

experience not encompassed in the Troilus or earlier poems. Its psychology and its drama are more inclusive and fresher. The varieties of human experience become Chaucer's preoccupation, and the Legend opens up those varieties. By its devotion to action it goes to the heart of narrative power, and to the heart of another matter, too: people are what they do. To tell stories is to talk about the world." (bottom pp. 186-187)

Frank includes an "Excursus" in his book that is outside the theme of his book that deals with Chaucer's artistic development, but not entirely. His excursus contends with the problem of Chaucer's "boredom" in the Legend, his personal boredom with the task. This essay was also published in The Chaucer Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1966 (p. 110) and the page references refer to this version. "It is this widely accepted thesis - which I wish to consider here. It is an interesting instance of an opinion which has taken on the force of legend itself," (p. 110) and tells us the thesis dates from the late nineteenth century.

ref. answered references

He brings up probably the earliest criticism of the Legend, early in the essay,

This poet wrot, at request of the queen,
A legende off parfit holynesse,
Off Goode Women to find out ninteene,
That dede excelle in bouthe and fairness;
But for his labor and (his) bisynesse
Was imperatble his wittis to anoumbre,
In al this world to fynde so gret a noumbre.
(Lydgate's Fall of Princes, lines 330-6)

Frank remarks "It is, of course a simple joking remark out of the anti-feminist tradition, the same tradition which hovers behind curtains throughout the whole performance of the Legend, ready to pop out at moment's notice." The argument being, "If Chaucer found the project boring, neither Lydgate nor anyone else in the period seems aware of the fact." This is probably the most solid