In the following essay, Cook uses religious doctrines of sacramental law to analyze the Wife of Bath's failure to comply with the spirit of the sacrament of marriage. Because Alisoun prefers to control her spouse rather than form a true union with him, she is the opposite of the hag she describes in her Tale.

In a provocative essay on Alice of Bath's narrative posture, Gloria K. Shapiro recently requested a more adequate treatment of the religious dimensions of the Wife of Bath's performance. In the course of her discussion, Professor Shapiro observed: "The perfection in virtue through ... the grace of God is the larger subject of Dame Alice's Tale."

And so I also think it to be.

Professor Shapiro, however, goes on to reach the ingenious conclusion that Alice, prompted by an almost "pathological insecurity," takes extraordinary pains to conceal her refined sensibilities and, with them, virtues so admirable and appreciative of purity that readers must henceforward regard the Wife as "partially beatified" by religious passion and as a more "convincing Christian" than is Chaucer's Prioress.

In making this judgment, Professor Shapiro neither intends nor attempts to account systematically for the religious dimensions which interest her. In this essay, therefore, I propose to provide an overview of the major theological dimensions of the Wife's performance, especially those relevant to the theology of grace and of the sacraments. I shall also consider the relevant positions of a selection of influential churchmen with respect to those dimensions and shall suggest that, though Alice no doubt reveals more of herself than she intends in her portrait of the hag, religiously this revelation arises more from contrast than from identity of attitude. Finally, I shall insist that Alice cannot be counted among the Christian blessed--even partly, and I propose to examine the Wife of Bath's Tale as a medieval consideration of the sacramental efficacy of marriage.

In the Summa Theologiae, St. Thomas teaches: "Now the whole rite of the Christian religion is derived from the priesthood of Christ. It is clear, then, that the sacramental character is specifically the character of Christ, to whose priesthood the faithful are configured according to the sacramental characters, which are nothing else but certain participations of the priesthood of Christ, which are derived from Christ himself." Established by Christ for the good of the Church, the sacraments were deemed by Augustine, by Thomas, by their followers, and finally by the Council of Trent to be true causes (causa per se) of grace.
Though the Church considers matrimony least important among the sacraments, marriage is nevertheless Divinely ordained both to assist individuals in achieving spiritual perfection and to promulgate the growth of the Church. Accordingly, participation in each sacrament produces concomitant kinds and degrees of grace in the recipient and, also, certain observable benefits symptomatic of the grace which prepares human beings for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and for supernatural life.

St. Augustine specifies the sacramental benefits which flow from marriage. Among them, he lists the procreation of children, companionship between the sexes, the salubrious effect of matrimony in turning "carnal or youthful incontinence ... to the honorable task of begetting children, so that marital intercourse makes something good out of the evil of lust," and finally, the benefit of parental affection for tempering the "concupiscence of the flesh."[8]

To these benefits St. Ambrose adds harmony (armonia)--a couple's peaceful enjoyment of one another's company. Where one does not find this harmony, the Saint assures us, "There is strife and dissention, which is not from God, for 'God is love'".[9]

But this harmony, which in a wedded couple can be taken to signify the efficacy of the sacrament, is by no means the automatic outcome of having participated in the marriage ceremony. For any sacrament to confer its special grace on the participants, a number of conditions must first be fulfilled. Some of these conditions arise from the nature of the sacraments themselves. Sacraments are constituted by three elements: "things (res), as the matter (materia), words (verba) as the form (forma), and the person of the minister conferring the sacrament with the intention of doing what the church does."[10] If all those elements are present, the church deems the sacrament valid. In the case of Alice's marriages, we have no reason to suppose the sacraments otherwise than valid in all respects.

Others of the conditions, however, depend upon the state of mind of the adult recipient. Thus the sacrament may be perfectly valid and yet prove productive of no grace for adults. This case obtains when the disposition of the recipient to receive the sacrament is marred either by an intention not to do what the church does, or by mortal sin. This view was fully developed by Chaucer's time and was later thus summarized by Bellarmine:

"Intention, faith and penitence are necessarily required in the adult recipient, not as active causes, for faith and penitence neither produce sacramental grace nor give the sacrament its efficacy, but rather they [can] only erect obstacles which indeed prevent the sacrament from being able to exercise its efficacy."[11]

It seems clear that Alice evidences in her behavior, her narrative posture, and her autobiographical tour de force a good many obstacles that prevent the sacrament from producing consequent grace. One of them, however, is not the issue Chaucer has her raise concerning the validity of her five marriages. Theologically speaking, the doubts she expresses on that score constitute a red herring dragged through her narrative to throw her auditors off the scent of her real heterodoxy. Her arguments in support of serial marriage--though they seem to contradict Christ and however they may have offended prevailing lay and clerical notions of good taste and propriety--are nevertheless perfectly doctrinal. Though the church and the fathers strongly preferred widowhood to remarriage, they never dared to countermand the scriptural authority for the latter. Augustine remarked: "Men are wont to raise the question concerning third and fourth and even a greater number of marriages. To answer them in a few words, I do not have the audacity to condemn any of these marriages nor to minimize the shame of their frequency."[12]

Alice's real heterodoxy appears, instead, in her obstinate refusal to subordinate her will to the Divine will as it is implicit in the marriage sacrament. This refusal reflects itself first in her defense of her sexual predilections, the willful origins of which she attempts to conceal under the guise of astrological compulsion:

For certes, I am al Venerien
In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien.
Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse;
Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars therinne.
Allas! allas! that evere love was synne!
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun
By vertu of my constellacioun;
That made me I koude noght withdrewe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
(D 609-18)

This essentially theatrical appeal for sympathy thinly disguises serious heresy. By citing her horoscope to excuse her behavior, Alice denies to her own will that degree of freedom which people require to be able to choose God's intention for their lives--the highest good--over their own preferences, which, flawed by original sin, necessarily constitute the lesser good.

Moreover, Alice's admission of her continuing concupiscence, one of the maladies sin causes, signifies the failure of the sacrament to prove efficacious and to produce, in her case, its consequent and curative grace. Had it done so, Alice would have displayed in her behavior the virtue of temperance--a sign of grace whose absence points directly to a defect in her will.13

Alice's willful heterodoxy also appears in the demand for mastery that she regularly imposes upon her husbands. The church's insistence upon the husband's role as head of the family irks Alice--as it does some of her Tale's critics. But in focusing argument on the pros and cons of the psychological justifications for Alice's militancy--justifications that arise from misguided clerical, lay, and societal antifeminism--critical discussion sometimes obscures the theological imperative for a unique mutuality in marriage. This mutuality must express itself not only in the spouses' physical union, but also and more importantly in the union of their wills and, beyond that, in the careful and caring maintenance of that union by cheerful, mutually supportive, and successful coping with the onerous round of daily tribulation which characterizes human life. According to St. Ambrose, the essence of marriage defines itself in the contract (pactio) which expresses the union of wills: "Thus when the marital union is begun, then the name of spouses is applied; for it is not the deflowering of virginity that makes the union, but the marital contract."14

As I shall argue below, in none of her marriages has Alice made a full commitment of her will to the sacrament, and from that reservation follow most unhappy religious consequences--sin, gracelessness, and loss of charity.

It seems, then, that critics who find in Alice of Bath the prototype of the twentieth century's liberated woman and who can sympathize with her as the victim of an ages-old antifeminist conspiracy spring a snare that Chaucer set for Alice herself.

In preferring experience over authority and in raising and answering to her own satisfaction the question "what do women most want?" Alice universalizes her limited and limiting experience; she perceives herself as Everywoman.

To the church, and I think to Chaucer, she represents instead Everyman, facing the bar of God's ultimate justice and stripped by her own tragic decisions of salvific grace and of true liberty.

The psychic stresses that appear in Chaucer's characterization of Alice--her selective appeals to authority, her need for public approval despite private viciousness; her concern with appearances, her continual discomfort in her marriages, the tension created by the ongoing warfare between her refined sensibilities, on the one hand, and her shrewishness, lust, and coarseness, on the other--are in themselves symptomatic of the uneasy state of her soul and of her bondage to her appetites.
Commenting on the works of St. Augustine, Henri Rondet observes that therein "Liberating grace ... appears as a principle of unification, capable of restoring harmony among the divergent tendencies which are in the sinner's soul, which are the sinner himself precisely as sinner." Thus the "pathological insecurity" to which Professor Shapiro has called our attention is itself indicative, not of beatitude, but of its opposite.

The theological universals that associate themselves with Alice's experience do not do so exclusively or even principally as a result of her woes in marriage with five husbands--though these are certainly relevant. The universals, rather, have essentially to do with Alice's self-selected misery as a human creature.

Thomas Aquinas offers elucidation here. Except for man, every creature has a divinely appointed end, a tendency to achieve it, and sufficient natural means to encompass it. Man, however, has been created a spirit for a spiritual end vastly disproportionate to his nature: "Although man is formed toward an ultimate end, he is unable to achieve that end naturally, but only through grace, and this is because of the eminence of that end." Assisted by the gift of grace, man has the capacity actually to participate in the Divine nature--to achieve the beatific vision that is natural to no creature, but to the Creator only: "The gift of grace exceeds every faculty of the natural creature, for it is nothing other than a participation in the Divine nature ... through participation in its likeness."

But in this high distinction human misery originates. According to Thomas Aquinas and in the official view of the church, only God can make people fully happy, and people cannot reach God solely by their own efforts. They require God's freely offered help. Availing themselves of it, however, requires the exercise of will. People may accept God's grace; they may refuse it.

"God is the sun that gives the light, the soul is the eye that opens to the light, and sin is the opaque screen that comes between the soul and God." Those who refuse grace blind themselves with sin and opt for the natural order at the expense of the beatific vision. The pragmatic consequence of that option is damnation, freely chosen.

And there stands Alice. Despite her astrological disclaimer, she makes choices and knows it, and her speeches emphasize the conscious operation of her will:

For sothe, I wol nat kepe me chaast in al.
Whan myn housbonde is fro the world ygon,
Som Cristen man shal wedde me anon. ...
I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age
In the actes and in fruyt of mariage.
I nyl envye no virginitee.
I wol persevere; I nam nat precius.
In wyfhood I wol use myn instrument
As frely as my Makere hath it sent.
An housbonde I wol have, I wol nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,
And have his tribulacion withal
Upon his flessh, whil that I am his wyf.

These expressions of will follow an instructive pattern. Except for the last of them, each proceeds from a consideration of the position for which Alice has not opted: widowhood, virginity, and self-denial. Each one also involves a self-conscious rejection of its alternative despite lip service paid explicitly to virginity as a purer mode of conduct and, by implication perhaps, to the other two as well.

Given this pattern, we observe a curious and significant lacuna as well as a nasty shift in tone when Alice sets forth her expectations for her husbands.
With characteristic selectivity in choosing her authorities according to her tastes, Alice cites Paul in support of her power over her husband's body, but conveniently ignores that portion of the apostle's "sentence" that liketh hir noght so weel: namely, that husbands also have power over wives' bodies.20

As becomes abundantly clear in her account of her marriages, Alice reserves to herself authority over both bodies when she marries. Indeed, she reserves authority over her own body so that she can subsequently trade on it to gain opulent support and eventual control of her husbands' goods. This defect of intention on Alice's part both reveals her misunderstanding of the sacramental nature of Christian marriage and creates a serious obstacle to the sacrament's efficacy in producing grace. Though she has often joined her body to another's, she has intentionally and regularly avoided the requisite union of wills.

Moreover, Alice does not intend in her marriages to strive after harmony nor after perennial mutual affection which requires "a positive and definite effort on the part of the spouses."21 Instead, she elects to become the "whippe." Her success in that role needs no special citation.

Yet another indication that Alice has never submitted to the sacrament nor committed to a husband appears in the way she hedges her bets against the future. Still married to her fourth husband, she dallies with Jankin, promises to become his wife--contingent upon her first becoming a widow--and assures her pilgrim listeners:

Yet was I nevere withouten purveiance
Of mariage, n'of othere thynges eek.
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
And if that faille, thanne is al ydo.
(570-74)

Theologically speaking, Alice's reservations as she approaches the sacrament of matrimony and her commitment to enjoy what she perceives as her own good at the expense both of the harmony of her unions and of sacramental efficacy place her in a most precarious situation: "In the case of those who have reached the age of reason, the reception of grace must be voluntary ... ; there must be nothing in the soul which is an obstacle to the entry of sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace cannot enter if the will still cleaves to some grave sin and refuses to renounce it. If a man should receive a sacrament in such a frame of mind, not merely does he receive no grace, but he is guilty of the sin of sacrilege."22

One is reluctant to pronounce with Huppé and Levy such a heavy judgment on Alice,23 but her very devotion to self is, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, symptomatic of the sinner. In the sinner "there is a kind of spontaneous preference for one's own good in opposition to the universal good. The grace of God is necessary in order to correct this selfishness."24

Alice is caught. Five times she has had the opportunity to avail herself of the grace of the sacrament. Five times she has interposed her will and opted for the private good. Each time she does so, in the eyes of the church she sins mortally, becomes more obdurate in her chosen evil and more blind to the possibilities that sacramental grace offers, not only for temporal happiness, but also for eternal salvation.

One other point remains to be made in this connection. Mortal sin is of course so called because it has the power of destroying supernatural life. Says theologian G. H. Joyce:

A fully deliberate violation of God's law in a grave matter involves the rejection of God as our last end. It is an act of formal rebellion against His authority. By such an act ... the sinner of necessity forfeits the virtue of charity. Those who possess charity love God above all things: that is, they direct their lives to him as their last end. When a man shakes off the yoke of God's authority, he thereby makes self-gratification his end instead of God, and in so doing deprives himself of charity.25
If the theological pity of her performance is that she is damning herself, the psychological pity is that thereby she has rendered herself incapable of caring, of loving in the sense of caritas and agape. Her avowed motives in marrying, her treatment of her husbands, her incapacity for moral growth as it is reflected in her failure to learn from her experience, and her final curse, calling down early death upon husbands who reject wives' governance and invoking pestilence on those who spend too little, serve to confirm that view.

The pilgrim Chaucer gives us the key, after all, in the Wife's *General Prologue* portrait when he comments on her character:

> In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.

(A 449-52)

Being first in the offertory processional suggests a kind of mastery, and failure to achieve it produces frustration, anger, and a concomitant loss of charity that parallels the events in her autobiographical discourse.

One wonders, then, how, critics can argue for the moral identity of Alice and the morally beautiful hag of her *Tale*. Indeed, as John Ropollo noted years ago, the unregenerate knight of the early part of the story serves better than does the hag as Alice's moral surrogate.⁵ The Wife's willfulness, compulsive sexuality, disregard for others, and the recourse to the force she used to impose her will on Jankin all reappear in the knight's rape of the peasant girl (D 886-88). Almost certainly Chaucer's innovation,²⁷ the rape underscores the moral similarity of the Wife and the knight of her *Tale* as a rapist, and Ropollo makes a convincing case for this identification and for the subsequent dissimilarity between Alice and her knight when, unlike her, he submits to discipline, receives his wife's instruction, and reforms. Heretofore unremarked, however, is a parallel between the knight's and Alice's reservation of their wills.

This correspondence occurs when the knight fulfills his freely given promise to perform the Hag's next request. Bound by his word, the chivalric code, the Queen's justice, the hag's determination, and the imperatives of the plot, the knight grudgingly marries the hag, thereby participating in the sacrament without the intention of doing what the church does. As Chaucer has Alice recount his demeanor:

> I seye ther nas no joye ne feeste at al;
Ther nas but hevynesse and muche sorwe.
For prively he wedded hire on the morwe,
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,
So wo was hym, his wyf looked so foule.

(D 1078-82)

Just as the gentle persuasion of the pillow lecture on natural gentilesse overcomes the Knight's central objection to the social mis-matching implicit in this union, so, it seems, does his recognition of her moral beauty lessen the knight's objections to the hag's physical loathliness.²⁸ Thus the knight's reluctance to choose between the hag's proffered alternatives could mean one of two things. It could imply what Alice thinks it does--a choice between sensual gratification with the attendant risk of cuckoldry or secure reputation with sensual deprivation. For a more discriminating medieval person, however, it could also imply a fear that lost moral beauty was the price of improved physical appearance.

St. Ambrose raises the crucial question on this issue. In *De institutione virginis*, he asks husbands: "Why do you more require beauty of features in your spouse than moral beauty? Let a husband be pleased by integrity more than by pulchritude."²⁹ Elsewhere the Saint remarks: "For a woman's beauty does not delight a man as do her
virtue and gravity. Who seeks the blessings of marriage should desire [a woman] not more wealthy or well
dressed but [one] adorned with morality. The hag displays real concern for her moral health. Discerning that
another has found fault with her, the hag of the *Wife's Tale* immediately asks:

What is my gilt? For Goddes love, tel me it,
And it shal been amended, if I may.
(D 1096-97)

Upon hearing the fault described, she proves by sweet reason that it is no fault at all, thereby keeping her word
and amending it. Alice, however, displays no such concern for correcting her lapses. On the contrary, when
Jankin attempts correction, he provokes immediate violent resistance, and the Wife's later observation upon her
recollection of it:

Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.
I hate hym that me vices telleth me,
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.
(D 661-63)

Surely this is revelation through moral contrast rather than through identification.

In this connection, too, one must consider the Hag's implicit defense of the necessity for the operation of human
freedom as support for her argument against hereditary gentility:

Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted natureelly
Unto a certeyn lynage doun the lyne,
Pryvee and apert, thanne wolde they nevere fyne
To doon of gentillesse the faire office;
They myghte do no vileynye or vice.
(D 1133-38)

Neither the stars nor lineage determines gentility or viciousness; human beings choose good or evil for
themselves. Again, Alice's theology is faulted by contrast.

As the *Wife's Tale* unravels, the sequence of events becomes important to the interpretation offered here.
Convinced now by his wife's argument, the knight emblematically joins his will to hers when, without knowing what
the outcome of her choice will be he addresses her as "My lady and my love, and wyf so deere ..." (D 1230).
These words echo the hag's from lines 1091-92, "I am youre owene love and eek youre wyf; / I am she which that
saved hath youre lyf. ..."

The knight's acknowledgment of the loathly lady as lady, love, and wife also signals that the moment has arrived
when an already valid sacrament can also become efficacious. In his submission of his will to the sacrament, the
knight becomes a full participant in the marriage and removes the obstacle to consequent grace.

The subsequent elation of the hag on being granted the mastery that *worldly* women most prize is a joy in which
the knight can fully participate because her choice corresponds precisely to that which he would have made had it
been among the proposed alternatives.

In exercising the mastery her husband cedes her, in contrast to Alice, the loathly lady *charitably* opts to obey him
in everything "That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng" (D 1256), thereby acknowledging the mutuality of the
relationship. This mutual cession confirms the union of wills that removes the obstacle of the knight's reservation
and renders the sacrament efficacious and productive of grace.
The hag's transformation, no less miraculous than the knight's regeneration, and his response to her metamorphosis—"His herte bathed in a bath of blisse" (1253)—symbolize the reception of grace as a result of sacramental efficacy.

Grace itself may be defined as adoption by God—as a state of divine sonship mutually exclusive with sin. Moreover, as children of God, men and women are equally called to grace and are co-heirs of the supernatural life. Arguing against the contrast of the sexes in moral matters, St. Ambrose says: "Each one therefore ought to know himself, whether man or woman, because each is in the image and likeness of God."

In her care for her husband's welfare, the hag has not only saved the knight's natural life, she has set him on the road to supernatural life as well. Indeed, the pillow lecture and the knight's conversion provide a practical example of a husband and wife's sharing together the life of grace. Along with mutual prayer and fasting, Dooley identifies mutual teaching and exhortation as signs of that life.

A natural outcome of that grace is regeneration, by which is not meant merely a moral amelioration in a person's character—though certainly that occurs in the knight's progress from a willful, heedless rapist, to a subject bound by honor to become an unwilling bridegroom, to a committed husband, to one beatified by bliss. Regeneration properly signifies "... That a new nature has been conferred on us: that the humanity we received from our parents by natural generation has been transformed into something better. ... The moral change which regeneration involves is the result of this far more fundamental renewing of the soul.

Renewed by grace, the soul's faculties become elevated and receive appropriate gifts in the form of the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. When grace resides in the soul, charity resides in the will and is "the virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for God's sake." Charity, which is thus symptomatic of the receipt of grace, seems clearly evident in the mutual affection with which the knight and his no longer loathsome or loathed lady regard each other at the end of Alice's Tale.

Equally clearly, charity is absent from Alice's final curse, which mirrors those attitudes and practices that Alice learned at her old mother's knee, and which she has not modified in the course of five marriages. One finds neither moral growth nor regeneration in Alice.

Just as a loss of charity implies a lack of grace, so a lack of wisdom symptomizes a loss of charity, for wisdom is that gift of the Holy Spirit which complements charity in those blessed with grace.

A momentary digression will recall that at baptism each person, justified for the first time, receives in that moment the whole range of supernatural virtues, both moral and theological, which render souls susceptible to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

As I earlier noted, Thomas teaches that any mortal sin—like the knight's rape of the peasant girl, or Alice's infidelities and her reservations of her will in marriage—takes away charity. Sin does not, however, also destroy faith and hope—though without charity those virtues remain misdirected. Alice's misdirected faith appears again and again in her discomfort with her own situation. It also appears in her occasional prayers, and, negatively, in her curses. Her hope reveals itself in her unending search for yet another husband.

Even awash in sin, however, faith and hope remain virtues still and, speaking theologically, account for a portion of the Wife of Bath's unfailing attractive appetite for living and her optimism in spite of her experience of the woes of marriage. They account too, I think, for her concern about the opinions of others and for her theological rationalizing. Perhaps they also provide avenues for Alice's eventual, though unlikely, reformation.
Viewed in the light of issues relevant to a consideration of sacramental theology, the *Wife of Bath's Tale* raises and examines important questions which arise from the intersection of those issues with human life as it is lived in fact, in fantasy, and in feeling; in thought, in will, and in soul.41

Notes


3. Shapiro, p. 131.

4. Shapiro, p. 140.

5. Shapiro, p. 141.


9. St. Ambrose, *Expositionis in Lucam* 8, 3, (*PL* XV, 1856): "pugna atque dissensio est, quae non est a Deo, quia Deus charitas est."


13. See St. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium* 5.6.3: "Primo igitur ad integritatem perfectionis requiritur necessario perfectus recessus a malo, perfectus processus in bono et perfectus status in optimo. Quoniam autem malum aut procedit ex tumore superbiae, aut ex rancore malitiae, aut ex languore concupiscientiae." (First, therefore, [to achieve] the wholeness of perfection a perfect retreat from evil, a perfect progress toward the good, and a perfect attitude with respect to the highest good are necessarily required. Otherwise [spiritual] illness proceeds either from the swelling of pride, or from the rancour of ill will, or from the languor of concupiscence.) See also *Breviloquium* 6.13.1.

14. St. Ambrose, *De institutione virginis* 6, 41 (*PL* CCCXXXI, 41): "Cum enim initiatu coniugium tunc coniugii nomen adsciscitur; non enim defloratio virginitatis facit coniugium, sed pacto coniugialis." Not only does St. Ambrose insist on this point, the general practice of fourteenth-century ecclesiastical courts confirms that this
doctrines was not an arcane theological nicety but a matter of popular consciousness. Karen A. Corsano in "Custom and Consent: A Study of Marriage in Fourteenth Century Paris and Normandy" (unpublished thesis, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1971), examines several cases in which the union of wills was the crucial point in the court's decisions concerning the validity of marriages. See also, William Joseph Dooley, Marriage According to St. Ambrose (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1948), p. 38.

15. Henri Rondet, The Grace of Christ: A Brief History of the Theology of Grace, trans. Tad W. Guzie (New York: Newman Press, 1966), p. 97. Italics mine. See also St. Augustine, Confessionum 8,22 (PL XXXII, 759): "Nec pleune volebam, nec plene nolebam. Ideo mecum contendebam, et dissipabar a me ipso." (Neither was I fully willing nor fully not willing. For that reason I was contending with myself and was destroying myself.)


17. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae 1-2.112.1: "Donum gratiae excedit omnem facultatem naturae creatae, cum nihil aliud sit quam quaedam participatio divinae naturae ... per quandum similitudinis participationem."

18. Rondet, Grace, p. 211. See also St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae 1.48.4; 1-2.79.3; 2-2.2.3; 1-2.2.8; Contra gentes 3.159; and De malo 2.11.

19. See St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae 1-2.5.2: "Peccatores autem qui non justificantur per gratiam non sunt electi culpam sed solum praescit quod non sint gratiam habituri, sed suae naturae sint reliquendi." (Sinners, however, who are not justified by grace are not elected to guilt by the preordained will of God but it is only foreknown [to God] that they will not long for grace but will forsake their natures.)


28. A tension worth noting arises between the primary emphasis the lady's foul appearance receives in Alice's interpolations, and the primary emphasis the knight places upon his own and his kin's being "disparaged"--mismatched--by the union.


30. St. Ambrose, *De Abraham* 1, 2, 6 (CSEL XXXII, i, 506): "Non enim tam pulchritudo mulieris quam virtus eius et gravitas delectat virum. Qui suavitatem quaerit coniugii non superiorem censu ambiat ... non monilibus ornatum sed moribus."

31. Bernard S. Levy in "Queynte Fantasye," pp. 109-10, has called attention to the baptismal quality of this image and to its sacramental implications.


35. Joyce, p. 12. See also St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1-2.110.4: "Gratia dicitur creari ex eo quod homines secundum ipsam creantur, id est in novo esse constituuntur ex nihilo."

36. Joyce, p. 82.

37. See *CT*, D 576.


40. See St. Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* 14.7; and *Summa Theologiae* 2-2.4.4. Without charity, directed or formed faith (*fides formata*) becomes formless and misdirected (*fides informata*).

41. I am grateful to the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto for the kind hospitality afforded me during my research on this paper.

**Source Citation** (MLA 7th Edition)

**Document URL**
http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CH1420059242&v=2.1&u=holl83564&it=r&p=LitRC&sw=w&asid=e8f99a8ec880d599beb824bfe8cd9985

**Gale Document Number:** GALE|H1420059242