

Typification and Idealization: The Divided Heroes  
in *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell*

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I

Of all the heroes of the Arthurian legend, not excepting King Arthur himself, Gawain is the most admirable and the most favored, and his glorious reputation is remarkably predominant over the Middle English romances.<sup>1</sup> A considerable number of Gawain-cycle romances still surviving shows the hero's high popularity, and here we have one of those romances, *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell* (hereafter abbreviated as *The Wedding*).

*The Wedding*, an anonymous poem, composed in the East-Midland approximately 1450 and preserved in one manuscript in the Bodleian Library, has been merely noted as one of analogues of Chaucer's familiar *Wife of Bath's Tale*, or Gower's "Tale of Florent" in the *Confessio Amantis*.<sup>2</sup> It is true that, as many critics suggested, three versions do have two motifs in common, those of the Riddle Asked and Answered and the Loathly Lady; the motif of the question test that determines the hero's survival, and of the transformation of the loathly damsel by her marriage to the hero.<sup>3</sup>

There is, nevertheless, a significant difference in detail. *The Wedding* splits the functions of the original protagonist in both tales of Chaucer and Gower into two, Arthur and Gawain. That is to say, in *The Wedding* Arthur must find the answer to the riddle on which his life depends, and Gawain undertakes to marry the loathly lady who can provide the answer. In Chaucer's tale, on the other hand, the roles of riddle-solver

and bridegroom are combined in one and the same man, an unnamed bachelor of Arthur's court, and the same is the case with Gower's knight, Florent.

Furthermore, taking notice of the divided heroes in *The Wedding*, we soon become aware that Arthur and Gawain exhibit a striking contrast. While Gawain is represented as an exemplary knight who has perfect virtues of chivalry, King Arthur, although the poet spends nine lines in the opening of the poem as a "king curteis and royalle," (6)<sup>4</sup> is not portrayed in an entirely admirable way because of his unchivalrous conduct.

Then, what is the reason for the division of the functions of the hero in *The Wedding*? Is there any relationship between the division and characters of heroes, idealized Gawain and deteriorated Arthur? If so, then, why does the poet contradictorily dedicate his praise to the king in the opening lines of the poem? Answering these question above, this study attempts to clarify the central theme of the poem which, unlike other analogues, chooses the genre of romance, and, at the same time, investigates the fundamental problems found in the poem. As a beginning, I will concretely verify how Gawain is described as an ideal knight in the poem. Then I shall attempt to examine Arthur's conduct which is totally incompatible with his reputation, and finally I shall explore the distortion in the poem in full relief.

## II

While Lancelot, one of the representatives of the Round Table, is relatively popular among French literature, our Gawain holds an unshakable position as the noblest paragon of knighthood in England. Especially, although it is the question to be considered later, his outstanding characteristic is his well-established reputation for courtesy.<sup>5</sup> The best known reference to this is found in *The Squire's Tale*: "That Gawayn, with his

olde curteisye," or in *The Romaunt of the Rose*: "... Gaweyn, the worthy,  
/ Was praysted for his curtesye."<sup>6</sup>

Also in *The Wedding*, Gawain's conduct perfectly deserves to his widespread fame. According to B. A. Rosenberg, who classifies Medieval English romances into three structural groups, the poem comes under the third one, "Test and Reward" (in chivalry).<sup>7</sup> Indeed, in the poem, Gawain overcomes a series of tests of his chivalrous virtues. I would like to focus my attention on how Gawain successfully clears hurdles in each of the story's events.<sup>8</sup>

The story begins with a hunting scene, where King Arthur is separated from his men following a hart.<sup>9</sup> He meets a knight in full armor, Sir Gromer,<sup>10</sup> who threatens to kill Arthur unless the king tells him the answer to a question a year later: "Whate wemen love best" (91).<sup>11</sup> Although he has promised to keep the matter secret, Arthur confides it to Gawain. (Arthur's conduct in this scene, I shall discuss later.) Independently both Arthur and Gawain try to collect answers. However, the king is still far from satisfied. A month before the year's end, he encounters a hag, Dame Ragnell. She tells the king that she will teach the only answer which will save his life on condition that Gawain marries her.

What has to be noticed is Gawain's response when Arthur informs him of the proposal of Ragnell:

Her shalle I wed, by the rood,  
Or elles were not I your frende;  
For ye ar my king withe honour

. . . . .  
To save your life, lorde, it were my parte,  
Or were I false and a great coward;  
And my worship is the bet. (346-48, 351-53)

Gawain's reaction here is possibly one reason for the degraded reputation of the poem, for it seems to be "merely one of fixed determination," and to be so inhuman and monotonous with no suggestion of the hero's inner conflict.<sup>12</sup> From the view of Test and Reward motif, however, we can validly infer that the situation is a sort of test for one of Gawain's virtues, loyalty.<sup>13</sup> As a foremost romance hero, he lives up to his loyalty to Arthur.<sup>14</sup>

In feudal society, of course, loyalty was one of the most significant virtues for knights, for the loyalty of a vassal toward his lord was considered to be an inevitable obligation to help their society flourish.<sup>15</sup> The fact that Gawain, in his speech quoted above, refers to his duty to his king (348, 351) explicitly suggests his consciousness of the feudal loyalty. It should be added that here he calls Arthur not only his "king" but also his "frende" (347). Gervase Mathew asserts in his "Ideals of Knighthood in Late-Fourteenth-Century England" that "loyalty" implies not only fidelity to the pledged word, but loyalty to an individual because of friendship.<sup>16</sup> Gawain, thus, shows his loyalty in both concepts of feudalism and friendship.

It is widely recognized that, for a hero of a romance, his greatest motive in the practice of his chivalric virtues is the winning of individual honor.<sup>17</sup> So, as a kind of stock phrase, we often encounter the word "worship" in numerous romances. Also in *The Wedding*, for example, words like "honor" or "worship" appear in the text more than ten times.<sup>18</sup> Thus, his reference to his "worship" (358) in the problematic scene above implies that his motive for his loyalty to Arthur is a desire for renown.

Even for his loyalty, however, Gawain, who accepts Arthur's request for the marriage to "foullle a creature witheoute mesure" (249) with no sign of wavering, might still seem to be inhumanly stereotyped. Nevertheless, what I want to emphasize is that, at this moment, he hasn't see Ragnell

in person yet. Although her ugliness has already been explained to us in the previous scene covering 24 lines (228-51), Gawain's knowledge of her is only from Arthur's short statement. It is, therefore, quite natural for Gawain as a loyal knight to accept Ragnell's proposal without any hesitation.

Then, Arthur, with Gawain's consent, gains the correct answer from Ragnell: "Wemen desire sovereinté" (468).<sup>19</sup> After he offers it to Gromer and is released from their contract, Arthur rides back to the court with Ragnell. Now Gawain should overcome his second test, marrying the loathsome crone. In spite of the deep grief of Queen Guenever and her ladies, "Ther Sir Gawen to her his trouthe plight / In welle and in wo, as he was a true knyght" (539-40). Considering that, because he is a "true" knight, he pledges his "trouthe" to her, we can suppose what is tested here is Gawain's "true" virtue or his "trouthe."

In order to investigate his second test, it might be well to notice the word "truth." The *OED* defines it as "One's faith or loyalty as pledged in a promise or agreement" (I. 2. a).<sup>20</sup> It is obvious that "truth" includes the concept of "loyalty" to the pledged word. In this case, Gawain's pledged word is his agreement to marry Ragnell. That he keeps his promise and marries her indicates that he practices his virtue of truth or loyalty; in other words, he again overcomes his test as a romance hero.

It is worth noting that, in spite of the persuasion of Guenever and Arthur to wed secretly, Ragnell insists on the marriage in church with all publicity. From the standpoint of the test for hero's virtue, I find it dubious that her pride affects her insistence.<sup>21</sup> Rather, it seems to me to be more reasonable that, in order to verify Gawain's loyalty with certainty, she desires the public marriage. It clearly emphasizes his virtue more than the secret marriage would do.

Switching our attention to the scene of the wedding banquet, which

describes how the bride's manner and her extraordinary appetite is hideous and horrible, the manuscript suddenly shows us the fact that the following page, consisting of about seventy lines, is missing. There is fairly general agreement that the missing context probably noted how the married couple leaves the feast and retires to the nuptial chamber.<sup>22</sup> However, recalling our earlier analysis of the reason for Gawain's acceptance of the marriage without any wavering at his first test, I cannot but regret for the lack. The reason for my regret is, that, while in that test he doesn't personally recognize the bride's ugliness, after he actually sees her, he might show some reaction implying his repugnance or at least his inner conflict.

In the following lines after the missing leaf, there is evidence for my hypotheses above. After Ragnell's imploration to Gawain to kiss her in their wedding bed, we find a narration: "He turnid him her untill" (640), and Ragnell's words: "Why ar ye so unkinde?" (646). These two lines signify that Gawain has turned his back on Ragnell, and his attitude toward her has been "so unkinde." Accordingly, in these lines (and perhaps in a previous missing leaf), we expect to catch a glimpse of our hero's inner conflict.

A further significant aspect of this scene following the missing leaf is that it includes Gawain's third test of his other virtue. Ragnell implores Gawain as follows:

A, Sir Gawen, sin I have you wed  
 Shewe me your cortesy in bed;  
 . . . . .  
 . . . kisse me at the leste;  
 pray you do this at my request. (629-30, 635-36)

What is apparent in this extract is that Gawain's third trial is of his

"cortesy," which, as I mentioned earlier, is closely related to his conventional character.

Courtesy in medieval romances has such a wide variety of meanings that it is not easy to formulate. However, its basic concept can be signified as: "The complex of courtly ideal; chivalry, chivalrous conduct. . ." (*MED*, s. v. *coutreisie*, 1). Sometimes the sense of the word is narrowed to the ability of a knight to please ladies, as is represented in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, where the lady of the castle demands love-talking with Gawain, emphasizing his courtesy. Also in the case of *The Wedding*, the word is clearly attached to Gawain's "cortesy in bed" (630), namely, his ability to please Ragnell in the nuptial bed. As an incarnation of courtesy, in spite of his inner conflict, he again overcomes his test and declares: "I wolle do more / Then for to kiss, and God before!" (638-39).

When Gawain turns around, then, he finds the most beautiful woman who "evere he sawe withoute mesure" (642). In spite of his momentary happiness, what occurs here is his final test. That is, Ragnell, who is now transformed into a fair lady, tells him that he must choose whether she shall be fair by night and foul by day, or the reverse. What kind of virtue is tested in this alternative? Let us observe Gawain's anguished statement:

To have you faire on nightes and no more,  
That wold greve my hart righte sore  
And my worship shold I lese.  
And if I desire on days to have you faire,  
Then on nightes I shold have a simple repaire. (670-74)

Considering a knight's desire for worship which I have mentioned before, Gawain would not choose foul Ragnell by day who would make him lose his worship (672), but choose a foul one by night. What he does here is,

however, to surrender all the sovereignty of choice to Ragnell: "But do as ye list now, my lady gaye. / The choise I put in your fist" (677-78).

What is tested in this scene is the virtue of courtesy which is not the same one as in the previous trial, where Gawain was required to practice his courteous manner in the wedding bed. It must be considered in the literary convention of courtly love, whose essential element is "the inferiority of the lover in relation to his lady."<sup>23</sup> To discuss courtly love as a whole is beyond the scope of this brief paper, but we can at least point out that the relationship between Gawain and fair Ragnell at this moment is quite similar to lovers in courtly love.

We know a famous courtly lover, Lancelot, who gives his courtesy for his lady priority over his worship by riding on a shameful cart, in Chrétien's *Lancelot*. Also Gawain, in spite of a little anguish over his worship which is an ordinary motive for his conduct, devotes himself to Ragnell with courtesy. After his success in the final test, thus, Ragnell often calls him with an adjective "corteis," (655) as "curties Gawain" (700). Then, owing to his courtesy, Ragnell is disenchanted from the spell by her stepmother, and will be fair forever.

His success in every four tests gives Gawain the reward of a happy ending, as is typical of the Test-Reward romance. It follows from what has been considered that, throughout the poem, he is described as the flower of knighthood who can perfectly overcome his tests with his knightly virtues. From this viewpoint, it is reasonable to conclude that the central theme of the poem is to admire its hero, Gawain, as an ideal knight. Next, I will explore how his idealization affects the character of Arthur and the whole poem.

### III

While Gawain is highly glorified throughout *The Wedding*, how is the



other hero, King Arthur, in the poem? Before moving on to his main story-telling, the poet enumerates Arthur's high reputation:

Lithe and listenithe the lif of a lord riche,  
 The while that he livid was none him liche,  
 Nether in boure ne in halle;  
 In the time of Arthoure this adventure betid,  
 And of the great adventure that he himself did,  
 That king curties and royalle.  
 Of alle kinges Arture berithe the flowir,  
 And of alle knightod he bare away the honour,  
 Where-so-ever he went. (1-9)

The moment the story starts, however, Arthur begins to show some unchivalrous behavior which is quite unsuitable for the eulogy above. When he encounters Gromer, for example, what he really does is to beg desperately for his life: "Save my life, and whate thou wolt crave, / I shalle now graunt it thee" (80-81). Although he is unarmed and only "in grene" (83) for hunting, and his opponent, Gromer, is "Armid welle and sure" (51) perhaps in full hauberk and helm, he has at least a kind of weapon, arrows and bow "to sle the wilde veneré" (20). Here is an example of disadvantageous battle of unarmed knights also in green who are assailed by fully armed knights in Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*.<sup>24</sup> It is true that the attack on an unarmed man is believed to be unethical,<sup>25</sup> and thus Gromer is, needless to say, an extremely wicked knight. Even so, however, Arthur, who pitifully begs for his life with no attempt to retaliate, seems not to be the flower of all kings (7), but to be a mere coward with too much care for his own life.

Moreover, another example which indicates Arthur's more definite wickedness against the code of knighthood is that he knowingly violates his oath to Gromer not to tell anyone of his difficulty and their agree-

ment. When Gromer stresses not to be unfaithful to him, Arthur, who calls himself "true king" (103), affirms his loyalty: "Untrewe knighte shalt thou nevere fined me; / To dye yet were me lever" (116-17). (Even though a knight often mentions that he prefers death to shame as a kind of stock phrase,<sup>26</sup> Arthur's words in line 117, following his begging for his life, sounds rather ironical to us.) Much to our surprise, however, as Gawain asks the reason for the king's depression, he breaches the promise he has made and tells the whole story without the sting of conscience. Acknowledging the secrecy of the matter (174) and indifferently revealing it to Gawain, Arthur degrades himself to a liar, who has lost the fundamental virtue in chivalry.<sup>27</sup>

Besides, Arthur's way of asking Gawain to marry Ragnell is also unsuitable for "the flower of all kings." When she tells the king that she will save his life on condition that Gawain marries her, the king clearly declares: "In saving of my life to make it secour; / To Gawen wolle I make my mone" (295-96). In addition, Arthur leaks his anticipation that Gawain will inevitably wed her, because he is by his nature always loath to refuse (303-05). Nevertheless, in front of Gawain, Arthur pretends to grieve his hopelessness: "For nedely I most be ded" (332). To put it more concretely, Arthur, knowing that Gawain will accept the marriage and thus he will not die, pretends not to expect so and, as a result, makes Gawain voluntarily offer it. Although we can at least notice his humanity or human weakness, it is impossible for us to regard Arthur, who tries to save his life not in a manly way but in such a makeshift one, as one of "nine worthy" represented by Caxton.<sup>28</sup>

Up to this point, I have presented some observation on Arthur's character in *The Wedding* which undergoes a marked deterioration. The important point to note here is that strangely there is, although readers or listeners of the poem cannot miss it, no word which evaluates Arthur's con-

duct either good or bad, except for the praise of him in the first nine lines. In other words, Arthur's figure as the greatest king on the level of superficial description is contradictory to the one as a timid liar in the poem's context. Then, what is the reason for the dual aspects of the king?

In order to investigate the question above, it will be useful to recall the poem's unique difference from other analogues, that is, the division of the functions of the original hero which I touched on at the beginning of this paper. Before turning to a closer examination of the reason why the functions are divided between Arthur and Gawain, first I would like to discuss the effect of the division on the poem.

In the case of Chaucer, because of his rape incident, a lusty bachelor is consequently forced to marry a loathsome lady. Also in Gower, although he is not vicious as the bachelor, Florent cannot avoid the marriage, as a result of his killing the son of his captor in the battle. Both are responsible for getting involved in their hideous marriages. In *The Wedding*, on the other hand, Gawain has no necessity and responsibility for it as Arthur does. What makes Gawain accept it is merely his fidelity to his king.

Gawain's figure in the poem, therefore, is rather faultless and spotless in comparison with the other heroes in analogues, namely, by the division of the hero's functions his knightly virtues are more exalted. To put it the other way round, it seems that in order to idealize Gawain, the functions of the hero are separated into two. Thus, in addition to my discussion in the previous section that the central theme of the poem is to celebrate Gawain as an ideal knight, Gawain's idealization in the poem bears an important part. What has to be noticed here is that a hero demonstrates his perfection in all chivalric virtues not only in *The Wedding* but in many other romances. Or rather, the glorification of a hero is widely recognized as one of the common patterns of romance.<sup>29</sup>

Hence, it should be considered that Gawain's character in the poem is the result of following the pattern.

Then, what is the role of the other divided hero, King Arthur, in the poem? As is evident from his acts of unchivalrousness which I have examined one by one, his role is to enhance the knighthood of the other hero by means of the striking contrast between their conduct. In many romances which represent the peacetime and prosperity of the Arthurian universe, the attention is less often focussed on the king than on individual knights.<sup>30</sup> Arthur's court is now the central office from which a knight departs for his quest, and to which he ultimately returns with glory. Arthur himself is also reduced to a kind of background figure, making an appearance only in the opening and closing sections of the story. It seems that in *The Wedding*, the tendency is rather accelerated into giving him a far inferior position, for the purpose of idealizing Gawain as one element of romance patterns.

If so, then, why, on the level of superficial description, does the poet not refer to Arthur's wickedness but devote extollment to him in the opening lines? The main reason for the inconsistency above seems to be from another established convention of chivalric romance, simplification and typification of characters.<sup>31</sup> That is, characters in romance tend to be stereotyped and not to possess their marked individuality. The conventional mold of Arthur is still a "king curteis and royalle," one of "nine worthy." In Chrétien's *Yvain*, for example, although he again appears only in the opening and ending of the poem, the story starts with admiration for the king as in *The Wedding*. In the poem, thus, the poet's passion for obedience to the romance pattern makes Arthur, at least verbally, the greatest king, and consequently causes the inconsistency in his character.

We may, therefore, reasonably conclude that because of two elements of

romance formulas, idealization of its hero and typification of characters, *The Wedding* contains some distortion in dual aspects of Arthur's character. To put it more plainly, in order to emphasize Gawain's ideal chivalry, the functions of the original hero are divided into two with degradation of the other hero, King Arthur. There is, however, a dilemma in the poem, for, according to a romance convention, Arthur must be admired as the mirror of kings. The poet is probably less conscious of the coherence of plot than of romance conventions.

#### IV

What I have tried to do in this paper is, from the standpoint of the divided heroes in *The Wedding*, to explicate the contortion in it. There are, in spite of little space here for a fuller discussion, other examples which also suggest the incoherence of the poem, such as the description of Ragnell. Her appearance has been transformed into that of loathsome crone by her stepmother's spell. Strictly speaking, however, not only her appearance but also her inner nature, such as her extraordinary appetite at the wedding banquet, is transformed in order to exaggerate her ugliness. This problem again stems from one of romance conventions, typification of character, that is, the character of the Loathly Lady.

By the end of the fifteenth century, when *The Wedding* was supposed to be composed, chivalric romance had come of age and was thought to be in a state of decline.<sup>32</sup> Hence, its patterns which cause the distortion of the poem relatively became a kind of wreck of exaggerated literary topos. There has been the indication of its decline already at the age of *Sir Thopas*, which parodies and mocks the standard patterns of romance. From this viewpoint, we can recognize that the ill effects of romance patterns, investigated throughout this paper, are not only the problem of *The Wedding* but that of the concept of romance as a genre. Therefore, it

seems that the poem should not be blamed too much as some critics have done,<sup>33</sup> but be extenuated considering the whole circumstances in which the poem is situated.

It is unclear, of course, whether the poet and its original audience noticed the contradiction of the poem, but, they must at least have been careless about it. The reason for this is that the fundamental purpose and the nature of ME romance is entertainment and instruction, not the coherence of its plot.<sup>34</sup> The element of entertainment in the poem, for example, the description of Ragnell's ugliness or the sexual dialogue in the bridal chamber plays a comical and humorous role in the poem. Moreover, its moral instruction is accentuated by Gawain's idealization as a paragon to the audience. The poem, therefore, can be viewed to meet the requirements which are necessary for ME romance.

We must recall that the poet of *The Wedding* lived in an age when people were not impressed by individual originality or the invention of a new plot, but were interested in how a familiar plot was retold. By a fireplace, the audience enjoyed listening and anticipating how the motifs of the poem were developed and reborn in the genre of romance from the original Irish story and also from the versions of Chaucer and Gower. If this is so, the poem should not be regarded as merely one of their analogues, but be evaluated as one of romances in Gawain-cycle.

#### Notes

- 1 Although, in the later French romances, Gawain's character was blackened, his fame remained in England, except in the stanzaic *Morte Arthur*, Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, and possibly *The Gest of Sir Gawan*. See, Robert W. Ackerman, "The English Rimed and Prose Romances," *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History*, ed. Roger Sherman Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959) 493.
- 2 Also we can find a large number of other analogues in early Irish, English,

- French, and Welsh as J. K. Bollard pointed out, "Sovereignty and the Loathly Lady in English, Welsh and Irish," *Leeds Studies in English* 17 (1986): 41. Especially, a ballad in seven fragments, *The Marriage of Sir Gawain*, is considered to be the closest version to *The Wedding*. See Anna Hunt Billings, *A Guide to the Middle English Metrical Romances* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1901) 219. But a fire left us only half the tale, so it should be better not to include it in the discussion of this paper.
- 3 The motif of the Loathly Lady is ultimately derived from an Irish tradition, as many critics noted. For example, see Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton, 1957) 703; Bollard 41. On the other hand, it is too difficult to restrict the roots of the motif of the Riddle Asked and Answered, as G. H. Maynadier stated in his *The Wife of Bath's Tale: It's Sources and Analogues* (London: David Nutt, 1901) 124.
- 4 All the citations are taken from Donald B. Sands, ed., *Middle English Verse Romances* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), and verse numbers are parenthesized in the text.
- 5 B. J. Whiting counts up the total number of references in which Gawain is described with his courtesy, see, "Gawain: His Reputation, His Courtesy and His Appearance in Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*," *Medieval Studies* 40 (1947): 218.
- 6 Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, based on *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton, 1987) 170; Ronald Sutherland, *The Romaunt of the Rose and Le Roman de la Rose: A Parallel-Text Edition* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967) 44.
- 7 Bruce A. Rosenberg, "The Morphology of the Middle English Metrical Romance," *Journal of Popular Culture* 1 (1967): 67-68. With a morphological analysis, he classifies the romance into three groups: Crime and Punishment, Separation-Reunion, Test and Reward.
- 8 As for Gawain's virtues in *The Wedding*, Eiichi Suzuki has examined in detail, see "A Reading of *The Weddyng of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnell*," *POETICA* 2 (1974): 36-45.
- 9 The hunt-episode is usually used to isolate a hero. See Maynadier 118; Rosemary Morris, *The Character of King Arthur in Medieval Literature*

- (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1982) 71, 74.
- 10 As one element which reinforces his hypotheses that Malory wrote *The Wedding*, P. J. C. Field points out that the name of Gromer Somer Joure appears only in Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* except for *The Wedding*. See, "Malory and *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell*," *Archiv* 219 (1982): 375-76.
  - 11 The fulfillment of one's year-old promise is a popular motif in many tales, such as in *SGGK*. See, Maynadier 145.
  - 12 Ackerman 504.
  - 13 Marc Glasser, "The Forced Marriage in the 'Wife of Bath's Tale' and Its Middle English Analogues," *Neuphilologische Mitterlungen* 85 (1984): 240.
  - 14 Gawain's reaction on the matter of consent to marry contrasts sharply with heroes in other analogues. The knight in Chaucer shudders and cries out at woman's proposal of marriage, and Florent ungentlemanly thinks that the woman will soon die because of her age. Thus, their reaction has no relation to the conception of loyalty.
  - 15 Sidney Painter, *French Chivalry: Chivalric Ideas and Practices in Medieval France* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1940) 30; Alan M. Markman, "The Meaning of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *PMLA* 72 (1957) 578.
  - 16 Gervase Mathew, "Ideals of Knighthood in Late-Fourteenth-Century England," *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*, eds. R. W. Hunt (Oxford: Clarendon, 1948) 358.
  - 17 C. B. West, *Courtoisie in Anglo-Norman Literature* (New York: Haskell House, 1966) 2; Painter 34-36; Peter Coss, *The Knight in Medieval England 1000-1400* (Phoenix Mill: Alan Sutton, 1993) 108.
  - 18 We can find the word "honour," "worship," etc. in lines 65, 151, 162, 349, 353, 375, 582, 585, 666, 672, 687.
  - 19 There is the difference in the nature of sovereignty in the motif of the Loathly Lady between Irish and English tales. While the sovereignty in Irish stories, which is regarded as the origin of English stories, implies the kingship of Ireland, the theme is reduced to the notion of domestic sovereignty. (See, Ackerman 503; Bollard 45-47.)
  - 20 For I. 2. a, *OED* cites as an example from fifteenth-century literature which



- is almost the same age as *The Wedding*: "1460 CAPGRAVE *Chron.* (Rolls) 182 He cursed the Kyng of Scottis for brekyng of his treuth, . . ."
- 21 In his Introduction to his translation into Modern English, L. B. Hall argues Ragnell's pride, see his *The Knightly Tales of Sir Gawain* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1976) 155-56.
- 22 For example, see, Sands 341; Thomas J. Garbáty, ed., *Medieval English Literature* (Lexington: D. C. Heath and Company, 1984) 434; Billings 218.
- 23 West 4. Also see, Suzuki 42-43.
- 24 Thomas Malory, *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugene Vinaver, rev. P. J. C. Field, 3rd ed., vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990) 1120-22.
- 25 Painter 33-34. He adds that "no one attacks an unarmed man in the Arthurian works of Chrétien de Troyes" (34).
- 26 Also in *The Wedding*, we can see another example of the phrase (334). In addition, in Malory, see, 1122, 1166, etc.
- 27 It seems strange that Robert Shenk illogically justifies Arthur's guiltlessness: "If his consultation with Gawain seems to violate the oath he has taken . . . it must be remembered that he took the oath under constraint, and that in any case he is not breaking the spirit of that vow. . ." See, "The Liberation of the 'Loathly Lady' of Medieval Romance," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 2 (1981): 71.
- 28 See Caxton's original Preface in Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, ed. Janet Cowen, vol. 1 (London: Penguin, 1969) 3.
- 29 Martin S. Day, *History of English Literature to 1660* (New York: Doubleday, 1963) 45.
- 30 Morris 70.
- 31 Day 45.
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