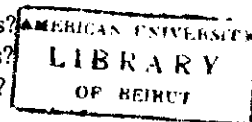


English 210
Final Exam – Spring 2005 – Dr. Wrisley
Saturday, June 4, 3pm, Nicely 101

Part I Close reading and comparison of specific quotations. In the tables below, you will find three pairs of passages (A, B and C). You should write two short essays about 2 pairs of quotations. Each essay should be about 3 paragraphs long. Please concentrate primarily on these passages, comparing and contrasting them. You do not need to answer all the questions below, but can use them to guide you. (20 points each, 40 points total)

- What are the authors' similar or different goals?
- What are specific, relevant details in the text that illustrate the authors' goals?
- What are specific images, language or stylistic features used by both authors?
- What general themes in the authors' texts do these passages illustrate? How?
- Does one of the passages explain the issue more convincingly? How?
- What can you say about the texts that we did not say in class?



A "Saying one's prayers"

<p>"The lady... uncovered her head and spoke. She answered the knight, saying that she would take him as her lover if he believed in God, and if their love was really possible. For he was of great beauty. Never in her life has she seen so handsome a knight—nor would she ever. "My lady," he said, "you are right. I wouldn't want you to feel guilt because of me, or doubt or suspicion. I do believe in the creator who freed us from the grief that Adam, our father, led us into when he bit into the bitter apple. He is, will be, and always was the life and light of sinners. If you don't believe me send for your chaplain(=priest). Say that you've suddenly been taken ill and that you desire the service that God established in this world for the healing of sinners. I shall take on your appearance to receive the body of our lord God, and I'll recite my whole credo(=Christian prayer, profession of faith) for you. You will never doubt my faith again." He lay beside her on the bed but he didn't try to touch her, to embrace her or to kiss her.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Yonec, ll. 136-163)</p>	<p>"By a mountain next morning he makes his way / Into a forest fastness (=a secluded forest), fearsome(=intimidating) and wild; / High hills on either hand, with hoar (=old) woods below, / Oaks old and huge by the hundred together... / The good knight on Gringolet glides thereunder / Through many a marsh and mire(=wetlands), a man all alone; / He feared for his default (=failure), should he fail to see / The service of that Sire that on that same night / Was born of a bright maid(=maiden), to bring us his peace. / And therefore sighing he said, "I beseech (=pray) of Thee, Lord, / And Mary, thou mildest mother so dear, some harborage (=safe ground) where haply (=by chance) I might hear mass / And thy matins(=morning prayer) tomorrow—meekly I ask it, / And thereto proffer(=offer) and pray my pater and ave and creed(=three prayers, to God, to the Virgin and the statement of belief)." He said his prayer with sighs, / Lamenting his misdeed (=offense); / He crosses himself, and cries / On Christ in his great need. / No sooner had Sir Gawain signed himself thrice(=three times) / Than he was ware(=conscious), in the wood, of a wondrous dwelling, / Within a moat(=body of water surrounding a castle), on a mound, bright amid boughs(=branches) / Of many a tree great of girth (=size) that grew by the water—A castle as comely (=attractive) as a knight could own.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ll. 740-767)</p>
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B "Interiors"

<p>"In this city is the see (=domain) of the Great Khan in a full great place and the most passing fair in all the world, of which the walls be in circuit more than two mile. And within the walls it is all full of other palaces. And in the garden of the great palace there is a great hill upon which is another palace, and it is the most fair and the most rich that any man may</p>	<p>"To the feast of St. Aaron celebrated in Caerleon and in many other cities, the lord had been summoned to come with his friends, according to the custom of the land, and to bring his wife and his son, all richly attired(=dressed). So it was; they went. But they didn't know the way; they had a boy with them who guided them along the right road</p>
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devise(=imagine). And all about the palace and the hill be many trees bearing many diverse fruits. And all about that hill be ditches great and deep. And beside them be great viviers (=small lakes) ... And all about these ditches (=a drainage hole) and viviers is the great garden full of wild beasts, so that when the Great Khan will have any desport(=recreation, sporting) either to take any of the wild beasts or of the fowls(=birds), he will let chase them and take them at the windows without going out of his chamber. This palace where he see is is both great and passing fair. And within the palace in the hall there be twenty-four pillars of fine gold... And in the midst of this palace is the mountour (=platform for mounting a horse) for the Great Khan that is all wrought of gold and precious stones and great pearls. And at four corners of the mountour be four serpents of gold, and all about there is made large nets of silk and gold and great pearls hanging all about the mountour. And under the Montour be conduits(=channel for fluids) of beverage that they drink in the emperor's court ... And the hall of the palace is full nobly arrayed(=decorated) and full marvelously attired(=decorated) on all parts in all things that men apparel with any hall. And first at the chief of the fall is the emperor's throne full high where he sitteth at the meat (=where he feasts)...

(Mandeville's Travels, pp. 163-5)

until they came to a castle—none more beautiful in all the world. Inside, there was an abbey of very religious people. The boy who was guiding them to the festival housed them there. In the abbot's chamber they were well served and honored. Next day they went to hear Mass before they departed, but the abbot went to speak to them to beg them to stay so he could show them the dormitory, the chapter house(=meeting house attached to a monastery), and the refectory(=eating room). And since they were comfortable there, the lord agreed to stay. That day, after they had dined, they went to the workshops. On their way, they passed the chapter house, where they found a huge tomb covered with a cloth of embroidered silk, a band of precious gold running from one side to the other. At the head, the feet, and at the sides burned twenty candles. The chandeliers were pure gold, the censers (=incense burners) amethyst (=a precious violet-colored stone), which through the day perfumed that tomb, to its great honor. They asked and inquired of people from that land whose tomb it was, what man lay there. The people began to weep and, weeping, to recount that it was the best knight, the strongest, the most fierce, the most handsome and the best loved, that had ever lived."

(Yonec, ll. 467-516)

C "What do women want?"

"What will your coupling in bed be like? Even those who love each other best have frequent differences there, although they may give no indication of it in the morning; and often, from minor matters, though they might love one another a great day, either one or the other will suffer bitterly on their own. She must often do his will much against her own will with great sorrow. All his lechery(=sinful sexual indulgence) and his indecent games she must put up with in bed, however obscenely devised, whether she wants to or not. May Christ preserve every maiden from asking or desiring to know what they are; for those who experience them most, find them to be most hateful. And call those women truly happy who have never known what they are, and who hate what such women practice. But if someone lies sunken deep into the mire(=difficult situation), though it seems evil to him there, he cannot climb up from it when he wants to. Think about it, blessed woman, for once that knot of marriage is knotted, whether he is a fool or a cripple(=handicapped person), whatever he might be, you must remain with him."

(Hali Meidhad, p. 301)

"And now of my fifth husband I will tell.
 God grant his soul may never get to Hell!
 And yet he was to me most brutal, too;
 My ribs yet feel as they were black and blue,
 And ever shall, until my dying day.
 But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,
 And therewithal (=besides) he could so well impose,
 What time he wanted use of my belle chose
 (=French "pretty thing"),
 That though he'd beaten me on every bone,
 He could re-win my love, and that full soon.
 I guess I loved him best of all, for he
 Gave of his love most sparingly to me.
 We women have, if I am not to lie,
 In this love matter, a quaint (=odd) fantasy;
 Look out a thing we may not lightly have,
 And after that we'll cry all day and crave(=desire).
 Forbid a thing, and that thing covet(=desire) we;
 Press hard upon us, then we turn and flee.
 Sparingly offer we our goods, when fair;
 Great crowds at market for dearer(=more expensive)
 ware,
 And what's too common brings but little price;
 All this knows every woman who is wise.

(Wife of Bath's Prologue, ll. 509-530)





Part II : Essay (60 points total)

Please choose one of the two essay topics listed below and write an analytical, well-organized essay of several pages length. You should discuss three different works in your essay. The sub-questions are only suggestions. You are not required to answer them directly. Use them only if they are useful to you.

1 The question of courtliness.

- Romance or romance-inspired texts promote certain kinds of special behavior. What are these forms of behavior?
- How do those ideals match--or not match--the reality of behaviors that we find?
- How is the court described as a place where values are debated?
- Do characters learn their values? If so, how? If not, what is the origin of the "courtly" behavior?
- Is being courtly the same as being noble?
- What does the court seem to think about other people's situations: poverty, churlishness, wickedness, clothing or other marks of identity?
- Are politeness and courtliness presented as just a cover up? If so, then, for what?
- What are the limits of a courtly society?

(Choose three of the following texts : Apollonius of Tyre, Bisclavret, Yonec, Sir Gawain, Wife of Bath's Tale, Squire's Tale)

2 Transformations and metamorphoses. Over the term, we have read different stories in which the limits of human and animal (or non-human) behavior are tested.

- When do human beings transform themselves?
- Sometimes it is into another kind of human altogether. Other times they become even animal like. When, and how, are characters represented in forms other than their true nature?
- Are their ever hybrids?
- Why does one change shape? To hide? To represent a spiritual (or other) transformation?
- When do characters change for good? When is the transformation temporary?
- If appropriate, what does the time of year (particularly spring) have to do with their transformations?

(Choose three of the following texts: The Phoenix, Wonders of the East, Bisclavret, Hali Meidhad, Yonec, Sir Gawain, Mandeville)

In your essay, you will be graded not only on

- *the thoroughness of your answer*
- *your synthesis of the various authors' thought*
- *the quality of your written English*
- *the originality of your argument, and*
- *the reformulation of the ideas you have been exposed to, that is, how far you go beyond what was said in class.*

Essays which simply have one paragraph for each author and lack synthesis will not receive as many points as more synthetic ones.

