

FORTUNA AND FREE WILL IN CHAUCER'S
"MONK'S TALE": AN EXAMINATION

By

CLARENCE OLIVER JOHNSON

Bachelor of Arts

Northwestern Oklahoma State University

Alva, Oklahoma

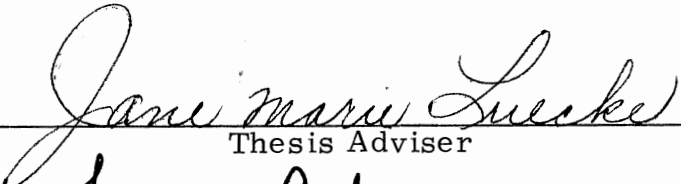
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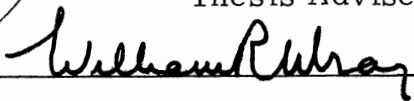
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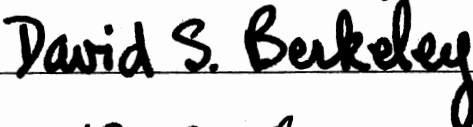
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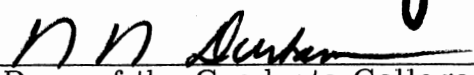
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Thesis Adviser







Dean of the Graduate College

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PREFACE

In this paper I advance the thesis that the portrayal of Fortuna, in the "Monk's Tale," is developed so that an orderly progression from a totally pagan Fortuna to a Christian conception of the goddess to the exclusion of the goddess' existence may be discerned. The idea of an ordering of the conceptions of Fortuna is not new. However, the idea of a progression such as I suggest is new and, furthermore, I have not found any work which suggests the possibility that the tragedie of Croesus is an example of the replacement of Fortuna with the concepts of free will and Divine providence. My analysis of this progression and the explication of the tragedie of Croesus will show that this progressive development of Fortuna and the introduction of free will in Croesus has a unifying effect on the "Monk's Tale" and thereby disallows the criticism of the tale on the grounds of disunity and poor workmanship.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Jane Marie Luecke for inspiring my interest in Chaucer and for giving me much advice and many helpful suggestions. I am equally appreciative of Dr. David S. Berkeley's sound instruction in research methods and his helpful suggestions for revision of the original draft of this paper. Also, Mr. Stephen Witte, Mr. Andrew Harnack, Mr. Roland Sodowsky, and Mr. Bill Coggin have offered useful suggestions at various stages in the preparation of this paper. I am deeply in the debt of Mrs. Dixie Mosier, Mrs.

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FORTUNA AND FREE WILL IN CHAUCER'S
"MONK'S TALE" : AN EXAMINATION

F. N. Robinson first gave direction to the study of Fortuna in the "Monk's Tale" when he suggested that "the fundamental Fortune motif" originated from the Roman de la Rose.¹ Since D. W. Robertson's pioneering use of the exegetical method opened a new field of criticism, analyzing the trend of the portrayal of Fortuna through the "Monk's Tale" has been a scholarly exercise. Recent criticism of Chaucer's "Monk's Tale" has generally accepted a conclusion that the conception of Fortuna in the tale is not static but develops in an orderly progression through the course of the seventeen tragedies and that this development invalidates the early assessments of the tale which saw the tragedies as a disconnected series of ensampla.

Some critics, such as R. E. Kaske, have found it useful to simply pronounce judgement on the goddess without analysis. All who treat her seem to designate the philosophical function of the goddess which is least deleterious to their own theses. In his excellent study of the Knight's interruption of the Monk, R. E. Kaske avoids classifying the conceptions of Fortuna but seems to lean toward a pagan conception. Kaske interprets the tragedies as "examples of gratuitous calamity, governed by the limited human concept of a meaninglessly shifting fortune." "The presentation of Fortune in the 'Monk's Tale'," Kaske states, "must be looked on as philosophically incomplete."² Rodney K. Delasanta, in a thesis which discusses the "Monk's Tale" with the

tenets of Augustine as a focal point, says that Fortuna, in the "Monk's Tale," is "clearly un-Christian."³

Paul G. Ruggiers allows for freedom in interpretation of Fortuna's portrayal. Ruggiers seems to be in a group with Delasanta and Kaske when he declares "It will suffice to say at the outset that Fortune is conceived as a pagan goddess, who, in her rotations, keeps the goods of the world impersonally distributed. By her victims who suffer loss and privation or by the narrator she is deemed capricious, or worse, malignant." Ruggiers does not sustain this opinion. "It is possible," he goes on, "to deduce from some of the segments of the 'Monk's Tale' that Fortune is all-powerful, an ultimate law operating within a scope defined by nothing outside of itself. But, we would be oversimplifying the matter if we left it with that statement. God's justice is implacable; through the agency of Fortune it brings the mighty low. But it is also inscrutable: it falls where it wills."⁴ Ruggiers, thus, recognizes that the concept of Fortuna is variable.

It is only a step from Ruggiers' understanding to the developmental theses of William C. Strange and Edward M. Socola. Socola separates the tragedies into three groups on the basis of those tragedies which do not mention Fortuna, those which present her as an abstraction, and those in which she becomes a "personalized and individualized being."⁵ Strange, in contrast arranges the tragedies into five groups on the premise of each group, or classification, representing Fortuna as either a Christian agent or as the pagan goddess. In support of his contention that the "Monk's Tale" "vacillates between the Christian idea of Fortune . . . and a most improper but powerful sense of that terrible presence, Fortuna," Strange attempts to exhibit the

unity in the tale by proposing that each of these classifications is part of a movement which is essentially evolutionary, moving from a Christian conception through a paradoxical sort of transition back to a Christian conception, after which "the movement back and forth becomes faster and faster until the two extremes collapse into a single, grinding climax with Croesus."⁶

The major differences between Strange and Socola are in the ways they choose to see Fortuna represented and in the explication of the tragedie of Croesus. Socola, in dealing with Fortuna only as an abstraction or a personification, classifies Fortuna, in Croesus, as a personification. Strange, while admitting that the tragedie of Croesus "is essentially ambiguous," and that it could be placed in either his Christian or his pagan category, places Croesus in a category of its own because, Strange says, it holds "both of these versions of Fortune briefly and dissonantly suspended."⁷

Fortuna is the explicit actor in only thirteen of the seventeen tragedies of the "Monk's Tale." In the other four--Lucifer, Adam, Sampson, and Bernabo of Lombardy--Fortuna seems to be waiting for an entrance, but it never comes. This is, perhaps, suggested by both Socola and Strange who include all of the tragedies in their classifications. It is possible to explicate these tragedies as if Fortuna were the active agent, but it is just as possible to illustrate the coherence and unity of the portrayal of Fortuna without including those tragedies in the illustration.⁸

If we examine only those thirteen examples in which Fortuna is mentioned specifically, the conception of Fortuna, far from the unstable position that vacillation suggests, may prove to be developed,

philosophically, to a quite coherent and congruent ending for the tale, and this philosophical coherence may supplement the structural integrity of the tale. For, while the portrayal of Fortuna in the "Monk's Tale" is philosophically paradoxical in that Fortuna appears as both a pagan goddess and as a Christian entity, the portrayal is ordered into a unified thematic development which emphasizes that paradox in order to resolve it in favor of free will, as conceived by St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and others. This emergence of free will, and divine foreknowledge, develops at the expense of both conceptions of Fortuna.

Using only those tragedies in which Fortuna is explicitly identified, one may arrive at a classification of the tragedies which is consonant with my thesis. If we divide the thirteen tragedies into those which present Fortuna as a pagan goddess and those which present her as a Christian entity, we will derive a list such as represented in Table I.

Croesus is an integral part of this concept, but does not, as will be discussed at length below, fit either classification precisely. The Croesus tragedie is, as Strange suggests, ambiguous, but it is necessarily so.

With the tragedies classified, it is possible to refine this classification for those tragedies in which Fortuna is presented as a pagan goddess. Fortuna, in the pagan tragedies, seems to display only three of the general characteristics associated with her tradition. However, on the basis of those three characteristics, the nine pagan tragedies can be separated into three categories--those in which the Goddess chooses her victims at random; those which represent her as

TABLE I
 DELINEATION OF CONCEPTIONS OF FORTUNA
 IN THE "MONK'S TALE"

Pagan	Christian
Hercules	Nebuchadnezzar
Zenobia	Balthasar
Peter of Spain	Antiochus
Peter of Cyprus	
Ugolino of Pisa	
Nero	
Holofernes	
Alexander	
Caesar	

TABLE II
 DELINEATION OF THE PAGAN TRAGEDIES INTO
 THREE BASIC CONCEPTIONS

Random Victims	Deserving	Innocent
Hercules	Nero	Caesar
Zenobia	Holofernes	Alexander
Peter of Cyprus		
Peter of Spain		
Ugolino of Pisa		

wreaking vengeance on those deserving of their lot; and those which represent her as attacking undeserving victims (see Table II).

It is appropriate that we should begin with Hercules because the Hercules tragedie is the first in the physical ordering of the tragedies and because it presents some difficulty in demonstration. There is no mention of Fortuna in the body of the tragedie of Hercules. It is not until the end of the tragedie, in a sort of appended moral (B 3324 ff.), that we encounter Fortuna.⁹ If, as Claude Jones has pointed out, the "Monk's Tale" is a mediaeval sermon, then we could consider this as one of several "warnings" in the text and divorce it from any direct connection to Hercules.¹⁰ However, line B 3329 seems to indicate at least a passing reference to Hercules when it says "Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe!"

Of the seven lines in the moral at the end of Hercules, which include B 3329, six present a Fortuna which is wholly pagan. First it is asked "Lo, who may truste on Fortune any throwe? / For hym that folweth al this world of prees, / Er he be war, is oft yleyd ful low."¹¹ Then the warning is issued "Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to glose, / Thanne wayteth she her man to overthrowe / By swiche wey as he wolde leest suppose" (B 3330-32). In De Consolatione Philosophie, II, pr. 1, Lady Philosophy describes Fortuna in similar terms: "I vnderstonde þe felefolde colour and deceites of þilke merueillous monstre fortune. and how she vseþ ful flatryng familiarite wiþ hem þat she enforceþ to bygyle. so longe til þat she confounde wiþ vnsuffreable sorwe hem þat she haþ left in despeir vnpurueyed."¹² Granted that Boethius later explains Fortuna's actions in terms of Divine providence, here he is dealing with a pagan goddess who was a fact of life

to all Romans. The same tradition in mediaeval literature is such a commonplace that illustration would be superfluous.

The portrayal in the Hercules moral is obviously consistent with the pagan identity of Fortuna in all but line B 3329. The line does not refer to Fortuna, but addresses itself to mankind, Hercules (tangentially), and to the problem of defending against Fortuna. Boethius, again, helps with this minor problem. Lady Philosophy exhorts the prisoner (Boethius), "þan if it so be þat þou art myȝty ouer þi self þat is to seyn by tranquillitee of þi soule. þan hast þou þing in þi power þat þou noldest neuer lesen. ne fortune may nat by-nyme it þe" (Cons. Philos. II, pr. 4). If we apply similar logic to the line in question, we find that he who is "ful wys" and "kan hymselven knowe" could avoid the wiles of Fortune which are mentioned on both sides of the line. The exhortation (B 3324), then, is another example of the traditional remedy against pagan Fortuna.

H. R. Patch, in his classic study of Fortuna, sums up the pagan strategies against Fortuna: "one way [to successfully oppose Fortuna] was to show courage. Another was to oppose reason to her unreason, to live the life of wisdom; and another . . . was to devote one's self to those concerns in which Fortuna had no part--the activities of virtue."¹³ Thus, recognizing the consistency of the portrayal of Fortuna as pagan and recognizing the exhortation as a traditional, rather than specifically Christian, remedy, the entire moral, and by association the entire Hercules tragedie, stands as an example of the pagan goddess.

The Fortuna of Zenobia is, without doubt, pagan. In the first of two passages in which she is mentioned, a convention which pagan

Fortuna borrowed from the Greek hierarchy of gods is used. In a prelude to the relation of Aurelius' conquest of Zenobia, the narrator says

But ay Fortune hath in hire hony gall;
This myghty queene may no while endure.
Fortune out of hir regne made hir falle
To wretchednesse and to mysaventure.
(B 3537-3540)

Gall in the honey of Fortuna's gifts, a tradition which can be traced to Jupiter and his urns of good and evil, appears in one form or another throughout mediaeval literature. Boethius has Lady Philosophy ask, "Lernedest nat þou in grek whan þou were zonge þat in þe entre or in þe seler of Iuppiter þer ben couched two tunnes. þat on is ful of good þat oþer is ful of harme" (Cons. Philos. II, pr. ii, 888 ff.). The Romaunt of the Rose has two accounts of this sort. One (ll. 6337 ff.) pictures two rivers in Fortuna's dwelling place; one is "musically sweet" and the other is "sulphurous, black, and grim." In the other account from the Romaunt (ll. 7191 ff.), "Great Jupiter hath . . . two wells / Or water-tuns" over which "Fortune presides as diety." One of the "wells" contains "well-spiced wine" and the other "worm-wood."¹⁴ Gower, in the Confessio Amantis, pictures a similar arrangement, but the "tonnes" are full of "love drink," both bitter and sweet, and are dispensed by Cupid, who is a servant of Fortuna.¹⁵ Even the good monk of Bury, John Lydgate, in his translation of Guillaume De Deguileville's Pelerinage de vie Humaine, illustrates that the tradition continued after Chaucer when he says "hyr sugre [Fortuna's]ys vnderspreynt wyth galle" and "Nor I drank no-were of the sugryd tonne / Off Iubiter, couchyd in hys celer."¹⁶

In the other passage of Zenobia which contains a reference to Fortuna, we find a lament: "Allas, Fortune! She that whilom was / Dredeful to dynges and to emperoures" (B 3557-58). This convention, which is a direct result of the tradition named, erroneously,¹⁷ for Boccaccio's De Casibus Illustrium Virorum, shows Fortuna's special penchant for royalty, for the court, and for crowned heads. Fortuna is admitted to be "very much at home at court, so she deals particularly in royal favors, bestowing kingship, empire, and crown, and taking them back at will."¹⁸

There is one problem in Zenobia which has perplexed some critics. Zenobia and Nebuchadnezzar, in all the human tragedies of the "Monk's Tale," are the only protagonists who do not die. Nebuchadnezzar escapes through reconciliation to God, but since the Fortuna in Zenobia is pagan, how does she escape death? The answer lies partly in the remedies for Fortune mentioned earlier. Zenobia, according to the tragedie, was a nonpareil in "hardynesse . . . in lynage . . . [and] in oother gentillesse" (B 3440-41). She was virtuous; she "kepte hir maydenhod from every wight" (B 3459); she kept her sons "in vertu and lettrure" (B 3485). She is repeatedly styled as more courageous than most men (cf. B 3455 ff.; B 3502; B 3577 ff.). When she had "leyser," "To lerne bookes was at hire likyng / How she in vertu myghte her lyf dispende" (B 3498-3500). In summation of a very generous description, she was "so worshipful a creature, / And wys ther with, and large with mesures / So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke" (B 3488-3490). In short, Zenobia practiced all the remedies against pagan Fortuna. She is courageous, she is wise, she is reasonable, and, finally, she is virtuous.

In spite of all this, however, there are indications that Zenobia is proud. We see, for instance, "Hir rich array ne myghte be told, / As wel in vessel as in hire clothing. / She was al clad in perree and in gold" (B 3492-3495). She seems to be guilty of cruelty in battle (cf. B 3519). Furthermore, there may be some narratorial disapprobation on the woman who "From . . . childhede . . . fledde / Office of Wommen" (B 3445-46). In addition, if Fortuna's traditional jealousy of man's prosperity were not enough, the jealousy of a female goddess for a successful queen is inevitable. Finally if we accept the sympathetic portrait of Zenobia as portraying a sort of goodness, it becomes impossible for her to remain powerful because "yif it so were þat þise dignities or poweres hadden any propre or naturel goodnesse in themself neuer nolden þei comen to shrewes. For contrarious þinges ne ben not wont to ben yfelawshipped togidres" (Cons. Philos. II, pr. 6, 1417 ff.). Therefore, the goodness of Zenobia was contrary to the nature of her rank and power and her fall was a result of not only a jealous attack, but of the rejection of an unlike quantity by Fortuna, the controller and purveyor of that rank and power. Fortuna, indeed, "out of hir regne made hire falle" (B 3549), but Zenobia does not fall to death; she falls to captivity in Rome where she returns to the "office of wommen" bearing "a distaf, hire coste for to quyte" (B 3564). Zenobia falls, but her attributes are such that they repel Fortuna's deadliest blows. Zenobia's virtues soften her fall.

Of the other three examples in the category of the fickle goddess, all adhere to conventional formulae. They are of interest only in that they present others of the traditional conventions which are attached to Fortuna. Peter of Spain falls into the convention of Fortuna's

particular maintainence over monarchs and royalty which was illustrated in Zenobia. His fall is chronicled simply, "O noble, O worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne, / Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee, / Well oghten men thy piteous deeth complayne!" (B 3565-67). Peter of Cyprus and Ugolino of Pisa are more interesting. Peter of Cyprus contains one of two mentions, in the "Monk's Tale," of that most familiar of Fortuna's implements--the wheel. The lament "Thus kan Fortune hir wheel governe and gye, / And out of joye brynge men to sorwe" (B 3587-88), suggests that the wheel is the instrument of Peter's fall.

The tragedie of Ugolino is replete with references to traditional tools and circumstances associated with the pagan goddess Fortuna. The second reference to the wheel comes when the first of Ugolino's children has died and Ugolino bewails his own and his other children's situation: "Allas, Fortune, and weylaway! / Thy false wheel my wo al may I wyte" (B 3635-36). Further examples from Ugolino include lines B 3603-04, in which the narrator moans "Allas Fortune! it was greet crueltee / Swiche briddes for to putte in swich a cage!" The use of a bird metaphor for Fortuna's victims and Fortuna's use of a snare to trap them are both common in mediaeval literature. Deguileville's Pelerinage de vie Humaine describes a tree "Vp on whichè tre anoon, / I sawgh nestys fful many oon; / And bryddës (that I koudë knowe,) / Sommë hyh, and sommë lowe, / Ther nestis made (I toke good hede) / Grete and smale (it is no drede)" (ll. 19449-19454).¹⁹ The tree is the world and the nests are degrees of achievement. In the account the tree is surrounded by Fortuna's wheel. Fortuna stands on the wheel and pulls the nests down or raises them up, as she pleases, with a

hooked staff. Chaucer uses the snare device in the "Knight's Tale" in relation to Arcite "That litel wiste how ny that was his care, / Til that Fortune had broght him in the snare" (A 1489-90), and Lydgate, in Troy Book, says "Sche [Fortuna] is so sleizty with hir gynny snare, / þat sche can make a man from his welfare, / With hir panter, þat is with fraude englued" (ll. 1869-71).²⁰

The prison situation in which Ugolino is found is a convention which may be traced to Boethius and the Consolacione. It is suggested that "without exaggerating the importance of the Consolatio, it is fair to suspect that, when a mediaeval man in prison complained of Fortune, he was induced to think of blaming the goddess by remembering what Boethius did under similar circumstances."²¹ It is not necessary to list Professor Patch's numerous citations of examples to emphasize the importance and popularity of this tradition in mediaeval thought. Chaucer, again in the "Knight's Tale," uses it when Palamon chides Arcite "For Goddes love, taak al in pacience / Oure prisoun, for it may noon oother be. / Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee" (A 1084-86).

Finally, when "from heigh estaat Fortune away hym [Ugolino] carf" (B 3647-48), we have an illustration of what has been called "the great theme of the middle ages," and "the tragic theme." The convention, for convenience named "high to low," describes the sudden change in man's estate. He is raised "high" by Fortuna and, when she withdraws her support, falls "low." All of the conventions and actions of Fortuna, and all of the tragedies written in the De Casibus tradition, center on this convention. The prison theme noted above, for instance, is only a hybrid variety of the "high to low" formula.

Although in our second pagan classification, Nero and Holofernes are not, thematically, thrown down differently from the victims in the preceding tragedies (they are both examples of the "high to low" formula), the point of departure is that both of these individuals are tyrants of the first order. Therefore, in bringing them to grief, Fortuna is dealing out just deserts and the circumstances of her actions are rational. It is not unusual, as a result of this rationality, to find critics who declare that Fortuna, in these two tragedies, is acting as an agent of Christian retribution. However, both Nero and Holofernes seem, from internal evidence, to succumb to a pagan goddess' fury. Nero, in the beginning, has Fortuna in tow: "His lustes were al lawe in his decree. / For Fortune as his freend hym wolde obeye"(B 366-69). But after a lengthy account of his exploits, we see Fortuna tiring of his pleasures. After Nero's murder of Seneca, Fortuna would

. . . liste no lenger
 The hye pryde of Nero to cherice
 For though that he were strong, yet was she strenger.
 She thoughte thus, "By God! I am to nyce
 To sette a man that is fulfilled of vice
 In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.
 By God! out of his sete I wol hym trice;
 Whan he leest weneth, sonnest shal he falle.

(B 3709-16)

After Nero's death, at his own hand, Fortuna has the last laugh: "Hymself he slow, he koude no bettre reed, / Of which Fortune lough, and hadde a game"(B 3739-40). The unreliability of Fortuna and the game which she had at the end of the Nero tragedie are indications that the goddess in Nero is pagan. Furthermore, if "cherice" is used with the connotation of "bestow upon," it seems that Fortuna has been active in making Nero proud. This fits the conception of the Fortuna

who makes man proud, or makes kings become proud "through their own fault." Once they have become proud, through either means, Fortuna casts them down. This tradition runs throughout Boccaccio's De Casibus. Indeed, Boccaccio inveighs "Against the Proud" in a short warning which follows the tale of Priam and Troy. Chaucer notes something of this tradition in the "Nonne Preestes Tale" when, after the chase sequence, there is a sort of lesson: "Now goode men, I prey you herkneth alle: / Lo, how Fortune turneth sodeynly / The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy" (B 4592-94). Lydgate deals with the convention similarly when he says "þat þoruȝ pride þer is don offence; / þe hiȝe goddis make resistence / To alle þo þat be surquedous, / Whiche is a vice so contrarious / þat it may in no place abide" (Troy Book, ll. 6539-6543). Nero has been made high by Fortuna, but he has not avoided pride. When Fortuna finally takes stock of Nero, she casts him down.

Holofernes is a victim of the same sort of situation. There was "nevere capityne under a kyng / . . . / Ne moore pompous in heigh presumpcioun / Than Oloferne" (B 3741-46). Holofernes' Fortuna is, as she was so often pictured, little better than a royal harlot. She "kiste Holofernes so likerously" and then "ladde hym up and doun / Til that his head was of, er that he wiste" (B 3746-48). Lydgate complains "O Fortune, fals and vnassured, / þat [to] no man was neuer fully lured, / To hiȝe nor lowe of no maner estat, / With bond of feith to be confederat" (Troy Book, V, ll. 1020-22). Boccaccio, in the Decameron, portrays Fortuna as a harlot in the tale of Alathiella (which is similar to the "Man of Law's Tale" of Constance) and uses an image very similar to that in Holofernes in the epigrammatic

moral. Boccaccio suggests "The mouth well kist comes not short of good fortune, but is still renewed like the Moone." In the tale of the Giseppus, Titus, Sophronia triangle, Titus proclaims "Fortune hath brought mee to such an extremity, as prooffe is now to be made of my constancy and virtue; both of which I find conquered in mee."²²

Holofernes is a victim of a different representation of Fortuna, but it is the same pride as that of Nero.

The last classification in which Fortuna is styled as pagan concerns that group of fallen humanity which has perplexed philosophers since time began--the undeserving. The historical facts concerning Alexander and Caesar should not trouble us when considering the two tragedies. The only concern we have is that both Caesar and Alexander are pictured as blameless. Of Alexander it is asked "who shal me yeven teeres to compleyne / The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise" (B 3853-54). Caesar, it is told, "by wisdom, manhede, and by greet labour, / from humble bed to roial magestee / up roos he Julius" (B 3861-63). Nevertheless, Fortuna in both instances is the direct cause of their downfall. Alexander, though "fortune hym made the heir of hire honour" (B 3833), was brought down when "thy sys Fortune hath turned into aas" at dice (B 3851). Dice are the most common choice for pagan Fortuna's favorite game. The same image appears in Gower's Mirour de l'Omne (ll. 22102-103; 23399). In the Confessio Amantis, "Between fortune and covoitise / The chance is cast upon a Dee" (Confessio, V, ll. 2436-37), and it is said "bot what schal befalle / . . . is noman knoweth, / But as fortune hire happes throweth" (Confessio, III, ll. 786-88). Chaucer, again in the "Knight's Tale," uses the image when Arcite complains to

Palamon "wel hath fortune yturned thee the dys" (A 1238). The reader's sympathy and the feeling of the lack of justice in Fortuna's attack on the blameless are enhanced when the narrator wails, "Allas, who shall helpe to endite / Fals fortune, and poyson to despise, / The which of two of al this wo I wyte?" (B 3857-3860).

There are fewer references to Fortuna in Caesar, but they indicate a similar treatment of both the character and of Fortuna. After the account of Pompey's flight, Caesar is told to "thanke Fortune, that so wel thee spedde" (B 3876). This not only indicates that Caesar is another royal pawn for Fortuna, but, from the precedents of the previous tragedies indicates that his fall is imminent. The other mention of Fortuna which is of interest relates to Pompey and his death, but it still sustains the identification of Fortuna as a pagan goddess. She has led Pompey down the path and is "that Fortune unto swich a fyn thee broghte" (B 3884). The end of Caesar ties Alexander and Caesar together. The indictment against Fortuna, while joining the two tragedies, includes the most standard of the common inveighances against pagan Fortuna and completes the picture of pagan Fortuna in Caesar.

How that to thise grete conqueroures two
 Fortune was first freend, and sitthe foe.
 No man ne truste upon hir favour longe,
 But have hire in awayt for evermoo.

(B 3912-15)

Christian Fortuna is the result of the attempt by classical and mediaeval writers to reconcile pagan Fortuna to the Christian God. The reasons for such a problem are multitudinous and beyond the scope of this study.²³ Let it suffice to say that even Boethius, in the Consolatione, does not successfully reconcile the two. While obviously

believing in the Christian God, Boethius presents a standard portrayal of the pagan goddess without explaining adequately how the two may exist together in one universe. It is not until Dante has Virgil explain Fortuna, in the Inferno, that we have a successful combination of the two. Dante belabours Virgil, "'Master,' I said, 'now tell me further: this Fortune which you touch on here, what is it, which has the goods of the world so in its clutches?'" (Canto VII, ll. 66-69), and Virgil replies,

"Oh creature sciocche,
 quanta ignoranza e quella che v'offende!
 Or vo' che tu mia sentenza ne 'mbocche.
 Colui lo cui saver tutto trascende,
 fece li cieli e die lor chi conduce
 se, ch'ogne parte ad ogne parte splende.
 distribuendo igualmente la luce.
 Similmente a li splendor mondani
 ordino general ministra e duce
 che permutasse a tempo li ben vani
 di gente in gente e d'uno in altro sangue,
 oltre la difension d'i senni umani;
 per ch'una gente impera e l'altra langue,
 seguendo lo guidicio di costei,
 che e occulto come in erba l'angue.
 Vostro saver non ha contasto a lei:
 questa provvede, guidica, e persegue
 suo regno come il loro li altri dei.
 Le sue permutazion non hanno triegue:
 necessita la fa esser veloce;
 si spesso vien chi vicenda consegue.
 Quest' e colei che'e tanto posta in croce
 pur da color che le dovrien dar lode,
 dandole giasmo a torto e mala voce;
 ma ella s'e beata e cio non ode:
 con l'altre prime creature lieta
 volve sua spera e beata si gode."
 (VII, ll. 67-96)

"O foolish creatures, how great is the ignorance that besets you! I would have you receive my judgement on this now. He whose wisdom transcends all, made the heavens and gave them guides, so that every part shines to every part, equally distributing the light. In like manner, for worldly splendors He ordained a general minister and guide who should in due time transfer the vain goods from race to race, and from one to another blood, beyond the

prevention of human wit, so that one race rules and another languishes, pursuant to her judgement, which is hidden like the snake in the grass. Your wisdom cannot withstand her: She foresees, judges, and pursues her reign, as theirs the other gods. Her changes know no truce. Necessity compels her to be swift, so fast do men come to their turns. This is she who is much reviled even by those who ought to praise her, but do wrongfully blame her and defame her. But she is blest and does not hear it. Happy with the other primal creatures she turns her sphere and rejoices in her bliss. "24

Fortuna, in Dante, is an angelic, "general ministra e duce" of God and is "beata." This is the type of conception we have in the "Monk's Tale." Chaucer's Christian Fortuna is an agent of God who either carries out his vengeance (Balthasar) or "sets up" the victims for God to wreak his own personal vengeance on them (Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus).

Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar must be discussed as a pair. F. N. Robinson, in his notes to The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, first suggested that these two were a pair. Robinson theorized that "the accounts of Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar were paired as a double tragedy, and the Fortune moral is introduced at the end of the second."25 We must treat Nebuchadnezzar/Belshazzar on the same basis as Robinson does, but for a different reason. Nebuchadnezzar is one of only five tragedies which do not mention Fortuna explicitly. Furthermore, Nebuchadnezzar is the only tragedie in which the victim is reconciled to his tormentor, and returned to grace.

Despite the absence of Fortuna by name, she is an active part of Nebuchadnezzar's fall. Nebuchadnezzar is "This proude kyng" who "leet maken a statue of gold" (B 3349); and it is said "this kyng of kynges proud was and elaat [arrogant]" (B 3357). The statement

that Nebuchadnezzar was proud puts him in the realm of Fortuna by virtue of the control over pride in mankind which was discussed above. The implication is that Fortuna has been active in Nebuchadnezzar's pride, but the implication is not clarified until the tragedies of Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar are linked. The difference between this conception of Fortuna and the pagan conception is illustrated when Nebuchadnezzar "wende that God [italics mine], that sit in magestee, / Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat" (B 3358-59). Nebuchadnezzar does not relate to Fortuna, but to God. It is as a result of God's power, rather than Fortuna's, that Nebuchadnezzar "sodeynly . . . loste his dignytee [high estate]" (B 3360). It is not clear that God is the agent of Nebuchadnezzar's fall until, after the telling of Nebuchadnezzar's madness, it is suggested that "God relessed hym a certeyn yeres" (B 3367). The relation between actor and redeemer is implicit, perhaps, but it is the same wrath/redemption relationship which operates in the Old Testament between God and the children of Israel.

The functional relationship between God and Fortuna is also tenuous, but it is clarified in Balthasar when Daniel tells Balthasar "Kyng, God to thy fader lente / Glorie and Honour, regne, tresour, rente; / And he was proude" (B 3399-3402). It is stated, furthermore, that Balthasar "knowest all thise thynges verrailly" (B 3414). Yet Balthasar is in the clutches of Fortuna. "Fortune," not God, "caste hym down, and ther he lay" (B 3379). The possibility that God "lente" the rewards customarily associated with Fortuna is an unsettling ambiguity in both tragedies unless we see that Fortuna is a servant of God and that they are acting in tandem.

That the narrator (The Monk) or Chaucer conceived these two tragedies as a pair is supported by the opening lines of the tragedie of Balthasar. Balthasar is identified as Nebuchadnezzar's "sone, . . . / That heeld the regne after his fader day, / He by his fader koude nocht be war, / For proud he was of herte and of array: / And eek an ydolastre was he ay" (B 3373-77). It is not important that Balthasar was not, historically, the son of Nebuchadnezzar; the importance lies in the author's understanding and subsequent connection of their relationship.

Balthasar is guilty of the same sort of pride as Nebuchadnezzar. However, in Balthasar's case, Fortuna is the explicit actor. Balthasar's "hye estaat assured hym in pryde; / But Fortune caste hym doun and ther he lay" (B 3378-79). Thus far, Fortuna seems to be a pagan. However, after the hand writes on the wall, Daniel (who is another connecting factor between the two tragedies) tells Balthasar "thou . . . art rebel to God, and art his foo" and that "this hand was sent from God that on the wal / wroot Mane Techel Phares" (B 3414-23). In the tragedie of Balthasar, God warns Balthasar and Fortuna carries out God's vengeance.

The two tragedies show Chaucer's idea of Christian Fortuna fully developed. However, it requires the pair to show a complete conception. In Nebuchadnezzar it is shown that Fortuna is no longer all-powerful in that there is reconciliation for Nebuchadnezzar. In Balthasar, the lesson is completed when we see Fortuna acting as a servant of God.

The appended moral at the end of Balthasar has, as in Hercules, little connection to Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar. The narrator

seems to slip back into the conventions of pagan Fortuna. We find evidence of the standard fickleness, of her control over royalty and riches, and an echo of the warning, similar to that found in the Romaunt of the Rose, against friends found through Fortuna (cf. RR, II 5460-5560). However, following tragedies which employ Christian Fortuna, we cannot be sure of the conception. It is admitted "while, therefore, the pagan idea . . . kept a fairly large number of devotees, a compromise with Christianity was effected for others and a genuinely Christian figure was created, retaining the title and apparatus of the pagan cult."²⁶ Without any mention of God, we cannot conclusively call the moral a Christian Fortuna, but its position would seem to deny that it be called pagan. As it stands it is a "proverbe . . . ful sooth and ful commune" (B 3436), which could be appended to any of the tragedies in the tale.

The tragedie of Antiochus begins as those of Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar--with pride. Two lines describe his fall and the recognition that "Fortune hym hadde enhanced so in pride / that verailly he wende he myghte attayne / Unto the sterres upon every syde, / . . . wenyng that God ne mughte his pride abate" (B 3773-80). Fortuna has not only "enhaunced so in pride," but she has, as with Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar, brought Antiochus to believe himself above God. God, of course, can do nothing but act, and "for his [Antiochus] manace hym so soore smoot" (B 3789). The list of God's retribution is long and ghastly. God "daunted al his pride and al his boost. / For he so soore fil out of his char / That it his limes and skyn totar" (B 3799-3801), and "The wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly / That thurgh his body wikked wormes crepte, / And therewithal he stank so horrible / That

noon of his meynee . . . / Ne myghte nocht the stynk of hem endure" (B 3805-3810). This catalogue of the works of God as in Nebuchadnezzar, shows God's power in vengeance against pride. Fortuna, again, is the means to pride and God is the initiator of his own vengeance.

There is a definite sequence in the tragedies discussed, and that sequence would look something like Figure 1 in chart form. The pagan instances progress uniformly from Zenobia and the "modern" instances, which are relatively conformist presentations of fickle Fortuna, to Nero and Holofernes who are deserving victims, and to Caesar and Alexander, the guiltless victims, who represent the epitome of Fortuna's fickleness. The continuity in the Christian portrayals, except that they envelope the pagan tragedies with Nebuchadnezzar/Balthasar and Antiochus is suspect. However, they do introduce and conclude the cycle with a Christian goddess. It would seem, then, that we have little progression except in the pagan tragedies. However, Hercules opens the cycle with a reference to a remedy against pagan Fortuna. With that in mind, what we have is a cycle which opens with a pagan remedy, envelopes all the standard pagan conceptions of the goddess with Christian Fortuna, and closes with a totally Christian remedy against Fortuna in Croesus, as is illustrated in Figure 2.

Several peculiarities occur which seem to set the tragedie of Croesus off from the rest of the tragedies. The tragedie, based on the conceptions of Fortuna in the preceding tragedies, opens with a contradiction when Croesus escapes from the stake. If we imply that Fortuna has brought him to the fire, as the original from the Romaunt

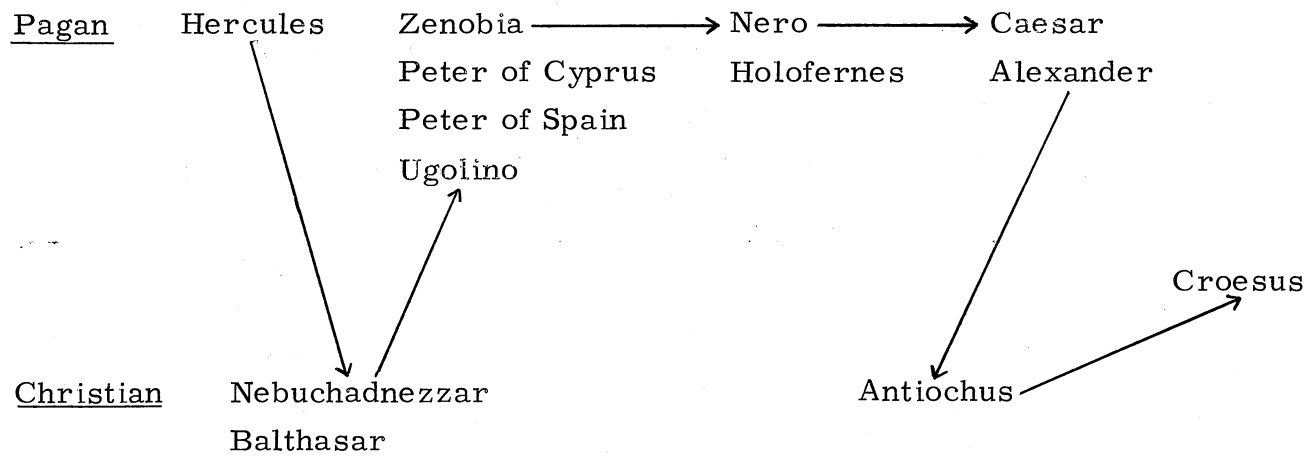


Figure 1. Graphic Portrayal of the Progression of the Tragedies Discussed

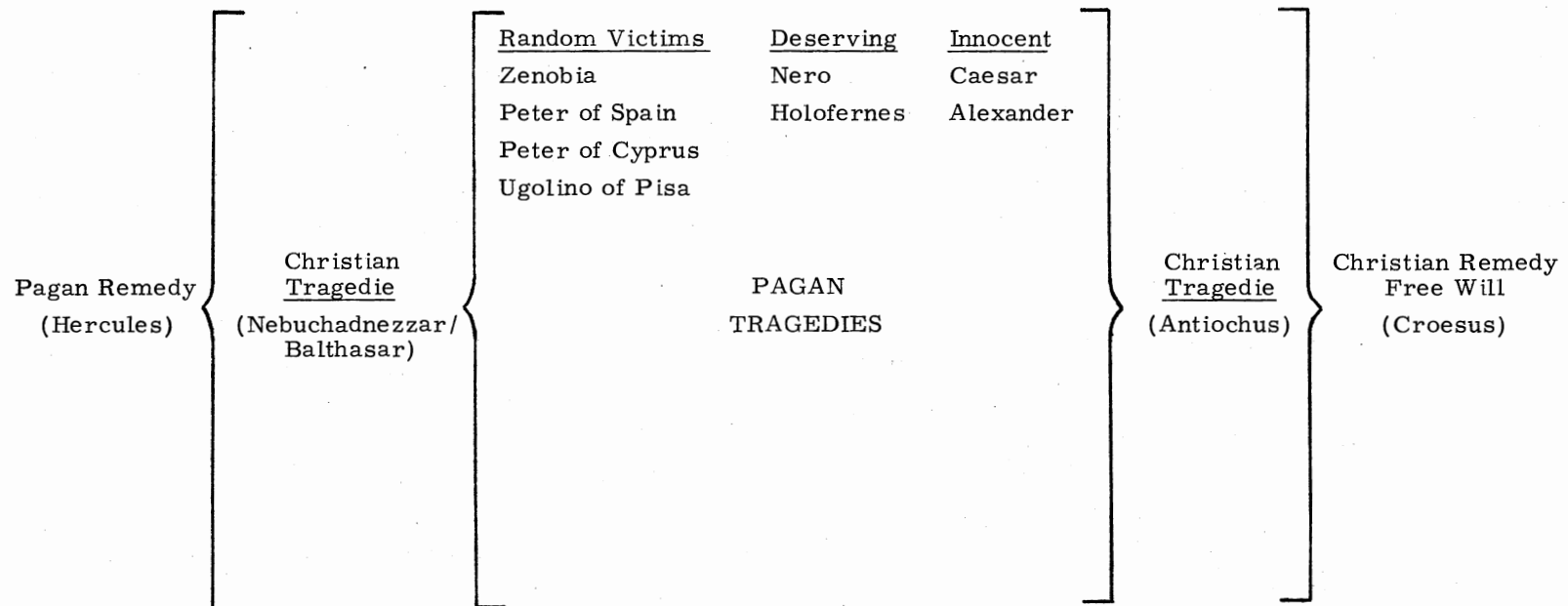


Figure 2. Graphic Portrayal of the Organization of the Symbolic Representations of the Tragedies of the "Monk's Tale"

of the Rose has it (RR, ll 6857-6996), then the contradiction of the dictum that Fortuna is inescapable is obvious. However, if we look at the escape in Christian terms, exclusive of Fortuna, the contradiction is not so obvious.²⁷ This sort of circumstance is exclusive to Croesus. Only in Nebuchadnezzar is the protagonist completely reconciled and saved from the normal end of Fortuna's victims. In Croesus the protagonist is saved, initially, but repeats his "sins," and is returned to punishment.

The dream of Croesus is also peculiar to the tragedie of that king. Nebuchadnezzar and Balthasar both experience dreams or dream-like occurrences, but there is no lengthy description of the dreams and there is no accompanying interpretation. Furthermore, some word choices and uses are peculiar to Croesus. These peculiarities, coupled with the differences between the original from the Romaunt, and Chaucer's version²⁸ seem to suggest that the tragedie of Croesus was written or edited rather carefully in order to make it exclusive--to make it stand out from the rest of the tale.²⁹

It is of initial importance to establish Fortuna's position in Croesus. She is mentioned twice prior to the appended moral or exhortation at the end, and the surface appearances of both instances place the Fortuna in Croesus squarely in the pagan mode. Croesus is accused of having no "grace" until "Fortune on the galwes made hym gape" (B 3924). In the second, Croesus becomes proud after his escape from the flames. He "wende wel, for that Fortune hym sente / Swich hap that he escaped thurgh the rayn, / That of his foos he myghte nat be slayn" (B 3927-29). This focus of the tale around a pagan figure should destroy the structure which has been suggested. However, the

first instance (B 3924) is simply a forecast of Croesus' death, and the second (B 3927), can be explained when we explicate "wende" as an indicator of supposition or personal decision which, in turn, is a vestige of free will. With this explication, both instances can be completely negated.

The use of "wende" in Croesus is the only instance in the "Monk's Tale" in which "wende" implies a personal decision. In Nebuchadnezzar (B 3358) and Antiochus (B 3774), the usage appears after they have been made proud by Fortuna. In Ugolino (B 3637) and Nero (B 3720), the usage appears in narrative which is unrelated to Fortuna. Only in Croesus does the supposition implied by "wende" precede the presence of Fortuna and, as a result of that syntactical position, imply that Croesus is deluding himself. If Croesus "supposes" that Fortuna has aided him, then he has made a decision on his own. Indeed, that decision concerning Fortuna leads Croesus to another decision. After his escape, "he kan nat stente / For to bigynne a newe warre agayn" (B 3925-26). This decision is based upon the earlier decision that Fortuna was his benefactress. In turn, this decision, to make war again, is the direct result of his death and, thus, cancels the earlier mention (B 3924) of Fortuna which suggests that the goddess, rather than his own decisions, led him to the gallows. These evidences of personal decisions, even though the wrong decisions, are indications of free will as defined and defended in some of the writings of St. Augustine, particularly in The City of God and On Freedom of the Will. Augustine insists that "For our very wills are in the order of causes, which God knows so surely and hath in his prescience; human wills being the cause of human actions: so that He that keeps a knowledge of

the causes of all things cannot leave men's wills out of that knowledge, knowing them to be the causes of their actions."³¹ Augustine goes on to say "So men good and bad have all their wills: and hereby it is apparent that the efficient causes of all effects are voluntary causes and nothing but decrees of that nature, which is 'the spirit of life' [God]" (City of God, Bk. V, x).

That the will is operational in Croesus is suggested from the passage after his escape when "to be war [italics mine] no grace yet he hadde" (B 3923), and in the suggestion that "Whanne he escaped war, he kan not stente / For to begynne a new warre agayn" (B 3925 - 26). "War," in l. B 3923, is an indication that Croesus has not learned anything from his experience. The probability is good that this lack of awareness is a direct result of his delusion concerning Fortuna. When he begins a new war, he chooses to return to his former ways (it is implied he has been at war previously) and, thus, falls into "concupiscence," or lust, which Augustine, in On Freedom of the Will, identifies as the origin of all evil.³² This lust is called a "culpable desire" and is equatable, Augustine says, with covetousness and fear. "For," Augustine says, "to live without fear is not only the desire of good men, but of all wicked men as well. But with this difference: that the good men seek this end by turning their affections away from those things which cannot be held without the danger of losing them; whereas the wicked, in order that they may rest secure in their enjoyment of such things, attempt to remove obstacles, and so pursue a life of misdeed and crime--a life that better deserves the name of death" (Will, Bk. I, 10). This seems to be a recitation of the motives of Croesus.

By identifying Croesus as evil, we certify the presence of free will because, again as Augustine says, "since then whatever is equal or superior to a mind possessed of virtue, and in control, will not for justice sake make it a slave of lust, and since whatever is inferior cannot for weakness do so, [Will, Bk. I, 18-20 established that lust cannot force itself on the mind because it is inferior to reason] . . . there remains only the conclusion that nothing can make the mind the companion of lust but its own will and free choice" (Will, Bk. I, 21). In the City of God, Augustine speaks of his two societies as "One good in nature and will, the other good in nature also, but bad by will [italics mine]" (City of God, Bk. XI, xxxiii). Furthermore, he insists "No inferior thing then depraves the will but the will depraves itself by following inferior things inordinately" (City of God, Bk. XII, vi). That Croesus "lusts" to war is apparent, but war is not necessarily the evil. Augustine, in the City of God, admits to the justice of some wars. It is the lust itself that is evil. It is also suggested in the tragedie that Croesus seeks vengeance, which is also a "lust." Croesus "lusts" and, in doing so, is evil. Being evil, it becomes apparent, according to Augustine, that he is acting of free will. The free will of Croesus is magnified when we read the dream of Croesus as a prescient dream (a warning from God), as an example of Divine Foreknowledge, and when we see that Croesus rejects the warning.

The evidence of the previous discussion of free will should make it obvious that Augustine admits God's foreknowledge of all that will happen. Augustine asserts repeatedly "God doth both know all things ere they come to pass, and we do all things willingly," and "He, whose foreknowledge cannot err, knew before that we should do thus

and thus, " and finally, "therefore our wills are of as much power as God would have them and knew before that they should be; and the power that they have is theirs free . . . because He foreknew that they should have this power, and do these acts, and whose foreknowledge cannot be deceived" (City of God, Bk. V, ix). Thus, divine foreknowledge is, for Augustine, a reality and that foreknowledge can, accordingly, be manifested to man in prescient dreams.

Aquinas, who draws from the writings of the important church fathers, admits that "to employ knowledge bestowed by God is legitimate. Now he sometimes instructs men in dreams." He cites Job, 33, 15-16 as an example of this instruction and he defends the interpretation of dreams by citing the examples of Joseph with the pharaoh and Daniel with the king of Babylon. "Therefore," he says, "to interpret dreams for knowledge of the future is not wrong." Aquinas recognizes that dreams have various causes but the divination and the reliability of that divination is dependent on the cause of the dream. "As for the spiritual cause," Aquinas says, "dreams are sometimes from God, who reveals things to men in dreams through the ministry of angels; thus Numbers [12, 6]: Should there be a prophet among you, in visions I will reveal myself to him, in dreams I will speak to him." Aquinas concludes that "if anyone uses dreams to foretell the future when he knows that they come from a divine revelation . . . then this is not unlawful divination."³³

Crœsus' dream is couched in terms of the pagan hierarchy of gods, and, as a result, it is natural to assume that Croesus considered the dream to be divinely inspired. It is also possible to assume that Croesus forms an opinion of the interpretation of the dream before he

asks his daughter for her interpretation. It is reported that as a result of his supposition of Fortuna's favor, so that he thought "that of his foos he myghte not be slayn" (B 3929), and a "sweven" which he "mette / Of which he was so proud and eek so fayn / That in vengeance he al his herte sette" (B 3930-32). Thus, the presence of Jupiter and Phoebus suggests success to Croesus. However "Phanye" interprets the gods as sumbols of nature and, thus, "Warned hym ful plat and eek ful pleyn" (B 3947). "Phanye's" interpretation of the dream is important in that in the editing of that interpretation for the Romaunt to the "Monk's Tale," all references to Fortuna have been eliminated. The symbolic interpretation of the gods and the end result are the same as in the Romaunt, but without the presence of Fortuna the natural symbols in the dream can be equated with the presence of God,³⁴ who is the bestower of all natural wonders, and the dream, thus, can be interpreted as inspired by the Christian God. The cumulative effect of the facts that "to be war no grace yet he hadde" (B 3923), that "he can nat stente ? For to bigynne a newe war agayn" (B 3925 - 26), that "He wende wel, for that Fortune hym sente / Swich hap that he escaped" (B 3927-28), and that a "sweven . . . / Of which we was so proud and eek so fayn / That in vengeance he al his herte sette" (B 3829-31) [italics mine in all instances], coupled with the fact that Croesus was "Warned ful plat and eek ful pleyn" (B 3947) by his dream and by Phanye's interpretation, strengthens the suggestion that Croesus is deluding himself throughout the tragedie and that that delusion is a manifestation of his free will. The end result of such exercise of his free will is death.

There is a paradox in Croesus' rejection of the interpretation. In the "Monk's Tale, the rejection is implicit. In the Romaunt it is explicit. In fact, inclusion, in the "Monk's Tale," of Croesus' rejection of Phanie's interpretation of his dream from the Romaunt, would lend a great deal of credence to the contention that free will operates in the tragedie of Croesus. In the Romaunt it is obvious that Croesus believes his dream comes from the gods. "Much better versed am I than you" he tells Phanie "in what the Gods propose to do" (RR, ll. 6975-76), and he believes "Yet will come / The Gods from out their sky-built home, / To work the end that they in sleep / Foretold to me" (RR, ll. 6985-88). The way in which Croesus berates Phanie for a faulty reading and his choice of his own reading, in the Romaunt, are consonant to the conception of free will and foreknowledge which are suggested for the "Monk's Tale." However, that the rejection is explicit in the Romaunt, which is the original for Chaucer's tragedie, makes the likelihood of a similar, but implicit, rejection in the "Monk's Tale" extremely viable and, as a result, further encourages this interpretation.

If we posit, then, the presence and operation of free will and foreknowledge in the tragedie of Croesus, we see that Croesus exercises his free will, makes the wrong decisions, rejects the warning of a prescient dream (which is a manifestation of foreknowledge), and meets his doom as a result of those decisions. Indeed, Augustine's explanation of justice and its implications in free will shows that there is no other course. Augustine says:

For if a man is something good, and cannot be unless he wills to live rightly, he ought to have a free will; for without it he would not be able to do right. For though we

sin also by that will, it is not to be believed that God gave free will for that purpose. It is sufficient reason why it should have been given, that without it man could not live rightly. But that it was given for this purpose may be seen from this: that if anyone shall have used it for sinning, he incurs divine punishment. And this would be unjust if free will had been given not only for right living but also for sinning. For how could he be justly punished who should use his will for that for which it was given.

But now when God punishes the sinner, does he not say in effect: "Why have you not used your free will for that which I gave it to you; that is, for doing right?"

(On Freedom of the Will, II, 3)

That Fortuna is central to the "Monk's Tale" and that more than one conception of the goddess is presented in the tale, has been recognized previously. However, the development of Fortuna as suggested above shows the "Monk's Tale" to have more structural and philosophical unity than it has been allowed before. As a result of the philosophical unity illustrated by the movement of Fortuna, within the tale, from a pagan remedy to free will, a re-evaluation of the impact of the "Monk's Tale" on the rest of the Canterbury Tales, particularly on the conception of Fortuna in each of the tales, becomes necessary.³⁵ The emergence of free will in the place of Fortuna will, necessarily, affect the recognized links between the "Monk's Tale" and the "Knight's" and "Nonne Preestes" tales. It could, furthermore, change the relationship which has been suggested, between the "Monk's Tale" and the "Merchant's Tale."³⁶ The "Monk's Tale" is almost the physical center of the Tales. With this reading of the "Monk's Tale" in mind, and recognizing that Fortuna operates in every tale of the entire cycle (with the possible exception of the "Miller's Tale" and the definite exception of the "Parson's Tale"), it becomes possible to read the "Monk's Tale" as very near the philosophical center of the Tales.

NOTES

¹F. N. Robinson, ed., The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1933), p. 852.

²R. E. Kaske, "The Knight's Interruption of the Monk's Tale," ELH, 24, 4, 261-62.

³Rodney K. Delasanta, "'Namooore of This': Chaucer's Priest and Monk," Tennessee Studies in Literature, 13, 120.

⁴Paul G. Ruggiers, "Notes Towards a Theory of Tragedy in Chaucer," Chaucer Review, 8, 90-91.

⁵Edward M. Socola, "Chaucer's Development of Fortune in the 'Monk's Tale'," JEGP, 49, 164.

⁶William C. Strange, "The Monk's Tale: A Generous View," Chaucer Review, 1, 170-71.

⁷Strange, in explaining this transition, does not deny that the portrayal of Fortuna is pagan. He, however, abandons his evolving conception of the goddess in favor of dealing with a point of nuance in the pagan entity's power. In doing so he ignores Zenobia's virtues, the point of departure between power and virtue in Boethius, and how these are liable to save Zenobia.

⁸It should be noted that all the four tragedies not discussed show vestiges of Fortuna. Lucifer has an explicit reference to Fortuna, but "Fortune may noon angel dere" (B 3191). Adam is left "To labour . . . helle, and meschaunce" (*italics mine*) (B 3204). Sampson is deluded by a woman (the equation between women and Fortuna was always viable for the mediaeval writer), who is called, among other things, "His false wyf" (B 3217), and the narrator asks Bernabo of Lombardy "Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acount, /Sith in estaat thow cloumbe were so hye?" (B 3591-3592).

For the sake of coherence throughout the tale, it is possible to read Lucifer and Adam as a sort of preamble to the rest of the tale. They are the beginnings. Lucifer is the origin of the primal sin and Adam is the perpetrator of that sin. Fortuna is implicated in both cases (see above). Sampson can be paired with Hercules almost as effectively as with Nebuchadnezzar/Balthasar. Sampson and Hercules

are both stereotypes of mythical strongmen (one pagan and one Biblical), and both fall as the result of feminine wiles. Sampson's fall as the result of Delilah's machinations and Hercules's death as a result of Deianira's gifts can be seen as an equation of both women with Fortuna. This equation, while consistent with the pagan conception of Fortuna, entails a discussion of the anti-feminism apparent throughout the "Monk's Tale" and throughout the Canterbury Tales and that discussion must be left for another paper.

The pairing of Samson and Hercules and the anti-feminist attitudes do not affect the explication of the moral after the tragedie of Hercules, and the pagan remedy functions just as effectively for Samson and Hercules as a pair as it does for Hercules alone. Bernabo of Lombardy is simply another victim of the pagan goddess and the "high to low" formula. His tragedie is not included in this discussion simply because there is no explicit reference to Fortuna.

⁹ Again, it is possible to suggest that the references to "Dianira" and her relation to Hercules may be looked on as equivalent to Fortuna.

¹⁰ Claude Jones, "The Monk's Tale, A Mediaeval Sermon," MLN, 52, 571. Jones does, indeed, suggest that these morals are separate when he uses the Hercules moral as an example of the "warnings" with which the "Monk's Tale" is "liberally spiced."

¹¹ The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed., F. N. Robinson (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1933), p. 228. All references to the "Monk's Tale" will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of the line number in the text.

¹² Geoffrey Chaucer, Chaucer's Translation of Boethius's 'De Consolatione Philosophiae', ed. Richard Morris (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 59. All references to the Consolatione will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of book number, prose or meter number and line numbers.

¹³ H. R. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature (1927, Harvard University Press, rpt. New York: Octagon Books, 1967), p. 13 and passim.

¹⁴ The Romance of the Rose, ed. F. S. Ellis (New York: AMS Press, 1926), p. 62. All references to the Romaunt will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of line numbers and the abbreviation RR.

¹⁵ John Gower, The Complete Works of John Gower, ed., G. C. Macaulay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 175. All references to the Confessio Amantis will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of line numbers and the designation Confessio.

¹⁶Guillaume De Deguileville, The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man, trans., John Lydgate, ed. F. J. Furnivall (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1899), p. 563.

¹⁷See R. W. Babcock's discussion of the problem in "The Mediaeval Setting of Chaucer's Monk's Tale," PMLA, 46, pp. 205-213.

¹⁸Patch, p. 59.

¹⁹Deguileville, p. 602.

²⁰John Lydgate, Troy Book, ed. Henry Bergen (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 303. All references to Troy Book will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of line numbers and the designation Troy Book.

²¹Patch, p. 67.

²²Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron: The Modell of Wit, Mirth, Eloquence and Conversation, etc., ed., Fritz Kredel (New York: The Heritage Club, 1940), pp. 96 and 503.

²³See Professor Patch's excellent discussion of these reasons in The Goddess Fortuna In Medieval Literature, pp. 8-34.

²⁴Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, trans. Charles S. Singleton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 22.

²⁵Robinson, Works, p. 854.

²⁶Patch, p. 34.

²⁷The fact that Croesus is about to be burned is exclusive in itself. Nowhere else in the "Monk's Tale," except in the Biblical allusion in Nebuchadnezzar, is fire of death by fire mentioned. The implications of the Christian symbolism of fire are manifest. When Croesus is saved from the fire, he is saved from purification. This smacks of chance and Fortuna, but if God had foreknowledge of all events and understands their whys and wherefores, Fortuna is not necessary as an explanation of events. Furthermore, the possibility of God quenching the fire to avoid the unholy sacrifice of the heathen Croesus is very real. In this case, Croesus is not saved from purification, he is denied it.

²⁸The Romaunt makes it clear, more than once, that Fortuna is the actor in the tragedie of Croesus. It is said "Neither could Croesus/ . . . 'scape the sting of Fortune" (RR 6857-59), and, after his escape

from the flames, "Then ruled he o'er his land again: / But yet once more by Fortune flung / . . . was he lastly hung" (RR 6866-68).

²⁹Socola suggests that Chaucer's conception of Fortuna is "the result of the positive alterations of the sources of at least eleven of the tragedies." He further suggests that these alterations are "made in order to establish a developing conception of Fortune." However, Socola is primarily interested in structural development and integrity and his ordering of the conceptions of Fortuna is not refined sufficiently to be successful.

³⁰It should be made clear that Augustine's position on freedom of the will and divine providence and on the relationship between both was not static. His involvement in the Pelagian and other controversies probably forced him to alter his position until he was virtually an advocate of predestination. However, in the City of God and in On Freedom of the Will he has not yet reached that position.

³¹Aurelius Augustinus, Bishop of Hippo. The City of God, trans., John Healey, ed., R. V. G. Trasker (New York: Dutton, 1973), p. 293. All references to The City of God will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of The City of God, book and section number.

³²_____, On Freedom of the Will, trans., Carroll Mason Sparrow (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1947), p. 15. All references to On Freedom of the Will will be taken from this edition and will be noted with parenthetical insertion of Will, book and section number.

³³St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, trans., Blackfriars (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 57-59.

³⁴The philosophical and structural unity of the "Monk's Tale," as I explain it, are dependent on the ordering of the tragedies as they are found in Dr. Robinson's ordering, i. e., with Croesus at the end and with the modern instances in the middle of the tale. The controversy attendant on this ordering of the "Monk's Tale" is familiar enough that it need not be rehearsed here. However, if my findings can be accepted, then some new material in defense of the order with Croesus at the end may be added to the argument. The conceptions of Fortuna are functional, no matter in what order the tragedies are found. The impact of the philosophical unity, the progression from a pagan remedy to the Christian remedy of free will, is lost unless the tragedie of Croesus is the final tragedie.

³⁵For a comprehensive examination of Natura, as a personified goddess and as an alter-ego of God, see E. C. Knowlton, "Nature in Early German," JEGP, 24, pp. 409-412; "Nature in Old French," MP,

20, pp. 309-329; "The Goddess Nature in Early Periods," JEGP, 19 pp. 224-253.

³⁶For studies of these relationships see Delasanta and Kaske, and Paul Beichner, "Daun Piers, Monk and Business Administrator," Speculum, 34, 611-14; Joella Ellen Brown, "Chaucer's Daun Piers: One Monk or Two?" Criticism, 6, 44-52; William Frost, "An Interpretation of Chaucer's Knight's Tale," RES, 25, 289-304; Donald K. Fry, "The Ending of the 'Monk's Tale'," JEGP, 70, 115-28; Thomas Garkaty, "The Monk and the Merchant's Tale," MP, 67, 18-24; Thomas Harton, "Chauncleer and the Monk, Two False Knights," Papers in Language and Literature, 3, supp., 31-39; Charles Watson, "The Relationship of the Monk's Tale and the Nun's Priest's Tale," SSF, 1, 277-88.

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VITA

Clarence Oliver Johnson

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Thesis: FORTUNA AND FREE WILL IN CHAUCER'S "MONK'S TALE":
AN EXAMINATION

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Alva, Oklahoma, February 7, 1947, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Dick D. Johnson.

Education: Graduated from Chandler High School, Chandler, Oklahoma, in May, 1965; received the Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, Oklahoma, in May, 1973; completed requirements for the Master of Arts degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1976.

Professional Experience: Graduate teaching assistant, Department of English, Oklahoma State University, 1973-1976.