Université de Montréal

Gender Performativity in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*

par

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Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des arts et des sciences en vue de l'obtention du grade de maîtrise en Études anglaises option avec mémoire

Août, 2017

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Résumé

Mon mémoire s'intéresse à la performance des genres dans l'histoire de Troïlus et Criseyde telle que présentée dans *Troilus and Criseyde* de Geoffrey Chaucer et *Troilus and Cressida* de William Shakespeare. En s'appuyant sur la théorie de Judith Butler, mon analyse explore d'abord l'influence de l'amour courtois sur les attentes sociales dépeintes dans les deux versions du récit. Les règles d'Andreas Capellanus servent de base pour comprendre les restrictions imposées par l'amour courtois et leur effet sur l'histoire d'amour de Troïlus et Criseyde. Ensuite, les thèmes de l'amour et de la guerre aident à définir la performance de la masculinité de Troïlus et Diomede, tout en permettant de comparer leur relation avec Criseyde. Finalement, la commodification du corps de la femme est présentée comme une conséquence inévitable de la performance de la féminité telle qu'encouragée par la société. L'alternance entre les textes de Chaucer et de Shakespeare montre que la performance des genres a très peu évolué entre le Moyen-Âge et la Renaissance et suggère ultimement que certaines attentes sont toujours les mêmes dans la société occidentale contemporaine.

Mot-clés : Chaucer, Shakespeare, performance des genres, amour courtois, commodification du corps

Summary

My thesis explores gender performativity in the story of Troilus and Criseyde as presented in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. Using Judith Butler's theory, I analyze the influence of courtly love on the social expectations depicted in both versions. Andreas Capellanus' rules are used to understand the restrictions imposed by courtly love and their effect on Troilus and Criseyde's love story. Then, the themes of war and love help define how Troilus and Diomede perform masculinity, while allowing a comparison between their relationship with Criseyde. Finally, the commodification of the female body is presented as an inevitable consequence of the performance of femininity as society encourages it. Throughout my analysis, I will switch between Chaucer and Shakespeare's texts in order to show that gender performance evolves very slightly between the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and to suggest ultimately that some expectations are still the same in contemporary western society.

Keywords: Chaucer, Shakespeare, gender performativity, courtly love, body commodification

Table of Contents

Abbreviations i

Dedication ii

Acknowledgments iii

1. Introduction 1

2. Courtly Love: A Tradition of Gender Conventions 4

3. War and Love: Defining Masculinity 22

4. “Ere the first sacrifice”: Commodifying the Female Body 43

5. Conclusion 65

6. Works Cited 68

Abbreviations

To Caroline and Émilie, my best friends,

for never complaining when I talk about

English literature for hours and hours.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Joyce Boro, my director of research, for supporting me since the very first day. I could not have written my thesis without your kind advice.

I would also like to thank Dr. Jessica Riddell and Dr. Jonathan Newman for helping me develop my passion for Shakespearian and medieval literature through their courses at Bishop's University.

I would also like to thank my friends, those who were there when I started this journey and those I met along the way. Thank you for your everlasting support.

Lastly, I would like to thank my boyfriend, Mounir, for standing by my side during these two years.

Introduction

My thesis analyzes the influence of courtly love on gender performativity in two versions of the story of Troilus and Criseyde, Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. I will argue that the way in which the characters perform their gender plays a determining role in developing and maintaining romantic relationships. Indeed, failing to perform femininity or masculinity according to social expectations can lead to the end of a relationship and to heavy criticism by other characters. My aim is to comprehend the consequences of courtly love if its principles are followed strictly by lovers. As a code that regulate romantic relationships, it restricts the possibilities of gender performance to a set of pre-defined gendered behaviours and creates inextricable situations. I want to show that while courtly expectations can preserve a relationship, it can also complicate it deeply by erasing true freedom of choice. When the only actions that are allowed are those dictated by the courtly tradition, gender performance is comparable to a prison, and failure to follow its rules to breaking out: freedom is gained, but one's reputation and social acceptance are threatened.

The first chapter serves as an introduction to courtly love and explores how its principles shape Troilus and Criseyde's love story in Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play. I will compare the characters' behaviours to the standards of courtly love to show that they fit perfectly in that tradition. Then, using Andreas Capellanus' rules, I will look at how courtly love influences gender performativity by limiting the actions that are admissible in a given set of circumstances. Indeed, courtly love is at the center of the social constructs of masculinity and femininity, and thus Troilus and Criseyde must conform to the tradition to perform their gender in accordance with society's expectations. The end of the chapter will then analyze

how Criseyde's betrayal contravenes courtly love and how the other characters are prone to condemn her for it.

The second chapter focuses on masculinity and compares how Troilus and Diomede perform their gender. I will use the themes of love and war as the basis of chivalrous masculinity, tying it back to courtly love expectations. I will argue that, in both versions of the story, Diomede successfully performs his gender while Troilus struggles with effeminacy in Chaucer's poem and with courtly love itself in Shakespeare's play. Troilus' failure to perform masculinity according to society's expectations will be presented as the reason why his relationship with Criseyde cannot survive. Finally, I will use the character of Pandarus as a different example of masculinity: I will investigate how his role as a go-between makes him another standard of courtly love.

Lastly, the third chapter will look at the commodification of the female body as a consequence of the value put on beauty and virtue in courtly love, since such qualities can then be used to determine a woman's worth as a commodity. I will show how *Troilus and Criseyde* presents Helen and Criseyde as "more than people" or "less than people", following Simone De Beauvoir's theory, and how it facilitates their commodification by separating them from men. I will also examine how women are used to secure homosocial bonds between men. I will then suggest that Criseyde is complicit in her own commodification because she understands that it is inevitable and that her best option is to find a way to benefit from it. Finally, I will argue that body commodification is part of how Criseyde "becomes" a woman and performs her gender according to the historical depiction of femininity.

Through my analysis, I wish to show that gender performativity and courtly love are closely linked together in the story of *Troilus and Criseyde*. Social expectations are based on

courtly love ideals, and the characters are supposed to behave accordingly. When Criseyde betrays Troilus and consequently fails to perform her femininity in accordance to Capellanus' rules, she stops being a courtly heroine and becomes the incarnation of a false woman, forever shamed for her mistake. Similarly, when Troilus fails to perform his gender successfully either by being effeminate or by disrupting courtly love, he jeopardizes his relationship with Criseyde and facilitates her seduction by Diomede. Troilus and Criseyde's relationship cannot survive because they do not perform their gender according to the tradition of courtly love. Yet, it is that same tradition that forces them to be apart.

Courtly Love: A Tradition of Gender Conventions

Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* present two versions of the same tragic love story anchored in the tradition of courtly love. As a code that regulates the relations among sexes, courtly love is deeply rooted in gender conventions and encourages specific practices depending on the gender of the individual who attempts to follow its guidelines. I will use Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity as an addition to courtly love to analyze the gender expectations present in *Troilus and Criseyde*. According to Butler, "gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self." (Performative Acts 520) I intend to show that, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, gender is performed in romantic relationships through the pre-established rules of courtly love, and that these rules only allow a limited number of choices. I will use Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play to analyze the historical evolution of the story and the characters between the late fourteenth and the early seventeenth century. Additionally, I will work with Andreas Capellanus' *The Art of Courtly Love* to define the rules of courtly love, Robert Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid* to explore the expectations of medieval readers concerning Criseyde's fate, and J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* to understand Criseyde's betrayal through the lens of performative utterances.

The concept of courtly love comes from the French notion of "amour courtois", which originates in the works of Chrétien de Troyes and in the seminal analysis offered by Gaston Paris. It is commonly accepted that "the *Conte de la charette* was the first and fullest representation of a novel conception of love that had entered French literature and life."

(Newman vii) The tradition shows “this kind of love as a ‘code’, implying both a system of rules for conduct and a quasi-judicial method of settling contested points.” (Newman vii) Expectations of chastity and of secrecy are only examples of the conventions that code would use to regulate romantic relationships. It is important to understand that courtly love conventions can be in contradiction with the general social expectations concerning love, and especially sexuality. In fact, Francis X. Newman states that “It is the special mark of *amour courtois* that it entails the simultaneous acceptance of contradictory notions, contradictory at least by the conventional standards of the Middle Ages.” (vii) For example, sexual relationships outside of marriage are encouraged by courtly love, but frowned upon in society. I will address these contradictions further in later arguments in order to offer nuances to Capellanus’s rules of courtly love and to show a more accurate picture of medieval relationships.

In order to offer a clear analysis, it is important to look at the defining gender criteria in courtly romances. Indeed, courtly love creates masculine and feminine ideals by assigning specific characteristics to the men and the women involved. Masculinity is represented by qualities such as strength and aptness in battles. As “secular love-lyrics idealizing unattainable relationships between a knight and his lady” (Hadley 85), courtly romances often display military actions, which have a determining role in the definition of masculinity: military accomplishments give value to male characters and help them gain their beloved’s favours. According to Dawn Hadley, “A knight's prowess made him sexually attractive to ladies” and, therefore, “Courtly love certainly had a place in defining the masculine military ideal” (84). Additionally, the male lover is expected to be “lovesick and wildly heroic” (Schaus 175), as well as “brave” (Schultz 84).

In contradistinction, the idealization of female characters puts an emphasis on her physical beauty. C.W. Jentoft cites "the incomparable beauty of the lady" as part of "well-established traditions in courtly love" (102). Moreover, the woman can be described as "noble in her virtue and behaviour" (Ferrante 79) and is thus expected to show her virtue in her speech and actions in order to preserve her honour and reputation. To be worthy of love, she must be "pure and free of all flaws", "faultless", "chaste" and "modest" (Schultz 84-85). It is also worth noting, in relation to Shakespeare's virgin Cressida, that "The youthful maiden, unmarried yet sexually mature, no longer a child but not yet an adult, served as a profound symbol of ideal womanhood throughout English culture of the later Middle Ages" (Phillips), including in courtly romances. I would suggest that, when the heroine is a maiden, the protection of her virginity goes along with virtue; likewise, faithfulness would be a proof of virtue for both the virgin Cressida and the widowed Criseyde.

The aforementioned characteristics are heavily gendered and apply either to male or female ideals, but not to the opposite. For example, if "Men may be pure or chaste, and this may be admirable, […] that is not ordinarily what causes women to fall in love with them" (Schultz 85). Similarly, women who possess masculine traits such as bravery can be praised for it, but can also be seen as threatening masculinity. To perform his or her gender properly in regards to courtly love, one must comply with pre-defined conventions that regulate male and female qualities. Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* offer compelling examples of these gendered expectations.

In both versions of the story, Troilus and Diomede perform according to the ideals of masculinity in courtly love. I will explore the subject in greater length in the second chapter, but it is worth noting that the Trojan War is an important component of the plot and allows

men to prove their aptitude in battle. Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play present Troilus and Diomede as skilled warriors, which makes them courtly ideals. They are clear representations of the "knight in shiny armour" whose appeal depends on his military prowess as much as his mastery of courtly behaviours.

In a similar manner, Criseyde's presentation follows courtly expectations, such as physical beauty. From the beginning of Chaucer's poem, the narrator tells us that "Criseyde was this lady name al right. / As to my doom, in al Troies cite / Nas non so fair" (Book I 99-101) and proceeds to describe her "natif beaute" (Book I 102). She is even "so fair a creature" (Book I 115) that Hector has mercy upon her despite her father's treason. Later, through Troilus' perception, Criseyde is described as "fairer […] / Than evere was Eleyne or Polixene" (Book I 454-455). Shakespeare's play offers a comparable portrait of Cressida. Troilus tells Pandarus how "fair Cressid comes into my thoughts" (1.1.30), and Cressida's uncle responds that "Well, she looked yesternight fairer than ever I saw her look, or any woman else." (1.1.33-34) Pandarus then reinforces the idea of his niece's beauty by stating that "an she were not kin to me, she would be as fair o' Friday as Helen is on Sunday" (1.1.77-78). A great emphasis is put on Criseyde's physical beauty, which shows that she personifies the feminine ideal of courtly love. Moreover, in both versions, Criseyde is compared to one of the most famous heroine of medieval romances, Helen. That comparison makes it clear that the authors intend Criseyde to be an exemplary figure of female characters in courtly love.

The rules listed by Capellanus are an addition to these characteristics and help us understand the expectations put on Troilus and Criseyde as the protagonists of courtly love. Jeff Massey states that "the most practical source for a sense of what Chaucer may have understood as courtly love remains Andreas Capellanus. Andreas's twelfth-century *De arte*

honeste amandi is surely the most important medieval text directly addressing the particulars of courtly love—fin'amors—listing as it does the customs and manners that drove the quasi-religion along." (20) A great example is the fourteenth rule, which highlights how "The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized" (Shoaf xxiv). In fact, the courtly heroine is often married, which justifies a virtuous rejection. In Criseyde's case, however, the problem lies elsewhere: in Chaucer's poem, she is a widow and, as indicated by the seventh rule, "When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor" (Shoaf xxiv); in Shakespeare's play, she is a virgin, and her chastity is at stake. She must reject Troilus' advances in order to protect her reputation.

Indeed, in both versions, Criseyde originally refuses Troilus' love. In Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, when Pandarus tells his niece that "Certein, best is, / That ye hym love ayeyn for his lovynge" (Book II 390-391), Criseyde responds by beginning "to breste a-wepe anoon / And seyde, "[…] Allas! what sholden straunge to me doon / When he, that for my beste frend I wende, / Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?" (Book II 408-413). Her distress makes it apparent that she wishes to reject Troilus in order to protect her virtue and reputation, and thus conform to the ideals of courtly love. Regardless of her feelings towards him, she believes that she should not love him: she tells Pandarus that

> I wolde han trusted, douteless,
>
> That if that I, thorugh my disaventure,
>
> Hadde loved outher hym or Achilles,
>
> Ector, or any mannes creature,
>
> Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
>
> On me, but alwey had me in repreve (Book II 414-419).

Her claim is unmistakably linked to keeping her “honour sauf” (Book II 480) since her “estat lith now in jupartie” (Book II 465). Criseyde understands that to get approved by society, she must perform according to a set of gendered rules, which guide her to protect her chastity and reputation even against her own feelings, had she loved any man.

Shakespeare’s Cressida reacts in a similar manner to Pandarus’ efforts to make her care about Troilus. When her uncle affirms that “Troilus is the better man” (1.2.64) compared to Hector, she responds that “there’s no comparison” (1.2.66), clearly indicating her disagreement. Later, she does admit that “my heart’s content firm love doth bear” (1.2.301) for Troilus, but she swears that “Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear” (1.2.302). She fears that “Things won are done; joy’s soul lies in the doing” (1.2.294) and that “Men prize the thing ungained more than it is” (1.2.296). This reflects the fourteenth rule of courtly love: the value of love rests in its attainment. Cressida knows that she must not yield to Troilus’ advances too easily or she risks losing her value, in his eyes as much as in other men’s eyes. She performs to satisfy the expectations of society rather than her own desires.

Butler points out that “there are nuanced and individual ways of *doing* one's gender, but that one does it, and *that* one does it *in accord with* certain sanctions and proscriptions is clearly not a fully individual matter” (525, her emphasis). Chaucer’s Criseyde and Shakespeare’s Cressida react differently to the pressure that Pandarus puts on them: in the poem, Criseyde faces despair and sorrow while, in the play, Cressida answers with wit and humour to mock her uncle’s words. Nevertheless, both of them “do” their gender in a way that permits them to function within the norms of courtly love. By rejecting Pandarus’ attempts to make her accept Troilus’ love, Criseyde follows the rule that states that “difficulty of attainment makes it prized” and performs as expected in accordance to her gender.

I mentioned earlier that contradictions surround sexuality in courtly love and in the medieval society in general. In fact, "It was the habit of the men of the Middle Ages to think man the superior of woman, to see sexual union (actual or desired) as permissible only within marriage, to consider sensuality a hindrance to union with the divine" (Newman vii), but courtly love is grounded in a strong sexual desire between two people who should not act on it. While "the aim of courtly love was the moral improvement, even the ennobling, of the lover" (Newman vii), such ennobling is attained through seduction and sexual passion. Courtly love protagonists must navigate the expectations of chastity present in the medieval society alongside the expectations of sexual desire contained in courtly conventions. This complicates particularly the intimate encounter that does happen between Troilus and Criseyde.

In Chaucer's poem, sexuality comes as the denouement of a long process of seduction and responds to the temptation that both characters have fought valiantly against until that point. The scene is described as a blissful experience that transcends physical pleasure:

> This is no litel thyng of for to seye;
> This passeth every wit for to devyse;
> For eche of hem gan otheres lust obeye.
> Felicite, which that thise clerkes wise
> Comenden so, ne may nought here suffise;
> This joie may nought writen be with inke;
> This passeth al that herte may bythynke. (Book III 1688-1694)

We can sense in these lines forgiveness for the sexual nature of Troilus and Criseyde's meeting. Indeed, the words chosen by Chaucer give a positive image of the moment: it brings "Felicite" and "joie" to the protagonists rather than culpability or regrets. Moreover, their

surrender to their physical desires serves as an act of ennobling as much as the prior wooing since the sexual act in itself transcends physical satisfaction. The experience is so strong that it "passeth al that herte may bythynke" and it "may nought writen be with inke". It is clear that sexuality reinforces their bond and strengthens the feelings they have for each other. However, it is still an act that goes against the belief that sexuality should only be experienced within legal union. If Troilus and Criseyde perform their gender in accordance to courtly love conventions, they ignore social expectations, and vice versa.

In Shakespeare's play, the night that Troilus and Cressida spend together offers another development. In Chaucer's version, Troilus deplores his necessary departure at the rise of the day:

> Quod Troilus, "Allas, now am I war
> That Pirous and tho swifte steedes thre,
> Which that drawen forth the sonnes char,
> Han gon som bi-path in dispit of me;
> That maketh it so soone day to be;
> And, for the sonne hym hasteth thus to rise,
> Ne shal I nevere don him sacrifise." (Book III 1702-1708)

In comparison, the affection that Shakespeare's Troilus feels for Cressida seems to have diminished after their relationship has been sexually consumed. When morning comes, Troilus unmistakably shows impatience towards Cressida: while she tries to grasp a few more minutes in his presence, he tells her that "The morn is cold" (4.2.1) and that she will "catch cold and curse [him]" (4.2.19) if she stays with him. Moreover, he encourages her to go "To bed, to bed!" because "Sleep kill those pretty eyes" (4.2.5). It would be possible to assume that

these concerns are real and that he sincerely worries about her, but Cressida interprets it differently. She denounces that “You men will never tarry” and expresses regrets that “I might have still held off, / And then you would have tarried.” (4.2.20-22) It is clear that she sees her acceptance of his sexual advances as the reason why he wants to go: now that he has satisfied his needs, he does not seek to stay with her longer than necessary. Following Capellanus’ fourteenth rule, Cressida obviously thinks that she should have rejected Troilus in order to make her love more valuable. Her surrender to Troilus’ sexual desires threatens her gender performance: she is caught between different expectations concerning her behaviour. While society would expect her to be chaste, courtly love bends this expectation with its inclusion of sexual passion as a requirement.

In fact, under Shakespeare’s pen, Troilus and Cressida’s sexual encounter is not as spiritually fulfilling as in Chaucer’s depiction. The conversation that follows the night they spend together in the play is rather cold compared to the adjectives used by Chaucer’s narrator. Such a difference brings our attention to the contradictory nature of sexuality in courtly love: both authors write the same story, but their interpretation of the sexual denouement is different. In Chaucer’s version, it is a moment of calm before the storm: it emphasizes the strength of Troilus and Criseyde’s love before their painful separation. It follows the conventions of sexual desire and passion in courtly love, and justifies it by describing the experience as an act that transcends physical pleasure. In contradistinction, in Shakespeare’s retelling, it is already the beginning of the end as far as the romantic relationship is concerned. Troilus’ impatience and Cressida’s regrets show us that the previous night did not bring them together, but apart. Shakespeare’s play is written in accordance with

the expectations of virtue and chastity, and depicts sexuality as something that will bring remorse and threaten the attachment of the two lovers.

It is also important to note that a woman's value in the marriage economy depends on her chastity. While Chaucer's Criseyde is restrained by her status as a widow in mourning, she is certainly not expected to be a virgin: she would have lost her virginity with her late husband long before her relationship with Troilus. Shakespeare's Cressida, however, is presented as a maiden. Her economic value is at stake when she decides to spend the night with Troilus. As Harris points out, "Cressida realizes that she is subject to re- and devaluation according to the laws of supply and demand […] she is afraid that her value will depreciate if and when she makes herself available to him." (308) In order to perform her femininity in the most proper manner and to preserve her value, Cressida should have rejected Troilus indefinitely despite the pressure put on her by Pandarus and Troilus himself. There is no place for her own desires: whether or not she wants to be sexually involved with Troilus is not important; her only choice, if she wants to conform to social expectations, to is to protect her chastity and her reputation by refusing physical love.

Following the sexual development of her relationship with Troilus, Criseyde begins to move away from the conventions of courtly love. The struggles of performing her gender through courtly love practices become even more challenging, and the complexity of the matter leads her to make the mistake of being unfaithful. As an expected quality in romances, faithfulness plays an important role in the story of *Troilus and Criseyde* and marks the proof of Criseyde's betrayal. Capellanus' rules guide its application: while the thirty-first rule states that "Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women" (Shoaf xxv), the third rule clarifies that "No one can be bound by a double love" (Shoaf xxiv).

Furthermore, the twelfth rule mentions that “A true lover does not desire to embrace anyone except his beloved” (Shoaf xxiv). According to these statements, the same person can be loved by two suitors but, in return, they can only have one single love interest. These rules are not gendered: we can suppose that both men and women are expected to obey them. However, it is closely associated with the quality of chastity, which is attributed specifically to women in the tradition of courtly love. Therefore, for Criseyde, to be unfaithful is a double-failure at gender performativity.

I would suggest that Henryson’s need to punish Cresseid in his *Testament of Cresseid* is due to her failure to perform her gender properly. Henryson himself clearly understand the conventions of courtly love: he describes “fair Cresseid” and “worthie Troilus” (42) according to the gender conventions of courtly love and emphasizes Cresseid’s beauty throughout the poem. She is presented as “the flour and A per se / Of Troy and Grece” (78-79), and it is clear that her value is based greatly on her physical appearance. In fact, her punishment is chosen in relation to her betrayal: she loses her beauty, which was the source of her value as an ideal of courtly femininity, because she failed to perform according to courtly love expectations of chastity and faithfulness. Jentoft claims that

> the tragic irony which informs the poem is dependent upon two well-established traditions in courtly love literature, the incomparable beauty of the lady and the necessity of secrecy to preserve her reputation. Poetic justice is served in the poem because the punishments fit the crime: leprosy destroys Cresseid's beauty, and the fact that "sum knew her weill" at the lazer house (1.393) ruins her reputation (102).

While some could argue that courtly love was not as popular in the fifteenth century, Jentoft indicates that "the conventions and formalities of courtly love were far from dead in the fifteenth century." In fact, they still kept their charm and their moral value (102). Therefore, it is not surprising that Criseyde would be punished because she did not follow the rules of courtly love properly and consequently failed to perform her femininity appropriately.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that women were never depicted as unfaithful in medieval romances. In fact, the first rule of courtly love is that "Marriage is no real excuse for not loving" (Shoaf xxiv), and it is often the woman who is married. Criseyde follows a long tradition of unfaithful women. A compelling example is that of Guinevere who is married to Arthur, but still loves Lancelot according to the rules of courtly love. Another one is that of Iseult, who is married to Marc, but is simultaneously Tristan's lover. Helen herself, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, is married to Menelaus, but has been abducted by Paris and lives at his side. As mentioned previously, the unattainability of these women is based on their marital status, and when they do reciprocate the knight's feelings, they are adulterous. The image of an unfaithful woman is at the center of courtly romances. The lack of punishment for their behaviour is then justified by their faithfulness to their courtly lover if not to their husband. One could similarly argue that Chaucer's Criseyde is not punished for the love she shares with Troilus even if it takes place during her mourning period because it is the relationship at the center of the courtly romance. Courtly conventions need to be respected specifically in courtly relationships, which are not usually marital relationships.

Fickleness is also a feminine characteristic, as portrayed in Henryson's description of Venus:

> Bot in hir face semit greit variance,

> Quhyles perfyte treuth and quhyles inconstance.
>
> Under smyling scho was dissimulait,
>
> Provocative with blenkis amorous,
>
> And suddanely changit and alterait,
>
> Angrie as ony serpent vennemous,
>
> Richt pungitive with wordis odious;
>
> Thus variant scho was, quha list tak keip:
>
> With ane eye lauch, and with the uther weip (223-231).

As shown in these lines, a woman is expected to be unpredictable and changeable. We can conclude that the instability of Criseyde's is not a surprise, but it is nonetheless a fault. In order to conform to courtly love conventions and to society's construction of an ideal femininity, she should have been able to restrain her fickleness. Based on Mazo Karras' exploration of medieval sexuality, we could say that, by transgressing the expectations of her gender, she is "hyper-feminine", "deviating from expectations by taking to an extreme the qualities that others of their gender kept under control" (5). While changeability could be in Criseyde's nature, she needs to fight against it and maintain proper behaviour.

Given the assumption that women are inconstant by nature, it is logical that men's gender performativity is experienced through jealousy. According to Capellanus, love and jealousy are tied together: the second rule states that "He who is not jealous cannot love" (Shoaf xxiv). This statement is reinforced by rules twenty-one, "Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love" and twenty-two, "Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved" (Shoaf xxiv). Additionally, according to the twenty-eighth rule, even "A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved" (Shoaf xxv). Troilus is

not exempt of the performance of gender through the conventions of courtly love, as his jealous behaviour clearly shows. In Chaucer's version, Troilus is jealous not as much because he does not trust Criseyde, but because he does not trust the Greek men with whom she will now live. He is afraid that her father "shal yow glose / To ben a wif, and as he kan wel preche, / He shal som Greke so preyse and wel alose / That ravysshen he shal yow with his speche" (Book IV 1471-1474). He adds that "Ye shal ek seen so many a lusty knyght / Among the Grekis, ful of worthynesse, / And ech of hem with herte, wit, and myght / To plesen yow don al his bisynesse" (Book IV 1485-1488). Shakespeare's Troilus expresses his jealousy for similar reasons. He states twice that she must "be true" (4.4.61 and 4.4.77) since "The Grecian youths are full of quality, / Their loving well composed, with gift of nature flowing, / And swelling o'er with arts and exercise" (4.4.80-82). That is why "a kind of godly jealousy – / Which I beseech you call a virtuous sin – / Makes me afeard" (4.4.85-87). Capellanus' twenty-eighth rule justifies his suspicion: even the slightest doubt is enough to question the lady's faithfulness. Troilus performs his gender in accordance to Capellanus' conception of jealousy, even though that leads him to be so jealous that he almost seems to expect her to betray him.

It is worth noting that Criseyde's betrayal is based not only on romantic standards of faithfulness, but also on the promise she makes to be loyal and to return. In Chaucer's poem, she tells Troilus "Mistrust me nought thus causeless, for routhe, / Syn to be trewe I have yow plight my trouthe" (Book IV 1609-1610) and indicates that she will find "a wey / To come ayeyn that day that I have hight" (Book IV 1626-1627). The Middle English Dictionary offers the meaning of the word "plight" as "a pledge, promise, or covenant; faith", while Shoaf modernizes "hight" as "promised" (Book IV 1627). In both instances, Criseyde performs a speech act as theorized by Austin: she utters a phrase that serves the purpose of doing rather

than simply describing. She does the same in Shakespeare's play: in their conversation before her parting, she tells Troilus "I'll be true" (4.4.72), which is obviously a promise of faithfulness. However, in their agreement, it is Troilus who will "corrupt the Grecian sentinels, / To give thee nightly visitation" (4.4.75-76) rather than Cressida who will find a way to return. In both versions, Criseyde's promise binds her to be faithful.

Austin explains that "to utter the sentence (in, of course, appropriate circumstances) is not to *describe* my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it" (6, his emphasis). The main idea is that "The uttering of the words is, indeed, usually a, or even *the*, leading incident in the performance of the act" (8, his emphasis). In *Troilus and Criseyde*, Criseyde's promise is a great example of such a performative utterance: it accomplishes the action of promising by itself; it has a meaning that implies specific actions. To respect her promise, Criseyde must stay faithful to Troilus. However, she subsequently fails to be loyal: she has therefore uttered a false promise. Austin suggests an interesting theorization of performative utterances into categories to include various distinctions between a promise that is kept and one that is not. I would argue that Criseyde's promise is an "abuse", an "act professed but hollow" (Austin 18) that does not conform to the rules of an utterance properly performed. The criteria are as follow:

> (A.1) There must be an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect […],
> (A.2) the given particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.
> (B.1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and
> (B.2) completely.

> (Γ.1) […] a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings […], and further
>
> (Γ.2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently (Austin 14-15).

In Criseyde's case, it is the very last condition (Γ.2) that is not respected, as the act consequent to the utterance (faithfulness) is not performed. She made the promise appropriately (As and Bs) and, certainly, she intended to keep it (Γ.1). Due to her betrayal, she is known as "false Criseyde", but Austin's theory of performative utterances helps us understand the degree of her falseness. Indeed, she did not intend to deceive Troilus; in both versions, she expresses distress at the announcement of her departure for the Greek's camp, and it is clear that she never thinks about being unfaithful with one of their military enemy. The reasons of her betrayal go beyond mere insincerity.

In fact, Criseyde's betrayal is her only act that contravenes courtly love rules. Her subsequent attachment towards Diomede is justified by a few of Capellanus' rules of courtly love. The fourth rule declares that "It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing" and, according to the ninetieth rule, "If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely survives" (Shoaf xxiv). Moreover, the seventieth rule expresses that "A new love puts to flight an old one" (Shoaf xxiv). Once Criseyde has accepted Diomede's advances, it is normal that her love for Troilus diminishes. Diomede, as a new lover, takes the place of Troilus, and his love replaces Troilus' love. It is thus not surprising that she would come to abandon Troilus' love token to her new beloved. In Chaucer's poem, "ek a broche […] / That Troilus was, she yaf this Diomede" (Book V 1040-1041). In Shakespeare's play, the stage directions indicates that Cressida is "giving the sleeve" that Troilus previously gave her to Diomede, and she says "Here, Diomed. Keep this sleeve" (5.2.78-79). Although she immediately regrets her gesture

and retrieves it, Diomede grabs it again and keeps it. In both versions, this marks a point of no-return: Criseyde has replaced Troilus' love with Diomede's. In fact, as soon as her love for Troilus starts to decline, it is clear that Diomede will take his place. This follows the conventions of courtly love, which tends to prove that Criseyde has failed to perform them properly once, but still lives according to the tradition.

Henryson, when he chooses to punish Cresseid, bases his judgment on a single failure of gender performativity. He does not consider the courtly conventions regarding the diminution of love or the replacement of one love by another. Moreover, Cresseid is not the only one who fails to follow courtly love rules properly in Henryson's poem. The eleventh rule explains that "It is not proper to love any woman whom one would be ashamed to seek to marry" (Shoaf xxiv). It should therefore be expected that Diomede's love towards Cresseid exceeds the wish to satisfy his sexual needs. However, Henryson writes that:

> Quhen Diomeid had all his appetyte,
> And mair, fulfillit of this fair ladie,
> Upon ane uther he set his haill delyte,
> And send to hir ane lybell of repudie
> And hir excludit fra his companie (71-75).

In this poem, Diomede is not performing his gender in accordance to the rules and expectations of courtly love. He is not, in fact, a courtly lover who that has strong feelings towards his beloved. His only goal, it seems, is to "his appetite, / And Mair, fulfillit of this fair ladie", which is clearly not a behaviour that would be encouraged by the tradition of courtly love, nor in society. Both medieval and Renaissance society generally expect sexual intercourse to be experienced solely within marriage. Being a man, Diomede might encounter

less pressure to be chaste, but his actions would at least be frowned upon, especially considering that he apparently had no intention to marry Cresseid once he had fulfilled his sexual desire.

In *Gender Trouble*, Butler indicates that it is "impossible to separate out "gender" from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained" (6). In medieval romances, as well as in adaptations of such stories, courtly love is part of the culture of love and can be used to determine the expectations according to which the characters must perform their gender. Through gendered qualities and pre-established rules like the ones listed by Capellanus, courtly love creates masculine and feminine ideals that become models that must be reflected by the protagonists. Troilus and Criseyde live in accordance to the courtly tradition and perform their gender through its conventions, which leads them to blindly reproduce the same gestures made by others before them. Their options are greatly restrained and if they make the mistake to disobey one of the rules, their reputation is tarnished: Criseyde's betrayal is a single act, but she will forever be known as "false" because she failed to perform as an ideal of courtly femininity.

War and Love: Defining Masculinity

Without denying the existence of multiple masculinities, gender performativity shows that some characteristics are socially recognized, and thus expected, as masculine. In this chapter, I wish to investigate these characteristics to understand how Troilus and Diomede's performance of masculinity fit in or differ from social expectations. I will explore war and love as two main themes of masculinity since both Troilus and Diomede shape their image through their role as soldier and as lover. Moreover, I will examine their performance of masculinity as a justification for their victories and defeats in both the spheres of love and war. In Chaucer's poem, a great emphasis is put on love sickness, and the frequent display of emotions leads us to rethink the idea of masculinity, especially when Troilus is subject to crying and fainting. Diomede, on contrary, conforms to the general expectations of masculinity. In Shakespeare's play, the opposition between Troilus and Diomedes is subtler since both present strong masculine characteristics. I will analyze how Troilus' standardized performance of masculinity in Shakespeare's version affects his fate, while discussing why it is not sufficient to save his relationship with Cressida since it does not satisfy the rules of courtly love.

A defining characteristic of male protagonists in *Troilus and Criseyde* is their status as nobles. That status obviously depends on their father's own nobility. In fact, Troilus and Diomede are both sons of a worthy father: Troilus is the son of Troy's king, Priam, while Diomede is the son of Tideus, a known warrior. Both Troilus and Diomede are thus expected to match or exceed their father's accomplishments, and their identity is shaped around these expectations. As Derek G. Neal points out, in the Middle Ages, "Male experience and the meanings of maleness, it turned out, were complex and culturally variable, which meant they

might be historically variable as well." (4) Due to the variety of male experience, we must acknowledge that Troilus and Diomede's social position influences their display of masculinity. They express their gender in a way that conforms to the standards of masculine nobility rather than a universal masculinity. Knighthood in particular means that they are expected be good fighters as well good lovers.

As knights, Troilus and Diomede are expected to have physical strength and an overall valiant appearance. Chaucer offers lengthy description of their qualities which clearly indicate that they meet the physical requirements to perform military acts of chivalry. In fact, Troilus is shown as possessing physical traits that make him comparable to the God of war himself: "swich a knightly sighte, trewely, / As was on hym, was nough, withouten faille, / To loke on Mars, that God is of bataille" (II 628-630). The description of his physical qualities continues:

> So lik a man of armes and a knyght
>
> He was to seen, fulfilled of heigh prowess;
>
> For bothe he hadde a body and a myght
>
> To don that things, as wel as hardynesse;
>
> And ek to seen hym in his gere hym dresse,
>
> So fressh, so yong, so weldy semed he,
>
> It was heven upon hym for to see. (II 631-637)

Similarly, Diomede has impressive physical characteristics:

> This Diomede, as bokes us declare,
>
> Was in his nedes prest and corageous
>
> With sterne vois and mighty lymes sqare,
>
> Hardy, testif, strong, and chivalrous

> Of dedes, lik his fader Tideus.
>
> And som men seyn he was of tonge large;
>
> And heir he was of Calydoigne and Arge. (V 799-805)

The length of these descriptions shows the importance of the characters' physical qualities. Neal states that "external physical features could be taken to indicate or express essential internal traits of individual character and temperament. Masculinity was one such physically expressible feature." (8) Gender was thus reinforced by physical characteristics and, for knights, these expected characteristics would include a body made to fight. In Shakespeare's play, we do not get any description of Troilus and Diomedes' physical appearance since they would have been seen on stage. We can suppose, however, that they would have been as strongly built as their Chaucerian counterparts or wearing amour to highlight the masculinity of their characters.

Furthermore, military prowess shapes the masculine identity of male characters such as Troilus and Diomede. Neal states that medieval masculinity is often regarded merely as "sword play" (2), which shows how people naturally associate masculinity and war, to the extent of ignoring any other masculine reality. Leo Braudy writes that

> One important component of masculinity thus embodies a myth of historical connection with past models and exemplars […] As the Greek hero had to die young in the midst of battle in order to be considered a hero in song and legend, so one powerful form of masculinity is perpetually nostalgic in its judgments and standards. All the good men are already dead. That's how we know they're good. They may be dead, but their names and the masculinity they embodied live on to inspire future generations, and to ensure that other young, unmarried

> boys, who are not yet part of the settled social order, will go to war in the effort to be real men. (6)

Troilus and Diomede are historical representations of heroes who are already dead while simultaneously being young men who go to war to meet the masculine ideal of the soldier. Consequently, military accomplishments are especially important to make the characters meet the readers' expectations, not only because of gender performance, but also because Troilus and Diomede are known as talented warriors. Chaucer's play gives clear examples of their military prowess. In Book II, severe damages have been inflicted to Troilus' armor, showing that he fought valorously:

> His helm tohewen was in twenty places,
> That by a tyssew heng his bak byhynde;
> His sheeld todasshed was with swerdes and maces
> In which men myght many an arwe fynde
> Tht thirled hadde horn and nerf and rynde (638-640).

The reaction of the crowd that "cryde, 'Here cometh oure joye, / And, next his brother, holder up of Troye!'" (II 644) shows that his fights contribute to his worth and his popularity. As aforementioned, Diomede is also said to be "chivalrous of dedes" (V 796-797), which would include military accomplishments. In Shakespeare's play, Troilus and Diomedes receive praise for their contribution in the war even from their enemies. Ulysses stresses Troilus' qualities in a lengthy speech:

> The youngest son of Priam, a true knight,
> Not yet mature, yet matchless firm of word,
> Speaking in deeds, and deedless in his tongue,

[…]

They call him Troilus, and on him erect

A second hope, as fairly built as Hector. (4.5.110-123)

The fact that Troilus is "A second hope", comparable to the hope put on Hector, shows that he is a talented warrior. In a similar manner, Paris addresses Diomedes as "A valiant Greek" who "a whole week by days / Did haunt [Aenas] in the field" (4.1.8-11). The importance given to military acts in both versions of the story indicate the prevailing role of such accomplishments in men's display of masculinity.

Moreover, it must be noted that being a good warrior is tied to masculine honour. In Chaucer's poem, it is Criseyde who discusses Troilus' honour in regards to his military role. According to Derek Brewer, "Criseyde says that if Troilus's plan to elope were known, her life and his honour would be jeopardised, but here she is thinking, as he is not, of Troilu's military and therefore social responsibilities and obligations." (99) Indeed, she tells him that he would "jurparten so [his] name" (IV 1566) since people would "seye, and swere it, out of doute, / That love ne drof [him] naught to don this dede, / But lust voluptuous and coward drede" (IV 1571-1573). When she addresses "coward drede", Criseyde makes it clear that Troilus' reputation lies on his military prowess and that leaving Troy in the middle of a war would taint his reputation. Similarly, Alice Shalvi states that, in Shakespeare's play, "Diomed expresses most clearly (IV.i.25-29) that it is not hatred of the enemy which motivates one in war but rather 'emulous honour' and this is, of course, once again, the longing for military glory." (298) Here is the passage discussed by Shalvi (the lines differ slightly in my version of the play):

We sympathize. Jove, let Aenas live,

If to my sword his fate be not the glory,

A thousand complete courses of the sun!

But in mine emulous honor let him die

With every joint a wound and that tomorrow. (4.1.27-31)

In these lines, Diomedes reveals that his honour is at stake in battles and highlights the link between military prowess and masculine worth. In order to preserve their honour, men must meet the expectations of society regarding their performance of masculinity, and these expectations obviously include military accomplishments.

In addition to their military function, knights are also expected take on the role of lovers. In the previous chapter, I explored how Troilus follows the conventions of courtly love in his relationship with Criseyde. It should be noted that Diomede uses courtly manners as well in his interactions with her. In Chaucer's poem and in Shakespeare's play, he promises to be her servant, following the tradition of courtly love:

This Diomede, as he that koude his good,

Whan this was don, gan fallen forth in speche,

Of this and that, and axed whi she stood

In swich disese, and gan hire ek biseche,

That if he ecresse myghte or eche

With any thing hire ese, that she sholde

Comaunde it hym, and seyde he don it wolde. (V 106-112)

Fair lady Cressid,

So please you, save the thanks this prince expects.

The luster in your eye, heaven in your cheek,

Pleads your fair usage, and to Diomed

You shall be mistress and command him wholly. (4.4.125-129)

These two passages show that Diomede uses the language of courtly love to address Criseyde. Therefore, we can conclude that Diomede also conforms to the role of the courtly lover in his performance of masculinity.

Furthermore, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, the portrayal of lovers includes melancholic behaviours. In fact, lovesickness might be the most complex characteristic of Troilus' performance of masculinity. As soon as he falls in love with Criseyde, Chaucer's Troilus is afflicted by a "wondre maladie" (I 419), which makes him subject to sighing and to the contemplation of his beloved:

And whan that he in chamber was allone,

He doun upon his beddes feet hym sette,

And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone

And thought ay on hire so, withouten lette,

That he sat and wook, his spirit mette

That he hire saugh a-temple, and al the wise

Right of hire look, and gan it newe awise (I 358-364)

Moreover, he doesn't know "whi unwery that I feynte" (I 410) and he "called evere in his compleynte / Hire name, for to tellen hire his wo, / Til neigh that he in salte teres dreynte" (I 541-543). Troilus is clearly sick with love: he is obsessed with Criseyde and subject to sighing, fainting, and crying. While the symptoms are not as apparent in Shakespeare's story, Troilus still suffers from a moderate form of lovesickness. At the very beginning of the play,

he wants to “unarm again” (1.1.1) because his love for Cressida troubles him too much to fight. In fact, he feels

> weaker than a woman’s tear,
>
> Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,
>
> Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
>
> And skilless as unpracticed infancy (1.1.9-12).

This description focuses on the weaknesses brought by lovesickness and makes it clear that Troilus is affected by his feelings for Cressida. Additionally, he is disturbed “when fair Cressid comes into [his] thoughts” (1.1.30) and, like his Chaucerian version, he is prone to sighing: “when my heart / As wedged with a sigh, would rive in twain / […] I have […] / Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile” (1.1.35-39). Lovesickness does not make Shakespeare’s Troilus as vulnerable as his Chaucerian version; however, he still experiences the same obsession and lack of motivation for battle.

Lovesickness is undoubtedly linked to courtly love. Capellanus’ twenty-third rule states that “He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little” (Shoaf xxiv), while the fifteenth indicates that “Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved” (Shoaf xxiv). Both rules correspond to expected symptoms of lovesickness. Indeed, Lesel Dawson explains that

> those suffering from lovesickness are said to be afflicted by insomnia, loss of appetite, exhaustion, depression, mental fixations, and speechlessness. Lovers are pale and emaciated [...] and are subject to intense, fluctuating emotions: sometimes they are “gaye, cheerful and plesant”, at other times they are “drowned in teares, making the ayre to sounde with their cryes”, and at other

> times still they become “cold, frozen and in traunce, their faces pale and chaunged” (17-18).

The symptoms described by Dawson clearly match those present in Capellanus’ rules of courtly love, as well as those experienced by Troilus in Chaucer’s poem and Shakespeare’s play. Since it is part of courtly love conventions, we can suppose that lovesickness becomes an expected trait of the masculine lover’s gender performance.

Nevertheless, lovesickness can also lead to effeminacy and to a performance of masculinity that does not follow social expectations. Gary Spear states that “Ambiguity exists even within the most literal parameters, since to be ‘womanish’ in early modern culture did not apparently mean the same thing as to be ‘unmanly’.” (411) However, Criseyde’s description informs us of the opposition that existed between men and women in the Middle Ages: “alle hire lymes so wel answerynge / Weren to wommanhood, that creature / Was nevere lasse mannysh in semynge” (I 282-284). Criseyde is beautiful because she is not manly; thus, we can expect a man to be less attractive if he is “womanish”. Moreover, writing about early modern lovesickness, Dawson states that “Men's melancholy could also have derogatory associations, conveying effeminacy [...] Melancholic men are sometimes accused of being emasculated by their passions” (103), which suggests that effeminacy could be a consequence of Troilus’ symptoms in Shakespeare’s version as well. Indeed, Shakespeare’s Troilus describes himself as being “weaker than a woman’s tear” (1.1.9) and “Less valiant than the virgin in the night” (1.1.11), which emphasizes his feminine characteristics. Effeminacy is at least partially diverging from the standards of masculinity; thus Troilus navigates the limits of a failed gender performance.

As seen previously, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, courtly love governs the dynamics of gender conventions and influences the performance of masculinity by intertwining expectations about men as warriors and as lovers. War and love are therefore not mutually exclusive: despite their apparently opposite nature, they become part of the same regulations of gendered behaviour. I now intend to show that the link between war and love is even deeper: in fact, Troilus gains value as a lover because he is a warrior, and he becomes a better warrior because he is loved. Rather than being separate characteristics, love and war are actually interconnected in his performance of masculinity.

The link between war and love is never as obvious as when Pandarus tries to persuade Criseyde to love Troilus. Indeed, in Chaucer's poem, Pandarus puts a great emphasis on Troilus' military accomplishments:

> "For yesterday, whoso hadde with hym ben,
> He myghte han wondred upon Troilus;
> For nevere yet so thikke a swarm of been
> Ne fleigh, as Grekes from hym gonne fleen,
> And thorugh the feld, in everi wightes eere,
> Ther nas no cry but 'Troilus is there!'
>
> "Now here, now ther, he hunted hem so faste,
> Ther nas but Grekes blood, - and Troilus.
> Now hym he hurte, and hym al down he caste;
> Ay wher he wente, it was arrayed thus:
> He was hir deth, and sheld and lif for us;

That, as that day, ther dorste non withstonde,

Whil that he held his blody swerd in honde. (II 191-203)

Pandarus chooses to highlight Troilus' qualities as a warrior because he knows that military prowess makes a man attractive. In fact, later, Criseyde's interest for Troilus grows when she is looking at him after a fight: "Criseÿda gan al his chere aspien, / And leet it so softe in hire herte synke, / That to hireself she seyde, 'Who yaf me drynke?'" (II 649-651) It is obvious that seeing the proof of Troilus' skills in battle influences Criseyde's feelings for him, which confirms that her uncle was right. In Shakespeare's play, Pandarus also insists on Troilus' military abilities in the hope that Cressida will be seduced: "Look you how his sword is bloodied and his helm more hacked than Hector's, and how he looks, and how he goes." (1.2.238-240) As she knows her uncle's intentions, Cressida does not acknowledge Troilus' appeal, but she does not deny the importance of military qualities either. Since the story takes place in a time of war, military accomplishments would be a valuable asset for a man in society in general; therefore, it is not surprising to observe that war influences love: it is only logical for a woman to choose a man that can protect her and the city where she lives.

Being in love also makes Chaucer's Troilus a better warrior. While he lost some of his military value due to lovesickness, the mere hope of Criseyde's loving him is enough to make him a better soldier than he previously was. As soon as Pandarus leaves him, he is ready to fight again:

> Troilus lay tho no lenger down,
>
> But up anon upon his stede bay,
>
> And in the feld he pleyde the leoun;
>
> Wo was that Grek that with hym mette a-day! (I 1072-1075)

The narrator then adds that "he bicom […] the beste knyght, / That his tyme was or myghte be" (1079-1083). The transformation is clearly linked to his love for Criseyde since it happens after he gets hope that she could return his feelings. Therefore, love and war are linked in his performance of masculinity: the mere thought of Criseyde's love makes him a better man and, thus, a better knight. Similarly, love influences the military accomplishments of Shakespeare's Troilus. As mentioned previously, the play begins with him unarming because his love for Cressida disturbs him too much to fight. Yet, after his talk with Pandarus, he returns to the field with Aenas:

> AENAS: Hark what good sport is out of town today!
>
> TROILUS: Better at home, if "would I might" were "may."
>
> But to the sport abroad. Are you bound thither?
>
> AENAS: In all swift haste.
>
> TROILUS: Come, go we then together. (1.1.116-120)

Once again, as soon as Pandarus offers his help in the wooing of Cressida, Troilus gets back the will to fight. Whether he becomes a better soldier is not specified; however, it is obvious that war is linked to love since Troilus' desire to go to the field varies because of his love for Cressida. His performance of masculinity is shaped by the connection between war and love.

Additionally, Troilus and Diomede are literally fighting for Criseyde's love: they seek to battle each other to prove their worth as lovers. In Chaucer's poem, Troilus is deeply affected by Criseyde's betrayal and seeks to avenge himself on the field:

> In many cruel bataille, out of drede,
>
> Of Troilus, this ilke noble knyght,
>
> As men may in this olde bokes rede,

> Was seen his knyghthod and his grete myght.
>
> And dredeles, his ire, day and nyght,
>
> Ful cruwely the Grekis ay aboughte;
>
> And alwey moost this Diomede he soughte. (V 1751-1757)

It is obvious that his rage in battle is caused by his sadness and anger towards Criseyde. It is, however, Diomede who becomes the target of his resentment. I would suggest that Troilus does not simply want to take revenge, but also to prove his worth in comparison to his rival. By fighting Diomede, he wishes to show that he is the better man between them two and that he deserves Criseyde's love more than Diomede does. In Shakespeare's version, Troilus and Diomedes maintain their rivalry in an even more open manner. Indeed, Diomedes claims that "Tomorrow will [he] wear [Troilus' sleeve] on [his] helm / And grieve his spirit that dares not challenge it" (5.2.113-114). The declaration is a provocation, and Troilus responds to it immediately by stating that "Wert thou the devil and wor'st it on thy horn, / It would be challenged" (5.2.115-116). Both Diomedes and Troilus understand that the stake of their fight would not simply be military honour, but also the demonstration that they are worthy of Cressida's love. Love is at the center of their military competition; thus, love and war are connected in their performance of masculinity.

The rivalry culminates in Diomede's acquisition of Troilus' horse after one of their fights. Chaucer recounts that Criseyde gave Troilus' horse back to Diomede: "she hym yaf the faire baye stede, /The which he ones wan of Troilus" (V 1038-1039). While the fight is not described, we know that Diomede won the horse in battle, then offered it to Criseyde. Similarly, Shakespeare's Diomedes tells his servant to bring the horse to Cressida:

> Go, go, my servant, take thou Troilus' horse;

> Present the fair steed to my Lady Cressid.
>
> Fellow, commend my service to her beauty.
>
> Tell her I have chastised the amorous Trojan
>
> And am her knight by proof. (5.5.1-5)

In both versions, that military conquest reflects Diomede's successful seduction of Criseyde and marks his victory on Troilus. The horse is a strong symbol of masculinity since it is closely linked to knighthood; one cannot be a knight without a horse. Indeed, the word "chivalry" itself comes from the French word "cheval", the translation of "horse", which shows that the identity of a knight is centered around his horse. Therefore, Diomede proves that he is a better warrior than Troilus by taking his horse and that he is a better lover by getting Criseyde's love. Since he is better in both aspects of masculinity, we can conclude that he performs his gender better than Troilus does.

I would suggest that Diomede conquest of Criseyde depends on Troilus' performance of masculinity and that, in both versions, Troilus fails to perform his gender in a flawless manner, which allows Diomede to seduce Criseyde. As discussed previously, Chaucer's Troilus is slightly effeminate: his lovesickness brings out feminine characteristics, such as fainting or crying. His status as a "masculine" man is challenged by his feminine behaviour. Shakespeare's Troilus seems to avoid effeminacy, despite his claim that he is "weaker than a woman's tear" and "Less valiant than the virgin in the night" (1.1.9-11). These two comparisons give him feminine traits; yet, these traits are expressed by Troilus himself and are not recognized by other characters. Brian Morris suggests that "the effect of this self-deprecation upon an audience is to reveal the stature of Troilus as a soldier, and the oblique presentation is seconded by Pandarus' report of his valor in the scene immediately following."

(487) Indeed, Pandarus "extols him as the example not of virtue or beauty, but of courage and martial bearing" (Morris 488). Pandarus' description serves to negate Troilus' effeminacy by giving him obvious male characteristics. Additionally, as Spear points out, another soldier, Achilles, is actually feminized in the play:

> In Act 3, scene 3, after being taunted by Ulysses about Ajax's growing popularity and esteem, Achilles is in turn chastised by his male "varlet," Patroclus, who chides him for being "an effeminate man / In time of action," a deplorable, inverted condition […] So compelling is the charge that Achilles can answer it only by recontextualizing this effeminacy as a source of strength and power, by claiming a "woman's longing, / An appetite that I am sick withal, / To see great Hector" (11.236-37). This complex exchange, referencing multiple slippages between literal, sexed bodies and gendered discourses of power, figures masculinity as fully realized only in tension with historically and socially specific notions of effeminacy. (409)

This passage highlights effeminacy as a flaw, but it also shows that if Troilus was meant to be effeminate, it would probably be mentioned by another character, as it is the case for Achilles. The fact that the only character who points out Troilus' feminine traits is Troilus himself makes it clear that, for everyone else, he is not actually effeminate. Effeminacy is a flaw for Chaucer's Troilus, but not so much for his Shakespearian equivalent since Shakespeare's Troilus meet other people's expectations.

Shakespeare's Troilus actually fails to perform another aspect of masculinity: courtly love. While Chaucer's character is well versed in courtly language and manners, Shakespeare's Troilus seems more hesitant. Courtly love is often perceived as transcendent,

and no less than perfect, but Troilus refuses to promise such perfection: “No perfection in reversion shall have a praise in present. We will not name desert before his birth” (3.2.92-94). Troilus’ obsession also tends to be focused on sex rather than love. As Kris Davis-Brown points out, “Complaining against Cressida's ‘chasteness’, Troilus transforms Chaucer's courtly love object of reverence into a sex object.” (21) Shakespeare’s Troilus refuses to follow courtly love conventions and thus fails to perform masculinity according to social expectations.

In Shakespeare’s play, Troilus also bends Capellanus’ thirteenth rule by allowing others to know about his love. Indeed, the rule states that “When made public, love rarely endures” (Shoaf xxiv), and there is no doubt that Paris and Aenaes have noticed the nature of the relationship between Troilus and Cressida: Aenaes deplores that “Troilus had rather Troy were borne to Greece / Than Cressid borne from Troy” (4.1.50-52), and Paris responds that “There is no help” (4.1.52). Paris also confirms that he knows Troilus is at “Calchas’ house” with “the fair Cressid” (4.1.39-40). Shakespeare is fully aware of the tradition of secrecy in courtly love, as shown by Pandarus and Cressida’s reactions. Pandarus denies that Troilus is at Cressida’s home:

> AENAS: Is not Prince Troilus here?
>
> PANDARUS: Here? What should he do here?
>
> AENAS: Come, he is here, my lord. Do not deny him.
>
> It doth import him much to speak with me.
>
> PANDARUS: Is he here, say you? It’s more than I know,
>
> I’ll be sworn. For my own part, I came in late.
>
> What should he do here? (4.2.52-58).

In a similar manner, when she hears the knock at the door, Cressida wants to hide Troilus: she declares “Pay you, come in. / I would not for half Troy have you seen here.” (4.2.44-45) Both Pandarus and Cressida follow the rule of secrecy, so it is not simply an omission on Shakespeare’s part. He knows about the rule and chooses to make Troilus ignore it. Troilus is thus not performing masculinity in accordance to courtly love rules, which becomes his flaw and puts his relationship at risk: his love for Cressida is doomed as soon as others learn that it is existent.

It is therefore Troilus’ flawed performance of masculinity that allows Diomede to seduce Criseyde. In Chaucer’s poem, Troilus loses part of his value due to his effeminacy, and Criseyde’s love for him weakens as her interest in Diomede grows. Diomede serves as an example of well-performed masculinity: he possesses all the characteristics expected from a knight, without the feminization of lovesickness. Diomede’s determination makes him a more masculine character than Troilus, who needs Pandarus to even hope that Criseyde could love him. The descriptions of the two men highlight these differences. Indeed, Troilus’s description tells us that “lik a man of armes and a knyght / He was to seen” (II 631-632) and that “It was heven upon hym for to see” (II 637). Troilus shows his masculinity by his appearance; he knows how to present himself as a knight, but not necessarily how to use language to convey his qualities. He thus requires Pandarus to speak in his place. In comparison, Diomede’s description is about words and expression. Chaucer describes him “as bokes us declare” (V 799): he has a “stern vois” (V 801), and “som men seyn he was of tonge large” (V 804). The vocabulary used in this passage focuses on communication and puts the emphasis on Diomede’s ease to express himself. By being his own Pandarus, Diomede increases his chances to seduce Criseyde. In Shakespeare’s play, Diomedes attracts Cressida by showing

her that he has mastered the courtly manners, which is something Troilus cannot claim. As mentioned before, when Diomedes meets Cressida, he immediately addresses her in the language of courtly love. He calls her “fair lady” and tells her she is the “mistress” that “command[s] him wholly” (4.4.125-129). Troilus does not share the same concern with courtly love, and his flaw facilitates Diomedes’ seduction of Cressida. She can easily recognize in Diomedes the qualities that Troilus is lacking.

In addition to Troilus and Diomede, Pandarus gives us an example of a different masculinity, outside of the role of lover. Indeed, Pandarus rather fits in the conventions of courtly love by being a go-between. Gretchen Mieszkowski describes the characteristics of the medieval go-between in courtly romances:

> their motives for going between are unimpeachable. They act out of devotion to one member of the couple – often out of devotion to both of them – and without the intervener's help, at least one of the lovers seem to be in imminent danger of death from lovesickness. Since the lovers imagine each other as so unconditionally unattainable that without the go-between's help they could never be united, these go-betweens are often essential for aristocratic couples' wooing. (Medieval Go-betweens 3)

Pandarus shares the traits of the usual go-between: in Chaucer’s poem as well as in Shakespeare’s play, he facilitates the development of love between Troilus and Criseyde and he helps Troilus heal from his lovesickness. Since go-betweens were not gender-exclusive, Pandarus can safely assume that role without disrupting the standards of masculinity.

However, Mieszkowski also points out the differences between the “go-betweens for idealized love” and the “go-between for lust”. If Pandarus were strictly a courtly go-between,

he would not have tried to persuade his niece to sleep with Troilus. Actually, “It would be unthinkable […] for a go-between from this courtly tradition of idealized loving to trick or coerce someone into having sex.” (Mieszkowski Medieval Go-betweens 3) Pandarus is in fact a mixture of the go-between for idealized love and the go-between for lust. Mieszkowski states that

> Chaucer's Pandarus fits in neither tradition. [...] As the lady's relative and the lover's best friend, Pandarus is an ordinary idealized go-between by position and situation, and that is the first role he plays: counseling the lover, comforting him in his yearning, carrying messages back and forth between the lover and the lady, and helping the couples spend time together. On the other hand, essential aspects of his actions violate the fundamental conventions of going between for idealised love. (Medieval Go-betweens 4)

She adds that it is the tradition of go-betweens for lust that “accounts for the ruses and lies that yield Criseyde's seduction – those crucial elements of Pandarus' role that are altogether foreign to the idealized go-between's supportive befriending.” (Medieval Go-betweens 4) Pandarus is therefore navigating between two traditions, which creates a complex character. His role as a go-between is not intrinsically linked to his masculinity, so it does not seem to influence the perception one would have of Pandarus as a man. Nevertheless, he does go against the expectations of society in regards to the tradition of courtly love, a tradition that is closely attached to gender performance.

Moreover, as a relative of Criseyde, Pandarus puts his reputation at stake by helping Troilus consummate his love. Chaucer’s Pandarus himself makes the statement that his honour is linked to his niece’s reputation and, thus, her chastity:

> And also think wel that this is no gaude;
>
> For me were leveret thow and I and he
>
> Were hanged, than I sholde ben his baude,
>
> As heigh as men myghte on us alley see!
>
> I am thyn em; the same were to me,
>
> As wel as the, if that I sholde assente,
>
> Thorugh myn abet, that he honour shente. (II 351-357)

Knowing that, Pandarus still decides to help Troilus get into Criseyde's chamber to spend a night with her and, by doing so, he threatens his own honour by association with his niece's. It is unclear whether or not Shakespeare's Pandarus is conscious of the same danger. He certainly does not react when Cressida tells him that he acts like a "bawd" (1.3.288). Such a word presents Shakespeare's Pandarus as closer to the lust go-between than the idealized go-between and lets us think that he does not care about his niece's honour or his own. Despite his lack of concern, however, his honour would still be linked to Cressida's, and he endangers it by encouraging her to sleep with Troilus.

Nonetheless, it is finally Criseyde's betrayal that truly affects Pandarus' honour and, therefore, his performance of masculinity. Chaucer's Pandarus is speechless and "shamed for his nece hath don amys" (V 1727), which shows once again the connection between her honour and his own. In Shakespeare's play, Troilus is the one who stresses that Pandarus' reputation is linked to that of his niece when he says: "Hence, broker, lackey! Ignomy and shame / Pursue thy life, and live aye with thy name!" (5.11.35-36) Since Pandarus' honour depends on his niece's proper behaviour, her betrayal consequently jeopardizes his

performance of masculinity. Indeed, as mentioned previously, honour would be part of a man's expected qualities, and Pandarus' reputation is now stained.

Medieval and early modern masculinity is not easy to define due to the variety of masculinities that can exist simultaneously. In this chapter, I have decided to focus on the expectations surrounding the knight in the two main realms of his life: war and love. Troilus and Diomede are soldiers in a time of war, and their value as men depends on their military accomplishments. Therefore, to properly perform their masculinity, they must possess physical strength and demonstrate military prowess. As lovers, they must follow the code of courtly love and avoid effeminacy if they experience lovesickness. Through my analysis, I have shown that Troilus fails to perform his gender in a flawless manner, which influences his relationship with Criseyde and facilitates her seduction by Diomede. In both Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play, Diomede serves as a foil to Troilus' character: we can observe Troilus' flaws through Diomede's behaviour. Diomede is the counterexample that shows the reader how a man should act to perform his gender in accordance to social expectations.

Additionally, Pandarus offers us an example of how masculinity can be performed outside of the role of lover. As Troilus' go-between, he fits in the tradition of courtly love; yet, his function is complex and leads him to fail to protect his honour, an important characteristic of gender performance both for men and women. In the previous chapter, I explored the consequences of Criseyde's betrayal on her own performance, which made her name synonymous of a "false woman". Similarly, her uncle's stained honour makes him the representative of go-betweens, and his name synonymous with pimps and procurers. It is obvious that honour plays an important role in gender performance and the failure to protect one's reputation can influence people's perception, even centuries later.

"Ere the first sacrifice": Commodifying the Female Body

As discussed in the first chapter, courtly love puts a strong emphasis on the physical beauty of female characters. Women are therefore judged for their appearance and are attributed a specific value depending on their beauty. Such a value system allows men to commodify the female body in a market of exchange. I would argue that body commodification falls into gender performativity: women are objectified in society and thus interiorize an image of themselves as valuables. Criseyde and Helen act, and thus perform their gender, to protect their market value: their beauty, their honour, and their virtue serve to increase their worth. As a consequence, they implicitly consent to the commodification of their body, sometimes even using it to their own advantage. I will suggest that their actions are grounded in a historical learning of what it is to be a woman; since women have been commodified for numerous centuries, Criseyde and Helen understand their objectification as an integral part of womanhood. In my analysis, I will alternate between Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play to compare the depiction of female characters in these two texts.

Using Simone de Beauvoir as the basis of her argument, Gretchen Mieszkowski writes that women "may be more than people: the Ideal, the Eternal Feminine, Liberty incarnate, or Beatrice who leads Dante to paradise; they may be less than people: the whore, the bitch, the beautiful object, or the docile, subservient, childlike wife; but they are not simply people as men are people." (Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde 111) I will argue that, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, women are both: they are more than people when they are depicted as "ideals" and less than people when they are treated as "beautiful objects". In both cases, the result is an easier commodification of the female body: since they are not perceived as equal to men, they can be objectified without moral issues. I will also explore the role of female objectification in

the creations of homosocial bonds as presented in Eve Kosofsky Sedwick's book *Between Men – English literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. I intend to show that male characters use the bodies of women as commodities to create meaningful relationships with other men: whether they give, take, or exchange a woman, the action is meant to influence their connection with members of their own gender. Finally, I will use Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Giovanni Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Shakespeare's retelling of the same story to observe the continuing commodification of women's bodies through history. To quote De Sainte-Maure and Boccaccio, I will use the English translation offered in *The Story of Troilus* by R.K. Gordon. I wish to show that despite clear changes to Criseyde's character from De Sainte-Maure to Shakespeare, she cannot escape her commodification because it is an integral part of how she performs her gender to meet society's expectations.

In *Troilus and Criseyde*, the depiction of women as ideals makes the commodification of their body easier since they are not regarded as people with desires or feelings. Criseyde is described as a "hevenyssh perfit creature" and "lik a thing inmortal" (I 103-104); she is presented as "aungelik" (I 102), and Troilus does not know "wheither [she is] goddesse or woman" (I 425). Mieszkowski argues that "The male defines himself as the One in opposition to an Other: the essential against the inessential, subject against object." (Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde 111) By presenting Criseyde as an angel or a goddess rather than a person, men make her an "other", and that "other" can be treated differently. She is perceived as the "object" to the male's "subject" and becomes a "tool in the other's projects" (Mieszkowski Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde 111). In Shakespeare's play, it is Cressida who declares "Women are angels, wooing" (1.2.293). She recognizes that the language of amorous men places women as ideals as long as they are unattainable. The implication seems to be that it is

better for women to be ideals because they retain a value easily lost when the relationship is consumed; however, it is precisely that value that allows the commodification of the female body. In a similar way, Helen is a myth: tales of her beauty have been told and retold since Homer. Chaucer and Shakespeare use her as a symbol more than as a person: she is mentioned, but rarely seen or heard, most probably because the authors assume that she is already known. Helen's role as a mythical beauty justifies her commodification: her objectification is not questioned because it is part of a larger, famous story. The justification of the actions surrounding her is less important than their outcome, and that outcome is already determined by the myth.

As mentioned previously, female characters are also often compared to valuable goods, which accentuates their role as objects of exchange. In Chaucer's poem, when Pandarus says "Wo worth the faire gemme vertulees! / Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no boote!" (II 344-345), it implies that Criseyde herself is a "faire gemme" and an "herbe" that *can* provide remedy. The healing powers attributed to both the gem and the herb give them economic value, and Criseyde becomes as valuable through the comparison. Indeed, Pandarus wishes to offer his niece as a gift to Troilus to soothe his aching heart in the same manner he would provide a gem or an herb as remedies to other afflictions. Moreover, in Shakespeare's play, Cressida is described as a "pearl" in "India" (1.1.102) while Troilus is a "merchant" (1.1.105). In these lines, the relationship between them is not presented as one between equals: Cressida is a precious gem, meant to be bought or sold by Troilus. Similarly, Helen is "inestimable" (2.2.94) and she is presented as "a pearl / Whose price hath launched above a thousand ships / And turned crowned kings to merchants" (2.2.87-89). These characteristics emphasize her monetary value; she is no longer praised solely for her beauty, but rather for its worth

according to Paris and Menelaus, portrayed as rival "merchants" who compete to possess her. Jonathan Gil Harris argues that, in *Troilus and Cressida*, "The standoff between the Trojans and the Greeks increasingly comes across not as an epic struggle between heroic figures, but rather as a mercantile competition to 'buy', and favourably manipulate the market value of, hotly desired commodities." (308) Such commodities, obviously, would be beautiful women, including Cressida and Helen.

A direct consequence of the commodification of the female body is the forced mobility of women. The whole Trojan war depends on the abduction of Helen by Paris and on her passage from Greece to Troy. Yet, her own will to go to Troy or to stay in Greece does not seem to count; she is merely a commodity taken from one man by another. In fact, Paris' interest for her is based on her physical beauty, not on her qualities as a person, and Melenaus' wish to get her back is anchored in the desire to keep what he considers rightfully his. Helen becomes a property, and the war is fought to determine who will possess her. Whether she stays in Troy or goes back to Greece depends on the outcome of a war between two men who commodify her body as a prize to be won. Criseyde suffers the same fate: her exchange for Antenor forces her to go from her home in Troy to an unknown space in the Greek camp even though she never agreed to move. Her mobility is not guided by her own desires, but by a strategic decision made by the male leaders. The commodification of the female body constrains them to move against their will since they are only perceived as objects of exchange, whose feelings and wishes are unimportant.

In Chaucer's poem, apart from Troilus himself, the only Trojan leader who opposes the exchange is Hector. He has a personal reason to do so: he promised Criseyde that her "body shal men save, / As fer as I may ought enquere or here" (I 122-123). Surely, to commodify her

body as an object of exchange is not to keep it safe as he swore to do. Nevertheless, the reason he gives to the other leaders is a different one:

> "Syres, she nys no prisonere", he seyde;
>
> "I not on yow who that this charge leyde,
>
> But, on my part, ye may eftsone hem telle,
>
> We usen here no wommen for to selle." (IV 179-182)

Hector puts the emphasis on Criseyde's status as a free resident of Troy: since she is not a prisoner, she should not be exchanged in such a way. Molly Murray explains that if Criseyde had been a relative of Antenor, the exchange would have been more common. She argues that "Hector's protestation […] refers not to the injustice of exchanging a woman in a ransom bargain, but rather to the unusual exchange of a free citizen for a non-relative" (341). She also points out that Hector "argues that she [Criseyde] is simply the form of payment the Greeks demand for the ransom of a captured Trojan, rather than either a temporary hostage or a tradable captive. To send her over, he argues, would be to "selle" her as a slave (4.182)." (342) It is clear that Criseyde's situation is not a normal one: she is not sent to the Greek camp as a substitution for a relative nor is she a prisoner herself. She is simply used as a commodity for men's advantages. In Shakespeare's play, the leaders do not come to an agreement on stage: like Troilus and Cressida themselves, the audience is faced with a decision already made. Though we can thus suppose that no leader was opposed to the exchange, Aenas seems concerned about Troilus' feelings. He tells Paris that "Troilus had rather Troy were borne to Greece / Than Cressid borne from Troy" (4.1.50-51) and calls the exchange "the first sacrifice" (4.2.69). However, his worries are as easily dismissed as Hector's qualms in

Chaucer's version. Cressida is merely an object of exchange, and neither her lover's feelings nor her own are important.

However, men do not regard the commodification of the female body as an act without consequences. They treat it as a monetary transaction, and the outcome must be positive for them. The exchange between Criseyde and Antenor is permitted because, during a time of war, they value the strength and military prowess of a soldier over the beauty of a lady. There is a shift in the worth of the female body: the Greeks, who have been assured victory by Calchas and the Gods, still perceive Criseyde as a valuable commodity, but the Trojans, besieged, revaluate the importance of desirable women. In Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, the other leaders respond to Hector's protestation by asking him "what goost may yow enspyre, / This woman thus to shilde, and don us leese / Daun Antenor" (IV 187-189) because "He [Antenor] is ek oon the grettest of this town" (IV 192). Antenor's value is deemed greater than that of Criseyde since he is one of the best warriors. In Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Paris answers Aenas' worries by telling him "There is no help. / The bitter disposition of the time / Will have it so. (4.1.52-54). He uses the same reasoning as the leaders in Chaucer's poem: the war, as a "bitter disposition of the time" justifies the exchange. Antenor is judged to be a bigger loss for the city than Cressida.

In contradistinction, the Greeks still value a beautiful woman as a gain. In Chaucer's version, Calchas convinces them that asking for another ransom is useless "Syn ye shul both han folk and town as yerne" (IV 112). Criseyde does not need to be valued against other acquisitions since these other acquisitions are already guaranteed. In Shakespeare's version, Calchas asks for a "recompense" (3.3.3) for "all service [he] [has] done / In most accepted pain" (3.3.29-30). However, it is made obvious that Cressida is actually valued for her beauty

in the kissing scene that follows her arrival to the Greek camp. Ulysses suggests that "'Twere better she were kissed in general" (4.5.24) and, as Stephen J. Lynch points out, "Cressida is tossed around like a plaything for their common amusement." (363) Her body is commodified as an object of desire that can be exchanged from one man to another in a matter of seconds. Her value for the Greeks is based on her attractive appearance and on the sexual gratification they can get from her. Through their eyes, the worth of a woman is greater than that of a prisoner, who is of little use except to get a ransom. Had they wished for Antenor to be out of the battlefield forever, they would have killed him, so it is clear that they wanted to exchange him, and the exchange that has taken place pleases them.

The commodification of the female body also facilitates the creation of homosocial relationships that would not exist otherwise. Citing René Girard as the source of her argument, Sedwick states that "in any erotic rivalry, the bond that links the two rivals is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved: that the bonds of 'rivalry' and 'love', differently as they are experienced, are equally powerful and in many senses equivalent." (21) In fact, "the bond between rivals in an erotic triangle [seems] even stronger, more heavily determinant of actions and choices, than anything in the bond between either of the lovers and the beloved." (21) In *Troilus and Criseyde*, many relationships depend on homosocial bonds formed through such an erotic triangle.

The first triangle we encounter in the story is the one between Menelaus, Helen, and Paris. Indeed, Helen's abduction is the starting point for a war between the two men; she becomes a justification for their rivalry. By commodifying her body as a possession that must be regained, Menelaus creates an everlasting bond with Paris. Daniel Juan Gil remarks that "Under the pressure of his love for Cressida, Troilus comes to gaze on homosociality from the

outside; when he complains that “Helen must needs be fair, / When with your blood you daily paint her thus” (ll. 86–87), he comes close to disclosing the open secret that competition for Helen is merely a vehicle for desire between men.” (345) Certainly, Troilus’ comment can be seen as doubting that Helen’s fairness is the true motivation behind the Trojan War. While she is at the center of the conflict, her role is passive. Menelaus and Paris are the active parts of the triangle and, through their fight, they express even more passion than through their relationship with Helen.

Another obvious erotic triangle happens between Troilus, Criseyde, and Diomede. While Paris and Menelaus seem to have equal responsibility in the creation of the homosocial bond that exists between them, with Paris abducting Helen and Menelaus starting a war, Diomede appears to be the one truly responsible for the rivalry that connects him with Troilus. Sedwick states that, in many examples, “the choice of the beloved is determined in the first place, not by the qualities of the beloved, but by the beloved’s already being the choice of the person who has been chosen as a rival.” (21) Following that reasoning, I would argue that Diomede’s interest towards Criseyde does not depend solely on her beauty, but also on her existing relationship with Troilus. Despite Chaucer’s Troilus efforts to keep his feelings secret, Diomede understands that he is Criseyde’s lover. The reader has access to Diomede’s thoughts shortly after Troilus has left Criseyde in his care: “if she have in hire thought / Hym that I gesse, he may nat be ybrought / So soon awey” (V 102-104). Diomede perceives the wooing of Criseyde as an interesting challenge for which he “shal fynde a meene” (V 104) specifically because Troilus is a great rival. He recognizes that “whoso myghte wynnen swich a flour / From hym whom she morneth nyght and day, / He myghte seyn he were a conquerour” (V 792-794). It is not his attraction to Criseyde, but his rivalry with Troilus that motivates him to

make advances to the lady. In a similar manner, Shakespeare's Diomede also knows about Cressida's relationship with Troilus before he begins courting her. Troilus himself does not hide his feelings when he tells Diomede:

> Entreat her fair and, by my soul, fair Greek
>
> If e'er thou stand at mercy of my sword,
>
> Name Cressid, and thy life shall be as safe
>
> As Priam is in Illium" (4.4.121-124)

Such a declaration is highly significant: Diomede now knows that Troilus cares deeply about Cressida's well-being. He can thus use her as a tool to develop a relationship with his male rival. In fact, Diomede's attention towards Troilus is never as obvious as when he insists to know who gave Cressida the sleeve, which he recognizes as a love token. He repeatedly asks her to tell him "Whose was it?" (5.2.105, 5.2.107, and 5.2.110) to get confirmation of his rival's identity and, when Cressida refuses to answer, he decides to find out by his own means: "Tomorrow will I wear it on my helm / And grieve his spirit that dares not challenge it" (5.2.113-114). By exposing the sleeve to his rival's eyes, he clearly intends to provoke Troilus and to affirm his status as a competitor for Cressida's affection. His action is not meant to further his relationship with Cressida, but to form a homosocial bond with the man who loves her.

While Diomede had the means to create a rivalry with Troilus, Troilus himself is faced with the consequences of the newly formed triangle. He could choose to ignore it or to participate in it, thus validating the homosocial bond developed by Diomede. Regarding Shakespeare's play, Gil considers that "Troilus refuses to define advantageous male-male bonds through Cressida" (345). The claim is valid for Chaucer's poem as well: as far as we

know, Troilus never intended to use Criseyde to generate a relationship with Diomede. Nonetheless, in both versions, he still embraces the rivalry once it unites them. To avenge himself, Chaucer's Troilus pleads God to "sende [him] yet the grace / That [he] may meten with this Diomede" (V 1702-1703) and seeks to fight "alwey moost this Diomede" (V 1756). While Troilus certainly feels sorrow and anger regarding Criseyde's betrayal, his most passionate feelings are in relation to Diomede. Diomede, like Paris before him, is guilty of a serious crime: he took a commodity that another man had previously claimed for his own. Criseyde is the object of the action, and Diomede is the subject; it is he who performs the most meaningful act by seducing Troilus' lover. Troilus recognizes this guilt and directs his anger towards Diomede, thus fuelling their homosocial rivalry. Similarly, Shakespeare's Troilus affirms that "as much as I do Cressid love, / So much by weight hate I her Diomed" (5.2.197-198). He hates Diomede because he loves Cressida: she is used to provoke a rivalry between the two men, becoming no more than the reason that justifies the passion. Troilus also acknowledges Cressida's role as a commodity when he declares "This is Diomed's Cressida" (5.2.166). Cressida is perceived as a possession: she is either Troilus' or Diomede's and, when she becomes Diomede's, Troilus turns his anger towards her new "owner" because he is seen as an equal with whom meaningful relationships can be established. In comparison, despite his love for her, Cressida was merely an object used for his personal gratification through the possession of a valuable commodity.

The final erotic triangle that is of interest for my analysis is more troubling than the previous two, for it links Troilus, Criseyde, and Pandarus. As her uncle, Pandarus would be expected to protect Criseyde's honour against the sexual desires of men. She actually says so herself: "Allas! What sholden strauge to me doon, / When he, that for my beste frend I wende,

/ Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?" (II 411-413) Similarly, Shakespeare's Cressida declares that she counts on her uncle to "defend all these": her "belly", her "wiles", her "honesty", and her "beauty" (1.2.267-270). Nevertheless, in both versions, he does exactly the contrary: he serves as a go-between for Troilus. It is obvious that he expects to obtain a gain in exchange for his niece's heart and body: he uses her to solidify his relationship with Troilus who is, after all, a king's son. Social advantages can certainly be expected for his friends, and Pandarus uses his niece to become the closest of all. Without surprise, the homosocial bond formed between them is one that Chaucer's Troilus gladly reciprocates:

> And, that thow knowe I thynke nought, ne wene,
> That this servise a shame be or jape,
> I have my faire suster Polixene,
> Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape,
> Be she nevere so faire or wel yshape,
> Tel me which thow wilt of everychone,
> To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone. (III 407-413)

Victoria Warren states that "That Troilus would offer his sisters to Pandarus as though they were objects [...] indicates how his own self-orientation prevents him from recognizing the claims of other people." (3) I would suggest, however, that Troilus' commodification of the female body can be explained (perhaps in a simpler manner) by a society that normalizes such practices. Troilus understands that women can be used to make transactions with other men, and he offers his female relatives to Pandarus to balance their homosocial bond. Pandarus has offered him his niece, and he responds by offering his sisters or his sister-in-law, who become recompenses for Pandarus' help. Shakespeare's Troilus, however, does not participate as

actively in the commodification of the female body: it is Pandarus who declares "Had I a sister were a Grace, or a daughter a goddess, he should take his choice" (1.2.242-244). These lines reaffirm the homosocial transaction from Pandarus' perspective, but take away the reciprocity showed by Chaucer's character. Troilus' position as a prince is the only element that secures his relationship with Pandarus.

Unsurprisingly, the forced mobility of women plays a crucial role in the construction of men's homosocial bonds. The foundation of Paris and Menelaus' rivalry is the abduction of Helen: only when she is taken from Greece by her lover does her husband have a valid reason to go to war with Troy, since the need to regain possession of a woman who is rightfully his justifies Menelaus' military attack. The commodification of Helen's body transforms her departure from Troy as a theft: she has been stolen and must be retrieved by all means. Discussing the use of the word "rape" to describe Paris' crime in regards to Helen, Laurie Maguire writes "The action is still legally rape however, a category in which female consent (or lack of it) is irrelevant, for the crime is not against the woman's body but against the owner of the woman's body […] his lack of agreement defines an act of abduction or sexual violation as rape" (36-37). Therefore, as soon as Helen leaves Troy, Paris is guilty of committing "rape" against her and, consequently, against Menelaus. It is through that specific crime that Paris' relationship with Menelaus shifts towards a homosocial rivalry.

Similarly, Criseyde's forced departure from Troy to the Greek camp allows the formation of a homosocial bond between Troilus and Diomede. Criseyde's betrayal lies on her arrival in a new space where previous claims over her body are not recognized. In Troy, the subtle protection of her lover and her uncle insured that she belonged only to Troilus. Her movement to the Greek camp prohibits that protection: she is an unclaimed commodity, and

Diomede can take her for his own. As Shakespeare's Troilus concludes, Cressida's identity changes when she goes from Troy to the Greeks: the woman he sees "is and is not Cressid" (5.2.175) because the woman he knew does not exist in the Greek camp. In Troy, she was his; in the Greek camp, she is "Diomed's Cressida" (5.2.166). Criseyde's movement to the Greek camp allows the formation of a rivalry between the two men since she goes from being possessed by one to being possessed by the other.

Additionally, Criseyde's leaving serves as a reflection of Helen's and helps to insure a balance in homosocial transactions. Gil states that "the movement of Cressida from the Trojan camp to the Greek camp suggests an impulse to restore the imbalance caused by the abduction of Helen by 'giving' the Greeks a Trojan woman who is said at every turn to be comparable to Helen." (336). Criseyde is not, however, traded for Helen, so the exchange does not nullify the previous rivalry created by the abduction of Helen. On the contrary, it adds the possibility for new homosocial rivalries to appear, such as the one between Troilus and Diomede. Therefore, Criseyde's exchange confirms that transactions are still possible between the two camps and insure that homosocial bonds can be formed in the future.

Chaucer and Shakespeare show us that women themselves understand the commodification of their bodies and the layers of social regulations that surround it.
In fact, Criseyde is desperate because her honour is at stake if she reciprocates Troilus' love:

> And with a sorrowful sik she sayde thrie
>
> "A! Lord! what me is tid a sory chaunce!
>
> For myn estat lith now in jupartie,
>
> And ek myn emes lif is in balaunce;
>
> But natheles, with Goddes governaunce,

I shal so doon, myn honour shal I kepe (II 463-468)

Similarly, Cressida makes a clear statement about her worth before she admits her feelings for Troilus:

> "Women are angels
>
> Things won are done; joy's soul lie in the doing.
>
> That she beloved knows naught that knows not this:
>
> Men prize the thing ungained more than it is. (1.2.293-296)

Harris remarks that "Cressida in particular displays a keen sensitivity to the market forces that shape her own identity as a commodity." (308) The same is certainly true for Chaucer's Criseyde. Both versions of the character are concerned with the possible loss of their value: Criseyde, by staining her honour and Cressida, by giving up her virginity. Criseyde knows that her reputation is important to keep her social worth, and the simple idea to put it at risk makes her weep. As for Cressida, she knows that her value depends on her desirability and that she can easily become less desirable once Troilus gains access to her body. In both cases, Criseyde and Cressida acknowledge the commodification of their bodies and make decisions in accordance with implied social rules. It becomes part of the way they understand and perform their gender.

Since Criseyde understands the mechanism of commodification that surrounds her body, she can become complicit in her own objectification. She is first coerced to commodify her body as a remedy for Troilus' sorrow. When Pandarus compares her to a "gemme" or an "herb", he wants her to assume the role of an object with healing powers rather than to present herself as a person with personal desires. Criseyde's protestations show us that she is reluctant to play that part. However, Pandarus insists that not only Troilus' life, but also his own, are

threatened by the lack of a remedy. He deliberately blames her for their deaths (should they die): "sith I se my lord mot nedes dye, / And I with hym, here I me shryve, and seye / That wickedly ye don us both deye." (II 439-441) Criseyde is faced with irreconcilable desires: she wants to protect her honour as much as her uncle's life. She thinks that "Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese; / Yet have I levere maken hym good chere / In honour, than myn emes lyf to lese." (II 470-473) She hopes to be able to keep her honour and to save her uncle's life; yet, by accepting to receive Troilus' advances, she commodifies her own body. She becomes that "gemme" or "herb" Pandarus wanted her to be.

Cressida is in a different position: Shakespeare's Troilus does not suffer as severely from love sickness, so he does not need a remedy, and her uncle never threatens to die. Therefore, when she chooses to commodify her body, it is as an object of desire. As mentioned previously, she knows that her value in Troilus' eyes is based on her desirability, so she uses it to develop a relationship with the man she already loves. Gil writes that "To Cressida, for example, trapped within a patriarchal world in which sexual appeal is her only capital, the bracketing of homosociality sometimes seems like an attack on her social viability." (339) Yet, Cressida acts according to the regulations of the homosocial erotic triangle, except she is both an active and a passive agent. She takes two roles in the triangle: the commodifier and the commodity. She secures her relationship with Troilus through her own body, as a man would secure a relationship with another man through a woman's body. In fact, Cressida openly wishes she could get the benefits of being a man or getting a man's rights:

> But though I loved you well, I wooed you not;
>
> And yet, good faith, I wished myself a man;

Or that we women had man's privilege

Of speaking first. (3.2.126-129)

She desires an active role in the relationship and she finds the means to obtain it by taking the role of a man in the commodification of her own body. She still knows, however, that her position is more precarious than if she were a man: she must keep a balance between the commodification of her body and the maintenance of her desirability. Thus, she tries to preserve her virginity for as long as possible to insure that she stays desirable in Troilus' eyes.

Criseyde's passivity can also be interpreted as acceptance of her own commodification. Mieszkowski argues that "Chaucer's new Criseyde is pliant, malleable, and so unassertive that, despite her liveliness and charm, she exists only as the beautiful and cheerful setting for the activity of others" (Chaucer's Much Loved Criseyde 113). Indeed, Criseyde does not fight back: she is convinced to love Troilus and she accepts to move to the Greek camp. Without actively participating in it, she allows the commodification of her body simply by not denying it. While Shakespeare's Cressida is less passive, she does not react when the Greeks kiss her at her arrival in the camp. Her passivity is not surprising: as J. L. Styan explains, "she finds herself a woman alone in a male circle of armed and brutal soldiery" (21). Therefore, she uses the commodification of her body as a means to protect herself: by letting the Greeks kiss her, she insures that their desires are momentarily satisfied and that she can find a male protector before they come back for more.

At last, Chaucer's Criseyde understands that she can commodify herself for her own advantage, and she does so by accepting Diomede's advances. When Criseyde understands that she will not go back to Troy, she is in need not only of a protector, but also of someone to relieve her painful heart. By allowing the commodification of her body by Diomede, she gets

both. Indeed, as soon as Criseyde arrives in the Greek camp, Diomede swears to take care of her:

> And by the cause I swor yow right, lo, now
>
> To ben youre frend, and helply, to my myght,
>
> And for that more aquayntaunce ek of yow
>
> Have ich had than another straunger wight,
>
> So fro this forth, I pray yow, day and nyght,
>
> Comaundeth me, how soore that me smerte,
>
> To don al that may like unto youre herte (V 127-133).

He clearly is one of her few allies in the Greek camp, perhaps the only one except her father. Moreover, he does make her feel better:

> So wel he for hymselven spak and seyde,
>
> That alle hire sikes soore adown he leyde
>
> And finally, the sothe for to seyne,
>
> He refte hire of the grete of al hire peyne. (1033-1036)

When Criseyde gives her heart to Diomede, she accepts to commodify her body to his desires, but he satisfies her own needs in exchange. In him, she finds not only protection against the other men, but also a remedy for her own sorrow. Diomede assumes the role that Criseyde took on for Troilus at the beginning: he heals her heart.

Similarly, Cressida commodifies her body to get a safer position in the Greeks' camp. The multiple kisses she receives as she arrives in the camp show her that she needs a male protector to keep her away from the other men's desires. Thus, she decides to commodify her body with Diomede in order to benefit from his protection. However, Diomede never gives her

the possibility of being an active or, at least, a deciding agent in the relationship. Though she begs him to "bid [her] do anything but that" (5.2.30), Diomede insists that she must allow him to sleep with her. She does not have the power to refuse as she did with Troilus since she risks losing Diomede's protection if she declines. She must accept that commodifying her body to him means doing so by his own terms and, because she has no other choice, she does.

Butler declares that "becoming woman" is "to compel the body to conform to an historical idea of 'woman', to induce the body to become a cultural sign, to materialize oneself in obedience to an historically delimited possibility, and to do this as a sustained and repeated corporeal project" (Performative Acts 520). When Criseyde consents to the objectification of her body, she does so as a way of "becoming" a woman: she performs her gender in accordance to historical representations of women as objects of exchange and of desire. The character of Criseyde experiences changes through different centuries, but her depictions always put her back in the role of a commodity. In order to perform her gender adequately, the only "historically delimited possibility" that she has is to embrace her commodification and to use it to her own advantage if she can. In order to show the continuing commodification of Criseyde throughout history, I will use four different versions of the story: De Sainte-Maure's, Boccaccio's, Chaucer's, and Shakespeare's.

In the 12th century, in his *Roman de Troie*, De Sainte-Maure paints the first account of Criseyde through his character Briseida. In this version, Briseida is sent to join her father, without any sort of exchange taking place; yet, she is still treated as a commodity. Her father is legally her "owner", and Briseida is simply returned to him when he asks for her. Indeed, Priam declares that "nothing belonging to him [Calchas] should be or remain in the city" (Gordon 8). The king does not take in consideration her own desires: she is "forced and

constrained to go to the camp" (Gordon 8). Despite her beauty, Briseida's worth is lessened by her father's betrayal, which facilitates her departure. She is not considered valuable enough to be kept in Troy. Even Troilus' love has little importance: though "Most men knew of that" (Gordon 8), no one considers it a reason to keep Briseida in Troy because the lovers are not married. It should be noted, however, that marriage would not have changed Briseida's status as a commodity. She would have been used to secure a homosocial relationship between her father and her husband, and she would become Troilus' property. In De Sainte-Maure's story, she is confined to body commodification as part of being a woman. Unfortunately, that role as a commodity follows her in every retelling.

In the 14th century, Bocaccio introduces the exchange between Antenor and Criseida, who is now a widow. Her departure from Troy thus becomes a transaction: Criseida is an object of exchange, and her worth is measured against that of Antenor. Her body is commodified to permit the retrieval of an esteemed soldier. The war certainly plays a role in the decision of the leaders since "many things were debated among the barons as to what must needs be done as things now stood" (Gordon 72). What "must needs be done" is different in a time of war: Antenor can help them win battles, while Criseida cannot. It is also considered that her place should be with her father: the leaders state that she "had never been kept from going" (Gordon 72) as if it is her own will to leave Troy. It is obvious that her father is still seen as her "owner" despite her widowhood: his wishes are interchangeable with her own because she belongs to him. Criseida is still a commodity that is returned to her owner; however, this time, a price has to be paid in exchange, and Antenor serves that purpose.

A few decades later, Chaucer adds more details to Boccaccio's story to create his own version. Criseyde gains independence and escapes being commodified as her father's property.

In fact, she is part of “a specifically privileged group in medieval English law: the *femme sole*, the unmarried or widowed, but financially independent, woman.” (Wynne-Davies 15) Marion Wynne-Davies points out that “Chaucer was clearly aware of the benefits for a woman of being a *femme sole*, for Criseyde is given the frequently discussed ‘liberation speech’ in which she affirms her independence: ‘I am myn owene womman’ (Troilus and Criseyde, II.750; 750-73).” (16) Nonetheless, Criseyde’s independence does not insure she will not be commodified. On the contrary, the exchange between Antenor and Criseyde reaffirms her status as a commodity. The discussion between the Trojan leaders reveals that whether she is a prisoner or not is irrelevant: as a woman, her body can still be commodified without her consent. The important factor is her value and, once again, it does not compete with the worth of a soldier. When the leaders affirm that Hector chooses “This womman thus to shilde, and don us leese / Daun Antenor” (IV 188-189), they make it clear that Criseyde does need a man to “shield” her from other men. Despite her apparent independence, she is not regarded as more than an object, so she needs a male protector to defend her interests. In this instance, Hector fails to do so, and she is exchanged against her will.

Finally, in the 17th century, Shakespeare twists the story to fit it in one of his plays. The exchange between Cressida and Antenor stays: it is now recognized as an integral component of the story. However, Cressida’s role as a commodity is surrounded by forces that were absent from the other versions: she has value in a different market, that of marriage. Her worth now depends on her virginity, which was not the case in Boccaccio and Chaucer’s retelling since both Criseida and Criseyde were widowed. Kathlen Coyne Kelly and Marina Leslie state that “after the English Reformation, virginity was generally viewed as a temporary state through which a young girl passed on the way to chaste marriage. Virginity was a valuable

commodity, but it had a very limited shelf-life." (xxvii) The sexual encounter between Cressida and Troilus puts her worth at stake because she loses her virginity without the transition to a "chaste marriage". Moreover, since their love is not a secret, we can assume that the leaders are aware of that loss, and it might count in the balance when a trade is proposed between Antenor and her. Even if Troilus still found her as desirable (which he does not), she would be of lesser interest for other men, and thus less valuable as a whole. Philippa Berry explains that "The Renaissance discourses of love certainly attempted to deny the materiality of the chaste woman they idealized: to exclude the female body, and feminine sexuality, from their idea of a chaste woman as exclusively spiritual" (3). By losing her virginity, Cressida gives up her status as a "chaste woman [men] idealized" and becomes the sexual object the Greeks expect her to be, which makes her commodification even easier.

From De Sainte-Maure to Shakespeare, Criseyde cannot escape the commodification of her body. She assumes distinct roles depending on the retelling of the story: her father's possession, an object of exchange, an independent widow or a maiden who loses her virginity. However, throughout centuries, the commodification stays. It is not her legal nor her financial status that make her a commodity, but her gender. Women are expected to be commodified and thus said commodification becomes part of their gender performance. Whether women are presented as ideals or as beautiful objects, they face commodification because men do not recognize them as equal; they are either more than people or less than people, to use Beauvoir's terms. Moreover, men use the female body as a means to secure homosocial relationships with other men. Consequently, women understand their commodification as inevitable and they consent to it in order to regain power over their bodies. In every version of the story I have analyzed, Criseyde's unfaithfulness is presented as the ultimate betrayal. Yet,

it is through her infidelity that she reclaims ownership over her body: when she *chooses* to respond positively to Diomede’s advances, she is finally in control of her own commodification.

Conclusion

Courtly love expectations shape the romantic relationship between Troilus and Criseyde in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* as well as in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, and consequently influences gender performativity. Both Troilus and Criseyde follow Andreas Capellanus' rules of courtly love, which limit their gender performance to a set of pre-defined gendered behaviours. Additionally, Troilus and Diomede develop their masculinity through their role in the realms of war and love, adhering to courtly love ideals. Finally, courtly love facilitates the commodification of Criseyde and Helen's body through the value attributed to their beauty and their virtue. While minor differences can be observed between Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play, the influence of courtly love on gender performativity is preeminent in both versions. My analysis shows how courtly love had an impact on medieval *and* Renaissance conceptualisation of love. I would suggest that courtly love's influence is not restricted in time and that it still exists today in Western society's understanding of love.

My claim is supported by other scholars who have investigated the relation between courtly love and our contemporary approach to love. Indeed, in 1989, a questionnaire by John G. Rechtien and Edna Fiedler demonstrates the influence of courtly love on modern perception of love by asking participants to agree or disagree with eleven statements inspired by Capellanus' commandments. They indicate that "When scored in the direction of courtly love, eight of the 11 items based on Andrew [the Chaplain, Andreas Capellanus] showed agreement of 75% or more in the desired direction, that is, in the direction of agreement with courtly love" (1217). Their report adds that "A ninth item showed such agreement above 50%" (1217). We can therefore conclude that courtly love influenced general ideas about love in

1989. That influence is most likely still present today, a few decades after the questionnaire was administered, since it successfully survived from the Middle Ages to the 20th century.

Furthermore, Ann Swidler argues that our ideal of love is based on courtly love. She states that "In the West the ideal of love became infused with moral meaning. While the heroes of most societies are great warriors, or leaders who dedicate themselves to their people, in our culture the drama of love embodies a struggle for moral perfection and social commitment. This symbolic link between love and moral life is the legacy of courtly love." (121) My analysis of *Troilus and Criseyde* certainly shows how courtly love encourages "moral perfection": it is because she is not morally perfect that Criseyde faces criticism in Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play, and even punishment in Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*. Moreover, following the rules of courtly love indicates the characters commitment to social expectations. Nowadays, moral perfection is still expected through faithfulness, and social commitment through a performance of gender that matches society's expectations.

Swidler adds that "Love [in the courtly tradition] was both virtue and sin; while it ennobled, it also led to betrayal, and ultimately to tragedy and death. This duality of the courtly love, its fusion of moral striving and social rebellion, has deeply influenced our own love mythology." (122) The story of *Troilus and Criseyde* does lead to Criseyde's betrayal and Troilus' death (at least in Chaucer's poem). Today, betrayal is still at the core of many love stories, from reimagining of myths as old as Arthurian legends to entirely new fictions. For example, the movie *Unfaithful,* released in 2002, relies on the narrative of a married woman who has an adulterous affair. Similar to courtly love, the story ends in tragedy and death when the husband kills his wife's lover. The resemblance between the movie and *Troilus and Criseyde* shows the lasting repercussions of courtly love on society.

As a consequence of its continuing influence, courtly love affects contemporary gender performance, especially in romantic relationships. For example, the emphasis put on a man's strength as an indication of his masculinity in modern society reflects courtly love expectations and encourages men to value and use their physical strength as a means of seduction. Similarly, a woman's use of make-up to attract potential partners can remind us of the importance of beauty in courtly love heroines. Even today, a "strong" woman usually has mental rather than physical strength, while a man rarely wears make-up. These gendered behaviours are used to perform masculinity or femininity according to social conventions, and such conventions are rooted in courtly love ideals.

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