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SOME MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVES  
ON THE TRADITIONAL  
HEROIC QUEST.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in French at  
Massey University.

Patricia Mary Sims  
1983.

To the memory of  
my parents.

## Abstract.

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine certain features of the quests of selected heroic characters in three significant literary periods. As worthy heroes tend to represent the noblest features of man, the heroic quest can be expected to reflect man's deepest yearnings and his fundamental experiences.

The principal authors who have been selected for this study are Homer, Vergil and Chrétien de Troyes, as they all occupy a conspicuous place in literary tradition. For in Homer's epics is the climax of a lengthy Greek oral tradition; Vergil looks back to Homer, and in doing so, adapts the older epics to the portrayal of the achievements of Augustus and the glory of the new Roman empire; Chrétien de Troyes, in his turn, is conscious of many aspects of antiquity as well as Celtic influences and reflects both secular and spiritual aspirations of twelfth-century France. Thus the works of these three authors, together with the Roman d'Eneas show in different ways man searching for the good.

There is a basic similarity in the heroes' experiences. The hero is, initially, a man of great promise who, to some extent, is distinguished from the rest of his society. Through pride, excessive self-love, blindness or failure to understand his vocation, he commits a sin of ὑβρις or excess, or sometimes fails in his duty. This fault is generally associated with a false quest where the hero sees personal gain and personal glory as the principal object of his quest. In most cases, however, his fault enables him to see himself as he really is, and forces him to embark upon a quest for 'wholeness', his true quest, which is directed to restoring a sound balance between the physical, rational and spiritual aspects of his nature. In order to do this, the hero sometimes has to assume a role where, for a time, he has to 'stand outside' himself in order to know himself better. This quest

frequently necessitates a journey of renewal where the hero expiates his fault and is tested through suffering. Although this journey is sometimes identifiable in geographical terms, the focus is on the hero's spiritual progression. The hero's successful confrontation with Other World forces proclaims not only his uniqueness and his election; it also proclaims the extent of his achievements and the degree of goodness he has attained. Finally, in different ways, the heroes are all portrayed as men capable of a high degree of loving and indeed, the perfection of love is frequently a sign that the hero has fulfilled his quest.

Some of the heroes experience conflict with their society. As the quest progresses, they reject, in different ways, the false values with which society may be contaminated and are forced, instead, to choose true and lasting values. The hero thus becomes the man who can be looked up to, the liberator from enslaving forces.

Although, inevitably, there are many differences in the portrayal of heroes of three such distinctive literary periods, the heroes of Homer, Vergil and Chrétien de Troyes have many features in common. This is due, in part, to a translatio studii, but more particularly to the tendency of honest human beings to discern the truth and to pursue the good.

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In presenting this thesis, I recall with gratitude certain discussions with the late Professor H.A. Murray of Victoria University who saw many ways in which some classical heroes challenged the values of their society as they sought the truth. As I grew more familiar with Chrétien de Troyes' romances and with his background, I began to see that a similar challenge was faced by certain twelfth-century heroes. At the same time, it became clear that in spite of the inevitable difference in background, the same fundamental quest pattern was common to certain heroes of significant Greek and Roman epics as well as to the heroes of some of Chrétien de Troyes' romances. It thus became my task to see what features these medieval romances had in common with the classical epic, in regard to the pattern of their quests, and to note the effect which twelve centuries of Christianity must inevitably have on heroic quest.

I am extremely grateful to the many people who have supported and encouraged me: the Sisters of the Congregation of Mercy, Wellington, to which I belong; the Marist Fathers at Greenmeadows and the Cistercian monks at Kopua who have been most generous in allowing me to use their libraries; the library staff of Massey University, particularly the interloan department; my colleagues at St. Peter's College. But my principal debt of gratitude must, surely, be to my supervisors: Dr. Glynnis Cropp of Massey University, who has guided me in so many ways, and has offered comments, constructive suggestions and scholarly advice as the manuscript evolved; and Dr. Justin Taylor, S.M. who has been a constant support. Finally, I wish to thank Mrs. Kathy Scott for her generous and competent typing.

## Preface.

As a preamble to the thesis proper, an attempt has been made to follow the practice of medieval authors who felt it a duty to explain and justify their selection of material according to the principles outlined in the rhetorical process of inventio, or the finding of suitable subject matter, and dispositio, or the arranging of the topic.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the first task is to define the key words of the title of the thesis, testing these definitions against the main works studied and against some other medieval genres which might have been thought to resemble the classical epics. Of these terms, traditional, heroic belong to the inventio, whereas quest belongs to dispositio.

The term traditional is to be understood in two ways. Firstly, it refers to statements, beliefs or practices which are derived from tradition, that is, transmitted, especially orally, from generation to generation.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, outstanding deeds accomplished in the past were recalled, recorded in poetry or song and eventually written down. In this way, poets and historians have helped people to develop pride in their ancestry and to achieve a sense of identity with their civilisation. It is inevitable, however, that as accounts of famous events and actions are repeated, they are subject to alteration and transformation, while remaining constant in essence. The epics of Homer, which relate the wrath of Achilles, its course and its effects, and the wanderings of Odysseus, have behind them a long oral tradition which dates from the Trojan War itself,<sup>3</sup> both the Iliad and the Odyssey containing evidence that the principal characters were already known to contemporary audiences.<sup>4</sup> The Iliad and the Odyssey and the oral tales which precede them, therefore, exemplify tradition.

Secondly, the word, traditional may be understood in relation to the kind of myth in which models of human activities are presented. For, as Joseph Campbell and others have shown,<sup>5</sup> many fundamental human experiences, particularly those representing different stages



of human development, have been portrayed in myth and in the experiences of significant heroes, and have thus been transmitted from one generation to another. For myth is an external manifestation of man's experiences, his conflicts and ultimately, his glorification. Jerome S. Bruner has written that myth:

. . . is at once an external reality and the resonance of the internal vicissitudes of man.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, man can recognise himself and his experiences as they are projected in myth. In using the term traditional, therefore, we refer to a pattern which reflects and transmits by myth certain tendencies in human nature and the universality of human experience.

To define the second term of the title, we have begun by examining the characteristics of the heroes of the Iliad and the Odyssey, and then, by exploring certain implications of the term, heroic. In Homer's writing, ἥρως, 'hero' has a variety of meanings.<sup>7</sup> It is used of King Agamemnon who, in spite of his shortcomings, is a fine soldier:

ὣς εἰπὼν ἔτρεψεν ἀδελφειοῦ φρένας ἥρως, (Iliad VI, 61).<sup>8</sup>  
(With these words, the hero persuaded the heart of his brother.)

It is a title of honour given to warrior-chiefs and their followers, especially to the Greeks who are besieging Troy. In the Iliad, Agamemnon addresses his men:

ὦ φίλοι ἥρωες Δαναοί, θεράποντες Ἄρηος, (II, 110).  
(My friends, Danaan warriors, henchmen of Ares.)

Elsewhere, ἥρως frequently means no more than 'warrior', for example:

φεύγοντ' ἄλλοτε Φύλακον δ' ἔλε Λήτιος ἥρως  
(VI, 35-36).  
(And Leitos the warrior caught Phulakos as he fled.)

In the Odyssey, also, ἥρως is used of warriors, for example:

εἶλετο δ' ἄλκιρον ἔγχος, ἀκαχμένον ὄζει χάλκῳ,  
βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρον, τῷ δάρμνησι στίχας ἀνδρῶν  
ἥρῶων, τοῖσιν τε κοτέσσεται ὄβριμοπάτρη.  
(Odyssey, I, 99-101)

(Then she (Athens) took up a powerful spear bordered with sharp bronze, heavy, large, thick, with which she beats down the battalions of fighting men against whom the daughter of the mighty father is angered.)

But ἥρωας was also given to men who had, evidently, nothing to do with war or command. When Odysseus is admiring the buildings of the Phaeacians, a peace-loving people, we are told:

θαύμαζεν δ' Ὀδυσσεύς λιμένας καὶ νῆας εἴσας  
αὐτῶν θ' ἥρωων ἀγορὰς καὶ τείχεα μακρὰ  
ὑψηλὰ, . . . . . (vii, 43-45).

(But Odysseus admired the harbours, the balanced ships and the meeting-places of the heroes themselves and the long, lofty walls.)

Furthermore, the term ἥρωας is used of the blind minstrel, Demodocus, who is not directly concerned with warfare (VIII, 483). Thus, in the pre-Hellenic age, although ἥρωας was applied principally to leaders and to warriors, and often suggested superhuman strength, courage and ability,<sup>9</sup> it could be applied to any free man.

But in general, the principal characters in the Homeric epics are qualified by a variety of well-known epithets. Some of these are applied to more than one hero. δῖος, 'lordly', 'god-like', for example, is used of Achilles (e.g. Iliad, I, 121), Odysseus (e.g. I, 145), Hector (e.g. XXIV, 175). ποιμῆν λαῶν, 'shepherd of the people', is used of Agamemnon (II, 254). Both Achilles and Hector are ψαίδιμος 'brilliant' and διογενες 'heaven-sprung'. Menelaus and Diogenes are distinguished because they are βοῆν ἀγαθός, 'good at shouting' and therefore, fierce in battle. Other epithets have become associated with specific heroes. Agamemnon is ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν 'lord of men' (I, 172), and even ἀριστος Ἁχαιῶν 'best of the Achaeans' (I, 91) who are themselves considered ἀριστοί (e.g. Iliad, X, 214; Odyssey, IV, 272). Achilles is πῶδας ὤκους 'swift-footed' (Iliad, I, 84), Odysseus is πολῦρηις, 'crafty', 'cunning' (Iliad, X, 554), πολυτροπος 'of many ways' (Odyssey, I, 1), Hector is κορυθαίολος, 'with glancing helm' (Iliad, vi, 116). Sometimes, too, a hero's title includes

reference to his lineage, so that pride in ancestry is evident. Achilles is frequently Πηλεΐδης, 'son of Peleus', just as Agamemnon is Ἀτρεΐδης, 'son of Atreus'. These heroes, then, form a class of men whose qualities of body, mind and spirit are denoted by the title which distinguishes them. Their excellent physique, their prowess in battle, their surpassing achievements and their qualities of leadership were a source of admiration to those who learned of their exploits. Furthermore, some have divine ancestry and are praised for their likeness to the gods. The author recognises the excellence of Achaean and Trojan alike. All these warriors can be called outstanding heroes and as such, were well known to Homer's audience.

Four meanings of the corresponding adjective, heroic, are relevant to this discussion.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, it denotes the period of Grecian history preceding the return from Troy, for this was the age of pride and courage associated with Homer's heroes. The epithet heroic can also describe a person who has recourse to bold, daring or extreme measures, and one who attempts great things. When such deeds are described in narrative verse the term epic or heroic verse is used. A certain nobility of style and subject is implied. Finally, heroic means 'characteristic of or suitable to the character of a hero'; 'of a bravery, virtue or nobleness of character exalted above that of ordinary men.' In using the term heroic, we refer to the attitudes, longings and behaviour of certain heroes of antiquity, particularly Achilles and Odysseus who were representatives of the heroic age. They were known, admired and exalted above their peers for their daring and courage. After being transmitted orally for several generations, their deeds were recorded in heroic verse. Finally, they adhered to what could be called an heroic ideal.

Certain standards of behaviour were expected from heroes of this type, and formed a kind of heroic code or rule of conduct. The Homeric hero considered honour to be of supreme importance in all his activities. Honour compelled him to strive for his own personal excellence or ἀρετή and to uphold the rights of his companions. A wrathful Achilles explains to Agamemnon why he has followed him to Troy:

ἀλλὰ σοὶ ὦ μέγ' ἀναιδὲς, ἄμ' ἐσπόμεθ', ὄφρα σὺ χάρις  
τιμῆν ἀρνύμενοι Μενελάῳ σοὶ τε, κυνῶπα, (I, 158-60)  
πρὸς Τρώων.  
(But for your sake, you shameless one, we followed, to do you favour, to win honour for Menelaus, and for you, dog-face, from the Trojans.)

The tangible signs of the honour in which a hero was held were gifts and spoils of war, including women. The conduct of the hero was not divorced from fear. Indeed, there are times in the Iliad when the Achaeans would quite happily cease fighting and return home (e.g. IX, 27). Furthermore, distaste for warfare is evident when both Trojans and Achaeans react favourably to Menelaus' suggestion concerning peace:

ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἔχαρησαν Ἰλίου τε Τρῳῆς τε  
ἐλπόμενοι παύσασθαι οἴλυροῦ πολέμοιο. (III, 111-12).  
(So he spoke, and both Trojans and Achaeans rejoiced, hoping to be rid of dreary warfare.)

But although fighting was not essential to this heroic code, it was the means by which the hero could gain glory and so enhance his reputation. Thus, honour compelled the hero to fight steadfastly, at the cost of his life, if need be. This attitude is exemplified by Hector as he refuses to be persuaded by Andromache to abstain from battle:

ἢ καὶ ἔροι τάδε πάντα μέλει, γύναι· ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰνῶς  
διδέομαι Τρῳῆας καὶ Τρῳάδας ἔλκεσιπεπλους,  
λί κε κακὸς ὡς νόσφιν ἀλυσκάλῳ πολέμοιο·  
οὐδέ με θυρὸς ἀνώγειν, ἐπεὶ μάθον ἔμμεναι ἐσθλὸς  
αἰεὶ καὶ πρῶτοισι μετὰ Τρῳέσσι μάχεσθαι,  
ἀρνύμενος πατρός τε μέγα κλέος ἢ δ'  
ἔμὸν αὐτοῦ. (VI, 441-46).

(All these things are in my mind, lady; but I would feel deep shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women who wear trailing garments if, like a coward, I were to withdraw from battle; and my spirit would not let me, since I have learnt to be valiant and to fight always amidst the first of the Trojans, winning great glory for my own sake and for that of my father.)

Odysseus utters similar sentiments:

"ἀλλὰ τίη μοι ταῦτα φίλος διελέξατο θυρός;  
οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι κακοῖ μὲν ἀποΐζονται πολέμοιο,  
ὅς δέ κ' ἀριστεύῃσι μάχῃ ἐνὶ, τὸν δὲ μάλα χρεὼ  
ἑστάνενα κρατερῶς, ἢ τ' ἔβλητ' ἢ τ' ἔβαλ' ἄλλον." (XI, 407-10)

(But why does my dear heart debate these things? For I know that evil men retreat from battle, but the man who would gain honour in war, let him stand his ground firmly, whether he be struck or whether he strikes another.)

Death is considered as inevitable. But if he dies with glory, the hero will be remembered in heroic song and his glory will remain and be transmitted to later generations.<sup>11</sup> Hector's prayer for his son exemplifies the familial aspect of this desire for glory.

"Ζεῦ ἄλλοι τε θεοί, δότε δὴ καὶ τόνδε γενέσθαι  
παῖδ' ἔρον, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ περ, ἀριπρεπέα Τρῳέσσιν,  
ὧδε βίην τ' ἀγαθόν, καὶ Ἰλίου ἱφί ἀνάσσειν  
καὶ ποτέ τις εἴποι 'πατρός γ' ὄδε πολλὸν ἀρείνων'  
ἐκ πολέμου ἀνιόντα." (VI, 476-80)

("Zeus and all you other gods, grant that this boy, who is my son, may be as I am, foremost among the Trojans, great in strength; and let him rule over Ilium; and let it be said of him some day, 'He is better by far than his father', as he comes home from battle.")<sup>12</sup>.

But what distinguishes the selected Greek heroes, Achilles and Odysseus, from their peers? What particularly marks them as heroes in a society where so many excellent warriors were described by Homer with well-earned epithets and, in later generations, were admired and exalted as a race of demi-gods?<sup>13</sup> Firstly, Achilles and Odysseus are protagonists, that is, they initiate the principal action of the epic and play the principal role.<sup>14</sup> Thus, although the term, hero, can be applied to all the free men among the Trojan

and Achaean combatants, the term, protagonist can be applied to only Achilles in the Iliad and to Odysseus in the Odyssey. In both epics, as the author invokes the Muse, he ensures that the audience will recognise the protagonist. The Iliad begins:

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλλῆος  
 οὐλομένην, . . . . (I, 1-2)  
 (Sing, goddess, of the ruinous wrath of Achilles,  
 Peleus' son, . . . .)

Similarly, in the Odyssey:

Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὅς μάλα πολλὰ  
 πλάθῃ, ἔπει Τροίης ἱερὸν προλίεθρον ἔπερσε. (I, 1-2)

(Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways who wandered distant  
 journeys when he had sacked Troy's holy citadel.)

For the author is writing for an audience and must, therefore, state his theme in a clear, straightforward manner, in order to inform his hearers of the precise role of his protagonists. Like the other heroes in these epics, both Achilles and Odysseus are conscious of an heroic code of conduct, and are described by characteristic epithets. Like many of their companions, they are dear to the gods and are frequently called godlike.

Achilles and Odysseus, however, look beyond the heroic code and the possibility of gaining superficial glory. Achilles, for example, in questioning the right of Agamemnon, the principal figure of authority, to deprive him of his bride, also questions the value of war. In his speech to Agamemnon, he says:

“ . . . ἐπεὶ ἢ μάλα πολλὰ μεταζὺ  
 οὐρεῶν τε σκιόεντα θάλασσά τε ἤχῃεσσα. ” (I, 156-57)  
 (‘ . . . seeing that there lies between us a long  
 space of shadowy mountains and loud-sounding sea.’)

Jasper Griffin has noted that Achilles, here, is suddenly opening  
 'a wide and inhuman vista, the world of empty space far from the

quarrels at Troy.' <sup>15</sup>. As Achilles makes frequent reference to distant places (e.g. I, 157; 349 sq; IX, 381; 395; XVI, 233) and speaks of his resolution to return home (I, 169-71; IX, 359-63), he not only emphasises his alienation; <sup>16</sup>. he symbolically questions and criticises warfare and death as a means of obtaining glory. He also criticises the compensation which his king offers, for he sees that material gifts, no matter how splendid (IX, 379-87), can give no satisfaction for insult to a hero's honour. He says to the embassy:

"οὐδέ κεν ὡς ἔτι θυρὸν ἔρῶν πείσει Ἄγαμέμνων,  
πρὶν γ' ἀπὸ πάσων ἔμοι δόμεναι θυραλγέα λῶβην." (IX, 386-87)

("Not even so will Agamemnon persuade my heart, until he has paid back this heart-rending insolence.")

For Achilles is a man to whom truth is all important, as he himself states:

"ἔχθρὸς γάρ μοι κείνους ὁμῶς Ἄϊδαο πύλῃσιν  
ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κευθῆ ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἄλλο δὲ εἶπῃ." (IX. 312-13)

("For I detest as the doorways of Hades, the man who conceals one thing in his heart, but says another.")

Thus, he shows that he would prefer to perceive the truth behind empty words and superficial gestures, and he professes his alienation not only by virtue of his physical isolation, but also, by his intellectual integrity.

Odysseus, too, stands beyond his society. Early in the Odyssey, before Odysseus appears, the audience is prepared for his cunning, his perception and his self-command. At the palace of Menelaus, Helen describes to Telemachus some of Odysseus' exploits at Troy, prefacing her tale:

"πάντα μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω  
ὅσσι Ὀδυσσεύης ταλασίφρονος εἰσὶν ἄεθλοι."

(Odyssey, IV, 240-41)

("I could not tell you the number, nor could I name all that make up the deeds of enduring Odysseus.")

At the same time, Menelaus admires Odysseus' failure to be deceived by Helen's wiles at Troy. As he begins to recall the incident of the Wooden Horse, Menelaus pays Odysseus the following tribute:

"ναὶ δὴ ταῦτά γε πάντα, γύναι, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες.  
ἤδη μὲν πολέων ἐδάην βουλήν τε νόον τε  
ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων, πολλήν δ' ἐπελήλυθα γαῖαν·  
ἀλλ' οὐ πῶ τοιοῦτον ἔγῳν ἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν  
οἷον Ὀδυσῆος ταλασίφρονος ἔσκε φίλον κῆρ." (IV, 266-70)

("Yes indeed, my wife, you have spoken rightly in all that you have said. I have long studied the wit and the counsel of many men who are heroes and I have journeyed over much of the world; but nowhere have I seen with my own eyes anyone like him, or known an inward heart like the heart of enduring Odysseus.")

Furthermore, on the homeward journey, Odysseus alone resists temptations and overcomes the most perilous trials. He is, finally, the only one of all his company to bridge the gap between the battlefields at Troy and the altered, domestic world at Ithaca.

To sum up, the hero in Homer's epics is a prominent leader among outstanding warriors who are, themselves, entitled to be referred to as heroes. He can rightly be described by the expression, 'primus inter pares',<sup>14</sup> for, until his leadership qualities are displayed, he is only one of many combatants who are engaged in the same campaign and subject to the same hazards of warfare. The selected heroes, Achilles and Odysseus are also protagonists in the respective epics, for the action of the epics is centred on their exploits and conflicts. The hero is often described by characteristic epithets which denote such exceptional gifts of body, mind and spirit that he is a true exemplar. The hero's ancestry is sometimes divine and if he has champions among the gods, he himself



is an intermediary on behalf of his fellow men. He is aware of the same code of conduct as his companions and is, therefore, motivated by honour in his activities. But instead of adhering unthinkingly to contemporary ideals and practices, he questions and criticises his society and thus, he seeks for himself the true meaning behind society's practices. This necessitates that, for a time, he stand outside society until he has fully assessed his own values. He therefore risks coming into conflict with his king who generally upholds society's standards. Joseph Campbell has commented on the special characteristics of the hero:

The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. Such a one's visions, ideas and inspirations come pristine from the primary springs of human life and thought. . . . The hero has died as modern man, but as eternal man - perfected, unspecific, universal man - he has been reborn.<sup>18</sup>

This is the transformation which characterises Achilles and Odysseus. They are not only great warriors, distinguished by their likeness to the gods, their gifts of character and ancestry, their assertiveness and their achievements. Their uniqueness consists in their rigorous honesty which compels them, in some way, to stand outside their society, to scrutinise themselves, to reassess their own values and to rise above their contemporaries. Thus, our heroes transcend their own human limitations and become timeless, universal symbols of honour and endurance.

\* \* \*

In the Aeneid, a literary epic based to a considerable extent upon Homeric tradition<sup>19</sup> and written in order to glorify the deeds of

Augustus, differences in the notion of hero are inevitable. How closely, then, does Aeneas meet the criteria which have been established for the Greek epic heroes? Firstly, he is recognised as the protagonist from the opening lines of the epic:

arma virumque cano . . . . . (Aeneid, I, 1.)<sup>20</sup>.

and from the nature of his role as leader and chosen founder of Rome which requires that, on behalf of the gods, he initiate the principal action and perform the principal task. Furthermore, the epic is centred on Aeneas' exploits, his sufferings and his potential greatness. Although he seldom shows the obvious assertiveness of Achilles and Odysseus, he is prominent in battle scenes and readily takes the initiative.

Epithets are used of Aeneas, his family and close friends, but their use is far more restricted than in Homer's oral tradition. Although Achilles and some of the other Greeks are occasionally described by terms which denote reputation in battle,<sup>21</sup> the epithets which are used for Aeneas and the other future Romans denote their noble ancestry, their relationship to the hero or their fine moral qualities. Thus, we find references to 'nate dea' (e.g. I, 582), Dardanio Aeneae (e.g. I, 494), Troius Aeneas (e.g. I, 596), pater Anchises (e.g. III, 9), 'puer Ascanius' (e.g. IV, 156), 'fidus Achates' (I, 189). Aeneas himself is described by his men in terms of high praise:

"rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo iustior alter  
nec pietate fuit, nec bello maior et armis." (I, 544-45).

Thus, he clearly not only a leader and master, as the term rex implies;<sup>22</sup> but he is also an exemplar of both peaceful and warlike

qualities. The excellence of his character is recalled by the use of the term magnanimus (e.g. I, 260), a quality which he has in common with the Trojans as a race (VI, 649). But above all, Aeneas is pius (e.g. VI, 9), which means that he acts dutifully and responsibly towards gods, parents, kindred and society.<sup>23</sup>

Like the Greek heroes, Aeneas claims divine ancestry and is constantly helped by his mother and the other favorable deities who intercede for him. In Book II, for example, it is only the apparition of his mother, Venus, that encourages him to resolve to leave Troy. She makes the following promise after begging him to flee:

"eripe, nate, fugam finemque impone labori;  
nusquam abero et tutum patrio te limine sistam." (II, 619-20)

When asking permission to descend to the Other World, Aeneas recalls his divine ancestry and is thus granted access: "et mi genus ab Iove summo." (VI, 123). During his visit there, he is able to act as intermediary between the known, living world and the world of the dead.

The term heros appears in the Aeneid, but its implications are limited and its use much less frequent than in either of the Greek epics. It gradually yields to the characteristically Roman term vir, with its overtones of courage and honour.<sup>24</sup>

The three occasions when the term, heros, appears in Book VI, however, are significant. Firstly, when Aeneas addresses the Sibyl and prepares to undertake his journey to the Underworld, he is 'Aeneas heros'. (VI, 103). The term is used of Misenus, who is connected

with the past at Troy:

Dardanio Aeneae sese fortissimus heros  
addiderat socium, non inferiora secutus. (VI, 169-70)

And finally, in the Underworld, Aeneas meets:

magnanimum heroum . . . defunctaque corpora vita  
(VI, 306-07).

Vir, on the other hand, is the term by which Aeneas is first introduced in the epic: 'Arma virumque, cano (I,1). It is associated with the noble qualities which attracted Dido:

multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat  
gentis honos . . . (IV, 3-4)

As Aeneas arrives at Laurentum, the oracle of Apollo predicts the arrival of a new ruler:

. . . "externum cernimus" inquit  
"adventare virum et partis petere agmen easdem  
partibus ex isdem et summa dominarier arce." (VII, 68-70)

Thus, indirectly, the term heros is associated with the Trojan past, whereas vir signifies the Roman future.

How does Vergil's hero meet the requirements of the term heroic which was applied to Homer's heroes? Firstly, although the Aeneid is concerned with future Roman viri rather than with warriors of the so-called heroic age, it describes the deeds of bold and daring men who have to undertake great exploits in order to found a new civilisation. Secondly, the epic is reputed for the nobility of its sentiments and style.<sup>25</sup> Finally, Aeneas and his men are conscious of a code of conduct which, in a sense, can be called an heroic ideal.

In the journey of Aeneas and his men, however, the emphasis is not so much on an heroic code as on the acquisition of the qualities

which, ideally, are considered Roman. At Carthage, Aeneas is reminded of the evil of luxus (IV, 193) which was contrary to the Roman ideal of labor and industria which Vergil himself applauded.<sup>26</sup> Aeneas, at least, was expected to be loyal and single-minded in his pursuit of his new land and in the founding of a new dynasty. Mercury reminds him:

"quid struis? aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?  
 Si te nulla movet tantarum gloria rerum  
 (nec super ipse tua moliris laude laborem,)  
 Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli  
 respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus. (IV, 271-76).

Thus, Aeneas was to lay aside personal aspirations and desires for the benefit of the nascent Rome, as is evident from the Dido affair and from his reluctant slaying of Turnus (XII, 938-41). The personal honour of the hero must, therefore, in Vergil's epic, yield to the greater honour of Rome and the ordinances of the gods.

Aeneas, however, conforms to most of the criteria established for the Greek epic heroes. As protagonist, he is central to the principal conflict. As leader, exemplar and intermediary, he is described by a number of epithets, especially by the epithet, pius which is peculiar to him. He is helped and guided by the gods as is appropriate to both his divine ancestry and his lofty vocation. Unlike Achilles and Odysseus, he does not stand apart from his society or challenge existing values, for his task is to build a new civilisation.

We shall now apply the established criteria to La Chanson de Roland, a French epic close to the traditional type with an historical basis, existing in oral tradition before becoming a full scale literary work.<sup>27</sup>

What in particular distinguishes Roland beyond his peers? Is it clear to an audience that this particular knight is the protagonist? For the tone and subject of this epic are determined not by Roland but by Charlemagne and by the account of the great achievements for which, in the interests of Christianity and the glory of God he has been responsible:

Carles li reis, nostre emperere magnes,  
Set anz tuz pleins ad estet en Espaigne,  
Tresqu'en la mer conquist la tere altaigne.

(La Chanson de Roland, 1-3)<sup>28</sup>

Unlike King Agamemnon who, in the Iliad, introduces an element of discord, Charlemagne gives authority, dignity and unity. Roland first appears in a scene dominated by Charlemagne and does not stand out in any way from the other knights present:

Ensembl'od els li quens Rollant i vint  
E Oliver li proz e li gentiiz. (175-76).

Whereas it is known at once that Ganelon is to be the traitor (178), Roland's role emerges only gradually. Although he has the perception to see the potential treachery behind King Marsile's proposal and enough authority to advise Charlemagne accordingly (196-213), Roland is only one of the several knights present who volunteer to take Charlemagne's message to Marsile (244-73). Yet Roland is undoubtedly the protagonist, for he initiates the conflict which is essential to the epic when he provokes Ganelon (277) and invites his treachery (574-79).

Roland's greatness emerges as the action develops. When he is put in charge of the rearguard, he shows his leadership qualities:

Sun cumpaignun apres le vaiit sivant  
E cil de France le cleiment a guarant. (1160-61),

and he encourages his men to battle by his words (1165-69).

Roland's singularity is confirmed when the earthquake and darkness foretell his death:

Il ne.l sevent, ne dient veir niënt:  
Ço est li granz dulors por la mort de Rollant. (1436-37).

His very survival through the main part of the battle, together with the few whom 'Deus i ad esparniez' (1689), is a sign of his extraordinary strength and prowess. The Archbishop sees Roland as an exemplary knight, as the pagans flee before him (1876-80). Finally, the manner of Roland's death distinguishes him: for his strength, his valour and his divine election. He is wounded, not by the enemy, but by his own strength as he blows his horn (1761-65). It is Roland who commends the dead Archbishop to God when the opposite roles might have been expected (2252-53). As he is dying, he recovers sufficiently from his swoon to slay a covetous Saracen (2274-96). In spite of his distress, he can still indicate that he was 'mort cunquerant' (2363) as he turns his face towards Spain. It is in keeping with Christian practice that he recalls the details of his life and prays for forgiveness of his sins; his proffering of his glove to God is a symbolic act which a Christian might make at the point of death. But the presence of the angels who come to accept Roland's proffered glove and take his soul to paradise, not only anticipates the answer to the liturgical prayer for the dead: 'In paradisum deducet te angeli' which is echoed by Charlemagne:

"Ami Rollant, deus metet t'anme en flors  
En pareis entre les glorius!" (2898-99)

but it is also a sign of divine approval.

What terms are used to describe the hero in La Chanson de Roland? Is Roland himself designated by any characteristic epithet? Neither the term heros nor any derivative is found in La Chanson de Roland. The term vasselage provides the link which connects the terms used to describe the courage of combatants of this period.<sup>24</sup> The praiseworthy warrior must, irrespective of whether he be Christian or pagan, be a loyal vassal who performs worthy service for his lord. The term is used of Roland after he has sounded his horn (1777) and describes his bravery in battle:

Tient Durendal, come vassals i fiert, (1870).

Both Christians and Saracens are designated ber, baron and chevalier. Ber, baron refers to Charlemagne as well as to King Marsile, the pagan (125), to the pagan lord, Baligant (3164) and even to Ganelon, who is to betray Roland (648).<sup>30</sup> It implies valour in warfare as in the following description of Roland's appearance:

Mais son espiét vait li ber palmeiant,  
Encontre.l ciel vait la more tornant, (1155-56)

and later, in the Archbishop's exclamation of praise:

"Cist cols est de baron." (1280)

Ber and baron, therefore, convey the expertise with which a vassal defends the rights of his lord.

All the combatants are designated chevalier,<sup>31</sup> principally



because they fight on horseback. But this term is frequently qualified by adjectives such as franc and bon. For, as Burgess has noted: 'Pour servir son seigneur et la chrétienté, le bon vassal a besoin de bons chevaux.'<sup>32</sup>

Thus, the term chevalier, also, is connected in a practical way with the notion of vasselage.

Proz is an epithet which is applied to many of Charlemagne's knights and denotes a high degree of both valour and esteemed service and therefore, the usefulness with which a vassal serves his lord.<sup>33</sup> But the term is flexible in meaning and can refer to the objects of war (1277) and to the worthiness of the combatants in general (604; 1557). Although we are told:

Rollant est proz e Oliver sage (1093),

there are many times when Oliver, also is said to be proz.<sup>34</sup>

Roland uses the term to praise Charlemagne for his decision which is expected to benefit France:

'Il fist que proz qu'il nus laisad as porz,  
Oï n'en perdrat France dulce sun los.' (1208-09)

According to the Archbishop who praises Charlemagne's men:

'Nostre hume sunt mult proz.  
Sus ciel n'ad home, plus en ait de meillors.' (1441-42.)

Burgess sees that Roland's exemplary proece results in his role as intermediary:

Roland est l'intermédiaire entre Charlemagne et ses vassaux, et sa prouesse idéale sert d'exemple pour une vision du monde qui exige la prouesse, pour donner l'auxilium aux seigneurs.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, a knight who is proz is one whose usefulness resides in his skill in warfare and consequently, in his valued, loyal service towards lord and country, as Roland manifests.

Finally, the term gent is used to describe the general appearance of the participants (e.g. 118; 895; 1794), the nobility of their lineage and their excellence in battle (e.g. 1274). Although it denotes nobility in the sense that beauty and nobility are closely associated, gent indicates, in Burgess' words: 'un aspect digne d'un bon vassal'.<sup>36</sup> The term indicates, also, the type of fighting which could be expected from such a vassal. There is mention of 'gente chevalerie' (594), 'gente bataille' (1274), and 'colps genz' (1712). Roland is described:

Cors ad mult gent, le vis cler e riant. (1159),

and he is later recognised by Grandonie:

Al fier visage e al cors qu'il out gent. (1640)

But again, this term is used of both Christians and pagans (e.g. 118; 284; 895).

Thus, the principal epithets used in this epic enhance the notion of nobility of birth and valour in action. They constantly remind the audience of the noble rank of the combatants, their qualities of body, mind and spirit and their roles in the epic. But above all, they emphasise the high quality of vasselage which is evident in the participants. Roland himself is described by the same terms as his companions and adversaries. His greatness lies in the fact that he not only possesses the same lofty qualities; he also exemplifies them.

This twelfth-century account of Charlemagne and his subjects can be considered as heroic for the following reasons. Firstly, La Chanson de Roland describes the deeds of bold, daring men who

undertake great exploits for a noble cause. Secondly, the epic is written in a noble elevated style. Finally, it praises the attitudes and behaviour of medieval barons who were exalted because they were proz, which means that they showed bravery, a sense of purpose, nobility of character, and loyal and useful service.

The 'heroic code' of conduct of the classical epics is, in La Chanson de Roland, paralleled by a similar code. Honour is essential to the behaviour of the knight as Roland acknowledges in the following four statements.

Firstly, the knight must be prepared to suffer and to die for the honour of his king:

"Ben devuns ci estre pur nostre rei:  
 Pur sun seignor deit hom susfrir destreiz  
 E endurer e granz chalz e granz freiz,  
 Si n deit hom perdre e del quir e del peil." (1009-12)

Secondly, the knight is bound to uphold the good name of his lineage and his country:

Respont Rollant: "Ne placet Damnedeu  
 Que mi parent pur mei seient blasmét,  
 Ne France dulce ja cheet en viltét!" (1062-64).

Thirdly, he has a duty to maintain his own personal reputation:

Respunt Rollant: "Jo fereie que fols,  
 En dulce France en perdreie mun los." (1053-54).

Finally, death is preferable to shame. Roland tells Oliver:

Ne placet Damnedeu ne ses angles  
 Que ja pur mei perdet sa valor France!  
 Melz voeill murir que huntage me venget;  
 Pur ben ferir l'emperere plus nos aimet." (1089-92).

By his actions, Roland gives substance to these lofty ideals.

There are, therefore, several points of similarity between Roland and the classical epic heroes. Roland is known to be the protagonist, both by the title of the epic and by his role in precipitating the principal action. He exemplifies the vassal who, at first, is no more prominent than his distinguished contemporaries. He, too, is 'primus inter pares'. Like the classical epic heroes, he is described by the same terms as his companions and adversaries. He practises to an exemplary degree the code of honour which he proclaims. Although there is no question, in this epic, of divine ancestry, Roland is obviously favoured by God. There are, however, certain differences to be found. Roland is not known, in the early scenes, to be the hero, but assumes the role of leader only gradually. Unlike the heroes of the classical epics, Roland does not need to isolate himself from his society in order to assess his own values. Nor does he have to 'battle past his personal and local historical limitations'. Finally, there is no kind of conflict with kingly authority. Rather, Roland is the embodiment of all that his king and his society hold dear and his death is the ultimate expression of his dedicated vasselage.

Why do Roland's exploits overshadow those of Charlemagne whose great achievements are proclaimed in the opening lines of the epic? Why is Charlemagne not the hero? He dominates the epic as the champion of France and of the interests of Christianity. He presides at councils (103, sq.), grieves for the dead (2855-2973), dispenses justice (3742-3837; 3947-74) and commands the armies

of France (2987-3095). This whole episode in the life of Charlemagne extends beyond Roland's death until, after vengeance has been exacted on Ganelon, Charlemagne is portrayed in the final scene as at the beginning of the epic, planning to undertake new exploits. Charlemagne, however, is not the protagonist. He neither initiates the principal conflict nor does he directly take part in the central action. For Charlemagne represents both the continuity and the greatness of France and Christianity and provides the background against which great deeds of vasselage can be accomplished on their behalf. Charlemagne's role is not to meet the kind of glorious death which Roland experienced, but to remain as a living exemplar of the principles for which Roland died.

Let us now consider some attributes of the hero in two examples of medieval hagiographical writing: La Vie de Saint Alexis and Le Voyage de Saint Brendan. In these works, the hero is no longer a knight devoted to the service of his God and his king through the glory of warfare, but a saint dedicated to God through the holiness of his life.

La Vie de Saint Alexis,<sup>31</sup> one of the many versions of a story which was popular in the middle ages,<sup>32</sup> exemplifies the saint as hero. There is, consequently, a significant omission of many features which characterise the epic hero. Alexis is distinguished by the nobility of his lineage (13-20). He is born in answer to his parents' prayers (21-30). But instead of glorying in his ancestry and his divine election, Alexis is called to renounce a

comfortable existence, his family and a noble bride in order to lead a life of extraordinary austerity and holiness. He is drawn by God alone whom he loves above all earthly possessions:

Dunc li remebret de sun seinor celeste,  
Que plus ad cher que tut aveir terrestre. (57-58)

and beyond the noble family to which he is born:

Plus aimet Deu que [res] tut sun linage. (250).

Instead of showing the outstanding physical prowess which was displayed by Roland, Alexis is called to undertake a way of life requiring him to attain a high degree of spiritual prowess, in order to glorify God by the fulness of his commitment.

Alexis is frequently referred to by the title danz which denotes noble rank.<sup>39</sup> But he is also 'l'ume Dieu' (170-71; 343), 'saint hume' (330), 'bons cristiens' (340), 'sain(t) home' (347), 'le Deu serf' (348), and, in the words of the Pope and the emperor who are praying for his intercession after his death, 'saintismes hom!' (359). The epithets are, therefore, directed principally towards Alexis' exceptional holiness until finally, after his death, he becomes 'saint Alexis' (541; 598). Indeed, the adjective saint appears to replace the term proz which appeared so frequently in La Chanson de Roland. Burgess has drawn an interesting parallel between the use of the two terms, and concludes:

Alexis est l'intermédiaire entre Dieu et le monde d'ici-bas,  
et la qualité par excellence qui sert à lier ces deux mondes est  
la sainteté.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, if Roland showed exemplary courage and valour in his service of the king, and in maintaining honour at all costs, Alexis shows exemplary courage and valour in rejecting worldly honour and reputation and in serving God and the poor with all his heart (245-55).

The role of honour, which was such an important feature of the epic heroes, is now reversed. Alexis reminds his bride that temporal honours are transitory:

"La vithe est fraisle, n'i ad durable honur;" (69).

He refuses to be honoured by those who want him to intercede for them:

Trestuit l'onurent, li grant e li petit,  
E tuit le prient que d'els ai(e)t mercit.  
Quant il ço veit quel volent onurer:  
"Certes", dist il, "n'i ai mais ad ester,  
D'icest honur nem revoil ancumbrer." (184-88).

After Alexis' death, his father grieves:

Ma grant honur t'aveie retenude  
Ed anpur tei, mais n'en aveies cure. (407-08).

But if Alexis rejected temporal honours during his lifetime, there is no doubt about the spiritual honours which he receives after his death:

Sainz Alexis out bone volentét,  
Puroec en est oi cest jurn oneurét.  
Le cors an est an Rome la citét,  
E l'anema en est enz el paradis Deu:  
Bien poet liez estra chi si est alüez. (541-45).

Thus, a spiritual dimension predominates in this presentation of a hero, as Alexis abnegates all the temporal honours which his society esteems and chooses, instead, the honour and glory of God.

Saint Brendan, on the other hand, is an example of a didactic saint. Although he is a monk of noble lineage (19-22),<sup>41</sup> there is little emphasis placed on the pride in ancestry which Charlemagne's knights showed. Except for one example in the prologue, the term saint is not used of the hero. He is referred to simply as 'Brandan', 'Brandan li pius' (36), 'li abes Brandan' and occasionally, when there is no chance of ambiguity, 'li abes'.

Although Brendan and his companions undergo severe physical trials, there is no indication given of any extraordinary physical gifts. There are, however, several references to Brendan's mental alertness, to his intellectual gifts and to his mental integrity, for example:

Li abes Brendan prist en purpens,  
 Cum hom qui ert de mult grant sens,  
 De granz conseilz e de rustes  
 Cum cil qui ert forment justes, (39-42).

Saint Brendan is obviously a leader. Not only does he lead his chosen companions on a difficult and dangerous journey; he also shows practical commonsense mingled with trust in God. For example, when his men are becalmed, he encourages them:

"Metez vus en Deu maneie  
 E n'i ait nul qui s'esmaie!  
 Quant averez vent, siglez sulunc;  
 Cum venez n'i ert, nagez idunc!" (225-28).

For he is also a spiritual leader who, together with his men, continually refers to God in all his activities (305-06; 375-77).<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, he is an exemplar, for after the momentary vision of Paradise (1701-81), Saint Brendan's virtue inspires many followers:

Li plusurs d'els ensaintirent  
 Par la vertud qu'en lui virent. (1827-28).

Saint Brendan is inquisitive. For he embarks upon the expedition through curiosity as well as piety (49-52). Nor does he hesitate to ask questions about the strange apparitions which he sees. He inquires about the birds which are fallen angels (501-05) and asks one of them directly:

"Si tu es de Deu creature,  
 De mes diz dunc prenges cure!  
 Primes me di que tu seies,  
 En cest liu que tu deies,  
 E tu e tuit le altre oisel,  
 Pur co que a mei semblez mult bel." (513-18)



Nor does he hesitate to question the sorrowing Judas about his grief (1255-60). But because of his human limitations, Brendan is not able to absorb all the delights of Paradise which he sees and hears (1768-72), for such a vision is too great for mortal men to endure for long:

Lur nature ne poet prendre  
Si grant glorie, ne entendre. (1783-84).

Saint Brendan, then, is portrayed as a holy man who embarks upon a voyage of discovery through which his mind is enriched and his faith tested and confirmed. Except for his position as abes, his initiative and his wise advice, Saint Brendan does not stand out beyond his companions. He is alienated from his people because of his voyage rather than for the sake of criticising the values of his society. In a sense, he is intermediary between the real world and the world of fantasy and again, between this world and the contemporary notion of Paradise. There is no glory in warfare, evident pride in ancestry or pursuit of honour by means of spectacular heroic achievements. The emphasis is now on the glory of God, the pursuit of His will and the vision of Paradise which the hero cannot yet possess for:

"O or venis carnalment  
Tost revendras spiritalment.  
Or t'en reva; ci revendras,  
Le juise ci arendras." (1795-98).

But there is no question of his 'transcending the limitations of his human state' until the time comes when he 'Ralat u Deus lui destinat' (1832) and possessed the glory of Paradise for eternity.

These examples of French medieval heroes in different literary genres show great noble men who are leaders, exemplars and intermediaries. How do they relate to the classical epic heroes? And are there

any essential differences between the classical epic and the medieval epic and its related genres which affect the presentation of the hero? In the classical epics, the protagonist belongs to a race of warriors who are frequently designated by the term heros. In the medieval epic, the protagonist emerges from a class of noble knights who possess qualities similar in essence to those of the classical epic heroes. All are distinguished for their outstanding gifts and for their prowess in battle. But whereas Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas also show remarkable mental and spiritual gifts and are presented as complete, integrated characters, these medieval writings present a limited view of the hero. Roland is noted more for the physical qualities and for his adherence to his ideals as a dedicated man of action than for any extraordinary intellectual or spiritual prowess. He does not criticise or question his society as Achilles does, nor, like Odysseus, does he survive through extraordinary use of his intellectual gifts. Alexis, on the other hand, is endowed with a high degree of spiritual prowess, and the concentration is on his feats of spiritual endurance. In Le Voyage de Saint Brendan, an antithesis is shown between the physical and spiritual aspects of the hero's vision. But in spite of Brendan's mental alertness, there is little evidence of intellectual or spiritual growth during the course of the journey. Although both Alexis and Brendan spend time away from their habitual environment, they do not question or criticise the practices of their society, but seek to enrich it by the sanctity of their lives.

There are limitations, too, in the subject matter of both the medieval epic and the hagiographical writings. In both the

Odyssey and the Aeneid, the scenes of fighting are relieved by elements of mystery, fantasy and romance. Odysseus meets giants and one-eyed monsters; he escapes apparently insuperable perils; he is loved by goddesses and mortal women. Aeneas, also, meets strange, supernatural creatures and is loved by Dido in an episode which is one of the most original and outstanding sections of the epic. La Chanson de Roland is not completely devoid of such incidents. For example, grief for Roland's death is anticipated by hail, thunder and earthquakes (1423-37), just as Achilles' death is strangely prophesied by his horses (Iliad XIX, 408-17). But we do not read of any love or longing for Aude, Roland's fiancée, who dies of grief when she hears of his death (3717-21). Nor is any mention made of Alexis' feelings when he has to forsake his earthly bride in order to become totally consecrated to God (56-70). Le Voyage de Saint Brendan, on the other hand, abounds in episodes of mystery and fantasy. But the nature of the hagiographical writings excludes such elements of romance as appeared in the classical epics and the battle scenes which are an essential feature of all epic.

A more complete presentation of the hero is, however, to be found in the medieval French romance, particularly in the writings of Chrétien de Troyes, where not only are elements of battle, fantasy and romance once more combined, as in the classical epics;<sup>43</sup> but also, the hero himself is presented as a person possessing gifts of body, mind and spirit which develop as his quest progresses. But first, let us examine some features which relate to the twelfth-century view of man as a whole, integrated being, and to his relationship with his creator.

In the early twelfth century, theologians were writing prolifically in order to preserve and transmit the doctrines which they themselves had received and to promote the spiritual advancement of their followers. Of these, William of Saint-Thierry (c.1085-1148), a Cistercian monk who was a contemporary and close friend of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux,<sup>44</sup> strenuously criticised the laxities which he saw in certain monastic orders, notably Cluny.<sup>45</sup> In his doctrinal treatises, William showed that he was a traditionalist who was familiar with patristic writings. He firmly opposed what he considered to be the innovations of such theologians as Abelard and William of Conches.<sup>46</sup> But although William of Saint-Thierry wrote for the would-be ascetic, his teachings refer to any person who sincerely seeks God.

Of the many topics which William discussed, three are particularly relevant for our purpose. Firstly, there is the doctrine of 'image and likeness'. This is not a new doctrine, for it has its origin in the Book of Genesis and was taught by Saint Paul and by other theologians including Saint Augustine.<sup>47</sup>

Man is in the image of God:

Ipse enim imago Dei est. Et per hoc quod imago Dei est, intelligibile ei fit, et se posse et debere inhaerere ei cuius imago est.<sup>48</sup>

This likeness should be the source of man's aspirations and his hope for, as William commented when discussing man's rational faculties:

Ab ipso (Deo) enim et ad ipsum conditus est rationalis animus, ut ad ipsum sit conversio ejus, ut sit ipse bonum ejus. Hic autem ex illo bonus, ad imaginem et similitudinem ejus conditus est: ut quamdiu hic vivitur, quam proprius potest, accedat ad eum similitudine, a quo sola receditur dissimilitudine: ut sit is sanctus, sicut ille sanctus est; in futuro futurus beatus, sicut ille beatus est.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, man carries within himself the image of the Trinity;

cum Trinitas Deus hominem crearet ad imaginem suam, quamdam in eo formavit Trinitas similitudinem, in qua et imago Trinitatis creatricis reluceret; <sup>50</sup>.

Therefore, the faculties of the human soul, when developed according to their true nature, form an integrated whole as they reflect the completeness of the Trinity. Finally, because God is perfect, man ought to strive to be perfect:

Propter hoc enim solum creati sumus et vivimus, ut Deo similes simus, cum ad Dei imaginem creati simus. <sup>51</sup>

William's spiritual teachings, therefore, are permeated with his conception of the ascent of the soul towards God and the perfection of which man is capable.

Secondly, William wrote about love, particularly about the origin of love, the nature of love and the heights of love to which a Christian might aspire. Love is essentially a movement of the will:

Nihil enim aliud est amor quam vehemens in bono voluntas. <sup>52</sup>.

Love has its origin in God:

Primum igitur ejus nativitas locus Deus est. Ibi natus, ibi alitus, ibi proventus; ibi civis, non advena, sed indigena. A Deo enim solo amor datur, et in ipso permanet, quia nulli nisi ipsi et propter ipsum debetur. <sup>53</sup>.

Following Saint Augustine's teaching,<sup>54</sup> William insisted that the root of love is memory, where a mysterious recollection of the creator slumbers:

in ejus quasi quadam arce vim memorialem collocavit, ut Creatoris semper potentiam et bonitatem memoraret. <sup>55</sup>.

Memory, together with reason and will, forms a kind of lesser trinity which is parallel in origin and function to the Blessed Trinity:

sicut in illa summa Trinitate una est substantia, tres personae: in qua Trinitate sicut Pater est genitor, Filius genitus, et ab utroque Spiritus sanctus; sic ex memoria ratio gignitur, ex memoria et ratione voluntas. <sup>56</sup>.

Love can be directed towards a higher or a lower good according to the dispositions of the lover. But for the person who truly seeks God, there is a natural progression in love which is likened to a man's journey through life:

Sic enim secundum aetatum incrementum vel decrementum puer mutatur in juvenem, juvenis in virum, vir in senem; secundum qualitatum mutationes, etiam aetatum nomina mutantes: sic secundum virtutum profectum voluntas crescit in amorem, amor in charitatem, charitas in sapientiam.<sup>58.</sup>

Thus, amor grows into charity, an adult, altruistic love until, finally, charity culminates in wisdom<sup>59.</sup> which is nothing other than the enjoyment of God in contemplation and ultimately, in the Beatific Vision, for, in William's words:

Primum enim ad Deum voluntas animam movet, amor promovet, charitas contemplatur, sapientia fruitur.<sup>60.</sup>

Progression in the spiritual life is, therefore, signified by progression in love.

Finally, the most original aspect of William's teaching concerns the need for self-knowledge which must be attained by those people, especially contemplatives, who strive for perfection.<sup>61.</sup> In his spiritual treatises and exhortations William, following Origen, insisted on the development of the whole person, and he encouraged his monks to recognise their gifts of body, mind and spirit, in order to achieve integration of their faculties. Using the divisions made by both Saint Paul and Origen, William developed the trichotomy - anima - animus - spiritus - and hence, the concepts of 'homo animalis', 'homo rationalis' and 'homo spiritualis' which are indications of an aspirant's progress in the spiritual life and of his ascent towards God. A similar trichotomy exists in Saint Paul's writings, with the terms ψυχικός, 'natural', λογικός, 'rational', 'thinking' and πνευματικός, 'living according

to the Spirit'.<sup>62</sup> Saint Paul, however, limited the division and contrasted only the ψυχικός and πνευματικός. For the man who is ψυχικός is concerned with this world only, whereas the πνευματικός, enlightened by the πνεῦμα, the Spirit of God, is concerned with the things of God.

For William, as for his contemporaries, the essential purpose of monastic life was to direct human love back to the creator, from whom it had been deflected by original sin.<sup>63</sup> The way back to the creator was marked by three stages or 'estates'. The first of these 'estates' is dominated by the anima. In itself, the anima is neither good nor bad, for it is nothing more than the life-giving spirit which human beings have in common with the rest of creation:

Porro secundum nostros, id est ecclesiasticos doctores anima spiritualis propriaque est substantia, a Deo creata, vivificatrix, rationabilis, immortalis, sed in bonum malumque convertibilis.<sup>64</sup>

This definition reflects the teaching of Saint Paul, for whom the ψυχικός is the 'natural man who lives without the eschatological gift of the πνεῦμα, or the Spirit of God'.<sup>65</sup> According to Saint Paul, the psychical nature is neither sinful in itself, nor does it incline to the πνεῦμα. But it is corruptible and, without the grace of God, it finds no access to the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the 'animalis homo' has only a limited view of life. In William's words:

Sunt etenim animales, qui per se nec ratione aguntur, nec trahuntur affectu.<sup>66</sup>

Such a man, dominated by his anima, tends to live principally according to his senses:

animalitas est vitae modus sensibus corporis serviens: scilicet

cum anima, quasi extra se per sensus corporis circa dilectorum delectationes corporum affecta, eorum fruitione pascit, vel nutrit sensualitatem suam. <sup>67</sup>.

For the ascetic who has seriously undertaken conversion, a characteristic virtue of this state is simplicity, by which the will becomes wholly turned towards God, and the convert is more concerned with the inner reality of virtue than with gaining a reputation for it. <sup>68</sup>. The will is turned to God, but has, as yet, to be fully formed and illumined:

Vel simplicitas est sola ad Deum conversa voluntas, sed nondum ratione formata ut amor sit, id est formata voluntas, nondum illuminata ut sit charitas, hoc est amor jucunditas. <sup>69</sup>.

At this stage, too, obedience is particularly necessary, for the aspirant whose ratio has not been properly formed, is not yet capable of trusting his own judgment. <sup>70</sup>. The 'animalis homo' grows in the virtues, particularly in the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, all of which help to perfect him as a human being and are, therefore, called moral virtues. <sup>71</sup>. The aspirant's main task is to eradicate vice and to prepare the body and the outward man for the positive acquisition of virtue. <sup>72</sup>.

The second part of William's trichotomy is concerned with the animus. According to William, when the anima, which man possesses in common with all living creatures begins to possess perfect reason, it renounces its feminine character and becomes spirit endowed with reason. <sup>73</sup>. This is the animus which indicates the 'homo rationalis'.

Quamdiu enim anima est, cito in id quod carnale est, effeminatur: animus vero vel spiritus non nisi quod virile est et spirituale meditatur. <sup>74</sup>.

The rationales in William's terms are, therefore, those:

. . . qui per rationis iudicium et naturalis scientiae



discretionem, habent et cognitionem boni, et appetitum: sed nondum habent affectum. <sup>75.</sup>

William makes a clear distinction between the preoccupations of the 'animalis homo' and those of the 'rationalis homo'.

. . . . status animalis vigilat circa corpus et hominem exteriorem componendum, et aptandum studio virtutis: sic rationalis circa animum agere debet, vel faciendum si non est vel excolendum et ordinandum si est. <sup>76.</sup>

The faculty of reason is clearly described:

Et nunc vere est ratio, hoc est habitus mentis per omnia conveniens veritati. <sup>77.</sup>

together with its way of looking at the truth:

Aspectus animi est, quo per se ipsum, non per corpus, verum intuetur. <sup>78.</sup>

The 'rationalis homo' must develop his will in order to acquire more positive virtues for, in William's words:

Bona enim voluntas in animo est origo omnium bonorum et omnium mater virtutum. <sup>79.</sup>

The will, when properly formed in line with ratio, helps in developing virtue:

Quid est virtus? Filia rationis, sed magis gratiae. . . . Virtus est voluntarius in bonum assensus. Virtus est aequalitas quaedam vitae, per omnia congruens rationi. <sup>80.</sup>

Obedience is still necessary at this stage:

Bona ergo custos voluntatis est oboedentia. <sup>81.</sup>

The task of the 'rationalis homo' is, therefore, to prepare his mind in order to grow in virtue and to learn to discern between true and false values.

The third part of William's trichotomy refers to the 'homo spiritualis'. There are, however gradations in the use of the terms, spiritus, spiritualis, according to the context in which they appear. There are four different uses of the terms in the

treatise De Natura Corporis et Animae. Firstly, where William contrasts the anima, the intangible part of man, with the corpus, the tangible aspect, spiritus denotes 'breath'.

Spiritus quippe per arteriam repulsus ex follibus spiritum recipientibus impetu quodam sui arteriam in vocem roborat aerem percutiundo; <sup>82</sup>.

Secondly, in the same treatise, the spirit dominates the senses and therefore, denotes the aspect of man which contrasts with the sense life of the animals:

Spiritus vero hominis longe aliter. Nam sensibus dominatur et de sensibus iudicat. <sup>83</sup>.

Thirdly, spiritual means nothing more than 'non-material', as in the expression: 'rei spirituali et incorporali'. <sup>84</sup>. Finally, the term spiritualis is interchanged with other terms. Its flexibility is evident in the exposition about the nature and origin of the anima:

Quid sit, nemo comprehendit; quia nulla ejus est materia, quia res est spiritualis, intellectualis, Deoque simillima. <sup>85</sup>

Similarly, we read:

spiritualis vel rationalis usus. <sup>86</sup>.

and:

sic ad spiritualem vel rationem vitam ordinandam vel consummandam. <sup>87</sup>

But there is no flexibility about the meaning of spiritus, spiritualis in William's trichotomy. Here, the 'homo spiritualis' closely resembles Saint Paul's πνευματικός, 'living according to the Spirit'. <sup>88</sup>. Such a man knows God's saving work by virtue of the Spirit of God, to which the ψυχικός, or 'natural man' is, as yet, blind. <sup>89</sup>. William states the characteristics of those who have arrived at the third stage:

Sunt perfecti qui spiritu aguntur, qui a sancto Spiritu

plenius illuminantur. Et quoniam sapit eis bonum cuius trahuntur affectu, sapientes vocantur. 90.

Now the entire preoccupation is with God and with matters relating directly to God:

Cum vero de his quae de Deo vel ad Deum sunt cogitatur, et voluntas eo proficit ut amor fiat, continuo per viam amoris infundit Spiritus sanctus, spiritus vitae; 91.

Thus, in 'becoming love', the truly spiritual man participates, through the Spirit, in the very life of God, and is thus led to transcend the limitations of his humanity.

et (Spiritus) omnia vivificat, adjuvans seu in oratione, seu in meditatione, seu in tractatu infirmitatem cogitantis. 92.

This is the extent of the perfection which man might reasonably attain in this life:

. . . quia factus est unus spiritus cum Deo, spiritualis est. Et haec in hac vita hominis perfectio est. 93.

When man possesses true sapientia, which is a characteristic of this estate, he possesses also a foretaste of the vision of God in the future:

Sapientia enim pietas est, hoc est cultus Dei, amor quo eum videre desideramus, et videntes in speculo et in aenigmate credimus et speramus: et in hoc proficimus ut eum videamus in manifestatione. 94.

Thus, having fallen from grace by sin,<sup>95</sup> man has the opportunity of returning to the state from which Adam fell, by recognising his gifts of body, mind and spirit and by subsequently developing his faculties in order to regain his lost perfection. His progression could be called a spiritual journey by which he passes from the darkness of his first conversion, through intellectual knowledge where he acquires virtues and learns to love until, finally, as a composite human being, he is possessed by the

Spirit of God which fosters unity and achieves new life among believers. But this cannot be achieved without effort and difficulty, as William comments:

. . . nec continuo, nec nisi cum magnis et diuturnis laboribus relucere potest in nobis Factoris imago. 46.

William wrote first and foremost for aspirants to the religious life. 47. Certain features are, however, contained even in the classical epics and are evident to a fuller degree in the medieval romances. The doctrine of 'image and likeness of God' can have no place in the classical epics. But the best of the heroes were, in their limited way, described as 'godlike'. 48. William's doctrine is more clearly reflected in the medieval romances where it is contended that the heroes are seeking perfection. 49. Throughout their quests, the epic heroes are portrayed as men capable of loving and of showing various degrees of love. This is more evident in the medieval romances where the heroes experience a clear progression in love. Finally, the tripartite view of man and the insistence on self-knowledge which was fundamental to William's doctrine is clearly evident in both the classical heroes and in the heroes of the medieval romances.

\* \* \*

In a recent study entitled 'The Game and Play of Hero', 50. John Leyerle has shown that the hero and indeed, the whole of his society, is playing a kind of game to which certain rules apply. On the face of it, these rules and the game they control might be applicable to the literature being studied here. It is

therefore necessary to consider the rules and to compare them with the criteria established for the classical epic hero. At the same time, we shall consider to what extent the rules apply to the romance heroes themselves.

1. 'There is a relatively passive figure of authority, often a king, who tends to be aloof from the action or even ineffectual in controlling it. His presence sets an aristocratic and martial tone to the society portrayed in the text. An example is Charlemagne in La Chanson de Roland.'<sup>101</sup>

The king is not passive in the classical epic. Rather, kingly power is, in different ways, a source of conflict. In the Iliad, Agamemnon is neither passive nor aloof from the action. Instead, he precipitates conflict by his selfishness and greed and thus, he enables Achilles to intrude upon his authority. Agamemnon, however, becomes ineffectual in controlling the Trojans' supremacy in battle, the result of Achilles' wrath, for he cannot hope to defeat the Trojans as long as Achilles withdraws his services. Odysseus is himself a king, but although he has abundant heroic qualities, his kingly authority is, as W.T.H. Jackson has pointed out, weak until he regains his former position at Ithaca.<sup>102</sup> For as long as he is cut off from his roots by war and by fate, he has no power as king. Odysseus, therefore, has to earn his position once more as King of Ithaca by intruding upon the society of the suitors, the petty princes who have usurped his kingdom and disturbed the order of his world. None of the major figures in the Aeneid can be called passive. The death of King Priam (Aeneid II, 554-58), symbolises the fall of Troy, a prominent kingdom. Aeneas himself is king by virtue of his leadership and his vocation. Like Achilles and Odysseus, whenever Aeneas intrudes as hero, he challenges the order of an established kingdom, and uses his heroic qualities to consolidate

his position. Thus, unlike Charlemagne in La Chanson de Roland, the figures of authority in the three classical epics are, in different ways, challenged by the hero who is, himself, of royal status. In the selected medieval romances, however, King Arthur remains generally in the background, his presence gives unity to the action and his court is a pivotal point during the knight's journey.

2. 'The hero makes a formal commitment to accomplish a notable feat and thereby takes upon himself the playing of a role. The feat frequently involves a quest, or hunt, which has a long tradition of erotic associations.' <sup>103</sup>.

The heroes in the classical epics do not make a formal commitment in this way. <sup>104</sup>. Rather, Achilles denies his own war-loving nature and withdraws his services. A quest is involved, which is a search within himself, but there are no directly erotic associations. <sup>105</sup>. Odysseus does not make a formal commitment. Any challenge to accomplish a notable feat ensues from his situation as exile from his home and from the obstacles which he faces on his return, together with his human limitations. There is no association with a hunt in his quest. Aeneas' challenge is imposed upon him by fate. He makes no formal verbal commitment, but as he sees the stricken crowd of survivors after the final battle at Troy, he steps forward to accept his destiny:

"Cessi et sublato montis genitore petivi." (Aeneid II, 804.)

The medieval heroes do, however, make a formal commitment to accomplish a difficult feat and a quest is involved for the selected characters. This is exemplified by the departure en aventure of Erec and Enide, by Yvain's determination to seek Laudine's pardon, by Lancelot's seeking after Queen Guinevere and by Perceval's resolution to find the Grail.

3. 'The hero has courage, a sense of purpose, and strength beyond that of ordinary men; he often faces opponents with supernatural powers, or even with mythic significance. If the hero's opponents are ordinary men, they tend to attack him in large numbers. Examples may be seen in La Chanson de Roland or in Havelock the Dane.' <sup>106</sup>.

These statements are true of the classical epic heroes, also.

Achilles' physical courage, clearly evident when he finally urges his men to battle (Iliad, XXII, 353-63), remains steadfast when he fights the superhuman powers of the river Xanthus (XX).

Early in the epic, Achilles showed moral courage by opposing his king on a matter of principle. Both Odysseus and Aeneas show a high degree of courage by dominating the fear which they experience when confronted by apparently insurmountable obstacles. <sup>107</sup>

After the vision in the Underworld, when Aeneas knows his destiny and is confirmed in his vocation, his courage is unshakeable.

The medieval heroes also show extraordinary courage and a sense of purpose. Not only do they sometimes face adversaries who are superior in numbers, but they also successfully vanquish hostile Other World forces.

4. 'The hero has a costume, often armour of magical origin and power. This costume tends to be used for trickery or even deception. . . . These costumes are important because they symbolize the metamorphosis inherent in the hero's assumption of the role he has to play.' <sup>108</sup>.

Both Achilles (Iliad, XVIII, 457-615), and Aeneas (Aeneid, VIII, 608-72) have armour made for them by the gods before they enter their principal battles. This armour serves not so much for trickery or deception as for assurance of divine protection. Odysseus is disguised by Athena, particularly at Scheria and Ithaca. At Scheria, Athena simply causes Odysseus to look taller and more handsome (Odyssey, VI, 227-37), so that the effects of the storm

and shipwreck are effaced, and Odysseus has more chance of being kindly received at the palace of King Alcinous. At Ithaca, Odysseus uses his disguise as a beggar to test the loyalty of his household. Thus, in these epics, the hero's arming and disguise have a strictly practical purpose. There is nothing magical about the armour of Chrétien's heroes. They are, however, helped by equipment of fairy origin.

5. 'Fighting is stylized into single combat. When a hero faces heavy odds, the opponents are encountered one after the other even though we are expected to understand that the hero is facing them in numbers. The stylization frequently takes the form of a tournament; . . . . The tournament is particularly suitable to the literary game of hero because it allows the ladies, whose sexual favours are usually the underlying issue, to be present and watch as the hero plays his game of combat, hoping that it will end in eros, not thanatos.<sup>104</sup>.

The classical epic heroes, also, generally fight in single combat. There is not, however, the stylization in the form of a tournament in which the hero's personal excellence is judged. Nor is the question of the lady's sexual favours given prominence. Although the Trojan War was initiated because of Helen, and the conflict in the Iliad centres on the ownership of the girl, Briseis, and the subsequent dishonour done to Achilles, there is more emphasis on the battles themselves than on the women who are indirectly the cause. Odysseus' encounters at Ithaca are as much for the sake of establishing his right as king once more, as for the sake of winning his lady. The union of Odysseus and Penelope is, rather, a sign that Odysseus is reinstated into his kingdom. (Odyssey, XXIII, 232-40). Similarly, in the Aeneid, Turnus' words:

"tua est Lavinia coniunx,  
ulterius ne tende odiis." (XII, 937-38),



are a sign that Aeneas has conquered the most formidable of his enemies and that he can now reign in Latium. Leyerle's statement is, in essence, true of the selected medieval romance heroes. Apart from in Le Chevalier de la Charrette, however, the formal tournament has little prominence in Chrétien's romances, and the lady's sexual favours are not the underlying cause of the fighting. Chrétien's heroes generally encounter opponents of increasing severity either in order to survive a hostile force or in order to deliver the oppressed.

6. 'No one, as the economists say, is gainfully employed. Gold may be won in war and is dispensed by the victor as gifts to his followers for their loyal service.' <sup>10</sup>.

While this is generally true of the epic heroes, it is clear, also, that Odysseus, at any rate, derived wealth from his land, his cattle and his flocks. <sup>11</sup> The selected medieval romance heroes do not appear to have any specific source of income.

7. 'As in all games, there is an element of chance, the hazard of the play; the outcome depends on the hero's luck or simply on fate. . . . Often the outcome turns on a mistake which can be no more than a clumsy move or an accident; The mistake often enough does arise from a flaw, especially the hero's tendency to hubris in defining the role he is to play.' <sup>12</sup>.

The element of chance is not so obvious in the epics, for these heroes are supported to a considerable extent by the intervention of the gods. But the hero is often the victim of fate. <sup>13</sup> The epic heroes are also tainted by a flaw or hubris which frequently precipitates the action of the epic. Most of Chrétien's heroes lament the capriciousness of Fortune and try to reconcile themselves with its unpredictable ways .

8. 'The protagonist is a man, never a woman.' <sup>114</sup>.

This is true of both the epic heroes and the medieval romance heroes. All have to maintain their authority and resolve their conflicts by force of arms, which was an occupation reserved generally for men.

Apart from the differences noted between the heroes of the classical epics and those of the medieval narrative poems, Leyerle's 'rules' for the medieval hero are incomplete. Leyerle does not include that the hero needs isolate himself, however temporarily, in order to question and criticise his society, or that he be leader, exemplar or intermediary. Leyerle does not suggest that the hero 'transcend the limitations of his human state' in order to achieve his goal. Leyerle does not refer to any gifts of body, mind and spirit which were evident in the definition of the classical epic heroes, nor to the anima - animus - spiritus trichotomy which William of Saint-Thierry used, to show the gifts with which man has been endowed, and of which evidence will be found in the development of the medieval romance heroes. Indeed, the whole spiritual dimension is absent. We shall, therefore, seek these features in medieval romance. But before doing so, let us investigate the acknowledged means of transfer by which elements of classical culture passed into medieval culture, and thence into Chrétien de Troyes' romances.

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The concept of translatio studii, which had become important by the twelfth century, expresses the transference of culture and learning<sup>15</sup> which, according to E. R. Curtius, is 'co-ordinated' with translatio imperii, or the replacement of one empire by another;<sup>16</sup> in other words, as one empire fell and another succeeded it, the centre of culture and learning was correspondingly transferred.

The origins of this notion are uncertain. In the following passage from the Epistles, Horace demonstrated the relationship between translatio imperii and translatio studii:

Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artis  
intulit agresti Latio: sic horridus ille  
defluxit numerus Saturnius et grave virus  
munditiae pepulere; (Epistles, II, 156-59).<sup>17</sup>

There are several relevant texts which show that medieval writers were aware of this concept. Curtius considered that the earliest example was found in Heiric's epistle to Charles the Bald, which he did not, however, quote.<sup>18</sup> Another significant reference is found in the writing of the anonymous monk who adapted the Chronicle of Saint Gall (c.884-87), and who refers to Alcuin's influence and the vast extent of his learning. E. Gilson, explaining it as 'l'amorce du thème de translatione studii', cites the passage:

cujus in tantum doctrina fructificavit, ut moderni Galli  
sive France antiquis Romanis et Atheniensibus aequarentur.<sup>19</sup>

A similar comment about Alcuin's learning appears later in les Grandes chroniques de France:

Tant multiplia et fructifia sa doctrine à Paris que, Dieu merci!  
la fontaine de doctrine et de sapience est à Paris aussi  
comme elle fu jadis à Athènes et à Rome.<sup>20</sup>

The principal feature of the translatio studii is that,

co-ordinated with the translatio imperii, it transmitted through cultural achievements the greatness of the respective dominant civilisations. Thus, scholars recognised with pride that their civilisation was heir to a rich culture. Consequently, writers experienced a great sense of responsibility to protect and transmit their cultural heritage. Gilson has commented:

Ce qu'on trouve de plus apparent, c'est la conscience qu'eut le moyen âge d'être l'héritier d'une antique culture morale et intellectuelle, la fierté d'en avoir reçu le dépôt, l'inquiétude de le laisser perdre ou corrompre.<sup>121.</sup>

The teaching of rhetoric ensured this transfer of culture. Students were taught to use as their models writers who were considered to be stylistically sound. In the Ars Poetica, Horace acknowledged the debt which Roman writers owed to Greek poets and he exhorted his readers:

Vos exemplaria Graeca  
nocturna versate manu, versate diurna. (268-69)<sup>122.</sup>

Alcuin, in his turn, gave the following advice which is, in essence, similar to Horace's:

Legendi sunt auctorum libri eorumque bene dicta memoriae mandanda: quorum sermoni adsueti facti qui erunt, ne cupientes quidem poterunt loqui nisi ornate.<sup>123.</sup>

In a passage in the Metalogicus, John of Salisbury described how Bernard of Chartres conducted his lessons:

. . . in auctorum lectione quid simplex esset et ad imaginem regulae positum ostendebat; figuras grammaticae, colores rhetoricos, cavillationes sophismatum, et que parte suae propositae lectionis articulus respiciebat ad alias disciplinas proponebat in medio. . . .  
Quibus autem indicebantur praeexercitamina puerorum in prosis aut poematibus imitandis, poetas aut oratores proponebat et eorum jubebat vestigia imitari, ostendens juncturas dictionum et elegantes sermonum clausulas. . . .<sup>124.</sup>

Thus, the critical study of ancient authors was fundamental to

medieval education. Although Bernard condemned open plagiarism, <sup>125</sup> he encouraged his pupils to imitate worthy models in order that they, in their turn might be worthy models for posterity:

Si vero redargutum, si hoc tamen meruerat inepta positio,  
ad exprimendam auctorum imaginem modesta indulgentia conscendere  
iubebat faciebatque, ut qui majores imitabatur, fieret posteris  
imitandus. <sup>126</sup>

But as students and writers absorbed, translated and adapted ideas from older civilisations, they were, inevitably, influenced by contemporary ideas and tastes. Consequently, old themes were subjected to new interpretations and reshaping. This is exemplified in many aspects of the romans antiques, particularly in the Roman d'Eneas where, although the essential story of the Aeneid remains, contemporary interest in love and the influence of Ovid predominate over the glories of the nascent Roman empire and the influence of Vergil. <sup>127</sup>

In the prologue to Cligès, a romance completed before 1176, <sup>128</sup> Chrétien de Troyes describes the pattern of translatio studii. He gives due credit to books and to education as the normal means by which learning is transferred:

Par les livres que nos avons  
Les fez des anciens savons  
Et del siegle qui fu jadis. (Cligès, 25-27)

He next traces the progression of chevalerie, 'chivalry' and clergie, 'culture'. <sup>129</sup>

Ce nos ont nostre livre apris  
Qu' an Grece ot de chevalerie  
Le premier los et de clergie.  
Puis vint chevalerie a Rome  
Et de la clergie la some,  
Qui or est an France venue. (28-33).

But the progression, according to Chrétien, is to stop in France,

for it has come, there, to its rightful place.

Dex doint qu'ele i soit maintenue  
 Et que li lues le abelisse  
 Tant que ja mes de France n'isse  
 L'enors qui s'i est arestee. (34 - 37).

This prologue is not only the first complete literary expression in French of the nature and progression of translatio studij,<sup>130</sup> but it is also the expression of Chrétien's own pride in the noble deeds of the past and the literary achievements which they inspired.

\*   \*   \*

It is time to situate Chrétien de Troyes in his social, intellectual and spiritual environment and to note briefly some of the factors which are likely to have influenced his work. Chrétien is known to have been a clerc at the court of Marie de Champagne where interest in culture was fostered, particularly in matters concerning love and chivalry.<sup>131</sup> He enjoyed the patronage of Philippe de Flandre who was, evidently, a man of strong principles and loyalty to his Church, practising exemplary justice and charity. In Chrétien's words:

Li quens est teus que il n'escoute  
 Vilain g[ap] ne parole estoute,  
 Et s'il ot mesdire d'autrui,  
 Quels que il soit, ce poise lui.  
 Li quens aime droite justise  
 Et loiauté et saint eglise  
 Et toute vilonnie het;  
 S'est larges que l'en si ne set,  
 Qu'il done selonc l'evangille,  
 Sanz ypocrisie et sanz gille, (Le Conte du Graal, 21 - 30).<sup>132</sup>

Although it has been contended that Chrétien's purpose in writing this prologue was, principally, to flatter his patron, it is clear that Philippe's virtues were a source of admiration

to Chrétien and could well have reflected his own attitude.<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, Chrétien lived in an age which was affected profoundly by the development of Cistercian monasticism. In the bailliage of Troyes itself, monastic houses proliferated largely because of the influence of Saint Bernard and his monks.<sup>134</sup> There were great theologians among Chrétien's near contemporaries, notably, Hugh of Saint-Victor (d. 1142) whose teachings reflect the thought of Saint Augustine and prepare the way for a logical, clearly-defined spirituality. Like Saint Augustine and William of Saint-Thierry, Hugh insisted that a high degree of self-knowledge is necessary for those who earnestly seek God. Furthermore, Hugh of Saint-Victor was among those twelfth-century teachers who, like William of Saint-Thierry, emphasised that man is made in the image and likeness of God and that perceptible images are signs or 'sacraments' of invisible realities.<sup>135</sup>

As a clerc, Chrétien will have been educated in the trivium and the quadrivium.<sup>136</sup> His work shows that he was influenced by Celtic tradition, by la matière de Bretagne and by the Latin classics.<sup>137</sup> Chrétien appears to have fused elements from these sources in a highly original way. Frappier has commented:

On dirait en le lisant que des rayons de la Grèce et de Rome ont rejoint les reflets des légendes celtiques dans l'air irisé dans la Champagne et de l'Ile-de-France.<sup>138</sup>

There are, also, references to Sacred Scripture, implications of patristic teaching and signs of the author's familiarity with Christian practice. Chrétien, therefore, absorbed, re-shaped and transmitted elements of both the sacred and the secular culture of his time.

What characteristics, then, can we expect in Chrétien's heroes? Will they show the same characteristics as the classical epic heroes? To what extent do they reflect the interests of a sophisticated twelfth-century audience? Can any indications be found in Chrétien's works of twelfth-century spirituality?

In Chrétien's romances, the hero is to be understood as the protagonist, for he initiates the principal action and plays the principal role. The term hero is not used, for there is no longer any question of an heroic age, but rather, of an age of chivalry, which, in itself, can be seen as embodying an heroic ideal. Burgess has defined the heroic ideal as it emerged in the middle of the twelfth century:

La tension établie entre la réalité sociale et les aspirations chevaleresques des barons se stabilise dans un idéal - le Chevalier ou l'homme courtois parfait, sans but politique, dont la seule quête est soi-même, la connaissance de soi, la réalisation de ses propres qualités.<sup>139</sup>

The ideal knight of this age, therefore, requires a high degree of self-knowledge and self-acceptance, and this is the principal object of his quest.

The terms used to designate these knights are, in general, similar to those used in La Chanson de Roland, and refer to the knight's nobility, his courage and his skill in warfare. Thus, ber, baron and chevalier are widely used, (e.g. Erec, 337, 526, 2458; Yvain, 676; Lancelot, 560, 1064; Perceval, 1627, 2039). Both knights and other noblemen are, at times, designated as preudom (e.g. Erec, 382; Yvain, 3211, 3972, 4009; Perceval, 1011, 1019). The epithets used are also



similar to those in La Chanson de Roland. Erec is 'biax et preuz e genz' (89), 'preuz et hardiz' (9673), 'preuz et cortois' (687). Yvain's proesce is a source of hope to all Gauvain's oppressed relatives (4008). Yvain and Gauvain are admired for being 'franc et jantil' (6358).<sup>140</sup> Lancelot is acknowledged to be 'molt preuz' (1983) when he raises the stone. Furthermore, Chrétien's knights are designated by titles of respect which denote their class: sire, mes sire, messire, mon seignor.<sup>141</sup> But the hero's name is sometimes suppressed during a significant part of the narrative. Yvain becomes 'le chevalier au lion' during the central section of his adventures; neither Lancelot nor Perceval is named until comparatively late in the romance, but in spite of such indefinite appellations as: li chevaliers, li vallés, there is no doubt for the reader concerning the identity of the knight nor of his role as the preeminent character.

There is altered emphasis on the conduct expected from the courtly hero. Courtoisie, 'courtliness' has replaced vasselage as the predominant term in the twelfth-century romance.<sup>142</sup> The emphasis is here on courtly behaviour which the courtly knight is expected to practise. Frappier has enumerated the qualities which true courtoisie implies:

En réalité les termes de courtois et de courtoisie tantôt désignent, dans un sens large, la générosité chevaleresque, les élégances de politesse mondaine, une certaine manière de vivre, et tantôt, dans un sens plus restreint, un art d'aimer inaccessible au commun des mortels, cet embellissement du désir érotique, cette discipline de la passion et même cette religion de l'amour qui constituent l'amour courtois.<sup>143</sup>

As is evident from the prologue to Le Chevalier au lion, love is the mainspring of courtoisie which degenerates when true love is absent (Le Chevalier au lion, 20 - 28). But it is a

disciplined love which exacts vigilance and constant service. Thus, a high standard of military, social and moral conduct is expected from the knights. It is practised by most, upheld by King Arthur as arbiter and by Gauvain as the exemplar. Honour is fundamental to the hero's activities and the pattern -honour lost, honour sought, honour regained- is found in Chrétien's romances. The knight has a responsibility not only to gain 'pris et los', but also to maintain and increase it, principally by defending the weak and upholding the cause of justice. If he has earned the love of a lady, he is expected to treat her with suitable devotion and for her sake, to defend other ladies in distress. Chrétien's knights are of noble birth and are expected to be able to perform spectacular feats. In Frappier's words:

C'est surtout dans les romans arthuriens, et d'abord dans ceux de Chrétien de Troyes, que le chevalier est le type de noblesse, comme le baron l'avait été dans les chansons de geste pour la génération précédente. Gauvain, Erec, Yvain et les autres héros de la Table Ronde appartiennent à de très hauts lignages, mais leur gloire est inséparable de leur qualité de chevaliers et de leurs exploits proprement chevaleresques. <sup>144</sup>

Thus, Chrétien's knights show by their behaviour that they belong to court society and adhere to its practices. Through their exploits they seek to perfect themselves as men.

Like the classical epic heroes, Chrétien's heroes will be forced to stand outside their society, to scrutinise their own human nature, to assess their own values and to look for the true meaning behind the surface practices of their society. Like Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas, they are forced to 'battle past their personal and local historical limitations' and to stand beyond their contemporaries. <sup>145</sup> A promising knight thus

becomes an exemplar, a leader, an intermediary and, in some cases, approaches being a Messiah, for some of Chrétien's heroes assume the role of a deliverer who conquers a demonic power.<sup>146</sup>

Chrétien's heroes encounter Celtic elements: magic, strange creatures, Other World forces. But, as can be expected from an author who was so obviously aware of translatio studii, elements of Greek and Latin antiquity are also present.<sup>147</sup> Chrétien's heroes conform at least in part to the contemporary view of hero discussed by Leyerle. Furthermore, they not only show that they are familiar with Christian rites and practices,<sup>148</sup> but they also reflect, at least by analogy, contemporary spiritual tendencies. We shall, therefore, endeavour to study the heroes' qualities of body, mind and spirit, and we shall look for evidence of their self-knowledge and subsequent spiritual growth.

Because Chrétien was subjected to a variety of influences, his characters are sometimes ambiguous, and their functions can be interpreted in several different ways. Enide, for example, can be seen, on the one hand, as an altered form of Morgain la Fee,<sup>149</sup> whereas she has also been convincingly compared with Alan of Lille's Prudentia.<sup>150</sup> But in Chrétien's romance, she is above all the perfect complement to Erec. The gratitude of Yvain's lion recalls the lion of Androcles. The lion itself has been seen as Yvain's ira.<sup>151</sup> But above all, it resembles the lion of the Bestiary, which is the symbol of Christ.<sup>152</sup> Loomis has presented evidence to show that Le Chevalier

de la charrete <sup>153</sup>. could have derived from Celtic seasonal myth in which Guinevere was abducted. <sup>154</sup>. Similarly, the Grail has been given numerous interpretations ranging from the Celtic Horn of Plenty to the Chalice used at the Last Supper. <sup>155</sup>. While these and other interpretations have been convincingly proposed elsewhere, the concentration here is on the Christian significance to be attributed to the heroes and to the people and objects closest to them in their quests. For, as the perfection of Christian love, either by analogy or reality signifies the climax of these romances, the Christian perspective has been adopted.

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The selection of material was organised according to an arrangement or order, the dispositio. Under this heading, the quest, which gave an outline or pattern to the narrative of epic and romance, must now be examined and defined. <sup>156</sup>.

The heroes are faced with a quest <sup>157</sup>. which can be understood in a general sense as a 'search or pursuit, made in order to gain something'. <sup>158</sup>. A quest is one aspect of the notion of task or 'piece of work that has to be done'. <sup>159</sup>. In mythology, for example, the labours of Hercules can be considered as a task. In literature, Roland is entrusted with the task of commanding the rearguard (742-44). A quest, on the other hand, is a searching for something not yet possessed. <sup>160</sup>. More specifically, in medieval romance, the term quest has been defined as 'an expedition or adventure undertaken by a knight to procure something, or to achieve some exploit'. <sup>161</sup>. E. Köhler has commented, furthermore, that in the Arthurian romances, the quest is closely linked with the

restoration of order:

. . . aventure et queste sont des entreprises de réintégration. <sup>162.</sup>

But the hero must first re-establish order and seek reintegration with himself before he can transmit them to society.

Why does the hero undertake a quest? Is it imposed upon him or does he freely undertake it? The quest is closely associated with the hero's need to gain honour and prestige. Thus, during the quest, the hero must explore his physical potential; he must increase his powers of discernment, test his courage and develop to a high degree his powers of endurance. The sufferings, strange encounters and dangerous situations which the hero faces, allow his qualities to be tested and developed. But the quest, which is one aspect of aventure, is a means by which the order and felicity lost by sin can be restored. <sup>163.</sup> For most of the heroes face a quest as a result of some flaw in their character which has caused them to commit a fault. As this flaw frequently results from a lack of balance between the hero's physical, rational and moral or spiritual qualities, the hero must embark upon a search for himself in order to learn both his weaknesses and his strengths, and to achieve integration of the qualities with which he has been endowed. This is particularly necessary in the case of Aeneas and other heroes who, during their quests, need to develop the qualities required for their vocation. Of the selected heroes, only Aeneas' quest is directly imposed upon him. The other heroes, as A.Viscardi has commented, undertake their quests:

non per obbedire a ispirazione divina, ma per deliberazione della loro autonoma volonta. <sup>164.</sup>

In the hero's quest, there is a pattern which is also fundamental to human experience. This pattern has its distant origins in solar myth with its contrast between light and darkness, and the corresponding opposition of the hero and his enemy.<sup>65</sup> Similarities can be discerned, also, with the pattern of the death and resurrection of the Year-god which is at the essence of Greek tragedy. Gilbert Murray has outlined the pattern:

The story of the Year-god is always the same: he is born a miraculous child, he grows in beauty and strength, he conquers, he wins his bride, he commits the sin of Hubris or excess, he transgresses the law, and thereafter must of necessity dwindle, suffer defeat, and die . . . . It is the story of all these vegetation-gods: it is the story of all life; of flower and tree, of bird and beast, of men and of cities . . . . Yet there is a further factor in the Year-ritual which may be of very great importance. This celebration of the Death of the Year-god takes place not in the autumn but in the early spring . . . . The year dies, but is immediately born again and proceeds through the same cycle.<sup>66</sup>

But this pattern is limited for our purpose because, firstly, in both the classical epics and the medieval romances, the heroes being considered are not gods but human beings. Secondly, the life, death and resurrection of the Year-god is a cyclic event in which there is predictable, annual repetition, without any suggestion that the hero develops or progresses. The heroes studied, on the other hand, atone for their faults and undergo stages of growth in their quests. Joseph Campbell has outlined what he calls 'the standard path of the mythological hero':

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow

boons on his fellow man. '67

Although it conforms in many respects to the established pattern, this 'standard path' suggested by Campbell is limited, for there is no reference to the flaw in the hero's character and his subsequent fault which sometimes acts as a catalyst to his quest. Nor is there any reference to stages in the hero's quest. When discussing the romance as a literary form, Northrop Frye has made an observation similar to Campbell's, but has suggested a more tightly structured form and has limited his comment to the romance:

The complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages: the stage of the perillous journey and the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe or both must die; and the exaltation of the hero. '68.

In order to be able to conquer his foe successfully, however, the hero needs to undergo a considerable degree of growth, for the ἀριστεία or 'decisive battle' by which he assumes heightened grandeur requires him to use his skills to the utmost. '69. The preliminary adventures help him to prepare for the principal confrontation. Similarities to this pattern and elements of this growth can be discerned in both the selected epics and in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes.

The pattern discerned in the selected quest heroes is similar in outline. We shall study, to begin with, the introduction of the hero and the qualities which, initially, seem to place him apart from other men. The hero then commits a fault, generally at a time when his worldly prosperity seems assured. After discerning the true object of his quest,

he embarks upon a journey of renewal or redemption for which he generally needs to be isolated from his own society and thrown upon his own resources. During this time he is tested by a series of adventures which often increase in difficulty until, finally, he has to encounter and overcome hostile Other World forces. Less emphasis is placed upon the 'exaltation of the hero' than upon the price paid for the restoration of order. For although all the heroes achieve their heart's desire, together with a kind of peace, they all experience the pain of self-knowledge, the pain of conflict and loss, and empathy with the pain of other people. Attention, therefore, will be given to the place of suffering as the price which the hero has to pay for the lessons which he learns during his quest. All the heroes, too, are men who are capable of a high degree of loving. Most are tempted by love; all are at some time inspired and enriched by love. The hero's progression as a fully integrated individual is indicated to a considerable extent by his attitude towards love. Love will, therefore, be considered as the sign of the hero's growth..



Notes to the Preface.

1. Inventio has been defined as 'the finding out, the discovery of the facts'; 'the action of devising or planning, invention'; 'the devising of the subject-matter of a speech.' Oxford Latin Dictionary, Oxford, 1968, 2 vols., p. 958.  
When discussing material suitable for the art of rhetoric, Cicero included these two terms: 'Inventio est excogitatio rerum verarum aut veri similium quae causam probabilem reddant; dispositio est rerum inventarum in ordinem distributio;' De Inventione I, vii, 9. Loeb Classical Library, London - Cambridge (Mass.), 1960.  
See also Quintilian's advice: 'nam quo minus adiuvat sermo, rerum inventione pugnandum est. Institutionis Oratoriae, XII, 10, 36, ed. M. Winterbottom, Oxford, 1970. James J. Murphy has discussed these terms as used in medieval rhetoric. Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance, California - London, 1974, pp. 120-21.
2. Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford, 1961, 13 vols. vol. 10, p. 226.
3. See M. Bowra, Landmarks in Greek Literature, London, 1966, pp. 10 - 15; G. Murray, The Rise of the Greek Epic, Oxford, 1934, p. 29; pp. 195 - 217; J. Griffin, Homer on Life and Death, Oxford, 1980, pp. xv - xvi; C. Whitman, Homer and the Heroic Tradition, Cambridge (Mass.), 1958, p. 13.
4. Bowra, Tradition and Design in the Iliad, Oxford, 1958, pp. 2 - 8.
5. J. Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, New York, 1949; M. Eliade, Myth and Reality, London, 1964.
6. Jerome S. Bruner, 'Myth and Identity' in Myth and Mythmaking, ed. Henry A. Murray, Boston, 1968, pp. 276 - 287. See p. 276.
7. H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek - English Lexicon, Oxford, 1855, p. 598. See also Walther v. Wartburg, Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, Paris, 1948 - 83, 25 vols. Vol. 4, pp. 416 - 17.
8. Homeri Opera, ed. D.B. Monro and T.W. Allen, Oxford, 1902. 4 vols. All further references to the Iliad and the Odyssey will be to this edition. Unless otherwise stated, the translations are my own.
9. Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 5, pp. 245 - 46.
10. Ibid., p. 246.
11. Bowra, From Virgil to Milton, London - New York, 1961, p. 10.
12. M. I. Finley has commented on this passage: 'There is no social conscience in these words, no trace of the Decalogue, no responsibility other than familial, no obligation to anyone or anything but one's own prowess and one's own drive to power.' The World of Odysseus, London, 1977, p. 28.
13. See infra. p. 12; p. 55 n. 3.
14. Protagonist has been defined as 'the chief personage in a drama; hence the principal character in the plot of a story, etc.' and, 'a

leading person in any contest, a prominent supporter of any cause'. Fowler, Modern English Usage, 2nd, ed., rev E. Gowers, Oxford, 1965, pp. 488-89. This term is derived from the Greek πρωταγωνιστής or the 'actor who takes the chief in a play.'

15. Homer on Life and Death, p. 75.
16. W.T.H. Jackson, The Hero and the King: an epic theme, New York, 1982, See p. 6.
17. E. Köhler uses this expression when discussing the role of the consecrated king in feudal society. L'Aventure chevaleresque: idéal et réalité dans le roman courtois, Paris, 1974, p. 25. It can, however, apply to all the heroes being considered.
18. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 19-20.
19. For Aeneas' part in the Iliad and his protection by Poseidon because of his divine election, see infra., p. 20. See also, M. Grant, Roman Myths London, 1971, pp. 68-71.
20. Publii Vergilii Maronis, Opera, ed. R.A.B. Mynors, Oxford, 1969. All further references are to this edition.
21. e.g. 'saevum Achillem' (I, 458); 'cristatus Achilles' (I, 468).
22. See Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, p. 1592.
23. Ibid., p. 1381
24. vir has been defined as 'a man of courage, principle, or honor, one who deserves the name of a man'. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, p. 1994.
25. See, for example, Tennyson's tribute: 'Wielder of the stateliest measure / ever moulded by the lips of man.' ('To Virgil' in The Works of Tennyson, London, 1907-08, 9 vols., vol 6, p.315.
26. cf. infra., p. 105 n. 20. 'labor omnia vicit/ improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas'. (Georgic I, 145-46).
27. There is evidence for Charlemagne's expedition to Spain, for the ambush by the Basques in a narrow mountain pass and for the disaster which befell the rearguard" 'In quo proelio Eggihardus regiae mensae praepositus, Anshelmus comes palatii et Hruodlandus Britannici limitis praefectus cum aliis conpluribus interficiuntur'. Einhard, ed. E.S. Firchow and E.H. Zeydel, Vita Karoli Magni, Miami, 1972, ch. 9, p. 54. For the development of this incident into an epic poem and for its similarity to the definition of tradition which has been established, see P. Boissonnade, Du Nouveau sur la Chanson de Roland, Paris, 1923, pp. 432-41; P. Le Gentil, La Chanson de Roland, Paris, 1955, pp. 68-69; F. Lot, Etudes sur les légendes épiques françaises, Paris, 1958, pp. 271-74; Murray, The Rise of the Greek Epic, pp. 331-37.
28. La Chanson de Roland, ed. F. Whitehead, Oxford, 1957.
29. The term vassal has been defined as 'homme noble qui suit un seigneur à la guerre et qui lui porte assistance fidèlement et vaillamment, jeune homme noble en général'. F. E. Godefroy,

- Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française, Paris, 1881-92, 10 vols., vol.8, op.150-51. For its derivation, see O. Bloch and W. von Wartburg, Dictionnaire Etymologique de la langue française, Paris, 1975, p. 664. In his discussion about the implications of the term vasselage, G.S. Burgess has defined it further as: 'mot qui jette le pont entre le contrat féodal et le serment d'une part et le rôle militaire et spirituel des chevaliers d'autre part'. Contributions à l'étude du vocabulaire pré-courtois, Geneva, 1970, p. 20. For full discussion of this term, see K.J. Hollyman, Le Développement du vocabulaire féodal en France pendant le haut moyen âge, Paris, 1957, pp. 114-22. See especially p. 114 where Hollyman makes the important point: 'En même temps il ne faut pas oublier que le vassal est le complément du seigneur'.
30. Ber, baron have been defined as 'homme distingué par sa naissance et ses hautes qualités et surtout par sa bravoure'. Godefroy, Dictionnaire, vol. 1, p. 589. For a full discussion of the origin and development of this term, see Hollyman, Développement, pp. 122-29.
  31. See Hollyman, Développement, pp. 134-35; Burgess, Contribution, pp. 61-62.
  32. Burgess, Contribution, p. 107.
  33. proz originates from prodesse, 'to be useful' or 'of use', 'to do good, benefit, profit', Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, p. 1477; F.E.W. 9, 420. Burgess has explained the specific function of Roland's proece. 'L'utilité du chevalier épique réside précisément dans son courage, sa proece, qui lui permet d'être un bon vassal. Le sens du mot proz est donc devenu celui de "courageux", ce qui double la notion de l' "utile". L'utilité de Roland est sa capacité exceptionnelle de défendre la terre de Charlemagne: Nen avrai ja ki sustienget m'onur; Suz ciel ne quid aveir ami un sul; Se jo ai parenz, nen i ad nul si proz. (2903-05). Contribution, p. 93.
  34. See I. Siciliano, Les Chansons de geste et l'épopée; mythes, histoires, poèmes, Turin, 1968, p. 355.
  35. Burgess, Contribution, p. 92.
  36. Ibid., p. 135. When used of people, gent indicates 'gentil', 'joTi', 'beau', Godefroy, Dictionnaire, vol. 4, p. 261.
  37. La Vie de Saint Alexis, ed. Storey, Oxford, 1968.
  38. Ibid., p. viii.
  39. For the different titles and appellations given to Alexis after his baptism, see Burgess, Contribution, p. 92, n.3.
  40. See Burgess, Contribution, p. 92; supra, p. xviii.
  41. Benedeit, The Anglo-Norman Voyage of St. Brendan, ed. I. Short and B. Merrilees, Manchester, 1979.
  42. Although abbé generally means 'father', it eventually comes to denote 'chef d'une communauté religieuse'. O. Bloch and W. von Wartburg, Dictionnaire Etymologique, p.1.

43. See W.P. Ker, Epic and Romance; essays on medieval literature, New York, 1957. pp. 3-7; 16-33; E. Vinaver, The Rise of Romance, Oxford, 1971, pp. 1-14; 33-52.
44. See J-M. Déchanet, William of St. Thierry. The Man and his Work, tr. R. Strachan, Spencer (Mass.), 1972, pp. 24-33.
45. Ibid, pp. 118-33; J. Leclercq, Saint Bernard et l'esprit cistercien, Paris, 1966, p. 34.
46. Déchanet, William of St. Thierry, pp. 133-36.
47. De Civitate Dei, tr. G. McCracken, London - Cambridge (Mass.), 7 vols., 1963 - 72. XII, 24.
48. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, cols. 341-42. The Epistola as it appears in the Patrologia Latina is attributed to Guigo of Castro, the fifth prior of the Grande Chartreuse. Déchanet has discussed how this Epistola was also attributed to Saint Bernard, and has demonstrated conclusively that only William could have been the author. Introduction to The Golden Epistle, tr. T. Berkeley, O.S.C.O., Spencer (Mass.), 1971, pp. xiv-xxxiii.
49. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 341.
50. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 382.
51. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 348.
52. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 383.
53. Ibid., col. 382.
54. Cf. 'itaque ex quo te didici, manes in memoria mea, et illic te invenio, cum reminiscor tui et delector in te'. Saint Augustine, Confessions, X, xxiv, tr. W. Watts, London - New York, 1919; 'et dignatus es habitare in memoria mea, ex quo te didici', Ibid., X, xxv.
55. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 382.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., col. 383.
58. Ibid., col. 382.
59. For the connection between sapio and sapientia, see Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, p. 1629.
60. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 397.
61. De Natura Corporis et Animae, PL 180, cols. 695-726. See cols. 697-98.

62. Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὁλοτελείς,  
καὶ ἀλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα  
ἀμέμπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν  
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆρηθεῖη.  
(I Thessalonians, 5;23).  
(May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.)
63. See William of Saint-Thierry, Aenigma Fidei, PL 180, col. 406.
64. De Natura Corporis et Animae, PL 180, col. 707-08. See also col. 720.
65. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 9, p. 662.  
See also, Saint Paul, I Corinthians, 2:14.
66. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 315-16.
67. Ibid., col. 316.
68. 'Proprie enim simplicitas est perfecte ad Deum conversa voluntas, unam petens a Domino, hanc requirens, non ambiens multiplicari in saeculo. Vel est simplicitas, in conversatione vera humilitas, scilicet virtutis magis conscientiam amplectens quam famam, cum non refugit vir simplex videri stultus in saeculo, ut sit sapiens in Deo.' Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, cols. 316-17.
69. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 317.
70. Ibid.
71. The moral virtues are to be distinguished from the intellectual virtues which enable us to think correctly. They enable us to act rightly as creatures, but they do not amount to the theological virtues which respond immediately to God himself. See Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, II, vi, 5, tr. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, London - Cambridge (Mass.), 1918.
72. De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, col. 385.
73. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 340.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid. col. 316.
76. Ibid. col. 340.
77. Ibid. col. 341.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., col. 344.
80. Ibid.

81. Ibid., col. 345.
82. De Natura Corporis et Animae, PL 180, col. 713.
83. Ibid., col. 711.
84. Ibid., col. 713.
85. Ibid., col. 717.
86. Ibid., col. 718.
87. Ibid.
88. See Supra, p. xxxv.
89. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 9, p. 663.
90. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 316.
91. Ibid., col. 317.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid., col. 352.
94. Ibid., col. 351.
95. For the journey back to God, see William of Saint Thierry, Speculum Fidei, PL 180, cols. 365; 368-69; Aenigma Fidei, PL 180, col. 406-14.
96. De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, col. 385. See also, De Natura Corporis et Animae, col. 710.
97. William defines the special vocation of the monk: 'Aliorum est enim Deo servire, vestrum adhaerere. Aliorum est Deum credere, scire, amare, revereri: vestrum est sapere, intellegere, cognoscere, frui. Magnum est hoc, arduum est hoc.' Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 311. Nevertheless, all people are called to possess God. 'An solitarium Deus tantum? Imo et omnium.' Ibid., col. 312.
98. See supra, p. iii.
99. See Joan M. Ferrante, 'The Conflict of Lyric Conventions and Romance Form' in IN Pursuit of Perfection; Courtly Love in Medieval Literature, ed. J. Ferrante and G. Economou, New York - London, 1975.
100. 'The Game and Play of Hero' in Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, ed. Norman T. Burns and Christopher J. Reagan, Albany, 1975, pp. 49-82.
101. Ibid., p. 69.
102. The Hero and the King, p. 108.

103. 'The Game and Play of Hero'. p. 69.
104. Gilbert Murray, however, considered that the Achaeans were votaries. They are frequently called κάρη κομόωντες which means 'letting the hair on the head grow long' rather than 'long-haired'. 'They had made a vow - ὑπόθεσις is the Homeric word - to take Troy, and this implied a vow not to do certain specified things until they had taken Troy.' Murray then notes the abstinences which were part of their vow. The Rise of the Greek Epic, pp. 132-33.
105. The famous 'hunt' similes in Book XXII of the Iliad are concerned only with the life and death of Hector. (Iliad, XX, 162-67; 188-93; 199-201.)
106. 'The Game and Play of Hero', p. 70.
107. See infra, pp. 22; 168; 170.
108. 'The Game and Play of Hero' p. 70.
109. Ibid.
110. Ibid.
111. This is attested in many instances. But it is particularly evident when Eumaeus, the swineherd, is reviewing his master's substance. (Odyssey, XIV, 100-08).
112. 'The Game and Play of Hero', pp. 70-71.
113. fatum has been defined as firstly: 'An utterance or prophetic declaration'; secondly, 'that which has been ordained', thus destiny or fate; thirdly, 'the eternal immutable law of nature'; finally, 'the will or determination of the gods'. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, pp. 729-30. A typically Roman attitude towards fortuna, however, is seen in the following statement by Sallust: 'sed profecto fortuna in omni re dominatur, ea res cunctas ex lubidine magis quam ex vero celebrat obscuratque.' Catiline, VIII, 1, tr. J.C. Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library, London - Cambridge (Mass.), 1965. See also, Bailey, Religion in Virgil, New York, 1969, pp. 204-40.
114. 'The Game and Play of Hero', p. 71.
115. Oxford Latin Dictionary, p. 1966.
116. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, London, 1952, p. 28. Curtius also cited the following passage from Ecclesiasticus to exemplify a theological reason for the replacement of one empire by another: 'Regnum a gente in gentem transfertur propter injustitias et injurias et contumelias et diversos dolos.' (Ecclesiasticus, 10:8)
117. Epistles, ed. A.S. Wilkins, London, 1926.

118. 'Luget hoc Graecia novis invidiae aculeis lacessita: quam sui quondam incolae iamdudum cum Asianis opibus aspernantur, vestra potius magnanimitate delectati, studiis allecti, liberalitate confisi; dolet inquam se olim singulariter mirabilem ac mirabiliter singularem a suis destitui; dolet certe sua illa privilegia (quod numquam hactenus verita est) ad climata nostra transferri.' ed. L. Traube, Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini, vol. III, 19-23, Berlin, 1964, p. 429.
119. H. Pertz, ed. Monumenta Germanica Historica, vol. 2, p. 731, cit. E. Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, Paris, 1932, p. 183
120. ed. J. Viard, Paris, 1923. vol. 3, pp. 157-58. cit. Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, p.185.
121. Les Idées et les lettres, p. 185.
122. Horace, Ars Poetica, ed. A.S. Wilkins, London 1947. See also Quintilian's views: 'A sermone Graeco puerum incipere malo, quia Latinum, qui pluribus in usu est, vel nobis nolentibus perbibet, simul quia disciplinis quoque Graecis prius instituendus est, unde et nostrae fluxerunt.' Institutionis Oratoriae, I, i. 12.
123. De Rhetorica, Dans Halm, Rhet. min., p. 544, cit. E Faral, Les Arts poétiques du XII e et du XIII siècle: recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge, Paris, 1962, p. 99.
124. Metalogicus, I, 24, cit. E. Faral, Les Arts poétiques, pp. 99-100.
125. 'Si quis autem ad splendorem sui operis alienum pannum assuerat, deprehensum redarguebat furtum; sed poenam saepissime non infligebat.' Ibid, p. 100.
126. Ibid.
127. See R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 'Old French Narrative Genres. Towards the Definition of the Roman Antique', Romance Philology, 34, no. 2, Nov. 1980, pp. 143-59.
128. Chrétien de Troyes, Cligès, ed. A. Micha, CFMA, Paris, 1970, p. viii. See also, M. Freeman, The Poetics of 'Translatio Studii' and 'Conjointure': Chrétien de Troyes' Cligès, Kentucky, 1979.
129. For the co-relation between these two concepts, see E. Köhler, L'Aventure chevaleresque, pp. 44-76.
130. Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, p. 184.
131. Chrétien de Troyes, Le Chevalier de la charrete, ed. M. Roques, CFMA, Paris, 1974, 1.1. See also, J.F. Benton, 'The Court of Champagne as a Literary Centre', Speculum, 36, 1961, pp. 531-91;



131. (ctd.) J. Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, Oxford, 1979, pp. 109-36; J. Bednar, La Spiritualité et le symbolisme dans les oeuvres de Chrétien de Troyes, Paris 1974, pp. 41-47.
132. Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal, ed. W. Roach, Geneva - Paris, 1959.
133. T. Hunt sees this prologue as a stylised exordium which is 'a composite presentation of historical fact, general scriptural allusions (some of them proverbial), Ciceronian ethical theory and traditional Alexander material reminiscent of exempla contained in twelfth-century moral works of the 'miroir de prince' genre.' 'The Prologue to Li Contes del Graal, Romania, 92, 1971, pp. 359-79. See p. 374. Hunt's view contrasts with that of Frappier who has written: 'Il serait étonnant que Chrétien eût écrit ce prologue dans la seule intention d'une louange à l'adresse de Philippe d'Alsace et sans établir quelque rapport avec le sen de son roman; de fait, exemple le plus significatif, l'enseignement de l'ermite à Perceval - Deu croi, Deu aime, Deu aore - (v. 6459) fait écho au prologue et à sa spiritualité.' 'Le Graal et la chevalerie', Romania, 75, 1954, pp. 165-210. See p. 172.
134. T. Evergates, Feudal Society in the Bailliage of Troyes under the Counts of Champagne, 1152-1284, Baltimore - London, 1975, pp. 7-9; Leclercq, Monks and Love, pp. 109-10; Leclercq, Saint Bernard, pp. 11-12.
135. See M.- D. Chenu, Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West, Chicago - London, 1968, pp. 99-145.
136. See J. Frappier, 'Jeunesse de Chrétien de Troyes', in Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, Geneva, 1973, pp. 129-41. See p. 130.
137. Ibid., p. 131.
138. Ibid.
139. Burgess, Contribution, p. 21.
140. Chrétien de Troyes, Yvain, ed. T.B.W. Reid, Manchester, 1967.
141. See L. Foulet, 'Sire, messire', Romania, 71, 1950, pp. 1-48; 180-221.
142. cortésie and cortejs originally denoted nothing more than 'conduite ou qualité digne d'un homme de cour', 'ideal du chevalier élevé dans une cour', Frappier, 'Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XII siècle, in Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, p. 4. See also Burgess, Contributions, pp. 20-34. See p. 20. For the derivation of courtois, see Bloch and von Wartburg, Dictionnaire Etymologique, p. 164, quoted by Burgess, p. 21.
143. See Frappier, 'Conceptions', p. 3.

144. 'Le Graal et la chevalerie, pp. 167-68.
145. See Supra, p. x.
146. N. Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays, Princeton, 1973, p. 187.
147. W. Ziltener has endeavoured to show that Vergil is a direct source of Chrétien de Troyes. Chrétien und die Aeneis. Eine Untersuchung des Einflusses von Vergil auf Chrétien von Troyes, Graz - Cologne, 1957. Frappier, however, while recognising that Chrétien did use Vergilian elements, considered that a much broader classical background was evident in Chrétien's romances. 'Virgile source de Chrétien de Troyes?' in Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, pp. 143-52. See also, C.B. Lewis, Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance, London, 1932.
148. All the heroes and their companions attend Mass at least once. (Erec et Enide, 6470-74; Le Chevalier au Lion, 5452-56; Le Chevalier de la charrete, 535-38; Le Conte du graal, 6348-49). There are frequent commendations to God and signs of personal prayer. See also, P. Imbs, 'L'Element religieux dans le Conte du graal de Chrétien de Troyes', in Les Romans du graal dans la littérature des XII et XIII siècles, Paris, 1956, pp. 31-91.
149. See R.S.Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes, New York - London, 1949, pp. 100-03.
150. C. Luttrell, The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance: A Quest, London, 1974, pp. 47; 70-71.
151. E.C. Schweitzer, 'Pattern and Theme in Chrétien's Yvain', Traditio, 30, 1974, pp. 145-89.
152. Julian Harris, 'The Role of the Lion in Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain, PMLA, 64, 1949, pp. 1143-63.
153. Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 214-18.
154. For parallels with Paris' abduction of Helen, see Lewis, Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance, p. 152.
155. It is outside the limits of this work to consider all the relevant literature on the Grail. Frappier has made a particularly useful survey in 'Le Graal et ses feux divergents', Romance Philology, 24, 1970-71, pp. 373-440; 'Du Graal trestot descobert', Romania, 74, 1953, pp. 358-75. See also, D. Kelly, Chrétien de Troyes: an analytic bibliography, London, 1976, pp. 131-34.
156. See Oxford Latin Dictionary, p. 555. In discussing the five divisions of the ancient art of rhetoric, Curtius defined dispositio as 'disposition' or τάξις 'the art of arrangement' European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, p. 68. See also, p. 71.
157. Quête has been defined as 'action de chercher', Bloch et von Wartburg, Dictionnaire Etymologique, p. 525. The earliest uses of this term include: Einsi est al la queste antree (Yvain, 4821), 'usure est et trop laide queste', Etienne de Fougères, Le Livre des manières, ed. A Lodge, Geneva, 1979, l. 910

158. Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 8, p. 46.
159. Ibid., vol. 9, p. 104.
160. For further differences and examples of tasks and quests, see Stith Thompson, The Folktale, New York, 1951, pp. 105-08.
161. Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 8, p. 46.
162. L'Aventure chevaleresque, p. 97.
163. In his study of the term aventure, R. Locatelli has commented that, in Chrétien's romances, aventure means not only 'prova di valore e di virtu', but also 'ricerca di una felicità perduta'. 'L'avventura nei romanzi di Chrétien de Troyes et nei suoi imitatori', Acme, Annali della Facoltà di Filosofia e Lettere dell' Università Statale di Milano, 4, pp. 3-32. See p. 11.
164. Storia delle Letterature d'Oc e d'Oil, Milan, 1952, p. 212.
165. See Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 187-88.
166. Aeschylus, the Creator of Tragedy, London, 1940, pp. 6-7.
167. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 30.
168. Anatomy of Criticism, p. 187.
169. Liddell and Scott, A Greek Lexicon, p. 181.

Some Medieval Perspectives on the Traditional Heroic Quest.

Introduction.

Tu fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est  
cor nostrum donec requiescat in te. <sup>1</sup>

In this well-known passage, Saint Augustine describes his ultimate capitulation to the truth which he had been seeking for the first thirty-one years of his life. Exceptionally gifted with human riches, a warm-hearted passionate nature, a brilliant, discerning intellect and a sincere longing for wisdom, Augustine had to explore a vast range of human experiences in his search for the fulness of truth before he could allow himself to yield to the grace of God in whom he recognised the personification of Truth, Wisdom and Love.

Saint Augustine's search is similar to the experience of many sincere individuals and contains features which will be noted, for they represent a kind of kernel to the quest of mortal man which is reflected, though sometimes amplified, in the heroic quest. It shows man setting his heart on false goals: fame, carnal love, distorted truth. But as he searches, he escapes from himself and his nature while unconsciously seeking a good which he does not, at first, recognise, but which he needs for his fulfilment as a human person. And whatever the nature of this good, the object of his quest, it is not fully attained until the seeker has known humiliation, self-recognition, suffering and a kind of spiritual exile, and is finally restored to himself, as a wiser and nobler human being.

The intention in this introduction is to note some relevant features of the nature of man together with some of his principal desires, needs and goals as he lives out his earthly existence. These features will then be noted in certain aspects of the heroic quest, as a preparation for the study of the selected characters.

Man's first and basic quest is himself. He is first called to be, to become, to recognise and to acknowledge himself as a person, to accept the potential as well as the limitations of his human state, to try to discern the meaning of his existence

on earth and to recognise his dependence upon forces more powerful than himself. He needs the support of his family, his society, and his friends. At times, through a mistaken sense of what is right, or simply through pride, he sins and lives in a way which is unworthy of his humanity. His failures bring him face to face with his weaknesses and, if he is receptive, teach him humility. His encounters with antagonistic elements and his alienation from a familiar environment serve as a testing ground on which he is either augmented or diminished as a human person. Indeed, opposition frequently brings out his latent strength, encourages him to develop his potential qualities and clarifies his real values.

As man is endowed with gifts of body, mind and spirit, the object of his quest is likely to vary with his predominant need. His behaviour on the so-called physical, rational and moral or spiritual levels will be noted during the course of this study. Man may embark upon a territorial quest where a physical or real journey is required. This is the kind of quest undertaken by the Israelites when they fled from their oppression in Egypt to seek the Promised Land. Or desire for knowledge may send an individual upon an intellectual quest like that of which Saint Augustine writes when he describes his passion for true knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Or a person may embark upon a spiritual quest for intangible values: truth, wisdom, justice.

Such experiences are common to many human beings and are, therefore, found in folk-lore, mythology and inevitably in literature. For example, mention must be made of the Cupid and Psyche episode in the Golden Ass,<sup>3</sup> for Psyche's quest exemplifies much of a pattern that will become familiar. Psyche shows early promise and outstanding beauty, she commits an indiscretion when she is at the summit of her happiness, she suffers alienation, difficult conditions, profound sufferings but, with the help of favourable gods, she regains the husband she has lost and shares his love to an even greater degree than she had experienced before committing her fault.

In a pattern frequently found in literature, the hero fulfils his purpose in the work, undergoes his development of character and attains some kind of reconciliation and growth through the suffering which accompanies a quest, whether his goal be territorial or intangible. Such a quest is normally beset by temptations, dangers, difficulties, isolation, misunderstanding, heartaches, exile and deprivations of other kinds. This was the experience of the Sumerian hero, Gilgamesh,<sup>4</sup> who, bereft of his friend, Enkidu, went to seek everlasting life. Among other quests of antiquity can be included Odysseus' quest for his home and the wife whom he has lost, Achilles' quest for justice, for revenge on his slain friend, Patroclus, and for restoration to sanity as a human being. There can be included, also, the lengthy episode in the Prometheus Vincetus of Aeschylus<sup>5</sup> where Io is distractedly seeking an end to her wanderings. Elements of the human quest can be perceived, also, in Aeneas' blind, bewildering, but ultimately triumphant journey to the land where he is to found his new city and Orpheus' unsuccessful quest for his lost wife, Eurydice, who has gone to Hades before him.

The dangers that heroic figures experience on their quests are often extreme, and harsh terms which are laid down by deities often add apparently insuperable difficulties and obstacles to the fulfilment of the appointed task, to say nothing of the excesses caused by ὑβρις, imprudence, destructive passion and self-love. But if some gods are adverse and the Fates relentless, those who are called and chosen often receive help, encouragement and vision from other sources: kindly gods, fellow-sufferers, helpful animals, counsellors or from deceased kinsfolk and friends. Although these heroes are often portrayed as 'larger than life,' they are still basically human beings, subject to ordinary human frailty. It is only through their extraordinary will-power, docility to the will of the gods, capacity for suffering and humiliation that the heroes can overcome such weaknesses and attain the object of their quest.

In order to describe our traditional hero, let us reflect on the qualities listed by Michael Grant:

One of the Iliad's outstanding contributions to human civilization, for good and for evil, is its concept of the hero. The Greeks of the eighth century B.C. and for ever afterwards saw something splendid and superhuman about what they supposed to be their lost past. This seemed to them filled with superb figures living for renown, and pursuing it with competitive vigour. The hero must use his superior qualities at all times to excel and to win applause, for that is the reward and demonstration of his manhood. He makes honour his paramount code, and glory the driving force and aim of his existence. Birth, wealth and prowess confirm a hero's title; his ideals are courage, endurance, strength and beauty. Enthusiastically confident in what he achieves and possesses, he relies upon his own ability to make the fullest use of his powers. <sup>6</sup>

But this description is limited. For in spite of their superior qualities, the heroes were still human. Even in the epics, there is conflict between this splendid ideal and the reality of the hero who, when his honour is questioned, is torn and humiliated and is thus reminded of his humanity. On the other hand, the heroes have been a source of hope and inspiration, for they have shown the greatness of which mankind is capable. Grant continues:

Yet in weakness and strength alike, the Hero has transformed our ways of thinking. The heroic outlook shook off primitive superstitions and taboos by showing that man can do amazing things by his own effort and by his own nature, indeed that he can almost rise above his own nature into strengths scarcely known or understood. <sup>7</sup>

Thus, the heroes were a source of admiration and encouragement to those who learnt of their exploits and tried to emulate them. Furthermore, we can identify with the crises of some of our heroes and empathise with them in times of suffering. As Grant has stated:

When we read the Iliad we feel larger than life, freed from the compulsion of present realities. The epic heroes carry us with them in their struggles and sufferings; they are not as we are, yet we follow after them. And so, when they suffer or exult, so do we. <sup>8</sup>

Many of the fundamental aspects of the traditional Greek and Roman heroes and their quests will emerge in the heroes of medieval French literature. Although the medieval epic must inevitably

provide some trace of these, a particularly fruitful field for the study of the heroic quest, and the one to which the major part of this thesis will be devoted, is the twelfth-century French courtly romance, where new perspectives are given to ancient themes and universal experiences. The twelfth century was an age when people went out to meet new experiences and seek new challenges. It was also an age of profound, but lively intellectual and spiritual seeking. R.W.Southern comments on the tendency towards movement which characterised twelfth-century Europe:

It was not until the twelfth century that the image of journeying became a popular expression of a spiritual quest. They indeed it meets us on all sides - in the Arthurian Romances, in allegories of love, in descriptions of the ascent of the soul towards God. The imagery of movement seemed at this time to lay hold on the imagination, and it invaded secular as well as religious literature. The theme had a natural appeal to the age which produced the Crusades, but it outlived the Crusades.<sup>9</sup>

Our twelfth-century heroes may, therefore, be expected to reflect contemporary interest in journeying, together with intellectual development and spiritual ascent.

But another dimension can sometimes be found in the hero of the middle ages. In a recent study of the 'game and play of the hero,' John Leyerle sees the hero to be playing a kind of game to which certain rules apply.<sup>10</sup>

These are, briefly, as follows:

1. There is a relatively passive figure of authority, often a king. His presence sets an aristocratic and martial tone to the society portrayed in the text.
2. The hero makes a formal commitment to accomplish a notable feat and thereby takes upon himself the playing of a role. This commitment is often the result of a challenge.
3. The hero has courage, a sense of purpose, and strength beyond that of ordinary men; he often faces opponents with supernatural powers, or even with mythic significance.
4. The hero has a costume, often armour of magical origin and power.
5. Fighting is stylized into single combat. When a hero faces



heavy odds, the opponents are encountered one after the other even though we are expected to understand that the hero is facing them in numbers.

6. No one is gainfully employed.

7. As in all games, there is an element of chance. Fate was often presented as a function of the wheel of fortune, an image made popular by Boethius in De Consolatione Philosophiae.

8. The protagonist is a man, never a woman. 11.

Although such a set of rules suggests a somewhat stylised portrayal of the hero, it also offers an opportunity for the hero to 'stand outside himself' for a time in order that he may see himself, begin to know himself and thus be better able to achieve the degree of excellence of which he is capable.

Evidence of the quest idea is perceptible in the romans antiques of the twelfth century, especially those in which well-known characters of the Greek and Latin epic appear. The medieval Roman d'Eneas exemplifies the adaptation of a traditional classical theme to the taste of a twelfth-century audience. But the principal writer for our purpose is Chrétien de Troyes. Although little is known about details of Chrétien's life, it can be concluded that he had the education of a clerk, that he was familiar with not only the Greek and Latin classics, but also Celtic tradition. He is known to have written his romances during the second half of the twelfth century. 12. By assimilating much from differing cultures and civilisations, Chrétien handed on ideas which were to influence writers for several generations to come.

In Guillaume d'Angleterre, a work somewhat doubtfully ascribed to Chrétien, there is a blind quest across unfamiliar land and through painful experiences to obey the command of God:

"Au monde par lonc ne par lé  
M'estuet cerkier au Dieu plaisir." (280-81) 13.

Erec et Enide provides us with a quest for balance between the code of chivalry and marital happiness; in Le Chevalier au lion, we follow Yvain's quest, firstly to avenge his cousin's shame while

seeking avanture, then to seek reconciliation with his wife; Le Chevalier de la charrete portrays a quest for a beloved lady where love is the dominating theme, and in Le Conte du graal, there is a quest for a precious object, the Grail, whose mystery was to fire the imaginations of writers for many ages to come. Throughout all these quests there recur the themes of sin and redemption, growth and learning through suffering, reconciliation through love, which emerge as signs of hope to a sinful and suffering human race.

If the quests of some of our medieval knights follow essentially the same pattern as those of certain heroes of antiquity, it should be possible to see that their temptations spring from the same sources, namely, from human nature with its pride, its passions, its self-love, its forgetfulness and its longing to better itself. But the whole medieval perspective differs from that of antiquity because of a radically changed social structure. The twelfth century was an age when feudalism was evolving further; it was an age characterised by the renewed impact of Christianity in Europe and affected profoundly by the birth and prodigious development of Cistercian monasticism. During this century, too, there was an enlarging of the physical and intellectual boundaries of Europe which was an inevitable result of the Crusades. There was, furthermore, a revival of the Cathedral schools of which Chartres, under the tutelage of Fulbert and later guided by such chancellors as Bernard and Thierry of Chartres and Gilbert de la Porrée, had become one of the most vigorous and influential schools of Europe. Among the most prominent teachers of this age was the theologian and mystic, Hugh of Saint-Victor, whose teachings reflect the thought of Saint Augustine, and prepare the way for a logical, clearly-defined spirituality, and one demanding a high degree of self-knowledge on the part of those who would ascend towards God. Hugh of Saint-Victor was among those twelfth-century teachers who emphasised that perceptible images are signs or 'sacraments' of invisible realities. 14.

This was the age when many tales were centred on the court of the mysterious King Arthur. Codes of chivalry were becoming

clearly defined, for at the same time, attitudes to women were changing, and the idea of courtly love which was to permeate the culture and literature of the period, exalted the ideal of womanhood to the extent that the symptoms of a hero's love could, in a sense, resemble those of a truly mystical experience.

The principal writers whose works will be studied here are Homer, Vergil and Chrétien de Troyes. In Homer's writings can be found the climax and written expression of centuries of oral tradition which was to prepare the way for much western literature. Vergil looks back to Homer, but in praising the newly-found glories and hoped-for peace of Augustan Rome, brings to the Homeric tradition a new purpose and a new emphasis. Attention will also be focused on the twelfth-century Roman d'Eneas as a work which links ancient epic tradition with pre-courtly ideas. Chrétien de Troyes in turn, looks back to many sources of antiquity, both western and oriental, and lays a foundation for the work of many of his successors. If we can accept that the Homeric bards, Demodocus and Phemius reflected contemporary traditions by singing, when requested, for kings and the assembled court, and if we connect this with the recorded fact that Vergil did recite at least some of the Aeneid for the Emperor Augustus and his court, it may be concluded that all the principal writers to be studied here have this in common: their poetry could to some extent and for different reasons be called court poetry. Furthermore, they seek, in their works, to exalt contemporary ideals.

The pattern formed by our quest heroes is similar in outline. We shall study, to begin with, the introduction of the hero and the qualities which, initially, seem to place him above other men. The hero then commits a fault, generally at a time when his worldly prosperity seems assured. After discerning the true object of his quest, he embarks upon a journey of renewal or redemption when he is generally isolated from his own society. During this time he has an encounter with hostile Other-World forces which he has to overcome. 15. There will then be some discussion of suffering

and the lessons which it teaches. Finally, the role of love in the quest will be examined.

The intention of this study is not to try to prove the extent of the influence of classical Greek and Latin writers on the medieval quest, though it must be noted that some very fine and useful scholarship has been directed towards exploring the influence of certain inherited and adapted features in the work of Chrétien de Troyes.<sup>16</sup> Rather, the aim is to examine the extent to which the selected quest heroes represent real human beings with their virtues, their failures and their longings; to see what are the predominant heroic virtues portrayed; to decide whether these heroes and their quests have any universal lessons to offer and to examine features which are common to these three major literary periods, represented principally by Homer, Vergil and Chrétien de Troyes. The aim is also to show that the goal of the quest is not for only a geographical or tangible good, but that it can also be for an inward, intangible one which, at times, becomes a truly spiritual reality. In fact, the hero's success in his quest is very often dependent upon his spiritual growth. The aim is also to show that shadows and images of Christian spirituality<sup>17</sup> can be found not only in pre-Christian philosophical works, but also in some pre-Christian literary quests, and that fuller substance was given to these shadows when the same basic themes were treated in the twelfth century, with its vibrant spiritual interest. Finally, the aim is to show that there can be discerned in the heroes of certain major authors the notions of early promise, sin, symbolic death and ultimately, reconciliation and redemption. And in discussing, comparing and contrasting analogues and parallels in these aspects of the heroic tales, we hope to show that the goals, trials, obstacles and finally, triumphs of these heroes and their quests are part of the universal, human pattern.

Notes to Introduction:

1. Saint Augustine, Confessions, tr. W. Watts, Loeb Classical Library, London-New York, 1919, I, i.
2. Confessions, VI, xi.
3. Apuleius, The Golden Ass, tr. W. Adlington, Loeb Classical Library, London-New York, 1922.
4. N.K. Sandars, The Epic of Gilgamesh, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1960.
5. Aeschylus, Prometheus Vinctus, tr. H. Weir Smyth, Loeb Classical Library, London-New York, 1922.
6. M. Grant, Myths of the Greeks and Romans, New York, 1964, pp. 44-45.
7. Ibid., p. 46.
8. Ibid.
9. The Making of the Middle Ages, London, 1967, p. 212.
10. 'The Game and Play of Hero', in Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, ed. Norman T. Burns and Christopher J. Reagan, Albany, 1975, pp. 49-82. See also, Margaret Burrell, 'From Cligès to Le Chevalier de la Charrete': the structural uses of treason, treachery and deceit', in New Zealand Journal of French Studies, 3, 1982, pp. 5-20. see page 11.
11. Leyerle, 'The Game and Play of Hero,' pp. 69-70.
12. See J. Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes. L'Homme et l'oeuvre, Paris, 1957, pp 18-21. M. Roques (Introduction to Erec et Enide, CFMA, Paris, 1973, p. xxvii) shows that Erec et Enide could not have been written before 1155 and suggests that this, the earliest of Chrétien's romances, was probably written around 1165.
13. Chrétien de Troyes, Guillaume d'Angleterre, ed. M. Wilmette, CMFA, Paris, 1971.
14. M.-D. Chenu, O.P., 'The Symbolist Mentality', in Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century, tr. J. Taylor and L. Little, Chicago and London, 1968, pp. 99-145. See pp. 128-41.

15. This sequence is similar, in part, to that noted by William R. Nethercut:  
 'A Hero is isolated from his society, he enters a land of mystery, is tested by a confrontation with some dread power, he undergoes a symbolic death, and experiences a life-enhancing return to those he left behind. At the end he is reinstated into the world of men.' ('The Epic Journey of Achilles', Ramus, 5, 1976, pp.1 - 17. See page 1. Joseph Campbell (The Hero with a Thousand faces, New York, 1949), traces this progression in the folk-lore of Asia, Africa, North America and Europe.
16. E.g., Pierre Gallais, Perceval et l'initiation, Paris, 1973; Charles B. Lewis, Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance, Oxford, 1932.
17. When discussing the classifications of those who can be said to belong to the Church, the Vatican Council includes the following: 'Nor is God Himself far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God.'  
 ('Lumen Gentium", Ch. 2, para 16, in Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Vatican Council II, ed. Walter Abbot, S.J., London, 1966.

## Chapter 1.

The Introduction of the Hero.INTRODUCTION.

In certain heroes of antiquity there are qualities which have a particular appeal to mankind as a whole. Man needs to look up to an image from which he may derive inspiration and which he may endeavour to emulate. In this way, the Greeks are seen to have looked up to the man of action, the man characterised, in Bowra's words, 'by an important element in the human soul, the self-assertive principle.'<sup>1</sup> For the Greeks, the life of action was considered superior to the life of gratification of the senses; the pursuit of honour was seen in itself to bestow honour upon the seeker.<sup>2</sup> The Greeks of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. considered the hero as a superior figure, driven by a strange assertive force, and the heroic tradition was so vital, that they believed the heroes of the Homeric poems to have been a generation of exalted beings. For them, history could and did speak of an heroic age which occurred when men possessed and used to the good, this exceptional power.<sup>3</sup>

What was it, in particular, that the Greeks admired about their heroes? And why did their notion of hero live on long after the so-called classical period of Greek civilisation had come to an end? The answer can be found in the qualities which existed in their principal heroes. These men were superior to others in gifts of character and ancestry. Many, like Achilles and Orpheus, could number gods among their forbears. By their characteristic assertive force, they dominated as leaders. Not only were they men of hardy physique and extraordinary physical endurance, but they frequently had a strong sense of responsibility towards their community. Such heroes were distinguished in war, and although they gloried in battles, they frequently strove to restore peace and justice in a season of turmoil. Help was frequently available from the gods who inspired them, guided them and led them to take extraordinary risks.<sup>4</sup>

Even if these ancient heroes were considered to be partly divine, they still possessed features common to all mortals who, as the ancient Greeks knew and taught, are endowed with gifts of body, mind and spirit and their behaviour reflects varying degrees of these gifts.<sup>5</sup> On the physical level, corresponding to the Greek φυσικός, which refers to the hero's external, natural and bodily characteristics, heroic assertiveness showed itself most clearly in the field of battle, whether for the possession of new territory, for the conquest of a bride or for some kind of revenge. The hero's very presence showed him to be greater than his fellows, and his skill in warfare made him an object of wonder to all who saw him. This was the extraordinary presence, heightened by divine help, which was shown by Achilles who, although unarmed, struck terror into the hearts of the Trojans as he protected the warriors who were recovering Patroclus' body. (Iliad XVII, 215-29).<sup>6</sup> Or it could be seen in the case of Odysseus who, disguised as a beggar, caused the onlookers to wonder at him as he fought with Iros in the presence of the suitors (Odyssey, XVIII, 66 - 74).

But man is also a rational being, the λογικός of Aristotle. He likes to understand the world around him, to identify his function in it and to challenge his gifts of mind and his powers of reasoning. It will be seen, too, that the assertive force shown by these heroes concerns not only those matters where exceptional physique is admired, but also, matters requiring intelligence, cunning and swift thinking.

The hero, too, living in human society, tended to manifest his assertive force in such a way that he was distinguished among his peers in matters concerning the regulation of morals and right conduct in society. Such a quality, the ἠθικός of Aristotle (Rhet., 3.7.1), enabled the hero to be quick to see injustices, ready to correct the harm done to others and to come to the aid of weaker people. This was the quality shown by Achilles who challenged his king and risked personal loss for the sake of the welfare of the Achaeans (Iliad I, 152-56).



We shall begin by discussing the early appearance of the principal heroes who are being used in this study, remembering that they tended to be characters of exceptional promise. Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas will be introduced in turn, and their most outstanding qualities of body, mind and spirit will be noted. After examining some of the factors which are relevant in the radically altered society of the twelfth century, its spirituality and its literature, with particular reference to the differences between Vergil's Aeneid and its medieval counterpart, Chrétien de Troyes' principal Arthurian heroes will be presented.

Let us now examine the initial appearance of our heroes and, as they are introduced, let us study their background, their ancestry, and above all, the heroic assertive qualities of body, mind and spirit which they manifest. And when we have assessed the promise which they evince, let us prepare to follow them as they set out on their quest.

#### ACHILLES.

As Achilles appears at the beginning of the Iliad, it is made quite clear that he is distinguished above his fellows in both character and ancestry. The first word in the poem, the  $\mu\eta\tilde{\nu}\iota\varsigma$  or wrath of Achilles, speaks of an anger which is not simply the grievance of an enraged mortal. It is a terrifying force which causes untold destruction to ally and to foe alike, involving even the gods in its onslaught. Yet, at first, the hero shows himself to be a responsible and reasonable man, concerned for the welfare of the Achaean community,<sup>4</sup> and prepared to uphold the cause of the weaker by summoning the assembly to discuss how to rid themselves of Apollo's avenging plague (Iliad I, 54), and by promising his protection to Calchas, should his soothsaying seem unpopular, or if it should offend King Agamemnon.

Does Achilles' ability to take such authoritative measures spring from any exceptional physical assertiveness? Appearing, as he does, at an age when physical excellence was greatly admired, does Achilles manifest any superior physical qualities? Very little is said explicitly about his bodily appearance. Rather,

it is seen from the epithets which are used and familiar from a long tradition, that he is understood to be πῶδας ὤκους 'swift-footed,' δῖος 'lordly'. And it is not until he is provoked by Agamemnon that he can be seen as a man who would promptly settle his quarrels with the sword.

ἦ ὃ γε φάσγανον ὄζυ ἔρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ  
 τοὺς μὲν ἀναστήσειεν ὃ δ' Ἀτρεΐδην ἑναριζοί,  
 ἦε χόλον πάσειεν ἔρητύσειέ τε θυρόν. (1, 190-92)

(. . . whether to draw the sharp sword from beside his thigh in order to drive them away and slay the son of Atreus, or to put an end to his wrath and check his anger.)

Elsewhere in the introduction, however, Achilles shows that he is in command of himself, and will not use force unnecessarily.

ἄρσιν μὲν οὐ τοι ἔγωγε μάχισσμαι εἵνεκα κόρης  
 οὔτε σοὶ οὔτε τῷ ἄλλῳ, ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφέλεσθε γε δόντες. (1, 298-99).

(With my hands I will not fight with you for the girl's sake, nor with anyone else, since you take her away who gave her.)

It has been suggested that Achilles is 'spoiling for a fight,' but it is doubtful whether the text can substantiate this.<sup>8</sup> For it can be seen that he shows no animosity towards Agamemnon until the king's hostile reception of Calchas' prophecy, when his wrath is first unleashed before it gathers its fateful momentum (I, 122). The first manifestation of Achilles' wrath is due, therefore, not so much to any innate antipathy towards Agamemnon, as to his sense of responsibility towards the weaker, and above all, to his heroic δύναμις which distinguishes him from his peers.

Furthermore, the Homeric hero is constantly motivated by a sense of duty towards himself and constantly strives after ἀρετή which means not only 'virtue,' but in particular, 'personal excellence.'<sup>9</sup> Achilles' ἀρετή is attacked, as Kitto points out, during the quarrel which is about 'not simply a girl', it is the 'prize' which is the public recognition of his ἀρετή<sup>10</sup>. Yet what does become evident here is not so much any extraordinary physical strength with which Achilles might be endowed, but the fact that he is a reasonable man with an overwhelming sense of justice, a man of initiative where strong action is needed, of concern for his fellows, and of fearlessness in the face of the abuse of the king who.

seems morally inferior. His sense of community only serves to intensify the pain of his subsequent alienation from the scenes of fighting.

οὔτε ποτ' εἰς ἀγορὴν πωλέσικετο κυδιάνειραν  
οὔτε ποτ' ἐς πόλεμον, ἀλλὰ φθινύθεσκε φίλον κῆρ  
ἄυθι ρένων, ποθέεσκε δ' αὐτὴν τε πτόλεμόν τε (I, 490-92).

(No longer would he take part in assembly where men win glory, no longer would he go to battle, but he wasted out his dear heart as he stayed there, longing for the war-cry and battle.)

Let us now investigate his background. Achilles is known to be a child of promise, of election, the child of the union between Peleus, the mortal, and Thetis, the sea-goddess:

αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς ἐστι θεᾶς γόνος, ἣν ἐγὼ αὐτῇ  
θρέψα τε καὶ ἀτίτηλα καὶ ἀνδρὶ πόρον παράκοιτιν  
Πηλείϊ . . . (XXIV, 59-60)

(But Achilles is the son of a goddess, one whom I myself **nourished** and reared, and gave as a bride to her husband, Peleus...)

though he is earlier accused by Patroclus of being the offspring of sea and rock (XVI, 33-35). And in Book XI, Nestor relates how Achilles was continually encouraged by his father to strive to be pre-eminent in battle (XI, 782-83). Such was his potential in mythological tradition that he represented the chief threat to the power of Zeus for, according to legend, a child of Zeus and Thetis was to be greater than his father. This was the great secret known to Prometheus. On the advice of Themis, Thetis was given in marriage to the mortal, Peleus, in order that she might bear this mortal son and keep Zeus' position safe. When discussing Prometheus, Kerényi makes the thoughtful suggestion that, considering that Achilles was what he was as child of Peleus and Thetis, neither Zeus nor Prometheus could have contemplated with equanimity the illustrious successor and reformer who would have been the child of Zeus and Thetis."<sup>4</sup>

Because, no doubt, of his divine ancestry, his background and the qualities he shows, Achilles is particularly dear to the gods in heroic tradition and is readily helped by them. It is Hera

who, through pity for the Achaeans, suggests to Achilles that he summon the assembly (I, 55-56), and it is tempting to think that Achilles is moved by the same pity. Furthermore, it is Athene who stays Achilles' hand when he is tempted to slay Agamemnon (I, 207-14), and his mother, the goddess Thetis, who acts as his confidante, promising to intercede for him with Zeus. Early in the poem, as elsewhere, he is frequently referred to as  $\Delta\iota\iota\ \phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\epsilon\ \mu\acute{\alpha}\kappa\alpha\rho$  and is said to be honoured by Zeus (I, 559). This was the kind of hero the Greeks admired, for he embodied many of the attributes of a god, while remaining human.

### ODYSSEUS.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Achilles' heroic assertive force is the fact that, after his tempestuous appearance in Book I of the Iliad, he is no longer seen until the arrival of the embassy in Book IX. Yet it is he who gives unity to the work, for the grievous plight of the Achaeans, the temporary supremacy of the Trojan forces, the tiny, yet momentous subsidiary quests, all spring from this absence caused by his wrath. But this is even more true of Odysseus who, although not present at the beginning of the Odyssey, is remembered by many people because of his exceptional qualities. Odysseus himself does not appear until Book V, but he gives unity to the poem in the same way, for there are several related events and quests which centre on his absence. Unlike Achilles, he cannot include gods among his ancestors, but his standing among gods is such that, early in Book I, Zeus presides at a council of gods to devise a safe home-coming for Odysseus (I, 32-95). At the same time, there is presented the dilemma of Penelope who is besieged by her ever-persistent suitors, and a portrayal of the degeneration of life at Ithaca which is the result of his absence (I, 231-51). When, therefore, Odysseus finally appears in Book V, the audience can easily envisage a hero of surpassing calibre who is loved and helped by the gods, and longed for by his wife and household.

In the Iliad, Odysseus was seen as an exceptional warrior, and he featured in several prominent scenes. When Agamemnon was seeking compensation for the loss of Chryseis, Odysseus was one of those whom Agamemnon threatened to deprive of a prize

(I, 138). It was he who, in Book I, escorted Chryseis back to her father and spoke words of propitiation on Agamemnon's behalf to the old priest (I, 430-45). Later, being selected by Nestor and entrusted with a delicate and difficult task, he formed part of the unsuccessful embassy in Book IX. For his success in warfare, he was designated by the term, *πτολίπορθος* 'sacker of cities'. But there is no place now for a hero of this type in the Odyssey, for the old heroic world in which he had gloried no longer exists. The other survivors among the surpassing heroes who had fought so tenaciously at Troy, returned home long ago. This lesser figure of the Iliad has now become a wanderer who is frequently confronted by strange sights and puzzling experiences.

When Odysseus first appears in the Odyssey, he is a lonely man, weighed down by profound grief, longing and sorrow for his state, for he has lost all his companions because of the many trials and misfortunes of the homeward journey. Imprisoned as he is by the nymph Calypso, he has no apparent means of returning to his home. Although he had continually exhorted and admonished his men, inciting them to practise patience, self-control and prudence, they have either been snatched away by monstrous creatures, met with disaster in the sea, or yielded to the temptations of ease, comfort and pleasure. Odysseus has escaped alone to Ogygia, Calypso's island, an unwilling lover of the fair goddess who has offered him all that her love and hospitality can provide. The island is described as a type of earthly paradise (V, 63-74), a wondrous place which would delight even a god who came there. But the security of his present position and Calypso's promise of immortality are now little compensation for the loss of his companions, the home and wife he longs for, and the community in which he had excelled. It is hinted that, although he may have enjoyed Calypso's favours in the past, the nymph is now no longer pleasing to him (V, 153).

There is therefore at Odysseus' first appearance here, nothing of the brilliance of Achilles or even of the Odysseus of the Iliad. Rather, he seems a desolate failure entrapped in a situation of

distress, for he is not only a lonely, unwilling prisoner who is no longer young, but he has outlived the heroic world of his youth, and is isolated in time as well as in space. As Hermes arrives at Ogygia, bearing the message from Zeus that will bring about Odysseus' deliverance, the 'great-hearted' hero is found in tears (V, 81-84), as he laments in the paradise which keeps him from all that he loves. Yet, in spite of his longing for home, Odysseus, true to his nature, remains cautious and prudent as he hesitates to accept Calypso's word of release, and is the more unwilling to entrust himself to the hazards of an unknown sea in a raft.

Although there is no evidence here that Odysseus was a 'child of promise' in the sense mentioned during discussion of Achilles, or that he had any divine ancestry, he does appear to be rich in the heroic characteristics discussed by Bowra.<sup>13</sup> The very fact of his survival in the face of so much opposition suggests that he is distinguished above his fellows. In the early part of the work, little is told about his physical characteristics, but much is implied. His endurance in the face of so many obstacles says much for his hardy physique. He is described by Menelaus as *ταλασίφρονος* 'enduring' and *κρατερόφρων*, 'stout-hearted'. Even before he appears, interest is provoked, not only in what has happened to him, but also in his character and personality. In spite of his extraordinary gifts, it is very clear that he is subject to human weakness as he yields to despair on Ogygia (V, 81-84).

If there is no evidence of Odysseus having divine ancestry, he is still seen to be worthy to be discussed at a council of the gods who are devising a means for his homecoming (Od. I, 22-95.). As they deliberate on his plight, the words *δῖος, θεῖος*, 'lordly,' 'godlike,' 'divine' are frequently used. Book V, the book of Odysseus' introduction, abounds in other enumerations of his attributes. He is *μεγαλήτορ*, 'great-hearted,' even when he is tearfully lamenting his exile. It is, however, Odysseus' gifts of mind which distinguish him particularly, his cunning and his curiosity. He is therefore described as being *πολυμήχανος* 'abounding in resources,' and *πολυμήτις*, 'of many counsels,' 'ever-ready,' and it is to these qualities that he owes his survival,

and because of them that he may yet hope for his return.

### AENEAS.

In spite of the centuries which separate Vergil's Aeneid from the Homeric poems, there are certain similarities in the presentation of the hero. Because of the time at which he was writing, and above all, because of the purpose of the poem, Vergil could never have portrayed Aeneas as a mere imitation of Achilles or Odysseus. His function was to glorify the nascent Roman empire by writing of the mythical ancestor as well as the prototype of the Emperor Augustus,<sup>4</sup> and for this purpose, Aeneas was chosen by Fate to found a new and glorious civilization from the remnant of the dying Troy. For this task, Aeneas was gifted with an exceptionally noble ancestry with a long, well-known tradition. In the Iliad, it is related that he is a prominent warrior, the son of Aphrodite and Anchises (XX, 240), and is sprung from Dardanus, founder of Troy. Thus, through both his parents, he is a direct descendant of Zeus. In the encounter referred to, he is removed from the scene of battle by Poseidon, lest he die before fulfilling the task which is to be entrusted to him.

ἦ δὲ γὰρ Πριάμου γενεὴν ἤχθηρε Κρονίων·  
 νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Ἰρῶεσσιν ἀνάξει  
 καὶ παίδων παῖδες, τοί κεν μετόπισθε γένωνται.  
 (XX, 306=08)

(For the son of Cronos has already hated the race of Priam; and now the might of Aeneas will lord it over the Trojans, and his children's children, and those who are born hereafter.)

Because he was kept somewhat in the background in the Greek epics, Aeneas had a natural flexibility that was ideal for Vergil's portrayal of him as hero of the Aeneid some eight centuries later. The outstanding heroes of Homer's epics, Achilles, Agamemnon, Nestor, Odysseus, Hector, Menelaus, all have their particular traditional role. No such role is cast for Aeneas and, except for the scene in the Iliad in which he is protected by Poseidon because of his future destiny, and hated by Hera because of his association with Troy (XX, 309-12), little mention is made of him. Vergil has, therefore, more freedom to endow him with the outstanding characteristics which he will need for a task which requires him to draw

forth order out of chaos, harmony out of discord, pietas out of furor, and above all, to recreate with a new emphasis a dying civilisation. It was necessary, therefore, that Aeneas possess exceptional characteristics of body, mind and spirit which would enable him to undertake the responsibilities demanded by such a high vocation.

Before Aeneas appears in the work, a good deal is told about him and about the circumstances which surround the poet's presentation of him. It is very clear, early in the poem, that the heroes of both the Iliad and the Odyssey are, to a certain extent, to be re-created in him, for reference is made to him as a storm-tossed warrior:

multum ille et terra iactatus et alto  
vi superum (Aeneid, I, 3-4).<sup>15</sup>  
as well as to a hero who has fought and suffered in battles:  
multa quoque et bella passus. (I, 5).

There is little told specifically about Aeneas' physique or appearance, but from the fact that he has endured many years of trials and wanderings, it can be assumed that he is at least as hardy as his men. During the storm at sea, however, it is made quite clear that human physical force alone is useless in the face of the powers of nature, as the strongest of the Trojans and the most precious of Trojan possessions are tossed by forces with which they are powerless to compete.

apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto,  
arma virum tabulaeque et Troia gaza per undas. (I, 118-19).

Thus, it can be seen that for Vergil, as indeed, for Homer, a hero requires more than physical assertiveness alone, and that he is as liable to be overcome by hostile forces as his companions. His real assertive force comes from his perception in seeing the task which has to be done, and from the moral strength which enables him to dominate his natural feelings for the sake of his men and his vocation.

Aeneas is introduced, like Odysseus, in a moment of distress, an unhappy man who envies the destiny of those who fell at Troy:



"o terque quaterque beati,  
quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis  
contigit oppetere!" (I, 94-96).

And as the remaining Trojans land safely, though storm-tossed, on the shores of Carthage, Aeneas hides his despair as he remembers the earlier losses of the fleet, and endeavours to encourage his men:

"o passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem." (I, 199)

He continues by pretending to a courage he by no means feels:

"revocate animos maestumque timorem  
mittite; fors an et haec olim meminisse iuvabit." (I, 202-03)

and presents a double view of himself, in which he is seen to conceal his real fears in his attempt to fulfil his role as effective leader of the Trojans:

Talia voce refert curisque ingentibus aeger  
spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem. (I, 208-09)

The extent of this effort can be estimated when these words are compared with those which described Aeneas' panic-stricken state at the height of the storm:

extemplo Aeneae solvuntur frigore membra; (I, 92).

Aeneas is presented, then, as a man who is endowed with outstanding gifts of both character and ancestry. Although little physical heroic assertive force is evident at his introduction and will not be seen until his narration of the last night in Troy, his men have no doubt about his moral excellence:

"rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo iustior alter  
nec pietate fuit, nec bello maior et armis.  
quem si fata virum servant, si vescitur aura  
aetheria neque adhuc crudelibus occubat umbris,  
non metus, officio nec te certasse priorem  
paeniteat." (I, 544-49)

He does emerge as leader, and is prepared to subdue his own feelings for the sake of his people for whom he feels a strong sense of responsibility. By the affirmation, "sum pius Aeneas" (I, 378), he identifies himself by his best known characteristic, uttering 'not a piece of smug complacency' but 'a poignant cry wrung from a tortured heart.'<sup>16</sup> As a man of memories without a home, he evokes a pathos far more profound than that of Odysseus who was returning home to family and friends. Aeneas, on the other hand, is forced to venture away from home into the unknown

It is inevitable that such a hero, seeking an unknown land in the face of unforeseeable difficulties, should provoke interest in himself as a person as well as by his actions, and interest was, indeed, found in him, not only in his own day, but for many centuries after.<sup>17</sup>

### THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE

If the pattern of early promise, temporary  $\upsilon\beta\rho\iota\varsigma$ , death and ultimate resurrection is to be seen in certain great literary characters, it is discernible also in great civilisations. From the ruins of Troy, according to the legend, arose the city which was to become Rome. The death of the Roman republic resulted in the growth of an organisation which promised something far greater, namely, the empire whose founder Vergil had praised. And some ten centuries later, there were fresh signs of another civilisation coming into being, so that a new distinction and a new identity could be seen to emerge from the ruins of a ravaged and chastened Europe. Greece and Rome had, in turn, known their years of greatness. Now a more prosperous economy and a more individual culture were to develop in France. In the works of Chrétien de Troyes as he looked back over the links with past civilisations and expressed his hope in the cultural achievements of the future:

Ce nos ont nostre livre apris  
 Qu'an Grece ot de chevalerie  
 Le premier los et de clergie.  
 Puis vint chevalerie a Rome  
 Et de la clergie la some,  
 Qui or est an France venue. (Cligès, 28-33)<sup>18</sup>.

Jacques Le Goff recalls how, in history, a translatio imperii can be traced through various great civilisations:

Dans l'histoire profane, le thème est celui du transfert de puissance,. Le monde, à chaque époque, a un seul cœur à l'unisson duquel, sous l'impulsion duquel vit le reste de l'univers. Fondée sur l'exégèse orosienne du songe de Daniel, la succession des empires, des Babyloniens aux Mèdes et aux Perses, puis aux Macédoniens et après eux aux Grecs et aux Romains, est le fil conducteur de la philosophie médiévale de l'histoire.<sup>19</sup>

But this translatio imperii must bring lasting results with it:

Le transfert de pouvoir, translatio imperii, est avant tout un transfert de savoir et de culture, translatio studii.<sup>10.</sup>

Inevitably, the cultural and emotional interest of a civilisation will be mirrored most clearly in its art and literature. The prolific output and the boldness in experimentation which characterised twelfth-century France, suggests a profound interest in both. Before presenting the hero of the medieval French Roman d'Eneas it would be worth while mentioning briefly some of the features which preceded the appearance of this work and made it such an important turning-point in the development of the romance, as well as a link with an earlier tradition.

The Europe which survived the barbarian invasions and the unrest of the early centuries which surrounded the fall of Rome had become, towards the year 1000, an isolated and sparsely populated land, unevenly and unprofitably cultivated by peasants who had little to look forward to except a life of extreme poverty and oppression by their betters. The possibility of trade, in the West, was heavily restricted, because there was little to trade with, as a result of the poverty of the soil.<sup>21.</sup> The comparative geographical isolation and lack of communication which characterised these gloomy years was accompanied by an intellectual isolation. But by the end of the tenth century, when the last of the barbarian hordes had created its havoc, signs of hope could be perceived in the growth of another civilisation. In the words of Thietmar, Bishop of Merseberg, in Saxony,

When come the thousandth year after the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ by the Blessed Virgin, a radiant dawn flooded the world with light.<sup>22.</sup>

Charlemagne's reign and spectacular conquests had prepared the way for a state of peace, unity and order. This was reinforced by repeated attempts to reclaim the devastated land and the rapid development of agricultural skills as a result of the work which was, in general, initiated in the monasteries and spread to the surrounding countryside. The imminence of the millenium of 1033 had brought with it a religious fervour which, although frequently based on the fear of the punishments which the wrath of God might inflict, also provoked a growing interest in both natural phenomena and spiritual matters. Interest in other living peoples and their beliefs was stimulated by pilgrimages to

to holy places and by the Crusades. By the twelfth century, therefore, Western Europe had achieved in a short time a spectacular level of productivity and broadened its cultural horizons. Through increasing opportunities for trade, and through contacts of various kinds with other civilisations, France had become greatly enriched.

The influence of the monasteries was, however, to be seen not only in matters of agriculture. While consistently providing a visible witness to the degree of stability in western society,<sup>23</sup> the monasteries, as well as the schools of grammar and rhetoric, had long been the principal repositories of ancient learning.<sup>24</sup> And evidence suggests that, even if some pagan authors were frequently held in suspicion because of the dubious nature of their content, and the fear that the perfection of their style might outshine that of the authors of Sacred Scripture, monks were quick to perceive their value, and tenacious in studying them as exponents of the good, the wise and the true. In monasteries, both Christian and pagan writings were studied with enthusiasm, and the copying, illuminating, binding and interpreting of texts were considered to be not only an ascetic exercise, calculated, like prayer and fasting, to subdue the passions, but also an important apostolate and source of prayer.<sup>25</sup>

Among classical writers who were studied in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Vergil, Cicero and Ovid were given pride of place. From the time of the first appearance of the Aeneid, Vergil had enjoyed a certain popularity among philosophers, who admired him for the content of his work, and among grammarians and rhetoricians who studied him for the perfection of his style. Although the study of Vergil was to see some dark days during the centuries of the barbarian invasions when people were, of necessity, more interested in surviving than in studying dying languages, he was still the chosen model in schools of grammar and a source of inspiration for those who frequently quoted him. In spite of a certain self-reproach for his early attraction to Vergil,<sup>26</sup> Saint Augustine referred to him as poeta clarissimus<sup>27</sup> or nobilis poeta,<sup>28</sup> and praised Vergil's nobilissimum versum<sup>29</sup> by his enthusiastic

references to it in de Civitate Dei and other works. Like Lactantius and Saint Jerome, who was also a noted admirer of pagan writers in spite of himself, Saint Augustine recognised in Vergil's philosophy and eschatology similarities to Christian doctrine.<sup>30.</sup>

Throughout the centuries Vergil was the subject of certain allegorisation by writers such as Fulgentius who, in the fifth century A.D. drew from Vergil's work a strange mysticism in an attempt to interpret pagan mythology in the light of Christian truths. In the twelfth century, Bernard Silvestris built on Fulgentius' teaching and endeavoured to use the first six books of the Aeneid as a background for a kind of De Rerum Natura. For both these authors, the Aeneid was a mirror of the stages of human life, and Bernard's interpretation reflects very clearly many of the philosophical ideas prevalent in his own time. The work abounds in expositions such as this:

Ab Appolline monetur ut 'antiquam matrem requirat.'  
 Antique due matres, id est due regiones, Creta scilicet  
 et Italia, sunt duo Enee initia, natura corporis et anime.<sup>31.</sup>

which exemplifies the author's preoccupation with the nature of man, one of the principal subjects of twelfth-century philosophical treatises.

When, in the twelfth century, the desire for learning and literacy grew and the use of Latin became less widespread as use of the vernacular increased, the need for a translation of the Aeneid was felt, especially because the Aeneid had long been viewed as a source of ethical and moral ideas. It is obvious from reading the work that the author of the Roman d' Eneas was familiar with the text of Vergil, for many lines appear to be direct translations of the Latin poet; it is obvious, also, that he was adapting it to the taste of a public whose interests were very different from those of the people for whom Vergil wrote. For at this period, the new interest in learning and chivalry which was observed by Chrétien de Troyes in the introduction to Cligès,<sup>32.</sup> was matched by an interest in love and adventure which was to assume new and extraordinary

dimensions in twelfth-century France:

Mais la courtoisie du moyen âge est beaucoup plus qu'un code de politesse et de galanterie. Elle englobe aussi un art d'aimer. Elle s'approfondit et se développe en une psychologie et une morale de l'amour.<sup>33</sup>

The widening of cultural and geographical horizons through more frequent contacts with other civilisations, a subsequent refinement in social behaviour and a great self-awareness on the part of the individual were among the many factors which contributed to the phenomenal growth of the interest in love which was such a predominant feature of twelfth-century philosophical treatises, theology and literature.

.....never before, in Western European history, were human beings so frequently rarefied, analyzed, split, discussed, defined, codified, examined and commented on as in the twelfth century, the Atomic Age of emotion.<sup>34</sup>

But this is not the place for lengthy discussion of the nature and origin of courtly love or of the conflicting theories which it has suggested.<sup>35</sup> It is sufficient to say, for the time being, that this is only one of the many facets of an emotion to which all rational mortals are prone, but which, because of the altered circumstances of the aristocratic, chivalrous society of twelfth-century Europe, provoked a new interest and a completely new emphasis.

What effects does the new state of society have on the heroes of twelfth-century romances? It is interesting to note that Jean Frappier, when enumerating the qualities which are expected from the courtly hero, recalls qualities similar to those which the Greeks admired.

La prouesse - preux et courtois sont deux adjectifs souvent associés dans les romans du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle et du XIII<sup>e</sup> - la fierté du lignage et la maîtrise de soi.<sup>36</sup>

But there are other qualities, too, which, although evident to a certain extent in the earlier epics, are especially characteristic of the more refined twelfth century:

.....la distinction du langage, des manières et des vêtements, une loyauté scrupuleuse dans les combats, la largesse --- la beauté physique, louée à l'égal de la force et du courage. Une parfaite courtoisie comportait

aussi le respect des actes et des sentiments  
d'autrui...<sup>37</sup>.

It is inevitable that the manner and behaviour of a romance hero should reflect the principles not only of his own Christian society in particular, but those which have their origins in the very nature of man (Romans II, 15) and are taught at some length in Sacred Scripture. It could be expected that his standards would be based on the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, explained at length by Saint Paul (Hebrews XI. 1 - 39; Romans VIII, 24 - 25; I Corinthians XIII ), and later discussed by prominent theologians.<sup>38</sup> Scriptural and patristic tradition also insists that the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude should moderate a Christian's actions.<sup>39</sup> The nature and function of the traditional gifts of the Holy Spirit were well known in the teaching and liturgy of the Church. But above all it would be worth recalling Saint Paul's enumeration of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, which should be evident in the actions of the truly spiritual man:

Fructus autem Spiritus est: caritas, gaudium, pax,  
patientia, benignitas, bonitas, longanimitas, mansuetudo,  
fides, modestia, continentia, castitas. (Galatians, V, 22).<sup>40</sup>

Certain of these qualities will be manifested when the hero is first presented, and their development will be noted as he deepens his experiences, as will the presence of the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, and their attendant gifts.

Among the most prominent theologians who influenced twelfth-century spirituality was Saint Bernard, (1090-1153) who was not only an immediate predecessor of Chrétien de Troyes, but also, had his principal monastery at Clairvaux, on the plateau between Champagne and Haute-Bourgogne. The region where Chrétien lived and worked can, therefore, be expected to be permeated to a considerable extent by Cistercian spirituality. Saint Bernard taught about the ascent of the soul towards God through the practice of humility and love.<sup>41</sup> He incorporated contemporary needs, nature and knightly practices into his sermons, his Rule and his prayer. At the same time, William of Saint-Thierry taught about the nature of man and the balance between body, mind and spirit which is essential for

achieving integrity or 'wholeness.' <sup>42</sup>. In his Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, <sup>43</sup>. William distinguished between the 'homo animalis,' the 'homo rationalis' and the 'homo spiritualis' as stages of man's growth in his ascent towards God. These terms correspond roughly to Saint Paul's terms, ψυχικός, or sometimes, σωματικός, 'bodily,' 'physical,' λογικός 'rational' and πνευματικός, 'spiritual' which were frequently discussed and contrasted in the Epistles. These theologians both understood the nature of man and the successive stages in his quest for God. They were well acquainted with the work of their predecessors, including Saint Augustine, and were highly regarded by their contemporaries and successors. It is likely that their work would have been known to Chrétien de Troyes, for points of similarity exist between their theological teachings and ideas which appear in the romances.

Much has happened, therefore, between the composition of Vergil's Aeneid and that of the medieval French Eneas. In the twelfth century, the achievements of Augustus and the glory of Rome have assumed a different perspective, for, in spite of the many legacies which remain, the Roman empire has long since disintegrated and is remembered for the glories of its past rather than for any promise of the future. If the people are to be directly stirred by the name of Rome, it is more as the centre of Christendom and the most desired goal of earthly pilgrimages. The stoic and Epicurean philosophies which influenced Vergil have ceded to the doctrines of Christianity. The great buildings of ancient Rome have, to a large extent, been demolished, and there has developed an architecture which reflects man's spiritual aspirations. <sup>44</sup>. Aeneas' pietas, a cause of contention to certain later critics, <sup>45</sup>. but a characteristic Roman virtue, nevertheless, was hardly likely to arouse admiration in the literary circles of twelfth-century France, where the knights were expected to glory in adventure and love. And for the medieval audience, the power of the gods of old who were so active and forceful in Homer and Vergil, has long been dimmed forever by the radiance of the light of Christ.



ENEAS.

We enter the story of Eneas in medias res.<sup>46</sup> But the author, writing in the vernacular in a period when Greek is hardly known presumes that the reader will not know the earlier background to the story, and provides a synopsis of the events which led to the downfall of Troy. The emphasis which the author places on this introduction is important, for the hatred of Juno, resulting from the judgment of Paris, would have been familiar to the Roman reader and was mentioned only briefly by Vergil. In relating this legendary incident, the author of the Eneas shows where his interest really lies, by introducing the theme of love, beside which the hero of the tale loses significance. For the tense recital of the plight of the Trojans, as they seek their way out of the burning city, is interrupted by references to the love of Paris for Helen who is, in turn, a bribe offered by the goddess of love if Paris will judge her to be the fairest of women:

Cele li a fait tel promesse:  
s'a li se tient del jugemant,  
el li donra prochenemant  
la plus bele fame del mont. (158-61)

This is the third and most tempting of three bribes which the goddesses offer Paris in return for a favourable judgment of their beauty, and the author says, concerning Venus' offer:

car molt coveita la richece  
et molt desirra la proece,  
mais molt li plot la feme plus  
que promise li ot Venus (165-68)

It was to take vengeance on an outraged love the Menelaus initiated the war:

Menelaus a vanjance prise:  
toz fist les murs aplanoier  
par le tort fait de sa moillier. (22-24)

There is no question here then, of a hero like Odysseus imposing his own personality during his absence, or of the 'arma virumque cano' of an already self-effacing Aeneas. The author of the Eneas was writing for an audience whose interest was love, its origins, its symptoms and its effects.

Do any outstandingly Christian virtues emerge, as this pre-Christian hero first appears in the twelfth-century romance? There is no doubt that Eneas reflects the pietas of his predecessor, although the term piété is not used until Eneas meets his father who says:

"Fiz Eneas, or sai et voi,  
quant venuz estes ci a moi,  
que piété venqui paor." (2839-41).

But if the virtue is portrayed in the sense understood and taught by Saint Augustine,<sup>47</sup> it implies a strong sense of duty towards gods and parents and this can be seen in Eneas' initial behaviour.

"Promise m'ont ne sai quel terre,  
ne sai ou ge la puisse querre;  
molt ai trové isles an mer,  
de la terre n'oï parler  
que vois querant a molt grant poine,  
si com fortune me demoine. (225-30)

It is this pietas which encourages him to follow blindly the will of the gods through storms, difficulties and shipwrecks, in order to fulfil the task which has been appointed him. His sense of filial duty is evident, also, from the way in which he takes his father and son into exile with him, thus imitating Aeneas.

Like Aeneas, he shows care for his people and reverence for the treasures of his city:

Bel loisir ot del suen tot prendre,  
tote sa gent fist asenbler  
et ses tresors an fist porter; (48-50)

Yet, at the beginning of the work, his pietas, like Aeneas', is a negative virtue which gives him little joy, for he lacks the understanding which will add richness and meaning to his task.

This can be said too, of his fortitude. Eneas is distressed and fearful when he is presented at the beginning of the work. His fear is understandable:

n'est mervoille s'il ot peor. (31)

and he is bewildered by a dimly remembered command of the gods to go out in search of a new city:

et ce li comandent li dé  
que il aut la contree querre  
dunt Dardanus vint an la terre,  
qui fonda de Troie les murs. (38-41)

Although he is terrified by the storm off the coast of Carthage, and longs for death,

"Par deu," fait il, "buer furent né  
cil qui a Troie la cité  
furent detranchié et ocis." (211-13),

he does encourage his men, as did Aeneas, with promises of a happier future:

caus comança a conforter  
des maus qu'il orent an la mer. (309-10)

and, once on land, he provides with due prudence for their welfare, and endeavours to find out about their situation:

Atant Eneas a choisiz  
dis chevaliers proz et hardiz,  
qui lo païs aillent cerchier  
et se li sachent renoncier  
an quel païs sont arivé  
se home i a ne grain de blé. (357-62)

But again, this prudence is seen rather as a Stoic foresight than a Christian virtue, and is related to Stoic acceptance of the inevitable. In these matters, then, Eneas' predominant spiritual qualities are derived more from the tradition of his Vergilian predecessor than from any characteristically Christian teaching.

In the telescoping of the first three books of the Aeneid, Eneas shows little of the  $\deltaύναμις$  which characterised the earlier heroes. Nothing is told specifically about his appearance or his physical gifts. Rather than take the initiative himself, he consults the community as to whether they should go back and take revenge on the Greeks for the slaying of their relatives, or whether they should go on to seek the unknown:

demande a toz comunaument  
s'il se voldront o lui tenir  
et bien et mal o lui sofrir,  
ou s'en voldront retorner anz  
vangier la mort de lor paranz;  
prez est de faire lor plaisir  
del retorner ou del foir. (64-70).

There is, therefore, little at the beginning of this romance to distinguish Eneas from other men, to designate him as a man of

promise, to provoke interest in his activities, or to suggest that he is the product of a Christian society. Yet, although his bravery is simulated, his love for his people is genuine. As the first tentative references to the motif of love are introduced, a kind of main theme to the whole work is announced. In Glyn Burgess' words:

"C'est le poète de l'Eneas qui met en pleine clarté l'importance égale de la bravoure et de l'amour pour la nouvelle société."<sup>48</sup>

The importance of love and of the momentum which it will gain in this work will be discussed in full in a later chapter, as will the theme of suffering. For it is in the matter of suffering that Eneas reflects both Vergil's philosophy and Christian attitudes. He now tries to comfort his men:

"Seignor" fait il, "franc chevalier,  
ne vos devez mie esmaier  
se vos avez eü peor  
an ceste mer, mal et dolor;  
ça avant vos delicterà,  
quant il vos an remembrera." (311-16)

His terms are strongly reminiscent of Vergil's:

"O socii (neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum)  
o passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem." (Aen. I, 198-99)

as he tries to look towards the future, in a spirit of optimism.

This is a typical attitude of a twelfth-century hero seeking honour for, as Burgess explains:

Pour l'homme du Moyen Age l'honneur est le point culminant de l'existence, ce qui l'amène à accepter n'importe quelle souffrance physique, à affronter n'importe quelles épreuves nécessaires pour le gagner.<sup>49</sup>

Although there are occasional signs of Christian spirituality, Eneas remains faithful to the spirit of Vergil, for whom labor improbus<sup>50</sup> was a necessary, yet glorious evil, as he prepares his men and himself to pay the price which is exacted by the fulfilment of his quest. His heroic δύναμις on all three levels, physical, intellectual and moral or spiritual, is hardly visible at the outset of the poem, and has to be discovered as his task progresses.

CHRETIEN DE TROYES.

Apart from brief reference to Guillaume d'Angleterre and to Cligès, the heroes of Chrétien de Troyes to be discussed in this work will be those of the Arthurian romances, Erec et Enide, Le Chevalier au Lion, Le Chevalier de la Charrete and Le Conte du Graal, for the proposed quest pattern can be seen most consistently in these works. Chrétien's heroes, who appeared within a comparatively short time of the Eneas, reflect the same contemporary interest in love and adventure, and are likely to have more in common with Eneas than with the more forceful heroes of classical epics. Similarities with the earlier works can, however, be frequently discerned, and there is much to suggest that Chrétien drew on Greek and Latin mythology for his themes, as well as on a host of sources from other civilisations.<sup>51</sup> The stag hunt,<sup>52</sup> the grateful lion,<sup>53</sup> the magic fountain<sup>54</sup> all have their antecedents in classical and literary tradition, as do some of the more universal experiences, including visits to the Other World,<sup>55</sup> the restoration to new life, the 'résurrection manquée' and the time of testing. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Chrétien had the education of a clerk, and his familiarity with Christian doctrine and practice cannot be disputed.<sup>56</sup> But even if the quests of Chrétien's heroes have much in common with those of antiquity, significant differences can be expected, and some of these will be evident in the early part of the works when their hero first appears.

EREC.

Erec et Enide,<sup>57</sup> like Chrétien de Troyes' other romances discussed here, is set at King Arthur's court at a major liturgical feast so that:

Au jor de Pasque, au tans novel, (Erec et Enide,27)  
there reigns an air of expectancy and hope. The hero's appearance is heightened by that of the nobles who attend a court which is renowned for the richness and splendour of its people:

einz si riche ne fu veüe,  
que molt i ot boens chevaliers,  
hardiz et conbatanz et fiers,  
et riches dames et puceles,  
filles de rois, gentes et beles; (30-34).

The general impression of brilliance serves to enhance the background for the introduction of a hero of exceptional promise and beauty:

Aprés les siust a esperon  
 uns chevaliers, Erec a non;  
 de la Table Reonde estoit,  
 an la cort molt grant los avoit; (81-84).

It is mentioned in the prologue that Erec is the son of a distinguished king (19), and he later shows a noteworthy pride in this ancestry.

"Filz sui d'un riche roi puissant:  
 mes peres li rois Lac a non  
 Erec m'apelent li Breton;" (650-52).

But he has, on his own account also, achieved an outstanding reputation, and he is aware of its possible extent:

"Je ne sai s'an ceste contree  
 vint onques nule renomée  
 ne de mon pere ne de moi" (655-57)

It is by this reputation that bride's father recognises him:

... "Bien avomes oi  
 de vos parler an cest país. (670-71)

The words 'grant los avoit' (84) are particularly significant for, according to Chrétien, the excellence of the knights of the Round Table is famed throughout the whole world:

Mes d'augues des meilleurs barons  
 vos sai bien a dire les nons,  
 de ces de la Table Reonde,  
 qui furent li meilleur del monde. (1667-70)

Any knight, therefore, who is already looked upon as the embodiment of knightly perfection and who is distinguished to this extent among his fellows, is promising, indeed.

Among the physical attributes required for a courtly hero, Frappier includes 'la beauté physique, louée à l'égal de la force et du courage.'<sup>58</sup> Erec is outstandingly handsome, and Chrétien is quick to praise his hero's appearance:

et fu tant biax qu'an nule terre  
 n'estovoit plus bel de lui querre. (87-88).

Erec's reputation implies that for his age he has already acquired a high degree of physical strength and courage:

Molt estoit biax et preuz et genz  
 et n'avoit pas .xxv. ans; (89-90)

to say nothing of what he may accomplish in the future:

onques nus hom de son aage  
ne fu de si grant vasselage; (91-92),

Thus, his physical appearance is a source of admiration to all.

But Erec is also seen to be a man of considerable personal wealth, and when his attire is described in detail, there are, as Alice Colby points out, several surprises.<sup>54</sup> He is mounted on a destrier, a horse which is more suited for battle than for hunting,<sup>60</sup> and as it goes 'galopant' (96), it gives an extraordinary impression of power and speed. Yet instead of the hauberk, helmet and shield which would normally be worn by a knight riding a destrier, Erec is carrying only an espee (104) which is suitable neither for hunting nor, for a man without a shield, for battle. Nor is his dress suitable for entering into combat with another, for he is 'afublez d'un mantel hermin' (95) in the manner of a wealthy nobleman. Chrétien describes in detail the other features of Erec's clothing, the diapre or figured silk of his tunic made in Constantinople, a city whose wealth was proverbial, the hose of silk brocade or paile. His esperons d'or complete the picture of his wealth. But besides giving an impression of richness, these clothes help to indicate that Erec is not only a knight but also the son of a king. Although, therefore, inconsistencies are present in the hero's dress and equipment, Chrétien portrays, at the same time, a hero who excels in several different aspects of his society, namely as knight, as wealthy nobleman and as future king. Furthermore, by both his dress and his attitude towards the White Stag hunt, Erec shows that he is going to act independently and not conform slavishly to the customs of his society.

But although Erec is rich in temporal possessions and distinguished for his physical appearance, these attributes are among the least of his gifts, and Chrétien acknowledges himself to be speechless before the excellence of his hero's moral qualities:

que diroie de ses bontez? (93).

And he pretends to leave the reader in awe at the prospect of what these unspecified qualities might be. But not for long.

Within a small number of actions, numerous 'bontez', or fine moral qualities are displayed. The fact that Erec is so respected and loved by the queen when he takes the initiative in escorting her, is an indication of his worth. He shows a certain courage, too, when, at the queen's request, he goes unarmed to reason with the strange knight and with the dwarf who is likely to attack him:

Erec cele part esperone,  
des esperons au cheval done,  
vers le chevalier vient tot droit. (205-07).

In this incident, Erec shows a natural prudence when he is prepared to defend the queen's handmaid, but refrains from attacking the dwarf as he is unarmed, whereas the strange knight is fully armed:

Il sot bien que del nain ferir  
ne porroit il mie joir,  
car le chevalier vit armé,  
molt felon et desmesuré. (225-28).

And at Laluth, his whole appearance gives an impression of vaiillance, as the townspeople wonder at his gifts (753-72) and are prompt in uttering terms of high praise:

"molt est adroiz sor ce cheval,  
bien resamble vaillant vassal;  
molt est bien fez et bien tailliez  
de braz, de janbes et de piez." (769-72).

Does Erec show a similar abundance of gifts on the spiritual level? And how does he conform to the requirements enumerated by Saint Paul and later endorsed by other spiritual teachers? <sup>61</sup>. Is he attuned, as must be a truly spiritual man, to the promptings of the Holy Spirit? Elements of charitas, bonitas, benignitas, and continentia are certainly to be seen in his behaviour, in his courtesy towards the queen and in his later behaviour at Laluth. He has manifested a noteworthy prudence and temperance on the natural level, for he is seen only in a courtly context. His high degree of courtoisie, although based on Christian charity, need not necessarily lead to that union with God which was advocated by the great spiritual writers, but can, nevertheless, pave the way for it.

Yet there is something else different here. Erec is not seen at the first amidst his fellows, as the earlier heroes were.



When the royal party leaves for the White Stag hunt, a community event revived at the king's instigation, Erec follows at a distance (81-82). In offering his company to the queen is he showing that his sense of community is subordinate to his instinct for courtoisie, or is he abstaining from the hunt out of diffidence or lack of interest in the kiss which will be the reward of the successful huntsman? Does his absence from the hunt imply a criticism of court practices which, on account of his youth, he dares not state explicitly? The fact that he has not yet reached his potential in the matter of spiritual gifts could also be an important factor here. He has reached a high degree of knightly achievement in the company of his peers. He is known for his natural goodness. Perhaps he needs time away from his companions in order to find his true orientation as a Christian, and his withdrawal from the hunt is an unconscious anticipation of this need. Marcelle Thiébaux sees another reason for Erec's absence from the hunt, suggesting that he deliberately ignores the custom because of the characteristic independence already noted, and with which he will continue to behave:

He will choose a poor girl, bring her back in rags and insist that the queen dress her, refuse to play the role of the courtly love servant and train Enide according to his own irascible notions of justice to be a devoted wife.<sup>62</sup>

Erec is, therefore, not going to be dictated to by the frivolous customs of the court but will, rather, practise courtoisie by abstaining from them. And was Chrétien aware of Saint Bernard's attitude to hunting?

abhorrent venationem ne ludicra illa avium rapina,  
ut assolet, delectantur.<sup>63</sup>

If so, it is inevitable that he will stay back from the hunt and seek love independently rather than the superficial symbol of it.

And what of the heroic assertive force, the peculiar *δύναμις* which Bowra included among the normal attributes of a hero?<sup>64</sup>

Is there any evidence of this in Chrétien's presentation of Erec? Certainly, he is not prepared to squander any of his gifts in pursuing a stag or in an unreasoned encounter with another human (225-33). As he goes to summon the hostile knight in obedience to the queen's command (205-06), Erec shows signs of

self-control and promptness in service. Our hero is outstandingly endowed with natural riches: wealth, youth, moderation, nobility, reason, honour, wisdom, kindness. The presence of these gifts is much more evident in the opening scenes than the manifestation of any heroic force. According to theologians, it is ratio, 'reason,' and prudencia, 'good sense,' 'intelligence,' which control the other virtues.<sup>65</sup> When teaching about the gift of ratio, Alan of Lille explains:

Illa monet iuvenem monitu seniore senisque  
 Largitur mores iuveni. Docet ergo repente  
 Ne quid agat subitumue nil presumat, at omne  
 Factum preveniat animo, deliberet ante  
 Quam faciat, primumque suos examinet actus;  
 (Anticlaudianus, VII, 170-74.).<sup>66</sup>

This is the deliberation shown by Erec who, like a knight aiming at perfection, practises reason and prudence before acting. He is, here, the λογικός the thinking, rational man of the traditional division, and any physical, assertive force is subordinate to this.

There is then, no doubt that Erec is presented as an outstanding knight who, although he does not at first manifest the heroic assertive force which characterised certain Greek heroes, does evince considerable promise, and provokes interest in himself as a person. His gifts of ancestry, of body and mind are obvious and are a source of admiration to all, but his spiritual gifts are not clearly defined. His strongly developed courtoisie is coupled with a sense of responsibility which is shown by his initiative in accompanying the queen who otherwise appears to be left without an escort. His failure to conform in the matter of the White Stag hunt suggests that he will undertake his adventures by acting as an individual instead of conforming unthinkingly to the frivolous dictates of society.

#### YVAIN.

Yvain<sup>67</sup> makes his first appearance at King Arthur's court which, as John Stevens writes,

...is not simply a handy rendez-vous for the knights of the Round Table: it is the fountainhead of true loving... And since love is the central experience in a whole bundle of experiences, the mainspring in the mechanism of

courtoisie, the king's court is also a mirror of gracious living.<sup>69</sup>

It is fitting that the tale should be set at Pentecost, for Christian love in its perfection is the subject of this feast which celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit, theologically defined as the love which exists between the Father and the Son, and consequently, between the Son and His Church, the embodiment, as it were, of all Christian love.<sup>69</sup> It is a high feast, therefore, rich in Christian meaning, and in its lavish celebrations there can be seen a reflection of the wealth of the court.

When he is first mentioned, Yvain is merely one of a well-known group of distinguished knights in the company of K e, Gauvain and Calogrenant, and there is nothing to suggest that he is more outstanding than they. No reference is made to his ancestry until later, when Lunete identifies him:

Fiz estes au roi Urien  
Et avez non mes sire Yvains. (1018-19)

when he has begun to prove his exceptional prowess. And if contemporary courtoisie deserved an implied criticism by Erec's withdrawal from the hunt, a further criticism of the degeneration of courtoisie can be seen in the introduction to Yvain:

Ore est amors torne e a fable  
Por ce que cil, qui rien n'an santent,  
Dient qu'il aiment, mes il mantent,  
Et cil fable et manconge an font,  
Qui s'an vantent et'droit n'i ont. (24-28).

This is reinforced, as Edward C. Schweitzer demonstrates,<sup>70</sup> by certain uncourtly incidents: the withdrawal of King Arthur from the celebration of Pentecost, K e's uncourtly words to Calogrenant whose tale is 'non de s'enor, mes de sa honte' (60). Schweitzer recalls the 'sensation one has of being witness to a scene not intended for public view which is strengthened first by the queen's stealth as, having overheard the beginning of Calogrenant's story, she creeps out of Arthur's chamber, then by the startled reaction of the knights to her sudden appearance.'<sup>71</sup> Even if King Arthur is considered to be the paragon of chivalry, and his court a stronghold of courtly standards in a society where courtoisie has degenerated, it is implied that the court, also, is failing to uphold the standard of perfection

for which it is reputed.

It seems strange, at first sight, that in a society which admired physical excellence in its knights, nothing should be told specifically about Yvain's appearance or his physical gifts, when he is first introduced. This is evidently not the author's preoccupation. As Yvain hastens to add his support to Calogrenant who has just undergone the humiliation of relating a tale of his own defeat, it can be seen that Yvain has much more important qualities, and that any physical splendour can be taken for granted, or discerned from his actions as the tale progresses.

After Calogrenant's tale, Yvain reminds his cousin of the love which ought to exist between them:

"Vos estes mes cosins germaines,  
Si nos devons mout antramer;" (582-83),

and is very quick to seek to avenge Calogrenant's shame:

"Car, se je puis et il me loist,  
J'irai vostre honte vangier." (588-89).

An important word has already been introduced by Calogrenant:

"Einsi alai, einsi reving,  
Au revenir por fol me ting;  
Si vos ai conté come fos  
Ce qu'onques mes conter ne vos." (577-80),

and its interplay in the ensuing dialogue between the two cousins suggests that Chrétien had an important reason for introducing it. Calogrenant, Yvain's cousin and precursor, recognised the foolishness of his undertaking (578), even though he was the first man in living memory to have escaped alive from Esclados le Roux (570-76). If, however, he was fos, 'foolish' to have told the adventure (579-80),<sup>72</sup> he has had an opportunity to grow in humility, for he has knowingly risked Ké's taunting words (71-85) as he tells his story to sceptical ears. Yvain, on the other hand, sees fol in a different light. He chides his cousin:

"Mes de ce vos puis fol clamer  
Quant vos le m'avez tant celé." (584-85).

There are numerous references in Sacred Scripture to the folly of Christ, the folly of the Cross, and to the Christian as a fool

in the light of the wisdom of the world.

"Si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc saeculo, stultus fiat ut sit sapiens. Sapientia enim huius mundi, stultitia est apud Deum." (I Cor. 3:18-19).  
And later: "Nos stulti propter Christum" (I Cor. 4:10).

Pierre Gallais, although writing of the Grail states:

Il y a chez tous les quêteurs du Graal - même les plus érudits, même les plus sages, consciencieux et méticuleux - un grain de folie qui les sauve, car il les oblige à penser.<sup>13</sup>

If Chrétien portrayed Calogrenant as a fool, it was surely, because he recognised that from such folly springs a subsequent growth in humility and therefore, a greater receptivity to the teachings of Christ, the supreme Fool who is at the same time the source of true wisdom. Following in the steps of his cousin and precursor, Yvain also is prepared to become a fool, though as yet, his motive is imperfect, and it is not until he has journeyed far on his quest that his folly 'l'oblige à penser,' and the spirituality which he shows only tentatively at first, assumes a new and deeper dimension.

Once the expedition to the fountain has been proposed by the king, Yvain is downcast by the envy which he experiences:

S'an fu dolanz et angoisseus  
Del roi, qui aler i devoit. (680-81)

and his motives are seen to be less altruistic.

Por ce solemant li grevoit,  
Qu'il savoit bien, que la bataille  
Avroit mes sire Kes sanz faille  
Ainz que il ...  
Ou mes sire Gauvains meïmes. . . (682-85; 687).

Saddened by this knowledge, Yvain has the prudence on the natural level at least, to understand that he must leave promptly, discreetly and in solitude, if he is to achieve any degree of success.

Thus, when Yvain is ready to leave for the fountain, there is no mention of any outstanding physical gifts, although with his undertaking of the fountain adventure, there is implied a desire to prove his physical excellence (682-85). He is seen as being prompt in doing courtly service, compassionate towards Calogrenant,

perceptive enough with the rest of the court, to see the worthlessness of Ké's hurtful remarks and quick-minded enough to rebuff them in a good-humoured way. His intellect and imagination are fired by his cousin's tale as he recalls in detail the strange episodes which he can hope to encounter (697-722), stranger still because of the distance of seven years which separates the two sets of adventures. There is no doubt about his love for Calogrenant and his readiness to undertake the same adventures with the purpose of either avenging his cousin's defeat or experiencing a similar disgrace:

... Jusqu'a tant que il an avra  
Grant honte ou grant enor eüe, (720-21).

He is, like his cousin a fol, with all its implications and indirect promises of a high spiritual calling. But there is no doubt, either, about his envy and the deterioration in his motives for leaving for the fountain, and he will pay dearly for this in the course of his quest. He sets out alone, in secret, for fear of an unfavourable outcome to his expedition (720-22), without any distinction. In his character and ancestry, he appears to be no more gifted than any of the other knights, although we do learn later, when Lunete offers him her protection, that he is already reputed to be a hero of outstanding courtliness (1009-19) and this in itself suggests that he is endowed with a promising combination of virtues.

#### LANCELOT.

The hero in Le Chevalier de la Charrete<sup>74</sup> appears even less pretentiously than Yvain. At the opening of the work, the company of the Round Table is presented with its customary brilliance, at the feast of the Ascension.

riche et bele tant con lui plot,  
si riche com a roi estut. (32-33).

But in this distinguished assembly there is no mention of the hero, no sign of him until line 271 when Gauvain sees:

venir un chevalier le pas  
sor un cheval duillant et las  
apantoisant et tressué. (271-73)

Not only does he fail to appear as a knight of promise, but rather, he has all the marks of an abject failure, and his own state is

reflected by that of his horse, which, 'duillant et las,/ apantoisant et tressüé,' drops dead and gives a very different impression from the galloping destrier which seemed to enhance Erec's noble splendour. This is reinforced later by the comments of the townspeople who are anxious to find out about the crimes and punishments of this obviously worthless knight riding on a cart:

..."A quel martire  
sera cist chevaliers randuz?  
Iert il escorchiez, ou panduz,  
noiez, ou ars an feu d'espines?  
Di, nains, di, tu qui le traïnes,  
a quel forfet fu il trovez?  
Est il de larrecin provez?  
Est il murtriers, ou chanp cheüz?" (410-17)

The knight's degradation and his association with the cart are among the many factors which have caused interpreters for this work to attribute to Lancelot a messianic role.<sup>75</sup> What is more important is that, in accepting to step into the cart (375-77), he has made the choice between public opinion and the task which he has to accomplish, and he has done this with an extraordinary single-mindedness which will be characteristic of him on his quest.

As Lancelot is first presented, there is no mention of his name, no glory in his ancestry or distinguished reputation. Although there are enquiries about his identity and about his probable crimes (410-17; 439-40), Lancelot will travel incognito, described as 'le chevalier de la charrete' until line 3660. Having preferred Love to Reason (365-66), in spite of his better judgment, he provokes the taunts of the dwarf as he reduces himself to the depths of abnegation and becomes a 'fool' for the sake of his love,

Amors li vialt et il i saut,  
que de la honte ne li chaut  
puis qu'Amors le comande et vialt. (375-77),

and a cause of wonder to Gauvain:

et quant il i trueve seant  
le chevalier, si s'an mervoille, (380-81),

who refuses, however to imitate him:

Quant mes sire Gauvains l'oi,  
si le tint a molt grant folie  
et dit qu'il n'i montera mie,  
car trop vilain change feroit  
se charrette a cheval chanjoit. (388-92).

No likelihood is shown here of Lancelot's emerging as a leader, for there is no one against whom he can test his powers. He manifests no assertive force, no heroic  $\delta\upsilon\lambda\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  as he follows slavishly and blindly in pursuit of his love.

On the physical level, then, Lancelot is seen not as a knight of fine appearance, rich clothes and extraordinary strength and courage, but as one who, although obviously a knight, seems to be guilty of forfet or larrecin, or a murtrier (415-17). It is evident that he has the power of reason, but he uses it to show that it is subordinate to Amors which is the dominating factor in his life. The spiritual qualities of single-mindedness and humility do exist, but in such a way as to provoke interest in the career of a knight of such contradictory qualities.

#### PERCEVAL.

The introduction of the hero in Le Conte du Graal<sup>76</sup> differs from that of Chrétien's other romans in the complete anonymity of its characters and its setting. There is nothing to suggest that the opening scene takes place anywhere near King Arthur's court, and the hero is nameless until line 3575. At first, he is simply 'li fiz a la veve fame' (74) or 'li vallés' (111). No specific liturgical feast is mentioned, for such an occasion would have little meaning for Perceval in his pre-evangelised state.

This very omission does, however, help to project a clear presentation of the hero as a youth who thinks and acts predominantly on the physical level. If the richness of a liturgical feast is portrayed in the other romances by sumptuous festivities in court surroundings the corresponding richness here is transferred to nature evoked in terms of growth and joy, consistent with the lyric convention of the 'début printanier:'

Ce fu au tans qu' arbre foillissent,  
 Que glai et bois et pré verdissent,  
 Et cil oisel en lor latin  
 Cantent doucement au matin  
 Et tote riens de joie aflamme. (69-73).

The hero sees this through the eyes of a child of nature who is concerned only for himself and for his immediate environment. As he rejoices in the fair weather and in the songs of birds,



Et maintenant li cuers del ventre  
 Por le dolc tans li resjoï,  
 Et por le chant que il oï  
 Des oisiax qui joie faisoient; (86-89)

he appears simply as a rustic lad who adds an element of human life to the vibrant rural scene to which he belongs.

He is inspired by the superficial attractions of the knights whom he wishes to imitate because of their appearance, and it is some time before he begins to understand what chivalry stands for. The very comments of the knights identify him as one for whom the principal realities are on the baser, physical level.

- "Sire, sachiez tot entresait  
 Que Galois sont tot par nature  
 Plus fol que bestes en pasture;  
 Cist est ausi come une beste. (242-45)

The tendencies of such a man are explained by Saint Paul:

"Animalis autem homo non percipit ea, quae sunt  
 Spiritus Dei: stultitia enim est illi, et non potest  
 intellegere: quia spiritualiter examinatur" (I Cor. 2:14)

who was contrasting the animalis homo with the spiritualis homo.

William of Saint-Thierry was to say on the subject:

animalitas est vitae modus sensibus corporis serviens.<sup>11</sup>

This is reminiscent of the young Perceval before the knights and again after he has listened to his mother's tale. He spares no thought for his mother's tears, her earlier sorrowful experiences and her longing to protect this last one of her offspring from the fate which has attended the rest of her family:

Li vallés entent molt petit  
 A che que sa mere li dist.  
 "A mengier, fait il, me donez;  
 Ne sai de coi m'araisonnez." (489-92).

His hunger represents a physical need which must be satisfied.

It is not for him to care that his mother should pay so dearly for his adventure. In this speech and in his preoccupation with himself, he has shown how irresponsible, self-centred and thoughtless he is at the time.

Does Perceval appear as a λογικός as one who reasons, who needs to know and to understand about the world in which he is situated? He has appeared to be at one with his physical environment of fields and woods (91-94), and his knowledge and reactions at this level are intuitive rather than reasoned. He has absorbed certain facts on hearsay and without sufficient

understanding as is seen from his faulty identification of the knights with angels:

"Ne me dist pas ma mere fable,  
Qui me dist que li angle estoient  
Les plus beles choses qui soient,  
Fors Diex qui est plus biax que tuit." (142-45)

Once he sees the knights, he is far more preoccupied with his urgent need to find out about the details of their appearance than with giving them the information which they seek.

"Il ne set pas totes les lois,  
Fait li sire, se Diex m'amant,  
C'a rien nule que li demant  
Ne me respont il ainc a droit,  
Ains demande de quanqu'il voit  
Coment a non et c'on en fait." (236-41)

If, therefore, his motives are selfish, and his ability to reason is undeveloped, his curiosity is insatiable and oversteps the limits of normal courtesy.

But at the same time, he has seen, without understanding the significance of it, a vision of the destiny which he carries within him, and which eventually impels him forward so that he ignores his mother's grief in a single-mindedness which will be characteristic of him in the course of his adventures. Regardless of the cost to his mother, he must find the king 'who makes knights.' (494)

What of Perceval's spiritual potential? Can a rustic lad who is preoccupied with himself, his appetites and his curiosity manifest any promise on this higher level? His education in spiritual matters is sadly lacking for, just as he is attracted by the superficial accompaniments of chivalry rather than by the reality of it, so his faith, based upon his mother's instructions, is governed by tangible factors.

"Mere, fait il, que est eglise?"  
-"Fix, ou l'en fait le Dieu servise," (573-74)

Similarly, a mostiers is

une maison bele et saintisme  
Ou il a cors sains et tresors. (578-79)

The concept of Church as Saint Paul's πληρώμα or 'fullness', 'complement' of Christ is far from Perceval's understanding, for it is not included in his mother's instructions. It is far, too, from a well known twelfth-century definition:

Ecclesia sancta corpus est Christi uno Spiritu  
vivificata, et unita fide una, et sanctificata. 73.

Yet in spite of his preoccupation with himself and his immediate interests, there is to be seen an extraordinary single-mindedness, an ardent desire to please an incorrectly imagined God:

"Chi voi je Damedieu, ce quit,  
Car un si bel en i esgart  
Que li autre, se Diex me gart,  
N'ont mie de biauté la disme." (146-49)

This, coupled with a touching receptivity to what he is taught and a willingness to learn about chivalry and his religious duties, designates Perceval as a young man of considerable spiritual gifts.

There can be discerned a further marked difference between Perceval and Chrétien's other knights. Erec offered his services to the queen, Yvain stole out to avenge his cousin and also to seek adventure; Lancelot was seen as a lone knight travelling incognito for the sake of his love. All were educated in the ideals of chivalry and trained in its art. All were quick to respond to a request for help. Perceval alone is nice, uneducated and egocentric. He is too simple to understand that the strange creatures in the forest are knights, too blind to perceive that the juxtaposition of light and dark on the armour does have a message for him, and too preoccupied with himself to realise how he is grieving his mother.

But a naive eagerness about the young Perceval reinforces the idea of him as a hero of exceptional promise. It is surely no accident that he leaves home for his adventures in the springtime of youthful hope, warmth and exhilaration. Throughout this romance, as will be seen, Chrétien uses external circumstances to reflect the state of his hero's spirits. If Perceval is introduced in spring, it is because there is spring, colour, warmth, life and promise of growth in the lad. His ancestry, which draws him to knightly aspirations, suggests a further reason for hope, for his father, while he lived had an outstanding reputation.

Nôt chevalier de si haut pris,  
Tant redouté ne tant cremu,  
Biax fix, com vostre peres fu  
En toutes les illes de mer. (416-19)

The 'grain de folie' which he has in common with Yvain and Lancelot and which is later to earn him the reputation of a

'pure fool,' is not necessarily an insurmountable obstacle to the development of character or spiritual growth. Nor is a lack of education. And it will be seen that Perceval does show an ability to learn through his mistakes as he proceeds on his quest.

Perceval completes a kind of descending order in the introduction of Chrétien de Troyes' heroes. In the romances after Erec, the heroic assertiveness, early promise and brilliance are, to a certain extent, concealed, and tend to give way to numerous themes which emerge. Le Chevalier au Lion gives much attention to the theme of courtoisie and its current degeneration. In le Chevalier de la Charrete; the obligations of courtly love take precedence over the presentation of the hero. And on a more specifically Christian level, it is worth recalling the prologue to Le Conte du Graal and the importance which is assigned to the theme of charity, the central point of Christ's message and of Christian practice.

Carité, qui de sa bone oeuvre  
 Pas ne se vante, ançois se coevre,  
 Si que ne le set se cil non  
 Qui Diex et caritez a non,  
 Diex est caritez, et qui vit  
 En carité selonc l'escrit,  
 Sainz Pols le dist et je le lui,  
 Il maint en Dieu, et Diex en lui. (43-50)

This merely echoes the frequent exhortations to charity which can be found in Sacred Scripture, for example:

Deus caritas est: et qui manet in caritate, in  
 Deo manet, et Deus in eo. (I John, 5:16) <sup>19</sup>.

Chrétien's heroes, therefore, not unlike Eneas, are used to illustrate a theme which will be developed to a greater degree as they continue on their quest.

#### THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HERO.

In general, it can be said that the hero of Chrétien de Troyes is, like the earlier heroes, a distinguished man, but this is not always evident at his first appearance. If he is superior in gifts of character and ancestry, he does not always immediately show this, but prefers to act unobtrusively by his

own personal efforts relying, when the need arises, on prayer and wise counsel. There is evidence in the romances, that Chrétien was familiar with Christ's teachings on humility. An anonymous hero, like Lancelot, who freely chose to journey on a vehicle which was associated with the basest abjection could never have been understood or accepted by Homer's audience. But this action does reflect Saint Paul's great message in his letter to the Philippians:

Hoc enim sentite in vobis, quod et in Christo Jesu;  
 qui cum in forma Dei esset, non rapinam arbitratus  
 est esse se aequalem Deo: sed semetipsum exinanivit  
 formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus,  
 et habitu inventus ut homo. Humiliavit semetipsum factus,  
 obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.  
 Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum, et donavit illi  
 nomen quod est super omne nomen: (Phil. 2:5-10).

For we learn here that the depths of degradation undergone for love, are matched by a corresponding exaltation. And the Gospel injunction recommended by Chrétien:

.... Ne sache ta senestre  
 Les biens quant les [fera] ta destre. (Perceval, 31-32)

could never have been the norm for the heroes of antiquity at a time when heroic  $\deltaύναμις$  and an overflowing assertive force were a source of interest and admiration. It was recalled by Chrétien de Troyes nearly twelve centuries after Christ, at a time when Saint Benedict's Rule with its stringent exhortations to humility had long formed the basis of monastic practice, and Saint Bernard's reaffirmation of this teaching would have been widely known to writers on both sacred and secular matters.<sup>80</sup> Thus it announces a striking leit-motif for a work in which charity and humility are to assume a leading role.

It was to be expected that in the 'heroic age,' the principal literary characters should be brilliant men, vying with one another in the practice of their excellent qualities. Not only, for example, was Achilles great and glorious. His companions and adversaries in the Iliad were also outstanding warriors, and appear to be so from the outset. Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas

were all dear to the gods and, being men who were often seen as orantes in times of trial, readily sought their help. The audience knows their destiny early in their respective poems, either from divine revelation to the hero, or from some council of the gods which serves to inform the reader. This is very different from the presentation of a hero whose ideals were influenced by some twelve centuries of Christianity. Such a hero is presented discreetly, amid the exposition of Christian ideals and proper courtly practice. He frequently appears inferior to his fellows, or at least, like Eneas, no more outstanding than they. No omens of glory attend his birth or help him to make right decisions, but he does 'grow in grace' as his quest progresses.<sup>81</sup> Except for Guillaume d'Angleterre, little reference is made in any of Chrétien's work to any directly divine revelation. His heroes must work out the direction of their quests for themselves, often by painful experiences.

But in spite of the centuries which separate the writing of these works, and the inevitable differences in social and religious outlook, there are clear similarities which can be discerned in the hero's first appearance. If Achilles showed a strong initiative and sense of responsibility in a matter which was really Agamemnon's duty, and if Aeneas simulated a hope he did not feel, for the sake of bringing his men safely to an unknown land, their initiative and self-abnegation are not so very different in principle from that of Erec who, without being asked, offers himself as escort to the queen, or Yvain, who risks his companions' ridicule to go forth to avenge Calogrenant's shame. The former act on behalf of their communities; the latter, for the individual. But in all of them there is seen a desire to protect the weaker person which is, perhaps, more endearing when it comes from the very nature of a brilliant, assertive man, as in the pre-Christian heroes, but more predictable and refined when it is based on Christian spirituality.

What is the role of these heroes in their society? And can any difference be discerned between the portrayal of the hero and his society in early epic and that in the romances of

Chrétien de Troyes? Achilles was obviously a strong and respected leader to whom others listened. His criticism of Agamemnon's greed implicitly echoed the feelings of those men who had earlier cried assent to Chryses' request (II. I, 22). His self-imposed alienation was a source of great affliction to himself (I, 490-92), and a great loss to his men. Odysseus is first seen to be alienated from the society in which he has excelled, grieving for his dead companions and longing for his return, which is the central point of his quest. Aeneas leads a remnant of Trojans out to the unknown. At times, he has to make crucial decisions on their behalf. As an exile who has lost his home, he occupies the central position in the forming of a new community. Can this be said of Chrétien's heroes? Do they occupy a central point in their community? Erec is seen at first to be separated from the community of knights who are, at King Arthur's suggestion, hunting the White Stag. Yvain steals away from the company to seek adventure independently, Lancelot is seen far from any civilised society or any known environment, and for Perceval, brought up in the solitude of 'la gaste forest,' King Arthur's court is nothing but a distant ambition.

If, however, Chrétien's heroes are seen, in their earliest appearances to be alienated from the company of other knights, it must be remembered that they are the product of a society in which the importance of the individual was emerging. This was an age when men began to develop a sense of individual reality and to appreciate the dignity and worth of individual human personality.<sup>82</sup> It is, furthermore, to be expected that the romance heroes return to their courtly environment later, when they have undergone the trauma of self-identification and self-knowledge, and traversed the vast range of spiritual experiences which will have accompanied their quest. Thus they will be better equipped to accept their place in a Christian society in which charity, true courtoisie and humility are given due priority.

But another similarity can be found to the earlier works here. By his angry withdrawal to his tent, Achilles had rebelled not only against Agamemnon, but against the society which supported a system

in which, at the word of an angry king, the most able and 'hard-working warriors' were liable to be deprived of a 'meed of honour'. Odysseus' survival on the journey to Ogygia and ultimately, to his home Ithaca, was due to his being superior in physical strength, in wits and in wisdom to his fellows who were implicitly criticised for their greed, sensuality and stupidity. In the medieval works also, it may be recalled, there are several criticisms of court practice which are at least implied at the outset of the tale. These include the rather superficial stag hunt in Erec and the reference to degeneration of courtoisie in the prologue of Le Chevalier au lion. And if this criticism is not so evident at the beginning of the other romances, it will manifest itself later.

#### CONCLUSION.

In spite of the differences which can be perceived, all these heroes are bound to provoke universal and lasting interest in themselves. Apart from Lancelot whose gifts are gradually manifested, all have gifts on the physical, rational and moral or spiritual levels, and it is clear that the heroes who have been selected stand out, not because of their physical excellence as much as their moral integrity or spiritual promise. From the very beginning of the Homeric poems the hero could be looked up to in spite of his human faults, as someone greater than human, someone of extraordinary physical gifts, initiative, cunning and endurance, and therefore someone to be admired. But he was also a man who could make wise and prompt decisions on behalf of others, and this, especially, distinguished him. We of the twentieth century can still identify with Achilles' wrath and with Odysseus' longing for home, and can see in them, besides their exceptional attributes, fellow human beings with faults, frailties and longings, while admiring their moral assertiveness and courage.

Vergil's Aeneas, besides being gifted beyond measure with many of the qualities which characterised Homer's heroes, is endowed with certain less obvious spiritual gifts - pietas, identification with suffering, sufficient love for his men to encourage them in spite of his own fear. It is fitting that the more educated public



of Vergil's day, many of whom were influenced by leading philosophers in their search for a more satisfactory meaning to life should also have to look deeply into Vergil's work for the real meaning of the hero's message.

Eneas appeared unobtrusively, as a compassionate and conscientious man. Thus he shows the qualities which distinguished Aeneas. Any heroic assertive force or domination as leader is subdued during his initial presentation. But even in the opening scenes of this romance, Eneas' high vocation loses significance in the face of the importance of love.

By the time of Chrétien de Troyes a new heroism had arisen, with the new chivalry of twelfth-century France, a chivalry which, in its perfection, was coupled with Christian belief and high spiritual aspirations. In Chrétien's romances, the hero's first appearance is, in general, much more subdued than in the classical epics. The heroes themselves are no longer greater than human. Indeed, apart from Erec, they appear inferior to their fellows. The heroic ideal is, therefore, becoming much more accessible to the ordinary knight. This levelling out is doubtless, due to the widespread teaching of Christian humility and charity. A knight's reputation had to be earned, and if he constantly strove to gain pris and los in order to be more highly regarded, he was also obliged to assist the weak, the helpless and the unprotected, and to defend Christian principles.

But the hero's introduction is only a preface to his quest. He has yet, to sin, suffer and die before he can be re-born with a deeper understanding of himself, a better balance between the levels of his gifts and with a broader relationship towards others and, therefore, with some hope of fulfilling his quest.

Notes to Chapter 1.

1. C.H. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, London, 1952. p.1.
2. Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, ed. J.E.King, Loeb, London - Cambridge (Mass.), 1960.
3. But when the earth had covered this generation also, Zeus the son of Cronos made yet another, the fourth, upon the fruitful earth, which was nobler and more righteous, a god-like race of hero-men who are called demi-gods, the race before our own, throughout the boundless earth. Grim war and dread battle destroyed a part of them, some in the land of Cadmus at seven-gated Thebe where they fought for the flocks of Oedipus, and some, when it had brought them in ships over the great sea-gulf to Troy for rich-haired Helen's sake.  
Hesiod, Works and Days, tr. Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Loeb, London-New York, 1914, lls. 156-65.
4. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, pp. 94-103. See also Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism Four Essays, Princeton, New Jersey, 1973, pp. 33-34.
5. These were the categories according to which the Greeks divided their philosophy, the φυσικός, λογικός, ἠθικός (Aristotle, Topica, 1, 14, 4) to correspond to the physical, intellectual and moral or spiritual elements in man.
6. Homeri, Opera, 4 vols., ed. D.B. Monro and T.W. Allen, Oxford, 1902. All further references to the Iliad and the Odyssey will be to this edition. Unless otherwise stated, the translations are my own.
7. The word 'Greek' or its equivalent was not used by Homer. In general, he designates the people who are fighting as Achaeans, although they are sometimes referred to as Argives and Danaans. The term, Myrmidons, is used of the inhabitants of Phthia, Peleus' subjects, who were led by Achilles.
8. Cedric Whitman's point of view on this matter (Homer and the Heroic Tradition, Harvard, 1958, p.183) seems much more convincing than that of William Nethercut ('The Epic Journey of Achilles,' Ramus, 5, 1976, 1 - 17). The latter sees an Achilles who is spoiling for a fight' (p.15, n.5) and sees an opportunity to press matters, while Agamemnon behaves reasonably within the established order. Whitman, on the other hand, sees an Achilles who feels more responsibility towards his men and therefore calls the assembly (Homer and the Heroic Tradition, p.183).
9. Liddell and Scott, Greek - English Lexicon, Oxford, 1855, p. 180.
10. H.D.F. Kitto, The Greeks, London, 1951, p. 58.
11. Carl Kerényi, Prometheus. Archetypal Image of Human Existence, London, 1963, p.111.

12. For example: 'ὦ Ἀχιλλεῦ, κέλευε με, Διὶ φίλῳ, μυθήσασθαι.' (I, 74)  
(You have bidden me, Achilles, beloved of Zeus, to explain.)
13. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, pp. 91-127.
14. Brooks Otis, Virgil. A Study in Civilised Poetry,  
Oxford, 1964, p. 222.
15. Publii Vergilii Maronis, Opera, ed. R.A.B. Mynors,  
Oxford, 1969.  
All further references to Vergil are to this edition.
16. W.B.Anderson, 'Pius Aeneas,' Classical Review, 44, 1930, p.4.
17. Domenico Comparetti (Vergil in the Middle Ages, tr. E.F.M.  
Benecke, London, 1908) has traced the progress of Vergilian  
scholarship from the Augustan age until Dante's time.  
Henri de Lubac (Exégèse médiévale: Les quatre sens de  
l'écriture, Paris, 1959-64, 2<sup>e</sup> partie, ch. v pp. 233-62)  
has devoted an important chapter to Vergil as philosopher and  
poet.
18. Chrétien de Troyes, Cligès, ed. Alexandre Micha, CFMA, Paris,  
1970.
19. Jacques Le Goff, La Civilisation de l'occident médiéval,  
Paris, 1964, p. 218
20. Ibid.
21. R.W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages, p. 31.
22. Chronicon for 908-1018, quoted by Georges Duby,  
The Making of the Christian West, Geneva. 1967, p. 8.
23. R.W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages,  
Harmondsworth, 1970, p. 215.
24. Le Goff, La Civilisation de l'occident médiéval, p. 113;  
147-49.
25. Jean Leclercq, The Love of Learning and the Desire for God.  
tr. Catharine Misrahi, New York, 1961, pp. 116-17.
26. Confessions, I, 12.
27. De Civitate Dei, tr. G. McCracken, D.J. Wiesen, P. Levine,  
E.M. Sanford, W.M. Green, W.C. Grune, Loeb, London-Cambridge  
(Mass.) 7 vols., 1963-72, VIII, 19.
28. Ibid., XXI, 6.
29. Ibid., VII, 9.
30. Comparetti (Vergil in the Middle Ages, p. 99), notes that

several theologians, including Lactantius, Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome, were aware of Vergil's understanding of the spirituality, unity and omnipotence of God.

31. Bernardus Silvestris, Commentum super sex libros Eneidos Vergilii, ed. J.W. and E.F. Jones, London, 1977, p.20.
32. Supra, p.23.
33. Jean Frappier, 'Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle.' Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, 2, 1959, p.135.
34. Raymond J. Cormier, One Heart One Mind: The Rebirth of Virgil's Hero in Medieval French Romance, Mississippi, 1973, p. 75.
35. See Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love - Lyric, Oxford, 1965, p.2; Roger Boase, The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love, Manchester, 1977 pp. 62 - 99.
36. Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes: l'homme et l'œuvre, Paris, 1957, p.13.
37. Ibid., p. 14.
38. For example, Saint Augustine, De Civitate Dei, XXI, 27; Hugh of Saint-Victor, De Sacramentis, I, 10, i - vii, PL 176, Cols. 327-41.
39. Saint Augustine, De Civitate Dei, XIX, 4.
40. References to Sacred Scripture will generally be taken from the Vulgate, in order to conform to twelfth-century practice. Isolated terms will, where necessary, be cited from the Greek. Any translations will be from the Jerusalem Bible (London, 1966).
41. See Jean Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, Oxford, 1979.
42. Jean Marie Déchanet, Guillaume de Saint-Thierry; l'homme et son œuvre, Bruges, 1942.
43. William of Saint-Thierry, Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei PL 184, cols. 307-64.  
Dante made a similar division with somewhat altered terminology. 'Ad quorum evidentiam sciendum est quod sicut homo tripliciter spirituat est, videlicet vegetabili, animali et rationali, triplex iter perambulat. Nam secundum quod vegetabile quid est, utile quaerit, in quo cum plantis comunicat; secundum quod animale delectabile, in quo cum brutis; secundum quod rationale, honestum querit, in quo solus est, vel angelice nature sociatur.' (De Vulgari Eloquentia, II 6, Firenze, 1960.)

44. Georges Duby, The Europe of the Cathedrals, tr. Stuart Gilbert, Geneva, 1966, pp. 13-19,
45. For example, T.E. Page (Introduction to Aeneid II, London, 1889, p. xxv.) wrote, 'Moreover, Virgil is unhappy in his hero. Compared with Achilles his Aeneas is but the shadow of a man ... "Sum pius Aeneas" is how he introduces himself, and all through he goes about with that painful adjective tied around his neck, doing what he ought to do and saying what he ought to say from first to last.'
46. Eneas. Roman du XII siècle, 2 vols., ed. Jean-Jacques Salverda de Grave, CFMA, 44, 62, Paris, 1925-29.
47. De Civitate Dei, X, 1.
48. Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire précourtois, Geneva, 1970, p. 109.
49. Ibid, p. 82.
50. Vergil, Georgic I, 145-46.
51. See C.B. Lewis, Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance, London, 1932, ch.7.
52. See Roy Harris, 'The White Stag in Chrétien's Erec et Enide,' French Studies, 10, 1956, pp. 55-61.
53. A Gellii, Noctes Atticae, V xiv, ed. P.K. Marshall, Oxford, 1968.
54. Lewis, Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance, ch. 4.
55. See Raymond J. Clark, Catabasis: Vergil and the Wisdom-Tradition, Amsterdam, 1978.
56. See Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, p.9.
57. Chrétien de Troyes, Erec et Enide, ed. Mario Roques, CFMA, Paris, 1973.
58. Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, p.14.
59. Alice M. Colby, The Portrait in Twelfth-Century Literature, Geneva, 1965, pp. 104-11.
60. A.J. Greimas (Dictionnaire de l'ancien français, Paris, 1968 p. 187) defines destrier as 'Gros cheval de bataille, mené de la main droite par l'écuyer et que le chevalier ne montait que lorsqu'un danger se présentait.'
61. For example, William of Saint-Thierry, Epistola, col. 347.
62. Marcelle Thiébaux, The Stag of Love, Washington, 1974, p.111.
63. Sancti Bernardi, Opera, III, Liber ad milites templi De Laude

Novae Militiae, Rome, 1963, IV, 7, p.22). Unless otherwise stated, all references to Saint Bernard are from this edition.

64. Heroic Poetry. pp. 94-95; 100.
65. See Saint Augustine, De Civitate Dei, XIX, 4.  
Saint Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theologiae, 3a, 85, 4, Blackfriars, 1966) wrote: '...prudentiae, quae est directiva omnium moralium virtutum.'
66. Anticlaudianus, publié par R.Bossuat, Paris, 1955.
67. Chrétien de Troyes, Yvain, ed. T.B.W. Reid, Manchester, 1967. All references are to this edition.
68. Medieval Romance, London, 1973, p.55.
69. Saint Augustine (Liber de Spiritu et Anima, PL 40, col. 820), defined the Holy Spirit: 'Amor Patris et Filii ipse est, per quam omnes sunt sancti quicumque sunt sancti.'
70. 'Pattern and Theme in Chrétien's Yvain,' Traditio, 30, 1974, pp. 145-89.
71. Ibid., p.141.
72. Although 'fos' in this context means simply 'mad,' 'foolish', it prefigures, in a sense, Yvain's real madness.  
See also P. Ménard "Les Fous dans la société médiévale, Romania, 98, 1977, pp. 433-59.
73. Pierre Gallais, Perceval et l'initiation, p.14.
74. Chrétien de Troyes, Le Chevalier de la charrete, ed. Mario Roques, CFMA, Paris, 1958.
75. In particular, Jacques Ribard, Le Chevalier de la charrette, Paris, 1972.
76. Chrétien de Troyes, Le Conte du graal, ed. W.Roach, Geneva - Paris, 1959.
77. Epistola, col. 316.
78. Hugh of Saint-Victor, De Sacramentis, II, 2, PL 176, col. 416.
79. The most obvious illustrations from the New Testament include: the novum mandatum of Saint John (XIII, 34-35), Saint Paul (I Corinthians XIII.)
80. See in particular, De Gradibus Humilitatis et Superbiae.
81. Patricia M. Sims, The Spiritual Development of Some Knightly Characters in the Roman Courtois. Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of M.A., Massey University, 1972. The hero's 'growth in grace' or spiritual development is here

studied along the traditional paths of growth, i.e. the purgative way, illuminative way, and unitive way which are taught by the masters of spirituality.

82. Norman F. Cantor, The Meaning of the Middle Ages, Boston, 1973, quoted by R.W.Hanning, The Individual in Twelfth-Century Romance, New Haven and London, 1977, p.2.

## Chapter 2.

The Hero's Fault.INTRODUCTION.

No matter how highly gifted a person is, with qualities of body, mind and spirit, he is always capable of abusing his gifts. A proclivity to err is inherent in mankind and can be recognised as part of the human condition. The Greeks spoke of ἄσθάλια the 'blind folly' or 'presumptuous arrogance!' which is at the source of man's woe. Pride of strength, passion, lust, gave rise to ὑβρις or 'wanton violence,' often with an added meaning of insolence.<sup>2</sup> In the New Testament, this generally meant insult or mistreatment.<sup>3</sup> But another Greek word, ἁμαρτάνω, has considerable significance in any discussion of sin or wrongdoing. The original meaning of ἁμαρτάνω is 'to miss the mark,' 'to lose one's way,' in both the literal and figurative senses.<sup>4</sup> The associated nouns, ἁμαρτία, ἁμαρτήματα, mean failure, fault or sin. This is close to the Roman term culpa or sin which, however, frequently also includes an unintentional error in judgment and is synonymous with peccatum.<sup>5</sup> In ἄσθάλια and ὑβρις, there is a suggestion of pride, which makes a person overbearing in his attitude towards his fellows; in ἁμαρτία, culpa and peccatum, there is an accompanying idea of failure, by which he puts an obstacle to his understanding of himself, his relationship with others and his purpose on earth, and delays the attaining of his full potential as a human being.

In early Roman and Greek literature, there was no question of sin having the strong theological implications which were to be attached to it later. The terms καλὰ καὶ σπουδαία, 'beautiful and noble things' refer to the worth of such deeds in themselves, their accord with the nature of man and the effect which they had directly on society, without necessarily any reference to a higher being. So it was with sin, malice, vice. Notions of virtue and sin were therefore, closely associated with man's happiness, forming a 'morale de bonheur'.<sup>6</sup> Although a



strong moral element is introduced in our epics, there was little connection between morality and the rule of the gods who tended to govern according to their own personal inclinations.

The essence of virtue to Greek philosophers was the concept of σωφροσύνη, namely, 'good sense,' 'prudence,' 'discretion' and 'moderation,' particularly in matters of sensual desires.<sup>7</sup> This was closely allied to the temperantia, modestia, continentia recommended by Roman writers.<sup>8</sup> The medieval French equivalent of this temperantia is mesure, or 'the right proportion between too little and too much, the level course between too high and too low.'<sup>9</sup> Its opposite, desmesure, suggests the lack of proportion which conflicts with the 'golden mean' required by good taste and right conduct.

In the words ἀμαρτία, culpa and peccatum, there seems to have been little distinction between the concept of fault and that of sin, and the more explicit definition by Christian theologians was needed, in order to make the distinction clear. Yet in the De Republica, Cicero recalls a law of right conduct based on obedience to a properly formed conscience:

Est quidem vera lex recta ratio naturae congruens,  
diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quae vocet  
ad officium iubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat.<sup>10</sup>

All rational human beings are bound by this law which sets clear norms of behaviour and is deeply implanted in the heart of man:

neque est alia lex Romae, alia Athenis, alia nunc,  
alia posthac, sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una lex  
et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit.<sup>11</sup>

The penalty for the infringement of this law is graver than any punishment which can be inflicted by the state, for the law-breaker's greatest injury to himself, and his greatest anguish comes from the denial of his own nature:

cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet ac naturam hominis  
aspernatus hoc ipso luet maximas poenas, etiamsi  
cetera supplicia quae putantur effugerit.<sup>12</sup>

This teaching anticipates that of certain Christian theologians whose ideas will be noted in this chapter. Saint Augustine, for example, defined sin as:

factum vel dictum vel concupitum aliquid contra  
aeternam legem.<sup>13</sup>

Sin will, furthermore, be seen to reflect a lack of balance in a person so that there is a disproportion and a conflict among the physical, intellectual and spiritual aspects of his nature. Saint Paul recognised this conflict:

Video autem aliam legem in membris meis, repugnantem  
legi mentis meae, et captivantem me in lege peccati,  
quae est in membris meis. (Romans, VII: 23.)

Man may abuse his physical gifts by wanton violence and unnecessary destruction, or by allowing himself to be provoked to commit hostile acts of aggression towards another. Or he may forget that he is a rational being, a λογικός and disregard the bounds of reason by allowing himself to yield to forbidden sensual delights. On the rational level, he may, out of pride and stubbornness, cling tenaciously to his own opinions rather than submit to reason, or he may act too rashly without thinking logically. Human reason can cause sin, too, when, for example, a person culpably fails to know those matters which he is bound in duty, to know, or when it causes him to commit an avoidable error of judgment. He may, also, lack due vigilance of mind, so that he forgets an obligation or a promise. On the spiritual level, he can be so preoccupied with himself that he belittles divine ordinances and, through pride and self-love, prefers his own will to the known will of God or the good of his neighbour.

Sinfulness, on the other hand, is not so much a specific word, deed or desire as a state or a tendency to fall short of and to act unworthily of the gifts with which one has been endowed, a tendency to incline towards the evil characteristics in one's nature, instead of seeking to develop the good. Saint Paul referred to this when he confessed:

Quod enim operor, non intelligo. non enim quod volo  
bonum, hoc ago: sed quod odi malum, illud facio.  
(Romans VII: 15 - 16).

Not all faults, therefore, are sins, but they originate from the same proclivity to evil and can lead to other and graver actions. They have the same results, with the same alternatives, namely, the sinner can become less sensitive to evil and can 'blind' himself to the seriousness of his actions. 'Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet.' (Ecclesiasticus XIX : 1). On the other hand,

they can lead him to greater humility, to fuller self-realisation and subsequent repentance and renewal of his values, so that a greater spiritual depth is possible for him.

An act can, in itself, be sinful, even though it is committed without full knowledge or consent. This is known as material sin and is not considered to be a sin at all, since there is no wilful transgression. An example of such an act would be to take the property of another in the belief that it is one's own. Like *ἀμαρτία* and *culpa* it sometimes implies an error caused through lack of judgement. Formal sin, on the other hand, is sin in the true sense of the word, namely, a deliberate transgression in act, word or thought against what conscience regards as divine law. It is possible for a graver, material sin to result from a lesser fault as, for example, when a person in the heat of temper, takes the life of another. Finally, history, mythology and literature provide many examples of sins of omission caused by insufficient care for one another, or by culpable neglect of one's duty.

Let us now examine the fall of the questing hero. In some cases there will be a weakness in his society which will be the immediate cause of his fault; in others, some weakness latent within the hero himself will be evident early in the work. As the hero's fault does not necessarily come under the category of sin, the discussion will be centred on the crisis by which the hero falls from the promise which he had evinced at his first appearance. For he does, at least, show a failure, either by excess or omission, to complete his initial task and sets a delay to the attaining of his full potential. This failure will lead him to a deep self-knowledge, and to the main part of his quest. After some discussion of the fall of the heroes of the classical epics, on the physical, rational and moral or spiritual levels, we shall recall some aspects of sin which were taught by twelfth-century theologians. The faults of Eneas and of Chrétien de Troyes' principal heroes will be introduced and compared with those of the earlier characters.

ACHILLES.

Achilles' fault is foreshadowed by that of Agamemnon who, in his greed, refuses to give the girl, Chryseis, back to her father. The plague sent by Apollo, with its ensuing disorder, is a direct result of Agamemnon's misuse of his kingly authority. At first, when Achilles takes the initiative in summoning the skill of Calchas, the soothsayer, and assures his protection, he appears to be genuinely concerned for the welfare of his people, and has already been seen as a much more sympathetic figure than the king. But it is here that Achilles shows the pride from which his faults originate. His temptation and threat to kill Agamemnon is serious. For even if Agamemnon erred by using his position to satisfy his own desires (*Iliad* I, 275), Achilles still has no right to insult him (I, 277-79), let alone consider an attack upon his life. As king, Agamemnon is supreme judge and lawgiver (IX, 98-99), and Achilles should have respected this.

Achilles misuses his reason, also. The argument by which he persuades Agamemnon to seek Calchas' advice is, certainly, logical and valid (I, 59-67). But he becomes so carried away by his wrath at Agamemnon's reaction that he loses the tact and diplomacy which should characterise the behaviour of a rational man whose actions are governed by σωφροσύνη, and belittles the dignity of his king (I, 122-23; 149-51). The insult with which Achilles addresses Agamemnon, φιλοκτεανώτατε πάντων, 'most covetous of all men' (I, 122) contrasts effectively with the terms used of Achilles' own men, μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί, 'great-hearted Achaians' (I, 123). Achilles, however, need not have spoken here at all in the first place. It is his pride which makes him put himself forward after Agamemnon has replied to Calchas (I, 106-20). As E.T. Owen points out, Agamemnon had not addressed himself to him or commented on his support of Calchas,

But Achilles waits for no man to act for him. It becomes abundantly clear that he regards himself as the most important man in the army. Headlong and tactless, he takes on himself the full responsibility of what he has started. He does not see that the diplomatic thing for the moment is to save Agamemnon's face, as no doubt Nestor or Odysseus would have done, but bluntly tells him that what he demands is impossible, and the sudden gratuitous insult, 'greediest of all men' (122) flashes his temperament upon us and prepares for the outburst that follows Agamemnon's

deliberately provocative reply.<sup>14</sup>

By the end of the speech, no matter how true his accusations, Achilles has worked himself up into a blinding wrath, the which has led him to contemplate physical violence upon his king and which has overridden all tact and moderation.

Pride has affected Achilles' behaviour on the moral level, also. If he has show initiative in his proposal to use Calchas' powers, he shows pride when he makes his oath to protect the seer, and presumption which suggests a potential disloyalty to the king (I, 88-91). This attitude is evidently well known to Agamemnon as he addresses Achilles in angry terms, and condemns his warlike inclinations, even though he himself has profited from them.

“ἔχθιστος δέ μοί ἐσσι διοτρεφέρων βασιλῆων·  
 αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοι τε μάχαι τε·  
 εἰ μάλ᾽ αὖ καρτερός ἐσσι, θεός που σοὶ τό γ' ἔδωκεν.”  
 (I, 176-78)

("Of all the kings whom the gods love, you are the most hateful to me; for quarrelling is always dear to you, as well as wars and battles; if you are particularly strong, it is because the gods have made you so.")

By this demonstration of anger, pride and greed, and by his lack of reasonable behaviour concerning the return of Chryseis, Agamemnon has forced Achilles to withdraw his loyalty from him personally. But by his stealing of Briseis, in spite of Nestor's advice, Agamemnon forces Achilles to withdraw his loyalty from the Achaeans altogether. This is Achilles' principal fault, the moment which precipitates the action of the epic. It cannot be classified as sin in the normal sense of the word, that is, a 'thought, word or deed against the eternal law.' The word ὕβρις is used of Agamemnon rather than of Achilles. But by his μῆνις, his 'godlike anger' (I, 75), the latter has shown very clearly the extent of the pride which has governed his behaviour on the physical, rational and moral levels. Although his action can be justified, he has offended his king whose authority is absolute and whose word is law to all the Achaeans (I, 78-80). He has transgressed, also, a tacit code by which warriors support and encourage one another (I, 157-60). For this is a society in which men work, fight and feast together. Thus, as he alienates himself from the company of his fellows who are linked by a strong community bond, Achilles is, in a sense, enslaved by this own pride and self-

pity. He has committed an action which results ultimately in disorder and grievous losses to the Achaeans, and is the real cause of Patroclus' going out to his death and of his own subsequent madness.

#### ODYSSEUS.

Odysseus' principal fault is foreshadowed in the Odyssey. He acts unworthily of his physical gifts when he and his followers make an unnecessarily savage and unprovoked attack upon the Ciconians (Odyssey IX, 39-61). In their ensuing act of retaliation, the Ciconians defeat and rout their Greek victors who, after the first onslaught, have followed their leader's example rather than his advice and renewed their attack. This results in the loss of six men out of each Achaean ship and the incurring of Zeus' anger which manifests itself in a supernatural storm (IX, 68-74) and a treacherous North wind which drives the men off course just as they are hopeful of returning home (IX, 79-81).

The real delay to Odysseus' homecoming is caused by his aggressiveness at the land of the Cyclops. Here he fails to use the intelligence which is one of his predominant characteristics, and acts, instead, through pride and greed. In this incident, he has arrived at a land where there is an inversion of the traditional rules which govern hospitality. Instead of being given food by the host, some of Odysseus' men are eaten as food. But, it must be remembered, Odysseus was the first to transgress these laws by taking food before it was offered (IX, 231-33), the first to invert the normal practices between stranger and host, and the first to show greed and aggressiveness (IX, 267-68). The precious flask of potent wine which Odysseus has brought as an offering becomes a means of destroying his host. If the Cyclopes are ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, (IX, 175) 'savage and violent and lawless,' these adjectives can also be applied to Odysseus as he greedily intrudes upon the home of Polyphemus, using the prestige which he ought to have as a stranger and guest in order to obtain presents.

Furthermore, through excessive, unreasoned promptness in speech, Odysseus causes the death of many of his men, undergoes

his own terrifying experiences in the sea, sets a delay to his homecoming and prolongs the unfortunate situation at Ithaca which is in a state of confusion without him. For, instead of gratefully accepting the success of the 'Nobody' trick by which he managed to sail away unharmed from the island of the Cyclops and sailing away secretly (IX, 364-70), Odysseus yields to his pride and boastfully proclaims his true identity to the enraged Polyphemus (IX, 475-79: 502-05). He calls out from his ship:

“Κύκλωψ, εἴ κέν τις σε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων  
ὀφθαλμοῦ εἴρηται ἀεικέλιην ἀλαωτύν,  
φάσθαι Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι,  
υἷὸν Λαέρτειω, Ἰθάκῃ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἔσσι.” (IX, 502-505).

("Cyclops, if any mortal man should ask you about the shameful blinding of your eyes, say that you were blinded by Osysseus, sacker of cities, who is son of Laertes and dwells in Ithaca.")

In doing this, he invites the curse of the Cyclops and the wrath of Poseidon, thus adding years, difficulties, doubts and losses to his homecoming. He should, of course, have known better than to invade the cave of Polyphemus or to trespass on the privacy of any other person simply out of curiosity and the hope that his host would give him presents when neither he nor his men were under any pressing need for food and drink. This is the ἀτασθαλία spoken of in the opening of the Odyssey (I, 34), the blind folly and arrogance by which man brings about his own misery. Odysseus will, therefore, have to propitiate those deities who are entrusted with his survival and his homecoming, and to learn lessons of humility in order to atone for the misuse of his gifts.

In the Homeric epics, therefore, the result of the hero's guilt is profound grief as a result of his isolation from his society, a lack of order and ultimately, a grievous destruction which affects not *only* the hero himself, but also his dependents and his fellows. As Phyllis Grau has put it, '...what had begun as a few days pleasant sailing ended as an arduous journey of ten years.'<sup>15</sup> There is no question here of sin as it will be understood in traditional Christian terms. Nor is there any question of an explicit obligation to a god or to any other human. If man is the source of his own woes, he is also the principal victim. It is the hero's own equilibrium which has been destroyed, and an obstacle has been placed in the way of his gaining true happiness and peace.

AENEAS

The attitude which precipitates Aeneas' main fault is evident during the events of the last night of Troy. When Hector appears in a dream, telling him to take up his household gods and flee from his homeland so that he can establish a new Troy elsewhere (11, 268-95), Aeneas ignores his command. Perhaps, like the city itself he is 'somno vinoque sepultus' and blind to the significance of the events of the day. As simple, inconspicuous and imprudent as any of the other Trojans, he ignores not only the dream, but also the counsel of the priest, Panthus, who pronounces solemnly that the end of Troy has come:

"venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus  
Dardaniae fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium et ingens  
gloria Teucrorum." (Aeneid, 11, 324-26)

Furthermore, Aeneas refuses to be persuaded by his mother who begs him, on behalf of the patron deities of Troy, to leave his city to its fate (11, 594-620), and to trust in her protection for reaching his new home:

"eripe, nate, fugam finemque impone labori;  
nusquam abero et tutum patrio te limine sistam." (11, 619-20)

Thus, he errs on the rational level, by letting himself be blinded by his own fears, and keeps himself in ignorance about matters which, for the good of his people, he ought to know.

The Aeneas who had become renowned for his pietas, his sense of duty towards gods and men, is now likened to a madman:

"arma amens capio; nec sat rationis in armis," (11, 314).  
As he leads a charge of angry young men against the enemy, he is compared with ravening wolves driven blindly by an overpowering, unreasoning hunger:

"inde, lupi ceu  
raptores atra in nebula, quos improba ventris  
exegit caecos rabies." (11, 355-57).

These comparisons and references to blindness emphasise the lack of reasoning in Aeneas' behaviour and above all, his lack of understanding, especially of his destiny, and his failure to learn where his duty really lies. He is no better than any of his men although, because of his responsibility and his destiny, he has been



offered more enlightenment than they.

Can Aeneas' fault be seen on a spiritual level? It has been written of him:

Enée est tout à fait dans la main des dieux et tient toujours les yeux fixés sur cette force supérieure qui le mène. Jamais il ne fait rien de lui-même.<sup>10.</sup>

Yet on this night of the fall of Troy, Aeneas appears to make no effort to heed the command of the gods, preferring instead, the glory of dying for his people to obedience to divine messages which a hero of his ancestry and reputed pietas ought to be able to discern. His disregard of divine commands and signs suggests a lack of commitment to the task appointed to him and to the will of the gods who have appointed it. As R. Allain puts it:

Un tel oubli serait-il vraisemblable s'il ne s'expliquait par une désaffection totale, et d'ailleurs involontaire, d'Enée à l'égard des réalités surnaturelles? <sup>11.</sup>

Aeneas has, therefore, misused his own characteristic quality in that he has chosen a reputation for personal glory instead of submitting to the revealed will of the gods, and in this way, his fault has a considerable spiritual dimension.

A failure to understand is discernible also in Aeneas' illicit affair with Dido at Carthage, which is his central and most obvious fault. With the death of his father in Sicily, all his links with the past have been cruelly broken. As he is bewildered by recent events, his most fundamental need is for the warmth of normal human relationships in a land which he can call his own. His union with the queen, therefore, at first seems logical and inevitable. For in Dido, Aeneas sees a reflection of himself as well as a complement. Both lovers are of royal stock, forced into exile by the treachery of another, and appointed by gods to build civilisations which promise a greatness far beyond that of the cities which they have left. Dido is a mature woman, bound by a self-imposed fidelity to her dead husband, Sychaeus. Aeneas is a mature leader seeking stability in the elusive land which he is destined to found for his descendants. Like Odysseus, he is tragically conscious of having outlived his world. Motivated, therefore, by his need for human compassion and warmth and the need for rest from his wanderings, Aeneas elicits the pity of the queen (I, 615-30;

IV, 13-14) who herself needs love and a man's protection (IV, 31-44). The couple are driven by the machinations of Venus and Juno (IV, 93-127) into a union which draws the attention of Iarbas and causes Mercury to be sent with an urgent message to Aeneas to continue the journey he has started (IV, 265-76).

Why is such an understandable love designated culpa? After all, as A. Guillemin suggests, the union could simply represent the beginning of the traditional usus by which Roman couples could lawfully become married.<sup>18</sup> For Dido, unfaithful to the vow she had made to her dead husband, there was the loss of a glory which was highly praised among Roman matrons, that of being univira, a quality which could be applied to a woman who had only one husband.<sup>19</sup> But for Aeneas, the culpa had far greater implications. In the first place, his dalliance among the luxuries of Carthage was a fault against the Roman ideal, so often underlined by Vergil, of the necessity of discipline and hard work if a noble end is to be achieved.<sup>20</sup> At Carthage, Aeneas forgets for a time this law by which man must subdue his baser physical longings and suffer, labour and discipline himself if he is to accomplish the task which is ordained for him. Furthermore, he has not yet learnt the Roman ideals of continentia and temperantia which, in C<sup>o</sup>icero's words:

...in rebus aut expetendis aut fugiendis ut rationem sequamur monet.<sup>21</sup>

Again, therefore, in yielding to the luxus offered him at Carthage, Aeneas has failed to act like a rational man and has acted unworthily of his own pietas. It would have been undiplomatic in the light of the comparatively recent scandal of Anthony's affair with Cleopatra and the later events at Actium, to allow any lawful relationship with a foreign queen or, in the light of Rome's earlier struggles, to suggest any permanent association with Carthage. The union with Dido, therefore, could never have been considered as a Roman marriage, nor could Carthage be seen as a Roman city.

Aeneas' fault can be seen on all three levels of his being. The physical aspect is seen particularly in his sin of luxus

at Carthage, but this is also caused through a fault in the rational aspect of his nature. This was already prefigured at Troy where he failed to think rationally and to perceive the signs which were offered. It was here that his fault achieved a spiritual dimension, for he failed to heed the revealed will of the gods. He knows what his duty is, but because his pietas is incomplete, he has not begun to understand its full significance.

#### THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE.

The universal, everlasting law referred to by Cicero anticipates Saint Paul's teaching on the law by which all people, including Gentiles, are bound:

Cum enim Gentes, quae legem non habent, naturaliter ea, quae legis sunt, faciunt, eiusmodi legem non habentes, ipsi sibi sunt lex: qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis. (Romans, 11: 14-15).

When a law is so deeply implanted within the nature of man and sets such universal obligation, it is hardly likely that there will be any significant change in its essence throughout the course of time. Therefore, in spite of the centuries which have elapsed between the ancient epics and the appearance of the French courtly romance, the faults of the hero can be expected to remain essentially the same, for they originate from the same sources. But there will inevitably be changes in external practices and, with the development of theology as a science, changes in attitudes to sin and failure. We shall now note briefly the ideas of some of the Fathers of the Church concerning sin, evil and error.

Saint Augustine was constantly aware of the good which is inherent in created things: 'nulla creatura Dei mala.'<sup>22</sup> For him, evil is a privation of the good which the subject should possess, a corruption of the measure, form, or order with which man has been endowed. 'Malum est corruptio modi, speciei aut ordinis.'<sup>23</sup> Evil, too, is a misuse of man's gifts: 'Malum est enim male uti bono,'<sup>24</sup> and was identified with a forsaking of the good. 'Peccatum non est malae naturae appetitio, sed melioris desertio.'<sup>25</sup>

Saint Augustine, using an imagery which was frequently to be found

in Saint Paul, wrote of the conflict which is necessary for overcoming sin:

Hanc pugnam non experiuntur in semetipsis nisi bellatores virtutum debellatoresque vitiorum: nec expugnat concupiscentiae malum, nisi continentiae bonum.<sup>26.</sup>

and of man's inability to combat sin and achieve virtue if he relies on his own efforts:

Noli de te fidere, ut peccatum tibi non dominetur.<sup>27.</sup>

It is the Holy Spirit who gives victory over sin:

Itaque ut spiritu nostro opera carnis mortificemus, Spiritu Dei agimur qui dat continentiam, qua frenemus, domemus, vincamus concupiscentiam.<sup>28.</sup>

In all this, there is implied a lack of order, a misuse of man's faculties and a conflict among the different aspects of his nature.

Although he acknowledges that sin is to be found in all mankind, Saint Augustine is slow to condemn the sinner, for he understands that the principal causes of sin are ignorance and weakness.

Duabus ex causis peccamus; aut nondum videndo quid facere debeamus, aut non faciendo quod debere fieri jam videmus: quorum duorum illud ignorantiae malum est, hoc infirmitatis.<sup>29.</sup>

And with characteristic optimism, Saint Augustine also sees the mercy of God who is quick to pardon the repentant sinner:

In quantum nos amasti, pater bone, qui filio tuo unico non pepercisti, sed pro nobis inpiis tradidisti eum! quomodo nos amasti, pro quibus ille non rapinam arbitratus esse aequalis tibi factus est subditus usque ad mortem crucis.<sup>30.</sup>

A compassion in which a similar optimism is implied, can be discerned in Boethius who sees the man who has lost his wisdom and right thinking as a sick man, in need of prompt, decisive treatment.<sup>31.</sup> This idea is later reaffirmed by Alain of Lille:

Peccator spiritualis aegrotus est,<sup>32.</sup>

and again by William of Saint-Thierry. For him the novice in religion, the person whose actions are on the most elementary, physical level, is to be treated as if he were an invalid:

Docendus est sic habere corpus suum sicut aegrotum commendatum, cui etiam multum volenti inutilia sunt neganda, utilia vero etiam nolenti ingerenda,<sup>33.</sup>

who is to remain in his cell and seek regular advice from his physician, his spiritual director, until he can be cured of his

inordinate inclinations and be led to a higher level of behaviour.

The notion of sin as failure can be seen clearly in Saint Anselm's writing:

Non est itaque aliud peccare quam Deo non reddere debitum?<sup>34</sup>  
and such a failure is the more serious because of man's obligations to the Creator whom he has offended.

Omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subjecta debet esse voluntati Dei.<sup>35</sup>

It is easier to fall into sin than to recover from it:

Peccare, quam mala et quam amara res est! peccata,  
quam faciles aditus, quam difficiles exitus habetis!<sup>36</sup>

But, as Saint Bernard says later, it is better not to sin at all:

Melius est etiam non peccare, quam peccatum emendare.<sup>37</sup>

Just as there are degrees in virtue, so there are degrees in sin. Saint Bernard also discusses ignorance and weakness as causes of sin, but adds that industria or deliberation is a much graver fault:

Tribus modis peccatum committitur; videlicet per ignorantiam, per infirmitatem, et per industriam, id est, scienter. Gravius est peccare per infirmitatem quam per ignorantiam; sed multo est gravius peccare per industriam quam per infirmitatem.<sup>38</sup>

A sin committed in private is less serious than one committed in public:

Dupliciter peccat qui in publico peccat, quia et peccat et aliis peccare demonstrat.<sup>39</sup>

The love of God should be a greater deterrent from sin than the fear of hell:

Melius est hominem non peccare propter amorem Dei quam propter timorem inferni.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, although all sins are evil, they are not equally so, and the causes of the sins affect the gravity of the acts.

Where Saint Bernard affirmed that: 'Omnis peccans superbus est,'<sup>41</sup> Abelard defines a sinner or transgressor more specifically and shows rather more tolerance:

Peccator dicitur qui in consuetudinem ac studium peccandi

venit, sicut justus non is qui semel aut bis aliquid  
justitiae fecerit, sed qui in usu et consuetudine  
justitiam habet. <sup>42</sup>.

He is unwilling to classify a person as a sinner unless he has fallen into the habit of sin. Furthermore, there is emphasis on the consent of the will, if the act is to be considered a sin.

Richard of Saint-Victor, for example, wrote:

peccatum autem ipse est consensus mali, qui solet saepe  
subsequi vel comitari appetitum. <sup>43</sup>.

But in the chivalrous society of the twelfth century, sin and fault could be understood in terms of failure in knightly duties. Ideally, at any rate, a high standard of moral conduct and outlook was exacted. In the Policraticus, written in 1159, John of Salisbury, aware of the growing conflict between clerics and knights was adamant in explaining the purposes for which knighthood was instituted and praised the dignity of the order of chivalry. He recalled the duties of the knight in the following terms:

Sed quis est usus militiae ordinatae? Tueri Ecclesiam,  
perfidiam impugnare, sacerdotium venerari, pauperum propulsare  
iniurias, pacare provinsciam, pro fratribus (ut sacramenti  
docet conceptio) fundere sanguinem . . . <sup>44</sup>.

Contemporary secular literature provides many examples of the qualities which were required: prowess in chivalry, physical strength and courage, generosity, pride in one's ancestry, singleness of purpose, respect for the feelings and actions of others, liberality, self-forgetfulness, prudence and sufficient humility to withstand and benefit from an occasional rigorous self-examination. Frappier writes of the high esteem in which the notion of the order of chivalry was held:

Ainsi la figure du chevalier était-elle la plus haute  
pour la société féodale des XII et XIII siècles; à cet  
égard le roman dépassait la stricte réalité, et se  
chargeait de l'embellir. <sup>45</sup>.

The knight was ennobled by his initiation into this order

Une fois chevalier, un simple vavasseur devenait l'égal  
d'un baron, d'un comte, d'un fils de roi. <sup>46</sup>.

Ideally, too, chivalry was expected to have a specific purpose such as the overthrowing of the pagan, the defence of the poor and weak, the upholding of divine ordinances and the public good.

Sed quo fine? An au furori vanitati avaritiae serviant, an propriae voluntati? Nequaquam. Sed: Ut faciant in eis iudicium conscriptum; in quo quisque non tam suum quam Dei angelorum et hominum sequitur ex aequitate et publica utilitate arbitrium.<sup>47</sup>

The knight was to be moderate in his dealings with others, including his enemy, and to be prepared at all times to undergo any hazardous adventure and at any peril, should he be required to do so: si opus est, animam ponere.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, extremely high standards of aims and conduct were expected of a Christian knight, and there were innumerable ways in which a knight could fail to meet these standards. He could lose sight of the goal for which he was striving and become absorbed in the delights of battle for its own sake, thus allowing his physical assertiveness to predominate over the rational and spiritual aspects of his being. Saint Bernard cautioned strongly against the false motives by which a knight could be tempted to enter into combat:

Non sane aliud inter vos bella movet litesque suscitatur, nisi aut irrationabilis iracundiae motus, aut inanis gloriae appetitus, aut terrena qualiscumque possessionis cupiditas.<sup>49</sup>

He could be led away by superficial vanities from the true purpose of knighthood and from his responsibilities.

In the twelfth century, a high standard of conduct, fidelity and service was considered to be the inevitable result of love.

Andreas Capellanus exclaims:

O, quam mira res est amor, qui tantis facit hominem fulgere virtutibus tantisque docet quemlibet bonis moribus abundare.<sup>50</sup>

On the other hand, there were many ways in which a lover could err and risk losing the love of his lady. Andreas Capellanus, for example, notes that a lover should not lack intelligence, discretion or moderation:

Minuitur etiam amor, si stultum et indiscretum suum mulier cognoscat amantem, vel si in amoris exactione ipsum viderit excedere modum.<sup>51</sup>

A lover should never be fearful, impatient or proud:

Deminutionem quoque patitur amor, si perpendat mulier, quod amator timidus existat in bello, vel verbi ipsum impatientem agnoscat aut superbiae vitio maculatum.<sup>52</sup>

The lover must be prepared at all times to submit without compromise or hesitation to his lady's will,

Now that we have noted the many ways in which codes of conduct could be transgressed in the twelfth century, we shall examine the fault of our selected medieval heroes.

### ENEAS

How does the medieval Eneas sin? Is his fault notably different from that of Vergil's hero? Has the author succeeded in projecting Roman attitudes towards sin into this twelfth-century romance? The hero's behaviour during the last night of Troy gives some indication of the differences which may be found here. Although there is no significant mention of any foreshadowing of Eneas' sin, the medieval hero, like Aeneas, identifies himself with the other Trojans in the folly of believing Sinon's false tale and in admitting the wooden horse into the city. He is like a representative of the Trojans' communal imprudence as he later recalls the episode:

A grant leece et a grant joie  
menames nostre duel en Troie. (Eneas, 1149-50)

But just as, when the hero was first introduced, the theme of love and its destructive consequences quickly assumed a greater importance than did the presence of the hero himself, so, on the night of Troy's downfall, Eneas' reluctance to leave his city, which was so evident in Vergil's account, loses significance in the author's apparent haste to begin his narrative of the affair with Dido. Because of its intense love interest, this episode was likely to have far more appeal for the medieval reader than did the intervention of those pagan deities for whom the founding of Rome was either a care or a threat.

No mention is made of the machinations of Venus and Juno who had earlier plotted mercilessly to gain their own ends at the expense of the lovers' happiness.<sup>53</sup> Instead, Dido and Eneas are compelled by a heartless Amor against whom humans are powerless. (1383-92). In Vergil's account, Dido, at any rate, was deluded by the strange attendants to the union into thinking that the marriage was lawful (Aeneid IV, 171-72). Now as Eneas takes



the initiative (1521-25), Dido justifies her behaviour by passing it off as marriage:

molt s'en faisoit lie et joiose;  
ele disoit qu'ele ert s'espose,  
ensi covroit sa felenie. (1533-35)

and blinds herself as to the gravity of the situation.

This deception by which Dido 'covroit sa felenie,' together with her total disregard for the feelings of others imply a misuse of reason by which both lovers disguise the nature and extent of their fault. The word felenie implies not only 'faithlessness' in the way that Dido's faithlessness to her vow reflects Eneas' faithlessness to his calling. It also designates the more emotive 'fureur, colère, emportement, ardeur, violence, énergie'<sup>54</sup> and aptly describes the emotional state of this heroine. There is, therefore less compassion here than for the culpa of Vergil's Dido, nor is there any sign of the empathy which the Roman poet, in spite of himself, showed for Dido.<sup>55</sup> In his commentary on the Aeneid, Bernard Silvestris allows no mitigation of the fault or compassion for the lovers:

Tempestatibus actus in speluncam cum Didone divertit  
ibique adulterium committit. Quam turpem consuetudinem  
consilio Mercurii deserit.<sup>56</sup>

as in objective terms he reflects the attitude of a theologian.

Yet the real fault is not so much the lovers' union as the luxure into which they fall:

An luxure andui se demeinent  
lo tens d'iver, d'el ne se point; (1573-74)

From the point of view of both the traditional Roman gentleman and the medieval knight, luxus, excess in the pleasures of the senses, was a serious sin and deserved severe censure.<sup>57</sup> The author has already portrayed the treachery of Amor and its effect on Dido;

Amor l'a fait de sage fole; (1408)

so that it has blinded her reason. It has also made Dido neglect her new city:

Amors li a fait oblier  
terre a tenir et a garder. (1413-14)

and this is complemented by Eneas' forgetfulness of his duty to seek his new land. Moreover, Eneas has been designated

chevalier (1244), and both chivalry and love demand their own obligations. There is, therefore, a lack of balance here in that this love has made Eneas forget chivalry whereas, if it were in conformity with the love depicted in the courtly romances, it should have inspired him to undertake noble deeds in order to make himself more worthy of his lady's love. Like Aeneas, therefore, Eneas does not fully understand his duty. But whereas the Roman hero's fault originated from an incomplete pietas, the emphasis here is on a sensual love which occupies all their attention. Eneas' time at Carthage both reflects the attitude which Vergil showed towards this kind of self-indulgence, and anticipates the faults of certain other twelfth century heroes, in particular, Erec.

The price is paid by the inhabitants of Carthage for whom Dido undertook to build a city, and by the poorer and weaker members of society whom Eneas, if he is to be considered a good knight, should be defending, in honour of his lady. But his oubli also delays the fulfilment of his destiny:

Or la tient cil a descovert,  
son afaire a mis an obli  
et tot son oirre deguerpi. (1608-10).

As Eneas prepares for his departure, his men are seen to be tired of Carthage and, having no reason to stay there, want to be on their way:

Sa mesnie a molt esbaudie,  
caytel sejors lor enuiot;  
chascuns l'aler molt desirrot,  
n'an i a nul cui l'ester pleise. (1650-53).

In addition, Eneas is guilty of selfishness, for he has yielded to his own sensual desires instead of leading and encouraging his men:

fors sol a lui qu'ert a son ese. (1654).

Eneas' fault, affects Dido who, knowing that her chance of happiness has gone, prefers to take her own life. But above all, it affects Eneas who, with the arrival of the messenger experiences horror at the realisation of his fault, and grief, because he has to hurt a woman whom he has come to love and because he fears for her reaction (1629-44). There is further tension in the fact that while Eneas knows he must obey the gods and plans to leave stealthily, Dido sees his action as traison (1673-93) and felenie

(1692). Thus, from the depth of his self-repugnance, Eneas has to make a new beginning to his quest, and with an added awareness of his own inadequacy must, like Aeneas, dare once more, chastened and humiliated, to continue his sea-journey.

So far, Eneas has committed an error on both the physical and rational levels of his nature. There is less evidence than in the Aeneid of a spiritual dimension to his fault. In the latter part of the romance, however, Eneas commits a fault where the author introduces a significant innovation. Whereas the Aeneid ends quite abruptly, with the death of Turnus, for Eneas, the slaying of Turnus marks the beginning of another fault. For, after his victory (9817-32), Eneas delays his return to Laurentum and, because he has not immediately sought Lavine, causes her great anguish (9839-9914). Thus, he has failed to show Lavine the prompt service which a beloved lady requires:

"Pou plain la deseritoison,  
rien ne me faut se s'amor non.  
S'il ne m'an fait bien tost s'euere,  
de ma vie n'avrai mes cure." (9911-14).

Although this delay, as Lancelot's will be, is understandable, it does imply an imperfect dedication on the part of the lover, and for Lavine, it causes real doubt as to the extent of Eneas' love. Eneas himself is quick to recognise that he has mesfait (9965-72) and that he must therefore seek Lavine's pardon:

Amors n'a soing de longue guerre,  
mais qui mesfet, merci doit querre. (9971-72).

No formal reconciliation is needed, or even implied, for the joy which accompanies the marriage and the beginning of a great dynasty, overrides past sadness and guilt. Although this episode is not essential to the pattern of Eneas' quest, it does exemplify how, in literature, a twelfth-century hero might sin against love, and it prefigures aspects of the faults of both Yvain and Lancelot.

EREC

In his study on Chrétien de Troyes, L.T. Topsfield notes the structural pattern which Chrétien follows in the quest of our four heroes:

Enide, the cart, the lion, the grail are agents associated with the tests which the knight will fail. They also represent, directly or obliquely, the strength or virtue which he needs, and they are instrumental in showing him the path to self-redemption.<sup>58</sup>

This pattern is particularly true in the case of Erec.

For when Erec first appeared, he was seen to be highly endowed with gifts of the physical, rational and moral orders, and also, to be a knight of high standing. His marriage with Enide before a third of the romance is completed, enhances the initial impression of bright promise. But Erec has to prove himself worthy of his position as heir to the Roi du Lac, and this requires him to undergo experiences which will bring him to a greater self-knowledge and establish a more even balance among the qualities of his nature. Thus, by the end of the poem, he will be better prepared to assume his responsibilities with the wisdom and understanding befitting a king of such distinguished lineage.

Erec's fault is foreshadowed in several ways, both by the behaviour of other characters in the roman and by his own actions. Elements are already visible of that kind of pride which brings about acts of aggression. It is shown by the dwarf who, by his harsh, physical attack upon the queen's pucele and later, upon Erec himself, becomes the very personification of pride and arrogance. Erec's subsequent reaction does little credit to his apparent refinement:

Erec bote le nain an sus;      (Erec et Enide, 217),  
for his behaviour follows the same pattern as the dwarf's. Nor is King Arthur free from pride. For, when he is criticised by Gauvain about the wisdom of reviving the hunt for the White Stag, on the grounds that the result would be unfair and uncourtly, the king, instead of offering a reasonable argument for his action, arrogantly takes refuge in his own authority:

Li rois respont: "Ce sai ge bien;  
mes por ce n'an lerai ge rien,  
car parole que rois a dite  
ne doit puis estre contredite."      (58-62).

Thus, the king shows that he is as capable as any of his knights of an overbearing attitude.

Traces are seen, too, of a type of blindness, a failure to know what ought to be known. Although Gauvain's protestations at the suggestion of the White Stag hunt seem plausible, and Erec's abstention from it completely praiseworthy, both knights can be accused of a lack of understanding of the spiritual significance of the hunt. The Old Testament image of the deer representing the just man who longs for God was well known:

Quemadmodum desiderat cervam rivos aquarum,  
ita desiderat anima mea te, Deus. (Psalm 41,2)

and presented an idea which was later to be reflected in the medieval bestiaries where the thirsting deer symbolised the sinful Christian who longs for the reviving grace of Christ:

...after the perpetration of sin, they run with Confession to Our Lord Jesus Christ who is the true fountain, and drinking the precepts laid down by him, our Christians are renovated - the 'Old Age' of sin having been shed.<sup>59</sup>

Perhaps, then, Gauvain is too preoccupied by the courtly aspects of the hunt, namely, the strife which the kiss will cause, to see that there could be a deeper significance to that custom. Erec, in his turn, has perhaps not really understood the deeper implications of the king's suggestion, but acted according to his own ideas and, in refusing an opportunity of acquiring the grace proffered symbolically by the stag, has prepared the way for another and graver fault.

Another kind of blindness causes Erec's principal fault, for he does not see the serious lack of balance between love and chivalry which causes him, after his marriage, to spend a disproportionate amount of time in the pleasures of love, and to earn the criticism of his companions:

Mes tant l'ama Erec d'amors,  
que d'armes mes ne li chaloit,  
ne a tornoiemant n'aloit.  
N'avoit mes soing de tornoier:  
a sa fame volt dosnoier,  
si an fist s'amie et sa drue; (2430-35).

Erec's excessive preoccupation with love at the expense of his knightly duty recalls Eneas' forgetfulness of his duty at Carthage:

en li a mise s'antendue,  
en acoler et an beisier;  
ne se quierent d'el aeisier. (2436-38)

This is a grievous fault for several reasons. As a knight, Erec is obliged to practise deeds of valour and to strive at all times to improve his skill in order to be ever more worthy of his calling. He may not, as Moshé Lazar points out, allow his love to cause any neglect of his knightly activity:

Un chevalier parfait n'a pas le droit de délaisser l'activité chevaleresque, la vie aventureuse. Il n'a pas le droit de ne penser qu' à courtiser sa femme.<sup>60</sup>

Now, we are told: 'd'armes mes ne li chaloit.' (2431)

He is no longer interested in the tournaments, the community activities which offer him the normal means of maintaining knightly excellence. Enide learns from the rumour:

que recreant aloit ses sire  
d'armes et de chevalerie. (2162-63).

Thus, as recreant is used of one who 'renonce à soutenir sa cause,'<sup>61</sup> and suggests weakness and cowardice, Erec has, apparently, abstained from chivalry and from the striving which is necessary for a dedicated knight. And the comment: 'molt avoit changiee sa vie' (2464), underlines the difference between Erec who evinced such promise at the beginning of the romance, and Erec married. Moreover, the severity of the fault is augmented by the fact that it is known publicly (2459-60).<sup>62</sup>

A further misuse of the rational aspect of Erec's nature is clear from the way that he hides the truth from himself by his generosity. Although he liberally distributes gifts to his fellow knights:

mes ainz por ce moins ne donoit  
de rien nule a ses chevaliers  
armes ne robes ne deniers. (2446-48)

and provides lavishly for their tournaments:

Destriers lor donoit sejournez  
por tornoier et por joster,  
que qu'il li deüssent coster, (2452-54)

he fails to participate in their activities. The fault is much more clear to the other knights than to Erec:

Si compaignon duel en avoient;  
 sovant entr' ax se demantoient  
 de ce que trop l'amoit assez. (2439-41)

Thus, Erec seems to deceive himself by offering his possessions and his wealth instead of himself and his skills. The other knights can diagnose the gravity of the fault much more easily than Erec can:

Ce disoit trestoz li barnages  
 que granz diax est et granz damages,  
 quant armes porter ne voloit  
 tex ber com il estre soloit. (2455-58).

suggesting that the fault is greater because of Erec's exceptional calibre.

But there is also a spiritual dimension to Erec's fault. He has bestowed upon Enide an exclusive love which resembles idolatry. For as a person who truly loves God directs his actions outwards towards others (John XIII, 35), so, in another context, the lover ought to be able to derive inspiration and courage for his deeds of chivalry from the contemplation of his lady, as Erec himself did when he was contesting with Yder for the Sparrowhawk.

Erec regarde vers s'amie,  
 qui molt dolcemant por lui prie:  
 tot maintenant qu'il l'ot veüe,  
 se li est sa force creüe;  
 por s'amor et por sa biauté  
 a reprise molt grant fierté; (907-12)

Now, Erec's preoccupation with his love, like that of Eneas, becomes an end in itself so that he forgets chivalry and undertakes no noble deeds for his love to inspire. His exceptional gifts have, therefore, become sterile and useless.

After Enide's accusation, Erec's pride becomes more evident. After a brief but intense moment of self-examination, he acknowledges his fault, but appears to be quite oblivious of the normal means available for expiation. For, instead of having recourse to prayer without which, as has been taught, true repentance cannot be achieved, Erec acts with characteristic independence and single-mindedness. Far from asking for divine help or expressing any sorrow for his fault, he directs his anger against the woman who has unwittingly been the cause of his recreantise. Profoundly

shocked by the extent of the rumours, Erec's immediate reaction is to go out and prove to Enide, to society and to his conscience, at the cost of his own life, if need be, that he is as capable and as gifted a knight as he first appeared.

Thus, Erec has erred on the three levels of his nature. His recreantise is a fault on the physical level, but originates from an imperfect attitude towards his lady and his duty. This, in turn, springs from an incomplete understanding and inadequate perception of his obligations as a knight, and from incomplete knowledge of himself. And the spiritual dimension of his fault can be seen in the way that he is excessively pre-occupied with Enide, so that she becomes the object of an exclusive, selfish, carnal love which ought, rather, to be the inspiration for his actions if it is to be productive of good.

#### YVAIN

Yvain's principal fault, also, is foreshadowed in the early part of Le chevalier au lion both by his own imperfect attitudes and by those of his companions. Reference has already been made to the decline of courtly standards of conduct at King Arthur's court and to the criticism which is implied in this work.<sup>63</sup>

The principal offender in the opening scene is K  who, although he is evidently a capable knight, is the embodiment of envy and malice. Yvain's attitude, on the other hand, when he first resolves to avenge Calogrenant's humiliation, seems to be completely altruistic:

"Par mon chief!", dist mes sire Yvains,  
 "Vos estes mes cosins germaines,  
 Si nos devons mout antramer:" (Yvain, 581-83),

and it appears that kinship gives Yvain the prerogative of going out to seek this strange adventure:

"Car, se je puis et il me loist,  
 J'irai vostre honte vangier." (588-89).

K 's tormenting words drive Yvain to show his latent pride and envy so that, when King Arthur suggests a visit to the Fountain, Yvain is the only knight to manifest any displeasure:

Car mout i voloient aler  
 Li baron et li bacheler,  
 Mes qui qu'an soit liez et joianz,



Mes sire Yvains an fu dolanz,  
 Qu'il i cuidoit aler toz seus. (675-79),

for, wishing to rank first in the esteem of all, he cannot bear that Ké or Gauvain should be offered the challenge before him (682-90). Thus he is drawn by an onrush of envy, which alienates him from the rest of the knights, towards the first stage of his adventures.

In this episode, Yvain misuses his intellect. For the purpose of the intellect is to seek the truth. And although Yvain certainly does go and seek the truth about Calogrenant's adventures, he deludes himself and his hearers concerning his motives. There is a clear discrepancy between Yvain's prompt exclamation:

"J'irai vostre honte vangier." (589)

and his sadness at the knowledge that the king proposed the adventure to all the knights:

S'an fu dolanz et angoisseus  
 Del roi qui aler i devoit. (680-81).

As the author recapitulates Calogrenant's tale, it can be seen that Yvain's desire to avenge Calogrenant has now become a pretext for re-enacting his cousin's adventures (693-713) and for satisfying his own curiosity:

Puis verra s'il puet, le perron  
 Et la fontaine et le bacin  
 Et les oisiaus dessor le pin,  
 Si fera plovoir et vanter. (714-17)

and for ensuring an opportunity of testing his prowess against the strange knight at the fountain.

Edward Schweitzer explains how all Yvain's faults can be traced to his 'amor propriae excellentiae' which, after Ké's taunting, is evident from his race to the fountain, his quest for supremacy in battle, his first infatuation with Laudine, his departure with Gauvain and his failure to return at the appointed time. 'His breathless race to the fountain dramatises his invidia'.<sup>44</sup> By his sarcastic words, Ké has precipitated a series of actions which bring out Yvain's latent pride and envy. This leads to a very real fault on the physical level. For it is not stated anywhere that Esclados is evil. Certainly, he has either slain or

captured all those who have trespassed on his territory or who have challenged his position as defender of the fountain (572-76). But he is mourned by his people as a beloved leader (985-89) and by Laudine as "le meilleur des biens" (1209), a husband who "el monde son paroil n'avoit." (1237). Yvain shows that in skill, determination and courage he is equal to Esclados:

Ainz dui chevalier si angrés  
 Ne furent de lor mort haster.  
 N'ont cure de lor cos gaster;  
 Qu'au miauz qu'il pueent les anploient. (838-41).

but is excessively ruthless in his treatment of his adversary. Instead of allowing a mortally wounded enemy to die in peace, Yvain pursues him as far as he can (907-61). In his determination to prove his valour at all costs, Yvain presents, as Schweitzer points out, a glimpse of disturbing inhuman ferocity which transgresses the limits of a courtly ideal,<sup>65</sup> and is far removed from the chivalric ideals set forth by certain contemporary thinkers:

Sed quo fine? An ut furori vanitati avaritiae  
 serviant, an propriae voluntati? Nequaquam.<sup>66</sup>

What causes Yvain's principal fault and what is its effect? His latent superbia and invidia have already been seen. Now, in addition, his self-love and self-esteem, his 'amor propriae excellentiae' which have flourished under Gauvain's encouragement, lead him to neglect Laudine, a fault which is unthinkable for a knight who truly loves his lady. Whereas Erec became so absorbed in the delights of love that he was accused of abandoning his knightly duties, Yvain forgets his duty to his lady, his grief at his departure from her and his promise to return (2579-2638). For, as Gauvain persuades him, Yvain should be endeavouring to better himself for the sake of his lady, whether she be his amie or his wife.

"Honiz soit de sainte Marie,  
 Qui por anpirier se marie!  
 Amander doit de bele dame,  
 Qui l'a a amie ou a fame,  
 Ne n'est puis droiz, qu'ele l'aint,  
 Que ses pris et ses los remaint." (2487-92).

But for Yvain, excellence in tournaments and in knightly exploits has become an end in itself instead of a means of increasing his good reputation. There is a lack of balance between 'chevalerie

d'armes' and 'chevalerie d'amour.'<sup>67</sup> When comparing the faults of the two heroes, M. Lazar explains:

Dans Erec, Chrétien faisait naître la crise de l'Aventure négligée, d'une recreance d'armes, et montrait que l'Amour ne devait pas exclure l'Aventure. Dans Yvain, la crise naît d'un amour déçu et trompé, d'une recreance d'amour, et Chrétien nous dit que l'Aventure n'a pas le droit de s'affirmer au détriment de l'Amour.<sup>68</sup>

There is again, a lack of balance between chivalry and love, an indulgence in the one at the expense of the other. Furthermore, in forgetting his promise, Yvain has also neglected his duty as defender of the fountain, which was one of Lunete's strongest arguments for persuading Laudine to accept Yvain as her husband (1615-25), and the final, decisive reason for Laudine's accepting him.

"Et oseriez vos anprendre  
Por moi ma fontaine a deffandre?"  
"O'il voir, dame! vers toz homes." (2033-35).

The scene where Yvain remembers his promise to Laudine is a crucial one in the romance. It begins when Yvain is at the summit of his knightly career having, at a tournament, won all the honours (2684). There is, in a sense, a reversal of roles as Gauvain and Yvain have 'made themselves rivals to King Arthur.'<sup>69</sup> For Yvain's superbia is heightened by the fact that he and Gauvain refuse to stop in the city where King Arthur is holding court (2687-89), thus causing the king to go to them rather than they to him:

Qu' onques a cort de roi ne vindrent,  
Einçois vint li rois a la lor; (2690-91).

They have thus successfully asserted themselves, for the best knights are on their side:

Qu' avuec aus furent li meillor  
Des chevaliers et toz li plus.  
Antre aus seoit li rois Artur. (2692-94).

As, at this moment, Yvain realises that he has outstayed the time set by Laudine for his return, his pride in his knightly achievements crumbles into a confusion of shame, grief and despair:

...car bien savoit,  
Que covant manti li avoit  
Et trespassez estoit li termes. (2699-2701).

The strange messenger who delivers Laudine's message of reproach seems to be conjured up instantaneously by Yvain's remorse

as he suddenly remembers the promise he has broken:

Tant pansa, que il vit venir  
Une dameisele a droiture, (2704-05).

so that she becomes the visible sign of Yvain's consciousness of his guilt. Harsh terms are used in the messenger's denunciation. Not only is he:

"Le desleal, le traïtor,  
Le mançongier, le jeingleor,  
Qui l'a leissiee et deceue." (2719-21)

He is also a thief who appeared honest and a traitor:

"Et cil sont larron ipocrite  
Et traïtor, qui metent luite  
As cuers anbler, dont aus ne chaut." (2737-39).

It is significant that the earlier criticism of the degeneration of court practices is borne out at this point. None of the assembled knights makes any attempt to help this anonymous messenger to dismount, to remove her cloak or to escort her to the king. Yet this was the kind of attention by which Yvain had once earned Lunete's gratitude and subsequently, her help (1004-17). Now, no doubt, Yvain is too preoccupied with himself and with his remorse and shame to be concerned about the finer details of courtly etiquette. Or have his standards, too, degenerated to the level of those of his peers who have evidently concentrated on feats of chivalry, instead of developing such refined manners as are suited to the company of ladies? A further significant point is the omission of Yvain's title. For in general, when Yvain's name is mentioned in this work, it is preceded by the titles "mes sire," or "mon seignor."<sup>10</sup> But although she has addressed 'mon seignor Gauvain' and 'toz les autres,' the messenger strips Yvain of his title of courtesy (2718-67).

Yvain's fault can be seen to stem from his pride and envy which, in the words of Alan of Lille:

continuae detractionis rubiginosa demorsione, hominum  
animos demolitur.<sup>11</sup>

Effects of this deterioration have been seen in Yvain's haste to leave the court and his companions in order to have the Fountain adventure for himself, in his savage pursuit of Esclados, in his implied arrogance towards King Arthur, and his preoccupation with

his spectacular deeds and reputation for skill, which results in his neglect of his lady. The notion 'hominum animos demolitur' suggests a declining in spiritual growth, and this idea seems to be paralleled by Yvain's madness and sustained by the anointing which begins his healing. Thus, there is also projected the image of the wrongdoer as a sick man in need of compassion. This compassion will have considerable significance in Yvain's quest.

Yvain's 'amor propriae excellentiae' also prevents him from understanding the true nature of love. His earlier reluctance to leave Laudine (2579-94) and his contradictory failure to remember the appointed day, suggest a love which is immature, egocentric and therefore, far removed from that love which belongs to true courtoisie or that which is at the heart of the Christian ideal:

et diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et ex  
tota anima tua, et ex tota mente tua, et ex tota  
virtute tua. Hoc est primum mandatum. Secundum  
autem simile est illi: Diliges proximum tuum tamquam  
teipsum. (Mark, XII, 30-31)

Yvain has now, therefore, from the depths of his incredulity and self-loathing, to begin emotional and spiritual healing, and the painful process of growth in a true altruistic love which has God and his neighbour as its object, rather than himself or his reputation.

### LANCELOT

A failure to respond fully to the true nature of love is at the core of Lancelot's principal fault. But in this romance, the difficulty stems from the conflict between love and reason, rather than from that between love and chivalry. Again, the real source of the fault is pride, and although its manifestation is subtle, it is, nevertheless, clearly discernible.

Although Lancelot's fault is not directly precipitated by Ke it is, in a sense, anticipated by him. In his overriding presumption, Ké is here, as elsewhere, the embodiment of all that is disorderly and uncourtly. The king upbraids Ké as he questions his motives for volunteering to accompany the queen on her strange journey.

-Est-ce par ire, ou par despit,  
fet li rois, qu'aler an volez?

(Le Chevalier de la charrete,  
104-05.)

Lancelot's fault, his hesitation before mounting the cart, which is the symbol of ignominy and disgrace, can also be seen, on the surface at least, as a kind of presumption. For he presumes, however momentarily, to rely on his own reison, his own right judgment, instead of following amor at all cost.

This fault, therefore, exposes the implications in the conflict between reison and amor.

mes Reisons, qui d'Amors se part,  
li dit que del monter se gart. (365-66)

Although ratio is one of the terms which designate the ethical system of values known to the knightly class,<sup>72</sup> and is highly desirable in a courtly lover, it is not to be the only basis for his behaviour. For the theme of love is so important in this romance that even reison must be subordinate to it, just as, on the spiritual level, true Christian love adheres to no laws of human reason, but unhesitatingly accepts Christ with the Cross and its associated foolishness. Lancelot, in his fault, is like the Christian who, in his quest for union with Christ, relies solely on his own human powers instead of allowing himself to be led by the love of God and the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Reisons presents a most convincing argument for Lancelot to refuse the dwarf's suggestion:

si le chastie et si l'anseigne  
que rien ne face ne anpreigne  
dom il ait honte ne reproche. (367-69),

and tempts him to put his self-esteem as a knight and concern for fame before the demands of Amor. There is conflict, too, between the external practices and statements of love, and the lover's interior dispositions:

N'est pas el cuer, mes an la boche,  
Reisons qui ce dire li ose;  
mes Amors est el cuer anclose  
qui li comande et semont  
que tost an la charrete mont. (370-74).

Reisons represents la boche, the logical, spoken word as opposed to the cuer which represents the full commitment of the heart which must characterise all true love. Love overrides all other factors, even courtly reputation, if need be:

Amors le vialt et il i saut,  
que de la honte ne li chaut  
puis qu' Amors le comande et vialt. (375-77).

and this is the reaction which Lancelot should have shown immediately.

The urgency of Lancelot's quest allows no room for the anger, disbelief, self-loathing and madness which ensued when Erec and Yvain recognised their faults. Indeed, the public jeering and curiosity which he encounters on his journey to the queen suggest that Lancelot has committed a grievous error by climbing into the cart. He is publicly insulted (402-09) by the townspeople who ask:

a quel forfet fu il trovez? (415)

At the Castle of the Flaming Lance, his hostess comments:

"Honiz est chevaliers an terre  
puis qu'il a esté an charrete;" (486-87).

And before Lancelot's encounter with the Arrogant Knight, the disgrace associated with the cart is recalled as the Knight provokes him (2589-2600) and the people of the household call out:

"Ha, Dex! de coi fu il retez?  
Et por coi fu il charretez?  
Por quel pechié? Por quel forfez? (2611-13).

Lancelot does not know what his fault is until he comes into the presence of the queen after enduring many trials for her sake:

"Dame, or sui prez de l'amander,  
mes que le forfez dit m'aiez  
dom j'ai esté molt esmaiez." (4480-82)

Nor does he even know that he has committed a fault until he asks the queen about the ungracious way with which she had received him at their previous meeting (4472-82). Lancelot had hesitated through fear of public disgrace, for the action of climbing into the cart is contrary to all his knightly training and experience. The queen reproaches him with the gravity of his hesitation:

"Comant? Don n'eüstes vos honte  
de la charrete, et si dotastes?  
Molt a grant enviz i montastes  
quant vos demorastes deus pas." (4484-87).

The expression 'molt a grant enviz' suggests a reluctance to subject his own will in complete humility to the service of the loved one.

The queen explains her coldness in these terms:

"Por ce, voir, ne vos vos je pas  
ne aresnier ne esgarder." (4488-89)

And Lancelot immediately adds a promise of repentance

and a prayer for pardon (4490-97).

By his fault, Lancelot has incurred the queen's anger but, according to Andreas Capellanus, this can have a salutary effect on love:

Crescit etiam amor, si unus amantium alteri se  
ostendat iratum.<sup>73.</sup>

It encourages, as in this episode, a deeper understanding between the lovers, and this is suggested by the secret meeting which they plan (4508-10).

Lancelot's hesitation does not, at first, cause a radical development in the direction of his quest, but it does teach a lesson. Lancelot had hesitated to climb into the cart for fear of his reputation, thus showing an element of pride. But like Erec and Yvain, he committed his fault in public. He has, therefore, to make a public atonement. For at Noauz, he is commanded by the queen to sacrifice his prowess before all the participants and spectators at the tournament (5652-56), with the result that he is prepared to be considered cowardly if it will please his lady:

Li plusor dient: "Ce que doit!  
Il estoit si preuz or endroit;  
et or est si coarde chose  
que chevalier atandre n'ose." (5685-88)

The extent of the fault of his hesitation is, therefore, heightened by the humiliating reparation which has to be made.

There is not, therefore, present in Le Chevalier de la Charrete, the lack of balance between the physical, rational and spiritual aspects of Lancelot's nature. Rather, the fault is caused by the conflict between the outward appearances and the inward reality; the rational aspect which includes his self-esteem and knightly reputation, and that love which demands an uncompromising, unhesitating obedience. Thus, the manifestation of this fault helps to add to the ambiguity which will be characteristic of Lancelot in this romance. For, from the point of view of a knight, Lancelot has committed a fault by climbing into the cart and diminishing his reputation. From the point of view of several groups of bystanders, Lancelot's association with the cart



means that he must have committed a grievous fault. But from the point of view of a lover, Lancelot's fault is the very hesitation which indicates incomplete dedication to his lady.

### PERCEVAL

The foreshadowing of Perceval's fault, like the source of his vocation to chivalry, is to be found in his family. As in the case of Lancelot, there is evidence of a conflict between external practices and appearances, and interior reality, but whereas Lancelot was prevented by his knightly training from fully understanding that the demands of love allow no compromise, Perceval has to seek the meaning of love and of chivalry through the errors which he makes as his education progresses.

Perceval's mother, la veve fame, has already prepared the way for his acts of omission by failing to tell him about essential details of his background, his duty to humanity as a young man of knightly ancestry, and his duty to God as a Christian. Through her over-possessiveness and her desire to keep this last son for herself, she delays the time of Perceval's education until he is about to leave home, so that there is no opportunity for her to guide him in the ways of spiritual or moral discernment. It is because of his mother's failure in this matter that Perceval leaves home with little equipment to accept an unusual destiny, no real understanding of the over-simplified instructions he has been given, and no opportunity of consolidating his rudimentary education by any guided, practical experience.

A primary cause of sin, according to St. Bernard, and one which transgresses the gift of reason and the logical aspect of a human being, is ignorance.<sup>74</sup> Through ignorance, a person fails to know those matters which he is obliged to know, and causes errors of judgment. Perceval's ignorance has been caused, in the first place, by his mother's omissions in his education. It causes, in turn, his failure to recognise the knights in the forest and his erroneous choice as he sees his mother swooning (Le Conte du Graal, 620-30). It causes his

clumsy approach to the girl in the tent and brings him to mistake the tent for a church (655-772).

This ignorance precipitates Perceval's sin on the spiritual level, also. His egocentric tendencies are evident from the beginning, and foreshadow more grievous faults. When the knights in the forest ask a simple question, he appears not to hear:

"Veīs tu hui par ceste lande  
Cinc chevaliers et trois puceles?"  
Li vallés a autres noveles  
Enquerre et demander entent. (184-87).

He interrogates them instead, concerning their knightly dress and equipment, for he is more anxious to satisfy his own curiosity about the nature of these strange beings than to offer the help which they seek. What is more serious, as John Bednar comments, is that, in his ignorance, Perceval fails to respect the grandeur due to God as he contemplates the knights.<sup>75</sup>

"Il sont plus bel, si com je quit,  
Que Diex ne que si angle tuit." (393-94)

In Bednar's words:

C'est ici que la vue trompe le jeune homme. Son péché  
commence ici, car il s'éloigne du respect qu'il doit à Dieu.<sup>76</sup>

And from this failure stem other faults, for even on his return home, Perceval shows, by his attitude to his mother, how prone to sin he is, and how seriously in need of redemption. His independent questioning of his mother's teaching:

"Mere, dont ne soliez vos dire  
Que li angle et Diex, nostre Sire,  
Sont si tres bel c'onques Nature  
Ne fist si bele creature,  
N'el monde n'a si bele rien?" (383-87),

and her response: "Biax fix, encor le di je bien." (388) lead to the abrupt interjection: "Taisiez, mere," (390). Besides suggesting that he is about to break away from his mother's influence, this discourteous command shows how lacking Perceval is in the Christian charity due to his neighbour, which must, in the natural order, begin with love of his family. He is seen as an individual who is beginning to think, if somewhat erroneously, for himself, and there is not yet any room for others in his rather primitive existence and within the narrow limits of his understanding.

None of these mistakes can be classified as sins in the normal sense of the word, for they lack at least some of the characteristics of sin. There is neither deliberation nor malice nor consent of the will. But they are sinful tendencies caused partly by ignorance, partly by youthful egocentrism and partly by an over-possessive mother.

La sottise de Perceval est avant tout une sottise artificielle, non pas une bêtise foncière, mais une niaiserie cultivée en vase clos par une mère attentive et trop aimante.<sup>17</sup>

From Perceval's initial faults, then, his failure to respect the grandeur of God, his selfishness and discourtesy towards his mother, comes his principal fault. This is not so much his act of leaving his mother, even though she is a solitary widow. He would have denied his vocation had he done otherwise, and he does have her practical help, her advice and her permission to leave for King Arthur's court. There is, in fact, a strong reminder of Christ's words to Saint Luke:

Nemo mittens manum suam ad aratrum, et respiciens retro, aptus est regno Dei. (Luke IX, 62.)

But Perceval does look back. And as he does so, he sees that his mother has swooned with grief at being abandoned by him, her only surviving son: (622-25). This is his fault, for in his act of spurring his horse onwards, Perceval neglects a basic commandment: 'Honour thy father and thy mother' as well as Christ's injunction to practise that charity which is to be the distinguishing mark of his followers. As Frappier puts it:

Très exactement, le péché de Perceval n'est pas d'avoir quitté sa mère, il est de ne s'être pas arrêté, de ne pas être revenu sur ses pas, lorsqu'en se retournant il l'a vue évanouie à l'entrée du pont-levis: (cf. vers. 620-30): c'est à ce moment-là surtout qu'il a manqué de piété filiale et de charité, comme le précisera l'ermite aux vers 6392-98.<sup>18</sup>

There are antecedents in legend and literature to Perceval's principal failure, which takes place at the Grail Castle. A. Pauphilet presents a synopsis of the story of the town of Ys, as a kind of 'résurrection manquée.'

Des marins pêchaient, au mouillage dans une baie. Au moment de partir, l'ancre ne vient pas; l'un d'eux plonge

pour la dégager. Or l'ancre était accrochée dans une fenêtre d'église, et l'église, brillamment éclairée, était remplie d'une foule richement vêtue. Devant l'autel un prêtre demandait quelqu'un pour lui servir la messe. Le pêcheur, au retour, va conter cette vision à son curé qui lui répond: "c'était la cathédrale d' Ys; si tu avais répondu à l'appel du prêtre, tu aurais ressuscité la ville d' Ys tout entière."<sup>19</sup>

This story is similar in some ways to that of Orpheus and Eurydice as related by Vergil in Georgic IV (455-527). In this version, a condition is laid upon Orpheus that he is on no account to look back at Eurydice as he brings her back from Hades. Overcome by his love for his wife and seized by a sudden madness, Orpheus turns around to answer her pleadings and loses forever his chance of welcoming her back to the light of day. In both tales, there is a failure to fulfil a condition, and a possible good is lost forever, in the first place, to a whole community, and in the second, to a loved individual. So Perceval's silence at the Grail Castle fails, in the first place, to fulfil a condition which will benefit the whole community, and fails, too, to allow Perceval to become a fully integrated Christian.

The cause of Perceval's silence is, the hermit explains, the result of his having abandoned his mother in her grief,

... "Frere, molt t'a neü  
 Uns pechiez dont tu ne sez mot:  
 Ce fu li doels que ta mere ot  
 De toi quant departis de li,  
 Que pasmee a terre chaï  
 Al chief del pont devant la porte,  
 Et de cel doel fu ele morte. (6392-98)

and for this reason, as the hermit tells him,

Pechie [z] la langue te trancha. (6409).

But if his tongue is locked because of his lack of charity towards his mother, so is his memory, and it can be noted, as Pierre Gallais clearly shows, that Perceval's difficulties in his adventures are characterised by progressions of oubli.

Le péché de Perceval, c'est l'oubli. Il a oublié sa mère, puis il s'en est ressouvenu (v.1700 et ss); il a oublié le Roi-Pêcheur: la Laide Demoiselle vient lui rafraîchir la memoire (v. 4610 et ss); et maintenant il oublie Dieu, pendant cinq longues années. Le manque de Perceval est un manque de memoire. Tout son

comportement procède du fait qu'il ne se souvient pas, ou qu'il se souvient à contretemps et mal (des conseils de sa mère chez la Pucelle au Pavillon, v 658 et ss, et chez Gornemant, v. 1360 et ss; des conseils de Gornemant chez Blancheflor v. 1857 et ss; et chez le Roi-Pêcheur, v. 3204 et ss).<sup>80.</sup>

The most far-reaching result of these failures must surely be the prolonged neglect of God which complements the idolatry of the opening scene.

Perceval's sin is, therefore, predominantly on the intellectual level. He has failed to know matters which, for his development as a person and for the working out of his vocation, he is obliged to know. Furthermore, he has not understood those matters in which he has been instructed and has acted according to the words he has heard instead of trying to discern the real meaning. This incomplete understanding has led him to faults on the physical level, such as his discourteous treatment of the girl in the tent and his excessive preoccupation with food, both in this incident and earlier, at home with his mother. It is because his understanding is insufficiently formed that he commits his faults on the spiritual level, viz., his adoration of the knights as God, his silence at the Grail Castle and his neglect of his duties to God and his neighbour during his five years of wandering.

#### THE HERO'S FAULT.

Although much that is imperfect is shown in our heroes when they undergo their crises, there is little that can be classified as sin in the normal theological sense of the word, for there is little evidence of consent by the will to real malice or to planned evil.<sup>81.</sup> Many of the characteristics of sin are, however, to be found in their actions. In all cases, for example, the hero is seen, for a time, to forsake the good which was evident at first, and in varying degrees, he misuses his faculties of body, mind and spirit. Instead of striving to improve himself, his powers and his relationships with others, the hero becomes distracted by self-interest. But it is interesting to note that, while several of the heroes do, at some time, show a savage physical aggressiveness, this is never the principal fault, or seldom, even, the cause of it. Most of the failings are on the intellect-

ual level, and it is worth recalling the number of occasions in which attention has been drawn to the hero's ignorant blindness and forgetfulness: Aeneas, through not understanding his vocation, through his excessive love of Troy which has blinded him; Eneas', Yvain's and Lancelot's failure to understand completely the demands of Love; Perceval's failure to understand the meaning of the instructions of which he has been given only the letter. On the spiritual level, there are examples of the pride from which the other faults originate. It is seen clearly in the case of Achilles and Odysseus who are the victims of their own pride. Aeneas was affected by it, too, in preferring his own will to the revealed will of the gods. Erec shows an overbearing attitude in confronting his problem. Yvain's invidia and superbia have been seen in his longing to have the Fountain adventure for himself in order to show his prowess. And Lancelot showed a presumption in not accepting immediately what the obligations of Love demanded. This was the ἄτασθάλια which, the gods in the Odyssey said, caused man's woes, his blind folly, presumptuous sin and arrogance. In its cause and its effect, it is similar to the ignorantia, infirmetas and industria of which Saint Bernard wrote.

What are the effects of the hero's fault? In Cicero's words, ipse se fugiet ac naturam hominis aspernatus, hoc ipso luet maximas poenas... 82.

It is evident that the hero himself is affected, for by his transgression, the quality of his own gifts is diminished and he sees himself as he really is. Moreover, he escapes from the reality through which he could grow and develop as a person. Achilles denies, for a time, his own heroic prowess, and from being a warrior of exceptional prowess and brilliant ancestry, he becomes a rebel who withdraws his services from his fellows. Odysseus misuses his own resourcefulness and Aeneas betrays his pietas. Nor do the medieval heroes fare any better, although the onset of their fault is often more discreet. For Eneas, Yvain and Lancelot there is a denial of the obligations of a lover. Erec and Yvain fail to do justice to their exceptional skill as knights, and Perceval neglects his own outstanding spiritual calling.

But the hero's fault affects other people, too. In the Iliad, Achilles hurt not only himself by his anger and withdrawal, but he caused severe losses to his men. Odysseus caused untold hardship to himself, lost all his followers and aggravated the disorder at Ithaca. Aeneas risked the welfare of his new city and the survival of his race, in his delay to give Trojan life to the land of Italy. It can be seen therefore, that the faults of the heroes in the early epics affected not so much themselves as their society as a whole. In the twelfth century, however, there is a marked difference. Erec and Enide are, certainly, affected by Erec's fault, but except for the time when Erec has absented himself from his duties with his fellow knights, his sin affects nobody else, although the nature of their journey does require them to alienate themselves from society for a time. Yvain's sin affects only himself and Laudine, and his journey, too, has to be made alone until he is ready to face his responsibilities once more. Lancelot's fault affects no one else directly, but it does teach a lesson to those who are prepared to accept it. Perceval's sin affects a society of which little is told, although much is inferred. The greater emphasis is, however, on the spiritual harm which has far-reaching results for Perceval, and requires a difficult time of expiation. In this self-conscious society, therefore, in which there was a constant demand for a higher standard of excellence on the part of the individual, there appears to have been more emphasis on the personal effects of the sin and less on the social consequences.

Yet society does play an important role in the hero's fault. It has been said:

Gravius etiam peccat qui in publico delinquit, quam qui in abscondito. Dupliciter peccat qui in publico peccat, quia et peccat et aliis peccare demonstrat.<sup>83</sup>

Erec's and Yvain's faults are known publicly, for it is gossip which causes Erec's moment of self-discovery; the messenger who denounces Yvain does so in the presence of his companions. The report of Lancelot's hesitation precedes him in his adventures, and Perceval is condemned by the accusations of his cousin and of the Laide Demoiselle, in such a way that his fault appears

to be well known among the strange people whom he meets.

There is something important that these heroes have in common. A word spoken in anger causes the death of thousands of Achaeans and unnecessary grief to all. A word spoken in anger causes the loss of all Odysseus' remaining men and causes the hero to enter upon a time of profound heartache and a most difficult journey. A failure to arrive home at the appointed time causes a long journey of atonement for Yvain. A hesitation of two steps means that Lancelot has to learn painful lessons of humility. A failure to ask a question at the right time means that the Fisher King will not be cured, nor will his lands be restored to him. These are all apparently small faults, but their consequences are grave, far graver than the initial sin seems to warrant. But it will be seen that if the hero is required to undergo expiation for his sin, it is only so that he may embark upon his real journey more successfully as he pursues the real object of his quest.

How do the heroes' faults reflect the morality of their time? All people are bound by the same 'vera lex, ratio naturae congruens'<sup>84</sup> which encourages right, balanced conduct, and promotes harmonious living through respect both for oneself and for the rights of others. Achilles' infringement of this, by his stubborn anger, resulted in a profound unhappiness, above all, for himself. Odysseus, at his first appearance and, indeed, on many occasions during the tale of his wanderings, was seen in tears of profound longing for his lost companions and sorrow for his own plight; Aeneas is seldom seen as a happy man, for he has to pay dearly for his misunderstanding of his vocation and for his excessive love of Troy. It is, therefore, the hero's happiness which is predominantly affected, together with the good of his immediate society. Although the gods uphold justice, there is no strong reference to them as lawgivers. Sin, fault, failure can therefore, be seen as a privation of the good which the subject should possess and by which he maintains his own self-respect. In the twelfth century, however, although sin can be seen as a privation of, and, at times, a misuse of the good, there is now reference to God as supreme lawgiver



and creator and to the obligations due to Him as such. These obligations are reflected in the claims which members of a predominantly Christian society have upon one another and in the results of the hero's failure to meet such claims.

Can the hero, then, be called a sinner? Because he belongs to the human race, a tendency to sin inevitably belongs to his nature.<sup>85</sup> But let us consider Abelard's statement:

Cum dicat quia omnes peccaverunt, aliud est peccasse, aliud est peccatorem esse. Peccator dicitur qui in consuetudinem ac studium peccandi venit, sicut iustus non is qui semel aut bis aliquid iustitiae fecerit, sed qui in usu et consuetudine iustitiam habet.<sup>86</sup>

The heroes under discussion can hardly be said to have 'fallen into the habit of sin' according to Abelard's definition. Although the main fault occurs as the result of a series of imperceptible lapses committed 'semel aut bis,' the shock of the realisation of their weakness and a growing desire to atone for their fault prevents the possibility of their falling again. And it is a source of hope that, when they have lapsed, betrayed themselves and caused disorder, our heroes do not remain discouraged but, at some time begin again, and strive for a higher degree of virtue.

### CONCLUSION

The heroes have now all been seen in the crises by which they have fallen short of their respective initial promise. These crises never come suddenly, but have always been anticipated either by the circumstances surrounding the hero, or have erupted as a result of a faulty latent disposition which needs to be confronted and eradicated if the hero is to embark successfully in the true direction of his quest. The fault which the hero commits at this crisis is not always a sin nor, because of it, is the hero always a sinner. But it has been seen that in the notions of pride, failure, misuse of the good, and lack of balance among the hero's gifts, the effects are basically the same and include: incredulity, horror at his fault, despair and self-loathing, to say nothing of the disorder in society which frequently ensues.

When the heroes were introduced, it was seen that their assertive force manifested itself on the intellectual and moral or spiritual level far more than on the physical level. The same can be said of the hero's fault, and it is on these levels that his development as a person provokes interest.

The real message of the Book of Genesis is not so much man's fall as his need for redemption. For although sin is evil in itself and, at times, likened to death, in the force of its destructive powers, it can, when recognised in its true perspective, lead to good, in the same way that new life is seen to emerge from death and decay. In this way, Adam's fall led to the promise of a Redeemer and is commemorated in terms of high praise in the liturgy of the Easter Vigil:

'O felix culpa, quae talem ac tantum meruit  
habere Redemptorem.'

This, too is the pattern of certain great sinners who have humbly recognised their unworthiness and been led to repentance and to heights of great sanctity in their quest for God.

Let us recall briefly what Michael Grant wrote concerning the universal appeal of the hero, and which was quoted earlier:

The epic heroes carry us with them in their struggles and sufferings; they are not as we are, yet we follow after them. And so when they suffer or exult, so do we. <sup>87</sup>.

If the man of heroic δύναμις and exceptional human qualities is as prone to struggles and sufferings as ordinary men, and is allowed to sin, it is, surely, because he is considered to be part of the human race which is capable of both evil and good. Such a man, too, can easily misdirect his assertiveness for a time, so that it becomes a destructive rather than a creative force. Humanity may, therefore, be encouraged by the downfall of its heroes who frequently grow in humility as a result of their failings, and are, therefore, more likely to achieve the good for which they are destined. Thus, they are better prepared to submit to the ordeals which the attainment of a quest frequently demands.

Notes to Chapter II.

1. Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 211  
For example: "οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ / σφῆσιν  
ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ νόμον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν." (Odyssey, I, 33-34)  
(For on account of their blind folly, they win suffering  
beyond what is given.)
2. Ibid., p.1458
3. For example: ταῦτα λέγων καὶ ἡμᾶς ὑβρίζεις (Luke XI: 45.)  
(When you say these things, you insult us also.)
4. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 69.
5. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, Oxford, 1886, p. 1320.
6. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, E. Amonn, Dictionnaire de Théologie catholique, t. 12, Paris, 1933, p. 143.
7. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 1390.
8. Ibid.
9. Jessie Crosland, 'The Concept of Mesure in some Medieval Poets, Modern Language Review. 21, 1927, pp. 380-84. See p. 380.  
Desmesure is defined in a sense which will be recognisable in the conduct of our heroes: 'Au sens moral, pour désigner une conduite ou une chose qui passe les bornes de la raison, de la justice, de l'honneur, etc. Il s'applique particulièrement à l'arrogance, à outrecuidance.'  
Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française, Paris, 1881-1902, t.2, p. 611.
10. De Republica, III, xxii, 33, tr. Clinton Walker Keyes, Loeb Classical Library, London - New York, 1928, p. 210.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Saint Augustine, Contra Faustum Manichaeum, XXII. cap. 27. PL 42, col. 418.
14. E.T. Owen, The Story of the Iliad, Michigan, 1966, p. 7.
15. Phyllis Grau, 'The Curse of the Cyclops,' Classical Bulletin of Saint Louis University, 50, 1973-74, pp. 31-32. See p. 31.
16. G. Boissier, La Religion romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins, t.i., p. 244, Cited by R. Allain, 'Une "Nuit spirituelle" d'Enée,' Revue des études latines, 26, 1946, p. 189.
17. Allain, 'Une "Nuit spirituelle" ...,' p. 191.
18. A. Guillemin, 'L'Unité de l'œuvre virgilienne,' Revue des études latines, 28, 1948, pp. 189-203. See p. 197.

19. '...a woman that has had only one husband.' (Lewis and Short, Latin Dictionary, p. 1933.) Although this word is post-classical and appears not to have been used before Tertullian, the attribute itself was noted, for example: 'in lapide hoc uni nupta fuisse legar.' (Propertii Carmina, ed. Barber, Oxford, 1960, IV, xi, 36.)
20. Vergil made his attitude quite clear: 'labor omnia vicit improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas.' (Georgic I, 145-46).
21. De Finibus, H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, London-New York, 1914. I, xiv, 47.
22. De Natura Boni, PL 42, cap. XXXVI, col. 562.
23. Ibid., cap. IV, col. 553.
24. Ibid., cap. XXXVI, col. 562.
25. Ibid.
26. De Continentia, PL 40, cap. III, col. 353.
27. Ibid., cap. V, col. 357.
28. Ibid.
29. Enchiridion, PL 40, cap. LXXXI, col. 271
30. Confessions, X, 43.
31. De Consolatione Philosophiae, tr. H.F. Stewart and E.K. Rand, Loeb Classical Library, London-Cambridge (Mass.), 1918. I, pr. 1; I, pr. 2.
32. Liber Poenitentialis, PL 210, col. 285.
33. Epistola, col. 320.
34. Cur Deus Homo? PL 158, cap. XI, col. 376.
35. Ibid.
36. Orationes, PL 158, cap. LXIII, col. 971.
37. Liber de Modo bene Vivendi, PL 134, col. 76.
38. Ibid., col. 75.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., col. 76.
41. Ibid.

42. De Remissione Peccatorum, PL 178, cap. CXLIV, col. 1588.
43. De Statu Interioris Hominis, Tract. II, PL 196, cap. II, col. 1147.
44. Policraticus, ed. C. Webb, t.2, p. 23.
45. 'Le Graal et la chevalerie,' Romania, 75, 1954, pp. 165-210. See p. 167.
46. Ibid.
47. John of Salisbury, Policraticus, VI, 8, p. 23.
48. Ibid.
49. De Laude Novae Militiae, cap. II, p. 216.
50. Andreae Capellani Regii Francorum, De Amore, ed. E. Trojel, Munich, 1972, p. 10.
51. Ibid., p. 246.
52. Ibid.
53. Aeneid, IV, 90-128.
54. Among the many implications associated with felenie are firstly, a breach of faith. For example, in La Chanson de Roland (ed. F. Whitehead, Oxford, 1942, l.844), a fel, feluns was a person guilty of a breach of feudal faith. Secondly, it can designate the faithlessness of a lover, for example, La Vie de Saint Alexis (ed. C. Storey, Oxford, 1946, l. 475). For fuller discussion, see K.J. Hollyman, Le Développement du vocabulaire féodal en France pendant le haut moyen âge, Paris, 1957, pp. 152-55, Godefroy, Dictionnaire, t.3, p 745.
55. Aeneid IV. Although the French poet transcribes accurately Dido's reactions at seeing the preparations for the fleet (1875-85), there is no equivalent of the poignant apostrophe by which Vergil addresses the queen:  
 Quis tibi tum, Dido, cernenti talia sensus,  
 quosve dabas gemitus, cum litora fervere late  
 prospiceres arce ex summa; (Aeneid IV, 408-10).
56. Commentum, p. 23. My underlining.
57. Cicero expounds his views on luxus very clearly. See In Verrem, II, 3, 26, 62. Saint Bernard condemns this fault in De Laude Novae Militiae, II, 7-9.
58. Chrétien de Troyes, Cambridge, 1981, p. 25.
59. T.H. White, The Book of Beasts, New York, 1954, pp. 38-39.

60. Amour courtois et fin' amors dans la littérature du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1964, p. 201.
61. F.E. Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française, t. 6., p. 691.
62. Cf. Saint Bernard, 'De Peccato,' Liber de Modo Bene Vivendi, PL 184, cap. XXVI, col. 75.
63. See supra, p. 40.
64. E. Schweitzer, 'Pattern and Theme in Chrétien's Yvain,' p. 157. For a fuller discussion of the meanings of superbia and invidia in their theological context, especially in the writings of Saint Gregory the Great, Saint Augustine and Hugh of Saint Victor, see ibid., pp.155-58.
65. Ibid., p. 158
66. John of Salisbury Policraticus, t. 2, p. 23.
67. The inter-dependence between 'chevalerie d'armes' and 'chevalerie d'amour' is noted in a medieval gloss on Ovid's Ars Amatoria 11.3437 sq.: 'Pour ce veult il prouver que amer par amours est une bonne maniere de labour. Si comme il dit ci et ailleurs, c'est chevalerie d'armes qui aide a iceste conquēter, et iceste chevalerie (c'est d'amours) aide a l'autre maintenir.' Bruno Roy, L'Art d'Amours: Traduction et commentaire de l' 'Ars Amatoria' d'Ovide, Leiden, 1974, p. 219.
68. Amour courtois et "fin' amors"... p. 244.
69. Schweitzer, 'Pattern and Theme ...' p. 162.
70. For example, 'Mon seignor Yvain avuec aus' (2483), 'Mes sire Yvains plore et sospire' (2579). Cf. also '...d'un tornoiemant/Ou mes sire Yvains ot este/S'an ot tot le pris aporte.' (2682-84), where Yvain has reached the summit of his secular knightly reputation and 'Quant Yvains tant ancomanca/A panser,...' (2695-96), where he begins to be aware of his lady and therefore, of his fault. See also L. Foulet, 'Sire, messire,' Romania, 71, 1950, pp. 1-48; 180-221.
71. Liber de Plāntu Naturae, PL 210, cap. 310, col. 468.
72. Alan of Lille, Anticlaudianus, II, ix, 332
73. Andreae Capellani, De Amore, p. 243.
74. Saint Bernard, 'De Peccato,' Liber de Modo Bene Vivendi, PL 184, cap. XXVI, col. 75.

75. La Spiritualité et le symbolisme dans les œuvres de Chrétien de Troyes, Paris, 1974, p. 88.
76. Ibid., p. 133.
77. Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes et le mythe du Graal, Paris, 1972, p. 88.
78. Ibid., p. 119, n. 38.
79. Le Legs du moyen age, Melun, 1950, p. 174.
80. Perceval et l'initiation, p. 144.
81. See supra, pp. 74 - 75.
82. De Republica, III, xxii, 33.
83. Saint Bernard, Liber de Modo Bene Vivendi, PL 134, col. 76.
84. De Republica, III, xxii, 33.
85. Hugh of Saint-Victor, De Sacramentis, XXVI, PL 176, col. 298.
86. PL 178, CXLIII, col. 1588.
87. Myths of the Greeks and Romans, p. 44

## Chapter 3.

The Object of the Quest.INTRODUCTION.

Man's first and fundamental quest is, as has been said, himself. He needs to know the demands of his own natural appetites, to discover the peculiarities of his temperament and the sources of his pride. He needs to explore his intellectual and spiritual potential. Only when he has recognised his strengths and accepted his limitations does he have sufficient wisdom to discern what is the true source of his good and his happiness, and to begin to pursue it. The inscription in the temple at Delphi, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ 'know thyself,' has been quoted at many different periods of civilisation and in many different contexts, Plato used it to show that self-knowledge should precede any other kind of learning:

I must first know myself, as the Delphian inscription says; to be curious about that which is not my concern, while I am in ignorance of my own self, would be ridiculous.<sup>1</sup>

Early in the thirteenth century, the Cistercian monk, Helinand of Froidmont, was to make a similar observation. As he commented upon this same inscription at Delphi and summarised the ideas of some of his literary predecessors, he wrote:

Stulta scientia est, et insipiens sapientia supervacua noscere, necessariis ignoratis. Quid enim prodest homini scire metiri mundum, et nescire seipsum? et absque hac scientia nihil mortalibus est utile, nihil hominibus salutare.<sup>2</sup>

But this fundamental quest does not end with man's self-knowledge and self-acceptance and, as Helinand points out, hardly even begins there:

Ut ergo convincamus Apollinem fallacem, prius est cognoscendus Deus, quam homo.<sup>3</sup>

Having recognised his own true nature, man needs to acknowledge his dependence upon his Creator, discern his situation in life and live in accordance with it. Placed in his theological and social context, man is better equipped to extend his potential, to discern his vocation and to fulfil the role to which he has been elected than if he were answerable only to himself.



Just as a high degree of experiential or intellectual knowledge is considered to be useless without self-knowledge, so man's quest for an external goal is misdirected and fails until he has succeeded in his quest for himself. His aims tend to alter and develop as, during the course of his experiences, he becomes a more mature and more fully integrated person, and as he learns that deep and lasting happiness is not to be found in transitory pleasures. Saint Bernard cautioned:

Sed hoc stultum et extremae dementiae est, ea semper appetere quae numquam, non dico satient, sed nec temperent appetitum, dum quidquid talium habueris, nihilominus non habita concupiscas, et ad quaeque defuerint, semper inquietus aneheles.<sup>4</sup>

This false seeking will be reflected in the course of the quest where the hero undertakes an initial quest before he embarks upon his principal task. In this initial quest, he is drawn by a desire for personal glory towards a goal in which his personal pleasure is seen as the good to be pursued. A misguided preoccupation with himself and with his superficial desires has clouded his mind and caused him to commit his fault. Now he is brought to self-confrontation and eventual self-acceptance, through which he can achieve a higher degree of maturity. Thus, he is better prepared to see where the object of his principal quest really lies, and to undergo the hazards which will accompany his journey. In the Homeric epics, this initial quest is merely implied (*Iliad* I, 159-60), and although it provides the circumstances, it has little other real bearing on the hero's principal quest. Chrétien's heroes, on the other hand, set out with imperfect motives in search of adventures, commit a fault, and have to begin their principal quest not from the height of their heroic promise but from the depths of their realisation that they are sinful men. The hero's principal quest, then, may be seen as that which he undertakes in his new maturity, when he has experienced failure and the humiliation of self-discovery. Through this quest, which is directed towards his true and lasting good, he can be expected to develop more fully as a human being and, because of his acquired virtues and increased self-knowledge, he can hope to discern what is right and achieve his goal successfully.

What are the external goals which man seeks and which he may reasonably hope to achieve? Freedom, reputation, security and harmony within himself must surely rank highly among these as do more spectacular values:

Atqui haec sunt quae adipisci homines volunt eaque de causa divitias, dignitates, regna, gloriam, voluptatesque desiderant quod per haec sibi sufficientiam, reverentiam, potentiam, celebritatem, laetitiamque credunt esse venturam.<sup>5</sup>

But above all, man seeks to be happy. No matter how incompletely he sees reality, man seeks what appears to be his own good as his primary external quest:

Bonum est igitur quod tam diversis studiis homines petunt.<sup>6</sup> for his happiness resides in this good:

Sed summum bonum beatitudinem esse definivimus.<sup>7</sup>

In the weakness of his humanity, however, he frequently finds that his superficial transitory desires are far removed from the true good which he could achieve and which could bring about his fulfilment as a person and far removed, therefore, from his real happiness. Saint Augustine wrote of the problem of man's aspirations in De Beata Vita, in his discussion on happiness.<sup>8</sup> The object of man's desire should be permanent and independent of chance or accident, for the fear of losing a perishable object or transitory good is incompatible with real happiness.

Id ergo, inquam semper manens, nec ex fortuna pendulum, nec ullis subjectum casibus esse debet. Nam quidquid mortale et caducum est, non potest a nobis quando volumus, et quamdiu volumus haberi.<sup>9</sup>

And as he grows to see the uselessness of setting his heart upon impermanent goals, man comes to seek knowledge, justice, love, truth, especially concerning the meaning of this life and his relationship to a higher being. This is true, also, of the heroes who have been selected for this study. It will be shown in this chapter that because they are human, they are sometimes blinded by the lure of worldly ideals and the promise of spectacular achievements, and often need to differentiate between their worldly desires and the deeper good which they strive ultimately to attain. Representing, as they do, three important periods of literary achievement, these heroes show tendencies which can be discerned in man's universal quest for himself and his good, and also reflect the deepest longings of their contemporary civilisations.

Man's yearnings may be found in more than one facet of his nature, and this is reflected in our quest-heroes. The quests on the physical, baser, more aggressive aspect of the hero's being, may be seen in his efforts to prove his self-assertiveness, his desire for experiential knowledge and his eagerness for adventure. According to the distinction made by William of Saint-Thierry:

Sunt etenim animales, qui per se nec ratione aguntur,  
nec trahuntur affectu.<sup>10</sup>

The lust for power at the expense of reasonable behaviour is evident, whether it be shown in battles for supremacy over an enemy in attempts to gain new territory or in manipulation of weaker people in attempts to gain prestige. Man's rational yearnings are evident from the quests for knowledge, often in preference to wealth and reputation, which have characterised thinking man in his endeavours to understand his world and to improve the quality of his life:

Sunt rationales qui per rationis iudicium et naturalis  
scientiae discretionem, habent et cognitionem boni,  
et appetitum: sed nondum habent affectum.<sup>11</sup>

But, with only his gifts of reason, man has not reached his potential as a creature of an all-wise Creator.

Sunt perfecti, qui spiritu aguntur, qui a Spiritu Sancto  
plenius illuminantur. Et quoniam sapit eis bonum cuius  
trahuntur, sapientes vocantur.<sup>12</sup>

Man's spiritual searchings direct him, if he is so willing, to explore the extent of his own gifts and lead him to seek the Supreme Good and the Supreme Wisdom. Let us recall St. Augustine's words which reflect man's fundamental yearnings:

Tu fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec  
requiescat in te.<sup>13</sup>

for these correspond to the conclusion of his argument in De Beata Vita:

Haec est beata vita, pie perfecteque cognoscere a quo inducaris  
in veritatem, qua veritate perfruaris, per quid connectaris  
summo modo.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, as only God is permanent, unchanging, independent of chance or accident and unable to be lost, only he who possesses God possesses happiness.

The selected heroes do not, of course, necessarily seek God as the direct object of their quest, but they frequently come to seek high ideals and spiritual values. Their experiences reflect

the three levels of their nature, and the goals of the quests develop as the heroes progress towards their true maturity. It could be expected that, in the Homeric age, when excellence in battle and the performance of spectacular heroic deeds were considered an ideal, the quest would remain predominantly on the physical or, at best, the rational level. But even here there can be glimpsed traces of a searching for a higher ideal and a longing for a greater, intangible good. The statement in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church:

Nor is God Himself far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath ... and wills that all men be saved.<sup>15</sup>

manifests a hope in the nobler instincts of sincere pagans which is exemplified by our heroes. Similarly, in his search for identity and for his new land, Aeneas shows evidence of a deep spiritual yearning which is much more powerful and constructive in its results than is any blind searching for a dimly perceived goal. On the other hand, although the medieval heroes appear at an age which is characterised by a vibrant spiritual and intellectual searching, they still undergo a time of questing on the baser, physical level before they can recognise the object of their quest proper. It is only then that they are motivated towards spiritual values of different kinds - peace, harmony, truth, joy and wisdom, for it is only in the light of these that a quest can be successfully achieved.

In quest literature, a task or quest can be imposed upon characters other than the principal hero. Such subsidiary quests are frequently concurrent with the main quest, are usually of considerable importance and can, at times, precipitate the main action of the work. This is exemplified in the Iliad, where Chryses' simple quest for the ransom of his daughter unleashes a chain of action which causes untold havoc among Trojans and Achaeans alike. These quests, like the Telemacheia in the Odyssey, can also serve to provide missing information about the hero's adventures, or to narrate a set of complementary episodes. Or a quest may, within itself, contain a miniature quest with many of the characteristics of a main quest. The visits to the World of

the Dead in the Odyssey and Aeneid, or to the Grail Castle in the Conte del Graal serve as examples of this.

After some discussion of the nature of the quest of the Homeric heroes and of Aeneas, Eneas' quest will be compared with that of his Roman predecessor and discussed in the light of the aspirations of twelfth-century France. A study will be made, in turn, of the goals of Chrétien de Troyes' heroes, of both their initial adventures which, in general, will have led to their fault, of certain features of the principal quest which ensues, and of any other quests which are relevant.

### ACHILLES

For the Homeric hero, the glory which was to be sought and found in heroic action and brave deeds was, to a certain extent, its own reward, and justified the undertaking of a quest. But this hardly classifies Achilles as a quest hero, for he is not seen, in this epic, seeking glory or fame. He does not, in the Iliad, leave home in search of a precious object, a new home or a wife. Nor does he undertake an apparently difficult or impossible task. Yet, although during most of the action of the epic, Achilles is idling in his tent, taking little interest in the battle in which he had gloried or in the friends whom he had appeared to love, there are ways in which the presentation of the hero conforms quite faithfully and consistently to our quest pattern. The present task is to try and define the object of Achilles' quest and to see how it not only places him in the category of quest hero, but also suggests features which will appear in later works.

Achilles begins his quest in the Iliad not as a promising young hero seeking glory and excitement in warfare and adventure, but as a deeply wounded man who does not know which way to turn or whose help to enlist. He has already, with Agamemnon's other supporters, embarked on his quest, in the physical sense, in the attack upon Troy. His angry words include an insult to his king (Iliad I, 225). By his oath to withdraw his services from the Achaeans, Achilles' isolation is self-inflicted but prompted, nevertheless, in firm defence of a principle. He has cut himself off from the battle

which he had loved (I, 490-92) and from all his friends except Patroclus. Thus, Achilles is forced back onto the resources of his own human nature to begin a deep but very real psychological journey.<sup>16</sup> This experience reflects the quest which every man must make to the depths of his own being to appease the forces of bitterness, anger and self-pity which will otherwise destroy him when his familiar world has been attacked. Achilles' task is to wrestle with this wrath, to live out the pain of his insulted pride and prestige, to purify himself of his destructive passion and, as would be stated in Christian terms, to 'save his soul.'<sup>17</sup> His μῆνις his wrath, does certainly result in a search for revenge, honour and justice, but it can also be seen, as Whitman expresses it, as a 'search for himself which is complete only when the poem is complete'.<sup>18</sup> Such a search is an agonising experience for any person, for it necessitates his confronting his innermost self, seeing himself as he really is, without the cloak of his delusions or the support of his friends, as he faces the horror of his weaknesses and his potential for evil and destruction. But for a man of Achilles' exceptional heroic qualities, the trauma of self-realisation is such that he must either be crushed by this knowledge or come to terms with it.

Self-knowledge, however, cannot be an end in itself, nor can personal glory, as Achilles himself admitted (IX, 307-27). For there is shown here, as in many places in the *Iliad*, a hint of that concern for other people, especially the weaker, which was to characterise later heroes. There is emphasis on a certain altruism in the motivation for undertaking warlike expeditions:

"ἀνδράσι μαρνάμενος ὄρων ἔνεκα σφετεράων. (IX, 327).

("striving with warriors for the sake of these men's women.")

With the disappearance of these fundamental qualities as a result of his wrath, there is seen in Achilles a limitation which is also his tragedy. Preoccupied, as he is, for the greater part of the epic, with his own grievances, he forgets the tenets of a primitive heroic code and seeks, not in any detached, objective fashion, but with a bitter introspection, for a solution which can be found only in relating himself to others.

It is not until after Patroclus' death that Achilles' inward quest assumes a new intensity and a clearer direction. For it is here that he begins to seek, in his erroneous way, what seems to be a good outside himself, namely, vengeance for the death of his friend. The moment of reconciliation had shown the original wrath for what it really was, namely, a momentary bitterness which ought not to be prolonged. Achilles had admitted to having experienced little satisfaction at the Achaeans' humiliation:

ἤμητερ ἐμή, τὰ μὲν ἄρ μοι Ὀλύμπιος ἐξέτελεσσεν·  
 ἀλλὰ τί μοι τῶν ἡδῶς, ἐπεὶ φίλος ὦλεθ' ἑταῖρος,  
 Πάτροκλος, τὸν ἐγὼ περὶ πάντων τῶν ἑταίρων,  
 ἴσον ἐμῇ κεφαλῇ.  
 (XVIII, 79-82)

(My mother, the Olympian has fulfilled all these things for me; but what pleasure can I have from this, since my dear companion has perished, Patroclus whom I loved beyond all my companions, as well as my own life.)

Patroclus' death has placed his earlier hurt in its real perspective. His task of avenging Patroclus is undertaken not out of any desire to satisfy a personal grudge, but because he is impelled by a sense of what he owes to Patroclus' memory (XIX, 315-33), and thus, his quest begins to become more altruistic in its orientations. Yet even when Achilles has slain Hector and attempted the utmost desecration of his body, he can find neither satisfaction nor consolation, and he can be seen at the beginning of Book XXIV, not knowing how to appease his anguish:

κλαῖε φίλου ἑταίρου μεμνήμενος, οὐδέ μιν ὕπνος  
 ἦρει πανδαμάτωρ,  
 αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς  
 (XXIV, 3-5).

(But Achilles wept as he remembered his dear companion, nor did sleep, who embraces all, come to him.)

or with what acts of violence to seek an end to his own fury and attempt a reintegration within himself. (XXIV, 9-22)

It is at this point that the significance of the subsidiary quest is seen in its fullest form, instead of serving as a digression or source of information or parallel event of a complementary nature, it performs here an essential part of Achilles' growth and directs him more surely towards accomplishing the quest for his true self than does any brooding over his wrongs or preoccupation with revenge. Other lesser quests in this work, Thetis' journey to Zeus in Book I,

the embassy's approach to Achilles in Book IX, Patroclus' visit to Nestor's tent in Book XIII all have points of identification with the true quest. But there are two subsidiary quests upon which the epic hinges and which assume functions of crucial importance. These are the quest of Chryses for his daughter in Book I (12-24), which is placed symmetrically with Priam's quest for the body of Hector at the end (XXIV, 322-95), when Achilles, in a moment of identification with the agony of human loss, becomes reconciled with his mortal enemy, sets aside a deep personal animosity and achieves a kind of peace. For, after the tale of Priam's sorrows (XXIV, 485-506), and in the reminder to Achilles of his father (XXIV, 486-87), there is a moment when Achilles re-discovers himself as, through the meeting with Priam, he identifies himself not only in the everyday activities of eating and sleeping (XXIV, 621-76) which have eluded him in his grief, but above all in an emotion which transcends any hostility between Achaean and Trojan.

The first quest, therefore, helps to precipitate Achilles' wrath; the second helps to complete its resolution and to restore Achilles to humanity and to himself. The object of Achilles' quest has not appeared clearly on the physical or rational levels, as it will in the case of most of our other heroes. But the effect of his intense spiritual search is evident.

#### ODYSSEUS.

If Achilles' wrath can be seen to initiate a quest with a deeper significance than is obvious at first, can the same be said of Odysseus? Is his quest as simple and as straightforward as it traditionally seems? His great longing is, as he himself says to the Phaeacians, for his island home in sunny Ithaca.

‘αὐτὴ δὲ χθαμαλὴ πανυπερτάτη εἰν ἂν κεῖται  
πρὸς ζόφον, αἱ δὲ τ’ ἀνευθε πρὸς ἥω τ’ ἥλιον τε,  
τρηχεῖ, ἀλλ’ ἀγαθὴ κουροτροφός.’ (Odyssey, IX, 25-27)

("but my island lies low, last of all on the water,  
towards the dark, whereas the others face dawn and the  
sun, a rugged land, but a good nurse of men.")

This place is lovelier than the fair lands inhabited by Calypso and Circe, for as Odysseus himself says:

‘ὡς οὐδὲν γλυκίον ἤς πατρίδος οὐδὲ τοκῆων  
γίγνεται, εἴ περ καὶ τις ἀπόπροθι πῖονα οἶκον  
γαίῃ ἐν ἄλλοδαπῇ ναίει ἀπ’ ἀνευθε τοκῆων.’ (IX, 34-36).



("So it is that nothing is sweeter than native land and parents, even when, far away, one has settled in a rich home, when it is in a foreign land, far away from one's parents.")

Thus Odysseus defines the principal object of his quest as he speaks of his land, his home, his people and of all that is dear to him. And every act of his will and his innate cunning is directed towards this end. To attain his goal, Odysseus has been prepared to undergo trials of many sorts, culminating in his strange near-death experience in the sea, rather than share the life of pleasant immortality offered to him by Calypso (V, 133-36). For this is not just a quest on a physical level for new territory, or for the conquest of a bride. It is a search for Odysseus' own identity which is completed by his return to his own people and to his origins.

In order to achieve his principal goal, Odysseus needs his exceptional gifts of physical prowess, but above all, he needs his desire for knowledge. Indeed, a quest for knowledge features prominently in the main part of his adventures. At times, it leads him and his men into serious error, as was evident from his intrusion into the cave of the Cyclops. This knowledge, therefore, must be tempered with the kind of prudence which was to enable him to escape the temptations of the Sirens and to avoid Circe's snare, while learning, still, of the wonders to be found among these strange folk. It is through his constant seeking after knowledge and his openness to the lessons of the journey that Odysseus becomes the *πολύτροπος* the 'man of many ways', who alone escapes the perils of the wanderings and arrives home at Ithaca. But although he acquires knowledge and submits to new experiences, Odysseus' quest, like that of Achilles, is first of all a quest for himself, but it requires the working out of certain of his adventures and certain regenerative processes before he can be restored to himself as a fully human being who knows what he wants, has seen and assessed the possible alternatives to his goal and still continues single-mindedly on his quest. The *Γνώθι σεαυτον* of the temple at Delphi is seen in Odysseus' acceptance of himself and his limit-

ations as a creature who is dependent upon the caprices of the gods:

‘οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο  
 πάντων ὅσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνεῖει τε καὶ ἔρπει.  
 οὐ μὲν γάρ ποτέ φησι κακὸν πείσεσθαι ὀπίσσω,  
 ὄφρ’ ἀρετὴν παρέχῃσι θεοὶ καὶ γούνατ’ ὀρώρη·  
 ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ καὶ λυγρὰ θεοὶ μάκαρες τελέσωσι  
 καὶ τὰ φέρει ἀεκαλόρενος τετλήσῃ θυμῷ.’

(XVIII, 130-35)  
 ("Of all creatures that move and breathe on the earth, there is nothing more helpless than man, of all that the earth fosters. For he thinks that he will never suffer evil in future days, while the gods grant him virtue and his knees have power: but when the blessed gods bring woes upon him, his must suffer with enduring spirit.")

This is how Odysseus can accept himself as he is, be accepted as he has become by his son, his wife, his father and by those whom he left behind at the beginning of the Trojan War. Furthermore it is this search for himself through his challenges, misfortunes and the whims of the gods that places Odysseus as a universal hero whose relevance extends beyond the heroic age and the epic genre and becomes applicable to people of any century.

After twenty years away from Ithaca, Odysseus cannot expect to find the same situation as that which he left. He has outlived the heroic world of the Trojan War in which he had excelled and, stranded on Calypso's island, finds himself isolated not only from the companions of his own generation, but from human society altogether. His task, therefore, is also to adapt himself once more to the world of men, to achieve, through his trials, harmony within himself, to grow into his role as lord of an altered Ithaca and to prepare himself to assert his authority, in order to restore harmony within his household. It is because of this adaptation that the subsidiary quests in this work have considerable importance. Odysseus' visit to the World of the Dead adds to his knowledge of his family, helps to prepare his mind for the future and gives him confidence in his homecoming. Telemachus' quest for information about his father provides background knowledge for the reader but also prepares Telemachus to help Odysseus to effect his return.

As A.B. Lord writes:

It makes extraordinarily good sense that the son of Odysseus of many wiles should seek knowledge in his first journey away from home.<sup>19</sup>

For Odysseus and his son can be seen as exemplars for each other. Odysseus is a visible embodiment of the qualities which are seen developing in his son - his curiosity, his commonsense, but above all, the wisdom which is gained through his readiness to learn. Menelaus recognised it in Telemachus when he applauded the young man's tact. (IV, 611). In Telemachus, on the other hand, there is seen the heroic resourcefulness which traditionally characterised Odysseus in his youth, so that the suitors see in Telemachus a source of amazement, as well as a threat to their well-being (IV, 663-66). The Telemacheia, then, can be seen as a miniature Odyssey in which the hero leaves his land in search of information, faces perils and threats and, after accomplishing his task, returns to bestow the benefits of his greater maturity and deeper wisdom upon his household and his dependents.

#### AENEAS.

The longings of the society which Vergil knew are, naturally, more clearly obvious from both history and literature than are those of the heroic age, and it is inevitable that these should be reflected in the aspirations of the principal quest hero of that time. After a century of civil wars which culminated in the downfall of the Roman republic, there could be seen a deep longing for peace and order, as is exemplified in the work not only of Vergil, but also of his near contemporaries. Tibullus' frequent condemnation of war can be seen in lines such as these:

"Quis fuit horrendos primus qui protulit enses?"  
quam ferus et vere ferreus ille fuit." (Elegies, I, 10, 11s.  
1-2).<sup>20.</sup>

And Horace's love of peace is well known:

... "O pater et rex  
Iuppiter, ut pereat positum robigine telum,  
nec quisquam noceat cupido mihi pacis." (Satires I, Bk II  
42-44).<sup>21.</sup>

At the same time, there was considerable preoccupation with land, owing to the recent confiscations, and the problems suffered by evicted land owners are seen to have caused great anxiety to contemporary writers. But there was also a pride in ownership of land, as well as a longing for the simple, peaceful life of the countryman.

"o rus, quando ego te aspiciam? quandoque licebit  
nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis  
ducere sollicitae jucunda oblivia vitae?" (Satires, II, vi  
60-62)

Furthermore, the Romans were a people who had always been extremely conscious of their national identity, and their greatness was due, to a considerable extent, to the tendency to submerge the desires of the individual for the welfare of the whole community. The pride which could be seen in the earlier achievements of the Republic had yielded, by Vergil's time, to a pride in the achievements of Augustus and a resurgence of hope in the nascent empire.

The purpose of Aeneas' quest is defined very clearly, early in the epic:

multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem  
inferretque deos Latio ... (Aeneid I, 5-6)

and shows that his quest is to affect not just the fate of an individual or his family, but that it concerns the future of a whole people. For, like Odysseus, Aeneas is a wanderer with a purpose. But whereas Odysseus' quest is to find his wife and home and the beloved people whom he knew before the Trojan War, Aeneas has to leave his home and the burial places of his kinsfolk in order to begin his quest and find a land of which he is given such vague directions that, owing to his great longing for a land which he can call his home, he yields too easily to false hopes, and makes several mistaken landings in the search. Like Abraham in the Book of Genesis, he is called to leave his home and country, to put his faith in a power he cannot understand, in order to found a nation of his descendants. Like Odysseus, Aeneas has to adapt himself not simply to the changed circumstances of his old way of life, but to enter into a new role in order to institute a completely new society in an unfamiliar land. For this, he needs his exceptional gifts of character and ancestry, the gods' protection and guidance, and above all, the ability to grow into his role. Nor is his quest initiated by any self-imposed desire, but is, rather, ordained by the gods and, in spite of Juno's enmity, is to be blessed by them, as Jupiter promises Venus:

"His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:  
imperium sine fine dedi. quin aspera Iuno,  
quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat,

consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit  
Romanos, rerum dominos gentemque togatam." (I, 278-82).

If, therefore, Aeneas' quest for his new land is to succeed, he must, above all, know himself. He, too, has to embark upon a spiritual quest for identity in which again and again, he is seen having to test his potential against adversities which seem too strong, in order to achieve a destiny which he perceives only vaguely. He has to learn to settle the opposing forces of pietas and furor within his own nature and to resolve conflicts which will otherwise limit his growth as an individual and prevent him from beginning to understand his vocation. For this, he has to discern and develop his latent resources of mind and heart in order to consolidate once and for all the qualities which he will need as ancestor of the Roman race and precursor of Augustus. Although he is often crushed by the knowledge of his human weakness and inadequacy in the face of his destiny, and puzzled and discouraged by the demands of his calling, Aeneas' special vocation is to transcend the human state, however regretfully, and to cast aside personal longings and, at times, apparently even wise decisions for the sake of the greater glory of Rome. And these are to become his preoccupations. By his striving to find his new land, to consolidate its powers and to set a way of pietas and peace, he reflects the aspirations and special character of his own society which Anchises defined:

"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento  
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,  
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos." (VI, (851-53).

But he does this blindly and painfully until after his journey to the World of the Dead and his quest for knowledge there.

The special function of this most important subsidiary quest is to present Aeneas with such a vision of his destiny and of his descendants that he is infused with the self-knowledge, understanding and wisdom which will enable him to complete his task. This miniature quest has all the features of a quest proper. There is a time of separation, when Aeneas leaves his companions, and a difficult, and normally impossible, task to perform:

"sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,  
hoc opus, hic labor est." (VI, 129-30).

Besides the knowledge which he must gain in his visit to the Other

World, there is also a precious object to be found, the Golden Bough, which is associated with so much symbolism.<sup>22</sup> In addition there is, for Aeneas, an encounter with death and a return to his companions as one not only endowed with new life, but as one for whom life must assume an entirely different meaning in the light of the vision which he has experienced. For it is here that Aeneas learns the significance of his past conflicts, resolves the grief of his former sorrows and accepts the unknown challenges of the future:

quae postquam Anchises natum per singula duxit  
incenditque animum famae venientis amore. (VI, 888-89)

At this crucial point in his quest, Aeneas is led to submerge his individuality as Trojan Aeneas into his greater role as progenitor of the Roman people.

"huc geminas nunc flecte acies, hanc aspice gentem  
Romanosque tuos." (VI, 788-89)

But there is another facet to the knowledge which Aeneas seeks here. For, beyond the self-knowledge which he needs as a human person and the vision of the glories of Rome, there is presented, also, with his father's teachings, another goal to seek, namely a wider vision of the universe and a deeper perception of the meaning of human life, and hope in the mysteries of life beyond the grave (VI 719-51). Aeneas' quest, therefore, assumes a new and spiritual dimension. This culmination of his new knowledge gives him the confidence he needs in order to achieve his destiny, with the result that the fulfillment of his task of bringing Trojan gods to Latium can actually be said to depend upon the success of his quest for himself and his understanding of his role.

Thus there is a threefold dimension to the object of Aeneas' quest. The most obvious aspect is seen in the territorial goal, the quest in material terms. Yet this loses significance in the urgency of the intellectual search for knowledge and understanding. But it is the spiritual quest that gives Aeneas the confidence to complete his journey and sufficient prestige to establish himself as leader of the new settlement in Latium.

THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE

Do the goals of our medieval heroes differ significantly from those of Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas? And what contemporary features do they reflect in their quests? In the first place, certain theologians attached considerable importance to that self-knowledge and self-acceptance which was recommended in the inscription at Delphi. St. Augustine had seen it as a beginning of man's ascent to God and as a particularly useful kind of knowledge.<sup>23</sup> Now, in the twelfth century, Saint Bernard insisted that self-knowledge is a pre-requisite not only for humility:

humilitas est virtus qua homo verissima sui cognitione sibi ipse vilescit,<sup>24</sup>

but also for love of God, for a man who does not know and value his own gifts is hardly likely to arrive at due respect for his neighbour, or true reverence for his maker.<sup>25</sup> This necessity was affirmed by William of Saint-Thierry:

... ut incipiat homo perfecte nosse se ipsum, et per cognitionem sui proficiendo, ascendere ad cognoscendum Deum.<sup>26</sup>

Boethius, considered that a search for happiness outside oneself is vain and fruitless. For happiness is to be found not so much in external goods and possessions, which are transitory and unstable and exposed to the caprices of Fortune, as in being at one with oneself:

"Estne aliquid tibi te ipso pretiosius? Nihil, inquires. Igitur si tu compos fueris, possidebis quod nec tu amittere unquam velis, nec fortuna possit auferre."<sup>27</sup>

As man's most precious gift is himself, he will only suffer anxiety and sadness if he seeks elsewhere for his good and his happiness. In his commentary upon the Aeneid, Bernard Silvestris was to reinforce this notion:

Querit Sapientia ab homine ut in Boetio legitur an aliquid se pretiosius habeat. Qui cum respondet "minime," iubetur ut in se ipso beatitudinem quaerat.<sup>28</sup>

And he continues by clarifying the direction of man's quest for self-knowledge and by identifying the false quest which can easily be made if man ignores his spiritual qualities and is led by false values. Commenting upon Aeneas' false landing in Crete he writes:

Qui intelligens, 'in se,' id est 'in natura sui corporis,' non 'in se,' id est 'in natura spiritus,' descendit totus in voluptates carnis. Atque ita Eneas cum iubetur ire in Italiam, venit Cretam.<sup>29</sup>

and points out the error of those who seek only the delights of the flesh.

The twelfth century was a time of searching, of going out to meet challenges for, in general, there were fewer hazards attached to mere survival, than in previous centuries. Enterprising young men of certain sections of society were driven by restlessness to seek adventure. Younger sons of noblemen often had to wait their turn for a marriage to be arranged, had little likelihood of succeeding to their fathers' property and were often entitled, at best, to a small share of the inheritance. In G. Duby's words:

Privés de tout espoir d'hoirie certaine, les fils puînés ne voyaient qu'une issue; l'aventure.<sup>30</sup>

These were often young men who lived for the moment seeking diversion in hunting, falconry and adventure of all sorts. They can be seen in Le Charroi de Nîmes, for example, as they prepare to accompany Guillaume:

En sa compaigne quarante bachelor:  
Filz sont a contes et a princes chasez,  
Chevalier furent de novel adoubé;  
Tientent oiseaus por lor cors deporter,  
Muetes de chiens font avec els mener.<sup>31</sup>

This preoccupation with adventure for its own sake can be seen as a quest on the physical level, a searching without any clear direction for delights which are purely sensual. There is a reflection of the 'animal incipiens' of William of Saint-Thierry's classification:

animalitas est vitae modus sensibus corporis serviens.<sup>32</sup>

Duby uses an image allied to this notion, for he writes of these young men as:

une meute lâchée par les maisons nobles pour soulager le trop plein de leur puissance expansive, à la conquête de la gloire, du profit et de proies féminines.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, adventure could be seen as an end in itself with the excitement of its accompanying hazards and possible gain and glory.

Yet a quest into unknown dangers need not be the prerogative of restless young men seeking an antidote to boredom or a means of asserting themselves. In the eleventh century, the young Alexis



was portrayed preparing to leave a safe environment, a bride and a prosperous future in order to seek the will of God in whatever circumstances his journeying might lead him:

La pristrent terre o Deus les volt mener. <sup>34</sup>.

and his attitude could well be an antecedent to that shown in Guillaume d'Angleterre.<sup>35</sup> This notion is seen again in the case of Saint Brendan who longed and prayed to make his voyage to the lost Paradise:

Mais de une rien li prist talent  
Dunt Deu prier prent plus suvent  
Que lui mustrast cel paraïs  
U Adam fud primes asis,  
Icel qui est nostre heritét  
Dun nus fumes deseritét. <sup>36</sup>.

These quests emphasise not so much the pursuit of unspecified goals as a readiness to leave a known and loved environment in the pursuit of adventures of the spirit and ensuing spiritual gains.

This searching for adventure on both physical and spiritual levels, was matched on an intellectual plane by the eager desire for knowledge which was shown by some scholars. It is related, for example, in Historia Calamitatum how the young Abelard sought knowledge in the same way that young men left home in search of adventure.<sup>37</sup> Scholars in general were not content to accept facts on hearsay and encouraged one another to learn about the nature of their world. This attitude was exemplified in the writings of men like William of Conches who was quick to condemn those who accepted facts blindly and who discouraged others from searching for fundamental causes:

Sed quoniam ipsi nesciunt vires naturae, ut ignorantiae suae omnes socios habeant, nolunt eas aliquid inquirere, sed ut rusticos nos credere nec rationem quaerere ... Nos autem dicimus, in omnibus rationem esse quaerendam ...<sup>38</sup>.

Scholars took an immense pride in acquiring all kinds of knowledge. Hugh of Saint-Victor, for example, constantly stressed the importance of studying even the most rudimentary subjects:

Noli contemnere minima haec. Paulatim deficient qui minima contemnunt. Si prima alphabetum discere contempsisses, nunc inter grammaticos tantum nomen non haberes. <sup>39</sup>.

No detail of knowledge was considered to be useless:

Omnia disce, videbis postea nihil esse superfluum, <sup>40</sup>.

nor were students allowed to be satisfied with only a superficial knowledge of accepted facts.

An example of the effect of this attitude can be seen in Bernard Silvestris' Commentum. Vergil's 'Musa, mihi causas memora' develops into an exhortation to the diligence and depth which must be brought to the study of a work of this kind:

Si quis ergo Eneida legere studeat, ita ut eius voluminis lex deposcit, hec in primis oportet demonstrare, unde agat et qualiter et cur et geminam observationem in his demonstrandis non relinquere.<sup>41</sup>

And before introducing his allegorical exposition of the earlier half of the Aeneid, Bernard states in detail the origin, function and symbolism of the principal gods and creatures who are to manipulate the affairs of the main characters in the poem, so that his readers may have sufficient points of reference for a profound understanding of the allegory which he sees in Vergil.

This intellectual searching is reflected also in the realm of theology where men like Saint Anselm and Richard of Saint-Victor tended to criticise those Christians who accepted their faith blindly, and they exhorted their students to strive to understand the truths which they professed to believe. A close link was seen between faith and understanding:

Nam Christianus per fidem debet ad intellectum proficere, non per intellectum ad fidem accedere.<sup>42</sup>

so that the one led naturally to the other, not as an end in itself, but so that a greater understanding of spiritual truths might achieve greater delight in contemplation.

This interest in adventure and in an intellectual seeking after a greater understanding of theological truths was closely allied to the spiritual searching which was one of the characteristics of the twelfth century. The whole monastic movement, especially at Cîteaux and its offshoots, was consciously directed towards a search for God, and was guided by the spiritual gifts of wisdom and truth. Saint Augustine had made it quite clear that God, the supreme Wisdom, the unchanging, everlasting Good was the only object worthy of man's seeking:

Admonitio autem quaedam, quae nobiscum agit, ut Deum recordemur, ut eum quaeramus, ut eum pulso omni fastidio sitiamus, de ipso ad nos fonte veritatis emanat.<sup>43</sup>

According to Hugh of Saint-Victor, wisdom is the primary object of man's search,

Omnium expetendorum prima est sapientia.<sup>44</sup>

for wisdom not only enlightens man in his search for self-knowledge, but it also guides him to look beyond himself to his Creator, and to see all things in this light:

Sapientia illuminat hominem, ut seipsum agnoscat, qui caeteris similis fuit, cum se prae caeteris factum esse non intellexit. Immortalis quippe animus sapientia illustratus respicit principium suum, et quam sit indecorum, agnoscit, ut extra se quidquam quaerat.<sup>45</sup>

This is the wisdom which Saint Augustine discussed fully as the only source of man's true happiness.<sup>46</sup> William of Saint-Thierry later showed with what diligence it should be sought:

Ideo nitamur, in quantum possumus ut videamus, videndo intelligamus, et intelligendo amemus, ut amando habeamus.<sup>47</sup>

The fruit of such wisdom is the joy, peace, love, gentleness and self-restraint mentioned by Saint Paul in his letter to the Galatians (V, 22), and the ability to choose prudently what is useful and honorable:

Haec pene tota est in scientia (id est, vera sapientia), videlicet ut sciat discernere prudenter, et dijudicare inter utile et inutile, inter honestum et inhonestum.<sup>48</sup>

and thus to ensure a progression from carnal to spiritual matters, from the works of darkness to those of light. This is the normal outcome of a profound self-knowledge, as Helinand of Froidmont was to state when he was recapitulating the teachings of his immediate predecessors:

(Haec scientia) docet enim hominem timere Deum, cavere peccatum, diligere proximum, et terrena dispicere et amare caelestia.<sup>49</sup>

The renewed emphasis on the individual and a growing pre-occupation with the nature of the emotions meant that for some writers, the chief good or happiness was to be found in love. The contemplation of the loved one was at times the ultimate object of a lover's seachings and led to the perfection of his bliss. Although irrational, fickle, treacherous and cruel, love compelled a single-hearted search. Love was frequently both the inspiration and object of a quest, and required the hero to strive at all times

to be more worthy of his lady. It has already been mentioned how the poet of the Eneas hastened to introduce the theme of love at the expense of a convincing presentation of the hero.<sup>50</sup> A similar emphasis can be found in the Roman de Troie where Benoît de Sainte-Maure presents Jason and Medea in such a way that Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece loses significance beside the intense love-interest of the episode.<sup>51</sup> But in the works which are being studied, although love is closely associated with the object of the quest, it is seldom an end in itself, for it imposes certain obligations, in the same way that love of God generates love of neighbour and inspires actions which are directed towards his good. The medieval heroes have committed faults because they do not understand the nature of love or are not fully committed to their obligations. There will be seen, therefore, in all their quests, a striving to correct a faulty balance between the obligations of chivalry and the demands of love.

#### ENEAS.

Eneas' quest for his new land is closely associated with his quest for himself. Although his task has been ordained by the gods,

et ce li comandent li dé  
 que il aut la contree querre  
 dunt Dardanus vint an la terre,  
 qui fonda de Troie les murs. (Eneas, 38-41).

he is seen to be unsure of himself and of the role which he has to play: 'Eneas n'estoit pas seürs.' (42). Nor does he fully understand the urgency of the god's command to leave Troy to the Greeks and to seek this vaguely defined country. He needs, as did Aeneas, several crises and several moments of illumination before he can discern his vocation. Although his destiny is explained to him as he leaves Troy:

"Venus ma mere me vint dire,  
 de par les deus, que m'en tornasse,  
 et an la terre m'en alasse  
 dont Dardanus vint nostre ancestre." (1186-89).

and is shown to be closely connected with his ancestry, it is not until his father's revelation of his lineage and his descendants (2879-82) that he can enter into the joy of those who know their role in life and can prepare to undertake it with equanimity in spite of its pain. (2993-96)

Anz an son cuer an a grant joie,  
 oblié a le duel de Troie, (2991-92).

This attitude contrasts sharply with his earlier blind, docile acceptance of the will of the gods at Carthage:

"C'est par les deus, quil m'ont mandé,  
 qui ont sorti et destiné,  
 an Lombardie an doi aler,  
 iluec doi Troie restorer. (1759-62).

or with the account given to Dido by his men of the god's command, the quest for the new land and of the apparent hopelessness of their present plight. Ilioneus says of him:

"Par lor comandement vait querre  
 Itaille, une loigtaine terre;  
 quise l'avons set anz par mer,  
 ne la poons ancor trover." (579-82).

At this stage, Eneas' quest has been on a purely physical level, for he and his men have had to set out, apparently, in search of adventure.

il ne sevent quel part il torment,  
 s'il vont avant o il retornent;  
 an aventure ont mis lor vie. (207-09).

Yet, as G. Burgess point out, this aventure is not so much a deliberate seeking after strange encounters and occurrences, as a blind acceptance of the hazards of Fate.<sup>52</sup> It bears more resemblance to Alexis' blind submission to the will of God or to Guillaume d'Angleterres' trusting acceptance of the unknown,<sup>53</sup> than to the conscious questing of Chrétien's heroes.

It is not until later, when a rational dimension is incorporated into Eneas' quest, that the hero begins to accept himself and his role. This rational aspect is not, at first, strongly evident. The search for information about his situation at Carthage is more of a desire for survival than a quest for knowledge (357-62). A quest for a rational goal is, however, seen in Eneas' descent to the Underworld where he learns from the Sibyl of the nature of this strange place and, like Aeneas, gains confidence in himself and in the understanding of his mission. Like Aeneas, too, he gains such a pride in the vision of his descendants that, in the latter part of his quest, there is no room for yielding to his former panic, bewilderment and self-pity, in spite of the time of testing and the trials which now confront him:

Anz an son cuer an a grant joie,  
 oblié a le duel de Troie,  
 et nequedan pansis estoit  
 des batailles que il avroit,  
 des maus que li estuet sofrir  
 ainz que viegne a terre tenir. (2991-96).

This new knowledge brings about a confidence and joy which can be seen after the Trojans' arrival at the site of their new city. Although hunger drives them to 'eat their tables' (3041-46), there is no mention of the preoccupation with food which was evident when they arrived at Carthage (343-56). The need for food and shelter is subordinated to joy in the knowledge that this ancient prophecy has been fulfilled and that the wanderers have now reached the land which is destined for them.

Quant Eneas, son pere, l'ot,  
 dedenz son cuer molt s'en esjot;  
 dont sot qu'il erent ou païs  
 que tant lor ont li dieu pramis,  
 et qu'illuec ert lor remanance. (3051-55).

In this romance, Eneas' joy is shown to be much more spontaneous than that of Aeneas who, with characteristic Roman gravitas and pietas meditates on Ascanius' discovery and greets the land which is to receive him:

"Salve fatis mihi debita tellus  
 vosque' ait 'o fidi Troiae salvete penates:  
 hic domus, haec patria est." (Aeneid, VII, 119-21)

and only then exhorts his companions to seek, laeti, information about the new land and its inhabitants. (VII, 130-32)

Does Eneas' quest rise to a spiritual level? Does he, at any stage, seek goodness, wisdom, truth or any other spiritual value? Although he shows acceptance of the will of the gods, there is no equivalent here to Aeneas' deep spiritual searching for the meaning of human life, man's relation to the universe or the powers and destiny of the soul. Rather, an interesting paradox is presented here in that Eneas, a hero of the more 'spiritually aware' twelfth century fails to match the spirituality of the pre-Christian Aeneas. For, as is being consistently seen in the portrayal of 'Eneas, the author has other interests.

Again, Lavine's love adds a new dimension to Eneas' quest, for it gives him the necessary inspiration and courage to enter into combat with Turnus:

"molt an sui plus et fors et fiers,  
molt m'en combatrai volontiers;  
quant de s'amor me fait lo don,  
molt m'en metrai ainz a bandon  
ou de la mort ou de la vie;  
hardemant me done m'amie." (9051-56)

But after Turnus is defeated, this love becomes, in a sense, the real object of Eneas' quest, for his delay in coming to Lavine immediately after the battle (9839-9917) and his ensuing remorse cause him to resolve to seek her mercy in order that love may be more complete, and that the wound which he has caused Lavine may be healed.

"Amor n'a soing de longue guerre,  
mais qui mesfet, merci doit querre;" (9971-72).

He has reason to hope for this because he recognises that true love is merciful and that the healing of a hurt can cement a relationship, provided that pardon is sought:

"Molt par est bone l'acordance,  
quant il i a eü meslance,  
et molt rest grant angenemant  
d'amor un po de maltalant." (9977-80).

And from the joy which attends Eneas' possession of Lavine (10091-114), it is evident that this love is his real preoccupation and his most convincing and successful search.

#### CHRETIEN DE TROYES.

When discussing the nature of the quests of Chrétien's heroes, Topsfield stated:

... the major theme in these romances is the quest for 'wholeness' of the individual character, and, on a wider plane, the conflict between Good and Evil, Order and Disorder.<sup>54</sup>

This quest for 'wholeness' or integrity may take several forms.

In general, Chrétien's heroes have sinned through a lack of balance in the qualities needed for a knight, courtly lover and Christian. Or they have sinned through a faulty balance between the physical, rational and spiritual aspects of their nature. In their quests, they endeavour to repair that lack and to achieve a surer balance throughout their faculties.

EREC.

Erec's preliminary adventure presents in miniature most of the elements which could be expected from a principal quest. The isolation from his companions when he abstains from the hunt for the White Stag is deepened when he departs again to take revenge on Yder's dwarf. There is, in the Sparrowhawk episode, an adventure in a strange world of nameless people, and there is a time of testing when he confronts Yder for possession of the sparrowhawk. But his revenge on Yder's dwarf which is the main object of this quest, loses significance in the face of his possession of Enide, the bride whom he wins without setting out specifically to seek. In Enide's company, he returns to court as one who, in a sense, is endowed with new life, for the prospect of the future which he is about to share with Enide adds a new impetus and a new dimension to the life which he has experienced until then. The joy in the promise of this life is manifested in the unspoken admiration which the couple shows for each other (Erec et Enide, 1462-91), in the lavishness of the activities which accompany the wedding which is held at Pentecost, the season traditionally associated with new life and growth.

It may be questioned whether, in this section of the romance, Erec undertakes any quest for himself. He seemed, at first, to be perfectly in command of himself, to know what he was doing and to be aware of his obligations as a knight of exceptional promise and the son of a great king. He showed prudence and promptness in courtly service. But although Erec's absence from the hunt for the White Stag can be justified, it can, nevertheless, be a sign that he is not yet fully at ease in the society of his fellow knights, and may indicate that he has to undergo a time of searching, and a deeper involvement in matters of love which the stag represents, in both the courtly and spiritual sense<sup>55</sup>. before he can completely understand all the obligations of his rank and his calling.

This initial quest leads to Erec's marriage and subsequent tournament at Tenebroc. His reputation is enhanced (2207-14), but he gains no lasting satisfaction from his successes or from his winning of Enide, for he has not yet the spiritual resources he



he needs for handling this good fortune. It is not until the report of his recreantise that he can begin to experience the humility which is necessary for self-knowledge and for true spiritual growth.

Thus, although Erec is not yet fully aware of what he is seeking, his principal quest, from the time of his recreantise and subsequent departure from Carnant, is centred on a quest for himself. It is a spiritual search not only for the integration of the splendid knightly qualities which he has misused and improperly understood (2544-51), but also for a balance between the obligations and the pleasures of love so that he can fulfil his early promise as both husband and lover. He has to look beyond the superficial practices which his position demands, to strip himself of the props which have helped to delude him. Separated from his companions' encouragement and support, he has to assess his own position with complete honesty. As he learns of his companions' criticism (2536-71), Erec recognises the gravity of his problem and understands that he can no longer hide his fault behind deeds of largesse. With no companion save Enide (2716-20), he must prove indubitably to himself that he is not the degenerate idler of the rumour (2551), but a knight who is worthy of his background, ancestry and earlier promise.

Erec's quest, also, requires the resolving of a conflict between two aspects of his relationship with Enide. Barbara Nelson Sargent-Baur notes how Enide has two roles which alternate and sometimes conflict, so that she is both feme and amie.<sup>36</sup> As amie, Enide was not only the inspiration for Erec's participating in the Sparrowhawk contest, but she was also the source of his courage:

Erec regarde vers s'amie,  
 qui molt dolcemant por lui prie:  
 tot maintenant qu'il l'ot veüe,  
 se li est sa force creüe;  
 por s'amor et por sa biauté  
 a reprise molt grant fierté: (907-12)

After the account of the prolonged honeymoon, we are told that he 'l'ama ... d'amors' (2430), with the result that he: 'en fist s'amie et sa drue' (2435) namely, his sovereign lady, his chief joy and treasure. On the other hand, as Enide's husband, Erec has

powers of life and death over her. After the quarrel, Erec asserts his authority and adopts the role of sovereign lord in a high-handed aggressive fashion, leaving no room for Enide to assume the role of amie which has predominated until then. Enide is frightened and saddened by Erec's attitude (2580-84), and remorseful because of the accusation which she has conveyed to him, Erec's next task is to establish a balance between these dual aspects of his love and to integrate fin' amors and its ideals of service, with conjugal love and its responsibilities.

The physical aspect of Erec's principal quest is neither clearly defined, nor is it the most important. Erec merely sets out fearlessly without any specified destination, prepared to accept whatever crises may occur:

Erec s'an va, sa fame an moine,  
ne set ou, mes en aventure. (2762-63).

By Chrétien's time, the term aventure frequently means danger, as E. Köhler explains:

La vie dangereuse que mène le chevalier donne son sens  
à la chevalerie comme état et devient sa vertu suprême.<sup>57</sup>

The dangers which Erec encounters give him an opportunity of knowing himself and his strength as a knight, as he tests his skill against adversaries of increasing severity. The presence of Enide, his 'other self' and, in a sense, his accuser, gives him an opportunity of refuting the charge of recreantise. But as this quest is concerned with the building of marital harmony and balance, Enide, also, has a task to accomplish. Although she cannot be said to have directly caused Erec's fault, she has contributed to it by her natural awe of him and by her subsequent delay in informing him of the rumours.<sup>58</sup> Her untimely words provoked Erec's anger (2572-79). Now Enide must learn to brave Erec's wrath by learning discretion in her speech and thus, by speaking only when necessary and against his orders to warn him of approaching danger. This is the time for Enide to prove her worth as a woman and to become, in the highest sense, Erec's feme as well as his amie. J.-C. Payen proposes an interesting interpretation of this point:

Dans ces perspectives, les épreuves qu' Erec va imposer à Enide seraient peut-être moins des châtiments qu'une sorte

d'éducation de la volonté. Pour dire les choses dans un jargon moderne qui a le mérite d'être clair, Enide serait "complexée" en face de son mari. Non sans brutalité, celui-ci va la hausser à son niveau.<sup>59.</sup>

Thus, there is a seeking of 'wholeness', not only of the individual, but also of the marriage with its necessary reciprocal trust in spite of the evident cost.

Enide, also, has an opportunity of proving the extent of her love for Erec. In Frappier's words:

Si Erec n'est pas mécontent qu'elle obéisse, il est plus heureux encore qu'elle désobéisse: c'est sa désobéissance qui prouve son amour. Cet amour grandit lorsqu'elle voit les prouesses extraordinaires du héros.<sup>60.</sup>

Indeed, after Erec has been mortally wounded and recovered from his swoon, it is clear that this rational dimension has been fundamental to Erec's quest. For he says to Enide:

... "Ma dolce suer,  
bien vos ai de tot essaiee,  
Or ne soiez plus esmaiee,  
c'or vos aim plus qu'ainz mes ne fis,  
et je resui certains et fis  
que vos m'amez parfitement." (4882-87).

Although, therefore, Erec has set out ostensibly in search of adventure, he aims, in reality, at goals which require a considerable degree of intellectual discernment, spiritual growth and human understanding.

#### YVAIN.

In Yvain's preliminary quest, also, there can be seen most of the elements of a principal quest. This is illustrated by his secret departure, his isolation from his companions, his adventures into the strange world of the Fountain, the time of testing when he proves his physical superiority to Esclados, and his winning of Laudine. He cannot be said to be restored to his people as a man endowed with new life for, after his successful quest and marriage, it is his companions who unknowingly come to him as defender of the Fountain (2172-2282). But there is no doubt about his new reputation, as the other knights rejoice over his defeat of Ké:

Et li autre mout lié an sont,  
Qui de s'enor grant joie font.  
Nes li rois grant joie an mena,

Et mes sire Gauvains an a  
Cant tanz plus grant joie que nus: (Yvain, 2283-87)

In his preliminary set of adventures, Yvain, also, shows the need for a quest for himself. Like Erec, he does not appear to be fully at ease in the company of the Round Table. But whereas there was no doubt about Erec's reputation or his promise as a young knight, Yvain is portrayed as one who is jealous that others are considered better than he, for he knows, initially, that any battle at the Fountain will be offered to K  or Gauvain rather than to himself.

Por ce solemant li grevoit,  
Qu'il savoit bien, que la bataille  
Avroit mes sire Kes sanz faille  
Ainz que il, — s'il la requeroit,  
Ja vee ne li seroit, —  
Ou mes sire Gauvains meimes  
Espoir la demanderoit primes. (682-88).

Yvain's reactions of sadness and jealousy suggest that he is unsure of himself and that he has to learn to situate himself less selfishly into his society. Although he is aware of his capabilities and of the fact that there are knights whose reputation is greater than his, Yvain has yet to learn that here, as in any Christian society, the individual seeks good and aims at knightly perfection not only for his own good, but ultimately for the benefit of the whole community.

Yvain's preliminary quest is predominantly on the baser, physical level. Ostensibly, it is to avenge Calogrenant and his disgrace (748-49), but in reality, Yvain is determined to seek for himself the strange adventures through which, if he is lucky, he has the opportunity of gaining a better reputation for courage and skill (682-722). For, as Calogrenant has already noted in his conversation with the Herdsman, this is how a knight may enhance his reputation and improve his skill:

"Avantures por esprover  
Ma proesce et mon hardemant." (362-63).

The quest is precipitated by K 's antagonism and sarcasm and by the king's curiosity, and necessitates an alienation in which Yvain may discover the meaning of the strange adventures which he experiences, and the significance of the world through which he is led.

By the end of his preliminary quest, Yvain has gained mastery over the Fountain, and has won a bride of outstanding beauty and worth. His departure with Gauvain in search of adventures indicates a false quest where he is motivated by the high ideals with which Gauvain persuades him (2487-92). It is for the sake of his honour as well as Laudine's that Yvain undertakes this quest, for in asking for leave of absence from her, he begs:

"Por vostre enor et por la moie!" (2553)

But as Yvain is still the victim of his own pride and self-love, this success brings him little satisfaction. It does, however, allow him to see himself as he really is, namely, as a knight of outstanding skill but of little real commitment in love. His adventures need to assume more altruistic orientations if, by the end of the romance, he is to be completely at one with himself and to be guided by contemporary knightly and spiritual values.

Yvain's principal quest can be understood as that which he undertakes after the accusation by Laudine's messenger. It is initially a quest for himself and begins from the moment of self-loathing which follows the recognition of his fault: 'Ne het tant rien con lui meïsmes.' (2790). Thus, there is a point of departure for Yvain's quest as well as an indication of the distance which lies ahead of him. For Saint Bernard insists on self-love as the first step in achieving love of God. Before he can begin to love himself or anyone else, Yvain has to progress from hatred of himself towards self-acceptance on several levels: as a human being, as a knight and as a Christian. At this stage, he is not capable of deliberately undertaking a quest. Rather, his reinstatement in society begins through a series of unexpected events over which he has no control. After the moment of crisis, his companions recognise the symptoms of his madness and, as he wanders aimlessly away, understand that they can do nothing to help:

Bien sevent, que de lor parler  
Ne de lor siecle n'a il soing. (2800-01).

Yvain is now further alienated from society, as he is rejected both by his companions and by himself, just as he had, in a sense, rejected their company earlier. (723-46).

On the physical level, Yvain's quest is closely associated with the process of re-discovery as a human being. His primitive way of life in the forest, illustrated by the uncooked food, the bow and arrow, his nakedness, his living in the forest like an 'hon forsené et sauvage' (2828) suggest that he is existing only on the purely physical level, whereas his mental and spiritual powers are dormant. His madness is a source of fear to the hermit:

De la peor, que il an ot,  
Se ferí an sa meisonete. (2836-37)

who, nevertheless, helps to supply him with food and with a reintroduction to a rudimentary civilisation (2872-87). It is the anointing of Yvain which leads to the moment of self-discovery (3020-22), to the beginning of his awareness of himself and to the beginning, also, of a more conscious search.

For Yvain becomes, once more, a thinking man who has to assess his role in society and to find out the part he has to play. There is no question here of his seeking a rational goal or setting out at great personal cost to find a piece of valuable knowledge. But his reintegration into society as a knight does require mental alertness by which he can perceive the needs of others, be prepared to act wisely and apply his skills intelligently. To this extent, Yvain seeks and finds himself as a rational man and as a knight who wins increasing praise for his deeds of valour. (3243-49; 4580-82; 5794-96; 6476-92).

The rescue of the lion indicates a new level in Yvain's quest for himself and suggests the presence of a spiritual level in his seeking. This incident marks Yvain's ability to reason and to choose wisely (3354-63). By its significant gestures, the lion shows to Yvain the virtues which a spiritual man needs: humility (3400-01), vigilance (3482-84), sensitivity and loyalty (3510-15). In spite of the discrepancies between this lion and the lion of the Bestiary,<sup>62</sup> it must be recalled that the lion was frequently seen as the symbol of Christ. The lion's function in this romance is summed up very clearly by Julian Harris:

Although Yvain's lion is not an exact copy of the one in the Bestiaries, we shall see that he has much in common with the traditional lion. The first night of the compagnonnage between Yvain and the lion, as Yvain slept, the lion kept watch as a good lion should:

3481-82 Et li lions ot tant de sans,  
Qu'il veilla.

Thereafter he is to watch over Yvain always and protect him from all sorts of dangers. He is to suffer when Yvain suffers.<sup>63</sup>

As Yvain's constant companion (3452-55), the lion protects, comforts and assists him. After the successful defeat of Lunete's accusers, there is an inversion of roles as Yvain protects and watches over his wounded lion who had hitherto watched over him so that, in the words of M. Accarie:

Le lion devient le blason d'Yvain. Il ne suit plus de chevalier, mais celui-ci l'emporte avec lui, en lui; c'est un autre lui-même, ou mieux c'est lui-même, l'être nouveau. Dès ce moment ... Yvain n'est plus un chevalier avec un lion, mais le Chevalier au Lion. La rencontre avec l'animal ne faisait qu'annoncer la transformation morale, en jetait les bases. Désormais l'un et l'autre ne font qu'un: le lion est devenu Yvain, Yvain est devenu le lion.<sup>64</sup>.

Now, in the presence of Laudine, Yvain is able to name himself Le Chevalier au Lion (4613) and indirectly defines the object of his quest. He claims that he cannot accept Laudine's hospitality because of the urgency of his undertaking:

... "Dame! ce n'iert hui,  
Que je me remaingne an cest point,  
Tant que ma dame me pardoint  
Son mautalant et son corroz.  
Lors finera mes travauz toz." (4588-92)

Yvain's resolution to win back his lady after his neglect, his subsequent grief and despair, can also be seen as a spiritual quest for joy (4630-34). This can be found only in possessing his lady who unwittingly wishes him success.

"Ore alez donc a De, biaux sire!  
Qui vostre pesance et vostre ire  
Vos atort, se lui plest, a joie!" (4627-29)

His quest requires a restoration of balance in the values of love and chivalry which he has transgressed - humility, generosity, moderation, dependability - for it is only through these that true love and true chivalry can flourish. He cannot do this unaided, just as the Christian who has erred needs the grace of Christ in order to make a new beginning. And this is the function of the lion whose appearance, in a sense, marks Yvain's self-discovery as a Christian. Having faced up to his own weakness, Yvain can now rely not on his own strength but on that of the beast who symbolises Christ. In this he resembles Saint Paul: "Libentur igitur gloriabor in infirmitatibus meis, ut inhabitet in me virtus Christi." (II Corinthians, XII:9).

The effect of this new identity is that Yvain himself becomes the object of a quest. For the dispossessed younger daughter of the Lord of Noire Espine seeks the 'meillor chevalier del monde' as her champion (4791) and in doing so, undertakes a most difficult



task:

Si s'est de la cort departie  
Et panse, qu'an tote sa vie  
Ne finera par tote terre  
Del Chevalier au Lion querre. (4815-18).

which requires a journey (4821-22) and a time of severe testing (4824-25). She is helped by the compassion of another (4832-5094) who continues this quest in the face of similar hardships. But she is helped most of all by Yvain's readiness to undertake her cause, once he learns of her need.

### LANCELOT.

Lancelot is not seen to undertake any preliminary quest. The apparent object of his quest, namely, the liberation of the prisoners from the region of Gorre and the deliverance of the queen from the power of Meleagant is defined, at first, more through Meleagant's challenge to King Arthur and through Ké's subsequent actions (70-79) than through any deliberate action by Lancelot. Ké is considered to be unsuitable for this task both by King Arthur who says:

- Est ce par ire, ou par despit,  
fet li rois, qu'aler an volez? (Le Chevalier de la charrete  
104-05).

and by the queen who has no confidence in him:

"Ha! rois, se vos ce seüssiez  
ja, ce croi, ne l'otroiesiez,  
que Kex me menast un seul pas." (209-11).

so that Gauvain feels bound to intervene not, apparently, out of any dedication to the cause which has been proclaimed, as much as out of surprise at the King's action and mistrust of Ké (226-38).

Unlike our other heroes, Lancelot does not appear to make any quest for himself. He is introduced anonymously, in medias res, so that it is not clear at first that he has undertaken the same quest as Ké and Gauvain. There is, however, plenty of evidence to show that Lancelot is a mature knight who can accept his limitations. He is not too proud to ask for the use of one of Gauvain's horses (279-87) or, after hesitation, to climb into the cart. For by this action, he is told that he will surely know what has happened to the queen (356-59). In this, he is commanded by love

which is the mainspring and principal object of his quest:

Amors le vialt et il i saut,  
 que de la honte ne li chaut  
 puis qu' Amors le comande et vialt. (375-77).

For whereas some aspect of love forms part of the quests of Chrétien's other heroes, the physical, rational and spiritual levels of Lancelot's quest are subsumed by his quest for love. His hesitation in mounting the cart had shown a fault in the depth of his commitment. Now, his task is to learn to cast aside reason and adherence to outward forms of court practice and to seek not only the queen's deliverance, but also the perfection of a love which overrides all fear of humiliations, dangers and difficulties. Lancelot has already progressed far in achieving this love, for he is described early in the poem as one who is:

come cil cui Amors fet riche  
 et puissant, et hardi par tot,  
 que, sanz arest et sanz redot. (630-32).

In this work, there is a further significant difference from Chrétien's other romances. For Erec and Yvain, the object of the quest has involved, to a certain extent, the restoration of balance between values of chivalry and the requirements of love. Lancelot also seeks the perfection of a chivalry in which it is necessary, at times, to distinguish between the values of external appearances and those of inward reality. Such are, for example, the Cart episode (356-77), and the tournament at Noauz (5654-5708). F. Douglas Kelly notes how it is constantly stated in the Chevalier de la charrete that Lancelot is:

striving to accomplish the greatest of all tasks,  
 to become in effect the impossible: the supreme  
 knight of the Round Table.<sup>65</sup>

This is shown both by his exceptional resistance to temptation, as when he fails to yield to the charms of the Amorous Maiden (1194-1280). It is shown, too, in the incidents which designate him to be an outstanding knight: the episode of the Flaming Lance (503-34), the successful attempt to raise the tombstone (1871-1914), the numerous times he refers to the exceptional nature of his quest (1098-99; 2268-72), his determination to conquer the Sword Bridge, at the cost of his life, if need be:

"einz me voel metre en aventure  
de passer outre et atorner,  
Mialz voel morir que retorner." (3088-90).

Lancelot's task, then, is not so much to learn, as to forget those aspects of his training which interfere with the attainment of love. As he does so, the perfection of both love and chivalry will be brought together in him.

Thus, in abandoning reason for the sake of love, Lancelot has made a commitment to undertake a task which is not only difficult but seemingly impossible for a knight of his training and experience. For whereas Erec and Yvain saw aventure to be a means of maintaining 'pris et los,' Lancelot must now risk losing his reputation in order to achieve perfection in love. The power of love is however, not shown when Lancelot appears on his quest. This is left for Lancelot to discover as he assumes his new role and seeks a new dimension to himself.

To a certain extent, Lancelot's quest, also, is a search for joy. When writing of the effect on Lancelot's host of the defeat and death of the Arrogant Knight, Jean Rychner describes the following pattern.

Joie interrompue, trouble, désolation, joie retrouvée: ce schème, qui représente si bien la permanence de l'effroi et la ténacité de l'espérance, sous-tend ici un épisode court qui permet de bien le saisir. Mais il encadre aussi tout le roman.<sup>66</sup>

This pattern is constantly projected into Lancelot's quest, as is recalled by Godefroi de Leigni towards the end of the romance:

Joie depiece et si efface  
la dolor, qui encois i ert;  
li diaus s'an fuit, si i apert  
joie, qui formant les rapele (6816-19).

Lancelot is seen early in his quest amid trouble and desolation, and he is spoken of as a knight who is destined for great degradation. His hostess at the Castle of the Flaming Lance said to him:

"Bien doit voloir qu'il fust ocis,  
que mialz valdroit il morz que vis:  
sa vie est desormes honteuse  
et despite et maleureuse." (579-82)

By his association with the Round Table, where the domestic peace, order and joy of the Ascension are shattered by Meleagant with his

message of anguish and fear, Lancelot may be said to have experienced 'joie interrompue.' His successive undertakings, such as helping the oppressed people of Logres in their revolt against the inhabitants of Gorre (2289-2436), the defeat and beheading of the Arrogant Knight (2677-2939), occur because a state of tranquillity, joy and order has been violated. By constantly and ruthlessly overthrowing representatives of pride, treachery and insolence and in particular, Meleagant, Lancelot seeks to bestow the permanent, lasting joy which follows the triumph of good over evil and the restoration of peace and order to a troubled society.

### PERCEVAL.

Perceval's quest to a greater extent than those of Erec, Yvain or Lancelot, is predominantly a quest for self-knowledge. The earlier heroes are all accomplished knights of undisputed renown. But Perceval is younger and has not had their training. Pierre Gallais writes of Perceval's quest:

L'objet de la quête est la connaissance (de soi ou de Dieu ce qui est la même chose), 61.

A deepening search for identity accompanies Perceval's adventures. At first he does not know who he is, nor does he understand his duties as the son of a distinguished knight nor recognise to what extent he is involved in the household of the Grail. Nor, in spite of his superficial good will, does he begin to understand his duty towards God. He gains knowledge as he gradually comes to understand the counsels given by his mother, by Gornemanz and later, by the hermit.

Perceval's failure in understanding leads him to undertake several false quests which, while leading indirectly to his true quest, delay the process of his maturing and bring him little ultimate satisfaction. The preliminary quest, for which he leaves home, is to find the "King who makes knights.":

"Molt m'en iroie volentiers  
Au roi qui fait les chevaliers,  
Et je irai, cui qu'il em poist." (Le Conte du Graal, 493-95)

in order that he might join their rank. Yet when Perceval does arrive at Cardoeil, his reaction is one of disbelief that this mute character could be the King whom he is seeking.

"Par foi, dist li vallés adonques,  
 Cis rois ne fist chevalier onques.  
 Coment porroit chevalier faire,  
 Quant on n'en puet parole traire?" (927-30).

He does not yet understand himself, his background or his destiny well enough to know what he should be looking for. So far, then, Perceval's quest is on the level of tangible, physical realities, and corresponds to the present state of his perception.

There is a false quest as, after he is knighted by Gornemant, Perceval hastens to seek his mother (1699-1702). Although he shows a new altruism which becomes a real urgency after the episode at Belerepeire:

Mais d'autre ore plus li sovient,  
 Que de sa mere au cuer li tient  
 Que il vit pasmee cheoir,  
 S'a talent qu'il l'aille veoir  
 Plus grant que de nule autre chose. (2917-21).

this quest is, in itself, unsatisfactory, but it prepares the way for Perceval's principal quest. For, as he prays for a third time to find his mother:

... "Ha! Sire toz puissans,  
 Se ceste eve passer pooie,  
 Dela ma mere troveroie,  
 Mien escient, se ele est vive." (2990-93).

the strange fishermen materialise (3000-03) and indicate the way to the Grail Castle (3026-34).

The first mystery, the sword (3133-84) which, his host tells him: "Vos fu voëe et destinee" (3168), brings Perceval into contact with his heritage as a knight, but he is more interested in testing its potential as a weapon than in discerning its significance. The vision at the Grail Castle (3190-3309) presents to him the elements of the puzzle which he is to unravel, as well as the visible form of the spiritual reality which he is to seek. The vision both bewilders and entrances him:

Et li vallés les vit passer,  
 Ne n'osa mie demander  
 Del graal cui l'en en servoit,  
 Que toz jors en son cuer avoit  
 La parole au preudome sage. (3243-47).

But his rational and spiritual powers are as yet undeveloped. For as he observes Gornemant's recommendations which he does not understand:

"Ne ne parlez trop volentiers:  
 Nus ne puet estre trop parliers ...  
 "Qui trop parle, il se mesfait"  
 Por che, biax amis, vos chastoi  
 De trop parler ... ;" (1649-50: 1654-56).

he does not recall his tutor's insistence on the word trop and procrastinates. The author, however, commenting upon Perceval's silence notes:

Si criem que il n'i ait damage,  
 Por che que j'ai oi retraire  
 Qu'ausi se puet on bien trop taire  
 Com trop parler a la foie [e].  
 Ou biens l'en viegne ou mals l'en chiee,  
 Ne sai le quel, rien n'en demande. 3248-53);

As Perceval decides to wait until morning (3304-07), he loses the opportunity of learning more about this strange episode.

The interview with his cousin the following day does, however, represent an important moment in defining his quest, for he is here identified by his name for the first time:

Et cil qui son non ne savoit  
 Devine et dist que il avoit  
 Perchevax li Galois a non, (3573-75).

As he learns his identity, of his mother's death and of the extent of his culpability (3591-95), Perceval's quest for himself becomes completed as his situation in the family becomes clearer. But he still needs to attain perfection as a knight and Christian.

Until the appearance of the Hideous Maiden, however, there is no question of any searching for a rational or spiritual goal. For Perceval's wanderings are directed towards developing his skill as a knight:

Et Perchevax la matinee  
 Fu levez si come il soloit,  
 Que querre et enconter voloit  
 Aventure et chevalerie; (4164-67).

Even when Perceval has resolved to undertake a quest to find the meaning of the Grail (4727-40), it is later seen that the object of his quest has degenerated to the physical level so that in the excitement and glory of testing himself as a knight, he has lost sight of God and of any spiritual goal:

Perchevax, ce nos dist l'estoire,  
Ot si perdue la miemoire  
Que de Dieu ne li sovient mais. (6217-19).

His quest for knightly excellence has been successful:

Tot einssi cinc ans demora,  
Ne por che ne laissa il mie  
A requerre chevalerie;  
Et les estranges aventures,  
Les felenesses et les dures,  
Aloit querant, et s'en trova  
Tant que molt bien s'i esprova. (6224-30).

But he has sought, 'Tot einssi', and has forgotten God.

Thus Perceval's quest for the Grail cannot, at first, be seen explicitly as a quest deliberately undertaken for a spiritual reality. At best, it is an intellectual search, for his education has yet to be completed. A spiritual dimension is, however, added to his quest when, on the Good Friday, Perceval acknowledges his fault and seeks reconciliation, thus striving to be at one with himself and at peace with God (6364-67). He has already sought and found himself as a human being and as a knight. Now he can begin to find himself as a Christian.

Yet although he is unaware of it, there are ways in which Perceval's quest for the Grail is a quest for a spiritual good. To be sure, the Grail is not yet the Holy Grail which was to become the object of many later quests.<sup>68</sup> But its undoubtedly spiritual implications are too numerous to disregard. In its presentation before Perceval's eyes, the Grail was accompanied by such a radiant light that:

ausi perdirent les chandoiles  
Lor clarté come les estoiles  
Font quant solaus lieve ou la lune (3227-29),

thus suggesting the presence of divinity. For, as M. Eliade writes:

Il importe de souligner que, quelles que soient la nature et l'intensité de l'expérience de la Lumière, elle évolue toujours en expérience religieuse ... la rencontre avec la Lumière produit une rupture dans l'existence du sujet:

elle lui révèle - ou lui dévoile plus clairement qu'auparavant - le monde de l'Esprit, du sacré, de la liberté.<sup>69</sup>

The traditions of both Old and New Testaments abound in references to such divine light. Among the more familiar manifestations are the Burning Bush in Exodus (III, 2-5), Elijah's fiery chariot (II Kings, II, 11-12), the presence of fire at Pentecost (Acts II,3) and the light which blinded Saul on his way to Damascus (Acts IX,3-4) and accompanied his conversion. And the Church's Liturgy continues the notion of Christ as Light and Life of the world whose radiance gives brightness and meaning to people enslaved by the darkness of sin. The Easter Exultet encourages:

Gaudeat et tellus tantis irradiata fulgoribus: et  
aeterni Regis splendore illustrata, totius orbis se  
sentiat amisisse caliginem.

Thus, for Perceval, there is a 'rupture dans l'existence,' through a manifestation of divinity which he does not yet understand.

Nor must we disregard the spiritual associations connected with the meal at the Grail Castle. The setting of the mysterious episode at supper time evokes the events of the Last Supper. A contrast is repeatedly presented between the corporeal food and the splendour of the meal (3312-3333), and the Grail containing 'une sole oïste' which has the power to sustain the being in the inner room. There has been much discussion concerning not only the Celtic origins of the Grail itself<sup>70</sup>, but also its Christian symbolism.<sup>71</sup> The meaning of these symbols is left for us as it was for Perceval, to puzzle over. By his statement that this vessel does not contain 'pike, lampreys or salmon' (6421), the hermit suggests that these would be its normal contents. It is, however, well known that the fish is an ancient symbol for Christ. By the setting of the meal, the light which accompanies the procession, the association of fish with the vessel, the spiritual powers of its contents, the Grail could well represent for Perceval a quest for Christ which he undertakes unknowingly, but fulfils in receiving the Sacrament 'molt dignement.' (6513). This is the love of Christ in the Eucharist, given to man to sustain and encourage him in his journey towards everlasting life, and in this way,



Perceval's quest can also be seen as a quest for love.

#### THE OBJECT OF THE QUEST.

The goals of the quests of the twelfth-century heroes can be expected to differ considerably from those sought by the ancient epic heroes. One main difference is to be found in the role of love as the object of the quest. In the classical epics, love will motivate the heroes' actions, but it is never seen as the principal object of a quest. In the twelfth-century romances, love is frequently the direct object of a quest or is, at least, closely associated with it. In Eneas' quest, love predominates over the founding of Rome; Erec and Yvain both seek a surer balance between love and chivalry; Lancelot seeks directly the love of his lady whereas for Perceval, the quest centres directly on love of Christ which is made visible by the Eucharist.

There is, however, a further significant difference, as can be seen in the hero's attitude towards the success of his quest. All the quests end in a kind of peace which has exacted a price. But perhaps the greatest price is seen in Aeneas' quest. It is referred to early in the epic:

tāntāe molis erat Romanam condere gentem. (Aeneid I, 33.)

But even though he successfully accomplishes his task, Aeneas is seldom seen as a happy man. He has continually to do violence to his own nature as he discovers his new identity as a Roman and his ensuing obligations. This is exemplified clearly at the end of the epic when Aeneas forces himself, through pietas, to slay Turnus (XII, 939-51) who is, in many ways, a sympathetic character and a great hero. This incident contrasts significantly with Eneas' quest, where the emotional struggle and anguish surrounding Turnus' death are obliterated by the hero's joy at the possession of Lavine and in the prospect of their future as King and Queen of Laurentum (Eneas, 10105-10114). A similar joy is seen consistently as Chrétien's heroes successfully achieve the object of their quests. It is sought and found by Erec, particularly in the Joie de la Cort episode, and is to be given a fuller out-

ward expression in the Coronation scene, with the splendour which is accompanied by universal joy (6572 sq. 6639; 6830 sq.). There is an expression of hope for a future joy when Laudine first meets the 'Chevalier au lion' in his new role, and a fulfilment of this hope after the reconciliation at the end of the romance. A similar joy is interspersed throughout Lancelot's adventures and is seen at the end of Perceval's searching.

It is inevitable that joy would be found at the end of the quests of such heroes, for joy has long been considered by theologians as a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Saint Augustine wrote:

Effunde amaritudinem, ut dulcedine impleri possis. Spiritus sanctus gaudium est et amor.<sup>72</sup>

But although there is a profoundly touching moment of reconciliation at the end of the Iliad (XXIV, 515-670), and again in the Odyssey, when Odysseus is reconciled with the families of the suitors, there is not here, any more than in the Aeneid, anything resembling a quest for joy, or any sign of the joy which accompanies a successful quest. There is, at best, a docile and rather grim acceptance of the lessons which have been learnt during the quest. Although these earlier heroes have cast aside their amaritudinem or bitterness, there is little sign of dulcedo or delight and subsequent joy to which Saint Augustine was to exhort his followers.

But there are certain similarities to be found. All our quest heroes in some way reflect contemporary aspirations. Achilles seeks justice and vengeance and especially, recognition of his ἀρετή, which was so dear to the heart of the Greeks. Odysseus exemplifies Greek attitudes of mind by his curiosity about natural phenomena and by his wisdom. Aeneas reflects the preoccupation with land and the desire for peace experienced by Vergil and his contemporaries. For Eneas, all aspirations are subordinated to contemporary interest in love. Chrétien's heroes are shown to be seeking not only knightly valour through

the risks of aventure, but also, intangible goals: love, wisdom and the joy which accompanies virtuous living.

All the heroes, in some way, undertake a quest for the self on which, in most cases, the success of the principal quest depends. Indeed, apart from Odysseus and Lancelot who are older, more mature characters, the principal object of the quest cannot be properly identified until after the hero has committed his main fault and has seen himself as he really is. In all cases, this self-knowledge and inevitable humiliation bring about a liberation which fosters spiritual growth. This self-knowledge, too, has fostered a certain wisdom which, according to Aristotle:

... is a goodness of the rational part that is productive of the things contributing to happiness.<sup>73.</sup>

Elements of this wisdom are seen in Achilles' reconciliation with Priam and in the ensuing reasoned counsels which are exchanged (Iliad, XXIV, 515-670). Elements are seen, too, in Odysseus' mere ability to survive in order to achieve his heart's desire, and in Aeneas' eventual ability to discern where his duty lies.

This is close to the wisdom taught by Saint Augustine in De Beata Vita.

Si autem quaeritis quid sit sapientia ... nihil est aliud quam modus animi, hoc est, quo sese animus librat, ut neque excurrat in nimium, neque infra quam plenum est coarctetur.<sup>74.</sup>

Through its association with moderation and proper conduct, wisdom is connected with man's happiness and with his deepest searchings:

Habet ergo modum suum, id est sapientiam, quisquis beatus est.<sup>75.</sup>

But wisdom is one of the most characteristic attributes of God, for the Son is referred to from the New Testament onwards as the Word and Wisdom of the Father. Saint Paul, for example discussed this in the first letter to the Corinthians, and Saint Augustine commented:

Quae est autem dicenda sapientia, nisi quae Dei Sapientia est? accepimus autem etiam auctoritate divina, Dei Filium nihil esse aliud quam Dei Sapientiam (I Corinthians, 1:24).<sup>76.</sup>

Therefore, the truly wise man has come very close to finding his God who is the source of his happiness.

All Chrétien's heroes have gained wisdom by the end of their quests, not as knowledge for its own sake, but as knowledge with a view to ultimate happiness. Through their mistakes they have had to assess themselves and to learn a certain 'modus animi'. Through his recreantise and subsequent adventures, Erec has had to gain the balance in the heroic values which he had lost so that he can worthily assume his vocation as king (6799-6825). Erec's outstanding worth is suggested at the moment of his coronation, as he is crowned by the Bishop of Nantes:

L'evesque de Nantes meïsmes,  
 qui molt fu prodom et saintismes,  
 fist le sacre del roi novel  
 molt saintemant et bien et bel,  
 et la corone el chief li mist. (6803-07).

This suggestion is emphasised, and Erec's role as king is confirmed as he receives the sceptre (6820-23).

or fu rois si com il dut estre; (6824).

Yvain set out in search of adventures, but found a companion, the symbol of Christ, to help him on his real quest for reconciliation with his lady. Perceval set out, firstly, to become a knight and later, to learn the truth concerning the Grail. His quest in this romance ends with the Eucharist, namely, the possession of Christ who is Wisdom.

This is the most striking similarity between the two groups of heroes. Most, to some extent, embark upon a quest on the physical level. Some seek intellectual knowledge at some time during their quests or at least, act once more as rational, thinking men, once their fault has led them to know themselves. But all the heroes show the presence of a spiritual yearning in their quests and a receptiveness towards learning the ultimate lessons of wisdom.

CONCLUSION.

Our heroes have now been presented as they discern the object of their quests and have been discussed in the light of contemporary or related interests and aspirations, in particular, adventure, intellectual knowledge, peace, stability, love and ultimately, love and possession of God. Self-knowledge is the quest which all the heroes must undertake, to some degree, before discerning the true object of the quest and before achieving success in the principal quest. In order to know themselves, the heroes have, generally, to set out on a false quest which leads them to their fault and subsequent crisis. Such quests have, therefore, not only brought no satisfaction; they have generally precipitated a time of horrifying self-revelation, but have also promised a time of spiritual development to those who are willing to learn from their experiences.

The principal quest, on the other hand, is undertaken as a result of the hero's humiliation. He learns wisdom from his experiences. For our epic heroes, this is generally accompanied by a kind of anguish. For the medieval heroes, beginning from Eneas, the quest ends in joy. The realisation of all the quests is accompanied by the kind of peace which results from being at one with oneself, with one's conscience and with the world, as a result of the restoration of order in a troubled society.

The subsidiary quests undertaken by other heroes have also been discussed, where relevant. These have either precipitated the hero's quest or have complemented it. At times, as in the case of Odysseus, they have also provided information about the hero's situation.

An attempt has been made to see the object of the quest on the three levels of existence which have been adapted for this study. The physical and rational levels are the least important and at times, are only implied. They are never the ultimate object of

the quest, for the hero is led to seek spiritual goals. In doing so, the hero seeks happiness which can be achieved only by the eradication of faults and the acquisition of intangible, spiritual values which ensure harmony and 'wholeness' of the individual.

Notes to Chapter 3.

1. Phaedrus, 230 a in The Dialogues of Plato, tr. Jowett, vol. 3, Oxford, 1871, p.136.
2. De Cognitione Sui, PL 212, Col. 723.
3. Ibid., Col. 727.
4. Liber de Diligendo Deo, VII, 18.
5. Boethius, De Consolatione Philosophiae, III, pr. 2, ll. 71-76.
6. Ibid., ll. 76-77.
7. Ibid., ll. 43-44.
8. De Beata Vita, PL 32, Cols. 959-76.
9. Ibid., col. 965.
10. Episola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 315.
11. Ibid., col. 316.
12. Ibid.
13. Confessions, 1, i.
14. De Beata Vita, PL 32, col. 976.
15. Lumen Gentium, 16. See supra, p.11.
16. In 'The Epic Journey of Achilles,' Nethercut demonstrates clearly and convincingly how Achilles is portrayed as an inwardly existing personality whose experiences are very real, but related in abstract terms. On this matter, he pursues many of the same arguments as Cedric Whitman in Homer and the Heroic Tradition.
17. W.F. Jackson Knight, Many-Minded Homer, London, 1968, p. 100.
18. Whitman, Homer and the Heroic Tradition, p.96.
19. A.B.Lord, The Singer of Tales, Cambridge (Mass.), 1964, p.163.
20. Tibulli, Carminum, libri tres, ed. Postgate, Oxford, 1905.
21. Horace, Satires, ed. Palmer, London, 1883.
22. See in particular, C.P. Segal, 'Aeternum per Saecula Nomen, the Golden Bough and the Tragedy of History,' Part I, Arion, 4, 1965, pp. 617-57; Part II, Arion, 5, 1966, 34-73.

23. De Trinitate, XIII, 20, 25, PL 42, col. 977.
24. De Gradibus Humilitatis et Superbiae, I, 2.
25. De Diligendo Deo, II, 4.
26. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 352.
27. De Consolatione Philosophiae, II, pr. 4. 175.
28. Commentum, p. 20, ll. 13-15.
29. Ibid., ll. 15-18.
30. 'Au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: les jeunes dans la société aristocratique. Annales, économies, sociétés, civilisations, 19, 1964, pp. 835-46; see p. 841.
31. Le Charroi de Nîmes, Chanson de geste du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ed. D. McMillan, Paris, 1972, ll. 23-27.
32. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 316.
33. 'Au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: les jeunes dans la société aristocratique,' p. 846.
34. La Vie de Saint Alexis, l. 80.
35. See supra, p. 6.
36. Benedeit, The Anglo-Norman Voyage of Saint Brendan, ed. I. Short And B. Merrilees, Manchester, 1979, ll. 47-52.
37. 'I was so enthralled by my passion for learning that, gladly leaving to my brothers the pomp of glory in arms, the right of heritage and all the honours that should have been mine as the eldest born, I fled utterly from the court of Mars that I might win learning in the bosom of Minerva.' (The Story of My Misfortunes, tr. from Historia Calamitatum by H.A. Bellows, New York, 1922, p. 1.)
38. Philosophia Mundi, 1, 23, PL 172, col. 56.
39. Eruditionis Didascaliae, Lib. VI, PL 176, col. 799.
40. Ibid., col. 800.
41. Commentum, p. 1. ll. 3-5.
42. Saint Anselm, Epistola XLI, PL 158, col. 261.
43. De Beata Vita, PL 32, col. 976.
44. Eruditionis Didascaliae, PL 176, col. 799.



45. Ibid.
46. De Beata Vita, PL 32, cols. 970-76.
47. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, PL 184, col. 339.
48. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 404.
49. De Cognitione Sui, PL 212, col. 723.
50. See supra, p. 30.
51. Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Roman de Troie, ed. L. Constans, Paris, 1904, vol. 1, ll. 715-2078.
52. Glyn S. Burgess, Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire précurtois, Geneva, 1970, p.51.
53. "Diex fera son plaisir de moi,  
Et jou, au mix que jou porrai,  
Dusqu' a l'eure que jou morrai,  
Me voel du sien faire pener." (Guillaume d'Angleterre,  
248-51.)
54. Topsfield, Chrétien de Troyes, p.25.
55. See supra, p. 82.
56. "Erec's Enide: "sa feme ou s'amie"?" Romance Philology, 33,  
3, 1980, pp. 373-87.  
See also A. Adler, 'Sovereignty in Chrétien's Erec,' PMLA, 60,  
1945, 917-36.
57. E. Köhler, L'Aventure chevaleresque, Paris, 1974, p.81.
58. Zara P. Zaddy notes Enide's problem. She writes: 'Erec is a formidable person for a shy and diffident girl to have to take to task. Throughout the romance he is presented as a singularly intractable young man, more disposed to impose his will on others - equals and superiors alike - than to accept guidance from anyone, least of all from a wife he seems to look upon as a mere bedfellow.' (Chrétien Studies, Glasgow, 1973, p.30.
59. Le Motif du Repentir dans la littérature française médiévale, Geneva, 1967, p.368.
60. Chrétien de Troyes, p. 100
61. De Diligendo Deo, VIII, 23.
62. See E. Schweitzer, 'Pattern and Theme in Chrétien's Yvain,' pp. 167-68, n. 26.

63. Julian Harris, 'The Role of the Lion in Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain PMLA, 64, 1949, pp. 1143-63. See pp. 1148-49.
64. M. Accarie, 'La Structure du Chevalier au lion de Chrétien de Troyes,' Le Moyen Age, 84, 1978, pp. 13-34. See p.29.
65. F. Douglas Kelly, Sens and Conjointure in the Chevalier de la Charrette, The Hague - Paris, 1966, pp. 206-07.
66. J. Rychner, 'Le Sujet et la signification du Chevalier de la charrette,' Vox Romanica, 31, 1972, pp. 50-76, see p. 51.
67. Perceval et l'initiation, p. 74.
68. Although the Grail is referred to by the hermit as 'tant sainte chose' (6424), it was never called the 'Holy Grail' by Chrétien. This was left for his successors and imitators.
69. M. Eliade, 'Significations de la "Lumière intérieure",' Eranos-Jahrbuch, 26, 1957, pp. 189-242. See pp. 241-42.
70. E.g. D.D.R. Owen, The Evolution of the Grail Legend, Edinburgh, 1968.
71. In particular, J. Frappier, 'Le Graal et ses feux divergents,' Romance Philology, 24, 1970-71, 373-440; id., 'Du Graal trestoř découvert,' Romania, 74, 1953, 358-75.
72. Manuale, PL 40, cap. XXVII, col. 965.
73. On Virtues and Vices, II, i, tr. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, London-Cambridge (Mass.), 1961.
74. De Beata Vita, PL 32, col. 975.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.

Chapter 4.The Journey.INTRODUCTION.

In order to attain the object of his quest, the hero usually has to undertake a journey. In almost all cases, the word 'journey' refers here both to the distance travelled and to the 'course taken' by the hero. More specifically, the journey will be understood in our present context as the process by which the hero achieves the object of his quest, and the progression by which his actions ascend from what is physical, tangible, selfish and blind in his nature, to what is more selfless, more discerning and ultimately, more spiritual.

The physical journey will be understood as the progression which most of our heroes make towards a physical, territorial goal. At times, this goal will be clearly defined and identifiable in terms of known places. At other times, the geographical route will be unimportant and impossible to identify. Suffering, hardship and despair have long been associated with such journeys. In Gilgamesh, for example, written some fifteen hundred years before the Homeric epics, the following question is frequently repeated: "Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey?"<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in Le Voyage de Saint Brendan, in spite of the hazards of such an undertaking, the travellers show a lively interest in the extraordinary phenomena which they encounter during their strange journey. There is, furthermore, evidence of growth and development of the mental and spiritual faculties of Saint Brendan and his followers. Similarly, although our heroes experience despair and pain during their journeys, they are also receptive to the lessons which can be learnt from their experiences.

Some heroes, also, will make an intellectual or rational journey. This may resemble in part the journey from darkness to light, or the ascent from knowledge of shadows to knowledge of

substance which Plato described in the Republic.<sup>2</sup> It thus suggests progression from incomplete to complete understanding and ability to learn from one's mistakes. An intellectual journey can also suggest the learning and revelation which accompany the risks and temptations of a physical journey. There is also implied the progression from behaviour which is irrational to that of a reasoning, wise person who has learnt to discern beyond superficial appearances and practices and is able to commit himself to a reality which he understands.

All our heroes will embark upon a spiritual journey. This will be understood, in the first place, as a progression in specific virtues. Ascetical writers, however, have taught another kind of progression. This is the tripartite spiritual ascent by which people who seek the good are gradually led to perfection. In this ascent, there are generally three principal stages which are successive rather than parallel. There is first the Purgative Way, during which a man is purified of past sins and faults. The emphasis here is an expiation and renewal. When he is reformed, he must walk the Illuminative Way, by practising virtue and imitating Christ. Finally and always with God's help, he arrives at the Unitive Way, the way of union with God by love.<sup>3</sup> Although this ascent is normally associated with the attaining of Christian perfection, elements of it are discernible in our pre-Christian heroes and, mutatis mutandis, the doctrine may be applied to their spiritual journey.

In this chapter a study will be made, where applicable, of the circumstances of the hero's departure upon his journey, his means of transport, where relevant, and the route which he takes. At times he will make use of the hospitality which is offered. This usually has a practical purpose, such as providing equipment for the next stage of the journey or allowing the hero an opportunity to recover strength after an ordeal. But a host's courtesy can also give the hero a chance to express himself to others, and in doing so, to clarify for himself, the direction of his quest.

A twentieth-century spiritual writer suggests that hospitality means:

The creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place.<sup>4</sup>

This 'space' which is found at times of hospitality will have an important function in the attaining of the self-knowledge which is at the root of our heroes' quests.

On a journey, the hero may meet obstacles. On the physical level these include brigands, monsters, perilous waters or other strange phenomena. On the spiritual level they may be simply the faults in his own nature which have led him to yield to temptation. But, in spite of appearances, these obstacles are never insurmountable, for helpers are always available to a hero who has been duly chosen for his task. The lessons which the hero learns from his journey contribute to his development as a person.

After the journeys of the earlier heroes have been discussed, with reference to the physical, rational and spiritual levels, attitudes towards journeys in the twelfth century will be noted. As a link between the two groups of heroes, the journey of Eneas will be introduced before the discussion of the journeys undertaken by Chrétien's heroes.

### ACHILLES.

At first sight, the principal action of the Iliad can hardly be said to involve a journey. Achilles, with his companions, has already travelled from Achaea to Troy. But although he longs for home at times (Iliad I, 169-71), and even talks about making definite plans for his return (IX, 427-29; 617-19), little interest is sustained in this aspect of his journey. The only significant physical journey which Achilles makes in this epic is from the place of assembly beside the ships of the Achaeans, to his own tent, a distance which was easily walked by the old man, Phoenix (IX, 168). Achilles' wrath, then results in a physical alienation rather than a journey.

Nor is there a strong emphasis on any rational journey in the way that will be understood in certain later works. During most of the action of the epic, Achilles has been conspicuous for his logical point of view and for his perceptiveness in recognising specious arguments. A change from madness to reasoned behaviour is evident in Achilles' quest (XIX, 56-73). But this is due not so much to any logical progression of thought as to a moment of insight, a desire for reconciliation, an implied need for the company of his fellows, now that Patroclus is dead, and to a belated recognition of his duty (XIX, 67-71).

On the spiritual level, however, Achilles makes a very clear progression. Not only does he renounce the pride which had made him insult his king and withdraw his services from his fellows. Between the moment of his withdrawal and the scene with King Priam in Book XXIV, Achilles shows extraordinary development in the virtue of pity. For, from the self-pity which had accompanied his alienation, Achilles progresses towards a most profound altruistic pity which has its supreme expression in his attitude towards the suppliant King Priam.

At the beginning of the epic, Achilles was motivated by pity for others when he summoned the people to assembly (I, 54-56). This pity is lost when Achilles becomes hardened and allows his companions to suffer defeat and death without him.

At several significant points in the epic, Achilles is reminded of the value and the force of pity. During the visit of the embassy in Book IX, much of Phoenix's speech is directed towards inciting Achilles to act through pity (IX, 434-501), as the old man exhorts Achilles to subdue his anger (496-97). Phoenix continues by narrating the tale in which Meleager was persuaded through pity to drive back evil from his enemies (IX, 529-605). In Book XVI, Achilles shows a superficial playful pity for Patroclus when he sees him weeping 'like a little girl.' (XVI, 7-11). But he is, nevertheless, likened to a rock because of the hardness of his heart. Patroclus accuses him:

ἄνηλεές, οὐκ ἄρα σοὶ γε πατὴρ ἦν ἵπποτα Πηλεΐς,  
οὐδὲ θετὶς μήτηρ γλαυκῆ δέ σε τίκτε θάλασσα  
πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι, ὅτι τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής. (XVI, 33-35).

("You pitiless man! Your father was not horse-training Peleus, nor was Thetis your mother; the grey sea bore you and the towering rocks, for your heart is so harsh.")

And in this incident, Achilles' lack of pity is emphasised by the contrast with that of Patroclus his 'other self', who weeps for the plight of the Achaeans and, through pity, is moved to go to their help (XVI, 3-6) with the permission of an unwilling Achilles.

With the death of Patroclus, Achilles states that he has renounced all pity (XXI, 99-102). He shows this by his merciless slaying of Lycaeon (XXI, 99-135) whom he had earlier spared, and by his brutal treatment of the body of Hector. As Achilles drags the body of his enemy around the walls of Troy, Apollo says of him:

ὣ Ἀχιλεὺς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν, οὐδέ οἱ αἰδῶς  
γίνεται, ἣ τ' ἀνδρᾶς μέγα σίνετα ἦδ' ὀνίνησι. (XXIV, 44-45).

("But Achilles has destroyed pity and there is no shame left in him, which hurts men, but profits them, also.")

But as Priam goes to Achilles to ask for the body of Hector, he prays to Zeus:

Ἄγευ πάτερ, Ἰδηθὲν μεδέων, κῦδιστε, μέγιστε,  
δὸς μ' ἐς Ἀχιλλῆος φίλον ἐλθεῖν ἦδ' ἐλκεῖνόν. (XXIV, 308-09).

("Father Zeus, watching us from Ida, most high and most honoured, grant that I may come to Achilles as one loved and pitied.")

As in Book I Achilles was inspired by pity to summon the assembly concerning the plague (I, 54-56), now Zeus hears Priam's prayer and sends the omens which the old man seeks (XXIV, 310-11; 315-21).

The pity which Achilles lost for comrades, enemies and their parents is infused into his heart once more and renewed, as he is reminded by Priam of his own father. Pity is, therefore, one of the unifying links which transcend hostility between Achaean and Trojan. This transformation takes place during a hospitality episode. But here, the roles are inverted. For Achilles does not receive hospitality in the way that most of our heroes will. Rather, he dispenses it, with the result that in the simple actions of sharing a meal, shelter and above all grief,

an enemy is accepted, if not as a friend, at least as a fellow human being in an understanding which transcends enmity. Thus through pity, Achilles is restored to himself and, in spite of his pain, he is now even more courteous and considerate of a suppliant enemy than he was at the beginning of the epic.

### ODYSSEUS

Odysseus' physical journey is capable in itself of sustaining great interest, for it abounds in vivid descriptions of storms, monsters, strange places and witches. Odysseus himself is not simply a roamer out to see the world. Rather, he is a traveller with a purpose who keeps his goal constantly before him and who directs all his energies towards reaching his home again after the Trojan War. But in order to do this, he must develop his already exceptional gifts of cunning, fortitude and single-mindedness. He must also eradicate the pride which caused his principal fault and grow in humility. Odysseus' journey, therefore, concerns more than one level of his nature.

The stages in the main part of Odysseus' physical journey are portrayed in detail in his narrative to King Akinous and the assembled Phaeacians (Odyssey, IX - XII.) The route corresponds, in general, to identifiable geographical places and, from the data in the narrative, some relatively accurate reconstructions of Odysseus' journey have been possible.<sup>5</sup>

This is a journey accompanied by a series of strange landfalls which represent temptations to idle pleasure and sensuality at the land of the Lotos Eaters, or to greed, as at the lands of the Ciconians (IX, 39-61), and the Cyclops (IX, 152-251). Later, at Thrinacia, the men's disobedience to their leader's explicit command causes severe losses (XII, 397-419). Thus, Odysseus and his men impose obstacles upon themselves, for these faults are consistently punished, either by heaven-sent storms which drive them far off their course and ruin their ships (IX, 67-81) or by the brutality of their hosts. The last of these landfalls before Odysseus makes his solitary journey to the land



of the Phaeacians is the long sojourn at Ogygia where he has a final choice between sharing a pleasant life of immortality with the goddess, Calypso, and facing the terrifying hazards of the return home.

But there are helpful hosts, also. Aeolus, for example, gives a bag of winds by which the men are able to arrive within the very sight of Ithaca before they give in to curiosity and greed ( $\bar{X}$ , 28-55). Circe, too, once she has been overpowered by Odysseus, and recognises him as having a mind which is ἀκήλητος, 'to be won by no charms' ( $\bar{X}$ , 329), puts aside her evil spells and becomes a benefactress who provides abundant food, wine, comfort and shelter ( $\bar{X}$ , 449-65). After Circe's suggestion to Odysseus that they should unite in mutual love and trust ( $\bar{X}$ , 334-35), and her release of the men from their captivity as beasts ( $\bar{X}$ , 393-405), the true function of hospitality is seen. For Odysseus and his men are given space to recognise Circe as a friend rather than as an enemy. They are given space, too, to see their goals clearly once more so that, at the end of a year at Circe's palace, the men feel able to undertake the ordeal of the homecoming, and they make the urgency of their longing known to Odysseus:

Ἄαιμόν, ἤδη νῦν γιμνήσκεο πατρίδος αἴης,  
εἴ τοι θέσφατόν ἐστι σωθῆναι καὶ ἰκέσθαι  
οἶκον εὐκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν. ( $\bar{X}$ , 472-74).

("What are you thinking of? It is time now to think about our own native land, if it is truly ordained that you are to survive and to return to the well-founded house and land of your fathers.")

It is from Circe, too, that, after the visit to the Dead, Odysseus is given clear instructions concerning his homecoming and the perils which he is likely to encounter.

The time spent at Scheria, the land of the Phaeacians, shows clearly the value of hospitality and the space for renewal which it offers. Odysseus' journey from Calypso's island has been likened to a time of rebirth. E. Holtsmark<sup>6</sup> demonstrates in detail

how the rhythmical tossing of the waves resembles the contractions of birth; the food-bearing raft that comes from Calypso's island resembles placental security; the hero's reluctance to follow the advice of Leucothoë, the 'white-goddess' who offers the light of life is contrasted with his clinging to the raft which resembles the familiar world of dark Calypso. When he arrives at Scheria, he has sloughed off the now dead skin in which Calypso had clothed him and so emerged 'in the naked garb of infancy.'<sup>3</sup> He is forced by the sea to a remote landing-place where, almost lifeless from exhaustion, he has an opportunity to rest on Phaeacian soil (VI, 1-2). Here he meets Nausicaa and her maids who will provide him with food, clothing, shelter and a bath, from which he emerges 'more handsome than before,' (VI, 229-31). But this landfall is also a time for remembering. This is seen at first when the sight of Nausicaa causes Odysseus to reminisce in wonder as he compares Nausicaa's beauty with the young palm-tree in Delos (VI, 161-69). But it is at Scheria, also, that Odysseus tells his story which, in a sense, is a purification of his sufferings and is a source of interest to the listener. This sojourn marks a new beginning for Odysseus. After encounters with the monsters, strange creatures and enchantresses, Odysseus is now initiated once more into the world of men with whom he can communicate as a human being.

For Odysseus' journey leads from past to future. He leaves the real world of Troy with the glories, triumphs and pains of the heroic age and travels through an unreal world of progressively weird situations. As he responds to these challenges, Odysseus is gradually stripped of the past until, finally arriving before Nausicaa, he is naked and completely alone. This gradual separation from the heroic past is a necessary step in regaining the real world of Ithaca, which is Odysseus' constant preoccupation, and in accepting the challenges which he will meet there.

A progression on the rational level is evident in Odysseus' journey. One of Odysseus' most marked characteristics is that he takes time to look around him and ultimately, to assess his

surroundings in order to progress in his understanding of the world in which he is situated. Thus, he can decide more wisely what his next course of action ought to be. Yet, although Odysseus is always curious to investigate unfamiliar phenomena, he is increasingly wary of the unknown. There is a distinct progression from the heedless savagery with which Odysseus attacks the Ciconians (IX, 40) to the caution which he exhorts his men to practise at Thrinacia (X, 271-76; 320-23). In this later episode, too, there is a contrast between Odysseus' readiness to obey Circe's instructions concerning the cattle of the Sun-god and the men's disregard of Odysseus' explicit command. It can be said, therefore, that Odysseus owes his life to the proper use of his intellect for, unlike his men, he learns from his mistakes and respects the superior wisdom of the helpers whom he meets. Indeed, when Odysseus arrives back at Ithaca, Athene is quick to acknowledge the quality which has developed so powerfully and to see in him a resemblance to herself:

ἄλλ' ἄγε, μηκέτι ταῦτα λεγῶμεθα, εἰδότες ἄμφω  
 κέρδε', ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν ἔσσι βροτῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἀπάντων  
 βουλήν καὶ μῦθοισιν, ἐγὼ δ' ἐν πάσι θεοῖσι  
 μήτι' τε κλέομαι καὶ κέρδεσιν.

(XIII, 296-99).

("But come, let us no more talk of these things, for we both know sharp practice, since you are by far the best of all mortals in counsel and in stories and I am renowned among all gods for wit and sharpness.")

When it is recalled that Athene is seen as the embodiment of good sense and wisdom, it is clear that Odysseus has progressed very far indeed in his rational journey. Moreover, this cunning, shrewdness and good sense are not only an essential part of Odysseus' own nature. They become, in a sense extended and imparted to the people whom he meets as he comes to the end of his quest.

Nausicaa's common sense which is so highly commended by Odysseus (VII, 292-94, seems to be an extension of Odysseus' own sagacity.

At Ithaca, both before and after his own journey, Telemachus is constantly commended for wisdom beyond his years. Penelope's shrewdness has defeated the suitors and later provides Odysseus with the final test of identity when he returns home (XXIII, 177-204).

The narration of Odysseus' wanderings and the triumph of his wiles is accompanied by so many interesting episodes that at first, it is difficult to see any spiritual journey. Yet, as his perception grows, so do his humility, his single-mindedness together with his endurance, which is closely connected with the virtue of fortitude. These can all be called moral qualities, and they are seen to develop during the course of his wanderings.

The progression of Odysseus' endurance, which is one of his great characteristics and earns him the epithet πολύτλας, 'long-suffering', is rather a consistent response to hazards of increasing difficulty than a development of a virtue which has been diminished by any fault. Although he shows fear many times as, for example, before he reaches Scheria:

καὶ τότε Ὀδυσσεύης λυτο γούνατα καὶ φίλον ἦτορ. (V, 406)  
 (Then Odysseus' knees went slack and his dear heart sank.),

and he is seen weeping out of longing for his home, he always masters his feelings and continues in steadfast pursuit of his goal. This endurance in spite of all obstacles contrasts clearly with that of his men who yielded to discouragement and despair and thus failed in their homecoming.

But there has been clear progression in virtue, from the fateful moment when Odysseus yielded to pride in the earlier part of the wanderings, to the degree of humility which he finally attains and personifies in Ithaca. These acts of pride, namely, the savage, unprovoked attack upon <sup>the</sup> Ciconians, the boastful proclamation of his name to the blinded Cyclops are expiated as the lessons are learned. Odysseus' hosts come to be treated with both caution and deference. Although he is known by name to both Aeolus and Circe, he does not identify himself by name until he begins to narrate the tale of his wanderings at the palace of King Alcinous. This is only when he has accepted the hospitality of the Phaeacians, listened to Demodocus' song in which his own deeds are praised, and excelled in the games.

The simple statement:

‘εἶμ’ Ὀδυσσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν  
ἀνθρώποισι μέλω. (IX, 19-20),

("I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known to all men because of my cunning.")

is part of the narrative which the host has a right to know rather than the boastful proclamation which Odysseus earlier made to the Cyclops (IX, 502-04). When, at Ithaca, Odysseus is dressed as a beggar, he is not only wearing a disguise suitable for ascertaining the attitudes of his people; he is also projecting the supreme lesson of his own journey. After the defeat of the beggar, Irus, he states this lesson for those who are willing to hear. He says of his earlier life:

‘καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ποτ’ ἔμελλον ἐν ἀνδράσιν ὀλβίος εἶναι,  
πολλὰ δ’ ἀτάσθαλ’ ἔρεζα βίῃ καὶ κάρτεϊ εἰκῶν, (XVIIII, 138-39).

("For I too, promised once to be prosperous among men, but did many reckless deeds through force and violence.")

Although this beggar's tale is fictitious, it is the true Odysseus who is reflected. For he continues, from the experiences of his misfortunes:

τῷ μὴ τίς ποτε πάμπαν ἀνὴρ ἀθερίστιος εἴη,  
ἀλλ’ ὅ γε σιγῇ δῶρα θεῶν ἔχοι, ὅτι διδοῖεν. (XVIIII, 141-42)

(Let no man be altogether without righteousness, but let him take in silence the gifts of the gods, whatever they give.)

It is Odysseus, not his men, who has continually heeded the commands of the gods, respected their wishes and obeyed their instructions. His success in his quest, therefore, is due less to his extraordinary strength and imposing physique than to his ability to discern humbly the will of the gods and to continue learning promptly from his mistakes.

AENEAS.

Most of Aeneas' physical journey is recounted in Book 111 of the Aeneid. Although many of Aeneas' experiences follow those of Odysseus, the emphasis is less on the strange adventures and dangers which are experienced than on the progressive revelation of his destined goal.<sup>8</sup> Aeneas' journey, therefore, in a very real sense, represents a progression from darkness to light. Aeneas has started his journey from the darkness of the last night of Troy, with an incomplete understanding of his vocation and no knowledge of his route. Through the uncertainty of his journey, he must progress gradually towards the knowledge required for his destiny. Thus, there can be no separation of the rational from the physical aspects of Aeneas' journey. He has to keep learning of the significance of past events and their relation to the future. When, for example, he meets the spirit of Polydorus at Thrace, Aeneas has an opportunity of paying tribute to the mythological past as he learns of hitherto unknown events of the last night of Troy (Aeneid, 111, 41-57). On the other hand, at Delos, Aeneas learns of the future (111, 94-98). But because his understanding is faulty, he mistakenly lands in Crete.

"procedo et parvam Troiam simulataque magnis  
Pergama et arentem Xanthi cognomine rivum  
agnosco." (111, 349-50)

At Buthrotum, Aeneas is presented with a vision of a sterile past. He sees Andromache sacrificing at the empty tomb of Hector (111, 300-05). He sees the barren replica of Troy which Helenus has constructed as a memorial to the past, but which has no part in the life-giving future to which Aeneas is called. This sight in itself is a temptation because of the nostalgia which it evokes in Aeneas, as well as the longing to end his journey.

"hos ego digrediens lacrimis adfabar obortis:  
'vivite felices, quibus est fortuna peracta  
iam sua: nos alia ex aliis in fata vocamur.  
vobis parta quies: nullum maris aequor arandum,  
arva neque Ausoniae semper cedentia retro  
quaerenda.'" (111, 492-96).

But the founding of Rome demands that emotions be subdued for a greater good. In spite of his regrets, therefore, Aeneas must continue.

There are obstacles to be found in Aeneas' journey, also. They do not, however, bring the progressive loss of men to the extent which Odysseus experienced. For the Trojans to assert themselves successfully in Latium and to ensure a continuance of their lineage, it is necessary for at least some of them to survive the journey. These obstacles, rather, serve to instil fear into the men. For example, in the account of the episode at Strophades where the Trojans encounter the strange, vicious Harpies, Celaeno prophesies the end of Aeneas' journey in terms of severe discouragement. There is no question here of Aeneas' losing men or even of their suffering any physical harm. The encounter, rather, results in a chilling terror which adds to the doubt and confusion already experienced by the Trojans.

"at sociis subita gelidus formidine sanguis  
deriguit: cecidere animi, nec iam amplius armis,  
sed votis precibusque iubent exposcere pacem,  
sive deae seu sint dirae obscenaeque volucres." (111. 259-62).

These Harpies, therefore, the Cyclops, from whom he is warned by the tale of Achaemenides (111, 613-54), Scylla and Charybdis are not the insurmountable obstacles which are portrayed in the Odyssey. They are presented instead as deterrents to the men who have already suffered fear and despondency and who have little knowledge of their goal.

It is possible to discern a clear spiritual journey in Aeneas' quest. Indeed, F. Sullivan demonstrates most convincingly how Aeneas undergoes a tripartite spiritual development similar, in many respects, to the traditional stages of spiritual perfection.<sup>9</sup> The physical journey between Troy and Italy represents the Purgative Way with its doubts, despondency and imperfections. When Aeneas reaches Cumae and passes through the Underworld, he attains the Illuminative Way. On this plane, he is able to advance confidently because of the vision which impels him forward. When, after he has journeyed up the Tiber to Pallenteum, Aeneas first comes into contact with Roman soil and the Roman spirit, he can be said to have embarked upon the Unitive Way. There is, here an eagerness to fulfil his task which suggests that his will is perfectly at one with the will of the gods.

But Aeneas' spiritual journey is seen in terms of his growing pietas which he has to develop from the imperfect, struggling pietas which he had as a prominent Trojan citizen to the complete pietas which he will need as founder of Rome. The blind furor which caused Aeneas to persist in fighting blindly for a lost cause must, in Sullivan's words:

... give way to a new faith, despair to a new hope before he can become a vessel of election for the great task ahead.<sup>10</sup>

The epithet, pius, suggests in both Vergilian and Christian terms a promptness of the will in the service of God. Furthermore it is, as R.G. Austin suggests:

a complex word, a sensitive symbol of adherence to a personal ideal of devotion, which may nevertheless bring pain and sorrow ... the epithet is eloquent of struggle and bewilderment and submission.<sup>11</sup>

This adherence to a personal ideal of devotion is evident as Aeneas ignores the instructions given him by Hector and by Venus during the destruction of Troy. But his devotion and loyalty are wrongly placed. His pietas is founded on emotion rather than on faith and hope, and is thus directed towards defending a dying city and the relics of the dead past. In short, Aeneas' pietas is directed towards a lifeless, profitless ideal. His mother upbraids him for neglecting the gods:

'quid furis? aut quonam nostri tibi cura recessit?' (II, 595).

What is more, he has neglected the living members of his family (II, 596-98), in particular, the father who will guide him on the main part of the journey to his future city and the son who will ensure the perpetuation of Trojan lineage in Italy.

This night reflects Aeneas' darkness and uncertainty concerning his duty, and he needs enlightenment. The principal events which point out his duty to him are all accompanied by light. Hector is referred to as 'lux Dardaniae,' (II, 281), Venus is surrounded by an aura of rosy light (II, 590) and the comet which appears after Anchises' prayer for guidance serves to illuminate the next stage of the journey (II, 692-95). These apparitions are, in a sense, signs of enlightenment which clarify the direction of Aeneas' pietas. Furthermore the morning star, his mother's



symbol, appears like a ray of hope as he leaves Troy. But this is only the beginning of his struggle to attain complete pietas. The sight of the little Troy at Buthrotum (111, 349-53) echoes the tense conflict between his emotional yearning for the past and his duty, his pietas towards the future. With all his regrets at leaving Helenus and Andromache at Buthrotum (111, 493-97), he does keep his mind fixed on the will of the gods. When for example, he asks Helenus for clarification of Celaeno's prophecy (111, 362-64), there is evidence of faith growing to enlightenment as Helenus reminds him of the fates which will certainly help him to reach his goal.

"nec tu mensarum morsus horresce futuros:  
fata iam invenient aderitque vocatus Apollo." (111, 394-95)

But this faith needs to develop independently, as does his pietas. For until he reaches Sicily, Aeneas always has before him an exemplar of pietas in his father, Anchises, upon whom he has been dependent. It is Anchises who reflects submission to the gods in his prayer, his discerning heart and his readiness to continue in spite of mistakes. Anchises' death emphasises Aeneas' loneliness and in the very terseness of the narrative, there is evidence of the isolation and despair experienced by the hero at the loss of his father (111, 710-15). And when he first meets Anchises in the Underworld, there is a sense of triumph in the knowledge that the father's pietas has been perpetuated in the son.

"venisti tandem, tuaque exspectata parenti  
vicit iter durum pietas?" (V1, 687-88).

But even now, his pietas is not complete. It is confirmed by the vision of the future:

incenditque animum famae venientis amore, (V1, 889)

so that, although he is seen to be troubled by the prospect of the battles ahead of him, he is no longer doubtful and hesitant (V111, 522). As he prepares to go to battle in Book V111, he is given a sign from heaven which not only confirms his vocation, but also transforms his vision, just as a convert once he has received an infusion of grace knows that he can never be the same again (V111, 530-40).

When, at the end of Book VIII, Aeneas ceases contemplating his shield, there is to be found an interesting comparison with the departure from Troy in Book II. As Aeneas finally turned from the burning Troy to face his journey, there was little alternative offered him. He embarked upon the unknown out of the necessity of complete hopelessness in obedience to a command he did not understand. In the account of the wanderings, Aeneas and the other Trojans are continually seen: "incerti quo fata ferant." (III, 7). Now, after the sign sent from heaven by his mother (VIII, 526-29), Aeneas assumes a new confidence:

Tut memorat: 'ne vero, hospes, ne quaere profecto  
quem casum portenta ferant: ego poscor Olympo.  
hoc signum cecinit missuram diva creatrix,  
si bellum ingrueret, Volcaniaque arma per auras  
laturam auxilio.' (VIII, 532-36).

which is allied to joy in their performance of his duty to the gods:

. . . hesternumque larem parvosque penatis  
laetus adit. (VIII, 543-44).

Finally, after contemplating the craftsmanship of the shield on which the future triumphs of Rome are depicted, Aeneas undertakes battle, going again into the unknown, but this time, with confidence, joy and pride.

Talia per Clipeum Volcani, dona parentis,  
miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet  
attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum. (VIII, 729-31)

This act can be seen as a symbolic acceptance by his will of the fate which is the will of the gods.

Aeneas' break with the past is shown in two incidents in the latter part of the epic. These emphasise the extent of the pietas which he has achieved. When he was at Carthage, Dido gave him clothing which she herself had woven. It is this which he puts on Pallas' body in preparation for burial (XI, 72-76). This resembles a final stripping away of that part of the past which is hostile to Rome. When, at the end of Book XII Aeneas is faced with the choice between heeding Turnus' plea for mercy and slaying him, he renounces his own natural inclination to spare his enemy, not only in revenge for Pallas, but also because

he has shown himself a potential enemy of Rome.

At all stages of his journey, Aeneas has experienced struggle, bewilderment and submission to the will of the gods. But from the resulting pain and sorrow, the adherence to a personal ideal of devotion which was wrongly placed at the beginning of his journey, has now become correctly oriented, so that Aeneas' will is at one with the will of his gods and his destiny, and he has indeed achieved a pietas which is complete.

#### THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE.

The twelfth century was a time of renewed activity in many spheres of life involving Church, state, commerce and learning. Consequently, in France, journeys were undertaken by a variety of people and for different reasons. Kings, clerics, feudal lords, merchants, scholars, pilgrims, crusaders and knights in search of adventure had all, at different times, reason to travel. But, as in the case of the epic heroes, interest was focused not only on territorial journeys. Notions of intellectual advancement and spiritual ascensus were by no means new at this era,<sup>12</sup> but they were given fuller emphasis by the teachings of such theologians as Saint Bernard and William of Saint-Thierry. Spiritual writers, furthermore, insisted that life be considered as a pilgrimage, and numerous exhortations can be found reiterating Saint Paul's statement: 'Neque enim habemus hic manentem civitatem sed futuram inquirimus.' (Hebrews, XIII, 14). Saint Augustine had written of the way in which a good Christian should consider himself to be a pilgrim and an exile upon earth:

In civitate mundi bonus christianus semper peregrinatur;  
in civitate paradisi civis esse cognoscitur.<sup>13</sup>

This attitude was reiterated in the twelfth century by Saint Bernard<sup>14</sup> and Saint Anselm,<sup>15</sup> both of whom discouraged needless journeyings as a distraction to monastic life, and it was summed up again by Henry of Marcy, for whom the Church itself was on constant pilgrimage:

tales, inquam, calvi et peregrini et advenae super  
 terram et peregrinantis civitatis cives signa suae  
 militiae recognoscunt, et suae civitatis cantaturi canticum. <sup>16.</sup>

Thus, the idea of pilgrimage frequently accompanied the medieval idea of a journey, and with it, an idea of atonement in a temporary exile. There was, at the same time, a lively interest in the tales related by pilgrims, adventurers, crusaders, scholars and enterprising merchants about the marvels which they had found on their journeys.

Why should a person leave the comparative comfort and stability of his environment to undertake a quest which necessitates the perils of a journey from which he may never return? The very act of departing indicates that the person has chosen a more difficult alternative which is frequently for the sake of a higher good. This can be seen in the case of our knights. By voluntarily setting out into the unknown, a knight has the opportunity of testing his prowess against unforeseen hazards, and thus of knowing himself better by assessing his strengths and his limitations. When writing of the motives for the departure of knights on a journey, and the use of 'déplacement' as a literary device, P. Ménard notes:

Le départ répond assurément à un besoin de se dépenser,  
 mais aussi de se dépasser et de s'affirmer. <sup>17.</sup>

For it was not sufficient for a knight to reach a high standard of chivalry. He had continually to put his excellence to the test by freely confronting perils and many kinds of hazardous adventures. Such a departure incurs the risk of failure, but it can also be the sign of hope not only in the transitory glory which can be attained in the future, but also in the new, lasting self-awareness which fosters right conduct.

It would be unrealistic to separate too strictly the physical from the rational aspect of the hero's journey. For the hero must, as did Odysseus and Aeneas, inevitably experience a time of learning and revelation as he progresses towards his territorial goal. The blindness which caused him to commit a fault

gradually gives way to vision and the ability to assess his position. Thus, the hero gradually learns from his mistakes and is able to choose correctly when difficult alternatives are offered him. Again, too, the rational journey may refer to the progression from the madness of one who has discovered the defects of his nature and its consequences to the reasoned behaviour of one who is coming to accept his limitations and his dependence upon higher powers.

But it is the spiritual aspect of the journey which is the most important for our purposes. Several spiritual writers have described how a person's preoccupations progress from carnal to rational and again to the spiritual level. This progression corresponds to the physical, rational and spiritual aspects of nature. Reference has already been made to William of Saint-Thierry's distinction.<sup>18</sup> He summarises this division and leads it to its natural conclusion in the treatise, De Natura et Dignitate Amoris.

Cum vero fidelis anima talibus erudita, talibus incipiet non indigere, et a corporalibus transire ad spiritualia, a spiritualibus ad spiritualium et corporalium conditorem.<sup>19</sup>

In his Benjamin Major, Richard of Saint-Victor uses the same divisions to base his description of the soul's journey to contemplation.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, spiritual writers have described the ascent from virtue to virtue which the Christian makes when striving to reach perfection. Saint Bernard, for example, writes:

Haec autem convenit his qui ascensionibus in corde suo dispositis, de virtute in virtutem, id est de gradu in Sion, id est in speculatione, positi veritatem prospiciant.<sup>21</sup>

as, in this treatise he describes the gradual progression from self-recognition to recognition of the truth, just as elsewhere, a similar progression can be found from self-love to love of God. Such a journey, also, has obstacles and is always threatened by despair and complacency. A firm singleness of purpose must accompany the undertaking of such a journey lest the sight of the goal be lost.

Helpers abound in this kind of journey and can be seen primarily in the 'custodes' mentioned by William of Saint-Thierry, namely, God, one's conscience, a spiritual director.

Deo debes pietatem, cui te totum impendas; conscientiae tuae, honorem, coram qua peccare erubescas: patri spirituali, obedientiam charitatis, ad quem de omnibus recurras.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, prayer will be seen to play an important role in the spiritual journey, as will the formation of a right conscience and the attentiveness to the counsels of a wise man.

But there is a further important aspect to the spiritual journey. Patristic tradition makes a clear distinction in the degrees of love to which a person should aspire, according to whether he is beginning, advancing or reaching his goal in the spiritual life.<sup>23</sup> These degrees correspond to William of Saint-Thierry's division of the states of religious life where the 'animalis' belongs to the beginner, or the 'incipiens', the 'rationalis' to the 'proficiens' and the 'spiritualis' to the 'perfectus'. This division gave a basis to the later distinction between the three ways: the Purgative Way, the Illuminative Way, the Unitive Way. Although this tripartite development was not formally defined as such in the twelfth century, the distinction was clearly present, and traces of it can be seen in the spiritual journeys of our heroes. For if the signs of the Purgative Way consist of a tendency to yield to temptations of sensuality, vanity, anger, envy and uncharitableness, then our heroes, in spite of their excellent qualities can, at first, be regarded as 'incipientes'. Like all who are undergoing the Purgative Way, these heroes must turn away from sin, bring about a purification of the soul through the practice of penance, and experience crises which will develop their strength of character. The Illuminative Way is characterised by the mortification of the passions and the positive acquisition of virtues through constant practice. This step in our division is based on Saint Paul's words:

quae quidem retro sunt obliviscens, ad ea vero, quae sunt priora, extendens meipsum ad destinatum persequor, ad bravium supernae vocationis Dei in Christo Jesu.

(Philippians III, 13-14).

There is evidence, now, of the 'growing love' taught by Saint Augustine. This is shown by a much more positive attitude on the part of the individual, towards acquiring and consolidating virtues, in particular, charity, in imitation of Christ. Our heroes, too, experience a time of conscious striving to correct their faults and to acquire virtues. To this extent, their experiences reflect those which characterise the Illuminative Way. Lastly, Saint Augustine writes of the love of the 'perfecti.' This is a full-grown, adult love, and corresponds to the so-called Unitive Way. The principal characteristic of this stage is a close union with Christ, which, for the spiritual writer, is a reflection of Saint Paul's statement:

vivo autem, iam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus  
(Galatians, II, 20).

Signs of progression in this stage are the growth of gifts of the Holy Spirit and an abundance of His fruits. In this case, our heroes are no longer seen to be hesitant and doubting, especially where their destiny is concerned. There is no possibility of their turning back to the fault which precipitated their principal quest and caused them to set out on their journeys.

There is no certainty that Chrétien de Troyes had these divisions in mind when he wrote his romances or in fact, that his principal heroes were spiritual men in the way that would be understood by contemporary spiritual writers. But it must always be remembered that Chrétien was writing at a time when people had deep spiritual awareness and at a time, too, when outward appearances were considered to be meaningful only in so far as they expressed a deeper inward reality: In Alan of Lille's words:

Omnis mundi creatura  
quasi liber et pictura  
nobis est in speculum,  
nostrae vitæ, nostrae sortis,  
nostri status, nostrae mortis  
fidele signaculum. 24.

Chrétien himself writes as a man who has absorbed knowledge from many sources, Christian and pagan alike. This study does not pretend to investigate in any depth the possible interpretations of events and characters to be found in the journeys of Chrétien's heroes. But it would be strange if, in these journeys as well as in the journey of Eneas, there were not some reflection of the spiritual progression as it was understood by contemporary theologians.

### ENEAS.

When writing of the Roman d'Eneas, Frappier compared the style of the twelfth-century French verses with Vergil's hexameters and commented:

A lire l'Eneas après l'Enéide on reconnaît bien le même paysage, mais il semble qu'on le voie en hiver et non plus en été. La poésie a changé de saison.<sup>25</sup>

This 'change of season' can be seen in several aspects of Eneas' journey. For in the light of the journeys in the classical epics which were the antecedents to the Roman d'Eneas, the remarkable feature about Eneas' journey is that there is no mention at all of the route, landfalls, significant adventures or experiences with strange creatures which made the earlier journeys interesting. The very reason for Eneas' journey and the destination are stated only vaguely.

"Promise m'ont ne sai quel terre,  
ne sai ou ge la puisse querre;" (Eneas, 225-56).

There is not the painful heart-searching which accompanied Aeneas' departure, the same extent of difficulty in perceiving his duty or any apparent resistance to divine revelation. Eneas leaves Troy simply out of obedience to the god's command (38-41), after consultation with his men (64-77) and with the reassuring appearance of the rising star which shows them the way (79-80).

No evidence is given here of the dependence which Aeneas showed, upon his father as his principal companion, helper and



teacher. The role of Aeneas as founder of Rome had lost the force of its significance in the twelfth century adaptation of the story. As the tale of the wanderings is almost completely omitted, there is no mention of the times of enlightenment at such places as Buthrotum or Delos. The only hospitality episode portrayed in this narrative takes place at Carthage. This is a time of neither comfort nor enlightenment, but of sin. But in its own way, this episode gives Eneas an opportunity to recognise his limitations regarding the task which has been set. For here are clearly portrayed the destructive consequences of a self-seeking love. Illicit love, the storm sent by Juno, the caprices of changing Fortune (685-92) are the principal obstacles to Eneas' journey.

Eneas' spiritual journey differs considerably from that of his predecessor. There is no mention of any pietas until, in the section corresponding to Book VI, Eneas meets his father in the Underworld.

"Fiz Eneas, or sai et voi,  
quant venuz estes ci a moi,  
que pīetē venqui paor." (2839-41)

Although it is clear from his actions that Eneas is as endowed with pietas as Aeneas, he is not seen to make any spectacular ascent in this virtue. He does not progress from the uncertain, groping pietas of the Trojan to the sure, enlightened pietas of the Roman. For, apart from his time at Carthage, Eneas is constantly docile to the will of the gods and he is not seen to struggle to submit to Fate. There is, however, as in the case of Aeneas, a contrast between the love which is approved and needed by Fate and the love which Fate forbids. For, just as the theme of love has already been seen to have a prominent place in this romance, so Eneas' spiritual journey is, rather, on the plane of love, where there is a progression from an incomplete amor which has only physical gratification as its object, to a complete amor which exacts the performance of noble deeds for the sake of the loved one and is, therefore, directed outward towards other people and the good of society. At the beginning of the romance, the author

clearly illustrates the effect of illicit passion and the destructiveness and discorde which it generates. In the narration of the episodes of the judgment of Paris and the abduction of Helen (93-182), there is a preparation for the disorder caused by the affair at Carthage where the lovers put their own preoccupations ahead of their duty (1650-54). This is not the Eneas who was shown, early in the romance, to be solicitous for the welfare of his men (311-56). The real journey (1625-10108) can be said to begin from the time of Eneas' consciousness of his fault at Carthage and to conclude with his marriage to Lavine which has been prefaced by the author's lengthy demonstration of the true nature of love (7859-9998).

Eneas' journey to attain the perfection of this love is a progression which, to a certain extent, is parallel with the traditional Three Ways of the spiritual life. As an incipiens, one who has embarked upon the Purgative Way, Eneas has yielded to sensuality and selfishness. But he is quick to begin to make amends. When, at Carthage, the messenger arrives to command Eneas to continue his journey, he promptly renounces his fault as he perceives the necessity of continuing on his way.

Eneas fu molt esmaïé  
de ce que cil li a noncié,  
set qu'il ne puet mes remanoir,  
qu'il ne s'en alt par estovoir. (1625-28).

In spite of his own pain, Eneas does not waste time on futile self-pity. His fears and real regrets, as were those of Aeneas, are more for Dido's welfare than for himself. This departure, then, suggests an explicit turning away from sin and a renewed docility in accepting whatever the gods have decreed.

In Eneas' journey towards love, there are parallels, too, to a kind of Illuminative Way. His supreme vision, like that of Aeneas, is in the Underworld. Like Aeneas, also, he is seen to leave the past behind and to strive towards the future. This is exemplified in his case, too, by the garment with which he adorns the dead body of Pallas:

Pallas vestent un vestement  
 tissu a or molt mestrement:  
 a Eneas lo presenta  
 Dido, quant elle l'anama. (6121-24).

where there is a final break with all that Carthage represented, Eneas is seen, in this incident, to grow in selflessness, so that he sees beyond himself and his fears, and begins to understand his situation in the light of his destiny. At Pallas' funeral, for example, Eneas shows grief that he has lost such a promising companion in the prime of his youth and regret that his destiny detained him elsewhere when his friend needed him:

"Malvese garde ai fait de toi,  
 quant tu sanz moi recoillis mort;" (6250-51).

But his greatest concern springs from an unselfish motive, namely, for the parents of Pallas (6171-84). For the young warrior himself, Eneas sees hope, knowing that he will find happiness in the Elysian fields among the Blessed:

"Ge ne sai plus que ge te die;  
 t'ame n'ait poines ne ahans,  
 ainz aut es Elisiens chans,  
 iluec ou li buen home sont," (6200-03)

Thus, Eneas manifests very clearly the generosity, compassion, selfless concern for others and loyalty to an ideal which were evident when he first appeared in the romance.

It is evident, now, that Eneas has progressed to a high degree in virtues which are closely associated with true courtliness and which are necessary for the lover. But from the time that Eneas first arrives in Latium, the progression concerns not so much love and its inherent qualities as the reputation which Eneas has to gain. The judgments of Lavine and her family at Latium allow a gradual development in the presentation of Eneas as a lover. If our parallel is to be sustained here, it will be seen that, where love is concerned, Eneas moves between the Purgative and Illuminative Ways before he finally ascends to the Unitive Way where his love will be perfected.

Upon learning that Lavine loves Eneas rather than Turnus, the queen is quick to accuse him of unnatural vices (8567-8611) which

have no part in either true love (8567-68) or in the founding of a dynasty (8599-8602). He has been guilty of treachery in the Dido affair (8579-80), and Lavine would do better to love Turnus, a man who truly loves her and who could reciprocate her love (8612-16). Andreas Capellanus was scathing in his denunciation of unnatural vices and concluded:

Nam quidquid natura negat, amor erubescit amplecti.<sup>26</sup>

The queen reflects this attitude as she delivers a far more vicious accusation (8568-8621) than the dismay of Amata in the Aeneid (VII, 359-72). For Amata was in the power of the fury, Allecto, and was not responsible for her actions. The same cannot be said of her medieval counterpart. But the queen's accusation does help to demonstrate the progression which Eneas has yet to make in obtaining a worthy reputation among the citizens of Laurentum. It also helps to show how contemporary Christian attitudes towards sodomy have been projected onto classical myth.<sup>27</sup>

Eneas' reputation fares no better as far as Lavine is concerned, for she loves Eneas against her better judgment and in spite of her mother's advice. Indeed, when Eneas fails to appear and Lavine fears that her love cannot be reciprocated, she begins to believe her mother's accusations and abuses him in no less hostile terms:

"Ce est", fait ele, "verité,  
que ma mere m'a de lui dit;  
de feme lui est molt petit,  
il voldroit deduit de garcon,  
n'aime se males putains non." (9130-34).

For love demands promptness in the service of the loved one in the same way that pietas exacts promptness in the service of God.

Eneas achieves this promptness gradually. When he recognises the love which Lavine expresses in her letter (8779-92) and is moved by the pity which she implores for her love-pangs (8790-92), Eneas at first experiences joy (8872-74): The attraction which he begins to feel for Lavine as she watches from her tower (8875-8907) is rapidly transformed into love which disturbs him profoundly (8911-12).

Thereafter, he becomes preoccupied in thinking about Lavine (8915-20) until he manifests the symptoms which show that he is in love's power (8925-29).

But although Eneas recognises that love has given him abnormal strength and courage which will help him in his combat against Turnus:

"Quatre mains m'a doné Amor.  
 Amor molt fait ome hardi,  
 Amors l'a molt tost anaspri.  
 Amors, molt dones vasalages!  
 Amors molt faiz croistre corages!" (9060-64).

he has not yet achieved the necessary balance in love. When he is unable to withstand the force of the symptoms of love and consequently seems unlikely to be able to acquit himself adequately in battle (9115-18), Eneas incurs Lavine's scorn (9130-88), for which she immediately repents when she realises her error and learns of Eneas' love (9205-28). Nor does he achieve the necessary promptness in the service of his lady until after his failure to come to her after the death of Turnus. For now, Eneas must submit to a time of repentance (10013-17) which leads, in turn to a stronger, more binding love. This is productive not only of noble deeds but also of worthy descendants for Rome. In a very real sense, then, the progression in pietas of our medieval Eneas is a progression in amor which he attains by gradual awareness of the uncompromising service which love exacts. The signs of this love are the joy which accompanies both Eneas' possession of Laurentum and his marriage with Lavine (10093-10101). This joy is sustained at the coronation:

Eneas fu a roi levez,  
 a grant joie fu coronez,  
 et fu coronee Lavine. (10105-07).

and in the promise of peace and stability in the new kingdom (10124-36). The 'change of season' noted by Frappier can, therefore, be applied in several ways to Eneas' journey. It can be seen in the constant omission of so much that gave interest to the traditional real journey of Aeneas and of the lessening of interest in the hero's pietas. But perhaps the author's growing

preoccupation with love indicates that he sees his landscape not so much in winter, as Frappier suggests,<sup>28</sup> but in early spring.

### EREC

Although Erec's earlier adventures necessitated some journeying,<sup>29</sup> the focus in this chapter will be placed on Erec's journey from Carnant, to his coronation at Nantes. This is, to a certain extent, a voyage of atonement or penance for the excessive preoccupation with love. It is also a response to a challenge offered by adventures not only in unknown conditions, but also away from the support of knightly companions. There is seen here, too, an example of the departure for adventure which is necessary for men who need to test themselves if they are to improve as individuals. There is, however, no suggestion of pilgrimage in this journey for, unlike contemporary pilgrims, Erec is ceremonially arrayed in fine armour (2632-52) and carries arms, while at Erec's command, Enide wears her best dress whose richness together with that of her horse and its equipment later so impress the robbers (2803-08).

The haste in the preparations for the departure echoes the speed with which Erec makes his decision to leave Carnant:

"Apareilliez vos or androit,  
por chevauchier vos aprestez;  
levez de ci, si vos vestez  
de vostre robe la plus bele  
et faites metre vostre sele  
sor vostre meillor palefroi." (2574-79).

The abrupt imperatives here, the absence of Erec's earlier terms of endearment and his impatience at Enide's apparent delay (2661-67) contrast strongly with the affectionate words by which he had earlier sought to comfort her in her distress:

"Dites moi, dolce amie chiere,  
por coi plorez an tel meniere?" (2511-12).

In spite of his father's advice (2693-2711), Erec takes no

companion except Enide even though it is not considered fitting for a king's son and a 'prodome' to journey without an escort.

"ne doit seus aler filz de roi." (2706).

The presence of Enide is, however, essential to the working out of the balance between love and chivalry, For if she is the cause of Erec's recreantise, and her words the cause of his anger, it is her beauty which will attract a number of the hostile forces which Erec confronts on his journey<sup>30</sup> and which precipitate the most serious encounters. As Erec and Enide leave Carnant, they project an image of beauty, chivalry, nobility and wealth. But the journey which they undertake necessitates the deepening of the inner reality which lies beneath the superficial appearances.

During Erec's first adventures, there are no distinguishing features to designate the route. Rather, the itinerary is marked by the increasing severity of the adversaries. For the couple, this is a time of separation from society and from the refinements of court. The two groups of robbers whom they meet are fierce and greedy, and they are easily defeated by Erec's skill. The vain count represents lust which has no place in true courtliness and which must, therefore, be eradicated. There are no significant hospitality episodes in this section, for after the robbers are defeated, Erec and Enide sleep under a tree (3083). Although he accepts food from the courteous horseman, Erec shows no inclination to linger with his host. The count's offer of hospitality becomes, at first, more of a threat than an opportunity for real change to take place. Yet this incident signifies a change that has begun to take place in both Erec and the count.

For in terms of the traditional Three Ways,<sup>31</sup> this part of Erec's journey resembles a turning away from sin, which is the first requisite of the Purgative Way. His excessive preoccupation with the pleasures of love is corrected by his rigid temperantia which demands that his only association with Enide be, at best, a remote uncommunicative companionship. His fortitude was in question at the time of his recreantise. Now, through

being exercised against dangerous adversaries, it assumes a new dimension. He has begun to fight for his life, for his wife and for the necessary balance between his knightly duty and the love which had separated the couple from society. But this is a time for acquiring virtues as well as for atoning for his fault. Although, as yet, Erec shows little pity for Enide, he does spare the vain count who asks for mercy and, by his very goodness, Erec prompts his adversary to acknowledge his wrong-doing, as expressed by "exploitié ai vilainnant" (3630) and 'vilenie' (3631), the repeated use of 'max' (3638-39), and the epithets 'fos', 'desléax', 'traïtes', 'forssenez.' (3640-41). The count repents of his evil plans as he wonders at Erec's valour:

"Onques ne fu de mere nez  
miaudres chevaliers de cestui." (3642-43).

If Enide is the principal cause of Erec's recreantise and of his journeying, she is also his companion and his principal helper in facing the obstacles which he meets. In spite of his harsh words to Enide when she warns him of the approaching danger of the robbers, (2845-52; 2993-3004), Erec does heed her. Her vigilance (3093-96) compensates for the sloth at Carnant, her cunning (3377-3400) compensates for her excessive promptness in telling her husband of his lost reputation; her wise deliberations as to whether to disobey Erec's unreasonable command (2765-69) compensate for her earlier lack of discernment. But on a different plane, Enide's watchfulness while Erec sleeps:

cil dormi, et cele veillea,  
onques la nuit ne someilla. (3093-94),

suggests that there are differences in their degrees of awareness. For while Erec was asleep at Carnant, Enide stayed awake grieving because of the rumours she had heard (2475-78). Enide again grieves as she looks back with guilt at her presumption, and views her present ignoble situation:

"Honie soit ma leingue tote,  
qui l'orguel et la honte dist  
dont mes cors a tel honte gist." (3110-12)

But as at Carnant, she is awake to the situation. Erec, on the other hand, was asleep to the moral implications of his



recreantise, and is asleep now, both to signs of approaching danger and to the pain which he is causing Enide. Yet, although there is no mitigation of Erec's harshness towards Enide, the actions of the couple are now complementary, as Enide, alert in mind, keeps her anxious vigil and Erec sleeps in order to maintain his strength for the trials of the journey.

Guivret le petit (3660-3820) is a much more formidable opponent than the robbers or the treacherous count, for he is the embodiment of Erec's own fine attributes. In the combat with Guivret, Erec matches his courage against Guivret's courage, his skill against that of Guivret, so that the two knights appear to be equal in valour:

Li uns a l'autre granz cos done;  
 des tierce jusque pres de none  
 dura la bataille tant fiere  
 que nus hom an nule meniere  
 certainnement n'apar ceüst  
 li quex le meillor en eüst. (3795-3800).

Guivret himself is a worthy descendant of a noble household and a respected and feared master of his territory (3849-55). The friendship of the two knights is, therefore, significant, for Erec's qualities which had been questioned at the time of his recreantise, are now confirmed by his association with a knight who is his equal in those very qualities. Here, too, the urgency of his journey becomes clear, for in spite of the severity of his wounds (3878-82) and his pleasure in Guivret's friendship, Erec again shows haste, for he refuses Guivret's hospitality as he continues on his way (3883-90). He does, however promise to call on Guivret for help, should the need arise (3886-90).

Even when he reaches King Arthur's tent, Erec stays only overnight, allowing his wounds to be dressed. Although he is pleased to accept the food and comfortable lodging offered by the king, Erec rejects the king's offer of further hospitality (4207-12), even though he obviously needs more time for recuperation. He has undertaken a task of great importance, and nothing must

intrude until it is completed (4213-19). He explains to King Arthur:

"Je ai si ceste chose anprise  
ne remanroie en nule guise." (4231-32).

The departure from King Arthur's tent, with the preparations (4253-57), exhortations to remain (4258-61), tears (4262-64) and mutual commendations to God (4277-78) resembles the earlier departure from Carnant. But the resemblance ends here, for there will henceforth be a higher level of motivation in Erec's adventures, as Erec embarks upon a kind of Illuminative Way, in which there is concentration upon more positive acquisition of virtues.

For now, for the first time in the romance, Erec undertakes a challenge, not in a contest or for protection against an enemy, but in defence of another, weaker person. Because they are giants his next adversaries are more formidable than any of those previously encountered. In the words of the giants:

"Vasax, font il, vos estes fos  
quant a nos vos volez combatre.  
Se vos estiez or tel quatre,  
n'avreiez vos force vers nos  
ne c'uns aigniex antre deus los." (4402-06)

There is a marked difference in attitude from that of the knight who had prudently stayed in the background and had to be asked to go to the help of the queen's pucele (195-204). For, once he hears the cry of Cadoc's amie, Erec promptly goes to her help. He explains his actions to Enide:

"Dame, fet il, une pucele  
va par ce bois formant criant;  
ele a, par le mien esciant,  
mestier d'aie et de secors." (4290-93)

and although he addresses her by the formal 'dame', he does at least share with her his anxiety concerning the girl and her plight.

Erec's conflict with the giants leads to an experience which is essential for his growth not only as an individual, but above all, as a Christian. In the first place, he has undertaken this

combat in response to a plea for help, but in deliberately coming to protect Cadoc, a stranger, he not only resembles the Good Samaritan, but he also reflects the command of Christ:

Maiorem hac dilectionem nemo habet, ut animam suam  
ponat quis pro amicis suis." (John, XV, 13)

In confronting these giants on behalf of another, Erec prepares to lay down his life not simply for a friend, but for a stranger in need, and proves the extent of a love which closely resembles the ideal of Christian charity.

But above all, this encounter leads to Erec's apparent death which occurs at the moment when he rejoins Enide (4564-69). He has been so severely wounded by the giants that:

... chiet pasmez con s'il fust morz. (4569).

The apparent reality of his death is borne out by Enide's long lamentations (4572-82), her near suicide (4626-35), the reactions of the inhabitants of Limors who see him as a dead man (4704-08), the count's seizing the opportunity given by Erec's death to marry Enide (4729-40; 4772; 4800-01). Furthermore, the news of a mortally wounded knight reaches Guivret (4903-06) who immediately considers making preparations for Erec's burial (4917-21). Erec's swoon, therefore, is so similar to death that it deceives Enide, the count and the inhabitants of Limors, and it can be classified as a near-death experience.

Moreover, Erec's awakening from his swoon at the sound of Enide's voice (4806-14; 4820-21) resembles a resurrection. This is an event of great significance, for it marks the end of his quest for himself as a knight, as a lover and as a Christian. The knightly qualities which were questioned at Carnant have, in the preceding encounters, been witnessed and strengthened. Erec has seen for himself the extent of Enide's love (4882-87). Furthermore, he has attained a high degree of Christian charity. so that there is a reflection of St. Paul's words: 'Vivo autem, iam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus.' (Galatians, II,20). Thus, there is a fine integration of all Erec's promising qualities.

His spiritual itinerary now resembles that of the Unitive Way which, in Christian terms, is marked by a consolidation of virtues in union with Christ. This is the state of those whose love is perfect and can never return to their sinful ways. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are constantly evident in their lives. They can truly be called 'alteri Christi.' The extent of Erec's renewed charity has already been noted. Now he prepares to lay down his life once more for the sake of an adventure which promises certain death if he is defeated and great benefits if he is successful (5420-23). His earlier faults have been corrected. At the beginning of the romance, when the White Stag hunt was introduced, Erec stayed aloof from the coutume. (125-32). Now, he not only takes part in the coutume of the Joie de la Cort, but he seeks it with determination and confidence, and eventually conquers it. At Carnant, Erec had failed in single-mindedness, for he had neglected his duty as a knight. Now his determination is clear as he prepares to undertake the Joie de la Cort adventure:

Rien ne me porroit retenir  
que je n'aïlle querre la Joie. (5424-25)

which is a much more serious undertaking than any he has encountered so far.

It is tempting to identify the Erec in the latter part of the romance as a Messianic figure. He has been wounded to the extent that:

... toz ses cors an sanc baignoit  
et li cuers faillant li aloit (4562-63), and  
chiet pasmez con s'il fust morz (4569)

and has subsequently arisen from an apparent death. At the palace of King Evrain, his host honours him and

ot faite une chanbre ancenser  
d'encens, de mirre et d'aloë. (5516-17).

He is portrayed as one who delivers a man and a woman in a garden of delight from the bondage of their sinful ways. The blowing of the horn and the ensuing universal joy (6109-36) suggest the trumpet sounds which, on the Last Day are associated with deliverance from sin and the resurrection of the Dead. (1 Corinthians, XV, 52-53). But it would be more realistic

to see Erec, in the first place, as a type of Christian who has progressed so far in virtue that he can be truly seen as an 'alter Christus', a man who lives no longer for himself but for others, in imitation of Christ. This is not presumption. William of Saint-Thierry describes the aspirations of the truly spiritual man.

Propter hoc enim solum creati sumus et vivimus,  
ut Deo similes simus, cum ad Dei imaginem  
creati simus.<sup>32</sup>

But in addition, a king in particular, was considered to be an 'alter Christus' whose rank was due to an intervention of the Holy Spirit and whose anointing was associated with the power of vanquishing evil.<sup>33</sup> Evils of many kinds have been symbolically conquered by Erec, and kingly virtues have been constantly extolled. The nobility which was evident at Erec's first appearance and again at the departure from Carnant, has been tested and proved to be genuine, and is thus fittingly enhanced by the splendour of his coronation:

Cesar, l'empereres de Rome,  
et tuit li roi que l'en vos nome  
an diz et an chançons de geste,  
ne dona tant a uné feste  
come li rois Artus dona  
le jor que Erec corona; (6615-20).

The joy, peace and expectation which accompany this ceremony, surely express public approbation of Erec's suitability for his inherited vocation.

There is limited evidence that Erec makes any kind of intellectual or rational journey. But there is a definite progression from the darkness of the passion which had blinded his vision to the light of reason by which he achieves eradication of his fault and comes to greater understanding of his marriage, his love and his obligations to society. When he embraces Enide after his swoon, it becomes clear that Erec's love has progressed beyond the superficial physical, sensual knowledge which had preceded his fault. Thus, a greater depth has been added to his love:

... "Ma dolce suer,  
 bien vos ai de tot essaiee.  
 Or ne soiez plus esmaiee,  
 c'or vos aim plus qu'ainz mes ne fis,  
 et je resui certains et fis  
 que vos m'amez parfitement." (4882-87).

and with it, a promise of future service and complete devotion as in the past:

"Or voel estre d'or en avant,  
 ausi con j'estoie devant,  
 tot a vostre comandement." (4888-90).

Thus, the role of 'ami' has become integrated with that of sovereign lord. Furthermore, as Erec begins to accept his responsibilities as king, his promise becomes a reality, not just for Enide, but for all Erec's future dependents. For the extent of Erec's rational journey is, in a sense, signified by the figures on his coronation robe representing the quadrivium which correspond to four of the wheels of the Currus Prudentiae: Geometry, which makes a circuit of the whole globe and measures all its aspects (6684-92); Arithmetic, which shows how numbers unite all things in the bond of harmony and understanding (6693-6707); Music, which signifies ordered pleasure (6708-14) and Astronomy, which draws counsel from the heavens (6708-28).<sup>34</sup> These are the gifts which crown Erec's journey and prepare him for the future.

Through his journey, Erec has proved his true worth by using and developing the gifts which were evident at the beginning of the romance. Thus, he has refuted the charge of recreantise. He has, in Burgess' words, gained a victory 'over superficial judgments.'<sup>35</sup> For, the outward image of beauty, chivalry and nobility which was projected as the couple left Carnant has, in a sense, been shattered, but has come to life once more with a deeper fuller meaning. In surpassing himself as a knight, Erec has gained a high degree of Christian virtue and has proved himself worthy of his lady and of his vocation and has thus attained the 'wholeness' which he was seeking.

YVAIN.

Yvain's preliminary quest necessitated a departure from King Arthur's court and a journey of which the Fountain adventure was the destination. The role of Defender of the Fountain was subsequently the prize for his skill in combat just as Laudine, his bride was his prize for his diplomacy and for his obedience to the superficial demands of love. But in this adventure, undertaken for the sake of his family honour, Yvain has, as Margaret Burrell has noted, 'unleashed two potentially destructive forces, the weather and the power of love.'<sup>36</sup> He has not yet the maturity to maintain his new role and 'defend the Fountain against all comers' (2035) as he had promised. Therefore, just as Yvain has to win Laudine once more, after he has committed his fault, so he has to earn his role as Defender of the Fountain. He is to do this not so much through physical prowess alone, as through the development of his innate qualities of mind and spirit. Thus, the Fountain adventure is not only the goal of Yvain's initial quest; it becomes the testing-ground for his maturity.

Yvain's secret departure from King Arthur's court at the beginning of his initial quest is paralleled by his flight from his companions (2802-09). Yet at first, Yvain does not know that he is on a journey. Unlike Erec, he makes no deliberate plans for departure, for there is no formal departure scene at all. Instead, Yvain's companions walk away from him so that he is left alone. He runs away from the scene and disappears:

... va tant, que il fu loing  
Des tantes et des paveillons. (2802-03).

with the result that when his people begin to look for him, Yvain cannot be found:

Querant le vont par trestot l'estre.  
Par les ostés as chevaliers  
Et par haies et par vergiers,  
Sel quierent la, ou il n'est pas (2810-13).

There is no question of Yvain's needing to prove his knightly valour, for he has already shown his excellence in a recent tournament (2684-85), and his reputation is unquestioned. But a strong need for

atonement is present, for this is essentially a journey of redemption through which Yvain is ultimately to make reparation for his fault, to become reconciled with his lady, and to develop the qualities which he will need as master of the Fountain.

Yvain begins his journey in the forest,  
           come hon forsené et sauvage.       (2828)

With his bow and arrow, he kills game which he eats uncooked. The remote association with the hospitality offered by the hermit is significant. For even though he is fearful of his guest, the hermit offers his meagre food to Yvain (2829-86). In this sharing of bread, water and game, Yvain is brought, in spite of his isolation, into contact with human care for the needy and he responds, in a primitive way, to the hermit's concern for his welfare. The penitential bread and water which the hermit offers him not only suggest atonement for sin, but they also mark the beginning of a new charity, as Yvain reciprocates the hermit's kindness by bringing game to his benefactor, which the hermit cooks and offers back to him.

This reciprocal sharing and this concern are to play an important part in further stages of Yvain's journey. He responds willingly to the plight of the Lady of Noroison. For when she has provided him with healing ointment, clothing and a horse, Yvain is prompt in offering his outstanding skill (3078-79). When he has successfully defeated the Count Aliers, Yvain begins to rise above his own failure and misery, and to retrieve his self-respect, and to assume his role as a knight.

Thus, the hospitality episodes are already important in Yvain's journey. Not only do they provide opportunities for him to receive food and other necessities; they also mark the stages of his gradual reintegration into society, and give him 'space' to consolidate the benefits of his experiences before he embarks upon the next stage of his journey. It will be seen, however, that Yvain, like Erec, is so anxious to proceed on his journey that he refuses to stay more



than a single night in one place. Here, even though Yvain has to offend the Lady of Noroison by refusing her hand and her offer of further hospitality (3314-35), he shows his anxiety to continue his journey:

Mes il n'i vost onques antandre  
 Parole d'ome ne de fame.  
 Des chevaliers et de la dame  
 S'est partiz, mes que bien lor poist;  
 Que plus retenir ne lor loist. (3336-40).

This incident, also, gives Yvain an opportunity of testing his loyalty to Laudine. For although the Lady of Noroison needs a permanent defender for her estate as Laudine had needed a knight to defend her fountain, Yvain adheres carefully to his duty as a knight which requires that he go to the aid of ladies in distress while remaining faithful to his own lady.<sup>31</sup>

In terms of spiritual progression, this section bears parallels to the Purgative Way. Yvain's separation from Gauvain in whose company he had committed his fault, resembles a turning away from sin. His subsequent experiences help to purify the pride and self-love by which he lost Laudine. His knightly weapons were, initially, replaced by the primitive bow and arrow, his armour by his nakedness, his pride in his achievements by the humiliating recognition of his fault and his state (3021-22). But with the hospitality he has accepted from the Lady of Noroison there is a clear beginning to the purification of his faults. The self-hate which he had experienced when he recognised his neglect of Laudine:

Ne het tant rien con lui meisme (2790)

begins to change into self-acceptance as he offers to help his benefactress (3078-79). The self-pity which Yvain showed when he heard of King Arthur's projected visit to the fountain (678-84), the ruthless tenacity with which he pursued Esclados becomes pity for another as he spares the count and listens to his request for mercy (3280-81).

When Yvain goes to the help of the lion, his pity is again evident. In the first place, his attention is drawn by a cry 'mout dolereus et haut' (3344). It is pity which enables him to

make the right choice as to which beast to help:

Mes que qu'il l'an avaingne après,  
Eidier li voldra il adés;  
Que pitiez l'an semont et prie,  
Qu'il face secors et aïe  
A la beste jantil et franche. (3371-75)

This episode marks the beginning of a kind of Illuminative Way. If we accept the symbolism of the lion as Christ,<sup>38</sup> we can see that, once Yvain has the lion as his companion, he begins to show the characteristics of a follower of Christ. Imitation of Christ is one of the principal signs of the Illuminative Way, together with the acquisition and consolidation of virtues by assiduous, vigilant practice. We can, therefore, expect to find an increase in humility, justice, patience and, above all, in true charity. In choosing to save the lion rather than the serpent, Yvain has chosen good instead of evil, for the serpent:

Ne doit an feire se mal non. (3358).

The lion not only gives evidence of humility (3395-3401), gratitude (3403), and the promise of constant companionship and service for the future (3415). It is also attentive to Yvain's slightest gestures (3423-31) and shares his affection (3452-55). The lion thus shows qualities which reflect the proper attitude of a vassal to his lord. These are qualities, too, which a courtly lover ought to show his lady, but they reflect, furthermore, the spirit of Christ whose function is to heal, to protect, to guide, to comfort and, in short, to be always present as a source of strength. In the words of J. Harris:

When we remember that the lion's wakefulness was taken as a symbol of Christ who dead, yet lived, and who by the very act of death was redeeming mankind, we cannot fail to feel the appropriateness of having the symbol of the Redeemer accompanying Yvain on his journey of redemption.<sup>39</sup>

As the animal subordinates its natural instincts to the known will of its master:

Car ancontre sa volanté  
Ne voldroit aler nule part,  
Et cil parçoit a son esgart,  
Qu'il li mostre, que il l'atant. (3430-33)

it exemplifies humility, fidelity and docility which are necessary for vassal, courtly lover and Christian. To this extent, it represents the 'wholeness' which Yvain is seeking.

Yvain, also, must submit to a near-death experience. This is caused through the extent of his grief as he returns to the fountain (3492-3501) rather than through physical wounds. He is so sorrowful that he falls 'pasméz' (3497). Although 'pasmer' and its associated words mean only 'to lose one's senses,'<sup>40</sup> Chrétien does, at times, associate it with death. The word is used of Erec's swoon and apparent death (Erec, 4569; 4816) and later, of Perceval's mother (Le Conte du graal, 624; 1588; 2919) who fell 'pasmée' immediately before her real death. Here the lion, an animal of unerring instinct (3440-42) is convinced that its benefactor is dead and prepares to end its life with Yvain's sword (3510-14). What is important here, also, is that among the aspects of Christ which were symbolised by the lion was that of Resurrection.<sup>41</sup> Whether or not this episode signifies a real, physical death, there are, at least, strong associations with death and resurrection. For after he recovers his senses beside the fountain, Yvain wishes for death (3545-47). His moral courage seems to have deserted him as he laments his wasted opportunities in a monologue which ends in a final outburst of self-pity before he is led to a new level of motivation.

But it is pity, for others which enables Yvain to rise from this death-like state. When he has uttered his last cries of self-pity (3531-62), he begins to forget his own troubles as he realises Lunete's plight, and promptly undertakes her defence. From now until the end of the romance, Yvain not only acquires and develops the virtues which have been weakened by his fault; he also, in his principal encounters, symbolically conquers evils which affect society and undermine true love, for they strike at the heart of real cortoisie.<sup>42</sup> During her denunciation of Yvain's neglect (2716-73), Laudine's messenger had accused him of being 'desleal' (2719), 'fel' (2724), 'larron' (2730; 2736). The three seneschals whom he defeats on

Lunete's behalf are:

Uns fel, uns lenne, uns desleaus, (3668).

Yvain's victory over them is, in a sense, a final act of atonement for his own fault before he begins to overcome other vices. The encounter with Harpin de la Montagne is undertaken through pity (3942-45). Harpin represents selfish and sensual vices which are incompatible with love or with the growth of courtly virtues which foster true love. Thus, motivated by pity, Yvain now becomes preoccupied with the reality of chivalry as he develops its principal virtues: generosity, humility, loyalty, promptness in service, altruistic love, as opposed to the empty ideal which Chrétien condemned at the beginning of the romance (20-28).

Through these episodes, Yvain has helped others, especially those who have helped him<sup>in</sup> the past: the Lady of Noroison, Lunete, his benefactress and Gauvain his friend. Having learnt from the lion's example, Yvain can now be said to have embarked upon the Unitive Way. This is marked by a spectacular growth in charity. The only obligation of which he becomes increasingly aware during the course of his adventures, is the obligation incumbent upon all Christians to go promptly and willingly to the help of those in need. Again, Yvain is moved by pity for the weaker as he endeavours to find out about the origin and fate of the tisseuses (5226-36). There is here, another facet of the hospitality motif. For, instead of having opportunity or space for change to take place, Yvain is forced, through an evil coutume into combat with the netuns. His host warns him:

Que trestot seul de vostre main  
 Vos covandra, voilliez ou non,  
 Combatre et perdre vostre non  
 Ancontre les deus vis deables." (5334-37)

Yvain is not unlike Erec before the Joie de la Cort episode as he prepares to lay down his life in order to liberate these victims of an evil power (5506-09). There is thus, a radical development from the hero who, at the beginning of the romance, left the court secretly lest he should be required to share the aventure and subsequent glory with anyone else. The Scriptural exhortation:

'Seek peace and pursue it' which is a traditional sign of the Unitive Way,<sup>43</sup> is now reflected in Yvain's actions, for he has consistently restored peace to the oppressed. Accompanied by his lion, Yvain can now be seen as the Christian who, by his union with Christ, can say, like Saint Paul: 'Vivo autem, iam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus.' (Galatians, II, 20). Such a man can undertake the eradication of evil with great confidence, for he can also say: 'Omnia possum in eo, qui me confortat.' (Philippians, IV, 13).

Yvain's spiritual progression is, perhaps, seen most of all in terms of his relationship with Gauvain. At the beginning of the romance, Yvain was considered to be inferior to Gauvain (687-88). After his marriage, it was at the suggestion of Gauvain who

... sor toz fu renomez,  
Doit bien estre solauz clamez. (2401-02)

that Yvain undertook to spend time away from Laudine in order to further his reputation and his worth as a knight. And although Gauvain was quick to point out Yvain's duty in this respect (2484-2538), he was not so prompt in reminding his friend of the promise to Laudine. Finally the two friends are to confront each other in the conflict over the property of the Lord of Noire Espine. This episode appears, at first, to break the sequence of increasingly difficult adventures. Here, Yvain is no longer fighting against giants or demons, but against a knight who is recognised as the embodiment of true chivalry. It is an episode which finally proves the extent of Yvain's progression in humility as he avows himself to be defeated when, in reality, he is not. He says to Gauvain:

"Mes je vos vuel de cest afeire  
Tel amande et tel enor feire,  
Qu' outremant outrez m'otroi." (6289-91)

But there is a deeper significance in this encounter which again exemplifies Chretien's fine symmetry. At the beginning of the romance, there was strong criticism of the degeneration of cortoisie in which true love has no part. This is the kind of

cortoisie which Gauvain represents. He is known to be superficially brilliant and courteous. He is, in Topsfield's words 'contained within the bounds of virtuous knighthood.'<sup>44</sup> But his omissions are interesting. During the exchange between Ké, Yvain, Calogrenant and Guinevere, Gauvain is silent. He makes no attempt to become involved by offering a word of healing or encouragement. He is not available to defend either Lunete or his relatives, for he is away on a quest where he is quite ineffectual.<sup>45</sup> He is not seen committing any acts of desmesure or falling in love. He has, therefore, fewer opportunities of maturing. In this final encounter with Gauvain, then, Yvain is facing an adversary who is particularly harmful. For Gauvain represents a danger which is all the more insidious because it is not discernible at first, and is easily covered by good manners. This is the cortoisie which is not inspired by or associated with true love, and which represents empty superficial appearances as opposed to the fine reality of a cortoisie founded on love.

Yvain, on the other hand, besides atoning for his excessive 'amor propriae excellentiae' surpasses not only his reputed splendid knightly qualities, but also those of Gauvain who represents 'chevalerie anluminee' (2405). Now, by his journey, his adventures and his ensuing spiritual growth, Yvain becomes fully integrated as a knight, a lover and a Christian. His irresponsible seeking after the Fountain adventure has now become mastery over its forces. His first wooing of Laudine was successful because of expediency; now he wins her because of the highly developed virtues through which, with the help of the lion, he has progressed from a promising knight to a perfect Christian.

LANCELOT.

At the beginning of Le Chevalier de la charrete, more information is given about the other knights, Ké and Gauvain, who have undertaken the quest, than about Lancelot. There is no scene of departure, for Lancelot does not undertake his journey because of any self-revelation resulting directly from his fault. Rather, he commits his fault while he is already engaged in his quest. Unlike Erec and Yvain, Lancelot is not seen at any stage, setting out from King Arthur's court. Although Lancelot gives proof of his valour many times during the course of his journey, and atones for his fault of hesitation by showing haste and promptness in the pursuit and service of his lady,<sup>46</sup> these do not appear to be the principal reasons for his journey. For as he endeavours to bring together the alternating roles of perfect lover and perfect knight, it will be constantly evident that his main preoccupation is perfection in the love and service of the queen. Lancelot's journey is not, therefore, so much a journey of renewal as a journey of self-discovery. Like Erec and Yvain, Lancelot journeys anonymously along a route which has no clear geographical identity, and he experiences several significant hospitality episodes. But Lancelot's spiritual journey follows a different pattern from that of Erec and Yvain. For there is less emphasis on progression in virtue than on the series of strange tests in which the virtues necessary for a lover are elicited and are manifested more clearly in him.

The first indication of the urgency of the journey is shown by the way in which, when his own horse collapses from exhaustion (279-98), Lancelot seeks permission to use one of Gauvain's horses and selects one at random:

Mes cil, cui granz besoigne en est,  
 n'ala pas querant le meillor,  
 ne le plus bel, ne le graignor,  
 einz monta tantost sor celui  
 que il trova plus pres de lui, (290-94).

It is haste to reach the queen which makes Lancelot accept the dwarf's offer of transport in the cart, for he will thus have definite news

more quickly (356-59). In spite of the hesitation which shows his imperfection as a lover, Lancelot shows his single-mindedness and humility as he elects to ride in the cart and symbolically conquers pride and the seeking after a fine reputation. This action confirms Lancelot's isolation from the Arthurian world and indicates a refusal to conform to the outward forms of court standards.<sup>47</sup> At this stage of his adventures, Lancelot is simply an anonymous knight whose presence is evident through the traces of his activity: the collapse of his horse (296-98) and the evidence which Gauvain finds of a recent battle (304-13). The hero himself is, at first, therefore, a rather shadowy figure who is known to be on a journey of great urgency.

At the Castle of the Flaming Lance, Lancelot braves the curiosity of the lady of the castle and her attendants who are aware of the shameful reputation which Lancelot has incurred through riding in the cart (439-40) and which prevents him from being invited to sleep in the third, most splendid bed in the castle (471-95). But Lancelot ignores his hostess' admonitions and experiences the phenomenon of the Burning Lance (514-19). Hospitality here is not so much an opportunity for renewal as a pause in a journey of great urgency where the hero's uniqueness is shown. It also provides a place where marvels happen. Lancelot's presence of mind during the episode suggests that he is at one with himself as a knight (528-34), and that he has no need of such phenomena to prove his excellence. His indifference is remarkable:

ne por ce son lit ne guerpi,  
 einz se recoucha et dormi  
 tot autresi seüremant  
 com il ot fet premieremant. (531-34)

It is tempting to see here a similarity to Odysseus who had a mind that was 'to be won by no magic'.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, from the fact that he defies his hostess' instructions (471-75), Lancelot shows that he is aware of his uniqueness.<sup>49</sup> In addition, he sets the pattern for his tendency throughout his



journey to choose the more difficult way. There is, subsequently, offered an important piece of information, for the following morning after Mass, he glimpses the queen accompanied by Meleagant (556-59). Here, Lancelot's devotion as a lover is shown by his trance-like ecstasy at the sight of his lady (560-64) and his readiness to fall out of the window when she has gone (565-69).

The impression of haste and the single-mindedness which marked Lancelot's earlier activities is sustained as Lancelot and Gauvain reach the crossroads (604-55), learn from an anonymous maiden about the destination of the queen (637-43), how to reach her in the land of Gorre (645-52) and about the perils of the two bridges which lead there (653-88). Gauvain, the embodiment of chivalry, has chosen the longer, but easier, Water Bridge (693-95), leaving the Sword Bridge for Lancelot who, motivated by love, must be prepared at all times to show prompt service (697-99), and to overcome apparently insurmountable obstacles as he moves directly towards his goal.:

A further hospitality episode provides Lancelot with an opportunity of showing, on the one hand, his single-mindedness and his devotion to the queen and on the other hand, of proving his moral discernment and his skill as a knight. When an anonymous maiden offers him lodging for the night (934-35) on one condition:

"mes par itel herbergeroiz  
que avoec moi vos coucheroiz,  
einsi le vos ofre et presant." (943-45)

Lancelot shows no pleasure at the prospect, no matter how much it might have pleased other knights (946-49). As he accepts the girl's offer of hospitality but refuses the condition of amoral love attached to it, Lancelot is completely honest with her and thus exercises both diplomacy and truth:

"Dameisele, de vostre ostel,  
vos merci ge, si l'ai molt chier,  
mes, se vos pleisoit, del couchier  
me soferroie je molt bien." (950-53)

For his commitment to Queen Guinevere requires that he remain faithful to her and chaste in his relations with all other women. But having tested his fidelity as a lover, the girl forces him to prove his reactions as a knight, through the incident of the Feigned Rape.<sup>50</sup> Having heard the girl's cry for help, Lancelot promptly goes to her aid (1058-79). When he recognises her apparent plight, Lancelot has a fierce conflict with himself (1097-1125). Even though the girl has tempted him by her invitation and has given him an opportunity of testing his worth as a lover, Lancelot's honour as a knight requires that he help her now. For both love and knightly excellence require that a surpassing degree of moral courage be shown. Lancelot deliberates at the sight of the girl's assailants:

... "Dex, que porrai ge feire?  
 Meüz sui por si grant afeire  
 con por la reïne Guenievre." (1097-99).

If he gives way to cowardice and fails to accept the challenge, he will not reach Queen Guinevere or be successful in his quest.

"Ne doi mie avoir cuer de lievre  
 quant por li sui an ceste queste:  
 se Malvestiez son cuer me preste  
 et je son comandemant faz,  
 n'ateindrai pas ce que je chaz;" (1100-04).

Moreover, he will incur shame and subsequently be unworthy of his lady if he does not accept the test which this Amorous Maiden presents to him. Malvestiez or cowardice has no part in true love.<sup>51</sup> Topsfield notes, furthermore, that Lancelot cannot know the exalted state of Fin' Amors until he has recognised its opposite.<sup>52</sup> Although, therefore, the girl has tempted him, Lancelot is bound as a knight to rescue her, just as he is bound, as a lover, to remain completely faithful to the queen. In this incident, therefore, Lancelot has symbolically defeated Fals' Amors and has given proof of his valour, his single-mindedness and his fidelity to his lady. At this point, Chrétien comments on Lancelot's commitment as a lover:

Li chevaliers n'a cuer que un  
 et cil n'est mie ancor a lui,  
 einz est comandez a autrui  
 si qu'il nel puet aillors prester. (1228-31).

Once the girl is able to interpret Lancelot's behaviour, she withdraws to another room, willing to remain chaste (1261-65). She is compelled to admire Lancelot and to acknowledge his excellence:

"Des lores que je conui primes  
chevalier, un seul n'an conui  
que je prisasse, fors cestui,  
la tierce part d'un angevin;" (1270-73)

Like Circe, she now becomes a helper rather than a temptress and a friend rather than an enemy, for inspite of her wiles, she acts as a guide to Lancelot during the next stage of his journey. Yet she endeavours to divert him from the true path to Gorre (1357-69) and to prevent him from seeing Queen Guinevere's comb. Topsfield suggests that the girl 'personifies the folie of obedience to feeling and impulse'.<sup>53</sup> This was associated with her initial role at the castle. Lancelot, on the other hand, is led by true love which demands that he deliberate wisely before acting. Thus, although the girl tries to divert him, Lancelot insists on keeping to the right path (1376-83). He is rewarded by the sight of the queen's comb, and the hairs 'si biax, si clers et si luisanz' (1415). The swoon when Lancelot becomes, apparently pasmez (1432), implies not so much a victory over the kind of folie which the girl represents, as a symbolic death to it. As he contemplates the strands of the queen's hair, Lancelot falls into ecstasy:

Ja mes oel d'ome ne verront  
nule chose tant enorer,  
qu'il les comance a aorer,  
et bien .c<sup>m</sup>. foiz les toche  
et a ses ialz, et a sa boche,  
et a son front, et a sa face;  
n'est joie nule qu'il n'an face:  
molt s'an fet liez, molt s'an fet riche: (1460-67).

Thus, Lancelot derives strength and encouragement from his contemplation. When the Young Knight, who personifies a selfish love<sup>54</sup>, endeavours, according to the custom of the land, to claim possession of the girl (1551-1605), Lancelot is seen as a formidable adversary. This is recognised by the father of the Young Knight who endeavours to discourage his son from entering into combat with Lancelot:

... "Je t'acreat,  
 biax filz, ensi le cuides tu,  
 tant te fies an ta vertu,  
 mes ne voel, ne ne voldrai hui  
 que tu t'essaies a cestui." (1738-42)

and his plea 'tant te fies en ta vertu' may be contrasted with that of Lancelot who trusts in the power of his love rather than in his own strength.

At the strange cemetery, it is evident that Lancelot is a chosen figure, for he easily raises the tombstone (1910-14). Here, he is identified in terms of his origin (1929-30), but he refuses to give his name when the monk asks him (1922-24). Lancelot will insist on remaining anonymous until he reaches his goal (2000-07; 2076-82; 2717) and comes into the presence of the queen (3666). But at this stage, it seems that Lancelot's future role as deliverer is subordinate to that of lover, for although we learn that it is Lancelot who will liberate the prisoners from the Kingdom of Gorre (1934-36), Lancelot himself does not appear to understand that it is his tombstone or that he is the future deliverer. Rather, his haste to leave the scene (1955-66) suggests his preoccupation with his quest. And Lancelot now enters the land of Gorre (2051-55), having given evidence of his moral worth, his knightly excellence and his destiny, as well as his single-minded dedication towards his lady.<sup>55</sup> His reputation has already preceded him (2116-21) and his first host gives him directions about the route into Gorre and allows two of his sons to accompany Lancelot on his quest (2175-86).

The adventures in Gorre serve not only to overcome the obstacles which prevent Lancelot from reaching his goal through difficult and dangerous country, but to show his high degree of skill as a knight and his dedication as a lover. Lancelot's presence restores hope to the prisoners from Logres (2412-36) who see him as their deliverer and vie with each other in giving him hospitality.

The encounter with the Arrogant Knight, the following evening, presents Lancelot with a test of his commitment and brings him face to face with the representative of several vices. As the Arrogant Knight rudely accosts Lancelot, he draws attention to the extent of his own pride:

"Li quex est ce, savoir le vuel,  
 qui tant a folie et orguel,  
 et de cervel la teste vuide,  
 qu'an cest pais vient, et si cuide  
 au Pont de l'Espee passer?" (2579-83)

This Arrogant Knight represents insolence, pride and self-interest by his refusal to climb into the cart, even though his life depends upon it. He is 'felon' and 'desleal' according to the maiden on the mule (2811). When Lancelot cuts off the head of this knight at the request of the girl (2887-2939), he is symbolically defeating, once and for all, the embodiment of pride both in himself and in others. There is, in this incident, a reflection of Aeneas' attitude before the final slaying of Turnus. Aeneas was tempted, through pity, to spare Turnus before he caught sight of Pallas' belt, and recalled both the death of his young friend and his duty to his new land.<sup>56</sup> Lancelot, here, undergoes a similar struggle when he is tempted to heed the Arrogant Knight's plea for mercy (2866-75; 2902-04; 2911), a request which no Christian ought to ignore. He has, however, offered this knight a chance of saving himself by riding in the cart (2758-64), and by a second encounter (2866-75). Let us recall, however, that the slaying of an evildoer was, in Chrétien's time, considered to be a virtue. Saint Bernard, for example wrote:

Sane cum occidit malefactorem, non homicidia, sed, ut ita dixerim, malecida, et plane Christi vindex in his qui male agunt, et defensor christianorum reputatur.<sup>57</sup>

In beheading this knight, then, Lancelot can be seen as the defender of fundamental Christian virtues: humility, loyalty and altruistic love, of which his opponent is the antithesis.

Now Lancelot prepares to cross the Sword Bridge by which he will most surely come to his goal. An extraordinary degree of single-mindedness is required as, disregarding all efforts to

dissuade him, he prepares to cross (3038-77). He states his belief in God's help:

"Bien sai que vos an nule guise  
ne voldriez ma mescheance;  
mes j'ai tel foi et tel creance  
an Deu qu'il me garra par tot." (3082-85).

In spite of the difficulty of the crossing and the nature of his wounds (3110-17), the knowledge that he is following where Love leads him adds meaning and solace to his pain:

Amors qui le conduist et mainne,  
si li estoit a sofrir dolz. (3114-15).

The role of Love is significant here. Until he reached the Sword Bridge, Lancelot had a succession of guides and companions. In fact, we were told, when the first vavassour of Logres allowed his sons to accompany Lancelot that 'molt amoit la compaignie' (2186). Although Lancelot has had many indications of the direction of the queen's journey, Love is now his sole guide and companion. In this point, Lancelot resembles the Christian who has cast aside all supports, and relies solely on the love of Christ.<sup>58</sup>

Lancelot's final and principal antagonist, Meleagant (3148, sq.) is the very embodiment of evil. In contrast to Bademaguz who is known for his goodness, Meleagant is introduced in harsh terms:

et ses filz, qui tot le contraire  
a son pooir toz jorz feisoit,  
car deslèautez li pleisoit,  
n'onques de feire vilenie  
et traïson et felenie  
ne fu lassez ne enuiez, (3148-53).

In spite of his fine appearance and his skill as a knight, Meleagant is the antithesis of courtliness:

Nus ne fust miaudres chevaliers,  
se fel et deslèaus ne fust;  
mes il avoit un cuer de fust  
tot sanz dolçor et sanz pitié. (3164-67).

Lancelot's preliminary encounter with Meleagant marks, in a sense, the end of his journey. For after Lancelot, weakened by his wounds from the Sword Bridge (3622-26) and supported by the prayer and fasting of the maidens in Gorre confronts Meleagant, he is named by the queen and addressed by her maid (3664-68). He is no longer

the anonymous knight or 'le chevalier de la charrete,' but through his journey he has now attained and manifested his true identity as lover. If on the one hand, Love compels Lancelot to defend himself 'par derriere' (3678) while he is contemplating his lady (3675-82), it gives him the strength, once he has been commanded to fight facing his adversary (3692-3704) to reach the point of victory over Meleagant (3712-19), and thus show his surpassing valour as a knight:

et force et hardemanz li croist,  
 qu' Amors li fet molt grant ai'e  
 et ce que il n'avoit haïe  
 rien nule tant come celui  
 qui se combat ancontre lui (3720-24).

Thus, in this episode, the roles of knight and lover are incorporated and brought together.

Furthermore, Lancelot is completely obedient to his lady. When, for example, the queen gives permission for the combat to cease, Lancelot immediately yields to her wishes for:

Molt est qui aime obeissanz,  
 et molt fet tost et volentiers,  
 la ou il est amis antiers,  
 ce qu'a s'amie doie plaie. (3798-3801).

Meleagant, on the other hand, who is incapable of loving for he 'avoit un cuer de fust' (3166), resents this request and furiously attacks Lancelot until he is taken away by his father's men (3828-39). Thus, Meleagant's arrogance, self-interest and insolence serve to emphasise the humility, self-forgetfulness and obedience of Lancelot who has been severely wounded in the effort to reach his lady (3134-37). Meleagant, therefore, represents the outward appearances of a chivalry which is devoid of love, pity, generosity, obedience and readiness to suffer for the sake of the loved one. These qualities have all been shown to an increasingly high degree by Lancelot who has accepted humiliation and suffering for the sake of the queen.

When Lancelot delivers the queen and the prisoners of Logres from Meleagant's power (3899-3920), he not only fulfils the prophecy

of the monk at the cemetery and adopts the role of Messianic hero;<sup>59</sup> he also shows the power of goodness over evil, and his victory bestows joy upon the prisoners:

Cil qui plus s'an puet aprochier  
an fu plus liez que ne pot dire. (3916-17).

During the course of his journey, Lancelot has been rewarded several times for his prompt seeking.<sup>60</sup> After the false rumours of Lancelot's death (4140-4247) and his attempt at suicide (4250-4396) when he fears that the queen is dead, Lancelot and Queen Guenevere are reconciled, and Lancelot learns the nature of his fault (4484-4500).<sup>61</sup> This reconciliation leads to the rendez-vous (4508-32) and to the night of joy which is the supreme reward for Lancelot's valour and devotion (4574-4736).

It is difficult to see in Lancelot's spiritual journey any clear parallel to strict progression through the Three Ways. Lancelot is a mature knight whose virtues are highly developed. The turning away from sin, the purifying of the soul from its sinful tendencies which characterise the Purgative Way have no place in Lancelot's spiritual journey, for he is not aware of the nature of his sin until the queen enlightens him (4484-89). If his fault showed imperfect devotion to his lady, it showed, at the same time, perfect acquisition of knightly qualities and attitudes.

By analogy, there can, however, be seen elements of the Illuminative Way. For by his actions, Lancelot shows a consolidation of the virtues which enhance a lover's devotion. After his hesitation, he shows humility by riding in the cart (372-444). His fidelity and promptness in service are tested by the Amorous Maiden, but his single-mindedness is clear (1228-31). His conquests of representatives of pride, the Arrogant Knight and Meleagant, can be seen as symbolic actions by which this vice is finally subjugated.

By analogy, too, there are similarities to the Unitive Way. Apart from the hesitation at the Cart, Lancelot's will has consist-



ently remained at one with that of his lady, and has thus shown the harmony of wills which is essential for all love.<sup>62</sup> He has been drawn by love which, when perfect, makes suffering endurable and even a source of joy (3110-15). At the beginning of the night of union with the queen, he prostrates himself before her in profound adoration:

et puis vint au lit la reine,  
si l'aore et se li ancline,  
car an nul cors saint ne croit tant. (4651-53).

This can be seen, on one level, as idolatrous. But the love between man and woman has, from ancient Biblical tradition, been seen as an image of the love between God and the soul, and this analogue was sustained in the work of some twelfth-century spiritual writers.<sup>63</sup> Thus, although on the one hand, the multiple symbolism of the relationship between Lancelot and Queen Guinevere emphasises the ambiguity of Lancelot's character,<sup>64</sup> it provides on a human level, features which closely resemble the love of the soul which has found union with God.

#### PERCEVAL.

Perceval's departure differs from that of Erec and Yvain. As Perceval leaves home to find  
le roi qui les chevaliers fait (333)  
he is not responding to a need to 'se dépasser et s'affirmer' in the sense used of Erec and Yvain. Rather, he needs to come into the presence of his knightly heritage and in this way, to begin to come to terms with his vocation as a knight associated with the Grail. Unlike that of Erec and Yvain, Perceval's departure is not caused by his fault. Rather, his fault is the very act of his departing and his accompanying heartlessness. Thus, there is no question of a journey of atonement or renewal, for Perceval endeavours to make amends for his faults and misunderstandings as he becomes aware of them. To a greater extent than any of our other heroes, Perceval journeys from the level of material physical knowledge to the beginnings of spiritual

perception. When discussing the symbolism in Le Conte de Graal, P. Gallais entitles a chapter: Du signifiant au signifié.<sup>65</sup> This expression can be applied, in another sense, to Perceval's journey and interpreted as a progression from the 'shadows' of tangible experiences to the 'substance' of spiritual truths.<sup>66</sup>

Perceval's itinerary, like that of Chrétien's other heroes is very obscure. It can be identified by incidents and encounters rather than by known geographical landmarks. The narrative abounds in vague, but evocative expressions such as:

En une prairie bele  
Les le rieu d'une fontenele. (639-40)

or:

... sor mer vit un chastel  
Molt bien seant et fort et bel. (863-64).

Before arriving at Gornemant's castle, Perceval makes his way across a field:

Vers la grant riviere qui bruit  
S'en va tout une prairie, (1312-13)

and later, again, before he arrives at the Grail Castle, he is instructed by the strange fisherman:

"Devant vos en un val verrez  
Une maison ou je estois,  
Pres de riviere et pres de bois." (3032-34).

These indications are essentially vague in nature, but they show the naiveté with which Perceval sees the world around him.

The journey begins in 'la gaste forest', the Waste Forest, (75), a strange name for a place where:

... glai et bois et pre verdissent (70)

and where it is written of the hero that:

... li cuers del ventre  
Por le dolc tans li resjoï,  
Et por le chant que il oï  
Des oisiaux qui joie fais oient; (86-89).

But Perceval's defective spiritual perception, his selfishness, his heartlessness, his failure to pity his mother's sorrow or to understand her instructions, reflect the barren lifelessness of a Waste Land and suggest a state of heart where the life-giving caritez

which Chrétien advocates in the prologue (46-50), cannot possibly flourish. As Perceval leaves home equipped with the verbal facts which his mother has taught him concerning his duties as a knight, as a lover and as a Christian, he makes several ridiculous mistakes because no underlying meaning has been taught and his understanding is, therefore, inadequate.

Perceval's progression 'du signifiant au signifié' is seen most of all in the hospitality episodes where often, the use of food indicates the level of the hero's development. There is an inversion of hospitality when Perceval mistakes the girl's tent for a church, which he understands only in the material terms taught him by his mother. He associates God with his fundamental needs. He knows that he has a duty to worship God (658-63) who will give him food to satisfy his hunger (664-66). Topsfield sees this incident as a burlesque of the Mass, as Perceval pours the wine, breaks the pasty, eats it and covers over the unused remains (745-63).<sup>61</sup> And in this episode where Perceval believes himself to be in a church worshipping God, there is certainly a foreshadowing of other hospitality episodes and other meals at which aspects of the Mass are again evoked. There is a similar burlesque of court behaviour as, in mistaken obedience to his mother's instructions (541-54), Perceval seizes a kiss and a ring from the girl (707-28).

The element of burlesque is continued at King Arthur's castle at Cardueil, as Perceval incomprehendingly attempts to become a knight. His entrance on horseback is a source of mirth to the knights (904-10). Perceval comes into contact with the outward signs of chivalry and with his knightly heritage. The testimony of the Laughing Maiden shows clearly the extraordinary promise which he evinces (1039-44), as does his speedy, if merciless conquest of the Red Knight (1108-19). But he slays his opponent out of greed for his arms rather than out of any lofty motive. Perceval's lack of understanding causes both his failure to recognise King Arthur, the 'King who makes knights' (927-30),

and his reluctance to assume knightly clothing in its entirety.

Molt grief chose est de fol aprendre;  
Rien fors les armes ne volt prendre  
Por proiere que on li face. (1173-75).

This insistence upon armour alone suggests that for Perceval, superficial knightly equipment is more important than the reality of chivalry which it signifies.

The time spent with Gornemant shows a further stage in Perceval's development. His rudimentary education is approved (1402-09) and the instructions which he has received from his mother are reinforced. With gracious courtesy, his host adds meaning and depth to Perceval's education (1413-15), and takes care to affirm the worth of the mother's teachings:

"Mais que vos m'otroiez un don  
Dont grant bien venir vos verrés  
- "Et quel?" fait il.- "Que vos querrez  
Le conseil vostre mere et moi." (1414-17)

Thus, Gornemant takes care to win the young man's confidence before he instructs him in matters befitting a future knight. Again, there is no doubt about Perceval's aptitude for knightly skills:

Et il comencha a porter  
Si a droit la lance et l'escu  
Com s'il eüst toz jors veschu  
En tornoiemens et en guerres  
Et alé par toutes les terres  
Querant bataille et aventure; (1474-79).

With nature as his teacher, his possibilities seem limitless:

Car il li venoit de nature,  
Et quant nature li aprent  
Et li cuers del tot i entent,  
Ne li puet estre rien grevaine  
La ou nature et cuers se paine. (1480-84).

But instruction in dress, behaviour and refinement of manners must supplement natural inclination. Gornemant support Perceval's earlier teaching in these matters. His formal arming now has some meaning, for it follows Gornemant's training (1597-36).

Yet in all Gornemant's abundant instructions which will prove most useful for Perceval, there is a clear absence of real spiritual depth. He is advised:

"Volentiers alez al mostier  
 Proier celui qui tot a fait,  
 Que de vostre ame merchi ait  
 Et en cest siecle terrien  
 Vos gart come son crestien." (1666-70).

These references to Christian duty are, however, superficial and suggest no more than <sup>what</sup> any knight would do out of routine. There is no mention of any real conversion of heart or of the carité (43-50) by which man prepares to abject himself, lay down his life, if need be, in the service of others, and ultimately achieve union with God. But as Perceval leaves Gornemant, he shows signs of progress, for his great anxiety is to find out about his mother (1699-1702). A new altruism is, therefore, beginning to replace his former self-centred callousness.

At Belerepeire, Perceval again enters a barren, evidently waste land. The approach to it is desolate and unpromising:

Et chevalcha tant que il voit  
 Un chastel fort et bien seant;  
 Defors les murs n'avoit neant  
 Fors mer et aive et terre gaste.  
 D'esrer vers le chastel se haste  
 Tant que devant la porte vint,  
 Mais un pont passer li co\_vint  
 Si feble, ainz qu'a la porte viegne,  
 Qu'a paines croit qu'il le sostiegne. (1706-14).

There is little food in either Blancheflor's castle or in the adjacent abbey churches (1767-73), and the inhabitants, hard pressed by Clamadeus, are starving. The images of poverty and decay (1749-54) contrast significantly with Gornemant's castle which Perceval has just left. For Perceval, this is an opportunity of putting into practice both his mother's teachings about love, and Gornemant's instructions about court behaviour. In spite of the poverty of the setting, Blancheflor richly attired and naturally beautiful, is presented as the very perfection of womanly beauty (1795-1829) and the embodiment of qualities which are likely to awaken love (1826-29). But Perceval has learnt caution, and his formal greeting (1830-32) shows a marked contrast to his enthusiastic address to the girl in the tent (682-95).

His understanding is still limited to the words of his instructions, for he has not yet learnt to interpret the meaning of the words he hears or to let his heart speak for him. This is borne out by his slightly ridiculous appearance as he sits in mute silence beside Blancheflor. In the words of the other knights present:

"Diex, fait chascuns, molt me merveil  
 Se cil chevaliers est muiaus.  
 Grans doels seroit, c'onques si biax  
 Chevaliers ne fu nez de fame." (1862-65).

Yet, even in the midst of Perceval's silence and Blancheflor's plight, the young couple present a beautiful picture of youthful promise and suitability for love:

"Tant est cil biax et cele bele  
 C'onques chevaliers ne pucele  
 Si bien n'avindrent mais ensamble,  
 Et de l'un et de l'autre samble  
 Que Diex l'un por l'autre feïst  
 Por che qu'ensamble les meist." (1869-74).

Although there is again seen a knowledge of the superficial practices of cortoisie and love, the lack of communication suggests that the hero is, as yet, unfamiliar with the true meaning of these practices. It is Blancheflor who eventually breaks the silence and initiates conversation (1877-81) and who, after much anguish, approaches Perceval at night and requests his help. Perceval is scrupulously careful to obey his mother's instructions, to kiss his lady, to help her and to abstain from 'le sorplus' (548). But the element of burlesque which was present again during the early scenes at Belerepeire (1856-68), disappears when Perceval delivers the oppressed inhabitants from Clamadeus and demonstrates his fine qualities as a knight. After his victory, the nuns of the neighbouring convent lament his departure:

"Sire, qui nos as trait d'escil  
 Et ramenez en nos maisons,  
 N'est merveille se doel faisons,  
 Quant tu si tost laissier nos vels.  
 Molt doit estre grans nostre doels,  
 Si est il tant que plus ne puet." (2946-51).

A development in both pity and understanding is evident in this episode. For in contrast to his speedy slaying of the Red Knight, Perceval has spared Clamadeus and sent him to King Arthur (2827-63). By his promise to come back to Belerepeire, Perceval temporarily

shows an increased understanding of the obligations of a lover.

The episode at the Grail Castle is the central point in Perceval's journey. Here, spiritual realities are signified by material forms. The complete anonymity of both place and people, including the inhabitants of the Grail Castle, adds to the mystery which confronts the hero. After a day's journeying away from civilised society, Perceval, who has not yet been named, simply arrives at a river and:

L'eve rade et parfonde esgarde, (2988).

The vagueness which surrounds this incident is significant. In the first place

Un(s) vallés entre par la por[t]e (3131),

and is described more for the sword that he is carrying than for any other notable features. The same can be said when

Uns vallés d'une chambre vint,  
Qui une blanche lance tint. (3191-92).

Again, the presentation of the second 'vallés' loses interest beside the phenomenon of the Bleeding Lance. The attendants who bring in the chandeliers and the 'damoisele' who carries the Grail, although described respectively as 'molt bel' (3216) and 'bel et gente et bien acesmee' (3223), quickly fade in importance as the beauty of the Grail is described (3225-39). This anonymity not only serves to emphasise the objects and to enhance the mystery which surrounds the Grail; it also emphasises Perceval's bewilderment.

This is a hospitality episode where Perceval is given an opportunity for change to take place for, as he later learns from his cousin (3583-90), he could have benefited not only himself, but also his host. It is here that Perceval is presented with the vision which includes his heredity, for we learn later that the recipient of the contents of the Grail is Perceval's uncle and that his family is closely connected with the family of the Grail (6415-19). If we accept that the Grail represents the light and life of Christ contained in 'une sole oiste' (6422), and that the

Bleeding Lance is the symbol of chivalry, Perceval has his ancestry, his vocation and the central point of his religion presented to him in this strange vision. He also has the opportunity of learning the significance of what he sees. But he has persisted in following the words of his teachers too literally.

Perceval discovers his identity when he meets his cousin in the forest (3430-3585). He learns more specifically of his ancestry and of his guilt in causing his mother's death (3593-95). He slowly recognises a fuller extent of guilt as he meets the girl of the tent and questions his responsibility for her plight:

"Por Die(u), damoisele, por coi?  
 Certes, je ne pens ne ne croi  
 Que je onques mais vos veïsse  
 Ne rien nule vos mesfeïsse." (3787-90).

Perceval's subsequent frank acknowledgement of his fault presents a striking contrast to the ruthless fury of Orgueilleux de la Lande who:

... vint ausi come une foldre  
 Par le sablon et par la poldre,  
 Criant en haut: "Mar i estas.  
 Tu qui lez la pucele vas." (3833-36)

With Gornemant's instructions in mind (3933-36), Perceval spares Orgueilleux, showing a commendable wisdom as he insists that the defeated knight have compassion on his amie (3937-42). Thus, he atones for his earlier foolishness.

At Carlion, the sight of the drops of blood on the snow reminds Perceval of the features of Blancheflor (4194-4456) and sends him into profound contemplation.

Si pense tant que il s'oblie,  
 Qu'autresi estoit en son vis  
 Li vermels sor le blanc assis  
 Com ces trois gouttes de sanc furent,  
 Qui sor le blanche noif parurent. (4202-06)

As he 's'oblie,' he loses his sense of reality through love. But at the same time, by association, the emblem of chivalry is present in this vision.<sup>68</sup> There is, as David Fowler notes, an ironical element in this vision. For when Perceval looks upon



the three drops (4197-98),

... "he leaned upon his lance and looked at that image."  
The poet is here telling us in his characteristic way that, instead of being reminded of the beautiful face of Blancheflor the hero should have been reminded of the blood that dropped from the white lance. Even though his meditation is twice interrupted by armed conflicts, the 'image' fails to communicate.<sup>69</sup>

Gauvain, the embodiment of worldly chivalry, approaches as the drops of blood on the snow disappear (4432). As Perceval is aroused from his reverie there is no evidence of any longing to return to Blancheflor, to undertake lofty deeds for her sake or to seek the meaning of the vision at the Grail Castle. His profound contemplation of his lady has been a worthy pastime, approved and defended by Gauvain:

- "Certes, fait mesire Gavains,  
Cist pensers n'estoit pas vilains,  
Ainz estoit molt cortois et dols." (4457-59).

But as the vision fades, so, apparently, do Perceval's thoughts. His contemplation has given way to his renewed eagerness to associate once more with the knights of King Arthur's court to participate in their activities, and to be reintegrated into their company. He has not yet learned, as our other knights have had to, the full commitment which service in love requires. Nor is he fully committed to his quest to find the meaning of the vision at the Grail Castle.

Perceval has now achieved his heart's desire. He has fulfilled the earlier prophecy of the Laughing Maiden (4586; 4596-97) and has been received into the company of knights. But, as in the case of Erec and Yvain, the summit of the hero's worldly success coincides with a time of humiliation as he recognises his spiritual failure. Here, it is the Hideous Maiden who in unequivocal terms denounces Perceval for his silence at the Grail Castle:

"A mal eür tu [te] teüsses,  
Que se tu demandé l'eüsses,  
Li riches rois, qui or s'esmaie,  
Fust ja toz garis de sa plaie

Et si tenist sa terre en pais,  
Dont il ne tendra point jamais." (4669-74).

and prophesies future disasters (4678-83). This is another example of a hospitality episode where an opportunity for change is offered and accepted, for Perceval does resolve to seek the meaning of the Grail. Once more, he endeavours to compensate for a known fault, and resolutely sets out to find the truth about this marvel (4727-40). But he misuses his opportunity and appears to have forgotten the nature of his quest.

Unlike Erec and Yvain, Perceval does not immediately embark upon a clear spiritual ascent, after the messenger's denunciation, but rather, repeats the pattern of his former forgetfulness. He is seen five years later, having forgotten not only his promise to Blancheflor and his resolution to learn about the Grail, but also his duty to God. He has given constant proof of his skill, and his worldly success cannot be questioned:

Et les estranges aventures,  
Les felenesses et les dures,  
Aloit querant, et s'en trova  
Tant que molt bien s'i esprova. (6227-30).

No evidence is shown, however, of real commitment to Christian principles or to service inspired by love. The notion of Waste Land is sustained once more as Perceval rides, fully armed, on Good Friday:

... par un desert aloit  
Cheminant se come il soloit,  
De totes ses armes armez. (6239-41).

and an image is projected of a sterile knighthood which thrives on the glory of arms and battle rather than on Christian virtues. There is no harsh denunciation by the pilgrims whom he meets. One of the knights merely reminds him of his fault in being armed on Good Friday:

... "Biax amis chiers,  
Dont ne creez vos Jhesucrist.  
Qui la novele loi escrist,  
Si, le dona as crestiens?  
Certes, il n'est raisons ne biens  
D'armes porter, ainz est grans tors,  
Au jor que "Jhesucrist fu mors." (6254-60)

This gentle challenge is far more effective than the harsh interrogation by Perceval's cousin (3545-72) or the merciless attack by the Hideous Maiden (4644-83). For it immediately incites Perceval to repentance and to seek pardon and peace.

The final episode takes place in a hospitable setting as Perceval, in the presence of his uncle, repents of his neglect and learns of his ancestry and of the nature of the Grail (6354-6433). The hermit's instructions support those given by Perceval's mother (6459-61). But our hero is older now, and his experiences as a knight will have added depth of understanding to what he hears. Perceval's repentance is endorsed by the penitential food which he shares with the hermit (6503-05). The love in which he has failed is restored by the hermit's plea:

"Dieu aime, Dieu croi, Dieu aeure,  
Preudome et preudefeme honeure." (6459-60)

and above all, by the sacrament of Christ's love. There is no longer any burlesque of the Mass suggested by strange symbols, but the reality of the Eucharist which Perceval receives 'molt dignement.' (6513).

This use of food adds emphasis to the progression 'du signifiant au signifié.' Perceval has so often appeared in a context where food is present or a meal is offered. We may recall his heartless words to his mother at the beginning of the romance:

"A mengier, fait il, me donez." (491)

where a failure in charity was evident. When he accosted the girl in the tent, his primary need was food:

"Je li irai priier par foi  
Qu'il me doinst anqui a mengier  
Que j'en aroie grant mestier." (664-66)

At Belerepeire the food presented at the evening meal is associated with the spontaneous Christian charity of Blancheflor's uncle, the 'prieur' (1911-17). At the Grail Castle, Perceval was too preoccupied with the material aspects of the meal and of the procession to try and discern the deeper, spiritual meaning. The

sparseness of the penitential food at the hermit's lodging contrasts with the richness of the Eucharist in which all the symbols find their meaning.

Perceval's journey, then, lacks the straightforward patterns which can be found in those of Erec and Yvain. Instead, the hero learns, tests himself, makes noble resolutions, forgets his duty, repents, retraces his steps and only then begins to understand. It is not until the hermit's exposition that light and meaning are added to the instructions which Perceval has already received and to the visions which he has experienced. As he learns, so does he progress in love, and as he receives his Easter Communion (6513), there is hope given of a spiritual ascent that will, in the future, match his outstanding development as a knight.

#### THE JOURNEY.

There are, inevitably, certain differences to be found in the journeys of our heroes. Firstly, let us consider the association with home. In the Iliad, Achilles talked of going home (Iliad, IX, 617-19); in the Odyssey, the hero longs for his home, grieves for it and has been seen choosing home and a dangerous voyage in preference to known safety and the promise of a pleasant immortality with Calypso (V, 148-70). Aeneas prefers to die fighting for his home and leaves only under compulsion while he is encouraged by the prospect of the dynasty he is to found for his new home. In the case of the medieval heroes, the concept of home is more remote. It is hardly seen at all in the Roman d'Eneas where it might have been expected. When Erec is crowned, he certainly goes back to his father's domain, not to satisfy the yearning for home and land which characterised the epic heroes, but to assume his full vocation as monarch and to begin his real task as king. There is no longing for home implied in the case of Yvain or Lancelot. And if Perceval goes back in search of 'la veve feme', it is his mother whom he seeks out of sorrow for his callousness towards her, not his home.

The progression in these romances is more towards the next stage in the adventures and the next level of challenge, while the pivotal point is King Arthur's court. These are heroes who, although they are not pilgrims, appear at a time when pilgrimages had long been undertaken, and when Christians were exhorted to consider that life on earth was transitory. But they appear, too, in an age when life was considered to be a search and a journey, when challenges were to be sought, risks to be taken and a knight was expected to be continually trying to better himself.

In spite of the more hazardous nature of their journeys, both Odysseus and Aeneas have taken time for observation and for learning about the world around them. They have a far greater distance to travel, the hazards of the sea are great and their landfalls are inevitably beset with dangerous adventures or characterised by times of enlightenment. This is less so in the case of Eneas or of Chrétien's heroes, except Perceval. His journey is a process of learning, as he continually needs to find out about his surroundings. The journeys of the other medieval heroes are marked by a sense of urgency and haste: hasty departures, hasty decisions, anonymity, reluctance to accept hospitality for more than one night, and disregard of obstacles.

The route, too, presents considerable differences between the groups of heroes. Many of the ancient geographical places are easily recognisable and can be identified with known lands. The medieval place-names, on the other hand, are stated less frequently and the places themselves are difficult to identify. Thus, the physical, territorial journey is often mysterious and vague, and is presented less clearly than the intellectual and, above all, spiritual itinerary which accompanies it.

For Odysseus and Aeneas, the length, nature and circumstances of the journey necessitated a progression from past to future, from the old known heroic world of Troy to developing civilisations.

There is no question of such a dimension in the case of our medieval heroes, for these men do not represent civilisations which depend for continuance upon the survival of their major heroic figures. The concern is, rather, with the present and with accepting the challenges and opportunities for improvement which it offers. For in general, the ancient journeys affect the destiny of a whole people. The medieval journeys, on the other hand, affect the destiny of an individual and his place in a Christian and chivalric society.

A different type of progression is seen in the experiences of our medieval heroes. They were presented in an age when conformity to a multiplicity of outward practices and appearances could obscure the meaning of true chivalry which was based on love of God and neighbour, and the upholding of the right. Thus, Erec and Enide pass from their outwardly fine appearance as they leave Carnant (2629-2763) to a point where, after a series of adventures, Erec is seriously wounded:

... toz ses cor an sanc baignoit  
et li cuers faillant li aloit. (4562-63)

and he undergoes his near-death experience. As the outward appearance is temporarily shattered, the inward reality of Erec's knighthood becomes increasingly more apparent. Yvain and Lancelot and, to a certain extent, Perceval, undergo a similar experience. All Chrétien's heroes are, in different circumstances, contrasted with knights who are considered to be the embodiment of chivalry but who lack the fullness of commitment of the heart.

But there are similarities to be found between the two groups of heroes. They are all seen to be isolated, in varying degrees, from their normal surroundings. The notion 'se dépasser et s'affirmer' which was used by Ménard of the medieval heroes who experienced the need to depart on a journey can be used just as well of the epic heroes whose departure was, rather, forced upon them by necessity. Through their journeys, both groups of heroes can be seen to have reached a new level of vision, understanding and

spiritual growth. All our heroes have, in some way during their journeys, affirmed their skill and excelled in their own qualities. The spiritual growth with which twelfth-century writers were so vitally preoccupied is very clear in Chrétien's heroes, either in reality or in allegory. But it can be seen, too, in Achilles' extraordinary development in pity, in Odysseus' growing humility and in Aeneas' progression towards complete pietas. There is, however, no question of isolated virtues being developed for their own sake. Rather, the hero's quest is achieved because of his spiritual ascent.

All our heroes have experienced hospitality and its benefits. Achilles' moment of self-acceptance comes when he dispenses hospitality to an enemy. For Odysseus, hospitality means a time of testing, of gaining information or of healing and renewal. The landfalls where Aeneas receives hospitality, in particular, those at Buthortum and Delos, are generally associated with encouragement and revelation. Similar episodes are no less important among the twelfth-century heroes, where a hospitality episode frequently marks the end of a stage in the spiritual as well as in the territorial journey, offers enlightenment and gives space for healing and self-discovery, and allows them to prepare for the next stage of their itinerary.

#### CONCLUSION.

The journeys of our selected heroes have now been examined. The circumstances of their departure have been discussed, together with features of their route and their companions. The hospitality episodes have proved most significant in these journeys, for they have given the hero a chance to express himself, to be healed of both physical and psychological wounds and to assess his position in regard to the next stage of his adventures. It is at such times that the hero has time to reflect and is led to the enlightenment which he needs for the future.

All our heroes have undergone a spiritual progression in the course of their physical journeys. This is particularly noteworthy and encouraging in the case of the epic heroes, for it underlines the inclination of pious pagans to move towards the Good in their search for meaning. Such an inclination is related to the hero's readiness to learn as he journeys. The finest example of this learning is, of course, to be found in Odysseus. For, because he is open to the lessons of the journey, he survives the temptations and anguish which he experiences and achieves his homecoming, whereas all his companions perish.

But the most important feature of all these journeys is the opportunity which they offer for knowledge, not just of external phenomena, but especially for self-knowledge. For the hero has learnt not only the effects of the faults in his nature, but he has also been able to develop his latent skills and the resources of his mind. He has been continually forced to explore his potential, so that he knows himself, not just as he is, but as he can hope to be. This is how he arrives at the end of his journey and achieves the object of his quest.



Notes to Chapter 4.

1. The Epic of Gilgamesh, pp. 98-106
2. Republic, ed. J. Burnet, Oxford, 1902, VII, 514-21.
3. A. Tanqueray (The Spiritual Life, Issy, 1923, paras 619-34) explains clearly the whole progression, the scriptural and patristic origin of the divisions and the characteristics of each stage.
4. H. Nouwen, Reaching Out, London, 1976, pp. 68-69. See also Matilda Bruckner, Narrative Invention in Twelfth-Century French Romance. The Convention of Hospitality, Kentucky, 1980, pp. 159-76.
5. Erich Lessing, for example, in The Voyage of Ulysses (London, 1966, pp. 17-18) traces the reliance which early historians placed upon the evidence of the route given in the journey of Odysseus. This evidence is given credibility by the fact that Lessing himself made the same journey as did the commentators whom he cites, namely, Samuel Butler and Victor Berard.
6. 'Spiritual Re-birth of the Hero - Odyssey V,' Classical Journal, 61, 1966, pp. 206-10.
7. Ibid., p. 209.
8. 'The main interest is not in the physical terrors of the journey, but rather in Aeneas' deepening spiritual sorrow as more and more he realizes the importance and greatness of his mission. (V. Pöschl, The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid, Michigan, 1962, pp. 26-27.) See also R.D. Williams (ed. Aeneid III, Oxford, 1962, pp. 7-12) for the origin of the legend of Aeneas' journey and for comparison of the route with those of Vergil's predecessors.
9. F. Sullivan, 'The Spiritual Journey of Virgil's Aeneas,' American Journal of Philology, 80, 1959, pp. 150-61.
10. Ibid., p. 153
11. Commentary on Aeneid IV, Oxford, 1955, p.22.
12. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages, pp. 164-208.
13. Sermo LXIX, PL 39. col. 1877.
14. Epistola CCCXCIX, PL 182, col. 612; De Peregrino, Mortuo et Crucifixo PL 183, col. 826.

15. Epistola XIX, PL 158, col. 1169.
16. De Peregrinante Civitate Dei, PL 204, col. 261. See also, William of Saint-Thierry: 'Ergo, obsecro, in peregrinatione hujus saeculi, in militia hac super terram, aedificemus nobis, non domos ad habitandum, sed tabernacula ad deserendum: utpote cito inde vocandi, et emigraturi in patriam et civitatem nostram, et in domum aeternitatis nostrae. (Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 332.
17. 'Le Chevalier errant dans la littérature arthurienne,' in Voyage, quête et pèlerinage dans la littérature et la civilisation médiévales, Aix-en-Provence, 1976, pp. 291-311. See pp. 297-98.
18. See supra, p. 29.
19. Liber de Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 406.
20. Benjamin Major, PL 196, cols. 63-202.
21. De Gradibus Humilitatis et Superbiae, I, 2.
22. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 325.
23. This division is generally based on Saint Augustine: 'charitas inchoata, charitas provecta, charitas magna.' (De Natura et Gratia, PL 44, col. 290.)
24. PL 210, col. 579. Also cited by F.J.E. Raby, A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages, Oxford, 1927, p. 302. Hugh of Saint Victor had written: 'Universus enim mundus iste sensibilis quasi quidam liber est scriptus digito Dei ...,' De tribus diebus iii, PL 176, col. 814B. See also M.D.Chenu, Nature, Man and Society, p. 117.
25. 'La Peinture de la vie et des héros antiques dans la littérature française du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,' in Histoire, mythes et symboles, Geneva, 1976, pp.21-54. See p. 25.
26. De Amore, p. 7.
27. See E. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, London, 1952, pp. 113-17.
28. See supra, p. 180.
29. The journey to Caradigan has many points of similarity with the principal journey, especially in the encounter with Yder (863-1064) and in the hospitality episode where Erec meets Enide (342-690). But there is, as yet, no progression in the sense that will be understood in this chapter.

30. Enide attracts the attention of each of the groups of robbers (2803-05; 2941-42), and her beauty tempts the vain count (3314-25; 3632-37). For the connection between beauty and honour, see Glyn S. Burgess, 'The Theme of Beauty in Chrétien's Philomena and Erec et Enide' in An Arthurian Tapestry; Essays in Memory of Lewis Thorpe, ed. K. Varty, Glasgow, 1981, pp. 114-127.
31. see supra, p. 178.
32. Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, col. 348.
33. Georges Duby (The Making of the Christian West, p. 25.) writes of the king, The Christus Domini, in the following terms: 'The one man in the Christian community whose power lay at the junction between the spiritual world and the temporal, on the border of the seen and unseen worlds, he was minister to both the sacred and the secular.'
34. A parallel with all Alan of Lille's understanding of the quadrivium can be seen quite clearly in Chrétien's description of Erec's coronation robe, as Claude Luttrell clearly shows. (The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance, London, 1974, pp. 20-25.  
Alan describes the function of Geometry:  
Hic geometra tales sine motu preterit orbem  
Aerii tractus, sine pennis transvolat equor,  
Oceani spacium sine remige transit, in astra  
Absque gradu graditur, sine tactu tangit Olympum.  
(Anticlaudianus, 111, 526-29).
35. 'The Theme of Beauty,' p. 126.
36. 'The Fountain and its Function in Yvain,' AUMLA, 52, 1979, pp. 288-95. See p. 289.
37. A.H. Diverres, 'Yvain's Quest for Chivalric Perfection,' in An Arthurian Tapestry: Essays in Memory of Lewis Thorpe, pp. 214-28. See pp. 224-25.
38. See supra, pp. 139-40.
39. 'The Role of the Lion,' p. 1149.
40. Godefroy, Dictionnaire, t. 6, p. 19. It is also strongly associated with love, grief and death, as Tobler-Lommatzch cites. Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch, t. 7, pp. 415-18.
41. Tradition held that lion cubs were born dead and did not come to life until the third day after birth when they were animated by the life-giving breath of the father. 'Just so did the Father Omnipotent raise Our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day.' T.H.White, The Book of Beasts, p.8.

Patristic tradition, also, sometimes saw the lion as a figure of resurrection. 'Quaerendum est quare Joannes primum animal leoni simile dixerit, cum Ezechiel hominis speciem primo animali inesse perhibeat. Igitur aut ordo historicus mutatus est, quem mystica Scripturarum eloquia non semper servant; vel quia non propter nativitatem aut passionem crediderunt in Christum homines, sed propter resurrectionem, quae in leone figuratur, ejus speciem primam posuit.' Alcuin, Commentarium in Apocalypsin, VII, Bk. III, PL 100, col. 1118.

In medieval sculpture, lions sometimes portray the resurrection of Christ. See Midori Igarashi-Takeshita, 'Les lions dans la sculpture romane,' Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, 23, 1980, p. 47.

42. A Diverres ('Yvain's Quest for Chivalric Perfection' p. 220) discusses the notion, popular in the twelfth century, that the human soul is besieged by evil spirits against which unremitting struggle had to be waged. He sees man, aided by the appropriate virtues, struggling to overcome vices, in battles similar to those in the Psychomachia.
43. Tanquerey, The Spiritual Life, p. 602.
44. Chrétien de Troyes, p. 247.
45. In Le Chevalier de la charrete, Gauvain will be seen to be quite ineffectual. He does not climb into the cart, but rides at a distance. He fails to cross the Water Bridge, he does not enter combat at Noauz and he appears to make little practical effort to help Lancelot.
46. For the dual motifs of humiliation and hesitation, see Norris J. Lacy, The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes: An Essay on Narrative Art, London, 1980, pp. 90-92.
47. See David Shirt ('Chrétien de Troyes and the cart,' Studies in Medieval Literature and Languages in memory of Frederick Whitehead, Manchester-New York, 1973, pp. 279-301) for full discussion on the significance of the cart. Although, as Shirt suggests, it can mean public disgrace, ridicule or intense suffering, it seems also to represent here the extent of abjection which a perfect lover ought to be prepared to undergo in order to reach his lady.
48. Odyssey, X̄, 329.
49. R.S.Loomis (Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes, Columbia, 1949, pp. 206-7), sees the Irish saga, Bricrius' Feast as the origin of both the Cart and the Flaming Sword incidents. Here, the sword indicates the sovereignty of a great hero or king who will return home after striking his enemies; the perilous bed resembles the perilous seat which

is reserved for the elect, like that which will later be occupied by Galahad.

50. Both Kelly (Sens and Conjointure, pp. 116-18), and Topsfield (Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 127-29) discuss this incident as a 'feigned rape', where the girl is putting Lancelot to the test to see if he is worthy to sleep with her. But it also tests his fidelity as a lover to the queen and his promptness in action as a knight. For the constant interplay and apparent incompatibility of these roles in the light of Leyerle's 'rules' see M. Burrell, 'From Cligès to Le Chevalier de la Charrete.' pp. 5-20.
51. Topsfield defines mauvestié as 'recreancy and lack of moral principles,' Chrétien de Troyes, p. 128.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., p. 132.
54. Ibid., p. 134
55. Kelly (Sens and Conjointure, p. 121) explains that there is little to indicate that the Knight of the Cart is really in Gorre, except the presence of one of the prisoners who enlightens him about the customs and perils of Gorre. This vagueness of approach also helps to add to the mystery which attends Lancelot's journey.
56. See supra, p. 174-75.
57. De Laude Novae Militiae, III, 4, p. 217. It is tempting, also to recall the nature of the Psychomachia, and to see Lancelot, also slaying the vice of pride.  
 Extinctum vitium sancto Spes increpat ore:  
 "Desine grande loqui, frangit deus omne superbum.  
 Magna cadunt, inflata crepant, tumefacta premuntur.  
 Disce supercilium deponere ..." (284-87).  
 Prudentius, Psychomachia, Turnholti, 1966.
58. Cf. William of Saint-Thierry, De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 406.
59. Ribard sees this symbolism constantly. See Chrétien de Troyes, Le Chevalier de la charrete. See also, Topsfield, Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 143-33, Gallais, Perceval et l'initiation, p. 33.
60. He is rewarded by the sight of the queen after the episode of the Flaming Lance (556-64) and by the sight of the hair on her comb after the episode with the Amorous Maiden (1384-1469).

61. These two scenes are not really examples of the symbolic death which was seen in the case of Erec and Yvain. Rather, as Topsfield suggests, they are 'as artificially contrived for courtly entertainment as the Cariado episode in the Tristan of Thomas.' (Chrétien de Troyes, p. 152) They thus give the lovers an opportunity to express their feelings for the sake of the audience.
62. See Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, p. 126.
63. Ibid., pp. 121-29.
64. See infra, pp. 350 - 352.
65. Gallais enumerates several differences which can be found between Perceval's background and career, and those of the other knights. (Perceval et l'initiation, Paris, 1972, Ch. 111, 'Perceval et la différence,' pp. 35-49.
66. Ibid., pp. 59-66.
67. This is similar to the progression from darkness to light which was used by Plato. See supra, p. 159-60.
68. Chrétien de Troyes, p. 236.
69. Cf. the lance at the beginning of the Grail procession:  
 'S'issoit une goute de sanc  
 Del fer de la lance en somet, (3198-99),  
 See also ll. 3196-97. This is frequently seen as the emblem of chivalry, e.g. David Fowler, Prowess and Charity in the Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes, Washington, 1959, p. 31; Topsfield, Chrétien de Troyes, p. 268.
70. Prowess and Charity, p. 44. See also, Margaret Pelan, 'Old French S'oublier: Its Meaning in Epic and Courtly Literature,' Romanisches Jahrbuch, 10, 1959, pp. 59-77.

## Chapter 5.

Other World Adventures.INTRODUCTION.

Man has always been fascinated by manifestations of the supernatural and by the mysteries of death. For what is inexplicable to human perception offers a challenge to the resources of all man's faculties. Ancient mythologies have recorded the practices of many civilisations of supplicating the forces of death in order to bring about new life.<sup>1</sup> A fine early literary example of such a practice is in the Epic of Gilgamesh where the hero braves darkness and despair during his search for everlasting life and, before he returns to his own country, he has a vision of the garden of the gods which delights and entralls him.<sup>2</sup> As he hears instructions about creation, he gains a profound insight into the meaning of life itself and he learns of the means of renewing his youth, even though he is told specifically that life on earth is only transitory. The old priest, Utnapishtim, tells him, "There is no permanence.

Do we build a house to stand forever, do we seal a contract to hold for all time? ... What is there between the master and the servant when both have fulfilled their doom?"<sup>3</sup>

But if Gilgamesh cannot hope for everlasting life, he does, at least, come away from his experience with his youth restored. He subsequently shows a spectacular renewal of activity in many spheres.

In later literature significant visions of life after death have been portrayed. Sometimes these contain, or at least hint at, the author's own belief. Among the most influential of these works are the Myth of Er in Plato's Republic,<sup>4</sup> Cicero's Somnium Scipionis,<sup>5</sup> Aeneas' descent to the underworld in Book VI of the Aeneid and later, Dante's Divina Commedia in which pagan myths and Christian belief are skilfully mingled.

Some of our heroes, too, are strongly fascinated by the unknown power of supernatural forces and are led into singularly strange adventures. But there is a special fascination both in adventures which lead to revelation of life after death and in the challenge of confronting the forces of death. With this notion is allied a profound need, on the part of truly heroic characters, to confront the powers of evil threatening to destroy the harmony which their society could otherwise enjoy. The successful outcome of such a confrontation is often one of the features which marks a hero and distinguishes him beyond his companions.

When our heroes have Other World adventures, they are not necessarily, like Gilgamesh, searching for everlasting life. Some heroes have already been seen to be grievously wounded and apparently dead.<sup>6</sup> They all encounter strange supernatural forces which, in different ways, are allied to evil and death, for they threaten to destroy or at least, to intrude upon the pattern of orderly society. Elsewhere, by either a visit, a dream or a vision, the hero comes into contact with the world of the dead or with the abode of death. Here, he may meet his ancestors or representatives of his own society. These experiences include catabasis, a 'journey down into the underworld,' or nekyomanteia, 'a calling up of the dead,'<sup>7</sup> a journey to a place which has the outward appearances of the land of the dead, or merely an adventure veiled in mysterious elements. The focus in this chapter, however, will be not so much on the merveilleux<sup>8</sup> which very often accompanies such experiences as on the hero's ability to conquer evil and to rise above the powers of death. Nor would it be appropriate here to separate the physical, rational and spiritual aspects of the hero's quest. For the Other World seems to be, rather, a meeting-point where the hero has a physical confrontation with intangible forces, and thus advances in both intellectual knowledge and spiritual growth. Furthermore, just as the hero must enter into a role in order to gain true self-knowledge, so



he must undertake an excursion into the Other World before he can fully understand his own world.

In classical literature, certain encounters with the world of the dead are very well known, in particular, the nekuia of Odysseus in Odyssey XI and of Aeneas in Aeneid VI. After brief discussion of selected features of Other World experiences in the epics of Homer and Vergil aspects of similar features in the Roman d'Eneas will be presented. There will then be some discussion of the principal Other World encounters in Chrétien's romances. A porter or guardian sometimes admits the hero to this strange world. Outward signs frequently indicate the abode of death: a barrier such as running water, a wood, an island, darkness, stakes, a cave, a castle. Usually a meal or hospitality form part of such an experience. Sometimes, admission is granted only when a condition has been fulfilled, whether it be the offering of prescribed sacrifices, a talisman or the uttering of a certain formula. Sometimes, too, the sacrifice of a human life is required, on the principle that a life be exchanged for a service. If he is prompt enough in obeying these due conditions, the hero resumes his quest as an enlightened man who is ready to make a new beginning. Sometimes, such an experience helps to clarify the direction of the hero's quest and indicates the extent of his progress. Theological concepts are sometimes contained in these episodes. These include ideas about rewards and punishments, man's situation in relation to his universe, theories concerning creation, but above all the triumph of good over evil. Such experiences invariably bring change and signs similar to those of resurrection: peace, joy, optimism, hope, renewal.

### ACHILLES

Achilles' Other World experience is, in many ways, consistent with his actions in other features of this epic. He has, in one sense, been the object of a quest.<sup>9</sup> Any territorial journey

was made to him rather than by him.<sup>10</sup> In the last book of the *Iliad*, as both Whitman and Nethercut have pointed out, Achilles is temporarily situated in a kind of lodge of death.<sup>11</sup> This interpretation is suggested by several clear and consistent signs. In the first place, as King Priam leaves his people and makes his way to Achilles' tent to beg for the body of Hector, he is lamented by the Trojans as one 'going to his death' (XXIV, 328). Secondly, Hermes, as Psychopompus, traditionally guides souls to the underworld.<sup>12</sup> Here, carrying the staff by which he 'mazes the eyes of those mortals whom he chooses and wakes again the sleepers' (XXIV, 343-44), he is sent by Zeus to escort King Priam. A further indication is given when the king stops beside the tomb of Ilos near a river where he lets his horses drink (XXIV, 351). This river has not been mentioned elsewhere. It is tempting to recall that many Other World adventures begin from a place where there is running water, like the traditional river of folk-tale which separates the living from the dead.<sup>13</sup> The onset of darkness is significant, for in Homer, imagery associated with darkness often accompanies descriptions of death. The 'towering shelter' (XXIV, 448-49), the 'pallisade' (453), the heavily barred doors (XXIV, 453-56) which have not been mentioned before, are also closely associated with the abode of death. Both the body of Hector and the ashes of Patroclus lie in the camp of Achilles, but also in the land of the dead. The poet, therefore, hints at an unfamiliar land of shadows, unreality and gloom. Achilles himself is the force to be appeased, for the insult to his honour led to vast destruction, and above all, to the taking of Hector's life in revenge for that of Patroclus. He is presented as being implacable and indomitable (XXIV, 22) until he himself is brought to acknowledge that he is powerless before the mighty will of the gods.

There is no concept of rewards or punishments here. Nor can this encounter be seen as a time of enlightenment or vision. But amidst the darkness of the shadows and unreality, a renewal of life is evident as Achilles accepts his helplessness as a human

being and yields Hector's body to his suppliant. Priam and Achilles share the burden of their humanity as they speak of their mutual pain (XXIV, 486-521). Although the principal signs of resurrection are absent, there is evidence of mutual understanding and peace, as Achilles exhorts Priam:

ἄλλ' ἄγε δὴ κατ' ἄρ' ἔλθου ἐπὶ θρόνου, ἄλγος δ' ἔμψης  
 ἐν θυμῷ κατακείσθαι ἔασομεν ἀχνύμενοί περ' (XXIV, 522-23).

("But come and sit down upon this chair, and although we are grieving, let our sorrows lie still in our hearts").

This is the moment when Achilles completes the purification of his γῆνις and exemplifies the triumph of good over evil.

### ODYSSEUS.

Odysseus' Other World experience is the central point of his wanderings. It is a nekyomanteia rather than a catabasis, for it concerns a 'calling up of the dead' rather than a visit to the realms of the dead. Odysseus undertakes this visit not out of any explicit desire to know about the hereafter, but out of unwilling obedience to Circe's instructions (Odyssey, X, 488-540). In a sense, this episode is the supreme testing of his obedience. For although we may note his grief at hearing Circe's command, (X, 496-98) and his reluctance to undergo more trials, we may note, too, that Odysseus does not question the enchantress' instructions. He merely asks:

ὦ Κίρκη, τίς γὰρ ταύτην ὁδὸν ἡγεμονεύσει;  
 εἰς Ἅιδου, δ' οὐ πῶς τις ἀφίκετο νηϊ μελαίνῃ; (X, 501-02).

("O Circe, who will be our guide on this journey? For no one has ever gone to Hades in a black ship.")

and, in spite of his own anguish and that of his companions, he sets sail towards the west (XI, 1-12).

The external signs of entry are present. In the first place, there is a water barrier, the River Oceanus, to be crossed. No guide is present, for there is none needed. Instead, Circe has sent a following wind which enables the men to sit still while the helmsman 'keeps the ship steady.' (XI, 10). The idea of darkness

which is introduced here is sustained by the image of the black ship (XI, 3), the black beasts which Circe has provided for sacrifice (X, 571-73) and by the gloom which surrounds the land of the Cimmerians (XI, 14-19). It is amid this background of darkness that Odysseus performs the sacrifices necessary for summoning the shades. In addition, the death of the helmsman, Elpenor, can be seen as a sacrifice to the deities of the underworld, so that the notion is present of a life offered for a service.

This is a time of enlightenment. From Teiresias, Odysseus learns of the future, especially of his homecoming and of his eventual death (XI, 90-151). From his mother, Anticleia, he learns of the present situation of Ithaca, of the suitors, of Penelope's faithfulness and of the family whom he has left behind. (XI, 180-203). He learns of past events, as he sees the queens and heroines of the past (XI, 225-332) and learns of matters connected with the downfall of Troy, including the fate of Agamemnon whose grim homecoming provides a rich contrast with his own. There is limited indication to be found of a theological Hades in the strict sense that the good are rewarded and the wicked are punished. Some mythological characters from the past are, indeed, punished for their crimes,<sup>14</sup> but even for the virtuous, Hades is a joyless place. The heroes whom Odysseus sees are not buoyed up by the hope of a glorious hereafter but rather, they grieve for what they have lost.<sup>15</sup> We read of souls separated from the body (XI, 219). and although there are souls who flock around Odysseus 'with inhuman clamour' (633) out of longing to speak with him, Odysseus is seized by 'green fear' (633) and hurries back to his ship.

This visit can, in a sense, be seen as an act of expiation. In his careful performing of the rites which propitiate the spirits of the dead, there are signs that Odysseus is being purified of bloodshed. The offerings for the dead are bloodless, being 'honey mixed with milk, sweet wine, water and white barley.' (XI, 27-28). From now until his return to Ithaca, no blood is shed

by the warrior, Odysseus, who had fought so savagely at Troy and provoked hostility during the early part of his journey. John D. Niles sees this visit as a 'peace-making of Odysseus with his ancestors.'<sup>16</sup> But it is also a time of peace-making with himself. After his experiences in Hades and his visions of past, present and future, Odysseus is, in a sense, released from the past and from his longing for the world he has left. Equipped with the knowledge which he has gained here, Odysseus is, therefore, free to choose life, no matter what obstacles he encounters. To this extent, this episode has the elements of rebirth.

### AENEAS

Aeneas' descent to the underworld is the centre, not only of the hero's adventures, but also of several aspects of his development. In Pöschl's words:

Aeneas' journey to the underworld is much more than one adventure among many. Like the encounter with Dido, it has become a trial of the hero, a test of his pietas, and a revelation of the symbolic meaning of the whole poem.<sup>17</sup>

It is fitting that the command to visit the world of the dead should come from Aeneas' father, Anchises. For it is he who later affirms Aeneas' pietas (Aeneid V, 687-88) and leads him to the revelation of the nature of the universe and of his destiny as founder of Rome. When, therefore, at the end of Book V, Anchises announces the need for Aeneas to visit him (V, 731-35), and assures Aeneas that he is now in the abodes of the blessed (V, 733-35), we do not see the kind of lamentations which preceded Odysseus' visit (Od. X, 496-568). For, as we recall the love which Aeneas had for his father, and the reliance which he placed on his wisdom, the words;

"congressus pete, nate, meos," (Aeneid V, 733)

are calculated to diminish the fear which might otherwise attend such a visit. As Aeneas is motivated by love and filial piety, his grief at the beginning of this episode (VI, 1) is more for the loss of the helmsman, Palinurus, than for the prospect of the descent. Aeneas states his purpose clearly to the Sibyl:

"unum oro ...  
ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora  
contingat." (106-08)

as he prepares to visit the Other World. Thus, anticipation of his meeting with his father overrides all other reasons for this visit.

It is clear that this is a true catabasis rather than a nekyomanteia. The Sibyl explains this in the well-known words:

"facilis descensus Averno." (126)

Certain traditional signs of entry are present. But first, the deaths of both Palinurus and Misenus can, in a sense, be seen as a sacrifice: Palinurus to the deities of the sea, as a sign that the long journey to Italy is over; Misenus, to the gods of the underworld. His life can be said to be sacrificed in order that Aeneas may achieve his underworld journey and not only descend to Avernus, but also emerge once more.<sup>18</sup> Aeneas then enters through the Sibyl's cave (VI, 236-41) and after he has prayed and sacrificed the customary black victims (VI, 243-56), he crosses the waters of the Styx (VI, 412-16). Images of mist, gloom, shadows and unreality abound, as Aeneas and his guide enter the realm of the dead:

Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram  
perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna:  
quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna  
est iter in silvis, ubi caelum condidit umbra  
Iuppiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem. (VI, 268-72).

This idea of shadows is sustained in the horrifying forms which Aeneas meets at the threshold (VI, 274-81). These include:

Morbi tristisque Senectus,  
et Metus et malesuada Fames et turpis Egestas,  
terribiles visu formae, Letumque Labosque;  
tum consanguineus Leti Sopor et mala mentis  
Gaudia, mortiferumque adverso in Limine Bellum. (VI, 275-79).

But there are only empty shapes. Devoid of reality, they cannot hope to deter Aeneas. Nor can the sight of Cerberus who is drugged by the Sibyl and lies harmlessly across the threshold.

The Golden Bough is not only the talisman required for entry; it is also a sign of the meeting of past and future. It is aptly

compared to mistletoe,<sup>19</sup> the regenerating plant of life-giving and fertility cults.

quale solet silvis brumali frigore viscum  
fronde virere nova ... (VI, 205-06).

Furthermore, by the contrast of lifeless gold on the living tree, there is projected an image of a rich, dead past clinging to a living future. It is recognised by the grim ferryman, Charon, as a token of identification and as a sign that Aeneas is entitled to enter the kingdom of the dead as a living mortal.

After his meeting with Palinurus who instructs him about the woes of the unburied dead, Aeneas takes time to look at the familiar characters of the past: women who have died for love (VI, 441-76) and slain Trojan heroes (VI, 447-534). By these encounters in the so-called 'Mythological Hades',<sup>20</sup> Aeneas is, in a sense, purified of both the bloodshed of Troy and of his guilt in the Dido affair. L.A.Mackay comments on these meetings:

The sense of guilt and inadequacy that might have hampered him in his future conduct of affairs is dispelled by the recall and dismissal of these experiences, indeed by something like confession and absolution, when he comes face to face with Dido, and with Deiphobus, the active head of the house of Priam when Troy fell.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, in another sense, there is a preparation for the future. In the 'Theological Hades,' Aeneas learns of the punishments to be found in Tartarus, before he prepares to enter the abodes of the blessed. As the Sibyl had guided him through the earlier stages of his journey and the contact with the past, so Anchises now guides him through the time of revelation of the future. In this so-called 'Philosophical Hades,' Aeneas learns about the doctrine of the 'soul of the universe' (VI, 724) and of the life-giving spirit which animates all creation. He learns, too, of the nature of life after death and of the need for purification from sin. His father explains:

"ergo exercentur poenis veterumque malorum  
supplicia expendunt; aliae panduntur inanes  
suspendae ad ventos, aliis sub gurgite vasto  
infectum eluitur scelus aut exuritur igni." (VI, 739-42).

This is the knowledge which prepares Aeneas for the vision of the future and perfects his pietas. But there is seen too, a sign of Vergil's own preoccupation with death and resurrection.<sup>22</sup> For the sight of Marcellus elicits an expression of hope that death is not the end for this promising youth. Aeneas' will is, henceforth, always perfectly attuned to the will of the gods. He has achieved unity within himself and he is renewed in his mission. Although he is to suffer greatly because of his vocation, he will give evidence of a confidence and spiritual energy which were lacking in the early part of the epic, for he has now come to terms with himself.

#### THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE.

The hope in life after death which was expressed by virtuous pagans was given substance in the Gospel message where Christ promised everlasting life and exhorted his disciples to live in such a way as to be worthy of this promise. Visions showing belief in life after death are found in early Christian tradition and sometimes resemble, if only superficially, aspects of a pagan Other World. Antecedents of the Apocalypse of Saint John, for example, can be found in a limited way in the Myth of Er in Plato's Republic. The following passage is one of many in which Saint Paul refers to the blessedness of the life to come:

Et scio huiusmodi hominem sive in corpore, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit: quoniam raptus est in Paradisum: et audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui.

(11 Cor. 12, 3-4).

Inevitably, during the early centuries of Christianity, there appeared a good deal of apocalyptic literature which described visions of both heaven and hell, and portrayed experiences related to another world. The very nature of the subject encouraged vividness in description. Among such experiences we may note the Apocalypse of Peter and the Vision of Saint Paul<sup>23</sup> and certain passages in the dialogues of Saint Gregory the Great. In a passage describing the death of a certain Stephen the Smith, Gregory tells of a bridge across a fetid river:



quia pons erat, sub quo niger atque caliginosus foetoris  
intolerabilis nebulam exhalans fluvius decurrebat.  
Transacto autem ponte, amoena erant prata atque virentia,  
odoriferis herbarum floribus exornata, in quibus albatorum  
hominum conventicula esse videbantur.<sup>24</sup>

The ugliness and filth of the river evoke the horror of Vergil's Hades and will anticipate some of our later Other World scenes. On the other hand, the expression 'amoena prata atque virentia' evokes the serenity and beauty of the meadows where Aeneas saw the souls of the Blessed, and it anticipates some of the idyllic moments in our twelfth-century visions of the Other World.

This is not the place in which to discuss at any length the many Celtic journeys to the Other World. Howard Patch has considered the similarity between some of the Celtic Other World journeys and the classical idea of the Other World.<sup>25</sup> In Arthurian literature, notions of the Other World as a place of the dead, as an abode of the gods or as an earthly Elysium are frequently intermingled. A journey is usually required, for the Other World of the Celts was often situated on earth, usually towards the west.<sup>26</sup> The west is not specifically mentioned in our romances, but it is implied through references to sunset. For the onset of evening and the time for vespers generally necessitate the hospitality episode which leads to the Other World adventure.

The intermingling of classical, Celtic and Christian Other World elements is portrayed effectively in the twelfth-century Voyage de Saint Brendan. For in this journey which is a kind of Christian Odyssey, there are marvellous apparitions, such as the huge altar of jacinth on which Mass is joyfully celebrated (1063-96), followed by a description of hell (1097-1210). The travellers meet Judas whose remorse is depicted graphically as he recalls the Passion of Christ:

Jo sui li fels qui Deu hai,  
Le simple agnel as lus trahi.  
Quant vi que as mains ert Pilate,  
Dunc oi chere forment mate. (1281-84).

and he continues by enumerating the stages of the Saviour's

sufferings. But although there was a lively interest in theological and spiritual matters, in the twelfth century, less emphasis will be placed on contemporary eschatology than on the forces which the hero encounters. There are many superficial similarities with the ancient Other World episodes. For the medieval audience, however, the mythological world of the dead would have less appeal than the accompanying manifestations of the merveilleux. Let us examine, then, the nature of the forces which the hero encounters in his Other World adventures, his attitude as he undertakes this particular episode and the stage of his development at which it takes place. We shall then endeavour to discern the factors which make him successful.

#### ENEAS.

Eneas' excursion to the Other World is portrayed with more fidelity to the Aeneid than is the description of his wanderings. He undertakes this visit in obedience to a command from his father (2191-98) who, as in the Aeneid, assures his son that he is now in the abodes of the Blessed. Instead of the eagerness to see Anchises which Aeneas showed, there is simply hesitation and fear:

les mals dote, com faire puet,  
 qu'il set que sofrir li estuet  
 ançois qu'il ait de terre roie.  
 mais plus dote l'enfernal voie:  
 de cele estoit en grant freor. (Eneas, 2223-27)

There are other differences to be found, too. There is, for example much more stress on the Sibyl's appearance. She is described more clearly than in Vergil's account:

Ele seoit devant l'antree,  
 tote chenuie, eschevelee;  
 la face avoit tote palie  
 et la char noire et froncie: (2267-70).

Her 'char noire et froncie' (2270) suggests by implication that she is extremely ugly and therefore, that she is associated with the Other World. The author emphasis by repetition the effect that her stare has upon the hero:

peors prenoit de son regart, (2271)

And again, after Eneas has made his request for guidance:

ele lo regarde fieremant (2293),

with the result that he again experiences fear:

de son regart peors li prent. (2294).

The author's preoccupation is, therefore, with the awe-inspiring appearance of the Sibyl rather than with the prophecy which Vergil's priestess conveys (Aeneid VI, 83-97), or her function as a guide. In Poirion's words, although the twelfth-century Sibyl still retains the function of guide,

elle représente la connaissance de la mort, et la communication avec le monde de la mort.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, Eneas is justifiably afraid of her and of the mystery which she represents.

The introductory prayers and sacrifices are greatly compressed in comparison with those of Aeneas. We merely read that:

un sacrefice ot apresté,  
al deu d'enfer sacrefia  
et molt humblement lo pria. (2348-50).

The entry to hell is ugly and therefore evokes evil:

La ot une fosse parfunde,  
n'ot plus laide an tot le monde;  
granz et large estoit l'entree,  
de bois estoit avironee  
et d'une eve noire et fanjose. (2351-55).

It can be seen as a foul-smelling, life-destroying cave whose stench is overcome only by the ointment offered by the Sibyl (2393-96). The cave, the wood and the river all indicate the presence of the Other World. There are clear indications that this is a proper descent<sup>28</sup> to the realms of Pluto and Proserpine:

Lajus descendent tuit li mort,  
l'empire tient Pluto par sort,  
il en est rois, et Proserpine  
en est deesse et raine; (2379-82).

In these matters, the French poet is faithful to Vergil, and has retained features that appealed to a twelfth-century audience.

But the two most important sacrifices in Aeneid VI, those of Palinurus and Misenus, are completely omitted, so that

the necessity of exchanging a life for a service is not seen to be significant here. We see no Other World deities to be placated. Nor is there any need for the author to sustain Vergil's interest in the topography of the coastline of Italy.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, the author is careful to portray his Other World guardians clearly. The ferryman is formally depicted in terms which came to be used of uncourtly characters in the twelfth century:

vialz ert et laiz et regrouiz  
 et toz chenuz et toz franciz;  
 lo vis ot megre et confondu,  
 lo chief mellé et tot bossu,  
 oroilles grandes et velues,  
 sorcilles grosses et molsues,  
 roges les ialz come charbons,  
 la barbe longue et les grenons. (2443-50).

He resembles, in several respects, the Giant Herdsman whom Yvain encounters as he approaches the mysterious Fountain. (Yvain 288-326).<sup>30</sup> He is very different from Vergil's Charon who is described in four simple lines (VI, 298-301). The portrayal of Cerberus is even more striking. Vergil's account is restrained (Aeneid VI, 418-24) and if he mentions that 'horrere colla colubris' (VI, 419), the 'tria guttura' (VI, 421) and the 'immania terga' (VI, 422), his watchdog is, however, easily drugged and presents no real fear. The twelfth-century poet describes Cerberus in repugnant detail, for example:

Molt par est laiz a desmesure  
 et de molt horrible faiture;  
 janbes et piez a toz veluz  
 et les artolz a toz crochuz;  
 tels ongles a com de grifon  
 et coëz est come gaignon; (2563-68)

The poet continues to describe Cerberus' ugliness and finally tells us:

unques ne fu si laide rien. (2578)

Eneas rightly fears him:

Si grant peor ot Eneas  
 n'osa avant aler un pas;  
 s'il lo dota, ne m'en mervoil. (2595-97).

and his reaction contrasts with that of Aeneas who easily slips past the threshold (VI, 424-25).

There are differences to be found, also, in the Mythological Hades. The Golden Bough is recognised as a passport to the underworld, but there is nothing to indicate that it is recognised as a sign of new birth. Vergil's catalogue of past heroines is dismissed by a general statement in three lines (2622-24), and the concentration is on the plight of Dido who, unlike Vergil's heroine, can find no solace, even with her husband (2657-62).<sup>31</sup> The description of the punishments of the Theological Hades appears to owe more to Christian tradition than to Vergil. There is mention of torture (2747-57), of everlasting fire which torments the damned (2758), of everlasting darkness (2759; 2761) and of fear (2765-72). The author dwells at length on the punishments (2773-82). The ensuing scene, however, provides a rich contrast with the gloom of Tartarus, for the preoccupation with everlasting torments has yielded to the portrayal of 'grant repos et grant biauté' (2796). Darkness and gloom have yielded to light (2797-98), and the fear that pervaded the earlier section has turned to joy:

alquant chantoient et sailloient  
a grant delit se deduoient. (2805-06).

The French poet omits Anchises' exposition concerning the soul of the universe, and he concentrates, instead, on the necessity for souls to be purified of sin before they enter Elysium, where they are:

... en grant dolçor  
et an repos, n'ont puis dolor. (2909-10).

The list of famous Romans of the future comprises only Romulus, Julius Caesar and Augustus. Vergil's poignant reference to Marcellus is, similarly, omitted.

This episode represents a kind of purification and healing. In the first place, we are told that:

molt se fait liez de sa ligniee,  
qu'il voit qui tant ert escauciee (2987-88).

Eneas is now able to look more boldly towards the future, for:

Anz an son cuer an a grant joie,  
oblié a le duel de Troie. (2991-92).

And here, his attitude has undergone a radical change for, as he contemplates the trials to come, there is no reference to the fear which was expressed at the beginning of the episode or at the beginning of the romance. We merely learn that

et nequedan pansis estoit  
des batailles que il avroit,  
des maus que li estuet sofrir  
ainz que viegne a terre tenir. (2993-96).

In spite of significant omissions from Vergil's version, this visit marks for Eneas, also, a new beginning and indicates renewed confidence in his task.

### EREC.

Several elements of the Other World are discernible in Erec's quest. The White Stag, for example, is associated with the Other World.<sup>32</sup> Erec's striving for possession of the Sparrow Hawk has its antecedent in the Other World.<sup>33</sup> But in this chapter, the interest will be concentrated upon the Joie de la Cort episode which has the characteristics of an Other World experience and which comes as the climax of Erec's adventures.

It has been noted that, for the most part, Erec journeys directly towards his goal, taking no time to stop and look around him.<sup>34</sup> But after being purified of his fault and healed of his physical wounds, Erec reaches Brandiganz where his curiosity is aroused, for his journey has now lost its urgency. Although Brandiganz is evidently, nothing more than a castle, certain features of it are interesting. Erec, Enide and Guivret arrive there towards sunset. (5320). It is surrounded by a barrier of swiftly running water:

et par desoz a la reonde  
coroit une eve si parfonde  
roide et bruianz come tanpeste. (5325-27).

Within the bounds of this castle is set, apparently, a land of plenty (5350-53). Although these features have little significance in themselves, they can be seen as signs of approach

to the Other World. Furthermore, Erec is anxious to see this strange chastel and does not heed Guivret's warnings (5371-74) that this is a place from which no one returns.

"J'en ai sovant oï parler,  
que passé a set anz ou plus  
que del chastel ne revint nus  
qui l'aventure i alast querre;  
si vont venu de mainte terre  
chevalier fier et corageus." (5386-91).

Hence, there is a further hint that this might be an abode of death, to which many brave knights have come, who have then been vanquished (5390-98).

Yet Erec's single-mindedness and courage are evident. In spite of the warnings given by Guivret and later, by King Evrain (5609-13), he seeks lodging at Brandiganz and insists on undertaking the Joie de la Cort adventure. Loomis has shown that this garden is derived from Celtic mythology and identified it as the Kingdom of Eternal Life.<sup>34</sup> And although, as Carasso-Bulow states, Chrétien makes no mention of its being the Other World,<sup>35</sup> there are significant signs attending this adventure which clearly evoke the Other World. As a barrier, there is a magical wall of air around the garden (5689-95). Again, there are associations with the abode of death, especially if we recall that the term nigromance, 'magic' (5692) is etymologically derived from νεκροπαντεία, the calling up of spirits from the dead'.<sup>36</sup> The garden is surrounded by stakes, and the presence of the heads of slain knights supports the notion that Erec has indeed entered the abode of death. He himself is both the sacrifice and the deliverer. Although this incident takes place in an apparent garden of delights where everything appears to be alive and beautiful,<sup>37</sup> we learn that this place is dead in the sense that it is enslaving and inaccessible and that its delights cannot be shared with the outside world (5695-5714). Thus it is an apt setting for Mabonagrain and his amie.

For by his handsome looks, his imposing appearance (5847) and his skill as a knight, Mabonagrain represents the kind of chivalry which is superficially brilliant and fine. But in

the imprisonment of Mabonagrain by the selfish love of his amie, there is an image of an evil which can corrupt the meaning of true chivalry. This is the exclusive, sensual love which enslaves couples and compels them to turn inward in their preoccupation with their passions, instead of liberating them for the service of others. This was the type of love which had temporarily blinded and enslaved Erec and distorted the real understanding of marriage until Enide enlightened him. For Mabonagrain, the temporary activity which had proved to be both an obsession and a danger to Erec, has taken over reality, so that a state of pleasant diversion has become the real world. Mabonagrain is imprisoned as the result of a promise made to his amie (6023-31), and, as he is powerless to free himself, he must be liberated by another. It is fitting that Erec should undertake this task of liberation, for he himself has been threatened by a similar danger and has had to undergo many trials in order to achieve a balance between marriage and love.

This episode does not represent, as do our previous Other World adventures, a stage in the hero's development. Rather, as Erec challenges and conquers this strange knight in his magical world, he publicly manifests that he has completely renounced his fault, that he has purified himself of its effects and that he has fulfilled his early promise (89-92). There is, furthermore, a public display of the triumph of good over evil. This is signified in the first place, by the blowing of the horn which has already been likened to a trumpet blast.<sup>38</sup> The ensuing joy of the bystanders and the inhabitants is clear:

Molt s'an est Enyde esjoie;  
 liez est li rois et sa gent liee;  
 n'i a un seul cui molt ne siee  
 et molt ne pleise ceste chose:  
 nus n'i cesse ne ne repose  
 de joie feire et de chanter. (6112-17)

This joy contrasts with the expressions of fear and apprehension which were expressed by King Evrain (5742-76) and shown by Enide (5778-82). The wall of air, the symbol of imprisonment, is no longer an effective barrier, for its power has been overcome by



Erec's valour. Finally, after restoring order in his own life, Erec is now able to bestow order upon a situation where a serious lack of balance between love and knightly prowess has resulted in a world of death and imprisonment.

### YVAIN.

Yvain's encounters bring him many times into contact with strange and inexplicable features which are associated with the Other World. Among these, we may note the Giant Herdsman who, perhaps, has his antecedent in Charon,<sup>39</sup> and may be seen as the guardian to the Other World of the fountain. The storm-making stone, the ring of invisibility<sup>40</sup> and the fairy mistress all have links with the Other World.<sup>41</sup> Thus, to a certain extent, the Other World, for Yvain, intrudes upon the real world. These features have all been discussed in studies on the merveilleux. But the episode to be discussed here is the visit to the Castle of Pesme Aventure, where Yvain confronts and conquers the representatives of evil in a setting which, in many ways, resembles another world.

Yvain and the messenger of the disinherited Younger Sister arrive at this castle when they are on the way to contest the property of the deceased Lord of Noire Espine. Once more, we have an adventure which begins at sunset, for they arrive at Pesme Aventure 'Que li jorz aloit declinant.' (5111). Thus, there is not only an obvious need to find lodgings for the night, there is also a hint of the Other World shown by the onset of darkness. Instead of welcoming the visitors to the town, the inhabitants endeavour to discourage them by calling out dire warnings (5115-18). An elderly lady hints at a costume which is such:

"Que nos n'osons an noz ostés  
Herbergier por rien, qui avaingne,  
Nul prodome, qui de fors vaingne." (5156-58).

and she states that neither Yvain nor anyone else could receive the hospitality available in the town or encounter the costume without

incurring great shame (5171-74). But Yvain is led by his feelings, and his 'fos cuers' (5176) lets him ignore the reasonable advice of the townsfolk. He prepares to accept the hospitality which has been offered, despite the possible consequences (5178-84).

Within the room where the embroideresses are working, there is a strong element of realism as the plight of these maidens is portrayed (5196-5211). They are the victims of an evil situation and by their plight, they are associated with fantastic characters. The meadow surrounded by stakes (5190-92) evokes the same unreal atmosphere as the Joie de la Cort episode in Erec. Furthermore, although the embroideresses belong to the real world, their imprisonment is reminiscent of the abode of death. This is borne out by their extreme poverty (5198-5205), by the loss of their beauty through the harshness of their working conditions (5234-36) and by the extent of their grief (5244-46). Furthermore, their sense of oppression is heightened by the custom of yearly tribute exacted by the 'deus fiz de diable' (5271) so that they are, in a real sense, condemned to death (5275-87).

The vergier in which Yvain finds his host and his family is, similarly, realistic, and at first sight, it provides a clear contrast with the scene in the silk workshop. As the host 'se gisoit/ Sor un drap de soie,' (5363-64), a picture of repose and tranquillity is presented. Yet in its own way, this vergier is also barren. For this idyllic place is as lifeless and as unproductive of good as the workshop. The host is involved in

"Une mout fiere deablie,  
Que il me covient maintenir." (5468-69).

and he is as enslaved as the embroideresses.

Yvain, like Erec, is now faced with the challenge not so much of conquering death as of conquering an evil which is similar to death.<sup>42</sup> Yvain has been told of the evil associated with these monsters and their origin: he has seen for himself the effect of their wickedness (5256-5337). Now, he spends a night at the

castle where he is regally entertained by his host. But the following morning after Mass, which is celebrated in honour of the Holy Spirit, Yvain learns that he is not free to leave (5457-61). Thus he, too, is temporarily imprisoned and he must, as so many knights have done before him, submit to the 'mout fiere deablie' which afflicts his host's castle. He learns, furthermore, that if he is victorious, he must marry his hosts' daughter who is:

... si bele et si jante,  
 Qu'an li servir meist s'antante  
 Li Des d'Amors, s'il la veist, (5375-77)

But she has remained unmarried because all her suitors have been defeated.

The very appearance of the netuns emphasises their evil qualities. They are described as 'hideus et noir' (5510)<sup>43</sup>. Unlike contemporary knights, the netuns carry bastons (5515-17), and have their heads, faces and legs bare (5520-23). Their garb has been identified by Loomis as that which was worn by champions in judiciary trials.<sup>44</sup> Carasso-Bulow, however, makes the further point that if the netuns carry a 'legal' club, there is a particularly fantastic note present in that they have supernatural shields which cannot be damaged by any sword.

'They carry arms of justice while defending injustice.'<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, they do not allow Yvain's lion to fight with him on the grounds that

"Se li lions iere avuec vos,  
 Por ce, qu'il se meslast a nos,  
 Donc ne serieez vos pas seus,  
 Dui serieez contre nos deus." (5557-60)

This distorted justice makes the netuns all the more formidable because they are so unfairly matched against Yvain.

Yet the lion, as symbol of Christ, is the enemy of demons, and as he burrows his way out of the room where he has been imprisoned (5628), he tenaciously helps his master to destroy the evil which confronts him.

Car au lion triues ne pes  
 N'avront il tant con vis les sache. (5632-33).

For there can be no compromise or understanding between the demons, the 'devil's brood,' and the lion, the representative of goodness.

Yvain's victory over the netuns, like that of Erec, does not mark a stage in his development but rather, proclaims publicly that he has now attained an exceptional degree of goodness as a knight. This implies that he has done penance for his fault and been purified of its effects, as with the help of his lion, he overcomes the very personification of evil and injustice. This impression is enhanced by his refusal to marry his host's daughter. Although she is extremely beautiful and worthy of marrying the Emperor of Germany (5482-84), Yvain is both honest about his refusal to marry her (5720-29) and discreet in his loyalty to Laudine.

"Mes je ne puis esposer fame  
Ne remenoir por nule painne." (5746-47).

Nor can he abandon the task he has undertaken:

"La dameisele, qui m'an mainne,  
Siurai; qu'autremant ne puet estre." (5748-49).

For he has promised to champion the cause of the disinherited Younger Sister.

We see here a sign of hope both for Yvain's return to his lady and for the triumph of good over evil. The harmony which was distorted by the evil costume of Pesme Aventure is restored by Yvain's valour. As the maidens come out from their captivity, we are told:

Mes or sont riches, ce lor sanble.  
Fors del chastel totes ansamble  
Devant lui deus et deus san issent.  
Je ne cuit pas, qu' eles feïssent  
Tel joie, come eles li font,  
De celui, qui fist tot le mont,  
S'il fust venuz de ciel an terre. (5777-83).

Thus, Yvain is seen as a liberator as the maidens commend him to God (5795-5801) and acknowledge the state of joy and peace which he has left them.

LANCELOT.

Lancelot's quest is accompanied, to a considerable degree, by supernatural elements and strange apparitions. In this chapter, however, the attention will be focused on the crossing into the city of Bade in the land of Gorre, on the nature of the land itself and on the forces which Lancelot faces during his mission there.

Lancelot is escorted as far as the Sword Bridge by the two sons of the first vavassour who accommodates him in Gorre. Although Lancelot has been well received, this hospitality, unlike that offered to Erec and Yvain before their Other World adventures, is not related to a costume and does not lead directly to the adventure. The references to the onset of darkness serve to intensify the mystery of the crossing rather than suggest a need for a significant pause in the journey. For the knights arrive at the Sword Bridge at sunset:

Le droit chemin vont cheminant  
tant que li jorz vet declinant,  
et vient au Pont de l'Espee  
après none vers la vespree. (3003-06).

The elements which were used to describe both Erec's approach to the Castle of Brandiganz, 'jusqu'al vespre' (Erec, 5320) and Yvain's arrival at Pesme Aventure '... li jorz aloit declinant' (Yvain, 5111) are combined here, so that emphasis is added to the darkness which surrounds Lancelot's crossing of the Sword Bridge.

There are signs which suggest that the knights are approaching this Other World. For they:

... voient l'eve felenesse,  
noire et bruiant, roide et espesse,  
tant leide et tant espoantable  
con se fust li fluns au deable,  
et tant perilleuse et parfonde  
qu'il n'est riens nule an tot le monde,  
s'ele i cheoit, ne fust alee  
ausi com an la mer betee. (3009-16).

The reiterated references to darkness also serve to intensify the evil and horror associated with the river and thus, of the strange world which Lancelot is about to enter. We are not spared the

grim description of the Sword Bridge which 'molt est max.' (3007) and is later described more specifically:

d'une espee forbie et blanche  
estoit li ponz sor l'eve froide;  
mes l'espee estoit forz et roide,  
et avoit deus lances de lonc. (3022-25)

An added source of fear is present in the two lions which appear to guard the entrance to the bridge (3035-37). But Lancelot's attitude in the face of these fearful apparitions contrasts significantly with that of his companions. They are terrified:

L'eve et li ponz et li lyon  
les metent an itel freor  
que il tranblent tuit de peor. (3038-40)

and they warn Lancelot to take care before entering this land (3041-77), for he is in mortal peril. Lancelot, on the other hand, is so drawn by the love of his lady and has such confidence in God that nothing, not even the sight of the lions, can daunt him. The lions of which he had been warned, seem to be only an illusion, for after he has made this dangerous crossing, he sees nothing more harmful than a lizard:

Lors li remanbre et resovient  
des deux lyons qu'il cuidoit  
avoir veüz quant il estoit  
de l'autre part; lors s'i esgarde:  
n'i avoit nes une leisarde,  
ne rien nule qui mal li face. (3118-23).

We are reminded of the dire shapes at the entrance to Vergil's Underworld which prove to be harmless when Aeneas and the Sibyl confront them (Aeneid VI, 274-94).

What is the nature of this land of Gorre? And why has it been designated, if sometimes indirectly, as an Other World?<sup>46</sup> In the first place, we are told of a land 'don nus estranges ne retorne' (641) and where Queen Guinevere will be forced to remain in slavery (642-43). Unlike the Other World in our classical epics, it is difficult of access, and the journey to it is beset by obstacles. The encounter with the Arrogant Knight suggests the exchange of a life for a service (2677-2924). Although Loomis rejects the idea that Gorre could be an abode of the dead,<sup>47</sup>

he does see an association with an early elysian abode of the gods.<sup>48</sup> But whatever the origin of the tradition of this place, it is clear that its values differ radically from those of the Arthurian world and that Chrétien used Other World features to describe this land. Topsfield, for example, notes the inversion of values between this world and King Arthur's world by contrasting the attitudes of the inhabitants towards the Cart incident.<sup>49</sup> They lament Lancelot's association with the cart:

"S'il fust de cest reproche mondes,  
 an tant con dure toz li mondes,  
 ne fust uns chevaliers trovez,  
 tant soit de proesce esprovez,  
 qui cest chevalier resanblast;" (2615-19)

and show compassion rather than curiosity for his crime (cf. 410-417). Lancelot's union with the queen is in direct antithesis to the values of the kingdom of Logres, where this action would be seen as high treason.<sup>50</sup>

The nature of the evil which Lancelot has come to conquer is in the person of Meleagant rather than in the land. No matter what Celtic origins are attributed to him,<sup>51</sup> Chrétien consistently portrays Meleagant as an incorrigibly evil character. Mabonagrain, we may recall, was enslaved in a kind of Other World because of a foolish promise,<sup>52</sup> the netuns were evil-looking, uncourtly characters associated with the Other World.<sup>53</sup> Meleagant, on the other hand, is a prince of noble birth, for he is the son of King Bademaguz who:

a tote enor et a tot bien,  
 et læauté sor tote rien  
 voloit par tot garder et feire; (3145-47).

Meleagant's formidable vices have already been noted.<sup>54</sup>

Basing his conclusions on the Gospel of Nicodemus, D.D.R. Owen sees this whole episode with Lancelot's deliverance of the captives, as a parody of Christ's harrowing of hell.<sup>55</sup> Chrétien could well have had this in mind. But perhaps a broader interpretation would be more acceptable. For this episode can also be seen as the triumph of good over evil. All King Arthur's knights recognise evil and fight it, but few have the power or the virtue to conquer

it. Lancelot, on the other hand, has been seen as one of the elect who has risked his reputation and conquered pride and self-love by riding in the cart. He has gone beyond what Topsfield calls 'the formal courtly limitations of Arthur's world.'<sup>56</sup> The reason for Lancelot's success as a deliverer has been further suggested by Topsfield:

Knightly bravery, seeking adventure for its own sake, is not adequate to the highest tasks. These need inner virtue, honour and a moral courage which disregards the values of the world, the Leauté which alone can conquer Mauvestié.<sup>57</sup>

And in this romance, Lancelot has never been seeking adventure for its own sake. He has successfully overcome the obstacles to the Kingdom of Gorre and he defeats the evil power which resides there. He has, once more, been seen as a chosen knight who has selflessly exerted moral courage of a high order, and has thus shown the extraordinary degree of valour necessary for conquering Mauvestié.

#### PERCEVAL.

Perceval's principal Other World adventure must be taken as the episode in the Grail Castle. He comes upon this adventure unexpectedly during the course of his journey. We know that evening is advancing because, having journeyed all day (2976), Perceval is anxious to find lodging for the night (3024-25). Perceval's visit to the Grail Castle is closely connected with his prayer to see his mother alive and well. The sight of the river and its banks is skilfully juxtaposed with Perceval's prayer, so that the river seems to be conjured up as he prays:

Et tant dura cele priere  
Qu'il esgarda une riviere  
En l'avalee d'une angarde (2985-87).

And he seems to sense, in his limited way, that his mother can be found beyond this barrier. Thus, his prayer becomes more urgent:

"Ha! Sire tox puissans,  
Se ceste eve passer pooie,  
Dela ma mere troveroie,  
Mien escient, se ele est vive." (2990-93).



For, although the Grail Castle is assuredly an Other World adventure,<sup>58</sup> it can be seen in particular as a visit to the abode of the dead.<sup>59</sup> We are familiar with the combination of a water barrier, the onset of evening and the need for hospitality. There is, in a sense, a guide, in the person of the Fisher King who instructs Perceval how to come to his castle. The castle itself is extraordinary in that it cannot be seen until Perceval has almost arrived at it, it disappears almost before he has left (3403-09), and its presence is not known to the Weeping Maiden (3468-82).<sup>60</sup> The most extraordinary aspect of this visit has dominated the nekuia of the ancient epics, but has not been seen, so far, in Chrétien's romances.

For this is a vision where Perceval meets his parents and confronts the lessons they have to offer. David Fowler demonstrates most convincingly how this incident is, in reality, a meeting of Perceval with his father.<sup>61</sup> The following points are used to identify the Fisher King. Firstly, before Perceval set out on his quest for chivalry, his mother had, while speaking of his father, discoursed at length on his wealth and power:

"N'ot chevalier de si haut pris,  
Tant redouté ne tant cremu,  
Biax fix, com vostre peres fu  
En toutes les illes de mer." (416-19)

This is simply an emotional intensification of the weeping maiden's description of the wealth of the 'Riche Roi Pescheor' (3495).

In addition, when Perceval's mother is speaking of her husband she mentions how he was wounded:

"Vostre peres, si nel savez,  
Fu parmi la jambe navrez." (436-37)

A similarity is obvious when his cousin is telling him of the Fisher King's wound.

"Qu'il fu ferus d'un gavelot  
Parmi les quisses ambesdeus" (3512-13)

Finally, the young Perceval, we know, in the early part of the poem sought his delight in hurling his javelins, as he rode his hunter through the forest. His cousin again explains that the Fisher King,

though now unable to hunt and shoot, takes delight in sending out archers and hunters in his stead:

"Ne puet chacier ne riverer,  
Mais il a ses rivereors,  
Ses archiers et ses veneors,  
Qui vont en ses forés berser." (3524-27).

Surely, for Perceval, whose religious instruction is far from complete, this is the kind of life after death which if he thought about it, he would imagine for his father. As Fowler says:

The fisher king's way of "life" is precisely what we could expect Perceval to imagine as a setting for the memory of his father conjured up by his mother's words.<sup>62</sup>

This image is certainly in accord with the deep psychological insight with which Perceval is consistently portrayed.

We may, however, wonder why Perceval's father, rather than his mother, materialised after Perceval's prayer. Fowler makes the important point that Perceval does not see his mother at the Grail Castle because he does not yet know that she is dead, and he therefore does not expect to see her. But she is present through her influence:

... everything that Perceval does see in the grail castle, down to the very least detail, will be a direct projection of "what his mother told him"<sup>63</sup>.

Since he left Gornemant, Perceval has shown an increasing, overriding desire to see his mother. Now, in the vision of the Grail, in its beauty, its light and its mystery, there is presented the very essence of his mother's instructions. The theme of her elementary teaching was the beauty of God (145) and charity towards both God and neighbour (534-40; 592-94). We have understood the Grail to be the Eucharist, or the love of Christ offered visibly before him in a supreme gift of His charity, namely the grace offered through the Blessed Sacrament and distributed through the Church which is here symbolised by the maiden who carries the Grail (3220-23).

The lance which precedes the Grail, though undoubtedly a composite symbol, is often identified with the lance of Longinus

who pierced the side of Christ. But it could also represent chivalry, the symbol of Perceval's father, and as such, it underlines the necessity of being prepared to shed blood in the cause of maintaining Christian principles.

Whereas this scene has sometimes been seen as a choice offered to Perceval between knightly prowess and Christian charity as conflicting forces,<sup>64</sup> it can also teach that prowess and charity have a reciprocal function. For, just as husband and wife are considered to be incomplete, one without the other, and this, surely, would be true for Perceval's parents, so the ideal for the truly Christian knight, exacted that prowess and charity be integrated.

The signs of hope which were evident in the Other World adventures in Chrétien's other romances are present here. Perceval has the vocation and the potential to be a deliverer, to restore life and to impose order upon chaos as our other knights have done. The Hideous Maiden later reminds him of the good that he could have done:

"A mal eür tu [te] teüsses,  
 Que se tu demande l'eüsses,  
 Li riches rois, qui or s'esmaie,  
 Fust ja toz garis de sa plaie  
 Et si tenist sa terre en pais,  
 Dont il ne tendra point jamais." (4669-74).

This was the kind of order which was restored to society by Erec, Yvain and Lancelot. But as yet, Perceval lacks wisdom and discernment, and without these, he cannot hope to understand or interpret this experience.

#### OTHER WORLD ADVENTURES.

The superficial differences between Celtic myth and Classical legend are, inevitably, considerable, and this has been seen in the heroes' confrontation with Other World forces. The ancient epics are continually haunted by suffering and death and both Homer and Vergil dwell on poignant scenes portraying the death of parents and other loved ones. Their principal heroes, therefore, experience

a profound need to communicate, somehow, with their deceased kinsfolk. But although Chrétien's heroes experience suffering and sometimes apparent death, there is little said about real death. In fact, if we exclude the death of Esclados and its effect on Laudine (Yvain, 1150-65), we can say, with C. Martineau-Génieys, that Chrétien's heroic characters do not die.<sup>65</sup> Our medieval heroes, therefore, do not experience the same need to visit parents and other loved ones in an Other World. Furthermore, apart from Perceval, our medieval knights, who resemble chevaliers errants without strong family ties, appear to live, for the most part, independently of parents, and to have no need to visit them in the Other World.

Nor are we to see any direct revelation concerning rewards and punishments in our medieval Other World journeys, for there is no place for such doctrine here. The interest is, rather, upon the presence and the enslaving power of evil: selfish love, lust, injustice, mauvestié. Besides, we are now concerned with a society which is permeated by firm Christian beliefs. Although the physical appearance of the Other World, as Chrétien's heroes experience it, has more in common with the Celtic Other World and the accompanying manifestations of the merveilleux, our heroes' actions imply belief in life after death.<sup>66</sup> Joy and confidence are shown as they undertake these mysterious encounters and the accompanying risks, and greater joy still, as they bestow new life upon those who are oppressed by evil. The author of Eneas, however, combines Vergil's account of Aeneas' descent to the Underworld with a contemporary interest in the merveilleux and contemporary belief about rewards and punishments, and thus he provides a fitting link between the two groups of heroes.

The classical epics reflect the old notion of exchanging a life in the hope of obtaining a favour from the King of the Underworld. Although this notion is discernible in the case of Lancelot, Chrétien's characters, in general prepare to lay down their own lives in order to eradicate evil, destructive forces. This

happens, apart from Perceval's expedition to the Grail Castle, only when they have fully achieved their potential as both knights and Christians, that is, when they have completed their journey of renewal and attained the necessary integration of their qualities. Thus, when characters like Erec, Yvain and Lancelot confront a force of the Other World, they do not experience the 'green fear' shown by Odysseus. Rather, they appear to be in control of the situation, with the result that they are able to benefit people in great need. For these heroes, the Other World adventure is the supreme triumph, for to overcome a supernatural force is an ultimate achievement for the hero.

Odysseus and Aeneas need to go on a specified journey in order to arrive at their Other World. A sense of awe and mystery and alienation from the familiar world surrounds the beginning of the three epic Other World adventures. All Chrétien's heroes arrive at their Other World encounters almost casually in the course of their journeys, so that the Other World appears to merge into the real world. This merging of the two worlds is a typically Celtic characteristic. In Chrétien's romances, this characteristic is further reinforced by the author's tendency to humanise the strange forces whom the hero meets. Thus, in a sense, Chrétien's heroes 'rationalise' the supernatural.<sup>61</sup> The epic heroes all undergo a significant change within themselves during their Other World experiences, as a result of new knowledge and renewed confidence. Eneas, too, has experienced a time of enlightenment. But for Chrétien's heroes, apart from Perceval, there does not need to be any obvious enlightenment as a result of these experiences, for they have all grown in self-knowledge in the course of their journeys.

There are several obvious similarities in the external aspects of landscape which precede these adventures, including running water, a castle, towers, darkness, a forest. And there are significant similarities to designate the hero. He is always a chosen character who is distinguished beyond his fellows, for this

is an adventure which few can undertake successfully: Achilles himself is the force to be appeased, Odysseus is sent because he will be the only one able to survive the difficult passage back to Ithaca, Aeneas claims it as his right because of his ancestry and his destiny: "... et mi genus ab Iove summo." (Aeneid VI, 123). Erec is the only one of many unfortunate candidates who actually can restore Joy to the Court, just as Yvain is the only one who can free the captives from Pesme Aventure. If Lancelot was recognised by the monk at the cemetery to be a chosen figure, his entry into Badoine and his eventual defeat of Meleagant confirm this. Perceval, too, is designated at the Grail Castle, to be a chosen character, but he is not yet aware of his powers. Finally, all these Other World adventures have similarities in their results, namely in the signs of victory gained through suffering: knowledge, joy, hope and above all, peace.

#### CONCLUSION.

The self-assertive heroic force which was discussed early in this study has been evident in many facets of our heroes' experiences. But perhaps their most significant confrontation has been with the forces of evil and death, for it is here that the heroes have needed not only their own exceptional qualities, but also the distinction of their calling and the benefits of their experience. The heroes confront these forces alone or at least, without help from their fellow-warriors, for they are facing powers which are too strong for all except specially chosen characters.

The early epic heroes undertook this encounter out of necessity: Achilles because he himself had to be supplicated by Priam, Odysseus, out of obedience to Circe's instructions and Aeneas, because he was instructed by his father. The medieval Eneas follows this pattern. The results of these experiences are that the hero comes to terms with himself and his situation. When the interview with King Priam is over, Achilles, although profoundly saddened and bereft, is as reason-

able as he was at the beginning of the epic, and a good deal more peaceful. Odysseus leaves the Other World knowing that he will achieve his homecoming and Aeneas is confirmed in his vocation. Thus, for these early heroes, there is a need to find out about themselves and their situation and, in spite of the understandable fear and profound suffering that ~~are~~ entailed, they are required to journey beyond their known world in order to do so.

The medieval heroes tend to undertake these adventures out of curiosity and out of adherence to a costume which is often associated with a major hospitality episode. This is frequently the linking point of an encounter with Other World forces. The heroes now apply the lessons which they have learnt on their journeys and publicly proclaim that, in spite of the subdued, unobtrusive presentation at the beginning of the romances, they are capable not only of fighting their own evil tendencies, but also, of overcoming those characters who personify evil and the supernatural. This, surely, is the mark of Christian knights who are seeking a perfect integration of their qualities. Erec symbolically defeats the very evil with which his marriage has been threatened; Yvain despatches the netuns who represent a distortion of knightly principles; Lancelot proves that he is superior to Meleagant who personifies so many evils. These Christian heroes have shown, furthermore, that the ultimate evil is not death, so much as distorted, false values.

As the Other World adventures signify a meeting of the real, tangible world and the supernatural world, our division into physical, rational and spiritual levels has not been used in this chapter. For apart from Perceval, these heroes either achieve complete integration or 'wholeness' through their Other World adventures, or give visible evidence that they have attained it.

Notes to Chapter 5.

1. James Frazer discusses this subject thoroughly in the chapter entitled 'Attis and Osiris' in The Golden Bough, vol. 1, part 4, London, 1976, pp. 223-84.
2. Gilgamesh, p. 100.
3. Ibid., pp. 106-07.
4. Republic, X̄, 6146-6216.
5. De Republica, Vī, IX̄ - XXI.
6. See supra, pp. 165-66; 191; 199.
7. Clark, Catabasis, pp. 13 and 53.
8. For the merveilleux as such, see L. Carasso-Bulow, The Merveilleux in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances, Geneva, 1976; D. Poirion Le Merveilleux dans la littérature française du moyen âge, Paris, 1982; P. Ménard, 'Chrétien de Troyes et le merveilleux', Europe, 642, October, 1982. pp. 53-60.
9. See supra, pp. 116-17.
10. This is understood as the embassy in Book IX̄.
11. Whitman, Homer and the Heroic Tradition, p. 217. Nethercut ('The Epic Journey of Achilles', p. 9) develops this point of view which is also noted by Clark (Catabasis, p. 136, n.45.).
12. Funk and Wagnall, Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend, New York, 1972, p. 493.
13. Stith Thompson, Motif Index of Folk Lore, Bloomington, 1975, F. 141.1, vol. 3, p. 24.
14. These include: Tityos (576-81), Tantalus (582-92), Sisyphos (593-600).
15. Achilles' lamentation, for example, is well known. It is cited here in Lattimore's translation:  
"O shining Odysseus, never try to console me for  
dying.  
I would rather follow the plow as thrall to another  
man, one with no land allotted him and not much to  
live on,  
than be a king over all the perished dead."  
(Odyssey XI, 488-91).
16. John D. Niles, 'Patterning in the Wandering of Odysseus', Ramus, 7, 1978, pp. 44-60. See p. 54.



17. The Art of Vergil, p. 176.
18. This incident is also included to promote some local colour. The Punta di Miseno is a landmark associated with this funeral.
19. C.P. Segal, 'Aeternum per Saecula Nomen', pt. 1, pp. 630-31; Otis, Virgil, p. 288.
20. The divisions of Hades into Mythological and Philosophical is generally accepted. Some scholars divide further and see a Theological Hades, namely that of rewards and punishments. Frances Norword, for example, discusses how Vergil created the fullest possible measure of aesthetic effect by adopting these divisions. ('The Tripartite Eschatology of Aeneid 6', Classical Philology, 49, 1954, pp. 15-25, See p.18.).
21. L.A. Mackay, 'Three Levels of Meaning in Aeneid 6', T. A.P.A., 86, 1955, pp. 180-189. See p. 185.
22. This preoccupation is seen, as Brooks Otis shows, not only in the Eclogues, but above all, in the Georgics. (Virgil, A Study in Civilised Poetry, pp. 216-17).
23. Howard Patch discusses the literature of visions about this subject (The Other World, New York, 1950, pp. 80-133).
24. PL 77, ed. 384.
25. Patch, The Other World, p. 27. See also J. Le Goff, La Naissance du Purgatoire, Paris, 1981, pp. 246-73.
26. Procopius wrote of the island of 'Brittia', how it was regarded as an abode of death and of the journey made by those who were summoned, (History of the Wars tr. Dewing) vol. V, VIII, xx, 48-56. Loeb, London-Cambridge (Mass.) 1954.
27. Le Merveilleux dans la littérature française, p.43.
28. The poet reiterates words which signify descent: c'est l'enfernal descendant' (2376), 'Lajus descendent tuit li mort' (2379), 'Quant an enfer devons descendre' (2385).
29. Supra, p. 242. See also, Fletcher, Commentary on Aeneid VI, Oxford, 1948, pp. 50-52.
30. This type of portrait which describes ideally ugly characters is discussed by Colby, The Portrait in Twelfth Century French Literature, pp. 170-73.
31. D.D.R. Owen has noted that to a Frenchman of this period, marriage was a bond that not even death could break (The Vision of Hell, Edinburgh, 1970, p. 144).

32. R.S. Loomis notes that animals of the Other World were frequently considered to be white. He also recalls the early Breton conte in which it is narrated: '... a fay offers her love on condition that the hero pursue a white stag with the aid of a white hound which she provides; the hero cuts off the stag's head; he is robbed of it; he finally recovers it and receives the fay's love as his reward.' (Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 68-70). It is undoubtedly a modified version of this conte that provides the inspiration for the opening scenes of Erec.
33. Ibid., pp. 99-100.
34. Loomis, Arthurian Tradition, pp. 168-83
35. The Merveilleux in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances, p. 52.
36. Godefroi (Dictionnaire, t.5, p. 498) defines nigromance as necromancie which, according to Robert is 'Science occulte qui prétend évoquer les morts pour obtenir des révélations de tous ordres, particulièrement sur l'avenir.' (Dictionnaire, t.4, p. 596).
37. For a fuller discussion of such gardens, see Ernesta Caldarini, 'Un lieu du roman médiéval: le verger', Cahiers de l'association internationale des études françaises, No. 34, mai 1982, pp. 7-23.
38. See supra, pp. 192-93.
39. See supra, p. 248.
40. The ring of invisibility has well-known antecedents in folklore. In classical literature, Cicero (De Officiis, 111; 9) related the story of the ring of Gyges. Benoît de Sainte-Maure (Le Roman de Troie, 1690-93) described a similar ring which was given by Medea to Jason.
41. Loomis (Arthurian Tradition pp. 301-08) has discussed Laudine's possible origins as fairy mistress. A parallel is seen in Marie de France's Lanval. See also Poirion, Le Merveilleux dans la littérature française du moyen âge, pp. 73-75.
42. See supra, p. 251.
43. For ideals of fairness in Chrétien's romances, see Colby. The Portrait in Twelfth Century French Literature, pp. 37; 46-47; 57-59, Carasso-Bulow, The Merveilleux in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances, p. 89.
44. Arthurian Tradition, pp. 323-24.

45. The Merveilleux in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances, p. 89.
46. See Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 137-138, for the possible origins of this Other World, including the function of the cart as 'la charrette de la mort' (p. 137) and the connection of the dwarf with the kingdom of the dead (p. 138). See also Poirion, Le Merveilleux dans la littérature française du moyen âge, p. 74; P. Ménard, 'Chrétien de Troyes et le merveilleux', p. 56.
47. Arthurian Tradition, p. 220.
48. Ibid., p. 222.
49. See Chrétien de Troyes, p. 147.
50. Joan B. Williamson sees Lancelot's and Queen Guinevere's act of love more as an amplification of an ancient custom of the land of Logres and outside any Christian code of morality ('Suicide and Adultery in Le Chevalier de la charrete', Mélanges Jeanne Lods du Moyen Age au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1978, t. 1. pp. 571-87). See infra, pp. 350-52. M. Burrell sees this act as adultery and therefore high treason, but to be expected in the land of Gorre where normal courtly values are inverted (From Cliges to Le Chevalier de la charrete, p. 16).
51. Loomis has examined Meleagant's possible connections with the Celtic seasonal myth whereby the kings of Winter and Summer struggle for the possession of a vegetation goddess. (Arthurian Tradition, pp. 214-18; 264-66).
52. See supra, p. 252.
53. See supra, p. 255.
54. See supra, pp. 210-11.
55. The Vision of Hell, pp. 202-03.
56. Topsfield, Chrétien de Troyes, p. 146.
57. Ibid.
58. Frappier is only one of many scholars who have come to this conclusion. (Chrétien de Troyes et le mythe du Graal, pp. 111-12.)
59. On this point, David Fowler (Prowess and Charity in the 'Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 23-34), follows the work of Pauphilet (Le legs du moyen âge, pp. 174-77) and Loomis, Arthurian Tradition, pp. 347-55; 371-73).
60. The effect of Perceval's failure to ask the 'Unspelling Question has already been discussed. See supra, pp. 97-98.

61. Fowler, Prowess and Charity, p. 30. Loomis, (Arthurian Tradition, p. 372) through discussing the fusion of two themes, the Feud or Vengeance Quest and the Unspelling Quest, comes to a similar conclusion.
62. Ibid., p. 31.
63. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
64. Ibid.
65. 'Chrétien a donné vie à un monde où l'on ne meurt pas,' (Le Thème de la mort dans la poésie française, Paris, 1978, p. 39.)
66. Death could hardly be regarded as the utmost evil, in a predominantly Christian society. Saint Bernard, for example, wrote: 'quippe cuius mors ut praesentis est exitus vitae, introitus melioris. Bona mors, si peccato moriaris ut justitiae vivas.' (Epistola, CV, PL 182, col. 240-41.) Similarly, Alan of Lille: 'Noli considerare quantum vivas, sed quomodo. Noli ut diu vivas curandum est, sed ut satis bene ... Longa est vita si plena est; impletur autem animus, cum se virtutibus plenum reddit, et a propria sui potestate non resilit. Quid prodest illi si octaginta annos exegerit cum torpore inertiae? Non vixit iste, sed in vita moratus est, nec sero mortuus est, sed diu.' (Summa de Arte Praedicatoria, PL 210, col. 134).
67. For further discussion of this 'rationalising' tendency in Chrétien, see Carasso-Bulow, The Merveilleux in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances, pp. 80-85.

Chapter 6.Suffering.INTRODUCTION.

Suffering is an inevitable part of human experience. Through it, man learns about himself, his strengths and his weaknesses. For it is only when he has been tested through suffering that he can discern the extent of his powers of endurance. Through suffering, too, he can grow in his awareness and understanding of other people and consequently grow in compassion.

Of the Greek words for suffering, ἄλγος, 'pain, grief, distress' <sup>1</sup>, πάθος 'distress,' <sup>2</sup> together with other words derived from πασχω, 'I suffer,' are nearest to the meaning of suffering that will be discussed in this chapter. Although in Homer πασχω originally meant 'to experience something which comes from without and which has to be endured,' <sup>3</sup> it frequently means 'to suffer evil, to suffer misfortune and blows of Fate.' <sup>4</sup> It is the term used when the ancient Greek or Hellenistic world wants to discuss the problem of suffering. In addition, the word ἰσχυρῶς which originally meant 'I endure,' <sup>5</sup> defines the quality of man's response to suffering. It is connected with the epithet πολυίπας 'much enduring' which is frequently used of Odysseus.

At a comparatively early stage of Greek thought, it was accepted that suffering was a means of increasing experience and of giving a fuller insight into life. <sup>6</sup> It was considered to give a deeper view of human existence in its totality. In fact, certain authors a clear connection between πάθηματα, 'things endured' and μαθήματα, 'things learned.' <sup>7</sup> Suffering was however, not prized for its own sake, but rather, accepted because of the lessons which it could teach. Many aspects of the problem of suffering were discussed by the Stoics, <sup>8</sup> who tended to consider suffering not so much an evil in itself as a means of eliciting courage and the ability to

endure. According to Cicero, there are two parts to this endurance: the negative aspect consists in despising fortune and its more painful onslaughts; the more positive aspect consists in undertaking great enterprises and despising any consequent pain.<sup>9</sup> The man of courage detaches himself from fortune's gifts, for he wisely knows that the same fortune which dispenses gifts may also recall them. For the Stoics, the capacity for bearing pain without flinching is the primary test of virtue.

In the Old Testament, prophets and wise men considered the 'mystery' of suffering (Psalm 73:17) and recognised the purifying value of suffering, like that of fire which purifies metal in the crucible (Jeremiah, 9:6). Although suffering was frequently a sign of God's displeasure, the Book of Jeremiah, on the other hand, depicts, God as the potter who crushes, bends and re-shapes his clay in order that a new and finer image may emerge:

So I went down to the potter's house; and there he was, working at the wheel. And whenever the vessel he was making came out wrong, as happens with the clay handled by potters, he would start afresh and work it into another vessel, as potters do ... - it is Yahweh who speaks. Yes, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so you are mine, House of Israel. (Jeremiah, 18: 3-7)

Furthermore, suffering is a high test which God reserves for his chosen servants: Abraham (Genesis 22,) Job (Book of Job, 1:11). Suffering has an intercessory or redemptive value. This value appears most clearly in the 'Suffering Servant' of Isaiah (52:14 sq.). Punished for crimes of which he is innocent, the servant is transformed into a 'thing despised and rejected by men' (Isaiah 53:3). But through his suffering, the servant is to 'justify many, taking their faults on himself.' (Isaiah 53:11).

But in the New Testament times, a new dimension was given to the notion of suffering. This is exemplified in a particularly significant passage in Saint Luke's Gospel, when the disciples on the road to Emmaus are being instructed by their strange companion who says:

Nonne haec oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare in gloriam suam? (Luke, XXIV; 26).

This connection between suffering and subsequent glory is to be found frequently in later spiritual writers, beginning with Saint Paul who insists:

Existimo enim quod non sunt condignae passiones huius  
temporis ad futuram gloriam, quae revelabitur in nobis.  
(Romans VIII, 18).

He bases this hope on the knowledge of the Resurrection of Christ and of man's share in his Sonship:

Si autem filii, et heredes: heredes quidem Dei, coheredes  
autem Christi: si tamen compatimur, ut et conglorificemur.  
(Romans, VIII, 17).

Saint Peter, too, hoping in the Resurrection, sees suffering as a process by which man is tested and his faith ultimately strengthened:

In quo exultabitis, modicum nunc si oportet contristari  
in variis tentationibus: ut probatio vestrae fidei multo  
pretiosior auro (quod per ignem probatur) inveniatur in  
laudem, et gloriam, et honorem in revelatione Iesu Christi.  
(Epistle I, 6-8).

Suffering can be expected to be a part of the hero's quest. Through their encounters in battle and during their long, painful journeys, the selected heroes frequently experience harsh physical ordeals. A rational dimension is added to suffering when the heroes are forced into a situation which they do not understand or when they temporarily lose their reason. But our chief concern will be with sufferings of a spiritual kind. The heroes recognise not only the faults of which they are capable, but also, the pain and destruction which they have caused in others and consequently, feel guilt. They experience, too, the pain of conflict and loss. The heroes are usually able to share their sufferings with either a companion of the journey, a benign relative or some other confidant. These people manifest in a very real way, the Greek notion of *συμπάθειν* 'suffering with,' 'sympathy'<sup>10</sup>. and, in a sense, they absorb and help to resolve the heroes' sufferings. Although our heroes sometimes show anger and despair in the face of suffering, there is, eventually, acceptance, resignation, the learning of harsh lessons which ultimately lead to change and growth. Thus, the hero is not only the man who is designated as superior to his fellows; he is also the man who can endure.

The nature and the causes of our heroes' sufferings will now be discussed in turn, together with the attitude which is shown in the face of adversity. We shall also examine the way in which these sufferings are shared by others and the lessons which are ultimately learned. There will also, finally, be some discussion of the ways in which our heroes' sufferings are resolved.

### ACHILLES.

The pages of the Iliad are continually haunted by suffering and death, and the author's sense of πάθος is shown in many reiterated themes. For example, there are frequent references to the sadness of dying away from one's native land. There is a sensitive compassion shown for young men who are slain at the height of their youthful promise, and for the grief of their parents. And at times, some of the most tense and gruesome battle scenes gain in pathos by being juxtaposed with glimpses of domestic peace.

Grievous suffering is associated with Achilles in particular. Within the first two lines of the epic, the poet introduces the μύρια ἄλγεα, the 'countless woes' which the hero's wrath has inflicted upon the Achaeans. These woes are the direct result of Achilles' oath (Iliad I, 239-44) and of Thetis' prayer to Zeus on her son's behalf (I, 506-11). But here, as elsewhere, Homer reveals that the gods are to blame for these woes, for Apollo is the true cause of the strife between Agamemnon and Achilles (I, 9). If, however, the other Achaeans are thrown into despair and suffer heavy losses without their most outstanding warrior, Achilles' own suffering is far more profound. He is seen early in the epic, confiding to his mother about his grief at his present loss of honour (I, 365-42). But other losses follow. As he withdraws his services, Achilles loses the support of all his friends except Patroclus and later, through his own fault, he loses Patroclus too.

Achilles also experiences conflict. For he is constantly



torn between two alternatives, namely, that of yielding to his hurt pride and remaining aloof from battle, or of helping the society which he has already served so splendidly. He is seen again and again, justifying his withdrawal by recalling almost too emphatically the help he has given to his king (I, 152-3; I, 165-68; IX, 323-27), and in these repeated protests, he seems to be trying to convince himself as well as his audience, of the righteousness of his point of view. An added source of Achilles' sufferings is, therefore, not only the dishonour which has been done to him, but also, the fact that he has had to act in a way which is incompatible with his generous heroic inclination and with his strong affection for his community.

The climax of Achilles' suffering is, however, the death of Patroclus. For, until now, Patroclus has absorbed much of Achilles' pain and, by the armour he wears, represents Achilles' 'other self.' The hero's anguish is intensified by the knowledge that he has allowed Patroclus to go into battle (XV111, 98-104). Not only does the hero prostrate himself in the dust as he experiences dark despair and grief (XV111, 22-34); the mourning of Thetis, her Nereids and the other goddesses shows that Achilles' pain is shared by many others.<sup>11</sup> Although he formally laments the uselessness of strife against his fellows (XV111, 101-04), Achilles' pain, after his initial reaction, becomes a preoccupation with destruction which is directed against the Trojans, particularly Hector. His fury transforms him into an awe-inspiring figure as he protects the men who are recovering Patroclus' body (XV111, 205-38), incites the Trojans to panic and exhorts his men to battle with the Trojans (XIX, 21-73). After his furious encounter with the River Scamander which complains that its waters are being defiled by the corpses of Achilles' victims (XXI, 214-21), Achilles enters into the final battle with Hector (XXII, 131-366). There is no sign here of a suffering hero. As he chases his mortal enemy around the walls of Troy, Achilles is likened to the 'lord of battles' (XXII, 132), a 'hawk swooping on a trembling dove' (XXII, 139-40) and a 'dog chasing the fawn of a deer' (XXII, 190). As he is helped by the gods, the epithet *δῖος*, 'lordly', 'godlike' seems, for a time, to have become a reality. But Achilles' pain, here,

is only temporarily numbed. For all his godlike attributes and divine ancestry, Achilles is human and must undergo the crushing of his godlike presence before he can emerge in his real humanity. His heroic brilliance now becomes devoid of meaning as he realises the price of heroism.

For, after the funeral games for Patroclus, Achilles is left alone without companions to support or encourage him. He can find no solace in sleep or in tears (XXIV, 3-13). The violence which he keeps inflicting upon Hector's corpse is an outward expression of his own anguish which he is powerless to assuage without help. The gods have no part in such suffering; only in the fellow-feeling of other human beings can Achilles' pain be resolved. The encounter with Priam provides him with such an experience as he finally yields to the lesson of his sufferings and acknowledges man's futility when he is faced with inevitable pain:

ἄνοχ' εὖ, μηδ' ἀλίσστον ὀδύρεο σὸν κατὰ θυρόν·  
οὐ γάρ τι πρηξείσῃ ἀκαχήμενος υἱὸς ἕηρος  
οὐδέ μιν ἀνστήσεισῃ, πρὶν καὶ κακὸν ἄλλο πάθῃσθα.<sup>2</sup> (XXIV, 549-51).

("Bear up, and do not mourn endlessly in your heart; for you will not gain anything from grieving for your son, and you will not bring him back to life, or you will endure some other sorrow.")

Thus, although suffering is inevitable, it can teach lessons of endurance and understanding, and it can lead to reconciliation. Now, having experienced a profound depth of human suffering, Achilles is able to come to terms with it not by anger, but by manifesting an extraordinary degree of compassion to a mortal enemy.

### ODYSSEUS.

Suffering is an essential feature of the Odyssey. In the first five lines of the epic, we read that Odysseus is a hero who:

πολλὰ δ' ὄ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὄν κατὰ θυρόν,  
ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων.  
(Odyssey, I, 4-5).

(suffered many pains in his spirit on the wide sea,  
as he struggled for his own life and for the homecoming of  
his companions.)

He has endured shipwrecks, storms and strange, man-destroying monsters. His intelligence and his cunning have been tested in the decisions which he has been forced to make. But above all, he has known the pain of isolation from his contemporaries and the despair of ever regaining his home. Thus, if Odysseus has suffered physically, it is his spirit, especially, which is afflicted.

From the council of the gods we learn that Odysseus, like all humans who suffer misfortune has, to a certain extent, brought his sorrows upon himself. For, in spite of his sense of duty towards the gods (I, 48-67), Odysseus is still persecuted by Poseidon as a punishment for blinding the Cyclops (I, 68-69). Odysseus is caught up, therefore, in a series of events for which he is responsible, but which he is powerless to control.

There are many visible indications that Odysseus is a man who has suffered. When he first appears in the epic, he is seen weeping for his isolation (V, 83-84). At the palace of King Alcinous, while Demodocus is singing of the fall of Troy, Odysseus frequently weeps, sighs and groans until, finally, he is invited to relate his tale. Alcinous says:

ἔϊπε δ' ὅ τι κλαίεις καὶ οὐρύραϊ ἔνδοθι θυμῷ  
Ἀργείων Δαναῶν ἰδ' Ἰλίου οἴτον ἀκούων. (VI111, 577-78).

("Tell me why you weep and make lamentation in your heart as you hear of the Argives and Danaans and the fate of Ilium".)

And here, a positive note is introduced as we are told that the gods caused so much destruction and suffering for the sake of the bards who were to come:

τὸν δὲ θεοὶ μὲν τεύξαν, ἐπεκλώσαντο δ' ὄλεθρον  
ἀνθρώποις, ἵνα ἦσι καὶ ἔσομένοισιν ἀοιδή. (VI111, 579-80)

("The gods brought this about, and spun the destruction of peoples, for the sake of singing men hereafter".)

For suffering inspires song and song gives everlasting pleasure to the listener who also sympathises with the anguish which he has learnt.

This too, is an instance of συμπαιθεῖα ὄλων.<sup>12</sup>

But if Odysseus is completely bereft of his companions during the latter part of his journey, he is distinguished especially by his powers of endurance. The epithet, πολύτιλας, 'much enduring' is used of him frequently.<sup>13</sup> In spite of his pain and anguish, he continues resolutely towards his goal and is always prepared to learn from suffering and to derive courage from the recollection of former lessons. When he is back at Ithaca, for example, he states cryptically to the maid servants:

ἄυτάρ ἐγὼ τούτοισι φάος πάντεσσι παρέξω.  
 ἢν περ γάρ κ' ἐθέλωσιν εὐθρονον ἠὲ μίμνεμ,  
 οὐ τί με νικήσουσι πολυτλήμων δὲ μάλ' εἰμί. (XVIII, 317-19).

("I myself will provide a light for all these people.  
 Even if they wish to keep on until high-throned Dawn,  
 they will not wear me out; for I am very enduring.")

This aspect of Odysseus' suffering is seen most of all when he is deliberating how to treat the suitors:

ἴετλαθι δῆ, κραδίη· καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης,  
 ἡματι τῷ ὅτε μοι μένος ἄσχετος ἦσθις Κύκλωψ  
 ἰφθίμους ἑτάρους· σὺ δ' ἐτόλμας, δόρα σε μῆτις  
 ἐξάγαγ' ἐξ ἄντροιο δειόμενον θανέεσθαι. (XX, 18-21).

("Endure, my heart; you have had worse than this to suffer  
 on the day on which the irrepressible Cyclops ate my strong  
 companions; but you endured it until intelligence helped  
 you out of the cave, though you expected to perish.")

For the memory of former trials endows him with the courage he needs now. Odysseus' quest has exacted a heavy price in the hero's suffering. But it is a suffering which has attracted the interest and sympathy of both gods and men, and it has taught valuable lessons to the hero.

### AENEAS.

The opening scene of the Aeneid introduces several features of Aeneas' sufferings. We learn how he has suffered (Aeneid, I, 3). and we see that suffering is an essential part of the hero's vocation:

multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem  
 inferretque deos Latio. (I, 5-6).

Aeneas' woes are caused through fate, or the will of Jupiter who has

demanded this journey, and they are intensified by Juno's opposition. The insertion of this fact early in the work is significant:

Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso  
 quidve dolens regina deum tot volvere casus  
 insignem pietate virum, tot adire labores  
 impulerit. (I, 8-11)

for it shows that Juno is to harrass Aeneas constantly and to cause him considerable suffering. But Aeneas does not suffer entirely as an individual; he also shares the woes which have been inflicted upon the Trojans as a result of Juno's anger (I, 29-33). At the same time, he suffers with other people, and he has already been seen to suppress his own fears in order to bring comfort to his men. The fact that, like Odysseus, he can draw comfort from the memory of former woes does little to mitigate the anguish he feels (I, 208-09). And as he checks his pain for the sake of his men, Aeneas continues with his appointed task as his men look for sustenance and take stock of their losses (I, 210-22).

Unlike Achilles and Odysseus, Aeneas does not directly cause his own suffering through his fault. Rather, he is the victim of circumstances beyond his control. The notion of conflict is introduced in the storm at sea which symbolises the disorder and destruction brought about by Juno's wrath, the cause of so much suffering in this epic. Aeneas, in his turn, is caught up in the conflict between his pietas towards the will of the gods as he understands it, and his excessive love for his native land. Aeneas' innate pietas is threatened further by Juno who, by her furor, tries to deter the Trojans from their goal, and thus hinder the fulfilment of the will of Jupiter. These conflicts are recalled again and again in the narrative of Books II and III, where Aeneas' love and longing for the home he has lost are shown against his fear, bewilderment and frustration, so that there is a conflict, also, between past and present. Although in the second half of the epic, Aeneas knows what he might expect.

"omnia praecepti atque animo mecum ante peregi." (VI, 105).  
 this knowledge does little to alleviate the pain which he must undergo.

Much of Aeneas' suffering is concerned with loss. This is symbolised by the treasures which have been lost in the storm (I, 113-114), and it is evident in his constant longing for Troy. Indeed, in the earlier scenes of the epic, there are indications that death for the sake of Troy is preferable to living through the anguish of a journey through unknown dangers for the sake of a new land. He addresses the fiercest of the Greek warriors as he soliloquises:

... "O Danaum fortissime gentis  
Tydide! mene Iliacis occumbere campis  
non potuisse tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra,  
saevus ubi Aeacidae telo iacet Hector, ubi ingens  
Sarpedon, ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis  
scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora voluit!" (I, 96-101).

After his hesitation at Troy, Aeneas proceeds painfully away from his home and from the kind of death which, as a loyal Trojan, he would have wished, 'ante ora patrum' (I, 95).

In Book 11, suffering and grief and subsequent anger cause Aeneas to act irrationally, for he is so distraught at the scene of the slaughter of Priam (11, 526-58), that he is tempted to slay Helen (11, 575-88) and is restrained only by his mother's pleading:

"nate, quis indomitas tantus dolor excitat iras?  
quid furis? aut quoniam nostri tibi cura recessit?"  
(11, 594-95).

But this incident marks the beginning of Aeneas' resignation to his destiny and he prepares to leave his city (11, 634-49). Thus, suffering is resolved by prompt action. Aeneas must, however, endure further losses, for we learn how he loses his wife, Creusa, for whom he searches in vain:

"implevi clamore vias, maestusque Creusam  
nequiquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque vocavi." (11, 769-70).

Yet he is checked by Creusa's ghost who reminds him:

"... nec te comitem hinc portare Creusam  
fas, aut ille sinit superi regnator Olympi." (11, 778-79).

No matter how often he is overcome by such sorrow, Aeneas shows his heroism and his resignation to the will of the gods by mastering his inner torment. At Buthrotum, for example, he explains his situation to Andromache:

"vivo equidem vitamque extrema per omnia duco." (111, 315).

Later, his farewell to Andromache and Helenus recalls his pain at leaving the past, and his apprehension for the future (III, 493-97). Similarly, although he loses his self-esteem when he recognises his fault at Carthage, Aeneas is prompt in obeying Mercury's command:

Dixerat. ille Iovis monitis immota tenebat  
lumina et obnixus curam sub corde premebat. (IV, 331-32).

Here, the magnitude of his effort is noted as, in spite of his anguish for Dido, he keeps his grief subordinate to the known will of the gods and, once more, he continues steadfastly with his task.

But the Dido episode adds a new dimension to Aeneas' suffering. At different times, Achilles and Odysseus have been seen lamenting their misfortunes and grieving for their own sake. Aeneas' greatest suffering, on the other hand, is for others. As Pöschl puts it:

The grief that Aeneas bears and conquers is ...  
less sorrow for his own lost or denied happiness  
than sympathy and compassion for others who must  
suffer bitterly for the sake of the command laid  
on him by destiny.<sup>14</sup>

There is no question here of renunciation of Dido's love but rather, of painful response to the gods' prohibition. The portrayal of Aeneas' grief at Pallas' death expresses, similarly, not pity for himself but compassion for the young man and for his father (XI, 29-58). This attitude bears out Pöschl's statement concerning Aeneas' suffering:

A new humanity announcing the Christian philosophy bursts forth from him. He prefigures the Christian hero, whose heart remains gentle through struggle and sorrow and beats in secret sympathy with all suffering creatures.<sup>15</sup>

This humanity extends furthermore to enemies slain in battle and is evident, in particular, in Aeneas' conflict before striking the death-blow to Turnus (XII, 938-49).

For Aeneas, then, suffering is inevitable and is accepted with resignation rather than despondency. It is not only an essential part of the hero's vocation; it is also the price paid by all those individuals who, as helpers or obstacles, are associated with the

founding of Rome. The compassion which it elicits from the hero is an expression of Vergil's own cry:

sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt. (I, 462).

As such, it reflects both the Greek συμπάθειά ὀλῶν and anticipates the Christian notion of compassion for suffering mankind.

### THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE.

Many different aspects of suffering occur in medieval literature. It is associated with self-imposed penance, as in La Vie de Saint Alexis where, by his rigorous asceticism and apparent exile from his loved ones, Alexis causes intense suffering to his would-be bride and his parents.<sup>16</sup> In La Chanson de Roland, the glorification of Christian warfare is won only at the cost of the suffering experienced by the emperor, the knights and the relatives of the warriors slain at Roncevaux.<sup>17</sup> But in these instances there is unabated grief. In the romans courtois, as will be exemplified in Chrétien's romances, suffering tends to lead towards joy. But let us first note some relevant attitudes towards suffering.

The early Christians had accepted suffering with joy. In the Acts of the Apostles, for example, the apostles at Jerusalem rejoiced that they were found worthy to suffer for the name of Christ:

Et illi quidem ibant gaudentes a conspectu concilii,  
quoniam digni habiti sunt pro nomine Jesu  
contumeliam pati. (Acts, V: 41).

Saint Paul's exhortations to show joy and patience in the midst of suffering are numerous. True followers of Christ should be:

'Spe gaudentes: In tribulatione patientes.' (Romans, XII: 12).

And when teaching about the reliance which the Christian ought to place on God, Saint Paul reminds his followers:

Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico gaudete.  
Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus: Dominus  
prope est. Nihil solliciti sitis. (Philippians, IV: 4-6).

For if he relies on God rather than on his own powers, the Christian is, in a sense, liberated from his own fears and is able to direct his life



more freely towards spiritual goals. Joyful acceptance of suffering is, therefore, a characteristic of a true Christian:

Qui nunc gaudeo in passionibus pro vobis, et adimpleo ea, quae desunt passionum Christi, in carne mea pro corpore eius, quod est Ecclesia. (Colossians, I: 24-25).

Saint Paul, following Stoic tradition, exhorts his followers to practise patience in suffering, for suffering brings growth and the ability to endure:

Non solum autem, sed et gloriamur in tribulationibus: scientes quod tribulatio patientiam operatur: patientia autem probationem, probatio vero spem: spes autem non confundit, quia charitas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis. (Romans, V: 3-6).

In the twelfth century Richard of Saint-Victor maintains the same positive attitude towards suffering. He writes of the man who suffers:

Ad beatitudinem ergo animi spectat, quidquid pro Dei amore caro durum tolerat. Unde enim corpus atteritur, conscientia exhilaratur.<sup>18</sup>

By using his suffering wisely, man learns to distinguish between true and false joys, to overcome evil and to choose the good.

Richard of Saint-Victor continues:

Falsam laetitiam Veritas damnabat, cum dicebat: "Vae vobis qui nunc ridetis." (Luc. vi.) Vanam perturbationem extirpabat, cum auditores suos admonebat, dicens: "Nolite timere eos qui occidunt corpus, animam autem non possunt occidere." (Matt. X) Horum autem unum abstinendo superamus, alterum patiendo calcamus.<sup>19</sup>

This is the experience of our heroes. Having learnt of the misery of false joys, they face suffering, not only through self-knowledge and tests in endurance, but also through abstinence and deprivation as they ultimately arrive at true joy.

There are abundant references to Fortune in medieval literature.<sup>20</sup> As her wheel rotates, her gifts alternate between prosperity and adversity, between threats and flatterings. She is sometimes benevolent, sometimes treacherous, but always unpredictable, and no one is free from her caprices. But wisdom teaches

us to use Fortune in such a way that we can accept whatever she has to offer. Boethius, for example, notes the function of Wisdom in the face of Fortune:

¶erum exitus prudentia metitur: eadem<sup>que</sup> in alterutro mutabilitas, nec formidandas fortunae minas, nec exoptandas facit esse blanditias.<sup>21</sup>

Our heroes are all aware of the treachery of Fortune. At times, it will be seen that the verbal expression of grief as the hero suffers a reversal of fortune, coincides with the amelioration of his situation.

The pangs of love have always been associated with suffering, and descriptions of love as physical and mental anguish have appeared in many different genres. In Aeneid IV, for example, Dido's sleeplessness and distress are expressed in symptoms that will become easily recognisable. As all creation sleeps, Dido lies awake:

at non infelix animi Phoenissa, neque umquam  
solvitur in somnos oculisve aut pectore noctem  
accipit: ingeminant curae rursusque resurgens  
saevit amor magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu. (Aeneid IV, 529-32).

Ovid, in particular, described the symptoms of love-pangs in terms which were to be used in later descriptions of love-suffering. In the Heroides, for example, we read of Canace's conflict:

fugerat ore color; macies adduxerat artus;  
sumebant minimos ora coacta cibos;  
nec somni faciles et nox erat annua nobis,  
et gemitum nullo laesa dolore dabam. (XI, 27-30).<sup>22</sup>

A classical example of the symptoms, conflict and agony of love is presented in the Roman de Troie when Diomedes is longing for his lady:

Li fiz Tydeüs n'en a rien:  
Por amor est en tel esveil  
Que ne li prent en lit someil:  
Ne peut dormir n'il n'a l'ueil clos,  
Ne nuit ne jor n'est en repos.  
Sovent pense, sovent sospire.  
Sovent a joie, sovent ire;  
Sovent s'iraist, sovent se haite.  
Amors li a fait tel entraite  
Dont la color li change e mue

E dont par maintes feiz tressue  
 Qu'il nen a chaut ne qu'il nel sent:  
 Tel sont li trait d'Amors sovent. (15002-14) <sup>23</sup>.

Here, we see the sleeplessness, the meditations and sighs, the alternation between joy and pain, the symptoms of fever, the presentation, in short, of love as a sickness and a cause of suffering. Andreas Capellanus opens his treatise on love by the definition: 'Amor est passio quaedam innata procedens ex visione et immoderata cogitatione formae alterius sexus ...' <sup>24</sup>. He then proceeds to explain the fears and anxieties which make love a passio. <sup>25</sup>. The alternation of pain and joy which frequently denotes the presence of love is exemplified in the Eneas during the queen's discourse to Lavine:

se il i a un pou de mal,  
 li biens s'en suist tot par igal.  
 Ris et joie vient de plorer,  
 grant deport vienent de pasmer,  
 baisier vienent de baillier,  
 anbracemenz vient de veillier,  
 grant leece vient de sospir,  
 fresche color vient de palir.  
 El cors s'en suit la granz dolcors  
 qui tost seinne les maus d'Amors; (Eneas, 7959-68).

Love is one of the forms of suffering experienced by our medieval heroes, and the pain which alternates with joy is an essential feature of their growth. <sup>26</sup>.

### ENEAS.

In certain aspects of suffering in the opening of the Roman d'Eneas, there are similarities to Aeneas' sufferings. The gods command a quest which is known to be difficult (36-41). Juno's bitterness at the judgment of Paris (93-97) leads her to make difficulties for the Trojans.

Juno vit Eneas an mer;  
 molt se pena de lui grever,  
 set anz toz plains lo travailla,  
 par plusors mers lo demena;  
 molt anhai tote sa geste. (Eneas, 183-187).

In addition to the physical hardships associated with such a

journey, Eneas also grieves at being deprived of the honour of dying at Troy. The author uses terms to suggest that Eneas' anguish of mind and spirit is more severe than his physical sufferings:

Molt se dementot Eneas,  
 molt se clamot chaitis et las,  
 por ce qu'il eschapa a terre,  
 puis que an mer sofrist tel guerre;  
 miauz volsist estre a Troie ocis  
 o ses paranz, o ses amis,  
 la ou Hector et Priamus  
 furent ocis, contes et dus. (231-38).

Like Aeneas, Eneas tries to allay the fears of his men and speaks optimistically as he explains the reason for suffering:

"Seignor," fait il, "franc chevalier,  
 ne vos devez mie esmaier  
 se vos avez eü peor  
 an ceste mer, mal et dolor;  
 ça avant vos delicterà,  
 quant il vos an remembrera;" (311-16).

In this matter, he reflects both Vergil's philosophy and Christian attitudes towards suffering.<sup>27</sup> The memory of hard times will be a source of joy when prosperity comes. Those who accomplish great deeds must be able to endure hardship as well as enjoy good fortune:

"Huen qui s'esmuet an altre terre  
 por regne et por pai's conquerre,  
 an grant enor ne puet venir,  
 s'il bien et mal ne puet sofrir." (319-22),

Nobody who has not experienced evil, pain and loss will be able to appreciate prosperity when it comes:

"Qui toz tens a sa volanté,  
 n'onques n'a mal espermanté,  
 ce n'est avis, ja ne savra  
 a negun jor que bien sera." (323-26).

Fortune is said to be responsible for the Trojans' difficulties (337-38), even though they are led to their new land by the gods (339-41). But, as the poet observes further on, if Fortune can produce evil, she can also produce good:

Fortune torne en molt po d'ore,  
 tel rit al main qui al soir plore;  
 al soir est laide, al matin bele,  
 si com el torne sa roëlle; (685-88)

Thus, there is hope for more prosperous times, even during the most severe ordeals.

In leaving his native land and in the death of Creusa (1179-84), Eneas suffers losses similar to those of Aeneas. We do not, however, see the same longing for home as in Vergil's version of the story. Rather, as he continues resolutely towards his goal, Eneas sometimes shows a joy which Aeneas never seems to experience. The gravity, for example, which Aeneas shows as he learns of his future:

incenditque animum famae venientis amore (Aeneid V̄I, 889), is replaced in the twelfth-century narrative by joy which is present in spite of the sorrows which Eneas knows must come (2991-96).

Eneas' compassion is evident throughout the romance. At Carthage, his greatest grief is for Dido:

Molt li est grief a departir  
et la dame a de guerpir.  
molt est pansis, maz et dotos,  
d' anbedos parz molt angoisos: (1629-32).

Eneas experiences intense conflict between his duty to the gods and his dread of hurting Dido:

ne puet laissier ne tant ne quant  
lo dit as deus ne lor comant,  
et molt dote la departie  
de la dame, qu'el ne s'ocie. (1633-36).

The expression of pity and regret is more explicit here than that which is implied in the Aeneid.<sup>29</sup> For, whereas Aeneas' consternation was principally for his neglect of his duty to the gods, Eneas is tormented by the suffering which he will cause Dido.

As Pauphilet writes on this matter:

'Ainsi l'Eneas français met sur le même plan  
sentimental le respect des dieux et celui de l'amour;  
au moment d'obéir à un ordre qu'il sait inéluctable,  
il se souvient de son amour et pense à la douleur qu'il  
va causer.<sup>29</sup>

For the Roman epic has now become a courtly romance and the focus is on Eneas as a knightly lover rather than on him as the divinely appointed founder of Rome. Although, therefore, Aeneas certainly grieves for Dido and for the sorrow which he must cause her, the French author alters the emphasis of Eneas' pain and conflict.

But in the description of the affair with Lavine, the author makes an innovation which develops naturally from earlier changes of emphasis. The traditional symptoms of love have been enumerated in the long description of Lavine's sufferings (8399-8433). Now Eneas is seen to suffer, in his turn, as he lies awake stricken by love-sickness.

He experiences restlessness:

Il se degiete et estant,  
torne et retourne molt sovant;  
onques la nuit ne ot somoil: (8927-29).

He experiences, too, the anxiety, the pensiveness and the symptoms of fever:

Amors l'ot mis an grant trepoil,  
Amors lo faisoit trespanser,  
Amors lo faisoit tressüer  
et refreidir et espaumir  
et sospirer et tressaillir. (8930-34)

These torments are portrayed far more vividly and convincingly than any of Eneas' other sufferings have been so far. As he acknowledges his own anguish and the fact that he is 'navrez a mort' (8962) by love's shaft, Eneas comes to recognise that Lavine is suffering also, and he concludes his analysis of the situation by reiterating that love is the principal source of his suffering:

"Dolce amie, bele faiture,  
vostre amor m'ataint sans mesure;  
por ce me plain, por ce m'en duel;" (9095-97).

But Eneas also causes suffering to Lavine. When, the following day, he is too stricken with love's symptoms to appear, Lavine suffers acutely.

Quand elle voit qu'il ne repaire,  
molt a grant duel, ne set que faire,  
crient que s'amor est refusé. (9127-29).

Attention has already been drawn to the suffering caused by Eneas'

delay in coming to Lavine, after he has slain Turnus, and to the universal joy which attends their union and effaces the memory of suffering. For, says Eneas:

Qui torment a eü an mer,  
 plus se fait liez a l'ariver  
 que s'il l'avoit seürement  
 passee sanz altre torment;  
 quant a eü peor de mort,  
 se li plect molt, quand vient a port;  
 si fait amor; molt plaist forment  
 après un po de maltalant. (9991-98).

With the sufferings of Eneas, then, we see several parallels to those of the Roman epic hero. Suffering is seen to be a price for great achievements. Eneas shows compassion for his men and for Dido. There is, however, little reflection of Vergil's 'lacrimae rerum' or of his compassion for suffering humanity. Rather, the new emphasis on suffering through love which the French author portrays, establishes Eneas' identity with the courtly romance rather than with the epic.

### EREC.

Joy is experienced at certain times at King Arthur's court. In Erec et Enide, it is present when Erec returns to Caradigan with Enide (1515-18) and is part of ceremonies such as the marriage (1983-2000) and the coronation. Even the very mention of the Paschal season in the opening scene of the romance:

Au jor de Pasque, au tans novel, (Erec, 27)  
 recalls the joy of the Resurrection which was preceded by the intense suffering of the Saviour's passion. The joy which Erec and Enide gain and experience together is shattered, and suffering is an essential part of their experience before they again attain joy together.

In this romance, suffering of other characters is presented far more clearly than those of the hero. We may recall the inevitable sadness as Enide leaves her home and parents to accompany Erec (1438-44), and the lamentations of Erec's father and of the people of Carnantas Erec prepares to leave with Enide on

their journey of renewal (2378-48). Although, however, Erec is severely wounded during his encounters and experiences apparent death, he attaches little significance to his physical pain.

On the other hand, let us look at Enide's sufferings. When at Carnant, she learns of the rumour of Erec's recreantise, Enide's anguish is described as she tries to conceal her pain from Erec, who has caused it.

De ceste chose li pesa;  
mes sanblant fere n'an osa,  
que ses sire an mal nel preïst  
asez tost, s'ele le deïst. (2465-68).

Erec's subsequent harshness causes Enide to reproach herself for her part in his fault (2585-2606) and to grieve at the prospect of exile and the possibility of losing him.

"Or m'estuet aler an essil;  
mes de ce ai ge duel greignor  
que ge ne verrai mon seignor,  
qui tant m'amoit de grant meniere  
que nule rien n'avoit tant chiere." (2592-96)

Thus, in Enide's anxiety, there is both the fear of loss and severe inner conflict. Yet Enide is able to draw wisdom from her pain:

"ne set qu'est biens qui mal n'essaie." (2606),

as she concludes that one of the benefits of suffering is appreciation of one's blessings. During her monologue on the journey, Enide laments the joy which she has lost and recalls the vicissitudes of Fortune:

"Hé! lasse, fet ele, a grant joie  
m'avoit Dex mise et essauciee,  
or m'a an po d'ore abessiee.  
Fortune, qui m'avoit atreite,  
a tost a li sa main retreite;  
de ce ne me chaussist il, lasse! (2778-83).

Furthermore, she learns to discern her priorities and she gains the courage to disobey Erec's command from the knowledge that she would prefer him to be alive, in spite of his anger, than dead. Thus, through conflict, she gains in wisdom and courage. When she is about to warn Erec of the approach of the five robbers, for example, she reasons with herself:



"Mes se mes sires ert ci morz,  
de moi ne seroit nus conforz:  
morte seroie et mal baillie." (2967-69).

The ease with which Erec sleeps, with an apparently clear conscience (3093-3101), while Enide keeps vigil, suggests in another way that Enide is suffering on Erec's behalf, so that she is, in a sense, absorbing his pain and guilt. She could even be considered as obeying Saint Paul's injunction:

"Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem  
Christi." (Galatians, VI : 2).

Enide shows, furthermore, that she prefers to suffer to the point of death than to betray her husband, when she tells the count:

"He! mialz fusse je or a nestre,  
ou an un feu d'espines arse,  
si que la cendre an fust esparse,  
que j'eüsse de rien fausse  
vers mon seignor, ne mal panse  
felenie ne traïson." (3328-33).

Thus, as Erec's endurance is tested by the increasing severity of his encounters, Enide's patience, fidelity and love are tested and exalted by the suffering which she undergoes for his sake until, when Erec has apparently been slain by the giants (4569), Enide gives full expression to her grief:

Lors comança li diax si forz,  
quant Enydé cheü le vit;  
molt li poise quant ele vit,  
et cort vers li si come cele  
qui sa dolor mie ne cele. (4570-74).

There is guilt as well as grief as Enide soliloquises:

"Ha! fet ele, dolante Enyde,  
de mon seignor sui omecide;  
par ma folie l'ai ocis: (4584-87).

She has yet to experience the lesson taught by the author of the Eneas that 'Ris et joie vient de plorer' (Eneas, 7961).

A significant, positive aspect of suffering is noted by Gauvain when Erec and Enide pause at King Arthur's tent. He also would have grieved for Erec's wounds:

... "Moi poise molt.  
Il apert molt bien a son vout,  
qu'il a pale et descoloré;

et g'en eüsse asez ploré  
quant ge le vi si pale et taint." (4157-61).

But in expressing his delight at seeing his friend in spite of his wounds, Gauvain recognises that joy effaces the memory of suffering:

"mes la joie le duel estaint.  
car de lui tel joie me vint  
que de nul duel ne me sovint." (4162-64).

In view of Enide's anguish, conflict and guilt and Gauvain's philosophising, Erec's attitude seems remarkable. He makes no mention of his own physical sufferings. His harsh injunctions cause pain to Enide. Does his nonchalance result from Stoic acceptance of pain which must inevitably accompany a difficult task? Or does it result from Christian fortitude? or from the anger which he experienced, but suppressed, at Carnant? Erec's self-possession seems in the first place, to stress the urgency of his quest. He admits to the king that the pain of his wounds is less important than the task which he has undertaken.

... "Sire, je n'ai mie  
plaie de coi je tant me duelle  
que ma voie lessier an vuelle." (4214-16),

and he refuses the time of convalescence which the king offers him (4222-32). His self-possession also serves to enhance the reputation for knightly valour which he is trying to regain. Having set out 'en aventure,' he has undertaken, in the interests of his honour, to accept whatever physical suffering or trial of any other kind which may come his way.<sup>31</sup> When writing of the commitment which a dedicated knight ought, ideally, to bring to his undertakings, Frappier notes:

De plus, ces qualités ne prenaient tout leur prix que si elles étaient contrôlées par une discipline intérieure;<sup>32</sup>

Erec's attitude also results from vigorous self-control, which not only extends to his relationship and his communication with Enide, but also requires that he restrain the outward expression of his pain.

Complementary aspects of suffering are present in Erec and Enide. Erec's physical endurance complements the inner anguish

suffered by Enide as she learns her harsh lessons of discretion and wisdom. For both Erec and Enide, suffering is a time of learning, growth and renewal, and it is necessary for their redemption and for 'wholeness' in marriage. At Pointurie, when Erec has been healed by Guivret's sisters, we are told:

Tant ont eü mal et enui,  
il por li et ele por lui,  
c'or ont feite lor penitance. (5203-05).

Although they have suffered for each other, and shared their sufferings, their pain is forgotten in the joy which they have regained:

Or ont lor dolor obliee  
et lor grant amor afermee,  
que petit mes lor an sovient. (5209-11).

It is evident that suffering is necessary for the achieving of balance between love and chivalry, for the deepening of understanding and for the affirming of love between Erec and Enide.

### YVAIN.

Several aspects of suffering are presented in the early scenes of Yvain. Love is defined in the prologue as a source of both suffering and of great benefits.

Li autre parloient d'amors,  
Des angoisses et des dolors  
Et des granz biens, qu'an ont sovant  
Li deciple de son covant, (Le Chevalier au lion, 13-16).

Thus, the antithesis between joy and suffering may be expected in this romance. Yvain's original hurt is caused by excessive self-love, his 'amor propriae excellentiae' which resulted in his sin. Through his slaying of Esclados, Yvain causes suffering not only to Laudine, but also to the people of the town, who are fired with desire for revenge (978-82). Although Laudine's grief is indescribable (1173-76), Lunete reminds Laudine that indulgence in grief is useless and unproductive.

"Dame! cuidiez vos recovrer  
Vostre seignor por feire duel?" (1600-01)

Rather, it is better to consider the future and to provide for it.

Yvain himself suffers through love's power, as he realises that love can transcend normal enmity and cause conflict:

"Ançois amerai m'anemie;  
Que je ne la doi pas haïr,  
Se je ne vuel Amor traïr." (1450-52).

His contemplation of Laudine nourishes his love-pangs:

"Grant duel ai de ses biaux chevos,  
Qui fin or passent, tant reluisent: (1462-63).

But as Yvain begins to share in Laudine's sorrow (1472-1505), and to be inflamed with the pangs of love, Yvain resolves to maintain a high degree of honour in her presence (1570-77), as he subtly enlists Lunete's help. The acute, irreplaceable loss which Laudine and her people showed at Esclados' death, is effaced by the joy with which the marriage of Yvain and Laudine is celebrated:

Mout i ot joie et mout leesce,  
Mout i ot jant et mout richesce,  
Plus que conter ne vos savroie  
Quant lonc tans pansé i avroie. (2159-62)

Here, there is joy which enables pain to be forgotten:

Mes ore est mes sire Yvain sire  
Et li morz est toz obliez. (2164-65)

and Yvain's superiority as Defender of the Fountain is acknowledged:

Et les janz aiment plus et prisent  
Le vif, qu'onques le mort ne firent. (2168-69).

For love and valour have the power to overcome suffering, just as the pain of death can be forgotten in the promise of new life. Thus, we learn early in the romance that good can come from suffering.

But the joy of Yvain's wedding (2159-62) and his acclamation as Defender of the Fountain (2164-66) are lost when he overstays his leave. In her denunciation of Yvain's fault (2722-73), Laudine's messenger uses strong terms to show the extent of suffering caused by Yvain's betrayal of love:

"Mes Yvains a ma dame morte;" (2742)

For if lovers suffer greatly when they are separated (2760-61), infidelity in love is a source of mortal grief. But for Yvain,

the pain of this realisation is the principal source of suffering. As the messenger leaves him 'an grant enui' (2780), his distress grows more profound:

Et ses enuiz tot adés croist:  
 Quanqué il ot, tot li ancroist,  
 Et quanque il voit, tot li enuie. (2781-83).

until he becomes completely disoriented (2784-89). Thus the knowledge of his fault causes intense suffering of mind and eventual madness. On the other hand, the maiden from the household of the Dame de Noroison has great pity for Yvain (2915-20) and she recognises that suffering has caused him to lose his mind. She tells her mistress:

"Espoir aucun duel a eü,  
 Qui le fet einsi demener;  
 Qu'an puet bien de duel forsener.  
 Et savoir et veoir puet l'an,  
 Qu'il n'est mie bien an son san." (2926-30).

If Yvain is driven out of his mind because of the harshness of the accusation and his own guilt, the understanding and compassion which are offered at this time are as essential to his healing as the ointment with which he is anointed.

Yvain's own suffering fosters a compassion for the suffering of others. For example, he senses that the Dame de Noroison might need him (3078-79). When he is about to rescue the lion, it is the 'cri mout dolereus et haut' (3344) which attracts his attention. In addition, Yvain undertakes the encounter with Harpin de la Montagne 'de la pitié, que il l'an prant,' (3942). As long as he is helping others and resolving difficult situations, Yvain is as self-controlled in his acceptance of suffering as was Erec. He at no time complains about the severity of his physical wounds. It is not until he returns to the fountain and comes into contact with the joy which he has lost that he yields to self-pity, and his grief causes him to swoon:

Mil foiz las et dolanz s'apele  
 Et chieť pasmez, tant fu dolanz. (3496-97).

Yvain's reaction suggests that the principal cause of his suffering is still his guilt for his fault and sorrow at the memory of

the joy which he has lost. This time, however, the lion suffers with him, as companion and sympathiser:

Ains de rien nule duel greignor  
 N'oïstes conter ne retreire,  
 Come il an comança a feire!  
 Il se detort et grate et crie  
 Et s'a talant, que il s'ocie  
 De l'espee, don li est vis,  
 Qu'ele et son buen signor ocis. (3508-14).

If we accept that the lion is the symbol of Christ, we see that, at his point, Yvain comes into contact with the compassion of Christ who shares pain, promises healing and gives meaning to all suffering.

Three episodes, in particular, present an antithesis between the notions of joy and suffering, which will be repeated during the later part of the romance. Firstly in reply to Lunete's lamentations, Yvain says:

"Tes diaus est joie, tes maus biens  
 Anvers le mien, don je languis." (3576-77).

Secondly, before the encounter with Harpin de la Montagne, we see that profound suffering can be hidden by a show of joy. Yvain is interested in his host's reaction:

Mes sire Yvains s'esbaïssoit  
 De ce, que si sovant chanjoient  
 Et duel et joie demenoient, (3830-32)

for the grief which Yvain's hosts experience as a result of the giant's oppression is masked by the delight which they show in offering hospitality (3881-84). Although Yvain is 'mout iriez et mout dolanz' (3904), his pain is for his host's plight rather than for his own. Thus, Yvain is now seen by others as a source of hope, deliverance and comfort in suffering. His hosts rejoice at his presence as he removes their distress:

Por l'esperance, qu'an lui ont,  
 Se confortent et joie font,  
 N'onques puis duel ne demenerent. (4013-15).

Thirdly, when Yvain, as le Chevalier au lion, comes into the presence of Laudine, after the defeat of Lunete's accusers, Yvain states for the last time the source of his suffering and his struggles:

"Tant que ma dame me pardoint  
 Son mautalant et son corroz.  
 Lors finera mes travauz toz." (4590-92).

Laudine's wish for him not only signifies an unconscious union of wills;

"Ore alez donc a De, biaux sire!  
 Qui vostre pesance et vostre ire  
 Vos atort, se lui plest, a joie!" (4627-29).

it also implies that joy can come out of sorrow, even out of such sorrow as Yvain now feels.

Furthermore, Yvain is portrayed as the answer to the prayer of those who suffer. Lunete says, as he arrives to defend her:

"... Sire! de la part De  
 Veigniez vos a mon grant besoing!" (4402-03).

The girl who continues the quest for Yvain on the part of the disinherited Younger Sister is guided, as a result of her prayer, to her destination and to the information she seeks (5005-19). In the exchange between this girl and Yvain, we see Yvain's prayer that she be liberated from all pain:

"Des vos gart, bele! et si vos ost  
 De cusançon et de pesance!" (5054-55)

and the girl's explicit belief that Yvain is the hero who can not only alleviate her anxiety and grief:

"Et vos, sire! ou j'ai esperance,  
 Que bien m'an porriiez oster!" (5056-57),

but also, by his very presence, alleviate the distress of the journey:

"De rien nule ne m'an deshét  
 Ne ne m'an plaing ne ne m'an manbre.  
 Tuit me sont alegié li manbre;  
 Que la dolors me fu anblee,  
 Tantost qu'a vos fui assanblee;" (5066-70).

Although the Pesme Aventure episode brings Yvain into contact with supernatural Other World forces which exact an extraordinary degree of courage and endurance, we now find less emphasis on Yvain's trials than on the reliance which he places on God and on the ultimate restoration of joy. As he prepares

to undertake this adventure, Yvain says to the girls in the silk workshop:

"Et Des, li voirs esperitables."  
Fet mes sire Yvains, "m'an deffande  
Et vos enor et joie rande,  
Se il a volanté li vient!" (5338-41)

During the battle with the netuns we are told less about Yvain's wounds than about his valour (5590-92), and about the anxiety of the lion:

Ore a le cuer dolant et troble  
Li lions, qui est an la chanbre; (5594-95)

who not only seems to absorb the hero's pain, but feels obliged to help (5596-99). When, finally, the netuns are defeated, the suffering which has been experienced by the embroideresses fades in the face of the joy which their deliverance has brought.

Je ne cuit pas, qu'eles feïssent  
Tel joie, come eles li font,  
De celui, qui fist tot le mont,  
S'il fust venuz de ciel an terre. (5780-83).

This is the joy which comes from the resolution of shared suffering and effaces the memory of pain. But it now assumes a spiritual dimension as the supreme joy of the Incarnation is recalled.

This aspect of joy is reflected in the reconciliation of Yvain with Laudine. Each has caused suffering to the other. But as they recognise the extent of the other's love, they forget the times of suffering in the joy which they find together:

Mout an est a buen chief venuz;  
Qu'il est amez et chier tenuz  
De sa dame, et ele de lui.  
Ne li sovient de nul enui;  
Que par la joie les oblie,  
Qu'il a de sa tres chiere amie (6803-08).

For Yvain, then, suffering is not only inevitable. It is necessary for his redemption. If he causes suffering to himself and to Laudine in the early half of the romance, he grows in compassion as he matures spiritually until he is seen as one who frees others from suffering and ultimately shares joy.



LANCELOT.

The opening scene of Le Chevalier de la charrete is set in an atmosphere of pain and bewilderment. When Meleagant issues his challenge, King Arthur recognises the necessity of accepting his conditions, although he is grief-stricken:

Li rois respont qu'il li estuet  
sofrir, s'amander ne le puet,  
mes molt l'an poise duremant. (Charrete 61-63)

The king is, similarly, saddened by Ké's arrogant proposition:

Au roi poise, et si l'an revest,  
car einz de rien ne se desdist,  
mes iriez et dolanz le fist. (180-182).

As the queen departs with Ké, there are signs of mourning among all the people of Logres:

Au departir si grant duel firent  
tuit cil et celes qui l'oiïrent,  
con s'ele geüst morte an biere. (215-17)

so that intense grief is shared by all.

Yet at first, Lancelot seems to be removed from this kind of anguish. There are, certainly, signs that he has experienced physical suffering. Gauvain, for example, finds evidence that a very fierce battle has taken place (304-13). Because of the scandal of the cart, there is speculation on the crime that Lancelot could have committed and on the suffering that he might expect as a result.

... "A quel martire  
sera cist chevaliers randuz?" (410-11)

But Lancelot himself shows no sign of suffering or even of any emotion until, at the castle of the Burning Lance, he has seen the queen's procession, and is saved from leaping out of the window after her, only by the timely action of Gauvain (565-69). But the maiden at this castle sees Lancelot as a knight who ought to suffer because of the shame associated with the cart, and she predicts Lancelot's future in pessimistic terms:

"Bien doit voloir qu'il fust ocis,  
que mialz valdroit il morz que vis:  
sa vie est desormés honteuse  
et despite et maleüreuse." (579-82).

Lancelot makes no specific mention of any suffering until he experiences conflict at the castle of the Amorous Maiden. He is torn by the urgency of his quest and his single-minded devotion towards the queen. This is a painful test of his reason.

"Molt me vient or a grant desdaing,  
quant j'ai parlé del remenoir;  
molt en ai le cuer triste et noir;  
or en ai honte, or en ai duel  
tel que je morroie mon vuel,  
quant je ai tant demoré ci." (1106-11).

Towards the end of his stay at this castle we again see that in the opinion of his hostess, Lancelot can be expected to suffer because of the enormity of the task he has undertaken and the danger attached to it:

"il vialt a si grant chose antendre  
qu'ainx chevaliers n'osa enprendre  
si perilleuse ne si grief." (1275-77)

Yet Lancelot attaches little importance to the suffering caused by the danger he is to endure. He belittles the dangers of the Sword Bridge which can be crossed only by intense physical suffering:

A la grant dolor c'on li fist  
s'an passe outre et a grant destrece:  
mains et genolz et piez se blece, (3110-12)

Love, however, brings consolation to suffering (3113-15). Thus, Lancelot not only disregards physical suffering in his single-minded pursuit of his lady; he emphasises that suffering undertaken out of love is a source of joy and pleasure. Lancelot is also seen as the person who alleviates the sufferings of others and leads them to conquer evil. The people of Logres say of him:

... "Seignor, ce est cil  
qui nos gitera toz d'essil  
et de la grant maleürté  
ou nos avons lonc tans esté." (2413-16)

Lancelot's arrival, and the hope of victory, already bring joy which in turn inspires strength and courage.

De la joie que il en orent  
lors croist force, et s'an esvertüent  
tant, que mainz des autres an tüent. (2426-28).

An example of suffering as penance freely undertaken for a fault is seen in Queen Guinevere's remorse. The queen does not

suffer because of Lancelot in the way that Lavine, Enide and Laudine suffered because of their knights. For she has no reason to doubt Lancelot's love. But when she hears of the rumour of Lancelot's death, the queen does undergo a time of great suffering through guilt as she remembers her coldness towards Lancelot who had awaited their meeting so eagerly. (4180-4238). She laments:

"Nus fors moi ne li a doné  
le mortel cop, mien esciant.  
Quant il vint devant moi riant  
et cuida que je li feïsse  
grant joie, et que je le veïsse,  
et onques veoir ne le vos,  
ne li fu ce donc mortex cos?" (4208-14).

This juxtaposition of the expression 'mortel cop' to the 'joie' with which Lancelot had approached the queen shows another dimension to the antithesis between suffering and joy. Furthermore, we learn that the queen prefers to live and atone for her fault than to die and find rest:

"Mialz voel vivre et sofrir les cos  
que morir et estre an repos." (4243-44).

A time of real suffering for Lancelot is his imprisonment by Meleagant. He now wishes for death:

La mort covoite, et trop se diaut:  
trop par a mal et morir viaut;  
sa vie et son cors despisoit  
a la foiee ... (6463-66)

He grieves because of the capriciousness of Fortune's wheel which, as it rotates, can raise a man high before it lowers him again.

"Hai! Fortune, con ta roe  
m'est ore leidemant tornee!" (6468-69)

Like all men, Lancelot has experienced the blessings of Fortune; he has now completed a half-cycle of the wheel and is experiencing Fortune's evils.

"Malemant la m'as bestornee,  
car g'iere el mont, or sui el val;  
or avoie bien, or ai mal;  
or me plores, or me rioies." (6470-73).

Lancelot grieves, too, because of Gauvain's apparent neglect (6483-91), especially in virtue of the love which

Lancelot has for him:

"bien deüst avoir vostre aïe  
cil cui tant soliez amer." (6490-91)

This is not the way that Lancelot would have treated his friend (6492-98). Here, Chrétien implies a further criticism of the chivalry practised by Gauvain. For because Gauvain acts through convention rather than love, he cannot successfully undertake seemingly impossible tasks. Nor is he portrayed as a suffering hero. Furthermore, Lancelot is suffering from the shame of being Meleagant's prisoner. The earlier shame of riding in the cart and its effect on his reputation, did not disturb him at the time, for he was then motivated by love and oblivious to everything that did not lead him directly to his lady. But now, after consistently defending virtue and liberating prisoners from Meleagant's power, Lancelot himself has, in a sense, fallen into the power of evil. The ensuing shame is a source of intense spiritual suffering.

This suffering is resolved when Meleagant's sister, moved by the lamentations which she hears, helps Lancelot to escape (6572-81), and heals him of the physical weakness which results from his imprisonment and misery (6637-42). The whole incident is accompanied by expressions of joy:

Or est a grant alegement,  
or a grant joie, ce sachiez,  
quant il est de prison sachiez,  
et quant il d'iluec se remue  
ou tel piece a esté an mue. (6626-30).

As Lancelot is welcomed back to King Arthur's court, the function of joy in relation to suffering is expressed:

Joie depiece et si efface  
la dolor, qui ençois i ert;  
li diaus s'an fuit si i apert  
joie, qui formant les rapele. (6816-19).

This joy is transmitted to Queen Guinevere as she learns of her lover's return (6824-26), and prudently keeps her distance from him until there is an opportunity to express her love.

Lancelot pays no heed to his physical sufferings. If he receives any wounds in battle, there is no mention of them. He crosses the Sword Bridge with eagerness rather than complaint; when he injures his fingers on the bars of the queen's window (4639-44), he does not notice any pain. He sums up his attitude in his interview with the queen:

"Dame, fet il, or ne vos chaille!  
 Ja ne cuit que fers rien i vaille;  
 rien fors vos ne me puet tenir  
 que bien ne puisse a vos venir." (4607-10).

To a lover of Lancelot's commitment, physical pain and difficulty are trifling obstacles. As this is not a journey of redemption, Lancelot is not portrayed suffering as a result of sin or self-knowledge, but as one who has come to know perfect love with its attendant joys and sorrows.

#### PERCEVAL.

In Perceval's quest, suffering appears to have a different role from that in the quests of Chrétien's other heroes. For Perceval is immediately at the centre of much grief and suffering which he unwittingly causes but does not experience, and by his actions, he evokes former conflicts and losses.

When Perceval returns home after meeting the knights in the forest, his mother's anxiety and grief are clear:

"Biax fix, molt a esté destrois  
 Mes cuers por vostre demoree.  
 De doel ai esté acoree,  
 Si que par poi morte ne sui." (Perceval, 374-77)

The very mention of the knights in the forest causes her to swoon as she recalls the pain of former sufferings:

"Ha! lasse! com sui malbaillie!  
 Biax dols fix, de chevalerie  
 Vos quidoie si bien garder  
 Que ja n'en oiïssiez parler  
 Ne que ja nul n'en veiïssiez." (407-11)

Thus, Perceval's mother suffers through the recollection of the loss of her sons (475-76) and of the sorrow which bereft her of

her husband.

"Del doel del fil morut li pere,  
Et je ai vie molt amere  
Sofferte puis que il fu mors." (481-83).

Suffering can, therefore, be seen as the price exacted for chivalry as the mother recalls her fine sons and valiant husband, the many sorrows she has endured, and looks toward a joyless future.

Perceval's decision to depart adds the final sorrow to his mother's anguish:

Lors ot la mere doel estrange,  
Sel baise et acole en plorant  
Et dist: "Ore ai je doel molt grant,  
Biax fix, quant aler vos en voi." (508-11).

And as he rides away, his mother dies from grief. In her instructions, Perceval's mother had reminded Perceval of the suffering of Christ as the price paid for man's redemption (584-88). Now the mother's suffering and death can be seen as a price paid in advance for her son's vocation.

Perceval now causes suffering to the girl in the tent who experiences anguish at the prospect of what might happen to her:

C'onques un mot ne li respont  
La damoisele, ains pleure fort;  
Molt durement ses poins detort. (758-60).

But although Perceval has unwittingly caused her pain, he will remain detached from it until his encounter with Orgeuilleux de la Lande (3911-949).

Both Perceval's mother (535-38) and Gornemant (1656-62) have insisted that the duty of the knight is to give help and comfort to those who are suffering. This is Perceval's obvious function at Belerepeire where he comforts Blancheflor before confronting Clamadeu (2067-69), and bringing deliverance to the oppressed inhabitants of the town. But Perceval causes pain by his departure from Belerepeire, Blancheflor grieves:

Si laisse s'amie la gente  
Molt correchie et molt dolente  
Et toz les autres autresi. (2935-37).

As the nuns, also, lament at Perceval's departure (2946-51), suffering is again seen as the price of knightly duty.

At the Grail Castle, Perceval has the power to bring deliverance from suffering, but he unwittingly fails to use it. The plight of Perceval's cousin is visible evidence of the destructive effect of Perceval's earlier heedlessness. She grieves for her 'ami' whom Orgueilleux has slain, and tells Perceval of the circumstances of his mother's death. She rightly reproaches him:

... "Perchevax li chaitis!  
Ha! Perchevax maleürous,  
Come iés or mal aventurous  
Quant tu tot che n'as demandé!" (3582-85)

as she laments the potential for good and for healing which has been lost through Perceval's silence at the Grail Castle. Instead, Perceval has allowed the Fisher King's infirmity and loss to continue:

"Que tant eüsses amendé  
Le buen roi qui est mehaigniez  
Que toz eüst regaaigniez  
Ses membres et terre tenist.  
Et si grans biens t'en avenist!" (3586-90)

Thus at a central point in this romance, Perceval continues in his tendency to cause suffering as he proceeds on his quest.

These failures and the misfortunes which Perceval could have deterred are later enumerated by the Hideous Maiden (4646-83). After referring to the fickleness of Fortune (4646-51) this maiden repeats the information given by Perceval's cousin and adds, emphasising Perceval's part in causing suffering:

"Tot cist mal esteront par toi." (4683)

The compressed account of Perceval's exploits offers no indication that, in the pursuit of knightly excellence, Perceval has himself experienced suffering or alleviated another person's suffering. We know only that he has acquitted himself splendidly as a knight (5224-35), but that he has been negligent as

a Christian (6217-23). The author reiterates:

Tot ensi cinc ans emploia  
N'onques de Dieu ne li sovint. (6236-37).

The meeting with the pilgrim knights and ladies, however, recalls the memory of Christ's sufferings and prompts Perceval's repentance:

Ce que Perchevax oi ot  
Le fait plorer, et si li plot  
Que al preudome alast parler. (6315-17).

This is the first time that Perceval shows signs of distress. He has shown other emotions including eagerness, frustration, curiosity and even compassion. His preoccupation with knightly duties for their own sake has not allowed room for the developments in him of altruistic love. But as he enters the hermit's chapel at the beginning of the Mass (6342-53), his guilt, when he remembers God's love and suffering, causes him intense anguish and impels him to seek God's pardon by confessing his sins. Thus, although there is no evidence that Perceval has until then, experienced physical pain or mental strife, his spiritual anguish is, at this point, considerable. But as his grief is strongly associated with the sacraments of forgiveness and love, the redemptive function of suffering begins to be discernible in Perceval's quest.

### SUFFERING.

The classical hero frequently experiences suffering as the result of events which he has initiated but becomes unable to control. Suffering is generally inflicted by the gods as a punishment of either the hero's own fault or that of his immediate society. Although the epic heroes show endurance and resignation to suffering as to an inevitable evil, they are often seen in tears, groaning and lamenting their misfortunes before they finally come to acceptance and peace. Achilles has lain prostrate in the dust before working out his grief through inhuman anger; Odysseus has been seen weeping secretly behind his cloak as Demodocus' song reminds him of the pains and



losses which he has endured; Aeneas has groped painfully and uncomprehendingly through Juno's harrassments as he assumes the burden of his vocation.

Although the medieval heroes, too, cause suffering both to themselves and to others, they undertake their quests deliberately, knowing that intense suffering may result. Thus they tend to conceal their own physical pain and, except where love symptoms are described, their sufferings are seen more through the reactions of other characters. For these heroes are endeavouring to become better knights by eradicating their faults, testing themselves, practising discipline. On the subject of Yvain, Lancelot and Perceval, Frappier notes:

Les protagonistes des trois derniers romans de Chrétien, un Yvain, un Lancelot, un Perceval, représentent, chacun avec des différences individuelles, une forme plus haute, plus généreuse, plus religieuse du devoir. Leur chevalerie est à la fois militante et souffrante, vouée au sacrifice et à une sorte de sainteté.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, the promptness with which these heroes pursue their task does not allow for time to be wasted in futile expressions of suffering or self-pity. Like Erec, they move towards their goal, disregarding their own injury and pain;

... "Sire, je n'ai mie  
plaie de coi je tant me duelle  
que ma voie lessier an vuelle." (Erec, 4214-16).

The resigned acceptance shown by the epic heroes becomes, in twelfth-century romances, a deliberate search for healing and expiation which results not merely in peace, but in real joy which permeates their environment. The universal pathos, therefore, the  $\sigma\upsilon\pi\pi\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha\ \delta\lambda\omega\upsilon$  becomes, in our romances, a universal joy.

It has been noted that our epic heroes are presented in situations of suffering or at least, that their woes are given prominent emphasis in the opening scenes of the work: Achilles' 'countless woes' (Iliad I, 2), Odysseus' 'many pains' (Odyssey I, 1.) and Aeneas' many sufferings on land and sea (Aeneid I, 5). Most of Chrétien's romances, on the other hand, begin at major

religious festivals which ought to evoke expressions of joy: Erec begins at Easter, Yvain at Pentecost, Lancelot at the Ascension and Perceval in the early spring, the season traditionally associated with joy:

... au tans qu'arbre foillissent  
Que glai et bois et pre verdissent. (Perceval, 69-70)

But in all cases, this joy is tinged with sadness, sin or anxiety.<sup>34</sup> It is not until the hero has suffered or delivered others from suffering that the joy which is evoked becomes a reality. The joy which follows the successful triumph over suffering completely negates the memory of former pain. We are reminded, also, of Saint Paul's many exhortations to rejoice amid suffering, and his confidence in the power of Christ who has already suffered for our redemption, to give strength in times of trial:

In eo enim, in quo passus est ipse et tentatus, potens est et eis, qui tentantur, auxiliari. (Hebrews, 11:18).

All this suffering involves conflict and loss. Through conflict, the hero's single-mindedness is tested and his values are defined. His losses bring him face to face with himself, and force him to explore and to use the resources of his own being. He learns, through his losses, to appreciate his blessings. Enide's statement "ne set qu'est biens qui mal n'essaie." (Erec, 2606), could be applied just as aptly to the losses of any of our heroes. Suffering is inevitable for all, whether it be caused by punishments from the gods, the decrees of Fate or the characteristic fickleness of Fortune. Frappier writes of Chrétien's attitude towards his heroes' suffering:

On a bien l'impression qu'il a préféré voir dans la souffrance une nécessité liée aux épreuves et aux conquêtes de la vie.<sup>35</sup>

This could be said of our epic heroes, also. Achilles had to endure wounded pride, isolation and loss before he could grow in wisdom; Odysseus had to experience loss of men and equipment and to suffer near-death in the sea before he could embark on his homeward journey; Vergil's 'tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem' (Aeneid I, 33) proclaims that suffering will

be necessary for the foundation of Rome and indeed, for any mighty undertaking. Furthermore, once our heroes have matured and have grown in wisdom and endurance, they do not repeat the fault which precipitated their journeys and, whereas they had caused suffering by their sinfulness, they now show an active compassion for the sufferings of others. Thus, the ancient notion that suffering was a time of learning is sustained here. Through sharing their suffering with others, our heroes grow in understanding and tolerance. The time of shared sorrow between Achilles and Priam is doubtless the most striking example of this. But it can be seen in the reconciliation between Eneas and Lavine (Eneas, 10108-14), in Erec's and Enide's renewed declaration of love (Erec, 5203-05) and in the reconciliation between Yvain and Laudine (Yvain, 6804-06), all of whom have suffered because of but also, for the sake of, the other.

#### CONCLUSION.

Suffering is an essential part of human experience. In their quests, our heroes have been seen to experience intense grief, conflict and loss, and to cause suffering themselves. In general, the heroes' own actions have been responsible for their sufferings. But they have also been subject to the vicissitudes of Fortune. In the words of the author of the Eneas:

Fortune torne en molt po d'ore,  
 tel rit al main qui al soir plore;  
 al soir est laide, al matin bele,  
 si com el torne sa roëlle;  
 cui al met a l'un jor desus,  
 a l'autre lo retorne jus. (Eneas, 685-90).

Through their misfortunes, the early epic heroes have shown that suffering is inevitable. Although, at times, they have appeared to be crushed by the misfortunes of their journey and by the burden of their quest, they have faced their trials with courage, and have reached a laudable degree of self-knowledge.

From suffering they have learned patience, wisdom, endurance and eventually acceptance. The ancient association between  $\pi\alpha\theta\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  and  $\rho\alpha\theta\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  is obvious in their quests. If they have been temporarily crushed by suffering, they show the effects of the lessons they have learned. These heroes, however, do not lament as a result of physical pain, but because of conflict, loss and guilt, suffer more on a spiritual level. There is no suggestion of the 'mystery' of suffering, or of the more positive acceptance encouraged by the Stoics. Thus, we do not see so much an attempt to solve the problem of suffering as resignation to it.

But our twelfth-century heroes reflect more positive, Christian attitudes. Let us recall Saint Paul's teaching which, for the Christian, gives meaning to all suffering:

Si autem filii, et heredes: heredes quidem Dei,  
coheredes autem Christi: si tamen compatimur, ut  
et conglorificemur. (Romans, VIII : 17)

For Christ's sufferings were the beginning of man's redemption and therefore, the source of our joy and hope. For this reason, our heroes, whose quests are permeated by evidence of Christian belief and practice, are able to undertake suffering with eagerness. These heroes, also, belittle physical sufferings, even though at times they are severely wounded. Through their sufferings of a spiritual kind, however, our medieval knights are, in varying degrees, redeemed from their faults, and not only experience joy themselves, but they bestow upon others, joy and the effects of their redemption.

Notes to Chapter 6.

1. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p.55.
2. Ibid., p. 1021.
3. Ibid., p. 1071; New Testament Dictionary, N.5, p. 905.
4. New Testament Dictionary, N. 5, p. 906.
5. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 1430.
6. New Testament Dictionary, v. 5, p. 905. E.g. παθῶν δέ νήπιος ἔγνω.  
(Only when he has suffered does the fool understand.)  
Hesiod Works and Days, l. 218.
7. E.g. 'τὰ δέ μοι παθήματα ἔόντα ἀχάριτα μαθήματα γέγυνε'.  
(‘And I have learnt much from my wretched misfortunes’).  
Herodotus (Histories, I, 207, ed. Hude, Oxford, 1908.)
8. See E.V. Arnold, Roman Stoicism, New York, 1911, pp. 308; 337; 364.
9. 'Fortitudo est, inquit, scientia rerum perferendarum vel adfectio animi in patiando ac perferendo summae legi parens sine timore.' Cicero, (Tusculan Disputations, IV, xxiv, 53.).
10. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 1339.
11. Gilbert Murray writes of συμπαθειὰ ὅλων as 'the concept that every pain felt by an individual soul vibrates through the universe, so that with any great martyr or saviour, the whole of life suffers,' (The Complete Plays of Aeschylus, London, 1952, p.12). This is the tendency, also, in the heroic epic.
12. See supra, p. 277.
13. W.B. Stanford ('The Untypical Hero' in The Ulysses Theme, Oxford, 1954, p. 74 ) notes the length of time over which Odysseus' life extends, and especially the unusual variety of ordeals in comparison with those of Odysseus' companions.
14. The Art of Vergil, p. 53.
15. Ibid.
16. ed. Storey, ll. 101-60.
17. ed. F. Whitehead, Oxford, 1957, ll. 2397-2487.
18. Benjamin Minor, PL. 196, col. 18.

19. Ibid., col. 26.
20. H. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature, Cambridge (Mass.), 1927
21. De Consolatione Philosophiae, II, pr. 1, ll.47-49.
22. Heroides ad Amores, ed. G. Showerman, Loeb Classical Library, London-Cambridge (Mass.), 1963.
23. Benoit de Sainte-Maure, Roman de Troie, Vol. 111.
24. De Amore, Ch. I, p.1.
25. Ibid.
26. See P. Bec, 'La Douleur et son univers poétique chez Bernard de Ventadour,' Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, t. 11, 1968, pp. 545-71; t. 12, 1969, pp. 25-33; 'L'Antithèse poétique chez Bernard de Ventadour,' Mélanges de philologie romane dédiés à la mémoire de Jean Boutière, Liège, 1971, t. 1, pp. 107-37.
27. Cf. Aeneid 1, 198-99.
28. Cf. Aeneid 1V, 279-95, especially 'ardet abire fuga, dulcisque relinquere terras' (281).
29. 'Eneas et Enée,' Romania, 55, 1929, pp. 195-213. see p. 209.
30. See supra, p. 80.
31. See supra, p. 135.
32. Etude sur 'Yvain', p. 217.
33. Ibid., p. 208.
34. For an interesting discussion about the intrusion of pain into a scene of joy, in particular, into a début printanier, see P. Bec, 'L'Antithèse poétique chez Bernard de Ventadour', pp. 127-129.
35. 'La Douleur et la mort dans la littérature française des XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles,' in Histoire, mythes et symboles, pp. 85-109. See p. 102.

Chapter 7.LoveINTRODUCTION.

All our heroes have appeared as men capable of a high degree of love. If, at times, they have committed faults by loving to excess or by misplacing their love, they have, by their journeys and their sufferings, made atonement, and ultimately achieved a love which is both balanced and disciplined. As we recall that this is, above all, a quest for integrity, we shall now examine some features of love itself, in order to discern the part which a truly integrated love plays in the hero's quest for himself.

The traditional Greek words for love are well known. In Homer, as in most other writers, ἔρως is always used of sexual passion,<sup>1</sup> and describes a love which 'desires the other for itself.'<sup>2</sup> It is similar to Venus and, in its truest form denotes the state of being in love.<sup>3</sup> Although such love is good in itself, it exists predominantly on the physical, sensual level and, if not properly disciplined or understood, it can lead to selfish, irresponsible actions. The destructive effect of purely physical and sensual pleasure and selfish love has been noted during the study of the hero's fault.<sup>4</sup> φιλία, on another level, indicates a wholesome love which includes love of one's native land, friendship, love of one's spouse and family.<sup>5</sup> It is a love which 'embraces everything that bears a human countenance.'<sup>6</sup> Homer uses it many times, for example, when describing the love of the goddess, Hera, for mortal men (Iliad I, 196), the love of the Achaeans for their wives (Iliad IX, 340-43), the affection of Menelaus for his guest, Telemachus (Odysseus IV, 204) and the love of Penelope for the kindly stranger, Odysseus, whom she does not yet recognise (Odysseus, XIX, 254). It is equivalent to the Latin amicitia which Cicero defined in the following terms:

Est autem amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio; qua quidem haud scio an excepta sapientia nihil melius homini sit a dis immortalibus datum.<sup>7</sup>

(De Amicitia, VI, 20).

Amicitia, like  $\phi\lambda\acute{\iota}\lambda\alpha$ , is selfless, for it desires the good of the other and implies some kind of union or harmony of wills. Indeed, it anticipates the detached, spiritual love which was taught by Saint Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

The Greek  $\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta$ , which was originally a somewhat colourless word for love, came to have many uses in the New Testament and in patristic writings. In the Book of Deuteronomy, it referred to the love which man must show his creator (Deuteronomy XI : 13). It describes the love with which God has called the Apostles and with which he continually calls those whom He has chosen.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it also defines the brotherly love with which we should love our neighbour. It is equivalent to both caritas and the later dilectio which are fundamental to all Christian attitudes. Finally, the Latin amor is a much more flexible word and can have both a higher and a lower meaning.<sup>10</sup> Whereas caritas and dilectio are used only of human beings or God, amor can also be used of animals. It can be used of friendship and brotherly love, but it is frequently used of sexual love and, personified, it is equivalent to the Greek  $\epsilon\rho\omega\varsigma$ . These types of love are not separate from each other, but they frequently co-exist and overlap according to the maturity and need of the individual, and his relationship with the loved one.

Both the Old and New Testaments stressed that the righteous man must love both God and neighbour. But whereas the Old Testament tradition put love  $\bar{\epsilon}\bar{\nu}$ : a level of equality with the other commandments, the New Testament made it the central point of Christian teaching. In Saint Matthew's gospel, for example, love is proclaimed to be the greatest commandment of the law (Matthew, XXI : 37-40). We shall be judged according to the way we have loved (Matthew, XXV : 31-46). The



Christian is to love his enemies (Matthew, V, 44), for he is expected to seek perfection (Matthew, V, 48). Love is shown by action rather than by words (1 John, III : 18). Love does not confine itself to duty, but is always ready to go beyond the requirements of the law (Matthew, V : 40-42). But the greatest test of love is that stated at the Last Supper:

Hoc est praeceptum meum ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos. Maiorem hac dilectionem nemo habet, ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis (John : XV, 12-13).

And its greatest sign is unity of will among believers and with God (John XVII : 22-23; Acts, IV : 32).

It could hardly be doubted that love is the most powerful and constructive of all human emotions. Our heroes experience its power and suffer its loss. They have learnt, during their quests, of the destructive consequences of excessive self-love and illicit desires. But they also learn that altruistic love can restore harmony, increase self-forgetfulness and inspire noble deeds. Familial love and love of friends is evident in some of the quests and prepares the background for the hero's fuller development in love. These will be noted, as relevant. In this chapter, however, the focus will be principally on the love which resembles the Christian ἀγάπη and caritas, although amor and its symptoms must inevitably have some importance. We shall consider the types of love which prepare for this love. How does the author contrast it with lesser types of love? At what point of his quest does the hero achieve the perfection of love? What are the qualities of the hero's love? How does the love sought and attained by the hero reflect contemporary attitudes towards love? It will be seen that our pre-Christian heroes foreshadow this kind of love; twelfth-century heroes have to learn to integrate it with other forms of love and to let it transcend them.

ACHILLES.

As a poem, the Iliad is dominated by violence, suffering and death. Yet there are times when various aspects of love intrude to give relief to violence: Chryses' love for his daughter (Iliad I, 20), the love between Hector and Andromache (VI, 440-93), the understanding shown by the Trojan elders towards those men who go to battle for the love of a woman (III, 156-60).

Familial love is portrayed in many scenes for example, in the empathetic love of Thetis for Achilles (I, 357-63), a love which is necessarily limited because of Thetis' divinity, a gift not granted to Achilles who needs to communicate with other human beings. Thus, the depth of Achilles' loneliness and isolation is emphasised by the other scenes of family affection where love is seen as a comforting element: the love of Hecuba and Priam for each other and for their sons, especially Hector; the love of Hector and Andromache and their understanding of their son's childish fears. (VI, 471-75).

Achilles is, however, seen in no such context, yet he is constantly a man who loves. He speaks of his 'dear native land' (IX, 414), greets his 'dear friends' (IX, 197) and admits that he has loved the girl Briseis 'with all his heart' (IX, 342-43). But there is also a certain type of affection which links those who have been brought up together and who, moreover, have fought side by side in battles. This is exemplified in the love shared by Achilles and Patroclus. If his grief and anger at the death of Patroclus freed Achilles from his original πένις, they also made him embark upon the final brutal stage of his quest for himself. He is no longer to grieve in isolation, but shows his love by action as he prepares to face Hector and lay down his life, if need be, to avenge his friend. But there is no comfort or peace in this type of love. We may recall the frustrated longing which Achilles and the ghost of Patroclus show for each other (XXII, 69-100) and the final

empty handclasp:

"καί μοι δὸς τήν χεῖρ' ὀλοφυρομαί." (XX111, 75)  
(Give me your hand, I beg you.)

As Patroclus' ghost requests that their bones be buried in the same urn, so that they may be together at least in death, there is only frustration, as the ghost eludes Achilles' embrace (XX111, 99-102).

But later, with the arrival of Priam, love is seen in a context which resembles Christian teaching. Simone Weil has commented on this scene:

The purest triumph of love, the crowning grace of war is in the friendship that floods the hearts of mortal enemies. Before it - even more miraculous - the distance between benefactor and suppliant, between victor and vanquished, shrinks to nothing."

This is an ennobling love which goes beyond the realm of duty. It overrides bitter enmity, foreshadows the Christian meaning of ἀγάπη, and anticipates in an extraordinary way the exhortation:

Diligite inimicos vestros, benefacite his, qui oderunt vos. (Matthew, V : 44).

As it unites enemies and heals the bitterness of the pain of loss, it endows both suppliant and slayer with peace and wisdom.

### ODYSSEUS.

Odysseus' greatest griefs and longings are caused through his capacity for love. He has been seen weeping at the death of his companions whom he loved, and out of love and longing for his native land (Odyssey, V, 13-17; 81-84). He is referred to with affection by the loyal members of his household at Ithaca when, disguised as a beggar, he is testing their attitudes: Eumaeus, the swineherd, Eurycleia, the old nurse, Telemachus and Penelope.

- For Odysseus is constantly seen as a hero who is greatly loved. It was love for Odysseus that sent his father, Laertes, into retirement on his estate (XI, 187-96), and his mother, Anticleia, to her grave (XI, 197-203).

οὔτε τις οὖν μοι νόσος ἐπήλυθεν, ἣ τε μάλιστα  
 τηκεδόνι στυγερῇ μελέων ἐξείλετο θυρόν.  
 ἀλλὰ με σὸς τέ πόθος σά τε μήδεα φάιδε', Ὀδυσσεῦ.  
 σὴ τ' ἀγανοφροσυνῆ μελιηδέα θυρόν ἀπ' ἔμμεν.  
 (XI, 200-03).

("I was not visited by sickness which above all else takes the life out of the body with hateful weakness; but it was my longing for you, shining Odysseus, your cleverness and your gentle ways, that took the sweet breath of life from me.")

It is love coupled with filial duty which initiates Telemachus' quest for news of his father whom he does not remember. The sense of duty which sends him out on this quest later ripens into filial love after Odysseus and Telemachus have been identified to each other at Eumaeus' hut (XVI, 187-320). The ease with which the father and son make plans for their return to the palace, implies that a deep level of acceptance has been attained.

Irrational and destructive passion has been portrayed in the suitors' self-indulgence, greed, sensuality and, ultimately, death. Through portraying a violent end for these and for the faithless maid-servants (XXII, 465-72), Homer enhances the worth of noble love which is embodied in Penelope's faithfulness. Many aspects of womanhood are reflected in the major female characters whom Odysseus meets. In a sense, Calypso represents passion, Circe, woman's magic, Nausicaa, the fair beauty of young, unspoilt womanhood, whereas Anticleia represents the loyalty and wisdom of a mature woman. Penelope embodies all these attributes, but also transcends them. For she is the faithful wife and guardian of her husband's property. She is the goal to which all these other women have, in some way, either helped or advised Odysseus in his search. The reunion between Odysseus and Penelope, therefore, is all the more joyful when it comes (XXII, 302-43), for the time of testing is now past, and their love has acquired the deeper dimension which springs from the trust gained by those who have suffered and longed for each other. Although Odysseus has not laid down his life for his lady, he has, at least, risked it many times in the hope of returning to her. The variety of Odysseus' sufferings has

been noted.<sup>12</sup> His love has been tested through endurance and has appeared in a similar variety of ways.

### AENEAS.

Aeneas' love for his native land dominates the early scenes of the Aeneid. It is evident in his reluctance to leave the burning Troy and at many stages of his journey. At times, this love appears to be associated with safety, or with a reputation for heroism. This is evident when Aeneas recalls with envy the fate of those who have died at Troy:

. . . "o terque quaterque beati,  
 quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis  
 contigit oppetere! o Danaum fortissime gentis  
 Tydide! mene Iliacis occumbere campis  
 non potuisse, tuaque animam hance effundere dextra."  
 (Aeneid I, 94-98).

Pöschl notes that the Aeneid could well be called the 'epic of love,' for its deepest tragedy is that its people 'loved too much.'<sup>13</sup> For Juno's passionate hatred for the Trojans really stems from her love of Carthage. Venus, Dido, Latinus and Turnus all, in their own way, show an excess of love which causes destruction. The same can be said of Aeneas. His excessive love of Troy led him to hesitate before leaving it, and caused a kind of blindness, with the result that, without divine intervention, his mission would have been frustrated at its inception.

What are the qualities of love shown in the Dido affair which introduces romantic tragedy into classical epic? Early in the epic, the queen is seen to be in the power of love as she questions Aeneas about the fall of Troy, his journey and his sufferings:

nec non et vario noctem sermone trahebat  
 infelix Dido longumque bibebat amorem,  
 multa super Priamo rogitans, super Hectore multa; (I, 748-50).

Yet although she is devoured by Love's flame (IV, 1-5; IV, 54-89),

and is seen to be in the power of a blinding passion Dido is attracted by Aeneas' noble qualities:

multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat  
gentis honos; (1V, 3-4).

As Pöschl states:

In fact, all of the nobility of her nature is appealed to: Her talent for great love (proven to Sychaeus in life and death'), her compassion for the Trojans (so easily converted to love), her feminine nature (also awakened by Anna in 1V, 33: "Nec dulcis natos Veneris nec praemia noris"), and her longing for fulfilment as shown in the tenderness with which she takes Ascanius upon her lap and cries sweetly from her heart, "si quis mihi parvulus aula luderet Aeneas." 15.

Yet although the lovers are apparently suited and are in similar understandable situations, this is not the ennobling love which it promises to be. For the foundations of this love are insecure. There is no real benevolentia, as neither Dido nor Aeneas can really be said to will the good of the other. Nor can this love be said to be productive of good, for Dido's love impeded her task of building (1V, 88-89), opened a deep wound in her heart and brought about her death (1V, 689-705). It was harmful, too, because it was at variance with the Roman ideal of self-control and it conflicted with the implementation of Aeneas' own task. Aeneas is not portrayed as a man stricken by the shafts of Love. But he does recognise Dido's anguish as her 'obnixus curam sub corde premebat.' (1V, 332), and acknowledges that his destiny must take precedence over any illicit passion. He says to Dido:

"Sed nunc Italiam magnam Gryneus Apollo,  
Italiam Lyciae iussere capessere sortes;  
hic amor, haec patria est." (1V, 345-47).

And he concludes this speech by stating that he is acting against his own inclinations:

"Italiam non sponte sequor." (1V, 361).

Familial love plays a significant part in Aeneas' quest. His love for Creusa is identified with his love for Troy and all that Troy stands for. As the downfall of Troy becomes more imminent, Aeneas is prepared to forget about his vocation in his readiness to defend Creusa, together with his other dear ones and precious belongings (11, 664-67). But, unlike Anchises,

Iulus and the household gods, Creusa has no part in the founding of Rome, and her ghost must stay behind in Troy. Aeneas' love for Anchises follows upon the development of his filial piety. The father, at first, seems to be included with the other loved members of the household for whom Aeneas, with his well-known sense of duty, is caring:

Ascanium Anchisenque patrem Teucrosque penatis  
commendo sociis et curva valle recondo; (II, 747-78).

It is not until Anchises dies in Sicily (III, 710) that Aeneas is portrayed as a loving rather than dutiful son who needs the guidance of a father. His affection is seen as a yearning in Book VI where, in his prayer to the Sibyl, he speaks of his one longing, namely, to see his father face to face.

"ire ad conspectum genitoris et ora  
contingat; doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas." (VI, 108-09),

and the futile embrace before Anchises begins his exposition (VI, 700-01) is an eloquent reminder of the son's love for the father, and the grief which must be resolved before he receives the fuller knowledge of his destiny.

quae postquam Anchises natum per singula duxit  
incenditque animum famae venientis amore. (VI, 888-89).

Thus, familial love is assimilated into love of his new land and of his new task.

There is little evidence that either Aeneas or Lavinia falls into the power of Amor. They are to wed through the dictates of fate rather than of passion, and to seal the bond of reconciliation and friendship between the Trojans and the Latini. In his final sentence before Aeneas slays him, Turnus yields his promised bride:

. . . "vicisti et victum tendere palmas  
Ausonii videre; tua est Lavinia coniunx,  
ulterius ne tende odiis." (XII, 936-38),

but there is no mention of love. In any case, in Vergil's society, suitability was a factor to be considered in marriage, rather than love. But his marriage in accordance with the Father's will confirms his pietas which has been shown in many other ways and seals his destiny as founder of Rome.

THE MEDIEVAL PERSPECTIVE.

Before discussing some relevant attitudes towards love in the twelfth century, let us recall more fully some basic New Testament and patristic teachings. The ideal of all love was taught by Christ at the Last Supper (John XIII-XIV), and given its most sublime expression in His prayer to the Father before the beginning of His Passion

"Ut omnes unum sint, sicut tu, Pater in me, et ego in te, ut et ipsi in nobis unum sint . . . ut sint unum, sicut et nos unum sumus." (John, XVII : 21-23).

This was a love of benevolentia, a 'willing the good of the other' with its emphasis on unity, reciprocity, service and sacrifice which Christ was to leave as an ideal for His Church and which Saint Paul was to recommend as the ideal for married love (Ephesians, V : 25-26).

Saint Augustine defined amor as

. . . delectatio cordis alicujus ad aliquid, desiderium in appetendo et in perfruendo gaudium, per desiderium currens, requiescens per gaudium.<sup>18</sup>

But <sup>love</sup> is like a two-edged sword, for it brings both joy and pain, good and evil. When preparing for this definition, Saint Augustine stated:

Unus fons dilectionis intus saliens, duos rivos effundit: alter est amor mundi, cupiditas; alter est amor Dei, charitas. Medium quippe est cor hominis, unde fons amoris erumpit: et cum appetitum ad exterioria decurrit, cupiditas dicitur; cum vero desiderium suum ad interiora dirigit, charitas nominatur.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, cupiditas and caritas are placed in antithesis and although they originate in amor, they are different in both their object and their results:

Ergo duo sunt rivi, qui de fonte dilectionis emanant, cupiditas et charitas: et omnium malorum radix cupiditas, et omnium bonorum radix charitas. Ex eo igitur totum est, quod bonum est; et totum quod malum est, ex eo est.<sup>20</sup>

Love of a higher good, an ennobling love is, therefore, the source of goodness, whereas the baser, self-tending cupiditas is productive of evil. Saint Augustine concludes: 'Hinc bonum est et hinc malum est cor humanum.'<sup>21</sup>



In the twelfth century, these twofold aspects of love were discussed by theologians and by the school-men, and were exemplified in court literature. But we shall, as far as possible, direct our considerations towards the ennobling, constructive aspects of love, for we are now dealing with heroes who are not only knights of outstanding worth, but who have surpassed their contemporaries by their achievements.

For courtly writers, love had a priority among human relationships. Chrétien de Troyes, for example, closely explored the psychology of loving and the nature of love, together with its effect on the lovers and society.<sup>22</sup> In other literature, also, the symptoms of incipient love were frequently portrayed, as was the power of love in inspiring men to perform noble deeds. The lover was expected, however, to show a high standard of discipline in conduct, as well as submission to his lady's will. When discussing the failure of courtly writers, scholars and churchmen to arrive at a satisfactory synthesis on the subject of love, John C. Moore notes that they have these important features in common:

In the minds of most, then, love was the source of goodness, the effect of goodness, and goodness itself. It was the free act of the rational person - or rather of persons, for in its fullness it was reciprocal, the mutual recognition of goodness and beauty. Its goal was the union of the lovers, perhaps physical, but first of all the union of wills or hearts.<sup>23</sup>

These fundamental requirements for love have similarities to Cicero's definition of amicitia, with the suggestion of benevolentia, reciprocity and unity.<sup>24</sup> When properly sought and reciprocated, love helps to integrate the qualities of the individual who is constantly striving to better himself.

Scholars and theologians discussed love of God in the context of the Trinity, love between God and man and between man and his neighbour. Peter Lombard, for example, defines this kind of love and recalls the Gospel teaching:

Charitas est dilectio qua diligitur Deus propter se et proximus propter Deum, vel in Deo. Haec habet

duo mandata: unum pertinens ad dilectionem Dei, quod est maximum in lege mandatum; et alterum pertinens ad diligendum proximum, illi simile.<sup>25</sup>

There are priorities in the order of loving which are, according to Peter Lombard, first God, then ourselves, then parents, then sons and brothers, then 'domestics' and finally enemies.<sup>26</sup> Marriage is not included in this order, for in general, marriage was more of a contract in a kind of feudal hierarchy and as such, was independent of love.<sup>27</sup> But the desirability of love within marriage is implied by Peter Lombard in his commentary on Saint Paul's epistle to the Corinthians:

. . . est bona res conjugium. Est enim unum de sacramentis Ecclesiae, tenens imaginem conjunctionis Christi et Ecclesiae, sicut Apostolus Christo et in Ecclesia (Ephes. V). Constat itaque rem bonam esse conjugium.<sup>28</sup>

For in the use of Saint Paul's image of the love of Christ for His Church as symbol of the conjugal relationship, a great depth of union, love, service and sacrifice is implied between husband and wife:

Viri, diligite uxores vestras, sicut et Christus dilexit Ecclesiam, et seipsum tradidit pro ea. (Ephesians, V : 25).

The monastic tradition had long taught that God is the author and source of love, and the object of all loving. William of Saint-Thierry begins his treatise, De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, by proclaiming the excellence of love:

Ars est artium ars amoris, cujus magisterium ipsa sibi retinuit natura, et Deus auctor naturae.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, we may expect to find that every love relationship has, to some extent, its origin in God. The ascent to God is made by progress in specific virtues, but above all, by loving. This progression is similar to that which a boy makes through life<sup>30</sup> until finally.

sic secundum virtutum profectum voluntas crescit in amorem, amor in charitatem, charitas in sapientiam.<sup>31</sup>

In the same treatise, William defines love as follows:

Nihil enim aliud est amor quam vehemens in bono voluntas.<sup>32</sup>

Here we see that love is associated with a desire for the good,

and there is, here, a reflection of that benevolentia which is an essential feature of love. Love of God can be discerned on the three levels according to which we have been discussing our heroes, and correspond to man's progress from the physical and rational levels to the spiritual. In the Commentatio ex Bernardo in Cantica Canticorum, he writes:

Primus, sensualis vel animalis; secundus, rationalis; tertius, spiritualis vel intellectualis.<sup>33</sup>.

Furthermore, as Williams states, love of God can be expressed and understood in terms of human love, for:

Propter hoc non solum in parabolis loquebatur hominibus, sed tota ejus conversatio in terris quasi quaedam insignis erat eis parabola, ut per visibilia ejus invisibilia ejus intellecta conspicerentur.<sup>34</sup>.

Saint Bernard's writings are important not only for his influence on the contemporary spiritual attitudes in his exhortations to his monks, but also because, as has already been noted,<sup>35</sup> his immediate environment was in Clairvaux, in the vicinity of Troyes, the seat of the Counts of Champagne.<sup>36</sup> Saint Bernard, too, outlined a progression in loving. First, the lover loves himself alone:

Et est amor carnalis, quo ante omnia homo diligit seipsum propter seipsum.<sup>37</sup>.

This is equivalent to love at a physical, material level. The lover then loves God through self-interest.<sup>38</sup> He then comes to love God because he realises that God is good:

Iam non propter tuam necessitatem Deum diligimus; ipsi enim gustavimus et scimus quoniam suavis est Dominus.<sup>39</sup>.

Finally, the lover loses self-interest and becomes absorbed in contemplating the goodness of God. Our twelfth-century heroes will not be seen contemplating God in this way. But they have all experienced a certain progression from love of self and its subsequent destructive effects, to completely altruistic love which has parallels in almost contemporary spirituality.

From a discussion by Leclercq on the likelihood of Saint

Bernard's writings reflecting the same themes and attitudes as those in the literature of love which was so common in his neighbourhood,<sup>40</sup> it seems very likely that in writing about the divine love expressed in the Sermones super Cantica, Saint Bernard used the same sources as Chrétien de Troyes:

These two authors wrote with a common cultural background, influenced by the Bible, and by more or less numerous elements taken from the patristic and liturgical traditions as well as from the classical. It is virtually impossible for Chrétien to have ignored Bernard's Song of Songs which had such immediate and wide circulation.<sup>41</sup>

As we consider how Chrétien portrays his heroes' love, we may expect to find elements of the courtly tradition juxtaposed with strong contemporary interest in the spiritual aspects of love.<sup>42</sup> Thus, as we look for a love which is characterised by benevolentia, by a union of hearts and wills, and by the Christian understanding of caritas, we shall note how the hero manifests virtues which are common to both courtly and Christian traditions. And we shall consider an important point made by Leclercq when he sums up the tendencies of love in twelfth-century France:

But both a monk like Bernard and a professional poet such as Chrétien were trying to get over the same truth: there is but one love. There may be a variety of experiences of this love, with God and the human community, or with God, a wife, and the human community. Some of their readers had experienced this variety, others knew only its unity. But these monastic poets and these poetic monks, so to speak, appear to agree on the oneness of love, over and beyond its varieties.<sup>43</sup>

After some discussion about the presentation of love in Le Roman d'Eneas, the principal focus will be on the perfection of love in Chrétien's romances, where the hero is portrayed after the experiences and the lessons of his journey of renewal.

### ENEAS.

In Le Roman d'Eneas, the psychology of loving and the effects of love are closely explored. The author has

continually shown his preoccupation with love at the expense of features which were significant in Vergil's epic. In Helen Laurie's words:

Virgil's Aeneas, the elect of Providence, founder of a people and a civilization, whom we in our tradition find so lacking in romantic interest, has been provided by the twelfth-century poet with just that element, a new emotional life.<sup>44</sup>

This new interest is, doubtless, closer to Ovid than to Vergil.<sup>45</sup> We shall now investigate the qualities of this new 'emotional life,' its symptoms and its power, and we shall endeavour to situate it in the context of twelfth-century literary tastes.

Let us begin by recalling the affair with Dido, for the author, like Vergil, has portrayed the consequences of an illicit love. As in Vergil's epic, this love is not willed by the gods, it makes Dido unfaithful to her vow and places an obstacle between Eneas and his vocation.<sup>46</sup> It lacks the firm basis of benevolentia, for neither Dido nor Eneas can be said to will the good of the other. Rather, this love has its origin in physical desire, and has caused Dido's felenie and Eneas' neglect of his obligations. Such a love, although understandable, as both poets have shown, can only be destructive in its consequences. For as Dido receives the first shaft of love (Eneas, 809), we learn that such love is associated with death and suffering,:

mortal poison la dame boit,  
de son grant duel ne s'aperçoit; (811-12).

just as it is later associated with death and madness:

De mortel rage estoit esprise,  
molt l'angoissot li fous d'amor (1270-71).

After the narration of the tale of Troy, love is personified as Amor, the God of Love (1202-04) whose power is to render Dido helpless.<sup>47</sup> As Anna advises her:

Vos ne poez ancontre Amor. (1373).

For love makes Dido irrational:

Amor l'a fait de sage fole; (1408),

and has caused her to abandon her responsibilities (1413-26). She can think of nothing except her love (1433-44). In the

cave episode, the machinations of the goddesses, Venus and Juno, are not mentioned. Dido suggests the hunting party in order to forget love and its pain rather than to bring about its fulfilment (1445-56). But the manipulating force in this episode is Amor rather than the traditional pagan goddesses.

Eneas, on the other hand, is a passive figure and is, as Rosemarie Jones suggests, a 'puppet, an object for Dido's love-sickness.'<sup>48</sup> For, just as Vergil's Aeneas had gradually to grow into his role as founder of Rome, so Eneas now has to come to life in his role as lover. But he cannot complete this until his love is integrated with his destiny. There is no evidence in the text that Eneas reciprocates Dido's love. After Eneas receives his message, Dido, like Vergil's heroine, refuses to believe in Eneas' heaven-sent mission (1831-36) as she abuses him for his lack of faith to her. But the hatred and wish for vengeance which accompany the death of Vergil's Dido,<sup>49</sup> become, in the twelfth century, an acknowledgement that the heroine has been defeated by love. She not only pardons her lover (2063-67); she dies with his name upon her lips (2117-18). Thus, through this episode, the twelfth-century poet demonstrates the power of the love which dominates this romance.

In Le Roman d'Eneas, familial love loses the significance which Vergil attached to it. Creusa appears as Eneas is about to leave Troy (1179-84) and although he suffers through losing her:

grant duel en oi, puis ne la vi. (1184),  
there is little to evoke the pity and pathos of Vergil's description of this incident. It is significant, however, that the only feature of the Great Wanderings to be included is the reference to Anchises' death (1196). It is not until the meeting in the Other World that Eneas shows any signs of love and longing for his father:

-Peres", ce respont Eneas,  
"ge ne pooie laissier pas  
ne venisse parler a vos,

sovant en estoie angoissos,  
 vostre ymage me destreignoit  
 qui tote nuit m'aparissoit. (2857-62)

There is an attempt at the same futile embrace (2867-72), but there is little sign of this love between father and son being associated with love of the new land in the way that was evident in Vergil's Aeneid.

When the Trojans arrive at Laurentum, we see an example of feudal love as Eneas sends messengers to King Latinus to seek his protection.

au roi Latin les envoia  
 pais et concorde et amor querre,  
 et que segurs fust en sa terre. (3130-32).

But, as Burgess notes, the use of aimer and amor in the feudal sense is totally overwhelmed by their use in the courtly sense.<sup>50</sup>

The affair with Lavine is not only a fine portrayal of the inception of love which dwarfs all other treatment of love in this romance; it also shows Eneas growing into his role as lover. At first, it is a question of marriage rather than love. King Latinus understands that marriage between Eneas and Lavine is approved by the gods (7797-7800), breaks the former agreement with Turnus and recommends that Turnus look elsewhere for a wife (7805-08). From the Roman point of view, Eneas' marriage with Lavine is most appropriate, since it is desired by both the gods and the king. But at this point, it is Turnus who loves Lavine, not Eneas. The queen contrasts the motives of the two warriors before they enter into battle:

"Turnus te vialt avoir, qui t'aimme,  
 et Eneas sor lui te claimme  
 et par force te vialt conquerre,  
 mais il lo fet plus por la terre  
 que il ne fait por toe amor;" (7863-67).

After explaining the nature and symptoms of love to Lavine (7900-35), the queen regrets that her daughter cannot reciprocate Turnus' feelings (7935-42).

In the conversation between the queen and Lavine (7900-8020), there is a detailed exposition which includes the definition of love, its nature, its symptoms and its consequences. Its symptoms resemble those of a fever (7917-30; 7957-8001). But a twofold dimension to love is evident here:

"Soëf trait mal qui l'acostume;  
se il i a un pou de mal,  
li biens s'en suist tot par igal." (7958-60).

Not only is it a source of pain and joy; it heals even as it wounds:

"Molt doit l'en bien sofrir d'Amor,  
qui navre et sane an un jor." (7991-92).

Yet, although love is a sickness and causes anguish, it is constantly personified as Amor, the god of love, who ennobles those who come into contact with him.<sup>51</sup> Laurie notes his effect on Eneas:

Access to the enchanted circle of the God of Love made Eneas think of his previous state as vilenie.<sup>52</sup>

These characteristics of love are seen, first of all, as Lavine begins to experience love's symptoms. As a result of her contemplation of Eneas (8047-56), Lavine is struck by the shaft of love (8057; 8065-67) and finds that, like Dido, she is powerless (8061). She becomes totally absorbed in her love of Eneas:

Quant voit que eschiver n'en puet,  
vers Eneam a atorné  
tut sun corage et son pansé: (8062-64).

and as she begins to show the traditional symptoms of love (8073-94), she recalls the queen's teaching about the pain of love and its cure (8092-8114). She is immediately aware of opposition and of the need for secrecy because of her mother's disapproval of Eneas (8127-31). Love is once more seen as irrational, for in spite of the queen's warnings that Eneas is prone to unnatural vices (8603-08),<sup>53</sup> Lavine confesses herself to be incapable of changing her heart (8622; 8624). Thus, love is seen to be more powerful than human logic. As Lavine yields helplessly to the power of love (8655-65), she debates



within herself until she is impelled to declare her feelings in her letter to Eneas (8769-97). It is surely no accident that the letter is attached to 'la fleche ... d'une saiete barbelee;' (8808-09), for with the arrow, there is recalled the shaft of Amor which here strikes Eneas.

Eneas is immediately filled with great joy, but respects the need for secrecy (8871-74). Love begins to take possession of him:

amors por la fille lo roi  
l'ot molt tost mis an grant esfroi. (8911-12).

He experiences, in his turn, the loss of appetite (8913), the pain (8921), the sleeplessness (8925), the sighing (8926-29), the alternating sensations of hot and cold (8932-34). He is now totally in the power of Cupid:

Cupido, qui ert deus d'amor,  
qui ses freres charnaus estoit,  
an sa baillie lo tenoit; (8922-24).

An important insight into the power of love is given when, during his analysis of his feelings, Eneas thinks back to his relationship with Dido:

"se ge aüsse tel corage  
vers la raine de Cartage,  
qui tant m'ama qu'el s'en ocist,  
ja mes cuers de li ne partist;  
ne la guerpisse a mon vivant,  
se ge saüsse d'amor tant  
com j'ai des ier matin apris." (9039-45).

If he had fully reciprocated Dido's love and experienced such feelings for her as he now experiences for Lavine, Eneas would have been forced to yield to love's power and would have failed in his vocation. Thus Eneas recognises that for him, love must be fused with destiny.

Before Eneas enters into combat with Turnus, he meditates on the strength of love with its ideals of service:

"quant de s'amor me fait lo don,  
molt m'en metrai ainz a bandon  
ou de la mort ou de la vie  
hardemant me done m'amie." (9053-56).

For love has endowed him with extraordinary powers:

"quatre mains m'a doné Amor." (9060).

Eneas' soliloquy in praise of love complements the description of his incipient love symptoms (8930-39). For we see here a love which gives strength, inflames the will and incites the hero to undertake mighty deeds. This is very different from the kind of love which caused Eneas to delay at Carthage and to forget his responsibilities. It is, moreover, a reciprocal love, as can be seen from the following passage with its expressions of reciprocity:

Cil regarde sovant s'amie,  
 ele tendoit sa main vers lui;  
 signe faisoient anbedui:  
 l'uns ne pot pas l'autre oblier,  
 ne pooient lor cors oster,  
 que l'uns de l'autre ne pansast.  
 N'i avoit cel qui rien dotast,  
 ne il d'ele, n'ele de lui,  
 qu'il ne s'entramassent andui. (9266-74).

Thus, there is not the unreasoning passion shown by Dido, but an attraction whereby each becomes completely obsessed by the thought of the other. Cormier refers to the Dido affair in the following terms:

Unambiguous, erotic, and obsessive, each possessed the other without community of souls, without any bond of rule between them, with no similar ideals or union of resemblances. Eneas, moreover, as noticed already, took his pleasure with Dido without any probes, without self-interrogations.<sup>54</sup>

Now, the delicate portrayal of the inception of Lavine's love have been echoed by Eneas' love-symptoms, his soliloquies and inward debating and reasoning. Whereas there was emphasis on physical union, in the affair with Dido, the focus is now on the union of hearts and wills.

This is, furthermore, a love in which adversity has proved wholesome. Eneas is presented in an unfavourable light when he becomes so stricken with the symptoms of love that he is unable to appear in battle (9109-29). We have seen how Eneas' apparent refusal of Lavine's love strengthens the suspicions that

she has held concerning him (9130-34) and how Lavine loves him in spite of her suspicions (9189-95).<sup>55</sup> We have seen, too, that love has grown through misunderstanding and the subsequent need for reconciliation.<sup>56</sup> For from the anguish that each suffers from the misunderstanding and separation (9839-9914; 9918-68), there emerges the knowledge that repentance (9971-76) and reconciliation bring growth in love:

Molt par est bone l'acordance,  
 quant il i a eü meslance,  
 et molt rest grant angenemant  
 d'amor un po de maltalant. (9977-80).

The treatment of love in this romance is, doubtless, the most important difference between the Aeneid and Le Roman d'Eneas. It is a significant early portrayal of the inception, pains and power of love. Helen Laurie comments:

The romance poet, too, would represent people whose fate is bound up with their own exercise of freewill, in a philosophy of love where passion is redirected through the lovers' dependence on the God of Love.<sup>57</sup>

But in this passion and recognition of the dominance of the God of love, there is a remarkable degree of union. For in his marriage with Lavine, Eneas unites the love of his new land and the will of the gods with the love of his bride. This love, therefore, transcends human relationship as it is associated, in a sense, with divine love.

#### CHRETIEN DE TROYES.

Just as the fault of Chrétien's heroes was, in general, caused by or associated with a flaw which is somehow indicated in the titles of the romances,<sup>58</sup> so the hero attains a high degree of self-discovery through this flaw. Furthermore, these titles also indicate the means by which the hero will, in different ways, attain the perfection of his love. We shall now consider certain aspects of love in Erec et Enide.

EREC.

The pattern of love in the quest of Erec and Enide is clearly discernible in relation to the pattern of the romance as a whole, and gives unity to the structure. But although there is a progression from joy acquired, joy lost to joy regained,<sup>59</sup> the emphasis is placed also on the pattern of incipient love, growing love and perfect love. For, during the time of growing love, whereas the initial joy changes to Erec's anger and aloofness and Enide's fear and grief, love is hidden and tested rather than lost, as each evokes a deeper response from the other.

Love surrounds the beginning of Erec's quest. The hunt for the White Stag (36-124) and the contest for the Sparrowhawk (728-1004) are both associated with love.<sup>60</sup> There are expressions of reciprocal kindness between Erec and the queen who encourages his courteous offer to escort her by saying:

"Biax amis, vostre conpaignie  
aim je molt, ce saichiez de voir:  
je ne puis pas meillor avoir." (112-14).

Enide is seen, at first, against a background of familial love where her father's love for her is evident.

"Quant ge ai delez moi ma fille,  
tot le mont ne pris une bille;  
c'est mes deduiz, c'est mes deporz,  
c'est mes solaz et mes conforz,  
c'est mes avoires et mes tresors,  
je n'ain tant rien come son cors." (541-46).

Such love offers a high degree of comfort and support. In spite of their grief at their daughter's departure (1438-58), Enide's parents are consoled by the thought:

que lor fille an tel leu aloit  
don grant enors lor avandroit. (1449-50)

The love between Erec and Enide is, doubtless, fostered by the vavassour's instructions for showing suitable hospitality to Erec and by the welcoming atmosphere which Enide helps to create. But at this stage, the inception of this love is implied rather than stated directly. The first thing we

know about Enide is her beauty (398) which is remarkable in spite of her poverty:

povre estoit la robe dehors,  
mes desoz estoit biax li cors. (409-10).

The introduction of Nature as both witness to Enide's beauty (411-36) and as creator together with God, prepares the way for Erec to be attracted by her:

Erec d'autre part s'esbahi,  
quant an li si grant biauté vit. (448-49).

Enide is not only beautiful; she is extremely lovable and worthy (541-46), and her beauty inspires Erec to undertake the Sparrowhawk contest (639-42). Enide's father is, similarly, impressed by Erec's nobility and background (666-76). Before the contest, the spectators comment on the qualities of the couple (749-72):

"Dex, qui puet cil chevalier estre  
qui la bele pucele adestre?" (763-64)

as Enide's beauty is matched by Erec's fine appearance. In a sense, the Sparrowhawk contest seals the beginning of Erec's love. Real love gives strength in the way that Erec draws strength from the contemplation of his lady (907-12), who prays for him as he fights on her behalf. But as yet, Erec speaks less of love than of the honour shown him by the vavassour who has given him his daughter (1262-66; 1306-08). The conflict of joy and pain which is part of incipient love is not manifested by Erec and Enide. Nor do we see the inner debate concerning the nature of love which was so prominent in the Eneas. But the requirements of love are made quite clear as the narrative unfolds.

Once Erec and Enide have left for Caradigan, Erec's attraction towards his amie is clear. For she is

. . . bele a desmesure,  
saige et cortoise et de bon aire. (1464-65).

Erec rejoices as he contemplates her features in detail:

molt remire son chief le blond,  
 ses ialz rianz et son cler front,  
 le nes et la face et la boche,  
 don granz dolçors au cuer li toche. (1471-74).

At the same time, Enide contemplates Erec:

mes ne remire mie mains  
 la dameisele le vasal  
 de boen voel et de cuer leal  
 qu'il feisoit li par contançon. (1478-81).

And we see that Erec is attracted by Enide's beauty of both face and body (1475-77), whereas Enide is attracted by his qualities of heart and mind. Yet Chrétien stresses the corteisie debonereté and biauté with which each is endowed, and we learn that they are a particularly well-matched couple (1484-91). But, as Burgess notes, beauty, if it remains predominantly on a visual level, stimulates lust.<sup>61</sup> Although evidence is given of the union of minds and hearts which is considered necessary for lovers,:

molt estoient d'igal corage  
 et molt avenoient ansamble;  
 li uns a l'autre son cuer anble; (1492-94),

Chrétien's description of the inception of Erec's love remains predominantly on the physical level. But he implies that a deeper union is likely. For, in the first place, as Chrétien uses the Biblical simile of the thirsting stag and the épervier, he compares this love with the longing of the soul for union with God:

Cers chaciez qui de soif alainne  
 ne desirre tant la fontaine,  
 n'espreviers ne vient a reclain  
 si volantiers quant il a fain,  
 que plus volantiers n'i venissent,  
 einçois que il s'antre tenissent. (2027-32).

By introducing the process by which love is transmitted through the eyes to the heart (2037-39), Chrétien suggests the inception of a true total love. Thus, although Chrétien dwells on the physical nature of the union, as he describes the wedding night, he implies that a deeper, total union is to come. But, during the early days of the marriage, the love of Erec and Enide appears to remain entirely on a physical level.

Thus, in Burgess' words:

As long as the love he bears for Enide remains physical and superficial it will act as a stumbling-block in Erec's development as a knight.<sup>62</sup>

And Erec's recreantise has shown the disastrous effects of such a limited view of love.

The journey of Erec and Enide is a stage of growing love, which can be paralleled in spiritual love. For in spiritual progression there is initially, a time of joy and consolation as the soul embarks upon its journey to God. This stage is generally followed by a 'dark night' when the soul is deprived of the delights which it had formerly experienced in the presence of God.<sup>63</sup> During this spiritual 'dark night,' a person clings blindly to his goal through faith. He has to rely on his reason rather than on sensible consolation, and thus, has to struggle in darkness of mind and heart. Now, during this journey, Erec acts through reason rather than through emotion. Although when they set out Enide is clad in her best dress, Erec remains apparently unmoved by her beauty.

Tant s'est la dame demantee  
que bien et bel s'est atornee  
de la meilleur robe qu'ele ot;  
mes nule chose ne li plot,  
einçois li dut molt enuier. (2607-11).

He reasons with his father and his people who show signs of emotion as he leaves:

"Seignor, por coi plorez si fort?  
je ne sui pris ne mahaingiez;  
and cest duel rien ne gahaigniez." (2750-52).

Enide, for her part, meditates on the vicissitudes of Fortune and the suffering which God has allowed (2778-90).

"Hé! lasse, fet ele, a grant joie  
m'avoit Dex mise et essauciee,  
or m'a an po d'ore abessiee.  
Fortune, qui m'avoit atreite,  
a tost a lui sa main retreite;" (2778-82).

She soliloquises concerning the robbers (2829-39; 2962-78), always debating inwardly, for she is not allowed to speak to her husband or even to look at him (3003-06). The kind of

blind exile from his love to which Erec condemns Enide at this point, is analogous to the experience of the soul who seeks perfect love of God, yet feels deprived of the comfort of His presence.

Even when the vain count asks permission to sit beside Enide (3286-89), it is difficult from Enide's point of view to tell whether Erec's ready acquiescence is due to his sure knowledge of Enide's love, whether he no longer cares for her, or whether he is merely testing her. For he says to the count:

"Sire, fet il, pas ne me poise.  
Joer et parler vos i loist;  
ne cuidez pas que il m'an poist,  
volantiers congié vos an doing." (3298-3301).

On the other hand, we learn that Enide's love for Erec is so strong that she will deceive the count and mastermind the conspiracy for the next day in order to save her husband's life. Thus, throughout this stage of the journey, Enide's love gives her the power to withstand Erec's threats and the wit to elude the count's enticements. It is not until after Erec has defeated Cadoc's oppressors and apparently laid down his life for another (4564-97; 4815-21), that this stage of love is completed. Through this time of Enide's inner debate and her testing, while Erec remains aloof, growth has taken place. There is, therefore, a deep significance in Erec's words as, after he has slain the count, he proclaims his love for Enide:

. . . "Ma dolce suer,  
bien vos ai de tot essaiee.  
Or ne soiez plus esmaiee  
c'or vos aim plus qu'ainz mes ne fis,  
et je resui certains et fis  
que vos m'amez parfitemant." (4882-87).

In this last episode, Erec shows that he has attained a high degree of the love which is required for Christian knight, husband and true lover. As a knight, Erec has bravely faced situations that have arisen by being prepared to lay down his life for people in distress. Thus, he has shown love by action to the extent of going beyond his duty. Erec's changed



attitude as a husband is discernible in the terms with which he addresses Enide. When the couple departed from Carnant, for example, Erec addressed Enide in formal terms: "Dame, por coi demorez tant?" (2671). During the early part of the journey, when he was forbidding her to speak and uttering threats, Erec used no term of address to Enide (2764-2771; 2845-52; 2993-3006). Thus, he emphasised his role as the dominant husband. Now he uses terms of great affection, for 'suer' can be used by a lover towards his lady as well as by a husband towards his wife.<sup>64</sup> As a lover, Erec declares his love to his lady who is his wife and promises future service (4888-90). Thus, Erec has achieved a love which, being both balanced and integrated, is the sign of the 'wholeness' which he has achieved.

This love is mutual. It has been tested by Erec's acts of chivalry and Enide's sufferings, and each has had the opportunity of proving the worth of the other. At Pointurie, as they find pleasure in physical union once more, each strives to please the other (5206-07). But physical pleasure is accompanied by a new understanding. Not only has love grown through pain; it has also overcome suffering (5209-10). Before he undertakes the Joie de la Cort adventure, Erec encourages Enide and tries to calm her fear:

. . . "Bele douce suer,  
gentix dame læax et sage,  
bien conuis tot vostre corage:" (5784-86).

At Carnant, Erec had insisted that Enide tell him of her anxiety (2511-19). Now, as he praises her beauty and her goodness as he addresses her, Erec no longer needs an explanation of her distress, but with a gentleness which he had concealed during the journey, he speaks with understanding:

"peor avez grant, bien le voi,  
si ne savez ancor por coi." (5787-88).

As Erec tries to allay Enide's fears for him, he shows a new superiority and a new protectiveness in his desire to comfort her:

"Douce dame, ancor ne savez  
 que ce sera, ne ge nel sai:  
 de neant estes an esmai,  
 car bien sachiez seüremant,  
 s'an moi n'avoit de hardemant  
 fors tant con vostre amors m'an baille,  
 ne crienbroie je an bataille,  
 cors a cors, nul home vivant." (5802-09).

Zara P. Zaddy has commented on this passage:

It is obvious that Enide is no longer a mere bed-fellow for Erec, but a consort whose worth he has come to recognise and whose counsels he will henceforth be prepared to listen to and accept.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, as Enide has to let Erec depart along on this final adventure, emphasis is now on the attitudes of mind and heart which the couple share. Frappier comments on the lesson to be found in the Joie de la Cort:

L'Amour embellit la vie, mais il ne doit pas être toute la vie, ni devenir une passion dévastatrice.<sup>66</sup>

It is the strength of a truly balanced love, the 'source of goodness, the effect of goodness, and goodness itself'<sup>67</sup> which enables Erec to defeat Mabonagrain and to restore balance to his relationship with his amie. In Leclercq's words:

The immoral aspect of this liaison is intended to highlight the change which has come over the love relationship of the hero and heroine. Erec's victory over the obsessed knight confirms his victory over self in the course of the romance.<sup>68</sup>

Furthermore, familial love has a role here, also, as Enide and her cousin exchange confidences, and Enide's selfless devotion to her husband helps, in a sense, to restore new life and new freedom to her cousin.

### YVAIN.

The theme of love is introduced early in Le Chevalier au Lion and discussed in the prologue as a source of goodness as well as a cause of distress (Le Chevalier au lion, 13-16). But love is no longer properly understood or honourably practised at King Arthur's court:

Ore est amors tornee a fable  
 Por ce que cil, qui rien n'an santent,  
 Dient qu'il aiment, mes il mantent,  
 Et cil fable et mançonge an font,  
 Qui s'an vantent et droit n'i ont. (24-28).

The reader of this romance can, therefore, expect to find that the hero achieves a high degree of love only when he has experienced, somehow, love which is imperfect, or improperly understood. In this romance, too, an interesting study of the psychology of loving is presented, together with a description of the inception of love, as Yvain falls in love with Laudine and is forced to acknowledge the power of love.

In the early sections of the work, Chrétien has portrayed the progress of the symptoms of incipient love (1339-1506), and the power of love over human reason. Incipient love is described in great detail. While he is lamenting that he has no evidence of his defeat of Esclados to show Ké (1339-55), Yvain is stricken by love which possesses him so fully that there is no further mention of the bitterness which he feels towards Ké:

Celes ranposnes a sejour  
 Li sont el cuer batanz et fresches,  
 Mes de son cucre et de ses bresches  
 Li radoucist' novele Amors,  
 Qui par sa terre a fet son cors,  
 S'a tote sa proie acoillie. (1354-59).

As Yvain now comes completely into the power of love, he is set a task which is apparently impossible, for his lady is unattainable. Chrétien states the paradox:

S'aimme la rien, qui plus le het. (1361).

Thus, the contrary nature of love is immediately evident. Love has the power to avenge Esclados' death (1360-74) for it will cause conflict and suffering against which the victim has neither the ability nor the weapons to defend himself. Love immediately attacks through the eyes which contemplate the loved one, and enters the heart (1367-68).<sup>69</sup> The blows of love are far more devastating than an enemy's attack, for the duration of love's pangs cannot be predicted, and the victim need not

necessarily expect to be cured (1369-74). This is the wound which afflicts Yvain and puts him totally in love's power.

Cele plaie a mes sire Yvains,  
Dont il ne sera ja mes sains;  
Qu'Amors s'est tote a lui randue. (1375-77).

Love chooses its victims indiscriminately (1386-90), and although it inverts and confuses normal, logical values, it has, here, chosen a worthy victim:

Mes or n'a ele pas fet ceu,  
Ainz s'est logiee an un franc leu,  
Don nus ne li puet feire tort. (1403-05).

As Yvain watches Laudine grieving, he is moved by pity, but despairs of ever winning her love. He gains hope, however, as he tells himself about woman's traditional inconstancy:

D' "ore androit" ai je dit que sages;  
Que fame a plus de mil corages. (1435-36).

We learn, now, that love is highly exacting and that it transcends normal enmity:

"Ancois amerai m'anemie;  
Que 'je ne la doi pas haïr,  
Se je ne vuel Amor traïr." (1450-52).

It abides by no rules except its own caprices:

Ce qu'Amors viaut, doi je amer. (1453).

But is Laudine's beauty that attracts Yvain (1462-65) and as he contemplates her, his emotions alter from pity at her sorrow (1465-74), to wonder at the damage which she is inflicting on her beautiful features and finally, to wonder at her beauty:

Don fust si granz biautez venue?  
Ja la fist Des de sa main nue,  
Por Nature feire muser. (1497-99).

Here, too, Chrétien portrays a love which, although fostered by pity, is inspired only by superficial appearances and therefore, amounts only to infatuation.<sup>11</sup> There is no question of benevolentia, or any suggestion of caritas, or union of hearts and wills. Laudine accepts Yvain because of his impressive lineage (1815-18) and because of the need for a defender for the fountain. It is obviously to her own advantage to marry her husband's slayer, since he has proved to be the better knight. But there is nothing, as yet, to show that she loves him.

The basis of love is, therefore, insecure. In Topsfield's words: He (Yvain) lives in a state of illusion about himself and love and other people, and his words, in Chrétien's phrase, are like the wind that blows (158), for as yet they have no place in the heart.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, this love has not yet been tested. An important requirement for true love is the service d'amour which demands that a knight should win his lady only after undergoing many trials to prove his worthiness. Yvain, on the other hand, wins Laudine by a simple declaration and promise of future service. Diverres has noted:

Yet Yvain wins Laudine's hand without submitting to any test; he does not have to show that his love is inspiring in him greater courtesy and prowess.<sup>73</sup>

Thus, although by falling in love with Laudine at first sight, Yvain has found the way to true chivalry, with its obligations of service, he does not yet understand the exacting nature of love.

The lion's function as Yvain's companion on his journey of renewal has already been noted.<sup>74</sup> But it is also the sign of Yvain's love, his alter ego, in the sense that Enide is to Erec. It signifies the attitude which a vassal ought to pay his liege-lord (3393-98) and adds perpetual devotion to humility:

Et li lions lez lui costoie;  
Que ja mes ne s'an partira,  
Toz jorz mes avuec lui ira;  
Que servir et garder le viaut. (3412-15).

As Topsfield has commented:

In love the lion demonstrates the qualities which Yvain lacks: generosity, care for others and the rejection of self-indulgence. So the lion denies his hunger, offers Yvain food (3471-75), and like Enide, stands guard over his horse.<sup>75</sup>

The lion is, therefore, the composite symbol of fully integrated love, and represents the dedicated service of the knight, the devotion of the lover and the charity of the Christian. Thus, Yvain has constantly before him an image of what he should strive to be.<sup>76</sup>

The point at which Yvain attains perfect love is not clear, but there is no doubt about the effect of his growth in charity. Yvain has consistently shown love for his neighbour, not by words, but by deeds:

Non diligamus verbo, neque lingua, sed opere et veritate.  
(I John, 111 : 18).

There is no debate concerning the justice of Lunete's cause. Once he understands that she needs him he is quick to offer his services (3721-31), although he is to learn that he will be unfairly matched against his adversaries. In doing so, he is offering his life for a friend, for, as Lunete warns him:

"Et neporquant je vos depri,  
Que ja por moi ne reveigniez,  
Ne vuel pas, que vos anpreigniez  
Bataille si tres felensse.  
Vostre merci de la promesse,  
Que volantiers la ferieez,  
Mes trestot quites an soieez!" (3736-42).

Yvain undertakes the defence of other oppressed people in the same spirit, as he prepares to lay down his life for Gauvain's nieces and nephews (3770-4312), the dispossessed younger daughter (5095-5106), the embroideresses at Pesme Aventure. Thus, Yvain gradually perfects the service d'amour which he should have been practising before his earlier wooing of Laudine.

Let us now look at the scene of reconciliation. This is prompted not so much by hope and confidence as by despair. For once his true identity as Yvain is known, after the encounter with Gauvain, Yvain's separation from King Arthur's court and his former way of life is over. He must now either be reconciled with Laudine or die of misery:

"Mes sire Yvains, qui sanz retor  
Avoit son cuer mis an amor,  
Vit bien, que durer ne porroit,  
Mes por amor an fin morroit,  
Se sa dame, n'avoit merci  
De lui; qu'il se moroit por li. (6511-16).

Despair now proves stronger than the shame which has been holding him back, although this is a negative motive for taking such a decisive step, as Zaddy comments,<sup>77</sup> Yvain's resolution shows the

power of love which overcomes shame and inspires courage.

But Yvain does not take this step alone. As Yvain approaches the Fountain, the role of the lion is clear:

Mes avuec lui son lion ot,  
Qui onques an tote sa vie  
Ne vost leissier sa compaignie (6530-32).

The lion seems to participate in the Fountain adventure, as the plural of the verb indicates:

Puis errerent tant que il virent  
La fontaine et plovoir i firent (6533-34).<sup>18</sup>

The lion's presence is noted again as Yvain and Lunete approach Laudine's castle:

Tant qu'au chastel vindrent tuit troi. (6719).

Thus, as he approaches Laudine, Yvain derives strength from the lion, the composite symbol of love, and from Lunete, the symbol of wholesome friendship, who has experienced for herself the effect of Yvain's goodness. She tries to persuade Laudine:

Ains n'eüstes ne ja n'avroiz  
Si buen ami come cestui. (6748-49).

Lunete's request for pardon and peace for Yvain is answered by scornful refusal which emphasises the difficulty of Yvain's task:

Miauz vossisse tote ma vie  
Vanz et orages andurer!  
Et se ne fust de parjurer  
Trop leide chose et trop vilainne,  
Ja mes a moi por nule painne  
Pes ne acorde ne trovast. (6766-71).

When Yvain asks for pardon, however, Laudine, mindful of her oath (6634-58) does hear him favourably. He has proved his surpassing worth as a knight; he has gained a reputation for prompt, generous and skilled service of those in need. Just as Erec applied the lessons of his journey with Enide to the wider society, so Yvain brings the lessons of his journey back to Laudine. In this scene of reconciliation, we see a love which transcends normal enmity and resolutions of hatred, for Laudine grants pardon which in turn, prepares for real love:

Qu'il est amez et chier tenuz  
De sa dame, et ele de lui. (6804-05).

LANCELOT.

The love of Lancelot and Queen Guinevere is the central theme of Le Chevalier de la charrete. But Chrétien presents a view of love which differs from that in his other romances. Familial love has no obvious part in Lancelot's quest. There is no description of incipient love with its sleepless nights, inward torments and symptoms of fever. And although Lancelot has been seen inwardly debating when presented by dilemmas, he progresses towards his lady with a single-mindedness which suggests that his love is well established. The growing or rational aspect of love takes place not by a series of tests, but by the two steps when Lancelot hesitates before climbing into the cart. J.B. Williamson sees two levels of generosity in Lancelot's debate (365-77):

what is best for self, represented by Reason yields to a higher order, what is best for another, depicted by Love.<sup>79</sup>

The steps during which Lancelot deliberates on the course he should take, indicate a final choice by which reason yields to the power of love.

For Lancelot is continually presented as a knight who has attained perfect love. The excellent knightly qualities which were gradually manifested during his journey are due to the high degree of his love. In Lacy's words:

The chivalric ideal developed in this work and pursued by Lancelot is the subordination of all thoughts and enterprises, of pride and prowess, to love.<sup>80</sup>

Furthermore, throughout his journey, Lancelot has given evidence of a love which, because of its selflessness and preoccupation with the loved one, has had the power to overcome pride, evil and suffering.

Lancelot's pursuit of Meleagant and the queen is a constant testimony of his devotion. There is evidence of humility and self-abasement at the Cart episode. As Lancelot contemplates the queen's procession the morning after the episode of the Flaming Lance, he appears to lose consciousness of his surround-



ings (560-64). But even the thought of the queen can precipitate similar reactions. A little later, Lancelot's thoughts are described:

et cil de la charrete panse  
 con cil qui force ne deffanse  
 n'a vers Amors qui le justise;  
 et ses pansers est de tel guise  
 que lui meïsmes en oblie,  
 ne set s'il est, ou s'il n'est mie,  
 ne ne li manbre de son non,  
 ne set s'il est armez ou non,  
 ne set ou va, ne set don vient;  
 de rien nule ne li sovient  
 fors d'une seule, et por celi  
 a mis les autres en obli;  
 a cele seule panse tant  
 qu'il n'ot, ne voit, ne rien n'antant. (711-24).

This is a 'contemplation amoureuse,' a state which, in Ménard's words, is a kind of 'rêve éveillé'.<sup>81</sup> Lancelot does not, however, show the anguish or interior conflict which accompanies incipient love but rather, the total preoccupation of a lover with the thought and memory of his lady. He is so dominated by the power of love (711-13) that he is no longer aware of himself, his surroundings or of the reason for his being where he is (714-719). Margaret Pelan cites this use of oblie (715) as meaning 'to be rooted to a spot, in an hypnotic state,' or 'to fall into a trance.'<sup>82</sup> This is the effect caused sometimes by the thought or sight of the beloved, sometimes by the sight of an object associated with her in the mind of the lover. Thus, the lover here is blind to everything except the thought of his lady. A similar blindness in regard to a high degree of spiritual love is noted by William of Saint-Thierry who describes how, as the soul attains union with God, it loses awareness of its surroundings:

Relicto ergo corpore et corporeis omnibus curis et  
 impedimentis, omnium quae sunt praeter Deum obliviscitur,  
 nihilque praeter Deum attendens, quasi se solam solumque  
 Deum existimans.<sup>83</sup>

This is the reaction of the lover who pursues the loved one with a single-minded commitment.

The reconciliation with the queen differs from that of Chrétien's other heroes so far. As Lancelot, unlike Erec or Yvain, does not yet know the nature of his fault, he does not, at first, experience the same desire to acknowledge his wrongdoing. Rather, after his victory over Meleagant (3937-96), he is hurt by the queen's coldness when he comes into her presence. Neither Lancelot nor Bademaguz can understand the queen's attitude (3947-56; 3982-92). Lancelot, however yields in loving submission to her will:

Ez vos Lancelot trespansé,  
se li respont molt belemant  
a meniere de fin amant:  
"Dame, certes, ce poise moi,  
ne je n'os demander por coi." (3960-64).

After the anguish of the false rumours of death (4157-4399), Lancelot is conducted to the queen's presence (4455-59). Although he states that he does not know of what forfet he is guilty (4480-82), once he has been enlightened, Lancelot professes his readiness to make amends. He thereupon asks for God's help (4490-93), and promises:

"Dame, por Deu, tot or androit  
de moi l'amande an recevez,  
et se vos ja le me devez  
pardonner, por Deu sel me dites." (4494-97).

The queen graciously pardons Lancelot (4498-4500), and the reconciliation scene ends with the promise of the rendez-vous (4506-32) and the anticipation of the joys of the union (4528-32).

At this point, it would be appropriate to consider some features of the ambiguity of Chrétien's presentation of Lancelot. On the one hand Lancelot is, as Lacy has stated:

. . . a virtuous and valorous hero remarkable for his purposeful devotion to the queen and his quest.<sup>84</sup>

This devotion, shown consistently during his quest, has given Lancelot an opportunity to prove a high degree of humility, fidelity, courage, self-forgetfulness and charity. He has been seen at prayer (1840-42) to have frequently invoked God's name and to have stated his belief in God's help (3082-85; 4490-93). Furthermore, he has been seen as a Messianic hero

who has delivered enslaved people from the power of an oppressor.<sup>85</sup> His contemplation of his lady has shown the characteristics of a soul in a high state of prayer. On the other hand, Lancelot seems to be guilty not only of adultery of a particularly serious kind,<sup>86</sup> but also of idolatry, for he prostrates himself before the queen at the beginning of the night of love:

si l'aore et se li ancline,  
car an nul cors saint ne croit tant. (4652-53).

It seems, therefore, that Chrétien has depicted a hero who is outstanding in all respects and that he is condoning both idolatry and adultery, or that he is deliberately allowing serious flaws in the behaviour of an otherwise outstanding knight. In view of Chrétien's clear views on marriage, this seems unlikely. Lacy has commented:

The irony of the poem should cause us to view it with the same degree of detachment with which Chrétien apparently conceived and executed it, and perhaps we should leave his ambiguities intact.<sup>87</sup>

And instead of trying to solve Lancelot's ambiguities, let us, rather, note some parallels. In the first place, as Zara P. Zaddy has shown, in a comparison between the two works,<sup>88</sup> the Chevalier de la Charrete exemplifies in many respects the theory demonstrated by Andreas Capellanus in the De Amore:

Both glorify a love that is extra-marital and frankly sensual. Both insist on respect for women, though they differ over the degree of respect to be shown . . . They agree over the proper conduct of a love affair and the qualities to be required of those who would practise the art of loving. They coincide in their descriptions of the effects of love.<sup>89</sup>

On the other hand, it is possible to see, as Ribard has done, a spiritual symbolism on an exalted Christian plane, where Lancelot is the figure of Christ and Queen Guinevere, the soul.<sup>90</sup> Gallais notes Lancelot's ambiguity:

Lancelot est un nouvel Ulysse (ou un nouvel Orphée, ou un nouvel Enée) en même temps qu'une figure du Christ (le fait que ce soit avec les mains et les pieds en sang qu'il se présente au "royaume dont nul ne revient" pour y délivrer les captifs n'est pas l'un des signes les moins remarquables de cette "analogie."<sup>91</sup>

Perhaps, then, we could see in Lancelot's ambiguity a composite figure who represents a synthesis of a love which is faithful, self-denying, humble, noble and devoted to deeds of charity. In short, we have a knight who personifies all that is best in both courtly and Christian traditions of love.

### PERCEVAL.

In the prologue to Le Conte du Graal, Chrétien introduces charity as the theme of the romance and describes its characteristics. The obligations of charity are stated, as well as its effects. Charity is self-effacing, humble, unobtrusive:

Carité, qui de sa bone oeuvre  
 Pas ne se vante, ançois se coevre,  
 Si que ne le set se cil non  
 Qui Diex et caritez a non. (Le Conte du Graal, 43-46).

Moreover, God dwells in the person who has true charity:

Diex est caritez, et qui vit  
 En carité selonc l'escrit,  
 Sainz Pols le dist et je le lui,  
 Il maint en Dieu, et Diex en lui. (47-50).

This statement resembles Saint John's teaching:

Et diligamus alterutrum, sicut dedit mandatum nobis.  
 Et qui servat mandata eius, in illo manet, et ipse in eo.  
 (I John 111 : 24).

In the twelfth century, William of Saint-Thierry commented on the excellence of charity:

Ipsa (charitas) enim est oculus quo videtur Deus. 92.

But Perceval's attainment of true charity is impeded by his excessive preoccupation with chivalry alone, for throughout his quest, he fails to see that chivalry and charity must be completely integrated.

Basing his interpretation on the hermit's explanation of the strange symbols and characters at the Grail Castle (3191-3297) and of Perceval's family tree (6416-38), David Fowler has postulated that Perceval is constantly faced with two conflicting alternatives: that of charity, represented by his mother and that of chivalry or knightly prowess which is

represented by his father.<sup>93</sup> A high degree of both prowess and charity can be integrated into the one knight as Erec, Yvain and Lancelot have shown. But Perceval's case is somewhat different. Although charity does, at different times dominate over prowess, especially where Perceval's good intentions are concerned, he is easily misled, and seeks prowess for its own sake during most of the romance. Thus, although Perceval's parents are both dead by the time he experiences his principal adventures, familial love will become very important because of the conflict which has to be resolved.

Let us look at the earlier scenes to see how love is presented as Perceval begins his quest. Familial love appears at first as a hindrance rather than as a support. Perceval's mother has clung to him with a possessive love. Perceval understands her primitive instructions concerning knightly and religious practice in terms of superficial appearance and glory rather than love. Fowler comments, concerning Perceval's encounter with the knights in the forest:

The idea here expressed of prowess worshiped by Perceval as if it were the God his mother taught him to love is treated with amused irony. Later on however, as we shall see, this inversion of values will emerge as the fundamental crisis in Perceval's quest for self-realization.<sup>94</sup>

His turning his back on his mother has been condemned as a serious lack of charity.<sup>95</sup> But perhaps we could now add, that in leaving his mother as he did, he is symbolically turning his back on charity in favour of chivalry.

The two scenes where Perceval comes face to face with the beauty of young ladies present a contrast. When he meets the girl in the tent (635-772), he causes disaster through a too literal interpretation of his mother's instructions (816-33). At Belerepeire he has had the benefit of Gornemant's influence, acquits himself so splendidly in battle that he is praised by the defeated enemy (2767-80) and averts the disaster with which Blanche-flor and her people have been threatened. But in

neither episode is there evidence of incipient love in the way that was evident in both Erec and Yvain. Although Chrétien has devoted eighteen lines to describing the beauty of the site of the girls' tent and of the tent itself as it appeared to Perceval (635-52), his hero seems not to notice the appearance of the girl. She is simply 'une pucelete endormie' (671), 'la damoisele' (679), 'pucele' (682; 687), and eventually, 'bele amie' (767). There is no description of her features which might evoke love: Perceval kisses her because, as he says:

"Ma mere m'ensaigna et dist  
Que les puceles saluaise  
En quel que liu que jes trovaisse." (684-86).

Thus, having fulfilled his mother's instructions about the courtesy due to maidens, his preoccupation, once more is chivalry and King Arthur's court.

At Belerepeire, on the other hand, there is an example of love as comfort, and a kind of incipient love which leads to charity. It is clear to all the knights who are present that Perceval and Blancheflor are particularly well suited. The description of Blancheflor's beauty is very similar to that of Enide (1805-23) and evokes the same response to beauty. The bystanders say of the young couple:

"Tant est cil biax et cele bele  
C'onques chevaliers ne pucele  
Si bien n'avindrent mais ensamble,  
Et de l'un et de l'autre samble  
Que Diex l'un por l'autre feïst  
Por che qu'ensamble les meist." (1869-74).

But in spite of their obvious suitability, none of the normal symptoms of love are present. There is no message sent from the eyes to the heart. We do not see Perceval or Blancheflor pale, trembling, inexplicably feverish or sleepless or enduring conflict as a result of the power of love. Blancheflor seeks Perceval's love and counsel as a comfort in her anxiety. But she has to take the initiative, for he is obviously so very inexperienced.

Mais il ne savoit nule rien  
D'amor ne de nule autre rien,

Si s'endormi auques par tens,  
 Qu'il n'estoit de rien en empens. (1941-44).

At the end of this episode, however, after this brief encounter with amor, there is evidence of a new tendency towards charity as Perceval leaves to find his mother. Chrétien's other heroes are reunited with their ladies when they have undergone a time of expiation for their fault. At this stage, Perceval is only dimly aware that he has committed a fault. We may expect that when Perceval has grown in love and awareness of other people, he will retrace his steps over his omissions and that he will come back to claim Blancheflor. <sup>96</sup>.

There are three particular incidents on Perceval's journey which bring him face to face with Christ's love. These are the episode at the Grail Castle (2974-3421), the encounter with the pilgrims on Good Friday (6217-6330) and the time spent with the hermit (6337-6513). M. Lot-Borodine is emphatic in her description of the contents of the Grail:

Le voici donc ce Graal, vase d'or constellé des gemmes les plus rares, les plus précieuses, que nous présente l'épouse du Christ et mère des fidèles. Il répand émanant de lui, un éclat qui éclipse les plus brillants luminaires qui le précèdent. Le poète compare significativement cet éclat à celui de l'astre du jour. Aucune erreur n'est possible sur ce point pour un chrétien: voilà le sol invictus des Anciens, - le Christ de la Présence réelle -; c'est bien ce que nous révèle l'Hostie que le Graal contient. <sup>97</sup>.

But for Perceval with his rudimentary religious education, this experience must remain on a purely apparitional level. He can see only with eyes of flesh and consequently, though fascinated by what he sees, cannot penetrate to the inner reality of the love of Christ in the Eucharist. On the Good Friday, after Perceval has spent five years seeking knightly adventures and is reminded by the pilgrims of Christ's Passion, Chrétien emphasises Perceval's failure as a Christian by alternating the account of his assiduous practice of chivalry with comments on his forgetfulness of his Christian duty.

Cinc fois passa avriels et mais,  
 Ce sont cinc an trestot entier,

Ains que il entrast en mostier,  
Ne Dieu ne sa crois n'aora. (6220-23).

As he recounts Perceval's spectacular exploits (6217-37),  
Chrétien again reminds the reader:

Tot einsi cinc ans emploia  
N'onques de Dieu ne li sovint. (6236-37).

Thus, he has devoted himself completely to performing acts of chivalry for their own sake, so that the love of God from which such actions should result is completely forgotten. But God's love is more faithful, as the account of Christ's Passion shows (6265-91).

The third and most significant encounter with Christ's love takes place at the dwelling of Perceval's uncle. Perceval is helped to recognise his forgetfulness and to seek reconciliation. As in Chrétien's other romances, once any kind of reconciliation has been sought, it is granted, the hero is strengthened in regard to the love which he has been seeking, and some kind of union is evident. This time, however, it is the love of Christ in the Eucharist which signifies the true ἀγάπη or unity of love among believers. The apparition at the Grail Castle has now given way to reality.

Issi Perchevax reconnut  
Que Diex el vendredi rechut  
Mort et si fu crucefiiez.  
A le Pasque communiiez  
Fu Perchevax molt dignement. (6509-13).

Thus, the major liturgical feast is at the end of this part of Perceval's career, but with the account of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ, it indeed signifies a new beginning, as we recall the words of the prologue: 'et qui vit/En carité . . . Il maint en Dieu, et Diex en lui.' (47-50). Lot-Borodine has commented on this incident:

C'est bien ici l'amour unitif, la Caritas du Sacrifice consomme qui conforme dans le Sacrement le communiant au Christ vivant, au Christ ressuscité. Ainsi seulement, prendra forme et force dans l'âme régénérée l'exhortation du saint vieillard qui tient en trois mots: "Dieu croi, Dieu aime, Dieu adore", véritable crescendo spirituel, reçu avec le viatique. L'initiation propre,



la voilà; c'est la Grâce renversant le dernier obstacle à sa libre expansion, ouvrant la vie et rendant la pleine liberté au vouloir humain.<sup>38</sup>

It is not possible to predict Perceval's future, because of the unfinished nature of the romance. But it is possible to predict a new stage in his love. This is the end of the sterile chivalry which practised spectacular deeds for their own sake and the beginning of a chivalry founded on love.

### LOVE.

Love has played an essential part in the quests of all our heroes, but different emphases have, inevitably been found. Let us firstly consider some of the types of love which have been noted. Familial love surrounds the quests of the classical heroes. Achilles' mother has frequently acted as helper, intercessor and confidante; he is brought back to humanity and eventually, to a kind of peace, when Priam reminds him of his old father. Odysseus is kept resolutely on his quest by the thought of his family at Ithaca; Aeneas learns the meaning of his quest and the extent of his task from his father Anchises, and his love for his father becomes assimilated into his love for his new land. The twelfth-century heroes do not, in general, show such close association with their families. Anchises does not have the same powerful effect on Eneas, for his association with the new land is less evident. For Chrétien's heroes, familial love assumes other roles according to the experience of the hero. There is evidence of strong affection shared in the families of both Erec and Enide. Although parents are not directly instrumental in the quest of the young couple, parental support is present at several principal stages: the initial departure for King Arthur's court (Erec, 1303-1458), the wedding (1846-64), the departure from Carnant (2693-2761), the coronation (6572-75). Enide's cousin, at the Joie de la Cort is, in a sense, a foil for Enide's goodness and selflessness. On the other hand, we know from the text of Le Chevalier au lion that Yvain is the son of

Urien, but there is no mention of any love shared between father and son or of any parental support. In Le Chevalier de la charrete, the queen is the only object of Lancelot's love. Nothing is known about Lancelot's family in this romance. Indeed, the absence of all other ties, including friendship, enhances the effect of Lancelot's single-minded commitment to his lady. There is much more evidence of familial love in Le Conte du Graal. It is connected, in the first place, with Perceval's elementary education. The members of his family who appear at significant episodes during the romance educate and instruct rather than give evidence of loving. The role of Perceval's parents is, however, different again. For as Perceval is reconciled with God (6495-6513), there is a symbolic reconciliation between the prowess and charity which is represented by his father and mother respectively as these essential features of Christian knighthood become absorbed into the love of God.

There is evidence that the early epic heroes love their women. But they do not manifest the symptoms of incipient love or the domination by the god Amor which were so popular among writers who derived their inspiration from Ovid and his contemporaries. If Achilles is seen tossing and turning during a sleepless night, it is because he is grieving for Patroclus (Iliad XXIV, 10-12). Nor do we see much evidence of the symptoms of growing love. Achilles has won his bride as a prize; Odysseus' love for Penelope is long established; in the Aeneid, it is Dido's love which is portrayed, rather than that of Aeneas. On the other hand, the author of the Eneas describes at great length the symptoms of the inception of love, and he frequently comments on love's power. Chrétien's characters, also, show similar symptoms, but we learn from their experience that love on the purely physical level or ἔρως cannot be a foundation for a balanced and lasting relationship. Nor does it help the hero to attain the object of his quest, for it tends to self-love, which has always proved to be destructive.

All the heroes have experienced, in some way, the destructive effects of misplaced or excessive love. Achilles is affected not only by the grasping, selfish love of Agamemnon for Chryseis, but also by the farther-reaching effects of Menelaus' and Paris' love for Helen; Odysseus' destruction of the suitors represents the triumph of true love over lust; Dido's love for Aeneas causes her destruction and threatens to place an obstacle to Aeneas' quest. The same can be said of the twelfth-century version of the story. The love, in all these examples, is misplaced. For the other medieval heroes, love is not so much misplaced as excessive, misunderstood or out of proportion and must be corrected. This is true of Erec's preoccupation with love at the expense of his knightly duties, and Yvain's immature love of Laudine. Lancelot has to take a decisive step to prove the extent of his love, and Perceval has to learn to integrate the obligations of charity with those of chivalry. Thus, during the quest, the real demands and nature of love are tested. But if love is a cause of strife, temptation and misunderstanding, it is also a source of fellowship, and can transform normal enmity into acceptance and peace. For all the heroes, the attaining of a high degree of virtue in the spiritual ascent is signified by a high degree of charity.

What are the qualities of this charity which the heroes attain? Can they be said to anticipate or to reflect the demands of Gospel loving which exacted love of enemies, readiness to lay down a life for a friend, loving 'in deed and in truth'? Do they perform actions beyond those specified by duty, and seek reconciliation? In the classical epics, love of enemies is characterised by benevolentia, together with understanding and acceptance. In the Iliad, this is particularly evident at the climax of the reconciliation with Priam and is implied during Aeneas' quest. But Aeneas' temporary benevolentia towards Turnus is dominated by his pietas towards the gods and consequently by love of his new land and his destiny. There is not so much evidence of the epic heroes willing to 'lay down their lives' for another, as of longing for death in order to appease the

pain of the loss of a loved one. In the performance of heroic deeds, however, they all surpass the requirements of duty. Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas have all been seen, at different stages of their quests, to take up the cause of the oppressed and to defend victims of injustice. At times, this may well have been an appeal to a hero's instinct to increase his ἀρετή. But signs of love in action are often present.

These signs are far more evident among the medieval heroes: Erec's encounter with the giants in the defence of Cadoc, Yvain's encounters in defence of the Dame de Noroison, Lunete and Gauvain's relatives, Perceval's defeat of Clamadeus at Blancheflor's request. Many such episodes have concluded with mercy being shown to a suppliant. In general, these knights slay a defeated enemy only when he is intrinsically evil. Thus the aspect of forgiveness is quite strong in these quests. Erec, Yvain and Lancelot have all experienced a clear reconciliation with their ladies, after the times of separation. For Perceval, the reconciliation is with God.

#### CONCLUSION.

Many aspects of love have been considered in this chapter and have been evident during the hero's quest. In the Homeric epics, familial love and love of friends have had considerable significance, for the hero is supported by his society in his crisis. Close family members are sometimes present to offer comfort, to give information and to intercede. Familial love has been seen in Aeneas' quest, also, but it is closely associated with love of his land. He needs his father's enlightenment and his mother's encouragement. For, like other prominent characters in this epic, Aeneas, at first, loves too much and has to learn the reasoned, moderate love that befits a Roman.

Besides showing the destructive force of misplaced love, the

portrayal of love in the medieval Roman d'Eneas reflects the preoccupation of contemporary writers with the symptoms of incipient love and shows that love is more powerful than all other pursuits. Love gives strength in battle; it has the power to bring about reconciliation; as Amor, it possesses its victims indiscriminately and exacts service. Although caritas is implied, it receives no special treatment in this romance. Love, here, is not only compatible with marriage; marriage and love are compatible with Eneas' destiny.

But for Chrétien's characters, love has required a process of growth. If the hero has, initially, succumbed to infatuation, he has to learn about the true nature of love during the course of his journey, when he is alienated not only from society, but also from the consolation of his lady's love. Not only are his rational faculties explored; he has to prove his worth by his service d'amour. Through docility to the lessons of the journey, the hero attains a high degree of caritas which is signified by the perfection of his amor and the reunion with his lady. In Chrétien's heroes, then, we learn that there is a close connection between amor and caritas, and that the portrayal of physical love is sometimes an image of spiritual love. We learn too, that marriage is generally compatible with love and that a balanced marriage is a desirable result of it. Furthermore there is an obvious progression, similar to that taught by theologians, from love of self to love of God.

There have been features common to both groups of heroes. Let us look once more at Cicero's definition of amicitia:

Est autem amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia consensio.

(De Amicitia VI, 20.)

and let us recall the number of times when there has been some kind of union between the hero, his family, his friends, his lady, his God and even his enemy. All the heroes show some kind of benevolentia which is at the heart of true charity. Beyond the varieties of love described here, there is a noteworthy unity.

In this synthesis there is an apt reflection of the 'wholeness' of the individual, for love concerns not only the whole person; it concerns the individual's relationships with his fellows and with his God.

Notes to Chapter 7.

1. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 532.
2. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, v.1, p.35.
3. C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves, London-Glasgow, 1974, p.85.
4. See supra, p.71.
5. Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, p. 1526.
6. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, v.1, p.36.
7. ed. J.S. Reid, Cambridge, 1931, p.34.
8. Summa Theologiae, 2a 2ae, 23-33. See p.37 for the will as the seat of charity.
9. E.g., Ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου. (Thou shalt love the lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind.) Similarly for love of neighbour: Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτὸν. (Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.) (Matthew XXII:37).
10. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, p. 108.
11. Simone Weil, The Iliad or the Poem of Force, Pendle Hill, 1970, p. 28.
12. See supra, p. 279.
13. The Art of Vergil, p. 166.
14. This is the first feature we learn about Dido, when she is introduced in the epic. For Sychaeus was 'magno miserae dilectus amore,' (Aeneid I, 344).
15. The Art of Vergil, p. 76.
16. See supra, pp. 70-71.
17. Let us remember how this episode affected Saint Augustine: 'Quid enim miserius misero non miserante se ipsum et flente Didonis mortem, quae fiebat amando Aenean, non flente autem mortem suam, quae fiebat non amando te, deus. (Confessions, I, 13).
18. De Substantia Dilectionis, PL 40, col. 845.
19. Ibid., col. 843.
20. Ibid., cols. 843-844.

21. Ibid., col. 845.
22. For fuller discussion, see C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, Oxford, 1936, pp. 1-111; J. Frappier, 'Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, 2, 1959, pp. 135-56; Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et 'Fin' Amors, pp. 199-242; P. Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric, Oxford, 2 vols., 1966, pp. 57-97; J. Frappier, 'D'Amors, Par Amors' Romania, 88, 1967, pp. 433-74; John C. Moore, 'Love in Twelfth-Century France,' Traditio, 24, 1968, pp. 429-43; John F. Benton, 'Clio and Venus: An Historical View of Medieval Love' in The Meaning of Courtly Love, New York, 1968, pp. 19-42; G.S. Burgess, Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire pré-courtois, pp. 141-158; Glynnis M. Cropp, Le Vocabulaire courtois des troubadours de l'époque classique, Geneva, 1975, pp. 379-402.
23. 'Love in Twelfth-Century France,' p. 434.
24. See F.J.E. Raby, 'Amor and Amicitia: A Mediaeval Poem,' Speculum, 40, 1965, pp. 599-610. Amor here tends to be destructive and unruly, whereas amicitia is a beneficial, wholesome love.
25. Sententiarum, Lib. līī, Dist. xxvīīī, PL 192, col. 812.
26. Ibid., col. 817. The Old French Amor, also has a wide variety of meanings, as Frappier shows: ' . . . il désignait tantôt une divinité, quelquefois le dieu Amor, . . . tantôt le sentiment qui unit l'amant à la dame, ou deux amants, voire deux époux, tantôt l'amitié, l'affection, ou, de façon atténuée, la simple bienveillance, la gentillesse, une disposition favorable envers quelqu'un.' 'D'Amors, Par Amors', p. 434.
27. G. Duby, Le Chevalier, la femme et le prêtre, Paris, 1981, pp. 225-31; G.J. Halligan, 'Marriage in Chrétien's Yvain,' AUMLA, 34, 1970, pp. 264-85.
28. In Epistolam ad Corinthios. cap. 7, PL 191, col. 1585.
29. De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, PL 184, col. 379.
30. Ibid., col. 382.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., col. 383.
33. Commentatio ex Bernardo in Cantica Canticorum, PL 184, col. 407.



34. Ibid., col. 411.
35. See supra, p. 28.
36. See John F. Benton, 'The Court of Champagne as a Literary Centre,' Speculum, 36, 1961, pp. 531-91; Jean Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, pp. 109-36.
37. De Diligendo Deo, VIII, 23.
38. Ibid., IX, 26.
39. Ibid., IX, 27.
40. Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, pp. 100-05
41. Ibid., p. 121.
42. See Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric, pp. 75-88.
43. Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, p. 132.
44. 'Eneas and the Lancelot of Chrétien de Troyes', Medium Aevum, 37, 1968, pp. 142-56. See p. 142.
45. For the influence of Ovid in the twelfth century, see: Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, pp. 62-85, Laurie 'Eneas and the Lancelot of Chrétien de Troyes', 143, Jessie Crosland, 'Eneas and the Aeneid,' Modern Language Review, 29, 1934, pp. 282-90.
46. See supra, p. 79.
47. Burgess, Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire précourtois, p. 152.
48. Love in the Romans d'Antiquité, London, 1972, p. 31.
49. cf. Dido's curse in the Aeneid:  
     Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor  
     qui face Dardanios ferroque sequere colonos. (IV, 625-26).
50. Burgess, Contribution, p. 153.
51. Ibid., p. 151.
52. 'Eneas and the Lancelot of Chrétien de Troyes', p. 143.
53. See supra, p. 184.
54. One Heart One Mind, p. 262.
55. See supra, p. 184.

56. See supra, p.80.
57. 'Eneas and the Lancelot of Chrétien de Troyes,' p. 143.
58. See supra, p. 81.
59. See supra, p. 143.
60. For discussion on the White Stag, see Burgess, 'The Theme of Beauty . . . ' pp. 116-17; Thiébaux, The Stag of Love, pp. 108-14.
61. 'The Theme of Beauty,' p. 119.
62. Ibid., p. 120.
63. Cf. Saint Bernard, Sermones super Cantica, LXXVI, I, 1-2. In this commentary on the fruitless search of the Bride for the Spouse, whose love she already possesses, Saint Bernard alludes to the time of darkness which is necessary for the development of faith. This seems an apt parallel for Enide's love at this stage.
64. A. Grisay, G. Lavis, M. Dubois-Stasse, Les Dénominations de la femme dans les anciens textes littéraires français, Gembloux, 1969, p. 207.
65. 'The Romance of Erec and Enide' in Chrétien Studies, Glasgow, 1973, p. 22.
66. Chrétien de Troyes. L'Homme et l'œuvre, p. 102.
67. Moore, 'Love in Twelfth-Century France,' p.434.
68. Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France, p. 131.
69. See Ruth Cline, 'Heart and Eyes,' Romance Philology, 25, 1972, pp. 263-97.
70. Cf. *varium et mutabile semper/femina*. (Aeneid IV, 569-70).
71. See Diverres, 'Yvain's Quest for Chivalric Perfection,' p. 225.
72. Chrétien de Troyes, p. 180.
73. 'Chivalry and fin' amor in Le Chevalier au Lion', in Studies in Medieval Literature and Languages in memory of Frederick Whitehead, Manchester, 1973, pp. 91-116. See p. 110.
74. See supra, pp. 198-99.
75. Chrétien de Troyes, p. 180.

76. On the signs of Yvain's perfection as a knight, and the companionship of the lion, see Frappier, Etude sur Yvain ou Le Chevalier au lion de Chrétien de Troyes, Paris, 1969, pp. 211-16.
77. 'The Question of Yvain's Redemption' in Chrétien Studies, pp. 84-85.
78. My underlining.
79. 'Suicide and Adultery in Le Chevalier de la charrete, Melanges Jeanne Lods du Moyen Age au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1978, pp. 571-87. see p. 576.
80. Norris Lacy, The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes, p. 57.
81. P. Ménard, Le Rire et le sourire dans le roman courtois en France au moyen âge (1150-1250), Geneva, 1969, p. 243.
82. Pelan, 'Old French S'oublier,' p. 70.
83. De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, col. 406.
84. The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes, p. 56.
85. See supra, p. 212.
86. Williamson, 'Suicide and Adultery,' p. 571, Benton, 'Clio and Venus,' pp. 26-28. Benton connects Lancelot's ride in the cart with the crime of having betrayed his feudal lord. ' . . . the knight who rides in a shameful cart is no casual lover, but one who betrays his lord. In terms of the conventional standards of the courts of Champagne, Chrétien's Lancelot was not more of a hero for loving Guinevere, but a felon.' p. 28. This interpretation adds to Lancelot's ambiguity, but detracts from the fullness of his love.
87. The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes, p. 60.
88. 'Le Chevalier de la Charrete' and the De Amore of Andreas Capellanus,' in Studies in Medieval Literature and Languages in Memory of Frederick Whitehead, pp. 363-99).
89. Ibid., p. 397.
90. Chrétien de Troyes: Le Chevalier de la Charrete, pp. 20-22.
91. Perceval et l'initiation, pp. 33-34.
92. De Natura et Dignitate Amoris, col. 390.
93. Prowess and Charity, pp. 55-58.
94. Ibid., p. 11.

95. See supra, p. 97.
96. See Gallais, 'Perceval épousera-t-il Blancheflor,' in Perceval et l'initiation, pp. 193-212.
97. 'Le Conte del Graal et sa présentation symbolique,' Romania, 77, 1956, pp. 235-88. See p. 240.
98. Ibid., pp. 278-79.
99. Gallais has devoted a useful chapter towards exploring the connection between superficial beauty, love of beauty and ultimately, love of the creator of that beauty. 'De l'amour humain à l'amour divin', in Perceval et l'initiation, pp. 176-92.

### Conclusion.

The aims of this thesis were, firstly, to examine certain features of significant literary narratives and to discern what features of the quest of the selected Greek and Roman heroes can be found again in the more spiritual climate of twelfth-century France. Secondly, to note features of these quests which reflect the interests and attitudes of the respective contemporary audiences. Finally, to try to discover ways in which the heroic quest reflects fundamental experiences of mankind in his perpetual searching.

The hero was considered as an individual. He was understood to be the protagonist, whether he represents a race of so-called heroes, as Homer's heroes do, or whether he represents the more sophisticated society portrayed in the twelfth-century French romances. The personal qualities of the hero were studied, particularly those which were evident at his first appearance. All the heroes showed outstanding gifts of body, mind and spirit. But from the time when the hero is first introduced, it is found that his moral integrity predominates over his physical superiority. Whereas the classical heroes were remarkable at their first appearance for their dynamic assertive force, the medieval heroes were presented in a less spectacular way, and their role was not always evident in the opening scenes of the romances. Eneas appeared insignificant in comparison with the theme of love with which the author of the Roman d'Eneas was evidently preoccupied, so that, in this romance, a theme had greater importance than the hero. Chrétien's heroes, as can be expected from a writer who has inherited a long Christian tradition based on humility, were introduced simply and unobtrusively, and their assertiveness and their uniqueness appeared only gradually. Just as the classical heroes strove by

force of arms to preserve their ἀρετή, so the medieval heroes strove to increase 'pris et los'. Thus, personal excellence was highly prized by all the heroes who, in different ways, sought to enhance their reputation.

But despite their outstanding gifts, these heroes all showed some weakness or flaw in their nature, or an imbalance between their physical, rational and spiritual gifts. Through misusing their gifts, or through being betrayed by their own ignorance and weakness, they committed the fault which firstly caused a crisis, then a period of introspection. Although these faults were seldom sins in the theological sense, they obscured the goodness in the heroes' nature and impeded the good which could have otherwise been achieved. Through their faults, the heroes were, in a sense, untrue to themselves, for they delayed reaching their full potential. The heroes were, furthermore, temporarily enslaved by their fault and sometimes, particularly in the case of the epic heroes, they caused havoc in their society. In the medieval romances, the hero's fault affected directly only the individual, his family or his close friends.

A positive aspect to the hero's fault was, however, found. For, in order to re-establish the integrity which was threatened by the fault and to attain a true and lasting balance among his gifts, the hero was forced to undertake a quest which was primarily a search for himself and for 'wholeness'. This quest necessitated some kind of journey of redemption during which the hero had to atone for his fault and grow in virtue. For Odysseus and Aeneas, there is the added dimension of a journey from the past to the future. By

summoning his latent resources to conquer evils of increasing severity, the hero showed that he had developed not only in physical prowess, but also in moral and spiritual worth until, finally, he transcended his human limitations and became an exemplar of man's most admirable qualities.

The hero was also considered in relation to his society. All the heroes are noblemen of the free-born warrior class. But the terms used to designate the heroes alter according to the respective civilisations to which they belong. The society of heroes of the Iliad and the Odyssey has become, in the Aeneid, a society of virii where the qualities ideally considered to be Roman, are evident. In the twelfth-century romances, the term chevalier predominates over other terms, and implies, in addition, that the knights are gentlemen who are bound by the rules of courtoisie which exacts high standards of social and moral behaviour.

Differences were found in the attitude of society towards the hero. Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas were all respected by their society for their leadership. Achilles' withdrawal from battle caused a hopeless confusion among the Achaeans. Odysseus was longed for by the loyal society at Ithaca where his very absence caused havoc. The medieval heroes, being, apparently, no more outstanding than their companions, had to earn society's respect for their prowess. Their leadership qualities emerged only gradually as the nature of their vocation became evident.

All the heroes, through their quests, came to exemplify the values

and the high standards of conduct admired by their society. Consequently, honour is of great importance in the hero's quest. The Homeric heroes, by their excellence in fighting, sought to uphold not only their own personal honour, but also, the honour of their companions. In the Aeneid, the honour of the nascent Rome predominated over all other values. Emphasis was, therefore, placed on qualities which were ideally considered Roman: pietas, industria, temperantia, pax. Thus, Aeneas' conflicts and his quest were centred on consolidating these virtues in his own nature and in exemplifying them for the society which he established. The society portrayed in the medieval romances also admired honour and the skills required to uphold personal reputation. This was evident in the attitude of Erec's companions whose criticism:

que recreant aloit ses sire  
d'armes et de chevalerie; (Erec, 2462-63)

grievously troubled Enide. It was evident, too, in Yvain's resolution to avenge Calogrenant's defeat at the hands of Esclados (Yvain, 589). It was evident, furthermore, in the taunts and questions directed at Lancelot for degrading his personal honour by riding in the cart. (Le Chevalier de la Charrete, 410-17; 2611-13). Finally, on Good Friday, Perceval was chided by the pilgrims for failing to give due honour to God (Le Conte du Graal, 6254-6300).

The hero's fault was sometimes precipitated by a fault in his society. For, in spite of its apparently lofty ideals and laudable outward practices, the society to which a hero belonged was also subject to blindness, ignorance and weakness. Furthermore, it was sometimes enslaved by the intrusion of a hostile force, by a faulty



custom or by adherence to meaningless superficial practices. The hero, therefore, had to challenge society's customs and test its values, at times, coming into conflict with authority. In order to resolve his conflict, the hero had to be temporarily alienated from society. Of the classical heroes, Achilles, at first, came into conflict with his king and became alienated from his society through spite and anger. Odysseus and Aeneas were themselves the authority figures, but were alienated through force of circumstance until their own personal conflicts were resolved and they could rightly assume their authority. In the case of Chrétien's romances, Erec and Yvain deliberately left King Arthur's court in search of aventure, for they could not otherwise test their prowess, develop their potential and see their society in its true perspective. Lancelot was absent from King Arthur's court during most of the romance. Because of the separation which he experienced, he was enabled to encounter forces which only he, because of his uniqueness, could overcome. Except for the early incident at King Arthur's court and the scene of contemplation at Carlion, most of the action of Le Conte du Graal takes place at some distance from King Arthur's court. The hero generally returned to his society as a deliverer who re-established order, but only when he had attained inner calm and order within himself. For, just as, as an individual, he had to transcend his human limitations, so he had to transcend the false limitations of his society.

The hero was also seen in relation to a higher power. Of the classical heroes, Achilles and Aeneas have divine ancestry, and Odysseus is particularly favoured by the gods. Indeed, all are loved by the gods and are readily helped by them. The epithets given to the

Greek heroes praise their likeness to the gods. In the Greek epics, there was no question of any moral obligation to the gods or of any religious code. Vergil's hero, however, was remarkable for his developing pietas, namely, his sense of duty towards the gods which, therefore, entitles him to be called a religious hero.<sup>1</sup> Unlike Saint Alexis and Saint Brendan, the medieval heroes cannot be called religious heroes, but features of their quests can be paralleled with the experiences of the person who is seeking God. On the level of superficial religious practices, the opening scene of the romances coincided with a religious festival, the hero and the principal characters were careful to perform customary religious rites and to pray readily.

But at a deeper level, all the heroes were driven to self-knowledge which has constantly been seen as a primary requirement of those who seek to know God. It has been shown, furthermore, from the writings of William of Saint-Thierry, that other features of the quests of the medieval heroes can be paralleled with the experiences of the person who is sincerely seeking God. The heroes undertook a journey of redemption similar to the sinner's journey back to God, which progressed through the Purgative Way, to the Illuminative Way and ultimately, to the Unitive Way. In this journey, the heroes acted according to the different levels of their nature and showed, progressively, characteristics of the physical, rational and spiritual aspects which form the basis of William's trichotomy. Erec and Yvain portrayed, through analogy, this progression and subsequent attainment of Christian perfection; Erec, through apparent death and resurrection and his very goodness which had the power to conquer evil forces; Yvain, by his role as peacemaker and by his growth in the virtues of humility, pity

and charity which were evident not only in his own actions, but were given added significance by his unity with the lion, the Bestiary symbol of Christ.

Lancelot's spiritual progression is less clearly discernible, for his relationship with Queen Guinevere is ambiguous. He gave proof of virtues to which Christians are encouraged in their search for God: humility, single-mindedness, self-forgetfulness, simplicity. It was possible to see Lancelot as a Messianic figure. His love for Queen Guinevere had, in one interpretation, points of analogy with Christ's love for the Church and therefore, with the perfection of Christian love. But the analogy is not complete, for the great exploits which Lancelot achieved, derived more from the urgency of his quest for the queen than from his perfection as a human being. Once he attained the principal object of his quest, gained possession of the queen and confronted Meleagant, Lancelot appeared to regress. For he failed to see the deception of the dwarf who led him to prison and thus, he was forced, through his imprisonment into a more passive role, leaving Gauvain to return the queen and the prisoners to King Arthur (5316-58). Perhaps, therefore, in spite of the great qualities shown by Lancelot and his apparent perfection as both knight and lover, the ambiguity of his character and his role indicates that Chrétien is here questioning the values of both chivalry and courtly love, suggesting that the perfection of the hero is to be found elsewhere, in seeking spiritual values.

This is borne out in the case of Perceval who, contrasted with Gauvain, the embodiment of worldly chivalry, chose the spiritual values symbolised by the Grail and eventually found the reality of the Eucharist. Perceval progressed quite clearly from the state of the animalis homo to that of the rationalis and to the beginnings

of the spiritualis, so that the final scene at Easter may be considered not only as the end of his quest and his death to himself as a worldly knight, but also as the beginning of a totally new life where only Christian, spiritual values have meaning.

In addition to the relationships which have been noted, the situation of the hero showed features which resemble only approximately the 'rules' proposed by Leyerle.<sup>2</sup> Most of these resemblances were evident during the quest, particularly the hero's relationship to the authority figure, the extent of his commitment, his courage, strength and endurance, the manner of his fighting and the role of Fortune. But Leyerle concentrated on the physical, superficial features of the quest rather than on the rational and spiritual dimensions. There is no suggestion of sin, redemption or consequently, of any growth. Nor, in Leyerle's 'rules', does the hero appear to show any obligation to his society as leader, exemplar or deliverer, or any awareness of a higher power. Thus, in both the classical epic and the medieval romance, we have discussed a much more complete view of the hero as a person and a much wider view of his role than that envisaged by Leyerle.

The heroes all reflected contemporary interests and attitudes. The Homeric heroes exemplified qualities which were known and admired in the so-called 'heroic age'. They exhibited skill in battle, assertiveness, a sense of honour and a consciousness of personal *ἀρετή*. Furthermore, they showed qualities of a high moral nature such as responsibility and a sense of justice; they gave evidence of gentleness, compassion and concern for the weaker members of their society.

They showed many facets of love, including the destructiveness of misplaced ἐπίως the fidelity of a wife, love for a native land, familial love and the love which heals mortal enmity and effects reconciliation. The Homeric heroes, therefore, foreshadowed qualities which are essential to Christian attitudes. Homer's skill in recounting interesting digressions suggests that tales containing elements of mystery, fantasy and romance were popular with his audience. In the Odyssey, the episodes where Odysseus and his men met strange creatures, witches, giants and one-eyed monsters offered relief from the tension of the wanderings and from the pain of separation. Furthermore, in both the Iliad and the Odyssey, there was constant interplay between divine and human activities.

By the time Vergil wrote, literature reflected an increasing interest in emotional conflict, as is evident from the poetry of Catullus whose work appears to have influenced Vergil, and that of Ovid, whose influence was to be seen again in medieval literature. Consequently, while Vergil retained all the elements of Homer's epics and incorporated them into an epic written for a political purpose, he developed the love interest by emphasising the hero's personal conflict. There is also more emphasis placed on the hero's love for the gods and his promptness in serving them. Vergil, therefore, also placed a stronger emphasis on the place of religion, the glory of Rome and the development of Roman ideals, which were exemplified in his hero.

The twelfth-century romances, in their turn, reflected contemporary interests. They are set within a courtly and chivalrous society where, as in the classical epics, prominence was given to the hero's skill, his sense of honour and his consciousness of his personal

worth. But the virtues which were noted in the classical heroes not only reappeared in the medieval romance heroes; as a sign of the goodness which they attained through their quests, the medieval heroes showed that they had the power to conquer evil forces. Through Chrétien's use of both classical and Celtic material, elements of mystery and fantasy frequently appeared. Love was given an added dimension. Whereas in the classical epics love was a strong point of interest and even of conflict, it entirely dominated the medieval romances. A failure to love adequately caused the romance hero's sin; love was the principal object of the hero's quest and the sign of his growth. In the Roman d'Eneas, most of the features of love portrayed in the classical epics are present. They are, however, dwarfed by the detailed description of the nature of love and of the joys and sufferings which are symptoms of its inception.

Chrétien's portrayal of love, however, absorbed most of the notions of love described in the epics and projected in a spectacular way many of the twelfth-century notions concerning love: the psychology of love portrayed in the Roman d'Eneas, the rather ironic treatise of Andreas Capellanus and the preoccupation with nature as a reflection of God's beauty and goodness which was postulated by theologians. But Chrétien's works also reflect the exalted description of the experiences of the bride and the spouse in the Sermones super Cantica where Saint Bernard attempted to describe the nature of divine love in terms which would be understood by young knights who could then learn to apply them to their own spiritual experiences. Thus, in his romances, Chrétien presented a remarkable synthesis of both the courtly and the Christian traditions.

In reflecting the attitudes and interests of their respective societies, the quests of the heroes showed that, in spite of some differences of emphasis, the interests and attitudes of their societies are essentially similar. Furthermore, although the medieval epic presented a view of the hero which was similar in many respects to that of the classical epic hero, the medieval romance, through the hero's quest, expanded the tradition of the classical epic.

In their quests, the heroes followed a pattern which is found frequently in mythology, literature and reality. Elements of this pattern have been noted in the primitive cycle of the Year-God who, appearing as a 'child of promise', a chosen character, commits a serious fault, dies and rises once more. A fundamentally similar pattern has been noted as the 'standard path of the mythological hero' who leaves the known world, overcomes strange, hostile forces and returns to bestow boons upon his fellow men. The subtle evidence of this pattern which appeared in the *Iliad* was reiterated to a greater extent in the Odyssey and the Aeneid. For Odysseus, after his perillous wanderings and confrontations with strange forces returned to bestow order, reconciliation and, in a sense, new life upon the society at Ithaca; Aeneas prepared to initiate a new society at the site of the future Rome. Variations of the same pattern were found in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes where there are clearer stages in the hero's adventures, in his response to the difficulties he encounters and consequently, in his growth as an integrated individual. This growth was exemplified in Erec's progression from a promising knight to a worthy king, in Yvain's progression from an able knight to worthy defender of the Fountain and from Perceval's naive perception of outward symbols to his worthy reception of the reality of Christ in

the Eucharist. By means of the quest, therefore, the integrity of the individual hero was restored and extended to his relationships with others, and order brought again to the society around him.

Let us recall Michael Grant's comment concerning the heroes of the Iliad:

When we read the Iliad, we feel larger than life, freed from the compulsion of present realities. The epic heroes carry us with them in their struggles and sufferings; they are not as we are, yet we follow after them. And so, when they suffer or exult, so do we.<sup>3</sup>

This statement is true of the selected medieval romance heroes, also. For they have portrayed universal human experience to an even greater extent, in the hero's initial promise, his tendency to seek false, unworthy goals, his fault, his search for the true and lasting good and his development as a person. By following the quests of selected heroes of three significant literary periods with their struggles, sufferings and triumphs, we have shown that the quest reflects man's universal need to identify with a character who represents many contemporary aspirations. In spite of his greatness, the hero has appeared to be human, with human frailty and human reactions to self-knowledge and pain. Although, therefore, the hero's weakness identifies him with humanity, his quest underlines the human ability to grow through suffering and the process of liberation from the self, as he attains his triumphs and the fullness of his love. Through his quest, the hero of both the classical epic and the medieval romance is a source of hope for humanity and a sign of the confidence to be placed in man.



Notes to the Conclusion.

1. Sullivan, 'The Spiritual Itinerary of Virgil's Aeneas', p. 150.
2. 'The Game and Play of Hero', see supra, pp. xxxvii-xliii.
3. See Myths of the Greeks and Romans, p. 46. supra, p. 4.

## GLOSSARY

	of Greek terms which have occurred in the text of the thesis. <sup>1.</sup>
ἀγάπη	brotherly love.
ἀκήλητος	to be won by no charms.
ἄλγος	grief, pain, distress.
ἄμαρτάνω ἄμαρτία	to miss the mark, to err, to sin. Hence also sin, failure, fault.
ἀρετή	goodness, prowess, personal reputation.
ἀριστεία	'the deed of him that won the prize', hence, decisive victory.
ἄτασθάλια	blind folly, presumptuous arrogance.
Γινῶθι σεαυτὸν	'know thyself'.
δῖος	lordly.
δύναμις	power, might, strength.
ἔρως	love, mainly in the sense of sexual passion.
ἠθικός	belonging to the morals, ethical, moral.
θεῖος	god-like.
κατάβασις	a going-down, a descent.
λογικός	belonging to reason, rational.
μεγάθυμος	stout-hearted.
μαθήματα	things which have been learned.
μεγαλήτορ	great-hearted.
μῆνις	wrath.
νεκῦια	a magical rite by which ghosts were called up and questioned about the future. This is the title by which the eleventh Book of the <u>Odyssey</u> is known.
νεκυομαντεία	the calling up of spirits from the dead.
πάσχω παθήματα πείσος	to suffer, endure, hence also things which have been suffered and distress.
πνευματικός	of the spirit, spiritual.
πόδας ὠκῦς	swift-footed.
πολύμητις	of many counsels.

πολυρήχανος	abounding in resources.
πολύτροπος	the 'man of many ways'; the resourceful man, i.e. Odysseus.
πιολίπορθος	sacker of cities.
φιλία	love in the sense of friendship, affection.
φυσικός	natural, produced according to the laws of nature.
σωματικός	bodily, physical.
σωφροσύνη	good sense, moderation.
τάλασίφρονος	enduring.
τολμᾶω	to endure. Hence also
πολύτλας	long-suffering.
ὑβρις	wanton violence, outrage, insult.
ψυχικός	of the soul or life; concerned with this world only.

1. The translations of these terms have been taken from Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

<u>CCM</u>	<u>Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale</u>
<u>PL</u>	<u>Migne, J.P., Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Paris, 1844-64.</u>
<u>PMLA</u>	<u>Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America.</u>
<u>TAPA</u>	<u>American Philological Association, Transactions and Proceedings.</u>

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