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Chaucer and Giraldus Cambrensis

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In this paper I should like to add Giraldus Cambrensis's *Topographia Hibernie* to the list of writings by Giraldus that have at different times been suggested as possible sources for one or other of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer.¹ I shall first give a survey of the examples known to me of discussions in this context of writings by Giraldus Cambrensis, and will then go on to argue that the *Topographia Hibernie* may have been a source for Chaucer's *House of Fame*.

In 1913, John S. P. Tatlock suggested that the 'retracciouns' at the end of Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*, in which the writer asks his readers to pray that he may be forgiven for the more secular of his writings, and thanks Jesus, Mary and all the saints for the more spiritually-oriented works he has written, may have been influenced by the *Retractationes* which Giraldus Cambrensis appended to his *Descriptio Cambriae*, and in which he refers to certain remarks in a number of his other writings, including the *Topographia Hibernie*, that in his view need to be reconsidered (*retractanda*), on the grounds that they involve dubious statements which his readers might take for certainties.²

In 1932, Shio Sakanishi went so far as to suggest that the author referred to by Chaucer as 'Oon of the gretteste auctour that men rede', in Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* (*Canterbury Tales*, VII 2984, B² *4174), was Giraldus Cambrensis, and that the reference is specifically to Giraldus's *Expugnatio Hebernica*, where two stories remarkably similar to the first two used by Chaucer as illustrations of the prophetic power of dreams occur in the same order as in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, with only a single sentence intervening between them. These are the stories about one of two travellers staying at separate lodgings appearing to the other in a dream and declaring himself to have been murdered, as turns out to be true; and about a man staying behind on land after being warned in a dream not to embark on a sea-voyage, on which, it later emerges, those who do undertake the voyage are drowned.³ Both stories also occur in Cicero's *De Divinatione*; in the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* of

Valerius Maximus, who derived them from Cicero; and in the Latin commentary on the Book of Wisdom (*Super Sapientiam Salomonis*) by the fourteenth-century English Dominican Robert Holcot, who in turn derived them from Valerius Maximus. Arguing against Sakanishi in 1977 that Chaucer's source for the two stories is more likely to have been either Cicero or Holcot (or both) than Giraldus Cambrensis, Robert A. Pratt nevertheless had to acknowledge the significance of Sakanishi's point that in Giraldus's account the two stories were in the same order as in Chaucer's, as well as in close proximity to one another.⁴

In 1945, B. J. Whiting argued that Troilus's intention 'Hymselven lik a pilgrym to desgise' in order to visit Criseyde in the Greek camp in Book V, line 1577 of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* – an intention that is never fulfilled, since it seems impossible that the disguise will not be seen through – was influenced by Giraldus's account, in his *De Jure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae*, of how he himself, while travelling through France on his way back to Wales from Rome at the end of a long line of returning pilgrims, was singled out for questioning by the brother-in-law of the castellan of Châtillon-sur-Seine, who identified him as a Welshman, and hence as an enemy of the king of France (since Wales was subject to King John of England, then at war with France), after first looking at him closely under his gaberdine.⁵

In 1950, Margaret Schlauch showed how Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Liber de Invectionibus*, contributed to a gradual 'whitewashing' process in the development of traditions relating to the Byzantine emperor Mauritius (ruled 582-603/04), which led to his being presented, in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*, as an exemplary Christian emperor, very different from the tyrannical, albeit ultimately repentant figure that the tenth-century Latin writer John the Deacon (known as Hymonides) showed him to be in his Life of Gregory the Great. As a specific example of this process, Schlauch points out that Giraldus substitutes the adjective *tumidus* ('arrogant') for the one used by John the Deacon – *timidus* ('timid') – to describe Mauritius's opponent Phocas.⁶

In 1955, finally, Morton W. Bloomfield collected together fourteen medieval references to the use of the opening words of St John's gospel as an apotropaic formula, i.e. as a formula designed to ward off evil of one kind or another, and went on to show how these references help to fill in the cultural background of the use by Chaucer's Friar, as described in the General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* (l. 254), of the phrase *In principio*. One of them is to the *Gemma Ecclesiastica* of Giraldus Cambrensis, in which Giraldus reports that when priests are reproved by their superiors for excessive reading of the gospels at mass, they reply: 'Quia medicina est et phantasma fugat, praecipue Johannis initium.'⁷

My argument that the *Topographia Hibernie* may have been a source for *The*

House of Fame is based on certain similarities between the two works which I believe can be identified, and which I have done my best to illustrate in the parallel columns printed below. Here the Latin text of the extracts from the *Topographia* is taken from John J. O'Meara's edition of the first recension of that work, published in Dublin in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* in 1949.⁸ The indications in the Latin text of numbers of parts and chapters of the *Topographia* are however taken from the English translation of the latter, also by John J. O'Meara, first published in 1951, and later published (1982) in Penguin Classics.⁹ The text and line numbering of the extracts from *The House of Fame* are those of *The Riverside Chaucer* edition, published in 1988.¹⁰ On the first of the two pages of columns, where the relevant sections of the *Topographia* are from chapters 8 and 9 of Part I, no specific indication of similarities is given, since the similarities here seem to me more general than specific. On the second page, on the other hand, where the relevant sections of the *Topographia* are chapters 67, 69, 70, 71 and 77 of Part II, the similarities are indicated in italics. It may further be noted that, in the two pages of columns, all extracts from the *Topographia* are given in the order in which they occur in that work, and that on the first page this is also the case with the extracts from *The House of Fame*. On the second page, however, extracts from *The House of Fame* are given in an order which enables them to be placed side by side (more or less) with those passages in the *Topographia* to which I believe they show similarities.

As is well known, the major events of *The House of Fame* take place in a dream which the first-person narrator of the poem presents himself as having experienced. I shall refer to this narrator as either 'the dreamer' or 'the narrator', depending on whether the context relates to his experiencing of these events at the time of dreaming, or to his recalling of them after the event. In using these terms I shall in each case be treating the narrator as a character and personality within the poem, rather than as identical with the poem's author, Geoffrey Chaucer – notwithstanding the fact that the dreamer is at one point (l. 729) addressed as 'Geffrey' by another of the characters in the poem, the eagle who carries him to the House of Fame. When I do refer to Chaucer as the author of the poem, however, I shall of course use his name.

Giraldus Cambrensis (c. 1146-1223), *Topographia Hibernie* (c. 1188):

I, 8: Accipitres ergo falcones et nisos [...] pre aliis regionibus hec copiose producit.

[...] Item, juxta Cassiodorum; 'aves huiusmodi, quarum uictus ex preda est, fetus suos nouitate marcentes nidis proturbant, ne molle otium consuescant, alis uerberant, cogunt pullos teneros ad uolatum, ut tales debeant existere, pro quibus possit parens uterque presumere.' [...]

I, 9: Aquilarum quoque non minorem hic copiam, quam alibi miluorum uideas. Hec auis in ipsos solaris corporis radios irreuerberato lumine aciem defigit oculorum; et tam ardua uolatu plerumque petit, ut ei penne estuantibus solis ignibus exurantur. Item et per tot secula durat, ut renouate iuuentutis beneficio cum ipsa uideatur perhennitate contendere.

Sic uiri contemplatiui in ipsam diuine maiestatis naturam, uerumque solem iusticie toto et inflexo mentis tendunt intuitu; et ad aratrum celestis paradisi manum mittentes, retro non respiciunt. Sic et in sacris scripturis, qui ultra concessos, qui preteriri nec debent nec possunt terminos, celestium sacretorum ardua et archana scrutari nituntur, tanquam alis presumptuosi ingenii quibus transportantur adustis, in se redeuntes infra subsistunt. Cum ergo 'celum celi sit domino,' et quod residuum fuerit igne comburi debeat, memores esse debemus nec ingrati, quod in partem admissi sumus cognitionis, non in plenitudinem uel intelligentie uel inquisitionis. Sic et uiri sancti, renouata uere iuuentutis innocentia, cum ueterem hominem iam exuti fuerint, et induti nouum, ad perpetue uite fructum feliciter accedunt.

Geoffrey Chaucer (d. 1400), *The House of Fame* (c. 1378-80):

This egle, of which I have yow told,
That shon with fethres as of gold,
Which that so hye gan to sore, [...] (ll. 529-31)
[...] sayde twyes, 'Seynte Marye,
Thou art noyous for to carye! [...]'

(ll. 573-74)

'Oh God,' thoughte I, 'that madest kynde,
Shal I noon other weyes dye? [...]'

(ll. 584-85)

But thus sone in a while he
Was flowen fro the ground so hye,
That al the world, as to myn yē,
No more semed than a prikke;
Or elles was the air so thikke
That y ne mighte not discerne. [...]

(ll. 904-09)

Quod he, 'for half so high as this
Nas Alixandre Macedo;
Ne the kyng, Daun Scipio,
That saw in drem, at poynt devys,
Helle and erthe and paradys;
Ne eke the wrechche Dedalus,
Ne his child, nyce Ykarus,
That fleigh so hige that the hete
His wynges malt, and he fel wete
In myd the see, and ther he dreynete,
For whom was makid moch compleynte. [...]'

(ll. 914-24)

'Now,' quod he thoo, 'cast up thyn yē.
Se yonder, loo, the Galaxie,
Which men clepeth the Milky Wey
For hit ys whit (and somme, parfey)
Kallen hyt Watlynge Strete),
That ones was ybrent with hete,
Whan the sonnes sone the rede,
That highte Pheton, wolde lede
Algate hys fader carte, and gye.
The carte-hors gonne wel espye
That he koude no gouernaunce,
And gonne for to lepe and launce,
And beren hym now up, now down,
Til that he sey the Scorpion,
Which that in heven a sygne is yit.
And he for ferde lost hys wyt
Of that, and let the reynes gon
Of his hors; and they anoon
Gonne up to mounete and doun descende,
Til bothe the eyr and erthe brende,
Till Jupiter, loo, atte laste,
Hym slow, and from the carte caste. [...]'

(ll. 935-56)

And thoo thoughte y upon Boece,
That writ, 'A thought may flee so hye
With fetheres of Philosophye,
To passen everych element,
And when he hath so fer ywent,
Than may be seen behynde hys bak
Cloude' – and al that y of spak. (ll. 972-78)

GiC, TH, II, 67: Apud Kildariam Lagenie, quam gloriosa Brigida reddit illustrem, digna memoratu sunt miracula multa. Inter que primum occurrit *ignis Brigide, quem inextinguibilem dicunt* [...].

II, 69: *Virgeo* quodam et orbiculari sepe ignis iste circuitur, intra quem mas non intrat. Et si forte intrare presumpserit, quod a temerariis quibusdam nonnunquam est attemptatum, diuinam ultionem non euadit. Item mulieribus solum, et hiis non oris flatu, sed follibus tantum et uentilabris, ignem licet exsufflare.[...] **II, 70:** A tempore Brigide falco quidam egregius locum istum frequentabat, *qui et ecclesiastice turris summitati insidere consueuerat*. Vnde et a populo auis Brigide uocabatur, et in ueneratione quadam a cunctis habebatur. [...] Quis enim locus miseris auiculis relinquebatur, cum homines terram et

aquas, auis inimica grauisque tyrannus aerem obsidebat? [...] In ipso discessu primo domini Iohannis ab Hibernia, auem que per tot durauerat secula, et tam delectabiliter Brigide locum illustrauerat, demum prede quam ceperat minus caute insidentem, et humanos accessus parum euitantem, baculo quem gestabat rusticus quidam obpetiit. Ex quo patet casum in secundis fore metuendum, et uite diurne delectabili et dilecte parum esse confidendum. **II, 71:** Inter uniuersa Kildarie miracula, nihil michi miraculosius occurrit quam liber ille mirandus [...]. Continet hic liber IIII Euangeliorum iuxta Ieronimum concordantiam: ubi quot pagine fere tot figure diuerse, uariisque coloribus distinctissime. Hinc maiestatis uultum uideas diuinitus impressum; *hinc mysticas Euangelistarum formas, nunc senas, nunc quaternas, nunc binas alas habentes; hinc aquilam, inde utulum, hinc hominis faciem, inde leonis* [...]. **II, 77:** Apud Kildariam sagittarius quidam [...], sepem transiliens, ignem Brigide ore sufflauit. Qui statim resiliens, demens ire cepit, et

cuicumque obuiabat, insufflans in os eius dicebat, 'uiden? sic ignem Brigide sufflaui.' Sic quoque *per domos tocius uille discurrens, ubicunque ignem inuenit eadem uerba ingeminans, eum exsufflauit*. [...] Alius uero, ut ad ignem intraret, cum tibiam alteram trans sepem iam posuisset, et a sociis tamen retractus esset et retentus, pes ille cum crure statim exaruit.

GeC, Hoff: [...] Thus north and south
Wente every tydyng fro mouth to mouth,
And that encresing ever moo,
As fyr ys wonnt to quyke and goo
From a sparke spronge amys,
Til al a citee brent up ys. (II. 2075-80)

And al thys hous of which y rede
Was *mad of twigges*, falwe, rede,
And grene eke, and somme weren white,
Swich as men to these cages thwite,
Or maken of these panyers,
Or elles hottes or dossers; [...] (II. 1935-40)
And hyt was shapen lyk a cage.

'Certys,' quod y, 'in al myn age,
Ne saugh y such an hous as this.'
And as y wondred me, ywys,
Upon this hous, tho war was y
How that myn egle faste by
Was *perched hye upon a stoon;*
And I gan streghte to hym gon, [...]. (II. 1985-92)

For alther-first, soth for to seye,
Me thoughte that she was so lyte
That the lengthe of a cubite
Was lengere than she semed be.
But thus some in a whyle she
Hir tho so wonderliche streighte
That with hir fet she erthe reighte,
And with hir hed she touched hevene,
Ther as shynen sterres sevene,
And therto eke, as to my wit,
I saugh a gretter wonder yit,
Upon hir eyen to beholde;
But certeyn y hem never tolde,
For *as feele* eyen hadde she
As fetheres upon foules be,
Or weren on the bestes foure
That Goddis trone gunne honour,
As John writ in th'Apocalips.
Hir heer, that oundy was and crips,
As burned gold hyt shoon to see;
And soth to tellen, also she
Had also fele upstondyng eres
And tonges, as on bestes heres;
And on hir fet woxen saugh Y
Partriches wynges redely. (II. 1368-92)

What dide this Eolus, but he
Tok out hys blake trumpe of bras,
That fouler than the deuel was,
And *gan this trumpe for to blowe,*
As al the world shulde overthrowe,
That *throughout every regioun*
Wente this foule trumpes soun,
As swifte as pelet out of gonne
Whan fyr is in the poudre ronne.
And such a smoke gan out wende
Out of his foule trumpes ende.[...] (II. 1636-46)

From the first of the two pages of parallel passages it will be seen that both works deal with eagles. Giraldus treats these in the chapter immediately following his chapter on hawks, falcons and sparrowhawks, as is clear from the extracts printed in the first left-hand column. In the chapter on hawks, falcons and sparrowhawks, as also appears from these extracts, he quotes Cassiodorus as saying that birds of this kind throw their weak young offspring out of their nests. Giraldus goes on to say, in the second sentence of the following chapter, that the eagle can look straight at the sun in all its brightness. Taken together, these two observations are reminiscent of the tradition, well established in medieval bestiary lore, that eagles lift their young in their claws to look at the sun before they can fly, and drop them if they refuse to face its brilliance.¹¹ In the parallel extracts from *The House of Fame* in the first right-hand column it is clear from the eagle's references to the myths of Icarus and Phaëthon that he is claiming to have carried the dreamer very close to the sun. It also seems clear, from the eagle's complaint that the dreamer is 'noyous for to carie' (l. 574), and from the dreamer's terrified response to this, reported a few lines later, that the danger of being dropped by the eagle is not far from the dreamer's mind. Giraldus goes on to say that the eagle flies so high that its wings are scorched by the fires of the sun. This feature is also found in the bestiary tradition, where it is said that the scorching happens when the eagle grows old, and that it then plunges three times into a fountain, thus renewing its youth.¹² Giraldus, as will be evident, makes no mention of the fountain, though he does refer to the renewal of the eagle's youth.

Giraldus goes on to treat the eagle, as he has described it, as an allegorical representation of two types of person, one clearly more admirable than the other. The first of the two types, the more admirable one, is the contemplative who gazes unflinchingly at the nature of the divine majesty, without turning away or looking back. The second is the type of person who meddles in what he does not fully understand in trying to interpret the scriptures, and, as a consequence, makes no heavenward progress, remaining below as if the wings of his presumptuous intelligence had been burned. Of these two types the former recalls the Lady Philosophy's representation of herself in Book IV, Metre 1, of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, to which the narrator refers at lines 973-78 of *The House of Fame*, as shown in the final extract in the first right-hand column. Although the image of the eagle is not used in the Boethius passage, Philosophy describes herself there as having wings which enable her to fly beyond the clouds, the sun and the stars into the glorious light of the King of kings, leaving the earth far behind. She does, it is true, mention that she sees the clouds behind her as she flies,¹³ but her implication is that she soon leaves them far behind as well, and the emphasis of the whole passage

is indeed on the confident, direct and unencumbered nature of her flight towards its divine goal. Philosophy's flight as described by Boethius may thus be compared with Giraldus's description of the undistracted heavenward gaze of the contemplative, the first of the two types which Giraldus represents allegorically by an eagle. The same Boethius passage as used in *The House of Fame* is, however, more readily comparable, in my view, to Giraldus's description of the second of the two types in question, the type that meddles in what it does not understand and falls back rather than proceeds upwards. The narrator, who in general presents himself – whether as dreamer or dream-teller – as shy and diffident, and far from knowing the answer to every question, seems to give the passage a literally down-to-earth interpretation, apparently taking it to mean that the high-flown nature of philosophical speculation is in danger of distracting those who practise it from the realities of the world in which they live. This surely emerges in the greater emphasis he gives than Boethius does to the idea of looking back while in upward flight and seeing nothing but clouds below. The narrator indeed interrupts himself before he can mention the divine goal of the flight, the description of which forms the climax of the passage in Boethius, and this seems to be consistent with his having missed the point of the passage, and with his thus being himself an example – in his capacity as dreamer as well as narrator – of the second type of person of the two which Giraldus represents allegorically by the eagle, a type which might also be said to be represented by the winged (or feathered) thought to which the narrator refers.

Before any criticism is levelled at the dreamer, however, it must be remembered that the character in *The House of Fame* who does the actual flying, and indeed most of the talking in his conversation with the dreamer, is the eagle himself, and that there is plenty of evidence that this eagle, like the second type of person represented by Giraldus's eagle, is a meddler in what he does not fully understand. For one thing, his claim at lines 914-24, quoted above, that the dreamer and he have flown more than twice as high as Icarus is inconsistent with his earlier claim at lines 713-15 (not quoted here) that the House of Fame is situated midway between heaven and earth and sea, since the latter location, according to medieval thinking, would have been in the air, and hence below the moon, and nowhere near as close to the sun as Icarus was supposed to have flown.¹⁴ Another of the eagle's inconsistencies emerges at the end of his long lecture to the dreamer on how sound, which is really broken air, travels by a natural process from its place of origin to the House of Fame. After discoursing on this subject for well over a hundred lines, the eagle claims at lines 853-63 (not quoted here) to have done so in simple, plain language, without making use of figures of speech or rhetorical ornament. In fact, however, as Teager shows, the eagle has used a

great many tropes and rhetorical figures in the speech in question.¹⁵ To a medieval audience these inconsistencies would probably have seemed so blatant as to suggest that the eagle simply does not know what he is talking about, rather than that he is trying to deceive the dreamer in any calculated way. It may further be noted that to a modern reader, at least, the idea of broken air, used by the eagle to define sound (at l. 765, 'eyr ybroken'), might well suggest that of broken wind, and it has indeed been argued that the possibility of the eagle's breaking wind is one of the dreamer's worries, as a 'nether-riding passenger', as he travels with the eagle to the House of Fame. This view, put forward in 1971 by John Leyerle,¹⁶ has recently been rejected by Nicholas R. Havely on the grounds that the expression 'to break wind' is not recorded until the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁷ Still more recently, however, it has been reaffirmed by A. J. Minnis, who makes use of, among other things, the description of Aeolus's trumpet, quoted as the final extract from *The House of Fame* in the second right-hand column above, in arguing that a farting joke is generally at work in the poem, in the context of the eagle as well as in that of Aeolus.¹⁸ Whatever one's view on this last point, the whole tone of Chaucer's presentation of the eagle in *The House of Fame* surely suggests that this eagle is meant to be taken as very largely a figure of fun, to be laughed at rather than taken too seriously.

This less than respectful presentation of the eagle in *The House of Fame* is particularly striking when seen against the background of the various traditions that have become established – with good reason – as major sources for Chaucer's use of an eagle as a character in the poem. As far as I can see, these fall into four main groups: the Bible, where the eagle appears as, among other things, the symbol of St John the Evangelist;¹⁹ classical writings, notably Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in which a bird readily identifiable as an eagle is presented as closely associated with the god Jupiter;²⁰ the works of Dante, particularly *The Divine Comedy*, where the eagle appears (in the *Purgatorio*) in a poet-carrying role (as in *The House of Fame*) and (in the *Paradiso*) as a sun-gazer and a symbol of justice;²¹ and the bestiary tradition, in which the eagle's supposed ability to look directly at the sun is compared with Christ's face-to-face relationship with the Father.²² I have recently suggested elsewhere that somewhere in the background of Chaucer's poem there may also lie a memory of the eagle in Hindu mythology that brings the drink known as Soma – believed to confer, among other things, the gift of poetry – from heaven to earth.²³ While this last tradition may not be accepted as readily as each of the other four as representing a likely source for *The House of Fame*, it may be pointed out that in all of them the eagle seems to appear as an august and serious figure, to be treated with awe and reverence as well as respect. It would be a brave man, one might think,

who would venture to portray an eagle in a predominantly mocking spirit, as Chaucer seems to do in *The House of Fame*, against the background of the kind of portrayal of the eagle that seems to be characteristic of the traditions just referred to.

I cannot claim to have made anything like an exhaustive analysis of traditions relating to eagles that might have been known to Chaucer, but suspect on the basis of what reading I have done in this connection that Giraldus Cambrensis in his *Topographia Hibernie* is unusual, not in his use of the eagle to represent an ideal, contemplative human type, but in his use of it to represent a meddling, presumptuous type. I would also claim that, taken together, the arguments summarized at the beginning of this paper strongly suggest that Chaucer was acquainted with Giraldus's work. My own suggestion is that Chaucer was stimulated by Giraldus's treatment of the eagle in the *Topographia Hibernie* to present the eagle in *The House of Fame* as a less than ideal figure. If it is objected that the similarities between the two works as far as eagles are concerned are not detailed enough to support this suggestion, I would point to the relatively specific similarities between them indicated on the second page of extracts above. There are five such similarities, each relating in one way or another to the *Topographia's* description of the fire of St Brigid in Kildare. While the first of them, the mention of a fire in both works, may not be especially significant, since the fire is a literal one in the *Topographia* but occurs only in a simile in *The House of Fame*, it surely *is* significant that St Brigid's fire is surrounded by twigs, and that in Chaucer's poem the House of Rumour is made of twigs; that a falcon perches near St Brigid's shrine, as the eagle perches near the House of Rumour; that the mystical representations of the Evangelists are mentioned in both works (in a simile, admittedly, in *The House of Fame*) in a context of shape-changing; and that news of St Brigid's fire is spread by blowing, much as the slander decreed by Fame is spread by the blowing of Aeolus's trumpet. I have not space here to discuss these similarities further, but I believe that they are there, and that they support the general case for Giraldus Cambrensis's *Topographia Hibernie* as a source for Chaucer's *House of Fame*.

NOTES

¹ For knowledge of the articles referred to here in footnotes 2-7 I am indebted to the references given (under 'Gerald of Wales' as well as 'Giraldus Cambrensis') in Lynn King Morris, *Chaucer Source and Analogue Criticism: A Cross-referenced Guide* (New York: Garland, 1985), pp. 253-55.

² John S. P. Tatlock, 'Chaucer's *Retractions*', *PMLA*, n.s. 21 (1913), 521-29.

³ Shio Sakanishi, 'A Note on the *Nonne Preestes Tale*', *MLN*, 47 (1932), 150-51.

⁴ Robert A. Pratt, 'Some Latin Sources of the Nonnes Preest on Dreams', *Speculum*, 52 (1977), 538-70.

⁵ B. J. Whiting, 'Troilus and Pilgrims in Wartime', *MLN*, 60 (1945), 47-49.

⁶ Margaret Schlauch, 'Historical Precursors of Chaucer's Constance', *PQ*, 29 (1950), 402-12.

⁷ Morton W. Bloomfield, 'The Magic of *In Principio*', *MLN*, 70 (1955), 559-65.

⁸ *Giraldus Cambrensis in Topographia Hibernie: Text of the First Recension*, ed. by John J. O'Meara, *PRIA*, 52, C4 (1949), 113-78. For the likely date of the *Topographia* as indicated below, see p. 114 of O'Meara's edition.

⁹ Gerald of Wales, *The History and Topography of Ireland*, trans. with an Introduction by John J. O'Meara (1951; repr. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982).

¹⁰ *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson and others, 3rd edn based on *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* ed. by F.N. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). For the likely date of *The House of Fame* as indicated below, see p. xxv of this edition.

¹¹ See Florence McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), pp. 113-15.

¹² See McCulloch, p. 114.

¹³ Boethius, [...] *The Consolation of Philosophy*, with the English translation of 'I.T.' (1609), revised by H.F. Stewart, The Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1918, repr. 1953), pp. 302-303. See p. 302 ('Nubesque postergum uidet').

¹⁴ See *The Riverside Chaucer*, p. 984, note to l. 914.

¹⁵ F. E. Teager, 'Chaucer's Eagle and the Rhetorical Colors', *PMLA*, 47 (1932), 410-18.

¹⁶ John Leyerle, 'Chaucer's Windy Eagle', *UTQ*, 40 (1970-71), 247-65.

¹⁷ See Chaucer, *The House of Fame*, ed. by Nicholas R. Havely (Durham: Durham Medieval Texts, 1994), p. 156, note to ll. 761-822.

¹⁸ See A. J. Minnis and others, *The Shorter Poems*, Oxford Guides to Chaucer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 223-24.

¹⁹ See the Revelation of John 4. 7, and cf. Minnis, p. 202.

²⁰ See *Aeneid*, V, ll. 252-57 and *Metamorphoses*, X, ll. 155-61. cf. also Minnis, p. 202, and Robert Graves, *Greek Myths* (1955; rev. edn 1958, repr. London: Cassell, 1980), 115-18.

²¹ See *Purgatorio*, IX, ll. 13-57; *Paradiso*, I, ll. 46-48; XVIII, ll. 91-108; XIX; XX. On Chaucer's debt to Dante for his portrayal of the eagle, see James Simpson, 'Dante's "Astripetam Aquilam" and the Theme of Poetic Discretion in the "House of Fame"', *E&S*, n.s. 39 (1986), 1-18.

²² See McCulloch, pp. 114-15.

²³ In an article to be published in the Proceedings of a conference on 'Ancient and Modern: Old Norse Myths and Mythological Poetry Then and Now', held at Edinburgh University under the auspices of the Department of Scandinavian Studies on 26-27 September, 1997.