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Orta Çağ'ın Doğasını Okumak: *Sir Orfeo*'ya Karşı *Orpheus ve Eurydice*

Reading the Nature of the Middle Ages: *Sir Orfeo* versus *Orpheus and Eurydice*

ABSTRACT

Sir Orfeo is a Middle English narrative that presents a reworking of the ancient Greek myth of *Orpheus and Eurydice*, adapting it to the cultural and ideological framework of the medieval period. The plot follows *Sir Orfeo,* a knight who embarks on a journey to rescue his wife, Heurodis, after she is abducted by the Fairy King. Central themes of the narrative include love, loyalty, and the transformative power of music, reflecting the medieval concept of courtly love. Sir Orfeo's courage, displayed through his musical contest with the "Fairy King," exemplifies the chivalric ideals prevalent in medieval literature. Unlike its Greek counterpart, *Sir Orfeo* concludes with a hopeful and triumphant ending, characteristic of medieval romance that often emphasizes resolution and moral triumph. The text also demonstrates intertextuality, drawing on influences from both Greek and Irish mythology, and reshaping these elements within the context of medieval literary traditions. By examining the shifts in themes and cultural values, *Sir Orfeo* highlights the contrasts between ancient Greek and medieval views on fate, love, and the role of divine intervention. While *Sir Orfeo* represents a medieval reimagining of ancient themes, it also reflects the unique cultural and religious perspectives of its time. The medieval version incorporates elements of Christian morality, particularly in the depiction of the Fairy King's mercy and the ultimate resolution of the story. Contrary to, the Greek myth emphasizes the importance of following divine will and the tragic consequences of failing to do so. *Sir Orfeo* is a text that bridges the ancient and medieval worlds, offering insights into how myths were adapted across cultures and eras. The story reflects the values and ideals of medieval society, particularly the importance of love, loyalty, and the power of music, while also drawing on earlier mythological traditions to create a work that resonates with universal themes of fate, love, and the human condition.
Keywords: Medieval Romance, Greek Mythology, Universal Themes, Intertextuality

ÖZET

Sir Orfeo, Antik Yunan Miti *Orpheus ve Eurydice*'nin, Orta Çağ kültürel ve ideolojik çerçevesine uyarlanmış bir Orta İngilizce anlatısıdır. Hikâye, eşi**,** Heurodis'in Peri Kralı tarafından kaçırılmasının ardından onu kurtarmak için bir yolculuğa çıkan şövalye Sir Orfeo'yu takip eder. Eserin merkezi temaları arasında aşk, sadakat ve müziğin dönüştürücü gücü yer alır, bunlar Orta Çağ'da görülen soylu aşk kavramını yansıtır. Sir Orfeo'nun, Peri Kralı ile girdiği müzikal yarışma aracılığıyla sergilediği cesaret, dönemin şövalyelik ideallerini örnekler. Yunan Mitinin aksine, Sir Orfeo mutlu ve zaferle sonuçlanan bir sonla biter, bu da Orta Çağ romansının sıkça karşılaşılan bir özelliğidir ve genellikle çözüm ve ahlaki zaferi vurgular. Metin ayrıca, Yunan ve İrlanda mitolojisinden alınan etkilerle birlikte intertekstüellik gösterir ve bu unsurları Orta Çağ edebi gelenekleri bağlamında yeniden şekillendirir. Bu çalışma**,** temalar ve kültürel değerlerdeki değişiklikleri inceleyerek, *Sir Orfeo* Antik Yunan ve Orta Çağ bakış açıları arasındaki farkları, özellikle kader, aşk ve ilahi müdahale konularında ortaya koyar. *Sir Orfeo,* antik temaların Orta Çağ tarafından yeniden şekillendirilmesini yansıtırken, aynı zamanda dönemin kültürel ve dini perspektiflerini de içinde barındırır. Orta Çağ versiyonu, özellikle Peri Kralı'nın merhameti ve hikâyenin nihai çözümü üzerinden Hristiyan ahlakını işler. Oysa Yunan Mitolojisi, ilahi iradeye uyum sağlamanın önemini vurgular ve bu iradeye karşı gelmenin trajik sonuçlarını ortaya koyar. *Sir Orfeo*'daki değişiklikler, Orta Çağ edebiyatının klasik temaları daha iyimser ve insancıl bir bakış açısıyla nasıl yeniden yorumladığını gösterir.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Orta Çağ Romantizmi, Yunan Mitolojisi, Evrensel Temalar, Metinlerarasılık

1.   INTRODUCTION

Ancient texts exerted a profound influence during the Medieval period, particularly the myths surrounding the Greek pantheon of gods. Not only did these tales remain accessible, but they also resonated with the moral ideals of the time, as John J. Davenport observes: "In the process, early British authors sought to define themselves in the image of their ancient predecessors. They endeavoured to link their own creative efforts to the religious, mythological, and epic traditions of classical civilization. The ancient classics championed not only the sovereignty of Greek and Roman rulers but also the ethical codes, honour systems, and literary conventions of their era" (The Mythological and Philosophical Significance of the British Legends, John J. Davenport, p.6-7). A key example of this dynamic is found in the anonymous lay *Sir Orfeo*. A lay, often a rhymed romance, typically includes themes of chivalry and courage, elements that were closely tied to the Arthurian legends and well-known during this period. The *Matter of Britain* tales were crafted as a foundation for British patriotism. Although fictional, these stories helped strengthen the national identity of Britain by distinguishing it from French influence and providing the populace with a sense of cultural independence. As Davenport explains, "In their quest for national self-awareness, the early peoples of this land produced a series of legendary narratives—the stories of Brutus, the episode of King Lear, and what became the corpus of Arthurian legend—which collectively form what mythographers call the 'Matter of Britain'" (The Mythological and Philosophical Significance of the British Legends, John J. Davenport, p.4).

The Arthurian Legends provided early English identity with a sense of predestation, framing their journey through the Dark Ages as a divinely guided odyssey. This narrative was peculiarly pertinent during the Black Death or the Black Plague, offering solace and direction to a society gripped by uncertainty. The significance of these legends lies in their narrative structure, particularly the epic and legendary elements that not only provided moral guidance to the English spirit but also aligned with theological principles. As a natural byproduct of Christian values, the English were readily able to accept the teachings embedded in these legends, given their strong parallels to biblical moral teachings and the philosophical discourse surrounding them.

Moreover, the supernatural dimensions of these legends played a crucial role, enhancing their epic grandeur while imbuing them with a sense of divinity. This divine element not only elevated the stories but also ensured their recognition, particularly under the auspices of biblical teachings. It functioned as a legitimizing force, akin to Aristotle's prescribed rules for tragedy, which playwrights adhered to in order to secure their status as timeless and revered authors. Divinity also symbolized predestination, with fate steering the narrative, as John J. Davenport aptly observes: "The Sword in the Stone is undoubtedly a symbol of divine potency. Placed there by Merlin, who is an archetypal 'old man' figure of divine authority, the Sword is offered (like salvation) to any who can accept it. How a knight acts towards the Sword in the Stone indicates how he relates to divinity, i.e., the eschatological power of fate" (The Mythological and Philosophical Significance of the British Legends, John J. Davenport, p.27).

The concept of fate serves as the driving force behind the plotlines of these legends, profoundly shaping their progression. This is evident in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, where the Green Knight—representing the divine element of the legend—confronts King Arthur's court and demands that Sir Gawain strike him. After Sir Gawain delivers the blow, the Green Knight's head is severed, yet he picks it up and challenges Sir Gawain once more. Ultimately, Sir Gawain accepts the challenge, embarking on a journey that requires him to cultivate the virtues of a knight and evolve into a better version of himself. This divine intervention within *The Green Knight* thus instils the plot with a sense of inevitability, implying that Sir Gawain's transformation into a nobler figure was fated.

However, the notion of fate should not be viewed as a mere blind destiny, for the actions of the characters are not without consequence on their eventual outcomes. This is clearly demonstrated in *Le Morte d'Arthur*, where Marilyn Corrie articulates: "Rather, Fortune might be seen as dispensing to Arthur the punishment that, according to Merlin much earlier in the Morte, God has decreed it to be inflicted on Arthur because of the transgression that he has committed. Fortune, in other words, might be thought to be delivering to Arthur the fate that his own actions have determined, not a fate that she has determined herself' ("God may well fordo desteny": Dealing with Fate, Destiny, and Fortune in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Other Late Medieval Writing, Marilyn Corrie, p.18).

The theme of companionship, particularly the concept of brotherhood, plays a significant role in the Arthurian Legends. Unlike the camaraderie seen in works like Dante's *Divine Comedy* or Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, where brotherhood is often portrayed as a source of guidance and wisdom, the Arthurian brotherhood is more focused on chivalric deeds and the sharing of military prowess. This form of

brotherhood is not only a central theme in the legends but is also reflected in the historical context of the time. As Maurice Keem points out, "What these literary references show is that brotherhood-in-arms was some sort of very close relationship, established formally between two persons of military status. Because of their nature, it has usually been taken to be a mere piece of chivalrous extravaganza. It is, however, unwise to assume that anything which writers of medieval romance took seriously was a matter of indifference in practice, simply because official records, whose survival is notoriously chancy, do not underline its importance" (Brotherhood in Arms, Maurice Keem, p.2).

One of the most renowned tragic tales from Greek mythology is that of *Sir Orpheus and Eurydice*. Orpheus, hailing from Thrace, is revered as one of the world's greatest poets and musicians. His mother is a Muse, most likely Calliope, while his father is Oeagrus, the king of Thrace. Orpheus is famed for his extraordinary musical talents, which were so powerful that they could charm animals, trees, and rocks. As stated in the following passages, "If Apollo was the greatest musician of the gods, Orpheus was supreme among the mortals," and "The birds and wild beasts that roamed there would draw close to listen and to follow him. Even the trees swayed in time to the tunes he played" (Sir Orpheus, Gibson, p.1). In his attempt to rescue his deceased wife, Eurydice, Orpheus ventures into the underworld to plead with Hades and bring her back. Sadly, the story culminates in the heartbreaking loss of Eurydice once again.

The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is widely recognized and has captivated renowned artists such as Peter Paul Rubens and Nicolas Poussin (Greeka, 2024). Ancient Greek myths held great significance, serving as vehicles for imparting vital moral lessons. Moreover, they offered explanations for events beyond human comprehension, addressing universal themes like death, illness, and natural disasters. The Greeks believed that the Gods and Goddesses wielded control over human lives, and people felt compelled to honour and worship them for protection. The belief was rooted in the idea that the Greek Gods punished those who failed to show reverence. A prime example of this is the myth of Prometheus and his interaction with humanity. The story begins with Prometheus stealing fire from Zeus to give it to the God Hephaestus, who then bestowed it upon humans. Zeus, enraged by the gift of knowledge to mankind, forgave Prometheus's transgression but sought vengeance on humanity. The Gods presented Pandora with a box containing dreadful things, instructing her never to open it. However, driven by curiosity, Pandora opened the box, unleashing disease, sorrow, and the misfortunes of the Gods upon the world. Though she attempted to close the box, it was too late. Only one thing remained inside: hope. This act marked the end of the Golden Age for humankind.

Many Greek myths also played crucial roles in cosmology and religion. Orpheus is a notable figure in this context, for he was not only a musician but also a poet and a religious prophet. He served as a conduit for imparting wisdom on various aspects of life. In both *Sir Orfeo* and *Orpheus and Eurydice*, the importance of poetry and music is emphasized. These art forms are portrayed as mediums for expressing emotions, reflecting the inner self, and connecting with the spiritual realm. In the myth, Orpheus's music allows him to venture into the underworld, his sorrow moving even Hades, the Guardian of Balance. As expressed in the following quote: "My friends, we're not going down to Hades—not just yet, although we're grieving, not until the day we must confront our fate." (Odyssey, Line 228, p. 172).

The text underscores the profound connection between Fate and human existence, emphasizing the necessity of worshipping the Gods for one's wellbeing. This is further illustrated by the extraordinary power of Orpheus' muse, so compelling that even Hades, the stoic Guardian of Balance, moved by its force, was unable to remain indifferent. As a deity who maintains the impartiality of order, Hades is typically removed from emotional influence, yet the sheer power of Orpheus' music transcends this detachment. As noted in the text, "It was music from Orpheus's lyre which saved all but one of the Argonauts from the temptation of the Sirens. As a result, his fame had spread far and wide over the land of Thrace, where his father was king" (Sir Orpheus, Gibson, p.1). Orpheus' music is renowned for its calming influence, capable of soothing even the most ferocious of beasts.

Moreover, it is believed that Orpheus derived his wisdom from Dionysus, an insight that echoes the nature of Dionysian ecstasy. As Misopolinou (2000) notes, this state of ecstasy could be described as spontaneous and eruptive, yet it never completely disconnects the individual from their sense of self. The individual in this state continually "returns" to become a vital and creative member of their society, rather than an outsider. This liberating experience, alongside growth and maturation, is both a transcendence and an embodiment of the potential within the individual. Through art's transformative power, Orpheus' music allowed the human mind to tap into its primal, creative energy, breaking free from the constraints imposed by societal norms.

This theme of rebellion against the established order aligns with the journeys of both Prometheus and Orpheus, as they defied cosmic and societal constraints in the pursuit of human and personal desires.

Understanding Orpheus' musical ability with the lyre is critical, especially considering the ancient texts that suggest his contributions to human knowledge—spanning rites, writing, and even medicine. During this period, a new religious movement emerged, known as the 'Orphic' religion, a Hellenistic mystery faith that emphasized the cyclical nature of human rebirth, the rewards and aspirations of the afterlife, and the attainment of 'true' life (Britannica, Orphic Religion, 2008).

2.   INTERTEXTUALITY REGARDING MEDIEVAL ERA

The tale of *Sir Orfeo* begins with the abduction of his wife by the ruler of the fairy realm, a figure of notable significance in the context of medieval literary tradition. The original myth, rooted in classical themes, was adapted to fit the cultural fabric of English society, notably replacing the figures of Hades and hell with the fairyland and its monarch. This substitution was intended to ground the narrative within a distinctly English context, much like the treatment of *Beowulf*, where elements of the original work were reshaped to reflect Christian ideologies. The monstrous Grendel, for instance, was reinterpreted with a biblical origin. In *Sir Orfeo*, while Orfeo is playing his harp one day, the Fairy King becomes captivated by the music and, in a gesture of enchantment, invites Orfeo to the fairy court. There, Orfeo's music mesmerizes the fairies, and he senses his wife's presence nearby. Aware that his only power over the Fairy King lies in his musical prowess, Orfeo challenges the King to a musical contest, hoping to win his wife back. Despite Orfeo's victory, the Fairy King refuses to return her. However, Orfeo, resolute in his determination, decides to remain in the fairy kingdom, an act that ultimately prompts the Fairy King to relent and restore his wife.

This lay incorporates numerous conventions of medieval literature, particularly the theme of courage, which is embodied in Orfeo's valor. His bravery aligns with the ideals found in the Arthurian legends and other romantic tales, highlighting the lay as a product of its era. Many medieval narratives were reworked versions of Greek and Roman myths, with *Sir Orfeo* standing as a prime example of such adaptation. A significant distinction from its classical counterparts, however, is the story's joyful conclusion, a feature in line with medieval literary traditions where romance tales often concluded with a sense of triumph and moral resolution. This ending would have resonated with the audience, reinforcing the positive message and the moral lessons embedded in the tale.

In the first edition of *Sir Orfeo*, A. J. Bliss, the editor of the lay, posits that the text is of French origin, asserting that it represents a translation of an earlier work. However, this claim lacks supporting evidence, and remains merely his opinion. In contrast, as Jordi Sánchez Martí contends, *Sir Orfeo* may actually stand as the most complete surviving example of the insular tradition of the Orpheus story, a tradition tracing back to Anglo-Saxon times. This tradition evolved through oral dissemination, gradually incorporating influences from the Breton lay genre. Sánchez Martí advocates for further study to ascertain whether the text is of Anglo-Saxon or Norman origin. *The Wooing of Etain*, an Irish tale with motifs strikingly similar to *Sir Orfeo*, also serves as a potential source for the latter. As Laura Hibbird observes, "In this, as in Orfeo, Etain, the happy wife of Eochaid, high king of Ireland, is stolen away by Midir, a fairy king, to whom in a former life she has been wedded. Like the fairy king in Orfeo, Midir sings to her of his marvellous Otherworld realm; like Heurodis, Etain, though guarded by her mortal husband's warriors, is spirited away through the air, and is recovered at last from a fairy hill" (Medieval Romance in England: A Study of the Sources and Analogues of the Noncyclic Metrical Romances, Laura Hibbird, p. 198).

Both narratives also share thematic similarities, such as the contest between the fairy king and the mortal husband. In *The Wooing of Etain*, Midir challenges Eochu to an ancient Irish board game, an element that closely resembles the musical contest between the King and Orfeo in *Sir Orfeo*. In both instances, the contest culminates in the victorious figure demanding the prize—Midir seeks to embrace Etain, and Orfeo strives to win back his wife. These elements of competition and rivalry mirror themes common in romance literature. Such contests often reflect the tradition of courtly love, where the valour required to win the affection of the beloved is a central theme. In both texts, the valour of the protagonists is showcased within the context of conflict and competition, underscoring the chivalric virtues that are at the heart of the romance genre.

The influence of the Irish narrative on *Sir Orfeo* is unmistakable, underscoring a pivotal aspect of medieval intertextuality. This narrative, while rooted in Irish tradition, has been reimagined and adapted as part of the English literary corpus. This process reflects a desire for cultural autonomy, as early English literature sought to carve out its own identity and establish a distinct foundation through both external influence and intertextual connections. Such adaptations were not limited to the romantic tales shaped by contemporary

French traditions but also extended to the works of figures like Chaucer, who, in turn, drew from the literary legacies of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. These intertextual references played a crucial role in the formation of English literature, drawing heavily on its Greek and Roman literary heritage, while simultaneously adapting and transforming those traditions to reflect the unique cultural and moral values of medieval England.

3. INTERTEXTUALIY OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE WITH THE ANCIENTS

In the context of the original Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, a notable shift in genre occurs. *Sir Orfeo* places a stronger emphasis on chivalric ideals and offers a more favourable resolution, in contrast to the tragic ending of the original myth. This divergence is evident in Orpheus's failure to adhere to the singular rule given by Persephone or Hades (with variations across different versions of the text, such as the *Odyssey* and *Metamorphosis*). The initial tragedy in the original myth is Eurydice's death, a fate foreshadowed by the sorrowful demeanour of Hymenaeus, whose expression is described as 'hanging low,' akin to his saffron robes (Orpheus, Mockingbirds). This moment serves as a test of love, similar to *Sir Orfeo*, where the protagonist is also tested by his love and ultimately triumphs in reclaiming his beloved through his exceptional musical talents. However, the classical version carries a deeper connotation rooted in reverence for the Gods and classical wisdom. Failing to honour their divine guidance results in the loss of material wealth and culminates in inevitable catastrophe, a theme that is subtly altered in the medieval rendition.

In *Sir Orfeo*, Orpheus faces a challenge from Aristaeus, a shepherd intent on claiming the nymph. Aristaeus, aware of Orpheus's renowned musical talent, scoffs at the notion of being threatened by him. "The stranger threw back his head and laughed. 'The wife of Orpheus, the poet and singer,' he exclaimed. 'I have heard he loves music more than battle. You threaten me with him? Clearly you do not know who I am.'" (Sir Orpheus, Gibson, p.2). Despite Aristaeus's confidence, Eurydice attempts to escape him. However, in her brief respite, she tragically steps on a pile of venomous vipers and is bitten, symbolizing the inescapability of fate and death. "But Aristaeus had been wrong about Orpheus. He was a brave man, braver by far than most, and perhaps his desperation to win back Eurydice gave him a greater courage than he would normally have had. For he decided that he would enter Hades itself and fetch her back to earth from there. Everyone tried to dissuade him." (Sir Orpheus, Gibson, p.2). This narrative emphasizes the universality of love, intertwining the themes of "*eros*" and "*Thanatos*" —the interplay of joy and sorrow, passion and mortality.

Sir Orpheus and Eurydice is often regarded as a precursor to *Romeo and Juliet*, and this comparison offers a critique of the Greek perspective on following divine will. Orpheus fails to adhere to the proper course, attempting to defy death and alter fate. Even when granted the opportunity by Hades, he ultimately fails. His refusal to accept the inevitable leads him into despair, resulting in a tragic end: "To this day many scholars don't know whether Orpheus and Eurydice were together in death. Some tales state that after the Maenads killed him, the muses kept his head so that his beautiful voice could sing to them for eternity. Others state that his sad spirit wanders, filling the hearts of heartbroken musicians with his songs of despair. Orpheus forced himself through multiple trials to be with his love only to fail in both life and death" (Jean-Francois, 2016). Orpheus's overwhelming desire to reunite with his lover leads to his demise, as his depression isolates him from women and ultimately causes his death. Some even claim that Orpheus never reunites with Eurydice, with his head being kept by the muses, who sought his eternal song instead of allowing him to be with her.

This theme mirrors *Romeo and Juliet*, where the two young lovers' impulsiveness and disregard for societal expectations, including the wisdom of their elders, leads to their tragic deaths—and the death of those around them, such as Mercutio and Tybalt. In both cases, the "elders" are represented by the divine or societal authorities, illustrating the universality of the theme: the consequences of not adhering to the expectations of authority and tradition. This motif appears repeatedly in many stories of the time, emphasizing the destructive potential of defying the established order. Both *Sir Orfeo* and *Orpheus and Eurydice* utilize the principle of the "quest." In *Sir Orfeo*, the protagonist embarks on a journey to reclaim his beloved by engaging in a "battle of the muses" against the Fairy King, showcasing a more active, combative pursuit. In contrast, Orpheus's quest is more passive and compassionate, centered around his resolve not to look back at Eurydice as he is led out of the underworld by Hades. This contrast highlights the differing tenacity of the two figures: Sir Orfeo's prolonged exile and unwavering devotion to Herodias stand in stark contrast to Orpheus's assertive challenge against fate and the Gods, marking distinct paths in their respective quests. In conclusion, *Sir Orfeo* and *Orpheus* embody contrasting ideologies of the Medieval Era and Ancient Greek values. The Medieval perspective is rooted in romantic ideals, emphasizing courtly love while integrating religious themes such as loyalty, humility, and justice. This is evident in the Fairy King's captivation of *Herodias* and his eventual mercy,

allowing Sir Orfeo to reclaim his love through the emotional power of music. On the other hand, Orpheus follows a more classical ideology, adhering to the reverence for the gods and the timeless authority of the ancients, stressing the importance of obedience to divine will and the enduring wisdom of the past.

4.   CONCLUSION

Sir Orfeo is a Middle English narrative that retells the ancient Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, adapting it to the medieval context, with significant shifts in themes and values. The plot follows Sir Orfeo, a knight who embarks on a journey to rescue his wife, Heurodis, after she is abducted by the Fairy King. In this version, the story unfolds in a realm of fantasy where the supernatural intersects with human emotions, primarily focusing on the power of music as a transformative force. Sir Orfeo, a skilled harpist, is able to challenge the Fairy King through a musical contest, showcasing the theme of love, devotion, and the redemptive power of art. This is in contrast to the tragic Greek myth, where Orpheus fails in his attempt to retrieve Eurydice from the Underworld due to his disobedience to divine rules.

The story of Sir Orfeo aligns with medieval ideals of chivalry and courtly love, emphasizing bravery, honour, and the importance of virtue. Sir Orfeo's dedication to his wife, his journey to confront the Fairy King, and his eventual victory highlight medieval conventions of romance that often feature happy endings and moral resolutions. This reworking of the myth contrasts with the Greek tradition, which focuses on the inevitability of fate, divine punishment, and the tragic consequences of defying the gods. Additionally, Sir Orfeo demonstrates intertextuality with earlier works, particularly Greek and Irish mythology. The story shares motifs with the Irish tale The Wooing of Etain, involving the abduction of a loved one and the hero's struggle to reclaim them. Both texts feature contests—Orfeo's musical battle with the Fairy King and Midir's board game challenge in The Wooing of Etain—which serve as tests of courage and devotion. This highlights the universality of themes such as love, fate, and the triumph of human will over supernaturally forces. While Sir Orfeo represents a medieval reimagining of ancient themes, it also reflects the unique cultural and religious perspectives of its time. The medieval version incorporates elements of Christian morality, particularly in the depiction of the Fairy King's mercy and the ultimate resolution of the story. In contrast, the Greek myth emphasizes the importance of following divine will and the tragic consequences of failing to do so. The changes made in Sir Orfeo show how medieval literature reinterprets classical themes through a more optimistic and humanistic lens. In conclusion, Sir Orfeo is a text that bridges the ancient and medieval worlds, offering insights into how myths were adapted across cultures and eras. The story reflects the values and ideals of medieval society, particularly the importance of love, loyalty, and the power of music, while also drawing on earlier mythological traditions to create a work that resonates with universal themes of fate, love, and the human condition.

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