

CHAUCER STUDIES

ISSN 0261-9822

CHAUCER AND
PAGAN ANTIQUITY

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later Middle Ages. The title of this book is a deliberate echo of the title of Beryl Smalley's pioneering book, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century*.

To Miss Smalley I am indebted for, among other things, many stimulating conversations about medieval theologians. When this book was a mere gleam in my eye Piero Boitani encouraged my research and allowed me to read his unpublished Cambridge doctoral thesis, comprising a complete translation of Boccaccio's *Il Tesoro*. Meg Twycross gave me permission to consult her unpublished Oxford B. Litt. thesis on the representation of the pagan deities in Middle English Literature, a fine piece of careful scholarship and interesting criticism which, regrettably, has not seen the light in print. I am most grateful to two of my colleagues at the University of Bristol, Professor John Burrow and Miss Myra Stokes, for reading the penultimate draft of this book and making valuable comments and suggestions. John Burrow kindly allowed me to read his unpublished paper on 'Chaucer's *Knights Tale* and the Ages of Man'. Dr Brian Scott, Reader in Latin at the Queen's University of Belfast, provided invaluable advice on several puzzling passages of Medieval Latin, and Mr Edward Bower, formerly Senior Lecturer in Latin at the same university, translated the extracts from Nicholas Trevet's commentary on Boethius which are printed in the Appendix.

I owe a special debt to the late Professor E. T. Silk, formerly of Yale University, for supplying me with a copy of his (unfinished) edition of that commentary by Trevet and generously allowing me to use it in whatever way I thought fit.

This book is dedicated to my wife Florence, to whom my debt is as incalculable as it is large.

Alastair Minnis
Bristol, 1982

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INTRODUCTION

The Popular Pagans

'The pagans are wrong and the Christians are right', exclaims the hero of the late eleventh century *Chanson de Roland*.¹ By contrast, in the *Roman de la Rose* (c.1277) Jean de Meun assures his audience that 'It is good to believe the pagans, for we may gain great benefit from their sayings'.² By Jean's time the pagans had attained a considerable degree of respect, even of popularity. Sometimes they were wrong, sometimes they were right, and often they were half-right, or right in a limited way.

Christians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were fascinated by classical or pagan lore of every kind. Pagan philosophers were recognized as experts in such subject-areas as natural science, ethics and politics; pagan poets were supposed to have written fables which, when interpreted allegorically, were found to contain profound truths.³ It was generally accepted that contemporary Christians, the *moderni*, had much to learn from the sages of antiquity, the *antiqui*.⁴ After all, many of them had been monotheistic, believing in an omnipotent god who could be identified with the one true God of Christianity. Some of them, moreover, had been prophets or forerunners of the faith to come. Virgil had foretold the coming of Christ in his fourth eclogue;⁵ the testimony of David had been supported by the Sibyl:

Dies irae, dies illa,
solvet saeculum in favilla,
teste David cum Sibylla.⁶

[The day of wrath, that awful day,
will dissolve the world in ashes.
David and the Sibyl bear witness to this.]

But the authority of pre-Christian writings was limited: the Christian establishment pronounced them to be in error on matters relating to the nature of God and His characteristic operations, and any scholar who was enticed by pagan notions about, for example, astral determinism or the eternity of the world, ran the risk of being condemned by Holy Church. Once the pagans' errors had been identified, however, one could carefully avoid them and freely exploit the abundance of lore which was left—hence the need for a work like Giles of Rome's *Errores Philosophorum* (written between 1270 and 1274), which lists the mistakes made by Aristotle and his Arabian interpreters, and the great Jewish scholar Maimonides.⁷ Concomitant with the assimilation of heathen knowledge to Christian doctrine was the investigation of the final end of those ancients who had taught the moderns so much both by precept and by example.

the rest in heaven or in hell? This interest in the pagan past was not confined to schoolmen and academic theologians. It was shared by vernacular writers like, in the case of England, William Langland, John Gower, the anonymous authors of *Penance* and *St Erkenwald*, the native tellers of tales of Alexander and redactors of the matter of Troy, Greece and Rome—and Geoffrey Chaucer, whose literary paganism is the subject of this book.⁸

Chaucer's three great pagan poems, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Knight's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale*, belong, at bottom, to a particular species of the genus of romance, the *roman d'antiquité*. As such, they bear comparison with, for example, the *Roman de Thebes* (c.1150, based on Statius), the *Roman d'Éneas* (c.1160, based on Virgil's *Aeneid*), and Benoît de St Maure's *Roman de Troie* (c.1160, based on Dares and Dictys; a minor source for *Troilus and Criseyde*). These French works succeed in making the past come alive, and display some sense of historical perspective. Therein the noble pagans of ancient Troy, Greece and Rome are depicted 'in a natural environment, observing laws and customs that they felt were true, performing duties and obligations in which they believed, doing the best that they knew, and occasionally exceeding the virtue and moral excellence of Christians'.⁹ Chaucer, therefore, was not unusual in presenting his pagan characters in this way; what was unusual was the subtlety and profundity with which he did so, notably the way in which Troilus, Theseus and other ancients are characterized in accordance with quite sophisticated contemporary notions about what pagan antiquity was like.

Although Chaucer's pagans are generally fatalistic, polytheistic and idolatrous, on occasion the best of them pushes his recognition that Jupiter is the supreme god to a monotheistic vision which anticipates Christian belief. Troilus at the end of book III of *Troilus and Criseyde* and Theseus at the end of *The Knight's Tale* sound rather like those 'friends of God' described in the Book of Wisdom 7.27, 'And being but one, she [i.e. Wisdom] can do all things: and remaining in herself the same, she reneweth all things, and through nations conveyeth herself into holy souls, she maketh the friends of God and prophets'. Expounding this text in his *Posilla Literalis* (completed 1331), Nicholas of Lyre, 'the best-equipped Biblical scholar of the Middle Ages', states that, according to the Old Testament, there were many gentle prophets as well as hebrew ones, as is obvious from the case of St Job, who was a gentle.¹⁰ The Erihrean Sibyl had the spirit of prophecy, as Augustine says. Similarly, Lyre continues, in the histories of the Romans we read that during the time of the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helen a certain sepulchre was found, in which lay a man with a golden blade on his breast, on which was written, 'Christ will be born of the Virgin, and I believe in Him. O Sun, in the time of Helen and Constantine you will see me again', i.e. you will cause me to be seen. Chaucer, of course, does not go so far as to suggest that his good pagans have received a special grace whereby advance information about Christ has been revealed to them: his interest is rather in the moral and martial achievements which they attained through wisdom, identified by Lyre as a gift of the holy Spirit. From the martial point of view, Duke Theseus resembles the patriarchal conquerors celebrated in the Old Testament; from the moral and intellectual point of view, he resembles those virtuous pre-Christian philosophers whose exemplary lives were recorded in the anonymous *Liber Philosophorum Martium Antinomum*, the sixth book of the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of

Wales, and Walter Burley's *Liber de Vita et Moribus Philosophorum*.¹¹ The case of Chaucer's Troilus is a more complex one, as I hope to show in Chapter III below.

The timeliness of Chaucer's pagan poems deserves some comment at the outset, since it is difficult for us to grasp just how controversial the alleged achievements and limitations of the pagans could be in Chaucer's day, and to appreciate the wider implications of some of the philosophical ideas he was handling. In 1270 and 1277 Stephen Tempier, Bishop of Paris, 'condemned and excommunicated' a series of pagan errors 'together with all who should knowingly teach or affirm them'; Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, followed suit at Oxford.¹² Among these errors were the propositions that man's will acts from necessity, and that all that happens in the sublunar world is subject to the necessity of heavenly bodies. Absolute necessity and astral determinism were thereby identified as distinctively pagan beliefs which no Christian could accept—a point which must be taken into account in any appreciation of Chaucer's fatalistic pagans. Certainly, it is impossible to accept the tentative suggestions of T. O. Wedel that our poet might have 'favoured a kind of determinism' and that 'his mature judgment decided in favour of a fatalistic philosophy'.¹³ What Wedel's account of Chaucer's literary use of astrology fails to recognize is the fine sense of historical perspective that operates in *Troilus*, *The Knight's Tale*, and *The Franklin's Tale*: Chaucer's pagans act and think as pagans were supposed to. The narrator of *Troilus* briefly but firmly condemns the rascally gods and cursed old rites of the pagans; the Franklin laboriously criticizes

swiche illusions and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk useden in thilke dayes.

(V, 1292–3)

A consideration of the traditional aspects of these literary stances is included in Chapter III.

The nature of pagan achievement was as open to question as the nature of pagan limitation, a point which will be discussed in Chapter II. Precisely what was the basis of such knowledge as the heathen possessed, and what degree of perfection was possible to them? Nominalist theologians made much of the idea that the man who does his best naturally (*qui facit quod in se est ex parte naturalibus*) will receive divine aid in acquiring knowledge and effecting his salvation.¹⁴ Robert Holcot (d.1349), whose popular commentary on the Book of Wisdom was known to Chaucer,¹⁵ claimed that God would not refuse the grace necessary for salvation to people who 'did what was in them' and observed assiduously the best law they had, whether it was the natural law (available to pagans), the Mosaic Law (available to Old Testament figures) or the New Law (available since the passion of Christ). Such views were castigated as semi-pelagian by Thomas Bradwardine (d.1349), one of the foremost Augustinian theologians of the fourteenth century, by which he meant that the nominalists inclined to the belief that an individual could merit salvation through his own efforts. Holcot's position was far more complex than that, as shall be explained below. Suffice it to mention here one interesting

it is. In the second book of *The Scale of Perfection*, the English mystic Walter Hilton (d. 1395) emphasizes that Jews and pagans do not receive the benefits of the passion since they do not believe in it.¹⁶ From the beginning of the world until its end, no-one was ever saved, nor will be saved, except through belief in Jesus Christ and His coming. Therefore, Hilton continues, it seems to him a serious mistake for anyone to say that Jews and Saracens may be saved by keeping their own law, even though they do not believe in Jesus Christ in the manner of Holy Church, inasmuch as their own faith is supposed to be good and sufficient for their salvation, and in that faith they seem to perform many good deeds. It is sometimes assumed that they will be saved, and that if they knew that the Christian faith was better than their own, they would renounce their own faith and accept Christianity.

Sen þis is sob, þen þink me þat pese men gretly & greuonuly erre þat saien þat Lewes & Saregeins bi þeþing of þeir own law moun be mad saf þawʒ þei trowe not in Iesu Crist als Haly Kirke trowes; in als mikel as þei wene þat þei owne trowþ is good & siker & suffisaunt to þair saluacioun, & in þat trowþ þei doo as it semes many gode dedes of riȝtwisnes, & þeraventure if þei knewe þat Cristen feiþ ware better þen þaures is þei wold leue þeire own & take it; þat þei þerfore schuld be saf.¹⁷

All these ideas may be found in the writings of Nominalist theologians. Their point of view is untenable, Hilton argues, because Christ, God and man, is both the way and the end; He is the mediator between God and man, and without Him no soul can be reconciled to God or come to heavenly bliss. This major difference of opinion helps to explain Chaucer's reticence about making any definite statement concerning the ultimate destiny of his noble pagans, although it can be argued that he is implying more than he wished to make explicit.¹⁸ He was prepared, however, to have his Squire praise the pagan 'Tartre Cambyuskan', king of Tzarev, for keeping his Squire law to such an extent that he possessed all the regal and chivalric virtues:

Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng.
As of the secte of which that he was born
He kepte his lay, to which that he was sworn;
And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
And pitous and just, alwey yliche;
Sooth of his word, benigne, and honourable;
Of his courage as any centre stable;
Yong, fressh, and strong, in armes desirous
As any bacheler of al his hous.

(V, 16-24)

One may compare the manner in which Chaucer's Knight, the Squire's father, depicts the 'pitous and just' Theseus, the heathen ruler of ancient Athens.

Chaucer's portrait of a Tartar king, and Hilton's reference to 'saregeins', will serve to remind us that plenty of pagans were living in Chaucer's day, whose presence was proof positive that there were viable value-systems other than

whom the crusaders fought'.¹⁹ The crusades having failed, some Western Christians sought to conquer the Muslims by argument rather than by force.²⁰ To take but one notable example, Raymond Lull (d. 1316), who dedicated his life to the conversion of infidels, seems to have been the prime mover behind the decision at the Council of Vienna in 1311 to institute language schools in Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac, at Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Avignon and Salamanca.²¹ This, presumably, was designed to facilitate a dialogue between the religions with a view to conversion. As the frontiers of the known world were pushed back new candidates for conversion were revealed. Thomas Bradwardine read with horror Marco Polo's account of the Tartar deity Nangai, an earthly god who watches over children, beasts and crops.²² Late-medieval debates on the salvation of the heathen may seem remote and recherché to us, but they were stimulated by current affairs of great importance.

For the most part, Chaucer did not respond directly to those current affairs—a point which may be made effectively by contrasting his literary paganism with that of a major poet who was fascinated by the interaction of Christian and pagan characters, Wolfram von Eschenbach. In Wolfram's *Willehalm* (c. 1217) the hero's wife, a converted pagan, begs the assembled Christian leaders to spare the pagans, should they win the crucial battle.²³ The Saracens are the creation of God's own hand; whatever they may have done they should be forgiven, even as Christ forgave those who put him to death. After all, the first man God made was a heathen, as were Elias, Enoch, Noah, and Job—and all these men were just. When the battle has been fought and won, Wolfram speaks in *propria persona* to accuse the Christians of having sinned by killing many heathen, and has his hero command that the bodies of the fallen Saracens should be carried home to their own country in order to receive burial according to the rites of Islam. Wolfram's pagans are misguided and limited, but not wilful enemies of the one true God, who cares for all his creatures and offers salvation to all.²⁴ Moreover, in *Willehalm* religious values are complemented by chivalric ones, valid for all knights, so that in those terms a Saracen may be equal in worth to a Christian. We have come a long way from the *Chanson de Roland*, wherein the pagans, although not lacking in courage, are underhand, hot-tempered, stupidly idolatrous, and generally despicable; they all go to hell after death.

Chaucer's interests and emphases were very different from Wolfram's. *The Man of Law's Tale* is the only work of his in which pagans and Christians confront each other, and there the stress is on the divine providence which sees Constance safely through her intricate and marvellous adventures rather than on the nature of Islam or the relative merits of the different faiths. The wickedness of the Sultan's mother cannot be ascribed simply to her wish to defend 'the hooly lawes of our Alkaron' (II, 332): the point is rather that she, as a daughter of Eve, is the willing instrument of Satan's malice (see II, 358-71). Although Chaucer's Knight has seen honourable service both with and against present-day pagans (I, 60-66) he prefers to tell a pagan tale of long ago. It could be suggested that his experience of Saracen chivalry and honour has coloured the way in which he portrays the martial exploits of ancient Athenians and Thebans, but the pagan world of *The Knight's Tale* is essentially remote, 'closed', and self-contained—a description which applies equally well to the pagan world of *Troilus and Criseyde*. In those works, and to a lesser extent in

to write as an 'historial' poet about events which had long since passed and beliefs which had been rendered obsolete.²⁵

What is meant by calling Chaucer an 'historial' poet will be made clear in our first chapter; through discussion of medieval attitudes to history and poetic fiction respectively. The differences between *historia* and *fabula* (or *factio*) have for long fascinated literary critics and theorists. In his *Apology for Peery* (1581-3), Sir Philip Sidney, adopting certain precepts of Italian literary theory for his own polemical purposes, had argued that poetical fiction is superior to historical fact because 'Poetry ever setteth virtue out in her best colours' whereas history is obliged to record every kind of event and deed, whether edifying or not: 'the historian, being captived to the truth of a foolish world, is many times a terror from well-doing, and an encouragement to unbridled wickedness'.²⁶ Chaucer and his circle would have found this argument difficult to accept (as, indeed, did many of Sidney's contemporaries) since for them 'the reading of history was an exercise second only to the study of Holy Writ in its power to induce good morality and shape the individual into a worthy member of society'.²⁷ The good pagans presented in Chaucer's poems about pagan antiquity attain heights of virtue and wisdom which should put many a so-called Christian to shame (to apply the late-medieval cliché). On the other hand, Chaucer was perfectly aware that the heathen had made numerous mistakes and were limited in many ways, partly through their own fault and partly through the historical accident of having been born at the wrong time, before the advent of Christ. Yet Chaucer did not write exemplary history in the strict late-medieval and Renaissance sense of the term. His concern was with truth-to-life, with verisimilitude, rather than with moral truth; instead of wishing to score moral points through and off his pagans he wanted to show how they thought and behaved in their historical time and place.

Viewed from the vantage point of our own age, Chaucer's pagan poems are intriguing hybrids: they are at once anachronistic and historically accurate. Their anachronism mainly consists in such things as the late-medieval manners, fashions, ideals of chivalry, and doctrines of *fin'amors* which Chaucer imposed on his pagan materials in an attempt (how conscious we will never know) to up-date the past slightly, to make it more meaningful in contemporary, 'modern' terms. But when we consider such matters as pagan philosophy and faith, *Troilus* and *The Knight's Tale* are as historically accurate as Chaucer, as an Englishman of his time, could have made them. In order to understand precisely what Chaucer did to the primary sources of his pagan poems, it is necessary to investigate those attitudes to pagan antiquity which were current in fourteenth-century England, a task which (it will be argued in Chapter I) involves the reading of such philosophical, theological, encyclopaedic, historical and 'fabulous' works as Chaucer and his contemporaries read. Here one may find the basis for an understanding of Chaucer's poetry which takes stock of both his celebration of the achievements of good pagans and his fundamental detachment from their limitations.

CHAPTER I

An Historical Approach to Chaucerian Antiquity

When attempting to enter Chaucer's pagan world the modern critic is faced with a twofold problem. In the first place, he is approaching Chaucer's poems as fourteenth-century writings, which display late-medieval attitudes, preconceptions, prejudices and ideals. In the second place, he is approaching them as depictions of antiquity, with its pagan attitudes, preconceptions, prejudices and ideals. The critic is looking back into the medieval past at Chaucer's poems; Chaucer was looking back into the ancient past at pre-Christian societies.

The task of disentangling what was 'ancient' and what was 'modern' to Chaucer is a difficult one. It is all too easy for us to mistake what was, in Chaucer's opinion, an authentically pagan attitude for a fourteenth-century notion, as may be illustrated by reference to the most problematic of all the ancient themes treated by Chaucer, namely, pagan love. Emelye in *The Knight's Tale* has been regarded as the archetypal 'courtly lady' of the Middle Ages, the unmoved mover who stands aloof from the trials and tribulations which her suitors are suffering; content to accept the lover whom a spectacular trial of strength proves to be the better man. Similarly, Troilus in *Troilus and Criseyde* has been regarded as the ideal 'courtly lover' who, under the guidance of the trusted *ami* Pandarus, pursues his *fin'amors* according to the book, the book being the *Roman de la Rose* of Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun. In fact, neither Emelye nor Troilus are typical of the courtly ladies and lovers of romance tradition. Emelye is simply too passive and acquiescent to keep company with the heroines of, for example, Chretien de Troyes' *Eric et Enide*, *Cliges* and *Yvain*, or (to go somewhat down-market), the anonymous *Sir Degrevant*, *William of Palerne*, *Sir Isumbras* and *Florian and Florete*. Troilus is so ideal a courtly lover that he renders himself ineffectual: the reader may be forgiven for suspecting that, had Pandarus not helped him into bed with Criseyde (which he does, literally, at one point), there would have been no love-affair and hence no poem.

When it is realised that they are pagans, however, the behaviour of Emelye and Troilus becomes more comprehensible. As I hope to show below, Emelye's acquiescence is an aspect of her fatalism, the world-view which, according to late-medieval clerics, had been held by the vast majority of ancient heathen. Troilus, too, is imbued with the fatalism endemic to pagan society: if he is slow to act, this is because he cannot believe in the efficacy of human action in any situation. Faced with the impending loss of his beloved Criseyde, Troilus exclaims that

'al that comth, comth by necessitye:

Thus to ben born, it is my destinee'.

and of an unknown writer of the fifteenth century, ed. C. Babington and J. R. Lumby (London, 1865–86)
Review of English Studies

RES
Ridevall, *Fulgentius
Metaforalis*

RSPPT
John Ridevall, *Fulgentius Metaforalis*, ed. H. Liebeschütz, Studien der Bibliothek Warburg, iv (Leipzig, 1926)

SP
Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
Studies in Philology

Trevet, commentary
on Boethius
Nicholas Trevet, commentary on the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius; unfinished edition by the late E. T. Silk

Vincent of Beauvais,
Speculum Maius
Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Maius* (Venice, 1591)

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1 *La Chanson de Roland*, 1015 (ed. C. Segre, Documenti di Filologia, xvi, (Milan and Naples, 1971), 190).
- 2 *Le Roman de la Rose*, 7061–2 (ed. E. Langlois (Paris, 1914–24), iii, 28; trans. C. Dahlberg, *The Romance of the Rose by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1971), pp. 134–5).
- 3 This is argued in Chapter 4 of my forthcoming book *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*.
- 4 In the later Middle Ages the term *antiqui* could designate the 'ancient' writers of Greco-Latin antiquity as opposed to 'modern' Christians, those 'ancient' people who lived before the time of Christ as opposed to those who live after it, or the 'ancient' Church Fathers as opposed to 'modern' medieval writers. Throughout this book 'antiqui' and 'moderni' are used in the first two senses only. For discussion see M.-D. Chenu, 'Antiqui, Moderni', *RSPPT*, xvii (1928), 82–94. In scholasticism a more specialised sense developed, whereby 'antiqui' could refer to previous generations of scholars, while 'moderni' referred to the scholars of one's own generation. When designating one's opponents, 'moderni' could have a derogatory connotation: see Philotheus Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, ed. E. M. Buytaert, Franciscan Institute Publications, Philosophy Series, xii (New York, 1958), 40–1; cf. Janet Coleman, *Piers Plowman and the 'Moderni'*, *Lecture di pensiero e d'arte* (Rome, 1981).
- 5 See D. Comparetti, *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, trans. E. F. M. Benecke (London, 1895), pp. 99–103; cf. pp. 219–31, on Dante's attitude to Virgil.
- 6 *The Oxford Book of Medieval Latin Verse*, ed. F. J. E. Raby (Oxford, 1959), p. 392. For commonplace medieval attitudes to sibyls see Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale*, ii, 100 (*Speculum Maius*, iv, fol. 28').
- 7 See *Giles of Rome, De Erroribus Philosophorum*, ed. J. Koch and trans. J. O. Riedl (Milwaukee, 1944).
- 8 In the case of *Patience* I am thinking of lines 165–240, in which Jonah converts the pagan seararers to monotheism: see *Patience*, ed. J. J. Anderson (Manchester, 1969), 36–9. *St Erkenwald, The Travels of Sir John Mandeville, Patience, Alexander B, The Awynys of Arthur, Piers Plowman* and (briefly) *Troilus and Criseyde* are discussed in respect of their literary paganism by T. G. Hahn, *God's Friends: Virtuous Heathen in Later Medieval Thought and English Literature* (Ph.d. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974).
- 9 Hahn, *God's Friends*, p. 152.
- 10 *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa Ordinaria et Postilla Nicolai Lyrami* (Lyon, 1589), iii, cols 1917–8.
- 11 For the anonymous *Liber Philosophorum* see *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, ed. C. F. Bühler, EETS OS ccii (London, 1941), pp. x–xi; for Butley see the edition by H. Krust (Tübingen, 1886). Full references to the other works mentioned here may be found in my table of Abbreviations.
- 12 For discussion see D. L. Douie, *Archbishop Peckham* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 272–301; P. Van Steenbrouck, *Archbishop Peckham* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 272–301;

tes in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (New York, 1968), pp. 222–40; and especially R. Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 Mars 1277*, *Philosophes Médiévaux*, xxii (Louvain and Paris, 1977).

- 13 *The Medieval Attitude toward Astrology, particularly in England*, Yale Studies in English, ix (New Haven, 1920), pp. 145, 148. For a sensible approach to the problem see Chauncey Wood's chapter on 'Chaucer's Attitude toward Astrology' in his *Chaucer and the Country of the Stars* (Princeton, 1970), pp. 3–50.

- 14 The literature on late-medieval nominalism is vast. For the purposes of this study, the following have been especially helpful: P. Vignaux, *Justification et prédétermination au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1934), and *Nominalisme au XIV^e siècle* (Montreal and Paris, 1948); the compendium of William of Ockham's theological ideas (perhaps assembled by Robert Holcot) edited by L. Baudry as *Le Tractatus de principis theologiae attribué à Guillaume d'Occam* (Paris, 1936); R. Guelley, *Philosophie et théologie chez Guillaume d'Ockham* (Louvain and Paris, 1947); L. Baudry, *Lexique philosophique de Guillaume d'Occam* (Paris, 1957); H. A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967); William of Ockham: *Predestination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents*, trans. M. M. Adams and N. Kretzmann (New York, 1969); Gordon Left, *William of Ockham* (Manchester, 1975).

- 15 See p. 11.
- 16 *The Scale of Perfection*, ii, 3, ed. S. S. Hussey, *An Edition, from the Manuscripts, of Book II of Walter Hilton's Scale of Perfection* (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1962), pp. 7–9.

- 17 Note the striking verbal parallels between this passage and the statement made by Langland's Ymaginatif (which arises out of his defence of the proposition that the good pagan Trajan is saved) to the effect that God will recognise the 'trupe' of the man who observes the best law available to him:

Ac trupe þat trespased neuere ne trauerseþ ayeins his lawe,
But lyueþ as his lawe techþ and leueþ þer be no bettre,
And if þer were he woude amende, and in swich wille deieþ —
Ne woude neuere trewe god but [trewe] trupe were allowed!

- Piers Plowman*, B-text, XII, 287–90, ed. G. Kane and E. T. Donaldson (London, 1975), p. 483. Clearly, Ymaginatif and Hilton are referring to the same doctrine. John Trevisa agreed with Hilton rather than with Ymaginatif: see above p. 55.

- 18 For discussion see above pp. 11, 55–9. There have been several attempts to relate some of Chaucer's ideas and attitudes to late-medieval nominalism and so-called skepticism, notably Sheila Delany, *Chaucer's House of Fame: The Poetics of Skeptical Fideism* (Chicago and London, 1972); John Gardner, *The Poetry of Chaucer* (Carbondale, Illinois, 1977), pp. ix, xvii, xviii, 43, 156, 254, 298, 316, 337; R. A. Peck, 'Chaucer and the Nominalist Questions', *Speculum*, liii (1978), 745–60. No specific and indubitable instances of nominalist influence on Chaucer have, however, been provided as yet; we are offered analogies of the most general kind. Most of the scholastic texts cited in such discussions fail to meet the two aspects of the criterion of historical plausibility described on pp. 9–10 above. In view of the danger of solipsism, it seems prudent, at the outset, to investigate thoroughly the philosophical ideas in known Chaucer sources, to determine how adequate they are for our interpretative needs. Only when this is done—and we have a long way to go—should we turn to tangential texts or to the 'general intellectual climate of the age' (assuming that such a thing exists, and, if so, that we can agree on its nature—which seems highly unlikely).

- 19 *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1974), s.v. 'Saracens', p. 1236.

and North Africa, perhaps due to Raymond of Peñafort, who after serving as Master General of the Order of Preachers for two years (1238–40), resigned to work in Barcelona. According to tradition, it was in response to Raymond's request that he wrote a work against the errors of the infidels that would both take away the thick atmosphere of darkness, and unfold the doctrine of true light to those willing to believe'. This work, the *Summa contra Gentiles* (1259–64), was intended for experienced missionaries rather than beginners; it may also have been intended to counter the errors of the Parisian 'Gentiles', i.e. those contemporaries of Aquinas who had been led astray by Arabic philosophers. See J. A. Weisheipl, *Francis Thomas d'Aquino* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 130–3; M.-D. Chenu, *Toward understanding St Thomas*, trans. A.-M. Landry and D. Hughes (Chicago, 1964), pp. 288–92.

- 21 See R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p. 73; cf. Coleman, *Piers Plowman and the Modern*, pp. 115–6.
- 22 *De Causa Dei*, i, 1, corollarium 16 (ed. Savile, p. 12); cf. *The Travels of Marco Polo*, ch. 2, trans. R. E. Latham (Harmondsworth, 1958), p. 68.

- 23 See the useful summary in J. F. Pögg, *Wolfram von Eschenbach* (New York, 1972), pp. 102, 104–5.
- 24 See Carl Lohmark, *Remerwart in Wolfram's 'Willehalm'* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 129–35, esp. p. 135.

- 25 I have taken the term 'historical' poet from C. S. Lewis, 'What Chaucer really did to *Il Filostrato*', repr. in *Chaucer Criticism*, ed. R. J. Schoeck and Jerome Taylor (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1960–1), ii, 16–33 (pp. 19–21).

- 26 *Sir Philip Sidney: An Apology for Poetry*, ed. G. Shepherd (London, 1965), p. 111.
- 27 L. B. Wright, *Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (London, 1964), p. 297.

CHAPTER I

- 1 E. D. Hirsch, *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago and London, 1976), pp. 7–8.

- 2 For the concept of 'alterity' see H. R. Jauss, *Ästhetik und Modernität der mitteralterlichen Literatur* (Munich, 1977); also his article 'The Alterity and Modernity of Medieval Literature', *New Literary History*, x (1979), 385–90. See further the important reservations expressed by John Burrow, 'The Alterity of Medieval Literature', *ibid.*, pp. 385–90.

- 3 The following few pages constitute a reworking of part of my paper 'Chaucer and Comparative Literary Theory', in *New Perspectives in Chaucer Criticism*, ed. D. M. Rose (Norman, Oklahoma, 1981), pp. 53–69.

- 4 Hirsch, *The Aims of Interpretation*, p. 41.
- 5 See Chenu, *Toward Understanding St Thomas*, p. 144; P. C. Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au moyen âge*, Bibliothèque Thomiste, xxvi (Paris, 1944), p. 250.

- 6 A useful review of Boccaccio's influence on Chaucer and up-to-date bibliography are included in N. R. Havely, *Chaucer's Boccaccio*, Chaucer Studies, iii (Woodbridge, 1980); R. A. Pratt has suggested that Chaucer used a French translation of *Il Filostrato*: 'Chaucer and *Le Roman de Troie et de Criseida*', *SP*, liii (1956), 509–39. However, Louis de Beauvais, its putative author, wrote much later than Chaucer.

- 7 On the nature of these works, and their influence on Chaucer, see especially K. Young, *The Origin and Development of the Story of Troilus and Criseyde* (London, 1908); G. L. Kittredge, 'Chaucer's Lollius', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, xxviii (1917), 47–133; R. K. Root, 'Chaucer's Dares', *MP*, xv (1917), 1–22, and the excellent notes in his edition of *Troilus and Criseyde* (Princeton, 1945); I. C. McGalliard, *Classical Mythology in Chaucer's Medieval Tricentenary of the 13th*.

CHAPTER II

philosophized. The impressive accuracy of his depictions, considered with regard to late-medieval conceptions of paganism, will be intimated in the next chapter and confirmed in Chapters III and IV. For Chaucer was not a (self-styled) historian in the mould of Joseph of Exeter and Guido delle Colonne. He belonged to a later generation, the generation embracing Vincent of Beauvais and Ralph Higden, which is distinguished by a more liberal view of the pagan past. It is this liberal view which is the very essence of Chaucer's historical sense and sensibility.

The Shadowy Perfection of the Pagans

'We must see in what consisted the shadowy perfection of these philosophers,' declares John of Wales, introducing an account of the achievements of the pagan philosophers.¹ There can be no perfection without divine grace, he continues, yet in many pagans there was perfection after a manner, which 'consisted of the detestation of vice, so far as this was possible without the grace of the faith which illuminates and purges'. Elsewhere, John quotes John of Salisbury's statement that there was in the pagan philosophers 'a venerable image of virtue, though the substance of virtue cannot be found without faith and love'.² Would that there were found among us those who have even the image of virtue! For who nowadays puts on 'even the shadow of those virtues, with which the Gentiles flourished, although without Christ they could not grasp the true fruit of blessedness?' In these two passages both the virtues and the failings of the ancient pagans are intimated, but it is abundantly clear that John is determined to give them as much credit as he can as often as he can.

It is the purpose of this chapter to discover what these virtues and failings were supposed to be in Chaucer's day, and especially in Chaucer's sources. First, heathen limitations shall be investigated in respect of their two basic kinds as identified by medieval writers: shortcomings in theology and shortcomings in philosophy. Pagan 'theology' is spoken of in the sense attested by Vincent of Beauvais who, following Augustine, took it to refer to heathen conceptions of the gods, a type of knowledge vastly inferior to Christian theology which had as its subject the one true God.³ As we shall see, pagan idolatry was a major target for medieval attacks on false notions of deity. The pagan philosophies with which we are concerned are those of greatest interest to Chaucer critics, namely, theories concerning fate, fortune, predestination and the freedom of the will. Secondly, the intellectual and moral achievements of the pagans will be investigated, with special reference to those heathen ideas and actions which approximated most closely to Christian theory and practice. All the good pagans were good, but some were better than others. It will, therefore, be necessary to consider the degrees of perfection which (in the eyes of late-medieval writers) different pagans had attained, and the extent to which pre-Christian thinkers could be regarded as personally responsible for their shortcomings. This survey will, it is hoped, place us in a good position from which to consider the pagan limitations and achievements delineated in *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Knight's Tale*.

I IMPERFECT PAGAN THEOLOGY

Let us begin at the beginning, with medieval descriptions of who and what the pagans were, and how their gods originated. Isidore of Seville had claimed that *pagani* were so named from the country regions (*pagi*) around Athens, in which places the gentiles set up lights and idols.⁴ The gentiles, according to Isidore, are those who are without the law (i.e. the law of Christ), because they did not yet believe.⁵ They are called *gentiles* because they are just as they were generated or born (*geniti*), 'that is, just as they descended into the flesh in sin, namely serving idols and not yet regenerated' in Christ. A version of this explanation is found in Guido's *Historia Destructionis Troiae*: 'They are called gentiles because they were always without the law, and were always thus, so that they are stated to have been born serving idols from the first'.⁶ Isidore also remarked that since the advent of the Christian faith the term 'gentiles' refers to unbelievers, whereas 'apostates' designates those who, having received baptism, revert to the cult of idols and the contagion of sacrifices.⁷ Hugutio of Pisa and William Brito, who repeated Isidore's definition of *pagani*, add that the term describes all those who do not dwell in the city of god, that is, the Church.⁸ All these accounts stress the contrast between the pagan past and the Christian present, and identify idol-worship as an essential feature of paganism.

The most generally accepted explanation of the origin of the pagan gods, and hence of idol-worship, was the euhemeristic theory that these deities originally were mortal men who, through misplaced reverence or fear, had become falsely worshipped as gods.⁹ In his *Speculum Historiale* Vincent of Beauvais quotes Isidore verbatim on this subject: 'Those whom the pagans claim to be gods can be shown to have once been men; they began to be worshipped among their own people after their death, on account of the life or merits of each one: for example, Isis in Egypt, Jove in Crete, Juba among the Moors, Faunus among the Latins, and Quirinus among the Romans'.¹⁰ This error had been compounded by ancient poets and mythmakers, who sang their praises and by composing odes elevated them to heaven. Of course, some poets did attempt to reduce the gods to physical causes, suggesting that they were to be understood in terms of the elements.¹² Robert Holcot, expounding Wisdom 13-2, recounts that the Chaldeans worshipped fire, named Vulcan by the gentiles; others worshipped the ether, which the gentiles named Jove; the sun was supposed to be Phoebus, the first son of Jove, and so on.¹³ For Isidore of Seville this kind of argument was a vain attempt to confer respectability on lying fictions about the gods by interpreting them naturalistically.¹⁴ Holcot, Vincent and other late-medieval writers were more charitable, attempting as they were to bring out the praiseworthy aspects of classical antiquity.

On the other hand, the pagan gods were associated with the planets which bore the same names. Isidore claimed that the Romans consecrated the planets with the names of the gods, 'that is, of Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus and Mercury'.¹⁵ Guido's *Historia* takes a different view. 'Jupiter or Jove acquired the name of the planet Jupiter, and the pagans worshipped him by the name of the highest god'; Mercury was named after the planet Mercury, and so on.¹⁶ Such thinking seems to be circular. Isidore believes that the planets were

certain men, who eventually were worshipped as gods, were named after the planets. At any rate, it is clear that the impotence of the link between the gods and the planets was sustained by the commonplace medieval belief that heavenly bodies had real power over human lives. But how could dead men continue to be the objects of worship? The reason usually offered was that this was due to the intervention of demons or devils, who sought to lead mankind astray.¹⁷ Therefore, the real objects of much pagan worship were devils, those angels who had been banished to Hell because of the great pride of Lucifer.

This is made very clear in the learned digression on the origins of idolatry which constitutes Guido's major addition to the material he found in the *Roman de Troie*.¹⁸ There is a lack of agreement, he explains, concerning the identity of the first person to make an idol. According to the Jews Ishmael fashioned the first image from clay, but the pagans say that it was Prometheus, and that from him developed the art of making images and statues. An Assyrian king called Ninus, the son of Belus, was the instigator of the worship of such idols. When Belus died Ninus 'ordered an image constructed of gold which was amazingly like his father, so that for his comfort and in memory of his father he could imagine by the sight of the image that he was seeing his father'. Accordingly, King Ninus worshipped this gold image as if it were a god and ordered his people to worship it too, 'and he handed it down to be believed by all Assyrians' that Belus was deified in Heaven. A demon encouraged this error by entering into the idol of Belus and answering the questions of those who sought its advice:

Et sic, non multo postmodum tempore procedente, spiritus immundus in hoc ydolum Belli regis ingressus responsa petentibus exhibebat. Unde apud Assyrios illud ydolum dictum est Bellus. Alii dixerunt Bel, alii Beel, alii Baal, alii Belphegor, alii Belzabuch, alii Belzebub. Et huius ydoli mortuus esse deos et pro diis adorabant eos. Unde dixerunt primum deum fuisse Saturnum. Qui Saturnus fuit rex Crete, nato nomine ab illo planeta qui dicitur Saturnus. Quo mortuo deum esse dixerunt, non habentem neque patrem neque matrem.

[And so, after not much time had gone by, an unclean spirit entered into this idol of King Belus and gave answers to those who sought them. This is why this idol was called Belus among the Assyrians. Some say Bel, some Beel, some Baal, some Belphegor, some Belzabuch, some Belzebub. From the example of this idol, the pagans proceeded to the worship of idols, imagining that dead men were gods and adoring them as gods. This is why they said the first god was Saturn. This Saturn was the king of Crete, his name being taken from that planet which is called Saturn. When he was dead he was said to be a god, having neither father nor mother.]

From Guido's subsequent account of the origin of devils it is clear that this unclean spirit is one of those who fell from heaven with Satan, the Leviathan or Prince of Devils who 'with his cunning temptations cast our miserable parents and their descendants into the same infernal fire'.

worshipped different gods. Idolatry and polytheism were, therefore, supposed to have been propagated by the forces of evil.

According to a common medieval etymology, the name *daemones* ('demons') came from a Greek word meaning 'experts' or 'those who know things', for demons have foreknowledge of many future things, whence they can make predictions.²⁰ In his *Speculum Doctrinale* Vincent of Beauvais quotes St Augustine's version of this etymology, then repeats Peter Lombard's statement that, although the evil angels may be inflexible through malice, they have not lost their lively perception.²¹ As Isidore says, demons are knowledgeable partly on account of the subtlety of their sense, partly because of the experience which they have gained during their long lives, and partly because they retain (by divine permission) some of their angelic powers of revelation.²² In Vincent's *Speculum Historiale* the process by which the worshippers of idols are deceived by false images is included in a list of the ways in which devils can provoke men to sin.²³ The relationship between pagan images and demons is described comprehensively in the apocryphal *Speculum Morale*, through a distinction between the initiating or forming cause (*causa dispositiva*) and the completing cause (*causa consummativa*) of idolatry.²⁴ The *causa dispositiva* is itself threefold, declares the anonymous compiler with his usual scholastic precision. First, it proceeded from inordinate affection: not being content to honour someone as a man, people revered him as a god. This reason is intimated in the Book of Wisdom 14:15: 'For a father being afflicted with bitter grief, made to himself the image of his son who was quickly taken away: and him who had then died as a man, he began to worship as a god'. The same authority adds that men, serving either their affection, or their kings, imposed the incommunicable name of deity on mere pieces of wood and stone (Wisdom 14:21). The second reason, our compiler continues, was the great delight in representation which is a facet of human nature. In Wisdom 13:11–19 we are told how an artist or carpenter might, by the skill of his craft, fashion a piece of wood into the image of a man, and then proceed to worship it, inquiring of it concerning his substance, his children, or his marriage. The third reason was the inability of men to see the Creator in His creation. Preoccupied with the beauty or power of creatures, vain men failed 'by attending to the works' to acknowledge who was the workman, but instead 'imagined either the fire, or the wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the great water, or the sun and the moon, to be the gods that rule the world' (Wisdom 13:1–2). All three reasons, it would seem, were due to men, either through ignorance of the intellect or disorder of the affection. The compiler then proceeds to the *causa consummativa*, which was due to demons, who in order to make erring men worship them presented themselves in idols by giving responses and doing things which seemed marvellous to mortals. Whence it is stated in Psalm 95:5, 'all the gentile gods are demons'. This information helps us to grasp how medieval writers could envisage certain pagan oracles as being at once true and full of falsehood. Those demons who inhabited heathen images could indeed foresee the future, but, since they were of the race of 'prevaricating angels whose prince was the devil'²⁵ their answers were not to be trusted.

One of the best-known cases of a deceptive pagan prophecy concerned the proud king Croesus, to whom Boethius had referred in *De Consolatione Philosophiae* II pr. 2. Explaining this allusion, Nicholas Trevet tells of how

Apollo's answer was ambiguous: 'If Croesus crosses the Alys, a great kingdom will fall'. Croesus, reassured by this prediction, crossed the river Alys, and a great kingdom did fall—his own. Apollo was notorious for his misleading answers, as is made clear by Isidore of Seville's discussion of *amphibolia* as a form of speech. His first example of ambiguity is the response of Apollo to Pyrrhus: 'I say that you, O man sprung from Aeacus, the Romans can defeat'.²⁷ Here it is uncertain who will be the victor, the Romans or Pyrrhus. It is little wonder, then, that Chaucer's Criseyde, with her father's devotion to Apollo in mind, should protest that

... goddess speken in amphibologies,
And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty yves'.²⁸

(IV, 1406–7)

Stories of demons deceiving men through the agency of oracles, false prophets or speaking images, were legion in the late Middle Ages.²⁸ For example, in the *Polychronicon* Ralph Higden relates how one Stephen, Proctor of Gascoigne, consulted a spirit which animated a head of brass.²⁹ First he asked, would he see King Richard again (on the King's return from the Holy Land)?, to which the spirit answered in the negative. Then he asked, how long would his administration endure? The spirit answered, until his death. Finally Stephen asked, where would he die? to which the spirit answered 'in plume'. Thereafter, Stephen commanded that no plumes or feathers should be put near him, and felt free to oppress his people. But this wicked man eventually was killed in a castle called 'Plume', and so the deception of the spirit was expressed. Higden then tells a similar story of how a man was told by a spirit that he should possess Greece. To his surprise, the Greeks refused to have him as their ruler. All was revealed when he married a woman called 'Greece', thereby possessing Greece.

More complicated, and certainly more serious, is Guido delle Colonne's account of how Achilles and Patroclus went to Delphos to seek an answer from Apollo concerning the outcome of their expedition to Troy.³⁰ In the temple of Apollo there was a very great image, all made of gold, in honour of the god. This idol, a deaf and dumb object made in the similitude of a mortal man, had been entered by an unclean spirit who sought to keep his worshippers in a state of error:

Que licet fuisset ex auro composita et in veritate fuisset surda et muta, tamen secundum gentium errores colencium ydolatricam (que principatiter apud ipsos inualuit, cum omisissent verum cultum Dei veri, qui in sapientia, id est in filio Dei, domino nostro Ihesu Christo, ex nichilo cuncta creavit) adheserunt diis surdis et mutis, qui pro certo homines mortales fuerunt, credentes et putantes eos esse deos, quorum potentia nulla erat. Sed responsa que dabantur ab eis non ipsi sed qui ingrediebantur in eorum ymagine dabant, qui spiritus immundi pro certo erant, ut per eorum responsa homines in perpetuis errorum ceccitatibus conservarent.

pagans, according to their error, embracing idolatry (which chiefly prevailed among them because they lacked the true worship of the true God, who in His Wisdom, that is, in the Son of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ, created all things of nothing), clung to the worship of deaf and dumb gods, who assuredly had been mortal men, believing and considering that those who had no power were gods. But the answers which were given by them were given not by them but by those who entered into their images, who were surely unclean spirits, so that through their answers men were kept in the perpetual blindness of error.]

After providing the account of the origins of idolatry and of demons which was described above, Guido returns to Delphos and Apollo's answer.³¹ Speaking in a low voice, the spirit tells Achilles that in ten years Troy will fall to the Greeks. This prediction is then confirmed by Calchas, a Trojan priest and the father of Briseida (the antecedent of Boccaccio's Criseida and Chaucer's Criseyde), who has decided to throw in his lot with the enemy in the light of a warning from Apollo. There is no need for Guido explicitly to make the point that the responses received by these men are deceptive, even though true.³² The implication is too strong to miss; the import of Guido's thorough analysis of dumb images and their unclean inhabitants is abundantly clear. Of course, the Greeks did win the war after ten years, just as Apollo had promised, but their loss both during and after the siege of Troy was a terrible price to pay. Had Achilles been told the whole truth, he might have thought twice about embarking on a course of action which would result in his own death and those of many comrades-in-arms. But as a devil in disguise, Apollo was careful to provide just the right amount of accurate information required to bring his worshipper to grief. 'Demons greatly delight in the shedding of human blood', to quote Robert Holcot.³³

Also implicit in Guido's narrative is a criticism of the inordinate extent to which the heathen relied on their ungodly gods. This is quite explicit in Joseph of Exeter's version of the episode, where the 'amazing faith' of the Greeks is ridiculed.³⁴ The same warriors 'whom passion dragged headlong into battle and who chafed at every delay, gladly idled their time away in peaceful prayer and calmly sought the oracles. Grief put aside its pitiful sighs, glory its laurels, anger its threats, the army stayed rooted to the spot, its warts suspended, and Mars himself waited on the permission of that loquacious cave', that is, the cave of the Delphic oracle. For Joseph such an excess of misplaced reverence is but one instance of the 'credulous blindness of pagan superstition'. Another case in point is the way in which certain heathen worshipped animals and other natural things. Hence Joseph does not know whether to 'lament the idols of the Egyptians with laughter, or tears, or a mixture of both'. For in Egypt 'they worshipped crops, trees, vegetables, serpents that crept, and birds that flew'. Indeed, Joseph complains, such stupidity has by no means ceased in our own age. Fortune-tellers in Spain 'classify the birds of their country by song, or flight, or taste, considering these as omens of things to come'. Elsewhere, old women 'hate to dream of laughter and fear the loss of teeth'; they foretell future events 'by the prophetic chattering of their magpies or the itching of their ears'. But Joseph's most pungent sarcasm is reserved for the Delphic oracle: 'More in error, however, were those answers and that wind of Delphi, which wretched

thought was God'. 'He whom His universe proclaims as its Creator', Joseph exclaims, 'does not bellow in a cave'.

The fact that men had stooped to worship material things struck many medieval writers as absurd. This attitude is conveyed in the attack on idolatry found in the prose *Roman de Troie*, a revision of Benoit's work made around the middle of the thirteenth century. The anonymous writer ridicules idols by indicating the 'wood, copper or other metal' of which they are made.³⁵ Guido's reference to the deafness and dumbness of the golden image of Apollo has already been mentioned. Elsewhere the emphasis is placed on the fact that pagans worshipped objects of their own making. According to Holcot, in Wisdom 13.11-16 idols are derided on three counts: because of the material from which they are made, because of the manner in which they are made, and because of the place in which they are put.³⁶ Reading his passage from Wisdom in the light of Isaiah 44.13-17, he tells the story of the artificer or carpenter who, having cut down a large tree in a wood, divides it in three parts. From the first part he makes a vessel, or an instrument necessary for life such as a cart, a ship, or a plough. From the second part, which consists of the fragments left over from the vessel, he makes a fire on which to cook his food. From the third part, which is full of humps and knots, and from which nothing necessary for human life can be made, he makes an idol. It is most fatuous, therefore, to believe this to be a god, since it is of the same substance as the material which he burnt and the material from which he made his plough. Moreover, Solomon states that the carpenter carves his idol diligently 'when he has nothing else to do', thereby deriding idols in respect of the manner in which they are made. By the knowledge of his craft he shapes a statue from the wood, not creating any new thing, but removing pieces of wood one after the other, thereby obtaining the likeness of a man. Alternatively, he may carve the wood after 'the resemblance of some beast', just as the Egyptians depicted Arpis in the form of an ox, Hammon as a ram, and Anubis as a dog. Then the image is covered over with red paint and dye. Holcot regards this red dye as a false colour, since it conceals the natural colour of the wood and gives it the appearance of something which it is not, every flaw in the image being hidden. Finally, idols are derided by reason of their location, when we are told that the carpenter makes a worthy dwelling-place for his image. The pagans placed their images in the most beautiful temples, declares Holcot, revealing his aesthetic sense. An idol must be fixed firmly lest it should fall—but the statue of Dagon fell before the ark of God (I Kings 5.1-5). What the carpenter has made is an image of a man and not a man; it needs the help of a man and by no means can help a man.

The silliness and fatuity of the pagans in making vows, prayers and supplications to such artifacts is the subject of Holcot's next lecture.³⁷ The carpenter is 'not ashamed to speak to that which has no life' even though he ought to be, since he himself is a rational creature whereas the idol, lacking a soul, is not. Although his idol is 'weak', that is, powerless to confer health, 'for health he makes supplication and for life prays to that which is dead', an object made either of dry wood or lifeless stone (Wisdom 13.18). For help this fool 'calls on that which is unprofitable', just as the priests of Baal called on their god in vain, as we read in III Kings 18: 'There was no voice, nor any that answered; and they leaped over the altar that they had made.'

with blood' (verses 26 and 28). Then Elias with good reason mocked these priests, saying that perhaps Baal was talking, or in an inn, or on a journey, or asleep and in need of awakening. This chimes with Wisdom 13.19, where Solomon ridicules the foolishness of those who 'for a good journey' pray to an idol that cannot walk, and in general appeal to the very thing that is unable to do anything.

But in view of all these criticisms of pagan images, what ought we to think of Christian images? Should Christians adore images of Christ and of the Saints? Holcot confronted this problem at the very beginning of his treatment of idolatry.³⁸ It would appear that we should not make images, because it is stated in Exodus 22.4, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself an image nor any likeness'. If it is not right to make them, surely it is worse to adore them. When idolatry is reprehended in Scripture it is always spoken of with reference to images made by human hands, as Wisdom 13.10 makes clear. And Christian artifacts are, after all, objects made of gold and silver, wood and stone. Since it is written in Scripture that such things are not allowed, it would seem to follow that it is superstitious to employ images.

Holcot demolishes this argument by citing the traditional practice of the Church, St John Damascene, and his fellow-Dominican St Thomas Aquinas. According to Aquinas's commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, an image can be considered in two ways, either with regard to what it is in itself or with regard to what it signifies.³⁹ The spiritual realities signified by images are the proper objects of Christian reverence. Holcot proceeds to quote Aquinas's account of the threefold cause of the institution of images: for the instruction of laymen (for whom images take the place of books), in order that the mystery of the incarnation and the examples of the Saints may be the more firmly and directly imprinted on the memory, and in order to excite the affection of devotion, which is caused more readily by things seen than by things heard.⁴⁰ Then Holcot emphasises the point that Christian images are quite different in nature and in usage from pagan similitudes, the latter having originated through affection for the dead and having been sustained by demons who entered into the effigies or images of the departed.⁴¹

A basically similar pattern of thought informs the portrayal of Dame Idolatry provided in the second recension (1335) of Guillaume de Deguileville's popular poem *Le Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*. This is hardly surprising, since Deguileville is imaginatively elaborating on the carpenter episode of Wisdom 13.11-19, the focus of Holcot's comments on idolatry and the pagan gods which have been outlined above. *Le Pèlerinage* will be cited as an example of the way in which a poet could powerfully dramatize the doctrinal commonplaces which thus far have been the subject of this chapter. The following paraphrase follows the Middle English translation of 1426 which is usually attributed to John Lydgate.⁴²

Deguileville's pilgrim moves from the island where he has encountered Astrology and Geomancy to another island, which is inhabited by an ugly old hag named Idolatry, who whinnies like a horse. In her house is found a foul image of a man crowned like a king, holding a sword in his hand and bearing on his shoulders a shield which is painted with black flies and spiders. A devotee—apparently a mason or carpenter—kneels before this idol, making his sacrifice. Idolatry, who delights in this sight, reveals that she is the friend and daughter of Satan, who is enclosed in the image, and always gives

ambiguous answers to infect the carpenter's soul with sin and to trouble his wits. The fool asks the idol for a response, but it itself does not hear, being as dumb as a stone. It has eyes but cannot see; feet, but it cannot walk a foot away from its chair; its sword and shield are of no avail in battle (cf. Wisdom 13.18-19). What is especially absurd is that the carpenter made the idol himself, and therefore knows that it cannot help him—a clear echo of Wisdom 13.15-16.

The same sylve carpenter
Dyde a-forn hys bysy peyne
To forge hym, wyth hys handys tweyne,
And made hym flyrst off swych entaylle,
And wot he may nothing awaylle
To helpe hym, whan that al ys do.
They ben A-coursyd, bothe two.

(20934-40)

The carpenter, refusing the pilgrim's advice to repent, accuses him and Christians in general of revering idols which are equally useless. The reply is twofold: images of the Saints are mere 'spectacles' and 'merours' of the spiritual realities which they represent, and they serve as books for the unlearned.⁴³ This type of defence is utterly predictable, but it should be remembered that it was of far greater significance in Lydgate's day than in the time of Deguileville or Holcot, in view of the Wycliffite rejection of the traditional role of images in worship. Wycliff himself had opposed the veneration of religious *objets d'art* with moderation, but by the late 1380's a strong distrust of them had become one of the distinguishing marks of a Lollard.⁴⁴ This was the period in which Chaucer composed his great poems about pagan idolaters, *Troilus and Criseyde* and the final version of the tale of Palamon and Arcite.

But let us return, for the moment, to *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*. Why, the pilgrim asks the carpenter, should he persist in worshipping an idol which contains Satan and will therefore hurt him mortally? But the 'vyleyn' refuses to argue any more, and threatens to cut off his opponent's head if he does not worship his idol, whereupon the pilgrim departs in great fear. This attempt at coercion is consonant with one of the reasons for the continuance of idolatry offered in Wisdom 14.16: men had to maintain the wicked custom of pagan rites and sacrifices to idols for fear of offending the tyrants who enforced error as law. Robert Holcot interpreted this passage with the aid of the tale of King Syrophanes of Egypt, drawn from Fulgentius (as expounded by Ridevall) and Alexander Nequam.⁴⁵ Out of inordinate corporeal affection Syrophanes set up an image of his dead son: in seeking a remedy for sorrow he founded a nursery of sadness. The king's retainers made offerings to this idol in order to please their ruler, and those who fled to it obtained pardon from their misdeeds. Clearly, such reverence stemmed from fear rather than love. Whence Petronius says, *Primum in orbe deos fecit timore timor* ('Fear first caused the gods to exist in the world').⁴⁶ This statement, as quoted by Holcot, may be the source of the remark of Chaucer's Criseyde that 'drede fond first goddes' (IV, 1408). It is possible to argue that, in the pagan world of *Troilus and Criseyde*, fear is

This completes our brief review of the major limitations inherent in heathen conceptions of deity, in what may be called (with ample medieval precedent) pagan theology. We shall now proceed to describe some of the limitations of pagan philosophy, paying special attention to doctrines of fate and fortune.

II IMPERFECT PAGAN PHILOSOPHY

Since late-medieval scholars generally believed that many of the ancient pagans had been fatalists, it is necessary to investigate their understanding of the term *fatum* ('fate') in this context. Vincent of Beauvais repeated Isidore of Seville's definition of fate as whatever is spoken by the gods, or whatever is decreed by Jupiter, the supreme pagan deity.⁴⁷ Drawing on the description of pagan antiquity in St Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, Isidore had stated that *fatum* is derived from *fari* ('to speak'), but this must be understood in a special sense.⁴⁸ We Christians cannot deny that it is written in Scripture, 'God hath spoken once . . .' (Psalm 61.12), which is to be interpreted as God speaking immovably and unchangeably, so that all things must befall just as He said they would, and meant to have them. In other words, the notion of fate can be accepted by a Christian if it is reduced to the decrees of the one true God. Isidore proceeds to explain that fortune takes its name from 'fortuitous things', and was imagined as a goddess sporting with human cases and fortunes. Fate and fortune differ in so far as fortune consists in those things which occur by chance and apparently without reason, whereas fate is fixed and ordered with regard to individuals.

Elaborate versions of these definitions and distinctions were provided in the early fourteenth century by Nicholas Trevet and Thomas Bradwardine. Expounding Boethius's treatment of the relationship of fate and providence in *De Consolatione Philosophiae* IV pr. 6, Trevet says that fate can be taken in two ways, as may be gathered from the words of Augustine in *De Civitate Dei*.⁴⁹ First, it may be understood as the power or position of the stars when one is born or conceived. Taken this way, fate is nothing, by which Trevet means that it does not determine the lives of men. The Saints, he explains, understood *fatum* in this sense when they absolutely denied that it existed. For example, in his Epiphany homily St Gregory states that the notion that there is such a thing as fate should be dismissed from the hearts of the faithful. The second sense of *fatum* is defined by Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* V. 9: 'we neither deny an order of causes wherein the will of God is all in all; neither do we call it by the name of fate, unless fate be derived of *fari*, "to speak"'. Although this sense is employed less often by the Saints than the first it seems to be the more ancient of the two, Trevet explains, and certainly it is in this second sense that Boethius is using the term when he speaks of 'the manifold manner in which all things behave' as follows: 'this manner, when it is contemplated in the utter purity of the divine intelligence, is called providence; but when related to those things it moves and disposes, it was by the ancients called fate'. Indeed, the poets

threefold manner in which mutable things are disposed.⁵⁰ For mutable things either move from non-being to being, or continue in existence by duration of time, or pass from being to non-being. The first of these events is attributed to Clotho, to be interpreted as evocation or generation, who is said to carry a distaff because she provides the beginning of existence. The second is attributed to Lachesis, to be interpreted as 'lot' and 'fortune', who is supposed to pull the thread because she produces the existence of things. The third and last is attributed to Atropos, who is interpreted as 'without turning' because after something ceases to exist it cannot return to its former existence. She cuts the thread, because she ends the space of existence. Considering these three types of event together, fate is, as Boethius says, 'a disposition inherent in changing things'. Through it 'providence binds all things together, each in its own proper ordering'.

But if fate is an ever-changing nexus, namely the 'movable interlacing and temporal ordering' of the divine disposition, how can Boethius say that the fatal course 'moves the heaven and the stars' and 'binds the acts and fortunes of men in an unbreakable chain of causes'? Trevet points out that, although the sky and stars are, in terms of substance, immediately from the God who created them, yet their movements and the phenomena proceeding from them (such as eclipses, conjunctions, oppositions and the like) are from God through the agency of mediating secondary causes, and hence they are subject to fate. Thus, when Boethius speaks of the way in which the indissoluble chain of causes binds the acts of men, this may not be regarded as a contradiction of his statement about fate's moving nature. Trevet resolves the difficulty by distinguishing between two ways in which the fatal course may be considered. First, it may be considered in so far as it consists in the secondary causes themselves, which order and disposition is called fate. Secondly, it may be considered in so far as it is subordinate to and dependent on the divine providence itself, and in this way immobility is obtained. This lack of change, however, is not absolute but conditional—in accordance with which we speak of conditional necessity thus: 'if God saw this, this will be'.

Boethius, Trevet continues, proves that the fact that fate is immobile in this way, is perfectly congenial. At the outset he shows the divine rule to be fitting and appropriate, saying that 'things are governed in the best way if the simplicity which rests in the divine mind produces an inflexible order of causes', because if someone could deflect the order of divine providence the importance of the ruler would be manifest. But from this it cannot simply be concluded that all things come about by necessity, for the following reason. Being precedes necessity and contingents; necessity and contingents follow being as its proper manners. Since God is the provider of all being, consequently these manners of being come under His provision also. Therefore, He sees to it that things result necessarily only to the extent that these things have proximate causes which are contingently necessary. Causes, although they are changeable in so far as they are contingent, can yet be disposed in a fixed order by divine providence. Such immobility will not be absolute immobility but conditional immobility, depending on the divine providence. And so, the freedom of the human will is assured; we are not 'fated' in the sense of being rigidly determined in all our acts by absolute or 'simple' necessity.

This distinction between absolute and conditional necessity is echoed in

Bradwardine with St Augustine and Boethius as experts on the subject of divine foreknowledge and predestination:

But I ne kan nat bulve it to the bren
As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,
Or Boece, or the Bisshop Bradwardyn,
Whether that Goddes worthy forwityng
Streyneþ me nedely for to doon a thyng,—
'Nedely' clepe I symple necessitee;
Or elles, if free choyz be graunted me
To do that same thyng, or do it noght,
Though God forwoot it er that was wrought;
Or if his wityng streyneþ never a deel
But by necessitee condicionel.

(VII, 3240–50)

Bradwardine sifts this matter 'to the bren' in both the *Sermo Eptincius* and *De Causa Dei*, where the notion that secondary causes (such as fate, fortune or the stars) have some independence in causation is systematically refuted. These causes are, he argues vehemently, obedient instruments of the divine will. Very much in Bradwardine's mind were the erroneous views on necessity and fate which had been condemned in 1270 and 1277 by the Bishop of Paris.⁵¹ The main object of Stephen Tempier's attack were the so-called 'Latin Averroists', who seem to have included Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia. The influence of Arabian commentaries on Aristotle had encouraged the formulation of philosophies which denied freedom of choice to both God and man. For example, God was supposed to necessitate earthly events by the medium of heavenly bodies (1270, condemned proposition 4).⁵² The divine artificer has set in motion a vast machine which He cannot stop and with which He cannot interfere. Consequently, human acts cannot be said to be ruled by the divine providence (1270, condemned proposition 12): God is subject to His own determinism. Freedom is thus denied to God, and also to man, in whom freedom is a passive power which is moved with necessity by the desired object (1270, condemned proposition 9). The nominalistic theory of the absolute power of God, as held by such thinkers as William of Ockham and Robert Holcot, may be regarded as an attempt to counter these errors with an affirmation of the divine freedom,⁵³ as may their formulation of a relatively optimistic view of man's natural abilities, which Bradwardine castigated as a new form of pelagianism.⁵⁴ Bradwardine was equally concerned to curtail the power allowed to secondary causes, but his solution was very different.⁵⁵ In the fashion of 'Boece' and 'the hooly doctour Augustyn' he asserted the sovereignty of the first and primary cause over all secondary and inferior causes.

The influence of *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and *De Civitate Dei* is writ large in the three semantic analyses of the term *fatum* provided in *De Causa Dei* 1.28, which shall be summarized in turn.⁵⁶ According to the first analysis, one may distinguish between the common power of the stars which, God willing, generally regulates all earthly things, and that particular power which *specially* consists in a certain conjunction of heavenly bodies which is supposed to determine what the future will bring to a man born under it.⁵⁷ The former may

According to Bradwardine's second analysis, *fatum* may be understood to refer to divine dictates, an interpretation already familiar to us from the statements of Isidore and Trever cited above. Following Augustine, Bradwardine explains that the Stoics and other pagan moral philosophers believed that *fatum* was derived from *fari*, meaning 'to speak', and so they identified fate with the dictates of Jove, their greatest God. *Fatum* was the name given to the will of that great and all-disposing god whom they called Jove, whose power was insurmountably extended through the series of secondary causes. Christians hold the same belief, Bradwardine continues, but of course they substitute the true God for Jove in this causal scheme. As Augustine says, we regard as vain and frivolous the notion of fate as a position of stars in nativities and conceptions; neither do we call an order of causes by the name of fate, unless *fatum* is understood to be derived from *fari*.

According to Bradwardine's third analysis, *fatum* may be taken either as the active will of God in so far as it disposes all earthly things, or as the passive disposition inherent in creatures. The first of these senses is attested by Augustine, when he quotes from Seneca and Homer verses which identify fate with the will of Jove. The Stoics found in Homer a description of Jove, whom they held to be that great god who caused light and heat to fill the earth:

Tales sunt hominum mentes qualis pater ipse,
Jupiter auctiteras lustravit lumine terras.

[Such are the minds of men as Jove the great
Vouchsafes, that fills the earth with light, and heat.]

Bradwardine, anxious to secure Homer as a good pagan, criticizes Aristotle for having misunderstood him. Aristotle thought Homer's phrase 'father of men and of gods' referred to the sun: in fact, says Bradwardine, it refers to Jove. The second sense of fate in this analysis, that is, as the passive disposition inherent in creatures, is attested by Boethius in *De Consolatione Philosophiae* IV pr. 6. Here, recounts Bradwardine, providence is described as the divine reason itself, which disposes all things, whereas fate is a disposition inherent in changing things, by which providence connects all things in their due order (cf. p. 41 above). Providence connects all things together, but fate puts every particular thing into motion, being distributed by places, forms and time: this unfolding of temporal order being united into the foresight of God's mind is providence, and the same uniting being digested and unfolded in time is called fate. Bradwardine explains that Boethius takes fate *secundum effectum* ('as effect') and not *secundum efficientiam voluntatis divinae* ('according to the effecting of the divine will'), which he understands as providence. By contrast, Seneca, Homer and the Stoics take fate 'according to the effecting of the divine will', because they had a single word, *fatum*, for what Boethius described with the two terms *fatum* and *providentia*. Thus the good pagans are free from error, their fault being merely one of expression. Bradwardine sums up with another quotation from *De Civitate Dei*, which indicates the limitations of pagan philosophies. Let Cicero, who denied divine prescience, wrangle, together with the Stoics who said that the order of causes is fated, or is fate itself! Cicero could not accept that God knows assuredly the set order of causes: we

would seem, shares Augustine's preference for the Stoics, whose main fault was their use of the term *fatum* in a false sense. This chapter of *De Causa Dei* ends with the attribution to God of a controlling power so total that one may suspect that Bradwardine has rejected all rival forms of necessity in order to substitute a strict divine predestination.

In the next chapter of *De Causa Dei* Bradwardine argues that all *fortuna* ('fortune') is reducible to God, and here the Stoics, together with Aristotle and his Arabian interpreters, are upheld as the best of the pagan authorities on that subject.⁵⁸ Many pagans, including Sallust, Democritus, Epicurus and Ovid, believed in mere chance (*casus*), but the Stoics affirmed that all is governed by divine providence. From their differing positions Bradwardine extracts the common belief that fortune and chance exist when something occurs which is beyond the intention of the agent. Then he turns to Boethius, who argued that the opinion that certain things happen in a purely fortuitous and casual manner is to be denied, because everything that occurs occurs in accordance with the intention of some agent. The question is, which agent? Astrologers claim that it is the power of the stars, in which case all apparently fortuitous events would be produced by the determinate causation of many heavenly bodies. But heavenly bodies are in turn controlled by God, and hence have no independence in causation. Others, Bradwardine continues, speak of the goddess Fortuna, who is portrayed as a blind woman distributing good and evil irrationally. But Isaiah 65.11 speaks contemptuously of those who spread a table for the god Fortune and pour libations in his honour. Bradwardine quotes Aristotle as saying that *casus* and *fortuna* are causes *per accidens*: therefore they are reducible to some cause *per se*, and every cause *per se* is reducible to the final cause and unmoved mover, God. In *De Bona Fortuna* Aristotle argues that good fortune comes from God, in his *Rhetorica* he calls God the author of fortune, and in his *Ethics* he says that men are good not merely by their personal power but by a divine cause, and it is in this that the real 'good fortune' consists. Highly selective quotations from Arab commentators on Aristotle, together with citations of Augustine, Boethius, the Stoics and Holy Scripture are used to define a single authoritative view of fortune. According to Bradwardine, Christians and the most enlightened of the pagans share the conviction that there is no such thing as mere chance, that fortune in the sense of an arbitrary force simply does not exist.

Bradwardine's main conclusions on the subject of astral determinism are advanced with impressive rhetoric in the *Sermo Epinicius* and with full intellectual rigour in *De Causa Dei* II.3. It appears from the *Sermo Epinicius* that, on the eve of the battle of Crécy some of Edward III's soldiers had tried to predict the outcome of the battle. Such men, Bradwardine complains, are not worthy of the name 'Christian'.⁵⁹ In emulating those misguided pagans who worshipped the sun, moon and stars as gods, and certain ancient Jews who fell into the same error, they deny their faith and brand themselves as antichristians and apostates. Since the birth of Christ there has been no excuse for such practices. According to Christian tradition the entire heavens were created in the beginning by God, and so they cannot do anything other than serve His will. This is attested by Baruch 3.34–5, 'joyfully the stars shine out, keeping the watches he has appointed, answer when he calls their muster-roll, and offer their glad radiance to him who fashioned them'. God is perfectly entitled to intervene in the normal operations of His universe, thereby winning the point

that He is more powerful than the stars. In Exodus 10.22–3 we read how Moses stretched out his hand towards the sky, and it became dark throughout the land of Egypt for three days, but there was light in the homes of the Israelites. Similarly, Joshua spoke with the Lord, and the sun and moon stood still until his armies had defeated the Amorites (Joshua 10.13). What astrologer could have prognosticated this? Truly, Bradwardine exclaims, behold one prognostication which cannot fail: whatever God wishes to do or be done, that will be done! The obvious moral is that we should not displease God lest He deny us victory. Isaiah tells us how astrological lore let down the Babylonians, who were unable to foretell their own ruin, or to charm away disaster. One cannot see in the constellations a presentiment of victory or defeat, for a day which is victorious for one side is simultaneously a day of defeat for the other. Bradwardine cites the Church's condemnation of the judicial art of predicting particular events, thereby enforcing the theme of his sermon, that God alone, and not any secondary cause like the stars, is to be thanked for the victory, which was granted as a reward for virtue and because the English cause was just.

In *De Causa Dei* II.3 Bradwardine stresses the point that no secondary and inferior cause can necessitate the created will to act rationally and freely in a meritorious way, or to sin.⁶⁰ A rational creature is free of will, and naturally free: this is what distinguishes man from the beasts. If the human will could be necessitated by some secondary cause, it would surely be by astral influences, which seem to have the maximum effect on subjects, to such an extent that astrologers often appear to foretell the mores and actions of men. But this notion, Bradwardine declares firmly, does not withstand rational analysis. Stars and stellar virtues are material and irrational things, whereas the human rational soul is immaterial, more perfect, and naturally superior. As Augustine says in *De Libero Arbitrio*, nothing can move the genuinely virtuous soul to act in a contrary way. Ptolemy rightly says that the wise man will build on what the stars have given him by way of natural virtue.

The value of a good moral education is pointed out. Experience shows us that any opinions or acts to which a child may be disposed at birth can be altered by teaching, by the child's being brought into contact with the views of its parents, friends and tutors: thus, the child may become settled in better ways. Hermes Trismegistus says that one should study the natural dispositions fostered in us by the heavens, then encourage the good ones and conquer the bad. Ptolemy compares the wise man to a true husbandman, who will make the most of stellar assistance, and fortify himself against future mishap. Bradwardine provides the *exemplum* of a rich merchant the once met who confessed that the stars had predisposed him to homosexuality, yet, through constant struggle and the guidance of the divine law, he was managing to repress these tendencies.

All the catholic doctors condemn astral fatalism, Bradwardine affirms, especially if it implies necessity. If the human will was being necessitated in its action by some external cause, this would take the form of a strong temptation, but a temptation, however strong, can always be rejected. While one cannot deny the power of the stars in *inclining* someone to perform certain actions, this is not necessitation because the person retains his option of contradiction and refusal: his *free* will is Bradwardine's answer to the question of whether the point

with all the scholars of his day) he believed to be a genuine work of Aristotle.⁶⁵ The disciples of Hippocrates were shocked when Philimon, having examined a painting of the philosopher's figure, said that it was the figure of a covetous, deceptive and lecherous man. Yet Hippocrates confirmed Philimon's judgment, admitting that he had indeed inclined to all these vices but, having made his soul a king to itself, had managed to control them. According to Bradwardine, Plato, Socrates, Seneca and all the other moral philosophers frequently teach, and more frequently assume, that the virtues and vices are in the power of the human will. He quotes Augustine as saying that only those who are the slaves of cupidity lose their free will.

Bradwardine's Christian and pagan authorities have proved, to his satisfaction at least, that no temptation can overcome a freely-disposed virtuous will. All doubts are swept aside with a confident assertion of the freedom of the will from astral determinism. Anyone born under an unfortunate disposition of stars may refuse to perform the corresponding evil actions. This may not be easy, and the person in question may never become securely settled in the opposite virtues, but it certainly is possible. We are responsible for our own actions, and cannot blame our faults on the stars. Yet, because stellar influences do at least incline men to perform certain actions, the theologian should know something of the science of astrology. The importance of a sane pioneer of experimental science at Oxford, recommends the study of mathematics, astronomy, and the genuine science of astrology which operates in accordance with firm guidelines.

Similar affirmations of the power of the will to withstand stellar influence are found in the writings of, for example, Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. In a passage incorporated in Vincent's *Speculum Naturale*, Albert explains that the stars necessarily govern the 'vegetative spirit' of plants and the 'sensible spirit' of animals, because these things are absolutely dependent on matter. The human soul, on the other hand, is dependent on matter only in a certain respect (*secundum quid*), and hence the stars may influence a man's will through his body, but this is not necessitation. 'The effect does not always follow necessarily from the constellation'. In his opusculum *De Iudicis Astrorum*, Aquinas distinguishes between those things that depend on the stars directly (such as the weather, physical health, and agriculture) and activities that depend on free will, which in no way is determined by the stars.⁶⁶ His conclusion is that, while doctors of medicine and farmers may benefit from predictions relating to the first category, it is a grave sin to consult the stars about the fate of individuals, for the devil can make use of such superstition for his own evil purposes.

The practice of making 'particular' predictions, i.e. predictions concerning the destinies of individuals from the configuration of the stars at their births, was usually termed 'judicial astrology' and regarded as a pagan practice which was as uncertain as it was unlawful.⁶⁷ By contrast, 'general' predictions of such major and universal events as famines, pestilences, and the falls of cities, which involved a large number of people, were supposed to have a high degree of accuracy and could legitimately be made by Christian scholars. An especially interesting application of this distinction is found in the *Summa Iudicialis de Accidentibus Mundi* of John Ashenden, who, like Bradwardine, was a fellow of Merton College, Oxford. John's famous definition of judicial astrology is as follows:

1348, four years after *De Causa Dei* had been published, at a time when Bradwardine's upbraiding of the fellows of their college . . . and a theological reaction against natural philosophy' were probably making themselves felt.⁶⁸ This may to some extent account for the care with which Ashenden delimits the scope of his treatise: the judicial astrology which is his main interest comprises general rather than particular predictions. Ptolemy, he explains, divided astrology into two principal parts, the first and the greatest of which is the 'universal part', which concerns what will happen in entire regions and lands.⁶⁹ This is the subject of the second book of the *Summa Iudicialis*, wherein Ashenden refuses to discuss births, because of the difficulty of prognosticating in this area and the great precision required. We will return to the distinction between general and particular predictions in our next chapter, since it has considerable bearing on Chaucer's attitude to, and deployment of, fatalistic philosophy in *Troilus and Criseyde*.

What emerges very clearly from these discussions of fate, predestination and human freedom by Trever, Bradwardine and the rest is a firm refusal to lump together all pagan views on such subjects and reject them indiscriminately. In particular, Bradwardine is consistent in distinguishing between the faults of fatalists and 'vain astrologers' and the virtues of those noble Stoics and other good pagans who to some extent anticipated Christian conceptions of the workings of divine providence. The desire to harmonize Christian and pagan opinions on common intellectual problems is one of the most characteristic features of late-medieval scholastic procedure, but it takes on a special significance in *De Causa Dei*. Bradwardine was determined to obtain a consensus of opinion on the sovereignty of God,⁷⁰ who wields supreme power over all the instrumental causes which enact His will and who gives grace freely and without obligation to mankind. From our point of view the most interesting facet of this consensus concerns the heathen testimonies to, and prophecies of, Christ and Christian truths, which Bradwardine and his fellow-schoolmen so loved to cite. This is, as it were, the other side of the coin from the untrustworthy pagan prophecies which we have investigated already, those ambiguous answers made by deceptive demons who sought to sustain soul-destroying error.

III PAGAN FORERUNNERS AND FRIENDS OF GOD

There is, Bradwardine claims, no substantial article of the Christian faith which God did not reveal many times, through venerable prophets or various foretellings, before the advent of the Christian faith.⁷¹ This statement is substantiated with an abundance of Christian and pagan prophecies. Bradwardine begins by defending prophetic passages in the Old Testament against the charge of interpolation, and then proceeds to defend the prophets themselves. They cannot be regarded as charlatans because of the obvious goodness of their lives and their ability to work miracles in life and in death. Moreover, the fact

Who can doubt the power of God to illuminate and inspire a man, so that he becomes a prophet? Certainly, all the great philosophers concede the existence of true prophets. In his *Secreta Secretorum* Aristotle takes it as proved that prophets are most pure in intellect and most true in vision. The sibylline prophecies rightly are held in great reverence. Bradwardine then quotes two prophecies which reveal the existence of good pagans who anticipated the coming of Christ. When the tomb of Balaam was opened by the Emperor Constantine, a golden blade was found lying by the corpse. On it was written, 'Christ will be born of the Virgin Mary, and I believe in Him'. (Nicholas of Lyre's use of this story has already been discussed, on p. 2 above.) Secondly, in the reign of King Ferrandus of Castile a book was discovered, about the size of a Psalter and written in three languages, which told the history of the Jews, the Greeks and the Romans. This book prophesied the coming of Christ, and even managed to foretell the time in which it would be recovered.

Bradwardine then cites the case of the three wise men from the East, well instructed in the doctrine of the above-mentioned Balaam, who correctly interpreted the star of Bethlehem as a sign of Christ's birth. Historical confirmation of the existence of this star may be obtained from Pliny and Plato, and from Roman and Egyptian iconography. God has complete control over His creation, including all heavenly bodies, as is manifest by the eclipse of the sun at the time of Christ's death, in the middle of the lunar month when no such event could occur naturally. On seeing this sight, the great gentile philosopher Dionysius the Areopagite exclaimed, 'Either the god of nature suffers, or the mechanism of the universe is dissolved'. When St Paul came to tell the Athenians that Christ was the 'unknown God' in whom they believed already, Dionysius received the faith. Here Bradwardine may have been influenced by another work which, incidentally, was probably known to Chaucer, the *Tractatus de Sphaera* written in the early thirteenth century by John of Holywood (Johannes de Sacrobosco).⁷⁰ At the end of his explanation of the causes of eclipses, John states that the solar eclipse which accompanied the Passion was not natural but 'miraculous and contrary to nature, since a solar eclipse ought to occur at new moon or thereabouts'.⁷¹ On this account Dionysius is reported to have made his remark about the suffering God of nature. This discussion by John of Holywood seems to be the source of one of elaboration of Benoit's treatment of the magical powers possessed by Medea.⁷² The pagans of antiquity were willing to believe that she could force the sun and moon to go into eclipse against the natural order. Guido's rejoinder is that the high and eternal God imposed on the heavenly bodies for all eternity laws which they will not disregard. The only occasion on which a solar eclipse took place contrary to the laws of nature was when the incarnate Sun of God gave up His spirit on the tree of the Cross. Hence Dionysius, 'the most eminent gentile philosopher, who lived in Athens and was very active in the schools', said in strupelation that either the mechanism of the world was dissolved or the God of his nature was suffering. But Guido cannot resist making the point that, despite his great learning, Dionysius was 'tainted by the error of the pagans'.

That comment is absolutely characteristic of Guido, who misses no opportunity to criticize the pagans. By contrast, those writers who helped to inform Chaucer's view of pagan antiquity, including Vincent of Beauvais, John of Wales, Trevel, Holcot and Bradwardine, missed no opportunity to praise the

their intellectual and moral achievements.⁷³ Bradwardine's Dionysius is a good pagan who is ripe for conversion. By means of an apparent disruption in the mechanics of the universe he has inferred the existence of a suffering deity, so that when St Paul identifies the 'unknown God' of the Athenians with Christ, he can believe in Him immediately and without question. This portrait is typical of the depictions of pagan forerunners and 'friends of God' provided by the classicizing clerics of the later Middle Ages. We shall now consider other examples.

Those pagan prophets who had managed to predict the coming of Christ were among the most enlightened of the good pagans. The commonplace belief that Virgil's fourth eclogue was a Messianic prophecy of Christ is reiterated by Vincent of Beauvais.⁷⁴ Bradwardine makes much of two sibylline prophecies: one takes the form of 27 Greek verses which is an acrostic spell out the name of 'Jesus Christ the Son of God, Saviour'; the other is the popular tale of Octavian and the sibyl.⁷⁵ The story of how the Roman Emperor Octavian was saved from the common pagan sin of deifying what was human is told in some detail in Jacob of Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* (written between 1255 and 1266).⁷⁶ Caxton englishes the relevant passage as follows:

Octavian the Emperor, like as Innocent recordeth, that he was much desired of his council and of his people, that he should do men worship him as God. For never before had there been before him so great a master and lord of the world as he was. Then the Emperor sent for a prophetess named Sibyl, for to demand of her if there were any so great and like him in the earth, or if any should come after him. Thus at the hour of mid-day she beheld the heaven, and saw a circle of gold about the sun, and in the middle of the circle a maid holding a child in her arms. Then she called the Emperor and shewed it to him. When Octavian saw that he marvelled over much, whereof Sibyl said to him Hic puer major te est, ipsam adorara. This child is greater lord than thou art, worship him. Then when the Emperor understood that this child was a greater lord than he was, he would not be worshipped as God, but worshipped this child that should be born. Wherefore the christian men made a church of the same chamber of the Emperor, and named it Ara coeli.⁷⁷

Octavian's wise and humble acceptance of his own humanity provides a striking contrast with the fatuous practice of those tyrants who, according to the Book of Wisdom, had enforced idolatrous error as law. Indeed, in the same section of the *Legenda Aurea* Jacob gives an example of a deceptive pagan prophecy. Because the world was then in so great peace, the Romans had made a temple named the Temple of Peace, filled with many marvellous images.⁷⁸ When Apollo was asked how long this edifice would stand, he answered that it would endure until a virgin gave birth to a child. Believing that this was an utter impossibility, the pagans wrote in the portal of the temple that it would endure for ever. But when Christ was born of the Virgin Mary it all fell down. The birth of Christ, therefore, marked the end of idolatry.

Some pagans, it would seem, were so mentally well-prepared for Christianity that they believed in Christ the minute they heard of Him; some had been granted glimpses of the coming of Christ.

and/or lacking the divine grace to anticipate the incarnation. But certain of the virtuous heathen who fell into this large category had at least reached an intellectual position in which they confidently could abjure the gods and embrace a monotheistic view of deity.

Vincent of Beauvais, following Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, emphasizes the fact that many pagans had affirmed their multitude of Gods to be but one and the same Jupiter, of whom the famous poet Virgil was thought to say in his fourth eclogue, 'God His spirit imparts / To the earth's, the sea's, and heaven's profoundest parts'.⁷⁹ What, then, should the pagans lose by taking the shorter course, and instead of worshipping all His parts adore but one God? Vincent collects together *auctoritates* from Isidore, Clement and Augustine to prove that the Platonists had attained an impressive measure of truth, and that Abraham and many gentile philosophers had reached the knowledge of the one God.⁸⁰ Among all the heathen thinkers the Platonists were supreme in both practical and contemplative philosophy. They say that no mutable thing was God, and therefore went further than all mutable spirits and souls to seek for Him. What they knew of God, Augustine explained, 'He did manifest unto them by teaching them the gradual contemplation of His parts invisible by His works visible'. This is a clear allusion to Romans 1.20, 'For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made'. Vincent also includes a statement by Clement to the effect that Abraham inferred from his study of the stars the existence of a Creator whose providence ruled everything, whereupon an angel appeared in a vision to teach him more plainly those things which he had perceived. From this grouping together of extracts, as from several of Bradwardine's discussions as paraphrased above, it would appear that the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets were believed to be on a par, historically speaking, with certain pagan philosophers, since they had all lived long before the time of Christ. One consequence of this was that they operated on the same intellectual level, relying on their native wit for the most part, and being encouraged by the occasional divine revelation.

Tables of how the virtues of monotheistic pagans had been tried and tested in circumstances of exceptional adversity are provided by Vincent of Beauvais and by many of the classicizing clerics who scanned his vast compilation for information about antiquity. For example, in the *Speculum Historiale* and Higden's *Polychronicon* a story is told about the monotheistic and ascetic Brahmins winning a moral victory over King Alexander the Great, the most powerful of all pagan conquerors.⁸¹ When Alexander prepares to attack the Brahmins, they send him a letter pointing out that he has nothing to gain from them. Their God is the God of all, who is pleased with good works rather than with worldly riches, and so they live in communal poverty. Since their desires are restrained by nature they need no artificial laws; neither do they need to cultivate the earth to produce their food nor to indulge in plays and entertainments, preferring the pleasures of contemplating the heavens. Eventually Alexander, having had all his philosophical arguments against this way of life crushingly refuted, gives in and confesses to the Brahman king that he lives in a state of perpetual fear.

Because the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* was written by a noble philosopher who had been put to death by a tyrant, the medieval scholars who produced commentaries on this work recorded it as *monothestic*.

exempla of martyred philosophers (using the term 'martyred' in the strict sense). In *De Consolatione Philosophiae* I pr. 3, 19–21 Boethius had alluded to the death of Socrates. Expounding this passage, William of Conches declared that Plato's master Socrates refused to swear by Jove, Apollo and the rest, believing that there was one God alone.⁸² Because of this, he was expelled from Athens and forced to drink a poisonous fluid, wherefore he died. William of Conches then proceeds to speculate concerning the fate of the soul of Socrates. Since he was killed on account of his wisdom he merited a 'crown' and reward of some kind. Had he not believed in a redeeming God, he would have suffered less pain in the afterlife due to the unjust way in which he was put to death; had he believed, he would have been saved, like the gentile Job. Writing in the late thirteenth century, William of Aragon provided a more elaborate gloss.⁸³ Socrates, one of 'God's friends', composed a book on the unity of God in which he taught that not the gods but God should be revered. Consequently, the pagan priests forced him to drink poison. When Socrates drank a cupful of poison in the name of the one true God he was unharmed, but when he drank another cupful in the name of the pagan deities he died instantly. This miracle moved a multitude of the people to kill the priests, and Socrates was buried with honour in the temple, 'as a friend of the true God' (an echo of Wisdom 7.27). Nicholas Trevet was more restrained, being content to reiterate Augustine's statement that Socrates, having revealed in his moral disputations the ignorance of his fellow Athenians, had a calumnious accusation made against him and eventually was executed.⁸⁴

The short account of the death of Socrates found in Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose* seems to be an amplification of the William of Conches gloss.⁸⁵ Jean claims that, whatever happened, Socrates was always calm, regarding good and ill fortune alike. He believed in one God and rejected polytheism, and therefore was forced to drink poison.⁸⁶ The *Roman* proceeds to recount another *exemplum* of persecuted pagan virtue, of how the noble philosopher Seneca was forced to commit suicide also, and here again one may detect the influence of a Boethius commentary.⁸⁷ Jean says that Nero made a martyr of his good teacher ('Seneca mist il a martire, / Son bon maistre'), which is in keeping with the common tendency of the commentators to regard the virtuous philosophers named by Boethius as something like pagan saints. This pervasive attitude accounts for the hagiographic tone of the subsequent narrative. Jean recounts how Nero ordered Seneca to discharge his veins into a warm bath. The noble pagan—clearly a monotheist—prays that his soul might return to the God who made it:

Il fist eslire

De quel mort mourir il vourrait;

Cil vit qu'eschaper ne pourrait,

Tant iere poissant il maufez:

'Donc seif', dist il, 'uns bainz chauffez,

Puis que d'eschaper est neleuz,

E me faites saigner laienz

Tant que je mature en l'eve chaude,

E que m'ame joieuse e baude

A Deu qui la fourma se rende,

Oui! D'amtrées rommanz lo. 1466a. 1.2.

[He made him choose the death by which he wanted to die. Seneca saw that the devil was so powerful that he could not escape. 'Then', he said, 'since it is impossible to escape, let a bath be heated and have me bled therein so that I may die in warm water and that my joyous, happy soul may return to God, who formed it and who forbids it any further torments'.]

Nero has the death-sentence carried out without delay. The only reason for his crime was that, according to the custom, from his youth he had borne Seneca that reverence which pupils should do to their master, but as emperor Nero believed he should do reverence to no man, whether senator or teacher.

The inspiration for this account could have come from Jean's reading of either William of Conches on *De Consolatione Philosophiae* III pr. 5.25-6, or William of Aragon on I pr. 3.28.⁸⁸ According to William of Conches, when Nero was made emperor he pretended that he feared Seneca as he had done when the philosopher had been his teacher. When the occasion arose, he ordered Seneca to choose the kind of death he wanted, because he could live no longer. Satiated with food and drink, Seneca entered a bath, had a vein in each arm cut and, drinking poison, he died. William of Aragon explains how Seneca was killed by Nero, whom he had taught as a child. At a palace banquet Nero, seated in his regal majesty, caught sight of Seneca and remembered that, once when teaching him, Seneca had struck him. Moved by fury, Nero called on Seneca to choose the manner of his death. Seneca decided to be bled in both arms, in a bath. Thus Seneca nourished the heart of the man who took away his life. These glosses clearly reveal Jean de Meun's original touches: Nero being irked by having had to stand in the presence of his schoolteacher, as is the custom; Seneca praying to his Creator. Perhaps the description of the monotheism of Socrates which Jean found in his Boethius commentary encouraged him to credit Seneca with a similar degree of enlightenment.

Trevet's gloss on the death of Seneca follows that of William of Conches, although the detail that Seneca died in a bath is omitted—perhaps Trevet regarded this as too ridiculous a detail to include in such a serious and edifying tale of pagan virtue.⁸⁹ The short tragedy of Nero included in Chaucer's *Monk's Tale* follows Jean's *Roman* closely, with one detail, Nero's fear of Seneca when he was his pupil, probably coming from Trevet's gloss. Chaucer concentrates not on Seneca's monotheism but on his moral virtue, and the impressive way in which he had educated the future emperor:

In yowthe a maister hadde this emperour
 To teche hym letterure and curteisye,
 For of moraltee he was the flour,
 As in his tyme, but if books lye;
 And whil this maister hadde of hym maistrye,
 He makede hym so konnyng and so sowple
 That longe tyme it was er tyrannye
 Or any vice dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
 By cause Nero hadde of hym swich drede,

Discreetly, as by word and nat by dede,—
 'Sire,' wold he seyn, 'an emperour moot nedde
 Be vertuons and hate tyrannye'
 (VII, 2495-2508)

Unfortunately, when Nero grows up he becomes a tyrant, and forces his teacher to bleed to death in a bath: 'thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere' (2518).⁹¹

The best medieval example of all the good pagans who, although not necessarily or obviously monotheistic, had attained a standard of virtue which would put many a Christian to shame, was undoubtedly Trajan. John of Salisbury did not hesitate to prefer Trajan before all the other Roman emperors, including Julius Caesar and Augustus, because he founded the greatness of his reign solely on the practice of virtue.⁹² In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the destiny of Trajan's soul became a test-case for medieval theories concerning the relative importance of divine grace and human merit in attaining salvation.⁹³

The tale of Trajan included in John of Wales's *Communiuogium* follows the version in John of Salisbury's *Polytriticus*:⁹⁴ Being an exemplary ruler, Trajan listened to a widow who came to him lamenting, begging him to bring to justice the men who had murdered her innocent son:

'Tu', inquit, 'Auguste, imperas, et ego tam atrocem iniuriam patior'. Qui licet equum ascendisset ad bellum profecturus, respondit ille, 'Ego tibi satisfaciám cum rediero'. 'Quid', inquit illa, 'si non redieris?' 'Successor', inquit, 'meus satisfaciet tibi'. Et illa, 'Quid tibi proderit si alius benefecerit? Tu mihi debitor es secundum opera mercedem recepturus. Fraus utique est nolle reddere quod debetur. Successor tuus iniuriam patientibus pro se tenebitur. Te vero non liberabit iustitia aliena. Bene agetur cum successore tuo, si liberaverit seipsum'. Quibus verbis motus, imperator de equo descendit et causam presentialiter examinans condigna satisfacione viduam consolatus est.

[She said, 'You govern, O emperor, and yet I suffer such a dreadful injury'. Although he had mounted his horse to go off to war, he answered her, 'I will satisfy you when I return'. 'But what', she replied, 'if you do not return?' 'My successor will satisfy you', he said. And she replied, 'What will it avail you if another should perform a good action? You are my debtor and you will be rewarded according to your deeds. It is fraudulent not to give what is owed. Your successor will be responsible on his own account for those who have suffered injury. The justice done by another will not exonerate you; your successor will do well if he exonerates himself'. Moved by these words, the emperor got off his horse and, the case being examined presently, the widow was consoled with appropriate satisfaction.]

The similar version of this story found in Vincent's *Speculum Historiale* is the direct source of the account in Higden's *Polychronicon*.⁹⁵ On another occasion, Higden adds, when Trajan's son accidentally killed a widow's son, Trajan gave

A comprehensive theological treatment of Trajan's life and afterlife is provided in Jacob of Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*.⁹⁶ Having recounted how Trajan dealt justly with the widow, Jacob tells how, much later in time, on a certain day St Gregory passed through Trajan's forum, remembered the emperor's just actions, and in St Peter's basilica wept most bitterly because this good man had died a pagan. God responded by telling the Pope that He had granted his petition, but warned him against making entreaties on behalf of any other damned soul. Jacob then offers several possible explanations of what actually happened. According to John Damascene the divine answer was as follows: 'I have heard your prayer and I grant Trajan mercy'. Concerning this some say that Trajan was briefly recalled to life, where with consequent grace he merited mercy and thus was saved; therefore, he had not been condemned to hell finally nor damned definitely. Others claim that the soul of Trajan was not absolved absolutely from the penalty of eternal pain, but that it was suspended for a time, until the day of judgment. Others say that only the place or manner of his pain was changed by the grace of Christ. Others, like John the Deacon who compiled this legend, believe that it should be understood in this way: Gregory shed tears on account of Trajan rather than prayed for him, and God frequently grants that which a man wishes to pray for though he does not presume to do so.⁹⁷ Trajan's soul was not liberated from hell and placed in paradise, but simply freed from the torments of hell. It is possible, as John says, for a soul to be in hell and not to feel its torments, by divine mercy. Others say that eternal pain consists in two things, namely, in the feeling of pain and in that pain of being damned which is the absence of vision of God. Therefore, eternal pain in the first sense was taken away from Trajan, but in the second sense was retained, the emperor's soul being denied the sight of God.

The short account of Trajan in *Piers Plowman* seems to have been derived from the *Legenda Aurea*, although Langland seems to incline (especially in the B-text) to the opinion that the emperor's merit was the main factor which moved God to save him, though of course the Pope's prayer did play an important part.⁹⁸ Langland also emphasizes that there are three kinds of baptism: by water, by shedding of blood, and by fire (i.e. by steadfast faith, what Langland calls 'ferme bliene').⁹⁹ Trajan's 'bliene' was great: the implication is that he may have been baptised by fire, human merit and divine grace operating together to effect his salvation.

Ne wolde neuere trewe god but trewe trupe were allowed.
And wheipen it worp of trupe or no3t, þe worp of bliene is gret,
And an hope hangynge þerinne to haue a mede for his trupe . . .

(B-text, XII, 290-2)

This fideistic argument is persuasive, if not provable either by reason or written authority. It is crucial to realise that it is being delivered by the character Ymaginatif. According to late-medieval theory of imagination, imaginative thinking produces not certainties but possibilities, often in areas of thought where a mere mortal cannot expect to reach absolute certainty. We cannot *prove* that Aristotle and the other good pagans are saved, but, since we believe by faith in the goodness and grace of God, we can *hope* that he will give their souls rest.

'And wheipen he [i.e. Aristotle] be saaf or no3t saaf, þe soþe woot no
clergie,
Ne of Sortes ne of Salamon no scripture kan telle.
Ac god is so good, I hope þat sippe he gaf hem writes
To wissen vs wytes þerwiþ þat wisschen to be saued . . .
That god for his grace gyue hir soules reste . . .

(B-text, XII, 270-5)

Langland is relying on faith, hope and love, on belief in God's goodness and truth; there is no suggestion that we are being offered certain knowledge or indubitable wisdom. Such moderation contrasts strikingly with the dogmatic outburst of John Trevisa who, having translated Ralph Higden's version of the story of Trajan, exclaims that anybody who believes that Gregory won Trajan's soul from hell is worse than mad and far away from correct belief.

For so greet ri3twisnesse it seneþ þat Seint Gregorie
wan his soule out of helle. *Trevisa*. So it my3te seme
to a man þat were worse þan wood, and out of ri3t bliene.

These considerable differences of opinion will serve to remind us that the problem of the salvation of the heathen was very much a live issue in Chaucer's day. One of the possible explanations of Trajan's destiny collected by Jacob of Voragine was that the pagan was restored to life long enough for the normal process of salvation to operate.¹⁰¹ A similar solution—if indeed it can be called that—is offered in a fascinating alliterative poem of the late fourteenth century, *St Erkenwald*, which obviously is based on some form of the Trajan legend.¹⁰² Here the corpse of an unnamed pagan judge is miraculously preserved until it can be baptised by the saint. However, the blatant legalism of this procedure is mitigated somewhat when the poet has St Erkenwald weep over the body of the pagan and anticipate the words he will say when he baptises him formally. But there is no need to send for water to effect the baptism: the saint's tear constitutes holy water of indubitable efficacy, and he actually has said the right words. Therefore, the soul of the pagan judge can ascend to heaven while his body crumbles to dust.

The solution offered by the nominalist theologians of the early fourteenth century swept away all legalism of this kind, with an affirmation of what men can achieve *ex puris naturalibus*, that is, under purely natural conditions, without the aid of external grace. Bradwardine, however, felt that they had espoused a different kind of legalism, by binding God to reward human merit and therefore placing restrictions on the divine freedom to bestow grace when and where He wished. Among the 'modern Pelagians' castigated in *De Causa Dei* seem to have been William of Ockham, Thomas Buckingham, Adam Woodham—and Robert Holcot.¹⁰⁴ Our discussion of Holcot's attitudes to the virtuous heathen will concentrate on his Wisdom commentary, since it is an acknowledged Chaucer source. The unusual nature of this work should be appreciated, since controversial opinions of the type expressed therein were normally reserved for quodlibetal questions, *summae*, and commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, works written by and for academics within the intellectual confines and sanctuary of the schools. Bible commentaries, on the other hand, always had a wider readership, and Holcot on Wisdom became a

Biblical 'Mirror for Princes'.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, Holcot's allegedly 'Pelagian' views reached a wider audience, which seems to have included Chaucer, Thomas Hoccleve, and perhaps John Gower.¹⁰⁶

In a quodlibet on the Mosaic Law, Holcot investigates the lot of the good Jews who, living before the advent of Christ, diligently observed such laws as they had.¹⁰⁷ His conclusion is that observance of the Mosaic Law did indeed merit eternal life, because such observance could not be without grace and justice. The point is summed up in a syllogism:

Every man who is just before God is worthy of eternal life.

Every observer of the Mosaic Law is just before God.

Therefore, every observer of the Mosaic Law is worthy of eternal life.

Examples of such observers include Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Ezechiel, Josia and Judas Machabaeis: the Church venerates them as if they were saints, and believes that they merited eternal life, although they lacked the revelation of Christ.

Holcot's major premiss here refers to all men who are just before God, and it is clear from the full context of the quodlibet that he is thinking also of those good pagans who shared with the good Jews the problems resulting from having been born too soon. This is made perfectly explicit by a passage in Holcot's *Sentences* commentary in which he discusses Romans 2.14, 'When gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law unto themselves'.¹⁰⁸ Those gentiles, he argues, who lived in accordance with the principles of natural law, even though they lacked the Mosaic Law, received faith and grace from God, and observed the law, and loved God above all else.¹⁰⁹ This statement might be construed as an instance of that 'modern Pelagianism' attacked by Bradwardine. Yet Holcot was convinced of the importance of grace. As he puts it in his *Wisdom* commentary, no-one can become just before God without the influence of the holy Spirit.¹¹⁰ The necessity of grace is stressed also in the final section of Holcot's quodlibet on the Mosaic Law.¹¹¹ A colleague (*socius*) had suggested that, as things now stand, a person can be saved without baptism or grace. Holcot is prepared to be liberal about baptism but not about grace. If the colleague was thinking of baptism by water, it may be pointed out that no catholic believes such baptism to be necessary for salvation in the sense that without it a man cannot be saved.¹¹² — one wonders what the *Erkenwald*-poet would have made of that! When Peter Lombard said in his *Sentences* that a man can be justified and saved without baptism, he was thinking solely of baptism by water. But there are two other kinds of baptism, which are equally efficacious: by the shedding of blood (in the case of a martyr) and by fire (that is, by the holy Ghost). One is reminded of the passage in *Piers Plowman* where Ymaginatif makes the same distinction. Regarding grace, however, Holcot is unequivocal: there is no doubt that a man without grace is damned.¹¹³

This insistence on grace might appear to clear Holcot from the charge of Pelagianism which has been laid against him. Indeed, Meissner can claim that Holcot does not deviate from the Thomistic doctrine of grace and predestination.¹¹⁴ But when Holcot discusses the ways in which grace can be earned by human merit his originality becomes apparent, as Oberman has demonstrated so well:

God is committed to give his grace to all who do what is in them. This does not detract from His sovereignty, since in eternity God was free to establish totally different laws; he was free to act with absolute power, the *potentia absoluta*, subject only to the law of noncontradiction or the law of consistency. Out of sheer mercy and grace, he freely decided in eternity to establish the law that he would convey grace to all who make full use of their natural capacities. Though the law as such is freely given, and therefore an expression of God's *potentia absoluta*, God is now committed to it, in the order chosen by him, the order of his *potentia ordinata*, and he therefore gives his grace 'necessarily'.¹¹⁵

These beliefs are manifest in Holcot's *Wisdom* commentary. For instance, there we find the argument that works done out of natural goodness merit eternal life *de congruo*, that is, they meet the standard of God's generosity.¹¹⁶ By this Holcot means that if a man 'does what is in him' (the *facere quod in se est*) God will reciprocate by doing what is in Him.¹¹⁷ In other words, if a good pagan walks by the best light he has, he will merit, and receive, his eternal reward.

Holcot is obliged to face the question, can a man acquire by natural reason that knowledge which is necessary for salvation, or is it essential that certain supernatural truths should be bestowed on him by divine revelation? His basic answer is that it is God who ordains all natural things according to the goodness of His will, and God is no niggard: If a man 'does what is in him' he will be sufficiently informed concerning those things which are necessary for salvation.¹¹⁸ The human reason cannot by its own powers reach such truths: as a nominalist, Holcot believes that very little can be proved by reason alone.¹¹⁹ The human reason is defective, as every man knows from experience. Therefore it is fitting that men should be regulated in accordance with a superior reason, namely God's, in which reason men should have faith.¹²⁰ On the other hand, without the discourse of reason and the voluntary perception of truth, faith is not possible. Reason is required for belief and faith, and is not repugnant to them. In sum, faith and reason are not opposed but complementary. Atritudes such as these might warn us against making facile generalisations about the supposed disjunction of faith and reason in fourteenth-century thought.¹²¹ Holcot visualises a partnership between God and man: if a man 'does what is in him' and develops his natural capacities, God will ensure that he has faith, that he knows what he must know in order to merit salvation. In this way, the good pagan can be saved *de potentia Dei ordinata*.

It is, therefore, crucial to realise precisely why and how certain gentiles were criticized in the *Book of Wisdom*. In *Wisdom* 13.1 we read that all men are vain 'who by these good things that are seen, could not understand him that is, neither by attending to the works have acknowledged who was the workman'. Here, Holcot claims, the inspired author reprehends the obtuseness of those gentiles who studied natural phenomena with their utmost labours, and yet lacked knowledge of God. So concerned were they with investigating the causes of things that they did not properly investigate the first cause, God.¹²² This failure to address themselves to the most important issues is the reason why the gentile philosophers in question are being reprehended, not because of their failure to demonstrate that God is in them.

can prove by reason that God exists or that He created the world.¹²³ However, those who dispose themselves innocently towards God, and studiously exercise their natural reason, will receive such knowledge of God as will suffice for their salvation. A good example of such a man, Holcot claims, was Cornelius the Centurion, referred to in Acts 10. Though a gentile, he was a godly man who was well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation. As St Peter observed, in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to Him. Cornelius received a vision in which an angel told him to meet St Peter, whereupon he learned all that was necessary for his salvation. Similarly, Ananias was sent to St Paul (Acts 9.10–20). Holcot concludes that if men employ their reason correctly, and if human guilt does not intervene, with the help of divine revelation or inspiration they will come to have knowledge of a kind which is beyond mere philosophical wisdom.

This principle underlies Holcot's exegesis of Wisdom 7.27, where it is stated that Wisdom 'reneweth all things, and through nations conveyeth herself into holy souls', making 'the friends of God and prophets'.¹²⁴ God, who is 'not a respecter of persons', did not confine His favours to the circumcised. St Peter stated that any just man in any nation is acceptable to God (Acts 10.34), after having been sent by God to teach the good pagan Cornelius all that was necessary for his salvation. Wisdom, therefore, which is a gift of God, conveys herself into holy souls in so far as she inspires them with divine reverence and with those things which are necessary for salvation. The souls in question are 'holy' not in the sense of having been holy before Wisdom came to them, but inasmuch as they were made holy by this operation of Wisdom.

Again and again Holcot returns to the issue of the quality of the pagans' knowledge and the precise nature of their faults. He had to attempt to reconcile two apparently conflicting statements concerning the common gentile failure to know the one true God: Wisdom 13.6 claims that 'their fault is little' but Wisdom 13.8 states that 'Excuse them we may not'. Holcot concedes that those gentiles who explored 'the world around them' are less culpable than those who worshipped idols, and then proceeds with his main argument, which is that certain gentiles are indeed culpable because they had a firm basis for acquiring knowledge of God but refused to act on it.¹²⁵ This knowledge was obtained not through reason—which Holcot believes to be impossible—but through revelation. According to the intention of Augustine in *De Civitate Dei*, the fact of God's existence was originally preached by Adam and his sons, and this knowledge was transmitted by holy prophets who lived before the time of the Greek and Barbarian philosophers.¹²⁶ Therefore, the gentile philosophers reprehended in the Book of Wisdom could, on hearing of God's existence from His followers, have added faith to their reasonings about the empirical world: they would then have been in a position to affirm the existence of God. Because they did not do this, they are culpable on grounds of negligence or malice.

This theory of the ancient revelation of knowledge of God is found in Holcot's commentary on the *Sentences* also.¹²⁷ Here the gentiles' failure is described not as a failure of intelligence or a lack of information but as a failure of nerve. The great philosophers had learned about God from the patriarchs, yet some of them, although believing in Him, did not worship Him through fear of tyrants or out of a desire to appease popular opinion. What, then, of St

world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made' (Romans 1.20)? It would seem to follow from this that knowledge of God could have been obtained through rationalization based on knowledge of creatures. Yet Holcot maintains that we know of the existence of God only through revelation: but of course, once we know that He exists our powers of reason can find plenty of supporting evidence in creation. However, to those who employ well their natural ingenuity, God will reveal Himself in some way, thereby ensuring that such people possess knowledge of God in the sense of faith in God. If this were not true, astronomy would never have been invented, for in the *Historia Scholastica* it is said that Noah had a son called Iornith, who received from God a gift of wisdom which enabled him to found the science of astronomy.¹²⁸ If, with all this divine assistance, certain gentiles were still incapable of finding God, it was because they were looking in the wrong place: God is not to be found in vanity or carnality. And therefore they are inexcusable. The positive implication of this argument is obvious: those good pagans who looked in the right place, who developed their natural capacities and 'did what was in them', found God and their salvation.

We have come a long way from John of Salisbury and Jacob of Voragine, who emphasized that the salvation of the soul of Trajan was a unique event, not to be repeated in the case of any other good pagan. Jacob added that, because Gregory had dared to pray for one of the damned, he had to choose between being in purgatory for two days or being ill throughout his life.¹²⁹ Not unnaturally, he decided on the latter punishment. In the early fourteenth century the exception became the rule, when Holcot and his fellow nominalists, as it were, declared the gates of heaven open to all just men who had lived before the time of Christ, whether good Jews or good gentiles.

Holcot's views on the salvation of the heathen have been considered at some length because they represent the uttermost limits of fourteenth century investigation of the issue, or at least the most avant-garde excursions thereon which, to the best of our knowledge, was known to Chaucer.¹³⁰ Had he read Bradwardine's *De Causa Dei* as well, he would have found many nominalist positions being described in order to be refuted. This work, as we have seen, reaffirms with late-medieval emphases the conclusions which Augustine and Boethius had reached on those theological and philosophical problems raised by pagan theories of destiny. Despite the vast ideological differences between Holcot and Bradwardine, they shared at least a firm belief in the existence of many good pagans, and often grouped them with those resolute Old Testament Jews who had been the prophets and forerunners of Christianity. Similar attitudes were held by such major late-medieval compilers as Vincent of Beauvais, John of Wales, and Ralph Higden. Of course, it was held that the pagans had been very limited in their thinking, notably in their theology of gods and idols, and that some of them were much better than others, the Platonists and the Stoics having attained a high degree of metaphysical and moral enlightenment. The perfection of the pagans remained shadowy (to adopt John of Wales's idiom): it lacked real substance and it foreshadowed the total perfection embodied in the teaching and example of Christ. But perfection it certainly was, of an impressive kind.

In general, therefore, one may speak of the currency, in the age of Chaucer, of a more liberal attitude to the pagan past than had existed hitherto. The

Chaucer's major poems about pagan antiquity, with special attention being paid to the intriguing manner in which he exploited the alleged limitations and achievements of ancient cultures.

CHAPTER III

Pagan Emotion and Enlightenment in Troilus and Criseyde

The theologians, compilers and historians paraphrased above provide us with a perspective within which we can discuss Chaucer's treatment of and attitudes to the 'matter of antiquity' presented in *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Knight's Tale*. In these works the philosophies of life ascribed to the characters (quoted out of context from Boethius, for the most part) are of a type believed to have been well within a pagan's powers; the religious practices (such as the worship of a plurality of gods, and Arcite's funeral by cremation) are, by fourteenth-century standards, historically accurate. It is generally recognized that in *Troilus and Criseyde* Chaucer considerably increased the pagan 'colouring' of *Il Filostrato*. However, it has been argued also that 'instead of increasing the ancient colour of the *Teseida*, Chaucer has greatly reduced it' in *The Knight's Tale*.² I suggest that we are dealing with a difference of kind rather than of degree: what is in question is not the quantity of the 'paganism' found in Chaucer's poems, but its quality. Boccaccio's vision of antiquity possesses what may be regarded as a distinctive 'Renaissance' quality, and it is precisely this quality which Chaucer eliminated, substituting a classicism of the kind which has been described in our previous chapter. *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Knight's Tale* present a comprehensive and consistent picture of the heathen past which is consonant with notions about pagans current in fourteenth-century England.

The present chapter describes some of the major features of this picture as presented in *Troilus and Criseyde*, in accordance with the following mode of procedure. First, we shall investigate the authorial stance adopted by Chaucer in *Troilus*, indicating the extent to which it is modelled on the literary role traditionally claimed by those late-medieval compilers who collected pagan materials and reported pagan matters. Then, four of the characters portrayed by this narrator shall be examined in ascending order of complexity and importance to the plot and central themes of the poem: Cassandra, Calcas, Criseyde and Troilus. Pandarus, the most pragmatic of all Chaucer's pagans and the main instigator of the action of the poem, will be considered in respect of his dealings with Criseyde and Troilus. This being done, we shall be in a good position to examine in more detail the tone and tenor of the so-called epilogue of *Troilus*, where Chaucer makes quite explicit the historical approach to pagan antiquity which characterises and controls the entire poem.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 *Compendilogium*, Pars v, cap. 2 (ed. Wadding, pp. 292–3); cit. by W. A. Pantin, 'John of Wales and Medieval Humanism', in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn* (Dublin, 1961), pp. 297–319 (p. 310). See further William of Ockham's view that there can be no perfect virtue without theological virtue, but there can be natural virtue which follows the precepts of right reason: Leff, *William of Ockham*, p. 491. By contrast, Bradwardine concluded that, since there is no true virtue in an infidel, they cannot carry out a really good action: *De Causa Dei*, i. 39 (ed. Savile, p. 327); cf. G. Leff, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, New Series, v (Cambridge, 1957), p. 155.
- 2 *Compendilogium*, pars ii, cap. 2 (ed. Wadding, p. 77); cf. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, iii. 9 (ed. C. C. J. Webb (Oxford, 1909), i, 197–8; also Pantin, 'John of Wales', p. 309.
- 3 Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix [= xviii], cap. 3 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, fol. 291^r), quoting Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, vi. 5. True or Christian theology is discussed in capi 27–9 (fol. 294^r). Cf. the comprehensive attack on all forms of polytheism in Bradwardine's *De Causa Dei*, i. 1, coroll. pars 18 (ed. Savile, pp. 13–14). Bradwardine attacks idolatry in *De Causa Dei*, i. 1, coroll. pars 21 (pp. 15–19).
- 4 *Eymologiae*, VIII. x. 1
- 5 *Eymologiae*, VIII. x. 2.
- 6 Guido, *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, bk. x (ed. Griffin, p. 94; trans. Meek, p. 91).
- 7 *Eymologiae*, VIII. x. 4.
- 8 Hugutio, *Magiae Derivatives*, s. v. *pige* (Oxford, Bodleian Library; MS Bodley 376, fol. 152^r–152^v); *Summa Britonis*, ed. Daly, ii, 514.
- 9 On this subject see especially Cooke, 'Euhemerism: A Medieval Interpretation of Classical Paganism'.
- 10 *Speculum Historiale*, i. 102 (*Speculum Maius*, iv, fol. 13^v); cf. *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 6 (ii, fol. 291^r) which quotes *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 1 (trans. as an appendix in K. N. Macfarlane, *Isidore of Seville's Treatise on the Pagan Gods* (Ph. d. thesis, University of Washington, 1978), p. 142.
- 11 *Speculum Historiale*, i. 102, *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 6, citing Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 2 (trans. Macfarlane, p. 142).
- 12 *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 7 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, fol. 291^r), following Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 29.
- 13 Holcot, *Sup. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 155 (on Wisdom 13.2), p. 517 of the Basel edition. Cf. *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 7 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, fol. 291^r), quoting Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 29–41; also *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 12 (ii, fol. 292^v). On the 'natural' interpretation, see further Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, vi. 8; Mythographus II, prohemium (ed. G. H. Bode, *Scriptores Rerum Mythicarum Latinae Tres Romae nuper reperti* (Celle, 1834), p. 74).
- 14 *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 29: 'this was wholly a fabrication of the poets, so that they might adorn their gods with figurative speech, although their stories confess them to have been damned and filled with an infamy of shame. For the place lies altogether open for fabrication, where truth has departed' (trans. Macfarlane, p. 148).
- 15 *Eymologiae*, III. lxxi. 21.
- 16 *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, bk. x (ed. Griffin, p. 95; trans. Meek, p. 92). For an excellent discussion of the 'planet-gods' see M. A. Twycross, *The Representation of the Major Classical Deities in the Works of Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate and Henryson* (B. Litt. thesis, University of Oxford, 1961), pp. 81–92.
- 17 Isidore states that 'demons substituted themselves to be worshipped' in place of dead men 'and persuaded those deceived and damned men to sacrifice to them',
- inaccurate yet appropriate eymology, that 'the word idol is derived from "fraud" (*dolus*), because the Devil conveyed to a created thing worship which is appropriate to a divine being': *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 14 (trans. Macfarlane, p. 144).
- 18 *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, bk. x (ed. Griffin, pp. 93–6; trans. Meek, pp. 91–3). Cf. Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica*, pr. Migne, PL, cxcviii, col. 1090, and the briefer statement in Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 4–5, 23 (trans. Macfarlane, pp. 142–3, 146–7). Both Peter Comestor and Isidore are quoted in Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix. 5 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, 291^r). For the theory that Sirophanes of Egypt was the first to set up an idol see the references in note 45 below.
- 19 *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, bk. x (ed. Griffin, p. 97; trans. Meek, p. 94).
- 20 Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 15 (trans. Macfarlane, pp. 144–5), quoted in the *Summa Britonis*, i, 187, s. v. *demon*.
- 21 *Speculum Naturale*, ii. 101 (*Speculum Maius*, i, fol. 25^v); cf. *Speculum Doctrinale*, ix. 117 (ii, fol. 157^v).
- 22 Cf. Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 16, quoted in *Summa Britonis*, i, 187, s. v. *demon*.
- 23 *Speculum Historiale*, i. 10 (*Speculum Maius*, iv, fol. 2^v).
- 24 *Speculum Morale*, lib. iii, dist. xvii, pars 3 (*Speculum Maius*, iii, fol. 198^r).
- 25 Isidore, *Eymologiae*, VIII. xi. 17 (trans. Macfarlane, p. 145).
- 26 For discussion see Minnis, 'Medieval French and English Traditions of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*', pp. 335–6, cf. pp. 328–31. For the classical sources of this story see Joseph Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations, with a Catalogue of Responses* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), pp. 111–4, 302.
- 27 'Aio te, Aecacida, Romanos vincere posse': *Eymologiae*, l. xxxiv. 13–16. See further the discussion of *equivoatio et amphibologia* in Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Doctrinale*, iii. 92 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, fol. 51^v), and the account of medieval attitudes to Apollo in Twycross, *The Representation of the Major Classical Deities*, pp. 275–80.
- 28 One may contrast another attitude to ambiguous predictions, represented by a section of Macrobius's commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis*, which Chaucer certainly knew. In the *Iliad* a dream sent from Zeus encouraged King Agamemnon to engage in battle with the enemy, yet he was heavily defeated:
- Must we say that the deity had sent him a deceitful vision? Not so, but because the Fates had already decreed such disaster for the Greeks, there was a hint concealed in the words of the dream which, if carefully heeded, could have enabled him at least to avoid calamity, and perhaps even to conquer. The divine command was to lead out the whole army, but he, thinking only of the command to fight, did not attend to the order to lead out the whole army and overlooked Achilles, who at that time was still smarting from a recent insult and had withdrawn his soldiers from battle. The king went forth to battle and sustained the defeat which was owing him, and thus absolved the deity from blame of falsehood by not following all of his commands.
- Macrobius: Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, trans. W. H. Stahl (New York and London, 1952), pp. 118–9. A similar interpretation is offered of the Delian oracle's ambiguous statement to Aeneas concerning his destined kingdom (p. 119). Concerned as he was with the Christian truth which may be extracted from pagan fable, Macrobius felt obliged to defend divine revelations, whether pagan or Christian, from the charge of deceit: 'all portents and dreams conform to the rule that their announcements, threats, or warnings of imminent adversity are always ambiguous' (p. 118; italics mine).
- 29 *Polychronicon Ramulphi*, viii, 134–9.
- 30 *Historia Destructionis Troiae* bk. v (ed. Griffin, p. 107; trans. Meek, p. 107).

- 32 See the helpful discussion in Wigginton, *Nature and Significance of the Late Medieval Troy Story*, pp. 77–8.
- 33 *Sap. Sal. praefationes*, lectio 160 (on Wisdom 13.17–19), p. 529.
- 34 *Yliados libri sex*, IV, 215–38 (ed. Gompi, pp. 147–8; trans. Roberts, p. 45).
- 35 *Le Roman de Troie en Prose*, ed. L. Constans and E. Faral, vol. 1 (Paris, 1922), p. 55. Cf. the reference in *Cleanness* to the 'stokes and stones' which are worshipped as 'stoute goddess' by Belshazzar: *Cleanness*, 1337–44 (ed. J. J. Anderson (Manchester, 1977), p. 47).
- 36 *Sap. Sal. praefationes*, lectio 159 (on Wisdom 13.11–16), pp. 526–8. Cf. Thomas Bradwardine, who points out that an image is a thing which is made; it is perishable, and needs to be supported physically. Man, beast, tree, sky, sun and moon are each and every one more perfect in nature than is the metal, wood, stone or mud of which an idol may be made. Since none of these is God, therefore an idol cannot be. *De Causa Dei*, i.1, coroll. 21 (ed. Savile, p. 15).
- 37 Lectio 160 (on Wisdom 13.17–19), pp. 528–30.
- 38 Lectio 158, pp. 524–5.
- 39 In III Lib. Sent., dist. ix, qu. i, art. ii, sol. 2, ad 3um. For a succinct account of these ideas, see Pamela de Wit, *The Visual Experience of Fifteenth-Century English Readers* (D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1977), pp. 12–17.
- 40 Cf. the arguments put forward by two contemporaries of Chaucer, John Deverose and Walter Hilton, in refuting Wycliffite iconoclasm, discussed by James Crompton, *Lollard Doctrine with special reference to the Controversy over Image Worship and Pilgrimages* (B. Litt. thesis, University of Oxford, 1948); also G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 137–9. In Hilton's *De Tolentandis Imaginibus* (London, British Library, MS Royal 11. B. X, fols 178–183^v), a sharp contrast is made between pagan idolatry and Christian imagery. Christians do not imitate that gentle perversity whereby images depicting mere mortals were worshipped. Images in present-day churches are mnemonic signs of such real historical events as the incarnation and passion of Christ. When these images are adored the spiritual realities which they represent are the objects of worship, not the material objects themselves. God, speaking through Moses, prohibited the Children of Israel from making images of Him, because in that historical period neighbouring gentiles who had been 'seduced by illusions of demons' into idolatry could easily have misunderstood their function. Nowadays, of course, this problem does not exist, and Christians can utilise images with confidence.
- 41 Bradwardine adds that pagan idols were inhabited by evil spirits whereas Christian images are not inhabited by good spirits—why would any angel want to leave the supreme glories of heaven and angelic society for such a gross dwelling? Besides, if the consecration of an image could force an angel out of heaven into a material object, heaven would lose all its angels! *De Causa Dei*, i.1, coroll. 21 (ed. Savile, p. 17).
- 42 *Lydgate's DeGuilleville's Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, part 2, EETS ES lxxxiii (Oxford, 1901), pp. 555–61. In this account Lydgate is following closely his source, the second version of the French text: Guillaume de Deguileville, *Le Roman de trois pelerinages* (Paris, 1510), fols 73^v–74^r. For discussion of the genre of this work, and bibliography, see S. Wenzel, 'The Pilgrimage of Life as a Late Medieval Genre', MS, xxxv (1973), 370–88.
- 43 A full discussion of DeGuilleville's imagery of sight and vision is provided by Susan K. Hagen, *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man: A Medieval Theory of Vision and Remembrance* (Ph. d. thesis, University of Virginia, 1976).
- 44 See Joy Russell-Smith, Walter Hilton and a Tract in Defence of the Veneration of Images, *Dominican Studies*, vii (1954), 180–214 (pp. 200–4).
- 45 For this story see Fulgentius, *Mythologiae*, ii.1 (ed. R. Helm, *Fabii Plancidis Mythographus* (Ohio State University Press, 1971), p. 48). Restated by Ridevall, *Fulgentius Metaphoris*, i (ed. Liebeschütz, p. 66); Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, V, 1525–40 (ed. Macaulay, i, 443–4). For discussion of Gower's possible sources see H. C. Manzer, *A Study of the Sources of the Confessio Amantis* by John Gower (D. Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1967), pp. 275–6, who refers to Albert of London's *Poetarius*, Ridevall, Holcot, and Higden's *Polychronicon*. No classical source for the Stryphonae tale has been found: it may be an imaginative reworking of Wisdom 13.9–14.22.
- 46 Petronius, Fragment 27.1; cf. Statius, *Thebaid*, iii.661; Fulgentius, *Mythologiae*, ii.1; Servius on the *Aeneid*, ii.715; Orosius, *Historiae*, vi.1. Petronius and Statius are cited as sources of this statement in *Fulgentius Metaphoris*, i (ed. Liebeschütz, p. 67). For other references see Robinson's note to *Troilus and Criseyde*, IV, 1408 (*Chaucer: Works*, p. 831).
- 47 *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix.11 (*Speculum Maius*, ii, fol. 292^v); cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae*, VIII. xi, 90–1 (trans. Macfarlane, pp. 160–1).
- 48 *De Civitate Dei*, v.9. Cf. *Speculum Naturale*, iii.34 (*Speculum Maius*, i, fol. 32^v); *Summa Britonis*, ed. Daly, i, 257–8, s.v. *fatum*.
- 49 Here I use the (unfinished) edition of Trevel's commentary on Boethius by the late E. T. Silk.
- 50 Here Trevel is expanding on Isidore, *Etymologiae*, VIII. xi.92 (trans. Macfarlane, p. 161), which was cited by Vincent, *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix.11 (*Speculum Maius*, fol. 292^v), and the *Summa Britonis*, ed. Daly, i, 257–8.
- 51 For discussion see Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles*; Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West*, pp. 230–8; Left, *Paris and Oxford Universities*, pp. 222–40; H. A. Oberman, *Archbishop Thomas Bradwardine: A Fourteenth-Century Augustinian* (Utrecht, 1957), pp. 6–7; David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought* (London, 1962), pp. 272–7.
- 52 H. Denifle and A. Chatelet, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis* (Paris, 1889–97), i, 487.
- 53 Unfortunately, the *potentia Dei absoluta* has been described by several modern scholars as a subversive doctrine which undermined the traditional scheme of salvation and generated insecurity and skepticism. I can find no evidence in late-medieval theology of such sensational fears. For careful explanations of the two powers of God (*potentia absoluta* and *potentia ordinata*) see Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 30–40, and his article 'Fourteenth-Century Religious Thought: A Premature Profile', *Speculum*, liii (1978), 80–93 (esp. p. 85); also M. A. Perroud, 'Innovation in William of Ockham's references to the *Potentia Dei*', *Antonianum*, xlv (1970), 65–97, and 'The Theory of the *Potentia Dei* according to Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham', *ibid.*, xlvii (1972), 69–95. For Ockham's attack on fatalism and necessitation see Ockham, *Predetermination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents*, trans. Adams and Kretzmann, esp. pp. 3–16; Left, *William of Ockham*, p. 471.
- 54 Cf. Coleman, *Piers Plowman and the 'Modern'*, pp. 23–4.
- 55 For discussion see Oberman, *Thomas Bradwardine*, pp. 49–64, 70–94; Left, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians*, pp. 27–47.
- 56 Bradwardine, *De Causa Dei*, i.28: *De Fato* (ed. Savile, pp. 264–7).
- 57 This distinction relates to the two types of prediction, general and particular, which are discussed on pp. 46–7, 80–1.
- 58 *De Causa Dei*, i.29 (ed. Savile, pp. 267–71). See further the praise of the Stoics in John of Wales's *Compendioliquium*, pars vi, cap. 3 (ed. Wadding, p. 351), which draws on Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xi.4. For illustrations of Stoic enlightenment see Walter Burley, *Libri de Vita et Mortis Philosophorum*, ed. Knust, pp. 94–6, 106–8, 304, 310–12, 328–31, 354, 358–62, 386–8. In his book *Chaucer's Language and the Philosopher's Tradition* T. V. Birtwhistle discusses the Stoic influence on Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*.

- Unfortunately, this study pays little attention to the dissemination and medievalization of Cicero's philosophy, or indeed to the complexity of the language of scholastic discourse in the fourteenth century.
- 59 H. A. Oberman and J. A. Weisheipl, 'The *Sermo Epinicius* ascribed to Thomas Bradwardine (1346)', *AHD/LMA*, xxv (1958), 295–329 (pp. 308–10).
- 60 *De Causa Dei*, ii.3 (ed. Savile, pp. 449–51, 466–7).
- 61 Cf. especially the emphatic statement that stellar influences 'do not necessitate but dispose' human beings, made by John Ashenden, *Summa Iudicialis*, ii, dist. xii, cap. 3 (Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 369, fol. 378^v).
- 62 Cf. the Middle English versions of the *exemplum* in *Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum*, ed. R. Steele, EETS ES lxxv (Oxford, 1898), 38, 113, 217–8; *Secretum Secretorum: Nine English Versions*, ed. M. A. Manzaoui, EETS, OS cclxxvi (Oxford, 1977), 10–11, 90, 197–8, 376–9.
- 63 *Speculum Naturale*, iii.34 (*Speculum Mains*, i, fol. 32^v). On Albert's astrological teaching see now B. B. Price, 'The Physical Astronomy and Astrology of Albertus Magnus', in *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays 1980*, ed. J. A. Weisheipl, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Studies and Texts, xlix (Toronto, 1980), 155–85 (esp. pp. 174–85).
- 64 S. *Thomae Aquinatis Opuscula theologica*, ed. R. A. Verardo (Maretti, 1954^b), i, 155. Cf. the summary of its doctrine in J. A. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas D'Aquino* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 399–400.
- 65 For discussion see Wedel, *Medieval Attitude toward Astrology*, pp. 8–11, 68, 72–3. See also Isidore's attack on the superstitious astrology practised by the *mathematici* who predict the nativities and disposition of men by the courses of the stars: *Eymologiae*, III. xxvii.2; III. lxxi.37–41; cf. the similar statement by Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Naturale*, xv.50: *Reprobatio fatalis constellationis* (*Speculum Mains*, i, fol. 190^v).
- 66 J. D. North, *Richard of Wallingford: An Edition of his Writings with Introductions, English Translation and Commentary* (Oxford, 1976), ii, 88–9.
- 67 *Summa Iudicialis*, ii, prologus (Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 369, fol. 128^v). Cf. Pseudo-Prolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, ii.1 (trans. J. M. Ashmand (London, 1917)), p. 58).
- 68 Cf. Oberman, *Thomas Bradwardine*, p. 24.
- 69 *De Causa Dei*, i.1, coroll. 32 (ed. Savile, pp. 29–37).
- 70 For Chaucer's possible knowledge of Sacrobosco see S. W. Harvey, 'Chaucer's Debt to Sacrobosco', *JEGP*, xxxiv (1935), 34–8; Walter B. Yeazie, 'Chaucer's Text-Book of Astronomy, Johannes de Sacrobosco', *University of Colorado Studies, ser. B, Studies in the Humanities*, 1 (1939/40), 169–82.
- 71 Lynn Thorndike, *The Sphere of Sacrobosco and its Commentators* (Chicago, 1949), pp. 116–17, 142.
- 72 *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, bk.ii (ed. Griffin, pp. 16–17).
- 73 John of Wales's affection for antiquity is representative, and has been described well by T. G. Hahn: 'The disposition and accomplishments of the non-Christians impress John so favourably, that he always places the most advantageous construction upon their ideas or actions, even if he must stretch a point to make it fit. . . though he sometimes admits, almost reluctantly, the unfortunate deficiency of this world that lacks access to Christianity, his immediate rejoinder is, how little we excel these pagans, even with our superior knowledge'. *God's Friends*, pp. 161, 163. In Wadding's edition of the *Compendilogium* John's account of the philosophers' Perfections occupies 54 pages (pp. 292–340), while his account of their abuses occupies a mere 10 (pp. 399–409).
- 74 See for example Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale*, vi.62 (*Speculum Mains*, iv, fol. 66^v), citing Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, x.27. For general discussion see Comparetti, *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, pp. 99–103.
- 75 *De Causa Dei*, i.1, coroll. 32 (ed. Savile, p. 35).
- Chaucer's knowledge of the *Legenda* see now Sherry Reames, 'The Sources of Chaucer's *Second Nun's Tale*', *MLP*, lxxvi (1978/9), 111–35.
- 77 *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints as Englished by William Caxton*, ed. F. S. Ellis (London, 1900–35), i, 27. Cf. A *Stanzac Life of Christ*, ed. F. A. Forster, EETS OS, clixvi (Oxford, 1926), 20–1.
- 78 *Aurea Legenda*, cap. vi (ed. Graesse, p. 42; trans. Caxton, *The Golden Legend*, ed. Ellis, i, 26; cf. John of Wales, *Compendilogium*, pars vii, cap. 2 (ed. Wadding, pp. 381–2); *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, i, 214–5, 218–9; *Stanzac Life of Christ*, ed. Forster, pp. 16–18.
- 79 *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix.18: *Quod omnia potius uni Ioui esse attribuentur* (*Speculum Mains*, ii, fol. 292^v); cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, iv.11.
- 80 *Speculum Doctrinale*, xix.25–6 (*Speculum Mains*, ii, 293–4^v); cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, viii.6. See further John of Wales, *compendilogium*, pars iii, dist. 4 (ed. Wadding, pp. 152–87); Walter Burley, *Liber de Vita et Moribus Philosophorum*, cap. lii (ed. Knust, pp. 214–34. See esp. p. 226, where he follows *De Civitate Dei*, viii.11); *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, iii, 340–59.
- 81 Vincent, *Speculum Historiale*, iv.66–71 (*Speculum Mains*, iv, fols 47–48^v), cf. *Speculum Morale*, lib. i, dist. civ, pars 3 (iii, fol. 102^v); *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, iii, 454–79. A useful summary of Higden's account is provided by David C. Fowler, *The Bible in Early English Literature* (London, 1977), pp. 224–7. On the sources of the story of Alexander and the Brahmans see George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 13–14, 91–5.
- 82 T. Royes, *Bibl. Mun.*, MS 1381, fol. 46^v. London, British Library, MS Royal 15.B.III, fol. 16^v; cf. Minnis, 'Medieval French and English Traditions of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*', p. 324.
- 83 Cambridge, University Library, MS II.3.21, part ii, fol. 17^v.
- 84 *Comm. in De Cons. Phil.*, I pr.3 (ed. Silk).
- 85 *Roman de la Rose*, 5863–8 (ed. Langlois, ii, 274).
- 86 For other eulogistic accounts of the life and death of Socrates see Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale*, iii.66 (*Speculum Mains*, iv, fol. 38^v); John of Wales, *Compendilogium*, pars iii, dist. 3 (ed. Wadding, pp. 114–51); Burley, *Liber de Vita et Moribus Philosophorum*, cap. xxx (ed. Knust, pp. 108–142); *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, iii, 274, 290–5. One of John of Wales's sources is an 'expositor' of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, who may be identified as William of Conches.
- 87 *Roman de la Rose*, 6211–45. The following account is based on Minnis, 'Medieval French and English Traditions of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*', pp. 324–8.
- 88 Trans. Dahlberg, pp. 122–123.
- 89 MS Royal 15.B.III, fol. 72^v; CUL, MS II.3.21, pt. ii, fol. 17^v.
- 90 Trevet, *Comm. in De Cons. Phil.*, III pr. v (ed. Silk). Cf. Minnis, 'Medieval French and English Traditions', pp. 339–41.
- 91 For other eulogistic accounts of Seneca's life and death see Vincent, *Speculum Historiale*, ix.8 (*Speculum Mains*, iv, fol. 109^v); John of Wales, *Compendilogium*, pars iv, cap. 17 (ed. Wadding, pp. 288–9); Burley, *Liber de Vita et Moribus Philosophorum*, cap. cxvii (ed. Knust, pp. 358–62). Some scholars went so far as to turn Seneca into a Christian martyr. See for example the Bruges gloss on John of Garland's *Morale Scolarium*, probably by the author himself: 'In this satire the author urges us to perseverance in the Catholic faith even until death, since nothing will be crowned unless it is properly fought out, and he admonishes by means of a certain very worthy poet, namely Seneca, who in the age of Nero fought boldly for Christ and suffered death, for he was Nero's teacher, and, as it is said, was converted by St Paul to the Catholic faith and was instructed solidly in the same'. *The Morale Scolarium of John of Garland*, ed. L. J. Paetow, *Memoirs of the University of California*, iv.2 (Berkeley, 1927), p. 241.
- 92 *Palcraticus*, v.8 (ed. Webb, i, 317–8).

- pp. 108–126, 220–2; *St Erkenwald*, ed. Ruth Morse (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 16–25. But it should be emphasized that Morse's statement that Bradwardine's position concerning the salvation of infidels 'is provocative of despair' (p. 25), is insupportable.
- 94 *Communilogium*, pars i, dist. 3, cap. 6 (fol. 21^v); cf. *Speculum Historiale*, x.46 (*Speculum Manus*, iv, fol. 130^v).
- 95 *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, v.2. The *Speculum Historiale* was the source of the story of Trajan in the anonymous *Fiorè di filosofî*, to which Dante was indebted in his *Divine Comedy*, Purgatorio, canto x, 73–96. See Arturo Graf, *Roma nella memoria e nelle immaginazioni del Medio Aevo* (Turin, 1923), pp. 374–406.
- 96 *Aurea Legenda*, cap. xlvi (ed. Graesse, pp. 196–7); cf. the abbreviated version in Caxton, *The Golden Legend*, ed. Ellis, iii, 67–8.
- 97 Cf. S. Gregori *Papae Vitae*, lib. ii (pr. Migne, *PL*, lxxv, cols 104–6).
- 98 This account of Langland's Trajan is based on my article 'Langland's Imaginatif and Late-Medieval Theories of Imagination', *Comparative Criticism*, iii (1981), 71–103. See further R. W. Chambers, 'Long Will, Dante, and the Righteous Heathen', *Essays and Studies*, ix (1923), 50–69; T. P. Dunning, 'Langland and the Salvation of the Heathen: The Exploration of a Theme in Piers Plowman', *JWCI*, xxix (1966), 101–116; Coleman, *Piers Plowman and the 'Modern'*, pp. 108–46.
- 99 *Piers Plowman*, B-version, Passus XII, 285–92 (ed. Kane and Donaldson, pp. 482–3).
- 100 *Polychronicon Ranulphi*, v, 7. Trevisa's opinion concerning the achievement and destiny of good pagans in general, however, is far from clear. He criticises a story by Gregory Nazianzus which reveals Aristotle in a bad light, and recounts how the dying philosopher held an apple in his hand and had comfort of the smell, while teaching his scholars how they should live and come to God, and be with God without end: *ibid.*, iii, 371. Yet he does not comment on the possibility of Aristotle's salvation. The source of Trevisa's anecdote about Aristotle and the apple, the *Liber de Pomis*, has recently been translated by M. F. Rousseau, *The Apple, or Aristotle's Death* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1968).
- 101 *Aurea Legenda*, ed. Graesse, p. 197.
- 102 *St Erkenwald*, ed. Morse, pp. 8, 16–31.
- 103 For discussion of the term *ex puris naturalibus* see Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 47–50, 468; Johann Auer, *Die Entwicklung der Gnadentele in der Hochscholastik*, vol. II: *Das Wirken der Gnade* (Freiburg, 1951), pp. 26–58.
- 104 For these identifications see Left, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians*, pp. 127–254; Oberman, *Thomas Bradwardine*, pp. 28–48.
- 105 Cf. Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity*, pp. 148–9, 186.
- 106 For Hoccleve's reference to Holcot see *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems*, ed. F. J. Furnivall and I. Gollancz, EETS ES 61 and 73 (rev. reprint, Oxford, 1970), 33. Gower's possible knowledge of Holcot's commentary on Wisdom is discussed in Mainzer's unpublished thesis, *A Study of the Sources of the Confessio Amantis of John Gower*.
- 107 Paulo Molteni, *Roberto Holcot: Dottrina della grazia e della giustificazione, con due questioni quodlibetalis ineditae* (Pinerolo, 1967), pp. 174–204.
- 108 I Sent., q. iv, art. 3, P-Q (*Super quatuor libros sententiarum quaestiones* (Lyon, 1497), unfol.).
- 109 On the nominalistic conception of natural law see especially Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 103–8; Left, *William of Ockham*, pp. 622–3; A. McGrade, *The Political Thought of William of Ockham* (Cambridge, 1974), 177–85; Francis Oakley, 'Medieval Theories of Natural Law: William of Ockham and the Significance of the Voluntarist Tradition', *Natural Law Forum*, vi (1961), 65–83.
- 110 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 150 (on Wisdom 12.15–17), nn. 501–2.

112 *Ibid.*, pp. 198–9.

113 For Ockham's similar, yet in some important respects different, doctrine of grace see Left, *William of Ockham*, pp. 470–5, 476, 500.

114 Alois Meissner, *Gotteskenntnis und Gotteslehre nach dem englischen Dominikanertheologen Robert Holkot* (Limburg, 1953), pp. 102–4.

115 Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 245–6.

116 *Ibid.*, p. 246. By *meritum de congruo* is meant 'half merit', 'an act performed in a state of sin, in accordance with nature or divine law . . . and therefore accepted by God as satisfying the requirement for the infusion of first grace': *ibid.*, pp. 471–2. Cf. Left, *William of Ockham*, pp. 494–5.

117 For discussion see especially Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 132–4, 240–8, 468; also his article "'Facientibus quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam'": Robert Holcot O.P. and the Beginnings of Luther's Theology', *Harvard Theological Review*, lv (1962), 317–42.

118 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 29 (on Wisdom 2.21–2), p. 103.

119 Cf. Ockham's views, in *Ockham: Philosophical Writings*, ed. P. Boehner (London, 1957), pp. xliii–xlvii, 115–26; summarized by Left, *William of Ockham*, pp. 335–6, 346, 359–98.

120 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 29, p. 103.

121 Cf. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, pp. 241–3.

122 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 155 (on Wisdom 13.1–2), pp. 515–6; Cf. I Sent., q. iv, art. 3, M.

123 See Smalley's translation of this crucial passage in *English Friars and Antiquity*, p. 185. Cf. Holcot, I Sent., q. iv, art. 3, M.

124 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 103 (on Wisdom 7.27–8), p. 348.

125 *Ibid.*, lectio 157 (on Wisdom 13.6–9), pp. 521–3.

126 *De Civitate Dei*, xviii.38.

127 I Sent., q. iv, art. 3, Q.

128 *Sap. Sal. praelectiones*, lectio 157, p. 522.

129 *Aurea Legenda*, ed. Graesse, p. 197.

130 But it should be noted that Holcot's views on the salvation of the heathen were by no means the most extreme of their kind. That dubious honour must surely go to Ulrich of Boldon's opinion that all human beings, including pagans and infidels, enjoy a 'clear vision' of God at the moment just before death, when they must choose or reject Him. See M. E. Marcet, *Ulrich de Boldon, Friar William Jordan, and Piers Plowman* (New York, 1938), pp. 37–42; M. D. Knowles, 'The Censured Opinions of Ulrich of Boldon', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxxvii (1951), 305–42 (esp. pp. 313–7, 334).

CHAPTER 3

- 1 See especially J. S. P. Tatlock, 'The Epilog of Chaucer's *Troilus*', *MP*, xviii (1920/1), 625–59 (pp. 640–50), and Lewis, 'What Chaucer Really Did to *Il Filostrato*', in *Chaucer Criticism*, II, 19–21; also T. P. Dunning, 'God and Man in *Troilus* and *Criseyde*', *English and Medieval Studies presented to J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. N. Davis and C. L. Wrenn (London, 1962), 164–82; S. B. Greenfield, 'The Role of Calcas in *Troilus* and *Criseyde*', *Medium Aevum*, xxxvi (1967), 141–51.
- 2 Tatlock, 'The Epilog of Chaucer's *Troilus*', p. 643; cf. H. M. Cummings, *The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Works to the Italian Works of Boccaccio* (New York, 1965), pp. 126–7.
- 3 *Compendilogium*, prologus (ed. Wadding, pp. 19–28).
- 4 *Ibid.*, n. 128. On *ornith ornithis data* see Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*.