

# *Malory and Chrétien de Troyes*

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# Malory and Chrétien de Troyes

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The list of Malory's known major sources reached its present state in 1932, when Robert H. Wilson pointed out that one of the episodes in the third of the *Morte Darthur's* eight tales was apparently based on *Perlesvaus*.<sup>1</sup> No source was known for the fourth tale,<sup>2</sup> and there was still room for controversy over the sources of a few isolated episodes elsewhere; but for the remainder of the *Morte Darthur* it was possible almost everywhere to compare Malory's story in detail with a source that he reproduced and modified. The main preoccupation of *Morte Darthur* scholarship in the present century has been making those comparisons, in order to discover Malory's intentions, and his success in achieving them.

The process of making those comparisons, however, has increasingly suggested that Malory from time to time supplemented his major sources with minor ones. This proposition, hardly improbable *a priori*, is made probable by the way in which he at times uses two major sources together: in his last tale and in part of his previous one, for instance, he uses two major sources in parallel, and at other times he supplements one major source from another, so that the second becomes temporarily a minor source to the first.<sup>3</sup> So far scholars have proposed more than two dozen minor sources proper, minor sources, that is, that are never major sources in another part of the *Morte Darthur*.<sup>4</sup> About half of them are Arthurian romances: *Arthur and Merlin*, *The Avowing of Arthur*, *The Awyntyrs of Arthur*, *The Jeast of Sir Gawain*, *Lybeaus Desconus*, *Sir Degrevaunt*, *Sir Gawain and the Carl of Carlisle*, *Sir Launfal*, *Sir Tristrem*, *The Wedding of Sir Gawain*, *Ywain and Gawain*, and the Old French Vulgate *Suite de Merlin*. These have for the most part been suggested as supplying Malory with additional minor characters to fill out his cast list, although the Vulgate *Suite* has been proposed partly to explain why Malory made his Roman War story the second tale in the

*Morte Darthur*. Of the other proposed minor sources, two thirds count as fiction: the romances of *Ipomadon*, *Sir Orfeo*, and *Torrent of Portyngale*, Chaucer's *Troilus*, *Knight's Tale* and *Franklin's Tale*, and Lydgate's 'Complaint of the Black Knight', 'That Now is Hay', *Resoun and Sensuallyte* and *Fall of Princes*. The rest are broadly non-fiction: the source of Juliana Berners's *Book of St Albans* on hunting, Lydgate's *Pageant of Knowledge* on health and wisdom, John Hardyng's *Chronicle* on history, Vegetius's *De re militari* on war, and St Matthew's Gospel on peace. Most of these have been suggested as supplying Malory with various turns of thought or phrase.

The contrast between the major and minor sources is very striking. The major sources are very major: they can be set against the narrative of the *Morte Darthur* for long stretches line for line and sometimes word for word. At times they are even close enough to be used to correct the errors of Malory's scribes. The minor sources on the other hand are very minor - so minor indeed that they have (naturally) been proposed with distinctly varying degrees of conviction. They mostly resemble the *Morte Darthur* in isolated details, and the resemblance is often not close enough to exclude the possibility of coincidence - of a name having come from one of several stories or of another detail having been produced entirely by chance. Nevertheless, the overall pattern has a force of its own. It suggests that Malory's reading went beyond his major sources, and that he supplemented those sources from that reading, sometimes unconsciously, sometimes consciously, and sometimes even systematically.<sup>5</sup>

It is unlikely that we yet have a full list of Malory's minor sources. Some may be permanently beyond our reach: we may never, for instance, learn where Malory found the story of the good knight Sir Marrok, whose wife turned him for seven years into a werewolf.<sup>6</sup> Others, however, are likely to be identifiable, and this present essay will argue that Malory drew on a minor source that, like most, is Arthurian, but unlike any other suggested source, major or minor, is in French verse: Chrétien de Troyes's *Yvain*. Although Malory's major sources are of course predominantly in French prose, the minor sources suggested so far have been almost exclusively in English. That, however, may tell us less about Malory than about the reading habits of modern scholars.

Any suggestion about minor sources must take account of those twin bugbears of textual criticism, coincidence and contamination. This is particularly the case when the suggested source is an Arthurian

romance. Because any two chivalric romances will be set in similar imagined worlds, they are likely to have narrative elements and phrasing in common. Similarly, the very fact that Malory's appetite for such romances could lead him to conflate two of them in a single passage must warn us that the authors of his sources could have done the same before him. There are manifest similarities between Malory's fourth tale, his 'Tale of Sir Gareth' and Chrétien's *Erec*, but in the present state of scholarly disagreement about the tale's major source (if any), it would take a bold man to maintain that the points of similarity were created by Malory working from Chrétien's romance. Much the same must be said of the similarities between the longest episode in Malory's seventh tale, his 'Tale of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere' and Chrétien's *Lancelot*. That episode is based on a part of the French prose *Lancelot* that is based on Chrétien's poem, and although in the standard edition of the *Morte Darthur*, Eugène Vinaver was able to point out one or two passages where Malory might be thought closer to Chrétien than to the prose romance, he did not deny that those similarities might be the product of chance.<sup>7</sup> No other scholar has denied it since Vinaver wrote, nor do I intend to do so here.

Malory's third tale, his 'Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake', however, is a different matter. Nearly all of it is based fairly closely on episodes from the 'Agravaïn' section of the French prose *Lancelot*, but at several points Malory deviates from the *Lancelot* in ways that recall Chrétien's *Yvain*. In one prose *Lancelot* episode,<sup>8</sup> Lancelot approaches a castle through a crowd of people predicting that he is about to come to a bad end, enters the castle, where he is shut in, then attacked by two giants, whom he kills, thereby freeing a group of ladies and damsels and knights from the rule of the giants. They try to make him stay with them, but he gives them the slip and leaves. Malory follows all this quite closely, although he omits the knights, so that his Launcelot frees only 'ladyes and damesels', from whom he parts with ordinary courtesy, since they do not try to compel him to stay.

Malory's story, however, includes one striking detail that is not in the prose *Lancelot*, a detail that would stand out as unusual in any chivalric romance, because it is concerned with physical manual labour. The ladies complain that the giants have kept them prisoner for years, and that during that time they have had to earn their food by weaving various kind of silk. Although there is nothing corresponding to this in the prose *Lancelot*, there is an episode in *Yvain* in which a group of *puceles* tell the hero that they have had to earn their food by

weaving silk and cloth of gold.<sup>9</sup> Vinaver pointed out this similarity years ago in the Commentary to his Malory edition, but he said nothing about cause and effect, apparently because he was still under the influence of a theory he had put forward earlier,<sup>10</sup> that this was one of a group of details that exemplified Malory's distinctively practical cast of mind to such an extent that he must have invented them.

Vinaver might have had second thoughts about that if he had reflected on the full extent of the similarities between Malory and Chrétien in the two passages. The lines he cited from Chrétien mention silk-weaving and the girls' hunger, but Chrétien also makes a good deal of the fact that his weavers are prisoners, as Malory's are: those in the prose *Lancelot* are not. Again, Chrétien's *puceles* complain that knights have often fought the giants and been killed,<sup>11</sup> and Malory's ladies regret that

there myght never knyght have the bettir of thes jyauntis;  
for many fayre knyghtes have assayed, and here have ended.

The prose *Lancelot* never implies that anyone but its hero has fought its giants before.

There is a further discrepancy between the giants in the prose *Lancelot*, who carry swords, and those in Malory, who carry 'horrible clubbys'. A club, said Vinaver, was 'a typically epic weapon which Malory could not have found mentioned in any French romance',<sup>12</sup> from which he deduced that Malory was echoing an episode in the Middle English alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the source of his second tale. Vinaver's premise, however, was unsound. Although giants with clubs cannot be said to be a regular feature of French romance, they appear there occasionally both in prose and verse. Among Arthurian examples we may notice Chrétien's *Yvain* and *Erec*, *Le Bel Inconnu*, the Vulgate prose *Merlin*, the *Livre d'Artus*, and at least one passage from the prose *Lancelot* other than that cited above; and in visual art forms derived from such romances, the illuminations to manuscripts such as Bodleian Rawlinson Q.b.6 and Pierpont Morgan M 805-806, and the Chertsey Arthurian tiles.<sup>13</sup> The giants in *Yvain*, however, have two particular attractions that none of the others can offer. First, the hypothesis that Malory used *Yvain* provides a single explanation for both Malory's deviations from his major source in this episode. Second, the clubs the giants carry are described as

Baston cornu de cornelier  
 Qu'il orent fez apareillier  
 De cuivre, et puis lier d'archal.<sup>14</sup>

Malory habitually abbreviated his French sources, and an author who wanted to abbreviate that complicated description of horned clubs made from the wood of cornelian cherry-trees, covered with copper and wound round with brass, could well have turned to Malory's adjective, *horryble*. The vagueness of *horryble* might have had a particular attraction for Malory, since his grasp of French was not quite as firm as he would have liked people to believe.<sup>15</sup>

Malory could of course have used a version of the prose *Lancelot* that included those details from *Yvain*. However, no such version is known, nor are any other grounds for moving from suggesting that he could to believing that he did. A more plausible intermediary, both because it undeniably exists and because of the overwhelming predominance of English texts among the suggested minor sources, would be *Yvain and Gawain*, the Middle English translation of Chrétien's poem. However, its giants' clubs are in no way horrible - they are simply *ful grete and lang* - and the champions who have previously fought for the imprisoned maidens are dukes, earls, and barons: knights are not mentioned.<sup>16</sup> On present evidence, therefore, we can leave *Yvain and Gawain* out of account too, and consider only Chrétien's poem as we have it.

It is more rewarding to consider how Malory might have come to do what we must assume that he did. The answer may lie in a combination of two factors. First, the two French romances are telling very similar stories: the summary of the prose *Lancelot* episode given above describes the *Yvain* episode almost exactly. Second, Malory liked transferring creditable bits of his sources from other heroes to Launcelot.<sup>17</sup> We may therefore guess that the major source brought the similarly structured minor source to Malory's mind, and prompted him, either from the text or from memory, to improve Launcelot's role. The number and closeness of correspondences suggests a text rather than memory.

A similar process seems to have operated at a second point in Malory's tale as well. At the beginning of the tale, Launcelot and his cousin Lionel ride into a deep forest, where Lionel secretly leaves Launcelot and challenges a huge knight who unhorses him and takes him prisoner. Launcelot's brother Ector, entering the same forest in

search of adventure, is directed to a ford, overhanging which is a tree, from which is suspended a basin of *couper and latyne*, which he is told to strike. He does so, the knight appears, and unhorses and captures him too. Launcelot, after several unrelated adventures, finds his way to the ford, challenges and kills the big knight, and frees the prisoners.<sup>18</sup>

Much of this is very close to the prose *Lancelot*. The most notable difference is that, instead of the basin hanging from the tree over the ford, the French romance describes a fountain that issues through a silver pipe onto a marble slab, and from there into a large vessel made of lead.<sup>19</sup> There would plainly be no point in trying to summon an antagonist by beating on any part of that apparatus, particularly on what corresponds to Malory's copper and pewter basin, the lead vessel full of water. Fortunately, neither of the French characters needs to summon the big knight: he conveniently appears just when he is needed, when Hector is watering his horse at the fountain, and again when Lancelot is approaching his stronghold.

*Yvain*, of course, begins with a famous episode in which a basin hanging from a tree is used, first by the hero's cousin and then by the hero himself to summon a knight to defend a fountain.<sup>20</sup> Among the common features that could have brought *Yvain* to Malory's mind while he was reading the prose *Lancelot* episode, perhaps the most likely are the similarities in the setting of the basin itself. In the prose *Lancelot*, the water of the spring spills onto a marble slab: in *Yvain* it is colder than marble.<sup>21</sup> In the former, three great pine trees overshadow the spring, in the latter, one, said to be the finest pine-tree in the world.<sup>22</sup> The basin that hangs from the tree is used to pour water onto a stone, a huge emerald,<sup>23</sup> corresponding to the marble slab onto which water pours in the prose *Lancelot*. In *Yvain*, pouring water causes remarkable things to happen, the last of which is the appearance of the knight who defends the spring. Like the knight-defender in the prose *Lancelot*, he is said to be formidably large.<sup>24</sup>

Malory's introduction of the basin as a means of summoning the defender of the spring might alone suggest he had *Yvain* in mind, but confirmation is provided by the changes he made elsewhere, particularly to the part of Ector. In the prose *Lancelot*, Hector is directed to the fountain by a distraught damsel who tells him a good deal about Lionel's captor and points out the path he must take to find the man.<sup>25</sup> She does not, however, describe the place he will find at the end of the path, or tell him what to do when he gets there. In *Yvain* by contrast, Calogrenant is given directions by a male guide, a

mysterious *vileins*, the master of the beasts of the forest, who tames wild animals with his bare hands.<sup>26</sup> Malory's Ector's guide is male too, 'a man was lyke a foster.' In the *Morte Darthur*, foresters are responsible not only for trees but for the beasts who live among them, as we see a little later in this tale when a forester turns up with four horse-loads of venison;<sup>27</sup> and the phrase 'was lyke' seems to hint at more than is ever said. It is easy to see Malory's forester as a cut-down version of Chrétien's imposing figure. Calogrenant and Ector each asks if his interlocutor knows of any adventures, and the reply describes the spring or ford, the tree, the basin, and what the knight has to do when he reaches them, ending in each case with a mocking hint of something unpleasant to come. Each knight does as he is told, discovers that what has been hinted at is a violent attack from a huge opponent, puts up a fight, and is defeated. The two stories then drift apart: Ector is taken prisoner, whereas Calogrenant is left to make his way home on foot without his weapons or armour.

Malory agrees with Chrétien against the prose *Lancelot* not only in these facts but also in the order in which they are presented. Apart from following Chrétien, there is no obvious reason why Malory should have departed from the order of events in his major source, which is also the natural order of events, to give so much of the description of the fountain to the 'foster' in advance, rather than narrating it when Ector arrives there.

Malory also agrees with Chrétien against the prose *Lancelot* in some details of wording and tone. Calogrenant and Ector ask about adventures in almost identical phrasing, and the adventures are in each case specifically described as 'nearby'.<sup>28</sup> The huntsman's final words to Calogrenant are that if he escapes from the spring

Tu seras de meillor cheance  
Que chevaliers qui i fuíst onques.<sup>29</sup>

The forester's final words to Ector are that he will get a surprise at the spring

Ellys haste thou the fayreste grace that ever had knyghte  
this many yeres.<sup>30</sup>

We may notice not only the synonyms - *fayreste grace* makes a very good equivalent for *meillor cheance* - but the even more important



identity of tone. There is a grim humour in the intimidating understatement with which each speaker ends, emphasised by the breach of social decorum each commits in addressing a knight in the second person singular. The damsel in the prose *Lancelot*, by contrast, even though she does not think much of Hector's chances against the knight of the fountain, still politely addresses him in the second person plural.<sup>31</sup> Malory relished grim humour of this sort in other places too, not only keeping it when his sources supplied it, but on occasion adding it from a minor source.<sup>32</sup> It is therefore quite likely that this understated humour was one of the things that made him think of this passage as a potential minor source for augmenting the prose *Lancelot*.

The number and closeness of these similarities suggests even more strongly here than with the episode discussed previously that Malory wrote with a copy of *Yvain* in front of him. It is no mere accident, however, that these similarities have not been noticed before. Except perhaps for the single touch of irony in the conversation between Ector and the forester, Malory borrowed nothing of what twentieth-century readers have most valued in Chrétien's romance. To modern eyes, what Malory took from Chrétien in these passages is little more than raw material for romance. He borrowed nothing of Chrétien's distinctive use of the magical or his psychological insight, let alone his astonishing combination of the two, and nothing of what some modern critics have thought to be the views of life that Chrétien's stories embody.

There is, however, a passage elsewhere in Malory's 'Tale of Sir Launcelot' in which Malory may be influenced by the opinions elsewhere. In this third passage, Malory introduces into his story something that would probably have been congenial to Chrétien, but which is certainly at odds with the spirit of most mediaeval French romance, and of his major source in particular. The Malory passage has been much discussed in recent criticism, partly because it is not taken from the prose *Lancelot* and is so much at odds with it. Even though there is no agreement in detail between the passage and Chrétien's poem to prove a relationship of dependence, the agreements with *Yvain* elsewhere make it reasonable to assume that Chrétien's influence is responsible for the anomaly here, and all the more so since this third passage immediately precedes the first passage discussed above, that relating Lancelot's fight against the two giants.

In Malory, as in the prose *Lancelot*, Lancelot rescues a damsel from a renegade knight, after which in the French romance she invites him to stay at her house, where wounds he has suffered in a previous adventure are healed.<sup>33</sup> In Malory, however, after thanking him, she complains that he will not marry, even though there are many ladies who would be very willing to marry him. Lancelot replies

For to be a weddyd man, I thynke hit nat, for than I muste  
couche with hir and leve armys and turnamentis, batellys and  
adventures.

He then goes on to explain why he will not take a mistress either, and he and the damsel part in mutual dissatisfaction.

There are no agreements of detail between the words quoted and *Yvain*, but of course the entire plot of Chrétien's *Yvain*, and of his *Erec* too, turn on the relationship of marriage and chivalry. In *Yvain*, the hero first wins and weds Laudine, then loses her love by staying away pursuing *armys and turnamentis*, and finally wins her back again by means of various *batellys and adventures*. It is this structure that I would suggest prompted Malory to the speech he gives his hero.

Since the influence of *Yvain* is sufficient to explain Lancelot's reply to the damsel in the third tale, to offer any further explanation might be thought an act of supererogation. However, that reply shows an intriguing similarity of detail to Chrétien's other romance of chivalry and marriage, *Erec*. At the turning-point in the plot of *Erec*, when the hero has won and married Énide, Chrétien says

Mes tant l'ama Erec d'amors  
Que d'armes mes ne li chaloit  
Ne a tornoiemant n'aloit  
N'avoit mes soing de tournoier:  
A sa fame volt dosnoier,  
Si an fist s'amie et sa drue.<sup>34</sup>

Chrétien elaborates on this rejection of *armys and turnamentis* at length in a passionate scene between Erec and Énide, during which he emphasises that they are *couched* together in bed, embracing 'like true lovers'.<sup>35</sup> Although the influence of *Yvain* may be a sufficient explanation for the speech about marriage that Malory gives to Lancelot, that scene suggests that we should keep in mind, in addition

to the certainty that Malory was influenced by *Yvain*, the possibility that he was influenced by *Erec* too.<sup>36</sup>

Oddly enough, although there are no agreements of detail between the *Morte Darthur* and *Yvain* in this third episode, there is an agreement of narrative detail between *Yvain* and a passage concerning different characters in a different tale in the *Morte Darthur*. The trick that Laudine's crafty maid Lunete uses in the critical scene in *Yvain* to make her mistress take the hero back again is also used in Malory's first tale by Gawayne to seduce the worthless Ettarde.<sup>37</sup> Since that trick is not found in Malory's major source for the passage,<sup>38</sup> it seems likely to have been suggested to him by *Yvain*, which he may have had in mind because one of the characters whose adventures are interwoven with Gawayne's in that section of his first tale is his Ywayne. Influence from *Yvain* in a different tale with a different main source provides effective confirmation that we should attribute these signs of Chrétien's influence not to chance or to unknown versions of Malory's major sources, but to Malory's use of Chrétien's *Yvain*.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> 'Malory and the *Perlesvaus*', *Modern Philology*, 30 (1932), 13-22; cf. A.E. Hartung, 'Narrative Technique, Characterisation, and the Sources in Malory's "Tale of Sir Lancelot"', *Studies in Philology*, 70 (1973), 252-68; Sir Thomas Malory, *Works*, ed. E. Vinaver and P.J.C. Field, 3 vols. (Oxford 1990), pp.278.18-282.9.

<sup>2</sup> See *Works*, pp.289-363, and P.J.C. Field, 'The Source of Malory's "Tale of Gareth"', in *Aspects of Malory*, ed. T. Takamiya and D. Brewer (Cambridge 1981), pp.57-70.

<sup>3</sup> Malory seems to have had the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the major source of his second tale, in mind from time to time during his last tale, and the stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur*, one of the two major sources of his last tale, in mind during his first: cf. *Works*, pp.1242.25, 1259.9-21, *Morte Arthure*, ed. M. Hamel (New York 1984), lines 3216-17 (and cf. 3422-36), 3875-85; R.H. Wilson, 'Malory's Early Knowledge of Arthurian Romance', *University of Texas Studies in English*, 29 (1950), 38 and passim. Again, when working up the 'Fair Maid of Ascolat' episode in his seventh tale, he seems perhaps unconsciously to have recalled details from the French prose *Tristan*, source of his fifth tale, and the French prose *Lancelot*, source of his third; Earl R. Anderson, 'Malory's Fair Maid of Ascolat', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 87 (1986), 237-54, esp. 241; Terence McCarthy, *Reading the Morte Darthur* (Cambridge 1988), pp.162-64.

<sup>4</sup> See P.J.C. Field, 'Malory's Minor Sources', *Notes & Queries*, 224 (1979), 107-110; Edward D. Kennedy, 'Malory and His English Sources', in *Aspects*, pp.27-55; *Works*, p.1469; Anderson, pp.252-54; Felicity Riddy, *Sir Thomas Malory* (Leiden 1987), p.142n; and John Withrington,

'The Arthurian Epitaph in Malory's *Morte Darthur*', *Arthurian Literature VII* (1987), 103-144, idem, 'The Death of King Arthur and the legend of his survival', unpub. DPhil thesis, University of York 1991, p.64.

<sup>5</sup> Dr Withrington has shown (art. cit.) that Malory probably took Arthur's epitaph from a widespread late medieval tradition that said that the epitaph was carved on Arthur's tomb, and has also identified other traditions that Arthur would return and that he was not dead but living 'in another londe' (thesis, pp. 10-30). Cf. *Works*, p. 1242. 22-9.

<sup>6</sup> *Works*, p.1150.27-9.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.1607-11, notes to pp.1125.9-10, 1131.6-8, 1131.24, and 1137.19-22.

<sup>8</sup> *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*, ed. H.O. Sommer, 8 vols (Washington D.C. 1909-16), v 213.9-215.2; cf. *Works*, p.271.5-272.35.

<sup>9</sup> Chrétien de Troyes, *Yvain*, ed. M. Roques (Paris 1965), lines 5101-805, esp. 5188-90, 5289-93.

<sup>10</sup> *Malory* (Oxford 1929), p.49n.

<sup>11</sup> *Yvain* 5323-5.

<sup>12</sup> *Works*, p.liiii.

<sup>13</sup> I owe this information to those who heard a version of this paper at the XVIth Congress of the International Arthurian Society, and particularly to Drs Edward Kennedy, Elspeth Kennedy, Claude Luttrell, Faith Lyons, and Muriel Whitaker. Cf. Kennedy art. cit. n. 4 supra, p.34; F. Lyons, 'Le bâton des champions dans *Yvain*', *Romania*, 91 (1970), 97-101; and for the Chertsey tiles, Manwaring Shurlock, *Arthurian and Knightly Art from the Middle Ages*, ed. D. Bryce (Felinfach 1989), esp. pp.56-7.

<sup>14</sup> *Yvain* 5509-11.

<sup>15</sup> See P.J.C. Field and Margaret A. Muir, 'French Words and Phrases in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 72 (1971), 483-500.

<sup>16</sup> *Yvain and Gawain*, ed. A.B. Friedman and N.T. Harrington, E.E.T.S. o.s. 254 (1964), lines 3158-9, 3065.

<sup>17</sup> See for instance Mary E. Dichmann, "'The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius': the Rise of Lancelot", in *Malory's Originality*, ed. R.M. Lumiansky (Baltimore Md 1966), pp.67-90, and Field, art. cit. n. 2 supra.

<sup>18</sup> *Works* pp.253.20-256.16, 264.6-267.30.

<sup>19</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 87.19-91.22, 204.15-207.30.

<sup>20</sup> *Yvain* 173-906.

<sup>21</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 89.39, *Yvain* 381.

<sup>22</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 90.1, *Yvain* 382, 414.

<sup>23</sup> *Yvain* 424.

- <sup>24</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 88.19 and passim, *Yvain* 522.
- <sup>25</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 89.18, 35.
- <sup>26</sup> *Yvain* 286.
- <sup>27</sup> *Works* p.269.10.
- <sup>28</sup> *Yvain* 362-73, *Works*, p.254.32-3.
- <sup>29</sup> *Yvain* 406-7.
- <sup>30</sup> *Works* p.255.9-11.
- <sup>31</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 89.31-2.
- <sup>32</sup> See *Works*, p.48.22-4. The humour is inspired by the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, although (*pace* Vinaver in his note on the passage, *Works*, p.1300) not by the scene corresponding to this one but by a later scene: cf. *Works*, pp.190.15-25, 225.14-226.8; *Morte Arthure* 419-66, 2306-51. On Malory's liking for the humour of understatement, cf. P.J.C. Field, *Romance and Chronicle* (London 1971) pp.111-12.
- <sup>33</sup> *Vulgate Version*, v 210.30-211.37, cf. *Works*, p.269.17-271.4.
- <sup>34</sup> 'Erec loved her with such a passionate love that he cared no more for arms, nor did he go to tournaments, nor have any desire to joust, but spent his time cherishing his wife - he made her his mistress and his sweetheart': *Erec et Énide*, ed. M. Roques (Paris 1955), 2430-35.
- <sup>35</sup> *Erec* 2471-4.
- <sup>36</sup> The *Morte Darthur*'s minor character Harry le Fyze Lake derives ultimately from Chrétien's Erec, but Malory may not have known this, since Harry's first appearance derives from the major source and his later ones may derive from his first: cf. *Works*, pp.1683, 1759 (Index of Names s.v. and note to p.685.6 respectively).
- <sup>37</sup> *Works*, p.169.6-30, cf. *Yvain* 6592-766.
- <sup>38</sup> *Works*, p.1360, note to p.169.16-24.