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Courtly Love in Malory's Le Morte Darthur

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COURTLY LOVE IN MALORY'S

LE MORTE DARTHUR

by

Gérard O. Couroux



A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

Although many articles, pamphlets, editions, and monographs have appeared on Sir Thomas Malory and various aspects of his Le Morte Darthur,¹ specific treatments of courtly love, as penned by the English romancer, have been few. Two of the early authors who have mentioned the problem of courtly love are: Vida Dutton Scudder and Eugène Vinaver. Vida D. Scudder's attempt at a thorough investigation of Malory's work in her Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory: a Study of the Book and its Sources,² in 1917, touches the subject slightly. Eugène Vinaver's important study in his Malory,³ and in his monumental critical edition, The Works of Sir Thomas Malory,⁴ in 1947, devotes more space to the treatment of courtly love in Le Morte Darthur. Other recent works that have given consideration to the problem of courtly love⁵ are three collections of essays all published since 1963. These collections by J.A.W. Bennett, Essays on Malory,⁶ 1963, Robert M. Lumiansky, Malory's Originality: a Critical Study of Le Morte Darthur,⁷ 1964, and Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur,⁸ 1965, are very useful and stress in a more definite manner Malory's attitude towards courtly love and chivalry. In general, the above-mentioned scholars tend to agree that for Malory, chivalry and not courtly love seemed to have been his constant preoccupation. However, it seems that their assumptions are based mainly on the examination of a few well known tales, such as that of "Sir Launcelot du Lake," the "Launcelot and Elaine" incidents, the "Gareth and Lyones" story, and "The Knight of the Cart" episode. These critics have not offered an in-depth study of the idea of chivalry nor

of the concept of courtly love.

The present critical examination of Malory's treatment of the popular French amour courtois is an in-depth study of the idea of chivalry and the concept of courtly love as these two themes develop in each of the books of Le Morte Darthur. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is an attempt to add greater clarification to Malory's position towards the system of courtly love as it is presented and developed in the eight books of Le Morte Darthur. Moreover, since chivalry is intimately related to courtly love, and since Malory seems to have been very much concerned with its revival, the subject will be closely examined and discussed.

To achieve this aim, the following approach will be taken: first, since chivalry is probably the element that first attracted Malory to the Arthurian legend, the first chapter will be devoted to a study of chivalry under its martial, religious, and romantic (courtly) aspects. Then, the main stages of its decline and the serious attempts at its revival under the leadership of men such as John of Salisbury, Ramon Lull, William Caxton, and Sir Thomas Malory, in particular, will be examined. Finally, each of Le Morte Darthur's eight books will be analyzed in terms of Malory's own interpretation of the French chivalric ideal, without neglecting the influence and consequences chivalry had had on Malory's own brand of courtly love.

Second, just as for Malory loyalty, prowess, and mercy are to be prized in the world of the warrior, so are the same qualities to be valued in the world of the lover. The attitudes of Malory towards chivalry in chapter one will be reinforced by a general survey of one essential refinement, namely, courtly love. The origin and development of courtly love, from Ovid through

Ibn Hazm, Ibn Sina, Andreas Capellanus, the Troubadours, and Chrétien de Troyes, will be briefly retraced. Then, the treatment of courtly love in Malory's England will serve as a background whereby the English romancer's acceptance, rejection or interpretation of the system of courtly love can be judged. Finally, Malory's own treatment of love will be examined in the light of the different sources, both French and English, in order to find out the changes Malory introduced, and the possible reasons for such changes. This analysis will consider first, each of the eight books, and second, the major characters.

Then, to show more evidence of Malory's attitude towards love, an extensive compilation of the episodes exemplifying various types of love--Love and Amor Mixtus, Love and Amor Purus, Love and Matrimonia, Love and Perfidia--will be made. In turn, these categorized examples will be compared with their French and English sources in order to discover the reasons which might have motivated Malory in reinterpreting the already existing materials.

Finally, an attempt will be made to determine whether Malory's treatment of courtly love in Le Morte Darthur has been consistent or not, and if not, to give the possible reasons for any inconsistencies. It will be seen that if Malory did not show any special fondness for courtly love, he could not write Le Morte Darthur and leave it out.

The text of Malory's book which will be used is that to be found in Eugène Vinaver (ed.), The Works of Sir Thomas Malory (London: Oxford University Press, 1954). For convenience all page references to this edition will be placed in parentheses in the text.

CHAPTER II

CHIVALRY AND LOVE

General Background of Chivalry

Sidney Painter has identified the three basic elements of the code of chivalry as war, love, and religion.¹ As will be seen, these three aspects of medieval chivalry form a highly unstable, and, at times, an explosive mixture. Throughout Le Morte Darthur knights striving to practice perfect chivalry find themselves confronted by dilemmas within the code itself. Too often, the elements of love, war, and religion are simply immiscible. Indeed, the final destruction of the Round Table fellowship occurs largely because Lancelot is unable to resolve the tragic dilemma of his martial loyalty to the fellowship of Arthur and his knights, and his courtly love loyalty to Guinevere.

The code of chivalry that develops in Le Morte Darthur is not the courtly chivalry of the Grail legend, but rather a secular, martial chivalry with fighting prowess tempered by moral discipline. Malory's pure knighthood is an austere departure from the French originals. French chivalry has its origin and end in courtly love. "Le but le plus ordinaire des prouesses chevaleresques est, comme on sait, la conquête de l'amour."² However, in Malory prowess is shown as debased when it is inspired by the system of courtly love which he seems to regard as sophisticated lechery, simply because such chivalry lacks moral excellence, its soul.³

Moral secular chivalry, as conceived by Malory, includes such typically Christian virtues as pity, meekness, loyalty, truth, and the interior disci-

pline needed to combat the seven capital sins. The moral essence of chivalry, therefore, is self-sacrifice requiring both internal fortitude and external bravery.⁴ Such an ideal is perhaps as rarely attained in real life as it is in Le Morte Darthur. But it does admit of some levels of practical attainment. However, the ideal in the romances and in medieval life raised a society immersed in total war for survival, struggling from virtual barbarism to a level where courtesy, service, and honor were at least admired and possible to practice. In the words of an early historian of chivalry, Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove (1817-1891), chivalry is, among other things, "the picture of the admirable influence exercised by literature, in the name of religion and civilization, on the violent and brutal passions encouraged and propagated by war."⁵

To understand properly the chivalry evolving in Le Morte Darthur from the primitive martial variety of the first three books, through the courtly chivalry of the tales of Gareth and Tristram, and finally, to the religious chivalry of the Queste, it will be necessary to examine briefly these elements separately as they developed in the literature and life of medieval Europe. In the first place, the basic elements of the chivalry of war, love, and religion evolve in Malory's work in a process roughly analogous to their historical evolution in medieval society. In the second place, an analysis of the development of chivalry may help to clarify the nature of Malory's ideal, one considerably different from that of his French originals.

Caxton certainly regarded Le Morte Darthur as more than merely a collection of tales. The translator of the Ordre of Chivalry (1464) thought of Le Morte Darthur as a series of illustrations of an ideal life in which

virtuous conduct was rewarded and vice inexorably punished.⁶ Caxton's translation of Ramon Lull's book on chivalry had as its purpose to recall to the nobility the rules of chivalry which were in desuetude at the time. He was undoubtedly attractive to Malory by the "strong moral tone which pervade his accounts of chivalric conduct."⁷ Roger Ascham's (1515-1568) criticism that in Le Morte Darthur "those be counted noblest knightes, that do kill most men without any quarell, and commit fowlest aduoultures by sutlest shiftes,"⁸ may have sounded a timely warning in The Schoolmaster (1570), but would have fallen on rocky grounds in Malory's time. Clearly, if "Lancelot is the 'flower of Christian knighthood' it is because he combines the qualities of a warrior with those of a gentleman."⁹ Malory, though bound by his sources, by no means attributes Lancelot's greatness to his love of Guinevere. Ector's threnody over Lancelot's corpse shows clearly enough that not even Galahad would have surpassed Lancelot were it not for Lancelot's sin.

Feudal Chivalry

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries there grew out of the environment and way of life of the feudal class a system of ethical ideas that we call chivalry: virtues appropriate to the knight. Chivalry was not, however, a logical and consistent system of ethics. Its basic ideas sprang from a variety of sources and were often inconsistent with one another.

Feudal chivalry developed its basic ideas naturally, out of the way of life of the feudal noble. Its origin dates from the ninth and tenth centuries. Originally, the Anglo-Saxon word cnicht denoted simply a young man. Later, it was extended to mean a servant of a lord, and then a soldier. After 1066, the

feudalized knight signified a land-holding military tenant of an earl. Finally, a knight came to mean a mounted warrior, normally, though not necessarily, of noble birth.¹⁰

The pre-chivalric knight was characterized by brutality, which occasionally reached heroic proportions. He was proud, war-like, individualistic, and above all, cruel. Fighting prowess was a necessity in a society which waged miniature wars for profit or even amusement. The qualities of the knights celebrated in the eleventh century chansons de geste: prowess, fidelity, and honor, are epitomized in Roland. They are an advance over the armored brute, but still pre-chivalric, judged by Malory's ideal. However, Roland's inordinate ambition for war-glory causes the annihilation of his 20,000 man rear-guard. Roland lacks moderation or mesur as Malory would have called it. Moreover, in his feud with Ganelon, the right of vengeance is recognized. Gawayne and his clan also revert to this claim of vengeance late in Le Morte Darthur.

In general the leisurely enchantment of the chivalry of the romances is richer and more varied in its concerns than the single-minded violence of the chansons de geste. The fairy-tale atmosphere of the romances of chivalric knights is that of an ideal world rather than the real, semi-documentary world of the chansons. Generally, the romantic knight sets out without a very specific mission, seeking rather adventures and marvels than booty or vengeance. He seeks, in fact, any perilous encounter that will serve to prove his prowess. Fate, fortune, or enchantment guide him on his errant way. The chivalric knight, therefore, lives in a world specifically created to give him the opportunity of proving himself and attaining thereby personal glory or worship.

The ideal world of the chivalric romances thus has special characteristics: it is absolute in the sense that it is normally above the mundane concerns, and it creates a circle of solidarity for the initiates who adopt its values.¹¹

For Malory, the moral significance of knighthood rather than the simple, endless combats or the pageantry of chivalric life becomes his primary concern. He believes with Caxton that "chivalry could be used as a means of moral perfection."¹² The perpetual series of challenges to combat have the basic aim of testing the knight's prowess, whatever other ancillary purpose these combats may have vis-a-vis the weak or oppressed. It is the valorous deed alone that proves and augments the worship of the knight, provided the deed is chivalrously performed. In Malory, certainly, it is worship that accounts for the endless series of jousts in Le Morte Darthur. Clearly, such an emphasis on prowess places the Arthurian knights in a position close to the earlier chansons de geste knights and rather far from the courtly or religious knights of his more sophisticated French sources.

After the thirteenth Century, the chivalric knight was required to be of noble birth. This was essential to later chivalry. In Le Morte Darthur the noble-churl class distinction is so basic a principle that, if a cowherd like Tor and a kitchen knave like Gareth show any spark of pride or honor, the odds are that they are kings' sons in disguise. However, as king Mark and Gawayne demonstrate in their actions, noble birth is no safeguard of nobility of life. Therefore, the personal element in the knightly virtues is not simply a gift of nature; nor is it acquired by birth. It is developed by constant testing of personal prowess. This accounts for the innumerable and often pointless duels of the knights-errant both against each other and the endless

ranks of black, red, and white kings standing tireless guard at wells, bridges, pavillions, and castles. Obviously, the most necessary chivalric quality is martial chivalry. A knight lacking prowess would be, in the first instance, radically useless to lord, church, and lady.

After prowess, loyalty was the next most important chivalric quality required of a knight. If it sounded good in theory, it created problem in practice. The chivalric dilemma most often involved conflicting loyalties: to liege-lord, lady, church.

Glory, or worship, as Malory calls it, is another necessary chivalric quality. One rationalization for the violence of the knight was his desire for immortality in song and story.¹³ In the feudal era, self-protection and loot were sufficient reasons for combat-prowess. And, in the absence of war, tournaments were adequate to establish a reputation for prowess.¹⁴ However, to earn worship in any kind of combat, the knight had to be scrupulously fair.¹⁵ This martial fairness could perhaps be subsumed under the law of courtesy. Courtesy in combat existed not only in the romances. During the Hundred Years' War, courtesy often took priority over sound military strategy.¹⁶ But courtesy in combat largely disappeared at Agincourt (1415) when Henry V used professional officers and low-born longbow men to cut down the flower of French chivalry. The era of individual knightly prowess was over.

One last chivalric quality, largesse or generosity, remains to be mentioned as a means of attracting and insuring loyalty. Heedlessness of expense was considered a trait of the noble soul, and long after loyalty and prowess faded from the nobility, recklessness with money remained.¹⁷

Besides the vengeance code previously mentioned, another legacy of

Germanic law was trial by combat, a chivalric form of trial by ordeal. One duty of the knight was to champion the weak and helpless, usually women. The quaint formula justifying the results of such combat was: "Dieu se tient du côté du droit/ Dieu et le droit ne font qu'un."¹⁸ There was, however, considerable doubt about the value of judicial combat, as the case involving Lancelot and Guinevere will prove later.

Religious Chivalry

The second type of chivalry was religious chivalry, a type that grew almost naturally out of St. Augustine's conception of the Christian soldier.¹⁹

The mixture of religious and martial chivalry was bound to be an uneasy one. Throughout the period in which feudalism was developing, the Church had consistently attempted to curb feudal warfare and violence,²⁰ and turn the energies of the knight into what it considered more useful channels. In 1095, the Council of Clermont decreed the First Crusade. The same Council also took a major step toward christening martial chivalry by ordering those of noble birth who had reached the age of twelve to take an oath before the local ordinary "to defend to the uttermost the oppressed, the widown and the orphan, and that women of noble birth should enjoy his special care."²¹ It seems likely that in the minds of churchmen one purpose of the Crusades was to divert knightly energy into war against the Moslems. Then in the twelfth century various ecclesiastical writers, the best known of whom was John of Salisbury,²² began to develop the Church's conception of the perfect knight. He would be a devout Christian whose chief aim would be to protect the Church and its faith.²³ He would faithfully serve his lawful prince.²⁴ He would put down crime of all

sorts and care for the weak and helpless. To strengthen its propaganda, the Church advanced the theory that knights formed an order like that of the clergy. The knight was appointed by God to fight in His service.²⁵ The clergy encouraged the use of religious ceremonies in making a young man a knight, and developed a complicated ritual for this purpose. The summit of Christian chivalry was reached with the founding of the great crusading Orders which united the religious life with military service. The Church's ideal of knightly behavior was expressed in treatises, in sermons,²⁶ and also in literary works. When the noted trouvère Chrétien de Troyes wrote his Perceval le Gallois, he intended to depict the perfect Christian knight. A more extreme expression of the ideas of religious chivalry can be found in the story about the knight Galahad.

Such chivalry, however, has little in common with the secular chivalry of military prowess. This is not to say that religious chivalry excluded militancy, but its ultimate militancy was that of interior self-conquest, and its end was not earthly worship but the beatific vision as symbolized by the Holy Grail.

In all that has been said about the religious chivalry it has certainly become evident that the role of women does not figure prominently. Their influence on chivalry, largely through the songs of the troubadours between 1050 and 1150, now remains to be examined.

Courtly Chivalry

The third type of chivalry,²⁷ with which we will be most concerned in this dissertation, is romantic chivalry or courtly love, which is an essen-

tially novel type. If love and lust are as old as the human race,²⁸ fin'amors or courtly love is essentially a product of the Middle Ages, a distinctly medieval phenomenon characterized by the subservient gallantry of noblemen toward their ladies conceived of as love-lieges.²⁹ Earlier in the Middle Ages, however, women were regarded as feudal chattels. A noble married a fief rather than a woman. Not only the father, but also the liege-lord, controlled the weddings, since the marriage contract usually involved a transfer of land. Consequently, the early feudal system was an enemy of romantic love, to say nothing of the happiness of the woman thus bartered.³⁰

Concubinage was common in the Middle Ages as a result of property marriages. Besides the degrading effect on the status of women, there was also the fact that the main occupation of the feudal nobleman was war, and women could not fight. The chansons de geste reflect the low status of women by glorifying them only as objects of lust in the persons of courtesans, particularly Saracen courtesans. It is no surprise to read in the Geste des Lorrains that a husband punches his wife in the nose for presuming to contradict him in public. Again, in the Chanson de Roland, far from thinking about his beloved Adle, Roland dies at Roncevaux thinking of his Douce France and his friend Olivier. In fact, the affections of warriors for each other in the chansons are nearly as intense as those of the later courtly lovers.

On the other hand, neither did the Churchmen idealize medieval women. They regarded them as unequal to men in potential virtue, and in any case, as sources of temptation. Intercourse within marriage was lawful for the purpose of offspring;³¹ outside marriage it was always sinful. Needless to say, the Church was unalterably opposed to the courtly love code.³²

Purged of the absurdities of excessive idolatry, the spirit of gallantry aroused by courtly love in the late twelfth century certainly refined the relations between men and women, even if it did not particularly purify them. In any case, the code was an improvement over the treatment of women recorded in the chansons. It is also apparent that courtly love exercised a beneficent influence on martial chivalry to soften its cruelty.

The ideas of courtly love first appeared in lyric poetry composed in Southern France (Provence), in the second half of the twelfth century. The men and women who composed these poems were called troubadours. Scholars are not in agreement³³ whether the origin of troubadour poetry is to be found in the remnants of classical poetry preserved as folk songs or in the love poetry of the Moslems in Spain. At any rate, professional entertainers in Provence began to write poems glorifying ladies and describing the benefits to be derived from adoring them.

By the eleventh century, castles and towns held a gay and aristocratic society, a society inclined to luxury, and the gentle relationships between men and women interested it exceedingly. The songs of the troubadours began to rise and give utterance to thoughts and feelings of chivalric love. The lady whom such songs were meant to adulate or win, frequently was the wife of the troubadour's lord.³⁴ The song might intend nothing beyond such worship as the lady's spouse would sanction; or it might give subtle voice to a real passion, which offered and sought all. To the troubadours and their ladies love was a source of joy.³⁵ Its commands and exigencies made life's supreme law. Love was knighthood's service;³⁶ it was loyalty and devotion; it was the noblest human giving. It was also the spring of excellence. The adoration of

a lady made a man a better poet, a wiser lord, and a braver knight. A lady won adoration by her beauty, her kindness, her gaiety, and her wisdom, even when those qualities were tinged with exactness and whimsicality.

Most of the troubadour love poems were addressed to great ladies by men of comparatively humble station. In general he was rewarded for his verse by gifts, or at least by a long period of entertainment in the castle. Most of the nobles who composed poems adopted the conventions of their lesser colleagues, but their reward, as in the case of the lusty lover Duke William IX,³⁷ was of a different nature. Hence, most troubadour poetry not only glorified women, but placed them far above their human lovers.

Troubadour poetry was not an isolated phenomenon. The same period that saw the birth and development of love poetry, also witnessed a general rise in the status of women. The Virgin Mary,³⁸ who had previously occupied a comparatively minor place in the public, if not in the private, Christian cult, became the chief intercessor with her Son for sinful man. More and more, quasi-religious poems originally intended to glorify a beautiful woman were modified to address the Blessed Virgin. In his youth, the great Pope Innocent III wrote troubadour poems to Mary. Famous monasteries of women were founded and prospered thereafter. In short, throughout Western Europe, the latter part of the eleventh century saw a decided appreciation of the status of woman in the civilization as a whole.

The conception of love, which rose in Provence, is a conception clearly opposed to Christian morals, independent from the Christianized society. Its precepts, its morals, its adulterous character, are absolutely irreconcilable with the teaching of the Church; but for the troubadours³⁹ an adulterous love

was not condemnable and was no sin. But in passing from Southern to Northern France, the ideology of courtly love changed.

On its way to Paris, it gradually abandoned a part of its erotic character, and above all, its exultation of adultery (the romances of Tristan and of Lancelot excepted). Love took a more realistic turn.⁴⁰ According to the code of the Northern trouvères who glorified mutual love and sensual satisfaction, passionate love expanded the soul of the knight and impelled him to deserve love by gallantry in combat.⁴¹

It is in the train of Eleanor,⁴² duchess of Aquitaine, granddaughter of the troubadour William IX, that courtly love made its debut. Eleanor's first husband was King Louis VII of France (1137-1180) a gentle, pious man, who apparently had little appreciation for his gay and high-spirited queen and her numerous attendants. Being unable to produce a male heir for the Capetian House, Louis had the marriage annulled. Eleanor promptly married Henry, (1152) Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou who was soon to become King Henry II of England. Eleanor was a patroness of all sorts of men of letters but particularly of troubadours. One of the greatest of all the troubadours, Bernard de Ventadour,⁴³ served her for many years. Her second son, Richard, known to history as Richard Coeur de Lion, was also a patron of poets and composed poems himself. But more important in the development of courtly love were Eleanor's two daughters by Louis VII, Marie and Alice.⁴⁴

The men and women of Northern France wanted something more solid than the rather vague ideas of the troubadours. If they were to sing and talk about love, they wanted to define it, examine its symptoms, and work out rules for its practice. The men of the Middle Ages were accustomed to looking for the

knowledge they wanted in the great treasures of classical learning. There they found a book seemingly exactly suited to their purpose, Ovid's Ars Amatoria. This work was translated into French by Marie's favorite writer, Chrétien de Troyes.⁴⁵ Another attache of Marie's court, Andreas Capellanus, wrote a treatise on love to guide his contemporaries. His literary examples were taken mostly from Ovid, contemporary lyrics, and Arthurian narrative poems. Chrétien also wrote a series of stories in which courtly love was an important theme. Moreover, Marie and her ladies amused themselves by holding "Courts of Love" at which questions dealing with the practice of this fashionable sport were debated.

The devotees of courtly love were certainly enthralled by the sensuous Ovidian code of love, but under the influence of writers such as Marie de Champagne and Chrétien de Troyes, romantic love gained more ascendancy. According to Rato R. Bezzola (Les Origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise en Occident),⁴⁶ romantic love was hardly mentioned in the early Middle Ages, the age of the epic. In that feudal period, a knight married to get a marriage portion and sons to succeed him; love did not generally enter into the picture. This situation very often encouraged the knight to seek mistresses in order to satisfy his momentary lusts. Therefore, it is no wonder that this state of affairs led to the conviction that courtly love and marriage were incompatible. A wife had to perform her marital duties, but beyond this, she had little place in the knight's life. This attitude changed, however, first, with the professional entertainers of southern France who wrote poems glorifying ladies and describing the benefits to be derived from adoring them. This idea, not only became fashionable throughout the land of the langue d'oc,

where troubadours cultivated a distant admiration (*amor de lonh*) for women, but it reached the northern regions of France, the land of the langue d'oïl, where trouvères sang of a more sophisticated and more sensuous kind of courtly love. In a word, amor mixtus replaced amor purus. This important change was recorded by one of the attachés of Marie's court, Andreas Capellanus, who wrote De Amore. From the pages of Andreas' book, courtly love emerges "as an extra-marital relationship in open defiance of feudal custom and ecclesiastical precept."⁴⁷

As has been said before, the new courtly love ideals that circulated at Marie's court were expressed largely in the treatise of Andreas Capellanus and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes. "Chrétien might be called with justice the official propagandist for the most influential patroness of courtly love."⁴⁸ The supreme expression of those ideas is manifested in Chrétien's Lancelot or Le Chevalier de la Charette.⁴⁹ Here, Lancelot, the best knight in the world, renounces all that feudal chivalry prized for the sake of love. His love for Guinevere, who is his lord's wife, constitutes a deep felony in feudal law. Because of his love he rides a hangman's cart, the deepest disgrace a knight could face. He allows himself to be driven ignominiously from a tournament by his opponents. He even refuses to sleep with a charming lady who offers him shelter and food when he is tired and hungry on condition that he will be her bedmate. Thus, to Lancelot, all the ordinary knightly desires are of no importance; all that matters is his love for Guinevere. It will be seen later how Malory re-interpreted that classical courtly example of the great hero of love.

Courtly love is the cause of a degree of prowess corresponding to its

intensity. In addition, it makes for selfishness and courtesy. Related to these improvements of chivalry, there are less desirable by-products, such as love-sickness, mad jealousy, feminine arrogance, and the obligation of furtiveness in satisfying one's love.

Rejecting the Provencal notion that courtly love gains intensity to the extent that it remains ungratified, Andreas Capellanus stipulates that love requires intercourse to achieve perfection. The De Amore further insists on absolute fidelity (actually monogyny), on the mutuality of love, and on wisdom in its conduct. Since marriage makes intercourse obligatory and not a free gift, courtly love ordinarily is possible only in extra-marital relations.⁵⁰ Needless to say, similar notions in Malory's French sources have no appeal to him. In essence, Le Morte Darthur might easily fit into the category of pre-chivalric chansons, were it not for its inescapable subject, love. Its tone and spirit rarely foster the courtly adoration.

To illustrate the gap between early and late romances, C. S. Lewis⁵¹ contrasts the Erec (c. 1168) of Chrétien de Troyes with his later Lancelot (c. 1172). Significantly, before composing the later work, Chrétien translated Ovid's Ars Amatoria, and became closely acquainted with Marie de Champagne, a woman who, according to the evidence we have,⁵² commanded him to incorporate the principle of fin'amors into the story of Lancelot. The two stories show the different effects of two codes of love.

Erec and Enide is a story of love, but of married love. Struck by Enide's beauty, Erec asks her father's permission to marry her. Enide is passive and obedient, and Erec leads her away. Erec immediately becomes so uxorious that he neglects knightly combat and makes himself the object of ridicule.

Enide reproaches him tearfully for his neglect of chivalry. Angered, he commands her to silence and takes her on a quest so that she can witness his battle prowess. His motive is not to honor Enide, whom he treats as a servant, but to repair his vexed amour propre.

On the other hand, the Lancelot of the Chevalier de la Charette is totally subservient to Guinevere. For hesitating a moment before riding a tumbrel on his way to her rescue, Guinevere snubs him despite his valor in saving her. To degrade him further, she commands him to feign cowardice in a tournament. Until Guinevere permits him to win, he behaves like a coward recreant. Love and not worship triumphs here. The woman is master. However loyal Malory's Lancelot is, he never becomes such a courtly slave.

Courtly love demands, then, subservience to the lady, and in the prosecution of love, secrecy. In effect, the secrecy often entails hypocrisy, deceit or equivocation, all violations of chivalric truth and honor. However, the courtly version of chivalry excuses such transgressions on the ground that love is superior to all other values, feudal or religious. It was largely such conflicts in loyalties to incompatible codes, each rigid in its demands, that destroyed the Round Table. Historically too, rigidity of customs operated to doom the ideal of medieval chivalry.

Decline of Chivalry

The decline of chivalry⁵³ distinguishes three main stages of chivalry between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries: 1) age of superiority: fusion of military and religious fervor; 2) age of privilege: courtesy and gallantry dominant; and 3) age of vanity: exaggerated pageantry, and hypocrisy about

vices.

Most late medieval chroniclers set out to glorify chivalric virtues, but they "tell more of cruelty, covetousness, cold scheming, and diplomatic guile than of chivalry."⁵⁴ G. G. Coulton's opinion is that speculation about a Golden Age of Chivalry is nothing more than the effect of "distance and mirage."⁵⁵ Perhaps ideal chivalry never existed outside the romances. Froissart records that the foolhardy exploits during the Hundred Years' War were simply impossible attempts to make life imitate art. French and English knights wished to model their prowess "directly on the Arthurian romances, and they testify to the strained unreality of an age when men strove so earnestly to live according to romance."⁵⁶ In any case, the practice of chivalry only rarely agreed with its theory, and already in the thirteenth century (twelfth according to some historians), its practice was already decadent at the time when it was most prevalent as a theory.

Sir de Joinville's memoirs of the seventh Crusade of Louis IX record scenes that rival barbarism: "sanguinary dissensions, infamous treachery, blasphemous ribaldry, selfish jealousy, shameless profligacy, and scandalous debauchery." Ultimately, perhaps, the major cause for the decline of chivalry was its attempt at a fusion of incompatible ideals. War, religion, and extra-marital love were mutually exclusive elements. Religion could hardly christen chivalric murder and erotic love.

Economically, chivalry could not survive when there was no land left for young and poor knights. Even wealthy knights were impoverished when they were forced to sell their lands to monasteries or usurers to obtain money for the crusades. Fundamentally, however, the money economy that required barons

to charge fixed rents ruined the nobility during frequent currency fluctuations. Wealth enriched trade cities and prominent nobles. With this wealth great nobles hired armies instead of depending on vassal knights in wartime. By the late fifteenth century the lower ranks of knighthood were economically and militarily powerless.⁵⁸

Certain social causes doomed chivalry also. Election of unworthy candidates for knighthood was one. Edward I (1272-1307) compelled every man with a land income of twenty pounds to be knighted. No longer would knighthood depend on free choice by an elite class.

Violations of the code also tended to degrade chivalry. Edward III (1327-1377) was more shocked by the immense loss of ransom than by the crime when troops at Crecy (1346) roamed the battlefield stabbing the wounded to death. Profiteering was contrary to the spirit of chivalry, but that did not deter Lord Thomas of Berkeley (1353-1417) from contracting for a batch of twenty-four Scots prisoners (1402) for the purpose of ransom speculation.⁵⁹ Oaths and challenges no longer were held particularly sacred. For instance, Philippe of Burgundy (1419-1467) and his knights solemnly vowed to go on a crusade. Not only did they not go, they never had any intention to do so. In 1425, the same duke of Burgundy challenged an English noble to single combat, and bought a new suit of armor for the joust. Though he practiced at arms daily in preparation, he never carried out the challenge.⁶⁰

The military cause for the decline of knighthood was principally the undisciplined valor of the individualistic knight avid for glory. When massed armies faced joust-trained knights in the late Middle Ages, the knights were invariably defeated. However, heavily armored cavalry received its death-blow

from the cross-bow and the long bow, both weapons of the low-born and despised infantry. Even though the Lateran Council (1139) forbade the use of arrows in combat,⁶¹ the weapons continued to be used, as at Agincourt. Finally, by the fifteenth century the intricate steel plating that covered both horse and rider was rendered useless by the introduction of firearms into warfare. A species of knighthood has continued up to the twentieth century, but for practical purposes knighthood had passed away when Malory made it the general theme of his romances.

Revival of Chivalry

As has just been said, in the fifteenth century chivalry had sunk to its lowest level. By Elizabeth's day it had already become a memory. But always there were forces at work to arrest such a degradation, and certainly Malory's Le Morte Darthur, the glory of English literature of that period, is one of them.

John of Salisbury

As early as the middle of the twelfth century a fervent advocate and an enthusiast of chivalry, John of Salisbury (1115-1180) bishop of Chartres, wrote his Policraticus (1159-1161) at about the same time Chrétien de Troyes (1160-1190) was born. Even before chivalry reached its Golden Age, John had already witnessed its deterioration. In the Sixth Book of Policraticus, he confirms the gloomy apprehension of the Church towards chivalry, severely criticizes the knights of his day, and expounds his views on the qualities knights should possess, as well as their proper function in society. Policraticus marks a stage in the process by which the spiritual forces of the

Church penetrated more deeply into the secular sphere. John saw the ideal of a chosen order of warriors based on the conception of knighthood as a distinct vocation which had arisen under the impact of religious and ecclesiastical currents of thought at the period of the crusades. Policraticus thus represents a progress in so far as it stresses the importance of such conception for the everyday life of European society. Chivalry would then become an institution molding the character and determining the destiny of its subject from cradle to grave.

The Policraticus (Statesman) is one of the greatest political treatises of the Middle Ages. As its sub-title De Nugis Curialium et Vestigiis Philosophorum) indicates, the book deals partly with Church and State diplomacy, partly with philosophy and learning generally. The section dealing with the relation of Church and State and especially with the chapters on the faults and foibles of those in high life will be examined here. In the Statesman the character and duties of the ideal prince and his servants are set down and contrasted with the behavior of a tyrant. John does not discuss the ideal form of government, which to him was fixed, but how its members should behave. He has little time for courtiers and takes care to emphasize the superiority of churchmen.

To men who are to become knights, John recommends soundness of blood, vigor of body, and courage of heart. While receiving their belt of knighthood, the chosen take the soldier's oath to serve their prince loyally.⁶² These new knights should then be rigorously trained in military science and bodily exercise. Courage, hardihood, and knowledge of strategy are also required. If they fail to observe their oath or if they prove cowardly they

will be deprived of their knightly belts and severely punished.

With complete clarity, John of Salisbury describes the function of the newly-organized chivalry:⁶³

To defend the church, to assail infidelity, to venerate priesthood, to protect the poor from injuries, to pacify the province, to pour out their blood for their brothers (as the formula of their oath instructs them), and, if need be, to lay down their lives. The high praises of God are in their throat; and two-edged swords are in their hands to execute punishment on the nations and rebuke upon the peoples . . . to the end that they may execute the judgment that is committed to them to execute; wherein each follows not his own will but the deliberate decision of God, the angels, and men, in accordance with equity and the public utility.

The above quotation makes it clear that the knight has to be some kind of policeman bound to execute the orders of Church and State. Only those who obey John's precepts have a right to be called true knights. The coward, the brigand, the plunderer of churches, the oppressor of the poor, and the debauche, are false knights and should be deprived of the insignia of their rank.

John's chief interest lies in emphasizing the obligation of knights toward the Church. "This rule must be enjoined upon and fulfilled by every soldier; namely, that he shall keep inviolate the faith which he owes first to God and afterwards to the prince of the commonwealth."⁶⁴

Fundamentally, knighthood was the rite of entry into the ranks of the mounted warrior. Even without becoming religious it enjoyed the sanction and color of a religious setting; it obtained a place in the philosophy of political and social life, as John's Policraticus shows. It inspired a great literature and was swept into a romantic movement wholly alien to its origin.

In his book of political wisdom, John speaks of a new and solemn custom which had arisen, by which the new knight went to church on the day of his

knighting, placed his sword on the altar and took it up again as a token that he offered himself and his sword to the service of God. John's words deserve special attention because he has just been telling us what modern knights do not do. They do not, for instance, take the solemm military oath prescribed by ancient authors; they do not, it seems, take any oath at all. But John sees in their action in coming to the altar something which is as good as an oath, something which for unlettered men has the same force as the written profession of obedience made by bishops and abbots to their superiors.⁶⁵

It would appear, therefore, that by John's time, it was becoming common for an act of religious dedication to be added to the secular ceremonies. But, though common, it was not necessary. The essential feature was the bestowal of a sword by an established knight on the aspirant to knighthood.

The addition of an ecclesiastical ceremony to the act of knighthood is somewhat similar to the addition of an ecclesiastical ceremony to the act of marriage, which was increasingly insisted upon by the authorities of the Church during the twelfth century. When we recall the horror and aversion with which secular arms were regarded by serious writers in the eleventh century, this work of sanctifying secular life appears as something of very great moment. It helped to soften the harsh division between secular and spiritual aspects of society which is implicit in much of the best thought of the period.

Although many conclusions which John of Salisbury drew from the addition of a religious sanction to the status of knighthood would perhaps not have been accepted by many laymen,⁶⁶ he has conspicuously more room for secular knighthood in his scheme of things than Gregory VII or St. Bernard in the

two previous generations. While St. Bernard's ideal of knighthood was dedicated to the cause of re-establishing Christ's kingdom in the Holy Land, John's kind of knighthood had its duties and found its fulfillment at home, on a man's native soil.

Like most of the religious writers of his age, John of Salisbury deflated the chivalric romantic idealism of courtly love by borrowing Ovid's exposure of woman's frailty, greed, and wiles. In his Policraticus, John collects every possible example against women from classical myth, history, and literature, starting with Diana, the goddess of hunting. Since John considered the sport self-indulgent and vicious, he found it natural that it was presided over by a goddess. He then proceeds to the more traditional example of Cleopatra, closing a hostile account of her career with this epitaph. Suicide was: "a worthy death for a poisonous courtesan created to corrupt character and assail the virtue of noble man."⁶⁷ A few pages later, he denounces the reign of Dido which led ultimately to the destruction of her city, "because vice took root in the rulership of a woman, the citizens became effeminate," and their commonwealth rotten.⁶⁸ Somewhat of a misogynist, John of Salisbury commended Virgil for wisely expressing "the proper order of affection" in Aeneas' flight from Troy: first the father, then the son, and lastly the wife.⁶⁹ John further reveals definite hostility to women by using biblical examples: who was stronger than Samson, wiser than Solomon, holier than David? And yet all these heroes were overcome by the finery and wiles of women.⁷⁰ His eloquent description of "The Annoyance and Burden of Wedlock" in Policraticus appears to be heartfelt. Although he concedes that matrimony does excuse lustful pleasure, which is otherwise vile, he goes on to say that

"it is more fecund in worry than in joy," supporting this view with a lengthy quotation from Theophrastus and Socrates' supposed opinion that marriage is even more irksome than single loneliness.⁷¹

John supplies no evidence for his allegation of woman's frivolity, ungoverned passion, and cruelty; but for her lechery--"there is no female so modest that she will not be stirred with passion at the advances of a stranger."--he finds the excellent authority of the tragic writer Eumolphus, a fictitious character in Petronius' Satyricon. John is evidently biased. He admits that since marriage was instituted by God it must be good, but he cannot refrain from saying that it is also vexatious: "Who except one bereft of sense would approve sensual pleasure itself, which is illicit, wallows in filthiness, is something that men censure, and that God without doubt condemns." Philosophers and clerics who cannot keep from the embrace of women "seem hardly human."⁷²

Written in solemn scholarly Latin, John's Policraticus could reach the nobility only through the intermediary of the sermons. Therefore, this book had a very limited influence and could have reached Malory only in vernacular writings.

Etienne de Fougères' Livres des Manières is almost a duplicate of John's Policraticus. However, Etienne de Fougères emphasizes noble blood as a prerequisite for knighthood far more clearly than John of Salisbury. While the Livre des Manières was written in a language and form that knights could understand it seems unlikely that many nobles ever heard of it. It is even more doubtful that Malory, who spent some time in France, ever read or saw Fougères' book. Although Malory constantly stresses the necessity of noble

blood as an indispensable requirement for knighthood, he only seems to be following a time-honored and demanding custom.

Ramon Lull

During the long period of chivalric decadence many other treatises were written in which chivalry was analyzed and its principles enunciated in didactic form. But it becomes clear, especially after what has been said, that the freshness and spontaneity of chivalry had faded away when it could be formulated as a science, and when Ramon Lull complained that "grete wrong is done to the order of knyghthode, of this that it is not a scyence wreton and redde in scoles, lyke as the other scyences."⁷³

So far there has been no attempt made to describe a perfect knight according to the doctrine of religious chivalry. No writer, with the probable exception of Ramon Lull (1235-1316), furnishes a complete picture of the ideal knight from a purely ecclesiastical point of view.

Towards the end of the thirteenth century, Lull, a Catalan, wrote a kind of breviary for the nobility: Le libre del orde de cavayleria. Lull is a theorist of chivalry. When he wrote his book on knighthood Lull was a clergyman, but the fact that he had lived for years as a married gentleman greatly influenced his views. Although, in general, his conception of chivalry is in accord with that of the Church, his opinions would not have received the full approval of John of Salisbury.

Ramon Lull's book, translated and printed by William Caxton (c. 1422-1491) between June 1483 and August 1485, has been recognized by all the chief writers on chivalry as the most compendious medieval treatise on the obli-

gations of knighthood. It was well known throughout Western Europe, as early as the late fourteenth century.⁷⁴ Le libre del orde de cavayleria was translated into French and increased in size. Many well known manuscripts testify to its popularity. In 1456 it was translated into Scots, with many notable additions by Sir Gilbert Haye, who also translated another popular and comprehensive work on medieval warfare and chivalry, the Arbre des Batailles, written about 1382 by Honoré Bonet, Prior of Salon en Provence.

The Ordre of Chivalry,⁷⁵ which takes upon the task of codifying chivalric principles and correcting its abuses, parallels and improves, in many ways, on Salisbury's Policraticus. The book opens with a simple but pleasing little romance. It tells how a wise knight who had long maintained the order of chivalry in jousts and tournaments had retired from the world to live a hermit's life in a wood, and to become the adviser and healer of knights. The hermit-knight was reading a little book concerned with chivalry and immediately volunteered to instruct a young squire who happened to be riding to court to be knighted.

A hermit as an authority on the rules of chivalry holds a prominent place in a work the importance of which as a source-book for late medieval chivalry has probably not been sufficiently recognized.

There are four major sections in the Order:

1. Origin: Lull puts chivalry into a chronological context. God rules over the seven planets and the seven planets dominate all terrestrial things. Hence, by analogy, the Prince, like God, rules over the knights, the planets, upon whom in turn depend the terrestrial bodies or lower orders. (C 1-2)⁷⁶ God chose the best of every thousand men to be knights.

2. **Function and Office:** The knight is to enforce God's law as promulgated by the clergy. Commoners owe him material support. He must be of noble blood. He is to defend the Church and all defenseless people, and suppress criminals. Consequently, he must stay physically fit through tournaments and hunting.
3. **Qualities:** He must possess bravery, intelligence, courtesy, chastity, humility. Vice ruins knights. He must have a good physique, neither fat nor lame. His knightly deeds must not be for profit.
4. **Training:** Principles of chivalry ought not to be inculcated on a hit-or-miss basis. Apprentices must learn chivalry from a manual (Lull's book, of course). The knights must be impressed with the importance of their vocation by solemn Church ceremonies.

Chapter Five describes the method of investiture which was most common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Chapter Six describes and symbolical meaning of the knight's arms and accoutrements, to the number of twenty.

The ethic in which Lull's hermit-knight instructs his squires is the Aristotelian ethic of the mean. "Virtue and measure abide in the middle between two extremes," and knights must be virtuous by "right measure." (C 56-57) Lull carefully works out his definitions of the virtues which a knight must have as means between opposite extremes. The point is of some importance because it shows that the Aristotelian ethic and the ethic of chivalry are one and the same thing in Lull's text-book, which Caxton later naturalized in English and made the program for the revival of English chivalry.

As it was the case with John of Salisbury's Policraticus, Lull's book disregarded courtly love. The reason for such omission seems to stem from

Lull's early years. The offense for which he reproached himself most severely was the attentions which he, a married man, had paid to the ladies of the court. It is not surprising, therefore, that he omits all references to the doctrine of courtly love which permitted relations that are now universally condemned and which must have appeared to Lull's austere mind in their true light as the most discreditable aspect of chivalry. He extols the virtue of chastity in more than one place, and his book concludes with an admonition to maintain the honor of knighthood by respecting the sanctity of marriage.

While Lull declares that chivalry and noble birth accord well, he does not fail to add that "elle puist avoir en chevallerie aucun homme de nouvel lignage, honnourable et gentil." (C 59)⁷⁷ In spite of an implicit assumption that the lower orders are inferior to the knights, Lull concedes, however, that on account of his virtue, not birth, a man of lowly birth may be knighted, a concession not readily adopted by Caxton.

One of the chief duties of a knight, Lull states, is the protection of poor, helpless, and oppressed people. A knight must always help the weaker side. When sir Lancelot sees Kay beset by three knights, he cries, "Yondir one knyght shall I helpe, for hit were shame for me to se three knyghtes on one, and yf [he] be there slayne I am partener of his deth." (197)

Participation in tournaments, jousts, and manly sports is rightly regarded by Lull as incumbent upon a knight. We know how Malory is more concerned with Tristram's renown as a hunter and harper than as a lover, and Caxton himself, in his Epilogue (C 121) deplores the lapse into disuse of knightly exercises and exhorts King Richard III, a most unchivalrous knight, to revive tournaments and "justes of pees" at least once a year. (C 123-124)

Courage was the sine qua non of chivalry, but Lull wisely insists that it must be tempered with discretion. In a remark which is his own, Malory agrees when his Tristram says:

. . . be a man never so valyaunte nother so bygge but he may be overmatched. And so have I seyne knyghtes done many, and when they wente beste to have wonne worshyp they lost hit; for manhode is nat worthe but hit be medled with wysdome. (521) (My italics)

Lull's moderate and strictly rational attitude is again apparent when he notes that the truly knightly virtue of generosity (largesse) must not be carried beyond the donor's means. His favorite virtue is moderation, "Attemperance is a vertu the whiche dwelleth in the myddle of two vyces/ Of whom that one is synne by over grete quantite/ And that other is synne by over lytyl quantyte." (C 108)

The restraint and self-control to which the noblest knights of Arthur's court subject their passions is underlined by Malory. In the last sad quarrel between Lancelot and Arthur, the taunts of Gawayne cannot shake Lancelot's attitude of magnanimous sorrow, nor make him injure his former friend and liege lord.(840) Also when Tristram heard Palomydes singing of his love for Isode,

. . . he was wrothe out of mesure, and thought for to sle hym thereas he lay.

Than sir Trystram remembyrde hymselff that sir Palomydes was unarmed, and of so noble a name that hymselff had. Than he made a restraynte of his angir, and so he wente unto sir Palomydes, (577)

and made his quarrel known to him, as a true knight should. Malory, here, makes sure that Tristram recognizes both the singer and the song. The incident does not bear the same consequences in French where neither the singer nor the song is recognized.

Lull condemned without any remission vices which contribute largely

to the decay of chivalry: pride, vanity, treachery, lying, envy, sloth, etc. It is significant that in Mark, the character in Le Morte Darthur who represents all that a knight should not be, treachery, cowardice, and envy are the vices most evident. He was treacherous to sir Tristram (376, 429-30); when Lancelot attacked him, he would not fight "but tumbled adoune oute of his sadyll to the erthe as a sak;" (443) he killed his brother through envy of his good name, (472) and his hatred of Tristram is due more to spleen on account of his prowess than to resentment of his intrigues with Isode.

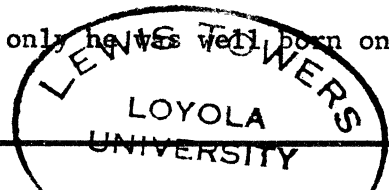
With Lull's comment on envy may be compared the words of Guinevere, (another passage of Malory's invention) when it was reported to her that Palomides was "passynge envyous,"

Than shall he never wyne worshyp, 'seyde the quene,' for and hyt happyn an envyous man onys to wyne worshyp, he shall be dishonored twyse therefore. And for this cause all men of worshyp hate an envyous man and wll shewe hym no favoure, and he that ys curteyse and kynde and jantil hath favoure in every place. (567)

Such examples indicate how closely Lull's and Malory's conception of knight-hood resemble each other. Malory illustrates in Le Morte Darthur Lull's teaching.

William Caxton

Caxton considered that there was an innate connection between nobility of birth and of character. In his belief he was in complete agreement with his contemporary Malory. In Le Morte Darthur knights like Gareth and Tor, who are at first supposed to be of humble origin, are found to derive their courteous manners from their noble birth. The point is emphasized most heavily when Arthur remarks that Tor would be unmatched if only he was well born on



his mother's side as on his father's. It is further enforced by Malory's severe comments on the two "vilains" who slew the noble knight Hermance, ". . . hit is an olde sawe, Gyeff a chorle rule and thereby he woll nat be suffysed;" (527) and by his statement that ". . . sir Launcelot ys com but of the eyghth degre from oure Lorde Jesu Cryst, and thys sir Galahad ys the nyneth degre from oure Lorde Jesu Cryst. Therefore I dare sey they be the grettist jantillmen of the worlde." (634)

Caxton's love of chivalry is testified by the number of books on the subject which he printed, besides Le Morte Darthur: 1) The Fayt of Armes and of Chyvalry (1489) of Christine de Pisan (c. 1364-c.1430), who was one of the most original and versatile women of the Middle Ages; 2) Bréviaire des Nobles, by Alain Chartier (c. 1390-c. 1440); 3) The Book of Good Manners (1487) which Caxton translated from the French of Jacques le Grand (c. 1340-c. 1416); 4) The Order of Chyvalry translated from a French original.

Caxton was not always faithful in the translations of his originals especially when he disagreed with their authors. He altered Lull's text in order to bring it into agreement with his own views. These concern mainly the connection between chivalry and aristocracy or noble birth. Caxton stresses the aristocratic conception even more than Lull. An ardent lover of chivalry, he insists that it is the preserve of a privileged class. In the Epilogue of the Order, he writes: "this book is not requysyte to every comyn man to have, but to noble gentylnen that by their vertu entende to come and entre in to the noble ordre of chyvalry." (C 121) Similarly he dedicates Le Morte Darthur to "alle noble prynces, lordes, and ladyes, gentylnen or gentylwymmen." (XVIII) It is very significant that almost the only original

thought, outside the Epilogue, that Caxton introduces into his translation is concerned with the connection between chivalry and noble birth. He omits Lull's single concession, that a man of lowly birth may be knighted if he is virtuous, and substitutes the following passage: "Thordre of chyvalry is most covenable [appropriate] and moche syttyng [suitable] to a gentyl herte replenysshed wyth al vertues than in a man vyle and of evyl lyf." (C 59)

Sir Thomas Malory

Since Malory knew French quite well, it is very possible that while he was engaged in the Hundred Years' War in France, he may have had the occasion to read Lull's book. There is great similarity between the code of chivalry written by Lull, Caxton's belief in the same code, and Malory's possible use of it. A few striking features of the Lull-Caxton-Malory ideology should convince us that at least a similar mentality motivated the works of those writers. Contrary to John of Salisbury who condemned tournaments, all three considered them as a necessary part of the knights' activities.⁷⁸ While John of Salisbury frowned on worldly glory as a motive for knightly deeds, they all spoke of it as the only proper one for a true knight. John of Salisbury's conception of a knight is written from the point of view of the Church, whereas that of the others is really a combination of the feudal (secular),⁷⁹ and religious, and in the case of Malory, because of his sources, romantic. Neither Caxton nor Malory could revive chivalry, a difficult, if not impossible, task. (C 22) Caxton puts Lull's work in a dominant position among the sources used by later English writers on the subject, while Malory gives precedence to chivalry over courtly love.

The origin, (C 16) and order (C 27, 67) of chivalry found in Lull's code is almost integrally accepted by English writers. Lull also maintained that the members of a divinely instituted order of chivalry should be rich (C 63) and powerful nobles, to which Caxton and Malory agreed almost completely. They would also have agreed that the function of the chivalric order was to supply the force needed to maintain the laws of God (C 24) and man, his lord in particular. In order to keep his knights in top condition Lull requires them to perform martial exercises and to participate in noble sports. John of Salisbury denies these exercises on moral grounds. The knight should joust, tourney, and hunt wild beasts. Would have Caxton and Malory disagreed with Lull here? The qualities required of a knight were numerous, but above all he must be wise (C 31), brave (C 37), courteous to all, strong of body (C 35), skilled in the use of arms; he should also abjure perjury (C 54), and lies, show humility and chastity (C 43). Malory, in particular, shows numerous examples of such virtues in his Le Morte Darthur. Lull says also that it is a graver sin to take away a knight's good name than to steal money (C 50), and that a knight ought to fear dishonor more than death (C 62). Examples of such attitude are plenteous in Malory's stories. Furthermore, Lull emphasizes the importance of a noble birth in a knight. This is surely Caxton's and Malory's theory. Finally, and most important of all, a true knight, in Lull's code, had to be actuated by a spirit of dedication. If he sought solely his own profit and honor rather than the reputation of the order as a whole, he was not fit to be called knight. As far as the dubbing ceremony is concerned (C 66 ff.) Malory seems to follow the recommendations provided by Lull. Every article of knightly equipment

(C 76), even part of an article, had its signification. The sword, the lance and the shield are well defined, and their symbol explained. These war articles certainly play an important part in the romances of Malory.

Lull's treatise does not speak of ladies (C 38) and mistresses except when he mentions that they should be the object of the knight's solicitude. Would Malory's attitude toward women and courtly love stem from a scarcity of recommendations in Lull's *Ordre*?⁸⁰ This problem would require a deeper and longer investigation and development. But it is nevertheless most amazing to find such striking parallels in two different authors.⁸¹ Malory's romances seem to put into practice Lull's code while William Caxton stands nearby ready to bless both.

Courtly Love Relegated to a Secondary Level

The Tale of King Arthur

As was stated earlier, Malory's earliest interest in the Arthurian romance is in the martial aspect of chivalry, a deep admiration for the kind of masculine prowess celebrated in the chansons de geste, although it is a chivalry refined from the barbarism of the earlier heroic songs by such knightly qualities as mercy and benevolence.⁸² Thus, "The Tale of King Arthur" celebrates sheer prowess in arms as the primary though by no means the sole quality necessary to win worship. Malory's ideal of chivalry begins its evolution in the first tale by eliminating the courtly love of his French sources as a cause of chivalry. On the contrary, courtly love is presented as vulgar lechery, a root of treachery, murder, and general "disworship."

In Malory's sources, Suite de Merlin, the knights of the Round Table

are waiting for the peerless knight, Galahad, to redeem the kingdom of Logres. Malory takes characters and episodes from the Suite, but he uses them to illustrate his ideal of secular chivalry. He postpones the episodes dealing with the chevalerie céleste with its mystical adventures until the Queste in Book VI.⁸³ Instead, Malory presents a series of quests in which knights are shown conducting themselves as practitioners or violators of Arthur's oath of chivalry. The spiritual Galahad is barely mentioned in the first Book, and then only as an inheritor of Balin's Sword. (70)⁸⁴

Malory's ideal of chevalerie terrestre is contained in the oath Arthur makes his Round Table knights swear to uphold. Knightly actions are to be judged by its standard.

[King Arthur] charged them never to do outrage nothir morthir, and allwayes to fle treson, and to gyff mercy unto hym that askith mercy, uppon payne of forfiture [of their] worship and lordship of kynge Arthure for evirmore; and allwayes to do ladyes, damesels, and jantilwomen and wydowes [socour:] strengthe hem in hir ryghtes, and never to enforce them, uppon payne of dethe. Also, that no man take no batayles in a wrongfull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis. (91)

This oath is the climax of the wedding of Guinevere and the establishment of the Round Table, and it is the touchstone for judging the degree of chivalry of actions preceding it and following it.⁸⁵

Most of the knights, including Arthur, violate some of its precepts. Some err like Balin (who, however, dies before the oath) through sheer clumsiness or inadvertence; whereas others, like Gawayne, through passion or malice. Ideally speaking the oath aims to moderate combat and direct it to moral causes. It requires discipline and practice to achieve perfect observance of its virtuous, secular chivalry. Above all, it represents an advance over the

lawless forces and actions that precede it.

The most evident evil that precedes the taking of the oath is barbarity. The kings who rise against Arthur are malignant pre-chivalric figures whose power must be destroyed before true chivalry can flourish. Merlin advises Arthur to make a sneak night attack to open the savage battle against the rebel kings, as well as an ambush. The combined ruses finally turn the tide against the eleven kings. Such methods, judged by later standards, are unchivalric. However, the tactics may be justified against barbarous foes. Malory's aim appears to be to show Arthur's consummate powers, "so bloody that by hys shyldes there myght no man know hym, for all was blode and brayne that stake on his swerde and on hys shyldes." (26)⁸⁶ Arthur's allies, Kings Ban and Bors, praise their enemies as "fyghtyng men and knyghtes of most prouesse." (27)⁸⁷ However, the savagery of Arthur that pools blood up to the horses' fetlock [fittlockys] is so unrestrained that Merlin, sickened, admonishes Arthur to halt the slaughter for fear of God's wrath. (28)⁸⁸

Several other episodes illustrate the barbarity of this period and show the necessity of a code to moderate it. One obvious example is the insulting demand of King Ryence for Arthur's beard to finish off his beard-trimmed cloak. (43-44) A worse instance of cruelty is Arthur's attempt to circumvent Merlin's prophecy of Mordred's later treachery by exposing all children born on May-Day to shipwreck. Only the intended victim escapes.

The primitive Germanic code of vengeance from the period of the migration is still dominant in this pre-chivalric era.⁸⁹ Arthur's incest with Queen Morgawse, the mother (and aunt) of Mordred, initiates the ancient resentments that ultimately bring about chivalry's destruction. King Lot rebels

out of revenge for King Arthur's adultery and his murderous attempt on Mordred's life (58)⁹⁰ Lust sows the dragon-seed of vengeance and treachery, and the doom of the Round Table is initially caused by Arthur's moral failures. Thematically, the motif is important far into the future when Gaheris murders his own mother before the horrified eyes of Lamorak, son of Pellinore and paramour of Morgawse.

Two other major episodes of unchivalrous lust and treachery demonstrate Malory's contempt for the influence of courtly love. The first is the intrigue of Morgan le Fay (101-102) (HM II, 168-169) to have her paramour, Accolon, kill Arthur (102, 106) with the stolen Excalibur, and the subsequent attempted murder of her husband, King Uriens, (106, 109) in his sleep by her own hand so that she and Accolon can marry and seize the kingdom. (106) Curiously enough, Arthur violates his own code and fights in a "wrongefull quarrell" for the recreant, sir Damas. An enchantment by the friendly Damsel of the Lake, (103) enables Arthur to regain his stolen sword. Finally, Arthur fatally wounds and yet spares the knight, even when Accolon confesses how treason grew out of his lust for Morgan. (106)⁹¹

Another degradation of knighthood caused by lust is the treachery of Gawayne against the oath he swore to Pelleas and his subsequent lustful relations with Ettarde with whom he promised to unite Pelleas. Earlier, Gawayne marvels at Marhaulte that "so valyaunte a man as ye be of prouesse, that ye love no ladys and damesels." (117) Marhaulte, unaware of the magic triple-strength (HM II, 239) odds he has successfully resisted before sparing Gawayne when his magic power begins to wane, utters a denunciation of the effeminating effect of lechery, that "as fuel of prouesse as a man maybe, they

evil women will make hym a sterke cowerde to have the bettir of hym." (117)

Then, as if to illustrate this principle, Gawayne departs on his quest. He sees a knight defeat ten others and then suffers the unusual indignity of allowing himself to be tied under his horse's belly. Pelleas is a knight of great tournament prowess, but he is so debased by his hopeless love for the proud Ettarde that he will suffer any dishonor simply to see her. Gawayne pledges his word to unite Pelleas with his lady in twenty-four hours.⁹² He violates this oath almost immediately. Ironically, he tricks Ettarde into an ambiguous promise to unite him with his love and in a typical code-dilemma, she yields to his lust to keep her word of honor. Pelleas witnesses the two in a lustful embrace, but true to the oath of chivalry spares them, merely laying his naked sword across their throats. (125)⁹³

Undoubtedly, this episode exists to document Gawayne's treachery from the outset, but it is also a clue to Malory's attitude toward love. Malory changed his sources, which depict Ettarde as enchanted to love Pelleas so that they may live happily ever after.⁹⁴ However, in Le Morte Darthur Ettarde dies of unrequited love, and Pelleas, disenchanted literally, falls in love with and happily marries the Damsel of the Lake. Marriage and not courtly extra-marital love is clearly Malory's ideal. Furthermore, Gawayne's lust causes him to lose worship at the court.

In contrast to Gawayne's misbehavior, both Marhaulte and Uwayne pass their tests of chivalry with flying colors. Marhault's courtesy contrasts with Gawayne's villainy, and is paralleled by Uwayne's action when he is unchivalrously attacked by two knights who have wronged a damsel. Besides being perfect practitioners of the Arthurian code of mercy they also fight for the

right causes and use only such force as is necessary. They are model secular knights. As we continue in the narrative we come to realize that prowess without discipline equals disgrace. For such undiscipline Guinevere's court will rebuke Gawayne's brother, Gaheris, and make him swear evermore to defend the rights of ladies and never to refuse mercy.

However, besides the type of knight who violates the code through malice or passion, some knights are simply good-natured oafs generously endowed with prowess, but utterly without tact or common sense or mesur. Balin, for instance, is a clean knight (46) but in an act of savagery, he revenges his mother by cutting off the head of the Lady of the Lake in the presence of Arthur and his court. Balin shows little remorse at being banished for the act. Furthermore, the lady who provided Balin his sword did so only to require him to cut down her own brother who earlier killed her paramour, Lanceor, then duels Balin to revenge the dishonor to Arthur's court. Lanceor is killed by Balin and Lanceor's lady commits suicide. Balin discovers, on information from the ubiquitous dwarf, that he will be wounded by Lanceor's kin until his death is avenged. Balin's final faux pas before he unwittingly kills his brother Balan, is so lacking in simple tact as to show a love-lorn knight his lady in the arms of another knight (66).⁹⁵ The knight, Garnish, much to Balin's astonishment, commits suicide after beheading the lovers. Truthful and brave as Balin is, the code of chivalry in his hands causes one disaster after another, many of them having to do with love and lust.

One of the major difficulties of the code of chivalry is that it leads to dilemmas whenever it is applied inflexibly. For instance, Tor beheads a yielded knight to keep his prior promise to an offended lady, thus breaking a

major obligation to fulfill a minor oath in an unworthy cause. (84) Likewise, Pellinore rides to fulfill his quest and ignores the cries of a lady whose beloved knight is bleeding to death. (86)⁹⁶ He achieves the quest, a mere matter of a joust for a lady, only to find that the damsel he ignored and who committed suicide in despair was his own daughter Alyne.

At this point, it might be said in summary that in Le Morte Darthur, the chivalric code finds itself pitted at the outset against the power of a pervasive and primitive Germanic code of vengeance that knows no pity, no quarter in its barbarity. It is equally evident that the code of virtuous chivalry for Malory surely is vitiated by the perversion known as courtly love. Even though Malory's code still seems to be in its infancy, it has already spawned the rival forces, courtly love especially, which will ultimately destroy it.

The Noble Tale of King Arthur

The figure of Arthur in the second tale derives from the alliterative Morte Arthur.⁹⁷ It is softened from the splendid barbarism of the original Arthur, admired rather for his prowess and bravery than for his gentleness and courtesy, into a chivalric king who is both self-controlled and concerned for the welfare of his people. Arthur allows neither anger at the Roman envoys' demands nor the raids of the savage giant to master him. He prevents the young knights from wreaking instant vengeance. (136)⁹⁸ He exhibits chivalric largesse by distributing the giant's treasure to the poor (148)⁹⁹

Though Arthur performs heroically in the Roman campaign, it is Lancelot who steals the show by his courage in the face of heavy odds. Malory emphasizes his role as a warrior in preparation for making Lancelot the ideal

of the chevalerie seculiere. (154)¹⁰⁰ It is noteworthy that Lancelot already exhibits the exquisite courtesy characteristic of his chivalry in a plea that offers as motive not so much his personal honor as that of his famous elders.

The emphasis throughout the Roman campaign is on fierce slaughter. In the sense that the defeated Romans and Saracens are cut down even though they surrender, the slaughter is pre-chivalric, more like the battles of the chansons de geste than those of the romances. Arthur exults at the martial prowess of his knights: "Be my fayth, there was never kyng sauff myselff that welded evir such knyghtes." (157)¹⁰¹ Out of policy, if not out of chivalry, when the city of Virvyn [Metz] falls,¹⁰² Arthur grimly forbids violence, especially rape. (174)¹⁰³ He is the courtly King throughout. After the victory, he distributes the captured wealth to his army, so that rich and poor may share in the booty.

The Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake

Whereas in the Roman wars, the military prowess of Lancelot is underlined, in this tale his private chivalry is stressed. His love for Guinevere is mentioned, but the two are kept apart in the story. The very order of presentation by which the martial prowess of Lancelot is established first before any exploits of courtly love simply indicates that the initial cause of Lancelot's great valor was loyalty to Arthur, in the first instance, not to Guinevere. In the French Vulgate Cycle, on the other hand, the order is reversed: love, personal chivalry, battle chivalry, with courtly love as the initial motive for prowess.¹⁰⁴

Although it seems evident that the emphasis of the tale is almost solely on the worship Lancelot gains through military prowess, R.M. Lumiansky

is of the opinion that Lancelot set out on his adventures in order "to win the approval of Guinevere, whom he already loves."¹⁰⁵ This may be true, but the text implies another conclusion: namely, that Guinevere falls in love with Lancelot because of his prowess. (180) It should be obvious that Lancelot first attracted the Queen's love by his prowess. It should also be recalled that Guinevere would be in a position to judge the degree of chivalry of Lancelot. She conducts a court of chivalry, a court of inquiry in fact, which receives reports of quests and passes judgment on the quality of chivalry of the knights. The analogy of this court to the Provençal courts of love is as striking as their difference. Guinevere's court passes judgment in the acts of Gawayne and Pellinore and finds them lacking in perfect chivalry. It is significant that Malory includes such courts in his book at the same time excluding courts of love. His hierarchy of values should be apparent.

Besides the surpassing prowess of Lancelot, which requires no comment for its obviousness, there are two other important considerations which attract the reader's attention: Lancelot's statement on courtly love (to Malory, sophisticated lechery), and the contrast of chivalrous with unchivalrous conduct. Not only is courtly love at best tangential as a motive for Lancelot's prowess, but also he goes out of his way to voice a specific condemnation of the love of paramours when a damsel, who, ironically enough, has just witnessed the defeat of a knightly lecher, asks why Lancelot is a bachelor and does not love any willing woman. She says that she realizes that it is rumored that he loves Queen Guinevere, and that this is the reason he lets so many damsels and gentle ladies pine away. Lancelot gives another reason for

his disdain of erotic love. It implies a sterner moral discipline than that of the French sources. Such love is not only against God's law, but principally it is a sin against prowess. Lecherous knights will be poor fighters, the prey of "sympler" knights. (194-195)¹⁰⁶ It may be that Lancelot is expressing the normal courtly love equivocation to protect the reputation of Guinevere, but it is more likely that Lancelot is voicing his own deepest convictions, regardless of how imperfectly he follows them. Malory could not avoid this situation but could easily have Lancelot voice the right doctrine. There can be little doubt that Lancelot is a mouthpiece here for Malory's ideal of masculine chivalry.

When four queens demand the imprisoned Lancelot's love despite their suspicions that his apparent chastity is only a mask for his fidelity to Guinevere, he again equivocates with a play on the word "lorde," and offers to prove the Queen's fidelity in combat. (184) Certainly Lancelot is faithful if not chaste. Also, his attitude in this tale is the conventional, distant love of a young knight for his liege-Queen. It is a sort of amor de lonh. As yet there is no more than a species of amor purus evident.

In a gruesome and particularly uncourtly episode, an enchantress of the Chapel Perilous implores Lancelot's love, if only to the extent of a kiss. He refuses, and she confesses her passion. Here the lady and not the knight pines for love, thus reversing courtly convention. (204)¹⁰⁷ What is more significant in that episode is that Lancelot would have been destroyed had he yielded to the sorceress' lust. That many knights have surrendered their prowess to courtly lechery is graphically proved by the large assortment of shields hanging outside the walls of the chapel, all reversed in token of knightly

degradation. (203) In the light of this episode, P. E. Tucker's comment that Malory did "not really believe that all his Lancelot's virtues were inspired by and existed for love" is something of an understatement.¹⁰⁸

The second theme of the tale is the contrast between chivalrous and unchivalrous conduct in combat. Lancelot successively defeats a series of criminal knights. It seems that here he is fighting to establish justice and abolish evil knightly customs, and not merely testing his prowess. His duel with the murderous Tarquin is really a fight to replace the Germanic vengeance code by the new code. (191) After defeating barbarous Tarquin, Lancelot delivers the knights from prison in the name of Arthur, not Guinevere. (193) Lancelot, then, slays a knight-ravisher at the request of a damsel, and he specifically invokes the chivalric code: "What . . . is he a theff and a knyght? And a ravyssher of women? He doth shame unto the Order of Knyght-hode, and contrary to his oth. Hit is pyté that he lyveth." (193)¹⁰⁹ Later, Lancelot attempts to protect a wife from a jealous husband, but the man, Pedyvere, manages to behead her by cruel cunning. (207)¹¹⁰ Yet Lancelot spares him on the condition that he present himself before Guinevere's court for sentence.¹¹¹ Her court of chivalry imposes a horrible expiation: a journey to Rome bearing his wife's corpse before him. (208)

Lancelot is merciless in the face of treachery, as Phelot discovers when, at the request of his wife, Lancelot is ambushed by Phelot, but manages to wrest away his sword and slay the recreant. (206) In another example of unfair combat, Lancelot defeats three knights who have set upon a single knight. He spares their lives on the condition that they appear before the Queen's court for sentencing. (198)¹¹² Lancelot is Malory's exquisite

embodiment of the code of chivalry. When he is attacked and bloodily defeated by three novice knights in a test-joust, he dissuades them from further combat mainly because of his courteous compliment on their bravery. (200)¹¹³

Thus, the "Tale of Sir Lancelot" shows the most perfect practitioner of chivalry on a quest to establish the new code of human warfare by eliminating knightly abuses, often enough, by eliminating the worst recreants. Furthermore, Guinevere functions primarily as a judge to punish penitent recreants, and not as Lancelot's lover and inspirer.

The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkeney¹¹⁴

Second only to Lancelot as a model knight is, curiously enough, Gawayne's youngest brother. Gareth's only peer in the qualities of meekness and humility is Lancelot himself. Gareth, shocked by the vengefulness of his own fierce clan, avoids his brothers and allies himself with Lancelot. (270) Instead of donning the royal garb, Gareth appears at Arthur's court and asks room and board for one year. He disregards Kay's uncivilities, (213) and spends a year among menials, always treated with notable kindness by Lancelot, (214) and by his brother Gawayne, who is then ignorant of their kinship. At the year's end Gareth asks two favors: the quest against the oppressor of Dame Lyones, and knighthood at the hands of Lancelot.

On the quest Gareth demonstrates the mesur which is a refinement of the chivalric code. He shows patience under the unmerited tongue-lashing of Lyonet. Furthermore, he illustrates the necessity of the physical as well as the spiritual testing obligatory for the ideal knight. Therefore, he earns his knighthood by proving his prowess to Lancelot, saying, "hit doth me good to fele your myght. And yet, my lorde, I shewed nat the utteraunce." (217)

His moderation, his mesur, in combat is one knightly quality strengthened by his year of self-control under constant humiliation. Though Lancelot dubs Gareth only after he reveals his royal lineage, his nobility proves itself by noble behavior rather than noble birth, which seems somewhat contrary to Malory's code, as seen above.¹¹⁵

After submitting to Lyonet's abuse for many days on their quest to rescue Lyones, even she is forced to recognize that his nobility of soul must stem from noble birth, and he, in turn, peacefully attributes his fighting prowess to the power of her abuse. (229) However, it is clear that Gareth's prowess is caused less by the unmerited abuse of women, than by a higher principle, "I woll no rewarde have but God rewarde me." (219) Gareth, though a novice knight, already exemplifies a high ideal of moral chivalry.

Gawayne's youngest brother is not only a model of courtesy and meekness, he is also virtually perfect in chastity. After Persaunt fights and yields to Gareth, (230) to minister to his pleasure, he sends his daughter to his bed. (231) Gareth firmly but courteously refuses Persaunt's daughter not to dishonor her, his host, and himself.

Shocked by the Red Knight's immoral prowess, and heartened in the heat of combat by a glimpse of Lyones, Gareth defeats the barbarous recreant but nevertheless spares his life despite his crime. The Red Knight pleads in his own defense that all his killings were required by a promise he made to a paramour to revenge her against all Round Table knights for the death of her brother (240). Again, courtly love inspires, not chivalry, but barbaric and insensate vengeance. Now deeply in love with Lyones, however, Gareth spares the recreant inasmuch as "all that he dud was at a ladyes request, [therefore]

I blame hym the lesse." (240) It seems strange that such an excuse is acceptable. Whatever credit Gareth's mercy deserves, his sense of justice seems a bit weak. However, the entire episode underscores the degradation courtly paramours can inflict on moral chivalry.

Gareth then behaves like the conventional courtly lover, "for his love was so hoote that he wyst nat were he was." (246) Lyonet soon discovers that Gareth and Lyones are "acorded to abate their lustys secretly," (247) and to save them for disworship of anticipating their nuptials, contrives a magic knight who slashes Gareth with a battle-axe as he lies in bed with Lyones. Gareth beheads the knight, and Lyonet fastens the head on again. Later, the lovers make another attempt, and this time Gareth literally shreds the magic head. Although Gareth's lust and savagery damage to some extent his worship for chastity and mesur, nevertheless the lovers have plighted their troth, and their love culminates in marriage, not in a furtive courtly love pact.¹¹⁶ Malory's ideal love is natural, "kyndely," not a sophisticated ritual. Even the lovers' lack of cunning and secrecy in managing their meetings show them to be of uncourtly caliber.

Lyones does act the part of the courtly madonna when she requires Gareth to spend a year on a quest "to laboure in worshyp," (242) and thus earn the right to marry her. Whatever may be said of their earlier state, Gareth and Lyones profess their love before the court, not as paramours, but as true lovers who seek marriage.

The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones

It is difficult to see the purpose of this long-winded and rather untidy story, unless it is to show that the world outside the control of the

Round Table is, to a large extent, barbarous. It provides a mine of adventures for knightly testing. Perhaps it is too much to say that the Arthurian court is "a well-ordered light in the savagery of surrounding darkness."¹¹⁷

It is true that the court of the vengeful King Mark is quite unchivalric, but within Arthur's own court the light of chivalry is dimming through a resurgence of unchivalric vengeance and unjustified cruelty. The code of the blood-feud condones cunning, resentment, murder, all of which represent the antithesis of chivalry.

Let us briefly examine first the chivalry of the dominant characters Tristram, Palomides, and Lancelot, and then, the code of vengeance of Mark on Tristram and that of Gawayne's clan on Lamorak.

Tristram is a great warrior. (286) In battle and tournament only Lancelot is his equal. What are Tristram's chivalric motives, and how does his conduct differ from that of Palomides, his rival in love? Tristram is a less perfect knight than Lancelot. He is guilty of lust and infidelity. Even as a courtly lover, he is easily detoured into adventure and his great passion, hunting. He is, nevertheless, a knight of outstanding and courteous prowess. Although he pays lip-service to courtly love it is a mere adjunct of his chivalry rather than a dominant motive.¹¹⁸ Tristram is capable of forgiving Lamorak for sending Morgan le Fay's horn of chastity to Mark's court, even though Isode and ninety-six other ladies fail the test. Furthermore, the espionage of Andred on Tristram and Isode proves the horn-judgment true, with the result that Mark imprisons Isode in a leper's hut and has Tristram condemned to death by the barons. When Tristram and Lamorak later meet in a joust, Tristram renounces vengeance out of admiration for Lamorak's superb

prowess in combat: "Hit were pite that ony of us bothe sholde here be myscheved." (358) Martial prowess is too precious a gift to be spoiled over a lady's love or reputation.

One evidence of prowess is the love of hunting, considered as a semi-martial sport.¹¹⁹ After rescuing Isode from the leper's hut, (328) Tristram takes her to a castle and goes out hunting. While he is gone, Mark steals Isode back. Does Tristram go mad with grief and frustration over Isode's abduction? Not quite. However, while out hunting he is shot by an arrow. Finding Isode gone when he returns, Tristram laments not over the loss of Isode but over the pain caused by the envenomed arrow. (329) Ironically enough, it does not seem to have been Cupid's arrow that caused Tristram's "sorow."

Malory's ideal of love is not the all-absorbing quest it is in his French sources. In the French prose Tristan, the pursuit of love is an important aspect of the pursuit of prowess.¹²⁰ Yet, when Tristram and Isode elope to Joyous Garde, (505-507) Malory omits virtually all the details of their passionate love-making to concentrate on Tristram's prowess. In effect, Isode becomes a hunter's widow in Malory's version with Tristram spending every day in the pursuit of game rather than love.¹²¹ What was a truly romantic idyll in the French sources becomes an extended hunting trip in Malory. Hunting, hawking, playing the horn, and adventures leave little time for "myrthis" in the English version. (506)

Later, faced by the alternative of adventure or rushing to rejoin Isode, who has begged him to come to her, Tristram chooses to spend ten days wandering in search of combat. (356) When Isode's indefatigable maid, Brang-

wayne, later catches up with Tristram, he postpones writing an answer to her "pyteous complaynte" until after the tournament. (384) The convention of courtly love pleading, needless to say, is directly reversed. In addition, Malory's view is that Tristram's prowess causes Isode to love him. Even the rival lover Palomides recognizes that Tristram deserves Isode, rather than Mark. He regrets that the best knight of the world should be matched with the most "vylaunch knyght of the worlde!" (441)¹²² That Mark is a recreant coward and vengeful murderer thus serves as a justification of Tristram's adulterous love.

Courtly love is not only a minor motive for Tristram's prowess, but it causes such unknighly acts as attacking an apparently unarmed knight, Keyhydys, for writing letters and ballads to Isode. (367)¹²³

In an episode more like a farce than a serious romance, the terrified knight jumps out of a window and sails over the head of Mark, who is playing chess (367) in the garden. Mad with jealousy over Isode's supposed infidelity, Tristram wanders in the woods smashing trees (369)¹²⁴ and weeping for six months before regaining his sanity. There is little in his behavior up to this point to motivate such excessive grief.

Moreover, as a lover, Tristram himself is fickle. After his expulsion from Cornwall when he is trapped in the act of adultery with Isode, (327) Tristram forgets his great love long enough to marry another Isode (Isode le Blaunche Maynys), though he later excuses this apparent infidelity to Lancelot by claiming that the second is ignorant of "fleyshely lustys" and is satisfied with kissing instead of consummating. (330-331)¹²⁵ Consequently, the statement that Tristram "is a lover first, last, and always" needs a good

deal of qualification and above all convincing proofs.¹²⁶

Tristram's great rival and foil, Palomides, originally fights him for the love of Isode, but by the end of the story, the Saracen knight finally gives up his love and reconciles with Tristram, overcome principally by the hero's superior prowess and gentleness. (622) No such renunciation occurs in Malory's sources. Furthermore, regardless of Palomides' occasional wailings and mad frustrations that drive him to throw his sword into a fountain or plunge into a river mounted and in full armor after losing a joust to Tristram, it is primarily rivalry of Tristram's prowess that spurs him on rather than simply the woes of love. However, his love for Isode does drive Palomides to deeds of prowess. He admits that Isode "hath bene the causer of my worshyp." (578) But this courtly inspiration frequently leads Palomides into distinctly unchivalrous deeds with consequent disworship. For instance, the killing of Lancelot's horse in a joust is a case in point. (546) On another occasion, he attacks Arthur without a word of warning and unhorses him. (550-551) Palomides also takes advantage of Tristram's unreadiness. (386) Later, Palomides, while mounted, attacks Tristram who is on foot and tries to trample him down. (395) At the tournament of Surluse Palomides beheads three knights after defeating them in jousts, apparently without asking them to yield. (487, 498, 496) Such conduct lacks the mesur of truly knightly prowess. Love and ambition make Palomides a knight of prowess, but not a particularly chivalric one.

In this tale Lancelot appears to be unfaithful to Guinevere with Elayne, the mother of Galahad. However, he is misled by enchantment into thinking Elayne is Guinevere. Loyalty or fidelity in love is the one virtue

of his adultery with Guinevere, and Lancelot is therefore overcome with shame at his unwitting offense against courtly chivalry when he comes to himself and sees Elayne instead of Guinevere in bed with him. (585) "Malory finds fidelity praiseworthy in itself--ultimately, perhaps, because it is a form of loyalty."¹²⁷ Lancelot appears oblivious of the fact that this courtly loyalty violates both his feudal loyalty to Arthur and his religious loyalty to God. In this connection Bors is dispatched with a message from a holy man to Lancelot bearing on the quest to come, that of the Sankgreall. Lancelot's grandeur is recognized, but "synne ys so foule in hym, that he may nat enchyve none such holy dedys . . . in this spyrytuall maters he shall have many hys bettyrs." (590) It is clear that the claims of morality and courtliness come into conflict here. More important, secular prowess must be the external expression of a spiritual prowess of self-discipline, of stability.

One knight in the Book of Tristram is firmly convinced that the whole business of knightly love and knight-errantry is as tiresome as it is ludicrous. Dinadan constantly mocks chivalry in the French Tristan,¹²⁹ and strongly objects to the ridiculous fights which the code of chivalry requires one to do. (376-380) Malory is unsympathetic with such mockery, especially mockery directed against prowess, and he reduces Dinadan's role to one of good-natured buffoonery, but omits the serious undercutting irony.¹³⁰ Malory takes the ideal of chivalry too seriously to allow such harsh criticism to destroy it.

The code of chivalry is complicated in practice by conflicting claims, which not infrequently cause dilemmas. Mark's feud with Tristram

begins first over the favors of Segwarydes' "lyght lady." (333) The husband attacks Tristram and is defeated. Ashamed of being forced to use his sword in such a disgraceful cause, Tristram begs the knight "to smyte no more," (297) and Segwarydes, like Arthur later, says, "lette hit overslyppe, for he that hath a prevy hurte is loth to have a shame outwarde." (297) However, when Bleoberys abducts the same wife shortly after, Tristram should attempt her release according to the courtly code, and he is widely blamed for following the moral code of marriage, leaving Segwarydes to go to her rescue. (302) He fails, and Tristram rides after her. Irate at Tristram's courtly infidelity to her cause, the lady rejects him. However, the chivalric code, rightly practiced in this tale, often takes precedence over the code of vengeance. For instance, when Tristram beheads the woman (Brewnor's wife) who loses the beauty contest, (314) her own son, Galahalt, releases Tristram because he was justified in abolishing the barbarous custom of his parents, "For sothe, this was a shamefull custom and usage, a knyght, for his herborow [lodging] askynge, to have such herborage. And for this custom I wolde never draw aboute hym." (316) Slaying according to the code was an unfortunate, if necessary, by-product of knightly prowess, and not a cause for invoking the code of vengeance as it is with Gawayne and his clan.

When we examine the operations of the code of vengeance by Mark, it soon becomes apparent that the court of Cornwall is unchivalric both in prowess and gratitude. The fact is painstakingly pointed out by Tristram in his farewell speech to the barons who banish him under Mark's instigation. (376) Mark's sole code bears only one stamp: vengeance. It is out of jealousy for Segwarydes' lady that Mark attempts to ambush Tristram with two other knights.

On one occasion, he stabs Bersules to death for refusing to help him murder Tristram. (430) Mark is deserted by his followers. After the unjust killing of Bersules, sir Amant severely rebukes him, "Hit was foule done and myschevously, wherefore we woll do you no more servyse. And wete you well we woll appele you of treson afore kynge Arthure." (430)¹³¹ Mark is utterly without honor. Disguised as a simple knight, he can listen to Lamorak berate Mark as a recreant coward without a word of challenge. (431) So cowardly is this king that not only does Dagonet, Arthur's fool, chase him through the forest in the guise of Lancelot, (438) but after Mark accidentally kills his opponent Amante in a judicial duel at Arthur's court, (492)¹³² he deliberately "tumblede adowne oute of his sadyll to the erthe as a sak," when Lancelot charges him, and lies on the ground begging for his life. (443) Much of this portrayal of Mark is designed, without doubt, to offer some justification for the love of Tristram and Isode.

What is less excusable in Mark's conduct is his malicious jealousy of Tristram's reputation for chivalric prowess. News of Tristram's powerful deeds at the tournament of the Maiden's Castle enrages him: "Than was kynge Marke sory and wrothe oute of mesure . . ." (405) Out of envy, for Tristram "pased all other knyghtes but yf hit were sir Launcelot," (429) Mark commissions two knight-assassins to go to Arthur's court "to destroy sir Trystram by som wyls other by treson." (429) Clearly, this murderous vengeance is motivated by a hatred of Tristram's personal honor, and not simply by the dishonor suffered by Mark's wearing of the cuckold's horns. Mark finally has his lust for vengeance satisfied when he stabs Tristram in the back. (812)¹³³

Finally, in this story the feud between the houses of Lot and Pellinore

begun in the first tale now begins to move toward its tragic series of climaxes with the entrapment and later slaying of Lamorak, Pellinore's son. After winning the first day in a tournament decreed by Arthur, Gawayne is defeated twice by Lamorak. (454-455) All the other members of the house of Lot are also vanquished. Immediately after that unbearable humiliation, Gawayne gathers his brothers¹³⁴ and recalls to them the murder of their father by Pellinore, as a cause for plotting revenge against Lamorak. (455) It is obvious, however, that the real motive is the loss of worship these knights have just suffered in the tournament. Their trap is a disgrace to human nature, to say nothing of chivalry and courtly love. The brothers send for their mother, Morgawse (458) in order to bait the trap for Lamorak, her paramour. Everything works fine, and Lamorak is caught in bed with Morgawse. (459) But the course of events changes suddenly. Gaheris kills his mother on the spot. Chivalry could never have countenanced such an ambush. Moreover, the queen should have been allowed a champion for a judicial trial. What is more surprising, and at the same time confusing, is that Gaheris excuses the offense of Lamorak on the ground that he is bound to the "servyse" of woman according to the chivalric, regardless of the moral implications. (459) Furthermore, he invokes the same chivalric code as the reason he will not slay a naked, unarmed man, apparently oblivious of the fact that his mother was even more defenseless. Gaheris is both observing and violating all the various elements of the code of chivalry at the same time: martial, courtly, and religious. Such a savage code of vengeance will shortly ruin the chivalry of the Round Table. As Mark had satisfied his lust for vengeance by treacherously stabbing Tristram in the back, ". . . that traytoure kynge slew

the noble knyght sir Trystram as he sate harpyng afore hys lady, La Beall Isode . . .," (812) so will Gawayne and his three brothers savagely hack down Lamorak, " . . . sir Gawayne and his three breterne . . . sette upon sir Lamorak in a pryvy place . . . and . . . sir Mordred gaff hym his dethis wounde byhynde hym at his bakke . . ." (520-521)¹³⁵

After news of the murder begins to spread, Tristram fears to go to Arthur's court, and Lancelot always sees to it that some of his kindred are near out of fear of ambush. The chivalric idyll that was the Round Table is now on the verge of being submerged by the ancient code of blood and its vindication of rights by assassination. Not only the conflicts within the code destroyed it, the pagan code of clan loyalty and feud hastened the downfall of the Round Table.

The Tale of the Sankgreal¹³⁶

In Malory's "Tale of the Sankgreal," the action passes from earthly to divine perfection. But if this quest is the final test of Arthur's code of chivalry, a test so severe that "more then halff" of his knights are "slayned and destroyed," (730, 731) then it must be obvious that the chevalerie terrestre has failed in the sense that Arthur's system is embodied in the failure of Lancelot, the peerless chevalier terrestre who is unable to ascend to the celestial level required by the chevalerie céleste.¹³⁷ Specifically, the religious requirements of the full knightly code are violated by a prevalent lechery, as the visions and temptations of this tale abundantly indicate.¹³⁸ Not even Perceval and Bors, two knights of the celestial trio, are totally unscathed by a temptation to commit or actually lapse into lechery. Although Lancelot is penitent in the story, he is too unstable to persevere in his firm

purpose to avoid future contact with Guinevere. So great are Lancelot's other chivalric virtues, however, that despite his cherished sin, he is twice granted visions of the Holy Grail. Yet, as a whole, the secular chivalry of the Round Table renders him unfit for this final test of prowess, religious prowess.

Lancelot is the chief transgressor against some of the moral virtues required to succeed in the Queste. Sexual purity and humility are the absolutes of this religious chivalry. Conversely, the principal sins against it are lechery and pride of prowess, both vices which are essential to other elements of the code of chivalry, namely, the courtly and martial elements. Up to now, these elements of the code have dominated the stories, particularly that of martial prowess to the exclusion of the religious element. Now, for the first time, the knights-errant find themselves in constant need of counsel from holy hermits on how to achieve their religious quest. Throughout the story the emphasis is on prayer and fasting, a spiritual asceticism more monastic than knightly, perhaps as the result of an adaptation by a Cistercian writer.¹³⁹ Thus, the ever-present dwarf strikes the sword out of Lancelot's hands, a rebuke to secular chivalry, when the knight moves toward the castle of Corbenic.

O, man of evylle feyth and poure byleve! Wherefore trustist thou more on thy harneyse than in thy Maker? For He myght more avayle thee than thyne armour, in what servyse that thou arte sette in. (726)

Nonetheless, unlike the French writer, Malory believes that there is a good secular chivalry, a chivalry that can be tempered by Christian morality, and he does not believe that the mystical chivalry of this Queste is the only true end of man on earth, even if it is obviously the final end. Only when

secular chivalry is destroyed by homicidal vengeance, adultery, and treachery, do the surviving knights of the Round Table renounce the secular code and pursue spiritual prowess as monks.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, in the person of Lancelot, secular chivalry is partially vindicated by the relative success in the Queste. It is entirely unfair to say, as does R. W. Barber, that "the religious atmosphere of purification and repentance is removed" in Malory's version of the legend.¹⁴¹ It is minimized, rather, in that Lancelot later reverts to his old lust, but certainly penance does enable Perceval and Bors to persevere and succeed in the Queste, and permits Lancelot to take a more serious prise de conscience with his own situation.

Malory's source, the French Queste, is an allegory of man's life as a pilgrim's progress of spiritual welfare. Achievement of the Sankgreal symbolizes attainment of the Beatific Vision. Instead of this mysticism, Malory concentrates on the dangers of the sensuality of courtly love and the necessity of chastity. The basic contrast in the original sets off the essential evil, of all secular chivalry against the ultimate good of religious chivalry, the black versus the white knights. (676) Such chivalry is condemned root and branch. However, Malory condemns only sensuality and the evil uses of prowess, not secular chivalry itself.¹⁴² He makes no absolute distinction between secular and religious ideals, and was confused by the French writer's condemnation of the secular ideal, which involved courtly love licentiousness. Since courtly love forms no part of Malory's chivalry, he saw no reason why chivalry in itself should be damned.¹⁴³

It is not for his secular chivalry that Lancelot is rebuked, but only for what is evil in it. Thus, Lancelot repents of his faults against chivalry

and his "olde synne,"¹⁴⁴ (654) somehow equating the two in degree of gravity. He confesses that (655-656) vainglory at his prowess and prowess in wrong causes, both violations of moral secular chivalry, rival in gravity his more serious violations of religious chivalry. So Lancelot leaves the holy man resolved henceforward "to sew [follow] knyghthode and to do fetys of armys," and to be less wicked. (657)¹⁴⁵ It is little wonder that Arthur mourns the departure of his knights on the Queste, considering the virtues they will require, some of which they so strikingly lack for this religious endeavor: humility, chastity, charity, patience, temperance, truth, gratitude. (671-686) Hermits tirelessly catalogue these requirements, especially to Lancelot and to the impertinent and bored Gawayne. Consequently, Arthur's foreboding "nevyr shall I se you agayne togydirs!" (633) is justified. In addition, he could hardly have failed to see the rampant hatred festering among his knights in the family feuds at his own court.

If Galahad, Perceval, and Bors feel to be somewhat at home in the rarefied atmosphere of the Queste, Lancelot appears uneasy, but his humility helped him achieve self-knowledge and contrition. Because he becomes aware of his limitations and perseveres in his virtually impossible task, he is the hero of Malory's tale rather than the invincible and celestial Galahad. Though Lancelot is permitted to see the Sankgreal twice, he lacks the "stabilite" to actually possess it. He is haunted by his concupiscence as he later tells the Queen: ". . . if that I had nat had my prevy thoughtis to returne to youre love agayne as I do, I had sene as grete mysterye as ever saw my sonne sir Galahad, Percivale, other sir Bors." (745)¹⁴⁶ He does attain the degree of glory possible to secular sinful man.

The painful failure suffered by Lancelot's form of chivalry is seen in the episode of the black and white knights. Lancelot hopes to increase his worship by helping the weaker black knights, only to have a lady hermit later explain why he was defeated in combat. The celestial white knights were all virgins, whereas the secular black knights were stained with lust, vainglory, and murder. Led by his similar brand of chivalry, Lancelot's prowess was not pure enough for him to win. (678) No wonder he wanders bewildered in this strange land.

If prowess appears as the dominant motive of martial chivalry, and love as the supreme theme of courtly chivalry, perfection in divine love is the subject of religious chivalry. Lancelot's martial chivalry is found wanting, and it is now Perceval's role to demonstrate the collapse of courtly chivalry even more definitely than is done in Lancelot's case. A damsel-fiend persuades Perceval, who is heated by wine, to be her true love-servant and she will lie with him. He is about to sin when his glance falls on the crucifix, just in time to save his virgin status. (669) A gentle hermit then informs him that the damsel was the demon of lust, "which hath posté [power] over all other devyllis." (670)¹⁴⁷

Similarly, Bors is tempted to lechery by a fiend in disguise. The false holy man interprets Bors's dream to mean that he must yield to a paramour's love in order to save Lancelot's life. Bors refuses, though he is heartsick for Lancelot. However, the steadfast Bors later discovers that the false interpretation was a diabolical plot. (695)¹⁴⁸ The demonic trap was designed to reduce Bors to a state of "wanhope and lechery" (697) to detour him from the Queste of the Sankgreal. The apparent dilemma is solved by

adhering to the most important element of moral chivalry. Hitherto, the religious component of the secular code was often enough placed last by the knights instead of first in the hierarchy of code loyalty.¹⁴⁹

In a related and painful dilemma, Bors chooses to rescue a damsel rather than his brother, Lionel. (691) He sacrifices clan loyalty to keep his oath to succor the weak.¹⁵⁰ Lionel does not see the matter in this light, however, and vengefully challenges his brother to combat à outrance. (698) Bors has by this time abandoned the murderous martial code. He kneels without drawing his sword, begs forgiveness of Lionel, and asks him to "have in remembrance the grete love which oughte to be betwene us two." (699) Only Lionel's murders of a defenseless priest and Colgrevaunce for their interference in the quarrel arouse Bors to try to stop him. In mortal fear of the sin of fratricide, Bors begs a miracle of God, and a heavenly flame parts the two. (702)¹⁵¹ In these two episodes from Bors's Queste, both courtly and martial chivalry stand condemned for their viciousness.

There is little that can be said of the heaven-sent Galahad. His code involves him only in superficial struggles. God elects him to the Round Table, not Arthur or his knights. On the day of his reception, he easily defeats each knight in turn, except Lancelot and Perceval whom he refuses to fight. (633) Later, he does defeat peerless Lancelot in a joust. (651) However, it is almost unchivalrous for Galahad ever to combat because he "hath no peere, for he worchith all by miracle, and he shall never be overcom of none erthly mannys hande." (658) There can be little interest in the exploits of an invincible knight. Galahad, however, never abuses his martial power. (648)¹⁵²

After the achievement of the Sankgreal, the shadowy figures of Galahad and Perceval do not return to the Round Table.¹⁵³ They are not permitted to triumph over the earthly worship of Lancelot, who remains Malory's ideal of knighthood despite his sin, rather than the extreme mysticism of the religious chivalry of the Grail knights. Bors does return,¹⁵⁴ but remains a minor figure. Obviously, Malory's ideal is still moral and secular, not mystical. Galahad and Perceval belong to heaven rather than to earth. Is it not ironic that the tale of the Sankgreal should end in Arthur's court with Lancelot at the center of the action?

The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere

The search for the Sankgreal is over, but it has not permanently ennobled the world of the Round Table, as will be seen. The purpose of the tale concerned with Lancelot and Guinevere as it flows into the last story is to portray the net of intrigue and treachery that begins to bring the Round Table idyll to its end. A series of three important climaxes occur with Lancelot rescuing Guinevere from the stake each time. In addition, there is a progression of moral guilt: the Queen is innocent of the poison charge, only technically innocent of the charge of adultery with one of the ten wounded knights, and guilty of adultery in the entrapment of Aggravayne. Similarly, Lancelot's chivalry in her defense declines from fidelity to truth in the first case, equivocation in the second, and falsehood in the last. The dilemmas he faces are solved by defense of the Queen in "ryghte other wronge," confessed during the Queste, and his defense both violates and fulfills his oath of knighthood. The oath can only be observed adequately if there is a hierarchy of values, with the religious values paramount, as Bors discovered and Lancelot admits

in theory when he begs Guinevere to beware of the slander their lust is causing in the court: "I was but late in that queste, and wyte you well, madame, hit may nat yet lyghtly forgotyn the hyghe servyse in Whom I dud my dyligente laboure." (745)¹⁵⁵

Unmistakably, the love between the two greatest lovers is becoming strained. Jealousy and mutual recrimination control their relations as much as does lust. Guinevere is furious at Lancelot's avoiding her, despite his plea for greater prudence in the safeguarding of her reputation. He emphasizes the sacrifices he has made for her love, in particular his failure in the Queste. (745) Unreasonable, she banishes him as a false lecher. Significantly, unlike the earlier Elayne episode, this time Lancelot does not go out of his mind. In the episode of the Maid of Astolat, Guinevere is at first madly jealous, (770) but when the maiden is safely dead of a broken heart, (780) she reproves him for not showing more courtliness to the poor girl, instead of recognizing his unswerving fidelity. (781)

Gradually Lancelot proves that he is no longer the courtly lover too enamoured to be above using rebukes and sarcasm. When he intends to skip a tournament because of the wound he received in her defense, she blames him for the gossip his absence might cause, to which he replies drily:

'Have ye no doute fear , madame,' seyde sir Launcelot,
'I alow youre witte. Hit ys of late com syn ye were woxen so wyse!
And therefore, madam, at thys tyme I woll be ruled by youre coun-
ceyle' (757)

Lancelot is depicted as by far the nobler character, whose nobility consists in fidelity to a love that is becoming increasingly more troublesome than pleasurable. Guinevere is jealous and completely self-centered. Perhaps this

is partly the reason Arthur is so prompt in piling the faggots for her three trips to the stake. Certainly, he can hardly be unaware of her conduct, considering the earlier warnings of Merlin, Morgan's shield, and Mark's letters, all concerned with Guinevere's adulterous infidelity.

The episode of the poisoned apple is an act of vengeance of the Pellinore family on Gawayne over Lamorak's death. The treachery misfires, but Guinevere is accused of treason. In need of a champion for the judicial duel, with conscious or unconscious irony Arthur asks Guinevere, "what aylith you . . . that ye can nat kepe sir Launcelot uppon youre syde?" (749)

In contrast to Guinevere's jealous lust is the pure love of the Fair Maid of Astolat. Dying heartbroken by Lancelot's refusal to love her, her confessor-hermit advises her to give up such earthly thoughts. She refuses on the ground that her love is good, and "all maner of good love comyth of God." (779)¹⁵⁶ When the Queen complains that Lancelot was ungentle to Elayne, Lancelot's irony indicates that Guinevere's possessiveness is beginning to gall: "I love nat to be constrayned to love, for love muste only aryse of the harte selff." (781) Whatever Malory understands by love, it is certainly neither platonic love nor sensual courtliness: ". . . lat every man of worship florysh hys herte in thys worlde: firste unto God, and nexte unto the joy of them that he promysed hys feythe unto; . . . such love I calle vertuose love." (791) And the more striking passage,

But nowadayes men cannat love sevensnyght but they must have all their desyres. That love may nat endure by reson, for where they bethe sone accorded and hasty, heete sone keeleth. And ryght so faryth the love nowadayes, sone hote sone colde. Thys ys no stabylte. But the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love, trouthe and faythefulnes. And so in lyke wyse was used such love in kynge Arthurs dayes. (791)

The abduction of Guinevere by Melyagraunce illustrates the dwindling power of Arthurian chivalry. Melyagraunce ambushes the lightly armed "Quenys Knyghted" with archers and armored knights. (792) It is swords against lances and armor. (793) After capturing the Queen, Melyagraunce sets up an ambush of thirty archers with orders to kill Lancelot's horse, (795) which is soon unkindly done. (796) Thus several rules of chivalry are violated at once. When Lancelot arrives at the castle, the cowardly knight begs Guinevere to intercede for his life. (798) In utter violation of all courtesy, to say nothing of common gratitude, Melyagraunce soon accuses the Queen of adultery with one of her wounded knights. (802) He then has the effrontery to warn Lancelot against doing "batayle in a wronge quarell, for God wolle have a stroke in every batayle." (803) Finally, on the pretext of showing Lancelot the castle, Melyagraunce springs a trap door and imprisons Lancelot. (804) Very few precepts of chivalry govern such a series of treacheries.

In the end Lancelot escapes and defeats the recreant Melyagraunce who again pleads for mercy,¹⁵⁷ but the Queen is unchivalrous enough to deny it. (807) Yet, Lancelot refuses to dispatch him, but unchivalrously offers to fight to the utterance with one hand tied and without any armor. Melyagraunce eagerly accepts the unfair odds, but Lancelot kills him despite the handicap, thus preserving his chivalry more or less intact despite the Queen (807) Nevertheless, he has suffered a mortal blot in killing even such an unworthy knight in a false cause, false morally if not legally. His action is at best equivocal, and the code is violated in fact, if not in theory. However, he does not stoop to vengeance or cold-blooded murder.

The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur

The last Book brings the Round Table to its final destruction, through the very prowess that elevated it to such high worship in the previous tales. The spirit of chivalry is destroyed by the warring elements within the code, and the code of vengeance which is essentially foreign to it.

Increasingly, Lancelot's sword has been drawn in wrongful quarrels for love, and it has been turned against the knights of his own fellowship for the sake of Guinevere and in defense of his own sin. On numerous occasions in this last tale Lancelot offers to champion Guinevere's good name body to body in order to prove her fidelity. This causes Arthur's sardonic comment:

. . . he trustyth so much uppon hys hondis and hys myght
that he doutyth no man. And therefore for my quene shal nevermore
fyght, for she shall have the law. (830)

The overriding tragedy from Arthur's point of view is the loss of the fraternity of his knights, not the loss of Guinevere: "And much more I am sorryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre quene; for quenys I myght have inow, but such a felyship of good knyghtes shall never be togydys in no company." (833) It is noteworthy that Arthur does not dwell on either the treachery of Lancelot or Guinevere. Indeed, the adultery appears to be no surprise to Arthur, "for the kynge had a demyng of hit, but he wold nat here thereof," (820)¹⁵⁸ and out of gratitude and admiration he preferred to ignore it. Arthur

has carefully maintained the fiction of ignorance, deceiving even the scheming Agravaïne. The reason for such concealment tells us something of Arthur's wide vision, his magnanimity, and his self-restraint. For Arthur the greatest good is the preservation of his empire and the correlative stability of the Round Table.¹⁵⁹

What Arthur deplores is Aggravayne's espionage that forces him to act,

whatever the deplorable consequences that must inevitably follow. His principal grief is for the damage to martial chivalry in the bloody civil war he foresees will follow his rupture with Lancelot and the execution of the Queen. However, it is equally evident that Arthur has relinquished control of events unwisely to such fierce and vindictive men as Aggravayne, and later, Gawayne. He has become a virtual figurehead, a King who has forfeited the right to such a chivalrous fellowship as the Round Table once represented. His passivity is self-annihilating.

As the result of the King's reluctant permission to Aggravayne to trap Lancelot in the act of adultery, (820) he has to hew his way through thirteen knights to escape the Queen's room, (823) leaving only Mordred alive though wounded. Later, in his rescue of Guinevere from the fire, he kills, among others, Gawayne's brother, Gareth. (831-832) The code is inadequate to reconcile his courtly loyalty to the lady and his loyalty to the fellowship he swore never to attack knowingly. Eventually, scores of thousands will die in battle resulting from this code dilemma, as well as from the more ancient code that demands vengeance for the death of members of the clan. Martial chivalry ends by devouring itself in blood.

Gawayne is an ambiguous character in the last book. At first, he plainly abhors Aggravayne's meddling, and later defends Lancelot's meeting at night with Guinevere as quite possibly innocent, though he knows otherwise. In all this, his behavior is extremely chivalric, even to the extent of excusing before Arthur Lancelot's killing of his two sons who were involved in the trap. (830) Told, however, of the death of Gareth, his vengeance suddenly flares up to become truly insane by the time he fights Lancelot. It is hard

to understand why Gareth's death carries Gawayne over the brink which "separates insanity from the gnawing conflict between the pagan and instinctive desire for vengeance and the checkrein of Christian principles."¹⁶⁰ Perhaps it is revulsion at the fact that Gareth is unarmed when he is struck down by the very man he most admires and loves. However, Gawayne refuses to listen to Lancelot and others use the confusion around the stake as an excuse for the unfortunate killing. Gawayne's blood suddenly and explosively calls for blood, (847) and he follows the call to his death.

Fierce in vindictive fealty to his king and his House, he is "throw-back" to that Pagan ideal in which fidelity to one's chieftain and vengeance on one's foes were primarily virtues.¹⁶¹

In any case, his fights with Lancelot involve using his triple strength, ambushes, and gross insults in the face of Lancelot's reluctant combat, and his extreme mesur in word and deed. Indeed, here perfect chivalry faces atavistic vengeance to the ultimate annihilation of both, or rather, the destruction of chivalry as it once inspired the Arthurian knights.

On the other hand, so chivalrous is Lancelot that he threatens execution to anyone who touches Arthur, and on one occasion brings tears to the King's eyes when he courteously picks up the fallen Arthur and horses him again. (840)¹⁶² Repeatedly at Benwick, Lancelot's knights are forced to plead with their leader to fight. Only Gawayne's insults force him into action at last. (858)

The dying Gawayne apologizes in a deathbed letter to Lancelot (863)¹⁶³ for his pride and wilfulness in having brought about his own death. Also, Gawayne's insistence that Arthur undertake the French expedition cleared the way for Mordred's treachery. (864) Gawayne repents of his vengeance in a last

expression of chivalric humility. It is tragically late and irreparable.

If martial chivalry is mourned more than courtly love, both forms are renounced by Lancelot and Guinevere in favor of a religious chivalry. At their last meeting, Lancelot realizes the full gravity of their sin in the light of its ruinous consequences for the Round Table, and Guinevere expresses the same sorrow that their love has destroyed the flower of chivalric knighthood.

(876)¹⁶⁴ Obviously, there is some doubt about the spirituality of these nostalgic expressions of contrition.

In any case, the breakdown of the Round Table occurs because of the conflict of incompatible loyalties. Loyalty to adulterous love, to murderous martial prowess, and to vengeance are only renounced after they have destroyed the central force that knit these loyalties together, always excepting treacherous vengeance.

To perdure, any chivalric code must be based on a hierarchy of morally good loyalties: to God, to liege, to lady. Ector's eulogy over his brother's body expresses Malory's ideal of chivalry, with only one deletion for its perfect realization in Lancelot.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF COURTLY LOVE

The following pages will attempt to give a general survey of the major trends and developments of courtly love from Ovid to Chrétien de Troyes. Such an analysis will provide a necessary background by which Malory's treatment of courtly love may be judged.

Gustave Cohen, following Charles Seignobos, an expert on the medieval period, strongly believes that "Love is a great discovery of the Middle Ages, especially of the twelfth-century France. Before that time it has not savoured so fully of eternity and spirituality."¹

During the twelfth century there arose, especially in the South of France, where manners were more refined, a new social ideal known as courtesy. That ideal developed into a system to which Gaston Paris has given the name of Courtly Love.² This was popularized by the Provençal poets or troubadours such as Guillaume de Poitiers, Marcabru, Jaufré Rudel, Bernard de Ventadour, and Arnaud Daniel, many of whose exquisite verses have come down to us.

In the courtly society of Champagne and Aquitaine diverse racial elements had long been blending, and acquirements, once foreign, had turned into personal qualities. Views of life had been evolved, along with faculties to express them. Likewise, modes of feeling had developed. This society had become what it was within the influence of Christianity and the antique educational tradition. It knew the "Song of Songs," as well as Ovid's stories, and likewise his Ars Amatoria, which Chrétien de Troyes was the first to

translate into Old French. Ovid's other poems, Remedia Amoris, and Amores also were well known.

The Roman poet Ovid (43 B.C. - A.D. 17) who, at the age of forty, wrote his Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love) established himself as the undisputed arbiter of elegance for an upper-class Roman society. The Ovidian love is frankly sensual.³ C. S. Lewis calls it "merry sensuality."⁴ It encourages extra-marital relationships and does not contemplate marriage as its object.⁵ It states that love is impossible between husband and wife,⁶ that the best partner in a love affair is another man's wife,⁷ and that such affair should be kept secret, thereby making it much pleasanter.⁸ That such love was ennobling was never stressed by Ovid.

In his conception of love as an art to be learned and practiced, Ovid insisted on many other "rules," which helped organize the courtly love code later on. For instance, Ovid says that love is a kind of warfare, and every lover is a soldier. Cupid is the generalissimo,⁹ and under him the woman's rule is absolute. Even though a man should deceive a woman, he must never show any sign of opposing her slightest wish.¹⁰ To undergo all kinds of hardships¹¹ and perform ridiculous deeds¹² is also a part of the code. Everything a lover does must be accomplished for her sake,¹³ even to the extent of endangering his health,¹⁴ and finally, of arousing her jealousy.¹⁵ Whether Ovid recommended that kind of conduct for his lovers or not, it is sure that his writings were taken very seriously by the courtly tradition. Not that the Ovidian material was taken in globo, but being combined with other elements, foreign or native, it produced a new "system,"¹⁶ which was exemplified in the lyrics of the troubadours. In the process of adaptation the Ovidian love

treatise changed in spirit from a game of mutual love deceit to a serious feudal relationship between lover and beloved. The troubadour's lady has now become his feudal suzerain, and consequently, he reverently owes allegiance to her. He feels inferior to her and addresses her with the most profound humility.¹⁷ Knowing the great social differences that existed between Rome in Ovid's day and France in Guillaume de Poitiers' time, it is not surprising, as has been said before, that the French system of courtly love, which owes much to Ovid, would become more and more refined. The period of the martial and dramatic chansons de geste was giving way to the period of sophisticated and romantic courtly love.

But Ovid was apparently not the only influence which contributed to the creation and the perfection of Courtly Love. According to Moshé Lazar, it is not in the works of Ovid, nor in the Medieval Latin literature, nor in the ecclesiastical poetry, that the troubadours have found their amorous themes.¹⁸ It is impossible today to reject simply and solely the hypothesis of a hispano-arabic origin of Courtly Love. A thorough study of the works of Ali Ibn Hazm of Cordova and of his contemporaries shows the possible basis to which the amorous ideology of the troubadours could be inscribed.¹⁹

Ali Ibn Hazm of Cordova (994-1065) whose philosophical writings provide one of the most valuable bodies of evidence we possess on the history of Arabian thought, composed, among other treatises, a book on love, The Dove's Neck-Ring. The concept of love, as understood by Ibn Hazm in The Dove's Neck-Ring, varies greatly from that of Ovid, but shows surprising resemblances to that of Plato. Two attitudes toward love are found among the Arabs: a sensual one,²⁰ perhaps native although colored by the work of Ovid; and another

more spiritual tradition, which appears to be based upon the work of Plato as it had come down through the commentaries of Arabic scholars.²¹ For Ibn Hazm love is a reunion of parts of souls which were separated in the creation.²² It is caused by an outwardly beautiful form "because the soul is beautiful and passionately desires anything beautiful, and inclines toward perfect image."²³ On descanting upon the various ways in which love comes to birth, he dwells on the impression of sight, "for love enters most often through the eyes, which are the gateways of the mind, and thence spreads throughout the whole soul."²⁴ Religious laws, far from hindering true love, make it better.²⁵ If Ibn Hazm does not clearly state that love ennobles the character of the lover, he comes close to it by stating that one of the many characteristics of love is to foster faithfulness.²⁶ Love could be addressed either to a woman of high rank²⁷ or to a slave girl,²⁸ but that the woman should not be married is strongly emphasized by Ibn Hazm.²⁹ If the lover's hopes are rewarded, he is filled with joy, but if his love is rejected, he does not show, as the troubadours very often did, an exterior joy as a kind of acknowledgement that his devotion to her is not rewarded.³⁰

If Ibn Hazm observes that "love begins jestingly," he immediately adds that "its end may be very serious."³¹ In his chapters on the "Helping Friend," he declares that lack of trust in love relations is the mark of "a person of low birth and one devoid of refined feelings."³² The author is above all devoted to extolling "the excellence of Chastity." "The union of the spirit," he asserts, "is more beautiful than the union of the body, a thousand times,"³³ although he does not ignore its physical aspect.³⁴

Ovid does not seem to hold that the kind of love he proposed was

ennobling. On the contrary, he readily admits that it is shameful and debasing.³⁵ The Arabs, and in particular Ibn Hazm, had a certain conception of pure love. It was mostly a love of desire and it would remain pure in spite of the sensual delights that accompanied it.³⁶ But it was not considered as the fount and origin of virtue and, because of that, it lacks the very essence of courtly love.

Ali Ibn Sina or Avicenna (c. 980 - c. 1037), an Arabian philosopher, physician and a devout Mohammedan, attributes an ennobling power to the courtly conception of love. This prodigy of learning wrote, among other books, a Treatise on Love in which he ascribes to human love a positive and contributory role in the ascent of the soul to divine love and union with the divine.³⁷ Before Ibn Sina produced his Treatise on Love, the Arabian philosophers tended to separate the activities of the animal and rational souls into distinct and unrelated orbits. The love of man for woman contained a good in itself, they said, because it produced the identification with the object loved; but that kind of love was still an activity of the animal soul.³⁸ Attraction to external beauty was regarded as a serious obstacle to the soul's ascent to the divine because it diverted the rational soul from its real good, namely, the spiritual beauty. This animal desire was to be suppressed and wholly subdued.³⁹

With Ibn Sina, the animal soul contributes together with the rational soul in reaching the divine. United to the rational soul, the lower soul pursues sense pleasure with a more refined intention. But the animal soul, in order to help further the rational soul toward its spiritual goal, must submit to the higher soul, and be governed by moral virtue and thus be subjected

and reduced to the status of a tool in the service of the rational soul.⁴⁰

The morality of human love rests on the free exercise of the rational soul, and its norm is man's progress toward or regression from it. It becomes clear that such love becomes a source of nobility because it brings man closer to the absolute Good.⁴¹

Sense pleasures become legitimate if they do not lead to actions that belong to the animal soul alone,⁴² but tend to bring together heart and soul in which true love consists. The result of such a union is grace of character, progress in virtue, and increase in nobility.⁴³

From a purely sensual, erotic, and pagan love found in Ovid, we have passed on to a more refined type of love, which could be called Platonic love, and which was exemplified in Ibn Hazm. Finally we have reached a higher and more ennobling stage of love by examining the treatise offered by Ibn Sina.

With the close of the eleventh century, and on through the twelfth century, a sharply heightened awareness of love comes into Western literature, which brought into circulation ways of thinking, many of which were undoubtedly new. This novelty, as expressed in the poetry of the troubadours, cannot be called "merely a new literary fashion,"⁴⁴ as Maurice Valency says. Yet, even regarded as a fashion, the troubadour love-theme was an immensely influential one, as most of the literature of Europe indicates, down to the Renaissance and beyond; but to dismiss Courtly Love as a mere fashion is failing to do justice to the enduring interest and importance of the idea and ideal that it contained. It is when we consider Courtly Love as an idea that we have to bring into the picture the important treatise De Amore libri tres, in which Andreas Capellanus drew this idea into a kind of textbook of Courtly Love,

probably in the 1180's.

This code of conduct makes clear how a world and a civilization that was Christian was able to conceive of a love that was sinful and shameful as the source of good and virtue. How did a work of this kind, apparently so pagan in content and spirit, come to be written, and written evidently in response to a demand, in the overwhelming Catholic world of the twelfth century France?

Andreas (late twelfth century) was a French cleric employed at the court of Philip II (1180-1223). He was almost certainly a priest. In the latter part of his book, he refers to himself as "chaplain of the royal court."⁴⁵ Moreover, his name is signed as a witness to seven charters dated between 1182 and 1186, and one of these charters was granted by the countess Marie (c. 1200), daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine (c. 1122-1204), a great promoter of the doctrine of courtly love in France. Andreas' mind had been formed by a Christian education and so he knew some theology; and the Christian-ethic was the traditionally accredited norm both for himself and his readers. Yet, it was a norm from which the love-ethic outlined in his De Amore sharply deviates in important respects, and of this disagreement Andreas was fully aware. This is shown with disconcerting clarity in a sort of epilogue added to his book, in which he repudiates, in the name of religion, everything he had said therein. His Reprobatione raises the question of Andreas' sincerity. The author upholds, successively, two absolutely opposed views on life; he says "yes" and then "no" about the same thing.⁴⁶

The sincerity of De Amore is not here contested. Only the idea of courtly love, as exemplified in Andreas' book will be relevant as a norm of

comparison with Malory's treatment of the same subject in Le Morte Darthur.

In his Second Book, Andreas presents the thirty-one rules of love:⁴⁷

1. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.
2. He who is not jealous cannot love.
3. No one can be bound by a double love.
4. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.
5. That which a lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish.
6. Boys do not love until they arrive at the age of maturity.
7. When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.
8. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.
9. No one can love unless he is impelled by the persuasion of love.
10. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.
11. It is not proper to love any woman whom one would be ashamed to seek to marry.
12. A true lover does not desire to embrace in love anyone except his beloved.
13. When made public love rarely endures.
14. The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized.
15. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.
16. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.
17. A new love puts to flight an old one.
18. Good character alone makes any man worthy of love.
19. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.
20. A man in love is always apprehensive.
21. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love.
22. Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved.
23. He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little.
24. Every act of a lover ends in the thought of his beloved.
25. A true lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.
26. Love can deny nothing to love.
27. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.
28. A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved.
29. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love.
30. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.
31. Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women.

These ideas are somewhat familiar to us. They are all found in the poetry of the troubadours, whereas only a few are illustrated in the lays and the romances.

Love comes from the intense contemplation upon the beauty of the opposite sex.⁴⁸ Besides a beautiful figure, the excellence of character and an extreme fluency of speech can also inspire a pure love. Andreas insists, above all, on the excellence of nobility of character, which he considers more important than the physical beauty of the body.⁴⁹

The courtly doctrine which Andreas unfolds appears to be of a very aristocratic inspiration. He considers that only three social classes, (plebeia, nobilis, and nobilior)--the middle class, the simple nobility, and the higher nobility--are capable of understanding the ideology of love, or the "fin'amors."⁵⁰ There is at least one more rank among men than among women: the clerk. The clerk represents the highest nobility and is for his lady the most discreet, the most experienced, and the most prudent of lovers.⁵¹ To love, according to this code, one must be noble and act nobly. Poverty is an obstacle to true deeds. (It is to be noted, however, that the troubadours have always declared the contrary.)⁵²

To the list of those who are not fit to bear the arms of love (men after their sixties and women after their fifties; girls under twelve and boys under fourteen),⁵³ Andreas adds that men who are slaves to an excessive passion are also barred from true love. These voluptuous men have a love, which deprived of reason is like that of a shameless dog,⁵⁴ quae rationis differentia nos a cunctis facit animalibus separari. Concerning the peasants, Andreas expounds an astounding theory.⁵⁵ The peasants are prevented, through a

fundamental impossibility, from achieving love. In spite of their greatest efforts to love, they are bound to fail; therefore, it is absolutely useless to instruct them in the rules of love.⁵⁶

Love is the most desirable thing in the world.⁵⁷ It is the supreme glory in this world ("gloria mundana").⁵⁸ Everything has its source in love. Human love is the cause and font of all virtue in this life.⁵⁹ True love cannot be degraded with any vice; it ennobles the humblest man and blesses the proud with humility, and makes him better.⁶⁰ Love is essentially suffering. It is an interior suffering, because the lover dreams, makes plans, worries, etc.⁶¹ A true lover cannot conceive to live, even one day without love, for the courteous lover is he who keeps "measure" in all things.⁶²

There exists no love between married people because between them there is equality and, therefore, only friendship and affection.⁶³ When two lovers marry, love dies. Love can exist only outside the marriage bonds. There exist four stages in the conquest of love, and these stages are controlled by the lady. First, to give hope; second, to promise a kiss; third, to offer embraces; fourth to give the complete abandonment of her person. This last degree is the reward of patient efforts and of a long expectation.⁶⁴ Therefore, if a woman promises her love and has her lover pass through all the stages (looks, kisses, embraces) without according him the supreme reward later, she is considered dishonest and guilty toward the god of love.⁶⁵

According to Andreas, the nature of love is of two kinds: first, Amor Purus, which permits embraces, bodily contacts, the erotic plays, but forbids coition; second, Amor Mixtus or carnal love, which reaches its term in coition.⁶⁶ In reality purus amor and mixtus amor are two forms of the same

love, two modes of the same passion. As a result, says Andreas, two people who have long been patiently and honorably united by pure love can practice mixed love, if they so wish, without changing the substance of their love.⁶⁷ In the main, it remains a question of choice between the lovers, which form of love they want to practice. However, the lover cannot compel his beloved to gratify his desires, that is, to accept the mixtus amor, if she does not consent to it. Still, it is not right for a woman to refuse to give in to her lover's desire on this point, if the lover's demands are sincere and persisting.⁶⁸

The eighth dialogue, between a man of the higher nobility with a woman of the same class, states the question of preference between two kinds of love.⁶⁹ Who doubts that the man who chooses the solaces of the upper part should be preferred to the one who seeks the lower? Such is the problem. Which one of the two lovers is right, he who has chosen the solaces of the upper part or he who has preferred the lower? The man, who seems to be Andreas' spokesman, approves the first choice, whereas the lady, who is generally opposed to the dictates of "fin'amors," prefers the second. The man answers to the lady that only beasts choose the lower form of solaces because they lack reason. Surely, the final aim of love is the physical union, the mixtus amor, but to crave only for mixtus amor is scandalous. It is only after we have tasted of the joy of the upper part, (the rational soul) that it is permitted to indulge in the other pleasures. But the lady tells her lover that fornication is a sin. It is a very small sin, which can be very easily expiated, replies the man.⁷⁰

In a word, Andreas admits that mixtus amor is as good and as true as

purus amor. They complete one another. If pure love is the source of virtue and good actions, it is the same with mixtus amor. Without condemning this form of love, Andreas further affirms that mixed love, too, is real love, that it is praiseworthy, and that it is the source of all good things.⁷¹ Continence is not essentially a virtue. One must love in this world. Without love nobody can live; it is an act contrary to nature.⁷² Chastity, on the other hand, should not bind the clerk more than the layman. To the lady who affirms that the clerk should be a stranger to both purus amor and mixtus amor for the Lord, the clerk answers that God has elected him to fulfill a mission, but He has not conceived him differently from the other humans, has not deprived him of his human instincts and desires. A noble lady must choose a clerk for he is more prudent and more moderate than a simple layman.⁷³

Two words recur constantly in these dialogues: reason and nature. Nature urges man to love; therefore, it would be unreasonable to abstain from love. The very nature of love makes the lover seek satisfaction of his desires; it is therefore not reasonable to refuse him the supreme reward. To oppose love is to oppose reason and nature. Strong passion and sensual appetite compel man to love. Man is not free to act contrary to that passion.⁷⁴ We are condemned to love what we desire. To will not to be separated from the beloved is the only effective liberty of man.⁷⁵

The infidelity of the lover or the beloved can be explained by the passionate nature of the lovers. The unfaithful lover should not deserve to be blamed for that reason, and should not lose the love of his lady, unless the infidelities become too frequent.⁷⁶ The love a man conceives for a new woman is not condemnable. Love seizes him and rules his reason. Of course,

the true lover does not desire any new love as long as the old one is not extinguished.⁷⁷

Dialogues Two and Six discuss the problem of free will in the woman. Does she have the right to refuse the love service of a sincere lover? The answer is negative. If the man loves the beloved, it is because he cannot help but love her. It is a necessity for the courteous lady, and a moral duty, to accept the lover into her service if she knows that the man possesses a noble character. Of course, the lady may refuse or accept such a demand, for she has the liberty of choice. If she refuses, she runs the most serious dangers, for a kingdom of love exists where she will have to give an account of her attitude in this world. The only criterion for the lady must be the character of the lover. The lover is then advised to be generous, charitable, humble, respectful to God and to His Saints. He should neither mock anyone nor beget quarrel. Moderate laughter only should be indulged before women. He should associate with great men. In battle he should be generous and hardy. Our lover should have many women at the same time. Continuing her instructions, the lady tells her lover that he should not lie, and should not be temperate in conversation. He should be hospitable, attend church regularly, and be respectful to the clergy. The lover who possesses these qualities will be found worthy to plead in the court of love.⁷⁸

The lady, convinced by the argument of her interlocutor, asks him whether she should follow her heart (inclination), or her head (reason). The man answers that the heart and reason desire the same thing. The will follows the heart in its inclination, and reason is submissive to the passion.⁷⁹

Each dialogue is a logical, rational, and methodical demonstration of

all the ideas that have been briefly analyzed above. The man presents the arguments (the propositions) of the "fin'amors," in the name of the established traditions, and objects to the conceptions expounded by the lover. Very often, however, the point of view presented by the man triumphs in the end. When a suitable agreement was not reached, they addressed themselves to a Lady of the Court to hear her verdict.

Certain expressions like "in this world," (dans ce monde) "in the world," (ici-bas) "earthly life" (vie terrestre) recur with the same frequency as the words nature and reason. They situate the question in its proper context. The ideology of love, or "fin'amors" is at the same time aristocratic, worldly, and profane. The Third Book, De Reprobatione Amoris, clearly proves it.⁸⁰

In reading De Reprobatione Amoris,⁸¹ one is immediately struck by a change of manner, tone, and method of presentation. Andreas condemns all the ideas which he has previously defended with so much zeal. Now he wants to demonstrate that human love--purus or mixtus--is incompatible with the love of God, unacceptable to the Christian morals. If Andreas, in his De Amore had demonstrated the supremacy of human love, basing his arguments on nature and reason, it is to the Scripture, the Fathers, to the Divine Authority, to the anti-feminine literature that he has now recourse to reject categorically all possibility of compromise between human love and God's love. These are two separate worlds and no bridge can unite them. We must understand here that for Andreas, love constitutes a separate order in the logical and moral categories.⁸²

The woman is no longer the perfect creature about whom he sang with

lyrical accents in De Amore; she is no longer God's and Nature's "chef-d'œuvre," formed to love and be loved. Love is no longer a source of virtue and of good actions, and does not make the lover better. The woman is now the most impure creature in the world, spotted with an ugly assortment of vices: egoism, greed, jealousy, etc. She is incapable of love.⁸³ Love engenders only miseries, crimes, homicides, perjuries, adultery, lies, incest, idolatry, etc.⁸⁴ Love destroys families, separates wives from their husbands. Love, or "fin'amors" is condemnable on all points: it displeases God, offends and hurts the neighbor, corrupts women and sows disorder, and makes of woman a divinity representing Satan.

One by one, Andreas condemns the propositions he had sustained in De

Amore:

1. Only the stupid persons prefer sexual love to the love of God.⁸⁵
2. It is only by abstinence that man can arrive at the eternal beatitude.⁸⁶
3. We are mere animals if we prefer the ephemeral pleasure of love to the celestial and eternal joy.⁸⁷
4. Love, in this world, can procure to man only suffering and miseries.⁸⁸
5. To think about women, to desire them, is the greatest sin a man could commit in this world.⁸⁹

In De Reprobatione, Andreas teaches Walter Gautier exactly the opposite of that which he has taught him in De Amore. Thus reason is rejected in the name of faith, and the ideology of Courtly Love condemned by theology. The conflict between "fin'amors" and divine love is presented as an inevitable phenomenon. We must choose between these two kinds of love, for they are irreconcilable. F. Lee Utley explains the conflict thus:

The Courtly ideal, being a civilized code superimposed on another, the moral code of Christianity, involved contradictions which in the more subtle authors could not be ignored. There were

none but fictional resolutions, for the conflict between the adulterous courtly system and celibacy of chaste marriage, and the setting up of the fiction demanded mention of the conflict. The simultaneous view that women are merciless and full of pity, that they bring man to honor and bring him to his doom, that they should be revered and reviled, these paradoxes are the very essence of the courtly tradition.⁹⁰

But, besides this conflict between the courtly code and the Christian moral, we must take into account the anti-feminist tradition, which, in De Reprobatione, plays an important role, for it is from this tradition that Andreas borrows his "irrational arguments."⁹¹

Why did Andreas have to tear down an ideology which he had applied himself to present in so systematic a manner? It must be noted immediately that while in De Amore Andreas never refers to divine love, in De Reprobatione he does not cease attacking human love. On the other hand, he does not give any positive definition of love for God. He simply contents himself by giving a negative aspect of "fin'amors." Speaking with the same conviction of sexual and divine love, we should realize that we are dealing here with two moral concepts opposed to each other. "What Andreas teaches to be true according to nature and reason, he teaches to be false according to grace and to divine authority. Thus emerges in his book the doctrine of the so-called 'double truth' wherein contradictory propositions are held to be true at the same time."⁹² No doubt seems possible with regard to this doctrine. It is a doctrine preaching a double truth; and that doctrine was condemned in 1277.⁹³

Andreas Capellanus' prose treatise on courtly love remained for many centuries a sort of book of conduct for the lovers. Love was at once the goal and agent of their education. The essence of love was not indulgence of uncontrollable passion, but the moulding of passion by a man's lady, his "mistress."

With the close of the eleventh century and on through the twelfth a sharply-heightened awareness of love comes into Western literature, and this awareness brought into circulation ways of thinking about love which were vividly expressed in the poetry of the troubadours. The troubadours, known in Northern France as *trouvères*,⁹⁴ flourished in the circles of aristocracy. The theme of these medieval poets was almost exclusively love, felt and expressed according to a strictly-defined code that treated refinement and convention. In that courtois relation between the two lovers, the man--a knight if possible, anyhow with a chivalrous soul--must be a humble servant, extolling the perfections of his mistress with quasi-religious zeal. This new cult of the woman and the rules guiding it was called amour courtois.

Among the most eminent troubadours, the following names deserve mention: Guillaume IX d'Aquitaine is the earliest singer of note; Jaufré Rudel made a name for himself by inventing the theme of "amor de lonh" or love from a distance; Marcabru revolted from the tyrannical fashion of the amour courtois but sought originality in a contorted language; Bernard de Ventadour, who among all his rivals, best succeeded in uttering his emotions sincerely and feelingly; and Bertran de Born, a specialist in political subjects, whose verse is vigorous and bitter.

According to Father A. J. Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness,"⁹⁵ the expression "amour courtois" was used for the first time by Gaston Paris in 1883.⁹⁶ The word "courtois" can be taken in a moral or social sense. In the moral sense, "courtois" agrees easily with the "cortezia" of the troubadours, and to the "cortezia" (eleventh and twelfth century) of the northern poets, or *trouvères*. It signifies a group of qualities and virtues. Its opposite,

"vilania," symbolizes a certain number of defects and vices. In the social sense, it indicates the aristocratic character of a special class of men. The "amour courtois" is an art of loving, and he who observes its rules is necessarily "courtois." Consequently, the "amour courtois" is not one of the numerous categories of "courtoisie," not one of its important constituents.

Since, on the one hand, a man or a knight cannot be "courtois" without loving nobly, and since, on the other hand, one needs to be "courtois" in order to love, the troubadours could easily use either of the following themes: a) "cortezia" which is the apanage of a man who loves according to the code of "fin'amors"; b) "fin'amors," which is the font of all virtues: "mezura," "jovens," "jois," "cortezia," "pretz e valor," "donars," etc. "Cortezia," "Mezura," and "Jovens" are the three fundamental virtues of "amour courtois." One finds here the three dimensions of the "amour courtois," namely social, psychological, and moral.⁹⁷ Again, it is Father Denomy who seems to give the best explanation of "courtoisie," and of "cortezia"; " 'Cortezia' is an ideal and a virtue of the Courtly Love; 'courtoisie' is the virtue and the ideal of the 'chevalier.' "⁹⁸

As for "fin'amors," Moshé Lazar says that it is a desire of physical union with the beloved; that this desire develops in function of the reward which the troubadour hopes to receive. The courteous lover always wavers between two poles: protestations of respect and humility on the one hand, and hope for a secret meeting on the other.⁹⁹ Between these two poles, there is enough room for a whole casuistry of passionate love, which Robert Briffault summarizes perfectly well in his The Troubadours:

When the subtleties of courtly dialectic are sifted to their meaning, the refined love which the poets defend against coarseness and

vulgarity remains no less frankly carnal. Marcabru inveighs, and his tongue is a sharp one, against those men and women whose behavior degrades love, and who heed not lofty sentiments and emotions. After which diatribe, he makes himself snug with his "bon amia," who, for her part, is never guilty of such unworthy conduct, and therefore merits the refined devotion of an "entendedor," and he caresses her "while he puts off his clothes."¹⁰⁰

The critics who have sustained the thesis of the platonic ideology of "fin'amors," of the Christian and even mystical character of that love, seem to find no better proof for their demonstrations than the poetry of Jaufré Rudel, the singer of "amor de lonh" (love from a distance).¹⁰¹ This theme later became the very symbol of the spirituality of "fin'amors." But in the poetry of the troubadours in general, scholars find that the "fin'amors" is not a spiritual or divine love inspired by the mysteries of the time. They say that it should not even be considered as the result of a reaction against asceticism, as Etienne Gilson clearly says in The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard:

Courtly love presents itself in no wise as a utilization of mysticism, nor as a reaction directed against asceticism, in the name of human love. Standing apart from both, it much rather expresses the effort of a society, polished and refined by centuries of Christianity, to elaborate a code of human love which should be neither mystical nor even specifically Christian, but more refined than the broad licence of Ovid.¹⁰²

The morality of "fin'amors" is very ambiguous for the critics and the moralists, but seemingly not for the troubadours like Guillaume de Poitiers, Marcabru, Jaufré Rudel and Bernard de Ventadour. It would be difficult to try to conciliate the amorous ideology of the troubadours, their way of life, and their modes of expression with the religion and the Christian morals into which they had been educated. Their ART and CREDO did not have to coincide in any way. This divorce between the religious and social life, between faith and courtly love, must be found in the acceptance of the principle of the

double truth, which regulated the whole system of courtly love.¹⁰³ Father Denomy, in an important essay entitled "Fin'Amors: the pure love of the troubadour, its amorality and possible source," explains the morality of "fin'amors" as follows:

Courtly love is not at all concerned with the Christian concept of the morality of sexual love. The troubadours simply did not advert to it. For them the morality of love lies not in the commandment of God, the teaching of Christ or of the Church, but in the adherence to rules and conventions formulated by them and codified by Andreas Capellanus, and by the observance of the virtues that must bedeck the lover, especially that of fidelity . . . What is a sin for the Christian is a virtue in the courtly lover Courtly love has a code of morality that is peculiarly its own. It is presented as neither immoral nor moral; it is amoral, wholly divorced from any code of morality except its own. Its subjective morality is not to be judged by the Christian standard.¹⁰⁴

Chrétien de Troyes (c. 1135 - c. 1190), the great revealer of the Arthurian drama, and probably the first writer to combine love with adventure and chivalry, seems to have written his Tristan and Iseult (c. 1160) bearing in mind the above-mentioned code of morality. Tristan and Iseult is a romance wherein "fin'amors" and passionate love operate. But in his next romances, Erec and Enide (after 1160) and Fenice and Cligès (after 1160) Chrétien takes a firm position against the "fin'amors" exalted by the troubadours, and against adulterous love, which had been magnificently illustrated in Tristan and Iseult.¹⁰⁵ In Erec and Enide, Chrétien preaches passionate love culminating in marriage and cannot conceive the possibility of real and enduring love outside the bonds of marriage. Chrétien's Lancelot (1164-1165), on the other hand, is at the antipode of everything he had taught or believed. In fact, Lancelot is a striking example of the amorous ideology of the troubadours, and shows Chrétien's allegiance to the principles, viewpoint, and maxims of the amour courtois code. In Lancelot, the "fin'amors" becomes the very subject matter of the

romance, much more strikingly than in Tristan and Iseult. In Yvain (1166-1167), Chrétien reverts to the problem which had always preoccupied him, namely, the conciliation of love and marriage, the harmonious relations between amour courtois and chivalrous adventure, as exemplified in Erec, and Cligès.¹⁰⁶ Yvain, which Jean Frappier justly qualifies as "tragi-comédie de l'aventure et de l'amour," in his Chrétien de Troyes: l'homme et l'oeuvre,¹⁰⁷ gives us the most complete information on Chrétien's ideas with regard to love and marriage. It will be most interesting, later on, to compare Malory's treatment of the very same ideas in his Le Morte Darthur.

Treatment of Courtly Love in English Literature in Malory's England

As has been seen above, courtly love is a highly complex, sophisticated and evasive term. For practical purposes, however, it may be wide, while analyzing Malory's treatment of love in Le Morte Darthur, to keep in mind Andreas' De Amore. The tone and allusions of Malory's work makes it clear that he wrote within and for a defined aristocratic class. It also appears evident that Le Morte Darthur was intended for the gentility, for the rising merchant class, the new bourgeois, and not for the common people, or the man in the street. Malory makes no effort to conceal his intention when he addresses his friends at the end of the book, "I praye you all jentylmen and jentylwymmen that redeth this book of Arthur and his knyghtes from the begynnyng to the endynge . . ." (883) (My italics)

Before attempting to study Malory's attitude towards chivalry in general and courtly love in particular, some important questions ought to be answered, such as, whether Malory really lived in a society which was similar

to that of France; whether Malory's society was undergoing the same gradual transformations as that of Louis XI; and how was chivalry and courtly love regarded in his days. A brief answer to these questions will help to determine how the same problems were exemplified in Malory's romances.

With Marie de France (c.1200), a prominent composer of "Breton" poems, a new tradition of romantic writings starts in England. One remembers that Marie, daughter of Eleanor, lived in England during the reign of Henry II (1154-1139)¹⁰⁸ The coming to England of Eleanor and Henry¹⁰⁹ was a unique stroke of chance by which the courtly romances became linked with the political aspirations of the Angevin Empire. Up to this time, the chief channel of expression for the cultural attitudes of aristocratic society and the chief vehicle for its imaginative powers had been the chanson de geste, which came to its fullest flowering between 1120 and 1160 in England. The chanson de geste and the whole Parisian culture as it was in the days of Louis VI (1108-1137), and Louis VII (1137-1180) were dismissed by Eleanor as "primitive," provincial, "uncourtly," and ill-bred.¹¹⁰

The chansons de geste,¹¹¹ as we recall, were a mirror of the ways and customs of feudal society in the twelfth century. The feudal virtues exemplified were: troth to one's liege, orthodox crusading ardor, limitless valor, truth-speaking. There was also enormous brutality; and the recognized but abhorred vices were cruelty, impiousness, and treason. In those chansons, fighting, and not love, was the absorbing topic.

The new courtly epic, under the patronage of Marie, derived its nourishment from three sources: Anglo-Saxon romancing,¹¹² Celtic inspiration,¹¹³ and the doctrines of love and eroticism peculiar to Provence and Southwestern

France. Although, for a while, the chansons de geste and the Arthurian legends overlapped chronologically and geographically, the former gradually gave way to the latter. The chanson's predominantly male audience was replaced by an audience chiefly of women. The basic material of the Arthurian legend was drawn from Welsh folk stories,¹¹⁴ a source used freely by Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France. To these stories were added whatever pleased the writer. In Lancelot and Tristan and Iseult, the addition is mostly courtly love. Perceval and Galahad were Welsh tales written from the point of view of religious chivalry.¹¹⁵ But a number of the Arthurian tales, perhaps the majority, bear the clear impress of the ideas of feudal chivalry. They consist of battle after battle and joust after joust. Thus, if one reads through the Arthurian cycle,¹¹⁶ even in its latest medieval form, the Le Morte Darthur of sir Thomas Malory, one will find all three types of chivalry worked into the background of Welsh folklore.

According to George Coulton,¹¹⁷ by Chaucer's time (1343-1400), chivalry was losing something of its vitality. By Elizabeth's day (1558-1603), it had become a memory.¹¹⁸ This memory was consciously cherished, was highly evocative, and vivid enough to inspire, even later, enthusiastic poets like Sidney, Spenser, Tennyson, and others.¹¹⁹ One must remember that the ideals of chivalry remained respectable in England longer than they did in France, even though the chivalric form lasted longer in France than in England. Chivalry became identified in England with a crude semi-feudal patriotism. It continued to feed the memory of Edward III's successful campaign (1327-1377) and, especially, on the brilliant reign and conquest of Henry V (1413-1422). In France, the chivalric idealism was suffering from too close a connection with

an era of national humiliation or with the reckless actions of an undisciplined and factious nobility. The results of the Hundred Years' War and the anarchy created by the subsequent Wars of the Roses (1455-1485) did not affect directly the chivalric idealism, because already it had sufficiently isolated itself from the practical affairs of the country. Long after the Frenchmen had discarded chivalry as being unrealistic, the Englishmen continued to view it as both an ideal and actual fact.

As for courtly love, one must remember that it had been introduced as a graft on the parent stock of an essentially feudal chivalry. It was tolerated, apparently very grudgingly, by the custodians of English morality. It was not unusual for the English authors in general to reshape the content of the stories they borrowed from France with conscious piety or even prudishness.¹²⁰ Raymond Lincoln Kilgour says that while chivalry was "considered as the military branch of the nation with duties strictly warlike and practical . . . courtly love was only a literary diversion which might charm knightly ears but which had no definite value for the order."¹²¹

Even in France, which has been regarded as the sanctuary of courtly love, the worthy chevalier de la Tour-Landry wrote a book, Livre du Chevalier (c. 1372) warning his daughters to avoid the pitfalls of courtly love. This attitude is acutely revealed throughout the Paston Letters written between 1440 and 1486.¹²² The English writers of that period seem often to have underplayed the role of the knight as a lover in preference to the man of military prowess, and to have taken a dour view of women. It is J. M. Berdan¹²³ who suggested that the "old formal erotic allegory was out of touch with the ideas of the new age," and that the anonymous The Courts of Love (c. 1400), though

artistically superior to Pasetyme of Pleasure (c. 1506), survived in only a single manuscript; whereas Hawkes's poem, which emphasizes the education of the knight rather than the theory of courtly love, went through several editions in the course of the century. Margaret Adlum Gist confirms the general attitude toward courtly love when she says that the authors of the Middle English romance seemed not to have been deeply influenced by the French concept of courtly love, and that where they treat the subject, it tends to be in a context of marriage rather than of adultery.¹²⁴ It can also be observed that in general the didactic intentions and the conscious piety of the English romances were usually stressed. Whereas the lusts of French lovers are bluntly stated, the English amorous relations are not only played down but usually punished. In the English romance dramatic justice is effected and didactic lines added. If the English are sometimes as outspoken as the French, they usually show a greater restraint of language and a tendency to modify or omit whatever is too blunt, too brash, or too sexual. In matters pertaining to the relationship between the sexes, the English romancers follow a more puritanical line of conduct than the French. This inherent sobriety and modesty of the English mind caused English authors, Malory included, invariably to modify the material of their French sources. They then lessened the emphasis on passion in all things and stressed moderation, discretion, self-control, and piety.

With the exception of Chaucer and Gower, whose works remain, the English poets had slight interest in and possibly little understanding of the French concept of courtly love. They tended to fit the concept of courtly love whenever possible to a marital rather than an extra-marital pattern. This tendency to emphasize married life is well put by C. S. Lewis when

referring to the third book of Chaucer's Troilus and Cryseide, he says that "Chaucer has brought the old romance of adultery to the very frontiers of the modern, or should we say late, romance of marriage."¹²⁵ Did Malory make the final step?

Malory's heroes are those representing a polite, cultivated and military society. They act in accordance with a moral code dictated by practical social conventions and clerical regulations. If the hero transgresses the code, he is defeated spiritually or physically, and the romance then becomes a tragedy. In the majority of English verse romances there is a tendency to have the hero marry the girl of his choice and to have him settle down to the serious task of raising a family.

Since one of the ideals of courtly love is infidelity in a wife,¹²⁶ and since the ideal of conventional morality is quite the contrary, it is interesting to find in some English works how the moral code of everyday living is emphasized and how the faithful, virtuous wife is presented as the noblest of creatures. The plot runs as follows. Wives¹²⁷ are wrongfully accused of betraying their husbands. They are cast off, suffer greatly and are tempted greatly, but their fidelity to the marriage vow remains unshaken. Ultimately the husband learns his error and is only too happy to recover his chaste wife. Virtue is always rewarded; morality always triumphs in the end.

We also find cases in which extra-marital love is seemingly condoned by the authors of the romances in which they appear. But it must be observed that in these works most of the intimacies follow formal betrothal between the heroes and heroines. This medieval troth-plighting had almost the binding power of the marriage which eventually took place. It was considered sacred

and unbreakable. Therefore, the intimacies which are indulged in are taken as much for granted as those of marriage.

There are other romances in which the authors are preoccupied with themes of virtuous love reaching a climax in marriage, and the writers' sympathetic treatment of these themes certainly indicate an idealization of such passion. This is made clear by the condemnation of the adulterous-minded Guinevere in the tales in which she appears, as well as by the praise of Igrayne's virtuous convictions in the face of Uther's illicit proposals. The ideal of married love is also stressed by Igrayne's ready acceptance of Uther, once his love is brought within the bounds of conventions. No glorified abstraction of an ideal of adulterous love is anywhere apparent.

But in spite of the virtuous aspect of love found in non-Arthurian materials, there is much adultery, especially in the matter of Arthur. However, the authors are not presenting the adultery sympathetically nor are they idealizing it. Even a major character like Lancelot is not favored, and his illicit love is not presented as being something ennobling, as Andreas would have it. Merlin himself, whose advent into the world and departure from it are motivated by adulterous love, is almost deprived of any responsibility by putting the blame on the devil. The tale offers a superb opportunity to the author to discuss the evil origins of luxury, never its courtly aspect.

The love affair of Lancelot and Guinevere in the late Arthurian works is no more courtly than is the queen's intimacy with Mordred in the earlier versions of the story, although Guinevere's character has been improved in the romances based on Geoffrey as it is in the more developed works. The Lancelot-Guinevere episode presents a very interesting story of unrestrained love.

There is nothing of the artificial courtly love code in it, for its treatment is too honestly sordid to a morally minded Englishman. Guinevere is constantly aware of her sin and Lancelot never forgets his moral failure. Although the author does not condone nor reproach the two lovers in particular, he rejects no opportunity to condemn the sin of luxury, in general. Moreover, the marital aspect of love (marriage is sacred and unbreakable) is presented in such a way as to give no chance to the courtly love code to operate. The Lancelot-Guinevere episode is explained in such a manner as to exonerate Lancelot of all blame. His sincere apologies and pledges of good faith are hardly in keeping with the courtly love code. At the end of her life, Guinevere, repentant and detached, is able to counsel Lancelot whom she once berated for supposed infidelity, to seek a wife. In his turn, Lancelot, struck by the finality of the tragedy and the inner consciousness of the necessity of expiation announces his decision to become a hermit. Only death will conclude the penance of both Lancelot and Guinevere.

In this romance, where the main thread of motivation is an adulterous love, one must search in vain for any glorification of illicit passion. In fact, there is no finer condemnation of immoral love than this story, which is so intrinsically bound up with persons who bring about their own and others' destruction by contravention of the higher ethos of the social code.

Arthur himself is not entirely blameless, and his double lecherous encounter with women during the course of the Lancelot, is severely underlined. Each time, the author condemns Arthur's conduct, and has the king's associates strongly disapprove of Arthur's misdemeanor. Gawain's casual loves are also presented in a very disinterested manner. He dabbles with love and evidently

does not take it very seriously.

The Tristan-Iseult story contains much that could be based on the courtly love code. However, many passages are found which not only indicate a respect for the rights of marriage which the hero has transcended, but also a sensitive repugnance to mere physical union. A sense of guilt permeates the story. Tristan bestirs himself to do all in his power to effect reconciliation between Mark and Iseult, and both lovers swear to sin no more.

In general, the English authors, either in their translations, adaptations, or re-interpretations of the French materials, treat adultery only in the light of conventional morality, never according to the courtly love code. The ready condemnation of the most sympathetically drawn characters of illicit love prohibits any glorification of such a passion. The hero of the important romance Lancelot is not exempt from the criticisms of the author. Tristan, Arthur, and Merlin, each one bow down for their share of condemnation for adultery. Even the proud Guinevere acknowledges her sin and bids Lancelot to seek her no more. There seems to be no necessity for equipping ourselves with the machinery of courtly love when reading medieval English Arthurian romances.

It is in this kind of literary and moral English atmosphere that Malory lived. Since next to nothing is known of his life and circumstances, what he actually believed and preached can only be assumed, gathered, or deduced from his writings.¹²⁸

Malory's knowledge, acceptance, or
rejection of Andreas' rules

Even though D. S. Brewer asserts that the distinction in Malory "Between that what is derived and what is personal . . . cannot affect our final

judgment on the total work of art, which must be judged in its own right, as a whole, obeying its own laws, holding and shaping the reader's imagination by its own power,"¹²⁹ one cannot agree totally with his position. In judging the work of art as a whole, it must be remembered also, that what Malory simply copied, deleted, enlarged, or altered must be closely examined in order to determine, not only how much he deviated from his sources, but what turn of mind, what attitude, what criteria caused those changes, especially when one deals with a subject as subtle and elusive as courtly love.

Now whether this attitude toward his material was personal, borrowed or simply influenced makes a world of difference. Here the writer has in mind Andreas' De Amore and Caxton's edition of The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalrye as possible direct influences.

Nobody will dispute the fact that the code of courtly love was of major literary importance. It appears doubtful, however, that the complete outline of the courtly convention ever crossed the English Channel. It does not often appear in the English romances. Although minimized, the influence of courtly love is nevertheless felt everywhere, in the occurrence of love-sickness on the part of the knight and lady, in the lady's initial inaccessibility and coldness, in the knight's endurance of hardships for love's reward, and in the occasional presenting of the adulterous relationship as beautiful and enduring. The convention is almost completely fulfilled in the loves of Lancelot and Guinevere and of Tristram and Isode.

It would be hard to imagine that Malory never had any knowledge of the code of courtly love as exemplified in Andreas' De Amore. The Latin work of Andreas enjoyed considerable popularity on the Continent,¹³⁰ and had been trans-

lated into French (1290,¹³¹ Italian (middle of the fifteenth century), and German (1404) by the time Malory was born, but no complete English translation had been undertaken.¹³²

Malory may have been attracted by Marie's code which professed to derive from the authentic practice of chivalry in the court of King Arthur in Caerlon on Usk, than which nothing could afford a more unexceptionable pattern for chivalry. It may have elucidated for aspiring knights the true inwardness of Gawayne, the sustaining principles of Arthur himself, but it seems futile to believe that a man like Malory could have accepted Andreas' book which was exposed to the callous scrutiny of an age and a people hostile to sentiment in general, and to courtly love in particular. Besides, Malory could never have accepted a code in which the conception of love is that of illicit passion. If in Ovid man is the master employing his arts to seduce women for his pleasure, in Andreas it is the woman who is the mistress, man her pupil in homage, her vassal in service. A rapid reading of Le Morte Darthur will immediately make us aware that for Malory women were not the untouchable mistresses depicted by Andreas but the loving, devoted, and faithful companion of man.

It is, therefore, not surprising at all that without even explicitly mentioning it, Malory rejected en bloc Andreas' code of courtly love by re-writing Le Morte Darthur on more orthodox and moral principles.

Malory's own treatment of courtly love in the different Books

In support of what has been said in the previous chapters, we readily notice when reading through Malory's work that the glamor of the flourishing French courtly love has lost all its luster. Arthur B. Ferguson makes courtly

love more grim and more sordid when he says that the "courtly love ideal was . . . largely irrelevant if not repugnant to those of the English provincial aristocracy who still held the basic principles of chivalry as guides to the actual business of living."¹³³

In the French Arthurian romances prowess and desire for reputation, nobility, courtesy, and friendship served only as a background for the treatment of love; but in Malory, prowess and not love dominates most of the tales. French Lancelot, for example, accomplishes all his exploits for a single word, LOVE. But in Malory, this single magic word becomes HONOR, or GLORY, or WORSHIP.

The Tale of King Arthur

In the simple story of Pelleas and Ettarde, (119-126) Malory ignores or simply rejects the courtly love convention of the original story. He has Pelleas, who has been cuckolded, desert Ettarde, who dies of love for him, and gives him the hand of Nyneve as a reward. Malory wanted poetic justice to be done. Moreover, his philosophy of giving a good "ensample" is at work here.

The Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake

The character of Lancelot fully exposes Malory's ideal of chivalry and courtly love as opposed to that of his French sources. At the end of Book I, Malory, following his sources, presents to us Lancelot as a leading knight who exemplifies his ideal perfectly. With Book III, however, Malory already begins to reject certain features of Lancelot's character, and continues to portray him as the best knight. Lancelot's love for Guinevere is mentioned only casually; it never forms the subject of the narrative. Malory omits Lancelot's love episodes with Elayne and Morgan le Fay and postpones his quarrels with

Guinevere, thus deliberately excluding the courtly and romantic episodes of the sources of his Third Book in order to emphasize the moral ideal of chivalry. (194)

Malory surely had a certain knowledge of the refined courtly philosophy which lay behind his story, but because it was too confused or too earthly, he simply shunned it. He could not admit, as the Frenchmen readily did, that far from being an impediment to virtue and bravery, courtly love was considered a direct incentive to it. Therefore, Malory has Lancelot reply to the damsel that his notion of chivalry took no account of love:

...To be a weddyd man, I thynke hit nat, for than I muste couche with hir and leve armys and turnamentis, batellys and adventures. And as for to sey to take my pleasaunce with peramours, that woll I refuse: in prencipall for drede of God, for knyghtes that bene adventures sholde nat be advoutrers nothir lecherous, for than they be nat happy nother fortunate unto the werrys. (194-195)

Since this part of the story is Malory's addition, it becomes clear that the vehemence with which "love of paramours" is censured by Lancelot strongly suggests that Malory himself was irritated by the matter. Of course, Malory could not delete all "touchy" passages dealing with Lancelot. We must bear in mind, as Malory certainly did, that Lancelot was, by a long-standing romantic tradition, the lover of Guinevere. If Malory disapproved of the flimsiness of courtly love he could not dismiss his traditionally recognized hero-lover Lancelot. Ultimately, Malory probably discovered that by presenting Lancelot and Guinevere as lovers he could maintain a certain unity throughout his tales and by condemning the relationship as unworthy of Lancelot's knight-hood, he could invoke it as one of the reasons for the downfall of the Round Table.

The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkeney

In the Book of Gareth, Malory expounds quite a different kind of love. It is a model story of a natural, untutored, and disinterested affection, which tears to pieces the conventional code of Andreas Capellanus. The tale is, in many ways, Malory's own commentary on his brand of courtly love. As Charles Moorman rightly says, it "works toward the proposition that the true end of love is marriage, not adultery, that young lovers may be fickle, that wise maids had best not tarry, and that young lovers sometimes need restraining."¹³⁴ In Gareth, Malory presents "vertuose love," of which he approves, rather than courtly love of which he disapproves.

Lyonet's attempt to test Gareth by courtly standard fails (230-231). Later on, Lyones, Lyonet's sister and true lover of Gareth, suddenly realizes that her love for Gareth is more than the conventional sudden emotion of the courtly love romances, and consequently, before losing him, she wastes no time in fixing the time of their marriage. (270) Both lovers reject the idea of Paramour-lover, and insist that marriage, which is blessed by the bishop of Canterbury and witnessed by Arthur, will bring the only happiness they want. (269) Moreover, Malory stresses the importance of matrimony in fostering happiness by having Gaheris marry Lyonet and Aggravayne, Lawrell, (270) at the end of the tale.

The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones

With Tristram de Lyones we open a new chapter on the development of love in Malory. The argument provided in the Third Book is reinforced here. Even if the love-intrigue does not play as important a part as it does in the French source of the Prose Lancelot, it still presents the pursuit of love as

a natural part of knight-errantry. As usual, Malory robs the love story of its glamor by failing to sympathize with it although he has to accept a knight-lover as hero. The story shows that Malory, again, believes strongly in a love that springs naturally and which is not magically provoked by love-potions. (288, 292) Tristram falls spontaneously in love long before he drinks the potion. (288) But, since his first concern is chivalry and not Isode, he forgets La Beale Isode and marries Isode Blanchemains. Tristram appears only too ready, love potion or no love potion, to be off with the other knights adventuring and fighting and hunting; and it becomes a matter of only incidental significance that it is all done in the service of a lady. (318; W 1435-1436) No doubt, Malory is more interested in his martial hero than in the lover of Isode; but he found it difficult to suppress many of his French sources without obscuring the clarity of the plot. The reader has the impression sometimes that it is Tristram's worship as a knight rather than his love for Isode which entitles him to possess her.

The character of Mark seems to be blackened for two reasons: a) to show how a treacherous villain behaves toward the second greatest knight; b) to attenuate the crime of Tristram's and Isode's adultery by making it look somewhat more human, more acceptable than Mark's conduct.

The role of Palomides accentuates the concept of true love. He calls himself a fool to love Isode when the best knight of the world loves her. But, that La Beale Isode has been the cause of his worship, he will not deny. (569) He even confesses that he never rejoiced her. (578) In the French version, Tristram and Palomides never reconcile because of their love for Isode; but Malory reconciles them, because both are noble knights. Moreover,

Palomides is christened not for the love of Isode, but because of his friendship for Tristram. (622) Is it not sir Segwarydes who earlier in the story told sir Tristram, who had created some love trouble between Segwarydes and his wife, that "I will never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady"? (333)

All along his "reducing" of the "Tale of Tristram," Malory was pursued by the adultery of his hero. He could not avoid it without distorting his story. But, how should he present adultery without offending the English taste? First, he has Perceval say to King Mark that "ye sholde never thynke that so noble a knyght as sir Trystram is, that he wolde do hymselff so grete vylany to holde his unclyns wyff. Howbehit, he may love youre quene synles, because she is called one of the fayryst ladyes of the worlde." (504) Malory was well aware of Tristram's adulterous conduct (327, 462), but he could not bring himself to admit it openly. Are we dealing here with a presentation of the theme of Rudel's "amor de lonh" (love from a distance), which is the symbol of the spirituality of "fin'amors"? Or to put it more simply, is it platonic love that Malory wants to present? There are many instances which would strongly incline us to believe that he permitted, outside the bonds of matrimony, a love free from sensual desire: "as the Freynshhe booke seyth, the quene and sir Launcelot were togydirs. And whether they were abed other at other maner of disportis, me lyste nat thereof make no mencion, for love that tyme was nat as love ys nowadayes." (821) It is interesting to note, as Vinaver clearly points out, (W 1615) that Malory follows neither Le Morte Darthur (1. 1806) "to bede he gothe with the quene," nor the French Mort Artu (MA p. 92) "se coucha avec la roine," both of which might, in his view, convey the wrong idea of how lovers were expected to behave in Arthur's time.

Professor R. H. Wilson offers the following argument:

For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustes was betwyxte them, and than was love, trouthe and faythefulness. And so in lyke wyse was used love in kynge Arthurs dayes. (791)

According to Professor Wilson, this change in Malory's thinking about courtly love is meant as a reprobation of the licenses of courtly love, or rather, the insistence that the love of true knights in Arthur's days was purely platonic. Malory's comments would then be reminiscent of the teachings of Andreas on that subject, especially with regard to Amor Purus; and of the chaste and disinterested love recommended by St. Bernard.¹³⁵ But such is not the case, I think, for Malory knew too well that platonic love was unnatural, to say the least. He seems to be very clear when he says "now lever we them kyssynge and clyppyng as was a kyndely thyng." (593) Numerous other passages corroborate the above assertion. Did not Ettarde and Gawayne go "to bedde togydirs"? (124) Did not dame Lyones come "wrapped in a mantell furred with ermyne, and leyde hir downe by the sydys of sir Gareth and therewithall he began to clyppe hir and to kysse hir"? (247) We have also seen that in the Tristram-Isode story, Malory describes plainly the physical relation between the two lovers, and we know that the Lancelot-Guinevere adultery game is too obvious to be played down. (801) The same is true of the Lancelot-Elayne relationship. (593)

What seems repulsive to Malory's taste or code is not so much the sexual relation itself, but the sophisticated manner in which it is presented in the French sources. The word "paramour," for instance, which, in Andreas' art of courtly love, was a rule to be strictly observed whether in amor purus or amor mixtus, did not please Malory because it implied mere pleasure-taking.

Malory was too much of a puritan to let the occasion pass to do a little moralizing. Upon the begetting of Galahad on Elayne, Malory takes great care to minimize Lancelot's guilt by emphasizing that the shameful action was accomplished under enchantment. (585) Vinaver clearly points out how Malory felt toward amour courtois. For instance, the simple incident involving Persydes and a certain Damsel, (600) which is treated very graciously and very courteously in the French sources, is presented in an almost brutal manner in Malory: "An therein dwellyth an uncurteyse lady; and bycause she proffyrde me to be her paramoure and I refused her, she sett her men upon me suddeynly or ever I myght come to my wepyn." In a passage which is not in the sources, Malory has Perceval rebuke the same lady for having been uncourteous, "A, madame, what use and custom ys that in a lady to destroy good knyghtes but yf they woll be youre paramour? Perde, this is a shamefull custom of a lady, and yf I had nat a grete mater to do in my honde I shulde fordo all youre false customys." (601) This is certainly not the kind of love which would gain Malory's approval. A model of love exemplified by the Maid of Astolat to Lancelot would receive Malory's benediction:

Am I nat an erthely woman? And all the whyle the brethe ys in my body I may complayne me, for my belyve ys that I do none offence, though I love an erthely man, unto God, for He fourmed me thereto, and all maner of good love comyth of God. (779)

That love should be as natural as breathing air is made clear by Malory.

Again, it is a direct jab at the French "paramours." Malory's hero speaks:

Madame, she (the Fayre Maydyn of Astolate) wolde none other wayes be answerde but that she wolde be my wyff, othir ellis my paramour, and of these two I wolde not graunte her. But I proffird her . . . a thousand pound yerely to her and to her ayres, and to wedde any maner of knyght that she coude fynde beste to love in her harte.

For, madame, I love nat to be constrayned to love, for love muste only aryse of the harte selff, and nat by none constraynte. (781)

At every turn of a page we feel that Malory's intention is to bring more realism, more humaneness in his tales. He is not merely telling a good story, but he endeavors to revive an unsophisticated kind of love together with an enduring fidelity in his lovers. Bewmayne's blatant rejection of the courtly tradition, that a knight-lover should remain unmoved by his mistress' infidelity or disdain is unequivocal: "Mesemyth hit was but waste laboure, for she lovyth nat is but grete foly." (237) The virtue of fidelity is praised even in Guinevere, for, as Malory says, ". . . all ye that be lovers, call unto youre remembraunce the moneth of May, lyke as ded quene Guinevere . . . that whyle she lyved she was a trew lover, and therefore she had a good ende." (791) This passage, and that immediately preceding it,¹³⁶ summarizes one of Malory's concepts of true love, namely stability, or, as others would call it, loyalty in love. Malory is opposed to the "hasty and fickle spirit which cannot establish affection before desiring satisfaction. In Arthur's time men and women kept faith for long years; there was love, truth, and fidelity between them, but no wanton lust. Malory finds fidelity in love praiseworthy in itself; ultimately, perhaps, because it is a form of loyalty."¹³⁷

But, as we have pointed out before, Malory is puzzled by the problem of presenting Lancelot, the pattern of knightly virtue, as an adulterer with his sovereign's wife. The problem, of course, never arose in French. But for Malory it has become a stumbling block. The only possible way out remains to re-interpret the whole Lancelot- Guinevere story and make their sinful love affair one of the causes of the fall of the Round Table.

The Tale of the Sankgreall

The "Tale of the Sankgreall" is another instance in which Malory's re-interpretation of his sources shows a definite shift in meaning although adhering closely to the plan of his French sources. If, in the "Frensshe Booke" the failure to achieve the Quest was the result of "man's sinful nature" according to Vinaver (W 1568), Malory did not fail to make the well "a sygne of lechory that was that tyme muche used." (732) Malory must be consistent, and "since in his scheme the Arthurian world is undermined from the beginning by 'lechory,' Uther and Igrayne, Arthur and Morgawse and since one of the contributing factors to the downfall of the court at 'that tyme,' is the Lancelot-Guinevere relationship,"¹³⁸ the relevance of this passage becomes obvious. The failure of the best knight in the world to attain the Grail brings as a consequence the failure of the whole knightly system of the Round Table, and serves as a fatal prelude to its final collapse and rejection. Therefore, Malory emphasizes that lechery, called sensuality or adultery in the approved French courtly love system, is destructive. Malory constantly opposes, in the Quest, the worldly chivalry of Lancelot, and the celestial chivalry of Galahad, Perceval, and Bors. From our readings we know exactly on which side Malory stands. In the French sources, the evils of courtly chivalry are sensuality and homicide, and the virtues of celestial chivalry are chastity and faith in God. Malory accepts the opposition between sensuality and chastity, but it is not of major importance to him; for him, chivalry and not chastity is the main issue. He considers Lancelot's devotion to Guinevere a betrayal of the chivalric code. An example that will strengthen this assertion is the story of Bors and his lady-temptress. (694-703) The lady, after revealing

her love to Bors, tells him that "nedys ye must lye be me to-nyght." (695) Then she swears that unless Bors shares her bed "ye shall se how I shall dye for youre love." (695) By denying her request Bors rejects the courtly love system. Whereas the French author takes great care to explain that this lady has violated the rules of polite behavior, Malory seems to ignore them by stressing the chivalric conduct of Bors. On the other hand, the love that a brother must have for his own brother is made a major symbol of unity in the Round Table code. The failure to maintain such brotherly love eventually helped cause the destruction of the Round Table itself.

The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere

The "Tale of Lancelot and Guinevere" introduces a Lancelot who had resolved to fulfill the duties of a Christian knight, as implied in Lull's book,¹³⁹ namely, to defend the "ladyes and damesels which daylay resorted unto hym to be their champion." (744) It introduces also a Lancelot who had promised to give up the adulterous relationship with Guinevere. That Arthur knew of such relationship and pardoned the sinners is almost clear. That there was "grete joy in the courte" over the decision of Lancelot is certain. (744) But such hope is short-lived, for "sir Launcelot began to resorte unto quene Gwenivere agayne and forgat the promyse and the perfeccion that he had made in the queste . . . for they loved togydirs more hotter than they ded tofore hand." (744) Besides, Lancelot tells King Arthur, after rescuing Guinevere from Mador, that "I promysed her at that day ever to be her knyght in ryght other in wronge." (755) Again, Lancelot begs Guinevere to believe that "I never fayled you in ryght nor in wrong." (822) Finally, at the very opening of the episode of "The knight of the Cart," Malory seems to reflect

on the very subject of right and wrong, with regard to knighthood and courtly love.

Therefore, lyke as May moneth flowryth and floryshyth in every mannes gardyne, so in lyke wyse lat every man of worshyp florysh hys harte in this worlde: firste unto God, and nexte unto the joy of them that he promysed hys feythe unto; for there was never worshypfull man nor worshypfull woman but they loved one bettir than another; and worshyp in armys may never be foyled. But firste reserve the honoure to God, and secundly thy quarell muste come of thy lady. And such love I call vertuose love. (791)

This passage refers undoubtedly to Lancelot and Guinevere. Are not Lancelot and Guinevere the noble man and woman who are "hote" in love? Convinced that a knight who is great in prowess would seem to be safe always in his love, Malory adds that his honor cannot be blemished. It is also understood that the service of a lady cannot be first; otherwise, the love would no longer be virtuous. This would account for Arthur's recommendation in the tale of "Torre and Pellinore" that "no man take no batayles in a wrongfull quarell for no love, for no worldes goodes." (91)

The experience undergone in the Quest of the Sankgreall has somewhat changed Lancelot's aim in his relationship with Guinevere. One would have desired a more complete purification of his sentiments, but the story must go on. Hereafter, Lancelot will rely on his prowess alone. No wonder, then, that the lovers, on few occasions, are at odds. (770, 771) The chivalric code is prevailing over the courtly system. Malory takes great care to broaden the gap between the two ideologies and makes chivalry, or the failure of it, the climax of the seventh Book.

The episode of "The Fair Maid of Astolat" contains some of the more revealing speeches about courtly love. For instance, after the letter of the

Fair Maid is read, shedding light on the Lancelot-Elayne relationship, the best warrior-lover in the world explains to Guinevere how his love-loyalty to her made him refuse Elayne's proposition to become either her husband or paramour. Lancelot also tells the queen about the monetary offer he proposed to Elayne to compensate for her frustrated love and how he recommended that she wed a knight "that she coude fynde best to love in her harte." (781) After such heartfelt reaffirmation of loyalty "the quene . . . prayde hym mercy, for why that she had ben wrothe with hym causeles." (782) Harmony is restored.

In the "Great Tournament" section a special sermon is delivered on the essentials of chivalry with due emphasis on the importance, not of courtly love, but of true friendship, "and allways a good man woll do ever to another man as he wolde be done to hymselff." (790) The episode closes with a lavish banquet and an encouraging moral, "And, he that was curteyse, trew, and faythe full to hys frynde was that tyme cherysshed." (790) During all that time we are fully aware that the recommenced adultery of Lancelot and Guinevere is in full swing, even though it plays only a second fiddle here. Lancelot shows complete obedience, and carries Guinevere's orders to the letter. This is the Lancelot who has gone through the purifying Queste. This atmosphere is intensified in the next episode of "The knight of the Cart."

Here, more than in the previous tale, the humiliation of Lancelot is renewed in a more open fashion. Guinevere, following the French courtly tradition, spurns Lancelot's zeal to defend her, and when he manifests signs of surprise, Guinevere chides him mildly, "Do ye forthynke yourselff of youre good dedis"? (799) In this episode, Malory "openly contrasts two kinds of love-relationships, marriage and love of paramours. There is no explicit

reference to Lancelot's love for Guinevere, yet Malory's preference for a certain kind of love sets up an uneasy opposition within the story.¹⁴⁰ As we read the tale, we notice how carefully the ground is laid for the eventual collapse of the Round Table. Lancelot fears that in trying to rescue Guinevere,¹⁴¹ "peraventure I shall there destroy som of my beste fryndis, and that sholde much repente me." (827) He also knows that to fight for Guinevere would be to fight against Arthur, "Alas, I have no harte to fyght ayenste my lord Arthur, for ever mesemyth I do nat as me ought to do." (841) The courtly love laws are increasingly scorned; idealistic chivalry and realistic friendship win over superficial and sophisticated courtly love. Malory, gradually and consistently, centers the issues on the feud presently developing between Lancelot and the other knights. Arthur wants to refuse to believe in Lancelot's disloyalty. Lancelot, the flower of knighthood, is the only knight who can heal sir Urry, as he had been the only one to rescue Elayne. (582) Lancelot remains the best knight in the world, even though some might regard him as only a worldly knight

The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur

If the sources make the death of Lancelot and Guinevere more romantic, there is no doubt left that Malory tries to give a spiritual orientation to his main tragic heroes. The world of chivalry was not well lost for love, "for as well as I have loved the heretofore, myne harte woll nat serve now to se the for thorow the and me ys the flowre of kyngis and knyghtes destroyed." (876) Malory refused the romantic parting accorded to Lancelot and Guinevere of the "Frensshe Book." To Lancelot's "I praye you kysse me, and never more," converted Guinevere replies, "Nay, that shal I never do, but absteyne you from suche werkes, and they departed." (877) Upon his return from France, Lancelot

goes to Glastynbury to pay his final homage to queen Guinevere. He swoons, (879) but not for love, but out of repentance for "myn orgule and my pryde that they were bothe layed ful lowe." (880) His final wish will be granted, namely, "that in Joyous Garde I wold be buryed," not because he loved Guinevere, but "bycause of brekyng of myn avowe." (881)¹⁴²

With this final blow to courtly love there is no doubt left that Malory considered it an adjunct, which he could scarcely dismiss without destroying the pattern of his story and diminishing the suspense, which it helped create.

Malory succeeded in finally rejecting Lancelot's unvirtuous love and in superseding the worldly fiction of the French courtly romance by introducing the religious values presented in "The Tale of the Sankgreall." As P. E. Tucker justly remarks, "to understand Malory's presentation of Lancelot is to grasp the unity of his book; its theme is loyalty even in describing its failure."¹⁴³ That Malory held idealistic chivalry far above artificial courtly love is beyond a shadow of a doubt. Whether the former was considered practical is doubtful, but that it was the best available instrument to teach a good lesson at the time is certainly believable.

The next section of this chapter will endeavor to present Malory's treatment of his major characters with regard to courtly love. How he slavishly followed his sources, and how he willingly and gracefully departed from them will also be analyzed. At the same time, we will attempt to give, as far as it can be done, the reasons which governed the transpositions of his source material.

In the major characters

Lancelot and Guinevere

Since Lancelot and Guinevere are of the greatest interest in the destruction of the Round Table, it appears essential to begin with them. Lancelot in particular presents a complex individuality, In general, Malory followed his various sources very closely in depicting Lancelot's character. The numerous variants from his basic material, however, clearly indicate that Malory, in presenting his hero-lover, had a new and definite plan in mind.

The very first appearance of Lancelot is announced by a long and original introduction, which leaves no doubt as to how his character should be taken.

. . . in all turnamentes, justys, and dedys of armys, both for lyff and deth, he passed all other knyghtes, and at no tyme was he ovircom but yf hit were by treson other inchauntement. So this sir Launce- lot encreased so mervaylously in worship and honoure; therefore he is the fyrste knyghte that the Freynsh booke makyth menccion of aftir kyng Arthure come from Rome. Wherefore quene Gwenyvere had hym in grete favoure aboven all other knyghtis, and so he loved the quene agayne aboven all other ladyes dayes of his lyff, and for hir he dud many dedys of armys and saved her from the fyre thorow his noble chevalry. (180)

This characterization of Lancelot emphasizes two traits, which will be constantly opposed throughout the narrative: surpassing prowess and loyal love for Guinevere. Malory's sources furnished the concept of Lancelot as the ideal lover of Guinevere. Already, Malory emphasizes the fact that Guinevere's love for Lancelot is "hote." Guinevere made "grete sorow that the kyng and all the lordys sholde so be departed." (142) Guinevere's sorrow for Arthur only is mentioned in (Mt. 21-22). Guinevere's feelings are not described at all in (VM. 427-428).

By stressing the unselfish loyalty of Lancelot's character, Malory greatly succeeds in diminishing the sinful love affair his protagonist is having with the queen. As discussed above, Malory uses all the means at hand to minimize Lancelot's wrongdoings, by insisting that love of true knights in Arthur's time must have been "platonick." Lancelot asks about "a knyght that dystresses all ladyes and jantylwomen, and the leste he robbyth them other lyeth by them," (193) whether he is "a theff and a knyght? And a ravyssher of women? For He doth shame unto the Order of Knyghthode, and contrary unto his oth." (193) In (L V, 210-211), Lancelot makes no comment about such incident. Besides, the knight's treatment of women is only implied vaguely.

In Malory, while Mark and Perceval are still discussing Tristram's actions, Perceval insists that Mark's nephew "should never thynke . . . that he [Trystram] wolde do hymselff so grete vylany to holde his unclys wyff . . . He may love youre quene synles [platonically?] because she is called one of the fayryst ladyes of the worlde." (504) No source is available for this passage.

Again, when Perceval frees Persydes after he had been chained by a lady whose love he had refused, he rebukes the very uncourteous lady thus: "what use and customys that in a lady to destroy good knyghtes but yf they will be your paramour? Perde, this is a shamefull custom of a lady." (601) In his sources (T³ 536), Persydes had accepted the lady's love, but later on both were imprisoned but separately. Perceval had nothing to say.

We have already touched the important digression on love, which Malory probably invented since it is not found in the sources. Here Malory stresses the fact that "the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togy-

dirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them." (791) Malory cannot tolerate the lusty love recommended by the laws of courtly love. Consequently, he endeavors to present his hero's love from a different angle, by emphasizing his faithfulness to only one woman, Guinevere. Numerous carnal scenes are glossed over, and, as R. H. Wilson correctly remarks, Lancelot's protestations of Guinevere's faithfulness to Arthur are made stronger and nearly sincere.¹⁴⁴

After the Queste, Lancelot's love for Guinevere has been purified. From now on the knight-lover is mostly interested in the queen's welfare. Early in the book, the queens who have captured Lancelot tell him that, having now lost Guinevere, he must take one of them. Lancelot bluntly refuses, "I woll none of you, for ye be false enchauntresses," and goes on to prove that Guinevere "is the treweste lady unto hir lorde lyvyng." (184) In the sources, especially (L V, 93), Lancelot is not even recognized. He refuses the love of the false queens and says that he would rather prefer to be dead, "il aimeroit miex à estre mors."

Shortly after, when a damsel tells him that "hit is noysed that ye love quene Gwenyvere," Lancelot immediately retorts that he will never permit people to believe such a story. Moreover, he adds that "to be a wydded man, I thynke hit nat," for he would not be able to participate in "turnamentes, batellys, and adventures." As for taking his "pleasaunce with peramours, that woll I refuse." (194-195) No such conversation is found in the sources. On another occasion, when the damsel of the Chapel Perilous asks Lancelot for a kiss, which he refuses, the lady says that "syttthen I might nat rejoyse the nother thy body an lyve, I had kepte no more joy in this worlde but to

have thy body dede." (204) In the only source referring to this incident, (Perlesvaus, 344-345), no love is involved.

After the Queste, Lancelot returns to Guinevere, in spite of the promise he had made. Soon, however, he finds that there is much gossip about their relationship. To avoid greater scandals, he withdraws from the queen and behaves in such a manner "that men sholde undirstonde my joy and my delite ys my plesure to have ado for damsels and maydyns." (745) In (MA 205), Lancelot also forgets his promise and meets Guinevere again, but he does not care at all whether he be discovered or not.

Shortly after the burial of Elayne, we remember how jealous Guinevere quarrelled with Lancelot, but he reminds her of her similar ill treatment of him in the past, and adds "what sorow that I endure, ye take no forse." (782) In (MA 258), Lancelot is absent from the court.

In "The Knight of the Cart" episode, Malory glosses over a story he did not particularly like, and reluctantly writes, "sir Launcelot wente to bedde with the quene and toke no force of hys hurte honde, but toke hys pleasure and hys lykyng untyll hit was the dawnyng of the day." (801) In the source (Chrétien 166-167) Chretien gives a good account of the story, but refuses to give any detail of "their pleasure." In (L V, 210), the account is complete but brief.

The lady who guards Lancelot in Melyagaunce's prison will free Lancelot under the condition that he give his love to her. He refuses the embrace, but finally consents to kiss her because he understands he "may do that and lese no worshyp." (805) In (L V, 219), Lancelot agrees to make love, but due to some circumstances, Meliagants' wife never enjoys him.

The very night Aggravayne found Lancelot with Guinevere, (821) Malory almost refuses to tell us what happened. Here again, Malory contrasts love, past and present, or love before and after the Queste. The sources (MH 53, and MA 275) are direct: "To bede he gothe with the quene." Just before the door is opened, both Lancelot and Guinevere each wish he would die while the other was saved, (822) and Lancelot assures Guinevere that even if he is killed, she will be rescued by his friends. (823) Here, Malory follows his sources very closely (MH 53-54, and MA 265). Only a shift of emphasis is shown. The influence of the Queste is apparent. Whereas only the unselfishness of Lancelot is apparent in the source, Malory endows both his heroes with it. When Lancelot returns Guinevere to Arthur, he affirms her general innocence, which is certainly not true, and especially the innocence of their last encounter, which is more than doubtful. Lancelot wants to prove to the King that he has only done a courteous action, and the fact that he returns Guinevere should account for the purity of his motives in rescuing her. Malory follows the source very closely here (MH 71-72, and MA 310-311), but seems to add a note of pathos.

If Lancelot's love for Guinevere is elaborately although discreetly treated, his surpassing prowess, his pre-eminence among all knights is treated on a grand scale. Lancelot is Malory's chosen hero and, because of that, even the humiliating rebukes of the Queste are softened a good deal. Lancelot is a magnanimous hero who shows generosity and love toward lesser knights. His manliness, kindness, and courtesy are emphasized. Malory loses no occasion to build up the image of Lancelot and to place him above all other knights. Malory's treatment of Lancelot overshadows his treatment in the sources, and the

reason is simple: Malory wants to make him the best knight of the Round Table.

When compared to Lancelot, Guinevere appears a rather minor character. Her character is not made the subject of any extensive development. She remains the type found in the sources. The only striking difference seems to be Malory's emphasis of her jealousy and unreasonableness toward Lancelot.

In Malory, Guinevere hears the gossip about Lancelot and Pelleas' daughter Elayne, and is angry with him until he explains the deception that was played upon him. Finally "the quene hylde sir Launcelot exkused." (591) In the corresponding French text (T³ 517), there is no such accusation, nor forgiving. At Elayne's visit to court: "So whan dame Eleyne was brought unto the quene, aythir made other goode cheres by countenance, but nothyng wyth there hartes," (592) Guinevere asks Lancelot to come to her that night in order to keep him from Elayne, and tells him "I am sure that ye woll go to your Ladyes bedde, dame Elayne, by whome ye gate Galahad." (592) In the source (T³ 518), Guinevere only makes vague threats of revenge.

Then Bors himself strongly criticizes Guinevere's vacillation and late repentance: "Now fye on youre wepyng! For ye wepe never but whan there ys no boote." (596) In (T³ 518), there is no rebuke by Bors after the queen's repentance. In (L V, 381), Bors merely says that her repentance is too late to help.

We have already analyzed the passage (744-746) in which Lancelot forgets his promise of the Queste and returns to Guinevere's love. Finding that they are gossiped about, he withdraws from her and devotes himself to the service of damsels. This arouses Guinevere's jealousy; they quarrel, and he leaves the court. In (MA 205), the order of events is different, and, conse-

quently, there is no disagreement of the lovers.

The famous dinner in "The Poisoned Apple" is given by Guinevere as a special occasion, after she has driven Lancelot from the court, "for to shew outwarde that she had as grete joy in all other knyghtes of the Round Table as she had in sir Launcelot." (746) In the source (MA 248), the dinner is merely an ordinary royal meal.

After Lancelot has freed Guinevere by vanquishing Mador, the story tells us that "evermore the quene behylde sir Launcelot, and wepte so tendirly that she sanke all moste to the grownde for sorow, that he had done to her so grete kyndenes where she shewed hym grete unkyndnesse." (755) Their reconciliation after the Elayne of Astolat story is of course much later. (782) In (MA 269), there is at this point a reconciliation over the episode of the Maid, and a return to their carefree and careless love. In (MH 48), we find a very short account of the same incident; the queen almost (my italics) swoons. But Guinevere's conduct is not considered as particularly bad.

Shortly after, wounded Lancelot refuses to participate in the tournament of the Elayne story; but the queen calls him to her and makes him leave. Lancelot comments sarcastically on her sudden caution, "Hit ys of late com syn ye were waxen so wyse! And there fore, madam, at thys tyme I woll be ruled by youre counceyle . . ." (758-59) In MA 205-206), Lancelot wishes to attend the tournament in disguise, (758) and feigns indispositions. Then he goes to the queen for permission to leave, which she grants easily. In (MH 2-3), however, with the excuse of real sickness, Lancelot stays behind out of love for the queen. But at their meeting she is uneasy and asks him to leave.

Again Bors reproaches Guinevere that she always thinks Lancelot false,

"all that he did was for the love of you . . . ye have ben oftyngtymes at the end ye founde hym a trew knyght." (776) In (MA 230), Bors utters general reproaches, saying that she should not ruin Lancelot as Delilah did Samson. In the other source (MH 13), the queen is not even involved in the story.

Finally, in "The Knight of the Cart," Lancelot and Guinevere have a brief quarrel and briefer reconciliation over her according so easily with Melyagraunce. (798-799) In (L V, 206-209), there is a long story of their reconciliation, the queen's coldness dating back to Lancelot's having left the court without her permission. Only after each has heard a false report of the other's death, and attempted suicide, are they brought together. In (Chrétien 140-161), the long account of the reconciliation is the same as in Malory, but the queen's grievance is Lancelot's having hesitated to enter the cart.

As the above comparisons show, the trait of spitefulness added to her character by Malory makes Guinevere more individual and more human; and the fact that she has her faults, and that Lancelot is aware of them, adds to the tragedy of his ruining himself and Arthur for her love.

It would be interesting, space allowing, to compare the treatment of Elayne, as an element embodying love, with that of Malory's sources. In general, Malory has failed to reproduce the grace and the delicacy which radiates from his French models. Here she is more frigid, and apparently too much dominated by love-court conventions. But, as in the case of Guinevere, Malory endeavored to create a straightforward, realistic flesh-and-blood woman. Her tragedy is transferred from the tenuous world of courtly love Malory scorned to that of actual life.

Tristram, Isolde, Palomides, Dinadan

Sir Tristram, whose portrayal in Le Morte Darthur should teach us something about Malory's own view of love in general and of courtly love in particular, will now be studied. From the beginning, the emphasis, in apparently original passages, is his ability in music, hawking, and especially hunting:¹⁴⁵

And so Trystram lerned to be an harper passyng all other, that there was none suche called in no contrey. And so in harpyng and on instrumentys of musyke in his youthe he applyed hym for to lerne. And aftir, as he growed in myght and strength, he laboured in huntyng and in hawkyng--never jantylman more than ever we herde rede of. (279)

But soon one finds Tristram implicated in episodes that show his reaction to love. In the first revealing passage, we learn that "Tramtryste hyste grete love to la Beale Isode, for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde. And there Tramtryste lerned hir to harpe and she began to have a grete fantasy unto hym." (288) In Malory, Tristram's jealousy is the result and not the cause of his love, for he loves Isode before the arrival of Palomides. In (T¹ 39b), the love of Tristan for Iseult comes from his jealousy. Malory also suppresses the affection which Mark gave to Tristram in the French source, thereby enlarging the gulf which separates Mark from Tristram, "kyng Marke caste all the wayes that he myght to destroy sir Trystrames." (304) While in (T¹ 49c) Tristan says he will ask Isode for himself, Malory makes him ask Isode for his uncle. He tells king Angwysse "ye woll gyff me La beale Isode to go with me unto Cornwayle for to be wedded unto kyng Marke, myne uncle," (311) thereby stressing Tristram's generosity and disinterestedness.

The love potion incident already referred to above loses almost all its magic in Malory. In (T¹ 55d-57b), the queen does not say that the duration of the efficacy of the love potion is unlimited, but later on we know that it

had been intended from the start. Isode and King Mark in (T¹55c) drink the potion, but in Malory, it is to be drunk only by Mark. (311) But, as it turned out, Tristram and Isode "made good chere and eyther dranke to other frely." (312) The drink did not occasion their love but it only increased it. Malory was too much of a realist to believe in instant love, or love produced by magic. In the incident of Castle Plewre, Tristram does not appear as a victim of the cruel custom, but he is almost its voluntary executor. Although he repeats that he does not approve of the "evyll custom," he, "with an awke stoke he smote of hir hede clene." (314) This is very unusual with Malory to have one of his heroes obey such "fowl custom." In (T¹60d), Tristram is reluctant to comply with such a custom, but there seems to be no regret at all in Malory's Tristram.

After that incident, Tristram hides in a chapel, and Isode is kept prisoner in a "lazar-cote." While in (T¹760) Tristram's friends rescue Isode first and then Tristram himself, Malory judges that Tristram should be rescued first and that he should in turn rescue Isode. (328-329)

In the episode of Isolde le Blaunche Maynes, one finds a Tristram who almost forgets Isode of Cornwall while he is seduced by the new Isolde who gave him "chere and ryches and all other plesaunce." (330) In the French source (T¹77b), Tristan never forgets Iseult. Above all, he does not want to marry the second Iseult. With Malory it is quite different and sir Tristram "agreed to wed this Isode le Blaunche Maynes." (330)

For Malory, prowess and not love is all important for a knight. In "Lamerok de Galys" episode, Tristram himself boasts of his prowesses, (333) while in the French text (T¹91a-95b) it is Segurades who speaks of Tristan's

victories and feats of arms. As much as he could, Malory deleted passages which did not coincide with his rigid code of chivalry. Thus, Lamerok, instead of finding Tristram and his lady sleeping together as in (T¹94a), he simply says that Lamerok "founde a knyght at a well slepyng and his lady sate with hym and waked." (339)

In "La Cote Male Tayle," Malory gives the major points of his chivalric code, which are absent in the French text. In (T¹95c-107c), Mordret reproaches the damsel for having calumniated la Cote Male Tayle, but does not say anything about the required qualities of a good knight. Malory's substantial addition clearly emphasizes his interest in the good behavior of a knight, to the prejudice of courtly love. The qualities enumerated: loyalty, bravery, kindness, and courtesy, are recommended to improve and perfect the relationship between knights and not between knights and ladies. (347)

In "Madness and Exile," Tristram reproaches La Beale Isode for her infidelity, and calls her a traitor. (367) In (T¹107c-116b), Tristram does not accuse La Beale Isode, but simply says that he is "le plus loyal amant du monde." Tristram does not leave Isode but listens to her calmly and talks to her to the sound of the harp. Malory, on the other hand, accentuates the tragic meaning of the departure scene, "than uppon a nyght he put hys horse from hym and unlaced hys armour, and so yeode unto the wylderness and braste downe the treys and bowis." (369)

A typical incident related to courtly manners is Tristram's refusal to part from his shield "for her sake that gaff hit me." (377) Malory is more concerned here with chivalric etiquette than with proper behavior toward a very demanding lady. In (T¹171c), Tristan departs with his shield without any

hesitation. In France, it is ladies first; Malory never believed in it.

In one of the longest discourses or complaints on courtly love, Malory reduces his French source to a mere summary. In the process of condensation, all the courtly coloring of the complaint is irretrievably lost. (441) In (T²317d-318a), the same passage deprecates the cruelty of love, its "tricherie et orgueil." Palomides does not utter a word of reproach to his lady, queen Iseult. On the other hand, Malory seems to misunderstand this subtle doctrine, for no courtly lover could say, as Malory's Palomides does in his monologue, that he is "but a foole." (441) Unrequited love may cause grief and anxiety, but its ennobling and enlightening effect is never questioned. To Palomides, as to any courtly lover, it remains the only source of his clarté.¹⁴⁶

Shortly after this passage, Malory deliberately omits one of Dinadan's most striking pronouncements on courtly love. While the discussion runs for a full two pages in (T²318a), Malory dismisses it in one sentence, without even directly alluding to it, "Now turne we agayne unto sir Palomydes, how sir Dynadan comfortyd hym in all that he myght frome his grete sorowe." (444)

At one point in the story, Tristram who at first seems unwilling to fight, finally changes his mind when he "remembird hym of his lady." But what must be kept in mind is not so much his love for Isode as the glory he might gain from his encounter that prompts him to fight (470) Later on, Tristram refuses to fight Elyas for health reasons, while in the French text (T³373b), Tristram refuses because of the ingratitude of the people of Cornwall.

In "The Tournament at Surluse," Malory omits a long scene in which Dinadan mocks Palomides' love for Isode. Palomides, in the French version (T³389b-392a), is so distressed after Dinadan's mockery, that he does not feel

able to invite Galahalt, Guinevere, Lancelot, Lamerok, etc. Malory, of course, sees no objection to the invitation, having removed the cause of it.

In Malory it is the lady who must care for the knight, and not vice versa. A good example occurs in the "Joyous Garde" episode. In Malory, Tristram is reminded by La Beale Isode that he travels in a strange country, and "here be many perelous knyghtes, and well ye wote that kyng Mark is full treason." (506-507) Consequently, Isode begs Tristram to carry arms when he is hunting. French Tristan (T³401c) takes this precaution without the warnings of Iseult.

Another long digression on courtly love found in (T³419ac), has been reduced to less than three lines in Malory: "God deffende me! for the joy of love is to shorte, and the sorow thereof and what cometh thereof is duras over longe." (516) This discussion, apart from its intrinsic merits, is essential to understand the character of Dinadan, for he is the exponent of the anti-courtly love doctrine. Since Malory's concern for courtly love is at its lowest ebb in this tale, it is quite surprising that he did not make Dinadan his spokesman on that subject. The reason is that Dinadan not only criticizes the doctrine of courtly love, but he also makes sarcastic speeches on chivalrous customs as well. And, of course, Malory would not hear of such profanities.

"The Tournament at Lonezep" continues to reveal Malory's aversion for courtly love. In (T³473bc), Dinadan tells Gaheris that according to him the victory of Palomides is due to his love for Isode; but in Malory, Dinadan addresses Tristram and thus cannot refer to Palomides' love for Isode without being challenged by him, "He wolde sey no more unto sir Trystram, but to

hymself [my italics] he seyde thus: And sir Trystram knew for whos love he doth all this dedys of armys, sone he wolde abate his corage." (546)

The feelings described here are closely related to the doctrine of courtoisie. Courtly poets often speak with a sense of gratitude of the honor bestowed upon them by her who inspired them with love. "What matters most to Tristram and Palomides, more even than Isode's love, is the privilege of devoting all their thoughts to her and of being inspired by her, to perform deeds of valor, a privilege which they valued more than life itself." (W 1505)

In a little incident involving Palomides' attack on Arthur, Tristram tells him that "ye ded nat worshypfully whan ye smote down that knyght so suddenly," (551) after all, is it not "every good knyghtes parte to beholde a fayre lady?" In (T³474a-483b), there is no criticism uttered to Tristan. It seems that Malory tries, as is later shown in the story, (556) to stress Palomides' loyalty in all circumstances and never allows the young man's love for Isode to affect his friendly devotion to Tristram. Of course, no such explanations exist in the French text, for no justification is required.

Arthur

Next in importance, as far as Malory's interpretation of courtly love is concerned, is the treatment of Arthur's character. Arthur is no Lancelot, no Gawain, no Tristram. As R. H. Wilson says in Characterization in Malory, Arthur "remains what he is in the sources: a passive figure with whom we sympathize because of his greatness when he becomes the victim of the final tragedy."¹⁴⁷ Many incidents fully developed in the sources, such as the attempt to destroy the fatal offspring of his incest, are reduced and glossed over in Malory. As much as he can, Malory suppresses instances which would

depreciate Arthur too much. In the last Book, for instance, Malory suppresses the unsuccessful accusation of adultery against Guinevere, which is found in the French sources.

The question of Lancelot's love for Guinevere is never brought up in the conversation of Gawayne and Arthur about Elayne. (768-770) In (MA 234-242), Arthur is convinced, from what he saw and heard at Morgan le Fay's castle, that Aggravayne's charges are right. The case of the poisoning of Mador's kinsman is cleverly handled. Arthur is determined to execute justice, but as yet is not unreasonably suspicious of the queen's conduct. (748-750) It is only much later that Arthur, finally convinced of his queen's adultery, resolves to punish her on the basis of justice--"she shall have the law"--not of jealousy. (806-807) Malory's retelling of the story makes Arthur very cautious about stirring up trouble in the realm. Arthur will hear no charges unless Lancelot can be caught in flagrant délit. (819-821) The trap is set and both Lancelot and Guinevere fall into it. While in (MA 272) Arthur wants to avenge the shame brought on him, in Malory it is the eventual ruin of the Round Table that preoccupies him. (830) Guinevere will not be allowed to be defended by Lancelot for, this time, "she shall have the law." (830)

The kind of love which Malory endeavors to portray in Arthur is not so much his love for Guinevere as his friendship and devotion for his good knights. This particular aspect of Arthur's love is found throughout Malory's book, and contributes enormously to making him the just, unselfish, and strong ruler that Malory wants him to be.

Gawain

Although Gawayne figures among Malory's major characters, he is not

treated as sympathetically and as consistently as in most of the sources.¹⁴⁸

With regard to courtly love, it may be said that Gawayne's characterization follows the sources in presenting him as a light lover. This will be shown especially in the treatment of the Pelleas and Ettarde episode.

The French originals of the story of Pelleas and Ettarde¹⁴⁹ contain in a modified but recognizable form an expression of the medieval doctrine of courtly love. The story of Pelleas is the story of love requited after many disappointments. Gawayne betrays the friend on whose behalf he has set out to win a lady's love; he wins it for himself. Pelleas refrains from vengeance, leaves a naked sword by the lovers' bed, and goes home resolved to die. He asks that his heart be sent after his death to his lady on a silver platter which he once received for having won a tournament. Gawayne and Ettarde find the sword and, realizing that Pelleas has forgiven them, they decide to part. Gawayne offers Ettarde to Pelleas, and both are finally married.

From the French prose writer's point of view, Pelleas' conduct is an example of how a courtly lover should behave. Scorned by his lady, he allows himself to be ill-treated merely to obey her. When attacked by ten knights, he refrains from any resistance. He simply obeys his lady's wish. His love for Ettarde never diminishes even when he is betrayed by Gawayne and Ettarde, but always he wishes his lady more happiness than he has ever been allowed to have himself.

Malory's reaction to the doctrine underlying this story is that of a man brought up in arms who values the dignity of knighthood above all else. Most of his knights are men of few words and of unsophisticated behavior.

They engage in extraordinary adventures, but their motives, in general, admit of no sentimental refinement. They are first and foremost men of action.

(251) And so, when Malory's Pelleas lets himself be "tyed . . . undir the horse belly," (119) the reason is not, as in the French story, that he wishes to obey his lady's capricious command, but that he hopes to gain access to her castle, "he suffyrde hem to pull hym downe of his horse, and bounde hym honde and foote." (119) The sword which he leaves with the sleeping lovers "overthawrte both their throtes," (125) is a token not of forgiveness, but of vengeance. The French Gauvain is seized with contrition at the sight of the sword and bitterly regrets his "mesfait." Arcade, however, instead of blaming him as she does in Malory for his breach of trust, tries to comfort him and, reluctant as she is to part with her lover, agrees to go back to Pelleas for his sake. On hearing this, Pelleas forgives Gauvain and returns Arcade to her castle. To Malory, this French ending offered few attractions, partly because it left the lady's infidelity unpunished, and partly because it credited Pelleas with an attitude of forbearance which could only be understood as part of the French tradition of courtly love. What Malory obviously wanted was to punish Ettarde (Arcade in the French source) according to her deserts and to reward Pelleas by giving him a more worthy lover. At all times Pelleas respects the code of knighthood "though this knyghte [Gawayne] be never so false, I will never sle hym slepynge, for I woll never dystroy the hyght Order of Knyghthood." (124) Pelleas' courtesy is acknowledged by Ettarde to Gawayne, "had he bene so uncurteyse unto you as ye have bene to hym, he had bene a dede knyght." (125) The love spell cast upon Pelleas by Nyneve makes him hate the woman he once loved, "he hated hir more than any woman on

lyve," (126) and causes Ettarde to die of sorrow. Pelleas, cured of his unhappy love, finds his happiness with Nyneve: "and the damesel of the Lake rejoysed sir Pelleas, and loved togedyrs durying their lyfe." (126) In a world where vice is punished and injured men redress with their own hands the wrong done to their honor, no other ending is possible.

Gareth

That Malory did not believe in courtly love appears more and more evident and will be seen in the following chapters. His knights were too noble to throw themselves at the feet of whimsical ladies and beg for their love. Malory believed in true love brought about by true sentiments and finally consummated in a happy marriage. Everything else was unreal. The following story gives another convincing proof of Malory's treatment of this doctrine.

Gareth is presented to us as a gentle, mild, young, charming, and noble knight.¹⁵⁰ The "kitchen knave" who becomes a living symbol of knight-hood also fulfills the oath of chivalry¹⁵¹ to the most minute requirements. In "The Tale of Gareth" Wilfrid L. Guerin accepts the interpretation of the "Tale of Gareth" as a commentary on courtly love; he even says that "the height of emotion [reached in Gareth] is in the mixture of passionate love and ideal love that brings together Lyonesse and Gareth."¹⁵² This tale is more than a simple courtly romance. Malory, as Charles Moorman says, "makes it a commentary upon love and the behavior of lovers,"¹⁵³ to present a kind of love which has not been influenced and affected by the French conventions of courtly love. Various incidents tend to prove that Malory was disenchanted with the French unrealistic approach to love. After Gareth's twelve-month labor is over, Lyonet describes her champion thus: "he is curteyse and mylde,

and the most suffering man that ever I mette withall. For I dare sey there was never jantylwoman revyled man in so foule a maner as I have rebuked hym. And at all tymes he gaff me goodly and meke answers agayne." (244)

Upon seeing Lady Lyones, Gareth falls madly in love with her so much so "that he passed hymself farre in his reson." (246) He "kyssed hir many tymes . . . and there she promysed hym her love, sertaynly to love hym and none other," (247) according to courtly love doctrine. Their love increases so much during the following days that "they brente bothe in hote love that they were acorded to abate their lustys secretly." Andreas Capellanus would have called their love amor mixtus. But "damesell Lyonet was a lytyll dyspleased; and she thought hir sister . . . was a lytyll overhasty . . . and for saving of her worshyp she thought to abate their hote lustys," (247) thus saving the love for a fulfillment more respectable than that of the courtly love tradition. "All that I have done I will avowe hit, and all shall be for your worshyp and us all." (248)¹⁵⁴

No doubt remains as to Lyonet's intentions. Her language is simple but direct. When Arthur shows some surprise at Lyones' absence when Gareth is present at the court, Lyonet replies, "ye must of your good grace hold hir excused, for she knowyth nat that my lorde sir Gareth is here." (269) Shortly after, Arthur, fully aware of the love that exists between Gareth and Lyones, askshis nephew "whether he wolde have his lady as peramour, other ellys to have hir to his wyff." (269) The scene follows a ritual--questions and answers--strikingly akin to the Christian betrothal ceremony. Both Gareth and Lyones explicitly use terms which would be unacceptable in the courtly love convention: "wyff," "husbonde," "fyrste love," "fre choyse,"

"only love," "maryage," and exchange of rings. Marriage is the goal, and it is soon arranged, blessed by the bishop of Canterbury "with grete solempnyte."

(270) Joy and happiness rejoice the heart of everybody present and we are told by Gareth himself that "there shall never lady nother jantyllwoman rejoyse me." (269) As with the married love of Pelleas and Nyneve in the first tale, Gareth's union with Lyones, and the other two marriages which are blessed in this tale, it is an index to the noblest elements of the chivalric ideal, those elements which Malory preached all through his tales.

Since the French sources appear to be entirely unknown, it is perhaps safe to assume that Malory built his own romance on some familiar pattern of the thirteenth century prose romance and gave it a turn which exemplifies the love concept he had in mind.

Major Types of Love in Le Morte Darthur and in Malory's Sources

After two separate round trips into Le Morte Darthur, one romantic and one chivalric, we may or may not be easily convinced of opinions about Malory's conception of courtly love and chivalry. Specialized excursions focusing on love in relation to amor mixtus, amor purus, matrimonia, and perfidia should inform the reader more accurately and more convincingly about Malory's over-all view of his tales. How much is Malory and how much comes from the sources, both French and English, will be discussed in the following chapter. It is to be understood, however, that within each excursion no particular method will be used other than following the narrative, page after page, as the story unravels.

Love and Amor Mixtus

Under the general title of Amor Mixtus will be discussed such topics as adultery, incest, lechery, and fornication as they are presented by Malory and his sources.

At first, Arthur is presented as a man responsible for various kinds of sorrows and sins. The initial sins shown are those of the flesh, and the one emphasized is lechery.

Omitting most of what the Suite de Merlin (HM) says about Arthur's predecessors, Malory starts in medias res and tells us about the begetting of Arthur. The Igrayne and Uther affair is given not as a courtly reaction but rather as a Christian departure from the moral code. Whereas in the French text (HM 56-58) Uther has no dishonorable intentions, in Malory he has. "I suppose that we were sente for that I shold be dishonoured." (2) Although Merlin's treatment is considerably abbreviated in Le Morte Darthur, Malory seems to lend him the same evil intentions he has in the French text. He meets a mad Uther who is "seke for angre and for love of fayre Igrayne," (3) and repeatedly promises the king that he "shalle cause hym to have all his desyre." (3) Consequently, Merlin arranges everything so that Uther may lie by Igrayne, without really committing adultery, for the duke of Tyntagil is slaim before Uther marries his wife. (4) Malory, in order to avoid confusion, and probably scandal, announces the death of the Duke before he lies by Igrayne. In French, this precaution does not seem to be necessary. Malory twice qualifies Uther as "lusty knyghte," and emphasizes the King's passion as a reason for a hasty marriage, (4-5)

Arthur's begetting a son, Torre, on Lyonors, daughter of the earl of

Sanam, is related at length in French, (Cambridge 225) but Malory dispatches the episode in one paragraph. No romantic atmosphere pervades the episode, but sheer animal sensuality. Arthur, like Uther, is a "lysty knyghte." But Arthur's greatest act of lechery is his begetting of Mordred on Lot's wife, and his own sister, Morgawse.¹⁵⁵ Here Malory follows his source integrally. Again, Arthur is shown as a "lusty kynge." Morgawse was "a passynge fayre lady. Wherefore the kynge caste grete love unto hir and desired to ly by her." (32) Later, Merlin, who understands the present situation quite well, explains Arthur's dream. He prophesizes the destruction of Arthur and his knights because of his incest: ". . . hit ys Goddis wylle that youre body sholde be punyssed for your fowle dedis," for "ye have lyene by your syster and on hir ye have gotyn a childe that shall destroy you and all the knyghtes of youre realm." (35) In Malory, more than in the French sources, the accent is put upon the destruction of Arthur and his court.

Merlin continues his predictions by announcing that Lancelot and Tristram will be the truest lovers, indirectly underlining the adulterous life each will live. (54) Later, he creates suspense by warning Mark against Tristram who "ys takyn with his souveraigne lady." (54) In French, the author does not intend Mark to understand that Tristram is in love with Isode. Malory is more specific, and instead of translating "avoec s'amie," he replaces it by "his souveraigne lady," which leaves no doubt in Mark's mind. The change is made in order to make the relationship obvious and regrettable.

Adultery is again underlined in the short episode of King Royns and Lady de Vaunce. "That nyght kynge Royns sholde have lyen with hir," but the rendez-vous never materialized, for Duke Vaunce "was commynge." (55) Although

the story is partially reproduced in Le Morte Darthur, it is in accord with the French text.¹⁵⁶ In Malory's opinion, paramours and adulterers could only bring discord and catastrophe.

In Malory, the motive for Lot's hatred is presented as the result of Arthur's adultery with his wife Morgawse, and not as the consequence of the drowning of the children born on May Day. This ghastly incident is not suppressed by Malory, but transferred to the end of Book One. (114) Not only does the English translator try to conceal Arthur's crime, but he makes the war waged by Lot a punishment for his adultery, and not a retaliation for the murder of the innocent children, "And for because that kynge Arthur lay by hys [Lot's] wyff and gate on her sir Mordred, therefore kynge Lott helde ever agaynste Arthure." (58) In the light of Malory's reinterpretation does it not appear that adultery is made more unbearable than war?

Morgan le Fay who "loved another knyght bettir than hir husbunde Uriens, other Arthur," (59) is introduced as a representative of evil, and a cause of malevolent happenings. Morgan's devilish strategy and hatred are instigated, it would seem, by her love for, or rather her adultery with Accolon. Malory reduces his French narrative (HM 122-123) but keeps its meaning. Falso love begets treachery.

Concerning Torre's parentage, Malory takes no detour and discovers it immediately. This mystery remains unsolved in the French text until much later (HM 155-173) Whereas in French, Torre's mother (Aries' wife) says that Pellinore had seduced her against her will, Malory attenuates the circumstances and has her say that when she went "to mylke her kyne, [cow] there mette with me a sterne knyght, and half be force [my italics] he had my maydynhode."

Since Torre is to be knighted it would have been a disgrace to make him the son of a mother who would have totally resisted Pellinore's advance. Christian morality is certainly not operating here, but only a certain code of social ethic. Since Torre is the offspring of adultery, it is not surprising to find him having "good chere" with a lady who "had a passynge fayre olde knyght unto hir husband," (85) a passage which is not found in French. Lechery will always beget lechery, Malory seems to say.

In "The War with the Five Kings," Merlin's character is altered. He is now presented by Malory as more of an ordinary human being than as a prophet or a guiding or controlling force behind what happens. He seems to lose his power on account of his infatuation with Nyneve. "He was [so] assoted [infatuated] uppon hir, that he myght nat be from hir." (91) Merlin is easily trapped by his crafty pupil, Nyneve. In being so obsessed by Nyneve, Merlin, and certainly Malory, shows strikingly the excessive kind of passion that the knights must avoid.

In the tale of "Arthur and Accolon," a knight is bringing a bound knight, Manessen, to be drowned in a fountain because he has been caught in the act of adultery. ". . . I founde hym with my wyff, and she shall have the same deth anone." (112) But Manessen is delivered by Morgan because she loves Accolon. The accuser is finally drowned. Morgan is behaving unjustly toward the first knight for he should have been killed as the law permitted. Here, Morgan's lusty love for Accolon causes her to do two wrongs: first, to kill the wrong man; and second, to threaten Arthur out of jealousy and revenge. Malory shows Morgan in a worse light than the French text, (HM 219) although the same end is achieved. From the point of view of morality, it

was certainly intended that culprits, as the knight saved by Morgan, should have the law, but story-telling necessity often dictated that they be saved. Here Malory's code of morality is at best dubious. Unless he wants to show the extreme injustice caused by the wrong kind of love, his code of morality is hardly plausible and definitely unacceptable.

In general, the expression "good chere" (117, 123, 219, etc.) as used by Malory, must certainly be connected with lust and sexual relation. However, the context is rather more pagan than courtly.

In the tale of "Gawain, Ywain, and Marhalt," Gawayne's adventure is the first related and, unfortunately, is one that will be shaming not only the chivalric code of knighthood but also the romantic code of courtly love. Gawayne sees a knight, Pelleas, who is making "the grettyst dole that ever man made." (119) Soon Gawayne discovers that Pelleas' strange behavior is motivated by the love of his lady Ettarde. Ettarde is Pelleas' "soverayne lady," and he will never "love other but her." (121) But Pelleas loves a lady who debases his prowess, and causes him to yield to ten knights. Gawayne's damsel does not accept the situation, probably because she does not believe in Andreas Capellanus' code which says that "a true lover considers nothing bood except what he thinks will please his beloved."¹⁵⁷ She urges Gawayne to correct it. Gawayne obeys and offers to help Pelleas achieve his love. He says he will go to Ettarde and talk to her. He does so; but instead of persuading Ettarde to love Pelleas, he seduces her. The fact that Ettarde is so easily won over by Gawayne emphasizes both how perverted she is as a woman and how perverted love is in her. Likewise, Gawayne's perfidy delivers a shaming blow to the chivalric oath of the Round Table. In his

negating of love and honor, all courtly virtues in general are in danger of being destroyed.

After waiting three days for Gawayne's return, Pelleas finally decides to investigate. He discovers Gawayne and Ettarde lying together in bed. Passion had overcome the code; Platonic love had bowed down to pure lust. In deep sorrow Pelleas laments, "Alas, that a knyght sholde be founde so false!" (124) His regret of Gawayne's perverted infidelity appears even greater than his personal sorrow of knowing that his love, Ettarde, has been false to him. His further reactions emphasize even more the chivalric attitude which animates Gawayne and Ettarde. After riding away disconsolate, the idea of killing both fornicators flashes into his mind, but he immediately extinguishes it by saying, very significantly, "Though this knyght be never so false, I woll never sle hym slepyng, for I woll never dystroy the hyghe Ordre of Knyghthode." (124) It would be disloyal to kill a king's son and a good knight. Malory transfers Pelleas' moral sense of sinning, found in the French text, to an ethical and loyal necessity of preserving the Order in Le Morte Darthur. When the two lusty lovers awaken, Ettarde immediately realizes that Gawayne had treacherously deceived her and her lover Pelleas, and rebukes, not his immorality, but his "uncurteyse." In French, both Pelleas and Arcade forgive and forget with the utmost readiness.¹⁵⁸ Gawayne regrets his falseness. Arcade comforts him and finally agrees to go back to Pelleas. Pelleas himself pardons Gawayne and rides off happily with his love. The French author follows Andreas Capellanus' code of courtly love, but Malory emphasizes justice by punishing Ettarde (Arcade) for her falseness and by rewarding Pelleas with a more worthy lover. Moral and poetic justice, "That is the ryght-

eous judgement of God" (127) wins over amoral courtly love code.

Another instance in which Malory seems to despise lechery more than any other vice is shown in the case of the giant (144-147) who is already shown as a murderer, a cannibal, a glutton, and an adulterer in the alliterative *Morte Arthure*,¹⁵⁹ (MT 11. 949-1161) but whose lasciviousness is stressed in Malory. In the bloody combat which takes place between Arthur and the giant, Malory deletes many descriptive passages in which the giant is hacked to pieces, but makes sure that the giant's genitals are cut off, ". . . and there he [Arthur] swappis his [giant] genytrottys in sondir." (146)

With Book Six, "Sir Lancelot du Lake," the developments in the Lancelot and Guinevere adulterous relationship are implicitly and importantly foreshadowed in the following introductory passage "Wherefore quene Gwenyvere had hym [Lancelot] in grete favoure aboven all other knyghtis, and so he loved the quene agayne aboven all other ladyes dayes of his lyff, and for hir he dud many dedys of armys and saved her from the fyre thorow his noble chevalry." (180)¹⁶⁰

At this point love of courtesy and honor are the prime movers of the relationship between the two lovers. Guinevere's love is interpreted as a kind of admiration for a worthy warrior. Lancelot's love of Guinevere is depicted as a kind of reverential respect all worthy knights should show to their queen. Love is not physical yet; it does not even appear to be sensual. Everything Lancelot does for Guinevere is "thorow his noble chevalry." (My italics)

Soon, however, Lancelot's "noble chevalry" is tested. Four queens fall in love with him. Morgan le Fay casts an enchantment on him and leads him to

her castle, (183) where he must choose one of the queens as paramour. Malory handles the situation very solemnly. He invents four queens instead of the one queen and enchanteresses found in the sources.¹⁶¹ He emphasizes the fact that all the queens are attracted to Lancelot, whom they recognize immediately, because they know of his "worthynesse." In French, Lancelot's name is never mentioned. Against the lust of the queens, Malory builds up Lancelot's respectability and honor. Lancelot does not say Guinevere is his paramour; ". . . as for my lady, dame Gwenyvere, were I at my lyberté as I was, I wolde prove hit on youres that she is the treweste lady unto hir lorde ly-vynge." (184)¹⁶² (My italics) But his "noble chevalry" must defend the queen's and his honor: "I lever [rather] dye in this preson with worshyp than to have one of you to my peramoure, magré myne hede." (184)

The details of the episode glorify Lancelot as the ideal lover according to Andreas Capellanus' code. Many of the adventures in which Lancelot is involved seem present simply to reinforce Lancelot's chivalric qualities which are gradually revealed and strengthened. Lancelot is not shown as a lecher, but as a knight who respects his oath of knighthood. Lancelot is a defender of women, especially against such recreants like Tarquin who "dys-tressis all ladyes and jantylwomen, and at the leste he robberyth them other lyeth by them." (193) (My italics) Lancelot condemns lechery and lecherers although his relationship with Guinevere begins to cast a vague doubt upon his own perfection. In a sourceless speech, Lancelot bluntly answers the accusations that by being a wifeless knight he is at fault, and that because of an enchantment placed upon him by Guinevere, he loves only the queen. First, he does not want to marry because then "I muste couche with hir and

leve armys and turnamentis, batellys and adventures." (194) Here, Malory explicitly condemns courtly love as motive for prowess. Second, he refuses to have paramours because "in prencipall for drede of God, for knyghtes that bene adventures sholde nat be advoutrers [adulterers] nothir lecherous, for than they be nat happy nother fortunate unto the werrys. . . And so who that usyth peramours shall be unhappy, and all thyng unhappy that is aboute them."

(195) If Lancelot does not believe in what he says, Malory surely does. In a way, Lancelot shields Guinevere by saying he does not wish to marry and rejects paramours "in prencipall for the drede of God." Is it not, on the contrary, an unconscious dread of emasculation and consequent loss of pre-eminence in tournaments, which is so necessary to win and keep the love of his queen and avoid the scorn of other women, that Lancelot is so eloquent, rather than the remote fear of God? This attitude toward love, paramours, adultery, is very characteristic of Malory and will be clarified as we go along.

Lancelot's faith in the principles he strongly advocates saves him from a lecherous and lusty damsel who says that if he had kissed her his "lyff dayes had be done." (204) Malory adds this sourceless passage to test Lancelot's loyalty to Guinevere, and also to show how love, the wrong kind of love, can be debasing.

The story of Gareth gives Malory the opportunity first, to continue to emphasize the nobility of Lancelot, who appears principally as the courteous benefactor of young Gareth, and, second to condemn the evils of lechery and the artifices of the courtly love code, and third, to advertise his own brand of love, a love which receives its fulfillment in marriage.

Lyonet is presented as the berating, insulting, and scorning lady modelled in Andreas Capellanus' De Amore, but she appears here in a worse light. When Gareth overtakes her, she asks, "what doste thou here? Thou stynkyst all of the kychyn, thy clothes bene bawdy of the grece and talow . . . What art thou but a luske, [sluggard] and a turner of brochis, [spits] and a ladyll-waysher? (218) " . . . I see all that evir thou doste is my mysseadventure and nat by preues of thy hondys." (220) Lyonet is also a lusty woman. Having been pursued by a knight who prayed her to lodge with him all night, ". . . the damsel rode with hym to his castell and there they had grete chere." (219)

Gareth, on the contrary, is presented as the model knight in prowess, humility, and purity. Gareth's purity and nobility are tested in the incident in which Persaunte commands his eighteen year old daughter to go to Gareth's bed. He instructs her on the courtly etiquette to be followed, ". . . lye downe by his syde and make hym no strange chere but good chere, and take hym in your armys and kysse hym, and loke that this be done." (231) She comes to Gareth who asks her, "Be ye a pusell [virgin maid] or a wyff?" This question seems out of place, especially in Gareth's mouth. To her answer, "I am a clene maydyn," an apologizing Gareth replies, "God deffende . . . that ever I sholde defoyle you to do sir Persaunte such a shame." (231) I wonder what Gareth's reactions would have been had Persaunte's envoy been a married woman! The proper love for Gareth was not lively and lusty Lyonet, but her sister Lyones, the lady whom he rides to rescue, and later marries.

Lechery is again underlined as an enemy of friendship in the episode concerned with Tristram and Segwarydes' wife, which Malory took from the

French. (T¹ 27-91) The enmity between Tristram and Mark results from their adulterous love for the same woman: "there befelle a jolesy and an unkynde-nesse betwyxte kynge Marke and sir Trystrames, for they loved bothe one lady." (295) Tristram, in true courtly love fashion, obeys the bidding of his lady, a married woman, and makes no secret about it, a very uncourtly behavior, indeed. After Segwarydes' wife unarmed Tristram, then "they soupede lyghtly and wente to bedde with grete joy and plesaunce." (296) The incident causes Tristram to win prowess in a wrong cause, (297) a victory that smirches his knighthood.

Tristram's rival, Palomides, is a good knight but so tormented by his unsatisfied love of Isode that he cannot help envying and hating Tristram. As often as he can, he tries to satisfy his lust by having ladies, queen Isode especially, grant him the "lusty" boons he asks. Upon bringing lady Brangwayne back to Isode, the queen granted him a boon. She "promysed hym [Palomides] his askynge for love and joy I had to se her. [lady Brangwayne]" (319) The king consents to let his queen go with Palomides, "Take hir to the and the adventures withall that woll falle of hit, for, as I suppose, thou wolt nat enjoy her no whyle." However, Mark does not seem to be worrying too much about what might happen between his queen and Palomides. His mind is not disquieted by the possibility of adultery between Isode and Palomides, but he fears the shame that would be brought upon him forever, "that by myne own assente my lady and my quene shall be devoured" (320) by the beasts of the forest. The fulfillment of a boon, evidently, has priority over adultery, but maybe not over personal shame.

Although Tristram cannot rival Lancelot in his love affairs, he manages

to enjoy Isode once in a while. One day, just after Mark's queen had failed the test of the horn, (327) Tristram "was takyn nakyd a-bed with La Beale Isode," by Andret who knew that Tristram "used dayly and nyghtly to go to quene Isode evir when he myght. (237) Again, adultery causes a knight, Andret, to act treacherously. On another circumstance, adultery between Tristram and Isode angers Palomides out of measure "for he loved La Beale Isode, and than he wyste well that sir Trystram enjoyed her." (462) Later, Perceval, indirectly and ironically, condemns Tristram's conduct with Isode, when bringing Mark to his senses he says: "And by your neveaw ye sholde never thynke that so noble a knyght as sir Trystram is, that he wolde do hymselff so grete vylany to holde his unclys wyff." To sweeten the pill, Perceval adds, "He may love youre quene synles, because she is called one of the fayryst ladyes of the worlde." (504) Adultery may not be avoided, but resentment, antipathy, anger, and above all a breach of friendship between noble knights is unthinkable. Again, Malory follows his sources very closely, apparently because they help him bring out the message he wants, namely, that adultery, that is, the wrong kind of love, will cause problems that will constantly threaten the High Order of Knighthood.

Because of unreciprocated love some potential paramours turn traitors and even killers. Such is the case with Awnoure, the sorceress who, while one knight unlaced Arthur's helmet, got "kyng Arthur's swerde in her honde to have strykyn of his hede." But fortunately, "kyng Arthur overtoke hir and with the same swerd he smote of her hede." (365) This scene would hardly fit in a courtly love context. Here courtesy and gentleness could not be applied to murderous Awnore.

Lamorak, son of Pellinore and one of the best knights in the world, loves queen Morgawse, widow of Lot. Not only is his love for her thwarted, but it is maliciously used as a bait because of the hatred between his family and the children of Lot. ". . . by the meane of sir Gawayn and his breth-eren, they sente for her moder . . . to that entente to slee sir Lamorak."

(458) Lamorak "wente unto the quenys bed . . . for ayther lovid passynge sore." (459) In spite of the great shame brought upon his mother by Lamorak, Gaheris "gate his modie by the heyre and strake of her hede." (459) Gaheris' puzzling explanation for the cruel beheading of his mother seems to be in accord with Andreas' code, for "a man is borne to offir his servyse," (459) to a woman, in adultery or otherwise. Lamorak is not killed by Gaheris because he was unarmed. Later Gaheris swears he will punish him on the battlefield. Is not matricide contrary to the code of chivalry? Malory, who follows his sources here, shows evident distaste at this very disgraceful episode, but again uses it to show that revenge wrecks the code and presages the fall of the Round Table.

As the book of "Tristram de Lyonesse" unravels its plot, it becomes obvious that as Mark's treachery deepens, Tristram's adultery with Isode lightens. (468-469) This seems to be a very conscious line of thinking adopted by Malory.

Another example of unrequited love (adultery) is given when Morgan le Fay's cousin tells prisoner Alexander that "quene Morgan, kepyth you here for none other entente but for to do hir plesure whan hit lykyth hir." (480) Like Lancelot, (781) Alexander does not want to be forced into loving somebody, especially a sorceress and a traitor like Morgan. He would rather "kut away

my hangers [testicles] than I wolde do her ony suche pleasure!" (480)¹⁶³ But to the damsel who promises to deliver him if "ye wolde love me and be ruled by me," (480) Alexander replies, "Telle me now by what meane, and ye shall have my love." He agrees to her plans, "And then he kyssed hir and ded to her plesaunce as hit pleased them bothe at tymes and leysers." (481) Andreas seems to have had a strong influence in the handling of the situation. Between two evils, revenge and adultery, Malory, who does not alter his sources here, chooses the lesser one.

Lancelot seems to confirm the above comment on the choice between two evils. After Tristram's and Isode's elopement, Lancelot brought the two adulterers to his own castle. (505) Then Tristram tells Guinevere about his elopement and she naturally approves. Finally, Guinevere "tolde all this to kynge Arthure, and whan kynge Arthure wyste that sir Trystram was escaped . . . and had brought La Beall Isode with hym, than was passynge glad." Not only does Arthur and his retinue approve Tristram's and Isode's elopement, he "let make a cry that on Mayday should be a justis byfore the castell of Lozenep," (505) to celebrate the event. Meanwhile we are told how Tristram and Isode "made joy togydyrs dayly with all maner of myrthis that they coude devyse." (506) Malory agrees entirely with the philosophy of the French author.

While discussing his problems with Palomides, who says he never "rejoyse her [Isode] in ony plesure," (569) Epyngryns serves him with "yoursorow ys but japys to my sorow; for I rejoyced my lady [an earl's daughter] and wan her wyth myne hondis and loste her agayne" (569) at the hands of Helyor. (570) "And thus," concludes Epyngryns, "my sorow ys more than yours, for I have rejoyced, and ye nevir rejoyced." Therefore, according to Epy-

nogrys, it is more heartbreaking to lose a lady with whom one has committed adultery, than to lose a lady who has never given herself to a lover. Malory partly agrees with Andreas, but is reluctant to admit that love is "the causer of . . . worship-wynnynge," (569) although Palomides keeps repeating it. (578)

Dealing with minor characters, Malory does not seem overpreoccupied with changing his sources no matter what happens to them. But he would never allow his hero Lancelot to lose his nobility. In the tale of "Lancelot and Elaine," the story requires that Lancelot father a son, Galahad, upon Elayne. He adds a passage for the benefit of the readers unfamiliar with the whole story of the Arthurian cycle. In spite of all these precautions, Malory faces a dilemma because "the kynge [Pelles] knew well that sir Launcelot shulde gete a pusyll uppon his doughtir, whyche shulde be called sir Galahad, the good knyght by whom all the forayne cuntrey shulde be brought out of daunger; and by hym the Holy Grayle sholde be encheved." (584)¹⁶⁴ Consequently, Malory takes great care to minimize Lancelot's guilt by emphasizing that the shameful action was accomplished by enchantment. Malory would never permit the best knight in the world to commit fornication or adultery with anybody but Guinevere whom he loves.

Later Lancelot is confronted by Guinevere who, misunderstanding the score, accuses him of being a "false traytoure knyght," (594) and commands him never to see her again. Bors comes to the defense of mad Lancelot. He rebukes Elayne, for "betwyxt you both [Elayne and Guinevere] ye have destroyed a good knyght." (595) Bors and Malory stress the destruction of a good knight, not the adultery and lechery of the two women.

For two years--one month in French--(T³ 518a) Lancelot roams the forest

and is treated as a fool, until by miracle, his insanity is cured by the Sankgreal. (610) Immediately, Lancelot inquires about his reputation: "how many be there that knowyth of my woodness [madness] ?" (610) Then learning that only Elayne, her father and dame Breusen know about it, he tells Elayne how deeply he regrets his lecherous adventure, (611) a regret which would have never occurred to Andreas Capellanus.

The Maiden's Castle is represented in "The Quest of the Holy Grail" as a seat of lechery and incest, for there many cruel knights "have devoured many maydyns." (649) Answering Galahad's question about the lady "for whom thys castell was loste," the priest confirms that "she was dede within three nyghtes aftir that she was thus forsed," and adds that the seven knights "have kept their yonger syster whych endureth grete payne with no other ladyes." (649) Galahad is the knight chosen to destroy the "wycked customes" of the castle, a castle whose inhabitants live in a continual state of sin "for all pité ys out thereoff, and all hardynes [audacity] and myschyff [wickedness] ys therein." (647) Malory follows his sources faithfully since they further his intentions vis-a-vis Galahad.

In his way of life Lancelot turns specifically to an inferior good, and becomes a man marked by self-love. For all his selfless devotion to his lady and to his code of honor, for all his courtly nobility, Lancelot must be judged as a creature lacking in caritas, the ideal of the chevalerie céleste, and marked by cupiditas, the appanage of the chevalerie terrestre. The words qualifying Lancelot as "harder than the stone and bitterer than the tre . . . more and barer than the fygge-tre," (656) mean that he is in a state of sin. Although he has been privileged in many ways with "fayreness . . . prouesse

and hardiness . . . wytte and discession to know good from ille," (656) he is still foul inside, "defouled with lechory," (657) and may be "lykened to an olde rotten tre." (656) Lancelot does not completely understand the hermit's words. Although he asserts that "frome henseforwarde I caste [resolve] me, by the grace of God, never to be so wycked as I have bene," yet he intends to "sew [pursue] knyghthode and to do fetys of armys." (657) In French (Q² 533c) the author makes it clear that Lancelot cannot give up knighthood and feats of arms. Lancelot has yet to learn that prowess and victories may satisfy the requirements of secular chivalry, but never those of celestial chivalry.

Perceval is also presented as a man who cannot see beyond the worldly surface of things. His spiritual torpor indicates that he does not have the purity necessary to reach truth. His indulgence in earthly food, "all maner of meetes," and drinks, "strengyst wyne," (669) inflame him with passion and lay him bare for a surprise assault.¹⁶⁵ Seeing a lady, Perceval desires her. He "profird hir love and prayde hir that she wolde by hys." As a true follower of Andreas' code, the lady agrees, on the condition that he become her "trew servaunte, and to do nothyng but that I shall commaunded you." (669) Perceval, having become immersed in sin, sloth, gluttony, and lechery, agrees. Soon they lie together in bed. But "by adventure and grace" he sees in the pommel of his sword "a rede crosse and the sygne of the crucifixe therein." (669) Thinking immediately of his knighthood and his promise to the hermit, he crosses himself. The temptress is vanquished and disappears. Realizing that he has come very close to committing an act of fornication, Perceval draws his sword and punishes himself for almost yielding, by stabbing himself deeply in the thigh: "he rooff [stabbed] hymselff thorow the thygh," saying

"A, good Lord, take thys in recompensacion of that I have myssedone ayenste The, Lorde!" (670) In this episode Malory condemns courtly love and lust as the master sins, but omits a series of details which give greater symbolic significance to Perceval's temptation of purity.¹⁶⁶ For instance, while lying with the temptress, Perceval immediately recognizes that he is naked. In French it is not until after the lady has disappeared that he notices his nakedness. (Q² 539b)

Perceval has successfully overcome the temptation of lechery, but Lancelot, still struggling, calls for help. Coming to a road cross "he put hys horse to pasture . . . and made hys prayers . . . that he never falle in dedely synne agayne." (673) If secular chivalry is not enough in achieving the Sankgreal, (671) courtly love with all its paraphernalia becomes a more bothersome impediment. (672) Lancelot's fornication has blemished his honor, and it is not a meager flaw in his life. But Malory adds a passage, not found anywhere, in which he stresses Lancelot's superiority over all "othir man lyvyng," (675) and relegates to the second plane his affair with Elayne. The attention of the reader is therefore turned from a bad situation to a good one. Again Lancelot begs for prayers so "that I falle nat to synne agayne." (675) Shortly after he humbly says, "Now I am shamed, and am sure that I am more synfuller than ever I was." (677) The French Lancelot's humility is greater and apparently more sincere, for he admits to be the greatest sinner. There is no doubt in Malory's mind that courtly love is intimately connected with adultery, and, consequently, has to be rejected, although he himself does not always know how to do it effectively.

Lancelot's sin of lechery is again and again brought before his eyes.

He is reminded that in the spiritual quest he shall have "many felowis and thy bettirs, for thou arte so feble of evyll truste and good beleve." (678) A page later, in another sourceless passage, Gawayne reminds Lancelot that "if one thyng [lechery, adultery] were nat . . . he had none felow of an erthely man." (679) Malory loses no occasion to strike at courtly love as a vice which prevents achieving great endeavors.

In the allegory of the white and black bulls, the French text specifies that Arthur's knights sinned "par lor luxure et par lor orgueil." Malory avoids being precise regarding the nature of Arthur's knights' guilt. He only says that "by the bullys ys understonde the felyshyp of the Rounde Table whych for their synne and their wyckednesse bene blacke; blackeness ys as much to say withoute good vertues or workes." (683) Malory repeatedly emphasizes in Le Morte Darthur that virginity is essential for success in the Queste, and here "synne" is none other than desire for women.

Soon it is the turn of Bors to undergo the test of purity. He is tempted by a young, fair, and lusty lady who asks him to eat meat--temptation of the flesh--and "many deyntees." (687) Probably recalling his previous weakness,¹⁶⁷ he refuses the courtly advances of the lady, "God thanke you, madam, but I may nat ete none other mete to-day." (687) Andreas' code is disregarded, for the lady "spake no more as at that tyme, for she was lothe to displease hym." (688) (My italics) Malory adds the word "stable" to the qualities of Bors, most likely to contrast him to "unstable" Lancelot. This stability is attested in some encounters that follow.

First, Bors listens very carefully to the story of the young lady who is being persecuted by an old woman held in bondage by king Anyausse and

championed by Prydam le Noyre. He decides to champion the young maid against "the moste douted [feared] man of thys lande," Prydam le Noyre, but refuses to lie in bed with the maid. (688) A vision ensues: "two birds . . . one whyght as a swanne and that other . . . merveylous blacke;" (688-689)¹⁶⁸ Although hard to explain,¹⁶⁹ the vision is certainly concerned with good and evil, evil being impurity. Bors defeats Prydam, and grants him mercy. The old woman flees and the young lady regains her estate. (690) Bors's action fulfills the oath of chivalry which states that the knight should defend ladies. Soon after, Bors is caught in a dilemma: to save his brother Lyonel who is captive and likely to be killed, or save a lady from rape and lust. After a prayer in which Bors asks "swete Lorde Jesus cyrst" to protect his brother Lyonel, he goes to succor the maiden. (691) Bors frees the young lady who wanted to preserve her purity, for, as she tells him, if she had been raped by the knight, her cousin who was then "enchaffed" [inflamed] by the devil would have been "shamed and dishonoured for ever" and, furthermore, "fyve hondred men sholde have dyed therefore." (692) In French, "shamed and dishonoured for ever" refers to the lady herself and not to her cousin. Malory is always more pre-occupied with his knights blemishing their virtue of purity than with the ladies losing theirs.

Bors is not at the end of his trials yet. The false hermit reveals to him that in freeing the lady, Bors has caused the death of Lyonel, and if he does not help another lady by making love to her, (693) not only will this paramour die but also his cousin Lancelot. This devil strongly believes in the code of courtly love and makes the remark that Bors should not think too highly of his own chastity, for "thou woldest nat do hit for to be holdyn

chaste, [but] for to conquerre the loose of the vayneglory of the worlde."

(694)¹⁷⁰ Bors is resolved not to fornicate but while he tries to solve that second dilemma he is led to a high tower where he meets the lady "unto whom we [knights] owghe all our servyse" and who "woll have no knyght but you."

(694) In this episode Malory is more preoccupied by the sinful aspect of courtly love than its etiquette.¹⁷¹ Bors is ill at ease but "in no wyse he wolde breke his chastité." (694) But the lady persists,¹⁷² "I have loved you for the grete beauté I have sene in you and the grete hardynesse that I have herde of you, that nedys ye must lye be me to-nyght, therefore I pray you graunte me." (695) (My italics)

Bors is caught between two codes, one courtly, the other chivalric, neither of which are true to the spiritual ideal of the Sankgreal Queste. Bors finally turns his back upon both codes. Neither the menace of suicide of the lady, nor the threat of the suicide pact of the twelve "ladyes of astate" will deter him from his decision. He would rather see them dishonored and dead even "for so litill a thyng" as the preservation of his purity. (695) The conquered temptation causes the lady and her servants to fall to the ground and disappear. Bors "all abaysshed," crosses himself. He recognizes that he has almost been led into "wanhope [despair] and lechery," and says, "Fayre swete Lorde Fadir and God in hevyn, I am grevously escaped!" (695)

Heavenly Galahad, the spiritual ideal of the Queste, reveals within him that which Lancelot lacks. His conception, an irreparable blot on the blazon of courtly love, symbolizes Lancelot's earthly endeavors, the tragic end of his adulterous love of Guinevere, and the fortunate inauguration of the realm of grace. Galahad's birth evinces the destructive and regenerative elements

found in earthly and divine love. Galahad is never tempted presumably because he is so holy as to be altogether immune to sexual attraction. Instructed by pure women, he thankfully says, "Damesell . . . ye have done so much that I shall be your knyght all the dayes of my lyff." (715) Armed with spiritual armor, he pursues his quest for the Sankgreal, destroying, on his way, "the wycked customes [impurity and lechery]" of the Castle of Maidens, (647) killing the incestuous sons of Hernox:¹⁷³ Hernox "had three sonnys, good knyghtes of armys, and a doughter . . . So tho the three knyghtes loved their syster so sore that they brente [burned] in love. And so they lay by her, magré her hede." (716-717) His quest witnesses only victories. Contrary to the courtly love code, Galahad approves of a lady giving her life for another lady, (720) in order to rid the castle of one more wicked custom. ". . . A dyssh-fulle of bloode of a maydyn and a clene virgyne in wylle and in worke, and a kynges doughter," (720) was required to heal the "malodye" of the "jantill-woman." But, strangely enough, Galahad soon finds out that "oure Lorde" avenged this cruel custom, for when Galahad and Perceval entered the castle they found nobody alive. "Thys vengeance ys for blood-shedyns of maydyn!" (722) The impure inhabitants of the castle who had caused the sixty "good maydyns which were martirde for the syke lady," had been punished.

The story continues with Lancelot coming to the water of Mortays. Upon entering the first ship he finds a lady and has a vision. Malory omits the long conversation between a hermit and Lancelot in which the hermit urges Lancelot to be chaste in thought and in deed in order that his purity may accord with Perceval's virginity. Otherwise, he adds, he will not be able to stay in the ship by the side of Perceval's sister. (723) Malory deletes all

the passages which would make Lancelot blush. For twenty-four days he lies in bed like a dead man in expiation for his twenty-four years as an adulterous sinner. (728)

Galahad's virginity is praised by king Mordrayns who tells God that after such an encounter with a saint, he is ready to depart from this world," and therewith the soule departed from the body." (732) After Galahad had "put hym in the erthe as a kynge ought to be . . . [he] . . . came into a perelous foreyste where he found" a burning fountain. Malory makes the fountain a symbol of "lechery that was that tyme muche used," (732) and which could not stand Galahad's virginity. The French author makes it a symbol of man's sinful nature and the "miracle of Galahad," his power to destroy the burning well.

The ascetic Christian ideals of the Queste were never entirely forgotten. In the Queste of the Sankgreal, indeed, they overshadow all others. It is not surprising in the end, after the destruction of the Round Table, to find that all surviving knights become hermits. This certainly implies a rejection of earthly love, although, of course, by this time there is not much else for them to do.

In the next Book of "Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere," we would expect a continuation of the sanctifying program initiated in the Queste. It is rather ironic to find that the knights who had been given a chance to achieve a greater perfection either die, as Galahad and Perceval do, (740) or revert to their old secular life. The tale is therefore anti-climactic, and attests to the failure of the best knight in the world to attain the ideal of the Sankgreal. As a consequence, the whole knightly system of the Round Table proves to be a failure and is a prelude to the final disintegration of every-

thing. The chivalric system is stale, but it is the system Malory believed in. For him the Round Table was a symbol of all good; and "if in the end it must fail, it will fail not because of a religious condemnation, but because of a human tragedy, which rests upon the conflict of love and loyalty."¹⁷⁵ Lancelot was Malory's hero before the Sankgreal and will remain until the final collapse of Arthur's court. He does not transfer the central place to Galahad. Malory's lack of enthusiasm for Galahad and Perceval is noteworthy, and surely springs from the same cause as his rejection of courtly love: he prefers the practical to the ethereal and spiritual. His Lancelot is best on the chivalric side; he is good from the point of view of courtly love, bad when it comes to the theological side. So there arises a hero who is all too fallible. As soon as he is back in the world, he cannot deny worldly pleasures and "began to resorte unto quene Gwenivere agayne and forgat the promyse and the perfection that he made in the quaste." (744) Now the love of the truest lovers is explicitly revealed in all its physical desire, "they loved togydiris more hotter than they ded toforehonde, and had many such prevy draughtis [recesses] togydir that many in the courte spake of hit." (744) Their love degenerates from loyalty and courtesy to physical desire and lust, and gradually prepares for the final destructive conflict of the Round Table.

More and more Lancelot becomes aware that his love for Guinevere is not the ennobling kind of devotion he had manifested in the early tales. On the contrary, it is a marring kind of love which sullies the delicate flower of fin'amors. Consequently he feels the need to enter into a long dialogue with Guinevere, a dialogue which can not be traced to the French sources, (744-746) and to state his position, as he is still under the spiritual in-

fluence of the Queste. When Lancelot decides to champion many ladies and damsels, in addition to the royal service he owes to the queen, in order to "eschew [avoid] the sclawdir [scandal] and noyse" that was spreading about him and Guinevere, she "waxed wrothe" out of jealousy and pride, and accuses Lancelot of no longer loving her. (744) To avoid "shame and sclaundir" and to prevent Guinevere from being dishonored, Lancelot wants to change his policy which is immediately condemned by Guinevere, who calls him a "false recrayed [cowardly] knyght and a comon lechourere." (745) She rejects and expels him from the court "uppon payne of thy hede," but as Malory adds, "women in their hastynesse woll do oftyntymes that aftir hem sore repentith." (746) This condemnation put in the mouth of Bors could hardly come from the courtly French writer.

Guinevere's jealousy proves almost fatal to her when on the occasion of a "pryvy dynere" given in London to the knights of the Round Table, Patryse is mistakenly poisoned.¹⁷⁶ Madore accuses Guinevere of treason, but Arthur who believes "thys dede come never by her," ironically adds, "that somme good knyght shall put hys body in jouperté for my quene . . . for perde, hit may happyn she shall nat be all frendeles." (748) Arthur who seems to play the game continues, "Where ys sir Launcelot?" for, were he "here he wolde nat grucche [grudge] to do batayle for you." (749) "What aylyth you . . . that ye can nat kepe sir Launcelot uppon your syde?" In default of Lancelot, Bors is sent for. Strangely enough, Bors rebukes Guinevere in a very uncourtly manner,¹⁷⁷ and refuses to challenge Madore. But finally, for Lancelot's sake who "wolde nat a fayled you in your ryght nother in youre wronge," (750) Bors says: "I woll at that daye be the quene champion." (750) But Bors's decision

sows discord among the knights because "they demed the quene was in the wronge and that she had done that treson," (751)¹⁷⁸ and especially because they did not believe Bors's assertion that "for never in my dayes knew I never ne harde sey that ever she was a destroyer of good knyghtes." (751) (My italics)

Bors's kindness and parti pris infuriate the knights who resort to strong language and call for a just judgment: "for favoure, love, nother affinite [kinship] there should be none other but ryghttuous jugemente . . . as well upon a quene as upon another pour lady." (752) Again Malory shows that he cannot stand the courtly love code which sows dissensions, and kills friendship among the knights. It is fatal in the end to all good knights, to Lancelot in particular. Lancelot, who had been kept informed by Bors all the time, "came frome a woode . . . upon a whyght horse." (753) Lancelot is a true lover according to Andreas' code, and as such, will prove his loyalty to the queen in real courtly love fashion. Before challenging Madore he rebukes him for his uncourtesy--lady burning. Notice that Lancelot is not concerned about the morality of a possible bad action of Guinevere, but about the uncourteous conduct of Madore toward her. Had he not promised Guinevere, on the day he was knighted, "eyer to be hir knyght in ryght othir in wronge"? (755) (My italics)¹⁷⁹

Lancelot has come to the point where it is no longer possible for him to be a good, faithful knight to his lady, Guinevere; to his lord Arthur; and to his God. His adulterous love has superseded both feudal loyalty and love of God; it is a love which is gradually destructive. Lancelot wins the match against Madore. But whereas the Mort Artu accepts Lancelot's victory as evidence of Guinevere's innocence, Malory does not and in a passage which he adds, he brings in Nyneve, who discloses the author of Partyse's poisoning,

thereby clearing the Queen of any treason. (756)

Lancelot has become so immune to the gossip about his love affair with Guinevere that the queen feels the necessity to caution him; in effect she says you had better not stay with me for your enemies and mine will say we remain behind, "for that they wolde have their plesure togydirs." (757) Lancelot's uncourteous and sarcastic answer, "Hit ys of late com syn ye were woxen so wyse!" (757) shows that his love for Guinevere is waning. However, he says he will follow her counsel and ironically adds, "I shall take the adventure God woll gyff me." (758) (My italics) At this point Guinevere shows a greater interest in Lancelot's fulfilling his chivalric code rather than his courtly one: "Sir, ye may do as ye lyste, [wish] but be my counceyle ye shall nat be ayenste youre kynge and your felyshyp." (758) The tournament has scarcely begun that a fair maid "keste [felt] such a love unto sir Launcelot that she cowde never withdraw hir loove, wherefore she dyed." (759) This pitiful episode will be treated in the next chapter, since the love the Maid of Astolat bore to Lancelot was natural and pure and appears to be the only kind of love Malory believed in. Gawayne, however, does not see the Lancelot-Elayne affair from the same angle, for he later says: God graunte . . . that aythir of you may rejoyse othir, but that ys in a grete adventure." (768-769) Gawayne is pictured as a light lover throughout Le Morte Darthur, and consequently the morality of lechery and lust never preoccupied him too much.¹⁸⁰ Malory even omits a passage in which Gawayne declares his love to the Maid,¹⁸¹ who tells him that if he really loves her he deserves pity, because she is already in love with a knight to whom she will never be disloyal. Bors and Gawayne do not completely succeed in persuading Guinevere that what Lancelot does in the

tournament is for her. Bors says " . . . madame . . . ye have ben oftyntymes displeased with my lorde sir Launcelot but at all tymys at the ende ye founde hym a trew knyght." (776) When Elayne reiterates her firm desire to marry Lancelot, the best knight in the world again confirms that "I caste me never to be wedded man." (777) Then Elayne, afraid of losing Lancelot for good, opts for a second best proposal, "Than, fayre knyght . . . woll ye be my paramour?" (777)¹⁸² to which he first shrugs and then counterattacks with a convenient monetary offer. He encourages Elayne to "besette your herte upon som good knyght that woll wedde you, [and] I shall gyff you togydirs a thousand pounde yerly, to you and to youre ayris [heirs]." (778) But Elayne has already made up her mind; it is either Lancelot or death, and unfortunately death wins. In the meantime Guinevere's anger and jealousy reach their paroxysm, " . . . quene Gwenyver was woode [madly] wrothe with sir Launcelot, and wolde by no meanys speke with hym, but enstraunged herself from hym." (778)¹⁸³ The cold situation does not soften until the incident of the cart which occurs in the month of May "whan every lusty harte begynnyth to blossom and to bugyne." (790)

A long sourceless digression on love opens the Cart episode. A full treatment of this passage will be given in the next chapter. However, it is worth noticing that Malory here makes three important remarks concerning love. After comparing the coming of winter to the turning away from true love (790-791) he explicitly states that earthly love is secondary to heavenly love; (791) finally he contrasts the true love as found in the good old days with the wanton lust of his own time. "Nowadayes," Malory says, love is "sone hote sone colde. Thys ys no stabylté. But the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures [lecherous] lustis was

betwyxte them, and than was love, trouthe and faythefulnes." (791) Thus, Malory rejects the "unstable" love of the present age. Indirectly, covertly, and ironically, he condemns the guilty adultery of Lancelot and Guinevere, despite the apparent praise he gives to Guinevere: ". . . all ye that be lovers," remember "that whyle she [Guinevere] lyved she was a trew lover, and therefor she had a good ende." (791) Malory's code of morality is, to say the least, puzzling. He is faced with the problem of presenting a hero who is at the same time a model of knightly virtue and an adulterer. Whereas the French never raised their voice against such a situation--it was an accepted code--Malory feels the need to condemn it outright, and decides to make the love affair of Lancelot and Guinevere one of the major causes of the collapse of the Round Table.

The episode of the Cart proves very profitable for both Lancelot and Guinevere. Soon "sir Launcelot had grete chere with the quene," and that night "promysed to mete her [the following night] when all folkes were on slepe." (800) "And anone the quene was there redy to mete hym." (801) He "wente to bedde with the quene . . . toke ys pleasaunce and hys lykyng untyll hit was the dawnyng of the day." (801) Before reaching the queen, however, Lancelot had to break the iron bars out of the window, and in the process badly hurt his hand. Coward and unchivalrous Mellyagaunce who desired the queen¹⁸⁴ and had been spying on her for many years,¹⁸⁵ was waiting for a favorable occasion to avenge himself. Very uncourteously "he opens the curtayn," and notices that "all the hede-sheete, pylow, and over-shyte was all bebled [covered with blood]." (801) He accuses the queen of adultery with one of her ten knights.¹⁸⁶ Meanwhile Lancelot returns and immediately rebukes Mellyagaunce

for his uncourtesy: ". . . to touche a quenys bede whyle hit was drawyng and she lyyng therein," (802) and to have "displayed her curtaynes, and she beying within her bed." Lancelot evades the true matter of the dispute by emphasizing the uncourtly conduct of Mellyagaunce; chivalric conduct is more important than possible adultery. Moreover, Lancelot vows that "thys nyght there lay none of these ten knyghtes wounded with my lady, quene Gwenyver." (803)¹⁸⁷ Lancelot covers up his adulterous life by fulfilling his chivalric oath by succoring "ladyes, damsels, jantilwomen, and wydowes." (91) Before he can champion Guinevere, Lancelot is treacherously trapped. A lady¹⁸⁸ finds him, feeds him daily, and wishes to sleep with him. (804) But Lancelot refuses her advances, "wyte you well . . . if there were no mo women in all thys londe but ye, yet shall nat I have ado with you." (805)¹⁸⁹ On the day the combat was supposed to be held, the lady makes a final attempt but must satisfy herself with a kiss Lancelot condescends to give her, because he finds no disworship in doing it: "As for to kysse you . . . I may do that and lese no worship," but if "I undirstood there were . . . disworshyp for to kysse you, I wold nat do hit." (805) The combat takes place. Mellyagaunce is defeated and Guinevere orders Lancelot to finish him off. Lancelot refuses Guinevere's unchivalric proposal and offers Mellyagaunce a combat à outrance. "Than with grete force sir Launcelot smote hym on the helmet such a buffet [blow] that the stroke [carved] the hed in two partyes." (808)

The story of "The Healing of Sir Urry" seems to be out of place here, unless it is meant to prove to the reader that, in spite of his adultery, Lancelot can still perform miracles and be called the best living knight. The healing of Urry is a final test that acts as a proof of Lancelot's worth in

the eyes of everyone watching and in those of Arthur, in particular, who may be finding in this action a sign of Lancelot's purity. Urry is cured and Lancelot weeps.¹⁹⁰

Malory ironically opens the last Book "The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur" by discoursing on the month of May. May is a lusty month. May is also an unfortunate month for chivalry, for, in that month "a grete augur and unhappe that stynted [put an end] nat tylle the floure of chyvalry of all the worlde was destroyed and slayne." (818) When one least expects it, in the freshness of Spring and the fullness of life, the Fall comes.

Although Lancelot's deeds are praised they are not numerous to counter-balance his adultery with Guinevere. Soon "thys realme shall be holy destroyed and myscheved, and the noble felyshyp of the Rounde Table shall be dis-parbeled [dispersed]." (819) Aggravayne finally decides to tell Arthur about Lancelot and Guinevere: ". . . we know all that sir Launcelot holdith youre quene, and hath done longe, and . . . we may suffir hit no lenger . . . we woll preve hit that he is a traytoure to your person." (819) Arthur, who already knew about the affairs of the truest lovers, regrets more the loss of the Round Table than his wife's reputation and life. Bors warns Lancelot of some trap by Aggravayne, and advises him not to go to the queen who had sent for him. But soon, presumptuous and imprudent Lancelot is found in bed with Guinevere. Malory softens their adultery, saying that "love that tyme was nat as love ys nawadayes." (821) This is a mild treatment of adultery compared to the French and English texts.¹⁹¹ Lancelot, already feeling that the end is near, takes more precaution,¹⁹² and tells Guinevere, who is thinking of taking her own life: "wyte you well I shall selle my lyff as dere as I may." (822) He tries

to appease the fourteen knights trying to kill him by telling them that he
 ". . . came to the quene for no maner of male engyne [evil intention]," (824)
 and that he would prove it in combat. Is not Lancelot equivocating again when
 he says that adultery is not "male engyne" and treason? Before Lancelot and
 Guinevere separate they exchange rings, as in a betrothal ceremony. Lancelot
 begs Bors's help, (825) which is immediately promised and explains the purpose
 of his visit to Guinevere (826) which is very much doubted by Bors, "Insomuch
 as ye were takyn wyth her, whether ye ded ryght othir wronge, hit ys now youre
 parte to holde wyth the quene, that she be nat slayne and put to a myschevous
 deth." (827) Lancelot rightfully fears that in defending Guinevere he may
 "destroy som of my beste fryndis." (827) Love brings a perennial dilemma, at
 least when the code of chivalry is concerned. Before the encounter, Arthur
 asks Mordred if Lancelot was really found in Guinevere's chamber" "Toke ye
 hym in the quenys chambir?" (828) Mordred's affirmative answer hurts Arthur
 sorely. To lose Lancelot's friendship seems more cruel than to see his wife
 burned at the stake. This last blow provokes a poignant comment on his part:
 ". . . now I am sure the noble felyshyp of the Rounde Table ys brokyn for
 ever." (829) The King "commaunded the quene to the fyre and there to be
 brente." (829)¹⁹³

Gawayne, who ignores most of what is going on, steps forward to defend
 the queen, ". . . I dare sey, my lady, youre quene, ys to you both good and
 trew." (829) He also predicts that Lancelot "woill make good for my lady the
 quene." (830) He disobeys the king by refusing to escort Guinevere to the
 pyre; Gareth and Gaheris reluctantly do that office, (831) but are almost imme-
 diately cut down when Lancelot bursts in to rescue the queen. (831-832) She is

snatched from the pyre and brought to Joyous Garde, and "there he kepte her as a noble knyght shulde." (832) Here again, Malory glosses over Lancelot's possible bad actions. The situation grows from bad to worse in a matter of hours. Arthur swoons at the loss of Gareth and Gaheris and forty other of his knights, and also at the noble fellowship of Lancelot.¹⁹⁴ Gawayne learns the deadly news and forthwith becomes Lancelot's principal accuser and archenemy who will be actively responsible for keeping alive the hostilities that result in Mordred's ultimate treachery, and in the conflict between Lancelot and Arthur. Lancelot, however, does not give up that easily. He strongly maintains that at this crucial moment he should "do batayle for her [Guinevere] in her ryght quarell . . . for she ys both tru and good." (837) As has been said before, Lancelot equivocates, and his judgment on the situation proves technically right but morally wrong. A most shameful and disastrous battle ensues. Guinevere does not seem to be the enjeu anymore, but will be saved and restored to Arthur by Lancelot who reaffirms that "she ys a trew lady unto you." (844) Lancelot again equivocates in order to convince the king of his nobility and purity with Guinevere,¹⁹⁵ "for I was sente unto my lady, youre quyne, I wote nat for what cause, but I was not as sone within the chambir dore but anone sir Aggravayne and sir Mordred called be traytoure and false recrayed knyght." (844)¹⁹⁶ More and more Lancelot centers the attention of his audience on his magnanimous character and his noble deeds, and forgets Guinevere, ". . . now I woll make avaunte . . ." (845) His discourse generates no enthusiasm, no reconciliation, (846) but only ingratitude. (847) He laments his banishment caused by "varyaunte" and "mutable" fortune, offers his service to Guinevere, (848) divides his property among his friends, (849) and departs. (850)

While Lancelot resists Arthur's attacks on the French soil, Guinevere wars against Mordred who had "seyde playnly that he wolde wedde her." (860) To avoid incest, Guinevere thinks of a clever subterfuge. She uses all her coquettish wiles to obtain Mordred's permission to go to London. Once in London she hides in the Tower and intends to remain there. She tells Mordred "shortely, opynly and pryvayly, that she had levir [rather] sle herself than to be maryed with hym." (861) Meanwhile, Gawayne is mortally wounded by Lancelot and dies soon after. (864) Arthur and Mordred slay eath other. (868) The trouble over, Guinevere retires to Amysbury and becomes a nun with five other noble ladies. The two great lovers meet for a final adieu. Guinevere now understands the role she, Lancelot, and their adulterous love have played in the destruction of the Round Table: "Thorow thys same man and me hath all thys warre be wrought, and the deth of the most nobelest knyghtes of the worlde; for thorow oure love that we have loved togydir ys my moste noble lorde slayne." (876) Guinevere encourages Lancelot to marry. But Lancelot will never prove disloyal to Guinevere whom he loved all his life and whom he still loves very dearly. His request for a last kiss is refused. The death toll for courtly love has finally rung its last.

Love and Amor Purus

It has become increasingly obvious after the above rapid survey that, for Malory, amor mixtus had no appeal. Consequently, he deleted, changed, or glossed over many passages which were interfering with the characterization of many of his characters, that of Lancelot in particular.

In general, Malory shows a remarkable sense of adaptation and versa-

tility. Most inconsistencies in the handling of his tales seem to have arisen when the unity of his plot required that he go along with his different sources whether he approved or condemned the code of courtly love.

The present chapter will endeavor to show that for Malory, amor purus, that is, natural, pure, or true love, was the ideal kind of love he tried to present, encourage, and recommend whenever the tale offered the occasion or permitted him to do so.

The first instance of natural love is shown in the second division of the "Merlin" after Arthur had fathered Borre on Lyonors. (30) "And there [in the country of Camylarde] had Arthure the first syght of quene Gwenyvere . . . and ever afftir he loved hir." (31)¹⁹⁷ It is difficult to understand why Malory drastically deleted the story of Arthur falling in love with his future queen, unless he found that Arthur was still too much of a "lusty knyghte" to deserve Guinevere. Another plausible reason may have been that since Malory intended to glorify chivalric prowess and nobility it would have been irrelevant to start by stressing the amorous character of the first meeting of Arthur and Guinevere.

The second example of true love occurs after Balin returns from his exile at Arthur's court. Challenged by Launceor, an angry knight from the court of Arthur, Balin, who had previously killed a lady, kills Launceor in a fair combat. Then Launceor's lady, Columbe, rushes forward, and when she "aspyed that Launceor was slayne she made sorow oute of mesure." (51) She threateningly rebukes Balin, "A! Balyne, two bodyes thou hast slain in one herte and two hertes in one body, and two soul thou hast lost." (52) Then Columbe takes her lover's sword, struggles with Balin, who wants to take the

sword out of her hand, and "suddenly she sette the pomell to the grounde, and rove stabbed hirselff thorowoute the body." (52)¹⁹⁸ Balin is ashamed that so fair a damsel had destroyed herself for the love of Launceor,¹⁹⁹ and said, "Alas! . . . me repentis sore the dethe of thys knyght for the love of thys damsel, for there was much trw [true] love betwyxte hem." (52) (My italics)

For not preventing the death of Columbe, Merlin tells Balin that he will "stryke a stroke moste dolerous that ever man stroke . . . and thorow that stroke three kyngdomys shall be brought into grete poverte, miseri and wrecchednesse twelve yere." (54)²⁰⁰ The whole pitiful episode has nothing to do with the code of courtly love, for, in general, secret loves do not end in death.

Another example of true love is revealed in the episode involving Gawayne and his damsel with Pelleas, who for a lady is fighting a grotesque dwarf.²⁰¹ The opponents ask Gawayne to settle their dispute. Being an amateur in matters of love, Gawayne refrains from taking any decision but allows the lady to choose between Pelleas and the dwarf. "And when she was sette betwene hem bothe she left the knyght and went to the dwarff." (120) Then the dwarf took her up and went his way "syngyng,"²⁰² [My italics] and the knight went his way "mournyng." Malory does not care, in the case of true love, whether it be a knight or a dwarf. The best party wins. Although Malory was an aristocrat his sources seemed to have prevented him from giving the lady to a knight. Here true love and not courtly love sings its victory. On that occasion, Gawayne loses his own damsel to another knight because of his poor handling of the situation. Soon after, Gawayne discovers that Pelleas acts as he does out of love for Ettarde, "hys soverayne lady." Pelleas will never love any other lady but her, and for that reason "this knyght promysed Ettarde

to folow hir . . . and nevir to leve her tyll she loved hym." (121)²⁰³ Pelleas admits that "love causyth many a good knyght to suffir to have his entente [the object of his desire]." (122) But he does not mind the pains as long as he may see Ettarde daily. (123) His love is sincere, and, as a true courtly lover, he will wait until his lady finally accepts him. But we already know the rest of the story too well.²⁰⁴ Ettarde, however, does not deserve Pelleas' true love.²⁰⁵ The Damsel of the Lake, who has cast her eyes upon Pelleas, tells him, "Take your horse and com forth withoute of this contrey, and ye shall love a lady that woll love you." (126) (My italics) The Lady of the Lake and Pelleas finally get married. She "rejoyced sir Pelleas," and they "loved togedyrs duryng their lyfe." (126)²⁰⁶ (My italics) Pelleas is rewarded for his virtue, and Ettarde punished for her sin. Only in Malory does Pelleas love and wed the Lady of the Lake. In the French text a reconciliation in the courtly love fashion is easily made between Pelleas and Gawayne, and Pelleas and Arcade (Ettarde). Malory has carefully built up the reputation of Pelleas as a knight, as a faithful lover, and as a husband. The Ettarde-Pelleas-Nyneve story, which stresses true love and happy marital relationship, counterbalances the less happy relationship between other famous pairs of lovers who so markedly contribute to the fall of the Round Table.

A further contribution toward the promotion of true and natural love is the story of Gareth, which has already been discussed in the preceding chapter.²⁰⁷ After days and weeks of courtly sufferings and trials under the proud and scornful Lyonet, Gareth finally sees the object of his true love, Lyones. "She shall be my lady and for hir woll I fyght." (237) He immediately challenges the Red Knight who warns Gareth that Lyones is "my lady, and

for hir I have done many stronge batayles." Unafraid, Gareth retorts, ". . . mesemyth hit was but waste laboure, for she lovyth none of thy felyshyp, and thou to love that lovyth nat the is but grete foly." (237) (My italics)

Love, therefore, should be natural, sincere, not sophisticated as the courtly love code implies. Gareth's prowess and valor are not wholly motivated by the code of knighthood, as we would be inclined to think, but are also inspired by Lyones, with whom he has fallen in love. For this reason he warns the Red knight that because he loves Lyones he "woll rescow hir, othir ellis . . . dye therefore." (237) When Gareth falters during the fight, maiden Lyonet shouts to him, "where is thy corrayge becom? Alas! my . . . sister beholdyth the, and she shrekys and wepys so that hit makyth myne herte hevvy," (239) Those words prick him to the quick and enable him to defeat his opponent. Lyonet admits that Gareth is an extraordinary lover and that nothing could deter him from pursuing his love. (244) Out of admiration for Gareth, Lyonet reverses the code of courtly love and offers her services to "curteyse and mylde" Gareth. Then Gryngamour, Lyones' brother, officially offers his sister to Gareth, "for wete you well she lovyth you as well as ye do hir and better, yf bettir may be." (246) My italics The two lovers soon burn "both in hoote love." He "kyssed hir many tymes, and eythir made grete joy of other." (247) They make no secret about their young blossoming love. And to prevent them from consummating their love before their marriage, Lyonet has to use magic. In spite of the magic, again "sir Gareth and dame Lyonesse were so hoote in bremynge [burning] love that they made their covenantes at the tenth nyght aftir, that she should come to his bedde." (249) Their plans are again disrupted and their "hoote" desire remains unfulfilled. Finally, after all

sorts of adventures which demonstrate Gareth's perfection and Lyones' constancy and love, Arthur, who had been summoned by Gawayne, arrives and asks the ritual questions of the betrothal ceremony. Each party answers very briefly and to the point. Gareth says: "My Lorde, wete you well that I love hir abovyn all ladyes lyvynges." On her side Lyones affirms: ". . . my lorde Arthure, wete you well he is my fyrste love and he shall be laste; and yf ye woll suffir hym to have his wyll and fre choyse, I dare say he woll have me."

(269) (My italics) Gareth is so moved by Lyones' declaration that he enthusiastically adds: "That is trouthe, and I have nat you and welde you as my wyff, there shall never lady nother jantyllwoman rejoyse me." (269) The system of courtly love shrinks hopelessly when confronted with such frankness and such candor. Arthur himself is so overwhelmed by their mutual love that he promises that he "shall rather encrece hyt than discrece hit." (270) He then announces the day of the wedding ceremony and feast which will be enhanced by the wedding of two other peoples and the presence of the bishop of Canterbury.

At the very beginning of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," we are told that the daughter of Faramon, king of France, loved Tristram. She sent letter after letter to Tristram but he "had no joy of hir lettyrs nor regarde unto hir." (282) When she realized that Tristram would never love her she died out of sorrow.²⁰⁸ This pitiful story does not bear the slightest imprint of courtly love. A lady who begs for the love of a man she truly loves is unheard of in the courtly love code. That princess is a precursor to the Maid of Astolat-Lancelot piteous tale. (757-782)

Shortly after, Tristram falls in love with his healer, Isode, probably

with good reason, "for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde." (288) Unfortunately, Palomides sees Isode at the same time and also falls in love and promises her that he would be christened for her sake. The conflict between the two suitors gathers momentum as the tale progresses. But we soon know who will get the prize. Contrary to a courtly lady's behavior, Isode helps Tristram get ready for his first combat. Tristram becomes Isode's servant, "I will be at your commaundement." (289) Their love continually increases and, as Lancelot will later do, he declares "that in all placis I shall be my lady your king Angwyssh doughtyrs servaunte and knyght in all ryght and in wronge." (294) (My italics) Before leaving the Irish king and barons for Cornwall he pledges fidelity to Isode and Isode to him. Before they exchange rings, symbols of their betrothal,²⁰⁹ Isode promises not to marry for the coming seven years and then only with Tristram's consent. Again courtly love cannot claim any right here. So far, the love of the two immortal lovers is natural, true, and pure.

Like Gareth and Pelleas, Brewnor Le Noyre (La Cote Male Tayle) proves to be another famous lover. Like the other two minor heroes, he has a lady who spurs him on to noble deeds, and consequently, causes his nobility to increase. Lady Maledysaunte is such a lady. She never rebuked Brewnor except "for grete love that I had to hym, for ever I supposed that he had bene to yonge and to tendur of ayge to take upon hym thys adventure." (351)²¹⁰ Because of the true and pure love the lady bore to Brewnor, Lancelot decides to change her name into that of Damesell Byeau Pansaunte. (352) The damsel is so much in love with her noble knight that she worries about his excessive fighting: "Alas! . . . my knyght fyghttyth passynge sore and overlonge." (353)

Only a person deeply in love and about to marry would make such complaint. Eventually the gentle pair weds. (355) The damsel changes her name into "Lady Byeaue-Vyvante," and Brewnor le Noyre adopts the nickname given him by "Kay the Senesciall" (341), namely, La Cote Male Tayle.

During Tristram's madness Isode, who thought Tristram was dead, "Gate a swerde pryvayly . . . bare hit into her gardyne . . . pyghte [thrusted] the swerde thorow a plum-tre . . . so that hit stake [stuck] fast, and hit stoode breste-hyghe." (322) Mark averts a sure suicide. Although Isode and Mark "were rychely wedded wyth grete nobley [pomp]," (318) their marriage of convenience never worked out. Forgetful of Mark's presence, Isode kneels down and utters a heart-breaking prayer: "Sweyte Lorde Jesu, have mercy uppon me, for I may nat lyve after deth of sir Trystram . . . for he was my firste love and shall be the laste!" (372) (My italics) True love, and not courtly love, was Malory's ideal, and here he rejects Isode's marriage of convenience contracted to Mark, and praises her yearnings for a sincere and wanted marital union. The enmity between Mark and Tristram growing worse every day, the jealous king decides to exile Isode's lover to England, for it seemed "that there was muche love betwene them twayne." (428) (My italics) At the news of Tristram's winning much prowess in England, Mark was much grieved. Both Mark and Isode send spies to England, Mark out of jealousy and envy, Isode out of love, "to know what dedis he had done, for full grete love was there betwene them." (428) When the reports came, "Marke was ryght hevvy of tho tydynges and as glad was La Beale Isode." (429) Malory constantly stresses the rewarding and consoling effects of true and pure love and the disastrous consequences of jealousy and envy.

One remembers the story of Alexander the Orphan and the damsel who helped rescue him from the hands of Morgan le Fay,²¹¹ who kept him prisoner "for none other entente but to do hir plesure whan hit lykyth her." (480) Never was Alexander tempted to have his pleasure either with Morgan le Fay or his lady-rescuer. The lady loved him sincerely and did not want to lose such a worthy knight. "As Jesu me helpe . . . and ye wolde love me and be ruled by me, I shall make your delyveraunce with your worship." (480) (My italics) Without any hesitation Alexander replies: "Telle me now by what meane, and ye shall have my love." (481) Alexander is delivered, and the damsel withdraws from his life. Shortly after, however, Duke Aunserus' daughter, who had witnessed a great combat between Sagramour le Desyrous and Alexander, "lepe oute of hir pavylyon and toke sir Alysaunder by the brydyll, and thus she seyde: 'Fayre knyght! Of thy knyghthode, shew me thy vysayge [face].'" (482) Upon seeing his face, Alice jubilantly says: "A, swete Fadir Jesu! The I muste love, and never othir." In his turn, Alexander courteously requests to see Alice's face. It is love at first sight. "A Lorde Jesu! Here have I founde my love and my lady! And therefore, fayre lady, I promyse you to be your knyght, and none other that beryth the lyff that lives ." (My italics) "So there was grete love betwyxte them." (482)²¹² Alice's real and natural love for Alexander was aroused certainly by Alexander's prowess and probably also by his great beauty. Their love for each other increased day after day and finally, as Malory puts it, Alexander "departed with his lady La Beall Pyllerowne. And that damsell wolde never go from hym, and so they wente into their contrey of Benoy and lyved there in grete joy."(484)

Returning momentarily to Tristram, one finds him in prison under heavy

guard "in a stronge preson." (501) Since nobody knows where he is except Mark, who had treacherously drugged him in order to overcome him, Isode "pry-vayly . . . wente unto sir Sadocke and prayde hym to aspye where was sir Trystram." (501)²¹³ Isode's worrying about her noble knight indicates an affection which transcends the artificiality of courtly love.²¹⁴ In every possible instance Malory endeavors to justify the Tristram-Isode relationship. Against Mark's uncourtly but valid reasons for hating Tristram, "I may nat love sir Trystram, bycause he lovyth my quene, La Beall Isode," Perceval, who has just delivered Tristram, replies in a defending mood, that Mark "sholde never thynke he [Tristram] wolde do hymselff so grete vylony to holde his unclys wyff." (504) Perceval, who ignores the facts about the relationship between the two lovers, persists in believing that purus amor is the only kind of love Tristram would give to Isode.²¹⁵

In the delightful scene between Dinadan, Tristram, and Epyngryns, Malory seems to have only one purpose in mind, namely, to contrast real and courtly love. Dinadan is a humorous, cynical knight who, although not the best jouster, is still the "beste felawe" and friend of all good knights. His function in the Prose Tristan appears to be that of a stern critic of the chivalric concepts of duty and valor. Malory also uses Dinadan most effectively in his criticism of courtly love. To Tristram, whose chivalric and courtly motto seems to be "a knyght may never be of proues but yf he be a lovear," Dinadan has nothing to oppose. But theories must be proven. Fortunately, a great lover by the name of Epyngryns comes along and is immediately recognized by Dinadan. Tristram profits by the occasion to test his theory, and tells Dinadan, ". . . now I suppose . . . and ye requyre hym, he woll

juste wyth you, and than shall ye preve whether a lover be bettir knyght or ye that woll nat love no lady." (512) A very short and interesting joust takes place and Epynogrys "smote down sir Dynadan." Triumphantly and mockingly Tristram rides to Dinadan and says: "How now? Mesemyth the lover hath well sped." If Malory has failed to appreciate Dinadan's unconventional criticism against ideal knighthood²¹⁶ and sophisticated courtly love, he has certainly succeeded through the words of his main heroes in emphasizing the fact that the hero must be not only the man of prowess and of courtesy--although it was his greatest preoccupation--but also the man of love, to achieve true grandeur and true happiness.

The first Elayne and Lancelot episode (581-617) will always remain a symbol of frank and natural love of a sincere woman for a noble hero. Lancelot is ashamed not only because "he has layne by her, [Elayne] but also because he drew his sword on her. (592)²¹⁷ Therefore, not only does he think he has offended his oath of chivalry, but also that he has been unfaithful and disloyal to Guinevere whom he truly loves. To clear Lancelot of ill intention and blame, Malory makes sure that the begetting of Galahad is performed under enchantment. Elayne has no other love, "for wyte you well, oute of mesure she loved hym," (592) and "for all the worlde I love nat so mucche as I do sir Launcelot." (593) Guinevere, whose suspicions are about to be confirmed, finally catches Lancelot and Elayne in bed. She calls him a "false traytoure knyght." (594) In the name of true love, Elayne immediately challenges Guinevere's rights to Lancelot's love, "for ye have a lorde royall of youre owne, and therefore hit were youre parte for to love hym . . . And yf ye [Guinevere] were nat, I myght have getyn the love of my lorde sir Launcelot." (594)²¹⁸

In one blow, Elayne accuses Guinevere of adultery with Lancelot and of disloyalty to the king, and defends and justifies her true love for the knight she has a right to love. Later, she admits to Bors, "I would lose my lyff for hym rather he shulde be hurte." (595) (My italics) This constant preoccupation on the part of the ladies like Guinevere, Isode, and Elayne, to prevent their men from being hurt, is most characteristic and denotes an anti-courtly love attitude.²¹⁹

Besides being a symbol and exemplum of natural, true, and pure love, the pitiful story of the second Elayne (The Maid of Astolat) and Lancelot, is one of the most popular and moving of Malory's tales. Elayne is a fair maid, an innocent girl whose love could have been a real success, but has remained unfulfilled because of Lancelot's unchangeable loyal attitude toward Guinevere. As in the case of the former Elayne, her love is good and commendable although branded as earthly by a priest.

The whole affair started when after having seen Lancelot before a joust, Elayne "keste [felt] such a love unto sir Launcelot that she cowde never withdraw hir loove, wherefore she dyed." (759) She was "so hote in love" with him that she asked him to wear a token of hers in the joust.²²⁰ It was love at first sight, the kind of simple, frank, and uninhibited love Malory believed in.²²¹ Lancelot's motive is less pure, however, for what he wants is not so much to fight for the lady who has fallen in love with him, but that "none of hys bloode thereby myght know hym." (759) We can already predict that Elayne's love will be unrequited. After the joust, Elayne thanks God for Lancelot's success. For her, Lancelot "ys the man in the worlde that I firste loved and truly he shall be the laste that ever I shall love." (767)

It is the story of the first Elayne all over again. To Gawayne she says "my love ys he. Lancelot God wolde that I were hys love." (768) (My italics) Knowing that Lancelot has been hurt in a combat, Elayne asks permission of her father "to ryde and seke hym, other ellis I wote well I shall go oute of my mynde." (769) Finding out about Elayne's red sleeve which Lancelot wore during the joust, Guinevere "was nygh ought of her mynde for wratthe." (770) She calls him "a false traytoure knyght." (770) Bors tries to console Guinevere, but she tells him that she heard Gawayne say "that it were mervayle to telle the grete love that ys betwene the Fayre Maydyn of Astolat and hym." (770) Guinevere is not only jealous, but also very prejudiced for, from the beginning of the story, Lancelot has not returned Elayne's love as a true lover should have done. Contrary to the strict recommendations of Andreas' code Elayne becomes the servant of Lancelot for "thys maydyn Elayne never wente frome sir Launcelot, but wacched hym day and night, and dud such attendaunce to hym that . . . there was never woman dyd nevermore kyndlyer for man." (772)²²² (My italics)

Gradually Lancelot feels the pressure of love on Elayne's side and the mounting anger on Guinevere's part. He complains to Bors that "by no meanys I cannat put her fro me." (773) Bors sees nothing unreasonable in this and wishes Lancelot "cowde love her, but as to that I may nat nother dare counceyle you. But I se well, . . . that she lovith you intyerly [entirely]." (773) What Bors tries to tell Lancelot indirectly is that, instead of carrying on an adulterous affair with Guinevere, he should settle down by marrying one of those truly loving maidens. But since the plot must follow its determined and fatalistic course, Lancelot refuses to listen to any wise advice which

would bring him to the foot of the altar. Meanwhile Guinevere's anger boils (776) Lancelot, about to return with Bors to Arthur's court, is visited by Elayne who "brought hir fadir with her, and sir Lavayne, and sir Tyrre, and than thus she sayde: ' . . . fayre knyght and curtayse knyght . . . have mercy uppon me, and suffir me nat to dye for youre love.'" (777) To her request "I wolde have you to my husband," Lancelot repeats his time-honored formula: "I caste me never to be wedded man." In desperation Elayne requests that he become her paramour. More forcefully Lancelot refuses, and repents that Elayne ever loved him, for "I was never the causer of hit." (778) Elayne remains inconsolable, and wastes away. When told by a priest that she should stop thinking of earthly love, she clearly indicates that in her mind she is not wrong to love sir Lancelot, and that she would continue to do so:

Why sholde I leve such thoughtes? Am I nat an erthely woman?
And all the whyle the brethe ys in my body I may complayne me, for
my beleve ys that I do none offence, though I love an erthely man,
unto God, for He fourmed me thereto, and all maner of good love comyth
of God. And othir than good love loved I never sir Launcelot du Lake.
And I take God to recorde, I loved never none but hym, nor never shall,
of erthely creature; and a clene maydyn I am for hym and for all
othir. (779)

Elayne, then commends her soul to God, and in a public confession declares: "I take God to recorde I was never to The grete offenser nother ayenste Thy lawis, but that I loved thys noble knyght, sir Launcelot, oute of mesure." (779) Finally she writes her testament in the form of a letter to Lancelot. With her death (780) true and pure love dies.

Elayne's letter provokes diverse but expected reactions. In defending his refusal to Elayne's true love, "God knows I was never causar of her deth by my wyllynge," (781) Lancelot says to the queen: "Madame . . . I love nat to be constrayned to love, for love muste only aryse of the harte seiff, and

nat by none constraynte," thereby indirectly warning Guinevere that she must put an end to her unreasonable jealousies, and be satisfied with what he has to offer to her. He blames Elayne herself, who, he says, has "loved me oute of mesure." (781) Who is to be blamed? Certainly not Elayne, but Lancelot, who follows the courtly love code too strictly in this case. Lancelot's words are technically right, but his own practice of the wrong kind of love prevents him from choosing the right values. Just as excessive love has driven the Fair Maid to a premature death, so it his adulterous love driving him and Arthur's realm to destruction. Furthermore, is it not ironic that Lancelot should criticize Elayne for loving him "oute of mesure," when he himself puts no limit to his guilty love of Guinevere? Arthur's endorsement of Lancelot's statement, "with many knyghtes love ys free in hymselffe, and never woll be bonden; for where he ys bonden he lowsith hymselff," is, to say the least, confusing the issues. Is Arthur referring to marriage which is a sacrament uniting and binding two persons (lovers) together for life, or is he warning the two lovers (paramours) who live for each other in a state condemned by the Church? Or is he referring to Andreas' code which states very explicitly: "We declare and we hold firmly established that love cannot exert its power between two people who are married to each other. For lovers give each other everything freely, under no compulsion of necessity, but married people are in duty bound to give to each other's desires and deny themselves to each other in nothing."²²³ Although there is no continuity of thought between what Lancelot and Arthur say, it is my contention that Arthur is advocating a kind of love which is set free only when fulfilled in marriage.

Love and Matrimonia

If Amor purus was the ideal kind of love Malory recommended, it goes without saying that in his opinion the best and safest way to secure and increase such a love was to bind it in the vows of matrimony.

In these following pages I will attempt to show that for Malory, marriage was the natural and supreme fulfillment of true and pure love.

The first mention of marriage occurs when after having rescued Guinevere's father, king Lodegraunce, Arthur sees Guinevere and falls in love with her, "And after they were wedded, as hit tellith in the booke." (31) From the context we learn that Arthur, like many other feudal warriors, is a "lusty knyghte."²²⁴ Arthur's decision to marry Guinevere is disapproved by Merlin who warns the king that "Gwenyvere was nat holsom²²⁵ [suitable] for hym to take to wyff," because "Launcelot scholde love hir, and sche hym agayne." (71) But Arthur, with a carelessness typical of any young lover, thrusts aside that concern and already subjects himself to the unflattering role of the scoffed at and satisfied husband. Nevertheless, Lodegraunce gives his daughter away to Arthur, along with the Round Table.²²⁶ Arthur rejoices at Guinevere's coming and at the rich present she brings with her, "Thys fayre lady ys passyngly wellcome to me, for I have loved hir longe, and therefore there ys nothyng so lieff [dear]²²⁷ to me. And thes knyghtes with the Table Rounde pleasith me more than ryght grete rychesse." (72) Soon after, the royal couple weds into a certain happiness, "the kynge was wedded at Camelot unto dame Gwenyvere in the chirche of Seynte Stepphyns with grete solempnit ,"²²⁸ (76) until Malory, in an original passage, introduces Lancelot in direct confirmation of Merlin's prophecy, as the man who "loved the quene." (180) Mer-

lin's phrase "nat holson" directly implies moral judgment on the adultery that will result in family tragedy, private and public.

In "The War with the Five Kings," Guinevere prefers to accompany her husband and cross the Humber with him even if it jeopardizes her life. She says she would rather die "in this water than to falle in youre enemyes handis, and there be slayne." (94) The newly-married royal couple show their real love for each other. Arthur behaves like a real loving husband and a gentleman. Courtly love would be at a loss here.

The piteous tale of Ettarde, Pelleas and Nynve is another proof that, for Malory, marriage was the best fulfillment of true love. Certainly, the French ending, which was according to the convention of courtly love, displeased Malory. With a little bit of magic, Malory turns the tables and invents a conclusion more suitable to his taste.²²⁹ Ettarde, the constant but unworthy pursuer of Pelleas, is punished for her disloyalty toward Pelleas and later dies of sorrow. (126) The hand of Nynve is given to Pelleas as a reward for his true love. We learn toward the end of the Book, that "the chyff lady of the laake, whych had wedded sir Pellyas, the good knyght; . . . wolde never suffir sir Pelleas to be in no place where he shulde be in daungere of hys lyff; and so he lyved into the uttermyste of hys dayes with her in grete reste." (872) What lovers would not envy such a pair?²³⁰ By ignoring the courtly convention of the French story, by bending the tale in the direction of his own taste, and by introducing a moral ending, Malory not only satisfies the poetic justice required by the story, but also reveals his natural inclination for love "stabilized" in marriage.

The Lyonet-Gareth-Lyones story, in which Lyonet feels "hir sister dame

Lyonesse . . . a little overhasty that she might nat abyde hir tyme of maryage," (247) confirms Malory's preference for the standard Christian ethic. Malory's intention seems to contrast Gareth's natural approach to marriage with the adulterous affairs of Lancelot and Tristram, the former promoting family stability, the latter causing family destruction. Although Arthur's question to Gareth may puzzle us, "the kynge asked his newew . . . whether he wolde have this lady [Lyones] as peramour, other ellys to have hir to his wyff," (269) Gareth's and Lyones' declarations of love assure us of their sincere intentions. To Gareth's "wete you well that I love hir abovyn all ladyes lyvyng," Lyones replies, ". . . my lorde Arthure, wete you well he [Gareth] is my fyrste love and shall be the laste; yf ye woll suffir [permit] hym to have his wyll and fre choyse, I dare say he woll have me." (269) Gareth concludes the preliminary betrothal ceremony by assuring Lyones that, in the event he cannot marry her, "there shall never lady nother jantyllwoman rejoyse me." (269) The same day the wedding is fixed for Michaelmas Day, September 29, and costly rings are then given to the jubilant couple. Upon the feast of St. Michael, the bishop of Canterbury "made the weddyng betwene sir Gareth and dame Lyonesse with grete solempnyté." (270) To underline the importance of the occasion, "Arthure made sir Gaherys to wedde . . . dame Lyonet," and Aggravayne, dame Lawrell, Lyones' niece. (271) Marriage is, in the eyes of Malory, the natural culmination of a love affair.

One of the few instances of happy wedded love in Le Morte Darthur is that of the wife of king Melodyas, the mother of Tristram. "She was a full meke lady, and well she loved hir lorde and he hir agayne so there was grete joy betwyxte hem." (276)²³¹ (My italics) Melodyas and his wife Elizabeth

had their times of trials,²³² but always their constant devotion to each other proved most rewarding. Malory favored wedded love as much as Chaucer, but his material gave him little chance to make that clear. Here Malory stresses marital fidelity and true love. The courtly love code of Andreas was certainly not one of his daily preoccupations.

The enmity which develops between Mark and Tristram over Segwarydes' wife gives Malory an ideal opportunity to present the darker side of Mark's character at the same time that he stresses Tristram's courtesy.²³³ The fight over a "lyght lady," (333)²³⁴ is long and complicated. At one point in the story, after Tristram had refused to rescue Segwarydes' wife from Bleoberys, "one lady . . . rebuked sir Trystram in the horrybelyst wyse, and called hym cowarde knyght." (298) Undisturbed, Tristram replies that "hit is nat my parte to have ado in such maters whyle her lorde and husbonde ys presente here." (298)²³⁵ (My italics) Tristram is faced with a dilemma which is not easily solved. Segwarydes' wife asks Tristram why he did not champion her, as the chivalric and courtly codes required. (302) But Tristram felt that since her husband was there it was most natural that he champion his wife. Here again, marital obligations win over courtly ones. Moreover, when Bleoberys realizes that "she is wedded and has a lorde," (303) and since he has fulfilled his courtly promise, he says that "she shall be sente unto hir husbunde agayne, and in especiall moste for your sake, sir Trystrames." Tristram, the apparent loser, comes out the victor, on account of his courtesy and common sense. According to all evidence, Malory also wants to warn the reader against marrying fair but "light ladies." He also avoids stressing bad marriages. That of Mark and Isode is dismissed in one sentence, "they

were rychely wedded wyth grete nobley," (318) while at the same time, Tristram's love for Isode is mentioned with more emphasis, "But evir, sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode loved ever togedyrs." (318)²³⁶ Their love provides a muted prefiguration of, and preparation for the Lancelot-Guinevere affair.

Toward the end of the story of "Isode the Fair," we are told that on one of his hunting sprees, Tristram is wounded by an "envenomed" arrow. Only king Howell's daughter, Isode le Blaunche Maynes, can cure him. Tristram goes to "Bretayne." (329) In spite of his incurable wound, Tristram fights for Howell's son, Keyhydins, and kills more than a hundred knights, including earl Grype. Then, great love "grew . . . betwyxte Isode and sir Trystrames, for the lady was bothe goode and fayre, and a woman of noble blood and fame." (330) Tristram had "suche chere and ryches and all other plesaunce that he had allmoste forsakyn La Beale Isode."²³⁷ And so one day he agrees to wed his new love ". . . at last they were wedded and solemply hylde their maryage."

(330) The marriage is never consummated, however, for Tristram "remembirde hym of his olde lady, La Beale Isode." (330)

The horn of marital fidelity sent by Lamorak to Mark's court causes a temporary but serious breach of friendship between Tristram and Lamorak. (326) "When you should have sent it to king Arthur's court" Tristram says, "you sent it here, in 'dispyte of me.'" (334) Lamorak justifies his action by saying that if he had to do it again he would not hesitate sending it back to Mark's court "for I had lever [rather] stryff and debate felle in kyng Markys courte rether than in kynge Arthurs courte, for the honour of both courts be nat lyke." (334) The point made by Lamorak is clear: Mark does not deserve Isode. Tristram understands and forgives Lamorak. In this case, chivalry

wins over courtly love and marriage, because Mark's marriage to Isode is considered unfair, not only by Lamorak, but by Malory as well.

To the rules of courtly love which declare that love cannot exert its powers between two married people, Malory opposes his own down-to-earth theories by giving a convincing example in the persons of Brewnor le Noyre and Maledysaunte, (341-356) who marry after a long and painful courtship. (355) After his marriage to damsel Maledysaunte, "La Cote Male Tayle . . . proved a passyng noble knyght and a myghty, and many worshipfull dedys he ded aftir in hys lyff." (356)²³⁹ Emphasized here by Malory is the idea that love which is fulfilled in marriage not only ennoble those who feel its power, but also causes the success of greater and more noble accomplishments.

We may also say that the marriage that took place between Alexander and Alice (484) produced the same profitable effects, for after they had gone "unto their contrey of Benoy, [they] lyved there in grete joy."²⁴⁰ We probably remember that earlier Alexander had refused to be loved by a lady for whose love Malegryne was fighting. Strangely enough, Morgan le Fay, whose marriage to king Uryence was not faring too well, warned Alexander not to marry that lady: ". . . she desyre to wed you; [but] she is nat for you." (479)²⁴¹ Under the pretext that he cannot marry in this country, (Cornwall) Alexander assents to her request "that ye woll gyff me to a knyght of this contrey that hath bene my frende and loved me many yerys." (479) The knight, Geryne le Grose, was sent for "And, anone he [Alexander] made them honde-faste and wedded them." (480)²⁴²

In "The Tournament at Surluse," king Baudas' daughter hearing that "sir Palomydes ded much for damsels . . . prayde hym to fyght with sir Corsabryne

for her love." (494) The problem was that Corsabryne loved Baudas' daughter, but would not marry her. To justify his conduct he constantly "noysed [reported] . . . that she was oute of her mynde, and thus he lette her that she myght nat be maryed." (494) In the field, Palomides and Corsabryne "laysshed togydirs myghtyly as myghty knyghtes." (495) Finally, pagan Palomides overcomes him and "than he smote of his hede,"²⁴³ his third in the last few days. "And therewithall cam a stynke of his body, whan the soule departed, that there myght nobody abyde the savoure [evil smell or foul odor]." (496) This very short episode in Le Morte Darthur, again indicates how Malory favored love culminating in marriage. Pagan Corsabryne did not want to commit himself and preferred to live as courtly lovers do, enjoying their paramours and never marrying them. Marriage haters are most odiously treated in Malory, they simply "stynke."²⁴⁴

Marriages of convenience are rarely mentioned in Le Morte Darthur, probably because in general they never procured nor promoted happiness. On the contrary, they caused dissensions and strifes among knights. The marriage of Mark and Isode is a typical and unforgettable case. Another example is the sad story of Elayne and Lancelot. (581-617) Addressing Lancelot, Elayne tells him that she only obeyed her father (586) in order to fulfill the prophecy that he "shulde gete a pusyll [virgin] upon his daughter, whyche shulde be called sir Galahad." (584) Elayne wanted to marry Lancelot and had her father's permission to do so, "For, daughter, I woll that ye wyte we all be honowred by the blood of sir Launcelot," (611) but the story is cut short and no more is said about the piteous tale. Of course, Lancelot could not marry Elayne and settle down when much of the remaining story depended on him to follow his course. I

am sure Malory would have preferred his hero to leave his adulterous life and enter into the state of matrimony with king Pelleas' daughter.

Many of Lancelot's friends urge him to marry. For instance, when Lancelot confides to Bors "that by no meanys I cannat put her [Maid of Astolat] fro me," Bors innocently replies, "why sholde ye put here frome you? . . . I se well by her dyligence aboute you that she lovith you intyerly." (773) Bors and Malory strongly encourage marital love, for it is ideal.²⁴⁵ Is not Malory's creed, in relation to marriage and chivalry clearly set forth in the following sourceless passage?

. . . lyke as May moneth flowryth and floryshyth in every mannes gardyne, so in lyke wyse lat every man of worshyp florysh hys herte in thys worlde; firste unto God, and nexte unto the joy of them that he promysed hys feythe unto; for there was never worshypfull man nor worshypfull woman but they loved one bettir than another; and worshyp in armys may never be foyled. (791)

Here, Malory establishes his own hierarchy of values: first, spiritual loyalty to God; second, loyalty to one's partner; third, chivalric loyalty in battle.²⁴⁶ Since no loyalty is possible without love, Malory does not hesitate to say that he who respects the above hierarchy of values possesses "vertuose love." The fact that this hierarchy has been inverted brings about the three great failures exemplified in Le Morte Darthur, namely, failure in religion, in love, and in chivalry.²⁴⁷

As far as marriage is concerned, the last Book of Le Morte Darthur contains few incidents. Lamenting the war between the Gawayne and Lancelot clans, Arthur reveals that the loss of the fellowship of men is more important than the loss of a queen and wife: "And much more I am sorryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre quene; for quenys I myght have inow [enough] but such a felyshyp of good knyghtes shall never be togydirs in no

company." (833) Arthur's and Malory's constant efforts to revive and maintain a system which was on its deathbed, proved dishearteningly futile.

Guinevere is the last commentator on the matters pertaining to marriage. First, she has to use a subterfuge²⁴⁸ to avoid the incestuous love of Mordred, who had declared in Winchester that he would wed her. (860)²⁴⁹ Her clever trick succeeds, thus preventing a possible suicide on her part. (861) More and more, Guinevere understands the nefarious role her love for Lancelot has played in the downfall of the Round Table. ". . . thorow thys same man [Lancelot] and me hath all thys warre be wrought, and the deth of the moste nobelest knyghtes of the world; for thorow oure love that we have loved togydir ys my moste noble lorde slayne." (876) Now wholly concerned with the salvation of her soul,²⁵⁰ she renounces Lancelot forever, ". . . for all the love that ever was betwyxt us . . . never se me no more in the visayge [face]." (876) She enjoins him to marry and live "wyth joy and blys."²⁵¹ But Lancelot rejects her proposition "for I shall never be so false unto you of that I have promysed," and decides to become a hermit and pray for Guinevere. Discarding the chivalric, romantic, and even marital values as transitory and inadequate in the achievement of the Sankgreal Queste, Lancelot and Guinevere opt for the only enduring values left to them, namely the service to and union with God. In the end both achieve the Grail message: union with God. The personal stability of Malory's heroes is finally reestablished, his values fallen in chaos, restored.

Love and Perfidia

Probably the least interesting but best understood and treated feature

of courtly love in Le Morte Darthur is its infinite capacity for causing unhappiness, jealousy, treachery, and all manner of perverted degradations, which we summarize under the name of Perfidia.

The following pages will present a few cases which should convince us of the attitude taken by Malory toward the wrong kind of love, and its disastrous effects on the knights, in general, and those of the Round Table, in particular.

One may well begin with Balin who gives the romance a tragic tone. Balin is the first of Malory's strong character studies. He is a tragic figure, always entirely noble in purpose--"I shall take the adventure . . . that God woll ordayne for me." (47)--always doing the wrong thing. At the beginning of the chapter, he is a poor knight in Arthur's disfavor, "for sleying of a knyght which was cosyne unto kynge Arthur." (46) Now, noticed by the king, (48) he has apparently every chance of recouping his fortune. But Balin disobeys a lady, Columbe, by keeping the sword that he was asked to return. "Ye shall repente hit within shorte tyme," says the lady. Soon after the Lady of the Lake rides in and demands to Arthur the death of either Balin or Columbe who had provided him with the sword. In his surprise Arthur remains helpless. Learning how the Lady of the Lake "had asked hys hede of kynge Arthure, he wente to her streyght and seyde, 'Evyll be ye founde ye wolde have myne hede, and therefore you shall loose youres!' And with hys swerde lyghtly he smote of hyr hede before kynge Arthur." (49) Balin's violent action, which in itself may be justified since the Lady of the Lake had killed Balin's mother, is nevertheless rash. To avenge his mother who had been "brente thorow hir [Lady of the Lake] falsehode and trechory," he breaks the chivalric and courtly code

and beheads a lady who had "bene the destroyer of many good knyghtes." (49)²⁵²

Courtly love and courtesy have never been so mistreated and so disregarded in a romance as in this Tale of Balin. But this is not all. The Lady of the Lake is no sooner buried than a proud knight by the name of Launceor requests Arthur's "license [permission] to ryde afftir Balyne and to revenge the despite that he had done." (50) Meanwhile, Merlin reappears only to confuse things further. He says that Columbe, who had brought the sword to Balin, "ys the falsist damsel that lyveth." (50) She loved a knight who held her as paramour. Columbe's brother slays him "by force of hys hondis." Then Columbe went to the Lady of the Lake and asked her help in destroying her brother Balin. Launceor challenges Balin who explains the reason he slew the Lady of the Lake: "that lady . . . dud me grete damage, and ellis I wolde have bene lothe as ony knyght that lyvith for to sle a lady." (51) Paying no attention to Balin's explanations, Launceor attacks him. In a few master strokes Balin unhorses and slays Launceor. When Columbe "aspyed that Launceor was slayne she made sorow oute of mesure." (51) Finally, she kills herself by running on Launceor's sword. (52) Merlin, who had praised Balin, saying that "there lyvith nat a knyght of more prouesse than he ys," (50-51) now blames him for not having prevented the death of Columbe, and predicts that Balin's uncourtly action will be responsible for the calamities that will be brought by the "dolorous stroke." (54) In all this confusion, one thing stands out, namely, that love of paramour, or the wrong kind of love, according to Malory, begets treachery and leads good knights into performing uncourtly and unchivalric actions.

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After the "Dolorous Stroke" episode, Merlin, a prophet of ill omen,

returns to the scene to warn Arthur always to keep the scabbard of Excalibur, his magic sword, "for ye shall lose no bloode whyle ye have the scawberde uppon you." (59) Here, in place of what exists in the Suite de Merlin²⁵⁴ as a long digression, Malory inserts an account of how Morgan le Fay, Arthur's treacherous sister, will take the scabbard from Arthur and trick him into fighting his knight and her paramour, Accolon. Disregarding Merlin's warning, Arthur "betoke the scawberde unto Morgan le Fay." (59) The fact that she loved Accolon better than her husband, Uryence, or her brother Arthur, made her the perfect vehicle for false married love and disloyalty toward husband and brother.²⁵⁵ Again love of paramour begets treachery.

After he leaves the three destroyed countries where he had delivered the Dolorous Stroke,²⁵⁶ Balin "was passynge fayne," (65) but not for long. He meets Garnysh of the Mownte who is grieving because his lady,²⁵⁷ the Duke of Harnel's daughter, has not kept her rendez-vous with him. He is about to slay himself when Balin suddenly interrupts him and promises to bring his lady back. Balin goes to persuade the lady²⁵⁸ to return to Garnysh, but finds her in the arms of another knight "fast halsynge [embracing, necking] eyther other."²⁵⁹ Balin reports his discovery and upon discovering the false lovers, exasperated Garnysh "smote of bothe their hedes."²⁶⁰ Balin encourages frustrated and sorrowful Garnysh by telling him that it was necessary that his lady's false love come to light. But as usual, Balin's noble purpose is destructive. Suddenly Garnysh "roofe [stabbed] hymself on his own swerd unto the hyltys." (66) and dies. Love, the wrong kind of love, causes destruction.

One still remembers Merlin's warning to Arthur against taking Guinevere as his wife because she "was nat holsom." (71) In French, Arthur fails to

understand, but in Malory, it is obvious that he should have grasped the meaning of Merlin's obscure admonition. The first love of the King of the Round Table already bears within itself the seeds of destruction. In response to Merlin's prediction that everyone will see "a straunge and a mervailous adventure," Arthur initiates quests.²⁶¹ Gawayne undertakes the first quest which ends in tragedy. The reason for such a catastrophe is that he lacks the knightly virtue of mercy. On one of his adventures, Gawayne, accompanied by Gaherys, sets six greyhounds on the track of a white hart. "They chace the herte into a castle, and . . . they slew it." (78) "A swerd drawyn in hys honde," a knight comes out of a chamber and chases the dogs, killing two of them "in the syght of sir Gawayne." (78) A fierce fight ensues, which brings the knight on his knees. Angered because the knight has killed two of his dogs, Gawayne refuses to grant him mercy. (79) As Gawayne was about to strike the knight's head off, his lady rushes in and throws herself on the knight. And so "Gawayne smote of hir hede by myssefortune." (79) The more romantic French text²⁶² makes it very explicit that the lady purposely thrust herself forward to protect her lover. For some reason or other, Malory does not specify the reason of her action, but he immediately has Gaherys reprimand Gawayne for his merciless and revengeful action, ". . . ye sholde gyff mercy unto them that aske mercy, for a knyght withoute mercy ys without worship." (79) Thus opens the "Torre and Pellinore" episode on the chivalric theme of mercy. To repair the immeasurable shame Gawayne has brought on his head and to the Round Table, a court of ladies²⁶³ judges him and sentences him "for ever whyle he lyved to be with all ladies and to fyght for hir quarels; and ever that he sholde be curteyse, and never to refuse mercy to hym that askith mercy." (81)²⁶⁴

Totally different from Gawayne's quest, Torre's is nevertheless an important test of his chivalric and courtly attitude. After a series of brief adventures Torre finds the white dog and takes it from a sleeping lady. The lady awakens and warns Torre of the impending consequences of his uncourtly action. Soon Torre fights over the dog's possession with Abelleus²⁶⁵ who, once vanquished, refuses to ask for mercy. A damsel rides toward them and requests a boon from victor Torre. Torre willingly agrees. Then the lady asks for "the hede of thys false knyght Abelleus . . . the most outerageous knyght that lyvith, and the grettist murtherer." (84) Somewhat surprised, Torre suggests that the lady should "lette hym make amendys." She refuses because Abelleus had killed her brother when she had knelt and begged mercy for half an hour to save her brother's life.²⁶⁶ Torre faces a crucial dilemma. Should he be merciful and false to his word? The impasse increases in acuteness when Abelleus himself asks for mercy. Torre, apparently acting on the first-come-first-served basis, cuts off the knight's head. Torre has fulfilled his courtly promise to the damsel but at the detriment of his chivalric honor, because his decision has caused cruelty and death.

The third quest, undertaken by Pellinore, shows another aspect of the chivalric and courtly codes. On his way to deliver a lady from her abductor, Pellinore comes upon a damsel sitting by a well and holding a wounded knight, [Myles of the Laundis] in her arms. (86) Pellinore's quest prevents him from helping the lady who begs for help. Soon after, the wounded knight dies and the damsel commits suicide. On his way back to Arthur's court, after having achieved the lady, Pellinore rides near the well where he had seen the pleading lady. He finds "the knyght and the lady etyn [eaten] with Lyons othir with

wylde bestis, all save the hede." (89-90) Guinevere strongly blames Pellinore for not saving the lady's life. Pellinore sorely repents his action, especially when he learns from Merlin that the lady was his own daughter, Alyne.²⁶⁷

In a sourceless speech, Pellinore excuses his own conduct. First he alleges that a knight must think of his own safety, a reason definitely incompatible with the code of chivalric behavior;²⁶⁸ second, he says that he was so furious in his quest that he could not stop. (90)²⁶⁹ Like Gawayne and Torre, Pellinore has accomplished the object of his quest, but like them he has smirched his honor by causing two deaths, thereby preventing a happy marriage between Alyne and Myles of the Laundis. (90) The Round Table is badly in need of a code of behavior which would focus and preserve the confused ideals of a revived chivalry. Arthur himself presides over the firm establishment of the Round Table and defines the important duties of its knights.²⁷⁰

Very soon, however, the chivalric code presents unsuspected difficulties. Arthur himself becomes the first victim when he consents to champion a false knight, Damas, in a wrongful quarrel,²⁷¹ while all the other twenty woe-ful knights prefer to remain in prison rather than help such an evil knight fight against a good man by the name of Oughtlake, brother of Damas. (101) The situation is further complicated and becomes ironical when Accolon promises a lady, Morgan le Fay, to champion Oughtlake. Accolon, therefore, fights unjustly to defend the right cause. Morgan turns to her own advantage the quarrel between Damas and Oughtlake. Knowing that Damas is a coward and that Oughtlake is too sorely wounded to fight, Morgan arranges a battle between Arthur, whom she wants to destroy by all means, and Accolon whom she loves more than Uryence, her husband, with the hope that her lover will defeat her

brother with the magic and deadly sword, Excalibur. (102) Meanwhile, Morgan sends a counterfeit and brittle sword to Arthur "for grete love." (103) While the fight was going on, Nyneve reappears "for the love of kynge Arthur" and saves his life. The battle over, Accolon reveals the whole truth about Morgan's evil plans. He admits that besides their mutual lust, the great reputation of Arthur has engendered Morgan's secret designs and has fed her pride and jealousy.²⁷² Arthur also denounces his sister as a "trytoure," and condemns "hir fals lustes," (107) as responsible for her attempts at his life.²⁷³ Arthur, who confides that he has trusted Morgan le Fay more than his wife,²⁷⁴ certainly ignored his sister's evil plans. In fact, thinking Arthur has been killed, Morgan now plans to slay her husband, Uryence, while he is asleep. But Uwayne, who had been alerted by a maiden, arrives just in time to prevent the murder. Unhappy marriages, fostered by adulterous love, can only produce disastrous consequences.²⁷⁵

As has already been seen, conflicts of values between chivalry and courtly love at times create dilemmas for the knights who want to conform to the oath of chivalry. Is obedience to a lady better than fidelity to a king? The knights who said "we durst nat disobey your [Arthur's] sisters commaunde-mente," (101)²⁷⁶ had also vowed "never to do outorage nothir morthir [murder], and allways to fle treson." (91) Is Malory trying to persuade the reader that blind obedience to a lady, according to the courtly love code, brings only disaster? It would appear so.

The scene in which damsels insult a white shield shows that both the courtly and chivalric codes are violated. Because Marhaus "hatyht all ladyes and jantylwomen," they in turn reciprocate by despising his shield and spitting

upon it. (114)²⁷⁷ Why is it that Malory, more than the French author, makes his ladies do more repulsive deeds? Again, false love, or the lack of courtly love causes improper behavior. Later on, Marhaus explains to Gawayne the reason for his hatred of women in general. He hates only women who unman the knights and destroy their worship; (117) to the others he owes his service as a knight ought to. Therefore, according to Marhaus, the ladies who deprive the knights of their honor should be excluded from their love and service. This section emphasizes explicit courtesy in matters of love for the first time in Le Morte Darthur. This new theme is combined with the older one of mercy and prowess and is revealed through the device of individual quests of Gawayne, Uwayne, and Marhaus.

The story of Pelleas-Ettarde-Gawayne (121-126) is an excellent example of love requited after many disappointments. Here Malory alters the subtleties of French courtly love and writes a story of a simple human relationship. From the French writer's point of view, Pelleas' conduct is an example of how a courtly lover should behave. Scorned by his lady, he allows himself to be ill-treated merely to obey her. The more she rejects him, the more he loves her. With Malory the situation takes a different turn. For example, when Pelleas lets himself be tied under his horse's belly the reason is not, as in the French, that he wishes to obey his lady's capricious command, but that he hopes to gain access to her castle. The sword which he leaves with the sleeping lovers "overthawrte bothe their throtes," (125) is a token not of forgiveness, but of vengeance, and naturally enough, Ettarde does not escape punishment. To Malory, lusty love could only bring treachery and jealousy, and nothing else.²⁷⁸ Unfortunately, Gawayne proved that it was true. He falls in love with

Ettarde, violates his oath, truth, and chastity, and betrays a good knight.

Unlike the unfortunate knight Balin,²⁷⁹ who does everything wrong despite his good intentions, Lancelot succeeds in doing everything right, at least until the Queste. The Book titled after his name concludes with Lancelot healing Melyot de Logrys' wounds, and with a damsel-sorceress who, because of her inordinate love for Lancelot, planned to kill him, enbalm him, and keep him with her forever, "I have loved the this seven yere [but] there may no woman have thy love but quene Gwenyver, and sytthen I myght nat rejoyse the nother thy body on lyve, I had kepte no more joy in this worlde but to have thy body dede." (204)

The following adventure involving Lancelot deals with the wrong kind of love which always brings jealousy and treason in its wake. Betrayed by a false knight, Phelot, who uses his wife as the perfect bait, Lancelot is attacked while without arms, but later succeeds in killing the treacherous knight. (205-206). Later, while lady Pedyvere is under his protection, her jealous husband cuts off her head. (207) These actions are perversions of both chivalric behavior and courtly love, and each knight illustrates a fault that Lancelot, in a sense, redeems through his nobility. Furthermore, both Phelot and Pedyvere treat their ladies in ways that are perversions of true love: Phelot, by making his wife help him in an unchivalric action; (205)²⁸⁰ and Pedyvere, by showing his wife hatred and no mercy. (207)²⁸¹

In the "Sir Gareth of Orkeney" episode, Lyonet, previewing the forthcoming "charette" incident, tries to make Gareth prove a coward. Lyonet's lack of courtesy trespasses the boundaries of courtly love etiquette permitted by Andreas' code. In a sense, her scorn differs little from that of Kay who

also insults Gareth, by giving him a mocking name. But Gareth is Malory's ideal, and in Arthur's words, "one of the goodlyest yonge men that ever I saw." (213) Despite the constant efforts of love to destroy his chivalry, the "kychyn knave" proves a mighty and noble warrior. In his last fight, Gareth defeats the Red Knight (239) but spares his life because of the knight's word of honor to avenge a lady's quarrell: ". . . she prayed me as I loved hir hertely that I wolde make hir a promyse by the faythe of my knyghthode for to laboure in armys dayly untill that I had mette with one of them . . . and do all the vylany unto Arthurs knyghtes." (240) Again, courtly love is shown as a great "causar of vylonys" and unchivalric cruelties. The entire Gareth episode underscores, so to speak, the degradation courtly paramours can inflict on moral chivalry.²⁸² In the end, however, chivalry and love make a perfect marriage, for Gareth receives fealty from all the knights he has conquered, becomes a ruler in his own right, and marries Lyones, the lady he truly loves.

Tristram's foster parent, king Melyodas, who had been wifeless for seven years, decides to wed the daughter of king Howells of Brittainy. Although many children are given them, their love lacked warmth and sincerity, probably because their marriage had been one of convenience rather than one promoted by true love. Moreover, Melyodas' wife's selfish ambitions and hatred of Tristram pushed her to poison young Tristram. She is punished, for her own son drinks the poisoned potion and dies. Tristram saves his stepmother from the fire but king Melyodas rejects her and "wolde never have ado with hir as at bedde and at bourde table ." (279)

The Segwarydes case, (297)²⁸³ is another unpleasant example of the wrong

kind of love causing a marriage to go on the rocks. Segwarydes is a weak husband who prefers the secret shame of his unfaithful wife to open shame. His wife's "Lyght love," (333) stirs up the "jolesy and unkyndenness [that] befelle betwyxte kyng Mark and sir Trystrames." (295) Malory never believed in Andreas' rules which state that "jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved."²⁸⁴ On the contrary, he rejected that false love as degrading and causing knights to do unchivalric deeds. Mark gives a good example of what Malory meant by false love when he sends Tristram to Ireland to bring Isode to Cornwall. Since he knew that Tristram had praised Isode for her beauty and goodness, he thought he would wed her himself. But Mark's only purpose was to slay Tristram, for he "caste all the wayes that he myght to dystroy sir Trystrames." (304) Love is used here as a means to destroy one of the best knights in the world. Fortunately, however, Mark's treachery never materialized, for a tempest took Tristram and his crew to the coast of England. After many years, Tristram finally makes the trip to Ireland and returns with Isode. They arrive at the Castle Plewre where barbarous beauty and prowess contests are held as customs of the house. As Brewnor, the promoter of those contests, explains to Tristram, "for and [if] thy lady be feyrar than myne, with thy swerde smyte of my ladyes hede, and yf my lady be fayrer than thyne, with my swerde I must stryke of hir hede. And if I may wyne the, yette thy lady be myne, and thow shalt lese [lose] thy hede." (313) To Tristram "this is a foule custom and an horryble [one]," but he obeys it in order to destroy it. Tristram wins in all categories. First, he takes the lady from Brewnor and "with an awke [backhanded] stroke he smote of hir hede clene." (314) Then, he thrusts "sir Brewnor downe groveling [face downward],

and . . . unlaced his helme and strake of his hede." (315)²⁸⁵

Sir Andret is another false knight whose inordinate love for Isode and hatred of Mark's nephew cause him to act treacherously toward Tristram. (323)²⁸⁶

Tristram's hasty marriage to Isode le Blaunche Maynes not only provokes Lancelot's angry rebukes, but is a definite breach of friendship: ". . . lette hym wete [know] that the love betwene hym and me is done for ever, and that I gyff hym warnyng: from this day forthe I woll be his mortall enemy." (331)

Another beauty contest is promoted by Malory in the person of Lamorak and Mellyagaunce. The only way to decide whether Morgawse or Guinevere "ys the fayryst lady that beryth the lyff," (360) is to fight it out in a combat a outrance. Lancelot intervenes in favor of Guinevere. But Lamorak's common sense--"for every man thynkith hys owne lady fayryste" (361)--wins both Lancelot's and Bleoberys' approbation and friendship. (362) In this episode, Lancelot reveals himself so great a lover as to become blind to friendship, common sense, and even persuasion, as soon as the fame of his lady-love is questioned.²⁸⁷

Because of her unreciprocated love of Arthur, Aunowre saw that "she myght nat have hym at her wylle, than she laboured by false meanys to have destroyed kynge Arthure and slayne hym." (364) Aunowre's lust for Arthur endangers the king's life. Here Malory makes lusty courtship and courtly love repulsive.

In "Madness and Exile," Tristram says that love was the cause of the anger and danger he escaped for ten years. (375) In effect, Tristram seems to say that love is a dangerous thing.²⁸⁸ In the same episode, Gawayne warns Tristram not to ride with a lady sent by Morgan le Fay. Sword in hand, Gawayne,

who knows about all the treasons planned by Morgan and her ladies, compels the false damsel to divulge Morgan's latest treachery.²⁸⁹ (382) Recreant Brewse, who was at that time "the moste myschevuste knyght lyvyng," (418) is one of those misogynists whose incapability to love envenoms his hate, and prevents him from accomplishing gentle and merciful deeds. Coward Brewse rides throughout the romance pursuing damsels in order to behead them, but flees when challenged by more reputable knights.

Contrary to Brewse Saunz Pité, Palomides has a lady who spurs him on to noble deeds, but the unreciprocated love of Isode and the superior prowess of Tristram bring him to the verge of suicide. "I wofull knyght, sir Palomides! What mysseadventure befallith me that thus am defoyled with falsehed and treson . . . Alas! . . . why lyve I so longe?" (394)²⁹⁰ Tristram also wants to commit suicide (404) because the absence of Isode and the miserable conditions of the prison made his life unbearable.²⁹¹

Because of her unreciprocated love of Lancelot, Morgan le Fay, who "desired hym [Lancelot], and he wolde never love her nor do nothyng at her rekeyste," (413) tries to destroy him,²⁹² incites the jealousy of one of her other paramours in order to kill Tristram, envies and hates Guinevere, and always looks for an occasion to shame Arthur and his knights.²⁹³ By the means of a shield,²⁹⁴ she wants to "put sir Launcelot to a rebuke" and to publicize his adultery with Guinevere. Morgan's treachery is instigated by the wrong kind of love. For Malory, false love does not, in any way, aggrandize the characters of the greatest lovers, but degrades them. No wonder that fear overcomes Guinevere when she learns that the shield has been made "in the dispite of me [Guinevere] and of sir Launcelot." (416) Her marital status with

Arthur is threatened. For Malory, the moral rather than the courtly issue was at stake.

One of the most unattractive, incongruous, and painful instance of love-adultery used as a means of vengeance, is the affair between Lamorak and Morgawse, the infamous wife of King Lot of Orkeney. Aged Morgawse is sent for by Gawayne and his brothers specifically as bait to trap Lamorak. (458)²⁹⁵ The scheme takes a tragic and cruel turn when Morgawse is beheaded instead of Lamorak. (459) The situation is ambiguous, but it appears that Lamorak's illicit love affair with Morgawse was intended not only to debase adulterous love but also to disgrace the Orkeney family and sharpen the Lot-Pellinore unchivalric and shameful feud.

Cruelty and savage acts seem to be some of the natural and most common by-products of the wrong kind of love. For instance, Malegryne tells Alexander that for a maiden's love (Morgan le Fay), "I have slayne ten good knyghtes by myssehap [misfortune]." (479)²⁹⁶ Corsabryne is the stinking knight killed by Palomides over a lady. (496)²⁹⁷ The scene between Tristram and Palomides (518-519), proves that love does not necessarily foster gentleness but very often breeds anger, hate, and cruelty, especially with Malory. King Pelles' daughter, Elayne, rejects her former lover, sir Bromell, because "my love ys sette upon the best knyght of the worlde." (586) Therefore, she adds, "Wowe [woo] me no longer." (587) Elayne's disclosure enrages jealous Bromell so much that he swears she will have "lyttle joy of sir Launcelot, for I shall sle hym wheresomever I mete hym." (587) Sir Persydes is "bounden wyth a chayne faste about the waste into a pylloure [pillar] of stone" because, as he tells Perceval, he had refused to be the paramour of an unchivalrous lady.²⁹⁸ After

freeing Persydes, Perceval rebukes the lady for the sensual custom of the castle, which forces knights to become paramours, (601) a very uncourtly custom, indeed.²⁹⁹ In the same line of reasoning, Bors refuses to sin with a lady who is desperate for love, not only because "in no wyse he wolde breke his chastité," (694) but also because lusty love had already caused the loss of a brother." (695)³⁰⁰ For Bors, and undoubtedly for Malory, sensuous love is destructive.

There is no need to review the already familiar story of Lancelot and Guinevere, but a brief survey of the latest events shows that Lancelot's defection from the path of right conduct symbolized in the Queste of the Sankgreal affects the lives of the heroes of the Round Table and the court of Arthur. To the very end, the courtly code exerts its nefarious influence.

In his adulterous relationship with Guinevere, Lancelot acts as her champion, defending and rescuing her without paying any attention to the disastrous consequences his conduct might entail. Had not Lancelot, from the day of his knighting, promised Guinevere "ever to be her knyght in ryght othir in wronge!"? (755)³⁰¹ (My italics) The courtly and stable relationship Lancelot wanted to establish was doomed from the start. Now he realizes, but too late, that he can no longer favor Guinevere without being disloyal to either Arthur or God. But regardless of the destructive effects of his choice, Lancelot decides to remain Guinevere's lover forever. Because of love, Lancelot makes an unchivalric move and commits a serious breach of fidelity when he tells Guinevere that he will fight Arthur, ". . . wytte know you well . . . at that justys I will be ayenste the kyng and ayenst all hys felyship." (758) Meanwhile, on account of Elayne's red sleeve incident, Guinevere's jealousy flares

up so viciously,³⁰² that she tells Bors, who begins to doubt Lancelot's motives, that "though he be destroyed, for he ys a false traytoure knyght," (770) she would not be disturbed in the least. The adulterous love of Lancelot finally induces the death of innocent Elayne, (750) and goads coward Mellyagaunce's lust into abducting Guinevere (793)³⁰³ thereby inviting him to break his chivalric oath. (801)

Mordred's wrong kind of love (incest) is responsible for Guinevere's thought of suicide, "for she answerd hym shortely, opynly and pryvayly, that she had lever [rather] sle herself than to be maryed with hym." (861) Guinevere's final recognition of her past adulterous life and its irreparable consequences is highlighted in the long sermon she delivers--with a lump in her throat--to all the ladies present:

Thorow thys same man and me hath all thys warre be wrought, and the deth of the moste noblest knyghtes of the worlde; for thorowoure love that we have loved togydir ys my moste noble lorde slayne. Therefore, sir Launcelot, wyte thou well I am sette in suche a plyght to gete my soule hele. And yet I truste, thorow Goddis grace and thorow Hys Passion of Hys woundis wyde, that aftir my deth I may have a syght of the blessed face of Cryste Jesu, and on Doomesday to sytte on Hys ryght syde; for as synfull as ever I was, now ar seyntes in hevyn. And therefore, sir Launcelot. I requyre the and beseche the hartily, for all the love that ever was betwyxte us, that thou never se me no more in the visayge. And I commaunde the, on Goddis behalff, that thou forsake my company. And to thy kyngedom loke thou turne agayne, and kepe well thy realme frome warre and wrake, for as well as I have loved the heretofore, myne harte woll nat serve now to se the; for thorow the and me ys the floure of kyngis and knyghtes destroyed. And therefore go thou to thy realme, and there take ye a wyff, and lyff with hir wyth joy and blys. And I pray the hartely to pray for me to the Everlastynge Lorde that I may amende my mysse-lyvyng. (876)

Moved by Guinevere's discourse, Lancelot, whose last hopes have vanished, says he will never be false to Guinevere, but will imitate her and become a hermit:

". . . the selff desteny that ye have takyn you to, I woll take me to, for

the pleasure of Jesu, and ever for you I caste me especially to pray." (876)

Finally, order and stability are restored.

Inconsistencies in Malory's Treatment of Courtly Love

Malory has sometimes been censured for misunderstanding of his originals,³⁰⁴ prosaic outlook,³⁰⁵ bathos,³⁰⁶ poor construction, obscurity,³⁰⁷ and inconsistent characterization.³⁰⁸ Although these criticisms cannot be contradicted, they are not totally fair, because Malory was not a theorist, but a moralistically inclined redactor.³⁰⁹ In spite of obvious defects from our conventional modern point of view, Malory's popular version of the Arthur stories has warmed more English hearts than any other English romance of the older days.

The variety of his sources contributed to the defects and virtues of his compilations. Inconsistencies exist but many of the chronological difficulties vanish when one realizes that the author sometimes deliberately retrogrades, and so, a character slain in one book may be resuscitated in the next. Other discrepancies are too inconsequential to be noticed, or, if noticed, may well be excused because of the conglomerate nature of the work. One must grant, in all fairness, that his occasional shortcomings are greatly redeemed by his overall enduring achievements.

The almost total elimination of the courtly glamor from his "Frensshe Bookes" is one of the best feats achieved by Malory in his compilation and rendering of Le Morte Darthur. In the light of the foregoing chapters, a sharp-eyed reader readily admits that Malory's conscious and constant efforts gradually to diminish and even to eradicate the courtly love atmosphere from

his romances can be considered a success; and that only major and unavoidable reasons prevented him from making a clean sweep of a code his sedate English turn of mind could not accept and would not advertise. These reasons will be briefly discussed in the following pages.

Malory's own conception of love

The central activity in Le Morte Darthur is in one sense adultery. The Round Table is founded virtually on adultery; the actual agent of its destruction was begotten in incestuous adultery, and the proximate cause of the tragic Day of Destiny is the affair of Lancelot and Guinevere.³¹⁰ And yet, R. T. Davies' contention that "Romantic adultery is predominant in Malory's presentation of love"³¹¹ [My italics] is not valid. To be sure, the relationship of Lancelot and Guinevere grows in significance throughout the work as Lancelot grows in human and tragic stature, but the central interest is less in adultery than in the conflict of loyalties it engenders.

As has been said above, Malory is not a theorist, but an intelligent selector and redactor of stories with a typical medieval moralistic and didactic bent.³¹² If he had been a single-minded theorist, his works would have presented a different stamp. Instead of giving us a series of Arthurian romances, he would have handed us treatises on religion: medieval Christian mysticism with a particular emphasis on the Sankgreal Queste; love: exposition and rejection of artificial romantic love à la Chrétien de Troyes; chivalry: book of conduct for gentlemen, with a fifteenth-century moral.

Professor Vinaver is undoubtedly right when he says that Malory wavers continually in his treatment of Lancelot and Guinevere.³¹³ Malory's "most cherished ideal is that of happy marriage, and he forgets that marriage and a

hero-lover like Lancelot are entirely incompatible."³¹⁴ And Vinaver, quoting the passage in which Lancelot condemns paramours, (194)³¹⁵ points out that it comes oddly from a man who is "the very embodiment of adulterous passion."³¹⁶ Is Malory's ambivalent reasoning deliberate? Is he presenting that dialectic of opposites which characterizes humanity? Since the quoted passage is sourceless we must deduce that, at this point, Malory wanted to condemn extra-marital love, first as an offense to God, then as a serious impediment to gaining prowess. If Lancelot ignores the implications of his condemnations, Malory certainly does not. Malory does not appear to lose control of his originals, but adapts them in order to convey his own message: extra-marital love is destructive.

The story of Pelleas-Ettarde presents a similar inconsistency. Why does Malory punish Ettarde so harshly for doing something which is done almost naturally in Guinevere and Isode? Pelleas obeys the courtly love code which says that "love causyth many a good knyght to suffir to have his entente." (122) He realizes also how he is treated and knows the incongruity of his behavior. Malory uses the story as an "ensample" to show that Ettarde's love is false, because inspired by pride, the pride recommended by Andreas Capellanus, and exceeds the limits of common sense. Pelleas is a worthy knight who deserves Ettarde's love. Ettarde's sinful nature is revealed in all its ugliness. Leaving out all the courtly formula used in the French text, Malory introduces a moral and poetic justice to enhance his message.³¹⁷ Malory's reinterpretation of this story may be said to be the result of a dislike of the French tradition of courtly love, but not a total misunderstanding of it. Malory is aware of the courtly love of his sources since he tries to suppress

them; he knows that it is the origin of many of the best features of chivalry, but he also recognizes that it is illicit and based on passions. It is my contention that Malory deliberately uses the essentially paradoxical nature of love to distinguish between two kinds of love: the first, marked by impetuosity, excessive passion, and sensuality;³¹⁸ the second kind, characterized by stability, reason, and loyalty, is later termed "vertuose love," and is for Malory the ideal kind of earthly love.³¹⁹

The sourceless Gareth-Lyones affair once more confirms Malory's own conception of love, while at the same time it presents a paradox. If Gareth is such a patient, humble, "meek, and gentle" knight, why is he acting so rashly with Lyonesse wanting to consummate his love with her? In this case, Malory resorts to magic, to Lyonet's "subtyle craufftes," to prevent an act of "desmesure." Is Malory condemning the sinfulness of courtly love by showing that even a man of mesur such as Gareth can become the victim of love-lust? Malory's intention is undoubtedly trustworthy but it is difficult to understand why Gareth himself, by his own will, cannot overcome the temptation.

When Tristram tells King Angwyssh his name, Tramtryste,³²⁰ and the reason of his wounds, ". . . in a batayle as I fought for a ladyes ryght," (287)³²¹ he simply becomes Malory's spokesman. Tristram lies, or at least equivocates, in saying he fought for a lady's right, for no such reasons are given in the French sources. Again, Malory's constant preoccupation with the evils of courtly love and his disapproval of it must account for such minor confusion. In true courtly fashion, the same Tristram later agrees to fight for Isode in spite of his wounds, "I will be at your commaundement." (289) King Angwysh, surprised that Tristram did not participate in the joust, asks

for an explanation. Tristram answers, "I was but late hurte and as yett I dare nat aventure." Such inconsistency may be explained in terms of the repugnance courtly love had for Malory.

Before departing for England, Tristram promises to angry king Angwysch that "in all placis I shall be my lady your doughtyrs servaunte and knyght in all ryght and in wronge, and I shall never fayle her to do as muche as a knyght may do." (294) (My italics) Desirous to win back the king of Ireland's love, (306) Tristram volunteers to fight Blamour de Ganys, but under two conditions: "one is that ye shall swere unto me that ye ar in the ryght and that ye were never consentynge to the knyghtis³²² deth": the second is "that ye shall gyff me a rewarde what thyngre resonable that I woll aske you." (307)³²³ (My italics)

Malory could not possibly have overlooked such a discrepancy in Tristram's chivalric behavior, especially when he has Lancelot himself repeat the same formula later on.³²⁴ Whenever Malory has an occasion to throw some discredit on the sophistication of courtly love he does not hesitate to do it. For him, courtly love and its imperious demands is what causes the best knights of the world to degrade themselves and to violate their oath of chivalry.

The horn of chastity episode³²⁵ serves Malory's purpose in foreshadowing the marital infidelity of Guinevere. Malory presents the incident as a link between the Mark-Isode-Tristram story and that of Arthur-Guinevere-Lancelot. But Malory's original comments on the great difference between the two courts involved is misleading. Rebuked by Tristram for putting himself and many ladies to shame, Lamorak asserts that "hit were to do agayne, so wolde I do, for I had lever [rather] stryff and debate felle in kyng Markys courte rether than in kyng Arthurs courte, for the honour of bothe courtes be nat lyke."

(334)³²⁶ (My italics) Malory, through Lamorak, is right in pointing out that "the honour of bothe courtes" is not alike, for the degradation of Mark's character tends to diminish our reprobation of the adulterous relationship between Tristram and Isode; but he is wrong in condoning one sinful relationship more than the other, for, in both cases, the morality of the action is essentially the same. Arthur's reaction to Tristram's and Isode's love is a jarring note. A damsel sent from Arthur to Mark's court, questioned about Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot, says they are "much bettir that ye . . . bene in joy." (462) When Arthur hears that the lovers, Tristram and Isode, have escaped from Cornwall into Logres, "Than was he passyng glad." (505) Most explicit of all is Arthur's greeting of Isode: "I dare say ye ar the fayrest that ever I sawe, and sir Trystram ys as fayre and good a knyght as ony that I know. And therefore mesemyth ye are well besett togydir." (561) (My italics)

How can Arthur condone, even commend, one adulterous relationship and condemn another, on principle, not only as a jealous husband? (829-831) Mark's villainy is certainly insisted upon, as is the fact that his knights feel liberated by his wickedness from their bond of loyalty; (324)³²⁷ but although "the honoure of both courtes be nat lyke," the discrepancy between Arthur's two reactions seems disproportionate. Possibly Arthur B. Ferguson's statement should settle the question: "Malory seems never to have been able to make up his mind whether virtuous love was confined to the married state or could ever exist in a relationship marked merely by the steadfast loyalty of one lover to another."³²⁸ But this is more an abdication from the problem than a solution of it. Contrary to Malory's own plans, Lancelot's affair with Guinevere appears in a worse light than that of Tristram and Isode. Was it Malory's

intention? The only plausible explanation is that Malory wanted to presage the tragic fall of Arthur's noble realm by underlining one of the numerous excesses of the chivalric and courtly systems, namely the adultery of its best knights.

A strong case against the whole fabric of courtly chivalry is presented by Lamorak, when he explains to Lancelot that he sees no reason to fight over their ladies since "every man thynkith hys owne lady fayryste." (361) In effect, Malory, in one of his significant additions, disavows the courtly practice of knights-errant to fight for their ladies, but cannot suppress it entirely. Fighting over ladies was one of the staples of knight-errantry,³²⁹ which included the performance of tasks, rescue of ladies, restoring the dispossessed to their inheritances, and meetings leading to love affairs. Since Malory's whole emphasis tends to be directed toward natural and true love, achieving its fulfillment in marriage, beauty contests did not win his approval. Rather than a misunderstanding of the courtly love concept it is a frank rejection of it which accounts for the dilemmas into which his heroes are thrown. If Lancelot makes amends for his "offence," (362) it is not because he misunderstands the code of courtly love,³³⁰ but because Malory wants him to stay away from its sophistication.

Although it still seems disproportionately long, the tale of Tristram is about six times shorter than its long-winded original. This intentional simplification accounts for some of the inconsistencies, many of which remain without satisfactory explanation.³³¹ Mad with jealousy over Isode's supposed infidelity,³³² Tristram wanders in the woods smashing trees and weeping for a good six months before he regains his sanity. (369, 371, 374) But up to this

point in the story there is little in Tristram's behavior which motivates such grief. Malory has already suppressed too many touching scenes, has too consistently despoiled the old Celtic story of its romantic charm and signification, to give Tristram a serious basis for his tragic madness. Clothed in a conventional disguise, Tristram plays the lover and acts as a knight.³³³

Far from suffering a thousand deaths, he knows how to enjoy a mitigated earthly happiness. In other words, under Malory's pen, the Tristram story takes a realistic rather than an adventurous and romantic turn.³³⁴

If on the one hand, Tristram is made by Malory somewhat less a courtly lover and more an ordinary knight than he is in the older legends, Mark, on the other hand, has been turned into a fiend, into a cowardly, treacherous, and murderous villain.³³⁵ Mark's reasons for hating Tristram seem to vary in the course of the book. (428-472) At first Mark hates his nephew not for the love of his wife,³³⁶ but for his prowess: ". . . whan . . . kyng Marke harde of the grete proues that sir Trystram ded there [England], wyth the whyche he greved." (428) "Than was kyng Marke passynge sory whan he harde of the honour of sir Trystram." (429) Gradually, however, after remarks such as "Hit is pite . . . that ony suche false kyng cowarde as kyng Marke is shulde be macched with such a fayre lady," (431) thrown in Mark's face by Lamorak, the cowardly king of Cornwall amplifies the reasons for his hatred of Tristram, and bluntly reveals to Perceval: ". . . I may nat love sir Trystram, bycause he lovyth my quene, La Beall Isode," (503) Such inconsistency seems almost normal since Malory's interest lies in the fact that love not only causes many knights to suffer but eventually destroys what is best in the world: marriage, friendship, monarchy.

The whole Lamorak-Morgawse relationship presents an interesting case of moral inconsistency. Fairly early in the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," Lamorak fights with Mellyagaunce--and almost with Lancelot--as to whether Morgawse or Guinevere is the fairer. (360-362) Not only afterwards, Mark discovers Lamorak by a fountain making a very doleful complaint over the love of Morgawse. (430) When Lamorak eclipses Gawayne and his brothers at a tournament, Gawayne tells his brothers that love will never exist between the two houses; first, because they slew his father on a false report; second, because he shamed their mother. (455) Gawayne's clan wants revenge. Soon the opportunity comes. They send for their mother, Morgawse, with the intention of trapping Lamorak and killing him. (458) For some reason, Gaherys, contrary to plan, cuts off his mother's head instead of Lamorak's. When Lamorak protests, ". . . with more ryght ye shulde have slayne me!", Gaherys curiously counters in excusing Lamorak who had to offer his service to the queen. (459) Finally, after the tournament at Surluse, Arthur and Lamorak meet:

'Alas!' seyde kynge Arthure, 'now wote I well hit is sir Lamerok de Galys. A, sir Lamerok, abyde wyth me! And be me my crowne, I shall never fayle the: and nat so hardy in sir Gawayne's hede, nothir none of his bretherne, to do the wronge.³³⁷ . . . They slew their owne modir, my sistir. Hit had bene much fayrer and bettir that ye hadde wedded her, for ye ar a kynoges sonne as well as they.' (494)

Malory's treatment here raises a number of questions: first, Lamorak is very quick to fight with Mellyagaunce over the beauty of a woman, and just as quick to point out to Lancelot the folly of such a quarrel. Does Malory mean us to see him as afraid of Lancelot? Second, Lamorak's apostrophe to Morgawse,

"Modir unto sir Gawayne and to sir Gaherys, and modir to many other . . . (430)

[My italics] is ludicrous. Is it meant to be? That is, does Malory intend

to present Morgawse as merely a willing female,³³⁸ and to make her affair with Lamorak a kind of burlesque of courtly love? If so, even her murder by Gaherys could be read as a kind of grisly comedy. Third, is the reader meant to believe Gawayne's statement and Gaherys' hint that Lamorak is deliberately insulting them by his affair with their mother? On the one hand, Gawayne, much later, shows a readiness to see malice unwarrantedly;³³⁹ on the other, keeping a noble lady as a paramour instead of marrying her seems to have been censured in the English romance tradition as "an indignity of noble blood . . . a contradiction of chivalric idealism . . ." ³⁴⁰ This is perhaps what Arthur means by saying that their marriage would have been "much fayrer and bettir" than the irregular relationship; but there is no way of being certain. Fourth, Arthur announces that he will save Lamorak from Gawayne and his brothers; in fact, however, he seems to have done nothing either to prevent or to punish Lamorak's murder. Is this an indirect Malorian comment on Arthur's growing weakness and subjections to Gawayne, or just one of the many loose ends in Le Morte Darthur?

The Tristram-Dinadan-Epynogrys³⁴¹ incident offers an ironic comment on chivalric love. One of Malory's most attractive but not most powerful knight, Dinadan, engages in an artful attack on the disadvantages of love with Tristram. He rejects with disgust the idea of being branded a lover. Tristram, however, rebukes him for such evil thoughts, "for a knyght may ever be of proues but yf he be a lovear." (511)³⁴² Dinadan is ready to challenge Tristram's theory, but by measure of precaution, he says: "Now I pray you telle me youre name, syth ye be suche a lovear." (512) Powerful Tristram refuses to comply with his request, and advises Dinadan to fight the knight-lover whom

he had seen at the well a while ago. "His name is Epyngryns, and he is as grete a lover as I know, and he lovyth the kynges doughter of Walys, a full fayre lady." (512) The outcome of the joust shall "preve whether a lover be bettir knyght or ye that woll nat love no lady." With a sneer, Dinadan requires Epyngryns to get ready. Then, one of the shortest combats in the whole book takes place, with Dinadan losing it. "And anone sir Trystram rode to sir Dynadan and sayde, 'How now? Mesemyth the lover hath well sped.'" (512) Frustrated Dinadan departs, loudly cursing Tristram.

Malory realized that in the Epyngryns incident,³⁴³ he had a wonderful opportunity to reaffirm his stand vis-a-vis real and simple love without even altering his sources. By letting Dinadan joust with Epyngryns who was fighting for a lady whom he wanted to marry, instead of Tristram who was then carrying on an adulterous affair with Isode, Malory has once more demonstrated his firm belief in the superiority of true love over sophisticated and adulterous courtly love. Despite the appearance, courtly love is not the winner here, and will never be with Malory. I am inclined to think that Malory exploited this episode to justify not Tristram's but his own theory, that the right kind of love helps accomplish acts of prowess and gain worship even in minor knights such as Epyngryns.

But does Malory contradict himself, shortly after, when Lancelot tells Palomides that "love is a grete maystry [mastery] (547) which causes prowess? It is very unlikely that Malory would, at this point, endorse Lancelot's statement, because it goes against his chivalric theories. Prowess engenders and promotes love; courtly love breeds and fosters dissension, jealousy, hatred, murder, etc. It may cause the knights to accomplish great feats of

arms, but only for a time; in the end, the only and sure reward for Lancelot's devotion to courtly love is tragedy and death.

The very fact that Palomides' loyalty to Tristram is not affected by his love for Isode, as it is in the French text,³⁴⁴ "for he was nat only so dolorous for the departynge frome La Bealle Isode, but he was as sorowful a parte to go frome the felyshyp of sir Trystram,"³⁴⁵ indicates that chivalry and friendship among knights held a greater importance in Malory's conception of knighthood than the artificialities of the courtly love code.

Bors, who has been plagued by incessant dilemmas, especially in the Queste of the Sankgreal, always succeeded in making the right decision. Contrary to "unstable" Lancelot, Bors maintains a steady, if worldly, attitude toward secular chivalry--"erthely worship"--until he decides to champion Guinevere in "The Poisoned Apple" incident. Besought by the queen to succor her, Bors, at first, refuses because "if I graunte to do batayle for the quene I shall wretth many of my felyshyp of the Table Rounde." He tells Guinevere to send for Lancelot "for he wolde nat a fayled you in youre ryght nother in youre wronge." (750) (My italics) Guinevere disregards Bors's suggestion and throws herself at Bors's feet and begs him to have mercy upon her. Arthur finally persuades Bors to be the queen's champion.³⁴⁶ What seems incongruous in Bors's conduct is that after accusing the queen of shattering the Round Table unity,³⁴⁷ he goes on to say that "I never . . . herde say that ever she was a destroyer of good knyghtes, but at all tymes, as far as ever I coude know, she was a maynteyner of good knyghtes." (751) This inconsistent reasoning may be puzzling for the reader, but not for Bors nor Malory. Bors seems to put on a show, for he knows already that Lancelot will come and rescue

the queen. "I shall nat fayle you [king] nother her; but if there com a bettir knyght than I am, than shall he have the batayle." (750)³⁴⁸ (My italics)

Informed by Bors of the whole adventure, Lancelot rejoices, for the combat will reinstate him in the queen's favors. He tells Bors: "I pray you make you redy to do batayle, but loke that ye tarry tylle ye se me com as longe as ye may." (751) (My italics) So, what appears to be some kind of inconsistency in Malory's characterization of Bors is, in reality, a very conscious and artful handling of a situation which once more reaffirms the stability of Bors. Contrary to the French source, Bors never intended to commit himself in defending Guinevere whom he thought was false. The dramatic suspense created by Bors's tergiversation greatly appealed to Malory and helped deepen his conviction vis-a-vis not only courtly love, but also chivalry.

The central theme of the Lancelot-Elayne incident³⁴⁹ is contained in the remark "Sir, I wolde have you to my husbände," (777) which cannot come from the French text.³⁵⁰ Again and again, Malory reiterates his deepest belief in the priceless advantages of married life. A first refusal does not discourage Elayne, but renders her bolder in her request. Since she cannot have Lancelot as husband, she demands, as any heroine of medieval romance would have done, that he become her paramour. Malory never changed his mind with regard to marriage, adultery, and fornication. Elayne dies not so much because she could not become Lancelot's paramour, but mainly because she could not have him as husband whom she loved "oute of mesure." (779)

In "The Knight of the Cart" episode, Arthur finds it hard to believe that Guinevere is an adulterous wife.³⁵¹ To the accusation levelled at the queen by Mellyagaunce, the king replies: "I am aferde sir Mellyagaunce hath

charged hymselff with a grete charge," (804) and "I dare say all that . . . [he] puttith uppom my lady the quene ys wrong." (806) That Arthur should not at least suspect the loyalty of his queen is unthinkable. Later one, Arthur's suspicion seems to be somewhat aroused (820) but he will not accept the fact unless Lancelot and Guinevere are caught in flagrantis delicto.³⁵² Still, after hearing Mordred's provocative but accurate report that the lovers were found together, Arthur finds it almost impossible to believe that his best knight had sexual relations with Guinevere: "Toke ye hym in the quenys chamber?" (828)³⁵³ Instead of dealing on such a degrading and shameful situation, Arthur turns his thoughts to chivalry and its hero Lancelot whose marvellous prowesses he praises. Then, finally, Malory takes the blame from Lancelot's shoulders saying that he "rode hys way wyth the quene . . . unto Joyous Garde, and there he kepte her as a noble knyght shulde." (832)³⁵⁴ (My italics)

Arthur's interest lies elsewhere than with the culpability of queen Guinevere.³⁵⁵ He has already declared that "the noble felyshyp of the Rounde Table ys broken for ever, for wyth hym [Lancelot] woll many a noble knyght holde." (829) On the other hand, he seems reluctant to accept the inevitable. Consequently, as much as he can, Arthur refuses to confront the destructive elements which since the beginning have continuously sapped the chivalric foundations of the Round Table. Dishonored Arthur realizes that such a "felyship of good knyghtes shall never be togydirs in no company." (833) In his turn, Malory painfully and helplessly sees his whole chivalric world collapse. And the gloomy sentiments which pervade the last chapters of the "hole booke" reflect the chaos which results from the inadequacies and failures of his chivalric code. If courtly love was an insurmountable obstacle in the reali-

zation of his ideal, the chivalric code itself proved to be insufficient and imperfect.

If there are any inconsistencies in the piteous description of the heroes' and court's collapse, they are due not to Malory who knew exactly what he was doing, but to his sources which were not emphasizing the same values.

Malory's eagerness to salvage chivalry

Malory's eagerness to salvage chivalry from historical oblivion incited him to draw a code of conduct which would promote the feudal rather than the courtly or romantic duties of the knights.³⁵⁶ Malory felt that courtly love vitiated the fighting prowess of his knights, since it lacked moral excellence. On the other hand, since the most common aim of chivalric prowess is the conquest of love,³⁵⁷ Malory's conscious departure from the spirit of his French sources and his imperfect handling of the basic elements of the chivalric code itself spawned insolvable conflicts and dilemmas. The inability of Lancelot to resolve the tragic dilemma of his feudal loyalty to Arthur and his courtly loyalty to Guinevere, in some ways epitomizes the conflicts within the code and helps explain the final collapse of the Round Table.

In spite of his awareness of the problems his new approach to the chivalric romances would suscite, Malory did not deter his steadfast determination to pursue his goal.

Many of the conflicts have already been presented. Here I will content myself with inconsistencies directly or indirectly implying courtly love.

In a series of romances involving Arthur and his court, one would expect to find in the person of the king of England a nearly perfect hero. Such

is not the case, however, at least from Malory's point of view. Again, such an inconsistency results from the variety of his sources.

Before Book One is over, Arthur, the most renowned Christian king, initiates through his adultery and murderous attempt on his incestuous son, the feud with Lot, and sows the seeds of lust and vengeance that ultimately destroy his realm. (53)³⁵⁸

Again involving Arthur is the episode in which Morgan le Fay and Accolon (92-112) plan to kill Arthur, (106)³⁵⁹ and Uryence (113) so that she and her paramour can marry and take over the kingdom.³⁶⁰ Here both the courtly and chivalric codes are systematically violated. Arthur consents to champion a false knight, Damas, in a wrongful quarrel. (101)³⁶¹ Accolon agrees to fight Oughtlake to champion the right cause. (102)³⁶² The situation is at best ironic and confusing, but Malory's purpose appears to show the ravages caused by lust and the tradition it foments.

Another deterioration of knighthood occasioned by lust occurs in the Gawayne-Pelleas incident. (121-126)³⁶³ Gawayne violates the oath he swore to king Pelleas, (123) because of his lustful relation with Ettarde. (124) Again, both chivalric and courtly codes are violated; treachery seems a direct result of lust. To certain critics such a situation may appear inconsistent, but it only furthers Malory's overall plan in presenting the sophistication of courtly love as a destructive element in the establishment of the code of knighthood.

The story of well-meaning but impetuous and tactless Balin (44-71)³⁶⁴ gives another clue to Malory's attitude toward courtly love. Although the theme of misfortune [mescheance] plagues Balin in everything he undertakes,

the subject of false love of paramour lurks everywhere. The story begins with the arrival at Arthur's court of a lady from the Isle of Avalon, who claims Balin's head. (49) Balin kills her in a moment of anger. Soon misfortune comes his way, but in an unusual fashion: instead of being defeated in combat, he is forced to inflict miseries upon other people. Challenged by an Irish knight, Launceor,³⁶⁵ he kills him too, (51) and although by all standards of chivalric behavior his action is fully justified, he bitterly laments it, and his regret turns to despair when Columbe comes to mourn the death of his victim, and stabs herself with the dead knight's sword. (52) Misfortune pursues Balin relentlessly. One day he meets a knight, Garnysh of the Mounts, who is anxiously awaiting his beloved, the Duke of Harmel's daughter, and they set out to find her. (66) Once more, for all his good intentions, he brings disaster: with his help the lady is found, but she is found in the arms of another man. This, Balin thinks, will cure his friend of his unhappy love. But the knight bitterly reproaches Balin for having brought such tidings; in anger he draws his sword and kills the two lovers, smiting off "bothe their hedes." (66) Garnysh has a momentary feeling of relief as if he were stunned by his own stroke. But when he sees what he has just done, he cries out in despair: "Allas . . . now is my sorou doubel that I may nat endure, now have I slayne that I moost loved in al my lyf! And therewith sodenly he roofe hymself on his own swerd unto the hyltys." (66)

Why is it that Balin's finest deeds turn to disaster and in his endeavor to serve his fellow men he destroys their happiness? It is certainly not because he is a guilty man who deserves punishment, but because fatality pursues its course and turns his noblest thoughts into ruins.³⁶⁶ In general, in his

work of mild Christian didacticism, Malory found a light tonal sprinkling of the supernatural to be compatible. Yet, catering to the tastes of his time, more sophisticated than the time and taste that gave birth to some of his sources, Malory rejected everywhere an overdosage of the supranatural.³⁶⁷ He preferred to think that the inevitable collapse of the Round Table was caused not so much by the whims and inconsistencies of Fortuna, but by the internal dissensions, failures, and excesses, particularly those in loyalty and love. Malory changes the whole perspective of the French story by making the Dolorous Stroke not a punishment for the violation of the Sankgreal mysteries, but for the murder of the lady who came to claim Balin's head. (49) Balin is told by Merlin that "because of the dethe of that lady thou shalt stryke a stroke moste dolerous that ever man stroke." (54)³⁶⁸

R. M. Lumiansky may be right when he says that Lancelot departs on his adventures in order "to win the approval of Guinevere, whom he already loves,"³⁶⁹ but the text inclines us to think otherwise, namely, that Guinevere "had hym in grete favoure aboven all othir knyghtis" because of his deeds of arms. (180)³⁷⁰ The moral judgment Lancelot passes on courtly love, especially on the love of paramours, (185) may seem inconsistent with his own personal practices, but Malory's spokesman could not prevent from voicing it, and ipso facto, he very ironically condemned his own unchastity; consequently he consented to remain a second best knight.

The character of Tristram is defined very consistently although not along the lines of the French source. He is a powerful warrior, (286) but less perfect than Lancelot. Like other martial heroes, he succumbs to the temptation of lust and commits breaches of fidelity. His greatest passion is

hunting, (506) not courtly love.³⁷¹ He tangentially refers to love, but considers it a mere adjunct of his chivalry rather than an essentially stimulating motive. His numerous fights and jousts confirm Malory's theory that martial prowess is too precious a gift to be spoiled over a lady's love or reputation. The same may be said of the Gareth episode which emphasizes the devastating influence courtly paramours can have on moral chivalry. Gareth's temporary lusty excesses, (246, 247) and unpremeditated savagery (248) throw a note of discredit on his otherwise perfect chastity and mesur. But his plighted troth (266) and marriage to Lyones (270) restore his noble character.

Anything Dinadan does should not surprise us. Yet, when he lies to Mark for fear of him, we gape. (437) But does the chivalric oath rule out truth to the recreant knight? It should not, for Dinadan has kept other promises. (436)³⁷² Malory never lived happily with japer Dinadan. He totally rejected his hedonistic conception of love, and resented his artful attacks on chivalry, especially on the fundamental principles of valor and duty.³⁷³

The endless conflict between the courtly and chivalric codes continues, this time with the murder of Morgawse at the hand of her son Gaherys. (459)³⁷⁴ Like Dinadan, Lamorak was never a great lover. It is almost incredible to imagine that his adulterous liaison with Morgawse would create such havoc. Gaherys' matricide is obviously a glaring injustice both to his family and to his oath of chivalry. But his stern refusal to slay Lamorak because he is naked and because "a man is borne to offir his servyse to his lady, (459) astonishes us. Gaherys respects and violates, at the same time, the various principles of the chivalric code: martial, courtly, and even religious. Like Gaherys, Malory considers the code of chivalry far above that of courtly love,

and even superior to the ties of family, but here his rigidity and parti pris trespass the limits of common sense, and he overshoots his aim.

Malory, who has made considerable efforts to transform the numerous religious symbols of the French Queste, has succeeded in depriving them of their spiritual foundations and mystical connotations. He has substituted the Arthurian for the Christian scale of values. Galahad himself, instead of remaining the mystical leader and inspirer of the French Queste, becomes a good and valiant German type of knight.³⁷⁵ No wonder then that occasionally his brutality should show. He cuts off the arm of an unknown knight who tries to overthrow him and pursues him as any other earthly knight would have done.³⁷⁶ Malory is not inconsistent in his treatment of Galahad. He humanizes him while preserving his purity, but deprives him of the glory of being the greatest warrior in Christendom. Lancelot, the sinner, remains Malory's favorite hero.

Malory, through Merlin, seems to say that knightly fellowship replaces family ties:³⁷⁷

For all the worlde crystenyd and hethyn, repayryth unto the Rounde Table, and whan they ar chosyn to be of the felyshyp of the Rounde Table they thynke hemselff more blessed and more in worship than they had gotyn halff the worlde.

And ye have sene that they have loste hir fadirs and hir modirs and all hir kynne, and hir wyves and hir chyl dren, for to be of youre felyshyp. Hit ys well seyne be you, for synes ye departed from your modir ye wolde never se hir, ye founde such felyshyp at the Table Rounde. (659)

Does Gawayne and his brothers belong to Arthur's court or do they form a separate clan, a separate Round Table?³⁷⁸ In spite of the confusion brought about by two different Gawaynes,³⁷⁹ it seems that from the start Malory intended the Lot-Pellinore feud to become a tragic issue between Arthur's court and Gawayne's

clan. Through a series of events,³⁸⁰ the faction between the two powerful houses becomes more and more envenomed. Gawayne's bitter rage increases day after day and is satisfied only in death. Because of the vengeful spirit and treacherous crimes of the chief of the house of Orkeney, the two clans never reconcile and are indirectly responsible for the ruin of Arthur's realm.

When Malory says that Lyonel "was of grete chevalry and passyng hardy [brave or violent]," what does he mean? This statement hardly fits Bors's brother, who violates the code of chivalry whenever the occasion presents itself. Lyonel's code of chivalry is inflexible.³⁸¹ He refuses to admit Bors's dilemma as a knight, calls him a traitor,³⁸² fights an unchivalrous combat with him,³⁸³ and finally vows to kill him.³⁸⁴ Said to be possessed by a fiend,³⁸⁵ Lyonel's thirst for blood, (699, 700, 701) and vengeance, (700) is quenchless. A mysterious cloud prevents a shameful fratricide and temporarily ends the violent quarrel.³⁸⁶ Besides the questionable praise of Lyonel's "grete chevalry," Malory's handling of Bors's case seems somewhat perplexing. In spite of Lyonel's menaces Bors manifests no fear,³⁸⁷ but since it is sinful to kill one's brother, he refrains from striking him. On the other hand, Lyonel's last two gruesome killings cry for outright vengeance. At this point in the Sankgreal Queste, Bors's perfection shows a progress from martial to religious chivalry. This new element in the hierarchy of code loyalty prevents him from degrading himself in the eyes of God. Chivalry now has become moral strength, not simply physical prowess. Confident that God will "shew His myracle upon us bothe," Bors "lyffte up hys honde" to strike Lyonel. God intervenes; a heavenly flame tempers and relaxes the tense situation.

Let us conclude with an incident indirectly concerned with courtly love

but most pertinent to Lancelot's chivalry. As was said earlier, Lancelot is Malory's hero and will remain so until the end of the book.³⁸⁸ Already hearing the mounting catastrophic tidal wave which will soon sweep Lancelot, Malory desperately endeavors to redeem his hero's reputation by having him perform dangerous and impossible deeds of valor. To repair chivalric abuses and increase his worship, Lancelot jeopardizes his life by putting himself at the mercy of recreant Mellyagaunce (807)³⁸⁹ whom he should have rightfully dispatched for all his treacheries.³⁹⁰ Later he successfully defeats fourteen knights who seem to be waiting in line outside the door to be hacked down. This situation is ridiculously inconsistent, if not impossible.³⁹¹ Malory's efforts remain unsuccessful because Lancelot's sword has already been drawn in too many wrongful quarrels and turned against too many knights of the Round Table, for the love of Guinevere, and in justification of his own sin.

Malory's noble but almost futile efforts to resurrect a code which was already waiting at the door of oblivion must not be dismissed too lightly. Malory's monumental work counts among the predestined books whose influence has never ceased to increase in the course of time and to have furnished to the successive generations an incomparable poetic aliment.

Malory's interest and care to preserve
the unity and function of his plot

Sir Walter Scott was undoubtedly wrong when he said that Malory's romances had been "extracted at hazard, and without much art and combination from various French prose folios."³⁹² A serious analytical study of the "hoole book" shows that the method Malory used in disentangling from his numerous sources a series of coherent stories is structurally sounder, progressively

more artistic, and more consistent than the Scottish novelist and poet thought.

However, whether the knight-prisoner intended Le Morte Darthur to be a consistent and organically unified romance, or merely a series of tales related to one another only by subject matter, or neither of these, is a question that is difficult, if not impossible, to answer with certitude. The schools of Vinaver and Lumiansky have this controversial argument well under way and no additional fuel for the fire is needed.³⁹³

Malory's talent as translator and adapter is remarkable if not totally irreproachable. The most obvious quality of his art is its conciseness.³⁹⁴ Confronted with masses of intransigent source material from folios he had not always at hand, Malory steadily if not always successfully reduced the amazing tapestry of French Arthurian cycle to a sizable yet more simple format. He was notably successful in working out the larger structure of his work, but in handling the details of component stories and episodes he frequently got lost in the wide-stretching wilderness of knightly adventure. In spite of the fact that he was apparently more interested in psychology than in adventure, and certainly more enthusiastic about chivalry than courtly love, he could not always keep his restless knights in hand.³⁹⁵ For the most part, however, he did succeed in keeping Arthur at the center of his story and in using him and other dominant characters to draw the various parts of the narrative together.

Fascinated by the late romances involving Arthur and his knights, Malory resolved to write his own version of the Arthurian saga, but with contributions of his own of varying lengths. By a just and happy reversal of fortune, Arthur, who had been almost naturalized a Frenchman by the medieval

romancers, returns to his true birthplace. Numerous notations restore his British, if not Celtic, soul; and the generosity of the author loads him with victories to the point of making him an omnipotent sovereign and emperor of all the then known countries. There can be no doubt that Arthur is one of the most important unifying factors in Malory's narrative, and serves to preserve the unity and function of his plot.³⁹⁶ Textually the frequent appearance of Arthur at the beginnings and endings of stories,³⁹⁷ the multiple forward and reflective references of strictly Arthurian events between the tales,³⁹⁸ and the parallel situation to his own court within other stories,³⁹⁹ set Arthur upon a platform before which the entire book unfolds.

In his youth, Arthur, himself a product of an intended if not technically adulterous union, sires Mordred on his married half-sister, Morgawse. Thus incest is seedbed for the greatest of family complications, the private destroying the public. This condemnable sin of incest gives cohesiveness to the narrative at the very center of the family and knightly structure, together with the perversive adultery and fornication. But this kind of family unchastity is worse sin than adultery in Malory's mind: Arthur and saint Galahad are conceived illegitimately, but this is not so reflected in their personal characters the way it is in the incestuously begotten Mordred, who hastens the momentum in the destruction of the Round Table. It is said to Arthur: "God ys displeasid with you, for ye have lyene by youre syster and on hir ye have gotyn a chylde that shall destroy you and all the knyghtes of your realm." (35)

At first glance, Malory was concerned with courtly love. To oversimplify, he was concerned only with the matter of courtly love, while introducing a new moral meaning which he innovated basically through the japing of Dinadan

and the preaching of some other knights, including Lancelot. Courtly love, if truly Platonic, could lead the lover to virtue; but in practice courtly love more often led the lover to choose between the divine and the earthly, or between Christ and Venus, as Charles Moorman puts it.⁴⁰⁰ No wonder that such a courtly system was vigorously condemned as immorally adulterous by the Church. In such a case Malory could have agreed no more.⁴⁰¹

To recall one striking instance, one remembers how Malory altered the story of Pelleas and Ettarde from the French original. He has Ettarde, who dies of love for him, deserted by Pelleas and gives Pelleas as a reward the hand of Nyneve. Malory ignores the courtly convention of his sources and replaces it with poetic justice and "a crude moral ending." (126)⁴⁰² By experimenting with this early story Malory realized that he might keep the adulterous relationship of Lancelot and Guinevere while at the same time condemning the same liaison as unbecoming of Lancelot's knighthood.

Thus Malory succeeded in preserving a certain unity and the function of his plot while giving a new meaning to the Lancelot story. Thus dismissed is courtly love, so that Lancelot and Guinevere themselves, by the time of Salisbury, have reverted to personal conscience that functions according to the standard norms of the standard Christian ethic even as known today. It is in Lancelot, the worldly and realistic knight, that Malory tries to reconcile the worldliness of chivalry with Christian standards. The Queste of the Sankgreal shows that such reconciliation is impossible, and accounts, in part, for the knights' humiliations and failures, and also for the fall of the Round Table. But it does not seem to be very clear in Malory's mind. The Winchester text strengthens Professor Vinaver's position,⁴⁰³ in showing that the Queste and

the Morte are separate works divided by a third work, "The Book of Sir Lancelot and Guinevere." And yet, if Malory wanted us to adopt his disinterested attitude, he has taken the wrong approach. Since his works all deal with the same characters, impressions made in one must somewhat affect us in the next. He has left Galahad, the son of Lancelot. He has left, therefore, the divine irony whereby Lancelot's begetting of that son was at once his sole offense against the courtly code, and, on the heavenly plane, his sole *raison d'être*. He has left that memorable moment when, as Charles Williams says, "Joy remembered Joylessness,"⁴⁰⁴ and the spiritual bids its courteous implacable farewell to the natural, "My fayre lorde, salew me unto my lorde sir Launcelot, my fadir, and . . . bydde hym remembir of this worlde unstable." (739) When the Queste is over and we return to the court, the first thing Malory shows us is Lancelot's determined attempt to break off his intrigue with the queen; and her selfish and ruthless recapture of him. His motives were admittedly mixed, partly to avoid the growing scandal in court, but partly because "I was but late in the quest of the Sankgreall," (744-745)⁴⁰⁵ and then, dying away, as such a speech would at such a juncture, into embarrassed repetition, "And therefore, madam, I was but late in that queste." (745) On top of this Malory introduces, perhaps even invents,⁴⁰⁶ the exquisite episode of sir Urry, where Lancelot at the very summit of earthly glory "wepte, as he had bene a chylde that had bene beatyn!" (815) Why, unless he remembered a higher glory and lamented his loss! Finally, when all is ended and Lancelot comes to take his last leave of Guinevere, Malory again harks back to the Sankgreall: "God defende but that I shulde forsake the worlde as ye have done! For in the queste of the Sankgreall I had that tyme forsakyn the vanytees of the worlde, had nat

youre love bene." (877) (My italics)

Malory's intention can only be guessed. But the human tragedy of Lancelot and the great majority of the other knights becomes all the more impressive if we juxtapose it to the solid and spiritual experience of the Sankgreal, and the failure of the Queste becomes all the more impressive if it is felt thus, reverberating through all the human relationships of the Arthurian world. What Malory intended the Sankgreal episode to be remains a question to be debated by scholars. What the Queste shows is the Round Table falling from the peak that failed to reach heaven, and abandoning itself to those earthly and perverted tendencies operating within itself, which eventually work its total destruction.

Although there is no evidence as to the author's original conception of his undertaking when he first sat down to write, it is most likely, as it has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, that Malory must have had at least a vague idea of his general purpose and objective, and a definite plan or intention as far as the treatment of chivalry and courtly love were concerned.

Malory was working with the well-known materials of a written tradition outside whose bounds he could not step without risking an irreparable distortion. Many times he acknowledges this obligation to his readers, by candidly referring his sources to the "Freynsh boke." (272) Isode, for instance, could no more return to be the long-suffering wife of king Mark than Lancelot could desert Guinevere to wed the Maid of Astolat.

A writer of Malory's stature cannot consistently reject the code of courtly love, which he found tedious, sophisticated, debased, and immoral and

constantly glorify a revised code of knighthood, which he propounded more or less as a Christian gentleman's guide, without a certain design. The occasional awkward handling of the great variety of his sources,⁴⁰⁷ and especially the gross but unintentional inconsistencies in the characterization of certain knights--Kay,⁴⁰⁸ Gawayne,⁴⁰⁹ and Arthur,⁴¹⁰ to name the most important--contributed largely to the much debated question of unity of Malory's work.⁴¹¹ However, Malory's deliberate and fortunate changes, especially in the case of Lancelot,⁴¹² are numerous enough to convince us that he wanted to improve upon the old traditional material of his sources if not completely to recreate it. Yet, even under the restraints of his limited and half-patchwork method, Malory's "reduce[d]" literary achievement may be qualified a great success.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation has been to add greater clarification to Malory's attitude towards the system of courtly love as it is presented and developed in each of the eight books that compose the romance of Le Morte Darthur.

Although the primary aim of this thesis purports to analyze the treatment of courtly love in Le Morte Darthur, it has been necessary, for a better understanding of Malory's work, to examine and discuss briefly, first the background of chivalry considered under its feudal, religious, and courtly aspects; second, its decline due to factors such as the incompatibility of military glory and religious fervor, the dominance of courtesy and gallantry, the exaggerated pageantry, the rise of the merchant class, and the Hundred Years' War and the War of the Roses; third, the attempted chivalric revival at the hands of writers such as John of Salisbury, Ramon Lull, William Caxton, and Sir Thomas Malory. These brief discussions were necessary, first, because chivalry is intimately related to courtly love, and second, because Malory himself seems to have been very much concerned with its revival.

After having identified the three basic elements of the code of chivalry as war, love, and religion, it has been seen that these three aspects of medieval chivalry formed a highly unstable, and even an explosive mixture. Throughout Le Morte Darthur, knights such as Arthur, Lancelot, Bors, and Gawayne, striving to practice perfect chivalry, find themselves confronted by

dilemmas within the code itself. It has been established that the three loyalties of chivalry, that is, to the overlord (war), to the lady (love), and to God (religion), cannot peacefully coexist. Indeed, the final collapse of the Round Table fellowship occurs largely because its most prominent member, Lancelot, is unable to resolve the tragic dilemma of his martial loyalty to the fellowship of Arthur and his knights, and his courtly loyalty to Guinevere. It has also been shown that the code of chivalry that develops in Le Morte Darthur is not the courtly chivalry of the Grail legend which included the fear of God and the defense of Christendom, but rather a secular martial chivalry with fighting prowess tempered by moral discipline.

Malory constantly refers to the High Order of Knighthood when his sources contain no such allusion. He did not consider knighthood as an adventurous mode of living, but as a well established, centralized order with its headquarters firmly fixed in the household of a great prince. As the concept of chivalry was fading away, Malory endeavored to reestablish it by formalizing the ideals of knighthood into a code of conduct and honor. It may almost be said that Malory's book was largely intended not as a record of disconnected adventures, but as a glorification of the high authority supported by the institution of knighthood. To Malory, the ideal of the knight combining bravery, generosity, and devotion was no longer a reality. Therefore, he fervently tackled the difficult task of recreating the chivalric ideals by giving them a new actuality, significance, and brilliance. The chore was an enormous one, but the goal justified the endeavor.

Lancelot and Arthur, the flowers of Christian knighthood, became, under Malory's pen, the central figures of the story, thus combining the qualities

of "noble chyvalrye, curtosye, humanité, frendyness, hardynesse, love, and frendshyp . . ." required of warriors and gentlemen. Even Dinadan, a humorous cynical knight, served Malory's purpose. He functioned as a delightful but somewhat severe critic of the artificial aspects of the chivalric concepts of duty and valor. But Malory's most effective use of "jabber" Dinadan is in his constant mockery of courtly love. Consequently, Malory's pure knighthood proved to be an austere departure from the French chivalric original. Whereas the most ordinary aim of French chivalric prowesses was the conquest of love, in Malory, prowesses were debased whenever inspired or motivated by courtly love which he seemed to have regarded as no more than sophisticated lechery.

Love is a common subject of Malory's tales, not the courtly, sophisticated, and adulterous love preached by Ovid and Andreas Capellanus, not even the recommended concept of love as idealized by Ibn Hazm or Ibn Sina, but Malory's own type of natural, real, and virtuous love. Malory expressed his personal feelings frankly and finely in various tales such as in the dramatic story of Columbe and Launceor, in the moving episode of Pelleas and Ettarde, in the charming romance of Gareth and Lyones, in the trying courtship of La Cote Male Tayle and Lady Maledysaunte, and in other striking tales. As some writers had done before him, Malory took every opportunity to revolt against the essential spirit of courtly love, which stressed the bargain marriage that bought and sold women like commodities, which preached a concept of sex that debased the physical relationship, and which theorized that the divine punitive system penalized most stringently the expression of the God-given emotion of love. For Malory, the best expression of love was that which culminated in the happy state of matrimony.

Malory's treatment of courtly love in each of the eight books forming Le Morte Darthur and its operation in the major characters of the romance, Lancelot and Guinevere; Tristram and Isode; Palomides and Dinadan; Arthur, Gawayne, and Gareth, gradually and steadily reveals Malory's attitude towards the French concept of courtly love. In the French Arthurian romances prowess and desire for reputation, nobility, courtesy, and friendship served only as a background for the treatment of love; but in Malory, prowess, and not love, dominates most of the tales. French Lancelot, for example, accomplishes all his exploits for a single word, LOVE. But in Malory, this single magic word becomes HONOR, or GLORY, or WORSHIP.

In order to give a more accurate and more convincing appraisal of Malory's whole interpretation of his tales, detailed analyses focussing on love in relation to amor mixtus, amor purus, matrimonia, and perfidia have been made. What Malory invented or introduced from his French and English sources has been discussed. The thesis shows: 1) that for Malory, amor mixtus had no appeal, and that he deleted, changed, or glossed over many passages which were interfering with the characterization of many of his characters, that of Lancelot in particular; 2) that amor purus, that is, natural, pure, or true love was the ideal kind of love Malory tried to present, encourage, and recommend whenever the tale offered him the occasion to do so; 3) that in Malory's opinion, the best and safest way of securing and increasing amor purus was to bind it in the vows of matrimonia; 4) and finally, that the worst feature of courtly love, or the wrong kind of love, was its infinite capacity for causing unhappiness, jealousy, treachery, and all manner of perverted degradations, which has been summarized under the name perfidia.

Malory had the power to change the plot of his stories. However, had he done so, one feels that most of the romantic affairs of his characters would have ended at the foot of the altar. One principle which seems to have governed Malory was to preserve a certain cohesion and maintain the already established tradition towards a good number of his leading characters. Another important principle seems to have influenced Malory in approving his characters' conduct, namely the primary stress in courtly love which rests upon faithfulness or loyalty. As long as love-loyalty was preserved, the code apparently excused disloyalty, equivocation, falsehood, deceit, and treachery in other relationships. When obligation to husband, wife or feudal lord conflicted with that of the beloved, the love-loyalty cancelled, at least temporarily, all other responsibilities. This supreme guide helps explain some of the contradictions and inconsistencies in the morality of the romances. Whether Malory believed in such a code is very doubtful, but he probably used it to give a certain air of respectability to the affairs going on, especially between that of Lancelot and Guinevere, and that between Tristram and Isode.

Malory's inconsistencies in the treatment of courtly love are real, but may be excused, first, by the great variety of his sources which did not treat courtly love with the same sympathy--even Chrétien de Troyes nourished diverse opinions towards it--and second, by Malory's own interpretation of his sources in which he emphasized: 1) adultery as a central and destructive activity in Le Morte Darthur. Eventually, adultery engendered irreparable conflicts of loyalties which involved the famous ménage à trois, Lancelot-Arthur-Guinevere; 2) chivalric prowess as essential not as a means to conquer love, but as a means to form the gentleman, promote friendship among the

knights, and encourage a sense of loyalty towards the established monarchy. Again, Malory's conscious departure from the spirit of his French sources and his imperfect handling of the basic elements of the code itself spawned insolvable conflicts and dilemmas. Another reason accounting for some of the inconsistencies found in the book seems to have been Malory's intention to write a coherent, if not unified, series of romances. A writer of Malory's stature cannot consistently shun the code of courtly love, which he found tedious, sophisticated, and debased; and then constantly glorify a revised, although imperfect, code of knighthood, which he offered more or less as a Christian gentleman's guide, without a certain design. Even if the occasional awkward handling of the great variety of his sources and the gross inconsistencies in the characterization of certain knights contributed to the much debated question of "unity" in Malory's work, his overall enduring literary achievement may be considered a great and unique success.

Malory may have lessened the romantic appeal of his tales by transferring them from Paris to the banks of the Thames, but he has not diminished our interest in their chivalric re-interpretation. For his is a method of creative adaptation which takes traditional matter for granted and by the mere process of re-shaping and re-modeling draws new values and new insights from the old.

Praenotanda

Notes in the following paper are of two kinds: (1) repeated notations from primary sources are incorporated in the text (see key); (2) other notes follow the text. All references to these texts, unless otherwise specified, will be by pages or folios, using arabic numerals. In the case of folios, a and b, c and d, indicate the first and second columns of the recto and verso pages, respectively; dashes between the letters will be omitted for references occupying two or more columns: as 345ac. Roman numerals indicate volumes (this indication being omitted in the case of Q and MA, which together make up the Vulgate Version, VI, and VM, Vol. II); in the case of ma, and MT, arabic numerals refer to lines.

- Cambridge The Cambridge MS. of the Suite du Merlin (British Museum Add. 7071, ff. 159-342).
- Chrétien Chrétien de Troyes, Le Conte de la Charette, ed. Foerster. Dutch Lancelot-Jonckbloet, Roman van Lancelot, edited from the unique MS. in the Royal Library, The Hague.
- HM The Huth Merlin of the unique Huth MS, (British Museum Add. 388117), available in the following edition: Gaston Paris and Jacob Ulrich, (eds.), Merlin, roman en prose du XIIIe siècle (Société des Anciens textes Français; Paris, 1886).
- L The prose Lancelot, constituting Vols. III-IV of Sommer's Vulgate Version (edited from British Museum MS. Add. 10292, 10293, and 10294).
- L¹ Lancelot du Lac (Paris, 1533); including Queste and Mort Artu.
- L² Lancelot du Lac (Paris, 1488), Vol. II; including Queste and Mort Artu.
- ma Mort Artu (edited from MS. B.N. fr. 342) James Douglas Bruce, (ed.).
- MA The Mort Artu, in Vol. VI of Sommer's Vulgate Version.
- MH The English stanzaic Morte Arthur, from the unique MS, (British Museum Harl. 2252), James Douglas Bruce, (ed.).

- Perlesvaus Le Haut Livre du Graal: Perlesvaus. Nitze and Jenkins, (eds.), from MS. Hatton 82 of the Bodleian Library.
- Pr The episodes of Alexander the Orphan and the tournament of Galahalt of Surluse, from the Prophecies of Merlin, ed. Sommer, Studies. pp. 197-333, from the MSS Mus. Add. 25434 and Harl. 1629.
- Q the Queste del Saint Graal, in Vol. VI of Sommer's Vulgate Version.
- Q¹ the Queste, ed. Albert Pauphilet, from MS. 77 of the Palais des Arts Library in Lyons; MS B.N. fr. 344, and MS. B.N. Nouv. Acq. 1119.
- Q² the Queste, ed. Vinaver, Malory, pp. 156-188, from MS. B.N. fr. 120.
- T¹ the prose Tristan, MS B.N. fr. 103. Rotographs. Library of Congress, M.L.A. deposit No. 218.
- T² the Tristan, MS B.N. fr. 334. Rotographs, Library of Congress, M.L.A. deposit No. 220.
- T³ the Tristan, MS B.N. fr. 99. Rotographs, Library of Congress, M.L.A. deposit No. 188.
- T⁴ the Lancelot interpolation in the Tristan MS (British Museum Add. 5474, fols. 142c-164b).
- VM the Vulgate as "Ordinary" Merlin, constituting Vol. II of Sommer's Vulgate Version.
- W The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, ed. Eugène Vinaver (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1947), 3 Vols.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

¹Robert Bator, "Overview of Malory Criticism" (unpublished seminar paper, Dept. of English, Loyola University, Chicago, 1966).

²Vida Dutton Scudder, Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory: a Study of the Book and its Sources (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1917, 1921).

³Eugène Vinaver, Malory (Oxford, 1929); hereafter cited as Vinaver: Malory.

⁴Ibid., The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, 3 vols. (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1947); hereafter cited as Vinaver: The Works of Sir Malory.

⁵W. A. Neilson, The Origins and Sources of the Courts of Love (Boston, 1899), pp. 176-177.

Neilson looks upon Courtly Love as a reactionary swing of fashionable society from the ascetic ideal of the Church to the opposite extreme of adulterous love. The courtly system of restrictions, no less elaborate than the ecclesiastical code, arose, he suggests, because the human spirit is in the long run averse to social anarchy.

W. D. Dodd, Courtly Love in Chaucer and Gower (Boston, 1913), pp. 5 ff.

Dodd defines Courtly Love in theory as: a) sensual, b) illicit and usually adulterous, c) secret, and d) difficult to obtain. He observes that it is conceived in classical, ecclesiastical, and feudal terms.

C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 2.

Lewis defines Courtly Love or Romantic Love as a highly specialized sort of love, whose characteristics he enumerates as: a) humility, b) courtesy, c) adultery, and d) the religion of love. He looks upon Courtly Love as the beginning of romantic love which believes in a passion that works a chemical change upon appetite and affection to turn into something different from either. Of this kind of passion, he says, the scholastics knew nothing.

Denis de Rougemont, Passion and Society (London: Faber and Faber, Limited, 1956).

De Rougemont treats passion-love as it appears in the Tristan myth and recurs in subsequent European literature and society. He reveals Courtly Love to

be a Christian heresy, Manichaeism (pp. 65-66), and Catharist (pp. 75-90) embodied in myth. Contrary to charity and Christian marriage (pp. 32-35; 66-67; 136), it is a passion, a suffering (pp. 15; 50-54), selfishness (pp. 41, 51), irresistible (pp. 46-49), boundless desire (pp. 60-66), a love of love (p. 38), and death (pp. 42-46), a ravishment beyond good and evil into an ineffable absolute irreconcilable with the world (p. 40), a union of man with the divine (pp. 165-166). It requires obstruction (pp. 42, 147). It is chaste (p. 143) and ascetic (p. 185). It is not an idealization of carnal desire (pp. 96-102). The moral system it provides is a rival to that upheld by Christianized society (p. 275). The history of passionate love, de Rougemont declares, is the history of the descent of Courtly Myth into profane life (pp. 163, 168); it loses esoteric character and sacred purpose as it takes literary form (p. 238).

A. J. Denomy, The Heresy of Courtly Love (New York: The Declan X. Macmillan Company, Inc., 1947).

Father Denomy explains Courtly Love as the ennobling desire of a man for a woman or a woman for a man, sensual, carnal, and selfish; neither charity nor platonic love, neither mystical nor lust, but a special type of love (pp. 22-26). He finds it neither moral nor immoral, but amoral (p. 28); in the courtly code, however, there is an opposite pole, which is false love, evil, and impure, founded on sensuality for its own sake, faithless, promiscuous and mercenary (p. 26). The origin of Courtly Love he declares to be found in Arabian philosophy (p. 29 ff.). Andreas rationalized Courtly Love to Charity by employing the doctrine of the double truth.

Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-lyric (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1966).

Peter Dronke propounds the thesis that "the feelings and conceptions of amour courtois are universally possible . . . in any time or place and on any level of society." (p. 2) "That the feelings of courtoisie are elemental, not the product of a particular chivalric nurture." (p. 3) In place of Courtly Love, he coins the term "the courtly experience," which he defines as "the sensibility that gives birth to poetry that is courtois, to poetry of amour courtois." (p. 3). By "experience," Mr. Dronke does not intend to stress "sincerity" (i.e., the historical truth of feelings expressed by poets) but something more than manners and fashions--"a whole way of looking at life." (p. 3) He bases his discussions on Bédier's definition of la poésie courtoise which conceives of love as "un culte qui s'adresse à un objet excellent" (p. 4) where "Dieus et amors sont d'un acort," (Le lai de L'oiselet), (p. 5) and in which the worship of the excellence of the beloved ennobles the lover. Mr. Dronke not only rejects the "dualist" theories like that proposed by Father Denomy, but undermines the current assumptions that Courtly Love is a) an invention of the twelfth century, (Paris, Lewis, Bezzola, etc.) b) that it is basically either adulterous or platonic in conception, (Denomy) and c) that it is borrowed. He also states that "in the

poetry dominated by the courtly experience, God is never imagined as opposed to love," (p. 70) and that "courtly experience . . . is essentially a man's conception of love." (p. 9)

⁶J.A.W. Bennett, (ed.), Essays on Malory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); hereafter cited as Bennett: Essays.

The book contains seven independent essays which reflect a discussion originally sparked by Vinaver's findings. The only essay dealing directly with either chivalry or courtly love is that of P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," pp. 64-113.

⁷Robert M. Lumiansky, (ed.), Malory's Originality: a Critical Study of Le Morte Darthur (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964); hereafter cited as Malory's Originality.

Many of the chapters represent revision of work which appeared originally in journals. Chapters dealing with either chivalry or courtly love are:

- Ch. 3. R. M. Lumiansky, "The Tale of Lancelot: Prelude to Adultery," pp. 91-98.
- Ch. 4. Wilfred L. Guerin, "The Tale of Gareth: The Chivalric Flowering," pp. 99-117.
- Ch. 7. R. M. Lumiansky, "The Tale of Launcelot and Guinevere: Suspense," pp. 205-232.

⁸Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1965); hereafter cited as The Book of Kyng Arthur.

This work, much of which has appeared in articles in scholarly journals, is admittedly the most extreme example of a defense of Malory's unity. Chapters dealing with either chivalry or courtly love are:

- Ch.2. "The Failure in Love: Lancelot and Guinevere," pp. 13-27.
- Ch.4. "The Failure in Chivalry: Lot and Pellinore," pp. 49-63.

NOTES

CHAPTER II

¹Sidney Painter, Mediaeval Society (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1951), p. 32.

²Albert Pauphilet, Le legs du Moyen Age, (Melun: Librairie D'Argences, 1950), p. 150.

³P. E. Tucker, "The Place of the Quest of the Holy Grail in the Morte Darthur," Modern Language Review, XLVIII (October, 1953), p. 391.

⁴William H. Schofield, Chivalry in English Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1912), pp. 3-4.

⁵Ibid., p. 5.

⁶Vinaver, Malory: Works, p. xvii.

And I, accordyng to my cople, have doon sette it in enprynte to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chyvalrye, the jentyll and vertuuous dedes that somme knyghtes used in tho dayes, by whyche they came to honour, and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke; humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates, of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same.

⁷P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 65.

⁸S. Humphreys Gurteen, The Arthurian Epic (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1895), p. 6.

⁹Eugène Vinaver, Malory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 64; hereafter cited as Malory.

¹⁰F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "Chivalry: Its Place in History," in Chivalry, ed. Edgar Prestage (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1928), pp. 3-4; hereafter cited as "Chivalry."

¹¹Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953), p. 119. See also p. 118.

The degrees of election, and specific election for a specific adventure are raised to the status of a graduated test of election; they become the basis of a doctrine of personal perfection.

¹²Vinaver, Malory, p. 59.

¹³Painter, French Chivalry, p. 29

¹⁴Although by the Fifteenth Century tournaments had become ceremonial pageants with light lances as the sole weapons for the ceremonial jousts, the tournaments of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries were bloody battles fought with heavy lances and sharp swords. One tournament in 1240 became a massacre à outrance with sixty to eighty killed and cartloads of maimed. To stop the killing, the Council of Clermont (1130) and subsequent Councils decreed laws banning tournaments, and refused Church burial to knights slain in the lists, but the tournaments continued unabated.

¹⁵The chivalric ideal forbade attacking sleeping men, injured men, spent men, weaponless men, dismounted men, or any women. It was considered unfair to attack a knight's horse, or to trample under hoofs a fallen knight. Knights using trickery (Gawayne using a secret source of strength) or traps were violating the law of chivalric fairness.

¹⁶When, for example, the Black Prince released the captive Constable Bertrand rather than incur the shame of depriving the French forces of their best field commander.

¹⁷Painter, French Chivalry, p. 32.

¹⁸Gustave Cohen, Histoire de la chevalerie (Paris: Editions Richard Masse, 1949), p. 99.

¹⁹Augustinus, Aurelius, De Civitate Dei (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), I, pp. liv ff.

The doctrine is not something new in Augustine's thought, but the logical result of his metaphysics, which place man between the two contrasting levels, that is, between God above and the corporeal world below. Man's supreme happiness lies in the service of God. The heavenly city can be reached only by the Christian soldier (knight).

²⁰For an excellent discussion of the attitude of the early Church Fathers toward war, see Léon Gautier, La chevalerie (Paris: Victor Palme, 1884), pp. 7-11; hereafter cited as Chevalerie.

²¹Hearnshaw, "Chivalry," pp. 8-9.

²²Joannis Sareberiensis episcopi Carnotensis Policratici sive de megis curialium et vestigiis philosophorum (ed. Clemens C. I. Webb, Oxford, 1909), II, pp. 8-58.

A very good translation of John of Salisbury's Works is that of John Dickinson The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury (New York, 1927); hereafter cited as The Statesman's Book.

²³Dickinson, The Statesman's Book, pp. 199-200.

²⁴The Chanson de Roland is based on the conception of loyal service to God and the Emperor.

²⁵Dickinson, The Statesman's Book, pp. 190, 201.

²⁶For fuller information about sermons addressed to knights, see A. Lecoy de la Marche, La Chaire française au moyen âge (Paris, 1886), pp. 385-397.

See also William Gaxton, The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry (ed. Alfred T. P. Byles, EETS, London: Oxford University Press, 1926); hereafter cited as Ordre.

The ecclesiastical conception of chivalry reached its fullest elaboration in Ramon Lull, Le Libre del orde de cavaylerie, 1276-1286; hereafter cited as Le libre del orde.

²⁷Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 95 ff.

²⁸Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-lyric, p. 2.

²⁹Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 95-96.

³⁰Both King Arthur's and Mark's marriages represent largely feudal arrangements. In fact, Lovelich's Merlin (ll. 15465-15484) shows the marriage of Arthur and Guinevere to be a military alliance rather than a love alliance.

See also Gist, Love and War, p. 32.

³¹Eugene Edward Slaughter, Virtue According to Love, in Chaucer (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), pp. 49 ff.

³²See Denomy, The Heresy.

³³On this disputed question see Alfred Jeanroy, La Poésie lyrique des troubadours (Paris, 1934), I, pp. 61-100.

Rougemont, Passion and Society, pp. 75-82.

Denomy, "An Inquiry into the origins of Courtly Love," Mediaeval Studies, VI (1944), 175-260.

W. T. H. Jackson, "The De Amore of Andreas Capellanus and the Practice of Love at Court," Romanic Review, XVII (1958), 243-251.

D. W. Robertson, Jr., "The subject of the De Amore of Andreas Capellanus," Modern Philology, L (1953), 145-161.

Theodore Silverstein, "Andreas, Plato, and the Arabs: Remarks on some recent accounts of Courtly Love," Modern Philology, XLVII (1949), 117-126.

³⁴Eileen Power, "The Position of Women," The Legacy of the Middle Ages (ed. C. G. Crump and E. F. Jacob, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1926), pp. 401-433.

³⁵Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, pp. 104-116.

Also Denomy, "'Jois' among the early troubadours, its meaning and possible source," Mediaeval Studies, XIII (1951), 177-217.

³⁶Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 113, 135.

It is doubtful whether a man who did not adore a woman could be a true knight. By developing this idea that a man could not be a perfect knight unless he loved a lady, the troubadours laid the foundations of courtly chivalry.

³⁷Ibid., p. 111

See also "Les chansons de Guillaume, duc d'Aquitaine," (ed. Alfred Jeanroy, Les classiques français du moyen âge, Paris, 1927).

³⁸Rougemont, Passion and Society, pp. 111, 122, 187.

³⁹Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁰Painter, French Chivalry, p. 114.

⁴¹G. Bataille, "La littérature française du Moyen Age: la morale chevaleresque et la passion," Critique, V (Juillet, 1949), 599.

⁴²Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World, pp. 157-196

⁴³The earliest troubadour is William IX, count of Poitou and duke of Aquitaine (1071-1127); other famous troubadours are: Bernard de Ventadour, Arnaut de Mareuil, Bertran de Born and Arnaut Daniel.

⁴⁴Marie married the most powerful and richest feudal prince of France, Henry the Liberal, count of Champagne. With plenty of money at her disposal, she made her court the center for composers of works about love. Her sister, Alice, married Henry's younger brother, Theobald, count of Blois and Chartres, and she maintained at her court a lesser circle of literary men.

⁴⁵Gustave Cohen, Chrétien de Troyes et son oeuvre (Paris, 1931), p. 84; hereafter cited as Chrétien de Troyes.

See also Edmond Faral, Recherches sur les sources latines de contes et romans courtois du moyen âge (Paris, 1913).

⁴⁶Reto R. Bezzola, Les origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise en Occident (500-1200) (Paris: Champion, 1944), II, pp. 485-517.

⁴⁷Painter, French Chivalry, p. 122.

⁴⁸Painter, French Chivalry, p. 123.

⁴⁹Cohen, Chrétien de Troyes, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁰Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 120-121.

⁵¹Lewis, Allegory, pp. 25-29.

⁵²John F. Benton, "The Court of Champagne as a Literary Center," Speculum, XXXVI (1961), p. 562.

⁵³Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry, p. 3.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁵Coulton, Medieval Panorama, p. 245.

⁵⁶Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry, p. 66.

⁵⁷Hearnshaw, "Chivalry," p. 19.

⁵⁸Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 17-18.

⁵⁹Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 9-11.

⁶¹A. T. Hatto, "Archery and Chivalry: A Noble Prejudice," Modern Language Review, XXXV (January, 1940), p. 42.

See also Painter, French Chivalry, p. 22.

⁶²Dickinson, The Statesman's Book, p. 198.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 199-200.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 201.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 174 ff, and especially pp. 196-200.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 199-200.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 248.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 251.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 51.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 20.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 355, 358, 360, 363.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Caxton, Ordre, p. 23

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. xi-xlii.

⁷⁵It is the title given by Caxton to Ramon Lull's Le libre del orde de cavaylerie.

⁷⁶For convenience page numbers related to Caxton's Ordre will be parenthetically included immediately following the quotation.

⁷⁷Thus in the same wyse thordre of Chyvalry is more convenable and moche more syttynge to a gentyl herte replenysshed wyth al vertues than in a man vyle and of evyl lyf.

⁷⁸Sidney Painter, William Marshal (Baltimore, 1933), pp. 284-289.

⁷⁹Thomas L. Wright, "The Tale of King Arthur: beginnings and fore-shadowings," Malory's Originality (ed. R. M. Lumiansky, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 12; hereafter cited as "The Tale of King Arthur."

⁸⁰Remorse for youthful follies probably led Lull to regard the doctrine of courtly love as the most degrading feature of chivalry, and this fact alone might explain his omissions of any significant allusion to it.

⁸¹Vinaver, Malory: Works, p. 91.

The last part of the tale of Torre and Pellidor, in which Malory states his own chivalric code, bears a striking resemblance to what has just been said above. Besides, since there is no known French source for this passage, we must regard it as Malory's addition to the story, unless it is taken in globo from Lull's Ordre.

⁸²P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 65.

⁸³Wright, "The Tale of King Arthur," p. 39.

⁸⁴Not in the French source. See HM 58-59.

⁸⁵This is Malory's own invention. Malory's additions to the original material is the oath administered by the priest-king each Pentecost as major renewal of family loyalty and stability. Additional examples of oaths may be sampled: 123, 132, 185, 191, 233, 341, 405, 445, 448, 457, 480, 496.

⁸⁶Cambridge MS., ff. 199a - 246d. Here f. 223b. This is almost a literal translation of the French text.

⁸⁷Not found in the French text.

⁸⁸This is not in the French source.

⁸⁹Although it looks like some of the folklore and history of original "barbaric" materials are showing through Malory's account, in general, it does not appear that he had any folkloric nor historical sense. He seems to have related the materials of his romance to the immediate code of chivalry which he found, complemented, and proposed to his generation.

⁹⁰In French the war waged by Lot is in retaliation for murder, (HM 260-263) the drowning of the children born on May Day. (HM 207) In Malory, the war is in retaliation for Arthur's adultery.

⁹¹In French, Accolon is not aware of Morgan's intention to slay her husband, king Uryence. However, Accolon is not as innocent as the text implies for he knows too much about his mistress' devilish designs not to understand their consequences.

⁹²The stratagem proposed by Gawayne in order to win Ettarde for Pelleas does not exist in French.

⁹³The incident of the sword laid across the throats of the two fornicators reminds one of the Tristan legend. Mark finding Tristan and Iseult fast asleep in the forest raises his sword to kill the lovers, but abruptly decides to spare them. He then leaves his sword with them to show that no thought of vengeance has corrupted his mind. The sword is a sign of leniency. Malory makes it a sign of unsatisfied vengeance.

⁹⁴Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 70.

⁹⁵Malory condenses all the descriptive passages and the monologues and dialogues directly dealing with love.

See M. Dominica Legge (ed.) Le Roman de Balain, A Prose Romance of the Thirteenth Century (Manchester, 1942), pp. 88-92; hereafter cited as Roman de Balain.

⁹⁶HM 115-117.

⁹⁷Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 73.

⁹⁸MT 11. 116-121. Arthur does not show such a patient and controlled attitude. He "luked as a lyone, and on his lyppe bytes! . . . ferdnesse on hys face."

⁹⁹MT 11. 1212-1217. Without changing the meaning, Malory has compressed into two lines six verses of the original poem.

¹⁰⁰MT 11. 1738, 1805. "Thowe hase wyrchipe wonne, and wondyde knyghttez." Malory is anxious to stress Lancelot's greatness.

¹⁰¹In MT there is no mention of Lancelot's marvellous deeds.

¹⁰²MT 11. 3068-3083. See Vinaver, Works, p. 1395, note 242:26 and 243:4-14.

¹⁰³Same recommendation in MT 3080-3081.

That no lele ligemane, that to hym lonngede, Shulde lye be no ladysse, ne be no lele maydyns, Ne be no burgesse wyffe, better ne werse;

¹⁰⁴R. W. Barber, Arthur of Albion (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1961), p. 126; hereafter cited as Arthur of Albion.

¹⁰⁵R. M. Lumiansky, "The Tale of Lancelot: Prelude to Adultery," Malory's Originality (ed. R. M. Lumiansky, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 94.

¹⁰⁶Vinaver, Works, pp. 1402-1404. This important section of the tale is one of Malory's most revealing additions, as far as courtly love is concerned. Malory's rendering is radically opposed to that of Chrétien de Troyes in his Lancelot.

¹⁰⁷It would be difficult to imagine such an uncourtly demand in French. This addition must be credited to Malory.

¹⁰⁸Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 70.

¹⁰⁹Malory attributes to the "wicked knight"--a robber and horse-thief in French--an extra vicious quality, namely, fornication.

¹¹⁰L V 160-162. In spite of the various minor differences, Malory seems to have followed the prose Lancelot very closely.

¹¹¹L V 161. Lancelot orders the knight to carry his wife's body to Arthur's court and to tell the Queen what he has done.

112 This appears to be Malory's own invention since this passage cannot be traced to any French text.

113 Not traceable to any French text.

114 For further information on this most puzzling production of Malory, see Vinaver, Works, pp. 1417-1424.

The Gareth episode in which he kills three knights (218-219) has a close parallel in the prose Lancelot, L V 40.

115 See Vinaver, Malory: Works, p. 91.

116 Gist, Love and War, p. 103.

117 Vida D. Scudder, Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory and its Sources (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1917), p. 251; hereafter cited as Le Morte Darthur.

118 Barber, Arthur of Albion, p. 128.

119 It is not unusual to find hunting listed among the virtues of medieval heroes. The passion of hunting is linked to excellence. Hunting had an ennobling effect upon its practitioners. Hunting was repugnant to the clergy. John of Salisbury went as far as to say that the exhilaration of the hunt was likely to arouse the passions. The type of hunt regarded as the best sport and the noblest was the chase of the stag with horse and hounds.

120 Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 73.

121 Ibid.

122^T 317-318. Palomides' complaint is a mere summary of a long monologue in French. Most of the courtly atmosphere is lost in Malory. In French, Palomides never blames Isode for his many frustrations, but attributes them to the cruelty of love, its trickery, and pride. Malory never thought for a moment that courtly love could be ennobling as I will attempt to demonstrate in the following pages.

123 Vinaver, Works, p. 1459, note 493:34 - 494-5.

124 Ibid., p. 1460.

125 This situation contradicts the very essence and existence of Tristram in the French story. Respecting the courtly code, Tristram could never have forgotten Isode. His betrothal to the second Isode could only have been motivated by a misunderstanding between him and his brother. Here, Tristram is victim of the secrecy he owes to his beloved Isode.

126 Scudder, Le Morte Darthur, p. 227.

127 Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 81.

128 In general, the French texts are more concerned about the story of how to achieve the Grail than about Lancelot's reputation. T⁴ 148a-149a.

129 Vinaver, Malory, p. 66.

130 Ibid., pp. 67-68.

131 See page 442 for a similar condemnation. T² 303. Malory follows the French text very closely.

132 The fact that sir Amante who fought in a "ryghteous quarell," is killed, shows that the code of chivalry could not prevent injustices perpetrated by treacherous knights of Mark's caliber.

133 In French, Tristan dies at the hands of Mark, but Iseult dies because Tristan strangles her in his final embrace.

134 The French text makes it clear that Gaheriet (Gareth in Malory) was not among the plotters. T² 332.

See also pp. 520, 521. Malory seems to exonerate Gareth from such dishonoring plotting, but it is less clear.

135 T¹ 298b. See also Vinaver, Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult dans l'oeuvre de Thomas Malory (Paris: Champion, 1925), pp. 45-48.

136 Throughout his first five tales, Malory has presented chivalry as an ideal in itself. With the "Tale of the Sankgreal," he begins to distinguish good chivalry and bad chivalry.

137 Charles Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," Malory's Originality (ed. R. M. Lumiansky, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 192; hereafter cited as "The Tale of the Sankgreal."

138 Katharine M. Rogers, The Troublesome Helpmate (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), pp. 58-59.

139 Margaret J. C. Reid, The Arthurian Legend (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1938), p. 132; hereafter cited as The Arthurian Legend.

140 Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 91.

141 Ibid., p. 129.

142 Tucker, "The Place of the Holy Grail," p. 392.

143 Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," pp. 83-84.

144^{Q1} 60-61. In French, since Lancelot was in a continual state of sin, whatever he did--in right or in wrong--was always reprehensible.

145^{Q1} 71. The French text stresses the fact that Lancelot cannot disengage himself from knighthood and feats of arms. The French author also adds that if Lancelot forsook "le pechie de la royne," (p. 71) he could accomplish "mainte chose ou vous ne pouvyes avenir par vostre péchié." Malory suppresses this passage.

146 Vinaver, Works, p. 1583.

This passage is typically Malory's own.

147^{Q1} 113 ff. Malory summarizes the effects of Perceval's temptation. The "exempla" taught by the French author are lost.

148^{Q1} 182.

149 Edmund Reiss, Sir Thomas Malory (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1966), pp. 121 ff.

150 The usual hermit conveniently turns up to tell Bors he was right in his choice.

151^{Q1} 193-194.

152^{Q1} 197. Malory has Galahad chase the seven knights he defeats, "And sir Galahad chased hem tylle they entird the castell." (648) A similar instance is found on page 645. The French author definitely states that Galahad refrains from chasing his defeated adversaries.

153 Galahad asks for actual death, (737) which is granted; he sends a last farewell to Perceval and Bors, and delivers a message to Lancelot, (Malory's invention) which bids Lancelot to "remembir of this worlde unstable." (739) After Galahad's death Perceval enters an hermitage, and remains there fourteen months. After "a full holy lyff . . . he passed oute of the worlde." (740)

154 Only Bors is left to return to Arthur's court.

155 Original with Malory (pp. 744-746).

156 Jean Frappier, La Mort le Roi Artu (Paris, Librairie E. Droz, 1936), pp. 55-70; hereafter cited as Mort Artu.

Malory makes an important addition to the episode of the Fair Maid of Astolat, in which he sets the pattern for true love.

157 In French, Arthur intervenes on behalf of Meliagant.

158 As far as the writer knows, the paragraph from which this quotation is taken must be credited to Malory's originality.

159 Wilfred L. Guerin, "The Tale of the Death of Arthur," Malory's Originality (ed. R. M. Lumiansky, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 263-264; hereafter cited as "The Tale of the Death of Arthur."

160 Ibid., p. 266.

161 Scudder, Le Morte Darthur, p. 188.

162" . . . whan kyng Arthure was on horsebak he loked on sir Launcelot; than the teerys braste oute of hys yen eyes , thynkyng of the grete curtesy that was in sir Launcelot more than in ony other man." (840)

For a close parallel, see Frappier, Mort Artu, p. 128., and Brock, Le Morte Arthur, ll. 2198-2205.

163" . . . wrytten but two owrys [hours] and an halff afore my dethe." (864)

164 Brock, Le Morte Arthur, ll. 3638-3692. Malory follows those verses very closely.

NOTES

CHAPTER III

¹Gustave Cohen, La Grande Clarté du Moyen-âge (New York: Editions de la Maison Française, Inc., 1943), p. 106.

"L'amour est une grande découverte du Moyen-âge et en particulier du XIII^{ème} siècle français. Avant, cette époque il n'a point la même saveur d'éternité et de spiritualité."

Charles Seignobos, Histoire sincère de la nation française (Londres: Edition Penguin, 1944), p. 103-105.

C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 2; hereafter cited as Allegory.

Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1948), p. 558. He says that "the passion and sorrow of love were an emotional discovery of the French troubadours and their successors."

²Gaston Paris, "Amour Courtois," Romania, XII (1883), p. 519.

³Naso Publius Ovidius, Ars Amatoria et Remedia Amoris, trans. John Dryden, William Congreve, and Nahum Tate (London: J. Tonson, 1725), III, 27; Remedia Amoris, ll. 385-386.

⁴C. S. Lewis, Allegory, p. 4.

⁵Ovid, Ars Amatoria, III, 585-586.

⁶Ovid, II, 153-155; III, 585-586.

⁷Ovid, II, 387 ff.

⁸Ovid, I, 275.

⁹Naso Publius Ovidius, Heroides et Amores (London: William Heineman, 1925), I, ix, 1, p. 354.

¹⁰Ovid, Ars Amatoria, I, 629 ff.

¹¹Ibid., II, 233-250;
Amores, I, ix

¹²Ovid, Ars Amatoria, II, 192 ff.

¹³Ibid., II, 727-736.

¹⁴Ovid, Amores, I, vi, 5-6: ix, 8.

¹⁵Ovid, Ars Amatoria, II, 443 ff.; compare also III, 593-594.

¹⁶Lewis Freeman Mott, The System of Courtly Love (Boston: Athenaeum Press, 1896).

¹⁷Alfred Jeanroy, La Poésie Lyrique des Troubadours (Toulouse: Privat, 1934), I, 90-93.

¹⁸Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors dans la littérature du XIIe siècle (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1964), p. 12-13; hereafter cited as Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors.

¹⁹A. R. Nykl, Hispano-arabic poetry and its relation with the Old Provençal Troubadours (Baltimore: Furst, 1946).

A. J. Denomy, "An Inquiry into the Origins of Courtly Love," Mediaeval Studies, VI (1944), 175-200.

Father Denomy's investigation of the origin of Courtly Love provides a notable restatement of the chief problems based on a careful reading of the texts. His work on the Neo-Platonic background helps to free that background from obscuring entanglement within the cultivated maze of courtly poetry. The problem of Arabic influence, still complicated by absence of information, makes some advance to clarification at his hands.

²⁰H. A. R. Gibb, "Arabic Literature," Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th ed., 1938. Vol. II, p. 195.

The author maintains that the Arabic love literature is practically confined to erotic verse. This theory was disapproved by Robert Briffault in his Troubadours (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1965), when he said:

"No belief could be more uninformed than the notion, not infrequently entertained, that the Arabs knew nothing of love beyond its sensual aspect. Veneration of women and their idealization counted among the ancient tradition of the race, and dated from further back than Islam. In earliest times, poetical competitions were held in the tents of cultivated women, themselves poets, who were the judges in those contests." p. 25.

For further information, see C. P. Gaussin de Perceval, Essai sur l'histoire des Arabes avant l'islamisme, Vol. II, pp. 314 ff.; E. H. Quatremère, Mélanges d'histoire de philosophie orientale, p. 225; Anne and Wilfrid Blunt, The Seven Golden Odes of Pagan Arabia, p. 14; Saiyid Amir Ali, A Short History of the Saracens, p. 455.

²¹A. R. Nykl, A Book Containing the Risala Known as the Dove's Neck-Ring, About Love and Lovers, composed by Abu Muhammed Ali Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi (Paris, 1931), pp. lxxvii-ciii.

²²A. R. Nykl, op. cit., p. 7.

²³Ibid., p. 9.

²⁴Ibid., p. 13.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 12-13.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 71-72.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 20, 50.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 75, 78, 85.

²⁹Ibid., p. 128.

There is abundant evidence of the freedom which women, even married women, enjoyed in Andalousia at that period. See also pp. 398 ff.

³⁰Ibid., p. 89.

³¹Ibid., p. 6.

³²Ibid., p. 137.

³³Ibid., p. 141.

³⁴Ibid., p. 92.

³⁵W. Schrotter, Ovid und die Troubadours (Halle: Niemeyer, 1918), p. 48.

³⁶A. J. Denomy, The Heresy of Courtly Love (New York: The Declan X. Macmillan Company, Inc., 1947); hereafter cited as The Heresy.

Father Denomy finds a little in the poetry of the Arabs that is suitable to his purpose, but makes a good deal more of the philosophy, especially the Metaphysica and De Anima of Avicenna.

³⁷Emil L. Fackenheim, "A Treatise on Love by Ibn Sina," Mediaeval Studies, VII (1945), 209.

³⁸Fackenheim, op. cit., pp. 218-219.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 221-222.

The most important treatment of love in Arabic philosophy prior to

Ibn Sina is found in the Encyclopedia of the Brethren of Purity. There, the function of love is to lead men away from sensual and bodily pleasures, which belong to the animal soul, to the beauty of the spiritual world.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 218-222.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 221.

⁴²Ibid., p. 222.

⁴³Ibid.

Whoever is filled with this type of love is a man of nobility and refinement, and this type of love is an ornament and a source of inner wealth.

⁴⁴Maurice Valency, In Praise of Love (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 1.

See also C. S. Lewis, Allegory, pp. 3, 22.

⁴⁵Andreae Capellani regii Francorum De Amore libri tres, trans. John Jay Parry, The Art of Courtly Love (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 104; hereafter cited as The Art of Courtly Love.

Although no evidence to substantiate this claim has ever been found, it may well have been true, in view of the close relations between Troyes and Paris which existed at that time. King Philip Augustus (1180-1223) was half brother of Countess Marie, and the Queen Mother was a sister of her husband, Count Henry.

⁴⁶Frederick Copleston, S. J., A History of Philosophy (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1963), I, 15f., 29f., 158; II, 71.

A. J. Denomy, The Heresy, p. 43.

Etienne Gilson, "La doctrine de double vérité," Études de philosophie médiévale (Strasbourg, 1921), pp. 51-69.

The doctrine of the double truth was taught by Averroists who believed in the existence of two simultaneous and contradictory truths, one stemming from philosophy, the other, from theology. The very expression "double truth" is really the reductio ab absurdum made by theologians who were orthodox against philosophers who were not; it simply expresses the declaration of the factual divorce between Revelation and Reason.

⁴⁷Parry, The Art of Courtly Love.

Notes and pages given in the text refer to that edition.

⁴⁸Parry, op. cit., I, 1, p. 29.

⁴⁹Ibid., I, 6, p. 33.

⁵⁰In England, these classes might be stated as follows: the trade people, the gentry, and the nobility.

⁵¹Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, I, 7, p. 167.

⁵²In the lay "Equitan" verse 74, the lady says that the rich do not know how to love honestly.

⁵³Hugo de Sancto Victore, Canonicus Regularis Sancti Victoris Parisiensis, Opera Omnia: Patrologia Latina, ed. J. P. Migne, (Paris, 1879-1880), Vols. 175-177.

See especially Hugo's Summa Sententiarum, VII, 4, 15, in vol. 176 of Migne's edition.

Young men before they are fourteen years old and girls before they are twelve may not, according to laws, enter into marriage.

⁵⁴Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, I, 5.

⁵⁵Ibid., I, II, p. 149.

⁵⁶p. Zumthor, "Notes en marge du traité de l'amour de A. le Chapelain," ZRP, LXIII (1943), 184-185.

⁵⁷Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, pp. 55, 71-72, 95, 117, etc.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 116.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 40-41, 61-62, 71, 88, 114, etc.

⁶⁰Ibid., I, 4, 6, dialogues 1 and 2 in particular.

⁶¹Ibid., I, 1.

⁶²Ibid., I, 2.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 100-101.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 42-43.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 162-163, 166.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 122-123.

- ⁶⁷Ibid., p. 164.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., p. 167
- ⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 107-140.
- ⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 110-111.
- ⁷¹Ibid., p. 122.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 11.
- ⁷³Ibid., pp. 123-125.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., Fourth Dialogue.
- ⁷⁵Ibid., Fifth Dialogue.
- ⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 161-162.
- ⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 162-163.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., Chapter III.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 88-89.
- ⁸⁰Ibid.
- ⁸¹Ibid., pp. 187 ff.
- ⁸²Zumthor, op. cit., p. 181.
- ⁸³Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, pp. 201-212.

The content of De Reprobatione was apparently borrowed from anti-feministic literature.

- ⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 193-194.
- ⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 187-188.
- ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 187.
- ⁸⁷Ibid., p. 193.
- ⁸⁸Ibid., p. 197.
- ⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 202-203.

⁹⁰Francis Lee Utley, The Crooked Rib (Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1944), p. 135.

⁹¹For the Fathers and for the medieval authors, women constitute the lubricus sexus.

P. Delhaye, "Le dossier anti-matrimonial de L'Adversus Jovinianum et son influence sur quelques écrits latins du XIIe siècle," Mediaeval Studies, XIII (1951), 65, note 3.

T. Neff, La satire des femmes dans la poésie lyrique du moyen âge (Paris, 1900), pp. 12-14, 89-95, 42 ff.

⁹²A. J. Denomy, The Heresy, op. cit., p. 39.

⁹³A. J. Denomy, "The 'De Amore' of A. Capellanus and the condemnation of 1277," Medieval Studies, VIII (1946), 107-149.

⁹⁴Frederick Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1895), pp. 125 ff.

In general the name trouvère was applied to an inferior class of troubadours. The term was also applied to those troubadours who developed a new school of poetical composition, and transformed themselves at last completely from a race of courtly knights into a generation of literary men.

⁹⁵A. J. Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," Speculum, XXVIII (1953), 46; hereafter cited as "Courtly Love and Courtliness."

⁹⁶Gaston Paris, "Etudes sur les romans de la Table Ronde, Lancelot du Lac, II: La conte de la Charette," Romania, XII (1883), 519.

⁹⁷Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, p. 44.

⁹⁸Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," 63.

⁹⁹Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, p. 85.

¹⁰⁰Robert Briffault, The Troubadours, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1965), p. 125.

¹⁰¹Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, pp. 86 ff.

¹⁰²Etienne Gilson, The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard, trans. A. H. C. Downes (London: Sheed and Ward, 1940), p. 195.

¹⁰³Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, p. 148.

104 A. J. Denomy, " 'Fin'Amors': the pure love of the troubadours, its amorality and possible source," Mediaeval Studies, VII (1945), 184; hereafter cited as "Fin'Amors."

105 Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors, p. 233.

106 Ibid., p. 244.

107 Jean Frappier, Le Roman Breton, p. 7.

108 Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World, trans. Janet Sondheimer, (New York: 1926), pp. 157-196.

109 Henry II and Eleanor were crowned in Westminster Abbey on the Sunday before Christmas, 1154. A few weeks later, also in London, Eleanor gave birth to her second son, who was named Henry and designated Count of Anjou.

110 Rowbotham, The Troubadours, pp. 222-259.

111 Sidney Painter, French Chivalry (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), pp. 28-64.

112 Ibid.

113 P. Rickard, Britain in Medieval French Literature 1100-1500 (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1956), pp. 45-70.

114 Roger Sherman Loomis, Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 12-51, 157-191; hereafter cited as ALMA.

115 Rita Lejeune, "The Troubadours," Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. R. S. Loomis (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 393-399.

116 R. S. Loomis, The Development of Arthurian Romance (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963), pp. 92-111.

117 G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), pp. 235-247; hereafter cited as Medieval Panorama.

118 Raymond Lincoln Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry as shown in the French Literature of the late Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1937), Chapter I; hereafter cited as The Decline of Chivalry.

119 Arthur B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1960), p. ix; hereafter cited as The Indian Summer.

120 As a rule, the English versifier follows his original with fidelity from incident to incident, but in doing so he often speaks from his own

point of view.

Frequently the English versions are poorer, less refined, and not as logically structured. The English versions differ from their courtly French originals. They adopt a more popular tone, and stress the joys found in nature, in the green forests, and in hunting.

In general, the English muse, if less delicate and dainty than her French sister, is less artificial; if more passionate, is less lascivious. The romances stress the conception and ideals of chivalry, especially its military side, although after 1350 the spirit of chivalrous society experienced a change.

The production of the verse-romances may be divided into four periods:

1. The Transition Period (1100-1250). The literature of this period is pre-vaillingly ecclesiastical.
2. The Period from Lewes to Crécy (1250-1350). Norman poems are bodily transplanted into English. Courtly material, models, and tendencies predominated but adaptations are already evident: Arthur and Merlin (13th c.); Sir Tristram (c. 1290); Havelock the Dane (late 13th c.); Ywain and Gawain (c. 1300), etc.
3. Prelude to the Reformation and Renaissance (1350-1400). This period is characterized by a wide expression of national consciousness manifesting itself in a democratic movement in political and social spheres; and the replacement of French by English: some romances worth noting are: Arthur (1350-1400); Launfal (late 14th c.); Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (1350-1400); Morte Arthure (c. 1360); Sir Perceval (late 14th c.); etc.
4. The Fifteenth Century Period. The literary movement of this period is characterized by teaching and popularizing. Prose redactions of the French romances is marked. Some romances worth noting are: The Holy Grail (c. 1450); Merlin (1450); Lancelot of the Laik (late 15th c.); Le Morte Arthur (c. 1400); etc.

¹²¹ Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry, pp. 194-195.

¹²² E. S. Bennett, The Pastons and their England (Cambridge, 1932), chapters III and IV.

A series of letters and legal documents written by and to three generations (1440-1486) of the Paston family in Norfolk, England. They are a valuable source of information about English history, as well as the business and social customs of the upper middle class of the time.

¹²³ J. M. Berdan, Early Tudor Poetry, 1485-1547 (London, 1920), pp. 74-92.

124 Margaret Adlum Gist, Love and War in the Middle English Romances (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Dissertation, 1947), pp. 7-8; hereafter cited as Love and War.

125 C. S. Lewis, Allegory, p. 197.

126 J. J. Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, pp. 161-162.

127 Constance in Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Man of Law's Tale," Canterbury Tales, ed. F. N. Robinson, in The Complete Works, (New York, 1933), Fragment II (Group B), pp. 76-90.

Emare in "The Romance of Emare," Middle English Metrical Romance, pp. 422 ff. This work was written in the Fourteenth Century.

Margaret in Sir Tryamour, ed. James Orchard Halliwell, (London: Percy Society Series, No. 16).

Florence in "Octavian Emperor," ed. Henry Weber, Metrical Romances, (Edinburgh, 1810), 3 vols. III, 155 ff.

128 Despite the increasing fame of Le Morte Darthur, nothing was known of the man who wrote it until the end of the nineteenth century. At this time, George Lyman Kittredge--Who Was Sir Thomas Malory--searching for a Sir Thomas Malory who was alive in the ninth year of Edward IV's reign (March 4, 1469-March 3, 1470) found in Sir William Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire, (1656), a Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel in Warwickshire, who could be the author of the famous Arthurian romances. Subsequent discoveries, primarily in the Public Records Office in London by Edward Hicks--Sir Thomas Malory, His Turbulent Career--and Albert C. Baugh, "Documenting Sir Thomas Malory," Speculum, VIII (1933), 3-29, have brought to light information about the man who most likely wrote Le Morte Darthur.

See also Williams Matthews, The Ill-Famed Knight: a skeptical inquiry into the identity of Sir Thomas Malory (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966); hereafter cited as The Ill-Framed Knight.

Matthews' thesis is that the author of Le Morte Darthur is not Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel in Warwickshire, first identified by Kittredge and generally accepted since, but Mal oret (ill-framed or ill-set) the son of Sir William Malory of Hutton and Strudley in Yorkshire.

129 D. S. Brewer, "The hoole book," Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 44.

130 At least twelve complete or nearly complete manuscripts have been preserved.

- 131 Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, p. 22.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Ferguson, The Indian Summer, p. 49.
- 134 Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 21.
- 135 Etienne Gilson, The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard, p. 195.
- 136 But nowadayes men cannat love sevennyght but they muste have all their desyres. That love may nat endure by reson, for where they bethe sone accorded and hasty, heete sone keelyth. And ryght so faryth the love nowadayes, sone hote sone colde. Thys ys no stabylte. But the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love, trouthe and faythefulness. And so in lyke wyse was used such love in kynge Arthurs dayes. (791)
- 137 P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 81.
- 138 Moorman, The Book of Kynge Arthur, p. 35.
- 139 William Caxton, The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalrye, (ed. Alfred T. P. Byles, EETS, London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 38.
- 140 P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 97.
- 141 This passage is Malory's own invention.
- 142 That Lancelot should regret having pledged his faith to Guinevere must have seemed to Malory a perversion of the true meaning of the story, and in the attempt to avoid this implication, he puts in Lancelot's mouth a series of somewhat incongruous remarks. Lancelot says in effect that he regrets having wished to be buried in Joyous Garde, that he "broke his vows," and that he therefore wishes to be buried in Joyous Garde. (W 1644).
- 143 P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," p. 102.
- 144 R. H. Wilson, Characterization, pp. 51-52.
- 145 This trait is part of Tristram's traditional character. Malory was very much conscious of and interested in this phase of Tristram's nature.
- 146 The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, ed. Eugène Vinaver, (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1947), p. 1477.
- 147 Wilson, Characterization, p. 105.

148 Another instance is the long conversation (MA 219-230) in which Gawayne and Arthur discuss Aggravayne's charge (which in Malory has been suppressed) against Lancelot and Guinevere. Arthur declares, "Si tous li mondes le me disoit et iou ne men apercevoie miex que iou ne men sui apercus, si nel querroie iou pas." In Malory the account of Gawayne's telling Arthur about Elayne is very brief.

In VM, MT, L, MA, and MH, Gawayne is a good knight and Arthur's right-hand man.

The Queste makes it emphatic that Gawayne is a sinful, worldly knight, to whom it happens as a punishment that he kills many of his fellows during the search for the Sankgreal.

In Tristan he appears as a thorough villain who, with his brothers, treacherously murders Pellidor's son Lamorak.

Malory's version retains and intensifies Gawayne's noble as well as his revengeful side, especially for family affronts.

149 Vinaver, Works, pp. 1348 ff.

150 "never dyspleased man nother chylde, but allwayes he was meke and mylde." (214)

"he ys jantyll, curteyse and ryght bounteous, meke, and mylde . . . faythfull and trew." (777)

151 The repetition of the phrase "meke and mylde," constitutes a very strong evidence that it is Malory's invention.

152 Wilfrid E. Guerin, "The Tale of Gareth," p. 109.

153 Moorman, The Book of Kynge Arthur, p. 19.

154 Malory is so preoccupied with the idea of honor and worship that he has Lyonet repeat the exact words a page later. (249)

In the same story, the evils of courtly etiquette are shown by the Red Knight when he says that "all the shamefull customs that I used I ded hit at the requeste of a lady that I loved." (251)

Another anti-courtly convention is demonstrated when Lyones asks Gareth for advice instead of giving it to him. "Now avyse me what I shall sey; and in what maner I shall rule me." (254) I wonder if Malory is not being ironic here!

In the "Conclusion" of the tale of "Tristram de Lyones," La Beale Isode says, "Sir, and hyt please you, I woll nat be there, for thorow me ye bene

marked of many good knyghted, and that causyth you for to have muche more laboure for my sake than nedyth you to have." (618)

This is indeed a surprising thought for a courtly lady. Instead of encouraging her knight to perform feats of prowess on her behalf, she seems to object to any excess of labor for her sake; she is clearly more concerned about Tristram's safety than about his fighting record. Dinadan would certainly have approved of Isode's conduct.

¹⁵⁵Even courtly love, which gave greater freedom to the expression of love and sex than any other contemporary standard or authority, censured the incestuous relationship. Andreas Capellanus says that "we are always bound to oppose any of those incestuous and damnable actions which we know even human laws punish by very heavy penalties." See J. J. Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, p. 170.

¹⁵⁶Dominica M. Legge, (ed.) Le Roman de Balain (Manchester: University Press, 1942), pp. 28-29.

¹⁵⁷Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, p. 185.

¹⁵⁸F. Whitehead, "On Certain Episodes in the Fourth Book of Malory's Morte Darthur," Medium Aevum, II (1933), 206.

¹⁵⁹Alliterative The Morte Arthure, ed. Edmund Brock (London, 1871), 11. 949-1161.

¹⁶⁰See Chapter III, p. 186.

¹⁶¹L II 281d. Only one queen and two enchantresses.

¹⁶²In French, Lancelot refrains from mentioning directly the name of his lady.

¹⁶³T³ 381a. Same as in the French, but Alexander's reply is more in keeping with the refined language of courtly love.

See also Pr 182a.

¹⁶⁴See also p. 729 for further developments.

¹⁶⁵On the quest the knights are told to "ete no fleysse as longe as ye be in the queste of Sankgreall, nother ye shall drynke no wyne." (673)

- ¹⁶⁶a) fiend: beautiful woman--woman who caused the fall of man;
 b) tent: world in which man lives and is corrupted;
 c) sun: true light of faith--hence the lady's desire to prevent Perceval from sitting in the sunshine.

167"he was never gretly correpte in fleysshly lustes but in one tyme that he begat Elyan le Blanche." (687)

168See Perceval's vision of the two ladies. (665 ff.)

169As it is later revealed, the white bird is pure only on the surface and is really gross and black within; but the black bird, like the Church, says he is black though Christ is fair. (697)

170This probably means: "you will refuse to do this [not for fear of God but] so that you may be thought chaste." See Q¹ 179.

171Q¹ 181.

172In this passage the French author takes great care to explain that the lady violated the rules of polite behavior. Malory is not preoccupied with the courtly love etiquette but the morality of the incident.

173Galahad kills knights who "were nat crystynde," therefore the action incurred no guilt upon him.

174Q¹ 558c.

175Vinaver, Malory, p. 79. See also E. K. Chambers, Sir Thomas Malory, English Association Pamphlet, No. 51 (Oxford, 1922), p. 9.

176Guinevere offers a dinner to make Lancelot jealous, but it is her own jealousy which is pricked sorely. Besides, how could Lancelot know that Guinevere was flirting with other knights!

177There is no counterpart of Bors's rebuke to Guinevere in the French sources. This sort of conduct on the part of a good knight would have been considered unacceptable. Guinevere's kneeling before Bors also goes against the etiquette of the code of courtly love.

178This particular episode is not found in Mort Artu, but a passage in MT 11. 1443-1458 shows that it occurred in Malory's sources.

179Lancelot's reason for defending the Queen is not found in Mort Artu, but the incident can be traced back to the first part of the Lancelot proper.

180See the Pelleas-Ettarde-Gawayne episode, p. 195.

181See ma pp. 20-21

182Malory dislikes the notion of "love paramour" probably because it implies mere pleasure-taking.

183 See pp. 771, 773, 776, 781. Here jealousy is provoked by disloyalty in love. According to Andreas Capellanus' code jealousy should increase love.

184 In the French, Meliagant's sister is in love with Lancelot.

185 On one occasion Mellyagaunce defeats the queen's knights and is about to slay them when Guinevere pleads for their lives and consents to do whatever he will order provided her knights remain with her, "For I woll rather sle myselff than I woll go wyth the, onles that thes noble knyghtes may be in my presence." (793-794) Chivalry wins over courtly love.

186 In the French it is Kay who is accused. See The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian romances, ed. H. O. Sommer (Washington, 1909-1913), vol. IV (1911), p. 210; hereafter cited as L.

187 In the Prose version it is Guinevere who protests against the accusation and calls upon Lancelot to defend her. L IV 210-211.

188 In the French it is Meliagant's sister who delivers him.

189 In this encounter with the lady, Malory alters the sources to make Lancelot look more noble than he really is.

190 Lancelot weeps probably out of joy, but this miracle shows to Lancelot how much more he would have accomplished were it not for his adulterous love of Guinevere.

191 MT leaves no doubt: "To bede he gothe with the quene." L IV 92 says: "se coucha avec la roine."

192 In Malory's sources, Lancelot takes no precautions at all.

193 In MT 11. 1920-1925 the barons sentence Guinevere to death; also in MA 96.

194 Guinevere is not even referred to as a cause of Arthur's grief. Chivalry and fellowship of men occupy a more important place in Arthur's scale of values. It seems even more important than marriage, at this point, "I am sorryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre quene." (833)

195 Lancelot calls his accusers "lyars" but forgets that he himself is one.

196 Lancelot is simply trying to prove to Arthur that the time factor-- not the motive-- is important. How could he possibly have the time to "rejoyse" the queen even if he had wanted to?

197 See Cambridge MS., f. 229a.

198 Legge, Le Roman de Balain, p. 20. The French version says that Balain has killed two hearts in one, and two bodies in one. Malory's rendering is more subtle, for it implies the injury Balin has done to the lady's heart must now cause her to die with her lover.

199 In the French, the lady kills herself before Balain has time to take the sword out of her hands.

200 In the French, the death of the lady and the Dolorous Stroke have no connection. Malory punishes Balin in an extraordinary fashion for the death of a true lover; whereas the French author punishes him apparently for having committed a sacrilege, first, in penetrating the Grail chamber; second, for having touched the sacred lance.

201 MS. B.N. fr. 112, f. 22c.

202 Ibid., f. 23ab. In the French, the lady chooses the dwarf because the knight had been false to her. Malory gives no reason, but it is to be assumed he had the French story in mind. Moreover, the fact that he adds "syngyng" to the text accentuates the simplicity and naturalness of the incident. Love should always be unsophisticated.

203 In the French, Pelleas submits to Arcade's whims not only to have a glimpse of her but because he is anxious to obey the courtly conventions which require a knight to carry out the commands of his lady no matter how irrational they may seem. To Malory, these courtly conventions seemed ridiculous, and consequently, he altered his story to throw into relief other values more in keeping with his own code of chivalry or his own system of secular ethics.

204 See Chapter II, pp. 40-41; III, p. 142.

205 In the French, Arcade has some reasons to be proud and to scorn her lover because Pelleas was of low birth. By making Pelleas "lord of many isles," (122) Malory removes the motive for Ettarde's pride and scorn, and that accounts for the justice done at the end of the episode. Besides, Malory never accepted the code of courtly love.

206 See p. 872.

207 See Chapter III, pp. 106, 135 ff., and Chapter II, pp. 48 ff.

208 Sir Kahydyn also dies for the pure love (370) of Isode: ". . . at the first tyme that ever sir Kayhidins saw la Beall Isode he was so enamored upon hir that for very pure love [My italics] he myght never withdraw hit. And at the laste . . . sir Keyhydins dyed for the love of Isode." (366, 578). Kayhydyn is the son of King Howell of Brittany, (330) and brother to Isode le Blanche Maynes. (332)

209^{See the Gareth-Lyones betrothal, p. 270.}

210^{There is no trace of this passage in the French text. Malory makes very clear that Lady Maledysaunte's rebukes are made out of love and not out of jealousy. Besides, she tries to prevent him from risking his life. See Vinaver, Works, pp. 1485-1488.}

211^{T³} 381a. Also, Pr 182a.

212^{T³} 382b-383b.

213^{Ibid.}

214^{Afraid that Tristram "myght be sone destroyed" if he continued to hunt without being armed, Isode gently recommends that he be more cautious. Tristram, in true loving fashion, assures Isode: "My fayre lady and my love, mercy! I woll no more do so." (507)}

On the occasion of the "Tournament at Lonzep," Isode worries and weeps because she cannot find Tristram who has just been unhorsed. (545) Later "whan la Beall Isode aspyed [became aware] sir Trystram agayne upon his horse bak she was passynge glad, and than she lowghe [laughed] and made good chere." (545) Her simplicity is a sure sign of true and sincere love.

Malory adds a final passage which shows how much importance he attached to the true love between Tristram and Isode, "And ever betwene sir Trystram resorted unto Joyus Garde whereas La Beall Isode was, that lovid hym ever." (581)

Finally we learn (812) that Isode dies of sorrow upon the cross of Tristram's sword. In the French she is strangled by Tristan in a last embrace with him. Malory seems to have made her death more humane. Devotion, and not only sensual love, is emphasized in Malory's re-interpretation.

215^{See also pp. 327, 462. When asked by Tristram if he is not a lover, Dinadan exclaims: "Mary, fye on that crauffte!" (511) Later he adds, "God deffende me . . . for the joy of love is to shorte, and the sorow thereof and what cometh thereof is duras [affliction] over longe." (516)}

216^{Vinaver, Malory, pp. 66-67.}

217^{T³} 510b. See also MS. 5474, f. 145d.

218^{In T³ 518a Elayne does not look upon Guinevere as the real obstacle to her happiness with Lancelot.}

219^{On a few occasions Elayne manifests her deep affection and true love for Lancelot. Finding him in her garden one day "she fell in remembraunce of hym . . . And therewithal she fell on wepyng so hartely that she sanke evyn}

to the erthe," for Lancelot was "distracke out of hys wytte." (609) But thanks to Elayne's attention and "by vertu of that holy vessell sir Launcelot was heled and recoveres." (610) Elayne lives only for Lancelot, "I woll lyve and dye wyth you, only for youre sake, and yf my lyff myght nat avayle my dethe myght avayle you, wyte you well I wolde dye for youre sake . . . doute ye nat but I woll be wyth you, wyth all the servyse that I may do." With these words, Elayne, the daughter of King Pelles, joins the phalange of the martyrs of love. We never hear about her after.

220 In the Morte Artu, Elayne makes her request to Lancelot in the name of Guinevere, thus forcing him to grant her demand.

221 Elayne's love has a greater merit because she did not even know Lancelot's name at first.

222 A similar passage is found on p. 774, ". . . and ever thys maydyn Elayne ded ever hir dyligence and labour both nyght and daye unto sir Lancelot, that there was never chylde nother wyff more mekar tyll fadir and husbande than was thys Fayre Maydyn of Astolat." (774)

Elayne's devotion, both maternal and marital, is stressed here. This maternal and wifely instinct is again manifested in a later passage when she finds wounded Lancelot: "And than she kyssed hym and ded what she myght to awake hym," so that Lancelot might not die. (775) Soon a hermit "staunched hys bledyng."

223 Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, pp. 106-107.

224 The ideal of married love is first stressed by Igrayne's acceptance of Uther, once his love is brought within the bounds of convention. No glorified abstraction of an ideal of adulterous love is anywhere apparent.

225 Merlin's phrase "nat holsom" directly implies moral judgment on the adultery that will result in family tragedy.

226 In the French text the Round Table is given as a gift from Lodegraunce. Malory makes it Guinevere's dowry, thereby stressing the allegiance Lancelot will owe to Guinevere later on in the story. See HM 151a.

227 HM 152b. French Arthur expresses no feeling toward Guinevere. Apparently his only desire and joy are to possess the Round Table and its 150 knights. Malory, on the other hand, puts the accent on the heartfelt welcome addressed to Guinevere. Marriage seems to be uppermost in Arthur's mind.

228 HM 153b. Malory deletes the romantic celebration which follows the wedding, probably to keep our mind on the marriage ceremony itself rather than on the following feast which takes place in a marvellous site.

229 MS. B.N. fr. 112, f. 27b.

230^A A very characteristic digression on Malory's part. Malory was very fond of this knight-lover and could not resist the temptation to stress the happiness of the happy married couple. Sourceless.

231^{T1} 27a-91a.

232^E Especially when an enchantress who "by no meane . . . cowde gete his love," put an enchantment upon him and took him prisoner in her castle. (276) In this simple incident, Malory also contrasts true with false love.

233^M Malory was never at ease with such material, and would probably have omitted it entirely had it not been for the excellent opportunity he was given to build up the conflict between the king and his nephew.

234^I In the context of courtly romance such a disparaging remark would have made little sense. We must therefore assume that it is Malory's invention. (T1 91a-95b) Later in the story, Segwarydes meets Tristram and blames him because he "departed the love betwene me and my wyff." But he later adds: "I woll never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady." (333) For Segwarydes, chivalric friendship is more important than marital devotion. The reverse is true with Tristram.

235^A According to the code, the husband should have championed his wife. Tristram is not blamed for his previous adultery with Segwarydes' wife, (296) but for failing to combat for her.

236^{As} As in the sources.

237^T This is not in the sources. The courtly love code would never have allowed Tristram to forget his first love. See T¹ 76a-80b.

238^T This is added by Malory, probably to tell us that a marriage between Tristram and Isode le Blaunche Maynes would have been preferable to the adulterous life of his hero with the first Isode. But then the whole sequence of events would have been disrupted and the suspense created by such an episode lost. Malory evidently accepted the story as he found it, but provided slight but meaningful variations to let the reader feel how reluctant he was in having to go along with a story whose morality he did not wholly accept. Early in the Book devoted to Mark, (428-472) Lamorak criticizes Mark for having married Isode: "Hit is pite that ony suche false kynge cowarde . . . should be macched with suche a fayre lady . . . for all the worlde . . . spekyth shame [of him]." (431)

Palomides also discusses with Dinadan the mismatch of Mark and Isode while hidden Mark listens to the disheartened knights: ". . . alas! so beawteuous a lady and pereles of all othir sholde be matched with the moste vylounce knyght of the worlds!" (441)

Malory criticizes marriages of convenience which did not take emotions and true love into serious consideration. His careful handling of the situation shows how he encouraged marriages which were the fulfillment of true love.

239 Sir Brewne Le Noyre kept the name of "The Cote Male Tayle" given him by Lamorak. (341) Damesell Maledysaunte's name was changed into that of "Lady Byeaeue Vyvante." (356)

240^{T³} 384. The conclusion is Malory's own.

241 Her reasons were not pure, however, for she wanted Alexander for herself. (480)

242 See page 495.

243 The French text T³ 394c indicates that Corsabrine kills himself.

244 In the French, the bad smell is connected with the devil. Malory omits the episode in which the devil brings Corsabryne's soul into hell, but adds a moral conclusion.

245 Lancelot's ambivalence, or instability, is clearly demonstrated in the following dialogue with Elayne:

"Sir, I wolde have you to my husbande," seyde Elayne.

"Fayre damesell, I thanke you hartely," seyde sir Launcelot,
"but truly," seyde he, "I caste me never to be a
wedded man."

"Than, fayre knyght," seyde she, "woll ye be my paramour?"

"Jesu deffende me!" seyde sir Launcelot. "For than I
rewarded your fadir and your brothir full evyll for
their grete goodness." (777)

Readily involved with Guinevere in right or wrong, Lancelot articulates the above reasons (no matter what his true motives for not accepting a liaison with Elayne) in interesting social terms. He clearly sees the familial evil that must need arise; for her specific family of father and brother he seems to have more respect than for Arthur, father-king of the Round Table. Malory in his citation makes no explicit reference to Lancelot's love for Guinevere, yet the dialogue coupled with the May and love sermon (790-791) sets up a tense opposition within the story. At its heart is Lancelot: for he can choose chaste marriage to Malory's ideal woman Elayne or choose adulterous liaison with Guinevere.

246 Malory literally demands that "every man of worshyp florysh hys herte . . . first unto God, and nexte unto the joy of . . . the lady." (791) Lancelot slowly slips from the cut-and-dried precision of this counsel with

his accustomed instability as each successive fight for Guinevere becomes less honorable. Two adventures illustrate the decline: Lancelot certainly honored God first by rescuing the innocent Queen after the incident of the poisoned apple; (744-756) his next rescue of her, (818-851) however, was not so honorable as the lady was truly guilty of the adultery. By saving her, thus giving false evidence of her innocence in a society which believed in proof by religious ordeal, Lancelot did service to his lady and disservice to his God, thus inverting the order of Malory's counsels.

247 Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur (Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1965), pp. 13-63.

248 "to byghe [buy] all maner thynges that longed to the brydale." (860) In the stanzaic poem, Guinevere gives no excuse for her trip to London. MH 11. 2984-2987.

249 Mordred is convinced that Guinevere had to go to London, "And bycause of her fayre speche sir Mordred trusted her and gaff her leve." She then secluded herself in the London Tower "with all maner of vytayle [food], and well garnysshed hit with men, and so kept it." (860)

250 ". . . she stale away with fyve ladyes . . . and . . . went to Amysbury. And there she lete make herselff a nunn." (873)

251 Malory strongly believed in the pacifying effects and ennobling virtues of marriage, but his heroes choose a higher order of values.

252 HM 56c-99a. See also Cambridge MS., ff. 199a-246d. Very close rendering. However, Malory suppresses all references to the king by putting the emphasis on "ye [Lady of the Lake] wolde have myne hede, and therefore ye shall loose youres!"

253 See Chapter IV, B. p.172 for another aspect and a longer development of the Lanceor-Balin-Columbe episode.

254 HM 120a-123d.

255 This prophecy, which implies the later betrayal of Arthur by Morgan, is a foreshadowing of the "Arthur and Accolon" sub-division (98-112) in which Morgan's fullest role in the work is presented. The role which Morgan plays in "Arthur and Accolon" seems to be the key to her role throughout the work.

256 It is to be understood that the Dolorous Stroke is not in Malory the punishment for Balin's violation of the Grail sanctuary, but instead the result of his murder of the Lady of the Lake who came to Arthur's court to claim Balin's head.

257 Legge, Le Roman de Balain, pp. 88-89. "She that I loved, and she me, as I demed," (66) is Malory's rendering of a long monologue in French, in

which Garnysh tells Balin how he earned the love of the daughter of the duke of Harmel.

258^{Legge, Le Roman de Balain, pp. 91-92.} In the French the search for the daughter of Harmel is elaborate. Malory compresses the long passage into two lines.

259^{Ibid., p. 92.}

260^{Ibid., pp. 87-88.} In the French we have a complaint about Garnysh's "grand duel" which is followed by an act of vengeance for his lady's falsehood.

261^{HM 151a.} Those quests are the following:

- a) Gawayne must bring back the white hart;
- b) Torre must get the white dog and the knight that had taken it;
- c) Pellinore must find the lady and her abductor.

262^{HM 162c.}

263^{The only court of ladies rendering a judgment on the knights' behavior in the whole book.}

264^{HM 167b.} Malory makes an important addition here. Gawayne, he adds, "sholde never be ayenste lady ne jantillwoman but if he fyght for a lady and hys adversary fyghtith for another." (81) Malory shortens the French text but translates the full meaning of Gawayne's oath.

265^{HM 169a.}

266^{HM 171d-172a.} Here Malory makes the damsel's request more pitiful and more impelling. Malory would not change a situation in which whimsical love causes cruelty, for he did not believe in that kind of love. Moreover, Malory wants to show that the code of chivalry has been destroyed by the courtly love code.

267^{HM 178c-182c.}

268^{Dinadan could not have reasoned better.}

269^{The reasons given by Pellinore could never have been uttered by the author of the French text, for they are anti-courtly.}

270^{The last section of the "Torre and Pellinor" episode is Malory's own. Here, more than in any other tales, he clearly expresses his own conception of chivalry. See also Vinaver, Works, p. 1330.}

271^{HM 197b-220a.} Malory changes his sources. In the French, all the knights are willing to fight for Damas to escape starvation. The wrong

quarrel stems from the fact that Damas has wrongfully seized Oughtlake's land and holds his brother's manor at the point of his sword.

272^{HM} 211d. In the French the author gives no reason for Morgan's decision to kill Arthur.

273^{Arthur's} comments are not found in the French text.

274^{Is} Arthur already suspicious about Guinevere's liaison with Lancelot?

275^{HM}. 213d. Malory appears to involve innocent damsels in murderous plots. In French, Yvain overhears the conversation between Morgan and her damsel-servant.

276^{This} passage is not found in French. In French, the identity of the evil woman is found only after the knights describe her.

277^{MS}. B.M., fr. 112, f. 18b. In French, the ladies prove to be more courteous. They hurl abuses at Marhaus' shield but do not spit upon it.

278^{See} note 4 above.

279^{See} Chapter III, p. 195.

280^{She} requires Lancelot, through his knighthood, to get her hawk caught by the leg in a high tree. Weaponless Lancelot is surprised by Phelot who then challenges him.

281^{Lancelot} sees Pedyvere chasing his wife with a sword. The lady requests Lancelot, through his knighthood, to keep and save her. Pedyvere says his wife is in love with her cousin-german. Denying the accusation, she clings to Lancelot for her life. He separates the married couple but as soon as Lancelot turns his head, Pedyvere "suddenly . . . swapped of the ladyes hede." (207)

282^{Love} also causes the killing of the knight who disturbs Gareth's solace. Gareth "smote off his hede from the body." (248) Lyonet's enchantment and magic restore Gareth's unchivalric deed and dishonor by glueing the intruder's head back. Love causes cruelty. Malory shows that unless love is stabilized in marriage it can only cause regrettable and dishonorable actions.

The evils of courtly love are also stressed by the Red Knight, sir Ironside, when he says to Arthur that "all the shamefull customs that I used I ded hit at the requeste of a lady that I loved." (251) Arthur makes him a knight of the Round Table under the condition that he be "no man-murtherer." In other words, by submitting to the code of knighthood and not to that of courtly love.

283 See Chapter III, pp. 147-148; and III, p. 189.

284 Parry, The Art of Courtly Love, p. 185.

285^{T1} 60d. When it comes to cutting the lady's head, the French author tells us that Tristram is much more reluctant to comply with the wicked custom. Malory's Tristram accomplishes his gruesome work much more cold-bloodedly. As for French Brewnor, he dies of the wounds inflicted by Tristram.

286 Andret is Mark's spy.

287 This episode is Malory's own composition, and suggests that he did not fully understand the habits of knight-errantry which permitted such discussions and contests. Malory wants to make sure his reader gets the message. Love which resides only in exterior beauty is bound to spoil the friendship existing between the best knights. Only true love can draw them closer.

288 According to Andreas Capellanus, love is the source of all goods.

289 According to Andreas' code, a lady could be very demanding but was no traitor.

290^{T2} 240b. Malory's Palomides feels so much the pangs of love that in his rage he throws his sword into the fountain; and after "he ran into that fountayne and sought after hys swerde." (394) French Palomides is so mad that he forgets what he has done with the sword and looks for it everywhere.

291 The last paragraph of the section titled "The Maiden's Castle" is Malory's own composition. See Vinaver, Works, p. 1466.

292^{T2} 285b. Here Morgan sits Tristram on one side of her and her paramour on the other side. Then she amorously looks at Tristram in order to excite her paramour's jealousy. Her paramour, then, sword in hand, is almost ready to run upon Tristram but for shame he refrains from killing him. Morgan always wanted Tristram dead.

293 Probably because of her vexed love, Morgan " . . . ever as she myght she made warre on kynge Arthure, and all daungerous knyghtes she wytholdyth with her for to dystroy all thos knyghtes that kynge Arthure lovyth." (446)

294 The description of the infamous shield is as follows: "the fylde was gouldes with a kynge and a quene therein paynted, and a knyght stondynge aboven them with hys one foote standynge uppon the kynges hede and the othir uppon the quenys hede."

295 Lamorak never was a great lover, and Malory used him, as he did Dinadan, to parody the pangs of love. "O, thou fayre quene of Orkeney, kynge Lottys wyff and modir unto sir Gawayne and to sir Gaherys, and modir to many

other, [My italics] for thy love I am in grete paynys." (430)

296^{T3} 379d. The French text specifies that Malegrine killed ten knights for "l'oustrage que ceste damoiselle me fist."

297^{T3} 384b-397c. The French Corsabrine kills himself. Malory seems to emphasize that love-paramour provokes regrettable cruelties.

298^{T4} 154a. Little choice was given to Persydes. He had to become a paramour or be chained. Malory's rendering of the episode is more dramatic and leaves no room for the courtly discussion which is carried on in French.

299^{In} the French, Perceval makes no such comments.

300^{Q1} 181. As usual Malory is very direct and neglects the courtly language and etiquette of his characters.

301^{This} curious pledge of fidelity does not exist in the corresponding place in MA VI. However, the knighting of Lancelot can be found in L III 128; and Q¹ 136-137.

302^{Even} after Lancelot has publicly refused to become either the husband or paramour of Elayne, Guinevere still resents him "and wolde by no meanys speke with hym, but estraunged herself from hym." (778)

303^{Not} only does Guinevere try to prevent him from carrying out his plans, "Thou shamyst all knyghthode and thyselff and me," (793) but the ten noble knights rebuke him severely for "wyte thou well thou ar aboute to jouparté thy worshyp to dishonoure, and also ye caste to jouparté youre persones." (793)

304^{Vinaver}, Malory, p. 54.

305^{What} is often termed Malory's "prosaic realism," his middle-class set of values, is not something necessarily in conflict with any basic idea of romance but his expression of something already implicit in the works that were his sources.

306^{Vinaver}, Malory, pp. 45-46.

307^{For} instance, Malory's view of the businesslike attitude of some of the knights to their women is obscure. After Tristram decapitates sir Brewnor's wife, Brewnor says: "Now haste thou done me a grete dispyte. Now take thyne horse, and sytthyn that I am ladyles, [My italics] I woll wynne thy lady and I may." (314)

Sir Segwarydes bears no animosity against Tristram for cuckolding him, for "I woll never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady . . ." (333) Sir Dynas, whose paramour has run away to another knight, taking with her two of

his dogs, is "More wrother for his brachettis, more than for his lady." (409) Consider the similarity in tone of these examples to Arthur's " . . . Much more I am soryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre quene; for quenys I myght have inow, but such felyship of good knyghtes shall never be togydirs . . ." (833) Is Malory aware of the irony of such attitude in a society undermined by adultery?

308 Ibid., p. 46.

309 Malory appears first as an abbreviator, a translator, and adapter.

310 Compounded, to be sure, by Gawayne's vengeance; but Guinevere describes the situation accurately in Le Morte Darthur: "Thorow thys same man and me hath all thys warre be wrought, and the deth of the most nobelest knyghtes of the worlde; for thorow our love . . . ys my most noble lorde slayne." (876)

311 R. T. Davies, "Malory's 'vertuose love,' " Studies in Philology, LIII (1956), p. 459.

312 F. Whitehead, "Lancelot's Penance," Essays on Malory (ed. J. A. W. Bennett, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 104-113.

313 Lamorak's treatment is typical of how Malory's abundance of dialogue and sparseness of direct statement causes ambiguity in the prominent characters. Those who appear only once or twice present a greater challenge, for the reader can form no general estimate of their worth against which to judge them.

314 Vinaver, Malory, p. 46.

315 A damsel rebukes Lancelot for not thinking of getting married: " . . . one thyng sir knyght, methynkes ye lak, ye that ar a knyght wyveless, that ye woll nat love some mayden other jantylwoman." Lancelot bluntly replies: " . . . for to be a wedded man, I thynke hit nat, for than I muste couche [lie] with hir and leve armys and turnamentis, batellys and adventures. And as for to sey to take my pleasaunce with peramours, that I woll refuse: in prencipall for drede of God . . ." (194-195)

316 Vinaver, Malory, p. 47.

317 See Chapter III, pp. 142-143; 173-174; 187-188. Malory, who in general suppresses the supernatural interventions of enchanteresses, is more than willing to accept the magic of Nyneve in order to bring his tale to a happy ending.

318 This kind of love is responsible for much of the trouble in Arthur's realm; it is also to be instrumental in the destruction of the Round Table.

319 This kind of love has an ennobling effect and is a requisite in noble knights.

320 Name assumed by Tristram for fear of being recognized as the man who slew Marhalt. (133, 292, 293)

321 T¹ 27a-91a. See T¹ 42b in particular. See also Vinaver, Works, pp. 1443-1444.

Tristram received his wounds when he fought Marhalt "So sir Trystram was so wounded that unnethe [with difficulty] he myght recover, and lay at a nunrye half a yere." (133)

322 A cousin of Bleoberys and Blamor. (305)

323 It turns out that the second request is that king Angwyshe give "La Beale Isode, your daughter, nat for myself, but for myne uncle, kyng Marke, [that] shall have her to wyff, for so have I promysed hym." (311)

324 Lancelot had promised Guinevere the day of his knighting " . . . ever to be her knyght in ryght othir in wronge." (755) (My italics)

325 Lamorak and Dryaunte encounter a knight sent by Morgan to Arthur's court with a drinking horn from which only faithful wives can drink. Morgan sends this horn "because of the quene Gwenyvere and in the dispyte of sir Launcelot." (326) The horn, which Lamorak diverts to Mark's court, never reaches that of Arthur.

326 This passage is Malory's own addition. In the prose version of the Tristan, it is Lamorak who causes Morgan's horn of fidelity to be sent to Mark's court instead of Arthur's. Tristram's banishment is the result of Isode's infidelity and the cause of his subsequent marriage to Isode le Blaunche Maynes.

327 See also pp. 429-430, 474, 476, 502, 504.

328 Ferguson, The Indian Summer, p. 50.

329 What the true knight-errant really values is not so much the presence of his beloved, nor the joy of sharing every moment of his life with her, but the high privilege of fighting in her name.

330 In the early tales, (pp. 253, 258, 270-271) Lancelot exhibits the distinctive marks of the courtly lover. In altering his sources to indicate Lancelot's early conformity to the code of courtly love, Malory would seem to be forecasting the inevitable downfall of the Round Table. For no matter how highminded his intentions, Lancelot, like all the great lovers in history, has in all innocence embarked upon a path which can lead only to adultery and tragedy.

331Dubois, Sir Thomas Malory, pp. 27-28.

332Tristram's jealousy develops over the letters Isode sends to Keyhydyns.

333According to Malory, Tristram's first duty is to knighthood, and his fidelity to Isode only serves as an occasional illustration of his chivalric conduct. Malory considers Tristram's service of love as another form of his self-assertion as a champion of the High Order of Knighthood.

334It is hard to forgive Malory for omitting the classic tragic death of Tristram and Isode, which has been replaced by an ending deprived of all emotion, hastily written, and furtively slipped, as if in parentheses, without grandeur, into the text.

335To Bérout, Mark was almost a likeable character, and the love motif a tragic issue which no human power could solve.

336Mark was suspicious of Tristram's love for Isode, but could hardly blame him, for according to the code of courtly love, Tristram's love for Isode was fully justified because he was a true knight and Mark an enemy of knighthood. At first Mark seems to accept the code, but he later rejects it. Also, since in Malory Tristram rarely adverts to Isode as inspiration of his prowess, Mark has less reason to hate him for his casual love of Isode.

337He has already assured Lancelot when the latter voiced his fear that the brothers will kill Lamorak: "That shall I lette [prevent]." (460)

338She does not seem to have resisted Arthur unduly.

339The narrator, (832) some knights, (833) Arthur, (835) and Lancelot, (838) all agree that Lancelot killed Gareth and Gaherys "in the thyk prees [crowd] and knew them nat." (835) But Gawayne insists: "thou lyeest, recrayed knyght . . . thou slewyste hem in the despite of me." (838)

340Gist, Love and War, p. 91.

341See Chapter III, pp. 180-181.

342Tristram is not much of a lover, as far as Malory's version is concerned. Here he pays lip-service to the code of courtly chivalry though his actions either belie or ignore its principle.

343In this incident, (568-572) Epynogrys and Palomides complain to each about their love affairs. Palomides rescues Epynogrys' lady from Helyor and brings her back to him. They are finally married by Saphir, "Now fayre knyght and lady . . . hit were pité to departe you too, and therefore Jesu sende you joy ayther of othir." (572)

344-T³ 493.

345 This passage is original with Malory.

346 In MT 11. 1443-1458, Bors promises to champion the Queen, but Lancelot takes up Mador's challenge at once, thus preventing Bors from carrying out his promise.

347 Earlier in the story, Bors decries the hastiness of women, of Guinevere in particular: "And women in their hastynesse woll do oftyntymes that aftir hem sore repentith." This passage is Malory's own invention. Such condemnation could hardly come from a French author.

348 Only Bors knew where Lancelot was hiding, ". . . and no creature wüst [knew] where he was become but sir Bors."

349 Iisode of the White Hands has doubtless influenced the character of Elayne (The Fair Maid of Astolat). Both girls are beautiful ladies who love a hero but cannot win his love in return because he is already united by an adulterous passion to a queen.

350 See Vinaver, Works, p. 1589; and Frappier, Mort Artu, pp. 33-34, 54, 55.

351 Merlin's prophecy.

352 A particularly poignant example of inconsistency occurs in the dialogue between Lancelot and Guinevere immediately after their discovery by Aggravayne and Mordred. To Lancelot's injunctions as to what to do if he is slain, Guinevere replies, "Nay, sir Launcelot, nay! . . . But and ye be slayne I woll take my dethe as mekely as ever ded marter take hys dethe for Jesu Crystes sake." (822) And when she wishes to be captured so that Lancelot can escape, " 'That shall never be,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'God deffende me from such a shame! But, Jesu Cryste, be Thou my shyld and myne armour!' " (823)

353 Frappier, Mort Artu, p. 95. In the French and English sources Mordred is not connected with the discovery, nor are we told how Arthur learned the news. Moreover, when Lancelot challenges Mordred's accusations he equivocates in saying that "hydir I cam to the quene for no maner of male engyne [evil intention]." (824) If adultery is not "male engyne" and treason, then what is it? Malory lets Lancelot gradually fall from his high rank in the order of knighthood, thereby acknowledging but not approving his misdirected conduct.

354 Frappier, Mort Artu, pp. 100-102; MT 11. 1964-1965.

355 It is remarkable how little preoccupied Arthur is with what happens to Guinevere. He is more concerned for his good knights' loss than for the loss of his fair queen: "for quenys I myght have inow . . ." (833)

356 See Chapter II, pp. 11 ff.

357 Albert Pauphilet, Le legs du Moyen Age, (Melum: Librairie D'Argences, 1950), p. 150.

358 HM 114. Malory shifts the emphasis of Arthur's crime from murder to adultery. French Lot complains against the drowning of the children born on May Day. In Malory, Lot revolts against the incestuous relationship of Arthur with Morgawse.

359 The French text offers no reason for Morgan's decision to eliminate Arthur.

360 HM 197.

361 Sir Damas has wrongfully seized sir Oughtlake's land and holds his brother's manor at the point of his sword.

362 Promises Morgan to champion Oughtlake who has been deprived of his land and manor by Damas.

363 MS. B.N. fr. 112, f. 26c. See also Chapter II, pp. 37 ff. and III, pp. 194 ff.

364 See Chapter III, pp. 195-196.

365 In French, Lanceor is not Columbe's paramour, but only a friend, "un ami."

366 Perhaps Malory felt a certain kinship to the unhappy hero; without question he sharply emphasizes the character of Balin as a man bold, benevolent, hasty, but fated, like the Greek Orestes, to disaster. The words "dole," and "dolerous" recur throughout the story like the tolling of a bell.

367 Moorman, Unity, p. 79. Malory constantly opted for a realistic background instead of the fairytale settings of his sources.

368 In the French story the death of the lady has no bearing on the "Dolerous Stroke." The fact that Malory connects her with the fatal stroke shows his constant preoccupation with the evils of unreasonable and excessive demands on the part of women. Moreover, the stroke causes great damages to three realms, "For the dolerous stroke thou gaff unto kynge Pellam thes three countreyes are destroyed. And doute nat the vengeance woll fall on the at the last!" (65)

369 Lumiansky, Malory's originality, p. 94.

370 See Chapter III, pp. 202-203.

371 Tristram's wanderings in the woods, smashing of trees, (369) and weeping for six months, is not motivated enough in Malory's rendering. Two

reasons may account for this inconsistency: a) Malory's deliberate emphasis on the martial prowess of Tristram; b) the extensive cuts in the French text.

372^DDinadan kept his promise not to divulge Mark's name to Arthur. (434)

373^DDinadan's promise to fight a knight and his subsequent refusal to honor his word leads to confusion. Malory partly succeeded in trying to remove all suspicion of Dinadan's opposition to the rules of chivalry. Too many deletions have been made at the expense of plausibility. This should never have happened to realist Dinadan.

374^SSee Chapter II, pp. 57-58, and III, pp. 207-208.

375^WWhenever Malory reproduces his source, the traditional conception of Galahad's mission remains unaltered, as when Galahad's origin is likened to "the Sonne of the Hyghe Fadir that lyght within a maydyn and bought all the soules oute of thralle." (651)

376^Q1 529. "Than sir Galahad drew oute hys swerde and smote the lyffte arme off, that hit fell to the erthe; and than he fledde and sir Galahad sewed [pursued] faste after hym." (645) [My italics] Also, "And sir Galahad chased hem tylle they entird into the castell." (648) [My italics] The French author expressly states that Galahad does not run after his enemies.

377^TThis passage is very much reminiscent of the words spoken by Our Lord when he asked his disciples to leave everything and follow Him in order to have eternal life.

378^AAfter a joust which saw Gawayne lose to Lamorak, the following comment is made: "Than the kynge was gladd and so was all the felyshyp of the Round Table except sir Gawayne and his bretherne." (455)

379^TThere are two Gawaynes in the French tradition of the Thirteenth Century: one good; the other bad. The bad Gawayne belongs to the Prose Tristan. No wonder that in Malory Gawayne should be a very unsympathetic character. In the Book of Gareth, which precedes the Book of Tristram, Gawayne is shown as a most valorous and noble knight. The Queste presents a Gawayne who is humiliated; but he is humiliated precisely because he represents the Arthurian chivalry.

These are two distinct traditions. Malory does not try to make one character out of the two traditional Gawaynes, but treats him as he finds him in the sources. In the end Malory does not resolve the problem of the two Gawaynes. The Gawayne of the last Book is that of the Prose Lancelot, that is, a character essentially heroic who has a certain valor and magnanimity.

Theme of revenge: Gawayne has a positive character; revenge also has a positive character. Gawayne's natural disposition for vengeance is only

one aspect of his heroism. In reality, he turns himself against his best friend Lancelot only from the moment he discovers that Lancelot has killed his brother Gareth. Then the fatal conflict bursts. Martial chivalry struggles in that unsolvable dilemma: on the one hand, the courtly ideal; on the other hand, the feudal ideal, both of which are intimately related, and yet irreconcilable.

All this is very interesting, for in Malory's sources, Mort Artu, the defeat of Arthur and the destruction of the Round Table is explained in four different ways, which is very typical. In the Thirteenth Century and in the Middle Ages in general, it was not only possible, but necessary to double, and at times, to triple and quadruple the motivations of important events. For instance, when Rodrigue kills the Count of Gomez, we know the reason of his action: he kills him because honor dictates him to act thus. It would be absolutely absurd to lend him other motives as love, jealousy, envy, hatred, etc. All these subsidiary motives would destroy the work. In the Thirteenth Century it was necessary to multiply the motivations. The theme of the conflict of these two loyalties: loyalty vis-à-vis the lady and loyalty vis-a-vis chivalry, was one of the themes introduced to explain the collapse of the Arthurian realm. It was one of the themes, because there are others: the wheel of Fortune, the Queste of the Sankgreal, the story of the Excalibur, that of Morgan le Fay, etc. From all the complicated motivations, Malory chooses one theme. He mentions the other in passing, but concentrates all his attention on the conflict between Lancelot and Gawayne. This is very important. The story of Malory's sources permits us to understand what happens. Malory rids his sources of all the network of motives and keeps only one to which he attaches a capital importance. This motive is not prepared nor even announced in the previous romances. Some critics find that it is prepared by the very fact that in the Tale of Tristram Gawayne has a bad character: he is detested by everybody and detests everybody, besides being very hostile to Lancelot. But this characterization of Gawayne does not necessarily prepare the denouement of the last Book. In reality, to understand what happens in the Eighth Book one must forget the Gawayne in the Fifth Book. The reader must start from the fact that Gawayne loves Lancelot because if he hated Lancelot from the start, the story would make no sense at all. It makes sense only insofar as Lancelot and Gawayne are presented as the best friends in the world. Remember how Gawayne protects Lancelot each time the other knights try to denounce him, how he refuses to attack him, how he defends him before Arthur. Therefore, to really understand the history of the death of Arthur, one must forget what he has learned in reading the Book of Tristram of Lyones.

- 380
- a) the slaying of Gawayne's father, king Lot,
 - b) the knighting of Pellinor's illegitimate son before that of Gawayne,
 - c) the choice of Pellinor made by Arthur to fill out one of the vacant seats at the Round Table,
 - d) Lamorak's adulterous liaison with Morgawse, (455, 459); her killing by Gaherys, (459)
 - e) the slaying of Pellinor, (597-598)

- f) the mutual distrust of Gawayne and Lamorak, (499)
 g) the death of Lamorak reported three times. (511, 514, 520)

381"whan ye saw two knyghtes lede me away beatynge me, ye leffte me to succour a jantillwoman, and suffird me in perell of deth." (698) (My italics)

382"Sir Bors, kepe the fro me, for I shall do to the as I wolde do to a felon other a traytoure." (698)

383"Therefore sterte upon thy horse, and so shalt thou be moste at thyne avauntayge, but if thou wylt, I woll renne upon the thereas thou arte on foote, and do the shame shall be myne and the harme youres, but of that shame recke I nought." (698) (My italics)

384"And for that myssedede [injure] I ensure you now but dethe, for well have ye deserved hit." (698) (My italics)

385"for the fynde had brought hym in suche a wyll." (699) Also, "he ran upon hys brothir as a fyndely man." (701) (My italics) Lionel kills a priest and Collegrevaunce who want to prevent him from murdering his brother.

386^{Defeated by Gawayne, (854)} Lionel is killed in London while seeking Lancelot. (878)

387"And well wote ye that I am nat aferde of you gretely." (701)

388Malory modifies his sources to make Lancelot a more consistently noble character' throughout the series of tales, Lancelot exhibits boundless courage, good sportsmanship, friendliness, and magnanimity. His passion for Guinevere is ennobled by his constancy and patience.

389Mellyagaunce had just imprisoned Lancelot by springing a trap door. "Launcelot felle downe more than ten fadom into a cave full of strawe." (804)

390^{Q1} 111-112. In the French, Meliagant does not beg for mercy. Arthur intervenes on his behalf. In Malory, the recreant knight begs for mercy, thereby giving an opportunity to Lancelot to show his kindness and generosity.

391It is impossible to understand Malory's motive behind this situation. In MH 1. 1839, and Frappier, Mort Artu, pp. 92-93, Lancelot takes no such precaution. The door is wide open and all the knights are challenged at once.

392Sir Tristrem, ed. Sir Walter Scott, (Edinburgh, 1804), p. lxxx.

393The scope of this dissertation does not permit a discussion of the unity hypothesis. The most representative statements of the two extremes are Vinaver and Lumiansky. Eugène Vinaver's opinion has been modified little since his first statement in Vinaver, Works, although what may be termed a

clarification of his position is found in his essay "Art and Nature," Bennett, Essays, pp. 29-40. He maintains the separate-autonomous-works position. Tulane University has been the center of opposition to Vinaver's thesis. The contributors to Malory's Originality stand for the deliberately-conceived-whole position. An excellent statement for an intermediate stand is Brewer, " 'the hoolle book,' " in Bennett, Essays, pp. 41-63. This, in my opinion, is clearer and more cogent than his earlier "Form in the Morte Darthur," Medium Aevum, XXI (1952), 14-24. I agree substantially with Brewer's conception of the work.

394 This conciseness is relative if we count the 432 folios of the original edition; it is very meritorious if we consider the mass of his sources. It must not be thought, however, that the whole of Malory's artistry consists only in reducing and simplifying the French prose romances, for along with these works Malory used other sources, including native English verse romances that were constructed according to what might be termed a simple narrative.

395 For Malory knight-errantry was too much characterized by the vagueness or even the absence of a final purpose. When the French writers seem to have built up their stories in accordance with this lack of purpose and to disorganize their material in the same way as the knights-errant had disorganized their mode of living, Malory reduces the adventures of his knights to a minimum and simplifies most of the battles and quests while making them more purposeful.

396 Perhaps one of the most striking alterations with regard to Arthur is the suspension of the incident of Arthur's death from his English source, for the second tale, the alliterative Morte Arthure. This allows five tales to intervene in his recasting of Arthurian materials to form a narrative peculiarly his own. This alteration also shows Malory's apparent intention to make his plot more coherent.

397 Of the eight tales, all but the first and last open either in the court of Arthur or with a direct reference to him as king. But with the help of the explicit, all eight tales end with reference to Arthur at least within the last three paragraphs. The major links being established at Arthur's court, a pattern of story demarcation is set up which continues with relative consistency among the shorter plot lines. Considering the forty-three smaller divisions of the narrative, which of necessity include the opening and closing stories of the before-cited eight tales, seventeen refer to Arthur by name in the opening paragraph and five more within the first page of the story. It should be also noted that Arthur is the sole figure mentioned in the final explicit as printed by Caxton.

398 These references are more difficult to codify and to evaluate. But by far the greatest number of allusions linking Arthur with events in other books are to be found in "The Tale of King Arthur." They are of two kinds: a) prophetic allusions; b) common evocative allusions: Merlin's prophecies,

(12, 14, 35, 41, 42, 59, 71); others: (11, 30, 31, 46, 48, 91); allusive passages: (27, 44, 107, 113, 143, 339, 514, 629, 847).

399 Sea dragon parallel. (143) The sea carries for Malory a distinct sense of mystery. Many characters, when dead, are set afloat aimlessly in richly-bedecked ships: Hermance of the Red City (526-533); Perceval's "martyre" sister (721); Elayne, the unrequited lover (757-782). Lancelot's union with Arthur's own wife is also a parallel to Arthur's violation of Morgawse's marriage contract. The ménage à trois, Tristram-Isode-Mark also is a counterpart of the Lancelot-Guinevere-Arthur noble trio.

400 The oft-thought unwieldy narrative supports, comfortably, locative, temporal, and chronological patterns which have direct associations with Arthur and which also tie in the Christian-political structure of the entire story.

Arthur's character, though closely identified with his role as king, must be distinguished from it for a proper evaluation of his part in the fall of the Round Table. Lancelot, while becoming an extension of Arthur and an embodiment of his ideals, also represents an external element which was incompatible with Arthurian idealism. The interplay of the two figures of idealism and realism serves as another unifying element to the story.

Finally, Arthur is intimately connected with the thematic threads which interweave and then unravel the Round Table tapestry. His familial and political ties present conflicting loyalties which his society is unable to absorb. Such a condition was presaged by the advent of the Sankgreal which, being alien to Arthur's kingdom, has only a nominal liaison with him.

The connective elements within the book which relate to the figure of Arthur should not be considered irrespective of other forces with which he is not a primary unitive factor. While it is generally possible to find some Arthurian linkage with any aspect of the book, one can overreach the intentions of the author in such a matter. A point in question is the book of Tristram. Although it offers numerous parallels and contrasts to the court of Arthur, its associations are more on a literary than an objective or integrated plane.

401 Malory's main chivalric interest had been martial chivalry; courtly chivalry he generally found distasteful. But we must remember that the predominant ethical tone of Malory's work is not the bourgeois, still less the proletarian morality of our own day. Furthermore, it is not the Christian rule of life, but the aristocratic code of behavior which guides his characters. This gentleman's code of conduct does not forbid homicide provided it is done in clean battle; it does not demand chastity, though it highly honors lifelong fidelity to the paramour; though it admires mercy, it allows private war and the vendetta.

402 Tucker, Essays on Malory, p. 70.

403 Vinaver insists that Malory took little interest in the Sankgreal and saw no connection between it and the fall of the Round Table. Vinaver, Works, pp. 1521-1526.

404 Charles Williams, Arthurian Torso, containing the posthumous Fragment of the Figure of Arthur, ed. C. S. Lewis, (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 176.

405 The dialogue between Lancelot and Guinevere cannot be traced to the French sources.

406 Much of this episode (sections 10-12 of Book XIX, pp. 808-815) has no correspondent French source.

407 For a succinct treatment of Malory's sources, see Eugène Vinaver, "Sir Thomas Malory," Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. R. S. Loomis, (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 544-546.

408 Kay appears on the scene as the deceitful knight who falsely claims the kingship of England, but presently he is Arthur's trusted seneschal, performing great feats of arms in a tourney, only to turn in Book VII to be a churlish mocker.

409 In Book IV Gawayne is depicted as a treacherous bounder; in Book VII he is described as "vengeable" (270) and murderous (520, 651); but in the last Book Arthur mourns him as "the man in the world that I loved most," and sees him in a vision surrounded by ladies whom God had permitted to appear with him because he had done battle for their rights. See Note 379.

410 Before Book I comes to an end, Arthur has begotten two bastards and has attempted to destroy all the lords' sons born on May Day. At the beginning of Book V, Malory seems to have had two versions of Arthur's character before him, and to have chosen the nobler one. Gradually Arthur is transformed from a jealous to a just king. Except for Lancelot, Arthur's character is built up by the greatest number of changes devoted to any personage.

411 The inconsistencies of characterization are due to the different treatments of Malory's heroes in the various sources. That those inconsistencies were deliberately accepted by Malory is practically inconceivable.

412 The manner in which Malory handled the character of Lancelot is most amazing because in his case there can be found the greatest number of variants between Le Morte Darthur and its sources. Undoubtedly Malory knew the source conception of Lancelot quite well. The introductory passage at the beginning of Book VI (253) and Ector's lament at the end (882) could have been written only by Malory. Both are revealing character sketches of Lancelot emphasizing: a) surpassing prowess; b) loyal love for Guinevere. These two characteristics appear elsewhere:

a) Lancelot's surpassing prowess: 153-154, 290-291, 301-302, 308, 362-363, 394, 398, 425, 428-429, 552, 559-560, 580, 588, 616. Lancelot's feeling of affection rather than of jealousy for lesser knights: 391-392, 488-489, 580-581. Lancelot's magnanimity emphasized in Malory: 260, 398, 490-491, 492, 493, 543, 548, 552, 555, 558, 845. Lancelot's kindness to young knights: 214, 215, 216, 351-352. Lancelot's modesty: 582, 583, 633, 655-656, 813-815.

b) Lancelot's loyalty as lover: 141-142, 193-195, 755, 183-184, 192-193, 203-204, 744-745, 781-782, 801, 804-805, 821, 822-823, 824, 842, 844.

Lancelot's position as the chief of worldly knights is emphasized at the expense of his spiritual condemnation, and he is pitied because in spite of many merits he is unable to achieve the Sankgreal: 633, 678, 679, 685.

Lancelot's repentance: 879-880.

It is inconceivable that so many departures from the various sources could have been introduced in Le Morte Darthur, except by Malory's deliberate intention and design. Ector's lament over his brother again sets forth the character of Lancelot. If his repentance is not commented on, the rest of the qualities Malory emphasized in Lancelot are generously mentioned: valor, manliness, nobility, and love.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Gerard O. Couroux has been read and approved by members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date

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Signature of Adviser