

# 『トロイラスとクリセイダ』と17世紀翻訳本における 史的現在の比較研究

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史的現在とは過去に起こった物語を、目前で起っているかの如く生き生きと描写する為の手法であると言われてきた。1991年よりの拙稿4編で、チョウサーが史的現在を或る動詞や助動詞に付与する規範を明らかにした。それは「戦う」よりも「刺す、切る」のように、より具体性を持つ動的動詞に付与され易く、また、意味的に動性に欠ける動詞でも、物語の進展に重要な鍵となる暗示的事件や主人公の大きな心理的動揺には付与されている。特に物語中での音表現に史的現在が多用されている事から、彼の作品が基本的に“読み聞かせ文学”であった事との関連に注目した。つまり音表現の史的現在は、聴衆が朗読者の声を通じて物語中の音を聞くという音の二重性、もしくは重奏性のための工夫であると結論づけた。チョウサーの死後、1478年にキャクストンにより『カンタベリー物語』が出版され、1598年にスペートによりチョウサーの作品群が、そして推定1630年代に『トロイラスとクリセイダ』の3巻が不明の人物により翻訳、改訂された。本研究は17世紀初頭の読書時代における翻訳本で、この史的現在の工夫がどのように取扱われているかを調べた。その結果チョウサーでは同じく3巻で51の史的現在の出現が翻訳版では13に減少している。特にチョウサーでは現在形付与が顕著な副詞nowと共に起るBe動詞に関しては全て過去扱いであり、心理的動揺の現在形付与も全くない。13の内、現在形付与は話者の心理が反映される法助動詞に多発している。韻律上の必然から現在形が付与された例が3例あり、典型的な史的現在の使用は2例のみである。以上の事などから読書が確立した時代にあっては史的現在への要求が低かった事が解る。この事実はチョウサーの史的現在が、正に読み聞かせ文学としての生き生き表現の為の工夫であったと再確認した。

# A Comparative Study of Chaucer's Historical Present in *Troilus and Criseyde* and Its 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Modernization

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## Introduction

My previous studies on the historical present (henceforth HP) used by Chaucer prove that he used it under some criteria. The study in 1991 clarifies the vagueness of “immediacy” and “vividness” which Burnley attributes to the employment of HP.<sup>1</sup> That is, HP is generally employed when a verb with the semantic feature of dynamism or concreteness is used to express an action of a major character in focus.

Even if a verb lacks the feature of dynamism or concreteness, the verb is given the present tense when it is used in the description of sounds and an inevitable event for the development of a story or the strong emotional oscillation of a character in focus.

Especially the employment of HP in the description of sounds led me to further studies. I found in *The Knight Tale* that HP in the sound-description gave a kind of tension to a long narrative and tightened it. And I was confronted with the non-employment of HP in the scene of the uproarious chase after a fox in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*. My study in 1994 recounts some reasons for it.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently I investigated all the sound-description in *The Canterbury Tales* in 1995.<sup>3</sup> The study concludes that a verb related with a sound is generally expressed in HP when the sound and an action of a character in a topic are synchronous and the verb is free from the metrical exigencies. And it proves that the effect of HP is to highlight sounds in a narrative recited by a reciter. That is, the use of HP is based on the dualism of sounds in the narrative and the reciter's voice. It must have been a device for the audience, not the readers of *the Tales*.

It is safely said that *Troilus and Criseyde* (henceforth TC) was also recited before audience as *The Canterbury Tales*. On the manuscript of TC kept in Cambridge, there is a frontispiece in which Chaucer is narrating the work in the court of Richard II, although some critics claim that the scene is the pictorial fiction.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the fidelity of the picture, to listen to a recited narrative was a common custom of the

contemporary with Chaucer, who could neither read letters nor buy expensive books.

After the time of Chaucer, William Caxton published *The Canterbury Tales* in c. 1478 as the first edition and in c. 1484 as the second one.<sup>5</sup> In the early Reformation period, a number of English Wycliffite texts were published.<sup>6</sup> In 1598, Thomas Speght published his edition of Chaucer's works.<sup>7</sup> And an anonymous author who is conjectured to be Jonathan Sidnam published the 17<sup>th</sup>-century modernization of the first three books of TC in the 1630ies although the definite date of the composition is uncertain.<sup>8</sup>

In this study, I would like to examine whether the device of HP was accepted in the days when people began to read narratives, in order to confirm the meaning of the employment of HP in Chaucer. And another purpose is to make a partial amendment to my previous study in 1993. For this study, I will investigate the original TC<sup>9</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup>-century modernization mentioned above. And the definition of HP will follow the one in my study in 1991.

#### 1.0 The present tense given to verbs which express Gods' actions in Book I

In my study in 1991, verbs in the present tense depicting actions of Gods including mythological Gods and astronomical bodies are excluded from the definition of HP because it can be regarded as the present of general truth based on the ubiquity and immutability of Gods.

It is another interest to see the treatment of such verbs in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century modernization although the interest seems to be a deviation from Chaucer's English (henceforth the modernization will be expressed as 17<sup>th</sup>-TC and its author be done as J.S. according to the signature on the first page of the modernization). The comparison, however, will show a common treatment for Gods' ubiquity if the present tense is still given in the modernization. On the contrary, if not, it will be clear that the assignment of the present tense for Gods' actions is peculiar at least to Chaucer.

The first example of the description of Goddess' action in TC by Chaucer is found in stanza 20.

(1) . . . and thus Fortune on lofte

And under eft gan hem to whielen bothe

Aftir hir course, ay whil that thei were wrothe. (ll.138-40, stz.20)

.....

Thus Fortune plac't her fauoures heere and there

Sometimes on those, and sometimes vpon these  
But euer vpō them that did her please.

The first quotation above a dotted line is from Chaucer's TC and the second below the line is from the 17<sup>th</sup>-TC (henceforth every quotation will follow this order). Chaucer uses the verb *gan* for the action of Fortune. It is clarified in my study in 1991 that the ingressive feature of *gan* prevents it from getting the present tense and Trugott regards it as the "carrier of the past tense."<sup>10</sup> And the translator of the 17<sup>th</sup>-TC uses the verb *plac't* in the preterit.

In stanza 30, the God of Love gets angry and intends to be avenged on Troilus.

- (2) At which the God of Love gan loken rowe  
Right for despit, and shop for to ben wroken.  
He kidde anon his bowe nas naught broken;  
For sodeynly he hitte hym atte fulle-  
And yet as proud a pekok *kan* he pulle. (ll. 206-10, stz. 30) [Italics mine]
- .....
- At w<sup>ch</sup> y<sup>e</sup> God of loue, look't angrilie  
And mean't to giue him an vndoubted token  
That none of all his arrows yet were broken  
For suddainelie hee chose one frō the rest  
W<sup>ch</sup> made him to lett fall his Peacocks crest.

In Chaucer, he uses *gan* as in example 1 (henceforth Ex 1), *shop*, *kidde*, *nas*, and *hitte* and J.S. uses *look't*, *mean't*, *were broken*, *chose*, and *made*. Both of them give the preterit tense to all verbs. The actions of Troilus and Fortune in stanza 20 and Troilus and Love in stanza 30 are interwoven each other. Shortly to say, Fortune and Love behave in the same temporal frame with Troilus'. Consequently their actions are expressed in the preterit tense. But in the last line of stanza 30 in Chaucer's TC, the auxiliary *kan* appears in the present tense. It is not HP because Chaucer expresses the general ability of the God of Love, not the action of his pulling. Especially the adverbial phrase, *as proud a pekok*, generalizes the character of Love. On the other hand, in 17<sup>th</sup>-TC, J.S. paraphrases the original without the direct correspondent, and he shows a different interpretation of *a pekok*, leaving the problem who is *a pekok*. As to the use

of the auxiliary *kan* in the present tense, there is one more example in Book I.

- (3) Blissed be Love, that *kan* thus folk convertē! (l. 308, stz. 44)

.....  
And now he *wisheth* euerie houre to die  
Soe deepe her lookes *haue* struck him to y<sup>e</sup> hart  
O blest be loue, that *could* him thus conuert,

In the above pair of quotations, there is an interesting reversed assignment of the tenses. In Chaucer's TC, he gives the present tense to the auxiliary *kan* which states the universal ability of the God of Love as in Ex 2. And the object of the predicate *kan convertē* is generalized as *folk*. On the contrary, in 17<sup>th</sup>-TC, the auxiliary *could* in the preterit tense is given. At the same time, the generalized object in Chaucer's TC is specified to be Troilus by using the pronoun *him*. And J.S. gives the present tense to the verbs *wisheth* and *haue* of which subjects are Troilus and Criseyde's looks respectively. The present tense of those two verbs are HP. However, the present tense of the disyllabic verb *wisheth* is compulsory for the metrical scheme in contrast with its monosyllabic preterit *wish't*. On the other hand, the present tense of the verb *haue* is free from the metrical exigencies so that this present tense is an intentional and outstanding adoption in 17<sup>th</sup>-TC.

In Book I, I have only three examples of Gods' actions narrated by the narrator although there are other descriptions stated by a character in a scene. As far as the first book is concerned, Chaucer gives the present tense of general truth to verbs for Gods' actions except for the verb *gan* and others which synchronize with the actions of Troilus. Judging from three examples, it is not definite whether the exclusion of such verbs in the present tense from these data of HP should be inevitable. Then I will continue to examine verbs for Gods' actions in Book II and Book III and will treat them in an independent item of the definite HP.

### 1.1 HPs in Book I

The modernization by J.S. is not word-for-word translation but a kind of paraphrase. In the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, Chaucer's words grew antiquated faster than his forecast: "Ye knowe ek that in forme of speche is chaunge Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho That hadden pris, now wonder nyce and straunge..." (ll.22-4, Book II). Some of them

changed in their meanings or in the phonetic systems. Especially J.S. faced the problem created by the shift of stress which was related to the metrical scheme. Therefore one may say that a simple comparison of the occurrences of HP is not significant. But the translator ought to have chosen either tense when a change of the tense did not influence the number of syllable as seen in the pair of *had* and *have* in Ex 3. And when the translator wanted the employment of HP still even if the change brought a syllabic disorder, he ought to have devised the metrical arrangement on the level of a line, not a level of a word. So I believe his choice of the tense shows his tendency toward HP.

The first book includes nine HPs in four stanzas.

- (4) Hym didnen bothe worship and servyce,

In trust that he *hath* konnyng hem to rede

In every peril which that *is* to drede. (ll. 82-4, stz. 12)

.....

And honour due to one of Noble race

For well they hop't in all Euentures to heare

Frō him what to pursue, and what to feare

In the quotation from Chaucer, the verb *hath* occurs in the appositive clause which explains the content of the word *trust*. In Modern English, it should take the past tense as Tatlock and Mackaye translate it into “in hope that he *had* cunning . . .” (379).<sup>11</sup> The present verb *is* in line 84 should be in the past tense in Modern English too. For the prepositional phrase “in every peril” which includes the antecedent of the relative pronoun is a part of the preceding line. In Chaucer, the preceding verb *hath* influences the following verb *is* in the relative clause, apart from the fact that the present tense was used to express the future event in Middle English. Tatlock and Mackaye continue as “. . . to counsel them in every peril which they *had* to fear” (379). In the quotation from J.S., there is no verbs in the present tense.

- (5) When he was fro the temple thus departed,

He streght anon unto his paleys *torneth*.

Right with hire look thorough-shoten and

thorough-darted,

Al *feyneth* he in lust that he *sojorneth*,

And al his chere and speche also he *borneth*. (ll. 323-7, stz. 47)

.....

And frō y<sup>e</sup> Temple, as he did returne,  
Vnto y<sup>e</sup> Paliace straight he bent his waie  
Scorch't w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> flame in w<sup>ch</sup> his hart did burne,  
And though he well foresaw his owne decaie  
Yet least a suddaine chandge should him betraie.

Basically I exclude verbs in the present tense in the rhymed position from these data of HP. But the three present verbs *torneth*, *sojorneth*, and *borneth* in Ex 5 are included. For the rhyme scheme can't be disordered even if they are changed to the preterit in the position. In this scene, Troilus tries to conceal his falling in love. The use of HP highlights the psychological oscillation behind the actions of an important character. And I find no verbs in the present tense in 17<sup>th</sup>-TC.

(6) But argumentes to his conclusioun:

That she of him wolde han compassioun,  
And he to ben hire man while he *may* dure. (ll. 466-8, stz. 67)

.....

But reasons drawne to this conclusion  
That shee would pittie his distresse as one.  
That vow'd himselfe a Seruant to her Will

In the first quotation in Ex 6, the auxiliary *may* is used in line 468. Here the content of *conclusioun* in line 466 is developed. Tatolock and Mackaye translate the lines into "... that she should have compassion on him and he *might* be her man for life" (385). Similarly J.S. paraphrases them with neither verbs nor the auxiliary in the present tense.

(7) Now lat us stynte of Troilus a stounde,  
That *fareth* lik a man that hurt is soore,  
And is somdeel of akyngge of his wownde  
Ylissed wel, but heeled no deel moore,  
And, as an esy pacyent, the loore

Abit of hym that gooth aboute his cure;  
 And thus he *dryeth* forth his aventure, (ll. 1086-92, stz. 156)

.....

And heere wee leaue to speake of Troilus  
 Who had a hart that all his patience tried  
 Yet by y<sup>e</sup> frendlie helpe of Pandarus.  
 He found his smarting wound well pacified  
 Though not soe heald but he *must* still abide  
 What should be thought on further for his cure  
 W<sup>ch</sup> he resolud w<sup>th</sup> patience to endure.

In the above quotation, Chaucer uses two HPs *fareth* and *dryeth*. Behaving like a man with sore hurt and as a patient abiding an advice, Troilus endures his fortune. These two verbs lack the dynamism which is the first condition for a verb to get the present tense. They, however, suggest his hidden emotional conflict and are suitable to be expressed in HP. Moreover, the verb *fareth* is compulsory because its preterit *ferd* is monosyllabic. While Chaucer devises by HP, J.S. adopts the infinite *to endure* instead of the finite verb *dryeth*. The interesting present tense in 17<sup>th</sup>- TC is the auxiliary *must* in the fifth line of the quotation. The subject for the predicate including the auxiliary *must* is Troilus, not the “esy pacyent.” As this present tense is not in simile, it is HP which is the second example by J.S. On the other hand, in Chaucer’s TC, there are four verbs in the present tense besides the two HPs mentioned above. They are two *iss*, *abit*, and *gooth*. They are used in two kinds of simile led by the prepositions *like* and *as*. They are the present of general truth because the man who must abide an advice is not Troilus but “a pacyent.”

## 1.2 A Summary of Book I

There are nine HPs in Book I by Chaucer. Generally J.S. avoids using HP in his modernization. Sometimes he changes the tense of verbs from the present to the preterit as seen in the following comparison : “He streght anon unto his palays *torneth* (l.323)” and “And fro y<sup>e</sup> Temple, as he *did returne*.” Sometimes he changes the finite verb in “And thus he *dryeth* forth his aventure (l. 1092),” into the infinite in “W<sup>ch</sup> he resolud w<sup>th</sup> patience *to endure*.” Sometimes he omits a crucial clause and changes the original “And he to be hire man while he *may dure*” (l. 468) to his complete paraphrase



“That vow’d himselfe a Seruant to her Will.” He adopts only three HPs, *wisheth*, *haue*, and *must* in Ex 3 and Ex 7. And the verb *wisheth* is compulsory for the metrical scheme. The verb *haue* in the present tense does not disorder the meter if it is replaced with its preterit. And as it lacks semantic dynamism, the present tense is to express the psychological oscillation of a major character. Then there arises a question why he doesn’t use it in the scene in Ex 5 in which Chaucer uses HPs. In comparison with these two opposite treatment, J.S. seems to highlight the most shocking and crucial happening that Criseyde looked at Troilus and her looking converted his scorn for lovers into the sufferer for his own love. And the use of the present tense to the auxiliary *must* in Ex 7 is abrupt in the environment of many preterits of other verbs in the stanza.

## 2.0 The present tense given to verbs which express Gods’ Actions in Book II

There is no description of Gods’ actions related by the narrator.

### 2.1 HPs in Book II

There are ten occurrences of HP in five stanzas in Book II by Chaucer. Three of them are newly counted in the present data as an amendment to my previous study in 1993.

- (8) Now lat us stynte of Troilus a throwe,  
That *rideth* forth, and lat us trone faste  
Unto Criseyde, . . . (ll. 687-9, stz. 99)

.....  
But lett vs now leaue Troilus, whilst that  
He forth vnto y<sup>e</sup> Pallace straight *doth ride*  
And turne againe to Cresida, . . .

- (9) This yerd was large, and rayled alle th’ aleyes,  
And shaded wel with blosmy bowes grene,  
And benched newe, and sonded alle the weyes,  
In which she *walketh* arm in arm bitwene, (ll. 820-3, stz. 118)

.....  
The place was lardge w<sup>th</sup> Alleys railed round.  
And shadow’d well w<sup>th</sup> goodlie blooming trees,

Adorn'd w<sup>th</sup> Seates, and graueled was the ground  
 In w<sup>ch</sup> shee *walking* arme in arme them *sees*  
 And *heares* Antigone by sweete degrees,

In the two examples above, the verbs of the movement from one place to another are typically given the present tense by Chaucer. At the same time, the present tense of the verb *rideth* can't be replaced with its preterit *rood* which is monosyllabic. J.S. gives the present tense to the verb *ryde* by adding the dummy tense-carrier *doth* in Ex 8 in order to arrange the pentameter. Unlike the case of Chaucer, J.S. could have replaced the present tense with the tense-carrier *did*, if he had intended to use the preterit. So it may be HP. But the subordinate clause with the predicate in the present modifies the main clause. And both the present tense of the verb *lett* in the main clause and the present tense of the verb *turne* in the next sentence after the questioned subordinate clause are the narrator's present. Judging from this environment of the narrator's address to his audience, it may be better that the present of the predicate *doth ride* in question is interpreted as the narrator's present. Tatlock and Mackaye change the crucial verb into the participle in "Now let us for aseason leave Troilus *riding* on..." (407).

In Ex 9, J.S. changes the finite *walketh* in Chaucer to its participle *walking* as an adverb. Instead of it, he gives the present tense to the verbs *see* and *hear* which are not found in Chaucer's original. The present-verb *sees* and its preterit *saw* are both monosyllabic but the present *sees* is rhymed with *trees* in two lines ahead. In regard to the verb *hear*, the present tense with the third person morpheme harmonizes with the iambic pentameter: *And hēarēs Āntīgōne bȳ swēete dēgrēes*. But when the verb *heares* is replaced with its preterit *heard*, the meter is disordered. Then J.S.' assignment of the present tense is for the exigencies of rhyme and meter, not for the vividness of HP.

- (10) And seide, "He which that nothing undertaketh,  
 Nothyng n'acheveth, be hym looth or deere."  
 And with an other thought hire herte *quaketh*;  
 Than *slepeth* hope, and after drede *awaketh*;  
 Now hoot, now cold; but thus, bitwixen tweye,  
 She *rist* hire up, and wente hire for to pleye. (ll. 807-12, stz. 116)

.....  
 And w<sup>th</sup> another thought her hart *did quake*

Hope fell a sleepe, and dread againe *did wake*  
 Now hott, now cold, and thus twixt two distrest.  
 Shee *rose*, and forth shee *went* to finde some rest

In Ex 10, there arises a problem as to whether the two verbs *quaketh* and *awaketh* should be counted in my data. Basically a verb in the present tense put in the rhymed position is to be excluded from my studies. But when a verb put in the rhymed position doesn't disorder the rhyme-scheme if its tense is changed from the present to the preterit, it is included in the present data as seen in Ex 5. At the first glance, the verbs in Ex 10 seem to be the same case as Ex 5. But they are rhymed with the word *undertaketh* in two lines ahead, which can't be changed into the preterit because of the tense in the direct speech. Then the present tense of the two verbs *quaketh* and *awaketh* is compulsory for the rhyme scheme. However, I dare to count these two into the HP-data, because "Than slepeth hope" and "after drede awaketh" are semantically comparative coordinate clause. Then each verb in the pair should take the same tense. And moreover this stanza is very peculiar in regard to the concentrated occurrences of HP except one verb *wente* in the last line. So the verb *rist* in the line is assigned the present tense in spite of the fact that its preterit *roos* or *ros* is as monosyllabic as *rist*. The description in the stanza exclusively expresses the emotional oscillation of Criseyde. It is natural and reasonable for Chaucer to adopt HPs. For these reasons, I add them to the present data as my amendment to the study in 1993. On the other hand, J.S. completely changes Chaucer's four verbs in the present to the preterit *did quake*, *did wake*, *fell asleepe*, and *rose*.

(11) Now lat hire slepe, and we oure tales holde

Of Troilus, that *is* to paleis *riden*  
 Fro the scarmuch of the which I tolde,  
 And in his chaumbre *sit* and *hath abiden* (ll.932-5, stz. 134)

.....  
 Now let her sleepe, and let vs thinke as well  
 How Troilus *did* to y<sup>e</sup> Pallace ride  
 After y<sup>e</sup> skirmish wheteof I did tell  
 Where in his priuate chamber he *did bide*

In Ex 11, J.S. changes Chaucer's *is . . . riden*, which is the perfect of the mutative verb, to *did . . . ride* in the preterit tense with the dummy tense-carrier *did*. As he avoids using HP even for the mutative verb, this is a contrastive tense-assignment to the present predicate *doth ride* in Ex 8. The incongruity may be based on the difference that the present-predicate *doth ride* is used in the adverbial clause and the preterit-predicate *did...ride* appears in the objective nominal clause.

(12) But theron was to heven and to doone.

Considered al thing it *may* nat be;

And whi? For speche; and it were ek to soone

To graunten hym so gret a libertee.

For pleylnly hire entente, as seyde she, (ll.1289-93, stz. 185)

.....  
But this was somewhat to perswade her to.

All things considered well, it *could* not be.

The present tense of the auxiliary *may* in Ex 12 embarrasses me. I thought it was a kind of the present of reflection.<sup>12</sup> By adding a main clause like *she seyde* as seen in lines 1293 or *hir thoughte* between "Considered al thing" and "it may nat be," the latter sentence becomes the object of the main verb. For the reason, I excluded it from my study in 1993. But the next sentence after the interrogation like the self question by Criseyde, takes the verb *were* in the preterit. Then the auxiliary should be in the same tense with the verb *were*. Therefore, I regard this present as HP.

## 2.2 A Summary of Book II

In regard to the verbs describing the emotional oscillation of a major character, J. S. perfectly rejects the use of the present tense. When he uses it as seen in Ex 9, the employment is for the rhyme-exigencies like the pair of *sees* and *trees*. When HP is used in the position other than the end of a line as the verb *heares* in Ex 9, the use is for the requirement of meter : the word *heares* is disyllabic while its preterit *heard* is monosyllabic. The most embarrassing use of his tense-assignment is the inconsistency in the difference like *doth ride* in Ex 8 and *did. . . ride* in Ex 11. Both predicates are used in the subordinate clause and they occur in a new topic- initiation. In Ex 8, he uses the tense carrier *doth* to arrange the meter. But if it is replaced with its preterit *did*,

the meter never changes. On the contrary, if the preterit *did* in Ex 11 is replaced with the present *doth*, the meter doesn't change too. Moreover both of the tense-carriers *doth* and *did* are free from the rhyme-scheme as they don't appear in the rhymed position.

### 3.0 The present tense given to verbs for Gods' actions in Book III

I see an interesting reversed tense-assignment in the following examples.

- (13) And moste at swich a temple allone wake,  
 Answered of Apollo for to be;  
 And first to sen the holy laurer quake,  
 Er that Apollo spak out of the tree,  
 To telle hym next whan Grekes sholde flee- (ll. 540-4, stz. 78)

.....

And *must* all night w<sup>th</sup> in y<sup>e</sup> Temple wake  
 That of Apollo he *maie* answerd be  
 And first to see the holie Laurell quake.  
 Before Apollo *speake* out of y<sup>e</sup> tree.  
 To tell when next y<sup>e</sup> Greekes *shall* frō him flee.

- (14) He swor hire yis, by stokkes and by stones,  
 And by the goddes that in hevene *dwelle*, (ll. 589-90, stz. 85)

.....

He swore to her both by those stocks and stones  
 And by y<sup>e</sup> Gods w<sup>ch</sup> doe in heauen dwell

In Ex13, Chaucer expresses Apollo's speaking in the preterit, because Apollo's action and Troilus' one are synchronous. Then Apollo's speaking is not generalized as Gods' truth. On the other hand, J.S. uses the auxiliaries *must*, *maie*, and *shall* in the present tense which are in the description of the actions of Troilus and Greekes. And he changes the preterit *spak* in Chaucer's TC into in the infinitive form *speake*. He may have avoided the assignment of the disyllabic present form *speakes*, although the use of the subjunctive in a subordinate clause is often found in Chaucer. In Ex 14, Chaucer depicts that "goddes that in hevene dwelle" in the present tense as Gods' truth,

although the tense is obligatory for the rhyme with “helle (592)” and “telle (593).” In accordance with the verb *dwelle* in Chaucer, J.S. uses the present tense with the tense-carrier *doe*. In addition to the Gods’ action, I find an example related with astronomical bodies expressed in the present.

(15) Whan lightles *is* the world a nyght or tweyne

And that the wolken shop hym for to reyne,

He streght o morwe unto his nece wente- (ll. 550-2, stz. 79)

.....

When all y<sup>e</sup> World *is* darke a night or twaine

And lowring skies began to threaten raine.

He to his Neece before the euenig went

The time when the world was lightless was the very morning when Pandare got up. The present tense is also preserved in J.S.’ modernization and it can be thought as HP, not the present of general truth of astronomical bodies.

As far as Chaucer’s Book III is concerned, the use of the present tense of verbs describing Gods’ action is strictly kept as Book I unless their action synchronizes with a major character’s action. On the other hand, J.S. follows Chaucer’s present- assignment to the predicate *do...dwelle*, and uses the subjunctive to verb *speake* while Chaucer assigns the preterit.

### 3.1 The Ambiguous cases : HP or the Narrator’s Present

The following is an example of the narrator’s present which expresses his judgment or summary in his sphere.

(16) Considered alle thynges as they stooode,

Now wonder *is*, syn she did al for goode. (ll. 923-4, stz. 132)

.....

All things considered as then they stood.

Noe wonder *tis*, since shee did all for good.

In the above quotations, Chaucer and J.S. use the present tense, and Tatlock and Mackaye use the same tense in “it *is* no wonder she granted him such a favor, since

she did all in innocence”(441). This common use of the present tense may be a criterion to distinguish the narrator’s present from HP. For HP is rarely used in Modern English and J.S. generally avoids using it as far as Book I and Book II are concerned. There are two more examples in which Chaucer, J.S., and the two modern translators above use the present tense.

- (17) And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle,  
That *is* so heigh that al ne kan I telle! (ll. 1322-3, stz. 189)

.....  
Let them enjoye this happinesse that well  
*Can* chuse y<sup>e</sup> place in w<sup>ch</sup> such pleasures dwell.

- (18) But of this thing right to the effect to go:  
Whan tyme was, hom til here hous she wente,  
And Pandarus *hath* fully his entente. (ll. 1580-2, stz. 226)

.....  
But when they ended had their jollitie.  
And time was come, hom to her house shee went  
And Pandarus *hath* gott his full intent.

According to the presumptive criterion, the above two verbs in italics in Chaucer’s TC should be the narrator’s present.

In the following two examples, there is no concord in the tense-assignment among Chaucer, J.S., and the two modern translators : Chaucer and the two use the present tense while only J.S. uses the preterit or omits the verb in question.

- (19) And now swetnesse semeth more swete,  
That bitternesse assaied was byforn;  
For out of wo in blisse now they flete;  
Non swich they felten sithen they were born.  
Now *is* this bet than bothe two be lorn. (ll. 1219-23, stz. 175)

.....  
And sweetenesse now to them seems farr more sweete  
Through bitternesse w<sup>ch</sup> yet is past and gone.

For free frð woe, in joye they fairelie fleete  
Such joye as heeretofore they nere felt none  
And better thus then to be both vndone.

In the above modernization by J.S., he avoids using the verb *is* and paraphrases the original without the direct correspondent.

The most embarrassing verb in the present tense is the verb *hath* in Ex 20.

(20) I mene it here, as for this aventure,

That thorough a peyne *hath* founden al his cure. (ll. 1217-8, stz. 174)

.....

This seemes most true by Troilus successe.

Who through much sorrow *gaind* this happinesse.

Chaucer, Tatolock and Mackaye use the present tense. They seem to use the verb *hath* as the narrator's present because the sentence in line 1217 is his summary. On the other hand, as J.S. changes the tense from the present to the preterit, he regards the tense in Chaucer as HP. As for me, it seems to be the present of reflection because the subordinate sentence is the content of *it* in the main clause, "I mene it here."

And there is one more interesting case in which the formulaic phrases like "herte may comprende," "herte may bythynke," and "herte may devyse" are commonly used.

(21) Ago was every sorwe and every teere;

And bothe, ywys, they hadde, and so they wende,

As muche joie as herte *may* comprende. (ll. 1685-7, stz. 241)

.....

They felt noe sorrow, nor they knew noe teare.

Yet they had both before; But loue did send

Them now more joye then hart *can* comprehend.

In Ex 21, the formulaic phrase is used as the foundation of comparison shown by the phrase "as muche joie." The present tense of the auxiliary *may* is that of general statement. Therefore, J.S. and the two modern translators adopt the present tense as in Chaucer's TC.



(22) his joie may nought writen be with inke;

This passeth al that herte *may* bythynke. (ll. 1693-4, stz.242)

.....

To set forth, for it is more then Inke.

Can well decipher, or mans hart *can* thinke.

In Ex 22, the formulaic phrase in the relative clause modifies the antecedent *al*. All joy is the foundation of comparison. The narrator evaluates the joy of Troilus and Criseyde to be supreme. So the present tense of the verb *passeth* is the narrator's present. And the present tense of the auxiliary *may* is the present of general statement as in Ex 21. Then J.S. and the two modern translators use the same tense as Chaucer's.

(23) This Troilus, with al th'affeccoun

Of frendes love that herte *may* devyse,

To Pandarus on knowes fil adown, (ll. 1590-2, stz. 228)

.....

And then w<sup>th</sup> all y<sup>e</sup> best Expressiō.

Of frendlie loue w<sup>ch</sup> *could* deuised be,

In Ex 23, the phrase is used in the relative clause as in Ex22. But in this case, as “al th'affeccoun” and “frendes love” are appositive, the antecedent is not the general referent, but Troilus' love. Then the present tense of the auxiliary *may* should be HP. And the decision accords with the presumptive criterion mentioned in the explanation of Ex 16. J.S. translates it into the preterit and the modern translators adopt the present tense as in the original. As I have discussed above, the similar use of the formulaic phrase in the similar environment is different respectively according to its semantic structure.

The following example gives me a question whether the present tense of the verb *ben* in the subordinate clause is the narrator's present or HP.

(24) Nought nedeth it to yow, syn they *ben* met,

To axe at me if that they blithe were;

For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet (ll. 1681-3, stz. 241)

.....

Since they *are* mette, you neede not ask me how

They spent their time, or if they joyefull were.

If it before was well, tis better now.

As far as the criterion that the present tense is the narrator's present when it is used in all of Chaucer's TC, 17<sup>th</sup>-TC and the modern version is concerned, the verb *ben* in Ex 24 is the narrator's present. Moreover, the preceding verb *nedeth* in his speaking to his audience, *you*, shows that the following sentence is his summary. But when I compare the sentence "Nought nedeth it to you, syn they ben met" with the sentence "No wonder is, syn she did al for goode" in Ex 16 which has the similar construction, I don't know the inevitability of the present tense in Ex 24.

### 3.2 HPs in Book III

In Book III of Chaucer, there are 29 occurrences of definite HP. And that of the mutative verbs like *go* and *come* appears in two examples as below:

(25) And Pandarus, with a ful sobre cheere,

*Goth* to the dore anon, withouten lette,

There as they laye, and softlyt it shette. (ll. 747-9, stz. 107)

.....

Yet Pandarus to be more out of feare

As one that all misfortu[n]es did forecast

*Went* softlie to y<sup>e</sup> dore, and made it fast

(26) And though that he *ben come* of blood roial,

Hym liste of pride at no wight for to chace; (ll. 1800-1, stz. 258)

.....

And though he *was deriu'd* of Royall blood.

Yet haughtie pride, and foule affections base.

In Ex26, the predicate *ben come* gets the present tense in Chaucer even when it is used in the metaphorical meaning of the birth-derivation, not in the literal meaning of someone's coming. And J.S. avoids using HP for it.

(27) And sire, his lessoun, that he wende konne

To preyen hire, *is* thorough his wit *ironne*. (ll. 83-4, stz. 12)

.....

And those quaint speeches, he had thought vpð

*Were* all forgott in this confusion.

When Chaucer gives the present tense to the predicate *is...renne*, J.S. changes the original perfect *is. . . ironne* to *were. . . forgott* in Ex 27.

(28) But nedes day departe hem moste soone;

And whan hire speche don was and hire cheere,

They *twynne* anon, as they were wont to doone, (ll. 1709-11, stz. 245)

.....

Bright daie must needes yet force these two *to part*

W<sup>ch</sup> when they saw, not w<sup>th</sup>out pleasing paine.

They both embrac't and kist w<sup>th</sup> tender hart

In Ex 28, Chaucer gives the present tense to the verb *twynne*. His employment of HP is for the metrical device to keep a monosyllable verb. This separation between Troilus and Criseyde is not a tragic one to be highlighted by HP because they “setten tyme of metying” (1712) and met many a time after the separation. J.S. paraphrases the stanza completely and embodies the content of “they were wont to doon”(1211) with the verbs *embrac't* and *kist* in the preterit. It is natural for J.S. to use the preterit because there is no inevitability to highlight Troilus' separation which is not highlighted even by Chaucer.

Although the verbs like *spende*, *make*, *yeve*, and *chaunge*, are not semantically dynamic, Chaucer gives them the present tense to highlight Troilus' delightful days, which reflect his exalted emotion as in the following example.

(29) He *spendeht*, *jousteth*, *maketh* festeynges;

He *yeveth* frely ofte, and *chaungeth* wede, (ll. 1718-9, stz. 246)

.....

Braue T[r]oilus now liud, all free frð care [my addition]

In feastes, in dancing, Justs, and Tourniaments.

Hee freelie gaue, oft chandg'd the clothes he ware.

As to those verbs in italics above, J.S. rejects to give the present tense to them by replacing them with the noun phrases and the preterit tense.

In relation to the verbs without semantic dynamism, the verb *have* occurs in the present tense in Chaucer's examples 30, 31, and 32.

(30) For al this world, in swych present gladnesse

Was Troilus, and *hath* his lady swete. (ll. 1244-5, stz. 178)

.....

In such sweete Joye, and such happinesse

Was Troilus, who *hath* his ladie sweete.

(31) With alle joie and alle frendes fare

Hire em anon in armes *hath* hire nome, (ll. 605-6, stz. 87)

.....

All joye w<sup>ch</sup> loue, and frendlie courtesie,

And he, w<sup>th</sup> both his armes gentlie *combinde*,

In Ex 30, Chaucer uses HP to highlight the consummation of Troilus' love. J.S. gives the present tense to the same verb as Chaucer. If the verb *hath* is replaced with its preterit *had*, there occurs no disorder of meter. Then it can be said that this is the example of his intentional use of HP. On the other hand, in Ex 31, the crucial verb which carries the tense is moved from the middle of line 606 in the original to the end of the line, in the rhymed position. The verb *combinde* in the preterit tense is inevitable to rhyme with the word *finde* in two lines ahead. In Ex 32, J.S. assigns the preterit to three predicates including two verbs and one auxiliary in the stanza.

(32) For now is wikke torned into worse,

And al that labour he *hath* don byforn

He wende it lost; . . . (ll. 1074-6, stz. 154)

.....

For now his ill was turned into worse

And all y<sup>e</sup> hopes that should his liue adorne

He gaue as lost, . . .

In regard to the verb *be* which is in the most remote position from dynamism, Chaucer's TC has eleven occurrences of its HP paradoxically. And four of eleven co-occur with the adverb *now*, and at the same time one of them occurs in the there-construction.

(33) Now al *is* wel, for al the world *is* blynd

In this matere, bothe fremde and tame, (ll. 528-9, stz. 76)

.....

A waie to keepe it frō each enuious eare.

And make y<sup>e</sup> jealous hudwink't world soe blinde

(34) And in his mynde he gan the tyme acrose

That he com there, and that, that he was born;

For now *is* wikke torned into worse, (ll. 1072-4, stz. 154)

.....

And in his minde he did y<sup>e</sup> time accurse

That euer he came there, or ere was borne.

For now his ill *was* turned into worse.

As to the present tense in those examples above, I feel the nuance of the narrator's present as the narrator seems to feel a continuance from Troilus' world to his. But Chaucer does not always give the present tense to a verb co-occurring with the adverb *now*. It is instanced by "For out of wo in blisse now they flete" (l. 1221, Ex 19). In addition to the judgment based on the presumptive criterion, this is reason I regard this present as HP. And J.S. replaces Chaucer's present tense with the infinitive *make* in Ex 33 and the preterit in Ex 34 respectively.

And two of eleven co-occur with the adverb *thus* as follows.

(35) Thus al *is* wel; but tho bigan aright

The newe joie and al the feste agayn. (ll. 652-3, stz. 94)

.....

Thus all *is* well, and euerie gentle wight

Return'd to mirth, and jollitie againe

(36) In joie and suerte Pandarus hem two

Abedde brought whan that hem bothe leste,

And thus they *ben* in quyete and in reste. (ll. 1678-80, stz. 240)

.....

There Pandarus them safe from e[n]uious eyes [editor's emendation]

W<sup>th</sup> warie priuacie brought both to bed.

And thus *were* long wisht joyes recouered.

From the semantic point of view, the sentences with the adverb *thus* seem to be the narrator's summary. As seen in the examples of the co-occurrence with *now*, Chaucer does not always give the present tense to a verb co-occurring with the adverb *thus* as "thus held hym ech of other wel apayed,"(421). And J.S.'s translation is incongruous between Ex 35 and Ex 36. In the case of Ex 36, if the preterit *were* is replaced with its present *ben*, meter doesn't change. By way of parentheses, Tatlock and Mackaye translate both of them into the past tense.

And two of eleven HPs occur in the there-construction, although one of them has already been counted in the group of HP with the adverb *now*.

(37) Now *is* ther litel more for to doone,

But Pandare up and, shortly for to seyne,

...

He streght o morwe unto his nece wente (ll. 547-52, stz. 79)

.....

Things thus prepar'd, kinde Pandarus did soone

Applie himselfe her free consent to gaine.

...

He to his Neece before the euening went

(38) Ther *nys* no more, but hereafter soone,

The voide dronke, and travers drawe anon (ll. 673-4, stz. 97)

.....

It was noe sooner said, but it was done

For vp they rose, and each one did consent

Tatolock and Mackaye use the past tense for Ex 37 and the present for Ex 38. There is no congruity in their translation. The there-construction in the original has no correspondent in the 17<sup>th</sup>-modernization above. And he replaced the verb *is* with the verb *prepar'd* in the past-participle in Ex 37 and with its preterit *was* in Ex 38. From these examples, it is clear that he intentionally avoids the employment of HP. And his avoidance of the there-construction itself may be influenced by the co-occurrence with HP because he follows the original when the construction co-occurs with the verb *was*, as follows.

(39) There was nomore to skippen nor to traunce,

But boden go to bedde, with meschaunce, (ll. 690-1, stz. 99)

.....

There was not one below, but was afraide

To giue disturbance to their sleepe heade

In connection with the verb *be* in the there-construction, the verb assigned the present in other constructions occurs four times in Chaucer's original. One occurs in the main clause in Ex 40 and the others are in the relative clause in Ex 41 and Ex 42 and the last is in the subordinate clause, "Lest she *be* wroth, hym thoughte his herte deyde-" (1171).

(40) My thridde bok now ende ich in this wyse,

And Troilus in lust and in quiete

*Is* with Criseyde, his owen herte swete. (ll. 1818-20, stz. 260)

.....

And though the Storie be not ended thus

Yet I will heere leaue Troilus in rest

W<sup>th</sup> Cresida the faire whom he *loues* best.

(41) He was so narwe ymasked and yknet,

That it undon on any manere syde,

That *nyl* naught ben, for aught that *may* bitide. (ll. 1734-6, stz. 248)

For all those bondes, in w<sup>ch</sup> shée tied him were.  
 Soe stronglie twisted, and soe firmelie spunn.  
 As made them difficult to be vndone.

- (42) Thise ilke two, that *ben* in armes laft (l. 1338, stz. 192)

This paire whom each *in* others armes wee left

In Ex 40 of Chaucer' TC, the narrator's present is used line 1818: "My thridde bok now *ende* ich in this wyse." This present tense and the adverb *now* seem to influence the following verb *is* in HP. In the 17<sup>th</sup>-modernization, the relative clause in which the present verb *loues* occurs modifies the antecedent *Cresida*. And the word *is* is a part of object of the verb *leauie* in the narrator's present. Then the verb *loues* may be interpreted as the narrator's present. This is very similar to the present in Ex 8. Tatlock and Mackaye translate the part in question into the prepositional phrase: "leave Troilus in joy and peace with Criseyde" (456).

In addition to the auxiliary *may* in Ex 41, I have three more examples of it.

- (43) And Pandarus, as faste as he *may* dryve,  
 To Troilus tho com, as lyne right, (ll. 227-8, stz. 33)

But Pandarus w<sup>th</sup> all the hast he might  
 Came back to Troilus full of content

- (44) So harde hym wrong of sharp desir the peyne  
 For to ben eft there he was in plesaunce,  
 That it *may* nevere out of his remembraunce. (ll. 1531-3, stz. 219)

Soe farr desire all by past joye supprest  
 W<sup>ch</sup> yet soe wrought vpō his fantasie.  
 As it was printed in his Memorie.

- (45) Retorned to his real paleys soone,



He softe into his bed gan for to slynke,  
To slepe longe, as he was wont to doone.  
But al for nought; he *may* wel ligge and wynke,  
But slep ne *may* ther in his herte synke, (ll. 1534-8, stz. 220)

.....

Returned thus to his owne house againe  
W<sup>th</sup> all y<sup>e</sup> speede he could, he went to bedd  
To see if sleepe could ease his troubled braine  
But all for nought, for his disturbed head.  
Would not admitt of sleepe, . . .

I have excluded the auxiliary *may* in the present tense in a subordinate clause which works as a standard of comparison like “as herte may comprende” (l. 1687) in Ex 21. In Ex 43, as the subject of the subordinate clause is the same as that of the main clause, Pandarus’ coming and driving are in the same frame of time. So the auxiliary *may* is HP. Tatlock and Mackaye translate the auxiliary *may* into the past *could*. J.S. replaces the auxiliary *may* with its preterit *might*. As to his replacement in Ex 43, in Ex 44 and Ex 45, he completely replaces the auxiliary *may* in the original with the preterit verb *was* and the preterit auxiliaries *could* and *would*, which are as monosyllabic as *may*.

In relation with the auxiliary *may*, I have one more auxiliary *kan* in the present tense.

(46) The goodlihede or beaute which that kynde

In any other lady hadde yset  
*Kan* nought the montance of a knotte unbynde (ll. 1730-2, stz. 248)

.....

The louelie beauteie w<sup>ch</sup> kinde Natures art  
In anie other ladie made appeare.  
Could not deface out of his constant hart

As the auxiliaries *kan* and *could* are both monosyllabic, there is no metrical compulsion in their choice. Then the present tense in Chaucer is thought to be HP. But all the three translators, J.S., Tatlock, and Mackaye use the auxiliary *could*.

### 3.3 A summary of Book III

I have explained 29 occurrences of HP individually. And two more predicates have been decided to be expressed in HP in section 3.1 which treats the ambiguous cases as to whether the present tense is HP or the narrator's present. Consequently I have 31 occurrences of HP.

As far as Book III of Chaucer's TC is concerned, the assignment of the present tense to the mutative verbs represented by *go* and *come* is less frequent than to verbs without semantic dynamism like *is*, *hath*, and to an auxiliary *may*. Even to the verbs *hath*, and *is* used in the perfect-aspect, Chaucer gives the present tense when they are free from the exigencies of rhyme and meter. The distribution of the occurrences of HP is as follows.

mutative verb	have	bee	may	kan	others
goth ben come is...ironne	hath hath...nom hath don	is is...torned nys nyl...ben ben be	may bitide may dryve may may...ligge may...synke may devyse	kan... unbynde	twynne spendeth jousteth maketh yeveth chaungeth
3	3	12	6	1	6 /31

On the other hand, Book III of 17<sup>th</sup>-TC has only four HPs including two ambiguous verbs as to whether they are in the narrator's present or HP.

### Conclusion

I have 51 occurrences of HP in the first three books of Chaucer's TC. Against the general expectation of many occurrences of HP of the mutative verbs, their occurrences are only three in Book II and three more in Book III. They are *redeth*, *walketh*, *is...riden*, *goth*, *bencome*, and *is...ironne*. On the other hand, the verb *be* or *is* and the auxiliary *may* exclusively take the present tense in the 51. The co-occurrence of the verb and the adverbs *now* and *thus* increases its frequency. Those adverbs connote the nuance of the narrator's pause to begin a new phrase or to summarize what happened. In spite of the nuance, I regard the present tense of the verb with such an adverb as HP because there is no congruity in Chaucer's tense assignment. And many occurrences of the auxiliary *may* in the present tense are probably influenced by its

modality. As Jespersen states “they [three kinds of mood] express certain attitudes of the mind of the speaker toward the contents of the sentence,”<sup>13</sup> it seems that the narrator’s psychology toward the narrative which happened in the past let him choose the present tense in his sphere.

In 17<sup>th</sup>-TC, I have only thirteen occurrences of HP. And three of them are obviously assigned the present tense for the exigencies of rhyme and meter. The auxiliaries *must*, *mai*, and *shall* occupy four-13ths of the total occurrences. And three-13ths are ambiguous as to whether their present is HP or the narrator’s present. The verb *is* appears in the present tense twice. One is an obvious HP, and another is accompanied with the adverb *thus*. But in another example in which the same verb and the same adverb co-occur, J.S. translates the original into the preterit “thus were.” Then I can’t see any congruity in his translation of this co-occurrence. In regard to another co-occurrence of the same verb and the adverb *now*, J.S. gives the preterit tense to all of it. Judging from only two occurrences of obvious HP, it seems that he didn’t feel the exigencies of HP by which he could have highlighted an action or a situation in the narrative. His general avoidance of HP which Chaucer loves suggests the non-requirement of “vividness” and “immediacy” produced by the voice of a reciter when a narrative came to be read. This fact foils the effect of “vividness” and “immediacy” of HP in Chaucer’s literature which was expected to be recited.

#### Notes

1. Kazuko Hasegawa, “A Study of Chaucer’s Historic Present,” 大手前女子学園「研究集録」11 (1991):109-127.
2. ———, “Some Problems in Benson’s Interpretation of Chaucer’s Historical Present,” 大手前女子学園「研究集録」14 (1994): 108-130.
3. ———, “A Study of Chaucer’s Description of Sounds,” 大手前女子学園「研究集録」15 (1995): 64-80.
4. Dieter Mehl, “The Audience of Chaucer’s Troilus and Criseyde,” *Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honour of Rossell Hope Robbins*, ed. B. Rowland (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1974) 173
5. N. F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London : The Hambledon Press, 1991) 149-165.
6. Anne Hudson, “‘No newe thyng’ : The Printing of Medieval Texts in the early Reformation Period,” *Meddle English Studies presented to Norman Davis in Honour of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Douglas Gray and E. G. Stanley (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1983) 153-174.
7. Herbert G. Wright, ed. *A Seventeenth-Century Modernisation of the First Three Books of*

- Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde" (Bern : A. Francke, 1960) 9.
8. *Ibid.*, 5.
9. This investigation is based on the text, *The Riverside Chaucer*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987) 473-537.
10. Elizabeth Closs Traugott, *A History of English Syntax* (New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, INC., 1972) 138.
11. John S. P. Tatlock, and Percy Mackaye, *The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (New York : The Free Press, 1940)
12. J. M. Steadman, Jr. "The Origin of the Historical Present," *Studies in Philology* 14 (1947) : 4.
13. J. O. H. Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar* ( London : George Allen Unwin, 1924) 313.

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