as 'curteisye', 'gentil', 'parfit' are used literally of the virtuous and responsible characters, such as the Knight, Squire, Clerk and Parson, and ironically of the characters who act above their station or abuse their position, such as the Prioress, Friar and Summoner. The number of Romance rhymes used of the Friar seems to point this irony with especial sharpness (AU). The character with the greatest proportion of Anglo-Saxon words is the Miller, to whose crude physical strength and appetite they seem fitted.

(AU) 'confessioun', 'absolucioun', 'penaunce', 'pitaunce', 'avaunt', 'repentaunt' (221-8).
(vi) Imagery

A good deal of what has been said about the vocabulary of the poem has reference also to its imagery, so that all that is needed here is a brief indication of the chief themes running through the imagery. Images not paralleled elsewhere in the poem are the extended personifications or figures of the west wind as Zephirus, of April and of the Sun as running through the house of the Ram may be that Chaucer knew of Zephirus' descent from Eos the God of Dawn. (AV) If so, this would link the personification with that of the sun-rise, and also with

"Amorwe, whan day began to sprynge" (822)
at the end of the poem. At all events, the value of these personifications is that they facilitate the conveying of the current of new life in spring, and also of the double significance of spring as the season of natural growth and that of love, which may be either the kind which holds together the universe and human society, 'the frame of things'(AW) or the sensual kind. Both are to be found among the characters.

The religious images ('anoynt', 'cherubynne', 'wyn reed as blood') have already been explored. Literature yields the images of the Franklin as Epicurus' son and St. Julian, conveying a double suggestion of gluttony and

(AV) Zephirus in Ovid's "Fasti", which Ch. may perhaps have read.

(AW) v. discussion of TC III 1261-74, above, p. 155-6
generosity (found also in the red and white colour and the comparison of his beard to a daisy) which makes it impossible to regard this 'sanguine' man as simply a sinner.

The images of birds, animals, plants and fire seem taken from literature, iconography or myth rather than life, i.e. they seem emblems rather than the results of observation. The nightingale, for the Squire's broken sleep, reminds us of the one outside Crissyde's window. (AX) Indeed, the combination of this, the red and white flowers (reminding us of the Spring description) and the list of the courtly lover's accomplishments and attributes might indicate an equivocal attitude by the poet towards the Squire — we may take him as either a model young knight or a young servant of Venus. The summoner as jay (imitating learned speech), his paramour as finch, the Monk's hunting (of hares and of women), his hounds, the Miller as sow (sensuality) and fox (Satan, craft and deceit), the Pardoner as hare and goat (sensuality) and the Parson as shepherd, all obviously have moral implications.

Similarly moral in intention are the references to gold, especially the contrast of gold and iron for priest and layman, but the list of metallic remedies which would not cure the Summoner's complaint seems to be merely the result of contemporary medical thought. (AY)

(AX) v. above, p. 131.
(AY) Significance of these details discussed by Curry in op. cit. pp. 37-53.
Some flavour of the countryside, which clings about this poem, may be due to the comparisons of the Franklin's game-bag with morning milk and the Reeve's legs with staves. The fleur-de-lys with which the Friar's neck is compared seems more likely to be of the same emblematic kind as the red and white flowers adorning the Squire and the daisy which the Franklin's beard resembles. Its significance, when we combine it with the one of the Friar's cope as a bell and his general appearance resembling a pope's, is probably that of a 'limitour' acting like a superior member of the social and ecclesiastical order.

Final Comment

The whole 'Prologue' has been seen as a kind of image which can be expounded on the lines of the fourfold interpretation applied to religious literature. Thus literally, at a fixed time in April, 1387, a number of people, some of whom may have been historical personages, stayed at a real inn before visiting a real shrine. They had attitudes and habits really found among their social groups. Allegorically, the pilgrims respresent the corrupt Christian community which can only be healed through the saint's holiness. The tropological (moral) interpretation would involve the holding up of the Christian standards of the humble Knight and Parson for contrast with those of others in greater need of redemption, such as the Wife of
Bath (La Vieille) or the Miller (Discordia). The _anagogical_ (eschataological) interpretation would involve the inn's standing for this world, the spring for youth and its temptations, the pilgrimage the one all Christians make through this world to the final abode of the saints. (AZ)

Such a Wyclifite strain of interpretation seems to leave out the most vital, the most essentially Chaucerian elements in the poem. It involves an over-emphasis on sexual misconduct, ignoring the fact that the paramount virtues of the Parson and Ploughman are charity and helpfulness to others. It leaves out the exuberance, the delight in spring and fresh growth, the love of, and curiosity about people, the Friar's eyes, the Wife's ten-pound weight of head-covering, the humour, the sly digs at the rapacity of doctors, which a modern American writer might make, or the Man of Law's keeping clients waiting in the outer office in order to give the impression of being much in demand. It leaves out the enchanting variety of rhythm and sound: the Prioress is a sinner but Madame Eglantyne is a lovely name; the Monk is a fat rogue but we

(AZ) This interpretation is an amalgam of elements in those of Hoffman: "Ch.'s Prol. to Pilg." (EH 1954) and Robertson, op. cit., esp. 373-4. Hoffman stresses the allegorical and moral elements, Robertson the moral and anagogical. I have drawn them together in order to know what seems to me to be an unfortunate imbalance in present-day criticism of Ch.
hear his harness "gynglen in a whistlynge wind" louder, perhaps, than the chapel bells some of the sterner critics ring. It leave out the familiar, easy tone of the Narrator, and, "er that I ferther in this tale pace".

One must re-assert the pleasure principle and the reliability of our immediate response in reading Chaucer. To say that the Prioress is a social climber, that she pampers animals, exposes her forehead and wears a gold brooch is to accuse her of only a very limited degree of wickedness. Her coy smile, her charm, the sweet verse in which she is described, give us a sense of the whole woman which should prevent us from taking the details of her misconduct more seriously than Chaucer did. So too with the Monk's worldly rationalizations. We must regard the Friar's cheating of poor widows far more seriously, and in our age of secret police and concentration camps we are bound to think the Summoner monstrously wicked, his grotesquely horrible face, as the words and images conjure it up before us, compels us to think him so.

If one final conviction emerges from this laborious dissection of a masterpiece, it is that the dissection should have shown that such marvellous skill in the use of words, images, ironies, rhythms, couplets, sounds, sentences, rhetoric has not been expended all this time in vain: the impression Chaucer has made on generations of readers was
the one he wished to make. If we think we have been in England in springtime we have been; if we think we have been refreshed by a rich fund of humour, observation and holy common-sense we have been. The discoveries of literary and social historians can only enrich, and not impoverish Chaucer for us, if we use them to supplement, not to replace, our general impressions.
CHAPTER NINE

THE MILLER'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

The Miller's Prologue and Tale have long been esteemed for the mastery of dramatic situation and narrative which they respectively display. They have of late been quarried also by scholars seeking material for discussion of Chaucer's poetic style. Even so, the stylistic richness and variety, particularly of the Tale, has hardly been realised. Only perhaps in the "Nun's Priest's Tale" do we find a comparable range of poetic expression, from comic dialogue to the controlled profusion of imagery in the description of Alison or the delicious parody of courtly rhetoric by Absalom after the night has been so hauntingly evoked. Perhaps in none of the other Tales is every rift so loaded with ore, nor such unflagging entertainment offered.

The following study will resemble those of the 'Knight's Tale' and the "Prologue" in general pattern, except that, after the investigation of the couplet form, rhythm, sentence structure and rhetoric, I shall only allude to such aspects of the diction and imagery as have not already attracted considerable notice. Finally some comparisons will be drawn between the verse of this poem and that of the "Knight's Tale". It is perhaps inevitable that the picture of the Tale to emerge should be distorted one,

(A) E.g. F.W. Bateson: "Eng. Poetry-An Appreciation".
in as much as the comic action which, in all honesty, must be admitted to be the chief attraction, can barely be touched upon in a study of the style. However, my treatment may add weight to the recent comment on the situation as being "more substantial and more plausible than the bare necessities of farce require". (B)

Though one or two critics see a serious moral implication, (C) there is no general dispute about Chaucer's aims in writing the poem. Nor need any problems of the relation of tale and source detain us. It may enable later references to be briefer if the parts of the tale be listed as:

(i) Description of John and Nicholas 3187-3220;
(ii) Description of Alison 3221-70;
(iii) Nicholas' wooing 3271-3306;
(iv) Description of Absalon 3307-51;
(v) Absalon's vain courtship 3352-96;
(vi) John's interruption of N.'s 'trance' 3397-3486;
(vii) Conversation of Nicholas & John 3487-3600;
(viii) General retirement 3601-56;
(ix) Absalon's resolve 3657-66;
(x) Misdirected kiss 3687-3743;
(xi) Absalon's revenge 3744-3815;
(xii) Conclusion 3816-54.

(a) Couplets

Closed couplets occur in widely varying proportions, the largest proportion, as might be expected, in the description of Alison, but the smallest, surprisingly, in that of Absalon. Conspicuously large proportions occur in the scenes in which John interrupts Nicholas' 'trance' and

(B) T.W. Craik: "The Comic Tales of Ch.", p.5
(C) Robertson, op.cit., pp. 468-9.
in which Absalon courts Alison. Conspicuously small proportions occur in Absalon's revenge and in the general retirement. Of the closed couplets many are devoted to the separate images in the description of Alison, to John's 'sentences' in his conversation with Nicholas, while a few convey the conventional actions of the courtly lover in Absalon's wooing. That so dramatic a scene as that of Absalon's revenge should have a great variety of line-groupings is to be expected, as is the considerable number of self-contained lines to express John's panic-stricken actions in the retirement scene.

The closed couplet is used for a number of other purposes. The drunken Miller uses several together, giving a rather staccato effect:

"Now herknet," quod the Millere," alle and some
"But first I make a a protestacioun"-
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun;
And therefore if that I mysspeke or seye,
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I yow preye.
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf......" (3136-42)

More accustomed is its use for the 'sentences' on the marriage of John and Alison, such as:

"He knew not Catoun, for his wit was rude,
That bad men sholde wedde his simylitude." (3227-8)

A similarly epigrammatic effect is produced by the use of the form in dialogue, as when Nicholas says:

(D) v. Appendix B.
"A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle,  
But if he koude a carpenter bigyle."  (3299-300)

The closed, balanced couplet is comparatively rare, though found in such examples as:

"For what so that this carpenter answerede,  
It was for noght, no man his reson herde."  (3843-4)

The couplet containing repartee is, I think, more appropriate here than in the "Knight's Tale". The form is seen at its best in the scene of the misdirected kiss:

"And (Absalon) seyde, 'Fy! Allas! what have I do?  
'Tehee!' quod she, and clapte the wyndow to.'"  (3739-40)

Continuous sentences in which the sense runs through several couplets are found in places where the narrative briefly summarizes events taking some time, such as:

"This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,  
And spak so faire, and profred him so faste,  
That she hir love, hym graunted atte laste,  
And swoor his ooth, by seint Thomas of Kent,  
That she wol been at his comandement,  
Whan that she may hir leyser wel espie."  (3188-93)

A similar example is the account of John's provisioning of the kneading trough. (3624-9) One narrative highlight at which the verse takes this form is the account of the falling of the barrel (3819-23) but here also several successive events, John sitting up, cutting the cord, falling, striking the floor and swooning, are told in continuous lines to create the impression of rapidity. We may therefore suspect that a change from closed couplets to a continuous form is a way of increasing the speed of narrative, where this ought naturally to occur.
This impression is borne out by the fact that single lines, made more deliberate by the 'repetitive', are found where John's reaction to Nicholas' forecast is described:

"He wepeth, weyleth maketh sory cheere; He siketh with ful many a sory swogh; He gooth and geteth hym a kneading trogh." (3618-20)

before the narrative slips into the continuous form when the provisioning of the tub is described. So too, as Absalon prepares for the hoped-for kiss, there is a mixture of single lines and couplets (3718-29) ending in the single lines:

"This Absolon gan wype his mouth ful drie." (3730)

This line, as it were, isolates a moment of silent, tense expectation before the rapid continuous lines which rise to a climax at the kiss (3731-35). This control of speed is one of the vital secrets of Chaucer's genius as a narrator.

The greatest variety of couplet forms is found in the description of Absalon or, failing that, in the conversation of Nicholas and John. In the description, particularly, most of the different permutations of lines and couplets are used, each according to the context. Thus a three-line group describes Alison going to church, split couplets her forehead and Absalon, a single line his face and later a closed couplet his surplice. A single line sums him up as "A myrie child" and seven continuous lines his playing and singing.

(b) Rhythm and Sound

It is impossible to discuss confidently the rhythms of the "Miller's Tale" in terms of their suitability for oral
reading, in view of the mock-serious warning at the end of
the "Miller's Prologue":

"For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of yvel entente, but for I moot reheere
Hir tales allo, be they bettre or worse,
Or elles falsen som of my mateere.
And therefore, whoso list it nat yheere,
Turne over the leef and chese another tale:" (3172-77)

After this somewhat equivocal passage, it would perhaps be
safest not to insist on the auditory qualities of the verse,
in case a fabliau so bold as this was meant to be read silently.
This will not prevent us from noticing the writer's ear for
speech-rhythms, which can be heard with the inward ear, as
well as the flexibility noticeable when one considers the
rhythms respectively of his narrative and descriptive verse.

A close study of the rhythms of the poem confirms Dr.
Craik's view, founded on his study of the subject-matter,
that once the tale is under way we are not aware of the Miller
telling it. During the "Miller's Prologue" there is perhaps
a suggestion of the drunkard's voice in the groups of monosy-
llabic auxiliary words, with longer words, caesurae and
accents combining to give an effect of unimportant words being
slurred over and heavy accents at key words, in:

"Bur first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun.
And theryeore if that I mysspeke or seye,
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I yow praye.
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Both of a carpenter and his wyf.......") (3137-42)

especially if one compares it with the Reeve's reply which
is in metrically more regular verse:
"...Stynt thy clappe!
Lat be thy lewed drunken harlotrye.
It is a synne and eek a greet folye
To apeyrren any man, or hym defame,
And eek to bryngen wyves in swich fame." (3144-48)

It is not long, however, before the two voices become indistinguishable, as we hear from the Miller's last lines to 'brother Osewold':

"An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf
Of Goddes pryvetee, nor of his wyf." (3163-64)

We hear nothing reminding us of a drunken man's voice thereafter, and the words and ideas of some lines are quite beyond a miller.

An example of the poet's 'good ear' for speech expressing different moods is the contrast between the speech of both Nicholas and Alison when he is wooing her and their speech when she accepts him. Both speak at the time of their 'struggle' in a staccato style, with marked pauses and alliterating groups of words. Nicholas initial parody of a lover's utterance:

"...Ywis, but if ich have my wille,  
For deerne love of thee, lemm, I spille"  (3277-78)

acquires a fierceness in

"Lemm, love me al stones,  
Or I wol dyen......"  (3280-81)

which contrasts with the somewhat pettish note of Alison's

"I wol nat kisse thee, by my fay"  (3284)
in which the strong accent on 'wol' and the falling away at the end, assist the sense of the words. Even the scolding
"Why, lat be," quod she, "lat be, Nicholas" (3285) has not the urgency of "Lemman, love me..." and subsides soon after to "Do wey youre handes, for youre cuteisy." (3287)

None of Alison's actual protests sound so agitated as the "out, harrow and allas" she threatens to cry.

After their agreement to love, the two speak in much less broken lines, such as:

"Myn housbonde is so ful of jalousie That but ye wayte wel and been privee, I woot right wel I nam but deed" (3294-96)

where the sense is melodramatic but there is no tension in the rhythm, while there is confidence in both the sense and the rhythm of Nicholas' reply:

"Nay, therof care thee noght......" (3298 et seq)

Though self-deception is easy when one is discussing the alleged effect of sounds and rhythms, I do not think it fanciful to detect an amusing contrast between Nicholas' "Lemman, love me..." and the 'cantabile' rhythm, or rather metre, of Absalon's song:

"Now deere lady, if thy will be, I praye yow that ye wole rewe on me" (3361-62)

corresponding to the masculine sensuality of the one and the virtual effeminacy of the other. Similarly, one's perception of the humour of the following lines is increased by awareness of the subtle difference between the exclamatory
bark and pronounced pauses of:

"What! Alison! hearestow nat Absolon" (3366)
in which the first two syllables are sharply accented,
and the gentler pauses and more regular accents conveying
Alison's weariness in:

"Yis, God woot, John, I heere it every deal." (3369)
In the pauses of the first line one imagines tense silence,
in those of the other, sighs.

In like manner, one enjoys the humour of the second
serenade of Absalon more for mentally contrasting the
mincing delicacy of the note of:

"Ywis, leman, I have swich love-longynge,
That lik a turtel trewe is my moornynge. I may nat ete na moore than a mayde" (3705-7)
both with Nicholas' former

"Ywis, but if ich have my wille,
For deere love of thee, leman, I spille" (3277-78)
and with the coarse vigour of the accents of Alison's:

"Go fro the wyndow, Jakke fool," (3708)
to which the gutturals contribute. Absalon sounds so
inaffectual in contrast to Nicholas because his stresses
are so much feebleler and his caesurae less marked. One
must, of course, give due weight too to the contrast
between the directness of Nicholas' utterance and the
conventionally romantic similes of Absalon's.

The speech of Nicholas and John is also contrasted,
in their long conversation in Nicholas' room, but less
spectacularly. When John bursts in his short sentences,
rather than his rhythms, make his remarks somewhat jerky. He awakes Nicholas with cries verbally and rhythmically very similar to those with which he woke Alison after Absalon's first serenade:


(3477)

His 'nyght-spel', by contrast, is incomparable as a skit on such jingles, in its doggerel regularity:

"Jhesu Crist and seinte Benedight,  
Blesse this hous from every wikked wight...."

(3483-4)

but John, awaking Nicholas, is soon back in his staccato bark:

"What seystow,  
What! thynk on God, as we doon, men that swynke."

(3490-91)

Nicholas' lines are as smooth and regular as John's are broken and rough. Thus is simulated the calm voice of prophetic authority which carries conviction to the unlearned and superstitious dotard:

".....Fecche me drynke,  
And after wol I speke in pryvetee  
Of carteyn thyng that toucheth me and thee..")(3492-94)

A similar conviction is conveyed in the grave, regular metre of Nicholas' injunction of secrecy (3501-7), which has John fairly gabbling out assurances. The actual prediction is conveyed in lines whose continuously rising pitch, reaching a sustained climax in the last line, is remarkably like the rhythmic pattern of the Apothecary's prediction about the effectiveness of his poison in the "Pardoner's Tale":

(E) 'Pard.T.' 859-64 esp.
"That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and wood,
That half so greetwas nevere Noees flood.
This world," he seyde, "in lasse than an hour
Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the shour.
Thus shal mankynde drenche, and lese hir lyf." (3516-21)

An even closer parallel to the Apothecary's utterance is the demand for silence (3583-88). Chaucer's ear for the human voice in certain basic situations— in this case the giving of instructions—would in another age have enabled him to be a great dramatist.

Finally, apropos speech-rhythms, one might briefly mention the immortal "Tehee" and "The man is wood, my leve brother" (3848) which respectively convey laughter by onomatopoeia and a principal stress on 'wood' which suggests to me someone spluttering as he says the word. In general, therefore, the rhythms differentiate characters, change according to their changing moods and purposes, convey cross-references from one character's remarks to another's earlier ones, and convey certain obvious effects such as laughter and drunkenness.

The various stretches of pure narrative in the Tale show the great flexibility of rhythm and these qualities contribute in no small measure to the unbroken interest of this tale, one with neither flat stretches nor digressions. In its opening twelve lines (3187-3198) for example, the first line-and-a-half

"Wilom ther was dwellynge at Oxenford
A riche gnof/"

(F) n.b. also the assonances of 'tehee' and 'she', 'and' - 'clapte', and recurring dental consonants.
is paralleled by the first mention of Nicholas,

"With hym ther was dwellynge a poure scoler,  
Hadde lerned art/ "

but the complete parallel, which might result in a jingle, is avoided by placing 'gnof' on the half-line and 'scoler' on the full one, so that the parallel is simply rhythmical. There is a parallel rhythm also between the lines:

"......that gestes held to bord,  
And of his craft he was a carpenter."

and "...... but al his fantasey  
Was turned for to lerne astrologye".

The feminine rhymes of "conclusiouns" and "interrogaciouns" (as well as the Romance words) give a weightiness contrasting with the crude simplicity of "gestes...bord...craft...carpenter." This naturally gives the first indication of the awe in which Nicholas is to be held, and is quickly followed by the reiterations "If that men asked hym......whan that men sholde have....if that men asked hym." The two conditional clauses are not followed by echoing lines, however, as the complete line with details

"Whan that men sholde have droghte or elles shoures" corresponds with the all-inclusive

"......what sholde bifalle  
Of every thyng". (3197-8)

Finally the section ends with one of Chaucer's conversational shrugs:

"I may nat rekene hem alle".

The device of the parallel rhythm is used most
arrestingly in the lines describing the servant looking in at the door, suspense being the effect aimed at:

"An hole he foond, ful lowe upon a bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,
And at that hole he looked in ful depe,
And at the laste he hadde of hym a sight." (3440-43)

The monosyllables give a bareness which increases the effect of tautness and concentration, however ludicrous the actual sense.

One of the most delightful passages for variation of metre and pause is the one in which the lovers come down from aloft:

"....And eft he routeth, for his heed mislay.
Doun/of the ladders talketh Nicholay,
And Alison ful softe adoun she spedde;
Withouten wordes mo/they goon to bedde,
Ther as the carpenter/ is wont to lye.
Ther/was the revel and the melodye;
And thus/lith Alison and Nicholas,
In bisynesse of myrthe/and of solas,
Till that the belle of laudes/gan to rynge,
And freres in the chauncel/gonne synge." (3647-56)

The caesura slides along the line during the first group of five lines, comes back arrestingly to the beginning of line 3652, then the slide forward begins again, until in the last couplet it follows the "belle of laudes" and "freres in the chauncel" and our attention is transferred to the outer world. Which stress in the line would receive most emphasis in the original reading it is impossible to say, but one is certainly tempted to begin the lines "Doun of the laddre...." and "Ther was the revel...." with a trochee, drawing attention to these key lines, while a
somewhat heavier stress than usual on the underlined syllables would so add to the vigour of the actions as to increase one's amusement. The normality of the metre and more orthodox caesura placing in the last couplet enable the poet to modulate not only to another scene but, for the present, to a quieter and graver mood.

The descriptive passages in the poem are, rhythmically, some of the finest, indeed, the critical attention given to the imagery in the description of Alison has perhaps dulled our perception of the excellence of its sounds and rhythms. It is preceded by some perfect examples of the virtually unstopped iambic line but opens with a normally stopped line. The next line, however, is has an exquisite tripping effect owing to the accent on 'gent' and the slight pause there, which is additional to the normal caesura after "wezele". The slight extra accentuation to which some syllables in the last passage discussed seemed to lend themselves is almost inevitable in the next two lines

"A cgynt she werede, barred al of silk,
A barmcloth eek, as whit as morne milk (3235-6)
Upon hir lendes...."

and the enjambeement after 'milk', with the normally

(G) Eg. 3221, 3222, 3223, 3228, 3229,
(H) 3233.
stressed syllables on the next line, reasserts the smooth-flowing iambic metre.

In the next line, however, the initial accent at "Whit" and the pronounced pause after "smok" re-focus attention on the next item of clothing.

After this the caesura slides about, combining with enjambement to give two half-lines said almost as one line in:

"...............and brydden al bifoore
And eek binyndede..........."  (3238-39)

or coming soon after the beginning of the line to isolate items to be described, such as "the Tapes" and Hir filet brood", but moving over to near the end to give a conversational tone to "were of the same suyte", sometimes almost disappearing in

"She was ful moore blisful on to see"  (3247), or in

"For any lord to leggen in his bedde".  (3269)

The result is verse at once graceful and effortless, sometimes near to conversation because of the caesuras, yet, because of the end-stopping after couplets, never losing its formality. How delicious, for example, is this group of lines, begun with the typical Chaucerian casualness "But of hir song", continued in monosyllables which rise slowly in pitch to the climax of "swalwe" before the pause and dying away in the rest of the line; in the next couplet the light decision of "skippe'y", followed by a pronounced pause marks a climax, after which the 'k' sound
re-echoes in the next line, as does as the pitch rising
(less sharply) to the middle and falling away:

"But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittyng on a berne.
Therto she koude skippe and make game
As any kyde or calfe folwynge his dame."  (3257-60)

Again, the alternation of an almost unstopped line with
one broken in the middle by caesura and phrase-ending can
give a delightful ring to the couplet, as in:

"Ther nys no man so wys that koude thenche
So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche."  (3253-54)

Here the very echoing consonants of 'popelote', or 'swich'
and 'wenche' make the sounds of the words linger in the
mouth. Similarly with the echoes of rhythm, consonant and
vowel of:

"She was a prymerole, a piggesnye".  (3268)

One could write much more about the rhythm, cadence
and melody of this enchanting description. Here there is
space only to mention the exquisite pattern of sounds and
echoing unstopped lines in:

"For any lord to leggen in his bedde,
Or yet for any good yeman to wedde."  (3269-70)

Nor is there time to enlarge on the rhythmic inversions,
such as

"Wymsynge she was, as is a joly colt"  (3263)
in which the assonances and recurring soft sibilants add
to the beauty of the line.

From the extracts quoted, and some of the remarks,
it will be obvious that the description is distinguished.
by patterns of sound, alliterating consonants running throughout a group of lines, such as the 'p's near the end, or the 'b's and 'l's of

"A brooch she baar upon hir lowe coler,
As brood as is the boos of a bokeler...
Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye!" (3265-67)

More subtle is the use of the 'k' sound between lines 3233 and 3244, in words like 'silk', 'clooth', 'eek', 'milk', 'coler', 'col-blak', 'sikerly', 'lierous'; though these sounds fit in with those of some words later in which Alison is most characteristically imaged ('kydde', 'calfe', 'skippe'); the real value of all this, as it were, trellis-work is that we have here a girl, sensuous, earthy, whose description is full of Anglo-Saxon words and bucolic imagery.

What is more natural than for the poet to exploit the alliterative tendency of the English tongue, but to weave patterns of euphony as his instinct prompted him, rather than to enforce the rigid pattern of 'rum, ram, ruf' at which he laughed? (I)

To discuss the other set descriptions in these terms would be repetitive: it need only be said that in this poem Chaucer's genius for appropriate variation of rhythm, sound, and cadence is revealed more continuously than in any other I have examined. Incidentally, whether because of more

(I) Terms used of Alison suggest a country girl, yet she lives in Oxford. Town and country life were much more alike then and people may not have been aware of antithesis.
continuous attention by the poet, or because the tale
demands the use of many monosyllabic 'peasant' words,
often repeated, the sound-effects are used with quite unus-
usual frequency.

(c) Rhetoric and Sentence-structure

The view expressed by J.M. Manly, in his study of
rhetoric in Chaucer, (j) is that by the time of writing of
the "Miller's Tale" the poet had outgrown rhetoric, that
he used its devices only occasionally and as the spirit
moved him. While not dissenting, in the main, from this,
I would think that there is more rhetoric in the tale than
Manly admits. While the memory of the description of
Alison is fresh, it might be as well to take that as a
point of departure. First of all, the whole passage, like
the portraits of Nicholas, and Absolon, is an example
of 'descriptio', the static character sketch which
preceded action in stories told according to the precepts
of the rhetoricians. It is unorthodox in that the writer's
eye wanders from waist to head and face, pauses while he
conveys her freshness and sportiveness in a series of
comparisons, then travels to her purse and shoes, instead
of proceeding according to a plan as laid down by one of
the rhetoricians. The purpose of the passage is just the
same as that of orthodox 'descriptio'; however, and it holds

(j) See Table in Appendix A, for sound-effects. On rhetoric
v.J.M. Manly, "Ch. and the Rhetoricians" (Brit.
Academy Lecture 1926).
up the action just as much. We do not object, because it is so delightful in itself, and because the overall impression of sensuality and skittishness is just what her subsequent action requires.

Within the description there are several examples of rhetorical figures: 'interpretatio' in "So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche" (3254) or in the repetition of Cato’s precept in the following line:

"That bad man sholde wedde his simylitude. Men sholde wedden after hir estaat" (3228-29)
The next after this is a 'sententia':

"For youthe and elde is often at debaat" (3230)
and later follow examples of various kinds of repetition, such as

"......broyden al bifoore
And eek bihynde....... (3238-39)
......within and eek withoute" (3240)
or "As any swalwe" (3258) followed by, "As any kyde" (3260), and the ending might be deemed a 'conclusio'. Nor is this all, for several more lines begin alike, and the series of comparisons are phrased so alike as, perhaps accidentally, to look like examples of 'conversio'. Already, in this passage alone, the number of lines manifesting rhetorical devices is greater than Manly's figure of one percent would allow for the entire tale. At the same time, these are only an element, one of the means of giving a sense of unity to a deliberately random piece of writing: Chaucer
rules them, not they him. The chief unity here is one of
colour and impression, black and white colour; sweet body
and untamed senses.

To these examples of rhetorical ornament must be
added one or two more such as the line which introduces
the first action (after eighty lines of preliminary de­
scription):

"Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the cas", (3271)
perhaps a hint of the drunken Miller, or perhaps intended
to show him turning his head from one to another of his
audience, but an example of 'repetitio' at any rate. The
'love-scene' that follows is full of rhetorical devices such
as 'traductio', (K) 'repetitio', (L) 'interpretatio', (M)

It could be that the poet used the devices uncon­
sciously, for any good writing demands some kind of pattern,
or it could be that he feels it appropriate to use them
in a scene conveying a deliberate antithesis to 'fyn
lovyng'.

Certainly rhetorical figures form a large element in
the account of Absalon's wooing, surely a burlesque of
chivalric courtship. It is short enough to quote in full.

"Fro day to day this joly Absolon
So woweth hire that hym is wo bigon.
He waketh al the nyght and al the day;
(K) 'for deerne love' (3278), 'ben ful deerne' (3297).
(L) 'lat be ...lat be' Nicholas' (3285).
(M) 'ben privee'...'ben ful deerne' (3295, 3297), 'I
spille...I wol dyen' (3278, 3281).
He kembeth his lokkes brode, and made hym gay;
He woweth hire by meenes and brocage,
And swoor he wolde been hir owene page;
He syngeth, brokkynge as a nightyncle;
He sente hir pyment, meeth and spiced ale,
And waftres, pypynge hoot out of the gleede;
And, for she was of towne, he profred meed.
For som folk wol ben women for richesse,
And somme for strokes, and somme for gentillesse.
Somtyme, to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye,
He pleeyeth Herodes upon a scaffold hye.
But what availleth hym as in this cas?
She lovethe so this hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horn:
He ne hadde for his labour but a scorn.
And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape,
And al his ernest turneth til a jape.
Pul sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,
Men seyn right thus, "Alwye the nye slye
Maketh the ferre leeve to be looth."
For though that Absolon be wood or wrooth,
By cause that he fer was from hire sighte
This nye Nicholas stood in his light." (3371-96)

Rhetoric is here adapted to the purpose of ridicule. The numerous verbs preceded by 'He' at the beginning, and the repetitions of 'He woweth' convey the feeling of a courtship which is frantic and extravagant. Then there are the balanced phrases in the third line, an example perhaps of 'adnominatio' in the use of 'brocage' and 'brokkynge', then more balanced phrases in the mock-serious 'somme for strokes and some for gentillese', and finally a rhetorical question, a proverb and its application to close. The lines remain endurably entertaining because rhetoric is used to make fun of a human attitude, of extravagant and unrequited affection, and not to make fun of itself. (N)

(N) Craik, op. cit., p. 89, comment on 'Sir Thopas'.
We have not exhausted the fund of rhetoric in the Tale, but it is important to keep a sense of proportion; the figures employed are always brief, never used as mere mannerisms and their use is clearly related to the purpose of the passage concerned. They are, in fact, so subordinated to the writer's purposes that a reader can fail to notice their presence. This, I feel, has sometimes happened, that it could, is a tribute to what Chaucer has achieved since his earlier poems. He had not abandoned the medieval conventions, not even the static personal description (more in evidence here than in the "Knight's Tale" or "Troilus and Criseyde") but had subdued them to his purpose. The touchstone of a major artist is the ability to fashion all the materials available to suit his end.

As already suggested, we can make no assumptions about the possible effect upon an audience of hearing particular kinds of sentences. However, the author shows great skill in varying his utterance according to his immediate aim. Needless to say, the skill is Chaucer's, not the Miller's. In no scene is this aspect of the author's art more apparent than in the one in which John interrupts Nicholas' 'trance' and listens to his prophecy.

First of all, John's comments, on hearing of the 'trance', consist of a series of short, random exclamations and statements as appropriate to a 'lewed man' in a panic as is the verbal slip 'astromye'. These begin at:

".....Help us, seinte Frydeswyde!  
A man woot litel what hym shal bityde."
This man is falle, with his astromye,
In some woodnesse or in som agonye.
I thoghte ay wel how that it sholde be!
Men sholde nat knowe of Goddes pryvete.
Ye, blessed be alway a lewed man
That nought but oonly his bileve kan!" (3449-56)

Though the following lines, illustrating the fate of the
clerk distracted by 'astromye' from looking where he is
going, are printed as one sentence, they could be said as
three:

"So ferde another clerk with astromye;
He walked in the feeldes, for to prye
Upon the sterres, what the sholde bifalle;
Til he was in a marble-pit yfalle;
He saugh nat that." (3457-61)

After this he continues to speak jerkily until the 'nyght-
spel', a four-line nonsense-rhyme. During the awaking
both he and Nicholas speak in brief questions and exclam­
ations, as the urgency of the situation would warrant.

A more fluent style is adopted as John brings back
the ale, the series of 'and's' being appropriate to the
series of simple actions:

"This carpenter goth doun, and comth ageyn,
And broghte of myghty ale a large quart;
And whan that eah of hem had dronke his part,
This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
And doun the carpenter by hym he sette." (3496-3500)

The style becomes noticeably more fluent still as Nicholas
addresses John, though the syntax is still suitable for
an educated man speaking to an uneducated one so that the
latter may be at once impressed and informed:

"... John, myn hooste, lief and deere,
Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me beers..."
That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye;
For it is Cristes conseil that I seye,
And if thou telle it man, thou art forlore;
For this vengeaunce thou shalt han therfore,
That if thou wreye me, thou shalt be wood." (3501-07)

Here the opening command is followed quite logically by
the reason for obedience and the consequences of disobedience. In passing, one notices the aptness of the penalty
mentioned, madness being feared by the ignorant and superstitious, as well as King Lear and Lady Macbeth.

The carpenter fairly splutters out his short, random
sentences in reply and then Nicholas again speaks in a
style appropriate to an educated man: this time in a
complex sentence rising to a suitably frightening climax:

"I have yfounde in myn astrologye,
As I have looked in the moone bright,
That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and wood,
That half so gree twas nevere Noe's flood." (3514-18)

He continues in simple sentences, but it is this one which,
one feels, is really intended to engage the carpenter's
attention.

John's reply is couched in brief, agitated sentences
of exclamation and question, after which Nicholas con­tinues in his fluent, expository style, throwing in a 'sen­
tence' from Solomon. His first suggestions as to a course
of action are conveyed in what might be called 'persuasive
rhetorical questions', such as:

"Hastow nat herd hou saved was Noe,
Whan that our Lord hadde warned hym hiforn
That al the world with water sholde be lorn?" (3534-36)

This series concludes in the brief, urgent

"And therfore, woostou what is best to doone?" (3444)

The actual instruction comes in a quite long sentence of
which the parenthesis 'but looke that they be large' is
remarkably true to life, being an emphatic development
from what has just been said in a normal tone. Very
clever too is the association of speaker and listener in
"go gete us" and 'for ech of us':

"Anon go gete us faste into this in
A knedying tough, or ellis a kymelyn,
For ech of us, but looke that they be large,
In whichwe mowe swymme as in a barge,
And han therinne vitaille suffisant
But for a day - fy on the remenant."

(3547-52)

The last half-line is, presumably, a line-filler.

The next few lines, on the impossibility of saving
servants and the uselessness of asking questions, are
delivered in brief, scrappy sentences, which one imagines
as spoken with voice upraised and speech quickened so as to
override John's incipient inquiry. These end with "Go
now thy way, and spede thee heeraboute" (3562), after which
John is presumably half-way out of the door when he is
held by further instructions. These are brilliantly con-
veyed, in long sentences held together by the repeated
'Whan that' (P) which each time detains the anxious John

I doubt any allusion to N.T. precept 'take no thought
for the morrow'.

cf. PCT 1-18.
a little longer. The instructions are followed by a series of promises of triumph, each beginning 'Thanne' (more 'repititio'). In one of the promises Nicholas might conceivably be imitating his hearer's style of speaking.

"But whan thou hast, for hire and thee and me,
Ygeten us thise knedyng tubbes thre,
Thanne shaltow hange hem in the roof ful hye,
That no man of oure purveiaunce spye.
And whan thou thus hast doon, as I have seyd,
And hast oure vitaille faire in hem yleyd,
And eek an ax, to smyte the corde atwo,

Whan That the water comth, that we may go,
And broke an hole an heigh, upon the gable,
Unto the gardyn-ward, over the stable,
That we may frely passen forth oure way,
Whan that the grete shour is goon away,
Thanne shaltou swymme as myrie, I undertake,
As dooth the white doke after hire drake.
Thanne wol I clepe, 'How, Alison! How, John!' (3563-82)
'Good morwe, I se thee wel, for it is day,'
And thanne shal we be lorde al oure lyf!
Of all the world, as Noe and his wyf."

As instructions, it must be admitted, these are none too clear, for the very long parenthesis from "Whan thou thus hast doon" to "grete shour is goon away" would be bound to confuse a simple listener. It is difficult to say with complete confidence whether this is involuntary, for Chaucer does sometimes blur his sentences with parentheses, or whether whether it is meant to increase the humour of the scene, by conjuring up a picture of a terrified John listening to rambling instructions knowing that his life depends upon obedience, instructions which he is never intended to carry out in full. Certainly it is laughable
that Nicholas should so often tell him to go before carrying on with more instructions.

Certainly, also, the long instructions just quoted could not have been written without Chaucer's training in rhetoric; though not strictly in the tradition they are a development from it.

(d) Vocabulary and Imagery

In a story so dependent for its humour upon the antithesis between the sophistication of the clerk and the stupidity of the superstitious carpenter whom he beguiles, it is not surprising that the differing idiom and vocabulary of the next two orders of speech should play an important part. From the beginning one notices not only stock epithets, 'hende Nicholas', 'joly Absolon', but expressions one has seen elsewhere in Chaucer. Apart from the famous "Allone, withouten any compaignye!" (3204) there is 'syn day began to sprynge' (3674) and dancing 'after the scole of Oxenforde (3329). These alone, surely, would be enough to prove the narrator to be Chaucer, rather than the Miller. (Q)

Though not many idioms and proverbs are used in the story, what there are tend to impart a bucolic English flavour to it. The Carpenter's saying

"Blessed alwey be a lewed man
That noght but oonly his bileve kan" (3455-56)

(Q) cf. respectively KT 2779, PCT 822 and 125.
the oaths by Saxon saints, St. Frydeswyde (3449, 3462) or St. Neot, (3771) Alison's "Go fro the wyndow, Jakke fool" (3708) and "...it wol nat be com pa me," and the final catastrophe, with John's finding "neither to selle... breed ne ale" (3822) until he hit the floor, are among the examples of racy idiom. There is in some of the wording a hint of the carnival or saturnalia; one thinks of the "revel and the melodye" of the love-making. Perhaps in a religious age illicit love is made gleefully, rather than squalidly.

One of the clearest signs of the Tale's kinship to the General Prologue is the use of patterns of verbal repetition and cross-reference. Repetition, as indicated previously, is most elaborate in the description of Alison and the first courtship of Absalon. In the description such repetition as is not rhetorical is designed firstly to establish the motif of black and white in the girl's clothes, the blackness of her collar, and the tapes of her cap (R) and the whiteness of her cap and smock. (S) Secondly the number of references to silken clothes and accoutrements (T) gives some idea of delicacy, or luxury perhaps, in outward appearance, much at odds with her headstrong character and coarse speech. This is confirmed by the references to the smallness of her body and

(R) 32, 3239, 3240, 3242, 3265.
(S) 3236, 3238, 3241.
(T) 3235, 3240, 3243, 3251.
brows(U). In Absolon's wooing the key word is "sweete", as in "sweete Alison" (3698), and "sweete cynamome" (3699), the suggestion reinforced by his addressing her as "honycomb" (3698). In our day these expressions would cloy, but even then the imagery of honey and spice must have suggested artificiaility and excessive delicacy, rather amusingly at odds with his frequent references in the same passage to sweating.

In the same passage occur two of the verbal cross-references, Absolon's eating "na moore than a mayde" (3707), and his calling Alison "lemman" (3700); Nicholas is "lyk a mayden meke for to see" (3202) and, of course, addresses her as "lemman" in a very different courtship. The first reference is perhaps accidental, the second obviously deliberately ironic. The two chief cross-references, however, occur in the repeated uses of the words "curteisy" and "pryvetee" and its derivatives. The Miller's refusal to wait his turn to speak "for his curteisy" (3123) refers back, very possibly, to the Knight who has just finished, and to the Squire, setting the coarser character in opposition to the gentlemen. The "curteisy" (3287) to which Alison appeals in telling Nicholas to take away his hands is an appearance which prevents Absolon from receiving offerings from the parish wives "for curteisy" because of his longing for love (3349-51). The word first appears (U) 3234, 3245.
in the 'Romaunt of the Rose', used of Fair-Welcome who is not unlike Alison, but it is not elsewhere used ironically, (except for the use of 'curteys' in the portrait of the Friar). More frequent is the use of "pryvee" or "pryvetee", from the Miller's saying that a man

"...shal nat been inquisityf
Of Goddes pryvetee, ne of his why" (3162-63)
to John's saying a man should not inquire into "Goddes pryvetee" (3454) and Nicholas refusing to disclose "Goddes pryvetee", (3458), then doing so, and John's telling his wife "his pryvetee", (3603) though she already knows it. Next, John "pryvely" sends a trough and tub to hang "in pryvetee". (3622-3) Finally, Nicholas is urged by Alison to be "pryvee" in love-making, (3294) and later "pryvely" puts out his buttocks. Thus different episodes are linked. This word has two senses elsewhere in Chaucer, inner thoughts, especially if unworthy to be known, and private parts of the body. Like 'curteisye' it goes back to the 'Romaunt', being used there in Nicholas' sense of not being seen kissing. (W) In Chaucer's beginning was his end. Incidentally, one wonders whether the word 'pryvee', for 'discreet' or 'secret' is used here of sensual lower-class love, instead of the expressions used in "Troilus and Criseyde" and the "Nun's Priest's Tale". (X)

(V) RR 2985 (not by Ch.) is most specific ref.
(W) RR 1294.
(X) NPT 2915. The word may simply offer an opportunity to make an unsavoury pun.
This thought is prompted by the way in which the double vocabulary of English is used according to the character being portrayed. Nicholas' attainments, his knowledge and musical skill, are conveyed in Romance words, 'scoler', 'art', 'fantasye', 'interrogacioouns', 'melodye', but his person is described in Anglo-Saxon terms, 'sweete', 'lyk a may den meke', 'ydight with herbes'. In his love-making, as will be remembered, he used the blunt terms of Anglo-Saxon speech. Thus emerges the picture of the clerk's mind and the cruder and simpler instincts. Absalon is described in Romance words, 'amorous, jolif, 'gentil' while his actions 'woweth', 'kembeth', 'syngeth' are from Anglo-Saxon. The double vocabulary is exploited very skilfully in the description of Alison. The details of her body are largely Anglo-Saxon, 'lendes', 'brow', 'eye', but her clothing a mixture of the native 'barinclooth' or 'smok' with the Romance 'filet,' 'voluper', 'ceynt'. The imagery is full of Anglo-Saxon terms for animals and fruit. Thus we have a girl mainly earthy, peasant, with a slight touch of refinement, or would-be refinement, in her clothes.

At the climaxes the words for the grosser actions are, as might be expected, Anglo-Saxon. Those used of Absalon are among the most interesting. He 'rubbeth' his lips, and wishes 'awroken for to be'. He seems to renounce not only courtly love but its jargon, for we are told:

"Of paramours he sette nat a curs;"
For he was heled of his maladie.
Ful ofte paramours he gan deffie..." (3756-58)

Later, as he stands outside the window for the last time, he speaks without using anything but peasant terms of endearment, addressing his "sweete leef" as "my deerelyng" and using monosyllabic terms about the ring and his wish to kiss her. It may be here, that we are to concentrate on his passion, which so provokes Nicholas, rather than on any affected expression. (^Y)

Character is, of course, created more directly by the themes running through the vocabulary used about the person concerned. Thus of Alison some words used suggest exquisiteness ('fair', 'gent', 'smal', 'softe'), some vulgarity ('wenche', 'brooch broodas bokeler', 'popelote', 'loude song' and a number wildness or even animality.

The groups of words used of two characters may help to differentiate them. The words used of Nicholas' wooing suggest the contradiction in his character; his being at once 'subtle' and 'queynte' goes with his clerkly rank, but his holding Alison by the 'haunche-bon' and the 'queynte' (genital region) conveys a crude sensuality that belies it. Absalgon, by contrast, is described in words suggesting daintiness and fastidiousness: 'smal', properly dressed', hair that 'shone golde', 'a myrie child', who could

(Y) Dr. Craik's suggestion, with which I agree, without feeling that the repetition of so many terms can be accidental. Hatred and renunciation of the attempt to make love in a knightly way would go together.
'trippe and daunce', 'pleye', 'sing' and was 'squamous' of what does not seem to embarrass Nicholas. His colours, the red fresh complexion, gold hair, light blue kirtle and white surplice fit in also with the general impression of a rather boyish would-be gentleman, as much an exaggeration as Nicholas is a contradiction.

The apparent contradiction in the terms used in the account of Nicholas' and Alison's love-making adds a kind of unspoken ironic comment. On the one hand there is silence, Nicholas 'stalketh', Alison comes 'softe adoun' and they fall to 'withouten wordes mo'; on the other hand music, 'revel and melodye', till the 'laudes belle' and the 'freres synge'. Music and worship without, silent sensuality within, the contrast emphasized, rather than softened, by the metaphorical expression of sensual pleasure in terms of the music of carnival rather than worship. A more tenuous contradiction is that between the over-sweet terms used by Absolon in his serenades and the grossness of 'risen for to pisse', and all the details of buttocks and haunch-bones. The comedy is largely one of the incongruity between two forms of excess, and is contributed to by the wording.

Some incidental humour is conveyed in such an ambiguous sentence as "Thy wyf and the most hange fer atwynne" (3589), which means:

(i) the two literally will be apart for the night;
they will be further apart than the Carpenter thinks, as Alison will be in bed with Nicholas.

The patterns of imagery of fruit, flowers and animals in the description of Alison need no further exposition. This description has the heaviest concentration of images in the tale. The ones elsewhere are on the themes of travel and entertainment, in the Miller's Prologue ('the game wel bigonne' 3117, 'unbokeled is the male' 3115, and 'Pilates voys' suggesting mystery plays 3124), of plants (Absolon's surplice white as blossom on twig 3324) of birds and insects (Nicholas swimming as happily as white duck after drake 3576, Absolon calling his 'fayre bryd' 3699, of animals (Asolon mourning as lamb after the teat 3704) and finally of fire (Absolon's 'hot love' being 'cold' and 'yqueynt' 3754). The last image may carry an appropriate reference to the smith's forge from which Absolon borrows the weapon for revenge. There may also be an oblique reference to a commonplace expression in Chaucer's earlier love-poetry and that of the courtly love poets before him, in Absolon's being 'heeled of his maladie' of loving Alison (3757), his love being a 'reduction ad absurdum' of chivalric adoration.

What I am trying to suggest by these examples is that in various ways the imagery provides a suitably peasant background for this tale of pagan sensuality on the one hand and ludicrous courtship on the other. It also, however, is woven into the very texture of the
characters of the two human beings behaving like satyrs, in the references to plants and lawless animals in Alison's portrait, or to the grosser features of the body, in Nicholas' wooing. The descent of human beings to the level of the natural world around them is laughable, and not tragic, because religion is present only as the ignorant superstition of the Carpenter, or as the routine of the friars (contrasting with the 'revel and melodye' within) and the civilized tradition of courtship is represented only by the absurd delicacy and effeminacy of Absolon. Moreover, the only philosopher in the tale is the chief celebrant in this pagan rite of love, and he uses his learning only to mislead the husband and create his opportunity for sensuality.

One of the most interesting features of the poem is the repeated reference to the Moon; Absolon serenades in its light (3352); Nicholas looks entranced as though he had "kiked on the newe moone" (3445), and says he has looked into the "moone bryght" (3515) for his 'revelation'. To this we may add the pitch darkness of the dawn in which Absolon has both insult and revenge. We must beware of expecting from Chaucer the significance a writer such as Hardy, versed in the Greek classics, would have given it. Some idea of it as being associated with madness and prophecy seems implied in the two references to Nicholas. Its presence at Absolon's serenade and
absence at the climax may be associated with his illusion and disillusionment respectively. There are not enough parallels in Chaucer, however, for certainty in the matter.

(e) **Comparison with 'Knight's Tale'**

Stylistically, the 'Miller's Prologue and Tale' would seem to have most in common with the 'General Prologue'. The object of comparing it with the 'Knight's Tale' is to try to show the changes in style between the first poem Chaucer wrote in heroic couplets and a mature example.

(i) **Couplets**

The difference between the proportions of closed couplets in the passages of the poems tested was not large enough to be worth discussing. The stichomythic couplet rare in the 'Knight' is almost non-existent in the 'Miller', reflecting the more naturalistic dialogue. The couplet embodying a 'conclusio' or 'sententia' is found only perhaps in the lines on youth and age. In a poem whose subject-matter lends itself so much less to reflective verse than does the 'Knight's Tale', this is not surprising. The formal modulation by means of a closed couplet occurs only once in the 'Miller's Prologue and Tale', indeed, the author intrudes less than usual, transitions

(AA) $KT \ 23.\ 44\%$, $M\ Prl.T.\ 20.48\%$

(AB) 3227-8.

(AC) 3397-8.

(Z) Esp. in sentences and wording, See above, pp. 328, 330-2.
being managed with a quiet adroitness rarely found in narrative verse. The conscious modulation through a split couplet is rarer here, too. The closed couplet, in general, fulfils a specific function, to convey a single image, a thought, a staccato impression, or its presence or absence may mark off one description from another. One is more aware of its employment for a definite purpose than in the 'Knight'.

The verse-paragraph comes into use as the 'Knight's Tale' proceeds, but is, naturally, early in evidence in the 'Miller's Tale', in which in any case the paragraphs are longer, as well as being essential to the creation of the spirit and tone of the narrative passage in which they are employed, Nicholas' wooing, or the fall of the barrel.

Single lines are used with great skill in some parts of the 'Knight's Tale' to create such effects as the confusion of the battle. In the 'Miller's Tale' they are used to control speed, a requirement hardly paralleled in the earlier tale, static as it usually is. Examples of clumsy lines and 'fill-up's are rarer.

In general, the metrical form may be said to be handled in the later tale with the skill not greater, but more uniform. Variation is more constant and more appropriate to the needs of the narrative.

(AD) See above, p. 249.
(ii) **Rhythms and Sounds**

The percentage of run-on lines (9.5%) is about a third larger in the 'Miller' than in the "Knight" (7%), though itself very much smaller than in the 'Parlement of Fowles'. This proportion varies greatly from one section to another so that no great importance can be attached to the total proportion. The general tendency of Chaucer's later verse is towards an apparent randomness resulting in self-contained lines and couplets, which are in evidence in some parts of this tale. By the time of writing of the 'General Prologue' the poet had begun to think in single lines.

Comparison of the dialogue of the two poems is difficult, as their whole spirit is so different. The grave reflections of Theseus, for example, find no echo here unless in the Carpenter's after the 'prophecy'. Rhythmic variation between one speaker and another is, of course, equally noticeable, though it is achieved more by the position of the caesura than by formal alternation of stopped and unstopped lines. This point should not be over-stressed, as some parts of the 'Knight's Tale' show great skill in this respect. While there are no rhythms quite so arresting in the latter poem as those of the battle scene, or so haunting as those of Arcite's

(AF) v. Appendix B.

(AG) See above, p. 268, 292.
dying speech and the lamentation thereafter, there are no flat or monotonous stretches. This is in keeping with the greater swiftness and concentration of the whole poem, for in the last phase of Chaucer's literary career the wasted, empty or verbose passage is rare indeed. The subject-matter of the 'Miller's Tale', while requiring skill, dexterity and constant variation, does not lend itself to the spectacular or the sublime.

(iii) Rhetoric and Sentence-structure.

The difference immediately apparent is that, while the 'Miller's Tale' is by no means so free of rhetorical device as has been supposed, the devices are used more quietly and less frequently and blend more into the texture of the verse, as though Chaucer was here hardly conscious of them. Certainly there are no such tours-de-force as the long 'occupatio' of Arcite's funeral.

Nor are there the 'framing' devices apparent both in the 'Troilus' and the 'Knight's Tale'. Words recur, indeed, such as 'pryvetee'; there are allusions, such as 'Allone, withouten any compaignye', amusing if one thinks of the very different characters and circumstances of Nicholas and Arcite, but the 'framing' device has gone with the desire to write the pageant-like with its separate tableaux. A tale so swift and unified as the Miller's needs no such embellishments. The connections are verbal or visual, such (AH) See above, PP. 193, 262.
as the recurrence of the Moon.

In both poems characters differentiated by their manners of speech, the sentences they use. If the speech of Palamon and Arcite is not always self-consistent, the amount of dialogue in the 'Miller's Tale' is hardly great enough for the characters not to be self-consistent. The sentence-structure of the comic poem is, however, always directly linked to the kind of entertainment aimed at, whereas in the funeral 'occupatio', for example, the long sentence draws attention more to itself than its object. The tendency towards occasional confusion has not always been overcome, but perhaps nowhere else in so short a poem is such a variety of types of sentence employed.

(iv) Wording and Imagery

Comparison here is really very difficult, as the 'Knight's Tale' has no personal descriptions comparable to that of Alison, no characters so opposed in nature as Nicholas and Absolon, nor any so contradictory as Nicholas. The 'Miller's Tale', on the other hand, has no battle scene, no spring morning in the grove and, on the whole, less varied entertainment to offer. It has indeed the same flavour of the country, conveyed not through direct description but through the imagery used of Alison. The terms of courtly love, where used, are mocked.

The only valid comparison are as follows. The verbal patterns in the 'Knight's Tale', are within a passage\(^{(AI)}\)

\(^{(AI)}\) See above, pp. 276, 280, 284, 294.
in the Miller's they are recurrences of words throughout, as in the 'General Prologue' (though they are less numerous here or within a passage, as in the portrait of Alison. Thus, again, the greater unity of the poem. Imagery is used more consciously to fit into the total scheme of the poem, whereas in the 'Knight's Tale' it might fit rather a particular setting, the grove, garden or temple. No images used in the later poem give the impression of having been imported from outside the world of the tale, as do all the mythological references in the temple scenes. Finally, though in both poems the double vocabulary is brilliantly exploited, its exploitation in the 'Miller's Tale' is not calculated to produce any such special effects as in the battle scene, but is unobtrusive and designed to build up the total impression of a character or episode, as in the contrast between the words used for Nicholas' mind and actions, or that between Absolon's wooing, and Alison's reply.

The difference, in a nutshell, between the two tales is that that of the 'Miller's Tale' is less striking but more unified and more assimilated to the subject-matter. This difference is the result not only of experience but of the other, and less varied demands of the subject matter itself.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

This study began in the realisation that Chaucer was an accomplished craftsman in words and rhythms whose poetry had, as such, been little discussed and criticized before the present generation of Chaucerians. Perhaps not until the modern fashion for rigorous verbal analysis had been set by Richards was it possible to ask the questions that Chaucer's verse could answer, though the present movement away from the poetry of metaphor and towards the poetry of statement would conduce to the appreciation of what our poet has supremely to offer. We began by asking what the essence of the Chaucerian note was, by asking, since so many had concentrated on the poet's subject-matter, what the relationship was between subject-matter and style. When we were bored, or delighted, by Chaucer, in what proportion were we reacting to what was said and to how it was said? Most of all, this study began in the hope of tracing the process by which so rich a talent had matured, and how a poet so derivative could be so apparently original. Though the task proved very large for the available time and resources, I hope that what has been done may have some value as at least an additional sounding or bore-hole.

To me, the labour has been worth-while not only because it has enhanced my respect for Chaucer's poetic
intelligence, but because it has revealed the need for a
new aesthetic, if we are to judge him by the criteria I
believe to have been his own. The enquiry, though begun in
the wish for a more sceptical and discriminating attitude
towards a poet who has had more than his share of vague
approval, has left me with the feeling that a new humility
was needed. After all, we are dealing with a poet of
immense creative energy, one who has not unjustly been
compared to Bach for intelligence and complexity, one who
could also be compared to Picasso for his fecundity. The
man who could write "Troilus and Criseyde" while holding
an important administrative post does not need our patronage.
Sometimes, one feels, the very proper study of his age and
sources may end in his being seen not as the child but as
the prisoner of his time. One has not disposed of the force
and originality of a work of art by tracing its humble
beginnings in either the unconscious or in tradition. We
are perhaps in danger of assuming that Chaucer had no more
to say than had Machaut or de Lorris, or the gargoyles-carvers.

Such an assumption would only be valid if we could
ignore the universal reference of even some minor poems, the
implication of the "Book of the Duchess", for example, that
without love we are nothing, not to mention the terrifying
vision of man living as though there were no God which is
implicit in the series of Biblical echoes in the "Pardoner's
Tale", or the implications of the "Nun's Priest's Tale" of
the need of other-love rather than self-love, or of the need of proper prudence and humility. The poet's originality lies not in the newness of the things said but in the means by which, and the intensity with which, we are made to draw them from the experience to which the poet compels our attention. The imaginary life of the work of art turns out to have enduring relevance to the real life of which it is both a criticism and a distillation.

In this day of the cult of teenage love, the experience of false felicity through which we have lived with Troilus must sharpen awareness both of the inner world of the lovers and of the inexorable demands of life outside the enchanted garden. Where one feels that some of the sterner interpreters of Chaucer err is in giving too little weight to his awareness of the ecstasy of romantic love: he was as sympathetically aware of Troilus' 'blisse' as he was ironically aware that Fortune, and society, would take it from him. Similarly, it is possible that some commentators perceive the folly of Chanticleer or January but underrate the humour of its exposure or the intense vitality with which, for example, January sitting up in bed is imaged and described. The Chaucer of the great poems of his maturity is rarely a dogmatist: deeply Christian though the admiration for the Knight and Parson, or the values implicitly in the "Franklin's Tale", show him to be, his imagination is large enough to include the most intense perception of the urgency
of desire or ambition. Never unkind to the simple and sincere, nor contemptuous of wholesome affection, this master-poet of love does the lecher the courtesy of letting him speak for himself.

Grant Chaucer the gifts of almost inexhaustible fecundity, of that 'negative capability' which enabled him to attend to so much of his experience, grant him a massive sanity and good humour and we have not touched upon the essentials of his craftsmanship. Others have had such qualities without producing works to outlast the civilization that has nurtured them. The gift that most obviously sets him above those lesser poets with whom some commentators come perilously near to equating him is, in Coleridgean terms, the shaping and unifying power of the imagination. When this power is not operative, the verse palls on us, the rhythm may be flat, or the wording trite or abstract. Sometimes he treats a subject unworthy of him, so that the poem never comes to life. Such is the case with the "Man of Law's Tale": the story is a melodrama, the style correspondingly monotonous. Perhaps in "Anelida and Arcite" alone is he capable of producing, like Paganini, a set of variations and cadenzas which leave us admiring, dazzled even, but quite unmoved. In general, the story of his growth as a poet, as far as uncertainties over dating enable us to trace it, is chiefly that of an increasing consistency in operation of this unifying energy.
In general, too, there is a growth in judgement. Often enough in the early poems, he misapplies his skill in rhythm or phraseology, and may do so even in the great works of his middle period, such as the "Knight's Tale", but rarely indeed is there a phrase or rhythm out of place in the "Prologue" or the tales of the Miller, Merchant or Nun's Priest. Sometimes, however, he may come to grief through inability to invent or always to choose subjects offering scope for the drama and ironic comment in which he excels.

He always needed the right situation taken from his reading to set his imagination alight, but almost always transcends his model by extending the story's significance, making it portray and refer to a wider area of human experience. In general, he adds to its complexity, giving it a philosophical dimension and ironic overtone, as in the 'Troilus'. Where he was perhaps original among writers drawing on the French tradition was in becoming increasingly instinctive when the tendency was to be deliberate, writing according to rules. This is not to say that he ever really ceased to have an observable structure in his poems, but that this became less important than a sub-structure created largely, one would think, by a process as different from formal planning as an artist's pencilled lines are from a draughtsman's.
The kind of development in mind is illustrated by the difference between the complex but formal plan of the "Book of the Duchess" and that of "Troilus and Criseyde", in which, though the story has a clear outer framework, there is an inner structure; the replacement of imagery and lyricism by rhetoric and moralising. The inner structure of the "Miller's Tale" is the repetition of several key words, such as 'pryvetee', in different contexts, that of the "Nun's Priest's Tale" the repetition of 'herte', 'drede' and their synonyms, but also a contrast of colour between the Widow's plain ones, the brilliant ones of Chantecleer and the Fox's red and black. In the "Pardoner's Tale" it is a strain of religious references indicative of blasphemy and sacrilege avenged by an inscrutable deity who is not mocked, but the tension and terror is largely created also by the constant acceleration of the events until with fearful speed the three sinners are swept away. That of the "Franklin's Tale" may well be an ironic contrast between the "burel man" who despises "colours of rethorik" and the rhetoric he so constantly uses. The outer framework of the poems of the mature Chaucer might therefore be seen without special attention to language, but the inner structure demands for its perception a close attention to words, sentence-structure or imagery.

As the 'Troilus' marks a half-way stage in the transition from deliberate to instinctive construction, so
it is, I think, the summit of his achievement, being the work in which all sides of his complex nature most perfectly meet and blend. Here passion and idealism, most evident in the imagery, meet and are overcome by reality; here lyricism is balanced by irony and rhetoric; here love is in the same moment physical, passionate and spiritual, the poet having both the young man's intense absorption in the present and the middle-aged one's disillusioned awareness of the transience of ecstasy. Thereafter, kindly though he be, the middle-aged man predominates, the vision of life being predominantly comic and ironic.

Chaucer's imagination, like Shakespeare's, seems to take on a different quality according to the demands of the plot or situation. The "Knight's Tale" like any other pageant, abounds in visual pictures, brilliant colours, stately processions, statuesque scenes, while the 'Troilus' is at first full of conversation, serious or witty, then of bird-haunted dusk, dreams and the fulfilment of love, finally of cold speech-making and insincerity on the one side, of desolation, the empty house, the crumbling kingdom on the other. In the "Pardoner's Tale" we are aware of allegorical figures etched out in the sharp black-and-white of a Durer engraving, in the " Summoner's Tale" of a grotesque vision of crawling figures such as Hieronymus Bosch might have portrayed, in the "Merchant's Tale" of the grotesqueness
of age, the folds in the skin, and of the "fresshe leves grene" among which young lust is being fulfilled. Perhaps more than anyone else he is the poet of colour, of the visual imagination. There is scarcely one of his major poems that does not leave in the mind a predominant colour or contrast, the black and white of Alison, the red and black of the Fox, or the contrasting figures of the plain Knight and embroidered Squire.

Perhaps more in his rhetoric than in any other feature of his art we see the transition from conscious, deliberate, perhaps mechanical, writing to instinctive writing. There is a world of difference between the strings of pointless repetitions in the "House of Fame" and the use of rhetorical figures as occasion demands in the later poems, for purposes of characterization in the "Pardoner's Prologue", or of mockery in the "Mun's Priest's Tale", or of expressing piety in the "Prioress's Prologue and Tale". In the meantime, Chaucer had not abandoned rhetoric but subdued its use to his total conception. Though he made fun of it, he was influenced throughout his career by the discipline of his training therein.

His originality is most apparent in his use of words. Though the use of idioms and proverbs from common speech or else from his reading can be traced to a rhetorical tradition, the use he made of the double vocabulary of
English, as though instinctively aware of the scope of this hybrid tongue, is surely one of the chief marks of his genius. In poem after poem, following the initial uneasy use of the two vocabularies side by side in the "Book of the Duchess", one sees them adapted to the needs of his tale, supremely perhaps in the love-scene in "Troilus and Criseyde".

We are on less safe ground in discussing his skill in rhythm and metre, but from the first he is aware of the dramatic possibilities of the iambic line and of how to control its speed. Often the parallelism of rhetorical utterance is reinforced by parallel rhythms. Behind drama and emotion there will often lie a superb use of shifting caesure or of enjambement, not indeed the cause of the drama or emotion, but its manifestation. Where his imaginative awareness of the needs of a situation prompts him, he summons up the rhythmic resource required: where imagination fails, rhythm declines into metre. Often his casualness and ease, or his infinite variety of expression, can be traced to his mastery of the permutations of couplet and line-form.

What I hope chiefly to have shown in this study, however, is the need of a new way of reading Chaucer. Now that we are moving into an age of spoken or recorded poetry, now that the spoken word is beginning to return to its
medieval predominance over the written word, we need a new awareness of the oral possibilities of Chaucer's verse. Here is a writer infinitely aware of the contours of the human voice, a writer who can create two entirely different characters in a few lines by making one use questions and exclamations and the other plain statements. A dramatist born out of time, he has few superiors in catching the nuances of the voice of, for example, Nature addressing different listeners in the "Parliament of Fowls", or the Fox soothing away Chanticleer's fear in the "Nun's Priest's Tale". Most of all, perhaps, his ear for speech is demonstrated in the Links in the "Canterbury Tales". One wonders whether he might not have been a much poorer and narrower writer but for the experience gained in his diplomatic work of the tones in which men persuade each other, or the way in which voices and speech-rhythms change as a quarrel flares up. This ear for speech, above all, is what establishes his character as one who wrote from life, not merely from literature. From the "Roman de la Rose" he could learn how to vary sentence-structure, but only from learning listening to many men of different classes and characteristics could he have learned his marvellous facility in dialogue. This, I believe, is what the aspect of Chaucer's art which the literary public of the next generation may be most ready to appreciate.

FINIS
ADDITIONAL NOTES

(1) Page 13

"This wenche thikke and wel ygrowen was,
With kamus nose, and eyen greye as glas,
With buttokes brode, and brestes rounde and hye;
But right fair was hire heer, I wol nat lye."

("Reeve's Tale" 3973-6)

(2) Page 14

"En temps d'este, our mois de may,
Je qui bien par amour amay,
Pris aux oiseles mout d'esbas
Et tant alai et hault et bas,
Que je vins dessus un ruissiel
Ou il avoit maint arbrissiel.
Moult par estoit le lieu jolis;
Anuelles, rose et lys,
A l'environ d'illuee eroisoient,
Et rosegnol si s'escoisoient
Au chanter d'un assentement,
Qui n'euist eu sentement
Onques de par amour amer,
Lors l'eu convenist entamer.
Pour mieuls oir les oiseles
M'assis dessous deus ruissseles,
D'aulx espine toute florise.
Amours qui par sa seignourie
Mestrie mon coer et mon corps,
Me fist lors faire uma grant recors
De mon temps et de mon jouvent,
De ma joie et de mon tourment."


The parallel with BD 1-13 is in the sentiment of the last five lines, though Robinson's Note (p.882) makes it seem more exact than, to my mind, it is. The sentence-structure of the whole passage is, however, more sophisticated than is usual in the wholly original parts of B.D."
"Et pour ce que merencolie
Esteint toute pensee lie,
Et aussi que je bien veoie
Que mettre conseil n'i poie
Et que, s'on sceust mon muser,
On ne s'en feist que ruser,
Laissey le merencolier
Et pris ailleurs a colier
En pensant que s'a Dieu plaisoit
Qui pour le milleuer le faisoit."


Parallel is with lines 109-12.

N'a mon las cuer jamais bien ne vendra,
N'a nul confort n'a joie n'ateindra,
Jusques atant que la mort me prendra,
Que a grant tort
Par devers moy, quant elle ne s'amort
A moy mordre de son dolereus mort,
Quant elle m'a dou tout tollu et mort
Mon dous ami
Que j'amocie de fin cuer et il mi."

Machaut: "Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne" 193-200.

(This, to me, seems flatter even than Ch.'s lines.)
Ch's additions seem to be the heroine's attributes.

(a) Original Imagery
Similes 229 ('hunteresse'), 505-6 ('heven ... sonne'),
646 ('Lerke'), 792 ('covercole'), 1034 ('Peter ... see'),
1124 ('alum de glas'), 1192 ('flakes ... snowes'),
1382 ('fethares'), 1387 ('burned gold'), 1522 ('been'),
1643 ('pelet'), 1653 ('ryver ... walle'), 1654 ('helle'),
1686 ('bawme'), 2077 ff. ('fyr'), '2016 ('moone').
Metaphors 974 ('fetheres of Philosophye'),
1637 ('black trumpet'), 1678, 1723-5 (Eolus' trumpet),
1777 ('masty swyn').

(b) Borrowed Imagery
Similes RR ('countrefete ... as ... ape' 1212),
1803 from Dante ('wynd in helle').
Metaphors Nil.
Add. Notes 7-8

(7) Page 44

Covoitise ne set entendre
Fors que a l'autrui acoochier;
Covoitise a l'autrui trop cher.

("Roman de la Rose" 192-4)

(8) Page 52 Other Interpretations of 'FF'

(i) Poem a debate on value of courtly love. Suitors criticised by lower orders, who can be equated with social classes (v. Robinson's Note on p.904).

Objections: (a) Theory only explains part of poem; (b) Turtle speaks more delicately than 'aristocratic' 2nd. Tercel.

(ii) Poem occasional, for marriage of Richard II to Anne of Cleves after a year's delay. (Fully detailed in Robinson, pp. 900-01).

Objections: (a) Opening sections still unexplained; (b) Comments by lower orders could cause offence to historical personages.

(iii) Poem a revision of original occasional poem, original wooing being by single suitor. Additions were Dedication (113-19), section on Temple, 2nd and 3rd Tercels' speeches, Scipio's hints of need to serve commonwealth (hint to Richard), self-mockery of Ch.

Objections: (a) Only evidence is lower orders only mentioning one suitor, thus their speeches in original version, thus offending royal personages; (b) 590 and 607 ('lat ech of hem') do not fit theory, and whole speech would make no sense without line 607; (c) Original poem thus rather thin.

(iv) Poem an 'envelope' involving poet and his reading at beginning and end, enclosing dream episodes. Poet tries to reconcile heavenly joy of Scipio with false earthly felicity of writing erotic poetry.

(Lumiansky, article cit.)

Objections: (a) Poem thus too trivial and personal to interest audience; (b) Ignores debate, opening lines on love, and paradisal quality of Park.
Continued.

(v) Interpretation given in text (p. 52) accepted with following reservations:

(a) Remarks on value of devotion to common weal do not imply an ascetic renunciation, as Scipio enjoins;
(b) The remarks are irrelevant to debate unless choice of Formel Eagle affects common weal, in which case Royal Tercel and Formel apparently historical personages, so that FF becomes an occasional poem;
(c) Unless Formel a real personage, who hesitated over marriage, ending of debate is unsatisfactory, natural ending being her choice or refusal.

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Lines drawing analogy between love and religion, added by Ch., include the following:

I 554-60 (P. accusing Tr. of religious remorse);
1046-50, 1055-57 (Tr. dedication and invocation of God);
III 'Proem, 37 (God's law of love);
   II Bocc. 'gods', Ch. 'God';
428-34 (ennobling effect of love on Tr.);
1289-90 (Tr. serving Cr. 'for love of God');
1319-30 (esp. 1322 'hevene blisse', words not of P. but of narrator);
1619, 1621 (Tr. 'God woot' and 'God help me so', i.e. to serve Cr., inserted in Bocc. lines);
1649, 1656-59 added Ch. (Tr. dedication, P. sententia on one who has known 'hevene blisse');
1723-5 (Tr.'s reputation rising to heaven);
1744-71 (Tr.'s song on universal love).

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Beauvau's version (op. cit. pp. 231-34) runs thus:

"I must go with Diomede. All my relatives are here. Women can freely come and see them. Love tries us. We can go several days without meeting. I would be blamed for not going. I am afraid of Greek troops. Calkas is ruled by avarice. Unless I return, our house may be requisitioned, therefore he will allow me, to avoid losing his property."

He thus cuts Bocc.'s reference to truce, increases time lovers now go without meeting, and gives motive for Cr.'s return which involves her coming to safeguard house. Chaucer adds need to obey law, restores talk of peace and Bocc.'s reference to treasure attracting Calkas. He also increases coherence.
Beauvau's version (op. cit. p. 263) has the emphatic utterance of Ch.'s, but lacks the idiom of TC V 885-6. His Dio. remarks Cr.'s pensiveness since leaving Troy, and says Trjns. "par nous tenus en prison", "comme vous veez", and Gks. will remain until Troy "mis a feu et a flambe". He then says, "Ne cuidez point que nul qu'il soit dans la ville trouve jamais pitie ne misericorde a nous .........".

I think this a little more emphatic than Fil. VI 16, but hesitate to judge on matters of style in 0. Italn.

Pratt's Parallel No. 251 (v. Bibliography) shows:

_Boce._ "Le fresche guance e diliate, pallide e magre l'eran divenute .......
_Beo._ "Son beau visage, frays et delye, luy estoit devenu tout palle e maigre .......
_Ch._ "Ful pale ywoxen was hire brighte face."

Statements as exclamations: Fil. VII 8:

(Tr.) Deh guarda in giu, deh vedi tu quel ch'is?
(P.) No, disse Pandar, se ben gli oochi sbarro Quel che mi mostri parea me un carro.

TC V 1160-62:

(Tr.) 'Heve up thyn eyen, man! maistowm. nat se?'
(P.) 'Pandare answere, 'Nay, so mote I thi! Al wrong, by God! What saistow man, where arte? That I se yond nys but a fare-carte'.

Reported speech as direct speech Fil. III 44:

"Il giorno che venia maledicendo Cor lor cosi (sbaccio?) separava,"

is expanded into TC III 1450-70, beginning:

"O cruel day, accusour of the joie That nyght and love han stole and faste iwryen, Accursed be thi comyng .........!"
Add. Notes 14-16

(14) Statement as metaphor Fil. 1 33 (followed by Beau.):

E seco a rammentarsi del piacore
Avuto la mattina dell'aspetto
Di Criseida comincio, e delle vere
Bellezza del suo viso annoverando
A parte a parte quella commendando.

"... as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
That he hire saugh a temple, and al the wise
Right of hire look, and gan it newe avise.

"Thus gan he take a mirour of his mynde,
In which he saugh al hooly hire figure ...." (I 362-6)

(15) Thoughts as soliloquy Fil. V 70 (followed by Beau.):

El riguardava li Greci attendati
Davanti a Troia, e come gia turbarsi
Vendendoli solea, cosi mirati
Con diletto eran: e cio che soffiarsi
Sentia nel viso, si come mandati
Sospiri di Criseida solea darsi
A creder fosser, dicendo sovente:
'O qua o quivi e mia donna placent'.

"Upon the wallesaste ek wolde he walke
And on the Grekis oost he wolde se,
And to hymself right thus he wolde talke:
'Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
Or ellis yonder, ther the tentes be.
And thennes comth this eyr, that is so soote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me boote.

'And hardly this wynd, that more and moore
Thus stoundemele encresseth in my face,
Is of my ladys depe sikes soore.
I preve it thus, for in noon other place
Of al this town, save onliche in this space,
Fele I no wynd that sowneth so lik peyne:
It seyth, 'Allas! whi twynned be we twyne?'.

(V 666-79)

(16) Thought as proverb (Fil. VI 10 (followed by Beau.):

'Oime che male andai
Per me a Troia quando la menai ...... ' (cf. TO V 785-8)

"Men shal nat wowe a wight in hevynesse." (V 791)
Add. Notes 17-19

(17) **Thoughts and narrative as apostrophe**

Fil. V 69: Era la vecchia luna gia cornuta ...

Per che sovente con seco diceo
Allor che questa sera divenuta
Colle sue nuove corna, qual parea
Quando sen gi la nostra donna, fia
Tornata qui allor l'anima mia.

Beauvau (op. cit. p. 259):

"Quant ceste lune deviendra nouvelle, le
jour s'approchera que ma joye devroit
estre recouverte."

Ch. (V 650-58):

"And sayde, 'Ywis, whan thou art homed newe,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!

'I saugh thyne homes olde ek by the morwe,
Whan hennes rood my righte lade dere,
That cause is of my torment and my sorwe;
For which, O brighte Letona the cleere,
For love of God, ren faste aboute thy spere!
For whan thyne homes newe gyuen sprynges,
Than shal she come that may my blisse brynges.'"

(18) **Change of syntax (Bocc. followed by Beau.)**

Fil. IV 12: ..... i Greci con romore (noise)
Tutti gridavon (shouted): diaglisi Antenore.

TC. IV 133: "They yave hym Antenor, withouten moore."

Fil. IV 13: ..... e Calchas fu contente.

TC. IV 134: "But who was glad ynough but Calkas tho?"

i.e. attention switched from Greeks to Calchas.

(19) **Page 128**

Kittredge (MLR xxv, p.158) says, rather inconsistently,
that Chi neither translated nor imitated Machaut's
"Paréyus d'Amour" but that there is "hardly an idea in
either that does not recur in the other". He gives then
a list of parallels. The resemblance is, however, much
more general, in my view, than Kittredge's letter has
lead Robinson and other scholars to believe. Here is
a literal rendering of Machaut's poem (Chichmaref, 'Poesies lyriques' II 345 ff.), made for me by Mr. A. Hart, postgraduate student of the French Dept., Nottingham Univ.)

Comments on correspondences or on underlined words are given in brackets after the rendering of each stanza.

N.B. L'Amour (Love, or the God of Love) is feminine in O. French, though masculine in Mid. Eng. Hence Love referred to as 'her'; the speaker in Mach., as in Ch., is a woman.

(i) 'Love, if I ever wished or asked more, or sought a gift other than the joy which comes to me from you, I should sin against you, and be doing what I should not, and what is not for me to do.

(ii) 'For it is enough (appropriate) that I should believe and accept that I should be in your fair paradise as long as (whenever) I remember my love. So if I should see him as often as I wish, I should have more than I could hope for of those things that go to make up happiness.

(iii)'And truly I cannot see that there is paradise in the laws (realm) of love, other than always to be loyal, happy and gay and unless the lover and his mistress love each other in true trust and without discord. (gay - 'joli')

(iv) 'For a lover who lives according to this principle is more than satisfied; for he has so much joy in him that he is carried away by joy; nor can anyone persuade him that love is capable of wounding, so happy is he in spirit. This I believe to be so. (I believe my love is like this)

(v) 'And thus would I loyally, cheerfully and with all my heart serve Love all my days and bear myself joyfully. And always cherish, in faith and with a true heart the fair, the good, the gentle one I love and desire.

(gentle - 'gentil', i.e. courtly)

(vi) 'For without a lowly thought, he loves and serves me so perfectly, unswervingly, that he wishes to deserve nothing but my honour; there ever strive his heart and his desires, there are set without exception all his pleasures.

(lowly - opposite of 'courtly', 'gentil')

(vii)'And I was born under a fortunate star when my destiny is such that I love and am loved with a good heart and true, and with a pure and secret love, and by a lover who has such renown that his fair and cheerful figure pleases all.
Add. Note 19

(viii) 'When I think of it in secret, my joy is renewed, and a hundred thousand times doubled (is) my love that reposes in him, and I am so aflame with love that I love even the thought, the place, the hour, the day when I won his love.

(or 'I love even myself')

(ix) 'For truly I believe that never was a life so happy, so gay, so carefree, nor so full of sweetness, shared between lover and mistress; so free of domination, so united, nor so completely adorned with perfect love, (domination of one by the other, 'maistrie')

(x) 'Nor with less regret: for there is here no envy, jealousy, not one jot of 'vileynye', nor any stupidity; rather is (our love) happy in all circumstances; trickery is alien to us, for true love makes each of us dearer to the other all the while. ('villainie', opposite of courtly attitude; mention of trickery may be apt for Cr.)

(xi) 'And he is wasting his time on me who suggests that I do not love my beloved without base thoughts or a pure and healthy love, for the further I am from him, the nearer is his goodness to me.

(xii) 'There is no human gentleness, no worldly grace, no merit, however lordly it be, which is not in him; and I am sure that Love so rules us that Paris and Helen never loved like this.

(lordly- 'souvereinne'; Paris and Helen apt for TC)

(xiii) 'And it should be more than enough for me when I have no grief nor anger nor sadness to burn me up, nor anything which blemishes my joy or my honour.

(xiv) 'Thus I have, without doubt, all that my heart desires, and that without effort: Love does this, God bless him who has caused me to select the noblest of them all.

(xv) 'Thus I need ask no more of Love when from him I have perfectly sufficient, and thus I must praise her (Love) with all my soul and honour her (Love) with all my strength.

(xvi) 'And serve and worship her (Love) as I do my God, love her, cherish her and hold her in reverence, and gently relish her sweet gifts, by which I always (shall) remember her (Love). (cf. TC 1273, similar analogy of love and relig.)
(xvii) 'For any one who really knew the perfect gift one receives, and how Love provides for the lovers she unites in her sweet domain, if he has never been in love, would doubtless fall in love, unless he was ill-fated, and would immediately offer himself to her service.

(domain - 'hommage'; i.e. feudal submission to Love; service - 'franc servage', voluntary feudal service.)

(xviii) 'For, if we are to be accurate, there is no one in her (Love's) service who is not free/honest, and if a 'vilain' joined this service, True Love would change his character for the better; Freedom/Frankness would set him free, Loyalty would educate him, Happiness would make him love, and Gentle Hope would keep him elegant, alert and wise/good.

(free/honest - honesty the prerogative of the nobles, who are 'free'; 'vilain' - one incapable of 'fine amour'; Frankness - 'franchise'; Happiness - 'Plaisance', of Chis 'pleasance'; Gentle Hope - 'Dous Espoir'; elegant - 'cointe')

(xix) 'And for this reason I placed myself in her (Love's) noble free-service, in the hope of improving myself; but voluntarily I undertook a noble task when I entered her bonds, for I neither seek nor wish for any other wealth.

(xx) 'Sweetness, peace, joy and elegance, and other wealth of any kind that I see or know of, and everything my heart desires, I find there, without any undue pride, and all to my liking. And perhaps I shall receive better than I am used to.

(XX) 'And he who lives off such fare enjoys most sweet nourishment. For a lover who pictures to himself the upright figure of Love, shuns and hates all mean tricks, sin, vice and error, and anything he comes by illicitly; such is the nature of the true. I am sure of this from my own experience, without seeking evidence elsewhere.

(xxii) 'Thus have love, a lover, uprightness, honesty, pure loyalty, grace, good fortune, moderation, set me in my happiness in Love's sweet paradise. There I have no dark thoughts, no regrets, no ill, no wounds, nor anything unpleasant to me; and I am assured of the other (paradise) when I end my days.

(moderation - 'mesure')

(xxiii) 'So, if I did not obey, and serve, and devoutly praise Love, who keeps me in such a situation, I should be truly mad, for she (Love) guides my heart along this sweet way which ever becomes more beautiful;

(xxiv) 'And I rejoice so much more than was my wont. What should I say of my love? He loves me, obeys and fears me; he is mine and I am his; that is my joy, it is the finest that love can give, and
it is what sustains me most of all.'

Clearly Mach.'s (v) corresponds with Ch.'s 827-33, less clearly Mach.'s (vii) and (xxiv) are comparable with Ch.'s 827-36 and 869-73; Mach.'s (xxi) has some resemblance to Ch.'s 851-4. The chief correspondence, however, is the circular movement of the argument in both poems.

To say that there is "hardly an idea in either that does not recur in the other" seems an exaggeration. Ch. adds, e.g.: lines 841-5, among the most memorable in A.'s song;

the analogy of the sun in 862-6, an important idea (love good but harmful if abused) which is a lover's reply to the kind of criticism in the Epilogue, and is thus quite important.

Furthermore, he makes the criticism of 855-6 one of love, not of the lady in love, as in Mach.'s (xi), avoids the moralising of Mahhs's (iii)-(iv), and has nothing in A's song not directly bearing on Cr.'s inner conflict and her situation.

It might be maintained that he read the Machaut poem attentively enough to perceive its circular structure, was aware of its ideas (as any poet of 'fine amour' would be), that the references to Paris and Helen stayed in his mind and recalled the French poem to him as he was writing TC, and that he then wrote A's song 'out of his head'. This would surely have given him far less trouble than any such display of "adaptive mastery" as Kittredge's note implies.

Page 131 Use of 'entente'

'Entente' occurs 37 times in TC, the only comparable frequencies elsewhere in Ch. being 21 uses in Pars. T., 12 in Clerk's, 17 in Romant of Rose (A,B,C included), 8 in MLT and 6 in Fri.T. 'Entencioun' is used 8 times in TC, so that 45 uses of 'entente' or 'entencioun' are to be considered. In view of frequency of word elsewhere in Ch., does its unusual frequency in TC convey overtone of irony at height of love affair, when it occurs most, or is its frequency due to exigencies of Rhyme Royal, or merely accidental?

(a) Irony is obvious in use of word at crises, e.g. I 211, when Tr., intending to scoff at love, is smitten:

"O blynde entencioun".

Likewise, at consummation, Cr. on Tr. pretended jealousy:

"In alle thyng is myn entente cleene". (III 1166)

Pand. lays Tr. to sleep with "a ful good entente" (ibid 1188) and poet comments afterwards that P. "hath fully his ent." (1582) These uses fit in with irony of Tr. using feigned jealousy as pretext for entering bedroom, in view of his later cause
for jealousy. Ironic uses amount to not more than 15, viz.:

(i) wish opposite to effect, I 738, II 295, 524;
(ii) purpose " ", II 878, III 1229;
(iii) Cr.'s innocence of what she was being led towards: II 1560, 1665, 1723;
(iv) purpose not achieved owing to intervening circumstance not anticipated, I 211, II 258, III 1188 (i.e. ultimate unhappiness of Tr. owing to Calchas' demand for Cr.);

so in II 295, when P. is ignorant of subsequent events resulting in unhappiness after love-affair his speaking makes possible;

(v) good wishes not fulfilled in long run, III 1166;
(vi) purposes not to be achieved, IV 1416;
(vii) irony of natural circumstance, i.e. lark indifferent to lovers parting below, V 1110 (in &G 141 'Nysus dochter' heralds Queen of Love, perhaps as Ch. had TC ref. in mind);
(viii) purpose of which Tr. read letter, perhaps also Cr. writing it, ignorant, V 1630.

(b) Rhyme Royal largely responsible, as it is used in MLT and Cl.T., both of which have 'entente' a number of times. In TC, 30 of 37 occurrences of 'entente' are at ends of lines, exceptions being II 580, 1293, III 1166, 1229, IV 657, V 776, 1630. Of exceptions, underlined 3 only have ironic significance. Of 30 uses at ends of lines, 11 come in Book II, 6 in IV, 5 in III, 5 in V, 3 in I. 'Entencioun' occurs always at end of line, 4 of examples coming in Book I, 2 in II. Thus the two words occur 7 times at ends of lines in Book I and 13 times in II. This might indicate a tendency for Ch. to acquire proficiency in stanza form as work continued, though infrequency in PF (usually thought earlier than TC) only explicable if we remember that a third of uses in TC are ironic, and that irony is not germane to subject of PF. On this argument, Cl.T. might be held to precede MLT, as irony less likely in Cl.T. (12 uses) than MLT (8), therefore more uses likely to result from exigencies of stanza-form.

N.B. Concordance wrongly lists 'entencioun' as in V 632, where word is 'enchesoun'. Reference in V is 767. Meanings of word 'entente' would interest lexicographer, as several do not appear to be covered by N.E.D. definition.

(21) Page 157

'Peste' occurs unambiguously in V 524, but its ambiguous use in III 1228 seems probable in view of the proximity of the drinking analogy of 1215 and the religious references of 1234 at seq. In 1312 only the 'celebration' meaning seems present. The word also
occurs in II 421-25, analyzed by Empson (op. cit. 58 ff.) and the 'food' meaning would fit the meaning 'drink of honey' he attributes to 'mede'. In general, however, I feel that such ambiguity as there is in Ch. takes the form of simple, disparate mngs., rather than mngs. demanding depth of semantic/philosophical reflection such as we see in Empson's gloss of II 393-9 ('Thank ek how elde wasteth every houre').

The two character-descriptions in KT. most comparable with those in PCT. are those of Lycurgus and Emetreus. The following are the arrangements of lines and couplets:

**Lycurgus (2126-54)**

2128-9 Split;
2130 Single line (face);
2131-2 Closed couplet (eyes);
2133 Single (aspect);
2134-6 Confused arrangement (hair);
2137-9 Three-line group (chair);
2140-2 " " " (bearskin);
2143-4 Two complementary lines (hair);
2145-7 Continuous 'sentence' (wreath);
2148-52 Continuous lines (hounds);
2153-4 Closed couplet (lords).

**Emetreus (2155-78)**

2155-9 Continuous sentence (announcement, riding);
2160-1 Split (armour);
2162 Single line (saddle);
2163-4 Closed (mantle);
2165-6 " (hair);
2167-8 " (features of face);
2169-70 " (freckles);
2171-2 Single (look);
2173 " (beard);
2174 " (voice);
2175-6 Closed (laurel garland);
2177-8 " (eagle).

Thus that of Lycurgus has variety, though the expression is jerky and the syntax awkward, while that of Emetreus, though more fluently expressed, has no variety as regards couplet-arrangement.
A selection of occurrences of words in senses given in text is appended here. Line numbers are as in Concordance.

**companionye**
- (group) KT 898, 1750, 2105, 2183, 2307, 2700, 2909, RT 4323, MLT 134,
  - e.g. (God) "save all this companye" (RT 4323);
- (companionship) KT 2774, 2779, MT 3204, 3660, Fri.T.1521, TC IV 1202,
  - e.g. "Alas, departynge of oure compagnye" (KT 2774).

**worthynesse**
- (virtue) Phys. 3, Fkl. 738, TC. I 567, II 178, etc.,
  - e.g. "As he that is the welle of worthynes" (TC II 841);
- (rank) Pri. 1672 ?, Sum.T. 2260 ?, Cl.T. 824, Mop.T.249,
  - e.g. "In place digne unto thi worthynesse" (TC I 963);

**vileynye**
- (disrespect or harm) KT 942, Sh.T. 1373, Pard.T. 740, 898, NPT 4477,
  - e.g. "To spoken to an old man vileynye" (Pard.740);
- (low rank) Pri. 1681 ? "Foul usure and lucre of vil."

**parfit**
- (perfect) KT 3009, 3072, Mel. 2710-5, WB 141, 1258,
  - Mch.T. 1642, TC I 104, II 891, III 831, V 919,
  - e.g. "Yet is ther felicitee parfit" (Mch. 1642);
- (able) NPT 4426, WB 446, SumpT. 1956, SNT 353, often Boe.,
  - e.g. "Parfit in his lernynge, Godes knyght" (SNT).

**gentil**
- (rank) KT 952, 1753, 2539, MLT 628, NPT 4055, 4474,
  - e.g. "Thise olde gentil Bretouns in hir dayes" (Fkl. 709),
- (virtue) KT 1431, 2797, 3039, Fkl. 1611,
  - e.g. "Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man" (KT 2797),
- (sensitive) KT 1043, 1772, Mil.T.3360 ?, MLT 660, RR 1987, 2194, irit
  - e.g. "As gentil hert is fulfill of pitee" (MLT).
Fair(e) (beauty) KT 871, 1511, Mil.T. 3233;
(just) KT 984, Mil.T. 719 (?ambig.), "Now fair Custance, that is so humble and meke";
(desire) Mil.T. 3699, RT 3951 ?, 4023 ?; e.g. "...that we sholde han so faire a grace" (Pard. 783).

curteis(ye) (polite) Mel. 2970-5, Pars. 245-50, RR 538, TC I 81, III 26;
(-ness) Pard.T. 739, Fkl. 1569, e.g. "But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye" (Pard. 739);
courtly NPT 4061, Fri. 1287, Mk. T. 3686, Sq. 95, TC IV 1436, V 64, e.g. "This Troilus, in wise of curteisye" (i.e. falconry) TC V 64.

(e)staat (rank) KT 956, Mil.T. 3229, TC I 287, 432, V 1749;
(business) Mch. 1322, TC II 219 ?; e.g. ("I speke of folk in seculer estaat" (Mch. 1322);
(sin) Pars. 680-5;
(wealth) KT 2790, NPT 3965;
digne (worthy) Sh.T. 1175, Pard. 695, RT 3964, Cl.T. 411, TC III 23, e.g. "So behigne and so digne of reverence" (Cl.T. 411);
(rank) KT 2216 "...Venus, honorable and digne";

(reverence (homage) KT 2531, Cl.T. 231, 298, TC III 40, e.g. "That child may doon to fadres reverence" (Cl. 238);
(religious) Pr.T. 1663, 1705, 1727, TC III 1273, 1323;
(respect) NPT 4403, WB 206, Cl.T. 411, TC I 516 e.g. see 'digne' above.

Conscience Mel. 2620-5, Phys. 280, WB 435 ('spiced'), Mch. 1635, TCI 554.
charitable(-ee)

Sum.T. 1795, TC V 823
"Ther have I taught hym to be charitable" (Sum. 1795);

(in ironic sense) "Of charitable and chaste bisy freres" (Sum.T. 1940);

solempe(ly)(itee)

(dignity) MLT 387, Sq.T. 61, BD 302, KT 870, 2702, WB 629;
(e.g. "And halt his feste so solempne and so riche" (Sq.);

 seriou) Sq.T. 111, Pars. 100-5,
e.g. "My lige lord, on this solempne day Saleweth yow" (Sq.T. 111).

Mowher (nys) not listed.

discreet

(secret) NPT 4061, Phys.T. 46, Pars. 1005-10, T6 III 477,
e.g. "shrive thee to a discreet and honest preest" (Pars.)

(vertuous) Cl.T. 410, 930
e.g. "Discreet and pridelees, ay honurable" (930).

semed

(false) Phys.T. 52, RR 7013, 7670,
e.g. "No countrefeted termes hadde she To seme yys..." (Phys. 51-2);

(appear, not falsely) Sq.T. 394, TC I 703, RR 1011,
e.g. "Made the sonne to seme rody and brood" (Sq.T.).

Felawe

(man) Ck.T. 4368, WB 618, e.g. "a propre short fel." (Ck.);

(companion) Pard. 672, 887; (i.e. not necessarily loyal)

(mate) KT 1031, 1192, 1740, Pr.T. 1734, Pars. 925-30, TC I 696, 709, IV 524,
e.g. "This Palamon and his felawe Arcite" (KT 1031);

RR 3149 as 'sirrah', RR 267 as 'companion'
"...feith ne trou the holdith she To freend ne felawe, bad ne good";
RR 5272 as 'mate'.

Add. Note 23 (418)
APPENDIX A  SOUND EFFECTS

As stated in the Introduction, the information below is offered very tentatively, owing to the uncertainty of the exact pronunciation of Chaucer's words and the great difficulty one finds in counting accurately. During the course of the research, it was realised that such results would be of very little value, so that less care was taken over revision of counts and calculations than over revision of more significant aspects of the work. The results, such as they are, are set out in two parts: first, there is a series of tables applying to all the poems examined from this point of view, and, second, comments are made where they seem appropriate. The comments may well prove of more interest than the figures. The "Nun's Priest's Tale" is included because, though space did not permit of the inclusion of a chapter on the tale, the sound-qualities proved of considerable interest. There is no analysis of the effects in the "Hous of Fame" or the "Romaunt of the Rose" but some very general comments are offered on the former.

Tabular Analysis

N.B. This is set out in five columns, though these have not all been completed in the case of the octosyllabic poems. The figure refers to the proportion of a particular effect per line of the passage examined. The columns are:

(a) Assonance; (b) Alliteration; (c) Consonance;
(d) Monosyllabic (entire) lines; (e) Average of a,b,c.
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| Mill. T. | Des. N.J. | 5187-220 | 0.56 | 0.91 | 0.50 | 0.06 | 0.66 |
|          | Des. Al.  | 5221-70  | 0.72 | 1.50 | 1.08 | 0.11 | 1.05 |
|          | Abs. Woo. | 5522-96  | 0.63 | 1.25 | 1.15 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
|          | " Soli." | 5672-86  | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.06 | 0.50 | 1.02 |
|          | " Seren."| 5698-706 | 0.80 | 1.70 | 0.90 | 0.50 | 1.15 |
|          | Al. Sp.   | 3708-13  | 3.50 | 2.16 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 2.22 |
|          | Narr.     | 5750-41  | 2.35 | 1.55 | 1.55 | 0.55 | 1.67 |
|          | Narr.     | 5754-71  | 1.11 | 1.50 | 1.00 | 0.25 | 1.20 |
|          | Narr.     | 5798-825 | 0.35 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.94 |

| N.P.T.   | Des. Wid. | 2821-46  | 0.60 | 0.76 | 0.68 | 0.15 | 0.69 |
|          | " Chant.  | 2847-81  | 0.47 | 1.70 | 0.24 | 0.18 | 0.80 |
|          | Dream     | 3882-907 | 0.60 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 0.04 | 5.00 |
|          | Sp. Pert. | 2908-69  | 0.82 | 1.13 | 0.82 | 0.06 | 1.15 |
|          | Sp. Ch.   | 2970-5156| 0.20 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.18 | 0.90 |
|          | " Nar. Ch." | 0.69 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 0.15 | 0.70 |
|          | Des.      | 3157-86  | 1.00 | 1.06 | 0.20 | 0.40 | 0.75 |
|          | Narr.     | 3187-214 | 0.50 | 1.68 | 0.14 | 0.11 | 0.77 |
|          | Narr.     | 3215-78  | 0.82 | 1.05 | 0.89 | 0.16 | 0.58 |
|          | Fox Sp.   | 5279-5521| 1.57 | 1.90 | 0.74 | 0.11 | 1.54 |
|          | Narr.     | 5523-54  | 0.52 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.19 | 0.31 |
|          | Narr.     | 5555-401 | 1.06 | 1.45 | 0.20 | 0.20 | 0.90 |
|          | Sp. Narr. | 5402-57  | 1.08 | 0.74 | 0.59 | 0.55 | 1.07 |
|          | Moral     | 5458-46  | 2.10 | 1.65 | 0.88 | 0.44 | 1.54 |
APPENDIX B: METRICAL EFFECTS

(i) Enjambement

Four poems only are considered for frequency of enjambement, viz.: "Book of the Duchess", "Parlement of Fowls", "Knight's Tale" and the "Prologue to the 'Canterbury Tales'". The term is used in two senses, viz.:

(a) running over of sense from line to line, e.g.

"... and in the Grete See
At many a noble armee hadde he be" (PCT 59-60),

(b) running over of part of phrase, e.g.

"That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte." (PCT 154-5)

Two separate lists are given for each poem or section of a poem, under the headings (a) and (b) as above. The line number given is that of the line at the end of which the enjambement takes place. The percentages given include both kinds of enjambement.

1) "Book of the Duchess"


(Total 112)
(425)


(Total 81)

Total (a) and (b) 193;  
No. of lines 1535 (not counting last line);  
Frequency 14.5%

2) "Parlement of Fowls"


(Total 81)

(b) 17, 18, 52, 56, 55, 151, 155, 208, 249, 267, 285, 554, 557, 559, 447, 465, 477, 526, 548, 554, 562, 576, 632, 698.  

(Total 24)

Total (a) and (b) 105;  
No. of lines 698;  
Frequency 15.0%

Occurrence in passages analysed in text:
169-210 (v. pp. 64-6) (a) 2, (b) 1; 7% approx.;  
585-415 (v. pp. 66-9) (a) 1, (b) 0;  
414-616 (v. pp. 69-74) (a) 25, (b) 8; 16% approx.

3) "Knight's Tale"


(Total 51)
(b) 907, 915, 966, 979, 986, 996, 1018, 1021, 1022, 1025, 1028, 1064, 1150, 1157, 1142, 1175, 1204, 1244, 1503, 1550, 1544.

(Total 21)

Part 2
(a) 1575, 1585, 1596, 1415, 1429, 1485, 1516, 1615, 1666, 1680, 1697, 1701, 1756, 1766, 1842, 1879, 1495,

(Total 17)

(b) 1559, 1575, 1578, 1594, 1452, 1454, 1457, 1459, 1556, 1537, 1547, 1625, 1802, 1804, 1855,

(Total 15)

Part 3
(a) 1882, 1885, 1895, 1957, 1985, 2054, 2090, 2101, 2175, 2246, 2266, 2500, 2504, 2325, 2555, 2558, 2585, 2416, 2452,

(Total 19)


(Total 12)

Part 4
(a) 2492, 2502, 2572, 2584, 2601, 2655, 2711, 2750, 2768, 2771, 2778, 2794, 2801, 2818, 2850, 2854, 2668, 2871, 2897, 2958, 5062, 5105.

(Total 22)

(b) 2488, 2494, 2506, 2526, 2625, 2658, 2725, 2766, 2794, 2799, 2827, 2851, 2865, 2865, 2870, 2929, 2959, 2965, 2968, 2970, 2815.

(Total 21)

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<td>2138-89     1                      0</td>
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<td>2231-60 (P) 2                      3;</td>
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<td>2375-2420 (A) 2 3;</td>
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Part 1 (a) 51, (b) 21; 495 lines; frequency 10.5%. Part 2 17, 15; 525 " ; " 6.1% Part 3 19, 12; 601 " ; " 5.2% Part 4 22, 21; 626 " ; " 6.9% Totals 89 69; 2247 " ; " 7.0%

N.B. last line of each part not included in count.
4) "Prologue to 'Canterbury Tales'"


(Total 58)

(b) 6, 15, 25, 38, 44, 89, 101, 154, 159, 158, 195, 253, 259, 551, 527, 554, 650, 669, 696, 697, 712, 718, 752, 792, 857.

(Total 25)

Total (a) and (b) 83;
857 lines (ex. last)
Frequency 9.7%

Occurrence in passages

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(ii) Closed Couplets

Only poems in heroic couplets have been considered from this standpoint, viz. the "Knight's Tale", "Prologue" and "Miller's Tale". The frequency of the form in each section of the respective poems is indicated as follows: Col. (a) gives the number of closed couplets in the section; Col. (b) the number of couplets of all kinds; (c) the frequency expressed as a percentage of the number of couplets, and (d) the main interest of the section, i.e. Narrative, Dialogue, Description.
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**Passages**

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<td>4</td>
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<td>1490–1512</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>15.4</td>
<td>Des. / Moncl. (P.)</td>
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<td>1648–62</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>1760–61</td>
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<td>Narr. / Spoch. (Th.)</td>
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<td>1785–1814</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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**Passages**

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<td>18</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Des. (Venus)</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Des. (Venus)</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>2455–78</td>
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**Passages**

<p>| Part III | 55 | 156 | 22.4 | Av. % |</p>
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<th>(d)</th>
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<td>Dial. (Ven., Sat.)</td>
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<td>55.5</td>
<td>Narr.</td>
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<td>2771-97</td>
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<td>2810-15</td>
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<td>16.3</td>
<td>Narr.</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Spoh. (Egeus)</td>
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<td>2898-17</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
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**Passages**

| Part IV      | (a) | (b) | (c)  | (d)%
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<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>Av.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**All Passages**

|                | 151 | 429 | 25.5 | 24% Av. |

| (2) "Prologue" |    |     |      |        |

| 1-18          | 2   | 9   | 22.2 | Desc. |
| 19-42         | 2   | 12  | 16.3 | Narr. |
| 45-78         | 4   | 15  | 50.8 | Kt.  |
| 79-100        | 6   | 11  | 54.5 | Sq.  |
| 101-17        | 3   | 8   | 37.5 | Yeo. |
| 118-62        | 3   | 22  | 13.6 | Prio.|
| 165-207       | 7   | 23  | 31.8 | Mk.  |
| 208-69        | 7   | 51  | 22.6 | Fri. |
| 270-84        | 1   | 8   | 12.5 | Moht.|
| 285-508       | 6   | 12  | 50.0 | Clk. |
| 309-50        | 2   | 11  | 18.2 | M. of L. |
| 351-60        | 8   | 15  | 55.5 | Fkl. |
| 361-78        | 5   | 9   | 55.5 | Clsmn.|
| 379-97        | 2   | 4   | 50.0 | Clk. |
| 388-410       | 2   | 12  | 16.5 | Ship. |
| 411-44        | 8   | 17  | 47.1 | Phys. |
| 445-76        | 6   | 16  | 57.5 | W.B. |
| 477-528       | 4   | 26  | 15.4 | Pars.|
| 529-41        | 5   | 6   | 50.0 | Plow.|
| 545-66        | 3   | 11  | 27.5 | Mil. |
| 567-86        | 0   | 10  | 0    | Manc.|
| 587-622       | 8   | 18  | 44.4 | Rv.  |
| 525-58        | 2   | 25  | 8.5  | Sum. |
| 669-714       | 7   | 25  | 50.4 | Pard.|
| 715-46        | 2   | 16  | 12.5 | Narr.|
| 747-821       | 9   | 58  | 25.7 | Host/Spoh. |
| 822-58        | 4   | 18  | 22.2 | Narr.|

**Total**

|                | 115 | 429 | 25.5 |
### Conclusions

The "Miller's Tale" has one-fifth less closed couplets than the "Prologue". This appears to reflect the difference between a poem consisting largely of narrative and one consisting mainly of description. In M.T. the description of Alison has far more than any other passage, suggesting that it is a virtuoso piece; the one of Absalon has the smallest proportion, as though by contrast. No such regularity can be found in the "Knight's Tale", in which extended passages with a high proportion are found in narrative and descriptive parts of the Tale, though speeches have relatively low proportions. The poet would seem thus to follow the contours of the voice, rather than stopping regularly every two lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>(c)</th>
<th>(d)</th>
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<td>38</td>
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<td>5221-70</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>Nar./Dial.</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>11.1</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>16.5</td>
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</table>

| Totals | 75 | 57$ | 20.0 | Av. % |

(430)
APPENDIX C: IMAGERY

Note: The term, as used here, is restricted to similes and metaphors. Only those poems which have been surveyed in full are included in the following tables. Common themes in the imagery are briefly indicated afterwards in each case. For a full study of the imagery of T.C., v. Meech, op. cit. and also Chapter Five above. The object of this Appendix is simply to show the comparative frequencies of images in different poems.

(i) "Book of the Duchess"

No. of Lines: 1554;
Similes: 8 (170, 508, 779, 821, 858, 946, 965, 980);
Metaphors: 12 (578, 617, 622, 626, 628, 629, 635, 656, 652, 920)
(980, 982);
Total: 20
Frequency %: 1.5

N.B. only 170, 578, 920 possibly original. Themes therefore not given.

(ii) "House of Fame"

Lines: 2158;
Similes: 20 (229, 505, 546, 792, 1054, 1124, 1192, 1212,
1582, 1587, 1522, 1645, 1653, 1654, 1686,
1785, 1805, 1806, 2077, 2116);
Metaphors: 2 (974, 1777);
Frequency %: 1

Many literary illustrations from classics also. Imagery almost all original. Themes include birds (e.g. 546), animals (e.g. 1785, 1777).

(iii) "Parlement of Fowles"

Lines: 699
Similes: 4 (22, 148, 191, 442)
Metaphors: 1 (159 ?)
Frequency: 0.7%

N.B. Much allegorical reference, however, esp. imparting colour to desc. of Park (v. text, pp. 61-5 above).
(iv) "Priestess's Tale"

Lines (inc. Prol): 258;
Similes: 0
Metaphors: 12 (461, 465, 466, 469, 485, 558, 559, 578, 609, 610, 627, 656);
Frequency %: 5

N.B. also symbolism from Apocalypse, e.g. "white Lamb" 581.
Most metaphors conventional (Bible and liturgy) and occur in Prologue or its echo in 607-15, where images of jewels have apocalyptic flavour, apt for teller but very unusual in Ch., as is frequency of metaphor here.

(v) "Knight's Tale" (examined in full for imagery)

Lines: 2250 (i. 502, ii. 525, iii. 602, iv. 625)
Similes: (i) 6 (1056, 1055, 1177 anal., 1261 anal, 1261, 1502),
(ii) 10 (1564, 1502, 1555, 1554, 1598, 1658,
1656, 1657, 1658, 1775)
(iii) 5 ($155, 2144, 2457),
(iv) 5 (2529, 2626, 2650);

Metaphors: (i) 12 (886, 925, 951, 1042, 1043, 1220, 1226,
1258, 1257, 1299, 1505, 1508),
(ii) 8 (1490, 1491, 1494, 1496, 1552, 1556,
1564, 1575),
(iii) 0
(iv) 1 (3059)

Total: 45
Frequency % 1.9

N.B. Most similes Part i (quarrel), Part ii (fight).
'anal' - analogy.
Most metaphors Part i (quarrel), Part ii (grove and fight).
Themes: animals (mouse, lion, tiger, wild boar);
fire (1299, 1564, 1502 ?);
plants & gardening or farming (886, 1056,
1502, 1508, 1552, 1555);
religion (1226, 1227) or myth (2153).
Also many conventional images, e.g. 925, 1055.
(vi) "Prologue to 'Canterbury Tales'"

<table>
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<td></td>
<td>4 Mkt. (171, 179, 199, 202),</td>
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<td>(Total 21)</td>
<td>4 Fri. (258, 257, 265, 268),</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Fkl. (552, 553),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 Mil. (552, 555, 559),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 Rv. (592),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 Sum. (626, 655 ?),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Pard. (684, 688);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Metaphors: | 5 Spring (2, 5, 7), |
| | 1 Fri. (214), |
| (Total 15) | 5 Fkl. (556, 340, 545), |
| | 3 Pars. (496-506-508-515-514 sheep, 500, 526), |
| | 3 Sum. (624, 652, 555, 641), |
| | 1 Pard. (712), |
| | 1 Host Spch. (850); |

| Total: | 36. |
| Frequency: | 4.2% |

(vii) "Miller's Tale"

| Lines (inc. Prol.) | 746; |
| Similes: | 1 Prosl. (5124), |
| | 2 Nich. (5202, 5207), |
| (Total 26) | 15 Alis. (5224, 5254, 5256, 5246, 5248, 5249, 5256, 5258, 5259, 5261, 5262, 5265), |
| | 1 Wooing (5282), |
| | 5 Abs. (5510, 5514, 5517, 5524, 5577), |
| | 1 Nich. (5576), |
| | 5 Abs. Wooing (3704, 3706, 3751 ?): |

| Metaphors: | 2 Prosl. (5115, 5117), |
| (Total 15) | 1 Narr. (5224), |
| | 2 Alis. (5254), (5268), |
| | 1 Abs. (5389), |
| | 1 Nar/Al. (5617), |
| | 5 Abs. Wooing (5698, 5699, 5699), |
| | 5 " Revenge (5754, 5757, 5792); |

| Total: | 59 |
| Frequency #: | 5.2 |

Themes in both poems inc. many references to animals, but those of PCT conventional (wolf and sheep), those in MT are genuine images in giving impression of, e.g. Alison.
Different fields of imagery in MT for Alison and Alison as
addressed by Absalon: she is described in terms of unruly animals and of fruit, while Absalon addresses her as "honey-comb", 'cinnamon', i.e. tame or artificial objects. In Prol. many characters have no imagery, such as there is is largely literary or conventional.

General Conclusions

Ch. moved from allegorical figures in BD or allegory-plus-colour in PF to an abundance of racy comparisons in KT, though allegorical figures still in Temples.. Many images in PCT or MT are from outdoor life. Ch. always had much more command of simile than metaphor, of which many are personifications. To say outright that Ch. had no interest in metaphor would be wrong, but only in MT (of those examined), does he use many which do not appear to be drawn from literature or iconography rather than life in real world. The proportion of imagery used increased late in his career.
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All works listed have been consulted, but not all are cited in the text. Titles are arranged under the following heads:
(a) Books on Chaucer's work in general, or on background;
(b) books relating to individual poems;
(c) essays or articles on his work in general;
(d) essays or articles relating to individual poems.

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(c) Essays and Articles - General

Abbreviations used

CQ Critical Quarterly
ELH English Literature & History
ES Essays and Studies
JEGP Journal of English & Germanic Philology
MLN Modern Language Notes
MLR Modern Language Review
PMIA Publications of Modern Language Assoc.
RES Review of English Studies
Spec. Speculum
SP Studies in Philology
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"THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHAUCER'S POETIC ART"

The thesis consists of four parts. In Part One, three octosyllabic poems, "The Book of the Duchess", "The House of Fame" and the "Romaunt of the Rose" (Part A) are studied, in Part Two three poems in rhyme royal metre, "The Parliament of Fowles", "Troilus and Criseyde" and "The Prioress's Tale" and in Part Three a group of poems in heroic couplets, the "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales", "Knight's Tale", the "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales" and the "Miller's Tale". Part Four contains a Conclusion, a number of Additional Notes, three Appendices on Sounds, Metrical Devices and Imagery respectively, and a Bibliography.

The object of these studies of poems is to attempt to trace a line of development from the early to the late Chaucer, as regards style. The greatest attention throughout is given to rhythm, rhetoric, sentence structure and use of words, though imagery and sounds are also considered as appropriate. In Part One the emphasis is on the poet's natural ability in metre and dramatic dialogue and on his debt to Old French poetry. In Part Two poems are studied in much more detail, with an attempt to show the natural qualities of rhyme royal and its appropriateness for the aims of the poems. In addition, a very detailed comparison of "Troilus and Criseyde" and its sources is attempted, as well as detailed study of a number of episodes, to reveal Chaucer's additions and improvements. In Part Three, the greatest emphasis is on the couplet and the varied effects achieved by it, but there are also detailed studies of the ambiguities of some words in the "Prologue" and "Miller's Tale". Finally, an attempt is made to survey Chaucer's whole development in outline. The Additional Notes consist largely of quotations and detailed reference to Old French and Italian analogues.

The general inferences drawn are that Chaucer possessed an imagination which when active unified the varied aspects of his style, that he never quite ceased to write rhetorically, but used rhetoric with increasing discrimination, that the implications of his poems being fixed for speaking aloud necessitates a much closer attention to rhythm and sentence-structure and that some recent views of him as conventionally moralistic are exaggerations.