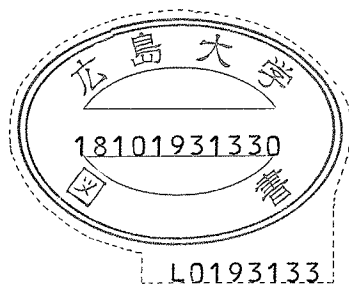


STUDIES IN CHAUCER'S
LANGUAGE OF FEELING

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TO
DR. TADAO YAMAMOTO

Preface

In this collection of essays I have examined Chaucer's language in a number of aspects, mainly those concerning the semantic sense. Together they constitute, it is hoped, a study of the meaning of Chaucer's language in the widest sense of the word.

These eight articles have received the title 'Studies in Chaucer's Language of Feeling,' in accordance with the suggestion of a great Cambridge Chaucerian, Derek Brewer. Professor Brewer has suggested that I should speak as a Japanese, who *feels* more often than he does.

These articles are, therefore, selected and arranged around the theme of the language of feeling, as follows:

- "The Language of Love in Chaucer," *Studies in English Literature, English Number*, The English Literary Society of Japan, 1960.
- "Chaucer's Use of 'Smile' and 'Laugh'," *Anglica*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1958.
- "Observations on the Tone of Speech in Chaucer—Especially in *Troilus and Criseyde*—," *Anglica*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1959.
- "The Development of Mood in Chaucer's 'Troilus'—An Approach," *Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Margaret Schlauch*, Polish Scientific Publisher, Warsaw, 1966.
- "Chaucer's Tenderness and the Theme of Consolation," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, Studies Presented to Tauno F. Mustanoja on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, 1-2 LXXIII, 1972.
- "*The Prioress's Prologue and Tale*—A Structural and Semantic Approach," *Studies in Celebration of Professor Chiaki Higashida's Sixtieth Birthday, Language and Style*, Osaka Kyoiku-tosho, 1974.

“Some Thoughts on the Continuity of Themes in Chaucer,”
Poetica 1, Shubun International Co. Ltd., Tokyo, 1974.

“A Mode of Word-Meaning in Chaucer’s Language of Love,”
Studies in English Literature, English Number, The English
 Literary Society of Japan, 1967.

Why did Professor Brewer say it was feeling that underlay my way of thinking? Of all paths of research, this was the most neglected. Thus the language of feeling seemed to me a term most pertinent to my approach. And so I entitle my book ‘Studies in Chaucer’s Language of Feeling,’ with the warmest thanks to Derek Brewer for his kindness of heart.

I should like to express my gratitude to Masahiko Kanno, a student of mine and an able helper in the preparation of these *Studies in Chaucer’s Language of Feeling* for publication; and likewise to Masuo Umeda, a careful proof-reader and also a student of mine, I appreciate the labour that each has undertaken.

Last but not least, I wish to offer thanks to the Kinseido Shoten Publishing Co. Ltd., who willingly undertook the volume for the sake of learning, despite the many difficulties inherent in this kind of publication.

Michio Masui

1st April 1988

Professor Michio Masui—*A Personal Tribute*

The work of Michio Masui needs no introduction and it would be otiose for me to offer one. Nor indeed, for the community of scholars of English, does he himself need introduction. He has long been the doyen of students of Chaucer in Japan. He has produced standard works in both Japanese and English which have made his name and fame international. His interest in English literature and life has not been limited to Chaucer as the following essays show. Shakespeare has keenly engaged his attention, while his devotion to Edmund Blunden both as person and as poet has resulted in the Blunden Memorial in Hiroshima. And as a Japanese Michio Masui's virtually life-long connection with Hiroshima has marked him not only as a witness of horror but in consequence as gentle champion of peace.

Michio Masui was one of the earliest of Japanese scholars to resume the study of English culture after the long gap enforced by the war. He visited England and Europe in 1954-5 and it was then that I met him, introduced by a mutual friend, the poet and Professor of English, Denis Enright. Professor Masui's eagerness to experience the varieties of English life and weather, his knowledge of many things from medieval architecture to bus time-tables, his excellent spoken English, his gentle politeness, his humour, charmed everybody who met him. Some of his experiences on that trip are overtly referred to in the following essays, illustrating again how knowledge of the general language and culture enriches study of the literature, as literature enriches life.

In 1976 Professor Masui established the first Miyajima Seminar, which I had the honour of attending. We finished with a supper in a restaurant after which he constrained us all each to sing a folk-

song from our place of origin. I cherish the memory of Professor Masui singing a delightful traditional love-song from his native home. (I sang 'Green Grow the Rushes-O,' hoping my colleagues would join in with the cumulative refrain. At the end someone said 'That was a *very* long song!') The devotion and interest of Michio Masui's colleagues, friends and pupils was everywhere apparent and his energy and inspiration carried the Seminar to its successful conclusion, though I fear it may have overtaxed his strength.

In 1987 we met again in Hiroshima where though now long retired he is the object of respect and affection of his devoted wife and daughter and a circle of learned and genial colleagues who are friends and in many cases former pupils.

Life, literature and study have always been bound together in a unity for Michio Masui, even when his work has been of such a technical and laborious nature as his early well-known study of Chaucer's rhymes. This philological contribution is not only valuable in itself but the basis of the detailed knowledge of Chaucer's mind and art which all Michio Masui's work effortlessly reveals. By such close contemplation of apparently impersonal details as rhyming usage and verbal habits we come close to the mind and spirit of a great poet. Into the penetrating study of verbal structures Michio Masui weaves his own rich life experiences and responses. Such an exercise in sensibility is the more valuable and the more difficult as it spans two ancient cultures so different as those of Japan and England. In science we are now close, but in the wider range of social and personal, not to say linguistic acts, attitudes, concepts and responses we are still far apart. For the sake of human diversity long may they remain so. But the need for mutual sympathetic study is all the greater.

The collection of essays given here is an example of just such

study applied to traditional English literature. They reveal a penetrating yet meditative mind which seizes on detail to illuminate a whole range of characteristics in Chaucer and Shakespeare. The concern with technical characteristics and artistry does not obscure the warm response to the mind and spirit of the poets, and it reflects the warmth of spirit and care for detail of the scholar himself who turns scholarship into poetry.

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1 The Language of Love in Chaucer

The language of love begins with romance in English literature. The spirit of romance may have caught Spenser when he opened his great poem after the manner of Virgil:

Lo! I the man, whose Muse whilome did maske,
 As time her taught, in lowly shepherds weeds,
 Am now enforst, a far vnfitter taske,
 For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds,
 And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds;
 Whose prayses hauing slept in silence long,
 Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
 To blazon broad emongst her learned throng:
Fierce warres and faithfull loues shall moralize my song.

“Fierce warres and faithfull loues” were the moralizing themes of *The Faerie Queene*. In it the Elizabethan poet sang of “Knights and Ladies gentle deeds; Whose prayses hauing slept in silence long.”

About two centuries before Spenser, however, his great master Chaucer had begun to compose a great poem in a somewhat different tone:

The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
 That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye,
 In lovyng, how his adventures fellen
 Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie,
 My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye.
 Thesiphone, thow help me for t'endite
Thise woeful vers, that wepen as I write.

The medieval poet was, at the outset, aware of the narrative verse that he was going to write being woeful and ‘weeping’: “Thise

woful vers, that wepen as I write." The poet had been pervaded by a sense of tragedy¹ already when he took the story in hand. He knew well that his story must take its tragic course "fro wo to wele, and after out of joie." The story of earthly love between Troilus and Criseyde was to end with Criseyde's betrayal and falsehood to her faithful lover Troilus. The historical setting and the material in hand were what the poet could not change a bit. Before him were Benoit de Ste.-Maure, Dares, Guido delle Colonne, Boccaccio among others, who touched on or treated this episode of the Trojan War. Thus Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* was to become "the immediate and principal source of Chaucer's *Troilus*."²

Troy was as remote in time and space as it was in sentiment for the poet who was a Customs House officer in 14th century London as well as a courtier in the Court of Westminster, though the story of the Trojan War and its love episode were quite familiar to him. The sense of remoteness must have awakened him to the new kind of romance, with Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* before him, as he had been imbued with French love-poems and bored, perhaps, with the traditional romances like *Guy of Warwick*, *Child Horn* and some others.

The element of romance in Chaucer's *Troilus* which is related to a great tradition of romantic narrative has been stressed with due attention by Professor Karl Young.³ He goes so far as to say: "Our critical preoccupation with psychology and ordinary realism must not be allowed to obscure the charm and flavor of the poem as romance... he *meant* to write a *romance*, and he succeeded in doing so."⁴

Whether the poem in all its aspects should be seen in the light of romance alone we cannot say with certainty. It is because, as Professor Young himself has recognized above, there has been a "preoccupation"—to use his word—with psychology and realism in

interpreting the poem. But such a preoccupation as this has a great deal to do with the modern interpretation of it. On the side of the psychological interpretation of the poem we are reminded of, among others, Professor G.L. Kittredge. In his admirable *Chaucer and His Poetry* Professor Kittredge asserts: "The Troilus is not merely ... the most beautiful long narrative poem in the English language: it is the first novel, in the modern sense, that ever was written in the world, and one of the best" or "Psychology it was to contain, or what passed for psychology in the medieval love-poets, the analysis of emotion in terms of Chrétien de Troyes and the Roman de la Rose."⁵ From both statements we can say at the least that Chaucer's *Troilus*, though in many ways in contrast to Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, contains much of romance as well as of psychology and realism with such a curious impression upon the reader as that of a magical combination in him of medieval and *modern* (if the term is not anachronistic) arts.

At all events, we cannot but feel as a modern reader who has some knowledge of the courtly love literature of the Middle Ages that both aspects, romantic and psychological, emerge through the poem. Especially youthful emotions of love, whether of joys or sorrows, pervade it. And it is the aim of the present article to approach the qualities of the language by means of which the poet tried to realize and describe human experiences and medieval formalities of love between Troilus and Criseyde in a remote and romantic setting of Troy against the background of the Trojan War. It is, in other words, an approach to, and an analysis of, what we may call the language of love in Chaucer, especially in his *Troilus*.⁶

I

A perusal of Chaucer's early allegorical poems from *The Book of*

the Duchess to *The Parliament of Fowls* through *The House of Fame* may confirm that love played a great role in his "youthful consciousness."⁷ The theme of love, the arts of love ('fyn lovyng'), the delicacies of the feeling of love, these things he learned from the French love-poems, especially of Machaut and Deschamps. Though, as Miss Bowden says,⁸ love was probably not in his own experience, the young poet as a page and then later as a squire may have learned a great deal about love from the atmosphere of love affairs in the royal household that he served. As Queen Alceste defends the poet in the imaginative Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* from the accusation of the God of Love that he wrote *The Romaunt of the Rose* "That is an heresy e ayeins my lawe" and *Troilus and Criseyde* "That maketh men to wommen lasse triste," the poet made

the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
 And eke Deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
 And the Parlement of Foules,...
 And al the love of Palamon and Arcite
 Of Thebes, thogh the storye ys knowen lyte;
 And many an ympne for your halydayes,
 That highten balades, roundels, virelayes;

LGW F 417—23

The themes of these poems were mainly of love. And if we believe what he confesses before the God of Love, his intention was

To forthren trouthe in love and yt cheryce,
 And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice
 By swich ensample;

LGW F 472—74

This may give a hint to the older poet's state of mind after he had

finished *Troilus and Criseyde*—a reflective mind toward the vanity of earthly love and its instability. What we can point out here, however, is the extent to which he had been occupied with the themes and matters of love before he set out on a grand journey to Canterbury Cathedral. The poet of *The Canterbury Tales*, matured and reflective as he was, may have reminded himself of the joyful atmosphere of love that had been in Court in his younger days. He composed the lines of the Squire in the reflective vein:

a yong Squier,
A lovyere and a lusty bachelor,
.....
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.
Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;
He was as fressh as is the month of May.

Prol. 79—92

These lines set the tone of the mind in retrospect of the now matured and experienced courtier-poet for the young feelings of love and its fresh atmosphere.

This was, among other things, the atmosphere of love—especially, the courtship and the ambition to win a lady—that might suggest the poet's Court life and manners. There was there such an atmosphere as to make him go to French love-poems which the ladies and courtiers favoured and liked to hear read aloud, or sometimes sung, perhaps, to some music. And it cannot be doubted, as in a scene of reading the gest of the siege of Thebes⁹ in *Troilus*, that Chaucer read his latest poem to his sensitive audience which

was composed of some group of his friends and courtly acquaintances. On the other hand, in real Court life there was "much of what he learned, of politeness, of good manners, of noble behaviour," or even of "scandalous talk."¹⁰ "There shall your master have a thousand lovers," says Helena jeeringly to Parolles, "A mother, and a mistress, and a friend, A phoenix, captain, and an enemy, A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign, A counsellor, a traitress and a dear; ..." ¹¹ So the Court was, as in her words, "a learning-place" for him in the affairs of love as in other matters. Of general education, however, which the Court gave him, "gentillesse" and "curteisie" were the major virtues which would have shaped the culture of the courtier-poet. "Gentillesse" is a word which suggests nobleness and gentleness of heart,¹² whereas "curteisie" is a word which presupposes, first of all, courtliness of manners and behaviour, and finds full expression in the outward act or behaviour. Both words were expressive of the ideal virtues which any courtly lover might have wished to acquire in order to have reputation in the courtly circles. Chaucer's success as a courtier and as a diplomat may well prove not only his sagaciousness, gentleness of spirit, but also what it was that he had achieved and learned in Court life.

Pandarus, coming as he does with the intention of revealing Troilus's love to Criseyde, commends his merits as a knight and as a lover in her presence, which naturally disclose the qualifications of a perfect courtly lover as well as the virtues of knighthood:

And ek his (*i.e.* Hector's) fresshe brother Troilus,
 The wise, worthi Ector the secounde,
 In whom that alle vertu list habounde,
 As alle trouth and alle gentillesse,
 Wisdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse.

“Trouth, gentillesse, wisdom, honour, fredom, worthinesse” here enumerated are all the virtues of a knight, among which Pandarus lays stress on “trouth” and “gentillesse” by putting the generalizing or intensive “alle” before them. The same phrase that describes Troilus’s essential character as a lover, it is worth noting, recurs in Criseyde’s delayed reply to Troilus’s letter in Book V as if to echo Pandarus’s praise here:

But now no force, I kan nat in yow gesse
But *alle trouthe* and *alle gentillesse*.

Tr V 1616—17

“Trouthe” may presuppose ‘purity of heart’ in love (‘Echtheit der Liebe’),¹³ whereas “gentillesse” as mentioned above the gentleness and nobleness of the heart that knows the delicacies of feeling in terms of courtly love. A great warrior, Troilus is there presented as an ideal courtly lover: he is strong and brave, wise and honourable, gallant and generous, and most important of all, ‘true and gentle.’ This must be enough and all-important to Criseyde at the moment. In this connection we are reminded of Chaucer’s ideal Knight in *The General Prologue*:

he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and *curteisie*.

ProL. 45—46

All in all, we can sum up that these virtues are required of any knight who is to be servant of the God of Love.

The reasons, then, why Chaucer, unlike Spenser, sang only of love and not of war, are not very far to seek:

1) The Court audience for which he wrote was fond of love-

poems, especially French love-poems. And one of his chief duties was to entertain the Court audience by composing such poems.

- 2) The Court atmosphere then prevalent was amatory.
- 3) The cultures which he devoted himself to acquire were mainly of Latin and French courtly love literature before he knew Italian literature.
- 4) He became through these literatures and through his experiences in Court well-informed of the arts and technique of love, and particularly of the language and expressions of love, on the model of which *mutatis mutandis* he brought the expressions of the emotion and psychology of love into the vernacular; this was a new quality to be added to the English language.
- 5) The courtliness ('courtesie') that was nurtured in him became an essential part of his second nature.

Here the last-mentioned reason is important in that 'courtliness' played a great role in determining his attitude to love and love-language as well as in shaping his character and culture. Courtliness is vague in meaning for us moderns. First of all, the background of the term 'courtly' is medieval. It relates to 'courtois' and 'courtoisie' in two ways in particular: one is that 'courtliness' is the standard by which one can judge one's behaviour, that is. it serves as a kind of social and moral standard by which to judge worth of man. The other is that 'courtliness' entails the attitude—a respectful attitude or distance—toward a lady whom a courtly knight adores. Hence, it has a close relationship with the modes of love-language. "Courtesy," as Nevill Coghill defines, "is behaviour proper to a Court."¹⁴ In this sense, Chaucer was the most courteous poet of all poets in English literature.

Like his Knight.

He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf unto no maner wight.

Like his Squire,

Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable.

He hated villainy and loved courtesy. Such was Chaucer's temperament and attitude toward his superiors. The courtliness of the poet may well be echoed by a conversational speech that he uses in the presence of the Black Knight who symbolizes his great patron John of Gaunt. The following is a dramatic rearrangement of it:

[Poet]: Good sir, telle me al hooly
 In what wyse, how, why, and wherfore
 That ye have thus youre blysse lore.*

[Knight]: Blythely, com sytte adoun!
 I telle the upon a condicioun
 That thou shalt hooly, with al thy wyt,
 Doo thyn entent to herkne hit.

[Poet]: Yis, syr.

[Knight]: Swere thy trouthe therto.

[Poet]: Gladly.

[Knight]: Do thanne holde hereto!

[Poet]: I shal ryght blythely, so God me save,
 Hooly, with al the wit I have,
 Here yow, as wel as I kan.

BD 746—57

*lost

The young poet's tone of voice, we are impressed, assumes grace

and respectful courtesy toward the noble man in the flesh whom he has before his mind when writing. The poet uses the respectful "ye, you" and "sir," while the Knight speaks to him with the blunt "thou, thy" and "thee." This is the language of Court and courtesy.

He learned the language of courtesy from the actual circumstances in which he found himself, and acquired the language of love from the literary cultures which he cultivated for himself. We may say that both the circumstances and the cultures would have contributed to making the poet of love. Thus Chaucer was at once the poet of the Court and the poet of love.

II

Chaucer was a poet of love both in the medieval sense of the word 'love'¹⁵ and in the sense that he had been trained in the tradition of literature of the allegory of love. Though the courtier-poet pretended from time to time to have no feeling or experience of love,¹⁶ he was deep in "al the craft of fyn lovyng" ¹⁷ or in the "remedies of love"¹⁸ or in the art of the old dance.¹⁹ "All that was young and romantic in Chaucer had swallowed the dream-allegories of France and the philosophy of courtly love in long draughts from the *Roman de la Rose*, the *Fontaine Amoureuse*, the *Jugement du Roi de Behaingne*."²⁰ The remarks here quoted were especially true of the young Squire-Poet when he composed *The Book of the Duchess*, a dream-poem of love between the Duchess Blanche and the Knight in Black. The Black Knight voices his humble fear and desire in full courtly love style:

With sorweful herte, and woundes dede,
 Softe and quakyng for pure drede
 And shame, and styntyng in my tale

For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and red.
Bowynge to hir, I heng the hed;
I durste nat ones loke hir on,
For wit, maner, and al was goon.
I seyde 'mercy!' and no more.

BD 1211-19

Here is shown almost all the vocabulary of courtly love which is used in courting a lady: *sorweful herte*, *woundes dede*, *drede* (=dread), *shame*, *ferde* (=rear), *pale*, *red*, *quakyng*, and, finally, and most important, 'mercy.' As the Black Knight, so is Troilus before his beloved. His voice is changed for dread and quakes and further his goodly manners are abashed with change of his complexion from red to pale and

With look down cast and humble iyolden chere,
Lo, the alderfirste word that hym asterte
Was, twyes, 'Mercy, mercy, swete herte!

Tr III 96-98

The exclamation "mercy!" is the last word for a courtly lover to declare before his lady. It is the essential and final word in the language of love as in the language of religion.²¹ These words illustrated above may suggest the psychic and physical qualities and symptoms of a courtly lover: Fear, Shame or Modesty, Dreadful Joy, on the one hand, while, on the other, Death, Sorrow, Pain, Paleness, Quaking, Aphasia, and last of all, Mercy; all of which were quite familiar to Chaucer already in his favourite *Roman de la Rose*.²²

There, besides, he knew the significance of allegory and love-

vision. We can say that young Chaucer the poet had moved in the dreamy sphere of the allegory of love in the beautiful garden of the "roser" as if he were himself the Dreamer-Poet who attempted to steal a kiss from the Rose—the symbol of an ideal courtly lady:

The roser* was, withoute doute,
Closed with an hegge withoute,

Rom 2967—68

*rose-bush

Bel Acueil, son to Courtesy, greeted the Dreamer-Poet and helped him see the fresh rose-bush and feel the sweet savour, but there was a churl named Danger who kept the roses, being on the lookout for any one who might lay hand on the roses. Beside Danger there were Wicked Tongue and Shame. These and other allegorical persons he met there, like Idleness, Courtesy, Beauty, Fair-Semblant, Wan-hope, Reason and others.

C.S. Lewis, comparing the author of the first part of the *Roman de la Rose* with Chrétien de Troyes, goes far to the root of the meaning of allegory: "...the 'concrete' places and people in Chrétien are mere romantic supposals: the 'abstract' places and people in *The Romaunt of the Rose* are presentations of actual life."²³ This was the sort of allegory in the *Romaunt*.

Thus although Danger in *The Romaunt of the Rose* is an abstract, yet any courtly lover must feel its actual existence in real life. Like the Dreamer-Poet in the *Romaunt*, Chaucer or any courtly lover in any time would have met Danger in his experiences of love. This 'abstract-concrete' relationship in an allegorical person was the significance of Danger or of the other characters in the *Romaunt*. Chaucer in his *Troilus* employs such a mechanism of allegory for analysing the emotions of love; so some of the allegorical persons

in the *Romaunt*, say, Reason, Danger, Jealousy, Wicked Tongue, or Friend, are to recur again and again, but this time with a deeper and a subtler significance; they serve as often as not to reveal the psychological conflict of the characters in their inner world; a fact which shows how or to what extent Chaucer even in his maturer period had been influenced by the *Roman de la Rose*.

Pandarus, who plays "the part that Frennd plays in the *Roman de la Rose*,"²⁴ has in mind a plan to work out for arranging for Troilus a "siker place his wo for to bywreye (=reveal)" (*Tr* II 1370) and says to Troilus in allegorical terms:

"Peraunter thynkestow: though it be so,
That *Kynde* wolde don hire to bygynne
To have a manere routhe upon my woo,
Seyth *Daunger*, 'Nay, thow shalt me nevere wynne!
So reulith hire hir hertes gost withinne,
That though she bende, yeet she stant on roote;
What in effect is this unto my boote*?"

Tr II 1373—79

*cure

Here the inner conflict takes the form of debate between Kind (Nature) and Danger. This reminds us of Danger in the *Romaunt* who gets angry with Bel Acueil (Friend) who accompanies the lover, leading him to the Rose:

Danger says:

"Bialacoil, telle me why
Thou bryngest hider so booldely
Hym that so nygh is the roser?
Thou worchist in a wrong maner.
.....

Fle hennes, felowe! I rede thee goo!
 It wanteth litel I wole thee sloo.*

Rom 3139—50.

*slay

But the function of Danger in *Troilus* is significantly different from that of Danger in the *Romaunt*. In *Troilus*, it is subtly fused into the inner texture of the poem often with a symbolic effect, whereas in the *Romaunt* it simply gives an impression of a real character that assumes an allegorical name. The conflict of Love (*i.e.* passion) and Reason is seen in Troilus's mind when he hears the decision of Parliament to exchange Criseyde for Antenor. Troilus cannot say a word against it and ponders the matter:

Love hym made al prest to don hire byde,
 And rather dyen than she sholde go;
 But *resoun* seyde hym, on that other syde,
 "Withouten assent of hire ne do nat so,
 Lest for thi werk she wolde be thy fo,
 And seyn that thorough thy medlynge is iblowe
 Youre bother love, ther it was erst unknowe."

Tr IV 162—68

This mode of language is a new and a symbolic way of realizing the inner experiences of a courtly lover who fears that his love affair which must be kept secret on the code of courtly love may be made public ('iblowe'). Thus Reason gets the upper hand of Love. Here the word "iblowe" may imply as often in *The House of Fame* that bad as well as good fame will be *blown* over the world as if through the trumpet. Again Desir is in conflict with Reson in Troilus's mind when he is faced with the dilemma as to whether he lets Criseyde go or not:

Thus am I with *desir* and *reson* twight:*
Desir for to destourben hire me redeth,
And *reson* nyl nat, so myn herte dredeth.

Tr N 572—74

*pulled.

Here as well as speaking to Pandarus, he speaks to himself—a kind of inner speech which reveals his inner struggle.

Such a qualitative transformation of allegory as we have seen above between *The Romaunt of the Rose* and *Troilus* may equally be found in a different context of love-language. This is, above all, seen along the development of the poet's genius from the use of mere rhetoric to the use of dramatic language. To take an instance, in *The Book of the Duchess* the Knight in Black who is sorrow itself ('y am sorwe, and sorwe ys y') explains to the Dreamer-Poet why he is subjected to deep grief. In doing so, he displays the rhetoric of oxymoron with something like enthusiasm, though his syntax is quite simple:

My song ys turned to pleynyng,
And al my laughtre to wepyng,
My glade thoghtes to hevynesse;
In travayle ys myn ydelnesse
And eke my reste; my wele is woo,
My good ys harm, and evermoo
In wrathe ys turned my pleyng
And my delyt into sorwyng.
My hele ys turned into seknesse,
In drede ys al my sykernesse;
To derke ys turned al my lyght,
My wyt ys foly, my day ys nyght,
My love ys hate, my slep wakyng,

My myrthe and meles ys fastyng,
 My countenaunce ys nycete,
 And al abaved*, where so I be;
 My pees, in pledyng and in werre.
 Allas! how myghte I fare werre?
 My boldnesse ys turned to shame,
 For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game
 Atte ches with me, allas the while!

BD 599—619

*confounded

Here the opposites are, in sharp contrast, equated with one another either by the copula 'is' or by the recurrent syntax 'is turned'. The syntax if simple has the ring of authority; the gusto with which the Knight tells his "sorwes smerte" is but youthful; and the tone is impassioned, though somewhat formal. In *Troilus*, on the contrary, the rhetoric appears with a dramatic appropriateness to context—it is in part of Troilus's final letter to Criseyde, in which he, now in despair yet hopes for the welfare of his beloved:

Myn eyen two, in veyn with which I se,
 Of sorwful teris salte arn woxen welles;
 My song, in pleynte of myn adversitee;
 My good, in harm; myn ese ek woxen helle is;
 My joie, in wo; I kan sey yow naught ellis,
 But torned is, for which my lif I warie*
 Everich joie or ese in his contrarie.

Tr V 1373—79

*curse

The syntax is condensed with a sparing use of the copula, while it has variety of rhythm, especially the first and the last two lines may evoke the writer's emotion due to change of word order. What

is more interesting in terms of courtly love literature is the list of vocabulary there presented which may constantly be used for the expression of a lover's joys and sorrows. We may say that in *The Book of the Duchess* the young poet has employed almost all the words of love-language.

1) Words which indicate a lover's happy state of mind in the above examples are:

song, laughtre, glad thoughtes, ydelnesse, reste, wele, good, pleyng, delyt, hele, sykernesse, lyght, wyt, day, love, slep, myrthe, meles, countenaunce, pees, boldnesse (*The Book of the Duchess*)/ song, good, ese, joie (*Troilus*).

2) Words which indicate a lover's woeful state of mind there are: pleynyng, wepyng, hevynesse, travayle, woo, harm, wrathe, sorwyng, seknesse, drede, derke, foly, nyght, hate, wakyng, fastyng, nycete, pledyng, werre, shame (*The Book of the Duchess*)/adversitee, harm, helle, wo, contrarie (*Troilus*).

III

Besides these, we have in *Troilus and Criseyde* a host of words and phrases for the expression of the feelings of love and love-woe. The following is a general list of such words and phrases as we may come across in *Troilus*:

1) First come words related mainly to the sentiments of love-woe and the symptoms of love:

Nouns: adversite, angwissh, bitternesse, care (*cares colde*), compleynyng, cruelte, daunger (often symbolically), deeth (*the crampe of*

deeth), displeaunce, distresse (very freq.), despyt, desespeir, desesperaunce, drede, drerinesse, feer, harm, helle (*your absence is an helle*), hevynesse, langour, malencolie, penaunce, peyne (freq., *Loves peyne*), peynes (freq., *mine aspre peynes smerte*), pleynte, rage, sikes (=sighs), siknesse, slouthe, sorwe (very freq., *a lusty sorwe*), teres (*salte teres*), torment (*thou Goddess of torment*), vileynye, waillynge, woo (freq.), wodnesse, wrathe, wrecchednesse (*his owne slouthe and wrecchednesse*), jalousye (*thou wikked serpent jalousye*), envye (*thy foule envye*), jupartye, etc.

Adjectives: angwisshous, bittre, careful, colde, cruel (*The cruel peynes of this woful man*), deedly, daungerous, despitous, dredful (*Hir dredful joye, dredful herte, chere, etc.*), hevvy, jalous (*a jalous rage*), smerte, sik (*sik is he that is in sorwe*), unkinde, wikked, woful (freq.), untrewre, etc.

Verbs: angwisshen, compleyne, dye (freq., *dye in distresse*), dispise, displese, dreden, falsen, langwisshen, quaken (*Whan I shuld daunce, for fere than I quake*), syke (=sigh), sleen (*Who shal that sorwe slen that ye be inne*), swounen, wepen (*tho wepte she many a tere*), etc.

2) Next come words related to the nature of love or the hopes, joys and fears of love:

Nouns: affecciou, blisse (*The parfit blisse of love*), dart (*Criseydes darte*; cf. *Loves fyr dart, Compl. Lady 37*), desir (*sharp desir of hope and of plesaunce*: so often symbolically of the passion of love), daunce (*Loves daunce*), favour, fyr (*his hote fyr, the fyr of love, etc.*; so often of love), felicitee, fevere, feste, glee, gladnesse, heven (*fro heven into which helle She fallen was*), hope (*bittre hope*), joy (*worldly joye unstable; O cruel day, accusour of the joye*), love (*love of stiel, the blisse of love, jalousye is love, etc.*; used 232 times as noun and

verb), lust, mercy, passioun, pite(e) (*any drope of pite; in the feld of pite*), pryde, routhe, selynesse, swetenesse, traunce, tresoun, wele, etc.

Adjectives: blisful, benigne, fery (*the fery flood of helle*), glade, hevynnissh, hote (*th' hote fyr of love, this hote fare*), joly (*joly wo*), pitous, (*pitous distresse, pitous herte*), secree, softe, siker, swete, trewe.

- 3) Then come words related to the description of a lover's mentality and behaviour or a lady's spiritual and physical beauty:

Nouns: benignite, diligence, gentilesse, honour, largesse, noblesse, worthynesse, etc.

Adjectives: bright(e) (*lady bright*), benigne, cle(e)re (*yen clere*), debonaire, faire, free, fresssh, fyn, gentil, good, goodliche, gracious, humble, noble, shene, swete, womanliche, wys, etc.

- 4) Finally come basal words related to general contexts or situations of love-language:

a) Persons: man (as *hire man*), womman, wight (very freq., *woful wight*), creature, knyght (freq.), lady (freq.), folk, frend, servaunt (*i.e.* lover), Grek, Troian, etc.

b) Address: dere herte, swete herte, herte myn, swete herte myn, swete herte dere, my dere herte, dere, dere herte myn, swete, etc.

c) Parts of the body and related words: arms, body (*the wofulleste Body*), breste (*His herte, which that is his brestes ye*), chere (freq.), countenaunce, eye (very freq.), eris (=ears), fynghres, heer (*Hire ounded heer*), herte (freq.), honde (esp. in phrases: *she bar hym on honde; holden me in honde*, etc.)

d) Colours: asure, ded(as in *ded and pale*), grene, blake, pale, red,

rosy (*rosy day*), white; hewe, etc.

- e) Heavenly bodies and natural objects: moone (*The bente moone with hire hornes pale*), sonne, sterre, cloude, erthe, see (sea), nyght, day, light, wynd, reyn (*That smoky reyn*), shour, etc.
- f) Animals and plants: (i) birds: brid, dowves, egle, faukoun, owles, lark, nightyngale, sperhawk, etc. (ii) animals: been (= bees), cok (*the cok, comune astrologer*), fox (*Fox that ye ben*), fissh, mouse, serpent, lioun, etc. (iii) plants: bark (*the blake bark of care*), flour, herbe, laurer, tree, wodebinde (*the swote wodebinde*), etc.
- g) Supernatural beings: Nature, Kinde, Fortune, destyne, wyrdes, etc.
- h) Pagan gods and Muses, etc.: Venus (*blisful Venus*), Citherea, Cupid, Mars, Juppiter, Jove, Appollo, Phebus, Mynerva, Pallas, Mercurye, Cleo, Thesiphone, Love, God of Love, Imeneus (god of marriage), Proserpyna, Pluto, Parcas, Lachesis, Zepherus, Ecuba, etc. cf. Flegetoun (the river of fire).
- i) Asseveration: Depardieu, parde, for (the) love of God (very freq.), Lord, God, etc.
- j) General affairs or situations: aventure, businessse, biheste, cause, entente, fare (*yvel fare*), game (*a noble game*), gardyn, gouvernaunce, labour, leche (*sorwes leche*), lif (*My sorweful lif*), mynde, place, plit (=plight), proces (*peynted proces*), qualite (*a new qualite*), gost (*the woful gost*), servyse, soul, space, thought, tyme (*blisful tyme swete*), viage(=enterprise), word(es), etc.

Rough as the analysis may be, we may from the above catalogue get a general impression of the words and phrases (especially figurative phrases) for the language of love in *Troilus*. What is important is the use of these words and phrases as often similitive or

metaphorical in their contexts; as to details of which we shall discuss them separately in another chapter.

IV

To say that the language of love is the language of Court and estate is to imply that it is the language of 'high style.' As Chaucer knows perfectly well, "The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede."²⁵ He learned the sense of the levels of style from medieval rhetoric, "as techeth art of speche hem that it leere (=learn)."²⁶ The story of Troilus and Criseyde is first of all the love-story of the *king's son*.²⁷ Then the style in which the story is to be told must be high and noble. Chaucer was conscious of such levels of style as high, middle, and low, since he was deeply read in medieval rhetoricians and poets who practised the rhetorical precepts. Any one who reads the opening stanza of *The Parliament of Fowls*, which is an "elaborate *circumlocutio*," is at once aware of "Chaucer's familiarity with the *artes rhetoricae*":²⁸

The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,
Th'assay so hard, so sharp the conquerynge,
The dredful joye, alwey that slit so yerne:
Al this mene I by Love, ...

The sententia of the above lines is the instability of earthly love, a subject matter which may eventually become what Chaucer is going to develop later in his *Troilus*. And both poems are written, it is to be noted, in the so-called rime-royal, which, in *Troilus*, is in perfect accord with the telling of a noble love-story of a king's son.

Chaucer begins *Troilus and Criseyde* in the high style to tell the double sorrow of Troilus and invokes Thesiphone, one of the Furies, for his help:

Thesiphone, thow help me for t'endite
 Thise woful vers, that wepen as I write.
 To the clepe I, thow goddesse of torment,
 Thow cruwel Furie, sorwyngge evere in peyne,
 Help me, that am the sorwful instrument,

This is a high style in the classical vein. The recurrent effect of sorrow—the *double sorwe, woful vers that wepen, sorwyngge evere in peyne, sorwful instrument*—first appeals to the reader, who is in this way prepared for the whole of the coming story. In Book II, however, the object of the poet's invocation is turned to Clio, the Muse of History, for what now concerns the poet is how to go on with the story in accord with the "matere" of history and how to "endite" well:

O lady myn, that called art Cleo,
 Thow be my speed fro this forth, and my Muse,
 To ryme wel this book til I have do;
 Me nedeth here noon other art to use.

Tr II 8—11

And the content or the process of Book II is 'hope.' Though he has to tell "how that she forsook hym er she deyde" (*Tr* I 56), it is a long story before he comes to that final tragedy. Thus the beginning passage of Book II, which is Dantean,²⁹ is in the high style, but "not without humorous overtones."³⁰ This may show a characteristic of Chaucer whose temperament is inclined to humour rather than to seriousness whenever a weighty matter is off his mind. The passage runs:

Owt of these blake wawes for to saylle,
 O wynd, o wynd, the weder gynmeth clere;
 For in this see the boot hath swych travaylle,

Of my connyng, that unneth I it steere.
 This see clepe I the tempestous matere
 Of disespere that Troilus was inne;
 But now of hope the kalendes bygynne.

Tr II 1-7

This is half-serious, slightly humorous, in tone, but not without the element of high style. The poet as the narrator is, as it were, a boatman whose duty it is to steer his boat in the tempestuous sea that *he calls* ('clepe I') Troilus's despair. The narrator's address to the wind: "O wynd, o wynd," or the imagery or the associative sequence: the boat—the tempestuous sea—Troilus's despair, or the final suggestion of 'hope,' these things, taken together, are to some extent irrelevant or artificial. Especially the tone which is produced by "clepe I" may invite one to a smile, as it often does whenever Chaucer is at his humorous moment. At any rate, here it may be said that Chaucer is using the high style in his own way, imitating Dante, *Purgatorio* i 1-3. We may grasp some of the spirit of Dante from Cary's translation when he is going to his second part of *The Divine Comedy*:

O'er better waves to speed her rapid course
 The light bark of genius lifts the sail,
 Well pleased to leave so cruel sea behind;
 And of that second region will I sing,
 In which the human spirit from sinful blot
 Is purged, and for ascent to Heaven prepares.

Purgatory i 1-6

As here is a hope for the salvation of the sinful soul in the *Purgatory*, so there is a hope for the success for Troilus's love in Book II of Chaucer's *Troilus*. The coincidence may have reminded the English

poet of Dante's *Purgatory*. But the quality of style in both poets is different; one is serious in tone, whilst the other Chaucerian in the sense that the English poet somewhat exaggerates and infuses his personal tone into the high style.

What qualities of the Italian language, then, Chaucer had been aware of may pose an interesting problem in this connection. The poet's consciousness for the language as well as for the mode of love-making in the Italian story may be detected in the beginning of *Troilus* (Book II). He addresses himself to the audience who are young lovers, in this way:

Ye knowe ek that in forme of speche is change
 Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
 That hadden pris, now wonder nyce and straunge
 Us thynketh hem, and yet thei spake hem so,
 And spedde as wel in love as men now do;

Tr II 22—26

As he himself says with a consciousness of it, there have been changes in the forms of speech (the language of love) in a thousand years and the words which had then "pris" (=esteem) have now become "nyce and straunge." Now he has a hopeful process to tell on, but he is faced with the problem of the language to use—metre, stanza, rime and all. It must be a serious and difficult problem for him. One may wonder what would have occurred to him when he was continuing to write the poem with something like enthusiasm. It may be that he had felt within himself that the Englishing of Italian words and expressions was quite a different task from what he had experienced in translating French poems. Or he may have felt that the language he would employ from then on might raise a smile from his sophisticated audience who would be first introduced to the Italian mood of

love-making. Whatever feeling he may have had, it is true that he saw in his original a different kind of the language of love—the passionate, the sensuous, the feminine, the romantic and soft quality of the Italian love-language—and there was no love vision at that. Boccaccio makes Troilo say to Criseyda in their first union:

Anima mia,
io te ne priego, si ch'io t'abbi in braccio
ignuda si come mio cor disia.—

(Soul of me,
I pray you do[=undress], so that I may have you
in my arms naked as my heart desires.—)⁸¹

Such a sensual quality of language must have been new to Chaucer, as he is retelling the corresponding part in this way:

This Troilus in armes gan hire streyne,
And seyde, "O swete, as evere mot I gon,
Now be ye kaught, now is ther but we tweyne!

Tr III 1205—07

Chaucer's description is as soft and subtle as Boccaccio's is direct and "down-to-earth."

The most high and magnificent in style, however, is an invocation and "herynge" to Venus, God of Love, at the very beginning of Book III whose *leit-motif* is the fulfilment of love between Troilus and Criseyde:

O blisful light, of which the bemes clere
Adorneth al the thridde heven faire!
O sonnes lief, O Joves doughter deere,
Plesance of love, O goodly debonaire,

In gentil hertes ay redy to repaire!
 O veray cause of heele and of gladnesse,
 Iheryed* be thy myght and thi goodnesse!

Tr III 1-7

*praised

This may be the highest pattern of the language of love in its formal aspect—beautiful, magnificent and classical. In this passage, however, it is necessary to remember that there is seen a medieval practice of “astrologizing gods.”³² Here Venus represents both the planet of the third sphere, hence the companion of the sun (*i.e.* scientific) and the daughter of Jove, goddess of love (*i.e.* mythological). Both connotations, scientific and mythological, of Venus were in Chaucer’s mind. That is, Venus was for him not only the Goddess of Love, but also the Planet of Love. And the two great attributes of Venus as Goddess of Love are praised here, her ‘might’ and her ‘goodness.’ Love that is “a grettere lawe ...Than may be yeve to any erthely man” (*KnT* 1165—66) brings Troilus and Criseyde into a happy union. Troilus’s song in which he praises the great power of Love in high style at the end of Book III may therefore be a structural parallel to Proem to Book III which is also a hymn to Love:

“Love, that of erthe and se hath governaunce,
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevenes hye,
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
 Halt peples joyned, as hym lest hem gye,
 Love, that knetteth lawe of compaignie,
 And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle,
 Bynd this acord, that I have told and telle.

“That that the world with feith, which that is stable,
 Diverseth so his stowndes concordynge,

That elementz that ben so discordable
 Holden a bond perpetuely duryng,
 That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bryng,
 And that the mone hath lordshipe over the nyghtes,—
 Al this doth Love, *ay heried be his myghtes!*

Tr III 1744—57

As the narrator comments: "It was an hevене his wordes to here," so Troilus's hymn to Love is full of nobleness and bliss,—an appropriate climax to Book III whose theme is the bliss of courtly love. This is, however, a close rendering of *Boethius*, 2.m. 8.³³ As Chaucer used the stanzas of *Il Filostrato* (3, 74—79) which are in part based on *Boethius* as Proem to his third Book, he now "turned back to the passage from which Boccaccio had received his inspiration."³⁴ What one can say is that the high style of love-language such as this was probably alien to the English language and came by way of Chaucer from the Italian or Latin source in relation to courtly love literature.

V

While reading and rereading *Troilus* we come to be fully aware of the presence of the emotionalized tone of femininity³⁵ that permeates throughout the poem. This impression, I think, comes not so much from the mere amatory atmosphere of the poem, as from the inner quality of love-language peculiar to the poem—"Thise woful vers that wepen"—which, however, may not be discovered in any earlier or later poems of Chaucer's. In *Troilus* the hero is avowedly young; so is the heroine. Troilus, though an ideal romantic lover, is less passionate or personal, if more complex, than Troilo in *Il Filostrato*: Criseyde is far less sensual, if far more complex a woman than Criseyda. We may wonder if Chaucer's qualitative transformation as such is mainly due to the difference of the temperament of the English

poet from that of the Italian. Chaucer is more matured, temperamentally objective in attitude, and therefore can see the psychology of humanity in a wider perspective and on a deeper plane. And yet he does not lose sympathy and pathos. Then whence comes such a feminine quality of his love-language? No doubt it originally comes from the Italian source, but rather more from the womanliness or muliebrity of the heroine, so full of "soft feminine charm" and amiability and so delicately touched throughout, that she does not provoke us even for a moment to her hatred to the very end that discloses her fatally a faithless woman. It is because the poem, unlike Boccaccio's, lacks the violent effusion of romantic passions, and the tone set for her physical beauty is all the time sublimated as if it were seen or felt by the noble Troilus, and thus gives to the reader a psychosomatic softening effect of feminine beauty.

A scoffer at love, Troilus sees Criseyde among the crowd at the festival of the Palladium: "His eye percede, and so depe it wente, Til on Criseyde it smot, and ther it stente" (*Tr* I 272—73):

She nas nat with the leste of hire stature,
 But alle hire lymes so wel answeyng
 Weren to wommanhod, that creature
 Was nevere lasse mannyssh in semyng.
 And ek the pure wise of hire mevyng
 Shewed wel that men myght in hire gesse
 Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

Tr I 281—87

What he saw there was the paragon of feminine beauty: her moderate stature, her limbs answering to womanhood so well, her least manly appearance, her honour, her estate, and, to crown all, her womanly nobleness. This is the 'Gestalt' of Criseyde that is intuited by

Troilus. The narrator further describes her in this way:

Criseyde was this lady name al right.
As to my doom, in al Troies cite
Nas non so fair, for passynge every wight
So aungelik was hir natif beaute,
That lik a thing inmortal semed she,
As doth an hevenyssh perfit creature,
That down were sent in scornynge of nature.

Tr I 99—105

Among thise othere folk was Criseyda,
In widewes habit blak; but natheles,
Right as oure firste lettre is now an A,
In beaute first so stood she, makeles.
Hire goodly lokyng gladed al the prees.
Nas nevere yet seyn thying to be preysed derre,
Nor under cloude blak so bright a sterre
As was Criseyde,...

Tr I 169—76

Our impression from these passages is that, though an idealization of feminine beauty is common to all romances, Chaucer does what other poets of romance cannot, with here and there a sensible penetration into the very nature of womanliness, however extrovert his description may seem to be: the elements of heavenly beauty like “aungelik,” “a thing inmortal,” “an hevenyssh perfit creature” commingled with the elements of earthly flavoured quality like a comparison of the isolated beauty of Criseyde with “so bright a sterre under cloude blak,” or “oure first lettre A,” which might imply in its innermost sense a compliment to a real noble lady (Queen Anne) as Professor J.L. Lowes has suggested. Such is an aspect of Chaucer’s love-

language that evokes the inner as well as physical quality of a woman.

"Criseyde's most emphatically displayed characteristic," writes Professor E. T. Donaldson,³⁶ "is amiability—that is, lovability: she has almost all the qualities that men might hope to encounter in their first loves." She is so enduringly feminine and so sensitively demure as to have us suspect that her heart may all the time be trembling with hopes and fears. Thus the language that describes her inner tremble and sensibility may assume the most psychological and subtle and sometimes the most ambiguous tone that Chaucer has ever set for the description of any character in *Troilus* or throughout his poems. The tone of femininity of love-language therefore emerges most naturally in Criseyde as when she begins to think about Troilus's love and love in general after she has seen:

swich a knyghtly sighte, trewely,
As was on hym, was nought, withouten faille,
To loke on Mars, that god is of bataille.

Tr II 628—30

Troilus seemed "So fressh, so yong, so weldy" (to her) that "It was an heven upon hym for to see" (*Tr* II 636—37). Troilus is as much the paragon of knighthood as Criseyde is that of womankind; and yet such a knight as Troilus "wex a litel red for shame (=modesty)" when he heard people cry:

Here cometh oure joye,
And, next his brother, holder up of Troye!

Tr II 643—44

The "gentillesse" of Troilus which is perceived on his "chere" sinks "so softe in hire herte" that she says to herself:

"Who yaf me drynke?"

Tr II 651

The softness of her whispering tone has such an elusively feminine quality that it attains a reality in the sense that the emotions of love have just been aroused in her. Thus she herself like Troilus "of hire owen thought wex al red." Now love dominates her whole being. And she

gan to caste and rollen up and down
Withinne hire thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estat, and also his renown,
His wit, his shap, and ek his gentillesse;

Tr II 659—62

And for her it was a pity "To sleen swich oon, if that he mente trouthe" (*Tr* II 665). Of all her long arguments about love (*Tr* II 652 ff.), it is especially fear that alternates with hope in her thought as the narrator inserts an imaginative stanza which has the effect of something like an empathy:

But right as when the sonne shyneth brighte
In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face,
And that a cloude is put with wynd to flighte,
Which oversprat the sonne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorough hire soule pace,
That overspradde hire brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for feere almost she gan to falle.

Tr II 764—70

Then the tone of her inner speech suddenly takes the form of her inner conflict:

Allas! syn I am free,
 Sholde I now love, and put in jupartie
 My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?
 Allas! how dorst I thenken that folie?
 May I naught wel in other folk aspie
 Hire dredfull joye, hire constreinte, and hire peyne?
 Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne.

For love is yet the mooste stormy lyf,
 Right of hymself, that evere was bigonne;
 For evere som mystrust or nice strif
 Ther is in love, som cloude is over that sonne.
 Therto we wrecched wommen nothing konne,
 Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
 Oure wrecche is this, oure owen wo to drynke.

Tr II 771—84

And she reflects finally upon the destiny of her sex: "Oure wrecche is this, oure owen wo to drynke." Her language here reaches a philosophical plane. However, at long last, she is soothed and surrendered to the sweetness of love by a Trojan song of love sung by "Antigone the shene."

She sings:

.....
 For, lord, withouten jalousie or strif,
 I love oon which that is moost ententif
 To serven wel, unweri or unfeyned,
 That evere was, and leest with harm desteyned.

As he that is the welle of worthynesse,
 Of trouthe grownd, mirour of goodlihed,
 Of wit Apollo, stoon of sikernesse,

Of vertu roote, of lust fynder and hed,
Thorough which is alle sorwe fro me ded,—
Iwis, I love hym best, so doth he me;

.....

Tr II 837—46

The long process of the heroine's movement of heart may suggest what subtleties of a woman's heart the poet knows and how he emotionalizes the language with such a sense of a woman's experienced psychology of love and with such a cogency of her intellect to develop it; we may say with good reason that this is the innermost quality of Chaucer's love-language.

Let us turn to Troilus.

"With hire look thorough-shoten and thorough-darted," Troilus now suffers from love-malady and complains of his woe, wishing ever for death. This mental state of the lover, *prima facie*, well accords with the code of courtly love. Chaucer, however, gives his hero a depth—an intellectual, melancholy and meditative character unsurpassed in any medieval English literature. The inner speech that reflects his woe and inner struggle and envisages his intuition into the power of destiny may, however, curiously enough, sound feminine, the more so as he is a great warrior, "Ector the secounde." Listen to his self-mocking tone of complaint:

"But, O thow woful Troilus, God wolde,
Sith thow most loven thorough thi destine,
That thow beset were on swich oon that sholde
Know al thi wo, al lakked hir pitee!
But also cold in love towardes the
Thi lady is, as frost in wynter moone,
And thow fordon, as snow in fire is soone.

"God wold I were aryved in the port
 Of deth, to which my sorwe wol me lede!
 A, Lord, to me it were a gret comfort;
 Than were I quyt of languisshyng in drede.
 For, be myn hidde sorwe iblowe on brede,
 I shal byjaped ben a thousand tyme
 More than that fol of whos folie men ryme.

.....

O mercy, dere herte, and help me from
 The deth, for I, while that my lyf may laste,
 More than myself wol love yow to my laste.

Tr I 519—37

The tonal effect that is shadowed by the melancholic mood of Troilus on the one hand, while on the other by the diffuse and drawling syntax that reflects it, is not 'sunny' as the Troubadours would have us believe, but rather emotionally 'wet' and 'weeping.' These lines, as the poet puts it at the very beginning, are the verses that "wepen." Such a tone of love-language gives us the effect of softly feminine sensibility rather than that of virile energy of language. Compared with this, the Canon's Yeoman's use of language may suggest a vigour or a masculinity that is latent in realistic language. He is garrulous in revealing his master's cunning craft:

Ther is also ful many another thyng
 That is unto oure craft apertenyng.
 Though I by ordre hem nat reherce kan,
 By cause that I am a lewed man,
 Yet wol I telle hem as they come to mynde,
 Thogh I ne kan nat sette hem in hir kynde:
 As boole armonyak, verdegrees, boras,
 And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas,

Oure urynacles and oure descensories,
Violes, crosletz, and sublymatories,
Cucurbites and alambikes eek,
And othere swiche, deere ynough a leek.
Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle,—
Watres rubifyng, and boles galle,
Arsenyk, sal armonyak, and brymstoon;
And herbes koude I telle eek many oon,
As egremoyne, valerian, and lunarie,
And othere swiche, if that me liste tarie;
.....

CYT 784—801

And thus his garrulity continues endlessly. This is the language of experience or reality, which is energetic and masculine enough, for the English language was later more to develop and exploit along this line.

Parallelisms and contrasts in expression as in structure are, as Professors Patch and Meech have noted, the salient features of *Troilus and Criseyde*. Songs, letters and dreams are woven into the texture of the poem with proportionate distribution to hero and heroine and ever with consciousness of a structural irony involved. The romantic or lyrical or graceful tone of love-language is especially heightened by such individuated expressions as are used in songs in particular. Troilus's song of love (*Canticus Troili*) in Book I. ll. 400—20 structurally contrasted with his song of love-woe (*Canticus Troili*) in Book V. ll. 638—44 is a notable example of it. An ideally romantic and poeticized hero, Troilus is the fittest person who voices bitter-sweet words of love, "a lyrical outburst"³⁷ of love, in the Petrarchan vein. Troilus, remembering that "love to wide yblowe Yelt(=yields) bittre fruyt, though swete seed be sowe," sings in this way:

"If no love is, O God, what fele I so?"

And if love is, what thing and which is he?
 If love be good, from whennes cometh my woo?
 If it be wikke, a wonder thynketh me,
 When every torment and adversite
 That cometh of hym, may to me savory thinke,
 For ay thurst I, the more that ich it drynke.

"And if that at myn owen lust I brenne,
 From whennes cometh my waillynge and my pleynte?
 If harm agree me, wherto pleyne I thenne?
 I noot, ne whi unwery that I feynte.
 O quike deth, O swete harm so queynte,
 How may of the in me swich quantite,
 But if that I consente that it be?"

"And if that I consente, I wrongfully
 Compleyne, iwis. Thus possed to and fro,
 Al sterelees withinne a boot am I
 Amydde the see, bitwixen wyndes two,
 That in contrarie stonden evere mo.
 Allas! what is this wondre maladie?
 For hete of colde, for cold of hete, I dye."

Tr I 400—20

Here the seeming contradictories of a lover's mentality are anti-thetically brought into relief with pointed conjunction: his pleasure seems his wailing and complaint, his torment and adversity seem savoury, his thirst without ever being cured by continual drinks, his fainting but without being tired, his living being his death ('quike deth'), his sweetness his harm ('swete harm'), thus the hero is always being pushed to and fro as one within a rudderless boat between two winds in the sea; he feels death for heat of cold or for cold of heat, he knows not which is which—this is a superb example of the refined

rhetoric called oxymoron, which is very characteristic of the language of love.³⁷

On the other hand, in the final Book, Troilus, waiting for Criseyde to come back to him, sings a song, which, though short, well expresses his state of mind between hope and fear. Criseyde figures here as a guiding star, whose light Troilus the boatman has lost sight of. Now he and his ship will face the danger of the monstrous Charybdis if he fails to see the bright beams of the guiding star. A faint echo of the imagery of a 'steerless' boat in the song of Troilus in Book I recurs here:

That evere derk in torment, nyght by nyght,
Toward my deth with wynd in steere I saille;

Tr V 640--41

When Troilus first sees Criseyde, we are reminded, she is symbolically compared to a star under the black cloud; now the light of the star is the only hope left for Troilus. We may well ask whether this is dramatic irony or not.

Book V of *Troilus* lacks an invocation as there are in the other Books; instead, it begins with a significant line:

Aprochen gan the fatal destyne.

As this line implies the whole meaning of the final Book, so the narrator must now in earnest tell "how Criseyde Troilus forsook" (*Tr* V 15). The narrator gives a warning to the reader as to his hero with an apostrophy:

But Troilus, now far-wel al thi joie,
For shaltow nevere sen hire eft in Troie!

Tr V 27--28

Now, the language of love assumes throughout this last Book a tone of painful woe and sorrow, a tone of destiny and despair—without any hope in Troilus for his soul's salvation in this world. After Troilus sends off Criseyde, leaving her with reluctance to the hands of the 'sudden' Diomedes,

To Troie is come this woful Troilus,
In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte,

Tr V 197—98

He curses Jove, Apollo, Cupid, he curses all the pagan gods, his birth, his fate and nature, every creature, even himself, but he does not and cannot curse his beloved Criseyde, except that he bitterly complains of his own destiny:

Wher is myn owene lady, lief and deere?
Wher is hire white brest? wher is it, where?
Wher ben hire armes and hire eyen cleere,
That yesternyght this tyme with me were?
.....
O herte myn, Criseyde, O swete fo!
O lady myn, that I love and na mo!

Tr V 218—29

It is, we are reminded, the same narrator at his best moment when he describes in a subdued yet exalted tone the sensuous beauty of Criseyde in her happy union with Troilus:

Hire armes smale, hire streghte bak and softe,
Hire sydes longe, flesshly, smothe and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad* ful ofte
Hire snowisshe throte, hire brestes rounde and lite:

Tr III 1247—50

*blessed

How the language is changed from bliss to sorrow we are only impressed with such a poignancy of tone that we may eventually be led to know that earthly beauty or love must inevitably be mutable and lost, that it must be a fate that no one can resist and yet a fate of "so noble a creature As is a man" (*Tr* V 383—84). It was indeed "the fatal destyne" that awaited the noble Troilus as it does all mankind, or, as Pandarus says in his earthly terms: "Thus goth the world" (*Tr* V 1434).

The same tone of Troilus's painful reflection on the passing of beauty and bliss is tinged finally, through Criseyde's falsehood now revealed, with a more painful colour by the recurrent: "where is your truth?," which will ever remind one who reads this love-story of the saddest quality of love-language:

O lady myn, Criseyde,

Where is youre feith, and where is youre biheste*?

Where is youre love? where is youre trouthe?

.....

Allas, youre name of trouthe

Is now fordon, and that is al my routhe.

Tr V 1674—87

*promise

As "every thyng hath ende" (*Tr* III 615), so "Thise woful vers that wepen" do end with the narrator's noble lines which may through repeated all-pervasive "swich fyn" suggest his complex tone of voice in the sense that earthly love and lust not only are the cause of tragedy for Troilus, the romantic hero, but also may by

change of order point the way to heavenly love, the quintessence of Christian philosophy that the poet intended to teach young lovers through a long process of telling the human experiences of life and love:

Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!
 Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse!
 Swich fyn hath his estat real above,
 Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse!
 Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse!

Tr V 1828—32

At all events, this may be the most profoundly sympathetic and sincere tone of love-language that the poet has ever set for Troilus or for the tragedy of this world.

Notes

- 1 What Chaucer meant by tragedy was:
 "Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
 As olde bookes maken us memorie,
 Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,
 And is yfallen out of heigh degree
 Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly."

Prol. to *MkT* 1973—77;

- 2 Robinson, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (2nd ed.), p. 386.
- 3 "Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde' as Romance," *PMLA*, Vol. LIII, No. 1 (1938).
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- 5 G.L. Kittredge, *Chaucer and His Poetry*, 1915, p. 109.
- 6 The present paper forms an introductory part of the triadic study on Chaucer's language: its expressive structure, *i.e.* the language of love (here treated in part), the language of experience (reality), and the language of philosophy and religion.
- 7 Muriel Bowden, *A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, 1948, p. 75.

- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- 9 ...and she, Withinne a paved parlour, and they thre,
Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste. *Tr* II 81—84.
- 10 D.S. Brewer, *Chaucer*, 1953, p. 4.
- 11 *All's W* I i 167 ff.
- 12 Skeat notes: 'Gentillesse' is 'gentleness, noble kindness, courtesy, good breeding.'
- 13 Héraucourt, *Die Wertwelt Chaucers*, 1939, p. 190.
- 14 *Geoffrey Chaucer*, p. 22.
- 15 According to Andreas Capellanus, the concept of love is "a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace." (J.B. Ross and M.M. McLaughlin (eds.), *The Portable Medieval Reader*, 1949, p. 115.) This is the basic idea of 'love' in courtly love and well accords with Troilus's love toward Criseyde.
- 16 *Tr* I 15 f., II 13, 19, etc.
- 17 *LGW* F 544. (This is due to the suggestion of Dr. D.S. Brewer.)
- 18 *Prol.* 475.
- 19 *Prol.* 476; *Tr* III 659.
- 20 Nevill Coghill, *Geoffrey Chaucer*, 1956, p. 36.
- 21 The word appears in the *ABC* which is said to have been written "at the request of Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, as a prayer for her private use" (Robinson):

But merci, ladi, at the grete assyse,
Whan we shule come bifore the hye justyse!

ABC 36—37.

Here, the object of prayer, *i.e.* ladi, symbolizes the Virgin Mary, 'Almighty and al merciabile queene' (*ABC* 1).

22 In connection with these symptoms of a courtly lover, special reference may here be made to some of the rules of Courtly Love which were stated by Andreas Capellanus: 1) Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved. 2) When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates. 3) A man in love is always apprehensive. 4) He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little. And there are many other rules. See *The Portable Medieval Reader*, p. 116.

- 23 *The Allegory of Love*, 1936, p. 115.
- 24 Dorothy Everett, *Essays on Middle English Literature*, 1955, p. 173.
- 25 *Prol.* 742.
- 26 *SqT* 104.
- 27 The phrase 'king's son' is used for Troilus from the outset: "Troilus... That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye" and later here and there in *Troilus* (e.g. *Tr* II 708, *et passim*).
- 28 J.A.W. Bennett, *The Parlement of Foules*, 1957, p. 26.
- 29 *Cf. Purgatory* i 1-3.
- 30 Kemp Malone, *Chapters on Chaucer*, 1951, p. 115.
- 31 C. Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition*, 1957, pp. 126-27.
- 32 Robinson, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (2nd ed.), p. 822.
- 33 That the world with stable feyth varieth accordable chaungynges; that the contrarious qualites of elementz holden among hemself allyaunce perdurable; that Phebus, the sonne, with his goldene chariet bryngeth forth the rosene day; that the moone hath comaundement over the nyghtes,...al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and hath also comaundement to the hevene....This love halt togidres peples joyned with an holy boond, and knytteth sacrement of mariages of chaste loves; and love enditeth lawes to trewe felawes. O weleful were mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevene governede yowr corages. *Boece*, II, Metrum 8.
- 34 R.K. Root, *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde*, 1926, p. 494.
- 35 The idea that Chaucer's language especially in *Troilus and Criseyde* has a feminine quality is due to the suggestion of Dr. Tadao Yamamoto, for which I am deeply indebted to him.
- 36 *Chaucer's Poetry: An Anthology for the Modern Reader*, 1958, p. 965.
- 37 A.L. Sells, *The Italian Influence in English Poetry*, p. 41.
- 38 Cp. *BD* 599-615. / *Tr* V 1375-77.

2 Chaucer's Use of 'Smile' and 'Laugh'

I

"The beginning of Chaucer's portraits is always significant," writes Professor H.R. Patch in his *On Rereading Chaucer*. In the case of the Prioress, the portrait opens:

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse,
 That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
 Hire gretteste ooth was but by Seinte Loy;
 And she was cleped madame Eglentyne. *Prol.* 118—21

Here Chaucer first strikes the key-note that the Prioress, though a nun, is much like a lady in romance; we see her smile "simple and coy," a phrase which is frequently used to express "the gracious charm of various ladies in romance and allegory."¹ And then her greatest or strongest oath is by Saint Loy which "does not distort the lips"² and her name is Madame Eglentyne "sweetbriar"; all the repertory for a romantic lady is already there, her simple and gracious smile, her soft ladylike oath, her sweet name Eglentyne. It is irresistible for us to be asked to smile already when we read the first four lines. But most interesting is that her smile was what first impressed Chaucer when writing about the Prioress. The smiling figure of the Prioress was, as it were, a gestalt-like flash of inspiration the poet might have felt. Why Chaucer put her smile first we do not know. What we can say at the least is that the effect of her gracious smile lasts and goes through the whole of the lines which describe the Prioress. We may say that Chaucer is seeing her through a smiling light from the outset. This smile of hers gleams throughout and gives a softly satirical flavour to the whole description.

The smile may be an enigma worth studying, as Lafcadio Hearn many years ago did with respect to the Japanese smile. In his study on the subject Hearn writes that "a Japanese can smile in the teeth of death, and usually does. But he then smiles for the same reason that he smiles at other times. There is neither defiance nor hypocrisy in the smile." It is very doubtful whether at present any Japanese can smile in the teeth of death, but the point is that a smile may imply defiance or hypocrisy as is hinted by his comment, "there is neither defiance nor hypocrisy in the [Japanese] smile." This will remind us of the pregnant use of "smiler" in *The Knight's Tale* 1999:

The smylere³ with the knyf under the cloke;

Here we can at once notice something like hypocrisy or flattery in the smile; the smiler is smiling behind his hand with a malicious intention.

Of all Chaucer's uses of 'smile' whose frequency of occurrence is not much, there seems to be hardly any instance which shows a genuine angelic smile. And, strangely enough, the word does not occur in his earlier works, such as *The Book of the Duchess*, *The House of Fame*, or *The Parliament of Fowls*, so we must await *Troilus and Criseyde* to meet the word. In *The Book of the Duchess*, Chaucer's earliest dated work, the poet describes with gusto and verve all the physical beauties and all the spiritual virtues of Lady Blanche; we may see her gracious smile in our mind's eye and we may actually hear her friendly voice in our ear, particularly when the Knight in Black speaks to the Dreamer Poet:

I sawgh hyr daunce so comlily,
Carole and syngre so swetely,
Laughe and pleye so womanly,

BD 848—50

But the Knight never mentions a word about her smile. At this point a question may arise: Is 'smile' incompatible with the Lady? The question is not very easy to answer. The Prioress may be compared with Lady Blanche in this respect. But the beauty and charm of the latter is idealistic, while the charm of the former is at once romantic and realistic, complex, subtle, a charm of "the engagingly imperfect submergence of the feminine in the ecclesiastical."⁴ Hence her smile, though simple and coy, would remain somewhat elusive and enigmatic.

II

In *Troilus and Criseyde*, Troilus, "heroic son of King Priam of Troy," appears first as a scoffer at both love and lovers at the April festival of the Palladium, "byholding ay the ladies of the town, now here, now there." But he has neither devotion nor love toward any lady and is fancy-free. He holds himself aloof and observes as a bystander how a knight or a squire of his company sighs or adores a lady whom he loves. Then Troilus "wolde smyle and holden it folye" (I 194) and says to himself, "God woot, she slepeth softe For love of the, whan thow turnest ful ofte." Here we can see Troilus's smile become oblique, which has a touch of disdain or shows a scornful detachment. (Note also the ironical effect of 'For love of the.')

This instance of his scornful smile in *Troilus* (Book I) has engaged the attention of Professor Patch, who suggests that this offers a structural parallel to Troilus's laughing in the skies at lovers at the end of *Troilus*.

It is ironical enough, however, that the smiler at lovers immediately falls a victim to Love, as the poet admonishes that "kaught is proud, and kaught is debonaire" (I 214).

Book II of *Troilus* offers three instances of 'smile' (verb),⁵ each

serving as a sort of aside and closely relating to the subtle situation. The first smiler is Pandarus, the second Criseyde, the third Troilus. It is of much interest to note here that three main characters all smile a Chaucerian smile.

First it strikes us that Pandarus's stratagems are most brilliantly displayed here to draw Criseyde's attention to what he has in mind. He introduces Hector first and then Troilus, "his fresshe brother," in a natural way, and praises all virtues in Troilus as a noble knight; and then he takes his leave, saying, "I wol go henne." —it is his pretension. He is persuaded to stay, and after some talks again he pretends to go, "Now it is tyme I wende." Before leaving he encourages Criseyde to cast her widow's habit and dance "sith yow is tid thus fair an aventure." Criseyde's curiosity must be aroused. She is now entirely in his hands. She becomes as impatient as she is fearful and urges him to say, "com of, and tell me what it is." Then Pandarus goes directly to his point and reveals to her that "The noble Troilus, so loveth the, That, but ye help, it wol his bane be." After the revelation Pandarus swears that if Criseyde lets Troilus die he will also die. Criseyde is discreet and considers that if Pandarus slays himself in her presence "it wol be no solas." So she grants that she will try to please Troilus from day to day save her honour. And they both begin to talk about other intimate matters, but the curiosity once kindled within her does not easily leave Criseyde. So she exhorts Pandarus, "Tel me how first ye wisten of his [Troilus's] wo... Kan he wel speke of love? I preye Tel me, for I the bet me purveye." Then the Narrator inserts a line:

"Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle."

Tr II 505

Why does Pandarus smile? A man of experience, Pandarus knows

her heart; he perceives Criseyde's curiosity begin to fire towards Troilus. This smile is sly, subtle and psychological. Here 'laugh' would not fit in with the context, because it might disturb her fearful heart and nip her interest in the bud; he must seize this opportunity to impress Troilus's love carefully upon her. Thus the meaning of "a litel gan to smyle" gains depth in its context—what we may call 'a contextual depth.'

It is Criseyde's smile which concerns us next:

"And gan to smyle..."

Tr II 1159

If this half-line is taken *in vacuo* it does not signify anything; it simply means: "And [she] smiled..." Here again context comes to our aid and has something to say.

Pandarus and Criseyde are in the garden. Pandarus has brought Troilus's love-letter to Criseyde. He takes out the letter and asks for her "goodly answer" to Troilus who "may nat longe lyven for his peyne."

Pandarus, after persuading her with a great swearing that there is no harm in the letter, seizes her and with his "knowing assurance"⁶ thrusts it into her bosom, saying:

"Now cast it away anon,

That folk may seen and gauren [gaze] on us tweye." Tr II 1156—57

Criseyde says, "I kan abyde til they be gon." This is to say that she can abide and cast it away after people are gone. Then the Narrator inserts the line: "And [she] gan to smyle..." She answers his mild challenge with her knowing smile. There is a quality in the smile which may suggest a slight defiance on her part. For then she says to Pandarus: "Swich answeere as yow list yourself purveye, For tre-

wely I nyl no lettre write." After being embarrassed by Pandarus's high-handed challenge Criseyde resumes her stand ('I kan abyde...') and then smiles and at the next moment gets the upper hand of him.

Troilus smiles a sly smile in the nick of time in the line which follows:

To smylen of this gan tho Troilus, Tr II 1639

The scene is at Deiphebus's house. Pandarus's stratagem for bringing together Eleyne, Criseyde and other noble people to Deiphebus's house is successful. Troilus has already come for the night, but pretends, as he is told by Pandarus, to be sick, and lies in bed. They have come to help Criseyde to free her from the accusation of *false* Poliphete (II 1467 ff.). Troilus's brother Deiphebus and his sister Eleyne are especially anxious about his 'feigned' sickness. Pandarus knows that his plan works well and takes the opportunity of persuading Eleyne that Criseyde herself would go and speak her case to Troilus in order to receive his help. Pandarus gets permission to go and see whether Troilus sleeps or will hear about this. He 'leaps in' and whispers to Troilus:

"God have thi soule, ibrought have I thi beere [bier]!" Tr II 1638

The line has a touch of irony together with humour which is peculiar to Pandarus: "God have thy soul, I have brought thy bier [for thy body]:" Because Troilus is sick 'in earnest,' so sick that he may "wel neigh sterve for the peyne" (II 1530). But in fact he means that the time has come for Troilus to see his lady and talk to each other. For this sly yet ironical rally Troilus gives no answer except his smile. The Narrator speaks: "To smylen of this gan tho Troilus."

Troilus knows Pandarus's intention only too well and at once senses the ironical and playful effect of his rally: "I have brought thy bier." Hence a smile on Troilus's part which is sly and yet complacent.

All the instances of 'smile' as explained above show sometimes scorn or defiance, sometimes amusement or irony, but always slyness, in a varying degree in accord with the situation.⁷ What might be said of Chaucer's use of 'smile' is that it may always imply a shade of meaning which changes and becomes pregnant or coloured through the context. Thus considered, we are inclined to think that Chaucer does not use the word without implying something delicate, sly and complex.⁸

III

Chaucer's example of 'laugh' is much more frequently evidenced than that of 'smile.'⁹ The area of meaning of 'laugh'¹⁰ ranges on the whole from mirth, pleasantness, joke, and joyous feeling to scorn or defiance or irony.

Mirth or pleasantness is expressed especially in the combination "laugh and play." For instance:

And, as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye. *PardT* 967

I sawgh hyr...

Laughe and pleye so womanly, *BD* 848—50

So *The Shipman's Tale* 1612/*The Reeve's Tale* 3858, etc. But the pleasant effect of a joke is enhanced the more when 'laugh' is added as if it were the Narrator's aside after a rallying conversation. This device will be seen after a conversation between Pandarus and Criseyde.

Pandarus: "For Goddes love, what seith it? telle it us!

Is it of love? O, som good ye me leere [teach]!"

Criseyde: "Uncle,.. your maistresse is nat here."

Narrator: *With that thei gonnen laughe.* (Italics mine.)

Tr II 96—99

Let me explain the situation in brief. Criseyde is listening to a story read by a maiden. Pandarus greets her and apologizes for interrupting the reading, and assumes a joking tone. He is sly and wise enough to bring about here the topic of love: "Is it of love?," for he has come to tell her about a love-woe that Troilus is suffering for his niece Criseyde. Though knowing nothing of the sort Criseyde is quick to sense his joking tone and returns with jest (perhaps smiling): "Uncle,... your maistresse [mistress] is not here." Pandarus is made the butt of the joke, for it is well known that he has recently suffered in love and experienced an unrequited love. Thus Criseyde's humour is to the point. The courtly audience would laugh at Pandarus immediately after hearing her jesting reply. And the Narrator does not forget to add, "With that thei gonnen laughe." This is the Narrator's aside.

Criseyde often pokes fun at Pandarus. Their language tends to be highly colloquial and jesting. We can imagine in the following stanza how Criseyde laughs when Pandarus mocks his own love-affair:

Therwith she *lough* [laughed], and seyde, "Go we dyne."
 And he gan at hymself to jape faste,
 And seyde, "Nece, I have so gret a pyne
 For love, that everich other day I faste—"
 And gan his beste japes forth to caste,
 And made hire so to *laughe* at his folye,
That she for laughter wende for to dye.

Tr II 1163—69

Mocking or derision was expressed then as now by 'laugh at,' which

was first used by Chaucer¹¹ as in:

Ryght as him list, he *laugheth at* my peyne.

Anel 234

A scornful laugh is suggested in the phrase 'laugh in scorn,' which appears in Troilus's monologue:

What wol now every lovere seyn of the,
 If this be wist? but evere in thin absence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn, 'Loo, ther goth he
 That is the man of so gret sapience,
 That held us loveres leest in reverence.

Tr I 512—16

Cf. "It is a shame that the peple shal
 So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye;"

SecNT 505—06

In the next context defiance is clearly seen in St. Cecilia's laugh:

Almache answerde, "Chees oon of these two:
 Do scarifice, or Cristendom reneye [reject],
 That thou mowe now escapen by that weye."
 At which the hooly blisful faire mayde
Gan for to laughe, and to the juge sayde:

SecNT 458—62

In the following stanza, however, it would seem that a sly and ironical tone of voice is heard in Pandarus's laughter:

The bente moone with hire hornes pale,
 Saturne, and Jove, in Cancro joyned were,
 That swych a reyn from heven gan avale [fall down],

That every maner womman that was there
 Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray feere;
At which Pandare tho lough, and seyde thenne,
 "Now were it tyme a lady to gon henne!"

Tr III 624—30

It is because Pandarus knows too well that all the ladies in his house cannot go home for the "smoky" rain. He seizes this chance and asks Criseyde in earnest to stay at his house, for "To wende as now it were to me a shame." Thus the happy encounter of Troilus and Criseyde is prepared in such a way as he himself has arranged.

More significant and psychological is Criseyde's laughing:

Herde al this thyng Criseyde wel inough,
 And every word gan for to notifie [take note of];
For which with sobre cheere hire herte lough.

Tr II 1590—92

This last line almost reaches the symbolical level. Here is presented an ambivalent figure of Criseyde whose heart laughs with sober looks. In this respect, Tatlock's translation may lose the richness of the original: "All this Criseyde heard well enough, and laid it up in her memory, whilst *her heart bounded within her*." Why did Chaucer use the symbolical expression here? It is an interesting question. The situation would help us in this case too.

As I explained above, in connection with the scene at Deiphebus's house, Troilus's sickness becomes a serious topic of all present there. There is a complaint and his sister Eleyne complains so sincerely that "it is a pity to hear." Every person suggests one thing or another for the cure of his sickness, except Criseyde who knows what the cause of it is: love-malady. Then the Narrator speaks in symbol-

ical terms in this way:

But ther sat oon, al list hire nought to teche,
That thoughte, "Best koud I yet ben his leche." *Tr* II 1581—82

Criseyde is aware that she alone can be the best physician for malady of love but she remains a listener, a person behind the scene. This lurking attitude of hers continues even when they change their topic and begin to praise all the virtues of Troilus after complaint of his sickness. While she is listening to every word of their praise, *her heart laughs with sober looks*. What, then, would her heart's laughter imply? It would be a laughter of pride and self-assurance on her part, because the Narrator comments, "For who is that ne wolde hire glorifie, To mowen [be able] swich a knyght don lyve or dye?" (II. 1593—94). These and similar symbolical expressions as scattered here and there in *Troilus*¹² call for our attention in that they might be due to a qualitative transformation of the style and technique of allegory used in the *Roman de la Rose*.

In Book V of *Troilus* we come across two instances of 'laugh.' One is when Troilus reminds himself of a past happiness with Criseyde who is gone to the camp of the Greeks:

"And yonder have I herd ful lustyly
My dere herte [*i.e.* Criseyde] laugh;..."
Tr V 568—69

The other is when after death Troilus's soul goes up to the eighth sphere and looks down at "This litel spot of erthe":

And in hymself he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste;
Tr V 1821—22

What concerns us here is the contextual meaning of 'laugh' in its respective situations. In the first instance 'laugh' does not simply mean pleasantness or mirth, but it suggests something different, because the context is that the heart of Troilus who remembers his lover's "lusty" [merry] laugh is filled with sadness and retrospective thought. Her laugh is seen, as it were, in his reflective mood; her pleasant laugh is now a reminder of sorrow to him, just as the charm and beauty of Lady Blanche when she was alive might have been to the Knight in Black. From the beginning of Book V the story of *Troilus and Criseyde* moves rapidly towards its tragic fate against the background of the fate of Troy; the progress of the tragedy becomes emotionally overshadowed by a sense of destiny. Thus Criseyde's laugh seems to shade into another nuance when Troilus sees it through his retrospection of the passed happy experiences; the laugh loses its gayness and becomes tinged with sorrow.

More significant is the second instance: Troilus's laughing in the skies. As Professor Patch points out, Troilus's scornful smile at the beginning of Book I may be a parallel to his last laugh at the end of the whole tragedy. Whether or not, here at the very end of *Troilus and Criseyde* Chaucer's use of 'laugh' attains its profound significance through the context. And it deepens the portrayal of Troilus as a tragic hero. The soul of the slain Troilus mounts the heavens, and at the eighth sphere sees the "erratik sterres," hearing the harmony of heavenly music, and then he looks down from there at "This litel spot of erthe," despising "This wrecched world"; he holds that all is vanity—compared with "the pleyn felicite That is in hevене above." Then his eyes are directed down towards the place where he was just now slain,

And in hymself he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste;

Troilus laughs at the woe of those who weep for his death. This is Troilus's laugh, not Chaucer's. But is the laugh a usual one when Chaucer uses it in other contexts, say, 'laugh and play' or 'laugh in scorn' or any thing else? The context produces here an essentially different atmosphere. Troilus's laugh must have a meaning. Is this joy? Is it scorn? Or is it irony? It seems to me that the laugh sounds unsubstantial, hollow, ephemeral, or *ironical* (in the symbolical sense of the word)—as if echoing that all is vanity that is on earth, life and love and blind lust and what-not else. This, or something like this, may have been in Chaucer's mind when the word 'laugh' flashed upon him at the moment, whether a memory of Lucan's *Pharsalia* (ix 11—14) helped him or not.

It was a religious and a medieval Chaucer who made Troilus laugh a cosmic laugh at the mourners of his own death on earth.

Notes

- 1 H.R. Patch, *On Rereading Chaucer*, 1939, p. 151.
- 2 G.L. Kittredge, *Chaucer and his Poetry*, 1915, p. 177.
- 3 W.W. Skeat, *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, VI: Glossarial Index, p. 237: *smylere*: smiler, flatterer.
- 4 J.L. Lowes, *Convention and Revolt in Poetry*, 1922, p. 60.
- 5 'Smile' is never used as noun in Chaucer.
- 6 Margaret Schlauch, *English Medieval Literature*, 1956, p. 246.
- 7 A sense of doom may even be felt beforehand in Cassandra's smile when she begins to expound Troilus's dream:
"She gan first *smyle*, and seyde, O, brother deere,
If thow a soth of this desirest knowe,...

Tr V 1457—58

Another use of 'smile at' in *The Legend of Good Women* suggests amusement on the part of Ariadne, but at the same time the reader may be im-

pressed through the context that there is in her smile a touch of suspicion about Theseus's fidelity towards her. The passage runs:

This lady [Ariadne] *smyleth* at his [Theseus's] stedfastnesse,
And at his hertely wordes, and his chere, LGW 2123—24

8 It is interesting to compare two uses of 'smile' in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, both of which imply a seemingly pleasant and unfavorable one when seen in the light of the context:

The first is:

With *smoþe smylyng & smolt* [mild] þay smeten in to merþe. 1763.
(Here Sir Gawain and the chatelaine glide into mirth with smooth and mild smiling, but their smile is more apparent than real. See *OED*, s.v. Smooth.)

The second is:

þe knyȝt sayde, 'Be sayn Jon',
& *smepely* con he smyle,
'In fayth I welde [possess] riȝt non,
Ne non wil welde þe quile.' 1786—89

(Here, as above, Sir Gawain's smile which is smooth suggests a mild denial on his part.)

As compared with Chaucer's use both the examples shown here are aided either by the adjective 'smooth' or by the adverb 'smoothly' to indicate that the smile is a false one.

9 According to Tatlock-Kennedy's *Concordance* the frequency of occurrence of 'laugh' and its derivatives totals 65, while that of 'smile' and its derivatives 14, *The Romaunt of the Rose* being excepted in both cases.

10 A rhetorical use of 'laugh' is referred to play of light. This is seen in a beautiful line in *The Knight's Tale*, which, however, is copied from Dante, *Purg* i 20:

And firy Phebus riseth up so bright
That al the orient *laugheth* of the light, KnT 1493—94
Cp. Dante: Faceva tutto rider l'oriente.

11 See *OED* s.v. Laugh 4.b.

12 Cf. *Tr* II 393 ff./II 1373 ff.

Ch. Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition (passim)*, 1957.

3 Observations on the Tone of Speech in Chaucer

—Especially in *Troilus and Criseyde*—

A person can hardly disguise his own tone of voice, unless he deliberately or consciously mimics someone else's. A person has his own voice. This statement may be true of "a voice" which may seem to be detected when we read a book or certain passages of a book. The point is what Bonamy Dobrée was aware of when he wrote in his admirable *Modern Prose Style* (Introduction): "It is as though some one had been speaking to us, telling us something, or working upon our feelings...and if we know a writer of any note, it is extraordinary how we seem to hear the inflexions of his living voice as we read what he has written." We do not know exactly why this is so, but it is true; and we may be able to know of a voice, or, better, an inner voice or tone of a written speech, regardless of the period when it was written. It is indeed "extraordinary," as Bonamy Dobrée says, with something like surprise, how we become conscious of the existence of a kind of voice which is constantly speaking to us and working upon our feelings when we read and reread what has been written, especially a poem. So the problem poses a possible way of approach to a deeper understanding of a poem or a poet.

I

Chaucer's Knight is described as follows:

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
 No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be

Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
 At Lyeys was he and at Satalye,
 Whan they were wonne;

Prol. 54—69

These lines stand in striking contrast to the lines which describe his Squire:

With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier,
 A lovyere and a lusty bacheler,
 With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
 Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.

.....

And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
 In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
 And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
 In hope to stonden in his lady grace.

Prol. 79—88

The passage about the Knight seems to reflect the language of a matured, older man in point of tone, rhythm and movement; it may give an illusive impression, as if the Knight himself were speaking to the audience. We may get such an impression, the more so if we change the third person 'he' into the first person 'I' in this case. There may be a subtle overlapping of the Narrator's tone of voice with the Knight's, we may infer, since it is only natural that the poet, himself a matured man at the moment, should have felt an affinity in tone and temperament with the Knight, whose age may have been nearly the same as that of the poet.

The tempo or movement of these lines is rather slow, measured, consciously symmetrical, and very like the character of "a verray, parfit gentil knyght."

Describing the Squire, however, the poet strikes quite a different note, a note of youthful consciousness ('his sone, a young Squier'), from the outset, using words "that are swift and light and that suggest a May morning..."¹

The line which follows:

"In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie"

is especially swiftly moving, as if echoing a swift move from one place to another in fight, as compared with the carefully weighted lines of the Knight's expedition:

"In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he and at Satalye,..."

The Squire's lines may reveal how the poet felt within himself when he was writing, reminding himself perhaps of his young days and of "joy in high spirits"² that he must have had "in hope to stonden in his lady grace." We may say in so many words that this is the language of youth. Hence, we find here a tone of the "smiling reminiscence" of the "twenty-year-old Chaucer."³

II

In *Troilus and Criseyde* Chaucer is "dealing with youth and with the affairs of youth."⁴ Love, among other things, must be one of the concerns of youth, and such is Troilus's love for Criseyde. When Troilus first sees Criseyde among the crowd he suddenly falls a victim to the God of Love, and says within himself (this is a usual device of inner speech with Chaucer):

"O mercy, God," *thoughte he*, "wher hastow woned,
That art so feyr and goodly to devise?"

Tr I 276—77

There is here a tone of admiration ('O mercy, God') and surprise ('wher hastow woned...?'), and we seem to hear his soft sigh being uttered even without the remarks of the Narrator: "Therwith his herte gan to sprede and rise, And *softe sighed*" (*Tr* I 278—79).

Compared with this, Romeo's first words when he sees Juliet appear above at a window seem to convey a tone of adoration in a somewhat different way:

"But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."

Romeo II ii 2—3

The latter expression tends to assume the patterned tone of Elizabethan love-language⁵ which is at once metaphorical and youthful. Thus, "Juliet is the sun" comes pat to Romeo's expression of adoration for Juliet. In Troilus there is a pleased tone of hushed surprise; in Romeo a tone of almost exclamatory adoration (here note the effect of 'what light through yonder window breaks!').

Now a young servant of the Court of Love, Troilus repents of his former jape and scoff at Love and Love's folk, for "Love hadde his dwellynge Withinne the subtile stremes of hir yen" (*Tr* I 304—05). Then follows a story of the "lugubrious youthfulness of the lover."⁶ Thus, after a first sight of Criseyde, Troilus is a changed man whose monologue comes to have a colouring of self-reproach and of longing for his lady:

"O mercy, dere herte, and help me from
The deth, for I, while that my lyf may laste,
More than myself wol love yow to my laste."

Tr I 535—37

In the same monologue the Narrator employs a device to reproduce other people's living voices which give vent to their comments on Troilus's pride (this serves effectively as a speech within a speech):

"What wol now every lovere seyn of the,
If this be wist? but evere in thin absence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn, '*Loo, ther goth he
That is the man of so gret sapience,
That held us loveres leest in reverence.
Now, thanked be God, he may gon in the daunce
Of hem that Love list feibly for to avaunce.*'"

Tr I 512—18

There can be no doubt that a tone of irony pervades this; the ironical speech ('Now, thanked be God,...') gives us a poignancy of tone, the more so, because it takes the disguised form of other people's speech and reminds us suggestively of Troilus's first ironical attitude toward lovers being now turned upon himself. And let it be noted at the same time that Chaucer, inserting as he does a sort of audience rumour within the monologue, may have in mind a sophisticated (yonge lovers) who may be entertained by the God of Love's retaliation against Troilus and who know well enough that "kaught is proud, and kaught is debonaire" (*Tr I 214*). This is dramatic irony.

Chaucer knew and liked young men, as Professor H.R. Patch says somewhere in his *On Rereading Chaucer*. Chaucer makes Troilus have moments of being human in feeling and tone like a young man

and seems to rejoice at his hero's genuine joy as he takes his beloved in his arms:

.....

"O swete, as evere mot I gon,
Now be ye kaught, now is ther but we tweyne!
Now yeldeth yow, for other bote is non!"

Tr III 1206—08

No joy of any young lover's union will ever surpass that of the first union of Troilus and Criseyde. Now we seem to hear Troilus's soft breathing as well as the "inflexions of his living voice," as the poet might probably have felt at the moment ('now is ther but we tweyne!'). This is an echo of the language of youth. However, Chaucer changes the tone when he is going to describe Criseyde's physical beauty:

Hire armes smale, hire streghte bak and softe,
Hire sydes longe, flesschly, smothe, and white
He gan to stroke, ...
Hire snowisshe throte, hire brestes rounde and lite:

Tr III 1247—50

Here we may first be impressed with the poet's heightened imagination, and then we can feel the tone of a subdued exultation in which, like Troilus, "he gan hym to delite." This reminds us that the young Squire-Poet had once had such a moment when he described the physical beauty of Lady Blanche:

Ryght faire shuldres and body long
She had, and armes, every lyth
Fattyssh, flesschy, not gret therwith;

Ryght white handes, and nayles rede,
 Rounde brestes; and of good brede
 Hyr hippes were, a streight flat bak.

BD 952—57

But the tone gives us a deplorably staccato effect. We can at least say that the lines are still immature. Though in *Troilus* Chaucer goes beyond Boccaccio, he had to learn something significant from the Italian poet which was alien to his favourite French Courtly-love literature in order to achieve such a matured effect as is shown in the description of Criseyde's sensuous beauty. The language of love had ripened in him at last.

III

Troilus is not a mere young lover like the Squire in the *Prologue*. He is "a great lover as well as a great warrior," and he has "the strength and depth of his mind"⁸ which is capable of a great passion. "It is," as Professor P.V.D. Shelly aptly says, "in his sufferings more than in his joys that Troilus's character of the passionate and ideal lover is most fully revealed."

Troilus's tone of rage combined with the strength of his mind which is revealed in his passion for Criseyde may be detected from the stanza which follows:

"The deth may wel out of my brest departe
 The lif, so longe may this sorwe myne;
 But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
 Out nevere mo; but down with Proserpyne,
 Whan I am ded, I wol go wone in pyne,
 And ther I wol eternaly compleyne
 My wo, and how that twynned be we tweyne."

Tr N 470—76

The situation is that, after the decision of Parliament to exchange Criseyde for Antenor, Troilus complains bitterly of his destiny, when Pandarus comes and tries to comfort him in encouraging words which suggest that it is better for him to get a new lady than to complain without reason, for "the new love out chaceth ofte the olde" (*Tr* *W* 415).

However, Pandarus's words of wisdom that had once a magical effect on Troilus are now powerless, nay, even repellent to him.

The effect of tone of Troilus who gives vent to his strong emotion may here be intimately related to the syntactic and metrical structure of the stanza. First, we can notice the conscious use of enjambement, as, for instance: "departe/The lif,..."; "...shal Criseydes darte/Out nevere mo;"; "...eternaly compleyne/My wo..."; hence, we may be all the more impressed with the contrast of the beginning words of the lines like "The deth/The life/My wo/"; secondly, the thrust of the rimes is forcible in tone and stress, and yet, not without meaning, say, "departe: darte/myne: Proserpyne: (in) pyne/", or, let it be noted, a pathetic interplay of the rime: "compleyne: we tweyne," thus suggesting at the back of our mind (we two complain... eternally); or thirdly, it is the forceful tone of the phrase: "down with Proserpyne" that most reveals Troilus's doomed situation; and lastly, as a final touch of the whole stanza, emerges the inseparable "we tweyne," which closely relates to "twynned" in the same line, leaving on our mind a subtle impression that the inseparable two must now be separated (cf. 'the twynnyng of us tweyne,' *Tr* *W* 1303). In this connection, especial attention may be called to the difference in tone of the same "we tweyne" in the contexts which follow:

how that twynned be *we tweyne*.

Tr *W* 476

now is ther but *we tweyne!*

Tr III 1207

The former context, as explained above, suggests a tone of deep sorrow, the more so, because "twynned" and "we tweyne" not only resemble each other in sound (assonance), but also interact in meaning (association), while the latter gives the soft tone of a happy moment of the lovers' union. An analysis like this may be a clue to the organic structure of the whole stanza.

Another instance which illustrates the youthful tone of anger on Troilus's part is seen in his reply to Cassandra when she expounds his evil dream:

"Thow seyst nat soth," quod he, "thow sorceresse,
 With al thy false goost of prophecye!
 Thow wenest ben a gret devyneresse!
 Now sestow nat this fool of fantasie
 Peyneth hire on ladys for to lye?
 Awey!" quod he, "ther Joves yeve the sorwe!"

Tr V 1520—25

Here a passion of rage almost absorbs his whole being (*Thow sorceresse/Awey!/ther Joves yeve the sorwe!/*). He is indignant at what she sets forth a warning that "this ilke bor (=boar)" by which, he dreamed, lay his bright lady, Criseyde, kissing always, signifies no less a man than "Diomedé" and "This Diomedé hire herte hath, and she his." She winds up her exposition by the simple yet symbolic line:

"This Diomedé is inne, and thow art oute."

Tr V 1519

Cassandra's final words ring prophetic in our ears, and so they

shall in Troilus's with such an impression on him that the unbelievable thing is just happening to Criseyde. The sense of doom which might be felt from the tone of the sorceress's words: "This Diomedes is inne, and thow art oute" cannot now be denied, however indignant Troilus may be. Thus the story takes its own tragic course.

IV

Next our attention is called to the tone and mood of the language of philosophy in Troilus's famous soliloquy in Book IV 11. 960—1078. Troilus, now oppressed by despair, faces the dilemma between "fre chois" and "necessitee":

"For al that comth, comth by necessitee:
Thus to be lorn, it is my destinee."

Tr IV 958—59

There is already a keynote of resignation or pessimism in the beginning of his long argument on predestination and free will. It must be a grave question whether he lets Criseyde go to the Greek camp (this is apparently a necessity or God's foreknowledge) or whether any sphere of free will is left for him to act against his destiny (this is a matter of man's freedom of choice). We may well argue that his is the situation of Hamlet ("To be or not to be") or of Boethius in *The Consolation of Philosophy*.

In any case, here is shown "the youth in a typical mood" who attempts to have recourse to philosophy, but cannot reach any solution whatsoever. What is dominant here is the mood of a young man who gives way to his feelings, arguing for argument's sake, rather than arguing or action's sake.

This may be a limit of Boethian philosophy, which Troilus

must accept as inevitable as his fate is inexorable.

Troilus is throughout his argument obsessed with the conception: "We han no fre chois" (*Tr* *N* 980), and the tone of obsession predetermines his pessimistic attitude toward the inevitable situation in which he is placed, and finally asks himself:

"What myght I wene, and I hadde swich a thought,
But that God purveyeth thyng that is to come
For that it is to come, and ellis nought?"

Tr N 1065—67

This is to say: "What could I think any otherwise than that God foresees things which are to come, because they are to come, and nothing else? I shall, inevitably, fatally, know that the thing I am most afraid of is to come. I am sure of it now."

Here is clearly a tone of determinism which overshadows his whole being, so much so that he is driven into his last resort, that is, death, as he himself utters his appeal to the Almighty Jove:

"Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone."

Tr N 1081

Is not this long soliloquy a difficult question Chaucer might have put to himself...we are tempted to ask...a question of philosophy with which he was once obsessed to life and the world, although it may well be argued that he used the philosophy as a device to deepen the portrayal of Troilus as he did later at the end of the story?¹⁰ Even so, cannot we detect here a youthful voice of a medieval intellectual, debating hopelessly with himself, ... rather than hear the voice of Chaucer at the moment? At any rate, it sounds strange that Troilus should soliloquize in terms of Christianity, as, for instance,

"God, divine purveyance, prescience of God," and so on...in his inner world, so to speak,...while, when he ceases to argue, he comes out to the world of Troy, looking to the pagan god for compassion. The effect of tone may on the surface be a clash of the Christian view and paganism. How should this be explained or reconciled? Is Chaucer's later addition of this soliloquy in keeping or out of keeping with the tone and mood of the whole poem? Whatever reason, it may safely be said that Chaucer tried to see the story on a deeper level than he found it in his Italian source, since it seems not without reason that he had probably had such a philosophical moment as Troilus now has, when he was deeply involved in *The Consolation of Philosophy*. We may say that he had had almost a religious moment. This, it would seem, is why the poet had a profound sympathy with Troilus, a young hero who is naturally limited in his experience of life and in his perspective of the world, and yet who must accept his fate as she decrees him. If we listen to Troilus's soliloquy again we seem to hear a second voice, if not Chaucer's own voice, which may seem to be speaking to us from the depth of the context:

"Has not any person ever had such an experience of dilemma in real life, whether in a love-affair like that of Troilus or in any thing else? Has not any person been ever asking for divine help when he is in such a dilemma?"

Chaucer knew and loved young men, even their limitations. Indeed, we can hardly doubt that the tone of Chaucer's sympathy toward young Troilus is implicit and sustained on its deepest level throughout the poem, and prepares us for his last admonition to the young lovers whom he had always in mind:

O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with youre age,

Repeyreth hom fro worldly vanyte,
And of youre herte up casteth the visage
To thilke God that after his ymage
Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire
This world, that passeth soone as floures faire.

And loveth hym, the which that right for love
Upon a crois, oure soules for to beye,
First starf, roos, and sit in hevене above;

Tr V 1835—44

Notes

- 1 Muriel Bowden, *Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, 1948, p. 74.
- 2, 3 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 4 H.R. Patch, *On Rereading Chaucer*, 1939, p. 67.
- 5 Gladys D. Willcock, "Shakespeare and Elizabethan English," *Shakespeare Survey* 7, 1954, p. 16.
- 6 H.R. Patch, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
- 7 P.V.D. Shelly, *The Living Chaucer*, 1940, p. 129.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 138.
- 10 R.K. Root, *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde*, Introduction lxxiii.

4 The Development of Mood in Chaucer's 'Troilus' —An Approach—

As the *Tale of Genji* may first strike us Japanese as a leisurely long and exquisite work of the emotional mood of courtly life in the Heian period, so Chaucer's *Troilus* seems to impress us as a great medieval poem which reveals the variety of the emotionally sustained mood of courtly love fostered in the long tradition of European love-poetry.

Though the term 'mood' here used may sound rather vague and ambiguous, we cannot help feeling for certain that as we read the English poem there grows an emotional mood peculiar to it which pervades and emanates from the texture of the poem, but progresses and changes subtly and contrastingly along the development of the love story. This indefinable though honest feeling of a reader leads him to a larger problem of some consequence about the way of understanding the poem through tracing out this pervasive mood in its variety against the background of Chaucer's art of narrative. Here, however, we shall rest satisfied with simply suggesting a possibility of approach through mood to the emotional progression in *Troilus and Criseyde*, particularly Book II.

Whereas *Troilus* shows the unusually sustained efforts on the poet's part, it equally well reveals his sustained imagination at work in building up the emotional mood underlying and developing along the theme in relation to Troilus's double sorrow in love, "Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie." It must here first be admitted that Chaucer has already been so skilled a poet in creating a mood from his early works like *The Book of the Duchess* or *The House of Fame* that we should naturally in this poem expect his imagination to be

working in this direction.

The building up of a mood, however, presupposes the scenic settings or the dialogues or the psychological processes within characters which are revealed by the language used with all its devices, patterns and imagery through which a poet may allow the feeling to work itself up in a pervasive and progressive way. In her admirable *Gollancz Memorial Lecture on Chaucer's "Art Poetical"* the late Miss Everett treats of the poet's effective use of verbal repetition in *The Book of the Duchess*, particularly, the recurrent use of words and phrases expressive of "defaute of slep" which 'echo' and 're-echo' throughout the earlier part, culminating in "Such a lust anoon me took To slepe,..." (*BD* 373—74).¹ This is the case in point for our illustration, though her main attention is drawn to Chaucer's use of rhetoric. It is because, here, only through this recurrent use of the same or similar words and phrases may the insistent mood of, say, the hopeless complaint of the poet about sleeplessness be impressed upon the mind of the reader. To take another more general example, a poet often employs natural objects or images as projections of "his emotional state or of the general area of feeling he wishes to build up."² This is a technique of empathy or emotional projection. Japanese literature, especially 'waka' (31-syllabled poem) or 'haiku' (17-syllabled verse), abounds with natural objects, moon, grass, flower, bird, insect, stream, mountain, hill, field, and so on, which are intimately assimilated to the state of mind of the poet that is the poem's mood. The *Tale of Genji* is no exception to this technique of assimilation in which the character's mood of sorrow, for instance, is projected into the 'waka' poems or natural objects like the moonlight, or the cold wind, or the things around. In the *Book of Kiri-tsubo* we find:

So she, weeping too, spoke as she hurried away. *But the sinking moon was shining in a cloudless sky, and in the grass-clumps that shivered in the cold wind, bell-cricket tinkled their compelling cry.*³

This is a moment when the Emperor's messenger is taking her hurried leave of the bereaved mother. The author of the *Tale* tries to build up a mood of loneliness and bleakness as momentarily projected into the mind of the lady messenger when leaving the mother by describing the natural objects at the moment (the sinking moon, cloudless sky, grass-clumps, bell-cricket, etc.).

Chaucer's imagination, perhaps more dramatically psychological and associative, works in a somewhat different way, always moving backward and forward throughout *Troilus and Criseyde*. This may partly be seen in his artistic and functional use of contrast or symmetry, partly in his use of the language of introspection or metaphor. At any rate, whatever means of expression Chaucer may have recourse to, we can not help wondering at the fine texture he weaves which creates a beautiful mood of love as in *Canticus Troili* in Book I or Antigone's song of love in Book II or Troilus's hymn to Love in Book III. And these lyrics are subtly and structurally woven into the texture of the narrative and heighten the emotional mood of love in accordance with the development of the story. Chaucer not only medievalizes, but also beatifies this "storial" matter of courtly love by weaving and interweaving a variety of moods of love into the texture as of tapestry.

In the development of mood in Book I of *Troilus* along with the underlying theme, the reader is from the outset prepared for the alternating state of mind of the hero—from pride to melancholy, from languishing to sorrow, from sorrow to despair, then from despair to hope or the other way round. It is the characteristic mood

of Troilus—the alternating rhythm of mood of love “fro wo to wele and after out of joie.” A beautiful example of this state of feeling is well shown in the configuration of Troilus as a steerless boatman in *Canticus Troili* (Book I 415—20):

Thus possed to and fro,
 Al sterelees withinne a boot am I
 Amydde the see, bitwixen wyndes two,
 That in contrarie stonden evere mo.
 Allas! what is this wondre maladie?
 For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye.

These alternating and unstable fluctuations of Troilus's mood, strangely enough, seem all but feminine and continue further on to the end of the story. We even wonder if Chaucer's imaginative attention may all the time in *Troilus* have been intent on the moulding of such an affective mood—both structurally and introspectively.

Now, Book II of *Troilus* begins with a stanza of hope:

Owt of this blake wawes for to saylle,
 O wynd, o wynd, the weder gynneth clere;
 For in this see the boot hath swych travaylle,
 Of my connyng, that unneth I it steere.
 This see clepe I the tempestous matere
 Of disespier that Troilus was inne;
 But now of hope the kalendes bygynne.

Tr II 1—7

The keynote of hope as a dominant theme of Book II is explicitly struck here. However, the *allegoria* here used suggests a symbolic mood of hope still in fluctuation like a small boat on the waves of the love between Troilus and Criseyde is swung like a pendulum

between hope and fear. And now for Chaucer everything is focused on developing such a subtle mood of hope for love: "O lady myn, that called art Cleo, Thow be my speed fro this forth, and my Muse."

Structurally, Book II has seven proems while Book III in which Troilus's love is complete also has seven proems. Whereas in Book I Troilus's love for Criseyde begins in April:

And so bifel, whan comen was the tyme
Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene, of lusty Veer the pryme,
And swote smellen floures white and rede,

Tr I 155—58

The motivation of hope in Book II is given in the month of May:

In May, that moder is of monthes glade,
That fresshe floures, blew and white and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that wynter dede made,
And ful of bawme is fletyng every mede;

Tr II 50—53

Both figures are conventional and rhetorical enough, but function in a Chaucerian way so as to give an atmospheric mood of love. Thus the reader is at the outset prepared for the coming sweet course of love. The effect of the above *descriptio* of hopeful spring becomes clearer if compared with the gloomy and ironical *apostrophe* to Fortune in the beginning of Book IV:

But al to litel, weylaway the whyle,
Lasteth swich joie, ythonked be Fortune,
..... traitour comune!

Thus, though conventional enough, the May stanza serves here as the scenic setting for providing a mood of hope. In this season of love Pandarus comes to his niece, Criseyde, to urge her to accept Troilus's love, as the translator of the *Roman de la Rose* emphasizes: "Hard is the hert that loveth nought In May, whan al this mirth is wrought" (*Rom* 85—86). Then the dialogues between uncle and niece which reflect this undercurrent mood of hope throughout often reach the levels of joking and banter.

Structurally more subtle, however, is the emotional function of Antigone's song of love in Book II which is inserted at a crucial point for Criseyde who still hesitates as to whether to give her love or not. The emotional impact of the song upon Criseyde's alternating state of mind is significant. As Antigone sings:

O Love, to whom I have and shal
 Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn entente,
 As I best kan, to yow, lord, yeve ich al,

 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.

Tr II 827—33

Al dredde I first to love hym to bigynne,
 Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne.

Tr II 874—75

So Criseyde is given courage toward the decision of love for Troilus. Especially the finale of the song ('Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne') sounds to us as if projected into Criseyde's mind directly. Then, seven stanzas later, Chaucer makes us aware of this

subtle change of Criseyde's mind by suggesting a beautiful mood of love that occupies her heart. The mood is created by a no less beautiful dream which she dreams, lured by a lay of love sung by a nightingale:

And as she slep, anonright tho hire mette
How that an egle, fethered whit as bon,
Under hire brest his longe clawes sette,
And out hire herte he rente, and that anon,
And dide his herte into hire brest to gon,
Of which she nought agroos, ne nothyng smerte;
And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte.

Tr II 925—31

The use of dream here is almost symbolic. In it a white-feathered eagle exchanges her heart with his heart without causing a slight pain—is not this a mysterious foreshadowing of Criseyde's heart-to-heart communion with her lover? Thus the sweet dream has an emotional significance for the developing hope of love on Criseyde's part. Moreover, the kind of symbolism as revealed by the dream is again used to an opposite effect in Book V 1238—41, this time for a symbolic revelation of Criseyde's betrayal in sharp and poignant contrast with the dream of hope here. In this way we are aware that these elaborate structural patterns contribute to a thematic as well as an emotional progression of hope through Book II.

The mood of the poem, such lyrics or scenic settings apart, is also developed by the introspective use of language. It is developed within the characters. Though the poet makes his usual apology at the outset: "...to every lovere I me excuse, That of no *sentement* I *this endite*" (II 12—13), his self-projection into the thought of Criseyde about her love for Troilus in Book II 694—812 may pose a subtle

problem in connection with his use of inner language there. The poet makes Criseyde open, as it were, the secret door of her own heart through the process of the argumentative soliloquy. He gives depth to her nature by probing into every corner of her heart. Though here again he apologizes: "And what she thoughte, somewhat shal I write, As to myn auctour listeth for t'endite" (II 699—700), what he does is a creation in the reader of a sort of mood of participation in the dilemma Criseyde was put into. She reveals herself here as a fearful being who fluctuates between "drede" and "hope." And the mode of language, detached as it is on the poet's part, does not prevent us from enjoying and participating in the subtle movement of Criseyde's heart. The kind and quality of illusion the poet creates here might be the extreme extent to which a medieval poet like Chaucer could attain in describing human psychology or—to use the modern terms—"the stream of consciousness."

As in the case of Troilus, so Criseyde, "the ferfulleste wight," fluctuates between hopes and fears about her love toward Troilus. Whereas fluctuation or indecision is universally symptomatic of love-feeling, it may also reveal the woman's psychology of love as may be perceived in the contemporary courtly ladies of the Court of Richard II who are the audience of the *Troilus* poem. And whatever source or matter Chaucer may go to, it is the psychology that he can hardly betray to any one, for the poet's imagination works, it seems, in contemporaneous relation with the love-psychology of the feminine audience who participate in the state of feeling of Criseyde at the moment. Criseyde's contemplation on love begins in earnest with the fear that her love might be taken for "a sodeyn love," for which the Narrator-Poet inserts a stanza of her defence that indicates his self-revealing attitude:

For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
Yaf hym hire love, but that she gan enclyne
To like hym first, and I have told yow whi;

Tr II 673—75

And then by way of modification of his half-subjective attitude the poet ascribes the cause of love on her part to the astrological reason:

blisful Venus, wel arrayed,
Sat in hire seventhe hous of hevene tho,

.....

To helpe sely Troilus of his woo.

Tr II 680—83

However, behind this disguised attitude of the poet's there may be concealed a kind of empathy on his part as artist at least, if not as man.

At all events, the dominant note of her contemplation is, as repeatedly described, that of the deliberate mood of fluctuation. The themes occurring to her mind range from maintenance of her honour, sense of pride, inevitability of love as such, freedom of love, to self-encouragement through her self-justification and sympathy with Troilus's woeful situation. Thus Chaucer builds up a sustained secret mood of a woman's love-feeling, stanza by stanza, by making the heroine reveal herself as a discreet courtly lady who is not easily subject to man's lust.

In the course of her debate, Criseyde asks herself from time to time as in:

"What shal I doon? To what fyn lyve I thus?
Shal I nat love, in cas if that me leste?
What, par dieux! I am naught religious."

Tr II 757—59

This is a fleeting moment of hope on her part. But the poet does not forget to create a mood of undulation next time by the use of an imagery of sun (bright hope) and cloud (dark fear):

But right as when the sonne shyneth brighte
 In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face,
 And that a cloude is put with wynd to flighte,
 Which oversprat the sonne as for a space,
 A cloudy thought gan thorough hire soule pace,
 That overspradde hire brighte thoughtes alle,
 So that for feere almost she gan to falle.

Tr II 764—70

The imagery stands externally in echoing relation with the preceding stanza of the internal monologue, thereby creating a mood of fluctuation more poignantly through contrast. This, one might say, is part of the quality of Chaucer's metaphorical language, a quality of the external language as vivid contrast to the internal. At any rate, through such a self-argument as vacillates between hope and fear Criseyde finally comes to the medieval condition of womankind (Does not any courtly lady who hears this feel sympathy with Criseyde's mental situation—even apart from the story's development?):

Therto we wrecched women nothing konne,
 Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
 Oure wrecche is this, oure owen wo to drynke.

Tr II 782—84

The next moment again the swing of her heart's pendulum violently turns to the opposite extremity—the desperate courage, so to speak. Her voice here almost sounds mannish as contrastingly later in Book V 784 Diomedes speaks to himself:

"He which that nothing undertaketh,
Nothyng n'acheveth, be hym looth or deere."

Tr II 807—08

Before this, Chaucer puts in a line: "hire thought gan for to clere," which is significantly reminiscent of the second line of the first stanza in Book II: "the weder gynneth clere," which is the poem's mood: the dawn of hope. The Narrator, however, finishes her long soliloquy by suggesting again the alternative mood of "hope" and "drede" as in:

And with an other thought hire herte quaketh;
Than slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh;
Now hoot, now cold; but thus, bitwixen tweye,
She rist hire up,...

Tr II 809—12

Thus he resumes the thread of the narrative which progresses undulatingly between hope and fear toward the final hope for love.

The similar mood continues on the part of Troilus. This time, however, instead of using the internal language, the Narrator tries to externalize the emotional vacillations of Troilus by the recurrent use of the same or similar words and expressions, the impact of which upon the reader is accumulative. The situation is that Troilus, after he sent a letter to Criseyde, is waiting for her answer at the hands of Pandarus. The Narrator first impresses us with the fluctuating state of feeling between hope and despair:

And Troilus he (Pandarus) fond allone abedde,
That lay, as do these lovers, *in a traunce*

Bitwixen hope and derk disesperaunce.

Tr II 1305—07

When Troilus reads his lover's letter:

But ofte gan the herte *glade* and *quake*
Of Troilus, whil that he gan it rede,
So as the wordes yave hym *hope* or *drede*.

Tr II 1321—23

Although she "covered the wordes under sheld," hope increases more and turns to desire on Troilus's part:

Thorough more wode or col, the more fir,
Right so encrees of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful ofte encresseth ek desir;
Or as an ook comth of a litel spir,
So thorough this lettre, which that she hym sente,
Encressen gan desir, of which he brente.

Tr II 1332—37

that day and nyght
This Troilus gan to desiren moore
Thanne he did erst, thorough hope,...

Tr II 1338—40

The words and expressions which recur from stanza to stanza or from line to line, such as "Bitwixen hope and derk disesperaunce," "glade and quake," "hope and drede," "encrees of hope," "encresseth ek desir," "Encressen gan desir," help here to build up not so much a fluctuating as an increasing and insistent mood of a lover's desire through hope. Moreover, in order to heighten the effect, the Narrator puts in two images about the increase of desire, one being the image

of fire (*i.e.* desire), the other that of a growth of the oak (*i.e.* great desire) from a spire (*i.e.* small hope).

However, the swing of the emotional pendulum comes back again to the usual mood fluctuating between "glad" and "sory."

So was he outhur glad or seyde "allas!"

Tr I 1348

So were his dayes sory outhur gladde.

Tr II 1351

From then on, the story takes the course of the fulfilment of love, and after the declaration and consummation of love and the beautiful *aubades* of Troilus and Criseyde the whole of Book III comes to be filled with joy and bliss, for "Agon was every sorwe and every feere" (III 1685). And the climax is Troilus's hymn to Love at the end of the Book:

Love, that of erthe and se hath governaunce,
Love, that his hestes hath in hevenes hye,
Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
Halt peples joyned, as hym lest hem gye,
Love, that knetteth lawe of compaignie,
And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle,
Bynd this acord, that I have told and telle.

Tr III 1744—50

Now we may say the development of the mood of hope is complete in terms of both emotion and structure.

If, on the other hand, the whole story is seen in a wider perspective than in Book II or III, the progress of it seems to have a fluctuating rhythm of 'ascending' and 'descending'—to modify Profes-

sor S. B. Meech's terms⁴ here—in point of the emotional development of mood as well as the theme's structural development. The ascending rhythm pervades Book I to Book III with the mood of hope and bliss, whereas the descending one Book IV to Book V with the mood of sorrow and despair. This alternative and contrasting aspect, consciously or unconsciously on the poet's part, is a characteristic mood of the poem. Thus the undercurrent rhythm is on the whole from bliss to sorrow as the poet first strikes the keynote: "Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie." However, structurally and philosophically significant is the palpable existence in the background of the supernatural Goddess Fortuna throughout, whose wheel, it must be emphasized, *ironically fluctuates* between bliss and sorrow, turning always toward the tragic end as is suggested by:

And whan a wight is from hire whiel ythrowe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.

Tr IV 6—7

The turning to and fro of the wheel of Fortune well foreshadows the ups and downs of hero and heroine—a symbolism of the key mood of the development of the poem Chaucer may have wished to build up in *Troilus*. However, in this vacillating world of love the constancy of Troilus's faith in love shines forth to the very end under the surface of his seemingly fluctuating state of feeling. This may be one of the meanings of the poem when seen in the light of the mood of it.

Notes

- 1 Dorothy Everett, *Essays on Middle English Literature*, 1955, p. 157.
- 2 David Daiches, "Imagery and Mood in Tennyson and Whitman," *English Studies Today*, Second Series (1961), p. 224.
- 3 The *Tale of Genji*, trans. by Arthur Waley, p. 12.
- 4 *Design in Chaucer's Troilus*, 1959.

5 Chaucer's Tenderness and the Theme of Consolation

I

When reading and rereading Chaucer's works, especially from the earlier to the later works in order of, say, *An ABC*, *The Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Knight's Tale* and other Tales, one gradually becomes aware of an internally growing and deepening tendency in the poet's emotion and feeling. This may well be called a tendency toward "emotional internalization"¹ on the part of the poet which seems to be focussed on the feeling of sympathy or fellow-feeling which equally well pervades and penetrates all living and natural things even to the dullest or hardest. John Livingston Lowes once wrote, when treating of Chaucer's 'World of Books':

Chaucer possessed the...robust imperviousness..., and he had besides...the happy faculty of transmuting dullness into sparkling humour. And his tastes were catholic...²

Chaucer's perceptive mind goes deep into the root of all things and immediately sees life and feels flavour in them, while at the same moment "the poet's pen turns them to shapes," moods and feelings like humour, pity or pathos. One may say such a working process of his mind is the inexhaustible source of his humour or sympathy.

When the poet describes the Prioress in *The General Prologue* in this way:

She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous

Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.

.....

But soore wepte she, if oon of hem [small hounds] were deed,

Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;

And al was conscience and tendre herte.

Prol. 143—50

One can say that before Chaucer's satirical turn of mind begins to move his innermost nature as man tends in spite of himself to the tenderness of the Prioress's heart (that is 'tender to tearfulness') at the cost of sentimentality. One may from this description become aware how Chaucer's personal feeling—"sentement"³—to use the poet's own word—works when he sees any object that "souneth into gentillesse."

This emphatic tendency of Chaucer's mind, however, is revealed most characteristically in the form of consolation or comfort, especially when the poet confronts such a crucial situation as a broken heart or the loss of a lover or the death of a protagonist in the courtly love relationship. Rhetorically speaking, this consolatory attitude was a conventional one as seen in the genre of 'consolation' from classical literature onwards.⁴ And it seems quite likely that Chaucer knew about the conventional 'consolatio.' His early consolatory poem *The Book of the Duchess* may bear good witness to it. In what way, however, he *used* the genre in his works raises an interesting problem for Chaucer criticism and interpretation. It is because, for one thing, the problem is closely relevant to, here as elsewhere, the poet's creative faculty of transmuting convention into art; for another it must be deeply rooted in the very nature of the poet's personality. In the latter case, further, the emotional, as against the intellectual, side of Chaucer, that is, for instance, the tenderness of his heart, may well be 'insisted on' as D.S. Brewer hints towards the

end of his appreciative article: 'Images of Chaucer 1386—1900.'⁵ Needless to say, however, only through the context and expression of a particular passage or poem can one analyze or be aware of the tone and implication of 'consolatio' as in the case of *The Book of the Duchess*. Thus the present paper is concerned mainly with Chaucer's emotional attitude as expressed by means of the language employed to psychologize or philosophize his personal feeling.

II

Professor John Lawlor begins the first chapter of his recent book, 'Adventures of a Dreamer' in this summary way:

It [*The Book of the Duchess*] attempts consolation of the patron; as such it is expressive of duty and courtesy. But it eschews doctrinaire comfort, and is therefore marked by tenderness...The poet, even in this hour of darkness, is still an entertainer, one who can only hope to make headway by diverting his patron, drawing a gleam of amusement for his own incomprehension.⁶

In this statement one can understand what kind of consolation is attempted in *The Book of the Duchess*, a consolatory poem of 1334 lines composed from "duty and courtesy" even for a purpose of entertainment, as it may have been "commanded" by his patron John of Gaunt.⁷ Throughout the poem the feeling of "respectful and affectionate sympathy" permeates in various forms and moods, a feeling which ultimately comes from the tenderness of the poet's heart as Professor Lawlor is keenly aware of when he says "[the poem] is therefore marked by *tenderness*" (italics mine). Tenderness is indeed a flavour of Chaucer's personality. It transcends the poet's mask or *persona* as artist since it lies at the very core of his heart: a spontaneous fountain of humour or, we may say in old Japanese, "a-wa-re,"⁸ which

implies an emotional state of the heart in which it feels deeply for any thing to which it tends.

The texture of the former half of *The Book of the Duchess* is fraught with the mood of 'sorrow,' the feeling of suffering and deep sadness, while it is, curiously, marked with here and there a slightly frivolous or humorous tone as in the description of Morpheus—is this aimed at producing a humorous effect for comfort?—At any rate, the keynote is sorrowful. The Dreamer-Narrator uses again and again such words as 'sorrow' and 'sorrowful' as if there were no other words to express distress or grief or affliction of mind: first, in the description of the sad story of Alcyone and Seys (62—220) one may find:

'her hertely *sorrowful* lif (85), such *sorowe* this lady to her tok (95), I... Had such pittee and such rowthe To rede hir *sorwe*, That...I ferde the worse...to thenken on hir *sorwe* (96—100), For *sorwe* ful nygh wood she was (104), Allas! quod she for *sorwe* (213).

And the Narrator does not forget to hint the fleetingness of happiness: "To lytel while oure blysse lasteth"—through the King Seys' mouth. This is a concept of mutability which will later loom large in the poet's philosophy. And then equally in the description of the Knight in Black a sorrowful note is struck as he sings a complaint with "a dedly sorwful soun" (462), "the moste pitee, the moste rowthe" that the Narrator has ever heard. The complaint runs:

I have of sorwe so gret won
That joye gete I never non,
Now that I see my lady bryght,
Which I have loved with al my myght,
Is fro me ded and ys agoon.

This is simple enough language, but this language of simplicity goes straight to the heart of the listener and produces an expected effect of sadness. And the mood of sorrow culminates in the following expression voiced by the Black Knight, the simplest language that any human being has ever spoken: "For y am sorwe, and sorwe ys y" (597).

Now the Black Knight becomes 'Sorrow' itself—an image of suffering or a man of sorrow.⁹

Next, the incurability of the sorrow and woe which the Black Knight suffers is stressed in the following way:

May nocht make my sorwes slyde,
Nought al the remedyes of Ovyde,
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
Ne Dedalus with his playes slye;
Ne hele me may no phisicien,
Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen;

BD 567—72

And thus the Knight's thought comes naturally to death or living death:

This ys my peyne wythoute red,
Always deynge and be not ded,

BD 587—88

Such a situation may invite a feeling of consolation on the part of the audience which is affected this time by the rhetorical language of the sorrowful Knight. The Black Knight, however, seems to find consolation in the very recounting of his sorrow, whereas the Narrator, together with the audience, may feel for his 'sorrowful'

situation in the respectful listening to it.

Another subtle form of consolation may be felt when the Knight *is consoled*, one might say, by telling the detailed story of how his love is fulfilled, forgetting himself even in the very enjoyment of his lady's physical and spiritual beauties that he describes. It is especially so when in the poem he has such an eager listener as the Dreamer-Poet before him. That Chaucer as courtier and as poet is performing his difficult task in order to give consolation to his great patron without transgressing his social status as subject is beyond all question. Still more difficult his task must be because of his presence before the royal audience when he as a courtier reads aloud, the patron as well as the audience must be aware of the enthusiasm of the young squire, "curteis, lowely, and servysable," who is doing his utmost at the expense of his own incomprehension ('thow nost what thow menest'). He is consoling at once the Black Knight in the poem and the patron in the flesh in the audience without any pretension to being a consoler. This subtle double function of consolation is a psychologically complex one, since it aims at being not only artistically satisfactory but humanly sympathetic as well.

III

It is well known that the Boethian influence on Chaucer continued to the end of his poetic career. But it was most profoundly felt in *Troilus and Criseyde* in that the work may have been fundamentally "revised"¹⁰ if at all on the grounds of that philosophy as a leading artistic principle.¹¹ Among other revisions, the insertion in Book IV (958—1078) of the long soliloquy of Troilus on predestination and free will poses an important problem from not only the artistic, but also Chaucer's personal viewpoint. It is because from the artistic point of view he intended "to make us aware of the profound implications

of his story,"¹² thereby giving his work an intellectual or "ironic"¹³ depth, while from the imaginative point of view he sympathized with the plight of Troilus in his dilemma as profoundly as when, while closely reading the *Consolation*, he surely did with that of Boethius whose death was imminent. For who could say he would not tomorrow be in the place of this Roman consul in these unpredictable, changing circumstances? From this time on, Chaucer's sympathy toward Troilus rapidly increases as the story progresses to the end.

Chaucer had learned when he read the book entitled 'Tullyus of the Drem of Scipioun' that "oure present worldes lyves space Nis but a maner deth...And rightful folk shul gon, after they dye, To hev-ene:"¹⁴ The thought must have always been in the back of his mind until it has dawned in him later when he writes about the death of Troilus. And then in *The Consolation of Philosophy* Chaucer exploits—to use Ida Gordon's words—"The three main topics," that is, "the relation of Fortune to Providence, of true to false happiness, and the problem of reconciling God's foreknowledge with man's free will."¹⁵

The last problem of the reconciliation is significant here in the sense that Troilus, pagan as he is, can hardly reach the height of understanding God's foreknowledge, still less the reconciliation of it with man's free will. What he comes to know after a long argument within his heart is simply that there is little or no freedom of will but the inexorable pressure of necessity: "al that comth, comth by necessitee: thus to ben lorn, it is my destinee" (W 958—59). This attitude of Troilus' is a kind of resignation which was caused from outside, that is, the absolute 'decree of Parliament.' Whether resignation or not, it is the human condition Troilus has now been placed in that must invite a feeling of pity or sympathetic consolation, involving the 'gentle' audience in his painful suffering, "For pitee

renneth soone in gentil herte."¹⁶ That Criseyde is predetermined to be false to Troilus must surely be foreseen by God, but it is Troilus that is unaware of it, nor is Pandarus aware of it. Isn't this emphasis on the unawakened or unenlightened state of suffering Troilus the point Chaucer is making in order to induce the audience's consolatory feeling? Troilus prays to the pagan god: "Almyghty Jove in trone... Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone" (W 1079—81).

The contemporary audience know better: there comes no salvation from that side, no matter how earnestly he prays. Throughout the story of the love between Troilus and Criseyde Troilus's 'trouthe in love' shines forth, and even when he knows "His lady nas no lenger on to triste" (V 1666), he says:

and I ne kan nor may,
For al this world, withinne myn herte fynde
To unloven yow a quarter of a day!

Tr V 1696—98

This consistency or integrity of Troilus in love, even if the love was physical or illicit, must deserve a high reward, as Ida Gordon says:

Those critics who find a 'triple scale of values' in the poem do so because, while they recognize that the love in the story must be distinguished from *caritas* they feel that its 'idealism' or 'nobility' raises it above lust.¹⁷

Then what kind of reward does Troilus who is doomed to death deserve? There seems to be no reward worthy of his 'trouthe in love' in this world. Even Pandarus, his friend and consoler, cannot console Troilus now that Troilus has lost his love, since his view of life is much limited (his last advice is: 'Swich is this world. '), and cannot

go beyond this world.

At the end of the story the Narrator describes the death of Troilus with restraint yet with internalized emotion:

But weilaway, save only Goddes wille!
Despitously hym slough the fierse Achille.

Tr V 1805—06

These last two lines mark the end of the whole story of the love between Troilus and Criseyde, and when the Narrator used the word "Despitously,"¹⁸ it seems he used it with a sympathetic tone of sorrow, the mood of which is first precipitately struck by the interjectional "weilaway." And, what is more significant, the Narrator inserts a half-line after it: "save only Goddes wille." This half-line may suggest the stance of the Narrator or of Chaucer the man as a Christian. In it there seems to be heard a sigh of consolation on the part of the Narrator who is moved by the tragic death of Troilus.

As Africanus once taught Scipio in *The Parliament of Fowls*, so the poet must now have been reminded: "Our space of life in the present world...is but a kind of death...and righteous folk, after they die, shall go to heaven" (Tatlock's modernization). Overpowered by the feeling of sympathy for Troilus, the Narrator whose aesthetic distance he has up to that time set up toward the hero now disappears, makes Troilus's soul go up to the eighth sphere as the poet once has made a heavenly journey in *The House of Fame*—"ful blisfully," and hearing a heavenly melody. From that heavenly starry place Troilus looks down on "This litel spot of erthe," and laughs within himself at the grief of the people who weep so for his death. This is, as Professor Morton W. Bloomfield says,¹⁹ "the consolation of Christianity" that is beyond the consolation of philosophy. And one

may add that Chaucer has from the depth of his heart felt that this soul's pilgrimage toward heaven may deserve the reward for Troilus's "trouthe" and "gentillesse."

Notes

- 1 For this idea, I am indebted to my friend Raymond Tripp, Jr. of University of Denver.
- 2 J.L. Lowes, *Geoffrey Chaucer*, 1934, p. 89.
- 3 The *OED* says: 'Intellectual or emotional perception,' quoting *Tr* III 43 ('Ye in my nakede herte sentement Inhelde..') as the earliest example.
- 4 E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 1948, pp. 80—81.
- 5 D.S. Brewer, ed., *Chaucer and Chaucerians*, 1966, p. 268.
- 6 John Lawlor, *Chaucer*, 1968, p. 19. See also his excellent article: "The Pattern of Consolation in the *Book of the Duchess*," *Chaucer Criticism*, II, eds. R.J. Schoeck and Jerome Taylor, 1961.
- 7 G.L. Kittredge, *Chaucer and his Poetry*, 1915, p. 37.
- 8 As for its original meaning, Motoori Norinaga, a great Japanese philologist (1730—1810), says in his essay on poetry, *Isonokami-sasamegato*: "A-wa-re" is the term which expresses a state in which the heart ('kokoro') feels deeply.'
- 9 It is worth noticing that in Chaucer emphasis seems to be placed on the 'protagonistic ideal of suffering' rather than action as in the case of Troilus. Cf. G.R. Crampton: *The Protagonist as Sufferer: a Critical Inquiry into a Topos in Chaucer and Spenser*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Univ. of Oregon, 1967 (unpublished).
- 10 R.K. Root writes: "No less than nine separate passages in *Troilus* are derived directly from this treatise,...In all these instances there is nothing in the corresponding portion of the *Filostrato* to suggest the Boethian philosophizing which Chaucer has introduced" (*The Book of Troilus and Criseyde*, 1926, xli.). Also it is worth noticing that the long soliloquy of Troilus on the conflict between God's foreknowledge and man's free will is not found in the earliest draft (the 'a' version) of the poem (*ibid.*, p. 517).
- 11 M. Masui, *Studies in Chaucer* (in Japanese), 1962, p. 80.
- 12 Alfred David, "The Hero of the *Troilus*," *Speculum*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 4 (October 1962), p. 579.
- 13 *I.e.* in the sense in which Ida L. Gordon used it in her excellent

book, *The Double Sorrow of Troilus*, 1970, especially p. 132.

14 *PF* 53—59.

15 Ida L. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

16 *KnT* 1761.

17 Ida L. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

18 The word seems to have a combined meaning of 'cruelly' and 'mercilessly.'

19 M.W. Bloomfield, *Essays and Explorations*, 1970, p. 215.

6 *The Prioress's Prologue and Tale* —A Structural and Semantic Approach—

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;

Prolog. 118—19

0. 0. The present article is an attempt to make a multiple approach to Chaucer's *The Prioress's Prologue and Tale* in structure, theme and meaning.

1. 0. It is significant that in the early period of his poetic career (perhaps between 1359 and 1369) Chaucer made a free translation now called *An ABC* from *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* by Guillaume Deguilleville; it is because for one thing the translation was prayer to be sung or read aloud, 'a devout prayer to our lady,' "made as some say, at the request of Blanche Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her priuate vse,"¹ and for another, more importantly, prayers or deep moods like those of prayer on Chaucer's part continued to appear in his works in moments of "anxiety, heart-break and contrition" of the characters or the narrators in the Tales to the last period of his creative life as seen in the so-called *Retraction* at the end of *The Parson's Tale*. We may even say with Sister M. Madeleva that "the first and the last thing that Chaucer wrote was prayer."²

1. 1. Seen in historical perspective, however, the *genre of prayer*³ or the liturgy seems to find its proper place in all medieval Christian expressions of piety and devotion. Chaucer's work is no exception. One can see that these prayers, shorter or longer, appear throughout Chaucer's work, as for instance, *An ABC*, the whole of which consists of stanzas of prayer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Man of Law's Tale*, *The Clerk's Tale*, *The Prioress's Prologue and Tale*, *The Second*

Nun's Prologue and Tale, The Knight's Tale, and so on.

1. 2. And it may be added that prayers, especially addressed to the Virgin Mary, are often on the lips of a woman, whether she is a maiden, a wife, a widow, a nun or a lady.

1. 3. The object of Christian prayer is in most cases Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary, or both. A great example of prayer addressed to Jesus (and then to the Virgin Mary) may be seen in the stanzas beginning with "Yonge fresshe folkes, he or she" in the epilogue to *Troilus and Criseyde*, and especially in the stanza which concludes this long poem:

Thow oon, and two, and thre, eterne on lyve,
 That regnest ay in thre, and two, and oon,
 Uncircumscript, and al maist circumscribe,
 Us from visible and invisible foon
 Defende, and to thy mercy, everichon,
 So make us, Jesus, for thi mercy digne,
 For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne.
 Amen.

This elaborate and rhetorical stanza sounds like the liturgy and may have been sung by the audience to the voice and tune of the Narrator. Full of mirth and gaiety as he looks in his merry Tales, it seems Chaucer had moments of living "in that kneeling world,"⁴ which the Hoccleve portrait of a quiet and contemplative Chaucer with a rosary in his left hand suggests.

2. 0. On the other hand, whatever reason there may be, it is interesting to point out that the poems which contain prayers are often composed not usually of couplets but of stanzas of seven or eight lines. All the poems mentioned above except for *The Knight's Tale* are of stanzaic form. One can hardly explain the reason why

verse-form has anything to do with the expression of prayer. The least one can say is that the poet may have thought fit to express prayer in stanzaic form rather than in the form of couplets, judging from the high frequency of its occurrence in the former. *The Prioress's Prologue* and *Tale* are cases in point.

2.1. The fervent form of piety may have relevance to emotions rather than to "the logical powers of the intellect"⁵ as is evidenced by the devotional lyrics of, say, Richard Rolle, which often take stanzaic forms. Stanzas move spirally whereas couplets progress straight. Linguistically speaking, such a spiral movement of language may be rhythmically related to the expression of worship or aspiration of a pious heart, just as a spire to the cathedral may be symbolic of man's aspiration to reach up to God.

3.0. *The Prioress's Prologue* which is composed of five stanzas of seven lines is told by the Prioress in a vein of praise and prayer to the Virgin Mary: it is Marian devotion. Thus the *Prologue* is integrally and thematically related to the *Tale* and enhances a religious mood, serving, as it does, as a precursor to the main story of the martyrdom of a Christian child.

3.1. What the Prioress is here conscious of seems to be the relationship between Mother and Son, "the figures of Mary as mother, fondling her baby, or as the Mater Dolorosa, watching the agony of her child upon the cross."⁶ The story the Prioress tells is the legend of "a wydwes sone, A litel clergeon, seven yeer of age" who lives in a great city in Asia and is murdered by Jews because he sings "O Alma Redemptoris mater," while the poor mother seeks her lost child everywhere, "her face with fear and her thoughts busy" and cries out to Christ's Mother for help, who at last causes her to find her son in the Jewry, with his throat cut and his body thrown into a privy. Even after his throat is cut, he miraculously continues to sing the

song: "O Alma Redemptoris mater," which helps his mother discover him. This is a pathetic Christian story of mother and son.

4.0. In her *Prologue* the Prioress (the Narrator) compares herself to a child of twelve months old in her prayer for the Virgin Mary's assistance and guidance in composing her song. This comparison speaks for the Prioress's simplicity and tenderness, although in *The General Prologue* she appears as an ambiguous woman—"the engagingly imperfect submergence of the feminine in the ecclesiastical"⁷—to use the famous expression by J.L. Lowes.

4.1. In this connection, the motto *Amor vincit omnia* etched on the face of the brooch she wears is thought to be relevant to Chaucer's allotment of such a religious tale to the Prioress, seeing that she may have been concerned not only with worldly love but with sacred love as well. J.L. Lowes answers the knotty question as to which of the two loves *amor* does mean here—in this way: "I think she *thought* she meant love celestial" (*Italics mine*).⁸ We may imagine as her smile is "ful symple and coy," so she is really so simple and tender that she is ignorant of what else "amor" implies here.

4.2. In this deeper sense, it must be stressed, the Prioress's character suits her for the rôle of the Teller of this genuinely religious story, despite the fact that she looks and behaves in *The General Prologue* as if she were a court lady in the disguise of a nun. And more important is the description of her nature: "And al was conscience and tendre herte" (*Gen. Prol.* 150). This sympathetic feeling innate in her relates not only to her tenderness but also to the *Tale's* theme that is "a pathos and tenderness" which "seem particularly appropriate to the Prioress."⁹ Thus we can say that *The Prioress's Tale* betrays the Prioress's genuine nature. It seems generally Chaucer made the Pilgrims in *The General Prologue* tell such Tales as may characterize and reveal the essential nature of the Tellers.

5.0. *The Prioress's Tale* is composed of twenty-nine stanzas of seven lines, the same verse-form as that of the *Prologue*, of which 13 stanzas are used to describe the story of the little child from his learning the hymn to the Virgin Mary ('Alma Redemptoris mater') up to his murder, and the rest is a description of his mother's search for her lost child, her discovery of him through the miraculous assistance of the Virgin Mary, the miracle itself of the murdered child's singing of the hymn, and finally, the little martyr's burial at an abbey. Throughout the *Tale* the song "O Alma Redemptoris mater" resounds and recurs on the lips of the little child at the crucial moments. It appears five times, four times in part, at one time *in extenso* and is central to the thematic structure of the *Tale*.

5.1. First the song appears when this "litel" child hears other children sing "O Alma Redemptoris"; second, when daily and merrily he sings "O Alma Redemptoris" on his way to and from school along the Jewish street; third, when this little boy, murdered and lying with the carven throat, begins to sing "Alma Redemptoris" from the ground; fourth, when on his bier the child sings "O Alma Redemptoris mater" as the drops of holy water are spilled on his head; and finally, when he explains the reason why he can sing although his throat is cut, this time only in short form "O Alma," instead of a longer "O Alma Redemptoris mater." In this way the song of devotion recurs, always reminding the audience or the readers as if they were before the presence of the Blessed Virgin, "O bussh unbrent, brennynge in Moyses sighte."¹⁰

6.0. Particularly important from a thematic point of view is the semantic implantation of a word from one context to another, that is, the recurrent feature of a word from context to context, though the form of the word may be changed when it appears in a different context. Rhetorically speaking, this feature may be application of the

so-called *polyptoton* ('the repetition of a word in different cases or inflexions in the same sentence'¹¹). In *The Prioress's Tale* the figure is unobtrusively used, so much so that it may elude even a vigilant reader. To take a crucial example: the Narrator, after describing the single-minded devotion of the little child to the Virgin Mary (541—43), emphasizes the force of the Blessed Virgin's mercy in this way:

The swetnesse has his [the child's] herte perced so
Of Cristes mooder that, to hire to preye,
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

555—57

Here the unusual expression: 'the *sweetness* of the Mother of Christ *has pierced* his heart' is a central key to the whole meaning and theme of the Prioress's story of the child's martyrdom. Later in a stanza in which the child explains the miracle he has experienced the adjective "sweete" reappears in the child's half-addressed: "Cristes mooder *sweete*":

"This welle of mercy, Cristes mooder sweete,
I loved alwey,...
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
To me she cam, and bad me for to syng
This anthem verrailly in my deyyng."

656—60

This must be an echo of the preceding expression: "the swetnesse... Of Cristes mooder..." and it illustrates the close link between the narrative part of the Prioress and the words of a character in her *Tale*. Since the child is now whole-heartedly penetrated by the 'sweetness' of the Virgin, it is no wonder that he utters 'Christ's Mother *sweet*' involuntarily.¹² This usage of the same word in different

contexts is a recurrent practice in Chaucer's art.

6.1. Such echoes of expression may also be seen in the recurrence of the word "enclosen" in the *Tale*. First it occurs when the mother of the little child goes to search for him "With moodres pitee in hir brest *enclosed*" (Nevill Coghill: 'Within her breast her mother's pity closed'). It is in a different context, however, that the same word reappears later. This is when people bury the little child's body:

And in a tombe of marbul stones cleere
Enclosen they his litel body sweete.

681—82

In the first instance the word is used figuratively to describe the mother's heart being filled ('enclosed') with pity, whereas in the second it simply has the physical sense: 'putting his body into the earth for burial.' And, what is important, in the former it is used about the mother while in the latter it is used about her son.

Here the word "enclosen" may perform a subtle function for binding and consolidating the affective relation between mother and son. One can say at least that when the poet hit upon the word to describe the little child's burial, he was not unconscious of the moving expression he had created: "With moodres pitee in hir brest enclosed."

6.2. What is more interesting is that in the above quotation there appears the adjective "sweete" as in "his litel body sweete," a last echo of 'the sweetness of Christ's Mother.' Thus one is led to be aware at the end of the story that the little martyr's body is now purified and transformed into a sweet being—almost a divine being—through the intervention of the sweet virtue of the Blessed Virgin.

6.3. Here it will perhaps be needless to repeat many critics' remarks about the fact that throughout the poem the unobtrusive

word "litel" appears again and again in such combinations as "a litel clergeoun, hir litel sone, this litel child, my litel child, his litel body," and so on, contributing in part to the poem's pervasive mood of innocence and pathos.

7.0. The most significant of all words in the *Tale* is perhaps the symbolic word "greyn" (=grain) whose holy power enables the little child to continue his song while it remains on his tongue. The word is used three times, once in the midst, twice at the end of the line (as rime). The contexts in which it is used are as follows:

1. ...and whan that I hadde songe,
Me thoughte she [the Virgin Mary] leyde a *greyn* upon my tonge.
661—62
2. Wherfore I synge, and synge moot certeyn,
In honour of that blisful Mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of taken is the *greyn*;
663—65
3. This hooly monk,...
His tonge out caughte, and took away the *greyn*.
670—71

As to the meaning of the word used here, the *Middle English Dictionary* explains it as 'precious stone; small bits of gold or gems' quoting the first example adduced above as illustration, whereas the editors of the *OED* are silent about the implication of the word in this example, rather leaving it to the context or to the reader. What is clear is that the word as used here, whether in the sense of seed of a plant or precious stone, has rich religious associations. In this respect, one of the meanings given in the *OED* (*s.v.* Grain II. 6.), which is 'a bead, esp. one of the beads of a rosary; also, a pearl,' seems to be relevant to the crux at issue. Sister Madeleva comes

to our aid here. She says modestly:

'From my first reading of the story many years ago, I have always taken the *greyn* laid upon the child's tongue to mean the consecrated Host.... *Greyn* is defined by *Bradley and Murray* to have meant in early usage 'a small part.' The Host is often called a 'particle.' So ...the *greyn* could mean the Holy Communion'.... 'One other meaning for *greyn* in *Bradley and Murray* ought to be considered here. It was a common word for bead, prayer bead. As such beads were most commonly used to count Ave Marias upon, it seems evident that if the *greyn* was not the consecrated particle, it must have been the bead of the angelic salutation.'¹³

It is obvious that the grain has a mysterious healing power, and, as suggested from the above remarks, the word may have been used as a symbol of the Holy Communion between the little martyr and the Virgin. At any rate, it certainly gives a mysteriously religious flavour to the poem.

7. 1. This story is, as Professor Charles Muscatine stresses in his recent book, "one of Chaucer's moving poems."¹⁴ Such an emotional effect may come first from his treatment of the subject of a child's martyrdom in a poignant religious atmosphere as well as from the pathetic and consciously childlike or simplistic style appropriate to the character of the Narrator. Chaucer at his maturity was still exploring the nature of pathos and tenderness as against violence, this time in such a devotional and religious vein as in his early period he had once experienced when translating Guillaume Deguilleville's *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* "at the request of Blanche Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praiser for her priuate vse." And the result was this brilliant triumph.

Notes

- 1 Aage Brusendorff, *The Chaucer Tradition*, 1925, p. 241.
- 2 Sister M. Madeleva, *A Lost Language*, 1951, p. 21.
- 3 Morton W. Bloomfield, "Troilus' Paraclausithyron and its Setting":
Studies Presented to T.F. Mustanoja on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday.
- 4 Sister M. Madeleva, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- 5 Douglas Gray, *Themes and Images in the Medieval English Lyric*, p. 18.
- 6 Douglas Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 7 Quoted in M. Bowden, *A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, 1948, p. 97.
- 8 Quoted in Bowden, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
- 9 P.M. Kean, *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry*, Vol. II, The Art of Narrative, 1972, p. 209.
- 10 *PrP*, 468.
- 11 *OED s.v.* Polyptoton.
- 12 The adjectives 'doux, douce' (sweet) are applied frequently to Christ and the Virgin. See Douglas Gray, *ibid.*, p. 33.
- 13 *A Lost Language*, pp. 58—59.
- 14 *Poetry and Crisis in the Age of Chaucer*, 1972, p. 129.

7 Some Thoughts on the Continuity of Themes in Chaucer

0.0. "To show in detail how all the recurring themes, major and minor, are worked out in the *Canterbury Tales*," writes P.M. Kean in her recent *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry*,¹ "would require a line-by-line reading and cross-referencing; and, in the process, there would be some danger that the integrity and effectiveness of the tales themselves would be lost sight of." It is true there may be some danger of losing sight of the integrity and effectiveness of the tales when one is concerned to look only for the themes which may be hidden in the lines of those tales without paying much attention to the contents of them. For one to be aware of the existence of themes, however, it would also be necessary for him to read the lines from the thematic point of view and see them in perspective not only of the tales concerned but the whole works of the poet as well. To put it another way, one must make some kind of abstraction out of the lines and contexts he is involved in. Thus to hunt for themes, central or peripheral, is "always an abstraction" as Richard Levin says in his excellent article in *The Modern Language Review*.²

1.0. In this way, when we are concerned with thematic problems in Chaucer while reading and rereading and cross-referencing, we may come to such a general abstraction as that everything about the art and language of Chaucer continues, *mutatis mutandis*, or develops with recurrence or with cyclic repetition through his works from the beginning to the end of his poetic career.

1.1. If, as Richard Levin suggests in the above article, "inclusiveness" is the first criterion in the problem of determining the theme

of a work, then the concept of continuity may be such a theme, since it exhibits the greatest inclusiveness in Chaucer.

In what way, however, this concept of continuity or recurrence will be relevant, if modified in quality and kind according to the nature of a particular work, to the whole of Chaucer's works may be almost equivalent to asking the central question: What Chaucer the poet is like, that is the question of the nature of poetry, his imagination, his interests, his attitude toward language, life, thought, religion, and the world.

2.0. In the first place, it seems likely what once occurred to the poet would often later appear in much the same form either thematically or expressionally. This kind of self-repeating on Chaucer's part may imply or be relevant to what it was that Chaucer had been obsessed with or had been striving for. Obsessive striving was, after all, Chaucer's way. It may be said that he was always exploring what is true by 'proving it by experience'—to use his own words.⁴ And we may say with Sheila Delany that it was for Chaucer an attitude of "skeptical fideism"⁵ or an attitude of uncertainty.

2.1. To take an example of the continuation of ideas: in *The House of Fame* Chaucer used the device of the cosmic journey, with the Eagle as escort, to a new locus that is the House of Fame which is located "Ryght even in myddes of the weye Betwixen heven, erthe and see."⁶ The same technique was used later when the poet faced the crucial problem of where the soul of Troilus should be guided to after he had been slain mercilessly by Achilles: he made it fly to "an eighth region, the home of the ultimate God...whose being was the true home of man in his union with God":⁷

And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
His lighte goost ful blisfully is went

Up to the holughnesse of the eighthe spere,
 ...herknyng armonye
With sownes ful of hevenyssh melodie.

Tr V 1807—13

That is a cosmic journey of Troilus's soul though changed in context, that is, a continuation of an idea similar to that which first appeared in *The House of Fame*. *The House of Fame* lines 543 ff. read as follows:

Me, fleynge, in a swap he hente,
And with hys sours ayen up wente,
Me carynge in his clawes starke
As lyghtly as I were a larke.

And it is significant that the expression of Troilus's despising of "this wrecched world" from heaven (*Tr* V 1816 f.) may again be a continued echo of what Chaucer had kept fresh in memory particularly when he translated Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* IV, m.l:

Whanne the swifte thought hath clothid itself in tho fetheris, it *despiset* the hateful erthes, and surmounteth the rowndnesse of the gret ayr; and it seth the clowdes byhynde his bak, and passeth the heighte of the region of the fir, that eschaufeth by the swifte moevynge of the firmament, til that he areyseth hym into the houses that beren the sterres, and joyneth his weies with the sonne, Phebus, and felawshipeth the weie of the olde colde Saturnus; and he, imaked a knyght of the clere sterre...and thilke *soule* renneth by the cercle of the sterres in alle the places there as the schynyng nyght is ypainted...[Italics mine.]

3.0. If in this way one considers the whole works of Chaucer from beginning to end in perspective, he will be struck with the question as to whether or not the poet may from the very first have

been obsessed with the idea of pilgrimage. When he was very young, Chaucer made a translation from a French poem by Guillaume Deguilleville for the Duchess Blanche. It is called Chaucer's *ABC* in the Fairfax MS. The original title of this poem was *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* (the pilgrimage of Human Life). We are inclined to believe that the young poet himself may have seen the original title of the poem as it then stood.⁸

3.1. It may be said then that the obsession the poet had in the early period of his life continued until the end of his poetic career and appeared finally as a central theme of *The Canterbury Tales*, the great theme of pilgrimage:

Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
 And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
 To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
 And specially from every shires ende
 Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,

Prolog. 12—16

3.2. And, curiously and interestingly enough, if such a supposition is true, it will be significant; the fact that the whole of *The Canterbury Tales* may be symbolic of the pilgrimage of the human life may have something to do with the title and content of this initial translation of Chaucer's.

4.0. As is well known, the idea of pilgrimage will later appear from place to place in Chaucer. The most famous passage may be the following:

This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
 And we been pilgrymes, passynge to and fro.

KnT 2847—48

This is a medieval view of life and the world, and perhaps “scriptural,” as Robinson notes. And yet these two lines may remind us of a thematic significance in *The Knight's Tale* against the background of the central theme of *The Canterbury Tales*, here, however, serving as a thematic link with *The General Prologue* where the poet impresses us with the idea of pilgrimage from the beginning:

In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage, *Prol. 20—22*

Or,

...and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
Prol. 26—27

4. 1. Another related passage is found in a short poem:

Her is non hoom, her nis but wildernesse:
Forth, pilgrim, forth,! Forth beste, out of thy stal!
Truth 17—18

Though ‘the conception of life as a pilgrimage may be a commonplace of biblical and Christian literature’ (Robinson), yet it is a *significant* commonplace according to D.W. Robertson, Jr. who clearly states: “Among scriptural concepts which appear in *The Canterbury Tales* the most important is the idea of pilgrimage.”⁹ Moreover we may add that the idea of pilgrimage is important here in this sense: that the poet may not only have conceived the idea from the very first of his poetic career but also may have *continued* to cherish it so long that it appeared in the very last period of his artistic life. This may bear

witness to how the theme of 'continuity' works throughout Chaucer, and in this connection what Sister Madeleva, having *An ABC* in mind, states about prayer may endorse the validity of our viewpoint of 'continuity' of concept: "The first and the last thing Chaucer wrote was prayer."¹⁰ The first thing Chaucer wrote was of course *An ABC*, while the last thing was the so-called *Retraction* placed at the end of *The Parson's Tale*. We may say if Chaucer were alive he would have agreed with T.S. Eliot when he begins *East Coker* with:

'In my beginning is my end.'¹¹

5.0. Miss Kean who is well aware that there are many themes in *The Canterbury Tales* takes only a few major themes like 'the theme of Fortune and free will; of marriage in relation to Nature, and to order and disorder; of the nobleness of man' for her argument and illustration. Among the themes she has left out, however, there is such an important theme as the theme of the rivalry of "preef by experience" and "auctoritee." This theme has recently been elaborately and subtly treated by Professor John Lawlor,¹² as a formative principle at work through the Tales of the Marriage Group.

5.1. The theme of conflict between "auctoritee" and "preef" will show that Chaucer's attitude toward the sources, which are traditional, literary, and historical, may be skeptical, as Sheila Delany demonstrates in her recent book: *Chaucer's House of Fame: The Poetics of Skeptical Fideism*, 1972.

5.2. *The House of Fame* is important in many ways from the thematic point of view. It is important because, for one thing, it seems there are first presented two major and inclusive themes in Chaucer throughout the development of the story, one being the theme of the rivalry of "auctoritee" and "preef" (or 'experience'),

while the other is that of "tydynges of Loves folk"; and because for another both of the themes do continue with due modifications from that work on through *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Legend of Good Women* ('Prologue') to *The Canterbury Tales*. In this sense *The House of Fame* seems to open the way to the later thematic development that Chaucer made as a poet.

6.0. The idea of "preef by experience" first appears in *The House of Fame* 787-88, when the Eagle explains the nature of "speche" to Chaucer:

Now hennesforth y wol the teche
How every speche, or noyse, or soun,
Thurgh hys multiplicacioun,
Thogh hyt were piped of a mous,
Mot nede come to Fames Hous.
*I preve hyt thus—take hede now—
Be experience;*

This idea of experience may indicate the scientific and rational aspect of the poet that would later in *The Canterbury Tales* loom large, —an aspect which may be a reflection of the period's atmosphere of the revival of nominalism and the rise of skepticism as maintained by the English Franciscan William of Ockham (1290-1350) "whose logic and natural philosophy were to have a profound impact on European intellectual life."¹³ Chaucer may well have been influenced by or have been aware of the philosophy of Ockham, who studied at Merton College and graduated in Paris, 'a clerk of Oxenford.'

6.1. On the other hand, it is in the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* that the idea of "auctoritee" is clearly seen. It is when the poet confesses his credence in the authorities, that is, "olde bokes,"

without which he would lose 'the key of remembrance':

Thanne mote we to bokes that we fynde,
 Thourgh whiche that olde thynges ben in mynde,
 And to the doctryne of these olde wyse
 Yeven credence, in every skylful wyse,
 And trowen on these olde aproved storyes
 Of holynesse, ...

 And if that olde bokes weren aweye,
 Yloren were of remembrance the keye.

LGW Prol.G 17—26

Here the key term 'remembrance' may, according to Robert O. Payne, suggest "a synthesis of art, experience, and history"; and a few pages later Payne continues: "...but for Chaucer poetry began and ended in remembrance. The trouble for the practicing poet, however, is that remembrance is not a passive concept,..."¹⁴

7.0. The vision Chaucer had of "olde bokes" as the key of remembrance may have relevance to the concept of "auctoritee"—the authors of these old books—as he himself says respectfully toward the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*:

Go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye,

 But litel book, no makyng thow n'envie,
 But subgit be to alle poesye;
 And kis the steppes, where as thow seest pace
 Virgile, Ovide, Omer, Lucan. and Stace.

Tr V 1786—92

7.1. Then the theme of "tydynges of Loves folk" that again first

appears in *The House of Fame* is closely related to this idea of "aucto-ritee," because these classical love stories Chaucer learned from these classical authors, and we may add the names of Boccaccio, Petrarch and Dante to complete the list of such authorities.

7.2. The theme of "tydynges of love" continues from the *Roman de la Rose* and *The Book of the Duchess* on, and goes through Chaucer's earlier works, culminating in *Troilus and Criseyde* as its greatest artistic fulfilment. It is, however, significant that the theme has come to the front in *The House of Fame*, taking the form of exploration in the poet's artistic consciousness. The Eagle explains that Chaucer has long served the God of Love's folk without hearing news of them; Jupiter has taken pity on the poet, and has sent the Eagle to take him to the place where he can hear:

...of Loves folk moo tydynges,
Both sothe sawes and lesinges;
And moo loves newe begonne,
And longe yserved loves wonne,
And moo loves casuelly.

HF 675—79

8.0. Tidings which Jupiter wished Chaucer to hear for "som recompensacion Of labour and devocion" that he performed are not limited to the tidings of love alone, but extended to far more things such as 'wars, peace, marriages, rest, labour, voyages, abode, death, life, love, hate, accord, strife, praise, learning, winnings, health, sickness, buildings, fair winds, tempests, pestilence of man and beast, divers transmutations of estates and regions, trust, fear, jealousy, wit, profit, plenty, great famine, times of cheapness and dearth, ruin, good or ill government, fire, divers accident.'¹⁵

8.1. The whirling House of Rumour to which the poet after the

House of Fame is led by 'one who stood right at his back' is filled with such whisperings and pratings, great and small, as mentioned above. Professor J.A.W. Bennett comparing the House of Rumour which is made of twigs and of rude structure with the House of Fame where "Fame holds imperial court" states as follows: "(In the House of Fame) all is constant jostling, plebeian fashion. The throng is noisy, miscellaneous, hurried; shipmen, couriers, pardoners, pilgrims (2120—30). It is like stepping from the decorum of dooms and audiences in the great hall of Westminster to the crowded streets of Thames-side."¹⁶

8.2. Chaucer while standing near this whirling house because he cannot enter it is through Jupiter's grace 'solaced' with "these thinges, Unkouthe syghtes and tydynges" which he has not yet experienced. Thus news and rumours, whether of love or not, make their way to this House of Rumour. It seems the vision embraced here by the poet who has not yet written *Troilus* nor *The Legend of Good Women* has continued until he hits upon the great idea of the tales of Canterbury at long last. Before we ask the much debated question: who the man of great authority is at the very end of this unfinished poem, we feel it an irresistible question to wonder whether Chaucer has already here formed a whole design of *The Canterbury Tales* in embryo. If so, this may be a hint suggesting that the continuation of themes may have some relevance and meaning for Chaucer studies.

Notes

1 P.M. Kean, *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry*, Vol. II, 1972, p. 110.

2 *MLR*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January, 1972).

3 *Ibid.*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January, 1972).

4 *HF* 787—88.

5 Sheila Delany, *Chaucer's House of Fame: Poetics of Skeptical Fideism*,

1972.

6 HF 714—15.

7 Willard Farnham: *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy*, p. 27.

8 Aage Brusendorff remarks in *The Chaucer Tradition*, 1925, p. 233.: 'Prière à Notre Dame (ABC). This paraphrase of prayer to the Virgin in Guillaume de Deguilleville's XIV century allegory *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* has been handed down to us in the Tyrwhitt group of authorities,...' The present writer's supposition is that Chaucer may have seen the original title of the French allegory and may have been struck with the idea and the expression: 'Le Pèlerinage de la vie humaine.'

9 *A Preface to Chaucer; Studies in Medieval Perspectives*, 1962, p. 373.

10 Sister M. Madeleva: *A Lost Language*, p. 26.

11 In this connection, we are reminded of what Yasushi Inoue, one of the leading Japanese novelists, once said when he touched on the achievements of the unique painter Shigejiro Sakamoto: 'Just as Sakamoto *matured* toward his maiden work, so a writer would mature toward his first work.' The statement may apply to Chaucer, for Chaucer may in a sense have matured toward a completion of his first maiden work: *An ABC* in that he fulfilled the meaning which the original title had implied.

12 *Chaucer*, 1968.

13 Sheila Delany, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

14 *The Key of Remembrance: A Study of Chaucer's Poetics*, 1963, p. 63.

15 HF 1961—76. See also A.C. Cawley's excellent article: "Chaucer, Pope, and Fame," *REL* (April, 1962).

16 *Chaucer's Book of Fame: An Exposition of 'The House of Fame,'* 1968, pp. 171—72.

8 A Mode of Word-Meaning in Chaucer's Language of Love

INTRODUCTORY

In his suggestive 'Modes of Meaning' (1951) J.R. Firth first set forth a revealing idea or theory about the modes of meaning of words: this is the theory of 'collocation' and 'collocability' which has now become gradually known to linguists outside his own country¹ and whose usefulness has since been widely recognized. It is, however, a matter of deep regret that his untimely death prevented him from elaborating and refining the theory and applying it to various language texts other than those taken fragmentarily from Edward Lear and Swinburne.²

Firth emphasized that "meaning was a property of all types of patterning found in language" and also that "one could not describe language without describing meaning."³ Firth's approach to meaning in language was what he called the 'Spectrum of Modes of Meaning.' He states that "to make statements of meaning in terms of linguistics, we may accept the language event as a whole and then deal with it at various levels,...beginning with social context and proceeding through syntax and vocabulary to phonology and even phonetics..."⁴ And it is especially at the level of word-meaning that the theory of 'collocation' and 'collocability' as Firth sets it forth in the above-mentioned article will be highly applicable in that a word's collocability, that is, its being able to collocate is part of the meaning of that word. For instance, "one of the meanings of *night* is," according to Firth, "its collocability with *dark*, and of *dark*, of course, collocation with *night*."⁵ In this way 'dark' and 'night' can be collocated and are in 'mutual expectancy.'⁶ To take another instance, again

according to Firth, "part of the meaning of the word *ass* in modern colloquial English can be by collocation,"⁷ that is, part of the meaning of the word *ass* may be determined by its collocability with, for instance, such adjectives as (You) *silly, obstinate, stupid, awful* (*ass*) in the context of modern colloquial English or in modern social context of England.

From what has been said it may be inferred that word-meaning may depend largely on "the collocational and contextual levels."⁸ And this way of approach to meaning may provide a basis for the analytical elucidation of the complicated *use* of the English language.

I

Firth's approach to meaning might, with due modification, be fruitfully applied to the analysis of Chaucer's Courtly Love language in *Troilus and Criseyde*. In my previous article on the language of love in Chaucer⁹ I tried to make an analysis of such words and phrases as are used to express the feelings and sentiments of love and love-woe in that great love-poem. In my article these word-items were classified into four major groups, based mainly on their expressive and semantic values. We may say that these kinds of words are on the whole the constituents of the contexts of the language of love in Chaucer. The list is roughly as follows:

- (1) Words related to the sentiments of love-woe and the symptoms of love, such as: *angwisch, care, compleynynge, cruelte, deth, distresse, malencolie, jalousye, peyne, sorwe, wrecchednesse*, etc.
- (2) Words related to the nature of love or the hopes, joys and fears of love such as: *affeccioun, blisse, desir, fyr, felicitee, fevere, gladnesse, joy, lust, mercy, passioum, pitee, swetenesse; secre, softe, irewe*, etc.
- (3) Words related to the description of a lover's mentality and behaviour or a lady's physical and spiritual beauty, such as: *benignitee, gentilesse*,

honour, largesse, noblesse; bright, debonaire, faire, free, gracious, humble, womanliche, etc.

(4) Words related to general contexts or situations of love-language, such as: i) (Persons): *knight, lady, frend, etc.* ii) (Address): *dere, herte, swete herte, etc.* iii) (Parts of body): *breste, countenance, eye, herte, etc.* iv) (Colours): *blake, ded, grene, pale, red, white, etc.* v) (Natural objects): *moon, rein, see, sonne, sterre, wynd, etc.* vi) (Animals and plants): (a) *brid, egle, nightyngale, been, fissh, fox, serpent, etc.* (b) *bark, herbe, tree, etc.* vii) (Supernatural beings): *Nature, Kinde, Fortune, destyne, Fate(fate), wyrdes, etc.* viii) (Pagan gods, etc.): *Cithe-rea, Cupid, Cleo, Jove, Jupiter, Mars, Pluto, Proserpyna, Thesiphone, Venus, etc.* ix) (General situations): *aventure, bisinesse, game, labour, processe, etc.*

The present paper, which is partly a continuation of my previous article, is a small attempt to make an analysis of only a few of the words mentioned in the above list *in terms of collocation* against the background of the context of situation in which they are employed. The collocation of words, according to Marjorie Daunt, can only be established by their contexts.¹⁰ Thus in the first place, the contexts of the language of love, in other words, the context of Courtly Love, must be ascertained and analysed. In the second place, the principle of co-occurrence¹¹ of lexical items must here be taken into account, that is, the principle that an item collocates with another item or items, so that the two (or more) items form relations of co-occurrence with one another in similar contexts. The task has yet been left undone in my foregoing article.

II

Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* as is well known was written on the basis of the conventions of Courtly Love. In it one can easily detect the rules of Courtly Love which Andreas Capellanus codified

in his famous *De Amore* (*The Art of Courtly Love*) in the twelfth century. Andreas's book begins in this way:¹²

"We must first consider (1) what love is, (2) whence it gets its name, (3) what the effect of love is, (4) between what persons love may exist, (5) how it may be acquired, retained, increased, decreased, and ended, (6) what are signs that one's love is returned, and (7) what one of the lovers ought to do if the other is unfaithful." These points he makes seem to be wholly woven into the basic texture of the *Troilus* poem. Particularly the third point: "what the effect of love is" is relevant to the mode of meaning now at issue. For one thing the effect of love was, according to the code of Courtly Love, to refine the sentiment of a lover and to ennoble the character, conducting finally to excellence of character; for another to make the lover suffer, to make him sleepless and sick, and sorrowful, and finally to make him long for death unless love is granted him. No wonder there are seen word-items like 'death, die, pain, sorrow,' and so on, in the contexts of the extreme suffering of a lover in *Troilus*.

First come words like 'sorrow,' 'sorrowful,' 'sorrowfully,' etc. which are collocated in many ways in the language of love in Chaucer; 'sorrow' is collocated with, among other words, 'death, die, distress, torment, sigh,' etc., and its context of collocation culminates in *Troilus* V 841 ff.:

(Criseyde) "Whoso me seeth, he seeth *sorwe* al atonyis,
Peyne, torment, pleynte, wo, distresse!
 Out of my *woful* body *harm* ther noon is,
 As *angwissh, langour, cruel bitternesse,*
Anoy, smert, drede, fury, and ek *siknesse.*
 I trowe, *ywys,* from hevene *teeris* reyne
 For *pite* of myn *aspre* and *cruel peyne.*"

Then come words like 'death,' 'die,' etc. in collocational contexts.

A great lover, Troilus, who was at first a scorner of love, now feels the pain of "death" while he is living (= 'quike') after having seen the "natif beaute" of Criseyde and voices his complaint of sorrow in a Petrarchan vein:

"O quike deth, O swete harm so queynte,"

Tr I 411

"Allas! what is this wondre maladie?
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye."

Tr I 419—20

This is stylized rhetoric, using oxymoron, that shows the high style of the love-language in Chaucer.

'Death' (*deth*) appears 59 times throughout *Troilus and Criseyde*, of which, the analysis of context reveals, about 53 occurrences seem to be relevant to contexts of love and love-woe, as against about 6 relevant to ordinary contexts. On the other hand, 'die' (*deye*) appears 79 times (the preterite form 'died' is not considered here), of which about 52 occurrences seem to be relevant to contexts of love and love-woe, as against about 27 relevant to ordinary contexts. This means that these two words are indispensable to the expression of lovers' intense suffering in the contexts of Courtly Love. A further analysis of context shows that 'death', along with words of analogous content like 'harm,' 'bane,' etc., is collocated frequently with 'life,' 'sorrow,' 'despair,' 'distress,' 'woe,' and strangely enough, even with 'sweet.'¹³ All these collocations not only add to the flavour, but also enhance the tragic effect, of medieval love-poetry. By and large, Troilus and Criseyde, particularly the former, are the chief users of these kinds of words in their painful suffering of love, whereas on the

other hand Pandarus uses them often for intensifying the truth of what he is going to say in ordinary contexts mostly irrelevant to love-contexts. His exaggeration in the use of 'death' sometimes produces a comical effect.

In the following Troilus utters his intense feeling of sorrow when he knows that he is destined to part from Criseyde (here 'death' is collocated with 'sorrow' and 'pain,' and is used to connote a welcome thing that puts an end to all sorrows):

"O deth, that endere art of sorwes alle,
Com now, syn I so ofte after the calle;
For sely is that deth, soth for to seyne,
That, ofte ycleped, cometh and endeth peyne."

Tr *IV* 501—04

As if in accord with Troilus's crying, Criseyde "for the wo After the deth...cryed a thousand sith" (*Tr* *IV* 752—53). (her utterance here sounds particularly feminine and shows her in a helpless plight.):

What is Criseyde worth, from Troilus?
How sholde a plaunte or lyves creature
Lyve withouten his kynde noriture?
For which ful ofte a by-word here I seye,
That 'rooteles moot grene soone deye.'

Tr *IV* 766—70

III

Now the typical contexts of the suffering of love which involve 'death' are collected and given for illustration:

(1) Context of apostrophe to death:

(Troilus) 'O deth, allas! why nyltow do me deye?'

Tr *IV* 250

(2) Contexts of life and death:

(Narrator) Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his cure!

Tr I 469

(Troilus) 'But as hire man I wol ay lyve and sterve.'

Tr I 427

Cp. 'O thou Venus...Now doth me plainly live
or dye.'

(Gower, *CA* I 125 (*MED* q.))

(Troilus) 'The deth may wel out of my brest departe
The lif, so longe may this sorwe myne;'

Tr W 470—71

(3) Contexts of death and sorrow (Troilus addresses 'death'¹⁴):

(Troilus) 'O deth, syn with this sorwe I am a-fyre,...'

Tr W 509

(Troilus) 'O deth, that endere art of sorwes alle,...'

Tr W 501

This is also the context of apostrophe to death like (1).

(4) Context of sorrow and despair:

(Troilus) 'Love,...With desespeyr so sorwfulli me offendeth,
That streight unto the deth myn herte sailleth.'

Tr I 603—06

(5) Verbal collocational pattern which involves 'death':

(Narrator) Tornede hire tho Criseyde, a wo makynge
So gret that *it a deth was for to see*.

Tr W 855—56

Cp. It was an heven upon hym for to see.

Tr II 637

(6) Contexts of metaphor:

(Troilus) 'God wold I were aryved in *the port*
Of deth, to which my sorwe wol me lede!'

Tr I 526—27

The 'port' literally means a harbour or a haven, which is figuratively used here in the sense 'a place...which one takes refuge in or endeavours to arrive at' (*OED s.v.* Port sb. l.b.); thus, 'the port of deth' may mean 'the eternal place of rest.' This example perhaps antedates Lydgate 1426 which is the earliest instance cited in the *OED*.¹⁵

(Narrator) But wel he felt aboute his herte *crepe*,
 For everi tere which that Criseyde asterte,
The crampe of deth, to streyne hym by the herte.

Tr III 1069—71

The 'cramp of deth' may signify the spasmodic death agony on the one hand and on the other suggest an image of some poisonous worm *creeping* about his heart to sting and strain on a sudden. The *MED* quotes this example as the earliest.

(Narrator) The myghty tresses of hire sonnysshe heeris,
 Unbroiden, hangen al aboute hire eeris;
 Which yaf hym verray signal of *martire*
Of deth, which that hire herte gan desire.

Tr N 816—19

The 'martire of deth' is a religious metaphor used to describe the piteous figure of sorrowful Criseyde as if she were an insane nun with her hair dishevelled. Strangely enough, this instance seems to have escaped the eye of the Editor of the *OED* (*s.v.* Martyr sb.) but this is an impressive metaphor.¹⁶

As shown by these examples, the contexts of 'death' and 'die' in Chaucer's language of love may reveal that the users of these words (mostly Troilus in the case of *Troilus and Criseyde*) often have recourse to the extreme point of the human condition that is death in order to emphasize not so much a sorrowful state of mind as the effect of immediacy of the appeal of pain and sorrow. Particularly interesting is the metaphorical use of death as explained above. Thus considered,

it becomes manifest that lexical items can be seen in their natural light only when they are placed in context. So in describing modes of word-meaning the process of contextualization should be revealed.¹⁷

The word 'bane' (*OED*: that which causes death, or destroys life; death) is another word for death in the language of love. The verbal collocational pattern, however, is 'it, etc. wol his, etc. bane be' as in:

The noble Troilus, so loveth the,
That, but ye helpe, *it wol his bane be.* *Tr* II 319—20
If *sorwe of that nyl nat my bane be,*
Thanne shal no mete or drynke come in me.
Tr W 774—75

In this grammatical pattern: "it wol his bane be" (*be* is a rime-word) 'death' can hardly be put in place of 'bane,' in other words, 'death' is not substitutable for 'bane.' Cf. *ben bane*, be (one's) death. *MED* s.v. bane 2. (a). This is a strict verbal collocation.

In contrast to words like 'death' and 'die,' words which express hopes and fears of love are also components of the contexts of love-language. The distributions of such words as express feelings of joy and sorrow in *Troilus* may be seen at a glance in the following tables:¹⁸

TABLE I (NOUN)

Word item	Bk I	Bk II	Bk III	Bk IV	Bk V	Total
HOPE	1	7	2	2	10	22
JOY(S)	6	11	40	19	17	93
BLISS	1	5	11	3	4	24
DREAD	6	4	9	14	8	41
FEAR	5	4	8	4	4	25
SORROW(S)	18	10	19	33	42	122
WOE	36	21	23	41	27	148

Remark: The words 'fere' and 'drede' as involved in 'no fere' 'out of drede' and 'with-outen drede' are not counted here.

TABLE I (ADJECTIVE)

Word item	Bk I	Bk II	Bk III	Bk IV	Bk V	Total
BLISSFUL	1	7	5	3	6	22
WOEFUL	4	3	1	20	7	35
SORROWFUL	3	3	1	10	7	24

Remark: Oddly enough, the word 'joyful' does not appear in *Troilus*.

These two tables show that the distribution of the basic vocabulary seems to be in line with the development of theme of *Troilus*. In other words, the fact that Book III of *Troilus* reaches the thematic climax which is the lovers' happy union seems to account for the high frequency of, say, the basic word 'joy' in Book III (40 times), whereas Book IV in which the Fortune's wheel begins to turn the other way round shows the high frequency of such words as 'woe' (41 times) and 'sorrow' (33 times) in it. And that *Troilus* is in essentials a tragedy may partly be suggested by the far greater frequency of such basic words as 'woe' (148 times) and 'sorrow' (122 times) throughout the poem than that of the other basic words such as 'joy' (93 times) and 'bliss' (24 times).

Now attention is drawn to the approach to word-meaning with more emphasis on the collocation than on the context of a word.

'Bliss,' which is the expression of joy and happiness, is often used in the following collocation as the source of joy that is a lover in the language of Courtly Love:

First he gan hire his righte lady calle,
His hertes lif, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and ek thise other termes alle
 That in swich cas thise loveres alle seche;

Tr II 1065—68

Ryght on thys same, as I have seyde,

Was hooly al my love leyd;
For certes she was, that swete wif,
My suffisaunce, my lust, my lyf,
Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blesse,
My worldes welfare, and my goddesse,
And I hooly hires, and everydel.

BD 1035—41

In this collocational pattern 'bliss, lust, life, suffisaunce' and other similar words are used in successive order with possessive pronouns like 'my, her, his,' etc. 'Bliss' and analogous words like 'gladness' are also sometimes collocated with 'bathe' as in:

Criseyde,...Shal now no lenger *in hire blisse bathe*;

Tr V 207—08

His herte *bathed in a bath of blisse.*

WBT 1253

But ye loveres, that *bathen in gladnesse,*

Tr I 22

Chaucer seems to like such a collocation as 'bathe in bliss,¹⁹ gladness.' This may be not only part of the meaning of the word 'bathe' or 'bliss' in terms of mutual expectancy, but also characteristic of Chaucer's 'personal' taste. However, the collocation 'bathe in blood' which is frequently used in Middle English poems as evidenced in the *MED* (s.v. bathen 2. (a) *bathen in blod*, to drench (sth) in or with blood) is hardly found in Chaucer.²⁰ The word 'bliss' also appears in collocations like "hevene blisse" (*Tr* III 704, 1322, 1657), "sonne of alle blisse" (*Tr* V 548), "worldly blisse" (*Tr* IV 836), "the (parfite) blisse of love" (*Tr* II 891, 889). And the verbal collocation is by "in":

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singynges

This Troilus gan al his lif to lede.

Tr III 1716—17

For out of wo *in blisse* now they flete;

Tr III 1221

'Dread' and 'dreadful' are also of some interest from the collocational point of view. 'Dread' collocates with 'hope' in the language of love, especially in the collocation of "(bitwixen) hope and drede" as in:

swich lif right gan he lede,

As he that stood *bitwixen hope and drede*.

Tr V 629—30

Bitwixen hope and drede his herte lay,

Tr V 1207

On the other hand, 'dreadful' collocates with "chere, foot, herte, joye, vois," and so on; they are collocationally in mutual expectancy to one another. Particularly "(with) dredful herte" is a frequent collocation. So the partial meaning of the word 'dreadful' lies in its collocability with "herte," etc. Most important of all the collocations of "dreadful" is its unusual collocability with "joye": "dredful joye."

The dredful joye, alwey that slit so yerne:

PF 3

(Criseyde) May I naught wel in other folk asprie

Hire dredfull joye, hire constreinte, and hire peyne?

Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne,

Tr II 775—77

This collocation reaches a higher level of the spectrum of meaning, that is, the level of style in Chaucer's language. The phrase well

expresses an 'unease' felt by lovers, and shows their heart palpitating with timidity. Explaining the *topos* (:the instability and duality of love) of *The Parliament of Fowls*, J.A.W. Bennett incidentally touches upon this phrase (*dreadful joye*) which is first used in that poem, and writes: "If either Criseyde or Troilus could rationalize this *unease* there might be no tragedy; but it takes a Donne to be objective about love while still in its toils"²¹ (italics mine). It is indeed a Chaucerian touch unlike that of Boccaccio whose lovers hardly share this kind of uneasy feeling. "The... stylistic analysis", writes J.R. Firth, "is made at the levels of phonetics...phonology, syntax, word and phrase formation, collocation and vocabulary."²² Here mention is made of a possibility of interpreting the collocational forms like "dreadful joye" as the modes of *stylistic* meaning in view of the above statement.

Analysis of the other similar word-items may be made by the use of the collocational theory as partly developed above.

CONCLUDING REMARK

It will now be obvious to anyone that the above research has been concerned to explore experimentally only one of the levels of meaning in terms of context and collocation. It is hoped that this experiment may serve as an application of the brilliant theory of the great scholar whom I could not see in the flesh, but who has recently had no small influence on my theoretical consideration of the use of the English language. Last but not least, I would say with thanks that I am greatly indebted to the excellent article: 'Some Modes of Anglo-Saxon Meaning' by Marjorie Daunt, who concludes by saying that "I am not quite sure that if J.R. Firth could read this article he would say 'That's all wrong,' and at once show me what I ought to have done." This is what I now feel.

Notes

- 1 R.H. Robins states: "The contextual theory of meaning was developed by Firth to form a general theory of language and of linguistic analysis, that has been of considerable influence in Great Britain...." *General Linguistics*, 1964, p. 42 (Notes to Chapter 1).
- 2 J.R. Firth, "Modes of Meaning." *Papers in Linguistics*, 1957, pp. 190 ff.
- 3 M.A.K. Halliday *et al.*, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, 1977, p. 151.
- 4 *Papers in Linguistics*, p. 192.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- 6 J.R. Firth, "A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory 1930—1955," 1957.
- 7 *Papers in Linguistics*, p. 194.
- 8 Bazell, Catford, Halliday, & Robins (eds.), *In Memory of J.R. Firth*, 1966, p. 67.
- 9 "The Language of Love in Chaucer," *Studies in English Literature*, English Number 1960, pp. 16—19.
- 10 "Some Modes of Anglo-Saxon Meaning." *In Memory of J.R. Firth*, p. 69.
- 11 R.H. Robins, *ibid.*, p. 224.
- 12 J.J. Parry (trans.): *The Art of Courtly Love* by Andreas Capellanus, 1959, p. 28.
- 13 Cp. 'O swete harm so queynte' in Troilus's song quoted above, which means 'sweet death so strange.' Also, 'But now thi (*i.e.* death's) comyng is to me so swete...' *Tr* W 507.
- 14 When Troilus here addresses 'death' as if it were a living creature—this may be a technique of personification—he may have had some real image or figure of death in mind as his partner as may be suggested by a fifteenth-century Flemish shield (The British Museum) which displays a lady and a knight at tournament when the knight with 'death' (figure of man) at his side kneels before his lady. Kenneth Little, "The strange case of romantic love," *The Listener*, April 7, 1966.
- 15 R.K. Root notes: 'Chaucer's figure of the "port of death" is derived from *Fil.* I. 54.' *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde*, p. 421.
- 16 Cf. Dar vero segno degli aspri martiri. *Fil.* 4.96. (Root quotes the line in his Notes, *ibid.*, p. 515.) It is evident that Chaucer has taken over the word 'martire' from the Italian source. But I am not quite sure whether 'martire of *deth*' is of Chaucer's own invention or not, though it seems likely. Chaucer

may have rendered '*aspri martiri*' (bitter or severe martyr) into 'martire of *deth*.'

17 In the contexts of religious lyrics 'death' and 'die' also appear frequently in relation to man's death and Christ's death 'on þe rode-tre'. Examples are taken from Carleton Brown's *Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century*:

Ihesu...þat deydst upon þe rode-tre.

(*ibid.*, p. 125)

Cold & hunger þu must þolen as þu were geten in senne,
& after deyzen on þe tre for loue of al man-kenne.

(*ibid.*, p. 83)

Ihesu... þat soffred for me dethes wounde,
At my deiynge so visite me...

(*ibid.*, p. 117)

18 See also my article: "Recurrence of Expression in Chaucer" (in Japanese). *Studies in Chaucer* (in Japanese). Tokyo, Kenkyusha, 1962.

19 The *OED* cites 1576 Ld Naux ('He most of all doth bathe in bliss') as the earliest example for the transferred and figurative sense of 'bathe.' This example is obviously later than Chaucer's examples.

20 Cf. *KnT* 2006: 'His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer'; This is part of the grisly description of the 'grete temple of Mars in Trace.'

21 *The Parlement of Foules*: An Interpretation, 1957, p. 28.

22 *Studies in Linguistic Analysis*, 1957, p. 25.

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