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Notwithstanding the considerations outlined above, we must thank the author for his contributions to the contemporary renewal of the historiography about shortage and famine in the late Middle Ages.

Flocel Sabaté, Universidad de Lleida

Jonathan Fruoco, *Chaucer's Polyphony: The Modern in Medieval Poetry*. (Research in Medieval and Early Modern Culture 29.) Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020. Pp. 228; black-and-white figures. $104.99. ISBN: 978-1-5015-1849-2.
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Chaucer studies has often drawn on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin to understand the formal, social, and linguistic diversity of *The Canterbury Tales*. Jonathan Fruoco's book promises to extend this perspective by considering a wider range of Chaucer's works, and also by developing a broader theory of polyphony that incorporates contemporary linguistics (6). The book proposes polyphony as a central organizing concept for understanding Chaucer's writing, and the argumentative moves leading to this position are worth rehearsing. Bakhtin's term *novelistic* refers to a set of "linguistic qualities" distinct from the literary genre, but most fully realized within that genre (21); Chaucer is novelistic in this sense. This further suggests a counterintuitive understanding of Chaucer as a "prose writer" (24), because of a Bakhtinian association between polyphony and prose (opposed to lyric poetry, not verse). Chaucer's writing becomes more narrative, and hence more novelistic, over the course of his life, "switching from lyric poetry to narrative poetry, and in some instances to prose" (24). Since novelistic writing is by definition polyphonic, this also means that Chaucer's literary career is a story of increasing polyphony. This use of polyphony produces an "ever-modern dimension" to Chaucer's work (5). Modernity, polyphony, prose, and the novelistic are thus mutually constitutive concepts for the book. Chaucer's writing is modern because it is polyphonic, polyphonic because it is novelistic, and for all of these reasons it tends toward prose. One problem with this structure is that it works, against the book's stated wishes (6), to recenter the *Tales* as the culminating achievement of Chaucerian polyphony. Earlier texts by Chaucer and others tend to be characterized as transitional or incompletely polyphonic works (Bakhtin's own account of the polyphonic novel has similar drawbacks).

The book's introduction discusses Chaucer's modernity and gives details of the book's methods and contents. It is followed by two chapters which set the stage for later discussions of Chaucer's works by describing the various preconditions (literary, linguistic, cultural) for Chaucerian polyphony. The first of these, "Polyphony and Multilingualism in Medieval England," provides a further theoretical introduction before discussing insular multilingualism as an important background for Chaucer's sensitivity to language. A more systematic description of methodology would have been useful here: this could have included a fuller sense of the history of Bakhtin's reception in literary studies and some critiques of his method beyond those mentioned (21–23). Conversely, the material on language history could have been trimmed. A second stage-setting chapter turns to literary history and considers some of Chaucer's canonical predecessors: Chrétien de Troyes, the *Roman de la Rose*, and Dante.

Chapter 3, "Narrative Evolution and New Discursive Strategies," reads a group of Chaucer's poems as early experiments in polyphony which make innovative use of Italian, Latin, and French antecedents. *The Book of the Duchess*, which produces a sense of "discourse as an open and often unfinished interaction" (68), is read here as prefiguring, but not matching, the complex hermeneutic games of Chaucer's later work. A section on *The House of Fame* discusses this poem's use of Virgil and Dante as a way of thinking about the "mixed character" of Chaucer's "bivocal narration" (79), which incorporates voices from the past without subsuming them.

Chapter 4, "*Troilus and Criseyde* and the Ambiguity of Double Enunciation," further considers Chaucer's source relationships alongside a reading of the *Troilus* narrator that uses Oswald Ducrot's concept of linguistic dialogism. This material generates the somewhat conventional conclusion that the narrator's dialogism makes him "one character amongst others" (106), but the method of approach is refreshing and suggests the possibility of further work along similar lines.

Chapter 5, "Hybridization and the Legend of Chaucer's Inventiveness," distinguishes between internal and external polyphony in order to argue for *The Legend of Good Women* as an experiment in this latter technique. Where previously Chaucerian polyphony was generated from the relationships within a given narrative, the chapter argues that *The Legend of Good Women*'s juxtaposed narratives produce a "duplication of dialogism" (129) through a "hybridization of effects and tones" (146) across the collection's different stories. The chapter draws unusually on contemporary utterance-act linguistics; a more developed account of this intriguing theoretical framework would have been useful. The theory's connection with the readings that follow is not always clear, since the discussion focuses mostly on the relationships between the various legends, rather than between (or within) specific linguistic utterances.

Chapter 6, "Extradiegetic Dialogue in *The Canterbury Tales*," reads Chaucer's final work as a synthesis of all the techniques discussed in previous chapters. Unified by the "chronotope of the road" (168), the text's individual narratives can speak to each other in a "complex form of dialogism" (170). Pilgrims interact in the extradiegetic frame and the act of telling, which allows for a "dialogue between literary genres" (203); the Retraction implicates readers in this same dialogue (204).

Structural issues aside, this is a thoughtful book, clearly founded on considerable learning. The book's commitment to a narrative of linear development does not always serve the texts well, but it represents a meaningful start for future work. Such work, which might draw further on the fascinating material from contemporary linguistics presented in this book, could generate significant new insights.

A note on sources: the book draws on a French translation (*Esthétique et théorie du roman* [1978]) of Bakhtin's *Voprosy literatury i estetiki*, described as "impossible to locate" (x) in English. This is not actually the case: four of the six Russian essays are translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist in *The Dialogic Imagination* (1982), and I was able to trace all of the French quotations I checked to material translated there. Likewise, material cited from *Esthétique de la création verbale* (1984) can be found in Vadim Liapunov's English translation of the essay "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity," collected in *Art and Answerability* (1990). Readers interested in context for the Bakhtin material cited are directed to these volumes.

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Eric Gallagher and Lesley Boatwright, eds., *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Tenth Year of the Reign of King Henry III, Michaelmas 1226*. (Publications of the Pipe Roll Society New Series 64.) Woodbridge, UK: Pipe Roll Society, 2022. Pp. xxxvii, 395; black-and-white figures. $85. ISBN: 978-0-9011-3482-0.
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The pipe rolls, which received their name because they were parchment sheets sewn together and then rolled tightly for storage, are the earliest surviving financial records of the royal government of England, with the first surviving one dating from late in the reign of Henry I and a nearly continuous series from the beginning of the reign of Henry II. In addition, a few survive from Normandy from before 1204. The pipe rolls are mainly the reports of the accounts of sheriffs of English counties and record royal income from a variety of sources: royal lands, towns, taxes, judicial revenues, and miscellaneous payments to the king. Though mostly concerned