

# Chaucer's Description of Nature through Adjectives in *Troilus and Criseyde*

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## 0. Introduction

The word “nature”, according to the *OED*, means “the creative and physical power which is conceived of as operating in the material world and as the immediate cause of all its phenomena.” In this paper, I will deal with the creative and regulative physical power in Chaucer's description of natural phenomena which surround ‘Human Beings’ and ‘Court and Society’ in *Troilus and Criseyde*.

W.H.Hudson admires Chaucer's description of nature and says: “A specially charming feature of his poetry is its fresh out-of-doors atmosphere. His descriptions of the country are often indeed in the conventional manner of his time, and his garden landscape and May flowers are to some extent things of tradition only. But he has a real love of nature and particularly of the spring, and when he writes of these, as in the *Prologue* and the *Knights Tale*, the personal accents unmistakable.”<sup>1</sup> It is a well-known fact that the best example of his description of nature, as Hudson points out, is found in the “General Prologue” to *The Canterbury Tales* (I(A) 1-11), where appear the following adjectives: “swoote”, “sweete”, “tendre”, and “yonge”. These adjectives create a pleasing atmosphere of spring which provides the setting of the scenes in *The Canterbury Tales*.

Chaucer's description of natural phenomena in *Troilus and Criseyde*<sup>2</sup> also achieves a pleasant springlike effect. The narrator, by describing the beauty of natural objects, plants, and animals, produces a gentle atmosphere around the human beings. He also provides the setting of nature in *Troilus and Criseyde*, such as April in Book I, May in Book II, “reyn” in Book III. Those natural objects will keep up with the development of the story: i.e., they reflect the characters' state of mind, harmonizing the contents of the story.

Moreover, it is not too much to say that the descriptions of nature in this work reflect the delicate emotion of the characters. Their subtle states of mind are seen especially when they curse the natural order at the end of Book III, or when they see the animals in their dreams.

Nature controls both the development of the story and the characters' states of mind in this work. If they act in harmony with nature, everything will follow the natural course of events. However, once they try to break down this harmony or natural order, as at the end of Book III and in Book IV, they tend to be destroyed by nature's uncontrollable power. In Book V, the narrator emphasizes the transcendental aspect of nature. Even though the characters end up tragically, nature stands aloof from them, just as Taylor states: "In this book, the narrator no longer confined nature to art. He does not limit it to the garden of love; he does not reduce it by personification of love; he does not allude to it to transform death. He writes of it now on the grandest of scales, as the intermediary between man and God, the veil partially hiding the final vision."<sup>3</sup> Therefore, majesty of nature remains stable, even though Troilus and Criseyde end tragically. After he dies a heroic death, however, Troilus ascends to heaven in harmony with nature. This may be the last rescue to the hero Troilus.

And ther he saugh, with ful avysement,  
The *erratik* sterres, herkenyng armonye  
With sownes ful of *hevenyssh* melodie. (5.1811-13)

Let us closely examine the description of nature, which, thus looking at the characters with a detached air, reflects the development of the story and the characters' subtle states of mind. This paper will proceed in the following order: (1) Natural Objects, (2) Plants (3) Animals.<sup>4</sup>

## 1. Natural Objects

Natural objects are represented by nouns such as "moon, rein, see, sonne, sterre, wynd, etc."<sup>5</sup> Here I will discuss the kinds of adjectives that collocate with these nouns. The following types are dealt with in this section: (1) natural objects in the air and (2) day and night.

### 1.1. Natural objects in the air

We find the following nouns: the objects which exist in the air such as 'cloude', 'sterre', 'Bole', 'moone', 'sonne'; those which are created by the physical power of the

former objects, such as 'bemes' and 'reyn'. (The nouns 'day' and 'nyght' are dealt with in the following section.) These nouns generally collocate with the adjective "bryghte" which shows the beauty of nature, but sometimes with the adjective "blak" which provides an effective contrast with the former adjective.

In the following instance, Criseyde's beautiful figure contrasts powerfully with her black dress through natural description. The colour of her black dress is, strangely enough, coincident with that of "cloude blak" and her fair figure corresponds to "so bright a sterre."

Nas nevere yet seyn thyng to ben preysed derre,  
Nor under cloude *blak* so *bryght* a sterre  
As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everichone  
That hir behelden in hir *blake* wede. (1. 174-77)

Criseyde's appearance harmonizes with the natural objects. We can imagine how "bryght" Criseyde's beauty is against the dark sky. Here the expression "so bright a sterre" contrasts strongly with "cloude blak."

Let us now discuss the natural objects which show brightness in this work. The adjective "bryght" is attached to the nouns 'Phebus', 'sonne', and 'moone'. Further the proper noun 'Phebus' collocates with the compound adjectives "gold-ytressed" and "laurer-crowned" which refer to the superior and dignified aspect of nature.

Whan Phebus doth his *bryghte* bemes sprede  
Right in the *white* Bole, it so bitidde,  
As I shal synge, on Mayes day the thrydde, (2.54-56)  
But right as floures, thourgh the cold of nyght  
Iclosed, stoupen on hire stalke lowe,  
Redressen hem ayein the sonne *bryght*,  
And spreden on hire kynde cours by rowe, (2.967-70)  
The *gold-tressed* Phebus heighe on-lofte  
Thries hadde alle with his bemes *cleene*  
The snowes *molte*, and Zepherus as ofte  
Ibrought ayeyn the *tendre* leves *grene*, (5.8-11)  
The *bryghte* Venus folwede and ay taughte  
The wey ther *brode* Phebus down alighte; (5.1016-17)  
The *laurer-crowned* Phebus with his heete

Gan, in his cours ay upward as he wente,

To warmen of the est as the wawes weete, (5.1107-9)

The first quotation describes “bryghte” Phebus, who seems to cooperate with Pandarus in furthering the object Pandarus has in view. The epithet “white”, in harmony with the brightness of the sun, “has been traced to Ovid’s description of the snow-white ball in the form of which Jupiter visited Europa (Met., ii, 852).”<sup>6</sup> In the second instance, the favourable progress of their love affair, in harmony with “the sonne bright,” makes Troilus’s heart feel happy. In the Proem of Book III, as a matter of course, we again find expressions of brightness, but they are not related to the sun but to the blissful state of the goddess Venus. In Book IV, there are few expressions of brightness, but we find one instance which shows harmonious nature, when Troilus and Criseyde have been temporizing. Dancing “th’amrouse daunce,” they go into the harmony of nature, as in “And as the briddes, whanne the sonne is shene, / Deliten in hire song in leves grene,” (4.1432-33). This may be an attempt by the narrator to rescue them from their harsh and dark situation. In this way, the tragedy draws near.

It must be noticed, however, that majestic nature makes her appearance, in the last three instances. The adjective in the expression “the gold-tressed Phebus” shows the eternal nature of the sun. This nature does not change, even as time passes. This eternity is applicable to the planet ‘Venus’, which, according to the *OED*, means “5. *Astr.* The second planet in order of distance from the sun, revolving in an orbit between those of Mercury and the earth; the morning or evening star.” It is associated with the goddess Venus. The figure of Phebus is also shown in the adjective “laurer-crowned”.

As for the natural objects which show darkness in this work, we may consider nouns such as ‘reyn’ and ‘wynd’. It is noticeable that the rain, which contrasts with the above-mentioned sun, functions to promote the couple’s love affair in Book III.

Now is ther litel more for to doone,

But Pandare up and shortly for to seyne,

Right sone upon the chaungynge of the moone,

Whan *lightles* is the world a nyght or tweyne,

And that the wolken shop hym for to reyne, (3.547-51)

The *bente* moone with hire hornes *pale*,

Saturne, and Jove, in Cancro joyned were,

That swych a reyn from heven gan avale,

That every maner womman that was there  
 Hadde of that *smoky* reyn a verray feere; (3.624-28)  
 And seyde, "Lord, this is an *huge* rayn! (3.656)  
 The *sterne* wynd so loude gan to route  
 That no wight oother noise myghte heere; (3.743-44)

These natural phenomena play a significant role in preventing Criseyde from escaping from Pandarus's house. The rain may be unfortunate for Criseyde, but it is fortunate for both Troilus and Pandarus. (The adjective "bente" is the *OED*'s first citation and means "1. Constrained into a curve, as a strung bow; curbed, crooked, deflected from the straight line," and the adjective "smoky" is also the *OED*'s first citation and means "2. Of vapour, mist, etc.: Having the character or appearance of smoke; resembling smoke; smoke-like.") In this way, Pandarus's plan harmonizes with the natural phenomena in Book III.

Lastly, at the end of Book V when Troilus ascends into heaven, he is bathed in the harmonious light of nature. Although Troilus is given up by nature in Book IV, he gains a bird's-eye view of several planets around him.

And ther he saugh, with ful avysement,  
 The *erratik* sterres, herkenyng armonye  
 With sownes ful of *hevenyssh* melodie.  
 And down from thennes faste he gan avyse  
 This *litel* spot of erthe,... (5.1811-15)

In this passage, "the *erratik* sterres" are "the (seven) planets"<sup>7</sup> and the adjective "erratik" is a first citation in the *OED* and means "A. Wandering; prone to wonder. 1. First used in certain special applications: a planet. obs." Passing these 'sterres', he looks down at "this *litel* spot of erthe." The whole description of nature forms a fine panorama of great nature and it shows the hierarchical order of human beings, nature, and God.

We find the following astrological expressions:

And caste and knew in *good* plit was the moone  
 To doon viage, and took his way ful soone (2.74-75)  
 I, woful wrecche and infortuned wight,  
 And born in *corse*d constellacioun, (4.744-45)

The verb 'caste' (which is a first citation in the *OED* and means "39. To calculate

astrologically, as to cast a figure, horoscope, nativity, etc.; also absol.”) shows that Pandarus uses an astrological calculation to discover that the moon is in a favourable position. The other astrological expression is the noun ‘constellacioun’, which, according to the *OED*, means “+1. *Astrol.* The configuration or position of ‘stars’ (i.e. planets) in regard to one another, as supposed to have ‘influence’ on terrestrial things; *esp.* their position at the time of a man’s birth; *my constellation* = ‘my stars.’”

## 1.2. Day and night

The contrast between day and night continues the development of the theme in this work. When things are in the right order, “the *derke* nyght” corresponds to “sorwe” and “the *glade* morwe” to “joie”, as can be seen when Pandarus is preaching to Troilus: “And next the *derke* nyght the *glade* morwe; / And also joie is next the fyn of sorwe” (1.951-52). We can also understand this contrast, when we consider that it is not in the morning but at night that Grendel made an attack on Heorot in *Beowulf*. The advent of night is connected with the colour “blake”, as in “And *white* thynges wexen *dymme* and *donne* / For lak of lyght, and sterres for t’apere, / That she and alle hire folk in went yfeere” (2.908-10), where the adjective “donne” is the *OED*’s second citation and means “2. More vaguely: Dark, dusky (from absence of light); murky, gloomy.”

However, a clear-cut distinction between black and white is not always applicable to a work of psychological depth such as *Troilus and Criseyde*. As is clear in Book III, when Troilus and Criseyde further their love affair at night, the value of day and night turns upside down. Nature seems to offer a hand of help to Troilus and Criseyde, but in fact it does not help them, and both Troilus and Criseyde complain of the day and night which Nature has created. This situation will be found in Books III and IV. At first, the narrator describes Troilus and Criseyde’s happy night, using the adjective “blisful”, as in “O *blisful* nyght, of hem so longe isought, / How *blithe* unto hem bothe two thow weere!” (3.1317-18). Although they enjoy themselves at night, however, they complain of both the night and day. The following is Criseyde’s complaint.

“O *blake* nyght, as folk in bokes rede,  
That shapen art by God this world to hide  
At certeyn tymes wyth thi *derke* wede, (3.1429-31)  
Thow *rakle* nyght! Ther God, maker of kynde,  
The, for thyn haste and thyn unkynde vice, (3.1437-38)

Criseyde complains of the swiftly passing night, using the adjectives “blake” and “rakle”. (This may be natural, because the night is of course “blake”.) On the other hand, Troilus complains of the coming day.

“O *cruel* day, accusour of the joie  
That nyght and love han stole and faste iwryen,  
Acorsed be thi comyng into Troye,  
For every bore hath oon of thi bryghte yen!  
*Envious* day, what list the so to spien? (3.1450-54)  
“Allas! what have thise loveris the agylt,  
*Dispitous* day? Thyn be the peeyne of helle! (3.1457-58)

This kind of ‘day’ is against the natural laws. It is just the opposite of Pandarus’s proverbial expression. Troilus wishes to stay with his love Criseyde, and curses the day, which is regarded as the “cruel”, “envious”, and “dispitous” being (the adjective “dispitous” is the *OED*’s first citation and means “2. Cruel; exhibiting ill-will, or bitter enmity, malevolent”). These expressions lead to the following instances: “cruel day” (3.1695) and “Callyng it traitour, envyous, and worse,” (3.1700). (It is interesting to note that Pandarus’s saying, “How stant it now / This *myry* morwe?” (3.1562-63), when the morning comes, may show his optimistic and joyous state of mind.) Troilus’s emotional reaction to the day is described in the serious words in Book IV. When Criseyde is destined to be sent away to the Greek camp, Troilus complains of the day, losing his heart in grief: “O deth, allas! why nyltow do me deye? / *Acorsed* be that day which that Nature / Shop me to ben a lyves creature!” (4.250-52).

In Book V, Troilus appears to regain the tranquil state of mind, but, in fact, he is in a fever of impatience. Being anxious, he feels he has waited for Criseyde much longer than he really has waited.

The dayes *moore*, and *lenger* every nyght  
Than they ben wont to be, hym thoughte tho, (5.659-60)

In this way, the expressions about the day and night reflect the characters’ state of mind, especially Troilus’s sensitive emotions.

## 2. Plants

In this section, I will deal mainly with the description of spring, such as found in the “General Prologue” to *The Canterbury Tales*. This natural phenomenon is often present

in other Middle English verses; for example, in *Sir Orfeo* the scene is set in the gentle atmosphere of spring, and this atmosphere provides a surrounding in which an event occurs: “Bifel so in pe comessing of May, / When miri and hot is pe day, ... And blosme breme on eueri bouz / Oueral wexep miri anouz” (57-62),<sup>8</sup> where the emotional expression “miri” is used to show the joyous state of the characters and the narrator.

In *Troilus and Criseyde*, however, unlike *Sir Orfeo*, the narrator connects the description of nature to the development of the story and to the characters’ states of mind. In this poem, the narrator uses not only the description of spring, but also the ‘turning of the seasons.’ The description of the seasons is subtly differentiated in each one of the Books. It should be noted here that the changes of the seasons in this work correspond to the characters. Raymond P. Tripp, Jr. points out this fact in the “General Prologue”: “The emotion is gentler in Chaucer and the sense of time even more subtly internalized. The motion is toward spring and life, rather than toward winter and death; but the vital welling of time is still there: life is movement and pilgrimage – man’s “season”.<sup>9</sup> We should note how deeply the ‘turning of the seasons’ is connected with that of the characters’ minds and with their circumstances. I will quote one passage from each Book and compare their descriptions of nature.

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*, (1.155-58)  
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, (2.50-53)  
But right as thise holtes and thise hayis,  
That han in wynter *dede* ben and dreye,  
Revesten hem in *grene* when that May is,  
Whan every *lusty* liketh best to preye;  
Right in that selve wise, soth to seye,  
Wax sodeynliche his herte ful of joie,  
That gladder was ther nevere man in Troie. (3.351-57)  
And as in wynter leves ben biraft,



Ech after other, til the tree be *bare*,  
 So that ther nys but bark and braunche ilaft,  
 Lith Troilus, byraft of ech welfare,  
 Ibounden in the *blake* bark of care, (4.225-29)  
 The *gold-tressed* Phebus heighe on-lofte  
 Thries hadde alle with his bemes cleene  
 The snowes molte, and Zepherus as ofte  
 Ibrought ayeyn the *tendre* leves *grene*, (5.8-11)

In Book I, the narrator describes April rather objectively. Taylor says that the description is “purely conventional,”<sup>10</sup> but we know that the description of spring foreshadows a subsequent event in this work. Spring has come, just as ‘Veer’ (which is the *OED*’s first citation and means “the season of spring; spring-time”) is “lusty” (=“pleasant, delightful”). The flowers are “white and rede,” as in the “General Prologue.” The whole field is full of life. We expect that something will happen.

In Book II, April turns into May. The description of nature is more cheerful than in Book I. The recurring sounds /m/ and /f/ show the beautiful movements of nature. The proper noun ‘May’ is personified.<sup>11</sup> The flowers are described by the adjectives “fresshe” (just like “as fressh as is the month of May” in the description of ‘Squier’) and “blew”, in addition to “white” and “rede” in Book I. The pleasing spring strikingly contrasts with the “dede” winter. In this way, the narrator creates an atmosphere of cheerfulness and Troilus and Criseyde’s love affair proceeds successfully.

In Book III, the harmony of nature is described by the narrator. Especially in the Proem of this Book, we find eternal nature in harmony with the goddess Venus, as in “As man, brid, best, fissh, herbe, and *grene* tree / Thee fele in tymes with vapour eterne” (3.10-11). The passage (3.351-57) shows that the description of nature also plays a role in depicting Troilus’s state of mind; when he does not know if Criseyde can accept his love, his mind is in ‘wynter’, and later, when he realizes what her feelings are and wins her affection, he enjoys the cheerful spring. The narrator also explains this in the following way: “For I have seyn of a ful *misty* morwe / Folowen ful ofte a *myrie* someris day; / And after wynter foloweth *grene* May;” (3.1060-62).

In Book IV, we do not know exactly which season is described by the narrator. However, even though it is a spring, the passage (4.225-29) reminds us of a cold and severe winter, because of the expressions “til the tree be *bare*” and “the *blake* bark of

care”.

In Book V, however, surprisingly the beauty of nature is described again. To use Taylor’s words, “the imagery here is epic, presenting time’s relentless course, and although the passage of time portends sorrow, nature maintains its beauty” and the passage creates “the impression of an eternal order, benevolent and beautiful although distant from man.”<sup>12</sup> The eternal beauty of nature is represented here. Since nature is stable and constant, she keeps her dignified air, regardless of the fate of the characters.

In this way, the setting of the scene is the spring, as in Book I. The love affair goes well with the help of nature. But as soon as the harmony of nature is disturbed in Book IV, her cheerful and lovely aspect turns into a cold and severe winter. In Book V, however, nature displays her magnificent beauty. The more dignity nature has in Book V, the more the situation reminds us of the miserable state of Troilus. This is also true of Criseyde, miserable as she is, whose beauty also makes Diomedes love her, though. Although nature seems to be detached from the characters, she is, in fact, deeply connected with them.

### 3. Animals

The animals which make their appearance in this work are the ‘swalowe’, the ‘nightingale’, the ‘egle’, and the ‘bor’. The description of the animals also reflects the development of the story and the characters’ state of mind.

First, let us discuss the animals ‘swalowe’ and ‘nightingale’. As Brewer states,<sup>13</sup> they are based upon Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*. However, the narrator does not simply quote it, but he seems to make use of it in order to represent the characters’ delicacy of feeling.

The swalowe Proigne, with a *sorrowful* lay,  
Whan morwen com, gan make hire waymentynge,  
Whi she *forshapen* was; and ever lay  
Pandare abedde, half in a slomberynge,  
Til she so neigh hym made hire cheterynge  
How Tereus gan forth hire suster take,  
That with the noyse of hire he gan awake, (2.64-70)

When Pandarus is going to let Criseyde know of Troilus’s passionate love, this ‘swalowe’ begins to chirp outside the house. The bird’s “sorrowful” twitterings may suggest the

beginning of the love affair. It seems that in some way or another the 'suster' Philomela of this 'swalowe' reminds us of Criseyde, because Pandarus soon visits Criseyde and goes between Troilus and Criseyde in Book II. Criseyde may be obliged to accept Troilus's love through Pandarus's earnest commendation of Troilus to her. Criseyde may be "forshapen" by Pandarus. Afterwards, she is compared to the 'nyghtingale': "And as the *newe abaysed nyghtyngale*, / That stynteth first whan she bygynneth to synge, / Whan that she hereth any herde tale / Or in the hegges any wyght stirynge, / And after siker doth hire vois out ryngge" (3.1233-37).<sup>14</sup> Just as the nightingale trembling with fear begins to sing again when she is released from fear, Criseyde has a joyful time with Troilus.

Next, let us discuss the animals which make their appearance in the characters' dreams. Their dreams are affected by expectations and fears. Criseyde dreams of a figure in the shape of an 'egle' and Troilus dreams of a 'bor'.

The 'egle' appears in Criseyde's dream. The word 'egle', according to the *OED*, means that "the strength, keen vision, graceful and powerful flight of the eagle are proverbial, and have given to him the title of the king of birds."

And as she slep, anonright tho hire mette  
How that an egle, *fethered whit as bon*,  
Under hire brest his longe clawes sette, (2.925-27)

Criseyde, fascinated with Troilus's bravery, expects to have a good time with Troilus. That may show her psychological reality. It seems that this courageous white 'egle' is the knightly figure of Troilus, who is on the point of captivating Criseyde's mind.

In comparison with Criseyde's dream, in Book V Troilus dreams a terrible dream in which Criseyde is raped by the 'bor'.

And up and doun as he the forest soughte,  
He mette he saugh a bor with tuskes *grete*,  
That slepte ayeyn the bryghte sonnes hete. (5.1237-39)

This dream reflects Troilus's apprehension. The "bor with tuskes grete" instead of Troilus makes his appearance before Criseyde. Cassandre foretells that the boar will turn out to be Diomedes and this prediction comes true. The adjective "stronge" and "gret" are attached to the animal 'bor': "And hire bisoughte assoilen hym the doute / Of the stronge boor with tuskes *stoute*;" (5.1453-54) and "For with a boor as gret as ox in stalle / She made up frete hire corn and vynes alle" (5.1469-70).

#### 4. Summary

In this paper, I have discussed the description of nature which controls both courtly elements and human beings in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. First, as for the description of natural objects, the relationship between the cloud and the star reflects Criseyde's black dress and her bright figure. Furthermore, the description of natural objects shows the delicate feelings of the characters; in particular, "the sonne bright" represents a joyous state of mind. The fatal 'reyn' heightens the drama as the story develops. The rain, governing the human beings and the palace, facilitates the love affair between Troilus and Criseyde. However, when Troilus and Criseyde go against nature, she does not support them, as is shown in the fact that they complain of the day and night at the end of Books III and IV. Second, the plants also reflect the delicate emotions of the characters. The descriptions of plants suggest the harmonious development of the love affair in Books I, II, and III, as the adjectives "newe grene," "fresshe", "blew and white and rede," and "lusty" show, while they may show that in Book IV the natural order is about to break down, as in the expressions: "til the tree be bare" and "the blak bark of care," the adjectives reminding us of the severe winter and the coldness of the human beings. However, the description of Phebus as "gold-tressed" signals a return to the harmony of nature in Book V. In spite of the characters' tragic end, nature remains undisturbed. Finally, the animals are also deeply connected with the characters in this work: "the newe abaysed nyghtyngale" is compared to Criseyde, "an egle, fethered whit as bon" in Criseyde's dream suggests the manly figure of Troilus, and the "bor" in Troilus's dream is associated with Diomedes. In this way, the descriptions of nature in *Troilus and Criseyde* mirror faithfully the actions and states of minds of the characters.

#### Notes

- 1 W.H.Hudson, *An Outline History of English Literature* (London, 1966), 26.
- 2 All Chaucer citations are from L.D.Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed.(Boston, 1987).
- 3 D.Taylor, *Style and Character in Chaucer's Troilus* (Michigan, 1969), 254.
- 4 M.Masui, "A Mode of Word-Meaning in Chaucer's Language of Love," *Studies in English Literature*, English Number 1967 (English Literary Society of Japan, 1967), 115.

- 5 Masui,115.
- 6 F.N.Robinson, ed., *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Boston, 1957), 818. Cf. Benson's text, 1031.
- 7 D.S.Brewer and L.E.Brewer, ed., *Troilus and Criseyde* (London, 1971), 128.
- 8 The text of *Sir Orfeo* is from K.Sisam, ed., *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose* (Oxford, 1921). This description is, as a matter of course, conventional. But it is interesting that the physical adjective "hot" and the emotional adjective "miri" are used at the same time. The word "miri" usually shows the joyous state of the human beings. According to the *OED*, it may mean "of weather, climate, atmospheric conditions, etc: 'pleasant', 'fine'. Of a wind: 'Favourable'." Since the mind of human beings will judge whether or not it is "pleasant" and "favourable", it is the emotional expression.
- 9 R.P.Tripp,Jr., "On the Continuity of English Poetry between *Beowulf* and Chaucer" (1-21) in *POETICA* Vol.6 (Tokyo, 1976), 9. See also the following two articles: C.L.Wrenn, "On the Continuity of English Poetry," *A Study of Old English Literature* (New York, 1967), 17-34, and L.C.Gruber, "*The Wanderer* and Arcite: Isolation and the Continuity of the English Elegiac Mode," *Four Papers for Michio Masui* (Denver, 1972), 1-10.
- 10 Taylor, 244.
- 11 The noun 'May' is the *OED*'s first citation.
- 12 Taylor, 252-54.
- 13 Brewer, 108.
- 14 When Criseyde is charmed by Troilus's knightly figure more and more, she falls asleep, listening to the nightingale's chirpings. This male nightingale comes near to Criseyde's room and whispers sweet nothings to her, as if this nightingale were Troilus: "A nyghtyngale, upon a cedir grene / Under the chambre wal ther as she lay, / Ful loude song ayein the moone shene," (2.918-20). This passage corresponds to the one which shows that Arcite in "The Knight's Tale" is dying for Emelye, singing the song of spring: "And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene" (I(A)1509), where the noun 'sonne' is used instead of the noun 'moone'.

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