

# CHRISTIAN IMPLICATIONS OF KNIGHTHOOD AND COURTLY LOVE IN CHAUCER'S *TROILUS*

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THE CHARACTER of Troilus, as depicted by Chaucer in the *Troilus and Criseyde*, is representative of that strange anomaly of the Middle Ages, namely, the combination of the ideal courtly lover and the perfect knight. The system of knighthood was early taken over by the priests for the purpose of saving Christendom from the inroads of the infidels. Out of this churchly connection came the chivalric code, with its emphasis upon spiritual qualities. Later, the two came to be united through the upgrowth of another convention of the age, the idealization of woman. The lives and adventures of Troilus and Criseyde are a fine example of this peculiar combination of church, chivalry, and courtly love. Chaucer not only demonstrates a thorough knowledge of all three, but shows that he admired each of these conventions in its finest aspects. Before considering some of the various passages of the *Troilus and Criseyde* which indicate the spiritual qualities of these conventions, it will be well to sketch in the background of this unique amalgamation of ideals.

## 1.

The early Christian Church was primarily sacramental in character, having been established for the purpose of perpetuating a memorial of Christ's sacrificial death. "The Church was not considered in the early medieval period as a society, a club, or a corporation, but as a mystery."<sup>1</sup> As a consequence, all of the official acts of its clergy were likewise sacramental in character, that is, they were the outward signs of spiritual truths. Not only that—all nature was representative of the sacramental character

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<sup>1</sup> Summerfield Baldwin, *The Organization of Medieval Christianity* (New York, 1929), p. 36.

of the universe. The universe abounded with outward signs of the invisible God. As an example, the pelican was used as a symbol of Christ because she supposedly suckled her young with her own blood. The symbolism of plants and flowers is obvious in the writings of the saints. Even precious stones and perfumes held concealed significance. Above all, the stars were believed to have supernatural influence upon the bodies and lives of men.<sup>2</sup> Thus the Church, with its emphasis upon sacrament, permeated every area of life to a degree difficult for an individual living in the present age to conceive.

The seven sacraments of the Church were baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, holy orders, matrimony, and extreme unction. Of these, baptism and penance became important parts of the chivalric code and of courtly love. The primary sacrament, baptism, was representative of the washing away of original sin and was accompanied by many ceremonies. The convert, having been touched with the consecrated oil and ointment, received a few grains of salt on his tongue in token of Christ's teaching: "Ye are the salt of the earth." Then he held a lighted candle because Christ had said, "Ye are the light of the world." Afterward he was touched with spittle, in remembrance of Christ's healing of the deaf and dumb man. Finally, a white cloth symbolizing purity was placed on his head, a Christian name bestowed, and the rite of "Christening" had come to an end.<sup>3</sup>

A system of penance grew out of the need of the Church to reclaim those who fell from grace after having received the rite of baptism. In the early ages of the Christian religion, outward acts such as exclusion from the church, the wearing of certain garments to indicate remorse, refraining from food, the repetition of certain prayers, and the giving of gifts to the poor were considered an indication of repentance. Offenders were frequently placed under several years of this type of discipline, then in a solemn ceremony readmitted to the religious communion, the bishop making the public declaration of the remittance of sin. Until the time that Christianity was accepted as the official religion of the Roman Empire, this impressive concession could be received only once. Later on, the monks in Ireland brought about a change

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

in the manner of penance. Their custom of confessing their faults to one another passed over to the continent, becoming the rite of confession as it is used today in the Catholic Church.<sup>4</sup>

Then out of the sacrament of penance grew the emphasis on the doctrine of Purgatory. "It was held that penitential works of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which had not been performed in sacramental penance during this life, would be replaced by sufferings of greater or less intensity and duration in the world to come. . . ." <sup>5</sup>

The three prime elements of Chivalry were War, Religion, and Gallantry. These elements were carefully adapted to the training of the young squire, who, at the age of twenty-one, was qualified for knighthood. The rite of conferral was a long and elaborate one, the Church having taken over for it the ceremonies of the ordination of priests. Having spiritualized the ceremony (the first indication of this spiritualization appears in a Service Book of the year 1000), the church established the following features: (1) the ceremonial bath, signifying purification; (2) the putting on of a white tunic, indicating innocence, of a red robe, signifying the willingness to sacrifice one's life, and of a black doublet, emblematic of death; (3) the twenty-four-hour fast, which included (4) an all-night vigil in the church; (5) the hearing of confession, receiving communion, and listening to the exhortatory sermon; (6) the blessing of the sword; (7) the repetition of vows; (8) the being clothed with armor, spurs, and sword; (9) the accolade, or touch upon the shoulder with the flat of the sword; and, finally, the placing of the helmet, the mounting of the horse, and the execution of daring exercises.<sup>6</sup>

It will be seen from the above tabulation that the cleansing bath corresponded to baptism, and the white tunic to the white kerchief signifying purity; and, in like manner, the fast, vigil, and confession were taken over from the penitential system. The blessing, vows, and investiture were similar to those used for priests.

Many duties were demanded by the chivalric code, the following being the most prominent: to worship God and uphold the Christian church; to serve the King loyally and bravely; to protect those unable to defend themselves; to forbear the careless giving of

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Edgar Prestage, *Chivalry* (New York, 1928), pp. 23-24.

offense; to live for honor and glory, disdaining material wealth; to battle for the general good of all; to submit to those in authority; to defend the honor of the knightly order; to avoid partiality, meanness, and treachery; to keep a pledge and be honest at all times; to be steadfast in purpose; to honor women; to accept every challenge from an equal and never to turn the back upon an enemy.<sup>7</sup>

To this combination of knighthood and religion, gallantry was later added. *L'amour courtois*, an offshoot of chivalry, came into being after the primary struggle between Christians and infidels had come to a close. The old feudal knighthood and nobility, "diverted, but not converted," to religion, served as the nesting-place for gallantry. The baronial castle, no longer just a fortress, became the center of social intercourse. The position of women in the aristocratic order underwent a decided change. The priests had captured knighthood for religion, but it was the troubadours who "captured womanhood for romance."<sup>8</sup>

Out of this capture grew the system of courtly love, which placed such firm emphasis on the role of the *paramour* that love and marriage became completely divorced; indeed, fidelity was in no way considered a necessary attribute for a successful marriage. Wives were not exhorted to love their husbands, or the husbands to value their wives. Young people were not encouraged to make marriages for love. Marriage was merely a legal contract, surrounded by civil and ecclesiastic evils. Instead of being the consummation of love, it was considered its most dreaded enemy. Young women were urged to seek illicit relationships and knights were expected to gain the favor of a lady, whether married or not, and to make her the guiding star of all their actions.<sup>9</sup>

During the process of engrafting courtly love on the system of knightly vows, love itself began to take on certain religious qualities, the result being an odd mixture of glorified adultery and high nobility. Thus love became a religion in itself. Not merely a matter of physical relationships, it produced all kinds of high aspirations and emphasized the spiritual element to such an extent that it came to be looked upon as "the habit of the noble heart, a serene, enabling virtue, sometimes a union with the principle of

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

beauty itself.”<sup>10</sup> Of this union of the physical and the spiritual, Father Denomy writes as follows:

Courtly love is a type of sensual love and what distinguishes it from other forms of sexual love, from mere passion, from so-called platonic love, from married love is its purpose or motive, its formal object, namely, the lover's progress and growth in natural goodness, merit, and worth. . . . Despite the sensuality that such love implies in Christian eyes, for the troubadours such love was spiritual in that it sought a union of hearts and minds rather than of bodies; it was a virtuous love in so far as it was the source of all natural virtue and worth. . . . In skeleton form, it is the surge of the lover to rise in worth and virtue towards the beloved through the force and energy of desire.<sup>11</sup>

Such a passage accurately indicates the unique quality of the courtly love ideal.

## 2.

A Christian echo occurs early in the *Troilus* when Chaucer refers to himself as the “servant of the servants of the God of Love” (I, 15), an obvious paraphrase of the papal title. This official title of the Pope was used in the introductory greetings of all papal bulls, in which the Pope speaks of himself as *servus servorum Dei*.<sup>12</sup> Professor Robinson, after referring to the above-mentioned paraphrase, adds the following comment: “In fact, the poem as a whole combines the conventions of pagan epic with the mediaeval conception of the religion of love.”<sup>13</sup> Although Professor Root maintains that there are in the *Troilus* only three direct quotations from the Bible, all of them from the writings attributed to Solomon (two from Ecclesiastes, one from Proverbs), in addition to certain indirect allusions to the gospels,<sup>14</sup> there is no denying that in this work Chaucer makes full use of ecclesiastical terminology. The

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>11</sup> Alexander J. Denomy, “Courtly Love and Courtliness,” *Speculum*, XXVIII (1953), 44-63 (44).

<sup>12</sup> William George Dodd, *Courtly Love in Chaucer and Gower* (Boston, 1913), p. 192.

<sup>13</sup> F. N. Robinson, editor, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, second edition (Boston, 1957), p. 814, n.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Kilburn Root, *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde* (Princeton, 1926), p. xlii.



poet's attitude of extreme humility before the god of Love (I, 16) is a parallel to the self-abasement of saints before God. This compares to the humility of John the Baptist (Mark 1: 7) and that of St. Paul (Ephesians 3: 8).<sup>15</sup> Chaucer's statement that he is far from Love's help in darkness (I, 18) is similar to numerous expressions of saints of the Church who were oppressed by consciousness of sin, feeling cut off from God and in "outer darkness." An example of this attitude may be seen in the following prayer attributed to St. Augustine:

O God our Father, . . . hear me, who am trembling in this darkness, and stretch forth Thy hands unto me; hold forth Thy light before me; recall me from my wanderings; and Thou being my Guide, may I be restored to myself and to Thee.<sup>16</sup>

The last lines of the third stanza (I, 19-21) make use of the ecclesiastical doctrine of merit, that is, the idea "that the merit attaching to any good work may be imputed to the doer or to some other to whom he chooses to transfer it."<sup>17</sup>

There follows at once an exhortation to happy lovers to pray for various categories of people: (1) to remember their own "passed heaviness" and therefore to think of the adversity of others; (2) to keep in mind Love's presence even in his punishment of them; (3) to pray for those in Troilus' "case"; (4) to pray for the poet; (5) to pray for those who are in despair over a lost love; (6) to pray for those who are slandered; (7) to pray for those sunk in despair and out of the reach of Love's grace; and (8) to pray for those who are at ease in love. The high seriousness of the poem is brought out by its emphasis on prayer. The above series is obviously used in imitation of the "bidding prayer," which commonly preceded the sermon in the medieval religious service when the priest exhorted the members to pray for various kinds and conditions of people. "In composing the passage the poet kept something of the tone and spirit of his model."<sup>18</sup> Incorporated in the prayer is a reference to the sin of wanhope, or the sin of despairing of mercy from the loved one (I, 36). This

<sup>15</sup> Dodd, pp. 192-193.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Kemp Malone, *Chapters on Chaucer* (Baltimore, 1951), p. 111; cf. Robinson, p. 814, n.

is comparable to the sin against the Holy Ghost, or the sin of despairing of the mercy of God, referred to in the Bible as the one unforgivable sin (Mark 3: 28-29). The doctrine was that "despair damned the soul of him who gave way to it."<sup>19</sup>

Professor Slaughter, who has analyzed certain aspects of the *Troilus* in the light of the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas, states that Troilus is not only an unbeliever in the religion of love (I, 187-188), but is guilty of presumption (I, 213, 225, 230). This presumption, stemming from pride, represents the desire to obtain glory without merit, pardon without repentance. Presumption is also a part of the sin of despair. "It is the sin against the Holy Ghost, because by it a man despises the Spirit which might withdraw him from sin."<sup>20</sup> Presumption is opposed to the virtue of magnanimity, which is described as concerning "honor and the achievement of great things by a man of great capacities. When a man assumes to do what is above his power, he is guilty of presumption." This sin Troilus avoids after his conversion (I, 1076-1085; III, 1716-1725).<sup>21</sup> Pusillanimity, on the other hand, is a sin which makes a man fail to do what he is capable of doing. Pandarus accuses Troilus of this sin, but Troilus denies it (I, 554-576). Both presumption and pusillanimity are opposed to the virtue of magnanimity, which would be expected in the ideal knight.<sup>22</sup>

Likewise, when Chaucer urges happy lovers to pray that God grant them perseverance (I, 44) he is expounding a doctrine familiar to Catholics. "The Church held that perseverance was the gift of God, and could be obtained by an appeal through prayer, not to the justice of God, but to His mercy and kindness."<sup>23</sup> The poet also hopes to advance the best interests of his own soul by praying for Love's servants, by writing down their woes, and by living a life of charity and compassion. In this he is once more voicing a theological idea which was an important part of Catholic practice—that of good works. By doing good works the Christian merited reward, but to read the life of a saint was considered

<sup>19</sup> Dodd, p. 195; cf. Robinson, p. 814, n.

<sup>20</sup> Eugene E. Slaughter, "Love and Grace in Chaucer's *Troilus*," *Essays in Honor of Walter Clyde Curry* (Nashville, 1954), p. 69.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69, n.

<sup>23</sup> Dodd, p. 195.

especially meritorious.<sup>24</sup> It meant keeping oneself from idleness and exposing oneself to the desire of imitating the saints' virtues. To write the life of a saint was equally meritorious.<sup>25</sup>

As early as Bk. I, line 94, Chaucer introduces the word "penance" in regard to Criseyde's attitude toward the traitorous action of her father, and refers to her physical beauty as "angelic," "immortal," "heavenly" (I, 102-104). In like manner she begs Hector for "mercy" (I, 112). Having the lovers meet for the first time at a religious service reinforces the mood with which Chaucer opened the poem. "The festival of the Palladion is thought of as a pagan equivalent of Easter. Chaucer places it specifically in the month of April."<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Troilus' flouting of the god of Love (I, 193-210) is like the boastfulness of the unrepentant sinner. The reference in lines 215-216 to his climbing up the stairs without realizing that he must come down carries an overtone from Proverbs 16: 18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." And when, in line 237, Chaucer says, "That Love is he that alle thing may bynde," we sense the analogy to God's omnipotence. Professor Tatlock long ago called attention to a liturgical reminiscence in I, 245:

'This was, and is, and yet men shal it see' reflects the 'sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper' of the Gloria Patri.<sup>27</sup>

Lines 251-252 of Bk. I mention for the first time the ennobling power of love. It has been pointed out that one aspect of Boccaccio's *Filostrato* which we are prone to forget in his conception of love as a great spiritual force, a power capable of changing and improving those whom it affected. The regenerating influence of love had first been celebrated by the troubadours. Boccaccio successfully mingled the carnal and the spiritual, without incongruity, as Chaucer does in the *Troilus*.<sup>28</sup> In lines 246-259 of Bk. I, after Troilus has fallen in love, Chaucer indicates that such a state has been a

<sup>24</sup> Near the end of the poem Chaucer uses the imagery of saint and shrine as an effective ecclesiastical parallel. See V, 553.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>26</sup> Root, p. 413, n.

<sup>27</sup> John S. P. Tatlock, "The Source of the Legend, and Other Chauceriana," *SP*, XVIII (October, 1921), number 4, 419-428 (422, n.); cf. Robinson, p. 815, n.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas A Kirby, *Chaucer's Troilus: A Study in Courtly Love* (Louisiana, 1940), p. 101.



source of great comfort to those who have suffered most and has caused even noble people to grow in virtue, and urges his readers to follow love that "yow so wel can lede." "It is scarcely necessary to note that this entire passage is a courtly love addition of considerable significance. It is an excellent example of Chaucer's tendency to improve the tone of his original by placing emphasis on love as a great spiritual force that will transform all those who become subject to its power."<sup>29</sup>

Troilus' sudden falling in love against his will is similar to the Christian "conviction of sin" (I, 273-274), and is followed at once by his "conversion" (I, 306-308), which, in its suddenness, reminds us of the conversion of St. Paul or St. Augustine.<sup>30</sup> This is succeeded by "repentance" (I, 318), although Troilus dissembles before his friends, just as a repentant sinner is reluctant to make a public admission of guilt—or faith. "Troilus' remarks are couched in semi-ecclesiastical language, for he addresses lovers as if they were members of a religious order, ironically remarking that though all their 'observaunces' are uncertain except for a few unimportant details, yet nothing demands such great attention as does their law . . ." (I, 330-350).<sup>31</sup> His withdrawal into the privacy of his chamber, followed by "love's agony" (I, 358 ff.), is analogous to the sinner's struggle against the compelling power of God's love and his final submission to a deity greater than himself (I, 422-424).

O lord, now youres is  
My spirit, which that oughte youres be.  
Yow thanke I, lord, that han me brought to this.

This is the language of the penitent sinner after yielding to God. "With the exception of the lines borrowed from Dante's *Paradiso*, in only one of those passages which show the ecclesiastical idea is the language suggested by the Italian original." (The passage just mentioned [lines 422-423] is taken from Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, I, st. 38-39.)<sup>32</sup> This means, of course, that Chaucer deliberately

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248. Father Alexander J. Denomy also comments on the ennobling power of courtly love in "The Two Moralities of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XLIV: Series III, Section Two (June, 1950), 36-43.

<sup>30</sup> Dodd, p. 203.

<sup>31</sup> Kirby, p. 249; cf. Robinson, p. 815, n.

<sup>32</sup> Dodd, pp. 196, 203.

raised the tone of the original by use of additional ecclesiastic references. The rhetorical figure of oxymoron as used in the description of love in I, 411, "O quike deth," although a translation of a phrase in one of Petrarch's sonnets, suggests several scriptural passages such as "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Tim. 5: 6) and St. Paul's cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7: 24).<sup>33</sup>

Professor Slaughter points out that Christian grace is one of the important ecclesiastical forms imitated by the religion of Love in the *Troilus*. It not only helps to justify earthly love, but motivates the actions of Troilus, and, to some extent, those of Criseyde. Grace is defined as unmerited favor. Since Troilus's falling in love is presented in terms of a conversion to the religion of Love, it implies the operation of sanctifying grace. As a result Troilus will be the best of Love's followers (I, 998-1008). Troilus credits his conversion to the providence of the god of Love, following which his free-will is moved in the direction of the god. This, too, is an aspect of the power of grace. Inasmuch as love is ennobling, by nature virtuous, and cannot be denied, it therefore should be followed freely.<sup>34</sup>

In the same essay, Slaughter calls attention to the fact that in the medieval church contrition was a part of the sacrament of penance. Before fully repenting, Troilus goes through an inward struggle concerning the sorrows and unrewarded service of lovers (I, 330-350); this struggle is followed by a questioning of the reality of Love (I, 400-405). He then capitulates, undertakes humble service, and strives to merit bliss (I, 430-431). The poet relates that he perseveres, growing in grace, love, and virtue. "Perseverance is both the infused virtue of habitual grace and the gratuitous help of God that sustains a man in good. It is necessary because the free-will continues to be changeable and, even though repaired by grace, is unable to remain unchangeably good."<sup>35</sup>

In line 425 of Bk. I Troilus asks whether Criseyde is goddess or woman—a question which grows out of the excessive idealization of woman as a part of the courtly love system. This aspect

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Robinson, p. 815, n.

<sup>34</sup> Slaughter, pp. 64-70.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70 and 70, n.

of the code undoubtedly partook of certain elements of the worship of the Virgin Mary. As we have already seen, the system had evolved a terminology derived from Christian ideas. Parallelism existed between the religion of Christ and the religion of Cupid in the use of such expressions as conversion, penance, service, prayer, fasting, martyrdom, sanctity, faith, works, and hope in the lover; grace, piety, mercy, and stableness in the lady. During the medieval period many hymns to the Virgin and to Christ used the language of erotic poetry without anyone's feeling that it was unfitting or unworthy.<sup>36</sup>

Troilus' promise of total submission and of a life of service to his lady (I, 427) is a curious combination of the ideas of feudal and religious loyalty. The same combination occurs later in Antigone's song (II, 827-875). Professor Dodd thinks Chaucer "evinces a great fondness for using ecclesiastical ideas and phraseology" and that although the *Troilus* at times exhibits the classical conception of the god of Love and at other times the feudal character of the same god, "the conception of the love divinity which is by far the most prominent is . . . the ecclesiastical; and the same preference for the ideas of the church appears not only in the actual account of the love of Troilus and Criseyde, but also in other passages which have nothing to do with this story itself (such as the proem to Bk. I)." <sup>37</sup> Troilus' prayer for "compassion," as expressed in line 460, and the use of the word "salvation" (I, 464) continue the ecclesiastical tone. Professor Robinson agrees with W. M. Rossetti that the word "savacioun" in this line means "well-being" or "safety," and that the theological application would be inappropriate. Nevertheless, the use of this word helps to emphasize the religious parallel to be found in the conventions of courtly love.<sup>38</sup> The immediate effect of his love was to make Troilus more valorous in battle, yet without hate in his heart for the enemy. Inwardly, however, he felt convinced that his lady would not respond to his love (I, 523-529). Such a feeling of complete woe corresponds to the "black night of the soul" in religious experience, when the convert feels convinced that God will not hear and answer his prayer. According to Professor

<sup>36</sup> Nevill Coghill, *The Poet Chaucer* (London, 1949), p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> Dodd, p. 211.

<sup>38</sup> Robinson, p. 815, n.

Slaughter the concept of despair is related to grace. He writes that, "whereas hope regards a good as obtainable and is an approach to the object, despair implies not only privation of hope, but a withdrawal from the thing desired because it is judged to be impossible to obtain." On the human level, he also observes, both hope and despair may be considered merely passions, but on the moral level they may be thought of as having God for their object, and therefore as coming under the control of the will.

Hope is then a theological virtue, infused in man by God alone, for the purpose of directing the will to its supernatural good as something attainable. Contrary to hope, despair is a sin that consists in a movement of the will in conformity to the false opinion that God refuses pardon to penitent sinners or that he does not convert sinners by sanctifying grace. Since man in despair sinks in sin and withdraws from good works, despair is the greatest of the sins.<sup>39</sup>

Religious terms of a like nature are used by Pandarus during his questioning of Troilus concerning the cause of his condition. He speaks of "remorse of conscience," "wailing for sin," and "attrition," the last meaning an imperfect repentance for sin (I, 554-557). Professor Tatlock, referring to the word "holinesse" as used in I, 560, informs us that this word "became shopworn in the middle ages, and without entire obliteration of the sense 'sanctitas,' weakened to the sense of 'piety' or 'religion' in pretty much the modern senses, 'religion' then having generally the more concrete meaning of religious observances or the clerical or monastic profession or life. The emphasis on the objective side of 'holiness' is characteristic of medieval religion. . . . 'Holiness' has almost always this specialized meaning in Chaucer."<sup>40</sup> Lines I, 659-665 distinctly recall the Biblical story of the physician who could not heal himself (Luke 4: 23).<sup>41</sup> In line 693 Pandarus quotes more or less accurately from Ecc. 4: 10: "For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to lift him up." Troilus' "confession" of love to Pandarus is similar to confession in the church, with secrecy in the matter binding on both parties, and is followed by an audible repentance (I, 932-938).

<sup>39</sup> Slaughter, pp. 72-73. Compare the discussion of despair on pp. 62-63 above.

<sup>40</sup> Tatlock, p. 423.

<sup>41</sup> Robinson, p. 816, n.

Pandarus' advice to Troilus to be diligent, true, secretive, and persevering in service to his lady (I, 957-958) is not only in the best courtly love tradition, but is similar to the "new life" the sinner is exhorted to follow after conversion in the church—"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4: 24). Pandarus' remark that "he that is divided within is nowhere whole" (I, 960) is certainly an echo of Jesus' teaching "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3: 25). His further instruction to Troilus to "stand fast" carries an overtone of several New Testament passages, such as "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (I Cor. 16: 13).

In regard to the function of Pandarus Professor Slaughter introduces the theory that "in terms of grace Pandarus seems to be a kind of priest of Love, an implement of gratuitous grace, by which one man co-operates with another in leading him to God. . . . He hears Troilus's confession with a kind of absolution (I, 939-945), and exhorts good perseverance (I, 957-958). He is also instrumental in converting Criseyde to Love, and arranges for the confirmation of Troilus in grace."<sup>42</sup>

When, a little later, Pandarus assures Troilus that it isn't fitting for Criseyde to be too "celestial," but that it will be a "sin" in her not to love and cherish a worthy knight (I, 983-987), he is again using Christian terminology. In lines 999 and 1004-1005 there are references to "conversion" from wicked ways through the "grace" of God, and to the fact that the most erring sinner, when converted, becomes the strongest "pillar" of the church (I, 1000).<sup>43</sup>

Lines 1065-1069 of Bk. I bring another New Testament echo—"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" (Luke 14: 28). In reference to such Biblical echoes Miss Deanesly writes as follows: "Chaucer . . . shews great familiarity with the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha, and with persons and passages in them. His interest, however, is that of the scholar, not the devout monk; and he is familiar with the Bible

<sup>42</sup> Slaughter, p. 68.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Ephesians 1: 4-7, which describes salvation by grace.



as he was with the *Storial Mirror* of Vincent of Beauvais, and the other great reference books of the age." <sup>44</sup>

Succeeding stanzas show the reforming effect of love on Troilus. He becomes a "lion" on the field of battle, but gentle and friendly to all others, discarding his proud and cynical bearing for true humility (I, 1073-1085). In referring to this section, Professor Kirby says:

There is nothing new or unusual in these lines, for the spiritual growth of one subject to love is a common theme in courtly literature; but it is another and very excellent example of Chaucer's effort to portray love as a great regenerative force.<sup>45</sup>

The opening lines of Bk. II bring an echo of the Psalms 42: 7, in which the Psalmist, after speaking of his great despair, exclaims, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Although in the stanza beginning with line 435 Pandarus calls on the heathen gods and the Furies, his use of the word "shrive" (II, 439) continues the Christian idea. A short time later Criseyde uses the words "solace" (II, 460) and "salvation" (II, 486). When Pandarus describes Troilus' woe to Criseyde he uses the terms "*mea culpa*," "confession," "penance," "wanhope," "shield," and "graciousness" (II, 525-532). On these lines Mr. Kirby makes the following comment:

This passages breathes a distinctly, in fact an almost exclusively, religious air; much condensed, it is unmistakably the Act of Penance addressed to Cupid, and the *mea culpa* is of course taken over directly from the *Confiteor*. The two stanzas which follow, in which Troilus begs the God of Love to guard him against despair, have all the sincerity and depth of feeling one might expect to find in a hymn to the Almighty.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Margaret Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions* (Cambridge, 1920), p. 224. Miss Deanesly also makes note of the interesting fact that Guillaume de Deguilleville, Cistercian monk of Chaalix, who died in 1360, wrote three romantic poems which are the ecclesiastical counterpart of the *Romaunt of the Rose*. The first, the *Pelèrinage de la Vie Humaine*, is the story of how the soul, helped by God's grace, is made stronger by the sacraments, encounters vices and virtues, and finally as a pilgrim enters a Cistercian monastery. The second, *Pelèrinage de l'Ame*, is the pilgrimage of the soul after leaving the body. The third, *Pelèrinage Jhesu-crist*, is a life of Christ. Miss Deanesly states that these stories were known to Chaucer; see p. 154.

<sup>45</sup> Kirby, p. 252.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

Mr. Root had previously spoken of this passage in similar vein, noting that Troilus addresses Love in language "suggested by words which Boethius applies to the supreme God."<sup>47</sup> Professor Hutson calls special attention to II, 540-541:

Wyth that he smot his hed adown anon,  
And gan to motre, I noot what, trewely.

He suggests that these lines describe the murmuring of the penitent in the confessional. For Chaucer's audience this would be a common experience shared by all. Pandarus had previously ordered Troilus to make a formal statement of sorrow for sin (against Love), in other words, the Act of Contrition, and Troilus had agreed (I, 932-938). In the church order the Act of Contrition comes after Confession and contains the following elements: contrition (sorrow for sin); prayer for forgiveness; and a statement of determination not to repeat the sin. Line 935 of Bk. I: "Thus sey with al thyn herte in good entente," paraphrases the words of the confessor when he tells the penitent to make a good act of contrition. Pandarus did not impose a formal penance on Troilus, but reprimanded him severely after cataloguing his deeds performed in committing the sin.<sup>48</sup> Through contrition, Troilus came into harmony with divine will. Concord and harmony in the world are, according to Professor Dodd, but a manifestation of the power of love; and "if love ceased to operate, all things which now work together in harmony would be reduced to chaos."<sup>49</sup> For Boethius an important attribute of the deity is that he establishes faith in the universe. The stars, the ocean, the seasons, the land are controlled in harmony by "stable faith," and in precisely the same way human relationships should be controlled. "A lack of faith in any way means becoming separated from the control of God, from the harmony of the divine system; and such a separation can only mean confusion and ruin."<sup>50</sup>

Pandarus, in relating to Criseyde his attempts to play the physician to Troilus' agony of despair, continues the use of churchly

<sup>47</sup> Root, p. 443.

<sup>48</sup> Arthur E. Hutson, "Troilus' Confession," *MLN*, LXIX (November, 1954), 468-470; cf. Robinson, p. 819, n.

<sup>49</sup> Dodd, p. 205.

<sup>50</sup> Bernard L. Jefferson, *Chaucer and the Consolation of Philosophy of Boethius* (Princeton, 1917), p. 106.

terms or language by speaking of "salvation," "preaching," and "shriving," ending his appeal to her with a Biblical echo:

And, be ye wis as ye be fair to see,  
Well in the ring than is the ruby set. (II, 584-585)

In Job 28: 18 we read these words: "For the price of wisdom is above rubies"; in Prov. 3: 15: "She [wisdom] is more precious than rubies"; in Prov. 8: 11: "For wisdom is better than rubies." (In the Vulgate version, however, the ruby is not specified, and so at this point Chaucer seems to be following the *Filostrato*.)<sup>51</sup>

Criseyde's "conversion" to Love could not be "sudden," as that of Troilus had been. According to courtly convention it was necessary that the lady exhibit both modesty and reluctance. Although intrigued by the possibility of love (II, 673-675), she weighs the merits and objections carefully (II, 598-609), knowing that it is possible to scorn the lover or deny him reward. In the religion of Love there is inequality between man and his deity just as in the Christian religion. Everything depends on the god's "grace."<sup>52</sup>

In deciding to accept Troilus' love, Criseyde says that she is "naught religious" (II, 758), that is, not a nun vowed to celibacy. Speaking of the fickleness of love and of its quick disappearance she says, "That erst was nothing, into nought it torneth" (II, 798), which is perhaps an echo of a phrase in the burial service—"for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," which in turn is derived from Gen. 3: 19. It is essential that Criseyde, as a perfect example of the courtly lady, exhibit "pity" in her dealings with Troilus. Pity was not only the active manifestation of charity and therefore an outstanding mark of Christian behavior, but it was also one of the conspicuous attributes of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>53</sup>

Antigone's song to Love in the garden, which continues the use of Christian symbolism as applied to courtly love, emphasizes the fact that love enables her to "banish all kinds of vice and sin" (II, 852). In the opening lines, like a vassal to a feudal lord, she pledges loyalty to Love, and at the same time, in the image of a Christian sinner, likens it to a redeeming grace which will save her from fear and lead to all joy and security.<sup>54</sup> Professor

<sup>51</sup> Root, p. 444.

<sup>52</sup> Slaughter, p. 72 and 72, n.

<sup>53</sup> Root, p. 427.

<sup>54</sup> Kirby, pp. 201-202.

Dodd sees in this a comparison to the Biblical command: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6: 5)—with the lines immediately following her pronouncement making use of the Christian idea of grace:

For nevere yet thi grace no wight sente  
 So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede  
 In alle joie and seurte, out of drede. (II, 831-833)

The remainder of her song is a hymn of praise and thanksgiving. Falling in love is not an accident but a manifestation of special grace.<sup>55</sup> It is at the end of this song that Criseyde finds herself in a state to be "converted" (II, 899-903).<sup>56</sup>

Troilus' prayer of thanks to Venus upon learning that Criseyde will accept him in friendship contains the exclamation: "Lord, al thyn be that I have! / For I am hool, al brosten ben my bondes" (II, 975-976). This is an echo from both an early Christian hymn and from Psalms 116: 16: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds." In the first letter to Criseyde the ecclesiastical tone is continued by reference to "sorrows," "bliss," and "grace," and by an appeal for "mercy" at the end (II, 1066-1076).

After telling Troilus of the arrangement for him to meet Criseyde at the home of Deiphebus, Pandarus (urging him not to be backward in speaking to her of his love) says, "Thow shalt be saved by thi feyth, in trouthe" (II, 1503). Here again we have an echo of a Biblical saying, for in the Bible this thought is applied to a number of people, including (1) the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment (Matt. 9: 22), (2) the leper who returned to give thanks (Luke 17: 19), and (3) the blind man who believed that Jesus could restore his sight (Mark 10: 52). In connection with this passage, Professor Dodd mentions in particular the case of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with the costly ointment, Luke 7: 50; and he adds other references to Mark 5: 34 and Luke 8: 48.<sup>57</sup> Line 1526 of Bk. II: "Thi grace she shal fully ther conferme," refers to the act of confirmation, which Professor Slaughter reminds us is one of the sacraments of the church.<sup>58</sup> Throughout

<sup>55</sup> Dodd, pp. 198-199.

<sup>56</sup> Slaughter, p. 71.

<sup>57</sup> Dodd, p. 201; cf. Robinson, p. 821, n.

<sup>58</sup> Slaughter, p. 68, n.

the remainder of Bk. II the words "pray" and "praise" are used repeatedly (II, 1549, 1553, 1583, 1589, 1657, 1670, 1701, 1756), and the word "glorify" is found in II, 1593. Although the meaning of "corones tweyne" (II, 1735) is not entirely clear, this phrase reinforces the religious mood.<sup>59</sup> In observing the cumulative effect of the spiritual tone of the poem, it is interesting to notice that in the first two books alone the name of God in capitalized form is used 102 times. Although it occurs frequently in ejaculations or pious oaths, the total effect of its use is undeniable.<sup>60</sup>

The invocation to Venus which opens Bk. III contains numerous references to love, both earthly and heavenly. Professor Root finds here a curious blending of the cult of Love and of Christian theology. Since in the divine work of creation the giving of life operated through the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit impersonates the *Love* of God.<sup>61</sup> Such a doctrine includes sexual love as well as the cosmic love which operates the universe. "God loveth, and to love wol nought werne" (III, 12). This is a remarkable departure from classical mythology in that this god in the *Troilus* is not at all the mischievous young archer of conventional love poetry, but is given all the qualities of celestial love described at length by Boethius.<sup>62</sup> Jove is creator and Venus takes her character from the God of the Christians. She makes Mars peaceful, raises lovers to moral heights which otherwise they could not reach, while bringing about unity and friendship. Chaucer has emphasized and enriched the goodness which he makes characteristic of Venus.<sup>63</sup> Concerning lines 39-42 of Bk. III Robinson says: "The language here seems to echo that often addressed to the Virgin."<sup>64</sup> The invocation ends with a strikingly pious prayer: "To which gladnesse, who nede hath, God hym brynge!" (III, 49). This conclusion is a Christian one. In praying that God bring the gladness of consummated love to whoever needs it Chaucer implies that

<sup>59</sup> Robinson (p. 822, n.) inclines to the belief that this may refer to the nuptial crowns used in the Orthodox Eastern Church to symbolize innocent or honorable love.

<sup>60</sup> Bernice G. Cofer, "Chaucer's Religious Consciousness in *Troilus and Criseyde*" (unpublished thesis, University of Washington, Seattle, 1939), as abstracted in *Abstracts of Theses*, IV, 119-120. Miss Cofer states that the *Troilus* contains more than three hundred examples of the name of the Deity, used either in reverence or for emphasis.

<sup>61</sup> Root, p. 464; cf. Robinson, p. 823.

<sup>62</sup> Malone, pp. 117-118.

<sup>63</sup> Jefferson, p. 122.

<sup>64</sup> Robinson, p. 823, n.



such gladness comes from God.<sup>65</sup> Professor Slaughter says that the words "gladness," "joy," and "bliss," which are frequently used in the sense of "grace," carry on the religious analogy.<sup>66</sup>

Just as soon as Troilus gets the opportunity to see Criseyde alone he prays for "mercy" (III, 98), begs to be allowed to "serve" her, to "suffer" under her sovereignty, to "die," if need be, in her service. Criseyde's acquiescence, including her admonishment, "Now beth al hool" (III, 168), adds another religious touch similar to those mentioned previously. Her words "And I shal trewely, with al my myght,/Youre bittre tornen al into swetenesse" (III, 178-179) carry echoes of two Biblical passages:

And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet. Ex. 15: 23-25.

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Isa. 5: 20.

Troilus considers his acceptance by Criseyde a genuine miracle; he seems to hear each church bell ringing (III, 189). "To the simple-minded believer, the bell thus miraculously ringing was God's voice of approval of something done, or of protest against some wickedness committed or about to be committed."<sup>67</sup> Pandarus' repetition of an old proverb to the effect that "firste vertu is to kepe tonge" (III, 294) no doubt relates to the courtly love rule in regard to secrecy, but also has Biblical sanction. The books of Psalms and Proverbs abound in warnings concerning the necessity of guarding the tongue, and the book of James in the New Testament contains a long exhortation on the subject.<sup>68</sup> Other Biblical passages allude to the sin of boasting, the sin which Pandarus especially warned Troilus against. For example: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (Jas. 3: 5).

<sup>65</sup> Malone, p. 119.

<sup>66</sup> Slaughter, p. 64, n.

<sup>67</sup> Dodd, p. 201.

<sup>68</sup> Ps. 39: 1, Prov. 10: 19, Jas. 3.

The vivid description of how Troilus rejoiced upon learning that he had been accepted by Criseyde is analogous to the joy and ecstasy experienced by the seeking soul when he realizes at last that he has obtained the forgiveness of God.

Who myghte tellen half the joie or feste  
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte,  
Heryng th' effect of Pandarus byheste?  
His olde wo, that made his herte swelte,  
Gan tho for joie wasten and tomelte,  
And al the richesse of his sikes sore  
At ones fledde; he felte of hem namore. (III, 344-350)

A change of character and of demeanor is at once apparent.

But Troilus, though as the fir he brende  
For sharp desir of hope and of plesaunce,  
He nought forgot his goode governaunce.  
But in hymself with manhood gan restreyne  
Ech racle deed and ech unbridled cheere. (III, 425-429)

The lover devotes himself to the "service" of his lady just as the religious convert dedicates his life to God and the church.

Although Chaucer mentions that the fateful conjunction of planets is responsible for the severe storm which delayed Criseyde at the home of Pandarus on the night of her yielding to Troilus, he is careful to give it a Christian touch.

But O Fortune, executrice of wyrdes,  
O influences of thise hevenes hye!  
Soth is, that under God ye ben oure hierdes,  
Though to us bestes ben the causes wrie. (III, 617-619)

The idea of Fortune as the servant of the Christian God has a profound effect on the plot of the *Troilus*. Although alluding many times to the operation of fate, the story does not proceed as a sentimental tragedy, in which the characters fall victim to some pitiless force external to themselves. Troilus, unlike his prototype in the *Filostrato*, discovers that his sufferings are the result of his own folly. Passages reflecting the Christian conception are deliberately introduced to show that Fortune is the shepherdess only under the direction of "heighe Jove,"—"and that therefore the plot does not move by chance but in accordance with a plan which does

not exclude human free-will.”<sup>69</sup> Mr. Shanley supports the view that the control of Destiny is not complete in the lives of the hero and heroine. The story does not rest on destined events alone, and the final unhappiness of the lovers is not to be blamed solely on fate. They are free to choose, and as they choose they determine their future. Troilus does not lack free-will, but uses it unwisely. Of his own will he places his hope for perfect happiness in something that is both temporary and insufficient.<sup>70</sup>

Professor Patch has further pointed out the significance of the fact that these Christian additions occur at the two main crises of the story. The result of relieving the poem of a sentimental fatalism is to take away the hopelessness of a setting in which the pagan Fortune rules.<sup>71</sup> The pagan conception of Fortune was that she was capricious, wilful, heartless, and irrational. Philosophers of the medieval age did not permit Fortune a real existence as a goddess, but attributed chance to the theory of hidden causes. The common people, however, personified her, and so the poets accepted the figure, gradually making her subservient to the rational God, thereby satisfying both faith and reason. Out of this compromise a “genuinely Christian figure was created, retaining the title and the apparatus of the pagan cult.”<sup>72</sup> Originally an independent ruling power, she became a figure which shared the universe with some other force, and then became subordinate to another god. In regard to lines 624 and 625 of Bk. III Professor Root says, “Chaucer here accepts the orthodox opinion that astrological influences are subject to the will of God, and are, like Fortune, a means through which the divine providence is executed.”<sup>73</sup>

Mrs. Dempster believes that although enough stress is laid on metaphysical considerations to enthrone Fortune as the power ruling over men, she still retains a strong atmosphere of mystery, the secret of which probably lies in the unique combination of classical convention with Christian thought.<sup>74</sup> She further believes

<sup>69</sup> Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, 1927), pp. 31-32.

<sup>70</sup> James Lyndon Shanley, “The *Troilus* and Christian Love,” *ELH*, VI, number 4 (December, 1939), 271-281 (272, 275, 277).

<sup>71</sup> Patch, pp. 31-32.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>73</sup> Root, p. 475.

<sup>74</sup> Germaine Dempster, *Dramatic Irony in Chaucer* (Stanford, 1932), p. 13.

the philosophical background of the *Troilus* to be fatalism, inescapable necessity. "The whole tragedy is felt, not so much as a series of events occurring one by one in the course of time, but as one solid mass, as the reflection in this world of elements somehow inseparably woven together in another world."<sup>75</sup>

Troilus' prayer to Venus (III, 712-719), when he is about to go to Criseyde's bed, is a prayer for intercession, probably borrowed from the worship of the Virgin as a mediator between God and man.<sup>76</sup> His expression of a strong desire to have the bad aspects of his "stars" mitigated adds to the nobility of his character. Professor Pratt remarks that "most of the contributions from the *Teseida* add to the sober and stately tone of *Troilus and Criseyde*." These include invocations to the gods, adjurations by characters, lines intensifying the atmosphere of fatalism, and Troilus' description of his own funeral and funeral urn (II, 435-436; III, 720-721; III, 1807-1813; V, 297-315).<sup>77</sup> Preceding the supper with Pandarus Troilus had been spending his time in the temple of Apollo. This scene is an illustration of the religious piety expected of a courtly lover—in spite of the fact that it is also part of a ruse for deceiving his friends.<sup>78</sup> Troilus' character is different from that of his counterpart in the *Filostrato*. Chaucer has "both ennobled and enriched" the role of the courtly lover.<sup>79</sup>

In Criseyde's monologue on "fals felicitee" (III, 813-840) and the mutability of joy we see Chaucer preparing us for the end of the story and the philosophy contained in the epilogue. This statement is in disagreement with the opinion of Professor Tatlock, who says that although we are warned in the beginning of the tragedy to come, there is a feeling that nothing is better than happy love, and that there is no hint of the vanity or unworthiness of love.<sup>80</sup> It is true that Chaucer has painted earthly love in glowing terms. Mr. Lewis draws attention to the fact that he has lavished more than half his work on the happy phase of the story, that is,

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>76</sup> Dodd, p. 200.

<sup>77</sup> Robert A. Pratt, "Chaucer's use of the *Teseida*," *PMLA*, LXII (1947), 598-621 (609).

<sup>78</sup> Kirby, pp. 157-158.

<sup>79</sup> John Livingston Lowes, *Geoffrey Chaucer and the Development of his Genius* (Boston, 1934), pp. 179-180.

<sup>80</sup> John S. P. Tatlock, "The Epilog of Chaucer's *Troilus*," *MP*, XVIII (April, 1921), 625-659.

the wooing and the winning of Criseyde, followed by the fruition of their love. He considers Bk. III a long epithalamium, containing some of the greatest erotic poetry of the world. "It is a lesson worth learning, how Chaucer can so triumphantly celebrate the flesh without becoming either delirious like Rossetti or pornographic like Ovid."<sup>81</sup> Professor Slaughter has remarked that earthly love is not only made to seem good, but is frequently extenuated and apparently reconciled to heavenly love. To quote him exactly:

The intermixing, confusing, and blending of earthly lovers' emotions, moral standards, and ecclesiastical forms with those of Christian religion produce a kind of specious reconciliation. . . . The imitation of Christian grace and its associated notions contributes much to the extenuation of earthly love in *Troilus*. . . . The effect is a tone of religious love and devotion that infuses Troilus's endeavor and excites in the reader a serious concern for the hero's high purpose in love.

Nevertheless, as Slaughter remarks later on, the epilogue condemns worldly vanity.<sup>82</sup>

Continuing our analysis of the lines in Bk. III, we find in Criseyde's discussion a reference to jealousy which carries a definite Biblical overtone: "But O thow wikked serpent, jalousie" (III, 837). According to legend, Lucifer became so jealous of the fact that God had placed all kingdoms under the dominion of His Son that he instigated the revolt which resulted in his own downfall, his subsequent temptation of Adam and Eve, and his final punishment of being compelled to assume permanently the form of a serpent. And so the personification of jealousy as a wicked serpent brings before our minds the entire picture of Satan and the Fall of man. In V, 1212-1213 Chaucer again refers to jealousy as a "wikked spirit."

The use of the Latin word *benedicite*, taken from the Church ritual and repeated in III, 757 and 860, supports the Christian atmosphere.<sup>83</sup> It is the first word of the canticle *Benedicite omnia*, sung by the Three Children in the fiery furnace.<sup>84</sup> The kneeling of Troilus at the head of Criseyde's bed in an attitude of worship is of course a courtly love touch, but there is a continual undergirding of the story with Christian or Biblical references. Line

<sup>81</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory, of Love* (Oxford, 1936), p. 196.

<sup>82</sup> Slaughter, pp. 62-75.

<sup>83</sup> See also I, 780.

<sup>84</sup> Root, p. 425.



1165 of Bk. III: "For, by that God that bought us bothe two" reminds us strongly of I Cor. 6: 20, which reads, "For ye are bought with a price." Mr. Bloomfield thinks that in the *Troilus* Chaucer always writes of the Trojans and Greeks as if they were reasonable pagans believing in God and the basic moral law, but not as though they were Christians. He cites III, 1165, the line just discussed, as an exception to Chaucer's pattern.<sup>85</sup> However, as noted earlier in this paper, these pagan characters have quoted scripture at other times; and a few lines farther on (III, 1172-1177) we find Troilus, in continuation of this practice, using "mercy," "trespass," and "grace," and Criseyde answering "Of gilt miseriecorde!"—an ecclesiastical term referring to mercy. In kneeling, Troilus demonstrates the true humility of the repentant sinner, and in forgiving him Criseyde exhibits the quality of compassion. On this passage Professor Coghill makes the following observation:

Had it not been for another quality, namely the generous one called Pitee, she would have held back longer, perhaps entirely. But the grief of Troilus awakens pity in her, Pitee, standard grace in the Beloved, that takes the lover's part.<sup>86</sup>

In lines 1204-1221 of Bk. III, the ecstasy of human love is rendered in terms of the soul new-risen from purgatory. Such use of theological terms to describe psychological states does not necessarily imply any identification of human with divine love, but was the allegorical method to describe one plane of being in terms of another without blurring the distinction between the two.<sup>87</sup>

About fifty lines farther along, Troilus utters a prayer of thanksgiving to Love, part of which (III, 1266-1267),

Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn certes,  
But if thi grace passed oure desertes,

is a translation of lines addressed, in the *Paradiso* of Dante, to the Virgin. It is a fine example of the use of ecclesiastical terminology for the expression of courtly love. Men may see that in this love

<sup>85</sup> Morton W. Bloomfield, "Chaucer's Sense of History," *JEGP*, LI (1952), 301-313 (308, n.).

<sup>86</sup> Coghill, p. 74.

<sup>87</sup> John Speirs, *Chaucer the Maker* (London, 1951), p. 66.

mercy surpasses justice.<sup>88</sup> In discussing the lines quoted above, Mr. Shanley notes that Troilus and Criseyde describe their joy and give thanks to Love in the religious terms constantly used in speaking of God, the everlasting good.<sup>89</sup>

Professor Root maintains that thirteen passages in the *Troilus* indicate the use of material from Dante's *Divine Comedy*. One is the passage in praise of Love, which is used in the original as an address to the Blessed Virgin; one gives the elevated conception of Fortune as the agency of divine providence; and one is the address to the Blessed Trinity used at the end of the poem. "All of the passages where Dante's influence is manifest are of a character which adds to the tone of artistic and spiritual elevation which so markedly differentiates *Troilus* from the *Filostrato*."<sup>90</sup> He further states that in line 1282, "Here may men seen that mercy passeth right," the language of courtly love has transferred to its own use the theological opposition of divine mercy and strict justice.<sup>91</sup> In line 1577, the words "God foryaf his deth" carry echoes of Luke 23: 34, Luke 6: 37, and Eph. 4: 32.<sup>92</sup>

Troilus' hymn (III, 1744-1771) celebrates Love as the great force which controls everything in the universe and without which all would be ruined and lost.<sup>93</sup> Being a conception of love associated with Nature as a unifying and creative power, it can include both the courtly love and *fabliau* attitudes and yet transcend both. Although the love celebrated is that of the creature it is so conceived that it can be surpassed only by the love of the Creator.<sup>94</sup>

In referring to line 623 of Bk. IV: "And if thow deye a martyr, go to hevene!" Professor Robinson makes the following statement: "There is clearly an allusion here to the teaching of the Church that a martyr's death ensured immediate entrance into heaven, of which the ultimate source was perhaps Rev. 7: 14." This teaching was especially emphasized in the time of the Crusades.<sup>95</sup> When,

<sup>88</sup> Kirby, p. 211; cf. Robinson, p. 826, n.

<sup>89</sup> Shanley, p. 273.

<sup>90</sup> Root, p. xlv.

<sup>91</sup> Root, p. 485; cf. Robinson, p. 826, n.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. Robinson, p. 827, n.

<sup>93</sup> Kirby, p. 255.

<sup>94</sup> Speirs, p. 68.

<sup>95</sup> Robinson, p. 829, n.

during her lament, Criseyde in IV, 770, says "rooteles moot grene soone deye" she is probably quoting from a well-known proverb, but this too carries its Biblical overtones.<sup>96</sup> She had already, in IV, 756, referred to herself as "forlost," that is, an utterly lost creature, a damned soul, and had blamed her condition on her father's "synne" (IV, 761). Lines 782-784 refer again to a religious order with its observances, including "abstinence." Lines 818-819 speak of the martyrdom of death for love. When, in lines 834-835, Criseyde says that not only love but all worldly bliss ends in woe, we can see that Chaucer is indirectly preparing the reader for the stand he will take in the epilogue. A few lines farther on, Criseyde again refers to her "peyne," "torment," "distresse," and "angwissh," as though she were truly a martyr (IV, 842-844).

Later on in Bk. IV the fated turning of Fortune's wheel convinces Troilus that he is doomed by Destiny and Necessity to lose Criseyde (IV, 947-959). His long meditation and touching prayer in the temple emphasize his courtly qualities. He is here brought into association with the courteous, church-going heroes of romance, such as Chrétien's Lancelot.<sup>97</sup> Line 996 of Bk. IV continues the image of a religious order by reference to the tonsure of the clergy.<sup>98</sup>

Troilus' thoughts on destiny deserve special consideration here. Chaucer's idea of destiny derived from Boethius, who, in his *Consolation of Philosophy*, reveals God's one-ness in relation to the manifold nature of Creation. This God is "stable," "invisible," and "benevolent," transmitting his power through successive stages of action. As each one occurs farther and farther away from the source, we find increasing diversity and change. God has planned the universe as a complete whole. This conception or plan is called Providence. In order that this conception may be carried out, God delegates powers to a blind force called Destiny. Because Destiny is removed from the center of Intelligence, it becomes divided into many manifestations. It is sometimes exercised by divine spirits, by a human soul, by Nature serving God,

<sup>96</sup> Ps. 102: 4; Ps. 103: 15-16; Isa. 40: 6; I Pet. 1: 24.

<sup>97</sup> Karl Young, "Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde' as Romance," *PMLA*, LIII (1938), 38-63 (50).

<sup>98</sup> Robinson, p. 830, n.

by the celestial movements of stars, by virtue of angels, or through the evil workings of devils.<sup>99</sup>

Again, Destiny extends its control still farther outward to influence another blind and capricious force called Fortune, who rules over the checkered lives of individuals. Because the activity of Fortune is the farthest removed from God as the center her chief qualities are "mutability, change, instability, and irrationality." Fortune cares no more for one man than for another; therefore she seems to be illogical. But Fortune has two aspects: (1) common fortune, that is, experiences common to all humanity, and (2) personal fortune, such as place and time of birth, environment, individual love, etc. Common fortune is Nature-as-destiny. God has bound together the various elements of His creation and maintains them in their proper places by the universal bond of Love. However, personal fortune may also be influenced by the erratic stars, involving chance or accident, which is called that only because its cause is not understood. It is only because men are short-sighted that they rail at Fortune or Destiny.<sup>100</sup>

Nature, which serves God in the capacity of Destiny, is the product of the regular movements of the fixed stars. But the planets, which run their courses irregularly from west to east, cause the principle of earthly change. Therefore the power of God's Love is communicated first to the constellations of the eighth sphere, then to the planets, and then to the earth, where it appears in the common fortunes of men. Boethius seems to have been familiar with this theory and Chaucer makes use of it in the *Troilus*.

He insists time and again . . . that the common fortunes of Troilus and Criseyde are caused by Nature-as-destiny and hence by God, who is the author of Nature; he suggests as often that the special, individual fortunes of the protagonists are directed by the destinal power inherent in the movements of the erratic stars.<sup>101</sup>

Professor Curry (agreeing with Mrs. Dempster<sup>102</sup>) stresses the

<sup>99</sup> Walter C. Curry, "Destiny in Chaucer's *Troilus*," *PMLA*, XLV (March, 1930), 129-168.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 129-132.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

<sup>102</sup> See footnote 75.

fatalistic background of the poem in sentences like the following: "Emphasis cannot be too strong when placed upon the fact that in *Troilus and Criseyde* an absolutely inescapable necessity governs the progress of the story. The Boethian God may be discerned back of every incident working out the plans of Providence through His ministers, Destiny and Fortune."<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, Mr. Curry considers Troilus' long monologue on predestination and free-will dramatically appropriate and not an interruption of the story at a vital point. Troilus had been happy and satisfied with God's providence when Criseyde was given to him. Now he must reconcile his thinking to a change of fortune. "In the depths of despair he retires into a temple where he prays . . . for the privilege of dying and communes with himself upon the relation between God's foreknowledge and man's free-will." He is being honest and consistent in his attitude toward Destiny and Fate.<sup>104</sup>

In addition, Professor Curry believes that Chaucer used this fatalistic philosophy for artistic purposes—"he conceived that the action of a great tragedy should be under the direction of a stern necessity and that the doom of a struggling protagonist should be inevitable."<sup>105</sup>

### 3.

Critics disagree markedly in regard to the epilogue, which repudiates the courtly love system and adjures young people to set their hearts on a heavenly Love. After examining a large part of the material written on the epilogue, the present writer sees a growing inclination on the part of critics to accept this section of the work both as being implicit in the poem and an integral part of it. Among those favoring this interpretation are Professors Root, Patch, Lowes, Shanley, Kirby, Lawrence, Speirs, Denomy, Clark, Bloomfield, and Slaughter, whereas those in opposition have among their number Professors Tatlock, Young, Curry, and Malone, with Professor Robinson maintaining a middle ground. The arguments of those in opposition will be presented first.

Professor Tatlock, although he says that "for grandeur and charm the ending is seldom matched in poetry," and that after

<sup>103</sup> Curry, p. 152.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.



contrasting Christian truth with pagan beliefs it ends with "an imposing and devotional invocation to the Trinity,"<sup>106</sup> nevertheless considers the feeling in the epilogue in no way prepared for in the beginning or anywhere else—"it does not illumine or modify; it contradicts." However, he considers Chaucer sincere in his semi-retraction. It is a worldly tale interpreted in an unworldly way, ending with a revulsion against, or a transcending of, the love story. "His sublimation of earthly to heavenly and of pagan to Christian faith can leave no one unmoved."<sup>107</sup> Although it was customary in medieval literature to have a religious ending, Professor Tatlock does not think that Chaucer was being merely conventional. The poet purposely used the paganism of antiquity to place his story in ancient times, but these references to pagan gods and practices would be disturbing to the medieval Christian believer, especially when they were presented so vividly by the main characters.<sup>108</sup>

The Catholic religion felt secure in the fourteenth century, but it was believed that souls were imperilled by non-Christian ideas of the supernatural and by the frivolous morality inherent in such ideas. The Church had been threatened previously by the Albigensian heresies and in Chaucer's day by Wyclif's theology. A revival of paganism might be improbable, but not impossible. The Church was perforce hostile to study of the classics for fear of an undermining of the fundamentals of morality and of the theory of a theocracy.<sup>109</sup> Both Petrarch and Boccaccio had been attacked for their interest in the classics. Pagan poetry being suspect on both religious and moral grounds, its acceptance by a contemporary would be both startling and disturbing. Consequently, Tatlock sees in the epilogue a reflection of the dispute as to the proper attitude of a Christian man toward pagan poetry.<sup>110</sup>

While agreeing that the epilogue presents a moving Christian appeal to amorous young people, Mr. Young considers it a virtual renunciation of the poem that precedes, and so the cause of bewilderment in the reader. He agrees with Professor Tatlock that

<sup>106</sup> Tatlock, p. 625.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 636.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 644-646.

<sup>109</sup> Mythology was frequently allegorized to make it acceptable to the Church. Chaucer never consented to this practice.

<sup>110</sup> Tatlock, pp. 646-658.

it expresses the natural revulsion of the medieval mind to the strong emotion and painful ending of the main poem, and therefore indicates that Chaucer felt the need of a counterbalance for the reality of physical passion. However, he believes that "Chaucer's feeling of revulsion arose as much from the false principles of courtly love . . . as from the intensity and reality of the physical passion."<sup>111</sup> Professor Kittredge had already pointed out that Troilus was right in his first opinion that the principles of the code were unsound.<sup>112</sup> Their inevitable conclusion was that Chaucer repudiates the system. Andreas Capellanus had made a similar renunciation in his *De Amore*. There is no proof that Chaucer knew this work, but he may have had a copy of it in Latin or in translation.<sup>113</sup>

Professor Curry, too, regrets the epilogue and considers it out of keeping with the remainder of the poem—a denial and a contradiction. He is glad the main poem can be considered apart from the ending, which he thinks represents the separation of the artist and the religious man. Nevertheless, he does not doubt the sincerity and religious fervor of Chaucer in this instance.<sup>114</sup>

Although Kemp Malone considers the ending a recantation esthetically disturbing to some modern readers, he believes the Christian moral of the story is perfectly clear, that it is unreasonable to blame Chaucer for pointing it out, and that in doing so he was following a deeply rooted medieval literary convention, that of the religious ending, which in this instance is serious, not perfunctory.<sup>115</sup> He does not think this condemnation of courtly love and paganism was written to stave off ecclesiastical censure, but that Chaucer actually believed unworldliness to be the better part. He also thinks the poet meant all he said in disapproval of the pagan gods (V, 1849-1853). Troilus had appealed in vain to the gods for help in his misery. Only after death did he win that insight which the Christian may have in earthly life. Therefore Chaucer

<sup>111</sup> Karl Young, "Chaucer's Renunciation of Love in *Troilus*," *MLN*, XL (May, 1925), 270-276.

<sup>112</sup> George Lyman Kittredge, *Chaucer and His Poetry* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 143.

<sup>113</sup> Young, p. 276.

<sup>114</sup> Curry, pp. 165-168.

<sup>115</sup> Malone, p. 139.

rightly lays stress on the part religion played in the action, even though that part was negative rather than positive and could do nothing for the hero.<sup>116</sup> In spite of the fact that the ending differs in point of view from the body of the poem, the difference makes the work richer and nobler than it could have been otherwise. Mr. Malone is glad Chaucer did not make exemplary points as he went along, but thinks it is cause for congratulation that the ending is "so informed with faith and so charged with beauty." He considers the closing prayer analogous to the benediction at the close of a religious service. He notes that the ending grows more and more religious in tone and spirit as it proceeds, and that it "takes us as near the throne of God as we are ever likely to get by the literary road."<sup>117</sup>

Professor Robinson, after noting that V, 1835-1855 constitutes a repudiation of earthly love and that it is taken by some to be merely conventional, adds the following statement: "But the whole spirit of the passage is that of religious sincerity. How far it is merely an utterance of personal feeling on Chaucer's part, and how far it reflects a more general conflict of pagan and Christian ideals, as Professor Tatlock suggests, is difficult to judge. . . . The attack on heathen worship [l. 1848] seems to be no less earnest than that on pagan love."<sup>118</sup>

Taking a stand in favor of the epilogue, Professor Root has noted that the beautiful stanzas depicting the flight of Troilus' soul are taken from the *Teseida* by Boccaccio, and are most important in undergirding the philosophical interpretation Chaucer has placed on the poem. In the fickleness of Criseyde, so sweet and gracious and lovely, Chaucer sees the mutability and the transitoriness of earthly happiness. He warns young people that the world is only a Vanity Fair, that "only in God is there neither variableness nor shadow of change."<sup>119</sup> The epilogue is not a tacked-on moral, but is implicit in the entire work. Chaucer gives his own opinion as to the permanent values of human life.<sup>120</sup>

Professor Patch reminds us that at least three times during the

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

<sup>118</sup> Robinson, p. 837, n. and p. 838, n.

<sup>119</sup> Root, pp. xlv and xlviii.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

poem Chaucer has taken the pains to show his own point of view by departing from his source in carefully-prepared passages, and that he deliberately modifies the philosophy as he found it in Boccaccio in order to give expression to a Christian point of view. In two of these passages he adopted from Boethius and Dante the description of a Christian Fortuna (III, 617 ff. and V, 1541 ff.), removing the element of caprice from destiny and restoring control to a rational rather than an arbitrary God; in the third, the epilogue, he specifically interprets the whole plot in Christian terms. If the story had been simply one of disaster and fatalism it would have been unnecessary to picture Fortune as subservient to God. Therefore the two passages are in harmony with the third, which they precede and interpret.<sup>121</sup> Since two of these passages occur at the crises of the plot and the third at the end, they serve to bind the philosophical construction of the plot together. Thus there is no break between the early part, where Troilus gives himself up to the delights of love, and the end, where he sees that folly played a part in his tragedy and brought the consequences of his own choice.<sup>122</sup>

Professor Lowes believes Chaucer's appeal to young people to be one of passionate sincerity, moving through the dedication to a deeply reverent prayer. When profoundly moved, Chaucer turns to the great passages in Dante and to the offices and hymns of the Church. His invocation opens with a word-by-word rendering of three lines in one of the finest cantos of the *Paradiso* . . . and its close portrays the beautiful Office of the Virgin (V, 1863-1869).<sup>123</sup>

Mr. Shanley, in contending that the epilogue is implicit in what precedes, asserts that Chaucer retold the tale "in the light of an entirely new set of values, determined not only by this world and man's life in it but by the eternal as well. . . . Before the medieval mind seriously and religiously concerned with life and happiness were divine peace and felicity, perfect and eternal, to be achieved not when individual wills were drawn to one another, but when they were drawn to God's, for it was His will that was peace." Therefore Chaucer's conclusion gives full meaning to Troilus' situa-

<sup>121</sup> Howard R. Patch, *On Rereading Chaucer* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 112-113.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>123</sup> Lowes, p. 190.

tion and sorrows, being "aesthetically essential as well as intellectually consistent, for by these lines only is the final emotional resolution achieved."<sup>124</sup>

In speaking of the ascent of Troilus' soul to the eighth sphere, Professor Tatlock had remarked that the other-worldly tone of this passage is done purposely to lead into the unworldly ending which follows—"piety with a pagan touch forms a transition from pagan worldliness to Christian devoutness."<sup>125</sup> Professor Kirby sees a further purpose in this passage, in that it rounds out Chaucer's picture of Troilus as the ideal lover. Troilus does not linger in limbo or purgatory, but ascends directly to heaven. His love has been so noble and so spiritual that he stands in need of no punishment. This passage is in the best courtly love tradition, showing love as a great spiritual force which has completely transformed the hero and now brings him to eternal salvation. Then the poet reminds his readers that all the trials and sorrows of love may be avoided by giving up the vain things of this world and dedicating themselves to God (V, 1847-1848).<sup>126</sup> Having written a beautiful courtly love poem, Chaucer discerns the artificiality not only of courtly love but of all earthly endeavor. Consequently, he urges all young people to look on things eternal. "Many people seem to be perplexed at Chaucer's attitude and find his epilogue strangely out of place; the whole thing seems to me entirely appropriate and the explanation of its presence quite simple."<sup>127</sup>

W. W. Lawrence believes that the code of what was socially proper and right was essentially the same for Chaucer as for Boccaccio, but that his attitude was different. Boccaccio accepted the courtly love system, Chaucer tested it. In the hands of Chaucer the story is an attempt to analyze the validity of the conventions of love, and his final decision is that those conventions break down as a rule of life.<sup>128</sup>

Professor Speirs thinks that in the final stanzas the lovers and their story are set in relation to the established medieval Christian

<sup>124</sup> Shanley, pp. 272-280. For a criticism of this view see Dorothy Everett, *Essays on Middle English Literature* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 136-137.

<sup>125</sup> Tatlock, p. 626.

<sup>126</sup> Kirby, p. 283.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

<sup>128</sup> W. W. Lawrence, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (New York, 1931), pp. 148-149.



values, which Chaucer does not repudiate; the poem is not a romantic glorification of passion—it makes explicit what has been implicit, namely, that above all human love is to be set the love of God.<sup>129</sup>

Father Denomy inclines to the belief that Chaucer wrote the retraction for one of two reasons: either he feared incurring official blame and displeasure or he tried to salve a conscience thoroughly Christian. In regard to the first possibility, Father Denomy points out that the morality of courtly love had been condemned by Archbishop Stephen Tempier in Paris on March 7, 1277, and that Chaucer was probably aware of the condemnation. There was danger involved in writing such a romance. Chaucer meets this danger by the use of the following devices: first, he uses immoral and heretical teaching only as a vehicle for retelling the story; second, he disclaims any personal knowledge of such love by referring to "bokes olde" and "myn auctour called Lollius"; third, he inserts a retraction, rejecting, disapproving, and condemning courtly love as vain, ephemeral, fallacious, the blind effect of passion. Never, after *Troilus and Criseyde*, did Chaucer venture to write a romance of courtly love.<sup>130</sup>

John W. Clark, in the essay in which he attempts to prove that Chaucer drew directly and initially from Dante in writing the epilogue, voices the belief that the epilogue is a proclamation of the superiority of heavenly to earthly love, and that critics are in general agreement on this point.<sup>131</sup>

Mr. Bloomfield suggests that in the epilogue Chaucer deliberately contrasts the world before Christ with that after His death when He introduced a new kind of love to mankind, a kind very different from that revealed in the story. "The world *sub gratia* is a very different world; a new quality or dimension has been created by God's love, dividing forever pagan history . . . from Christian history." This author considers Chaucer to have had a strong sense of history, a feeling "of man's transience, of his foolish pretensions, of his comic-tragic dignity."<sup>132</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Speirs, pp. 80-81.

<sup>130</sup> Denomy, "The Two Moralities of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," pp. 35-46.

<sup>131</sup> John W. Clark, "Dante and the Epilogue of *Troilus*," *JEGP*, L (1951), 1-10.

<sup>132</sup> Morton W. Bloomfield, "Chaucer's Sense of History," *JEGP*, LI (1952), 301-313 (308 and 311).

According to E. E. Slaughter, Chaucer was aware that earthly and heavenly love are diametrically opposed, and although the poet finally favors the latter, he nevertheless sympathizes with the lovers. The epilogue definitely condemns worldly vanity.<sup>133</sup>

## 4.

The foregoing examination of the ecclesiastical and Christian passages in the *Troilus* leads to several conclusions in regard to Chaucer's handling of his subject. Having chosen a pagan love story for his theme, he deliberately set about spiritualizing it by first of all giving it a setting in the courtly love tradition as Boccaccio had, to some extent, done previously. In no instance does he present Troilus to the reader as a weak, effeminate, or vacillating lover. The hero's agony, his secrecy, his forbearance, his unwillingness to expose Criseyde publicly are all in keeping with the rules of the Court of Love. His manliness, his gentleness, his magnanimity, his bravery are the marks of the perfect knight. Throughout the entire poem we find a dovetailing and overlapping of these principles and virtues which were upheld jointly by courtly love convention and medieval Christianity. Similarly, Chaucer emphasizes the virtues of Criseyde, and although he feels constrained to reveal her weakness of character in her "slyding corage," he carefully refrains from judging her; in fact, the reader carries away with him the feeling that the poet was deeply moved by the tragedy of this lovely woman.

After having chosen his subject and its setting, Chaucer carefully selected from his original sources only those parts which contributed to a spiritualization of the theme. Not finding these sufficient to elevate the tone to the desired sublimity, he inserted original passages designed to undergird the spiritual quality of the poem still further. Critics have noted that at each crisis or high point in the *Troilus* there is a passage of great power and beauty, skilfully inserted by the author. Many of the poet's small, but subtle additions make use of ecclesiastical terms or refer to the Deity, some are Biblical references, direct and indirect, yet all are instrumental in leading the reader's mind away from the merely physical aspects of love to a contemplation of that unending

<sup>133</sup> Slaughter, "Love and Grace in Chaucer's *Troilus*," pp. 61 and 75.

and all-enveloping higher Love which fills the universe in spite of the presence of tragedy. From this point of view the epilogue is an integral part of the poem, contributing to the final spiritualization of a pagan theme. Surely Chaucer, the careful artist, made these changes and additions purposely, with an eye to their cumulative impact and to the total effect of a satisfying artistic production.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Unpublished treatments of the religion of love, as listed in the Griffith bibliography of 1953, are as follows: Bernice G. Cofer, "Chaucer's Religious Consciousness in *Troilus and Criseyde*" (unpublished thesis, University of Washington, Seattle, 1939, as abstracted in *Abstracts of Theses*, IV, 119-120); and John H. Jacobson, "The Church of Love in the Works of Chaucer and Gower" (unpublished dissertation, Yale, 1939).

It was not possible for me to examine these studies before the preparation of this paper, but I have done so since (Miss Cofer's in abstract only). Although their work does not cause me to make any revision in the present paper, I wish to acknowledge that Mr. Jacobson not only made mention of some of the ecclesiastical additions to the poem, but also pointed out that such were original with Chaucer and are not to be found in the French and Italian sources.

Judging from the abstract of her thesis, Miss Cofer agrees that Chaucer deliberately raised the tone of the story and gave the problem a religious solution by means of the addition and re-emphasizing of religious attitudes, particularly those of the medieval Church.