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# Genealogy of the Isolated Knight: From Boccaccio's *Filocolo* to Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*\*

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In addition to the *Filostrato*, the direct source of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (c. 1382-6; hereafter *TC*), several studies focus on the influence of the *Filocolo*, Boccaccio's early romance.<sup>1</sup> Although the basic plot is shared by several versions of the well-known story of the lovers Floris and Blancheflor,<sup>2</sup> Boccaccio's *Filocolo* can be regarded as somewhat critical of medieval romances, and chivalric romances in particular. While it is almost impossible to define medieval romance as a monolithic genre because of the diversity of its subject-matter, form and function, it would be safe to say that most romances, especially so-called chivalric romances, have a certain ideal in common: chivalry;<sup>3</sup> the *Filocolo* is designed to throw a satirical light upon this ideal. In the story, which mainly focuses on the love pilgrimage of Florio – the protagonist in the *Filocolo* – his infatuation with Biancifiore, which urges him to neglect his own princely status as a heir to the throne, is often criticised by other characters, the narrator, and even Florio himself; thereby, the knight seems to be isolated in his attempt to attain his love. As Boccaccio does in the *Filocolo*, Chaucer also depicts, several decades later, just such an isolated figure in *TC*. A comparison of Boccaccio's romance with Chaucer's *TC* makes clear the obvious similarities between the two knights, Florio and Troilus. Those similarities also serve to demonstrate that the two works are critical of the knightly ideal expressed by their protagonists, giving them the status as knights who go through extreme romantic love

and disenchantment with it. Thus, it is not pure speculation to suppose that this prose narrative attracted Chaucer's attention by its uniqueness. To analyse the two knights in detail demonstrates that Chaucer's Troilus has, at least partly, his origin in this Italian romance.

Whereas Boccaccio's *Filostrato* does hardly show any intention to describe his Troiolo as a knight, Chaucer's Troilus, calling himself Criseyde's knight, is acutely aware of his knightly state: 'syn that I am hire knyght, / I moste hire honour levere han than me / In every cas' (IV. 569-71).<sup>4</sup> Just as he pledges, he never fails to put the lady's reputation before his own desire, which is considered appropriate for courtly lovers. As studies like those of Sarah Kay and Roberta L. Krueger have shown,<sup>5</sup> refined behaviour as a lover is an essential prerequisite for knights in romance; a worthy knight is obligated to behave as a refined lover as well as a good warrior.<sup>6</sup> Among Chaucerian studies, various attempts to prove Troilus's status as a courtly lover have been made.<sup>7</sup> Some of them have already pointed out a similarity between Troilus's characterisation and that of Florio;<sup>8</sup> however, to scrutinise and compare descriptions of the amorous courtly knights in both works will throw light upon another aspect of the Trojan knight: an isolated knight whose behaviour in his pursuit of love is repeatedly criticised by characters around him.

Although the story of Florio's love and conversion in the *Filocolo* has few obvious parallels with that of Troilus's tragic love, both heroes are portrayed as romance knights in a similar way. Like Boccaccio's Florio, who is derived from Floris, the romance hero, Troilus is equipped with sufficient features attributable to romance heroes that he can be regarded as one of the idealised lovers in romance:<sup>9</sup> physical beauty;<sup>10</sup> prowess on the field; unwavering fidelity to ladies; and even his swooning.<sup>11</sup> In addition, Troilus is a prince of ancient Troy, just as Boccaccio's Florio is the son of the pagan king of Spain. Their princely status gives more political meaning to both heroes' love. The most notable example in *TC* is when Criseyde is chosen in prisoner exchange; despite his strong desire to

steal Criseyde away, Troilus never objects to the decision by Parliament because he puts his princely duty before his personal desire:

‘First, syn thow woost this town hath al this werre  
For ravysshying of wommen so by myght,  
It sholde nought be suffred me to erre,  
As it stant now, ne don so gret unright.  
I sholde han also blame of every wight,  
My fadres graunt if that I so withstoode,  
Syn she is changed for the towne goode.’ (IV. 547-553)

In addition to these similarities, the fact that both protagonists live in a pagan kingdom, not a medieval Christian society should be emphasized; during their attempts to win love, they behave as servants of the God of Love and Venus, without mentioning the Christian God. In the *Filocolo*, pagan deities – Venus, Amor, and Mars – in material form help the knight attain his goal. As an ancient Trojan, Troilus also serves pagan deities, although after his death he derides earthly, mutable love, for the consummation of which he once gave his prayer to those pagan gods.<sup>12</sup> Noble status and service to the God of Love are important aspects of the idealised knight in romance.

While Troilus always endeavours to live up to the knightly ideal of romance, giving more precedence to the public good and setting his lady’s reputation over his personal desire, his idealism is frequently questioned by the two characters around him: Pandarus and Criseyde. Even though Pandarus teaches Troilus how to behave as a courtly lover, he himself is no romanticised character; rather, it is Pandarus who introduces a more realistic viewpoint into the courtly atmosphere represented by Troilus in *TC*.<sup>13</sup> Go-between figures like Pandarus appear in both romance and fabliaux. From the eleventh century to the fifteenth century, ‘two well-defined and ideologically opposed traditions emerge

from them: going between that facilitates idealized love, and going between in the service of lust and sexual conquest'.<sup>14</sup> While a certain amount of similarity with other go-betweens in courtly romances can be seen,<sup>15</sup> in his manipulation of Troilus and Criseyde Pandarus is more similar to the shrewd hag of *fabliaux* than the go-betweens of romance.<sup>16</sup> When Pandarus, in advance of Troilus, steals into the chamber in which Criseyde is sleeping, he turns the atmosphere of the scene into something more suitable to *fabliaux*:<sup>17</sup>

And as [Pandarus] com ayeynward pryvely,  
His nece awook, and axed, 'Who goth there?'  
'My dere nece,' quod he, 'it am I.  
Ne wondreth nought, ne have of it no fere'.  
And ner he com and seyde hire in hire ere,  
'No word, for love of God, I yow biseche!  
Lat no wight risen and heren of oure speche'.

'What, which wey be ye comen, benedicite?'  
Quod she; 'And how, unwist of hem alle?'  
'Here at this secre trappe-dore', quod he.  
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Lat me som wight calle!'  
'I! God forbede that it sholde falle',  
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich folye wroughte!' (III. 750-63)

The unexpected appearance of Pandarus, who sneaks into the chamber using a secret door, heightens a tension between Criseyde and him, as if he comes to rape her for himself. Some critics have pointed out the strong similarities between Pandarus and the Old Woman in *Pamphilus*;<sup>18</sup> Chaucer's Pandarus brings Troilus into his lover's chamber without the lady's consent, which can be seen as a typical beginning of a rape in *fabliaux*.<sup>19</sup> Pandarus's intrigue obviously creates a

more fabliaux-like atmosphere, which draws a clear line between Pandarus and other romance go-betweens. Go-betweens in romance like Guinevere in Chretien's *Cligés* and Alexandrine in *William of Palerne* never forcefully demand that a lady reciprocate.<sup>20</sup>

Similarly, Boccaccio also introduces such a go-between who arranges the lovers' meeting. The most conspicuous example of the similarity between Boccaccio's go-between and Pandarus is seen in the stratagem designed by the go-between so that the knight may steal into his lady's chamber without being noticed by her.<sup>21</sup> Like Chaucer's Pandarus, Glorizia, the faithful servant of Biancifiore, hides Florio behind the curtain surrounding the bed. As night falls, Florio sneaks into her bed from there and reveals himself. In this scene, which serves as an introduction to the climactic scene of consummation, Glorizia plays a crucial role, like Chaucer's go-between, making the atmosphere less romance-like.<sup>22</sup> Mieszkowski points out a strong similarity between Glorizia's and Pandarus's roles as go-betweens, who, like bawds in fabliaux, forgo the consent of the lovers.<sup>23</sup> Although it is contestable whether Chaucer directly models his go-between on Boccaccio's, Glorizia's actions may well have guided Chaucer in inventing Pandarus.

Pragmatic advice on love from Ovid is another token of the link between the two works. In addition to going between the lovers, Pandarus is always giving pragmatic advice to them.<sup>24</sup> Pandarus is a practical mentor for Troilus, and sometimes criticises his behaviour from an ironic point of view. His pragmatism is mainly based on the love doctrine derived from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*. When Pandarus teaches Troilus how to behave appropriately in order to acquire Criseyde's love, his role is similar to the mentor's in the *Ars Amatoria*, who shows how to win another's favour.<sup>25</sup> When Troilus is forced to part from his love, however, Pandarus turns to the other Ovidian source: the *Remedia Amoris*, which is written for disillusioned youth.<sup>26</sup> By alluding to Ovid's remedy for madness caused by love, Pandarus attempts to extinguish Troilus's

hopeless love and comfort his friend (IV. 400-06). When he urges Troilus to take another lover, saying ‘The newe love out chaceth ofte the olde’ (IV. 415), the contrast between the knight’s idealism and Pandarus’s pragmatism becomes more apparent; Troilus, the idealised lover, cannot accept the practical remedy presented by Pandarus.<sup>27</sup> Pandarus’s intrigues and his advice show his detachment from the romance world that Troilus thinks he himself inhabits, underlining the incompatibility between Pandarus’s realistic point of view and Troilus’s idealism.

Just as Pandarus plays the role of practical mentor, sometimes taunting his pupil’s delusion the *Filocolo*, in which the role of mentor is played by several characters, also depicts Ovidian doctrine in contrast with the knight’s love. When the Duke of Montoro and Ascalion find Florio lamenting over his separation from his love, they plot to distract him with other attractive ladies. Ascalion addresses the Duke:

‘Florio mai con Biancifiore carnale diletto non ebbe; e se noi potessiamo fare che con alcuna altra bella giovane l’avesse, leggiere saria dimenticare quello ch’egli non ha per quello che possedesse’. (III. 9)<sup>28</sup>

This plot, conceived by the two mentors, can be regarded as an adaptation of Ovid’s doctrine about the transitory nature of love. However, the idealised lover cannot accept Ovidian pragmatism; although much tempted by two lovely maidens, Florio manages to quell his libido with the help of Amor. In both works, Ovid’s practical love doctrine contrasts with and questions the idealised view of the romance hero.

Those Ovidian doctrines are also used to question the hero’s behaviour in both works. Pandarus’s remark on Troilus’s inaction in his chamber serves as another telling example: Pandarus ‘sayde, “Awake, ye slepen al to longe! / It semeth nat that love doth yow longe, / That slepen so that no man may yow wake”’

(II. 545-47). Here, Pandarus tries to remind Troilus of the doctrine of courtly love, which is based on Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. It says that those who suffer from love-sickness cannot sleep soundly; Troilus, according to Pandarus, does not suffer from love, sleeping too long. A similar accusation can be found in Boccaccio's *Filocolo*. Informed by Venus that Biancifiore is to be burned at the stake as a result of the king and queen's collusion, Florio rushes to the place of execution. Before he arrives, however, this knight in glittering armour stops for a rest and falls fast asleep. The narrator accuses him of this failure: 'O Florio, or che fai tu? Tu fai contro all' amore leggi. Niuno sonno si conviene a sollecito amadore' (II. 56).<sup>29</sup> If it were not for Mars, the other deity who aids the hero, Florio would have slept on, and Biancifiore would have been executed. Boccaccio's blaming of Florio sounds ironic, because Florio also serves the God of Love and has nothing but respect for 'il santo libro d'Ovidio' (I. 45), which states that love deprives men of sound sleep. This scene clearly shows Boccaccio's quasi-ironical, detached view of the ideal code extolled in medieval romance. In the *Filocolo*, only the pagan deities, especially Venus and Mars, fully support the hero's perspective on love; however, once they are disdained from a Christian standpoint after the hero's conversion, they no more appear in the story. In medieval romances, knights' sentiments are often described with Ovidian doctrine and motifs of love. The *Filocolo* and *TC*, while adapting such a conventional usage of Ovid's love doctrine, also simultaneously present satirical characters in relation to it, which differentiate the two knights from other, typical romance heroes, like Tristan and Lancelot.

It is not only the practical view represented by Ovidian doctrine, but also political concerns that criticize the knight's purely idealised love. The Spanish king and queen fear that their son's love for Biancifiore, whose lineage is considered obscure, will threaten their kingdom. For this political reason, they strive in vain to impede Florio's love by eliminating Biancifiore. They also play a similar role to that of Pandarus when they determine to send Florio to Montoro, in order



to separate him from Biancifiore. The queen gives her husband counsel on this matter:

‘Secondo le vostre parole, questo amore è molto novello, e senza dubbio egli non può essere altramente, e simigliantemente gli amanti novelli sono, né mai altro fuoco non li scaldò ; e però questo fia lieve a spegnere seguendo il parer mio, né niuna più legger via ci è che dividere l’uno dall’altro. [...] gli potrà agevolmente della memoria uscir questa giovane, non vedendola egli’. (II. 8)<sup>30</sup>

The queen supposes that the absence of Biancifiore will easily divert Florio’s love, but this is proven wrong. In *TC*, this argument is put forth by Pandarus, who tries to urge Troilus to give up his love (IV. 421-27); his advice, ‘Absence of hire shal dryve hire out of herte’ (IV. 427), is quite similar to that of the queen in the *Filocolo*. When Florio laments over his separation from Biancifiore, it turns out even Ascalion, teacher of the lovers and guide to Florio on his love pilgrimage, shares the political anxiety, and thereby gives a hand to the king and queen. Just as Pandarus constantly offers pragmatic advice in the face of Troilus’s complaints, Ascalion and the Duke try to assuage Florio’s despair with their practical counsel, which confirms the isolation of Florio’s romantic love, like that of Troilus.

Romance ladies, who are also engaged in idealised love with their knights, and whose love is the ultimate object of the romance knights’ quest,<sup>31</sup> function as another apparatus for ironical description of the knights’ behaviour as inadequate. In *TC*, Criseyde’s characterisation is one of the most controversial issues: she is an example of female fickleness, a victim of patriarchy, and a courtly lady in the romance tradition.<sup>32</sup> As Windeatt points out, Criseyde is described as a more refined lady than her model in the Italian source.<sup>33</sup> She also shows constant anxiety for her reputation should she become involved in a furtive affair with her knight.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, during the love affair, she appears to have

the same perspective as Troilus. Criseyde does, whether self-consciously or not, act like a lady in romance; Criseyde's words, 'Who yaf me drynke?' (II. 651), show herself to be a lady, like Iseult in the Tristan legend. This scene undoubtedly alludes to the Tristan story, in which a love-potion leads to the tragic love between Tristan and Iseult.<sup>35</sup> Yet, later, her nature is revealed to be rather as similar to that of her uncle, Pandarus.<sup>36</sup> Criseyde behaves as a romance figure as long as her defender, Troilus, can protect her from menace; however, as the story passes through the climactic consummation scene and spins out of control, she is forced to become a more practical figure in order to preserve herself. Revealing her pragmatic perspective, she can afford no longer to act as an idealised lover like Troilus.<sup>37</sup>

Just as Ascalion and the Duke of Montoro consistently remain conscious of the political significance of the case of Florio's love, Criseyde's strong concern about her social status is clear from the beginning of the story. Moreover, after Criseyde is chosen for the prisoner exchange and required to go to the Greeks, she no longer acts as a character in romance. When the parliament accepts the claim of the Greeks, Troilus offers to elope with Criseyde:

'So late us stelen priviliche away;  
For evere in oon, as for to lyve in reste,  
Myn herte seyth that it wol be the beste'. (IV. 1601-03)

His words 'to lyve in reste' suggest his pastoral view of elopement, reminding us again of the Tristan legend. Thomas, and his successor, Gottfried von Strassburg, depict the elopement in an idyllic way; in their escape, Tristan carries a harp as well as his armour.<sup>38</sup> Criseyde, however, flatly refuses Troilus's proposition, because of her characteristic political awareness. She says, 'Drif out the *fantasies* yow withinne, / And trusteth me, and leveth ek youre sorwe, / Or here my trouthe' (IV. 1615-17). Deriding his idyllic view as 'fantasie', Criseyde provides

a more practical alternative: to return to Troy by means of tricking her father, Calkas. Instead of going in tandem with Troilus, a romance knight, it is Criseyde who finalises the isolation of the romance lover in *TC*. Her radical change from romance lady to this pragmatic figure parallels the shift in tone of the story from romance, which keeps focusing on the process of Troilus's love, to more historical narrative, which deals with a series of events in the Trojan War.

Like Criseyde in *TC*, Biancifiore also has a twofold nature: on the one hand, she is a romance heroine who is engaged in idealised love with her knight; on the other, she is the daughter of Christian pilgrims descended from a noble Roman family. Biancifiore, who, like Florio, has great respect for Ovid's 'santo libro' (I. 45), appears to share the hero's idealised view, but the other facet of her nature differentiates her from Florio, the pagan prince. After the climactic scene of marriage, Biancifiore reveals herself intrinsically incompatible with pagan romance because of her Christian roots. She transforms from the romance heroine who is devoted to the God of Love to a more historical figure, who enlightens the Spanish kingdom with Christian truth. For Florio, the idealised romance knight, the consummation of his love and marriage with Biancifiore are the ultimate goals of his love pilgrimage. After this fulfilment, Florio wants to return to his kingdom and see his parents, who are still grieving over his departure. But it is Biancifiore who detains him; inspired by something divine, she begs Florio to visit Rome, the birthplace of her dead parents. Their visit to Rome thus leads to the prince's conversion from paganism to Christianity, and that in turn leads to Spain becoming a Christian kingdom. That Biancifiore brings this more practical and historical phase to the romance narrative seems to prove another side of her nature, which is not at all compatible with the romanticised perspective of Florio. Indeed, the pagan gods who have aided Florio's quest also suddenly vanish from the story as soon as Christianity reveals its dominance. Converted to Christianity, Florio goes so far as to condemn these deities as 'la iniqua [credenza]' (V. 71).<sup>39</sup> Biancifiore's Christian nature and the vanishing of the pagan gods, without

whose aid in preceding scenes Florio's quest for love would have been thwarted, imply that it is only Florio who exists in the vain delusion encouraged by the pagan deities in romance. The condemnation of paganism in the *Filocolo* reminds modern readers familiar with Chaucer's *TC* of the latter work's ending and Troilus's ascension. Just as Biancifiore discloses the vanity ascribed to pagan deity and their ideal in romance, Troilus's deriding of his own earthly love as vanity can be interpreted as denoting the limitation of the knightly ideal, which Troilus persists in pursuing as a idealised lover.

The awakening from idealised romance is represented by the metamorphosis of Fileno in the *Filocolo*. In the former part of the story, Fileno comes to love Biancifiore without noticing her love for Florio; thereby, he invites Florio's anger and exiles himself to avoid Florio's ungovernable rage. Lamenting over his inability to see Biancifiore, Fileno turns into a fountain (IV. 3).<sup>40</sup> This transformation into a fountain is caused by his hopeless love, and the origin of this anecdote can be traced back to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.<sup>41</sup> Once Florio attains the purpose of his love pilgrimage, he revisits the fountain with Biancifiore, now his wife. Florio forgives Fileno, and when Biancifiore is reflected in the fountain, it suddenly changes its form:

Egli dicea ancora queste parole, quando i circostanti videro le chiare acque coagularsi nel mezzo e dirizzarsi in altra forma abandonando il loro erboso letto, né seppero vedere come subitamente la testa, le braccia e 'l corpo, le gambe e l'altre parti d'uno uomo, di quelle si formassero, se non che, riguardando con maraviglia, co' capelli e con la barba e co' vestimenti bagnati tutti trassero Fileno del cavato luogo, e davanti a Filocolo il presentarono. (V. 37)<sup>42</sup>

Fileno turns into a fountain in the atmosphere of romance; however, as the narrative shifts to a more historical mood, he recovers his original form. Fileno's retransformation can be interpreted as overtly signalling, or revealing the change

from illusory romance to more realistic narrative.

It is also noteworthy that Chaucer uses the image of transformation into a fountain to describe Pandarus's weeping. When Troilus first faces Criseyde on his sickbed, he begs for her mercy. Pandarus is moved to tears by his 'manly sorwe', which 'myghte han mad an herte of stoon to rewe' (III. 113-14); while Pandarus weeps as if 'he to water wolde', he 'poked evere his nece new and newe' (115-16). Criseyde refuses Pandarus's persistent prompting, saying, 'I not nat what ye wilne that I seye' (121). The image of the transformation into water contrasts with the realistic exchange between Pandarus and Criseyde, which makes his weeping look somehow absurd. This allusion shows an interesting parallel between the two works: while Fileno's transformation implies the shift of the narrative from one mode to the other, Chaucer's similar allusion shows the absurdity of the reference to romance-like metamorphosis, juxtaposed by the completely different perspective. This suggests the possibility that the two authors shared a critical view of the unrealistic nature inherent in romance.

All of these similarities – juxtaposition of the knights' behaviour with a more pragmatic perspective, heroines' sudden transformation from romance ladies to more practical characters, and a statement on the vanity of earthly love made by the knights themselves – are the common features shared by *TC* and the *Filocolo*. The *Filocolo* introduces Florio as a knightly figure who appears in romances; however, his knightly behaviour is often regarded as absurd or inappropriate from the more practical and political viewpoints held by other characters, including his parents. His knightly ideal seems to be supported by his lover and pagan deities, but at the end of the story, Biancifiore turns out not to be on the same page as him, and the deities disappear from the story.

In a similar manner, Chaucer's *TC* is designed to isolate the knight. His behaviour is repeatedly exposed to critical opinion by the more pragmatic figures around him, Pandarus and Criseyde. The knightly ideal, embodied by the knights, does not work, and is never accepted for what it is in either of the two

works; at the end, furthermore, the two knights themselves abandon earthly love, which was a main impetus for their previous actions. The simultaneous existence of the knightly ideal and criticism of it from a more practical point of view is conspicuous in the two works. The hypothesis that Chaucer's *TC* isolates Troilus's ideal, just as the *Filocolo* does, means that several scenes in the story bring a tinge of irony to their representation of Troilus's behaviour. Troilus's idealised behaviour, which would be acceptable in romance, is critically observed through the pragmatic eyes of other characters, Criseyde and Pandarus.

As an immediate model for Chaucer, Boccaccio also revealed the discrepancy between the romance ideals and more realistic perspective. Interestingly, in the *Filocolo* even the romance knight shows his consciousness of the absurdity of the ideal of romance. Before Florio rushes to the tower in which Biancifiore is held captive, the hero's inner conflict is depicted. His reason dissuades Florio from exposing himself to the risk of death for love, and it is his reason that urges him to love others, calling him a fool: 'O poco savio, quale stimolo a tante pericolose cose infino a qui t'ha mosso e vuole a maggiori da quinci inanzi muovere?' (IV. 89).<sup>43</sup> Florio answers, 'Folle no, ma innamorato si: così agl'innamorati conviene vivere. Guardisi chi in cotali pericoli non vuole vivere, d'incappare nelle reti d'amore' (IV. 89).<sup>44</sup> While his love urges the knight to refuse the realistic advice his reason offers, it shows how absurd such behaviour appears from a practical point of view.<sup>45</sup> Unlike other versions of this legend, including the Middle English version, with which Chaucer might have been familiar,<sup>46</sup> the *Filocolo* demonstrates a satirical stance on the courtly ideal through the inner voice of the hero reasoning with himself.

The *Filocolo*, derived from the widespread love romance of Floris, isolates its protagonist and throws an ironical light upon his behaviour as a courtly lover and as an ideal knight in romance. Similarities between the two knights in isolation suggest the influence of Boccaccio's isolated knight on Chaucer's protagonist. In the *Filocolo*, devices similar to those of Chaucer are used to

isolate the idealised lover. The incongruity of the chivalric ideal embodied by the knights is common to both *TC* and the *Filocolo*. Given that Boccaccio's romance had an enormous impact on Chaucer in his composition of both *TC* and *The Canterbury Tales*,<sup>47</sup> it is highly possible that its anti-romance nature inspired Chaucer, who was acquainted with various romances, including those of amorous knights who blindly pursue their love. The *Filocolo* and *TC* throw into relief the discrepancy between romance ideal and realistic perspective based on reason. Not unlike Florio, Troilus is surrounded by characters who do not share his romanticised perspective on love. The isolation of Troilus clarifies the absurdity of his behaviour through others' point of view. His status as both idealised and isolated thus might as well be labelled as 'quixotic', as Charles Muscatine once called it.<sup>48</sup> The isolation of the two knights serves as a proof to show the critical nature of medieval romance in the two works, and clarify Boccaccio's influence on Chaucer's creation in this aspect.

### Notes

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1. For the edition of *Il Filocolo*, see *Tutte le Opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, a cura di Vittore Branca, vol. 1 (Verona: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1967). Similarities between *TC* and the *Filocolo* have long been acknowledged. See, for example, Karl Young, *The Origin and Development of the Story of Troilus and Criseyde* (New York: Gordian Press, 1908); Hubert M. Cummings, *The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Works to the Italian Works of Boccaccio* (New York: Phaeton P, 1916); David Wallace, *Chaucer and the Early Writings of Boccaccio* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1985).
  2. For the explanation of medieval derivatives of the romance of Floire and Blancheflor, see Patricia E. Grieve, *Floire and Blancheflor and the European Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
  3. Geraldine Heng, for example, indicates the difficulty in defining romance according to a certain subject, plot or style in her study *Empire of Magic*:

- Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 3-4.
4. Quotations from Chaucer's *TC* are from *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) with line numbers in parentheses.
  5. Sarah Kay, 'Courts, Clerks, and Courtly Love', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. by Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 81-96 (pp. 84-87), and Krueger, 'Questions of Gender in Old French Courtly Romance', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance* ed. by Krueger, pp. 132-49. See also Krueger, 'Introduction' to *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance* ed. by Krueger, pp. 1-9 (p. 5). 'For an elite minority, romances were a vehicle for the construction of a social code – chivalry – and a mode of sentimental refinement – which some have called "courtly love"'.
  6. Craig A. Berry, 'The King's Business: Negotiating Chivalry in *Troilus and Criseyde*', *Chaucer Review*, 26 (1992), pp. 236-65 (p. 248). See also Derek Brewer, 'Chivalry', in *A Companion to Chaucer*, ed. by Peter Brown (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 58-74. As Brewer briefly summarises, the ability to fight is crucial to the code of chivalry (p. 58); in addition, the knights' attitude towards women is the other pole of the ideal of chivalry (p. 61). For the concept of ideal knights in romance, see also James I. Wimsatt, 'Type Conceptions of the Good Knight in the French Arthurian Cycles, Malory and Chaucer', in *Heroes and Heroines in Medieval English Literature*, ed. by Leo Carruthers (Cambridge: Brewer, 1994), pp. 137-48.
  7. For example, C. S. Lewis considers *Troilus* a courtly lover because of his characteristics, some of which are not found in Boccaccio's Italian source. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936). See also Thomas Kirby, *Chaucer's Troilus: A Study in Courtly Love* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1940); Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Barry Windeatt, *Oxford Guides to Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp. 144-151 and pp. 275-79; Marcia Smith Marzec, 'What Makes a Man? *Troilus*, Hector, and the Masculinities of Courtly Love', in *Men and Masculinities in Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde'*, ed. by Tison Pugh and Marcia Smith Marzec (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008), pp. 58-72.
  8. See Young, *The Origin and Development*. See also Windeatt, *Troilus and*



- Criseyde*, p. 147.
9. See Windeatt, p. 148, and Corinne Saunders, 'Chaucer's Romances', in *A Companion to Romance: From Classical to Contemporary*, ed. by Corinne Saunders (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 85-101 (pp. 97-101). Chaucer represents Troilus's love as counterpart to adventure in romances, making Troilus an inexperienced youth in love.
  10. The description of Troilus having a feminine appearance is discussed by Stephanie Dietrich in "'Slydyng" Masculinity in the Four Portraits of Troilus', in *Masculinities in Chaucer*, ed. by Peter G. Beidler (Cambridge: Brewer, 1998), pp. 205-20. Feminised appearance can be interpreted as another characteristic of romance knights, including Floris in the legends of Floris and Blanchefflore.
  11. See Gretchen Mieszkowski, 'Revisiting Troilus's Faint', in *Men and Masculinities in Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde'*, ed. by Tison Pugh and Maricia Smith Marzec (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008), pp. 43-57. Mieszkowski also points out that swooning can also be interpreted as an attribute of romance knights, comparing Troilus with romance heroes like Tristan and Lancelot.
  12. A. J. Minns, *Chaucer and Pagan Antiquity* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1982). Minnis argues that Chaucer intentionally writes the Trojan world as situated in the pagan past, which historically existed before the advent of Christ. Troilus improves through his earthly love and attains the status as a good pagan, but his limitations are also derived from its historical setting (pp. 93-107). See also Wallace, *Chaucer and the Early Writings of Boccaccio*, pp. 61-72. Wallace also regards Chaucer's Troilus as a pagan who reaches the 'threshold of enlightenment', demonstrating the analogy between Troilus and Florio at this point.
  13. Muscatine, pp. 124-53. See also Saunders, pp. 99-100.
  14. Gretchen Mieszkowski, *Medieval Go-Betweens and Chaucer's Pandarus* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), p. 1. This paper follows Mieszkowski's definition of the two types of go-betweens: 'Whereas the go-betweens for lust routinely create situations in which people are tricked, trapped, or coerced into sex, these romance go-betweens never violate one person's consent in the service of another person' (p. 78). Mieszkowski also points out that, in romance, the go-between's role is usually played by the man's best friend or comrades.
  15. Windeatt, *Troilus and Criseyde*, p. 146.

16. See Carol Falvo Heffernan, *Comedy in Chaucer and Boccaccio* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2009). See also Mieszkowski, *Go-Betweens*. Heffernan and Mieszkowski point out the strong similarity between Pandarus and bawds in medieval comedies.
17. Muscatine, p. 150.
18. For example, see Mieszkowski, 'Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde', *Chaucer Review*, 26 (1991), pp. 109-32; Laura Kendrick, *Chaucerian Play: Comedy and Control in the Canterbury Tales* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Thomas Jay Garbáty, 'The Pamphilius Tradition in Ruiz and Chaucer' in *Philological Quarterly*, 46 (1967), pp. 457-70.
19. Mieszkowski, 'Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde', p. 115. However, it is also noteworthy that Chaucer intentionally makes it vague whether Criseyde is really ignorant of Pandarus's true intention when 'she to hym gan to rowne, / And axed hym if Troilus were there' (III, 568-69): 'Nought list myn auctour fully to declare / What that she thoughte whan he seyde so, / That Troilus was out of towne yfare, / As if he seyde therof soth or no' (III, 575-78).
20. See *Go-betweenes*, p. 84. Discussing go-betweenes in an idealised world, Mieszkowski first names Guinevere in Chretien's *Cligés*. In this narrative, Guinevere goes between lovers 'who love each other desperately but who are unable to confess their love without her aid'. Go-betweenes in the idealised world, like Guinevere, never force one of the lovers to accept the other's love, as Pandarus does.
21. See Young, pp. 143-48. Pointing out seven similarities between the two scenes, Young focuses on the similarities between these two go-betweenes.
22. In other versions, like the Middle English version, the knight is also brought to the lady without her noticing; however, while the English Floris jumps out in the presence of Clarice, another maiden (l. 865), Boccaccio's Florio waits until Biancifiore falls asleep, and then, undressing himself, reveals his identity to her in her bed. For the edition of *Floris and Blancheflour*, see *Sentimental and Humorous Romances*, ed. by Erik Kooper (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2006), pp. 11-38.
23. See Mieszkowski, *Go-betweenes*, p. 159.
24. W. A. Davenport, *Chaucer: Complaint and Narrative* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1988), pp. 136-37.
25. See Maud Burnett McInerney, "'Is This Mannes Herte?': Unmanning Troilus through Ovidian Allusion' in *Masculinities in Chaucer*, ed. by Peter

- Beider (Cambridge: Brewer, 1998), pp. 221-35.
26. Michael A. Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), p. 59. 'Pandarus, as master of the *Ars Amatoria* and therefore a master of flexibility, helped Troilus deal with change and fulfil his desire. As master equally of the *Remedia Amoris*, Pandarus will attempt again to succor his friend when the next change occurs, when Criseyde must leave Troy'.
  27. McInerney, "'Is This Mannes Herte?': Unmanning Troilus through Ovidian Allusion', p. 234.
  28. ['Florio has never had carnal knowledge of Bianciflore; and if we could arrange that he experienced it with some other lovely maiden, he might easily forget what he lacks in exchange for what he does possess']. The translations into modern English are from *Il Filocolo*, trans. by Donald Cheney with the collaboration of Thomas G. Bergin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985).
  29. ['Oh Florio, now what are you doing? You are going against the rules of love. The careful lover is permitted no sleep']. See also James H. McGregor, *The Shades of Aeneas: The Imitation of Vergil and the History of Paganism in Boccaccio's 'Filostrato', 'Filocolo', and 'Teseida'* (Athens: The University of George Press, 1991), p. 39.
  30. [According to your own account, this love is very recent; and to be sure, it could be not be otherwise. Similarly, the lovers are new to this and have never been touched by other flames. And so in my opinion this flame will be easy to extinguish. The simplest way to do this is to separate them from each other [...] once out of his sight, the young woman may easily pass out of his memory].
  31. In medieval romances, ladies are also expected to play an active role in love. See Helen Phillips, 'Love', in *A Companion to Chaucer*, ed. by Brown, pp. 281-95 (p. 289). In what has been labeled 'courtly love', unlike medieval marriage, which presupposes male dominance and lordship over women, ladies in romance often play a dominant role; thus, in romance, ladies are usually not only an object of male desire, but dominant figures to whom knights pledge their fidelity. See also Geoffrei de Charny, *A Knight's Own Book of Chivalry*, ed. by Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), p. 52. As is implied by Geoffrei de Charny, love for noble ladies enhances knights' virtues and helps them win honour through deeds of arms and so become good knights.

Even when knights themselves are unaware of honour, ‘they succeed so well because they put their hearts into winning the love of a lady’.

32. Windeatt, *Troilus and Criseyde*, pp. 279-88.
33. *Ibid.*, p.148. ‘Rewriting Boccaccio’s rather unladylike heroine, Chaucer takes pains to restore his Criseyde to the refinement and delicacy of a lady, a suitable heroine of romance’. See also Saunders, pp. 96-101.
34. While Chaucer’s Criseyde is concerned about her reputation, Boccaccio’s Criseida wants to keep love secret for the pleasure of love (*Filostrato*, IV. 153).
35. Windeatt, p. 150. See also Young, *The Origin and Development*. Young also points out the influence of the Tristan story on Boccaccio’s *Filostrato*.
36. Davenport, pp. 136-37 (pp. 152-63). Davenport emphasises Criseyde’s role as ‘the spokesperson for practicality’ (p. 159).
37. Her detachment from romance is already suggested in the early part of the story. When her uncle finds her, Criseyde is reading a romance, the *Roman de Thèbes* (II. 100-03). This scene implies both her familiarity with romance and, ironically, her distance from it: perhaps Criseyde exists outside romance, as a reader, and not within it as a character.
38. Niikura Shunichi, *Yōroppa Chūseijin no Sekai [The World of Medieval People]* (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1983), p. 180.
39. [the evil faith].
40. ‘Ma pure pietà del mio dolore vinse gli’iddii, li quail chiamando, come io ho detto che faceva, sedendo in questo luogo, mi sentii sopra subitamente venire un sudore e tutto occuparmi, e, dopo questo, ciò che quello toccava in quello medesimo convertiva, e già volendomi con le mani toccare e asciugare quello, né la cosa desiderata toccava, né la mano sentiva l’usato ufficio adoperar [...] per che io incontanente me conobbi in questi liquori trasmutato.’ [But finally pity of my grief overcame the gods, and when I was calling on them, as I have said I was wont to do as I sat here, I felt myself suddenly overcome by a sweating which wholly possessed me, and thereafter whatever it touched it turned into that same element, and even as I was trying to touch myself with my hands and dry it off, I neither touched the thing I sought nor felt my hand performing its usual office. [...] And from this I suddenly realized I had been transformed into these liquids].
41. In *Metamorphoses*, for example, Arethusa in Book V and Byblis in Book IV turn into fountains.
42. [He was still saying these words when the bystanders saw the clear waters

coagulate in the middle and rise up in another form, abandoning their grassy bed; and they could not understand how the head, the arms and body, the legs and the other parts of a man were suddenly formed of those waves; but as they watched this in amazement, they drew Fileno out of the hollow place with his hair, beard and clothing all wet, and presented him before Filocolo].

43. [You fool, what is it that has been goading you till now into such dangerous behavior, and is now moving you on into even greater dangers henceforth?]
44. [Not a fool, but a lover; lovers must live this way. Whoever does not want to take such risks should be careful not to be trapped in the nets of love].
45. Ramon Lull, *Book of Knighthood and Chivalry and the Anonymous Ordene de Chevalerie*, ed. by Brian R. Price (California: The Chivalry Bookshelf, 2004), p. 34. According to Lull, knights must possess wit and discretion, and, as Marzec also points out (p. 61), their behaviour should be guided by their reason; however, Florio, urged by his extreme love, does not heed what his reason suggests. This scene shows that Florio's behaviour as a lover is described as contradicting the knightly ideal.
46. For example, in the Middle English *Floris and Blancheflour*, Daris thinks Floris is a fool: 'Daris now that child bihalt, / And for a fol he him halt (ll. 577-78)', but the knight's inner conflict between reason and love is not depicted.
47. Wallace, p. 60. See also N. R. Havely, ed. and trans., *Chaucer's Boccaccio: Sources of 'Troilus' and the Knight's and Franklin's Tales* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1980).
48. Muscatine calls Troilus 'an ancestor of Don Quixote' in his *Chaucer and the French Tradition*, (p. 137). He suggests the possibility that Chaucer's Troilus is a quixotic hero, but does not expand further on this topic.