THE DUALITY OF COURTLY LOVE IN THE CANTERBURY TALES: A CASE STUDY OF FATHER AND SON

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ABSTRACT

Scholasticism delivered dogmatic principles of love and marriage that greatly influenced medieval culture and literature. The aristocracy and the poets in medieval English strove to live and represent the circular notions of love and those established by Christian standards side by side. Medieval Christian doctrine of ancillia theologia which speculated among other things that passionate love was fraught with evil even in conjugal relationship and the Feudal marriage system in which arranged marriages downplayed the interest of the woman held sway between 1066 and 1500. Thus, medieval philosophy and education was dramatically influenced by Christian religious dogmas, and the feudal dispensation to develop and maintain Courtly Love practice in two dimensions. The two notions of love, practiced under the Courtly Love system are mutually exclusive and represent two separate worlds apart. In this two fold expression of love, the Knights, driven by their amatory and romantic affection, demonstrated through the courtly love practice that true love can actually exist outside marriage, with or without physical consummation. Geoffery Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales* represents the two ideas of Courtly Love using the tales of the Knight and the Squire. The Knight's Tale and The Squire's Tale respectively represent the earlier conventions of medieval courtly love of Camelot and King Arthur's court and cult, characterized by strong chivalric codes of legendary Knights, and the latter conventions of courtly love in which the Knight and lover was no longer bound by strict chivalric codes. This study explores these two courtly love dimensions as they are portrayed through these two characters in *The Canterbury Tales*.

Keywords: Courtly love, Knight, Squire, ancillia theologia, Camelot

INTRODUCTION

I. Background

The fall of the Roman Empire ushered in the Middle Ages between AD 400 and 1500. Greco-Roman civilization was practically lost, giving way for the prevalence of superstition and ignorance. But Christianity, which had been weakened with the fall of Rome re-emerged and began to throw some light into the darkness of the Middle Ages. The socio-political and religious dispensations of the Middle Ages delivered among other things the doctrine of Courtly Love, which was to have expression in Medieval English Literature. The coronation of William Duke of Normandy in 1066 which practically marked the beginning of medieval England witnessed a dramatic metamorphosis in the socio-political life of the English society. Christianity and the feudal system were forces to reckon with between 1066 and 1485 Medieval England. Feudalism established arranged marriage system based on monetary worth in which mutual love in conjugal relationship was relegated to the background. The monarch married mainly for political expediency, and once diplomacy was satisfied, the marriage lost its value and the king looked elsewhere for love. The "husband's object was to get rid of the lady as quickly as possible" once "the alliance which had answered would answer no longer" (Lewis, 1936: 13). The queen on the other hand had no more choice of choosing a suitor or satisfying her interest in the choice of a life partner than all the other young ladies and gentlemen who wanted to marry. This factor occasioned frequent dissolution of marriages because the alliances initiated by the monarchy were driven by constantly changing interests, while genuine love was absent. But more crucial to the factors that catalyzed the practice of courtly love among Knights was Medieval Christian doctrine of Ancilla Theologiae, which Thomas Aquinas espoused. This doctrine theorized among other things the notion that passionate love or sexual desire (a conscious quest) in conjugal relationship was evil, as such desire was linked to the carnal nature of man after the fall. Coital affection was deemed an innocent act and only by the desire for offspring, in the original provision of God, hence "the medieval theory finds room for innocent sexuality: what it does not find room for is passion, whether romantic or otherwise" (ibid, p. 16, 17). This theology of love which medieval scholasticism propagated became the rule of law and scholastic knowledge was propagated on the dogmas of Christian faith, establishing as a consequence the general impression that passion and carnal desire was base and wicked or animalistic. The Knights, striving to reconcile feudal marriage principles with medieval Christian association of evil with passionate love particularly in conjugal relationship, leaned towards courtly love, balancing their religious ideals and their amatory and romantic affections to demonstrate that true love can actually exist outside marriage, with or without physical consummation. These factors fueled the poetic expression on the possibility of true love existing outside matrimony, and this fact, to the ardent courtly lover may be idealized and spiritual, and may exist without ever being physically consummated. In this exposition, it is valid to note that courtly love was a springboard for humanism, a departure from scholasticism, which emphasized the religion of God as opposed to the religion of man. Petrarch, although a contemporary of Chaucer, born in the medieval times, is considered a humanist for this

reason: for emphasizing the religion of humanism - knowledge in service to man, in the expression of ardent passionate love and carnal desire in his poetics and poetry.

Geoffrey Chaucer, one of the illustrious poets of the Medieval English period used his masterpiece – *The Canterbury Tales* (1387—1400) to bring a cross section of medieval English society together. On the occasion of the pilgrims' visit to St Thomas Becket's (martyred archbishop of Canterbury) shrine at Canterbury Cathedral, Chaucer presents a broad spectrum of the civil society across the social strata in the thirty pilgrims in order to illustrate through their tales aspects of medieval culture, typically the courtly love tradition. Many of the stories in *The Canterbury Tales* therefore are steeped in the medieval tradition of courtly love. In this way, Chaucer fictionalizes the historical pilgrimage, using the occasion for festive friendship and thereby turning a spiritual affair into a social gathering to entertain and educate his audiences about medieval English society and their life. For this reason *The Canterbury Tales* is more or less a Human Comedy as opposed to Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1308—1320). Courtly love, like the later Romantics emphasized passion as the basis of true love when Scholasticism delivered dogmatic principles concerning love and marriage during this period of the Middle Ages. Against this background, this study seeks to explore the dual nature of the courtly love tradition as Chaucer illustrates it through the tales of the Knight and his son, the Squire, in *The Canterbury Tales*. The kind of courtly love practised at Camelot was somewhat different from what it became in Chaucer's time. In Arthurian romance men did not really fall in love and worship the women the way it became in the later courtly love practice. Unlike in the later courtly love where men fell in love with a mortal woman, the earlier courtly lovers exercised their love for the beloved in the form of homage to the Christian saint and loyalty to God. The study shows that true love actually existed out of wedlock with or without physical consummation, when the Church through the theory of Ancillia Theologia frowned on passionate love in conjugal relationship.

II. The Duality of Courtly Love

Courtly love in medieval Europe was the expression of love and admiration exclusively by Knights and the nobility for a lady. In this uniquely knightly practice, the knight and lover was a servant who exercised humility and courtesy to the beloved lady in the manner of a vassal and his lord under feudalism. Courtly love advocated a kind of 'sanctified adultery' since one always fell in love with someone else's wife and pursued her with success or sometimes failure. Despite the loving Knight's so-called dedication to the cross of Christ, their real faith was in the pagan god of love on whom they placed the success of all their hopes and desires. Medieval English Romance was an aspect of this courtly love tradition, a supreme example being the secret love affair between

Lancelot and Genevieve—wife of King Arthur who seemed unmindful or blind to it. In the courtly love narrative history, "The Queen" or "The Lady" who is the object of love "is inexorably in love with someone other than the king, and so she represents the extreme instance of a figure who is central to social stability acting in a way which undermines it", and these queens in courtly love history are "Iseult, Gráinne, and Guinevere; and the lovers are Tristan, Diarmuid, and Lancelot; while the kings are Mark, Finn, and Arthur" (O'Donoghue, 2007: 14). The extraordinary beauty and magnanimity of the woman makes her an object of worship by the knight in courtly love tradition.

The earlier Arthurian Knightly courtly love and the latter phase of Camelot, of Lancelot's lieutenantship are two worlds apart. The two courtly love traditions are socially permissible by their chivalric traditions shown in the widening gulf between them. In the earlier medieval English chivalry and the lengthy legend of King Arthur, the Knights are strong devotees to the chivalric code of fidelity. Even though adultery was possible, it did not exit during this period of the courtly love tradition, as the desire for the act of adultery was absent and the loving Knight was bound by the chivalric code of honour, loyalty, faith, and fidelity. The Knight and lover linked the devotion to the beloved to the Virgin Mary in a mystical worship, of the kind displayed by Dante and his Beatrice, and Petrarch and his Laura. The Cross of Christ was the muse that inspired love in the earlier courtly love, and for this reason, platonic love was emphasized through the lover's devotion to the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. Thus, chastity and virginity was linked to the Grail Legend which was believed to contain the blood of Jesus, therefore only the virgin Knight could attain it. Consequently, physical consummation of love was not expected in this prolonged and sublime experience of Knightly love. Sir Gawain's decisive resistance to the temptress' (Mrs. Bertilak's) three strong seductions into erotic love in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is evident of the total absence of erotism in the earlier courtly love. Sir Gawain's exploits and commitment to the chivalric code of Knights typify this extraordinary devotion to fidelity in courtly love. Sir Gawain's chivalric trust and honour as a Knight of Christ who solely depended on the love and protection of Providence was however betrayed when he accepted the secret charm of protection from the temptress (Mrs. Bertilak) to save him from the sword of the Green Knight.

The earlier courtly love which was defined in terms of the medieval Christian conception of agape love, metamorphosed into another religion of love, what Lewis (1936) describes as "feudalization of love" where the lover was the lady's 'man' and addressed her as "midons", which etymologically represented 'my lord' (p. 2). In this tradition of courtly love, a certain kind of religious devotion characterized the love lavished on the beloved by the lover, a kind of adoration tantamount to idolatry. Lancelot's secret passion for Guinevere is evident of the adulterous desire associated with the latter courtly love. Lancelot sat in the court of Arthur as Guinevere's secret lover, more than replacing Sir Gawain as King Arthur's nephew and right-hand man. Adultery

existed as a matter of course in this later phase of courtly love with the disappearance of the courtly chivalric ideals of fidelity. The pagan god/goddesses of love actuated love in this tradition of courtly love and erotism was emphasized through sexual fulfillment and loss of chastity in the lover's devotion to his lady. However, the absence of fidelity in the love relationship did not guarantee fulfillment as the lover mostly did not succeed in wooing the beloved. This was because the beloved somehow did not reciprocate the Knight's love; therefore, unrequited love was a hallmark of the latter courtly love tradition. The lover's chances of success over the beloved, was "almost despairing", and he was saved from "complete wanhope" by the trust he reposed in the god/goddess of love who could "subjugate the cruellest beauties". This highly specialized dedication to the beloved was characterizes by "Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love". Regarded as his lord, the beloved was often idolized and immortalized by the lover who was ever ready to defend and perform every daring or ignominious labour to endear himself to her. He was always "abject", and "Obedient to his lady's lightest wish however whimsical", and manifested "silent acquiescence in her rebukes, however unjust" (ibid, p. 3). In the words of McCash (1990), this "medieval love" was the kind in which the lover was "subservient to his lady, ready to do her every whim" (p. 429). In such a mystical worship, almost like religious love of the earlier courtly love, the hero in love spent his entire life in mixed feelings of devotion to the apathetic lady who was customarily haughty, impervious and difficult to please. Thus, the mere fact of adoration and devotion was an indulgence that produced happiness and sadness. Under this pleasure of pain described by Petrarch as "Dolendi Voluptas", the lover obtains humility and courtesy and only men with such virtues could love within the latter courtly love tradition. In other words, the virtues of gentleness, humility, courtesy and courage are both the process and products of the courtly love tradition under feudalization of love.

The duality of the courtly love concept was a great source of inspiration for much of medieval European literature, particularly in the poetic genre, with one writer influencing the other up to the 16th century Renaissance literature and even beyond. O'Donoghue (2007) notes that Petrarch's dedication to Laura was one of the late classics of medieval courtly love, and it is hard to establish a sensible break in the tradition from the troubadours to Dante to Petrarch to the Elizabethan sonneteers to the love-poems of John Donne (p. 15). It is noteworthy that Dante represents the earlier courtly love in the *Divine Comedy*, perceiving his beloved Beatrice in the image of the virgin Mary, in divine spiritual terms without physical attainment, while Petrarch represents the latter courtly love in his desire for physical love with Laura who does not reciprocate the love. Similarly, William Butler Yeats was "roll-playing" the poet in love, having fallen in love, not with Maud Gonne "whom he scarcely knew, but with his own projected anima, the 'woman within himself' "as a stimulus to the creative imagination" (Kline, 1989: 11). Albeit Yeats loved Maud

Gonne, yet the latter was unattainable, and her psychological presence became Yeats stimulus for creating poetry, similarly as Laura was believed to exist in Petrarch's mind as an inspiration for his art. Thus, in the latter courtly love, love becomes an excuse for poetry, a kind of therapy for the lover's unrequited love. It revealed the poet and the persona more than the beloved who inspired the writing, evidence is in the profuse use of the "I" persona in such love poems. This dimension of love in the latter courtly love is traceable to the Roman poet - Ovid, who, emphasizing the centrality of unrequited love wrote: "video meliora proboque deteriora sequor", literally meaning : "I see, and I desire the better: I follow the worse" (*The Metamorphoses* , Book VII, 20-21). In this "worse" form of love where the beloved, for one reason or the other did not reciprocate the love, the lover underwent a kind of physical torment due to the restlessness of sleep, and or lack of appetite for food but remained servant to the beloved.

In a nutshell, in the earlier courtly love, the religion of love centred on the love to God rather than to the mortal woman and the virtues of courtesy and humility towards the lady were understood in this sense, whether she is physically attainable or not. In the latter courtly love however, the lover's humility and courtesy were understood in terms of the constant suffering in the hands of an impervious beloved, who was mortal and physically attainable.

III. The Duality of Courtly Love: The Tales of The Knight and the Squire
(All extracts are from the Penguin edition of The Canterbury Tales)

Courtly love in the late medieval times was steeped in chivalry. More so, the pangs of unrequited love and the suffering accompanied courtship during this period and beyond, as the loving Knights earned their ladies' love in sophisticated duels and grand tournaments (Benson, 1984). But the chivalric exploits and the sufferings borne by the lovers differ in terms of the object that actuates the loyalty of the lover. Love as a theme was central to the tales told by the pilgrims, and the marriage group of tales specifically are read against the general background of the courtly love system. The group presented a debate or symposium on what should be the seat of authority in marriage life, and divergent opinions arose from the different tales. Marital infidelity always had existed even though it had never been approved or accepted in Western civilization. The 'Wife of Bath's Tale' demonstrates the reality of domestic tension arising as a result of infidelity of the courtly love practice in medieval English (Coffman, 1945). Other tales of the marriage group including the Parson's, the Miller's and Reeve's, the Clerks, the Nun's Priest's, the Franklin's, and the Second Nun's Tale hinge on the centrality of love and marriage in the Canterbury Tales and the medieval Christian teachings and exceptions to their courtly dimensions (Holman, 1951; Taylor, 1997; Jeffrey, 2010). The Knight and his son, the Squire's tales, although are thematically related to love within medieval courtly love tradition, they are each used by Chaucer to represent the two contrasting notions of courtly love reviewed above. A striking dichotomy in the tales told by the father and his son are preempted in preliminary character portraiture of the two tale-tellers

in the General Prologue. The Knight represents the earlier courtly lover while the Squire represents the latter. Of the Knight, the General Prologue writes:

> There was a Knight, a most distinguished man,
> Who from the day on which he began
> To ride had followed chivalry,
> Truth, honour, generousness and courtesy.
> He had done nobly in his sovereign's war
> And ridden into battle, no man more,
> As well as in Christian as in heathen places,
> And ever honoured for his noble graces,…
> He often sat at table in the chair of honour…
> He was a true, a perfect gentle-knight. (p. 4, 5)

The knight in the earlier courtly love is noted for his chivalrous feats and honour and marks of generosity, as befitting the Christian cardinal virtues. Committed to the chivalric code of charity, truth, and faithfulness, the knight is driven by the passion for service to God and it is for this reason that he fights in the Crusades, describes as "his sovereign's wars". He is a very experienced man of battle, having fought and won in countless battles, and no one matches him, both in Christendom and heathenism. His loyalty and love to God constrains him for daring deeds particularly in battles, to vindicate the honour of his name. Total trust in God is his mark of faithfulness, and he does not fail to minister to the needs of his lady. This knight is always armed for duty, and it is he who is depicted in this description, as one whose commitment to duty as Christ's soldier is unflinching. His character is also depicted in his outfit and in his equipment. The Prologue further states: "...he possessed/Fine horses, but he was not gaily dressed/He wore a fustian tunic stained and dark/With smudges where his armour had left mark" (p.5). Thus, he belongs to the older generation of knights, without fashion, without gaiety, and his object in battle is to please Christ, not necessarily his lady. He is also described as "wise" and "modest as a maid" (ibid) – depicting his mark of nobility and commitment to service. His mark of fidelity and faithfulness is captured in the words: "He was a true, a perfect gentle-knight". This Knight's exceptional pedigree, courage and distinguished gentleness endears him to sit at the Kings table in the latter's Court, as exemplified by the record of Sir Garwin in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. His (the Knight) son, the Squire on the other hand is limned in the General Prologue in clearly contrasting terms as one full of exuberance and romance:

> He had his son with him, a fine young Squire,
> A lover and cadet, a lad of fire.

With locks as curly as if they had been pressed.
He was some twenty years of age, I guessed.
In stature he was of moderate length,
With wonderful agility and strength…
And had done valiantly in little space
Of time, in hope to win his lady's grace.
He loves so hotly that till dawn grew pale,
He slept as little as a nightingale. (p.5)

The portrait of the young Squire shows him to be more intimately entangled with love than his father. Described as "a lad of fire" gives the impression of his burning inclination for love, the kind of love associated with the latter courtly lover. His state of sleeplessness due to "hot love" shows him to be of the latter who burns with passion due to unrequited love. He also has the quality of service, courtesy and humility, which are the direct results of unrequited love: "Courteous he was, lowly and serviceable". That is not all. He is also described as one "embroidered like a meadow bright/And full of freshest flowers, red and white/Singing he was, or fluting all the day/He was as fresh as is the month of May" (ibid). The portrait here shows the
Squire to be very romantic, as befitting the latter courly love who strove for erotic love. As romantic as he is, he "Knew how to joust and dance, to draw and write" as well as "make songs and poems and recite". In such flamboyant depiction, he is a foil to his father, the Knight. Above all these qualities, he also goes for war, as a knight and "He'd seen some service with the cavalry/And had done valiantly in little space". In this way, the Squire resembles his father, the Knight. However, his objective in battle, unlike his father who often dedicated his armour to the service of Christ, is "to please his lady". Thus, in the General Prologue, the Squire is depicted as suffering under the cruel inflexibility of the impervious beloved, developing in him the same qualities of humility, gentleness and service possessed by his father for the service of God. The son and younger lover is a stronger lover than the father's more gentle love. In their tales however, each of them represents entities that reflect the two courtly love traditions but more poignantly their own respective symbolic representation of the courtly love.

In his tale, the Knight presents two knights who are cousins of noble heritage fighting for the love of a young lady of equally noble descent. These two knights are Palamon and Arcite, and the young lady is Emily, the lovely sister of Queen Hippolyta, the wife of Theseus, the Duke of
Athens. The two cousins, Palamon and Arcite represent the earlier and latter courtly lovers respectively. The description of the young lady's enchanting beauty, makes Palomon and Arcite, per their respective orientation of courtlu love perceive her with different attitudes:

Young Emily, that fairer was of mien
Than is the lily on its stalk of green,

And fresher in her colouring that strove
With early roses in a May-time grove (p.31)

Emily is represented in the likeness of the latter courtly beloved: romantic, the same description given to the Squire in the General Prologue. Apart from being young, fair, and "fresher in colouring", she is identified with Rose and May, and "She wandered gathering flowers, white and red/To make a subtle garland for her head/And like an angel, sang a heavenly song" (ibid) similarly as the Squire did in his portraiture. But in her extra-ordinary beauty and enchantment, Emily represents both earlier and latter courtly ladies and the two cousin knights also represent both courtly lovers, Arcite representing the latter and Palamon the former. The two cousins are prisoners for life, under Duke Theseus in Athens after the latter conquering King Creon and his Theban city, and capturing them. While serving their life imprisonment, and contemplating hopes of deliverance one day, Emily happens to be wandering behind the prison cells in search of flowers to make a subtle garland for her head in her usual fashion. Palamon's attention is caught by her enchanting presence and angelic melody. On this beauteous sight, "he blenched and gave a cry/As though he had been stabbed, and to the heart", then "He fell upon his knees before the sill and prayed": O' Venus, if it be thy will/To be transfigured in this garden/Thus before two wretched prisoners like us/O help us to escape, O make us free!" (p. 32, 33). Palamon perceives Emily in the likeness of the former courtly lover who views the beloved in the likeness of a goddess. Despite his infection by Emily's physical beauty, he considers her in the likeness of Venus, the Roman goddess of love and beauty, and resolves in his heart to adore her for the rest of his prison life or to be with her and serve her if fate brings him deliverance. In this perception, Palamon's attitude to Emily is the virgin deserving worship for her divinity. He similarly prays in like attitude before facing Arcite in the battle for Emily: "Fairest of Fair, O Venus, Lady mine/ Consort of Vulcan, Daughter of Jove Divine.../O Lady bright, that art aware/Of all my thought and seest my despair…/As I shall ever struggle to maintain/Thy service, in so far as it shall be/Within my power to combat chastity" (p. 62, 63). The earlier courtly lover does not express carnal desire towards the beloved, as she is deemed a deity. Therefore, Palamon prays to the goddess Venus in whose image he views Emily. Ascribing virginity to the goddess Emily, he does not intend to defile her but maintain her saintliness: "I shall ever struggle to maintain….to combat chastity". In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Sir Gawain similarly prays to the Virgin Mary as he embarked on the terrifying journey through the wild woods to the Green Knight's temple. Apart from seeing his lady in the likeness of the unattainable goddess in the earlier courtly love tradition, it is also unthinkable for a knight to have erotic love for his fellow knight's lady. It amounts to a breach of the chivalric code and the honour of the knight is brought into disrepute who engages in such carnal passions. Love for a fellow knight's lady can only be the agape love, of the kind demonstrated by Sir Garwin to Mrs. Bertilak, no matter how the lady tempts a knight into having

erotic love. Therefore Palamon, in his puzzlement concerning Arcite's expression of romantic affection for Emily, remarks: "It is no great honour then, to you/To prove so false, to be a traitor.../This was our oath and nothing can untie it/And well I know you dare not now deny it/I trust you with my secrets, make no doubt/Yet you would treacherously go about/To love my lady whom I love and serve/And ever shall, till death cut my heart's nerve" (p. 33-34). For the trust and confidence reposed in each other, the earlier courtly lovers freely shared their secrets, knowing that there is no possibility of betrayal especially on the issues of their ladies and lovers. This is the premise on which Bertilak leaves his lady with Sir Garwin without fearing any consequences, and is faithful to share whatever he brings from his hunting expedition, just as verily as Garwin faithfully shares his received kisses from Mrs. Bertilak. Thus, Palamon is unequivocally a replica of the former courtly lover.

Arcite, representing the latter courtly lover on the other hand does not see Emily in like manner as Palamon. Arcite is similarly struck by Emily's beauty, and her beauty hurts him so that if his cousin had felt the wound before, Arcite was hurt as much as he, and much more. Therefore, with a deep and piteous sigh, he exclaims: "The freshness of her beauty strikes me dead/Hers that I see, roaming in yonder palace!/Unless I gain the mercy of her grace/Unless at least I see her day by day/I am but dead…" (p. 33). In the latter courtly love tradition, the beloved is not a goddess, who is not physically attainable, but a mortal lady capable of erotic love. Moreover, the loving knight would love his fellow knight's lady if he can win her, and since adultery is a normal practice in the latter courtly love, the knight can love another one's lady or have as many beloved as possible. Arcite confesses his carnal erotic love for Emily, as against Palamon's fantasy: "I loved her as a woman before you!/What can you say? Just now you hardly knew/If she were girl or goddess from above! Yours is a mystical, a holy Love/And mine is love as to a human being… What do I care? Suppose you loved her first…/A man must love, for all his wit/There's no escape though he should die for it/Be she a maid, a widow, or a wife" (p. 34). It is no crime for the knight in the latter courtly love to have erotic love with another knight's lady, whether she is a widow, maid or wife. Apart from that, Arcite's prayer and the god he offers it to prior to his battle against Palamon characteristically identify him with the latter courtly lover. His prayer and sacrifice is after the pagan manner, and since the pagan god of love is the source of inspiration for the lover's attitude towards the beloved, Arcite prays to "Mars", whose burning passion for erotic love is beyond measure:

> By the same suffering and burning fire
> That long ago consumed thee with desire
> Having in use the incomparable flesh
> Of fair free-hearted Venus, young and fresh,
> Holding her in thin arms and at thy will...
> Seeing that Vulcan caught there in his net

And found thee lying with his wife… (p. 67).

Adultery is the outstanding mark of the god Mars, whose inflamed passion also moves him to hold affectionately the virgin Venus. His strong passion is described as "burning fire", and this same description is given about the Squire in the General Prologue on which basis he is considered passionate lover and romantic. Thus, the latter courly lover's romantic and pleasure-loving nature is inspired by this pagan god of love. Possessed with the same muse, Arcite confesses how passionately drank he is of love: "Thou knowest I am ignorant and young/And, as I think, more passionately stung/By love than any creature dead or living…/Not only for the flames that burn in thee/But for the fire that now is burning me" (p. 67). It is no wonder then that when Palamon tells Arcite about Emily, he (Arcite) immediately gets intoxicated with Emily's love and wishes to enjoy erotic love with her despite Palamon's desire for her. It is this jealousy that begins the bitter antagonism between the two knights for the love of Emily, and for which the two lovers become rivals. When Arcite is released from prison through the intervention of Duke Perotheus, a companion to Duke Theseus, the jealousy and rivalry between the two cousins wax stronger and deeper. In Prison, Palamon cannot attain Emily, therefore he continues to live day by day in perpetual depression due to strong suspicion of Arcite. In the case of Arcite, he is set free from prison on condition that he never set foot on the land of Athens lest he be killed immediately. But Arcite, as it is with the latter courtly lover, spends his days and night literally dying slowly without a sight view of Emily. It is tantamount to being in hell for the latter courtly lover to live without at least seeing the beloved, and as such Arcite bemoans: "Now I am doomed eternally to dwell/Not in Purgatory, but in Hell" (p. 36). It is as blissful as being in Paradise to the latter courtly lover to be in prison and catch a glimpse of the beloved than to be free and be denied a sight view of her. Therefore, Arcite in apostrophe cries: "O my dear cousin Palamon, yours is the victory in this adventure/How blissfully you serve your long indenture/In prison- prison? No, in Paradise…/For you! You have her presence, I the loss" (ibid). In order to assuage his pains, the latter courtly lover resorts to what Petrarch describes as "Dolendi Voluptas", or the pleasure of pain, for he prefers to live in the ignominious suffering, condition of unrequited love, than to lose his beloved entirely. In Ovid's terms, although he sees and desires the better love, yet he will follow the worse (video meliora proboque deteriora sequor). For this reason, Arcite chooses to disguise himself and migrate from Thebes to Athens as a servant and a slave, denying his royal status and honour. In this disguised wretchedness, he also changes his name to Philostrate to avoid been recognized and fell in service with a chamberlain who had his dwelling with Emily. Arcite is a true replica of the latter courtly lover who under feudalization of love becomes humble, gentle, courteous and courageous. Hitherto, he had been afflicted with thoughts of Emily and grew pale for refusing to eat: "There never was a man so wo-begone/Nor is, nor shall be while the world goes on/Meat, drink, and sleep - he lay of all bereft/Thin as a shaft, as dry, with nothing left/His eyes were hollow, grisly to

behold/Fallow his face, like ashes pale and cold" (p. 39). The physical torment which the latter courtly lover undergoes due to unrequited love is precisely Arcite's experience, even as the Squire was portrayed in the General Prologue.

In order to demonstrate that the Knight and his tale symbolize the earlier courtly love, the two courtly lovers, the earlier and the latter in Paramon and Arcite respectively meet in a final clash in Athens to determine who wins Emily, and in this battle, Arcite dies after winning. Since Palamon survives the combat, he can live his dreams of ever adoring his beloved virgin. Consequently, Emily becomes a symbolic figure of the earlier courtly beloved who is unattainable. Arcite's death makes Emily unattainable to him. Palamon attains Emily, but she is a goddess to him and as such there would be no physical consummation of their love. Thus, even though the two courtly lovers are represented in the Knight's tale, Palamon's survival proves that the Knight intended to represent himself, being the epitome of the earlier courtly lover whose beloved is pictured with godly spiritual lenses and therefore unattainable.

The Squire also consents in his Prologue to tell a tale about love. This tale hinges on the nature of love as it is practised by the courtly knights of the earlier and latter traditions. In the Squire's tale, Canace, the youngest of all the children of King Tartar Cambuskan and his wife Elpheta, is the object of supreme courtly love. The knight represented in this tale for the earlier courtly lover is the Stranger-Knight, who comes to the court of King Tartar Cambuskan at Tzarev in the land of Tartary. His portrait is just like that of the Knight depicted in the General Prologue:

> Bare-headed, armed and richly ornamented
> Saluted king and queen and nobles all
> In order as they sat about the hall
> With such deep reverence and comely grace.
> Not only in his speech but in his face,
> That Gawain, ever courteous, ever bland,
> Though he were come again from fairyland,
> A greater courtesy could not have shown.
> And thus before High Table and the throne,
> He gave his message in a manly voice (p. 391).

The reference to Gawain is the sure evidence that the knight in this tale represents the earlier courtly lover. As shown in the General Prologue of the Knight of noble grace, gentleness, courtesy, reverence and chivalry, this Stranger-Knight also has virtues of chivalry, courtesy, gentility, and honour, and calmly grace, who, like Gawain is also welcomed at the High Table of the King. Like the Knight in the General Prologue and Sir Gawain who all had fine horses, this Stranger-Knight arrives "upon a steed of brass", with "a golden ring", "a naked sword a-swing", and a "mirror"

(ibid). The King sat with his nobility in the hall listening to instruments of minstrelsy. The atmosphere is clearly one of the scenery depicted in King Arthur's court in the earlier courtly love. It is the summer season, just like King Arthur's Christmas season, and as a true and noble courtly lover under the chivalric code of charity, faithfulness, and courtesy, the Stranger-Knight bestows a special ring and a special mirror on the young lady - Canace, symbolizing his love towards her. It is a mark of his humble service to the one he loves although such love involves no consummation. He declares: "This mirror and this ring are sent by me/As you behold, to Lady Canace/Your excellent and lovely daughter here" (p. 393). In the music and dance that ensued shortly after, "The Stranger-Knight was fetched and he alone/Was chosen forth to dance with Canace" (p. 396). Canace is hence the lady of the earlier courtly love, who is highly honoured by her lover, and the ring and the mirror are intended to woo her. The mirror also serves as a symbol of the earlier courtly lover's faithfulness to the lady. This is because it can be used by the lady to test or check the courtly lover's hidden and potentially vicious intentions. The Stranger-Knight says of the mirror: "This mirror that I have in hand...it will show/You plainly who is friend and who is foe/More than all this, if any lady bright/Has set on any man her heart's delight/If he be false she shall perceive his shady And treacherous conduct…" (p. 392). In this case, Canace can use the mirror to check the genuineness of the Stranger-Knight's love. At the end of this almost introductory part of the tale, the Squire launches into the mainstream of his tale about the tercelet and the falcon. Since the Stranger-Knight does not develop and practically fades away in the mainstream of the Squire's tale, the Squire shows that he does not intend to discuss the earlier courtly lover but only uses him as a springboard to present the latter courtly lover whom he (the Squire) epitomizes. The tercelet and the falcon represent the nature of the latter courtly love game. The infidelity of the courtly lover is depicted in the pretence of the tercelet who after dying to woo the falcon into his tentacles turns his attention to the kite, leaving the falcon in misery and pain. The latter courtly lover seriously yearns for love from his lady, but no sooner does he get that love than he begins looking elsewhere for new love, as the falcon narrates to Canace: "So with this tercelet falcon, woe the day!/Although of gentle birth, though fresh and gay/Handsome, adoring, good in everything/One day he saw a kite upon the wing/And suddenly he felt a love so hot/For this same kite my love was clean forgot/And thus he broke his faith in foul delight/And thus my love is servant to a kite/And I am lost and there's no remedy!" (p. 405-406). The hotness of the lover as well as its urgency and suddenness, as demonstrated by the tercelet is characteristic of the latter courtly lover. The sorrow of the falcon represents the flippancy of the latter courtly love. This is because, the knight or the king marries the beautiful lady or queen and after consummation, he begins to look elsewhere for love, similarly as the unfaithful knight and lover in the latter courtly love goes after other beautiful ladies after the initial longing for one lady. the high point of the Squire's tale and for that matter the latter courtly love comes out poignantly in the falcon's conclusion: "Man by his nature seeks new-fangledness/As do those birds that people keep in

cages/One cares for them day-long and one engages/To get them straw as fair and soft as silk/And gifts of sugar, honey, bread, and milk/Yet on the instant that the slide is up/The foot will spurn away the proffered cup/And to the woods they fly for worms to eat/Such is their longing for new-fangled meat" (p. 405). Love in general is short-lived, especially when it is consummated, and this tale suggests that requited love, and for that matter the love observed in matrimony is weaker than unrequited love, especially of the kind practiced in the latter courtly love. The tercelet falcon receives full love in the love of the female falcon, after yearning desperately for it, but this fulfillment does not quench his taste for another love. After some time, he travels to find another love in the kite, and this disappointment puts the female falcon in sorrow and distress. The presence of other ladies, symbolized by the kite seems to fuel the lust in the latter courtly love even though its primary source of inspiration is the god/goddess of love. The naked adultery of the latter courtly love is illustrated by the tercelet's infidelity.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the portraits of the Knight and the Squire are a replica of themselves, and they respectively represent the earlier and latter courtly love traditions that their tales illustrate. The two tales told by them classically represents the courtly love game as it is practiced in the earlier and latter phases of Camelot, in the Arthurian court and its latter phase of Lancelot's lieutenantship. The earlier courtly love is characterized by a strong chivalric code of honesty, devotion, faithfulness, gentleness, love and courtesy while the latter courtly love tradition is marked by infidelity, humility, courtesy, and feudalization of love occasioned by unrequited love. Lovers in the two courtly love traditions exercise some form of endurance as the lady and beloved becomes difficult to attain. The two fold tradition of medieval English courtly love shows that true love can actually exist outside marriage with or without physical consummation. The continually changing nature of lovers' interests necessitates alliances in courtly love at one time but the same interest annuls such alliances when the interests and circumstances change. Unrequited love both in the earlier and latter courtly love traditions are stronger, more enduring and lasting as compared to requited love which is typically observed within wedlock even though the two courtly love practices encourage adultery subtly or overtly. Father and son, the Knight and the Squire and their tales present a modus operandi of pre-eminence of courtly love practices over medieval Christian love.

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