

Contents

Acknowledgments	6
1. Introduction	9
Chaucer and the Genre of Devotional Prose	10
Pseudo-Dionysius and His Followers	14
The Middle English Mystics	24
2. Experience and Authority	30
Margery and Alice	30
The Parson	37
Pertelote's Dreams and the Reeve's Horse	46
3. Comic Tales	50
✓ The Miller's Tale	50
; The Friar and the Summoner	58
4. The Prioress's Tale	71
The Prioress and the Women Mystics	72
Doubled Language and a Grain on the Tongue	93
5. Good Women	102
The Man of Law's Tale	103
The Clerk's Tale	114
The Second Nun's Tale	123
6. Other Women	130
; The Merchant's Tale	130
; The Franklin's Tale	138
; The Shipman's Tale	144
; The Manciple's Tale	151
7. Chaucer Himself	157
<i>Sir Thopas</i>	157
<i>The Tale of Melibee</i>	165
The Retraction	169
Silence	173
Notes	175
Bibliography	203
Index	222