

1969

A comparison of the middle English Ywain and Gawain with its old French source

Marcia R. Dugan
Lehigh University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://preserve.lehigh.edu/etd>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dugan, Marcia R., "A comparison of the middle English Ywain and Gawain with its old French source" (1969). *Theses and Dissertations*. 3719.

<https://preserve.lehigh.edu/etd/3719>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Lehigh Preserve. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Lehigh Preserve. For more information, please contact preserve@lehigh.edu.

A Comparison of the Middle English
Ywain and Gawain
with its Old French Source

by
Marcia R. Dugan

A THESIS
Presented to the Graduate Committee
of Lehigh University
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
English

This thesis is accepted and approved in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 15, 1969
(date)

Albert E. Hartung
Professor in charge

J. Burke Seves
Chairman of the Department

CONTENTS

Abstract 1
Introduction 2
I. 5
II 20
III. 64
Notes. 67
Bibliography 71
Vita 74

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the differences between the Middle English romance, Ywain and Gawain, and its Old French source, Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain. Changes made by the English author prove that he was not merely translating Chrétien's work, but also adapting it to his own purposes, and can thereby be considered a poet in his own right. There is a coherent pattern of changes, albeit not an absolute one, which marks a difference in total effect between the two poems. The changes which the English poet made in plot emphasis, in the social tone of the discourse, and especially in the characterization of the hero helped him in shaping Chrétien's elegant courtly romance into a story of action and adventure.

Introduction

Source studies can often become fascinating but futile chases into the past, with the medievalist losing his way in a Celtic wood of error. If able to respond to the questionings of scholars, many manuscripts could answer the query of "Dost thou know who made thee?" in much the same manner as did Topsy when she replied, "I spect I [just] grow'd." The answer for this particular study is fortunately a simple one. The Middle English romance, Ywain and Gawain, "grew" directly out of Chretien de Troyes' Yvain ou le Chevalier au lion, which is its Old French source.

The attempt here will be to examine the differences between the Middle English and Old French versions. Before looking at the changes which the English author made, I will first give a brief plot summary of the Old French romance, inserting significant differences which occur in the Middle English version.

As Friedman and Harrington point out, Ywain and Gawain (known hereafter as YG) is by no means a slavish translation, and "the redaction has been carried out with controlled skill, the modifications following a coherent pattern."² The purpose of this investigation is not merely to point out the differences, but also to examine the effect created by these differences. Robert W. Ackerman states that in

examining the work of the English poet (known hereafter as the E-poet), we should inquire whether the author was merely attempting a translation of a French work, or whether he was striking out with a free and independent adaptation of a traditional story.³ The hypothesis of this study is one which agrees with both Ackerman and the editors, Friedman and Harrington: that is, that the Middle English poet "possessed a literary mind of rare independence and made the tale he was translating his own."⁴ Even though its source is generally accepted as one of the best of all medieval romances, Yvain and Gawain has an excellence of its own.

There is definitely a marked difference in total effect between the two works; Chretien's elegant courtly romance becomes a rapid-paced story of love and gallant adventure. This is done chiefly by the emphasis placed on certain plot elements, a change in the social tone of the discourse (related in part to the different audiences), and the characterization, primarily in the conception of the character of the hero.⁵ P. Steinbach feels that all of the alterations are the result of conscious effort on the part of the E-poet to improve upon Chretien.⁶ Even if this were true, the result is not always a success. It is more likely that at least some deletions are due to lacunae in the copy of the French poem available to the E-poet or simply to a desire for brevity.⁷ A coherent pattern of changes does exist,

but it is by no means an absolute one.

I

Before attempting any analysis of sources or a comparison of the two romances, it would be helpful to outline the plot, keeping in mind that, for the most part, the matter of both YG and Yvain is the same. It is in manner that they differ. The plot summary which follows is that of the Old French romance. Any major differences which occur in the English version are noted in parentheses.

(E begins the romance with a prayer, a conventional invocation frequently found at both the beginning and end of English minstrel romances.) King Arthur is holding a Pentecostal feast at Carduel in Wales, and after the banquet when both he and Guinevere withdraw, the knights and ladies tell stories and speak of Love (E omits the Love digression). Outside the door of the King's chamber are a few of the knights including Yvain, Gauvain, Keu, and Calogrenant. Calogrenant begins to tell them the story of a disgrace he had suffered seven years before, when Guinevere, who overhears the tale, comes upon them so quietly that no one sees her until she is right in their midst. As Calogrenant politely jumps up, Keu initiates an exchange of insults. The Queen chides Keu and asks Calogrenant to continue his tale. He does so rather reluctantly.

Seven years before he had been riding through a forest, following a path thick with briars and thorns. As he emerged from this forest (the forest, Brocéliande, is not mentioned in E by name), he passed into open country and saw the wooden tower of a castle. At Calogrenant's approach, the master of the castle came forward and invited him to dismount and spend the night. The lord's daughter helped him to disarm and they spoke pleasantly until supper. After the supper, the lord admitted that it had been a long time since any knight in search of adventure had lodged there. He then begged Calogrenant to return from his adventure by way of the castle, and Calogrenant agreed.

After leaving the castle the next morning, Calogrenant had not gone far when he saw some wild bulls fighting among themselves and, sitting upon a stump, a hideous giant. When Calogrenant found out that the giant was actually a herdsman, he asked him where he could find some adventure to test his bravery. The ugly rustic replied that he knew nothing of adventure, but said that if Calogrenant would go to a certain nearby spring, he would not easily come back. The man described the spring and its surroundings, and instructed Calogrenant to take the basin which he would find hanging there and use it to pour water on the stone which lay beside the spring. If he did as directed, a terrible storm would arise.

Calogrenant arrived at the spring and followed the

herdsman's directions. The storm arose as predicted but did not continue long. As soon as the storm had completely passed, Calogrenant saw that the pine tree which shadowed the spring was covered with birds which sang so beautifully that he became lost in rapture. Suddenly, however, he heard a great noise as if ten knights were approaching, but he soon realized that the noise was caused by but a single knight. The knight battled with Calogrenant because of the damage the storm had caused to the knight's woods and town. The knight overthrew him, led away Calogrenant's horse, and left the defeated knight to make his way back on foot. Calogrenant then kept his promise to lodge with his generous host of the previous night and subsequently returned to the court.

After Calogrenant finishes his story, his cousin, Yvain, begs to be allowed to revenge his relative. Keu scoffs at Yvain's eagerness and is again chided by the Queen for his sharp-tongued comments. The King appears while they are talking, and has Guinevere repeat the story for him. He listens eagerly and then swears that he, too, will make the journey and see the marvels of the spring and the storm, vowing to reach the fountain by the eve of St. John and to spend the night there. Chagrined by this news, Yvain decides to slip off secretly and to avenge his cousin alone.

He follows Calogrenant's route through the forest and also lodges with the hospitable lord of the castle in the

clearing. The next day he meets the hideous giant and is directed by him to the spring. He pours the water and raises the storm, and shortly afterwards, the strange knight appears and engages in battle with Yvain. They fight for a long time, seemingly equally matched, but at last Yvain crushes the helmet of the knight and splits his head. The knight, feeling that he has received a mortal wound, flees toward the town, Yvain pursuing him closely. They both ride swiftly until they come to the palace gate. The knight rushes through the narrow entrance-way as does Yvain. But Yvain's horse steps upon the wooden spring which held the portcullis in place and the gate drops down, cutting the horse in half, but only grazing Yvain's back. Yvain finds himself trapped between the two gates, and while he sits shut up and discomfited, he hears the door of an adjoining room opening and a beautiful maiden appears. She reveals that the lord has died from his wound and that the people are ready to kill Yvain as soon as the funeral rites are over. However, she promises to help him since he alone of all the knights showed her kindness when she chanced to be at the King's court. The lady, whose name is Lunete, gives him a magic ring which will make him invisible, and then she brings him something to eat.

By this time the knights of the castle are looking for Yvain in order to avenge the death of their lord. They enter the room and beat about everywhere, but they fail to

find Yvain because of the ring's protection. In the midst of the search the mistress of the castle enters the chamber and is so mad with grief that she is on the verge of killing herself (E omits this mention of a possible suicide). As the funeral procession passes through the room, the corpse bleeds afresh, a phenomenon which meant that the murderer was still present. The people again beat about the room and this time Yvain is struck and beaten many times, but he remains still. They finally give up in weariness. (The passage of the procession through the room and the bleeding of the corpse are omitted in E).

When Lunete returns Yvain asks her whether he might look out at the procession in order to catch a glimpse of the lady. Yvain falls completely in love with her and is now truly a prisoner, this time of Love. He gazes out the window at the lady until she goes away. At Lunete's return she asks him how he has fared and he replies that he has spent a pleasant day. She immediately guesses his meaning (In E Yvain does not answer Lunet's question. He merely sits looking "pale and wan." Lunet guesses his love-sickness simply by looking at him). The next time Lunete is with her mistress, Laudine, she begins subtly to try to win over Laudine. Lunete points out that the fountain must be defended and that grief will not raise the dead. Laudine becomes angry with Lunete at this statement, becoming even more angry when Lunete states that the knight who conquered

her husband must surely be the better of the two. Laudine sends her away but soon repents of her anger, and by arguing with herself, decides that Lunete is right (E omits the inner argument. He says simply "sho sat in stody lang" l. 972). She consents to see Yvain and after having first asked permission of her liege-men and having got Yvain's promise that he will defend the spring, she consents to marry him.

By this time Arthur and his knights have reached the well and go through the usual procedure in causing the storm. This time, of course, Yvain, who is not recognized by the others, appears as the defender of the fountain. Keu requests the King to allow him to do battle first and his request is granted. Yvain overcomes Keu without harming him, simply taking his horse. He then reveals his own identity, tells the story of his adventure, and invites the King and all his knights to lodge with him and his lady. All are greatly pleased and a week's feasting follows. At the end of this time, Gauvain persuades Yvain to accompany him on a tour of the tournaments, insisting that Yvain risks losing his lady's love by growing soft and falling back on his reputation. Yvain consults Laudine and obtains her consent to go off after she first extracts a promise from him that he will return within a year's time or else forfeit her love. She then lends him a ring which will protect him from all harm if he remains a true lover.

Yvain is distressed to leave his lady and leaves his heart behind, but grows a new heart, one of hope (E omits this digression on lovers' hearts). Over a year slips by and Yvain suddenly realizes that he has broken his promise just as a damsel arrives as a messenger from Laudine, requesting the ring and saying that Yvain has lost his lady's love. Stunned by this news, Yvain cannot reply and feels a sorrow growing inside him. He leaves the court, hating himself and fearing that he will go mad if he remains. Once far away he does lose his mind, tearing his skin and clothing and running across the fields (E omits Chretien's specific descriptions. He says "An evyl toke him als he stode;/ For wa he wex al wilde and wode" ll. 1649-1650). He meets a lad who has a bow and arrows in his hands and takes the weapons, using them to kill the beasts of the wood for food. He lives in the forest like a savage and finally finds refuge with a hermit.

One day a lady and her two damsels find him asleep in the forest. One of the damsels recognizes Yvain and tells her mistress who he is, wishing he were in his right mind so that he could assist her mistress in her war against Count Alier. The lady returns to her castle to fetch an ointment which cures any malady of the brain and gives it to the damsel, telling her to rub Yvain's temples with it. The damsel returns to the sleeping Yvain with the ointment and some clothes for his nakedness. Yvain is restored to

sanity and rewards the lady by defeating her enemy, Count Alier. The lady (La Dame de Noroison) wishes to make him her lord, but he refuses and leaves her and her court.

After leaving the castle, Yvain proceeds through the woods and sees a serpent holding a lion and burning the lion's hindquarters with flames of fire. Yvain kills the snake and rescues the lion. From this time on, the grateful beast is his faithful companion and protector. Chance brings them to the fountain and Yvain almost goes mad a second time when he remembers his lost love. He swoons and cuts himself accidentally, and the lion, thinking his master is dead, tries to kill himself by hurling himself on Yvain's sword. Yvain recovers and while he sits lamenting, he hears a maiden's voice calling to him from the chapel nearby asking who it is she hears. He returns the question and subsequently discovers that the imprisoned maiden is Lunete. She has been charged with treason and will be burned or hanged unless she finds someone to champion her cause and fight her three accusers. Yvain and Lunete discover each other's identity and he promises to act as her champion at her trial the next day.

He and the lion depart to seek shelter for the night and journey until they come to a baron's castle where they are welcomed heartily and offered lodging. Yet the people combine their joy in honoring Yvain with sorrow in worrying over an event which is to take place the next day. Yvain

asks them the reason for their grief and they explain that an evil giant, Harpin, has killed two of the lord's six sons and threatens to kill the other four unless the lord either delivers his daughter to Harpin or finds someone to act as her champion. Yvain is greatly distressed and wonders why they haven't asked for help at King Arthur's court. The baron explains that he would have some assistance if he knew where to find Gauvain, for Gauvain, being his wife's brother, would surely not fail them. Yvain consents to fight the giant if he and the captive sons arrive by prime of the next day, explaining that he must be somewhere else by noon in order to fulfill a promise.

The following day the giant appears just as Yvain is about to leave and they engage in battle. The lion helps Yvain to kill Harpin, and Yvain then hurries away to his business with Lunete. Before he leaves, however, he asks Gauvain's kin to relate to Gauvain what has passed. When they ask his name, he replies that he wishes to be known as "The Knight with the Lion."

Before he reaches the chapel, Lunete has already been dragged out and bound to the pyre where she is to be burned. Yvain challenges her accusers and they accept the challenge, stipulating that the lion must not take part in the fight. In the course of the fight, however, the lion does aid his master and both the lion and Yvain defeat the false accusers who are burned at the pyre meant for Lunete's death. Without

being recognized by Laudine, he turns down her offer to remain until he and the lion are recovered from their wounds. He leaves, saying only that he wishes to be known by the name "The Knight with the Lion" (This statement is not in E). Lunete keeps him company for a part of his journey and then departs, vowing that she will keep a place for him in her mistress' heart whenever possible. Both he and the lion stay at an unnamed castle until they are cured.

At this point in the romance, a dispute arises between the two daughters of a great lord (li Sire de la Noire Espine) who has just died. The elder of the two wishes to possess all of the estates and will give nothing to her younger sister. The elder secures Gauvain as her champion and the younger is given forty days by King Arthur to find herself a champion. She begins her quest but falls ill and a second maiden takes up her quest for the Knight with the Lion and eventually finds Yvain, who promises to defend the younger sister. He agrees without knowing that the elder sister has already got Gauvain to be her champion. On the way back to the court, they reach the town of Pesme Avanture and enter the castle, having ignored the ominous warnings of the townspeople. Within, Yvain finds some three hundred maidens, poorly clothed and working on rich embroidery. They tell him that they are from the Isle of Damsels and that their King had been forced by two devil's sons to purchase his life in agreeing to send a yearly tribute of thirty

maidens. They can be freed only if a man agrees to fight with the devil's sons and defeats them. Many noble men have died in trying to rescue them. Yvain enters the castle garden and finds the lord and his family. They entertain him royally and then put him up for the night. The next morning Yvain desires to leave, but he finds he must observe the terrible practice which has been established in the castle; that is, that he must fight the two brothers. The lion is forcibly kept penned up by the brothers' demand, but he breaks out of his room and helps Yvain to kill one of the brothers and to overcome the other. Yvain refuses the nobleman's offer of marriage to his daughter and after first releasing the maidens, goes off with the disinherited sister to the place appointed for combat.

Neither Yvain nor Gauvain recognizes the other. They struggle, equally matched, until nightfall, when they reveal themselves to each other. Each insists upon ceding the victory to the other. King Arthur terminates the dispute and says that he will judge the quarrel fairly. He commands the elder to endow her younger sister with her rightful share and asks the younger sister to vow her fidelity as a vassal to her elder sister (E adds that this land was the first that was ever divided in England).

The lion rejoins his master and he and Yvain depart. Yvain decides to return to the fountain to cause such a disturbance of rain and wind that his lady will be forced

to make peace with him. When the terrible storm arises, Laudine asks Lunete for advice in defending the fountain and Lunete suggests that The Knight with the Lion would be a good man for the job. She first, however, cleverly extracts an oath from Laudine, whereby Laudine swears that she will do everything she can to help the knight recover his lady's love. She, of course, does not realize that she is the lady in question. Lunete goes to the spring to get Yvain and the lion and all three return to the town. Lunete reveals to Laudine Yvain's identity and Laudine sees that she is caught in a trap but must keep her word. They are reconciled and all turns out well (E adds the fact that they finally died, and ends the romance with a prayer).

* * *

For the purposes of this paper only a summary treatment of the various sources and analogues of the two romances is necessary. ⁸ Dissensions about the origins of the story split critics into two camps: those who find the sources for major episodes in Celtic myth, and those who believe that Chrétien elaborated different folk themes independently.

A. C. L. Brown, upholding the Celtic theory, contends that Yvain is a partly rationalized fairy-mistress story of the type preserved in the Irish sagas Serglige Conculaind and Tochmare Emer (The Wooing of Emer). Brown finds parallels to situations and characters in the Welsh Lady of the Fountain,

La Mule sans Frein (a French poem written ca. 1200 but evidently based on a folk-tale of a far more primitive time), Froissart's romance Meliador, and Kulhwch and Olwen, the oldest of the Arthurian tales contained in the Welsh manuscript called The Red Book of Hergest; and he adds this as corroborative evidence to support his theory that Yvain is derived from Celtic legend.⁹

Brown's views have been reinforced by R. S. Loomis. He derives the episode of Calogrenant and Yvain at the fountain from Irish legends having to do with Cu Roi's testing of the Ulster warriors and with the slaying of Cu Roi by Cuchulainn, and accepts Brown's provenance for Yvain's winning of Laudine, adding to Brown's evidence the association of Yvain and his father Urien with the fountain-fay Morgan. Loomis also believes that the story of Calogrenant's humiliation owes much to the Combat at the Ford theme, a Welsh tradition preserved in the mabinogi of Pwyll.¹⁰

In the other, non-Celtic, critical camp, W. Foerster derives the basic themes from a famous Märchen of a girl captured by a giant and later liberated by a young hero. He feels that Chretien grafted the theme of the storm-making spring on to this folk motif, a theme which Wace had treated in the Roman de Rou, and had drawn the theme of the easily consoled widow from the Roman de Thèbes.¹¹

Nitze finds this theory unacceptable and endeavors to explain the fountain story as derived from the myth of the

Arician Diana, whose armed priest guarded the grove and lake (not fountain) of the goddess in the Alban hills near Aricia until some intruder--usually a runaway slave--challenged the priest by breaking a sacred bough near the temple. If the challenger became the victor in the contest which ensued, he became the defender of the lake. There is no evidence, however, that this myth was ever localized in Brittany or that any native Gallic fountain-cult ever assumed this form. On this evidence, James Bruce finds Nitze's theory unacceptable and agrees with Foerster on the Marchen as a basis for the story.¹²

Sources for many other different episodes have also been pointed out. The first adventure in the wood of Brocéliande is, according to Foerster, clearly a Breton (Armorican) legend which Chrétien used in order to bring together the hero and heroine. F. Lot gives an account of an Irish legend which, while as a whole absolutely different from Yvain, presents some striking analogies with the story of the marvellous fountain in Chrétien.

G. Paris sees in the central incidents an altered form of the theme that we find in the French Guingamor and Oger le danois and the German Tannhäuser. According to Paris, Laudine was originally a *fée*, and the legend of the fountain whose waters when agitated caused a storm did not belong to the primitive story but was added to explain the name of "lady of the fountain" which had become incom-

prehensible. Laudine as easily consoled widow is seen by Foerster as a direct imitation of the Widow of Ephesus. In the Welsh version of the romance, Rhÿs finds points of similarity to the last part of the Peredur legend. The death of the Avanc of the Lake (= the Black Knight of the Fountain) at Peredur's hands Rhÿs explains as the development of a Welsh myth on the victory of the sun over night. Yvain's madness may have been suggested to Chrétien by the madness of Tristan and his life in the woods.¹³

Whether or not Chrétien actually constructed Yvain from this multitude of suggested sources is not known. In any case, an extended study of these sources is not a relevant consideration here, since the E poet was not fabricating a tale out of diverse sources, but rather translating from (and modifying) one source only, namely, Chrétien's Yvain.

II

In examining the two poems, I would like to begin by asking the question of whether the author of YG was merely attempting a translation of Chrétien's work, or whether he was striking out with a free and independent adaptation of a traditional story. Robert Ackerman opts for the latter statement and states that the excellence of YG is due, not simply to the fact that it is a redaction of one of the best of all medieval romances, but that "the composer possessed a literary mind of rare independence and made the tale he was translating his own."¹⁴ In agreeing with Ackerman, I hope to show in the course of this investigation that the E poet is by no means a slavish translator. He

. . . does not hesitate to trim, eliminate correct, or add when it suits his purpose. . . . As a result, the 6, 818 lines of Chrétien's poem are reduced to 4,032 lines in the English version The poem is clearly the work of a minstrel catering for the sober, realistic audience of a provincial baron's hall, an audience . . . not adjusted to Chrétien's elaborate and subtle representations of courtly love or to high-flown chivalric sentiment. The elegant and dilatory court romance of Chrétien has become in the hands of the English minstrel a rapid-paced story of love and gallant adventure.¹⁵

As Jessie L. Weston has said, it was Chrétien's matter,¹⁶
not his manner that attracted the E poet.

Scheich's comparison of the two poems points out three major departures of the English poem from its source: the emphasis placed on certain plot elements, the social tone of the discourse, and the conception of the hero's character. Friedman and Harrington agree with these divisions in essence, but break down the differences by treating their generalities under more specific headings.¹⁷

The greatest difference, and one which appears at the outset of YG, lies in E's excisions of courtly love and chivalric refinement. In almost every instance in which Chrétien pauses to elaborate on matters of courtly love and chivalry, E remains silent. For example, in the beginning of Yvain the ladies and knights go off together to talk of various subjects. Some tell stories, but the greater part of the discussion is devoted to the angoisses, the dolors, and the granz biens of love.

Mes or i a mout po des suens;
 Que a bien pres l'ont tuit leissiee,
 S'an est amors mout abeissiee;
 Car cil, qui soloient amer,
 Se feisoient cortois clamer
 Et preu et large et enorable.
 Or est amors torneé a fable
 Por ce que cil, qui rien n'an santent
 Dient qu'il aiment, mes il mantent,
 Et cil fable et mançonge an font,
 Qui s'an vantent, et droit n'i ont. (18-28)

In YG, however, the talk is of dedes of armes and of veneri. Love is mentioned only once, almost as if in passing.

Fast þai carped and curtaysly
 Of dedes of armes and of veneri
 And of gude knightes þat lyfed þen,
 And how men might þam kyndeli ken

By doghtines of þaire gude ded
 On ilka syde, wharesum þai zede,
 For þai war stif in ilka stowre,
 And þarfōre gat þai grete honowre.
 Þai tald of more trewth þan bitw[e]ne
 Þan now omang men here es sene,
 For trowth and luf es al bylaft;
 Men uses now anoþer craft. (E 25-36)

The E poet's unwillingness to explore the psychological complexities as does Chrétien results in his cutting of one of Chrétien's great rhetorical passages, the description of Yvain's falling desperately in love with the grieving Laudine. In a passage of 239 lines (1302-1541), Chrétien describes elaborately how Yvain has been wounded by Love's attacks.

Mes de son çucre et de ses bresches
 Li radoucist novele Amors,
 Qui par sa terre a fet son cors,
 S'a tote sa proie acoillie.
 Son cuer an mainne s'anemie.
 S'aimme la rien, qui plus le het.
 Bien a vangiee, et si nel set,
 La dame la mort son seignor.
 Vanjance an a prise greignor,
 Qu'ele prandre ne l'an seüst,
 S'Amors vangiee ne l'eüst,
 Qui si doucemant le requiert,
 Que par les iauz el cuer le fiert. (1356-68)

Chrétien here uses the traditional rhetoric of love in describing how Yvain is softened with the sugar and honey of Laudine. She is his enemy and has well avenged her husband's death aided by Love, who attacks Yvain and wounds him through the eyes. Chrétien carries out this metaphor but is not content with the situation itself and goes on to theorize about love in general.

C'est granz honte, qu'Amors est teus,
 Et quant ele si mal se prueve,

Qu'an tot le plus vil, qu'ele trueve,
 Se herberge tot aussi tost,
 Come an tot le meillor de l'ost.
 Mes or est ele bien venue,
 Ci iert ele a enor tenue
 Et ci li fet buen demorer.
 Einsi se devroit atorner
 Amors, qui si est haute chose,
 Que mervoille est, comant ele ose
 De honte an si vil leu desçandre.
 Celui sanble, qui an la çandre
 Et an la poudre espant son basme,
 Et het enor et aime blasme,
 Et destanpre çucre de fiel,
 Et mesle suie avueques miel.
 Mes or n'a ele pas fet ceu,
 Ainz est logiee an un franc leu,
 Don nus ne li puet feire tort!-- (1386-1405)

Afterwards, Chrétien again picks up his subtle word-play
 in Yvain's self-questioning, using the same double sense
 of 'enemy'--Yvain is Laudine's real enemy because he has
 killed her husband and also her figurative enemy because he
 has been wounded by her love. He is both literally and
 figuratively a prisoner.

The E poet cuts this same scene to only 39 lines,
 losing none of the passion, but excising as usual the ela-
 borate courtly figures.

Luf, þat es so mekil of mayne,
 Sare had wownded Sir Ywayne,
 þat whare so he sal ride or ga,
 His hert sho has þat es his fa.
 His hert he has set al bydene,
 Whare himself dar nocht be sene.
 Bot þus in langing bides he
 And hopes þat it sal better be.

He wrought fu/1 mekyl ogayns resowne
 To set his luf in swilk a stede,
 Whare þai hated him to þe dede.
 He sayd he sold have hir to wive,
 Or els he sold lose his lyve. (E 871-78; 904-08)

He too comments on the strength of love and uses the 'enemy' motif as does Chrétien. His heart, ironically, is where his 'self' cannot be, and the traditional reason vs. passion combat within is won by passion. All this is packed into a scene only one-sixth the length of the original. Loss of rhetorical elaboration serves E's purpose by contributing to his direct-action method, but his unwillingness to pose the moral problem involved, does, in this respect, make the passage inferior to Chrétien's. Chrétien is explicit. How can Laudine love a man who is the murderer of her husband? Yvain himself struggles over the situation.

Mes de son voloir se despoire;
 Car il ne puet cuidier ne croie
 Que ses voloirs puisse avenir,
 Et dit: "Por fol me puis tenir,
 Quant je vuel ce que ja n'avrai.
 Son seignor a mort li navrai,
 Et je cuit a li pes avoir?
 Par foi! ne cuit mie savoir,
 Qu'ele me het plus or androit,
 Que nule rien, et si a droit. (1425-34)

However, he suddenly consoles himself with the thought:

D' "or androit" ai je dit que sages;
 Que fame a plus de mil corages.
 Celui corage, qu'ele a ore,
 Espoir changera ele encore, -- (1435-38)

According to the editors, the introduction of this notion serves a two-fold purpose: "it induces Yvain to remain in Laudine's castle as her servant in Love, and it provides at least a rudimentary explanation for the widow Laudine's subsequent change of heart and the easy consolation she finds in her new husband, Yvain."¹⁹

E offers no solution of this sort and Yvain states only that he realizes his bad situation, but that he wants the lady to wife or he will die.

'Bot 3it I wite her al with wogh,
Sen pat I hir lord slogh.
I can nocht se by nakyn gyn,
How pat I hir luf sold wyn.

He wrought fu^l mekyl ogayns resowne
To set his luf in swilk a stede,
Whare pai hated him to pe dede.
He sayd he sold have hir to wive,
Or els he sold lose his lyve.

(E 895-98;
904-08)

The characterization of the hero is made quite explicit by both authors. Perhaps a digression would be helpful in illustrating the differences in the treatment of the two men. Henri Peyre says that "l'analyse psychologique est peut-être le trait permanent le plus caractéristique de la littérature française depuis Chrétien de Troyes . . . jusqu'à Marcel Proust . . ." ²⁰ This statement applies to Yvain as a whole, but can be applied more particularly in this instance. Yvain is the raisonneur. He first despairs of realizing his wish, then remembers that "fame a plus de mil corages." This is hardly the level of intense, psychological analysis which Proust attains, but it does illustrate Yvain's (and Chrétien's) analytical bent. Interestingly enough, the fact that Yvain reasons about love seems a reversal of his emotional reactions to other situations. On the other hand, it is the sober Yvain who feels here rather than reasons. In this amorous situation, he is the type of

Englishman whose feelings D. H. Lawrence would uphold:

The moment the mind interferes with love,
 or the will fixes on it,
 or the personality assumes it as an attribute,
 or the ego takes possession of it,
 it is not love any more 21

Again, as in Yvain's case with Proust, Yvain is hardly as explicit as Lawrence, but the kinship with their twentieth century counterparts seems to illustrate Peyre's point about Chrétien and to sharpen the contrast between Yvain's and Ywain's different psyches.

E characteristically shows no interest in Chrétien's figures. They are either drastically reduced or omitted altogether. An example of this occurs in the passage of the Chastel de Pesme Avanture. Chrétien is describing the beauty of the daughter of the lord of the castle in an intricate tribute. She is so fair that the God of Love would have wanted her for himself alone, becoming a man and wounding himself with love for her sake.

N'ele n'avoit mie seze anz,
 Et s'estoit si bele et si jante
 Qu'an li servir meïst s'antante
 Li Deus d'Amors, s'il la veïst,
 Ne ja amer ne la feïst
 Autrui se lui meïsmes non.
 Por li servir devenïst hon,
 S'ïssïst de sa deïté fors
 Et ferïst lui meïsmes el cors
 Del dart, don la plaie ne saine,
 Se desleaus mires n'i painne. (5374-84)

Chrétien also manages to get in his lament about the fallen status of Love.

De ceste plaie vos deïsse
 Tant, qui hui mes fin ne preïsse,

Se li escouteres vos pleüst;
 Mes tost delist tel i eüst,
 Que je vos parlasse d'oïseuse;
 Car la janz n'est mes amoreuse,
 Ne n'aimment mes, si come il suelent;
 Que nes oïr parler n'an vuelent. (5389-96)

E says simply:

Sho was bot fiftene *β*eres alde;
*β*e knyght was lord of al *β*at halde,
 And *β*at mayden was his ayre;
 Sho was both gracious, gode and fare. (E 3091-94)

E also omits entirely an extended passage in which Chrétien develops the figure of a knight in love being like a body without a heart, but which is marvelously given a new heart of hope. And Chrétien's attitude comes through yet again, as he says that this heart is ". . . sovant/Traïst et fausse de covant." (2659-60)

Another omission of the same sort occurs at that point in Yvain (2722-41) where the maiden carrying Laudine's message of repudiation to Yvain makes a distinction between true and false lovers.

"Cil n'anblent pas les cuers, qui aimment,

 Li amis prant le cuer s'amie
 Einsi qu'il ne li anble mie.

 Mes li amis, quel part qu'il aut,
 Le tient chier et si le raporte. (2729; 2733-34;
 2740-41)

At one point, Chrétien, in describing the meeting between Gauvain and Lunete, compares Gauvain to the sun and Lunete to the moon:

Mes solemant del'acointance
 Vuel feire une brief remanbrance,

Qui fu faite a privé consöil
 Antre la lune et le soloil.
 Savez, de cui je vos vuel dire?
 Cil, qui des chevaliers fu sire
 Et qui sor toz fu renomez,
 Doit bien estre solauz clamez.
 Por mon seignor Gauvain le di;
 Que de lui est tot autressi
 Chevalerie anluminee,
 Con li solauz la matinee,
 Oevre ses rais et clarté rant.
 Par toz les leus, ou il s'espant.
 Et de celi refaz la lune,
 Dont il ne puet estre que une
 De grant san et de corteisie.
 Et neporuec je nel di mie
 Solemant por son buen renon,
 Mes por ce que Lunete a non. (2395-2414)

The comparison is a charming one, and not like the belabored and rather tedious description of the knight in love without a heart. E is indifferent, however, and cuts this passage entirely.

Chretien's interest in points of social behavior fails to interest E. It has already been mentioned how Chretien poses and develops the moral problem of whether or not Yvain is Laudine's enemy by having killed her husband. First, Yvain mulls over this. Then Lunete speaks in Yvain's favor without revealing who he is. Finally Laudine herself solves the problem in the form of an imaginary dialogue taking place between her and the slayer of her husband. She reasons subtly that she is free to marry Yvain and is not compelled to hate him, because he killed her husband in self-defense and is therefore not guilty.

Con s'il fust venuz devant li.
 Lors si comance a pleidoier:

"Va!" fet ele, "puez tu noier
 Que par toi ne soit morz mes sire?"
 "Ce", fet il, "ne puis je desdire,
 Ainz l'otroi bien." -- "Di donc, por quoi?
 Fels le tu por mal de moi,
 Por haïne ne por despit?"
 "Ja n'aie je de mort respit
 S'iques por mal de vos le fis."
 "Donc n'astu rien vers moi mespris,
 Ne vers lui n'eüs tu nul tort;
 Car, s'il poïst, il t'eüst mort.
 Por ce mien esciant cuit gié,
 Que j'ai bien et a droit jugié. (1758-72)

This same dialogue with a few changes actually does take place several hundred lines later when Yvain and Laudine meet for the first time. Besides the initial debate on Yvain's guilt, Chrétien also inserts Yvain's avowal of his love for Laudine into the real conversation using a stichomythic exchange between Laudine and Yvain. Laudine pardons Yvain and then begins the exchange:

"Toz torz et toz mesfez vos quit.
 Mes seez vos, si nos contez,
 Comant vos estes si dontez?"
 "Dame", fet il, "la force vient
 De mon cuer, qui a vos se tient;
 An cest voloir m'a cuers mis."
 "Et qui le cuer, biaux douz amis?"
 "Dame, mi oel." -- "Et les lauz qui?"
 "La granz biautez qu'i a forfez?"
 "Dame, tant que amer me fet."
 "Amer? Et cui?" -- "Vos, dame chiere."
 "Moi?" -- "Voire". -- "Voir? an quel meniere?"
 "An tel, que graindre estre ne puet,
 An tel, que de vos ne se muet
 Mes cuers, n'onques aillors nel truis,
 An tel, qu'aillors panser ne puis,
 An tel, que toz a vos m'otroi,
 An tel, que plus voü aim que moi,
 An tel, se vos plest, a delivre,
 Que por vos vuel morir ou vivre."
 "Et oseriez vos anprendre
 Por moi ma fontainne a deffandre?"
 "Oïl voir, dame, vers toz homes."
 "Sanchiez donc bien qu'acordez somes." (2012-36)

These brilliant pieces of dialogue are characteristic of Chretien's continuing interest in the psychology of his characters, and contrast sharply with E's handling of the same scene. The dialogues are both cut out, and Alundyne's sudden decision to marry Ywain seems motivated only by practicality. She knows that her fountain and her lands must be protected, and as the steward puts it:

. . . wemen may maintene no stowre,
 þai most nedes have a governowre.
 þarefor mi lady most nede
 Be weded hastily for drede. (E 1221-24)

Ywain's interview with Alundyne comes out as three set speeches. Alundyne finds Ywain 'bowsun' and Ywain declares his love, but Alundyne presses for no elaboration. After Ywain's avowal, she brings up her immediate concern, having no inclination to play love games at this point.

Sho said, 'Dar þou wele undertake
 In my land pese forto make
 And forto maintene al mi rightes
 Ogayns King Arthure and his knyghtes?'
 (E 1169-72)

When Ywain assents she says simply, "'Sir, þan er we at ane.'" In the French version Laudine is specifically worried about the defense of the fountain, whereas in the English version, there is an emphasis on making peace and maintaining rights. This perhaps foreshadows the direct address to the reader which E makes later concerning King Arthur's decision on land rights (in the episode of the two sisters).

þis land was first, I understand,
 þat ever was parted in Inghland.
 þan said þe king, withow/t/en fail,
 For þe luf of þat batayl
 Al sisters þat sold efter bene
 Sold part þe landes þan bitwene. (E 3767-72)

The editors feel that the weight given to the maintenance of rights in the poem shows that E had "somewhat unusual legalis-
 tic interests." ²² We see, then, that Laudine's concern is immediate and specific; Alundyne's shows concern for a continuing peace and maintenance of rights. These attitudes fit in with their characterization: Laudine as more volatile and nervous and Alundyne as the more careful and sober thinker.

The life of a married knight itself suggests some other problems which Chrétien treats in detail. Marriage and chivalry make conflicting demands, and this problem is raised by Gauvain, who exhorts Yvain to leave Laudine and come with him on a round of tournaments. Gauvain argues that Yvain is liable to lose both Laudine's love and the esteem of his peers if he abandons chivalry. The language in this passage is very insistent and full of passion, and almost by Gauvain's rhetoric alone he forces Yvain to give in.

"Comant? Seroiz vos or de çaus",
 Ce li dist mes sire Gauvains,
 "Qui por lor fames valent mains?
 Honiz soit de sainte Marie,
 Qui por anpirier se marie!

• • • • •
 Ronpez le frain et le chevoistre,
 S'irons tornoier moi et vos,
 Que l'an ne vos aplaut jalos.

• • • • •
 Joie d'amor, qui vient a tart,
 Sanble la vert busche qui art,

Qui de tant rant plus grand cholor
 Et plus se tient an sa valor,
 Con plus se tient a alumer.

(2484-88; 2500-2;
 2519-23)

Gauvain adds rhetorical appeals to the memories of old friendship and in fact lures Yvain away from his conjugal duties by his sweet language. For a time at least, the demands of honor have won out. ²³

The E poet's handling of this same situation once again reflects the same technique he used in cutting the scene in which Yvain falls in love with Laudine. He keeps only the essential details before the reader's eyes, and even though the plot forces him to reproduce Gawain's injunction against sloth and degeneracy, the speech is only half as long and lacks the high passion of Gauvain's warning. Here, too, is lacking the usual rhetorical heightening by which Chrétien dramatizes and points up the importance of a scene. ²⁴

Besides the wholesale cutting of the sections treating courtly behavior, E makes many other omissions and condensations, sometimes sacrificing many of Chrétien's finer effects, but always in the interests of speeding up the narrative. Before his combat with Calogrenant, the unknown knight in Chrétien's version gives an elaborate complaint and challenge, stating that Calogrenant has caused him harm and shame without provocation, and then describing the consequences, even before beginning the challenge itself. In E, however, these

24 lines (491-514) become 9 lines of indirect discourse:

He bad þat I sold tel him tite,
 Whi I did him swilk despite,
 With weders wakend him of rest
 And [did] him wrang in his forest.
 'þarfore', he said, 'þou sal aby.'
 And with þat come he egerly
 And said I had ogayn resowne
 Done him grete destrucclowne
 And might it never more amend. (E 409-17)

In this instance E gains by his editing, since Chrétien's long discourse is not so extraordinarily done that we feel a loss in the change. At a time of action E insists on action by his cutting, and the scene has more vigor than Chrétien's version. Yet Chrétien knows what he's about, since in his second description, that of the knight coming toward Yvain, he plunges the two into combat immediately without any words in between, thus giving more variety to his descriptions than does E.

One of Chrétien's strong points as a narrator is his handling of suspense. During Yvain's adventures with the lion, his reconciliation with Laudine hangs in suspense. Similarly, while he is disguised as Le Chavalier au lion, he is on the verge of abandoning Gauvain's niece and nephews to an ugly fate because of a prior promise to defend the slandered Lunete. These "arcs of suspense" remain in YG, but the E poet often eliminates Chrétien's "local suspense."²⁵ For example, as Yvain is approaching the Chastel de Pesme Avanture he is warned against staying by the outcries of the villagers:

Au chastel vient cheminant,
 Et les janz, qui venir les voient,
 Trestuit au chevalier disoient:
 "Mal veigniez, sire, mal veigniez!
 Cist osteus vos fu anseigniez
 Por mal et por honte andurer"

.
 Tantost mes sire Yvains s'adresce
 Vers la tor, et les janz s'escrient,
 Trestuit a haute voiz li dient:
 "Hu! hu! maleüreus, ou vas?
 S'onques an ta vie trovas,
 Qui te feïst honte ne let,
 La, ou tu vas, t'an iert tant fet,
 Que ja par toi n'iert reconté." (5112-17;
 5128-35)

To increase the sense of foreboding, Yvain is also warned by an unidentified old woman who apologizes for the villagers since they say what they do only as a warning, not to do him harm. She then adds:

"Ore est sor toi del soreplus:
 La voie ne te deffant nus.
 Se tu viaus, lassus monteras,
 Mes par mon los retorneras." (5159-62)

E keeps the villagers' speeches (although they are shorter than in Chrétien), but drops the old woman's speech, perhaps thinking it redundant.

In another instance, just before Yvain and Gauvain begin their combat, Chrétien pauses for an allegorical digression on Amor and Haine. He develops the ironic possibilities of the battle, giving alternately reasons why Yvain and Gauvain both love and hate each other.

Et or don s'antrainment il?
 "Oïl" vos respong et "nenil."
 Et l'un et l'autre proverai,
 Si que reison i troverai.
 Por voir, mes sire Gauvains aime
 Yvain et conpeignon le claimme,

Et Yvains lui, ou que il soit.

• • • • •
 N'est ce amors antiere et fine?
 Oïl, certes. Et la haïne,
 Que li uns a l'autre sanz dote
 Voldroit avoir la teste rote,
 Ou tant avoir fet li voldroit
 De honte, que pis an vaudroit.
 Par foi, c'est mervoille provee,
 Qu'an a an un veissel trovee
 Amor et Haïne mortel.

(6001-07;
6013-23)

This does prolong the audience's ignorance as to the outcome of the battle, but 109 lines of this verges on tedium. E cuts the passage to 11 lines, moving the narrative forward, but at the same time undercutting the element of suspense. E, however, does stop long enough to comment that

Ful grete luf was bitwix þam twa,
 And now er aþer oþer fa;

• • • • •
 If oþer of þam had oþer sene,
 Grete luf had bene þam bitwene;
 Now was þis a grete selly
 þat trew luf and so grete envy,
 Als bitwix þam twa was þan,
 Might bath at anes be in a man.

(E 3515-16;
3519-24)

Here one wishes E had cut out the love/hate digression entirely, since the theme doesn't lend itself to such a concentrated treatment.

The descriptions of combat are also edited, the E poet being careful to leave out bloody details. In the Count Alier episode Chrétien describes a knight struck so violently that both knight and horse are sent to the ground in a heap. Chrétien then adds:

Cheval et chevalier ansamble,
 N'onques puis cil ne releva;

Qu'el vandre li cuers li creva,
Et fu parmi l'eschine frez. (3158-61)

Yvain and his followers pursue the Count's band:

La chace mout longuemant dure
Tant que cil, qui furent, estanchent
Et cil, qui chacent, les detranchent
Et lor chevaus lor esboelent.
Li vif dessor les morz roelent,
Si s'antrafoient et oçlent. (3264-69)

E retreats from any descriptions of broken backbones and disemboweled horses and contents himself with saying that Yvain slew knights and they fell dead.

Sir Yvain þan his armurs tase
With oþer socure þat he hase.
þe erel he kepes in the felde,
And sone he hit ane on þe sheide,
þat þe knyght and als þe stede
Stark ded to þe erth þai zede.
Sone anoþer, þe thrid, þe ferth
Feld he down ded on þe erth. (E 1875-82)

Yvain's battle tactics are totally different, and in many ways more striking in their grim and realistic effect than Chrétien's rhetorical depiction. Even the meter itself in YG contributes to the descriptive effect. One can almost feel the efficiency and rhythm of the sword cutting hard and fast as Yvain strikes "sone anoþer, þe thrid, þe ferth . . ." In Chrétien's version, the sound does not join the sense in the same way. The action does come through, but the poetry itself obtrudes and the effect is more diffuse.

Yvain's fight with Harpin de la Montaingne gives Chrétien another opportunity to exercise his descriptive

powers.

Anmi le piz li dona tel
 Mes sire Yvains, que la pel fausse,
 El sanc del cors an leu de sausse
 Le fer de la lance li moille; . . . (4200-05)

Yvain cuts a slice from the giant's cheek fit to roast.

Seeing the giant retaliate with a heavy blow to Yvain, the
 lion leaps up to help his master.

Si saut par ire et par grant force,
 S'aert et fant come une escorce
 Sor le jaiant la pel velue,
 Dessoz la pel li a tolue
 Une grant piece de la hanche,
 Les ners et les braons li tranche. (4221-4226)

E's language is, again, not as fanciful as Chrétien's. He
 is here, as elsewhere, striving for realism and his des-
 criptions are as powerful in their simplicity as Chrétien's
 are in their intricacy. As in Yvain, the lion aids his
 master.

. . . to þe geant sone he styrt.
 þe scyn and fless bath rafe he down
 Fro his hals to hys cropoun;
 His ribbes myght men se onane,
 For al was bare unto bane. (E 2466-2470)

Yvain then finishes the giant off, the description continuing
 to be stark and simple.

þe geant gaf he ful gude pay;
 He sante oway al his left cheke,
 His sholder als of gan he kieke,
 þat both his levore and his hand
 Fel down law op/on þe land.
 Seþin with a stoke to him he stert
 And smate þe geant unto þe hert;
 þan was nane oper tale to tell,
 Bot fast unto þe erth he fell,
 Als it had bene a hevvy tre. (E 2476-85)

A reluctance to expand the scene emotionally appears in E's noticeably toned-down account of Alundyne's grief at her husband's funeral. Yet the language in E actually contributes to a starker expression of grief, even more real and certainly just as moving as Laudine's more hysterical outburst.

A la foliee s'escrioit
 Si haut, qu'ele ne pooit plus,
 Et recheoit pasmee jus.
 Et quant ele estoit relevee,
 Aussi come fame desvee
 Se comancoit a descirer
 Et ses chevos a detirer.
 Ses chevos tire et ront ses dras,
 Si se repasme a chascun pas,
 Ne riens ne la puet conforter,
 Que son seignor an voit porter
 Devant li an la biere mort,
 Don ja ne cuide avoir confort;
 Por ce crioit a haute voiz. (1152-65)

In more restrained fashion, the English poet gives us:

Sho wrang hir fingers, outbrast þe blode;
 For mekyl wa sho was nere wode.
 Hir fayre hare scho al todrogh,
 And ful oft fel sho down in swogh;
 Sho wepe with a ful dreri voice. (E 821-25)

He is, as always, concerned with a realistic description.

For example, Laudine's swooning "a chascun pas" is an exaggeration, albeit a conscious one on Chrétien's part.

In this way he wants to embody the picture of an hysterical woman and succeeds. E doesn't want this effect. To swoon "ful ofte" is much more plausible and realistic than swooning at every step, and this effect of credibility is exactly what E wants and gets.

In Chrétien the religious procession is ornate and fits in with the emotionally-charged atmosphere.

L'eve beneoite et la croiz
 Et li cierge aloient devant
 Avuec les dames d'un covant,
 Et li texte et li ançansier
 Et li clerc, qui sont despansier
 De feire la haute despanse,
 A quoi la cheitive ame panse. (1166-72)

The E poet again presents a starker picture, dramatic and effective in its simple statement. The emphasis in his description is on the military aspects of the funeral, whereas in the French version, an ecclesiastical tone dominates. E does mention the holy water and the cross preceding the procession and the priests and monks who perform the final service, but the military aspect takes precedence in the figure of the grim reminder of Salados' death, a fully armed knight who precedes the corpse. Chrétien's handling of the same scene is completely religious in nature and seems enveloped in clouds of incense. E's starkness is achieved through reined-in emotion, while Chrétien exploits emotion unchained.

þe hali water and þe croyce
 Was born bifore þe procession;
 þare folowd mani a moder son;
 Bifore þe cors rade a knyght
 On his stede þat was ful wight,
 In his armurs wele arayd,
 With spere and target gudely grayd.
 Prestes and monkes on þaire wyse
 Ful solempnly did þe servyse. (E 826-32;
 837-38)

E's attitude toward Chrétien's descriptive excesses is also present in his handling of Chrétien's ironic passages.

Chrétien's ironical touches are suppressed by E, either because of artistic inability or lack of interest. There is one instance in which Keu has been his usual sharp-tongued self with Yvain and is rebuked by the Queen. Yvain brushes off Keu's sarcasm and replies ironically:

"Certes, dame, de ses ranposnes",
 Fet mes sire Yvains, "ne me chaut.
 Tant puet et tant set et tant vaut
 Mes sire Keus an totes corz,
 Qu'il n'i iert ja muéz ne sorz,
 Bien set ancontre vilenie
 Respondre san et corteisie,
 N'il ne fist onques autremant.
 Or savez vos bien, se je mant. (630-38)

E is not interested in irony, however. Yvain is always courteous and proper and it would not do for him to reply to Kay as Yvain does to Keu. Yvain answers and speaks "ful hendly" and "ful curtaysly." Where Yvain is witty and ironic in his reply, Yvain is mild and kind.

. . . alsone Syr Ywayne
 Ful hendly answerd ogayne,
 Al if men sayd hym velany,
 He karped ay ful curtaysly:

 . . . men says sertayne
 þat, wo so flites or turnes ogayne,
 He bygins al þe melle;
 So wil I nocht it far by me.
 Lates him say halely his thocht;
 His wordes greves me right nocht.' (E 495-98;
 500;
 503-08)

E chooses to ignore the dramatic irony which occurs in Chrétien after Lunete's ordeal. The disguised Yvain regretfully tells Laudine he cannot remain at her court until his lady forgives him, and Laudine replies, unaware that

she is the lady in question:

"Certes", fet ele, "ce me poise.
Ne taing mie por tres cortoise
La dame, qui mal cuer vos porte. . . ." (4593-95)

In this same situation in the English version, Ywain says:

. . . 'No lenger dwel I ne may;
Beleves wele and haves goday.
I prai to Crist, hevyn kyng,
Lady, len 3ow gude lifing,
And len grace, pat al 3owre anoy
May turn 3ow unto mykel joy.' (E 2673-78)

Alundyne, unlike Laudine, does not unwittingly accuse herself of discourtesy. The scene continues in this way:

Sho said, 'God grant pat it so be.'
Unto himself þan þus said he,
'þou ert þe lok and kay also.
Of al my wele and al my wo.' (E 2679-82)

E, again, isn't seeking an ironic effect. There is a sadness in Ywain's good wishes and Alundyne's simple and sincere reply. Friedman and Harrington, however, feel that the text bungles the dramatic irony and would be improved considerably if lines 2675-2678 were given to Alundyne and line 2679 to Ywain. "The interjection in 2676 is the stumbling-block. If it were þe lady said the passage would come right." ²⁷ Compare the same scene in Chretien:

Lors dit la dame de rechief:
"Ancor, s'il ne vos estoit grief,
De remenoir vos priëroie."
"Certes, dame, je n'oseroie,
Tant que certainement seüssse
Que le buen gre ma dame eüsse."
"Ore alez donc a Deu, biaux sire,
Qui vostre pesance et vostre ire
Vos atort, se lui plest, a joie!"
"Dame", fet il, "Deus vos an oie!"
Puis dist antre ses danz soef:

"Dame, vos an portez la clef,
Et la serre et l'escrin avez,
Ou ma joie est, si nel savez." (4621-34)

In Chretien the speech in question is given to Laudine and preserves the ironic effect which E chose to eliminate. The fact that E chooses to eliminate the irony seems to imply that the editors are wrong in accusing E of bungling. There is a point in characterization which E makes, and he doesn't need or want irony. Here and elsewhere, E avoids Chretien's ironic touches. Yvain and Alundyne are simple and straightforward; they are not the witty and sophisticated Yvain and Laudine. E's characters are simpler and less complex than their French counterparts, but they are not necessarily inferior and do not make YG inferior to Yvain.

The editors point out that "Chretien's topical allusions, literary references, and French place-names are omitted by way of naturalizing and modernizing the romance, and also perhaps to correct the Frenchman's geography" ²⁸

As examples, they state that E cuts the reference to Brocéliande (189; 697) as well as references to le bois d'Argone (3228) and les rives de Sainne (5980-81). Allusions to the Chanson de Roland (3235-36) are deleted along with references to Forre ²⁹ and to Noradin, the Sultan Noreddin Mahmud, a contemporary of Chretien.

Other details are either omitted by E or dealt with in the same way he handles larger sections; that is, he does not stop to give us the tiny characterizing detail that

Chrétien delights in. After Yvain has been initially accepted by Alundyne, the steward gives a speech to her barons explaining the need for a knight to defend the fountain since King Arthur is coming to try to win the land (E 1211-26). E here omits details which appear in Chrétien (2081-2104) among which is the information that Laudine had married seven years before on the advice of her nobles, and that the defense of the fountain had been a custom there for sixty years.

When Yvain greets Lunete after she has told how she trapped her lady into taking him back, Chrétien tells us that Yvain was so elated that he kissed her eyes and then her face (6694). The more proper Yvain simply "thanked hir ful fele sith" (E 3943). Obviously Chrétien is having fun. The fact that Lunete isn't Yvain's wife and that his greeting, in view of this fact, is Gallically effusive doesn't bother Chrétien. He is, again, exaggerating for the sake of an effect. Yvain, observing propriety, is thankful but reserved. E seems to be the proper Englishman saying, "One simply doesn't do that!"

Another instance of E's condensation occurs right before Yvain saves Lunete from death at the stake. The ladies of the court are lamenting her fate and give details of Lunete's kindness to them.

"Ha! Deus, con nos as obliées!
 Con remandrons or esgarees,
 Qui perdomes si buene amie
 Et tel consoil et tel aie,
 Qui a la cort por nos estoit!

.....

N'iert mes, qui die ne qui lot:
 'Cest mantel ver et cest sorcot
 Et ceste cote, chiere dame,
 Donez a cele franche fame! . . .'

.
 Ja de de n'iert parole treite;
 Car nus n'est mes frans ne cortois,

(4361-65;
 4373-76;
 4380-81)

The lament in E's version is a general one:

'Lord, 'pai sayd, ' what es oure gylt?
 Oure joy, oure confort sal be spilt.
 Who sal now oure erandes say?
 Allas, who sal now for us pray?' (E 2539-42)

E avoids mention of part of the reason for the ladies' grief. They are sad at the thought of losing their good friend, Lunete. But part of their sadness is connected with their fear of losing Lunete's influence with Laudine, who, persuaded by her, was accustomed to giving fine clothes to the ladies of the court. E does mention that the ladies wonder who will relay their messages and pray for them, but Chrétien's fashion-conscious women come off as more selfish and materialistic. The ladies in E's version are more concerned with the possibility of Lunete's death and with the loss of her friendship than with the loss of their fashions.

E also omits some minor descriptive details. Chrétien names the father of the two contending sisters as "li sire de la Noire Espine" (4705), whereas E says only "a grete lord" (E 2746). In describing the stone at the fountain, E omits Chrétien's detail that the stone was "perciez aussi come une boz" (425). Perhaps E feels that these details are made too much of in Chrétien; that is, that the concern

with insignificant details becomes more important than the narrative itself. E is interested in a tale of action, not one of detailed descriptions, which, no matter how minor, tend to break the chain of action. E's excisions of Chrétien's lingering over details do work to E's advantage in speeding up the action, but many times they simply deprive the audience of the fine filigree of Chrétien's language. Much of what Chrétien savors E finds excrescent.

A great part of the imagery found in Yvain is frequently missing in YG. There is a striking image in Chrétien's episode of the search for the invisible Yvain. The men are looking for him, thrashing all about the room:

Par tot leanz de lor bastons,
Come avugles, qui a tastons
Vet aucune chose cerchant. (1141-43)

Although Chrétien's figure is more interesting than E's, it reduces the intensity and the scene verges on comedy. The sight of the men pounding with their clubs like blind-men provokes laughter and the focus is on the searchers rather than on Yvain. By drawing the reader's attention away from the real danger that Yvain is in, Chrétien dissipates greatly and, in fact, almost loses the effect of violence and rage. E comments in a different way.

Al about *pai* smate so fast,
pat mani of *paire* wapins brast. (E 813-14)

There is a determined violence and force of action in E which is missing in Chrétien, and the effect is more appropriate to the people's feelings of rage and desire for

revenge. Much of the rich animal imagery in the first part of Yvain is also absent, except for Colgrevance's description of the Giant Herdsman, some of whose features are likened to those of various animals.

His hevyd, me thoght, was als grete
Als of a rowncy or a nete;

• • • • •
He had eres als ane olyfant

• • • • •
His nese was cutted als a cat;
His browes war like litel buskes;
And his tethe like bare-tuskes.

(E 251-52;
257; 260-62)

Chrétien's imagery is a little more detailed: his elephant ears are "mossues et granz," his eyes like an owl's, and his jowls split like a wolf's (299 ff.). Chrétien's other uses of animal imagery, however, are either absent or greatly reduced in E. As Colgrevance describes the approach of the defender of the fountain he says, "þat knight to me hied ful fast" (E 407), whereas Calogrenant states, "Vint plus tost qu'uns alerions, / Fiers par sanblant come lions" (487-89). Elsewhere Keu chides Yvain for his prompt avowal of vengeance after Calogrenant's tale: "L'an dit que chaz saous s'anvoise" (594), and Yvain retorts, saying,

Ne vuel pas snabler le gaignon,
Qui se hericé et regringne,
Quant autre mastins le rechingne. (646-48)

Yvain is, as has been stated before, always proper and gentle in speech. He avoids Chrétien's 'dog' imagery and says in reply:

'Lates him say halely his thoght;
His wordes greves me right nocht.' (E 507-08)

Later Chrétien again describes the approach of the unknown knight, this time coming toward Yvain:

Vint d'ire plus ardanz que brese
 Li chevaliers a si grant bruit,
 Con s'il chaçast un cerf de ruit. (812-14)

E's treatment of this passage is quite different.

And sone he saw cumand a knight
 Als fast so þe fowl in flyght
 With rude sembland and sterne chere,
 And hastily he neghed nere. (E 629-32)

E is interested in action and doesn't stop to comment in the figurative language Chrétien uses. He comments on the speed of the knight's approach ("als fast so þe fowl in flyght," and "hastily he neghed nere"), whereas Chrétien spends his time describing imagistically the knight's state of mind (the knight is blazing with rage like a burning log and he makes as much noise as if he were chasing a stag). E's description of the knight is more realistic with its picture of grim determination ("with rude sembland and sterne chere"): Also missing in E is another image of pursuit which follows soon afterward. Yvain chases the knight "si con girfauz grue randone" (882).

E, in fact, manages to tell the story very well without the aid of Chrétien's flourishes and imagery. "He seems reluctant to hazard a figure of any kind." ³⁰ Yet E is by no means devoid of skill in language. An especially striking difference in the way the two poets handle language is evident in their descriptions of the storm-making fountain. Each has his peculiar charm, Chrétien's description evoking

a strange, other-world, violent beauty, and E's more simple, less emotionally described, but hardly as unimaginative as the editors would have us believe.

Que lors vi le ciel si derot,
 Que de plus de quatorze parz
 Me feroit es iauz li esparz,
 Et les nues tot pesle mesle
 Gitoient noif et pluie et gresle.
 Tant fu li tans pesmes et forz,
 Que çant foiz cuidai estre morz
 Des foudres, qu'antor moi cheoient,
 Et des arbres, qui depeçoient. (440-48)

I toke þe bacyn sone onane
 And helt water opon þe stane.
 þe weder wex þan wonder-blak,
 And þe thoner fast gan crak.
 þare come slike stormes of hayl and rayn,
 Unnethes I might stand þare ogayn;
 þe store windes blew ful lowd,
 So kene come never are of clowd.
 I was drevyn with snaw and slete,
 Unnethes I might stand on my fete;
 In my face þe levening smate,
 I wend have brent, so was it hate, (E 367-78)

Chrétien uses two, strung-out sentences within 9 lines, a technique almost breathless in effect. Lightning blinds Calogrenant's eyes from more than fourteen directions, and the clouds let fall snow and rain and hail all at once. Bolts of lightning fall about and Calogrenant thinks a hundred times that he'll surely be killed. Chrétien again exaggerates very successfully. E's description comes at us in smaller chunks. Within 12 lines, there are 6 separate thoughts, 2 lines being devoted to each one. In more simple fashion, he takes one thing at a time, whereas Chrétien does things "pesle mesle." Colgrevice takes the basin and pours

the water. The sky becomes black and the thunder starts. Afterwards, there comes a storm of hail and rain, violent winds, and then snow and sleet. Colgrevice finally feels such heat from the lightning in his face that he thinks he will burn up. The entire description is as restrained as possible, considering the extremely strange goings-on being described. Even in a situation of wonders, E tries to be as realistic as he can, yet he still conveys effectively the violence and unnaturalness of the storm.

As Whiting pointed out,³¹ E adapted only five of Chretien's twenty-eight formal comparisons (E 251 f., 257, 260, 262, 629 f.). To these he added nine similes of his own, but they are popular and rather unimaginative, some examples of which are:

A lady folowd white so mylk; (E 819)
 Hir yghen clere als es cristall (E 900)
 þe king said, 'Lady white so flowre'; (E 1421)

E, however, does show a fondness for both proverbs and ³³sententious remarks. There are six proverbs in Yvain which were not translated, and three which were. They are:

Toz jorz puir li fumiers
 Et taons poindre et maloz bruire,
 Enuieus enuier et nuire; (116 ff.)

It es ful semeli, als me think,
 A brok omang men forto stynk; (E 97 f.)

Plus a paroles an plain pot
 De vin, qu'an un mui de cervoise. (592 f.)

It es sene now es efter mete!
 Mare boste es in a pot of wyne
 þan in a karcas of Saynt Martyne; (E 468 ff.)

The editors find that E's loose translation of lines 592-93 ("there are more words in a pot full of wine than in a whole barrel of beer." [Comfort's translation]) presents a problem in interpretation. They note that Schleich pointed out St. Martin of Tours' reputation for abstemiousness and suggested he is being contrasted with the glutton ("pot of wyne"). They note further that French and Hale offer the meaning of a carcass of dried beef for "a karcas of Saynt Martyne," Martinmas being the time meat was dried for the winter. Other French, Provençal, and German proverbs indicate St. Martin's day as slaughtering time. At this point in YG, the knights have just eaten and drunk, and Kay's sarcastic remarks imply that Ywain's courage is due to drunkenness. The editors conclude that the juxtaposition here is between a "pot of wyne" (a drunken boaster) and a carcass of meat (a symbol of sobriety). They mention further that St. Martin's name was frequently used as rhyming word in other romances and that a legend about him describes him as dividing his cloak with a beggar, and "gifts of clothes were welcome to minstrels."

33

Que cil ne fet pas la meslee,
 Qui fiert la premiere colee,
 Ainz la fet cil, qui se revange. (641 ff.)

And als, madame, men says sertayne
 pat, wo so flites or turnes ogayne,
 He bygins al þe melle. (E 503 ff.)

Here E translates Chretien's proverb ("For he who deals the first blow does not always win the fight, but rather

he who gains revenge." [Comfort's translation] freely, yet more incisively and takes only two lines to Chrétien's three. He also takes the sting out of the French version, saying only that he who rebukes or turns against someone is looking for a fight. E added two more proverbs as well:

Bot 3it a fole þat litel kan,
May wele counsail anoþer man; (E 1477 f.)

For fole bolt es sone shot. (E 2168)

Of the seven sententious remarks, E translated only one, and that not quite literally:

'Nenil,' fet il; 'de reposer
Ne se puet nus hon aloser'; (5095-96)

He said: 'þat knyght þat idil lies
Oft sipes winnes ful litel pries.' (E 2923-24)

To this he adds five of his own:

And in þe hert þare es þe horde
And knawing of ilk mans worde; (E 147-48)

For best comforth of al thing
Es solace efter myslikeing; (E 387-88)

To speke of lufe na time was þare;
For aiþer hated uþer ful sare; (E 633-34)

Madame, it es oft wemens will
þam forto blame þat sais þam scill; (E 967-68)

And said, 'Wha juges men with wrang,
þe same jugement sal þai fang.' (E 2641-42)

Besides E's addition of some proverbs and similes, he sometimes brings in other material not found in his source. For example, he prefixes the narrative with the standard minstrel incipit:

Almyghti God þat made mankyn,
He schilde his servandes out of syn

And mayntene þam with might and mayne,
 þat herkens Ywayne and Gawayne;
 þai war knightes of þe tabyl rownde,
 þarfore listens a lytel stownde. (E 106)

He adds a minstrel formula at line 149 ('Herkens, hende, unto my spell,'), and concludes the romance with a prayer (4029-4032), also conventional minstrel procedure.

In referring to the Giant Herdsman, E calls him "þe karl of Kaymes kyn" (E 559), an addition not found in the French original. According to tradition, monsters, elves, giants, and spirits of hell were descended from Cain, the father of all evil progeny. This appears to be a peculiarly English tradition, allusions being made in such works as Beowulf, Havelok the Dane, and Kyng Alisaunder.³⁴

At one point in the narrative E disregards his source and addresses the reader directly. This occurs after the fight between Ywain and Gawain when Arthur commands the elder sister who wished to keep all the inheritance to share it with her younger sister. E follows Chrétien up to here, but then he says:

þis land was first, I understand,
 þat ever was parted in England.
 þan said þe king, withow/t/en fail,
 For þe luf of þat batayl
 Al sisters þat sold efter bene
 Sold part þe landes þam bitwene. (E 3767-72)

These lines are inserted to inflate the importance of King Arthur's decision by making it an historical precedent for the laws of partible and impartible lands, a legal question pertaining to English laws of inheritance during the early

Middle Ages. The insertion itself is legal fiction, but taken along with the other legal interpolations in the poem (Cf. E 1253, 3759-3765), as has been mentioned before, points to the poet's legalistic interests.³⁵

A final personal touch comes at the end of the poem. Chrétien reunites Yvain and Laudine and shows Lunete sharing their happiness, but E realistically adds to Chrétien's fairy-tale ending that they all (Yvain, Alundyne, Lunet, and the lion) lived in happiness until they died.

And so Sir Yvain and his wive
 In joy and blis þai led þaire live.
 So did Lunet and þe liown
 Until þat ded haves dreven þam down. (E 4023-26)

These "miscellaneous" changes and insertions on E's part contribute to the evidence that E is not merely a translator, but, in many ways, an original poet. His translations of the proverbs and sententious remarks are usually rather free, and yet, come out more compact and incisive than Chrétien's versions, once again providing proof of E's more laconic nature. On the other hand, this economic tendency of the E poet sometimes works to his disadvantage. In a few places, either because of misunderstanding, mistranslation or desire for economy, E confuses an episode or loses necessary background material. For example, an episode which suffers from over-condensation is the account of the loss of the magic ointment used to cure Yvain's madness. In Chrétien the deliberate loss of the box is carefully

prepared for. Chretien tells us the maiden's reason (she has used up all the ointment and is afraid to tell her lady) and says it is her intention to lie about losing it. This is so cut in E's version that when the maiden suddenly throws the box into the water, we are taken by surprise and don't fully understand her motives until she explains the loss of the box to her lady (E 1840-54).

Another major obfuscation occurs in the episode of the disinherited sister. The younger sister sets out to seek Yvain, but falls ill in the castle of a friend (4826-27). Both E and Chretien agree that the girl remains at the castle and that a second maiden takes up her quest, but at this point E leaves out Chretien's account (4835-4941) of the storm in the forest which overtakes the girl, her prayer, the three horn blasts which lead her to a castle apparently belonging to Gauvain's brother-in-law, his hospitality to her, his account of the killing of the giant, and finally the damsel's journey to the fountain where Yvain and his lion have killed three knights. Here E resumes his tale and the two versions are parallel in their accounts of the meeting of the second girl with Lunet, their journey together, and the second maiden's arrival at the castle where Yvain had been healed (E 2848-2879; Ch. 4965-5012).³⁶ By eliminating the account of the second maiden's journey, E has economized, but according to the editors, has left us with some unanswered questions. Why does the maiden, who has presumably helped

cure Ywain of his "sekenes" and who later takes up the quest in search of him, deliberately set off in the wrong direction by going to Alundyne's castle where she knows he has fought and received his wounds? Actually, this question is not a valid one. Let us examine the facts. Ywain arrives at an unnamed castle after his defense of Lunet:

Forth he rides by frith and fell,
Til he come to a fayre castell. (E 2711-12)

The folk of the castle take him in and tell the lord about this unknown knight who is wounded. The lord's two daughters take care of him and the lion, and he stays at the castle until he is healed. How long is not specified:

I can nocht tel how lang he lay;
When he was helyd he went his way. (2741-42)

The younger sister also comes to a castle where she is well-known. Presumably this is the same castle "Whare Sir Ywayn are had bene/Helid of his sekenes clene" (E 2815-16). She falls sick and tells the lord of the castle (E 2821) of her quest, whereupon a maiden from that castle goes in her place to seek Ywain while she remains. This maiden is not necessarily one of the two daughters of the lord who helped cure Ywain, but she surely knows about his stay there. However, she does not know where Ywain received his wounds, since he nowhere reveals this, so she neither sets off deliberately for Alundyne's castle (she comes upon it), nor does she know of his combat there until she finds out about it from Lunet. The problem starts with the editors' second

question; that is, why does she show no sign of recognition when she comes to the castle where Ywain was "held byforehand," the castle which is presumably her home and starting point? At this point certain facts are at odds. If this is, in fact, the original castle, it would appear that Ywain arrives at the castle, stays an unspecified space of time, and leaves. The disinherited sister then arrives, tells her story, and a second maiden takes up the quest, goes to Alundyne's castle, and turns back home immediately. First of all, if Ywain had just left the castle, the maiden who takes up the quest would have immediately seen their recent visitor to be the same knight the sister is talking about. There is no sign of recognition here. Secondly, the time sequence is also badly handled. Even assuming the preceding to be true (i.e., that the same castle is involved in both instances), how much time does it take for all this to happen? The second maiden arrives back home and is told by the people that the knight with the lion has just left, something she should have already known. She then catches up with him in a short time, and instead of going back immediately to the castle where the sick sister is, they ride for a time and come to the "Castel of þe Hevy Sorow." Not until Ywain finishes his adventures there does he return to the original castle.

Jessie Weston tries to clear this up by saying that the castle in which the disinherited sister falls ill is

not the same one where Ywain has just been cured, but rather the castle of la dame de Norðison, where Ywain recuperated from his madness.³⁷ Unfortunately, as the editors point out, she fails to take into account the mention of "þe lord" of the castle (E 2821), an almost certain indication that the castle is not that of the lady, since she is unmarried and has no lord (E 1960 ff.).³⁸

There is no solution except to agree with the editors that E was too busy reducing his source to catch inconsistencies and conflicting details, and to accept their statement that the text comes down to us marred.³⁹

Friedman and Harrington point out another discrepancy in the text occurring in E, line 3838, where E states that Ywain returns to the well where "he thinkes forto dwell." They go on to state that ". . . he casts water upon the magic stone, bringing on the customary storm and precipitating the dénouement of the tale. Such an action is plainly unexpected in a man who had come to the well to live, presumably, in solitude and contrition."⁴⁰ In Chrétien Yvain returns to the fountain explicitly to cause the storm, so that Laudine will be forced to make peace with him. His intentions coincide with his actions:

Et pansa qu'il se partiroit
 Toz seus de cort et si iroit
 A sa fontaine guerroier,
 Et s'l feroit tant foudroier
 Et tant vanter et tant plovoir,
 Que par forcé et par estovoir
 Li covandroit feire a lui pes,
 Ou il ne fineroit ja mes

De la fontaine tormanter
Et de plovoir et de vanter. (6517-26)

Besides correcting some minor details of Chrétien's geography, E makes an important improvement in clarifying the one confused episode in Yvain. Chrétien as usual gives us more details than does E, but they serve only to confuse. Here E's customary simplicity clarifies many vague points in Chrétien's version. The passage in question (907 ff.) deals with the physical details of Yvain's captivity between the two portcullises, the description of his passageway prison, and the mysterious appearance of Lunete from her own room. Chrétien describes Yvain caught between two portcullises, one at each end of what seems to be a passageway leading into the castle. Except for the trap mechanism, this seems to be an ordinary passage, but suddenly the entrance turns into an elegant chamber.

Qui tote estoit cielee a clos
Dorez, et paintes les meisieres
Du buene oeuvre et de colors chieres; (964-66)

Lunete enters from an adjoining room (chambrete) through a small door which must have been invisible, for no one else seems to know of it. She gives Yvain the magic ring of invisibility, seats him on a couch, and goes back to her own room to get him something to eat. Later she again leaves him when the retainers arrive in search of the murderer. In this elegant room they find the dead horse, and it is through this same room that Laudine and the funeral procession pass. When the procession has gone, Lunete returns and directs

Yvain to a window where he can watch Laudine. After the burial Lunete takes Yvain to her own room. In the editors' opinion this raises a few problems. First of all the transformation of the entranceway into an elegant room is strange, especially since it continues to serve as an exit for the funeral procession. If Lunete's room is really so secret, it would seem logical for her to hide Yvain there at once instead of making him submit to the search. Also, if there is a portcullis at each end, why must Yvain look out a window to see Laudine when he could just as easily look out the iron lattice-work, and especially since he has just seen her in the room? The editors say that "one can only speculate that Chrétien either did not understand his source or was so intent on working up the melodramatic scene with the murderer and the bleeding corpse that he was willing to sacrifice all credibility and realism."⁴¹

E approaches the scene differently. Lunet appears from a door in the wall of the plain passageway (stall). After she has given him the magic ring, she leads him through the door and into her room. The funeral procession passes outside the room, so Yvain's request to look out the window seems more natural. He has heard the cries of the lady, but has not yet seen her. In E's hands the account is simpler and more credible and in this respect superior to Chrétien's version, since Chrétien gives no logical reason to explain why the passageway suddenly turns into a beautiful room.

E cuts the scene in which the corpse is carried through the room and bleeds afresh in the presence of its murderer, so it is simpler for him to place Yvain in Lunet's room. But Chrétien doesn't omit this touch, so Yvain must be in the room for this scene. The thrashing about of the retainers while Yvain sits fearfully on the couch and occasionally receives some blows, shows the kind of comedy Chrétien liked. Perhaps Yvain could have seen the procession from the portcullis, or perhaps he could have seen it only from some sort of window higher up. At any rate, even though he has just seen Laudine, his request to see her again shows that he is interested. And this also shows his interest to Lunete, who presumably starts matchmaking. Chrétien's physical details are more blurred and E's version is more credible and realistic, but both versions again reveal the tastes of their authors; that is, that Chrétien is willing to sacrifice realism for melodrama, effect, and linguistic performance, while E is willing to sacrifice the effect to achieve realism and credibility. E feels here that Chrétien's cavalier attitude goes beyond the limits of reality and therefore changes the scene to fit his own demands.

Much of the problem of characterization has already been treated obliquely in the preceding discussion. However some general remarks are necessary. One can say that the major characters in YG are far less finely drawn than those in Yvain, but not to the point where they come close

42

"to being mere puppets." The editors find that this bluntness in characterization is due mainly to the altered tone of the romance.

E has muted the vivacity and passion of Chrétien: the fits of emotion, the high flights of rhetoric, the ardent involvement in conversation, battle, and love are toned down and muffled. The sharp, angry exchanges between Keu and Guenievre at the beginning of Chrétien's poem are a case in point. These exchanges, which serve to display the seneschal's chronic ill-humour, on the one hand, and the quick temper of the Queen, on the other, lose much of their sting in E. Kay is less malicious; the Queen less angry and outspoken . . . Her attitude in E is more conciliatory, and the effect is to lower the emotional intensity of the scene, and incidentally to blunt the sharpness of the characterization.

E does lower the emotional intensity which is so characteristic of Chrétien, but this does not necessarily "blunt the sharpness of the characterization." What it does do is to change the characterization.

Lunete's character is least changed from the French source to the English version; yet she is still flatter in E than in Chrétien. E cuts the previously mentioned symbolic (Sun and Moon) encounter between her and Gauvain, along with their amorous dalliance, perhaps for reasons of propriety. Also lost is the witty teasing of Yvain before she maneuvers his meeting with Laudine. According to G. Cohen, Chrétien's Lunete is "sûre d'elle même, habile en son langage . . . feignant l'irritation, puis se faisant

prier pour dire ce qu'elle brûle de révéler" ⁴⁴ In
 E she is not, perhaps, as much the coquette as she is in
 Chrétien, but her characterization is much more consistent.
 E portrays her as warm-hearted and kind (as in Lunete), but
 also more straight-forward and less given to the tiny deceits
 and volatility of Lunete.

Laudine undergoes much more of a change. In Chrétien
 she is strange and complex, and even Chrétien's adeptness
 at psychological penetration doesn't clear up all the my-
 steries surrounding her character. The hysteria and emo-
 tional violence she displays at her husband's funeral are
 esthetically offensive to E's restrained tastes, for he
 shows his characteristic tendency to cut, leaving out her
 attempt at suicide and her hysterical outburst, and replacing
 them with a more believable display of grief. Laudine, like
 Criseyde, is full of inconsistencies. "This quality prepares
 us for her amazing volte-face towards the slayer of her hus-
 band, just as Criseyde's tendency to be 'slydinge of corage'
 prepares us for her capitulation to Diomedes." ⁴⁵ Laudine is
 indeed fascinating, but her inconsistency of character does
 not necessarily "prepare" us for her sudden acceptance of
 Yvain. At any rate, Chrétien does handle well her extremely
 passionate nature, and makes her believable in spite of her
 inconsistencies. People, after all, especially females,
 are hardly known for complete consistency. ⁴⁶ Alundyne, on
 the other hand, shows the same consistency of character E

portrayed in depicting Lunet. Both Lunet and Alundyne are less openly emotional than Lunete and Laudine, but this does not indicate a weakness in characterization. Perhaps we find the two Englishwomen more dull than their sources, but they do have character, even if it is less appealing. The Frenchwomen are much more interesting psychologically, but E handles the consistent, practical nature of his women well within the scope of his intentions. Their low-key responses are much more credible (especially Alundyne's reaction after her husband has been killed).

Yvain is almost completely transformed. The long, elegantly-spun speeches which E cut were Yvain. Chretien's hero is an accomplished courtly lover and passionately reels out the elaborate conceits expected of him. Yvain is incapable of rhetorical excess and also of the irony and sarcasm Yvain uses in contests of verbal wit, as, for example, in his dialogue with Keu. The psychological conception of Yvain is such that the lapse into madness is entirely plausible given his sentimental and over-wrought nature. But Yvain's madness comes on almost like a sudden physiological disorder.⁴⁷ The conception of the hero can be said to encapsulate the basic difference between the English romance and its French source in the contrast between a sober fighting man and an eloquent courtly lover.

III

And so one returns to the original question: was the E poet simply a translator or was he adapting a traditional story to his own needs? All evidence points to the second reply. If Chrétien seems to emerge as the superior poet, it is by no means a condemnation of the E poet nor of his work. Many of his changes, while obliterating virtuoso performances in language, do improve the narrative force and power of the story. One is reminded of the way Malory used his French Vulgate source in paring down rhetoric for a simpler and more dramatic effect.

There is a marked difference in total effect between the two poems. E's suppression of Chrétien's musings produces a more colloquial tale in which the characters, more simply motivated, "seem to act with greater directness and vigour." ⁴⁸ The knightly idealism is not lost in E, it is simply expressed in action rather than in words, and the result is a speeded-up narrative devoid of rhetoric, flights of fancy, digressions, and psychologizing.

E's adaptation, as we have seen again and again, is also much more realistic. His excisions of Chrétien's fanciful, complex, and often exaggerated descriptions seem to point to an attitude on E's part which we can only call realistic. This realism continues in his characterizations.

Although less psychologically complex than Chrétien's, E's characters are more consistent in thought and action, more straightforward and real. Chrétien's interests lie elsewhere, and he is less concerned with character consistency and realism than he is with creating specific effects in specific situations.

Tied in with the question of characterization is one of propriety. Chrétien's courtly sophistication may have seemed rather morally lax, or at least improper to the English poet (Irony and sarcasm, while not "morally" wrong in themselves, are not proper vehicles for a knight like Yvain). E's cutting of the love scene between Lunete and Gauvain and Yvain's extremely affectionate behavior towards Lunete point to a sober, more conservative view on E's part. This sense of propriety is present most notably in the characterization of the hero, Yvain. As mentioned before, the conception of the hero is perhaps the most obvious proof of E's role as an adaptor rather than translator. Both Yvain and Ywain are fighting men, but Ywain's sober and proper attitude contrasts sharply with Yvain's more carefree spirit.

In the opinion of one critic, all of the alterations are the result of a conscious and generally successful effort on the part of the E poet to improve upon Chrétien.⁴⁹ It is more likely that at least some deletions are due to lacunae in the copy of the French poem available to E, or simply to his desire for brevity. But whether or not E was

capable of appreciating Chrétien's ironic commentary on courtly love, it is certain that in his version the reflections on courtly love are abbreviated. And perhaps for this reason more than for any other one a more forthright and uncomplicated romance of adventure is the result.⁵⁰

Both Yvain and Gawain and Yvain succeed as poems, but they are different and appeal to different tastes. Hopefully, those tastes can exist in the same reader.

NOTES

¹Among the surviving manuscripts of Yvain, there exists no completely satisfactory source for the English poem. Alexandre Micha, La Tradition Manuscrite des Romans de Chretien de Troyes (Paris, 1939), gives a classification of the seven manuscripts and two fragments of Yvain, and concludes that none of them came directly from any of the others.

²Ywain and Gawain (hereafter YG), p. xvii. The source for all quotations in the text from YG is Ywain and Gawain, eds. Albert B. Friedman and Norman T. Harrington, E. E. T. S., no. 254 (London, 1964). The source for all quotations in the text from Yvain is Kristian von Troyes, Yvain (Der Löwenritter), ed. Rudolf Baehr (Tübingen, 1958).

³Robert W. Ackerman, "The English Rimed and Prose Romances," in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Roger Sherman Loomis (Oxford, 1959), p. 481.

⁴Ackerman, p. 507.

⁵Ibid.

⁶P. Steinbach, Über den Einfluss des Chretien de Troies auf die altenglische Literatur (Leipzig, 1885), pp. 7-27, quoted in Ackerman, p. 508.

⁷Ackerman, p. 509.

⁸Although Chretien's Yvain is the subject here, it is by way of this romance that we are also pointing to the sources of YG.

⁹Arthur C. L. Brown, "The Knight of the Lion," PMLA, XX (1905), 696.

¹⁰YG, p. xxxvi.

¹¹YG, p. xxxiv.

¹²James Douglas Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance vol. II (Baltimore, 1928), p. 77.

¹³Anna Hunt Billings, A Guide to the Middle English Metrical Romances (New York, 1901), pp. 156-158.

¹⁴Ackerman, p. 507. Although the English poet worked directly from a manuscript of Yvain, none of the surviving manuscripts furnishes a completely satisfactory source for YG. See fn. 2, above.

¹⁵YG, p. xvii.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷I am grateful to Friedman and Harrington's introduction to YG for much of the organization of source analysis, and the overall organization of this paper.

¹⁸YG, p. xviii.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Henri Peyre, Le Classicisme français, p. 69, quoted in Henri Clouard and Robert Leggewie, eds., Anthologie de la littérature française (New York, 1960), pp. 464-465.

²¹D. H. Lawrence, "The Mess of Love," Selected Poems, ll. 12-14.

²²YG, p. xxvi.

²³YG, p. xxi.

²⁴YG, p. xxii.

²⁵YG, p. xxii. The two quoted phrases are the editors' terminology.

²⁶Friedman and Harrington state: "The his in ll. 830 and 831 apparently refers to Salados, whose horse, armour, and weapons have a place of honour in the funeral procession. The honores horse and armour commonly preceded the corpse in medieval English obsequies." YG, p. 121, fn. to ll. 829-30.

²⁷YG, p. 127, fn. to ll. 2669 ff.

²⁸The characters in the French romance move from Britain to Brittany (to the forest of Brocéliande). Chrétien nowhere mentions the fact that they crossed the channel. YG, p. xxiii.

²⁹Friedman and Harrington state that Forré was an Arab doctor in the Narbonnais branch of the cycle de Guillaume. W. W. Comfort, in his edition of Yvain, says that Forré was a legendary Saracen king of Naples mentioned in the epic poems. In Ernest Langlois' Table des noms propres de toute nature compris dans les chansons de geste (Paris, 1904), there are three different instances of the name Forré which seem to fit this context:

1. Forré, roi sarrasin, mis à mort par Rolant apres la prise de Nobles.
2. Forré, Sarrasin, fils du roi Maubrun.
3. Forré, Sarrasin, frère d'Esplendoine, chambellan de l'amirant, puis prisonnier at medecin d'Aimeri de Narbonne.

³⁰YG, p. liii.

³¹B. J. Whiting, "Proverbs in Certain Middle English Romances in Relation to Their French Sources," Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, XV (1933), 75-126.

³²Whiting makes a distinction, if only in organization, between proverbs and sententious remarks.

³³YG, pp. 115-116, fn. to l. 470.

³⁴YG, pp. 116-117.

³⁵YG, p. xxvi and pp. 130-131, fn. to ll. 3767-72.

³⁶The editors mistakenly state that in both versions, Lunet and the second maiden arrive at the castle together. Both versions, in fact, explicitly state the opposite:

Maintenant Lunete la leisse:
Cele retorne, et cele an va
Sole, tant que ele trova
La meison, ou mes sire Yvains
Ot este tant, que toz fu sains (5008-12)

Lune[t] hastily hies hir home,
And þe mayden sone to þe kastel come
Whare he was helid byforehand. (E 2877-79)

³⁷Jessie L. Weston, "Ywain and Gawain" and "Le Chevalier au Lion", p. 196 quoted in YG, p. 128, fn. to ll. 2815 ff.

³⁸YG, p. 128, fn. to ll. 2815 ff.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰YG, p. xxxi.

⁴¹YG, p. xxix.

⁴²YG, p. xxxii.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Gustave Cohen, Chrétien de Troves et son oeuvre (Paris, 1931), p. 361.

⁴⁵YG, p. xxxiii.

⁴⁶The name Alundyne is a mistake. The corresponding lines in Chrétien are:

Prise a Laudine de Landuc
La dame, qui fu fille au duc
Laudunet, dont an note un lai. (2151-53)

Apparently E thought the preposition "a" formed part of the proper name. Instead of Laudine, he read Alaudine and anglicized it to Alundyne. YG, p. 122, fn. to ll. 1254-55.

⁴⁷YG, p. xxxiv.

⁴⁸Ackerman, p. 508.

⁴⁹P. Steinbach, op. cit., pp. 7-27 in Ackerman, p. 508.

⁵⁰Ackerman, p. 509.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ackerman, Robert W. "The English Rimed and Prose Romances," in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages. ed. R. S. Loomis. Oxford, 1959.
- Auerbach, Erich. Mimesis. New York, 1953.
- Billings, Anna Hunt. A Guide to the Middle English Metrical Romances dealing with English and Germanic Legends and with the cycles of Charlemagne and of Arthur. New York, 1901. Yale Studies in English, IX.
- Brodeur, Arthur Gilchrist. "The Grateful Lion," PMLA, XXXIX (1924), 485-524.
- Brown, Arthur C. L. "The Knight of the Lion," PMLA, XX (1905), 673-706.
- Bruce, James Douglas. The Evolution of Arthurian Romance. vol. II. Baltimore, 1928.
- Chotzen, Th. M. "Le Lion d'Owein (Yvain) et ses prototypes celtiques," Neophilologus, XVIII (1933), 51-58 and 131-136.
- Chrétien de Troyes. "Yvain," in Arthurian Romances. ed. & trans. W. W. Comfort. London: Everyman's Library, no. 698. 1967.
- Chrétien de Troyes. Yvain ou Le Chevalier au Lion. trans. André Mary. New York, 1963.
- Clouard, Henri and Robert Leggewie, eds. Anthologie de la littérature française. New York, 1960.
- Cohen, Gustave. Chrétien de Troyes et son oeuvre. Paris, 1931.
- Cohen, Gustave. La Vie Littéraire en France au Moyen Âge. Paris. 1953.
- Cross, Tom Peete and William A. Nitze. Lancelot and Guenevere. Chicago, 1930.

- Everett, Dorothy. "A Characterization of the English Medieval Romances," Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association, XV (1929), 98-121.
- Frapplier, Jean. "Chrétien de Troyes," in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages. ed. R. S. Loomis. Oxford, 1959.
- French, W. H. and C. B. Hale. Middle English Metrical Romances. New York, 1930.
- Hamilton, George L. "Storm-making Springs: Rings of Invisibility and Protection. --Studies on the Sources of the Yvain of Chrétien de Troies," Romanic Review, II (1911), 355-375.
- Harris, Julian. "The Rôle of the Lion in Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain," PMLA, LXIV (1949), 1143-1163.
- Hopkins, Annette Brown. The Influence of Wace on the Arthurian Romances of Crestien de Troies. Menasha, Wisconsin, 1913.
- Jackson, W. T. H. "The Romance," in The Literature of the Middle Ages. New York, 1960.
- Kane, George. Middle English Literature. London, 1951.
- Ker, W. P. Epic and Romance. New York, 1908.
- Kristian von Troyes. Yvain (Der Löwenritter). ed. Rudolf Baehr. Tübingen, 1958.
- Lawrence, D. H. Selected Poems. The Penguin Poets, 1950.
- Lister, Wilfred. "Notes on the Text of the Middle English Romance 'Ywayne and Gawin'," Modern Language Review, XXXV (1940), 56-59.
- Loomis, Roger Sherman. Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes. New York, 1949.
- Micha, Alexandre. La Tradition Manuscrite des Romans de Chrétien de Troyes. Paris, 1939.
- Nitze, William A. A review article of Zenker, Rudolph. Forschungen zur Artusepik: I Ivainstudien (Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, no. 70). Halle, 1921. in Modern Philology, XX (1922), 101-104.
- Nitze, William. "The Fountain Defended," Modern Philology, VII (1909), 145-164.

- Schofield, W. H. English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer. New York, 1906.
- Severs, J. Burke. ed. A Manual of the Writings in Middle English: Fascicle -1- Romances. New Haven, 1967.
- Taylor, A. B. An Introduction to Medieval Romance. London, 1930.
- Warren, F. M. "Some Features of Style in Early French Narrative Poetry (1150-70)," Modern Philology, III (1905), 179-209 and (1906), 513-539.
- Whiting, B. J. "Proverbs in Certain Middle English Romances in Relation to Their French Sources," Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature. XV (1933), 75-126.
- Yvain and Gawain. eds. Friedman, Albert B. and Norman T. Harrington. E. E. T. S. no. 254. London, 1964.

Vita

Marcia R. Dugan was born the 28th of October, 1945, in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania to Marco A. Rodriguez and Irene M. Lipinski. She attended grade schools in Bethlehem, Pa. and Easton, Pa. and was graduated from Notre Dame H. S., Easton, Pa., in June 1963. She graduated magna cum laude with a B. A. in French from Cedar Crest College in 1967, after having spent a year abroad at the University of Aix-Marseille in Aix-en-Provence, France. She received her M. A. in English from Lehigh University in June, 1969, where she was a Hood Fellow. She is continuing her graduate work at the University of Toronto for the Ph.D. in Medieval Studies.