# Amplification as gloss in two twelfth-century texts:

**Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie***

**and**

**Renaut de Beaujeu's *Li Biaus Descouneüs***

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy in French
in the
University of Canterbury
by Joanne Rittey

University of Canterbury
1998

# Abstract

Where does a literary text originate and how is it formed? What are the influences at work on the writer as he produces his work and can these be perceived by the audience or reader?

The focus of this study is the literary process which took place when a medieval writer wrote. This is conducted with reference to two texts representative of the period around the end of the twelfth century to the beginning of the thirteenth century: Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and Renaut de Beaujeu's *Li Biaus Descouneüs*.

The vocabulary which I have chosen in order to approach these questions, notably *antancïon*, *gloser la lettre* and the technique of amplification, highlight the awareness of fiction, or fictional creation, called for by these writers. Both Robert and Renaut are builders of stories, elucidating and expanding the material at their disposal. The original idea is conceived in the poet's mind. This is then the starting point for a construction which relies on the combination of learned literary tradition with its patterns and codes and the wealth of material derived from antecedent sources. This study demonstrates that this seemingly artificial construct is individualised through the application of poetic *antancïon*. Despite evidence of extensive borrowing from a number of different sources, both Robert and Renaut can be credited with producing texts which exhibit an authorial perspective which departs from the original source and take a new direction. The way in which they achieve this is the subject of my research.

# Contents

# Acknowledgements

# Abbreviations

For reasons of brevity, the following abbreviations are used in the footnotes and bibliography.

BBSIA         Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne

MLN             Modern Language Notes

PMLA          Publication of the Modern Language Association

# Introduction

My project involves the close textual analysis of two late twelfth-century romances: Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and Renaut de Beaujeu's *Li Biaus Descouneüs,* and a classification of the literary and generic conventions and norms found in them. Both Robert and Renaut are engaged in the art of literary manipulation. That is to say, in having recourse to certain literary techniques, they seek to engage the attention, affection, sympathy, and interest of the reader. To that extent they can be said to be shaping the way in which the reader receives and responds to their romances. The way in which the writers achieve this is through the imposition of their determining will and the subsequent manipulation of plot, process and character. This study relies on the textual evidence provided by the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* to support the claim that their authors were very much aware of the manipulative power of literature.

For the purposes of this thesis, I have classified the author's determining will as *antancïon*, a classification which here requires justification. This justification is the subject of the first chapter, but in terms of a preliminary discussion, an acknowledgement of Douglas Kelly and his extensive work on the function of the author in medieval romance is necessary.

Over the course of my thesis I refer frequently to Douglas Kelly and, in particular, to his book, *The Art of Medieval French Romance.*[1] Kelly's study seeks to define artistic conceptions and methods of composition from the recorded statements of medieval poets and scribes. From these authorial interventions, Kelly proposes the documentation of the emergence of medieval French romance as the authors and their public understood it.

However, the explicit statements of intent ascribed to the authors are not the only means of expressing the determining will, or *antancïon*, of the author. The methods of composition and techniques for elucidating the central issues of a text, I group under the heading, amplification.

William Ryding devotes a considerable part of his book, *Structure in Medieval Narrative*, to an explanation of amplification. The aim of Ryding's essay is 'to study the structure of medieval narrative in a general way', as opposed to the specialized treatments of specific texts undertaken in other studies. Ryding sees length as being a 'matter of central importance' in terms of analysing 'the common elements of narrative structure within the medieval tradition'.[2] For Ryding, 'the impulse to amplify narrative, to give it fullness and

magnitude, appears to have been the most important determining factor' in the development of the structural style of medieval narrative.[3] In general, according to Ryding, 'the idea of amplification was simply to make a story longer and more effective by providing more in the way of circumstantial detail'.[4]

Ryding makes two classifications of amplification : rhetorical and material. Ryding's explanation of rhetorical amplification resides mainly in the addition of details acquired through rhetorical conventions. As far as Ryding is concerned, medieval writers are not discerning in their amplification, and he has them amplifying all of the narrative data 'without stopping to consider the advantages of selective expansion, of developing only the dramatic portions and of summarizing matter of only secondary importance in the progress of the story'.[5] This practice he compares with the original meaning of the term, as employed by the classical writers. For them, '*amplificatio* had nothing to do with lengthening a narrative, but was directed at the manner of presenting an idea, giving it grandeur and magnitude, exalting its importance or heightening its effect. But the rules for amplification, originally intended to give fullness to an exposition, were ultimately applied to narrative and came to mean spinning out the story, lengthening, widening, and heightening, stuffing it with the full complement of rhetorical devices'.[6]

Material amplification concerns the addition of new narrative matter, either from outside the text, in the form of episodes borrowed from other works, or from within the text through the varied repetition of previous episodes. These additions either perform the function of clarifying what has been related or act simply as a means of lengthening the narrative.

Ryding's division of amplification into material and rhetorical works very well in the *Vie de St Alexis* to which he applies it; however, for the more sophisticated techniques used by the authors under discussion in this thesis, his classification is too simplistic. Amplification in these texts works as a unifying device in that it indicates and intensifies authorial *antancïon.*

Kelly and Ryding explore much that is relevant to my thesis; however, my argument will go beyond the parameters established in their discussions. In this study I have narrowed the focus as much as possible to concentrate on an examination of *antancïon* and its amplification from various perspectives, and each of my chapters is devoted to one of these viewpoints. Frequently these viewpoints overlap. For instance, it is difficult to talk about antecedent sources, termed here, *materia remota*, without referring to generic conventions and traditions, or to discuss characterization without mentioning description. Nevertheless, I have attempted to keep such overlapping to a minimum.

The first chapter considers the literary context in which Robert and Renaut were writing and addresses the issue of whether literature is a product of an acquired skill or the result

of natural talent. That is, is literature a question of imitation or inspiration? In order to answer this question, we gauge the appropriateness of the term *antancïon* as a means of addressing the craftsmanship involved in producing literature. This leads to an evaluation of the major influences at work in Robert and Renaut as twelfth-century writers of romance, placing them alongside the *artes poeticae* tradition, as well as their vernacular literary contemporaries, notably Chrétien de Troyes.

The second section of my study presents a survey of the antecedent sources upon which Robert and Renaut are said to have based their texts with the emphasis on the way in which the authors both exploit this *materia remota* and adapt it to suit their own *antancïon*.

The third chapter attempts to discern the author's presence from his interventions and self-conscious comments about his craft. This section explores the possibility that the poets might use their own role as creator to enhance their *antancïon*. This is treated in six categories which bring to the fore the deliberate nature of fiction. The poets choose the places where they interrupt the narrative explicitly to point out what they are doing. By emphasizing the distinction between the diversion and the narrative, they highlight the distance between fiction and its creator.

The fourth chapter examines the generic context in which Robert and Renaut place themselves. Since both texts exhibit features deemed typical of the romance genre, this chapter examines the effects of the inclusion of these features and how this relates to authorial *antancïon*.

The fifth chapter explores the possibility that characterization may act as a device of amplification whereby characters serve as vehicles for conveying authorial *antancïon*. Characters are not to be seen in terms of their psychological or emotional development, but are to be viewed more in terms of what they offer to the interpretation of the central ideas of their respective authors.

In the sixth section, the device of *descriptio* is looked at in terms of its elucidatory function. That is, the English word, description, falls short of all that is implied by the Latin term as used in the contemporary treatises of Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Matthew of Vendôme. Description not only ornaments the text to make it attractive, but also adds further material to enhance the meaning. The discussion divides *descriptio* into three components, ranging from simple to complex.

The final section of my thesis looks at the way in which repetition acts not only as a structural device, but is an integral part of poetic design. At its most simplistic level, this chapter intends to emphasize how recurrence, whether it be of simple words or complex motifs, attracts audience attention and insists on being noticed. The argument is then developed to explore the way in which repetition acts as a technique for refining the narrative and reinforcing the key themes.

The following chapters attempt to determine how the reader can perceive an author's *antancïon*, or mental conception of his work, through rhetorical technique. While Robert and Renaut do not explicitly state what their respective *antancïons* are, the alert reader can deduce it from the signposts provided. These signposts are the rhetorical techniques to which the poet has recourse in order to control the way in which the reader understands the text. Interest lies in the way Robert and Renaut involve their readers by giving them clues, crafting their texts to direct the attention of the reader to the most important parts of the story.

While I am aware that authors and poets may equally be women as men, for reasons of style and concision, I have referred to the author as 'he' throughout.

The English translation of the Old French quoted in the body of my thesis is provided in an appendix. The number in parentheses immediately following Old French quotation in the text corresponds to the same number in the appendix.

---

[1] Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).
[2] William Ryding, *Structure in Medieval Narrative* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1971), p. 37.
[3] Ryding p. 162.
[4] Ryding p. 79.
[5] Ryding, p. 66.
[6] Ryding, p. 66.

# One

# The *Antancïon*

The author determines the structure of a literary work and the amplificatory devices used to adorn it. These devices, intended to enhance the meaning of the work, are mainly determined by the author's perception of what his subject matter requires. This perception of the author is what I define as his or her *antancïon,* though this is a term omitted from the writings of both Robert and Renaut. This chapter will ascertain the role *antancïon* plays, that is its definition and function, as a means of addressing the craftsmanship involved in producing literature at the time Robert and Renaut were writing. The discussion will point to the major influences at work in Robert and Renaut as twelfth-century writers of romance. In this chapter I shall consider the art of literary composition as the Latin Middle Ages inherited it from ancient rhetoric and poetics, represented in the *artes poeticae,* as well as medieval notions of the craft of literary creation. The way in which Robert and Renaut craft their work and convey the authorial *antancïon* behind their respective texts, depends significantly on the literary conventions they had available to them. I shall be using as an example the work of one of Robert and Renaut's contemporaries, Chrétien de Troyes.

Is *antancïon* appropriate as a literary term? The best known use of the term occurs in the Chrétien corpus. The way in which Chrétien refers to specific features of the craft of romance composition, which he frequently does in the prologues to his romances, has been used in modern scholarship to discuss other works contemporaneous with Chrétien. That an important twelfth-century writer employs a term frequently to describe a certain function, as Chrétien does with *antancïon,* renders this term essential to a discussion of poetic craft. An understanding of what he means by this term will provide greater insight into what Douglas Kelly calls an 'historically demonstrable feature of art in Chrétien's time: a common technique for invention'. Kelly goes on to explain that the '*trouvère,* like any other skilled *faber* — maker or craftsman — seeks his material in order to realize a certain intention through artifice.'[1]

This 'intention through artifice' is an undertaking best expressed in Chrétien's term, *antancïon.* He uses the term seven times throughout his romances as a means of expressing the poetic craft which lies behind the writing of romance.

The most frequently discussed of these occasions occurs in the prologue to *Le Chevalier de la Charrette.* Here, Chrétien distinguishes between the role his patron, Marie de Champagne, has to play in literary creation and his own function as writer. Chrétien

credits Marie with providing him with the inspiration to write the romance. She has supplied him with the *sans* and *matière* to which Chrétien has applied his *painne* and *antancïon* :

> Puis que ma dame de Chanpaigne
> vialt que romans a feire anpraigne (vv. 1-2) [1]

> Mes tant dirai ge que mialz oevre
> ses comandemanz anceste oevre
> que sans ne painne que g'i mete.
> Del chevalier de la charrette
> comance Crestïens son livre
> matiere et san li done et livre
> la contesse, et il s'antremet
> de panser, que gueres n'i met
> fors sa painne et antancïon. (vv. 21-29) [2]

The *painne* and *antancïon* of the *Charrette* prologue express the artistry involved in medieval romance. These words refer to the process behind the elaboration of source material into a romance. The importance of an initial mental plan is indicated here in Chrétien's use of the phrase, 'il s'antremet de panser'. Owens translates this as 'he puts his mind to it', while Kelly chooses 'he undertakes to think'.[2] The phrase conveys the idea of a preliminary stage of planning on the part of the author. In another study, Kelly describes the collaboration between Marie and Chrétien in the prologue to the *Charrette* as 'invention'. He then defines medieval invention as including 'the elaboration of subject matter, that is the amalgamation of *matière* and *san*, and it subtends the selection of what in the sources and the author's own construal of the *matière* may be utilized in the new work.' The work which emerges is, Kelly continues, 'the result of the author's artistry and purpose, his *painne* and *sans/antancïon*'.[3] Chrétien achieves a unified text by using amplificatory techniques in order to indicate and elucidate his *antancïon*.

Faith Lyons uses a study of the appearances of *antandre* and *antancïon* in medieval writing to translate line 29 of the *Charrette* as Chrétien's 'effort and careful attention'.[4] 'Careful attention' does not convey sufficient meaning. There is an implied partnership with the audience or reader who will also engage purpose and intention to understand the work. A discussion of the precise range of meanings is provided in the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* complied by Adolf Tobler and Erhard Lommatzsch and will be found in the next few paragraphs. Lyons wrongly concludes her study by finding that in every instance where *antancïon* is used, it appears with the verb *mettre*. This is clearly not the case and can be disproved within the Chrétien de Troyes corpus, and even within the *Charrette* text itself.

In Godefroi de Leigni's section of the *Charrette* he inserts an authorial aside to express his desire for brevity. The passage in question takes place just over 100 lines after Godefroi takes up the tale from where Chrétien has left off. He recounts Meleagant's arrival at his father's palace and the crowds of people who are present, including Meleagant's sister. It

is indicated that mention of Meleagant's sister will be explained further on in the text, but Godefroi reneges on elaborating forthwith because of his wish not to distort, corrupt or labour his subject-matter:

> mes une en i ot avoec eles
> don bien vos dirai ça avant
> (cele estoit suer Meleagant)
> mon pansser et m'antencïon;
> mes n'an vuel feire mancïon,
> car n'afiert pas a ma matire
> que ci androit an doie dire,
> ne je ne la vuel boceier,
> ne corronpre ne forceier,
> mes mener boen chemin et droit (vv. 6242-51) [3]

Obviously, the presence of Meleagant's sister will have repercussions later in the text intrinsic to the poet's *antancïon*; but for the moment, he wants to pursue the matter at hand, that is Meleagant's conversation with his father. Stylistically, at this point in the romance, an exploration of his reasons for mentioning Meleagant's sister does not appear to fit the poet's plan, since he writes that he wants to treat his subject matter in a direct, straightforward manner.

In addition to the fact that *antancïon* occurs here without *mettre*, thereby negating Lyon's argument as to the inseparability of *mettre* and *antancïon*, Lyon's translation of 'careful attention' is not entirely appropriate here either. While line 6245 could well be translated as his thoughts and careful attention, the passage is clearly intended as an expression of Godefroi's plan for his work. He indicates that he has a clear purpose for his work. The connotations of authorial foresight and intention to a certain end conveyed in this passage are stronger and more encompassing than the phrase 'careful attention' can communicate.

Marie Louise Ollier reduces the definition provided in Wendelin Foerster's *Wörterbuch zu Kristian von Troyes' Sämtlichen Werken* — Anstrengung, Zweck, Absicht, Meinung, Sinn — to just one meaning, namely 'the notion of "effort directed, oriented toward a goal"'. This she applies to the *Charrette* to conclude that 'Chrétien would be directing his *antancïon* to the elaboration of his romance; that is, the *antancïon* denotes the creative effort itself'.[5] This is an appropriate conclusion. However, Ollier does not provide an adequate answer for where this creative effort originates.

How did Chrétien acquire the knowledge and the techniques for elaborating his romance? Rejecting the 'narrowly rhetorical terms' which Ollier claims are usually employed in discussion on the prologue and its relation to the body of the text, she dismisses the medieval *artes poeticae* on the grounds that they are a 'collection of technical, empirical precepts'[6] rather than a truly theoretical reflection. Instead, Ollier refers to the 'textual phenomenon' that results from situating 'every text at the confluence of its own organization' as an explanation for the provenance of creative effort. This brings Ollier to

a position where she affirms 'the absolute value of the text, which makes no other reference than to itself, the site of a truth enclosed in a *conjointure*, the result of the author's *antancïon*, an *antancïon* offered henceforth to the interpretation of every reader, thanks to the permanence of writing'.[7] While Ollier recognizes the poetic craft and authorial intention implicit in the term *antancïon*, she does not sufficiently explain how the author can manipulate the way the text is understood. This he can achieve through various techniques such as those reflected in the *artes poeticae*, thus expressing his *antancïon*. This is achieved not only in explicit authorial statements about his poetic craft but also through the amplificatory techniques in characterization, description and generically expectable ingredients, features which will be discussed in the chapters which follow. The rhetorical devices recommended in the *artes poeticae* provide the poet with the 'tools' and thereby the creative scope for conveying his meaning with style.

Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner's discussion of the *Charrette* places Chrétien in the role of 'shaper of his story', a role made explicit in his pairing of 'painne et s'antancïon' (v. 29), which Bruckner translates as Chrétien's 'craft as a poet'.[8] On one hand, Chrétien speaks with humility, crediting the Countess with the most important role in the story's conception. At the same time, he ensures that the mark of his craftsmanship, the 'painne' and 'antancïon' he applies to Marie's material, will be recognized by the reader throughout the romance.

The prologues to both *Le Conte dou Graal* and *Erec et Enide* also contain Chrétien's self-conscious references to his own craft. *Le Conte dou Graal* is said to have its source in a book provided by Count Philip of Flanders. To this supplied source Chrétien applies his poetic skill, presumably in much the same way as he did with the material given him by Marie de Champagne, to produce the finest story ever related in a royal court:

> Crestïens, qui entent et paine
> Par le comandement le conte
> A rimoier le meillor conte
> Qui soit contez a cort roial:
> Ce est li Contes del Graal,
> Dont li quens li bailla le livre. (*Perceval*, vv. 63-67) [4]

The 'entent et paine' action which Chrétien describes himself as undertaking expresses the need for poetic effort, reflected in *paine*, as well as poetic will and understanding, as indicated in *entent*. As in the *Charrette*, where the nominal form of the *entent et paine* pair: *painne et antancïon*, indicates what the poet does with source material, the verbal formula expresses the need for the creative effort involved in composition to be directed by authorial will and design.

The prologue to the *Erec* emphasizes the duty of the poet to write well. Moreover, putting his own name to his exhortation, Chrétien says:

> Por ce dist Cretïens de Troies

> que reisons est que totevoies
> doit chascuns panser et antandre
> a bien dire et a bien aprandre  (*Erec et Enide*, vv. 9-12) [5]

Edward J. Buckbee in the translation he provides for this passage in his article on *Erec*,[9] gives these verses as '[...] it is right that each person continually think and strive to speak well and teach well'. 'Strive' is adequate in one sense as it conveys the impression of effort, so long as the reader is aware of the implications of artistry. A more long-winded way of expressing this thought might be that each person is to think continually and apply their craftsmanship to the text. In the next line, Chrétien, in what is perhaps intended as an example of this application of artistry, speaks of drawing from an adventure story a very beautiful composition; the *molt bele conjointure*, a term which will be discussed below.

Later, in the body of *Erec*'s text, Chrétien refers to the description rendered by the fifth-century Roman Neoplatonic philosopher and grammarian Macrobius, as his authority for the words he uses to describe the robe Erec wears at his coronation with Enide. Chrétien writes that Macrobius put his *antancïon* into his composition:

> Lisant trovomes an l'estoire
> La description de la robe
> Si en trai a garant Macrobe,
> Qui au descrivre mist s'antante,
> Que l'an ne die que je mante.
> Macrobes m'ansaingne a desvrivre,
> Si con je l'ai trové el livre,
> L'uevre del drap et le portret. (*Erec et Enide*, vv. 6736-43) [6]

This passage is particularly relevant as far as poetic creation is concerned. Firstly, it illustrates the medieval practice of imitation. Chrétien claims to be using Macrobius' description of Erec's coronation robe which he found in the *estoire* which is said to be the source for his story. The effect of this claim is twofold. By referring to an antecedent source, Chrétien lends the weight of authority to his text. He also shows how he has applied himself to studying and interpreting the work of previous poets. Thirdly, the reference to Macrobius' 'antante' produces a 'Chinese box effect', in that Chrétien models his work to which he strives to apply his craftsmanship on an author who had his own *antancïon* governing the way in which he presented his text.

The two-way understanding implied by *antancïon* is explicit in Chrétien's *Yvain*. Calogrenant prefaces the tale he is about to relate with an appeal to his listeners that they not only listen to his story, but that they understand it:

> Cuers et oroilles m'aportez,
> car parole est tote perdue
> s'ele n'est de cuer entandue.
> De cez i a qui la chose oent;
> et cil n'en ont ne mes l'oïe,
> des que li cuers n'i entant mie;
> as oroilles vient la parole,

ausi come li vanz qui vole,
mes n'i areste ne demore,
einz s'an part en molt petit d'ore,
se li cuers n'est si esveilliez
qu'au prendre soit apareilliez;
car s'il le puet an son oïr
prendre, et anclorre, et retenir,
les oroilles sont voie et doiz
par ou s'an vient au cuer la voiz;
et li cuers prant dedanz le vantre
la voiz, qui par l'oroille i antre. (*Yvain*, vv. 150-68) [7]

Marie-Louise Ollier discusses the idea conveyed in Calogrenant's speech of a dual, or 'sender-receiver', relationship. She explains that '*antancïon, antante* and the verbal form *antandre* are essentially dynamic, introduce a will, a directed endeavour, as much on the part of the author, who invests his text with meaning, as on the part of the reader, of whom the decoding effort is required'.[10] That it is not enough for the reader merely to hear the story in a physical sense without cutting through narrative to understand the poet's inner meaning, is apparent also in a later passage in the *Charrette*, where Chrétien appeals to the sympathy of the readers who can identify with Lancelot's plight from their own experience:

Bien poez antendre et gloser
vos qui avez fet autretel,
que por la gent de son ostel
se fet las et se fet couchier. (*Charrette*, vv. 4550-53) [8]

This passage calls for active participation on the part of the reader and highlights the double responsibility involved in literature. The author must convey his meaning through the techniques he has at his disposal, and in turn, the reader is to be alert to indications of the author's *antancïon* in order to appreciate the full import of his work.

Having considered how the word is most often employed by Chrétien, it is pertinent to review how it is retrospectively defined in dictionaries, taking other writers and their texts into consideration. *Antancïon* is the noun form of the verb *antandre*, derived from the Latin, *intendere*. In their *Latin Dictionary*, Lewis and Short record the figurative meaning of *intendere* as 'to strain or stretch towards'; 'extend'; 'to direct towards anything'; 'to turn or bend in any direction'; 'to direct one's thoughts or attention to anything'; 'to enlarge, extend, magnify'; 'to turn one's attention to', 'to exert one's self', 'to purpose, endeavour, intend'; 'to purpose in one's mind'; 'to intend'.[11] It is obvious from the Latin root of the word that this term has a range of meanings, among them the idea of intention and directing one's thoughts towards a pre-determined end. It has not lost this range of meaning in its Old French form.

In the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, compiled by Adolf Tobler and Erhard Lommatzsch,[12] *entencïon* is documented as possessing several basic meanings. The first section comprises citations from texts whose lines reflect creative effort in poetic activity.

Chrétien's use of *antancïon* in the prologue to *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* discussed above espouses the connotations indicated in the German words, *Acht* and *Aufmerksamkeit,* which head this section.

The interest or intentions of a character within the narrative may be expressed using *antancïon*, as is the case in *Yvain*:

> Mes il n'avoit antancïon
> N'au cors n'a la procession,
> Qu'il vosist qu'il fussent tuit ars (*Yvain,* vv. 1273-75) [9]

The next category is headed*Absicht* and *Willen* and the passages cited express the ideas of exerting will, intention or endeavour:

> Cligés par quel antancïon
> "Je sui toz vostre" me deïst,
> S'amors dire ne li feïst? (*Cligés*, vv. 4408-10) [10]

These lines have Fenice wonder what Cligés might have intended by his words; what he wanted to convey by saying what he does. In a similar way, D.D.R. Owen translates *antancïon* in *Yvain* as 'endeavours' to express the goodwill on the part of the lady which was required to help assure the Knight of the Lion of his lady's love:

> Se il vos plest, si jureroiz
> Por le chevalier au lïon
> Que vos an buene antancïon
> Vos peneroiz tant qu'il savra
> Que le buen gré sa dame avra
> Tot aussi bien com ilot onques (*Yvain*, vv.6644-49) [11]

The deliberate and manipulative nature of *antancïon* is made clear in *Perceval*. The action is made to serve the end the subject desires:

> Et ele li respondu
> Que ele li avoit beisié
> Par tel antancïon le pié
> Que de li li resovenist
> An quel que leu que il venist (*Perceval*, vv. 5644-48) [12]

The passage in which the above quotation appears describes a young maiden kissing Gawain's foot and explaining her action as being the means by which she could ensure that he remembered her. There is almost the suggestion of an ulterior motive in the young maiden's *antancïon*, in much the same way as the author's designs are not entirely based on his desire to entertain without imparting certain information and vice versa.

The references included under the heading *Verständnis, Urteil, Meinung* enunciate concepts such as knowledge, understanding and perspective. Understanding the difference between right and wrong is the state of mind implied in *Li Romans de Carité et Miserere du Renclus de Moiliers* published by Van Hamel in 1885:

> Discretions est le vertus

> Ki done a home ententïon
> K'il set faire devisïon
> De bien, de mal (*Li Romans de Carité et Miserere du Renclus de Moiliers*, C 44, 4)

The author of *Li Cumpoz Philippe de Thaün* published in Strasbourg by Von Mall in 1873 reveals his right to say something according to his understanding of the matter:

> Ço dirrai par raisun
> Sulunc m'entencïun (*Li Cumpoz Philippe de Thaün*, 2094)

*Sinn* and *Bedeutung* explain the ideas of meaning and significance incorporated in *antancïon*. Published in 1900 by Walberg, *Le Bestiaire de Philippe de Thaün* employs *antancïon* to signify a spiritual meaning or understanding:

> E lampe signefie Anme en ceste vie
> L'oile crestïenté
> Li fus l'esprit Dé
> E ceste ententïun
> Par le furmi avum. (*Le Bestiaire*, vv. 924-28)

The final category included in the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* provides an example from a work published by Bocca in 1841 in Valenciennes to describe the *Kunde* aspect of *antancïon*:

> Quant li contes de Flandre oï l'entencïon
> Que Baudüins em mainne sus un cheval gascon Blanche
> sa soer germaine, ne li vint mie a bon. (*Li Romans de Bauduin de Sebourc*, VI, 791)

This example illustrates the possible interpretation of *antancïon* as information or testimony. In this instance, the *entencïon* the Count of Flanders hears is the news of Baudüin's actions. In literary composition, *antancïon* has the potential for announcing, or at least indicating, the central issues. The author's *antancïon* bears witness to the author's initial mental conception.

The various examples provided in the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* indicate the dimensions of meaning which constitute the term *antancïon*. There is both a sense of directing attention towards a particular point of view or towards a pre-determined end, as well as an expression of volition. In both of these meanings, that is, attention directed towards a certain end and volition imply a directing force behind them. This is the shaping hand of the author who has a purpose in mind in composing the romance and wishes to convey this to the reader.

*Antancïon* is a double-edged term: it not only refers to the writer's intention springing from his initial mental conception, but also to the work's reception by either large audience or single reader. Authorial intention and audience understanding are necessary allies, as implied in these lines from the *Accessus ad auctores*:

> 'Intentio est affectus animi circa materiam vel oratio quae animum maxime intendit libro legendo.' [13]

Implicit in the word *antancïon*, is the notion of understanding, accounted for in the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* by the inclusion of the definitions *Verständnis*, *Urteil* and *Meinung*. It is a two-way understanding, whereby the poet expresses his feelings on a subject and through the careful choice of words and form, cajoles the reader into adopting the same stance.

The way a reader interprets a story depends largely on the manner in which it is told. The manner of telling, that is the linking together of different elements of narrative and the various rhetorical techniques the poet may have recourse to in order to enhance his *antancïon*, is often referred to using Chrétien's term *conjointure*.

A wealth of scholarship has grown out of a word that appears only once within the Chrétien corpus. Eugène Vinaver provides a relevant overview of some of the scholarship undertaken on *conjointure*, explaining that:

> There are about as many renderings of the word *conjointure* as there are critics who have tried to explain it. Chrétien's German editor, Wendelin Foerster, gives in his Glossary three renderings: Verbindung ('connection'), Vermutung ('conjecture'), and Schlußfolgerung ('chain of reasoning', 'argument'), but favours the last as being the most appropriate. He refers to the *Miracle de St. Éloi* where *conjointure* is used in the sense of 'inference'; but what the author has in mind in this work is the method of interpreting the stars, and the text is in any case about a century later than Chrétien's *Erec*. Before *Erec* there is no example of the word in twelfth-century French. The situation is one which some critics find challenging in that it provides ample room for conjecture and no apparent means of disproving even the least likely hypothesis. Foerster makes the word mean what he thinks it ought to mean in the context. Later critics, proceeding in exactly the same way, arrive with equal confidence at a variety of different meanings. Baist translates *conjointure* 'theme' — the theme of the sparrow-hawk, which Chrétien borrowed from his source (assuming that he had a source). William Nitze thought it meant 'the combination of features or motifs taken from the source' — a good guess, but still only a guess. Wilhelm Kellermann and the Tobler-Lommatzsch dictionary suggest as an equivalent the German *Anlaß* — 'occasion', 'opportunity', again without conclusive evidence.[13]

Vinaver himself hazards the explanation that *conjointure* is 'the art of *composition* in the etymological sense of the term that [Chrétien] seems to regard as the proper means for turning a mere tale of adventure into a romance, and that it is upon this delicate art, which only a learned man can practise properly, that he wants the reader to focus his attention.'[14]

How does Chrétien use it? As Vinaver points out, the only occasion where Chrétien uses *conjointure* to describe the poetic craft he undertakes in his work is in the opening lines of what is understood to be the first of his romances,[15] *Erec et Enide*:

> Por ce dist Crestïens de Troies
> que reisons est que totevoies
> doit chascuns panser et antandre
> a bien dire et a bien aprandre;
> et tret d'un conte d'avanture
> une molt bele conjointure
> par qu'an puet prover et savoir
> que cil ne fir mie savoir
> qui s'escïence n'abandone
> tant con dex la grasce l'an done (*Erec et Enide*, vv. 9-18) [14]

Here, the importance of *conjointure* as a poetic skill is made apparent. Chrétien boasts that his own work has achieved the status of a *molt bele conjointure* (v. 14). In sharp contrast to this are those writers whose interest in poetry lies primarily in the profit which can be made from it and not in the craft of creating beautiful verse. They are said to 'depecier' and 'corronpre' poetry. While Chrétien does not overtly define the term, it would seem from the context in which he places it that he intends it to mean more than simply the physical arrangement of words in a sentence or narrative.

*Conjointure* as a critical concept does not originate with Chrétien, but rather is developed as a result of his application. The term *conjointure* can be attributed to the Latin source, *conjunctio*, derived from the infinitive *conjungere* which the Latin dictionary compiled by Lewis and Short defines as 'to bind together', 'connect', 'join', 'unite', with a parenthesis which explains that the verb is very frequently used to refer to joining together in composition. Its use in composition is highlighted in a further definition, where it is said to mean 'in particular, "to compose, form by writing"'.[16] A *molt bele conjointure*, then, would combine diverse elements to achieve a certain amount of harmony and unity which will be understood and appreciated by the audience or reader.

In the Latin treatises on the art of poetry, *coniunctura* and *iunctura* were used to describe both sentence and narrative composition. *Iunctura* appears in Horace's *Ars Poetica*:

> tantum series iuncturaque pollet,
> tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris (ll. 240-43) [15]

Horace's use of *iunctura* does not refer to the composition of plot and narrative — such as Nitze maintains in a series of articles devoted to *conjointure*,[17] but to what Michelle Freeman describes in her published doctoral dissertation on the subject as 'a rhetorical combination of words'.[18] Words are grouped together within a sentence or phrase in such a way as to render the work stylistically pleasing to read.

This definition of *conjointure* as an aesthetically pleasing syntactic arrangement of words is also expressed by Philippe Mousket in the *Chronique rimée*:

> [Grammar] nos ensegne en quel manière on doit escrire les figures et asambler les congointures (vv. 9703-9705)

Mousket's understanding of *congointure* is glossed in a note to line 9705:

> 'congointures, les divers membres de la phrase' (*Chronique rimée*)[19]

Alain de Lille uses *conjunctura* in the same way that Chrétien de Troyes employs *conjointure* in the *Erec*, intending it to imply narrative composition:

> Poete tamen aliquando hystoriales euentus ioculationibus fabulosis quadem eleganti sutura confederant, ut ex diuersorum competenti conjunctura ipsius narrationis elegantior pictura resultet (Alain de Lille, *De planctu Naturae*, VIII.137-39) [16]

Two types of composition are represented in this quartet. Mousket and Horace refer to sentence composition and Alain de Lille and Chrétien use the term to mean narrative composition. From where did these authors acquire their approach to craftsmanship?

The techniques of craftsmanship recommended by the authors of the *artes poeticae*, particularly their views on disposition or 'the manner of telling', are frequently overlooked, dismissed, or at least downplayed in discussion of the twelfth-century romance. Faral claims that 'la composition n'a pas été le souci dominant des écrivains du moyen âge'[20] and Curtius, with an opinion corresponding to Faral's, writes 'man kann sagen: was wir heute unter Aufbautechnik (Komposition) verstehen, hat in der antiken und mittelalterlichen Literaturtheorie keine Entsprechung'.[21] We need only turn to the writers of the twelfth-century treatises themselves to dispute these hypotheses.

In his study on narrative craft, Norris Lacy looks at Chrétien de Troyes' romances and the critical problems they present.[22] Lacy gives as his focus, 'the ensemble of methods by which Chrétien assembles his works so as to confer on them the form, meaning and artistic appeal he is seeking'.[23] But while he dicusses the craft inherent in Chrétien's romances and includes sections on the narrator's role, point of view and form, Lacy makes no mention of the *artes poeticae*. Lacy demonstrates his interest in the analogical relationships established between certain episodes in the *Erec* and explains this by referring to the concept that 'composition for the medieval poet implied the literary amplification of a theme or idea'.[24] Lacy does not expand his statement by describing how this literary amplification might occur, noting only that the idea behind this concept appears 'in most medieval treatises on poetic art, such as those of Geoffroi de Vinsauf or Mathieu de Vendôme'.[25] While Lacy's relegation of Geoffrey and Matthew to a mere footnote is regrettable, his later assertion that 'analogical composition is one of the most prominent methods by which Chrétien organizes his material and confers both form and meaning on it' is most apt.[26] For Lacy, Chrétien is a 'self-conscious artist applying accomplished and effective techniques to his material'.[27] What are these techniques and where did Chrétien acquire them? Surely, the very self-consciousness Lacy refers to is a result of the influence the *artes poeticae* had on the theory and practice of twelfth-century romance writers.

In vernacular French, Chrétien's use of *conjointure* quickly gave way to *roman*, or romance, as testified in Renaut's obvious parallel of the *Erec* in the prologue to his own romance:

> et tret d'un conte d'avanture
> une molt bele conjointure (*Erec*, vv. 13-14) [17]

> por li veul un roumant estraire
> d'un molt biel conte d'aventure (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4-5) [18]

What does it mean to equate *conjointure* with *roman*? Kelly looks specifically at this question over the course of his *Art of Medieval French Romance* in 'an attempt to determine how *bele conjointure* defines romance and, implicitly, the art of romance invention'.[28] Kelly places the first critical use of *conjointure* in the literary-historical context of the time when the *roman* was coming to be considered a specific narrative genre.

Anne Berthelot claims at the outset of her article, published in the 1993 edition of *L'Esprit Créateur*, that Chrétien, in introducing the term *conjointure* as a critical term, 'set forth [...] the definitive esthetic ideal to pursue in matters of fictional composition'.[29] Renaut uses similar terminology to Chrétien, except for the critical replacement of *molt bele conjointure* with *roumant*. *Conjointure* is not concerned with presenting a sequence of events or adventures held together by a series of tenuous themes and motifs, but is the deliberate construction of a work so that all parts serve the whole. In reconstructing Chrétien's *conjointure* formula, Renaut emphasizes the self-concious approach he adopts, thereby asserting his authorial control and demonstrating the process of poetic creation.

What are the antecedents to the medieval expression of poetic creation as represented in Robert and Renaut? Writing is a craft to be studied and perfected. This is best expressed in the *ars, imitatione, exercitatio* formula, presented here in the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*:

> Haec omnia tribus rebus adsequi poterimus: arte, imitatione, exercitatione.
> Ars est praeceptio, quae dat certam viam rationemque dicendi:
> Imitatio est qua impellimur, cum diligenti ratione, ut aliquorum similes in dicendo valeamus esse.
> Exercitatio est adsiduus usus consuetudoque dicendi. (*Ad Herennium*, I.ii.3) [19]

But what of the influence of natural skill or inspiration? The question of the superiority of inborn talent, *ingenium*, over training and practice first arises with Pindar. Acclaimed by Gilbert Norwood as the 'the earliest European literary critic',[30] Pindar (518-438 B.C.) attributes his artistic inspiration to the Muses, advocating natural talent and denying the possibility that poetry could be learned through training and technique.[31] Born two years after Pindar's death, Isocrates, despite his emphasis on practical teaching, was also of the opinion that of the three elements required for success in composing poetry, 'natural talent, training in the art, and practice',[32] natural talent was the most important. Isocrates' contemporary, Plato, explores the contrast between inspiration and technique in his *Ion*. In this text, he explores the question of whether poets rely on art, that is techniques for literary composition, or on inspiration. Plato records Socrates' opinion of the role inspiration had in composition as:

> [...] this gift you have of speaking well on Homer is not an art; it is a power divine, impelling you like the power in the stone Euripides called the magnet, which most call 'stone of Heraclea.' This stone does not simply attract the iron rings, just by themselves, it also imparts to the rings a force enabling them to do the same thing as the stone itself, that is, to attract another ring, so that sometimes a chain is formed, quite a long one, of iron

rings, suspended from one another. For all of them, however, their power depends on the loadstone. Just so the Muse. She first makes men inspired, and then through these inspired ones others share in the enthusiasm, and a chain is formed, for the epic poets, all the good ones, have their excellence, not from art, but are inspired, possessed, and thus they utter all these admirable poems. (533 d-e)[33]

For Plato, a poet has nothing if he does not have inborn talent. The idea of possession expressed in the above citation from *Ion* relies on imagery of a magnetised chain of poets who depend on the loadstone of the Muse for their inspiration. Plato compares lyric poets, seized with poetic inspiration and compelled to write, to the participants of frenzied corybantic worship, compelled to dance. Neither, he says, are in their senses, but are driven by what may, if somewhat tenuously, be described as a religious fervour. Certainly, Plato seems to be indicating a quasi-evangelical nature to lyric poetry wherein subsequent poets are caught up in the literary frenzy and become part of a line, or chain, of possession.

In their discussion of the *Ars Poetica*, O.B. Hardison and Leon Golden consider that the *ars, imitatio, exercitatio* formula is depicted more as a working partner of *ingenium*, with this partnership standing behind the five-fold rhetorical division of *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria* and *pronuntiatio*. In order to have access to this theory of rhetorical composition as the means of approaching literature as a craft, Horace writes, the poet had to possess skill, training and experience. A writer cannot produce poetry without natural skill and imagination, yet these may be refined through learning the appropriate skills.[34] Horace asks whether good poetry is created by nature or by training (*Ars Poetica*, v. 406) and concludes that both are needed:

Personally, I cannot see what good enthusiasm is or uncultivated talent without a rich vein of genius; each requires the help of the other and forms a friendly compact. (*Ars Poetica,* vv. 408-11)[35]

Where did the techniques for poetic composition originate? Around the middle of the fifth century B.C., travelling philosophers called Sophists instructed orators in the art of eloquence in speech-making.[36] In his account of the literary, critical and stylistic theories which developed between Homer's time and the third century A.D., Grube describes the Sophists as 'teachers of the art of speech', and furthermore explains that 'originally the term means "one who makes wise" or teacher of wisdom'.[37] The Sophists' teaching on rhetoric filled a need in traditional Greek education centred on sport, music and poetry.[38] The growth in democracy and the subsequent need for well-educated statesmen necessitated intellectual training.[39] Through their emphasis on the techniques which could be used to enhance a speech, making it both pleasant and interesting to the ear while at the same time being informative, the Sophists introduced the rudimentary elements of literary criticism. The motive was to equip the student with the means for persuading an audience to his point of view. In order to do this, the student must have an understanding of the way in which poetry is put together and why it is able to achieve the effect that it does.

The most influential Sophist was Gorgias of Leontini who came to Athens from Sicily in 427 B.C.[40] With Gorgias, rhetoric became synonymous with style. The veracity of content in a speech was not as important as the skill with which it was delivered.[41] Consequently, Gorgias favoured artifice and his speeches were filled with figures of speech and rhetorical devices designed to evoke an emotional response in the audience. Marrou notes that the 'whole of antiquity lived on [his] achievement',[42] more notably in the practice of embellishing their work with the three 'Gorgiac figures': antithesis, balance of clauses and final assonance.

Gorgias' theory of style points to the artificial and manipulative crafting of language that was to become a feature of the medieval romance writers. The Greek writers' ready adoption of the consciousness of language propounded by the Sophists manifests itself in the deliberate artistry their writing reveals from this time. Grube points to the deliberate nature of their craftsmanship, reflected in their increasing interest in the exact use and definition of words.[43] Through their choice of words and the stylistic techniques they applied to their writing, they sought to elicit the desired response from the audience. Already, there is evidence of an awareness among writers of the potential inherent in rhetorical devices to influence the way in which a work is received.

To be convincing as an orator or critic required background knowledge and training in how to think. The Hellenistic formula of *enkuklios paideia*, more commonly known in English as the liberal arts, has its origins in classical Greece and the concern with a good 'general education' which prevailed during this era.[44] For the Greeks, a grounding in mathematical sciences as well as in language and literature was considered the intellectual basis for an educated mind.[45] Plato (427-348 B.C.), however, rejected the idea of a general education and wanted philosophy alone to serve as the means of education. Plato dismissed the Sophists' more practical approach to education, favouring the philosophical ideals such as a belief in the truth and the possibility of discovering the truth through rational contemplation. Plato's contemporary, Isocrates (436-338 B.C.), while recognizing the advantages in both philosophy and a general education, still perceived the subjects of the liberal arts as less valuable than philosophy. Building on the methodological foundations established by his teacher Gorgias, Isocrates developed rhetoric as an educational subject to be studied as well as a method to be appreciated.[46] Marrou attributes the application to literature, at this stage in the form of the public lecture, of the principles of rhetoric previously reserved for the domain of politics or law.[47] For Isocrates, the liberal arts were studied as a preparatory course for the more advanced secondary education which centred on philosophy. By late Antiquity, the value of the liberal arts was finally recognized and philosophy was no longer the highest goal in education. According to Marrou, the liberal arts inherited from the schools of late Antiquity by the Middle Ages had their number fixed at seven in about the middle of the first century B.C., [48] with Curtius stating that their sequence: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic,

arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy, remained constant throughout the Middle Ages.[49]

The curriculum of the medieval school, including arithmetic, grammar and knowledge of the Psalter, was fixed in the Carolingian era with the rebirth of literacy brought about by Charlemagne. The division of the seven arts into the trivium and quadruvium took place in the ninth century. The Carolingians first used the term trivium to designate the three literary arts of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic. John Marenbon writes:

> 'In the Carolingian period, the most usual classification of secular knowledge was provided by the seven liberal arts: the three verbal arts of the 'trivium' (grammar, logic and rhetoric) and the four mathematical arts of the 'quadrivium' (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy). The liberal arts and their relation to the study of scripture are first discussed in the Middle Ages by Alcuin. Alcuin (ca 730-804) was a teacher from York whom Charlemegne invited in 781 to help revive learning in his kingdom.'[50]

The Carolingians based much of their knowledge of the seven liberal arts on the text by the fifth-century Latin author Martianus Cappella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*. In this allegorical work, each of the seven arts is introduced by Martianus Capella as a female character, clothed in an appropriate costume and speaking according to her function. To paraphrase Curtius' account, the god Mercury wishes to take a wife, and Philologia is chosen because of her exceptional knowledge in many subjects. As her wedding present, she is given the seven liberal arts. Curtius describes only two of Martianus Capella's characters: Grammar and Rhetoric. Grammar, he says, is presented as an elderly grey-haired woman who carries an ebony basket containing a file and a knife with which she operates surgically on children's grammatical errors. Under Capella's pen, Rhetoric becomes a splendid and regal woman, wearing a dress adorned with the figures of speech and carrying weapons with which she wounds her enemies.[51] Grammar and Rhetoric are the more important of the seven liberal arts in terms of the textual crafting with which this thesis is concerned.

Of the three literary arts of the trivium, grammar was considered the most important. Its primary function was to provide access to the literary text. Martin Irvine, in his survey of *grammatica* from its codification in the fourth century through to the rise of the schools in the twelfth century,[52] places *grammatica* at the centre of social and intellectual developments of Western culture. Curtius also refers to grammar as the 'first of the seven artes', citing Dante's description: 'la prima arte' (Dante, *Par.*, 12.138).[53] Irvine explains the implications *grammatica* had for Western culture as a whole and which surpassed the strictures of literature and learning:

> Although *grammatica* was formalized as the first of the arts of discourse in early medieval school curricula, the discipline articulated cultural practices that extended far beyond scholastic institutions and the internal unity of the arts of discourse: by supplying the very conditions for textual culture, the culture of the manuscript book, *grammatica* functioned as an irreducible cultural prerequisite, a status never given to rhetoric or logic. In the terms of medieval scholars themselves, *grammatica* was "the source and foundation of all the textual arts," not only because *grammatica* was the only point of entry into the literate culture but

because *grammatica* was universally understood to supply the discursive means for constructing language and texts as objects of knowledge.'[54]

For Irvine, *grammatica* provides the foundation for all learning, interpretation and knowledge. Hyperbolic as this statement may appear, Irvine does have a point. While, in Plato's and Aristotle's time, grammar referred simply to the art of reading and writing, in the Hellenistic age, the Sophists introduced the idea of critical exegesis of poetry. For the Roman rhetorician Quintilian, writing in the first century A.D., grammar becomes 'recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum narrationem' (*Institutio oratoria*, I, iv, 2).[55] Quintilian provides a list of Greek and Roman authors whom students could use as models for study in order to improve their writing style. According to Hardison, Quintilian's list is the forerunner of the medieval *accessus ad auctores* and sets a precedent for the imitation and adaptation of earlier masters which was a feature of the instruction on literary composition in twelfth-century schools, and an intrinsic part of the manuals and handbooks of the *artes poeticae* genre.[56]

The framework for composition and the grammatical concern in interpreting and appreciating writers of the literary canon is represented in the five-part formula of invention, arrangement of subject matter, style, memory and delivery. This formula, which is later favoured by the twelfth-century theorists who produced the *artes poeticae*, cannot be attributed to any one writer in particular.[57] The classification of rules for the selection of ideas and arguments for speeches, in which *inventio* had its beginnings, may be traced back to the fifth-century Sophists. In keeping with the judicial and political nature of the speeches they were writing, the approach to subject matter was particularly analytical, with the impetus being to draw out all possible meanings and nuances from their topics.

In the first two books of his *Rhetorica*, written in the fourth century B.C., Aristotle discusses both the means by which the orator can deduce the subject matter for treatment and the appropriate arguments with which he can express it. This work also deals with the arrangement of material and style. Aristotle's perception of the choice of material and subject matter, the setting out of this material and its ornamentation, is a precursor to the five-part rhetorical formula discussed in more detail by later writers.[58]

Cicero's *De inventione*, written in the first century B.C., holds as its central interest *inventio*.[59] Cicero discusses in great detail the discovery of arguments and the way in which they are arranged, that is *inventio* and *dispositio*:[60]

> Quare materia quidem nobis rhetoricae videtur artis ea quam Aristoteli visam esse diximus; partes autem eae quas plerique dixerunt inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, pronuntiatio. Inventio est excogitatio rerum verarum aut ver; similum quae causam probabilem reddant; dispositio est rerum inventarum in ordinem distributio; elocutio est idoneorum verborum ad inventionem accomodatio; memoria est firma animi rerum a verborum perceptio; pronuntiatio est ex rerum et verborum dignitate vocis et corporis moderatio. (*De inventione*, I.vii.9)

Cicero's reference to Aristotle refers to the establishment of the theory of rhetoric credited to Aristotle from what he writes in his *Rhetorica*.[61] Aristotle defines rhetoric as 'the faculty of discovering the available means of persuasion in each case'.[62] This, then, is the essence of the term, *inventio* which later writers would consider the principal element in the rhetorical formula and the element to which all the other arts are subordinate. Without invention, or the discovery of what will be the driving purpose of the speech or text, there is no point to a work, for the body of the work exists to support and bring out the inner meaning.

Cicero mentions the five-part formula of rhetoric in his other works, among them the *Brutus*, linking it in to the rules and theory versus natural gift controversy:

> ...sive illa arte pariatur aliqua sive exercitatione quadam sive natura, rem unam esse omnium difficillimam. Quibus enim ex quinque rebus constare dicitur, earum una quaeque est ars ipsa magna per sese. Qua re quinque artium concursus maximarum quantam vim quantamque difficultatem habent existimari potest. (*Brutus,* I) [21]

Although not written by Cicero as was previously assumed, the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, an anonymous document, dated around the first century B.C., exhibits many Ciceronian traits concerned with rhetorical formulæ. The general plan of the treatise is based on the five-part formula which was to endure into the Middle Ages:

> Oportet igitur esse in oratore inventionem, dispositionem, elocutionem, memoriam, pronuntiationem. Inventio est excogitatio rerum verarum aut veri similum quae causam probabitem reddant. Dispositio est ordo et distributio rerum, quae demonstrat quid quibus locis sit conlocandum. Elocutio est idoneorum verborum et sententiarum ad inventionem adcommodatio. Memoria est firma animi rerum et verborum et dispositionis perceptio. Pronuntiatio est vocis, vultus gestus moderatio cum venustate.[63] [22]

The phrasing and definitions in this passage are so similar to those of Cicero's *De inventione,* that it is easy to understand why the *Ad Herennium* was also assumed to be the work of this author. Both treatises emphasize the authors' duty to invent or discover appropriate *res*, arrange them and express them in appropriate language so as to amplify the work according to their initial conception.

The twelfth-century *artes poeticae* rest on Grammar for instruction in the interpretation and imitation of literary models and composition and in rhetoric for its craftsmanship. The *Artes,* of which Geoffrey's treatise is a prominent example,[64] were a product of the schools and universities of Tours, Orléans, Paris and Blois around 1150-1250.[65] They formed part of the medieval curriculum designed to instruct the student on the fundamentals of the composition of verse. The theory of poetics represented in the *artes poeticae* evolved from an inherited tradition. Medieval theoreticians, the most influential of whom are Matthew of Vendôme and Geoffrey of Vinsauf,[66] draw on a long Latin tradition of grammar and rhetoric, which itself has its foundations in ancient Greece.

According to Hardison, the *artes poeticae* are manuals designed for classroom instruction in literary composition and appreciation, with Hardison describing the immediate purpose

22

of the *artes poeticae* as being 'educational' and citing John of Salisbury's description of the teaching methods of the twelfth-century grammar curriculum, which it is appropriate to include here.[67]

> Bernard of Chartres, the richest fountain of literary learning in modern times, taught the authors in this way: he pointed out what was simple and what conformed to rule; he called attention to grammatical figures, rhetorical colours, and sophistic fallacies; he showed where a given text was related to other disciplines...He expounded the poets and orators to those of his students who were assigned as preliminary exercises the imitation of works in prose or verse. Pointing out skilful connections between words and elegant closing rhythms, he would urge his students to follow in the steps of the authors...He bade them reproduce the very image of the author and succeeded in making a student who imitated the great writers himself worthy of posterity's imitation. He also taught, among his first lessons, the merits of economy and the laudable adornment of thought and expression. (*Metalogicon*, I.24)

In this tribute to Bernard of Chartres, John of Salisbury presents the pedagogical emphasis on imitation so that students could become well-versed in the art of composition by studying curriculum authors.

By the time that Robert and Renaut were writing in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the debate between natural talent and skill acquired through learning had become a tradition. In his *Poetria nova,* written around the same time as the *Joseph* and the *Descouneiis*, Geoffrey of Vinsauf presents writing as a craft, and in this respect, he considers *ars, imitatio* and *usus* as being on an equal footing with *ingenium.* A good piece of writing may be sparked by natural talent:

> ...si sedula cura
> Igniat ingenium, subito mollescit ad ignem
> Ingenii sequiturque manum quocumque vocarit,
> Ductilis ad quicquid. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 214-17) [23]

At the same time, the knowledge of how to translate this initial inspiration into a literary text relies upon technique:

> Rem tria perficiunt: ars, cujus lege regaris;
> Usus, quem serves; meliores, quos imiteris.
> Ars certos, usus promptos imitati reddit,
> Artifices aptos, tria concurrentia summos. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1705-09) [24]

Geoffrey's artist is a craftsman, in his words, an architect, or a man 'quis habet fundare domum' (v. 43).[68] Natural talent, or the capacity to produce ideas from which a literary work may issue, reaches its potential through the skills which may be acquired in studying the work of literary masters and is honed through application. *Ingenium* endows the writer with the ability to invent a work, that is to come up with a mental conception or idea, around which the body of the text revolves. *Ars, imitatio* and *usus* provide background instruction on the skills required to create the body of the text. These three, *ars, imitatio* and *usus*, are represented by Geoffrey in the division of his treatise into sections which consider respectively invention, arrangement, expression or style, memory, and delivery.

> Cumque sequens series præsumat ab ordine cursum,
> Est operæ primæ, quo limite debeat ordo
> Currere; — cura sequens, qua compensare statera
> Pondera, si juste pendet sententia; — sudor
> Tertius, ut corpus verborum non sit agreste,
> Sed civile; — labor finalis, ut intret in aures
> Et cibet auditum vox castigata modeste,
> Vultus et gestus gemino condita sapore. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 79-86) [25]

In so doing Geoffrey provides the means by which the poet is able to translate his mental conception into a literary composition.

These treatises were based on the imitation, in prose or poetry, of certain works prescribed in the *accessus ad auctores*. To this end, the grammatical concern with reading and interpreting literature was supplemented by the rhetorical interest in eloquence and composition.

The scholars who wrote the medieval *artes poeticae* approached their task methodically, setting forth various techniques and ornamental devices designed to assist the poets in their literary expression. According to Marjorie Woods, the most influential of these treatises, in terms of distribution and references made in other works, are those by Matthew of Vendôme and Geoffrey of Vinsauf. There are 19 identified manuscripts of Matthew's *Ars versificatoria* of wide geographical and chronological scope and 190 (including fragments) of Geoffrey's *Poetria nova*, including 20 additional manuscripts with excerpts from Geoffrey.[69]

In addition to this attestation to their wide distribution, their influence is discernible from references by other writers. In his *Laborintus*, Eberhard the German refers to Matthew's work, *Tobias* and to Geoffrey's *Poetria nova*:

> Tobias in agro veteri lascivit, et æque
> Re juvat et metri nobilitate placet.
> Ars nova scribendi speciali fulget honore,
> Rebus cum verbis deliciosa suis (*Laborintus*, 663-66) [26]

Nine lines on, he mentions Matthew by name:

> Scribentis regit arte stylum Rufoque negante
> Laudem Matheus Vindocinensis habet (*Laborintus*, 675-76) [27]

In his *Ars poetica* (ca. 1215),[70] the thirteenth-century English grammarian and poet Gervase of Melkley, in a discussion of the scope of the instruction in literary composition found in the rhetorical treatises, writes:

> Scripserunt autem hanc artem
> Matheus Vindocinensis plene, Gaufroi Vinosauf plenius
> Plenissime vero Bernardus Silvestris (*Ars poetica*, 1.9-11) [28]

Gervase places Matthew, Geoffrey and Bernard in a hierarchy according to the contribution the respective theorists have made to the art of literary creation. This bears witness to the influence which these three writers had on the twelfth-century *artes poeticae*. Gervase's comment that Bernardus Silvestris has provided the most comprehensive (*plenissime*) treatment of the art of poetry has led Gallo, Hardison and Kelly to conclude that there may have been an earlier manuscript which did not survive transmission and has now been lost.[71] Hardison goes so far as to claim that 'if such a treatise existed, it was in all probability the parent of the *ars poetica* tradition'.[72]

Who, then, was the first in the medieval *artes poeticae* tradition? Matthew of Vendôme is generally credited with being the earliest of the medieval theoreticians to write a treatise on the art of poetry.[73] Matthew refers to himself as the Vendômian in his *Recueil epistolaire* (Prologue to Part 2, verse 1): 'Natus Vindocini', and he says in the first part of the *Recueil* that he studied under Bernard Silvestris:

> Me docuit dictare decus Turonense magistri
> Silvestri, studii gemma, scolaris honor. [29]

While uncertainty surrounds his date of birth, both Baldwin[74] and Hardison[75] date his treatise around 1175 and Faral places it in the years leading up to 1175, which makes Matthew's ideas on the theory of poetic composition relevant to Robert and Renaut who were writing around this time, or at least shortly after.

Matthew's *Ars versificatoria* is heavily indebted to Horace's *Ars Poetica*. His extensive references to Horace have made Baldwin conjecture that 'Matthew's book may have begun in his *prœlectiones* on that poem'.[76] But it is not only the direct quotations from the *Ars Poetica* included to support his teaching which Matthew owes to Horace, but his view of unity, especially in description. Having discussed the qualities to be attributed to characters and the importance of the appropriateness of their description to the subject of the text, Matthew writes that:

> Et quia in peritia describendi versificatoriae facultatis praecipuum constat exercitium, super hoc articulo meum consilium erit ut, si quaelibet res describatur, in expressione descriptionis maximum fidei praetendatur nutrimentum, ut vera dicantur vel veri similia, juxta illud Oratii: [Poetria. 119] Aut famam sequere aut sibi convenientia finge.(*Ars versificatoria*, I, 73) [30]

Horace's recommendation that close attention be paid to language (*Poetria*, 46-72) becomes a major section in Matthew; quality and manner of expression are the means to make a verse elegant :

> Restat de tertio membro praefatae distinctionis, scilicet de qualitate, sive de modo dicendi. Versus enim plerumque ex modo dicendi majorem quam ex substantia dicti contrahit venustatem [...] Sunt itaque tria quae redolent in carmine: verba polita, dicendique color, interiorque favus. (*Ars vers.*, III.1) [31]

Matthew divides his treatise into four sections:

De ornatu interioris sententiae
De ornatu verborum
De qualitate dicendi
De executione materie

Matthew's central preoccupation is to provide instruction and models which will assist the student in writing descriptions. His theory on the writing of descriptions rests on three premises. Firstly, the overriding principle is that descriptions should function as general types, furnished by tradition and a collective understanding of appearances and values (I, 60). Secondly, description is to be used either to lay praise or blame. Lastly, descriptions should be fitting, and correspond to and support the poet's subject:

> Amplius, non praetermittendum est utrum persona de qua agitur describi an ejus descriptio praetermitti. Plerumque descriptio personae est tempestiva, plerumque superflua. (*Ars versificatoria*, I.38) [32]

In his second section, *De ornatu verborum*, Matthew expresses his concern with what he calls the three-fold elegance of versification. According to Matthew, elegance in verse comes either from the beauty of its ideas, the exterior decoration of the words or the quality of its speech:

> Etenim sunt tria quae redolent in carmine: verba polita, dicendique color, interiorque favus. Versus enim aut contrahit elegantiam ex venustate interioris sententiae, aut ex superficiali ornatu verborum, aut ex modo dicendi. (*Ars versificatoria*, II, 9) [33]

Thus, it would seem that the impetus is to produce a unified composition. The author's understanding of a subject is amplified through the words he selects to describe it and by the way in which he records it on paper.

In his third section, entitled *De Qualitate dicendi*, Matthew compares the task of the poet to that of the sculptor and the effort involved in shaping rough material into a piece of art. Matthew lists as the tools of the poet's trade: schemes, tropes and rhetorical colours. He then proceeds to enumerate 13 schemes, or figures, with examples of how they are to be used (*Ars Versificatoria*, III, 3-16). Matthew is quick to point out that his work is intended to provide examples so that those using the book will be able to make their own models from it:

> Instruit ad versus pueros haec summula, nomen
> Ex re sortitur: summa docere potest. (*Ars versificatoria*, IV.51) [34]

The purpose of the manual is, after all, the instruction of students learning methods of verse composition. It reflects the '*ars, imitatione, exercitatio*' and *ingenium* relationship discussed above. The emphasis in treatises such as Matthew's is on the *ars* and *exercitatio* parts of the formula, rather than on *ingenium*. Inborn or natural talent and imagination may come later once the techniques of composition have been mastered through the more systematic approach of imitating earlier works.

Matthew says that of the 13 tropes which can be discussed, he will treat only those most recommended for the verse writer (*Ars vers.*, III, 18), which, according to his examples, number nine: *metaphora, antithetum, methonomia, sidonoche, peryfrasis, epithetum, methalemsis, allegoria, aenigma.* He does not give a full treatment of rhetorical colours, saying that another writer has already explained them. He provides a list of 29 rhetorical colours, but does not explain them:

> Amplius, ut cognoscat auditor quod ei restat inquirendum, colorum rhetoricorum nomina ad praesens sufficant assignata, haec scilicet: repetitio, conversio, complexio, traductio, contentio, exclamatio, ratiocinatio, sententia, contrarium, membrum orationis sive articulus, similiter cadens, similiter desinens, commixtio, annominatio, subjectio, gradatio, diffinitio, transitio, correptio, occupatio, disjunctio, conjunctum, adjunctum, conduplicatio, commutatio, dubitatio, dissolutio, praecisio, conclusio (*Ars vers.*, III. 47).

Matthew's systematic setting out of figures and tropes gives a formal and highly organized aspect to the art of writing poetry. However, Matthew does not sacrifice meaning to organisation and technical flair. The overall impression of the *Ars versificatoria* is one of a concern with unity. Throughout his treatment of the writing of descriptions, Matthew insists on their appropriateness to the writer's purpose. His 'threefold elegance of verse' mentioned in section two bears further testimony to his desire that the poem work as a whole. Matthew's final section treats the working out of the material. He warns once again against superfluity and emphasizes the need for a coherent order (IV. v. 13, 25).

Matthew concludes his third section, *De qualitate dicendi*, with a succinct formula of invention, which underlines the craft involved in literary creation:

> ...in poeticae facultatis exercitio praecedit imaginatio sensus, sequitur sermo interpres intellectus, deinde ordinatio in qualitate tractatus; prior est sententiae conceptio, sequitur verborum excogitatio, subjungitur scilicet materiae, sive tractatus dispositio. (*Ars versificatoria*, III. 52) [35]

Matthew's explanation of the writer's craft is indicative of the concept of *inventio* inherited from classical writers such as Cicero. Matthew's *sententiae conceptio* refers to the invention or discovery of the ideas and arguments to be used in the work; *verborum excogitatio* is the use of tropes and figurative language which convey the initial invention, and *tractatus dispositio* involves the organization of the work.

Geoffrey of Vinsauf, like Matthew of Vendôme, is concerned with providing instruction in the art of composition. The differences between the way in which they present this lies in their differing standpoints. Matthew is a grammarian, while Geoffrey is a rhetorician. Kelly explains this in an article published in 1966 in *Speculum*. According to Kelly, Matthew limits his instruction to versification and ornamentation: 'the structure or plan of the poem does not belong to his subject, principally because he was a grammarian teaching beginners in "creative writing"'.[77] On the other hand, Geoffrey includes all aspects of rhetoric and makes particular mention of *inventio* and *dispositio*.[78]

Geoffrey's *Poetria nova* is often associated with Horace's *Ars Poetica*.[79] Hardison refers to Geoffrey's title, *Poetria nova*, as being an explicit statement that his *Poetria* is a new version of the kind of poetics presented in Horace's *Ars Poetica*, cited throughout the Middle Ages simply as the *Poetria*.[80] While Geoffrey quotes Horace 22 times in his *Documentum de Modo et Arte Dictandi et Versificandi*, his *Poetria nova* contains only two references to Horace. Yet the *Poetria nova* continues to reflect the concerns of the Horatian treatise, such as the craftsmanship involved in writing, the formula of *ingenium* combined with *ars, imaginatione, exercitatio*, and the rhetorical importance of ornamentation.[81]

According to Edmond Faral, the facts surrounding Geoffrey of Vinsauf are scant and 'ce qu'on sait de certain sur la personne et la vie de Geoffroi de Vinsauf se réduit à très peu de chose'.[82] What can be learned comes from the *Poetria nova* itself. The dating of the treatise still remains uncertain, with Curtius placing it in the years between 1208 and 1213,[83] the translator of the 1967 edition, Margaret Nims, claiming a date no later than 1202, and Faral estimating that it was written around 1210.[84] Even Marjorie Woods, who has done extensive work on commentaries, glosses and related information[85] on the *Poetria*, speaks of 'the work, which was written about 1215.'[86] On the other hand, the facts of Geoffrey's English nationality and his voyage to Rome are attested by his own hand:

> Me transtulit Anglia Romam
> Tanquam de terris ad caelum, transtulit ad vos
> De tenebris velut ad lucem (*Poetria nova*, vv. 31-33) [36]

Geoffrey divides his treatise into six parts:

> De inventione materiae et sensitivae
> De dispositio
> De materia amplianda et de materia abreviandi
> Ornata facilitas et ornata difficultas
> Memoria
> Pronuntiatio

In his general remarks about poetry, Geoffrey considers the steps a poet must take in constructing his work. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, he compares the poet to an architect who must first have a mental blueprint or plan of what he intends to build. This mental conception will then dictate the modes of expression used and so is 'archetypal before it is actual', which is simply to say that the author should plan before starting the work, so that the act of literary creation is virtually complete in his mind before he proceeds any further:

> ...et status ejus
> Est prius archetypus quam sensilis (*Poetria nova*, ll. 47-8)

The divisions of Geoffrey's treatise reinforce the order in which the artist is to approach literary creation as well as emphasizing the importance of having an archetypal idea. The

author creates the idea first before he is able to realize it in words. The way in which the poet chooses to present the original idea and have it understood by the reader will govern the setting out of the text and the devices of amplification and ornamentation he selects. In turn, these devices should reflect and enhance the author's original idea. The question as to whether Robert and Renaut succeed in doing this in their respective texts is one which must be answered over the course of the present thesis.

In his second section, Geoffrey discusses the order of the material, principally the difference between natural and artificial order. There is only one way in which natural order may be worked out, but, according to Geoffrey, there are eight ways for proceeding with an artificial order. Naturally, if a poem starts at the beginning of a sequence of events, the poet is establishing a natural order. If he starts with the end or the middle; with a proverb drawn from beginning, middle or end; or has recourse to an exemplum drawn from the beginning, middle or end, he has chosen the more artistic route. Martianus Capella had already discussed this in the fifth century:

> His igitur ad fidem faciendam prudenter inuentis ordo rerum est sociandus, quæ pars dispositio uocitatur [...] duplex igitur huius partis est ratio; aut enim naturalis est ordo aut oratoris artificio comparatur: naturalis, cum post principium narratio, partitio, propositio, argumentatio, conclusio epilogusque consequitur; artificio oratoris, cum per membra orationis quæ dicenda sunt digerimus. (v. 506) [37]

What is the effect of this? The choice between artificial and natural order is tied in with the rhetorical concern with manipulating audience response to the work. An artificial order most often has the work open at precisely the point where the argument may be presented most lucidly. In this case, the audience is left in no doubt as to the central issues the poet has in mind, and everything that follows is an extension or amplification of the argument. This technique allows the poet greater control over the way the audience or reader reacts to the text. The same may be said for starting a text with a proverb or an exemplum. The proverb or exemplum chosen will, of necessity, be pertinent to the argument, so that the argument is furthered through its use. This is explicitly stated by Geoffrey when he says:

> Si pars prima velit majus diffundere lumen,
> Thematis intacta serie, sententia sumpta
> Ad speciale nihil declinet, sed caput edat
> Altius ad quoddam generale; novoque lepore
> Materiae formam nolit memnisse, sed ejus
> Abneget in gremio, quasi dedignata, sedere
> Supra thema datum sistat, sed spectet ad illud
> Recte fronte...(*Poetria nova*, 126-33) [38]

By using an artificial opening, the poet manipulates his material, pointing to what is of greatest relevance to his case, guiding the reader to a particular, predetermined standpoint. The way in which the poet arranges his material will depend on the message he wants to convey. Douglas Kelly studies the way in which a poet, and in this instance he cites Chrétien as his model, can use his art to turn his sources into a romance. Kelly

emphasizes the fundamental role order has as far as topical invention is concerned. According to Kelly, order 'reflects a concern for proper placing of topical material, it allows for original, even profound adaptations of material'.[87] By manipulating source material, the poet is able to bring to the fore his primary concerns and the mental conception he has for the work, which may well be completely different to that of the original source. Geoffrey uses the analogy of the architect who has carefully drawn up plans. He will know what the finished building will look like, and has estimated the work required to achieve this. So, too, will the poet be more successful if he orders his thoughts and makes all stages of composition subordinate to his *antancion.*

The third section of the *Poetria nova* is taken up entirely with devices for the amplification or abbreviation of the poet's material. Amplification and abbreviation, especially the former, are two further means the poet has at his disposal for controlling the way his material is understood. According to Geoffrey, amplification and abbreviation offer possibilities for developing a piece of writing. Geoffrey's imagery of a fork in a road and two diverging ways seems to indicate a choice between reporting the matter with brevity or drawing it out into lengthy discourse:

> Curritur in bivio: via namque vel ampla vel arta,
> Vel fluvius vel rivius erit; vel tractius ibis,
> Vel cursim salies; vel rem brevitat notabis,
> Vel longo sermone trahis (*Poetria nova*, vv. 206-09) [39]

Geoffrey's 'drawing out' of the material is not an advocation that the poet sacrifice quality to quantity. While amplification often meant that a poem's word-count was increased quite substantially, Geoffrey's interest in this device is for the opportunity it provides to enhance the subject of the work through the use of various devices. He lists eight techniques of amplification with examples of how they are to be used. As they are presented by Geoffrey, these devices are:[88]

1. *Interpretatio/expolitio* (PN 219-225) is described by Geoffrey in terms of reiterating a single thought in a number of different ways:

> ...sententia cum sit
> Unica, non uno veniat contenta paratu,
> Sed variet vestes et mutatoria sumat;
> Sub verbis aliis praesumpta resume; repone
> Pluribus in clausis unum; multiplice forma
> Dissimuletur idem; varius sis et tamen idem. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 220-25) [40]

Evrard the German, in the *Laborintus*, uses the same clothing terminology as Geoffrey to discuss the way presentation of the subject may be subtly altered according to the variations made on words and word patterns:

> Vestio rem verbis variis: non est tenor idem
> Verborum (*Laborintus*, v. 309) [41]

Faral sums up the role this technique plays by describing it as 'le procédé qui consiste à accumuler les mots et les expressions autour d'une même pensée en vue de l'amplifier'.[89] The function of exploring the semantic possibilities of a word or words through 'synonymic or incremental repetition' and the use of 'etymology as a rhetorical device'[90] is expressed in the dual role this device possesses, represented in the terms *expolitio* and *interpretatio*. The *Ad Herennium* defines the term thus:

> Interpretatio est quae non iterans idem redintegrat verbum, sed id commutat quod positum est alio verbo, quod idem valeat, hoc modo: "Rempublican radicitus evertisti, civitatem funditus dejecisti", etc. Expolitio est quum in eodem loco manemus, et aliud dicere videmur. (*Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, IV, 28, 42) [42]

*Interpretatio*, like its English cognate, is concerned with the exposition of the meaning of the words, while *expolitio* varies an idea by expressing it in different words, with a different tone of voice or turn of phrase, having much more the idea of refining and embellishing an idea. An idea may be amplified or developed thoroughly through the clarification of meaning afforded by dwelling on the idea, restating it in other words and looking at the etymology of the central word or words.

2. *Circuitio/circumlocutio* (PN 226-40) is listed as a trope in the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* (IV, 32) with the function of expressing simple things in a roundabout manner, and refers to the technique whereby the usual given name of something is replaced by a more lengthy designation. This trope also includes the rhetorical device whereby a single word is replaced by a series of words. Matthew of Vendôme lists *perifrasis* or *circumloquium* as one of the means of changing words and material in his section on the execution of the matter. He says:

> vel quando veritas splendide producitur, vel quando sententiae foeditas circuitu evitatur (IV, 21) [43]

While Matthew classifies circumlocution as a trope for ornamentation through euphemism, Geoffrey considers it a device for amplification, as does Evrard:

> Pulchro circuito rem vilem vito, decoram
> Dedico: periphrasis ista perita petit.
> Sic qui mentitur non verum dicere dicis;
> Veracem dictis dicis amare Deum. (*Laborintus,* vv. 305-8)

Geoffrey advocates circumnavigating a subject by employing a lengthier sequence of words to express it. While this device could tend towards verbosity and overstatement, it can also have the effect of drawing out the meaning simply by allowing the reader or listener more time to meditate on the subject:

> [...] formasque loquendi
> Elonga cautela breves, quando breve verbum
> Cedit, ut ipsius oratio longa sit heres. (vv. 234-36) [44]

3. *Collatio* (PN 241-63) is comparison, either overt or hidden. An overt comparison presents a resemblance which is explicitly indicated through the employment of recognizable words such as *magis, minus, aequo* (v. 246).[91] A hidden comparison is presented as though it was not a comparison at all and achieves a much more distinguished status. Matthew and Evard recommend restricted usage, if at all:

> [...] ut quaedam collateralia quae non sunt de principali proposito, scilicet comparationes et poeticae abusiones et figurativae constructiones, modus temporum et syllabarum, non inducantur. (*Ars vers.*, IV, 3) [45]

> Solemnis fuerat quondam collatio multis;
> Sed nunc, quando venit, rara, modesta venit (*Laborintus*, vv. 313-14)

Geoffrey is not so definite, although he favours hidden comparison over overt by virtue of its subtlety.[92] He recommends a skilful juncture, giving the impression that it was the hand of nature which had joined the ideas rather than the hand of art:

> [...] his est
> Formula subtilis juncturae, res ubi junctae
> Sic coeunt et sic se contingunt, quasi non sint
> Contiguae, sic continuae quasi non manus artis
> Junxerit, immo manus naturae. Plus habet artis
> Hic modus, est in eo longe sollemnior usus (*Poetria nova*, vv. 260-63) [46]

4. *Apostropha* (PN 264-460) is an exclamatory passage in a work. Geoffrey provides examples of various types of authorial exclamation, which are treated in the chapter on authorial presence under the headings of apostrophe, both second person or audience address and invocations to God; authorial commentary where the author intervenes to make an aside about his poetic craft or to refer to the antecedent sources of his story; authorial digression; the author's subjective judgement of the events in his own text; and establishment of authority in the text.

Apostrophe by its very nature implies a recipient, an often unidentified reader or listener who bears the brunt of the author's address. Geoffrey's first example warns the recipient against excessive joy, the second rebukes a proud man and the third encourages the faint-hearted. He also provides a passage written as though on the death of King Richard, apostrophizing England in the form of a reprimand at its lack of foresight. Included in this model are apostrophes to death, nature and God.

In the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, which Margaret Nims notes is a major source for the *Poetria nova*,[93] apostrophe is treated as a device to be used when the grandeur of the subject demands it, 'cum rei magnitudo postulare videbitur' (IV, 15).[94] The rhetorical aspect to this device has its origins in its function in guiding audience or reader response through dramatic exclamations which reinforce the emotion inherent in the passage:

> Exclamatio est quae conficit significationem doloris aut indignationis alicujus per hominism aut urbis, aut loci, aut rei cujuspiam compellationem (*Rhet. ad Her.* IV, 15) [47]

This has much to say as far as the crafting of the work to achieve a desired result is concerned.

5. *Prosopopeia* (PN 461-526) is a device of personification which represents an animal, an inanimate object or abstract idea as though it were a person, able to speak for itself. In medieval romance, it is most often Nature or Love which are personified. The mention of Nature as creating a beautiful person becomes a common feature of descriptions and portraits, and Love is portrayed as an exigent mistress inflicting suffering on those who fall under her spell.

6. *Digressio* (PN 527-553) designates either a straying away from the matter in hand or a change in the natural order of events. Geoffrey provides two models which correspond to the two types of digression he classifies. The first involves stepping outside the subject to discuss a parallel situation or a tangential idea sparked by the passage, such as occurs when the author intervenes to speak in the first person about his own experience. The other type of digression results from a change in the chronological order of events, to foreshadow a future scene, recapitulate a previous scene, or create an atmosphere of temporarily suspended animation while the author describes the setting or the season before entering the action.

7. *Descriptio* (PN 554-667), that is the addition of a descriptive passage, is probably the most straightforward means of amplifying a text and is the subject of Chapter Six. For Matthew of Vendôme, description is the central feature of his treatise; for Geoffrey, it is merely another means of amplifying a text. That is not to say that Geoffrey did not judge it important as a rhetorical device. On the contrary, he presents models for describing a woman, her attire, as well as the means by which a ceremonious feast may be described. Geoffrey obviously considers the proper treatment of *descriptio* important enough to warrant a warning against trite conventionality and he advises that descriptions be appropriate to the subject, so that they will be lengthy, but also lovely:[95]

> Sed, cum sit lata, sit ipsa
> Laeta: pari forma speciosa sit et spatiosa. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 555-56)

These lines offer both a play on words, as well as expressing the importance of appropriateness of language to work out poetic design.

8. *Oppositio* (PN 668-686) is Geoffrey's final device, which consists in negating the opposite of an idea and then affirming the actual idea. It operates as a technique of reinforcement in that the poet introduces a certain image and then revokes it, replacing it with another image more suitable for his purposes and the antithesis of the image first presented.

Having treated amplification, Geoffrey conducts a brief discussion on abbreviation, wherein he provides seven techniques for achieving brevity in a piece of literature. He

recommends that abbreviation be employed when writing a factual account, so that the facts being presented are presented simply and objectively.

The fourth division of Geoffrey's treatise discusses the ornaments of style which should be present in a discourse, whether brief or long. Geoffrey presents ten tropes and thirty-five rhetorical colours, defining them and presenting them in the context of a piece of writing. Geoffrey concludes his survey of the rhetorical colours by noting that:

> Scemata si plene rerum scruteris, in illis
> Omnibus ostendit sententia rem manifeste (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1528-29) [48]

Geoffrey emphasizes the importance of bringing together thought and the devices used for expressing this thought. Ornamentation for its own sake is not the aim behind the inclusion of these devices.

As mechanical as Geoffrey's divisions and definitions may appear, the motivation behind their provision is to instruct the writer in how he may better convey his meaning. Words are the poet's tool and treatises such as Geoffrey's instruct the poet on how these tools may be used to their full potential.

Words must be suited to content, so that the work is conceived of as a unified whole, reminiscent of Matthew's threefold elegance of versification. The importance of expressing the inner meaning through well-chosen words is expressed by Geoffrey in this way:

> Si bene dicta notes et rebus verba coaptes,
> Sic proprie dices. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1842-42) [49]

At the conclusion of his *Poetria nova*, Geoffrey of Vinsauf indicates the importance of the harmonious linking of all parts:

> ...Sic simul ergo
> Omnia concurrant, inventio commoda, sermo
> Continuus, series urbana, retentio firma.
> Non plus laudis habent, si res recitentur inepte,
> Quam sine praemissis recitatio facta venuste. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 2061-65) [50]

Geoffrey's concern with unity is expressed in the section concerned with '*de inventione materiae intellectivae*':

> Si quis habet fundare domum, non currit ad actum
> Impetuosa manus: intrinseca linea cordis
> Praemetitur opus, seriemque sub ordine certo
> Interior praescribit homo, totamque figurat
> Ante manus cordis quam corporis; et status ejus
> Est prius archetypus quam sensilis. Ipsa poesis
> Spectet in hoc speculo quae lex sit danda poetis.
> Non manus ad calamum praeceps, non lingua sit ardens
> Ad verbum: neutram manibus committe regendam
> Fortunae; sed mens discreta praembula facti,
> Ut melius fortunet opus, suspendat earum
> Officium, tractetque diu de themate secum.

Circinius interior mentis praecircinet omne
Materiae spatium. Certus praelimitet ordo
Unde praearripiat cursum stylus, aut ubi Gades
Figat. Opus totum prudens in pectoris arcem
Contrahe, sitque prius in pectore quam sit in ore. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 43-59) [51]

Geoffrey advises careful planning in the initial stages of a literary work to ensure that all elements of the composition fit in with and complement each other. Matthew addresses this issue in the Prologue to the *Ars versificatoria* where he warns:

'[...] pannorum assutores ab inspectione hujus operis excludantur [...] qui [...] nugarum aggregationem nituntur in unum compilare' (Prologue, 7) [52]

From both Matthew and Geoffrey it becomes clear that intrinsically linked to the invention of a piece of written work is the underlying mental conception, or authorial intention. Is *inventio*, then, to be considered the same thing as *antancïon*? If *antancïon* is taken to mean poetic will or design, that is the preconceived idea the poet has for how the work will be perceived by the audience, *antancïon* must be understood as the authority to which selection of matter and its classification refer. *Antancïon* is ever-present throughout the process of composition as the desired end. Moreover, it is the governing principle behind the scheme constructed to achieve this. The poet's initial idea is the starting point which will dictate the subsequent process of poetic creation, with *inventio* being the first stage in composition. As Douglas Kelly points out in his article on the 'Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*', 'the invention of the material is the first and foremost step in composition'.[96] Moreover, as Kelly states earlier in this study,

The instruction in the *Poetria nova* on the choice and arrangement of the *materia* checks any inclination the poet may have to be careless in the conception of his poem, and demands clarity and order in the basic plan. Nor should the subsequent disposition, amplification, and ornamentation of the poem be indulged in for their own sake. Rather Geoffrey insists that these steps in composition be subordinated to the original plan, and thus preserve its unity and balance.[97]

In composing a romance, the medieval poet starts with an idea. This is the mental conception for the work. From the initial idea, the poet proceeds to write it down. He needs to arrange the work in a certain way and find suitable material with which to express his idea. The text which ensues is an amplification or elucidation of this initial idea. Thus, invention and intention are co-dependent elements in the craft of composition. In inventing a work, the poet takes the subject matter and uses it to meet a certain end, to fulfil his *antancïon*.

Matthew and Geoffrey write their treatises in Latin, yet their methods for composition are relevant for the vernacular. The medieval schools taught the art of literary composition, providing students with techniques for imitating and elaborating on examples from the works of respected authors. The influence of treatises such as those written by Matthew and Geoffrey is discernable in the romances which emerged as a new literary genre in the

twelfth century. Faral describes the development of romance from the *artes poeticae* as, 'un enseignement littéraire qui dépasse la formule de leur propre enseignement'.[98] He describes the evolution of these arts in terms of a genre outgrowing the traditions upon which it was formed, while at the same time retaining certain elements of this older tradition which 'font toucher du doigt certains modes importants de l'action des modèles anciens sur la production littéraire du moyen âge, latine et française'.[99] The craft involved in writing a twelfth- or thirteenth-century romance depends largely on patterns of composition inherited from the *artes poeticae*.

*Antancïon* is the fundamental requirement in the act of literary creation to which all other elements are subordinate. The creation of a context, that is the selection of appropriate subject matter, the ordering of material and the use of rhetorical devices all follow on from the poet's initial mental conception and give form to the idea.

The question remains, what was the source material upon which Robert and Renaut based their texts, what is new, or at least adaptation, and what techniques do they employ to reveal their own *antancïons*?

1   Douglas Kelly, 'Chrétien de Troyes: The Narrator and His Art', in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium*, ed. by Douglas Kelly (Lexington: French Forum Publishers, 1985), pp. 13-47 (p. 13).
2   Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), p. 100.
3   Kelly, *Symposium*, p. 30.
4   Faith Lyons, '"Entencion" in Chrétien's *Lancelot*', *Studies in Philology*, 51 (1954), 425-30, p. 426.
5   Marie-Louise Ollier, 'The Author in the Text: The Prologues of Chrétien de Troyes', *Yale French Studies,* 51 (1974), 26-41 (p. 32).
6   Ollier, p. 26.
7   Ollier, p. 36.
8   Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, *'Le Chevalier de la Charrette (Lancelot)'*, in *Symposium*, p. 181.
9   Edward J. Buckbee, *Symposium*, p. 51.
10   Ollier, p. 33.
11   Charlton T. Lewis and Charles T. Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945), p. 975.
12   Adolf Tobler and Erhard Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch,* 10 vols. (Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag, 1915-), III pp. 568-70.
13   Eugène Vinaver, *The Rise of Romance* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 34-35.
14   Vinaver, p. 37.
15   Buckbee places *Erec* at the head of Chrétien's *oeuvres* from Chrétien's list in *Cligés, Symposium*, p. 48.
16   Lewis and Short, p. 423.
17   William A. Nitze, 'The Romance of *Erec*, Son of Lac', *Modern Philology,* 11 (1913-1914), p. 487; 'Sans et matière' dans les oeuvres de Chrétien de Troyes', *Romania,* 16 (1915-1917), p. 44; 'Arthurian Problems', *BBSIA,* 5 (1953), pp. 76-79; '*Conjointure* in *Erec*, vs. 14', MLN, 69 (1954), pp. 180-81.
18   Michelle A. Freeman, *Translatio studii and Romance Composition: the example and some ramifications of Chrétien de Troyes' Cligés* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1981), p. 65.
19   Philippe Mousket, *Chronique rimée,* ed. by Baron de Reiffenberg, 2 vols (Brussels 1836-38).
20   Edmond Faral *Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle: recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen age* (Paris: Champion, 1924), pp. 59-60.
21   Ernst Robert Curtius, 'Dichtung und Rhetorik im Mittelalter', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, XVI (1938) 435-75, (p. 453).
22   Norris J. Lacy, *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes: An Essay on Narrative Art* (Leiden: Brill, 1980).
23   Lacy, p. vii.
24   Lacy, p. 76.

25 Lacy, p. 130.

26 Lacy, p. 111.

27 Lacy, p. 117.

28 *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 13.

29 Anne Berthelot, 'The Romance as *Conjointure* of Brief Narratives', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 33 (1993), 51-60 (p. 51).

30 Gilbert Norwood, *Pindar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945), p. 165.

31 G.M.A. Grube, *The Greek and Roman Critics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965) p. 9.

32 Grube, p. 41.

33 Seán Burke, *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p. 15.

34 O.B. Hardison Jr. and Leon Golden, *Horace for Students of Literature: The Ars Poetica and its Tradition* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), p. 72.

35 Alex Preminger and others, *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1974), p. 167.

36 Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willard R. Trask, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), p. 64.

37 Grube, p. 15.

38 Grube, p. 20; H.I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1956), p. 72.

39 Marrou, p. 77.

40 Grube, p. 16; Curtius, p. 65.

41 Preminger, p. 9.

42 Marrou, p. 85.

43 Grube, p. 16.

44 Marrou, p. 243.

45 Marrou, p. 299.

46 Preminger, p. 10.

47 Marrou, p. 121.

48 Marrou, p. 244.

49 Curtius, p. 37.

50 John Marenbon, 'Carolingian Thought', in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 172.

51 Curtius, pp. 38-39.

52 Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350-1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 1.

53 Curtius, p. 42.

54 Irvine, p. 2.

55 '...the science of correct speech and the interpretation of the poets', trans. by H.E. Butler, *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian* (London: William Heinemann, 1920), p. 63.

56 *Medieval Literary Criticism*, ed. by O.B. Hardison Jr. and others (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1974), p. 7.

57 Grube, p. 137.

58 Grube, p. 137.

59 Grube, p. 168.

60 Grube, p. 173.

61 Charles Sears Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400) Interpreted from Representative Works* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1959), p. 3.

62 Grube, p. 93.

63 *[Cicero] Ad C.. Herennium*, trans. by Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 6-9.

64 Hardison numbers existing manuscripts of the *Poetria nova* at fifty and concludes that, 'evidently it was a popular textbook', in *Medieval Literary Criticism* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1974), p. 123; Douglas Kelly calls Geoffrey's treatise 'the most widely used treatise on composition written in the Middle Ages', citing fifty-seven surviving manuscripts. ['Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsaufs *Poetria Nova*', *Medieval Studies*, 31 (1969), 117-48 (p. 117)].

65 Douglas Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), p. 107.

66 'The most popular of the medieval arts of poetry was Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*', [Ernest Gallo, 'The *Poetria nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf', in *Medieval Rhetoric: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. by James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 68; 'Only Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova* and Matthew's *Ars versificatoria* appear to have travelled widely and to have continued in general use into the Renaissance [...] the little that has been reported tends to attest continued, widespread use or at least availability until the end of the Middle Ages for Geoffrey's *Poetria Nova* and Matthew's *Ars*', [Douglas Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, pp. 110-11].

67  Hardison, *Medieval Literary Criticism*, p. 31.
68  '[...] who has a house to build', Nims,. p. 16.
69  Marjorie Woods, 'Literary Criticism in an Early Commentary on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*', in *Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bologna* (1979), p. 667.
70  O.B. Hardison Jr, p. 290.
71  Ernest Gallo, 'The *Poetria Nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf', in Murphy, p. 68; Hardison, *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism*, p. 290; Kelly, 'Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*', p. 117.
72  Hardison, p. 290.
73  Faral, p. xiii; Hardison and Golden, *Horace for Students of Literature*, p. 92; Galyon, p. 4.
74  Baldwin, p. 185.
75  Hardison, p. 290.
76  Baldwin, p. 186.
77  Kelly, 'The Scope of the Treatment of Composition in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Arts of Poetry', *Speculum,* 41 (1966), 261-78 (p. 270).
78  Kelly, p. 278.
79  Ernest Gallo, 'The *Poetria nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf', in Murphy, p. 69; Douglas Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, p. 105; Hardison, pp. 384-87.
80  Hardison, p. 385
81  Hardison, p. 387.
82  Faral, p. 15.
83  Curtius, p. 51.
84  Faral, p. 15.
85  Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, p. 126.
86  Marjorie Woods, p. 667.
87  Douglas Kelly, 'The Logic of the Imagination in Chrétien de Troyes', in *The Sower and His Seed: essays on Chrétien de Troyes,* ed. by Rupert T. Pickens (Lexington: French Forum, 1983), pp. 9-30 (p. 24).
88  Amplification is also discussed by Eberhard the German and Jean de Garlande. Eberhard lists eight techniques for amplifying a work, although in a different order to Geoffrey, and Jean de Garlande includes nine, grouping *duplicatio, exclamatio, subjectio, dubitatio* and *interpretatio* as sub-categories of apostrophe.
89  Faral, p. 63.
90  Douglas Kelly, in *Medieval Eloquence*, p. 241.
91  'more, less, equally' (Nims, p. 25).
92  Faral, p. 69.
93  Nims, p. 10.
94  [Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium*, p. 283.
95  Nims, p. 36.
96  Douglas Kelly, 'Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*', *Mediaeval Studies,* 31 (1969), 117-48 (p. 140).
97  Kelly, p. 118.
98  Faral, p. 103.
99  Faral, p. 103.

# Two

# The Antecedent Sources

In the Prologue to her *Lais*, written in the twelfth century, Marie de France sets forth the technique of amplifying inherited material so that the writer might bring to the fore a particular and new reading of it. Marie writes that the ancients wrote books which seem obscure, and they did so:

> Pur ceus ki a venir esteient
> E ki aprendre les deveient,
> K'i peüssent gloser la lettre
> E de lur sen le surplus mettre (*Prologue*, vv. 13-16) [1]

This passage highlights the craft of the medieval poet. *Gloser la lettre* seems above all to imply use of the rhetorical process, that is the art of composition. By amplifying or adding to the text or the tradition which the poet inherits, the poet imbues the newly conceived work with a new perspective. In composing the text, he selects material from antecedent sources and then applies the principles of composition reflected in the arts of poetry discussed in Chapter One in order to elicit his own *antancïon*. From Marie's Prologue, it would appear that the inherited text could furnish the poets with a good foundation upon which they could build their texts, but that a subsequent listener or reader would then provide his or her own interpretation of the material, adding fresh insight and bringing hitherto neglected meanings to light through glossing the text. Glosses might then be incorporated into the next re-working of the material and the desired result is a *molt bele conjointure*.

Conrad d'Hirsau's distinction is useful. He distinguishes between the two types of material which together produce a text and in so doing highlights the process of composition:

> materia remota sunt rudes lapides et inexpoliti et ligna nondum dolata, nondum levigata.
> Set materia propinqua sunt lapides et ligna bene preparata, ut in structura domus, prout
> expedit, componantur (*Summa de arte prosandi* ) [2]

*Materia remota* is the raw material of the romance which the author takes as his context and then shapes to fit his design, according to his *antancïon*. The reconstructed or revised version of the sources becomes the *materia propinqua*.

Kristine Brightenback in her 'Remarks on the "Prologue" to Marie de France's *Lais*,' discusses Marie's invocation of Priscian in terms of the controversy surrounding the

translation of *gloser la lettre*.[1]  She, along with Robertson and Spitzer, considers the term an invitation to discover the Christian doctrinal content of the 12 *lais*.  Spitzer says that in the poetic works of the Middle Ages, 'there is only one doctrine, the Christian doctrine' and moreover that 'Marie knows her poetic tales have Christian significance and that the 'subtlety' of future commentators will be exercised to discover that immutable Christian truth'.[2]  Robertson, in the same vein, concludes from his discussion on verses 13 to 15 of the prologue that 'Marie invites us to inquire into the doctrinal content of her *lais*'.[3]

Brightenback disagrees with Spitzer and Robertson's implication of an 'interpretational limitation' on the *Lais* and instead focuses on 'the sense of poetic craftmanship and pride Marie seeks to convey'.  Brightenback supports this view by referring to the custom of citing antecedent authorities which is a feature of literature in this period, encapsulated in the *ars, imitatione, exercitatio* formula discussed in Chapter One.[4]

Vinaver elicits two functions from Marie's lines 9-16:

> 'the discovery of meaning implicit in the matter and the insertion of such thoughts (*sen*) as might adorn, or be read into, the matter [...] To add one's own *sen* could therefore be taken to mean to 'enliven' the matter, not only with one's thoughts, but with one's understanding, purpose and skill.'[5]

This is not a new proposition for twelfth-century writers.  According to Vinaver, the craft implied in Marie's terminology is 'the product not so much of learning as of certain habits of mind acquired through learning'.[6]  This learning is that discussed in Chapter One.

If 'gloser la lettre' refers to adding to the source and making it conform to the author's *antancïon*, what is Robert's and Renaut's inheritance?  What is 'la letre' for each writer?  By looking at the supposed *materia remota* which Robert and Renaut select and comparing it with the versions under consideration, the respective *antancïons* of Robert and Renaut can be isolated.  In order to approach the concept of glossing the text and revealing authorial *antancïon*, some idea of the antecedent material and where it comes from must be ascertained, before being able to recognize what the new version takes as its emphasis.

Structure and *materia remota* are related.  For Kelly, '*conjointure* is specifically the result of the interlacing of different elements derived from the source or sources (or for that matter, from the author's imagination)'.[7]

Form follows function.  In other words, *antancïon* determines the shape and design of the plot.  The needs of the story dictate its structure, and the structure should in turn support the *antancïon*.  In order for the author to express the key issues of the text, there must be a framework upon which he can hang his ideas.

Both the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* exhibit a structure based on narrative units or episodes which together build a cohesive romance.  The *Joseph* charts the progress of the

Grail in terms of its increasing significance. This is achieved through the accumulation of episodes. At each crucial episode, the vessel is central, but with a different function. This structuring device is explored further in Chapter Seven.

There are diverging views on how best to allocate divisions in the *Joseph*. Joan Tasker Grimbert, in an article entitled 'Testimony and Truth in *Joseph d'Arimathie*', says that 'the poem falls naturally into three parts, the first and last of which comprise the early history of the Grail'.[8] The middle section is the focus of her article and she analyzes this in terms of its illustration of the 'chain of evidence' which takes place as the truth about Christ is sought and tested. According to Grimbert, Robert presents a text in which witnessing and personal experience are fundamental to the discovery and transmission of the truth. Grimbert makes the following divisions:

Part 1: 1-986;
Part 2: 987-2356;
Part 3: 2357-3514.

Jean Rogers sets out his translation of the *Joseph* in three sections which correspond with Grimbert's except for a slight discrepancy in the divisions between the first and second sections. Rogers names his sections:

1. The Cup of the Last Supper (vv. 1-960);
2. The Freeing of Joseph (vv. 961-2356);
3. The Company of the Grail (vv. 2357-3514).

While there is some merit in Roger's and Grimbert's divisions, they are too simplistic for meaningful discussion. Grimbert's divisions support her hypothesis, which is that 'Robert's organization of his *matière* shows that the concern with the discovery and transmission of truth determines to some extent the overall structure of the romance'.[9] This explains Grimbert's need to dwell on the middle section at length.

Rupert Pickens treats the *Joseph* in divisions which I see as more appropriate:[10]

I. (1-192) Introduction (Creation, Fall of Satan, Fall of Man, Birth of the Virgin, Birth and Ministry of Christ);
II. (193-438) The Passion of Our Lord;
III. (vv. 439-960) The Charity and Imprisonment of Joseph of Arimathea;
IV. (vv. 961-2306) Saint Veronica, Vespasian, the Freeing of Joseph, and the implied Destruction of Jerusalem;
V. (2307-2430) The Neophytes;
VI. (2431-3514) The Western Grail Adventures of the Elect Company. Pickens divides this final section into three parts, the first dealing with the institution of the Grail service, the second with Moyses as an example of what happens to those not accepted at the Grail

service and lastly, Alein's rise to importance and the departure of the company towards the West.

I treat the *Joseph* in seven divisions which more adequately reflect the textual progression following the elucidation of the nature and importance of the Grail:

1. Pseudo-Prologue (vv. 1-192);
2. Christ's last days and Crucifixion (vv. 193-438);
3. Christ's Burial and Joseph's subsequent Imprisonment (vv. 439-986);
4. The Pilgrim's Story (vv. 987-1184);
5. Veronica, Vespasian and the Vengeance on the Jews (vv. 1185-2306);
6. The Grail Company and the establishment of the Grail Service (2307-3454);
7. Epilogue (3455-3514).

These divisions are justified by authorial intervention where Robert specifically comments that he wishes to change the subject or treat another part of the story. The first section comprises a full account of the Fall, man's separation from God and how this could be rectified through the death of Jesus Christ. The next section commences at the words, 'Au tens que Diex par terre ala' (v. 193), setting the chronological context in which the narrative takes place. The division I have made between the second and third sections requires explanation. Although it might appear strange to place the beginning of a section with a line starting with 'Et', it is from this point on that Joseph takes a prominent role in the narrative. Christ is crucified and Joseph's reception of the news precipitates the chain of events which have him take Christ from the Cross, catch His blood in the chalice of the last supper, be imprisoned and receive Christ's instructions on His visit to him in prison. The section involving the pilgrim commences with, 'Au tens que je vous ei conté' (v. 987), referring to the time when the pilgrim travelled to Rome from Judea where he had witnessed Christ and the miracles He had performed, and relates this to the Emperor. The pilgrim's role ends with his adamant words that if it eventuates that he has not been telling the truth, the Emperor's men can cut his head off. The next section begins with the Emperor's command to his men that messengers be sent out to discover the truth of the pilgrim's story. Robert concludes this section by having Vespasian sell 30 Jews for one silver piece, which echoes Judas' betrayal of Christ for 30 silver pieces. There is an abrupt transition from an account of Vespasian's vengeance on the Jews to Joseph's formation of the Grail company. The introduction of Joseph's sister and her husband at verse 2307 signals the start of the section. The epilogue is indicated by the word 'ainsi' (v. 3456), which precipitates several concluding statements as well as a projection of what will be treated in future texts.

Treatment of the antecedent sources of Robert's *Joseph* will be undertaken according to the seven divisions outlined above.

**Prologue**: vv.1-192

As discussed in Chapter One, there is no formal prologue in the *Joseph*; yet the first 192 verses function as an introductory section wherein the main themes are presented and explain the serious nature of the sin committed by mankind and the subsequent need for God to send His son as Saviour.

The opening sequence of ten lines functions almost as an apostrophe in its insistence. The explanation of the need for Christ's coming to earth (vv.11-31), and digression on the virtues of the Virgin (vv.32-44) and her birth (vv.45-80) fill 77 lines of verse as opposed to six lines of prose. The account of the conception and birth of the Virgin does not appear in the prose version at all. The images which Robert applies to the Virgin in this passage are all traditional. Italo Siciliano notes in his book on the poetic themes of the Middle Ages that the cult of the Virgin was flourishing in the twelfth century, recording that 'on sait que des sermons, des poèmes, des traités furent écrits en latin pour célébrer Notre dame'.[11] The intriguing formula of the Virgin as both mother and daughter, is described in Robert as 'fille dieu est, si est sa mere'. The example in Robert is noted by Siciliano amongst other appearances in literature of this phenomenon.[12] The play on words is both satisfying from a poetic point of view, as well as conveying one of the mysteries of the faith.

Both verse and prose provide a brief explanation of original sin (vv. 81-88; ll. 15-24) and both digress to reiterate Christ's incarnation (vv. 89-108; ll. 12-14). The biblical story of Adam and Eve related in verses 109-130 comes from Genesis, Chapter Three. Prose and verse include a bridging passage which reiterates the need for Christ's presence on earth and refers to Mary's role (vv. 131-148), with both versions using the epithet *fonteinne*, to describe her bountiful qualities which can never be exhausted. The narrator intervenes at this point in both versions to make the self-conscious remark that he will return to his *matere* (vv. 149-52), and then proceeds to discuss the doctrinal issues of baptism and penance (vv. 153-92). In this passage, O'Gorman understands allusions to, or at least influences of, trends in theological teaching current at the time Robert was writing. For Robert's insistence on purging the sin of *luxure* (v. 171), O'Gorman places him within the 'mainstream of Augustinian teaching on marriage'. For the passage which explains the process of sin and repentance, O'Gorman sees the influence of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and its discussions on frequent confession and the inter-dependence of confession and baptism.[13]

**Christ's Last Days and Crucifixion**: vv. 193-438

The narrative proper begins at verse 193 when the central character of Joseph is introduced, although he is not named in the opening lines of this section. The information involving Joseph's secret love for Christ and fear of the Jews is recorded in the New Testament gospel of Matthew:

'After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave.'
John 19.38

The account of the Last Supper and Mary Magdalene's act of washing Christ's feet and anointing them with expensive perfume is derived from a combination of biblical accounts. Robert situates this scene at Simon's house on the day of the Last Supper. In John, no one becomes indignant at Mary Magdalene's use of the perfume, but Judas is greatly angered at the loss of money:

> Or avint au jour de la Cene
> Que Marie la Madaleinne
> Vint droit en la meison Symom,
> A la table trouva Jhesum
> Avec ses deciples seant,
> Judas devant Jhesu menjant.
> Dessouz la table se muça.
> As piez Jhesu s'agenouilla;
> Mout commença fort a plourer,
> Les piez nostre Seigneur laver
> De ses larmes et les torchoit
> De ses chevous que baius avoit.
> Aprés les oint d'un oignment et de l'oudeur
> Que chaucuns d'eus se merveilla. (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, vv. 235-53) [3]

Robert's version of events is confusing and inconsistent. He locates the Mary Magdalene scene supposedly on *le Jour de la Cene*, and then later has a scene where Jesus and His disciples are back at Simon's house on a Thursday with Jesus imparting His final teaching.

In Matthew's account, the woman comes while Jesus is at the house of Simon the leper. It is not yet Passover. All the disciples become indignant at the waste of expensive perfume and this precipitates Judas' deal with the Jews to betray Jesus:

> 'Now when Jesus was at Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabastar jar of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head, as he sat at table. But when the disciples saw it they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for a large sum, and given to the poor." Matthew 26.6-8

In Mark 14.3, the incident occurs two days before the Passover festival, and the wording is much the same as in Matthew.

In the gospel of Luke, this scene does not take place at the Last Supper, but prior to this day when Jesus is eating at the house of Simon, the Pharisee:

> 'One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went to the Pharisee's house, and sat at table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was sitting at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and annointed them with the ointment.'
> Luke 7.36-39

Robert's account of the Last Supper and Christ's final teaching reflects the gospel of John. In the gospel of John, Christ knows that 'His hour had come' (John 13.1) and, over supper, teaches the disciples important elements of the Christian faith. Robert reduces this teaching to one illustration: Christ's washing of the disciples' feet. The account as it is related in the gospels forms part of Jesus' last instructions to His disciples before leaving them and is an illustration of humility and servitude. The question Peter asks of Christ in the gospel simply enquires why Christ is washing the feet of His servants:

> 'He came to Simon Peter; and Peter said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet."' (John 13.6-8)

Robert changes the emphasis and has John ask why Christ is washing everyone's feet in the same water:

> Quant il daigna leur piez laver;
> D'une iaue a touz les piez lava,
> Et sainz Jehans li conseilla
> Prive[e]ment: — Sire, une chose
> Demanderoie, meis je n'ose."
> Jhesus l'en ha congié donné,
> Et il ha tantost demandé:
> — Sire, a nous touz les piez lavas
> D'une iaue. Tu, pour quoi feit l'as?" (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, vv. 332-40) [4]

The importance of this passage in terms of the preoccupation with penance and confession at the time Robert was writing is discussed in Chapter Four. Robert adapts an illustration provided in the Bible to highlight his own treatment of sin and the need for salvation.

After this didactic digression, the narrative returns to the Last Supper and events taken from Matthew 27. The Jews' exclamation that 'Seur nous soit ses sans espanduz' (v. 423) is found in Matthew 27.25 and in the Gospel of Nicodemus, and is fully exploited by Robert for his own purposes. This verse absolves Pilate from any guilt as well as precipitating and almost justifying the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Vespasian.

### Christ's Burial and Joseph's Imprisonment (vv. 439-986)

Joseph's request to take Christ's body from the Cross is canonical and is recorded in the New Testament gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke:

> 'And when evening had come , since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.' Mark 15.42-46[14]

The request is also recorded in the *Gesta Pilati:*

> 'A certain man named Joseph, a member of the council, from the town of Arimathea, who was also waiting for the kingdom of God, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.' (*Gesta Pilati* 11.3)

Robert's treatment of the relationship between Joseph and Pilate is quite different to that of scripture and apocrypha. In the *Joseph*, they are depicted as relating to each other more in terms of a feudal relationship, with Joseph being described as a *soudoier* under Pilate, asking for his 'guerredon' (v. 445). O'Gorman notes that the *Passion des Jongleurs*, dated to approximately the end of the twelfth century also portrays Joseph and Pilate in a feudal relationship as *hom* and *seigneur*.

Nicodemus assumes a fairly prominent role in apocryphal material in that he shows his support for Christ and speaks of his good works:

> 'This man does many signs and wonders, which no other has done nor will do. Release him and wish no evil against him. If the signs which he does are from God, they will stand; if they are from men, they will come to nothing [...] And now let this man go, for he does not deserve death.' (*Gesta Pilati*, 5.1)[15]

However, it would appear that as closely associated as Nicodemus is with the events surrounding Christ's Crucifixion, Robert has adjusted his sources in having his Nicodemus assist Joseph in removing Christ from the Cross.

O'Gorman notes that mention of Christ's blood falling on a stone and splitting it is an allusion to a widespread medieval tradition which relates this event.[16] Robert's reference reinforces the powerful nature of the blood which is then collected in the chalice, rendering it twice hallowed. Its twice-hallowed status is achieved through its role as the cup of the Last Supper and then its re-use as a receptacle for holy blood. This holy status of the vessel makes credible the voice of the Holy Spirit which later in the romance is heard from it.

Robert records details of the burial of Christ, that is that He was wrapped in a shroud and placed in a tomb Joseph had intended to use for himself:

> Joseph le cors envolepa
> En un sydoine qu'acheta
> Et en une pierre le mist
> Qu'il a son wes avoit eslist,
> Et d'une pierre le couvri
> Que nous apelons tumbe ici. (*Joseph*, vv. 575-580) [5]

This description echoes the New Testament gospels, of which Matthew is representative:[17]

> 'And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed.' (Matthew 27.59-60)

The *Gesta Pilati* also refers to Joseph's burial of Christ:

> 'Why are you angry with me, because I asked for the body of Jesus? See I have placed it in my new tomb, having wrapped it in clean linen, and I rolled a stone in front of the door of the cave.' (*Gesta Pilati*, 12.1)[18]

Robert then digresses to relate Christ's descent into Hell:

> Li vrai Diex, en ces entrefeites,
> Comme Sires, comme prophetes,
> En enfer est errant alez,
> Ses amis en ha hors gitez (*Joseph*, vv.593-596) [6]

This tradition comes from the New Testament:

> 'For, as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' Matthew 12.40

> 'Therefore, it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)' Ephesians 4.8-10

The Jews' anger at Joseph's act of burying Christ and their subsequent imprisonment of him is recorded in the *Gesta Pilati*. In the *Gesta Pilati*, Joseph is imprisoned for his act of defiance in burying Christ's body:

> When the Jews heard these words, they were embittered in their hearts, and laid hold on Joseph and seized him and shut him in a windowless house, and guards were stationed at the door. And they sealed the door of the place where Joseph was shut up.' (*Gesta Pilati*, 12.1)[19]

However the events differ slightly in Robert's version. When Christ's body is no longer to be found in the tomb, the Jews plan to imprison Joseph. They formulate an alibi should they be asked about the disappearance of Christ's body:

> — Tantost com les pourrons seisir,
> De mort les couvenra morir;
> Et s'il nous welent acuser,
> Qu'il le nous vueillent demander,
> Chaucuns de nous respondera
> Que on a Joseph le bailla;
> Se vous Joseph ci nous rendez,
> Par Joseph Jhesu raverez. (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, vv. 653-60) [7]

Robert's version differs in that the Jews plot to hide Joseph away in order to be free to blame him for Christ's disappearance. His absence will allow assumptions to be made about his guilt. In the *Gesta Pilati*, it is the soldiers who use this excuse to defend themselves when the Jews require an explanantion for the disappearance of Christ's body from the tomb:

> 'Again the members of the guard said, "We have heard that you shut up the man who asked for the body of Jesus, and sealed the door, and that when you opened it you did not find him. Therefore give us Joseph and we will give you Jesus."' (*Gesta Pilati*, 13.2)[20]

In the *Joseph*, the excuse is given almost as a reason for imprisoning Joseph, while in the *Gesta Pilati*, the line appears after Joseph has been both imprisoned and escaped.

In the apocryphal versions, Joseph only remains in prison a short length of time before Christ comes to him, reveals Himself to him and then frees him and places him in his own house in Arimathea. When later Joseph is questioned as to his escape he explains:

> "'On the day of preparation about the tenth hour you shut me in, and I remained the whole Sabbath. And at midnight as I stood and prayed, the house where you shut me in was raised up by four corners, and I saw it as it were a lightening flash in my eyes. [...] Then I recognised it was Jesus. And he took me by the hand and placed me in the middle of my house, with the doors shut, and led me to my bed and said to me: Peace be with you!'" (*Gesta Pilati*, 15.6)[21]

Robert fills over 300 lines of verse recounting Christ's appearance to Joseph in prison. This is largely devoted to Christ's teaching on grace and salvation and his instructions concerning the Grail. Robert's version of Jesus' visit to the prison also contains descriptions of great light and the revelation of the visitor's identity to Joseph. However, in the apocryphal versions, Christ does not bring the vessel, nor does He expound doctrine and make Joseph a Grailkeeper and leader of a group of people. Robert's Joseph is not removed from prison in so short a period of time as the apocryphal Joseph, but instead Robert records that:

> Ainsis est Joseph demourez
> En la prison bien enchartrez,
> Ne de lui meis plus ne pallerent,
> Meis trestout ester le lessierent.
> Et demoura mout longuement
> Que de lui ne fu pallement. (*Joseph*, vv. 961-66) [8]

The alterations Robert makes are highly significant in terms of his *antancïon*. Christ's appearance to Joseph as told by Robert revolves around the Grail and an explanation of the secret words. This allows Robert to establish the symbolic nature of the Grail as representing Christ and acting as a line of communication between man and God.

Verses 899-916 explain the significance of the objects used at Christ's burial:

> Ausi sera representee
> Cele taule en meinte contree.
> Ce que tu de la crouiz m'ostas
> Et ou sepulchre me couchas,
> C'est l'auteus seur quoi memetrunt
> Cil qui me sacrefierunt.
> Le dras ou fui envelopez
> Sera corporaus apelez.
> Cist veissiaus ou men sanc meïs
> Quant de men cors le requeillis
> Calices apelez sera.
> La platine ki sus girra
> Iert la pierre senefiee
> Qui fu deseur moi seelee
> Quant ou sepuchre m'eüs mis. (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, vv. 899-913) [9]

The symbolism which Robert employs in this passage is often discussed in the light of Honorius Augustodunensis' *Gemma Animae*. It is appropriate here to make the comparison:

> Dicente sacerdote per omnia saecula saeculorum, diaconus venit, calicem coram eo sustollit, cum favone partem ejus cooperuit, in altari reponit et cum corporali cooperit, praeferens Joseph ab Arimathia, qui corpus Christi deposuit, faciem ejus sudaro cooperuit,inmonumento deposuit, lapide cooperuit. Hic oblata, et calix cum corporali cooperitur, quod sindonem mundam significat, in quam Joseph corpus Christi involvebat, Calix hic, sepulcrum; parena,lapidem designat, qui sepulcrum clauserat. (Migne PL, CLXXII, 558)

O'Gorman says that there can be little doubt that Robert drew on a source such as Honorious Augustodunensis' *Gemma animae*, 'which draws specific parallels between the ritualistic objects associated with the Crucifixion: the altar and the Cross, the chalice and the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, the corporal and the shroud, and the paten of the Mass and the stone used to close the sepulchre.'[22] In having recourse to liturgical expression, Robert reinforces the deeply religious tone of his work, and uses this to draw his own conclusions on the nature of the Grail.

Furthermore, Christ reveals to Joseph (and at the same time, the reader) the secrets of the Grail. What are these secrets? Robert's reference to 'li grant secré [...] qu'en numme le Graal' (vv. 935-36) has been the subject of much debate and scholarship.

Robert mentions secret words in three very specific passages:

> La sunt li grant secré escrit
> Qu'en numme le Graal et dit (vv. 935-36) [10]

> Ki sunt propement apelees
> Secrez dou Graal et nummees (vv. 3335-36) [11]

> Il i ha feit demoustrement
> Des sevrez tout privement (vv. 3419-20) [12]

Robert also refers to *paroles* in eight verses, five of which simply refer to the words of messengers or the *meintes paroles* told about the Rich Fisher (v. 3457). Three of these references are to words conveyed by Christ:

> Cil qui ces paroles pourrunt
> Apenre et qui les retenrunt
> As genz serunt [plus] vertueus,
> A Dieu assez plus gratïeus (*Joseph*, vv. 921-24) [13]

> Toutes ces paroles leur di
> Que je t'ei contees ici,
> Et trestout cest enseignement
> Leur di sanz trespasser neent. (*Joseph*, vv. 3143- 46) [14]

> Les seintes paroles dist t'a
> Ki sunt douces et precïeuses
> Et gracïeuses et piteuses (*Joseph*, vv. 3332-34) [15]

One of these overtly describes the words as 'les seintes paroles' (v. 3332) which are correctly called and named the secrets of the Grail. Christ tells Joseph of the joy that can be experienced by those who repent and believe in Him. He speaks of *sacremenz* being made and relates this to Joseph in words which are generally accepted to refer to the treatise written by Honorius Augustodunensis. This treatise explains the symbolic nature of the various rites of Mass, of parts of the liturgy, of ecclesiastical dress and of sacred objects.[23] Nitze, in the introduction to his edition of Robert's *Joseph*, refers to Robert's *grant livre*, wherein the secrets of the Grail are said to be written. He too takes this book to be a treatise or edifying work such as the *Gemma Animae* and notes that, here 'nous trouvons, sans que le Graal soit mentionné, la même explication de la messe que dans notre roman'.[24] Adolf conjectures that identifying the Grail with the tomb, as Honorius does ("Calix hic sepulcrum, patena lapidem designat") could assist in understanding what exactly Robert meant by his secrets of verses 935 and 3336.[25] Jung quotes from Chapter 47 of Honorius' treatise and explains that 'the idea of the communion cup as the grave of Christ and therefore as the place of His death and resurrection seem to have been familiar to the Middle Ages'.[26] However, she denies any connection with the words of the Consecration said at the Catholic Mass, because, according to her, the Grail Service cannot be considered a real Mass.[27] Despite various hypotheses, the exact identification of Robert's secrets remains unresolved. However, this does not detract from the significant role they perform in terms of Robert's *antancïon*. They are secrets passed on from God to man through the vessel. Those who are in possession of these words are able to experience great joy and are admitted to God's grace. This both aids the explanation of the function of the Grail and also illustrates God's offer of salvation to those who listen and accept his words.

## The Pilgrim's Story (vv. 967-1184)

Two passages in Robert's work echo a version of the *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* which itself is composed from other medieval legends. According to Loyal Gryting, the *Venjance* exhibits threads from both the seventh-century *Cura sanitatis Tiberii* and the eighth-century *Vindicta salvatoris,* and was well-known and extremely successful during the medieval period.[28] The *Joseph* shares the main points of the story with the medieval versions.[29] These are that Vaspasian is extremely ill and no cure can be found for him. He sends his messenger to Jerusalem to bring back the miracle-working prophet who has been healing people. Upon finding that He is dead, the messenger nevertheless returns with Veronica and her cloth which bears the likeness of Christ. Vespasian is healed by looking at the cloth and then vows to take vengeance on the Jews. This he does and Jews are sold in groups of 30 for the price of one piece of silver.[30]

The pilgrim's role in relaying the information about Christ is a feature of one of the versions of the mystery-play stage of the legend. Loyal Gryting's study on the various literary threads that make up the legend of the *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* makes no

mention of why the pilgrim may have been included in the fifteenth-century mystery, only that in the first act, a pilgrim tells Vespasian of Christ and that this leads to messengers being sent out to seek a relic of Christ.[31] Robert's inclusion of the pilgrim allows him to explore fully the themes of hearing, telling and relaying information, thereby providing an illustration of the communication aspect of his *antancion*.

**Veronica, Vespasian, and the Vengeance on the Jews**: vv. 1185-2360

The episode involving Vespasian and his cure from leprosy is based on a version of the *Venjance Nostre Seigneur*. Vespasian is so afflicted with leprosy that no cure can be found and everyone avoids him. He sends for 'the great wonder-working prophet from Jerusalem'[32] only to discover He has been crucified by the Jews. He is nevertheless cured as a result of looking at Christ's image captured on Veronica's cloth, and forthwith seeks vengeance on the Jews for Christ's death. While Robert retains the mass destruction of Jerusalem in his version and has Jews dragged behind horses, burned and executed, the conclusion offers more hope than is apparent in the customary medieval version of the legend. Having found Joseph and been converted, Vespasian asks Joseph on what terms the Jews might be saved. Joseph's answer is almost the 'moral of the story':

> 'S'il vuelent croire ou Fil Marie
> Qui Sires est de charité,
> C'est en la Sainte Trinité
> Ou Pere, ou Fil, ou seint Esprit,
> Si con no loi l'enseigne et dist.' (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, vv. 2296-300) [16]

In verse 1483, a woman is introduced who has in her possession a cloth which bears the likeness of Christ. The woman's name is given as Verrine. She is the Veronica who in the *Cura sanitatis Tiberii* uses a cloth with the image of Christ imprinted upon it to cure Tiberius.[33] The Catholic Encyclopedia records that one of the earliest accounts of the Veronica story is found in the *Mors Pilati*. According to this version, a woman called Veronica wishes to have a picture of Christ's face to comfort her. She takes a cloth to a painter and on the way meets Jesus who, hearing her story, causes the image of His face to appear on her cloth. Other stories portray Veronica as a compassionate woman who inadvertently captures an image of Christ's face when she encounters Him on the way to the Cross and offers Him her cloth to wipe His face. It is this latter version which Robert adopts.

When Vespasian finds Joseph in prison, Joseph sets about explaining to him the nature of the one who has cured him from leprosy. This explanation performs the function of a didactic digression wherein Joseph gives an account of the angels, the advent of sin, a reiteration of the Creation story and Fall, an explanation for the concept of the Trinity and an account of Christ's crucifixion and Resurrection. Through this narrative by Joseph, Robert explains the necessity for Christ's salvation, recounting the downfall of the angels and the subsequent creation of man to fill the seats of paradise which the angels had lost.

The list of sins committed by the angels is attributed by O'Gorman to the Gregorian classification, a twelfth- to thirteenth-century presentation of the Seven Deadly Sins:[34]

> Il fist et cria les archangles
> Et tout ensemble fist les angles.
> De mauveis en y eut partie,
> Plains d'orgueil et de felonnie
> Et d'envie et de couvoitise
> Et de haïne et de faintise,
> De luxure et d'autres pechiez
> [...] Le barat et la tricherie,
> Ire, luxure et gloutenie. (*Joseph*, vv. 2089-95; 2129-30) [17]

Though there are 11 sins recorded in the metrical *Joseph*, there are only five in the prose:

> quant il ot fait les angres, si en i ot une partie de mavés; et cil qui mavés furent, si furent plain d'orgoil et d'envie et de covoitise [...] le mal enging et la tricherie an terre. (*Prose Joseph*, ll.845-46; 855-56)

The prose makes no mention of the sin of lust, recorded twice in the above passage in verse as *luxure*. Robert's preoccupation with penance and redemption revolves around the sin of *luxure*. It is *luxure* which precipitates Adam and Eve's act of betrayal towards God and the advent of Original Sin (v. 122), and it is this same sin which divides the Grail Company and separates those who have indulged in *luxure* from those who are pure (v. 2383), with *luxure* being further qualified here as *teu vilté* and *tele ordure* (v. 2384).

O'Gorman sources both the fall of the angels and the subsequent creation of man to take their place in Augustine's *De civitate Dei*. He also refers to Honorius' *Elucidarium*, I, 50, noting that the 'closeness of the wording practically assures us that this was Robert's source'.[35]

At one point in his testimony to Vespasian, Joseph describes Christ as:

> [...] cil qui par les Juïs
> Fu en la crouiz penduz et mis
> Ou fust de quoi Eve menja
> La pomme. (*Joseph*, vv. 2195-98) [18]

O'Gorman has Robert alluding to the legend of the Holy Rood, which links the wood from the tree bearing the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden with the wood of the Cross upon which Christ hung.[36]

In a somewhat contradictory passage, Joseph offers salvation to those Jews who are prepared to believe in the Trinity, whereupon Vaspasian puts them up for sale. The selling of 30 Jews for a denier appears in the *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* and nicely balances Judas' betrayal of Jesus to the Jews for 30 silver pieces.[37] O'Gorman suggests that 'the ultimate source for the account of the selling of the Jews after the Fall of Jerusalem might well be Flavius Josephus who relates in the *De bellum Judaicum* that Titus sold an enormous amount of captives, along with the women and children, at a very low price owing to the exceedingly large supply'.[38]

**The Company of the Grail** (vv. 2307 -3514)

Robert introduces two new characters at the outset of this section whom he calls Enygeus and Hebron, or Bron. Several critics have speculated on the etymology of Joseph's sister's name, with William Nitze reviewing a few possibilities and favouring that of Brugger, who connects her to Innogen in Wace.[39] Paul Imbs believes the name derives from the *Gesta Pilati* and from the Greek word for noble and well-born.[40] O'Gorman remains unconvinced, noting only that the only other appearance of the name is in ms.K of the Second Continuation, 'where Enygeus features in a genealogy of Perceval as sister of Joseph, wife of the wounded King and mother of Alain, li Gros, Perceval's father'.[41]

As for Hebron, Jean Marx claims that, 'il semble certain que pour Robert, Bron est une abbréviation de cet Hébron qui dans la Bible (Nombres, III, 19) est l'un des trois fils de Koath et l'un des gardiens de l'Arche'.[42] O'Gorman agrees with this view of Hebron's origin and discounts those scholars who would have a Celtic source for Joseph's brother-in-law, claiming that his name is derived from Bran, a Celtic God associated with the sea and who is also said to have brought Christianity to England.[43] Among those who claim Celtic antecedents is Pierre Le Gentil who says 'it is probable that Robert employed the alternative form Bron because he had some confused and indirect acquaintance with the Welsh legends of Bran the blessed, renowned for his hospitality and his wounded foot, legends to which in their French form he alludes as the "meintes paroles" told about the good Fisher'.[44] Further discussion on Bron's character may be found in Chapter Five.

Robert calls on two traditions in the passage, which in the prose version depicts Moysés' demise and which in the metrical *Joseph* is a lacuna. On one hand, the empty seat left by Judas is to remain empty until the Day of Judgement and this is highly imbued with Christian significance. On the other hand, the empty and powerful seat is connected to Arthurian romance.[45] Liliane Dulac explains that 'le siège vide laissant la Table Ronde inachevée peut-être rapproché d'autres objets prédestinés des romans arthuriens, ceux qui dans l'attente du héros qui en sera digne, conduisent à un sort funeste les téméraires qui on osé s'en emparer'.[46] Moysés' disappearance into the abysm foreshadows a scene in the *Merlin* where the presumptuous Baron is swallowed up for having dared to try and sit with the knights at the round table. Dulac highlights the points in common between these two episodes:

> Le parallélisme entre ces deux récits ne se limite pas seulement aux deux actions — faute et châtiment — qui en forment le motif commun. [...] il faut ranger les acteurs principaux, qui occupent des positions analogues et ont les mêmes fonctions. Ce sont le Christ et Merlin qui ont prévu, voulu l'épreuve et en dégageront le sens; Joseph et le roi Uterpandragon qui la laissent s'accomplir; Moyse et le baron que leur fourberie rend dignes de figurer la trahison de Judas. Les deux épisodes s'ouvrent d'autre part par l'annonce de ce qui va nécessairement suivre. Lorsque Joseph interroge le Christ sur la réponse à apporter à Moyse qui implore le droit de partager la grâce des compagnons du Graal, la voix de l'esprit Saint déclare, 'Joseph, Joseph, or est venus li tans que tu verras ce que je t'ai dit del siège qui est entre toi et Bron.' (éd. B. Cerquiglini, p. 59). Il faut donc que la 'senefiance' s'impose et que la démonstration soit faite. Or Merlin ne dit rien d'autre à Blaise, quand il

> l'informe de l'intrigue ourdi par des gens 'faus' qui exigent la tentative. Il n'entreprendra rien pour les en empêcher, car cette épreuve doit avoir lieu'.[47]

Both texts present the idea that falseness and deception have no place at the table of the elect. Those who are admitted to the Grail Table and to the Round Table appear to have been predestined for such a role. Neither Moysés nor the presumptuous Baron understand or acknowledge this, and are lost.

Joseph is told that Petrus will receive a letter from heaven which he is to read out to the Grail company. O'Gorman explains that hagiographic literature often included a scene where a letter is sent from heaven, and credits Robert's inclusion of the motif to either a saint's life or to the apocryphal *Lettre du Seigneur*.[48]

The voice from the Grail tells Joseph to hand the Grail over to Bron and to take responsibility for his good behaviour and then explains that:

> cil qui nummer le vourrunt,
> Par son droit non l'apelerunt
> Adés le Riche Pescheur;
> A touz jours croistera s'onneur
> Pour le poisson qu'il peescha
> Quant cele grace commença (*Joseph*, vv. 3343-48) [19]

O'Gorman sees this passage as a clear reference to Chrétien's *Roi Pescheor*, but also as an allusion to the scripture wherein Christ exhorts His disciples to be fishers of men (Matthew 4.19).[49] William Nitze summarizes the views regarding Chrétien's term *Roi Pescheor* in an article devoted to this subject.[50] Nitze clearly favours Celtic provenance. He claims that Robert's Bron 'is a medieval contamination or identification of the Celtic god Bran with biblical Hebron, one of the guardians of the Ark in the Old Testament (Numbers 3:19)'.[51] While the Christianized nature of Robert's Fisher King is in no doubt, Nitze argues against the Christian hypothesis which posits the source for Chrétien's *Roi Pescheor* solely in the Bible. Nitze's reasons for rejecting this view rest on the fact that Chrétien omits any mention of the sacrificial fish which is a feature of the Christian tradition, and present in Robert. Nobody has explained Robert's use of the name to my satisfaction. Opinion remains divided, with scholars adopting either a Christian or a Celtic interpretation.

There is also considerable conjecture and ambiguity about Robert's purpose in mentioning, twice, the Vales of Avalon (vv. 3123 and 3221). It is impossible to know why he might have wanted Petrus to go there. Pierre le Gentil asks:

> 'what could have given him the idea of linking the evangelisation of Britain with the transfer of the Grail to the West? How did he know of the identification of the 'vaus d'Avaron' with Glastonbury?[52]

This identification is denied by Mary Giffin. In a 1965 article,[53] she situates Avalon about 80km northwest of Autun in Burgundy. The Burgundian Avallon had become a

place of pilgrimage to which thousands of lepers were attracted by stories of miraculous healing. O'Gorman mentions Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* where Avalon is an island off the coast of England to which Arthur is transported to be healed of his wounds.

Any discussion on the sources of the *Joseph* must take the prose versions into consideration. In the light of Richard O'Gorman's extensive research on Robert de Boron, the culmination of which is presented in his recent critical edition, it is obvious that the prose versions are more valuable than has previously been thought.

The prose version of *Joseph* is extant in whole or in part in 17 manuscripts.[54] In many cases, the prose versions of the text are clearer, more consistent and more helpful in establishing meaning than the verse. A number of Robert's inconsistencies are explained by comparing verse with prose. O'Gorman suggests that this is because there is an original, but missing, text upon which both verse and prose are based and that the prosifiers rendered a more faithful reproduction of the story.

> 'In view of the fact that the single witness to the verse version of the *Joseph* is often faulty and contains numerous blunders and inconsistencies, it is safe to assume that R represents a state of the text much altered through a succession of scribes from its form when it left the hand of Robert.'[55]

While this is interesting for a study of textual transmission and the transition from verse to prose, a comparison between the two forms does not assist us in isolating the *materia remota*. Although transposed into prose, the *Joseph*, in whatever form, still retains the same themes and storyline. The prose-writers have not introduced any new material, but redesigned the format. The initial *antancïon* has been respected and retained.

Apart from passages in the verse version which contain more detail than the prose, for example the description of the Virgin Mary and her conception and nativity, all the details of the story and the structure of the plot are the same in prose and verse. This means that, despite the fact that the texts we have at our disposal may be corrupt versions of the original, there are still enough clues to allow a study of the author's *antancïon*.

In conclusion, we can only state that many of the sources claimed for Robert rest only on conjecture. We do not know where Robert got his Grail from. He is not necessarily re-writing Chrétien or providing a pre-history to Chrétien's grail. What is clear is that the Grail, whatever its provenance, offers Robert the ideal medium through which he can expound his ideas on Christianity. To do this he had to provide an explanation of the Grail and its holy nature so that he could use it as a symbol of God's Grace and the availabilty of personal salvation to those who desire it.

The *Joseph* could be decribed as homiletic in nature. It is comparable to a sermon in that Robert is at pains to convey to the reader the significance of Christ's sacrifice and what this can mean to the individual sinner. Robert illustrates his themes with material taken

from other literary texts, traditions and theological debates contemporary to his time of writing. He adopts a didactic approach, comparable to a preacher giving a sermon, teaching and warning of the dire consequences which will eventuate for those who refuse to acknowledge and accept Christ's Grace and salvation.

Arthurian romance is obviously the source of 'la letre' for Renaut. From his first lines he alludes to an antecedent source, saying that he wishes to compose a romance for his lady from a beautiful tale of adventure. The exact nature of this antecedent source is surrounded in ambiguity. Was it oral? Was it written? If so, by whom and located where?

A brief account of the various studies devoted to the origins of the *Decouneüs* reveals considerable conflict and divergent opinions. From here on I will discuss the Fair Unknown prototype, but when I refer to Renaut's work, I will call it the *Descouneüs*. There are several schools of thought concerning the origins of the Fair Unknown legend. There are those who posit a specific Celtic source, as Schofield does with the Welsh *Peredur;* there are those who maintain a lost Celtic legend upon which all cognates are based, as Owen does in his comparison of *The Dream of Macsen Wledig* with the Fair Unknown legend.

We can say with some degree of certainty that Renaut was influenced by Chrétien's work. This assertion is supported by the number of borrowed lines and episodes which feature in the *Descouneüs*. This is especially the case when Renaut's work is compared with the *Erec*, a comparison which William Schofield has made in great detail in his extensive study published in *Harvard Studies*.[56] While the similarities and identical language can be explained by the common stock of poetic language and themes the twelfth-century poet had available to him, there are enough resemblances between the texts to validate a theory of Renaut's imitation.

Schofield provides a comprehensive analysis of the occasions where Renaut uses material from the *Erec*. His conclusion that 'Renaut made wholesale use of *Erec*' is supported by the 89 instances of similar, if not identical wording.[57] Schofield describes Renaut's borrowing as 'skilful' and 'deliberate', referring to Renaut's craftmanship in terms of a student imitating, and yet adapting, his teacher's work:

> He entered into the spirit of his master with wonderful ease, and wove Chrétien's ideas so naturally into his own composition that, although it has long been known that he was indebted to Chrétien for some features of the poem, the extent of his borrowings has escaped the notice of scholars.[58]

Schofield claims that the points in common between *Li Biaus Descouneüs* and the Middle High German *Wigalois* (1204-1210), the Middle High English *Lybeaus Desconus* (ca. 1350), the Italian *Carduino* (ca. 1375) and Chrétien's romances necessitate a common prototype for the *Descouneüs*. Schofield's theory of a common prototype rests on the

fact that the *Descouneüs* has elements which appear in the Celtic *Peredur*, but not in the *Perceval*, which leads him to believe that 'there was some version of the story [...] containing, perhaps, all the adventures which are common to *Peredur* and the Fair Unknown story'.[59]

In an article on 'Les Sources de Renaut de Beaujeu',[60] Madeline Tyssens tests the validity of the claim to a prototype for existing Fair Unknown texts and concludes that there is not. She outlines the points in common between Renaut's text and Chrétien's romances, and notes that Renaut borrows from all of Chrétien's Arthurian romances except *Cligés*. Tyssens' approach to discussing the sources of the *Descouneüs* is undertaken more in terms of the intertextual 'pillage'[61] which takes place. She refers the reader to Schofield for a detailed account of Renaut's borrowings from the *Erec*, but disagrees with his conclusions. Having discussed the number of features the *Descouneüs* has in common with the works that make up the Chrétien corpus, and noting that Schofield was obviously aware of 'le pillage' undertaken by Renaut, Tyssens wonders why Schofield 'a jugé necessaire d'expliquer d'autre façon les ressemblances du 'cycle' du Bel Inconnu avec *Erec* et *Perceval*'.[62]

Tyssens denounces Schofield's theory on the basis that he has oversimplified the *Peredur* in order to make his hypothesis work[63] and instead proposes that Renaut borrowed from Chrétien and was in turn copied, and moreover glossed, by the later authors.[64]

'Le pillage' from Chrétien which Tyssens discusses is also treated by Ricarda Bauschke in an article which appeared in the *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*. Bauschke describes Renaut's imitation of his contemporary as an 'Auseinandersetzung mit Chrétien' or a 'Diskussion mit Chrétien',[65] and establishes the links and borrowings from Chrétien. According to Bauschke, this is not the work of a mere epigonal writer, but Renaut's 'discussion' with Chrétien was carried out with a certain end in mind. This end, or *antancïon*, is, claims Bauschke, the subversion or undermining of convention, an 'intendierten bewussten Dekonstruktion der Gattungskonventionen des höfischen Romans'. This, maintains Bauschke, is made clear through the 'grossen Linien der Handlung und an Einzelmotiven'.[66]

D.D.R. Owen shares Schofield's theory of a misplaced common original.[67] He notes Madeleine Tyssens' dissension, but adds that her position is not supported. Owen continues, '[...] Renaut did not invent the plot and its main articulations: his achievement was to develop and enrich a more primitive original, as we can see from a comparison with the other versions. W.H. Schofield has made such a comparison, and in painstaking detail'.[68] Owen suggests that this basic story is what he refers to as the Caer Seint story, and is the fusion of two independent stories transmitted through the Irish legends of *The Dream of Oengus* and the *Phantom's Frenzy*. *The Dream of Macsen Wledig* is the only extant version of the Caer Seint Tale and Owen offers examples of parallels between the

*Descouneüs* and *Macsen*. There are similarities in characters' names, in descriptions of castles, in episodes. Owen is careful to make it clear that Renaut de Beaujeu, or any other of the authors assumed to have written Fair Unknown tales, did not borrow directly from *The Dream of Macsen*:

> [...] when fairly close textual resemblances occur, we must presume that both the Welshman and the other writers were at these places transmitting with reasonable accuracy details of their own sources, which had a common point of origin in the lost Welsh legend of Caer Seint.[69]

Owen explains that not all episodes on the *Descouneüs* can be accounted for through a comparison with *Macsen*. According to Owen, during the transmission from Welsh to French tradition, the *Descouneüs* was further filled out by the addition of new adventures and supplementary details. These additional episodes were taken from romance: the combat at the ford, the rescue of the maiden from the giants, the theft of the dog, the fight for the sparrow-hawk, the encounter with Lanpart.[70]

Claude Luttrell is dismissive in his discussion of the studies undertaken on the Celtic sources of the Fair Unknown and refers to the whole issue of provenance as the 'Mabinogionfrage'. As far as Luttrell is concerned, much of this scholarship rests merely on conjecture:

> In spite of the confidence shown by such a commentator as Loomis, the comparative literary methods that have been applied to the establishment of Arthurian source material for Chrétien are typically very open to criticism, source relationships being claimed that cannot be substantiated, because the procedure used amounts to no more than guesswork (or even biased judgement).[71]

I do not wish to conduct a comprehensive study of the textual provenance of the *Descouneüs*. This has already been carried out, although not conclusively, by other scholars. While it is interesting and indeed valuable to make detailed comparisons of texts and to trace origins, my approach to sources is different. I am not so much interested in proving a lost source or in tracing motifs back to their Irish beginnings, but in recognising the creative impulse at work in the author. This creative impulse means that the medieval author does not fashion a text from nothing, nor does he borrow without discretion from other authors. Instead, he uses samples taken from the general store of international material he has at his disposal and then builds on these to create his own romance. Where scholars who study origins are most helpful is in assessing the range and provenance of this international material.

What are the intertextual features Renaut uses in the composition of his romance? These can be divided into two categories: the first is where Renaut borrows from Chrétien and the second is the use of motifs from the stock of mythic literature.

## 1. Borrowings from Chrétien

This category may be further divided into two sub-categories where Renaut, a) re-uses short passages or lines in his own work or b) transposes whole episodes with slight variation.

### a) Short passages or lines

The instances where Renaut uses identical phrasing to Chrétien are numerous. Many of these verbal parallels appear in different episodes in the *Descouneüs* than they do in the *Erec*. For example, Margerie and Guinglain's ride to the sparrow-hawk competition is described in the same words as Erec and Enide's entrance to the *Joie de la Cort*:

> Ensi vers le castel s'en vont;
> Passent les lices et le pont (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1655-56)

> Ensi vers le chastel s'an vont,
> Passent les lices et le pont (*Erec*, vv. 5493-94) [20]

Both Erec and Guinglain must leave certain situations to explore their characters. Erec leaves in order to make amends for falling into recreance, seeking to temper the lover aspect of his personality with that of knight. Erec takes leave of his father, King Lac, saying:

> Sire, ne puet estre autremant
> Je m'an vois; a Deu vos comant. (*Erec*, vv. 2737-38) [21]

Guinglain, on the other hand leaves Blonde Esmeree and the requirements of knightly society for the world of the Pucele and love. His single-minded and formal leave-taking is not made with the purest of motives:

> Dame, ne puet estre autremant.
> Je m'en vois; a Diu vos comant. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3891-92) [22]

While Renaut's protagonist appears to have been based on Chrétien's, there are marked differences in motivation. As will be shown in Chapter Five, Guinglain is very much the 'literary' hero. He is propelled through the plot and performs certain functions according to the genre in which he is placed at the time. There is no thoughtful reflection in this character. He does not work through the issues and conflicts as Erec is seen to do. Guinglain fights, he wins, he loves. But he remains incomplete. His character is unresolved.

Many of the descriptions of the female characters' beauty or the descriptions of settings and combat in Renaut are made using the same vocabulary as in Chrétien.

Enide is described in terms of her eligibility for marriage:

> La pucele est et bele sage,
> Et si est mout de haut parage. (*Erec*, vv. 1277-78)

Ne por biauté ne por lignage
Ne doi je pas le mariage
De la pucele refuser. (*Erec*, vv. 1565ff) [23]

King Arthur describes Blonde Esmeree in similar terms. The difference between the two descriptions is that in the *Descouneüs*, the hero seems unaware of the privilege he is being accorded. This is yet another instance where the protagonist has a situation explained to him:

Plus bele avoir vos ne poés;
Et si est de moult grant parage;
Ne por biauté, ne por lignage,
Ne le devés vos laissier mie [...]
Il vit la dame bele et sage. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 6184ff.) [24]

The depiction of an image of a leopard on a rug as a knight arms himself for combat appears in both romances. The image of a leopard is used twice in Erec. The first time occurs as Enide assists Erec in arming himself before the sparrow-hawk contest. Erec has a rug brought out which he sits on:

Et fist un tapis de Limoges
Devant lui a terre estandre [...]
Erec s'assist de l'autre part
Dessus l'image d'un liepart,
Qui el tapit estoit portreite
Por armer s'atorne et afeite:
Premierement si fist lacier
Unes chauces de blanc acier. (*Erec*, 2628-38) [25]

The second instance of a leopard occurs at the description of Erec's coronation. The carved representation of a leopard appears on the two ivory thrones intended for Erec and Enide. Tom Artin explains that the context alters the significance of these images so that 'at the beginning of his quest, the emblem can properly indicate only intention; at his coronation, the same emblem indicates achievement'.[72] According to Artin, the traditional depiction of a saint standing on the figure of a lion or dragon signified victory over evil. In Erec, it represents the hero's 'inner struggle to subdue vice'.[73]

In the *Descouneüs*, it is Lanpart who has a rug brought out so that he can prepare to oppose Guinglain's claim to hospitality:

Un tapit a fait aporter
Quant à terre fu estendus,
Si est tost cele part venus;
Et puis est se Lanpars asis
Sor l'image d'un lupart bis
Que el tapis estoit portraite.
De lui armer forment s'afaite.
Cauces de fer li font caucier
Qui moult faisoient à prisier. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2618ff.) [26]

The image of the leopard is used more gratuitously by Renaut. He uses it to set the scene of combat; however, his object is not to subdue vice or appease an inner struggle. He simply wants lodging for the night.

How many of these similarities in language can be attributed to Renaut's imitation of Chrétien? How many must be explained as coming from a more universal stock of romance language? These questions cannot be resolved. Nevertheless, many of the resemblances are so striking that Renaut's knowledge and use of Chrétien's romance seems obvious.

b) Borrowing of episodes

In order to approach the borrowing of whole episodes, we must first decide how the text is divided. Luttrell lists the order of the episodes in the *Decouneüs* as follows:

AA      Arrival at Arthur's Court ;
DA      Departure from Arthur's court (vv. 133-320);
I      Encounter at the Perilous Bridge (vv. 321-592);
II      Rescue from Two Giants (vv. 593-828);
RS      Reconciliation Scene (vv. 829-958);
III      Attack by Three Avengers (vv. 959-1236);
IV      Encounter with a Huntsman (vv. 1276-1496);
V      Sparrowhawk Contest (vv. 1497-1869);
VI      Ile d'Or Episode (vv. 1870-2491);
VII      Jousting for Hospitality (vv. 2492-2740);
VIII      Accomplishment of the Mission (vv. 2741-3503);
WQ      Wedding to a Queen (vv. 3504-3908; 6145-6246).

Luttrell lists only the episodes which are common to both the *Erec* and the *Descouneüs*. He does not include the additional episodes, that is those where the story thwarts expectation by not ending in resolution, but continuing beyond verse 3908:

Guinglain's return to the Pucele (vv. 3909-5055);
Blonde Esmeree at Arthur's Court (vv. 5056-5318);
Tournament (vv. 5318-6144).

Although Renaut uses the same episodes as Chrétien does in the *Erec*, he alters them for his own purposes. He does this in two ways. Firstly, he alters the order in which the episodes appear and secondly, he changes the focus of the episodes.

Luttrell lists the order of the episodes in *Erec* as such:

DA IV V VI I II RS III VII VIII WQ

Which, as Luttrell points out, means that the two romances differ only in the block I II RS III,[74] which come later in the *Erec*.

The sparrowhawk episode is particularly illustrative of Renaut's glossing of Chrétien. The sparrowhawk contest is of fundamental importance in *Erec* and occurs near the

beginning of the romance. It is here that Erec first fights as Enide's champion in order to prove his prowess, and to receive acclaim for her beauty. In the *Descouneüs*, the episode functions more as yet another occasion where the hero proves his heroic worth. The changes Renaut introduces, such as the motivation for combat and the ugliness of the maiden, serve to undermine the expectations engendered by the romance genre.

Renaut uses very similar wording to Chrétien, presenting the rules and conditions in a similar way:

> Qui l'esprevier voudra avoir,
> Avoir li covandra amie
> Bele et sage sanz vilenie.
> S'il i a chevalier si os
> Qui vuelle le pris et le los
> De la plus bele desresnier,
> S'amie fera l'esprevier
> Devant toz a la perche prandre (*Erec*, 570 ff.) [27]

> Cele qui l'esprevier ara
> Et à la perce le prendra,
> Si ara los de la plus bele,
> Et si convient à la pucele
> Qui vaura aveir l'esprevier,
> Que maint o soi I chevalier,
> Por desrainier qu'ele est plus bele
> Que nule dame, ne pucele. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1589ff) [28]

However, the motivation behind the contest differs. In the *Descouneüs*, Guinglain encounters a distraught maiden and enters the contest in order to avenge the death of her *ami*. The circumstances in the *Erec* are entirely different. Yder, son of Nut, is in possession of the sparrow-hawk. Erec decides to challenge him for it, more to rectify the wrong done him by Yder's dwarf than for any other reason. In order to challenge the knight, he requires a maiden on whose behalf he can lay claim to the sparrow-hawk. Fortunately for Erec, the vavasour with whom he finds lodging has a beautiful daughter, and even more fortuitous is the grant by the vavasour of her hand in marriage. The descriptions of the contest itself follow an almost parallel course except for a fundamental difference in Renaut. Both Erec and Guinglain are unknown when they ride up for the contest and are the subject of much speculation by the townspeople. In Chrétien's version, it is Yder who commands his maiden to take the sparrow-hawk from its perch, while in the *Descouneüs*, Guinglain tells Margerie to take it. Erec makes a counter-claim on the bird, and in the *Descouneüs* the knight of the castle rides in to defend his right on behalf of his *amie*. In *Erec*, both maidens are extremely beautiful and justify combat on their behalf. Renaut presents another image, one of an ugly and wrinkled *amie*, whom the knight of the castle maintains to be the most beautiful of women. The juxtaposition of beauty against ugliness allows for Renaut's comment that love 'la laide fait biele

sanbler / tant set de guille et d'encanter' (vv. 1733-34). In so doing, he foreshadows Guinglain's later folly in love.

Erec's recreance during the initial phase of his marriage is echoed in Guinglain's life with the Pucele on the Ile d'Or. Both knights give up arms and tournaments and spend time playing lover to their ladies.

> [...] la joie et le delit
> Qui fu an la chanbre et el lit. (*Erec*, 2017-18)

> La ou il jurent an un lit,
> Ou orent eü maint delit.
> Boche a boche antre braz gisoient,
> Come cil qui mout s'antre amoient. (*Erec*, 2471-74) [29]

> Et Giglans quant il fu el lit,
> Des or ara de son delit.
> Ensanble li amant se jurent.
> Quant il furent ensenble et jurent,
> Molt docement andoi s'enbracent;
> Les levres des bouces s'enlacent;
> Li uns à l'autre son droit rent ;
> Fors de baiser n'orent content;
> Et cascuns en voloit plus faire
> De baiser dont son cuer esclaire. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4795-4804) [30]

However, Erec resolves the two conflicting sides to his character, while Guinglain does not. The generic implications caused by the conflicting roles of lover and knight is an essential theme in the *Descouneüs* and is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

## 2. Motifs from Mythic Literature

The theory of Celtic provenance found much favour among certain scholars such as R.S. Loomis and D.D.R. Owen. Though it cannot be established convincingly as direct source material, the influence wrought by Celtic myth and motif cannot be entirely discounted. Allusions to prior sources are not always to a specific text, but will at least refer to a tradition known to the author and recognized by the intended public. In the case of the *Descouneüs*, there are particular episodes and motifs such as the fairy tradition and the *fier baiser* motif which may be ascribed to Celtic tradition.

The character of the Pucele as Blances Mains derives from the traditional Celtic fairy mistress of early Irish and Welsh literature, discussion of which is conducted in Chapter Five. Here I will discuss the controversial episode of the *fier baiser*. Guinglain's encounter with the serpent who bestows upon him the *fier baiser*, takes place in the Cité Gaste:

> Atant vit une aumaire ouvrir
> et une wivre fors issir
> qui jetoit une tel clarté

[con] un cierge bien enbrasé [...]
li serpens eneslespas
desi es dens li est alee.
Et [cil] trait del fuere l'espee;
ferir le vaut par la poitrine.
La guivre autre fois le rencline,
vers lui doucement s'umelie.
Il se retint, ne le fiert mie
Il l'esgarde, pas ne s'oublie
ne de rien nule ne fercele,
et si a molt grant [se] mervele
de la bouce qu'a si vermelle
Tant s'entent en li regarder
que d'autre part ne pot garder.
La guivre vers lui se lança
et en la bouce le baissa [...]
la sale fu oscure
et cil del baissier fu pensis.
Delés la table s'est asis.
"Dius, Sire," fait il, "que ferai
del Fier Baissier que fait i ai?
Molt dolerous baisier ai fait!
Or sui je traïs entresait.
Li dïables m'a encanté
que j'ai baissié otre mon gré.
Or pris je molt petit ma vie." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3172-73, 3179-86, 3202-11) [31]

Firstly, the *fier baiser* poses questions of origin. Where does this tradition come from and how does Renaut use it? Loomis traces the *fier baiser* motif back to the Kiss of Sovereignty in a tenth-century Irish story called the *Echtra mac Echdach Muigmedón*.[75] He indicates the points in common between the fourteenth-century *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, the Swiss *Lanzelet*, written between 1194 and 1203, and Renaut's romance. Loomis explores the question of the earlier origins of the motif of the dragon kiss. He concludes with Dr Emma Frank, whose research appears in the 1928 study, *Der Schlangenkuss*, that the *Lanzelet* and the *Descouneüs* are the two earliest extant versions of the kiss, and while they are 'not necessarily the closest to the ultimate original, nevertheless they may well be our best guides in tracing a legend backwards'.[76]

These Arthurian versions themselves bear marked resemblances to the Irish story noted above, *The Adventures of the Sons of Eochaid Mugmedon*. In this story, a young man is induced to kiss a monstrous hag. She is then transformed into a beautiful damsel and he is acclaimed the future King of Ireland.[77] Loomis notes that the Irish story exists in a number of forms, one of them by a Westmeath poet who died in 1024, more than 100 years before the composition of the *Descouneüs*. This, while not proving that Renaut was aware of this version of the story, does indicate the existence of the motif well before the advent of the *Descouneüs*.

Secondly, the *fier baiser* is interesting as far as structure and Renaut's manipulation of convention is concerned. It occurs almost exactly half-way through the romance at verse 3186. Once the *fier baiser* has been accomplished, Guinglain's quest is completed. He

has freed the Queen from enchantment, the quest which Hélie had announced at the beginning of the romance, and the Queen grants her hand to him in marriage. Despite the fact that Guinglain has achieved the quest, the romance does not end. Instead, it continues for another 3080 verses and finishes without resolution.

Thirdly, there is the idea of ritual. The accomplishment of the *fier baiser* is an initiation rite for Guinglain. Despite the fact that Guinglain does not initiate the kiss, he has passed the test which proves his status as hero. In so doing, he can be compared to Gilgamesh, Jason, Hercules, St. George and other literary figures who have defeated monsters and earned the title of hero.[78] He also learns his name and lineage with identity forming a decisive stage in initiation. The transformation of monstrous hag or serpent into a beautiful woman is not the only transformation to take place. The protagonist himself is transformed. He fulfils his predestined role of hero, often earning for himself sovereignty, honour and the woman he has rescued. In both the *Lanzelet* and the older Irish story, it is the hero who kisses the serpent and brings about the metamorphosis. In the *Descouneüs*, it is the serpent who approaches Guinglain and kisses him, yet he is still accorded hero status and Blonde Esmeree's hand in marriage.

In this respect, Philippe Walter's observations are highly relevant. Walters makes the important point that:

> Les textes mythologiques irlandais ne peuvent être les «sources» directes des romans arthuriens. Ceux-ci reposent principalement sur une tradition orale dont nous avons perdu la trace. En outre, il convient de se souvenir que les romanciers arthuriens ne sont pas des mythographes; il ne faut donc jamais s'attendre à trouver des correspondances littérales entre tel épisode romanesque et tel texte conservé de la tradition mythologique irlandaise. Par contre, des faisceaux de motifs rattachent les deux traditions et appellent des lectures croisées au nom de leur origine commune.[79]

Walter's concept of the 'faisceaux' of motifs connecting Arthurian romance with mythology is essential to a discussion of the process of composition. What is not essential is whether there existed a prototype for the *Descouneüs*, or whether Renaut simply pillages Chrétien's texts for his material and alludes to motifs from a cultural domain with which his readers would be familiar. Renaut plays on the convention of an antecedent source in his frequent mention of a source text, his allusions to well-known traditions and conventions and his blatant use of episodes and phrases taken from Chrétien. This is highly significant in terms of literary crafting.

As Chapter One has shown, the poet has an initial idea for his work which I have called his *antancïon*. He then selects appropriate material with which to express this and arranges it in a coherent form. For writers trained in exegesis and the art of adaptation, to compose was to 'gloss', that is, this practice was designed not only to extract the inner meaning of previous texts, but also to bring out new meanings through the application of rhetorical techniques. What are these techniques and how do Renaut and Robert apply them to their respective texts?

1   Kristine Brightenback, 'Remarks on the "Prologue" to Marie de France's *Lais*', *Romance Philology*, 30 (1976-77), 168-77.

2   Leo Spitzer, 'The Prologue to the *Lais* of Marie de France and Medieval Poetics', *Modern Philology*, 41 (1943-44), 96-102 (p. 100).

3   D.W. Robertson Jr., 'Marie de France, *Lais*, Prologue 13-15', *MLN*, 64 (1949), 336-38, p. 338.

4   Brightenback, p. 169.

5   Vinaver, pp. 16-17.

6   Vinaver, p. 17.

7   Kelly, 'The Source and Meaning of *conjointure* in Chrétien's *Erec* 14', *Viator*, 1 (1970), 179-200 (p. 200).

8   Joan Tasker Grimbert, 'Testimony and the Truth in *Joseph d'Arimathie*', *Romance Philology*, 44 (1991), 379-401, p. 380.

9   Grimbert, p, 380.

10  Rupert T. Pickens, *The Old French Grail Romances of the Twelfth Century: a comparative study of Chrétien de Troyes and his contemporaries, Robert de Boron and the First and Second Continuators* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1966), p. 153.

11  Italo Siciliano, *François Villon et les thèmes poétiques du Moyen Age* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1934), pp. 203-04.

12  Siciliano, p. 218, n.1.

13  O'Gorman, pp. 344-45.

14  See also Luke 23: 50-53, Matthew 26:57.

15  J.K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 174.

16  O'Gorman, p. 355, n. 559.

17  See also Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:41.

18  Elliott, p. 178.

19  Elliott, p. 178.

20  Elliott, p. 179.

21  Elliott, p. 182.

22  O'Gorman, 'Ecclesiastical Tradition and the Holy Grail', *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 6 (1969), 1-8, p. 4.

23  *Gemma Animae*. Book I, Chapter 47: 'De Joseph', *Patrilogiae cursus completus... Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Garnier, 1841-1905), 172, col. 542 ff.

24  William Nitze, *Le Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal* (Paris: Champion, 1927), p.xi.

25  Helen Adolf, *Visio Pacis: Holy City and Grail* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University, 1960), p. 81.

26  Emma Jung and Marie von Franz, *The Grail Legend* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), p. 318.

27  Jung, p. 318

28  Loyal A. T. Gryting, 'The *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* as a Medieval Composite', *Modern Language Journal*, 38 (1954), 15-17. p. 15.

29  Gryting notes that the legend of the *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* is 'available in nine widely scattered manuscripts, which represent five different stages in the legend, ranging from the twelfth century through to the fifteenth' (p. 16).

30  Gryting, p. 16.

31  Gryting refers here to the Chatsworth Manuscript available in Library of Congress Photostats. p. 16.

32  Gryting, p. 16.

33  O'Gorman, p. 370, n. 1483.

34  O'Gorman, p. 377, n. 2091. There is no further explanation as to the origin of this 'Gregorial classification'.

35  O'Gorman, p. 380, nn. 2131 and 2141.

36  O'Gorman, p. 381, n. 2197.

37  Gryting, p. 16.

38  O'Gorman, p. 382, n. 2304.

39  William Nitze, 'On the Derivation of Old French Enygeus', p. 40.

40  Paul Imbs, 'Enygeus', *BBSIA*, 6 (1954), pp. 68ff.

41  O'Gorman, p. 382, n. 2308.

42  Jean Marx, *La Légende Arthurienne et le Graal.* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952).

43  O'Gorman, p. 383, n. 2310.

44  Pierre Le Gentil, 'The Work of Robert de Boron and the *Didot-Perceval*'', in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, A Collaborative History*, ed. by R.S. Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 251-62.

45  O'Gorman, p. 392, n. 2773.

46  Liliane Dulac, 'L'épreuve du siège vide: esquisse d'une lecture croisée d'un épisode du *Joseph* et du *Merlin* de Robert de Boron', in *Rewards and Punishments in the Arthurian Romances and Lyric*

*Poetry of Medieval France,* ed. by Peter V. Davies and Angus Kennedy (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1987), pp. 31-44.

47  Dulac, p. 34.

48  O'Gorman, p. 397, n. 3110.

49  O'Gorman, p. 402, n. 3345.

50  William Nitze, 'How did the Fisher King get his name?', in *Mediaeval Studies Jeremiah Denis Matthias Ford,* ed. by U.T. Holmes, Jr, and A.J. Denomy (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1948), pp. 177-82.

51  Nitze, p. 177.

52  Loomis, p. 256.

53  Mary Giffin, 'A Reading of Robert de Boron', *PMLA,* 80 (1965) 499-507.

54  O'Gorman, *Critical Edition,* p. 6.

55  O'Gorman, *Critical Edition,* p. 12.

56  W.H. Schofield, *Studies on the Libeaus Desconus,* Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, 4 (Boston, Harvard University Press, 1896).

57  Schofield, p. 132.

58  Schofield, p. 133.

59  Schofield, p. 152.

60  Madeline Tyssens, 'Les Sources de Renaut de Beaujeu', in *Mélanges Jean Frappier,* 2 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1970), II, pp. 1043-55.

61  Tyssens, p. 1047.

62  Tyssens, p. 1048.

63  Tyssens, p. 1051.

64  Tyssens, p. 1049.

65  Ricarda Bauschke, 'Auflösung des Artusromans und Defiktionaliesierung im *Bel Inconnu* Renauts de Beaujeu Auseinandersetzung mit Chrétien de Troyes', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur,* 102 (1992), 42-63 (p. 53).

66  Bauschke, p. 54.

67  D.D.R. Owen, *The Evolution of the Grail legend,* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1968), p. 88.

68  Owen, p. 88.

69  Owen, p. 92.

70  Owen, p. 97.

71  Luttrell, p. 82.

72  Tom Artin, *The Allegory of Adventure* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1974), p. 135.

73  Artin, p. 135.

74  Luttrell, p. 105.

75  R.S. Loomis, 'The *Fier Baiser* in Mandeville's Travels, Arthurian Romance and Irish Saga', *Studi Medievali,* 17 (1951), 104-113 (p. 104).

76  Loomis, p. 107.

77  Loomis, p. 108.

78  Philippe Walter, *Le Bel Inconnu de Renaut de Beaujeu: rite, mythe et roman* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), p. 278.

79  Walter, p. 274.

# Three

# The Presence of the Author

The process of literary refinement by which the *materia remota* of the proposed work is prepared for inclusion in the completed work and becomes *materia propinqua* is revealed through the application of authorial *antancïon*. But how can the reader know what the author intends?

Authorial presence acts as a corollary to *antancïon*. Both the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* are answerable to an overriding *antancïon*, expressed through authorial intervention. This may be in the form of a subtly directing hand shaping the text, more perceived than observed, or may be the blatantly proposed opinions and interjections of authorial apostrophes, digressions and self-conscious references to poetic craft.

This chapter will investigate how Robert and Renaut assert their presence throughout the text. The presence of the author is at all times perceptible through the use of apostrophe and narratorial commentary and this provides a sense of unity and cohesion. They comment, explain and remind the audience or reader that the fate of the characters and the outcome of the plot will be determined by the *antancïon* underlying their work.

Traditionally, an indication of authorial *antancïon*, both a statement of intent and how this is worked out, may be found in the opening and closing sequences of the romance. Prologues function as an illustration of *conjointure*, in that they are part of the ordering process and serve to point to the themes which will be treated in the body of the text.

Tony Hunt in his article, 'The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue',[1] places the origins of the prologue in Greek rhetoric. The initial conception of the prologue was that it was expository in nature and served as a means of familiarizing the audience with what was to come. In this respect, the prologue had two functions. It established a relationship with the audience as well as providing them with the information necessary to understand the subject of the action. In order to support his comparison between Cicero's rules for the *exordium* and the use of the prologue by Chrétien de Troyes, Hunt discusses the availability of Ciceronian teaching to medieval writers.

According to Hunt, prologues frequently take the form of the *exordium*.[2] They often begin with a proverb or some sort of pithy statement which embodies the subject of the ensuing romance or refers to the poet's craft. For example, Chrétien explains the poet's

duty to write, which he refers to in the *Erec* and in the *Conte dou Graal*. There is often reference to a real or supposed source and an appeal to the audience's goodwill and intelligence; the poet hopes to secure the *benevolentia, attentia* and *docilitas* of the audience, as Cicero states in the *De inventione*:

> Exordium est oratio animum auditoris idonee comparans ad relinquam dictionem; quod eveniet si eum benivolum, attentum, docilem confecerit. (I, xv, 20)

How then is the reader to approach works such as the *Joseph*? Especially in the absence of any formal prologue? There is no *exordium*, no maxim or proverb to indicate a point of focus for the romance and Robert does not attempt to set out his authorial *antancïon* in any overt manner. However, the narrative proper does not start immediately. It is not until verse 193 that Robert begins to narrate the story of the events leading up to Christ's crucifixion and burial, which set in motion Joseph's story. The previous 192 verses contain an account of the Fall, and the subsequent need for a saviour for the human race. This need is met in Christ who is described five times in the opening section as growing and being contained within the Virgin Mary. Christ's teaching on baptism and confession are also provided in these verses. While this opening section may not be a prologue in the conventional sense, Robert uses it to introduce a number of ideas which will be important in the body of the text.

Despite the absence of the elaborate *exordia* usual in romance narratives, Robert does provide indications of his *antancïon* throughout the body of his text, amplifying those elements which are of central concern and which point to this *antancïon*.

From the opening word of the text, the reader is confronted with the importance of knowledge and its application. The *Joseph* begins with an emphatic 'Savoir doivent tout li pecheeur' and the *estoire* which ensues is the amplification of just what it is that all sinners are to know. At another point in the text, the reader is exhorted to 'entendez en quantes mennieres / Nous racheta Diex nostres Peres' (v. 89). The reader is to hear, and moreover, to understand, the way in which God sent his Son to redeem the sins of humankind.

Robert makes no reference to his patron or to his poetic craft, nor does he explicitly state his intentions for the tale in his opening section. It is not until the epilogue, where he says what he is going to do, but not actually what he has done:

> Messires Roberz de Beron
> Dist, se ce ci savoir voulun,
> Sanz doute savoir couvenra
> Conter la ou Aleins ala,
> Li fiuz Hebron, et qu'il devint,
> En queu terre aler le couvint,
> Et ques oirs de lui peut issir,
> Et queu femme le peut nourrir,
> Et queu vie Petrus mena,
> Qu'il devint n'en quel liu ala,

En quel liu sera recouvrez,
A peinnes sera retrouvez;
Que Moÿses est devenu
Qui fu si longuement perduz;
Trouver le couvient par reison
De parole, ainsi le dist on;
Lau li Riches Peschierres va,
En quel liu il s'arrestera,
Et celui sache ramener
Qui orendroit s'en doit aler.  (*Joseph*, vv. 3461-80) [1]

Robert obviously does not consider the work now drawing to a close to be complete, since, according to the above verses, there are outcomes still to relate. But if he can find them in a book, he says that he will assemble these various parts so long as God gives him life and health to do so:

Ces quatres choses rassembler
Couvient chaucune et ratourner
Chascune partie par soi. [...]
se Diex me donne santé
Et vie, bien ei volentei
De ces parties assembler (*Joseph*, vv. 3481-83; 3497-90) [2]

Robert says in these concluding lines of the *Joseph* that he is going to forget about the four other parts and relate a fifth part, which, although unspecified in this passage, appears to be that of the *Merlin*, as it follows immediately after the conclusion to the *Joseph*:.

Ausi cumme d'une partie
Leisse que je ne retrei mie,
Ausi couvenra il conter
La quinte et les quatre oublïer
Tant que je puisse revenir
Au retreire plus par loisir...'  (*Joseph*, vv. 3501-06) [3]

The narrative proper ends with the departure of the Riche Pescheeur with the Grail.[3] Joseph has the last word, saying that the events are God's will and he reminds Bron of the importance of what he is taking with him. He says that Bron will go, but that he (Joseph) will stay behind and will be at God's command:

"Car ces choses de par Dieu sunt.
Bien sez que tu em porteras
Et en quel païs t'en iras.
Tu t'en iras, je remeindrei,
Au commandement Dieu serei."  (*Joseph*, vv. 3450-54) [4]

Then, in a transitional passage, Robert recapitulates that Joseph remains and dies in the land where he was born, while the Riche Pescheeur leaves and has many stories told about him:

Ainsi Joseph se demoura,
Li Boens Pescherres s'en ala
Dont furent puis meintes paroles
Contees ki ne sunt pas foles;
Et Joseph ensi est finez
En la terre lau il fu nez.  (*Joseph*, vv. 3455-60) [5]

Robert does not comply with the romance tradition of a succinct *exordia* and epilogue. He indicates his *antancïon* in other ways. The *Joseph* may be considered part of a 'work in progress'. Its didactic nature and the establishment of the function of the Grail make the *Joseph* more of an introductory text to a greater and more far-reaching opus: the five parts which Robert says he has yet to write. The *Joseph* looks forward to these parts and provides their history. Unfortunately the ensuing texts have been lost to perpetuity. Nevertheless, whatever fate Robert intended for his Grail, its role and the symbolism which surrounds it are soundly stated in the *Joseph*.

On the other hand, Renaut frames his text with an easily recognized prologue and epilogue. Renaut states in his prologue that he wishes to show what he can do, or more literally, to show what he knows how to do:

> Mostrer vel que faire sai (*Descouneüs*, v. 10)

and therein follows the romance. Having had this warning, the audience is primed to watch for indications that Renaut does indeed know what he is doing. Renaut's prologue to *Li Biaus Descouneüs* specifically mentions his patron, or at least the woman, whether she is real or imagined, who has inspired him in his task. Ricarda Bauschke, in the aforementioned article, discusses the relationship between Chrétien's and Renaut's text, describing Renaut's *antancïon* in terms of a literary programme. Ricarda comments that Renaut makes his intentions specifically known in the prologue and epilogue:

> 'Ein eigenständiges literarisches Programm Renauts lässt sich vor allem an Prolog und Epilog begründen. Kann am Nachwort speziell das Moment der Fiktionsironisierung festgemacht werden [...]'[4]

While the *Descouneüs* is open-ended in that Renaut's closing remarks leave the characters, as well as the audience, in a perpetual state of suspension without a definitive outcome, this is exactly what Renaut intends. Throughout the *Descouneüs* Renaut plays on the notion of fictionality, subverting genre and manipulating audience expectations. In avoiding the usual closing cadence for his work, he thwarts the expectation that a story must end with resolution.

To rely solely on the prologue and epilogue as the means of ascertaining authorial *antancïon*, is to miss the point. The text, as a unified whole, must express what the author intends as well as convince the audience of the merits of the poet and the value of the story. The ways in which Renaut and Robert make their presence felt, other than in the prologue and epilogue, may be treated within the following categories:

1. Apostrophe;
2. Commentary on poetic craft;
3. Subjective asides;
4. Authorial digression;
5. Levels of Authorial Identity;
6. Proverbs.

## 1. Apostrophe.

The first category of authorial presence is apostrophe. What do the treatises say of it? Matthew of Vendôme does not devote any of his treatise to the figure of apostrophe, but Geoffrey of Vinsauf's treatment of this device takes up a considerable amount of the discussion in his *Poetria Nova* (vv. 264-460). He provides examples which illustrate a number of types of apostrophe. The use of apostrophe to address individuals is illustrated by three models. These respectively rebuke excessive joy, reproach pride and encourage the timid man.

To rebuke excessive joy:

> Quid gaudia tanta
> Concutiant animum? Plausam sub fine modesto
> Stringas et fines ejus non amplus aequo
> Extendas [...] (*Poetria nova*, vv. 277-80) [6]

To reproach pride:

> [...] Memor imprime menti:
> Cum fueris major cunctis, te crede minorem
> Et de te mentire tibi (*Poetria nova*, vv. 299-301) [7]

To encourage the timid man:

> Ne timeas; si forte times, assume timentis,
> Non animum timidi. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 306-07) [8]

He provides a lengthy example of an apostrophe to a country, here England, on the occasion of King Richard's death:

> Neustria, sub clypeo regis defensa Ricardi
> In defensa modo, planctu testare dolorem;
> Exudent oculi lacrimas; exterminet ora
> Pallor (*Poetria nova*, vv. 368-71) [9]

Edmond Faral, in a comment on Geoffrey's explanation, notes that apostrophe was in common usage from the eleventh century, where the narrator addressed himself to absent people, to personified entities such as Death, Love, Fortune or to inanimate objects such as the earth, a country, a town or a sword.[5] Geoffrey himself speaks of apostrophe as having a varied countenance, but in all cases it is an emotional response to the subject matter on the part of the poet, designed to elicit a comparable reaction in the audience or reader:

> Sic igitur variat vultum: vel more magistri
> Corripit errorem pravum; vel ad omnia dura
> In lacrimis planctuque jacet; vel surgit in iram
> Propter grande scelus; vel fertur ridiculose
> Contra ridiculos. Ex talibus edita causis
> Et decus et numerum lucratur apostropha verbis. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 455-60) [10]

How is apostrophe used in the texts under consideration? The figure appears in both second person or audience address and invocations to God.

*Second Person or Audience Address.*

While all forms of apostrophe are an appeal to the audience, the occasions when the poet solicits their attention by issuing a direct address are perhaps the most striking. The importance of hearing and assimilating what is being said is emphasized by both authors. In the *Joseph*, Robert exhorts his audience or reader to 'Entendez' (v. 89), where the audience is not only to listen to, but to understand, the way in which God saved humankind. As Glyn Burgess has noted in his article on *savoir* and *faire* as they appear in the *Anglo-Norman Voyage of St Brendan*, and, as was discussed in Chapter One's analysis of the origins of *antancïon*, 'the Old French verb *entendre* implies not only understanding but action' and 'indicates that one is making an effort and directing one's thoughts towards something *(intendere)*'.[6] This address to the audience that they hear and understand calls to mind the adamant opening line of the *Joseph*, that all sinners are to know the facts surrounding Christ's incarnation and time on earth.

> Savoir doivent tout li pecheeur *(Joseph, v.1)* [11]

Robert's choice of *savoir* as the first word of the *Joseph*, and its combination with the imperative effect created by the verb *devoir*, is telling. It is a forceful beginning to a narrative which has the story of Christ's death and resurrection, his teaching and Church doctrine as its central core. The assimilation and transferral of this information is through the story of Joseph of Arimathea and his company of followers. With the emphasis on 'telling' and passing on and verifying information which is a feature of the *Joseph*, the opening line that, 'all sinners are to know' may be understood as implying that 'all readers are to know' about the story of Christ. This is not a story to be read merely for entertainment value about a subject far-removed from the reader's realm of experience. Robert presents a text which demands personal response.

A direct address to the audience's intelligence is important for an understanding of Renaut's work as an invitation to full participation on the part of the reader. While the reader is addressed in conspiratorial tones on a number of occasions throughout the narrative as Renaut relates what he will tell them next, or prefacing an authorial digression, it is not until the latter part of the text that Renaut specifically asks them to 'listen' or to 'know'. Renaut finishes his personal lament on his unhappy experience in love and then tells the reader to listen while he tells of how Guinglain lay dying of love: 'Or, escoutés ici endroit' (v. 4210). This address functions as a transitional comment between the narrator's digression about his own lady and the suffering he is undergoing because of his unrequited love for her, and the continued account of the torment Guinglain experiences at the hands of Love. Here, Renaut highlights what several critics

have seen as the identification of the narrator with the protagonist, discussed below as an illustration of the levels of authorial identity which operate in the text.

That 'saciés' is addressed twice to the audience indicates that there is to be no passive entertainment taking place here. Renaut demands active thinking and recognition of what is happening both in the plot and behind it in the process of literary creation. In both of these instances when Renaut appeals to audience awareness and knowledge through the use of the verb 'saciés' (vv. 6104 and 6154), emphasis is placed on the joy experienced by certain people with respect to Guinglain.

The first *saciés* comes at Giflet and Lampart's discovery that the knight who had won the tournament was Guinglain:

> ...Quant il se virent
> saciés que grant joie se fisent. ( vv. 6103-4) [12]

The second use of *saciés* is a call to the reader to notice the joy felt by Blonde Esmeree at the sight of Guinglain:

> Quant Blonde Esmeree le vit,
> saciés que grant joie li fist (*Descouneüs*, vv. 6153-54) [13]

It is not coincidence that sees Renaut use almost the same wording to alert the reader to the *joie* experienced by his characters. In both cases, the reader is to know something about Guinglain. He is a remarkable knight who has proven himself time and again. He has earned the respect of such men as Giflet and Lampart, whom he had previously defeated in combat, and he ultimately triumphs in the tournament. The emphatic nature of Renaut's apostrophe in the second example suggests the importance of the reader's recognition that Guinglain has proved himself a suitable husband for the Queen.

Renaut's insistence on audience knowledge is an insistence on their awareness of the dichotomy inherent in Guinglain's nature. It also calls their attention to the exigent nature of literature. The audience is presented with two generic sides to Guinglain's character over the course of the narrative, that of romance knight and *lai* lover, and these two sides are represented in the two instances of the apostrophe, *saciés*. Tempting as it may be to conclude that Guinglain has finally reconciled these two worlds in his marriage to the Queen, this would be a false assumption. Nothing is resolved at the end of the tale.

*Apostrophes to God.*

The second of the subdivisions of apostrophe are apostrophes to God. In the *Descouneüs*, these have a particularly striking effect. God's presence is first evoked in the prologue to the romance and is presented almost as the reason why Renaut is not greatly troubled at his task, but wishes to demonstrate his ability:

> En poi d'eure puet Dius aidier;
> por cho n'en prenc trop grant esmai,
> mais mostrer vel que faire sai (*Descouneüs*, vv. 8-10) [14]

Renaut presents a parallel between God's aid in the poet's craft and His aid in the role of the hero. The poet's initial claim that God will assist him in the composition of the romance is echoed throughout the text in references to God's aid in the hero's knightly prowess. Both must show what they can do and prove themselves worthy. For example, once Arthur has granted Guinglain's request to save Hélie's mistress, he immediately sets out, with Renaut exclaiming:

> Dius li aït par sa puissance! (*Descouneüs*, v. 272)

Renaut invokes God in speaking about the three avengers who are searching for Guinglain. He creates a feeling of suspense and plants the idea in the minds of the audience or reader that something is about to happen:

> Or penst Dius de celui garder
> car se il le püent trover
> en aventure est de sa vie! (*Descouneüs*, vv. 589-91) [15]

Still in anticipation of the arrival of the three avenging knights, Renaut comments on Guinglain, Robert and Hélie dismounting to stop for the night, saying: 'Or les gart Dius que il ne perdent!' (v. 608). This creates a uneasy sense that something might happen to them.

When Guinglain fights the two giants, Renaut emphasizes the odds against him. The giants' reputation precedes them. They have laid waste the entire land and have plundered, killed and destroyed everything which lay in their path. However, as Renaut reminds the reader in an authorial aside, Guinglain has been chosen as hero and as such has God's protection:

> Cui de Dius de honte veut garder,
> nule riens ne le puet grever.
> A cele fois a Dius gari
> le chevalier par sa merchi. (*Descouneüs*, 771-74) [16]

Renaut invokes God once again as Guinglain rides up to the Gaste Cité, the scene of his ultimate combat: 'Or le gard Dius par son pooir!' (v. 2846). Through these apostrophes to God, Renaut creates a sense of drama. On one hand, it is almost as though he is not sure himself of what the outcome will be and is hoping for the best. On the other hand, Renaut highlights the fiction of his romance by having his hero emerge from every adventure relatively unscathed and with increased prestige. This is due not so much to divine intervention, but to authorial control over decisions of narrative. Guinglain's fate is entirely dependent on Renaut's shaping hand.

The initial reference to God's aid in writing the romance is reiterated by the protagonist himself in reference to combat:

> "[...] car Dius nos puet molt bien aidier." (*Descouneüs*, v. 2554)
>
> "Amis," fait il, "ne t'esmaier:
> Dius nos en puet molt bien aidier." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2675-76) [17]

The acknowledgement of God and the ensuing apostrophes to Him carry with them the implication of an omniscient guiding hand who controls the drama of life as it is played out on earth. This is not to suggest that Renaut is in any way setting himself up as God, but serves to reinforce the idea of the manipulating and overseeing role he takes on in his function of author. On the other hand, in an authorial digression, Renaut adds impact to his own lament that he may never receive what he desires from his love. Renaut calls out to God in a lament which points to his lack of control over events which happen outside the text, that is his lady's favour:

> Ha, Dius! arai ja mon plaissir
> de celi que je ainme tant? (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4860-61) [18]

There is a constant tension between the poet as creator and poet as man constrained by forces extraneous to the romance.

## 2. Authorial Comment on Poetic Craft.

On a number of occasions, the author's voice enters the narrative to make a comment in the first person relating to the process of composition. This might take the form of a comment on the veracity of the story, where the author is at pains to impress on the reader the legitimacy of what is being told, often having recourse to a supposed antecedent source to lend weight to these claims:

> je ne menc mie,
> si con la letre dist la vie. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 29-30) [19]

The author can also use these asides to comment on the structure of the text, referring to what has already been told or to what is yet to come. Renaut does this in a transitional passage between Guinglain's fight with the three avenging knights, and the episode of the white brachet and Orguillous de la Lande. This section of the narrative is highly constructed. Having related the combat between Guinglain and the knights, Renaut digresses with a diatribe on the vicissitudes of love and lovers. His digression is framed by authorial statements informing the reader of what he is doing. He steps out of the narrative as narrator and becomes commentator. Helie, the dwarf, Robert and Guinglain ride off towards the Desolate City. However, before he recounts the next series of events which will befall them, Renaut inserts his digression:

> Vers la Cité Gaste s'en vont;
> assés orés que il feront.
> Or m'escoutés: voir vos dirai (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1235-37) [20]

He picks up the narrative once again after the digression and expresses his intention to recount more about Guinglain:

> Or vos redirai je par chi
> del Descouneüs qui s'en vait. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1272-73) [21]

These authorial intrusions have an interesting effect. In interrupting the narrative, they break the fictional 'spell' in that they force the reader to step out of the literary world the poet has been creating and recognize it for what it is: a literary world, shaped by the poet for a specific purpose.

According to Roberta Krueger, we must distinguish between authorial intervention in the form of simple rhetorical fillers and those which are significant articulation and are a direct reference to the poet's *antancion*.[7] Rhetorical fillers are those types of apostrophe which Gunnar Biller[8] refers to as 'parenthèses'. In other words, they are authorial asides, introduced more to fulfil the requirements of rhyme and metre, than actually to impart something meaningful about the content. Having said that, any phrase where the author's presence is implied or even explicitly stated draws attention to the process of composition. A certain complicity between audience and author is achieved as the poet steps out from the anonymity of third-person narration to appeal to the audience. As long as these comments are used in moderation, they ornament the text and act as a means for the poet to engage the audience or reader. However, when they appear merely as a means of completing the verse, they degenerate into meaningless *chevilles* and lack impact.

Significant articulation, on the other hand, is evident in those phrases which inform the audience of what is about to happen next, comment on what has just been related or provide an explanation for a situation. Such statements often take the form of a bridging passage between episodes and function as a form of guidance for the audience. The author takes the reader by the hand, as it were, and points him in the direction authorial *antancïon* dictates.

Renaut interrupts the story of the *Descouneüs* at least 86 times to comment, explain and pass judgement on the events he relates. Many of these interruptions refer to his poetic craft, for example 'Or m'escoutés: voir vos dirai' (v. 1237) and 'que feroie longes novieles?' (v. 6213), and are also found in works by his contemporaries.

Renaut frequently makes use of disclamatory statements, where he declines to provide full details by claiming lack of knowledge or limitations of space and time. This might be seen as an inexpressibility topos and is treated in more detail in Chapter Six.

Renaut uses this device twice when describing the numbers present at King Arthur's court; the first time ocurs in the opening scene:

> Tant en i ot ne.s puis conter
> ne l[es] dame[s] ne puis nonmer. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 55-56) [22]

Renaut once again impresses upon the reader the number of people present at court when Blonde Esmeree enters:

> [E]n son pailais trova le roi
> et maint bon chevalier o soi,

> maint roi [et maint duc] et maint conte;
> tant en i ot n'en sai le conte. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5181-84) [23]

Comments such as these create the effect of an eyewitness account where events are related as they occur and the author affects an overwhelmed stance.

On two occasions, Renaut asks 'que vos iroie je contant?' (vv. 4423 and 6083). This implies that he either cannot or will not go into any more detail, since the subjects, namely the love between Guinglain and the Pucele (v. 4423) and Guinglain's prowess at the tournament (v. 6083), are too vast to put into words. These asides emphasize the fact that this is fiction and that Renaut is in control of the information the audience is to receive and when they are to receive it. The paradox is that in the verses leading up to his admission of inexpressibility, he has already spoken at some length on the subject and continues to do so after the aside. As a matter of interest, the first of these authorial asides falls within the *lai* section of the narrative referring to Guinglain's role as *lai* lover; the second is in reference to Guinglain's role as romance protagonist.

Renaut often adopts the stance of a fallible narrator. He casts himself as a by-stander, unsure of the preciseness of what he relates. He adds a disclaimer to the account of the consummation of the love between the Pucele and Guinglain, presenting the idea that he may not be capable of doing full justice to his subject. He humbly says that 'je ne sai s'il le fist s'amie/car .n'i fui pas ne n'en vi mie' (vv. 4815-16), and then in a blatant contradiction adds, 'mais non de pucele perdi/la dame dalés son ami' (vv. 4817-18). On the one hand, Renaut adopts a discrete attitude in reference to the couple's love-making, while on the other, he reasserts his omniscience in the matter of the Pucele's loss of virginity. An authorial comment on the maiden's loss of virginity appears also in *Erec et Enide* in the consummation of the wedding scene. Renaut's words echo Chrétien's:

> De l'amor qui est antr'ax deus
> fu la pucele plus hardie:
> de rien ne s'est acoardie,
> tot sofri, que qu'il li grevast;
> ençois qu'ele se relevast,
> ot perdu le non de pucele;
> au matin fu dame novele. (*Erec*, vv. 2048-54) [24]

Renaut uses deliberate authorial asides as a recapitulation device to remind the audience of the events he has related. This device is most noticeable in the episode involving the three avenging knights. Renaut first introduces the knights by relating Blioblieris' thoughts of them and then, in a show of authorial knowledge, adding that he knows their names:

> Li souvient des trois conpaignons,
> dont bien vos sai dire les nons
> Elins li Blans, sires de Graies,
> et li bons chevaliers de Saies,
> et Willaume de Salebrant (*Descouneüs*, vv. 525-29) [25]

He then adopts an almost conversational technique in mentioning them twice more within the space of a few verses, then self-consciously adding that he has already referred to them:

> Cist trois que je vos ai conté (*Descouneüs*, v. 532)

> cil chevalier que j'ai nomé. (*Descouneüs*, v. 546)

Renaut has the knights set out in search of Guinglain to avenge their wounded Lord and then the narrative returns to Guinglain, Helie and the dwarf, and the ensuing combat with the giants. When the three knights enter the scene again, Renaut reiterates his knowledge of their names in an almost exact repetition of his earlier reference, as above:

> Icil trois furent conpaignon.
> Bien sai coment orent a non:
> li uns estoit Elins de Graies,
> li secuns li Sires de Saies,
> et li tiers [ert] de [Sa]lebrans,
> Willaumes, qui molt ert vaillans. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 969-74) [26]

William is the first to attack, but his approach to combat is interrupted by an authorial digression. Renaut employs a bridging passage to move from the digression back to the description of combat and deliberately comments on what he is doing:

> Mais ce vos laisserai ester
> que d'autre cose veul parler.
> Del Bel Descouneü dirai;
> la bataille vos conterai (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1083-86) [27]

He then takes a couple of narratorial steps backwards and reiterates, using exactly the same words as he had in verse 1064, the fact that it was William who attacked first, and then immediately comments that he has said this before:

> Willaumes vint a lui premiers
> ensi con vos contai devant. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1088-89) [28]

In another instance, Renaut's aside functions as a means of leaving one part of the story to take up another. Guinglain leaves Blonde Esmeree and the romance genre to return to the Pucele and the *lai*. In Chapter Four, I will discuss the generic implications of these two disparate forms, the *lai* and the romance, and the way in which Renaut exploits the conventions of each form to fulfil the needs of his *antancïon*. To avoid an abrupt shift in focus, Renaut assures the audience that he will recount what happened to the Queen, but that first he wants to relate Guinglain's progress:

> Bien vos ert conté et retrait
> coment la roïne s'en vait,
> mais ains vul de Guinglain conter (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3907-09) [29]

Renaut, then, constantly interrupts his narrative to comment upon his material.

In the *Joseph*, however, Robert's interventions are infrequent (an authorial *je* is used on six occasions). Yet, if Robert's presence is not explicitly asserted, it is certainly perceived as underlying the text. Everything in the *Joseph* reveals arrangement and adaptation, so that Robert is seen to be engaged in the art of manipulation.

He makes use of a rhetorical filler device, where the inserted authorial statement adds nothing to the understanding of the text. Such a passage occurs when Robert relates Christ's incarnation within the Virgin's womb:

> Et puis en Bethleem naschi
> De la Virge, si cum je di   (*Joseph,* v. 144) [30]

He then goes on to describe her as an eternal fountain of goodness (v. 146). This constitutes one of the moments of authorial intervention when the author is seen to step forward and reassert his role in the transmission of the narrative. Here, the intervention performs the function of an explicit comment within the overall context of the prologue, drawing attention to the *je* of the principal narrative voice. Because of its position in the rhyme, however, the statement 'si cum je di' could be considered less an important, meaningful intervention, and more as a means of filling the line and providing an end-rhyme.

The use of phrases such as 'a icel tens que je vous conte' (v. 11) and 'au tens que je vous ei conté' (v. 987) is also interesting to note. In both instances, these phrases are at the head of a section and refer to the recounting of the time when Christ was on earth, before he was crucified. As noted above, these statements add nothing to the meaning of the text as such and operate more as a stylistic device to shift from one topic to another.

On the other hand, the phrase 'le veissel unt Graal nummé/Pour la reison que j'ei conté' (vv. 2677-78) is not just a throwaway comment. The 'reison' Robert refers to is the reason behind the creation of the romance, that is the name and explanation of the Grail. In the verses prior to his authorial statement of poetic craft, Robert has provided an etymological explanation for the name he has given the vessel. He plays on the verb, *agreer*, and the immense pleasure which was experienced by those who looked upon it. This feeling of joy signalled the state of being part of God's community and is symbolic of the bestowal of God's Grace.

Robert moves from a description of Mary as an inexhaustible fountain into a discussion on baptism and penance. He explains that he is now obliged to return to his *matere*; he states that at the heart of his narrative lies Christ's redemptive nature and His offer of salvation through the institution of the church:

> Des or meis me couvient guenchir,
> A ma matere revenir
> De ce que me rememberrei
> Tant cum santé et pouoir ei.
> Voirs est que Jhesuscriz ala

> Par terre, et si baptisa
> Et ou flun Jourdan le lava (*Joseph*, vv. 149-55) [31]

On three other occasions he asserts his authority as storyteller:

> a icel tens tens que je vous conte (v. 11) [32]
>
> au tens que je vous ei conté (v. 987)
>
> a ce tens que je la retreis (v. 3489)

The first two of these examples refer to the time in which the narrative is set, that is New Testament time. The third refers to the time in which Robert is writing. They are almost statements which are surplus to requirement, except that the intervening 'je' reminds the audience or reader of the author's presence behind the text as the creating and directing force.

Ever-present throughout the *Joseph* is the narrator, who from time to time inserts an explicit authorial intervention in the form of formulaic phrases such as 'si cum je di' (v. 144), 'si com je croi' (v. 268), 'que je n'en sai dire le conte' (v. 1934) and 'et si je vous conterei comment' (v. 2374), which serve as a reminder of his presence as author. On one hand, Robert's use of these *parenthèses* can be seen as a function of rhyme and metre in that they provide the means by which the author can fulfil the requirements of octosyllabic rhyming couplets. On the other hand, the insertion of his authorial comments asserts his presence as authority and the force behind the direction of the narrative. They function as signposts along the route chosen by the author and create a feeling of security in that the outcome of the events described has already been decided. What the author must do now is convince the reader of the relevance and wisdom of what he is saying and win him over to his way of thinking.

## 3. Subjective Asides

These take the form of brief narratorial comments on the events being related. They reinforce the idea that this is not an objective account, but a highly constructed piece of literature.

Renaut seems unable to stop himself from expressing his feelings, often responding quite vehemently towards the events he describes. It is as though the narrator is intimately involved in the narrative. Yet, on other occasions it appears the narrative somehow has a life of its own, running its course and developing without Renaut's input. Renaut continually makes exclamations of joy, anger, pity or anguish, according to the circumstances. Sometimes his interjections seem almost involuntary as though he has been caught up in the story himself. This is apparent when he makes an authorial aside in response to Blioblïeris' villainy, 'Molt avoit cil le cuer felon!' (v. 578), and when Guinglain is tested by the Pucele, 'S'il a paor ne m'en mervelle!' (v. 4568). These subjective outbursts manipulate the audience's response to the narrative, colouring the

way it is received. His comments are affective, and many of them increase expectation and foster a heightened sense of excitement and tension. They demand an emotional response on the part of the audience.

The whole work is coloured by the opinion Renaut wants to project onto the audience or reader. The reader is left in no doubt about what the narrator thinks of the various characters. His comments heap either praise or blame. He notes of Lampart that 'molt i avoit bon chevalier' (v. 2595). There are frequent hyperbolic exclamations about a person's beauty, 'onques nus hom ne vit si biel' (v. 1876) and 'si bele riens ne fu veüe' (v. 2218). In addition to this, Renaut intervenes to exclaim over a character's moral disposition, as in 'molt estoit preus la damoissele!' (v. 1013), or to pass comment on their prowess, 'molt orent andui bieles armes' (v. 1413).

In the *Joseph*, Robert's subjective asides take the form of personal indictments on the Jews who crucified Christ. He relates how Joseph and Nicodemus return to the Cross to remove Christ for burial and the describes the way in which the Jews receive them. He does not simply write that when the Jews saw Joseph and Nicodemus, they were taken aback. Instead Robert attaches an aside to his mention of the Jews which reveals his personal stance: 'Quant ce virent li chien puant' (v. 526). Later in the text a similar situation occurs. Vaspasien speaks to the assembled Jews and asks them to explain their role in Christ's death. When Robert records their reply, he adds his personal invective, 'Il distrent, li puant revoit' (v. 1797). [33] Robert's prejudice against the Jews spills over into his characters' dialogue when he has Vespasien beg his father for his permission to avenge Christ's death:

> '...me leissiez aler vengier
> La mort mon seigneur droiturier
> Que cil larrun puant Juïs
> Unt si vileinnement ocis' (vv. 1735-38) [34]

Interruptions such as these emphasize the subjective nature of the text and the extent to which the poet can exert his influence.

## 4. Authorial Digressions.

As we have seen in Chapter One, Geoffrey lists *digressio* among the eight amplificatory devices which will enhance a work. He discusses the ways in which digression acts as a means of altering the natural order of the work. The author departs from the material at hand, but still remains faithful to the subject matter by using the digression as an aid to clarification. In the example provided by Geoffrey, the digressive passage operates as an explanatory aside which assists in understanding the matter being discussed in the body of the text.

There are six major authorial digressions in the *Descouneüs*. The Prologue and the Epilogue form the framework for the romance and stand outside the text. Within the body

of the text, Renaut makes four significant departures from the narrative to expound his ideas on either love or chivalry, and his personal experience with the former. These may be considered an appeal to the audience's intellect. What did Renaut intend his audience to take from these and how was this to affect the reception of the narrative?

The general function of the prologue and how this is applied in the *Descouneüs*, was discussed earlier in the chapter, so we shall proceed with treating the digressions. Renaut's first digression is concerned with the changing face of chivalry and occurs as Guinglain moves in to do combat with the three avenging knights. This digression achieves impact in that it echoes the sentiments already expressed by Hélie. In reprimanding the knights attacking the unarmed Guinglain, Hélie indignantly addresses the notion of the chivalric ideal of courtesy:

> coment pensés tel vilonnie
> d'asalir homme desarmé!
> Molt vos serra a mal torné
> se vos desarmé le tociés
> Gardés, signor, ne comenciés
> cose dont vos soiés honni,
> c'onques si lait blame ne vi. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1016-22) [35]

In the digression which occurs 56 lines on from Hélie's speech, Renaut reiterates the idea already intimated by Guinglain's female companion that there is a certain code of conduct to which a knight must conform:

> et a cel tans costume estoit
> que quant uns home se conbatoit,
> n'avait garde que de celui
> qui faissoit sa bataille a lui.
> Or va li tans afebloiant
> et cis usages decaant
> que vint et cinc enprendent un. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1067-73) [36]

Renaut's treatment of chivalry and the concepts of courtesy are not confined to this one passage, but are elsewhere reflected in the text in the numerous descriptions of combat between Guinglain and his attackers. Renaut's presentation of combat scenes is treated in Chapter Seven. The combats and the participants who enter combat are following a particular code of conduct, highlighted in this digression by the lack of adherence to the code. That Renaut devotes an authorial digression to this topic is important for his crafting of the text. Renaut's concern with generic identity in this romance specifically explores the two sides to the courtly psyche, that of lover and of knight. Guinglain is a product of the genre into which he has been written. He is a knight first and foremost, and must exhibit the chivalric qualities befitting a knight. In this digression, Renaut expounds the ideals of courtliness and the mutual respect knights were to have for one another.

In Renaut's second digression, he discusses the importance of loyalty in love. True love does not involve self-gratification and self-seeking, says Renaut. He describes a scenario where the lover manipulates the situation to his own ends, taking the woman away from her friends and then deceiving her. At the close of this digression he takes a lyric stance, questioning his right to call his beloved *amie,* and gives himself over to her mercy, 'por li muir, por li cant' (v. 1270). His reference to the traitorous behaviour of those who profess to love but are false, is reminiscent of troubadour poetry of which Bernart de Ventadorn provides an apt example:

> Ai Deus! car se fosson trian
> d'entrels faus li fin amador,
> e.lh lauzenger e.lh trichador
> portesson corns el fron denant
> Tot l'aur del mon e tot l'argen
> i volgr'aver dat, s'eu l'agues (ll. 33-37)[9] [37]

Renaut's expresses this same sentiment, as well as his abhorrence for the abuse of love when he says:

> Ce dient cl qui vont treçant,
> li uns le va l'autre contant,
> "Peciés n'est de feme traïr,"
> mais laidement sevent mentir.
> Ains [est] molt gras peciés, par m'ame!
> Cil qui se font sage d'amor,
> cil en sont faus et traïtor. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1243-47, 1261-62) [38]

In this passage, Renaut aligns himself with the tradition of courtly love and the ideals which this genre propounds and which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

In his third digression, Renaut personalizes the question of love by discussing the love he has for his lady. This follows a lengthy passage which presents Guinglain suffering at the hands of Love, undergoing the most *cruels martire* (v. 4193). Renaut says that he too has suffered a thousand deaths at the hand of his lady whom he describes as a *male gerriere* (v. 4198). Just as Guinglain sets his whole heart to thinking of the Pucele, the narrator's lady is in possession of the author's heart, which he never wants to withdraw (vv. 4208-09).

When Love gives Guinglain his due reward, the narrator intervenes with his fourth digression and gives his personal experience of love:

> De tos les mals et le contraire
> c'Amors a fait a Guinglains traire
> iluec le gueredon li rent. (*Descouneüs*, v. 4825-27) [39]

He acknowledges the sublime transcending power afforded him through loving his lady and extols the many virtues of ladies: 'Dius lé fist de si grant vertu, de tos bien les forma et fist' (vv. 4842-43). Here, he emphasizes the honour that is to be shown them by men. Those who speak ill of ladies are to be cursed by God and struck dumb:

> Et cels qui sont maldisseor
> des dames et de fine amor
> maudie Dius et sa vertus
> et de parler les face mus
> Car a cele ouvre que il font
> demonstrent bien de coi il sont,
> qui tant se painent de mentir. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4853-59) [40]

The final authorial statement takes the form of the Epilogue, which is a direct address to the lady to whom Renaut addresses his romance. The reality of this woman, who supposedly holds Renaut's heart and to whom the poem is written, has been the subject of much conjecture. Was there really a woman who was the impetus for this poem, or is this merely a poetic device used by Renaut for effect? The answer remains elusive, generating much of the interest of the poem. One thing, however, is clear. At the conclusion of the story, nothing is resolved. The happy-ever-after ending is not forthcoming and the audience is left in suspense as to the eventual outcome. While marriage might appear to signal the conclusion of a romance, here marriage is a *faus sanblant* rather than the *biau sanblant* which Renaut demands of his lady.

From the Epilogue, Renaut's object in writing the romance appears to have been to receive a *biau sanblant* from his beloved:

> Mais por un biau sanblant mostrer (v. 6255) [41]

> que jamais je n'en parlerai
> tant que le bel sanblant avrai. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 6265-66) [42]

In addition to being used twice in the Epilogue, 'sanbler' and 'sanblant' occur throughout the text and the appearance of these terms often points to the ambiguity, and in many instances the deceptiveness, of the situation. That appearances are deceiving and preconceived ideas must be abandoned in reading the *Descouneüs* is highlighted through the recurring use of vocabulary of deceit and falseness. Penny Simons[10] provides a detailed analysis of the occasions when cognitives of *sanbler* occur in the text. Variations of *sanbler* occur 28 times over the course of the narrative, often referring to the ambiguity of external appearances and the correct reading of them. In addition to *sanbler, decevoir* appears four times, *faus* seven times, *mentir* 11 times, *retraire* three and there are seven other instances where words implying deception are used. On 11 occasions, *sanblant* is used with either *faire* or *mostrer* to signify the way one character looks at or treats another or others. Depending on the adjective used in conjunction with *sanblant*, and in the *Descouneüs* there is quite a range, the look bestowed may be a gracious and courtly one, one of humility or one of welcome. At the picnic after the defeat of the two giants, Guinglain sits down opposite Clarie and Hélie and 'molt lor faisoit biel sanblant' (v. 936). In Renaut's second digression, he questions his own use of 'amie' to refer to his lady, as the lady in question does not even look at him:

> car moi ne fait ele sanblant (*Descouneüs*, v. 1269) [43]

When Guinglain defeats Lampart in combat, Lampart arranges that his conqueror be given a gracious welcome, 'molt bel sanblant li fait mostrer' (v. 2728). Guinglain is surrounded by characters within the Arthurian society who know how to conduct themselves and the appropriate response to make in a given situation. Blonde Esmeree is the epitome of graciousness. Even in the form of a serpent, she approaches Guinglain in a courtly manner, displaying both humility and friendship:

> sanblant d'umelité li fait (v. 3159) [44]

> et sanblant d'amistié mostra (v. 3170)

> sanblant d'umelité li fait (Descouneüs, v. 3191)

In the same way, Blonde Esmeree, once freed from enchantment, is described as knowing how to treat everyone graciously:

> a tos savoit bon sanblant faire (Descouneüs, v. 3500) [45]

Guinglain, on the other hand, gives the appearance of assuredness and yet deceives everyone; even himself. When Blonde Esmeree offers herself in marriage to Guinglain, he accepts and gives the appearance of being pleased:

> molt li sot biel sanblant mostrer (Descouneüs, v. 3402) [46]

At the same time as appearing happy at the proposed marriage, Guinglain has laid plans to leave and return to the Pucele.

For the most part the *sanblant* references do not contain sinister overtones, nor do they, in isolation, mask hidden meanings. The impact of this phrase is not felt until the narrative ends and it is revealed that the author is prepared to manipulate convention and alter the outcome of the romance to assure himself of his lady's *biau sanblant*. It is at this point that the subtle accumulation of phrases referring to *sanblant* appears to have been significant.

Margaret Burrell studies the use of the term *semblant* in an artlicle published in the 1992 edition of the *New Zealand Journal of French Studies*.[11] Dr Burrell firstly explores how the phrase *bel semblant* manifests itself in courtly lyric and distils a variety of meanings for the term:

> *Bel semblant* may simply refer to the physical appearance of the adored object, her beauty; in more general terms, *semblant* includes all aspects of the appearance of both the lover and the object of his adoring service; it is the mask worn by both. The smiling mask of the *dompna* may conceal conceit [...] or it may be so universally bestowed that the sight of it no longer reassures the lover. [12]

This leads Dr Burrell to conclude that 'the wearing of the *semblant* is an integral part of the process of love as it is described by the courtly poets of the twelfth century'.[13] Having established this, the article then considers how this process of love is taken up in

romance. Dr Burrell uses *La Chastelaine de Vergi* in her analysis of the term *semblant*. Many of the conclusions drawn from this text may be usefully applied to the *Descouneüs*.

The *Chastelaine de Vergi*, like the *Descouneüs*, turns on the themes of deception and false appearances. Looks are exchanged and promises made which bely the truth and the underlying motivation of the characters. To a certain extent, both women in the *Chastelaine* manipulate the situation, and the men, to achieve their purpose. The Chastelaine constructs an elaborate code of secrecy upon which her relationship with the knight is based and which ultimately brings unhappiness. The Duchess, motivated by lust and revenge, manipulates both the Duke and the knight, and the conventions of court. She gives the outward appearance of elegant sophistication and conceals the malice and jealousy she harbours beneath the surface. The use of *semblant* in this romance underlines the precarity of a situation built on ruse, suspicion and false appearances. At the conclusion of the romance, all are broken. Each of the four characters has been destroyed by deceit and the failure to recognize the falseness of the situation.

*Sanblant* in the *Descouneüs* refers to outward appearance and the interpretation or meaning that can be implied by this appearance. Outwardly, it appears that marriage to Blonde Esmeree achieves resolution. Indeed, without the Epilogue, the reader may well have been left with this impression. However, marriage in this case is not as promising as it may at first seem.

Guinglain has resolved only one part of his character: that of romance protagonist. He is offered the reward he has achieved through his chivalric quest, but by the end of the narrative he has still not learned how to be a lover. He has been given an identity but has not made it his own. Renaut threatens eternal limbo for Guinglain wherein he is caught between two genres; married to a romance queen, but bearing 'tel esmai' (v. 6260) at having lost his *lai* lover.

The digressions in the *Descouneüs* explore the ideas of chivalry and love. These interruptions both break the narrative flow and assert the author's role as well as elucidate the subject at hand through personal reflection.

Renaut's digressions are easily recognizable in that they clearly depart from the narrative and allow the author to muse on a subject related to the themes of the romance in the subjective first-person voice. Robert, however, does not present such well-defined divisions. Yet he does digress from the narrative to amplify certain aspects of the text. The passage which extols the virtues of the Virgin Mary and gives an account of her conception and birth does not appear in any of the prose versions. In a note to his critical edition, O'Gorman describes this passage as an 'interpolation' and notes the verse author's recourse to apocryphal texts to amplify the picture the reader has of the mother of Christ.[14]

It could be argued that the Vaspasian/Verrine episode digresses from the main narrative, which follows the development of the Grail. However, this is more a sub-plot in that it is included to explain Joseph's release from prison. It provides a well-supported progression from one situation to the next, as well as illustrating the personal relationship with, and power of, Christ.

## 5. Authorial Identity

There are different levels of authorial identity at play in the texts. That is, the poets take on different personae to elicit certain responses from the audience or reader. An author, as Minnis defines the term, is 'someone who was at once a writer and an authority, someone not only to be read, but also to be respected and believed [...] the writings of an *auctor* contained or possessed *auctoritas* in the abstract sense of the term, with its strong connotations of veracity and sagacity'.[15]

Where is the author in the *Descouneüs*? Renaut has roles as a) author b) narrator and c) lover.

### a) Renaut as author

Renaut's literary craftmanship is a consistent feature in the *Descouneüs*. When the Pucele reveals she has orchestrated events in Guinglain's life, she places herself in the creative and omniscient role of author. It appears that she has watched over Guinglain while he was a boy, knowing that he would become a knight and that he would go to Arthur's court. She tells him that it was she who told Hélie to go and seek help for her lady, knowing that Guinglain would be the one who would respond. Once he has accomplished the *Fier Baisier*, she would be the one to tell him his name and genealogy. The Pucele literally, as well as symbolically, provides Guinglain with his identity. She is depicted as having some sort of hold over him as he rides away and leaves Blonde Esmeree, with Renaut commenting that 'la Biele as Blance mains le tire' (v. 3911). The Pucele's admission of her role in Guinglain's life reveals a subtle layering of authority in the text. While it would seem that the Pucele has been a motivating force behind Guinglain's conduct and choices, the fact still remains that Renaut is the ultimate authority. Characters, including the Pucele, are but the issue of Renaut's pen. For all the Pucele's power, she is not completely in control. Renaut has other plans for his hero and has him leave the Pucele to return to the romance world of the court.

### b) Renaut as narrator

Renaut, as author, is the creator of the quest. However, within the narrative, it is Hélie's arrival at King Arthur's court which initiates the first in a series of adventures undertaken by Guinglain. Renaut withdraws to the position of narrator and, through Hélie, emphasizes the need and overwhelming importance of having a knight worthy of the task.

Hélie reiterates six times that she has been sent to Arthur's court for the best knight and nothing but the best will do:

> Ne li estuet c'un chevalier;
> uns chevaliers le secorra. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 180-81) [47]

> Envoie li tel chevalier
> qui bien li puisse avoir mestier,
> trestot le millor que tu as. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 185-87) [48]

> Mais pros que il li a mestier;
> onques n'ot tel a chevalier. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 193-94) [49]

> Jo t'avoie quis le millor (*Descouneüs*, v. 231) [50]

> Des millors vel et des plus fiers
> [...] tel qui soit de chevalerie
> esprovés et de millor los (*Descouneüs*, vv. 236-38) [51]

Hélie's doubts as to Guinglain's worthiness are resolved after the joust with Lampart. Hélie discloses her revised opinion of Guinglain, saying that she knows of none better 'car il est molt de grant valor' (v. 2724). Hélie serves as the knight's guide and mentor: she reminds him constantly of his committment to the quest:

> Ja de ço ne t'estuet penser
> ne fors de ton cemin aler. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 661-62) [52]

> Sire, n'i pensés vilonnie
> ne ma dame n'oblïes mie! (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2327-28) [53]

She explains or verifies customs:

> Sire," dist la pucele Helie,
> tels est l'usages, n'en  ment mie,
> et cil qui ici est conquis
> si puet estre de la mort fis.  (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1992-94) [54]

> Sire," fait ele, nenil mie!
> De la aler n'aiés envie
> car tant en ai oï parler
> que molt i fait mauvais aler.
> Un usage vos en dirai
> dou castiel que je molt bien sai. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2513-2518) [55]

She warns of possible dangers:

> Vasal, esgardés que je voi!
> Or ne venés plus aprés moi:
> je voi la outre un chevalier
> trestot armé sor un destrier.
> Se plus volés venir sans faille,
> ja vos rendra dure bataille. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 369-74) [56]

In this way, Renaut uses Hélie as a mouthpiece instead of giving an explanation for events from an authorial point of view. In terms of the narrative, the trials Guinglain undergoes prove his suitability to Hélie as the knight who will rescue her mistress. In

terms of the romance genre, Guinglain asserts his right as a worthy protagonist for this romantic tale of adventure.

The squire, Robers, also provides a means for the author to explore certain ideas from another standpoint. Through Robers, Renaut broaches the subject of the ennobling power which love can have for a knight. Robers expresses this very idea when he says

> ne cil ne doit avor mestier
> c'aucune fois ne veut amer
> ne cil ne doit en pris monter
> qui vers Amors n'a son corage
> se il n'est molt de grant eage (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3766-70) [57]

Hélie and Robers represent ideals which are generically opposed. Hélie asserts, or at least attempts to assert, an influence on the protagonist which is firmly posited within the romance genre, while Robers encourages the *lai* lover side to Guinglain's character. His words suggest that it is possible, even ideal, to combine knight with lover. Yet this is an ideal which proves unobtainable for Guinglain. Hélie and Robers' role in relation to the protagonist will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

## c) Renaut as lover

Another story runs alongside Guinglain's adventures: that of the narrator and his unrequited love. While Renaut does not enter Guinglain's story as a character, he alternates between two personae, that of omnipotent author on the one hand and helpless lover on the other. The identification between the narrator and protagonist enhances the fictionality of the romance. For Peter Haidu, 'the persona's contrasting relationship to the narrative, and the narrative's dependence on the persona's good fortune, playfully raise the question of the limits of literature: where does fiction end, where does reality begin?'[16] There are times in the romance when it becomes difficult to distinguish between hero and narrator. The parallel between Guinglain and Renaut is highlighted, in particular, through the authorial digressions which interrupt Guinglain's story to present the poet's own relationship with his beloved. Guinglain's fate is dependent on his author's luck in love. Despite Renaut's seemingly sympathetic attitude towards his protagonist as he undergoes great suffering at the hands of Love, he still holds him for ransom at the conclusion of the romance, refusing to allow Guinglain the object of his desire until he has been granted his own romantic interest. The distance between narrator and protagonist is particularly close in the transition from narrative to third digression, where Guinglain's torment is compared to that of Renaut. Renaut firstly narrates the suffering experienced by Guinglain as he acts like a man ruled by love, and then breaks the narrative to lament his own romantic problems:

> En soi a d'Amors le maniere.
> Molt l'a trové male gerriere
> en celui cui je sui amis (*Descouneüs*, 4197-99)

The parallels between Renaut and his protagonist have been the subject of much conjecture amongst critics.[17]  What does Renaut achieve in aligning himself with his protagonist and moreover, in seemingly commenting on this in the first person?  Jeri Guthrie refers to Renaut's auto-referential segments as giving his work a troubadour flavour, which in turn 'serves as a rhetorical device'.[18] Like Margaret Burrell in her article discussed earlier, Guthrie places much emphasis on 'the first look of love and the return gesture, the unattainable *sanblant*'.[19]  Dr. Burrell considers the transferral of the process of love (*semblant*) from courtly song to the narrative genre of romance in terms of the *Chastelaine de Vergi*.  Guthrie also considers the same issue here, as it occurs in the *Descouneüs*.  Guthrie claims that, 'generic complexity results from the interlacing of the poetics of the *grand chant courtois* and the romance narrative'.[20]  This generic complexity will be discussed further in the following chapter.  For our present purposes, it is sufficient to note that Guthrie emphasizes the suffering of the poet, the inaccessibility of the woman and the impossibility of closure of the text apparent in the *Descouneüs,* and compares these to a troubadour text which also contains these ingredients.

For Claude Roussel, it is a 'double fiction qui autorise une certaine analogie entre Guinglain et le poète'.  However, Guinglain is not the good and faithful lover promoted by Renaut and which the poet professes himself to be, instead 'il représente un double ambigue du narrateur, plus heureuse que lui, puisqu'il est aimé, et pourtant moins digne de l'être...'.[21]

For Laurence de Looze, in a study looking at the effect wrought by the clash of elements from various genres, 'the protagonist becomes a double of the Narrator-Author, hence a figure of the author *qua* lover'.[22] De Looze cites Jean-Charles Payen, whose thoughts on this matter are that 'les interventions personnelles de l'auteur [impliqué] et la façon dont il s'assimile à Guinglain révèlent chez Renaut la conscience que le roman est une manière de se raconter'.[23]  The *Descouneüs* is often discussed in terms of its pseudo-autobiographical nature.  The author intervenes to speak in the first person and reflect on his own experience.  However, it is slightly simplistic to reduce the *Descouneüs* to the status of a sentimental outpouring on the part of a man desperately in love using the story as a means to work through his grief.  Renaut should be given more credit than this.  His autobiographical flourishes enhance the meta-fictional nature of the text.  It is not that Renaut is 'writing himself', but that he is writing about writing.  The discernible presence of the author adds yet another dimension to the romance, widening and deepening audience understanding through example and verbal illustrations.

Robert does not interrupt his narrative as frequently as does Renaut and yet his presence is, nevertheless, perceptible.  Robert, too, has two separate yet interrelated identities.  He is both Robert, narrator of the romance and Robert, the commentator, providing discourses on matters of doctrine.  The *Joseph* exhibits the development of a theme made

up of two different 'strands', or what might be called two different planes: narrative and doctrine. The different levels of narratorial personae relate to these. Robert at once narrates a romance and comments on doctrine.

Robert shows a particular concern for notions of communication and the truth. Much emphasis is placed on recounting information and verifying its authenticity. Reports from the perspective of different characters on events already described by the narrator lend credibility to the tale, particularly in the case of supposed eye-witness accounts such as those of the pilgrim and Verrine. These various perspectives also bring about a 'shift' in authority.

In the *Joseph*, the voice which has been understood as the narrator's becomes more of a commentator. Authority is taken over first by Joseph, through his knowledge of the secret words Christ imparts to him and his subsequent ability to communicate with the Grail, and then by the Grail itself, as the omniscient voice of the Holy Spirit is heard from the vessel.

Robert does not explicitly state his intentions. He presents the issues that best suit his needs and then he simply narrates. He presents dialogue, barely commenting on what people say, but letting their words speak for themselves. However, he has established his stance from the beginning with the doctrinal discussions which occur. The use of 'je' denotes specific authorial interventions. It serves as a constant reminder that the narrator who outlines the aspects of dogma is to be considered by the audience as the shaping presence behind the narrative. He organizes and presents to the audience what he wants them to see and directs how they are to see it.

He begins by introducing the audience to a narrator who identifies himself as a figure of authority, exhorting all sinners to be aware of the prophets' announcement before Christ came to earth. He writes of the proclamation of Christ's birth and the suffering that was foretold for Him:

> Savoir doivent tout pecheeur,
> Et li petit et li meneur,
> Que devant ce que jhesuscriz
> Venist en terre, par les diz
> Fist des prophets anuncier
> Sa venue en terre et huchier
> Que Diex son Fil envoieroit
> Ça jus aval, et soufferoit
> Mout de tourmenz, mout de doleurs,
> Mout de froiz et mout de sueurs. (*Joseph,* vv. 1-10) [58]

In ten lines, Robert outlines the scope of his work. The voice that introduces the work remains constant throughout the work, assuming the role more of commentator than anything else, providing definitions, etymological explanations, clarification of customs and laws and recounting Biblical history.

The way in which the *Joseph* begins, informs and determines the character of the whole work. Robert's message operates on two levels. He is at once concerned with individual need and with the greater message. The *Joseph* opens with the dramatic portrayal of Christ's coming to earth to suffer torment and death for the sake of all sinners. He also presents the consequences for the individual, expressed in the phrase, 'li petit et li meneur' (v. 2).

Up until Joseph's release from prison, the anonymous narrator, whose voice is that of the highly charged Prologue, is the voice of authority. This voice recounts Christ's descent into Hell and His incarnation within the Virgin Mary (vv. 27-31). It digresses to give a glowing iconographical description of Christ's mother and her own nativity (vv. 32-80), explaining the need for Christ's birth and sacrificial death in the account of Adam and Eve's fall from grace (vv. 81-88). It discusses baptism and penance (vv. 89-192), and then finally begins the narrative proper and introduces the as yet unnamed Joseph (vv. 199-204). This voice tells of the Last Supper, giving Jesus' teaching on confession and the possibility of absolution by a priest who is himself sinful (vv. 317-74). The narrator portrays Judas' betrayal of Jesus and the Jews' subsequent seizure of Jesus (vv. 375-432). He gives the story of Joseph removing Christ from the Cross, collecting His blood in the cup used at the Last Supper and laying Him in a tomb which he had prepared for himself (vv. 439-592). The narrator relates how Joseph is imprisoned for his supposed role in the disappearance of Christ's body from the tomb and reports Christ's visit to Joseph in prison, and the conferring of the vessel and its teachings which takes place (vv. 649-724). When Joseph wonders who it can be who has appeared in such bright light and beauty before him, Christ tells him that He is the Son of God and proceeds to reiterate elements of the story already given by the narrator (vv. 727-824). The narrator's authority as a faithful source of historical facts is reinforced because of this double narration. Indeed, the first narrator's authority is unassailable since the corroboration is given by Christ.

As he entrusts the vessel to Joseph, Christ imparts a special knowledge to him which the narrator admits he would not have been able to mention if it had not been for 'le grant livre' where 'les estoires sunt escrites, Par les granz clers feites et dites' (v. 932-34). The previously established narrator withdraws to the position of commentator as he acknowledges that he is not the ultimate authority and that he has received his information from another source. The words Christ speaks to Joseph are not revealed, but seem to be linked to questions of doctrine. The narrator is redefined as a limited authority who willingly admits his fallibility. Joseph is now the figure of authority in the story by virtue of his personal encounter with Christ. The narrator's knowledge of Biblical history and doctrine is no longer sufficient when faced with the mysteries of Christ and the Grail.

When Joseph is liberated from prison, it is he who recounts to Vespasian the events leading up to Christ's crucifixion. Later, as Joseph turns to the Grail for guidance on solving the crisis of famine in the community, the Grail begins to assume a position of greater importance and authority in the text. Working in conjunction with Joseph, the voice of the Grail, which is that of the Holy Spirit, directs the narrative and explains the significance of obscure signs around various events, while at the same time serving as a moral guide. External forces are shown to enter in order to reinforce the narrative. Joseph, like the narrator before him, is relegated to the position of serving the Grail. Both figures are understood to have limited authority on their own, but serve as intermediaries for God's word, the narrator through his writing, Joseph through travelling to distant lands to share the message he has received from Christ.

The *Joseph* is coloured by Robert's own thinking. Even when the narratorial *je* is silent, there is a pervasive sense of authorship. There are times when Robert does not specifically use *je* statements to indicate his voice as narrator; yet the reader is nonetheless aware of his subjective presence affecting the way the narrative is presented.

## 6. Proverbs.

The exploitation of the proverb or proverbial phrase is the final category in the discussion of the ways in which the medieval poet can use his own presence as a means of supporting his *antancïon*. The use of the proverb raises the issue of how to distinguish between material and rhetorical amplification. The proverb at once reveals the use of an outside authority which is integrated into the poet's own text, a feature of material amplification. At the same time it uses language designed to persuade the reader of the truth of what is being said, thus amplifying the idea rhetorically. It is in this respect that Henri Meschonnic refers to the proverb as 'un hors-texte dans le texte'.[24] He sees the proverb as an 'activité de discours où le sens n'est pas séparable du mode de signifier, dans et par une significance'.[25] He then clarifies this explanation by comparing proverbs to enigma and myth, wherein the solution is not immediately apparent but is realized gradually.

By proverb, should also be understood proverbial phrase, so that Michèle Perret's term 'énoncé' is perhaps more appropriate. According to Perret, the *énoncé* has a dual resonance in that the author's presence is asserted while at the same time an outside authority is implied.[26] Perret expresses the latter line of thought in her article on the atemporal effect which can be achieved through fiction. She notes that Renaut's proverbs 'proposent une vérité indépendante du contexte et des circonstances de leur énonciation et prétendent à l'universalité'.[27] In fact, the very nature of the proverb as words of an authority outside of the text made precious by the gilding of time, gives the text a certain amount of credibility. It is another technique at the disposal of the author in order to approach the audience and win them over to his way of thinking. The inclusion of a

proverb or proverbial expression underscores the poet's own text, linking it in to the already existing wealth of literature and showing his awareness of it and his ability to work within it.

Moreover, a certain amount of aesthetic pleasure is derived from the use of proverbs. Proverbs fulfil a didactic purpose in that they are both pleasing to the reader as a form of literature as well as being instructive in interpreting the text into which they have been incorporated. They enhance the interest or force of the truth or knowledge which they embody, be that theoretical, moral or practical.

Geoffrey of Vinsauf, in advocating the elegance of artificial order over natural order, recommends the use of proverbs:

> civilior ordine recto
> Et longe prior est, quamvis praeposterus ordo (*Poetria nova*, vv. 99-100) [59]

For Geoffrey of Vinsauf, the function of proverbs is twofold. On one hand, they are to make the work more elegant in that they depart from the natural order of events to insert a reference to a more general truth which has a ring of authority to it. On the other hand, they serve to guide the reader to a particular understanding of the text — the author's own — without blatantly stating what this is. Proverbs allude to and suggest meaning, amplifying the author's *antancïon* by subtle means.

According to Geoffrey, a proverb can indicate that which is of central interest to the body of a text, not through direct inference, but through recourse to a concept with a more universal application:

> Supra thema datum sistat, sed spectet ad illud,
> Recte fronte; nihil dicat, sed cogitet inde. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 132-33) [60]

This not only renders the work more elegant:

> Sic opus illustrent proverbia. (*Poetria nova*, v. 142) [61]

It also functions as a means to control how the reader will understand the work. By means of the proverb, the poet can control pace and can focus on elements that he deems of primary importance. While the proverb looks 'outwards' from the text, it also serves to magnify the central theme of a specific work.

Matthew of Vendôme also encourages the use of proverbs, and advises placing a proverb at the beginning a work of literature. Matthew defines proverbs as:

> [...] communis sententia, cui consuetudo, opinio communis assensum accommodat, incorruptae veritatis integritas adquiescit. (*Ars versificatoria*, I, 16) [62]

The weight of 'truth' which proverbial phrases carry with them graces the text in which they appear and imparts a certain dignity. Paul Zumthor describes the authority of the

proverb by explaining that 'le proverbe subsume le contenu des vers qui le précèdent, et le confronte à une "vérité", proposition virtuellement universelle, fictivement admise comme non falsifiable'.[28] The proverb stands outside the text in that it espouses a more general statement which, if isolated from the narrative, could stand on its own. At the same time, it has been selected for what it adds to the text, for the insight it can afford the reader. The proverb, then, acts as a signpost which directs the reader to what is important in the text and to an understanding of the author's *antancïon*.

However, it is not enough to look at the proverb simply in terms of the authority it lends to the text. To what does the proverb owe this stamp of authority? The proverb, as a device of rhetoric, accomplishes both a stylistic and a thematic complexity in the work. It is at once ornamental and conceptual. It is ornamental in that it provides what might be called a verbal illustration of the idea being discussed. It often depicts an image or a scene which expresses the instruction or explanation behind it. A proverb is conceptual in that it explains an idea essential to the author's *antancïon* and does so through the insertion of a saying which seems to derive from an external fund of knowledge.

How is a proverb recognized in the text? Schulze-Busacke notes 14 examples of proverbs in the *Descouneüs*, while Michèle Perret cites 22.[29] The discrepancy in the tally arises in how a proverb is defined. Schulze-Busacke bases her identification of the proverbs and proverbial phrases she recognizes in the narrative texts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries[30] and which appear in Joseph Morawski's collection of 2500 proverbs, published in 1925.[31] Schulze-Busacker cites Morawski as offering the most complete and best edited presentation of medieval French proverbs to date.[32] Perret adds another eight *énoncés* which she credits with an 'allure proverbiale',[33] even if they do not appear in Morawski's or Schulze-Busacke's registers. Renaut's proverbs, claims Perret, have a 'fonction idéologique'[34] in that they are an expression of the ideas the author sees as being at the heart of the romance. Even if the author invents his own proverbial phrase and it appears only once to espouse some truth particular to a specific romance, Perret would call this an 'enoncé sentiel ou proverbial'. It is sufficient for a phrase to be true on only one occasion for it to join the ranks of the 'toujours-déjà dit',[35] provided that it gives the impression of universality at the same time as being applicable to the text at hand.

The only phrase which approaches a proverb in the *Joseph* is the verse which Richard O'Gorman describes as 'a verse with a proverbial ring' in a note to his *Joseph d'Arimathie*. Verse 3068 is here compared to Morawski's number 1315:

> Maubailliz est qui bien ne voit (v. 3068) [63]

This is situated within a long passage of dialogue where the voice of the Holy Spirit talks to Joseph. This one proverbial phrase is certainly not a comment made lightly. Filled

with terms of knowing and understanding, hearing and listening, as Robert's narrative is, it is fitting to find a phrase which decrees that the blind, or those who do not see, will be destroyed. The people who trust Moÿsés and his intentions have been deceived by the enemy. Robert's proverb alludes to the possibility of deception for those who do not possess a certain knowledge. Implicit in Robert's story is the necessity to seek the truth and for Robert, the truth is found within the context of a personal relationship with Christ symbolized in the Grail. Those who are ignorant of the truth, and trust in their own needs and desires, relying on emotional sentiment to guide their judgement, are condemned. Their overriding concern to receive God's Grace comes more from a desire for self-gratification than from a desire to serve God and follow His teachings.

The *Joseph* has an historiographical ring to it with Robert referring to it three times in the course of the text as an *Estoire*. The allusions to other literature and the extent of the borrowing from Biblical and Apocryphal sources lend the required weight of authority without the poet resorting to proverbs.

In the *Descouneüs*, Renaut uses proverbs to indicate the distance between reality and fiction. Proverbs in their atemporality gain a certain amount of authority through being distanced from the narrative. They are not completely enmeshed in the story, but their more general attitude is exploited by the narrator to fulfil his *antancïon*. Proverbs imply truth and authority and yet they have been deliberately chosen by the author for a specific purpose. The author has an ulterior motive behind all that he includes in his text and proverbs are no exception. Proverbs evoke a certain reaction in a reader or listener just as any other rhetorical device might do.

A closer look at the proverbs used by Renaut in the *Descouneüs* reveals varying levels of meaning. At one level, they provide a didactic comment on the way people may have been expected to behave in courtly society, whether in combat or in their relationships with other people. At another level, they imply the illusory nature of this literary world. Nothing is as it seems.

Renaut uses 22 proverbial phrases in the *Descouneüs*. Of these 22, 11 of them are a feature of narrative discourse, where the narrator either digresses to quote a proverbial statement relatively faithfully, or adapts a proverb to his context. By quoting or adapting a proverbial expression which was known to the audience, or at least is obviously borrowed from another source, Renaut provides evidence, so to speak, for his own words. His use of proverbs is particularly relevant with regard to the poetic craft involved in writing literature. He is able to subtly suggest his *antancïon* by using a seemingly objective general statement.

The other 11 proverbs appear in the direct speech of some of the characters. The authority usually accorded the narrator is temporarily placed in the hands of the characters

as they express whatever it is they are saying with the authority of a proverbial phrase. However, the words they enunciate are intrinsically linked to the main themes and therefore serve to reflect the authorial conception which permeates the work. They may take on the role of elucidator for a time, yet their function on these occasions is as mouthpiece for the author.

The first proverbial expression comes in the Prologue and is clearly narratorial:

En poi d'eure puet Dius aidier' (*Descouneüs*, v. 8) [64]

Schulze-Busacker cites the source of this phrase as the proverb, *En poi d'eure Deus labeure* (no. 679). In Renaut's Prologue, this phrase refers to the process of the writing of the *Descouneüs*. He claims that he will not be greatly troubled by his task, but that God will supply him with the necessary assistance to compose his romance. This same idea of divine assistance is later echoed in the midst of a narratorial description of the combat between Guinglain and the giants who are attacking Clarie:

Cui Dius de honte veut garder,
nule riens ne le puet grever. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 771-72) [65]

Guinglain has already killed one of the giants and seems to be at a disadvantage in the fight. He has lost his shield and his horse has been struck. Yet he is the hero, and he has a destiny which does not include death at this point. This highlights his role as the chosen hero. God has chosen to protect the knight from harm. Schulze-Busacker classifies these lines as a proverbial phrase adapted to the context rather than a quoted proverb. The original proverb is given as *Cui Deus velt eidier, nus ne li puet nuire* (Schulze-Busacke, no. 440).

In the *Descouneüs*, reference to this proverb reflects the identification of the author with the protagonist. In the same way as Renaut alludes to the divine guidance lent to his narrative in verse eight cited above, Guinglain is given divine aid in combat. Both Guinglain and Renaut have a task to perform and must prove themselves as respectively romance hero and romance writer.

Guinglain's ability as a knight is shown to be constantly tried and proven. The dwarf who accompanies Hélie cites three proverbs to express the idea that appearances are not always what they seem and that other characters must be tested before being judged. He chides Hélie for not giving the unknown knight the chance to prove himself:

On ne doit blamer mie
dusc'on sace sa coardie (*Descouneüs*, vv. 309-10) [66]

Tel tient on vil que c'est folor
que Dius donne puis grant honnor. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 311-12) [67]

Tel cose tient on molt viument
de coi on aprés se repent. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 837-38) [68]

The first two of these admonitions are not included by Schulze-Busacke in her collection, but for the third she cites the original proverb: *Tel chose ait on en despit que puis est moult regretee* (no. 2313). All three of the dwarf's speeches to Hélie in defense of Guinglain warn against accepting things at face value, and advise looking deeper. That appearances can be deceiving is an element which is present throughout the narrative. Knights who appear to be the most formidable opponents, such as Giflés, li fius Do and Lampart, by the end have become part of an entourage of loyal Guinglain supporters. The terrifying serpent of the Cité Gaste and the *fier baiser* it bestows on the hero is merely the Queen seeking escape from enchantment. The part Guinglain plays in freeing her assures him of wealth and social position, which is far from the outcome a first impression of the terrifying creature would have afforded.

Renaut creates a certain amount of tension in the combat scenes through a vivid description of the action, including sword thrusts and galloping horses, ducking and diving. But, in case there was ever any doubt as to the legitimacy of Guinglain's moves in fighting the two giants, Renaut provides a proverb to dispense with any notions of cowardice in avoidance strategies:

> Fuir vaut mius de fol atendre
> puis qu'il n'i a mestier desfendre (*Descouneüs*, vv. 797-98) [69]

This proverb follows an apostrophe by the narrator in response to Guinglain's ducking the giant's blow. In effect, the proverb explains his apostrophe that 'Ce ne fu pas fait de musart!' (v. 796) [70]. Guinglain is shown to be aware of tactical manœuvres in combat, a further endorsement of his worthiness as a knight. The proverb is a direct quote which Schulze-Busacke lists as number 1245: *Mieus vaut bone fuite que mauvese atente.* It is as though Renaut wants to provide legitimate evidence that avoidance can be a good ploy in combat.

The central idea of the proverb listed by Schulze-Busacker and Morawski as number 229: *Belle vigne sans resin ne vault rien,* has been adapted by Renaut as a comment on the feast Guinglain, Robert, Hélie and Clarie enjoy when they discover the giant's cache of food:

> Li vilains dist, "Par Saint Martin,
> tels fait viengne, n'i cuit roissin." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 915-16) [71]

On a deeper level, this proverb is pertinent for the story as a whole and is related to the idea of the illusory nature of things. The Pucele as Blances Mains has tended and nurtured Guinglain for her own benefit, but she loses him to the call of *chevalerie*, a concept espoused in the tournament and a beneficial marriage.

Hélie reprimands the three avenging knights as they seem about to attack the unarmed Guinglain. She concludes her speech with a climactical proverbial statement referring to a universally implied knightly duty to show mercy to the disadvantaged:

> et la u on puet sormonter,
> doit on bien sormonter,
> doit on bien merchi esgarder (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1029-31) [72]

Couched in general terms, the base and disgraceful behaviour of these knights is contrasted to Guinglain's conduct in battle, and the mercy he offers to almost all those he defeats.

Schulze-Busacker lists verse 1076, *La force paist le pré adiés*, [73] as a direct quote of the proverb which both she and Morawski number as 1003: *la force pest le pré*. Renaut uses this proverb in his lament that times have changed and codes of conduct are no longer followed. Placed as it is in a digression which has suspended the beginning of the combat, this proverb underlines Hélie's anxiety as regards Guinglain, and is designed to create tension in the audience or reader as they wonder whether might will really win out or whether Hélie's words will take effect.

The sequence of two proverbs spoken by li bons chevaliers de Saies refers both to the situation at hand, that is the combat between Guinglain and the three avenging knights, as well as suggesting the way in which events may be determined by a force outside the individual. The knight has recourse to proverbial phrases to refer to the task he and the other two knights had to avenge Bliobïeris' suffering at Guinglain's hands, saying:

> Tels cuide sa honte vengier
> ki porcace son enconbrier.
> Qui plus monte que il ne doit
> ains trebuce qu'il ne vaudroit. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1221-24) [74]

Schulze-Busacker includes these proverbial phrases in her collection and cites their respective sources: *Teus cuide venchier sa honte qui la croist* (no. 2351) and *Qui plus haut monte qu'il ne doit, De plus haut chiet qu'il ne voldroit* (no. 2091). These sentiments seem almost too elegant to be referring solely to defeat in combat, but echo the theme of the majority of the proverbs, that all is not what it seems. The link between Cil de Saies' words and Renaut's *antancïon* is by no means a tenuous one. The expected outcome of a situation may not always be realized. This idea may also be allied to the ending of the romance. Renaut deliberately leaves it unresolved; that is he has an open-ended conclusion wherein the final outcome is suspended pending a word from the elusive lady to whom the romance is addressed. Events in the narrative are determined by the author's *antancïon*. Renaut's manipulations and constant undermining of reader expectation is an attack on complacency. The reader who has already predicted the ending according to convention and romance tradition sets himself up for a fall, much in the same way as the person referred to in the above proverbs. Familiarity not only breeds contempt, but also fosters oversight. The craftsmanship of the poet will pass unnoticed in the reader's haste to reach the expected conclusion. In a sense, Renaut lays traps for the

unsuspecting reader, demanding wariness as much as an appreciation of his literary crafting.

That appearances may be deceiving and that natural order can be manipulated is once again reinforced in the proverbial phrases Renaut uses to describe Rose Espanie and the effect she has on her lover. This maiden is, by all accounts, ugly. The one whom Giflés, li fius Do, maintains to be the most beautiful of women is 'laide et frencie' (v. 1727). His apparent ignorance of this fact is explained by referring to the theme of the world upside-down described by Curtius as a *topos*:[36]

> Mais nus home ne se puet garder
> k'amors ne.l face bestorner
> la laide fait biele sanbler,
> tant set de guille et d'encanter (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1732-35) [75]

These two statements, which run on one from the other, are not listed amongst Schulze-Busacker's collection and yet they refer to an outside authority, or at least a commonplace idea. The motif of the world upside-down has its origins in the 'stringing together of impossibilities' which first appeared in Archilocus around 648 B.C., inspired by the eclipse of the sun which Archilocus took to mean that anything was possible.[37] The reversal of the order of Nature is also seen in Virgil's writing and is used to denounce the times and lament the passing of better days,[38] a theme also adopted by Renaut as he comments on the decline of chivalric standards.

The implication that there is an outside force controlling events and playing with expectations is carried over into the scene where Guinglain defeats Malgiers li Gris, the last of the Pucele as Blance Mains' suitors. The proverbs which Renaut employs to refer to Malgiers li Gris and his fate have a more far-reaching impact than simply to foreshadow the fate that will befall the faithless scoundrel full of evil intent; 'il estoit fel, cuvers et mals' (v. 2035). Renaut uses a proverb to explain why the people who attend the combat between Guinglain and Malgier li Gris would be happy to see the latter lose:

> Amors de force petit vaut.
> Saciés que au besoing tost faut. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2169-70) [76]

This comes from the original proverb, *Meauz vaut sens que force*, which Schulze-Busacker numbers as 1287. Malgiers is disliked by everyone and has won their love or their feudal service through force. Although Malgiers li Gris is obviously a fine and competent knight, 'd'armes estoit preus et vaillans' (v. 2064), this is not enough in the courtly society and Renaut explains using a variation of another proverb: *Fortune torne en petit d'eure* (Schulze-Busacker, no. 764) to note, 'que tost puet la roe torner' (v. 2172). Fortune's wheel will turn and one will reap what is sown. The imagery of the wheel turning represents instability and change.

Fortune's wheel is a common motif in medieval literature.[39] It reached prominence in Roman art where the goddess Fortuna was depicted standing on a sphere. This image suggests that Fortune is on a moving foundation without the goddess herself having any control over its rotations. By the Middle Ages, the sphere had become a wheel and the idea of Fortune turning the wheel, and consequently controlling man's affairs, had become a familiar one. There were two aspects to the turn of the wheel and the effect this brought about. In some cases, the wheel was portrayed as having objects such as wealth, good health or happiness, attached to it, so that as the wheel turned man's fortune changed.[40] In other cases, men were shown to be attached to the wheel and as it revolved, their situation would change, so that over the course of their lives there may be several high and low points.[41] The wheel turned by Fortune means, Patch concludes, 'relative exaltation or humiliation in worldly dignity' and 'man is often actually attached to the rim, where he suffers the consequent changes of position'.[42] Patch also suggests that 'it is your own fault if you suffer, because you have a certain control over the question whether you will get on the wheel at all'.[43] Matthew of Vendôme cites Ovid's 'Pontine Letters' as an example of how a proverb may be employed at the beginning of a text to suggest the subject to be treated in the body of the work:

> [...] praetermittendum est generale proverbium, id est communis sententia, cui consuetudo fidem attribuit, opinio communis assensum accommodat, incorruptae veritatis integritas adquiescit. (Ars versificatoria, I.16) [77]

He writes that should the author want to discuss the uncertainty of Fortune, he might include a proverb such as Ovid's:

> Nutat ad occasum Fortunae gratia fallax,
> Sors stabilem nescit perpetuare fidem.
> Est rota Fortunae fallax, est mobilis; immo
> Est in sorte fides non habuisse fidem.
> Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo
> Et subito casu quae valuere ruunt. (Ovid, *Pontine Letters*, IV, 3, 35] [78]

It is made very clear in this instance that the fate of Malgiers li Gris was largely due to his own base behaviour, and yet Renaut's suggestion in this proverbial phrase of an unseen, manipulating hand underlines the poetic crafting which he himself is undertaking in writing the romance. Malgiers must lose because he is not the hero and for the story to continue, the hero must win. Malgiers does not lose so much because of a turn of Fortune's wheel but because his defeat will fulfil Renaut's *antancïon*.

Although Schulze-Busacker does not include a proverb like the one Guinglain uses to encourage himself at the Gaste Cité, it is a phrase which seems to bear the stamp of authority. It is almost as though Guinglain has heard it said elsewhere and uses it here to convince himself of his obligations:

> cil qui a amor
> ne doit avoir nule paor (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3114-15) [79]

Guinglain then speaks of casting his thoughts on the one whom he loves so much. He uses *devroie* (v. 3117) to express his feeling that that is what he *should* be doing. It is as though he has to work himself up to it, or remind himself of the duty of a *lai* lover.

Guinglain's squire, Robers, uses four proverbial expressions in a row in what Schulze-Busacker cites as 'proverbes ou expressions proverbiales en série dans le discours direct'.[44] This proverbial series appears in a passage where Robers advises Guinglain to approach the Pucele and profess his sorrow and suffering at having left her:

> Qui ne porcace sa besoigne
> tost li puet torner a vergoigne.
> Cil qui de mal sent le martire
> le doit molt bien mostrer au mire.
> Sans nul respit dist li vilains
> querre doit pain cil cui tient fains
> [...] Aprés plor ai oï canter. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3813-3818, 3824) [80]

These are variations of the proverbs Schulze-Busacker records as *Qui ne fait quant il puet ne fait quant il veult* (no. 2026); *Qui veult la guarison du mire, Y lui convient son meshain dire* (no. 2192) and *Le pain est bon pour la faim* (no. 1101).

The choice of words, *besoigne, martire* and *fains* convey the carnal nature of Guinglain's love for the Pucele. Guinglain has worked himself into a frenzy of self-pity and thwarted desire, and Robers' choice of advice adds fuel to the fire. Robers has recourse to cliché to make Guinglain feel better, telling him what he wants to hear. The proverbs are not direct quotes, but adaptations of the original. This adds to the image of Robers as a character lacking originality and individuality. The quotes he chooses are a superficial response to the problem and suggest a simple and self-centred outlook on life. This response does not take into account the Pucele's feelings, but seeks a swift way to alleviate suffering and find mercy, saying that 'bien tost porrés merchi trover' (v. 3823) [81]. Coming at the end of this series of proverbs, Robers' final piece of advice (v. 3824) appears almost flippant. Robers' version is based on Morawski's no. 111, *Aprés grant joie grant corrous*. Rober's variation has the opposite meaning and is perhaps meant to refer to *chanter,* referring as in troubadour poetry to composing poetry, and not to the literal translation, 'sing'. As the suffering undergone by the troubadour was supposed to ennoble him and help him to produce fine poetry, we are perhaps to take Robers' words as an encouragement to Guinglain that he would be strengthened through his tormenting experience of love for the Pucele. This also reflects the function of the narrative as an elaborate appeal to the narrator's beloved to grant him her love. That is, that her presumed coldness towards him and reticence in bestowing her favour on him are the driving force behind the creation of the story. If she had willingly accepted the poet's advances, there would have been no need for a story.

In response to the tricks and illusions wrought on him when he attempts to join the Pucele in her chamber, Guinglain uses a proverb:

> 'Tels cuide bien faire qui faut' (v. 4677) [82]

He refers to his good intentions and his confusion as to the appropriate manner in which he should respond to the Pucele's promiscuous advances. The phrase, similar to that recorded in Schulze-Busacker: *Qui cuide bien faire ne doit pas estre blasmé* (no. 1879), could also refer to the author's supposed aim, that through writing the romance, he will win his lady. Guinglain's attempt to enter the Pucele's bedroom, to which she leaves the door invitingly open, meets with failure and makes him out to be a fool. The Pucele has sent him mixed messages and nothing is clear. He is deceived through her tricks, which she sees as a means of testing him. Likewise, the narrator does not appear to have been rewarded for his efforts to impress his lady through verse.

The last two proverbs set forth the idea of choice and outcome, which have been a feature amongst the proverbial phrases as a whole. When Guinglain decides to leave the Pucele against her wishes and attend the tournament, he falls alseep in bed and wakes up in the forest, so that Renaut notes:

> Qui le bien voit et le mal prent
> saciés que aprés s'en repent (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5395-96) [83]

Renaut seems to be saying that Guinglain's choice to leave the Pucele in favour of knightly activity is the wrong choice. He expresses this in words which are very close to the original proverb: *Qui bien voit et mal prant a boen droit se repant* (Schulze-Busacker, no. 1853). In a similar vein, a few lines down, Renaut adapts the proverb, *De tel fait tel retrait* (no. 562), and judges that:

> De tel penser, tel gueredon. (*Descouneüs*, v. 5408) [84]

The themes of superficial appearances and the working out of consequences continually appear in the proverbs Renaut uses. This is highly significant in terms of his poetic craft. Renaut does not conform to the outcomes which may be anticipated in a romance. He appears to be following expected norms and then diverges, tantalizingly demanding that the reader or audience recognize his craft. Renaut has ultimate control and his closing lines present the penultimate reworking of an expected outcome. If Renaut is granted what he asks, the romance will continue and be resolved, if not, it is destined to remain unfinished.

Proverbs have a power in the medieval text which cannot be ignored. They carry the authority of an outside source, while at the same time and as a result of that, act as a device of amplification within the narrative. What could be more natural for a medieval writer, trained in the art of adaptation and borrowing from authoritative sources, than to include proverbial statements in his work? Proverbs add a certain amount of grace to a text, but at the same time fulfil a function which is more than purely ornamental. In this case, they are a feature of both narratorial discourse and direct speech and both add weight to the subject at hand as well as reinforce the main themes.

Robert and Renaut take advantage of a self-conscious style of narration to further their personal *antancions*. This is especially so in *Li Biaus Descouneüs*, in which Renaut continually flaunts the discrepancies between the work's fictionality and the reality it seems to represent. In the *Joseph*, Robert's narrator reveals his own fallibility as author in referring to a *grant livre* as his source by surrendering his authority to other characters who recount events and give information. In so doing, he withdraws to the position of commentator, reporting dialogues and events, seemingly without giving his own point of view.

While it is true that the author's shaping influence is an obvious feature of any literary work, these two texts provide interesting examples of the way in which the author's presence is used as a rhetorical device. Both Robert and Renaut exploit their omniscience while at the same time indicating their fallibility. At times the poets appear coy, stepping back from the authorial role of initiating and explaining events to the position of a bystander, commenting on the scene as though they were there and deferring authority to an antecedent source. In other passages, the direct approach is taken as the narrator makes an explicit statement about his opinion or his poetic craft.

The preceding discussion credits the author with a considerable amount of power as far as creative choice and manipulation of text are concerned. Can we detect the restraints, if any, imposed on Robert and Renaut? Is there an identifiable framework within which they wrote?

---

1   Tony Hunt, 'The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 6 (1970), 1-23.
2   Hunt, p. 2.
3   Robert uses three variants of the title, Rich Fisher, when referring to Bron. In vv. 3345, 3387, 3416, 3440, he is the *Riche Pescheeur*, in vv. 3431 and 3477, the *Riches Peschierres* and in v. 3456 he is called *Boens Pescherres*.
4   Ricarda Bauschke, p. 51.
5   Faral, p. 72.
6   Glyn S. Burgess, '*Savoir* and *faire* in the Anglo-Norman *Voyage of St. Brendan*', *French Studies*, 49 (1995), pp. 257-74 (p. 272).
7   Roberta L. Krueger, 'The Author's Voice: Narrators, Audiences and the Problem of Interpretation', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, I, p. 115.
8   Gunnar Biller, *Etude sur le style des premiers romans français en vers (1150-1175)* (Göteborg, 1916; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1974).
9   From Bernart de Ventadorn's 'Non es meravelha s'eu chan,' translated by Frederick Goldin, *The Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères: An Anthology and a History* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1973), p. 129.
10  Penny Simons, 'The '*Bel Sanblant*': Reading *Le Bel Inconnu*,' *French Studies*, 50 (1996), 257-74 (p. 273).
11  Margaret Burrell, 'The Use of the Term *semblant* in *La Chastelaine de Vergi*', *New Zealand Journal of French Studies*, 13 (1992), 5-14.
12  Burrell, p. 8.
13  Burrell, p. 9.
14  Richard O'Gorman, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, p. 341.
15  A.J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship* (London: Scolar, 1988), p. 10.
16  Peter Haidu, p. 51.
17  Michèle Perret, 'Atemporalité et effet de fiction dans le *Bel Inconnu*', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renaut*, ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996) pp.

145-158 (p. 144); Peter Haidu, 'Realism, Convention, Fictionality and the Theory of Genres in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 12 (1972), 37-60; Laurence de Looze, 'Generic Clash, Reader Response, and the Poetics of the Non-Ending in *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context; Selected Papers from the 5th Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 August, 1986.* ed. by Keith Busby and Erik Kooper, Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, 25 (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990), pp. 113-33 (p. 113); Alice Colby-Hall, 'Frustration and Fulfilment; the Double Ending of the *Bel Inconnu*', *Yale French Studies* 67 (1984), 120-34 (p. 123); Claude Roussel, 'Point final et points de suspension; la fin incertaine du *Bel Inconnu*', in *Le Point final; actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand* (Clermont-Ferrand: Association des Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Clermont-Ferrand, 1984), pp. 19-34 (p. 25).

18  Guthrie, p. 148.
19  Guthrie, p. 154.
20  Guthrie, p. 148.
21  Roussel, p. 25.
22  De Looze, p. 117.
23  Payen, p. 25.
24  Henri Meschonnic, 'Les proverbes, actes de discours', *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 163 (1976) 419-30 (p. 427).
25  Meschonnic, p. 421.
26  Perret, 'Atemporalités et effet de fiction dans le *Bel Inconnu*.' in in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renau,* ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996), pp. 145-158 (p. 149).
27  Perret, 'Atemporalités ...', p. 233.
28  Paul Zumthor, 'L'épiphonème proverbial'. *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 163 (1976), 313-28 (p. 316).
29  Perret, 'Atemporalités ...' p. 151.
30  Elisabeth Schulze-Busacke, *Proverbes et expressions proverbiales dans la littérature narrative du Moyen Age français* (Geneva: Editions Slatkine, 1985).
31  Joseph Morawski, *Proverbes français antérieurs au XVe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1925).
32  Schulze-Busacke, p. 17.
33  Perret, p. 150, n. 27.
34  Perret, p. 150.
35  Perret, p. 150.
36  Curtius, p. 95.
37  Curtius, p. 95.
38  Curtius, p. 96.
39  Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna and Medieval Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), p. 154.
40  Patch, p. 155.
41  Patch, p. 156.
42  Patch, p. 159.
43  Patch, p. 159.
44  Schulze-Busacker, p. 174.

# Four
# The Consequences of Genre

Authorial *antancïon*, according to the previous chapters, has wielded influence and creative power to affect the poetic crafting and shaping of a literary work. Now it must be ascertained how much choice the poets have over style of writing and content. Is there a recognizeable framework within which they are constrained? If so, when has it been previously established? This chapter will answer these questions.

It is with regard to their 'relationship' with other medieval romances and especially those of Chrétien de Troyes that both the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* have most often been discussed. This has resulted in their works being situated within the generic boundaries of romance.

A discussion of convention, technique and typical generic features poses difficulties in terms of appropriate terminology. As Curtius has been credited with having much authority in investigations of poetic tradition and literary convention,[1] it is perhaps fitting to start with his definition of the commonplace features used in narrative construction.

According to Curtius, 'in the antique system of rhetoric, topics is the stockroom'.[2] General ideas could be taken from the available pool and used in every kind of oratory and writing, with the aim of putting the reader in a favourable frame of mind. Curtius suggests that the poet is duty-bound to make plausible some proposition or idea in his oration. In order to help him in this endeavour, there was a collection of intellectual themes which could be developed and modifed as the orator saw fit. The Greek word for this concept, Curtius gives as *topos* and employs this word when he intends to mean a commonplace. Cicero, in his work *Topica*, defines a topic or a commonplace; *locus*, in his terminology, 'the region of the argument' or the area in which arguments are found:

> Itaque licet definire locum esse argumenti sedem, argumentum autem rationem quae ei dubiae faciat fidem. (II.8)[3] [1]

This firm establishment of a matter to which Cicero refers functions as a device of amplification. Just as the orator depended on certain lines of argument to assure audience comprehension and approval of his central point of interest in his speech, so too did the medieval poet rely on particular generic features to indicate and enhance his *antancïon*.

Peter Dronke uses Curtius's work on *Toposforschung*[4] as a springboard for his discussion on poetic individuality. He is hesitant in fully accepting an explanation for *topoi* in terms of being able to establish a sound method of analysis which can be applied

in every case.[5] According to Dronke, the analysis of *topoi* as a method, such as that put forward by Curtius, 'is as precise or imprecise as the literary sensibility of the person using it'.[6] While Dronke concedes that skilled and flexible analysis of the topos can afford insight into a work, he remains dubious as to the possibility of classifying certain motifs as *topoi* and thereby making them conform to a certain tradition, be that a literary or an oral tradition. Dronke prefers to discuss a literary work in terms of the author 'using *topoi* to a greater or lesser extent' rather than as 'standing within the tradition of a *topos*'.[7] This being the case, poets and their works may be appreciated for their individuality in manipulating typical features of a given genre, rather than simply being indiscriminately placed alongside a collection of works which exhibit similar features. Familiar features, if used intuitively, can indicate the personal *antancïon* of the author rather than the collective *antancïon* of a genre.

In order to avoid the ambiguities which seem to accompany discussion on *topoi*, it seems more pertinent to refer to the generic implications which arise from the poet's decision to write within a certain literary tradition. That is, the medieval poet had cause to use certain conventions which had become features of a specific genre, be that Arthurian romance, the lay or lyric verse. In so doing, the poet relies on the resonances these conventions evoke and the associations with other texts or themes which he could expect the audience to recognize. The poet can achieve a certain profundity of meaning in his own text and can draw on this to enhance his own *antancïon*.

But what do we mean by genre? As modern critics, we tend to adopt either a descriptive or a prescriptive approach to classifying literature. The tendency is to propose a certain theory to which every other work must conform. However, we cannot be too categorical in our approach to genre. In his book, *Medieval French Romance*, Douglas Kelly explains the irony of the modern approach in a section specifically titled 'Genre':

> The Middle Ages had no theory of genre in any modern sense and does not seem to have reflected theoretically or even practically on genre distinctions. To speak of romance is thus anachronistic. [...] Today we commonly adopt medieval language when discussing romance, using designations such as romance (*roman*), narrative lay (*lai*), *chanson de geste*, chronicle, saint's life (*vie*), fabliau, and *dit* — designations that identify a corpus of works with identifiable common features. But usage of these terms in the Middle Ages was not consistent. These words were more like convenient tags rather than designations of perceived genres.[8]

Philippe Walter also notes the difficulty of defining romance in his discussion of Chrétien's inheritance as a writer of romance.

> Ce que nous appelons aujourd'hui «roman» n'était pas d'une évidence absolue au XIIe siècle. À cette époque, le terme désignait en effet, n'importe quelle œuvre écrite en langue roman et ne renvoyait pas à des modèles établis. [...] L'emergence lente du concept de roman, l'affirmation tout aussi lente de la notion d'auteur, la mise en place de techniques narratives et descriptives nouvelles reposent sur une improvisation parfois difficile. Aucune théorie ne vient au préalable fonder et justifier ces pratiques d'écriture.[9]

Yet we know there were distinctions in form, structure and content which distinguished certain texts from others. Objective analysis of certain texts reveals common features which appear in texts contemporary with one another. Frye explains the advent of these common features in the following terms:

> '[...] it must happen very rarely that a writer sits down to write without any notion of what he proposes to produce. In the poet's mind, then, some kind of controlling and coordinating power, what Coleridge called the "initiative," establishes itself very early, gradually assimilates everything to itself, and finally reveals itself to be the containing form of the work. This initiative is clearly not a unit but a complex of factors. The theme is one such factor; the sense of the unity and mood which makes certain images appropriate and others not is another. If what is produced is to be a poem in a regular metre, the metre will be a third: if not, some other integrating rhythm will be present. [...] the poet's intention to produce a poem normally includes the genre, the intention of producing a specific kind of verbal structure. The poet thus is incessantly deciding that certain things, whether they can be critically accounted for by himself or not, belong in his structure, and that what he cuts out in revising does not, though it may be good enough in itself to belong somewhere else. But as the structure is complex, so these decisions relate to a variety of poetic elements, or a group of initiatives. Of these, [...] genre and the integrating rhythm concern us here.'[10]

Frye indicates the relationship between *antancïon*, here referred to as "initiative", and genre. Far from considering genre an imposition on *antancïon*, he sees it as being an intrinsic part of the process of composition. By choosing a certain form, structure and content, the author writes himself into a particular genre.

How do the themes and motifs referred to above as generic implications arise? Exterior conditions such as the current social, religious and intellectual climate undoubtedly have some effect on the way an author writes. As a matter of course, there will be events and ideologies which find their way into literature and which reflect certain currents of thought. In Penny Simons' words, the text is a 'product of the milieu for, and in which, it is composed'.[11] The writer must be able to assume a certain amount of comprehension and identification on the part of the audience for his work to be appreciated by them. The act of writing will either assimilate the form and content of what is already available, or will react against it. In either case, later authors will 'gloser la letre', manipulating the material they inherit to reveal their own *antancïon*.

In an article which focuses in particular on Chrétien de Troyes and the techniques he uses to involve the audience, Mariantonia Liborio considers rhetorical *topoi* as 'clues for decoding the text'.[12] Liborio professes to be adopting the stance of seeing the role of the reader as that of co-participant in the text, as directed and required by the author. The author can use certain generic elements to bring him into contact with the reader by using familiar language and themes and creating a 'universe of discourse common to both author and reader'.[13] The use of conventions relies on a collective literary memory as far as generic ingredients are concerned. For the audience to appreciate the implications and references used by the author, there is the tacit assumption that they will be familiar with the material.

There are critics who treat Renaut's text in terms of the author's manipulation of other romances. Sara Sturm refers to Renaut in terms of his 'thorough knowledge and frequent imitation of the works of Chrétien',[14] and Karen Fresco notes that the 'references to Chrétien are so numerous, one might say insistent, that it is clear they are a deliberate attempt to situate the text with respect to this literary forbear'.[15]

The recurrence of certain literary features within the corpus of Chrétien's tales creates a pattern for which the modern critic can suggest a classification or model for romance. Chrétien de Troyes is often used as a point of reference in defining the features of romance. Michel Zink refers to the 'profound influence Chrétien's romances exercised on subsequent medieval French literature'.[16] Chrétien's influence is obvious in several ways. According to Zink:

> His romances were imitated. They supplied the subject of the first prose romances. They produced an immediate reaction among the rivals of the master from Champagne, who took great pains to affirm their own originality but were constrained to define themselves in relation to him.[17]

For Eugène Vance, 'to judge by the uses that later medieval writers made of Chrétien's art, Chrétien was by far the most resourceful vernacular model-maker of his age'.[18]

Having previously discounted the possibility of a theoretical conception of genre, Kelly concedes that, 'after Chrétien de Troyes, [...] there was awareness of romance (*roman*) as a class of writing distinct from history, hagiography and Fabliau'.[19]

Yet, despite Chrétien's far-reaching influence, we must not exaggerate his contribution by assuming that he invented the stories he wrote. Chrétien is not the starting point for romance, but more the promulgator or refiner of it.

Where did the romance originate and what are the elements said to make it a romance? The romance form does not exist in isolation, but came about as a natural result of literary progression, developing from the poetry of the troubadours and the *trouvères*. The blossoming of the romance as a genre is a consequence of the ideas and reactions explored in the lyric poems of Provence. This poetry fostered ideas of the necessity of introspection and careful analysis of emotion. These poems exhibit various rhetorical devices and conventions including hyperbole, apostrophe and repetition to heighten the tension and engender an emotional climax. Linda Paterson in her book, *Troubadours and Eloquence*, describes Provençal poetry as 'emotional fiction'. According to Paterson, 'the audience's attention would thus be concentrated not on the theme, which would be a mere pretext for the existence of the poem, but on the subtle interplay of stylistic figures, clichés, rhythm, and music'.[20]

Ker explains the influence of the troubadours on the romance poets in terms of imitation:

> The French romantic authors were scholars in the poetry of the Provençal School, but they also knew a great deal independently of their Provençal masters. [...] They read the ancient

authors for themselves, and drew their own conclusions from them. They were influenced by the special Provençal rendering of the common ideas of chivalry and courtesy; they were also affected immediately by the authors who influenced the Provençal School.[21]

Lynette Muir considers the romance authors' inheritance in a discussion of the concept of *fin'amor* and its transmission. She explains that 'the *fin'amor* of the Provençal poets was reflected in Northern France not in lyric poems but in romances, where the love between the hero and the heroine provided the motive for the action'.[22]

Frappier also maintains that it is 'à la littérature d'öil qu'est due la création du roman, devenu presque dès sa naissance le roman courtois. La conception courtoise de l'amour, plus dégagée que dans le Midi de ses rigueurs et de ses subtilités, favorisait la délicatesse des sentiments'.[23]

Naturally, these techniques cross over into romance, so that romance writers were not confronting their audiences with a radically new method of composition, but adopting themes and conventions already set in place. The shift in perspective the romances offer is, if anything, enhanced through the use of these familiar devices, which in turn become expectable ingredients in the narrative. Where did these familiar devices come from?

The poetry of the troubadours and trouvères gleaned much of its inspiration from classical authors such as Ovid and Virgil and this was passed on to the romance writers. Muir discusses this in a section of her book entitled 'The language of love':

> The stress on emotional analysis of the self and the beloved in the romances meant that the poets had to extend their vocabulary of feeling and reaction to cope with this new emphasis. As with all aspects of medieval culture, the sources available to them were basically Classical Antiquity and the Bible: more specifically, for terms and images suitable for the expression of love, whether Christian, courtly or merely comradely, they turned to Ovid (especially the *Art of Love* and the *Remedy for Love*) and to the *Song of Songs*. All these works were well-known to twelfth-century writers and audiences, the Ovid in Latin [...] and the *Song of Songs* in either Latin or French.'[24]

The term 'romance' at its emergence referred to writing in the French vernacular language, as opposed to the Latin used by the clerics. The *roman* makes its debut in the literary world as a translation of a Latin work, as Zink describes it, 'a *mise en roman*, which is to say, a translation from Latin into the romance language'.[25] Stevens notes that 'the history of romance in the European vernaculars begins with a group of anonymous "classical" romances of the mid-twelfth century, le *Roman de Thèbes*, le *Roman d'Énéas*, le *Roman de Troie*. The first major development after this is in the work of Chrétien de Troyes whose five romances [...] are traditionally dated between 1165 and 1181'.[26] At the outset, the *roman* was not so much a genre as a literary exercise in reproducing a translation as close as possible in meaning and attitude to the original work, with the Latin model being considered the historical truth. The romance form, then, was not so much the aim as the consequence.

Robert and Renaut have been said to use narrative motifs found in Chrétien's works and are therefore placed within the romance genre. How do they use these features in their own works, and is their application successful in accomplishing their individual *antancïon*?

Critics such as Françoise Boiron and Jean-Charles Payen consider the movement between genres in the *Descouneüs* as an 'échec', judging that 'le conte de fée est peu compatible avec le roman d'amour'.[27] More recent criticism has tended to applaud Renaut for his inventiveness and sharp literary insight, and on his craft as a writer in manipulating text and audience comprehension through subverting and undermining generic expectations. In her recently published articles, Penny Simons shows a concern with Renaut's 'deconstruction of generic codes'[28] and has Renaut 'introducing elements that are clearly copied from the romances of Chrétien'.[29] Her interest in Renaut's borrowings is based on her hypothesis that Renaut was making a blatant choice in using and manipulating the romance storylines made famous by Chrétien and that he did so to encourage active participation on the part of the reader. In her discussion, Simons indicates how Renaut thwarts audience and reader preconceptions of genre in order to elicit a more pro-active approach to his work. Simons urges audience or reader awareness of what Renaut is doing as a writer. The manipulations of language and storyline which Renaut applies are not haphazard and failed attempts at romance, but are used to calculated effect.

Discussion on Renaut is fuelled by his very name. In the latest edition of *Li Biaus Decouneüs*, Karen Fresco provides biographical details of the author based on Guerreau's work:[30]

> The forms Biauju and Baujieu have led scholars to assume that Renaut must have belonged to the house of Beaujeu, a powerful clan in the Mâcon region. However, the name Renaut does not appear in its genealogical records and the blazon [*Li Biaus Descouneüs* contains two references to the heraldic device on Guinglain's shield, an ermine lion on an azure field, 73-4 and 5921-2] does not belong to the Beaujeu family but to the rival house of Bâgé. Guerreau shows that in the Franco-Provençal linguistic region encompassing Bresse, where the Bâgé family held most of its lands, the Latin etymon of Bâgé, Balgiacum, must have developed into Baugiu by the early thirteenth century.[31]

The surname of Beaujeu has inspired much scholarly writing on the subject of the eloquent and manipulative literary game Renaut conducts in the *Descouneüs*.[32] Francis Dubost finds it highly significant that an author whose surname was probably de Bâgé chose to sign his name as de Beaujeu. Beaujeu with its suggestion of 'l'élégance, le badinage, la distance [...] avec la soupçon de mystification [...] présente l'avantage de brouiller les pistes et d'exprimer l'essence de l'art littéraire'.[33] Dubost's study is concerned with what exactly this game consists of, and answers that essentially it is 'un jeu avec les conventions littéraires'.[34]

Sara Sturm describes Renaut's two narrative threads and their representation in the hero's dual love-interest as 'the mark of his originality' and the means by which he defines his

place 'in the developing tradition of the *roman*'.[35] The two conflicting claims for the hero's attention allow the poet to explore the generic expectations which accompany the passage of the protagonist. In another article, Sturm adds to her explanation by exploring the two types of magic presented in this story. She concludes that 'it seems probable that Renaut was exploring the possibilities inherent in the contrasting types of *merveilleux* deriving from the *conte de fée* and the *roman d'amour*', and moreover that this 'elaboration provides further evidence of the poet's deliberate utilization of traditional material to serve his own intent'.[36] The literary exploration which Sturm has Renaut embarking on sees Renaut setting up the hero as a case in point. Guinglain becomes the subject of a literary experiment and the *Descouneüs* appears to have been written in response to the question, 'what happens if...?' Renaut's text reveals a recognition of what was considered normal and abnormal as far as romance as a genre was concerned, and plays on the effect which may be achieved by straying from the norm.

A similar analysis of the doubling of both the love-interest and the narrative strand leads Michelle Freeman to put forward the hypothesis that 'Renaut de Beaujeu's answer to the crisis which had started to affect romance narrative in verse during the closing decades of the twelfth century was to experiment, essentially, with generic transformation, or perhaps with introducing the coexistence of a variety of genres'.[37]

This theory of a coexistence of genres within the *Descouneüs* is succinctly expressed by Jeri Guthrie, who writes, 'the generic complexity of the text emerges in a triple focus of desire: Blances Mains of the Ile d'Or as the reward of the lay, Blonde Esmeree as the royal (economic) reward in the romance and the Dame as the centre and the limit of the *grand chant courtois*'.[38]

Peter Haidu had made a similar suggestion in an earlier article devoted to a discussion of the theory of genres in the *Descouneüs*. Haidu describes the reversals of the expected conventions of the tradition of courtly love as 'a tease of the reader's expectations'.[39] Renaut appears to be adopting the conventions which had come to be expected in a romance, but changes the outcome, so that the reader is constantly alert to question the validity of his judgement and acceptance of the norm. Examples of this type of generic manipulation occur throughout the text and reach a climax at the point where the narrative stops.

Laurence de Looze refers to the conclusion of the *Descouneüs* as a 'non-ending', in an article based on a paper given at the 1986 Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society. De Looze compares the unresolved ending of the *Descouneüs* to lyric poetry where the final outcome rests on a decision from the lady to whom the poem is dedicated. In this respect, 'the Narrator's love-longing becomes [...] a generically lyric, unclosed narrative frame of which the Implied Author invites his lady in turn to become the author by requiting his love and thereby transforming lyrical openendness into narrative closure.

Should she do so, he will switch lovers/genres in the story he has told'.[40]  De Looze explains this by stating that 'Renaut makes a provisional choice in the form of an ending that is unsatisfying to the poet, to the protagonist, and to the reader, then offers to change it.  By linking the ending of the story to the outcome of the narrator's own suit as a lover, Beaujeu specifically links love to poetic craft'.[41]

We cannot prove that Renaut was playing with the audience.  Nor can we say for sure that he was undermining and subverting expectation.  It is tempting to assume this, and this line of enquiry has certainly fuelled many scholarly articles on the subject.  One can say with authority that Renaut's work is about extending the limits and experimenting with the ingredients and tools at the poet's disposal.  His very Prologue gives an indication of his intention:

> Cele qui m'a en sa baillie,
> cui ja d'amors sans trecerie
> m'a doné sens de cançon faire —
> por li veul un roumant estraire
> d'un molt biel conte d'aventure.
> Por celi c'aim outre mesure
> vos vel l'istoire comencier.
> En poi d'eure puet Dius aidier;
> por cho n'en prenc trop grant esmai,
> mais mostrer vel que faire sai. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1-10) [2]

But he has also signalled that he intends to present a mélange of what we in the twentieth century consider to be genre.  His lady has given him the *sens de cançon faire,* that is, to compose or create, and like Chrétien before him, he intends to 'estraire', extend, a *conte d'aventure* into a *roman*.  But, as this chapter will show, he does more than that: he intermingles material from romance, *lai* and courtly song.  He is not confined to a code he must follow, but uses what is appropriate to his *antancïon*.

What does the *Joseph* reveal about Robert's understanding of genre?  Critics such as Rupert Pickens claim that 'Robert de Boron connaissait le *Perceval* de Chrétien de Troyes et s'en servait'.[42]  Pickens is not alone in asserting that Robert's project was the 'ré-écriture du texte de Chrétien de Troyes'.[43]  Jean-Charles Huchet likewise insists that 'Robert de Boron ne continue pas Chrétien, il le réécrit dans un texte qui fournit la plus fine lecture du *Perceval* dont on puisse rêver'.[44]  William Burgwinkle writes that 'l'intertextualité de l'*estoire* révèle une dette énorme à l'auteur champenois'[45] and describes Robert's project using Bernard Cerquiglini's phrase, *écriture totalisante*.[46]  He claims that Robert's aim is to 'écrire une "demonstrance" et "senefiance" du *Roman du Perceval* qui révélera un dessein didactique justifiant certains courants de pensée de son époque'.[47]  The currents of thought which Burgwinkle is referring to rest on 'la puissance créatrice de la religion de son époque et d'une quête à la fois idéologique, théologique, et peut-être même personnelle'.[48]  They therefore encompass ecclesiastical debate on doctrine, biblical and apocryphal literature and other literary texts.

Robert, himself, refers to his work as an *estoire* three times:

> L'apelon dou Graal l'estoire
> Dou Graal la plus grant estoire (*Joseph*, v. 2684) [3]
>
> Sanz doute ki est toute voire  (*Joseph*, vv. 3487-88) [4]
>
> La grant estoire dou graal (*Joseph*, v. 3493)

William Nitze gave Robert's poem the title, *Le roman de l'estoire dou graal,* and based his choice on the scribal incipit noted by O'Gorman in his *Critical Edition*: 'ci comme[n]ce li r[o]manz de lesto[i]re dou graal'.[49]  Robert does not mention the word *roman* at all in his text, and yet his work is most often referred to in terms of it being a romance.  How is the reader to understand the term *estoire* and how does this fit in a discussion of the generic implications of romance?

Payen writes, 'pour Robert de Boron, *estoire* signifie haut livre, consignant des événements réels [...] Mais *estoire* implique une autre dimension: celle d'un texte vénérable parce qu'il relate des chose saintes [...] L'*estoire*, en quelque sorte, est en train de se confondre avec l'Histoire Sainte, et tout un imaginaire est envoie de sacralisation'.[50]  For Kelly, '*estoire* was a word commonly used to designate romance, even after *roman* acquired its generic sense. [...] Like the art of romance invention, medieval historiography construed history or *estoire*, as an amalgam of sources and topical amplifications'.[51]  In an elaboration of Cerquiglini's aforementioned phrase, *écriture totalizante*, Burgwinkle notes that 'Robert tend a un mélange du merveille folklorique (suivant les traditions celtiques et hagiographiques) de la piété chrétienne'.[52]  The *Joseph* exhibits the fusion of Biblical history with Arthurian romance and features of these two genres manifest themselves within the text.

The closeness of hagiography to romance is a common theme among scholars.  In a prelude to a study on Pan-Brittonic hagiography,[53] Valérie Lagorio notes 'the affinity between the historical romance, imaginatively incorporating legends regarding an historical person or era, such as the Arthurian romances, and hagiographic or ecclesiastical romances, written to extol the virtues of a saint'.[54]  Hippolyte Delahaye discusses the ambiguous task of assigning a genre to imaginative texts which claim to be narrating the life of a saint:

> If the writer's aim is to depict the life and spirit of a saint honoured by the church by means of a series of happenings that are partly real and partly imaginary, then the work may be called a hagiographical romance, though that expression has not passed into common use. [...] When one wishes to judge an author's work, the first matter to be decided is what sort of thing, *genre littéraire*, he was setting out to write; for it would be unjust to condemn an author in the name of history if he only intended to write imaginative fiction.  Some hagiographical documents are clearly of this kind; they are parables or stories designed to bring out some religious truth or moral principle.  The author tells a story in order to drive home a lesson more effectively, and he does not pretend to be relating actual facts. [...] And even when it was not a question of teaching some truth, when the writer simply wanted to gratify the reader with an appealing tale, something about a saint provided a topic of interest that was not to be despised at a time when lives of the saints were the Christian's favourite

reading. It was not infrequent for a serious lesson to be conveyed to the faithful in the form of a tale about a saint.[55]

Paul Maurice Clogan also recognizes the common features of romance and hagiography and the difficulty of separating the two genres:

> The rich collections of early Christian saints' legends contain a variety of styles of presentation. and many of these narratives follow the conventional pattern of romance. Both kinds of writing employ narrative normally with a single protagonist as hero, and both celebrate an ideal and liberated experience, disengaged and disencumbered from the demands of reality. [...] Modern scholars have been aware of the problems of distinguishing the essential characteristics of romance and legend as types of narrative, so that today one studies not the definition, but the genre of hagiography and romance. Yet the relationship of these two narrative forms has been somewhat complicated by the influence and imitation of the style and mode of one on the other.[56]

What are the common ingredients of hagiography? Elissa Henken provides a list of the stages through which the saint progresses to show how closely paralleled the lives of saint and hero are:[57]

1. Conception and birth
2. Childhood (education)
3. Performing a miracle which indicates spiritual maturity
4. Going out into the world – founding churches, making pilgrimages, retiring to the wilderness, journeying as a missionary
5. Conflict with secular powers (kings or beasts)
6. Ruling a territory
7. Death

While the *Joseph* does not conform to all of these stages, it certainly includes various elements which could be described as hagiographical. Some aspects of Henken's list are discernible in Robert's text.

The protagonist, although not called a saint in the text, is presented as an exemplary model of Christian conduct. Robert does not give any details of his birth and childhood, but his education occurs when he is in prison and Christ appears before him. This episode corresponds with Henken's number two. Christ explains to him about His death and the salvation which this brought for the world and ends his instruction with the words:

> En ten pouoir l'enseigne aras
> De ma mort, et la garderas;
> Et cil l'averunt a garder
> A cui tu la voudras donner. (*Joseph*, vv. 847-50) [5]

Christ then symbolically places the Grail into Joseph's keeping, placing him at the head of a line of guardians. This conforms to Henken's number three, as it would seem to indicate Joseph's spiritual maturity in that he has been chosen by God:

> Joseph, bien ce saras garder,
> Que tu ne le doiz commander
> Qu'a trois persones qui l'arunt (*Joseph*, vv. 871-73) [6]

Joseph's conflict with secular powers, fifth on the list, occurs earlier in his story, when he is put into prison for the part he is said to have taken in Christ's disappearance from the tomb:

> En la meison Joseph s'en vunt
> Mout tristoié, mout irascu
> De ce qu'il l'ont ainsi perdu.
> [...] Chiés un rich homme l'ont mené,
> Forment l'unt batu et frapé. (*Joseph*, vv. 672-74, 95-96) [7]

Joseph establishes a community of believers whom he leads into exile. This is a combination of Henken's numbers four and six. Joseph is the head of the community and leads them out to distant lands to follow God's will:

> 'Se vous me voulez
> Croire, pas ci ne demourrez,
> Ainçois leirez vos heritages,
> Vos terres et vos hesbergages,
> Et en eissil nous en iruns;
> Tout pour amour Dieu feruns.' (*Joseph*, vv. 2345-50) [8]

As is discussed below, Joseph fulfils a pre-destined role. He has been chosen by God. Through the character of Joseph and the elucidation of the properties of the Grail, Robert is able to explore various theological concerns of his time, such as transubstantiation, the mystery of the Trinity and penance.

The *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* are always referred to as romance and yet, as we have seen, they exhibit features from other genres. Why? What exactly constitutes romance and is this too restrictive a label to apply to the two texts under consideration? To a certain extent, medieval romance can be defined through analyzing form, structure and content.

## 1. Form

At their most basic level, the first French romances may be distinguished from their forerunners, the *chansons de geste* and the lyric poetry of the *troubadours* and *trouvères*, by their form. The *chansons de geste* were sung narrative poems composed in a decasyllabic metre. They contain stanzas of irregular length referred to as homophonic, assonant *laisses* and much of their effect is derived through the use of repetition.[58] The *troubadour* poem consisted of approximately 40 to 60 lines divided into stanzas of four to six lines. The metric pattern and rhyme scheme employed were often complex and, like the *chansons de geste*, they were sung.

Zink heralds romance as 'the first medieval literary genre intended to be read',[59] noting that this more often than not meant read aloud. The romance is written in octosyllabic rhyming couplets and offers narrative continuity rather than the repetitive effects of refrains and parallel *laisses*.[60]

## 2. Structure

In addition to form, the texts retrospectively classified as romances shared a common structure.

Northrop Frye likens the romance to the wish-fulfilment dream in its expression of the ideals of the ruling social or intellectual class. Romance heroes and villains represent the aspirations and the fears which beset them. Frye says of romance:

> 'the essential element of plot in romance is adventure, which means that romance is naturally a sequential and processional form [...] At its most naïve it is an endless form in which a central character who never develops or ages goes through one adventure after another until the author himself finally collapses [...] However [...] as soon as romance achieves a literary form, it tends to limit itself to a sequence of minor adventures leading up to a major or climacteric adventure, usually announced from the beginning, the completion of which rounds off the story. We may call this major adventure, the element that gives literary form to the romance, the quest. The complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages: the stage of the perilous 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.'[61]

Meanwhile, Frappier, a contemporary of Frye, also notes a three-part structure in romance:

> '[...] des parallélismes indiquent une préférence réfléchie pour un certain type de structure. Ce schéma, que Chrétien a mis au point dès son premier roman arthurien, se caractérise par une composition en triptyque: une première aventure s'achève par le bonheur amoureux d'un héros et d'une héroïne; une crise, qui unit un drame psychologique à un conflit d'ordre moral et social, fait rebondir l'action; une troisième partie, la plus ample, marquée par une suite progressive d'aventures, dont une mystérieuse et magnifique entre toutes, grandit la figure du héros, aboutit à un dénouement heureux: la parfaite réconciliation des amants. Ce plan méthodique s'assouplit et souffre des variantes. Mais d'un roman à l'autre les lignes générales se reconnaissent.'[62]

Frappier's three stages of adventure focus much more on the love aspect of the romance and its hero. Both critics have a crisis as the middle stage. Frye's exaltation of the hero in the final stage is described by Frappier in terms of the lovers' reconciliation. Frye's quest structure follows the development of the hero alone, while Frappier includes as a condition of the quest, the synthesis of the two worlds of chivalry and love.

Douglas Kelly takes Frye's quest aspect of romance and emphasizes it further. He describes romance authors as relating 'adventures leading to love, renown, or social and moral excellence'. He says that, in general, romance recounts a real or implicit gradation of events leading to the achievement of, or failure to achieve, a specific goal'.[63] The 'sequential and processional form' of the quest is present in both the *Descouneüs* and the *Joseph*, but in differing ways.

It is not to be disputed that Guinglain embarks on an easily recognizable quest. The succession of adventures which the hero embarks or stumbles upon are naturally connected to the quest and the structure of the romance. Alison Adams discusses this in

terms of *entrelacement*, explaining that the use of this narrative technique in the *Descouneüs* is linked 'with the kind of dramatic irony [...] which consists of having a character face a number of parallel situations so that we can compare his or her reaction on the various occasions [...] to show how a hero or heroine progresses'.[64] Guinglain must constantly prove himself to a sceptical Hélie and this he does over a succession of combat episodes. He undergoes adventures typical of Arthurian romance and is rewarded with land, wealth, and the prospect of a wife. Yet a quest, by its very nature, implies a goal and therefore an end. There is no end to the *Descouneüs*, and therefore the goal, the presence of which may have originally been taken for granted, becomes uncertain. If the goal of Guinglain's quest is taken as the one declared by Hélie at the opening of the romance:

> Certes, molt avroit grant honnor
> Icil qui de mal l'estordoit
> Et qui le Fier baissier feroit. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 190-92) [9]

then by rescuing Blonde Esmeree and accomplishing the *Fier baiser*, Guinglain has fulfilled the quest. However, the story does not finish with this adventure, but continues, and it becomes clear that knightly accomplishment is not the driving force behind this narrative. The quest is a literary one.

It would appear from the previously cited Prologue that Renaut holds three things uppermost in his mind as he writes his tale. He simply wishes to write of love, adventure and the act of writing itself. From this Prologue, with the mention of three types of literature, the audience is alerted to the fact that there is no guarantee that the poet will keep to only one genre. Renaut says that he has written a *cançon*, and that now he wishes to write a *roumant* from a *molt biel conte d'aventure*. It is almost as though he feels claustrophobic within the confines of one genre. He is unable to express exactly what he needs to within the boundaries of the lyric or the romance or the lay, and so moves from one to the other.

How is a *lai* distinguishable from romance? Glyn Burgess provides a definition of the origin of the *lai* genre:

> It can safely be said that the *lai* as a genre is Celtic in origin, perhaps more specifically Breton. 'Le mot *lai* lui-même', Léon Fleuriot has written recently, 'est la transcription d'un vieux-breton ancien, apparenté à l'ancien irlandais *laid*, *laed* "poème chanté", et probablement à l'allemand *Lied*'.[65]

For Alexandre Micha, editor of the *Lais Féeriques des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, 'le lai est à l'origine une composition musicale, un son, disait-on en ancien français, exécutée sur la harpe ou la rote, qui relate une aventure, c'est-à-dire un événement plus ou moins merveilleux. De cette partition musicale s'est détaché le texte pour donner un genre narratif'.[66] A similar definition is provided by Prudence Mary O'Hara Tobin in her 1973 doctoral thesis on *Les lais anonymes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*.[67]

122

> Dans la littérature du moyen âge il existait beaucoup de petits contes en vers que l'on appelait des lais bretons. L'action se déroulait tantôt à la cour du roi Arthur, tantôt dans un décor inconnu, mais presque toujours dans le cadre breton, dans l'atmosphère de la société courtoise. Depuis plus d'un siècle le terme lai est l'objet de controverses assez vives, et nous ne voulons pas rouvrir le débat. Aujourd'hui il est généralement accepté que les lais étaient d'abord des compositions musicales répandues par des chanteurs bretons itinérants qui s'accompagnaient de la harpe ou de la rote. Ces compositions commémoraient un événement, une légende, une aventure dont elles s'inspiraient, et que les chanteurs commentaient peut-être, avant de les chanter'.[68]

Kelly expands on these definitions and describes the *lai* as a 'short narrative work', usually employing Celtic material as story matter and exhibiting the common basic structure of the romance. Kelly describes how in the *lai*, 'a marvelous adventure draws a hero or heroine to an encounter', with love playing a central role in the encounter. According to Kelly, 'most narrative lays recount the love of a male mortal for a beautiful woman, occasionally identified as a fay, encountered in the woods, beyond a river, or in some analogous otherworld setting away from court'.[69]

Renaut's text is, in effect, an elaborate appeal to his lady that she grant him her favour. The romance and lay elements are therefore presented within a lyric frame, which emerges in the Prologue, Epilogue and the authorial interventions which occur over the course of the narrative.

As noted above, scholars view the quest as being of central importance to the structure and motivation of the romance. The quest is not only a recurring motif in the romance, it is also the framework upon which the romance hangs. The movement towards a set goal which the quest implies provides the structure of the narrative. Fourrier equates the quest with adventure, referring to adventure as the 'fil conducteur' of the romance, 'la recherche, la queste de l'inconnu'.[70] It is this fundamental movement towards a goal which is not only a feature of the *Descouneüs*, but also of the *Joseph*.

In the later Grail romances, Arthurian knights would set out in search of the Holy Grail; in Robert's *Joseph*, the Grail is aready present. Yet there is a progression from beginning to end. It is as though the literary quest in the *Joseph* has as its aim the elucidation of the Grail and all that it symbolizes. It symbolizes at once God's Grace, seen in the Service of the Grail; God's wisdom, as the voice from the Grail instructs Joseph; and the personal relationship that is possible with Christ, as seen in Joseph's communication with Christ by means of the vessel. The quest in the *Joseph* has as its goal participation in the mysteries of the Christian Faith.

## 3. Content

The descriptive analysis of the romance and its content has been attempted by many. The following discussion will limit itself to six representative theories.

For William Ker, the twelfth-century narratives known as romances display an 'interest of the love story and all its science' as well as 'the interest of adventure, of strange things'.[71] He goes on to say that 'courteous sentiment, running through a succession of wonderful adventures, is generally enough to make a romance' and lists 'variety of incident, remoteness of scene, and all the incredible things in the world' as the ingredients the medieval authors inherited from classical literature and incorporated into the art of romance.[72] Much of the courtly sentiment present in the romance form comes from the poetry of the troubadours. These courtly motives, William Jackson posits in the ideal, if unhistorical, Arthurian court. According to Jackson, the court depicted by Chrétien de Troyes in his romances is 'an unreal court with unreal traditions and values' wherein two situations predominate: 'love service and adventure'.[73] The Arthurian world which provided the framework for romance exploits this element of unreality in furnishing the writer with the opportunity to explore, in a confined setting, how human relationships may be depicted. Moreover, Jackson sees unreality as 'the first principle of the romance genre' and as such credits it with endowing the romance with 'that independence and flexibility of morality and imagery which are its greatest glory'.[74] The romance as a genre is answerable to its own fictional sets of morals, which, while perhaps reflecting the ideals of the society in which it was produced, in no way represent an objective account of it.

Donald Maddox provides a survey of the narrative organization of Chrétien's Arthurian fictions and suggests that :

> '[...] each work in its own unique way tends to develop what might appropriately be identified as a *textuality of crisis*, according to which each poem relates two fictive phases through a median crisis. While it may vary in length, this critical transition is always located temporally between two complementary series of episodes, the former developing toward some problem that provokes the crisis, the latter discovering the means of its resolution in a sequence. The crisis is invariably a major turning point for the protagonist [...]'.[75]

Both Abrams and Vinaver compare romance to epic. Abrams explains that the romance represents, 'not a heroic age of tribal wars, but a courtly and chivalric age; often one of highly developed manners and civility'.[76] In an outline of the standard plot of a chivalric romance, he describes how a single knight undertakes a quest in order to gain a lady's favour. The central interest is usually courtly love, combined with a healthy love of tournaments and combats. Throughout the romance, emphasis is placed on the chivalric ideals of 'courage, honour and mercifulness to an opponent, and exquisite and elaborate manners', as well as revealing an avid interest in wonders and marvels.[77]

From these summaries, it may be concluded that there are certain generic elements which are frequently present and are associated with romance. In order to extract those elements which will be of most interest in this discussion, a distilling of the above scholarly definitions of the content of the romance suggest three main areas:

(i) Adventure and the *merveilleux*;

(ii) The expression of courtly sentiment and its manifestation in references to chivalric or feudal society;

(iii) Love-interest; not only its presence, but the way in which this is explored in differing ways in each work.

<center>(i) Adventure and the *merveilleux*</center>

Adventure and the *merveilleux* are inevitably combined in romance, hence the *aventure merveilleuse*.[78] According to Kelly, 'romance relates the achievement of marvelous adventures' and these adventures 'constitute the plot of the romance'.[79] He continues, 'marvels are extraordinary and unique, at the very limits of the world, the mind, or the human. By achieving them, the knight acquires the extraordinary qualities of the marvel, imbuing his own character with the marvelous that unique achievement of an adventure bestows on the achiever'.[80]

Claude Lecouteux, in his study on medieval beliefs, explains that 'le merveilleux signifie dans les langues romanes et germaniques étonnement et admiration, puis désigne, par extension de son champ sémantique, tout ce qui provoque ces réactions, c'est-à-dire l'émerveillement résultant de la perception de l'étrange et de l'irrationnel'.[81]

It is important to note, as does Kelly, that 'the marvelous in Old French is not merely the supernatural or fantastic'.[82] A *merveille* encompasses any extraordinary occurrence. In this respect the adventure, every adventure, is marvelous as it is an out-of-the-ordinary event which allows the knight to display his knightly qualities. The hero is only the hero because he takes part in events which make him heroic. He inspires Lecouteux's 'étonnement et admiration'.

The worth of the hero is most often proved not on the basis of standards which are considered acceptable in the real world, but on a fictional set of values. His worth is only enhanced through contact with fantastic elements or the way in which he reacts when faced with out-of-the-ordinary events. As Leyerle notes in one of the rules he lists in the literary paradigm he establishes for the game and play of hero, '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 [...] In early Germanic poetry it is the *beot* 'boast', often rash. [...] The feat frequently involves a quest, or hunt'.[83] Loomis also describes the rash boon, using Keu's demand in *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* as an example. Loomis links the rash boon to the Celtic abduction stories, explaining that 'the motif of the rash boon [...] was also derived from Celtic tradition. It occurs several times in Irish, Welsh, and Arthurian story, and is regularly linked to the abduction of a queen from her consort and her subsequent recovery'.[84] This is clearly not the case in the *Biaus Descouneüs*. Frappier speaks more specifically about the rash boon within Renaut's text. He begins his analysis of the appearance of this motif by citing the

*Descouneüs* and then continues to discuss how the motif appears in Chrétien's romances. From a survey of Chrétien's romances, Frappier concludes that 'la coutume en question l'amuse et le gêne un peu aussi, me semble-t-il. Il s'attache à familiariser son public avec elle, en donne d'utiles et discrètes définitions, cherche peut-être à la fixer dans la tradition littéraire'.[85] This being the case, there is even more cause to see Renaut as having recourse to, and even flaunting, techniques established, or at least fixed in tradition by Chrétien.

In the *Descouneüs*, Guinglain demands a 'rash boon' of King Arthur as soon as he rides into court, making a formal commitment to accomplish a feat and asserting his role as hero:

> 'Hartu, venus sui a ta cort
> car n'i faura, coment qu'il tort,
> del premier don que je querrai.
> Avrai le je u je i faurai?
> Donne le moi et n'i penser:
> tant es preudon, ne.l dois veer!'
> 'Je le vos doins,' ce dist li rois. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 83-89) [10]

The opportunity soon presents itself for Guinglain to claim his boon. When Hélie requests a knight, Guinglain rises to the challenge and speaks to King Arthur:

> 'Sire,' fait il, 'mon don vos quier:
> je vel aler ma dame aidier.
> Mon don vel ore demander [...]
> Par le covent que tu m'en as,
> te quier le don que m'as proumis.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 209-11, 218-19) [11]

Guinglain's role as hero is established as he will take on the quest.

Despite the fact that the *Joseph* is not played out in the Arthurian court, there is a similar instance of the protagonist asking for his due. Joseph demands Christ's body for burial and in so doing, sets in motion a chain of events which form the storyline.

> Servi t'ei longuement
> Et je et mi cinc chevalier,
> N'en ei eü point delouier,
> Ne ja n'en aei guerredon
> Fors tant que me donras un don
> De ce que touz jours prommis m'as.
> Donne le moi, pouoir en has.' (*Joseph*, vv. 442-48) [12]

Pilate is asked to grant Joseph's request without knowing what he will ask. Pilate is then committed to his promise in the same way as King Arthur must grant Guinglain's demand.

It is hardly surprising that episodes destined to enhance the heroic nature of the protagonist should include as much as possible the fantastic element, borne out in Ker's 'variety of incident, remoteness of scene, and all the incredible things in the world'.[86]

These elements appear in recurring motifs such as those listed by Norris Lacy in his essay on the typology of medieval romance. By typology Lacy understands the 'motifs, themes, characters, and structures [...] that give [romance] its identity and that may be taken (as the term implies) to be "typical"',[87] that is, the roles played by giants and dwarves; perilous crossings; stakes bearing the heads of knights; the besieged woman; bridewinning and enchanted castles.[88] All of these appear in some form in the *Descouneüs*.

In Francis Dubost's opinion, 'les géants, le nain et le braque appartiennent aux zones périphériques du merveilleux'.[89] Penny Simons uses the dwarf in the *Descouneüs* to support her theory of Renaut's subversion of romance convention. Simons claims that Renaut's dwarf does not conform to the model established in other romances. However, while there are many more instances of ugly dwarves than noble ones, there is certainly a tradition of the two types throughout Arthurian romance. Renaut's dwarf, Tidogolans, then, is not the contradiction of the norm Simons would have him be. Simons cites two examples of the churlish and ugly dwarf, in *Tristan* and in *Erec*, and takes these as evidence of a 'norm'. While there is a dwarf in the *Erec* who is described as 'molt fu fel et de pute ere' (v. 17) or 'fu fel tant connus plus' (v. 218), there is also another dwarf, Guivret who is noble and courtly, 'il estoit molt de cors petiz, mes de grant cuer estoit hardiz' (vv. 3665-66). Unfortunately for Simons, Vernon Harward has conducted extensive research into the appearance of dwarves in romance literature and cites many more examples than two. Harward cites Celtic tradition as the source for the dwarves which appear in Arthurian romance. He notes three noble dwarves who play roles of considerable importance: Guivret in the *Erec*; the Chevalier Petit in the second continuation of the *Conte del Graal;* and Auberon in *Huon de Bordeaux*. Harward claims that 'all three are drawn from the romance tradition of a high-minded and powerful dwarf king who owes his essential characteristics to Celtic, more specifically Welsh, tradition'.[90] Renaut's dwarf is of this type. He accompanies the hero on his adventures and assists Robert in serving Guinglain and the ladies after the combat with the giants. Renaut says that 'li nains molt biel [Robers] aidoit, molt les savoient biel servir' (vv. 944-45). Harward recalls the similarities of role in the other three dwarves.

> Guivret similarly supplies and cares for Erec and Enide on their way to Penevric, [...] one of Auberon's first hospitable acts is to produce food and drink for Huon in the midst of the forest, and [...] the Chevalier Petit provides a bower and splendid viands for Gawain during their journey to the tournament.[91]

Harward lists the attributes which the Arthurian dwarves owe their Celtic forbears:

> [...] their beauty or hideousness; their extraordinary mounts; their royal or noble station and the concomitant realm and castle; the characteristic roles of gracious host, combative opponent, truculent servant, supernatural helper, abductor, seer and betraying spy; their association with magic vessels like the Grail and with testing talismans.[92]

Francis Dubost, like Simons, considers Tidogolain to be 'à peu près unique en son genre'.[93] Dubost argues that the examples of hideous dwarves are many, but that those of attractive dwarves are negligible. However, they do occur, as Harward has shown.

What is to be concluded from the inclusion of a courtly dwarf in Renaut's romance? Firstly, the appearance of a dwarf introduces a slightly supernatural element. Dwarfism is an abnormality of nature. That Tidogolains is perfect in every way except that he is small promotes a slightly unreal atmosphere. Secondly, the dwarf speaks with the voice of reason when he advises Hélie to allow Guinglain to prove himself:

> On ne doit ome blamer mie
> dusc'on sace sa coardie.
> Tel tient on vil que c'est folor,
> que Dius donne puis grant honnor.
> En cestui a biel chevalier. (*Descouneüs*, 309-13) [13]

The pre-destined nature of the hero's role is reinforced by a character whose origins are supernatural.

Another instance where Renaut uses a feature present in other romances, but alters the way it is presented, occurs in the episode featuring the white hunting dog (vv. 1276-1492). Penny Simons' description of this adventure as a 'travesty'[94] is extreme. The reasons for the duel are certainly nonsensical. Guinglain is forced to defend Hélie's actions, despite the fact that they are wrong. Hélie has simply decided to take the dog and stubbornly refuses to return it. Guinglain is more or less propelled into combat by dint of his role of hero, and as part of the sequence of 'proving' episodes he undergoes to obtain Hélie's acceptance of him.

In this scene, Renaut uses the name of a character from Chretien's *Conte du Graal*, *Orguillous de la Lande*. In Chrétien's work, this character is arrogant and fully deserving of the name given him. He reacts to Perceval's advance on his *amie* with rage and takes it as a personal affront. Treating his *amie* as though she were a possession, he shows her contempt and mistrust. Renaut's Orguillous behaves in a perfectly natural way for someone whose dog has been taken. He is unjustly dishonoured and has the greater claim to right.

For Dubost, the brachet is yet another example of the supernatural, or at least *féerique*, intruding in the narrative.[95] The proof of this, he says is in the brachet's description: 'Plus estoit blans que nule nois' (v. 1287). Philippe Walter also refers to the brachet as a 'fée-chien'[96] and includes it as one element in *un ensemble d'indices* which point to Guinglain's appropriateness as the knight who will free the enchanted Queen.

One of the most blatant occurrences of a theme taken from elsewhere is the Sparrowhawk contest. This motif appears in both Chrétien de Troyes and Andreas Capellanus. Capellanus was writing at the same time as Chrétien and it is not clear which author

influenced the other. Andreas refers to the sparrowhawk contest in the *De Amore* in a section entitled *De regulis amoris*. He situates his rules within a tale about a British knight who is journeying through the forest hoping to see King Arthur. He comes across a beautiful young girl who explains to him his reason for coming:

> 'Cuiusdam Britanniae dominae dum postulares amorem, ipsa dixit tibi quod eus nunquam posses amorem lucrari, nisi ei primitus victorosum reportares accipitrem, qui in Arturicuria super aurea dicitur pertica residere.' [...] 'Accipitrem quem quaeris habere non posses, nisi primitus in Arturi palatio proeliando convincas quod dominae gaudes pulchrioris amore quam eorum aliquis qui in curia demorantur Arturi; palatium vero intrare non posses, nisi primo custodibus chirothecam demonstrares accipitris. Sed chirothecam non est habere possibile, nisi contra duos milites pugnando fortissimos in duplicis pugnae agone obtineas.'[97] [14]

Peter Haidu maintains that the sparrowhawk episode is 'perhaps the most obvious example of a borrowing from the genre's paradigm'.[98] A similar scene appears in Chrétien's *Erec* and, as in the *Descouneüs,* the two participants are contesting the beauty of their respective ladies. Renaut has recourse to conventional elements to describe the scene of the combat. The setting, as well as the antagonist, is in line with traditional treatment, yet the physical appearance of the beloved reveals a marked straying from what might be expected. The violence associated with the sparrow-hawk contest usually comes about as a result of two fiercely proud knights, each desiring to defend the honour of their beloved. If, as in the case of Rose Espanie, the beloved is wrinkled and ugly, the combat does not make sense. However, the denial of traditional beauty is explained by another convention which has love as a power able to alter the lover's judgement and reason. It is almost as though reality momentarily impinges on fiction in the person of Rose Espanie, as she is the complete reversal of stereotypical fictional beauty. Fictional normality resumes and the flaw in the fictional fabric is explained in the convention which casts Love in the personified role of tyrant and manipulator. In moving so abruptly and unexpectedly between fiction and reality, it is as though Renaut demands the reader's awareness of his omniscient control as author and the power he has to manipulate the way they read the text.

While François Dubost relegates the giants, the dwarf and the white dog to the outer edges of the supernatural, for him the episode of the *Fier baiser,* 'représente au contraire le coeur de la manifestation surnaturelle, la levée du sortilège'.[99] Dubost's essay turns on the point that Renaut's text is a 'mise en oeuvre originale' and that he has not simply borrowed gratuitously from other literary sources, but uses motifs, particularly marvelous ones, in order to contradict tradition.[100] With this in mind, it becomes apparent why he views the *Fier baiser* as crucial to Renaut's *antancïon*. The *Fier baiser* represents the principal test, the success of which results in the rescuing of Blonde Esmeree and the invitation to Guinglain to marry her. As previously noted, Frye describes romance as limiting itself to 'a sequence of minor adventures leading up to a major or climacteric adventure, usually announced from the beginning, the completion of which rounds off the

story'.[101] The call to rescue Blonde Esmerée from enchantment is made at the beginning of the romance. In terms of the structure posited by Frye, the audience might expect resolution when this is achieved. By delaying this end and having the hero embark on other adventures, it quickly becomes obvious that winning Blonde Esmeree is not the point of the story.

It seems almost paradoxical to find the truth of the narrative consistently being upheld, while at the same time, presented alongside it are out-of-the-ordinary incidents which can only be described as marvelous. Marvels function in a highly significant way as far as authorial *antancïon* is concerned. This is particularly so in a work such as the *Joseph* where the poet has a didactic purpose and where his work is intended to elucidate spiritual truths. It may seem strange to the modern reader that at the same time as the poet provides extraordinary descriptions of certain events, and in a sense invites the reader to suspend disbelief for a time, he intervenes with reminders of the truth of the narrative and its antecedent sources.

It cannot be disputed that marvels tend to be impressive and memorable. A concept is more effective if it is described using unusual imagery and out-of-the-ordinary situations. In terms of characters, their various qualities might be magnified and enhanced so as there may be no question as to their status as models of conduct, even if their standards appear impossible to attain.

What exactly constitutes a marvel in the *Joseph*? There are three categories of the *merveilleux* in the *Joseph*:

(a) Biblical and apocryphal;

(b) The predestined role assigned to Joseph;

(c) The Grail itself.

(a) *Biblical and Apocryphal references*

Robert's story has many echoes of the Bible and the apocrypha. It depicts wondrous occurrences, miracles and revelations which are recorded in the books of the New Testament. Accounts of both the Immaculate Conception and Christ's Resurrection are related in the Scriptures.

The gospel of Luke relates that an angel appears to Mary and tells her of the child she will bear:

> The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)

Robert refers to Christ's incarnation in the Virgin's womb on several occasions during the Prologue. In the following passage, Robert uses the preterite of the verb, *s'aümbrer*,

which the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* defines as *sich verbergen* (conceal oneself) (I. 411-12).

> Lors si plut a nostre Seigneur
> Qu'il nous feïst trestouz honneur
> Et qu'il nous feïst trestouz honneur
> Et qu'il en terre descendist
> Et nostre humeinne char preïst.
> Dedenz la Virge s'aümbra. (*Joseph*, vv. 27-31) [15]

The closeness of Robert's passage to the biblical text is more easily noticed by referring to the Vulgate version of Luke 1.35, with Robert's choice of *s'aümbrer* deriving from the Latin *obruere*:

> Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te et virtus altissimi obumbrabit tibi ideoque et quod nascetur sanctum vocabitur Filius Dei.

In the *Joseph*, Christ's descent into hell, and subsequent Resurrection and appearance before witnesses occurs immediately after the burial scene:

> Li vrai Diex, en ces entrefeites,
> Comme Sires, comme prophetes,
> En enfer est errant alez,
> Ses amis enha hors gitez,
> Eve et Adam, leur progenie
> Qu'Ennemis eut en sa baillie,
> Seinz, saintes, toute boenne gent,
> Car des boens n'i leissa neent,
> Touz ceus qu'il avoit rachetez,
> Pour qui il fu a mort livrez.
> Quant nostres Sires ce feit eut,
> Quanqu'il li sist et il li pleut,
> Resuscita, c'onques nou seurent
> Li Juïf ne vooir nou peurent;
> A Marie la Madaleinne
> S'apparust, c'est chose certainne,
> A ses apostres, a sa gent
> Qui le virent apertement.
> Quant eut ce feir, la renummee
> Ala par toute la contree:
> Relevez est de mort a vie
> Jhesus li fiuz sainte Marie.
> Si deciple l'unt tout veü
> Et l'unt tres bien reconneü;
> Et ont veü de leur amis
> Qui furent trespassé jadis,
> Qui o Jhesus resusciterent
> Et en la gloire Dieu alerent. (*Joseph*, vv. 593-620) [16]

It is the news of Christ's Resurrection and the appearance of people who had been dead which precipitates the Jews' anger and Joseph's eventual imprisonment.

Robert's version of Christ's descent into Hell is construed from New Testament descriptions of this miracle:

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:40

[...] he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses. Acts 2:31-32.

Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.' (In saying, 'He ascended,' what does it mean but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) Ephesians 4: 8-10

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey. I Peter 3:18-20

Christ's image on Verrine's cloth (1483ff.) provides a marvellous episode with an apocryphal influence. As previously discussed, Verrine's story is based on an amalgamation of the *Cura sanitatis Tiberii* and *Vindicta salvatoris*. Robert clearly explains the marvelous nature of Verrine's cloth.

Un sydoine feit feire avoie
Et entre mes braz le portoie,
Et je le prophete encontrei
Enma voie par ou ralei;
Les meins avoit derrier lïees,
A une couroie atachiees.
Pour le grant Dieu moutme prïerent
Li Juïf, quant il m'encontrerent,
Que men sydoine leur prestasse,
Au prophete son vis torchasse.
Erramment le sydoine pris
Et li torchei mout bien sen vis,
[...] Et quant enma meison entrei
Et men sydoine regardei,
Ceste semblance y hei trouvee
Tout ainsi comme ele est formee. (*Joseph,* vv. 1593-1614 [17]

Because of Verrine's cloth Vespasian is miraculously cured of leprosy. Robert relates this in an aside to the audience:

Et sachiez, quant il l'eut veüe,
N'avoit unques la char eüe
Si sainne cum adonques l'eut,
Car nostre Seigneur ainsi pleut. (*Joseph*, vv. 1681-84) [18]

(b) *The pre-destined role assigned to Joseph.*

One of the most important *merveilles* of the text is the predestined nature of the role Joseph performs. There are a number of references to God's love for Joseph and the fact that he has been chosen to play a part in God's plan of salvation:

Ainsi doutoit ses ennemis,
Ja soit ce qu'a Dieu fust amis (*Joseph*, vv. 207-08) [19]

'Tu estoies mes boens amis,
pou ce estoies o le Juïs;

Et bien seu quemestier m'aroies
Et au besoing que m'eideroies,
car Diex mes Peres t'eut donné
Le pouoir et la volenté
Que peüs Pilate servir
Que sile [te] voust remerir:
De ten service te paia
En ce que men cors te donna.' (*Joseph*, vv. 816-24) [20]

In terms of its function as a *merveille*, the episode which describes Joseph's predestined role proves his status as a literary hero. Joseph is established as a model of Christian conduct. Later, he is able to talk to the vessel and carry out God's instructions within the community. This does not appear untoward, as he has been chosen by God and has been seen to behave in a manner fitting his role.

Nul de mes deciples o moi
N'ei amené; sez tu pour quoi?
Car nus ne set la grant amour
Que j'ai a toi [...]
Tu m'as amé celeement
Et je toi tout certainnement. (*Joseph*, vv. 833-36, 41-42) [21]

Joseph's use of Vespasian's name upon first seeing him in the prison cell is attributed to God, with Joseph explaining his knowledge of the stranger's name as being supplied by 'Cil qui ha apris tout le munt' (v. 2058), thus emphasizing Joseph's close relationship with God, which becomes more important as the story progresses.

(c) *The Grail*

The scene which has Joseph removing Christ from the Cross and collecting the blood which falls from His wounds as he washes Him is highly significant within the explanation of how the Grail becomes the Saint Graal. Joseph is said to remember the stone which broke when blood from Christ's side fell on it and so hastily takes the Grail given him by Pilate and collects the flowing blood in it:

Adonc est il errant couruz
A son veissel et si l'a mis,
Qu'avis li fu que mieuz seroient
Le goutes ki dedenz cherroient (*Joseph*, vv. 562-64) [23]

Richard O'Gorman notes Robert's reference in this scene to a medieval tradition which told the story of the splitting of a stone from the blood which fell from the wound in Jesus' side.[102] This would explain Robert's concern with having Joseph catch the blood in the vessel rather than letting it fall to the ground. The marvelous aspect of this scene calls attention to it and becomes important for the explanation of the sanctified nature of the Grail. Not only has the legitimacy of Joseph's role been affirmed, but the holiness of the Grail is established beyond doubt, allowing for subsequent descriptions of its far-reaching power and authority.

Joseph's humble discourse with the voice that issues from the Grail provides a model for a Christian relationship with God. The *merveille* of the audible voice of the Holy Spirit is in sharp contrast with the marvelous aspect to Moys' disappearance, 'Moÿsés qui est perduz' (v. 2797). Moys is swallowed up as a result of his audacity in presuming he could sit with God's chosen people when he, in fact, rejected belief in God as Lord.

At the same time as Robert depicts marvelous features in his work, he also constantly stresses the veracity of his sources. In order to emphasize the truthful nature of the work, it was not unusual, and in fact was probably expected, for the poet to claim one or more sources for his work and to deny any personal invention of the facts. In the *Joseph*, there is continual reference to the truth which is observable on two levels. Firstly, there is confirmation of the legitimacy of his story as an explanation for the Grail. Robert refers to his source material, *le grant livre* (v. 932), and makes much use of biblical and apocryphal material to add weight to his work. He takes care to provide etymologies and explanations so that there is no room for doubt about what he writes. His *estoire* is to be taken as a legitimate account of Grail development. On another level, there is the establishment of the truth involved in being involved in a relationship with Christ. He achieves this both by providing models of Christian conduct, most notably in the character of Joseph, based in scripture, but amplified to illustrate his *antancïon*, and also in his presentation of various aspects of Church doctrine.

Robert summarizes the monumental nature of his text at the close of his work, writing that no man would be able to gather together the parts of the story if they had not heard recounted 'Dou Graal la plus grant Estoire,' which without doubt was 'toute voire' (v. 3488).

<div align="center">(ii) Courtly Sentiment.</div>

In the *Descouneüs*, courtly sentiment manifests itself both in the depiction of Arthur's court and in the combinations of the literary ideals of chivalry and prowess.

(a) *Arthur's Court*

Chivalric society provides the conventional backdrop to Arthurian romance. This convention is made manifest in the corpus of Chrétien tales where King Arthur is the figure in authority presiding over the courtly romance. Arthur did not always feature at great length nor did he often do anything of particular interest in the story. Yet his presence was sufficient to generate a certain atmosphere. Leyerle says of Arthur that 'his presence sets an aristocratic and martial tone to the society portrayed in the text'.[103] He is quite simply, as Jackson has said, 'a literary king'.[104] Arthur is the head of the court, such as it appears in twelfth- and thirteenth-century romances. According to Jackson, he is 'a king whose whole behavior is middle-aged and who is seen, when he is seen at all, hunting, taking the kiss after the hunting of the white stag, grieving on numerous

134

occasions for an abducted Guinevere, or just sleeping. Never do we see him carrying out any significant public action. Arthur never personally fights, but arranges opportunities for others to engage in adventure. His function is basically that of an arbitrator of individual prowess'.[105] The quest is instigated in Arthur's court, very often as a result of the rash boon discussed earlier.

The knight returns periodically to court to check in or return once his quest has been completed. Such is the experience of Guinglain. Renaut in fact plays on this convention, by having Guinglain abuse the custom of asking for Arthur's approval to marry, and using it as an alibi to have Blonde Esmeree otherwise occupied in travelling to Arthur's court so that he can return to the Pucele:

> jo ne suis pas o vos aler
> D'autre part m'en estuet aler
> u ai a faire grant besoigne.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3881-83) [23]

From the first line of his narrative, Renaut establishes an Arthurian setting. The opulent courtly milieu is evoked by Renaut in the frequent descriptions of clothing, jewels and beautiful surroundings which are included to reflect a particular character's nobility and worthiness, as well as to create an atmosphere of wealth and the aristocratic milieu. In his opening lines, Renaut introduces four elements which frequently appear in Chrétien's corpus and so may be designated typical for Arthurian romance. He mentions an Arthurian placename, here Carlion; he notes King Arthur's presence at court; the scene is set during a festive season; and there is a sizeable gathering of noble lords at court:

> A un aost fu s'asanllee
> Molt fu la cors qu'Artus tint grans
> [...] Quant venus fu tos le barnés
> qui a la cort fu asanblés,
> grans fu la cors qui fu mandee.
> Quant la cors [i] fu asanblee,
> la veïsiés grant joie faire (*Descouneüs*, vv. 14-15, 17-21) [24]

By starting in this way, Renaut adopts an Arthurian framework for his work, and thus creates certain expectations in his audience many among whom he could be fairly assured would be familiar with the subject matter made famous by Chrétien. Generic implication is perceived from the outset.

In the same way that Chrétien seems to have a preference for quantity and frequently names a series of characters to give the impression of a crowd of faithful followers, Renaut provides a list of those present at Arthur's court in what has been called by Faral a *dénombrement épique*.[106] Renaut lists some 33 knights, amongst them characters such as Gauvain and Kay who would be recognizeable for their more prominent roles elsewhere in literature. This *dénombrement épique* occurs again in the tournament scene. The 'grant chevalerie' (v. 5463) said to be attending the tournament is amplified to 120 lines and includes the names of 43 knights, ten from the earlier list: Gawain (vv. 37 and 5567),

Lancelot of the Lake (vv. 40 and 5507), Caraés (vv. 41 and 5581), Tors (vv. 42 and 5582), Mordred (vv. 45 and 5569), Segures (vv. 45 and 5570), the Knight of Baladingan (vv. 46 and 5503), King Amangon (vv. 47 and 5547) King Mark (vv. 47 and 5543), Bedevere (vv. 61 and 5575). The reappearance of these names produces a certain resonance within the text.

(b) *Chivalry and Prowess*

Another fundamental feature of courtly sentiment is the concept of chivalry. The Arthurian court is populated with knights and is the centre of knightly activity. The knight is a *chevalier* because he fights, as Marc Bloch states, '*à cheval*, on horseback, with full equipment'.[107] The literary *chevaliers* exhibit many of the features of their historical counterparts, to whom Duby gives the name *juvenis*.[108] According to Duby, 'the roving life and the refusal to "stay put" are revealed as a fundamental characteristic in all the descriptions we have of the condition of "youth". The youth is always on the point of departure or on the way to another place; he roams continually through provinces and countries; he "wanders over all the earth". For him the "good life" was "to be on the move in many lands in quest of prize and adventure", "to conquer for reward and honour". It was thus the quest for glory and "prize" which was to be achieved in war and even more often in tournaments'.[109] Duby points out that 'the presence of such a group at the very heart of aristocratic society helped to sustain certain ideas, myths and forms of collective psychology'.[110]

Bloch devotes a section of his book on feudal society to the code of chivalry.[111] He explains that the oath which the newly dubbed knight had to take defined his obligations and symbolized the knight's acceptance of knighthood. Over the course of time, certain rules developed which governed the life, both courtly and military, of the knight. These rules were encapsulated in prayers and other documents and eventually found their way into romance and dictated the way the literary knight behaved.

Bloch outlines the general precepts which a knight had to follow. His spiritual life must be active: 'he must go to mass every day or at least frequently; he must fast on Friday'; his life as a warrior defined his existence: he was to 'defend [the] Holy Church, particularly against the infidel. He will protect the widow, the orphan, the poor. He will pursue the malefactor.' He is 'not to slay a vanquished and defenceless adversary [...] not to take part in a false judgement or an act of treason'. Lastly, there were rules for everyday occurrences. The knight was 'not to give evil counsel to a lady; to give help, 'if possible', to a fellow-being in distress'.[112]

Knighthood and chivalry are most often represented in romance in scenes depicting combats and tournaments,[113] in the models of comportment established by the heroes and in the concept of *prouesse* which is a consistent feature within the romance.[114]

Chrétien provides evidence for a concept of a certain chivalric conduct in the *Conte dou Graal*. The maladroit Perceval spends some time with Gornemant of Gohort who teaches him how to carry his arms, how to fight, the importance of granting mercy to the defeated party and how to behave in society. In an action symbolic of dubbing, Gornemant takes the sword of the departing Perceval and girts it on him. He kisses him and says that he has conferred on him with the sword the highest order created and ordained by God, namely the order of chivalry, which must be free of all baseness:

> 'Biax frere, ot vos soviegne,
> Se il avient qu'il vos coviegne
> Combatre a aucun chevalier,
> Iche vos weil dire et proier:
> Sevos en venez al desus,
> Que vers vos ne se poïst plus
> Desfendre ne contretenir,
> Ainz l'estuece a merchi venir,
> Gardez que merchi en aiez
> N'encontre che ne l'ociiez.
> [...] Une autre chose vos apreng
> Que ne tenez mie a desdaig,
> Car ne fait pas a desaignier:
> Volentiers alez al mostier
> Proier celui qui tot a fait
> Que de vostre ame merchi ait
> Et en cest siecle terrïen
> Vos gart come son crestïen.' (*Le Conte du Graal*, vv. 1639-47, 1663-70) [25]

Chrétien reiterates in *Yvain* the importance of upholding certain standards in combat. In the *Pesme Avanture* scene, Guinglain defeats one of his assailants and the man surrenders saying,

> Et qui merci prie et requiert;
> n'i doit faillir cil qui la rueve,
> se home sanz pitié ne trueve. (*Yvain*, vv. 5674-76) [26]

In the *Descouneüs*, both Hélie and the narrator refer explicitly to an expected form of conduct in combat and their references are carried out in almost parallel fashion, acting both to highlight the fact of a recognized code of chivalry and to point to the narrator's influential and authoritative presence behind the characters. In the first instance, Hélie questions the three avenging knights who are about to attack the unarmed Guinglain, asking them, 'coment pensés tel vilonnie / d'asalir homme desarmé!' (vv. 1016-18) [27]. She points out the baseness of their behaviour and the disgrace which they will incur by such actions and reminds both the knights and the reader of the *merchi* concept of combat (v. 1030). The other knights agree with what Hélie says and allow Guinglain to arm himself. Hélie girds on his sword, telling him not to forget his lady as he fights, and that she will be praying that God might give him, 'force et vigor / de li secorre et de s'onor!' (vv. 1047-48) [28].

A mere 30 verses on, in much the same vein as Hélie's speech, Renaut makes an authorial intervention to comment on the decline of the *usages* (v. 1072) of chivalry. It is a nostalgic look back to a time when men acted with *fois, francisse, pitiés, proece* and *cortoisie*, and, it is implied, according to a certain code of behaviour. Now, laments Renaut, times have changed and the standards are no longer the same:

> Or fait cascuns tot son pooir;
> tot entendent au decevoir. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1081-82) [29]

Renaut has his hero take part in eight combats and one tournament. For the most part, these combat scenes serve no other purpose than to provide action and reinforce the hero's status as a valiant knight and the one chosen to achieve the quest. The quest scenes have their counterparts in other romances which are recorded by Luttrell.[115] The following references to other romances come from Luttrell's notes. The encounter at the *Gué Perilleus* is a feature of *Lybeaus Desconus*, vv. 253-444; *Carduino,* ii, 20/5-25/8; *Wigalois*, vv. 1968-2013 and *Erec et Enide*, vv. 3653-3913. The Sparrowhawk contest can be found in *Lybeaus*, vv. 706- 999; *Wigalois* 2349-3285; *Papegau*, 5/11-12/15 and *Erec*, vv. 342-1458. The combat against Malgiers the Gray has echoes in *Lybeaus*, vv. 1231-1458; *Carduino*, ii, 8/6-20/4 and *Papegau* 14/20-44/16. The equivalent to the jousting for hospitality with Lampart occurs in *Lybeaus*, vv. 1459-1737; *Wigalois*, vv. 1928-67 and *Erec*, vv. 5319-5623. The fight with the two evil knights in the *Gaste Cité* recalls the *Pesme Aventure* in *Yvain,* vv. 5512-5693. By aligning himself with other romances, Renaut promotes the extreme literary nature of his hero. Guinglain is cast in a similar role to Perceval or Yvain. To what end?

The *Descouneüs* depicts a questing knight who must prove himself. In the eyes of the twelfth-century audience, the combat was the conventional means of achieving this. In making references to other literary combats and indeed in evoking the usual courtly milieu, Renaut underlines the fictionality of this world in which combats are entered into with little or no motivation apart from dramatic action, and earn their inclusion by virtue of the dramatic tension which they establish.

Certain words are employed within the romance which reflect the chivalric nature of the society and the people who move within it. The epithet *preu* recurs so frequently, 18 times in the *Descouneüs*, that *prouesse* may be seen as a prerequisite for the chivalric hero and his entourage. Kelly defines *prouesse* as that quality which 'includes both martial prowess and the inner worth that prowess expresses'.[116] This is important for a knight such as Guinglain who must prove himself in feats of arms in order to be accepted as a worthy romance hero.

The expression of courtly sentiment which is so obvious an element in the *Descouneüs* is not a feature of the *Joseph*. Renaut depicts a society based on chivalric values. In Robert's work, feudal relationships provide a more appropriate field with which to

convey his theme of a personal relationship with Christ. This being the case, a concern with *compagnonnage* replaces that of the more chivalric notion of *prouesse* present in the *Descouneüs*.

In the *Joseph*, social sentiment manifests itself not in chivalric *prouesse* but in *compagnonnage*, highlighted especially in the frequent use of the term *ami*. There is not the same need for *prouesse* in the *Joseph* as there is in the *Descouneüs* and, apart from the account of the destruction wrought on the Jews, combat scenes do not feature. Yet, while the *Joseph* is not about chivalrous adventures, heroic deeds in battle nor brave soldiers in a society permanently geared for warfare, as in works such as the *Chanson de Roland*, it does share the latter's emphasis on the relationships binding men to their friends, companions and kin, and men to God. This relationship is perhaps best expressed in the term *ami* and in the feudal concept of *compagnonnage*. Robert's *Joseph* reveals a concern with the relationships between men and their relationship with God. In O'Gorman's words, the Grail, as vessel 'becomes the instrument of communication between God and man'.[117] These relationships are described in terms reminiscent of the feudal bond which came to exist between vassal and overlord and the kinship ties which Marc Bloch says were often expressed in the word *amis*.[118]

Bloch discusses two types of *amis* distinguishable in the culture of feudal Europe. The *amis charnels*, or kinsfolk, and the *amis* formed from the bond of vassalage. This was a relationship of mutual respect, where the vassal served his lord and in return, the lord looked out and provided for him. The best served hero was he whose warriors were all joined to him by the new feudal relationship of vassalage, or by the ancient tie of kinship; two ties which were equally binding.[119]

The word *amis* appears 16 times in the *Joseph* and *amistié*, once. Richard O'Gorman glosses *ami* as 'kinsman' and *amistié* as 'love, affection'.[120] Of these 17 references, eight of them refer to the binding relationship between men reminiscent of feudal times, and nine of them refer to the relationship between man and God.

I have not discussed all the occasions where Robert uses the term, *ami*. It is not the fact that Robert employs feudal terminology in his romance that is particularly striking, but that he uses it to illustrate his *antancïon*. Affinal ties and their corresponding obligations assist in reinforcing the idea of a personal relationship with Christ which Robert promotes.

The bond between Pilate and Joseph expressed in *ami* reflects the feudal tie between seigneur and vassal. When Pilate discovers that Joseph has been imprisoned, he becomes angry:

> Et en sen cuer mout l'en pesoit,
> Que nul si boen ami n'avoit. (*Joseph*, vv. 709-10) [30]

As Joseph has previously been cast in the role of serving Pilate: 'a lui servoit uns soudoiers' (v. 199), Pilate's regret at having lost 'si boen ami' intends to mean the loss of a worthy vassal who has served him well. Pilate had promised Joseph recompense for working under him, and although he considers Joseph's request for Christ's body an unusual one, he nevertheless grants it to him, saying that he would have been prepared to grant him much more, had he asked, except his fealty to his lord (v. 451). This provides an image of the feudal hierarchy, with Pilate being answerable to his feudal Lord; Joseph serving Pilate; and the 'cinc soudoiers' (v. 199) taking orders from Joseph.

The issue of vengeance, or the vendetta, is also tied into the feudal relationship, being as Bloch phrases it, 'the primary duty of the kinsman'.[121] The newly converted Vaspasian, as a vassal of God, does not even question his right to avenge Christ's crucifixion, but carries out a mass destruction of Jerusalem in an attempt to rectify the injustice done to the man whose image on Verrine's cloth had cured him of leprosy.

As mentioned previously, nine of the passages in the *Joseph* featuring the word *amis* refer to the relationship between God and men. The first occurrence is when Robert brings into the narrative a soldier, who is serving under Pilate, with five men beneath him. This soldier is of course Joseph, but at this stage of the narrative he is unnamed. He is described as having seen Jesus and 'en son cuer l'aama mout' (vv. 201-02). He is afraid of the Jews and despite being an *ami* of God, as discussed in the *merveille* section of this chapter, he hides his love for Christ from them:

> Ainsi doutoit ses ennemis,
> ja soit qu'a Dieu fust amis (*Joseph*, vv. 207-08) [31]

It is curious that he is spoken of in terms of being an *ami* of God at this stage, as although he has seen Christ, he has not yet had a personal encounter with God. However, when Christ speaks to Joseph in prison, it becomes clear. Christ explains to Joseph that he had been chosen to serve Him and tells him: 'pou ce estoies o le Juis' (v. 816) and He calls him His 'boens amis' (v. 815).

A certain amount of ambiguity is generated by the following verses:

> Lors dist Diex: — Avec mes amis
> Et aveques mes ennemis
> Estoie' (*Joseph*, v. 809) [32]

Slightly clearer than the verse, the prose has Christ tell Joseph that '[s]es amis est bons avec [s]es anemis' (l. 308, Tours 951), suggesting that those who were followers of God were safe even amongst their enemies, or that God was still with those who professed faith in him, even if they were keeping company with God's enemies, as in Joseph's situation. The verse implies that Christ was with His followers as much as with those who opposed Him, perhaps suggesting the equality of His ministry and the fact that He tried to reach out to those who rejected and despised Him.

Robert portrays the possibility of a relationship, even a friendship, with God through Christ. The idea is expressed that God never disappoints His friends or those who have chosen to follow Him. This is similar to the way vassal follows master and in return, expects him to fulfil his obligations.

The narrative comment about God's recognition of those who have need of Him or have in some way suffered or have been put in danger for Him evokes the reciprocity present in the relationship between lord and vassal:

> Meis Diex nou mist pas en oubli
> Cui on trueve au besoing ami
> Car ce que pour lui soufert ha (*Joseph*, vv. 713-715) [33]

Here, the relationship being referred to is that between God and man, or in particular, between God and Joseph. Joseph has suffered for God's sake in being captured, beaten and imprisoned. God does not let this pass unrewarded, but has chosen Joseph for a special role in His divine plan. When Christ comes to Joseph in prison, He explains the mutual nature of His relationship with His followers, summing it up in the phrase, 'je suis as boens, li boen sunt mien' (v. 828).

Christ is portrayed as Seigneur and Joseph His vassal, chosen to help Him in His mission on earth. Christ tells Joseph that He had known that He would have need of Joseph, and to this end, God had given Joseph 'le pouoir et la volenté' (v. 820) to serve Pilate, so that Pilate would want to offer him recompense and give Joseph Christ's body for burial. It appears that Joseph's entire life has been so directed that he would be in a position to ask for Christ's body for burial. As a consequence, he is thrown into prison, where he is visited by Christ and given the Grail. He is made leader of a community which is to preach God's name and becomes the first in a line of Grail guardians which would extend 'devers Occident' (v. 3354).

Feudal language often had religious overtones, with the lines between religious symbolism and feudal gesture becoming somewhat blurred. The word *amis* signifies the powerful bond, of which both shared common features. Joseph is shown to be able to communicate directly with God through the Grail, the intermediary vessel. He has a personal relationship with God, acknowledging and believing in the Trinity. In return, he experiences joy and the honour of being in possession of the Grail. Joseph is the epitome of a true disciple, and an encouragement to medieval men and women to participate in a personal relationship with God in order to receive blessings in this world and joy in the life hereafter.

In a similar way to the hero served by his warriors, Joseph is served by his Grail company. The *compagnonnage* of the Grail is founded on the mutual love and faithfulness of the company for God. Joseph takes on the role of overlord, as it is to him

that people turn to petition for their needs. In turn, Joseph is dependent on God as his Seigneur.

References to the relationships between men and between God and men expressed in the word *amis*, function as a device to amplify the themes of the *Joseph*: that salvation was possible through a personal relationship with Christ.

### (iii) Love Interest

In his analysis of the meaning and use of the term *chevalerie*,[122] Glyn Burgess understands as central to the development of romance as a genre the notion that 'military success impresses a lady and leads to the granting of her love'.[123] Richard Hanning also discusses the conventions of chivalry as they appear in the twelfth-century narrative, and concludes that the romances of the twelfth century all derive their plots from the exposure of the tensions between love and prowess.[124] He contends that the public and private spheres, with their respective impetus to chivalry and its tendency to aggression and a personal need for fulfillment, can co-exist and reinforce each other; love prompts prowess, prowess prompts love. This does not seem to work in the *Descouneüs*.

Paradoxically, Guinglain needs to be a knight to prove his worthiness as a lover, but in being a lover, he cannot participate as a knight. Over the fortnight when Guinglain is waiting for an opportunity to speak to his lady, he gives away all his belongings, including his knightly equipment:

> Si li despent tot son avoir,
> tant poi con il en ot o lui,
> [...] Despent, acroit, barate et donne;
> quanques il a tot abandonne (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4166-67, 71-72) [34]

He spends his time hunting wild beasts or birds in the forest or fishing in the river (vv. 5323-27) and of course, loving his lady. Yet, as soon as he hears of the tournament, he is *joiant* and has an ardent desire to attend, which refutes the previous notion that 'tot avoit quanque bon li ere' (v. 5328) [36]. Love, in the *Descouneüs*, does not inspire prowess. The ritualised description of the exercise of arms in single combat, namely jousts, duels and isolated combats between knights and tournaments, is much in evidence in Renaut's work. However, it is not love which inspires Guinglain to prowess; it is the generic obligation imposed by his role as hero which motivates him.

Love, however, does play a crucial role in establishing the generic boundaries of the romance. As noted previously in this chapter, Ker includes 'interest in the love-story and all its science' as one of the features of romance. He is adamant that 'it is impossible [...] to separate the spirit of French romance from the spirit of the Provençal lyric poetry. The romances represent in a narrative form the ideas and the spirit which took place as lyric poetry in the South; the romances are directly dependent upon the poetry of the South for their principal motives. The courtesy of the Provençal poetry, with its idealism and its

pedantry, its psychological formalism, its rhetoric of antithesis and conceits, is to be found again in the narrative poetry of France in the twelfth century'.[125] The *Descouneüs* exhibits many of the elements which have come to be associated with the lyric poetry of the troubadours. That is, the inaccessiblity of the beloved, the need to be deserving in order to be loved and the heightened emotional tension and unattainable nature of love caused by the presence of obstacles.

In essence, Renaut would have us believe that his romance occurs as a result of his love for his lady. He dedicates the *Descouneüs* to 'cele qui [l]'a en sa baillie' (v.1) and is coy about how he should address her, taking exception to his own presumptuous use of the loaded term *amie* (v. 1264). He says that 'por li muir et por li cant' (v. 1270) [37], carryinging the idea of audience participation and co-creation to an extreme. This concept is reinforced at the conclusion, or non-conclusion, of the narrative when the invitation to influence the way the romance should end is extended to this lady. As the romance ends with this invitation, the reader is obliged to believe that she did not take the poet up on his offer. In doing so, her refusal to co-operate reinforces her status as the haughty *dompna* who was the object of the troubadour lyric. She remains detached and silent, a stance necessary for the generation of the frustration which is a feature of this poetry. Renaut exploits a poetic genre which plays on fictional fantasy in order to amplify a work which explores this very phenomenon.

Renaut includes in his text many features which are clearly recognizeable as features of romance and yet at the same time he chooses not to remain faithful to one genre. Instead, he experiments with features from the *lai* and lyric genres as well. Renaut's story appears to be generically unstable in that it is told first and foremost as a romance with features of the other two genres, *lai* and lyric, intruding to undermine the primary status of the first. However, in extending the boundaries of the romance genre, Renaut demands audience awareness. Blonde Esmeree and the Pucele as Blances Mains represent two sides of the same literary coin. Guinglain's constant movement between love and knighthood and between the two ladies who each represent these respective literary sides to his character highlights the potential within a genre to establish certain obligations which were expected to be fulfilled.

The love-interest, which in the *Descouneüs* involved romantic love, has a shift in focus in the *Joseph* to refer to spiritual love and Christian morality as being the sentiment diffused. Where Renaut explores secular love, Robert's interest lies in the investigation of divine love and to this end he gives as the background to his narrative, the pivotal story of the Christian church, that is Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection.

The didactic nature of Robert's work, the discovery of knowledge that is demanded and which is the founding principle of the *Joseph*, reveals itself in Robert's treatment of dogma within the text. Transgression and redemption were to become two themes of

great underlying importance in the stories of the Grail, and manifested themselves in references to what Richard O'Gorman describes as 'the new cultural obsession with penance which began in the twelfth century'.[126] In the *Joseph,* with its description of the Fall and the advent of Original Sin, the idea that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory pervades the text. Robert explores what it means to know and participate in God's grace.

The fact that the Church's institutional promotion of penance had a substantial influence on literature, explains much about the *Joseph.* Charlotte Morse explains that 'the cultural obsession with penance began in twelfth-century France where the most intelligent theologians since Augustine, thought, wrote, preached and taught. They defined the nature and number of the sacraments and worked out a rational theology for them. [...] Inheritors of the Gregorian reforms of the eleventh century, they extended the spirit of reform in a new direction, toward a vigorous concern with the spiritual welfare of the laity'.[127] Morse claims that the Church's institutional promotion of penance influenced literature in particular through penitential literature. Brundage describes the penitentials as 'a new genre of Christian moral literature', and says that 'it grew increasingly influential in shaping Catholic sexual doctrine between the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the eleventh century. The handbooks of penance writers in this period provided guidance for confessors in dealing with sinners who wished to be reconciled with God and to make their peace with the Church'.[128] The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 seems to have been pivotal to the Church in a number of areas. Leonard Boyle notes the new importance placed on pastoral care which extended to the sacrament of penance. This meant that 'the council endowed both the penitent's act of confession to a priest and the priest's role as confessor with a public and a definite identity for the first time ever in the history of the Church'.[129]

The *Joseph* reflects the concern with sin and how atonement is to be achieved. Sexual sin, or *luxure,* occurs first with Adam and Eve, when Adam *a luxure s'abandonné* (v. 114). It is then seen as the prime cause of famine amongst Joseph's followers, as Robert explains: *Mout en estoit entechié: C'iert pour le pechié de luxure* (vv. 2383-84). The people's sin precipitates the Grail service as a means for separating sinners from the righteous.

Richard O'Gorman[130] and Jean-Charles Payen[131] place much emphasis on the feet-washing scene (v. 341 ff.) which is recounted early on in the *Joseph.* They agree that the example of Christ washing the feet of all His disciples in the same water taught that a sinful priest could absolve a penitent of sin. It also encourages the concept, novel at the time, of private confession, where the penitent could privately confess his sins to the priest instead of in a public forum.

The decades on either side of 1200 and, therefore, at the time Robert was writing, saw an increased interest in the sacrament of penance. Robert recognized, as did the Church, that man in his weakness is naturally inclined to sin:

> Et nostres Sires qui savoit
> que fragilitez d'omme estoit
> Trop mauveise et trop perilleuse
> Et a pechié trop enclineuse
> Car il couvenroit qu'il pechast  (*Joseph*, vv. 179-83) [37]

Robert reports on the events of the Last Supper, giving Jesus' words as He taught His disciples. When Jesus washes all of the disciples' feet in the same water (v. 332) this prompts John to ask about the meaning behind this, providing Robert with an opportunity to outline some of the sacramental issues of his day involving the absolution of sin by a priest who is himself sinful.[132]

Jean-Charles Payen discusses this passage in an article devoted to this scene, highlighting the confessional requirements Robert appears to be promoting. Payen concludes his article in saying that Robert's *Joseph* must be interpreted in:

> [...] un contexte idéologique assez précis, et ne sauraient être considérés comme des romans ordinaires; leur auteur a pris parti dans les querelles du temps, et il l'a fait en fonction d'une certaine culture théologique. Il n'est pas sans intérêt de constater que dès la fin du XIIe siècle, le roman pouvait être considéré comme un moyen de diffusion des idées spirituelles les plus complexes, pour l'edification des laïcs les plus éclairés.[133]

O'Gorman also refers to this verse in an article which has as its aim the refutation of Francesco Zambon's claim that the Joseph 'manifests a certain heretical leaning'.[134] Here, O'Gorman discusses this and other verses which refer to penance and posits them firmly within Christian doctrine:

> Just as the action of Christ in the Gospel of John (13: 2-20) was characterized as an exemplum, a lesson in humility (13:15), so too the episode in Robert is intended to teach a lesson: just as dirty water can wash clean, so can a priest sullied with sin forgive the sins of a penitent.[135]

He maintains that Robert was strictly orthodox in theological and devotional matters, concluding that 'he was certainly alive to the theological preoccupations of the day and reveals in his work no hint of heterodoxy'.[136]

The notion of private confession placed certain responsibilities on the priest. The priest whose function it was to absolve the penitent had to discern whether the sinner was displaying the correct degree of contrition or whether his/her sorrow was being evoked from other sources. In the *Joseph,* Moys was among those excluded from the Grail Table because of their sin. He appeared to show genuine remorse and indeed seemed to want to be part of the company who were experiencing God's Grace and would benefit by receiving *joie pardurable.* When Joseph allows him to sit in the empty place, he is

swallowed up into the abyss because he was blind to the reality of God's grace. The voice from the Grail explains:

> Quant si compeignun s'en alerent
> Et ci avec vous le leissierent
> Ce que il touz seus demoura,
> Qu'o les autres ne s'en ala,
> Ce fist il pour toi engignier;
> Or en ha reçut sen louier. (*Joseph*, vv. 2801-06) [38]

Robert places the Grail at the centre of his narrative with explanations of aspects of penance leading ultimately to the Grail service where God's judgement is meted out to Joseph's company. It was important that people were reconciled with God before they came to His table and received His Grace.

In the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs*, conventional material or romance elements required by the genre amplify the story and are used as a means of enhancing the author's *antancïon*. The narrative is enriched by the associated ideas which are evoked in the audience by the respective poet's exploitation of traditional material; material which is understood as conforming to a certain genre.

Defining romance is difficult because it is not static. The basics of the genre can be defined according to the three categories considered above: form, structure and content. Romance as a genre appears to be in a state of constant evolution. The first romances, taken from stories from antiquity, have a different aim from the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, and the Grail romances are different again. Yet they are all romances.

At the most basic level, the two texts under consideration are romances because they are written in octosyllabic rhyming couplets. That is, their basic form is that of a romance. Their quest structure, which embodies a search for meaning is also characteristic of romance. Lastly, their content places them alongside other romances. They contain elements which appear in other works also given the retrospective label of romance, notably the works of Chrétien de Troyes. Both texts are *romans* in the strictest sense of the word, yet there are differences in structure and expectable ingredients. Robert and Renaut's originality lies in using elements of form, structure and content perceived as typical of different kinds of genre. Renaut uses features of the *lai* and Robert's text contains echoes of hagiography. In so doing, these authors manipulate the material they have available to them and contribute to the extension of the boundaries of genre.

In addition to the pattern or template which may be recognized in the design of the romance, there are also recurring characters and relationships. What function do the characters perform in the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs,* and can they in any way be said to elucidate authorial antancïon?

1  Peter Dronke, *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. v.
2  Curtius, p. 79.
3  Cicero, *De Inventione, Topica,* trans. by Harry Mortimer (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 387.
4  Dronke, p. 21.
5  Dronke, p. 12.
6  Dronke, p. 18.
7  Dronke, p. 20.
8  Douglas Kelly, *Medieval French Romance* , p. 101.
9  Philippe Walter, *Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1997), pp. 40 and 62.
10  Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 246.
11  Penny Simons, 'The Bel Sanblant...', p. 272.
12  Mariantonia Liborio, 'Rhetorical Topoi as Clues', in *Rhetoric Revalued*, ed. Brian Vickers (New York, 1982), (pp. 173-78), p. 177.
13  Liborio, p. 177.
14  Sara Sturm, 'The Love Interest in *Le Bel Inconnu:* Innovation in the Roman Courtois', *Forum for Modern Languages Studies,* 7 (1971), 241-48, p. 247.
15  Karen Fresco, *Renaut de Bâgé: Li Biaus Descouneüs* (New York: Garland, 1992), p. xv.
16  Michel Zink, *Medieval French Literature: An Introduction* (Binghampton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995), p. 61.
17  Zink, p. 61.
18  Vance, *From Topic to Tale* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. xiii.
19  Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 318.
20  Linda M. Paterson, *Troubadours and Eloquence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 2.
21  Ker, p. 347.
22  Lynette R. Muir, *Literature and Society in Medieval France: The Mirror and the Image, 1100-1500* (London: Macmillan, 1985), p. 48.
23  Jean Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris: Haitier, 1968), p. 12.
24  Muir, p. 72.
25  Zink, p. 51.
26  Stevens, p. 238. Michel Zink also includes the *Roman d'Alexandre* in this group (p. 51).
27  F. Boiron and J.C. Payen, 'Structure et sens du *Bel Inconnu* de Renaut de Beaujeu', *LeMoyen Age,* 76, (1970), 15-26 (p. 20).
28  Simons, 'The *Bel Sanblant* ...', p. 273.
29  Simons, p. 261.
30  Alain Guerreau, 'Renaud de Bâgé: *Le Bel Inconnu,* structure symbolique et signification sociale', *Romania,* 103 (1982), 28-82.
31  Fresco, p. ix.
32  Francis Dubost, 'Le "beau jeu" de Renaut avec le merveilleux', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renaut,* ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996) pp. 23-56; Peter Haidu, 'Realism, Convention, Fictionality, and the Theory of Genres in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *L'Esprit Créateur,* 12 (1972), 37-60.
33  Dubost p. 26.
34  Dubost, p. 26.
35  Sara Sturm, 'The Love-Interest in *Le Bel Inconnu*: Innovation in the *roman courtois*', *Forum for Modern Language Studies,* 7 (1971), 241-48 (p. 247); also, Sturm, 'Magic in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *L'Esprit Createur,* 12 (1972), 19-25 (p. 19).
36  Sturm, 'Magic...', p. 25.
37  Michelle A. Freeman, '*Fergus*: Parody and the Arthurian Tradition', *French Forum,* 8 (1983), 197-215, p. 208.
38  Jeri S. Guthrie, 'The '*Je(u)*' in *Le Bel Inconnu*: A Semiotic Topography' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1983), p. 160.
39  Haidu, p. 46.
40  Laurence de Looze, 'Generic Clash, Reader Response, and the Poetics of the Non-Ending in *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Courtly Literature,* pp. 113-33 (p.117).
41  De Looze, p. 117.
42  Rupert T. Pickens, 'Histoire et commentaire chez Chrétien de Troyes et Robert de Boron: Robert de Boron et le livre de Philippe de Flandre,' *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, p. 17.
43  Pickens, p. 18.
44  Jean-Charles Huchet, 'Le Nom et l'image: de Chrétien de Troyes à Robert de Boron,', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, II, pp 1-16 (p. 1).
45  William Burgwinkle, '"L'écriture totalisante" de Robert de Boron', *Constructions* (1986), p. 87.

46 Bernard Cerquiglini, *Le Roman du graal, manuscrit de Modène* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1981), p. 9.

47 Burgwinkle, p. 94.

48 Burgwinkle, p. 87.

49 O'Gorman, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, p. 339.

50 Jean-Charles Payen, 'Récit et *estoire* dans la littérature médiévale: le malentendu de l'histoire et l'histoire d'un malentendu', in *Récit et histoire*, ed. by Jean Bessière (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984), pp. 7-21 (p. 14).

51 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 93.

52 Burgwinkle, p. 92.

53 Valérie M. Lagorio, 'Pan-Brittonic Hagiography and the Arthurian Grail Cycle', *Traditio,* 26 (1970), 29-61. Pan-Brittonic refers here to the peoples of Wales, Cornwall and Armorica (Brittany).

54 Lagorio, p. 31.

55 Hippolyte Delahaye, *Legends of the Saints*, trans. by Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), pp. 4-5, 50.

56 Paul Maurice Clogan, ed., *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Culture: Medieval Hagiography and Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. ix.

57 Elissa R. Henken, *The Welsh Saints: A study in patterned lives* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 1991).

58 Zink, p. 18.

59 Zink, p. 50.

60 Zink, p. 50.

61 Northrop Frye, pp. 186-87.

62 Jean Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes*, p. 227.

63 Douglas Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 105.

64 Alison Adams, 'The Shape of Arthurian Verse Romance (to 1300)', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, I, pp. 141-66 (p. 150).

65 Marie de France: *Lais*. ed. by Alfred Ewert (London: Duckworth, 1995), p. x.

66 *Lais féeriques des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, ed. by Alexandre Micha (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1992).

67 Prudence Mary O'Hara Tobin, *Les Lais anonymes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles: Essai d'édition critique de quelques lais bretons*, (unpublished doctoral thesis, Paris: Université de Paris — Sorbonne, 1973)

68 Tobin, p. 1.

69 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 10.

70 Anthime Fourrier, *Le Courant réaliste dans le roman courtois au Moyen Age, Tome I: Les Débuts*, (Paris, 1962), p. 112.

71 William Ker, *Epic and Romance* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 328.

72 Ker, p. 328.

73 W.T.H. Jackson, 'The Nature of Romance', in *Approaches to Medieval Romance* (Yale French Studies 51, 1974: repr. New York: Kraus, 1976), pp. 12-25 (p. 18).

74 Jackson, p. 15.

75 Donald Maddox, *The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 16.

76 M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988), p. 24.

77 Abrams, p, 24.

78 Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance*, p. 151.

79 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 81.

80 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance,* pp. 81-82.

81 Claude Lecouteux, *Au-delà du merveilleux: des croyances du Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 1995), p. 19.

82 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance,* p. 104.

83 John Leyerle, 'The Game and Play of Hero,' in *Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Norman T. Burns (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 49-82 (p. 69).

84 Roger Sherman Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 202.

85 Jean Frappier, 'Le motif du don contraignant dans la littérature du Moyen Age', in *Travaux de linguistique et de littérature publiés par le Centre de Philologie de Strasbourg,* 7 (1969), pp. 7-46 (p. 22).

86 Ker, p. 328.

87 Lacy, in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 33-34.

88 Lacy, p. 54.

89 Dubost, p. 47.

90 Vernon J. Harward, *The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance and Celtic Tradition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1958), p. 62.

91  Harward, p. 89.
92  Harward, p. 120.
93  Francis Dubost, p. 43.
94  Penny Simons, 'Minor characters ...', p. 266.
95  Dubost, p. 45.
96  Philippe Walter, *Le Bel Inconnu de Renaut de Beaujeu: rite, mythe et roman* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), p. 151.
97  P.G. Walsh, *Andreas Capellanus on Love* (London: Duckworth, 1982), p. 270.
98  Haidu, p. 45.
99  Dubost, p. 47.
100 Dubost, p. 56.
101 Frye, p. 186.
102 O'Gorman, p. 355, n. 559.
103 Leyerle, p. 69.
104 Jackson, p. 19.
105 Jackson, p. 19.
106 Faral, p. 83.
107 Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society,* trans. by L.A. Manyon (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961; original: *La Société Féodale*, Paris: Michel, 1949), p. 314.
108 Georges Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. by Cynthia Postan (London: Arnold, 1977), p. 113.
109 Duby, pp. 113-14.
110 Duby, p. 120.
111 Bloch, pp. 316-19.
112 Bloch, p. 318.
113 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 121.
114 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 123.
115 Luttrell, pp. 85-104.
116 Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 123.
117 O'Gorman, Richard, *Joseph d'Arimathie* (abstract).
118 M. Bloch, p. 124; W.A. Stowell, 'Personal Relationships in Medieval France', *PMLA*, 28 (1913), 388-416.
119 M. Bloch, p. 126.
120 O'Gorman. *Critical Edition,* p. 504.
121 M. Bloch, p. 215.
122 Glyn S. Burgess, 'The Term 'chevalerie' in Twelfth-Century French,' in *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature, and Translation: Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, ed. by Peter R. Monks and D.D.R. Owen (Cologne: Brill, 1994), pp. 343-58.
123 Burgess, p. 345.
124 Robert Hanning, *The Individual in Twelfth-Century Romance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 4.
125 Ker, p. 345.
126 Mary Flowers Braswell, *The Medieval Sinner* (Rutherford, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983), p. 4.
127 Charlotte M. Morse, *The Pattern of Judgement in the 'Queste' and 'Cleanness'* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978), p. 4.
128 James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 152.
129 Leonard E. Boyle, 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England,* ed. by Thomas J. Heffernan (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, 1985), p. 31.
130 Richard O'Gorman, 'Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and the Sacrament of Penance', in *Conjunctures: Medieval Studies in Honor of Douglas Kelly,* ed. by Keith Busby and Norris J. Lacy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), pp. 375-85 (p. 375).
131 Jean-Charles Payen, 'Sur Robert de Boron, *Joseph*, v. 341 ss.', *Le Moyen Age*, 71 (1965), 423-32.
132 Richard O'Gorman, 'Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and the Sacrament of Penance', p. 376.
133 Jean-Charles Payen, 'Sur Robert de Boron, v. 341 ss.,' *Le Moyen Age* 71 (1965) 423-32, p. 432.
134 O'Gorman, 'Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and the Sacrament of Penance', p. 375.
135 O'Gorman, p. 376
136 O'Gorman, p. 385.

# Five

# The Portrayal of Character

Douglas Kelly's treatment of adventure and the hero in medieval French romance may cause confusion. It is hardly surprising that Kelly treats character as 'a problematic subject in medieval romance'.[1] On the one hand, he defines adventure romance as a 'romance that emphasizes number and variety of adventures rather than character portrayal or narrative meaning'.[2] On the other hand, he argues that 'an adventure requires the right knight'.[3] If character is not an issue, then how can a 'right' character be depicted? Moreover, not only does adventure require the right knight, but the right knight requires adventure. An exploration of the concept of a 'right knight' in the *Descouneüs* and the *Joseph*, provides the explanation that for characters to be 'right', they must conform to the author's chosen genre. In so doing, characters can highlight and amplify the authorial understanding of what is to be taken from the text. In this respect, Kelly's assertion is correct. Characterization is not the overriding concern of the romance poet, but it is yet another device of amplification which the poet has at his disposal to be used in crafting his text.

Renaut's story is named after his hero: it is the story of *li biaus descouneüs*, commonly called in English the Fair Unknown. The hero is an unknown quantity at the outset; a nameless knight errant who rides into King Arthur's court and demands a boon. By the end he has a name, a wife and land, none of which he has achieved by himself.

The question which the *Pucele as Blances Mains* asks of the young knight who has approached her and professed his undying love for her, having previously left her in pursuit of adventure, is crucial in reading Renaut de Beaujeu's *Li Biaus Descouneüs*. She very pointedly asks him: 'Qui estes vos?' (v. 4025). It is a question which the reader must also have constantly before him or her, in order to fully appreciate the poet's purpose and plan: who is this man and what is his function within the narrative?

Renaut uses his protagonist as a device of amplification. In common with other writers of the period, his aim is to win the audience's approval of his material and treatment by the use of various rhetorical devices of amplification, with Renaut revealing the paradoxical purpose of both highlighting and manipulating the conventions of twelfth-century romance. Renaut's protagonist becomes part of an elaborate authorial design to explore the process of writing and to expose the artificiality of creating a literary world.

As a result of the constant shift between genres discussed in the previous chapter, the reader is forced to recognize the ways in which genre constructs character and audience interpretation. Characters are constrained to behave in a way befitting the type of genre they have been written into. To this end, Renaut exploits not only his protagonist, but all of his characters, using them to animate his *antancion.*

The Fair Unknown, or Guinglain as he comes to be known, is a non-entity. His background is unknown to others and to himself. Everything is decided for him. At the moment he first appears he demands a boon, but thereafter seems unable to take the initiative. Far from being a pro-active hero, he is instead a reactive one. Almost all of Guinglain's actions and decisions are decided by someone else or by the fact that he is the hero and has no other choice but to act the way he does. Guinglain drifts between genres, but is unable to remain faithful to any one in particular, much like his creator. He reacts to certain stimuli, which for the most part appear under the guise of other characters.

This passivity is reinforced by the function of the other characters. It is they who warn him of impending danger, explain local custom and outline combat strategies for him. Hélie alerts Guinglain to the danger of battle with the giants (vv. 732-44) and Guinglain's squire, Robers, wakes his sleeping master to announce the arrival of the three avenging knights (vv. 977-99). Margerie explains the Sparrowhawk contest to Guinglain (vv. 1582-1628) and Hélie explains the *usage* of the *Ile d'Or* (vv. 1992-2000). Later on their journey, Hélie relates the custom of jousting with Lampart for hospitality in the city of Galigant (vv. 2517-52). Lampart then goes on to advise Guinglain of the best way of gaining entry into the *Gaste Cité* (vv. 2797-2838). Even everyday matters such as clothing and weaponry are carried out for him by someone else, in that he is dressed and armed by his squire and by Gawain at Arthur's court.

There are five categories of character within the text. Firstly, there is the vague mass whose function is largely to set the scene. Next, there are the characters met in passing who do combat with, are rescued by, or who speak to the hero and are then left behind. Hélie and Robers form a separate category from the previous one in that they have specific literary roles to play as far as the elucidation of hero and narrative are concerned. The Pucele and Blonde Esmeree make up the fourth category. They hold highly significant roles in terms of amplifying the exigent demands of genre to which the hero must submit. Finally, there is the hero himself.

i) Scene-setting characters

Renaut presents his characters as being involved in a mutually dependent relationship. All of the other characters owe their existence in the narrative to Guinglain, since they have been included to act as his conscience, to provide him with a sense of identity, to motivate his actions and to furnish him with an appropriate courtly backdrop. At the same time,

without them Guinglain would have no frame of reference or setting in which to operate as hero. In the cast of characters who appear in *Li Biaus Descouneüs*, 95 proper names are mentioned. Many of these appear in the enumeration of knights at Arthur's court and at the tournament at Valendon, and do nothing except lend their name to the list. Most of these are names associated with Arthurian literature and feature in other romances, yet they are not elaborated upon here, and on their own have nothing to offer the text. Michèle Perret explains that Renaut includes amongst the names mentioned as belonging to these peripheral characters both familiar and unfamiliar names. She remarks that 'la majeure partie est repérée dans les autres romans arthuriens, mais [...] quelques uns, — Aquins, le chevalier de Baladigan, Briés, Dinaus, Enauder, Eriaans, Floriens, Oduïns, Riciers, Segurés — sont des hapax'.[4] By placing the hero within an already established literary context, Renaut emphasizes the fictional nature of the *roman* and the characters within it.

Guinglain's initial reception at the court emphasizes the artificiality of his presentation as a romance hero. Despite his lack of a name and despite his status as a newcomer to the court of King Arthur, with unknown credentials and with no known family connections, all males at the court are prepared to accept him. All those who saw him readily agreed that 'si biel homme ne savoient' (v. 100). King Arthur grants him the boon he asks for and Gawain's action of giving him a tunic and arms shows his acceptance of him, and foreshadows the later revelation that he is, in fact, Gawain's son. The dwarf who accompanies Hélie tells her that no man should be disparaged until he has proven his cowardice, and that the young man looks like a fine knight to whom God could well lend his aid (vv. 309-15).

## (ii) Superfluous characters

The next category of characters are those whom Guinglain encounters along the way and who enjoy a brief moment of glory in the text, and then are passed over when they have served their purpose. These are the 'superfluous ladies'[5] whom Guinglain rescues, defends, admires for their beauty and then leaves. In this same category are the male characters Guinglain fights against: Bliobliëris, the three avenging knights, Giflet of Do, Orguillous de la Lande. These characters fulfil the function of providing the protagonist with the opportunity to display his great skill at arms. With the exception of Bliobliëris, possessed as he is of a 'cuer felon' (v. 578), who breaks his promise to surrender himself at Arthur's court and who instead sends his men to avenge him, the male characters whom Guinglain defeats in combat respect him and acknowledge his prowess and nobility. Two of these knights even appear to have become particularly close to Guinglain. After the tournament at Valendon where Guinglain enjoys immense success, Lampart and Giflet of Do rejoice at seeing him and all three greet each other happily (v. 6105). The peripheral female characters who appear over the course of the narrative such

as Clarie, Margerie and even Rose Espanie, operate in a similar way as the knights in that they can be seen as providing the motivation for the combat in the first place. It is to rescue Clarie from being raped that Guinglain enters into battle with the two giants (vv. 701-814), and Margerie enlists the hero's help to avenge the death of her *ami* in the Sparrowhawk competition (vv. 1687-1801).

(iii) Hélie and Robers

Hélie and Robers take on the role of supporting characters as they accompany the hero through the narrative. They are presented as extensions of the hero's own character. Penny Simons outlines the importance of the minor characters in the 'subversive play with types and figures' which Renaut presents in the *Descouneüs*.[6] She speaks of a narrative populated with well-known figures who are 'drawn from the stock of medieval narrative'.[7]

Certain expectations arise from the inclusion in the narrative of the damsel in distress. However, expectations are not met in Hélie, since she is a 'false trail'. She is presented in the manner usually reserved for the one who is destined to receive the hero's love. One of the unifying devices of the early part of the narrative is Hélie's constant scepticism and criticism. Indeed, Hélie has many functions in the romance. She provides a standard by which the hero can measure his progress. Hélie's scepticism and the winning of her admiration which Guinglain must achieve is a way of proving his valour and suitability as the hero capable of rescuing her mistress; but more importantly, it proves that he fulfils the prerequisites for being the hero of the story itself.

Hélie functions as his literary conscience. She reminds him of his duties as the hero of romance, ensuring that Guinglain does not stray from his path. In the first scenes, the audience is not privy to the Fair Unknown's thoughts. Hélie initiates the quest and does the hero's thinking for him, outlining conceivable dangers and foreshadowing future events. She serves to colour the scene for the audience by heightening the suspense of the adventure, constantly predicting sure death should he fight Blioblïeris or the two giants and alerting him to the danger involved in jousting with Lampart, as not a single knight had ever bested him. Hélie stalls for time in the scene where the three avenging knights are poised to attack Guinglain, admonishing them for their morally reprehensible behaviour in wishing to attack an unarmed man (vv. 1015-29). This allows Guinglain time to arm and prepare himself adequately for combat. It is Hélie who deals with practical matters such as where to sleep at night, suggesting that they stop and spend the night in a meadow. It is said that she *se porpensa* (v. 597), actively considering the available options, whereas Guinglain willingly accepts what the maiden proposes, 'volontiers otria/ço que la pucele loa' (vv. 605-06), and takes a passive role in the decision-making.

Hélie personifies reason and serves as the knight's guide, for she reminds him constantly of his commitment and finds ways to rescue him from circumstances which threaten to hinder him. Guinglain's squire, Robers, on the other hand, acts as a reflection of the protagonist. He agrees with whatever his master chooses to do. He gives Guinglain advice about Love and the Pucele and seems to encourage Guinglain's abandoning courtly society in favour of being a lover. Yet, as soon as Guinglain expresses his desire to go to the tournament, and asks Robers to prepare his horses and equipment, Robers is overjoyed at the news: 'liés de ces novieles' (v. 5384), and seems eager to get on with the business at hand. Simons notes that Robers fulfils a double role; he is both squire and mentor.[8] He is presented firstly as squire:

> Gavains li baille un escuier;
> son escu li porte et sa lance. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 270--71) [1]

As squire, he accompanies Guinglain, assists him in preparation for combat:

> Puis apiele son escuier
> qu'il estraigne son destrier. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 391-92) [2]

He disarms him and takes care of the horses:

> Molt fu Robers bons escuiers.
> Il vint a son sigmor premiers,
> dessarmé l'a isnelement,
> puis va a son ceval corent. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 611-14) [3]

The shift in the importance in Robers' role is indicated when Guinglain's party ride up to Galigant. Robers notices the villagers preparing to attack Guinglain and advises his master:

> Robers regarde lor ator
> si li mostra a son signor (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2581-82) [4]

He arms Guinglain for combat with *grant amor* and reminds him:

> "Sire, n'obliés mie
> poe amor Diu, le Fil Marie,
> les laides torces ne les pos!
> Ne soiés pas de joster sos:
> molt vos cuident tost malbaillir." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2667-71) [5]

Robers also counsels Guinglain in love. When Guinglain is in the throes of his suffering for love of the Pucele, he turns to Robers for advice:

> Il apiele son escuier
> qu'a lui se vaurra consillier.
> Cil est venusa son signor
> et il li conte sa dolor (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3737-40) [6]

Robers then proceeds with a very detailed plan on how Guinglain should go about achieving the object of his desire, concluding that:

> 'Ne vos en esmaiés de rien,
> qu s'amor conquerrés vos bien.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3831-32) [7]

Simons would have Robers as one of the 'all-important initial wedges used by the poet to undermine the narrative structures he has at his disposal and involve the audience with him in a process of reflection and recreation'.[9] This conflicts with the more valid remark made earlier in her article that Robers is 'a supporting actor to the hero's lead both in the progress of the plot and as a reflection of the hero's movement towards or away from his true object'.[10] Robers is not so much an element inserted to undermine the narrative, but to draw attention to it, and to the hero's progress through it.

iv) The Pucele and Blonde Esmeree

Renaut amplifies the idea of Guinglain's narrative quest to rescue a woman in distress by having him meet another more enticing woman first. He thereby steps out of his initial romance milieu into that of the lay. The Pucele and Blonde Esmeree represent two literary traditions. They are essentially the same woman but behave differently according to the genre in which they move. The Pucele is given a more sensual and commanding portrayal. She is the enchantress of the *lai*, as exemplified by the fairy mistress in *Lanval*. This type of character makes events happen, whereas Blonde Esmeree is presented as more conservative and passive. She is the heroine of a romance who has events happen to her, and as such can be compared with Guenevere in *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*.

While the duplication of the female characters has already received much attention in scholarship on *Li Biaus Descouneüs*, criticism has tended to concentrate on the two female characters as separate entities. Colleen Donagher talks of 'the psychological interest generated by the extended role of the Pucele' which she maintains is 'to examine certain questions pertaining to the individual and society, as well as the nature of love'.[11] Gérard Chandès adopts a Jungian approach, considering the Pucele and Blonde Esmeree as symbols of the conflict between the hero's *anima/animus*.[12] From a similar perspective, Philippe Walter perceives their presence as representing 'une lutte imaginaire' which takes place between 'ce principe féminin dans lequel on soupçonne les vestiges d'un matriarcat primitif (incarnée par la fée) et un masculin qui rêve, lui aussi, de conquête'.[13] What is relevant for present purposes is not the psychological exploration of the two sides to the hero's psyche, but the literary consequence of dividing what is essentially one leading lady into two characters.

While the two ladies who vie for the hero's attention derive from different traditions, Renaut's combination of these two traditions is not, as critics such as Boiron and Payen claim, an 'échec',[14] but evidence of his deliberate exploitation of traditional material to serve his own intentions. Renaut manipulates conventions, reversing the usual forms and structures so that his writing is presented as the self-conscious combination of speech and rhetoric. Renaut is not so much looking at love and chivalry in themselves but at how they are presented in literature.

Renaut works within two types of narrative and alters the form these narratives take to suit his own conception of the story's focus. Gaston Paris points out that Renaut's emphasis on two amorous involvements is not traditionally a feature of the *roman* genre:

'...il est de règle, en effet, dans les romans de ce genre, que le héros n'a qu'un amour, celui qui mène au mariage final'.[15]

Renaut deepens the resonance of the narrative by adding a well-known convention of the Fairy Mistress. She is the true Celtic fay, all powerful, intolerant of the slightest infringement of her will, and having as the single aim of her existence to lure to herself her chosen mortal favourite.[16] Harf-Lancner notes the association of the *lai* with *féerie-fiction*, commenting that 'la plupart des lais merveilleux content les amours d'un mortel et d'un être surnaturel'.[17]

Renaut develops the traditional Celtic fairy mistress motif of early Irish and Welsh literature. In Irish literature, the earliest extant narrative in which we meet the Celtic fairy queen is the *Imram Brain maic Febail* (The Voyage of Bran, Son of Febal) dated to the seventh century.[18] The Fairy Queen is later adopted by the twelfth-century *lais* and romances of France, among them Marie de France's *Lanval* and the anonymous *Partonopeus de Blois*. Lucy Paton describes the fay of Arthurian romance as:

'[...] essentially a supernatural woman, always more beautiful than the imagination could possibly fancy her, untouched by time, unhampered by lack of resources for the accomplishment of her pleasure, superior to human blemish, contingency, or necessity, in short, unlimited in her power. Insistent love is a fundamental part of her nature, but she holds aloof from ordinary mortals and gives her favour only to the best and most valorous of knights. She has complete foreknowledge, and often has guarded from infancy the mortal whom she finally takes to the otherworld as her beloved. However unexpectedly to the hero she appears before him, she comes always in quest of him and for the purpose of carrying out a long-formed design of claiming his love [...] when the inevitable result ensues and he obeys her summons to the other world, his bewilderment becomes complete oblivion, and he dwells in utter forgetfulness of all things mortal, conscious only of the delights that the fay offers him. He may grow restless at his retention in fairy land, but he cannot escape the fay's control. Her power follows him back to earth in the form of a command, disregard of which will bring certain punishment [...] the fay is never to be thwarted in her plans to win the hero whose love she seeks.'[19]

While Paton's outline of the fairy mistress offers a comprehensive outline of the character of the Pucele, there are marked differences which must be recognized. As in Paton's model, the hero learns that the Pucele has been the moving cause of all the incidents of his life and has had foreknowledge of his every deed. Her words are highly significant in Fairy tradition. She had taken great care 'en tos sanblans, en tos servisse' [8] to win him and become his *amie* (vv. 5005-8). Hers had been the mysterious voice that he had heard tell him his name and parentage after he had released Blonde Esmeree from enchantment. Yet, contrary to the outline given by Paton, she is thwarted in her plans to win the hero. Mention of a tournament was all that was required to draw the hero away from her:

Quant Guinglain l'ot, s'en fu joiant:
en son corage se pensa
qu'a cel tornoiement ira. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5338-40) [9]

When Renaut represents the maiden of the Ile d'Or as desiring Guinglain for her knight and also as impelling him to the rescue of Blonde Esmerée, an adventure which will eventually take him away from her to marry the rescued damsel, he is undoubtedly modifying his source to suit his own design. In so doing, he explores the two opposing generic worlds of chivalric romance and the love of the lyric or the *lai*, as well as the constant play between reality and fantasy which appears in *Li Biaus Descouneüs*. It would seem unlikely that the true *fée* would lead the hero to the rescue of a mortal damsel whom he is to wed. She trains him for purposes that directly concern herself and have to do with the attainment of her own desires.[20] The unusualness of the *fée*'s lack of control points back to the fact that Renaut has ultimate control and that the fate of the characters is in his hands. The emergence and extended use of a figure so rich in social and mythological implications is important in Renaut's treatment of literature. The Fairy Mistress represents the supernatural, the world of fantasy, in short the escapist and artificial element of literature which Renaut exploits. Baumgartner supports this hypothesis in referring to the *Descouneüs* as 'féerie-fiction'.[21] Baumgartner discusses the contribution made by the two *fées*, Blancemal and the Pucele as Blances Mains, to the creation of the story: 'tout a été programmé de main de maître par les deux fées, comme l'explique sans ambiguïté la voix qui commente l'épreuve du Fier Baisier, la voix dont le lecteur apprend en ce point médian du récit, qu'elle est celle de la Pucelle de L'Ile d'Or'.[22]

The Pucele is what Reinhard calls a 'rationalized fairy';[23] that is, a fairy who has acquired her magical skills through study. The Pucele's knowledge of enchantment is placed alongside her familiarity with the seven liberal arts, astrology and a knowledge of good and evil (vv. 1933-36). It is hardly surprizing that with a curriculum such as this one, she is described by Renaut as 'a woman of the rarest intelligence' (v. 1936). Despite her ability to predict the future, create illusions and influence events around her in some rather extraordinary ways, there is no indication that she uses any form of enchantment to secure Guinglain's love. Her great distress as she ponders the wiles and arts, *engiens et ars*, she might use to keep the knight with her, is a very human trait. It is perhaps for this very reason, that is her humanness, that she is unable to gain complete control over Guinglain's life. Yet, she is a supernatural being, and more specifically she is a *fée*. Laurence Harf-Lancer compares Renaut's romance with other romances written around 1160-1220 which depict supernatural characters. Many of Renaut's contemporaries refer to their supernatural female characters using ambiguous terminology, relating that 'le héros rencontre une «pucelle», une «demoiselle», une «dame», une «meschine» qui, quand elle lui a accordé son amour est dorénavant désignée comme «s'amie» ou «sa drue»'.[24] However, despite the fact that Renaut employs equally vague terms to describe the Pucele, he also calls her *fée* on two occasions:

et c'aveuc lui voie la fee [...]
Molt me fist grant honnor la fee. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3699 and 3715) [10]

Harf-Lancner classifies the Pucele as Blances Mains as a Morganian *fée*. Morgan la fée first appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*, composed in 1148.[25] Robert Ewald describes Morgan's debut in this twelfth-century work in his thesis which has as its subject, *The Jungian Archetype of the Fairy Mistress in Medieval Romance*:

> In Geoffrey's *Vita Merlini*, Morgain and her attendant fays rule an island paradise, demonstrating powers of metamorphosis and healing, and of knowledge of events to come, all characteristics similar to the demoiselle of the Breton lais.[26]

Ewald distinguishes three types of *fée*: the fairy queen, the harmful fay and the helpful fay.[27] Ewald's description of the model Fairy Queen is descriptive of Renaut's Pucele:

> Her most significant trait is her amorous nature, her dedicated love for a mortal hero, often before she has even seen him. The meeting place between the fairy and the mortal is near a body of water — a stream, fountain or ford. The hero may be guided to the spot by a supernatural animal, perhaps a stag, boar or brachet. [...] The meeting is not accidental, and the fay, through the power of foreknowledge, knows the hero and his circumstances. The fairy queen offers her love in return for some consideration, usually his acceptance of a tabu. [...] Once the hero accepts the fay's terms, he goes with his supernatural mistress to her abode in the Otherworld, a timeless place full of delights and pleasures. Often, he returns to the mortal world where he breaks the tabu imposed upon him, and dire consequences follow. [...] Normally in these instances, the fay relents and takes him to live with her in the Otherworld forever.[28]

Renaut's depiction of the Pucele and of the competition between two women for the hero's affection is not unique. Two of the most well-known examples may be found in *La Chastelaine de Vergi* and in Marie de France's *Lanval*. The similarities between these two works themselves has been noted by Patricia Terry. She writes of the *Chastelaine* that 'the *lai* has obvious affinities with *Lanval* and may have been written in response to it. But the chatelaine is a human being, and we can participate in her emotions, whereas we really have no access to those of the *fée*'.[29] Both Marie de France and the anonymous author of the *Chastelaine* present a contrast between the limited world of human society and the euphoric existence which is possible outside of this. This is also the case in the *Descouneüs*. However, Renaut's romance is not as clear cut as these other two. In *Lanval* and the *Chastelaine* there is an attractive woman from the Otherworld, or at least as in the *Chastelaine*, from outside the boundaries of the court, whom the protagonist loves to the point where the advances of another woman are repugnant to him. This other woman is the Queen, and moreover she is presented as the 'bad queen', to borrow Anne Berthelot's phrase, 'a Potiphar's wife'.[30] Berthelot is here referring to the role occupied by Guenevere in the Prose *Lancelot*, an epithet which could equally be employed to describe her role in *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*. This is Guenevere the seductress, although in the *Charrette*, her actions encapsulate the essence of courtly love. In this respect, the *Descouneüs* is markedly different from these other romances. Renaut's

158

queen is neither adulteress nor the haughty *dompna*. Indeed, many of Guenevere's caprices and games are present rather in the Pucele's character.

On a number of occasions the two leading ladies are spoken of in the same way. Both women are first seen by Guinglain in a haze of light, with the Pucele appearing to give off the light, 'Sa biautés tel clarté jeta' (vv. 2221-23) and Blonde Esmeree being surrounded by it, 'en la sale grant clarté a' (v. 3260). Both women give Guinglain their whole heart. The Pucele desperately wants to keep him with her on the island because 'ses cuers a lui s'otroie et donne' (v. 2287). Similarly, when Guinglain breaks the spell cast over Blonde Esmeree, she falls in love with him and greatly desires to have him as her husband: 'ses cuers a lui s'otrie et tire' (v. 3672). The donation of the heart is a familiar motif in lyric poetry.

Blonde Esmeree and the Pucele both claim responsibility for Hélie's appearance at court which precipitated Guinglain's embarking on adventure. Blonde Esmeree says:

> Sire, fait cele, ge fus cele
> por cui ala la damoisele
> au roi Artu le secors querre.
> Por moi estes en ceste terre. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3311-14) [11]

However, the Pucele also claims that she was the initiator of the quest:

> certes, je suis cele
> qui fis savoir a la Pucele
> qui estoit apielee Helie
> qu'a la cort alast querre aïe
> por sa dame a Artus le roi (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4985-89) [12]

While there are similarities in the way the women are presented, there are also marked contrasts. These contrasts occur as a result of the opposition between genres, that is between romance and *lai*.

Blonde Esmeree is presented as a much more straightforward character than the Pucele. When Guinglain breaks the spell that has cast her in the form of a serpent, she quite matter-of-factly explains the nature of the enchantment and his right, as romance hero, to take her as his wife, concluding that she has told him the truth in everything, without falsehood or deception (vv.3381-82). She is loving and forgiving when Guinglain returns, after his having left her to be reunited with the Pucele. The Pucele, on the other hand, is the epitome of falsehood and deception. She does not reveal her participation in his life until their second encounter, when she has already secured his love. She proves a haughty and disdainful lover when he returns from achieving the *fier baiser* quest, responding to his protestations of love by feigning non-recognition and then berating him for having left without asking her leave.

In terms of marriage to the hero, the women adopt different approaches. Blonde Esmeree respectfully speaks of giving herself to Guinglain:

Sire,' fait ele, 'vostre sui.
Votre doi estre par raison:
...Ciers sires, totes vostre sui.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3304-5, 3308) [13]

In stark contrast, the Pucele speaks of taking Guinglain as her husband:

a mari, sire, vos prendrai (*Descouneüs*, v. 2275) [14]

It seems evident that this relationship is not to be on equal terms, but that power lies in the hands of the Pucele. She warns him that as long as he heeds what she says, he shall have all that he desires, but the moment he ceases to listen to her, he may be certain that he will lose her:

'Et saciés bien, tot entresait,
que tant que croire me vaurois
ne vaurés rien que vos n'aiois.
Et quant [mon] consel ne croirés,
ce saciés bien, lors me perdrés.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5012-16) [15]

The Fairy Mistress acts as an inner voice or as an extension of the hero's own self. Life with the *fée* takes place in a world upside–down, where Guinglain cannot be true to his role of romantic hero. On the island, he is prevented from taking part in the knightly activities which make him the protagonist of a romance. As a result of the despair Guinglain experiences in his love for the *fée*, he gives up all his knightly equipment and has nothing, symbolically crossing over from one genre into the other.

The Pucele is not honest in her love, but manipulative. As such, she epitomizes the role of literature itself with its manipulating force and transforming power. The Guinglain who is competent in the fray is made foolish in love. Romance hero becomes *lai*-and-lyric plaything. The generic power to transform is reflected particularly in the *Descouneüs* in the area of secular love. Genre dictates the conduct of a character in the same way that love is presented as affecting behaviour. Guinglain in his love for the Pucele is in a 'topsy-turvy' state of mind where he cannot think straight and must rely on the advice of his companions, Hélie (v. 2333f.) and Robert (v. 4149f.). This confused state is foreshadowed in the conduct of Giflet of Do who defends his *amie*'s beauty when everyone else considers her *laide et frencie* (v. 1727). Renaut explains this by saying that:

Mais nus hom ne se puet garder
k'Amors ne.l face bestorner
la laide fait biele sanbler
tant set de guille et d'encanter (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1732-35) [16]

Not only the attitudes of the two leading ladies, but their external appearance must be considered. Physically, the two women are different, or at least they are presented differently. In a precarious narratorial balancing act, where the two potential companions to the hero are pitted against each other, the Pucele and Blonde Esmeree are given similar

portraits. Colby-Hall discusses Renaut's presentation of their beauty as a 'battle of portraits', and concludes that 'the Pucelle aux Blanches Mains should be declared the winner, but marriage to the runner-up would certainly be no misfortune'.[31]

Renaut provides portraits of the Pucele on three occasions. The various rhetorical devices involved in the portrait are discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Hyperbole, outdoing, the creative force of Nature, the enumeration of her various parts and a description of her clothing and adornments are employed, but the overall effect is one of sensuality. The Pucele is described in terms of how she may be perceived by men as a sexual object. She has a delicate red mouth, dainty white teeth, lips made for kissing and arms for embracing (vv. 2237-40). When she appears in the doorway as Guinglain lies in bed, she is said to be wearing nothing but her shift and a cloak of green samite (vv. 2396-2405), and her bosom as she leans over him is as white as the hawthorn (v. 2431).

Blonde Esmeree on the other hand, is described in an extremely conservative manner. It is not that she is not beautiful, for Renaut describes her as lovely and full of grace, and says that she far surpasses any of the other female characters. Nowhere in the world was there anyone as fair, with the exception of the Maiden of the White Hands:

> Tant le sot bien Nature ouvrer
> c'onques si bie[le] n'ot el mont
> [...] fors sel Celi as Blances Mains,
> quar nule a li ne s'aparele. (vv. 3268-69, 71-72).[17]

The Pucele does not offer Guinglain an idyllic alternative to an unsatisfactory existence, but an alternative that seems to interfere with his knightly activities. She is a temporary diversion from his real task, as romance protagonist, of rescuing the Queen. Earlier critics[32] saw the extended role of the Fairy Mistress as a failing on Renaut's part and disagreed with his heightened use of what should have been a minor incident in the plot. However, torn between two women, each of a different type the hero represents the poet in his exploration of the constraints of genre. It transpires that this 'other woman' — the distraction in the text — has orchestrated the whole quest so that she could be sure of getting the hero. As a further illustration of the manipulation which is rampant in the narrative, the *fée* appears to assume the role of pseudo-narrator. As such, she has organized the whole of Guinglain's story with a view to seducing him, just as Renaut appears to be trying to seduce his lady with the story. The message underlying the text is that literature is seduction, as by it the reader is lulled into a false sense of reality. Renaut appears to be suggesting that literature is not to be taken as a serious reflection of society, but that it is, in fact, a form of escapism. The lay often involved this element of escapism where a mortal is lured away from society by the charms of a supernatural being, most often a fairy mistress.

This whole notion of escapism is further supported by the frequent references to Guinglain sleeping or waking from sleep. In one instance, Renaut presents an idyllic

image of Guinglain asleep on the fresh grass next to Hélie, her head resting on his arm. Upon waking, he is brought back to the 'reality' of the romance world when he hears crying and proceeds to rescue Clarie from the giants. On at least two other occasions, involving great emotional turmoil, he is described as being so tired that he falls asleep, in one instance dreaming of holding the Pucele in his arms, having been rebuffed by her when awake (v. 2465), and in another falling asleep after he has been kissed by the serpent and had his identity and lineage revealed to him by a mysterious voice. Either he is lacking in iron, or his constant need for sleep is a reflection on literature's offer of a dreamlike world, out of touch with reality. The constant affirmations on the poet's part that what he is writing is the truth — *si con la letre dist la vie* — are set off against vocabulary of deceit and false appearances. This is not real, but art.

The two different, yet essentially similar, functions of the two women are the result of Guinglain's oscillation between two genres: the *lai* and the romance. Guinglain's quest is in essence a quest for his place in the literary world. The Queen and the Pucele represent the dichotomous nature of Guinglain's literary character and his relationship with each of them functions as an exploration of this.

## (v) The hero

For Hans-Robert Jauss, 'on ne peut pas prendre n'importe quel héros pour le mettre dans n'importe quel genre'.[33] The way in which the hero behaves relies upon the genre into which he is written. Quite simply, as Kelly puts it, 'an adventure requires the right knight'.[34] In this respect, Renaut has chosen his hero well. In fact, there could have been no other knight to undertake the adventure. As is revealed by the voice which tells him of his origins and lineage after the *Fier Baisier*:

> 'Tres bien le savoie de voir
> que chevalier n'aroit pooir.
> nus ne peüst pas delivrer
> nus ne peüst tant endurer
> ne le baisier ne l'aventure
> qui tant est perilleuse et dure' (vv. 3217–22) [18]

Renaut's protagonist is a blank page who has allowed him to fulfil the *antancïon* expressed in the Prologue that, in composing a romance from a tale of adventure, he will show what he is capable of (v. 10). Guinglain, as discussed in the previous chapter, is generically 'confused'; he exhibits a heightened sense of awareness of generic role and its exigencies and has earned his role by authorial election.[35] Guinglain is the hero simply because he is the hero. The only time he comes into his own, that is, when he is not being advised or manipulated by other characters, is in combat or when performing other knightly duties, and even this seems to be in response to an innate force that propels him toward knightly action. It is almost as though he cannot help but undertake adventures, as though he is intrinsically motivated to help people and be chivalrous. His first act after

having greeted King Arthur on his arrival in court is to demand a boon (vv.83-88). Fresco remarks in her notes to the text that the boon is a 'recurrent motif in Arthurian romance especially'.[36] From the outset, he fulfils the requirements which might be expected of the hero. In a similar manner, Guinglain grants his mercy to his opponents as though he were reciting lines learned by heart. He repeats the formula, 'ens en la cort Artus le roi' word for word on four separate occasions (vv. 481, 1183, 1469, 1801). He is self-consciously driven by the fear of being a coward, refusing to turn back as he and Hélie start out on the journey, as 'coardie ne velt penser' (v. 320) and continuing to insist that he will not return 'car trop serroit grans couardie' (v. 386).

In a blatant crossing over from one set of generic characteristics to another, Guinglain demonstrates the artificial nature of generic boundaries. Dismissing his fear at the Gaste Cité, he encourages himself with the thought that it is not worthy for a knight to be afraid whatever his fate, and then, in what appears to be an afterthought, he remembers that 'cil qui a amor, ne doit avoir nule paor' (v. 3115) [19]. Previously, he had left the Pucele, having spent the night dreaming of holding her in his arms and suffering because of Love (v.2464). In one breath, he is dying for love for the Pucele and the next he is riding off happily into the forest. It is almost as though he has a checklist of symptoms with which the lover is to be afflicted. The passages where Guinglain is shown to be undergoing great pain because of his love for the Pucele reflect the narrator's own experience of love as described in his authorial interventions, and both display the Ovidian influences of the lyrics of the *troubadours* and *trouvères*. At the height of his affliction, Guinglain can neither 'dormir ne reposser' (v. 3678) and grows 'pales et vains' (v. 3682), referring to his Love as a 'mals' (v. 3708) which undermines him. He cannot 'mangüe ne ne dort' (vv. 4177, 4187), exhibiting all the symptoms of a dreadful illness: he 'tranble, fremist, genmist, souspire' (v. 4193). As a lover, that is what one does. The suffering experienced by the lover is also recorded also in *Le roman d'Enéas*:

> come s'amor lo destrainoit
> com il an ert paliz et tainz
> et toz müez et si atainz,
> ne pooit boivre ne mangier. (*Le Roman d'Enéas*, vv. 9192-95)[37]

The Epilogue is very important to a reading of Renaut's text, for it is here that Renaut's omniscient control as author is made explicit. Everything in the text is answerable to him. The hero's fate does not rest on personal development and his making the right decisions, but on the author's *antancïon*. It would seem that by the end of the narrative, Guinglain has achieved the goal of the romance hero in marrying the Queen. However, his ultimate fate is reliant on a word from the poet's lady, who need only show the poet a gracious countenance (v. 6255) for the outcome of the narrative to be altered, as Claude Roussel describes:

'Renaut choisit de souligner, dans les derniers mots du roman, le caractère arbitraire de l'aventure arthurienne, en présentant Guinglain comme une marionnette qu'il manipule à sa guise.'[38]

Despite these contradictions which may be inherent in the multiplicity of generic conventions, Guinglain makes a visible effort to be a romance hero. He has a principal task to perform and along the way accomplishes other minor tasks which prove his worth. He participates in episodes borrowed from Chrétien which, well-known and recognized as romance exploits, have the effect of reinforcing Guinglain's role as romance hero. Yet, his suffering at the hands of love makes him comparable to the first-person subjects of the lyrics written and sung by the troubadours and trouvères; the presence of the fairy-mistress, who draws him away from society to a secluded 'otherworld' and reveals that she has had a hand on his life, makes him reminiscent of a participant in a lay. Guinglain self-consciously speaks of his role as the hero, mentioning cowardice as a motivating factor four times, and responding to cries of help and calls to combat with the sort of heightened awareness of adventure that only a romance hero could possess.

The question posed at the outset of the chapter as to who the hero is cannot be answered by the end of the narrative. Many of the ideals of the early courtly romance involved the exploration of the possibility that in his love for a woman, a man might search for an ideal which could redefine his being. Unfortunately for Guinglain, he is in a constant state of redefinition. Guinglain is a protagonist pulled between conflicting genres, and yet it is this tension which is central in amplifying Renaut's *antancion*. The protagonist's changing choice of lovers becomes equated with the narrator's changing choice of genres. Guinglain's oscillation between love and knighthood and between the two ladies who represent the respective sides to his character, sees him in a state of perpetual confusion. The power of genre to enforce certain codes of conduct is thereby reinforced.

Guinglain is a device of amplification in this piece of work which flaunts the conventions of the twelfth-century romance. There are so many similarities and borrowings from Chrétien's *Erec* that it is tempting to look at Guinglain as a study in the interplay between the chivalric hero's inner and outer worlds, or the conflict between the protagonist's two vocations: knight and lover. However, Renaut's text is not an exploration of the different sides to Guinglain's psyche. He does not have one. Unknown he starts off, and unknown he remains. This is not a quest for himself as an individual. It is not a quest for identity, but a quest for generic classification.

The milieu in which Guinglain operates is not real society, so the reader must not look for the ways in which he conforms to social codes and conventions, but rather how he conforms to the literary milieu of the narrative with its own particular and exigent codes and conventions. Renaut's text is not an exploration of the different sides of the hero's

psyche, but an exposition of the various literary conventions and obligations which the act of literary creation imposes, and the limitations which these involve.

In the *Joseph*, it is the women who act as a device of literary amplification to emphasize the themes of the text. Robert's antithetical statement in verses 763-68 offers much to provoke discussion of his treatment of women in the *Joseph d'Arimathie*. Yet, his work is not about women. In six lines, he succinctly summarizes the inherent ambiguity of the medieval view of womankind. As he explains, she is at once the cause of man's downfall and also of his salvation. Moreover, the very form of the couplets strengthens the force of this statement.

The primary function of women in the *Joseph* is to provide rhetorical amplification. The female characters serve to highlight the theme of salvation, which is central to Robert's work, by providing an analogy for the Grail. The way the female characters are described casts them in the role of vessels, with all the imagery which this entails. In myth, the vessel was seen as fulfilling a life-giving or life-maintaining role.[39] Similarly, in Scripture, images of the vessel cluster around two themes: vessel of wrath and vessel of mercy.[40] Robert uses the female characters for amplification of these aspects of the Grail.

The function of female characters in medieval writing has recently been the subject of much critical comment.[41] In her article, 'The Knight and the Superfluous Lady', Rosemary Morris writes that 'one of the most familiar structuring principles of folktale is the promise of a bride to the achiever of a series of exploits'.[42] This remark prefaces a discussion on the problem of what to do with women in medieval romance once they have been won. However, women in the *Joseph* do not function as an incentive for the hero to accomplish marvellous feats, nor do they correspond to Rosemary Morris' 'structuring principle'. If the women presented in the *Joseph* are not a prize to be gained, what role *do* they play in Robert's work?

According to Sophie Hand's study, *Fusing the Biblical and the Arthurian*,[43] 'the woman, so pivotal to Arthurian romance and courtly literature, retains [in the *Joseph*] none of the importance accorded her in Chrétien's romances.' However, Hand misses the point of the *Joseph* when she states that 'Robert's portrayal of knighthood excludes an important element of chivalry in Chrétien's terms — the role of the Lady', and that 'women are neither mirrors of their lovers' prowess and character, nor reflections of a standard to which they must aspire. Their role is minimal, mostly as 'vessels' to allow for a pre–destined lineage. They are inferior parallels of the Virgin Mary. The Knight is clearly in the service of God [...] and exemplary women are those who do not impede this service'.[44]

Hand's thesis is concerned with the processes involved in textual composition, and yet she misses the importance of women as a literary device for amplifying the themes which

Robert wishes to convey. While it is true that women are not important as individual characters in their own right, the fact that they are compared to vessels and perform similar functions to those of the Grail cannot be underestimated and is crucial to an understanding of the themes and intentions of the work.

Robert states that this tale is to be called *L'Estoire dou Graal* (vv. 2684, 3493). The Graal, as explained in vv. 2654 and 2677, is the name which is to be given to the cup-like vessel in which Christ made his sacrament at the Last Supper and in which Joseph collected the blood of the crucified Christ as he removed him from the Cross. The vessel, mentioned specifically in at least 37 verses, is used as a unifying device in the *Joseph*. By means of the vessel, grace can be received:

> De la grace dou seint Esprist
> Fu touz pleins, quant le veissel vist [...]
> Tout cil qui ten veissel verrunt
> En ma compeignie serunt,
> De cuer arunt emplissement
> Et joie pardurablement. (vv. 725-26, 917-20) [20]

Advice may be sought:

> Ansi vous pri je et requier
> Que vous me vouilliez co[n]seillier (vv. 2453-54) [21]

> Joseph a sen veissel ala,
> Mout devotement Dieu prïa
> Demoustrast li de sen neveu,
> Comment il li feroit son preu. (vv. 3001-4) [22]

Judgement may be effected:

> Ten veissel o men sanc penras,
> En espreuve le meteras
> Vers les pecheeurs en apert,
> Le veissel tout a descouvert. (vv. 2469-72) [23]

> Puis pren ten veissel et le mest
> Sus la table lau mieuz te pleist,
> Meis qu'il soit tout droit em mi liu [...]
> Et quant tu tout ce feit aras,
> Tout ten peuple apeler feras
> Et leur di que bien tost verrunt
> Ce de quoi dementé se sunt,
> Qui par pechié ha deservi
> Pour quoi leur est mescheü si. (2503-18) [24]

> Cil respont: — Par ce veissel ci
> Summes nous de vous departi,
> Car il n'a a nul pecheour
> Ne compaignie ne amour (vv. 2627-30) [25]

While Robert does not explicitly compare his female characters to vessels, they are cast in such a way as to emphasize the function of the vessel at the centre of the work; namely the Grail, and its pivotal relationship to the themes of the story. Robert's female characters

parallel the functions of the Grail. They, like the Grail, are presented as the means by which men are able to achieve spiritual fulfilment. They reflect and reinforce the motivation of the poem, which centres on the potentiality of a personal relationship which can be enjoyed with Christ and the possibility of eternal salvation which this affords.

At each crucial episode, the vessel is central, but has a different function. Each function represents an aspect of the Trinity. The blood collected in the cup of the Last Supper represents Christ and the blood He shed for humankind; the visit in the prison has the Grail as Christ but also as the Holy Spirit, which Christ leaves Joseph as his comforter and advisor. God's judgement and his promise of salvation is symbolized in the vessel as it is placed before Joseph's company on the Table of the Grail, separating sinners from the righteous. The final representation of the Grail is the passing on of Christ's teachings and the knowledge of the relationship possible with Christ for those who believe and have faith in Him. The immediate focus of the work is on the Grail, therefore images of the vessel are central.

In addition to portrayals of the vessel itself, there is an underlying symbolism of woman as vessel which pervades the text, deepening the meaning and enhancing Robert's themes. Hand calls the female characters in the Joseph, 'inferior parallels of the Virgin Mary'. However, this would mean that the other women function simply as a reinforcement device for the amplification wrought through the character of Mary. By means of the Grail, Grace is received, advice sought and judgement effected. The other female characters reinforce this image by representing the various aspects of the Grail as depicted by Robert, and modelling the need for a personal relationship with Christ in order to be saved.

Robert includes six women in the *Joseph*: the Virgin Mary, Eve, Mary Magdalene, Verrine, Anne and Enygeus.

The Virgin Mary is the supreme symbol of the vessel, as she carried Christ within her. In his book *The Grail: Quest for the Eternal*, John Matthews makes an interesting comparison by stating that Mary, proclaimed the Theotokos, or God-bearer, at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431, 'is the vessel destined to contain the spirit made flesh'.[45] The Grail, which is also presented as containing Christ, 'thus becomes like the womb of Mary and a symbol of the desire for self-fulfilment in man'.[46]

The idea of woman as vessel is not a new one. The medieval 'Litany of Loreto'[47] describes the Virgin as:

> vas spirituale
> vas honorabile
> vas insigne devotionis

Mary is thus referred to as the vessel (womb) in which divinity had become manifest. In effect, Mary became a living Grail, containing the blood and spiritual essence of Christ. She is the vessel through which salvation is effected. Through Mary, mankind was *recouvrez* and *recouvré* (vv. 764 and 768).

Before the first mention of Mary in the *Joseph*, there is a dramatic passage portraying people being sent to Hell to be under the power of the Devil. Robert uses evocative language to express the significance of the situation, that is that Christ has come to earth to save 'les boennes genz' (v. 25). Christ will suffer *tourmenz, douleurs, froiz* and *sueurs* (vv. 9-10). Robert contrasts this suffering and damnation with his description of Mary's virtues. In Robert's hands, the 'highly favoured' Virgin of Luke's gospel[48] becomes endowed with 'toutes bontez' (v. 35). She is 'simple, douce, mout bien aprise' (v. 33). She is compared to a briar rose in that she is 'fleiranz comme esglantiers' (v. 37) and 'de tous les biens est enluminee' (v. 42).[49] It is not a picture of a real woman, but a glowing image of an iconographical figure, similar to the image of Mary given in the rest of the Litany.[50]

Despite Robert's eulogizing of Mary in verses 33 to 43, his other references to her encompass her role as the mother of Christ, rather than giving her any importance of her own. In verse 781 she is described as Joseph's wife and spouse, and the person in whom Jesus took on flesh; in verse 943 Mary is explicitly called the Mother of God.

Mary is given a special role when Christ, instructing Joseph in prison, tells him of the secret words and leaves him with the command to believe in the Trinity, and the mother of God 'mout tres bien te conseillera' (v. 946). From these verses, it would seem that Mary is to act as an intercessor, with Joseph being told that when he has need, he should call on the three powers that are one and the Holy Woman who bore the Son, and he will hear the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to him.

Both Mary and the Holy Spirit are connected with vessels in this story: Mary as the vessel which bore Christ and the Holy Spirit which speaks to Joseph from the vessel. In the Bible, Christ describes the Holy Spirit as a helper, an advisor[51] and one who will intercede with groans that words cannot express.[52] The vessel seems to function in this way for Joseph, who prostrates himself before the Grail and prays to it whenever he is in a difficult situation or needs advice about a decision. Mary is not described in the same way. It is only in this one instance that she is cast in the role of intercessor, and Robert does not suggest that Mary is involved on the occasions when Joseph is before the Grail.

The Grail is the means by which Joseph, and subsequently the line of Grailkeepers to come, are able to communicate with God and the Holy Spirit, but the Grail is not to be seen as God. Likewise Mary, as vessel, is not to be seen as part of the Trinity. She

effects the means of salvation through her role as the vessel which carried Christ. She is the instrument and not the agent.

The concept of a dual role for woman is integral to Robert's imagery, as illustrated in the *fame* passage quoted above. In her Grail-like function as vessel, she is giver of mortal life as represented by Mary, but woman as Eve is also the temptress, the reason why Adam is expelled from the Garden. Eve is, according to Robert, entirely to blame in the Genesis story. She is the woman by whom man was *adirez*, compelled (*pourchaçier*) towards death and *emprisonné* (vv. 763, 765, 767). Adam sinned and caused the downfall of mankind when he 'nous eut par Eve trahi,' but Eve 'li feist feire' (v. 86) and betrayed humankind (v. 108) by the apple that she ate and which she gave to her husband.

Robert gives a sexual interpretation to the Fall in his *Joseph* when he uses *luxure* (v. 122) to describe the reason why Adam and Eve were thrown from Eden. He uses the same word to describe the sin which separated sinners from the rest of Joseph's company at the Grail service (v. 2383). In both situations, the sin of *luxure* destroys the relationship which men and women have with God and brings about his judgement on them. In effect, the fall from Grace which Joseph's company experiences mirrors the advent of original sin in Eden.

Eve's function is to create a need for salvation; while not explicitly acting as a vehicle for salvation, she nevertheless can be seen to illustrate the vessel's function as the provider of forgiveness for human frailty. In Robert's poem, at least, she is the first to be released from captivity in Hell (v. 597). In addition, she reveals the effect of succumbing to temptation and, in this respect, joins Judas and Moses in illustrating the consequences of disobedience to God and the rejection of the personal relationship which had been offered them through Christ. She is the archetype of human frailty and betrayal, yet her actions precipitate the need for God's Grace. As a literary device, her story in the *Joseph* foreshadows the later events which would culminate in the establishment of the Grail table, where God's judgement was meted out.

Mary Magdalene, the third female character, appears twice in the *Joseph*. The first time is when Robert recapitulates the gospel story of Mary Magdalene washing Jesus' feet with her tears, drying them with her hair and anointing Him with a sweet-smelling, but expensive, balm. This scene is conflated from various accounts in Scripture.[53] The Mary Magdalene episode also illustrates Jesus' later discussion on baptism and penance. A similar scene occurs 100 lines later, when Jesus and his disciples are still at Simon's house, and Jesus explains the importance of penance and confession as prerequisites to asking for Grace. The similarity of the scenes ties them together, so that Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet and the accompanying lesson he gives them would seem to resolve the Magdalene scene. Mary Magdalene showed her contrition in the tears she shed and

her love for Christ as she anoints Him. She represents the penitent sinner of Jesus' lesson.

Mary Magdalene can be seen as a contrast to Judas. She had nothing and was a sinner and yet was accepted into the inner circle. Judas, *'que Diex mout amoit'* (v. 217), had everything. He was one of the disciples and he enjoyed a position of responsibility as seneschal. Yet he gave this up and was lost. Mary Magdalene illustrates the need for humility of spirit and a complete devotion to Christ in order to be able to approach Him. In this way, her story is a parable for Christ's teaching that when a person, having sinned, wants to repent and be forgiven, he or she may seek God's grace and receive it (vv. 188-92). Her actions foreshadow the judgement at the Grail table when those who are devoted to Christ and are willing to live their lives in a manner pleasing to Him are blessed, and those who show a lack of concern with a godly life must leave.

The fourth female character is Verrine. Although at first sight Verrine might appear to play a minor role, her role as a further vessel of salvation makes her of rhetorical importance. By means of Verrine's cloth, Vespasien meets Joseph and is converted. The episode in the *Joseph* in which Vespasien is healed by looking upon the image of Christ on a cloth appears to have been an established legend by the time Robert was writing. The Veronica legend appears in both the seventh century *Cura sanitatis Tiberii* and the eighth century *Vindicta salvatoris,* which recount the tale of a cloth that was used to wipe Christ's brow on His way to the cross and which later became responsible for performing miraculous cures. According to legend, whoever looked at the cloth in faith beheld there Christ's image and was immediately healed.[54]

In her explanation of how she came into possession of Christ's image on the cloth, Verrine reveals that she has had a direct encounter with Him on His way to the Cross. At first, she denies all knowledge of the cloth, but when she sees that the truth is about to be disclosed, decides to allow her cloth to be used to heal the Emperor's son. Her decision precipitates the healing and subsequent conversion of Vespasien, and his desire to avenge the death of Christ. The vessel is not present in the Verrine section, but Verrine and her cloth illustrate the importance of the need for a personal encounter with Christ in order to be healed and saved.

Verrine, as stated earlier, is another vessel of salvation; but she also provides Robert with the opportunity of amplifying his material by introducing an existing and well-known story into his work. The legend of Veronica, as she is commonly called, as possessor of an image of the Lord is first found in the apocryphal *Cura sanitatis Tiberii,* where she first denies that she possessed a likeness of the Saviour but finally produces it under compulsion, and with it accompanies an envoy to Rome where it cures Tiberius. In the *Mors Pilati,*[55] these events are combined with an account of Veronica who possesses an image of Jesus imprinted by Him on a linen veil that she refuses to sell. Other apocryphal

and legendary accounts, especially the *Vindicta salvatoris,* contributed to the diffusion in the West of the legend of Veronica, as Robert knew and exploited it. It is not the actions of this woman which are important in themselves. The Veronica presented in the *Joseph* cannot help but act the way she does; she has been imported into the story from other sources through what Ryding describes as 'the principle of free association'. The medieval writer could amplify his story by adding more narrative matter from the 'considerable stock of stories [...] which was the basis of his craft'.[56]

What needs to be addressed at this point are the reasons behind Robert's choice in inserting this legend into his narrative. On one hand, an element of narrative interlacing is involved. The Verrine episode and the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Vespasien digress from the main narrative, but perform the necessary bridging function between the scenes of Joseph's incarceration and eventual freedom at the hands of the newly healed Emperor's son. The passage provides background information on how Joseph is rescued and comes to establish a company of disciples. On the other hand, Verrine provides another vessel image. She holds the image of Christ and thus is a vehicle for Vespasien's salvation. With Verrine as intermediary, Vespasien is saved from physical death, as he is cured of leprosy and spiritual death through his conversion.

Anne is the fifth female character in the *Joseph.* She is mentioned in the text, but merely as Mary's mother with her 'ventre saintefiee' (v. 70). This story comes from the *Pseudo-Matthew* and *Protevangelium of James.*[57] There are over 100 extant Greek manuscripts containing all or part of the *Protevangelium of James*, which led to parallel development of the Latin infancy gospels such as the *Pseudo-Matthew* and the *De nativitate mariae*, both attributed to Jerôme.

Anne is the vessel for bearing the one who is to bear the Messiah. That she achieves this after having been considered barren makes her part of the overall plan of salvation as one of the chosen ones who serve God's purposes on earth. The *Protevangelium of James* has Joachim think of Abraham, 'to whom in his last days God gave a son, Isaac'. Similarly, Anne thinks of Sarah, asking God to bless her and heed her prayer, just as He 'blessed the womb of Sarah and gave her a son, Isaac'.[58] Anne's story bears a marked resemblance to Hannah's bearing of Samuel in the Old Testament[59] and Elizabeth's late conception of John the Baptist in the New Testament.[60]

Enygeus is the only female character in the *Joseph* for whom we have no point of reference or associated ideas from other literature.[61] She is first introduced as Joseph's sister (v. 2307) and immediately after she is referred to as Bron's wife (v. 2313). She is mentioned again in God's explanation to Joseph of the Grail Table, where Joseph is told that a place was to be left empty until Enygeus had a child from Bron, her husband. In the same way as Anne and Mary are vessels of salvation and redemption, Enygeus is important for the child she is to bear (vv. 2532, 2794).

Enygeus expresses her concern at how she and Bron are to bring up their 12 sons. She advises her husband, albeit addressing him in somewhat deferential tones as *seigneur*, to go and speak to Joseph about the situation, where her use of the verb *deüssiez* implies obligation. He replies that he had been thinking the same thing (v. 2849). She is, at first, amazed at what Bron tells her Joseph has advised, but she shows that she is adaptable and ready to accept what she is told, as she tells Bron to 'feites ce que vous devez' (v. 2936).

Enygeus appears almost as Bron's conscience, sharing his thoughts and affirming his responsibilities. It is her relationship to Joseph which ensures Bron's success and apparent fame, as the Rich Fisher is said to have had many things written about him (v. 3457) and 'toujours croistera s'onneur' (v. 3346). In the role of mother, she brings Alein into the world, who, as a Grail guardian, will pass the secret of the Grail down the hereditary line. The sin of Joseph's company will be redeemed by Enygeus' child who is to fill the place left empty at the Grail table (vv. 2531ff.). The possibility of regeneration is represented in the line of Grailkeepers.

Female characters appear in the *Joseph* in a supporting role for men who are striving to come to an understanding of the personal relationship that is possible for them with Christ and the promise of salvation which this ensures. Women in the *Joseph* reflect and reinforce the nature of the Grail as an intermediary vessel between man and God. In so doing, their function may be seen as a rhetorical device.

Mary is the supreme symbol of the vessel, as she carries the Saviour within her. The other women reinforce this image by representing various aspects of the Grail as depicted by Robert, emphasizing the need for a personal relationship with Christ in order to be saved. Eve illustrates the need for Grace as a result of the frailty of the human condition answered in the cup of the Last Supper; Mary Magdalene is used as a vessel for Christ's teaching on repentance; Verrine is portrayed as a further vessel of salvation, enabling Vespasien to know Christ and be healed; and Enygeus and Anne are vessels of the new life and destiny they contain within.

It is indeed simplistic to see Robert's work as a quasi-quest romance in which the knight has various female characters as adjuncts. In the *Joseph*, women and Grail combine in a striking rhetorical illustration of the relationship with Christ, which is possible and indeed necessary, if one is to achieve salvation. The didacticism of the *Joseph*, combined with the problematic attempt to define the ambiguous function of women, gives a greater role to the female characters than that of Marian imitators. The female characters are central to the message of the text and are as much vehicles of redemptive qualities as the Grail itself.

What of the 'hero', the title character? Richard O'Gorman credits Robert with being the first to incorporate the legend of Joseph of Arimathea into Arthurian Romance, bringing 'the mysterious Grail into a clear and unmistakeable relationship with the events of the

Last Supper' and thereby linking existing elements of the Grail story with Biblical and pseudo-biblical tradition'.[62]   This is accomplished through the character of the protagonist.   Robert's Joseph is the historical Joseph of the Bible, the Gospel of Nicodemus and the Grail romances, although Robert has exercised a certain amount of poetic licence in his depiction of the man who removed Christ from the Cross.

According to Jerry Ball, the most 'sober and reliable'[63] account of Joseph of Arimathea appears in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.   It offers an objective biographical account supported by references to scripture over which there can be little argument:

> 'JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA, disciple of Jesus Christ who took a prominent role in His burial.   He was named after his birthplace, but at the time of Christ's death he was apparently a resident of Jerusalem, where he had a tomb prepared for himself (Mt. 27.60). He was a man of standing and wealth and was a member of the Sanhedrin (Mk. 15.43). With Nicodemus (Jn. 19.38-42) he assumed the task of burying Jesus in his own tomb (Mt. 27.57-60; Mk. 15.46, Lk. 23.53).   He had not agreed to the Sanhedrin's condemnation of Jesus (Lk. 23.51).   In Mt. 27.57 he is called a disciple, but he was one in secret (Jn. 19.38).   His former timid behaviour stands in contrast to his boldness in asking for the body of Jesus.'

For the most part, this extract avoids controversy by complying with Scripture.   Briefly, the Joseph of the Gospels fulfils four roles.   He is a disciple of Christ: 'When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus' (Matthew 27.57).   He is also a member of the Jewish Council: 'Now there was a man named Joseph from the Jewish town of Arimathea.   He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their purpose and deed, and he was looking for the kingdom of God' (Luke 23.50-51).   All four gospels present him as a petitioner for Christ: 'He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.   Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him' (Matthew 27.58), 'Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus' (Mark 15.43), 'This man went to Pilate and asked him for the body of Jesus' (Luke 23.52), 'After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave' (John 19.38-40). Lastly, he is depicted as Guardian and burier of Christ, an example of which is found in the Gospel of Matthew: 'And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and departed' (Matthew 27.59).   Robert's Joseph comprises the Joseph of Scripture, fleshed out with the Joseph of the Gospel of Nicodemus.   But is that all he is?   How does he amplify Robert's *antancion*?

Joseph's character fulfils Robert's twofold intention to both explain the nature of the Holy Grail as well as to explore the call to salvation and the personal nature of the relationship that was offered with the Saviour Christ.

In his thesis, Jerry Ball discusses in some detail the tradition of Joseph of Arimathea in history and literature, and describes Robert as providing the step which turned the popular tradition of the Gospel of Nicodemus into imaginative fiction.[64] Ball says that Robert has used Geoffrey of Monmouth's history of Arthur as a model for his history of Joseph of Arimathea and is the first to attempt such a history. Ball acknowledges the dissent among critics as to Robert's authorship of certain texts, but all critics agree that Robert de Boron can take the credit for being the one to link Joseph of Arimathea to the Holy Grail and make them both central to the Arthurian tradition.[65] Robert established the basic framework which later writers developed at great length: the bringing of the Grail to Britain, the mingling of the legends of Joseph and Arthur and the establishing of the Grail legend.

According to Ball, the generally accepted view is that the notion of Joseph of Arimathea as Grailkeeper originated with Robert de Boron.[66] Joseph is to entrust the vessel to three persons in honour of the Holy Trinity (v. 872). Along with being entrusted with the vessel itself, Christ also imparts a special knowledge to Joseph in the form of the secret words discussed in Chapter Two.

Ball acknowledges that 'Joseph's role in the scriptures is far more complex than one might first imagine'.[67] The traditional figure of Joseph provides Robert with the *materia* with which to pursue his double *antancion*. The Joseph of the gospels provided Robert with the perfect basis upon which to construct a character who could amplify the need for a personal relationship with Christ, based on faith and service.

The other prominent male characters in the *Joseph* conform fairly strictly to their originals in Scripture, the apocryphal gospels and historical records, with only minor shifts in character delineation to suit the narrative.

Vespasian is important as an historical figure, and his inclusion lends a certain amount of authenticity and credence to the work. Within the work, he amplifies the notion of the necessity of an encounter with Christ in order to be healed and saved. He is also important for his drive for the truth about Christ, truth and knowledge being of particular importance in the *Joseph*.[68] Robert's Vespasian is based on the conflated version of Vespasian found in the apocrypha, which in turn elaborated the figure found in the historical emperor of AD 69. Vespasian's son, Titus, was responsible for the fall of Jerusalem in AD 78, though in the *Joseph* it is Vespasian who wreaks vengeance on the Jews. Robert combines the motif of vengeance found in the *Vindicta Salvatoris*, where it is Titus who is cured of a cancer when he hears of Jesus' miracles, with the *Cura sanitatis Tiberii*, which tells of the healing of a leprous Tiberius once he beholds Veronica's painted image of Christ. In Robert's version of events, Vespasian fills all these roles, being stricken with the rot of leprosy, cured by looking upon Verrine's cloth and, because

of that, desiring information about the man whose image had cured him. When he learns of Jesus' crucifixion, he leads the genocide wrought on the Jews in Jerusalem.

Pilate's inclusion in the narrative is understandable because of his role in the Crucifixion of Christ. After the death of Christ, he becomes embroiled in the concern for truth and the attainment of the authentic facts of the story of Jesus' death, and is given an important role in determining the Jews' guilt for Jesus' death. He delivers a speech which is elaborately designed to elicit their full confession. He is the mouthpiece for the poet who on numerous occasions hints at a damning attitude towards the Jews.[69]

It is interesting to note that in the Gospel according to John, when Pilate questions Jesus about what He has been preaching, he poses the question, 'What is truth?' This does not appear in Robert's text, but perhaps lies behind Robert's placing Pilate at the forefront of the inquest for truth.

Robert is obliged to include Judas as part of his account of the Passion. In the *Gesta Pilati*, Judas is a spy for the Sanhedrin from the outset, with his evil nature being intimated in the Gospel of John when Jesus asks, 'Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil?' (Jn. 6.71). In the *Joseph*, Judas and Moys fulfil parallel functions. Both these characters had the opportunity to become part of the elect, but through their greed and deceitfulness, they deny themselves the possibility of salvation.

> [...] en liu de Judas
> Seroit cil lius en remembrance
> Que il perdi par s'ignorance
> Quant je dis qu'il me trahiroit [...]
> Quant si compeignun s'en alerent
> Et ci avec vous [Moÿsés] leissierent,
> Ce que il touz seus demoura,
> Qu'o les autres ne s'en ala,
> Ce fist il pour toi engignier;
> Or en ha reçut sen louier [...]
> Saches de voir qu'il est funduz
> Dusqu'en abysme et est perduz. (vv. 2778-81, 2801-06, 2813-14) [26]

The origin of Enygeus' husband, Hebron, is somewhat vague. O'Gorman[70] suggests that Robert adopted the name from the Old Testament, where the Hebronites are the third family mentioned as guardians of the Ark of the Covenant: 'Of Kohath were the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites; these are the family of the Kohathites' (Numbers 3:27). Both Alfred Nutt[71] and William Nitze[72] associate Bron's name with the Celtic sea god, Bran. However, this theory has been discounted by O'Gorman, who refutes the theory originating with Nutt and continued most notably by Helaine Newstead. O'Gorman says that these critics 'claimed that Robert, aware of the legends surrounding Bran the Blessed, son of Lyr, shortened Hebron to Bron to bring the latter name into relationship with that of the Welsh sea god,

possessor of a magic cauldron and who, like Hebron, brought Christianity to Britain. This explanation of the shortened form seems farfetched'.[73]

Newstead provides the following points of correspondence between Bron and Bran:

> 1. The names are almost identical in sound and spelling;
> 2. Bron is a wanderer, the leader of a group;
> 3. Bron is connected with the sea through his epithet, the Rich Fisher;
> 4. Bron plays an important part in the Grail service, which closely represents the Hospitality of the Noble Head;
> 5. Bron becomes lord of the Grail, a vessel which provides sustenance and plenty for the starving. He thus possesses, like Bran, a vessel with food-providing and life-sustaining properties. The testing qualities of the Grail resemble those of similar vessels assigned in Irish and Welsh tradition to Bran's closest relatives, Manannan and Manawyd;
> 6. Bron leads his followers to the distant west. Many of Bran's geographical associations are in westernmost Wales;
> 7. Bron is the ancestor of a family of Grail-keepers and sets out to evangelize the west. Parallel, though late and untrustworthy, Welsh traditions make Bran the head of a holy family and the founder of Christianity in Britain.[74]

Loomis is also an advocate of the hypothesis of Celtic origin, and from a series of comparisons between Chrétien's *Perceval* and the *Queste du Saint Graal* draws the conclusion that 'it therefore seems clear, first, that the last part of the *Joseph* contains genuine Celtic material; secondly, that its true nature has been deliberately and successfully disguised by a face-lifting process which makes it look like an apocryphum; and thirdly, that the material has been shifted from Arthur's time, where it belonged, to the first century'.[75]

Any explanation for the provenance of the name and character of Bron, or le Riche Pescheeur, as he is also known, can only be conjecture. There are elements of the Celtic argument which seem convincing. However, within Robert's highly Christian context, are these relevant? Pauphilet remarks on Bron's ambiguous character, saying that 'Bron, beau-frère de Joseph, reçoit un jour de la voix divine l'ordre d'aller pêcher un poisson, et de le mettre à côté du «saint veissel» sur la table où les compagnons commémorent la Cène (on retrouve là le vieux symbole chrétien). Il n'est ni riche ni roi, et il n'a été pêcheur que cette seule fois dans sa vie, et pour quelle pêche! Cependant il s'appellera éternellement le Riche Pêcheur'.[76]

The characters depicted in the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* are not part of real life or a real society, but operate in a literary world. They are not intended to represent real people or real psychological progressions or dilemmas, but exist to support the line of argument that happens to interest the respective poets. For the most part, these characters are imported into the text from exterior sources. They are part of the process of material amplification or intertextual glossing, wherein elements from other texts are deemed appropriate for the elaboration of the author's initial conception of his work. In this respect, characters and characterization become part of an interesting phenomenon, that of 'double amplification.' By this term, I mean that characters are often types, stock characters or recognizeable

historical and literary figures, brought into the text to amplify it and to serve as vehicles for the author's ideas. Broadly speaking, they form part of the *materia* of the work. These characters are, in turn, developed rhetorically through the description of the properties ascribed to them, be they physical or moral, and through their place within the narrative scheme.

1    Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 231.
2    Douglas Kelly, *Medieval French Romance*, p. 157.
3    Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 192.
4    Michèle Perret, 'Statut du nom propre dans *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renaut*, p. 101.   In addition to the names noted by Perret, a comparison of the characters in *Li Biaus Descouneüs* and those recorded in Flutre's *Table des noms propres* shows that Baudins, Carentins, Condrin, Geldras, Goalan, Lanpart, and Malgiers le Gris also appear only in Renaut. Ferdinand Flutre, *Table des noms propres avec toutes leurs variantes figurant dans les romans du moyen âge écrits en français ou en provençal et actuellement publiés ou analysés* (Poitiers: Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, 1962).
5    Rosemary Morris, 'The Knight and the Superfluous Lady: a problem of disposal', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 14 (1988), 111-24
6    Penny Simons, 'The Squire, the Dwarf and the Damsel in Distress: Minor Characters in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *Forum for Modern language Studies*, 32 (1996), 27-36, p. 27.
7    Simons, p. 27.
8    Simons, p. 33.
9    Simons, p. 35.
10   Simons, p. 30.
11   Colleen P. Donagher, 'Socializing the Sorceress: The Fairy Mistress in *Lanval*, *Le Bel Inconnu* and *Partonopeu de Blois*', *Essays in Medieval Studies: Proceedings of the Illinois Medieval Association*, 4 (1987), 69-90, p. 78.
12   Gérard Chandès, 'Amour, mariage et transgressions dans *Le Bel Inconnu* à la lumière de psychologie analytique', in *Amour, mariage et transgressions au moyen âge: actes du colloque des 24, 25, 26 et 27 mars 1983*, ed. by Danielle Buschinger and André Crépin, Université de Picardie, Centre d'Études Médiévales (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1984), pp. 325-33 (p. 328).
13   Philippe Walter, *Le Bel Inconnu de Renaut de Beaujeu: rite, mythe et roman* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), p. 128.
14   Françoise Boiron and Jean-Charles Payen, 'Structure et sens du *Bel Inconnu* de Renaut de Beaujeu', *Le Moyen Age,* 76 (1970), 15-26 (p. 26).
15   Gaston Paris, 'Guinglain ou le Bel Inconnu', *Romania,* 15 (1886), 1-24 (p.6).
16   Lucy Paton, *Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance* (Boston: Ginn, 1903; repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1959), p.176.
17   Laurence Harf-Lancner, *Les Fées au moyen âge: Morgane et Mélusine. La naissance des fées* (Geneva: Editions Slatkine, 1984), p. 243.
18   Paton, p. 2.
19   Paton, p. 173.
20   Paton, p. 176.
21   Emmanuèle Baumgartner, 'Féerie-fiction: *Le Bel Inconnu* de Renaud de Beaugeu', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille ...*, pp. 7-21.
22   Baumgartner, p. 15.
23   John R. Reinhard, *The Survival of Geis in Medieval Romance* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1933), p. 299.
24   Harf-Lancner, p. 35.
25   Harf-Lancner, p. 264; Robert James Ewald, 'The Jungian Archetype of the Fairy Mistress in Medieval Romance' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Bowling Green State University, Ohio, 1977), p. 40.
26   Ewald, p. 42.
27   Ewald, p. 120.
28   Ewald, pp. 120-21.
29   Patricia Terry, *The Honeysuckle and the Hazel Tree: medieval stories of men and women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 22.
30   Anne Berthelot, 'From the Lake to the Fountain: Lancelot and the Fairy Lover', in *Arthurian Women: A Casebook*, ed. by Thelma S. Fenster (New York: Garland, 1996), p. 167.
31   Alice Colby-Hall, 'Frustration and Fulfilment; the Double Ending of the *Bel Inconnu*', *Yale French Studies,* 67 (1984), 120-34 (p. 131).
32   For example, Françoise Boiron and Jean-Charles Payen; Gaston Paris and Hans-Robert Jauss.

33  Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 107.

34  Kelly, p. 192.

35  Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 198.

36  Karen Fresco, *Renaut de Bâgé: Le Bel Inconnu* (New York: Garland), p. 376.

37  *Le Roman d'Enéas*, ed. by J-J. Salverda de Grave, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 1925), II, p. 100.

38  Claude Roussel, 'Point final et points de suspension; la fin incertaine du *Bel Inconnu*', in *Le Point final; actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand* (Clermont-Ferrand: Association des Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Clermont-Ferrand, 1984), 19-34 (p. 26).

39  Emma Jung and Marie-Louise Von Franz, *The Grail Legend* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), p. 114.

40  Romans 9. 20-23, Potter and vessel; Jeremiah 18. 2-6; 19. 10-11; Isaiah 29. 15-16.

41  R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); E. Jane Burns, *Bodytalk: When Women Speak in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Joan Ferrante, *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

42  Morris, p. 111.

43  Sophie Hand, 'Fusing the Biblical and the Arthurian: A Study of Robert de Boron's Poetic Craft in the *Joseph d'Arimathie* and the *Merlin*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Wisconsin, 1992), p. 5.

44  Hand, p. 22.

45  John Matthews, *The Grail: Quest for the Eternal* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), p. 16.

46  Matthews, p. 16.

47  Matthews, p. 15. The Litany of Loreto is traceable to the early Middle Ages and shows the influence of Marian devotion in the East, where lists of gracious titles of Our Lady were not uncommon; *New Catholic Encycopedia* (New York, 1967), 8, pp. 993-94.

48  Luke 1. 28.

49  Mary's beauty, chastity, wisdom and devoutness are described at length in the 'Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew', in Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: being the apocryphal gospels, acts, epistles and apocalypses, with other narratives and fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 88.

50  causa nostrae laetitiae    cause of our joy
    foederis arca    Ark of the Covenant
    turris Davidica    tower of David
    turris eburnea    tower of ivory
    domus aurea    house of gold
    sedes sapientiae    seat of wisdom
    speculum justitiae    mirror of wisdom
    Regina prophetarum    Queen of prophets

51  John 14. 16, 26.

52  Romans 8. 28.

53  Luke 7. 36-38; Mark 14. 3; Matthew 26. 6-8.

54  Loyal A.T. Gryling, 'The *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* as a Medieval Composite', *Modern Language Journal*, 38 (1954), 15-17.

55  James, pp. 158-59.

56  Ryding, p. 82.

57  James, pp. 158-59.

58  James, p. 57.

59  I Samuel 1.

60  Luke 1. 5-25.

61  O'Gorman supplies a note to Enygeus' name, commenting that, apart from texts associated with Robert de Boron, the name is found only in an independent conclusion to the Second Continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval* where Enygeus figures in the genealogy of Perceval as sister of Joseph, wife of the wounded King and mother of Alain li Gros, Perceval's father (O'Gorman, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, p. 382).

62  O'Gorman, 'The Prose Version of Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie*', p. 453.

63  Jerry Ball, 'Joseph of Arimathea and the Arthurian Tradition' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Tennessee, 1986), p. 6.

64  Ball, p. 55.

65  Ball, p. 63.

66  Ball, p. 96.

67  Ball, p. 23.

68  Grimbert, 'Testimony and Truth...'.

69   'li chien puant' (v. 526); 'Jüis pautonniers' (v. 784); 'la pute gent qui le haïrent' (v. 1051); 'li Jüif, qui sunt de pute eire' (v. 1060); 'li puant renoi' (v. 1797); Diex les maudie!' (v. 1850).

70   O'Gorman, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, p. 383.

71   Alfred Nutt, *Studies on the Legends of the Holy Grail, with Especial References to the Hypothesis of its Celtic Origins* (London: Folklore Society, 1888).

72   William Nitze, 'The Identity of Brons in Robert de Boron's Metrical Joseph', *Manly Studies*, 300-14.

73   O'Gorman, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, p. 383, n. 2310..

74   Helaine Newstead, *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian Romance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 45.

75   R.S. Loomis, *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 117.

76   Albert Pauphilet, 'Au sujet du Graal', *Romania,* 66, 481-504 (p. 497).

# Six

# Techniques of Description

*Descriptio* provides the poet with the opportunity to create an image, and thereby colour the text. By means of *descriptio*, the poet is able to produce text which is aesthetically pleasing as well as relaying information; in short, *descriptio* provides an ideal opportunity for amplification. Through enumerating the various attributes of a character's being or the appearance of a setting, the poet can adequately fill out several lines, if not pages. Yet, there is more to *descriptio* than is implied in Geoffrey of Vinsauf's summary of it:

> sic breve propositum longo producimus ore (*Poetria nova*, v. 667)

'Amplifying by a long description the brief matter proposed', which is Margaret Nims' translation of Geoffey's words, does not explain the multi-faceted function which *descriptio* can have in a text. *Descriptio* not only provides a way to increase the word-count of the text, but it is also a device for reinforcing and enhancing the themes at the heart of the narrative. A more appropriate way of approaching *descriptio* is to consider it as a means of elucidation rather than simple ornamentation. Description is a sophisticated amplificatory device and provides the means by which the narrative may be embellished in order to bring out the authorial *antancïon*.

Both Geoffrey and Matthew present *descriptio* as involving more than simply the representation of characters in the formal and stereotypical portraits which Alice Colby-Hall says are a common feature of medieval romance: 'the long, formal portrait [...] appears frequently enough in the narrative poetry of Chrétien and other twelfth-century writers to make possible many of the linguistic and stylistic comparisons needed to determine the effectiveness and originality of an individual author'.[1] In his *Poetria Nova*, Geoffrey lists *descriptio* as the seventh means of amplifying a text. He demonstrates how a woman's beauty may be amplified:

> Sint variata novis exempla secuta figuris,
> Rebus ut in variis oculos spatietur et auris.
> Femineum plene si vis formare decorem,
> *Praeformet capiti Naturae circinus orbem;*
> *Crinibus irrutilet colr auri; lilia vernent*
> *In specula frontis, vaccinia nigra coaquet*
> *Forma supercilii; geminos intersecet arcus*
> *Lactea forma viae; castiget regula nasi*
> *Ductum, ne citra sistat vel transeat aequum;*
> *Excubiae frontis, radient utrimque gemelli*
> *Luce smaragdina vel sideris instar ocelli;*
> *Aemula sit facies Aurorae, nec rubicundae*

*Nec nitidae, sed utroque simul neutroque colore.*
*Splendeat os forma spatii brevis et quasi cycli*
*Dimidii; tanquam praegnantia labra tumore*
*Surgant, sed modico rutilent, ignita, sed igne*
*Mansueto; dentes niveos compaginet ordo,*
*Omnes unius staturae; thuris et oris*
*Sit pariter conditus odor; mentumque polito*
*Marmore plus poliat Natura potentior arte.*
*Succuba sit capitis pretiosa colre columna*
*Lactea, quae speculum vultus supportet in altum.*
*Ex cristallino procedat gutture quidam*
*Splendor, qui possit oculos referire videntis*
*Et cor furari. Quadam se lege coaptent*
*Ne jaceant quasi descendant, ne stent quasi surgant,*
*Sed recti sedeant humeri; placeantque lacerti,*
*Tam forma gracili quam longa deliciosi.*
*Confluat in tenues digitos substantia mollis*
*Et macra, forma teres et lactea, linea longa*
*Et directa: decor manuum se jactet in illis.*
*Pectus, imago nivis, quasi quasdam collaterales*
*Gemmas virgineas producat utrimque papillas.*
*Sit locus astrictus zonae, brevitate pugilli*
*Circumscriptibilis. Taceo de partibus infra:*
*Aptius hic loquitur animus quam lingua. Sed ipsa*
*Tibia se gracilem protendat; pes brevitatis*
Eximae breviatate sua lasciviat. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 560-97) [1]

Geoffrey invokes Nature as having a hand in her creation and enumerating each of her features in descending order from the gold of her hair to her wonderfully tiny foot, which dances for joy at its smallness. He goes on to say that this already glowing portrait may be added to by providing an account of her clothing, and he recounts the sumptuous fabric and tasteful jewels which may adorn her person:

Formae tam pictae si vis appingere cultum,
Nexilis a tergo coma compta recomplicet aurum;
Irradiet frontis candori circulus auri;
Se nudet facies proprium vestita colrem;
Lactea stelliferum praecingat colla monile;
Instita candescat bysso, chlamis ardeat auro;
Zona tegat medium, radiantibus undique gemmis;
Brachia luxurient armillis; circinet aurum
Subtiles digitos et gemma superbior auro
Diffundat radios; certent in veste serena
Ars cum materia, Nihil addere cultibus illis
Aut manus aut animus possit. Sed divite cultu
Pluris erit facies. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 601-12) [2]

Geoffrey makes it clear that he considers the description of a person's beauty to be a commonplace theme: 'trita et vetus' (*Poetria nova*, vv. 622-23).

The other facet of *descriptio* is treated in the section of Geoffrey's treatise entitled 'Figures of Thought', where *descriptio* presents the consequences and eventualities that can arise from a given situation:

Resque secuturas etiam describit et illas
Quae possent ex re dicta contingere: quadam
Cum gravitate tamen dilucidat omnia plane (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1238-40) [3]

According to Edmond Faral, Matthew considers description 'l'objet suprême de la poésie'[2] and he devotes much of his treatise to a consideration of this device. For Matthew, the art of writing poetry is particularly reliant on skill in description and he credits a substantial amount of weight to it, claiming that:

> [...] referendum est non ad effectum sermonis, sed ad effectum sermocinantis. Verba etenim notanda sunt ex sensu quo fiunt, non ex sensu quem faciunt.
> (*Ars versificatoria*, I.115) [4]

He presents *descriptio* in terms of it being a well-thought-out piece of writing which will edify the reader and add to the text, rather than idle banter whose only purpose is to increase the volume of text.

Further on in his treatise, Matthew reiterates this idea, and indicates the expectation that the reader will look beyond the superficial layer of narrative to ascertain what the author is alluding to by his words:

> ut venustas significatorum in ipsa significantia redundare perpendatur (*Ars versificatoria,* II. 10) [5]

The words carry with them a wealth of associations and images, which, if applied correctly, can enhance the text in which they are placed.

What Matthew is treating in his section on writing descriptions is the presentation of the ideas of the poem. In the subsequent sections, he discusses the elegance of the words, the quality of expression and the execution of the material, but in order to be able to apply these concepts, the poet initially relies on a core sentiment with which he will work. Descriptions allows for the development of themes and provides the means by which the author's *antancïon* may be explored and set in context. For Matthew, literary craftsmanship relies on the adept application of description:

> Et quia in peritia describendi versificatoriae facultatis praecipuum constat exercitium, super hoc articulo meum consilium erit ut, si quaelibet res describatur, in expressione descriptionis maximum fidei praetendatur nutrimentum, ut vera dicantur vel veri similia [...]
> (*Ars Versificatoria*, I.73) [6]

It appears that Matthew considers the purpose of description as a means to explain motivation. Throughout his discourse on description, Matthew emphasizes the need for appropriateness of expression. Clearly he perceives apt description as fundamental to composition as he refers to it in the following definition he gives for verse:

> elegans junctura dictionum, expressio proprietatum et observatum uniuscujusque rei epithetum' (*Ars versificatoria*, I.1) [7]

The way in which a character or setting is described should make plausible the outcome of a situation. That is, the reader is warned about how a character might react or how he or she might be received by the adjectives used to describe them. Matthew's concern with

the plausibility of description means that what is said must be true or seem to be true, a concept which had already been expressed by Horace:

Aut famam sequere aut sibi convenientia finge (*Ars versificatoria*, I.73) [8]

Geoffrey shares with Matthew the same concern that the poet employ relevant expression to both enhance and elucidate his work. Geoffrey divides the path of description into byways. Description is to be both lengthy and lovely: *speciosa* and *spatiosa*. While description provides the poet with the opportunity to write at length on a subject, exploring all its various facets and taking Geoffrey's 'wide path', *cum sit lata*, it must also be undertaken wisely, *sit ipsa laeta*. Words and subject must be harmonious: *in celebri forma faciat res nubere verbis* (l. 556), indicating the role description plays in fulfilling the poet's *antancion*.

In bringing a literary character to life by delineating their various attributes, the poet intends to personify an essential virtue or flaw, that is he wants to allocate praise or blame to the object of the portrait, according to context. This he can achieve by outlining various parts of the body and assigning qualities to these parts. The effect is one of concentrated contemplation. The reader is forced to regard the person being described from the author's perspective. As a consequence, the conclusion the reader may draw about this character will be influenced by the role the author has intended this character to play in the narrative. For example, if a woman's beauty is described at length, it then follows that a man could be so much in love with her that he loses his sense. Matthew gives the example of Jupiter and Callisto:

Amplius, si agitur de amoris efficacia, quomodo scilicet Jupiter Parasis amore
exarserit, praelibanda est puellae descriptio et assignanda  puellaris pulchritudinis elegantia,
ut, audito speculo pulchritudinid, verisimile sit et quasi conjecturale
auditori Jovis medulas tot et tantis insudasse deliciis. Praecipua enim debuit esse affluentia
pulchritudinis quae Jovem impulit ad vitium corruptionis. (*Ars versificatoria*, I.40) [9]

Matthew explains that a poet cannot simply write about the power of love without providing reasons as to what might have evoked this love. To render believable the depth of love which Jupiter experiences for Callisto, the poet provides a description of Callisto's beauty. The same may be applied to Guinglain and the Pucele. Just as Jupiter has a wealth of Callisto's charms to contend with, so too the Pucele's beauty must be presented in such a way that Guinglain's disorientation and generic confusion, whether he is a romance or *lai* hero, is understandable and a natural outcome of being confronted with such perfection.

Matthew is concerned with the appropriate description of action as well as people. At the conclusion of his section on writing descriptions, Matthew discusses the description of an action and outlines nine attributes which are to be taken into consideration when presenting an action:

summa facti, causa facti, ante rem, cum re, post rem, facultas faciendi, qualitas facti, tempus, locus (I. 94) [10]

Matthew's definition reflects the explanatory function of description indicated in Geoffrey's reference to *descriptio* as providing a 'full and lucid account'. The nine attributes listed by Matthew at once establish a context for the action, explain the reasons which lie behind its ocurrence and attempt to support the validity or appropriateness of the action. A description of an action is a presentation of cause and effect.

Matthew's summary of the elements involved in description indicates the multiple aspects of description as a device of amplification:

Quis, quid, ubi, quibus, auxilis, cur, quomodo, quando (*Ars versificatoria*, I.116) [11]

Not only is a character's appearance to be described, but also their location, the events which take place and the motivation behind them. Renaut and Robert's practice in allocating description to each of these parts differs. Renaut makes extensive use of the first three elements of this list, the who, what and where. Robert's text is not as straightforward. Description in the *Joseph* does not involve stereotyped portraits or even brief sketches of characters' appearances or bearing and it would be ridiculous to try and look for ways in which it conforms to the paradigm for description as set out in Renaut. However, Robert exhibits a keen interest in showing cause and effect and in clarifying everything he writes.

The poetics of the *Joseph* are completely different from those of the *Descouneüs* and it is futile to force a comparison. At first sight, the *Joseph* appears to offer nothing of interest by way of lengthy evaluations of a person's physical appearace, their stunning raiment or even a moral description of their inner being. Robert produces a text which in its entirety is a *descriptio*.

In the *Joseph*, the reader is confronted with the essential part of the action in the opening lines:

Diex son Fil envoieroit
Ça jus aval, et soufferoit (vv. 7-8) [12]

The essential part of the action is, in fact, twofold. Christ comes to earth to save His Father's work of creation, so it is the Crucifixion and the Resurrection which are to be the pivotal elements in the drama. While the action itself is vital, the knowledge of this action is just as important and is obvious from the resounding first word, *savoir*. Over the course of the story, Robert develops the cause of these events and relays the story of the Fall from Genesis, recounting Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise and man's subsequent separation fom God. The circumstances of the action, that is what precedes, accompanies and follows the Crucifixion and Resurrection are described and reiterated at length.

Following an apostrophe to the audience that they listen, 'entendez en quantes mennieres' (v. 89) to the way in which God enacted the redemption of humankind, Robert outlines Christ's incarnation within the Virgin Mary's womb. In this passage and the one which follows, Robert relates the events leading up to the Fall, man's separation from God and the subsequent need for God's offer of salvation. He uses words such as 'pour ce' (vv. 105, 139), 'pour tel reison' (v. 130), and 'pour ce besoing' (v. 141). Such words carry explanatory overtones and call attention to the clarification which is expected to follow. The contexts in which these phrases are used all relate to the reason why God sent His Son to earth to suffer and die for mankind.

Robert presents Adam and Eve's sin of *luxure* as the reason which precipitated mankind's suffering:

> Sa fame nu veüe ha,
> A luxure s'abandonna
> [...] Et quant nostres sires ce vist,
> [...] Tantost de delist les gita,
> Si les mist en chetivoison
> Et en peinne pour tel reison. (*Joseph*, vv. 121-22, 125, 128-30) [13]

The cause, then, is the 'luxure' of Adam and Eve and the effect is separation from God and the need for redemption through a third and bridging agent: Christ.

*Luxure* is also the reason given for the suffering experienced by Joseph's community:

> Et cil maus qui leur avenoit
> Par un tout seul pechié estoit
> Qu'avoient entr'eus commencié
> Mout en estoit entechié
> C'iert pour le pechié de luxure
> Pour teu vilté, pour tele ordure. (*Joseph*, vv. 2379-84) [14]

The establishment of the Grail table and a service which follows that of the Eucharist follows the provenance of *luxure* (v. 2383) among the community and the need to separate sinners from the righteous (vv. 2470-72; 2595-2600). Just as Adam and Eve are said to have been expelled from Paradise for their sin, those poeple in Joseph's community who have given themselves over to lust are unable to experience the peace and joy which comes from the Grail, and instead are cast out.

Robert constantly presents cause and effect. Every event is explained and set in context. One episode provides the motivation for the next, so that the narrative in its entirety is seen as a credible whole. The essence of Robert's text is to recount God's salvation of mankind. The recounting of God's salvation of mankind is accompanied by the introduction of the Grail into the story, which becomes of prime importance in the text. Robert builds a complex series of cause and effect scenarios wherein he is at pains to clarify both God's offer of salvation to mankind as well as making credible the significant role the Grail comes to play in its function as intermediary between God and man.

This 'cause and effect' aspect of *descriptio* is also apparent in Renaut, but is presented in a different way. Descriptive devices in the *Descouneüs,* which on the surface may be deemed stereotypical and clichéd, are extremely functional in terms of audience sympathy. The sensory appeal to the emotions of a portrait or other descriptive device can affect the readers' interpretation of some of the incidents in the romance and thus create a certain impact on the romance as a whole. Renaut's narrative is filled with descriptions of people, places, things and actions.

Forms of description in both texts which comply with the *quis, quid, ubi* part of Matthew's formula discussed above, can be categorized into three groups: simple, compound and complex according to the following criteria:

1.Simple description.

Simple description manifests itself in the ornamental epithet.

2. Compound descriptions.

Such descriptions, which fall between simple and complex, are, for the purposes of this chapter, referred to as compound descriptions. Included in this category are commonplace descriptive devices such as hyperbole, inexpressibility, outdoing and references to Nature or God's hand in the creation of beauty.

3. Complex descriptions.

Lengthier descriptions of people, objects, towns, gardens, buildings and furniture build upon the last two categories of simple and compound. They elaborate and qualify ornamental epithets and include the tropes classified here as compound within the description. The centre of interest in a portrait or short description lies in the subject's appearance. Medieval texts present a uniform beauty; a beauty which is reduced to formulaic appraisal. Characters are not to be seen as realistic individuals. Reality should not impinge on the romance. Their formulaic aspect, as well as the intention to lay praise or blame,[3] reinforce the notion that description is the means and the character is the vehicle through which the author can express his *antancïon.*

## 1. Simple Description

Descriptions of people occur frequently in twelfth-century romance. The simplest of these descriptions is achieved through the use of the ornamental epithet. Certain words and patterns of expression are constantly reiterated in descriptions of the people who appear in the romances of the twelfth century. Recurring adjectives of this more general nature are termed ornamental epithet by Gunnar Biller.[4] Use of the ornamental epithet emphasizes the stereotypical presentation of characters. Characters are rarely mentioned without a qualifying adjective and these adjectives are limited to a select group which

seem to form the stock from which a character is to be described. The frequency with which adjectives such as *biel*, *gent*, *avenant, cortois* and *a merveille* appear in Arthurian romance is astounding.

The ornamental epithet, while being one means, albeit a simple one, of describing a character, may be differentiated from the portrait. In a portrait, the character's outer appearance as well as their inner attributes are delineated over a considerable number of verses. The ornamental epithet, on the other hand, expresses in one word a more general beauty or demeanour and is used in a more random and brief fashion outside the portrait.

For Matthew, an epithet shows an attribute belonging to and qualifying a noun, and signifies either something good, bad or indifferent:

> Est autem epithetum accidens alicui sustantivo attributum, pertinens ad bonum vel ad malum vel ad indifferens (I. 2) [15]

After a brief mention of the epithet at the start of his treatise, Matthew moves on to discuss the ways of beginning verse stylishly. He comes back to the epithet in section 44, which follows his categorization of the various qualities in a person which must be addressed when writing a description. He stresses the importance of describing those qualities which set apart the person being described from other people. It is in keeping with this need to differentiate that he goes on to explain that the epithets used to describe people should demonstrate the dominant traits on which most of their reputation rests. When applied to the *Descouneüs*, the majority of the characters who are portrayed have reputations which appear to rest on the fact that they are beautiful, noble and intelligent.

Despite Gunnar Biller's opinion that ornamental epithets are 'appliqués indistinctement à presque tous les personnages'[5] which might render them banal, and that their frequent appearance provides an excellent means of filling out the verse, these formulaic adjectives fulfil an important function. In Renaut's case, they have been used for calculated effect. Aside from their use in the more lengthy portraits, where they are used to qualify specific parts of the body, the text is dotted with brief mention of beautiful, courtly, noble and attractive people. The general attractiveness or demeanour of the characters in the *Descouneüs* is often described in a formulaic way, with Renaut having recourse to the same adjectives repeatedly. Constant recourse to these adjectives captures the concern of the romance to reflect the courtly milieu.

Renaut presents a courtly society which appears noble and good, a model of order and stability. As a matter of course, the people who move within this society are noble and good, which seems within the romance genre to mean that these people are also beautiful. Almost all of the cast who appear throughout Arthurian romance, except for giants, loathly damsels and dwarves, are described in these terms.

The characters who people Arthur's court at *Charlion* (v. 14) are described as *bieles* (v. 27), and from the outset a precedent for beauty is set. Immediately following this description of the fine people and the knights who had proven themeselves in arms, Renaut interrupts the narrative to comment in the first person that he is not lying in relating this. Why should he be so concerned that the reader accept his claims as to the nobility and valour of Arthur's entourage as being the truth? It is important for the courtly milieu to be firmly established as a backdrop against which the events of the narrative are played out. Even the servants are *biaus* (v. 67). Guinglain, then, is a fitting arrival to this beautiful court and is described in like terms.

When the King grants Guinglain the boon he demands, Guinglain thanks him *con cortois* (v. 90). Three lines on, when Gawain brings a cloak for Guinglain and the epithet 'courtly' is used, it is part of Gawain's title; he is *Gawain li cortois* (v. 93). It seems hardly coincidental that father and son are described with the same adjective, even although their familial link has not yet been established.

Even the hero's naming makes use of an ornamental epithet. Guinglain has no knowledge of his name except that his mother called him *bel fil* (v. 124). Unhappy with the newcomer's namelessness, King Arthur bestows a name on him. The King has recourse to rhetoric and the convention of Nature's hand in the beauty of the person being described as he explains what Guinglain's new name will be.

> Ce dist li rois, "Non li metrai
> puis qu'il ne.l set ne jo ne.l sai.
> Por ce que nature i ot mise
> trestoute biauté a devisse
> si k'en lui se remire et luist,
> et por ce qu'il ne se conuist,
> lo Biaus Descouneüs ait non," (*Descouneüs*, vv. 125-32) [16]

The solemnity with which Arthur bestows the newly conceived name becomes ridiculous. His verbosity partly obscures the fact that the new name renders the hero just as nameless as he was when he rode into court. Now instead of *biel fil*, he is *li biaus descouneüs*. Attractive he may be, but he nevertheless remains unknown. His anonymity is, if anything, enhanced by this new appelation, since because of it he has had his maternal ties cut. He does not belong. He may be *biaus*, but he has yet to fit; he has yet to prove his generic place.

Epithets mostly appear within the longer portrait; however, there are instances where adjectives are used alone, notably *biele* and *gente*.

When Hélie arrives in court, her general appearance is described as *gente* and *biele*. Tidogolains is also described in glowing terms, and receives a fine array of epithets: *cortois, gent, biel* (vv. 157-66). He is said to be attractive and noble in every way except that he is little:

> Gent ot le cors et biel le vis;
> plus male tece en lui n'avoit
> fors seul tant que petis estoit. (vv. 160-63) [17]

Clarie is also described as *biele* (v. 728) and *gente* (v. 867). Margerie also earns the epithet *biele* (v. 1526). Renaut uses simple description to present the Pucele at her first apearance. She is *gent et biele* (v. 1938). Blonde Esmeree is not given a simple description. Her appearance is either described in portarit form or in the compound devices of hyperbole and outdoing, discussed below.

In juxtaposition to the courtliness of the majority of the cast, Guinglain's first combatant, Blioblïeris, has a heart which is 'fier et felon' (v. 340), as do his companions (v. 586). Malgiers the Gray is described in similar terms with the adjectives: *fel, cuvers, mals, trop tirans et desloiaus* (v. 2035-36). Busby notes that evil characters appear in Chrétien's romances to provide the hero with an opportunity for proving himself. For Busby, these figures, 'may be seen to provide occasions for the hero to demonstrate his qualities, sometimes within the framework of the expiation of his fault'.[6] The evil characters who appear in the *Descouneüs* are not of the type described by Busby. Busby has these characters fulfilling 'a specific narrative function and whose contact with the Arthurian court or the hero is brief but catalytic'.[7] Guinglain's aggressors do not effect a change in the protagonist. Entering into combat against these characters reinforces Guinglain's status as hero, but he does not undergo change or education as a result of combat.

Leyerle lists conflict with opponents as one of points in the literary paradigm he uses to describe the game and play of hero:

> 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.[8]

Frye explains this in more detail in his essay entitled the 'Theory of Myths.'[9]

> 'A quest involving conflict assumes two characters, a protagonist or hero, and antagonist or enemy [...]. The enemy may be an ordinary human being, but the nearer the romance is to myth, the more attributes of divinity will cling to the hero and the more the enemy will take on demonic mythical qualities. The central form of romance is dialectical: everything is focused on a conflict between the hero and his enemy, and all the reader's values are bound up with the hero.'

The hero becomes associated with all that is right and good, whilst the enemy is the epitome of evil. The presence of these villains also suggests the paradox which exists in Arthurian romance. What Frye is discussing occurs in the two texts under consideration. Adjectives at each end of the spectrum of good and bad are employed by Renaut.

The Arthurian society, which is established and lauded as the epitome of courtliness, is an artificial construct. The ideals so often associated with the Arthurian society and reinforced through the constant use of the ornamental epithet may well be the result of

vision through rose-coloured spectacles. That there exist knights such as Blioblïeris and Malgiers the Gray, and giants who would rape a young maiden, and that the three avengers would even consider attacking a single unarmed knight is evidence enough that the Arthurian society is by no means perfect. At a first glance, it appears that the three avenging knights are an exception to the courtly code of conduct. It is then intimated in Renaut's digression that their lack of moral fibre is symptomatic of a general malaise. The constant use of favourable adjectives to describe the Arthurian society and those who operate within, highlights the deceptive nature of literature and the need to look beyond what is superficially apparent.

Despite the fact that Robers receives frequent mention and is presented in favourable terms, he has no identity of his own. Whenever he is mentioned, it is either in relation to his master, Guinglain, in serving him, reacting to something Guinglain has said or done, or with an epithet adorning his name. He is 'sages et apers' (v. 278), 'preus et loiaus' (v. 618) and 'molt fu sages et apers' (v. 938). Descriptive 'tags' such as 'li preus Robers' (v. 959), 'et Robers, qui ne fu pas vilains' (1232), while seemingly personal reflections on Robers' own character, function more as a reflection and extension of the hero's character. Wherever Guinglain is, his squire will be in close proximity: 'Robert troverent a ses piés' (v. 3538).

Orguillous de la Lande is 'avenant et biel' (1311), but more importantly he is of 'haut parage' (v. 1367). In this case, ornamental epithets serve to reinforce the knight's nobility and his concept of honour. He is prepared to defend his honour no matter how trivial the issue. That a combat between two fine and handsome knights ensues over the possession of a dog is almost comical, and yet any form of combat provides the hero with the opportunity to prove himself. It is highly desirable for him to be pitted against someone who is attractive and strong as it reflects well on his own status. According to Leyerle, '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 larger numbers'.[10] Much of the hero's worth is reliant both on the circumstances in which he is placed as well as the other characters he is seen to interact with. It is the hero's lot to be described in these terms in order that he might appear credible to the reader as the central feature of the narrative.

There is not the same need for Robert's text to exude the courtliness of the *Descouneüs*. Ornamental epithets appear rarely in the *Joseph*. Chaÿphas is described as a *preudons* (v. 268) as is Brons (v. 2312), but that is the extent of the praise meted out to characters. There is no question of establishing a hierarchy of characters in the *Joseph*. Individual characters do not need to be set apart from others by their beauty or valour. There is much more a sense of a collective quest for the truth in the *Joseph*. What is seen to be

important in this text is discovery, learning and a coming to terms with the universally required knowledge that only God's Grace could provide fulfilment. It is the Grail, as representative of this Grace and the means by which it could be achieved, which is most often the recipient of epithets in this text.

The first time the Grail appears, it is the vessel which Christ used to perform the Last Supper and a Jew finds it at Simon's house. It is described as 'un veissel mout gent' (v. 395). When Christ entrusts the vessel to Joseph in prison, it is described as 'le veissel precïeus et grant' (v. 852), for now it contains the blood of Christ, making it twice-hallowed. When the vessel is described as *precïeus* for a second time, it is part of the rhyme, *precïeus* and *glorïeus* with the rhyme, 'sans glorïeus' (v. 2452), consolidating the fact that it is Christ's blood which has made the vessel precious. The qualifying adjectives which are used in conjunction with references to the Grail owe their nobility entirely to the function the vessel has performed and to the worth of the person who carried out this act, Christ. Even at this simple level, the symbolic nature of the Grail is implied. The Grail is not to be seen as an object of veneration in itself, but for the purposes of Robert's *estoire*, it is the vessel through which man can communicate with God.

## 2. Compound Description

The twelfth-century poets employed tropes of hyperbole, outdoing, inexpressibility and the creative force of Nature to describe people in terms of what Colby-Hall refers to as 'ideal beauty':[11]

> 'Beauty is referred to so often that the reader soon becomes aware of a pattern in the way in which this kind of praise is meted out. Ordinarily a person is either very handsome, more handsome than someone else, or indescribably handsome; and his comeliness is frequently the work of God, of Nature, or of both of them.'[12]

These devices are often part of the longer portrait, although they also appear outside of them as the narrator inserts, for example, a hyperbolic interjection to exclaim over a particular character's beauty.

Nature is often evoked as having a hand in the creation of a beautiful character. References to Nature, or God's creative role in shaping a beautiful character, contribute to the stereotyped quality of the descriptions of general physical attractiveness. Curtius notes that in late Antiquity, a man or woman's beauty is often represented as a gift of Nature: 'One of [Nature's] functions is to create beautiful places and beautiful human beings [...] In the Latin poetry of the eleventh and twelfth centuries this topos is extraordinarily frequent'.[13] The newly developed genre of courtly romance adopted this practice for its own in the clichéd descriptions, such as those appearing below in Renaut. Renaut does not cite God's role in creating beauty. It is always Nature which is presented as creator. In keeping with Chrétien, who describes only those characters who are

influential in terms of the plot, as products of Nature's creative force (Enide, v. 411; Fenice, v. 2727; Cligés, v. 2788; Laudine, v. 1500), Renaut has recourse to this device to describe his protagonists. In so doing, he sets Guinglain, the Pucele and Blonde Esmeree apart from the rest of the characters.

In naming Guinglain *li Biaus Descouneüs*, Arthur declares that Nature sees in him her shining image, so that he has been created in the very likeness of her:

> Por ce que Nature i ot mise
> trestoute biauté a devisse
> si k'en lui se remire et luist [...] (*Descouneüs*, vv. 127-29) [18]

Guinglain is overcome at his first sight of the Pucele. Her beauty is described as a gift from Nature which has rendered her more lovely than any other lady who has lived:

> Si l'avoit bien Nature ouvree
> et tel biauté li ot donee
> que plus bel vis ne plu bel front
> n'avoit feme qui fust el mont (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2227-30) [19]

Nature is also said to have had a hand in making Blonde Esmeree more lovely in every way than anyone else in the world:

> Tant le sot bien nature ouvrer
> c'onques si biele n'ot el mont (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3268-69) [20]

Nature's studious treatment of her beauty is reiterated:

> Issi l'avoit Nature faite;
> par grant estude l'ot portraite (*Descouneüs*, v. 3277-78) [21]

This is a veritable beauty pageant of a text. It is hard to distinguish between the beautiful women who populate the romance. In this respect, Colby-Hall's levels of praise are a useful means of approaching the treatment of beauty in the two texts under consideration: 'A large number of the many references to beauty represent one of three clearly perceptible levels of praise which themselves cause the portraits to seem more stereotyped'.[14] Colby-Hall's first level of praise comprises the words and phrases which I have classified as 'simple description'. She includes hyperbole in this first level, while I include it with other tropes on a more advanced level.

Hyperbole produces a larger-than-life effect. As a literary device, the exaggeration and overstatement of fact heightens the emotional impact of a statement and is designed to impress upon the reader the particular feature, most often the beauty, of the person being described.[15] Renaut exploits hyperbole as yet another means of flaunting the conventions of the romance. Almost all the characters in the *Descouneüs* are described using the same hyperbolic sentiment. It is as though they have all been cut from the same cloth. Hyperbole contributes to the stereotypical nature of the portrait as well as the shorter

descriptions, with the frequency of *mout/molt* as a qualifying adjective attesting to the intensity of beauty the reader has before him.

According to Colby-Hall's categories, the second level of praise accorded to physical attractiveness is formed by those passages which show how great the person's beauty is when compared to that of one other handsome individual, or to that of any member of a certain group of people. The man or woman being portrayed may equal or surpass some historical or legendary figure whose exceptional beauty is well known, such as Narcissus or Helen of Troy. In fact, superiority of some sort to a traditionally famous person or thing is such a common theme in classical and medieval panegyric that Curtius has classified it as a *topos* and called it the 'topos of outdoing'.[16] A character may be presented as more beautiful than any of the inhabitants of a given city or country. More often than not, his or her comeliness exceeds that of any person of the same sex or, not uncommonly, of either sex, who is living at the time of the story. In even more superlative terms, the character is more attractive than anyone who has ever dwelt on earth. Renaut simply uses either a superlative that the character is the most beautiful, or the best. He does not compare them to any individual or group in particular or else he has recourse to the phrase, 'in the world': *en tout le monde /el mont /el monde*, so that they are set apart from any other person on the planet.

All who saw Guinglain said that 'si biel homme ne savoient' (v. 100). Hélie, Margerie and the Pucele are all 'si biele riens ne fu vu' (vv. 138, 1528, 2218). 'Ja nus hom ne demant plus biele' (v. 708). There was no one better in any land than Margerie (v. 1532) and 'onques nus hom ne vit tant biele' (v. 1536). More specifically, 'plus bel cors n'ot nule pucele' (v. 1551) and 'onques si biele ne fu nee' (v. 1754). Renaut describes the Pucele in the same way as he does Margerie. The Pucele is so beautiful that that 'onques nus hom ne vit si biele' (v. 1932), with a slight variation in phrasing: 'onques nus hom ne vit tant biele' (v. 2258). She is described three times as having no equal in the world:

> que plus bel vis ne plu bel front
> n'avoit feme qui fust el mont (vv. 2229-30) [22]
>
> onques so bele n'ot el mont (v. 2244)
>
> mais que tant biele ne tant sage
> ne qui tant fust de franc corage
> ne peüst on trover el monde
> qui le cerkast a la reonde (vv. 3989-92) [23]

In an expansive phrase of outdoing, the audience is told that the Pucele compares favourably to other literary beauties such as Elanne, Iseut la Blonde, Blibis, Lavine de Lonbardie, Morgan the Fay and that, in fact, these women did not possess a tenth of her beauty. Renaut says of both Blonde Esmeree and the Pucele that '[c']onque[s] si biele n'ot el mont' (vv. 2244, 3269). Blonde Esmeree is also so beautiful 'c'onques nule fame/ne fu de sa biauté formée' (3260-61) and 'qu'en tot le mont n'ot cele bisse' (v.

5146). Her attractiveness is such 'que nus hom son per ne trovast/en tout le mont, tant le cerkast' (vv. 5269-71) and 'onques n'ot de biauté le quart/nule dame qui don[c] fu nee' (vv. 5176-77). The Pucele and Blonde Esmeree are decribed in equal terms up to a certain point. Yet, the Queen's praise is undercut by mention of the Pucele. As previously mentioned, Renaut details the fairness of Blonde Esmeree's mouth, eyes, face, brow, form, feet and hands and says that nowhere in the world was there anyone as fair, except for the Pucele.

Colby-Hall's third and highest level of praise is that of completely indescribable beauty.[17] In this case, the poet says that he is unable to describe the extraordinary beauty of the person concerned as whatever he comes up with would be entirely inadequate. In Curtius' words, he emphasizes his 'inability to cope with the subject'[18] and Curtius labels this the *topos* of inexpressibility. Inexpressibility seems to be more a device for abbreviating a work than amplifying it. In citing the excuse that there is no phrase good enough to adequately describe a character's beauty, the poet refrains from detail and instead leaves the task to the imagination of the audience. However, while there is a diminution in word-count, the very act of saying that what they are discussing is beyond words is telling in itself, perhaps even more so. With the self-confessed interest the narrator of the *Descouneüs* has in the truth: *si con la letre dist la vie*, it would seem advisable to avoid incredulity in his audience. By using this device of inexpressibility, the narrator intimates that the women in the text are so beautiful that a full description of them would appear fantastic to members of the audience and threaten their acceptance of his work. Yet, by presenting himself as bereft of words, their beauty is nevertheless passively made out to be extraordinary.

It is perhaps at the level of inexpressibility that we can begin to distinguish between those whose beauty is exceptional and those who are above even the exceptional. In this cast of beautiful women, there are only two for whom Renaut is at a loss for adequate words to describe their beauty: Blonde Esmeree and the Pucele. Of the Pucele, Renaut says:

> De sa biauté plus que diroie?
> Por coi plus le deviseroie (vv. 3987-88) [24]

As for Blonde Esmeree:

> Tant estoit fresse et coloree
> que clers ne le saroit descrire,
> ne boce ne le poroit dire,
> ne nus ne le poroit conte (vv. 3262-5) [25]

By a process of elimination, the final two contestants in the battle of beauty are Blonde Esmeree and the Pucele. It then becomes clear that Renaut intends the Pucele to be the *prima donna* of the company of beauties. It is her beauty in general which Renaut reneges on describing, whereas it is only the colour and freshness of Blonde Esmeree's complexion which cannot be described in words. This, in addition to the undermining of

Blonde Esmeree's beauty by comparing her to the Pucele, makes the Pucele the winner. However, the Pucele does not benefit from winning, at least, not in the immediate text. Despite the tricks and wiles the Pucele desperately considers and even employs, it is Blonde Esmeree whom Guinglain marries.

## 3. Complex Description

Complex description goes beyond the relatively straightforward employment of adjectives and tropes which are used to convey the way a person or setting looks. In an ascending scale of difficulty, complex description deals with the portrait as a combination of the previously discussed devices of ornamental epithet, hyperbole, inexpressibility, invocation of nature.

There comes a point in the romance text where particular characters are singled out as being especially beautiful and go beyond the ornamental epithet to earn the right to have a portrait devoted entirely to describing their person in more detailed terms. Alice Colby defines the portrait:

> Descriptions of people varying greatly in length, style, content and degree of organization abound in the romances; but among these there is one kind of description which consists of nothing but pure panygeric or its exact opposite and is so long, so stereotyped in its content, so stylistically ornate, and so well organized that it stands out from its context as a semi-independent unit the purpose of which is not only to give the listener a mental picture of an important character primarily in order to provoke in him an emotional reaction which will affect his interpretation of the work but also to display the writer's skill in the manipulation of stylistic devices. The principal subject matter of a portrait is the person's physical appearance, which serves as a well-defined nucleus around which can be grouped other significant details such as: identity, lineage, age, wealth, education, character traits, talents, popularity, clothing, armor, weapons, and the animal which the person is riding. It is this functional and ornamental descriptive unit which we call a portrait.'[19]

According to Colby-Hall, a description must exceed 22 lines in order to be classed as a portrait: 'the writers seemed to have been conscious of this difference between the portrait and the short description; for, on the whole, they either depict a person at great length or limit their description to 14 lines or less'.[20]

The portrait is a prime example of the way in which rhetorical devices may be used to manipulate audience reception. Description was originally conceived of as fulfilling one of two functions: praise or blame. This emphasizes the power the poet has in eliciting the desired response to his portrait. Geoffrey classifies the inner and outer representation of a character as *effictio* and *notatio*, emphasizing the requisite nature of these devices.

> Sive color vicinus ei, cum corporis ipsam,
> In quantum satis est, effingo vel exprimo formam.
> Deinde quais quasdam notulas, certissima signa,
> Pono, quibus quae sit hominis natura patenter
> Describo: color iste magis meliusque colorat. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1260-65) [26]

It is evident that these two figures are to be used in distinguishing the subject, but that they are to be used consistently with the context.

Objectivity is not a feature of the portrait. The appearance of a portrait serves as an indication that the character being described holds an influential role within the narrative. Or, in Colby-Hall's words, 'a woman deemed worthy of formal portrayal is by definition important and, if she has a lover, either becomes his wife or establishes a permanent liaison with him, provided of course that the love is mutual'.[21] For Renaut, this convention provides ample opportunity for manipulation. He plays on the fact that the reader would expect that a character, especially a woman, who has a lengthy passage of description devoted to her will be significant in the plot, moreover that her great beauty sets her up as a partner worthy of the hero. For Colby-Hall, 'the depiction of ideal feminine beauty — and it is always ideal in the true portrait — often serves the purpose of justifying the love of a knight for a lady'.[22] This assertion echoes Matthew of Vendôme, who, as mentioned above in reference to Jupiter and Callisto, intimates that a lengthy and lovely account of a woman's beautiful attributes commends her to the audience and makes understandable any love interest which might ensue (I.40).

Portraits are part of Renaut's game. In the *Descouneüs*, Renaut depicts a number of women rather than just one whose beauty is described at length, thus he establishes a series of 'false trails' or red herrings and plays with reader expectations. The poet sets the woman destined to be the hero's partner apart from the others by means of her appearance. While all women are beautiful, there is often no doubt as to the one the hero will marry. In the *Descouneüs*, this is not immediately apparent.

The phenomenon of a sucession of beautiful women in a romance and the multiple possibilities they provide for amorous encounters and knightly proving has been the subject of a number of studies.[23] In an article devoted to this theme, Rosemary Morris discusses the problem of how the superfluous women who frequently people the narrative are to be perceived by the reader. Morris makes the point that:

> '[...] medieval romances are characterized first by *length*: prolongation by the multiplication of originally separate episodes. The problem then arises of what to do with originally separate characters. The hero is no problem: as an active, mobile agent he can attach himself to any sets of adventures, and vice versa. Not so the heroine: the same woman can hardly be the prize of a whole series of adventures if the object of each one is to marry her off.'[24]

Their superfluity is a result of their place within the text. That is, the knight undertakes a number of adventures over a number of episodes, but has one ultimate adventure towards which he moves. While beautiful women may present a momentary distraction or pleasant interlude to his quest, if they are not part of the ultimate goal, then they must be left behind.

Guinglain does not appear to have any qualms at leaving the women he rescues, namely Clarie and Margerie. He simply makes other arrangements and the narrative continues. While this superfluity is treated efficiently in the characters of Clarie and Margerie, the question as to which of the two leading ladies is superfluous remains unanswered, both within and beyond the text. This, for all its ambiguity, is what Renaut intends, and the lack of resolution as to which woman he will.end up with fulfils the authorial *antancïon* to explore literary convention.

The first woman the reader encounters, apart from the unnamed women at Arthur's court (v. 56), is a beautiful, forthright young woman who seems entirely suitable as a companion to the hero, but for her social and literary rank. She is lady-in-waiting to the queen, and although the hero is of unknown descent and rank, he is the hero after all and is destined to marry a title. She is also the instigator of the quest and not the goal. Her function is to accompany the protagonist through the narrative, providing him, and at the same time the reader, with explanations for various events, and commenting on the hero's progress on the scale of worthiness.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, Hélie fulfils an important role within the narrative. She is one of the most consistent figures in Guinglain's story. With Hélie's arrival in court and her plea for help in rescuing her mistress from enchantment, Guinglain's quest is established. The hero now has motivation and purpose and can set about the task of being heroic. It is not surprising that the reader should become slightly confused as to Hélie's role in Guinglain's life. Renaut describes Hélie using all the terms usually reserved for the significant women figures of the plot.

> Quant l'aventure ert avenue [...]
> vint a la cort une pucele
> gente de cors et de vis biele.
> D'un samist estoit bien vestue;
> si biele riens ne fu veüe.
> Face ot blance con flors d'esté,
> come rose ot vis coloré;
> les iouls ot vairs, bouce riant,
> les mains blances cors avenant.
> Biel cief avoit, si estit blonde —
> n'ot plus biel cief feme ne home. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 133-44) [27]

Renaut has recourse to hyperbole, describes her complexion, her hair, her smiling mouth. She is well dressed and rides a mount worthy of a king or count. Hélie is both beautiful and intelligent. On a number of occasions, such as the night Guinglain and Hélie sleep side by side, with Hélie's head resting on Guinglain's arm (vv.623-27), or the occasions when Guinglain seeks and respects Hélie's advice (vv. 2331), the reader (or this reader, at any rate) cannot help but wonder what would happen if Guinglain had simply eloped with Hélie.

Clarie performs a minor role. She provides the motivation for Guinglain's combat with the giants and is described as a lovely maiden. But she is not one of Guinglain's women. In addition to a conventional use of hyperbole, 'ja nus hom ne demant plus biele' (v. 708), Clarie is given only a two-line description remarking on her loveliness and her complexion, where her general appearance and demeanour is described using an ornamental epithet, *gente*, and her cheeks are 'fresse et noviele' (v. 868). Clarie tells Guinglain that he has won her in combat (v. 899), however Guinglain does not acknowledge her statement of self-bestowal. This is perhaps only a formality anyway as Clarie seems unconcerned at his failure to take her up on the offer and is described as being overjoyed (v. 1230) when he sends her back to her family with the defeated Lord of Saie.

It is obvious that Clarie will not feature as a significant character by dint of the brevity of her description and the polite but distant interest the hero shows in her. Margerie, on the other hand, is the second woman presented in portrait form. In terms of the convention mentioned by Colby-Hall and discussed above, this would make her an obvious choice to be the recipient of the hero's favour.

> Encontré ont une pucele
> en lor voie, qui molt ert biele.
> D'un drap de soie estoit vestue;
> si biele riens ne fu veüe.
> La pene d'edres fu bendee,
> d'ermine, de gris geronee;
> li sebelins molt bons estoit —
> en ul païs millor n'avoit.
> Molt fu la demoissele gente,
> sa crans biautés molt atalante
> a cels qui virent la pucele.
> Onques nus hom ne vit tant biele:
> le front ot large et clier le vis
> et blnc con est la flor de lis;
> les sorcils peu noirs et vautis,
> delgiés et grailles et traitis;
> le vis avoit si colouré
> come le rose el tans d'esté;
> bien fait boce, dens petistes —
> de plus biele parler n'oistes.
> Les crins ot blon et reluissans
> come fin or reflanbloians;
> d'un fil d'argent fu galonnee,
> si cenaçoit escevelee;
> Les iols ot vairs, le front bien fait;
> maisn ot blances, cors bien portrait—
> plus bels cors n'ot nule pucele. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1525-51) [28]

However, as Colby-Hall rightly points out, the reason behind the poet's extolling of Margerie's beauty and charm is to provide an explanation of the motivation behind the sparrowhawk contest. Colby-Hall explains that 'the girl's appearance is presented merely

in order to explain Guinglain's sympathy and his offer to avenge her lover's death by doing battle with Giflet in the Joust of the Sparrowhawk'.[25]

> Cil li respont qui se li dist,
> 'Bon gré l'en saroies, je cuit,
> qui vos rendroit cel esprevier
> et vostre ami porroit vengier.'
> Cele respont, 'Sire, por voir,
> bon gré l'en devroie savoir.
> Grant cose i vauroie avoir mise
> qu'il fust vengiés a ma devise.
> Qui mon ami porroit vengier,
> cil me porroit bien ensagier
> en tos païs,' ce sidt la biele.
> Et cil respont a la pucele,
> 'Venés o moi, je vos en pri,
> Ne lairai pas, je vos afi,
> que vostre ami n'aille vengier
> et ne vos rende l'esprevier.' (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1633-44) [29]

It is also evident once the deceptive portrait has been given and the characters are seen to exchange words, that there will be no love between them. When Guinglain hears the reason for Margerie's distress, he is described as being filled with pity (v. 1573) and thinks of the combat in terms of avenging Margerie's friend's death. Margerie tells Guinglain that she would be very grateful to whomever would act on her behalf and that he could always count on her good will (v. 1638). There is no question of winning her.

But what of the two leading ladies? How does Renaut distinguish between them? They are both described in portrait form and both are described as being the most beautiful woman in the world.

Renaut provides three portraits of the Pucele. In the first instance, there is a brief prelude to the Pucele's beauty in verses 1931-43, where her beauty, intelligence, marital status and name are touched upon, but not fully treated, as Guinglain has not yet seen her.

> El palais ot une pucele;
> onques nus hom ne vit si biele.
> Les set ars sot et encanter
> et sot bien estoiles garder
> et bien et mal — tot ço savoit.
> Merveillous sens en li avoit.
> Cele estoit dame del castiel:
> molt ot le cors et gent et biel;
> ses pere n'ot oit fors que li,
> encor n'avoit ele mari. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1931-40) [30]

It is not until after Guinglain's victory in battle that the lady arrives and Guinglain nearly falls over in his amazement at her beauty. Various rhetorical devices are called in to play such as hyperbole, outdoing, the creative force of Nature, the enumeration of her various parts and a description of her clothing and adornments.

> Atant est la dame venue.
> Si bele riens ne fu veüe;

ceste ne trove sa parelle,
tant estoit biele a grant mervelle.
Sa biautés tel clarté jeta
quant ele ens el palais entra
con la lune qu'ist de la nue.
Tele mervelle en a eüe
li Descouneüs quant le vit
qu'il chaï jus a bien petit.
Si l'avoit bien Nature ouvree
et tel biauté li ot donnee
que plus bel vis ne plu bel front
n'avoit feme qui fust el mont.
Plus estoit blance d'une flor,
et d'une vermelle color
estoit sa face enluminee.
Molt estoit biele et coloree.
Les oels ot vairs, boce riant,
le cors bien fait avenant.
Les levres avoit vermelletes,
les dens petites et blancetes,
boce bien faite por baissier
et bras bien fais por enbracier.
Mains ot blances con flors de lis
et la gorge desous le vis.
Cors ot bien fait et le cief blont;
onques si bele n'ot el mont
Ele estoit d'un samit vestue;
onques si bele n'ot sous nue.
La pene en fu molt bien ouvree,
d'ermine tote es[che]keveree;
molt sont bien fait li eschekier;
li orlés fist molt a pris[ier].
Et deriere ot ses crins jetés;
d'un fil d'or les ot galonnés.
De roses avoit un capiel
molt avenant et gent et biel.
D'un afremail sen col frema.
Quant ele ens el palais entra
molt iot gente damoissele!
Onques nus hom ne vit tant biele.
La dame entre el palais riant;
al Descouneüs vint devant,
se li a ses bras au col mis,
puis li a dit, "Li miens amis,
conquis m'avés, vostre serrai." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2217-63) [31]

There is mutual admiration at play in this encounter. Guinglain is obviously very taken with her and she gives herself to him, changing the rules of the custom that had all potential suitors proving themselves worthy over a specified amount of time. All that is done away with, as the Pucele says she will take Guinglain as her husband straightaway without further testing. Yet she does test him by seductively hanging over his bed in scanty apparel and then leaving him unsure of her expectations. The narrator exclaims

over her beauty and plays with contrasts, setting black sable against fair skin, white snow against dark branch, white shift which is seemingly dark against her fair legs.

> Et le Descouneüs pensa;
> vers l'uis de la canbre garda,
> par l'uis la dame voit venir.
> Lors cuide avoir tot son plaissir.
> Sans guinple estoit eschevelee
> et d'unmantiel fu afublee
> d'un vert samit o riche hermine.
> Molt estoit biele la meschine!
> Les taces de sonmantiel
> de fin or furent li tasiel.
> Desus sa teste le tenoit;
> l'orlé les la face portoit:
> li sebelins, qui noirs estoit,
> les le blanc vis molt avenoit.
> N'avoit vestu fors sa chemisse,
> qui plus estoit blance a devise
> que n'est la nois qui ciet sor branche.
> Molt estoit la cemisse blance
> mais encore est la cars molt plus
> qui la cemisse de desus.
> Les ganbes vit: blances estoient,
> qui un petit aparissoient.
> La cemise brunete estoit
> envers les janbe[s] qu'il veoit.
> A l'uis la dame s'apuia. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2391-2415) [32]

The image is one of seduction and it is hardly surprising that Guinglain misconstrues her intentions and feels cruelly mocked when the Pucele withdraws, denying him the pleasure of a kiss.

> Et cil de bon oel l'esgarda;
> un doç baissier prendre cuida
> quant la dame ariere se traist [...],
> Celui a laissié esbahi
> qui molt se tint a escarni. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2447-49, 59-60) [33]

The third time Renaut describes the Pucele at length occurs when Guinglain rushes back to the Ile d'Or with the hope of alleviating the suffering he is experiencing at the hands of love.

> Quant il les vit molt en fu liés,
> car entre eles conut s'amie
> qui menoit cele conpaignie
> et sist sor un blanc palefroi.
> Soeuf anbloit et sans desroi;
> el blanc fu de noir pumelés,
> ses crins sanbloit estre dorés.
> C'est la Pucele as Blances Mains.
> Molt estoit rices ses lorains:
> cent escalates i ot d'or;
> par grant engien le fisent Mor
> car quant li bon palefrois anble,
> si sonnoient totes ensanble
> plus doç que soit harpe ne rote.

Ainc n'oïstes plus douce note
ne de gigle ne de vïele.
Que vos diroie de sa siele
sor coi la damoissele sist?
Uns maistres d'Ilande le fist;
tant par estoit et bonne et ciere
qu'a deviser n'iert pa legiere.
De fin or fu et de cristal
ouvree molt bien a esmal.
La dame ert biele et honneree
et cevauçoit eskevelee.
Son mantiel osta por le caut;
ele avoit vestu un bliaut
ki tos estoit a or batus.
Plus rices dras ne fu veüs;
ovrés estoit et bienet bel.
En soncief avoit [un] capiel
qu'ele portoit por le calor,
Ovrés fu de mainte color —
d'inde, de vert, de blanc, de bis.
Bien li gardoit de l caut le vis.
Portrais i avoit oisials d'or;
li capials valoit un tresor,
Par deriere ot jeté ses crins
plus reluissants que nus ors fins.
Sans guinple estoit; a un fil d'or
ot galonné son cief le sor.
Flans ot bien fais et cors et hances;
molt se vestoit bien de ses mances:
bras ot bien fais et blances main[n]s
plus que flors d'espine sor rains.
De sa biauté plus que diroie?
Por coi plus le deviseroie
mais que tant biele ne tant sage
ne qui tant fust de franc corage
ne peüst on trover el monde
qui le cerkast a la reonde. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3942-92) [34]

The portrait of the Pucele begins with a description of her mount. Renaut cannot find adequate words with which to describe the splendour of the saddle and simply relates that it was made of fine gold and crystal and skilfully inlaid with enamel. The Pucele herself is described both in terms of her beauty and her bearing. Renaut describes her tunic and hat, devoting seven lines to its description. It is expensive and highly coloured with gold birds wrought into the design. Renaut points out twice that the Pucele's hair is loose, perhaps suggesting a freedom from the constraints of the court, where ladies may have been expected to wear a wimple. In any case, her loose hair fosters an atmosphere charged with sensuality. In almost the way Guinglain's eyes may have roved over her form, the Pucele's shapely body, waist, hip, arms and hands are presented to the reader with the narrator posing a rhetorical question wherein he wonders what more he can say of her beauty (v. 3987). He finishes by stressing her physical, intellectual and spiritual superiority and then moves back to the perspective of the eye of the beholder, in divulging that Guinglain had known who she was as soon as he had seen her in the distance. This is a carefully constructed portrait. The action leading up to the Pucele's description is

recounted with urgency. Guinglain greatly wished to see the Pucele and Renaut describes his journey in terms of his haste and his desire:

> mais ains vul de Guinglain conter
> ki ne fine de tost aler.
> La Biele as Blances Mains le tire;
> que le veïst molt le desire.
> De le veïr a grant besoigne;
> vis li est quesa voie alonge [...]
> Guinglains de tost aler ne fine
> vers l'Ille d'Or qui siet sor mer. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3909-14, 34-35) [35]

Guinglain is desperate to see the Pucele, yet Renaut delays his description of her as long as possible and by so doing, creates a sense of the tension experienced by the lover at being withheld from the object of his desire.

Blonde Esmeree is described twice in portrait form. Her features are not described in the same way as the other women. They are certainly listed, but with scant use of qualifying adjectives except the general term, *biele,* which is used to cover all her features. In sharp contrast to the portraits where each part is dwelt on in luxurious contemplation, as in the example provided by Geoffrey, Renaut condenses three conventions: reference to Nature, expression of outdoing and the mention of various parts of her body, into four lines:

> Tant le sot bien Nature ouvrer
> c'onques si bie[le] n'ot el mont
> de bouce, de iols, de vis, de front,
> de cors, de bras, de piés, de mains (vv. 3268-71) [36]

Blonde Esmeree's physical appearance is approached in vague terms. Renaut goes so far as to qualify the above statement of outdoing by saying that nowhere in the world was there anyone as beautiful as Blonde Esmeree — except for Celi as Blances Mains, for none was her equal:

> c'onques si biel[le] n'ot el mont [...]
> fors Celi as Blances Mains,
> quar nule a li ne s'aparele (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3269, 72-73) [37]

Blonde Esmeree's apparel is given much more coverage than her person. Her clothes are described in great detail, more so than the Pucele or any of the other women in the text. In her first portrait, the description of her clothes and jewellery consumes 22 lines, taking up just over half of her total portrait:

> D'une vert popre estoir vestue;
> onques miudre ne fu veüe.
> Molt estoit riches ses mantials:
> deus sebelins ot as tasials;
> la pene fu et bone et fine
> et si estoit de blanc ermine.
> Les ataces qui furent mises
> furent faites de maintes guises.
> Molt par faisoient a proisier:
> ne.s puet on ronpre ne trencier;

ensi les ovra une fee
en i'Ille de la Mer Betee.
De cel drap dont li mantials fu
fu li blials qu'ele ot vestu.
Molt estoit ciers et bien ovrés;
d'une ermine fu tos forrés.
Plus de cinc onces d'or sans faille
avoit entor le kieveçaille;
as puins en ot plus de quatre onces.
Par tot avoit asis jagonsses
et autres pieres de vertu
qui furent deseur l'or batu. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3279-3300) [38]

In her second portrait, her apparel is described over 26 lines:

En une canbre encortinee
s'en est don[c] la roïne entre[e].
Ilueques se fait atorner
de chiere reube d'Outremer
qui tant estoit et biele et riche
qu'en tot le mont n'ot cele bisse —
caucatri, lupart ne lion,
ne serpent volant ne dragon,
n'alerion ne escramor,
ne papejai ne espapemor,
ne nesune bieste sauvage
qui soit en mer ne en bocage —
qui ne fust a fin or portraite.
Molt estoit la roube bien faite!
El matiel ot pene de sable
qui molt fu bone et avenable.
Li orles estoit de pantine. [...]
Et d'une çainture de soie
a or broudee tot entor
si s'en estoit çainte a un tor
molt cointement la damoissele. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5141-57, 5166-69) [39]

This detailed description of her clothing precedes brief mention of her physical grace and beauty as well as her courtly speech:

Or fu tant avenans et biele
que nus hom ne trovast
en tout le mont, tant le cerkast.
De parler ne fu mie fole;
cortoisse fu de sa parole.
D'amor estoit si regar[t].
Onques n'ot de biauté le quart
nule dame qui don[c] fu nee. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 5170-77) [40]

It is as though Renaut describes the Queen in the same indifferent manner as Guinglain seems to view her. He agrees to marry her if it is Arthur's will, saying:

"volentiers vos prendrai a fame
se Artus le me velt loer,
et je irai a lui parler
car sans lui ne le ferai mie.
Iço serroit grans vilonnie
se je prendoie sans son los

feme; mais je ne vel ne n'os,
mais lui irai consel rouver.
Sans lui ne me vel marïer." (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3404-12) [41]

While he does concede that she is 'biele et saje' (v. 6193) and 'se li plot molt en son corage' (v. 6194) she is just not the Pucele.

Having looked at the way in which the female characters are portrayed in the *Descouneüs*, let us now consider the male characters. Perhaps Renaut was following Matthieu of Vendôme in the distinction he makes between his descriptions of men and women. Matthieu says that 'amplius, in femineo sexu approbatio formae debet ampliari, in masculino vero parcius' (I.67). While it is appropriate to dwell upon and appreciate a woman's beauty, this is not the proper way to praise a man. He continues this train of thought by providing the qualities which are acceptable when used to describe a man: 'scilicet rigor virilitatis, quae in negligentia prosperitatis et adversitatis perpenditur' (I.71) [42].

Certainly, the men in the *Descouneüs* are more often described in terms of their bearing, their arms or their horses. However, they are not described in portrait form. Guinglain is 'sages et pros et cortois'(v. 4391) and seemed all that a knight should be (v. 76). The dwarf, too, is *cortois* and *bien apris* and is twice descibed as neither *faus* nor *vilains*, although, as mentioned previously, this is more for reasons of rhyming than anything else. Orguillous de la Lande is described as being *de haut parage* and Giflet, in terms of his arms and horse: *bien fu armés...bel ceval*. Lanpart's armour is *blance* and *fine* and as a chevalier, 'molt ert prous et alosés'. The knight who challenges Guinglain at the Gaste Cité is also described in terms of his chivalric demeanour. He is *corsus, grans et fiers* (vv. 2999-3000).

As for physical appearance, Guinglain's general appearance is simply described as *biel*. The dwarf and Giflet are both described as *gent* and *biel* and Orguillous de la Lande is *avenant* and *biel*. Amongst the male characters, *biel* is the most frequently used epithet.

In addition to describing characters at length, Renaut describes towns and settings, often in portrait form. That is, he enumerates features of the cities at length and applies certain qualifying adjectives to them in much the same way as the beauty of a woman is described.

Matthew of Vendôme stresses the importance of the appropriateness of a description based on time or place. He says that unless the description is of importance to the audience in furthering their understanding of the text, it should be left out :

Nisi enim temporis aut loci amminiculo aliquid auditori velimus intimare,
supersedendum erit loci descriptioni (*Ars versificatoria*, I, 110) [43]

G.D. West discusses the practice of describing towns in an article devoted solely to this subject.[26] West describes Renaut's first description, that of Becleus (vv. 1500-16), as one of the best examples of imitation of the First Brut model in all octosyllabic romances.[27]

> un castiel de pres [ont] veü
> qui molt estoit et bons et bials.
> Becleus avoit non li castials.
> Tot entor cort une riviere:
> por poissons nul millor ne quiere,
> et si porte l'iaue navie;
> par la i vient la marcandie
> dont li pasages molt valoit.
> De molins plenté i avoit,
> et rivieres et praeries,
> et si ot grans gaaigneries.
> D'autre part les viegnes estoient,
> qui plus de dous liues tenoient.
> Li castiels fu clos de fosés
> grans et parfons et lons et lés.
> Sur les fosés hals murs avoit
> dont li castials tos clos estoit. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1500-16) [44]

As for the Brut model, itself, Wace describes Karlion in the following way:

> La cité ert bien herbergiee
> E mult esteit bien aaisee;
> A cel tens, ço distrent li hume,
> De riches palaiz semblot Rome.
> Karliun dejuste Usche siet,
> Un flum ki en Saverne chiet;
> Cil ki d'altre terre veneient
> Par cele eue venir poeient;
> De l'une part ert la riviere,
> De l'altre la forest pleniere.
> Plenté i aveit de peissun
> E grant plenté de veneisun;
> Beles erent les praeries
> E riches les guaaineries.
> Iglises out en la cité
> Dous, de bien grant autorité:
> L'une ert de saint Juile, un martyr,
> Nonains iout pur Deu servir,
> L'altre esteit d'un suen compainun
> Que l'om clameit saint Aarun;
> La fu li siez de l'evesquied [...]
> Bon ert a cel tens Karlion,
> Ne fist puis se empeirer non. (*Brut*, vv. 10207-36)

Other examples of this model feature in the Chrétien corpus. In *Erec and Enide*, Carnant is described in similar terms:

> a Carnant vindrent a un jor,
> ou li rois Lac ert a sejor
> en un chastel de grant delit;
> onques nus mialz seant ne vit.
> De forez et depraeries,
> de vingnes, de gaaigneries,

de dames et de chevaliers,
de rivieres et de vergiers,
de vaslez molt preuz et heitiez,
de gentix clers bien afeitiez
qui bien despandoient lor rantes,
et de dames beles et gentes,
et de borjois bien posteïs
estoit li chastiax bien asis. (*Erec et Enide*, vv. 2259-72) [45]

The *Perceval* also contains this type of description:

[...] un chastel molt fort,
Qui d'une part avoit le port
De mer molt grant et le navie.
Petit valoit mains de Pavie
Li chastiax, qui molt estoit nobles.
D'autre part estoit li vignobles
Et la riviere grans desous,
Qui açaignoit les murs trestoz,
S'avoit jusqu'en la mer son cors. (*Perceval*, vv. 6659-6669) [46]

However, in comparison to Renaut, Chrétien is sparing in his descriptions and they take the form of a list of attributes. All three echo Wace's description of common features of the countryside: a fertile area of pastures, streams, vineyards and forests. A particular feature of this type of description is its vagueness. The poet merely gives indications as to the city's appearance and prosperity without dwelling upon it. There are no specific architectural details provided which are a feature of later descriptions, although the *Perceval* and the *Descouneüs* give a cursory glance of the walls, which, in the *Descouneüs*, are described as being high and completely encircling the castle (vv. 1515-16).

The description of the Ile d'Or is the second description of a location in the text and has a lengthy passage devoted to it. This portrait falls within the same category as that of Carthage in the *Eneas* (ll. 407-548). As this passage is lengthy, I have included two extracts which demonstrate the emphasis the poet places in the city walls:

Li carrel sont de marbre bis,
de blanc et d'inde et de vermoil;
par grant anging et par consoil
i sunt asis tot a compas;
tuit sont de mabre et d'adamas [...] (*Eneas*, vv. 422-26)

Li mur erent espés et halt,
qui ne criement negun asalt;
cinc cenz torz avoit anviron
estre lo demoine donjon;
devers la vile erent trifoire
li mur, a ars et a civoire,
o granz pierres de marbre toz. (*Eneas*, vv. 441-47)

Renaut follows the same order as the poet of the *Eneas*,[28] establishing first the town's situation, then dwelling on the strength and fortitude of its walls before describing the interior of the city and remarking on prominent buildings. In the second line of this long and detailed portrait, Renaut uses a hyperbolic phrase of the kind usually favoured for

portraits of people: 'onques nus hom ne vit si biel' (v. 1876). The Ile d'Or is given the lengthiest description out of the four descriptions of towns:

Ill esgard, voit une castiel:
onques nus hom ne vit si biel.
Molt fu li castials bien asis;
molt ert rices et plentevis.
Uns bras de mer entor coroit
qui tote la vile açaingnoit.
D'autre part la grans mers estoit
qui au pié del castiel feroit.
Molt i avoit rice castiel:
li mur en furent rice et biel
dont li castials tos clos estoit.
Nois, blances flors, ne riens qui soit
n'est pas si bel con li mur sont
qui tot entor la vile vont.
De blanc marbre li mur estoient
qui le castiel entor clooient,
si hals con pooient uns ars traire.
Nus hom ne pooit engien faire
qui peüst as cretials tocier.
Traire ne puet en ne lancier,
et tant estoient li mur halt
qu'il nedoutoient nul asaut.
En la vile ot cent tors vermelles
qui bieles erent a mervelles,
et furent de mabre vermel
qui molt reluist contre solel.
Cent conte ens la vile estoient
ki dedens icés tors manoient
et tot sont casé del castiel.
Un palais i ot bon et biel.
Cil qui le fist sot d'encanter,
que nus hom ne.l puet deviser
de coi i[l] fu, mais bials estoit.
Cristal la piere resanbloit
dont li palais estoit tos fais
et a conpas trestos portrais.
A vaute fu covers d'argent
et par desus a pavement.
Une esclarboucle sus luissoit;
plus que solaus resplendissoit
et par nuit rent si grant clarté
con se ce fust en tans d'esté.
Vint tors sostienent le palais
— plus bieles ne verrés jamais —
totes indes d'une color.
Ainc hom ne vit nule millor.
Iluec vienent li marceant
qui d'avoir sont rice et manant;
si amainnent lor marchandie
par la mer qui illuec les guie,
dont lipassages mlt valoit
que cele vile recevoit.
De lor avoirs qui i vient grans
est la vile rice et manans.
Icis castials dont vos oiés
a l'Isle d'Or estoit nonmés. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1875-1930) [47]

Renaut depicts a surreal atmosphere where beauty and magnificence are the focus and although its trade receives mention at the end of the passage, this financial report is intended more as additional information and not as the emphasis as in the other briefer descriptions. The castle is said to give off a great light and is beautifully decorated. There is mention of enchantment in its creation, for no one could tell what it was made of, only that it was *bials* (v. 1907). Renaut describes a fitting scene for Guinglain to meet the Pucele. It is a setting where the boundaries between reality and fantasy are vague and transmutable.

Galigant is the third town to be described.

> Atant un biel castiel coisirent
> outrë un pont et une eve virent.
> Les tors estoient boen antisses,
> bien faites environ asisses;
> s'ert de haus murs clos li donjons.
> Molt ot en la vile maissons
> et li bos molt pres i estoit.
> Molt rices borgois i avoit
> dont la vile estoit bien peuplee.
> Molt estoit biele la contree
> de vingnes, de bos et de plains,
> et si ot molt rices vilains.
> De tos biensestoit raenplie;
> bien estoit la vile garnie.
> Li castials ot non Galigans
> ki ert molt biaus et avenans. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2493-2508) [48]

The economic virtues of the town are stressed, in addition to the beauty of its situation by a river near a forest. It is a town inhabited by *molt rices borgois* (v. 2500) and even its peasants are described as *molt rices* (v. 2504). The land around the town is beautiful and sports *vingnes*, *bos*, and *plains* (v. 2503). Renaut emphasizes its beauty, fertility and healthfulness as important features in the description of the landscape.

The Cité Gaste is described in two parts, depicting the splendour which had once been apparent, and then its current ruined state:

> et la Cité Gaste [ont] ve[ü]e.
> Onques si biele de veüe
> ne vit nus con cele ert jadis;
> or est gaste, ce m'est avis.
> Entre dues augues molt bruians
> sist la cités qui molt fu gran[s].
> Les tors virent et les maisons
> et les clociers et les donjons,
> les bon[s] palais qui [resplandoit]
> et les aigles qui reflanboit. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2775-84) [49]

The walls are *bon et biel* (v. 2859) and are richly decorated with a colourful mosaic. But the city has been destroyed and lies deserted.

> Cinc liues duroit la cités,
> close de mur[s] et de fosés.

Li mur estoient bon et biel;
de mabre sont tot li quarriel,
li un es autres entaillié
et a ciment entrelacié.
Et furent de maintes colors,
et sont li quarriel bien asis,
indes et vers, gaunes et bis.
Et a cinc toisses tot entor
ot adiés une haute tor,
si que on i puet bien aler
et li uns a l'autre parler.
En la cité homme n'avoit;
tote gaste la vile estoit.
Quant il le vit, si se saingna,
par la porte dedens entra.
Le porte a trové abatue.
Il s'en vait adiés les grans rues
dont les fenestres sont marbrues;
chaoit en sont tuit li piler. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2857-79) [50]

There is clearly an atmosphere evocative of danger, as Guinglain crosses himself before entering the fortress: "Quant il le vit, si se saingna, par la porte dedens entra" (vv. 2872-73) [51].

Two other settings, the Pucele's garden and bedroom, while not being described in quite the same way as the towns, receive lengthy passages of description and warrant mention. In describing the garden Renaut has recourse to hyperbole and the outdoing device to emphasize its uniqueness:

Et quant sont el palais venu,
si se sont d'autre part issu
par mi un huis en un vergier.
Et molt se faissoit a proissier.
Tos estoit clos de mur mabrin
qui bien fu ovrés de grant fin,
c'onques Dius ne fist cele [c]ose
qui fust en tot le mont enclose
que ne fust bien el mur ouvree,
molt [bien] tallie ey devisee.
Fenestres avoit tot entor
par [u] i venoit la calor,
trestoutes ouvrees d'argent.
Ainc Dius ne fist cel abrissel
que on el vergié ne trouvast,
qui le lé et le lonc cercast.
Grant masse i avoit de loriers,
de figiers et d'alemandiers,
de saigremors et de [paumiers],
[sapins] molt et asés melliers,
pumiers grenas, loriers ramés.
D'autres arbres i ot asés,
et s'i croissoit li reculisses
et li encens et molt espisses.
Dius ne fist herbe de bonté
que el vergié n'eüst planté.
Encens, gerofle et citoual
et le caniele et garingal,

espic, petre, poivre, comin —
et ce ot asés el gardin.
Rosiers [i ot] d'itel nature
que en tos tans la flors i dure.
Molt fu li vergiers gens et bials.
Tos jors i avoit cans d'osials:
de calendres et d'orïals,
de merles et de lonsingnals
et d'autres dont i ot asés,
ne ja leur cans ne fust lassés.
Laiens avoit itel odors
et des espeses et des flors
qu[e] cil qui s'estoit laiens mis
quidoit qu'il fust en paradis. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4289-32) [52]

That anyone inside its walls would have believed himself in paradise indicates its fantastic atmosphere. The herbs which flourish in abundance suggest a heady, seductive atmosphere and the presence of all the trees ever created by God, including perpetually flowering rosebushes, set it apart from the everyday mundane world where seasons wax and wane. In the microcosm of the Pucele's garden, reality does not feature. Renaut's garden is reminiscent of the example of description of a place which Matthew of Vendôme gives:

### Descriptio loci

Naturae studium locus est, quo veris abundant
Deliciae, veris gratia, veris opes.
Blanditur Natura loco, donando favoris
Prodiga, donatis rebus egere potest.
Donandi transgressa modum, sibi nulla reservans,
Purpurat ornatu floridiore locum.
Tellus luxuriat crinito gramine, gramen
Comprimit et brevitas auris amica placet.
Non infestat aquas solis calor, immo teporem
Ramorum series orbiculata fovet.
Humor, amicitiae solis sua jura maritans,
Destinat in florum fructificare comas.
Altera gratuitas superest, cumulantque decorem
Organicae studio garrulitatis aves [...]
Flos sapit, herba viret, parit arbor, fructus abundat,
Garrit avis, rivus murmurat, aura tepet.
Voce placent volucres, umbra nemus, aura tepore,
Fons potu, rivus murmure, flore solum.
Gratum murmur aquae, volucrum vox consona, florum
Suavis odor, rivus frigidus, umbra tepens.
Sensus quinque loci praedicti gratia pascit,
Si collative quaeque notata notes.
Unda juvat tactum, gustum sapor, auris amica
Est volucris, visus gratia, naris odor.
Non elementa vacant, quia tellus concipit, aer
Blanditur, fervor suscitat, humor alit. (*Ars versificatoria*, vv. 1-14, 49-60) [53]

What stands out in Matthew is the sensory appeal of the description. All five senses are assailed in the beauty of the trees and flowers, the fragrance of the herbs, the harmony of the birdsong, the stream for its sweetness of taste and refreshing touch.

In medieval literature, the garden has a number of associations attached to it and as Geneviève Sodigné-Costes asserts, it is a significant setting for the medieval poet:

> 'Il est indéniable que le jardin joue un rôle de premier plan dans la littérature médiévale. Lieu de la rencontre, de l'amour ou de l'aventure, il est aussi un lieu protégé ou les protagonistes aiment à s'ébattre et à se reposer.'[29]

James Dauphine explains the origin of the garden with reference to Genesis:

> 'Au sein des mythologies et des religions, la démonstration n'est plus à faire, le jardin merveilleux occupe une place toute particulière. Qu'il soit lieu enchanteur ou simple cadre propice à la manifestation de la prouesse, il est d'abord, dans bien des cas, le lieu contenant le secret des débuts de la vie et renfermant le mystère des origines. Le paradis terrestre s'inscrit pleinement dans cette perspective: en témoigne la Genèse, texte fondateur et texte sacré'.[30]

The archetypal garden is described in the second chapter of Genesis:

> And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers [...] The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.' (Genesis 2.9-15)

Notions of paradise, temptation and enlightenment are often evoked by the use of the garden setting in medieval literature. Renaut writes that anyone within the walls of the Pucele's garden 'quidoit qu'il fust en paradis' (v. 4332) and it is here that the Pucele intimates that she will return Guinglain's love, and effectively entices him away for the second time from performing his literary role as romance hero.

The garden is frequently associated with amorous liaisons and intimacy, as Armand Strubel notes in an aside: 'le verger est l'endroit par excellence de la rencontre et du "delit" d'amour',[31] has its origins in the Song of Songs:

> 'A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a garden locked, a fountain sealed. Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with all choicest fruits, henna with nard, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all chief spices — a garden fountain, a well of living water, and flowing streams from Lebanon. I come to my garden, my sister, my bride [...].' (Song of Solomon 4.12-5.1)

Here, we have the enumeration of trees and spices that would later become a feature of medieval descriptions of gardens and which we see in the *Descouneüs*.

The Pucele's bedroom is presented in much the same way as the garden. It, too, is permeated with strong-smelling fragrances and described as paradise (v. 4742). It is rich and sumptuous and ornately decorated with beautiful fabrics and a mosaic bearing animals and flowers of every kind (vv. 4764-68).

> Atant [ar le canbre s'en vont,
> tres par mu l'uis entré i sont.
> Quant en la canbre sont entré,
> tot maintenant [i ont trové]

une si tress douce flairor
dont asés mius valoit l'odor
k'encens ne petre ne canele.
Tant [i] avoit bone odor
que qui eüst mal ne dolor
s'un petit i peüst ester,
lués se peüst tot sain trover.
Laoens avoit cierges espris;
lacanbre sanbloit paradis.
Asés i ot argent et or;
de tos biens i ot grant tressor.
Paree fu de dras de soie
de molt cier pris, Ca'aconteroie?
Mais molt en i ot de divers:
bofus roiés, osterins pers,
tires, pales et siglatons
i ot de molt maintes [façons],
dyapes et bons bogerans
Molt par estoit la canbre noble.
D'un pale de Constantinoble
estoit desus encortinee
et desous ert tote pavee
de cieres presiousses pieres
dont it ot de maintes manieres:
esmeraudes, safirs eslis
et calcedonies et rubis;
il i ot de maintess colors.
Li pavemens fu fais a flors,
a images et a oisials.
Tant fu bien fais et tant fu bials
qu'en tout le mont ne en la mer
n'a bieste c'on sace nonmer
— poisson, dragon n'oissel volant —
ne fust ouvrés el pavement. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 4829-68) [54]

In every one of the descriptions except for that of the Pucele's bedroom, walls are emphasized. Descriptions of settings are very important for what Renaut has to say about literary creation. It is not explicitly stated that he is making a comparison between his walled cities and a literary work; yet the architectural vocabulary and imagery used in Geoffrey's *Poetria Nova* to convey the way in which a poet plans his composition in much the same way as a man building a house must have a blueprint, seems to provide evidence that would support this line of thought. This passage beginning at verse 43 in the *Poetria nova* has been quoted in Chapter One.

The rigid structures of these cities reflects the structures underlying literature and the walls which Renaut emphasizes are perhaps representative of the limitations which literary conventions impose. The walls are frequently described as beautiful, being hewn out of marble, or covered in a rich and ornate mosaic. This suggests the elegance of verse which is superficially appealing, while at the same time restricting, for both poet and audience.

A first view of a walled town is appealing for the mystery which surrounds it. One is first of all impressed by its structure and size, often by its beauty of symmetry and its outline against the sky. Curiosity as to what is within the walls is another response. Literature can produce the same reaction. A first view is seductive and draws the traveller or reader in. Once inside the walls, the traveller is more or less expected to conform to the statutes of the town, just as the reader is lulled into the conventions of the work.

Descriptions of castles and towns are prefaced, in the *Descouneüs*, at least, by verbs of motion. Characters arrive, often emerging from the forest, and catch sight of the town. The audience is thereby introduced to the view at the same time as the character, as though from their perspective, which is normally that of the protagonist.

When Guinglain, Robert, the dwarf and Hélie first see Becleus, they have been travelling all day and it is when they emerge from a thick forest as night falls that they see the town before them:

> Le jor ont faite grant jornee
> et quant ce vint a l'avespree,
> si issirent d'un bos foillu;
> un castiel de pres [ont] veü
> qui molt estoit et bons et bials. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1497-1501) [55]

Guinglain, Hélie and the dwarf have once again been travelling all day when they approach the Ile d'Or in the evening:

> [...] tote jor avoit erré.
> Li vespres lor fu apresté.
> Ill esgarde, voit un castiel:
> onques nus hom ne vit si biel. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 1873-76) [56]

Galigant is viewed through the twilight after they have been travelling all day:

> Vers le Gaste Cité en vont;
> dusques as vespres erré ont.
> Atant un biel castiel coisirent
> outrë un pont et une eve virent. (*Descoueniis*, vv. 2491-94) [57]

The Gaste Cité is first seen after emerging from a forest in the evening light:

> Et quant ce vi[n]t a l'avesprer,
> une forest ont a passer
> et la Cité Gaste [ont] ve[ü]e. (*Descouneüs*, vv. 2773-75) [58]

Twilight and the forest are interesting motifs in this narrative. Joan Tasker Grimbert discusses the use of light in the *Descouneüs* in an article entitled, 'Effects of Clair-Obscur in *Le Bel Inconnu*'.[32] Grimbert notes that 'Guinglain usually sets out at dawn and arrives at nightfall [...] the poet always uses these temporal notations to open and close an episode [and] the great majority of Guinglain's exploits, whether chivalric or amorous, are accomplished at the end of the day, some in early evening and others in the middle of the night'.[33]

Both of these settings, twilight and the forest, point to the oppositions Renaut sets up in his work, notably the oppositions indicated by Guerreau: 'en plein air / en salle; jour / nuit; prospérité / ruine; ville / forêt; réalité / rêve; construction / destruction'.[34] These oppositions reinforce the doubling effect apparent in characterization and genre.

Curtius notes that the forest became one of the principal motifs in courtly romance and is frequently the scene of chivalric adventure as well as suggesting otherness, in that it is divorced from courtly society. Curtius says that, 'with the rise of the courtly romance in verse, the primitive landscape requirements of the heroic epic are far exceeded. [...] One of its principal motifs is the wild forest — "una selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte," as Dante will later put it'.[35]

As examples, Perceval is brought up in the forest, which supposedly accounts for his naïvety and lack of knowledge concerning knights and courtly values; Marie de France has Bisclavret go into the forest to become a werewolf. The forest is frequently depicted as the antithesis of courtly society. It is hardly surprising that so much time is spent in forested land, as much of medieval Europe would still have been covered with it at the time Arthurian romances were being composed, as Sidney R. Packard explains:

> 'The larger population at the end of the twelfth century could not have subsisted on the amount of cultivated land available at the beginning of the century [...] In the twelfth century, many areas throughout Europe, vast in their total extent, previously mainly forest and marsh, were cleared, drained, and then either cultivated or given over to stock breeding.'[36]

Yet there is more to the frequent reference to forests than mere geography. Keith Busby notes the association of adventure with the world outside Arthur's court and in particular the forest, claiming that 'the forest is nearly always the setting for *aventures*, a place tending to be conducive to a certain amount of lawlessness and thereby insecurity, populated by a variety of types of aggressors and villains'.[37]

In the *Descouneüs*, the protagonist seems often confused as to his exact role, and despite having an ultimate goal towards which he directs his energy, he seems to be able to see ahead only as far as from one episode to the next. His emergence from the forest and the moment of clarity which occurs, parallels his embarcation on the next episode of his quest.

Renaut constructs a backdrop to his romance which is by no means incidental to his *antancïon*. Not only do each of his descriptions of setting provide a suitable frame for the characters or events described in them, they also serve as reflections of the structures and limitations of writing.

Both texts use description as a device of amplification, however differently this is represented. The *Joseph* has communication as one of its major themes and Robert presents the narrative in terms of relating circumstances; providing non-refutable evidence

in an almost judicial approach, clarifying circumstances and supporting his account with material from other sources. The *Descouneüs* involves appearance and the deceptiveness of appearance and so Renaut presents cause and effect through imagery, hence the emphasis on physical appearance, both of people and places.

Descriptions hold much narrative potential as, by their very nature, they add to the narrative. At a superficial level, they grace the text with their 'illustrating presence' and colour the text with the images they depict. The portraits of attractive men and women, the clothes and jewellery they wear, the horses they ride and the courtly milieu in which they move do much to make the narrative come alive. This is particularly the case with regard to the protagonist and the leading lady. Glowing descriptions of physical attributes are a notable means of generating plausibility. If the main characters are beautiful, strong and capable, it necessarily follows that they will be given the opportunity to display these traits. The women will be loved, setting in motion the train of events which surrounds romantic accounts. The men will participate in feats of arms, requiring episodes involving combat, tournaments and quests. In this light, description is a major device in motivating the text.

From Geoffrey and Matthew's respective treatises, it becomes obvious that the presentation of physical aspects is only one aspect of description. The other aspect is the elucidatory function which description performs. The whole of the narrative is an event made up of a series of actions. For these actions to be plausible, the motivation behind them must be credible to the reader. The poets present consequences and their eventualities in order to justify the presence and arrangement of the episodes recounted.

---

1   Alice Colby, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Romance* (Geneva: Droz, 1965, p. 3.
2   Faral, p. 75.
3   Colby, p. 178; Curtius, p. 69, n. 17.
4   Gunnar Biller, *Etude sur le style des premiers romans français en vers (1150-1175)* (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1974), p. 143.
5   Biller, p. 143.
6   Keith Busby, 'The Characters and the Setting', *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, Vol. I, p. 75.
7   Busby, p. 73.
8   Leyerle, p. 70.
9   Frye, p. 187.
10  Leyerle, p. 70.
11  Colby, *The Portrait...*,p. 25.
12  Colby, *The Portrait...*, p. 71.
13  Curtius, p. 180.
14  Colby, p. 25.
15  Biller, p. 146 and Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 161.
16  Curtius, pp. 162-63
17  Colby, *The Portrait...*, p. 28.
18  Curtius, p. 159.
19  Colby, p. 4.
20  Colby, p. 4.
21  Colby, p. 126.

22  Colby-Hall, 'Frustration and Fulfilment', p. 126.

23  Colby-Hall, 'Frustration and Fulfilment'; Penny Simons, 'The 'Bel Sanblant'...'; Rosemary Morris, 'The Knight and the Superfluous Lady: a problem of disposal', *Reading Medieval Studies,* 14 (1988), 111-124

24  Morris, p. 111.

25  Colby-Hall, 'Frustration and Fulfilment' p. 127.

26  G.D. West. 'The Description of Towns in Old French Verse Romances', *French Studies,* 11 (1957), 50-59.

27  West, p. 54.

28  West, p. 53.

29  Geneviève Sodigné-Costes, 'Les Simples et les jardins', in *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1990), pp. 331-42 (p. 331).

30  James Dauphine, 'Du paradis terrestre', in *Vergers et jardins*, pp. 89-96 (p. 89).

31  Armand Strubel, 'L'allégorisation du verger courtois', in *Vergers et jardins*, pp. 345-57 (p. 345).

32  Joan Tasker Grimbert, 'The Effect of *Clair-Obscur* in *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Courtly Literature,* pp. 249-260.

33  Grimbert, pp. 251-52.

34  Alain Guerreau, 'Renaud de Bâgé: *Le Bel Inconnu*: structure symbolique et signification sociale', *Romania,* 103 (1982), 51-52.

35  Curtius, p. 201.

36  Sidney R. Packard, *Twelfth Century Europe: An Interpretive Essay* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1973), p. 38.

37  Busby, p. 85.

# Seven
# Techniques of Repetition

Previous chapters have presented evidence for the authors' use of source material, and certain common themes and motifs as devices of amplification. This chapter is not so much concerned with the inter-textual patterns which emerge and recur within a literary tradition as with the intra-textual recurrences of words, or patterns of words or thoughts. Unity of form and meaning is achieved through the substance of what is being said, the elegant manner in which it is expressed and through the way this is impressed on the reader through the reiteration and variation of certain themes and trains of thought. The harmony of form and meaning is established through recurring phrases and word patterns. Profundity of meaning is enhanced structurally through form, while at the same time the form itself requires a substantial meaning to amplify. Romance composition involves the reorganisation of established conventions and accepted subjects. The pattern which emerges is one of repetition and variation.

These recurrences are defined as repetition. Geoffrey of Vinsauf describes the technique he writes about in verses 219-25 of his *Poetria Nova* as the first step in the process of amplifying a work:

> Si facis amplum
> Hoc primo procede gradu: sententia cum sit
> Unica, non uno veniat contenta paratu,
> Sed variet vestes et mutatoria sumat;
> Sub verbis aliis praesumpta resume; repone
> Pluribus in clausis unum; multiplice forma
> Dissimuletur idem; varius sis et tamen idem. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 219-25) [1]

In a section devoted to the artistic transposition of words, Geoffrey provides methods by which the poet may groom his composition in order to produce a piece which will be well received in both form and content.

> Esto quod, ut mulcet animum, sic mulceat aurem
> Et duo complaudant in idem. Non sufficit istud,
> Non dum credo, nisi replicem. Speculatio prima
> Nec bene, nec plene discernit: quando revolvo
> Rem, magis evolvo. Si sit foetentis odoris,
> Mota magis, res pejus olet; si plena saporis,
> Plus repetita sapit. Sit judex ergo triformis
> Propositi verbi: mens prima, secunda sit auris,
> Tertius et summus qui terminet usus. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1960-68) [2]

Repetition, by its very nature, is associated with formula, and its use within the text becomes formulaic in that the same words and phrases are repeatedly used in the same way. Studies on formulaic use in medieval literature have largely been generated by scholars such as Milman Parry, Albert Bates Lord, Joseph Duggan, Jean Rychner and Edward A. Heinemann.[1] For Parry and Lord, the vitality of oral language rests on its formulaic system. The following quote from Milman Parry is representative of these studies:

> 'In a society where there is no reading and writing, the poet, as we know from the study of such peoples in our own time, always makes his verse out of formulas. He can do it no other way. Not having the device of pen and paper which, as he composed, would hold his partly formed thought in safe-keeping while his unhampered mind ranged where it would after other ideas and other words, he makes his verses by choosing from a vast number of fixed phrases which he has heard in the poems of other poets. Each one of these fixed phrases does this: it expresses a given idea in words which fit into a given length of the verse. Each one of these fixed phrases, or formulas, is an extraordinary creation in itself. It gives the words which are best suited for the expression of the idea, and is made up of just those parts of speech which, in the place which it is to fill in the verse, will accord with the formulas with which it is to be joined; and the formulas taken all together make up a diction which is the material for a completely unified technique of verse-making. Finally, the formulas of an oral poetry are not each one of them without likeness to any other; in that case the technique would be far too unwieldy. They fall into smaller groups of phrases which have between them a likeness of idea and words, and these in turn fall into groups which have a larger pattern in common, until the whole diction is schematized in such a way that the poet, habituated to the scheme, hits without effort, as he composes, upon the type of formula and the particular formula which, at any point in his poem, he needs to carry on his verse and his sentence.'[2]

This explains the transmission of certain common phrases and ideas. The studies of these scholars centre on the formulaic style of the *chanson de geste* and how this relates to oral composition. In brief, oral-formulaic theory, also known as the Parry-Lord theory, is concerned with the interpretation of style and structure as evidence of a work's oral provenance. The idea behind this theory is that texts which have been created orally will exhibit recognizeable patterning in terms of musicality and memory aids.[3] As these works gradually came to be recorded, they naturally still exhibited elements attributable to techniques of oral composition. While I am not so much concerned with tracing the oral provenance of certain conventions, repetition of language and motifs is not confined to the *chansons de geste*, but also appears in twelfth-century romance.

Of particular relevance to this thesis is the study undertaken by Anne Elizabeth Cobby.[4] Her view of the way the medieval poet could manipulate convention to achieve a pre-determined end accords with my own. Her study of conventions centres on the concept of 'formula' and rests on the premise that certain medieval authors, 'far from being enslaved by conventions, were conscious of them and could master them with sufficient independence to exploit them for calculated literary effect'.[5] Cobby applies her hypothesis to a specific analysis of a selection of fabliaux and observes the parodic depth the use of formulæ can achieve. Cobby cites *Aucassin et Nicolette* as an example of how an author might criticize the stereotypical nature of romance by having recourse to the

very conventions which cast it in a stereotypical light. She makes the point that the author of *Aucassin et Nicolette* makes clichéd use of stock material in order to make transparent the accepted and predictable nature of romance conventions.

> 'The essential part played by parody in this work is evident when we analyse the ways in which the author manipulates our expectations. He sets up clear and repeated reference to the literary traditions of his day, to their conventions and, most importantly, to their assumptions; but he treats them in such a way as continually to thwart our expectations and to lead us to review the preconceptions we have as we deal with those traditions.'[6]

Cobby presents the author of *Aucassin et Nicolette* as a talented writer who displayed an enormous amount of literary insight in mocking those second-rate poets who blindly adhered to the model proposed by courtly tradition. The failings of mediocrity could be transformed through parody or metafictional comment. This is precisely what this thesis claims with regard to the *Descounûs*.

The formulaic style of the *chansons de geste* and the theory linking this to techniques of oral composition are not the concern of this chapter. What is relevant in terms of the Parry-Lord theory is this theory's appreciation of the role formulæ have to play, rather than a wholesale condemnation of them as repetitions performed by an inept and clumsy poet.

Firstly, this chapter intends to emphasize how the same passage of recurring text attracts the reader's attention and insists on being noticed. There are three discernible levels through which repetition may be approached and discussed:

1. Conceptual repetition

2. Phrasal repetition

3. Associative repetition

Associative repetition refers to the use of formulæ or stock conventions from the greater literary tradition. Here the distinction must be made between repetitions of words and repetitions of generic conventions. The associative potential of the formulaic phrase can call up past experience of conventions of various kinds and so establish expectations in an audience. This practice is treated in Chapter Four's discussion of generic implication and will not be revisited here. This chapter will limit itself to the first two of the above categories, namely Conceptual and Phrasal repetition. These categories concern the semantic patterns and textual unity which techniques of repetition can generate.

## 1. Conceptual Repetition

Conceptual repetition treats the more technical devices of repetition such as the figures of thought and figures of diction classified by Geoffrey and Matthew. Amongst the 35 rhetorical colours Geoffrey describes as *verborum flores*, translated by Margaret Nims as 'flowers of diction', he includes five variations on the technique of repetition: *repetitio*,

*conversio, complexio, conduplicatio* and *interpretatio.* Figures of diction promote easy intelligibility and a literal use of the words. They enhance the text through easy style, not relying on sophisticated conceits, but on the effect which may be achieved through the subtle manipulation of form. Figures of diction depend upon simple word play and aesthetic appeal.

Geoffrey does not provide definitions for the rhetorical colours he terms *flores verborum*; he instead demonstrates how they are to be applied to a literary passage. The first four devices in his list of rhetorical colours are devices of repetition. Firstly, he shows how a word may be repeated at the beginning of successive clauses (*repetitio*), then at the end of successive clauses (*conversio*). Both initial and final words may be repeated in successive clauses (*complexio*), or words of the same sound, but with a different meaning or function may be repeated or transposed into a different case (*traductio*). Geoffrey then illustrates *conduplicatio,* wherein he repeats one or more of the key words to heighten the intense emotion of what he is saying. Immediately following this illustration, he shows how a single word may be reiterated using synonymous words, in order to emphasize what is being said (*interpretatio*). The fact that the idea is repeated, but in several different forms, cannot help but position this idea at the forefront of the reader's mind.

Having treated this more straightforward level of word-play, Geoffrey then discusses 19 figures of thought (*dicta lega*) and addresses the issue of how the meanings of words are to be adorned. These more sophisticated devices give scope for word and thought association.

The two figures of thought which employ repetition to adorn the meaning of what is being said are *frequentatio* and *expolitio*, and Geoffrey provides definitions as well as examples of these:

> Vel singula rursus in unum
> Conveniunt et quae sunt undique sparsa resumit.
> In replicando frequens, iterum variando colorem,
> Dicere res plures videor; sed semper in una
> Demoror, ut poliam rem plenius et quasi crebra
> Expoliam lima, quod fit sub duplice forma:
> Dicendo varie vel eamdem rem, vel eadem
> De re. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 1242-51) [3]

*Frequentatio* involves the accumulation of a series of ideas which have appeared over the course of the text and which, when brought together, create a complex and definitive illustration of a person, a thing or an idea. *Expolitio* is presented as a refining device, whereby the reader's attention is engaged by the reiteration and variation of an idea.

Matthew, for his part, also includes devices of repetition in a list of figures which may be used to elegant effect in versification. Matthew uses Greek terms to classify his rhetorical

colours so that *anaphora, epanalensis, anadiplosis* and *epyzeusis* (*Ars versificatoria*, III, 5, 6, 7) correspond to Geoffrey's *repetitio, conversio, complexio* and *condupliactio*.

Neither Robert nor Renaut demonstrate abundant use of the rhetorical colours recorded in Geoffrey's and Matthew's treatises. Renaut relies heavily on associative repetition to achieve his *antancïon* and therefore his text brings into play much intra-textual inference, rather than semantic patterning. Robert's reliance on devices of repetition appears to have been restricted to three of these: *repetitio, conduplicatio* and *interpretatio*. The most frequently used of these devices is *repetitio*. This is the repetition of words at the beginning of successive clauses. He occasionally uses *conduplicatio,* which is the immediate repetition of certain words for effect, and *interpretatio*, repetition by means of synonymic and incremental statement.

The least sophisticated level of repetitive phrases or ideas is the series of recurring phrases which appear frequently in the work and add nothing to the narrative or to the overall sense of the work and its themes. They are inserted merely to provide a rhyme and they act as filler verses. O'Gorman describes an example of this device in his notes to the Critical Edition as 'meaningless *cheville*'.[7]

It often happens that the same filler verses are used to rhyme with the same words. For example, the phrase, 'si n'est pas fole', in the *Joseph* is commonly used to rhyme with '-ole' words:

> Verrine ha non si n'est pas fole
> S'est en la rue de l'escole (*Joseph*, vv. 1492-93) [4]

> 'Li Boens Pescherres s'en ala
> Dont furent puis meintes paroles
> Contees ki ne sunt pas foles' (*Joseph*, vv. 3456-58) [5]

Similarly, due to the need for rhyme, the pilgrim is described in terms of his mental stability:

> 'Li pelerins est la venuz,
> Qui ne fu fous, ni esperduz.' (*Joseph*, vv. 1111-2) [6]

While it is important in the *Joseph* to establish the credibility of the witnesses so as to elicit a truthful testimony, it is difficult to know how much weight should be given to phrases such as the above, which provide a convenient rhyme at the same time as a psychiatric assessment.

In the *Descouneüs*, it is the presence of the *nain* which creates a need for rhyme. Characters are described as being not *vilains* on three occasions simply to provide a rhyme for the medieval French word for dwarf. The dwarf himself is described as 'ne fols ne vilains' (v. 158) to rhyme with the 'nains' of the previous verse, and again further on in the narrative he is 'ne faus ne vilains' (v. 694). In verse 1233, it is Robert 'qui

n'est pas vilains', which corresponds to mention of the dwarf in the preceding line. While it could be argued that describing someone as not *vilains* describes a personality trait and so, therefore, is not entirely meaningless, it is the fact that almost every time the word *nains* appears, it is rhymed with *vilains* which makes its accuracy as an indication of demeanour somewhat dubious. A more comprehensive discussion on the dwarf and the scholarship his inclusion in Renaut's text has generated is undertaken in Chapter Five. For the purposes of this discussion, *vilains* is simply a recurring rhyming adjective.

Robert de Boron demonstrates the use of *repetitio* on a number of occasions over the course of his narrative. The most striking of these examples is the anaphoric sequence pivotal in Chapter Four's discussion of the characterization of the women characters in the *Joseph*. The very form of the couplets strengthens the force of this statement:

> Par fame estoit hons adirez
> Et par fame fu recouvrez;
> Fame la mort nous pourchaça,
> Fame vie nous restora;
> Par fame estions emprisonné,
> Par fame fumes recouvré. (*Joseph*, vv. 763-68) [7]

The six-fold repetition of the word *fame*, as well as the pattern of verbs with opposing meanings, point to the importance of these verses. These six verses fulfil the function of a signpost to ensure the audience will actively take in the full meaning behind this passage, relating it to the emerging themes of the work.

A few lines on, the reason for Christ coming to earth is reiterated once again, with the focus on the reason being emphasized in the repetition of *pour*:

> et si has oï
> Pour quoi de la Vierge naschi,
> Pour ce qu'en la crouiz moreüst
> Et li Peres s'uevre reüst.
> Pour ce sui en terre venuz (*Joseph*, vv. 771-75) [8]

Having established the reason for His coming to earth, Christ then responds to Joseph's clarification of his identity by repeating the imperative to believe:

> Je sui icil tout vraiment.
> Croi le, si avras sauvement;
> Croi le et si n'en doute mie (*Joseph*, vv. 791-93) [9]

This is extremely important in terms of the story, as by obeying Christ's injunction to believe, eternal life may be achieved.

There is an even more important passage, where the reiterated word is the adverb *comment*:

> Joseph a sen veissel ala,
> Mout devotement Dieu prïa
> Demoustrast li de sen neveu,
> Comment il feroit son preu.

[...] 'Enten comment l'enseigneras:
[...] Conte li comment vins en terre,
Comment eurent tout a moi guerre
Et comment je fui achetez,
Venduz, bailliez et delivrez,
Comment fui batuz et leidiz,
[...] Comment tu de la crouiz m'ostas,
Comment mes plaies me lavas,
Comment ce veissel ci eüs
Et le mien sanc y receüs,
Comment tu fus des Juïs pris
Et ou fonz de la chartre mis,
Et comment je te confortei ... (*Joseph*, vv. 3001-4, 13, 17-21, 27-33) [10]

*Comment* is a functional word. The reiteration of this word in this instance builds up an image of a number of actions being performed. It is repeated 11 times in 30 lines. Its initial use in this passage is tied in to the present tense of the narrative and refers to Joseph's prayer to God regarding his nephew, that he might know how he should act to his advantage. The voice from the Grail instructs him on how he is to teach his nephew, and then in a sequence of verses which feature *comment*, provides the substance of this teaching, namely how Christ came to earth and the suffering and insults He was subjected to. Robert paints a grim picture of the treatment Christ received. The heightened tension of this depiction is increased due to the sharpened focus achieved by reiterating this one word. The passage then shifts its focus to describe how Joseph removed Christ from the Cross and tended His wounds. It becomes clear that these are reciprocated actions and the use of *comment* here enhances the relationship between Christ and Joseph. Christ reminds Joseph of how He comforted him when he was in prison by providing him with the knowledge of God's grace.

The instances of *conduplicatio* are not numerous. Repetition of exactly the same word occurs most often with adverbs of quantity such as *mout* and *trop*, and prepositions such as *sanz*. That Christ came to earth and suffered much is emphasized through the repetition of *mout* and the accumulation of words indicating suffering and torment:

Mout de tourmenz, mout de doleurs,
Mout de froiz et mout de sueurs. (*Joseph*, 9-10) [11]

The fragility of man and his propensity to sin is highlighted in the repetition of *trop*:

[...] fragilitez d'omme estoit
Trop mauveise et trop perilleuse
Et a pechié trop enclineuse
Car il couvenroit qu'il pechast. (*Joseph*,vv. 180-83) [12]

Likewise, Vespasian's desperate plight at being afflicted with leprosy and shut away from the world is emphasized by the idea of excess expressed in the word *trop:*

Com il estoit; trop estoit dure,
Trop tenebreuse, trop obscure. (vv. 1209-10) [13]

To emphasize the holiness and appropriateness of Jesus as Saviour, the word *sanz* is repeated:

> Nez fu de la Virge Marie
> Sanz pechié et sanz vilenie,
> Sanz semence d'omme engenrez,
> Sanz pechié conceüz et nez. (*Joseph*, vv. 2185-88) [14]

Renaut also uses the adverb of quantity, *molt*, with the repetition of nouns of suffering and distress, in this case Hélie uses it to describe Blonde Esmeree's suffering which only the help of a worthy and valiant knight can assuage:

> Molt a painne, molt a dolor,
> molt est entree en grant tristor (*Descouneüs*, vv. 183-84) [15]

Having treated the first four of the variations of repetition; *repetitio, conversio, complexio* and *conduplicatio*, the definition and use of the fifth variation, *interpretatio*, will now be undertaken. William Ryding points out the difficulty in establishing a distinction between *interpretatio* and *expolitio*.[8] It would seem that the difference between the two is largely ignored in medieval treatises and Ryding concludes that they appear to have been reduced to the same general formula. In medieval texts, the two terms were considered virtually interchangeable. In the interests of at least a part-clarification of this difficulty, I consider that *interpretatio* generally refers to synonymic repetition, that is replacing a word by another of the same meaning. *Expolitio* is more concerned with the reiteration of ideas; that is, the expansion of an idea through restatement. Edmond Faral defines both *interpretatio* and *expolitio* as 'le procédé qui consiste à accumuler les mots et les expressions autour d'une même pensée en vue de l'amplifier'.[9] A word or a concept is amplified through the process of expansion, enlarging the idea laterally. That is to say, it both fills a line, ensuring that the requirements of octosyllabic verse are met, as well as emphasizing the idea which the duplicated or substituted word is expressing. By exploring the semantic possibilities of a word, the poet ensures that its weight of meaning in relation to the authorial *antancïon* of the text does not go unrecognized.

In the *Joseph*, there are a number of verses which feature a word repeated using a synonym.[10] This use of tautology comes about in response to the need for a rhyme or to make up the eight syllables required for the octosyllabic verse. At the same time, they add emphasis to the matter at hand. The first time this occurs is in the second line of the *Joseph* and is an example of the way in which emphasis does not necessarily result in clarity. Verse two expands the opening line referring to all sinners:

> Et le petit et li meneur (*Descouneüs*, v. 2)

The line is emphatic as it expands the idea given in the first verse and does so with two synonyms, and yet it is ambiguous whether it is the status of the sinners themselves, in terms of social class or importance, who are 'petit et meneur', or the type of sin committed which is being referred to.

Of the 34 instances where this type of repetition occurs in the *Joseph*, nine of them use synonymic pairs of verbs involving some sort of communication, be that speaking, telling or announcing. This coincides with the narrative motif of communication and the importance of discovering and passing on the truth. The first of these describes the announcement of Christ's coming to earth.

> Fist des prophetes anuncier
> Sa venue en terre et huchier  (*Joseph*, v. 5-6) [16]

In this example, the supernatural nature of His appearance on earth is emphasized by the reiteration of words referring to the prophecies announcing His birth. Salvation is the key issue in this text. Robert begins by explaining that Christ came to earth to save mankind, and why this was necessary. He then proceeds to give the history of salvation from that time henceforward and, through the symbolism of the Grail, reveals the possibility of a personal relationship with Christ.

The act of writing itself is of great importance in the communication of the truth. In an authorial aside, Robert de Boron acknowledges his source book, without which he would not have dared, let alone have been able, to 'conter ne retreire' (v. 929). It was supposedly in this book that the stories which were his inspiration are written: 'Par les granz clers feites et dites' (vv. 933-34). As a result of the hope which the pilgrim's story of Jesus evoked in the pursuit of a cure for the Emperor's son, his host asked him whether he would dare repeat to the emperor, 'dire et reteire' (v. 1079), what he had just related. He willingly agrees and once at the palace with the Emperor and his men assembled before him, 'si leur ha tout dist et conté' (v. 1124). The pilgrim's story is important as it precipitates Vespasian's destruction of the Jews and Joseph's liberation from prison.

> Ainsi le doiz dire et conter
> A tes deciples et moustrer (*Joseph*, v. 2825) [17]

Communication with God is also emphasized as being important. This can be achieved through prayer and worship. Robert presents the two types of prayer: petition and praise. When Joseph goes before the vessel and asks the Holy Spirit for advice, this is presented using variations on the verb 'to pray':

> 'Ainsi vous pri je et requier' (*Joseph*, v. 2453) [18]

In terms of praise, Joseph's people 'funt oroisons et prïeres' (v. 3437), lifting their prayers to God, their devotion and the seriousness with which they carry out this action being emphasized in this synonymous coupling.

Amongst the examples of this tautological practice are those which offer little more than a convenient rhyme, as is the case when Judas goes before the Jews to betray Jesus. The Jews' initial suspicion and silence is expressed through repetition:

> pour quoi
> Estoient si mu et si quoi (vv. 279-80) [19]

Another example of a convenient synonym pair which also provides a rhyme for the preceding line occurs in reference to the Virgin Mary:

> [...] la Vierge precïeuse
> Ki fu Joseph fame et espeuse. (vv. 781-82) [20]

The remaining pairs are successful for their emphatic nature. By repeating a word with its synonym, the action described is reinforced. In the two examples which follow, it is the action of cleansing and purging which is highlighted, and is also an important element in the dogma Robert alludes to. Here, baptism is discussed and offered as a means for being cleansed of the sin of *luxure* to those who acknowledge a belief in Christ:

> Ainsi fu luxure lavee
> D'omme, de femme, et espuree (*Joseph*, vv. 171-72) [21]

There are many references to rotting and filth and the need for cleansing throughout the text, with the most striking image being portrayed in Vespasian's leprosy. His cure reflects the purging of transgressions and the offer of life to sinners:

> Tost en poroit estre sanez
> Vaspasïens et respassez. (vv. 1161-2) [22]

He is cleansed of this dreaded skin disease through a revelation of Christ on Verrine's cloth and his desire to know the man whose image has healed him.

There is an emphasis placed on the truth, and the belief which is necessary in order to be able to approach God and receive his Grace. This is reinforced through verses such as the following, which refer to the importance of a belief in the Trinity as three in one. Joseph tells Vespasian that 'tu doiz croire, n'en doute mie' (v. 2207). This notion of the truth and its importance is also expressed in the pilgrim's words as he assures the Emperor's men that, should he be lying about Jesus, it was his wish:

> 'Que la teste me soit coupee
> Ou a coustel ou d'une espee' (vv. 1177-8) [23]

*Espee*, as a synonym of *coustel* has been chosen to rhyme with *coupee*, yet the two words for weapons to perform such a bloody and final act, together with the action by which this could be accomplished, create a violent and emphatic image.

In juxtaposition to the truth and joy that is to be found in knowing God, there is the darkness of not knowing Him, highlighted in words to do with obscurity, deceit and falseness. Joseph is incarcerated in a prison which is 'trop tenebreuse, trop obscure' (vv. 1209-10), which is contrasted with the light which surrounds Christ when He visits Joseph in prison and imparts a special knowlege. Words which imply a straying from the truth are applied to Christ by the Jews, who are outraged that he 'feïssent les gens errer/En la creance et desvoier' (vv. 1924). According to the Jews, the misdirection they see in Christ, emphasized in the choice of *errer* and *desvoier*, serves as justification of

their subsequent actions. The vital importance of seeking the truth is made manifest in the words, 'enquerre bien et encerchier' (vv. 1173-74). The messengers set out to discover the truth of what the pilgrim has related in order to confirm his account. They focus on the horror and shame of what was done to Christ at the hands of the Jews as they relate to the Emperor 'la honte et dou despist' (v. 1636). In a graphic accumulation of violence, it is related how Jesus was 'batuz et leidiz/Et escopiz et decrachiez' (vv. 3021 and 23).

Tautological devices are used to produce images of moral decay and corruption in Joseph's explanation of the fall from Grace of the angels. He speaks of 'le barat et la tricherie' (v. 2129) and 'de la honte et dou despist' (v. 2137) which they displayed and which they passed on to mankind: 'feiz et fourmez' (v. 2150) by God, and which manifested itself in the kind of sin which divided the people at the Grail table, with some being cast out 'pour teu vilté, pour tel ordure' (vv. 2383-84) and 's'en sunt alé et departi' (vv. 2726-27).

The joy and fulfilment of the knowledge of Christ represented in the Grail is reiterated several times. Joseph's preaching of the word to the people 'le greent et otroierent' (v. 2336) and the Grail itself 'a touz agree et abelist' (v. 2663). Those in possession of the knowledge of the Grail and Christ and who pass it on to others 'plus amé et chieri serunt' (v. 3404). There are spiritual rewards as well as earthly ones for those who have had a personal encounter with Christ and who choose to follow the right path, as is seen in the Emperor's promise to Verrine 'qu'il la feroit et pleinne et drue' (v. 1660) for the part she had played in the healing of his son.

In addition to the benefits which followers of Christ were promised, they were also expected to conduct themselves in a certain way, which is emphasized in lines such as God's instructions to Joseph that his nephew 'se gart de courouz et d'ire' (v. 3066) and that Petrus will have neither 'force ne pouoir' (v. 3225) to go against God's will.

Synonymous pairs often appear clumsy and unnecessary, and yet even when they seem to have been chosen only for their rhyme or metre, they gloss the text through emphasis. In using two words which have an identical or almost identical meaning, emphasis is created. The emphatic nature of the use of this device of tautology is further enhanced when the meaning of the words is explicitly concerned with the *sens* of the narrative, as is the case with many of the synonymous pairs in the *Joseph*.

Amplification through incremental statement as a feature of *interpretatio* is effected through enumeration. It has already been noted in Chapter Four that the enumeration of Arthur's knights is a convention of the courtly romance and helps to establish the courtly milieu. On a smaller, more aesthetic level, the mention of the names of more than one participant always adds more credence to an action or scene. The image of the scene the audience may have in mind is also expanded. For example, both Renaut and Robert

amplify their respective verses by providing lists of three or more types of people instead of merely stating that there were people present, or even that there was a general throng of courtly people on the scene:

'dames, chevaliers, puceles' (*Descouneüs*, v. 3937)

'contes et dus, princes, casés' (*Descouneüs*, v. 4060)

'as dus, as contes, as marquis' (*Descouneüs*, v. 5034)

'maint roi [et maint duc] et maint conte' (*Descouneüs*, v. 5183)

'Et roi et prince et duc et conte
Nostres premiers peres Adam
Eve no mere et Abraham,
Ysaac, Jacob, Yheremyes,
Et li prophetes Ysaÿes' (*Joseph*, vv. 12-16) [24]

'Ne rois ne dus ne empereres' (*Joseph*, v.1794)

These crowd scenes not only fill in line-space, but they create an amplified 'visual' quality, evoking a rich and sumptuous 'cast of thousands'. Renaut uses this technique of listing in other ways in the *Descouneüs*. The idea that Guinglain would receive much of material value from his marriage with Blonde Esmeree is emphasized through the list of assets that can be his in addition to the land which will be in his possession:

vos arés cïens bos, pra[ier]es,
bonnes roubes, bieles rivieres,
hostoirs, espreviers et gerfaus,
faucons gentius et bons cevals
S'arés asés or et argent (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3573-77) [25]

When Guinglain first catches sight of the Pucele on his return to her, in addition to the crowd of people, Renaut once again lists birds:

Espreviers [...] et faucons,
ostoirs, tercels, esmerillons (*Descouneüs*, vv. 3939-40) [26]

The description of the Pucele's garden, quoted in chapter six, is filled with lists of trees, herbs and birds (vv. 4304-28). These references to birds, animals and plants are conventions in themselves and carried various symbolic associations which could be exploited as the author saw fit. The birds, kept in captivity for the amusement and sport of the nobility, and the plants and herbs confined within the enclosed garden, could be seen as reflecting the hero's entrapment within a literary scheme for the entertainment of the audience or reader.

According to Faral, exploring a word's semantic possibilities and expanding it through variation and incremental statement may be also achieved through etymological wordplay.[11] Etymology offers a variation on *interpretatio* as the meaning of the word has been expanded through the exploration of its sources. In the *Joseph*, Robert provides an etymology of the Virgin Mary's name in verse 43, which ties in with her portrayal as the

mother of Christ and the importance she accrues as a symbolic reinforcement of the Grail. This etymological explanation does not appear in the prose, but in the verse, Robert writes: 'Marie est dite mer amere'. Richard O'Gorman[12] outlines the various interpretations to be taken from this equation of Mary with the bitter sea, citing it as an example of a common medieval device of rhetoric, *annominatio* or a play on words, wherein contrasting words similar in sound, but different in meaning, are brought together. The designation of Mary as *amarum mare*, of which this phrase is reminiscent, could be understood as an outpouring of tears of sorrow at the death of her son on the Cross. O'Gorman cites this as deriving from Saint Jerôme and says it was frequent in medieval exegetical literature. The 'bitter sea' of Mary's sorrow at her son's death provides another reminder of Christ's redemptive death which is at the heart of Robert's poem, and casts Mary as the compassionate *mater dolorosa*.[13]

The legendary shroud which cures Vespasian of his leprosy and which was said to display an image of Christ is apparently referred to as the Veronica and is held in Rome (v. 1747). In exploring the origins of the story of Verrine and her shroud, Robert has a three-fold purpose. The story is at once an episode in his narrative, necessary for explaining how Joseph is liberated from prison by Vespasian, who, having been cured by the image on the shroud and wanting to find out about the man whose image it was, is told about Joseph and his fate. Secondly, the Verrine episode strengthens the message that a personal encounter with the Messiah is both possible and necessary in order to be saved. On a third level, Robert links his story in with existing historical and literary sources and provides an etymology for the name given to the relic in Rome.

Robert explores the semantic possibilities of the word Grail. Those who have been blessed with God's grace and allowed to remain at the table of the Grail explain the nature of the vessel which has given them this *grant joie* (v. 2612) to those who must leave. Those leaving ask what they should call the vessel when they tell others about it. Petrus tells them that if they want to call it by its correct name, then *Graal* is the name they should use:

> "Car nus le Graal ne verra,
> Ce croi je, qu'il ne li agree;
> A touz ceus pleist de la contree,
> A touz agree et abelist;
> En lui vooir hunt cil delist
> Qui avec lui pueent durer
> Et de sa compeignie user;
> Autant unt d'eise cum poisson
> Quant en sa mein le tient uns hon
> Et de sa mein puet eschaper
> Et en grant iaue aler noer."
> Quant cil l'oient, sel greent il rien
> Fors tant que Graal eit a non;
> Par droit agreer s'i doit on.
> Tout ainsi cil qui s'en alerent
> Et cil ausi qui demourerent

> Le veissel unt Graal nunmé
> Pour la reison que j'ei conté. (*Joseph*, vv. 2660-78) [27]

This is an effective, if somewhat fanciful, interpretation of the origins of the word *Graal*. O'Gorman concludes in his notes to the text that 'while much has been written about the origin of the word, as regards its immediate etymology we can safely derive it from medieval Latin GRADALE', rather than deriving it from the verb, *agreer*.[14] However, for Robert's purposes, the elaboration of the idea of the pleasure and freedom that can be gained through the Grail is enhanced by etymologically linking *Graal* to *agreer*.

## 2. Phrasal Repetition

Phrasal repetition is intended to mean the reiteration of phrases which become formulaic through recurrence within one work and whose effect is generated through the play on such repetition. There are two levels of phrasal repetition. There is the recurrence of particular words in the text which become thematic and there is the reiteration of particular ideas or events which become formulaic within the text.

In addition to short-term repetition of a word which occurs immediately within a verse or the one following, as in the devices treated above in Conceptual Repetition, there is also the repetition of certain words over the course of the narrative which draw attention to a particular theme. Most of these are the words which Glyn Burgess includes in his study of *pré-courtois* vocabulary[15] and which Gunnar Biller describes as ornamental epithets. This is more the case in the *Descouneüs* than in the *Joseph*. The setting of the former is a courtly one and Renaut is concerned with flaunting as many of the conventions of courtly romance as he can. A more detailed analysis of the ornamental epithet and its use in describing characters is undertaken in Chapter Six. For the purposes of this present study, it may be interesting to note that in keeping with the courtly milieu in which the narrative is set and the need to people the text with the noble and the attractive, the epithet *gent* is repeated six times, *biel*, 13 times, *cortois*, three times and *avenant*, three times.

Certain ideas are repeated with very similar wording in a series of recurring phrases. In the *Descouneüs* it is the concept of naming which is reiterated. Naming and identity are important in this narrative. The protagonist does not have a name until halfway through the story and is an 'unknown'. Once he has accomplished the adventure which he set out on, his name and lineage is revealed to him. A pattern is established where every character is either asked their name by another character, usually by the protagonist, or the name is supplied by the narrator in an aside.

Helie, Robers, Blioblïeris, Margerie, la Pucele as Blances Mains, Malgiers li Gris and Blonde Esmeree are all introduced by the narrator:

> La pucele avoit non Helie (*Descouneüs*, v. 197)

> L'escuiers ot non Robers (*Descouneüs*, v. 277)

Blioblïeris avoit non (*Descouneüs*, v. 339)

Ceste pucele fu montee;
Margerie estoit apielee. (*Descouneüs,* vv. 1653-54)

C'est la Pucele as Blances mains (*Descouneüs,* vv. 1941)

Cil chevaliers qui fu ocis
Malgiers fu apielés,li Gris. (*Descouneüs,* vv. 2191-92)

Ele ot a non Blonde Esmeree (*Descouneüs,* v. 3669) [28]

Clarie, Sire de Saies, Orguillous de la Lande and Giflet de Do are all asked their name by Guinglain:

Dalés lui l'a sor l'erbe asise,
se li demanda en quel guisse
l'avoien cil jaiant trovee
qu'iluques l'orent aportee
et coment a non que li die;
qui est ne dont ne li çoilt mie.
Dist la pucele, "Je.l dira:
de rien nule n'en mentira.
Pour voir nonmee sui Clarie
—ne vos en mentiroie mie. (vv. 881-90) [29]

li Descouneüs l'arainna,
si li demande sa convine,
coment il va, par quel destine.
Li doi conpainnon qui estoient,
qui asali l'ont, que querroient?
Cil de Saies respont atant,
"Sire," fait il, "Tot vraiement
vos en dira la verité;
ja mos ne vos en ert celé.
Je sui," fait il, "sire de Saies." (vv. 1196-1205) [30]

Li Biaus Descouneüs dist, "Sire,
mon [non] m'avés rové a dire;
or vel je vostre non savoir."
Et cil li regehist le voir;
faire l'estuet ço qu'il comande:
"J'ai non l'Orguillous de la lande". (vv. 1481-86) [31]

"Atant n'en irés vos plus cuites:
vostre estre et vostre non me dites[...]
Li chevaliers plevi sa foi,
puis li a dit aprés son non:
"Sire, Giflet m'apelë on.
Giflés, li fius Do, sui nonmés
en cest païs et apielés." (vv. 1797-98, 1802-06) [32]

Lampart has his name supplied by Helie:

"Et Lanpas a a non li sire
don je vos v[el] l'usage dire." (vv. 2523-24) [33]

There does not seem to be any reason for Renaut altering the way in which he introduces characters except for a desire for variation.

In the *Joseph*, phrases concerning the Trinity are repeated in a formulaic way. The Trinity is a concept which is central to the *Joseph*. *Trinité* is specifically named three times, but is described a total of 11 times throughout. The separateness of the three elements and yet the oneness of the whole is emphasized in the *Joseph*.

The first mention of the Trinity comes after Mary's eulogy, which concludes with a brief mention of God's people being thrown into Hell because of Eve's action of eating the apple and then offering it to her husband. The audience or reader is exhorted to 'entendez en quantes mennieres' (v. 89) that God redeemed us and the saving 'Diex nostres Peres' of line 90 is amplified in the following verses:

> Li peres la raençon fist
> Par lui, par son Fil Jhesucrist,
> Par le saint Esprit tout ensemble.
> Bien os dire, si con moi semble,
> Cil troi sunt une seule chose,
> L'une persone en l'autre enclose' (*Joseph*, vv. 91-96) [34]

Robert describes how Jesus was baptised by John in the river Jordan. Here, Jesus is said to have offered salvation to those who believe in him and are baptised 'ou non dou Pere et dou Fil Crist/Et ensemble dou saint Esprist' (vv. 157-60).

In a passage in which Robert de Boron symbolically interprets the footwashing scene of John 13.2 ff., he has Christ teach his disciples that a sinful minister is able to absolve sin. The prerequisite for cleansing is:

> Qui a Dieu vouront obeïr
> Et au Fil et au saint Espir (*Joseph*, vv. 363-64) [35]

The symbolism of the three men who are to be the keepers of the Grail reflects the tripartite nature of God. The three men who are to take possession of the Grail do so 'Ou non dou Pere [...]/Et dou Fil et dou Saint Esprist' (vv. 873-74), and God tells Joseph that they must believe 'que ces trois persones sunt une/Et persone entiere est chaucune' (vv. 876-78).

When Christ entrusts the vessel to Joseph, he tells him that he can go before it whenever he has need. He reiterates the presence and importance of the Trinity in the vessel, telling Joseph:

> A ces trois vertuz garderas
> Q'une chose estre ainsi creiras (*Joseph*, vv. 941-42) [36]

Joseph, having had a personal encounter with Christ is thus in a position to pass on the message to Vespasian who comes to find him in prison. Joseph tells Vespasian that it was Christ who had healed him of his leprosy and saved Joseph by leaving to him the life-maintaining vessel. He says:

> Diex le Peres, Jhesus li Fiz,
> Et meismes li sainz Espriz,
> Tu doiz croire, n'en doute mie,
> Que cil troi funt une partie. (*Joseph*, vv. 2205-08) [37]

Vespasian assures Joseph that he has heard and understood his words and that he is prepared to believe:

> De dieu le Pere, Dieu le Fil,
> Dou Saint Esprist, que Diex est il;
> Une seule persone sunt
> Cil troi et tout un pouoir unt (vv. 2219-22) [38]

When the King asks Joseph what the Jews can do to be saved from the destruction Vespasian is wreaking on them, Joseph replies that they can be saved through believing in Mary's son who is lord of charity and 'en la sainte Trinité/Ou Pere, ou Fil, ou seint Esprist' (vv. 2298-99).

Joseph is to tell the people in his company to believe in:

> Dieu le Pere de tout le munt
> Et le Fil et le seint Esprist
> [...] C'est la sainte unité (vv. 2540-42, 44) [39]
>
> Des trois vertuz ki une funt (v. 2549) [40]

When the sinners discover that they are not experiencing the joy of those who are able to remain at the table of the Grail, they demand an explanation. Those remaining reply that it is as a result of God's Grace that they have been allowed to remain, 'De Dieu no Pere, Jhesuscrist/Et ensemble dou saint Esprist' (vv. 2649-50).

Finally, the significance of the three Grail guardians is made explicit. They are to symbolize the Trinity:

> Lors sera la senefiance
> Acomplie et la demoustrance
> De la benoite Trinité
> Qu'avons en trois parz devisé (vv. 3371-74) [41]

I have previously mentioned the Grail in terms of its etymology. But it has a greater function in terms of the *conjointure* of the work. Robert states that this tale is to be called *L'Estoire dou Graal* (vv. 2684, 3493). The Graal, as explained in vv. 2654 and 2677, is the name which is to be given to the cup-like vessel in which Christ made His sacrament at the Last Supper and in which Joseph collected the blood of the crucified Christ as he removed Him from the cross. The vessel, mentioned specifically in at least 37 verses, is used as a unifying device in the *Joseph*. By means of the vessel, grace can be received:

> De la grace dou seint Esprist
> Fu touz pleins, quant le veissel vist (vv. 725-26) [42]
>
> Tout cil qui te veissel verrunt
> En ma compeignie serunt,
> De cuer arunt emplissement
> Et joie pardurablement. (vv. 917-20) [43]

Advice may be sought:

> Joseph a sen veissel s'en va
> Et tout plourant s'agenouilla
> Et dist: — Sire, qui char presis
> En la Virge et de li nasquis,
> Par ta pitié, par ta douçour
> I venis [...]
> Et la, Sire, me commandastes,
> Quant vous ce veissel m'aportastes,
> Toutes les foiz, que je vourroie
> Secors de vous, que je venroie
> Devant ce veissel precïeus
> Ou est vostres sans glorïeus,
> Ainsi vous pri je et requier
> Que vous me vouillez co[n]seillier'  (vv. 2431-36, 2447-54) [44]

> Joseph a sen veissel ala
> Mout devotement Dieu prïa
> Demoustrast li de sen neveu,
> Comment il feroit son preu.  (vv. 3001) [45]

and judgement will be affected:

> Ten veissel o mon sanc penras,
> En espreuve le meteras
> Vers les pecheeurs en apert,
> Le veissel tout a descouvert  (vv. 2469-72) [46]

> Cil respont: — Par ce veissel ci
> Summes nous de vous departi,
> Car il n'a a nul pecheour
> Ne compaignie ne amour;
> Vous le pouez mout bien vooir.  (vv. 2627-31) [47]

The various aspects of the vessel, as representations of the three elements of the Trinity, reflect and reinforce the *antancïon* of the poem, which centres on the potentiality of a personal relationship which can be enjoyed with Christ and the possibility of eternal salvation which this affords.

The first time the vessel appears it functions as a receptacle for Christ's blood, and in this capacity it represents Christ himself. The vessel is discovered by one of the Jews who is leading Jesus to Pilate for judgement, and is described as, 'un veissel mout gent/ou Criz feisoit son sacrement' (vv. 395-96). Pilate gives it to Joseph, who uses it to catch the last drops of the Messiah's blood, after having taken Him down from the Cross to prepare Him for burial. The vessel, already made holy by Christ's performance of the sacrament, is sanctified once again because it contains Christ's blood, 'ou veissel touz requeilluz' (v. 574).

The second time the vessel appears it reflects the qualities of the Holy Spirit. Joseph is imprisoned and the risen Saviour visits him, bearing the precious vessel and entrusting it to him along with certain teachings. This passage is reminiscent of Christ taking leave of His disciples, but comforting them with the knowledge that He is leaving them the Holy

Spirit as Counsellor. Robert has Christ speak of the vessel in similar terms. Joseph is to stay in prison, but Christ leaves him the vessel, saying that whenever he has need, he can go before the vessel and receive the advice he desires, and hear, 'le seint Esprit paller' (v. 948). Here, as in the previous instance, the vessel represents Christ and His teachings, as 'l'enseigne...de [sa] mort' (v. 847), but its capacity to fulfil the role of the Holy Spirit as counsellor and comforter is also implied.

When the vessel appears for the third time, it does so once again as the Holy Spirit. Long after Joseph's imprisonment, Vespasian, having been cured of leprosy by Verrine, arrives in Jerusalem to avenge Christ's death, and he releases Joseph who has been miraculously kept alive without food or drink. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Joseph establishes a company of men and women who will travel with him through foreign lands, spreading the news of the gospel and preaching the name of Christ. Some of the company become guilty of fornication, and all suffer consequently because of the ravages of failed crops and famine. Joseph goes before the vessel, 'et tout plourant s'agenouilla' (v. 2432), such is his grief at the distress which has overcome his company. The voice of the Holy Spirit speaks to him from the Grail and advises him to establish the Grail table, giving him detailed instructions on how this is to be done, telling him that when the people are summoned, they will immediately recognize their sin:

> ce de quoi dementé se sunt,
> Qui par pechié ha deservi,
> Pour quoi leur est mescheü si (*Joseph*, vv. 2516-18) [48]

When the vessel next appears, it is as an instrument of judgement and grace and, as such, it is representative of God and His power to banish sinners and bestow His grace on the faithful. In order to detect the guilty, and in obedience to what the voice from the vessel instructs, Joseph sets up the Grail table and establishes the service of the Grail. On this table he places two symbols of Christ: the vessel and a fish caught by Bron. Only those who believe in the Trinity and live cleanly are summoned to sit at the table, where they experience all that their hearts desire, 'la douceur, l'acomplissement/De leurs cuers tout entierement' (vv. 2565-66). Sinners feel no pleasure, but are cast out, having been told that those who had received God's grace would remain (vv. 2648-50), whereas those responsible for the famine are referred to as 'fauses gens' (v. 2687) and feel compelled to leave Joseph's company 'pour la honte qu'il unt' (v. 2585). When Moses vainly attempts to sit in the empty chair, he is swallowed up. The condemnation wrought on the sinful of the company by the presence of the Grail, and on Moses in particular, depicts the separation of sinners from the righteous. The 'grant delit' (v. 2611) with which the righteous are overcome when they look upon the Grail is a manifestation of God's Grace.

The final instance of the vessel fulfilling an aspect of the Trinity is concerned with the perpetuity of the Grail and its teachings. It symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ. Time has passed since the establishment of the Grail table and Bron and Enygeus have had 12

sons. The twelfth son, Alein, wishes to remain celibate and is revealed as the one chosen to be entrusted to his uncle, Joseph, who teaches him about Christ and the importance of the Grail. Alein is convinced by what Joseph tells him, and is 'de la grace de Dieu pleins' (v. 3148). The Grail and the teachings about Christ's death, which Christ confers on Joseph when He entrusts him with the Grail and which are reiterated when Joseph seeks advice from the vessel (vv. 2487ff. and 3013ff.), are to be passed on from Alein, Petrus and Bron, through a line of chosen Grail keepers.

Each manifestation of the vessel increases its symbolic worth and at each crucial episode the vessel is central, but with a different function. Moreover, an aspect of the Trinity is represented each time the vessel appears. The blood collected in the cup of the Last Supper represents Christ and the blood He shed for humankind; the visit in the prison has the Grail as Christ but also as the Holy Spirit which Christ leaves to Joseph as his comforter and advisor. God's judgement and His promise of salvation are symbolized by the vessel as it is placed before Joseph's company on the Table of the Grail, separating sinners from the righteous. The final representation of the Grail is the passing on of Christ's teachings and the knowledge of the relationship with Christ which is possible for those who believe and have faith in Him.

Repetition of three-in-one vocabulary as well as of the idea of the vessel as a means of understanding the nature of the Trinity combine in Robert's attempt at conveying complex spiritual ideas, which were the topic of much debate during his time.

There is yet another aspect of repetition to be discussed: the variant episode. In speaking of repetition, William Ryding makes the point that 'it is important to distinguish between the use of repetition as a substitute for narrative imagination and its use as a principle of poetic design'.[16] The former function of repetition occurs as a result of the writer's desire to make the story longer. In order to do so, he recounts another episode similar to the one he has just related. This results in the invention of a variant episode. This may be seen in the *Descouneüs* in the repeated combat scenes, and in a slightly different way in the *Joseph* when the events of the Creation story, the Fall, Crucifixion and Resurrection are reiterated. However, Ryding's explanation of such a technique appears to be that the poet comes to the end of a section, and unable to think of what to do next, he simply repeats the episode, making minor changes to the number of characters involved or to the description of their person or the setting. While this could have been the case in certain romances, the use of variant episodes in the *Descouneüs* and the *Joseph* serves a more significant purpose. The episodes which are reiterated are not haphazardly repeated simply to make the work longer, but instead act as reinforcing and unifying devices.

Renaut presents eight combat scenes in the *Descouneüs* each featuring similar structure and vocabulary to the others as well as each having their source in an antecedent text. In the *Descouneüs*, each combat scene in the text is the result of either custom, honour or a

woman. The *Gué Perilleus*, Sparrowhawk contest, Ile d'Or and Lanpart episodes all feature combat as a result of a custom which appears to have been well established in the territory in which they take place. The three Avengers and the Proud Huntsman episodes arise over points of honour, while the two giants and the Cité Gaste are specifically adventures for saving women. Indeed, all of the combats could be said to have been inspired by women, either to save them, win them or to prove the hero's worth to them.

Donald Maddox, examines Chrétien's use of customs in his romances and refers to four of these romances, *Lancelot, Yvain, Perceval* and *Erec et Enide*, as *customal romances*. This, he explains, is 'because of their extensive and prominent depiction of customs'.[17] Renaut also makes extenseive use of custom. Is it correct, then, to refer to his romance as a customal romance? This question can only be explored with further recourse to Maddox's hypothesis. How does Maddox define customal?

> 'In studies of medieval European institutions, the term "customal" is more familiar as a noun, used interchangeably with "customary" in the nominative, to designate the collections of written customs that began to emerge shortly after Chrétien's works had appeared. The use of "customal" as an adjective in referring to these works will thus serve to underline their frequent evocations of literary customs, at the very moment, moreover when repositories of written versions of customs — or customals — were soon to proliferate. We shall see that it is precisely the customal dimension which lends special shape and significance to Chrétien's Arthurian romances, both individually and as an ensemble.'[18]

References to customs certainly carry intertextual associations, especially within Arthurian romance. However, as the intertextual relationship between the *Descouneüs* and the Chrétien corpus has already been discussed in both Chapters Two and Four, what I intend to focus on here is what Maddox refers to as the 'special shape and significance' of the romances.

In terms of the *Descouneüs*, the special shape and significance which customs generate emphasizes authorial presence. Renaut's descriptions of combat display variations and repetitions of the same elements. The same vocabulary is used and some phrases are repeated verbatim. In short, Renaut depicts stylized combat. By having recourse to formulaic patterns of repetition, Renaut presents several combat scenes which are, in fact, variations of the one action: that of proving the hero's worth. The hero is predisposed to win by dint of his role as protagonist.

The first combat scene (vv. 321-592) is the encounter at the Gué Perilleus and comes about as the result of a custom whereby Blioblïeris must prevent anyone from crossing the ford. Blioblïeris challenges Guinglain, saying that it is the custom of the ford that they fight, 'ensi l'a tenu mes lingnages' (v. 422). The combat against the two giants (vv. 751-814) is the point where Hélie is won over to Guinglain's side and is assured of his prowess. The third description of combat recounts the attack of the three knights who arrive to avenge Blioblïeris (vv. 1064-1190). Hélie is the reason behind the fight with the Proud Huntsman (vv. 1407-88)) It is a point of honour for the Huntsman not to let his

brachet be taken without a fight. The Sparrowhawk contest (vv. 1758-1810) is an established custom, but Guinglain becomes engaged in it as a result of a woman. He comes to the aid of Margerie and avenges the death of her *ami*. The Ile d'Or episode (vv.2105-86) is in response to a custom which the Pucele has established, whereby her suitors must defend the causeway to the castle for a full seven years before they can marry her. This custom is annulled with the advent of Guinglain. Guinglain must joust with Lanpart (vv.2641-92) in order to receive lodgings as is the custom of the town. The final description of combat takes place at the Cité Gaste (vv. 2989-3068). This is an unusual scene as it is a scene of enchantment and the *merveilleux*. The combat with the huge knight is necessary as a result of the spell that has been cast over the city, and is almost a test that Guinglain must pass to be able to attempt the *fier baisier*, his ultimate adventure and the one to which he has been summoned.

Every combat episode begins with a 'spurring on of the horses', creating a feverish opening to the description:

> Les cevals poignent molt forment (Gué Perilleus, v. 435)
>
> Il point le ceval durement (Two Giants, v. 748)
>
> par mi la lande vint poingnant (Three Avengers, v.1138)
>
> point le ceval qui tost li lance (Proud Huntsman, v. 1410)
>
> come home iré les cevals poingnent (Sparrowhawk, v. 1759)
>
> les cevals poingnent par vicor (Ile d'Or, v. 2124)
>
> por tost aler lor cevals poingnent (Lanpart, v. 2642)
>
> Cascuns d'esperonner ne fine
> et li chevaliers poit vers lui (Cité Gaste, vv. 3016-17) [49]

There is always a mention of knightly equipment, of which Guinglain appears to have an unending supply. In every combat, hauberks and lances are smashed and pierced, helmets are dented and shields damaged. The damage to shield and hauberk is described using similar vocabulary:

> l'ecu perça, l'auberc desront (Gué Perilleus, v. 443)
>
> l'escu perce, l'auberc desront (Three Avengers, v. 1107)
>
> fendent escus, fausent haubers (Proud Huntsman, v. 1417)
>
> les escus trencent et esclicent (Ile d'Or, v. 2155)
>
> les haubers ronpent et desmaillent (Ile d'Or, v. 2157)
>
> molt ruiste cop en son escu (Lanpart, v. 2682)
>
> que l'escu li perce devant (Lanpart, v. 2688)
>
> les mailles ronpent des haubers (Cité Gaste, 3023) [50]

Helmets receive a great deal of damage, with blows from swords and clubs:

> sor les elmes, sor les escus (Gué Perilleus, v. 459)
>
> sor les elmes se font ferir (Three Avengers, v. 1149)
>
> sor les elmes s'en font ferir (Sparrowhawk, v. 1771)
>
> sor les elmes les cols ferroient (Ile d'Or, v. 2159)
>
> sor les elmes, sor les escus (Cité Gaste, v. 2945)
>
> sor les elmes, sor les escus (Cité Gaste, v. 3033) [51]

In all cases, combatants are knocked from their horses and must proceed on foot and great blows are meted out to each other:

> dont il se donnent grand colees (Gué Perilleus, v. 458)
>
> s'entredonnent molt grans colees (Sparrowhawk, v. 1774)
>
> Des tronçons donent grand colees (Proud Huntsman, v. 1421)
>
> Des orre sont as cols ferir (Ile d'Or, v. 2123)
>
> Sor les escus grans cols se fierent (Ile d'Or, v. 2132)
>
> des lances tels cols s'entrefierent (Ile d'Or, v. 2940) [52]

The skill and competence and excellence of both knights is reiterated so that when Guinglain wins every time, he is proven the most valiant:

> Bon chevalier furent andui (Three Avengers, v. 1105)
>
> Molt sont vasal, fier caple font (Proud Huntsman, v. 1429)
>
> Andoi furent de grant valor (Ile d'Or, v. 2123)
>
> Andoi furent preu et hardi (Lanpart, v. 2650) [53]

There are two outcomes at the end of each combat. Guinglain either deals the final blow resulting in death, as in the case of the giants, Willaume de Salebrant, Malgiers li Gris and the knight at the Cité Gaste, or else he grants mercy to the defeated party. In each case, the loser is told to go to Arthur's court and say by whom they have been defeated:

> ens en la cort Artus le roi
> a lui en irés de par moi (Gué Perilleus, vv. 481-2) [54]
>
> ens en la cort Artu le roi
> iluec en iras de par moi (Three Avengers, vv. 1183-4)
>
> ens en la cort Artus le roi
> se li dites de par moi (Proud Huntsman, vv. 1469-70)
>
> ens en la cort Artus le roi (Sparrowhawk, v. 1801)

There is a sameness about all the combat scenes and yet they are not there merely to make the narrative longer, nor to instruct the audience on military tactics. The repetitious way

in which the action is described casts the characters in prescribed roles. The combat scenes appear staged, almost rehearsed. Their purpose is to glorify the protagonist and provide him with ample opportunity to prove his worthiness as romance hero. In this light, there is only one possible outcome of combat: the hero must win. It is as though the moves have been choreographed and the opponents are stylised caricatures who adopt the stance dictated by the author.

Phrasal repetition takes another form in the *Joseph*. Robert does not present variant episodes in the *Joseph* in the same way as Renaut does in the *Descouneüs*. The Joseph is not a progression through a series of adventures similar from one to the next in structure and vocabulary, and seeming only to have a change of cast and setting; specific events are reiterated in nearly every section. For the audience, it is a progression towards understanding, or a discovery of the truth. However, in almost every section of the narrative, the major events of the story are reiterated from a different perspective. The effect of the repetition of these events is twofold. Firstly, Robert is ensuring that the key events are ever-fresh in the mind of the audience. There will be no doubt about what happened and a comprehensive picture of the events is provided. Secondly, as discussed in Chapter Three, these various perspectives produce a 'shift' in authority. Reports from the perspective of different characters on events already described by the narrator lend credibility to the tale.

There are five specific themes which Robert reiterates over the course of the narrative. These are:

i) Christ's incarnation

ii) Salvation of the Father's creation

iii) Adam and Eve's story from Genesis

iv) Events of the Last Supper

v) Christ's crucifixion

The same, or similar words, phrases or passages are used to recapitulate the key events from the perspective of different characters. There are six voices or perspectives who repeat these phrases, and themes are: the narrator, Christ, the pilgrim, Joseph, Pilate, and the voice from the Grail. Not all of these voices are used for every theme.

### i) Christ's Incarnation.

An account of Christ's Incarnation is first introduced by the narratorial voice which repeats the advent of Christ and His incarnation within the Virgin Mary, five times:

> Fist des prophetes anuncier
> Sa venue en terre et huchier
> Que Diex son fil envoieroit
> Ça jus aval, et soufferoit (*Joseph*, vv. 5-8) [55]

> Lors si plut a Nostre Seigneur
> Qu'il nous feïst trestouz honneur
> Et qu'il en terre descendist
> Et nostre humeinne char preïst.
> Dedenz la Virge s'aümbra  (*Joseph*, vv. 27-31) [56]
>
> Diex voust que ses fiuz char preïst
> De la Virge et de li naschist (*Joseph*, vv.97-8) [57]
>
> Cil Sires, qui humanité
> Prist en la Virge  (*Joseph*, vv. 101-2) [45] [58]
>
> Tant com Diex le vout, et ne plus,
> Qu'il envoia sen fil ça jus  (*Joseph*, vv. 137-38) [59]

The perspective changes when Christ visits Joseph in prison and the circumstances of His birth are reiterated four times.  Christ firstly introduces Himself to Joseph as:

> li Fiuz Dieu, qu'envoier
> Voust Diex en terre pour sauver
> Les pecheours de dampnement (*Joseph*, vv. 741-43) [60]

He then repeats His status twice more:

> Et les eut tant cum plust au Pere
> Que li Fiuz naschi de la mere  (*Joseph*, vv. 761-62) [61]
>
> Li Fiuz Dieu tout certeinnement
> Vint en terre; et si has oï
> Pour quoi de la Virge naschi  (*Joseph*, vv.771-73) [62]

Joseph makes completely sure of the identity of his visitor and his question is once again a restatement not only of Christ's name, but messianic status.  Joseph asks whether He is:

> Jhesus qui prist
> Char en la Virge precïeuse (*Joseph*, vv.780-81) [63]

The third time Christ's incarnation is reiterated, it is from the perspective of the pilgrim:

> Jhesus eut non, li fiuz Marie,
> De Nazareth lez Bethanie. (*Joseph*, vv. 1049-50) [64]

The pilgrim provides an eye-witness account of the miracles performed by Christ and the hatred the rich men of Judea held for Him.  He relates what he has seen without fully understanding who Christ is.  To him, Christ is a man, a 'grant profete' (v. 1025) and a 'preudons' (v. 1026), but He is human.  In the previous episodes, He has been spoken of in terms of his divinity, being referred to as *li fiuz Diex*, born of a virgin, and therefore born in wondrous circumstances.  In the pilgrim's terms of reference, He is called Jesus and is the son of Mary.

When Vespasian finds Joseph in prison, Joseph gives a full explanation of Christ's coming to earth and His incarnation in the Virgin Mary:

> Ainsi le vout il ordener,
> En terre sen fil envoia
> Qui aveques nous conversa.
> Nez fu de la Virge Marie' (*Joseph*, vv. 2182-85) [65]

> Ainsi voust Diex li Fius venir
> Pour sen pere en terre morir;
> Cil qui de la Virge fu nez,
> Par les Juïs morz et dampnez' (*Joseph*, vv. 2199-202) [66]

When Joseph goes to the vessel for advice about the sin of his people, he addresses Christ in terms of His immaculate conception:

> 'Sire qui char presis
> En la Virge et de li nasquis' (*Joseph*, vv. 2433-34) [67]

Here, the formulaic phrase is used as a title of respect and an acknowledgement of Christ's divinity.

## ii). Salvation of the Father's Creation

The salvation of the Father's creation appears five times over the course of the narrative, in variations of the formulaic phrase 'sauver l'uevre de son pere'. The phrase appears first in the pseudo-prologue where the narrator explains the need for Christ's birth and death and His plan for salvation:

> Daigna en terre pour morir;
> Pour ce que il voloit sauver
> L'uevre son pere (*Joseph*, vv. 104-46) [68]

> Pour saver l'uevre de son pere (*Joseph*, v. 139)

It is then reiterated from Christ's perspective when He visits Joseph in prison:

> 'Je vins en terre mort soufrir,
> En la crouiz finer et morir,
> Pour l'uevre men pere sauver' (*Joseph*, vv. 745-47) [69]

> 'Pour ce qu'en la crouiz moreüst
> Et li peres s'uevre reüst' (*Joseph*, vv. 773-74) [70]

Joseph relates this knowledge to Vespasian using almost the same language as Christ had used with him. He explains to Vespasian that, as a result of God's bountiful goodness, His Son was sent to earth:

> Meis li vrais Diex, par sa bonté,
> Pour s'uevre qu'avoit feit sauver,
> Ainsi le vout il ordener,
> En terre sen Fil envoia
> Qui aveques nous conversa. (*Joseph*, vv. 2180-84) [71]

## iii). Adam and Eve's Story

The reason behind God's need to send His son to save humankind is explained by Robert in Adam and Eve's sin. It also provides another example of phrasal repetition. In the first and narratorial account of events, their story is mentioned twice:

> Pour le pechié d'Adam no pere,
> Que li fist feire Eve no mere
> Par la pomme qu'ele menja
> Et qu'ele son mari donna (*Joseph*, vv. 85-88) [72]

Further details are revealed a few verses on. Robert relates that when Eve realized her sin, she tried all ways and means to have her husband sin as well (v. 111), and that God had allowed Adam and Eve access to every tree except one. By eating the apple and then giving it to her husband, Eve had committed the gravest of sins, and because of it God 'tantost de delist les gita' (vv. 129).

The involvement of the enemy in tempting Eve and her husband Adam is mentioned in the two prison scenes In the first of these scenes, Christ tells Joseph of the need for salvation as a result of Adam and Eve's sin:

> [...] Adans avoit feite dampner
> Par la pomme que il menja
> Qu'Eve sa femme li donna
> Par le conseil de L'Ennemi
> Qu'ele plus tost que Dieu creï.
> Aprés ce Diex de paradis
> Les gita et les fist chetis
> Pour le pechié que feit avoient
> Quant son commandement passoient (*Joseph*, vv. 748-56) [73]

When Vespasian comes to free Joseph from prison, he asks Joseph to tell him about the one whose image had healed him. Joseph provides him with a thorough explanation of Christ and the reason for His coming to earth, recounting how the enemy:

> a Eve vint, si l'engingna
> Par la pomme qu'ele menja.
> Par l'enhortement l'Ennemi
> S'enfist Adam mengier ausi
> Et quant il en eurent mengié
> De paradis furent chacié (*Joseph*, vv. 2165-70) [74]

## iv). Events of the Last Supper

The account of the Last Supper is first related by the narrator:

> Et ce jüedi chiés Simon
> Estoit Jhesus en sa maison
> Ou ses deciples enseignoit (vv. 319-21) [75]

It is then repeated as a reminder to Joseph, first by Christ when He comes to Joseph in prison:

> Joseph, bien sez que chiés Symon
> Menjei et tout mi compeignon,
> A la Cene, le jüesdi (vv. 893-95) [76]

and then by the voice which speaks to Joseph from the Grail:

> 'Devant que je fui chiés Symon,
> Ou estoient mi compeignon (vv. 2477-78) [77]
>
> Tu sez bien que chiés Symon fui
> A la taule, ou menjei et bui (vv. 2487-88) [78]

The Grail Table and its service recalls the table of the Last Supper:

> Ou non de cele table quier
> Une autre et fei appareillier (*Joseph*, vv. 2491-92) [79]

The establishment of the Grail table and service enables the people in Joseph's community to approach God and experience His Grace. Robert uses the canonical event of the Last Supper as a means to explain the significance of the Grail table. He uses phrasal repetition to emphasize both the importance of this event in terms of Christianity, but also to point to its significance in the development of the Grail.

## v). Christ's Crucifixion

Details of Christ's Crucifixion are not supplied by the narrator in the first section. Instead, Pilate and Joseph are simply portrayed as hearing the news of His death:

> Li Juïs le veissel tenoit
> Qu'en l'ostel Simon pris avoit;
> Vint a Pilate et li donna,
> Et Pilates en sauf mis l'a
> Dusqu'atant que conté li fu
> Qu'il avoient deffeit Jhesu.
> Et quant Joseph l'a oï dire,
> Pleins fu de mautalent et d'ire. (*Joseph*, vv. 433-40) [80]

In the prison scene, Christ reveals more details of the Crucifixion:

> [...] et si has oï
> Pour quoi de la Virge naschi,
> Pour ce qu'en la crouiz moreüst
> Et li Peres s'uevre reüst.
> Pour ce sui en terre venuz,
> Et li sans de mon cors issuz
> Qui en issi par cinc foïes;
> Assez i soufri de haschies. (*Joseph*, vv. 771-78) [81]

In the same scene, Joseph refers to the Crucifixion, providing more details of the harsh treatment meted out to Christ by the Jews:

> Cil que Judas trente deniers
> Vendi as Juïs pautonniers
> Et qu'il fusterent et batirent
> Et puis en a crouiz le pendirent? (*Joseph*, vv. 783-86) [82]

The pilgrim offers yet another perspective on the Crucifixion:

> La pute gent qui le haïrent
> Tant donnerent et tant prommirent
> A ceus qui le pouoir avoient
> Et qui les joustices tenoient,
> Tant le chacierent qu'il le prirent
> Et vilainnement le leidirent
> Et le despouillierent tout nu
> Tant qu'il l'eurent forment batu.
> Et quant pis ne li peurent feire
> Li Juïf qui sunt de pute eire,
> Si le firent crucefier
> En la crouiz et martiriër. (*Joseph*, vv. 1051-62) [83]

Pilate provides the most comprehensive account of the Crucifixion, spanning 71 verses (vv. 1295-1366). He relates to the Emperor's messengers how Judas sold Christ to the Jews and then led them to arrest Him at Simon's house, providing details of the violence committed against Christ:

> Il le pristrent et l'em menerent
> Et le batirent et fraperent,
> Et en l'estache fu loiez
> Et en la crouiz crucefiez (*Joseph*, vv. 1333-36) [84]

Verrine gives a similar account of the mistreatment inflicted on Jesus as the Jews led Him to the Cross:

> Je m'en ving, et il l'em menerent
> Outre batant, mout le fraperent;
> Mout li feisoient vilenie,
> Nepourquant ne se pleignoit mie. (*Joseph*, vv. 1607-10) [85]

The voice from the Grail reminds Joseph of the events surrounding the Crucifixion:

> Souvigne toi que fui venduz,
> Trahiz et foulez et batuz (*Joseph*, vv. 2473-74) [86]

Included in the instructions Joseph is to pass on to his nephew provided by the voice from the Grail are details of the crucifixion:

> Conte li comment vins en terre,
> Comment eurent tout a moi guerre
> Et comment je fui achetez,
> Venduz, bailliez et delivrez,
> Comment fui batuz et leidiz,
> D'un de mes deciples trahiz,
> Et escopiz et decrachiez,
> Et a l'estache fu loiez;
> Quanque peurent de leit me firent,
> Car au darrïen me pendirent. (*Joseph*, vv. 3017-26) [87]

Details of the Crucifixion are gradually disclosed each time the event is related until the full horror of the Jews' treatment of Christ and the suffering He underwent is revealed.

Through phrasal repetition, Robert amplifies the basic tenets upon which the Christian faith rests. These are represented in the five themes discussed above and which recur throughout the text, expressed in the same or very similar phrasing.

By emphasizing, at various points in the narrative, those themes and motifs that the poet wants to impress upon his audience, he effectively draws together the various parts which make up the narrative and makes them serve the central focus, the *antancïon,* of the text. Repetition reflects authorial *antancïon* in that it imposes a pattern on the work which has a considerable effect in enhancing and deepening the themes. Emanuèle Baumgartner expresses the concept of recurring thematic phrases in her explanation of repetition as 'la reprise à l'intérieur d'un récit, ou d'un récit à un autre, d'un même motif narratif' and it is this process which 'joue ainsi un rôle essentiel dans la production du sens'.[19] According to Baumgartner, it is 'la répétition qui fonde l'unité d'ensemble du texte voire du cycle et dévide le fil conducteur du sens'.

Through the repetition of certain key motifs, the author creates a densely worked and yet unified romance. Every time the formulaic phrase occurs, it recalls its previous mention and heightens the significance of the theme, creating a harmony of structure and meaning. The various episodes are linked by certain common denominators and in this way, the authorial *antancïon* of the work is fully developed and extended.

Repetition functions fundamentally as a means of amplifying a work. The precise task of the poet is to restate his initial idea in a variety of ways and in so doing, to refine it and draw from it all of its inherent implications and meanings. It may also serve as a principle of thematic recurrence, in that one part of the story is echoed in a later part, thereby strengthening the initial idea. Repetition creates textual unity in that it acts as a principle of poetic design.

While it may appear that literary devices such as repetition are concerned merely with the physical execution of the poem, they have a lot more to do with the arrangement of ideas and therefore the manipulation of reader perception of these ideas. The repetition of words, phrases and motifs focuses the audience or reader's attention on the meaningful. Well-wrought repetition should achieve the effect of a heightened sense of crisis and emotional significance. It locates what is to be noticed, compared and analysed, and in this way reinforces the central themes of the narrative.

---

1   *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry,* ed. by Adam Parry (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971); Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales,* Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 24 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960); Joseph Duggan, *The Song of Roland: Formulaic Style and Poetic Craft,* Publications of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, UCLA, 6 (Berkeley and London, 1973); Jean Rychner, *La Chanson de geste: essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs,* Publications romanes et françaises, 53 (Geneva and Lille, 1955); Edward A. Heinemann, *L'Art*

*métrique de la chanson de geste: essai sur la musicalité du récit*, Publications romanes et françaises, 205 (Geneva: Droz, 1993).

2   Parry, p. 329.

3   John Miles Foley, *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: An Introduction and Annotated Bibliography*, Garland Folklore Bibliographies, 6 (New York and London, 1985), p. xiii.

4   Anne Elizabeth Cobby, *Ambivalent Conventions: Formula and Parody in Old French* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995).

5   Cobby, p. 1.

6   Cobby, p. 57.

7   O'Gorman, p. 371, n. 1493.

8   Ryding, p. 75.

9   Faral, p. 63.

10  Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), p. 255.

11  Faral, 'Une forme particulière de *l'interpretatio* consiste à exploiter l'étymologie', in *Les Arts Poétiques,* p. 65.

12  O'Gorman, *Critical Edition,* p. 340.

13  Angus Kennedy, '"Marie est dite mer amere", in Robert de Boron's *Le Roman de L'Estoire dou Graal'*, *BBSIA,* 29 (1977), 185-90.

14  O'Gorman, p. 389, n. 2659.

15  Glyn Burgess, *Contribiution à l'étude du vocabulaire pré-courtois.* Publications romanes et françaises, 110 (Geneva: Droz, 1970).

16  Ryding, p.98.

17  Maddox, p. 6.

18  Maddox, p. 6.

19  Baumgartner, '*Féerie-fiction...*', p. 181.

# Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the author is the motivating agent of the text. The material selected by the poet operates as the vehicle for the central ideas and the structure and amplification of the material bring the *antancïon* to the fore, clarifying and enhancing the poet's initial mental conception. Far from being a contrived and highly artificial framework, this allows us to define fiction as a craft which organizes and glosses material, creating unity through authorial *antancïon*.

At its inception, this project was guided by two lines of enquiry. How is authorial *antancïon* to be defined and what is its role in terms of the poetic craft represented in two twelfth-century texts? Can I successfully conclude that authorial *antancïon* is supported through techniques of amplification and that these texts represent a complex poetic craft based on the twelfth-century *artes poeticae*?

Firstly, is *antancïon* relevant in terms of evaluating a literary text? Can a reader achieve an objective interpretation of an author's expressed meaning and can this meaning be determined through the use of amplification? In broaching the subject of *antancïon*, we must consider the relation of the writer to the tradition understood as literary history, encompassing as it does literary technique, conventions and genres. A study of Chrétien de Troyes, as a contemporary of Robert and Renaut, and his references to poetic craft offers an insight into currents of thought and generally accepted practices. However, Chrétien himself did not invent the process of literary composition. He is on a continuum which reaches back to the Sophists and the art of rhetoric inherited from Classical Greece. This art was developed and revised, particularly in the resurgence of education and literature in the liberal arts during the Carolingian period. The twelfth-century perception of the process of composition is reflected in the *artes poeticae*, most prominently represented in the Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* and Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria*.

Northrop Frye divides rhetoric into speech which is persuasive and that which is ornamental:

> Rhetoric has from the beginning meant two things: ornamental speech and persuasive speech, These two things seem psychologically opposed to each other, as the desire to ornament is essentially disinterested, and the desire to persuade essentially the reverse [...] Persuasive rhetoric is applied literature, or the use of literary art to reinforce the power of argument. Ornamental rhetoric acts on its hearers statically, leading them to admire its own beauty or wit; persuasive rhetoric tries to lead them kinetically toward a course of action. One articulates emotion; the other manipulates it.[1]

The impetus to write is to impart certain knowledge, whether this is knowledge based in the fictional world created by the author, or authentic information. Either way, the author has an overriding idea, his *antancïon*, that he wishes to convey. As noted in Chapter One, Aristotle defines rhetoric as, 'the faculty of discovering the available means of persuasion in each case'.[2] For the medieval writers, the available means of persuasion lies in the interpretation and imitation of already existing literary models and in the techniques of amplification acquired in the schools.

Many of the features of both the *Joseph* and the *Descouneüs* are not original to their authors. Not only do we see Robert and Renaut using techniques of literary composition represented in the *artes poeticae*, but they also present texts which are an amalgam of sources, motifs and conventions taken from other literary models and reproduced to suit their own design. The intertextual aspects of the romances under consideration lend a note of familiarity, tying them in to the body of literature classified as twelfth-century or Arthurian romance. Reference, be that explicit or implicit, to other romances establishes a complex web of associations, which, far from being monotonous and repetitious, extends the terms of reference of the specific romance.

If brevity be the soul of wit, or to paraphrase Geoffrey of Vinsauf, if the glory of a brief work consists in saying nothing either more or less than is fitting, what does amplification have to offer in terms of literary elegance and crafting?[3] My premise throughout this thesis has been that the process of literary composition is discernible in the works of Robert and Renaut. They respectively both exploit, as well as extend, what modern scholars classify as the limits of romance genre. This is not to suggest that these poets deliberately set out to revolutionise a genre and broaden the scope of romance. We can only retrospectively claim that this might be perceived in their work. What may be claimed with more assurance is that they have recourse to what is already available; that is, the combination of *materia remota* found in antecedent writers and methods of composition acquired in the classroom, and that they manipulate these according to their *antancïon*.

There is nothing new in my claims. Norris Lacy addresses the craftsmanship involved in the creation of romance in his study of *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes*:

> '... although we as critics and students of literature may be reluctant to admit it, the ideas in our art are rarely if ever profound. [...] What does distinguish literary art, or any other is precisely its artfulness; that is, profundity resides less in what is said than in the way in which it is said, less in the thesis than in its elaboration. Or, less narrowly put, profundity resides in the harmonious relationship of the thesis to the properly organized components of its elaboration.'[4]

What is lacking in Lacy is the appreciation of this craft as a process. How is this 'harmonious relationship of the thesis to the properly organized components of its elaboration' produced? Lacy vaguely refers to the impossibility of separating 'the

fictional world [Chrétien] creates from the techniques by which its creation is achieved'.[5] He discusses what he finds 'essential', that is 'the nature of that fictional universe, its themes, problems, and conventions; the characters who inhabit it; the role of Chrétien as narrator in presenting the story and his role as artist in creating and organizing that story'.[6] While these elements are important in a discussion of literary crafting, they are corollaries and in themselves do not comprise 'technique'. The romance is an entity with a genesis, an identifiable method and a premeditated conclusion towards which the narrative heads. To return to the terminology used in Chapter One, *inventio* and *dispositio* are mutually dependent elements in the process of literary composition and both are informed by *antancïon*. The poet must start with an idea. This initial idea then controls and coordinates the *dispositio*, that is the selection of material, the method and the structure. Without the initial idea and the directional influence of the poet which must accompany it, there would be no romance.

I am greatly indebted to Douglas Kelly's work which recognizes medieval French romance as an art and analyzes it as such. As I have previously mentioned, both Douglas Kelly and William Ryding have already carried out extensive work on amplification. In his aptly named book, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, Kelly provides a full account of the literary paradigm, linking poetic creation to the medieval *artes poeticae*. He distils the process of the invention to three stages which have been particularly helpful to the conception of my thesis:

> First, the author has an idea or mental conception of a subject. Second, material is sought and identified through which the initial conception may find appropriate staement and elaboration. Third, the mental conception and the *materia* are meshed as the subject matter of the work.[7]

This present study has looked at how this concept is applied to specific texts and how the authority of the poet's *antancïon* is sustained throughout his project. Interest is in the specific place occupied by the author and the marked reflection on the nature of fiction. In my research of the two texts under consideration, I have discovered that *antancïon* is to be considered a necessary prerequisite before the author can arrange the material. The emphasis has been on amplification as a unifying device with its function being to gloss the text through indicating and intensifying authorial *antancïon*.

What of the ambiguity engendered by the open-ended conclusion to the two romances under consideration? Geoffrey of Vinsauf is quite specific about the need for resolution to balance the overall *dispositio* of the work:

> Finis, quasi praeco,
> Cursus expleti, sub honore licentiet illam. (*Poetria nova*, vv. 73-74) [1]

There has been much discussion on craftsmanship and the poet's determining will being directed towards a certain end. If there is no end, does this negate this thesis? By no means. The unconcluded work is still the product of rhetorical crafting and the non-

ending achieves as much, if not more impact as resolution. In terms of Robert and Renaut, then, Matthew of Vendôme's words are more appropriate:

> Conclusio est, prout hic accipitur, tenorem propositi complectens legitima metri terminatio. (*Ars versificatoria*, IV, 49) [2]

Matthew's explanation of how to approach the writing of a conclusion allows for individual deviance from the beginning, middle, end, construct which Geoffrey appears to be upholding. In Matthew, the emphasis is on the appropriateness of the conclusion to the overall design, rather than the *dispositio*. This clearly supports the author's power to manipulate material to bring out his own perspective. If this means avoiding a *point final*, so be it.

---

1   Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 245.
2   Grube, p. 93.
3   'Sic breve splendet opus: nihil exprimit aut magis aequo aut minus.' (*Poetria nova*, vv. 730-31)
4   Lacy, *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes*, p. 114.
5   Lacy, p. 117.
6   Lacy, p. 117.
7   Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance*, p. 38.

# Appendix

## One

1. 'Since my lady of Champagne wishes me to undertake the writing of a romance.' Owen, p. 185.

2. 'But I will go so far as to say that her bidding is more important for this work than any inspiration or effort I might put into it. Chrétien begins his book about the Knight of the Cart. Its subject matter and treatment are supplied and given to him by the countess, and he puts his mind to it without contributing anything beyond his effort and application.' Owen, p. 185.

3. '[...] and one of them was Meleagant's sister: I will tell you later my thoughts and reasons for mentioning her; but to give them at this point would be irrelevant, and I have no wish to distort. corrupt or labour my subject-matter but want to treat it in a direct, straightforward manner.' Owen, p. 268.

4. 'Therefore, Chrétien will not be wasting his efforts as he labours and strives, on the Count's orders, to tell in rhyme the finest story ever related in a royal court. That is the story of the Grail, found in the book the Count gave him.' Owen, p. 374.

5. 'Therefore Chrétien de Troyes says it is right for everybody always to devote his thoughts and efforts to telling and teaching what is good.' Owen, p. 1.

6. 'In the story we read the account of this robe; and so that no one accuses me of lying, I give as my authority Macrobius, who devoted himself to describing it. Macrobius is my model for the description, as I found it in the book, of the cloth's workmanship and what was depicted on it.' Owen, p. 89.

7. 'Lend me your hearts and your ears! For things one hears are lost unless they are understood by the heart. There are people who don't understand what they hear and yet commend it; they have nothing but the power of hearing. So long as the heart understands nothing of the words, they reach the ears like the blowing wind; but rather than stopping and lingering there, they very swiftly pass on, unless the heart is alert enough to be ready to receive them. The ears are the route and channel by which the

voice reaches the heart, and the heart receives in the breast the voice that penetrates to it through the ear.' Owen, p. 283

8. 'You, who have done as much yourselves, can understand and supply the reason for his shamming tiredness and going to bed with an eye to the people in his house'. Owen, p. 246.

9. 'Yet his interest was in neither the body nor the procession, for he would have liked to have had them all burned.' Owen, p. 298.

10. 'With what purpose did Cligés say to me, "I am entirely devoted to you", unless Love made him say it?' Owen, p. 152.

11. 'So will you please swear that in good faith you will use your best endeavours in the interest of the Knight with the Lion until he is sure of enjoying his lady's love as fully as ever in the past.' Owen, p. 371.

12. 'She answered that she had deliberately kissed his foot so that he would remember her again wherever he might go.' Owen, p. 449.

13. '[...] intentio represents one's feelings about a subject, or words that direct one's feelings while reading a book.' Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 38.[1]

14. 'Therefore Chrétien de Troyes says it is right for everybody always to devote his thoughts and efforts to telling and teaching what is good; and from a tale of adventure he fashions a very elegant composition giving manifest proof that there is no wisdom in not freely making one's knowledge available so far as God's grace allows.' Owen, p. 1.

15. '[...] such is the power of order and connection, such the beauty that may crown the commonplace,' Michelle Alice Freeman p. 65.[2]

16. 'Sometimes poets combine historical events and imaginative fancies, as it were in a splendid structure, to the end that from the harmonius joining of diversities a finer image of the story may result', Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance,* p. 24.

17. '[...] and from a tale of adventure he fashions a very elegant composition'. Owen, p. 1.

18. 'Now I wish to compose a romance for her from a beautiful tale of adventure.' Donagher, p. 5.

19. 'All these faculties we can acquire by three means: Theory, Imitation and Practice. By theory is meant a set of rules that provide a definite method and system of speaking. Imitation stimulates us to attain, in accordance with a studied method, the effectiveness of

certain models in speaking.  Practice is assiduous exercise and experience in speaking.'
Harry Caplan, pp. 6-9.[3]

20. '[...] the material of the art of rhetoric seems to me to be that which we said Aristotle
approved.  The parts of it, as most authorities have stated, are Invention, Arrangement,
Expression, Memory, Delivery.  Inventio is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid
arguments to render one's cause plausible.  Arrangement is the distribution of arguments
thus discovered in the proper order.  Expression is the fitting of the proper language to the
invented matter.  Memory is the firm mental grasp of matter and words.  Delivery is the
control of voice and body in a manner suitable to the dignity of the subject matter and the
style.'  H.M. Hubbell, pp. 19-21.[4]

21. '...whether it (eloquence) is a product of rules and theory, or a technique dependent
on practice, or on natural gifts, it is one attainment amongst all others of unique difficulty.
For of the five elements of which, as we say, it is made up, each one is in its own right a
great art.  One may guess therefore what power is inherent in an art made up of five great
arts, and what difficulty it presents'.  G.L. Hendrickson, pp. 36-37.[5]

22. 'The speaker, then, should possess the faculties of invention, arrangement, style,
memory and delivery.  Invention is the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would
make the case convincing.  Arrangement is the ordering and distribution of the matter,
making clear the place to which each thing is to be assigned.  Style is the adaptation of
suitable words and sentences to the matter devised.  Memory is the firm retention in the
mind of the matter, words, arrangement.  Delivery is the graceful regulation of voice,
countenance and gesture'. Harry Caplan, pp. 6-9.

23. '...if intense concentration enkindle native ability, the material is soon made pliant by
the mind's fire, and submits to the hand in whatever way it requires, malleable to any
form.' Margaret Nims, p. 23.

24. 'Three things perfect a work: artistic theory by whose law you may be guided;
experience, which you may foster by practice; and superior writers, whom you may
imitate. Theory makes the craftsman sure; experience makes him ready; imitation makes
him versatile; the three together produce the greatest craftsmen.' Nims, p. 77.

25. 'Since the following treatise begins its course with a discussion of order, its first
concern is the path that the ordering of material should follow.  Its second care: with what
scales to establish a delicate balance if meaning is to be given the weight appropriate to it.
The third task is to see that the body of words is not boorishly crude but urbane.  The
final concern is to ensure that a well-modulated voice enters the ears and feeds the
hearing, a voice seasoned with the two spices of facial expression and gesture.' Nims, p.
18.

26. 'Tobias plays at will in the old field and delights us equally with his subject matter and the nobility of the metre. A new art of writing shines with splendid distinction, delightful in its combination of substance and words.' trans. by Alison Holcroft, Classics Department, University of Canterbury, 1997.

27. 'He governs the pen with regard to the art of writing and, in spite of Rufus' denial, Matthew of Vendôme is praised.' Alison Holcroft.

28. 'Matthew of Vendôme wrote fully on this art, Geoffrey of Vinsauf even more so, and Bernardus Silvestris most thoroughly.' Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance*, p. 35.

29. 'I was taught the basic skills of composition by Silvester, the glory of Tours, who shone like a gem in his field of study and brought honour to the school.' Alison Holcroft.

30. '[...] since the exercise of the craft of versification consists especially in skill in description, I would advise that if a thing is to be described, the greatest attention be paid to credibility in writing descriptions, so that what is said is true or seems to be true. This practice agrees with Horace's advice: Either follow tradition or invent details that agree with each other. (Poetria, 119).' Galyon, p. 47.

31. 'There remains to be discussed the third section of the division made above in the Prologue, namely the quality or the manner of the expression. A verse quite often derives its gracefulness more from its manner of expression than from the substance of what is said [...] Hence three qualities distinguish poetry: polished language, figurative expression, and the inner sentiment.' Galyon, p. 87.

32. 'Further, one must decide whether or not to describe the character about whom he is writing. In many cases a description of the person is fitting, in many superfluous ' Galyon, p. 34.

33. 'For there are three types of elegance which please in poetry: polished words, figurative expression, and the inner sentiment. This is to say that elegance in verse comes either from the beauty of its ideas, the exterior decoration of the words, or the quality of its speech'. Galyon. p. 65.

34. 'This little book instructs boys about verses; it takes its name from that fact; it can teach the major ideas.' Galyon, p. 112.

35. '...so in the exercise of the poetic faculty the conceptual realization of meaning comes first, then the language, the interpreter of understanding follows, then the orderly arrangement of the treatment. Thus the conception of the meaning comes first, next

comes the working out of the language, then the ordering of the treatment or the disposition of the material.' Galyon, p. 99.

36. 'England sent me to Rome as from earth to heaven; it sent me to you as from darkness to light.' Nims, p. 16.

37. 'To these devices, which have been cleverly worked out to create credibility, we must add the order in which our material is presented: this is called 'disposition.' [...] This part of rhetoric has two aspects, for the structure follows either a natural order or an artificial one devised by the skill of the orator. The natural order occurs when, after the introduction, there follow the narrative, the outline of the main points, the presentation of one's thesis, the argument, the conclusion drawn, and the peroration. The skill of the orator is employed when we distribute the points to be made throughout the speech.' William Harris Stahl and Richard Johnson, pp. 187-88.[6]

38. 'If a still more brilliant beginning is desired (while leaving the sequence of the material unchanged) make use of a proverb, ensuring that it may not sink to a purely specific relevance, but raise its head high to some general truth. See that, while prizing the charm of the unusual, it may not concentrate its attention on the particular subject, but refuse, as if in disdain, to remain within its bosom. Let it take a stand above the given subject, but look with a direct glance towards it.' Nims, p. 20.

39. 'The way continues along two routes: there will be either a wide path or a narrow, either a river or a brook. You may advance at a leisurely pace or leap swiftly ahead. You may report the matter with brevity or draw it out in lengthy discourse.' Nims, p. 23.

40. '[...] although the meaning is one, let it not come content with one set of apparel. Let it vary its robes and assume different raiment. Let it take up again in other words what has already been said; let it reiterate, in a number of clauses, a single thought. Let one and the same thing be concealed under multiple forms — be varied and yet the same.' Nims, p. 24.

41. 'I clothe what I intend to say in a variety of words: the words say different things but mean the same thing.' Translation, Alison Holcroft.

42. 'Interpretatio is the figure which does not duplicate the same word by repeating it, but replaces the word by another of the same meaning, as follows: 'You have torn the republic from its roots; you have demolished the foundations of the state. *Expolitio* consists in dwelling on the same topic and yet saying something ever new.

43. 'either the bare truth may be embellished with ornamentation or the foulness of an idea may be avoided by roundabout statement'. Galyon, p. 105.

44. '...this device lengthens brief forms of expression, since a short word abdicates in order that an extended sequence be its heir.' Nims, p. 24.

45. '[...] but certain collateral matters not affecting the principal theme — such as comparisons, flagrant poetic license, vague syntactic relationships, and practices affecting quantities and syllables — need not be followed.' Galyon, p. 100.

46. 'Here is the formula for a skilful juncture, where the elements joined flow together and touch each other as if they were not contiguous but continuous; as if the hand of nature had joined them rather than the hand of art. This type of comparison is more artistic; its use is much more distinguished.' Nims, p. 25.

47. 'Exclamation serves to reinforce the expression of suffering or indignation by addressing a man, a town, a place or some other object.' Harry Caplan, p. 325.

48. 'If you examine these rhetorical figures carefully, in all of them the meaning clearly reveals its content.' Nims, p. 70.

49. 'If you heed the directives carefully and suit words to content, you will speak with precise appropriateness in this way.' Nims, p. 82.

50. 'So, then let all be in harmony: suitable expression, polished development, firm retention in memory. If discourses are delivered ineptly, they are no more to be praised than is a recitation charmingly delivered but without the other requirements mentioned.'

51. 'If a man has a house to build, his impetuous hand does not rush into action. The measuring line of his mind first lays out the work, and he mentally outlines the successive steps in a definite order. The mind's hand shapes the entire house before the body's hand builds it. Its mode of being is archetypal before it is actual. Poetic art may see in this analogy the law to be given to poets: let the poet's hand not be swift to take up the pen, nor his tongue be impatient to speak; trust neither hand nor tongue to the guidance of fortune. To ensure greater success for the work, let the discriminating mind, as a prelude to action, defer the operation of hand and tongue, and ponder long on the subject matter. Let the mind's interior compass first circle the whole extent of the material. Let a definite order chart in advance at what point the pen will take up its course, or where it will fix its Cadiz. As a prudent workman, construct the whole fabric within the mind's citadel; let it exist in the mind before it is on the lips.' Nims, pp. 16-17.

52. 'Let those who patch together rags be excluded from a scrutiny of this work [...] they turn out their ragged verses, attempting to make a unified poem out of an assortment of trifles.' Galyon, p. 26.

# Two

1. '[...] so that those who were to come after and study them might gloss the letter and supply its significance from their own wisdom.' Robert Hanning and Joan Ferrante, p. 28.[7]

2. '*Materia remota* is represented by rough, unhewn stones and wood as yet unplaned or unpolished. But *materia propinqua* is composed of stones and wood fashioned so as to fit exactly into the frame of the house.' Kelly, *The Art of Medieval Romance*, p. 36.

3. 'Now it happened on the day of the Last Supper that Mary Magdalene came straight into Simon's house, and found Jesus sitting at table with his disciples, and Judas eating with Jesus. She hid under the table, and knelt at Jesus' feet; she began to weep bitterly, washing the feet of Our Lord with her tears, and wiped them with her beautiful hair. Next she anointed them with a fine and costly ointment that she had brought, and Jesus' head likewise. She so filled the house with the scent and the wonderful perfume of the ointment, that everyone was amazed.' Rogers, p. 5.

4. 'When he condescended to wash their feet. He washed everyone's feet in the same water, and Saint John consulted him: "Lord, there is something I would ask you privately, but I do not dare." Jesus gave him leave, and he at once asked: "Lord, you washed all our feet in the same water. Why did you do this?"' Rogers, p. 6.

5. 'Joseph wrapped the body in a shroud which he had bought especially, and placed it within a rock which he had chosen for his own use, and covered it with a stone of a kind which we in this country call *tombe*.' Rogers, p, 10.

6. 'Meanwhile, the true God, acting like a lord or a prophet, descended straightway to hell. He cast out from there all those who were his friends.' Rogers, p. 10.

7. 'They will seize Joseph and Nicodemus so quietly that no one will know, and then this will happen: "And if anyone decided to accuse us, when we are asked for the body, then those two will die just as soon as we can seize hold of them. Each of us will reply that we gave it to Joseph; if you bring Joseph here to us, through Joseph you will recover Jesus."' Rogers, p. 11.

8. 'So Joseph remained securely locked inside his prison cell; he was soon left completely alone, and his name was no longer mentioned. There he remained for a long time, forgotten.' Rogers, p. 17.

9. 'So this table will be represented in many lands. You took me down from the cross and laid me in the tomb; this is represented by the altar on which I will be placed by those

who sacrifice me. The cloth in which I was wrapped will be called corporal. This vessel, in which you put my blood, when you collected it from my body, will be called the chalice. The platina covering it shall stand for the stone which was sealed above me when you had placed me in the tomb.' Rogers, p. 16.

10. 'In that book, the great secrets are written which are named and called the Grail.' Rogers, p. 16.

11. 'which, when they are called by their proper name, are known as the Secrets of the Grail.' Rogers, p. 57.

12. 'He revealed the secrets to him in complete privacy.' Rogers, p. 58.

13. 'Those who are able to learn and remember these words shall be more powerful among humanity, and more pleasing to God.' Rogers, p. 16.

14. '"Repeat to them the words which I have said to you now, and pass these teachings on to them without a single omission."' Rogers, p. 54.

15. 'he told you the holy words, which are sweet and precious, full of grace and piety.' Rogers, p. 57.

16. '"If they are prepared to believe in the Son of Mary who is Lord of Charity; that is, in the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as our law teaches and proclaims."' Rogers, p. 38.

17. 'He made and created the archangels, and at the same time made the angels. Some of them were evil, full of pride and wickedness, envy and covetousness, hatred and falsity, lust and other sins [...] all the fraud and trickery, wrath, lust and gluttony.' Rogers, pp. 35-36.

18. 'This was the man who was hanged on the cross by the Jews, nailed to the wood of the tree whose apple Eve ate.' Rogers, p. 37.

19. 'And anyone who wants to name him, will always call him by his rightful name, the Rich Fisherman. His reputation will be ever-increasing, because of the fish which he caught when his grace first began.' Rogers, p. 57.

20. 'And so they rode toward the castle; they passed the walls and the bridge.' Donagher, p. 99.

'So they go up to the fortress, passing the lists and the bridge.' Owen, p. 72.

21. '"Sire, this is how it must be. I go now and commend you to God."' Owen, p. 36.

22. '"My lady, it cannot be otherwise. I am leaving; I bid you farewell."' Donagher, p. 231.

23. 'The maiden is beautiful and wise and is of extremely high birth [...] "I should not refuse to marry the maiden on grounds of beauty or lineage."' Owen, pp. 17 and 23.

24. '"You could have no wife more beautiful or more nobly born than she. Neither her beauty nor her lineage should cause you to disdain her, for she is a powerful queen" [...] He saw that the lady was wise and fair.' Donagher, p. 369.

25. '[He] had a Limoges carpet spread on the floor in front of him. The man to whom he had given the order hurried to fetch the arms and put them on the carpet. Erec sat down opposite them on the figure of a leopard that was portrayed on the carpet. He prepares and makes himself ready for the arming. First he had laced on a pair of greaves of polished steel.' Owen, p. 35.

26. 'He had a carpet brought in; when it had been laid out, he went over to it at once and seated himself on one side upon the image of a gray leopard that had been woven into the carpet. He then had himself armed. They laced on his iron leggings, which looked quite handsome.' Donagher, p. 155.

27. 'Whoever wishes to obtain this hawk will need to have a mistress who is beautiful, sensible and above reproach. If there's a knight so bold as to wish to defend the merit and reputation of the one he claims to be most beautiful, he must have his mistress take the hawk from the perch in front of everybody.' Owen, p. 8.

28. 'Any maiden who gains possession of the hawk by taking it from its perch will be renowned as the most beautiful of women. But the maiden who wishes to have this hawk must bring with her a knight who will maintain that she is more beautiful than any other lady or maiden.' Donagher, p. 95.

29. '[...] the joy and delights of the marriage chamber and bed.' Owen, p. 28.

'[...] they lay in bed, where they had been taking great pleasure. They were lying mouth to mouth in close embrace like true lovers, he sleeping and she awake.' Owen, p. 33.

30. 'No man was ever as happy as he, for very soon he would take his delight. The two lovers lay together. Side by side they embraced tenderly; their lips met, and both received what was theirs by right. Their sole joy was to kiss each other, and each vied thereby to gladden the other's heart.' Donagher, p. 285.

31. '[...] the serpent at once raised itself toward his mouth [...] He looked at it, his attention fixed, without moving, and he marvelled greatly at the mouth so red. He was so absorbed by looking at it that he could not turn away. Then the serpent darted forward and kissed him on the mouth [...] the hall was dark and the knight deeply troubled

because of the kiss. He sat down beside the table. "Lord, God", he said, "what shall happen to me because of the Fearsome Kiss which I have undergone? That kiss was indeed a terrible thing! Surely I have been betrayed. The devil has caught me in a spell, for I have kissed against my will. I now set my life at a small price."' Donagher, pp. 189-91.

# Three

1. 'Master Robert de Boron says that if we wish to know this, he will surely need to be able to tell tou where Alan, the son of Hebron, went, and what became of him, what land he was obliged to go to, and what heir could be engendered by him, and what woman could nurture him; and the way of life which Petrus led, and what became of him and what place he went to, in what place he will be regained, when he could scarcely be found; what became of Moses, who was lost for so long — for he must be rightly found, so the word said — where the Rich Fisherman went, and where he will settle, so that he might be able to bring back the one who must now depart.' Rogers, p. 59.

2. 'It is necessary to bring together every one of these four things, and to arrange each part individually as it should be [...] If God allows me to live in good health, it is certainly my intention to bring together these parts.' Rogers, p. 59.

3. 'Just as I leave one part, which I will not recount, so must I narrate the fifth, and set aside the four, until I can return to my narrative with greater leisure, and return in my own way to this work, and set each part out separately.' Rogers, p. 59.

4. '...for these things happen as God wills. You know what you will take with you, and to what country you will go. You will go away; I will stay here,and be at God's command.' Rogers, p. 59.

5. 'So Joseph remained, and the good Fisherman set out. Many things have been said about him, which do not lack sense, in the country where he was born and where Joseph remained.' (Rogers, p. 59.

6. 'Why does joy so intense excite your spirit? Curb jubilation with due restraint and extend not its limits beyond what is meet.' Nims, p. 26.

7. 'Firmly imprint on your mind: although you are greater than others, feign yourself less, and deceive yourself in your own regard.' Nims, p. 27.

8. 'Fear not. If perchance you do fear, assume the spirit of one temporarily fearful, not of one habitually timid.' Nims, p. 27.

9. 'Once defended by King Richard's shield, now undefended, O England, bear witness to your woe in the gestures of sorrow. Let your eyes flood with tears, and pale grief waste your features.' Nims, p. 29.

10. 'Apostrophe varies its countenance thus: with the mien of a magistrate it rebukes vicious error; or it languishes in tearful complaint against all that is harsh; or it is roused to wrath over some great crime; or appears with derisive force in attacking buffoons. When evoked by causes such as these, apostrophe contributes both adornment and amplification.' Nims, p. 32.

11. 'All sinners [...] should know.' Rogers, p. 1.

12. 'When these knights saw one another, you may be sure they rejoiced.' Donagher, p. 363.

13. 'When Blonde Esmeree saw Guinglain, you may be sure she welcomed him joyfully.' Donagher, p. 367.

14. 'God can swiftly lend His aid to mortals, and so I am not greatly troubled at my task, but wish to show you what I can do.' Donagher, p. 5.

15. 'May God defend the Fair Unknown for, if these men find him, his life will be in great danger!' Donagher, p. 39.

16. 'But when God chooses to protect a man from shame, nothing can harm him. And so God protected the knight through his mercy.' Donagher, p. 49.

17. '"My friend," said the knight, "do not be dismayed: God an easily lend us his aid." Donagher, p. 159.

18. 'Dear God, shall I ever receive what I wish from the one I love so much?' Donagher, p. 289.

19. 'I am not speaking lies, just as the story tells the truth.' Donagher, p.5.

20. 'They rode towards the Descolate City; soon you will hear a great deal about what they did there. But hear me now, for I shall tell you a truth.' Donagher, p. 75.

21. 'Now I shall tell you more about the Fair Unknown, who was riding away.' Donagher, p. 77.

22. 'There were so many that I cannot count them, or name the ladies who were there.' Donagher, p. 7.

23. 'They found the king in his palace along with many fine knights and kings and dukes and counts; I could not tell you how many there were.' Donagher, p. 309.

264

24. 'Then the love they shared made the maiden more bold. Afraid of nothing and whatever the hurt, she suffered all. Before she rose, she had lost the name of maiden: in the morning she was a new lady.' Owen, p. 28.

25. 'He thought of his three companions whose names I can readily tell you: Elin the Fair, lord of Graie, the strong knight of Saie, and William of Salebrant.' Donagher, p. 35.

26. 'These three were companions. I know their names well: one was Elin of Graie, the second was the Lord of Saie, and the third, a most valiant knight, was William of Salebrant.' Donagher, pp. 59-61.

27. 'But I shall hold my peace on this now, for I wish to tell you of other matters. I shall tell you of the Fair Unknown and of the combat he had undertaken with the three knights.' Donagher, p. 67.

28. 'William came at him first just as I told you before.' Donagher, p. 67.

29. 'You will hear it told how the queen journeyed to the court, but first I wish to tell of Guinglain,' Donagher, p. 233.

30. 'and then was born in Bethlehem to the Virgin, as I said.' Rogers, p. 3.

31. 'Now I must follow another track, and return to my subject matter as I recall it, while I have health and strength. It is true that Jesus Christ walked on the Earth, and Saint John baptized him and washed him in the River Jordan.' Rogers, p. 3.

32. 'In the days of which I am telling you.' Rogers, p. 1.

33. 'When they saw the stinking dogs.' Rogers, p. 9.

34. 'let me go to avenge the death of my rightful lord, who was so wickedly killed by those stinking, dishonest Jews.' Rogers, p. 29.

35. 'how can you think of being so base as to attack an unarmed man? It will only do you discredit if you lay a hand on him thus. Take care my Lords not to undertake something that will disgrace you, for I have never seen such base behaviour.' Donagher, p. 63.

36. 'for at that time it was the custom, that whenever a knight did battle, he need only concern himself with the one, challenging him at the moment. But things are not as they used to be, and this custom is falling out of use, for now twenty-five may attack a single man.' Donagher, p. 65.

37. 'Ah, God! If only true lovers stood out from the false; if all those slanderers and frauds had horns on their heads. I'd give all the gold in the world.' Frederick Goldin.

38. 'Those who make a habit of deceiving ladies go about saying to one another, "It is no sin to betray a woman", but they are wicked liars. On the contrary, it is a great sin, by my soul [...] Those who make themselves clever in matters of love are false to it, they are traitors.' Donagher, p. 77.

39. 'Love gave Guinglain his due reward for all the griefs and setbacks with which she had troubled him.' Donagher, p. 287.

40. 'And may God curse all those who speak ill of ladies and true love, and may he strike them dumb! For by their deeds they clearly show what they are made of, those who take such pains in telling lies.' Donagher, p. 289.

41. 'If you show him a gracious countenance [...] for until you look kindly on me, I shall nevermore speak of him.' Donagher, p. 373.

42. 'smiled at them most graciously'. Donagher, p. 57.

43. 'for she will not even look at me.' Donagher, p. 77.

44. '[...] it made a gesture of respect to him.' Donagher, p. 187.

45. '[...] and well knew how to treat everyone graciously.' Donagher, p. 207.

46. 'he showed her a most gracious countenance.' Donagher, p. 203.

47. 'She needs but one knight a single one will be able to help her.' Donagher, p. 15.

48. 'Send her a knight such as she needs, the very best one you have.' Donagher, p. 15.

49. 'But he must be a worthy knight. Indeed no man ever had such need of valor! No worthless man should ask this boon.' Doangher, p, 15.

50. 'I asked for your best knight.' Donagher, p. 17.

51. 'I want only the best and most daring, and I will not accept this man; I want only a proven knight of the highest reputation.' Donagher, p. 17.

52. 'You should not be concerned about this voice, nor stray from your path.' Donagher, p. 41.

53. '"Do not think of acting unworthily by forgetting my lady!"' Donagher, p. 139.

54. '"He is telling the truth, for such is indeed the custom. and whoever is defeated here may be certain of death."' Donagher, p. 119.

55. '"No indeed, my lord! Please do not think of going there, for I have heard it said that to do so is most ill-advised. I shall tell you of a custom observed in this city about which I know a great deal."' Donagher, p. 149.

56. "'Vassal, look what I see! Follow me no longer, for on the other bank I see a knight fully armed and mounted. If you insist on going farther, he will certainly give you a harsh battle.'" Donagher, p. 25.

57. '[...] there should be no knight who wishes never to be in love; and he who has not set his heart on Love should not increase in honour unless he be a very old man.' Donagher, p. 223.

58. 'All sinners both the small and the even smaller, should know that before Jesus Christ came to Earth, he caused his birth to be announced by the words of the prophets. He inspired them to proclaim that God would send his Son here below, to suffer torments of pain and grief, to freeze in the cold and sweat in the heat.' Rogers, p. 1.

59. 'The order of art is more elegant than natural order, and in excellence far ahead, even though it puts last things first.' Nims, p. 19.

60. 'Let it say nothing directly about the subject, but derive its inspiration there from.' Nims, p. 20.

61. 'Proverbs in this way add distinction to a poem'. Nims, p. 20.

62. '[...] universal sentiments in which custom reinforces belief, in which common opinion agrees and in which the purity of unalloyed truth inheres.' Galyon, p. 29.

63. 'for one who cannot see clearly is unfortunate indeed.' Rogers, p. 53.

64. 'God can swiftly lend his aid to mortals.' Donagher p. 5.

65. 'But when God chooses to protect a man from shame, nothing can harm him.' Donagher, p. 48.

66. 'No man should be disparaged until he has proved his cowardice.' Donagher, p. 21.

67. 'One may foolishly take as worthless a man to whom God later grants great honour.' Donagher, p. 21.

68. 'Sometimes we prize a thing very little and afterwards see that we have erred.' Donagher, p. 53.

69. 'Discretion is the better part of valour.' Donagher, p. 49.

70. 'This was no fool's move.' Donagher, p. 49.

71. 'As the peasant says, 'By Saint Martin the one who plants the vineyards doesn't always harvest the grapes.' Donagher, p. 57.

72. 'and whoever clearly has the advantage, should take care to show mercy.' Donagher, p. 63.

73. 'Now might makes right or so it seems.' Donagher, p. 65.

74. 'Sometimes a man seeks to avenge his shame, and wins nothing but harm for himself.' Donagher, p. 73.

75. 'But no man can so protect himself that Love cannot turn his mind topsy-turvy, for Love makes the ugliest woman a beauty, so skilled are her ways of deceit and enchantment.' Donagher, p. 103.

76. 'Love won by force is of little value, You may be sure it will fail in time of need.' Donagher, p. 129.

77. '[...] so he may also begin with a general proverb, that is, universal statements in which custom reinforces belief, in which common opinion agrees, and in which the purity of unalloyed truth inheres.' Galyon, p. 29.

78. 'The deceitful favour of Fortune gives the nod to ruin. The one certainty in Chance is uncertainty. The wheel of Fortune is fickle, mobile; Indeed it is faith not to have faith in chance. "All things concerning man are held suspended by a thread. And suddenly those things which were firmly held fall."' Galyon, p. 30.

79. 'he who has love, should never be afraid.' Donagher, p. 185.

80. Whenever a man does not look to himself, it can quickly turn to his shame. And he who is suffering from an illness, should certainly see a doctor. As the peasant says, a hungry man had best find himself some bread [...] After crying I have heard men sing.' Donagher, p. 227.

81. 'You can swiftly find mercy.' Donagher, p. 227.

82. 'Sometimes a man may try his best but fail.' Donagher, p. 279.

83. 'Who sees the good and chooses the bad will soon regret it, of that you may be certain.' Donagher, p. 321.

84. 'As a man sows, so shall he reap.' Donagher, p. 323.

# Four

1. 'Accordingly we may define a topic as the region of the argument, and an argument as a course of reasoning which firmly establishes a matter about which there can be no doubt.' Translation by Harry Mortimer, p. 387.

2. 'For my sovereign lady I have written and sung of a love that knows no falsehood, according to the direction she gave. Now I wish to compose a romance for her from a beautiful tale of adventure. And for her whom I love beyond any power to measure I shall now begin this story for you. God can swiftly lend His aid to mortals, and so I am not greatly troubled at my task, but wish to show you what I can do.' Donagher, p. 5.

3. 'And, because all this is true, we call it *The History of the Grail*.' Rogers, p. 45.

4. 'the high History of the Grail, […] for it is quite true.' Rogers, p. 59.

5. 'You shall have in your power the proof of my death, and shall keep it, and whoever you choose to give it to shall have it in his keeping.' Rogers, p. 15.

6. 'Joseph, you will well be able to keep the vessel. For you will only entrust it to three people who will hold it after you.' Rogers, p. 15.

7. 'They went to the house of Joseph, deeply aggrieved and angry that his friend had given them the slip […] They took him to the house of a powerful man, where they beat him and battered him severely.' Rogers, p. 12.

8. 'If you will believe me, you will not stay here. Instead you will abandon your inheritance, your lands and your dwellings, and we shall go into exile. We will do all this for the love of God.' Rogers, p. 39.

9. 'In truth, the one who rescues her from her plight and accomplishes the Fearsome Kiss will win great honour.' Donagher, p. 15.

10. '"Now that I have come to your court I surely cannot fail to receive the first boon I ask of you, whatever may be the result. Shall I have my request or not? Grant it to me without thinking on the matter: a king of your merit should to fail to do so." "I grant it to you," said the king.' Donagher, p. 17.

11. '"My lord," he said, "I now make my request of you: I wish to go to the aid of this lady. Now I ask that you grant me this boon […] By the agreement you made with me, I now ask for what you have promised.' Donagher, p. 17.

12. 'I have served you for a long time, together with my five horsemen, and have never received any payment. But I shall never receive any reward for it, unless you will give

me a gift, as you have always promised me. Give it to me, for it is within your power.' Rogers, p. 8.

13. 'No man should be disparaged until he has proven his cowardice. One may foolishly take as worthless a man to whom God later grants great honour. This man looks like a fine knight.' Donagher, p. 21.

14. 'When you were seeking the love of a certain British lady, she told you you could never win it unless you first brought her the victorious hawk which is said to sit on a golden perch in Arthur's court [...] You could not take the hawk you seek without first proving by combat in Arthur's palace that you rejoice in the love of a lady more beautiful than any possessed by those who dwell at Arthur's court. Moreover, you could not enter the palace without first showing to the guards the gauntlet for the hawk. That gauntlet you cannot get without winning it by engaging two of the bravest knights in a double contest.' P.G. Walsh, p. 272.

15. 'Then it pleased Our Lord to do us all honour, for he came down to earth and assumed human flesh like ours. He took on flesh within the Virgin.' Rogers, p. 1.

16. 'Meanwhile, the true God, acting like a Lord or a prophet, descended straightway to hell. He cast out from there all those who were his friends: Eve and Adam, their descendants, who were in the power of the Enemy, the saints, both men and women, all virtuous folk. He left no one in hell who was virtuous, for he had ben condemned to death for their sake and had redeemed them all. When our Lord had done his will in this matter, as much as was proper, he rose again, though the Jews never knew it, and could not see it. he appeared — this is beyond all doubt — to Mary Magdalene, to his apostles, to his own people who saw him clearly. After this, word spread throughout the whole country that Jesus, son of Saint Mary, had risen from the dead and lived again. His disciples all saw him and recognized him without difficulty. And they saw some of their friends who had previously died, and who were resurrected with Jesus and passed into divine glory.' Rogers, p.11.

17. 'I had a length of cloth woven for me, and I was carrying it home in my arms when my path crossed that of the prophet. His hands were tied behind him, fastened with a thong. The Jews whom I encountered entreated me, in the name of God almighty, to lend them my cloth, to wipe the prophet's face for him. At once I took the cloth and gently wiped his face for him, for he was sweating so heavily that his whole body was dripping with it. Then I continued homewards, while they led him away, whipping him without mercy and constantly beating him. They were cruelly mistreating him, but he spoke not a word of complaint. And when I went into my house and looked at my cloth, I saw this likeness upon it, just as it appears now.' Rogers, p. 27.

18. 'And I can tell you that it pleased Our Lord that, as as soon as he had seen it, his flesh became healthier than it had ever been before.' Rogers, p. 28.

19. 'And so he feared his enemies, although he was God's friend.' Rogers, p. 4.

20. 'You were my true friend, and for this reason you were with the Jews. I was well aware that I would need you, and that you would help me in need. For God, my Father, had given you the strength and will to serve Pilate so that he would desire to reward you: he paid you for your service by giving you my body.' Rogers, p. 14.

21. 'I have not brought any of my disciples with me, do you know why? It is because no one knows of the great love which I bear you [...] you have loved me secretly, and truly so have I loved you.' Rogers, p. 14.

22. 'So he ran at once to to fetch his vessel, and set it where the blood flowed.' Rogers, p. 10.

23. 'I cannot go with you. I must go elsewhere, for an urgent matter so compels me.' Donagher, p. 231.

24. 'The gathering was in the month of August. Arthur's court was a very great one. [...] When all the noble lords had assembled at the court, great indeed was the gathering. When the court was assembled, you could have seen great merriment there.' Donagher, p. 5.

25. '"Dear brother, remember now something I want to tell and beg you, should it happen that you have to fight some knight. If you get the better of him so that he can no longer defend himself or put up any opposition against you but has to ask for mercy, then be sure to have mercy on him and not kill him instead [...] There's one further lesson I have for you that you shouldn't neglect, for it's not to be taken lightly: go willingly to church to beseech Him who has made everything to have mercy on your soul and, in this earthly life, to keep you as His Christian."' Translation D. D. R. Owen, p. 396.

26. 'A man who begs and asks for mercy should not have his pleas turned down unless he's faced by someone quite pitiless. And so as to obtain mercy, I'll not defend myself any further or get up from here: I just place myself in your hands.' Owen, p. 357.

27. 'How can you think of being so base as to attack an unarmed man!' Donagher, p. 63.

28. 'Strength and spirit to aid her and do her honour.' Donagher, p. 65.

29. 'Now each man does what he has the power to do and all set their minds on deceit.' Donagher, p. 67.

30. 'His heart was heavy, for he knew Joseph was the best friend he had.' Rogers, p. 12.

31. 'And so he feared his enemies, although he was God's friend.' Rogers, p. 4.

32. 'I was with my friends, and with my enemies.' Rogers, p. 14.

33. 'but God, who is a friend in need, did not forget him, for what Joseph suffered for his sake was most generously rewarded.' p. 12.

34. 'He gave away all that he had, the little he had with him [...] He spent, he bartered, he lent and he bestowed gifts; he had soon given up all that he had.' Donagher, pp. 247 and 249.

35. 'he had all that he desired.' p. 319.

36. ' [...] for her I am dying, for her I sing.' Donagher, p. 77.

37. 'Our Lord, who knew the extreme weakness and vulnerability of human frailty, and its great susceptibility to sin (for man would necessarily sin).' Rogers, p. 4.

38. '"When his companions departed, leaving him here with you, the reason why he remained here alone and did not set off with the others, was to deceive you; now he has had his just reward."' Rogers, p. 48.


# Five

1. 'Gawain gave him a squire, who took his shield and lance.' Donagher, p. 19.

2. 'The he told his squire to tighten the girth of his charger,' Donagher, p. 27.

3. 'Robert was a very fine squire. He went straight to his lord and quickly disarmed him, then hurried to take care of his horse.' Donagher, p. 39.

4. 'Robert observed all their preparations and pointed all of this out to his lord.' Donagher, p. 153.

5. '"My lord, for the love of God, the Son of Mary, do not forget the mudpies and the pots full of rubbish! You must fight better than your opponent, for these people are ready to give you a bad welcome!"' Donagher, p. 159.

6. 'He called to his squire to give him counsel. Robert went at once to his lord, who told him of his sorrow.' Donagher, p. 223.

7. '"Do not fear anything that may befall for you shall certainly win your lady's love."' Donagher, p. 227.

8. 'In many ways and with all kinds of service.' Donagher, p. 299.

9. 'When Guinglain heard this, he rejoiced, and he fixed in his heart the intention to go to that tourney.' Dongaher, p. 319.

10. 'And he saw the fay with him [...] "the fay did me such great honour."' Donagher, p. 221.

11. 'My lord I am the one, for whose sake the maiden Helie sought the aid of King Arthur. For my sake you came to this land.' Donagher, p. 197.

12. 'In truth I am the one who said to the maiden who is called Helie that she should go to King Arthur to seek help for her lady.' Donagher, p.297.

13. 'My Lord, she said, I am yours. It is right that I should be.' Donagher, p. 197.

14. 'I shall take you as my husband.' Donagher, p. 135.

15. 'And you may know beyond any doubt that, as long as you heed what I say you shall have all you desire. But when you cease to listen to me, you may be certain you will lose me.' Donagher, p. 299.

16. 'But no man can so protect himself that Love cannot turn his mind topsy-turvy, for Love makes the ugliest woman seem a beauty, so skilled are her ways of deceit and enchantment.' Donagher, p. 103.

17. 'So skilfully had Nature done her work that nowhere in the world was there any as fair [...] except for the Maiden of the White Hands, for none was that lady's equal.' Donagher, p. 195.

18. 'I knew quite well that no other knight would have such strength, that no other could accomplish this rescue, that no other could endure either the kiss or any adventure so dangerous and harsh as this one.' Donagher, p. 191.

19. 'He who has love should never be afraid.' Donagher, p. 185.

20 'When Joseph saw the vessel, he was filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit [...] All those who see your vessel shall be members of my company. Their hearts shall be filled to overflowing, and their joy shall be eternal.' Rogers, pp. 13 and 16.

21. 'So now I pray and entreat you to advise me.' Rogers, p. 41.

22. 'Joseph went to his vessel and prayed devoutly to God, explaining to him about his nephew, and how he would act to his advantage.' Rogers, p. 52.

23. 'You shall take the vessel with my blood in it, and set it openly as a test for the sinners, so that the vessel is quite visible.' Rogers, p. 42.

24. '"Then take your vessel and set it on the table, in the position which you think best, so long as it is well in the centre [...] When you have done all this, have all your community summoned, and tell them that soon they will see the cause of their lamentations, and who it is whose sins have earned the misfortunes which have befallen them."' Rogers, p. 42.

25. 'They replied: "It is by that vessel that we are set apart from you, for, as you can clearly see, it does not love sinners and will not tolerate their presence."' Rogers, p. 44.

26. 'In memory of Judas, as the place which he lost through his ignorance, when I told him that he would betray me [...] When his companions departed, leaving him here with you, the reason why he remained alone and did not set off with the others was to deceive you; now he has his just reward [...] You should know for a fact that he has fallen into the abyss and vanished.' Rogers, p. 48.

# Six

1. 'Examples of description, accompanied by novel figures, will be varied, that eye and ear may roam amid a variety of subjects. If you wish to describe, in amplified form, a woman's beauty: Let the compass of Nature first fashion a sphere for her head; let the colour of gold give a glow to her hair, and lilies bloom high on her brow. Let her eyebrows resemble in dark beauty the blackberry, and a lovely and milk-white path separate their twin arches. Let her nose be straight, of moderate length, not too long, nor too short for perfection. Let her eyes, those watch-fires of her brow, be radiant with emerald light, or with the brightness of stars. Let her countenance emulate dawn: not red, nor yet white — but at once neither of those colours and both. Let her mouth be bright, small in shape — as it were, a half-circle. Let her lips be rounded and full, but moderately so; let them glow, aflame, but with gentle fire. Let her teeth be snowy, regular, all of one size, and her breath like the fragrance of incense. Smoother than polished marble let Nature fashion her chin — Nature, so potent a sculptor. Let her neck be a precious column of milk-white beauty, holding high the perfection of her countenance. From her crystal throat let radiance gleam, to enchant the eye of the viewer and enslave his heart. Let her shoulders, conforming to beauty's law, not slope in unlovely descent, nor jut out with an awkward rise; rather, let them be gracefully straight. Let her arms be a joy to behold, charming in their grace and their length. Let soft and slim loveliness, a form shapely and white, a line long and straight, flow into her slender fingers. Let her beautiful hands take pride in those fingers. Let her breast, the image of snow, show side by side its twin virginal gems. Let her waist be close girt, and so slim that a hand may encircle it. For the other parts I am silent — here the mind's speech is

more apt than the tongue's. Let her leg be of graceful length and her wonderfully tiny foot dance for joy at its smallness.' Nims, pp. 36-37.

2. 'If you wish to add to the loveliness thus pictured an account of attire: Let her hair, braided and bound at her back, bind in its gold; let a circlet of gold gleam on her ivory brow. Let her face be free of adornment, lovely in its natural hue. Have a starry chain encircle her milk-white neck. Let the border of her robe gleam with fine linen; with gold let her mantle blaze. Let a zone, richly set with bright gems, bind her waist, and bracelets enrich her arms. Have gold encircle her slender fingers, and a jewel more splendid than gold shed its brilliant rays. Let artistry vie with materials in her fair attire; let no skill of hand or invention of mind be able to add aught to that apparel. But her beauty will be of more worth than richness of vesture.' Nims, p. 37.

3. 'So, too, *descriptio* presents consequences and the eventualities that can ensue from a given situation. It gives a full and lucid account with a certain dignity of presentation.' Nims, p. 61.

4. '[...] description ought to have the effect of polished discourse, not merely of conversation. For words are to be understood on the basis of the sense in which they are used, not merely on the basis of the sense they make.' Galyon, p. 61.

5. 'Thus the beauty of what the words signify, overflows to grace the very words themselves.' Galyon, p. 65.

6. 'Since the exercise of the craft of versification consists especially in skill in description, I would advise that if a thing is to be described, the greatest attention be paid to credibility in writing descriptions, so that what is said either is true or seems to be true.' Galyon, p. 47.

7. '[...] the elegant combination of words, the vivid presentation of relevant qualities, and the carefully noted epithets of each single thing.' Galyon, p. 27.

8. 'Either follow tradition or invent details that agree with each other.' Galyon, p. 47.

9. 'Or again, if one writes about the power of love, — how, for example, Jupiter burned with love for Callisto — then the audience ought to be given a foretaste of such exquisite feminine beauty, so that having a picture of such beauty in their minds, they would find it reasonably believable that a heart as great as Jupiter's could be heated up over the charms of a mere mortal. For it ought to be made clear what a wealth of charms it was that drove Jupiter to so vile an act.' Galyon, p. 34.

10. 'the gist of the action, the cause of the action, the action preceding the action described, the action accompanying the said action, the ease with which it was done, the quality of the action, the time and the place.' Galyon, p. 55.

11. 'Who, what, where, with what aid, why, when, in what manner.' Galyon, p. 61.

12. 'God would send his Son here below, to suffer torments [...].' Rogers, p. 1.

13. 'He saw his wife naked, and gave way to lust. [...] When our Lord saw this [...] he at once threw them out of delight and condemned them to live in want and suffering for this cause.' Rogers, p. 3.

14. 'And this misfortune which befell them was caused by one single sin which had sprung up among them, which made a great stain on their community. The cause was the sin of lust — that baseness, that filth.' Rogers, p. 40.

15. 'An epithet, moreover, shows an attribute belonging to some noun; it may signify something good, bad or indifferent.' Galyon, p. 21.

16. 'The king said, "I shall give him a name, since neither he nor I know what his true name is. Because Nature has bestowed on him such perfect beauty that she sees in him her own shining image, and because he does not know who he is, let him be named the Fair Unknown; so shall my knights call him."' Donagher, p. 11.

17. 'He was fair of both form and face; indeed there was no flaw in him except that he was little.' Donagher, p. 13.

18. 'Nature had bestowed on him such perfect beauty that she sees in him her own shining image.' Donagher, p. 11.

19. 'Nature had so wrought her and given her such beauty that no lady who ever lived had such a lovely face or brow.' Donagher, p. 133.

20. 'So skilfully had Nature done her work that nowhere in the world was there any so fair.' Donagher, p. 195.

21. 'Thus had Nature made her, and drawn her with the greatest care.' Donagher, p. 195.

22. '[...] that no lady who ever lived had such a lovely face or brow.' Donagher, p. 133.

23. '[...] so lovely a woman, or one so intelligent or so noble of spirit could not be found anywhere in the world no matter how far one searched.' Donagher, p. 237.

24. 'What more shall I say of her beauty? Why should I describe it further?' Donagher, p. 237.

25. 'a lady so beautiful that no other so lovely had ever been formed. Her exquisite complexion was so fresh that no cleric would be able to describe it nor any tongue do it justice or tell the truth about it.' Donagher, p. 195.

26. 'Or there is a figure allied to this last one, whereby I depict or represent corporeal appearance, in so far as it is requisite. Again I set down certain distinguishing marks — very definite signs, as it were — by which I describe clearly the character of a man; this is a better and more effective figure.' Nims, p. 62.

27. 'Soon after this adventure, before the tables had been removed, there arrived at the court a maiden who was lovely of form and face. She was beautifully dressed in samite; so lovely a creature had never been seen. Her face was fair as a summer flower, her cheek the colour of the rose; she had shining eyes and a smiling mouth, fair white hands and a charming appearance. She had beautiful fair hair — no man or woman ever had lovelier.' Donagher, p. 13.

28. 'Along the road they met a beautiful maiden. She wore a silk garment, and no one ever saw such a lovely creature. Her cloak, trimmed in swansdown, was done in alternating bands of ermine and miniver; its lining of sable was of the highest quality — none finer could be found in any land. This maiden was of noble bearing and her great bearing delighted all those who beheld her. No man ever saw such a lovely woman: she had a wide forehead and glowing complexion, and she was fair as the lily; her eyebrows were dark and arched, fine and delicate, and beautifully formed; her face was the colour of a summer rose; her mouth was beautifuly shaped with delicate teeth — you never heard tell of a lovelier lady. Her blonde hair shone like fine and glimmering gold; a silver thread had been woven into it, and she rode with her head uncovered. Her eyes were bright, her brow well shaped; her hands were white and her body elegant — indeed, no maiden was more fair of form.' Donagher, p. 93.

29. 'The knight said to her, "I believe you would not be ungrateful to whoever could return the hawk to you and so avenge your friend." The beautiful lady answered, "In truth, my lord, I would be most grateful to him. I would give a great deal for my love to be avenged as I wish. Whoever avenges him may count on my good will wherever he might be." Then the knight said to her, "Please come with me. I promise that I will not fail to avenge your friend and see that you gain possession of the hawk."' Donagher, p. 99.

30. 'In the palace lived a maiden; no man ever saw one so beautiful. She knew the seven liberal arts and she knew enchantment and how to read the stars and good and evil — all this she knew. She was a woman of the rarest intelligence. This maiden was the lady of the castle: she was lovely and noble of form, her father's only heir, and as yet unmarried. She was called the Maiden of the White Hands — of that I am quite certain — and she was a woman of wondrous beauty.' Donagher, p. 115.

31. 'Then the lady herself arrived. Such a lovely sight was never seen; this lady would never meet her equal, so wondrously beautiful was she. Her beauty shed such light that

she came into the palace as the moon comes from behind a cloud. The Fair Unknown was so filled with wonder at the sight of her that he very nearly fell to the ground. Nature had so wrought her and given her such beauty that no lady who ever lived had such a lovely face or brow. Her skin was whiter than any flower, and her cheeks were bright with beautiful red. She was most lovely and radiant. Her eyes shone, her mouth smiled, she was beautiful and charming of form. She had a delicate red mouth, dainty white teeth, lips made for kissing and arms for embracing. Her hands and her bosom were white as the lily. She was fair of form, with golden hair; there was never a woman so beautiful in all the world. She was dressed in a cloak of samite; never under the sun was there any cloth so lovely. The lining was beautifully made of ermine in a checkered pattern of the finest workmanship; the trim was worthy of admiration. The lady's hair hung freely down her back; she had woven a golden thread through it. She wore a wreath of roses that was most charming and attractive. Her cloak was held in place with a brooch. When she came into the hall, she was indeed a lady of noble bearing! No man ever saw such an exquisite woman. She smiled as she entered the hall, went straight to the Fair Unknown, and put her arms around his neck, saying, "My dear friend, you have won me, and I shall be yours."' Donagher, p. 135.

32. 'The Fair Unknown grew thoughtful; he looked toward the chamber door and saw the lady come through it. Now he expected to have all he desired. Her hair hung loose, without a wimple, and she wore a cloak of green samite lined with fine ermine. The maiden was indeed beautiful! The clasps of her cloak were of fine gold, as were the ties. She wore it over her head, with the fur trim framing her face: the black sable next to her fair face was most becoming. She wore nothing else but her shift, which was whiter even than snow as it falls on the branch. The shift was white indeed, but whiter still was the form it covered. The knight could see her fair legs just a little. The shift seemed dark next to the legs he glimpsed. The lady leaned against the frame of the door.' Donagher, p. 143.

33. 'And he looked at her tenderly; he tried to take a sweet kiss from her, but the lady drew back [...] She left the knight quite dismayed and thinking himself most cruelly mocked.' Donagher, p. 145.

34. 'When the knight saw this group he rejoiced, for he recognized his lady among them leading the company and seated on a white palfrey. The horse ambled along gently; it was white with black spots and its mane seemed to be of spun gold. This was indeed the Maiden of the White Hands. The breaststrap of her horse was richly made: a hundred tiny golden bells hung from it; Moors had crafted it with great skill, for as the palfrey ambled along the bells all rang together, making a sound more sweet thanthat of any harp or rote. You never heard sweeter music from any hurdy-gurdy or fiddle. And what shall I tell you of the saddle on which the lady was seated? A master craftsman of Ireland had

made it; it was so fine and costly that describing it properly would be no easy task. It was made of fine gold and crystal and skillfully inlaid with enamel. The lady was beautiful and of dignified bearing, and her hair hung freely as she rode along. She had removed her cloak because of the heat; she wore a tunic all in gold brocade. No one ever saw a more exquisite fabric, for it was finely made and decorated. She wore a shade hat to protect her from the heat. It was of many colours — dark blue, green, white and grey. It shielded her face from the sun quite well. On it were birds wrought in gold; this hat was indeed worth a king's ransom. The maiden allowed her hair to hang freely down herback, and it shone brighter than any fine gold. She wore no wimple; she had woven a golden thread into the gold of her hair. This maiden was indeed shapely of body and waist and hip; she wore well-fitted sleeves to advantage: her arms were lovely, her hands whiter than the hawthorn on the branch. What more shall I say of her beauty? Why should I describe it further, except to say that so lovely a woman, or one so intelligent or so noble of spirit could not be found anywhere in the world no matter how far one searched.' Donagher, p. 237.

35. '[...] but first I wish to tell of Guinglain, who rode at a gallop and without stopping for rest. The fair one of the White Hands was drawing him nigh; he greatly longed to see her. His need for her was urgent, and his road seemed long to him [...] Guinglain did not break his headlong pace toward the Golden Isle by the sea.' Doangher, p. 235.

36. 'So skilfully had Nature done her work that nowhere in the world was there any so fair of mouth, of eyes, of face, of brow, of form, of arms, of feet, or hands.' Donagher, p. 195.

37. 'that nowhere in the world was there any so fair [...] except for the Maiden of the White Hands, for none was that lady's equal.' Donagher, p. 195.

38. 'She was dressed in green silk; no finer fabric was ever seen. Her cloak was a very costly one: hanging from it were two ties of sable; its lining of white ermine was fine and beautifully made. The clasp on the cloak was most intricately wrought. It was indeed worthy of admiration, for it could not be cut or broken; a fairy on an island in the Dead Sea had made it thus. The tunic that she wore was cut of the same cloth as her cloak. A garment most precious and beautifully made, it was lined with ermine. In truth, the embroidery around the neck contained more than five ounces of gold, and there were more than four ounces at the wrists. Into the gold there had been set a large number of hyacinths and other stones of magical properties.' Donagher, p. 197.

39. 'The queen then entered a room that was all draped with tapestries. There she had herself arrayed in a costly robe from the Holy Land, so beautiful and rare that in all the world there was no wild creature — whether crocodile, leopard, orlion, or winged serpent or dragon, or eagle or escramor or popinjay or espapemor or any other wild beast

that lives in the sea or the forests — that was not embroidered there in fine gold. Truly, this robe was exquisitely made! The cloak was lined with sable soft to the touch and of excellent quality. It was trimmed in pantine fur. [...] The lady had taken a silken girdle richly embroidered with golden thread and tied about her waist to elegant effect.' Donagher, p. 309.

40. 'She was now so lovely and full of grace that no one could have found her equal in all the world, no matter how he searched. Nor was she foolish when she spoke; rather her speech was courtly indeed. Her very glances inspired love. No lady who had ever been born had even a fourth of her beauty.' Donagher, p. 309.

41. '"I shall gladly take you as my wife if King Arthur wishes me to do so, and so I shall go to speak to him for I shall never do this without his approval. It would be the basest kind of behaviour for me to take a wife against his good wishes; I do not wish to nor shall I dare do so, but rather will I go seek his counsel. I do not wish to marry without it."' Donagher, p. 203.

42. 'There are other qualities which ought to be attributed to any man who is praised, such as that stern manliness which maintains itself in adversity as well as in prosperity; for the true man is one who prepares himself beforehand to face fortune's double offerings with a resolute singleness of mind and also with patience.' Galyon, p. 47.

43. 'Unless we suggest something of importance to our listeners by details of time and place which we wrap around our account, these details ought to be omitted.' Galyon, p. 59.

44. '[they] saw a beautiful and well fortified castle nearby. The castle was named Becleus. There was a river flowing all around: no better could be found for fishing, and many boats traveled on it, for there was much traffic of merchandise there, which brought great profit to the city. There were mills in great number and rivers and meadows, and much pasture land. On the other side were vineyards, which covered more than two square leagues. The castle was surrounded by deep moats both long and wide. High walls loomed above the moats and completely surrounded the castle.' Donagher, p. 91.

45. 'Carnant, where King Lac resided in a very charming stronghold. Nobody ever saw one better situated: it was well endowed with forests, meadows, vineyards and cultivated ground, streams and orchards, ladies and knights, noble, cheerful youths, courteous, well-mannered clerks who spent their income freely, lovely attractive maidens and townsfolk of substance.' Owen, p. 31.

46. '[...] he saw a very strong castle with, on one side, its own seaport and navy. This extremely noble stronghold was worth little less than Pavia. On its other side was the

vineyard with, below it, the great river girdling all its walls as it flowed past into the sea. In that way the castle and town were entirely enclosed.' Owen, p. 462.

47. 'He looked about and saw a fortified city: no man ever saw such a fine one. This city was well situated, opulent and richly provided. A branch of the sea flowed around it, so that it was all surrounded by water. On the other side the open sea flowed right up to the walls of the city. This town was indeed magnificent: the walls which completely enclosed it, were very fine and beautiful. Nothing, neither snow nor white flowers, was so lovely as the walls that enclosed the town. These walls were of white marble, and they rose higher than a bowshot from the ground. No one could ever devise a war machine that might reach their crenels. They were beyond the reach of bow or catapult; the walls were so high that they need fear no assault. In the town were a hundred red towers of wondrous beauty, all made of red marble that sparkled in the sunlight. A hundred counts lived in these towers and owed allegiance to the castle. There was a fine and seigneurial palace. Its maker knew well of enchantment, for no one could tell what it was made of, only that it was beautiful. The rock with which the palace was made and which adorned it all around seemed to be of crystal. Its roof was of silver and decorated with mosaic. At the very top was a carbuncle that shone brighter than the sun and gave out such great light at night that it seemed to be summertime. Twenty towers supported the palace — you will never see any more beautiful — all of the very same blue. No one ever saw finer ones. Rich and powerful merchants came to the castle; they brought their wares from across the sea, and the tolls they paid brough great wealth to the town. Because of the many goods that were brought there the city had grown rich and powerful. The castle of which I am telling you was called the Golden Isle.' Donagher, p. 115.

48. 'Suddenly they spied a beautiful walled city beyond a river spanned by a bridge. Its ancient towers were solid and well placed on all sides; high walls surrounded the keep. There were many houses in the town, which was quite near a forest. Many wealthy burghers lived there, so that the town was well populated. The land around the castle was a lovely sight, rich in vineyards, woodlands, and plains, and the peasants were quite prosperous. The castle was stocked with all kinds of goods, and the town was well fortified. This fine and handsome walled city was called Galigant.' Donagher, p. 149.

49. 'and [they] saw the Desolate City. No one ever saw a city so beautiful as this once had been; now, I believe, it all lay in ruins. The fortress, a very large one, was placed between two roaring rivers. The company saw the towers and the houses, the bell towers and the keeps, the fine, resplendent palaces and the eagles that shone in the sun.' Donagher, p. 165.

50. 'The city was enclosed by walls and moats five leagues around. These walls were handsome and well constructed; their stones were carved out of marble, and each was fitted solidly to the other and held in place with mortar. Animals and flowers of many

colours had been carved into these walls, and the stones of blue, green, yellow and gray had been skillfully arranged. And all around, at intervals of thirty feet, high towers had been placed, so that those who ascended these towers could easily make themselves heard from one to another. There was not a soul in the fortress; the entire city lay in ruins.' Donagher, p. 171.

51. 'When the knight saw this, he crossed himself and entered the fortress.' Donagher, p. 171.

52. 'When they arrived there, they went straight to the other side and through the gate into a garden. This garden was indeed worthy of imaginaiton. It was all enclosed by marble walls made with the greatest skill and art, for God never created anything that could be found in the world that was not represented in the magnificent carvings on these walls. There were windows all around, which allowed warmth to enter the garden, with shutters made of silver. No one ever saw such a pleasant garden, nor one so fine, so rare, or so lovely. Every tree in God's creation could be found in this garden if one searched carefully. There were many laurels there, along with fig trees and almond trees, sycamores and palms, pines and apple trees, medlars and oleander. There were many other kinds of trees, and licorice grew there, along with incense and many other spice trees. God never made any fragrant herb that did nor flourish in that garden. Frankincense, coves, and zedoary, along with cinnamon, feverfew, pepper and cumin — all these grew there in abundance. There were rosebushes that bloomed throughout the year. This garden was indeed a rare and lovely place. Every day birds sang there: orioles and larks, merlins and nightingales, and many more besides, so that the sounds of birdsong never ceased. And there was such a fragrance of flowers and spices in the garden that anyone outside its walls would have believed himself in Paradise.' Donagher, pp. 255-57.

53. 'This spot is nature's rarest triumph; here abound the charms, the delights, the riches of spring. Nature fawns over this place, so generously giving it every favour that can be bestowed that nothing is lacking. Exceeding the measure of that which has to be given, Nature keeps nothing back for herself as she adorns this place with flowery charm. The earth luxuriates with spikey herb. [...] Still another of Nature's gifts is the birds whose ardent chirping crowns the beauty of the place. [...] Here blossoms bloom sweetly, herbs grow vigorously, trees leaf profusely. Fruits abound, birds chatter, streams murmur, and the gentle air warms all. Birds please with song, groves with shade, breezes with warmth, springs with drink, streams with murmuring, the earth with flowers. Pleasant is the stream's sound, harmonious the birdsongs, sweet the flowers, cool the springs, warm the shade. All five senses feast here, as one may note by noticing all details described. The stream appeals to the touch, the sweetness to the taste, the birds to the ear, beauty to

the eyes, and fragrance to the nose. The air fosters, the heat quickens, the water nourishes.' Galyon, pp. 59-60

54. 'They went toward the chamber, and straight through the door. As soon as they had entered they were made aware of an exquisite fragrance much rarer than frankincense or feverfew or cinnamon. So wondrous was this fragrance that anyone who was ill had only to be in that room for a short while and he would soon be well again. There were candles burning; the room seemed a paradise. It ws filled with silver and gold and all kinds of riches, worth a king's ransom. Costly silk cloths had been hung everywhere. Why should I name them all? But truly, there were all kinds of fabrics: heavy striped silks and deep blue silks, silks from the Tyre, cloth of gold and rich brocades of the most diverse kinds, figured silks and light silks from Boukhara. The chamber was royally decorated. The ceiling had been draped with a silken cloth from Constantinople and the floor was covered witha mosaic made from all manner of precious stones: there were emeralds and finest sapphires calcedones and rubies of many different colours. This mosaic had been arranged in the form of flowers, birds, and many other things. The floor was so fine and so well made that you could name no animal that dwells on land or in the sea — whether fish, dragon, or bird — that had not been portrayed in it.' Donagher, pp. 281-83.

55. 'They travelled a great distance that day and when it was early evening they emerged from a thick forest and saw a beautiful and well fortified castle nearby.' Donagher, p. 89.

56. 'He had been travelling throughout the day. It was now nearing evening. he looked and saw a fortified city: no man ever saw such a fine one.' Donagher, p. 111.

57. 'They travelled until evening. Suddenly they spied a beautiful walled city beyond a bridge spanned by a bridge.' Donagher, p. 147.

58. 'And when it was almost evening, they emerged from a forest and saw the Desolate City.' Donagher, p. 165.

# Seven

1. 'If you choose an amplified form, proceed first of all by this step: although the meaning is one, let it not come content with one set of apparel. Let it vary its robes and assume different raiment. Let it take up again in other words what has already been said; let it reiterate, in a number of clauses, a single thought. Let one and the same thing be concealed under multiple forms — be varied and yet the same.' Nims, p. 24.

2. 'See to it that an expression, as it wins the mind's approval, may likewise charm the ear, and the two approve the same thing. Even that is not sufficient, and I still do not trust it unless I reflect upon it again. A first examination discerns neither well nor fully.

As I revolve around the subject, I evolve more. If the topic is malodorous, its unpleasantness is intensified as it is moved about more; if it is full of savour, the taste is more delightful through repeated testing. See, then, that there are three judges of the proposed expression: let the mind be the first judge, the ear the second, and usage the third and final one to conclude the whole.' Nims, p. 87.

3. 'Or single details are brought together, and *frequentatio* gathers up points that had been scattered through the work. By turning a subject over repeatedly and varying the figure, I seem to be saying a number of things whereas I am actually dwelling on one thing, in order to give it a finer polish and impart a smooth finish by repeated applications of the file, one might say.' Nims, p. 61.

4. 'She is called Veronica, she is a very wise woman, who lives in School Street.' Rogers, p. 25.

5. '[...] the good Fisherman set out. Many good things have been said about him, which do not lack sense.' Rogers, p. 59.

6. 'The pilgrim was no fool or madman; he arrived and greeted the emperor.' Rogers, p. 19

7. 'Man was lost by a woman, and by a woman he was redeemed; woman sought our death, and woman gave us life again; we were imprisoned by a woman, and by a woman we were rescued.' Rogers, p. 13.

8. 'You have also heard why he was born of the Virgin, so that he might die on the cross, and the Father might regain his creation. For this reason I came to earth ...' Rogers, p. 14.

9. 'Believe this and you shall be saved; believe it, without doubting, and you shall have eternal life.' Rogers, p. 14

10. 'Joseph went to his vessel, and prayed devoutly to God, explaining to him about his nephew, and how he would act to his advantage [...] 'Listen to what you shall teach him [...] Tell him how I came to earth, and how my enemies warred against me, how I was bought and sold, delivered and handed over; how I was beaten and insulted [...] Tell your nephew how you took me down from the cross, how you washed my wounds, how you came to possess this vessel, and collected my blood in it, how you were captured by the Jews and thrown into the depths of their prison, and how I comforted you when I found you in your prison cell.' Rogers, p. 52.

11. 'to suffer torments of pain and grief, to freeze in the cold and sweat in the heat.' Rogers, p. 1.

284

12. 'the extreme weakness and vulnerability of human frailty, and its great susceptibility to sin (for man will necessarily sin).' Rogers, p. 4.

13. 'which was so exceedingly harsh, and dark and gloomy'. Rogers, p. 21.

14. 'He was born of the Virgin Mary, without sin or wrongdoing, engendered without a man's seed, conceived and born without sin.' Rogers, p. 36.

15. 'She is plunged in suffering and sorrow, overwhelmed by sadness.' Donagher, p. 15.

16. 'He caused his birth to to be announced by the words of the prophets.' Rogers, p. 1.

17. 'This is what you must tell your disciples, and explain and demonstrate to them.' Rogers, p. 49.

18. 'now I pray and entreat.' Rogers, p. 40.

19. 'why [...] so mute and silent.' Rogers, p.5.

20. 'The Virgin beyond price, who was the wedded wife of Joseph.' Rogers, p. 14.

21. 'In this way lust was washed out of men and women and purified.' Rogers, p. 5.

22. 'Vespasian would at once be cured and returned to health.' Rogers, p. 20.

23. '[...] that you cut off my head, with a knife or sword.' Rogers, p. 20.

24. 'Every king, prince, duke and count, Adam, our first father and our mother Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jeremiah and the prophet Isaiah.' Rogers, p. 1.

25. 'here you shall have forests and meadows, fine garments, beautiful rivers, sparrowhawks and goshawks and gerfalcons, purebred falcons and fine horses. You will also have much gold and silver.' Donagher, p. 213.

26. 'sparrowhawks and falcons, goshawks, tercels, and merlins.' Donagher, p. 235.

27. 'For, I believe, whoever sees the Grail will find it agreeable. It charms all those of this land, they find it pleasant and agreeable; those who are able to remain with it and can bear its presence, when they see it they feel delight, they are as happy as a fish when a man holds it in his hand, and it can escape from his hand and return to swimming unconfined in the water.' When the others heard this they agreed heartily. They would agree to no other name, but that it should be called the Grail; and it is right that people should agree in this way. Both those who departed and those who remain called the vessel the Grail, for the reason I have told you.' Rogers, p. 45.

28. 'The maiden [...] was named Helie.' Donagher, p. 15.

'The squire was named Robert. Donagher, p. 19.

'The maiden, whose name was Margerie.' Donagher, p. 99.

'She was called the Maiden of the White Hands.' Donagher, p. 115.

'The knight who had been killed was named Malgier the Gray.' p. 129.

'She was called Blonde Esmeree.' Donagher, p. 217.

29. 'She began to weep for joy. He had her sit down beside him on teh grass and asked that she tell him how the giants who had brought her there had found her and also that she not fail to tell him her name, who she was, and where she came from. She said, "I shall tell you without falsehood. My name is Clarie — I would not speak to you falsely about this."' Donagher, p. 55.

30. 'and the Fair Unknown spoke to him and asked him to tell him how and with what purpose he had come. Who were his two companions who had attacked him and what had they been seeking? The other answered him at once, "My lord, I shall tell you the truth of this matter; no part of it shall be withheld from you. I am the Lord of Saie."' Donagher, p. 73.

31. '"My Lord, " he said, "you asked me to tell me your name; now I would like to know yours." And the hunter told him the truth, for it was right that he do what the other required: "I am called the Proud Knight of the Glade."' Donagher, p. 89.

32. '"You may not consider yourself free to go: first you must tell me your name and who you are [...] The knight pledged his word and then told him his nameL 'My lord, my name is Giflet: Giflet, son of Do, is what I am called in this land."' Donagher, p. 107.

33. '"And this lord whose custom I wish to tell you about is named Lampart."' Donagher, p. 149.

34. 'The Father paid our ransom with himself, with his Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit all in one. For I dare say, as it seems to me, that these three are one single being, each person contained within the other,' Rogers, p. 2.

35. 'those sinners who desire to obey God, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.' Rogers, p. 7.

36. 'You shall turn to these three wonders, which you believe to be one thing.' Rogers, p. 16.

37. 'You should believe, so I assure you, in God the Father, Jesus the Son and also the Holy Ghost who is God; these three are one person and share one power.' Rogers, p. 37.

38.'God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Ghost who is God; these three are one person, and share one power.' Rogers, p. 37.

39. 'God the Father of all, and in the Son and the Holy Spirit, that is, in the blessed Trinity which dwells in holy unity.' Rogers, p. 43.

40. 'The three marvels which are one.' Rogers, p. 43.

41. 'In that way, this will signify the representation of the Blessed Trinity, which we have composed in three parts.' Rogers, p. 57.

42. 'When Joseph saw the vessel, he was filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit.' Rogers, p. 13.

43. 'All those who see your vessel shall be members of my company. Their hearts shall be filled to overflowing, and their joy shall be eternal.' Rogers, p. 16.

44. 'Weeping, Joseph went to his vessel, and knelt before it, saying: "Lord, who took on flesh in the Virgin and was born of her, who came here because of your pity and gentleness [...] for it was there, lord, when you brought me this vessel, that you instructed me, whenever I wanted your help, to come before this precious vessel which contains your glorious blood — so now I pray and entreat you to advise me."' Rogers, p. 41.

45. 'Joseph went to his vessel, and prayed devoutly to God, explaining to him about his nephew, and he would act to his advantage.' Rogers, p. 52.

46. '"You shall take the vessel with my blood in it, and set it openly as a test for the sinners, so that the vessel is quite visible."' Rogers, p. 42.

47. 'They replied: "It is by that vessel that we are set apart from you, for, as you can clearly see, it does not love sinners and will not tolerate their presence."' Rogers, p. 44.

48. '"tell them that soon they will see the cause of their lamentations, and who it is whose sins have earned the misfortunes which have befallen them."' Rogers, p. 42.

49. 'harshly they spurred their horses forward.' Donagher, p. 29.

'Harshly he spurred his horse forward.' Donagher, p. 47.

'He spurred his horse across the heath.' Donagher, p. 69.

'He set spur to his horse, who charged forward.' Donagher, p. 85.

'They spurred their horses like men full of anger.' Donagher, p. 105.

'They spurred their horses sharply.' Donagher, p. 127.

'then they spurred their mounts to lend them speed.' Donagher, p. 157.

'he spurred his horse forward as the other knight rushed toward him.' Donagher, p. 179.

50. 'he pierced the shield, tore through the hauberk.' Donagher, p. 29.

'he pierced his shield, cut through the hauberk.' Donagher, p. 67.

'shields were smashed, hauberks were pierced.' Donagher, p. 85.

'Shields were split and splintered.' Donagher, p. 127.

'they pierced each other's hauberks, tearing the mail.' Donagher, p. 129.

'a mighty blow on his shield.' Donagher, p. 159.

'he pierced the shield.' Donagher, Donagher, p. 159.

'the mail of their hauberks was torn.' Donagher, p. 179.

51. 'on their helmets, on their shields.' Donagher, p. 31.

'they struck each others helmets.' Donagher, p. 69.

'they rained such blows on each other's helmets.' Donagher, p. 129.

52. 'They continued to give great blows with their broken lances.' Donagher, p.85.'

'they gave each other great blows.' Donagher, p. 105.

'and gave each other great blows.' Donagher, p. 31.

'The two knights quickly came to blows.' Donagher, p. 125.

'they struck great blows on each other's shields.' Donagher, p. 127.

'giving such blows with their lances.' Donagher, p. 175.

53. 'Both of these men were excellent knights.' Donagher, p. 67.

'for they were both fine knights and fierce in battle.' Donagher, p. 85.

'Both were valorous knights.' Donagher, p. 125.

'Both were worthy and valiant men.' Donagher, p. 157.

54. 'You must go to King Arthur's Court and say that I have sent you there.' Donagher, p. 31.

55. 'He caused his birth to be announced by the words of the prophets. He inspired them to proclaim that God would send his Son here below to suffer.' Rogers, p. 1.

56. 'Then it pleased Our Lord to do us all honour, for he came down to earth and assumed human flesh like ours. He took on flesh within the Virgin.' Rogers, p. 1.

57. 'God willed that his Son should assume flesh within the Virgin.' Rogers, p. 2.

58. 'This Lord, who assumed humanity within the Virgin.' Rogers, p. 2.

59. 'For he sent his Son below.' Rogers, p. 3.

60. '"I am the Son of God, whom it was God's will to send to earth, to save sinners from damnation."' Rogers, p. 13.

61. 'and he did have them until it was the Father's will that the Son should be born of the Mother.' Rogers, p. 13.

62. 'The certain truth about how the Son of God came to earth. You have also heard why he was born of the Virgin.' Rogers, p. 13.

63. 'Jesus who took on flesh in that Virgin beyond price.' Rogers, p. 14.

64. '"He was called Jesus, the son of Mary, from Nazareth near Bethany."' Rogers, p. 18.

65. '[God] wished to order matters in this way: he sent his Son to earth to live among us. He was born of the Virgin Mary.' Rogers, p. 36.

66. 'God the Son was willing to die on earth in this way for his Father's sake. He who was born of the Virgin, condemned and killed by the Jews.' Rogers, p. 37.

67. 'Lord, who took on flesh in the Virgin and was born of her [...]' Rogers, p. 41.

68. 'He condescended to come to earth, and die, because he wanted to save his father's creation'. Rogers, p. 2.

69. 'I came to earth to suffer death, to die and expire on the cross, in order to save my father's creation.' Rogers, p. 13.

70. 'so that he might die on the cross, and the Father might regain his creation.' Rogers, p. 13.

71. 'But the true God, out of his goodness, and in order to redeem his own creation, wished to order matters in this way: he sent his Son [...] This was that same Jesus who lived among us here below, and performed miracles [...] This was the same man who was hanged on the cross by the Jews.' Rogers, p. 36.

72. 'because of the sin of our father Adam, which our mother Eve made him commit when she ate the apple and gave it to her husband.' Rogers, p. 2.

73. 'Adam had brough about this damnation, by eating the apple given him by his wfe Eve, on the advice of the enemy, whom she believed more readily than she did God. After this, God cast them out of paradise into misery, because of the sin they had committed in disobeying his command.' Rogers, p. 13.

74. 'He came to Eve, and tricked her with the apple which she ate. At the enemy's urging, she persuaded Adam to eat it too; and when they had eaten it, they were driven out of paradise.' Rogers, p. 36.

75. 'So they left the house, and waited until the next Thursday. On that Thursday, Jesus was at Simon's house, where he was teaching his disciples.' Rogers, p. 6.

76. '"Joseph, you know that I an all my companions were eating in Simon's house at the Last Supper, on the Thursday."' Rogers, p. 15.

77. '"[...] before the time when I was in Simon's house with my companions."' Rogers, p. 42.

78. '"You know that I was at Simon's house, at the table where I was eating and drinking."' Rogers, . 42.

79. '"In the name of that table, find another and prepare it."' Rogers, p. 42.

80. 'The Jew carrying the vessel which he had taken from the house of Simon came to Pilate and gave it to him; and Pilate put it in a safe place until he was informed that Jesus had been executed. When Joseph heard the news, his anger and grief were immense.' Rogers, p. 8.

81. 'You have also heard why he was born of the Virgin, so that he might die on the cross, and the Father might regain his creation. For this reason I came to earth, and shed the blood of my body, which flowed from it at five points; I suffered greatly there.' Rogers, p. 14.

82. '[...] he whom Judas sold for thirty deniers to those ruffians, the Jews, whom they whipped and beat and then hanged on the cross?' Rogers, p. 14.

83. '"The wicked folk who hated him bribed the people in power, those who administer justice, and promised them gifts, and hounded him until they had him arrested, and basely insulted, and stripped quite naked, and cruelly beaten. And when they could do no worse to him, the Jews, whose nature is wicked, had him cucified on the cross and put to death."' Rogers, p. 18.

84. '"They took him and led him away, and struck him and beat him, and tied him to a stake and crucified him on the cross."' Rogers, p. 23.

85. "'Then I continued homewards, while they led him away, whipping him without mercy and constantly beating him. They were cruelly mistreating him, but he spoke not a word of complaint." Rogers, p. 27.

86. "'Remember that I was sold, betrayed, trampled and beaten.'" Rogers, p. 42.

87. "'Tell him how I came to earth, and how my enemies warred against me, how I was bought and sold, delivered and handed over; how I was beaten and insulted, betrayed by one of my disciples, booed and spat upon, and tied to the stake; they did me as much harm as they could, for in the end they hanged me.'" Rogers, p. 52.

# Conclusion

1. 'Let the conclusion, like a herald when the race is over, dismiss it honourably.' Nims, p. 18.

2. 'A conclusion. as the term is used here, is an appropriate ending of a poem that completes its overall design.' Galyon, p. 111.

---

1    *Accessus ad auctores, Bernard d'Utrecht, Conrad d'Hirsau Dialogus super auctores*. ed. by R.B.C. Huygens (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 223-24.

2    Michelle A. Freeman, *The Poetics of Translatio Studii and Conjointure: the example and some ramifications of Chrétien de Troyes* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1981).

3    Harry Caplan (trans.), *Cicero: Ad Herennium*, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1968).

4    H.M. Hubbell (trans.), *Cicero: De inventione* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949).

5    G.L. Hendrickson (ed.), *Cicero: Brutus* (London: William Heinemann, 1952).

6    William Harris Stahl and Richard Johnson, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts, Vol. II, The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

7    Robert Hanning and Joan Ferrante, (trans.) *The Lais Of Marie de France*, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978).

# Select Bibliography

Editions of the *Joseph d'Arimathie* and *Li Biaus Descouneüs* used

Fresco, Karen, *Renaut de Bagé: Le Bel Inconnu (Li Biaus Descouneüs; The Fair Unknown* (New York: Garland, 1992)

O'Gorman, Richard, *Robert de Boron: Joseph d'Arimathie: A Critical Edition of the Verse and Prose Versions* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1995)


Dictionaries and other reference works

Abrams, Meyer Howard, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988)

Catholic University of America Editorial Staff, *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington: Publishers Guild, in association with the McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967-1974)

Elliott, J.K., ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament: a collection of apocryphal Christian Literature in an English translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)

Flutre, Ferdinand, *Table des noms propres avec toutes leurs variantes figurant dans les romans du moyen âge écrits en français ou en provençal* (Poitiers: Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, 1962)

*Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957).

Lacy, Norris, ed. *The Arthurian Encyclopedia.* Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, 585 (New York: Garland, 1986)

— *The Arthurian Handbook* (New York: Garland, 1988)

Lewis, Charlton, T. and Short, Charles T., *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945)

Morawski, Joseph, *Proverbes français antérieurs au XVe siècle* (Paris: CFMA, 1925)

Tobler, Adolf and Lommatzsch, Erhard, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch, 10 vols.,* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag, 1915-)

Secondary Works and Studies

Adams, Alison, 'The Shape of Arthurian Verse Romance (to 1300)', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, I, pp. 141-66

Adolf, Helen, *Visio Pacis: Holy City and Grail* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University, 1960)

Artin, Tom, *The Allegory of Adventure* (London, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1974)

Baldwin, Charles Sears, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400) Interpreted from Representative Works* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1959)

Ball, Jerry, *Joseph of Arimathea and the Arthurian Tradition* (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1986)

Baumgartner, Emmanuèle, 'Féerie-fiction: *Le Bel Inconnu* de Renaut de Beaujeu', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans le Bel Inconnu ou le Beaujeu de Renaut*, ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996), 7-22

Bauschke, Ricarda, 'Auflösung des Artusromans und Defiktionalisierung im *Bel Inconnu* Renauts de Beaujeu Auseinandersetzung mit Chrétien de Troyes', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, 102 (1992), 42-63

Bekker-Nielsen, Hans, and others (ed.), *Hagiography and Medieval Literature: a Symposium* (Odense University Press, 1981)

Berthelot, Anne, 'The Romance as *Conjointure* of Brief Narratives', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 33 (1993), 51-60

Biller, Gunnar, *Etude sur le Style des premiers romans français en vers (1150-1175)* (Göteborg, 1916; repr.: Geneva: Slatkine, 1974)

Bloch, Marc, *Feudal Society* trans. by L.A. Manyon (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961; original: La Société féodale, Paris: Michel, 1949)

Bloch, R. Howard, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991)

Boiron, François and Payen, Jean-Charles, 'Structure et sens du *Bel Inconnu* de Renaut de Beaujeu', *Le Moyen Age* , 76 (1970), 15-26

Boyle, Leonard E., 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England,* ed. by Thomas J. Heffernan (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee, 1985)

Braswell, Mary Flowers, *The Medieval Sinner* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983)

Brightenback, Kristine, 'Remarks on the "Prologue" to Marie de France's *Lais*', *Romance Philology*, 30 (1976), 168-77

Bruckner, Matilda Tomaryn, '*Le Chevalier de la Charrette (Lancelot)*', in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium*, ed. by Douglas Kelly (Lexington: French Forum Publishers, 1985)

Brundage, James A., *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987)

Burgess, Glyn S., *Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire pré-courtois*. Publications romanes et françaises, 110 (Geneva: Droz, 1970)

— 'The Term 'chevalerie' in Twelfth-Century French,' in *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature, and Translation: Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, ed. by Peter Monks and D.D.R. Owen (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 343-58

— '*Savoir* and *faire* in the *Anglo-Norman Voyage of St. Brendan*', *French Studies*, 49 (1995), 257-74

Burgwinkle, William, '"L'écriture totalisante" de Robert de Boron, *Constructions*, (1986), 87-101

Burke, Séan, *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 13-18

Burns, E. Jane, *Bodytalk: When Women Speak in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993)

Burrell, Margaret, 'The Use of the Term *semblant* in *La Chastelaine de Vergi*', *New Zealand Journal of French Studies*, 13 (1992), 5-14

Busby, Keith, 'The Characters and the Setting', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, I, pp. 57-90

Butler, H.E., *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian* (London: William Heinemann, 1920)

Caplan, Harry, [Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968

Chandès, Gérard, 'Amour, mariage et transgressions dans *Le Bel Inconnu* à la lumière de psychologie analytique', in *Amour, mariage et transgressions au moyen âge: actes du colloque des 24, 25, 26 et 27 mars 1983*, ed. by Danielle Buschinger and André Crépin,

Université de Picardie, Centre d'Études Médiévales (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1984), pp. 325-333

Clogan, Paul Maurice, ed., *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Culture: Medieval Hagiography and Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975)

Cobby, Anne Elizabeth, *Ambivalent Conventions: Formula and Parody in Old French* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995)

Colby, Alice, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Romance* (Geneva: Droz, 1965)

Colby-Hall, Alice, 'Frustration and Fulfilment; the Double Ending of the *Bel Inconnu*', *Yale French Studies*, 67 (1984), 120-34

Curtius, Ernst Robert, 'Dichtung und Rhetorik im Mittelalter', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 16 (1938), 435-75

— *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages,* trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953)

Dauphine, James, 'Du paradis terrestre', in *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval*, (Aix-en-Provence, Université de Provence, 1990), pp. 89-96

De Grave, J-J. Salvedra, ed. *Le Roman d'Enéas* (Paris: Champion, 1925, Vol. II)

Delahaye, Hippolyte, *Legends of the Saints*, trans. by Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962)

De Looze, Laurence, 'Generic Clash, Reader Response, and the Poetics of the Non-Ending in *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context; Selected Papers from the 5th Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 August, 1986,* eds. Keith Busby and Erik Kooper, Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, 25 (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990), pp. 113-33

Donagher, Colleen P., 'Socializing the Sorceress: The Fairy Mistress in *Lanval, Le Bel Inconnu* and *Partonopeu de Blois*',: *Essays in Medieval Studies Proceedings of the Illinois Medieval Association*, 4 (1987), 69-90

Dronke, Peter, *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970)

Dubost, Francis, *'Tel cuide bien faire qui faut*: le "beau jeu" de Renaut avec le merveilleux', in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renaut*, ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996), pp. 23-56.

Duggan, Joseph, *The Song of Roland: Formulaic Style and Poetic Craft*, Publications of the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, UCLA, 6 (1973)

Ewald, Robert James, 'The Jungian Archetype of the Fairy Mistress in Medieval Romance' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Bowling Green State University, Ohio, 1977)

Ewert, Alfred, ed., *Marie de France: Lais* (London: Duckworth, 1995)

Faral, Edmond, *Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle: recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge* (Paris: Champion, 1924)

Ferrante, Joan, *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975)

Foley, John Miles, *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: An Introduction and Annotated Bibliography*, Garland Folklore Bibliographies, 6 (New York and London: Garland, 1985)

Fourrier, Anthime, *Le Courant réaliste dans le roman courtois au Moyen Age, tome I: Les Débuts* (Paris: Nizet, 1962)

Frappier, Jean, 'Le motif du don contraignant dans la littérature du Moyen Age', *Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature,* 7 (1969), 7-46

Freeman, Michelle Alice, *The Poetics of Translatio Studii and Conjointure: the example and some ramifications of Chrétien de Troyes* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1981)

— '*Fergus*: Parody and the Arthurian Tradition', *French Forum*, 8 (1983), 197-215

Frye, Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957)

Gallo, Ernest, 'The *Poetria nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf', in *Medieval Rhetoric: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. by James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978)

Galyon, Aubrey E., *Matthew of Vendôme: The Art of Versification* (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1980)

Giffin, Mary, 'A Reading of Robert de Boron', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 80 (1965) 499-507

Goldin, Frederick, *The Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères: An Anthology and a History* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1973)

Grimbert, Joan Tasker, 'The Effect of *clair-obscur* in *Le Bel Inconnu*', in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context; Selected Papers from the 5th Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 August, 1986*, ed. by Keith Busby and Erik Kooper, Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, 25 (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990), pp. 249-260

— 'Testimony and the Truth in *Joseph d'Arimathie*', *Romance Philology*, 44 (1991), 379-401

Grube, G.M.A., *The Greek and Roman Critics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965)

Gryting, Loyal A. T. 'The *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* as a Medieval Composite', *Modern Language Journal*, 38 (1954), 15-17

Guerreau, Alain, 'Renaud de Bâgé: *Le Bel Inconnu*: structure symbolique et signification sociale', *Romania*, 103 (1982), 28-82

Guthrie, Jeri S., 'The *'Je(u)'* in *Le Bel Inconnu*: A Semiotic Topography' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1983)

Haidu, Peter, 'Realism, Convention, Fictionality, and the Theory of Genres in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 12 (1972), 37-60

Hand, Sophie, *Fusing the Biblical and the Arthurian: A Study of Robert de Boron's Poetic Craft in the 'Joseph d'Arimathie' and the 'Merlin'* (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Wisconsin, 1992)

Hanning, Robert, *The Individual in Twelfth-Century Romance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977)

Hardison, O.B. Jr., *Medieval Literary Criticism* (New York: Ungar, 1974)

Hardison, O.B. Jr. and Leon Golden, *Horace for Students of Literature: The Ars Poetica and its Tradition* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995)

Harward, Vernon J., *The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance and Celtic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1958)

Hendrickson, G.L., ed. *Cicero: Brutus* (London: Heinemann, 1952)

Heinemann, Edward A., *L'art métrique de la chanson de geste: essai sur la musicalité du récit*, Publications romanes et françaises, 205 (Geneva: Droz, 1993)

Hubbell, H.M., trans., *Cicero: De inventione* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949)

Huchet, Jean-Charles, 'Le Nom et l'image. De Chrétien de Troyes à Robert de Boron', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, II, pp. 1-16

Hunt, Tony, 'The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 6 (1970), 1-23

Huygens, R.B.C., ed. *Accessus ad auctores, Bernard d'Utrecht, Conrad d'Hirsau Dialogus super auctores* (Leiden: Brill, 1970)

Imbs, Paul, 'Enygeus', *BBSIA*, 6 (1954), 63-73

Irvine, Martin, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350-1100* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

Jackson, W.T.H., 'The Nature of Romance', *Yale French Studies: Approaches to Medieval Romance* 51, pp. 12-25

Jauss, Hans Robert, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982)

Jung, Emma and von Franz, Marie, *The Grail Legend* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971)

Kelly, Douglas, *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes : A Symposium,* (Lexington: French Forum Publishers, 1985)

— 'The Scope of the Treatment of Composition in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Arts of Poetry', *Speculum*, 41 (1966), 261-78

— 'Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*', *Mediaeval Studies*, 31 (1969), 117-48

— 'The Source and Meaning of *conjointure* in Chrétien's *Erec* 14',*Viator*, 1 (1970), 179-200

— 'The Logic of the Imagination in Chrétien de Troyes', in *The Sower and His Seed: essays on Chrétien de Troyes,* ed. by Rupert T. Pickens (Lexington: French Forum, 1983), pp. 9-30

— 'Chrétien de Troyes: The Narrator and His Art', in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium,* pp. 13-47

— *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, Series: Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991)

— *The Art of Medieval Romance* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992)

— *Medieval French Romance* (New York: Twayne, 1993)

Kennedy, Angus, '"Marie est dite mer amer" in Robert de Boron's *Le Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal*', *BBSIA*, 29 (1977), 185-90

Ker, William, *Epic and Romance* (London: Macmillan, 1926)

Krueger, Roberta L., 'The Author's Voice: Narrators, Audiences and the Problem of Interpretation', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, 2 vols., ed. by Lacy, Kelly and Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), I, pp. 115-40

Lacy, Norris J., *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes: An Essay on Narrative Art* (Leiden: Brill, 1980)

Lacy, Norris J., Douglas Kelly and Keith Busby, eds., *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, 2 vols., (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987)

— 'The Typology of Arthurian Romance', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, I, pp. 33-56

Lagorio, Valérie M., 'Pan-Brittonic Hagiography and the Arthurian Grail Cycle', *Traditio*, 26 (1970), 29-61

Le Gentil, Pierre, 'The Work of Robert de Boron and the *Didot-Perceval*', in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, A Collaborative History*, ed. Roger Sherman Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 251-62

Lecouteux, Claude, *Au-delà du merveilleux: des croyances du Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 1995)

Leyerle, John, 'The Game and Play of Hero' in *Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Norman T. Burns (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 48-82

Liborio, Mariantonia, 'Rhetorical Topoi as Clues', in *Rhetoric Revalued: papers from the International Society for the History of Rhetoric*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), pp. 173-78

Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949)

Loomis, 'The *Fier Baiser* in *Mandeville's Travels*, Arthurian Romance and Irish Saga', *Studi Medievali*, 17 (1951), 104-113

Loomis, *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (London: Hutchinson, 1963)

Lord, Albert B., *The Singer of Tales*, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 24 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960)

Luttrell, Claude, *The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance: a quest* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974)

Lyons, Faith, '*Entencion* in Chrétien's *Lancelot*', *Studies in Philology*, 51 (1954), 425-30

Maddox, Donald, *The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Marenbon, John, 'Carolingian Thought', in *Carolingian Culture: emulation and innovation*, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

Marrou, H.I., *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1956)

Marx, Jean, *La Légende arthurienne et le graal* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952)

Matthews, John, *The Grail: Quest for the Eternal* (London: Thomas and Hudson, 1981)

Meschonnic, Henri, 'Les proverbes, actes de discours', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 163 (1967), 419-30

Micha, Alexandre, *Lais féeriques des XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1995)

Minnis, A.J., *Medieval Theory of Authorship* (London: Scolar, 1988)

Morris, Rosemary, 'The Knight and the Superfluous Lady: a problem of disposal', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 14 (1988), 111-24

Morse, Charlotte M., *The Pattern of Judgement in the 'Queste' and 'Cleanness'* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978)

Mousket, Philippe, *Chronique rimée,* ed. by Baron de Reiffenberg, 2 vols (Brussels, 1836-38)

Muir, Lynette R. *Literature and Society in Medieval France: The Mirror and the Image, 1100-1500* (London: Macmillan, 1985)

Newstead, Helaine, *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian Romance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939)

Nims, Margaret, *Geoffrey of Vinsauf: Poetria Nova* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1967)

Nitze, William, 'The Romance of *Erec*, Son of Lac', *Modern Philology* 11 (1913-1914), 445-89

— 'Sans et matière' dans les oeuvres de Chrétien de Troyes', *Romania,* 16 (1915-1917), 14-36

— *Le Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal* (Paris: Champion, 1927)

— 'How did the Fisher King get his name?', in *Mediaeval Studies Jeremiah Denis Matthias Ford,* ed. by U.T. Holmes, Jr, and A.J. Denomy (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1948), pp. 177-82

— 'Arthurian Problems', *Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne,* 5 (1953), 69-84

— '*Conjointure* in *Erec,* vs. 14', *Modern Language Notes,* 69 (1954), 180-81

— 'On the Derivation of Old French Enygeus', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur,* 66 (1956), 40-42

— 'The Identity of Brons in Robert de Boron's Metrical *Joseph'*, *Manly Anniversary Studies on Language and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923), pp. 300-14

Norwood, Gilbert, *Pindar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945)

Nutt, Alfred, *Studies on the Legends of the Holy Grail, with Especial References to the Hypothesis of its Celtic Origins* (London: Folklore Society, 1888)

O'Gorman, Richard, 'The Prose Version of Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie'* *Romance Philology,* 23 (1970), 449-61

— 'Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie* and the Sacrament of Penance', in *Conjunctures: Medieval Studies in Honor of Douglas Kelly,* ed. by Keith Busby and Norris J. Lacy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), pp. 375-85

Ollier, Marie-Louise, 'The Author in the Text: The Prologues of Chrétien de Troyes', *Yale French Studies,* 51 (1974), 26-41

Owen, D. D. R., *The Evolution of the Grail Legend* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1968)

Packard, Sidney R., *Twelfth Century Europe: An Interpretive Essay* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1973)

Paris, Gaston, 'Guinglain ou *Le Bel Inconnu'*, *Romania,* 15 (1886), 1-24

Parry, Adam, *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry,* ed. by Adam Parry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)

Patch, Howard R., *The Goddess Fortuna and Medieval Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927)

Paterson, Linda M., *Troubadours and Eloquence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975)

Paton, Lucy, *Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance* (Boston, 1903)

Pauphilet, Albert, 'Au sujet du Graal', *Romania*, 66 (1940-41), 481-504

Payen, Jean-Charles, 'Récit et *estoire* dans la littérature médiévale: le malentendu de l'histoire et l'histoire d'un malentendu', in *Récit et histoire*, ed. by Jean Bessière (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984), pp. 7-21

— 'Sur Robert de Boron, v. 341 ss.', *Le Moyen Age,* 71 (1965), 423-32

Perret, Michèle, 'Atemporalité et effet de fiction dans le *Bel Inconnu'*, in *Le Chevalier et la merveille dans Le Bel Inconnu ou le beau jeu de Renau,* ed. by Jean Dufournet (Paris: Champion, 1996), pp. 145-158

— 'Statut du nom propre dans *Le Bel Inconnu*', ibid., pp. 97-110.

Pickens, Rupert T., 'Histoire et commentaire chez Chrétien de Troyes et Robert de Boron: Robert de Boron et le livre de Philippe de Flandre', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by Norris Lacy, Douglas Kelly, Keith Busby, 2 vols (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), II, pp. 17-40

Preminger, Alex, and others, *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism* (New York: Ungar, 1974)

Reinhard, John R., *The Survival of Geis in Medieval Romance* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1933)

Robertson Jr, D.W., 'Marie de France, *Lais*, Prologue 13-15', *Modern Language Notes*, 64 (1949), 336-338

Rogers, Jean, *Joseph of Arimathea: A Romance of the Grail* (London: Rudolf Steiner, 1990)

Roussel, Claude, 'Point final et points de suspension; la fin incertaine du *Bel Inconnu'*, in *Le Point final; actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand* (Clermont-Ferrand: Association des Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Clermont-Ferrand, 1984), pp. 19-34

Rychner, Jean, *La Chanson de geste: essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs*, Publications romanes et françaises, 53 (Geneva: Droz, 1955)

Ryding, William, *Structure in Medieval Narrative* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971)

Schofield, William Henry, *Studies on the Libeaus Desconus*, Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, 4 (Boston, 1896)

Schulze-Busacker, Elisabeth, *Proverbes et expressions proverbiales dans la littérature narrative du Moyen Age Francais* (Geneva: Editions Slatkine, 1985)

Siciliano, Italo, *François Villon et les thèmes poétiques du Moyen Age* (Paris: Colin, 1934)

Simons, Penny, 'The *Bel Sanblant*: Reading *Le Bel Inconnu*', *French Studies* 50 (1996), 257-74

— 'The Squire, the Dwarf and the Damsel in Distress: Minor Characters in *Le Bel Inconnu?*', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 32 (1996), 27-36

Smith, Nathaniel B., '*Aucassin et Nicolette* as Stylistic Comedy', *Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, 26 (1979), 479-90

Sodigné-Costés, Geneviève, 'Les simples et les jardins', in *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval* (Aix en provence: Centre Universitaire d'Études et de Recherches Médiévales d'Aix, 1990), pp. 331-42

Spitzer, Leo, 'The Prologue to the *Lais* of Marie de France and Medieval Poetics', *Modern Philology*, 41 (1943-44), 96-102

Stahl, William Harris and Richard Johnson, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts, Vol. II, The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977)

Stevens, John, *Medieval Romance: themes and approaches* (London: Hutchinson, 1973)

Stowell, W.A., 'Personal Relationships in Medieval France', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 28 (1913), 388-416

Strubel, Armand, 'L'allégorisation du verger courtois', in *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval* (Aix en provence: Centre Universitaire d'Études et de Recherches Médiévales d'Aix, 1990), pp. 345-57

Sturm, Sara, 'The Love Interest in *le Bel Inconnu:* innovation in the *Roman Courtois*', *Forum for Modern Language Studies,* 7 (1971), 241-248

— 'Magic in *Le Bel Inconnu*', *L'Esprit Createur,* 12 (1972), 19-25

Tobin, Prudence Mary O'Hara, *Les Lais anonymes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles: essai d'édition critique de quelques lais bretons* (Doctoral disseration, Paris: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1973)

— *Les Lais anonymes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles: édition critique de quelques lais bretons* (Geneva: Droz, 1976)

Tyssens, Madeline, 'Les Sources de Renaut de Beaujeu', in *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier, professeur à la*

*Sorbonne, par ses collègues, ses élèves et ses amis* (Geneva: Droz, 1970), II, pp. 1043-1055

Vance, Eugène, *From Topic to Tale* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987)

Vinaver, Eugène, *The Rise of Romance* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971)

Walsh, P.G., *Andreas Capellanus on Love* (London: Duckworth, 1982)

Walter, Philippe, *Le Bel Inconnu de Renaut de Beaujeu: rite, mythe et roman* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996)

— *Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1997)

West, G.D., 'The Description of Towns in Old French Verse Romances', *French Studies*, 11 (1957), 50-59

Woods, Marjorie, 'Literary Criticism in an Early Commentary on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*', in *Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bologna* (1979), pp. 667-73

Zink, Michel, *Medieval French Literature — An Introduction* (New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995)

Zumthor, Paul, 'L'épiphonème proverbial', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 163 (1976), 313-28