INFORMATION TO USERS

This was produced from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure you of complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark it is an indication that the film inspector noticed either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, or duplicate copy. Unless we meant to delete copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed, you will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed the photographer has followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For any illustrations that cannot be reproduced satisfactorily by xerography, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and tipped into your xerographic copy. Requests can be made to our Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases we have filmed the best available copy.

University
Microfilms
International

300 N. ZEEB ROAD, ANN ARBOR, MI 48106
18 BEDFORD ROW, LONDON WC1R 4EJ, ENGLAND

7923752

MICHEL, ROBERT ANTHONY
FROM SYMBOL TO SELF: THE "LAIS" OF MARIE DE FRANCE.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, PH.D., 1979

COPR. 1979 MICHEL, ROBERT ANTHONY
University Microfilms International 300 N. ZEEB ROAD, ANN ARBOR, MI 48106

© COPYRIGHT BY

ROBERT ANTHONY MICHEL

1979

PLEASE NOTE:

In all cases this material has been filmed in the best possible way from the available copy. Problems encountered with this document have been identified here with a check mark ✓.

1. Glossy photographs _____
2. Colored illustrations _____
3. Photographs with dark background _____
4. Illustrations are poor copy _____
5. Print shows through as there is text on both sides of page _____
6. Indistinct, broken or small print on several pages ✓ throughout ✓
7. Tightly bound copy with print lost in spine _____
8. Computer printout pages with indistinct print _____
9. Page(s) _____ lacking when material received, and not available from school or author _____
10. Page(s) _____ seem to be missing in numbering only as text follows _____
11. Poor carbon copy _____
12. Not original copy, several pages with blurred type _____
13. Appendix pages are poor copy _____
14. Original copy with light type _____
15. Curling and wrinkled pages _____
16. Other _____

University Microfilms International

300 N. ZEEB RD., ANN ARBOR, MI 48106 (313) 761-4700

FROM SYMBOL TO SELF:

THE *LAIS* OF MARIE DE FRANCE

by

ROBERT ANTHONY MICHEL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in French in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1979

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in French in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

APRIL 25, 1979
date

Paul A. Longo
Chairman of Examining Committee

April 25, 1979
date

Henri Peyre
Executive Officer

Madeleine Morris

Henry Hornik
Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Belle,

tu me refais le jour.

Bête.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With tender appreciation and intellectual satisfaction, I give thanks to:

Professor Paul Lonigan who has "directed" this dissertation in the true sense of the term by guiding my thoughts, while allowing me freedom of expression, so that I could reach an authentic interpretation of the Lais of Marie de France. His consummate knowledge of philosophy, mythology, religion, and the medieval period has facilitated my task. He is a helpful caring friend to whom I am indebted.

Professor Madeleine Morris whose concern for my success and interest in my work have been a constant in my career as a student. Her constructive criticism and keen observations have added form, precision, and objectivity to this analysis.

Professor Henry Hornik whose scholarship and ability to synthesize have contributed much to my understanding of Idealism and the twelfth century French Renaissance, both pertinent to this thesis.

Professor Henri Peyre whose vast knowledge of symbolism provided the inspiration which encouraged me to develop my thoughts in this area.

Jeanne Fuchs whose urging, insistence, proof-reading, and love have made much of this possible.

For and from these "Happy Few," I have enjoyed the fullness of a highly specialized study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter

I. FROM PRESENTATION TO IDENTITY 23

II. SYMBOLISM AND THE LAIS 47

The Prologue 54

The Symbol as Ideal Love 58

The Symbol as the Power of Love 71

The Symbol as Nominal Power 98

Druërie 108

III. CLASSICAL AND CELTIC MYTHOLOGY 123

The Symbol as Ideal Love 152

The Symbol as the Power of Love 164

The Symbol as Nominal Power 192

Druërie 201

IV. PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND BELIEF 213

The Prologue 255

The Symbol as Ideal Love 259

The Symbol as the Power of Love 277

The Symbol as Nominal Power 309

Druërie 322

V. COURTLY AND NON-COURTLY LOVE TRADITION 331

Druërie 340

The Prologue 369

Page

The Symbol as Ideal Love 370

The Symbol as the Power of Love 382

The Symbol as Nominal Power 408

CONCLUSION 432

BIBLIOGRAPHY 444

INTRODUCTION

Marie de France, her Lais, her literary models, her contribution to French literature, and even her identity still remain an enigma. Apart from the generally accepted and quite logical theory of her association with the court of Henry II of England to whom the Lais are dedicated, and other innocuous but valid assumptions concerning Marie's intellectual prowess, her knowledge of several languages including French, Breton, English, and Latin - and her possible noble birth as sister of this assassin-king of Thomas ã Becket aside[1] - merely shreds of evidence have been offered in an attempt to achieve a complete composite portrait of the artist. What contributes to this aura of mystery clouding and encircling Marie de France and her works has been exactly the compartmentalization of France's first poetess into a hodgepodge of non-related entities until only a fragmented glimpse of her personality, of what she may have been and may have known, shines forth. Certain lais are "definitively" cast in the Celtic mythological mold: Lanval, Yonec, Chievrefoil, Guigemar;[2] while others are believed to be of the more classical mythological strain among which Bisclavret and Deus Amanz are tinged with shades of Pliny's Historia Naturalis[3] and Ovid's Metamorphoses[4] respectively. And still there is the interminable courtly versus non-courtly debate over Chaitivel, Equitan, and Fresne.[5] Which of these various elements present in the

Lais constrain the critic to choose one and not the other as possible sources? Next, neoplatonic influences seem to become apparent to some critics in Laüstic and Chievrefoil,[6] whereas Milun with its multiple options of interpretations from a Welsh or general Celtic swan theme[7] to a "chanson de geste" father-son combat[8] appears to defy classification. And then, there was Eliduc. Does this lai represent a more realistic treatment of the Celtic Otherworld motif,[9] or does its inspiration lie in the Catholic transcendental spirit of the author herself? This compartmentalized examination of Marie's life and work should no longer be scrutinized under such a myopic microscope but rather through a more generalized telescopic approach in order to determine not only the varying traditions whence Marie drew but also the powers of cultural synthesis and crystallization inherent with the talent of the poetess herself. Therefore, shall we witness Marie's tendency to synthesize and reconcile traditions - philosophical, mythological, pagan, religious, and courtly. Furthermore, we shall determine how she extracts the omnipresent love theme from the courtly epics of the Middle Ages and from these seemingly contradictory or rather paradoxical visions of man and his world.

This convergence of traditions and the concentration of plot with its subsequent reduction of most of the adventure-exploit elements, which are transformed into mere donnões, will become manifest through the individual symbols of each lai in which some form of love or another prevails. "Symbols" such as the "laüstic," as opposed to the less intricate "signs" like the ring of recognition in Milun or the semi-comical chastity belt

in Eliduc known as "druérie" or love tokens, do not only represent a certain idea or concept as do "signs" but also develop that concept through a series of definitive steps of transition; this progression, therefore, assumes larger proportions so that the "signifiant," that which signifies, and the "signifié," that which is signified,[10] become totally enmeshed, fused, and confused one for the other, acquiring a life unto itself in which essence and existence are one. This philosophical point of view is neither foreign to Celtic nor Christian thought and belief whereby light is darkness in actu and darkness is light in potentia,[11] with duality playing a secondary role. "Symbols" encompass in this way much more a concealed meaning than their simplistic counterparts, "signs;" for instance, thunder may be the "sign" of rain and through extension, a forthcoming or impending tragedy.[12] However, this "sign" could never possess the "loaded" suggestive quality of the "laüstic" which on one hand epitomizes the platonically Christian world of the Idea - an Idea fixed in its own time zone of which we espy only the shadow - and on the other hand which changes significance from character to character in this lai, and even from Breton jongleur to Marie de France in her more realistic treatment of tragic love. The "symbol" thus furnishes a rare blend of idealism, the transcendence out of self towards a higher order of things, and a stark realistic study of love in all its forms, with all its pre-Petrarchan sensuality, and all in the neatly compact form of the lai; from epic to lai, from lai to symbol, synthesis upon synthesis, and a play within a play will typify the work of the poetess.

Associated throughout time with the occult, mysticism, hierophancy, the Eleusinian mysteries, the rites of Bacchus, neo-platonism, pass-words, shibboleths, and especially with articles and profession of faith,[13] symbols have also helped to maintain and propagate through their complex nature a duality of existence and interpretation: firstly, the more "rational" feature of a philosophical heritage which freezes or fixes the symbol and sets it apart from the reality of daily life, placing it in the Platonic Otherworld of the Parabole of the Cave and making it larger than life itself as in Chievrefoil - a tendency that can be traced back to the Stoics and their theories on "incorporals" right up to the Church Fathers who inherited this tradition and reconciled it with their own beliefs;[14] secondly, the "non-rational" side of the symbol, a mystical quality which paradoxically manifests itself in Marie's demythologizing brand of Celtic mythology, and even the debunking of certain heretofore revered principles, where a fusion of real, non-real, and dream-like elements takes place as in Yonec's hawkman lover. In either case however, non-rational or rational, there will be a noticeable attempt on Marie's part to "idealize" the symbol - to create an absolute, positively or negatively, and often through the rites of mysticism or the Celtic dream-world, leading both listener and herself to a point of elevation or a connaissance de soi, as intuited and even announced in her Prologue and as culminated in the final religious experience of Eliduc. Listen to how she invites future audiences to partake of this communion:

> Pur ceus ki a venir esteient
> E ki aprendre les deveient,
> K'i peüssent gloser la lettre
> E de lur sen le surplus mettre.

Li philesophe le saveient,
Par eus meïsmes entendeient. (Prologue, 13-18)[15]

Several points should be borne in mind: the Prologue, written after the lais, is a formalized statement of belief in Marie's role as "theologus" and "philosophus" skilled in exegesis,[16] and not just one of those many common "stock" prologue forms of the Middle Ages; Eliduc, her longest and possibly final lai (and placed last in most editions of the Lais) since influences and affinities with the Roman d'Enéas would indicate such,[17] has that Abbaye de Thélème flair about it which also adds to the theory of a conscious effort towards a connaissance de soi movement - all of which underlines the exegetic quality of her work. Furthermore, we are dealing with one of the richest periods in history, the height of the twelfth century French Renaissance[18] called the "aetas Ovidiana"[19] and not a totally misunderstood Ovid either as once believed.[20] Thus, the notion that Marie's lais develop along patterns of idealism - intuitive, rational, transcendental - is not at all far-fetched.[21] At times and with all the parody and puns intended, Marie's Ovidian side will reveal itself clearly; nevertheless, the overriding characteristics of her lais and of her final creation, the Espurgatoire Saint Patrice, are firmly rooted in idealism: the knowledge of self, world, and their inevitable fusion as filtered through the Catholic ethos. Finally, idealism per se was not an uncommon occurrence in the lyric poetry of the eleventh and twelfth centuries: the creative process was viewed as a procession from knowledge of self to ultimately that of God. This was a fundamental metaphor for the connaissance de soi espoused

in the poetry of Guillaume IX d'Aquitaine, Jaufrê Rudel, and Bernard de Ventadour among others.[22] Why therefore cannot the name of Marie de France be associated and joined to this predominating flow of history and literature, idealism?

During this study certain concepts shall be pitted against each other for a sturdier comprehension and understanding of the function of symbols within each of the following categories: Classical and Celtic Mythology, Pagan and Christian Thought and Belief, Courtly and Non-Courtly Love Traditions. In this way, the extent of Marie's imitation of previous authors and points of originality and innovation might be determined and clarified more fully through the tracing of various symbols. These dichotomies of traditions may hopefully blend enough so that we can focus upon a relatively complete picture of Marie and maybe even a new theory regarding her identity: Mary Beaumont or Mary, Abbess of Shaftesbury.[23] Our main interest concerns how the symbols relate to each other and coincide in these differing branches of study with all their innate conflicts: philosophy vs. mysticism, psychology vs. intellectualism or rationalism. What shall emerge is a convergence and crystallization of the all-prevailing love theme, Marie's principal concern, and the wholeness or integration of the personality of Marie's self within her time.

Are the Lais part of the mythological epic mold? Classical or Celtic? How much do the hero's exploits and adventures interest Marie? Is it glorification of country or total submission to love? What predominates? Maybe neither. Is that fatalistic quality in both love and war peculiar to Celtic

mythology and legend alone as Bédier and others would have us believe?[24] Obviously not, since in the lyric poets like Jaufré Rudel's "amor de lonh", this predetermined self-condemning context is already apparent: the poet will die when he sees his love, the Princess of Tripoli. The ending is known from the beginning. The Celtic heroes likewise - and it must be remembered that there are no manuscripts earlier than the twelfth century to verify conclusively any borrowings by the French[25] - have their deaths envisioned by a series of self-incriminating injunctions of "geis" which will ultimately bring about destruction and tragedy, not without frequent parody of "geis" upon "geis" intermingled to such a degree that the hero is inextricably bound.[26] In both the French and Celtic tradition, there seems to be an omnipotent force present which maintains the hero in this state of fatality. All is in the omniscent mind of the controlling gods. There are obvious parallels and prototypes to be found among the Greek heroes damned by their own tragic flaw, hubris. Confusion always exists between the human and divine nature and attributes of all these heroes who endlessly search to comprehend their godly origins. A mélange of fantasy and reality? Explanations of Christ's own nature are part of Catholic dogma. Aside from this fact, one common denominator repeats itself in both Greek and Celtic mythology: the young god-old god syndrome of struggle for power and dominance over both land and women. The eventual overthrow of the older god is imminent, irreversible, and a continuous process whereby the young god acquires his predecessor's symbols of authority. Cúchulainn, the young sun god like Zeus, slays the old sun and

lightning god, Cúroí.[27] How aware is Marie de France of these solar deities? Is she demythologizing? Marie's conscious attempt to duplicate this conflict in battle scenes between father and son or between husband and lover is dubious, but the only clear relationship, if that, is the acquisition of certain rights and privileges by the younger foe heretofore granted only to father or husband: the rival stakes and makes claim. If the affinity exists and it does, the collective unconscious is at work. Transference of culture and even communication between Celts, Greeks, and other tribes are recognized facts.[28] In conjunction with the gods and their deeds, there is the question of where they live. On top of Mount Olympus, inaccessible and circuitous climb, or far off the coast of Ireland or in the fairy mounds and hills, the "sidí,"[29] amongst real live people is where they made their abode. The ineffable and ethereal Celtic Otherworld has definitely left its mark on Marie; it is quite apparent and is ingrained in several lais. In Lanval, the fée or fairy lover has her maiden-messengers light the way for the lover through a well-plotted progression and sequence of events - all predetermined by this Fairy Mistress. An essential key to the understanding of most of these myths is precisely bound up with the word, predestination. The rejection of the lover, Lanval, and his ostracization from the "real world", his stranger-like quality, his resignation and ambivalent feelings of duty to search for a new life "elsewhere," his initiation and allurement to the "sidí", and the ultimate fate of his journey through this mystical drawing are all dictated by the fée. Her maidens can be seen in the cup-bearing ladies

of the Graal or even the Fisher King who posts warnings and guides the way as the best pilot of Arthurian Romance.[30] Whenever the supernatural being happens to be a male, then the shapeshifting Celtic phenomenon of man-to-beast occurs, which is neither uncommon to Ovid's nor Marie's imagination. Jupiter in order to seduce will become what his heart desires. In any event, traditions are converging and taking hold of our early writers' body and soul.

In matters dealing with the psychology of love, is Marie faithful to the courtly or non-courtly traditions? These are the questions to be examined. What games are being played out? What psychological tricks are being fulfilled? What is the overriding attitude toward men and women in the Lais? Are the characters belittled, elevated, or realistically perceived? Some critics would have us believe that Andreas Capellanus' doctrine of role playing between those of equal or unequal rank is at work in the Lais, but Andreas' De Arte Honeste Amandi merely codified his own impressions of what he thought was going on between lovers, and incidentally his highly comic and cynical treatise of preciosity had been composed much after the so-called courtly poets and Marie - that is, the early thirteenth century.[31] Are the dialogues carried on between Marie's lovers a measure of competence in scholastic dialectics? Casuistry? Does the Ovidian art of persuasion have any weight - that brilliant piece of logic and guess work that subtly manoeuvres and coerces someone to bed? Or maybe it is the tongue-in-cheek disposition of Chrétien de Troyes that prevails?[32] Love in Marie de France, no matter how it is regarded, does not exist in a vacuum as

Emmanuel Mickel proposes to study it: for him, it is "not courtly love, not the development of psychology of characters, but the nature of love itself; the love so often personified in medieval literature, so often treated as a natural force . . . it does subvert reason and cause man to react in a way that ultimately brings him suffering and grief."[33] Pray tell, what is its nature? Love is, in fact, acted upon and influenced by the milieu and a set of principles of a given time of history, namely Christianity and Feudalism. Apparently, the term, "l'amour courtois," its essence and nature, has not yet been adequately nor satisfactorily explained; it has grown into too general a term to be defined with any precision. What it has come to mean generally or rather been confused to mean is a list of requisites and prerequisites to be met by the lover if he is to win his Lady's love - waiting, suffering, prolonging the waiting and the suffering, fulfilling duties and deeds[34] - that is, to humble oneself to the point where one must ask where the seriousness stops and the parody begins. Adulterous love seems to be the only answer in these contexts since incompatibility between love and marriage reigns. While it is not always the case with Marie, on the whole however, it is a given - married people just do not love each other. Nonetheless, this Ovidian cynicism is for the most part lacking in Marie's Lais, and yet love is not for the poetess just an all-inspiring "je ne sais quoi" that always sweeps the lovers straight off their feet to the Otherworld on the wings of a nightingale. What we will attempt to establish is Marie's attitude towards love, its elements, and above all the elements absent from her work.

Consequently, through a process of elimination, another form of synthesis will occur that will shed more light upon her "love" attitude.

In Chrétien, married men sometimes become "recréants;"[35] they get lazy; obstacles are no longer present in their path nor feats of bravery required. From the Freudian standpoint, the maturity level of a hero who cannot accept the calm of his new marital status would be held in question, but Freud also made an acute observation: when the hero settles down, the myth is dead[36] - and that is literary tragedy. On the other hand, the portrait of the woman in the Middle Ages seems double: she can be demanding as demonstrated in some of Chrétien's work tinged by Marie de Champagne's influence and instigation; Marie de France's wife of the Bisclavret and Guildeluëc, wife of Eliduc, demand in their own way but perhaps not as overtly. The married woman is not always - though she may be - beholden, tyrannized, and even put under lock and key as is Guigemar's lady love; however, even here the tongue-in-cheek becomes evident when one notices on the wall of the lady's prison-home Venus burning Ovid's Remedium Amoris. Just in case our lady gets some fanciful ideas about her powers of attraction, she is confined to quarters. The mistake that is often made in developing a concept of love in a particular writer is not knowing how to pinpoint tone and mood. Is the author being facetious or not? Does any sign of sincerity emerge at a specified moment? Not all of the literature of the Middle Ages is one large courtly game of insincerity as many try to paint it. Then again, what does this term, "courtly," really mean? Does not everything that transpires at

the court warrant the stamp, "courtly"?[37] We must know when to capture certain moments of seriousness and distinguish them clearly from those of parody. In Marie's Lais, both cynicism and idealism towards love will manifest themselves through a complex series of symbols.

The philosophical questions encircling Marie have cast a large shadow of doubt and speculation. The problem, as I see it, lies in the degree to which one names Marie "philosophus-theologus." It has been sufficiently established that since the Prologue was written last, Marie reflected somewhat upon her work, the Lais, and subsequently perceived a unity of thought and of form. There is a considerable amount of self-awareness in her efforts to fulfill a role and mission within the Christian framework. The Christian ideals in Eliduc and elsewhere will be examined in depth further on; let it suffice for the moment to enunciate one fact: humilitas and caritas are pivotal points in certain lais, and paganistic mythology will yield to these principles of the new faith.[38] The Abbaye de Thélème ending of Eliduc - Rabelais' couple must however depart if they marry - is not coincidence; on the contrary, it is predicated by a one thousand year old Christian heritage and a hotly debated subject among Church Fathers in Marie's time.[37] But what contact did Marie have with prelates? Can we say that Marie is interpreter of sacred biblical texts in the exegetic sense of the term? This view of her role and mission has given rise to some very fascinating analyses of Marie's own interpretations concerning paraboles and the like. To what point can these analogies be made, fascinating as they might be? Or is

Marie really trying to tell us something through her symbols in a more occult hermetic way by means of secret pagan rites of initiation of Celtic mythology or by the more cryptic ogham sticks of the Chievrefoil?[40] What is she communicating to modern man? -

> Custume fu as anciens,
> Ceo testimoine Preciens,
> Es livres ke jadis feseient
> Assez oscurement diseient (Prologue 9-12)

We have here a curious blend of highly interwoven and sophisticated treatments of multifaceted symbols like mirrors reflecting tradition into other mirrors. The task is to decipher and unearth in order to obtain further insight into Marie's personality. "Philosophus" therefore? Arguments over conflicts of priority between faith and reason, the demonstrable characteristics of faith through reason, the metaphysical proofs for the existence of God? How therefore does Marie warrant the title of philosopher? Is it in a more general fashion wherein the application and attribution of the term lie? To what lengths is Marie conceptualizing and intellectualizing her feeling on love as did the medieval philosophers, or is she being transported to the Celtic Otherworld by faith alone? A key to this puzzle might be found in the mysticism of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, unquestionably and uncontestably, the strongest most influential spiritual leader of the twelfth century.[41] Although he died in 1153 - around the approximate birth of Marie de France - his philosophical teachings lingered on through the Cistercian order leaving an enormous impact. St. Bernard is credited with

the formulizing and structuring of the nova devotio - the adoration and love of both Jesus and Mary[42] - whence an affinity, if not a source, of the idealization of man and woman in Marie de France's profane counterparts. It is through this transcendental spiritualism of St. Bernard that Marie's philosophical tendencies were born. St. Bernard - counselor of popes, preacher of the Second Crusade, denunciator of Abelard's conceptualism, and founder of the devotio moderna - did not have a direct influence on Marie's life; his writings alone though have earned him the title of "Mellifluous Doctor" - his works being so sweetly but forcefully persuasive. Who would be able to deny the possible affinity in regard to love-worship especially since the overwhelming Christian milieu in which Marie's thoughts were nurtured was in large part due to St. Bernard and the Cistercian order? We should never lose sight of Mary and her place within the context of the Middle Ages. Her contribution can only be ascertained through an analysis of preceding and subsequent historical facts and literary movements. Where does she fit in the general scheme of things - the Middle Ages - and more precisely, the twelfth century Renaissance.

A shift in emphasis in this study of symbols will occur from the much battered worn-torn Freudian aspects - the phallic swords, the confining, repressing and depressing towers, the escapist bird-man fantasies, the oedipal triangular conflicts of ménage à trois - to a Jungian explanation of the situation at hand. The pat and blatant contrivances with which most critics are feverishly and boringly familiar shall give way

to Jung's terminology of dreams and symbols whereby a key being placed in the lock of a door becomes not solely the classical sexual imagery but a representation in which the door will symbolize hope, the lock charity, and the key faith in and the desire for God.[43] The multifaceted Jungian symbolic interpretation will be at the basis of this analysis. As Freud emphasized one aspect of symbol - the sexual - Jung turned towards another - the idealistic. Of course, neither one is mutually exclusive of the other in reality or dreams. However, keeping in mind Marie's heritage, background, and frame of reference, the Jungian system applies itself more readily to Marie's understanding of medieval reality. Symbols in the Lais will thus reflect the desire and a progression towards the transcendental, on one hand, and the integrity or wholeness of the Self on the other - which are not diametrically opposed functions at all. In fact, these views are paralleled in Christian thought. Marie will integrate various traditions in order to conceptualize and resolve dilemmas in her own mind and thereby establish the wholeness of her being and transmit this new synthesis of culture in a way special to herself. This inward motion will blossom into an all-encompassing transcendental world where Self and God unite, where microcosm and macrocosm harmonize.

This examination of the symbol will not endeavor to offer complaisant explanations of a hypothetical nature - the hopes, fears, wants, needs, angers, and infantile desires. This is not a psychocritique with Marie as resident patient - which in itself could be interesting; however and moreover, Marie will

be set and fixed in the time and elements of the period in conjunction with mythology, philosophy, and psychology. In this way, we may understand Marie as she understood herself and her role - and in this light only. Superimposing our own standards and extending meanings of superfluous knowledge will be minimized as much as possible. Those dreamlike Jungian symbols and figures of metamorphosis will open the door to our understanding, reflecting Marie's inner life and the darker hidden regions of the unconscious. In Marie's oneiric illusionary world, benevolent and demonic figures will clash; in the dream world of a person, these figures are termed "animus" for the woman and "anima" for the man since these creatures of the mind manifest themselves as the opposite sex.[44] Frightening images such as the Hawkman of Yonec, while not fear-provoking in himself, become such when the lady's chastity is in question and adultery is imminent, or the Fairy Mistress of Lanval who also has elements of fear associated with her. These symbolized figures offer fuller comprehension into Marie's psyche where problems of the heart are concerned. That "animus" side of Marie's fantasy world might not consider so repulsive or socially unacceptable certain love-associated behavior patterns that her conscious waking state would reject. Her writing reflects more dream than reality. The numerous rapports and inter-relationships between these dreamlike symbols can only enhance our interpretations lending larger perspectives. There is a definite collective unconscious quality about myths and dreams which are an integral part of the philosophical heritage although not so often admitted. There are similar symbols which

are universally used and which strive to integrate the id, ego, and superego of the personality; the soul and self must be reunited to achieve self-acceptance. For a deeper understanding of the inner and external worlds and their resulting interplay, a symbolic approach to the study of the Lais is essential lest confusion exist. These symbols in Jungian terminology are called "mandala" - round, square, triangular, and often interwoven geometric figures.[45] Figures of geometric perfection represent the individual's longing towards the unification of the Self: King Arthur's Round Table, for example. However, in Marie's case, it is the ever-recurring triangular image of her inwardly enacted love conflict. It is imperative that the characteristic love-triangle quality of the Lais be played out in the poetess' mind in order to satisfy and reconcile the many functions of her psyche, thereby fulfilling integration. As with some modern Christian existentialists, "I, thou, and the world" must be satisfied for the attainment of personal happiness.[46] From the collective unconscious, therefore, stem the Indo-European family ties of language and thought, Marie's recurrent symbols of the "triangle" crisis, and resolution of this conflict toward a far-reaching Otherworld concept.

To plumb the symbol to its depths in this way is our goal. The first step is to examine the surface level - the obvious meanings, the denotations, the phallic and kteic[47] signs, the oedipal and electra complexes and triangular imagery. Secondly, we will focus our attention on the more intellectualized connotations: the Platonic Idea and Reality, Essence and Being - frozen in time. Included in this intellecutalized view of the

symbol will be the Jungian form of analysis as opposed to the Freudian vision of the world. Thirdly, we will analyze the more emotionalized meanings dealing with phobias, neuroses, psychoses, dissociation, sublimations, anger, fear, hurt, and an attempt at integration, calm, serenity, and ultimate happiness. All underlying possibilities have to be at least noticed and then studied. This three-sided investigation of the symbol in conjunction with the studies of mythology, philosophy, and psychology - always adhering to the twelfth century context and being faithful to its thought - will exemplify the procedure and aim of this study in detailing Marie de France's quest for permanence, integration of Self and mission in life in addition to her ultimate transcendance to a higher order of things.

Notes

[1] The Urban T. Holmes and the John Fox theories regarding Marie's identity shall be probed fully during Chapter I.

[2] Frederick Hodgson, "Alienation and the Otherworld in Lanval, Yonec, and Guigemar," Comitatus, 5(1974), pp. 19-31. There are many conflicting classifications; the above is used as an example only. It would be too lengthy and early at this moment to list all critics who have placed certain lais in certain categories. The discrepancies and differences of opinion as to under which particular category a lai should be fitted are many. In the body of this study, these theories will be discussed in depth. Some authors such as Emanuel Mickel pay little notice to the Celtic element while others like R. N. Illingworth and Tom Cross do.

[3] S. Battaglia, "Il mito del Licantropo nel 'Bisclavret" di Maria di Francia," Filologia romanza, 3(1956): pp. 229-53.

[4] Segre Cesare, "Piramo e Tisbe nei Lais di Maria di Francia," Studi in Onore di Vittorio Lugli e Diego Valeri (Venezia: Pozza, 1961): pp. 845-53.

[5] Harry F. Williams in Les Lais de Marie de France (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), 133pp., prefers the classification of "réalistes" for these lais.

[6] Mr. Williams opts for "anecdotiques" in regard to these two lai, thus eliminating other more esthetic interpretations.

[7] Constance Bullock-Davies, "Love-Messenger in Milun," Nottingham Medieval Studies, 16: 20-27.

[8] Ernest Hoepffner, "La Géographie et l'histoire dans les Lais de Marie de France," Romania 56(1930):1-32. This critic among others mentions the father-son combat in Gormont et Isembart in which a character's name, curiously enough, resembles that of Milun - a certain Miles de Gailart.

[9] Howard Robertson, "Love and the Otherworld in Eliduc," Essays in Honor of Louis Francis Salano, Holmes and Cormier eds. (Chapel Hill: University Press, 1970), pp. 167-176.

[10] Henri Peyre, Qu'est-ce que le Symbolisme, (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1974), pp. 1-20.

[11] Alwyn Rees, Celtic Heritage: Ancient Traditions in Ireland and Wales, (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 41.

[12] Altizer and Beardslee, Truth, Myth, and Symbol (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962).

[13] Sukeylâ Bayrav, Symbolisme médiéval (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1957), chap. 1: Symbole-emblème chez Marie de France, 232 pp. For a more comprehensive study on mysticism and idealism, I refer you to Henry Hornik's "More on the Hermetica and the French Renaissance," Studi Francesi 52 (1974), 1-12.

[14] Emile Bréhier, La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1962), p. 5: "une force interne qui se déploie."

[15] Marie de France, Les Lais, pub. par Jean Rychner, Classiques Français du Moyen Age (Paris: Champion, 1973), p. 1. All subsequent citations will come from this text - "édition critique."

[16] Leo Spitzer, "The Prologue to the Lais of Marie de France and Medieval Poetics," Modern Philology XLI: pp.96-102.

[17] R. N. Illingworth, "La Chronologie des Lais de Marie de France," Romania, 87 (1966):433-475. The author has concluded that the Prologue was written after the Lais; he also has divided them into three groups depending upon sources that may have influenced the poetess:

L'Estoire des Engleis et du Brut - influences composed between 1155-60	Piramus et Tisbé influence 1160	Enéas et Tristan influences 1165 and after
Bisclavret	Deus Amantz	Lanval
La Fresne	Eqitan	Yonec
Laüstic		Milun
Chaitivel		Chievrefoil
		Guigemar
		Eliduc

[18] Henry Hornik, "Three Interpretations of the French Renaissance," Studies in the Renaissance, VIII (1960):43-66. The traditionalist, continuity, and conciliatory schools of thought are presented.

[19] L. P. Wilkinson, Ovid Recalled (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 378.

[20] C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 7.

[21] Henry Hornik, "Rabelais and Idealism," Studi Francesi, 1969: pp. 16-25.

[22] Maria Casella, "Poesia e Storia," Archivo storico italiano, 96 part 2(1938), pp. 3-63 and 153-199.

[23] The Holmes and Fox theories.

[24] Joseph Bédier, "Les Lais de Marie de France," Revue des Deux Mondes, 107 (1891):835-63.

[25] Rees, p. 23.

[26] Rees, pp. 266-278.

[27] Roger Loomis, Celtic Myth and Arthurian Romance (New York: Columbia University Press, 1926), p. 57.

[28] Joseph Campbell, Masks of God: Occidental Mythology (New York: Viking Press, 1969), p. 300. The Firbolgs, a pre-Celtic people, came from Greece through Spain. In addition, Loomis traces the Celtic movement from Ireland, Wales, England, Bretagne, France, right through to Italy - which is known as the "Celtic Hypothesis."

[29] Gerard Murphy, Ossianic Lore and Romantic Tales of Medieval Ireland (Dublin: Cultural Relations Committee, 1961), p. 7.

[30] Loomis, p. 188.

[31] C. S. Lewis, p. 32.

[32] Paul Lonigan, "The Authorship of the Guillaume d'Angleterre: A New Approach," Studi Francesi, 47-48 (1972): 308-314. A study on irony, parody, and the tongue-in-cheek of Chrétien de Troies in order to establish authorship.

[33] Emanuel Mickel, Marie de France (New York: Twayne, 1974), p. 10o.

[34] Joseph Bédier, Histoire de la littérature française, tome 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1923), p. 45-46.

[35] Chrétien de Troyes, Oeuvres Choisies (Yvain) (Paris: Larousse, 1936), p. 62.

[36] Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), p. 66: "Any restriction of this aggressiveness directed outwards would be bound to increase the self-destruction." See also Denis de Rougemont, Love and the Western World (New York: Random House, 1956 reprint), who reaches a similar conclusion that doomed lovers must also erect obstacles in their passion in order to perpetuate such passion.

[37] Paul Lonigan, "Calogrenant's Journey and the Mood of 'Yvain,'" Studi Francesi, 58 (1976): pp. 1-20. The author demonstrates how the term "corteisie" could become something other than the well-mannered refined speech of the court where Calogrenant and Kes in the presence of the Queen try to outdo each other in rudeness.

[38] Howard Robertson, p. 169.

[39] U. T. Holmes, "Further on Marie de France," Symposium iii (1949), p. 336.

[40] Maurice Cagnon, "Chievrefueil and the Ogamic Tradition," Romania, 91(1970): pp. 238-255.

[41] Roland Bainton, The Medieval Church (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1962), p. 41: "Bernard dominated councils, invaded universities, chided princes, corresponded with crowned heads, and chided a pope who had come from his own abbey."

[42] Etienne Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1955), pp. 47-48.

[43] Carl Jung, Man and his Symbols (New York: Dell Publish. Co., 1964), p. 15.

[44] Carl Jung, pp. 187-188.

[45] Carl Jung, pp. 231-232.

[46] George Abernethy, Philosophy of Religion (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 250.

[47] kteic or ctenoid meaning comblike or pectinate (having teeth) as seen in the Deus Amanz by Domenico Fasciano, "La Mythologie du lai les Deus Amants," Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medievale, 16(1974): pp. 79-85.

Chapter I

FROM PRESENTATION TO IDENTITY

A great number of questions have arisen concerning the origins of the Lais, whether they had "continental" or "insular" roots.[1] Whether or not Marie de France had ever heard a lai sung by a Breton jongleur is also unknown to us. What complicates matters further are the definitions of what a "lai" actually is.[2] Was it entirely a musical composition at first, and when was the narrative portion introduced, or when did this narrative portion become distinct and separate from the "note"?[3] All of these questions have been discussed at length with little resolution. It is generally believed that the separation of music and text had already taken place in Marie's time.[4] There are other subdivisions of this circular reasoning. In addition to these hypotheses, certain critics have demonstrated the "stock" nature of the medieval prologue from tracing its ancestry back to Greek drama and through Cicero's De oratore while making fine and necessary distinctions between exordium, proemium, principium, and prologus with their respective functions[5] which are basically to introduce the subject and establish a definite rapport with the audience. Quite a number of clever sophisticated attention-getting devices were employed. Marie appeals to the listener's attentiveness in order that he may decipher what is said and possibly what she is saying of herself. But

to date, not even a conjecture has been attempted as to the presentation of the Lais. How did Marie really begin her work - the actual principium? It has been established that even today when one of the country folk of Ireland is asked to relate or recite one of the adventure stories of the Táin Bó Cuailnge, one of the most famous sagas, he often forgets, elaborates, and may even recount the tale in a more exciting manner one time than another.[6] If the story is too long, he will certainly not be able to hold his audience's attention without an attractive "audite topos."[7] Marie de France obviously did not recite the twelve lais one after the other in a single performance; the court would have grown weary and lost any message that was to be perceived. One must bear in mind that the Lais also represented a recreation in process for this aristocratic society. In what way could Marie have presented her lais? In what order? This may even offer us some insight into the possible chronology of the Lais or some verification or refutation of the already postulated chronologies of Hoepffner and Illingworth among others.[8] Our concern and even preoccupation with the form of presentation could establish a link to Marie de France's identity.

One is struck, after looking over and over again at the names of the twelve lais, by certain features. An apparent attempt at alphabetizing may have been one of Marie's preoccupations: Aquitan (a variation of Equitan)[9], Bisclavret, Chievrefoil and Chaitivel, Deus Amanz, Eliduc, Fresne, Guigemar or even Gotelef for the Chievrefoil, Ionec (another variation of Yonec),[10] Laüstic, and finally Milun - halfway through the

alphabet. Not perfect, but it makes one wonder and probe more deeply to ascertain whether Marie had a plan right from the start - a sort of highly structured symbolism with its usual esoteric qualities which conceal meanings purposefully. Secondly, if we examine phonetically the names Chievrefoil and Chaitivel, one notices the same initial palatals and the closely related intervocalic f/v phenomenon of vocalized and non-vocalized consonants. Would Marie possibly "sing" these two lais one after the other? These two lais are both short and closely related thematically as we shall see. Is Marie endeavoring to explain her deepest thoughts through an intricate system of symbols as she hints at in that highly hermetic prologue of hers? None of this is conclusive. Thus, the aura of mystery continues.

Coupling is one of Marie's favorite devices within the internal structure of each individual lai. Often two verses either complement or oppose each other as was cleverly shown by J. A. Frey:

> Dui chevalier ilec maneient
> E deus forz maisuns i aveient. (Laüstic, 9-10)
>
> Que femme deus enfanz eüst
> Si deus humes ne coneüst? (Fresne, 84-85)

In addition to these rhymed octosyllabic couplings, one cannot help but notice the symmetry that surrounds the number two. The critic does not only view this as a stylistic occurrence within Marie but also examines the psychological implications of these couplings;[11] for example, Chievrefoil is a "perfect" coupling since honeysuckle and hazel tree are united whereas in Chaitivel an unfulfilled coupling takes place since lady and

lover never unite.[12] In this way, Frey has extended his stylistic idea to a more explication de texte approach. Let us extend his meaning even further: this interior coupling would also afford Marie the reason to juxtapose and sing these two lais one after the other in order to exert a larger impact on her audience through contrast. Let me suggest therefore that there was an outer structure and coupling of the lais. Chaitivel and Chievrefoil, in particular, lend themselves very well to this analysis and may, indeed, have been recited together since they present a case in opposition: Chievrefoil, the transcending ideal Tristan and Iseult love of the century and of all time, and Chaitivel, the more mundane courtly and selfish lady who demanded too much and received nothing. While poking her literary finger at members of the royal entourage, Marie may have started by saying, in rhyme of course, "And now I shall tell you the story of the most famous love in the world," and after this tale she might have continued by saying, "And now let us hear the story of lovers who were not eternally bound to one another." All is in the realm of "fantastic" possibility; however, other external couplings and presentations can justifiably be hypothesized in like manner. Yonec is our Celtic Hawkman, the bird-lover of the supernatural order who could have been easily coupled with another bird image, the "laustic" - the male substitute calling his lady fair and culminating in that Platonic, larger than life, ideal symbol of love - and death. Case in point: the Celtic blend of fantasy followed by the more courtly framework. These lais may have been presented two at a time, back to back, or within the same day or given time period for

reasons of contrast and similarity. Thus, there is a visible movement from the extraordinary to the "more realistic." In Lanval, it is now a supernatural woman rather than man who captivates and mystifies the lover whereas in Guigemar, although our lady seems to have in the beginning, as some critics point out,[13] certain supernatural qualities, she is merely of earthly stock locked up in her old jealous husband's tower. Let us not overlook the comic elements; there is tongue-in-cheek humor throughout. Remember that in the so-called courtly tradition ulterior motives prevail, and whatever social game Marie is playing while she sings will be our task to determine. Therefore, another possible coupling exists with Lanval and Guigemar. The nameless children motif may have followed next or on another day or time. Fresne simply bears the name of the tree, the ash, where she, the heroine was left to die; the illegitimate son of Milun has no real name either. We may call these the brother-and-sister lais of those who are finally restored to their rightful position in society. Is Marie herself possibly bearing a grudge due to the loss of rights she may have had? Continuing along, young lovers may have been paired with the older corrupt prosaic ones: the Deus Amanz faithful in their love to the tragic end and Equitan's brand of love for the senechal's wife and lack of loyalty to the senechal until the fatal end. Plus, the Deus Amanz and Equitan have been linked in time circa 1160 by Illingworth as having been influenced by Piramus and Tisbe.[14] Coupling may open new doors in aiding the critic in establishing chronologies. The last possible coupling centers around the differing wife motifs: the helpful virtuous

kind, Guildeluëc, in Eliduc, and the treacherously fickle one of the Bisclavret. Other possibilities of coupling might be offered, but this seems the most logical. If anyone were to dispute these couplings on grounds of dating or chronology, the reply would be that none of the datings is a confirmed fact. Guigemar seems to have been the first lai and Eliduc the last,[15] but all is speculation. Thus, this theory of coupling is quite plausible.

Let us now look once again at these couplings in a schēma form in order to determine Marie's general subject matters and how these subject matters may relate to the poetess herself.

Man — Yonec - supernatural lover (18 pages, 24 minutes)
Man — Laüstic - Platonic ideal (6 pages, 8 minutes)

Woman — Lanval - supernatural mistress (21 pages, 29 minutes)
Woman — Guigemar - lady in a tower (28 pages, 37 minutes)

Love — Chievrefoil - the zenith (4 pages, 6 minutes)
Love — Chaitivel - the nadir (8 pages, 10 minutes)

Nameless Children — Fresne - girl (17 pages, 23 minutes)
Nameless Children — Milun - boy (17 pages, 23 minutes)

Lovers — Deus Amanz - young and innocent (9 pages, 13 minutes)
Lovers — Equitan - old and guilty (11 pages, 15 minutes)

Wife — Bisclavret - treacherous (11 pages, 15 minutes)
Wife — Eliduc - virtuous (44 pages, 59 minutes)

Since it takes about six minutes to recite Chievrefoil, the shortest of the tales consisting of four pages read at an approximate speed of 1.33 minutes per page, one would need a half an hour to forty minutes for a lai of average size, seventeen to twenty-eight pages like Fresne and Guigemar, and an hour or so for the longest, Eliduc, which has forty-four pages - always

remembering to allow an addition of one to thirty minutes or more for musical interludes and "breaks" between the readings of these coupled lais. Only one pair was probably recited on a given day since more would have bored everyone and lost semblance of any continuity. The feasibility of this manner of recitation is apparent as indicated by the projected times of any two lais. The longest set, Eliduc and Bisclavret, would have only taken an hour and fifteen minutes approximately if they were read in succession. Readings may vary depending upon rhythms, crescendos and decrescendos, and pauses especially with the longer lais where additional time is needed in proportion to length and dynamics. What interests us more is not the feasibility of this method but the general statements of insight that can be declared from these seemingly simplistic conclusions: Marie is concerned about the Man, the Woman, the Wife, consequently the Love conflicts of the Lovers, and finally the Nameless Children. The categories are simplistic but revealing. Up to now, no critic has ever dared or deigned to consider the possiblity of some very day-to-day realism pertinent to Marie de France's own factual life within the symbolic nature of the Lais. To become personal was in general a trait foreign to the Middle Ages; one did not express himself and his needs directly, nor did one speak about his family either. But indirectly what is being expressed? Could any of these triangular love conflicts and, in particular, the nameless child preoccupation have any bearing on Marie's own life? Or is it all just part of the "stock" tradition without an ounce of truth or sincerity? Was the first poetess of France so insensitive or apprehensive that

she could not even express herself indirectly? Are we so naive to think that hardly anyone during the Middle Ages could confide some element of fact, of his own private life, in order to perpetuate some idea of Self? As difficult as it seems, I will try to show how Marie's preoccupation can be related to actual facts about her life. Let us put in abeyance this theory of presentation and its conclusions for the moment, and let us reexamine the two major theories concerning Marie de France's identity. Is she Marie Beaumont, the Holmes theory,[16] or is she Marie Abbess of Shaftesbury, the Fox theory?[17] I will try to demonstrate that they are not only one and the same but also the poetess. With the aid of this new theory of presentation and through other items of factual information found in the Lais, we hope to establish the identity of Marie de France.

The John Charles Fox theory is understandable, logical, but only half correct. He assumes that Marie de France is Marie the Abbess of Shaftesbury since the founder of this abbey was King Alfred to whom Marie attributes the English version of the Fables which she translated, and since the Count William mentioned in the Fables is identified with William Longsword, natural son of Henry II and nephew of the abbess.[18] Furthermore, this Marie was the natural daughter of Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou and father of Henry II, who died in 1151. Therefore, Geoffrey had this illegitimate daughter sometime prior to that date, or as near as the historians can conclude, only a few years earlier to Emma, the "lady of Maine," with whom he is said to have had three other children.[19] The first time, however, that this particular Marie is even mentioned occurs

in 1181 through charters granted and awarded to the Abbess of Shaftesbury by King Henry the Second himself who indeed acknowledged her as his half sister. The only objection to Fox's conclusion is the gap of those thirty odd years prior to the 1181 date during which time the Abbess is a non-entity. The only other substantial piece of evidence is the Abbess' demise: she died around 1216. The Holmes theory could satisfy and explain those thirty unaccounted for years. According to Holmes who searched all the possible listings of peerages, the dormant and extinct branches of the time of the Magna Carta and before,[20] trying always to pinpoint a Marie who lived at that time, the poetess must have been born in Ile-de-France which in those days encompassed a much larger territory: the French Vexin and the Gâtenais but not Maine or Anjou and definitely not Normandy.[21] This would explain the area included in the words "de France." Next, he assumed and with good reason that this person was of noble birth and not just some "petit bourgeois." Third, she lived in England where she wrote - whence the distinction she was constantly making, "de France."[22] The appellation, "Marie de France," thus suggested the area to which Marie referred and once lived as opposed to where she lived at the time of her productive literary years. With all these thoughts in mind, Holmes came upon a Marie de Meulan, eighth child of Galeron de Meulan who had his fief in the French Vexin.[23] He sets her date of birth - and there were records as to the names and numbers of children born to noblemen - between 1150 and 1155. Curiously Holmes reflects the same dates as Fox as far as Marie's birth is concerned, but remains vague and has

absolutely no information regarding Marie de Meulan's date of death. Nor does Holmes have any facts relating to Marie de Meulan in her later years. One other significant fact Holmes was able to unearth is that Marie was married to a certain Hugh Talbot, baron of Cleuville, who owned land in Hereford and Bucks. An interesting feature to Holmes's study is the descriptions of these geographical areas which he feels were used as location settings in various lais such as Eliduc.[24] A major difficulty, however, arises in the Holmes theory causing considerable confusion: he cannot determine whether Marie de Meulan is married to Hugh the father or Hugh the son but seems to prefer the son as her husband even though all the dates are at best exiguous.[25] Moreover, he refutes the Fox theory by simply stating - and without thought - that an Abbess could never have written the Eliduc ending where the love trio goes off to a convent since a religious would not have contradicted canon law.[26] Holmes did not take into account that the Church Fathers had difficulty at that time resolving certain questions such as a divorced person entering the monastic life or what constituted the consummation of a marriage, vows or sexual intercourse among other questions of graver importance.[27] Bearing these facts in mind, let us examine the similarities of both theories. Both scholars agree on approximate birth dates, her noble ancestry, the place where she wrote, England, and that she is the poetess. However, one man has the beginning of someone's life - Marie de Meulan born to the Norman nobleman Galeron and later married to Hugh Talbot - while the other man has the last years of someone's life in an abbey with the sole

exception of the birthdate of her illegitimate being. I contend that it is just the one life time of just one person present in both theories. Furthermore, there is no recorded death date for Marie de Meulan but there is for the Abbess.

Delving more deeply into the historical facts in order to establish the poetess's identity with accuracy, we discover that the above-mentioned Hugh Talbot was a divorced man who later married a Beatrice de Mandeville who died in April 19, 1197.[28] In addition, Hugh Talbot at the close of his life "assumed the habit at the monastery of Beaubeck."[29] Holmes seems to have some confusion and justifiably so since the records are not clear especially in the case of women - as to whether Hugh Talbot, son or father, married Marie de Meulan. Even though Holmes remains nebulous as far as dates are concerned, we do have a date, 1197, for the death of Hugh's second wife, Beatrice. This Hugh, the father, must be Marie de Meulan's husband who then left her to marry Beatrice and afterwards retired to a monastery. This Hugh's dates most closely coincide with those of Marie de France. In Sir Bernard Burke's book of peerages, no mention is ever made as to who his first wife was, whereas in Le Comte Mas Latrie's book Marie becomes wife of Hugh.[30] It seems logical therefore that Marie was Hugh's first wife. Let us suppose that Hugh died sometime after his second wife Beatrice who died in 1197, thus setting his death dates between 1198-1208 if we grant a ten year margin span. This would be more than close enough to make him Marie's contemporary - either Marie de Meulan born around 1150 or Marie Abbess of Shaftesbury born around 1150 and died in 1216. Holmes fails to mention that not

only did Hugh enter the monastery but Marie's father, the famous Galeron, did likewise.[31] In any event, we have a case in point: nobleman in his later years retreats to a monastery, not a very uncommon practice in the Middle Ages but which bears much resemblance to the Eliduc story and which would have meaning to both Marie de Meulan and the Abbess. To give further support to the argument that these two Maries are one and the same, Holmes and Fox never disagree on the approximate dates of birth of their respective Maries, and curiously enough we can approximate the Abbess's death around 1216;[32] however, we know nothing of the last part of Marie de Meulan's life - or better known as Marie Beaumont, the family name of the Meulans.[33] When the facts concerning Marie Beaumont's later life and death date are discovered, then this theory can either be further fortified or completely disproven. If perchance Marie Beaumont's demise occurred in 1216, then she and the Abbess may be the same person. If however she died much earlier, we can safely exclude this theory. What we have at present is the beginning of Marie Beaumont's life and the end of the Abbess's.

Other assumptions can be offered to fix other dates revolving around the life of Marie de France. Thus, we can give more substance to the person about whom we speak. Marie de Meulan probably got married around the age of eighteen. This would establish her marriage date around 1170. The next piece of evidence and the first records we have concerning the existence of Marie Abbess of Shaftesbury are in 1181. I assume that she was married to Hugh ten or so years and then for some reason - and we do know Hugh remarried - she entered the

religious life. The one flaw to my argument is how can one make Marie Beaumont de Meulan and the Abbess one person and have their dates coincide so neatly. The answer is to be found in this question - "What happened to the first thirty years of the life of the Abbess, the illegitimate daughter of Geoffrey Plantagenet and half sister of the king?"[34] The Abbess was born around 1150 but makes her first known recorded appearance as abbess in 1181. Where are those thirty years? Answer: to hand over an illegitimate child of a king or a count to a loyal vassal or nobleman was not a rare occurrence in the Middle Ages.[35] The missing link is whether ties between the royal family and the Beaumont family are existent. They are abundant. For Geoffrey Plantagenet, a bon vivant warrior of sorts who had four illegitimate children with the "lady from Maine," to have handed over his illegitimate daughter Marie to Galeron de Meulan is not an unlikely story. What links could be established between the two men? Henry I (1068-1135), father-in-law to Geoffrey and grandfather of Henry II, had divided the land of his relative, Robert de Beaumont, at his death between Robert's twin sons, Robert de Meulan and Galeron de Meulan - Marie's father.[36] Galeron (sometimes Waleron) received the Norman baronies; he was a relative to the king and spent much time at his court.[37] Later, Geoffrey confirmed Galeron in the possession of the castle at Monfort.[38] These are all facts never mentioned by Holmes who neglects to offer historical background and a tie with the Abbess. At a certain point in history, Galeron crossed the English Channel with Hugh de Monfort and with Henry I, King of England. Relationships do exist. In 1140 Galeron formed the

abbey of Beardsley and married Marie de Monfort in 1141.[39] The Beaumonts as well as the Monforts were most influential personages. Galeron also made pilgrimages to St. James of Worcestershire and was a leader of the Crusades in 1147 and, in addition, founded another abbey of Le Valasse.[40] The religious aspect of his life is clear; his association with the religious community was not foreign to his secular life. Could Marie's prototypes emanate from this source and from her husband Hugh Talbot who also confined himself to the monastery of Beaubeck? Shades of Eliduc. The Beaumont family had considerable prestige, dignity, and power; Galeron was later made Earl of Worcestershire.[41] He was also for a time the right-hand man of Stephen, nephew to King Henry I, in all the courtly intrigues. Then Galeron broke with Stephen to pay homage to Geoffrey Plantagenet and even helped Geoffrey in the conquest of Normandy in 1144 and in his siege of Rouen.[42] It is written that Galeron died April 9, 1166 at the age of sixty-two and had become a monk at Préaux twenty-one days before his death.[43] Therefore, since a convincing bond of allegiance can be demonstrated between Geoffrey and Galeron, it is not inconceivable that the former entrusted his illegitimate daughter to the latter which would explain how the Abbess spent the earlier portion of her life as daughter of Galeron and wife of Hugh Talbot. This would also explain Marie de France's preoccupations with triangular relationships and convent syndromes since she was left for another woman - Hugh having married again to Beatrice - and since examples of men running off to the monastery flourish in her background thanks to her father and husband. The Abbess's own desire to

go off to a nunnery may have been dictated by these facts, and Marie's concern for the nameless or illegitimate child as exemplified in Yonec, Milun, and Fresne could be seen in the light of her having been the illegitimate daughter of Geoffrey. Her longing to be reunited with her husband, even if it meant that his new wife be present, is at least felt in the religious experience of Eliduc. The Eliduc story is not a reality but a wish for reality with all the underlying repressed hopes, fears, and sadness while desperately attempting to hold on to an intangible love by idealizing such a love. Is not mythology itself based in some reality, be it of mind or fact?

Interestingly enough, P. N. Flum in two articles confirms and verifies the connections between Marie de Meulan and the Talbot family: that she was the eighth child of Galeron II, count of Meulan, and of Agnes de Monfort, and wife of Hugh Talbot. However, here too there are discrepancies; Flum states two distinct entries one in which Galeron had six sons and one daughter and from the Complete Peerage that he had six sons and three daughters.[44] This is almost comical; records were supposed to have been so well kept in those days. Could the discrepancy have something to do with the addition of a daughter? A camouflage tactic might be at work. Another problem which faces the critic is the lack of information concerning specific dates to these dormant and extinct peerages. There is no date of death for Marie de Meulan; women, in general, are excluded and not accorded the honor of being mentioned too often. Perhaps, Marie de Meulan is the Abbess for whom we have an approximate death date. It is also a complicated task for the

critic to trace and untangle the web around Hugh Talbot, no less his wife. Information on first sons is more easily attainable: Hugh Talbot, eldest son of William.[45] Thus, the critic has a Hugh but then must decide between another Hugh, his son. Then there are the other critics themselves. For Holmes, the Marie who wrote the Lais was totally ignorant of canon law to have imagined such a "blasphemous" ending as Eliduc has. An Abbess could not have conjured up this triangular love convent scene.[46] Holmes ignores fantasy, hope, wishes - not to mention a strong religious desire to be united in the platonic sense - devoid of any physical or sexual implications. Marie is a poet. Once again Holmes fails to realize that the Church during the twelfth century had tremendous difficulties in deciding and defining terms. What is a marriage? When is it dissolved? Holmes even mentions these facts, but they leave no impression on him.[47] If the Church could not define, how could Marie? Why should Marie? The Abbess was not in direct papal contact; no less was she ever involved in conciliary debating. Holmes feels that the Eliduc ending proves the secularity of Marie de France who was no abbess. There are two answers for Holmes regarding the "secular" nature of the Lais. First, Marie de France wrote the Lais not when she was abbess but when she was Marie Beaumont, either daughter of Galeron de Meulan or more likely as wife of Hugh Talbot. The textually religious and philosophical nature of the Espurgatoire Saint Patrice might indicate that she composed this work as Abbess of Shaftesbury especially since the dates of this work confirm it as being her last.[48] It was written in 1215 approximately, a year before the

Abbess's death. Secondly, both the Lais and the Espurgatoire are very transcendental in their own way. To say that an abbess could not have written them is not to understand the twelfth century when the terms "secular" and "religious" blend as witnessed in the lives of Galeron de Meulan and Hugh Talbot. The terms are not mutually exclusive, and as we know, the divorced Hugh in fact entered a monastery in the Middle Ages. Why cannot Eliduc? Did the Church rule on Hugh's case?

As supporting evidence of this new theory on Marie de France's identity, several essential facts, references, and relationships pointed out by critics in regard to the Lais must be retained. Flum made a truly enlightening find: the Talbot crest is the hound's head;[49] Hugh Talbot, a Norman nobleman - Baron of Cleuville - married Marie de Meulan as we know. It has also been demonstrated by Salvatore Battaglia that the wolfman in the Bisclavret behaves more like a faithful dog towards its master-king than a wolf.[50] If we link the Flum and Battaglia theories, I believe that Marie is saying that the Talbot family will always give allegiance to its king, Henry II.[51] It is worth repeating that the Eliduc conversion ending the love trio fantasy would have meaning and pertinence to Galeron, Hugh, Marie Beaumont, Marie the Abbess, and Marie de France who all went off retreating to a monastery. To recapitulate other bits of evidence is a necessity: Fresne, the abandoned baby entrusted to someone else; the son of Milun also nameless and born out of wedlock; the illegitimate Yonec who avenged his father. All these tales of illegitimacy interest Marie greatly. They have a special meaning for her. The name Milun has been

identified with a Miles de Gailart, the adversary of Isembart prior to the intervention of his father in Gormont and Isembart whence the father and son combat motif in Milun. And does not the sound of the name Milun conjure up that of Meulan, Marie's name.[52] In addition, scholars have made a direct relationship between Gautier d'Arras' Ille and Galeron with Marie's Eliduc. Ille's father is named Eliduc, and the name Galeron would, of course, have particular meaning to Marie de Meulan.[53] Holmes himself points out similarities in the territory owned by Hugh Talbot and that described within Eliduc.[54] All food for thought.

Marie de France, as she announced in her Prologue and through the symbolic nature of the bits and pieces discovered in Eliduc, Bisclavret, Fresne, Milun, and Yonec, has had more impact than anyone ever imagined before. The abandoning of the nameless child, the transcendental open-ending of Eliduc, the wolf-man's allegiance to the king have all their counterparts firmly rooted in reality. Many family quarrels occurred within the royal family, usually generated by Matilda, Geoffrey's wife, and Stephen in their struggle for the throne. Another treacherous woman example can be seen in Eleanor of Aquitaine who stirred up strife between her husband, Henry II and his sons.[55] The Bisclavret's wife could pertain to either lady. The combined Fox and Holmes theory is summarized as follows: Geoffrey Plantagenet in the 1140's entrusted his illegitimate daughter, Marie, to one of his loyal noblemen, Galeron de Meulan. This child was raised and educated in this branch of the Beaumont household - a learned people as were the Plantagenets. The connections between these two families are evident. Marie de

Meulan then became the wife of Hugh Talbot who left Marie to marry a certain Beatrice who died in 1197. This Hugh is confused with his son due to vague dating procedures. Marie de Meulan, was thus his first wife. After her "divorce" she retreated to a convent, as would Hugh later on, and became known as Marie the Abbess of Shaftesbury in 1181. In the same year she will be recognized by King Henry II as being his half sister. The question arises over why Henry II even recognized her. Possibly due to her talent he felt obliged, or he may have rewarded her for her discretion since she caused no embarrassment referring to herself as "Marie de France." What could be more innocuous and ambiguous? Mary Beaumont de Meulan, Abbess of Shaftesbury, died at the abbey in 1216. As concerns her literary production, this faint picture of her life may have the key. The Fables may have been composed first or at about the same time as the Lais between 1160-1175 while Marie was with the Beaumonts and Talbots; the Espurgatoire is a production of her later life as Abbess in about 1215. This order would nicely explain the progressive development of the idealistic tendencies of Marie from intuitive, rational, and transcendental.[56] A composite portrait of the artist through the concealed meaning of Marie's method of presentation and symbolic guess-work of the Lais and through the known historical facts offers us the ultimate "sens" of the Lais. A tapestry of her life has unfolded; we have a clearer picture now of Marie than of most any other writer of the Middle Ages. Those generalized unquestioned dictates surrounding the so-called non-existent personal nature of the artistry of the Middle Ages should be abandoned. Such trite statements

as the person and his life not being reflected in his work or the lack of ingenuity or innovation of "les temps ténébreux" should be abolished. Such pat criteria need to be reconsidered and old theorems reformulated. If we become so dogmatic that we will not allow the slightest shred of humanity to appear in a given author's work, or if we persistently repress the author's feelings about his own life by denying to admit such relationships, then everything is answered and literary criticism with whatever ingenuity may remain is dead. Marie de France, first poetess of France, was Marie Beaumont, Abbess of Shaftesbury.

Notes

[1] "Nous craignons que ce ne soit une allusion de chercher des conteurs bretons autour de Marie et de Thomas et nous avouons n'avoir à cette date tardive trouvé aucune trace de leur activité." Lucien Foulet, "Marie de France et Tristan," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 32 (1908): p. 289. Ernest Hoepffner does admit certain "insular" origins especially in regard to locations in "La Géographie et l'histoire dans les Lais de Marie de France," Romania, 56 (30): pp. 1-32.

[2] Emanuel Mickel exposes these arguments quite well in Marie de France (New York: Twayne, 1974), pp. 51-61.

[3] For this very technical analysis see Foulet, "Marie de France et Tristan," pp. 161-83 and 257-89. Hoepffner will also offer his understanding of the nature of a "lai" with his tenuous explanations in Aux origines de la nouvelle française (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), pp. 1-10. In general, Hoepffner thinks little of Marie's talent: "Jamais Marie n'a pour ses personnages le sourire moqueur d'un Chrétien de Troyes. Elle n'essaie pas non plus d'analyser gracieusement et péniblement, en raisonnements difficiles et pénétrants, les sentiments complexes de ses héros comme le fait son grand contemporain, Thomas d'Angleterre, subtil psychologue." p. 23. Hoepffner did not read the Lais carefully enough.

[4] Interesting to note that Ovid wrote in the manner of epyllia, a short narrative poem with an epic flair and tone. This could also become a possible source. L. P. Wilkinson, Ovid Surveyed (London: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 63. For further insight into what constitutes a lai, consult H. d'Arbois de Junbainville for his Irish source "loîd," in "Lai," Romania, 8 (1879): pp. 422-25. For a better look into Marie's own period check Benkt Wennberg, "Marie de France and the Anonymous lais: A study of Narrative Lai in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century," D.A. XVI (56) 2450-51. There have been Welsh and German interpretations of the term "lai," among others: Constance Bullock-Davies, "The Form of the Breton Lay," Medium Aevum, 42 (1973): 18-31 - Welsh art "penillion."

[5] Tony Hunt, "The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue," Arthurian Romance: Seven Essays, ed. D. D. R. Owen (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), pp. 1-23. Excellent study.

[6] Alwyn Rees, pp. 11-15. The tradition still exists.

[7] Tony Hunt's attention-grabbing device.

[8] Hoepffner's chronology is basically a comparative study: "Marie ne connaît pas encore la traduction française de l'Enéide pour Lanval." However, he does notice the Aeneid's influence on Guigemar and Eliduc, and concludes that Chrétien's influence on Marie is non-existent. "Pour la chronologie des Lais de Marie de France," Romania, 59 (33): pp. 351-370.

[9] Eilhart mentions an Aquitan in his Tristan - a possible source name according to J. Wathelet-Willam, "Equitan dans l'oeuvre de Marie de France," Le Moyen Age, 69 (1963), 325-45.

[10] U. T. Holmes came up with a Breton word - "dihuddennêc," comforting individual, for the differing possibilities of Yonec: Ionec, Ionet, even Yvain, Ivon, Ion. Holmes blames a scribe for this confusion. "Old French Yonec," Modern Philology (1931-32), pp. 225-29.

[11] J. A. Frey, "Linguistic and Psychological Couplings in the Lays of Marie de France," Studies in Philology, 61 (1964): pp. 3-18.

[12] Ibid., p. 8. G. Kamber goes even further and notices the compact nature of the verse itself divided in a perfect unit of two parts:

"Bele amie/si est de nus:
Ne vus sanz mei/ne jeo sanz vus." (77-78)

A case of symbolic syntax in "Chievrefueil," Romance Notes, t. 1 (1959-1960): pp. 151-154.

[13] Frederick Hodgson, "Guigemar...where the fairy mistress disappears from the Celtic scenario, leaving a purely human setting." p. 25.

[14] See note 17 of the Introduction.

[15] Lucien Foulet, "Marie de France et les lais bretons," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 29 (1905) pp. 19-56 and 293-322. The critic feels that Guigemar is the first lai.

[16] Urban T. Holmes, "New Thoughts on Marie de France," Studies in Philology, 29 (1932): 1-10.

[17] John Fox, "Marie de France," English Historical Review, 25 (1910), pp. 303-06.

[18] In another article, Fox unearths charters in Latin granting this Marie an abbey. "Mary, Abbess of Shaftesbury," English Historical Review, 26 (1911) p. 318.

[19] J. M. Chartrou, "Geoffrey Plantagenet," La Province du Maine, ser 2, vol. 9 (1929), pp. 156-177.

[20] Sir Bernard Burke, Dormant and Extinct Peerages (London: Pall Mall, 1883). On page 526 will be found the Hugh Talbot lineage.

[21] Holmes, "New Thoughts on Marie de France," p. 4.

[22] Ibid., p. 2.

[23] P. N. Flum, "Additional Thoughts on Marie de France," Romance Notes, 3 (1961), 53-56. The critic verifies and substantiates Holmes' names, places, and dates.

[24] Holmes, p. 8.

[25] Burke, Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage (London: Burke's Peerage Limited, 1956), p. 1988.

[26] This ludicrous comment is made in Holmes' "Further on Marie de France," Symposium, iii (1949): pp. 335-339.

[27] Bainton, pp. 45-62.

[28] Watney, Wallop Family (Oxford: John Johnson, 1928), p. 522 and 750.

[29] Burke, Dormant and Extinct Peerages, p. 526.

[30] Holmes, Studies in Philology, 29, p. 7 n. 23-24.

[31] Wallop Family, p. 76 and p. 557.

[32] Fox, "Marie de France," p. 304.

[33] Geoffrey H. White, "The Career of Waleran, Count of Meulan, Earl of Worcester(1104-1166)," Royal Historical Society, vol. xcii (London: R. H. S., 1934), p. 20. Check also Burke's Complete Peerage, 2nd ed., VII, pp. 738-39.

[34] Geoffrey is said to have had Eleanor of Aquitaine as a mistress also. Richard Barber, Henry Plantagenet, (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964), p. 48.

[35] In fact, this practice of fosterage by royal families in Scotland and elsewhere was the custom. James VI was left by his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, with the Erskine family at Stirling Castle. See Antonia Fraser, Mary Queen of Scots (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1971), p. 313.

[36] Geoffrey White, p. 20.

[37] Ibid., p. 23.

[38] Ibid., p. 35.

[39] Ibid., pp. 26-36.

[40] According to Rogers Whichard, Waleron sided with Mathilda and Henry II against Stephen, and he states that Marie de Meulan and family are direct descendents of Charlemagne and the Capetians. "A Note on the Identity of Marie de France," Romance Studies, presented to W. M. Dey (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950), pp. 177-181.

[41] Geoffrey White, pp. 19-20.

[42] Wilfred Lewis Warren, Henry II (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 32.

[43] Wallop Family, pp. 76 and 557.

[44] Flum, pp. 53-56.

[45] Burke, Peerage, p. 1988.

[46] Holmes, "Further on Marie de France," pp. 335-339.

[47] Holmes mentions the "Decretum" of Gratian (1140) and the "Quatuor libri sententiarum" of Peter Lombard (1152), and the reigning Pope Alexander III, p. 335-336.

[48] Mickel, pp. 20-21 and the Fox theory.

[49] P. N. Flum, "Marie de France and the Talbot Family Connections," Romance Notes, VII (1965), pp. 83-86.

[50] Battaglia, pp. 229-253.

[51] Nota Bene: Henry II's name comes up frequently in the Marie de France story. The Lais are dedicated to him, ties with the Waleron family; recognized the Abbess as his half-sister, the Fables may have been dedicated to William Longsword, natural son of Henry II and nephew of the Abbess.

[52] Rogers Whichard declares that the geographical places of her childhood are detailed in Milun and Deus Amanz, p. 179.

[53] See note 8 of the Introduction.

[54] Holmes, "New Thoughts on Marie de France," p. 8.

[55] John Tate Abbeby, Henry II, the Vanquished King (New York: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 21-56.

[56] Hornik, "Rabelais and Idealism."

Chapter II

SYMBOLISM AND THE LAIS

A precious vase, broken into small pieces and then distributed by the host to his guests before their departure to some Greek island as a sign of gratefulness and peace so that his guests would never forget the splendor of what occurred during their sumptuous feast, was our first symbol - συμβολον - that which is "thrown" and blended together or "with."[1] An upward transcendental movement of something "thrown" and then latching itself to something else to create another meaning or entity demonstrates the idealistic quality of the etymology of the word itself. An innate and almost immediate fusion and confusion exists even in the meaning. Put in more practical terms, what the substance or matter is in reality - a piece of vase in the above case - and what it represents - the remembrance of the pomp, congeniality, formalities, rituals, and just fine dining - are now founded or melted into one inseparable piece of goods that displays a materialistic outer shell and a more spiritual inner life, its very essence. In more modern terminology, the "signifiant" - that which signifies - and the "signifié" - that which is signified - are fused beyond recognition so that either one or both may mean one or the other.[2] A veritable trompe-l'oeil in which appearance and reality, essence and existence, are now one and the same. The object in question exists in itself, and

on its own. The visible and the tangible characteristics, the "accidents," represent the object itself. What elevates this "symbol," the piece of vase, to an even more profound interpretation, is the importance and the role of the code of hospitality amongst the Greeks. The formalities and rituals of this code add a greater significance to that which is called "symbol." One could act according to or against this code and expect his just due. The symbol thus takes greater dimensions upon itself. Similarly, during the early Christian period of persecution by the Romans, the small fish engraved on the cave walls of the catacombs were the symbol for Christ - ichthys in Greek - not only meaning "fish" but whose letters spell out the Lord and Savior's name. This symbol also served as a bond of allegiance, a calling card if you will, among the members of this secret and private group whereby they would give recognition one to the other. Occasionally on church murals, a saint will have his fingers crossed forming the Greek letter "X," chi, the first letter for Christos - whence a "closed" oral and written tradition to which only the first Christians and martyrs were privy and which they hopefully, but not always, knew exclusively. Take note of the progression or steps that lead to the formation of this symbol: the crossing of the fingers to form the Greek letter representing Christ and finally what it meant to be Christian. "Signs," the simplistic counterparts of symbols do not share this same transcendental progression and merely denote objects to which they are attached; they are meaningless in themselves but are shared through common usage. The "UN" is a self-explanatory sign having only this bilateral interpretation.

What we call a symbol is a term, a name, or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional or obvious meaning.[3] It is something vague and hidden. On the relief of the Chartres Cathedral three of the four Evangelists are depicted: the lion is Mark, the ox is Luke, the eagle is John. In addition to what we see and understand while looking at this relief, there is a list of associations concerning not only the individual characteristics of these animals but also the facts and legends of the lives of the saints. Analogies upon analogies can be offered: the sons of the Egyptian god, Horus, are also sculptured and represented as animals since "animals, and groups of four, are universal religious symbols."[4] The transcendental nature of the symbol will interest us greatly as we proceed: the ultimate progression in abstract terms reads as follows: sign, symbol, dream and myth, Christian logos, and courtly tradition. Myths are considered elaborations of symbols in which dreamlike qualities intermingle.[5] This highly structured movement through which most of the fantasy and dreamlike elements are systematically eliminated or repressed not only reflects history but also the development of man from his more primitive image-making beginnings to his so-called "civilized" past and present.[6] This in-depth examination of the symbol in many of its contexts will serve as the unifying factor in the Lais of Marie de France in order that the compartmentalization of her work be re-ordered and solidified into one comprehensible intelligible source of information and knowledge. This chapter will deal strictly with the symbol as a philosophical concept devoid of any other inter-

pretation and related only to an abstract study. This will avoid confusion with the use of the word, symbol, in a context where the meaning and definition could be altered considerably. For example, in the Catholic Church, the Mass is considered a "sign," whereas for the Protestant Church the Mass is termed "symbolic" - here meaning simply representative. The Protestant faith considers the Mass as a re-enactment solely of the ceremony Christ has performed, the transubstantiation never actually taking place. However, when a Catholic priest pronounces the words, "this is my Body and this is my Blood," the believer admits thatthis is in truth the body and blood of Christ - the transubstantiation - and not just a commemorative episode. The power of the words is evidently present within this example where "sign" means an actual happening which God caused and for which he is ultimately responsible. However, this religious context and meaning shall only be employed when examining the Christian sources and elements perceived in the Lais. Otherwise, the more classical definition of the term, "sign," shall be used - that is, a bolt of lightning is the "sign" of rain and by extension the possibility of some impending danger. "The introduction of Christianity brought about many changes in meaning, which are, however, not the work of the people; . . . miracula, virtutes, signa similarly took the meaning 'miracles of faith.'"[7] Thus "sign" will not exhibit the complexity of that which is meant by "symbol" in the philosophical context.

What applies to symbols will also apply to names as well. Plato in the Cratylus teaches that names represent the essence itself of the person or thing; consequently, to understand names

is to understand the things which they designate;[8] that there exists for each thing a name by nature belonging to it alone; that the propriety of a name is wholly dependent on the consent of men.[9] What is apparent in Plato's teaching is the ontological aspects of the nature of name combined with the relative aspects of mutual agreement. Neither one is divorced from the other. Plato explains to his friend Hermogenes, not without some humor and parody, that Theophilus has the correct name by nature since it means what he is - a lover of God.[10] This correct-naming process and technique will be at the core of the lai, Chaitivel, among others. From the name, therefore, one intuits the essence - that which makes a thing be what it is. The naming must be in accordance with its nature and with its own will. "For clearly, the gods call things by the names that are naturally right."[11] Of course, everything hinges upon what is meant by "naturally." In the Platonic system of things, all abstracts - beauty, love, order - will unite and mean for all intents and purposes one and the same. With one exception, of course - whence Plato's humor - Hermogenes' own name does not befit the person: the one who makes the "type" or "nature" clear and interprets it.[12] Quite a name for one who asks questions rather than gives answers concerning the nature of names. Their dialogue will be faintly reminiscent of that in Chaitivel as we shall see. Plato's conclusion states clearly that "when anyone knows the nature of its name and its nature is that of the thing, then he will know the thing also since it is like the name and the science of all things which are like each other is one and the same."[13] All things are

rightfully called -except for his friend. The Stoics had a similar point of view but expressed it differently placing much more emphasis on the physical nature of the thing: "l'accent sur le corps et pas sur l'être intelligible."[14] Plato in a rationalized manner was attempting to establish some link between "idée et choses sensibles," whereas the Stoics coined the terms "l'exprimable, incorporel, et force vivante." These abstractions meant that, through this chiefly materialistically based philosophy, a kind of mystical force within the object seeped throughout the object letting itself be known as a "force interne qui se déploie."[15] Thus, essence in fact determines the thing itself where cause and effect coexist and where there is no mutual exclusivity of either term: not that the Word becomes flesh but <u>is</u> flesh. The Stoics also emphasized, and existentially so, the concepts of "le vide et le non-être" in addition to "le lieu et le temps" which act upon all things.[16] Without belaboring the philosophical aspects of words, names, and symbols, it must be at least mentioned for a fuller appreciation of the function of symbols in the <u>Lais</u> that the all-important role of semantics can only be ascertained through context in order to arrive not only at the linguistic meaning but the "true" sense of the symbol.[17] The symbol system is a system which defines pure and impure, holy and unholy;[18] symbols, therefore, may take many shapes and forms, the "accidents," and may even be at times equated with "sign" in this new philosophical light of understanding - the opacity of the symbol.[19] This multivalent nature of the symbol as exposed by Jung offers the most assistance in this study since the transcendental nature of his work

on symbolism, closely allied to that of Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and especially Husserl's hermeneutic phenomonology, reflects similar trends inherent in Marie's Lais. This interpretation of text in regard to intentionality of the work in question and the anticipatory psychological features involved in the work shall prove to be of immeasurable value.[20] Aristotle's peri hermeneias is interpretation as logic; Plato's techné hermeneia is an art of making obscure expression clear.[21] In any event, hermeneutics suggests the idea of a text as that which is interpreted, and through this interpretation man may better understand himself via the indirect route of the symbol: self-discovery or "the authentic subjectivity of the authentic act of consciousness."[22]

The poet through the ages has not only been regarded as the interpreter of the symbol and the one who passes it on through the culture but also the creator of his own particular kind of symbol. As indicated by the Latin, vates, the poet was a writer of lovely verse, interpreter, prophet, and soothsayer. The magical and mystical attributes of his work and of his very being made up an intrinsic portion of what poetry was and is. The Celtic poets and druids thought of themselves and their writings within the context of this same light.[23] Their function was analogous to that of Marie de France, the synthesizer of cultures and traditions through symbolic use. Although some critics feel that "Spitzer forces on Marie an idiosyncratic use of the Priscian preface since Priscian was discussing only grammar not Christian readers or exegetics,"[24] these critics do not take into account that the reference to Priscian was

merely an example used to illustrate and to generalize what the poetess meant, poetic licence not having died. It is or will be clear that after scrutinizing Marie's work on the whole, an exegetic use of the symbol prevails - not only can it be classified as such, but the multifaceted symbol will allow the synthesis to take place in the poetess's mind: Classical, Celtic, Pagan, Christian, and Courtly traditions. Spitzer did notice and admit the seemingly unlikely combination of poetry, theology, philosophy, pagan myth, and Christian dogma - all of which is startling at first.[25] However, as we understand the machinations of the Lais, that startling feature disappears. Admittedly, the Prologue is an ambiguous passage. For what symbol does not have an air of vagueness?

> Assez oscurement diseient
> Pur ceus ki a venir esteient
> E ki aprendre les deveient,
> K'i peüssent gloser la lettre
> E de lur sen le surplus mettre.
> Li philesophe le saveient,
> Par eus meïsmes entendeient
> Cum plus trepassereit li tens,
> Plus serreient sutil de sens
> E plus se savreient garder
> De ceo k'i ert a trepasser.
> Ki de vice voelt defendre
> Estudïer deit e entendre
> A grevose ovre comencier:
> Par ceo s'en puet plus esloignier
> E de grant dolur delivrer. (12-27)

The issue should not be belabored any further since the critics have a propensity for looking directly at the proverbial tree without enjoying the beauty of the forest. The poetess's words are: "assez oscurement, gloser la lettre, le surplus mettre, sutil de sens." Need one say anymore? The Prologue was com-

posed also for all future generations as well as for the "philesophe" to do with as they see fit, and the critics have - but without freeing us from "grant dolur." Marie de France must have noticed it herself, the quasi-philosophical expression of her Lais since she did write the Prologue after the fact - that is, after all the lais had been composed.[26] She as descendent of the vates "saw" what she had created and stated such, if not directly, in her Prologue.[27] The suggestively hidden symbolic movement and goal of her work is that which is declared in generalized terms from the very start. The "veiled" role of the symbol could not have been unknown to Marie since the "trobar clus" of the lyric poets was literally ubiquitous, its use being quite familiar to the medieval court. No one should be, therefore, shocked at the discovery of the sublety of symbolism during Marie's era. It was a total experience of the symbol in all its possible dimensions. In effect, one could isolate various categories by which the symbols of the Lais distinguish themselves. These categories are to be regarded as an aid in the comprehension of the intended unity of the authoress's Lais. The lais exemplified in specific categories could possibly have certain features which transcend a particular categorization - which is within the nature of a symbol to do. A given category does not necessarily exclude a particular lai or include only certain ones. However, particular lais have been chosen and thereby placed in a category since they best typify that category. For the sake of comprehensibility and for the purpose of unifying the Lais through symbolic use, these categories will be of valuable aid as a tool in bringing

together and focusing upon the various traditions of Marie's eclectic style. Furthermore, most critics have discarded quite nonchalantly all of Marie's symbols into the same proverbial bag without considering that certain symbols are more heavily "weighted" and suggestive than others. One cannot compare a ring of recognition with a hawkman, neither with a werewolf, nor with a nightingale, and then hope to obtain conclusions about unity through symbolism in the Lais. This chapter will be a study of Marie's symbols in and of themselves in a philosophical treatment devoid of any other branch of science or religion. Therefore, I propose the following categories: the symbol as ideal love, the abstract idea and concept in Plato's sense of the term under which shall be classified Laüstic, Yonec, and Chievrefoil; secondly, the symbol as the power of love - the symbol, whatever it may be, will acquire the capacity to overcome obstacles in order to arrive at the desired goal of uniting the lovers for better or for worse as in Guigemar, Bisclavret, Eliduc, Deus Amanz, Milun and Lanval; third, the symbol as words or names - the symbol of nominal power; it has also been referred to as nomina-numina,[28] the names and the will power or consent of the gods in which these two elements coexist as demonstrated by Plato's Cratylus: once the words or names are pronounced,a kind of evocation, existence is immediately granted to the object or matter in question. Essence will precede existence in a fatalistic fashion as in Equitan, Fresne and Chaitivel. This will perhaps be the most subtle of the categories since words alone will assume the attributes of symbols in an ironic blend of courtly

principles and tragedy. The fourth and final category will be entitled "druërie" which are simply souvenirs or objects identifying characters in the "scènes de reconnaissance," or they may be love tokens exchanged between lovers as signs of their love.[29] Because of the double-entente of the word "druërie," this last category can pertain to either these love tokens, "gages d'amour," or the very sensual and physical love-making, "commerce amoureux." "Dru" could also mean "amant" or "ami." If we were to ascend this eschatological ladder by reviewing these categories in reverse, we would note a definitive progression towards idealistic tendencies in the Lais - the base sensual or intuitive level of "druërie," the moral and rational features of the philosophical symbol of nominal power, nomina-numina, and finally the transcendental symbols of the power of love blossoming into the full ideal love symbol with all its heritage of abstract beauty. This interpretation does in no way exclude other possibilities of examination and categorization of the multivalent symbols involved; some characteristics will, in fact, overlap - but in no way will this destroy the soundness of this procedure. We are merely placing symbols in a philosophical vacuum to determine their nature, essence, attributes, and functions. In subsequent chapters, the sources and origins of these symbols - Greek, Celtic, Christian, Courtly - shall be discussed in all their social and psychological implications. For the moment, this abstract analysis is necessary in order to define Marie's symbols and to offer more insight when these symbols are finally placed in diametrically opposed contexts. The thread running through the Lais is the symbol which gives unity to the work

while expressing some greater truth.[30] The Lais are a symbolic art form of metaphysical stature.

The Symbol as Ideal Love

The Laüstic is an extraordinary case since the image or notion of an existent nightingale effectively signifies the true spiritual love between the lovers. The question arises, however, of whether the bird, the "signifiant," lives in reality or not. Its existence, at best, is dubious but would lend a more Platonic flair if it existed purely in the minds of the lovers. After having perused the text, we can safely conclude that the nightingale was the clever invention and ruse of a self-controlled but terrified wife who, not knowing what to say at the moment and fearing her "insanely jealous" husband, said she heard a bird at her window. The question of the existence of a real nightingale has become the stumbling block of many a critic who bases his arguments on the reality of a live bird, while underlining the symbol's passage from the strictly physical to the spiritual world but never mentioning the possibility of an imaginary bird.[31] Although the husband of this story does trap some helpless bird, that in itself does not indicate that he captured "Le Laüstic," the illusive and imaginary symbolic bird to which the wife was referring. Nor does it mean that the husband had necessarily that "stock" quality of the "gelos;" he only wanted to put an end to the affair. Some critics have pointed out the caustic biting irony of the narrative technique and vocabulary used in these scenes by which the lovers, in essence, invite their own tragedy.[32] The courtly

humor and parody should also be kept in mind for the lady was just leaning out of the window and communicating to her lover while fabricating some tale about a bird singing. The "laüstic" has a more symbolic meaning since we may conclude that it never had existed - a trompe-l'oeil. Yes, there was maybe some bird singing someplace, but it did not exist until after having been pronounced by his wife - nomina-numina. A symbol that has no basis in reality is an incredible feat on Marie's part:

> Il nen ad joié en cest mund
> Ki n'ot le laüstic chanter.
> Pur ceo me vois ici ester.
> Tant ducement l'i oi la nuit
> Que mut me semble grant deduit. (vers 84-88)

A lie generated by the fear of losing her love and physical desires, "deduit," - all of which are repressed by the wife in this scene of double-edged vocabulary. Symbols do contain this need to repress certain feelings deemed socially unacceptable or unpleasant.[33] At any rate, her husband does not believe a word of it, and it will be he who will bring forth upon the stage for the first time the symbol of this love in the flesh, a "laüstic." It has been noted that the means by which the "gelos" or jealous one ensnarls the helpless creature are symbols of not only death but betrayal: "engins, laçuns, laz, et glu," all of which serve as an antithesis to the open window, symbol of hope, through which the only possible verbal exchange occurs.[34] By an "uncourtly" symbolic gesture will the bore snap the tiny bird's neck, implying essentially to his wife that he is aware of everything that transpires around him in the first place, and that he detests her love for the chevalier in the second place,

and thirdly he will kill her lover in the same manner before her very eyes. Furthermore, by an even more grotesque and savage act, will the "mari" fling the dead bloodied creature at her breast - a sexual hint - that the chevalier will be a dead man before he ever possesses his wife:

> Le col li rumpt a ses deus meins.
> De ceo fist il ke trop vileins.
> Sur la dame le cors geta,
> Si que sun chainse ensanglanta
> Un poi desur le piz devant. (vers 135-137)

Clearly the "laüstic" symbolizes the love conflict in this triangular relationship. The wife, always wishing to eternalize this love, wraps the bird up in precious cloths and linen to indicate the special quality of their love and to have the symbol live forever:

> En une piece de samit
> A or brusdé tut escrit
> Ad l'oiselet envolupé. (vers 135-136)

The samite cloth and the embroidered message serve to accentuate the purity of their ideal love.[35] Following her noble example and in imitation of her act of love, the chevalier will construct a small coffin in which he shall lay the bird's body to rest for the purpose of safeguarding the holiness of this "fin' amor":

> Un vaisselet ad fet forgier;
> Unques n'i ot fer ne acier,
> Tuz fu d'or fin od bones pieres
> Mut preciuses et mut chieres;
> Covercle i ot tres bien asis.
> Le laüstic ad dedenz mis
> Puis fist la chasse enseeler
> Tuz jurs l'ad fete od lui porter. (vers 149-156)

What perfection and care he takes in its construction! All is made of the best of everything. We should also pay strict attention to the perfection of these lines and their musicality which enhance the transcendental elements. Thus, is the bird-love concept eternalized not only by the lovers but by the Bretons who had already composed a lai on this subject and finally by the poetess herself:

> Une aventure vus dirai
> Dunt li Breton firent un lai.
> Laüstic ad nun, ceo m'est vis,
> Si l'apelent en lur païs. (vers 1-4)

Marie will recapitulate almost verbatim these lines at the end of her lai (vers 157-161) in an attempt to immortalize the symbol and her finished product. A similar technique will be further exploited by Marie in virtually all the other lais. Thus, it is not so perplexing a task to demonstrate how the symbol grows in meaning as the story progresses - a true indication of the nature of a symbol: the "laüstic" changes significance while passing through the hands of various characers. First of all, the "laüstic" appears as the fanciful imaginary idea of the wife, followed by its materialization thanks to the "gelos," and finally it will be rendered immortal by the efforts of our lovers, the Bretons, and of course Marie herself - whence the multiplicity of a symbol, not present in "signs." This "perfect" symbol falls into five different hands, and its meaning will largely depend on whose hand it is found in at a given moment in the story. The "Laüstic" is the most complex and complete symbol which Marie uses since it represents an eternal concept

more than a real object. Idealized love progresses in this manner: the symbol passes from the imaginary, to the physical, and progresses towards the spiritual state of mind and an outer consciousness of an Otherworld, its final resting place.

While retracing her plan and certain themes found in the Laüstic, especially the inclusa motif (the locked up lady), Marie de France had evidently materialized the données and the symbol of this lai in order to sing her new creation, Yonec.[36] The lady of the house has again been literally confined for the past seven years in a well-fortified tower due to the tyranny of her "mari-jaloux." A certain critic views the tower, usually considered a male image, as being a symbol of love and of the obstacle to be destroyed and conquered for the fulfillment of this love.[37] The inaccessibility of the lady and her position on high - that is at the top of the tower - signify to other critics the pedestal on which she is placed, recalling thereby certain characteristics of the ancient gods who also dwelt on high.[38] This lady, however, is in neither a privileged nor envied position. In fact, her physical description confirms the depressed state of her mind and the forthcoming tragedy as prophesied by the chevalier:[39]

> Mut ert la dame en grant tristur
> Od lermes, od suspir e plur;
> Sa beuté pert en teu mesure
> Cume cele ki n'en ad cure. (45-48)
>
> Il li ad dit: "Ma duce amie
> Pur vostre amur perc jeo la vie.
> Bien le vus dis qu'en avendreit
> Vostre semblanz nus ocireit." (319-322)

The chevalier has become the new symbol of ideal love; he is not

the imaginary "laüstic" this time but has been transformed by Marie into the Celtic hawkman. Marie has given flesh and blood to her previous symbol, the "laüstic." This new bird tainted with the "merveilleux" qualities of the "matière de Bretagne" will take on the form of a courtly gentleman and even turn out to be a king. Thus we witness here the physical manifestation of the ideal love symbol which now bears more mystical and magical qualities not foreign to modes of idealism:[40]

> Quant ele ot fait sa pleinte issi
> L'umbre d'un grant oisel choisi
> Par mi une estreite fenestre
> Ele ne seit que ceo pout estre
> En la chambre volant entra . . .
> Il s'est devant la dame asis.
> Quant il i ot un poi esté
> E ele l'ot bien esgardé
> Chevaliers bels e gens devint. (105-109; 112-115)

Once more the ideal symbol of love passes from the mythological fantasy-like state to a physical reality, later to become a martyr in the name of love - which will further eternalize this symbol.[41] We could add to this scene of transformation the tightly knit bond between animality and sensuality which exists in the Bisclavret - the sexual appetite manifesting itself through lower forms of life. However, Marie will accentuate the more mystical attributes of love, and for the pinnacle of courtly miracles, she will then have the chevalier transform himself into the likeness of the lady herself in order to receive the sacred host. In this way, he can prove his "noble" intentions to the lady while disguising himself from the treachery of her husband. Remembering that the word "host" means victim and that Christ for whom the host is a "sign" was also

savior, Marie exploited this new Birdman symbol to the fullest:[42]

> La semblance de vus prendrai
> Le cors Damedeu recevra
> Corpus domini aportat.
> Le chevaliers l'ad receü. (161-162; 186-187)

Only the priest had access to the tower where the lady was being spied upon by the husband's sister. The chevalier, after having changed himself into the lady, made himself one with the host so that he could deify his love - all of which proved to the lady the honesty and loyalty of the Birdman. As is the case, symbols pass through a series of steps before the final one of divinization. In a later chapter on courtly tradition, this symbol will be examined in a different context where role-playing and parody take prominence. This is all in keeping with the multivalent nature of the Jungian definition of symbol which manifests itself in various ways. The games - social games - that Marie herself is playing to persuade or discourage her audience either to mock or accept the "lessons" of her lais are obviously functioning. The interplay between troubadour and audience was complex; to render her meanings, Marie had to rely heavily on tone, mood, and mannerisms - all these nuances would affect the listener and the meaning.

As in the Laüstic, traps are set to capture and kill the Birdman. This time, however, they seem more realistic and concrete since a higher form of life is to be slaughtered. It is within the nature of the husband-"gelos" syndrome to eliminate the lover:

Des engins faire fu hastifs
A ocire le chevalier.
Broches de fer fist grantz furgier
A acerer le chief devant:
Suz ciel n'ad razur plus trenchant! (284-288)

As a result, the Birdman is physically and mortally wounded - and not just symbolically as in the Laústic, a death well foreseen by the chevalier:

E nus seium issi trahi
Ne m'en puis mie departir
Que mei n'en estuce murir. (208-210)

Love is usually fatal in courtly doctrines. Consequently, the conflicts between each person of this love triangle have given rise to a change of meaning of the symbol and have given birth to varying interpretations of the same symbol. The progression towards idealism is nevertheless present: mythological bird to courtly man, then becoming the image of the lady who receives the divine host and finally dies as love's martyr. Although the Birdman symbol lacks the purity and perfection of literary construction since it is not an isolated image in and of itself and since it is elaborately far-fetched and deeply rooted in Celtic sagas, it nevertheless has features resembling the "laüstic" and its movement towards the concept of an ideal. The Birdman, therefore, merits his place among the groupings of the symbol as ideal love. What further sacrifices could be made by one Birdman alone?[43]

After this point in the story, Marie will introduce an element - Celtic in origin - which will alter the scope and nature of the symbol and which will pertain rather to our

second grouping, the symbol as the power of love. This will be a transitional stage of the development of the symbol to be discussed at length further in this study. It is the introduction of the illegitimate son motif.[44] It will no longer be ideal love in the foreground but the force and magical strength of the ideal love flowing through the veins of the natural son. The "symbolized" son is not love personified as is the Birdman but is the symbol of what love can accomplish - whence the symbol as the power of love, strength being one of love's attributes. This distinction between the symbol as ideal love and the symbol as the power of love must be comprehended in order to follow the development of the symbol in Marie de France. Before his prophesied death the chevalier announced to his lady fair the birth of a son who would avenge his death with his own sword:

> Un fiz avra, pruz e vaillant
> Icil la recunforterat.
> Yŏnec numer le ferat.
> Il vengerat e lui e li.
> Il oscirat sun enemi. (vers 328-332)

And so be it!

> Sun parastre ad le chef tolu;
> De l'espeie ki fu sun pere
> Ad dunc vengié lui e sa mere. (vers 544-546)

Yonec will thus take charge of the paternal role and will represent, in effect, the continuity and the power of love rather than love itself as an idealized concept. Love lives through a mystical force inherited by the illegitimate son. With the stepfather eliminated, the lovers are able to share the same tomb. As a transitional symbol, Yonec becomes the power of love

which succeeded in spiritually reuniting his true parents. The third party cannot exist; the obstacle must be felled to unite true lovers. To demonstrate more fully what is meant by the symbol as power of love, all one must do is decipher the "raison d'être" of the magical ring given to the lady by her chevalier:

> Un anelet li ad baillé
> Si li ad dit e enseigné
> Ja tant cum el le gardera,
> A sun seignur n'en membera
> De nule rien ki fete seit,
> Ne ne l'en tendrat en destreit. (415-420)

The lovers can overcome obstacles and keep their love intact thanks to this ring of forgetfulness;[45] the husband remains a dupe throughout - he just does not remember what happened. Once again this example of the power of love aids the lovers in their turmoil with the express purpose of uniting them someday. Both Yonec and the ring will serve the same function.

A veritable mountain of articles and theories exist in regard to our next example of the symbol as ideal love, Chievrefoil, principally due to these verses:

> Ceo fu la summe de l'escrit
> Qu'il li aveit mandé e dit. (61-62)

Did Tristan engrave his name on the bark of the hazel tree, his initials, or a full letter in oghamic code - the Celtic inscriptions of Ireland? Or had he sent a letter in advance to warn and announce his meeting to Iseult? These are the questions that have interested many critics - Spitzer, Hatcher, Frank, and Foulet among others.[46] There will probably never be a satisfac-

tory solution to this argument. However, the most feasible of these arguments deals with the "spiritual core" of the message which the Queen devined at first sight.[47] That is without doubt the most striking element of all these arguments. Tristan's full name or his initials would have caused the Queen to understand the import of the message immediately. Why? It was the innate power of the symbol which let itself be known as a mystical force transmitted to the lady who intuits the meaning upon seeing the message in whatever shape or form:

> De sun ami bien conustra
> Le bastun, quant el le verra . . .
> Ele esgardat tut un pendant
> Le bastun vit, bien l'aparceut,
> Tutes les lettres i conut. (59-60; 80-82)

Just as the audience knows that the "reïne" in question is Iseult even though her name is never mentioned through the course of the lai, so is Iseult capable of understanding through the power of the symbolic "coudrier" what the message had to announce and who the sender was. At first sight, the hazel bark is merely representative of the power of love; however, it will gradually assume extended implications. In the beginning, it only serves a utilitarian purpose - Tristan must square the branch in order to write his so-called message.[48] Then the authoress goes one step further, and the symbol of the power of love, the hazel, reveals itself to the Queen. By the end of the lai, it becomes the symbol of perfect love:

> Cume del chievrefoil esteit
> Ki a la codre se perneit:
> Quant il s'i est laciez e pris
> E tut entur le fust s'est mis,
> Ensemble poënt bien durer,

Mes ki puis les voelt desevrer,
Li Codres muert hastivement
E li chievrefoil ensement. (vers 69-79)

Like separate and distinct entities, male and female, the hazel tree and the honeysuckle assume human qualities and thereby adopt new meaning which qualifies them as symbols in the true sense of the word. The honeysuckle seizes, winds, and twists around the hazel tree. Marie's image steadily becomes larger than reality. Interlaced, they are able to survive as one new being. Once separated, both will die immediately. The total interdependence of this well-constructed analogy calls to mind the Androgyne Myth - that each of us desperately searches for the complement of our being and soul that existed for all time. Once reunited, the two souls, now one, may enjoy a state of bliss. Through association with what the medieval audience already knew about the great love between Tristan and Iseult, the symbol of ideal love is further enhanced and elevated. In Jungian terminology, this union would symbolize the attainment or longing for the attainment of perfection in which friendly animus and anima figures coexist. The symbol thus progresses toward unity of self and mind, self-acceptance and perfection within the grasp of man. Marie de France's couplet sums up this unity of perfection and personal happiness:

"Bele amie, si est de nus
Ne vus sanz mei, ne jeo sanz vus." (77-78)

The compactness and beauty of these words converge upon ideal love. At first glance, these two images of the hazel tree and the honeysuckle seem to signify the two lovers: Tristan and

Iseult respectively; however, as the lai unfolds the two symbols create a completely new notion, a truly different entity which surpasses any mundane explanation: a love that cannot be annihilated either in life or in death; forever together is the loving couple. Conflicts arising from Mark, father surrogate, only strengthen the bond and solidify the symbol of love.

Before concluding this section on the symbol as ideal love, it should be noted that apart from the philosophy of idealism and these neoplatonic thoughts, Marie de France often displays in full view the other side of the coin, the sensual or pre-Petrarchan aspects. These two elements together - idealism and sensuality - explain in part what is meant by the courtly code. That the lover must wait incessantly to obtain his lady, suffer, love his suffering, subject himself to all trials and tribulations to merit this special love is only one side of the picture.[49] While in the Chievrefoil love-making is only hinted at (vers 91-96), the adulterous couple often enjoys the fruit of their evil in all its sensuous pleasure. Often the poetess offers glimpses into this other portrait of "courtly" existence in a most flagrant manner as in Equitan:

> Sur le lit al seignur cuchierent
> E deduistrent e enveisierent
> Ileoc unt ensemble geü . . .
> U il gisent, entr' acolez (281-283; 291-292)

These sensual elements had a great influence on the poets of the Renaissance. Although Ronsard and Du Bellay inherited and imitated their Italian models and Latin models like Catullus, the Italians themselves, Petrarch especially, admired and imitated in their turn the lyric poets of twelfth century France.[50]

Thus this stark realism and pursuit of pleasure was a trait transmitted through the ages bearing witness to the dual nature of the Lais and their symbols.

The Symbol as the Power of Love

The power of love sometimes exerts its forces upon the brave warrior types like Guigemar - "Ke unc de nule amur n'out cur." (v. 58) The hero does not seem allured by the temptations of love. Numerous hypotheses have been suggested concerning his "malady." Some have assumed that he is a homosexual, or a violent brute only interested in warlike sports and courtly games; others say that he is totally indifferent to love or too attached to his mother.[51] Be that as it may, the fatal day is upon the hero when he is out hunting: he shoots a white antlered hind, a curious creature to say the least with its ancestry in Classical mythology[52] - "perches de cerf out en la teste." (v. 92) Ordinarily no hind has antlers, but symbolically this creature with masculine ornaments will be the cause of physical pain as well as mental anguish to the protagonist. Curiously enough, it has been stated that such a beast did exist and that Henry II was even presented its head - a true story that Marie may have known;[53] however, it may have been as fabled and "fabulous" a creature as a unicorn to Marie. The use of this image is merely a symbolic technique for, since it is granted a human voice, it has been elevated to a form of personification representing more than an everyday hind. In any case, Guigemar aims and shoots in vain since the arrow rebounds from the hind's forehead striking the hunter in the thigh.[54] There will be no cure for this hunter according to the dying animal:

"Oï! Lase! Jo suis ocise!
E tu, vassal, ki m'as nafree,
Tel seit la tue destinee:
Jamais n'aies tu medecins,
Ne par herbe, ne par racine!
Ne par mire, ne par poisun
N'avras tu jamés garisun
De la plaie k'as en la quisse,
De si ke cele te guarisse
Ki suffera pur tue amur
Issi grant peine e tel dolur
K'unkes femme taunt ne suffri,
E tu referas taunt pur li;
Dunt tuit cil s'esmerveillerunt
Ki aiment e amé avrunt
U ki pois amerunt aprés.
Va t'en de ci, lais m'aveir pés!" (vers 106-121)

Why is the chevalier being cursed? He obviously refuses to conform to the rules, dictates, and domination of the opposite sex. The antlers signify the animal's strength over the now powerless hunter. This androgynous creature is definitively expounding upon a "stock" courtly love doctrine. Whether this doctrine is to be espoused or ridiculed is another question. That rests with the intent of the authoress. Nevertheless, a safe assumption is that since the lovers must undergo more torment and suffering through the various peripeteia, the animal is preaching a love doctrine, perhaps Marie's. In any event, the hind incarnates this code admonishing, with considerable exaggeration, those who refuse to fall victim to love's charm. The hind, as symbol of the power of love, demonstrates its strength and masculinity over he who has vowed never to be caught in love's omnipotent snares. A multivalent symbol with innumerable possibilities at its disposal is the hind - all of which attests to Marie's genius in her capacity to blend together mythological,

courtly, and psychological traditions into one newly crystallized symbol. The fear of being dominated by a woman is expressed in this unfriendly anima image of Guigemar's mind while the poetess mocks his exaggerated fear.[55] This symbol will force Guigemar to find a cure and will finally lead him to ideal love.

Guigemar's wound was so deep that he would have died if a ship had not mysteriously appeared out of nowhere and had taken him to the woman of his dreams who would heal him - an echo from the Tristan legend with several differences.[56] It seems, however, that before their first encounter the lovers were predestined to meet and love one another; it will, in fact, be the ship that shall accomplish this task. This predetermined context or fate in which the lovers act their parts has been fixed by the hind which states that Guigemar must find his love in order to be healed; she, whoever she will be, is essential to his cure; secondly, the ship intervenes three times in order to unite the couple periodically, thus demonstrating that these are the chosen two at whose suffering all the world will marvel. On the one hand, the ship symbol closely resembles the small coffin of the "laüstic" incrusted with jewels and draped in fine linens - all of which points to the splendor of ideal love:

> La vielle fu tute de seie . . .
> Dunt li pecul et li limun
> Furent a l'ovre Salemun
> Taillié a or, tut a triffoire
> De ciprés e de blanc ivoire. (159; 171-174)

The symbol of the ship will transcend this basic interpretation and will represent the means and the vehicle by which the lovers

are afforded the opportunity to meet. Therefore, the recurrent symbol of the power of love which overcomes obstacles is used three times during the course of the lai; after the hero receives his wound, the ship carries him off to his lady; when the husband discovers the romance and sends the chevalier away, the ship awaits and aids in his escape, and finally the ship takes the lady to the land where she will eventually rejoin her lover - but not after inconsequential episodes with a fear-provoking antagonist, Meriaduc:

> El hafne out une sule nef,
> Dunt Guigemar choisi le tref. (vers 151-152)
> La barge trovent, enz l'unt mis:
> Od lui s'en vet en sun païs
> La neifs erre, pas ne demure. (vers 619-621)
> Al hafne vint, la neif trova:
> Atachiée fu al rochier
> U ele se voleit neier
> Quant ele la vit, enz est entree. (vers 678-681)

Thus the instrument of escape, "la nef," which miraculously materializes has become a symbol for the power of love which confronts all difficulties leading the lovers to their predetermined destination. The "Laustic," the symbol of love, is constructed by the three main characters in whose hands love is either crushed or glorified. The ship, on the contrary, is a means to an end, a symbol that reflects an attribute of love only - its magical powers. Furthermore, adulterous love lends itself quite easily to an absurd, sterile, whimsical situation since the jealous husband's way of managing the household is unbearable. On one hand, the wife is forced to retire far from the world like a recluse, and on the other, she is tempted and seduced by her own desires and sexual needs. Like a nun in a holy chapel, Guigemar's lady is ironically surrounded by murals depicting Venus burning books by Ovid:

Le livre Ovide, ou il enseine
Comment chascuns s'amur estreine,
En un fu ardant le gettout,
E tuz iceus escumengout
Ki jamais cel livre lirreient
Ne sun enseignement fereient. (vers 239-244)

A symbolic gest and as one critic puts it, "Marie n'y fait jeter ni les Métamorphoses, ni les Amours, ni l'Art d'Aimer, ni le reste, seuls les Remèdes d'Amour sont condamnés; c'est que, selon la dialectique amoureuse de Marie, le véritable amour, 'fin' amors,' étant fatal, il ne saurait guérir."[57] However, as Philippe Ménard stated, not without some humor, the husband should have had Venus burning the Ars Armatoria whose third book advises wives on how to deceive their husbands.[58] The parody lends itself well to Marie's interpretation of the situation on the whole; the confining and all-repressive tower symbols oppose themselves to the longing for escape as exemplified by an angered Venus who is setting aflame, in essence, fatal love for which the lady really wants no cure. Like an alter ego, Venus expresses what the lady seems incapable of expressing. Doth Venus protest for naught? A good number of sophisticated traps are being laid by Marie. This scene is like a vignette of a Molière play a few centuries before the fact - a code of comportment to which no one adheres.[59] How can the lady then escape her circumstances and free herself? She needs a good strong ship, the symbol of the power of love, which sweeps her away and which expresses her desire for liberation. The ship has been equated with the Church since the Church is often depicted as a ship in mosaics and medieval Church windows.[60] This interpretation lacks insight into the heart and subject

matter of this lai. Other parallels have been established with the Celtic quest-and-voyage themes of the Imrama where the classical means of transportation is the ship.[61] Before Christianity and before any formalized mythology existed, there was the mind of man in a more primitive state of development. For this reason we are studying the symbol as an abstract concept with its associated psychological implications where a "collective unconscious" is in operation before introducing the various sources and possible affinities.

Two other symbols of the power of love in Guigemar bear mentioning: the knotted shirt to be untied and the world's first chastity belt to be unbuckled. Both Celtic and Greek counterparts of these symbols exist and will by analyzed in the following chapters.[62] Occasionally, the lovers exchange objects to control and to maintain the ideal state of their love:

> Vostre chemise me livrez
> El pan desuz ferai un plait:
> Cungié vus doins, u ke ceo seit
> D'amer cele kil deferrat
> E ki despeier le savrat. (vers 558-562)
>
> Par une ceinture autresi
> Dunt a sa char nue la ceint
> Par mi le flanc aukes l'estreint:
> Ki la bucle purrat ovrir
> Sanz depescier e sanz partir
> Il li prie que celui aint. (vers 570-575)

This quasi exchange of wedding vows - "to tie the knot" - must have provoked a few laughs at the court; however, beyond the parody, the symbolic nature of these objects once more demonstrates Marie's complete exploitation of meanings. The objects represent the power of love and not love itself since no one but the two lovers can accomplish the task - Meriaduc cannot open

the belt - nor can anyone break this contractual love agreement by undoing these two symbols; the lovers are destined to be the only ones capable of doing it. The power of love classification best suits these symbols since their strength lies in overcoming obstacles in order to unite true lovers; it is the mystical bond that brings them together. It is always a question of degree and emphasis which causes differenciations of this nature: the "laüstic" exists without a display of its forces and power - it is passive in nature. The ship in Guigemar, on the contrary, is a symbol in action, not just thought. Similarly, the illegitimate son, Yonec, who brought to fruition the existentially complete meaning of the symbol as ideal love, was the force behind the symbol.[63]

The power of a symbol displays itself to an even greater extent in the Bisclavret. By his very nature, the werewolf incarnates the classical inner conflict of a man in constant struggle with his animal instincts or, let us say, his sexual appetite- and metaphysically his struggle between good and evil. Since dualism is within the nature of this beast, it is subject to multiple levels of interpretation. Notwithstanding the sympathy felt towards the Bisclavret who betrayed by his wife for another man must lead the wandering life of an exil, the medieval audience also comprehended the religious aspects of this lai and of what is meant by werewolfism, lycanthropy. Of course, the circumstances are exaggerated to such a point that they become ludicrous: the "I-turn-into-a-wolf" motif. The comedy revolves around a wife who wrongs her husband and is punished by the removal of her nose. Her punishment will be eternal since all

future generations of females in her line will also be "noseless."[64] Much can be said of the phallic implications of this punishment when nose/phallus equals strength. Parody is present and so is another of Marie's courtly "warnings" to toe the line. For all intents and purposes and to explore the more philosophical nature of this lai, the actions and behavior of the Bisclavret are suggestive of a sin-motif. Why must the Bisclavret repent by roaming through the forests and being subjected to the savage life of the wilderness if it were not some form of penance? This more basic role of the symbol of the Bisclavret is essential to grasp the religious and superstitious characteristics of what Marie exposes. To reach the core of the problem, we must eliminate certain elements of parody in order not to cloud the issue. The lai deals with the dual nature of man; Christ also had a dual nature, human and divine; however, when an "ordinary" human is "stricken" in this way, it is manifested by diabolical features. Jung would explain this "illness" by the term, dissociation or the overtaking of the personality of some unfriendly <u>animus</u> fantasy image. It is thus the primitive forces of uncivilized man vying for power with those forces of rational control of the civilized man within this inner conflict of Self - whence the psychosis of split-personality. The civilized man wishes to repress these childlike fantasies of the dream world which are visible traits of mythology as well.[65] Happily for us, Marie lets her world of the mind flow and escape through her characters who vent and sometimes resolve these fantasies in a mature way. This openness of Marie's facilitates analysis of her work despite the conflicting sources from which she drew and its resultant composite personality. As Marie has many natures,

the Bisclavret has but two, the pure reaching towards a good and one "stained" with sensuality. Remember that it is within the nature of the symbol to reflect this dualism where reconciliation seems impossible:

> Beaus chevaliers e bons esteit
> E noblement se cunteneit. (vers 17-18)

Diametrically opposed to:

> Al plus espés de la gaudine
> S'i vif de preie e de ravine. (vers 65-66)

At times the chevalier comports himself nobly while at other times he searches like a wild beast for its prey. Many subtleties become progressively more apparent as we proceed:

> Dame, fet il, jeo vois tuz nuz. (vers 70)

The sensuality is well understood. The Bisclavret is the symbol of an interior conflict: the sensual drives and impulses characterize the negative power of love which manifests itself in animal form. Even though Marie de France never states emphatically nor even mentions the presence of a real woman whom the Bisclavret might seek out in the forest, the sensuality of this passage is nevertheless implied by the behavior of the beast. The "why" he turns into a wolf is never given. One could find the answer in parody perhaps, but our interest lies at present in a symbolic interpretation. Sensual and sexual love manifests itself here as a sin or else why the secrecy and shame? Thus, the Bisclavret is symbolic in regard to the nature of inner strife - a symbol frozen for all time. Another interesting contrast reflects the

"état d'âme" of the Bisclavret: the savageness of the forest where he "hunts" as opposed to the sanctity of the chapel where he leaves his clothes and seeks spiritual protection:

> Lez le chemin par unt jeo vois,
> Une vielz chapele i esteit
> Ki meintefeiz grant bien me feit:
> La est la piere cruose e lee
> Suz un bussun, dedenz cavee;
> Mes dras i mets, suz le buissun. (vers 90-95)

The Bisclavret's inner conflict is thus externalized and serves as a reinforcing thematic background. All seems black and white to him with no shades of gray. The clothes will now assume in their turn the role of symbol as a mystical force: when he puts them on, he is civilized man; taking them off indicates bestiality.[66] One could conclude that the clothes through their power transform him into one or the other at will. One could also conclude that they signify society itself, the courtly civilized species in contrast with the nude savage running through the woods. This "Jekyll and Hyde" is damned, condemned, and cursed to follow his shameful inclinations:

> Kar si jes eüsse perduz
> E de ceo feusse aparceüz
> Bisclavret sereie a tuz jurs. (vers 73-75)

What could be more fatalistic than this paradox of man and the destructive power of the love-symbol, the Bisclavret himself, an example of man yielding to his basest passions. The power is now seen not as sacred but of profane love which seeks to destroy itself and punish those culpable. Ironically the tables are reversed and it will be the wife's own "shameful" love affair which merits damnation. Her betrayal in hiding the

werewolf's clothes, her infidelity in prefering another, her trial, her punishment and that of her descendents[67] - "senz nez sunt neies" (313) - all these elements stress and establish the compassion we feel towards the beast and towards a man who cannot dominate his passions and keep himself within the social framework since he is attracted to the "autre soi" through the symbolic force of sensuality. In a tongue-in-cheek way, the Bisclavret is miraculously elevated to a position of esteem, first as royal pet and then as loyal nobleman to the king.

Where the Bisclavret finds little difficulty in winning the love of his king, Eliduc does not enjoy a similar success. Calumny, "les Lauzengiers," and evil thoughts seem to follow in the footsteps of Marie's "preux." The entire world is jealous of the superior man in whose shadow they live. Defamed and banished because of omnipresent lies, Eliduc must leave his native land, house, and wife. But before abandoning his spouse, he sincerely promises - of which there is some doubt - to remain faithful and to return within an unspecified period of time:

> Mes il l'aseürat de sei
> Qu'il li porterat bone fei. (vers 83-84)

The dramatic irony of these lines has been noted by several critics; it is Marie's most common narrative device;[68] the meaning of words seems to reverse itself whether because of circumstances within the lai, or because of Marie's intended parody. Whatever the case, as frequently happens to warriors, there is a war to be fought, and Eliduc liberates a foreign land from its natural enemies. In recompense for services rendered, the king of this foreign land would like to keep him in his army.

Eventually, Eliduc falls hopelessly in love with the king's daughter. The mystique of the foreign lady has captivated his heart. From this moment, one becomes aware of an interior conflict of mind taking possession of Eliduc - a little far-fetched and contrived as Chrêtien's Yvain who must decide between being happily married and relaxed - "recréant" - or being on the move like a warrior. Eliduc must decide between returning to his wife or staying with his loved one. Eliduc will do as he pleases since the conflict does not exist in reality: he must remain in order to be lover and warrior in the eyes of these newly found people. The conflict is pure invention:

> Tant pur sa femme garder fei,
> Tant pur ceo qu'il est od le rei.
> En grant peine fu Elidus. (vers 475-477)

His "crisis" dictates that he stay with his beloved. Nevertheless, the conflict is set down by Marie who seems to adopt the old Celtic theme of "the man with two women." Other critics believe that Tristan's indecision - vacillating between Iseult la Blonde et Iseult aux Blanches Mains - is comparable to this trio under study: Eliduc, Guildeluëc, and Guilliadun. However, Ewert questions this theory declaring that all parallelism is inevitable and not necessarily correct; situations and circumstances vary.[69] The question shall be probed later. Nonetheless, Eliduc's torment loses force since he ultimately does everything he wanted.

When the term of his contract with the king expires, a surge of emotion overcomes the hero who feels obliged to return home to his legitimate wife. After re-establishing his courtly

reputation in battle and after being restored to the good graces of his own king, his "crisis" reappears; he feels sad and his wife notices it. The understanding wife grants him permission to return. She is not aware of the "why," nor does his beloved know about the wife. He returns to the foreign land and cannot resist the temptation of sweeping his loved-one off and away with him on a sea voyage to Brittany. At this moment the role of symbolism will emerge. While escaping their problems by boat, a fierce storm arises from nowhere. Eliduc is apparently acting out against divine law and established Christian convention:

> Nel sufferreit crestïentez (vers 602)

The sign from heaven was ferocious:

> Une turmente eurent en mer
> E un vent devant eus leva,
> Ki luin del hafne les geta. (vers 816-818)

Furthermore, one of the sailors aboard hints at the symbolic nature and moral of the storm - that Eliduc is not faithful to his wife and is acting against the law of God and Church:

> Sire, ça einz avez od vus
> Cele par ki nus perissums
> Jamés a tere ne vendrums!
> Femme leal espuse avez
> E sur celi autre enmenez
> Cuntre Deu e cuntre la lei
> Cuntre dreiture e cuntre fei
> Lessiez la nus geter en mer! (vers 832-840)

Instead of taking the sailor's suggestion to throw Guilliadun overboard, the enraged Eliduc pitches the sailor into the sea. As a result, the storm subsides and the passengers are led safely to port. Rather than direct their hate and anger toward

Eliduc who fathered the crime and sin, the sailors chose to blame the maiden out of fear of Eliduc's courage and strength. Marie is twisting a conventional image to a semi-comical, facetious end. A bit of humor - if one pictures a mob scene of tough angry sailors incapable of mutinying and picking on a poor defenseless creature. Eliduc settles the argument. Marie's stylistic techniques often involve turning conventional scenes into her own brand of parody. Beyond this interpretation, since we must cut away the outer layers of the symbol and probe it to its depths, Eliduc did satisfy the code of sacrifice which was necessary to save the ship. One critic offered this excellent interpretation of the storm scene insisting that the sailor broke an oath of silence - which is treason in the feudal code. Thus he had to be offered in sacrifice; he merited such an end.[70] As concerns the symbol as power of love, we bear witness again to the reverse side of the coin: the storm symbol serves to demonstrate the power of an illegitimate love not sanctioned and capable of causing destruction. As with the wife of Bisclavret, it will be the absence of true love which brings punishment and tragedy through symbolic means. Even though Eliduc never touched the girl in the purely physical sense of the word, he nevertheless sinned in thought by desiring her and doing all in his power to keep her: he persevered in his illegitimate love. That is why the storm arose.[71]

After the catastrophe at sea, the young lady who is now aware of the marital status of the hero faints; everyone assumes she is dead. Eliduc places the "corpse" in a magnificent chapel, and the reader is bombarded with more <u>peripeteia</u> - the chevalier's

real wife arrives upon the scene and at the tomb with a "coup de théâtre" effect. Guildeluëc cannot help but admire the young Guilliadun's beauty and understands her husband's grief, the forgiving noble woman that she is. Suddenly, a weasel appears from under the altar, and an extraordinary event takes place: Guildeluëc's valet knocks the weasel over the head until dead, but fortuitously its little male companion weasel carries herbs to his little mate and revives or better yet raises it from the dead:

> Une musteile vint curant
> De suz l'auter esteit eissue
> E li vadlez l'aveit ferue . . .
> Quand sa cumpaine i accurut . . .
> As herbes est el bois venue
> Od ses denz ad prise une flur . . .
> Dedenz la buche en teu maniere
> A sa cumpaine l'aveit mise
> Que li vadlez aveit ocise
> En es l'ure fu revescue. (vers 1032-1034; 1039-1053)

Like the exemplary models of the warriors and saints genre but only in comic imitation and without the grandeur in this parody, Guildeluëc will understand the less than cryptic message of the male weasel and proceed to place in the mouth of our "Sleeping Beauty" the necessary herbs which revive her - shades of Fênice in Cligès:

> Dedenz la buche a la pucele
> Meteit la flur qui tant fu bele. (vers 1061-1062)

Could Marie be implying by this "flur vermeille" the virginity of the maiden in addition to her life which Guildeluëc restored? Symbols are everywhere present. The weasel itself is known to be a shrewd, cunning, and even sneaky craftsman, and in this

story it saves the day by resuscitating the dead.[72] But how exactly does the weasel apply to our theory of the symbol as power of love? It is through the weasel's actions that Eliduc's wife deciphers the sense of the symbol: that the love between her husband and the young girl is too powerful to be broken. The symbol of the power of love, the weasel, shall convince the wife of this fact and thus be instrumental in uniting the lovers. Guildeluëc, of course, could have chosen not to act; however, her husband's melancholic attitude, Christian caritas, plus the weasel's good example - and the fact that the wife is portrayed as being lovingly understanding - dictated that she do so.[73] The force of love always shows its strength. It has also been demonstrated that the girl's so-called death is symbolically the penance due because of the sin of an illicit love. Similarly, the "deaths" of the sailor, weasel, and maiden have all been construed in this manner: all three are victims of this love symbolically reunited.[74] Thus, weasel and storm are opposing symbols in the lai Eliduc: the storm, impending danger, wrath of God, punishment, penance motifs for the guilty blend together; the weasel, the escapist, clever worker who through unconventional means resolves the conflict, brings hope, life, joy and eternal happiness without punishment. And for the "pièce de résistance" the lai of Eliduc offers an even larger open-ending in which the wife establishes a monastery, the couple marry, and after some time join the wife in a communal religious experience:

> Ensemble od eus se dune e rent
> Pur servir Deu omnipotent.

Ensemble od sa femme premiere
Mist sa femme que tant ot chiere.
El la receut cum sa serur
E mut li porta grant honur.
De Deu servir l'amonesta
E sun ordre li enseigna. (vers 1163-1170)

Let us trace for a moment the progression of the symbols in this lai: from the death and penance of the storm sequence, to the life and joy of the weasel scene which blossoms further into the notion of Christian caritas where the religious experience of this profane trinity prevails. In the Catholic ethos, God the Father is creator, the Son Saviour, and the Holy Spirit the Love between the Two. Parallels can be made. However, one cannot help but ask, since many of Marie's thematic and symbolic elements are so exaggerated, to what extent the parody is intended. The truth or answer to the question probably lies somewhere in the middle since Marie is a synthesizer of opposing cultures.[75]

Symbolism, per se, assumes numerous shapes and qualities; often a title alone may suggest backgrounds and sources that conflict. The lai of the Deus Amanz is a case in point. It has been associated not only with Celtic and Greek mythological themes but with the psychological and quite obviously Freudian love triangle.[76] In this example, a king instead of a jealous husband will be over-protective of this daughter and constantly wishing she be at his side. Finally, after some persuasion, he relents and consents to her getting married with, of course, one condition to be met: that the lover submit himself to the test of tests - the classical courtly proofs of love which are exaggerated feats of strength:

Sortit esteit e destiné
Desur le munt fors la cité
Entre ses braz la portereit
Si que ne se reposereit. (vers 43-46)

Carry his daughter in his arms out of the city to the very top of a mountain without respite - all done in the name of love. It is an exhausting and impossible task. Needless to say there is always some sorcerer type around - the girl's aunt - ready to prepare the magic potion[77] which is to enable the lover to accomplish his goal:

L'art de phisike ad tant usé
Que mut est saive de mescines
Tant cunuist herbes e racines. (vers 106-108)

At this point in the story, the herbs seem to stand for the force of love inherent in the symbol - an all pervading power that struggles against all odds; however, Marie de France through her exceptional talents and cleverness will not have the mystical brew drunk by the lover; she abandons the symbol that she herself sets up even though she has many doubts about the lover's ability to achieve this test on his own:

La fiolete od tut sun beivre
Bien seit qu'el nel vout pas deceivre
En sa mein a porter li baille
Mes jo creim que poi ne li vaille
Kar n'ot en lui point de mesure. (vers 185-189)

Furthermore, the lover does not remember that the potion is even there anymore, so infatuated is he with the lady stretched out in his arms - Marie is attempting to build up some tension and portray the youth's naïveté and nervousness:

Pur la joie qu'il ot de li
De sun beivre ne li membra. (vers 192-193)

She insists that he drink - notice how the symbol is being established step by step:

Amis, fet ele, kar bevez! (vers 195)

Out of breath and having expended all of his energy, the young man forgets about the potion and falls dead from exhaustion. He succumbs to his love.[78] The young girl, broken-hearted, follows him to the grave. To love is to die - the courtly rule of life.

What enthralls us is the way Marie purposefully gives precedence to the herbs, a possible symbol of the power of love, but then does not make use of them. What should have been and could have been the symbol of what love can do is transformed into one gigantic thrust of will power on the boy's part. It is his own internal strength, his own desire to love, which pushes him forward and supersedes the potentiality of the herbs. In short, the symbol that Marie choses to establish from the beginning has never been used and has been replaced by the boy's strength of will. A true stroke of talent: a "trumped-up" symbol is put aside and makes way for a love found at the very core of a human being. The boy <u>does</u> make it to the top of the hill without using the symbolic herbs:

Sur le munt vint; tant se greva (vers 213)

The symbol of the power of love which could have resided in the potion is now part of the character himself - the symbol which allows lovers to accomplish anything and overcome obstacles even

at the price of death. This reversal demonstrates Marie's genius: an inner force becomes our new symbol. Will power has overridden the concocted potion-symbol, thus permitting the boy to satisfy the requirements of the proof. The original sham symbol is cast aside and a mystical force within the lover does what the potion supposedly would have done. This is Marie's most ingenious and well-plotted development of the symbol of the power of love: the will of a lover. It is interesting to note the development of the love potion-symbol throughout the twelfth century from Tristan to Cligès and the Deus Amanz in which it represents tragic irony. The full implications of this development will be forthcoming. We witness at the end of this lai another open transcendental ending: the potion spills over the hill rejuvenating all sides and causing the grass to grow. Again the inherent force of the power of love; the made-up symbol was potent after all. The symbol is thus expanded; it is now an all-encompassing love, and in this light the boy's noble death almost seems like an offering and sacrifice after which life is restored. There is a progression from made-up symbol to will power and then an elevation towards the "new" symbol with its regenerative qualities:

> Ele le pleint a mut haut cri
> Puis ad getẽ e espaundu
> Le veissel u li beivre fu
> Li muns en fu bien arusez . . .
> Meinte bone herbe i unt trovee
> Ki del beivre orent racine. (vers 222-229)

This three-fold development of the symbol is a common occurrence in the Lais, and a pertinent example of Marie's skill.[79]

One of the first, never to be broken, rules of the courtly game is the secrecy of love: that love be kept secret at all costs especially when the husband's presence is imminent. That is one of the reasons why in the Occitan lyric poetry the "guetteur" must announce the approaching rising sun, "l'alba," to warn the lovers of a closeby husband and to keep the truth of their love a secret. In Milun the lovers desperately attempt to conceal their love affair, but the girl becomes pregnant and believes that she has lost her honor. To save face and since she is truly in love, she would like to marry the young man named Milun, but, her sense of guilt being too severe, she decides to entrust the child in her sister's care. In the meantime, the typical domineering father, as was the king of the Deus Amanz, arranges that she be married to some baron. They did keep their love a secret but are enveloped in an existential trap of their own making since once the marriage is consummated they will be separated forever. How will they get together? How will they communicate? The answer lies in the symbolic swan motif. The lovers put the swan on a diet: they pay special attention to its weight, so that it can fly faster and carry messages back and forth between the lovers.[80] This goes on for twenty years:

> Un bref escrit tel cum li plot
> Od un anel l'enseelot
> Le cigne ot laissié jeüner
> Al col li pent, sil laist aler. (vers 255-258)

Let us pause for a moment and delve into the symbolic implications. Some have seen in this fasting associations with phallic images[81] while others talk about the reality of swans inhabiting

the area of South Wales - the Welch motif.[82] Let us not be so complex. The white symbolic purity of the swan aside and other shapeshifting mythological creatures aside, the swan not only represents the means of communication but, if we extend our argument another step, we discover that the swan denotes again the power of love symbol. Nothing on earth can prevent the lovers from communicating with each other. As exaggerated and humorous as the twenty year period is, love, nevertheless wins out due to its mystical force for which the swan is a symbol.

As a final coup, Milun's natural son - grown up by now and a chevalier of note himself - comes face to face in mortal combat with his own father - the family relationship being unknown to both men. Their battle is typical of an epic motif of father-son rivalry. In Gormont et Isembart, the adversary of Isembart before his father's intervention is curiously called Miles de Gailart.[83] The similarity between names and themes is worth noting. In any event, the purpose of father and son combat is to prove that the two best men are in competition; it heightens the drama, thus showing their equality in bravery and courage. Both are worthy of one another. The young man is not just the son of any nobleman but the son of Milun, his real father. Through the deus ex machina ring of recognition, the two realize each other's identity and halt the fight. As we saw Yonec symbolically unite his parents, the bastard of Milun shall likewise take on the paternal task and vow to kill the "legitimate" husband. In the former lai the female role dominates, whereas in the latter the male image takes precedence. Since the son really has no motive to avenge his father and right the wrong -

for what did this husband actually do to offend Milun?- this desire to kill seems engendered only by the son's rage and humiliation rather than by just cause. The fact that the son realizes that his father has become old - "la barbe et les chevoz chanuz (vers 421) - and the fact that he did unsaddle his father in combat may contribute to the son's wanting to take on the responsibility to unite the lovers. In any case, this almost gratuitous act of murder is averted by the fortuitous natural death of the harmless husband. Fate works in wonderous ways as Marie well knew. Milun's son will again symbolize the perpetuity of the parents' love that flows through the son's veins:

> Li fiz respunt: "par fei, bels pere,
> Assemblerai vus e ma mere!
> Sun seignur qu'ele ad ocirai
> E espuser la vus ferai." (vers 497-500)

The son, the symbol of the power of love, will have his wish fulfilled by fate if not by his own actions since he never does get the chance to kill the husband. Ordinarily, a parent will give his son in marriage; however, Marie has chosen to reverse the natural order of this popular convention:

> Lur fiz amdeus les assembla,
> La mere a sun pere dona
> En grant bien e engrant duçur
> Vesquirent puis nuit et jur. (vers 527-530)

The illegitimate son continues to be an all persistant force that seeks to triumph in rejoining the true lovers; the son also reunites his true parents. This symbol of the illegitimate offspring remains the physical manifestation of their love and the

ultimate strength of this love. First the swan and then the son, another bird-to-man symbolism.

The adventures of the Round Table will form the backdrop of our next lai, Lanval, leading us through a valley of symbols associated with Celtic mythology. The brave chevalier, Lanval, feels existentially trapped between two worlds: the court of King Arthur and the Otherworld motif of the mysterious lady, or Fairy Mistress. He is the stranger; he is not accepted by Arthur who through his own negligence forgets to repay Lanval for his courage; all other knights are rewarded save him - a royal oversight; he will also be rejected by the Fairy Mistress for having revealed the secret of their love - a theme of the lyric poets previously mentioned. How did he make the acquaintance of such a fabulously attractive creature? Luckily enough and from out of a nebulous nowhere land, the chevalier encounters two lovely maidens who will escort him to their mistress:[84]

> Si vit venir deus dameiseles
> Unkes n'en ot veü plus beles
> Vestues furent richement
> Laciees mut estreitement
> En deus bliauz de purpre bis
> Mut par aveient bel le vis! (vers 55-60)

Exactly in the manner of the ship in Guigemar, the young ladies will appear a total of three times during the course of the story. Numbers and the number of times an event would take place had much significance, as we know, to the ancients and the Celts. The maidens will represent that closely knit bond that attracts Lanval to his mistress; they are in essence a mystical force directed by the mistress herself. Most often in

Celtic mythology, the route the hero will follow is mapped out in advance.[85] These handmaidens will become another recurrent symbol of the power of love designed to unite the lovers. Thanks to its unseen force, this symbol will engrave itself permanently in the mind of both king and public who doubt Lanval's declaration that the mistress is the most beautiful in the world.

At the mistress's Otherworld chateau, Lanval spent his moments of ecstasy at his lady's side; however, she imposed one strong condition upon her lover, reminiscent of the "geis" or injunction of Celtic lore:

> Amis, fet ele, or vus chasti,
> Si vus comant e si vus pri:
> Ne vus descovrez a nul humme!
> De ceo vus dirai la summe:
> A tuz jurs m'avrïez perdue
> Si ceste amur esteit seüe
> Jamés nem purrïez veeir
> Ne de mun cors seisine aveir. (vers 143-150)

What could be more explicit? If this love is discovered, he will never see her again. All that he must do to possess his lady is wish her presence, and she will appear:

> Quant vus vodrez od mei parler
> Ja ne savrez cel liu penser
> U nuls puïst aveir s'amie
> Sanz repreoce e sanz vileinie
> Que jeo ne vus seie en present
> A fere tut vostre talent
> Nuls hum fors vus ne me verra
> Ne ma parole nen orra. (vers 163-170)

This wish also suggests the symbolic nature of the power of love - that which attracts and brings the lovers together. Lanval then leaves his mistress quite content with himself; nevertheless, the peripeteia begin to mount again disrupting

Lanval's plans: Arthur's Queen wishes to possess the chevalier who refuses to succumb to her wishes for any reasons. This Guigemar-like and Hippolytus-like refusal leads to the insulting remarks of the dejected Queen:

> Lanval, fet ele, bien le quit,
> Vus n'amez gueres cel deduit,
> Asez le m'ad hum dit sovent
> Que des femmes n'avez talent!
> Vallez avez bien afeitiez,
> Ensemble od eus vus deduiez. (vers 277-282)

She makes her points quite clear, leaving no doubts. We know exactly to what "talent" she refers concerning "les femmes," and what other "talent" she means regarding the "vallez." Marie's language is never this blunt or forceful in any other lai; it is graphic and erotic. The Queen's insinuations are met in kind by a multitalented Lanval - insult for insult in this "tenso"-like quarrel:

> Bien le sachiez a descovert
> Une de celes ki la sert,
> Tute la plus povre meschine
> Vaut mieuz de vus, dame reine,
> De cors, de vis e de beauté,
> D'enseignement e de bunté! (vers 297-302)

A little more controlled than the Queen's language but well put. He may have even been suggesting her stupidity by the use of "enseignement" or some other lack of "talent." Unknowingly, Lanval breaks the secret contract by revealing that "son amie" is the most beautiful in the world:

> Mes jo aim e sui amis
> Cele ke deit aveir le pris
> Sur tutes celes que jeo sai. (vers 293-295)

The liaison is dissolved; the Fairy Mistress will return no more. Thus, the strength of words uttered in haste, the power of pronounced words. This almost is a reflection of the feudal system's contractual agreements between lord and vassal. The Queen continues her verbal attacks; lies, slander, and rumors start to fly around the court. The Queen reports to the King concerning the chevalier's "bad" behavior; she reversed the truth and said that Lanval had insulted her, but she fails to say why. Lanval must be judged according to the King's decree - in kangaroo court style. Miraculously, the two maidens make their second appearance as the symbol of the power of love which will substantiate and corroborate the truth of Lanval's words.[86] Love equals truth in this classic symbol. Again the maidens materialize from nowhere:

> Deus puceles virent venir
> Sur deus beaus palefreiz amblanz;
> Mut par esteient avenanz!
> De cendal purpre sunt vestues
> Tut senglement a lur chars nues. (vers 472-476)

Note also the sensuality attached to the descriptions of these maidens. This reappearance's purpose is to verify the truth of Lanval's words; he will, of course, be exonerated because of them - symbol of truth, justice and love. All members of the court also seem in agreement that even the maidens are more beautiful than the Queen:

> Mut les loërent li plusur
> De cors, de vis e de colur:
> N'i ad cele mieuz ne vausist
> Qu'unkes la reïne ne fist. (vers 529-532)

A little while later, they will appear for their third and final time:

> Deus puceles de gent cunrei
> Vestues de deus palie freis
> Chevauchant deus muls espanneis
> Virent venir la rue aval. (vers 510-512)

All of which prophetically announces and anticipates the arrival of the "belle étrangère." It is as if the three appearances of the two maidens focus upon the arrival of the beauty of beauties. Like the metaphysical proofs, the girls are merely beautiful but the mistress is Beauty. Hyperbole is commonplace in courtly art:

> Quant par la vile errant
> Tut a cheval une pucele.
> En tut le siecle n'ot plus bele! (vers 548-550)

Beauty, truth, and love all converge in a Platonic way, all of which proves the innocence of the chevalier. Therefore, the recurrent symbol of the maidens represents the power of love which is the sole link between the truth of Lanval's declaration and the actual beauty of the Fairy Mistress insofar as the jury is concerned. The maidens are the strength of this love which challenges the preconceived notions of the court, overriding the verdict and pronouncing Lanval right. The power of love prevails.

Nomina-Numina - the power of names and words

If up till this moment, the lovers are brought together at the end of each lai through the power of a "fin' amor," the reverse shall hold true for the following lais: the culpable will have to remain together in the corruption of their crime.

"Nomina" - the given names of characters or even the words uttered by them - shall acquire a new significance and a mystical force, "numina" - the nod of consent and through extension the will of the gods. As in the Cratylus of Plato, objects and people are correctly named by nature of the thing or person in question. In conjunction with the naming, there is an inner force which displays the exact nature of being. Thus names and thoughtlessly spoken words will have a greater impact than normally imagined. Other lais could possibly be classified in this category since they bear similar features; however, those under discussion in this part of the study demonstrate this battle of names and words best since the symbolic implications of the names encompass the entire lai. The work of Marie de France captures the poetess's desire to eternalize the symbol, establish a moral, and right the wrong that has been done especially in these next three lais. Let us for a moment turn to the lai, Equitan, in which no less a person than a king and his mistress will die together in the passion of their crime.[87] Equitan, a respected king and lover of the hunt like Guigemar, and the beautiful wife "al senechal" will plot the murder of the seneschal. Of course, the king's love of the "hunt" goes beyond the usual meaning of the word. Their method is a bit grotesque and borders on black comedy: they decide to boil the husband alive after a hunt on which he accompanies the king. The plan is suggested by the wife, the treacherous woman motif once more, to her lover:

Mis sire od vus se seignera
E avoec vus se baignera
Dites li bien, nel lessiez mie
Que il vus tienge cumpainie!
E jeo ferai les bains temprer

E les deus cuves aporter
Sun bain ferai chaut e buillant
Suz ciel nen ad humme vivant
Ne fust escaudez e malmis
Einz que dedenz se feust asis. (vers 247-256)

The dramatic irony of this scene is enhanced by a previous discussion on "honest love" which itself turns out to be a discourse on the art of persuading someone to have an illicit affair:[88]

Dame, merci! Nel dites mes!
Cil ne sunt mie fin curteis . . .
Suz ciel n'ad dame s'ele est sage
Curteise e franche de curage. (vers 150-151; 155-156)

Their love-making continued for quite a while until the unmarried king feels pressured by his nobles to marry. Add to the foregoing, the lady's insistance, and the stage is set for the bathing and bleeding episode of premeditated murder. When finally the seneschal does return home, he catches the lovers in flagrante delicto. The king, to hide his face and shame, mistakenly leaps into the wrong vat and boils himself to death:

Pur sa vileinie covrir
Dedenz la cuve saut joinz piez. (vers 294-295)

As a culminating gesture of violence, the husband plunges the wife's head into the boiling water:

Sa femme prent demeintenant
El bain la met le chief avant
Issi mururent ambedui,
Li reis avant e ele od lui. (vers 303-306)

Whence is derived the immortality and eternal punishment of a criminal and adulterous love.[89] However, what has become of our symbol? The symbolism of this lai has become more subtle

than the previous ones because it resides in the strength of words alone - it is the lie committed which will be directed back to the lovers in boomerang fashion. The fatal words pronounced by the lovers will return where they were generated instead of penetrating the person for whom they were intended. Equitan while feigning friendship presented himself before the the seneschal as a loyal sovereign:

"Vus baignerez, dist il, od mei" (vers 269)

And this is the rub for the seneschal accepts the proposition:

Li senescals dit: "Jo l'otrei!" (vers 270)

Once these fatal words are pronounced by the king and his seneschal they come to being, nomina-numina, and they will have more meaning and significance for the culpable party than for the unaware victim.[90] We have here another of Marie's stylistic devices which offers credence to what is going to happen; it is similar to the contractual agreement found in Lanval but without knowledge of the parties concerned. The emphasis again is on words and this particular lai is bound up in them. The conclusion also is dependent upon the power of words as we can verify by its moral:

Tels purcace le mal d'autrui
Dunt tuz li mals revert sur lui. (vers 309-310)

The concluding statement only accentuates what has occurred that those who live by false words shall die by them. Thus, the symbolic nature of this lai lies in the power of words. This technique is evidently closely related to the ironic treatment

of the lai as a whole. Fatal words will lead the lovers to their self-imposed tragedy without their knowing it. A comparable device has been much employed in "La Vie de Saint Alexis" where the wish of the parents is reversed by the saint's own desire and free will.[91]

In a parallel circumstance, the phenomenon of uttered words which accuses and returns slyly towards the person who spoke them, is well illustrated by the lai, Fresne. A rich lady has just given birth to twin boys. Her jealous neighbor slanders the woman and thoughtlessly says that this birth is quite bizarre because, according to an old superstition, if a lady gave birth to two children at once, the pregnancy was certainly due to the fact that she had two different men. At least that is the rumor and prejudice being reported around town. Thus, the nasty neighbor will condemn herself by letting escape these fatal words from her mouth:

> "Nus savum bien qu'il i afiert:
> Unques ne fu ne ja nen iert
> Ne n'avendrat cele aventure
> Qu'a une sule porteüre
> Une femme deus enfanz eit,
> Si dui homme ne li unt feit." (vers 37-42)

One day when the women's fortunes are reversed, the same prejudice befalls the neighbor: she becomes pregnant and has twin girls. At this point, she realizes that she had condemned herself through her own jealousy. Words become flesh; they boomerang and the realization comes too late. Irony it may be, but the importance of words as symbols must be emphasized:

> Kar jeo meïsme me jugai,
> De tutes femmes mesparlai. (vers 79-80)

Whence the symbol of the power of pronounced words since they take on a force of their own regardless of what a character might do. Nothing, in fact, that the character does can reverse the future events of spoken words. This is a more generalized role of what is meant by symbolism: groups of words may possess the same impact as that of a single word.

Through her shame and stupidity, the jealous neighbor decides to wash her hands of the whole affair and to rid herself of one daughter. She leaves the helpless child in the woods.[92] Fortunately enough the infant is found in the crook of an ash tree - thus the heroine's name - and raised by an abbess in a monastery. The ash tree itself could have symbolic meaning since it is a light, hard, and elastic wood, but even more essential than these qualities, if one considers the sin of a mother who had abandoned her child and left her to the mercy of the elements, the word and name, Fresne, comes to mean a haunting remembrance and is the symbol of the mother's sin. The ash tree, the "signifiant," transcends its ordinary meaning of a hardy wood and is transformed not only into the girl's name but into the actual scene of the crime.

Another element of this story that should be noted is its aura of predestination: the lovers are to be together from their first meeting onwards. Although Gurun, the chevalier, and Fresne sincerely love each other, he had to abandon any notion of marrying Fresne because of the difference in their social situations; she had become his concubine, "suinant," and he was to marry a young lady worthy of his station. Ironically and unknown to everyone involved, the chevalier has chosen Codre -

Fresne's sister. Again words assume dimensions which go beyond their usual interpretation. "Codre" or the hazel tree is a fruit bearing tree whereas the ash, "fresne," bears not. Words, as in the Cratylus, befit the person or object they designate. Curiously enough Fresne has become the concubine, and Codre the wife-to-be who should bear children when married.[93] By some whim of fate, the tables are once again turned and Marie employs her usual device of reversals effectuating opposite results from those established:

> En la codre ad noiz e deduiz,
> Li fresnes ne porte unke fruiz! (vers 339-340)

After a scène de reconnaissance in which Fresne's real identity is uncovered, she is immediately elevated and accepted in her new legitimate social position. One can safely assume that she will now bear fruit after her marriage to Gurun. The symbolism attached to a name has undergone several stages of development: the ash tree with its usual qualities, its association with Fresne and the scene of the crime, its fertility and non-fertility aspects of ironic treatment, and finally its social upgrading to a higher rank. The chevalier is reunited to his mistress and wife as was ordained from their first meeting - anticipations of Marivaux's theatre coupled with the power-of-love and the power-of-name symbols which rejoin true lovers and right the wrong. Despite all problems, they are destined to love only each other.

Not only names but also titles have a special meaning for Marie de France, and they will play an extremely important role

in the symbolic nature of the Lais.[94] In Milun, as soon as the lady touches the note attached to the swan's neck and sees the hero's name, she begins to shudder and all sorts of images are evoked. Why? Just as in the Chievrefoil, the lady understands immediately the full nature of the message and its contents without seeing it - the power of names:

> Desuz la plume sent le bref
> Li sancs li remut e fremi
> Bien sot qu'il vint de sun ami . . .
> Le brief aveient deslie,
> Ele en ad le seel brusié
> Al primier chief trovat "Milun." (vers 218-220; 225-228)

Occasionally, names and titles pose a problem to Marie de France. She herself seems to vacillate as to which title suits the lai best, not sure if hers or the Bretons' title is more appropriate:

> D'eles deus ad li lai a nun
> Guildeluëc ha Guilliadun
> Elidus fu primes nomez
> Mes ore est li nuns remuez
> Kar des deus dames est avenu
> L'aventure dunt li lais fu. (vers 21-26)

Marie seems to opt for the two women's names as title - which would make sense given their dominating portraits and roles; however, she ultimately decides upon Eliduc as title. Thus, to impose a name on a lai becomes not so easy a task in the art of this poetess.

The fascination with names and titles as symbols of love's power reaches its culminating point with the lai Chaitivel, so named by one of the characters in the lai itself. This lai offers an example of the nominal struggle for power. Four gallant chevaliers are wooing and hopelessly making advances towards a

less than obliging lady.[95] She is fickle and playful in her courtly games, which make her incapable of choosing among the four gentlemen. Who will win her love? The men decide to enter a tourney and joust for her love. From this tourney only one remains; the other three have unfortunately succumbed in their attempt to prove their courage on the "battle-field" in order to satisfy the lady's whims. The ensuing dialogue between the surviving chevalier and the lady in question closely resembles the form of a "tenso," the debating of a question - "Who suffered the most?" Those who died in vain, or he who cannot consummate his love since his injury will not allow this consummation? At first, the lady's argument proceeds in this manner:

> "De vus quatre ferai un lai
> E Quater Dols le numerai." (vers 203-204)

She, thus, places the accent on those who suffered and died. The chevalier retorts begging that the lai be named in his honor - the "chétif," the miserable poor weak one:

> "Dame, fetes le lai novel,
> Si l'apelez Le Chaitivel!" (vers 207-208)

The lady at length consents and declares with no reluctance:

> Par fei, fet ele, ceo m'est bel:
> Or l'apelum "Le Chaitivel!" (vers 229-230)

Furthermore, Marie will rebaptize the lai in favor of the weak one:[96]

> Pur c'ert li lai de mei nomez:
> "Le Chaitivel" iert apelez. (vers 225-226)

This story within a story or lai within a lai framework is one of Marie's common structural devices also used in Chievrefoil where Tristan had, in addition to the authoress, composed a lai. Characters compose as well as writer. Chaitivel represents a fine example of the power of names and words as symbols which give life to varying concepts. The name has always had this significance in life and in its rapport with the person it identifies. This union was and is existentially inextricable and inseparable. Just as one cannot separate "chievrefoil" from the "bâton" of "codre," neither can one divorce name from person. The "signifiant" and the "signifié" blend together into a new mass of being. If we were to think about the sacrement of Baptism within the Catholic Church and about the saint's name given to the child, we would realize that a comparable ritual is at work. The name is bestowed so that the child follow the example of the particular saint and that he be protected by the saint whose name he bears. As in papal elections, the newly elected pope will choose the name of a predecessor and saint for the same reasons - a mystical bond is established. In Celtic mythology this totemic practice is often observed: certain names of characters are associated with events or animals; they become a sort of namesake whereby the bearer of such a name may not kill the animal of the same name since this animal either was present at the time of birth or had some other symbolic reference.[97] This bond, a universal phenomenon, exists in all traditions, and Marie de France is very conscious of the power of denominating and thereby granting both essence and existence to the thing. The Word has become flesh - essence to existence.

For these reasons, "le Chaitivel" merits all that he desired. He (his name) becomes immortalized since he won the argument. The nominal power of the symbol starts from the lowest point and works its way to the highest place it can attain. Names equal power, power equals symbol, and names equal symbol.

Druërie - the souvenirs of love

This is the last and most elementary level of symbolism on the eschatological ladder towards idealism; there are many examples of "druërie," or love tokens, throughout the lais. We need not encumber ourselves with all the examples. These "symbols" rarely represent anything profound; they are merely theatrical gadgetry which serves as remembrances to the lovers - objects interchanged without any true symbolic depth. The word, "dru," can also pertain to love-making: it includes a double connotation. When the lady of Chaitivel sends the chevaliers messages, they are just love tokens:

> Ses druëries lur donout,
> Ses messages lur enveiout. (vers 57-58)

However, when Guigemar is speaking to his lady, the word has a more sensual connotation:

> Jo vus requeor de druërie
> Bele, ne m'escundites mie! (vers 505-506)

This form of symbolism finds itself therefore on the lowest level of the idealistic plane. What determines whether an object should be classified as a simple souvenir or as a veritable symbol depends in part on quantity - how many lines are dedicated

to the object? And more importantly - how well is it developed throughout the lai? If only four lines are granted to it, and if it is little developed by Marie, then the object does not merit the name of symbol, but rather "druërie" since it is a passing fancy. Furthermore, if there is no veiled meaning attached to the object, neither does it merit the name of symbol. In Yonec, these "druëries" are signs of love and vengeance at the same time, which serve to emphasize the power of love. Precisely, it is the sword that Yonec's father entrusted to the lady before his death so that the son might avenge his father one day by killing the "parastre":

> S'espee li cumande a rent
> Puis la conjuré e defent
> Que ja nuls hum n'en seit saisiz
> Mes bien la gart a oés su fiz. (vers 421-424)

It is an instrument of vengeance that is never developed but assists in uniting the true lovers due to the efforts of the illegitimate son.

Most of the time, these "symbols" are only signs of recognition which identify the person. As in much of eighteenth century French theatre, they are employed in those scenes of "reprises et reconnaissance."[98] In Fresne, it happens to be her ring and blanket which the mother leaves with the abandoned child so that everyone understands that the child is of noble birth. The mother's motives are not without a certain vanity or snobbism:

> Envolupent l'enfant gentil,
> E desus un pailé roé . . .
> Un gros anel li lie al braz

De fin or i aveit une unce
El chestun out une jagunce
La verge entur esteit lettree
La u la meschine est trovee
Bien sachent tuit vereiement
Qu'ele est nee de bone gent. (vers 122-123; 128-134)

At the end of the story when these signs of recognition are re-introduced, the mother recognizes her mistake and sin of abandonment while an all-loving father forgives and a bishop annuls the marriage to Codre since it was not consummated. Everyone is surprised and happy to regain the missing loved one:

-Bele, pois jeo veeir l'anel
-Oïl, dame, ceo m'est mut bel! (vers 441-442)

One could almost hear the screams of this comically exaggerated scene. In Eliduc also, the lady-love sends gifts to demonstrate her love and fidelity:

-Un anel d'or li porterez
E ma ceinture li durez. (vers 379-380)

Since the ring and the belt are not at all developed as are the chastity belt and the knotted shirt in Guigemar, they remain at the level of love tokens, not symbols. In Milun, the object of recognition is no more than an identity card. Milun has hung around his son's neck a ring and a note with his name inscribed when the chevalier was a child. Towards the end of the lai, Milun and his son are fighting in mortal combat when the father recognizes the object of his son's childhood:

Milun saut sus, mut fu bel;
Al dei celui cunuit l'anel. (vers 429-430)

In like fashion, we could distinguish many other small objects of recognition and love throughout the Lais. Through forced argument, one could find a way to extract some symbolic significance from this forest of "druërie," but such would not be so convincing. The meanings are plain and simple. Again, let us reiterate the symbolic progression towards the ideal state: the basic intuitive and sensual level of the "druërie," the more rational and philosophical nomina-numina, and finally the transcendental qualities of the symbol as power of love which leads directly to its ultimate symbol of love and absolute state of perfection.

Besides the Greek, Celtic, and Christian influences which shall be discussed in the following chapters, symbolism in the Lais treated and studied in this abstract way will eventually lead us to a movement of an even larger scope, the concept of "l'amour courtois," and in particular, the "roman courtois." Comparisons with these concepts regarding the Lais are essential. Does Marie's use of the symbol reflect the "courtly code" in any way or is this "code" a pure fantasy? The bilateral nature of the symbol has been apparent throughout this study. At times, the symbol aids in attaining some higher goal, happiness in re-uniting the lovers like the ship in Guigemar; other times the symbol aids in avenging a murdered father like the bastard, Yonec, or it aids in righting a wrong as the two maidens in Lanval. The symbol of nominal power assists in punishing the culpable in Equitan or in elevating the love of Chaitivel to a more refined level of existence. Or we witness the symbol of ideal love, the Laüstic. Certain critics, for example, lay much

stress on the "courtly" traits of the Laüstic: "l'amour qui naît d'une libre élection, fondé sur les qualités profondes et reconnues à l'amant, et s'opposant au 'contrat' conjugal de type féodal."[99] The secret of love, according to them, resembles "un amour de loin" since the lady has become totally inaccessible and since Marie herself often defends adulterous love against the prejudices of the world, "le lauzengier." Does she defend adulterous love or is she rather idealizing true love without regard to marital situations? Is Equitan defended, and for that matter is the couple in the Laüstic defended? They remain together only in the ideal world of the "Laüstic," not in the real world of the "gelos." On the other hand, some critics including Emanuel Mickel see no trace whatsoever of "amour courtois" in the Lais except for Chaitivel and Equitan. This critic states that the situation in Chaitivel is analogous to that in the De Amore of Andreas Capellanus, and that this love is highly rational.[100] But why base all on one's arguments and opinions on Capellanus who "founded" his doctrine considerably after Marie and after the fact? I have demonstrated that elements of the "tenso" of the lyric poets are deeply enmeshed in that lai. Many other elements and "facts" about courtly love must be researched more thoroughly. Mickel, in addition, says that "self-interest" as illustrated in Chaitivel is an element pertaining strictly to the courtly love tradition, and that this element is not encountered in any of the other lais.[101] On the contrary, there are elements of self-interest throughout the Lais: the Bisclavret's wife just to mention one. Furthermore, Bédier, whom Mickel never seems to fully contradict, believed

that fatality and the warrior-type motifs are strictly elements of Celtic legend and not of courtly love.[102] Perhaps, but Bertrand de Born composed his highly parodial "Eloge de la Guerre" as if it were in praise of a woman, and he was a part of the courtly tradition. And is there not fatality in Jaufré Rudel's "L'amor de lonh"? One wonders about this question because so many generalizations surround this concept of "courtly love." Each individual case must be examined separately. A "What is Courtly Love?" is yet to be written.

As we have endeavored to show, there are several levels through which the symbol manifests itself in the Lais of Marie de France. In general, the symbols can be classified into two major categories which coincide with the predominating literary currents of the Middle Ages: "l'esprit courtois et l'esprit gaulois." The symbol usually denotes the man or woman on the proverbial pedestal with an occasional fall. This dualism is apparent in the cruelty of the "stock" character, "li gelos," as opposed to the purity of a "laüstic," and so forth until the two sides of the symbol are revealed. To be complex is the very nature of the symbol. On one hand, the "laüstic" metamorphoses into that "esprit gaulois" in the hands of the husband, but on the other into a more refined and glorified "esprit courtois" in the hands of the lovers. These two movements represent in general the so-called courtly tradition, and there are other aspects of this tradition given the multivalent qualities of the symbol and the complexity and diversity of medieval literature. Suffice it to say, that these two diametrically opposed movements of the Middle Ages reflect in some ways the intricacies of

symbolism. It is with the hope of establishing a semblance of unity through the symbol and to demonstrate Marie de France's upward movement towards idealism in the Lais that we undertake this study.

Notes

[1] Henri Peyre, Qu'est-ce que le Symbolisme (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1974), p. 14.

[2] Helen Dunbar in Symbolism in Medieval Thought and its Consummation in the Divine Comedy goes even further in her definition of "symbol": intrinsic, extrinsic, interpretive - that is - arbitrary, descriptive, metaphysical associations. For her, the symbol is an expression of truth. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961), pp. 6-17. Dan Sperber in Le Symbolisme en général believes like Jung in a collective unconscious by which the symbol is devined or recognized intuitively - "je suggère comme hypothèse possible que les principes de base du dispositif symbolique ne sont pas induits de l'expérience, mais font au contraire partie de l'équipement mental inné qui rend l'expérience possible - je m'oppose sur ce point au behaviourisme en psychologie et au relativisme cultural en anthropologie." (Paris: Collection Savoir Hermann, 1974), p. 11.

[3] Carl Jung, Man and his Symbols (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 3-4. Jung's symbolic interpretation leads to a transcendental movement.

[4] Ibid., p. 3.

[5] Michel Bréal, Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning (New York: Dover Publications, 1964), p. 95.

[6] Jung, pp. 5-6.

[7] Antoinette Knapton, Mythe et Psychologie chez Marie de France dans Guigemar (Chapel Hill: North Caroline Studies, 1975), p. 39.

[8] Etienne Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1955), pp. 164-165.

[9] Michel Bréal, p. 172.

[10] Plato, Cratylus, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 6 (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 47.

[11] Ibid., p. 35.

[12] Ibid., p. 159.

[13] Ibid., p. 175.

[14] Emile Bréhier, La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1962), p. 3.

[15] Ibid., p. 5.

[16] Ibid., pp. 6-60.

[17] Bréal, pp. xv-xvi.

[18] Paul Ricoeur, Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 108-111.

[19] Ibid., p. 104.

[20] Ibid., pp. 3-5.

[21] Ibid., p. 6.

[22] Ibid., p. 11.

[23] Alwyn Rees, p. 17.

[24] Tony Hunt, "Glossing Marie de France," Romanische Forschungen 86 (1974), pp. 402-403.

[25] Leo Spitzer, "The Prologue to the Lais of Marie de France," Modern Philology XLI, pp. 96-102.

[26] Illingsworth's "La Chronologie de Lais de Marie de France."

[27] Eugene Mason in the Lays of Marie de France demonstrates the dedication to Henry II and his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, is nothing but a traditional formula - "Nobles reis pruz et curteis" - especially if one were to think of the atrocities of this king who has Thomas Becket assassinated. (London: Dent and Sons, 1959), p. x.

[28] Cicero, Traité des Noms, Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Bibliothèque Latine Française, 1837) - similar to the philosophy found in the Cratylus.

[29] Ernest Hoepffner in the Lais de Marie de France subdivided the work in a different but interesting manner to establish some sort of unity: l'amour tragique - Deus Amanz, Le Chievrefoil, le Laüstic; la femme coupable - Bisclavret, Eouitan, Chaitivel; parents et enfants - Fresne et Milun; amour conjugal - Eliduc; les lais féeriques et celtiques - Lanval, Yonec, Guigemar. A complex division but an attempt nevertheless towards unity.

[30] Jacques Ménard in Le Symbole considers the symbolic process as a means of transcendence towards the "au-delà" - "le processus symbolique, étant à la fois essai d'assimilation et de distanciation, assure, grâce à cette tension, la transcendance du sujet par rapport à son modèle . . . le symbolisme a permis la génération des formes vivantes, celles d'états psychiques nou-

veaux, et enfin une transcendance métaphysique." (Strasbourg: Faculté de Théologie Catholique, 1975). The latter quote from an article in the Ménard book by Michel Mansuy, "Symbolisme et transcendance," p. 162.

31 Robert Cottrell in "Le Lai du Laüstic; From physical to spirituality" bases his arguments on the reality of the bird. Philological Quarterly, 47 (1972): 499-505.

32 William Woods in "Marie de France's Laüstic" also notices that the characters behave within the framework of the symbol. Romance Notes, 12 (1970) pp. 203-207.

33 Bréal, p. 100.

34 J. Ribard, "La Lai du Laüstic: Structure et signification," Moyen Age, 76 (1970): pp. 266-267.

35 Ibid., pp. 264-274.

36 Tom Peete Cross, "Celtic Origin of the Lay of Yonec," Studies in Philology, 11 (1913), pp. 26-60. The critic views this lai as a combination of Oriental inclusa motif and the Celtic birdman motif.

37 Benjamin Honeycutt, "The Interpretations of Structure, Description, and Symbol in Yonec," Language Quarterly, 12 (1974) iii-iv, pp. 25-28.

38 Edwyn Bevan, Symbol and Belief (London: Fontana Library, 1962), pp. 22-181.

39 Honeycutt, pp. 24-25.

40 Henry Hornik, "More on the Hermetica," Studi Francesi, 52 (1974), pp. 1-12.

41 Spitzer, "Marie de France: Dichterin von Problem - Märchen," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, L (1930), pp. 29-67. The critic demonstrates how each lay is built around a single symbol; for example, the separation-death symbol of the Chievrefoil. In Yonec, he notices an elevation of the symbol from hawk symbol to child symbol. This phenomenon of the independent life of the symbol is referred to as Eigenlebigkeit, p.58.

42 Friedrich Schürr, "Komposition und Symbolik in den Lais de Marie de France," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, L (1930), pp. 556-582. The sacrifice of the knight is seen as part of the Christian faith ethic but with much emphasis upon the role of fate.

43 For Spitzer the symbol of each lai is the written representation of a particular problem, p. 54 of "Dichterin von Problem" etc.

[44] Tom Peete Cross mentions the story of Etain in the Togail Bruidne Da Derga who locked up is visited by a birdman and predicts that whe will give birth to Conaire, pp. 35-37.

[45] This ring of forgetfulness would be classified along with the other many "druërie" symbols.

[46] These arguments have been well exposed by Guy Mermier in "En relisant le Chievrefoil de Marie de France." The five theories are as follows: la lettre précédant la baguette sur le chemin; les inscriptions ogamiques; l'intention miraculeuse; message explicite et signature gravés sur le coudrier; Tristan n'a pas signé son nom - mais gravé un message explicite. French Review, XLVIII (n. 5, 1975), pp. 864-870.

[47] Leo Spitzer, "La lettre sur la baguette de coudrier dans le lai du Chievrefeuil," Romania, LXIX, pp. 80-90.

[48] C. Martineau-Génieys in "Du Chievrefoil, encore et toujours" thinks it totally absurd that a whole message might be written on the hazel branch.

[49] This is Bédier and Hazard's interpretation of "courtly love." Histoire de la littérature française (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1923), pp. 45-46.

[50] Hornik, "Three Interpretations of the Renaissance," pp. 50-53.

[51] Antoinette Knapton exposes these various theories in her excellent study of Guigemar from a mythological and psychological frame of reference, p. 42.

[52] The Hind of Ceryneia sacred to Artemis and hunted by Hercules for a year who wounded it with an arrow - a sacrilege. Pierre Grimal, Larousse World Mythology (New York: Hamlyn, 1965), p. 142.

[53] Knapton, p. 70.

[54] For Schürr, the future conquest of Guigemar by love is preempted by the wounding of the hind likewise does he view the weasel in Eliduc, p. 567.

[55] "One of the countless symbolic or allegorical images of the sexual act is a deer hunt," as depicted in a detail from the sixteenth century artist Cranach. Very often the Self is represented by a helpless animal such as a bird becoming woman. Jung, p. 13.

[56] Knapton points out these differences in the two ships: "Tristan a préparé la sienne [la nef] ; celle de l'heureux Guigemar prévient son désir et elle est belle et riche à voir," p. 93.

[57] Knapton, p. 99.

[58] Ibid., p. 99.

[59] Rupert Pickens in "Equitan: Anti-Guigemar" stresses the importance of the passive woman motif in Guigemar as opposed to Equitan's lady who takes too active a role. Romance Notes, 15 (1973) p. 366.

[60] Alice Welch, Of Six Medieval Women (Mass: Corner House Publishers, 1972), p. 42.

[61] Knapton, p. 93.

[62] Knapton, pp. 106-112. From the Gordian knot of Alexander the Great to the Herculean knot and to "geis" implications of exchanged mementoes. Furthermore, "La croyance que le noeud pouvait empêcher le mariage était fort répandue au moyen âge," p. 108.

[63] Here expressed is one basic difference between the Platonic and Aristotelian systems: Plato has a more stagnant concept of the ideal whereas Aristotle gives it movement and action.

[64] Spitzer realizes the sympathy felt for the beast for whose wife adultery may be justified but not betrayal. The noselessness indicating the lady's shame, p. 34 of the Dichterin von Problem-Märchen.

[65] Jung explains as "loss of the soul" or splitting of the psyche where civilized man has definitely abandoned and suppressed an integral part of his personality.

[66] The clothes seem to have the same effect and power of an "external soul" concept familiar amongst African tribes and more closely related to Marie through the Celts. Cúroí's treacherous wife betrays him by revealing the seat of her husband's life. His soul is in a golden ball within a salmon killed by Cúchulainn. Loomis, p. 14.

[67] Judith Rothschild in "A rapprochement between Bisclavret and Lanval" takes note of parallels in the legal actions and procedures of both lais while offering the courtroom terminology and contrasting Arthur with the king of the Bisclavret. Speculum, 48 (1973), pp. 78-88.

[68] Judith Rice Rothschild, Narrative Technique in the Lais of Marie de France (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies, 1974) 253 pages. The critic demonstrates how the characters are set up or perceived at first, only to have these characterizations reversed.

[69] A. Ewert, Marie de France: Lais (Oxford: Basil Blackwell & Mott, 1960), p. 185.

[70] Brewster Fitz, "The Storm Episode and the Weasel Episode: Sacrificial Casuistry in Marie de France's Eliduc," Modern Language Notes, 89 (1974), pp. 543-548.

[71] Fitz seems to think that Eliduc is not culpable since he had no physical contact with Guilladun. This is not a complete understanding of Catholic thought.

[72] And very popular in Indian legends according to Ewert.

[73] Spitzer sees in this the Christian elimination of bigamy where love of a Trinity-like nature reigns, p. 31.

[74] As interpreted by Fitz.

[75] More modern interpretations have been made between Eliduc and Mme Varda's film "Le Bonheur" (1965) in which our sympathy goes to the deceived wife and our antipathy to a weak husband. Jacques de Caluwé, "La conception de l'amour dans le lai d'Eliduc," Moyen Age, 77 (1971), pp. 55-77.

[76] Ovid's influence and Celtic themes will be brought up in the next chapter.

[77] These witch and sorceress types predate recorded history, but traces are visible in Morgan le Fay, for example, among others.

[78] Spitzer notices the elements of démesure and egoism in the boy's behavior, pp. 33-34.

[79] Alice Welch misses the point completely in her highly Christian interpretation of the potion: "In this strength giving potion we may perhaps see the expression of a Christian and the survival of a pre-Christian belief, where the getting of strength and life is only possible through a direct act of communion, either material or spiritual with good," p. 45. She forgets to trace the development of the potion in Celtic myth.

[80] Spitzer refers to this as a Symbolfähiger in which the swan acts like a person - eating, fasting, delivering messages. As Yonec, the son will take over the role of the bird, whence the elevation of the symbol, p. 48-50.

[81] Robert Green in "The Fusion of Magic and Realism in two lays of Marie de France," over this Freudian insight. Neophilogus, 59, p. 331.

[82] Constance Bullock-Davies in "Love Messenger in Milun" has the most realistic interpretation of all - that swans do inhabit that very region of South Wales and Gwent and that the swan is nothing but a medieval mailman. Nottingham Medieval Studies, 16, pp. 21-27. There are also the mythological aspects concerning Zeus as shapeshifter.

[83] Ernst Hoepffner, "La Géographie de l'histoire dans les lais de Marie de France," Romania, 56 (30), pp. 1-32.

[84] Maidens announcing or preparing for their mistress's arrival run through Celtic myth. See Tom Peete Cross's "The Celtic Elements in the Lays of Lanval and Graelant," Modern Philology, 12 (1914-15), pp. 585-644.

[85] See Loomis, pp. 1-15. All is a pre-determined plan often complicated by "geis."

[86] Michèle Koubickline in "A propos du lai de Lanval" feels that each arrival of the "puceles" brings forth another step in the progression towards Truth. She also prefers giving an existential interpretation to this lai by demonstrating how the chevalier makes his name and renown, and how in Corneillian terms he creates his own image and justifies his existence through proofs as in some of Chrétien's work.

[87] Spitzer states that love in Equitan drives one to sin and death through the boomeranging of a curse, p. 36.

[88] For all the dramatic irony in the Lais, see the Rothschild book Narrative Technique, and Mickel's "Marie de France's Use of Irony as a Stylistic and Narrative Device," Studies in Philology 71 (1974), pp. 265-290.

[89] Emil Shiött, L'Amour et les amoureux dans les Lais de Marie de France, Lund, 1889. In general, love is judged superior to marriage. Extra-marital love is condemned not if the husband mistreats the wife but if he does not merit such treatment. A noteworthy difference.

[90] For Rupert Pickens in "Equitan: Anti-Guigemar," neither of these two characters functions well in the social context from a psychological point of view. Perhaps. Romance Notes 15 (1973), pp. 361-367.

[91] Karl Bartsch, Chrestomathie de l'ancien français (Leipzig: Vogel, 1927), pp. 17-23.

[92] Spitzer interprets the "paile roé" in which the child is wrapped as the sacrificed object, symbol of true humilitas which aids in joining the lovers.

[93] Ann Trinidade views Gurun's position as a variation of the Celtic "homme aux deux femmes" theme - as is the case with Eliduc. She also offers sociological reasons which may have engendered this phenomenon - particularly during the Crusades when a soldier of fortune had to leave his wife to voyage and to fight in a far-off land. As a result, he established two households. "The Man with Two Wives" Marie de France and an Important Irish Analogue," Romance Philology 27 (Aug. '73-May '74), pp. 466-478.

[94] Michèle Koubickline also remarked on the importance Marie attached to names and titles - names that eventually find their justification through the course of the lai, p. 470.

[95] S. Foster Damon groups and couples all the lais as psychological opposites: Eliduc and Chaitivel represent polygamous and polyandrous themes; Deus Amanz and Equitan, altruism and selfishness; Milun and Fresne, realistic father-son and mother-daughter conflicts, and so forth. "Marie de France: Psychologist of Courtly Love," PMLA XLIV, pp. 968-996.

[96] Spitzer sees the exclusivity and the changeableness of love as opposing traits in this contest over name, p. 37.

[97] Loomis, pp. 19-20. Associated with taboos are these namesakes.

[98] Eighteenth Century French Plays, ed. Clarence Brenner, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1927), 561 pp.

[99] J. Ribard, "Le Lai du Laüstic: Structure et Signification," Moyen Age 76 (1970), pp. 270-272.

[100] Mickel, p. 99.

[101] Mickel, pp. 99-121.

[102] Mickel, pp. 99-100.

Chapter III

CLASSICAL AND CELTIC MYTHOLOGY

The further one delves into an art, the more one realizes the relationship between it and other branches of art and even science. In the study of myths one is faced with the question of origins which leads one naturally to the study of symbolism of which myths are an elaboration. Myths also conduct one's attention to the field of psychology where much of symbolism begins in dream form. Finally, the symbolic myth reaches its climax of an intellectualized nature in philosophy where the finished product, the structuralized symbol becomes epitomized as one might say in classical terms. This awareness of the progression from dream, to symbol, to myth, giving final birth to philosophy is nothing novel at all: "During the epoch which may be described as prescientific, men had no difficulty in finding an explanation of dreams. When they remembered a dream after waking up, they regarded it as a favorable or hostile manifestation by higher powers, demonic and divine. When modes of thought belonging to natural science began to flourish, all this ingenious mythology was transformed into psychology."[1] This mechanical build-up of a dream to a more sophisticated state of science progresses in conjunction with the development of "civilized man." Symbols, dreams, and myth often provide man with a means by which he can veil, attenuate, or disguise ideas

which are disagreeable or repulsive in social terms or quite satisfactorily pleasing on a personal level; however, they also possess the power to reveal certain concepts through indirect expressions. A delicate balance exists therefore between concealment and revelation in which one science or art will check the other: "The mythics pose the problem of how philosophical thought may be informed by symbol and myth without either reducing the symbolic or being taken into the myth in uncritical fashion; the aim is not to fall into self-deception since the fascination with subjective certainty can be as deceiving as fascination with the world of the object."[2] "Sympathetic imagination" is thus employed in the reading of texts - that is, the hermeneutic exercise seeking to recover the donation of symbolic significance for thought. The mythic and the symbolic hide and dissemble as well as reveal; therefore, one "suspects" a symbol at best.[3] This process is referred to as "reconciled ontology,"[4] expressing the inexpressible. Myths and symbols are imaginative variations which intend without necessarily fulfilling an intention, but they are also a way by which human possibilities are made concrete in an imaginative form - whence poetic philosophy. Language in the mythologically symbolic is a function of Self. It portrays a directive image of man through which he acts out his possibilities.[5]

At the base of myths lie symbols, primitive metaphors in which evil is understood to be "like" a defilement, "like" a broken relationship, "like" a self-induced punishment. Higher on the scale but still retaining the suggestive correctness of symbols are myths which elaborate and expand the possiblities

of symbols.[6] Thus symbolic language should be investigated descriptively rather than by means of explanations which go beyond the symbol. Principally due to their association with beliefs, pagan and Christian, certain symbols have been altered or corrupted in meaning; therefore, the intentionality of the symbol, its primitive meaning, must be isolated in order to capture and ascertain the transcendental aspects of both the myth and the symbol as we attempt to uncover the phenomenological traits of the symbol. Thus, myths are a species of symbol. Although myths add a temporal and character dimension to a narrative, they retain the analogical structure of symbols.[7] Archaic or primitive symbols provide an objective understanding of good and evil and how it is represented in a metaphoric style - its features and behavior. The symbol also includes a subjective reference as a response to evil recognizable in affects or feelings. This is known as the psychic or oneiric dimension of the symbolic myth.[8] In accordance with the moral aspects, rites of purification, reverance, worship, and defilement accompany these basic symbols. This system defines pure and impure, holy and unholy, and all the obsessive fears and hopes therein.

The god of myth is "anthrotropic" - made in the image of man, the Judeo-Christian variation of man being made in God's image. Furthermore, a pact always exists between man and god like the Israelite covenant, the Ten Commandments, the Precepts of the Church, or for that matter, the contractual agreements between lord and vassal of feudal times. Evil is the visitation of the wrath of god in the mythological context for having broken the contractual agreement. To repent is to stand and

to return in the god's presence in order that the contract be reestablished.[9] There is a cyclical pattern in the nature of symbols from sin, despair, rites of cleansing, and forgiveness. Myth is a ritualistic dramatic form which portrays in imagery a situation of man before the sacred. "The myth is set in a fantasy history which symbolically includes all mankind in a concrete universality of a primordial man. All individuals are summed up in the hero, the Titan, or first man principle; human experience is portrayed through the central figure or figures."[10] The characters are both gods and men in the sacred and primordial situation of man. The plot of the drama is usually a movement from an original state which depicts an origin of evil and moves or points to an elimination or an amelioration of evil in a fantasy history. Myths are classified into four groups: the drama of creation, the most archaic, and a theogony which has its paradigm in Babylonian mythology; the tragic myths whose paradigm is to be found in Greek tragedy, the most extreme form of evil originating in a wicked or blind god; the philosophical myth (one with implicit metaphysical notions) of the exiled soul and the dualism of body and soul motif, in which the Celtic external soul concept may be included, offering a "new" vision of the human condition; last is the eschatological and anthropological myth of biblical history.[11] The ambiguity of good and evil is contained in a more radical form in the tragic myths where there is little distinction between divine and diabolical and where the hero is a victim to be admired - whence tragic emotion and tragic theology.[12] The philosophical myth has its

roots in Eastern thought where the two sides of the eternal cycle, life and death, coexist and prevail. A breakdown of this system would be the Orphic myth where man is produced as a mixture of divine and earthly. The eschatological or Adamic myths display man's improper use of freedom. Evil is not pre-existent as in the other three types of myth. Here we notice a primordial innocence moving towards an existential deviation. The dialectic is omnipresent in the biblical tradition. It is the coming of evil through the fault of man. The dialectic quality, however, saves rather than destroys the role of free-will.[13]

Demythologization was Freud's speciality - that is, the stripping away of the mythological elements of the dream context to focus upon the psychic dimensions of the symbol since the symbol is an expression of experience, a primitive expression and experience. Through the study of dreams, myths, and symbols we can determine from the unconscious conscious levels of the mind and behavior. Two personalities within the same subject as in the Bisclavret or in Yonec is not per se pathological but in fact natural to the history of man who developed consciousness laboriously. Fear of revealing the mythological fantasy portions of one's life is equivalent to the fear of the new and the unknown - misoneism.[14] "Civilized man" seems to have difficulty in the expression of this "other" personality. Freudian psychoanalysis and free association reduced the myth of the dream to certain basic symbolic patterns. Exploring dreams is, in effect, to explore suppressed parts of the personality and to reveal the unconscious background of one's inner life by what he says or omits. In contrast to Freud for whom the sexual

symbolic dominates, Jung paid greater attention to the actual form and content of the dream; he felt that free-association led away from the dream.[15] Therefore, Jung firmly adhered to interpreting the dream within its own context. In like manner Marie's mythologizing and demythologizing could be approached so that extraneous matters or unrelated elements be eradicated and that prominence be granted to the transcendental symbol. Jung was also aware of the enormous variety of images which depict the sexual act but that the dream could contain some message other than this act. He also understood that meanings differ and must remain in their proper social, political, and religious contexts.

Why are myths similar to dreams? Both produce images that are more picturesque and vivid than the concepts and experiences that are their wakening counterparts.[16] Fear of the unconscious or new is not a part of Marie's personality; she vents her fantasies, the "animus/anima" images of fear and good-will being released in the form of Classical and Celtic lore. Her dreamlike fantasy images will occasionally be checked by the more structured, stylized, and sophisticated courtly traditions with their frequent pseudo-religious flair. The primitive or pagan elements are thus blended together with these elements of the new feudal "civilization" in the most consciously formalized fashion - a truly elaborate art form. Usually what one fails to perceive consciously is seen by our unconscious in symbolic language. Motifs of the symbol are numerous: flying has freedom and escape connotations; falling or being pursued by dangerous animals or hostile men or beings suggests guilt and persecution elements;

being insufficiently or absurdly clothed in public places may have implications of shame; being in a hurry, lost in a crowd, or fighting with useless weapons conjure up motifs of hopelessness and helplessness.[17] Most of these images can be found in the Lais: Yonec's flying, the hostility of the "gelos," the poorly clad Bisclavret, the sensations of being lost in the voyage to the Otherworld. These primordial images, the archaic remnants of the Indo-European collective unconscious - these instincts and physiological urges perceived by the senses in dream or myth form and manifested and revealed through symbolic imagery - are called "archetypes" by Jung.[18] The utopias through and in which every society has its idea of an archetypal paradise or golden age that is believed once existed or will exist again is dictated by their cultural contexts and the function of culturally oriented symbols. Man's rationalism - "this civilization of pretense"[19] - had limited his capacity to respond to the numinous symbols and ideas - which is true communication with the unconscious. This is not to suggest that Marie was the first French analyst as well, but she is clearly attuned to these supernatural and mystical images of earlier civilizations which ultimately offer further insight into the concept of Self. It is evident that Marie has little fear in manifesting all these "bizarre" images that the "normal" civilized man of structured indoctrination might have. In addition, Marie herself will structure this primordial imagery in such a way that she will even mock the intelligence of Self and Society. Marie thus asserts Self on both conscious and unconscious levels; frequently the unconscious is released through her highly

structuralized mythologization which, of course, is a conscious tour de force on her part.

Often the early weaknesses of the mythological hero are balanced by a strong tutelary figure - Theseus had his Poseidon. Gradually the hero becomes aware of his strengths and shortcomings. We have here an example of the consciousness of Ego passing through steps and initial tests toward the development of maturity. Jung interprets the hero's death as the achievement of maturity. For him the Self usually manifests itself in the form of an old wise man or wise woman - in fact, a more superego type of image forming judgments with a high level of conscience and objectivity.[20] Marie's character who most closely resembles this wise woman image would be Guildeluëc although we notice relatively few of these superego figures of judgment in Marie. More frequently present are the fantasy oriented id and ego figures of Marie's unconscious. In myths and dreams, a lovely journey often symbolizes the liberation of transcendance; Dante's journey to hell, purgatory, and heaven abandons the conflicting patterns of existence through a release mechanism of spiritual and mental energies.[21] The Lais do present this transcendental movement through journeyings whose ultimate goal is not smoothly obtained due to the vicissitudes of each lai. This upward movement toward integration of Self is achieved via the "animus/anima" figures which Marie attempts to unite and reconcile. The "animus" in women, for example, would be illustrated by Heathcliff, the sinister protagonist of Wuthering Heights who is partly a negative demonic "animus" figure of Emily Bronte's mind.[22] An man's "anima" is usually shaped by his mother, a woman's by her

father. The Lais contain many of these "animus/anima" figures from the Bisclavret to the recurring demonic "gelos" image among others. The most striking of these friendly or unfriendly fantasy characters is the Hawkman of Yonec, who illustrates very vividly Marie's longings, desires, fears, guilts, and need for purification - whence the elevation of the symbol to a transcendental and religious meaning. Helpful animals also represent the Self. Guigemar's hind is quite helpful. The cure for the hero's malady is announced by this androgynous beast. The vaporous and mystical journeys of fairy-tales and Celtic lore are ways by which the unconscious expresses fear and an attempt at integration. Transformations of one image into another seem to represent the relationship of cause and effect linked with the emotional state and expression of the writer; metamorphosis is an integral part of the Lais where symbol, dream, and myth show us the wish already fulfilled. Myth is the condensation of dream elements, and the symbol further crystallizes their meaning and intent. The witches, priestesses, or women who have a link with the forces of darkness represent another manifestation of the "anima" figure like the aunt from Salerno who concocts a brew for the "Deus Amanz;" fears and hopes are tied to this symbol. The "anima" figures can thus have two aspects, benevolent and malefic. The "mandala" shapes so often mentioned by Jung are the recurring geometrical patterns of the dream world - the square, round, spiral, triangular, concentric figures which overlap.[23] Arthur's round table may be construed in this light; Marie's recurring confining tower symbolizes the obstacle to be overcome in order that Self, to which ego must submit, may ful-

fill the process of individualization. This characteristic of wholeness as Jung refers to it reaches its pinnacle in the triangular shaped trinity of Eliduc, the spiritual love trio. The "mandala" revolving around the triangular love units is omnipresent in each lai and can be interpreted as an attempt toward wholeness in this quest for permanence. Marie's obsession is based in the triangle and the resolution of its inherent love conflicts in each lai - with the ultimate solution and resolution to be epitomized in Eliduc. Therefore, much more instructive insight may be gained by this Jungian approach in relation to the happenings of the Lais in which symbol, dream, and myth inextricably coalesce.

Symbols will alter in meaning or acquire a new dimension dependent upon context. When Marie juxtaposes the symbols and related imagery examined in the previous chapter with those of Classical and Celtic mythology, the poetess adds a new quality to these symbols by enlarging their philosophical implications. Marie must be judged not as the first synthesizer of these varying traditions but as one of the synthesizers in a continuous chain of cultural exchange. The geographical movement of the Celts down through Spain and Italy aided in the first synthesis;[24] the northern and western migrations and naval expeditions of the Greeks through Spain and their contacts with their inhabitants, the Iberians, formed another cultural synthesis where Celtic and Greek civilizations were to meet.[25] Numerous links can be established between these two groups not only in the mythological sense but in the cultural as well. The fusion of culture undergone by the Breton through the Welsh and Gallic interminglings

contributes further to our picture of Marie's cultural ancestry. Born around the region of Paris, she served in an Anglo-Norman court, a further synthesis. Let us not omit another feature of the process of synthesis, the Christianizing of the Irish in the fifth century and the continued Christianizing of Europe throughout the Middle Ages.[26] The people were already a cultural mix, and Marie de France, as synthesizer, codified these already existing traditions and added her personal touch. Therefore, when it is stated that Marie is synthesizer, it must be understood in this light.

As opposed to the Greek's relatively centralized government and geographical location, the Celts were spread all over Europe and parts of western Asia with little communication between the various tribal groupings. The territory occupied by the Greeks was periodically inhabited by traditional branches of Greeks for the most part: Aeolians, Ionians, Dorians and so forth. Their territorial expansion and points of contact with the Celts are largely due to their skill as sailors. Their traces are left in Sicily, Italy, Southern France, and Spain. The Celts, on the other hand, are members of a group of people first found early in the second millennium B.C. in Southwest Germany and Eastern France.[27] Certain groups crossed to the British Isles; others moved southward into France, Italy and Spain, while still others fought the Macedonians and penetrated Asia Minor where they raided Hellenistic centers. Their influence in Italy is witnessed by the Architrave in Modena representing Mardoc's abduction of Winlogee.[28] The La Tène culture is derived from the Celts. La Tène, an ancient Celtic site on Lake Neuchâtel,

Switzerland, gives its name to the cultures of the Late Iron Age. It is characterized by an art style which drew upon Greek, Etruscan, and Scythian motifs and translated them into highly abstract designs in metal, pottery, and wood. This culture spread in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. from the middle Rhine region east into the Danube valley, south into Switzerland, west and north into France, the Low Countries, Denmark, and the British Isles. Finally it was subjected to Roman influences. The Greek influence that stimulated Celtic culture included the introduction of writing.[29] Generally the Celts lived in semi-fortified villages with a tribal organization that became increasingly hierarchical as wealth was acquired. They believed in a daemonic universe and relied heavily on the druids for its interpretation. Western European folklore is derived mainly from the Celts. The invading Celts were called Gauls by the Romans, and it is said that the Greeks of Massalia (Marseilles) knew the Celts and their culture very well. Thus contacts between these two great cultures were inevitable since both expanded their spheres of influence. What was once considered or known as the "Celtic Hypothesis" - a gradual southern migration of the Celts filling such areas as Ireland, Wales, England, Brittany, France, and Italy - is now an archeological reality.[30] The Celts in Galicia, Spain is still another proof of this influence. It has also been said that the Fir Bolgs, early settlers of Ireland, came from Greece through Spain and that the Formors of Ireland settled in Spain according to a Greek mariner's guide dating from the sixth century B.C.[31] Thus borrowing and reborrowing of cultural traits is a phenomenon of considerable

import between Greek and Celtic peoples. It would seem in many ways that Marie almost set out to "dehellenize" and "decelticize" many of the mythological symbols. These symbols generally reflect the non-rational or intuitive aspects of mythology; however, Marie will "rationalize" this more archaic level of symbolism, adding therefore a formalized perspective to these former civilizations. In the preceding chapter, we demonstrated Marie's use of symbol in the most abstract sense of the word and divorced from most extraneous implications. In the mythological context, the addition of "rational" elements of symbolism to the "non-rational" ones must be credited to Marie's "courtly" background and to the "rationalistic" interpretations of the Church in regard to paganism. Her talent as synthesizer thus branches into philosophy, religion, psychology, mythology, and the arts.

When one glances through the myriad of articles on each lai, one is struck immediately by the fact that both Greek and Celtic affinities have been established: Lanval, Guigemar, Yonec, Chievrefoil, and even Fresne, Milun, and Eliduc are set in the Celtic mold by critics, whereas Laüstic, Deus Amanz, and and the Bisclavret find their origins in the Greco-Roman classical tradition. Then there are the lais that overlap both civilizations for some critics: Yonec, Guigemar, and Deus Amanz. Those that defy systematization into the myth cult, to the consternation of critics, are the "courtly" Equitan and Chaitivel, but these too will be shown to have some affinity to myth. This battle of the categorization of mythological sources is elementary. Agreed that the overwhelming majoring of articles concerning the Lais have endeavored to "prove" the Celtic ties

because of the geographical references made by Marie as well as the obvious myth factors.[32] However, this does not eliminate the so-called classically based lais since these two branches of mythology are not mutually exclusive and the Jungian multivalent interpretation of the symbol transcends culture - it is a cross-cultural phenomenon. There are numerous mythological elements shared between these two ancient world cultures with minor differences of degree. As demonstrated earlier, the cultural links have been proven not only historically but archeologically between Greeks and Celts. So if there is an overflow of one culture into another, this is purely a natural concomitant. As we shall witness, these mythologies have the common background of the "collective unconscious" disseminating through the veins of all men - including the Greeks and the Celts for whom demonstrable cross-cultural penetration can be traced. Marie's use of symbols has definable characteristic which emanate from these two sources. The question to be asked is "What differences and general similarities are there between the Greek and Celtic mythological systems?" This will offer us the opportunity to obtain an overall objective picture of mythology before rushing forward into the kaleidoscopic beliefs, images, and symbols of each individual lai.

The most striking feature differentiating Celtic from Greek mythology is that the former has absolutely no myth concerning creation;[33] the allegorical and etiological details explaining the occurrences and workings of natural phenomena are virtually non-existent in comparison to the Greek creation motif. Given Marie's Catholic heritage, the Greek creation factor would have

a more profound and significant importance for her - the Celtic still retaining a paganism which could be regarded as heretical. A belief in a god from whom all things are derived would affect Marie's thinking. It must be admitted though that the Lais pay little mind to the creation per se, but a belief in one God does rise to the foreground. As we know, the god of gods, Zeus, even had a father Cronos whom he castrated, the remains being cast into the sea - whence the birth of the love goddess from the waves, Aphrodite.[34] This Greek chain reaction of god-to-god from cause to effect, is endless, but to Christian thought God is the first cause uncaused. Marie's love concept will bear a similar development - a first love before and after which no other existed. To what extent will Ovid's view of Aphrodite-turned-Venus affect this notion? In Greek mythology is not Eros, Love, born from the egg of night which floated on Chaos?[35] And does not this origin or creation motif of love parallel that of the creation in general which would contribute to that quality of "oneness" so prevalent in Christian thought? The second trait separating these two branches of mythology is the hierarchy of the gods. The Celtic pantheon does not revolve around a man-oriented society of gods, demi-gods, and men with Zeus or Jupiter reigning supreme;a goddess will take precedence as she will in the Celtic tribal society in general. The hierarchy is generally considered matriarchal not patriarchal. The Mother of the insular Celtic pantheon is Dana in Ireland, Don in Great Britain. She is the companion of the Irish Bile or the British Beli who seems to correspond to Dis Pater, from whom, Caesar informs us, the Gauls believed themselves to be descended. There

is, however, a gradual movement toward matriarchal repudiation since Dana and like figures play lesser roles in the mythological cycle. The entire Celtic lineage is called the Tuatha Dē Danann, the people of the goddess Dana (or Danu) in the Gaelic literature or the Children of Don in documents of Gallic origin.[36] Unlike the Greeks, the myths of the Celts were not committed to writing immediately after composition or thereabouts; they relied on their oral tradition with the earliest manuscripts dating from the twelfth century, but probably written at least as early as the sixth century A.D. Thus there is no mass of contemporary material such as is found concerning the myths of the classical world. The Celtic mythology that exists was either written down from oral tales by Christian writers hundreds of years after the myths were a functional part of pagan religious life, or collected by modern students of folklore.[37] Although Ireland had little acculturation, the Celtic tales have undergone considerable syntheses in composition, elaboration, and even reduction. In any event, there is a certain hierarchy in Celtic mythology for Dana is generally accepted as the Celtic Artemis of classical writers with the fruitful earth and all animals of creation under her control. She is also the goddess of life and death as is Morrígan, the great slaughterer of men. Dagda, her consort and the god of plenty, is considered a rustic Hercules - which is, of course an over-simplification. The hunt is of the utmost for the virgin Artemis as for the Celtic Dana. The power-structure of the Celtic gods is as follows: the great god of civilization, Gwydion who created human beings by bringing vegetation to life; the god of the forge, Goibniu who also has traits in common with

Hercules; Amaethon, the god of agriculture among others. Curiously enough Arthur, a demi-god and king, resembles Gwydion insofar as his adventures and the structure of his entourage are concerned.[38] As the legend tells us, the Tuatha Dé Danann are victorious over the Fir Bolg in their first battle, the latter being early settlers of Ireland who eventually fled to Greece after another contest with the Formors. These Formors united and joined together with the Tuatha Dé Danann through marriage alliances. It is said that the remaining Tuatha, after numerous battles and a decline in power due largely to the Gaels, took refuge in the magnificent underground dwellings, "sidí," and remained there invisible - whence the beginnings of Marie's fairy mistress motif.[39] These mysterious creatures will lure men to Otherworld zones. The "Fairy Mistress" exists in tales related to the Táin, and she represents a "reduction" of the mother goddess. Another interesting parallel to be made between Greek and Celtic is the unfounded belief that the treasures of the Tuatha came from Greece.[40] To this wealth of Celtic material is added the Tristan and Iseult cycles also connected to the Arthurian material as is the Christian element of the quest for the Grail, originally a magic cauldron over which all the gods disputed and stole one from the other.[41] The Grail has indeed multi-transcendental implications as do Marie's other symbols. Vessels that test virtue and honesty as would those carried by the prototypes of the Fairy Mistress's two servant girls in Lanval have a long history unto themselves. This symbolism usually revolves around certain objects like a cup known for its healing powers and the restoration of fertility. This female image is often equated

with the cornucopia of Pluto - god of plenty and with Cūroſ's carrying off of a cauldron.[42] Thus the frequency of parallelism is great although not altogether exact when one compares these two cultures.

A deadly seriousness enshrouds Greek mythology dictated by fate without much intended parody transmitted. The element of parody is underplayed by the Greeks and heavily exploited by the Celts. Ovid would in time transform the Greek myths to his liking with considerable emphasis upon parody and sensuality. In this sense, Ovid may be also classified as a synthesizer of culture who focuses upon the love conflicts within the framework of the Greek epics and myths. Ovid invests them with a meaning and an atmosphere of subtle mockery. Another parallel can be drawn between Ovid and Marie's function in regard to the transforming of a myth - Ovid is to Greek what Marie is to Celtic. The tragic "heaviness" of the Greek myths is in part explained by the attributes of the gods and demi-gods themselves; they are not omniscent and they never seem to be able to find out what they want to know. The demi-gods wish to discover their true origins; the parent from whom they are divine. It is an interminable search complicated by tragic flaw aspects which leads to bribes, promises, and all the other human frailties in order to answer the metaphysical question of "who-am-I?" The tragic in Greek mythology is usually ironic. Tithonus asked Eos, the dawn-goddess whom he loved, for eternal life. This was granted but the aging process was not included in the bargain; he grew older and older till he was but dust and then turned into a grasshopper.[43] The Greeks often have these left-handed rewards of

kindness. Someone simply forgets to include an essential factor in his wish - whence the tragedy. Neither are the Celtic demi-gods and gods omniscient. It is for Christianity to supply this element. The "geis" may be looked upon as a variation of the left-handed reward. To violate "geasa" meant death. In the Celtic context, a form of predestination prevails. It is ordained that it will happen thus for an event is predetermined by an oath, curse, or "geis" - the negative command and threatening compromise.[44] A coming is decreed by a mystical force and not by hazard. The "geis" unlike the Greek counterpart displays element upon element of parody and exaggeration; for example, "There will be two years of shame and mockery unless you take me away with you."[45] The hero rarely becomes master of his destiny since he becomes existentially and often comically enmeshed in "geis" and "non-geis" conflicts of interest. He is usually warned of his death by way of this form of injunction. The courtly tradition seems to draw a fair number of its parodical situations from Celtic myth. The "merveilleux" qualitites of metamorphosis, wizardry, and shapeshifting with their wonderous comings and births are common to Greek as well as Celtic and have a fair share of parody. What Marie does is humanize and Christianize these "merveilleux" elements and present them in a new form. Several of Marie's characters, especially Yonec, resemble the Greco-Celtic demi-gods born of human and god; they all have supernatural powers, but Marie presents us with a perfectly Christian gentleman king Muldumarec, Yonec's father. The dwarfs, the monsters, the giants - this Celtic "grotesque" is Greek "grotesque" as well. Marie endows the grotesque with

its religious implications or introduces it for reasons of parody. Both traditions admit the mystical powers of the poet and of his work and of the singing of the saga, as witnessed by the Celtic shaman-poet Amairgin and his race of poets who endeavor to realize self-knowledge and greater insight of the world in general.[46] Marie's Prologue speaks of this also. In spite of all this knowledge and self-knowledge, secrecy is the word that befits much of the Celtic and Greek myths; the end-result is unknown to the hero but known to a select few. The secret makes its path through the Lais as well and is overshadowed by mystery.

The secrecy inherent in the oghamic alphabet with its cryptic rune stick-figures and its associations with the Cabal and Hermes merely complicates matters as witnessed by the wealth of articles concerning this subject in the Chievrefoil.[47] The inventor of this code was supposed to have been one of the champions and defenders of the Tuatha, Ogma, who like Gwydion bore characteristics of a god of civilization.[48] Of course, all of this secrecy is bound to ritualistic patterns of behavior. Greek and Celtic mythologies are equally centered around rituals of birth, initiation, marriage, and death. They are particularly related to the seasonal changes and the fertility of both land and lady. The common Irish expression of the passing of time, "from Beltan to Samain," - that is, from the renewal of the sun and life on May first to the night of the dead on November first - still reflects this mood of cyclical patterns of life. It is interesting to note that the beginning of the Celtic winter is also the New Year. Note how the cycle begins with death

moving to life. The Church has its All Saints' Day and a time of renaissance in Easter. Halloween, a Celtic innovation, is also associated with the time of year when one is to rest and reflect upon man and the cosmos.[49] This celebration is a reminder of the direct relationship between the living and the dead. The Middle Ages, especially, draws relatively no line of demarcation between these two worlds - the one is visited upon by the other - a real presence and "sign." The abductions of various queens by their respective heroes or assailants have been offered as explanations of natural phenomena. The imprisonment of the maid in the underworld would serve as an explanatory "proof" for the coming of winter, and this Underworld might have the same aura of mystery and that nebulous quality of the Celtic Otherworld motif. Parallels with Persephone and Pluto, Guinevere and Gawain, Blaathaat and Cúroí form an integral part of the etiological myth. But let us also be aware of the dominating implications of "nation" and the exemplary "hero" for these later tales are epics first and foremost. These heroes were once thought of as solar deities by some scholars since they bear similar arms and symbols of authority such as thunder and lightning bolts and related imagery.[50] Conditions must be met and fulfilled before the hero can be killed and replaced. His death is satisfied through some code of procedure. Tests to determine whether the old god can be supplanted by the young god constitute the essence of this conflict as illustrated by the contest between Cúroí and Cúchulainn.[51] The name, Cúchulainn, is the diminutive form of his former counterpart, Cúroí. Other relationships have been suggested between Cúchulainn, Gawain,

and Achilles - all considered young solar-type heroes, at least as a primitive model and concept, who overthrow their older prototypes by usurping their power, for example, Cúroí, Arthur, and Agamemnon. In addition, they seize their lady-loves. It is doubtless that the overthrow of the matriarchy and the emergence of the "Royal Father" is at the expense of the "Great Mother." The seizure and capture of the lady has often been equated to both dynastic and territorial rights as is the old Celtic tale of the "Transformed Hag."[52] It must be remembered that what was a tale at one time becomes in the hands of Marie de France a motif to be reshaped. The above triangular love theme seems, therefore, to span all cultures or at least those under examination in this study. From Juno's raging jealousy of Jupiter and Io among a multitude of others right up to the Lais, this appears to be the case. In the Aeneid, love-hate will be symbolized by Venus and Juno with Dido hopelessly torn in the middle. Of course, Rome - personified in Lavinia - becomes the other woman for Aeneas.[53] Jealousy itself will become for Marie the third most essential ingredient of emotional turmoil next to "fin' amor" and concupiscence. Thus are the old gods forever pitted against the new over a woman or over some more generalized power play as through the father-son hatred themes and contests starting from Zeus and Cronos who devoured his children to the father-son chanson de geste battles in Marie.

One of the most dynamic figures of Irish myth is Cúchulainn, a demi-god and warrior of Ulster in the Táin Bó Cuailgne, the Cattle Raid of Cooley. He is often compared to Roland and is considered to be the Irish version of Achilles. Some go as far

as to say that Cûchulainn is to the Tâin what Achilles is to the Iliad. Ireland's epic recounts the bloody history of the long war that the four other kingdoms of Ireland - the two Munsters, Leinster, and Connaught - waged against Ulster at the instigation of the redoubtable Queen of Connaught, the perfidious Medb who is later referred to by Shakespeare as Queen Mab in Romeo and Juliet. The object of this war - and as I mentioned previously many of the battles are of mock-hostility - was to insure possession of a magic animal, the Brown Bull of Cooley. (Notice how animals, magical supernatural ones, will be developed by our poetess as we proceed.) In any event, Cûchulainn for at least three months will fight killing one of the enemy each day; afterwards, he will join in battle with groups of them totally decimating every one. His wounds will unquestionably be healed by his real father, Lug of the Long Arm, who concocts a beverage of magic herbs for the champion. The brew shall have a special place in Marie's work as well. The Morrîgan will support Cûchulainn in his strife through her witchcraft.[54] There are sprinklings of witchcraft, its denunciation and spoofing in the Lais as well. Another father-son confrontation only more fatal than that of the Lais will take place for Cûchulainn will unwittingly kill his own son, Conlach, prompted by a witch, Aiffe, to provoke his father to a duel. Rage will be the keynote which typifies the Irish hero's personality, cataclysmic and cosmic rage. Comparisons to the Lais and the Iliad are at best general observations, but thematic elements, even the most minor, find their roots in Celtic lore especially in Marie's case. However, the disasters that befall Achilles seem to outweigh those

of Cúchulainn in seriousness if not in quantity. The tragic aspect overrides all others. To the Greek mind revenge is a constant imminent reality - no game playing or battles of mock-hostility as reminiscent of some of the later"chanson de geste" cycles of the "barons révoltés."[55] This is no game. Marie will pick up this playfulness of the Celts and turn it to parody. In a similar vein, the "beheading games" of Celtic lore - as with Gawain and the Green Knight where one keeps chopping off the head that grows back - are ceremonial for they demonstrate the rejuvenation and rebirth of the heroes and the universality of the gods in general.[56] This is the notion of prolonging the hero game as long as possible - which also has its parallel in the courtly context whereby the lovers suffering is prolonged, the waiting and wooing extended - whence the greater excitement and thrill. Marie will, therefore, take hold of the mythologies as frameworks around which or in which she will build the universality of love in all its facets.

The ferocity and mock-viciousness of the Ulster warriors is counterbalanced by the more courtly romantic "Fiana" - the warriors of Fian or the Fenian cycle which alludes to a glorious past filled with rites of paganism and the melancholy of a Christian present. One of its stories relates the joys and sorrows of Finn who wooed - and "wooings" form a large portion of Irish tales - his Gráinne, but she fled and lived in the forest with her doomed younger Dairmaid.[57] The Tristan-Iseult-Marc conflict stems from this tale. And we do already know how Marie exploited this theme in the Chievrefoil. The courtly

society of Ossianic lore, "oénaige," of learned poets, "fili," and aristocratic clubs, "sgéalaighe," is the setting for the recitation of these tales - which is no different from Middle Ages France nor England.[58] Occasionally, we catch glimpses of courtly elements in Greek mythology through Apollo's music-making on his lyre in which an atmosphere of leisure and merriment is recreated and thanks to Ovid these "courtly" feelings and contrivances are amplified still further with concentration on the love themes. Undoubtedly, there are numerous courtly aspects in the recitation of all these tales.[59] The Irish hero has always been characterized by certain refinements.

The habitats of the gods, heroes, and people of both Greek and Celtic cultures are of particular interest. The Tuatha Dé Danann as mentioned occupy hidden regions and magic dwelling places on some far off islands and sometimes amongst the regular folk. They are as inaccessible as the Olympic gods but not beyond the reach of the gifted one. The accent is on hero worship. The "imramha," the voyagings, and the "echtrae," the otherworld voyages are the quests of these heroes for the unknown and for the permanence of self and self-knowledge.[60] Micro- and macrocosm unite. The Greeks also lived in divided planes of existence, various levels designated for "special" groups of individuals: the Hyperboream is where the north people enjoyed eternal bliss, experiencing neither age nor disease; Delphi was the Otherworld and the seat of the occult; the Elysian Fields were reserved for virtuous men and heroes; the giants and the enchantresses could be found on the Isles of the Blessed - shades of the "sidí."[61] This strict division between divine beings and heroes was

reflected in the real world between priests, poets - "fili" or "vates" - royalty, warriors, farmers, and jugglers. All had their correct place in their social hierarchy.[62] Furthermore for some curious but understandable reason, all ordinary people live in the southernmost regions. The verticality of the system should be emphasized since it relates to the upward movement of symbolism in general. One must achieve height, for height and inaccessibility are synonomous with godly attributes, and these two traits transposed in the courtly setting of Marie's lais still persist.

Other characteristics shared by Greek and Celtic traditions, and hinted at by Marie, include the notorious shapeshifting of both Zeus and Cúroí - a true sign of divinity to possess this power, the hypnotic trances induced by birds or sirens, the swan drawn chariots of Apollo and Cúroí and swan metamorphoses in general which are symbols of masculine beauty and strength.[63] Remember that in the animal kingdom and primitive societies, the male attracts. Birds are creatures of Celtic lore that can cross the boundaries to the Otherworld. In one form or another, Marie will make use of these motifs, be it the Laüstic, Yonec, or the swan in Milun. The nature of the gods themselves will embody a double meaning as do symbols: Mercury is god of commerce as well as thieving; Bacchus is the god of wine and lawgiver - the rational and non-rational products of the symbol; Janus, the two-faced god, will represent the epitome of this motif;[64] Marie's Yonec also presents the rational/non-rational qualities of symbolism - from the fantasy elements of Ireland to the stylized Christian courtly king, exemplary of love

martyrdom motifs. In regard to symbol, it should be stated that the stem of the Welsh word for story, "cyfarwyddyd," means sign and symbol, "arwydd."[65] Many of Marie's lais - the symbols within each lai aside - become elevated to the ranks of symbol as do Chievrefoil, Bisclavret, and Eliduc to mention a few. Namesakes play an extremely dominant role in Celtic and Greek myths where animals present at wonderous births or helpful animals at times of disaster and strife extend their usual powers and are allied to the hero who may not abuse them - Arion's dolphin, Androcles's lion, the Celtic "Queller of Beasts."[66] Names given at baptism or place names of abandoned children like Fresne serve this end as well but with religious connotations admittedly. Other features of similarity include the Greek and Celtic brother and sister gods or goddesses and others who come in threes - the triadic team work of the Fates, the Furies, and the fatal Celtic Sisters who form the prototypes for the Fairy Mistress with her two servants in the Lanval story.[67] These cup-bearing maidens can be seen in the classical attendant cup-bearer, Hebe.[68] The bastard, or illegitimate son, - and there are a few in Marie's lais - is usually set adrift in Celtic lore and exposed to the wilderness to die. This type is beyond the usual social order of things and in most cases founds his own dynasty.[69] Certain groups are always looked upon unfavorably in Greek and Celtic myths, for instance, the Titans and the Formors. In the love context of the Lais, it is without question the "gelos." Finally, hunts, damsels in distress, hideous messengers, and stock characters of all kinds are forever present and omnipresent. These are but a few of

the parallels to be made.

Thanks to Ovid's joyful playing with themes of sensuality, the friendly persuasion of seduction, and words of camouflaged meanings, we have tales that remind us if only vaguely of some of the goings-on of the Lais. Ovid is the most influential force on twelfth century France and England. Philemon and Baucis[70] die and become trees whose branches intertwine - anticipations of the Celtic Deidre and the Sons of Usna and Chievrefoil. Cephalus was too sports-minded and resisted Aurora's love[71] - reminiscences of Guigemar. Leander swims the Hellespont[72] to visit his lady-love, Hero - a great feat of strength - he dies in his attempt and suicide awaits her - hints of Deus Amanz. Dryope[73] is transformed into a lotus tree for having picked its leaves with her baby still nestled in her arms; her sister, Iole, will take the baby to safety - a Fresne variation on the theme. The rage and jealousy of Venus and Persephone over Adonis[74] reminds one of the half-crazed Queen of Lanval as does the story of Bellerophon[75] who at the court of Proetus is falsely accused by this king's wife of having seduced her. Actaeon saw Artemis[76] naked and she changed him into a stag - which his own dogs will later slay. The stag seems to show its face throughout mythology and the female counterpart in the lai of Guigemar; there is Hercules[77] chase for the illusive beast as well as Perceval's merry chase of the white stag.[78] In the Louvre, there is a statue of Diane à la biche[79] with her left hand extended over the forehead of the Hind which runs by her side while her right arm reaches backward over her shoulder to draw an arrow. Here we have,

therefore, the mythological background for the Lais. Marie's basic innovation will be to use the various images and symbols of a non-rational nature and transform them into a more rational concept familiar to both herself and the Christian court of feudal times. The multivalent Jungian symbol is thus altered when taken out of its abstract context and placed in the myth context. Yonec whom I defined in abstract terms as the symbol of love will now possess a new quality of interpretation through his mythological heritage. The non-rational becomes rationalized in Marie's hands offering the reader a new perspective to the multifaceted Jungian notion of symbol. It is merely a turning of the symbol to a different side enabling us to view it from a different perspective. For instance, Yonec is not only a symbol of love but is also the Celtic demi-god shapeshifting hero. In the chapter on Pagan and Christian Thought we will turn the symbol to one of its other sides to see what else its meaning encompasses, and likewise in the chapter on Courtly and Non-Courtly Traditions to determine what new quality has been added by Marie. It is, therefore, the study of symbol from its most archaic levels to its more formalized and structuralized ones which reflect the history of man's development of consciousness from its early beginnings in the Indo-European "collective unconscious." It is a vertical movement up to God and then back to his creation. Its horizontality can only be witnessed in the cross-cultural influences as demonstrated by the Greek and Celtic interminglings. Verticality shall also be reflected in the recitation of Marie's tales which unfold not in an in medias res fashion but rather in a linear progression reaching

up towards her absolute symbol in transcendence.[80]

The Symbols as Love in the Mythological Context

Regardless of what Marie de France may lead us to believe concerning the Laüstic's origins as a Breton motif and a Breton musical composition or lai, it contains numerous innovations which transform it into a distinctly original work. Although if Yonec had been written first -- and it is usually placed before Laüstic in manuscripts whether this was Marie's intention or not[81] - Marie might have considered transforming her Celtic birdman lover into the ideal love symbol by establishing the totally novel idea of a non-existent imaginary "laüstic." Vice versa, the poetess may have decomposed or "split" her bird-symbol to fit the more Celtic mold and eventually to incorporate it into the courtly chevalier character or have joined these two distinct elements to create Yonec. In the first case, she would have crystallized the symbol eliminating or reducing the Celtic influence; in the second, she would have elaborated upon both the Celtic and Courtly concepts - a sharing of two traditions. In any event, the Laüstic, both symbolized bird and symbolized lai, goes one step beyond the supernatural and becomes a platonically self-sufficient symbol which represents numerous modes of expressions developing along transcendental lines as described earlier. Thus, Marie may be said to have "idealized" both Celtic motif and symbol. Just as probable and palpable as this explanation would be Robert Cargo's comparative study of the Laüstic with Ovid's Metamorphoses[82] whose influence in twelfth century France, "aetas Ovidiana," is inescapable. Both Cargo

and Cesare Segre have suggested possiblities and parallels with Classical mythology. According to Segre the framework of Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe would explain fifty of the one hundred sixty verses of the Laüstic.[83] It is true that the lovers of both stories live in walled-in castles next to one another; however, parental conflicts, absent in Marie's tale, are substituted by the "gelos" motif. Furthermore, the deception inherent in the forms of communication in both tales is strikingly similar: speaking through the crack in a wall or through the lady's window on high. It is, however, difficult to accept Segre's analogy that the blood-stained veil of Thisbe has features resembling those of the bird strangled and murdered by the "gelos." The grotesque is also a major factor for both accounts; however, the Ovid tale ends with the death of the lovers. Lastly, the symbolism of the snow-white berries of the mulberry turning deep red at the death of the Ovidian couple has been construed as some sort of symbolism reflecting traits of the "laüstic." This is too simplistic a comparison of symbols since the symbolism of the mulberry tree is never developed as we have shown above; only two references are made to this "cut and dry" symbolism. Cargo, in like manner, parallels Ovid's Philomela who is transformed into a nightingale to the Laüstic with similar results and tenuous conclusions. In Philomela Procne, after five years of marriage to her husband Tereus, requests that she be allowed to have her sister visit. This would be her greatest joy. In the meantime, Tereus becomes completely enamored and violates his sister-in-law, Philomela. Not only is he guilty of a heinous crime, but he will also cut out her tongue to prevent the

girl from revealing the deed to his wife. The sensuality and brutality of the scenes do resemble quite closely the reactions of the "gelos" in his wringing of the poor bird's neck. However, considerably more sensual and grotesque scenes are apparent in Ovid's version with many sado-masochistic tendencies not found in Marie's account. It is a question of degree and emphasis; Marie does not stress these elements nor accord them a place of honor; they are minimized in order to allow the transcendental aspects to dominate. In Ovid, clever Philomela weaves a tapistry recounting her tale of woe in purple on a white background. This tapistry has been equated with the "piece de samit a or brusdé a tut escrit" in which the "laüstic" is wrapped to preserve its symbolic purity.[84] It must be said, however, that the "piece de samit" is not a symbol in and of itself; it is an embellishment which accompanies the symbol and should be classified as "druërie." It is a pretty token and nothing more. The most troubling disparity between the two tales is that in her rage, Procne, after discovering the truth, kills and dismembers her son, the exact image of his father, and serves the remains in a succulent meal to her husband. This horrid cannibalistic vengeance is a variation of the taboo on eating one's namesake. In his pursuit of the sisters, both they and Tereus are transformed into nightingales by the gods. This bird image may in fact become a symbol - but not of love. This is a stark hate-vengeance symbol. The analogy contains certain strands of similarity, but generally it must be admitted that the Laüstic is one of Marie's most original inventions. Never does the Ovidian symbol pass through five distinct lines of transcendental

growth as does the Laüstic - the lai itself is eternalized. I do feel that my original idea of an idealized version of the Hawkman theme seems a more logical development in Marie's scheme of things. The poetess uses the myth as a point of departure and then creates her own concept usually along neoplatonic lines. She condenses myth, especially the epic myth, uses it as a point of reference, and then builds love conflicts as did the lyric poets of her time. She then treats the love question philosophically in symbolic form after having intellectualized, formalized, and studied the non-rational elements of the dream-like Greek and Celtic myths. Condensation is one of the keynotes of Marie's art.

In both Greek and Celtic traditions, birds are thought of as supernatural creatures who lure heroes to the Otherworld by their singing of some haunting and hypnotic melody. Birds have been used as a convenient shapeshifting form to find refuge and intrigue for both Zeus and his Celtic counterpart, Muldumarec, the handsome chevalier and father of Yonec, who undergoes the Hawkman transformation as he fulfills the wishes of the desperate inclusa. Tom Peete Cross et alii insist that the locked-up lady motif is strictly an Oriental contribution;[85] however, the "chanson de toile" of the "poésie lyrique" genre could offer us a possible source and point of reference. A woman, such as the "Belle Yolande,"[86] a "mal mariée" is in the bed chamber of her castle busily weaving while being scolded by her mother for speaking a little too frequently to a certain chevalier - a fact that Yolande's husband would not appreciate at all if the mother were to let him know. This example is used to point out

an important fact: certain of Marie's themes can be found in French literature itself. The "Belle Yolande" is in essence confined to quarters by both her mother and her husband. Thus, the inclusa motif does not always necessitate an Oriental provenance. It is not necessary at times to look to so foreign a literature although cross-cultural influences due to the Crusades were plentiful.

In the Celtic Togail Bruidne Da Derga, there is a supernatural being, a shapeshifting fairy lover like Muldumarec. The story of Aed, son of the Dagda, in the book of Leinster provides us with the second theme - that of a supernatural being who commits adultery with the wife of Corrcend and is in turn slain by her aggrieved husband.[87] Does not the Amphitryon story show Zeus trying and succeeding in gaining access to the wife of a mortal? Uther Pendragon does the same as Zeus by assuming another's identity in order to sire Arthur upon Igerna. That which is inaccessible is most desirable. If the tables were reversed, we would be left with a man searching for a goddess - the Lanval story - to point out that no branch of mythology is mutually exclusive from the other. Marie's hero, Muldumarec resembles a demi-god like Hercules, born of Zeus and Amphitryon's wife, Alcmene. Yonec's birth has these stock trappings. However, the most closely related Celtic tale in which a child's birth is predicted by the fairy lover is the story of Etain. In it Cormac abandons his unfruitful wife - a wife who only bore him a daughter - and falls in love with the fairy Etain who demands that the daughter be killed. The girl is shut-up and raised in a cowshed where she is visited by a birdman. This creature,

like Muldumarec, will predict that the girl will give birth to a son whose name will be Conaire.[88] Since he was sired by a birdman, there are taboos - he must never kill birds, his namesake. Mickel wisely points out the differences: Marie's inclusa is confined by a husband and Marie's lady wishes the birdman's presence whereas in the Celtic tale the father locks up the child and the birdman comes on his own prompting[89] - which has more of a "merveilleux" quality to it. Marie's lady's wish is more like a prayer after which she is visited by a god. Marie has rationalized the "merveilleux" by demanding its presence as if she could capture the uncapturable. The Celtic Hawkman motif becomes part of her will and not something which is mystically escapable.

The most enlightened critique of the role of the Celtic Birdman symbol is that offered by Spitzer who saw an elevation of symbolism from the fairy lover concept to his incarnation in a son, Yonec, who will take up the paternal cause and right the wrong by killing the old husband and by spiritually uniting his real parents in whom true love existed.[90] Similarly, God's becoming man is found in Catholicism - an issue which will be discussed in a later chapter. What adds to the mystic supernatural aura is the lady's leap from a twenty foot window - as fabulous a feat as Tristan's - since she is forced as if unconsciously to follow her wounded lover's blood-stained tracks to the city of no inhabitants - or possibly its citizens are of the invisible "sidi" lot. Nonetheless, this almost predestined route to which the lady is lured by mystical and instinctively correct means, is all part of Celtic myth - which further

enhances the theory of the symbol as power of love directing, luring, and guiding the lady to her wounded beau. Therefore, the Celtic factor adds a new dimension to the symbol in abstract terms; the Birdman symbol and the vague atmospheric setting of predetermined routes both contribute to giving a further credence to the more abstract theory of the symbol as power of love.

Illingworth repeats the information learned from Cross concerning the Etain story but adds the vengeance motif of the son as illustrated in the Snâm Da En of the Book of Leinster in which the wife of a man of high rank, Estiu, is loved by a supernatural being, Buide; their adultery is revealed by a spying servant, the finale being a dead birdman.[91] However, a son is born to the loving couple and revenge is imminent. The climax of the tale is the death of the real father's murderer. Again the Celtic son-vengeance motif offers a new perspective on the theory of the symbol as power of love. The non-rational supernatural Celtic element is transformed into a rational, flesh-and-blood, solution to the problem through a son. There are religious implications to all this as well. Continuing with the same line of reasoning, Illingworth presents his reader with the Finn saga of the early twelfth century Fotha Catha Cnucha[92] where the son-vengeance motif occupies a prominent position. Thus far, we notice the symbol unfolding into two equal portions: from the Celtic supernatural creature to his reincarnation through a son. Holmes unearths a further possible significance to the "Yonec" symbol of love's power and finally love itself in the union of the parents of "fin'amor" with etymological ingenuity. The Breton, "dihuddennêc," from which "dehud," is

the source word for the name Yonec, means the "comforting one"[93] since he is to soothe his mother's pain and anguish. Holmes offers a plausible explanation with Christian overtones.

The Celtic influences aside, we must delve further into Classical literature. M. B. Ogle directs our attention to Ovid's Metamorphoses[94] once more where intercourse between supernatural beings and mortals is commonplace and where often much parody is included. Jupiter takes the form of a woman appearing as the huntress Diana when he rapes Callisto, one of the goddess's attendants. Ovid did have a novel sense of humor. Jupiter as a bull carries Europa off across the sea, as a swan lures Leda, and so forth ad infinitum - the Zeus-seduce theme. Ogle strongly objects to the theories exposed by the Celtic-oriented critics who use and in his view abuse manuscripts not old enough (dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) in their effort to establish links with Marie's Lais. Cross is piteously attacked and does not entirely deserve such abuse since Ogle neglects to remind the reader of the oral tradition of these ancient tales. Besides, what the critics fail to mention is the all-important question of what it means in the abstract terms for a mortal to make love and bear children with a supernatural being. This phenomenon reveals man's longing to establish ties with the divine and to elevate his personal worth in his quest for stability and permanence - the Jungian goal. Ogle also argues that the jealousy motif is not even present in the Irish tale, Snâm Dà En, and that two brother birdmen visit this Estiu and that there is no companion or duenna as the sister-spy in Yonec.[95] In Yonec, the lover comes by wish of the lady; the brothers come

as they please. Ogle attempts to dissect Cross's arguments; however again, the classic example of the examining of the leaves rather than noticing and appreciating the beauty of the forest blinds Ogle's interpretations. In attacking specifics, he omits the general and does not allow for any modifications for which Marie herself and her genius are responsible. Other examples and "missing elements" from earlier and later manuscripts are further scrutinized by Ogle - such as, Cúchulainn's visiting and ravishing of the Amazon Aiffe and then leaving his magical ring as a future token for his son. Again, this is "druërie" and not symbol per se. The critic feels that details regarding the prediction are omitted in earlier manuscripts and and that Cross uses much later manuscripts. Ogle makes reference to Theseus who also left a parting token for his son and to a similar scene in the Alexander Romance[96] - not to mention the Annunciation of the archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. Ogle again neglects to notice the overwhelmingly mystical and exotic milieu and "merveilleux" occurrences of the Lais which are vividly Celtic in nature. Although in fairness it should be acknowledged that Ogle brings out one shred of convincing evidence about the inclusa motif in classical as well as oriental molds: the story of Acrisius and Danaë adapted by Ovid in which a father imprisons his daughter since she will eventually bear a son who will kill or drive the father from his throne.[97] As previously stated, neither Celtic nor Greek mythologies are so mutually exclusive that they do not draw from a common body of thought and knowledge.[98] Credit must be granted to Marie's creative genius as synthesizer of cultures who focuses in on and

crystallizes not only epic to romance but also mythological themes to concretized symbolic form.

The honeysuckle and the hazel tree images discussed earlier are enhanced by the mystical powers of the runic alphabet and the supernatural force credited by the Celts to this wood called hazel - it had healing powers. Tristan's message carved into the wood may have been in this Celtic script. This alphabet was probably first used among the East Goths and suggested by a Greek cursive script - a further synthesis of culture. The runes are adapted to being carved in wood, consisting of perpendicular and oblique as well as a few curved lines. They were definitely employed in England where runic manuscripts occur;[99] they were also said to be accompanied by magic powers which could transfer meaning through a limited use of figures - a condensing and crystallizing of symbolic form. A transcendental dimension is, therefore, associated with the eternally bound symbols of love present in these two most celebrated lines:

> Ceo fu la summe de l'escrit
> Qu'il li aveit mandé et dit (vers 61-62)

The mystique of these lines and the confusion of the critics attest to the complexity of the problem and argument, but all the critics seem to agree that Iseult grasped the meaning, if not physically through her senses then spiritually through her heart. The spiritual aspect of our interlocked symbol of the eternal "two" simply adds to the Celtic flair of mystery and to the transcendental movement in general. The occult becomes spiritualized in the poetess's art.

For Grace Frank who is wary of this theory of runes and oghamic inscriptions of Irish love poems, Iseult could not have ridden and read at the same time a seventeen line message (lines 62-78).[100] That raises the question of whether the whole message or part or just Tristan's name or initials were on the hazel branch in Celtic rune stick writing. Other critics surmise that the message was conveyed by the symbolism of the hazel-and-honeysuckle which Iseult would have understood from the lai,[101] Gotelef, which Tristan had supposedly composed himself[102] - another development in the upward movement of symbolism from a character composing the symbol to the poetess herself. Spitzer, on the other hand, tends to believe that Tristan's name on the hazel alone may have evoked the "spiritual core" of the message.[103] I also feel that the essential lies in these words, "spiritual core," which not only ally themselves to idealistc symbolism in general but unlock the meaning of the message as devined by the Queen. There are no doubt esoteric subtleties to the "true" meaning of the lai and the symbols involved since the puzzle revolving around runic alphabets and their codes has never fully been solved to anyone's complete satisfaction. Celtic mystery veils the non-rational elements of the symbol, maybe never to be deciphered. Foulet conjured up the notion - a reconciliatory one at that - that the name was carved but preceded by a message or letter that foretold the essence of lines 62-78.[104] This would have facilitated matters greatly, but the theory is not in keeping with the magical aura created by Marie or by the Tristan legend itself. Foulet has Tristan expedite a letter a few days beforehand in order to explain to the Queen how she is

to recognize the signal. A convenient possible explanation, and Foulet never really denies the transcendental qualities of the symbolic "chievrefoil-codre" image nor does he negate Iseult's utter shock as if she understood something beyond the normal sphere of understanding. Gertrude Schoepperle joins in the mêlée stating that the entire message was in oghamic script and that through some sort of "geis" or deceptive technique Iseult forced the troops of soldiers accompanying her to halt so that she could read the message and meet her lover - "l'interdiction primitive."[105] As we can see, some critics look for concrete literal interpretations for that which is not rational. For Foulet, it is a question of love not "geis," and Iseult's ruse is connected to biblical tradition as well. Why are love and "geis" for that matter mutually exclusive? Foulet speaks of "la portée symbolique" from which "le sens du message" is ascertained through miraculous spontaneity as is the general symbolism attached to the two plants in question.[106] Hatcher, who seems to agree with Frank on this matter but disputes Schoepperle and Warnke's stand as the symbolism becomes further embroiled, says, "if Marie writes of werewolves, magic potions, speaking hinds, birds that turn into knights at will, I do not ask how such things can be."[107] This is a clever answer and circumvents the ogham theory; however, from whatever perspective one views this problem, omnipresent is a definitive aura of mystery overshadowing the "message" whether one speaks of runic sticks, spiritual cores and intentions, or just the "merveilleux" in general. Hatcher in theory agrees with Spitzer that the name was on the hazel and that the "summe"[108] - the stumbling-block word - has

an inner meaning present in the name of Tristan and which is conveyed when Iseult sees it. Therefore, both the message and the hazel-honeysuckle symbol of love serve as a mode of transcendental expression where Celtic and Idealism unite.

In conclusion, there are no extant versions that contain Marie's episode. It has been hypothesized that Marie knew of a primitive account and that the episode resembles a passage in Eilhart relating the voyage of Tristan and Kaherdin to prove the lover's statement that "Iseult la Blonde" treats her dog better than "Iseult aux Blanches Mains" treats him. The journey is a mock-quest to observe the Queen's behavior and confirm the truth of Tristan's words. Tristan sends a message before hand to say that he and his companion will be concealed along the side of the road. At the proper time, Tristan signals to Iseult so that she is aware of his presence and so that she can eventually prove the veracity of her lover's words. Marie's lai may have evolved from this episode which would offer it a framework - no one will ever know for certain - whence Foulet's prior communication theory.[109] In any case, Marie makes full use of her symbols which were present and available in oral tradition if not written form.

The Symbol as the Power of Love in the Mythological Context

By humanizing the "merveilleux" and rationalizing symbols, Marie has "decelticized" Celtic themes and lore. In her deemphasizing and sometimes eliminating of the terror, brutality, tragedy, and often sensuality, Marie has also "dehellenized" the Classical tradition. Symbolic form for Marie is predicated by elevated modes of existence which tend to structuralize cer-

tain "given" conditions and motifs. We shall discover in subsequent chapters how the Church was instrumental in this philosophical formation. In the case of the Bisclavret, the above technique will continue to operate where a blending of traditions occurs. "These Neuri seem to be sorcerers. In fact, Scythians and the Hellenes living in Scythia relate that there is a custom among the Neuri whereby once a year everyone changes into a wolf for several days, then returns to his original shape. For my own part, indeed, I do not believe these fables; however, that is what they state, even under oath."[110] These were the words of the ancient Greek Herodotus, father of history contained in his History (IX, 105) dating from the fifth century B.C. This is the earliest recorded statement of lycanthropy in this communal mass hysteria setting where a person is overcome by the spirits. The Neuri of whom Herodotus makes mention had connections with the primitive Slav community. The disintegration of the Slav communities took place around the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. and continued into the early Christian period. And for the Celtic enthusiast, this particular Slav community's "both spiritual culture and production technique were affected by Celtic influence at an early stage and later by the influence of the provinces of the Roman Empire."[111] In regard to the werewolf theme the Celts can be credited with having assisted in the assimilation and cultural synthesis of this Slav group. In truth, the Celts as opposed to the Greeks were tribal in nature with wandering bands that settled all over Europe and Asia Minor.

Lycanthropy, besides the sexual connotations discussed

earlier, manifests itself in a more basic way which resembles more often than not cannibalism: a person either willingly or unwillingly changes to a wolf, eats human flesh or drinks human blood, then returns to his natural form. The wolfman must satisfy conditions before returning to his natural state. Akin to the vampire, the lycanthrope, is thought to undergo change by means of magic or witchcraft. The Bisclavret must satisfy conditions through the magical quality of his clothes - the external symbol of his malady in conjunction with the transformation motif. Internally the Bisclavret is suffering even though this suffering is mocked and parodied by the poetess; he does admit running into the forest to live "de preie e de ravine." (vers 66) Cannibalism's definition surpasses even this stark realism and implied is the acquiring of the victim's power and symbols of authority. Usually, as illustrated in the Greek myths, - the eating of people or children unbeknownst to the eater - the Philomela tale - cannibalism is affiliated with a revenge motif of warring tribes and the like. The Bisclavret must satisfy other conditions as well and take revenge on his faithless wife. Although we never find out who the Bisclavret's victims in the forest really are, we do know from legend that the spirit of the victim is transferred to the lycanthrope according him renewed life and power. This superstition and practice bears similarities to the old god/new god conflicts and the subsequent renaissance of strength. An element rarely mentioned by critics is that during the Middle Ages the Church condemned lycanthropy as a form of sorcery and often ruthlessly punished the offenders;[112] however, the peak of the condemnations lasted from the early

fourteenth century through the seventeenth long after Marie's time. Nevertheless from its creation, the Church through the four Councils at Constantinople and the Lateran Councils sought to stamp out all forms of witchcraft and heresy through definition and doctrine in the early Middle Ages.[113]

Today certain African tribes - a custom that predates history - have their "leopardmen." In fact, all literatures of the world have tales of men changing into animals. This malady may be analyzed in Jungian terminology as the "bush soul" - the primitive who saw himself in the animals of nature and felt akin to them and aped their behavior by assuming their likeness.[114] The "external soul" of Celtic lore serves as an intriguing point of reference: Cúroí's soul was in a golden bowl which was found in the belly of a salmon; in time the secret hiding place will be divulged to Cúchulainn by his treacherous wife.[115] The latter is reminiscent of the Bisclavret's wife who plots with her lover to steal the doomed creature's clothes. Lycanthropy may be considered a variation of this "external soul" idea in which the two separate elements of self-identity and the external elements of nature and the creation are fused. Symbolism has this quality of being capable of fusing elements then crystallizing them to produce a new concept. Many primitives assume that a man has a "bush soul" as well as his own and that his "bush soul" is incarnate in a wild animal or a tree with which the human individual has some kind of psychic identity - the "unconscious" features of the Self. If a tree is the "bush soul," then the tree is presumed to have something equivalent to parental authority over the individual concerned. We notice here direct parallels with

the Celtic "geis" and taboos governing the relationship of an animal in regard to the hero and his actions - he must not kill certain animals with whom he is kin. Differences between a conscious decision to "split" and temporarily suppress a part of one's psyche and a condition in which this happens spontaneously and without one's knowledge or consent, and even against one's intention, is the difference between neuroses and psychoses - complete dissociation. Jung views lycanthropy and other related maladies as man's movement towards a more primitive Self while breaking down the confinements and barriers of the "civilizing process"[116] - which in its own way has decivilized man by not allowing the fantasy life a proper outlet. Jung is preaching a return to myth, the non-rational, so that man can fully appreciate the totality of his existence. Marie seems to reconcile this dilemma of modern man as she does all varying traditions constituting her heritage: she does let the barriers collapse permitting the myth-fantasy factor to escape and thereby venting the needs of her psyche while giving structure, continuity, and definition to the non-rational motifs. The Bisclavret is for modern man superstition; to the medieval mind, his existence was believed by many and sometimes doubted but always looked upon as being in the realm of possiblity - doubted, feared, and believed. And his "existence" was admitted by the Church or else why condemn this diabolical happening? Marie, for her part, released the fear of superstition and one classic way of release, purging, and cleansing is to make light of the situation - to parody, to laugh at it. This is her contribution to the myth.

It is part of Italian oral tradition that he who is born at the exact time of Christ's birth - that is, at twelve o'clock midnight on December twenty-fourth as the legend goes - is the werewolf since that day and time is set aside exclusively as the savior's, and no one else may claim rights to his divine birth.[117] It is to violate the Commandments of God - to equal Him in stature. Like Christ who has two natures, human and divine, the werewolf is human and diabolical. Furthermore, according to this Italian folk tale, a woman with a large silver needle either stabs or wards off this creature when she is on the verge of being attacked. Thus a woman and the sex act are usually always implied in connection with the wolfman motif - a bestial act and the manifestation of physical excess. In addition, the word, "lupa" in Latin for Cicero, Livy, and Pliny who does speak of the werewolf, means she-wolf as well as <u>prostitute</u>. Moreover, the Neapolitan for "werewolf" is "lupanar" - which ironically enough means <u>brothel</u> in classical Latin. Marie was evidently conscious of all the implications of what being a werewolf meant and its associations with the sin of lust. She plays with the reader: she seems to eliminate this element in the recitation of the lai, but how can one eliminate what the audience already knows or intuits through oral tradition?

The Celtic trappings are apparent in the name: the Breton <u>bleiz lavaret</u> or speaking wolf and the Norman <u>garwaf</u> which Marie mentions.[118] As we have seen, the tradition is deeply rooted in both Celtic and Greco-Roman cultures. Lupercus, half man and half wolf, is a forest nymph of Classical Mythology. One only need think of the She-Wolf of the Romulus and Remus founding of

Rome to understand the enormous importance of this animal in pseudo-history. The wolf, a larger version of the fox, is not only sly and clever but extremely fierce, strong, protective of its kind, and a natural leader. The full-moon phenomenon associated to the werewolf myth and transformation scene is a later romanticized development not found in this lai since it was not an essential element in medieval times. References to the beast are made by Pliny in the Historia naturalis for the actual theme and a tale in chapter sixty-two of Petronius' Satyricon for the development of the theme.[119] Battaglia must be credited with having made a crucial observation in reexamining these texts: he detected in the tale the treachery of a wife which has absolutely no bearing on lycanthropy but may have tantalized Marie's curiosity because of the love element. Battaglia also noticed the lack of the traditional ferocity of the wolf in Marie's treatment - the Bisclavret is more docile, tamed, and obedient towards its master, the king. He further comments that the faithfulness of the dog and its subsequent vengeance derive from the popular tradition of the day whereby a dog remembers the face of its master's assassin and forces him to confess his crime. His speculations and observations are valid, and what gives more credence to his arguments is that in Book VIII of Pliny's Historia naturalis, the story of the faithful dog's vengeance is retold - exactly in the same book where the werewolf is defined. Why not? The dog and the wolf are in fact related species and the ancients surmised this. Was not the She-Wolf of Rome's founding relatively tame also? Mickel believes that the submerged human intellect and nature of the

Bisclavret himself dominate the animalistic side, and this factor alone explains the tameness of the beast - reason over instinct.[120] However, according to the myth, one loses all human and mental processes and faculties while in the transformed state and is divorced from all concepts of Self and will. The explanation lies therefore in Marie's variation of the symbolic myth whence the tameness factor of the courtly Christian gentleman. Mickel states also that the wife robbed her husband of human form.[121] That is partially true. Initially, the chevalier turned into a wolf of his own accord, and for whatever reason of his own, long before his wife rendered the state permanent. Again, Marie's inventiveness is clear; she recasts the old to present us with the new.

An equation of inestimable import is one concerning the relationship between the "merveilleux celtique" and the monastic life: "The early doctrinal alienation of monastic orders had become in the literature of the later Middle Ages a search for identity and values. The Otherworld exclusivity and the religious self-confinement were related insofar as they aided the individual in his quest for silence, peace, thought, and fulfillment."[122] In Guigemar, the Celtic Otherworld is merely hinted at in the nebulous décor of the beginning of the lai where the makings of the Fairy Mistress motif are presented as a "given" and then seem to vanish into thin air, miraculously becoming a purely human setting: from a speaking hind which comes out of nowhere to the locked-up lady motif of mock-realism.[123] It is not at all uncommon in mythology that a fusion of the two worlds occur. The hind is to be regarded as the Otherworld

induction theme - the alluring Fairy Mistress herself transformed. It is not difficult to imagine or even draw this conclusion if one ponders over the hind's lamenting tirade. Furthermore, both the hind symbol and the ship symbol - which incidentally appears three times as do the maidens of Lanval - emanate from no visibly human direction since they are of supernatural origin. Guigemar's alienation from society as being overly sports-minded and love-disinterested is the poetess's ironic treatment of the myth. She sets the lover up for an inevitable fall, morally and physically. The Celtic mythological theme of the "Transformed Hag" - now a speaking antlered white hind - is for certain critics the Fairy Mistress herself in disguise who will ultimately be replaced by a mortal woman in the flesh.[124] Marie has thus altered the frightening image of the "Transformed Hag" or Morrigû into a gentle hind. The wound inflicted by this message-bearing Fairy Mistress accentuates Guigemar's alienation from the "Our-World" notion.[125] Critics feel that the abrupt departure from a fairy mistress in disguise to the desperation of the inclusa is explained by Guigemar's own attitude: he is no longer alienated because he has found his "love," and therefore Marie's need to carry through with the fairy motif becomes irrelevant and out of place.[126] I do not believe that this is a conscious effort on Marie's part to find justification for this so-called abrupt change in Guigemar's personality. It is Marie's awareness of the older Celtic elements in operation, and she chooses to assimilate these with other motifs of the lyric poets, for instance, the mal mariée. As noted above, the inclusa notion is not strictly an Oriental contribution and is also part

of the roman courtois. Are not ladies held against their will in Chrêtien's works as well as in Floire et Blancheflor[127] among hosts of others? Although Marie's Lais are customarily placed in the roman courtois genre by the older French school of critics (she does reduce the epic elements in favor of the romance elements), the influence of this genre is evident only in the framework of the Lais and occasionally in a theme utilized by the author. But for the very essence of the love conflict, Marie is continuing the tradition of the lyric poets - the troubadours. The Celtic epic and French romance are framework items; however, the Celtic mythological themes are fully explored. The love conflict situation which Marie develops is already part of French tradition and one need not search for affinities elsewhere. This may be a myopic viewpoint, but who can deny the overwhelming troubadour influence in questions of love? We shall return to this matter later.

Illingworth has impressively related the fairy motif of Guigemar to the Irish Acallamh na Senórach in which a certain Caílte describes how he was led to the fairy "brugh."[128] At first, the mere mortal hunts the fairy and is then invited to her world by the haunting quality of her voice - she sings a "laid" or "loid." The critic also points out other possibilities for sources of this induction motif including the romance Partenopeus de Blois and Erec et Enide.[129] The famed Cûchulainn also wounds a hind which consequently takes him through a mystical voyage and cure. The voyage-cure pattern is not a rare occurrence either - Tristan among others. Even the curse-like, "geis" in appearance, proclamation of the hind has its origin in

a Welsh account. For Illingworth, the declaration of the hind is not a curse but an instructive lesson from the helpful Celtic animal since the beast directs the hero to his cure. For further "proof" of the ship's and hind's Celtic origin, Jeanne Lods has demonstrated that the dramatically cloudy or London fog effect and the mystical nature of the atmosphere and setting of the beginning seem to "ébranler la sécurité du monde"[130] - at least Guigemar's world - and ultimately lures him further and further along the predetermined routes sketched out by both ship and hind as power of love symbols. Holmes, for his part, continues his usual geographical arguments for Celtic origins and mentions that the misogynist knight and fairy in the form of stag themes are to be found in Scottish and Irish legend.[131] Then for a touch of reality, he quotes Giraldus Cambresis' Itinerarium Kambriae where such an androgynous animal is captured, slain, and presented to Henry II.[132] Marie might have dipped her poetic plume into this as well as the myriad number of Celtic sources. The Cambresis' incident occurs in Wales in 1188 however, and the Lais were more than likely written at an earlier date.

All Celtic influences aside, Guigemar has been brilliantly likened to the Hercules legend for both the hind and ship symbols: "nous avons découvert que chacune des trois parties de Guigemar reflète une aventure illustre d'Héraclès: La première (l'aventure dans la forêt) est imitée du III^{e} travail d'Héraclès: la poursuite de la Biche aux Pieds d'Airain; la seconde (dans le pays de la Dame) du XI^{e} travail du héros, le voyage au pays bienheureux des Hespérides; la dernière (la conquête de la Dame

contre Merïaduc), de la lutte d'Héraclès contre Achéloüs, l'homme serpent-taureau, pour la possession de Déjanire."[133] The Hind of Ceryneia, dear to Artemis, was also white and bore antlers. Hercules hunting and slaying of the beast represents a sacrilege and an insult to the vengeful goddess.[134] As concerns the boat, Hercules' ship, the critic notices, bears faint similarities at best with Guigemar's. Hercules, as we know, sails towards the Hesperides, the Isles of the Blessed. The ship is also the traditional means of transportation in the "Imrama" of Celtic legends.[135] The critic's psychological belief is that "la nef symbolise donc le voeu formé en soi puis exaucé: elle est l'extériorisation à la fois d'un désir (santé, vie, bonheur, liberté) et d'une certaine crainte (mort, prison, malheur), et le moyen d'obtenir le premier et de fuir cette dernière par le départ."[136] Granted the multiplicity of symbolic meaning, this explanation is valid; however, the basic symbolic meaning stripped of all external influence is the symbol as power of love.

Worth repeating is the cultural tie between Greek and Celtic mythologies. Neither the "merveilleux" nor the "biche" theme strictly pertains to one or the other although possibly emphasized more in one than the other. The critic, Antoinette Knapton, who found many analogies between the Hercules legend and the lai of Guigemar also admits the Celtic ties, affinities, and borrowings: the birth of Ossian - óisein meaning fawn since his mother was transformed into one before his birth - and the "Vielle Femme Transformée" whom some Irish king was to marry both have dynastic and territorial implications.[137] This critic, however, extends her psychological points excessively when she proclaims:

"Que le groupe biche-faon symbolise un lien de tendresse naturelle entre une mère et un fils est illustré dans des sources accessibles à Marie."[138] The role of Guigemar's mother - which is doubtlessly minor - is overemphasized by the critic in her attempt to accentuate the Oedipal complex. As I have shown in the previous chapter, the symbol is to be understood in a more generalized fashion as representative of the power of love in the more philosophical context or the power of induction of the Fairy Mistress in the Celtic context - which is tantamount to the power of love no matter how one views it. This idealistic treatment of the symbol devoid of foreign influences is Jungian in nature. Unfortunately, Knapton becomes too heavily enmeshed in diluted Freudian explanations of a boy too attached to his mother. Freud is as philosophical as Jung but this aspect is usually avoided or eliminated totally by critics. As for the symbolism attached to the color white what could be more evident: "White has ever been accepted as symbolic of innocence of the soul, of purity of thought, of holiness of life."[139] The priest of Osiris, of Zeus, the Druids, and the early Christians wore white robes. But is that little white beast purity incarnate especially when associated with paganistic myths? Is not Marie's treatment more complex? Marie takes the conventional symbol and twists it to adjust to her logic and humor. As for the "cornes," they represent in the Jungian frame of reference the productive male forces of maturity and harmony. But one cannot help think of the Italian "cornudo" either or the savage portrayal of Michelangelo's horned Moses. Multiple interpretations are available. That is the beauty of the symbol and of Marie's

handling of it. The symbol is an all-encompassing, open-ended phenomenon that lends itself to baseness as readily as to transcendence as does the Celtic induction motif of the Fairy Mistress - one is lured through the senses but somehow goes beyond to a land of mystery.[140]

Eliduc's affiliation with Celtic motifs as source material has unquestionably been a forced issue. One would have to stretch the imagination far beyond the non-rational elements of symbolism. Nevertheless, there are those that persist in the error. Of course, the setting and the names lead one to Breton origins, but these prove to be superficial. Wace and Geoffrey are always likely candidates for such source words.[141] Nonetheless, Howard Robertson in "Love and the Otherworld in Eliduc"[142] interprets the hero's voyage to a foreign land as mysterious a trip as those of Guigemar, Lanval, and Yonec. It must be stated that the "merveilleux" motif of Ireland with its nebulous surroundings, backgrounds, and atmospheres is non-existent in this lai. Eliduc takes a normal rather prosaic voyage for the adventure genre:

> Il tient sun chemin tut avant,
> A la mer vient, si est passez,
> En Toteneis est arivez. (vers 86-88)

Nothing fanciful or mystical about these lines. According to the critic, Eliduc finds love and success in this "Otherworld." Somehow love and success have become synonymous with Otherworld themes. Maybe this is Marie's handling of the situation. However, the description of the land to which he purposely voyages is too realistic a painting; he merely crosses the Channel and

places himself in the service of another king. The circumstances surrounding Eliduc's departure from his homeland vaguely call to mind those of Lanval, but Lanval is specially called and chosen; he is dragged by the will of another, the fairy. The question of will and the true nature of the Eliduc story shall unfold in the chapter on Christian context. The sailor's accusations against Guilliadun and Eliduc are paralleled to Lanval's having been falsely accused.[143] Is Eliduc through inference being falsely accused? Again we are speaking of diametrically opposed circumstances: one revolves around the Christian ethic, and the other around Celtic lore. The storm-at-sea symbol has more of a biblical than Otherworld connotation - the Jonah theme of sin and repentence.[144] The Gaelic tale of Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree[145] might offer an affinity, if little else, to Eliduc. In this variation on the theme, the second wife revives the first from a poison stab which had put her in a trance-like state - "la fausse mort de Fénice" theme. Then, the second wife in the Gaelic tale humbly agrees to remove herself from the scene, but the husband insists on all three living together. Once more, the Celtic "homme à deux femmes" notion is exploited[146] but again with Christian overtones and implications to be discussed in the next chapter. The complete picture of this lai lies in the Christian interpretation even though elements of a far-removed paganism still remain. There is also the Gautier d'Arras' Ille et Galeron[147] in which a similar triangular relationship occurs. And as Mickel notes, "both treat the basic theme of the man with two wives and, although Ille's personality and feelings toward Ganor and Galeron do not exactly parallel Eliduc's it is

striking that Ille's father is named Eliduc"[148] - a small world of oral tradition where Celtic polygamy and Christian monogamy come into direct conflict.

Regarding the special herb used to revive Guilliadun, Greek myths seem to offer little in the way of a parallel situation except for an occasional herb used in a potion. But Marie has the herb in the hands of a weasel. Although the bestiaries of Hugh de Saint-Victor and Neckam's De Naturis Rerum make references to the weasel, a mere reference does not necessitate a source for symbolic development.[149] Although in Indian myth the weasel does appear to possess magical healing powers, Marie would not have known of this source. A possible explanation for the weasel symbol may be its frequency in the area of Normandy, England, and even Wales where Marie lived. The animal is included in Cambresis' Topography of Ireland.[150] The weasel may be various shades of white or brown, and some turn all white except for their dark tail in winter. The weasel's major characteristic is his boldness, and Marie's is bold. What small animal would show its face, after its companion was killed, in front of two large human beings, Guildeluëc and her murderous valet? There is, of course, much humor in the scene, but more significant is the behavior of the weasel which will be viewed later in the Christian context. Snow White seems to be a pitiful offer of an explanation for our sleeping beauty, Guilliadun.[151] Most of the symbolism of this lai in particular must be sought elsewhere. Although Marie makes definite use of Celtic themes and symbols - not to mention the Breton conjunction ha for the alternate title "Guildeluëc ha Guilliadun" - these become trimmings only for a

more developed notion of symbolism in the light of Christianity.

Although the lai of the Deus Amanz bears remarkable affinities with the Piramus et Tisbé[152] account and with the actual priory of the Deus Amanz, the Celtic element, rarely mentioned by critics since they are so preoccupied with the Greek sources, is the development of the Celtic potion from Tristan onwards. The Tristan story forms an integral part of Arthurian legend material. Without rekindling the old arguments of which came first the Béroul or the Thomas - "la version commune et la version courtoise" - and the various similarities and disparities in these texts, suffice it to say that the element shared in common with Marie is symbolism and the treatment of the love potion. We have already witnessed Marie's interest in the legend through her lai, Chievrefoil; therefore, she must have at least considered the "potion" as a tool for development. Plus, the Deus Amanz concerns as the title explicitly denotes the relationship of two lovers whose love is complicated by a domineering father - an old Celtic tale of the king who lost his wife and finds comfort at his daughter's side.[153] Tristan and Iseult are faced with a comparable problematic circumstance regarding Uncle Marc. Deus Amanz as a title could conjure up the image of the famed couple. The legend of this unforgettable couple has established ties with the Dairmaid and Gráinne story. Gráinne, fiancée to Finn and daughter of the king of Ireland loves the chevalier Dairmaid. The night of her wedding to Finn, she convinces Dairmaid through the usual "geis" method to flee with her so that she can escape the clutches of Finn's passion. Dairmaid has a beauty mark on his chin to which all the girls are

irresistably drawn; they become completely enamoured as does Gráinne - whence the element of fatality. Like Marc, Finn will pursue the couple through the forest. At one point, a "geis" or dare scene transpires in which Gráinne shames Dairmaid by saying that "l'eau est plus hardie que lui" after the water of the stream had risen well above her knees. A similar scene occurs between Tristan and "Iseult aux Blanches Mains" where this insidiously clever injunction is employed.[154] A variation of this "geis" motif, in fact its complete reversal, might be the insistence of the girl in the Deus Amanz that the boy drink the potion; his constant refusals are in strict opposition to "geis" code - the lover must be punished for not having complied with the loved one's wishes. Disobeying "geis" means death. Remember that the symbol in the Deus Amanz had a three-sided development: first, the potion used as a ploy and put aside by Marie - the would-be potion, followed by the interior strength or will-power of the boy who usurps the power of the symbol, and finally the elevation of the would-be symbol to full potency as power of love as illustrated by its spilling over the mountain and rejuvenating the land. It would have worked for the boy is the implication. Dairmaid unlike Tristan does not like Gráinne at first and flees with her solely due to "geis" and the fatality associated with the beauty mark. Furthermore, "la consommation physique dépend d'un 'geis' - un défi à son honneur."[155] There is not psychology of love present but rather magic and fatality. In Béroul, "le philtre" that Iseult's mother the Queen gave to Brangien is destined for Marc and Iseult with a three year term. It is a question of fatality; the lovers are thirsty, and they

are brought the potion. They attempt to hide this love by simply saying that they are sick. They make excuses. Then Brangien exclaims in an hysterical tone, "Cher Tristan, chère Iseult, maintenant vous êtes perdus."[156] Their fateful love envelops them. In the Thomas version, there is no term of potency; the love is reciprocal: "Nous n'apprenons rien des sentiments des futurs amoureux avant qu'ils ne boivent le philtre."[157] Like the beauty mark, the potion seems to be the symbol of the fatality of their love. Tristan and Iseult love each other in spite of themselves. Many a time, Iseult will just admire the young man's physical beauty - especially while he is taking his bath. There are signs of love, or infatuation at least, long before the "fatal" brew is tasted. The philtre is thus no longer the cause of love but its symbol. Love existed before the drinking - no exterior fatality is involved; the lovers exercise their freedom of choice - free-will. As Paul Lonigan successfully demonstrates in Chrétien's Cligès, the next logical development of the "philtre" is its abandonment in this anti-Tristan parody: "Again, progression (as defined) is seen in what Chrétien has done with the theme of the love-potion. In Béroul the drink is merely an excuse for Tristan and Iseut's passion, and its potency is limited to three years' duration. In Thomas, on the contrary, there is no limit to its power, and we have every indication that the pair were enamoured before imbibing the draught. Hence, at least on the level of cause and effect, Thomas' philtre appears as a charming vestige. It was Gertrude Schoepperle who, many years ago, pointed out what would be the next logical step concerning this detail: eliminate it entirely. Chrétien did

just that."[158] Marie, as we know, has the pair loving each other before that taking of the draught and still loving each other without having taken it since it is not a question here of a cause or an excuse for love. However, a transitional stage in the development of the potion before its elimination in Cligès is to have the Celtic symbol of love present, the philtre, but never drink it. It is there but not used. This would be the next step in its development before parody obliterates it. The potency of Marie's symbol is witnessed only when it is too late - after death. This device in its own way enhances the fatalistic nature of the philtre because the boy through free choice could have taken of the symbol but refused. Fatality and irony are inextricably bound in this tale of unrequited love.

As pointed out by several critics,[159] there is a real "Côte des Deux-Amants" and a "Prieuré des Deux-Amants," constructed in the twelfth century, at Pont-de-l'Arche and at Pitres respectively. The legend concerning these sites can be traced back to the fourth century A.D. when a certain Injuriosus, a senator, and Scholastica, a wealthy lady, marry and mutually agree to keep the lady's vow of chastity - "le mariage blanc." Gustave Cohen inadvertently heard a Norman peasant retell the tale around 1936.[160] Marie more than likely knew of this tale through oral tradition - not to mention the love story of her own century, the two lovers of her time - Abélard and Héloïse. Returning to the mythological possibilities of this tale, Johnston mentions the old Gaelic legend of a king whose wife had died and he married his own daughter. These tales are concerned with dynastic

themes where the power structure of a given family is confined to its own and does not extend to neighboring royalty. Two separate tales form the background for this story: the death of the queen and the king's love for his daughter.[161] Let us bear in mind the role of incest in both Celtic and Greek mythologies which was quite frequent. Marie underplays the more sensational elements of these old tales and the development of their symbols in an artistically sophisticated form where she presents and questions the old to reshape it in the Christian system of analysis. Domenico Fasciano tends to draw the reader to Classical mythology and to Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe. For him, the psychological situation of parental refusal and domination, the dénouement - death for all, and the symbolism of the snow-white mulberries turned deep red are identical.[162] In a way, but again the symbol makes a brief appearance and displays no steps of development whatsoever. Nevertheless, the critic demonstrates what he terms "la dialectique courtoise"[163] which leads to the mystical transcendental quality of symbol to which we referred in the last chapter - the inaccessibility of the princess, the feats of strength, the transcendental death. The mountain, sacred to the ancients with its jagged treacherous route becomes for the lover of the Deus Amanz the "passage du profane au sacré."[164] The ascension, the upward climb to the summit "où se joue le drame" enhances this movement of transcendence. Finally, the pure death - no potion was drunk, a question of Self and will moves the lovers forward into transcendental bliss, if not earthly happiness. This transcendence is part of each lai and of the work as a whole. Other parallels to Icarus' flight towards the

sun, spiritual essence, and his ultimate fall due to vanity and stubbornness and knowledge of the beyond have been postulated along with the "eau-vive de la Fontaine de Jouvence."[165] Inherent in this scheme is the escalade-fall pattern of existence. The critic now is straying from the central image of this lai, the love-potion, which Marie probably heard in her own courtly backyard and reinforced by the Tristan and Iseult story. Marie combines the old themes and reworks them to suit her particular message: love and its power as represented by the philtre goes beyond the lovers and goes beyond the grave. As Freud states in his Civilization and its Discontents, the idealization of love leads to the social isolation experienced by the lovers in their quest for happiness. What holds true for Tristan and Iseult holds true for the Deus Amanz.[166] Lovers are in constant opposition to the interests of society - whence self-imposed exclusivity. Total dependence on the love-object exposes the lover to extreme suffering in most cases.

Love again is at the core of our next lai, Milun. For most critics it has been virtually an incredible feat to locate the lai's exact mythological sources. Spitzer's comment concerning the elevation of the Yonec symbol of love from Celtic Birdman to its incarnation and fulfillment through an illegitimate child may also be applied to the case in question. The problem with which the critic is faced is that little has been written about this lai. Once again, the paternal role and destiny of all those involved come to fruition thanks to the efforts of the bastard. This passing on of roles may be termed as the symbol of transference of the power of love from father to son. Even

though the "merveilleux" elements inherent in the Yonec-symbol are absent in the characterization of Milun, the transference of love's power nevertheless remains the common denominator. One could probably stretch the argument, not without some imperfections, that this transferring of paternal authority motif has its provenance in the old god/new god struggles of both Celtic and Classical mythology since the father-son combat theme, so prevalent in the chanson de geste has definite overtones pointing towards such a source - be it Cúroí and Cúchulainn or Milun who unknowingly does battle with his son. In Gormont and Isembart mentioned earlier, Isembart's adversary before his father's intervention is called Miles de Gailart[167] - a sound alike name for Milun and another link to Marie de Meulan's family name and Norman background. Thus the father-to-son transference of the symbol as power of love, which unites the true lovers by overcoming obstacles, is reflected in both Milun and Yonec.

The second feature which these two lais have in common is that the action centers around a bird-symbol - in this case, a swan. Besides the purity of its whiteness or the sexual imagery proposed by some because of the fasting, dieting, feeding of the animal - not to belabor its long neck, it should be recalled that much of the shapeshifting that occurred with Jupiter and Cúroí was in the form of this lovely animal. Remember also that the male of the species is the one who attracts, not the female. The swan continuously appears in mythology drawing Jupiter's chariot.[168] Marie may have simply abstracted or eliminated the mythological implications, stripping the symbol of this connotation, and what remained was a normal everyday swan tainted

with a mythological past - a vague unconscious element. Marie then reduces the myth to its essence by crystallizing the symbol. Others have pointed to the reality of such swans inhabiting the South Wales area and the Carwent/Carlion region where the lai takes place.[169] The answer, however, to the symbolism in Milun may lie in the more courtly or Christian frame of reference for a more comprehensive picture of the lai's thematic elements. The multivalent symbol dependent on context may offer a wider variety of explanations for this case. The lai does have a Celtic framework, and I have demonstrated two important parallels between Milun and Yonec, but the focal point on which Marie converges her thoughts is the love-conflict elements dear to the lyric poets. Furthermore, I feel that a little more than the mere accessibility of the swan in the South Wales region prompted Marie's use of this bird as a symbol. She must have realized its mythological past and origins, used the bare minimum in its expression, and only hinted at its Celtic and Classical beginnings. Thus many levels of lore and possible fact surround the understanding of this lai, but the gist of the swan's and father-son combat's symbolism relates more closely in nature to the courtly love mold as will Equitan and Chaitivel. Even though names and places have ties to Celtic origins, they will not unlock the door to symbolic mystery.

The Celtic Otherworld induction notion in conjunction with the Fairy Mistress theme overwhelm the form and content of the lai, Lanval, which is set at the court of King Arthur. Like Guigemar, Lanval becomes isolated from the "real" world; he is

a stranger to both men and women - the hero is immediately set apart from the "others" like "un génie mal compris de sa société."[170] The Celtic and monastic alienation theme dominates the mood and tone of this lai.[171] Also as in Guigemar, where the mystical Celtic ship unites the lovers and makes its appearance thrice, so will the Fairy Mistress's two maidens grace the "real" world with their presence at three separate intervals to prove Lanval's case and bring together the lovers, Lanval and his Fairy Mistress. Thus, the two symbols of the power of love, ship and maidens, overlap in their transcendental pursuit of truth. It is a slow tedious journey towards the absolute with its accompanying vicissitudes. The Otherworld will represent absolutes - in this case, Justice. Arthur's court shall be tinged with lies and injustice only to imitate finally the good example of the Otherworld and exonerate Lanval through the periodic images of the maidens which is epitomized in the coming of the Fairy Mistress herself. Lanval is victimized; he is wronged by both Arthur who slighted him on the social level and obviously by a jealously hyperactive queen who accuses him of a variety of charges. The veracity of Lanval's words is confirmed and elevated to symbolic purity through the recurring maiden-symbol and visits. As in Guigemar where the hind's tirade resembles the "geis-like" situations of a do-or-die nature, the Fairy Mistress's contractual stand and Lanval's sworn commitment to secrecy closely parallel the Celtic injunctions: a theme of threat. Threats are omnipresent in Marie's system and code of love. As stated before, the hind's ancestor may have been the "Transformed Hag" or even the Fairy Mistress herself in disguise

according to Bromwich.[172] These two lais bear amazing resemblance to each other and to the anonymous lais of Graelent and Guingamor which more than likely succeeded the former ones in their creation and production, and now the latter are looked upon as composite imitations of Marie's works. Graelent exploits the hunt and fairy mistress induction motifs; Guingamor capitalizes on the white boar and Otherworld themes.[173] What stands out in Lanval, however, is the Celtic "offended fairy" motif[174] - offended by a knight who did not maintain the oath of secrecy. The role of Arthur's Queen is to be viewed as a test of the knight's will-power - can he keep a secret? What is his breaking point? The Queen thus enhances the dramatic tension of what will take place and how it will be resolved. The knight's thoughtless boast concerning the fée's beauty leads to his further isolation. His salvation is in the love of a supernatural being. In myth a supernatural woman's affection for a mortal is common - for instance, the French legend of Melusina who turned into a serpent once a week from the waist down, married a mortal, and made him promise never to visit her on that day; he did and she left for good.[175] Jeanne Wathelet-Willem misinterprets the portrayal of the Queen completely. For her, the Queen only seeks friendship from Lanval who simply misunderstands her accusation of sodomy.[176] This is not to understand the usual mythological characterizations of said Queen and her prototypes on the one hand; on the other, this is an avoidance of the literal meaning of the Queen's straight-forward remarks. The Echtra Condla, an Irish romance, tells how a fairy woman induces a mortal to follow her to some over-the-sea Elyseum.[177]

Another Irish tale, Muirchertaig mac Erca recounts a king's meeting and affair with a certain Sin, a so-called follower of God. He abandons his wife for the fairy mistress and puts this supernatural creature on the throne. Her name incidentally means "storm." The king is bound never to mention her name, a "geis"; he does and a storm arises burning houses and killing everybody.[178] This contractual agreement is deeply imbedded in Celtic lore; in fact, Lanval in general is heavily steeped in Celtic elements and reflects the feudal nature of the times especially in the judicial process and hearings.

Other fairy mistresses and mortal lovers change into swans as in Aislunge Oengusso, the vision of Oengus - and a possible source for the Milun swan story.[179] In the Tâin, Cûchulainn is met by a fairy who envies his extraordinary deeds and "gestes;" he scorns her and even fights her in battle.[180] Eithne O'Sharkey interprets the opposing characterizations of Queen and Fairy Mistress as the rivalry between Morgain le Fay, Arthur's sister or the Irish Morrigû, and Guinevere.[181] In early legends, Guinevere was even Arthur's sister before she became his wife. Morrigû or Morrigan for the Celts was "Queen of the Ghosts" and goddess of war. The notorious Queen Medb of Connact of the Tâin has been detected as an ancestor of this depiction of disaster.[182] It has also been brought out that the atmospheric "merveilleux" qualities of the unknown parallel the hero's psychological state: the feeling of being lost or unwanted is reflected in the Otherworld's attributes and description.[183] There are also direct links with the Fairy Mistress, Morgain, and Avalon in Chrêtien's Erec and, of course, in Geoffrey of Monmouth's Vita

Merlini[184] - she is the mistress of the Otherworld. Notice the striking similarity between "Lanval" and "Avalon"[185] - the place to which the hero's soul is laid to rest and may wander. There is never an accident in the meeting of the Fairy Mistress; she usually knows her love and his name, then directs him to her abode through methods of persuasion in the form of "geis." It must be remembered also that the pre-Celts and the Celtic women especially exercised an astonishing freedom in the choice and abandonment of their mates; a feminine domination was clear - the men wooed while the ladies remained passively superior.[186] As for the recurring maiden symbol, Professor Cross has identified them with the Celtic fairy's companions transposed now into twelfth century "courtoises" servant girls. This metamorphosis and Marie's treatment of the symbol tend to make one conjure up the triadic nature of the sister or brother groups of Celtic gods like the three fatal sisters: Badb, Neman, Macha[184] who play a significant role with the Tuatha Dē Danann - the descendents of the goddess Dana. Marie's two maidens along with their mistress make three descendents of the triadic divine groupings. Plus, the maidens appear three times - let us not forget the innate power of numbers. Originally, these maidens would have been bathing outdoors in all their voluptuousness and carrying a gold basin and a towel for their older sister. Of course, the influence of the medieval court and Christianity would alter this tradition and the relationship between the goddess trio. The girls have become beautiful well-clad servants in Marie's frame of reference. The symbol, therefore, binds varying traditions together so that a multiplicity of meanings, all correct

within the proper contexts, may emerge. Paradoxically, the traditions are capsulized and epitomized by a single symbol - whence the multiplicity.

The Symbol as Nominal Power in the Mythological Context

Names play a crucial role in the analysis of the next three lais since they are the determining factors for the interpretation of various symbols. Already we have encountered the importance attached to names in both Celtic and Greek mythologies through the association of animals at the time of the hero's birth and in the abusing or eating of these namesakes: Dairmaid hunts and slays the boar but is ironically wounded by the boar's poisonous bristles;[188] his "brother" animal and "external soul" is violated, and retribution is necessary. The hunter is hunted. Since the violent act is usually in direct contradiction to the code of "geis," the price to be paid is even higher. Words, the elaboration of names, in the form of contractual agreements also have this symbolic power over the hero as in Lanval, in numerous "geis" situations of the Tristan legend as well as in the Tithonus example in classical myth. Words, if not pronounced correctly as in official proclamations or if the concept behind them be false, take life unto themselves and condemn the culpable. Equitan, character and lai, is no exception to this rule. First, his name. One immediately thinks of the latin, "equites" - the cavalry or horsemen, which would have a formidable significance since riding and hunting of both sorts, animal and woman, are thoroughly treated in this lai. Often in the medieval mind, a woman's sexuality was equated to a wild beast. Secondly, the

"equites" were a distinct class of the Roman Commonwealth between the senate and the plebs. It is a question of class differences in this lai as well, a king and a seneschal's wife. "Seneschal" literally means "old servant," and he was the officer in charge of domestic arrangements, ceremonies, the administration of justice in the household of a medieval prince or dignitary. The social situations and their innate irony reflect the comic struggles of the Ovid influenced Capellanus in his De Amore. Then again, from the name "Equitan" may emerge the latin, "aequitas," - the French, "équité" - that is, the notion of justice, erectness, fairness, and evenness - whence the irony and the hypocrisy considering the couple's tirades on the "nature of honest love." In addition, the final justice is meted out by the seneschal - each character gets his just due and the slate is wiped clean. Everyone at the end is "even" or "quitte."

For the Celtic source background material, it has been noted that in the Tristan story there is a dwarf named "Aquitan" who betrays the famed couple in the Eilhart and Gottfried versions.[189] Interestingly, Marie's "Equitan, sire de Nauns," as it appears in line twelve has been granted a variety of translations from "Nantes" (Nămnetes) to "nain" from where we obtain the dwarf theory in the Tristan legend. But dwarfs are most common when the "grotesque" is involved in much of Celtic lore. These conglomerations of facts have led to fascinating misinterpretations. It seems unlikely that our king, Equitan, had any vague physical resemblance, even hinted at, to a dwarf. Possibly, the king's treachery might bear some fiendish similarity with the accustomed portrayal of the dwarf - but no more. A

stronger link has been suggested by Hofer's analogy[190] with Gaimar's Estoire des Engleis (1140) where a king is enamoured by a vassal's wife, goes hunting, spends a sleepless night pining over the lady, but the vassal luckily dies a natural death and the couple is united. Marie, in truth, conveniently dismisses these details and centers her attention upon the complete subservience of the king to a woman. Some have hypothesized that the purpose of the lai is to condemn the new love vogue from the south, the Provençal impact, and that "Equitan" is a corruption of "Aquitaine" - which is supposed to have us conjure up immediately Aliénor and her influences on the troubadours.[191] However, the "new love ethic" from the south has many sides and many faces, and if the condemnation of a specific order is present in this lai, and I am not sure that it is, this does not necessitate the condemnation of the "whole" new love concept from Provence. Marie is more of an entertainer-composer who excites audiences than a moralist who intimidates her audience.

Now for the vat - "la cuve," the symbol around which the power of words, the contract, is built. The entire meaning of the lai converges upon the ever awaiting vat. As we remember, the truly amicable acceptance of the king's hunting and bathing proposition by the seneschal closes the fatal bargain - the nominal power and nomina-numina. The vat becomes the symbol of treachery for both wife and king as well as the symbol of vengeance for the seneschal. But beyond the vat, is the symbol of an "unbroken" pact; the agreement is kept throughout the lai,

but its basis and intention were false. Therefore, death and punishment are justified. The vat also represents false contracts. Let us not forget either that there are two vats: one scalding hot, a miniature hell; the other of tepid sensual bliss. The vat - and this is not stressed by critics - is typically Celtic in origin especially as an instrument of death. First, there is one of those habitual tests undergone by the hero Llew where he has one foot precariously balanced on a vat of boiling water, the other on some other intimidating object while spears whiz by his temples.[192] The vat is also used in multiple death scenes of Irish lore when "geasa" are violated: one victim is drowned in a bathing vat, wounded by spears, and then burned[193] - comedy and the macabre join hands. The macabre best describes the Equitan vat, symbol of false pacts, of false words, that will acquire the power to destroy. Interesting to note that Shakespeare uses the vat motif in Macbeth during the first scene where the old-hag witches gather around the smoldering cauldron and in Richard III when George, the Duke of Clarence and the king's brother, is drowned in a butt of malmsey wine. Thus, the vat has a long Celtic tradition as a cauldron of plenty and of sacrifice.

A conglomeration of tales has been offered in a vain attempt to unlock the mystery of symbolic meaning in Fresne, especially the stories of Griselda and the Scottish ballad Fair Annie.[194] The long-suffering heroine of medieval stories, Griselda, is forever subjected to her husband's numerous and cruel trials in order to test her devotion. Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Chaucer all use her as a model not to mention Thomas Dekker's

comedy Patient Grissell. Supposedly, the medieval account stemmed from the Eros and Psyche story. Psyche, as we know, was so beautiful that Eros became uncontrollably enamoured and took her away with him to an isolated castle. He forbade her to look at him since he was a god. She disobeyed and he abandoned her. She then ceaselessly searched for him, performing difficult and dangerous tasks to prove her love. They were finally reunited. The one shred of mutual thematic material that emerges is the devotion of the two ladies, Griselda and Psyche which is a trait of the Fresne story. However, no dangerous tasks are performed, and Fresne remains a relatively passive heroine. In our discussion on Christian Thought and Belief the full meaning of the lai will become apparent. Never is Fresne put consciously to the test by her future husband, Gurun. Even though the girl-concubine seems to be carrying a cross and the weight of the past on her shoulders, she will prove her worth in more Christian terms through the symbolism of the ring and particularly the blanket - "paile roé," decorated silk - in which she was wrapped and abandoned as a child. The symbols will form an integral part of the Christian virtues of humility and charity. The test imposed upon Fresne is of a different nature; it is imposed from elsewhere - from within and from the circumstances surrounding the mother's sins of superstition, calumny, and abandonment. The girl must come to grips with herself in the light of her faith. The symbolism in Fresne is not to be found in myths and, if found, its full meaning can only be understood in the Christian context. Fair Annie[195] likewise derives from those very prevalent folk traditions, but sources are not avail-

able or their dates are dubious. Besides the initial motif is absent - a woman who reproaches another for giving birth to more than one child. Here we have remnants of Celtic multiple births; certain goddesses go through various transformations through different births before they become what they are to be, their true Self like Etain.[196] Evidently pagan superstition and Christian charity are pitted against each other in this lai. The exposure of children - the bastard set adrift in Irish tales - the knight's love for a second maiden because she resembles the first, and the first wife's kindly reception of the second are also common features of the folk tradition.[197] The critics fail to see here a glaring similarity with the Eliduc story, the Celtic "homme à deux femmes" theme. Although Gurun is not married at the time, he does have a mistress, Fresne, and he plans to marry Codre. Later he will be married - although the marriage is not consummated - to Codre and still have no intention of abandoning his "suinant,"[198] a variation on the Guildeluëc-Eliduc-Guilliadun theme. Gurun must choose, but what determines his choice is the symbolic "paile roé" which will be instrumental in uncovering Fresne's true identity. The class and status of a person prove to be of great importance in this lai as in Equitan. In addition to these tales, there is the reality of the Crusades whose circumstances occasionally tempted the chevalier to establish a new home front with a new wife after having traveled abroad to the East.[199] In many cases, the first wife was forever abandoned.

As concerns the tree, the ash, from which Fresne's name is derived and which symbolically is the reminder of the mother's

sin and the scene of the crime, I have found in Scandinavian mythology "Yggdrasill," the great ash tree. It has the whole world lying under its branches protecting men and animals. This mysterious and majestic tree connects with all parts of the universe. The Scandinavians believed that the world was not supported by a giant like the Greek Atlas but by this tree, "Yggdrasill."[200] A myth directed towards nature and its elements rather than to a philosophical abstraction. The Celts also knew of the healing powers of certain trees like the hazel. All drugs derive from plants, trees, and nature. Fresne like the Scandinavian tree is very sturdy; however, the complete meaning of her sturdiness must be sought elsewhere. Although we can account for a portion of the Fresne tale in these mythological counterparts and in oral tradition, the Christian ethos of truth versus superstition, of the sacrament of marriage versus polygamy, and doctrine versus myth and fantasy, inundates the lai Fresne with all its symbolic implications. The mother's words and curse-like superstition become a pact with supernatural forces, if not the devil. Divine punishment awaits her sin of calumny - again, the innate power of words as expressed in Plato's Cratylus. The name, Fresne, thus befits the character for more than just one reason: she will ironically bear fruit and children like her Earth Mother counterpart, "Yggdrasill."

The final name-centered lai is Chaitivel which has all the earmarks of the casuistic "jeu parti" or "tenso" genre of the lyric poets.[201] The well-orchestrated arguments, pros and cons moving back and forth several times, conclude with the final decision resting in the lady's hand and then reinforced by

Marie's choice of the title which best suits the lai. The analogies made with Capellanus' love conflicts of those differing in social status are legitimate but cannot qualify as a source since the De Arte Honeste Amandi postdates Marie by about a hundred years. If anything, the lyric poets and Marie who present "tenso-like" conflicts of interest had a greater impact on Capellanus. These social battles of seduction between men and women of various stations pitted against one another have an Ovidian flair about them. Although we can find no mythological themes, per se, that suit these mock-battle situations of love, Classical mythology as sifted by Ovid may provide us with a clue. It is the tone employed by Ovid that relates most closely to the Chaitivel contest for a name. Modern man takes names for granted; the ancients and the medieval society underscored their origins and meanings as we have witnessed. Ovid lays stress on the sensual and the obscene in the Metamorphoses - which is only hinted at in Chaitivel's injury, an injury that will prevent him from consummating physical love. And Marie jokingly plays with this notion. Ovid's playfully flippant attitude in scenes of seduction and his verbal trickery resemble the art of persuasion found in Chaitivel. If Chaitivel does not seduce the lady, he nevertheless has the satisfaction of having "seduced" her mentally. The lady yields and the fallen hero's wish and name prevail. The title becomes an absolute and an exemplary case for all such knight-lovers. The lady's fickleness, her provocative behavior with the four knights, her refusal to choose the one love amongst them, exhibit much of the hypocrisy and mockery of the battle of wits of the Ars

Armatoria as well as the Amores and the Remedium Amoris where mytholgoical allusions are frequently exposed with all the intended humor. Therefore, we must turn to Ovid for tone, if not for thematic substance. The lady's lack of sincerity, a sincerity of shallowness, and sometimes just an exaggerated non-sincerity may be added to the Ovidian bag of tricks. Marie de-emphasizes the Ovidian "voluptas" attitude and the proprieties of the illicit love code while emphasizing the lady's frivolity. The non-platonic "amor mixtus" is preferred to the "amor purus" in the Ovidian context.[202] Marie's notion of love in this lai seems to lie somewhere between the two extremes. With Ovid, there is the love between "nobles" and the love between "plebians," and an occasional mixing of the two. In Chaitivel, Marie presents characters of equal rank or comparable rank. The central problem is that the lady is stubborn - which transcends rank. Marie christianizes the lai by purifying and cleansing the Ovidian obscenities and cynicism; she may, however, imply such things. But like Ovid whose ladies are rarely if ever glorified in truth, it is very debatable whether Marie's lady is to be placed on that pedestal as an ideal example to be emulated. On the contrary, she is equally mocked by the poetess. The "woe is me" syndrome, the "Ei mihi" of Ovid[203] - this exaggeration rings out in the characterization of the hero, even in his name - "poor little weak fellow." Thus a tone can be traced back to Ovid - a tone that will be modified by Marie. Marie's concept of love becomes an art for her just as much as for Ovid with all its role-playing and preciosity. Never though will one hear from the mouth of the poetess this blatantly direct insult:

"Il y a pourtant aussi des femmes cultivées mais c'est un tout petit groupe; le reste n'est pas cultivé, mais veut le paraître."[204] Thus Ovid's influence is most strongly felt and perceived in this lai with the minimizing of the force of the Ovidian tone and thematic substance. As concerns the numerous "druërie," both the love tokens of remembrance or of recognition and thankfulness and the sexual allusions and connotations of "druërie," we need only mention a few which occur in Greek and Celtic mythologies: Cúchulainn leaves a ring and instructions[205] for his son with his Amazon fairy mistress, Aiffe, a son whom he shall unknowingly kill in battle; Hercules' raiding of the Amazons and the making off with the girdle of the Amazon queen, Hippolyta - one of his twelve labors, some of which border on comic exaggeration like the cleaning of the stables of Augeas; the Gordian knot which could only be untied by the future leader of Asia and will be severed by Alexander.[206] The ring and instructions, the girdle, and the knot all serve as "druërie" since their meaning is devoid of depth and development. It is the lowest level of symbolic expression and should be classified along with the sword of Yonec's father, Fresne's ring, Eliduc's ring to Guilliadun and so forth as "druërie" and no more. Although sensual and sexual implications are sometimes an innate part of "druërie," they must be included and understood in the developmental process towards idealistic symbolism as the more basic intuitive level.

What general statements, observations, or hypotheses can be drawn by the symbol in the mythological context? In the first place, both Greek and Celtic mythologies are related

culturally and symbolically although more stress on the parodial "merveilleux" elements is evident in Celtic lore whereas a serious more tragic tone prevails with the Greek myths with the exception of those filtered by Ovid. Secondly, all steps of progression toward idealistic symbolism are reflected in the myths in neoplatonic overtones: "druërie," nomina-numina, power of love symbols, and love as a symbol and an ideal absolute. Marie "demythologizes" the myths by concentrating on the symbolic factors and by rationalizing the non-rational qualities of her predecessors. This usually occurs when the poetess chooses to emphasize courtly or Christian elements at the expense of the myths. A modification of themes also takes place through the "decelticizing" and "dehellenizing" of basically pagan beliefs. The Christian and the courtly influences are much more confining, controlling, and structurally limiting than their mythological counterparts. With the casuistics of the lyric poets and with the doctrines and dogmas of the Church, we shall enter a new era and witness its effect on the poetess who will synthesize all these traditions. Marie's knowledge, talent, and philosophical understanding - and let us not omit the musicality of her work - emerge in the compact structure of a lai, the ultimate mode of synthesis.

Notes

[1] Signmund Freud, On Dreams (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1952), p. 10.

[2] Paul Ricoeur, Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 7-13.

[3] Ibid., p. 22.

[4] Ibid., p. 7.

[5] Ibid., p. 23.

[6] Ibid., p. 95.

[7] Ibid., p. 103.

[8] Ibid., pp. 104-108.

[9] Ibid., pp. 108-111.

[10] Ibid., pp. 114-115.

[11] Ibid., pp. 115-116.

[12] Ibid., p. 117.

[13] Ibid., pp. 117-125.

[14] Carl Jung, Man and His Symbols (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 5-7.

[15] Ibid., pp. 9-12.

[16] Ibid., p. 29.

[17] Ibid., p. 38.

[18] Ibid., p. 77.

[19] Ibid., p. 84.

[20] Ibid., pp. 101-210.

[21] Ibid., p. 146.

[22] Ibid., p. 199.

[23] Ibid., pp. 231-232.

[24] Roger Loomis, pp. 14-15.

[25] Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology (New York: Viking Press, 1969), pp. 237-298.

[26] Loomis, p. 25.

[27] Campbell, p. 300.

[28] Loomis, pp. 1-14.

[29] Campbell, pp. 292-296.

[30] Larousse World Mythology, ed. Pierre Grimal (New York: Paul Hamlyn, 1965), pp. 334-356.

[31] Campbell, p. 286.

[32] Although Rychner and others prefer the Wace, Geoffrey, and "roman courtois"- Enêe and Thèbes - as points of reference.

[33] Alwyn Rees, pp. 91-106.

[34] Ovid's Metamorphoses (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), pp. 5-6.

[35] Thomas Bulfinch, Mythology (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1947), p. 17.

[36] Larousse Mythology, p. 347.

[37] Rees, p. 23.

[38] Larousse, pp. 347-350.

[39] Ibid., pp. 352-353.

[40] Loomis, p. 237.

[41] Larousse, p. 351.

[42] Loomis, pp. 235-237.

[43] See Tennyson's poem "Tithonus."

[44] Rees, pp. 277-278.

[45] Rees, p. 279.

[46] Ibid., pp. 90-106.

[47] Campbell, pp. 110-111.

[48] Larousse, pp. 347-348.

[49] Ibid., p. 346.

[50] Loomis' thesis.

[51] Loomis, pp. 57-60.

[52] Rachel Bromwich, "Celtic Dynastic Themes and the Breton Lays," Etudes Celtiques 9 (1961), pp. 440-458.

[53] I refer the reader to the Metamorphoses.

[54] Larousse, pp. 354-355.

[55] These mock battles are ritualistic according to Rees, p. 278.

[56] Bromwich, pp. 440-442.

[57] Myles Dillon, Early Irish Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 30-43.

[58] Gerard Murphy, Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland (Cork: Mercier Press, 1971), pp. 17-19.

[59] Gerard Murphy, Ossianic Lore and Romantic Tales of Medieval Ireland (Dublin: Colm o Lochlavan, 1961), pp. 5-12.

[60] See Murphy's Saga and Myth for a complete understanding of the 350 primary and subsidiary tales of Ireland, pp. 19-20.

[61] Bulfinch, pp. 1-10.

[62] Murphy, Saga and Myth, p. 19.

[63] Rees, Loomis and Bulfinch combined.

[64] Bulfinch, p. 7.

[65] Rees, p. 212.

[66] Rees, pp. 215-216, and Campbell, p. 118.

[67] Tom Peete Cross, "The Celtic Elements in the Lays of 'Lanval' and Graelent,'" Modern Philology 12 (1914-1915), p. 605.

[68] Bulfinch, p. 5.

[69] Rees, pp. 238-240.

[70] Ovid, Metamorphoses, pp. 200-204.

[71] Ibid., p. 168 and Bulfinch.

[72] See Christopher Marlowe's poem also.

[73] Ovid., pp. 219-221.

[74] Ibid., pp. 251-258.

[75] Bulfinch, p. 16.

[76] Ovid., pp. 61-64.

[77] Larousse, "The Hind of Ceryneia," p. 142.

[78] Bromwich, Perceval's Chase of the White Stag of Welsh folklore, p. 458.

[79] Bulfinch, p. 306.

[80] Judith Rothschild, Narrative Technique in the Lais of Marie de France, p. 15.

[81] Curiously enough the oldest manuscript at the British Museum dating from the middle of the thirteenth century includes the prologue and the twelve lais exactly as Rychner reproduces them - Harley 978.

[82] Robert Cargo, "Marie de France's Le Laüstic and Ovid's Metamorphoses," Comparative Literature XVIII, pp. 162-166, and Ovid's Book VI, pp. 142-152.

[83] Cesare Segre, "Piramo e Tisbe nei Lai di Marie di Francia," Studi in Onore di Vittorio Luglio e Diego Valeri, Pozza, 1961, pp. 845-853, and Ovid's Book IV, pp. 83-86.

[84] Cargo, pp. 163-166.

[85] Tom Cross, "Celtic Origins of the Lay of Yonec," Studies in Philology (1913), pp. 46-47.

[86] Classiques Larousse, Poésie lyrique au moyen âge, tome I, ed. Guillaume Picot (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1963), p. 97.

[87] Cross, p. 30.

[88] Cross, pp. 35-40.

[89] Mickel, p. 88.

[90] Spitzer, "Marie de France: Dichterin von Problem-Märchen," Zietschrift für Romanische Philologie, 6 (1930), p. 58.

[91] Illingworth, "Celtic Tradition and the Lay of Yonec," Etudes Celtiques 9 (1961), pp. 508-510.

[92] Ibid., p. 513.

[93] U. T. Holmes, "Old French 'Yonec'," Modern Philology 29 (1931-32), p. 229.

[94] M. B. Ogle, "Some Theories in Irish Literary Influence in the Lay of Yonec," Romanic Review 10 (1919), pp. 123-148.

[95] Ibid., pp. 126-130.

[96] Ibid., pp. 130-135.

[97] Ibid., p. 147.

[98] To this has been added Oliver Johnston's theory of Yonec's affinities with the Indian tale, "The Fan Prince," and the Russian, "The Resplendent Falcon." In "Sources of Yonec," MLA 20 (1905), pp. 322-338.

[99] Larousse, pp. 369-370. The inscriptions are common to both Germanic and Scandinavian tribes.

[100] Grace Frank, "Marie de France and the Tristram Legend," PMLA LXIII (1948), pp. 405-411. Some sort of cryptic message on a stick.

[101] Frank's reference to a Miss Rickert, pp. 405-406.

[102] Hoepffner, "Les deux lais du Chèvrefeuille," Mélanges Laumonier (Paris: Droz, 1935), pp. 41-49. For further suppositions on Marie's knowledge of the Tristan legend.

[103] Spitzer, "La lettre sur la baguette de coudrier dans le lai du Chievrefeuil," Romania LXIX (1946-47), pp. 80-90.

[104] L. Foulet, "Marie de France et la légende de Tristan," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 32 (1908), pp. 161-183 and 257-289.

[105] Schoepperle, "Chievrefoil," Romania 38 (1909) pp. 196-218. She points out six similarities with Cúchulainn and the Táin.

[106] Foulet, pp. 84-86.

[107] Anna Hatcher, "Le Lai du Chievrefeuil," Romania 71 (1950), p. 331.

[108] Ibid., pp. 336-337.

[109] Mickel presents these facts without comment, p. 95. For a comprehensive look at this debate see Maurice Cagnon, "Chievrefeuil and the Ogamic Tradition," Romania 91 (1970), pp. 238-255.

[110] Larousse, p. 402.

[111] Ibid., p. 402.

[112] Columbia Encyclopedia Third edition, ed. William Bridgewater (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 1260.

[113] Flynn and Loretto, The Triumph of Faith (New York: Sadlier, 1958), pp. 230-286.

[114] Jung, p. 6.

[115] Loomis, p. 14.

[116] Jung, pp. 7-9, Dissociation.

[117] This tale was furnished to me by my great-aunt who died ten years ago at the age of eighty-nine, and she had heard it from her grandmother. Who knows how long the tale has been recounted.

[118] J. Loth's meaning to "bise - lavaret" is "le loup à la culotte" or "le court culotté." "Le lai du Bisclavret, le sens de ce nom et son importance." Revue celtique 44 (1927), pp. 300-307.

[119] S. Battaglia, "Il mito del licantropo nel Bisclavret di Marie di Francia," Filologia romanza 3 (1956), pp. 229-253.

[120] Mickel, p. 81.

[121] Ibid., p. 81.

[122] Frederick Hodgson, "Alienation and the Otherworld in Lanval, Yonec, and Guigemar," Comitatus 5 (1974), p. 20.

[123] Ibid., p. 25.

[124] Rachel Bromwich, for instance.

[125] Hodgson, pp. 27-28.

[126] Ibid., p. 26.

[127] Classiques Larousse, Les Romans courtois (Paris: Larousse, 1943), pp. 69-80.

[128] Mound and hiding place.

[129] R. N. Illingworth, "Celtic Tradition and the lay of Guigemar," Medium Aevum 31 (1962), pp. 178-181. He also mentions Cúchulainn who wounds a hind and then is wounded by it in Serglige Con Culainn. Then he speaks of the cure-voyage motif in the Lebor na h Vidre.

[130] Jeanne Lods, "Sur quelques vers de Guigemar," Romania LXXVII (1956), pp. 494-496.

[131] U. T. Holmes, "A Welsh Motif in Marie's Guigemar," Studies in Philology XXXIX (1942), pp. 11-14. Ossian's birth

among others.

[132] Ibid., p. 13.

[133] Antoinette Knapton, Mythe et Psychologie chez Marie de France dans Guigemar (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies in Romance Language, 1975), p. 26.

[134] Larousse, p. 142.

[135] Knapton, p. 93.

[136] Ibid., p. 95.

[137] Ibid., p. 65.

[138] Ibid., p. 65.

[139] Ibid., p. 68.

[140] For those etymologically interested see Jack Brown's "Old French 'Estre': New Meaning," Romance Notes 14 (1972), pp. 597-98. Apparently in some manuscripts, line 226 reads "nus n'pot estre ne entrer." For him "estre" means to exit. Rychner uses "eissir."

[141] As Hoepffner and Rychner constantly remind us. Neither one wants to hear of Celtic origins for any reason. Hoepffner's "La Géographie et l'histoire dans les lais de Marie de France," Romania 56 (1930), pp. 1-32.

[142] North Carolina University Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, 92-95 (1970-71), pp. 167-176.

[143] Ibid., pp. 169-170.

[144] As Fitz Brewster brought out in his article.

[145] Alfred Nutt, "The Lay of 'Eliduc' and the "Märchen" of Little Snow-White," Folk-Lore 3 (1892), pp. 26-48.

[146] Ann Trinidade, "The Man with Two Wives - Marie de France and an Important Irish Analogie," Romance Philology 27 (Aug. '73-May '74), pp. 466-478.

[147] Hoepffner in "Le Roman d'Ille et Galeron et le lai d'Eliduc," Studies in French Language and Literature (Manchester University Press, 1939), pp. 125-44, and Maurice Wilmotte in "Problèmes de chronologie littéraire," Le Moyen Age 50 (1940), pp. 99-114 argues over who takes from what. Is the roman d'Enée at the bottom of it all?

[148] Mickel, p. 18.

[149] Rychner: "elle [la beletta] connaît les herbes qui guérissent des morsures venimeuses et peut même ressuciter ses

petits grâce à une fleur," quoting Neckam and Cambrensis.

150 Mickel, p. 97.

151 As Prof. Nutt proposes.

152 Domenico Fasciano, "La Mythologie du lai Les Deux Amants," Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medievale 16 (1974), pp. 79-85.

153 Oliver Johnston, "Sources of the Lay of the 'Two Lovers'," Modern Language Notes 21 (1906), pp. 34-39. In addition to the Gaelic legend, he refers to a Grimm tale, a Russian version and folklore in general.

154 Donald Stone, Tristan et Iseult (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1966), pp. 6-11. The critic mentions the similarities between the versions including the Dairmaid/Gráinne story.

155 As Stone put it on page 7.

156 Stone, p. 11.

157 Ibid., p. 132.

158 Paul Lonigan, "The 'Cligès' and the Tristan Legend," Studi Francesi 53 (1974), p. 204.

159 Gustave Cohen, "Marie de France's le lai des 'Deux Amants', " Mercure de France 265 (1936), pp. 61-68.

160 Ibid., p. 61. He went to the top of the hill to recite it.

161 Johnston, pp. 34-39.

162 Fasciano, pp. 79-80.

163 Ibid., p. 81.

164 Ibid., p. 82.

165 Ibid., pp. 83-85.

166 Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents, (New York: Norton, 1962), pp. 12-50.

167 Note 83 of Chapter II: Hoepffner article. The source is found in "laisse xix" of this "chanson de geste."

168 Loomis, pp. 315-316.

169 Constance Bullock-Davies, "The Love Messenger in Milun," Nottingham Medieval Studies 16, pp. 20-27.

[170] A theme of the nineteenth century French poets, especially Vigny.

[171] The Hodgson theory discussed above for Guigemar.

[172] Above note 124.

[173] For the relationship between the lais see W. H. Schofield, "The Lay of Guingamor," Harvard Studies 5 (1895), pp. 221-243.

[174] Tom Peete Cross, "The Celtic Elements in the Lays of Lanval and Graelent," Modern Philology 12 (1914-1915), pp. 588-589.

[175] Ibid., p. 589.

[176] Wathelet-Willem, "Le Personnage de Guenièvre chez Marie de France," Marche Romane 13 (1963), pp. 119-131.

[177] Cross, pp. 592-594.

[178] Cross, p. 595. This king will commit suicide in a vat resembling Equitan's fate.

[179] Ibid., p. 598.

[180] Ibid., p. 604.

[181] O'Sharkey, "The Identity of the Fairy Mistress in Marie de France's Lanval," Trivium 6 (1971), pp. 17-25.

[182] Larousse Mythology, pp. 350-351.

[183] Jeanne Wathelet-Willem, "Le mystère chez Marie de France: Lanval," Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire 39 (1961), pp. 661-686.

[184] O'Sharkey, pp. 18-20.

[185] C. Bullock-Davies, "Lanval and 'Avalon'," Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies 23 (1969), pp. 128-142.

[186] Cross, p. 617.

[187] Cross, p. 605.

[188] Loomis, p. 283.

[189] J. Wathelet-Willem, "Equitan dans l'oeuvre de Marie de France," Moyen Age 69 (1963), pp. 325-345, and M. Delbouille, "Le Nom et le personnage d'Equitan," Moyen Age 69 (1963), pp. 315-323.

[190] Hofer, "Zur Beurteilung der Lais der Marie de France," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 66 (1950), pp. 409-421.

[191] J. Wathelet-Willem's "Equitan dans l'oeuvre de Marie de France," and D. W. Robertson's "Love Conventions in Marie's Equitan," Romanic Review 44 (1953), pp. 241-245.

[192] Loomis, pp. 15-18. The story of Blodewedd and Gronw's plot to kill Llew, a forerunner of Lug.

[193] Rees, pp. 333-334.

[194] Lai Frêne, a critical edition shedding some light on these parallel plots. Smith College Studies in Modern Languages X, n. 3, pp. i-xx; 1-14.

[195] W. Kuchler, "Schön Annie, Fraisne, und Griselda," Neure Sprachen 35 (1927), pp. 489-497.

[196] Rees, pp. 271-272.

[197] The critical edition of Frêne of the Smith College Studies.

[198] His concubine.

[199] Ann Trinidade's thesis.

[200] Larousse Mythology, pp. 365-371; pp. 396-398.

[201] Classiques Larousse, Poësie Lyrique au moyen âge, tome 1, pp. 98-103.

[202] C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 32-35.

[203] Ovid, Les Amours suivi de L'Art d'Aimer et Les Remèdes d'Amour ed. Emile Ripert (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1957), p. 59.

[204] Ibid., p. 221.

[205] Tom Peete Cross, "Celtic Origins of the Lay of Yonec," p. 55.

[206] Bulfinch's Mythology for general reference and Knapton for an in depth study of these elements, pp. 106-112.

Chapter IV

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND BELIEF

From the era of myth we progress towards the age of definition, the Middle Ages - a definition largely due to the Church and its imposing historical figures, the Church Fathers and Doctors. The Renaissance is frequently referred to as the beginning of the modern era chiefly because of its scientific, technological developments like the printing press, and its humanistic tone. However, the groundwork of this so-called modern period and its beginnings is the labor of the Middle Ages which structured the pagan world philosophically and religiously. Without this striving to overcome the non-rational forces of mythology and paganism, which starts with this "defining" role of the medieval Church and its philosophy, the Renaissance would not have been a reality. In addition, humanism - the research for antiquity and the turning toward man and his needs - is a fundamental principle of the Church and of the twelfth century in particular even though the Renaissance period, in depth and breadth, is admittedly a total emersion into these concepts. Before the revival of interest in humanism in twelfth century France, there was the Carolingian Renaissance whose main exponent, Alcuin, preached doctrines similar to those of the twelfth century. Invited to Charlemagne's court, the English scholar encouraged the secular liberal arts and aided in defining the

Church's role by creating the foundations of the Roman Catholic Missal and by re-editing the Latin Vulgate in addition to defeating the heresy of Adoptionism - that Christ becomes divine after his birth.[1] Foundations will gradually accumulate in order to crystallize the meaning of Christianity and its symbols. The Middle Ages is thus the very beginning of this modern period. There is within the early Church a tendency to focus in upon and consolidate the pagan heritage if not to eliminate all which is considered non-rational and therefore heretical. The "polyisms" become "monoisms" - polytheism and pantheism converge upon monotheism; polygamy and promiscuity, the innuendoes of myth and older civilizations, change to monogamy. Christianity restored the sacredness to the meaning of God and added dignity and holiness to marriage by making it a sacrament. Women were granted a position of relatively more honor and were no longer as inferior as in pagan times. Paradoxically, while seeking to limit the myths, a complexity of inner structure will unfold; for example, belief in one God is espoused but complicated by the dogma of the Trinity. For centuries, the early Councils of the Church will debate this heated question. Therefore, even though this crystallization as the outer governing structure for belief will prevail, a complex inner structure of a definitional nature with which only the theologians and Church officials are truly involved, not the people on a whole, overwhelms the Middle Ages. To some extent Marie possibly knew and even understood the intricacies of this inner structure but these complexities were not altogether necessary to her role as a Christian; she is concerned with what it means to be Christian

and how this concept manifests itself rather than with the philosophical casuistics.

Another dramatic change between the old and the new is the shift from the Old Testament and mythological wrath of God patterns to the New Testament love doctrine of Christ. Although the wrath and vengeance motifs in Marie are vestiges of the old order, there are considerably less of them compared to the Christian virtues she depicts. Humilitas and caritas reign supreme in the Lais and will be defined in order to appreciate Marie's concept of art. For the Greeks and the Romans, to be humble was no virtue; it was to be shunned as a feminine weakness. In fact, it would be unmanly and equivalent to sin - virtus deriving from vir, man, and vis, force. One loves one's neighbor as one loves oneself for the love of God - Christ's Sermon on the Mount - to the point that one either turns the other cheek willingly - with emphasis on the will - or places himself on an inferior level whether he be there or not. This is caritas and humilitas combined in the Christian ideal. This is unheard of in the pagan world but ironically paganism still reflects itself in the "modern societies" of today. The seven virtues of Christianity have their parallels in the Classical world, as we shall see, but with distinct variations of emphasis and degree of importance. In opposition to these definitions of virtues, these positive absolutes, the Church shall compose strict formal definitions concerning their metaphysical counterparts, sins - the seven capital sins. One cannot escape, and neither could Marie de France, the structuring definitions of the Middle Ages. Sin is existentially not only the committing of the act which

stigmatizes the offender and sinner but the persistence in this act which eventually damns him, thus prohibiting salvation. Sin, the absence of good, is an offense to the Divine. Free will - man's choice - is the ultimate determinant of damnation or salvation. Man is not bound by the mythologically pagan fate concept. Grace will be that extra help from God in order that man remain good and continue to be and do good. Salvation is not in faith alone but in good works as well. It is essential that Marie be examined in this light and judged accordingly.[2]

As concerns the symbol, the transcendental movement towards the absolute of Greek philosophy and mythology, as exposed in the analysis of the Lais in previous chapters, shall also undergo a shift in emphasis. The explanation which is about to be offered existed in earlier periods of mankind, but the definition of symbol was never so strongly prominent as in the Christian world. The "sign" aspects of the symbol - the symbol turned sign if you will - will dominate this religious context, presenting a downward movement from God to his creation and then a linking back to God through faith - that spiritual mystical confidence in God which, although has certain non-rational features, has been minutely defined by the Church. "Sign" is thus the imposing counterpart of symbol since it emanates from God.[3] Emphasis is placed at the top of the eschatological ladder where to be beauty, truth, and the other classical and Christian virtues is to have attributes of the living God. All positive absolutes shall reside in the definition of this God who will, in turn, impose definition upon his creation. As the symbol passed through the stages of idealism from the base and archaic

to the most elevated, this irreducible "sign" shall inversely follow along the same patterns of development, in a downward motion, even to the intuitive and sensual stages where physical love is defined and sanctioned only in the light of procreation and not for pleasure or the satisfaction of physical desires. The medieval man shall "symbolically" express his love by reaching upward to God while his God expresses love and favor through "signs" directed downward from Him. Verticality is the overriding geometric and philosophical notion of this age. Where sensuality becomes pleasure seeking in itself, it is sin for Marie as well as the Church. Where philosophy deviates from the established definition, it is also sin, and heresy.[4] From God's love, to the power of this love as manifested by His Son and the Holy Spirit and through the gift of grace, to the more intuitive - "heart centered" - levels of faith and mysticism, the symbol shall pass downward towards man. Man's love through the symbolic medium moves upward as do sins which he commits; he offends God, hurting and angering the Divine. Punishment and penance are due and meted out from above indicating God's sorrow, hurt, and anger; man makes restitution through the ritual of cleansing, confession and penance, in an upward motion to God.[5] This link between God and man is immediately established in the Prologue. Marie's first words are "Ki Deus" - Man and God and the link between them is faith, hope, and charity. Marie's last work is Eliduc, the religiously transcendental and controversial but spiritual love triangle ending. This lai has exactly 1184 lines. Could it be one line for every year of Christianity? The dates hypothesized coincide with this number.

It is within the realm of symbolic possibility. Furthermore, are there not one prologue and twelve lais as there are one Christ and twelve apostles? Marie knew the meaning of numbers; they were not merely arbitrary figures without religious significance. Besides, does not the elevation of the symbol mentioned in the Yonec story, from Celtic Hawkman to its incarnation as a son, resemble God's having become Man, Christ - the physical manifestation of God's love for man. Again, the symbol imposes its power upon the creation. The Father-to-Son motif is therefore in context but with a special added meaning: belief in the Incarnation is necessary for man's salvation. Thus the multifaceted symbol is turned upside down, or right-side up if you prefer, with the laws and meanings firmly defined by Christianity. Most of our interpretations must be guided by this phenomenon since it explains the goings-on in the Lais. It is structure to an unstructured world. An act of God - a "sign" - is an actual happening which cannot be dismissed as mere fantasy or simplistic symbolism of a commemorative nature. All absolutes of Divine origin are parts of God; negative ones are incarnate in the Devil - both converging on the creation. Thus, the symbol becomes the reality of a sign with all the transcendental stages of symbolism in reverse order.

Symbol in the Christian context transcends all modes of symbolism heretofore examined since it is the existential link between God and his dependent creature, man. "Un symbole est un intermédiaire employé par la Providence divine pour nous permettre une pénétration de plus en plus profonde dans la connaissance intime des réalités intelligibles. Les symboles sont

donc pour nous des moyens et non pas des fins. La révélation a donc pris soin de nous représenter Dieu et les choses célestes sous une multitude de symboles différents, contradictoires même qui se corrigent les uns les autres et dont l'opposition interdit à aucun d'entre eux de se donner pour une représentation exacte de son objet."[6] John Scotus Erigena, the ninth century philosopher from Ireland, looked upon the intermediary role of symbols in this dialectic fashion. The interpretation of the Christian symbols have been established and founded by reason, and they, in turn, give birth to authority. For the Thomists, human reason did not walk hand in hand with revelation spontaneously; syllogisms do not lead directly to the true God. God is the "pure act."[7] Included with this system of symbolistic signs should be grace, the gifts from God and from the Holy Ghost, the sacraments, and the miracles of Christ since they all derive from God descending toward man.[8] Grace is the keystone of the whole Christian theological system; it turns the soul to God, confirming and perpetuating the ends of this conversion and thus making the soul habitually good. Grace begins with God and the love emitted because of this grace returns to Him - a reciprocal motion of existence. Sanctifying grace is a permanent gift dwelling in the soul; actual grace is a passing grace that enlightens the mind to do good and avoid evil.[9] It is a favor from God to men and is necessary for salvation. This concept has led to much debate concerning the differing modes of grace as opposed to man's free will. This does not concern us very much especially during the twelfth century; however, it will be of substantial concern to the period immediately prior

to and during the Reformation - whence the reappearance of Jansenistic predestination. The supernatural and the preternatural gifts also resemble "sign" in their downward movement from the Creator. The supernatural gifts include sanctifying grace and the virtues of faith, hope, and charity freely given by God to raise Adam to a divine level[10] - elevation once more. The symbolic movement that typifies the Middle Ages is the one that goes from God to man through "sign" and back to Him through "symbol," symbolic rights and duties, and morally good actions. The preternatural gifts which preserved Adam from natural ills of human existence are freedom from ignorance, concupiscence, pain, and death.[11] This Garden of Eden paradise is often simulated in the Lais where a complete innocence and purity before "the Fall" reign as in the Deus Amanz. In general most of the lais are eventually elevated to this state after occasional problematic difficulties due to plot. The seven sacraments likewise exhibit God's favor upon man since they are visible signs of invisible grace. By definition, they are outward "signs" instituted by Christ to give grace: Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction.[12] We have already witnessed the importance of baptism and names for the mythological world; the institution of marriage will present a separate set of problems for the Lais especially in Fresne and Eliduc. Finally miracles are signs from God; they are changes in the natural order of things, and they are effects that can be perceived by the senses: Christ's raising of the dead, feeding of the multitudes, and walking upon water among others - proofs of divinity, proofs of

the true God.[13] The paraboles of Christ will serve the same function as symbolic expression of the Word of God. Of special interest are those that illustrate the virtues of humility and charity: the Good Samaritan, and the Pharisee and the Publican. And of particular interest to the Prologue of the Lais will be the parabole of the talents. The paraboles of the barren fig tree and the lost coin shall likewise illustrate certain themes of Marie's Lais.[14] Thus, can we immediately appreciate some of the "sign" qualities of symbolism within the Christian context.

If all seems definition and a clear break with the past, I have misled my reader. The division, the dichotomy, between Pagan and Christian is not althogether that distinct especially from a philosophical point of view. At times, there is a meeting of minds as Spitzer points out.[15] For him harmony is the essence of similarity - a striving for this harmony, that is - between Pagan and Christian thought which leads us to the Jungian quest for permanence. This vision of the world - this world harmony to which Spitzer refers - only starts to disintegrate with the beginning of the Renaissance and falls into decay by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to advancing secularization. The complete separation between thought and intuition - inspiration of God for Christians - does not occur until then. The Greeks equated the two concepts of Denken and Anschauung -ἰδέα -εἶδος .[16] The bond went even further: the ties between the arts and sciences were more coordinated than they are in today's world of specialization. World harmony was in music, the stars, myth, poetry, and geometry, and they were all interrelated in pagan times as in Christian. They all had

similar basic principles of foundation reflecting orderliness and symmetry. Harmony comprehended strife and antagonism as well; it was neither a separate entity in Pliny's notion of concordia discors nor in the thinking of the Celts. The poet was a musician -ποιητής - as were the troubadours - no division of roles. Essence, happiness, and the quest for permanence were man's goals.[17] The human soul had to be patterned after this world soul of harmony. Friendship, as with Montaigne, was a tuning of two souls.[18] One notices how musical terminology appears and reappears with the ancients since music was said to have a curative effect: it healed and brought people closer together. This philosophy was transmitted to the Christians by the Romans. "Christian caritas reaches out toward true music."[19] The interrelationships are clear: order and music, order and love - therefore music and love. Augustine too in his search for self speaks of ordo amoris as does Origen.[20] In this light, God is perceived as an incorporal but present in the world - the paradox of paradoxes. For the Christian the link between the visible world harmony and the invisible will of the Creator is grasped by reason, not the senses, in this transcendental kaleidoscopic transformation of symbols. Spitzer continues by demonstrating the prevading order of the "one" in both pagan and Christian thought - the monodic in musical terms and monotheism in Christianity. A convergence obviously takes place and a move upward toward the Eternal. The hymns of Ambrose are neatly fit into this pattern of things where order of music and dance reigns - and not the movement associated with the baroque or romantic. While Augustine, who inherits from Plato, turns

his back on "saeculum," Ambrose will turn pantheistic fullness into Catholic polyphony.[21] Remember that even polyphony when heard as a whole renders a quality of "oneness." The whole equals the sum of its parts as will St. Paul's doctrine on the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ with its members of militant, suffering, and triumphant.[22] "Music in the Middle Ages was intended not as an appeal to man's subjective irrationality but as an objective reminder of laws ultimately inaccessible to the human mind."[23] While the Stoics endeavored to force the inimical together, harmonizing St. Augustine sought to smooth out the apparent discord. This transcendental sensitivity towards the arts and sciences is witnessed in the works of John Scotus Erigena as well where everything begins and ends with God. Everything is in musical proportion, even the choirs of heaven. Medieval music remains horizontal in nature but it is an act of love moving upward to God. Monodic music dominates for more than a thousand years after the Greeks. There is no rhyme per se, as we understand it, in ancient poetry nor in the hymns of Ambrose nor in the early medieval poetry where assonance prevails.[24] Christianity seems to develop the notion of rhyme and polyphony. Everything must be united in this vision of world harmony. The interpretation of Scripture and hermeneutics must agree with this notion. The unifying forces of song are noticed in Fortunatus, a sixth century poet and bishop, who praises the nightingale's singing of religious hymns - De Luscinia.[25] Scholars and saints are frequently transformed into birds in medieval art - the Holy Spirit is a dove. This presents no incongruity whatsoever to the medieval mind. All parts of nature blend in

harmony. The Christian tetrachord is of harmony, grace, love, and nature as opposed to the paganistic dualism of Manicheism: strife and love.[26] Ancient Greece and the Middle Ages were thus centered around music and musical terms which expanded and attracted other terminologies from other arts and sciences. Accordare was a question of ear, heart, and music. Le "descort" - the out-of-tune quality of the lyric poets like Raimbaut de Vaqueiras - was a sign of "déséquilibre" where music and passion brought along suffering and waiting. The goal of the lyric poets and that of Dante was to bring these concepts into focus and correct tune.[27] Although differences between the two worlds become more apparent as the Church develops its role as definer, an underlying thread of world harmony stretches across the centuries from the ancients to the medieval mind.

The various Councils held during the Middle Ages set the standards by defining the seven virtues according to Scripture and the Word of the Lord. Plato's virtues were wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice achieved through proper training and discipline with the essential ingredient of intelligence. These are the natural virtues in contrast to the Christian theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity regarded as dispositions for good residing in men. In the fourteenth century, these gifts of God were combined with the Platonic virtues and are now called the seven cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, faith, hope, and charity. Prudence disposes us to form right judgments; justice to give everyone what belongs to him; fortitude to do good in spite of difficulty; temperance to control our desires and use rightly things which please our

senses.[28] Temperance, or in courtly terms mesure and its counterpart dêmesure, is a recurrent theme of courtly tradition and therefore the Lais. In fact, all these virtues shall be put to the test in the Lais. Fortitude means not only courage and strength in battle but is the notion of forging ahead with one's convictions in search of Truth while guided by wisdom - the correct knowledge of things human and divine.[29] This is an inspired knowledge which aids in decision making - whence free-will. Justice is in essence an extension of the caritas principle - to do unto others as you would have them do unto you, a fairness of the first order.[30] To judge others with no ulterior or personal motives and not to be influenced in any way is a virtue for which grace is granted. Fortitude, temperance, and wisdom brings to mind the lover's conflict and tests in the Deus Amanz while justice and wisdom remind us of the incorrect use of these virtues in Fresne through the mother's thoughtless curse-like superstition.

The supernatural graces - Faith, Hope, and Charity - should be fully probed at this time. Faith is belief and confidence in God - a profound spiritual bond between the Creator and man, an emotional state of "esprit, âme, et coeur" that assures the person by granting certitude and confidence to act rightly and justly. It is also closely linked to promises and homage in feudal oaths - "jurer sa foi" or "violer sa foi." Thus a contract of rectitude, honesty, and sincerity. This context will offer an extra interpretation to Lanval's contractual agreement with the Fairy Mistress. In the language of the Church, Faith is the "virtue by which we firmly believe all the truths which

God has revealed on the word of God Who can neither deceive nor be deceived."[31] One practices faith by defending it, taking part in official worship, reciting the Acts of Faith and the Apostle's Creed, and by living model Christian lives - keeping the Commandments of God and of the Church.[32] Hope is to have confidence, assurance, and certitude while waiting for salvation. It is the "virtue by which one firmly trusts that God, Who is all powerful and faithful to his promises, will in His mercy give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it."[33] St. Paul, who is generally credited with the spreading of Christianity through his missionary journeys through Antioch, Palestine, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Malta, Sicily, and Italy, says the following on Hope: "I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ Our Lord."[34] When this hope is based on faith and inspired by love, then a man can hope certainly to attain happiness. Charity as preached by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount states that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself for the love of God."[35] It is love of neighbor and self which transcends all things; it is felt and experienced by God as love of Him. Whether one dislikes or has an antipathy towards another - this is not sin in itself. One only need not wish his neighbor ill-fortune and not do him harm by word, deed, or thought. This is the reciprocity of love which is love of God

also by extension. One loves God directly by doing his will. This is true communion with others and God in the Jungian and in the general humanistic sense of the word. When one loves by helping his neighbor with spiritual or material wants and needs - alms, good works and the like - this is charity, an essential factor in one's salvation. The ultimate goal of the Middle Ages was salvation. Charity is the "virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves for the love of God."[36] In his usual forceful and dynamic style, St. Paul will say this of Charity, the number one virtue: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity does not envy, is not pretentious, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, is not self-seeking, thinks no evil, does not rejoice over wickedness, but rejoices with the truth; bears with all things, believes all things; hopes all things, endures all things" (Cor. 13:1-7)[37] Along with the virtues are the acts of kindness by which the Christian models his life and behavior - the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The corporal works are feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, give shelter to the homeless, visit those in prison or who are sick, and bury the dead.[38] The spiritual works include instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, admonishing sinners, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving injuries, comforting the sorrowful, and praying for the living and the dead.[39] All of these are acts of love and true Christian caritas. Our goal will be to determine when these virtues are maintained or violated in the Lais. To understand these virtues is to understand Marie and the system under which she functioned.

The counterparts of these seven positive abstractions and

realities of Christian life called virtues are the deadly capital sins: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth.[40] They are offenses against the law of God - venial or mortal depending upon the severity of the offense. Sin is really non-love of God. It is disobedience and a personal affront to God as well as to neighbor and self. The notion of community must be maintained. Sin is an unethical act. Christianity and Islam have no developed notion of a collective or national sin, as do Israel and the Old Testament, usually in the form of idolatry. Adam's sin, of course, stained the souls of all mankind. Some acts could be classified as indifferent such as gambling, but one must refrain even from these so-called indifferent acts in order to please God. Sin could mean damnation; a true sinner is a persistent offender who cannot control himself and is usually doomed.[41] We think of the Equitan story immediately. Is Equitan doomed or will he be saved? To regain God's favor, the rites of purification must be performed - confession and penance, sorrow and contrition or attrition in the Christian framework. The idea that sin is grief to the loving Father and friend, shutting Him out of one's life was popularized in the twelfth century by St. Bernard's Cistercians.[42] Grace enters the picture as God's love and help to man to avoid sin and maintain goodness. The graces of Greece, - beauty, charm, and grace - were the three daughters of Zeus called Charities but have no relationship to Christian grace. The mythological graces were originally ancient fertility goddesses - Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne who were associated with Aphrodite.[43] Only names seem familiar not fundamental concepts.

Grace therefore is a preventitive measure against sin. Those who sin, of course, are those who violate the Ten Commandments, Christ's doctrine of love, and the precepts of the Church: to keep Sunday and the holidays of obligation holy by hearing Mass and by doing no servile work; to keep the days of fast and abstinence; to confess at least once a year; to receive communion at Easter time; to contribute to the support of the pastor and Church; not to marry within certain degrees of relationship or solemnize marriage at forbidden times.[44] The last two pertaining to support of the Church, a Divine and natural precept, and to marriage within certain degrees of relationship shall play a significant role in the Fresne story. The system of the tithe - a tax of one-tenth laid on profits from a piece of land - was established in the sixth century and not abolished until the French Revolution. In Charlemagne's time, it was state law.[45] It is implied in Fresne, this system of tithe. It was a Christian duty in addition to an act of love and charity. Finally who is to be saved in the midst of all this sin and damnation? Those who keep these commandments and maintain the Christian model of uprightness and charity. Incorporated into this system of those who will be spared are those mentioned by Christ in the Beatitudes: the poor in spirit, the meek, those who mourn, the hungry and thirsty for justice, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, and those that suffer persecution for justice's sake.[46] The Beatitudes reinforce the Christian notions of virtue and are "signs" of Christ's own love toward these exemplary types and the saints and martyrs as well. Baptism of blood, the death of a martyr, brings salvation. Most of Marie's

martyrs are - needless to say - martyrs of love. We must bear these principles, dogmas, and doctrines in mind while examining the Lais in the Christian context. Not to believe in these and various mysteries - the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection - and the infallibility of the Church's statements on dogma, is not to believe in revealed Truths and not to be Christian. Marie was above all else Christian. Marie believed and may have been saved, but the salvation of several of her characters is questionable; they violate the Ten Commandments: the chevalier in the Laüstic by coveting his neighbor's wife, the seneschal of Equitan by killing his wife, the Bisclavret's wife by stealing her husband's clothes, the Queen of Lanval by bearing false witness, the numerous adulterous relationships in Yonec, Milun, Eliduc, Guigemar, and Chievrefoil, and finally the general idolatrous behavior of worshipping the love-object which is in direct violation of the First Commandment. We will examine the implications of these "sins" in our analysis.

The Church Councils were among the most influential forces in formulating definitions of long-standing while endeavoring to wipe out heresy, the paganistic customs of the Old Testament, and to codify the non-rational elements of the past. Although the mysteries of the Church, the miracles of Christ, and the mysticism of a St. Bernard maintain a non-rational element, they will nevertheless be formalized in such a way to become understandable, reasonable, and rational to some extent. The First Council of Constantinople in 381 confirmed the Church's victory over Arianism by producing a formal statement on the Trinity. Arius, a priest from Alexandria, professed that Christ was not

divine but was God's greatest creation.[47] The Second Council of Nicaea in 789 directed its attacks against iconoclasm; it declared that images ought to be venerated not worshipped. Icons were ordered to be destroyed since their worship violated the Ten Commandments.[48] This ruling makes one wonder about the lover worship and hero worship of much of the courtly material; one need only think of the "Salle aux Images" of the Tristan story. Is it in violation or is it just a spoof or both? Gnosticism added a new "twist" to philosophical interpretation and exegesis. The Gnostics - "those who know" - proposed to explain fully all Christian mysteries, and in the course of which they would explain away faith. This select group denied the One God concept of Creator of matter and spirit, which came from His good and holy hand, and that man by his free-will brought evil into the world and that Christ was truly God and truly Man. St. Irenaeus, the first great defender of the Church, corrected that error.[49] It is not irrelevant to mention these Councils and their decisions and those of the Church Fathers since the Lais are strewn with paganistic mythological beliefs, and it is important to know these facts to understand what Marie does to and with these beliefs of a different time and era. Then there were the Manichees who preached a combination of paganism, Christianity, and Gnosticism. Mani claimed to be the last of the Eastern prophets and inspired by the Holy Spirit who taught him. The doctrine states that created matter is evil and that matter and spirit are in constant warfare - dualism and vestiges of paganism. For Mani, man would be exempt from the responsibility of free-will since man, the innocent bystander, was not

personally responsible for his evil acts. Marie would never consent to this last proposition. This heresy lasted a thousand years until controlled by the Albigensian Crusade in the thirteenth century. St. Augustine systematically answered and refuted the falsehood of Manicheism, but it lingered on well past Marie's time.[50] The Second and Third Councils of Constantinople of 553 and 680 respectively condemned various beliefs concerning the nature of Christ. The Monphysites, the Montheletes, and the Nestorians were all excommunicated as the Church defined Christ as having two natures and two wills of equal strength and in perfect harmony.[51] Donatists, who refused submission to the pope's authority and denied the validity of sacraments administered by priests and bishops in mortal sin, were in like manner condemned by the Lateran Council and the Council of Arles.[52] Pelagians are banished also for having denied the doctrine of original sin and its serious consequences; they questioned too the role of divine grace in the sanctification of mankind. Augustine here demonstrated that man could do nothing without grace because of his fallen nature.[53] By free-will, man has a choice of co-operating with or rejecting God's design for salvation. Grace strengthens man to choose good and God. This is only a minute portion of the Church's role as definer.

Of particular concern to us are the rulings of the Councils of Marie's day, the twelfth century, and how they might affect our interpretations of the Lais. The situations and difficulties brought to attention by the First Lateran Council may offer the reader considerable insight to the Eliduc problematic ending as well as to the problems encountered in Fresne. In

1123 the Council's canons forbad the marriage of clerics or their cohabitation with women. This ruling, although concerning clerics, might be applied to the characters of these two lais. The Second Lateran Council in 1139 touched upon similar situations - the prohibition of clerical concubinage and marriage. Incidentally, it condemned the use of bows and arrows in the fighting of Christians since this was too savage, barbaric, and unfair an act. Ironically, the Third Lateran Council of 1179 condemned tournaments among other forms of violence at a time when the "courtly" literature and practice abound with such things.[54] Chaitivel was more than likely written around this time though we cannot say for sure. But one thing is for certain, Marie does not condemn her tourney. Richelieu forbad dueling while Corneille's Le Cid picked up and utilized the theme. Why? To show the horrors of such things? Highly unlikely. The singing of the once glorious past of Roland, three hundred or so years after the fact, while the faithful pilgrimaged on the route of St. Jacques de Compostelle seems to conjure up a parallel situation of sorts. Curiously enough, it is not until - around the time of Marie's death - that the Fourth Lateran Council submitted a statement of Faith and a definition of transubstantiation in addition to the requirements of annual confession and communion - Easter duty.[55] Transubstantiation is an important element in the Yonec story when the hero receives the sacred host and becomes one with God. During our analysis of the Lais, these various decrees will be further re-examined to appreciate Marie's working of these beliefs and established definitions of Truth.

While the Councils made their contributions to Christianity, the Church Fathers and defenders of the Faith did their best to formalize the new institution. St. Paul emphasized the importance of the crucifixion and redemption while demonstrating the role of grace. Salvation is offered by faith in Christ and the Revelations. "When we were dead by reason of our sins, God brought us to life together with Christ,"[56] says Paul. The Greeks thought salvation to be achieved by way of rectitude of will and certitude afforded by the light of reason. Although Paul affirms by implication in the Epistle to the Romans rational knowledge of God,[57] throughout his career and missionary work, spiritual fervor, not dispassionate analysis, became the primary characteristic of his vocation. Paul's views on justification by faith alone have unfortunately lent to much confusion for the inaugurators of the Reformation. It was at the first Council of the Church at Jerusalem in 50 A.D. that "Peter and the Council after hearing the brilliant and inspired pleading of St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and St. James decreed that converts to Christianity need not adopt or observe the Judaic conventions."[58] The rituals of Judaism and the Old Testament were highly steeped in paganism - seasonal rites and accompanying sacrifices for example. Paul fought to persuade the new converts of the necessity of Baptism, and it is made clear in the Epistles of Paul that the Apostles conferred the power of the priesthood by placing their hands on the heads of the selected candidates while praying over them.[59] Therefore, Paul's role in helping to define the sacraments is of immeasurable worth in the eliminating of the non-rational.

From this highly active individual who spread the Word in deed, let us now turn our attention to St. Augustine whose City of God was a mammoth blow to paganism. Our role will be to determine the extent of paganism in Marie's Lais. At first, a skeptical professor of rhetoric, Augustine finally saw the "Light" and was baptized by his mentor, St. Ambrose, from whom much of Augustine's neoplatonism derives. And it is neoplatonism which concerns us in the Lais - the overriding philosophy of the work. Augustine broke with the rationalistic Manichaeans and their materialistic dualism and passed through successive stages of Ciceronian skepticism, the metaphysical and idealistic mysticism of Plotinus, and finally came to rest in the Word of St. John.[60] In De Utilitate credendi, he leans towards the evidence and natural light of Truth espoused by the Greeks but supplies the formula for the supremacy of faith over reason.[61] Faith-over-reason is a concept dear to Marie. Much in the Lais relies on it for it is a mystical spiritual reality that transcends all. Augustine understood that in this search for Truth reason was aided by revelation, and this Christian Revelation was an indispensable auxiliary to reason.[62] How often does Marie become entangled with reason as opposed to the virtues of faith and hope and charity? Divine Providence for Augustine was no longer the work of dissimulating gods but of a good God who watched over, controlled, and determined the future of man's life. God is identified in Augustinian terms with Being, Necessity, and Contingence. While Plato views and orders the universe in terms of Ideas - immutable, eternal, and necessary - Augustine's source for all is the mind of God. Neither Plato nor

Aristotle attained the notion of a divine being - this was Judeo-Christianity's contribution. Aristotle stressed movement as a mode of being with no notion of immobilities[63] - excellent fuel for the dialogues of scholasticism. "La pensée du moyen âge s'était alimentée dès le début de la dialectique d'Aristote."[64] And we know that Marie was educated enough to learn several languages, quote and allude to philosophers, and compose solid verse. Therefore, the saints and philosophers and their writings could not have been unknown to a lady of Henry II's court especially if she were the daughter of Galeron de Meulan and the Abbess of Shatesbury. For John Scotus, "Dieu est incompréhensible à cause de son infinité; il échappe à la raison humaine."[65] It is not until St. Thomas, after Marie's death, and his brilliant reconciliatory notion as God as unmoved mover, that we resolve this problem.[66] For the medieval philosopher of the Scholastica, essence and existence are in God; neither one precedes the other. The most startling statement regarding essence and existence came from Christ Himself: "Sum qui Sum."[67] This I-am-Who-I-am is philosophically more sound than Cartesian thought since one quality does not necessitate the presence of another, and this statement could not be more charged given the nature of the speaker and his claims. What troubled the medieval philosophers, however, was to what length either faith or reason played a more crucial role. Interminable debating occurred. For a while, St. Augustine's neoplatonism reinforced the Manichaean principle that the way of return to God must be through escape from the body - whence the Confessions. In reconciling neoplatonism and Pauline Christianity, Augustine concluded that

to discover the knowledge of God and of the soul one had to look into one's Self for this knowledge.[68] One knows God through his image in the soul. For Marie all this probing and questioning was unnecessary because they were "givens" to which she adhered. They were Truths imposed from on High and from a higher order, the Church. There is no philosophical debate per se in Marie; however, it is her mind and its essence which must be comprehended by the reader. The philosophy espoused by Augustine is of the utmost significance to the medieval mind. His De Trinitate treats the nature of the soul and self-consciousness. Basically his philosophy is tripartite: first, creation in Plotinus is motiveless and purposeless; for Augustine, it is the will of God that good things be - the origin of evil is not in material existence for God's act is an act of love; second, as in Plato, knowledge and truth are not imposed upon the mind of man from without - one finds Truth through Christ's revealing Word, an inward teacher that seeks truth for ourselves; third, conduct is directed to the achievement of eudaemonia, happiness and well-being - a universal desire - in which the body is subject to the spirit and the spirit to God.[69] Man, thus, knows his place in the larger order of things as with Montaigne. Love, God's love, influences our conduct and impels us to action and to climb ever higher on the scale of Goodness. One, therefore, mounts and surmounts to attain the ideal state. Following the neoplatonic trends of Augustine, John Scotus Erigena sought to define God and presented the world with his metaphysical proof or rather an order of existence à la St. Thomas, only centuries prior: first, all things begin and end with God - that which

creates and is not created; second is that which is created and creates - the Logos which is coeternal; third is that which is created and does not create - the world of Space and Time; finally, that which is neither created nor creates - the paradox returning full circle to God.[70] The point of all this is to demonstrate to what extent the medieval mind, and therefore Marie's, was saturated with dogma and definitions of all sorts revolving around God, His essence, and His love. This was an extremely intellectually productive time - even the early tentative beginning. Its impact on the human mind and personality was enormous. Again, in "sign" fashion, what God did not impose from above the Church did. Although one might feel stiffled in this atmosphere, he nevertheless had a goal and sought to achieve that goal. The thought content alone of this age is comparable to only a relatively small number of other societies. It was a society seeking to form itself and form is what it obtained.

Another key which may unlock the complete understanding of Marie and her work is the role and influence of the Celtic Church which made large contributions to the organization of the Church. It may have had an impact on the poetess's existence especially since Celticism in general fascinated Marie de France. Although the Celtic Church's scope of influence began to wane by the ninth century in Brittany, the eleventh in Wales, the twelfth in Ireland, it nevertheless lingered on for some time and certain of its characteristics were incorporated into the main stream of the Church's existence. The Celtic Church placed much emphasis on the monastic life, asceticism, devotion, austerity, holiness of life, learning, evangelism, and mysticism.

Monks and hermits were an omnipresent reality. It remained one with the rest of Christendom even though it maintained minor differences in the ritualistic sense - but nothing heretical. Its dislike for diocesan organization was another feature that distinguished it from the pomp of Rome. The highest rank in the Celtic Church was the bishop who had power of ordination, and the abbot was accorded considerable power and responsibility in the monastic life. The only clergy mentioned by Marie are bishops and abbots. It is said that the study of the Bible and Latin within the Celtic Church was in advance of the average standard of all Europe. What attracts us to the Celtic Church even more - as it may have attracted Marie - is its "fertility of invention, grotesque, fancies, felicity and complexity, devotion and patience."[71] Their illuminated manuscripts, the Book of Kells for instance, are among the most beautiful examples of that art. The Celtic Church is also responsible for the formation of a penitential system which led to the disappearance of public penance and the development of private confession - the beginnings of the sacrament of Penance and man's reconciliation with God. One wonders how this Church's philosophy and dealings may have dominated Marie's thinking. The question must be probed further by others.

Essentially, Marie's life span reflected a time of relative peace which promoted and helped courtliness to peak in the twelfth century. The Second Crusade was preached by St. Bernard before Marie's birth and only lasted for two years, from 1147-1149. Conrad III and Louis VII le Jeune had organized and authorized it. A seige was uselessly placed on Damas, and the

crusaders had to return home to Europe in disgust and failure. Since fighting did not take place on the fatherland, this only stimulated the mind toward "romance" and writing. The Third and Fourth Crusades, 1189-1192 and 1202-1204, had some repercussions in Europe but none which would rock the steady foundations to any grave extent.[72] Europe only benefited from the cross-cultural exchange of philosophy and art, and it solidified, consolidated, and fortified itself further against a common enemy, the Moslems and the Seljuk Turks. Although the wars eventually hurt financially, politically, and socially, this was not the case in the twelfth century. The Crusades stimulated the mind and progress and interest in the bizarre and different. The Fifth Crusade took place after Marie's death with similar results on the European scene. In the royal household of Henry II there was an occasional revolt by his sons, seconded by Aliénor, but again nothing that would disturb the feudal system especially after Aliénor established her own court at Poitiers in 1170. In 1172, Henry II undertook an expedition to consolidate his conquests in Ireland.[73] This only brought additional strength to a reign already marked with progress. Nothing shook the social structure of the twelfth century, not even heresy. The Church and State were one inextricable bond of allegiance - more or less - in the ordering of the society. Heresy diminished in the twelfth century. There were only sporadic occurrences of it after 1000 A.D. - for instance, the Albigensian Crusade in the south of France in 1209. Heresy was much less frequent than in the first thousand years of Christianity. The "albigeois" or "cathari" were of that dualistic

school of thought of the Manichees - the world was evil and was created by a malevolent deity, the work of a demiurge. Ironically, the "albigeois" still thought of themselves as Christians. The Waldenes were also rejected by Pope Alexander III at the Lateran Council in 1176 because of their simplicity of rite and form which was not in keeping with Rome.[74] These heresies were expeditiously stamped out of existence. Peace or rather the maintenacne of the established order, therefore, exemplified the England and France of Marie's day.

Christian philosophy was by its very nature transcendental. Even the non-rational elements of miracles, mysteries, and mysticism had been formalized and "doctrinized" so that they lost many of their paganistic features. Mysticism and philosphy walk side by side in the history of the Church. In the twelfth century, Abelard is the exponent of rationalism or conceptualism: reason's ability of totally grasping universal truth and ultimately God.[75] The theory exposed by Abelard to define and explain Scripture, dogma, and the mysteries of Christ were to be deemed heresy by St. Bernard since the "saut de foi" - the heart to heart communication with God cannot be sensed by such rationalistic means. Bernard as mystic was opposed to Abelard and his conceptualism both philosophically and personally: "We have in France one Peter Abelard, a monk without rule, a prelate without responsibility, an abbot without discipline who argues with boys and consorts with women."[76] With considerable animosity were these words pronounced, but they could not destroy Abelard's skill and fame. Abelard wrote over three hundred thirty-two sermons, eighty-six of which are in his Song of Songs

which ironically possess a certain quality of mysticism. His more than four hundred authenticated letters have contributed to our composite picture of his personality. In On Consideration, he faithfully reminds the present Pope, Eugene III, of his duties - in no less than five books. In his Apology to William St. Thierry, Abelard condemns the ostentation and the laxity at Cluny.[77] His emphasis on Aristotle's dialectics and belief that methods of logic could be applied to truths of faith - conceptualism - was, of course, in opposition to Bernard's mysticism. According to Abelard's way of thinking, universals are considered as entities existent only in thought but with a basis in particulars.[78] His ideas anticipate those of St. Thomas. With nominalism, conceptualism denied that universals exist independently of the mind, but it held that universals have an existence in the mind as concept. Universals are patterns in God's mind according to which he creates. This philosophy touches upon and relates to moderate realism which is the classical medieval solution to the problem and arguments between the schools of nominalism and realism. Realism in medieval philosophy was closely associated with Plato - universals exist independently of the mind and particular things. This was rejected on a whole by medieval philosophers for the teachings of moderate realism: that universals exist only in the mind of God and from them He creates.[79] Marie's leanings seem to favor and fall between realism and moderate realism since her symbols will often exist of themselves but occasionally will be based in some particular thing. Abelard went as far as to suppose that "chez les philosophes païens une certaine connais-

sance des mystères existait: Que Platon ait connu le mystère de la Trinité et pressenti le mystère de la Rédemption."[80] This attempt at reconciliation between the ancients and the new medievalists was too much for St. Bernard to bear especially since it was lacking in Christian mystical love, disregarded faith and grace, and placed an excessive value on the powers of reason. For Bernard, it was heresy. Abelard intellectualized faith to extremes. What we do see in Marie's work is a combination of intellectualizing neoplatonism and fantasizing mysticism both of which transcend. Marie must borrow from both; she has no choice. The milieu is set. There were thus three distinct lines of medieval philosophy which converged upon the battle of faith and reason and to what extent one or the other played a role in the life of a Christian: the Augustinians, tinged with Platonism, were the realists - universalia ante rem, all in the mind of God: Anselm, Victorines, and Bonaventure; the moderate realists believed that reality is not disjointed - universalia in re - Abelard, Lombard, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas;[81] for the nominalists, categories are mere names, nomina - the numina aspects are absent - from this point of view the Church and family become fortuitous, temporary, voluntary associations and the state and marriage are formed by contract and the Church by covenant - Roscellin, and William of Ockham.[82] A blending of these philosophies takes place in the Lais; Marie does not debate the questions but accepts the reality of what is handed down to her - the "givens," the word of God and of the Church.

St. Bernard tries to combine faith, reason, and intelligence:

"Il n'y a pas de joie plus profonde pour l'âme que celle de comprendre ce que l'on croit."[83] He was born in 1090 and was unquestionably the religious leader of the twelfth century, considered the most powerful influence in France and Western Europe politically, socially, and religiously - even more influential than the Pope. The Cistercian movement's impact was generally enormous during this time. Bernard had revived the almost dying embers of the order established by St. Robert, abbot of Molesme, at Clairvaux. For this reason, he is known as the movement's second founder. Before his death, three hundred and thirty-eight Cistercian monasteries were Christian strongholds. Ironically, he could have ascended to a higher rank but decided to remain an abbot maintaining thus the simplicity of early Christianity. He persuaded Lombard to accept Emperor Lothair II, helped Innocent to be elected pope, preached the second Crusade in 1145, excommunicated Guillaume d'Aquitaine and proceeded to celebrate the miracle of the mass on that same day - a model saint and warrior, the medieval ideals.[84] Incidentally, Lombard's Sentences where a sacrament is explained as both a symbol and a means of grace was adopted as the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Trent during the Renaissance.[85] Bernard's rare personality split between militarism and monasticism made men stand in awe. Although a literary genius of sorts, his studies never went beyond the medieval trivium, a Bachelor of Arts level. Conflicts of wordly pleasures and spiritual insight seem to plague him even after his "conversion" at the age of seventeen when his mother dies. He frightened many families, especially the

wives - so the legend says - who wanted to keep their husbands and children home with them and at their sides.[86] Bernard's monasteries included married men who just left forswearing wife and child at the calling, the vocation and "sign" from God. The fact that married men were admitted to the Cistercian order may provide us with a clue and answer to the Eliduc problem of how its characters - the females both married at different times to the hero - could have possibly entered the monastic life. When Bernard "converted," he took thirty relatives and friends along with him to Cîteaux. His powers of persuasion could not be equaled - his father even came to join them. His self-imposed penance induced ill-health which plagued him throughout his life; he would go to extremes to demonstrate his love for God and piety - that devout fulfillment of religious obligation out of deference and reverance to God. At times his directing of monks to find their "calling" and his own wanting of the solitary life of contemplation posed conflicts of a tormenting nature. He believed and stated in response to Hugh St. Victor that freedom of opinion in all matters not determined by faith could, should, and must be exercised by all Christians - a liberty of spirit where the individual could still maintain his identity while guided by a higher order. He would rather, however, "penetrate hearts than explain words."[87] His sermons, treatises, Canticle of Canticles, Steps of Humility, Grace and Free-Will became instruments for defining dogma. In 1128 at the Council of Troyes, he convincingly recruited the faithful into the military orders through his eulogy composed in praise of the Knights Templars, the fierce warriors of the Crusades.

Bernard, in fact, drew up the organization's rules. At the Council of Estampes, his decisive role in the dispute over who was the legitimate successor of Honorius II won Innocent II the papacy in his struggle against the candidate of Jewish origin, Anacletus II.[88] Of course, a conflict of personalities and favoritism were factors. Bernard's true "gift" was his skill of oratorical persuasion marked with singleness of purpose and ambiguity of method. He directed the policy and fortunes of the Church more than the pope. He circumvented revolution at Milan and Lorraine, decided agenda for Councils, deposed princes, replaced bishops, and brought the antipope, Gregory Victor IV to his knees in penitence at Rome.[89] He died in 1153, around the time of Marie's birth, and was canonized in 1174, around the time of the composition of the Lais. Even though the date of his death coincides with Marie's approximate birth, his memory dominated the twelfth century through the Cistercian order.

What concerns us most, however, is Bernard's brand of mysticism in relationship to the idealistic patterns of symbolism anchored firmly in the Lais. His devotio moderna of both Mary and the Infant Jesus and its mystical progression towards idealism has earned him the title of Marian doctor as well as originator of Christocentrism. Mysticism, in general, is a religious and philosophical doctrine which claims that perfection consists in a type of contemplation that leads directly to ecstasy and unites man mysteriously to God. In particular, Bernard's interpretation of mysticism becomes the most moving expression of medieval piety especially in his Iesu dulcis memoria.[90] Its musicality, movement, exquisite tenderness, and authenticity

animated by Bernard's spirit is not only mystical but also impregnated with many of the classical formulas of symbolic development witnessed in the Lais - from intuitive, non-rational, to rational and idealistic expansion of the infinite. A similar pattern of development will be employed by Bernard if the Virgin happens to be the central poetic figure. In the introduction of the Iesu dulcis memoria, the reader is immediately aware of the mystical presence of God in man's soul where supreme joy and love reign.[91] Love of God is matched by love of man. The soul next begins a long series of callings and invocations of Jesus, growing more and more pressing. Jesus is finally conquered by tears and fervor, and He descends into the soul. But then the Lord leaves; the soul pants, waits, and hopes for His return. The prolongation of the courtly love syndrome is apparent. It is not only the attainment of the desired love-object which is emphasized but the longing involved in the religious drama. Christ's love is a love that is never extinguished.[92] Whether the courtly had its origin in the religious or the profane is unimportant and irrelevant at this time. Noticeably, a fusion - affinity in thought, time, and poetic expression - is taking place. The two worlds, Christian and courtly, coexist. The soul in the Iesu dulcis memoria next follows the Savior on this transcendental road toward perfection resembling the steps of idealistic symbolism. The soul will go no matter where - to another world, a Celtic Otherworld perhaps. This mysticism resembles not only the supernatural occurrences of the voyages to the Otherworld but also the rules and regulations of the so-called courtly love concept. There is

transcendence in some courtly poets like Jaufré Rudel and Bernard de Ventadour, as well as in the Christian concept of love, of course. Continuing with the Iesu dulcis memoria, a joyous hymn suddenly arises in Bernard's poem, and the loving soul invites others, the rejoicing ones to celebrate in heaven. Marie de France celebrates love and lovers with an equal force and with the élan of the troubadours. All is raised to a higher level - to a foreseeable end-point. Christian piety and reverence is opposed to pagan mythological diffusion of thought. Finally, a total mystical union occurs, and the glory of the Beatific Vision is upon us. Love is no longer fugitive and transitory as it was before death. With death, Love is everlasting. Thus ends Bernard's poem of the melancholic voyaging of the soul to life everlasting and fulfillment[93] - Marie's search, the Classical and Celtic search, the Christian and Courtly search for a higher order of things.

In the Sermon on the Canticle of Canticles and in the De diligendo Deo where perfect joy and love of God are synonymous, Bernard offers not a promise of well-being but well-being itself. Etienne Gilson presents a list of qualities in these works by Bernard which can eventually be allied to Marie's love notions. First, love and happiness are equated as in the courtly tradition. Secondly, a mystical union takes place that cannot be described except by he who has experienced it and who knows of what it consists. Third, this love must be sought with ardor - burning desire. As in Chrétien's Yvain and the Roman de la Rose of Guillaume de Lorris where the lover's eyes are pierced by Cupid's arrow, so are the eyes of the soul overcome -

love penetrates the senses first. Fourth, the presence of God is fully enjoyed - which is tantamount to Happiness; absence brings about sadness, longing, pining, and thirst for renewal - the prolongation of the waiting period. Fifth, full satisfaction is transitory on earth; it does not last with the same fullness of expression. Similarly, Marie's lovers find themselves in a transitory love situation given the vicissitudes of each lai; however, full satisfaction and happiness are achieved through the final idealized state of the endings of the Lais with only two exceptions, Equitan and the Bisclavret in which either the corruption of love or other interests prevail. Sixth, a soul once seized by the love of God is never abandoned - the idea of grace enters the picture which could easily accomodate itself to the framework of lyric poetry as it will for the Fresne story. Seventh, physical contact is brought into play by "le baiser du Christ,"[94] a kind of spiritual sensuality. Eighth, Christians love Jesus because He proved His love for them through His passion - patio, enduring, suffering, patience, and visitation for and upon mankind. This is a "sign" and an act of God. The Resurrection, the focal point of Easter, is living proof to Christians of God's love. The tests, trials, and tribulations of the Savior are reflected in the courtly feats of strength for both love and country. Ninth, the soul is finally liberated from the senses - the elevation of carnal to a superior love; transcendence is an experience - "Expertus potest credere."[95] Tenth, dignity and religious morality mean elevation and transcendence. The soul has abandoned its sensual beginnings in this love-attaining process of Bernard's mysti-

cism, and it progresses in the path of knowledge of Self and God and the subsequent perfection of Self devoid of "l'amour du siècle et la vanité."[96] These elements of Bernard's system are incorporated into that of Marie, but never are the sensual aspects completely abandoned or eliminated although they are in some circumstances and in others are fairly deemphasized in the Lais.

How strikingly familiar these steps are to those of idealistic symbolism from the sensuality of "druérie" and the non-rational mythological pagan elements to the rational nomina-numina of the ancient philosophers; from the highly rationalized elements of Christianity to complete blossoming in the mystical power of love and finally Love itself in Christian neoplatonic terms. One progresses toward the transcendental experience. Bernard's progression towards the transcendental experience can also be reduced to four steps. Man begins with simple, egocentric, carnal love; he wants his body to be well fed and comfortable. This self-love is wholly natural and good so long as it does not overflow the channels of necessity into the fields of sensuality. Man's limitations force him to look beyond human society to a greater power, thus he moves to the second stage of love - love of God rooted in man's need and dependence upon divine will. The third stage occurs when man has gone beyond loving God because of man's dependence on Him and has come to love God because of what God is. The fourth stage is rarely achieved in this life in the Bernardian scheme of things. When the soul is drunk with divine love and loses all consciousness of Self, when it is almost absorbed into God, it becomes one

spirit with him - transcendence and mystical experimentalism where bliss and freedom from pain, death, ignorance, and concupiscence preside.[97] This does not contradict Jung except for the loss of Self consciousness in a supreme being. But even Jung, although not stated in his philosophy of the Self, was extremely religious and did not doubt the existence of God as Freud did - one reason for Jung's breaking away from the master. The De diligendo Deo reflects Bernard's mystical experience and is truly a song to God, an ode to love, and a lai to the Divine à la troubadours: "O amor sanctus et castus; o dulcis et suavis affectio . . . eo suavior et dulcior quo totum divinum est quod sentitur; sec affici deificari est."[98] Three elements dominate the poem: charity, light, and domination of the flesh. Ultimately these will be the governing principles maintained in the Lais with more inner strife present, however, in problems of the flesh. If one is to continue to love God, grace is a necessity bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit. For Bernard, "vouloir le bien" is the phrase that epitomized his beliefs.[99] All action is voluntary, good or bad, but this grace aids us lest we become "slaves to evil."[100] Grace is that which supports love and maintains it. Without grace, one is transported back to the state of original sin and impotence of the will. Grace and free-will are Bernard's overriding concerns in the mystical attainment of God. The lovers of the Lais are as impotent without the power of love and its related symbols from which this force derives and in which this force resides. Self-confidence and self-knowledge lead to the knowledge of God - which is hinted at in the Prologue of the Lais. Interior beauty of the soul is

reflected by the exterior Beauty of the Creator. Bernard's accent is, of course, on virginity, chastity, and abstinence of the flesh.[101] Although this principle is at times dismissed by Marie - only to demonstrate the effects of its opposite, sin - ninety percent of the time the end-result is adherence to this doctrine. For true sin is the persistence of evil ways, and Marie's characters can hardly be classified as such save Equitan who will boil himself alive to hide his shame. To hide one's shame and "vileinie" might be a saving grace. He had a conscience and this scene exhibits an awareness of wrong-doing. But probably it was too late and ineffective considering the progression into sin. Thus, knowledge of God was not solely a display of intellectual prowess and the faculty of reason as for the Abelards and Thomases, but it was a mystical experience - reminiscent of St. Augustine and expressed in full by St. Bernard. The result is the dissolution of the soul in God, liquefaction and Beatific Vision.

Bernard replaced claritas with caritas[102] - the keyword of Christianity and the central message of the "Sermon on the Mount." Contemplation rules supreme in the Bernardian system where salvation is Christ. Intensity and vitality accentuate Bernard's life and works. His proofs of charity through the monastic life highlight his exemplary brand of Christianity. He was said to be "plus faune que flore."[103] Bernard swore to having experienced a state of divine mysticism and a visitation from on high - a release from the Self through considerable endurance, suffering, and patience: "Je l'avoue: le Verbe est venu en moi et bien des fois. Souvent il est entré en moi, et

parfois je ne me suis pas aperçu de son arrivée, mais j'ai aperçu qu'il était là."[104] "L'obéissance, l'esprit de silence, prières intimes, miséricorde, humilité, compassion"[105] were but a few of the virtues practiced by the saint. The Savior Jesus was for him the "homme idéal" through the triumph of His Resurrection and Ascension[106] - the upward movement of the transcendental hero. Salvation was also acknowledged through the Virgin. Bernard praised her, she who honors her Son. Mary is on the second level in this hierarchy, an intermediary figure of this personal union with God.[107] The woman's goal is to unite man to some higher goal or standard. This is the woman's usual place in the Lais as well - the unifying force to the higher love concept. The impact of the De diligendo Deo on the Middle Ages is immeasurable - mystical ecstasy towards God in those days was a reality. The Idea was Reality. Bernard's doctrine of Christian love and its Object have all the earmarks of neoplatonism. Like Augustine, Bernard sets himself as the object of his own desire but then slowly raises this condition by progressive steps towards God - the Object Non-Object. "The common experience of egoism and sensuality, in short, from human desire in all its crudity"[108] is Bernard's starting point to the transcendental. No wonder Dante chooses Bernard as one of his guides on this non-egoistic love voyage to the Creator. Two concepts of love predominated in the minds of medieval thinkers - the physical conception of the Greco-Thomist order and the Augustine-Bernardian ecstatic one. The physical was strictly a seeking of one's own proper good. The physical conception plays an integral part in the De diligendo Deo while the ecstatic

elements prevail in the Canticle of Canticles as well as in Bernard's Epistola de Caritate.[109] The ecstatic is illustrated by a cutting of cords connecting our love to that of God's with few egoistic inclinations. The ecstatic is a later development of Bernard's thoughts. The Subject goes out of Self and partakes in the glory of God. We notice also the evolution of love from amor carnalis to the desire of heavenly things where "caritas illa visio"[110] - God is Love. Man is not the image of God; there is but one Image, the Word. Ecstasy is annihilation and fulfillment - a paradoxical situation. Cistercian mysticism rests wholly upon a conscious effort to perfect the natural likeness of the soul to God by means of conformity, never before so fully realized, between the human will and the divine will. To love God is in a way to make God love Himself, as He loves Himself in Himself.[111] The Love that God the Creator expresses to His Son the Savior is the Holy Spirit - the persons of the Trinity coexist from all Time. A total fusion of spirits between God and man comparable to the spiritual state attained in Chievrefoil and Deus Amanz occurs and is a natural happening for the medieval mind. Thus can we appreciate the role of Christianity and its effect on the Lais through these saints and doctors of the Church. For this, Christianity, is the all-engulfing context of Marie's life and existence - her very essence and the inescapable reality called the Middle Ages, the world of definitions due to missionaries, monasteries, councils, and the Church in an inexhaustable tour de force to spread and maintain the Faith.

The Prologue reexamined in the Christian Context

The Prologue has been singled out by several critics for possessing a certain number of Christian philosophical elements while the twelve lais have been virtually neglected in regard to this matter. A total of approximately fifteen articles just vaguely associate the Lais to their Christian sources and without a command of religious material. These elements must be reexamined in detail by future critics for one would hardly suspect that Marie de France was Christian by reading literary criticism. Leo Spitzer, however, confirms Marie's role as philologus, theologus, and poeta in the Christian sense as stated in the Prologue[112] - three roles which are inseparable entities; however, Spitzer admits her leanings toward the paganistic. The words "lettre," "sen," and "surplus" seem to verify this fact to Spitzer:

> Costume fu as anciens,
> Ceo testimoine Preciens,
> Es livres ke jadis feseient,
> Assez oscurement diseient
> Pur ceus ki a venir esteient
> E ki aprendre les deveient,
> K'i peüssent gloser la lettre
> E de lur sen le surplus mettre. (vers 9-16)

These three little words have led to considerable debate over intent and meaning. Fitz Brewster continues the analogy first made by Spitzer that the Prologue is an exegetic exercise imitating the Provençal "razo" - the accompanying "biography" - to some extent but of greater importance that it alludes to Christ's "Parable of the Talents."[113] Marie states from the outset of the Prologue that knowledge and art are gifts from

God and that man must demonstrate his "talent," returning to God what He has sent:

> Ki Deus ad dunê escïence
> E de parler bone eloquence
> N'en deit taïsir ne celer.
> Ainz se deit voluntiers mustrer.
> Quant uns granz biens est mult oïz,
> Dunc a primes est il fluriz,
> E quant loëz est de plusurs,
> Dunc ad espandues ses flurs. (vers 1-8)

The parable deals with a master's having given varying amounts of money to three different servants: one had five talents, another two, and the last only one. While the first two made interest and profit on the talents received, the last servant buried his, making no profit and thus having made no use of what was his. The others were able to return to the Lord what he had graciously bestowed upon them. The last one, slothful and lazy, did not profit at all from the gift received from God. The moral is that Marie made intelligent use of her artistic talent, a gift from God, and in appreciation and love she will return the favor in the production of her Lais. The parable is a semiotico-monetary metaphor. Marie, however, chooses to carry out her blossoming flower imagery. Nevertheless, the message of the first eight lines is clearly a restatement of the Lord's parable - parable (παραβολή) etymologically shares the same root as the word, symbol. Indeed, many of the Lais read in parable form. The introduction to Guigemar seems to reaffirm the same philosophical proposition of the parable:

> Ki de bone mateire traite,
> Mult li peise si bien n'est faite.
> Oëz, seignurs, ke dit Marie,

Ki en sun tens pas ne s'oblie.
Celui deivent la gent loër
Ki en bien fait de sei parler. (vers 1-6)

Here, it is not only a Christian duty but a social responsibility and a duty to Self to expose one's talent and to do it well. This duty is like a weight upon one's shoulders - a dutiful talent which may be envied especially by those who do not return God's gifts to Him:

Mais quant il ad en un païs
Hummé u femme de grant pris,
Cil ki de sun bien unt envie
Sovent en dïent vileinie . . .
Le me volent a mal turner:
Ceo est lur dreit de mesparler! (vers 7-10; 17-18)

In the true Christian spirit of humility, Marie grants these "villainous" ones the right of slander and of calumny.

While some critics feel that the "sen" that the "lettre" gives is "l'intelligence profonde de la pensée de l'auteur,"[114] there are others who admit the ambiguity of Marie's intentions especially as concerns the remark and commentary on Priscian. Mortimer Donovan states that the grammarian was referring only to grammarians not ancient philosophical writers. According to him, recent grammarians are more knowledgeable and less obscure than the ancient ones since they may draw on, correct, and expand the works of the ancients. Many facts or elements hidden to past generations have with the passage of time become clear.[115] Is Marie clarifying obscurities, correcting and reworking her sources, or is she creating more obscurities? According to the critic the ancients did not write obscurely <u>on purpose</u>. So to what is Marie referring? Tony Hunt suggests:

that Marie is actually referring to a quarrel between ancients and moderns within the twelfth century itself - a sort of medieval debate between humanistic moderns and their classical oriented contemporaries.[116] The moderns' humanistic tendencies were laid forth by the Priscian tag - a kind of twelfth century cultural progress. It is true that the twelfth century is an age of cultural progress, but the Priscian label of good standing is dubious. Rarely if ever mentioned by critics is this important fact: Priscian lived and composed his Institutiones grammaticae in the sixth century; however, his work did influence Rabanus Maurus, Alcuin's student. Curiously enough, his works are mostly concerned with biblical exegesis. Perhaps Marie was alluding to this theologian and philosopher and "future" scholar who did interpret and expound upon the works of his predecessor, Priscian, but in Christian terms this time. May I offer my reading of lines twelve to sixteen, the most crucial of the entire passage:

> Assez oscurement diseient
> Pur ceus ki a venir esteient
> E ki aprendre les deveient,
> K'i peüssent gloser la lettre
> E de lur sen le surplus mettre. (vers 12-16)

For those who were to come and who were or had to be taught (by the ancients) so that they too (the moderns) could interpret or expand upon the word - "gloser la lettre" and from its meaning place an extra dimension or meaning - "le surplus." Marie understood the symbolic nature of what she was doing and knew that what she was about to say meant one thing for those of her time - as the same situation held true in the past - but Marie had the common sense to realize that, with the passing of time

and changes in history, future generations, as those future generations of the past, might see not only what she saw but would add a new perspective to her art and meaning given the new context of time in which they found themselves - insight, perception, and a good prediction. The unshakable reality is this for Marie: all of us subject to God's laws, the Christians, must return in just proportion what we have received through God's love. For a particular moment in history, the meaning of this may be altered but for Marie if it were not Christianity, it had no meaning.

The Symbol as Love in the Christian Context

In her usual Christian neoplatonic style, Marie fixes and freezes for Time and Eternity the symbol and title of her lai, Laüstic, while the reader remains transfixed himself by the absolute quality of the image. After one listening or reading, the reader will crystallize in his own mind the meaning and meanings of the symbol. It is a common practice in the Lais to employ such a technique. The symbol, the Laüstic or the Chievrefoil, is set apart into a world all unto itself. In fact, all of Marie's titles have that effect from nomina to numina and back again to nomina - that is, from the rudimentary title, "la lettre," - the initial stage - to the soul and heart of the meaning or meanings, "le sen," and back to the title with its new perspective through idealistic symbolic interpretations, "le surplus." Marie repeats the title three times in three different languages at the very start - "laüstic, russignol, et nihtegale" - to permanently fix the image in our minds.

Fortunatus, the last of the Roman Gallic poets and bishop of Poitiers during the sixth century, also "sang" in praise of the nightingale: "Hinc philomela suis adtempterat organa cannis/Fitque repercusso dulcior aura melo."[117] Like the saints of heaven singing the harmonious religious hymns in praise of God, so too does the nightingale. Elements of nature - in a pre-Baudelairian Correspondances fashion - are drawn together: birds, saints, and the hymns become one. Remember also that "philomela" means "love of song" and that the male of the species attracts the female during breeding season with its haunting melodious chant. The nightingale is thus a symbol of purity and an expression of love for God in Fortunatus' De Luscinia. But for Marie for whom the mating season is of considerable import, how shall the symbol be transformed?

The chevalier-lover covets his neighbor's wife - he longs exceedingly to possess her:

> La femme sun veisin ama;
> Tant la requist, tant la preia. (vers 23-24)

This could be viewed as a sin in itself, but it never attains or obtains the impact of deeply rooted sin since Marie, through the five progressive steps towards idealism outlined earlier, turns her back on this starkly physical beginning and crescendos the Laüstic symbol along paths of the Absolute, the Love concept: from the lady's imaginative inventiveness of the existence of a bird and from the "gelos's" interpretation of vivid realism to the interpretation of the lovers each in his own idealizing way and finally to the reworking of the symbol in

Marie's hands through the Bretons. The progression follows a pattern similar to Bernard's attainment of Love and God in his De diligendo Deo - the gradual movement away from the purely physical and towards the spiritual. Christian virtues are very often pitted one against the other in the Lais: the always uncharitable "gelos" destroys while the charitable lovers build their temple of Love in the guise of a Laüstic - again in keeping with St. Bernard's doctrine. Of course, God is replaced by Love, but the general framework towards Bernard's concept of transcendental mysticism is maintained. For the Middle Ages, God is Love as he is Beauty and all other abstracts of positive value. The unity of thought and content is preserved during this time: it is not a question of substitutions of one abstract for another but of coexistent equivalents emanating from God. As opposed to her husband, the wife is "sage," full of wisdom; however, considering the outcome of the lai, the wife's ruse, and the ironic treatment of the Christian virtue of wisdom, the meaning of "sage" is ambivalent, somewhat "perverted" or "turned around" by the poetess - a truly courtly trait. Love weighs upon the lady as if imposed from above - the outside force or "rumeur":

> E tant par ot en lui grant bien
> Qu'ele l'ama sur tute rien,
> Tant pur le bien qu'ele en oï
> Tant pur ceo qu'iert pres de li. (vers 25-28)

The power of the Word makes one love - for Christianity as well as in the courtly context just as the "lauzengiers" - the bearers of ill-rumor and slander - may have the opposite effect.

The lady loves the chevalier because of his noble qualities as well as from what she hears of him. Christian modesty seems to present itself as the guiding principle to the lovers and possibly the sense of shame:

> Sagement e bien s'entreamerent
> Mut se covrirent e garderent
> Qu'il ne feussent aparceü
> Ne desturbé ne mes creü. (vers 29-32.

Usually when one virtue is experienced its diametrical opposite will be demonstrated by Marie for that courtly touch.[118] For once again the virtues are "perverted" to a point - all of which shall be examined in the following chapter.

How will the lovers overcome the obstacle of the "haut mur" which separates them? The "laüstic" ruse provides an escapist answer. But how will the symbol be affected in the Christian context? Although a strong case could be presented for this attempt at emphasizing the physical and sensual, reinforced by the "gelos's" behavior, and through the courtly aspects of parody, purity is nevertheless maintained throughout the lai. If not total innocence, the lai does depart from the wife's lying and the "gelos's" jealous reaction and killing tantrum to the elevation of the symbol by the lovers, the Bretons, and Marie à la St. Bernard who also departs from the egoistic beginnings to a higher order. The lady is too guarded anyway to persist in her lustful ways - courtly comic relief. The lovers were only able to speak to each other. This could hardly be termed a physical relationship or sin of any kind save one of the mind. Our symbol, the "laüstic," at first a lie or non-truth and not

serious in itself, leads to a punishment pattern of existence exemplified by the "gelos" which far outweighs the gravity of the lady's sin of lying. The husband sets up traps to capture the bird, thus transforming this symbol into a sign. A repentence pattern follows: a melancholy grieving and penance over the loss of the "dead" symbol - the death of love:

> Quant la dame l'ad entendu,
> Dolente e cureçuse fu . . .
> Durement plure e si maudit
> Ceus ki le laüstic traïrent,
> Les engins e les laçuns firent,
> Kar mut li unt toleit grant hait. (vers 111-112; 122-125)

Death, however, means transcendence for medieval man. The murdering of the symbol only emphasizes the need for its resurrection by the lovers who wrap it up in precious linens and place it in a jeweled little coffin. Is not Christ wrapped in fine cloths and anointed with precious oils before his resurrection? Thus from a scene of penance we move to a reconciliation or understanding between the lovers that they maintain a pure saintly state - the martyr resurrected motif. The lovers are destined never to experience physical contact; they must communicate in a spiritual way through the immortalizing of the symbol - the desired love-object. The pattern is quite visible: sin, death and punishment, penance, and a hope for renewal of love devoid of the flesh. The lovers have no choice since the "gelos" understood the ruse; his sarcastic words make this evident:

> Quant li sire ot que ele dist,
> D'ire e de maltalent en rist . . .
> "J'ai le laüstic enginnié
> Pur quei vus avez tant veillié.
> Des or poëz gisir en peis:
> Il ne vus esveillerat meis." (vers 91-92; 107-110)

How dare she take him for a fool. The excessive cruelty of the "gelos" during the act of sexual implication and abuse - the casting of the bloodied bird upon the wife's breast - is obviously in direct opposition to Christian caritas.[119] The chevalier, on the contrary, will never behave like a "vileins ne lenz." Thus, the resurrected martyr of faith in love, the "laüstic," like the lovers who become martyrs in their own right becomes an image - an Idea - fixed in our memory by repetition of the word "laüstic" at the conclusion of the lai and as idealized by both Bretons and Marie.

Chievrefoil also sets itself apart in the neoplatonic world of the Idea as symbol and title. According to Marie it is a faithful version - true to faith - of what she heard from the Bretons:

> Que la verité vus en cunt
> Pur quei fu fez, coment et dunt. (vers 3-4)

What Marie has learned from oral tradition is a revelation of sorts in which she firmly believes. Truth is the medieval quest. The setting Marie offers is Christian: it is Marc's court at Tintagel but during the feast of the "Pentecuste." Pentecost is the Church's birthday as well as the feast of the Holy Spirit who descended upon the apostles bestowing upon them the power of "tongues of fire and the sound of the rush of wind" - a "sign" from the divine. The bark of the hazel tree handed down from Tristan is of "sign" nature for Iseult understands and obeys its mystical message by stopping the troop of soldiers and meeting her lover. The "sign" has the power of

ascension since it originates from God. Tristan is god-like to Iseult. Tristan's exile from Marc's court would be banishment from Eden, but his irascible uncle reigns with questionable order and authority both over his kingdom and his nephew. In any event, the "sign" is understood. St. Bernard's progression towards love of God greatly resembles Marie's ascent of the symbol from the strict physical to a more pure state and finally to the ideal eternalized state of adoration of love and lovers - from the crude carving of the hazel, to the mysterious message and its comprehension only by the Queen, to the supernatural way in which the honeysuckle and the hazel intertwine transcending even further through Tristan's lai and Marie's composition. The progression reeks of neoplatonism as much as Iseult's "knowledge" of the seemingly indecipherable has that aura of mysticism - ecstasy and elevation combined. And as stated earlier, both neoplatonism and mysticism are interrelated parts of Christianity. St. Bernard's mysticism is a neoplatonic movement as well. Tristan starts with the physical shaping of the hazel - a utilitarian object and means - which slowly moves upward towards the idealized image of perfection. As Jesus departs from the soul of those visited in Bernard's Iesu dulcis memoria, so too does the love of Tristan and Iseult produce hardship and woe during moments or times of absence:

> Kar cil ki cime lealment
> Mut est dolents e trespensez
> Quant li nen ad ses volentez. (vers 22-24)

Bernard's system is not mutually exclusive of courtly doctrine either. Love purifies but is accompanied with pain, passion,

and a visitation from above for Tristan experiences the mental anguish and torment of the saints whose souls have been visited by Jesus and who must now leave:

> Mes puis se mist en abandun
> De mort e de destructiun (vers 19-20)

Tristan exposes himself to thoughts which kill and destroy - a pessimism and loss of the hope in renewal of love which typifies the hero's personality, for Marie at least. Christ, like the lover, visits, dies, and saves. Thus, the pattern of Resurrection, Ascension, and Assumption dominates this neoplatonic elevational pattern. Even after the lovers do meet; it is not all lust-seeking and licentiousness since a peaceful serene atmosphere pervades. After the love-making, Tristan speaks at his leisure, Iseult of her happiness:

> Entre eus meinent joie mut grant.
> A li parlat tut a leisir
> E ele li dit sun pleisir. (vers 94-96)

Although the egoistic yearnings of physical love exist, they are abated to allow the predominating transcendental atmosphere to reign.

Marie starts this lai with death:

> De Tristan e de la reine
> De lur amur ki tant fu fine
> Dunt il eurent meinte dolur
> Puis en mururent en un jur. (vers 7-10)

Again, death in the Christian framework is not final; it adds a new dimension of the immortality of the soul. Tristan's conflicts with Marc reflect the oedipal rivalry and struggle over

the young mother surrogate - although Iseult is more than a mother to Tristan - and it also represents defiance of the authority figure and disobedience to the paternal image. Tristan is the son of Marc's sister and has been entrusted to the king. Most of the Old Testament sins are sins of disobedience to God - Adam and Eve, Lot's wife among others. For Freud, lovers are anti-social by nature; they set themselves apart from society as much as they are set apart by the society, their peers and contemporaries. It could not be truer for the famed couple. Tristan sins by lusting for his uncle's wife and thus must he do penance by putting himself to the test in living the harsh life of the forest:

> Tristram est dolenz e pensis . . .
> En la forest tuz suls se mist:
> Ne voleit pas qu'hum le veïst. (vers 25; 29-30)

He has isolated himself from society and the world of the flesh like a hermit and recluse. This deprivation purifies and contributes to the neoplatonic trend of the lai. What enhances the nature of this love are acts of caritas and humilitas. Tristan spends the night with poor peasants - a sign of humility since he cares not where and with whom he passes the night. The peasants, in return, take him in - perhaps feed him. These are acts of love and works of mercy:

> En la vespree s'en eisseit
> Quant tens de herbergier esteit.
> Od païsanz, od povre gent,
> Pernait la nuit herbergement. (vers 31-34)

The Queen too would like to have Tristan make peace with Marc;

she proposes reconciliation, implicitly hoping to appeal to Marc's sense of Christian charity, to make amends, and to deter the notion of revenge:

> Puis li mustra cumfaitement
> Del rei avrat acordement. (vers 97-98)

The lai ends with the recapitulation of the theme of "vérité" with which Marie constantly preoccupies herself as did the entire Middle Ages - for it is the quest of truth first and foremost in their minds. From God's love, we receive Truth; from Tristan's love, Iseult finds truth. Tristan's transcendental pattern goes from sin, penance, and elevation to Love.[120]

Predictions are plentiful in the Old and New Testaments - Noah is warned of the approaching deluge; Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of the child and God, and Christ foresees his own death and asks his father to "take away this cup." Yonec's birth is as much a supernatural mystery as the Incarnation.[121] Muldumarec, our Hawkman, becomes man and is fully realized as such through his complete physical manifestation in his illegitimate son, Yonec - the new courtly gentleman without an ounce of supernatural qualities. All predictions come to pass as stated in Yonec: Muldumarec announces to the lady the birth of a son to be named Yonec; he also foretells the betrayal of their secret love affair and his eventual death. Truth and Revelation walk hand in hand. St. Joseph has no relations with Mary insofar as Christ's conception is concerned, and neither does the lady's old rich husband fulfill his desires through his young wife. Ironically, the old man is interested only in having sons:

Femme prist pur enfanz aveir,
Ki aprés lui fuissent si heir. (vers 19-20)

However, what Marie accepts as Christian truth is quite different from what she feels is pure fancy - Celtic myth. She is not blasphemous at all when it concerns Christianity. She may mock the myths but must uphold the delicate balance between faith and her courtly humor. The elevation of the symbol has already been noted - from Celtic birdman to a Christian courtly son. To add to the credibility of the Hawkman's story and to elevate the symbol of the Birdman to an even higher plateau, the mythological creature receives the Corpus Domini and drinks of the wine and blood of Christ; he evidently believes in the mystery of the transubstantiation as much as the lady and Marie.[122] In receiving the sacrament of Communion, the Birdman becomes one with God in essence:

Corpus Domini aportot.
Li chevaliers l'ad receü
Le vin del chalice beü. (vers 186-188)

And for a bit of courtly humor, he assumes the lady's likeness lest he be noticed by the villainous "gelos" and crew:

La semblance de vus prendrai
Le cors Damedeu recevrai. (vers 161-162)

Purity and "les bienséances" are at first maintained since the Hawkman is not allowed to touch her until he has proven himself in Christian terms. He will go as far as to recite the articles of faith - an Apostle's Creed - confess his sins, and take of the sacred host:

Jeo crei mut bien el Creatur,
Ki nus geta de la tristur
U Adam nus mist, nostre pere,
Par le mors de la pumme amere. (vers 149-152)

Belief in the Redemption, original sin, and God as Creator are all expressed. But does the taking on of the lady's form indicate his sincerity? Certainly not. His goal is seduction. Simultaneously are the symbols elevated in Christian terms and altered by courtly know-how.

Love in Yonec begins in ironic courtly parody; it is purely a physical state of affairs which, at first, never seems to ripen in Bernardian terminology but will to some extent. Love-making outside of wedlock - adultery - seems to warrant death once more. The sin-punishment-death pattern of the Laüstic is once again observed. There are even similar instruments of torture as stated previously. As if an overcompensation for the guilt experienced at the death of the Hawkman, a sudden reversal of emotions takes place and hope arises from the dying embers. A phoenix is reborn: the son Yonec is Hope incarnate. Marie is playing with emotions and virtues - from despair to hope and back again. The lady in the beginning of the tale is in a crippling state of despair; she lacks hope in her future. Despair may at times border on sin; this despair is even witnessed in her physical appearance; she loses her beauty:

Sa beuté pert en teu mesure
Cume cele ki n'en ad cure. (vers 47-48)

She is on the point of suicide. She is so confined that she cannot go to mass:

Jeo ne puis al mustier venir
Ne le servise Deu oïr. (vers 75-76)

The "gelos" denies her the opportunity to perform her Christian duty; he should be killed according to the standards imposed. He is a damned character anyway:

Quant il dut estre baptiziez
Si fu el flum d'enfern plungiez. (vers 87-88)

The lady in her despair and anger damns her parents and everyone else concerned for having forced the marriage upon her:

Maleeit seient mi parent
E li autre communalement
Ki a cest gelus me donerent
E de sun cors me marïerent! (vers 81-84)

What Marie does to Celtic mythology she does to Christian terminology - "perverts" or turns it to the comic. The lady, however, wants and has hope of being saved. She fantasizes thus:

Mut ai sovent oï cunter
Que l'em suleit jadis trover
Adventures en cest païs
Ki rehaitouent les pensis.
Chevalier trovoent puceles
A lur talent, gentes e beles,
E dames truvoent amanz
Beaus e curteis, prüz e vaillanz. (vers 91-98)

Hope is a most important Christian virtue. As she desires this hope and salvation, hope comes through the window bearing gifts of confidence and strength in Love - a Christian ideal:

Quant ele ot fait sa pleinte issi
L'umbre d'un grant oisel choisi
Par mi une estreite fenestre
Ele ne seit que ceo pout estre. (vers 105-108)

Hope is symbolized by the Birdman; he is hope fulfilled. For Jung, the dream is the act fulfilled. Fantasy and dream and hope share common ties in the subconscious. Immediately after the Birdman's death scene which lasts through four-fifths of the lai (vers 1-458) bringing with it despair once more, a son of hope is born, Yonec. It takes the illegitimate son only one-fifth the length of the lai (vers 549-558) to dispose of the murderous "gelos" so that the couple is spiritually united in death and that the final note is one of hope, eternal hope. For esthetic reasons, Marie accords prominence to the love story rather than to the revenge motif, thus accounting for the imbalance. The "gelos" is unquestionably always an unchristian soul; he has his old hag of a sister spy on the lovers as predicted, and she will betray them. Is not Judas immediately detected as the guilty one? Treason is an omnipresent reality thanks to the husband, his sister, and the servants. The "gelos" locks the lady up unjustly - she has committed no crime yet; he lacks faith in his wife, hope and trust in her actions, and the charity to allow her the minutest freedom. A study in contrasts: the lady's hope opposes the "gelos's" lack of virtue. Obviously, he never received any gifts from God for as the lady said - he was baptized in hell. In this despairing atmosphere, the Birdman is Hope which will elevate the nature of the couple's love considerably. But directly following the scenes of symbolic elevation through Christianity and the sacraments received by the Birdman, the lady lies down immediately beside her Celtic lover; she is convinced of his "sincerity" - a scene of mock-purity has obviously preceded this love-making

scene. Marie evidently set-up her readers with the lady's "holier-than-thou" attitude only to debunk the lady's self-righteous pose in a scene of stark sensuality:

> La dame gist lez sun ami:
> Unke si bel cuple ne vi!
> Quant unt asez ris e jué
> E de lur privetê parlé
> Li chevaliers ad cungié pris. (vers 191-195)

Not all is said in the courtly context. Imagination must fill in the gaps. And as the lady regains hope, she regains her beauty:

> Sun cors teneit en grant chierté
> Tute recovre sa beauté. (vers 215-216)

All she must do is wish the Birdman's presence and like an answered prayer from God he appears - the mystical power of hope which brings love:

> Mes ne poeie a vus venir
> Ne fors de mun paleis eissir
> Si vus ne m'eüssez requis. (vers 131-133)

In this lai, Marie continually tips the scales; the vicissitudes of the virtue of hope are the essence of Yonec: from the inclusa's state of despair to hope in Muldumarec's coming, a return to despair when the hero becomes love's martyr, and finally the resurrection of hope through the birth of a son. Marie's endings always seem to have that assumed-into-heaven notion about them - an upward verticality.

The theme of vengeance through the natural son is strictly Judaic and pagan as are the sacrifical scenes of martyrdom for

love's sake. Love is strengthened by hope which works in wondrous ways. The lady acquires abilities never before realized; she takes an enormous leap throwing herself out of a window - Celtic "merveilleux" and Christian miracles are not so detached in content as it seemed:

> Ele le siut a mut granz criz.
> Par une fenestre s'en ist;
> C'est merveille k'el ne s'ocist
> Kar bien aveit vint piez de haut
> Iloec u ele prist le saut! (vers 336-340)

In fortitude and the power of hope, the lady searches and finds the tomb by following the blood-stained path of her wounded lover - an act of love and caring. Into an Otherworld place of no inhabitants, a sort of heaven inhabited perhaps by spirits, her quest leads her:

> Ele esteit nue en sa chemise.
> A la trace del sanc s'est mise
> Ki del chevalier degotot
> Sur le chemin u ele alot . . .
> Tuz jurs après le sanc novel
> Par mi le burc, desk'al chastel
> Unkes nuls a li ne parla,
> Humme ne femme n'i trova. (vers 341-344; 373-376)

The faithfulness of one-man/one-woman is the policy most often maintained by Marie. The word, "sanc," is repeated several times; fidelity, suffering, and love are underscored by this repetition. Muldumarec's words are a vague echo of those of Christ who died for love of all men:

> Bien iert entre ma gent seü
> Que m'unt por vostre amus perdu. (vers 407-408)

To add to the Christian atmosphere, bells toll announcing the

chevalier's death:

> N'ot pas demie liẅe erré
> Quand ele oï les seins suner
> E le doel el chastel mener
> Por lur seignur ki se mureit. (vers 444-447)

Is not Christ referred to as Lord, "Seigneur"? Marie would like to demonstrate the exclusivity of this love. Even heaven recognizes it through the tolling of the bells. The question arises as to what extent this love is tantamount to adoration and idolatry. That might be too severe a judgment and must be examined in the light of courtliness to be fully understood. Love in Yonec is wholly elevated through hope in Bernardian terms. Muldumarec's son, Yonec, is the rebirth of this hope since he equals his father in the courtly virtues of courage and strength. The second person of the Trinity is coeternal with the father and the love between them is the Holy Spirit. Themes do blend in a curious way. On the feast of Saint Aaron - Aaron considered another Christ by Alcuin and his sons as symbols of the highest priesthood - the loverless mother and her grown-up son, Yonec, along with the "gelos" journey to Caerleon to celebrate. There, an abbot puts them up for the night - giving them shelter, a corporal work of mercy and an act of charity. They all hear mass and are taken on a tour by the same abbot; they are led directly to the tomb where Muldumarec's body lay surrounded by twenty candles as if sanctified or canonized. The mother, after so many years, explains the story to her son who executes the act of vengeance decapitating the "parastre." Justice is rendered on the feast of Saint Aaron -

a symbolic act that ends the reign of tyranny and non-charity, thus reviving hope. The mother dies heartbroken and is united with her lover in death and in the same tomb - hope continues after death.

> A grant honur la dame unt prise
> E el sacru posee e mise
> Delez le cors de sun ami. (vers 549-551.)

The lady's death eternalized their love and elevates it a step higher à la Deus Amanz. Hate and despair die too - forever in oblivion. It seems that it was all an act of God which led them to the tomb in the first place:

> "Beaus fiz, fet ele, avez oï
> Cum Deus nus ad menez ici?" (vers 529-530)

Even the people of this city were waiting for the arrival of the son as predicted. Overtones of the coming of the Messiah are unmistakable:

> "Unques puis n'eümes seignur
> Ainz avum atendu meint jur
> Un fiz qu'en la dame engendra,
> Si cum il dist e cumanda." (vers 523-526)

Love, hope, and salvation vie for power with hate, despair, and damnation in Yonec while charitable acts and vengeful acts oppose each other in this study of contrasting virtues. Although the glorious state of elevation achieved in Laüstic or Chievrefoil is not present, Yonec still exhibits the powers of transcendental love through hope.

The Symbols as Power of Love in the Christian Context

Like the doomed race of Cain, the Bisclavret is to roam through the forest in aimless search, and again like Cain the "Garwaf" is a killer that "hummes devure." As stated earlier, there are other implications inherent in the wolfman story - namely, lust, sensuality, and promiscuity. In any case, to be a "bisclavret" is to desire flesh:

> Garvalf, ceo est beste salvage;
> Tant cum il est en cele rage,
> Hummes devure, grant mal fait,
> Es granz forez converse e vait. (vers 9-12)

Marie in the beginning of the lai is speaking generically and is simply making a general statement of fact. She has not yet begun the tale of a specific "bisclavret" - one of her own "knowledge." To believe in him is to believe in superstition; even during the Middle Ages or especially so, this belief in witchcraft was condemned by the Church. And as we already noted, the beast is of two natures, human and diabolic, and in direct contrast to Christ's natures, human and divine. Already a case could be supported for the notion of sin in the theme of the "bisclavret." However, is Marie's "garwaf" a "beste salvage" in the reality of the specific case which she presents her reader? It is courtly joke time.[123]

Our Bisclavret seems to be of a different order; we never learn exactly what he does do except that he admits living from prey and plundering:

> Al plus espés de la gaudine,
> S'i vif de preie e de ravine. (vers 65-66)

Therefore, the notion of lusting for the flesh is not an unlikely assumption. He is a sinner of sorts. The Bisclavret neglects his wife and her needs three days per week leaving for parts unknown:

> Qu'en la semeine le perdeit
> Treis jurs entiers, qu'el ne saveit
> U deveneit ne u alout
> Ne nuls des soens nïent n'en sout. (vers 25-28)

This courtly humor is reminiscent of the modern businessman - comic relief assuredly since he always returns "joius e liez" - joyful and gay. What a way to return to someone who is so tormented by his passion and lives from plundering and prey. Marie is playing with themes and her audience: good and evil, lust and charity. The symbol of the "clothes," as the potion in the Deus Amanz, is that in which his salvation is to be had. Without them, he remains a "savage wanderer," who, of course, speaks perfect old French and demonstrates perfect Christian loyalty and fidelity to the king while in the bestial state. Remember that the loyalty expressed to the king - "loi" - was comparable to the fidelity shown to God - "foi." The "dras" or clothes besides providing the saving-grace factor are kept in an old chapel. To add an extra touch of Christianity, they are safeguarded in the house of God. Therefore, hope of returning to the normal human form and the hope of salvation from those forest deeds, whatever they may be, hinge upon the clothes. The Bisclavret is afraid of damnation - tongue-in-cheek- of course:

> "Mal m'en vendra si jol vus di,
> Kar de m'amur vus partirai
> E mei meïsmes en perdrai." (vers 54-56)

The sequence of events stems from sin and moves through lines of fear, punishment, damnation, and the saving grace of the symbolic clothes.

A parallel in contrast is offered by the characterization of the Bisclavret's wife. At first, she is presented by Marie as the example of loving concern:

> "Sire, jeo sui en tel esfrei
> Les jurs quant vus partez de mei
> El cuer en ai mut grant dolur
> E de vus perdre tel poür
> Si jeo n'en ai hastif cunfort
> Bien tost en puis aveir la mort." (vers 43-48)

This mock-charity is employed in the casuistic scene which follows - a dialogue between husband and wife - that will end in the wife's treachery, unfaithfulness, and the Bisclavret's loss of both hope and salvation through the theft of his clothes. The debate between the married couple lasts quite long, and little by little through cunning trickery - her particular art of persuasion - the wife will elicit the answer to the whereabouts of his clothes:

> -Di mei, pur Deu, u sunt voz dras?
> -Dame, ceo ne dirai jeo pas . . .
> Qu'ai jeo forfait? Pur queil pechié
> Me dutez vus de nule rien?
> Dites le mei, si ferez bien! (vers 71-72; 84-86)

The Bisclavret fears damnation and foolishly confesses to his wife; he is unaware of her motives for questioning him and mistakes selfishness for Christian altruism - he reveals everything:

> "Dame, fet il, delez cel bois,
> Lez le chemin par unt jeo vois,

Une vielz chapele i esteit,
Ki meintefeiz grant bien me feit:
La est la piere cruose e lee,
Suz un bussun, dedenz cavee;
Mes dras i met, suz le buissun,
Tant que jeo revienc a meisun." (vers 89-96)

The wife's loving concern had already turned to suspicion; she believes he is sinning - with other women of course:

Mun escient que vus amez,
E si si est, vus meserrez. (vers 51-52)

The wife sinks deeper and deeper into her crime while the Bisclavret will gradually be elevated to his noble Christian self. After having drawn from him a confession of "guilt," she immediately abandons the "sinner" for another. The wife led him to incriminate himself and then cast him aside. A sick man, mentally or physically, is to be cared for in Christian terms according to the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; he is quickly forgotten as we can see from this dialogue between the wife and her lover:

M'amur e mun cors vus otrei:
Vostre drue fetes de mei!
Cil l'en mercie bonement
E la fiance de li prent
E el le met par serement. (vers 115-119)

The pact in evil is confirmed - covenant of sin between lady and lover sealed with adultery, false marriage, and the theft of the clothes. She reveals her true motives violating the commandments of Church and God:

Vers la forest li enseigna;
Pur sa despuille l'enveia.
Issi fu Bisclavret trahiz

E par sa femme maubailiz . . .
La dame ad cil dunc espusee
Que lungement aveit amee. (vers 123-126; 133-134)

In essence, the wife robbed him of his salvation - a much greater injustice. Marie continually balances virtues and their abuses.

The Bisclavret's relationship with the king illustrates the virtues of humilitas and caritas which progress towards the elevation of the symbol from wolfman to courtly Christian gentleman. The Bisclavret humbles himself before his king in a doglike rather than wolflike manner:

La jambe li baise e le pié.
Li reis le vit, grant poür ad . . .
"Cum ceste beste s'humilie!" (vers 148-149; 153)

The king, in all his mercy, displays Christian charity in return:

"Chaciez mei tuz ces chiens ariere
Si gardez que hum ne la fiere! (vers 155-156)

The animal has the gifts of reason and sense from God:

Ele ad sen d'hume, merci crie . . .
Ceste beste ad entente e sen. (vers 154 and 157)

And never did any harm:

Unkes mes humme ne tucha
Ne felunie ne mustra. (vers 245-246)

The fact that the beast speaks and is graced with all the necessary gifts and virtues is food for comedy. The king continues with his corporal works of mercy and general friendship by caring for the beast and offering him shelter and assuring that his people do likewise:

E mut le tient a grant chiertê.
A tuz les suens ad comaundé
Que sur s'amur le gardent bien
E ne li mesfacent de rien. (vers 169-172)

What a contrast to the treatment the Bisclavret received from his wife. This all ends in acts of violence and revenge of a paganistic Old Testament nature: the lady is even tortured and confesses - which is commonplace for the Middle Ages:

Kar metez la dame en destreit
S'aucune chose vus direit (vers 255-256)

Like the infamous Cain who bears a mark on his forehead, the lady shall be stigmatized - "esnasees" - indicating not only her eternal damnation but also a curse on her entire lineage, which will be noseless - the ladies only, of course. In contrast to these acts of violence, the king has the clothes returned to the Bisclavret with grace bringing new life and form. The Bisclavret dresses in the privacy of a solitary room away from the eyes of onlookers. Christian modesty prevails. Thus are the clothes, symbol of salvation, played against the damnation symbol of a noseless wife and her progeny.

Virtues continue to play a major role through symbolism in the lai of Lanval. Ironically, the setting - besides taking place at the court of King Arthur - is once again the feast of Pentecost commemorating the Holy Spirit's bestowing of the gift of tongues and persuasion upon the apostles. It is ironic since this act of God's love is contrasted by the king's utter neglect and unconcern for a knight, Lanval, who had acted more than competently in his service. Lanval did not receive his

reward and just due for one who is envied by the other chevaliers for his bravery and courage:

> A ceus de al Table Roűnde . . .
> Femmes e teres departi,
> Fors a un sul ki l'ot servi:
> Ceo fu Lanval; ne l'en sovint
> Ne nuls des soens bien ne li tint . . .
> Pur sa valur, pur sa largesce,
> Pur sa beauté, pur sa prüesce,
> L'envïoent tuit li plusur. (vers 15; 17-23)

In most cases, the courtly virtues complement the Christian virtues; sometimes they will clash causing conflict. Lanval goes off brooding and sulking in total despair and sorrow. Has he become a *forgotten man*?

> Hum estrange descunseillez,
> Mut est dolenz en autre tere
> Quant il ne seit u sucurs quere! (vers 36-38)

To save him from this despair as in Yonec, a symbol of hope appears: two maidens in tightly fitted laced tunics. Like the power of grace, they will become the directing force towards a higher good - in this case, towards Ideal Love. The girls carry bowls of pure gold and a towel to clean and dry one's hands:

> L'eisnee portout uns bacins
> D'or esmerë, bien faiz e fins . . .
> L'autre portout une tűaile. (vers 61-62; 64)

Bowls as mentioned earlier are symbols of healing power like grace, and let us not forget the Grail, the ultimate cup and chalice of Truth, Divinity, and Salvation. Later, the girls will pour water in Lanval's hands so that he may wash and dry

them. This also suggests that he is using the vessel of truth:

L'ewe li donent a ses meins
E la tüaille a essuier. (vers 178-179)

It reminds us too of the priest's washing and drying of his hands before the holy sacrifice of the Mass. This ritual is also an ancient custom and part of the code of hospitality. Pontius Pilate's gesture had the totally opposite connotation. And for Lanval, the symbolic rite immediately precedes the enjoyment of physical pleasure and excitement in the arms of the Fairy Mistress. The maidens are thus like angels bearing news of good tidings; they will direct Lanval to the Otherworld which has already been equated with the solitude of monastic life where one reflects upon his destiny, although Lanval's mission seems not to transcend the basest needs. Ultimately, the maidens who appear at three separate intervals recall the mysteries of the Church since they are "facts" that are to be believed no matter how incredible they may seem. It takes King Arthur's Court about half the length of the lai - through many proceedings, the juris prudens, the visitations of the girls and finally the appearance of the Mistress herself - before it reaches a verdict and believes a word of what Lanval says. Like Christ, the maidens are bearers of Truth who are not always warmly received at first by others due to their supernatural origin - a nature hard to believe. The girls and their visitations culminate in the absolute love concept converging and focusing in upon the Mistress in a Bernardian progression from the egoistic yearnings to the establishment of Truth, Justice,

and Love - Ideals greater than Self.

The virtues are again contrasted. The Queen's false witness vies for power with the symbol of the maidens who represent Truth. The Queen is Injustice personified with a malicious slandering tongue. While contrasting vividly with the maidens, the Queen gives them additional strength since the reader and listener are altogether aware of her treachery. The Queen's accusations of homosexuality, her "démesure," hypocrisy, and outright lust for Lanval enhance the movement of this progression towards Truth through the "maiden" symbol. Lanval himself will finally idealize and fix in the Queen's mind the Beauty of which he speaks while he fixes this fact in our minds. Through all his troubles, Lanval will remain faithful to both Mistress and King even though the King persists in his stupidity; he wrongs Lanval a second time by putting him to the test of a courtroom trial. The trial is falsely based even though the procedures are in keeping with the formalities of the day. The means cannot justify the false basis. The justice has a rotted foundation - the word of the Queen. The theme of the scorned older woman who falsely accuses the object of her lust has its prototype in the Old Testament story of Potiphar's wife. The Phedra story is a later elaboration of the same theme. In submission, obedience, and humility towards king, court, and peers - the duty of a vassal - Lanval willfully subjects himself to this form of needless scrutiny and punishment. He chooses to remain silent. A silence he did not maintain when he should have in regard to his contract with the Fairy Mistress. There seems to exist a credibility gap between what Lanval says and

what the King sees and chooses to believe. The King is impatient and unfair - unchristian; he feels that the proceedings are too slow:

> Qu'a la curt voise sanz respit
> Li reis l'aveit par eus mandé. (vers 354-355)

Arthur sees the maidens, listens to them - that their mistress will come, but he forces a verdict - that a decision be made; the chevaliers delay out of concern for Lanval. The King is thus exposed to the magical mystical image of the girls but refuses to believe until the descent of the Mistress upon the chevaliers in mock imitation of the Holy Spirit's descent. Her descent and appearance in the real world becomes a scene of adoration and quasi idolatry. Everyone is infatuated with her beauty, but only one is selected to ride off with her. "Courtly" often means a perversion or a distortion of the virtues. Marie pits symbols of Christianity with those of courtly virtues and abuses.

Acts of love in the Bernardian sense are everywhere present: submission, obedience, and charity. Lanval consents to complete submission, humility, and faithfulness to the Fairy Mistress and thereby submission to Love. There is a purity of oneness, a monogamous relationship based on faith in one another. Lanval swears his allegiance - "jure sa foi" - the nominalistic contract. He agrees to obey her every command - a covenant is made reminiscent of that of Abraham who almost sacrifices his son out of obedience to God. As it happens, "dǒmesure" and lack of temperance mixed with excessive pride get the best of

Lanval, and he thoughtlessly breaks the covenant and brings despair to himself. When questioned during the trial, Lanval refuses to admit and disavows all knowledge concerning the maidens and his mistress; he does not want to break his word any further. He will sacrifice himself in order to protect them:

> Lanval respunt hastivement
> E dit qu'il pas nes avuot
> N'il nes cunut ne nes amot. (vers 524-526)

An act of charity is displayed by his silence. He does not reveal any more than he already has. All this submission is returned for the Mistress's promise to remain faithful; she is his alone, and he becomes love's martyr. The Mistress's love is not of the flesh alone; her generosity abounds for she provides Lanval with silver, gold, and all that he needs and desires:

> Un dun li ad duné aprés:
> Ja cele rien ne vudra mes
> Que il nen ait a sun talent
> Doinst e despende largement
> Ele li toverat asez. (vers 136-140)

Love overflows. This charity and generosity - "genus" that which is in the blood for generations - become contagious. What Lanval did not receive from the King, he receives a hundredfold from the Mistress. And in return, he gives to others:

> Mut est Lanval bien assenez:
> Cum plus despendra richement,
> E plus avra or e argent. (vers 140-142)

He will share this love as in the Bernardian concept. Love is a sharing experience, and Lanval will perform acts of corporal

mercy and acts of charity:

> Lanval donout les riches duns,
> Lanval aquitout les prisuns,
> Lanval vesteit les jugleürs,
> Lanval feseit les granz honurs! (vers 209-212)

Love is a contagious malady as Ovid once said. It encompasses a large area for it spreads and influences all those in its sphere. Christ's doctrine is simply that - Love makes one do good, and doing good is a "sign" of love to God. It is an eternal cycle of Truth. For this reason, Lanval is saved by mysterious means, the grace-like effect of the maidens. It is not fortitude of Self nor reason that saves Lanval. It is faith in the supernatural power of the grace symbolized by the maidens. Faith-over-reason is fundamental to Marie's code of logic. It is the force of the symbol that elevates Lanval to his rightful status in love and society - a redemption through truth and justice.

Bernard's transcendental concept of love is faithfully respected in the Deus Amanz as it was in the Laüstic and Chievrefoil. The love of the young "innocent" couple begins on the physical sensual level:

> La fillé al rei aama,
> E meintefeiz l'areisuna
> Qu'ele s'amur li otriast
> E par druërie l'amast.
> Pur cco ke pruz fu e curteis
> E que mut le preïsot li reis
> Li otria sa druëric,
> E cil humblement l'en mercie. (vers 63-70)

Their love gradually crescendos to the full bloom of love illustrated by the fresh new mountain greenery after the contents

of the potions had been cast upon the hill by the girl at the death of her lover:

> Ele le pleint a mut haut cri
> Puis ad geté e espaundu
> Le veissel u li beivre fu.
> Li muns en fu bien arusez;
> Mut en ad esté amendez
> Tuz li païs e la cuntree:
> Meinte bone herbe i unt trovee
> Ki del beivré orent racine. (vers 222-229)

The potion symbol follows identical lines of progression as Bernard's De diligendo Deo - from the base egoistic need of the couple for desire of the flesh to a gradual elimination of the physical aspects. The potion takes over to fulfill the rise towards redeeming elevation and idealistic symbolism. The would-be potion - that is, the one Marie presents but never has the lover drink - represents the lover's need for something higher than himself - the mystical energy inherent in the potion. Unfortunately like those Pharisees offered grace by Christ, the lover refuses; perhaps he does not believe. He knows its contents but has no faith in its powers. He falls back a step in the transcendental progression by relying strictly on his own will power, strength, and resolve. This could be considered a virtue in itself - fortitude and perseverance - to persistently forge ahead despite difficulties; however, the virtues are abused, and it now becomes a question of "démesure" since the dénouement is death. The lover is being offered life-giving strength which he refuses; he is too noble, too proud - hybris dictates his choice. This sequence could be equated with the role of grace, that indispensable auxiliary for every Christian.

Regardless, the tonic is not imbibed. Nevertheless, it could have, if given the chance, elevated the lover as Christ's presence does in the soul of man in Bernard's Iesu dulcis memoria. If only he had partaken of the precious liquid, it would have meant a release from the Self and a union with a mystical power. How do we know this to be true? We see that the potion does work miracles and does grant life to a once barren mountain by forcing the "bone herbe" to grow. The boy does have the ability; many tried the test proposed by the king and failed; the lover accomplished the task for he is a "special" person. Marie rectifies the boy's "démesure" and the situation on a whole for if the boy were not aware of the potion's power, the girl was: she empties the contents on the hill, sees the results and believes in its efficacity. Its use creates life. The realization of the brew's potential is too much to bear especially since it meant the boy's death; therefore, the girl must die. The two bodies are laid to rest in the mountain baptized of life-giving grace. In a sense, the lovers are placed in the all-encompassing grace of the mountain and are elevated to a level of purity devoid of the flesh.

Other Christian elements, virtues and non-virtues, become apparent once we perceive the account in this new framework. First, the father's inordinate dependence and attachment for his daughter is a type of selfishness on his part, an unwillingness to accept the fact of his own wife's death in attempting to live through his daughter - an existential problem that brings with it more death.

Mes li reis ne la volt doner
Kar ne s'en poeit consirrer.
Li reis n'aveit autre retur,
Pres de li esteit nuit e jur.
Cunfortez fu par la meschine
Puis que perdue ot le reïne. (vers 27-32)

His egoism is countered by the daughter's wish to console, comfort, and take care of the king, her father - which is a Christian duty to honor and love one's own father as prescribed by the Ten Commandments and Christ. She is worried about him, perhaps to excess:

Si jo m'en vois ensemble od vus,
Mis pere avreit e doel e ire,
Ne vivreit mie sanz martire.
Certes tant l'eim e si l'ai chier,
Jeo nel vodreie curucier. (vers 96-100)

The father, however, persists in his stubbornness which develops into a lack of concern for others and an abuse of Christian charity; he is determined that no one will have his daughter:

Cumença sei a purpenser
Cument s'en purrat delivrer,
Que nuls sa fille ne quesist. (vers 37-39)

The more he demands, the more the girl insists on loving her father with tender care. As she is concerned with her father's well-being, surely is she involved with that of her lover; she has faith in the potion; she seems to understand its powers, and she wants him to drink of it in order to save him physically and spiritually. The woman as intermediary between man and his salvation was presented by Bernard's vision of the Virgin Mary as such a mediator between God and man. The girl is committed to aiding her lover. The boy through human frailty becomes

too enraptured with his own power and is further motivated by the noise and cheers of the crowds:

> "Bele, jo sent tut fort mun quer,
> Ne m'arestereie a nul fuer
> Si lungement que jeo beüsse,
> Pur quei treis pas aler peüsse.
> Ceste genz nus escriëreient;
> De lur noise m'esturdireient;
> Tost me purreient desturber.
> Jo ne voil pas ci arester." (vers 199-206)

He has excessive faith in Self and looks no where else for his salvation since he is too influenced by the multitude. The girl's death is, in essence, the sacrifice for his salvation due to the sin of "démesure" or abuse of temperance and fortitude. If it were not for the girl, her belief in the grace of the potion, and her acts of charity, the boy would not be saved or elevated to such a position of transcendence. The king, in good Christian manner, regrets his actions and becomes inconsolable; his fainting spell at the death of the lovers shows the realization of his wrong-doing and selfishness. In his grief he does penance and respects the dead by burying them in the sacred grounds of "li munz 'des Deus Amanz'".

From eternalization to death, the Eliduc story will demonstrate how in life immortality can be achieved. "L'homme à deux femmes" is a theme rooted not only in Celtic lore but in biblical tradition as well. Sara, wife of Abraham, is unable to bear children - the boy that Abraham has so long awaited. Similar to Guildeluëc's understanding of her husband's predicament and out of humility or rather stark deference before her husband, Sara permits Abraham to lie and have a child with

Hagar, her handmaid. From this union will be born Ismaël. The only difference in the Hebraic account is Sara's eventual jealousy which will prompt Hagar and Ismaël to be exiled into the desert to die. They will be saved, and Abraham's wish for a son with Sara will come true. Isaac is born, the new prophet. Guildeluëc will, of course, maintain her Christian charity to the end by complaisantly allowing her husband to marry Guilliadun; then the wife enlists in the service of God by retreating to a monastery. In imitation of this grand gesture of humility and charity, the new couple decides to join the first wife in the abbey where mutual spiritual love and love of God prevail. Marie has emphasized the humilitas of the biblical tale to such a proportion that the reader is left with a spiritual Trinity of Love in God - the zenith of Bernardian mysticism.

The "storm" and "weasel" symbols oppose each other in a kind of duel of Christian virtues. The storm - like the punishment and wrath of God found in the Old Testament - is a "sign" from the Divine that Eliduc has sinned:

> S'a m'amie esteie espusez
> Nel sufferreit crestïentez. (vers 601-602)

Ironically, Christianity will tolerate this triangular love relationship by the end of the tale. Nevertheless, Eliduc has sinned; he abandons a good faithful wife and absconds with another woman; although it seems that he has not touched the young lady before their marriage, he has sinned in thought, if not by flesh, since he lusts for Guilliadun. One sins in thought, word, and deed. Fitz Brewster and others think and im-

ply that Guilliadun is still a virgin at the time of her marriage. For some reason, everyone assumes she is. It all depends upon the reading of these lines immediately following their first encounter:

> Bien s'esteient aseürē
> A cele feiz n'unt plus parlē. (vers 537-538)

That is to say that they engaged one another through a promise, and this time, they no longer spoke to each other. A scene of silence ensues. What is Marie hinting at? Imagination must be used. Furthermore, it continues:

> A sun ostel Elidus vet,
> Mut est joius, mut ad bien fet.
> Sovent poet parler od s'amie,
> Granz est entre eus la druërie. (vers 538-542)

Whether Guilliadun is a virgin or not hinges upon our translation of "druërie," and its translation could easily be construed as an intimate relationship. I feel that it is a clear case of adultery after carefully reexamining the passage. In order to placate the angry God during the storm scene, Eliduc tosses a sailor overboard - a sacrifice and atonement. Both the Judas and the Jonah motifs are employed in this passage in part - betrayal and punishment. Ironically, it was Eliduc who acts against God and Church. The sailor, as we know, broke the feudal oath of silence; he betrayed his superior by revealing the true nature of Eliduc's marital situation to Guilliadun. The parody involved in the scene is obvious since the real culprit remains unscathed. "La fausse mort" of Guilliadun - a comatose state induced by the shock of the sailor's revelation

is a further atonement for the sin of adultery - planned and intended if not consummated. This "fausse mort" will have to be reexamined later in courtly terms. It seems that Guilliadun is subject to fainting fits because before Eliduc leaves her for the first time the young lady is also overcome. This scene foreshadows Guilliadun's final fainting spell:

> Ainz qu'il li eüst tut mustré
> Ne cungié pris ne demandé
> Se pauma ele de dolur
> E perdi tute sa culur.
> Quand Elidus la veit paumer
> Si se cumence a desmenter. (vers 659-664)

The pagan element of God's wrath over the injustice of the situation is juxtaposed to the initial invocation of God and his saints before the tragic voyage:

> Deu reclleiment devotement,
> Seint Nicholas e seint Clement,
> E ma dame seinte Marie
> Que vers sun fiz lur querge afie,
> K'il les garisse de perir
> E al hafne puissent venir. (vers 821-826)

The weasel's "death" will have an entirely different connotation; it is a helpless victim felled for no reason whatsoever - an "acte gratuit." As the storm was the symbol of anger towards sin, the weasel will become Christian caritas personified. The male companion weasel despite all dangers - fortitude and courage - will run into the chapel of a "seinz hermites" amongst those who are responsible for the death of his weasel companion and ressucitate the dead creature with a "flur vermeille." A resurrection occurs and life is restored through the mystical powers of the herb - the effect is like that of grace or Baptism

upon a Christian and recalls the potion of the Deus Amanz as well as Christ's miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. Furthermore, the weasel's acts of charity will only be surpassed by Guildeluëc's humble understanding of her husband's situation. The weasel becomes the "exemplaire" from which Guildeluëc derives her inspiration and the Christian virtue of charity for she imitates the weasel's behavior in reviving the girl with the herb and flower.[124] One might wonder about this transference of virtue. Comedy is without doubt intended. For does one derive examples for leading a good Christian life from small defenseless animals? Marie is playing with Christian themes by pitting the Old against the New Testament through symbolic form.

The problematic ending must be reexamined in the light and teachings of the Church. Urban T. Holmes, inspired by the Decretum of Gratian (1140) and the Quattor libri sententiarum of Lombard (1152) states that three stages in marriage were recognized: verba de futuro (expression of intention), verba de praesenti (exchange of vows), and consummation.[125] For Pope Alexander III in 1159 the first stage constituted a valid marriage, but then in 1163 he opted for the second stage - that the vows be publicly made before a priest. Then again in 1179, he inclined slightly towards Gratian for whom consummation was required to supplement the vows.[126] The elements are confused already; even the pope had doubts. Why should we expect Marie to be aware of these conflicting facts as Holmes would like us to believe in order to dispute the theory that Marie is the Abbess of Shaftesbury? Why should Marie conform to these rulings

in the Eliduc ending? Holmes then proceeds to explain what constituted the dissolution of a marriage. How can Eliduc leave his wife, marry another, then all three meet in a monastory? Holmes cannot fathom this. There are two reasons according to the critic: entry into the religious life by one of the contracting parties prior to consummation, and affinitas superveniens before consummation - that is, an unconsummated marriage is dissolved if illicit relations are carried on by one of the parties with a relative of the other, but remarriage was not permitted.[127] Cases of this nature occurred between 1163 and 1174 but in 1179 both could remarry. Urban III in 1185 rejected this type of divorce as did Innocent III. Holmes tries to establish the case of affinitas superveniens in the Fresne story where Gurun has had sexual relations with his bride-to-be's sister. That would probably be sufficient grounds for dissolution, but what about the Eliduc story? No relative is involved in adultery. And as Holmes mentions himself, Fulbert of Chartres in 1020 allowed a husband to remarry after a wife had taken the veil. Although this practice was disputed, it "hung on in the popular mind."[128] However, during the reign of Alexander III, entry into a monastery never was grounds for dissolution. These conglomerations of facts could never prove nor disprove that an Abbess or some lay person ever wrote the Eliduc ending. Is an Abbess necessarily privy to all the learned debating? She would have other concerns such as the spiritual guidance of her fold. And as Holmes admits the Fulbert of Chartres decision of remarriage after a wife takes the veil still lingered on with the people. Furthermore, we know

that in the case of St. Bernard, the question never arose - men followed him into the monastery married or not. In addition, the requirements and decrees of the Church were not quickly disseminated and communicated to the average person or religious, not to mention the distances to be travelled from Rome. Holmes would like to use his arguments only to disprove Fox's theory of an Abbess. For how dare an Abbess compose such an ending contrary to the teachings of the Church?[129] The problem becomes increasingly clouded. Holmes gives very specific dates of when the above decrees became law, but we have no definitive answers as to when the Lais were written. We can only guess at the datings. In addition, consummation seems to be the predominate factor in all these cases: Eliduc's marriage to Guildeluëc is surely consummated or else why would Eliduc feel such guilt and torment over leaving her? And as mentioned, Marie does hint that Eliduc and Guilliadun have slept together. So what does Holmes propose to do with all these irreconcilable notions? The First and Second Lateran Councils in 1123 and 1139 respectively forbad clerical cohabitation with women and clerical concubinage. These rulings were decided before the Decretum of Gratian and Lombard's Quattor libri sententiarum - Holmes fails to mention these Councils. Are the decrees of these Councils not binding in this case or are abbeys excluded from this scheme of things? More questions are generated than resolved. Suffice it to say that there were rulings and there were decrees, but this did not prevent a Bernard from taking in whom he pleased - a more simplistic notion to the Eliduc ending should be espoused since Marie never really becomes

involved in any philosophical religious debate.

The last two lais under examination in this category, Milun and Guigemar, although manifesting certain Christian traits, will more comfortably suit the courtly context. Milun's most striking feature is its chanson de geste "creation" of the hero while in Guigemar Marie makes playful love commentaries. We noticed in Yonec what Spitzer termed the elevation of the symbol; the Milun story also makes use of the incarnation theme of the parental role being transferred to its filial counterpart and equal. Milun's son will prove to be just as worthy a hero as his father in courtly virtues - the one is made in the image of the other; however, the mystical qualities of the Celtic Birdman have vanished and are replaced by the tradition of hero worship. An elevation of sorts does take place through the illegitimate son who unites the love couple, the parents. The lai only briefly rises above the physical when love endeavors to purify itself through the swan symbol. During this period of communication through the swan a platonically forced relationship exists since the lovers have no choice in the matter. However, this raising of the symbol from the swan motif of communication to culmination in the natural son's objective in uniting his parents finally comes to rest, where it began, in the purely sensual aspects. As Jupiter seduced Leda in the form of a swan, so too is the sensuality maintained in this lai.[130] The elevation which takes place in Yonec, from Hawkman to natural son, transcends much more in spiritual meaning even though courtly humor is present. Therefore, the swan symbol and the elevation of this symbol through the father-to-son

motif fail to blossom fully into an ideal love concept since Marie does not develop the idealistic progression and relegates the motifs to their more mundane connotations. The Bernardian concept of love is never wholly exploited even though an attempt at elevation is made. The symbols in Milun do not grow to maturity as in Yonec and Chievrefoil. The terminus is love's power, not love, as represented by the swan and the natural son. Both keep communication alive between the lovers.

The lover's first meeting is purely physical:

> Tant i vint Milun, tant l'ama
> Que la dameisele enceinta. (vers 53-54)

A rather humorously rapid development of love! The girl's reaction is one of torment and sin; she feels ashamed at having lost her respect and honor:

> "Lasse, fet ele, que ferai?
> Avrai seignur? Cum le prendrai?
> Ja ne sui jeo mie pucele
> A tuz jurs mes serai ancele." (vers 133-136)

All this is accompanied by the pangs of fear generated by the girl's image of God's and society's wrath upon her head:

> S'onur e sun bien ad perdu
> Quant de tel fet s'est entremise;
> De li ert faite granz justise:
> A gleive scrat turmentee
> U vendue en autre cuntree.
> Ceo fu custume as anciens.
> Issi tencient en cel tens. (vers 58-64)

Sin, guilt, and the fear of punishment are the traditional patterns of behavior when it is a question of pre-marital affairs. Caritas, however, enters the work when the girl's sister cares

for the new born child:

> L'enfant feseient aleitier
> Cuchier de nuvel e baignier. (vers 111-112)

The corporal works of mercy are thus satisfied.[131] And at the age of reason, the child's identity shall be made known to him:

> Quand il serat granz e creüz
> E en tel eage venuz
> Que il sache reisun entendre,
> Le brief e l'anel li deit rendre,
> Si li cumant tant a garder
> Que sun pere puisse trover. (vers 81-86)

This is the sister's spiritual duty - a duty which she will accomplish. In most of the lai, Marie attempts to redeem what has been lost through sin. The son will in essence buy back his parents state of conjugal love. Like many of the Greek heroes, Milun's son will remain unaware of his true identity for quite awhile. During the time before the reappearance of the natural son, relative abstinence is maintained for <u>twenty years</u>:

> Vint anz menerent cele vie. (vers 277)

The lovers communicate by means of the swan for an incredibly long time with only intermittent physical encounters - a courtly joke on the virtues of fortitude, perseverance, and platonic love. Communication rests at a "spiritual" level through no choice of the lovers for the lady is married to another and again locked-up. What contributes to the spirituality of the swan symbol is the mystical force the girl experiences when she touches the swan's neck for the first time and feels the letter

from her lover under its feathers:

> El le receit mut bonement
> Le col li manie e le chief,
> Desuz la plume sent le brief;
> Le sanc li remut e fremi;
> Bien sot qu'il vint de sun ami. (vers 216-220)

The scene calls to mind Iseult's immediate comprehension of the message when she picks up and reads the hazel bark. It is a force similar to grace which comes upon Milun's lady and makes her understand. Again elevation would be possible, but Marie refrains from allowing the swan motif to pass through all stages of idealistic symbol. The swan never acquires the ramifications of the Birdman symbol. Milun remains a realistic treatment of the Yonec story - the mysticism has relatively disappeared. The lady's excitement at the touch of the swan may be interpreted in a courtly fashion with all intended eroticism. The manner in which the lovers care for the bird - housing it, feeding it as if it were or represented the lovers themselves demonstrates acts of love. Of course, the fasting of the swan before flight is to insure that the bird reach its destination for which it is rewarded with food. The humor of the passage cannot be omitted for it shows the desperation of lovers who will do anything to communicate. Love is demonstrated in the swan through hospitality and food as it is for many cultures. The swan is like a person, and why not? It has spent twenty years in the service of the lovers.

The rest of the lai focuses upon the metamorphosis of the illegitimate son - the creation of the hero. His aunt tells him who he is; he passes through the usual courtly stages of

development; he attains the courtly virtues and is nicknamed "Sanz-Per" - with all the double ententes intended. Not only is he valiant and courageous but also kind and good in Christian terms:

> Les povres chevaliers amot;
> Ceo que des riches gaainot
> Lur donout e sis reteneit
> E mut largement despendeit. (vers 325-328)

To give to the poor is once again an act of mercy. Since only the best can be opposed by the best - his father is his match during their battle scene where their true identities are unknown one to the other. The young man unhorses the older one, and in a gesture of respect and humility for the elderly, the son goes over to help his father up. The son feels shame over his own actions:

> Mut li pesa k'il fu cheüz!
> Par la reisne le cheval prent,
> Devant lui le tient en present,
> Puis li ad dit: "Sire, muntez!
> Mut sui dolenz e trespensez
> Que nul humme de vostre eage
> Deüsse faire tel utrage." (vers 422-428)

The conqueror exhibits a sense of guilt because of his behavior. But blood ties will out, and reconciliation is at hand. The father notices his ring on the young warrior's hand. The son's desire for revenge seems motiveless since the baron, the mother's husband, did no one wrong. This "acte gratuit" has an Old Testament flair. It is steeped in paganism and quite unchristian. Fortunately a deus ex machina intervenes and the baron dies of natural causes which prevents the vengeful act

from materializing. Marie has now redeemed the son by purifying his hateful wishes. Finally, the son in priest-like fashion unites his parents whose love remains the same and never transcends reality. It was, given the circumstances, a love of fidelity. Marie tries to maintain a Christian oneness of spirit in the love-couple.

In Guigemar, the Celtic and courtly elements prevail. The elevation that could have taken place through the "boat" symbol never, in Bernardian terms, reaches its ultimate goal which is the spiritual idealization of love. Guigemar, like Milun, is attracted by the desires of the flesh:

> Je vus requeor de druërie:
> Bele, ne m'escundites mie! (vers 505-506)

The symbol of the ship fulfills his wishes and acts as grace would - a special help in times of crisis. It appears three times: to take Guigemar to his cure, to carry him away from the clutches of an uncharitable "gelos," to unite the lady and her hero forever. This grace does not aid in doing good in the absolute sense but in doing good for one's own self. The "nef" symbol never departs from the egoistic confines of the lovers' wants and needs; it never arrives at a purer state; it passes from love of self - Guigemar's unconcern for love - to love of another, the inclusa, but the symbol fails to reach out beyond the purely physical even though traces of mysticism are inherent in the symbol. Marie, as we have seen, develops the full idealistic progression elsewhere; here, she chooses not to do so. The self-centered nature of the hero who makes a

noble attempt at moving toward disinterest in self and toward a pure concept of fidelity in another does not allow the symbols to mature to the level of a Laüstic - this is poetic choice. Guigemar's original crisis is concentrated around another symbol, the "biche," for it represents his natural disinterest in love. Of course, the "biche" and her tirade abound in courtly exaggeration and Celtic mythological overtones. Guigemar is not affected by love until the "biche," who signifies the power of love, coerces the hero to engage himself by making an existential decision. He must choose love in order to find a cure for his physical and spiritual wounds. His wounded thigh is merely the physical manifestation of a deeper emotional and spiritual problem: the absence of love. Ironically, Guigemar's hunt, which was to be a continuation and a persistence in his "unnatural" ways, becomes the scene of mock-martyrdom for love's sake. In Bernardian language, both annihilation and fulfillment are in love - an irrevocable paradox. The hunt was a reality and is not unchristian in the Middle Ages. However, Guigemar's act of aiming and shooting the arrow, if examined microscopically, is replete with insensitivity and thoughtlessness and may be regarded as a sin against nature, if not against God. He was searching for a stag. Why did he take aim at a helpless "bise od un foün." Needless to say, Marie is exploiting the maudlin elements here for all they are worth. Remember too that Nature has wronged Guigemar by causing him to be disinterested in love:

> De tant i out mespris Nature
> Ke unc de nule amur n'out cure. (vers 57-58)

Since he has been unjustly treated by Nature, which failed to grant him any inclination toward love, Guigemar strikes back and expresses anger towards this injustice by killing a "harmless" animal.[132] Curiously enough, both Guigemar and the "biche" are freaks of Nature - the hind bears antlers; the hero is incapable of loving. The hind symbol thus superimposes itself upon the hero and his predicament. It represents the hero's own "freakishness" as well as the hope for his cure. In this way, both the "biche" and the "nef" reflect Guigemar's hope for salvation through love. For having committed such a senseless act of mock-murder, revenge is wrought upon his head. Sin, punishment, and penance await the hero. By killing the "biche," he sins and is immediately punished by a ricocheting arrow, only to do penance by wandering in search of a cure.[133] The death of the beast compounds the guilt and exaggerates the courtly elements further.[134] Guigemar suffers and asks God to care for him while entrusting himself to Divine Providence:

> A Deu prie k'en prenge cure
> K'a sun poeir l'ameint a port
> E sil defende de la mort. (vers 200-202)

Normally, Marie displays faith and hope in God's power. In addition to these virtues, there is a oneness of character between the lovers as in Milun; fidelity overcomes obstacles despite the adulterous circumstances. Marie applauds the strength and attributes of this virtue during the initial stages of the love affair:

> Amur est plaie dedenz cors
> E si ne piert nïent defors
> Ceo est un mal ki lunges tient,

Pur ceo que de Nature vient.
Plusur le tienent a gabeis
Si cume cil vilain curteis
Ki jolivent par tut le mund,
Puis s'avantent de ceo que funt,
N'est pas amur, einz est folie
E mauveistié e lecherie! (vers 483-492)

While explaining the nature of Guigemar's wound, Marie severely criticizes those who vaunt their illicit love-making. In this passage particularly she upholds the virtue of fidelity. From the courtly perspective, "adulterous" is an irrelevant term since marriage to the insensitive "gelos" was tantamount to celibacy. Fidelity and oneness of mind, thought, heart, and soul is exemplified by two other images in this lai: the knotted shirt that cannot be undone and the unfastenable chastity belt - with all courtly puns intended. The point to be made is that neither courtly nor Christian elements are mutually exclusive one from the other. The two symbols were gifts that the lovers gave to one another to prove their honesty and faithfulness - the reciprocity of fidelity which is a Christian innovation. Meriaduc hopelessly tries to undo the chastity belt; his failure accentuates the bond of fidelity and the unchristian behavior of the villain. The battle of fidelity and chastity against the temptations of lust is further illustrated in the wall paintings of the inclusa's tower chamber where Venus is casting into the flames Ovid's Remedia amoris in tongue-in-cheek fashion. Thus the "gelos's" imposition of standards of fidelity through the wall paintings ironically encourages infidelity in the lady.[135] And in another ironic treatment this infidelity leads to an inextricable bond of fidelity in the lovers and the

symbols of the "knotted shirt" and "chastity belt." Marie is again playing with the virtues and their abuses. The Christian virtue of fidelity is probably upheld more in this lai through symbolism than in any other lai. The comedy unfolds as Marie pits the virtues against their abuses. The inaccessible towers, the priests, and the eunuch who guards the lady's every movement - all under the supervision of the "gelos" - contribute to the courtly joke. Obviously, Marie prefers virtue, but what better way to demonstrate it and its power than to contrast it comically with its parallel abuses - this is all part of Marie's art. In reaction to the "gelos's" unchristian behavior, the lady wishes him a most unchristian end:

Ceo doinse Deus que mals feus l'arde! (vers 348)

The revenge she seeks upon her husband is mitigated by the acts of charity and care in the healing of Guigemar's wounds:

En bacins d'or ewe aporterent
Sa plaie e sa quisse laverent;
A un bel drap de cheisil blanc
Li osterent entur le sanc;
Puis l'unt estreitement bendé:
Mut le tienent en grant chierté! (vers 367-374)

When Guigemar is banished by the "gelos" and the loving-care is withdrawn, he prays that God will bring him a speedy death:

La dame regretout sovent
E prie Deu omnipotent
Qu'il li dunast hastive mort
E que jamés ne vienge a port
S'il ne repeot aveir s'amie
K'il desire plus que sa vie. (vers 623-628)

As in the De Diligendo Deo, absence means death and suffering;

love means healing, happiness, and salvation. Hate and Love are symbolized through the non-ideal nadir of the "gelos" and the ideal zenith of an ideal lover - a study in contrasting exaggerations. Therefore, an attempt at elevation in Guigemar is supported by the "nef" symbol of hope which unites the lovers forever in a spiritual bond of fidelity even though this lai, in general, does not transcend in the metaphysical sense as have many of Marie's lais.[136]

The Symbol as Nominal Power in the Christian Context

Love will never transcend the carnal stage in Equitan but will descend further into hell's damnation - the vat of boiling water. Lack of temperance and "démesure" characterizes the nature of the hero's personality:

> Cil metent lur vir en nuncure
> Ki d'amur n'unt sen ne mesure. (vers 17-18)

Lust, desire of the flesh, is his only interest:

> Deduit amout e druërie,
> Pue ceo maintint chevalerie. (vers 15-16)

With a hint of facetiousness does Marie utter that last line. Marie is not necessarily condemning the so-called courtly love movement, but she is poking fun through subtle sarcasm. The sin of sloth aggravates the situation further; its severity is compounded since Equitan shrinks from his kingly responsibilities through laziness:

> Pur nul busuin ki li creüst
> Li reis ne laissast sun chacier,
> Sun deduire, sun riveier. (vers 26-28)

His actions will not guarantee him salvation; he is remiss in his duties and burdens the seneschal with them - who does an excellent job:

> Equitan ot un seneschal,
> Bon chevalier, pruz e leal;
> Tute sa tere li gardout
> E meinteneit e justisout. (vers 21-24)

The seneschal is assuming the king's responsibilities. In gratitude for his services, Equitan will steal his wife. The lady's attributes are immediately emphasized for the accent is on sensuality, and on this note the lai begins and ends:

> Gent cors out e bele faiture
> En li formeŕ uvrat Nature;
> Les oilz out veirs e bel le vis
> Bele buche, neis bien asis. (vers 33-36)

As in the Roman de la Rose of Guillaume de Lorris, the lover's senses are first troubled and attacked by love's penetrating sting - Cupid strikes:

> Amurs l'ad mis en sa maisniee:
> Une seete ad vers lui traite,
> Ki mut grant plaie li ad faite
> El quor li ad lanciee e mise! (vers 54-57)

Equitan sins in lusting for another's wife; he persists in his licentious desires:

> De ses aveirs li enveia
> Sanz veüe la conveita. (vers 40-41)

Persistence in these sinful ways leads to destruction and ultimate tragedy:

N'i ad mestier sens ne cointise:
Pur la dame l'ad si suspris
Tuz en est murnes e pensis.
Or l'i estuet del tut entendre,
Ne se purrat nïent defendre. (vers 58-62)

He seems to display only briefly and ephemerally regret and contrition:

La nuit ne dort ne ne respose
Mes sei meïsmes blasme e chose. (vers 63-64)

Step by step, he persuades himself to follow his own perverted logic. Marie is offering the reader insight into the psychology of sin and the ways in which it operates. The art of self-persuasion here is nothing but faulty reasoning and the exaggerations of courtly game-playing:

Si par nul engin le saveit,
Bien sai que mut l'en pesereit.
Mes nepurquant pis iert asez
Que pur li seïẽ afolez.
Si bele dame tant mar fust
S'ele n'amast e dru n'eüst! (vers 75-80)

After having hypocritically convinced himself, he proceeds to convince the seneschal's wife to become his lover - a "task" easily accomplished since the lady does not require much persuasion. A dialogue of mock-sincerity and courtly contrivance ensues. It is actually a scene of temptation and seduction where both characters vaunt their own attributes while preaching the necessities of true love, virtue, honor, and the like. The hypocrisy of the art of persuasion unfolds in "tenso-like" fashion in this casuistry of love. The lady speaks:

Vus estes reis de grant noblesce;
Ne sui mie de teu richesce

Qu'a mei vus deiez arester
De druërie ne d'amer . . .
Amur n'est pruz se n'est egals
Mieuz vaut uns povres hum leals,
Si en sei ad sen e valur,
E greinur joie est de s'amur
Qu'il n'est de princë u de rei
Quand il n'ad lëauté en sei. (vers 121-124; 137-142)

Equitan continues in the same ironic vein of self-deception:

Suz ciel n'ad dame s'ele est sage
Curteise e franche de curage
Pur quei d'amer se tienge chiere
Qu'el ne seit mie noveliere
S'el n'eüst fors sul sun mantel
Qu'uns riches princes de chastel
Ne se deüst pur li pener
E lealment e bien amer.
Cil ki d'amur sunt novelier
E ki s'aturnent de trichier
Il sunt gabé e deceü . . .
Ne me tenez mie pur rei,
Mes pur vostre homme e vostre ami. (vers 155-165; 170-171)

The couple seal the pact of treachery in an exchange of rings - which confirms their unwillingness to change. The existential choice is made - "les jeux sont faits." Fearing that Equitan might leave her, the seneschal's wife through psychological cunning and her powers of persuasion - saying how much she will suffer without him - coerces the king to accept her plot: the bleeding and the boiling of her husband. Eve could not have tempted Adam more convincingly:

Femme prendrez, fille a un rei
E si vus partirez de mei . . .
Pur vus m'estuet aveir la mort,
Car jeo ne sai autre cunfort. (vers 215-216; 219-220)

A case of emotional blackmail after which the lady persists further. She is not satisfied until Equitan agrees to her plot:

Sun bain feral chaut e buillant;
Suz ciel nenad humme vivant
Ne fust escaudez e malmis
Einz que dedenz se feust asis. (vers 253-256)

The vat awaits the seneschal. Sin, thus grows, into larger sin; it mushrooms; it lacks grace and there is no hope. The sin of lust and adultery is finally appeased in the hell concept of the "cuve" of boiling water where the culpable meet their just fate. Only one glimmer of hope for salvation shines through, and it too is questionable. Does Equitan have an attack of conscience and virtue at the end? Is it modesty, a sense of guilt, a feeling of shame - which are redeeming qualities - when he leaps into the vat in order to hide his villainy? Marie makes particular note of this:

Pur sa vileinie covrir
Dedenz la cuve saut joinz piez;
E il fu nuz e despuillez
Unques garde ne s'en dona
Iloec murut e escauda. (vers 294-298)

The ending is vague in regard to the question of Equitan's salvation since Marie first tells us that he jumps to hide his shame, and then she tells us it was by mistake that Equitan chose the wrong vat. If Equitan did experience remorse, there would be some justification for salvation. The question still remains if he jumped through shame or error. Then again, Equitan may have ventured too far into corruption, and it may have been too late for salvation. Finally, does the seneschal violate the Commandments by plunging his wife's head into the boiling vat or is he justified by reason of her treachery? Given today's standards and those of the Middle Ages, no court

would have convicted him especially since he had assumed the king's duties and managed them so well. The verbal pacts - the nominal powers - are condemning: the agreement to love falsely, the agreement to murder, and the seneschal's unknowing acceptance of the plot. All false pacts lead to hell - the vat.[137]

Christ speaks of a "barren fig tree" in one of his parables. For three seasons the tree bore no fruit. The owner ordered that it be cut down, but his gardener promised to take special care of it. If after the next season the tree did not produce, the gardener would agree to cut it down.[138] This parable concerns the resisting of God's grace by the Jews - a grace which gives reproductive power and life. Similarly in Fresne, the heroine will pass through a series of stages involving God's supernatural gift: the absence of grace, grace, its loss, and finally its renewal which shall lead to Fresne's redemption and elevation to her correct social and religious rank - that is, from abandoned child, to student at an abbey, to concubine, and legal wife through the sacrament of marriage. When the story begins, the twin boys of the neighbor - who will be slandered - are baptized or "lever":

> L'un li tramettra a lever:
> De sun nun le face nomer. (vers 17-18)

Ironically, Fresne's father will be the godfather of one of the boys; Fresne is not baptized. She has no name or saintly guardian, and the original sin has not been cleansed from her soul - no grace is possible. Her mother not only committed a

sin of slander, calumny, and superstition by stating that a twin birth meant conception by two men, but also abandoned the child leaving her to the mercy of the elements and without Baptism or a name. The only note of Christian virtue entering into the tale is the husband's reprimand and correction of his wife's behavior; he instructs and admonishes his ignorant wife - a spiritual work of mercy:

> Mut durement l'en ad blamee:
> "Dame, fet il, lessiez ester!
> Ne devez mie issi parler!
> Veritez est que ceste dame
> Ad mut esté de bone fame." (vers 44-48)

Despite her husband's counseling, Fresne's mother persists in her perverted sense of logic: she feels that she can do penance for her sin of slander by not abandoning but by murdering one of her twin daughters:

> Pur mei defendre de hunir,
> Un des enfanz m'estuet murdrir;
> Mieuz le voil vers Deu amender
> Que mei hunir e vergunder." (vers 91-94)

The lady is only interested in saving face for there is no charity in her soul. One of the lady's more Christian servants dissuades the lady from committing such a dastardly act and suggests that she - the servant - leave the baby in the woods. Before the mother's servant disposes of the child in the arms of an ash tree, the servant begs God to protect the child:

> "Deus, fait ele, par tun seint nun,
> Sire, si te vient a pleisir,
> Cest enfant garde de perir!" (vers 162-164)

A sense of guilt and a hope in God's love for the meek and

helpless affects the servant girl. Christian love will be demonstrated further by the porter of the abbey who provides food, clothing, and shelter for the child by entrusting it to his widowed daughter:

> De vostre leit le m'alaitiez
> Eschaufez le e sil baignez! (vers 201-202)

Next the abbess will take charge of the baby's physical and spiritual needs - the abbess has the baby baptized and grace is granted for the first time:

> Ele meïsmes l'ad levee;
> Pur cee qu'el freisne fu trovee,
> Le Freisne li mistrent a nun.
> E le Freisne l'apelet hum. (vers 227-230)

The baby is given the name of the tree, its protector and guardian. The name is also a reminder of the mother's sin of abandonment. In the atmosphere of a convent the child is raised in Christianity. The abbess thus provides for her spiritual well being:

> Dedenz le clos de l'abbeïe
> Fu la dameisele nurie. (vers 233-234)

Instructing the ignorant is in essence defending the faith. Fresne unfortunately proceeds to the ignoble state of concubinage - "suinant" - pleasure seeking and the loss of grace. However, her lover, Gurun, is in good standing in one area of religious concern since he supports the Church - one of its precepts:

> D'une chose se purpensa:
> L'abeïe crestre vodra;

De sa tere tant i dura
Dunt a tuz jurs l'amendera. (vers 261-264)

Of course, he has ulterior motives:

Kar il i voelt aveir retur
E le repaire e le sejur
Pur aveir lur fraternité
La ad grantment del soen donē
Mes il i ad autre acheisun
Que de receivre le pardun! (vers 265-270)

As Gurun's mistress, Fresne encounters more difficulties since Gurun's men would like him to marry a lady of his rank, and they do succeed in forcing this issue upon him. The once abandoned child becomes more deeply enmeshed in her hapless and graceless state of despair. It will be the blanket - "paile roē" - given to Fresne as a child by her mother that will serve as the symbol of Fresne's humility and submission.[139] The realization of her status comes at the moment when her sister, Codre, is about to consummate her marriage to Gurun. In preparing their nuptial bed, Fresne notices that the linens and blankets are not of the best quality; therefore, she replaces that blanket with the memento of her sorrowful birth - the "paile roē":

Un cofre ovri, sun palie prist
Sur le lit sun seignur le mist. (vers 403-404)

Fresne realizes that she cannot possess Gurun because of her status - a sign of humility. Ironically, she shall realize her goal through this same symbol which will elevate her to a state of grace so that she may marry Gurun.[140] Fresne's mother already has second thoughts about Gurun's mistress - and unbeknownst to her, her own daughter - and about the girl's worth;

she notices the "suinant" that wedding night:

> Sa mere l'ad mut esgardee
> En sun qor preisiee e amee
> Pensat e dist, s'ele seüst
> La maniere ke ele fust,
> Ja pur sa fille ne perdist
> Ne sun seignur ne li tolist. (vers 383-388)

Remarkably, when the mother notices the "paile roé" and discovers Fresne's identity, an immediate elevation takes place in Fresne's status and grace is restored. Fresne will now regain a state of grace since to get married she would have to confess. This would automatically place her on good terms with God and His love since God never abandoned her. God followed her progress all through her life. Both spiritual and social statuses are restored through her marriage to Gurun thanks to the symbol of humility - the blanket. While this upward movement continues, Fresne's mother, who had already begun to repent by realizing Fresne's worth as a person, confesses her sin and reveals the truth of her actions:

> -Sire, quant pardüné l'avez
> Jel vus dirai, si m'escutez! (vers 465-466)

Another elevation into grace occurs reminiscent of the "Parable of the barren fig tree." And as a final coup, the all-understanding Christian husband forgives his wife without question and in absolute mercy and kindness:

> Li sires dit: "De ceo sui liez!
> Unques mes ne fu si haitiez,
> Quant nostre fille avum trovee!
> Grant joie nus ad Deus donee
> Ainz que li pechiez fust dublez.
> Fille, fet il, avant venez!" (vers 485-490)

The ending is one of rejoicing and reminds us of the "Parable of the Lost Coin" in which a sinner who repents and for whom God's love is restored is likened to a servant who finds her lost drachma.[141] Both Fresne and her mother may be viewed in this light. Thus, elevation by grace as symbolized by the "paile roé" is the essence of the lai.

While delving into the Christian elements of Chaitivel, we should not be oblivious of the humorous courtly aspects nor be so blinded by them that we omit the Christian implications. The two main characters, the lady and Chaitivel, are pitted against one another in a comic expression and variation of Christian virtues. The sexually wounded knight - he becomes impotent - is overly humble while the lady is so haughty that she lacks both humility and modesty. Their contrasting attitudes are equaled only by their contrasting opinions concerning the lai's title in their "tenso" and debate situation. This lai is a study in exaggerated contrasting virtues. Indecision marks the lady's personality:

> El nes pt mie tuz amer
> Ne el nes vot mie tuer. (vers 17-18)

The classical understatement is reinforced by more indecision:

> En respit mist e en purpens
> Pur saveir e pur demander
> Li queils sereit mieuz a mer
> Tant furent tuit de grant valur
> Ne pot eslire le meillur. (vers 50-54)

This is a rather mock crisis situation. The lady is quite bereft. The scene reeks with the exaggeration and hypocrisy

of preciosity. The lady leads her men on. Existentially she refuses to engage herself by making a choice and thereby a commitment. Instead of exercising her free-will, she prefers role-playing and game-playing. Ultimately, the beautiful courtly lady becomes a harbinger of death - three men die because of her. The four chevaliers however, are the epitome of Christian perseverance - mock-perseverance; they work hard to prove their love:

> Icil quatre la dame amoent
> E de bien fere se penoent
> Pur li e pur sun amur aveir
> I meteit chescuns sun poeir. (vers 41-44)

Unfortunately, the chevaliers lack temperance and exhibit "dēmesure." They are overly hopeful and are blinded by their own exaggerated expectations;[142] they believe and trust in the lady to a fault:

> Li uns de l'autre le saveit
> Mes departir nuls nes poeit:
> Par bel servir e par preier
> Quidot chescuns mieuz espleitier. (vers 59-62)

The contest or tournament takes place the day after Easter - the feast of the Resurrection. One chevalier returns from the battle only half a man given the nature of his wound which is euphemistically described as a lance through Chaitivel's thigh:

> E li quarz nafrez e malmis
> Par mi la quisse e einz el cors,
> Si que la lance parut fors. (vers 122-124)

Later, the true nature of the wound is revealed and described as an incapability or impotence of the hero himself:

Si n'en puis nule joie aveir
Ne de baisier ne d'acoler
Ne d'autre bien fors de parler. (vers 220-222)

As he says, all he can do is talk. Christian charity, however, is displayed on the battlefield in the helping of the injured by the remaining triumphant chevaliers:

Sur les abatuz se resturent
Lur chevalier les succururent. (vers 103-104)

It is only after it is too late that the lady regrets - a sign of contrition or attrition:

Quant ele vient de paumeisun,
Chescun regrette par sun nun. (vers 145-146)

This momentary regret and realization of her mistake is transformed into self-pity and further indecision:

Ne sai le queil jeo dei plus pleindre,
Mes ne m'en puis covrir ne feindre:
L'un vei nafrê, li trei sunt mort,
N'ai rien el mund ki me confort. (vers 157-160)

She does not know whether she should pity the ill-fated chevaliers or herself. Instead of continuing with this sadness, pity, and regret at her own losses, the lady begins an interminable debate with the hopeless survivor over what the title of a lai should be. What generosity, kindness, and penance Chaitivel is subjected to! All is tongue-in-cheek. What a price Chaitivel had to pay to have been irreparably wounded for the lady's sake. The lady maintains her lack of humility and modesty throughout, thus retaining that haughtiness established in the beginning of the lai. In mock-charity and humility, she is

gracious enough to name the lai, Chaitivel:

> -Par foi, fet ele, ceo m'est bel:
> Or apelum Le Chaitivel! (vers 229-230)

Christian virtues are, therefore, perverted through the influence of courtly motifs and atmosphere.

Virtues are Christian duties for Marie de France; she praises some and mocks the abuses of others. Virtues are also gifts from god - a "sign" of His Love for mankind. The dogmas and the doctrines of the Church whether they concern miracles, mysteries, or philosophical points are "givens" also which must be observed if one is to be a good Christian. Ideas - be they God or other absolutes such as Beauty, Knowledge, or Love - are realitites, not imaginary concepts, that penetrate the world of man. These virtues, dogmas, and absolutes represent the downward motion of the symbol in the Christian context from God to man. Man now expresses his love in return by an ascending movement towards the creator by faithfully practicing the virtues, believing without question the articles of faith, and by doing God's will. Bernard's love concept comprises both descending and ascending movements - Jesus enters the soul; man is elevated, rejoices, loves and loves to be loved. Even the "druérie" of Christianity has this twofold notion of "sign" and symbolic expression of love. I am referring to rosaries, scapulars, medals, votive candles - all "love tokens" of Christianity; however, they have no sensual or physical connotation surrounding their meaning; they are of a highly spiritual nature and are means of transcendence. The symbols of love

were a full transcendental expression towards an absolute; the symbols of the power of love were in most cases the role of grace and its effects on man; the nominal symbols usually have been debates over which Christian virtue should dominate. All three categories are ascending expressions of man's love to God in varying degrees of worth. We have also witnessed how Marie juxtaposes the Old and New Testaments, the virtues of the new love concept with the paganism and mysticism of the old world. All of this is ingeniously blended with the novel courtly element of amusement and entertainment. Marie de France's art is intricate, compact, philosophical, psychological, religious, and, of course, entertaining.

Notes

[1] Roland Bainton, The Medieval Church (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1962), pp. 26-27 and 93-94.

[2] The definitions of grace, free-will, and sin may be found in Living Our Faith by Flynn, Loretto, Simeon, Reedy (New York: Sadlier Inc., 1958).

[3] Flynn et al, The Triumph of Faith (New York: Sadlier Inc., 1960), pp. 67-73.

[4] Flynn et al, Faith in Action (New York: Sadlier Inc., 1960), pp. 10-17, 270-271 and 193.

[5] Ibid., pp. 67 and 332.

[6] Etienne Gilson, Etudes de Philosophie Médiévale (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg, 1921), pp. 5-6.

[7] Ibid., pp. 3 and 52.

[8] Flynn et al, The Way, the Truth, and the Life (New York: Sadlier, 1956), pp. 69-73; 238-243; 250-251; 287-289.

[9] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 14-19.

[10] Faith in Action, p. 270.

[11] Ibid., p. 270.

[12] The Triumph of Faith, p. 68.

[13] The Way, the Truth and the Life, pp. 99-102.

[14] Ibid., p. 95, p. 131-132, p. 137, pp. 146-147.

[15] Leo Spitzer, Christian Ideas of World Harmony (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963), p. 76.

[16] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[17] Ibid., pp. 10-14.

[18] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[19] Ibid., p. 19.

[20] Ibid., pp. 19-20.

[21] Ibid., pp. 24-32.

[22] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, pp. 291-298.

[23] Spitzer, p. 36.

[24] Ibid., pp. 40-42.

[25] Ibid., p. 50.

[26] Ibid., pp. 58-66.

[27] Ibid., pp. 89-106.

[28] Living Our Faith, pp. 74-75.

[29] Faith in Action, p. 293.

[30] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 29-31.

[31] Ibid., p. 22.

[32] Ibid., p. 24.

[33] Ibid., p. 24.

[34] Ibid., p. 26.

[35] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, p. 87.

[36] The Triumph of Faith, p. 26.

[37] Ibid., p. 26.

[38] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 64-66.

[39] Ibid., pp. 60-63.

[40] Living Our Faith, pp. 66-67.

[41] Ibid., pp. 83-91.

[42] Columbia Encyclopedia, p. 1965.

[43] Ibid., p. 853.

[44] Living Our Faith, p. 115 and pp. 159-161.

[45] World Book Encyclopedia, p. 237.

[46] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, pp. 84-85.

[47] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 230-231.

[48] Ibid., p. 261.

[49] Ibid., p. 212 and p. 235.

[50] Ibid., pp. 212-234.

[51] Ibid., p. 232.

[52] Ibid., pp. 225-226.

[53] Ibid., p. 234.

[54] Ibid., p. 285, and the Columbia Encyclopedia.

[55] Columbia Encyclopedia, p. 1180.

[56] The Triumph of Faith, p. 201.

[57] Etienne Gilson, The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy (New York: Scribner's, 1936), pp. 20-21.

[58] The Triumph of Faith, p. 201.

[59] Ibid., p. 198.

[60] Gilson, The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy, p. 32.

[61] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[62] Ibid., p. 150.

[63] Ibid., pp. 63-65.

[64] Gilson, Etudes de Philosophie Médiévale, p. 78.

[65] Ibid., p. 3.

[66] Vernon J. Bourke, The Pocket Aquinas (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), p. 158.

[67] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, p. 81 and p. 160.

[68] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 233-234.

[69] Ibid., pp. 234-235.

[70] Gilson, Etudes etc., pp. 1-4 & Columbia Encyclopedia, p. 667.

[71] See Encyclopedia Britannica, Americana and Columbia Encyclopedia for the Celtic Church and its influence.

[72] Bainton, The Medieval Church, pp. 37-45 & pp. 118-120.

[73] John Tate Abbeby, Henry II (New York: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 1-43.

[74] Bainton, pp. 51-52 & pp. 138-139.

[75] Etienne Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1955), pp. 164-165.

[76] John C. Moore, Love in Twelfth Century France (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 10.

[77] Bainton, pp. 129-130.

[78] Ibid., pp. 150-151.

[79] Ibid., p. 57.

[80] Gilson, Etudes etc., p. 26.

[81] Bainton, pp. 56-59.

[82] Plato's Cratylus is transmitted to the Middle Ages through Isidore de Séville: "Cette conception d'Isidore qui s'accorde entièrement avec la tradition du Cratyle avait pour le chrétien du moyen âge l'avantage de s'accorder en même temps avec la tradition biblique - un personnage qui changeait de vie changeait aussi de nom," Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, p.165.

[83] Gilson, Etudes etc., p. 78.

[84] Bainton, pp. 41-43; 131-133 & 154.

[85] Ibid., p. 57.

[86] Ibid., pp. 131-133.

[87] Ibid., p. 154.

[88] The Triumph of Faith, pp. 263-264.

[89] Bainton, pp. 41-43.

[90] Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, pp. 41-44.

[91] Ibid., p. 44.

[92] Ibid., pp. 44-45.

[93] Ibid., pp. 45-48.

[94] Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, pp. 48-50.

[95] Ibid., p. 52.

[96] Ibid., p. 50.

[97] Moore, pp. 57-59.

[98] Gilson, Les Idées et les lettres, p. 52.

[99] Ibid., p. 66.

[100] Ibid., p. 66.

[101] Ibid., p. 67.

[102] Jean le Clercq, St. Bernard et l'esprit cistercien (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966), p. 43.

[103] Ibid., p. 12.

[104] Ibid., p. 84.

[105] Ibid., p. 88.

[106] Ibid., pp. 89-90.

[107] Ibid., p. 101.

[108] Gilson, The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy, p. 269.

[109] Ibid., pp. 270-290.

[110] Ibid., p. 296.

[111] Ibid., pp. 299-300.

[112] Leo Spitzer, "The Prologue to the Lais of Marie de France: Medieval Poetics," Modern Philology XLI, pp. 96-102.

[113] Brewster Fitz, "The Prologue to the Lais," Modern Language Notes 90 (1975), pp. 558-564.

[114] D. W. Robertson, "Marie de France, Lais, Prologue 13-15," Modern Language Notes 64 (1949), p. 337.

[115] Mortimer Donovan, "Priscian and the Obscurity of the Ancients," Speculum 36 (1961), pp. 75-80.

[116] Tony Hunt, "Glossing Marie de France," Romanische Forschungen 86 (1974), pp. 396-418.

[117] Leo Spitzer, Christian Ideas of World Harmony (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963), p. 50.

[118] S. Foster Damon, "Marie de France: Psychologist of Courtly Love," PMLA XLIV (1929), pp. 968-996. A related study which treats psychological opposites.

[119] Leah Wolf, "The Implied Author in the Lais of Marie de France," DAI 35: 1979 A. The critic endeavors to demonstrate the Christian framework of Marie's value system, "She values courage and generosity while she inveighs against disloyalty, pride, and selfishness."

[120] L. Foulet, "Marie de France et la légende de Tristan," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 32 (1908), pp. 161-183. The critic offers a persuasive argument concerning the miraculous spontaneity of symbolic meaning and the exegetic quality of the work on the whole.

[121] M. B. Ogle, "Some Theories in Irish Literary Influence in the Lay of Yonec," Romanic Review 10 (1919), pp. 123-148. The critic cites also the biblical source of Old and New Testaments from Genesis to the Gospels in regard to miraculous births.

[122] Pietro Toldo, "Yonec," Romanische Forschungen 16 (1904), pp. 609-629. According to the critic, "Sa poésie est chaste malgré la licence de la société et de l'époque où elle vivait." This is much too general a comment, and as we shall see there are erotic elements throughout the Lais. As concerns the scene of transubstantiation - "Ne nous scandalisons pas trop si la dame ose profaner la communion et invoquer 'al creatur' pour protéger son adultère. L'intervention de la divinité dans les affaires humaines était étendue à l'époque." He misses the courtly humor and influence.

[123] Thomas Watts, "Toward an Analysis of Certain General Lais of Marie de France," Lingua e Stile 9 (74), pp. 249-256. The critic emphasized the structural sophistication of Marie's images, symbols, and analogies.

[124] Alfred Adler, "Structural Uses of the Fairy Mistress Theme in Certain Lays of Marie de France," Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne 9 (1957), p. 28. Adler suggests that Guildeluec like a fairy mistress restores life to the husband's mistress. He views this as an act of caritas.

[125] Urban T. Holmes, "Further on Marie de France," Symposium 3 (1949), p. 335.

[126] Ibid., p. 335.

[127] Ibid., p. 336.

[128] Ibid., p. 336.

[129] Ibid., p. 337.

[130] Robert Green, "The Fusion of Magic and Realism in Two Lays of Marie de France," Neophilogus 59, pp. 324-360. An interpretation of the swan's sexual meanings.

[131] William Woods, "Femininity in the Lais of Marie de France," Studies in Philology XLVII, pp. 1-19. Tries to show that through her style in which superlatives, diminutives, exaggerated expressions and repetitions occur frequently that the Lais have a woman's touch. He does point out the motherly concern in Milun as a Christian ideal.

[132] Rupert Pickens, "Thematic Structure in Marie de France: Guigemar," Romania 95 (74), pp. 328-341. Nature wronged Guigemar who in turn retaliates.

[133] Pickens feels that the wound is symbolic of stages of growing, p. 330.

[134] The hind's words are for Rupert Pickens the bestowal of grace to undo the wrong of nature, p. 332.

[135] Pickens sees the lady's escape as an act of grace, p.339.

[136] Green, pp. 324-360. The critic offers a hodgepodge of symbols - the knot, belt, boat, hind - with no depth.

[137] D. W. Robertson, "Love Conventions in Marie de France's Equitan," Romanic Review XLIV (51-52), pp. 241-245. The critic demonstrates how Marie knew something of clerical ideas concerning lecherous and sensual love as discussed in De spirituali amicita by Ailred of Rievaulx. It is a love not tested by judgment not ruled by reason. Incidentally the Rievaulx Abbey is a Cistercian foundation in ruins by 1131.

[138] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, p. 130.

[139] Adler, the critic points out the symbolism of the brocade cloth as Christian humilitas - "Her childlike innocence [Fresne's] turns sinners into innocent children," pp. 127-128.

[140] Richard Baum, Recherches sur les oeuvres attribuées à Marie de France (Heidelberg: Winter, 1968). A restoration of equilibrium takes place at the end of each lai - focusing on a central image - a linear and concentric structure of the lais.

[141] The Way, the Truth, and the Life, p. 130.

[142] Samuel Cowling, "The Image of the Tournament in Marie de France's Le Chaitivel," Romance Notes 16 (75), pp. 686-691. "The lady is no more grossly selfish than the knights are grossly over-confident." The formality and cruelty of courtliness are the basic themes of this article.

Chapter V

COURTLY AND NON-COURTLY LOVE TRADITION

Coexisting in medieval French literature are two paradoxically contrasting phenomena, and for the sake of argument at this moment, they shall be termed "esprit courtois" and "esprit gaulois." These modes of expression have long since been thought of as separate entities; however, let us now place a framework around the terminology and call this new dimension "courtoisie." In this light, both "courtois" and "gaulois" would be regarded as functioning parts within one grandiose system - "courtoisie" - just as virtue and sin, although diametrically opposed, share equally important positions in Christian philosophy; sin, of course, is not more valued but preoccupies the mind and writings of Christianity in direct proportion to virtue. So too is the case with courtly literature. If we are to look at the situation in this objective way, the terms to be discussed may have a more comprehensive and more comprehensible meaning which will not tend to generalize the literary and cultural trends of the Middle Ages. Numerous misnomers have perpetuated the abuse and misunderstanding of the courtly genre. Bédier's simplistic and partially incorrect interpretations of the love concepts of the lyric poets have confined the modern critic to the point of confusion: "Ils chantaient l'amour, une passion disciplinée . . . et ils ne la

chantent qu'autant que la raison l'avoue . . . le thême de l'amant trahi qui ne peut s'empêcher d'aimer leur est inconnu . . . on ne chante pas de femmes déloyales mais les femmes idéales."[1] Authority abuses, thus constricting the critic to its dictates. For Bédier, there is in this system "pas d'amour illégitime," mostly "jeunes filles" since "les femmes mariées" are rarely represented. The lover must adhere to the following principles: "Il faut mériter d'être aimé . . . l'amour mène à la valeur; la dame impose aux jaloux et aux flatteurs les mêmes épreuves; l'amant doit aimer le mal dont il souffre - une longue attente."[2] Another critic's vast and misleading generalization would have us believe that the definition of "non-courtly" in the Tristan legend would be all the "éléments celtiques, les données de l'antiquité, et l'apport des contes populaires."[3] The "manque de cohérence" in the Béroul version is a definite sign of non-courtliness while the coherently composed Thomas work epitomizes courtliness.[4] The facts we do know and the observations made concerning medieval French literature are enlightening for as soon as the Chanson de Roland made its appearance around the end of the eleventh century, the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem appeared too at approximately the same time - it was a parody of the epic elements.[5] Thus, we witness early in the history of French literature this tendency to exaggerate, laugh at, and even abuse the so-called standards. Jaufré Rudel in his existentially transcendental poems yearns for his "Princesse de Tripoli" - the lady in absentia:

> Lanquan li jorn son lonc en mai
> M'es bèlhs dous chans d'auzèlhs de lonh,

E quan me sui partitz de lai
Remembra'm d'un amor de lonh. (vers 1-4)[6]

In some of his more risqué moments, Guillaume IX d'Aquitaine enjoys the lady's presence and favors in all their voluptuousness:

E que'm donèt un don tan gran,
Sa drudari' e son anèl:
Enquèr me lais Dièus viure tan
Qu'aja mas mans sotz son mantèl![7]

Although the contrast of styles is evident, this does not mean that the former work is courtly while the latter is not. Guillaume was a duke; Rudel, "un seigneur de Blaye."[8] Is parody incompatible with and non-existent within the "courtly" poems? Evidently not. Chrétien de Troyes' tongue-in-cheek, exaggeration, overseriousness, and mocking of both epic and love concepts is part of the courtly spirit. Calogrenant's less than courtly speeches in Yvain[9] are contrasted with the transcendental quest for the Graal, embellished with all its Celtic mysticism, in Perceval. As the Celtic parody of "geis" upon "geis" - where the hero was betwixt and between - extended our meanings or superimposed another dimension upon our symbols, so too shall the courtly love context where game-playing with the audience, and role-playing of the characters with all its intended hypocrisy, keen double psychology, and the rest as the modus operandi extend the meaning of the symbols within the Lais. It is not necessarily the cynicism of Ovid, or later Capellanus, nor the impact of Chrétien's spoofing that we have in Marie's work, but we do often enjoy a good joke. Let us be

realistic. Marie's job was to entertain first and foremost, not to depress Henry II. "Amuse-moi" is the principle behind this art form. We are now speaking of the entertainment aspect of the symbol within the courtly context. The symbol bears a façade - the courtly parody is the mask of the symbol socially imposed from outside by both the art form and the feudal system in general. Essentially, this mask of the symbol, or parody, has not the levels of idealistic symbolism nor transcendence in a step-by-step Bernardian fashion. Parody is the upper layer or camouflage mechanism of the symbol. Etymologically it is that which lies near the "ode" or song. The mask provokes and incites comedy, laughter, irony, parody, and even tragedy for it is the outward cover of the symbol. Only after the mask has been removed can other levels of context and meaning be made clear as we endeavored to demonstrate in previous chapters where we noticed the symbol enhanced in meaning by the various contexts. This courtly context is then the proverbial "icing on the cake;" once this is removed the critic is able to perceive and examine the various levels of transcendental symbolism with their accompanying mythological, philosophical, and religious aspects. Thus, parody is an integral part of "courtoisie;" it is the "entertainment factor" of "courtoisie." This in no way negates or excludes the intellectual or symbolic interpretations, but it adds a most pleasurable dimension to the notion of courtly art. By defining "courtly" in terms of role-playing and game-playing, all the double ententes of double psychology are included, as well as the more established beliefs which shall be discussed further on and in

relationship to this understanding. A new perspective in the treatment of medieval literature should be espoused. Non-courtly will be anything not falling within the scope of this definition. Since practically all is a product of the court, virtually little shall be excluded in this definition of "courtoisie." The early epics might not be considered courtly because of the absence of parodial elements, but they are courtly nevertheless due to the maintenance of courtly virtues of an exemplary nature. As love for Marie from a Christian standpoint incorporated the attributes and virtues of faith and hope as well as their abuses, distrust and despair, so too shall the courtly virtues of loyalty and honesty manifest their abuses - treachery and dishonesty. However, Marie's notion of the courtly context shall often take these virtues and standards, play with them, exaggerate them, and twist them into the comic or ironic situation where all seriousness is underplayed. Never will Marie sustain the parody of a given lai to the point that a lai could be viewed as a parody of another lai or other work. Nevertheless, Marie employs parodial elements in each lai that mock or ironically reverse certain themes already introduced in a more straightforward manner in the lai or already present in courtly literature. Otherwise, the Lais are to be regarded as adaptations of the so-called Breton lais: Marie abstracts the Lais by claiming they were not originally hers.

On the one hand, parody may be the desire to "cover-up," a reluctance to express one's inner feelings or the seriousness of the philosophical as Freud thought; comedy, for him, was really hidden tragedy - a cover-up takes place.[10] On the other

hand, even though the mask of the symbol - parody - displays little transcendence in the way of a systematic progression towards an Absolute, it does, however, give the composer and listener the chance to look at themselves and possibly laugh at themselves and their so-called standards. This is, in essence, a form of transcendence since both author and audience must reexamine and even reevaluate their value system and their priorities. In this way, "courtoisie" is a mode of social as well as self criticism. Often a sign of genius is the ability to mock oneself to better understand the self. He who can penetrate the falseness and hypocrisy - whether playfully exaggerated or not - is more likely to inaugurate change, restructure, or rehabilitate the notion of Self and the Other - society. Therefore, in addition to being the entertainment factor of the courtly system, parody is comparable to a grace-giving cleansing process whereby the individual may begin anew. This mentality presupposes an intelligence of philosophical and psychological depth while creating the seeming superficiality of parody. Marie's light-handed criticism becomes a means and hope for change.

This last context under examination is principally a matter and question of style - how the work is presented - its artistic expression. Marie is just as attached to the notions of mystical and philosophical transcendence through love as she is to those "trompe l'oeil" aspects of artistic form - the appearance level of the symbol, otherwise known as parody. Many times what most critics term "courtly love" is merely a distortion of already existing principles. Courtly parody

distorts, perverts, softens, modifies, or seemingly eliminates either pagan, Christian, or courtly values and virtues by superimposing a highly sophisticated art form upon all rational and non-rational aspects of the symbols employed in the Lais. A change of some sort must take place in all symbols of all the contexts in order for parody to function as parody. Preciosity may become one of parody's most logical outcomes; however, it is relatively less extravagant in Marie's work since the poetess's style, for the most part, lacks affectation; her discrete light touch never encumbers the humor - which is a breath of fresh air in relation to the philosophy. Marie's parody, although parody in general is often associated with the breakdown of a literary and socio-political system, is not criticism per se; in fact, Marie's use of parody ironically reinforces the courtly code through questioning and requestioning of its values and virtues as did the entire twelfth century - courtliness's peak. Although Marie's parody lacks the "punch" of a Chrétien, its graciousness, nevertheless, is food for courtly humor. To underestimate Marie's talents and the worth of the Lais in general would be foolish.

The development of the notion of courtliness must briefly be retraced through the "roman courtois" and the "poésie lyrique" of the troubadours so that Marie de France's understanding and reworking of this notion may be fully appreciated. The earlier "romans courtois" deal with love and adventure themes crossed with the legends of antiquity, those of "la matière bretonne," epic techniques, and Provençal lyricism. They will eventually converge upon and culminate in the works of Chrétien de Troyes

who will exploit the parodial elements to their fullest. The Roman de Thèbes (1150) in addition to recapitulating Etéocle and Polynice's struggle for the throne will belabor long descriptions of the emotional and inner life of the main characters. Portraits of the beauty, grace, youth, and honor of Antigone and Ismène will also signify the origins of the courtly notion.[11] Wace's Roman de Brut (1155), a freely translated version in verse of Geoffrey de Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae, mentions for the first time Arthur's Round Table. Wace with considerably more verve than Geoffrey offers elaborate descriptive passages of feasts, voyages, and even vignettes on manners and mores of the time with scepticism and humor towards the "faits merveilleux."[12] The inclusa motif appears: Ygerne, wife of the Comte de Cornouaille is held against her will in a chateau at Tintagel. Uther with Merlin's magical assistance takes on the count's likeness and rescues the lady - from this union is born King Arthur. Again long descriptive passages of how Uther becomes enamoured of Ygerne characterize the new courtly trend.[13] A debunking of the Celtic myths is already taking place in the works of courtly writers. Enéas (1160) delves deeply into the psychology of love during numerous scenes between Enée and Didon and later between Enée and Lavine. Both Ovid's and Virgil's influence are strongly felt in the work. For the author's part, an anonymous Normand, Dido is the cause of her own unhappiness - her fatality becomes his anti-feminist approach to the problem.[14] The moving lyrical passages of Dido's madness and suicide attest to the brilliance and talent of the author. Dido is the victim of love because

it is the will of the gods that it be so. Flames are rekindled by the innovating and novel love affair between Lavine and Enée. The accent is always on the psychology of love. The Roman de Troie (1165) by Benoît de Sainte-Maure retraces the Golden Fleece episodes ending with Ulysses' death at the hands of his son, Télégonus, whom he had with the sorceress Circé. Fabulous descriptions of the Orient abound while the author observes and analyzes the love situation and its nuances - the intrigues of Jason and Médée, Troilus and Briseida, Achilles and Polyxène. All sides of the picture of love are examined - "fraîcheur ingénue, désir irrésistible, coquetteries, dépit, oublis et remords, jalousie, ravages de la passion."[15] Splendid portraits of Hélène and Briséida are presented in an in-depth analysis. The fame of the Troilus and Briséida love affair is witnessed in Boccaccio's Filostrato, Chaucer's Troylus and Criseyde, and Shakespeare's Troylus and Cressida. All these notions of love, the "merveilleux," and courtly virtues come to a proverbial head in Chrétien. In Erec et Enide (1162) the rules of love and courtesy are outraged at every turn; the hero has already married the heroine before the action of the poem begins.[16] There is no humility on Erec's part and the woman is not the center of attraction to be glorified nor is the man for that matter. The "recréant" theme - the knight's laziness setting in after marriage - is another spoof of both chivalry and love. The incompatibility of love and marriage is further developed and humorously so in Yvain (1170) where the conflict is totally "contrived" and thanks to a lion the hero's life is saved.[17] Speaking of animals, Erec et Enide exploits the hunt

of the "blanc cerf" theme à la Guigemar[18] - the one who captures the beast wins a kiss from the maiden of his choice. Furthermore a comic variation of the chastity belt is to be found in Erec - "une ceinture de pieux." The "pucelle" of the "Joie de la Cour" is ensconced in many protective mechanisms.[19] Chrétien's "druérie" are just as fanciful as those of Marie - invisible walls, rings that make one invisible, ugly giants and dwarfs, mock battles and blood-baths, with an occasional descent into hell by the hero. Of course, Chrétien's "druérie" are functional while Marie's are not. The parody of the "Fausse Mort" in Cligès (1164) will be of particular interest to us in our analysis of Guilliadun's comatose state in Eliduc.[20] In Lancelot (1168), Chrétien demythologized the Celtic elements through the use of parody - he destroys more magic than he creates. Supposedly, Marie de Champagne's influence explains the hero's "submission to love."[21] The hero does make a fool of himself in the name of love since he is but a puppet in the hands of the artist. The exaggeration is a proof to the contrary; Chrétien's heroes do not submit themselves to the lady's dictates without complete knowledge and mock-humility. Guinevere's captivity in the mysterious land of Gorre and her rescue by Lancelot epitomizes the mockery of "courtly" and its value system: the reason for Guinevere's initial unfriendly and hostile attitude towards Lancelot is, according to the Queen, Lancelot's hesitation in stepping into the tumbril driven by a dwarf when the hero began his quest and rescue attempt.[22] This is her reproach after the hero had submitted himself to every torture imaginable through fairyland trial and tribulation

for love's sake. The lady is fickle and from a harsh breed. In Perceval (1182) Chrétien exploits all the religiously mystical and transcendental elements of symbolism - the Graal and a bleeding lance held by a maiden - not without the usual accompanying spoofing in the rivalry established between Perceval and Gauvain and the incredible happenings of a "merveilleux" nature.[23]

Chrétien sets up certain stock characters for the inevitable fall, duping both listener and reader at first. In Yvain a lofty build-up of King Arthur in all his majestic pomp, lasting a considerable length of time, is presented to an audience which will soon be shocked by the King's inelegant and boorish behavior. The King is anything but regal.[24] Marie like Chrétien capitelizes on the irony and parody of this courtly"build-up and fall" pattern especially in Lanval and Equitan. Remember that the courtly context deals primarily with form. Similarly, the "refined and well-mannered" Calgrenant of Yvain will bombard Queen and court with the most uncourtly, crude and rude language.[25] The Yvain accentuates the disparity between courtly pretense and bad, if not occasionally vulgar, language. The humor of the scene rests in non-courtly arrogance - all of which forms an integral part of the code of "courtoisie" and Chrétien's talent. It is no different with Thomas' version of the Tristan legend. Again, Thomas like Marie does not sustain the parody; nevertheless, the parodial elements are present on a reduced scale as in the well-known "Salle aux Images" episode. Thomas exaggerates the courtly so that it appears non-courtly; the ludicrousness of the situation

is at the base of the spoof: every time Tristan and Iseult get the chance to meet, the poet goes to great lengths, breaking the action of the tale, to explain the intimate details of the life of the couple - Tristan teaches Iseult how to play the harp and sing while she is infatuated with physical beauty. How sweet a picture in the midst of all the strife, fatality, and eventual death.[26] When the situation is viewed objectively, it becomes more of a farce than it actually is. "Ludicrous" is the adjective that typifies many scenes in both Béroul and Thomas. Much in Marie's work as in Chrétien's is left to the powers of the imagination which entices the reader further into the ludicrousness of the situation - Yonec and the Bisclavret are perfect examples. The problem with which we are faced, therefore, is how to read the courtly pieces. Just as lyricism and the narration of adventures do not clash in epics and gestes, so too can the transcendental harmony of the troubadours coexist in the same work with the puns and parody of the courtly genre - an occurrence fully realized in the Lais. All epics have moving lyrical scenes as in Gormont et Isembart;[27] this fact does not detract from the epic standards. Likewise Marie's form of parody does not take away from the transcendental qualities of idealistic symbolism. A blending occurs with Marie - the philosophical love movement of the troubadours and the courtly game playing of the roman courtois. The lyricism of the epic as the parody in Marie offers relief first and then stylistic contrast for reasons of emphasis. Chrétien's ironic elements - the master of tongue-in-cheek - his love of parody, innovation, and spoof with the mock-serious-

ness of an Ovid develops into a case of parody within parody, or "geis" within "geis" if you will. Marie, although her moments of parody are less frequent and not developed to the extent of a Chrétien, nevertheless employs the courtly bag of tricks whenever the occasion permits - comic elements can be found in every lai. Chaitivel's comedy rests upon the lai within a lai motif; we have the crisis - the battle scene of four chevaliers - and then the highly cerebral and philosophical recounting of the "tragedy" in order to establish a title. This is quite courtly and in the French tradition to intellectualize the circumstances while those around are losing their heads or dropping one by one. In effect, the detection of parodial elements may establish a basis to determine affinities between one work and another and possibly authorship as in the case of Guillaume d'Angleterre attributed to Chrétien de Troyes.[28] There are also several anonymous lais which at times were accredited to Marie - Graelent, Guigamor, Espine, Desiré, Melion, Doon, Tyolet.[29] Reexamination of the elements of parody within these works may provide clues to the establishment of authorship. Parody is rarely mentioned as a source of Marie's inspiration, but it is omnipresent in the work of her contemporary, Chrétien. In Cligès, a hyper-Tristan of sorts, we notice the familiar development of the king's characterization: in Béroul, Marc is vengeful, in Thomas benign, and in Cligès Alis is the "pawn-like butt of Chrétien's humor."[30] The voluptuousness of the "Salle aux Images" of the Tristan legend is tantamount to mock-adoration; Fénice, Cligès' lady, is hidden away in a tower "which contains all the luxury and

comfort imaginable."[31] While Tristan "may privately worship a life-like statue of his far away love"[32] in this "Salle aux Images," Cligès "may repair to enjoy his lady surrounded by opulence."[33] The point is that Chrêtien has developed the courtly themes and elements of parody found in the Tristan legend. How to make light of the situation is the forte of courtliness. An existential play between whatever courtly and non-courtly truly mean confuses and prevents a clear definition of terms due to the parody and to the fact that all takes place at the court from decapitations to love-making and that most of the poets in question are composing within the sphere of the court. In this case, the term - "courtoisie" encompasses a broader area which lends itself to some ambiguity. Nevertheless, adulterous love is a "courtly" element, and as Paul Lonigan illustrates, the Tristan legend cannot be declared "uncourtly" on the grounds of Iseult's sharing herself between two men - not necessarily two lovers. The critic realizes the insufficiency of the terms used - standards to which Chrêtien does not confine himself in reconciling and resolving the Tristan-like dilemma of Cligès.[34] A certain freedom is exercised even within our set definitions. The problem too is that adultery is not even considered adultery and is furthermore sanctioned especially when the third party is a "gelos" or some other phantomlike entity. It is rarely the case that both men are of equal worth in all areas. In Eliduc, Marie varies the accepted notion and abandons standard procedure by introducing two rivals of equal worth but they are women - Guilliadun and Guildeluëc. In this long progression of developing motifs, we

must establish Marie's place. By contrast, Chrétien chooses a love triangle composed of two men and a woman - Cligès, Fénice, and Alis like their "prototypes" - Tristan, Iseult, and Marc. The latter structure is the usual triangular make-up in the Lais including Marie's treatment of the Tristan legend in the Chievrefoil. The exceptions are the Guildeluëc-Eliduc-Guilliadun, Fresne-Gurun-Codre, and the Queen-Lanval-Fairy Mistress triangles where two women are pitted against one man - the feminine variation. The one triangular situation seems to accuse the man of infidelity, the other the woman for having two lovers. In any event, the terms "courtly" and "non-courtly" become unsatisfactory and irrelevant when enmeshed in parody, and they thus hinder in the analysis of certain twelfth century works.

While the "roman courtois" offers insight into the notion of the parody of courtliness, we must turn to the troubadours for further understanding of this concept. Marie's notion of parody does not preclude the notion of idealistic transcendence - a concept dear to the lyric poets. Mario Casella, while attempting to dispute the positivists like Jeanroy and Paris, detects an ontological progression towards the Absolute in the poetry of Jaufré Rudel and to some extent in that of Guillaume IX d'Aquitaine. It is an artistic and idealistic process - the "becoming" of the poet which leads to a connaissance de soi and a knowledge of God in strict Christian terms. The poet by an act of will searches for the complement of his interior life in the real world; he then reincorporates this already known exterior reality to the Self.[35] Eventually, according

to Casella, the poet experiences the truth of God in this newly incorporated factor. The woman in this process is a vehicle playing a secondary role exactly as the Virgin did in St. Bernard's transcendental progression. The only difference in this process as concerns Jaufrê and Guillaume is that the former tends to be more spiritual in an Augustinian sense while the latter is more a realist with emphasis upon the physical. For Casella, it is purely a matter of degree and the positivists who are overly concerned with their systems cannot simply place the poets into fixed categories which do not account for personal qualities. The troubadour through his poetry and creation is involved in self analysis: "Quelle che invece troviamo in Guglielmo IX è una tradizione di pensiero, di cui egli si serve per analizzare se stesso e rappresentarsi sensibilmente, secondo visualizzazioni tipologiche delle sue passioni primodiali e istintive."[36] Through love, the poet is capable of capturing that exterior complement of his soul and finally God: "Il motivo lirico sgorga così dall'animo del poeta con l'immediatezza spontanea di una musica interiore che si risolve in un canto. E il canto dice la pienezza e l'espansiva esultanza del suo essere, che si sente in armonia con la natura universa come parte di questa stessa natura che è poi la sua vita . . . la realizzazione di questo amore, per chi lo vive soltanto come desiderio e speranza lontana, si presenta al pensiero nell'indefinita e indefinibile richezza di astratte possibilità, che già il poeta accetta rimettendosi alla volontà di Dio."[37] Casella further concludes that even the biographers of the vida - whether a true account of the poet's life or not -

realized this creative process within the troubadours. Thus, the vida - that accompanying piece of biography - serves as an exposition of the motifs to follow in the troubadour's poems.[38] Marie's transcendentalism resembles that of the troubadours as much as that of St. Bernard. The philosophies are not mutually exclusive.

The troubadours regardless of their place of origin expressed their "new" courtly love message in "langue d'oc" - disputes of whether the language be classified as Provençal or Limousin do not concern us. From the beginning of the eleventh century, dissemination of this tongue was characterized by a relatively comprehensive unity with minimal dialectic differences - "l'idiome est sensiblement le même du Limousin jusqu'à la Méditerranée. C'est d'emblée que les troubadours, de quelque région qu'ils soient (il y a parmi eux des Catalans et des Italiens) adoptent le koinê (langue commune) de l'époque."[39] The language of culture was for all intents and purposes one - Occitan - even though other dialects were in full use in everyday conversation. It is a literary not native language, and therefore repercussions would be experienced on a socio-cultural level. Proof of this is clearly observed in the work of Guillaume IX d'Aquitaine who was, in effect, "poitevin d'origine" but wrote in "occitan."[40] Marie was composing in a form of the Norman dialect, but this too may have been the literary language of the English court. For cultural, political, social, and linguistic reasons, Guillaume seems to have chosen Occitan as a mode of expression. It has been demonstrated that there did exist other troubadours who could be described as "non-

occitan" - Jaufré Rudel and Richard de Barlieznieux.[41] The troubadour's love concept will be a complete social emersion into a ritualistic behavior pattern. The troubadour is a composer and entertainer affiliated with the court; he is not a wanderer like the "jongleur" who does not compose but entertains, recites, and performs acrobatic feats. Thus the poetry of the twelfth century is essentially aristocratic or "courtois" even though the poet himself may originate from various social classes.[42] His repertoire is extensive, but let us point out those genres that are visible in the Lais. The "canzo" is the basic form that treats the theme of love in all forms. Subdivisions of the "canzo" are the "pastourelle," "l'aube," and "planhs" among others.[43] The "pastourelle" is a rustic setting in which a chevalier attempts to seduce "la bergère" - without success most of the time since the young shepherdess is wiser than one assumes;[44] however, on a social level it is an aristocratic game since the poem itself is a means of mental seduction: the chevalier may fail in his attempts, but the dying languishing poet and martyr of love is through reverse persuasion conquering his lady's thoughts and body. It is, therefore, a psychological battle within and outside the context of the poem. The "pastourelle" is primarily a duel between differing social classes; Milun, Chaitivel, Equitan, and to some extent Lanval deal with the social question. "L'aube" is a genre in which a friend and look-out or "guet" warns the lovers, who are under cover of the night, of the approaching dawn - the light which may reveal their love to the "gelos." Secrecy is the essence of the "aube"[45] - Lanval as well as

Yonec must keep secrets; their love must not be known. The stock character of the "guet" is virtually absent in the Lais, whereas the evil "lauzengiers" who spy, reveal secrets, spread infamous rumors and undermine the workings of a "guet" are omnipresent in the Lais - Yonec, Guigemar, Fresne. The "planhs" or "plaintes" are the expression of extreme suffering caused by either the absence or death of the loved-one;[46] they can be "sincere" or honest, or they can be exaggerated as they are in Marie at times - the grievings of both Yonec's and Guigemar's ladies whereas the girl of the Deus Amanz employs the opposite tone in her "planhs." The "planhs" are usually associated with the "amor de lonh" concept. The "chanson de toile" mentioned earlier may be a source for the inclusa motif;[47] here, the ladies, usually under some form of supervision, are kept busy weaving in the towers of their castles while awaiting the return of their husbands from the Crusades; an occasional infidelity appears in this genre while the man is away. There is also the "chanson à personnages" in which the "mal mariée" complains of her brutal husband while longing for her lover.[48] Do not forget the frequent tongue-in-cheek nature of this genre. The "chanson pieuse" is as much to the honor of God, saints, and the Virgin as any "canzo" is to the honor and adoration of the love-object.[49] There is an affinity as stated in the previous chapter on Christianity. The "jeu parti" or "tenso" is a highly constructed and artifical debate of a particular question to be examined; in Provençal, it is called "partimen."[50] This casuistry is most noticeable in Equitan and Chaitivel. "Le dit" is a small piece treating a familiar subject usually

for reasons of satire or in order to derive a moral - Equitan and Fresne both have this aura about them.[51] "La fatrasie" or "resveries" is like a stream of consciousness - unrelated sequence of facts or events.[52] Many times this is the feeling established in the Lais through the mystical supernatural powers of the Celtic symbols. Although there is much order of form in Yonec, the general atmosphere is one of "resverie." Related to this genre is the complex "trobar clus" as opposed to "trobar plan" or simple; it was greatly employed by Guillaume IX and is an almost incomprehensible form destined to be understood by a select few - a definite elite and snob implication as is the bulk of courtly literature.[53] Marie's Prologue may be seen in terms of "trobar clus." And if my interpretation of the Bisclavret is correct concerning the poetess's identity as discussed in the first chapter, Marie was making full use of the cryptic "trobar clus." The "reverdies" are variations of the "pastourelle;" they are the songs of spring sung by the birds forming a cortège to the god of Love in this fairy-like vision.[54] The Laüstic devotes a portion of its time to spring and the singing of birds before the lady's imaginative ruse. The general tone and atmosphere created by the "chanson à danser" where love, happiness, joy, and dancing reign is reminiscent of the Golden Age. All is joy and singing of "rondeaux" and "ballades."[55] The essential point to be maintained is that all these genres were for the amusement and relaxation of the courtly circles. It is not all that seriously dry.

The "new" courtly tastes were credited in large part to the crusaders returning from the East. However, other theories

not within the scope of this thesis have been suggested: "la thèse historico-sociologique, la thèse médio-latine, la thèse arabo-persane," and even the continuing debate over "poésie populaire ou poésie savante?"[56] Most would agree that it is a "poésie savante" if not totally aristocratic due to the diverging classes of poets. What is termed "courtoisie" is a social, psychological, spiritual, and literary phenomenon. In the general "love concept" movement from south to north, critics have indicated several differences between the southern concept of "cortesia" and the northern "courtoisie." First of all, the "courtly" tendencies do not take hold in the north with sharpness and distinction until 1150[54] - Marie's time slot and area. This does not mean that the northern concept developed only because of southern influences. We have already noted the parody of Chrétien and the general Celtic contributions in matters of love and fantasy. A multitude of modes and expressions are utilized by Marie in the Lais. In fact, both the southern and northern movements may have been simultaneous and within highly aristocratic milieus. In general, the society of Occitania is less hierarchial in the feudalistic sense, and class distinctions are, if not abolished, attenuated at least. A discernable freedom of expression exists in the social and political structure of the South: "Le trobar y constitue une sorte de promotion sociale qui peut compenser la bassesse ou la médiocrité de l'extraction: la vida de Bernard de Ventadour, même si elle n'est que de pure légende, est significative à ce sujet."[58] The closed universe of "fin' amor" is a ritualized expression - "un monde à part à l'intérieur duquel l'écart

social peut être précisément valorisé."[59] The "langue d'oïl" milieu is a world of compartmentalization, stricter social and class structure. "Courtoisie" should now be analyzed in its general and strict sense to be best understood. In the larger sense, it is an ensemble of qualities - physical, mundane, moral, and intellectual - which makes the people of the court what they are - their essence: generosity, chivalry, elegance, politeness, the art of speaking and receiving others - in short, an "art de vivre." In the stricter sense, it is the art of love reserved for the elite - a concentrated sublimation of desire, a discipline of passion, a religion of love if you will. That is "courtoisie" which is to be distinguished from "amour courtois." "Amour courtois" constitutes the extreme refinement of "courtoisie" and its virtues;[60] it does not include everything that we understand from the notion of "courtoisie." This refinement may occasionally lead to exaggerated courtly virtues and parody. "Si l'amant-poète de la poésie lyrique doit nécessairement faire preuve des qualités d'ensemble de la courtoisie, le héros de roman peut posséder au même titre toutes ces qualités sans être pour cela un adepte ou un modèle de la religion de l'amour."[61] The expressions, "amour courtois" and "amant courtois" are thus ambiguous. These terms should be replaced by the authentic designations of the troubadours themselves - "de veraia amors, bona amors, fin' amors, fins amanz ou verais amanz."[62] All not lying within this context would be "non-courtois" and not a product of this noble society - which would be virtually little in the twelfth century at least. We cannot become so embroiled in our terminology

that we cannot escape its confines. The troubadours as well as the "trouvères" were endowed professionals from all classes although the majority emanated from what would be termed the lower nobility; they were loved and admired by an aristocratic public for their musical and literary talents. The stumbling block for most modern critics is the notion of "sincerity" in the troubadours; their art was not totally disinterested both in social and love terms. Their tears, laments, and "plahns" as well as their sacrifices in love's name even to the death must be scrutinized with a cautious eye. Not all of what is said - maybe half - was truly believed. Their art is marked by a certain detachment or possible lack of sincerity but not always. Our task is to go beyond this art of detachment and discover a relative truth in "amour courtois" by penetrating the game-playing within and outside the text.

What is "fin'amor"? It is a refined love conception with all psycho-sociological implications superimposed upon an ethical foundation. It reigns supreme in medieval lyricism and in the courtly codes of comportment; its representative form of expression is the "canzo." "La fin'amor est un amour sublimé, adressé par le fin amant à une dame, existentiellement absente dans le poème, qu'il peut n'avoir jamais vue, et projetée fonctionellement dans une transcendance de principe: cette transcendance s'actualisant par une distanciation qui peut être géographique (amor de lonh), sociologique (la dame est la plupart du temps de haute extraction), morale (la dame est mariée), et psycho-sexuelle (jeu de l'amour contrarié)."[63] Thus absence of the lady or her inaccessibility for one reason or another

characterizes the essence of "fin'amor." It is the paradoxical situation of "possĕder/ne pas possĕder"[64] in which the prolongation of the desire dominates the actual attainment of that long-awaited desire - an unfulfilled wish or dream. "Fin'amor" is a love that is born and nourishes itself on obstacles in Freudian terms - the obstacles being "nuisance, lauzengiers, et le gelos." Society can destroy as well as preserve this concept. "Fin'amor" is characterized by an ecstatic upward movement where the quest of a superior or higher good - the lady's love - is accompanied by the lovers' so-called duties: "la prière, le service, l'obéissance, la vénération." All this begins with physical beauty in the vast majority of cases. "Fin'amor" also demands an inverse movement from above originating from the lady who is "la merci." It is through her position that the lady, the object of this cult, may accept or reject the "prières" and the "vénération" which are addressed to her.[65] Although these upward and downward transcendental movements resemble Bernard's, Jung's, and symbolic idealism's progressive love systems in general, Bernard's God or Marie's ladies are never haughty as is the lady of "fin'amor" with the exception of Chaitivel's lady. Marie's ladies tend to be much more obliging; her men too are not so in awe nor do they act out of mock-deference. Neither God nor Marie's heroes and heroines nonchalantly dismisses one's prayers. Remember too that this is a projected image of the lady - an appearance level - and not necessarily a statement of belief or fact in what the lady really is. The dramatic tension of "fin'amor" is based on this dialectic of upward and downward movements -

does the lady accept what is offered? The waiting and prolongation of the desire are all part of the game. The inaccessibility of the lady creates a burning desire in the admirer to excel so that he may merit whatever the "domna" may have to offer. The dramatic tension of the Lais is not so much a question of inaccessibility for it is usually a conquerable factor - Yonec, Guigemar, Milun. Tension derives from exterior forces: how are the lovers going to keep their love alive; how will they overcome obstacles produced by the "gelos" and the "lauzengiers;" how will they make their encounters more frequent. Is it only in death that the clandestine meeting is permanent as in Deus Amanz? Or is it only through religious transcendence that the lovers may enjoy stability and attain permanence as in Eliduc? Marie de France offers middle-of-the-road solutions in most of the other lais. "Fin'amor devient une école de perfectionnement éthique suscité par la vertu (Pretz) de son destinataire et inséparable de la beauté féminine."[66] It is thus an esthetic, social, and moral ideal becoming larger than life and reaching for some general truth. Marie like Chrêtien will occasionally free herself from the chains of so restricting a system; solutions to dilemmas will vary from context to context.

The internal dramatization of the poetic and erotic situation of "fin'amor" revolves around three fundamental characters: "le destinateur, le destinataire, et les personnages allusifs." "Le destinateur" is the "je," the concrete being of the poem who truly loves; the "je" may represent all lovers; he is the "je-amant, je-poête, et je-récitant."[67] "L'effusion lyrique

est une confession devant un public de cour."[68] The "destinataire" in principle is the loved "domna" or the sublimated projections of desire on an object having no real existence - an "amor de lonh" or a "donna angelicata." The "personnages allusifs" are always in the wings - "lauzengier, gelos, et gardador." Their existence is closely linked to the amorous triangular situation. How does Marie handle and incorporate these three elements? By simply instilling flesh and blood into these allusive characterizations. Since the Lais are in the third person with frequent dialoguing, the listener and reader experience the full visual impact of the conflicts of "fin'amor." In addition, Marie is fusing these "fin'amor" elements with "roman courtois" story lines - that is, the vividness of the linear methods of recitation in adventure stories. Never is the "domna" allusive in the Lais. Neither is the "gelos" just a simple "given" or presence without life or function. Marie concretizes the elements; in fact, in the Laüstic, the modern critic could trace the development of a stock character, the "gelos," without any difficulty. Marie's ladies are never simply figments of the imagination even though they may possess certain illusive qualities due to Celtic mysticism as in Guigemar or Lanval. Marie offers concrete descriptive passages of characters which she juxtaposes to the more abstract philosophical characteristics of "fin'amor." Real presences dominate Marie's love triangles. Admittedly there are "gelos" or third party figures in the Lais who just happen to be there without the necessary existential fundamentals and these can be traced directly to those vague entities of "fin'amor."

The lady of "fin'amor" must be married - "la jeune fille n'ayant pas de personnalité juridique, ne possédant ni fiefs ni vassaux, est incapable d'autorité et de domination. L'épouse de seigneur au contraire . . . exerce un indéniable ascendant sans lequel la fin amor ne serait même pas pensable."[69] This is unthinkable for Marie who strives to maintain mutual understanding and harmony within the conflict, not the domination of one's will over another. The lovers are in an existential play together against the world; they form a unit reminiscent of the "mythe de l'Androgyne." For "fin'amor" adulterous love is so much more rich emotionally and socially when obstacles present themselves and when true affection is based upon and born of free-will. Many times with Marie, the lovers are overcome by a grace-like love or by the fatality of love. The equation, love equals death, is not always maintained. Marie presents both cases, of ill and good fortune, but it is usually not a matter of choice or free-will. For "fin'amor," marriage in the noble classes is a matter of sterility, conformity, and convenience both social and economic. The husband becomes one of those allusive and illusive personages. We could hardly say that about Eliduc or even the husband in the Laüstic. With Marie de France, the married lady is not chosen out of preference, although she may happen to be the object of adoration but not always as witnessed in Deus Amanz, Fresne, Eliduc, Chaitivel. An innocent, naive, young lady may be as formidable a lover as a Fairy Mistress or a seneschal's wife. The power struggle between the "destinataire" and the "destinateur" of "fin'amor" is eliminated by Marie as is the haughtiness of both

lover and lady in the Lais except for Chaitivel and Equitan. The experienced married lady is no proof of the quality of love for Marie. That evasive quality of "finesse" is given meaning through concrete acts of love in Christian terms. Much of "fin'amor" is the corruption or perversion of the already existing factor of Christian love and its virtues. Marie is more humanistic and realistic: all ladies and gentlemen are capable of such heights and more rarely of the most abominable depths. Marie eliminates, softens, or underplays the cynicism. The lovers tend to be equals, if not socially, then in the quality of their courtly and Christian love. "Courtly" and "Christian" can harmoniously blend at times especially in their emphasis on the transcendental and on the maintenance of strict virtues. In Marie, we witness, the reciprocity of this "finesse." The struggle or conflict situation, although it can and does at times involve inner strife, is the direct result of a third party, or it is due to circumstances; thus, Marie is imitating "roman courtois" story lines and descriptive processes while the basic love song of the troubadours is sung with emphasis upon the transcendental and with less emphasis on the cynical, but not without some courtly game-playing and parody. Marie's gift is her capability of fusing thought and art while reconciling seemingly irreconcilable philosophies. A simple fact rarely mentioned but which must be retained is that the troubadours are Christian. To be a troubadour is not to deny Christian ethics; on the contrary, we have demonstrated how the fundamentals of symbolic idealism, Christian philosophy, and "fin'amor" coincide and redublicate each other in tran-

scendental terms. "Fin'amor" does not necessitate the presence of some heretical doctrine opposed to the Church's teaching. When "fin'amor" does present a perversion or distortion of the Christian principles, it is no more different than presenting examples of "sin" in the Christian context. If the writer presents a case of perversion, sin, or distortion, is the writer debauched? One can "trobar" - compose musical airs, "tropes" - and one can sing "fin'amor," and did, while maintaining the principles of his faith. Most critics look upon "fin'amor" as only a licentious game in conflict with Christianity; this opinion must be reviewed. The court was the place where the troubadours "amused" without necessarily adhering to the dogmatic aspects of "fin'amor;" they were admired both for their entertainment and their philosophy by the nobles as well as the clergy. Few, if any, were ever excommunicated on grounds of their compositions.

Discretion is an integral part of both "fin'amor" and Marie's love concept. Not only are the oaths of secrecy to be upheld as in Lanval and Milun but also a discretion of language - an intended limit on what is revealed to the listener in order to leave more to the imagination. Some lyric poets like Guillaume IX will sometimes become blatantly obscene.[70] In "fin'amor," the lady is often designated by a "senhal" which spares the admirer the trouble and embarrassment of using the lady's real name. Names in this context belie their true meaning; for instance, the troubadour often refers to the lady in masculine appellatives such as "midons" since she represents a master or lord of sorts, and her "merce" and "orguelh" are

equally those of a "seigneur." A fusion between "fin'amor" virtues and abuses with those of epics, chivalry, and the feudal system in general is occurring. Marie, however, rarely pushes this analogy to extremes just to maintain secrecy and discretion. Why discretion? The husband has been relegated to the pejorative denomination - "gelos;" he has his entourage of spies who are ready to divulge the wife's minutest gesture. The "lauzengiers" defame the lady; in the eyes of the troubadour, they are a despicable lot - "gens infâmes, médisants, flatteurs, envieux, calomniateurs."[71] Keep in mind, however, the entertainment factor - just as the villain of early motion pictures entered the scene, a threatening image that made audiences boo and hair stand on end, the "lauzengiers" have a similar effect; although threatening, they are mocked and laughed at. The "lauzengiers" of lyric poetry are an anonymous, illusive, and collective species of non-entities that are never individualized. Marie individualizes everyone within the scope of "fin'amor" - there is a sister spy, some chaplain or eunuch. Marie's image is rarely vague and often quite developed. Therefore, we have the basic structural elements of "amour courtois" with a more in-depth character analysis and description of "roman courtois." The stock characterization of the "lauzengier" is a threat and rival not necessarily in the love conflict itself: "il est aussi et surtout la personnification des résistances qu'offre le monde extérieur aux aspirations du chevalier pauvre, et en particulier de la concurrence que lui font ses congénères. Ce n'est pas par hasard que le type répugne radicalement à l'individualisation."[72] Because of the

"lauzengier," the love couple cannot operate openly; they must dissimulate, "celar." The stock "gelos" in courtly terms symbolizes the husband. Marie varies this notion - Eliduc and the Bisclavret are husbands not equated with the term "gelos." Her characters are more complex. The Bisclavret's wife as well as the Queen in Lanval could more readily be termed as such. Marie's picture is not generalized; her art is in movement since she presents specific cases. The "gelos" of "fin'amor" is stupid but less hateful than the "lauzengier." It is no different for Marie; her "gelos" are often bungling fools like the husbands in Guigemar and Yonec; the husband in the Laüstic is much more clever. Furthermore, jealousy in marriage or conjugal jealousy is despicable, ludicrous, and incompatible with "courtoisie." Nevertheless, it is as important a factor to "courtoisie" as sin is to Christianity. Marie's lovers are never jealous of each other and her "gelos" is not eternally ravaged by jealousy; he seems often not to care. The "gardadors" are humorously detestable culprits too; they enjoy the most enviable positions and the protection of their master while keeping close watch on the lady's doings and whereabouts in this erotic situation of stereotyped characters of "fin'amor." Marie tends though to underplay the eroticism through discretion of language. The listener fills in the gaps.

The primary aim of "amour courtois" is not the satisfaction of desire but the acquisition of courtly virtues. The code of behavior of "fin'amor" supposedly ennobles the lover with all the necessary virtues to succeed in love and in society. This is the ideology of the system at least. These values possess

a triple meaning to the courtly existence. First, they actualize and realize the fundamental qualities which are the architecture of courtly society; their flaws or abuses constitute the ruination of this society. Second, for the individual, they render more dynamic a specific ethic as a model for behavior within the structure of the society in relation to the lady who is a reflection of it. Third, they become extraordinarily valued elements - semiotic and poetic centers of attraction[73] - whence the indispensible tensions form the dynamism of a particular message. The central symbol of each lai organizes the entire content in orbital fashion like planets revolving around the sun. These idealized virtues become absolutes themselves. The principal virtues of "fin'amor" are "mesura, largueza, joven, et joi." Some overlapping with Christian virtues occurs especially in the case of the first two. "Mesura" is savoir-faire, modesty, hate of excess, self-control, equilibrium of feeling and reason. Its abuse is "démesure." "Mesura" really means conformity to the laws of love for both the lady and the "chevalier-servant." The lady lacks "mesura" if she does not grant - after weeks and months of painful waiting her "merć et son gazardon" - her love in all senses of the term. Often the waiting period of the chevalier becomes an interminable courtly source of amusement.[74] Many of Marie's ladies, the Bisclavret's wife and Milun's lady among others, grant these pleasures without question or waiting; others may take their time but eventually succumb - the seneschal's wife needs to be persuaded in intellectualized courtly terms. The Lanval's lady never gets the chance;

Yonec's lady would like visible Christian proof before she goes off to bed with just anyone. Lazar made an attractive parallel between "mesura" and "cortesia": "la mesura étant à l'individu ce que la cortesia est à la vie en commun."[75] "Mesura" is socialized "cortesia" since "cortesia" also signifies equilibrium and moderation exercised by the chevalier in terms of those around him. "Mesura" is inward discipline and above all balance which represent the norms and rites in regard to the lady. To be a "fin amant," one must possess this virtue. Marie's lover of the Deus Amanz is stricken with "démesure," but we could hardly deny that his love is less "fin" than another's. Marie does not always respect the courtly "givens" as she does not always respect the virtues of the epics - "vaillance, courage, générosité, fidelité, et loyauté." Occasionally she will mock or parody the so-called standards. But this alone does not make her "non-courtois" especially when she uses the basic formulas and prescriptions of the courtly system. Abuse and parody - "esprit gaulois" - are all part of "courtoisie." "Largueza" is equivalent to generosity, munificence, the aristocratic propensity to grant gifts and favors profusely. It is largeness of virtue and character as depicted in the epic world. At times, this could be the troubadours' courtly deception of the seigneur. It is a brain-washing to convince the lord and master of his duty especially when all the "good" characters of the tale practice "largueza." We must be aware of the troubadour's bag of social tricks in matters of love and the duties of court when he seems only to be reciting a tale. Lanval's Mistress abounds in favors while

his king does not. Thus the virtue of "fin'amor" is satisfied while the virtue of the court or epic is not. Marie's lovers exchange "druërie," love-tokens of all sorts plus other physical favors, but the grandeur of "largueza" in the Lais or its abuse, "avareza ou escardedat,"[76] is usually reserved for kings and fairy mistresses and not the common individual. Aside from the general meaning of the terms, Guildeluëc exhibits "largueza" in her complete understanding of her husband's situation and by her decision to give Eliduc his freedom. Guildeluëc's resolution at times seems too good to be true; nevertheless, it is "largueza" contrived or not. Excessive demonstration of a virtue may be a sign of parody. The troubadours, however, tend to exaggerate the virtues even more than Marie who tries to be realistic. Marie was obviously more comfortable in her position at the court of Henry II than the troubadours may have felt in their respective situations since Marie saw little need to indirectly reprimand by exaggerating "largueza" or "avareza" in her works. If the king of Lanval is parsimonious, it is only to accentuate the Mistress's generosity. In "fin'amor," the notion of "largueza" becomes the lady's granting of favors to the troubadour. This is essentially a social not a personal art; two systems are at work simultaneously - "le service fëodal et le service amoureux." The lover is "homme-lige" to his lady as he is called in Equitan - not in triumph but in deceit, defeat, and death. The masculine terms used to refer to the lady reinforce and reflect the feudal code. The lover agrees to obey - an act of homage - à la Lanval or the seneschal's wife. Ladies obey just as quickly as men do in the Lais. The

Lais contain no sexist code of ethics. Marie takes hold of the fundamental principles of "fin'amor" and places them in opposing frames of reference for variety and innovation and entertainment. In Yonec, Marie mixes and transposes the act of homage with the rites associated with "serments de fidélité" - the hero in mock-fashion proves his Christian holiness. The vassal of courtly "fin'amor" or of the feudal system is inferior compared with the lady and lord; normally, the lovers of the Lais are on equal footing. Marie elevates or denigrates both lovers with equality. Marie seems not to display preference or prejudice for either male or female; she is not sexist per se but more humanistically realistic.

The last two virtues of "fin'amor" - "joven et joi" - are held in high esteem by courtly standards but mitigated greatly by Marie. They include the sexual implications of potency/impotency, virility/effeminateness, capability/incapability. The abuse is represented by "velheza" - "le vieillard et la vieillesse." Along with the notion of "joven" is juxtaposed generosity, joy, spontaneity of thought without ulterior motives - "la disponibilité"[77] as in the Deus Amanz whose lover is so absorbed in "joven et joi" that he acts without thinking. Marie again is more realistic and mature in the treatment of this virtue; she does not idealize or place this notion in adoration. In the Deus Amanz, Marie does not extol youth as being the sine qua non of "fin'amor." The lover's rashness brings death, in fact, but does not destroy the quality of the love. Furthermore, Eliduc is not old but relatively older than the lover of the Deus Amanz, but he too can attain "fin'amor" levels of

idealization. Marie does not stress nor place explicit faith in this factor. Youth does not always conquer all; she rejects the notion of the dynamism of youth cults. Marie always offers alternative resolutions of the courtly "givens." Marie is more even-keeled - excess is not her middle name. She does not automatically find the notion of "velheza" repugnant; it is not part of her psychological make-up to do so. Marie remains Christian as the young girl in the Deus Amanz who cares for her aging father. Marie does not generalize situations as does "fin'amor." No one is a priori detestable in nature - only their deeds can be judged. Finally, "joi" designates a fundamental kind of exaltation, quasi-mystical, induced by the contemplation of the lady or by her "souvenir" or by the anticipatory thought of her "merçé."[78] Marie's love is not an "amour de tête." It quite often starts on the physical level; she will, however, idealize and make it an Idea after the fact. Marie's love is not a solo imaginary trip of the mind. In a quasi-realistic framework, Marie elevates love to a purer state more often than not. The lovers themselves are not subject to the notion of "amor de lonh." The qualities of the lovers make the quality of love - existence before essence. Marie does not accept principles at face value. In a larger sense, "joi" may mean gladness, cheerfulness, and a briskness that overcomes the individual who loves - a renaissance of the personality as witnessed in Yonec's mistress. As it is alacrity of spirit, "joi" is also a psycho-poetic reality linked to the erotic situation.[79] The Bisclavret joyfully returns home on weekends from his questionable escapades. "Joi" can assume various forms in

Marie's work; her versatility never ceases to amaze. The force of "joi" has been equated by some as a mystical transcendental happening: "cette force issue du sentiment universel qui pousse la créature à collaborer avec le créateur en accordant à l'Autre le même amour que l'on accorde à soi-même dans l'égalité de l'estime. La femme est le symbole de l'Autre à propos duquel le moi se dépouille de l'amour-propre, de l'égoisme source de jalousie, de convoitise et avarice, et d'orgueil."[80] It is worth repetition: "amour courtois" often reflects Christian love and its abuses. But how do the courtly virtues correspond to reality in the twelfth century? When they resemble Christian virtues they become a duty; however, when they are presented in the light of parody, they correspond as much to the reality of the times as our forms of entertainment reflect today's reality. The symbol as "entertainment factor" is deceiving since ulterior motives are involved. The virtues and their abuses read as follows: "mesura/desmesura, umilitat/erguelh, joven/velheza, joi/dol(afan)."[81] They are inextricably bound to the interpretations of the symbols of the Lais. For some like Briffault or Lazar, "fin'amor" is fundamentally sensual while Casella accentuates the purifying virtues leading to transcendence. The love concept of the troubadours frequently moves along the framework of a "manichéisme affectif qui se manifeste sur le plan de la forme, par deux champs poétiques en perpétuelle tension."[82] If the Manicheism still lingers on, it is superficial and used only to contrast the positive absolutes of the Lais because Marie is above all a crystallizer and harmonizer. Her endings or resolutions seek to establish

harmony, not create further tension. As much as the form of lyric poetry is fixed in nature, the talent of the individual poet adds variety - themes are used and abused. They are often made to be abused. The art is stylized and individualized just as the virtues paradoxically coexist. For why else would Petrarch or Dante have been so impressed with the troubadours and with the twelfth century Renaissance of France? Melody, literature, philosophy, and poetry harmonize.

After this examination of "roman courtois" and "fin'amor," a definition would be in order. "Amour courtois" is fundamentally an intricate study of the psychology of love - ritualistic and transcendental - of its virtues and abuses with repercussions on literary as well as social levels. Depending on form, style, and mode of expression, the treatment of love, its virtues and vices, can tend towards parody. This is not a strange occurrence because when a society formulates a ritualistic pattern of behavior, it is open to criticism and attack by certain writers. Since the rituals are to some extent already exaggerated and affected, the writer need only slightly nudge these standards over the line of demarcation between ritual and parody. However, when the virtues of "fin'amor" are more closely associated to the Christian or epic virtues, they tend to set and even raise standards to greater heights. The distortion of these virtues is all part of the same system and is dramatized to enhance the virtues. When the virtues become stagnant and overused, the writer begins to parody. In the same author, both tendencies may appear. Thus, the general term of "courtoisie" incorporates the notions of "esprit

courtois" and "esprit gaulois." Marie herslef fuses the elements of form - and "fin'amor" of the troubadours - virtues, vices, and standards - to produce her Lais.

The Symbol as Love in the Courtly Context

The stock nature of the Prologue as an attention-getting device or exordium will have interesting repercussions in the light of the discussion to follow, and it can conceivably be termed an anti-prologue given the nature of the love concept within the Lais since the general philosophical tone of the Prologue belies the situational predicaments of each lai. What adds to the irony is that it was written post factum.[83] Marie composed a complex philosophical introduction mentioning the ancients after having presented the parody of love affairs of "perverted" Christian concepts. Because of the tone of the Prologue, the reader also expects the body of the Lais to be of a serious nature. Since Prologue and Lais contrast with each other in tone, the latter could be said to parody the former. The Prologue is anti-Lais and thus anti-prologue in courtly terms since the poetess prepares the reader and listener for a philosophical discussion. Is Marie also parodying the true nature of Henri II by referring to him as a "nobles reis, pruz e curteis"? This does not mean, as we have shown, that the work is void of philosophy. When the symbolism is masked as it is in the courtly, the interpretation is accorded a new dimension which does not negate but coexists with other interpretations.

Up to now in the Lanval, we have examined the psychological

and existential elements without having been completely aware of the essence of certain conflicts: the play and interaction between reality and non-reality, the static nature of the physical surroundings juxtaposed to a movement towards transcendence, and the desperate need to preserve the ideal for fear of losing it forever. The power structure is dependent upon the outcome of the battle between fear in inconstant surroundings and the maintenance of permanence or the ideal state. What complicates matters is the in-depth characterizations of non-stock characters as opposed to the more allusive stock characters in whose hands the symbol does change meaning. The chevaliers of the Laüstic are of equal virtue - how else could we justify the lady's attraction for her lover? The rival must be worthy "de pruesce, de grant valur." But to what end? To be a consummate knight or lover? Secondly, is the husband the epitome of "bunté," of "fin'amor," or is his behavior mock-epic or mock-chivalrous? He vents his anger on a nightingale. Marie parodies commonplace epic themes. Would it not have been more worthy of a chevalier to have had strangled the lover instead? The "gelos" closely guards his lady, traps some helpless bird, wrings its neck, and throws the blood-stained creature at her breast. Is this the noble baron to whom Marie introduces us in the beginning? These are outrages of the "fin'amor" code, but this is what one expects from a husband. The wife is "sage" - wise, clever, knowledgeable, and endowed with a certain propriety. She is as "sage" as Villon's "Helloïs pour qui chastré fut et puis moyne Pierre Esbaillart"[84] in the Ballade des dames du temps jadis. The lady concocts

the fabulous bird symbol, thus meriting the appellation of "sage." The parody lies in her duplicity as contrasted by the way in which Marie establishes the lady's character at the beginning of the lai:

> Sage, curteis e acemee;
> A merveille se teneit chiere
> Sulunc l'usage e la maniere. (vers 14-16)

The lady is skilled and lovely. Although this lady and her lover never seem to consummate the affair in physical terms, the two seem to relish the thought greatly. Marie's ladies are usually obliging and rarely unwilling to submit to their love. Furthermore, a certain comment by the poetess renders questionable the actual nature of their love presumed by most critics to be Platonic:

> Sagement e bien s'entreamerent,
> Mut se covrirent e garderent
> Qu'il ne feussent aparceü
> Ne desturbé ne mescreü; (vers 29-32)

This passage seems to contradict the non-physical aspects of their love as stated later:

> Delit aveient al veeir
> Quant plus ne poeient aveir. (vers 77-78)

This comment, however, is in the imperfect tense; therefore, it does not negate the sensual beginnings of their love affair since they were no longer able to obtain what they had. Bernardian transcendental love starts at the egoistically centered physical level also. What maintains the purity which is to follow and prohibits physical contact is the ironic treatment

of the husband's understanding. The listener is aware that this "gelos" is not just an ignorant bystander; he solves the lady's insomnia. The lover with all his virtues enumerated - "honur, valur, prusce" - is defenseless against the "gelos." Marie is playing with the conventional image of the "gelos." Is the lover now the husband's equal? Finally, the progressive build-up of adoration and worship - preciously woven cloths and a coffin encrusted with jewels for the dear departed bird - possesses the earmarks of parody. A dead lover is not being worshipped but a bird. And imagine a noble knight carrying a dead bird in a coffin in his pocket for all time:

> Puis fist la chasse enseeler
> Tuz jurs l'ad fete od lui porter. (vers 155-156)

Mickel, in addition to stating that the lovers derive satisfaction solely from seeing one another - a more noble form of love - proceeds to analyze the Laüstic in conjunction with an anonymous fourteenth century poem, Les Echecs Amoureux - which is even translated as The Chess of Love by one of his colleagues.[85] "Echec" has a more obvious meaning in the first place, and secondly why look two centuries after the fact for an answer to a question? What happened to the troubadours, the lyric poets, and the poets of the "roman courtois"? Is the love represented in the Laüstic less "bestial" and more noble considering the lady's contrived story and the possibility of physical contact? The lady, trapped, must lie: "Tis but a bird singing outside my window." The critics tend to become overly serious in the courtly context when not always

necessary, and then they tend to disregard the elements of other contexts - especially Christian and Celtic. Mickel will continue to abuse Les Echecs Amoureux and Capellanus' De Amore - another post factum - in his analytical treatment of love in this lai as well as in Eliduc.[86] "Passio" is the pensive and anguishing meditation over the wish of fulfillment, or the loss of fulfillment; the lover languishes in this grief. The loss becomes greater as does the "passio" when fulfillment is no longer possible. Mickel feels that the lover will never again see the "laüstic" since it is sealed in its coffin, "yet he will carry the agonizing memory of his love with him forever."[87] By extension, he will no longer see his loved-one which causes an absolute state of "passio." However, the chevalier offers no tirade nor a line as to the nature of his woe; furthermore, the lady is more disturbed and angry that her ruse did not work and worried that the chevalier will not understand why she cannot come to the window anymore:

> "Lasse, fet ele, mal m'estait!
> Ne purrai mes la nuit lever
> N'aler a la fenestre ester
> U jeo soil mun ami veeir.
> Une chose sai jeo de veir:
> Il quidera ke jeo me feigne
> De ceo m'estuet que cunseil preigne.
> Le laüstic li trametrai
> L'aventure li manderai." (vers 126-134)

This is annoyance rather than an attack of "passio." When the "passio," as it will in some lais, becomes over-emphasized, Marie is toying with the notion of parody. The critic fails to realize that "passio" immobilizes the individual, but Marie's characters always seem to have recourse to extricate themselves

from conflict situations. Marie is obviously establishing a case for mock-"passio" - a parody of the Christian virtue. In this lai, "passio" is virtually non-existent, and the symbol may be interpreted as much a triumph as a defeat depending upon one's perspective - for Christianity, death is just a beginning; for courtly, it is the end. Still the symbol remains conceptualized by Marie as an innate everlasting idea regardless of perspective.

In the Chievrefoil, Marie could hardly be said to emphasize the suffering and "passio" of the famed couple, Tristan and Iseult, a"passio"of love that occupies thoughts and gains hegemony over reason so that the lovers cannot escape suffering. The "passio" aspect, however, is for Marie a "given" which is immediately negated. She briefly mentions the traditional trials and tribulations of the legend:

> De lur amur ki tant fu fine
> Dunt il eurent mainte dolur
> Puis en mururent en un jur. (vers 8-10)

In fact, it is a question of the wit and strength of reason over "passio" that the Chievrefoil demonstrates.[88] Even though the Tristan legend is one of fatality, Marie chooses to eliminate this aspect, dedicating only three lines to suffering; the rest of the lai is a series of ploys on the part of the couple. The lovers of the Chievrefoil succeed in their ruse while those of the Laüstic do not. Nevertheless, the shrewdness of both pairs of lovers in the courtly context is evident; the ladies and gentlemen are wiser than one assumes. Reason, although not always morally correct, dominates in the Lais.

Furthermore, the ending of the Chievrefoil accentuates life not death: the lovers enjoy themselves physically and Tristan had enough time to compose his lai, called Gotelef by the English. The accent is on love, life, and reason. Danger, death, and destruction are not emphasized by Marie as some would have us believe. The "bâton" is the symbol by which reason manifests itself. Tristan uses it so that the Queen understands, and since she is as clever as the Laüstic's lady, she does understand no matter in what shape or form the message was inscribed. The "bâton" ploy which brings Iseult and a troop of the army to a halt becomes magnified into a larger than life symbol - the "Codre-Chievrefoil" - which confirms the intelligence behind the ploy - an "élargissement du symbole" takes place from "bâton" (which is of "codre") to "Codre-Chievrefoil." The plan worked and the symbol indicates such since the lovers are able to fulfill their sensual desires:

> Dedenz le bois celui trova
> Que plus amot que rien vivant
> Ente eus meinent joie mut grant
> A li parlat tut a leisir
> E ele li dit sun pleisir. (vers 92-96)

The sensual aspects of the lai are frequently ignored by some who place excessive value on "passio" without appreciating Marie's parody of this state.[89] The lai terminates on a triumphant note while the suffering, waiting, absence, prolongation of the desire, and Tristan's banishment from court are put in abeyance by Marie. We do not have here a truly lamenting Tristan or a lamenting Iseult - "pensif et désolé" - for the lovers set out to obtain what they want and they receive it -

love in various forms. Even though Tristan may be characterized as such, it is a brief moment of despair in comparison to the goal and purpose of the lai - that the lovers meet no matter what. Whatever torment Tristan may encounter - the hardships of forest life, for instance - this "passio" only serves to enhance the transcendental nature of the symbol in Bernardian terms. St. Bernard never excluded the physical aspect in his scheme of the attainment of absolute love. Often, what the critics define as strict courtly love elements is pure Christian love or at times its distortion and abuse. If anything, Tristan is lifted from his temporary state of despair both by the love-making in the woods and by the transcending optimism of the symbol. Sadness is not at the heart of Marie's treatment of the legend. This in itself may be anti-Tristan legend, but there are many such light moments both in Béroul and Thomas. Of particular interest, is not Iseult's melancholy but the stately authority with which she stops a troop of soldiers to go off and visit her beau. Marc who is more of a fumbler would probably have less success in commanding with authority. The Queen has no real conflict; she will get what she wants. Furthermore, even though both male and female images are used - "bâton, codre et chievrefoil" - Marie chooses to entitle the lai, Chievrefoil, thus placing emphasis on female imagery, the honeysuckle, rather than combining and intertwining the masculine and feminine as she did in the body of the lai. She may have wanted to emphasize the lady's and Queen's role in the interpretation of the message and symbol because, without the mystical and miraculous powers of interpretation by the Queen

as concerns the "message," there would have been no meeting whatsoever. Thus, as in the Laüstic, the lady takes a very active role in the attainment of the goal and in the general action. The perfect symbol of co-existence and transcendence - "Codre-Chievrefoil" - opposes itself somewhat to the Tristan and Iseult "fatality" notion since that "mythe de l'Androgyne" quality and its fulfillment override any notion of "passio," and thus parody of the legend. The neoplatonism and the Petrarchism before the fact anticipate the Renaissance. The symbol as usual encompasses a variety of levels - sensual and non-sensual, parody and non-parody - in its attempt to soar above the real world.

Many times with Marie de France, it is the overall ludicrousness of the situation replete with parody. A lady merely wishes to be loved and a Hawkman, Muldumarec, materializes whose name alone can cause tongues to tie. We have already examined to some extent the animality versus spirituality of Yonec, the wanting and longing to transcend accompanied by failure - "l'amour fatal" - only to be elevated again through the illegitimate son, the non-religious use of religious symbolism, the stupidity of the husband theme and the psychology of murder and vengeance. Now let us delve more deeply into the courtly joke. It is an accepted fact that the lady was so beautiful the "gelos" had to lock her up:

> De ceo ke ele iert bele e gente,
> En li garder mist mut s'entente;
> Dedenz sa tur l'ad enserreie
> En une grant chambre pavee. (vers 25-28)

That is the fate awaiting those of excessive beauty. The "gelos" obviously loved her very much or so Marie says:

Pur sa beautê l'ad mut amee. (vers 24)

The inclusa remained incarcerated for "only" seven years. The matter-of-fact attitude with which Marie reveals this vital piece of information is out-and-out parody and understatement. The husband's claim to fame was his wealth and his age - "vielz e antis." He cannot compare in courtly virtues with the Birdman.[90] The entire scene must be imagined to be appreciated in the way that it had doubtlessly amused the court: a winged creature and a grown man coming through a small window to save the lady from her distress - a noble bird, what next? The juxtaposition of terms contributes to the humor. Marie frequently places the likely side by side with the unlikely. The calibre of the joke to the modern reader may be subtle and mollified; nevertheless, the modern reader can still appreciate the incredibility of the circumstances as did the court of Henry II. After seven years, her prayer is finally answered but the lady is stricken with a false sense of modesty - she covers her head with a veil:

Li sens li remut e fremi
Grant poür ot, sun chief covri. (vers 117-118)

It takes only a few encouraging words from the Hawkman:

Jeo vus ai lungement amee (vers 127)

And the lady unveils:

La dame se raseüra,
Sun chief descovri, si parla (vers 135-136)

After seven years of imprisonment, she is easily persuaded to discard her modesty. The lady then grants the chevalier tacit permission to become her "dru" if he can prove himself in the most sacred of Christian terms.[91] The scene is tantamount to blasphemy and corruption of the sacrament of Communion and the mystery of transubstantiation since the ends and purpose of the chevalier's proof are to seduce and make love - whence the cynical and jaundiced view of courtly philosophy. The lady offers a prayer - for sexual communication - and it is granted! The courtly elements "pervert" Christian philosophy not so much in the moral sense but in an artistic one - it is a turning of events for literary reasons rather than for religious ones, and therefore it is not technically "sin." For consider the comedy of transformations in Yonec: a bird to a chevalier-king, then from bird-chevalier-king to a lady, after which the new bird-chevalier-king-lady receives the sacred host to become spiritually one with God. A tongue-in-cheek juxtaposition of mythology and Christianity could not be clearer. The chevalier proves himself through Communion while a lady - a myriad number of spoof implications are at work. By demythologizing and de-christianizing, Marie renders the work parodial.

The cautious attitude of the Birdman - his prediction of treachery - has been envisaged as a form of "mesura."[92] Has anyone ever considered that in an illicit affair, the third party or lover is simply frightened of the husband's revenge or reactions, and that "mesura" and "démesura" are here merely

courtly intellectualizations of this fear mechanism as contrasted with the epic virtue and that of "fin'amor." The lady's "dẽmesura" is, in fact, the essence of the comedy - the lady always wants more from her lover:

> E nuit e jur e tost e tart
> Ele l'ad tut a sun pleisir
> Or l'en duinst Deus lunges joïr! (vers 222-224)

Most of Marie's characters are typically voluntaristic in nature: they may seemingly be entangled in an inner or social conflict, but they always manage to do as they please - free-will dominates. As Mickel himself states, "Nowhere in the text does the girl exercise the least discretion . . . Marie continues to emphasize the girl's eagerness and lack of foresight."[93] This persistence in what the lady craves is the core of the comedy, and it is not Christianity. Marie is not disapproving of the girl's love or "dẽmesura," but she is demonstrating and presenting the elements of which it consists - namely, the passionate heat of love or as Cicero put it - "amores et hae deliciae quae vocantur."[94] Of course, Marie is not moralizing but "humorizing" the situation. "The basic goodness of the lady's character and the earnest nature of the couple's love are quite clear."[95] How so? The lady asks God that the "gelos" and all those involved in arranging the marriage be damned. Her confinement is deemed by some as unfortunate - but it takes only <u>one</u> prayer to reverse the circumstances. Is this a classical attack of " passio"? What could be considered "passio" are the pains with which the young lady tracks the blood-stained trail of her wounded lover - but even

this episode is tinged with farfetched fantasy: the girl's leaping from a twenty-foot window, her arrival at the city of no inhabitants, her entrance into a plush palace where two other sleeping knights lay - are they being sought after also by their respective ladies? Then the dying chevalier in the splendor of his tomb gives the lady a ring which will make the husband forget everything and a sword for Yonec so that the "gelos" may eventually forget permanently. Is this the "passio" of the troubadours? Again, as Marie reshapes Celtic and Christian themes, so too are the courtly virtues adapted to her parody. It is the girl's "dẽmesura" - her lust - where the mobility of the plot lies; it is the impetus of the lai and the source of humor. Is not the husband as well stricken with "dẽmesura"?- his spying attempts to crush the courtly fantasy. The avenging son - equal in the courtly virtues of "beautẽ, vaillance, et gẽnẽrositẽ" to his father Birdman - does not right a wrong as much as he confirms and sanctions both the illegitimacy and the "dẽmesura" of the tale by uniting the couple, his parents, forever - even in death. It must be stated that in spite of the humor Marie still accords a place of honor to progressive idealism through the Birdman-to-son symbol as well as through the central symbols of each lai. By the same token, neither can the sensuality of the death scene and the lady's preoccupation with the sensual be denied - three times are "chambre" and "lit" repeated in all the glorification of courtly exaggeration:

> En une bele chambre entra
> Un chevalier dormant trova . . .

En une autre chambre plus grant
Un lit trové e niént plus
Un chevalier dormant desus. . .
En la tierce chambre est entree:
Le lit sun ami ad trové.
Li pecol sunt d'or esmeré. (vers 379-388)

The lady's quest takes her through three bedrooms. The "parody" - that which lies beside the actual body of the tale - does in no way exclude the transcendental; it is a paradoxical state of affairs.

The Symbol as the Power of Love in the Courtly Context

The prologue to Guigemar emphatically restates that Marie will do exactly as she set out to do as outlined in the Prologue in spite of the opinions of others:

Si gangleür u losengier
Le me volent a mal turner:
Ceo est lur dreit de mesparler! (vers 16-18)

An attitude of determination and an affirmation of her free-will are apparent as is the invitation to parodial interpretations - "mal turner." Double psychology is basic to courtly contexts. Operating in Guigemar is the power or art of persuasion as set forth by the hind's tirade, but underlying this art and tactic are the fear of losing and the desire to possess the mind of another. Mockingly, the hind is to provoke guilt from the depths of Guigemar's shallow personality.[96] Marie via the "biche" is not so much the spokeswoman of "fin'amor" as she is playful distorter of courtly "passio." The thrice-appearing "nef" is as much a symbol of hope as the attainment of "druérie" with all its sexual implications; the movement of the "nef"

stylistically counteracts those sentiments of predestination, fatality, and loss of hope as symbolized in Guigemar's wound and his seemingly planned mystical route towards a cure with all its Celtic flair. Adulterous love is preferred in Guigemar. And why not especially since the "gelos" is a veritable idiot as demonstrated by his construction of the so-called "sainte chapelle à la Vênus" which breeds more infidelity than it prohibits. These are thus the basic ingredients of this parody of the virtues of "fin'amor."

Customarily, Bisclavret, Yonec, and Lanval are referred to as supernatural tales.[97] This terminology is misleading since the appellation incorporates a certain snobbism on the part of modern readers implying that the poetess is a staunch believer in the occult as were the people of the Middle Ages in general. Guigemar too is supernatural but in appearance only. Marie uses and abuses the supernatural first to make light of the situation and then to support her case concerning love. Ironically, the cause of Guigemar's problem is an over-abundance of love from both his parents:

> A merveille l'amot sa mere
> E mult esteit bien de sun pere. (vers 39-40)

Marie loves exaggerations and superlatives, but do these lines necessitate or justify the hero's Hippolyte-like indifference towards women or did "Nature" do him wrong as some critics suppose?[98] No, Marie is playing and making illogical excuses as to why Guigemar is what he is. Once more, Marie is establishing the personality of a character which is to be reversed.

It is obvious from the lai that Guigemar is not at all incapable of love. The parody lies in the contrasts Marie presents to the reader. In Christianity, neither Nature nor God creates the individual bad or evil. Marie is twisting logic again, Christian logic. Guigemar is looking for fame and glory:

> En Flaudres vait pur sun pris quere
> La out tuz jurs estrif e guerre. (vers 51-52)

How, by hunting white-antlered hinds? Anti-epic and thus parody can be detected. It is also strange that Guigemar is struck in the thigh as was Chaitivel - Marie might be implying impotency once again. And the beast, whether a Celtic transformed hag or originally some Fairy Mistress in disguise, is first and foremost a talking animal. A similar device is used in the Bisclavret. Dramatically, it shocks since the beast has reason and makes those around it appear, if not stupid, dumbfounded. Secondly, the listener and reader sympathize and side with these animals rather than with the humans. Marie twists our reason and our emotions. In any event, the hind's diatribe is self-contradictory - Guigemar will not find a cure until the lady heals him and this lady suffers for love of him a greater suffering or "passio" than any other woman, and Guigemar will repay in kind through his own suffering. Where is the "passio" if the inclusa never suffers? She is the instrument of courtly jokes given the comic murals depicting Venus burning Ovid's Remedia Amoris. The more accurate term would be mock-"passio." The lai is anti-inclusa for the lady always longed to escape and does throughout the tale. Where is this lady's suffering?

She surrenders herself without hesitation to the first available man. Therefore, the hind's speech is contrary to the movement and content of the rest of the story. The mysticism of the "nef" adds to the hoax. Its three appearances aid in fulfilling her love on all levels - it is hope and physical desire fulfilled. The "passio" is one of form not content. The lady is most anxious to leave the repressive surroundings which afford no freedom. Her body-guards are not strong chevaliers but an old white-haired priest and a eunuch who are no match for the lady and her faithful servant and co-conspirator. Thus Guigemar obtains his life-saving love without the lady's having met the "passio" requirement of the hind. Marie is anti-"fin'amor" here - the man and woman get what they want with minimal trials and tribulations in this tongue-in-cheek adventure of exaggerated events and tone. And what of Guigemar's "passio"? It is part of the parlor game activity. He demonstrates his suffering in this exorbitant show of "profound love." Before the lady grants her "merc&," Guigemar proves his worth. But how? By a rebounding arrow from a hind's hoof, the Tristan-like voyage of suffering, languishing, and torment in search of this cure. He fulfills the rituals of "fin'amor," but as a performer with all the required dramatic machinations. Is his ship a place of torment? It has all the luxury of a temple built by Solomon decorated with gold, ivory, and silk. Guigemar simulates the motions of "fin'amor." His wound and his voyage of grief are dubious as is his "passio" since he obtains what he wants with relative ease. The desired result is gained through this mock-suffering performance. Like the

poor spoiled love child that he was, he is immediately cared for by the lady and her servant who bandage and nurse his wound. Interesting to note that the first part of Guigemar's body the lady touches is not the wounded thigh but his bare chest. Anyone else would have cared for the injured area first:

> Desur le piz li met sa main
> Chaut le senti e le quor sein. (vers 299-300)

A remarkable recovery is forthcoming - love heals all. The "chemise" and "ceinture" symbols reinforce the parody through the notion of fidelity taken to extremes. The husband with all the trouble he caused is completely forgotten by Marie. Meriadus replaces him as a "heavy," and is also eliminated mainly because he cannot untie a knot in a shirt. Mickel admits the irony in Guigemar but cannot perceive the parody. Perhaps these two concepts are too closely associated to be distinguished. As the critic rightly says, "Guigemar can be cured only by doing what is uninteresting to him." But how quickly he becomes interested after only one encounter. Mickel also attempts to support his case for "passio" by employing Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae and with his usual lack of success.

There are those who persist in judging Lanval in the light of "passio" and "dēmesure."[100] Examine first his plight and travail. Admittedly, Lanval is a neglected and rejected soul in the courtly world, but as much as he is forgotten by an insensitively unfair Arthur - he is just as quickly endowed with love, wealth, and a feeling of belonging by the Otherworld

goddess. Marie frequently uses the apparition motif to add to the humor of the situation. There are few lost causes in the Lais. If someone has a problem, Marie usually has a cure. If neglect is what ails the hero, Marie supplies a Fairy Mistress and two enticingly lovely servant girls to remedy the situation. Marie is most accomodating and understanding of the plight of the man. Lanval does not need the King any longer to satisfy his practical wants; the Fairy Mistress is all that the hero needs. To read Marie properly is to capture the tone and mood of her work - the light, subtle, and refined way in which the poetess blends philosophy and parody. On one hand, Marie can be deceptively childlike but on the other, she is faintly sarcastic towards "fin'amor," the epic, and the "roman courtois." Lanval's suffering is ambiguous; he receives in one context everything he was denied in another. But what of his trial? It is not "passio" since this courtly notion implies an exterior force working upon the individual through the lady's neglect, obstinacy, or haughtiness which is subsequently turned inward by the individual himself producing the usual languishing and lamentation. Lanval subjects himself to this needless trial; he keeps silent out of a sense of duty to the King. But why such deference after having endured such abuse from both King and Queen? The answer lies in the nature of the parody - that is, the mocking contrast between the raging Guinevere and the benevolent Fairy Mistress. He has already broken one promise to the Fairy Mistress - the oath of silence; he could have just as easily curtailed the courtroom proceedings by denying the Queen's accusation of seduction. The humor lies in the fact

that Lanval tolerates these formalities, which last a considerable length of time, for the most base of reasons: to hide the Queen's attempted seduction of a vassal. Would an epic hero have refused the lady? Being overly chivalrous is Lanval's tragic flaw. Ironically, the true reason for the formal hearings is an ignoble one - the Queen's jealousy. Furthermore, the King is excessively anxious to get on with the hearings while the chevaliers delay in order to save Lanval and dramatically to prolong the expected arrival of the Fairy Mistress. Finally when she does arrive, mouths are agape in mock-adoration of her and her servants' beauty. The tirade of the "Duc de Cornouailles" is most revealing during the proceedings:

> Ceo dist li quoens de Cornvaille:
> "Ja endreit nus n'i avra faille,
> Kar ki qu'en pluet ne ki qu'en chant,
> Le dreit estuet aler avant . . .
> Ceo li devum faire saveir." (vers 433-458)

But how will the right or "dreit" triumph while the very foundation and basis for the trial are rotten? One cannot derive truth from a lie. In addition, the chevaliers take it upon themselves as a duty to settle the issue, but does their trial settle the issue or does some miraculous occurrence? All the formalities of the court cannot resolve what the magic of the Fairy Mistress can. This is parody of the actual proceedings of the day and of epic molds. Another bit of parody enters the picture: the attempted seduction and failure by an earthly queen contrasted with the successful seduction by the Fairy Mistress. Lanval remains rather passively in the middle. The mock-heroics of duty on the part of the chevaliers and Lanval

never come to fruition - everyone goes through the motions but ultimately the result depends upon an unknown factor, the Mistress - whence the parody. Another problem arising from Lanval's situation is the question of "dẽmesura." The confrontation between Lanval and the Queen ends in the revelation of his secret love. Thus, the breaking of the vow and its consequence - deprivation of the loved one - is the essence of the courtly joke. A mock-variation on the Orpheus and Eurydice theme is apparent. Both Queen and Lanval are guilty of "dẽmesura" if we choose to term it such; however, Lanval's rashness and "dẽmesura" is justifiable by most standards; he meets attack with attack in his "tenso-like" duel with the Queen. It is a farcical presentation of "fin'amor." The Queen could not have been more direct in this scene of stark realism:

> "Lanval, mut vus ai honuré
> E mut cheri e mut amé
> Tute m'amur poez aveir.
> Kar me dites vostre voleir.
> Ma druërie vus otrei
> Mut devez estre liez de mei." (vers 263-238)

The exaggeration of the repeated "mut" is an indication of the parody. Lanval, a bit prudishly, replies that he is not interested:

> -Dame, fet il, lessiez m'ester!
> Jeo n'ai cure de vus amer.
> Lungement ai servi le rei
> Ne li voil pas mentir ma fei. (vers 269-272)

Imagine Enée telling Didon in the same uninterested tone a comparable tale of rejection. Lanval's loyalty and deference towards an uncaring king seem to put him in more problematic

situations than the courageous knight can handle. The rejected Queen proceeds to bombard Lanval with a full arsenal of insults and even a charge of homosexuality:

> Que de femmes n'avez talent!
> Vallez avez bien afeitez,
> Ensemble od eus vus deduiez. (vers 280-282)

This is hardly courtly language. Finally Lanval insults the Queen thoroughly by telling her that she is no match for even the Fairy Mistress's servant girl:

> Tute la plus povre meschine
> Vaut mieuz de vus, dame reïne. (vers 299-300)

What greater insult for a Queen than to be relegated to the position of a handmaiden. But as we know, Lanval violates the verbal contract and can no longer see his love. But is this true? No, it takes no more than a few days before Lanval is back in the graces of the Fairy Mistress. Parody is everywhere; therefore, let us not be too serious in our analysis especially since one of the goals of courtly literature is to entertain. The courtly humor revolves around the abuse of "mesura" - an abuse of which Lanval is justifiably exonerated. The Queen's "démesura" is, however, tantamount to a temper tantrum only to be cancelled out by the Mistress and her servants. Thus, the entertainment factor or the mask of the symbol reveals itself through parody which neither negates nor excludes other levels of interpretation. Lanval is an outcast, a sort of "étranger." Subconsciously, the "étranger" wishes to be united with an "étrangère" - another misunderstood entity.

United they demonstrate existential interdependence similar to the Chievrefoil tale. However, where the code of persuasion with all its inherent erotica fails for the Queen, the psychology of Celtic induction motifs succeeds for the Mistress. Always present is the transcendence toward truth and the "femme idĕale" and the degradation of she who is less than "idĕale."

The next two lais resemble one another for the ludicrousness of their situations: Bisclavret and Milun. In the first, a noble chevalier for unclear and ambiguous reasons - and purposefully so on Marie's part - turns into a werewolf three days a week, abandoning his wife but returning always "joius e liez" like the cat who swallowed the bird. Mickel assumes as do others that "Marie carefully establishes the man's worthy character and indicates that they are happily married and in love."[101] True, she does establish this notion in the opening lines but only to repudiate them comically. She as usual is setting up her reader - her introductions often are in contrary motion to the story to be exposed. The Bisclavret returns home more like a little boy who has done wrong than like the chevalier that he is supposed to be. Is he taking leave to visit his mistress? Furthermore, the wife's infidelity and treachery are of secondary interest in comparison to the Bisclavret's transformations and his dealings and relationship to the king. Let us be cautious not to treat the wife's treachery, which keeps the anti-hero in a state of bestiality, as part of the Bisclavret's "passio." The wife's treachery without reflection - she does not give much thought about it for a person supposedly in love - adds to the humor of the Bisclavret's comic goodness -

a portrait in contrast. The lai itself demonstrates the classical conflicts of a Jekyll and Hyde pattern of a man incapable of coping with himself on a socio-sexual level; however, the conventional motif is turned to parody by Marie's treatment of the subject. One becomes fondly attached to the beast, feels sorry for him even though his activities are questionable, and sides with him against his wife. Whereas with Jekyll and Hyde the hero must die for his anti-social behavior and for his sins, the Bisclavret lives on and is even rewarded for his behavior by the king. Marie has purified the elements of the convention through comedy. If the Bisclavret is not sinning, he seems to be having a wonderful time running around in the forest naked.[102]

Too many questions are left unanswered if we accept the Bisclavret's condition as one of "passio" due to internal strife and a wife's infidelity and treachery. First, why does such a noble chevalier who loves his beautiful wife and seems happily married resort to these tactics of transformation?

> Femme ot espuse mut vailant
> E ki mut feseit beu semblant.
> Il amot li e ele lui. (vers 21-23)

Why the change of heart? Is the only answer that the Bisclavret cannot help himself or is it Marie playing a game? Second, if the wife were so happily married, why does she bolt with a former admirer? Third, how does one really explain mock-charity and the mock-feudal loyalty between the king and the beast? Is this all a function of "passio" and the wife's "dēmesura"?[103] One answer exists: Marie has turned the classical elements to parody. Let us observe more carefully. The epitome of chivalry,

the Bisclavret, swears that he is ready to answer all his wife's questions:

> "Dame, fait il, car demandez!
> Ja cele chose ne querrez,
> Si jo la sai, ne la vus die. (vers 39-41)

The beast displays openness and magnanimity. The wife is of course relieved - considering her ulterior motives and the dramatic irony of the scene:

> -Par fei, fet ele, or sui garie! (vers 42)

Then, she asks her first question:

> Kar me dites u vus alez
> U vus estes, u conversez! (vers 49-50)

Previously so cooperative, he now avoids answering her:

> Mal m'en vendra si jol vus di. (vers 54)

All of a sudden, he becomes reluctant. Marie constantly switches the expected movement and the results of events. Progressively, the wife will draw from her husband the secret information in the ensuing "tenso-like" debate. He foolishly divulges all. Marie often uses the "tenso" to produce the desired effects of comedy. Marie also uses understatement to enhance the humor of the debate:

> Mes d'une chose ert grant ennui. (vers 24)

Only one thing bothered the lady; that one "thing" is of colossal proportions and implications - her husband is a werewolf.

Marie will then juxtapose the supernaturally superstitious theme of lycanthropy with another "sainte chapelle" notion where the chevalier's clothes - the catalyst of metamorphosis - are kept. The themes of bestiality and spirituality, side by side in the ludicrousness of this situation, enlarge the scope of the parody. The incongruity between the hero's questionable behavior - taking his clothes off and running through the forest - and the chapel of safe-keeping should have more critics thinking twice about Marie's intentions. Then there is the episode with the dumbfounded king whose lack of courage - "grant poür ad" - is only counterbalanced by a werewolf with common sense. Picture, if you will, his majesty the king with a company of soldiers horrified by the lonely creature. The king of epic molds is clearly being parodied. Do not forget that talking and helpful animals are all part of medieval literature - in the bestiaries as well as the Roman du Renart where the fox usually surpasses everyone in intelligence. The exaggerated quality of this scene which lacks epic solemnity is replete with mock-humility; the beast kisses the king's leg and feet. Since when is a werewolf gentle and since when does he have common sense? In a grandiose gesture of misericordia, the king "grants his peace" to the beast:

A la beste durrai ma pes. (vers 159)

Since when does a king come to terms - terms of vassalage - with an animal? And for the final coup, the king instructs his men to do the same and take care of the beast as if it were a person. All is mock-generosity. Finally, the revenge and

punishment of a disfigured face - the Bisclavret does rip off her nose - is a gradual and logical crescendo of almost slapstick humor; it is a semi-violent humor resembling the build-up of a farcical scene. Ironically, the Bisclavret who had no real victims finds one in his wife, and he recaptures the symbol of authority - the nose. If all is "passio" in the Bisclavret or if the circumstances remind some of the problematic situational courtings of Capellanus' De Amore, then the modern critic has missed the essential point of Marie's art and does not appreciate Capellanus' humor either.[104]

The second tale, Milun, is just as ludicrous since the lovers of the tale carry out their relationship - almost devoid of physical contact - for twenty years by sending a swan to and fro as a mailman. This twenty year period is regarded by some as the trials and tribulations - "passio" - that the lovers must endure to satisfy "fin'amor." First of all, imagine the swan flying back and forth while fasting and dieting for twenty years; the situation borders on the ridiculous. Secondly, twenty years is an obviously exaggerated period of time - whence the courtly joke and parody of "fin'amor." There is even comedy in the lovers' frantic desire that the spiritual bond, symbolized by the swan, last forever. Milun was born and raised in the epic vein:

> Puis le jur k'il fu adubez
> Ne trova un sul chevalier
> Ki l'abatist de sun destrier. (vers 10-12)

This is an important fact to bear in mind since his natural son - his equal in courtly and epic standards - will unhorse

him later. However, for what is this warrior being groomed and to what is he reduced? - to communicating with his mistress by means of a swan. The hero is relegated to the position of anti-hero in epic terms: instead of fighting wars during his prime, the only battle we find him engaged in is a love contest: the lady becomes pregnant in short order:

> Tant i vint Milun, tant l'ama
> Que la dameisele enceinta. (vers 53-54)

The hero never even attempts or thinks about rescuing the lady from the pre-arranged marriage that she deplores. The lady is carrying his child, and the pregnancy took place considerably before the lady's marriage to a baron. Milun had enough time beforehand to sweep her away and wed, but the notion of "recréance" strikes; service and duty call:

> Milun eissi fors de sa tere
> En soudees pur sun pris quere.
> S'amie remest a meisun. (vers 121-123)

The chivalrous one leaves her stranded. However, love on the part of the lady enthralls and captivates, thus resembling an "amor de lonh" - she loves Milun without having seen him:

> Ele ot oï Milun nomer
> Mut le cumençat a amer
> Par sun message li manda
> Que, si li plest, el l'amera. (vers 25-28)

The "amor de lonh" notion is maintained and represented by the flights of the swan-symbol. The farfetched nature of this love story renders it so much the more amusing - the parody of both the troubadours' "fin'amor" and of the epic virtues is clear.[105]

The girl's overly stressed and accented tirade of how to explain her lost virginity to her future husband contributes further to the comedy:

> "Lasse, fet ele, que ferai?
> Avrai seignur? Cum le prendrai?
> Ja ne sui jeo mie pucele. (vers 133-135)

The girl, however, does not pine away from her grief in "passio" fashion nor does she commit suicide; she decides to keep up the affair by employing the "swan" ruse - and we have already witnessed her excitement on touching the swan's neck. The existential role-playing of both the matter and content of the lai and the gameful happenings at the court is of primary importance in the objective comprehension of this situation. Furthermore, the complications in keeping the swan on a strict diet in order that its flights be properly controlled and directed are further proof of the incredibility of the circumstances. The swan too is treated like a person as most of Marie's animals are:

> Li oiseus esteit fameillus
> E de viande conveitus. (vers 259-260)

Like a hungry guest the swan is immediately served and fed. The love demonstrated to the animal is inordinate and is a displacement of the couple's love since their love cannot be fulfilled. In any event, this inordinate preoccupation with the swan and its needs - a "dēmesura" of sorts - is the basis for the comedy.[106] Most of the humor in this lai revolves around the swan-symbol of purity and impurity - given the double nature

of symbols.

The dramatic tension of the second part of the lai is sustained by the appearance of a mystery character, "Sanz Per" (without peer or father) - the audience is excited. Who is this masked nameless knight? He is supposedly without equal. The son's exploits are more in keeping with the epic framework as opposed to his father's less than glorious activities in matters of the heart - whence the parody due to the contrast in characterizations. Milun is prideful however; he boasts to himself at least - "le gab" - which is an essential element of epic parody:

> Mut ert dolenz, mut se pleigneit
> Del chevalier ki tant valeit
> Pur tant cum il peüst errer
> Ne turnoier n'armes porter
> Ne deüst nuls del païs nez
> Estre preisiez ne alosez! (vers 343-348)

This pride of his - for he too feels himself "without equal" - is counteracted by his son's humility, generosity, and "largesse" - a son who helps his aged father to his feet and, after the dramatic tension of identities is resolved, promises to unite the lovers, his parents. The audience is granted a sigh of relief, a moment of truth in recognition and identity, and some warm tenderness which is also experienced by the onlookers:

> Sun peire baisa ducement;
> Mut bel semblant entre eus fesoient
> E iteus paroles diseient
> Que li autre kis esgardouent
> De joie e de pitié plurouent. (vers 476-480)

The scene has an emotional effect upon the court and society,

and there is no need for bloodshed since the lady's husband conveniently dies. Thus, the lai is divided equally between humor and tenderness while maintaining parody and certain abated epic virtues. The lai tends to seek moderation, but it still upholds a high level of entertainment. The swan symbol shares much in common with other symbols of the Lais in the way of transcendental elements. The swan is the symbol of the power of love, that bond of communication kept alive between the lovers; it is the union of souls as in the myth of Androgyne. This desire and longing to unite the couple, although begun by the swan symbol, is realised fully through the force of the illegitimate son - his father's equal as proven in the test of chivalry on the battlefield. There is the in-depth analysis of the symbol and its parody or mask which coexist.

Transcendental elements predominate in the *Deus Amanz* but not without some parody, the first indication of which lies in the nature of the triangular relationship - an overbearing father replaces the formal "gelos," a variation on Marie's customary theme. The father sins against the courtly virtues on all levels - "orguelh, demesura, escardedet, velheza." Much is made by critics of the boy's "démesure," but what of the father's?[107] Is his characterization one of "largesse"? The demands he places upon the lover resemble the trials of a "passio," but there is some comedy inherent in his ultimatum - "You can have my daughter if you can carry her to the top of a mountain." Of course, his own egotism blocks his reasoning, and he assumes no one is capable. In this hypothetical situation of his imagination, he creates a reality. Like

Chaitivel's lady, the way in which the king reasons borders on distorted logic; he is completely unreasonable:

> S'a sun pere la demandot
> Il saveit bien que tant l'amot
> Que pas ne li vodreit doner. (vers 87-89)

The young man knows better than to ask the king for his daughter until he submits himself to the test. Ironically, the "passio" the lady would impose in "fin'amor" is imposed by the father in Marie's variation of the theme. This quality of unreasonableness is the source of the entertainment and conflict. For if he were reasonable, who would care? "Demesura" seems thus to characterize the father even better than the lover.

Admittedly, there is a certain amount of the troubadours' "passio" within this lai imposed from without - the king - and from within - the lovers' inner conflict:

> La suffrance mut lur greva
> Mes li vallez se purpensa
> Que mieuz en voelt les maus suffrir
> Que trop haster e dunc faillir. (vers 75-78)

However, the lovers are not so inextricably tied to their own "passio" nor to the exterior force of love nor to the father's demands since they devise a way out; a plan is executed; they are not helpless bystanders who languish within love's throes. They are more reasonable. The girl sends the boy to her aunt in Salerno for a magic drug - free-will and reason, therefore, dominate "passio."[108] It is not a case for "passio" here. The characterization of the aunt from Salerno is humorous - she reads her niece's letter up and down and puts all her strength

in the concoction of this brew:

> De sa part li dunat un brief;
> Quant el l'ot lit de chief en chief . . .
> Par meschines l'ad esforcié
> Un tel beivre li ad charmié
> Ja ne serat tant travaillez
> Ne si ateinz ne si chargiez
> Ne li resfreschist tut le cors
> Neïs les vaines ne les os
> E qu'il nen ait tute vertu
> Si tost cum il l'avra beü. (vers 139-140; 143-150)

Let us neither forget that this aunt is an expert in the field - in fact, she has thirty years experience:

> Plus de trente anz i ad esté
> L'art de phisike ad tant usé
> Que mut est saive de mescines
> Tant cunuist herbes e racines. (vers 105-108)

Thus, the lovers' hands are not bound; they act against the father and any notion of "passio." Admittedly, "passio" is present within the ordeal itself; however, the lovers are in no way immobilized by it. Everything seems fine; it appears as if the lovers will succeed but Marie again reverses events. Why does the lover not take the brew after having subjected himself to the trouble of getting it? Marie reverses dramatic effects: instead of displaying the potion's power at the proper time, she delays in order to build up tension - a stylistic trick. In previous lais, we saw the power of Guigemar's "nef" and Lanval's Mistress's powers right from the very start; in this instance, Marie postpones the effect. The boy's so-called "démesure" might be a rash judgment on the part of critics: in fact, it might not be so much selfishness as it is a form of "largesse." He wants to demonstrate how deeply he loves; he

does not need artificial means to prove his love. Therefore, he refuses to imbibe - an act of will. The lover does not want to listen; he feels his inner love is sufficient:

> "Amis, bevez vostre mescine!"
> Ja ne la volt oïr ne creire
> A grant anguisse od tut li eire. (vers 210-212)

Thus, his behavior can be construed as "largesse" by the demonstrative nature of his love. Therefore, the interplay between the boy's "largesse" and the "false" potion symbol - which ultimately proves to be potent - is the source of dramatic tension which must have greatly pleased the audience by its complex nature. A symbol is introduced and not used, the potion. This fact in conjunction with the boy's own use of "mesure, démesure, largesse, volonté," and feelings of love complicate the issue even more. Will he take it, or won't he take it? The boy's dilemma is one of infatuation versus free-will. The situational dilemma arises from this factor joined to the complexity of the potion symbol. Many times, "courtly" refers to style more than anything else. Marie prepares the potion symbol, thus creating a "fake" symbol that is never to be used by the lover. She is, thereby, accentuating the duel between the "potency" of the herbs and the boy's act of will. But by doing so, Marie has also given the listener false expectations - the listener whom she purposely deceives. The existential play between the poetess and the listener could not be more pronounced than in this lai, and this exact interplay is the heart of what "courtly" means. Thus, we have the outer socio-psychological structure of parody and the inner complexities of parody within the

Lais themselves.

Parodial elements abound in Eliduc. Is the love between Eliduc and his wife, Guildeluëc, "characterized by faith and loyalty, thus elevating it above the selfish motivation of delight"?[109] Is it simply that? The truth of the matter is that Marie conjures up a device so that the hero and heroines might have their proverbial "cake and eat it too." She reconciles the question of fidelity and infidelity by spiritualizing and idealizing the situation through her trinity on earth. How else could the poetess keep Eliduc's love affair and marriage intact by the end of the lai if not by placing and sanctioning all three individuals under the guidance of the Church. Marie creates here a sort of "deus de machina" - a loophole that she derives and draws from the very body of the work in order to resolve an incredibly problematic circumstance. Marie's resolution is more fanciful than real and is as unbelievable as Guildeluëc's total understanding of her husband's needs and her willingness to renounce her love in order to allow the couple privacy and marriage and then to accept them both within the folds of her monastery. Guildeluëc's more than charitable behavior would make her a super-saint especially since her husband is not exactly the epitome of faith and loyalty. He does lie twice: he fails to inform Guilliadun that he has a wife; second, he tells his wife, Guildeluëc, that his "grief" is due to the fact that he must leave home to help the king of another land. His grief lies deeper than his superficial explanation. He has erotic(itical motives; we cannot make excuses for Eliduc as does Hickel,[110]

Femme ot espuse, noble e sage,
De haute gent, de grant parage.
Ensemble furent lungement,
Mut s'entreamerent lëaument. (vers 9-12)

Is this how Eliduc exhibits his loyalty in love by being diverted by the first woman he meets? Again, Marie is preparing the audience for a fall. "Recréance" also strikes; Eliduc feels an obligation towards war and being a warrior. Ironically his own king does not deserve any loyalty since the king ignores Eliduc, preferring to believe the "lauzengier" who have defamed and discredited his good name; therefore, the hero seeks to make his name in epic proportions elsewhere - in a foreign land. Marie offers us the most detailed account of epic-like qualities and "geste"-like manoeuvres in this lai. The battalions, positions, and the rest are all present and last for more than one hundred and seventy lines - lines 89-264:

Cil li dïent: "Sire, par fei,
Pres de cel bois, en cel ristei
La ad une estreite charriere
Par unt il repeirent ariere.
Quant il avrunt fet lur eschec,
Si returnerunt par ilec;
Desarmé sur lur palefrez
S'en revunt il soventez:
Ki se mettreit en aventure
Cume de murir a dreiture
Bien tost les purreit damagier
E eus laidir e empeirer." (vers 173-184)

But the enemy would be returning unarmed - a kind of ambush is being proposed which Eliduc accepts without question - epic parody. It may befit the Saracens but not a courtly army. Thus, both in love and war, Eliduc manages to do as he pleases; his will and wants dominate. It is a contrived conflict, the hero

really has no choice, he must do what the situation and his will dictate. Marie settles the issue by putting everyone in a monastery - the theme of resignation which was commonplace at the time. Eliduc is first torn between two women, a conflict of marital stability and the instability of an affair, but even if he were to resolve the conflict on his own, he might later be faced with Chrétien's problematic situation of marriage or war or "recréance." Situations are invented or reworked by the medieval poet who derives a certain pleasure in watching a resolution unfold. Eliduc gets his way on all levels - in marriage, in love, in war - all of which is sanctioned since Marie invents and opts for the equilibrium of a monastery. Is this "passio"? Eliduc's problems are neatly resolved in fantasy; he is not in eternal inner conflict.[111] Guillaudun's scenes of "passio" should also be judged in the light of parody and exaggerated grief:

> Tute la nuit veillat issi,
> Ne reposa ne ne dormi . . .
> Jo sui cheüe en malvés pleit! . . .
> Que, s'il ne m'aime par amur
> Murir m'estuet a grant dolur. (vers 331-332; 338-350)

The young lady also receives what she likes without dying, as she claims she would. But what persuades us of the parody? The supporting evidence convinces us: the humor of the storm scene, the weasel scene, and the "fausse mort" scene. During the storm escapade where Eliduc attempts to flee with his love, the sailor blames the lady for the cataclysmic event:

> Sire, ça einz avez od vus
> Cele par ki nus perissuns
> Jamés a tere ne vendruns! (vers 832-834)

Eliduc then blames the sailor and kills him by tossing him into the sea:

> Fiz a putain, fet il, mauveis,
> Fel traïtre, nel dire meis! (vers 843-844)

In mock-appeasement, the storm abates. However, no one bothered to sacrifice the guilty party - Eliduc himself. The girl was unaware of his marriage until the sailor spoke; the sailor out of fear blames the helpless maiden instead of the warrior. If the storm were not to subside, Eliduc would have to be sacrificed. He is to blame; so why then does the storm cease? The parody of the situation is the explanation. Eliduc lacks self-control, becomes angry, and has a strong will and feelings of self-righteousness. After Guilliadun hears the truth, she falls victim too, but it is only a "fausse mort." She was already subject to fainting spells long before the storm sequence:

> Ainz qu'il li eüst tut mustré
> Ne cungié pris ne demandé
> Se pasma ele de dolur
> E perdi tute sa culur. (vers 659-662)

The incident takes place when Eliduc plans to return home for the first time. Guilliadun's is an hysterical reaction, a kind of emotional blackmail that evokes sympathy. Marie has thus already prepared the "fausse mort" episode so that there is little surprise. Chrétien has already presented us with his version in Cligès. And as Paul Lonigan says, "What a terrible joke would have been on Cligès had he succeeded in joining her in death as Fénice (our bird from the clutches of death)

comes out of her cataleptic state just in time!"[112] And then three doctors in comic desperation attempt to revive Fênice, but to no avail. Who knows if Eliduc would have taken his own life, but I doubt it. Guilliadun's "fausse mort" is a courtly device which leads the listener in the direction of compassion and then reverses the circumstances to realize the spoof. The character will also lament unnecessarily over a death that has not taken place in order that he understand his wrong and mend his ways in this contrived solution to a problematic situation. The scene should evoke enough laughter that the incongruity of the triangular spiritual love solution will seem perfectly natural to everyone. Marie has distorted our thinking now. The "fausse mort" is the method by which an author maintains equilibrium and balance by means of parody, mock-hypocrisy, or just plain "invraisemblance." This is strictly a stylistic device and trick to save author and characters from the web of intricacies in which they are trapped while setting up the audience for all sorts of variations on the theme. The fainting spree is a way out; the girl cannot handle the situation - the "passio" is too much to bear. Exaggerated "passio" should often be viewed as mock-"passio" and the "fausse mort" as a parody of tragic deaths. Ironically, the wife, after having followed the good example of a weasel, will revive Guilliadun. The weasel is known in bestiaries to revive others by magical cures - Neckam's De Naturis Rerum, Hugh de Saint-Victor's and Richart de Fournival's bestiaries as well as Giraldus Cambrensis' Topography of Ireland.[113] However, Guildeluëc is not imitating the acts of charity of one of the saints but of an animal -

usually associated with sneakiness and viciousness. Imagine using this animal as the source of love, caritas, and inspiration. This is mock-caritas. Furthermore, why did anyone bother "killing" the weasel's female companion in the first place? To parody the parody. The parody of Guilliadun's "fausse mort" is acted out and parodied by the female weasel's "fausse mort." Parallel and complementary parodies which reflect Marie's comic intentions are apparent here. This lai offers a wealth of parodial elements.

The Symbol as Nominal Power in the Courtly Context

The introductory remarks in Equitan could not be more facetious given the circumstances:

> Mut unt esté noble barun
> Cil de Bretaine, li Bretun! . . .
> D'Equitan, ki mut fu curteis,
> Sire des Maunz, jostise e reis. (vers 1-12)

The Bretons are noble and "curteis" - but to what end? Even Equitan's name rings with ambiguity - "équité" or "equites" - fairness or horseman? The ambiguity of his name will be reflected in the double nature of the dialogue to follow between himself and his love. Marie has granted the Bretons and Equitan a lofty build-up only to precipitate their inevitable fall.[11/4] Some critics read into the meaning of "curteis," define it, and associate it with sensuality; they imply that this lai represents Marie's condemnation of the courtly trend from the south as inspired by Aliénor d'Aquitaine. Is Marie saying that "curteis" and love of "druérie" are synonymous? "Marie strongly emphasizes the danger to one whose only interest is "deduit"

and "druërie."[115] Most of Marie's characters have a penchant toward "druërie," and they are not so harshly dealt with. Despite the critic's insistence, I feel that "curteis" does not innately possess a derogatory or negative connotation for Marie - although it may at times. The poetess presents her case without necessarily condemning morally. If she is condemning "curteis" in Equitan, why did she not "condemn" all the other illegitimate affairs in the other eleven lais? Why is this one such a special case? Does the seneschal's "goodness" - his fulfilling of duties - necessitate this condemnation? This ironic praising of the Bretons and of one of their members, Equitan, is the source of the dramatic tension and the heart of the entertainment as will be Equitan's interior monologue and his subsequent dialogue with the seneschal's wife. No matter how distorted the logics are, Marie will be turning the conventional "tenso" of the troubadours completely around. If they are able to debate a question logically, she will logically debate an illogical premise - a variation on an old theme. For as much as Marie "condemns" Equitan, she will "praise" the seneschal for having assumed the king's duties while the king is off hunting:

> Pur nul busuin ki li creüst,
> Li reis ne laissast sun chacier,
> Sun deduire, sun riveier. (vers 26-28)

These portraits in contrast - that of the seneschal and that of the king - are part of the ironic treatment of the story to be introduced. Marie contorts the conventional image of the king with all the double-ententes implied by "chacier." As the

seneschal has a duty towards the king, the king too must in his way serve the seneschal; however, in an interior monologue, Equitan distorts reason, persuading himself that he would not be committing a wrong to the seneschal as much as a right to the lady:

> E si jo l'aim, jeo ferai mal
> Ceo est la femme al seneschal;
> Garder li dei amur e fei
> Si cum jeo voil K'il face a mei. (vers 71-74)

But Equitan intellectualizes and rationalizes his position in order to justify himself:

> Mes nepurquant pis iert asez
> Que pur li seie afolez.
> Si bele dame tant mar fust
> S'ele n'amast e dru n'eüst!
> Que devendreit sa curteisie
> S'ele n'amast de druërie? (vers 77-82)

He opts to covet his neighbor's wife. This interior monologue as a technique was widely used by the troubadours and came to full fruition in medieval theatre; Rutebeuf's Dit de l'Herberie is a perfect example of a dramatic monologue[116] - which also resembles an interiorized "tenso." Using courtly casuistry, Equitan persuades both self and lady. The progression towards the height of irony is exactly reached during a "tenso"-like debate on "true" love between Equitan and "la femme al seneschal" where distorted logic reigns. The lady preaches the necessity of loyalty:

> Amur n'est pruz se n'est egals.
> Mieux vaut uns povres hum leals
> Si en sei ad sen e valur. (vers 137-139)

The king retorts that love is based on loyalty not the art of "trichier":

> Cil ki d'amur sunt novelier
> E ki s'aturnent de trichier
> Il sunt gabé e decëü. (vers 163-165)

The foundation of the argument is, however, decayed with lies and hypocrisy - the harangue on noble and faithful love leads the lovers straight to bed and to the infamous pact of murder. But the "tenso" was part of the troubadours' repertoire; a typically debated question would be - "l'amour apporte-t-il plus de biens que de maux?" as stated in the "jeu parti entre Jean Bretel et Adam Le Bossu."[117] Adam Le Bossu or de la Halle more than likely wrote both parts as was the custom. If the troubadours started with a more noble basis, Marie chose simply to do an about-face in this highly stylized form. Thus, the art of self persuasion in Equitan is followed by persuasion of the lady - lies to self and to the other. A subversion of reason - "dêmesure" - is demonstrated through illogically founded arguments while the arguments themselves seem logically sound. The same inverted reasoning and "tenso" debate will take place in Chaitivel as well - both Marie and her characters are aping the "courtly" while mocking hypocrisy. The entertainment factor revolves around the "tenso," its reasoning whether faulty or not, and its conclusions. The interior "tenso" - Equitan's "examination of conscience" - is enhanced and amplified by his exterior "tenso" on honest love with the lady. Corruption thus corrupts. This illogically based "tenso" will focus in upon the power of words and the web of lies that

backfires, all of which will lead to the vat-symbol - the culpable are sent to its boiling water. The macabre or black humor in this lai is centered on the vat. The king and the faithless wife plan a hot bath for the faithful seneschal. The false pact between king and seneschal confirms this:

> "Vus baignerez, dist il, od mei."
> Li senescals dit: "Jo l'otrei!" (vers 269-270)

Ironically, the seneschal's naïveté will prove to be the source of his strength. An overlooked element of black humor is the lady's suggestion to her lover to have himself bled and then to take a bath in the vat:

> Dedenz le chastel mun seignur
> Sujurnez; si serez seignez
> E al tierz jur si vus baignez. (vers 244-246)

The lady's suggestion becomes a reality for the king - she puts him in jeopardy since he is to perform the ceremony or act before the seneschal does. Nominal power demonstrates its full ironic strength since the plot is aimed at the king - unbeknownst to him and his lady who uttered those fateful words. All the action of the lai revolves around distorted "tensos" and the vat symbol. Adding to the humor of the situation is Equitan's "passio":

> Amurs l'ad mis en sa maisniee
> Une secte ad vers lui trite,
> Ki mut grant plaie li ad faite
> El quor li ad lanciee e mise! (vers 54-57)

His attack is ephemeral especially since he satisfies his cupidity and carnal desire to extreme. This may resemble Guigemar's

"passio" as Nichol suggests, but we should bear in mind the exaggerated farfetched quality of Guigemar's grief.[118] Furthermore, Jaufré Rudel's notion of loving the unseen lady is employed:

Li reis l'oï sovent loër. (vers 38)

He heard praises to her beauty and was enamoured before actually laying eyes on her. However, this notion of "fin'amor" is just as brief as Equitan's "passio" - all of which indicates Marie's attempt to mock and parody the so-called rules and regulations. Equitan and the lady get what they look for in all senses of the term. As usual Marie takes conventional practices and bends them to suit her will and art form.

If Marie eternalizes crime, evil, and distorted logic in Equitan, she will also eternalize a lady's haughtiness and a chevalier's inordinate submission in Chaitivel. This lai, if looked at quite objectively, may be one of the most humorous. How a lady can maintain her "sang-froid" and "savoir-faire" while all those around her are dying out of love for her is, to say the least, incredible - whence comic exaggeration. The lady is determined to intellectualize the circumstances - three chevaliers fight to the end and die while another is irreparably wounded sexually - and all she wants to do is have a discussion. Let us forget the unpleasantries of life - this is her attitude at least. Marie presents her audience the lai-within-a-lai technique. The first half of the lai deals with the wooing and combat scene, and the second half is a detached discussion about it. The lady always safeguards her

aloofness during her debate with Chaitivel. Thus we have the story of a tournament and then a "tenso"-like casuistic debate concerning the results of the tournament. The humor lies in the fact that both lady and chevalier maintain a philosophical façade in the most tragic of circumstances.[119] Marie is mocking both the distorted reasoning of the debate concerning the title of the lai - of who suffered the most and deserves the honor - and she is mocking the lack of feeling and humanitarianism of those who insist on intellectualizing rather than on sympathizing. The comedy again revolves around the "tenso" - first, it is the question of the name, but the most important question to be answered is - "Which knight is the most worthy and should receive the lady's favors?" But what does this lady grant? A title.[120] Besides, Chaitivel is not in the proper condition to accept much of anything else. The lady's haughtiness, pride, and her unwillingness to grant favors remind us of the lady of "fin'amor;" however, even the latter will eventually accord what the former will not. Marie has magnified to the point of exaggeration the lady's reluctance. The joke is that the lady never really grants anything - she graciously, in mock-humility and charity - accords Chaitivel a title he more than certainly merits. She ponders too much over his worthiness. Nothing is spontaneous in regard to her decision-making process. Furthermore, whatever she would be able to grant, Chaitivel would never be able to receive due to the nature of his injury. Marie laughs at both man and woman in pitiful endeavors to become other than their true self. One wonders to what extent Marie was satirizing the mores of the twelfth

century court and "amour courtois" in general.[121] In "fin'amor," the lady customarily submits; reason and discipline are upheld just so long. Michel views this lai as illustrating the disasters of selfish love.[122] To a point, but the tone and circumstances are so farfetched and "invraisemblable" that we should not lose sight of the humor because of pedantic analyses. The choice which the lady is incapable of making is to some extent made for her by fate - a fate dictated by Marie's determinism. At the end of the tale, Chaitivel is not truly accepted as a lover - he is a lover in name only. Chaitivel's "passio" is virtually non-existent; he maintains his firm and combative tone to win the argument:

> Mes jo, ki sui eschapez vifs,
> Tuz esgarez e tuz cheitifs,
> Ceo qu'el siecle puis amer
> Vei sovent venir e aler
> Parler od mei matin e seir,
> Si n'en puis nule joie aveir
> Ne de baisier ne d'acoler
> Ne d'autre bien fors de parler. (vers 215-222)

His maudlin tone wins his case. Of course, he only "wins" in terms that have been wholly dictated by the lady. Again, Marie bombards her listeners with mock-"passio" to the very end. This lai is a study in contrasting stereotypes - the characters are "typified." There are chevaliers who fall hopelessly in love at first sight and a lady who could not care less:

> N'ot en la tere chevalier
> Ki aukes feïst a preisier
> Pur ceo qu'une feiz la veïst
> Ki ne l'amast e requeïst. (vers 13-16)

One question alone preoccupies her and the whole lai is built

around this question:

Li queils soreit mieuz a amer. (vers 52)

Marie is underscoring the hypocrisy of the entire system of "fin'amor":

Nes voil tuz perdre pur l'un prendre! (vers 156)

The lady's logic never ceases to shock. Marie usually gives much insight into the workings of a distorted mind and logic - the same will hold true for Fresne. Marie presents demented beliefs and amplifies them fully. The irony is clear in this capsulized formula about the lady's mentality:

La dame fu de mut grant sens. (vers 49)

That is "grant sens," not "bon sens." Her logic leads to tragedy; she will stop at nothing to maintain her image, and Chaitivel is a glutton for punishment - he subjects himself to her fickleness to the very end. All is ludicrously exaggerated. Chaitivel is a sorrowful excuse of a man for a number of reasons - he loses in combat, he loses his manhood, but wins a "crumb" of generosity in his debate - a title. Her generosity is absurd and finally useless. Chaitivel is forever compared to one of Andreas Capellanus' situational episodes in De Amore. Capellanus offers a myriad number of situations of lovers from different backgrounds and classes - the combinations satisfy all the social strata - and then he recommends the "appropriate" behavior that these lovers assume in order to persuade and seduce; by the end of his work, he negates all of the suggestions

offered in his courtly game playing.[123] As I stated earlier this work postdates the Lais by about a century; furthermore, if critics could appreciate Capellanus' humor, they may someday enjoy Marie's. As cerebral as the lady may be and as gullible as Chaitivel may be, they nevertheless prove to be formidably skilled and versed in the techniques of "tenso."

Faulty reasoning, word games, and ironic treatments of nominal power are sources of Marie's humor, and Fresne possesses all these elements.[124] First of all, the superstition that a woman having twins had relations with two men is part of Greek mythology - Amphitryon - but one of them is a god; Marie has her character use this theme to condemn - this is quite novel. The source of the slanderous remark was obviously a jealous neighbor. The superstition or lie is comically inventive nevertheless. When finally the slanderous remark backfires - the power of words - what decision does the lady take? Not a very Christian one:

> Un des enfanz m'estuet murdrir. (vers 92)

Marie is poking fun at the woman's faulty reasoning which is not in just proportion to what has transpired. The lady slandered herself; however, she chooses to resort to extremes in order to save face:

> Mieuz le voil vers Deu amender
> Que mei hunir e vergunder. (vers 93-94)

It sounds as if Marie is mocking the myths where so often a mother or father decides to abandon a child for some non-rational

reason - Oedipus was abandoned by Laius because of an oracle. Thus, Marie's humor is first witnessed in the non-sensical statement of a superstitious nature and then compounded by the mother's over-reaction in the "recognition" scene.[125]

Marie can often be very blunt:

> L'une des dames enceinta
> Al terme qu'ele delivra. (vers 9-10)

The rapidity with which she speaks of "chevalier pruz e vaillant," and then abruptly mentions the word, "enceinta," must have affected the listeners. She employs this entertaining device throughout this lai and in both Milun and Yonec. Now, is this bluntness an indication of "non-courtly" or shall we engage ourselves in a "tenso" about this? Nobles and pregnancies. The lack of unity of tone seems intentional in order to underscore the comic elements. In the seventeenth century such a juxtaposition will be taboo. Could the Middle Ages be more "modern" in ways or is this an indication of barbarism? There is an openness in medieval literature which could have a beneficial effect on "modern" man. In any event, the sharp intruding tongue must have entertained the court. So is it "courtly"?:

> "Si m'ĕit Deus, jo m'esmerveil
> U cist prudum prist cest conseil
> Qu'il a mandĕ a sun seinur
> Sa hunte e sa grant deshonur
> Que sa femme ad eŭ deus fiz
> E il e ele en sunt huniz! (vers 31-36)

The lady is doubtless feigning a state of shock over the neighbor's having given birth to twins. She evidently hated her and

said the first thing that came to her mind. This should remind us of the Laüstic's lady who said the first thing that her imagination could produce. Imagine also the audience's reaction; they must have hated her for being hateful and must have laughed over her distorted mind and faulty logic. Marie then plays with her audience:

> Ki sur autrui mesdit e ment
> Ne seit mie qu'a l'oil li pent. (vers 87-88)

In a light way, she cautions them not to be hasty in judging others. The audience someday may find itself in a similar position. Do not all of us to some extent, use logic to justify ourselves? Marie is making a general criticism applicable to everyone: she is mocking the reasoning process of logic that is falsely based. However, the lady must keep up appearances - maintain the "courtly." This is an example of Christian caritas versus courtly honor. To save her reputation compromised by her own doing, the lady must kill her child. The ludicrousness is blatant. The lady labors under the misapprehension that the end will justify the means. Will her honor be restored? Again, as Marie mocked the "philosophical" and highly "cerebral" lady of Chaitivel, she contrives a similar plot that distorts both Christian charity and epic honor. There is a quickness to Marie's style that adds to the humor of the situation. Notice the action, movements, and rhythm established when the porter announces to his widowed daughter that he has found a child:

> Icele nuit par tens leva,
> Chevalchiee, lampes alumé,
> Les seins Tom e l'un ovri.
> Sur le freisne les dras choisi. (vers 181-184)

The alliteration of the "s" sound imitates the precipitous state. Continuing in his frenzy:

> "Fille, fet il, levez, levez!
> Fu e chaundele m'alumez!
> Un enfaunt ai ci aporté
> La fors el freisne l'ai trové." (vers 197-200)

Marie builds up the humor through the musicality, rhythm, and alliteration of her verse. She imitates the man's franticness through her style. Marie uses this technique often; unfortunately, we cannot devote more time to stylistics in Marie de France.

A question rarely asked about Fresne has to do with the baby's name. Is it normal in the Christian world for a child to be named after one of the elements of nature - "le fresne"? This is the name given her by an abbess, not a saint's name which would be more appropriate. To maintain this name of pagan origin even after marriage seems even more strange. It is the name of a sturdy tree, thus Fresne's resilience. It is also the souvenir of her mother's crime. Names in the Lais in general are strikingly bizarre. In any case, this good upright young girl nestled in the religious atmosphere of a convent suddenly becomes corrupt - a concubine or "suinant." Where and how did she go wrong? Why the rapid turn of events? The humor of this abrupt change must have amused audiences. A nice little girl with no real name gone bad and for no apparent reason except love. "Fin'amor" works strange wonders; it can relegate innocent girls to a position of dishonor. Gurun is not without ulterior motives either; he contributes to the sup-

port of the Church to satisfy his own needs:

> Pur aveir lur fraternité
> La ad grantment del soen doné
> Mes li i ad autre acheisun
> Que de receivre le pardun! (vers 267-270)

Marie is demonstrating through comedy the hypocrisy of the situation. Gurun takes himself off to a nunnery. Then this noble "seignur" who loved his mistress so much consents without question to the proposals of his men to marry someone befitting his rank. Another abrupt turn of events and change of heart. Marie is poking fun at the fickleness of the system - the "fin'amor" system:

> Li chevaliers ad graanté
> Qu'en lur cunseil femme prendra. (vers 328-329)

Marie takes the standards of "fin'amor" and twists them. Although a chevalier being advised by his men suits the epic framework, this notion seems inappropriate in the love context. Fresne always appears to be at the mercy of the system and rarely on the pedestal.

Certain details concerning the theatrical "reprise et reconnaissance" finale should be reexamined. How impressed the audience must have been to discover along with the parent the truth of Fresne's noble birth. The audience perks up and revels in the unfolding of truth even though the audience knew Fresne's origins all the time. And yet Marie could have deceived them as she often does; the audience does not know the outcome until the very end. Marie plays with factors of which the audience is aware; she is playing, therefore, with the dramatic

irony inherent in this lai. There is also some vicarious pleasure, irony, and humor in the blanket or "paile roé" symbol. For who would know better how to make up the wedding bed - Gurun's bed - than his mistress. There are some courtly titillations on Marie's part in the use of the blanket symbol. Although the most banal and least fanciful of the poetess's symbols, the "paile roé" still applies itself to various levels of interpretation, one of which is to evoke pity. Marie is almost teasing the court in the use of this symbol - the mistress is making the bed with her old baby blanket for her lover and his new wife, her sister. Vicarious pleasures and incest are possible explanations. The irony almost becomes laughable through its incredibility. Then the actual discovery of the blanket and the ring defies probability - the mother confesses on the spot and the father like Guildeluëc is most understanding and forgiving. This was the same man who had reprimanded his wife for having slandered his neighbor's wife. Is he, after approximately twenty years of not having seen his abandoned daughter, going to be so reconciliatory? His reaction over the slanderous remark and his reaction to his wife's confession oppose each other and almost negate each other. These factors only add to the incredibility and the ludicrousness of the tale. The two contrary reactions border on "invraisemblance" which is ultimately a comic element. Finally, the mother's wedding ring - gold with a ruby and also left with the abandoned child - symbolized for Nickel purity, loyalty, and charity - gold is pure, the ruby is charity, and wedding means loyalty.[126] The critic feels that in the mother's abandoning of the ring,

she lost faith and loyalty which was to be regained by her daughter as a legacy through her marriage with Gurun. This might be a reasonable explanation if the mother's character were pure and noble. What the mother would be passing on, if Fresne were to use the same ring for her marriage, would be more lies, treachery, and calumny. The mother's act is one of hypocritic snobbery. Nickel would also like to place this lai somewhere between Equitan and Guigemar insofar as the love concept is concerned.[127] In the first place, Fresne contains many more Christian elements than either Equitan or Guigemar, and secondly in Equitan crime and punishment are eternalized not grace, salvation, and elevation to a higher social status, and thirdly, Guigemar abounds in Celtic elements whereas Fresne does not. Nickel's observation of unequal loves, socially speaking, is correct; however, he generalizes the situations with a restatement of Capellanus' De Amore, and he does not mention various traditions of lyric poetry and romance and since he fails to appreciate their humor.

It would be worth recapitulating the sources of Marie's entertainment and parody: a mocking or an exaggeration of mythological, Christian, epic, and courtly virtues; specifically, Marie draws humor from scenes of mock-"passio," perverted reasoning of "tenso" form, reactions out of proportion with the facts or circumstances, a playful attitude with the audience, a briskness of style, a highly inventive imagination, a distortion of conventional images of both "roman courtois" and "fin'amor," situational absurdities and ludicrousness, a general "invraisemblance," dramatic irony, and finally from a fanciful

juxtaposition of terms, concepts, and philosophies.

Notes

[1] Joseph Bédier and Paul Hazard, Histoire de la littérature française: Le Moyen Age tome 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1923), p. 45.

[2] Ibid., pp. 45-46.

[3] Bartina Wind, "Eléments courtois dans Béroul et Thomas," Romance Philology 14 (1960-1961), pp. 2-4.

[4] Ibid., pp. 7-13.

[5] Anna Hatcher, "Contributions to the Pèlerinage de Charlesmagne," Studies in Philology XLIV (1947), pp. 7-9.

[6] Pierre Bec, Anthologie de la Lyrique Occitane du Moyen Age (Paris: Aubanel, 1970), p. 181.

[7] Ibid., p. 175.

[8] According to his "vida" - a semi-biographical account of the poet's life written about a century after the fact by an unknown source. Nouvelle Anthologie, p. 177.

[9] See Paul Lonigan's "Calogrenant's Journey and the Mood of the Yvain," Studi Francesi 58 (1976), pp. 1-20.

[10] Sigmund Freud, Basic Writings (New York: Modern Library, 1938), pp. 761-768.

[11] Jean Frappier, Les Romans Courtois (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1943), pp. 17-20.

[12] Ibid., pp. 21-23.

[13] Ibid., p. 23.

[14] Ibid., pp. 24-30.

[15] Ibid., pp. 31-36.

[16] C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 29.

[17] See Paul Lonigan's "Chrétien's Yvain: A Study of Meaning through Style," University Microfilms International (Ann Arbor, 1973).

[18] Gustave Cohen, Chrétien de Troyes: Oeuvres Choisies (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1936), p. 13.

[19] Ibid., p. 24.

[20] Ibid., pp. 29-37.

[21] C. S. Lewis, p. 27.

[22] Ibid., pp. 26-29.

[23] Paul Lonigan, "The Authorship of the 'Guillaume d'Angleterre': A New Approach," Studi Francesi 47-48 (1972), p. 309.

[24] Lonigan, "Calogrenant's Journey," p.2.

[25] Ibid., pp. 4-6.

[26] Donald Stone, Tristan et Iseut (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1966), pp. 132-133.

[27] Paul Lonigan, "Lyricism and Narration in the Gormont et Isembart Fragment," Neophilogus 54 (1970), pp. 131-138.

[28] Paul Lonigan, "The Authorship of the Guillaume d'Angleterre: A New Approach," Studi Francesi 47-48 (1972), pp. 305-314.

[29] Emanuel Mickel, Marie de France (New York: Twayne, 1974), p. 157. See also Richard Baum's Recherches sur les oeuvres attribuées à Marie de France, Heidelberg: Winter, 1968.

[30] Paul Lonigan, "The Cligès and the Tristan Legend," Studi Francesi 53 (1974), p. 204.

[31] Ibid., p. 205.

[32] Ibid., p. 205.

[33] Ibid., p. 205.

[34] Ibid., pp. 206-208.

[35] Mario Casella, "Poesia e storia," Archivio storico italiano 96 pt. 2 (1938), pp. 3-63; pp. 153-199.

[36] Ibid., p. 17.

[37] Ibid., p. 159; p. 165.

[38] Grace Frank, "The Distant Love of Jaufré Rudel," MLN 57 (1942), pp. 520-524. "Amor de lonh" equals Love for the Holy Lands for this critic.

[39] Pierre Bec, p. 8.

[40] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[41] Ibid., p. 10 and see Jean Audiau's Nouvelle Anthologie des troubadours, Paris, 1928.

[42] See Joseph Anglade's Les Troubadours (Paris: Colin, 1929) for a complete understanding of their work.

[43] Bec, pp. 117-167.

[44] Alfred Jeanroy, Les Origines de la poésie lyrique en France au Moyen Age (Paris: Champion, 1965), pp. 1-157.

[45] Guillaume Picot, La Poésie lyrique au Moyen Age tome 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1903), pp. 68-81.

[46] Ibid., pp. 6-12.

[47] Ibid., pp. 86-97.

[48] Pierre Bec, pp. 162-164.

[49] Picot, pp. 12-23; pp. 28-45.

[50] Bec, pp. 140-148.

[51] Picot, La Poésie lyrique tome 2, pp. 72-74.

[52] Picot, La Poésie lyrique tome 1, pp. 14-17.

[53] Ibid., p. 15.

[54] Bec., pp. 159-162.

[55] La Poésie lyrique tome 2, pp. 77-122.

[56] Bec, pp. 53-60.

[57] Ibid., p. 11.

[58] Ibid., p. 12.

[59] Ibid., p. 12.

[60] Ibid., p. 12.

[61] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[62] Bec prefers these terms and justifiably so, p. 13.

[63] Ibid., p. 16.

[64] Leo Spitzer, "L'Amour lointain de Jaufré Rudel et le sens de la poésie des troubadours," (Cornell Hill: University

of North Carolina, 1944).

65 Bec, p. 16.

66 Ibid., p. 17.

67 Ibid., p. 17.

68 Ibid., p. 17.

69 Bec contradicts Bédier's notion of "amour courtois," p. 18.

70 Guillaume IX's "Ab la Dolçor del Temps Novel," in Bec's Anthologie, pp. 175-177.

71 Bec, p. 18.

72 Ibid., p. 19.

73 Ibid., p. 20.

74 See Jeanroy's Les Origines de la poésie lyrique.

75 M. Lazar, Amour courtois et fin'amors (Paris: Klincksieck, 1964), pp. 28-32.

76 Bec, p. 21.

77 Ibid., pp. 24-27.

78 Ibid., pp. 27-35.

79 Bec, p. 29.

80 Ibid., p. 30.

81 Ibid., p. 31.

82 Ibid., p. 34.

83 Elba Brichtenbeck, "Aspects of Organicity in Old French Romance Narratives: Prologue and Narrative Modalities in the Lais of Marie de France," DAI 35: 2931A. The critic delves into the nature and essence of prologues and questions whether Guigemar's prologue imitates that of the Roman d'Enéas.

84 François Villon, Oeuvres ed. par Auguste Longnon (Paris: Champion, 1970), pp. 22-23.

85 Micket, pp. 113-114; p. 167.

86 Ibid., p. 169.

87 Ibid., p. 114.

88 F. Schürr demonstrates destiny's role in the Lais believing that Chrétien answered Marie's "blind fate" through his doctrine of "courtly love." Too simplistic. "Komposition und Symbolik in den Lais der Marie de France," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 50 (1930), pp. 556-582.

89 Mickel, pp. 117-118.

90 E. Schiött feels that Marie does not object to extramarital affairs under certain circumstances: when the deceived partner is cruel and merits deception and when the lovers are loyal to one another. The question of "extramarital" seems irrelevant since the audience totally ignores the completely unfruitful marriage and since the bond between the lovers is as strong as that of a marital state - the lovers seem married. L'Amour et les amoureux dans les "Lais" de Marie de France, (Lund, 1889).

91 Philippe Ménard in "La déclaration amoureuse dans la littérature arthurienne au XII[e] siècle," points out how the declarations of love in the Lais are either shortened, prolonged, repeated, or delayed and how the lady deals with these declarations either by succumbing immediately or not. Cahiers de Civilisations Médiévales 13 (1970), pp. 33-42.

92 Mickel, p. 112.

93 Ibid., p. 112.

94 Cassell's Latin Dictionary (New York: Funk & Wagnall, 1959), p. 41.

95 Mickel, p. 113.

96 Maurice Wilmotte states that the "chasse de la biche" resembles a similar scene in Chrétien's Erec while pointing out other similarities between these contemporaries and insinuating that the lady borrowed from the gentleman. "Marie de France et Chrétien de Troyes," Romania 52 (1926), pp. 353-355.

97 This is Harry Williams' classification. Les Lais de Marie de France (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), pp. vii-viii.

98 Mickel, "Marie de France's Use of Irony as a Stylistic and Narrative Device," Studies in Philology 71 (1974), pp. 265-290. The critic examines the richness of irony in the language of various passages and in the poetess' interjected comments but fails to notice the humor of irony.

99 Mickel, Marie de France, pp. 103-104.

100 Mickel in another article debates whether this "passio" is influenced by Ovid or Cucldanus and whether love in the Lais is a matter of cupidity or charity in an attempt to define

Marie's notion of the term. "A Reconsideration of the Lais of Marie de France," Speculum 46, pp. 39-65.

101 Mickel, Marie de France, p. 109.

102 These supernatural occurrences and fantasy elements have been equated with subconscious states of mind by S. Foster Damon. The Bisclavret seems to want to escape and establish freedom away from his wife. "Marie de France: Psychologist of Courtly Love," PMLA 44 (1929), pp. 968-996.

103 Mickel, Marie de France, pp. 109-110.

104 Ibid., pp. 109-110.

105 R. Schober fails to admit the slightest humor and becomes enthralled with "fin'amor" doctrines: love is inherent in nature; beautiful people belong together; love prevails over reason; fate is at the heart of the matter and the like. Parody is one of these neglected topics in Marie. "Kompositionsfragen in den Lais der Marie de France," Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin 4 (1954-1955), pp. 49-59 and "Weltstruktur und Werkstruktur in den Lais der Marie de France," Von der Wirklichen Welt in der Dichtung, Berlin 1970, pp. 112-130; 383-397.

106 It is also mock-caritas.

107 Mickel believes that Marie is adhering to Peter of Blois' treatise De Amicitia in which the author warns against the attraction of the senses over "ratio," p. 168. The situation in Deus Amanz is, however, more complex since Marie is obviously toying with all these notions.

108 Where is Marie's so-called "blind fate"?

109 Mickel, p. 118.

110 Ibid., p. 169.

111 Some critics are more engrossed by the dictates of "fin'amor" than the troubadours were: "people sometimes finally forsake this delight [bestial instinct] out of great honesty and wish to live until death chastely, and yet to love each other perfectly." This is Joan Jones' idea that Eliduc is deliberately abstaining from carnal relations. I have already pointed out the questionability of this "fact." The Chess of Love, University of Nebraska, p. 867. Mickel admires her thesis.

112 Paul Lonigan, "The Cligès and the Tristan Legend," p.210.

113 Rychner, Les Lais de Marie de France, p. 288.

114 E. Hoepffner tosses about the notion of ideal love without full understanding of idealism and its development in

symbolism; he views Gauiton and Chaitivel as Marie's condemnation of Provençal love. He also misses the parody. Les Lais de Marie de France (Paris, 1935).

115 Mickel, p. 105.

116 Jean Frappier, Le Théâtre Comique au Moyen Age (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1935), pp. 6-9.

117 Picot, La Poésie lyrique, pp. 102-105.

118 Mickel, p. 105.

119 We have here extreme cases à la Molière - "la coquette et l'homme éperdument fidèle."

120 A return to Plato's Cratylus and if the name befits the person; also at hand is the philosophical notion of "le signifiant et le signifié."

121 How much of Marie's work is satire?

122 Mickel, pp. 116-117.

123 See Andreas Capellanus' The Art of Courtly Love trans. by John Parry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941).

124 Mickel admits that he cannot understand how Fresne fits either into "the so-called courtly tradition or the Celtic love of fate." This is because he only goes so far in his analysis of irony without perceiving its humor, p. 168.

125 Two elements are at work: Camus' existential idea of self-condemnation but treated humorously and Marivaux's considerations of social ranks: the prince versus the servant girl with accompanying parody by the servants and where all equalizes socially at the end.

126 Mickel, p. 108.

127 Mickel, p. 107.

CONCLUSION

At the term of this study, the intricacies of cultures and civilizations appear neatly woven in the microcosm of each lai. Essentially, we have traced the history not of man per se but of the development of his mind from its non-rational genesis to a progressive blending and equalizing of themes with rational elements. These rational elements will finally prevail once we reach the Christian era and will continue to dominate until modern times. The two elements, non-rational and rational, have always existed through time but in varying proportions. The fact is that we, "modern man," have lost contact with much of the non-rational and even some of the rational traits of bygone eras - a contact which was still fresh in the mind of Marie de France. Modern civilizations have a tendency to silence and deny what they cannot understand. If during the age of Greek and Celtic civilizations non-rational mythological traits are prominent, they nevertheless coexist with sophisticated philosophical thought: Aristotelian logic and syllogisms or the Celtic notion that light and darkness are one. The tendency for the rational to dominate the non-rational was always present, but its effect varied according to the period of time chosen. The Christian era confirms these trends toward "rationalizing" through a preponderance of definitions in an effort to refine the

thoughts of the "ancients." The courtly period becomes a super-sophistication in which mind plays with mind in a philosophical and psychological array of casuistry. Systems prevail - the fixed forms of poetic genre - but not without a certain freedom of thought and affirmation of individuality. All through the course of our study we have observed the coexistence of transcendental efforts towards a higher good and attempts at parodying man's so-called condition with a certain realism and satire: the sublime efforts of an Icarus towards his lofty goal followed by his unfortuitous fall and realization of defeat. Transcendentally, Plato's quest for the Idea or the greatest good in a gradual eschatological fashion bears resemblance to the Celtic step-by-step induction motif to the "Otherworld" concept where a Nirvana-like existence is established. Essence becomes existence. Heaven is a reality. Neither the Hesperides nor the Isles of the Blest with all the accompanying mystical voyages are foreign to Greek or Celtic mythologies. St. Bernard's ecstatic experience towards the attainment of God's love and the Beatific Vision cannot be eliminated in the objective sense from this quest for an absolute any more than the troubadours' vertically ascending search toward the "domna." Jungian interpretations of symbolism are no different in this regard. Along with the transcendental movement in all these contexts of diverse traditions is found parody - from Aristophanes' and Ovid's mocking attitude and cynicism towards their respective times to Chrétien de Troyes' transcendental vision and parody combined in the work of one individual. In particular, the mythologies of

both Greek and Celtic cultures offer examples of battles of mock-hostility, game playing, and even an aristocratic courtly notion, not to mention the parodial situations of "geis upon geis" or the Greek left-handed wish or prophecy situation in which the hero remains betwixt and between and becomes sterile in his inertia.

Marie herself will "idealize" the central symbols of each lai while demythologizing through use of parody many of the standards, beliefs, and superstitions of days of yore; she will dechristianize in a similar way sacred virtues and their abuses through exaggeration and distortion. To that extent, she will even "décourtiser" the revered principles of "fin'amor," "roman courtois," and the epics by altering themes and rendering them more entertaining. A reluctance, stubbornness, and an inordinate refusal exist on the part of critics to admit the existence of parodial elements with the Lais. Parody and comedy are plentiful but have been overlooked as well as the general entertainment factor. Yet both transcendence and parody were expressed in the Lais by the one common device - the symbol. The multivalence of the Jungian interpretation of symbolism, whether in dream, myth, literature or reality, provided the way to view critical explanations of Marie's symbols and their use in differing contexts. The Laïstic maintained the purity of symbolic idealism as much as it displayed the parodial features of a wife's ruse. At times and depending upon the context in question, the symbol's counterpart, "sign," might dominate our interpretation - especially within the Christian framework; nevertheless, verticality, both ascending and

descending presented itself in all contexts to a lesser or greater degree. All is "idealized" in the Lais - be it Love, Death, or Life - and all is interrelated. The gods, God, and the lady impose a system of restrictions in direct proportion to the limits the hero, lover, and philosopher imposed upon themselves. Thus, the development of man's mind through time, crystallized by the multivalent symbol and condensed into the miniature-like precision of a lai has granted us considerable insight into the personality and even identity of our poetess, Marie de France.

Marie de France's use of the symbol reflects both "l'esprit courtois" and "l'esprit gaulois" in a reconciliatory fashion, thus creating together the concept of "courtoisie." This notion must be baffling for the majority of critics who tend to condescend when referring to the primitive explanations of phenomena in the Middle Ages and fail to adopt a more objective view in dealing with this period of literary wealth. While reconciling numerous philosophies, Marie through the Lais manifests an existential awareness of man's condition. She is formed by her society and brings her own tribute to its continuing formation. The symbol reveals man's inner strife through the various animus/anima figures of Marie's characterizations. Whereas Marie can "pinpoint," substantially explain, and verbalize the inner state of her characters and then exteriorize this state through symbolism, the more "primitive" mode of dreams and mythology cannot achieve the same level of synthesis although it still strives at attaining this constructural goal. The reason for her success is that Marie is a

consummate artist. The symbol reveals how little man has changed intellectually and emotionally through time despite "advancing" technology. Modern man has preferred to ignore this reality. In Jungian terms, Marie as author is fulfilling her fantasies as well as her audience's in her oneiric vision of the world - a vision in the controlled atmosphere of "courtoisie." Although oneiric, her vision is concrete. While Marie does not always spell out or decipher the complete meaning of her symbols in conjunction with the characters and self, the objective analyst-critic can further explain what the poetess has taken for granted and what she has purposely concealed. Whatever Marie intended to convey seems to have been forgotten for the past eight hundred years. The erotica of the Lais is implied in a very subtle, yet often naive, fashion through the various symbols. Humanistically, Marie is always - except in Equitan - sympathetic towards the lovers who in most cases are irrelevantly unfaithful due to the exaggerated and desperate circumstances of their particular situations. The pedestal-fall theme occurs most often in parodial situations; when it is a question of love and lovers, both are gradually elevated to the idealized state and much less frequently degraded. Even though phsyical surroundings may be confining and overwhelming both in the Lais and in the Middle Ages in general, there is an omnipresent desire to transcend - through love, of course. Love without conflict does not exist in the Lais. Love means conflict. The Love-Death notion exploited somewhat by Marie will be cherished by the Romantics as will the pedestal-fall phenomenon. Love, for Marie, is a natural

occurrence, not dictated by some code of ethics; each individual case responds differently to that ineffable emotion. The only tragic flaw - hamartia - is that the lovers fall in love, for better or for worse, but they remain eternalized in symbolism. Love is not so much a bond with humanity as it is a form of isolation and withdrawal into the egoistic self and its complementary love-object singled out and arrested in time through idealization. A wanting for self followed by an explosion outward characterizes the love movement in the Lais. Thus, unity through symbolism has permitted further insight into man, his inner struggle, his condition, and his views on love while attempting to reach beyond self. Regretfully, many critics have failed to recognize the psychological nuances of the Lais and have chosen to perpetuate popular clichés which include the notion that the Middle Ages is a religiously restrictive period. But as we have seen, Marie exhibits a freedom of expression which is at times hardly representative of Christian philosophy. Marie too seems to have lived a life of relative luxury in the folds of an isolated monarchy and not the hardships of a feudal system - which is usually conjured up by the prejudicial understanding of modern readers.

As there are twelve lais, Marie wrote during the twelfth century - the significance and power of numbers are vivid in the poetess's mind. But how does she fit into this scheme of things - the twelfth century French Renaissance? At Henry's court, she artistically combined the "matière de Bretagne" and all its "merveilleux" with the "fin'amor" of the Provençal poets into her own inimitable style and mode of expression -

transforming and renovating the art of her predecessors. Marie linked France with her long time rival, England, through literature. As an exponent of the transcendental, Marie's Lais attain peak status during the twelfth century since the central symbols of each tale are "idealized" fully and since no other secular author exploited the notion of idealism with such constancy. Marie's Fables, also possibly her first work, and especially her final one, Espurgatoire Saint Patriz, begin and culminate that long transcendental climb towards the absolute and truth. De ranarum rege and De columbarum rege of the collection of fables probe the relationship of ruler and subjects while satirizing the times and its inequities. De muliere et proco eius once again pursues the triangular relationship and its outcomes. The Espurgatoire examines Saint Patrick's descent into a cavern and his visions of the pains of Purgatory and those of heavenly Paradise. The three works demonstrate a conscious effort and climactic build-up towards idealism - from the more satirically earthy, to a mixture of symbolic idealism and parody, and finally to the full vision of Paradise. Her writing in general offers a conciseness and compactness of form that typifies the notion of an Idea - for what is Plato's Idea if not a compact self-sufficient entity unto itself? Marie's transcendentalism incontestably attains peak status during the twelfth century Renaissance even though the thirteenth century is sometimes referred to as the "grand siècle" of the Middle Ages because of its gothic cathedrals, Dante, Saint Louis, and Saint Thomas. The competition is, nevertheless, at a maximum during the twelfth century between the lyric poets,

Chrêtien de Troyes, Saint Bernard, Abélard, and Marie de France. As concerns the broader classification of "amour courtois," Marie again attains peak proportions as do other poets of the twelfth century such as Jaufré Rudel, Bernard de Ventadour, Raimbaut d'Orange, and Arnaud Daniel while she paves the way towards a fuller awareness of an expressive nature visible in future poets like Rutebeuf, Christine de Pisan, and Villon. Insofar as parody is concerned, Marie maintains her status as a transitional figure between the earlier "roman courtois" works and its full expression in Chrêtien who exploits the notion of parody with relatively more "punch" and power while sustaining the comedy. Marie displays moments of humor - the entertainment factor of the symbol - without completely developing the notion throughout the Lais. Parody is usually a natural outgrowth of Marie's ironic treatment. Therefore, we are able to evaluate Marie's works within the transcendental, the parodial, and the general concept of "amour courtois."

On the personal level, Marie de France whether she was the Abbess of Shaftesbury or Marie de Meulan, the wife of a Norman nobleman, showed little restraint in the freedom of her artistic expression; bound mostly by the literary restrictions of the day, she maintained a certain amount of discretion; her language though may become graphic and fleetingly vulgar but remains without affectation. Marie displays realistic views and insight into female sexuality with a healthy attitude divorced from conventional taboos. The woman wants, needs, and is gratified sexually without much ado as in "fin'amor." The Lais demonstrate Marie's sophistication of thought on social,

religious, and sexual levels; never is she or her characters prudish unless mockingly so. She remains a feminist and a humanist. Her feelings toward the sensual and sexual are filtered through her feminine sensibility. Never does she favor one sex over the other. If she elevates or condemns both sexes, it is because they are of equal blame or praise. For this reason, she is one of France's first humanists and its first female humanist. Not partial, she examines both sides of the human personality, the inner selves, and the resultant problems when the opposite sex is introduced into the picture. A certain realism, thus, enhances her work. Although subtle and an "esprit nuancé" aware of the complexities of philosophy, mythology, religion, and "fin'amor," Marie manifests an openness and frankness of thought - a universal spirit in regard to questioning behavior, sexuality, and man's condition at a time when the notion of university and universitas flourished in France and England. She reexamines and never takes for granted the preconceived theories of her forefathers, offering a new and distinct twist to each of her twelve lais. Marie manages, however, to side-step tragedy except in one instance - Equitan. But even when tragic elements may be present in a distant past - the Tristan legend - she avoids mentioning them as in Chievrefoil. She rarely belabors the tragic elements in myths; she will either ignore them, mention them briefly, or make use of them in parody. In the case of Yonec, Muldumarec's death scene is tragic, but Marie immediately rejuvenates life through the natural son of the lover. Regardless, all central symbols of the Lais are eternalized whether their message is

positive or negative, good or evil.

Although a product of her century, Marie breaks from the "roman courtois" and the "fin'amor" molds considerably; she transcends in literature - she borrows, transforms, and innovates in terms of existing modes of expression. She is the first poet - and a woman ironically - of the Middle Ages for whom we can establish a composite picture, sketch a portrait, and recreate a personality during a time when so little is known of women in general and not much more is known of the male writers of the period. At least, we have endeavored to formulate a more intimate understanding of her being and her art. Love as the symbol is the key to this understanding. Although love, by nature and essence, is transcendental in the Lais, it has a basis in sensuality and realism - there is no denial on Marie's part of the physical nor of a need for something greater than self. Neither Plato, Saint Bernard, the troubadours, nor Jung would argue with this concept. Procreation in the Lais - the physical manifestation of Love - is secondary. It occurs in Yonec and Milun only. The illegitimate sons are merely extensions of the father image. The "gelos" is a tyrannical father-surrogate image who derives vicarious pleasure in the eternal triangle. The lovers themselves are never secondary, one to the other, but equals in love. Eliduc, Marie's last Lai, or at least always placed as such in collections, is an intellectualized renunciation of the physical with minimal sacrifices on the part of the lovers who enjoy carnal delights long before their entry into the monastery. Eliduc is in effect a response to, if not a parody

of, the Chievrefoil or rather the Tristan legend - that archetype of fatality - since this love trio can afford the convenience of passing their final days in the lap and protective arms of the Church. A ploy? The theme of resignation? Or is Marie implying that a triangular relationship composed of two women and one man rather than two men and one woman can achieve purity of perfection? Neither can the parody of a trinity on earth be dismissed. The physical and the metaphysical join hands and are adroitly enmeshed in those capsule-sized lais.

Woman is a civilizing factor or agent without whom man's chaos would reign - so thought Marie long before Rousseau or Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Does not woman enjoy this "civilizing" role in Bernardian and Christian terms through the Blessed Virgin? And what of the "domna" of "fin'amor"? Does she not aid tremendously in the production of art? And what of Marie de France? The mere fact that this analysis of the Lais was able to plumb diverse levels of interpretations proves in itself the richness of Marie's art. It is significant to note that the Middle Ages - Marie's framework - was a male oriented society, a world of men and to a much greater degree than today. Her achievement becomes so much more remarkable when understood in this light. There are very few women medieval poets. The most fascinating fact of all is that Marie de France never loses her identity, personal touch, nor freedom of expression during an age when Church and State supposedly dominated minds. Her religion and her experience at court only aid in the further expression of that quality known as Self. The Symbol has thus proven to be more than instrumental

in converging upon the thoughts, personality, identity, and art of France's first poetess - Marie de France.

Bibliography

Abbeby, John Tate. Henry II: The Vanquished King. New York: Macmillan, 1962.

Abernethy, George. Philosophy of Religion. London: Macmillan, 1968.

Adler, Alfred. "Structural Uses of the Fairy Mistress Theme in Certain Lays of Marie de France." Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne, 9 (1957), pp. 127-128.

Altizer and Beardslee. Truth, Myth, and Symbol. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Americana Encyclopedia. Ed. Bernard Cayne. Danbury: Americana Corporation, 1978.

Anglade, Joseph. Les Troubadours. Paris: Colin, 1929.

Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages. Ed. R. S. Loomis. Oxford: 1959.

Audiau, Jean. Nouvelle Anthologie des troubadours. Paris, 1928.

Bainton, Roland. The Medieval Church. New York: Van Nostrand, 1962.

Barber, Richard. Henry Plantagenet. London: Pall Mall Press, 1964.

Bartsch, Karl. Chrestomathie de l'ancien francais. Leipzig: Vogel, 1927.

Battaglia, Salvatore. "Il mito del licantropo nel Bisclavret di Maria di Francia." Filologia romanza, 3 (1956), pp. 229-253.

Baum, Richard. Recherches sur les oeuvres attribuées à Marie de France. Heidelberg: Winter, 1968.

Bayley, Harold. The Lost Language of Symbolism. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968.

Bayot, Alphonse. Gormont et Isembart. Paris: Champion, 1969.

Bayrav, S. Symbolisme médiéval. Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1957. Chapter 1: "Symbole-emblème chez Marie de France," pp. 43-74.

Bec, Pierre. Anthologie de la Lyrique Occitane du Moyen Age. Paris: Aubanel, 1970.

Bédier, Joseph and Paul Hazard. Histoire de la littérature française. Tome I. Paris: Larousse, 1936.

Bédier, Joseph. "Les Lais de Marie de France." Revue des Deux Mondes, 107 (1891), pp. 835-863.

Berdyaev, Nicolai. Christian Existentialism. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Bevan, Edwyn. Symbol and Belief. London: Fontana Library, 1962.

Book of Irish Myths and Legends. Ed. Eoin Neeson. Cork: 1970-1971.

Bourke, Vernon J. The Pocket Aquinas. New York: Washington Square, 1960.

Bréal, Michel. Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning. New York: Dover Publications, 1964.

Bréhier, Emile. La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme. Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1962.

Brenner, Clarence. Eighteenth Century French Plays. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1927.

Brightenback, Elba. Aspects of Organicity in Old French Romance Narratives: Prologue and Narrative Localities in the "Lais" of Marie de France. DAI 35: 2931A.

Bromwich, Rachel. "Celtic Dynastic Themes and the Breton Lays." Etudes Celtiques, 9 (1961), pp. 439-474.

Brown, Jack. "Old French 'Estre': New Meanings." Romance Notes, 14 (1972), pp. 597-598.

Bulfinch, Thomas. Mythology. New York: Thomas Crowell, 1947.

Bullock-Davies, Constance. "The Form of the Breton Lay." Medium Aevum, 42 (1973), pp. 18-31.

----------. "Love-Messenger in Milun." Nottingham Medieval Studies, 16, pp. 20-27.

Burke, Bernard. Complete Peerage. 2 ed. Vol. VII. London: Burke's Peerage Limited, 1956.

----------. Dormant and Extinct Peerages. London: Pall Mall, 1883.

----------. Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage. London: Burke's Peerage Limited, 1950.

Cagnon, Maurice. "Chievrefueil and the Ogamic Tradition." Romania, 91 (1970), pp. 238-255.

Caluwé, Jacques de. "La conception de l'amour dans le lai d'Elidus de Marie de France." Moyen Age, 77 (1971), pp. 53-77.

Campbell, Joseph. The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology. New York: Viking Press, 1969.

Capellanus, Andreas. The Art of Courtly Love. Trans. by John Parry. New York: Columbia University Press, 1941.

Cargo, Robert. "Marie de France's Le Laüstic and Ovid's Metamorphoses." Comparative Literature, XVIII, pp. 162-166.

Casella, Mario. "Poesia e Storia." Archivio storico italiano, 96 part 2 (1938), pp. 3-36 & 153-199.

Cassel's Latin Dictionary. New York: Funk & Wagnall, 1959.

Cassirer, Ernst. Language and Myth. Trans. by Susenne Langer. New York: Harper Bros., 1946.

Cesare, Segre. "Piramo e Tisbe nei Lais di Maria di Francia." Studi in Onore di Vittorio Lugli e Diego Valeri. Venezia: Pozza, 1961, pp. 845-853.

Chartrou, M. "Geoffrey Plantagenet." La Province du Maine, ser. 2t. vol. 9 (1929), pp. 156-177.

Cicero. Traité des Noms. Oeuvres Complètes. Paris: Bibliothèque Latine Française, 1837.

Cirlot, Juan Eduardo. Diccionario de símbolos tradicionales. Trans. by Jack Sage. 2 ed. London: Routeledge & K. Paul, 1971.

Cohen, Gustave. Chrétien de Troyes: Oeuvres Choisies. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1930.

----------. "Marie de France's le lai des 'Deux Amants." Mercure de France, 265 (1936), pp. 61-68.

Columbia Encyclopedia. 3 ed. William Bridgewater. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956.

Cottrell, Robert D. "Le Lai du Laüstic: From physical to spirituality." Philological Quarterly, 47 (1972), pp. 499-505.

Cowling, Samuel. "The Image of the Tournament in Marie de France's Le Chaitivel." Romance Notes, 16 (1975), pp. 686-691.

Cross, Tom Peete. "Celtic Elements in the Lays of Lanval and Graelant." Modern Philology, 12 (1914-1915), pp. 584-644.

----------. "The Celtic Origin of the Lay of Yonec." Studies in Philology, 11 (1913), pp. 26-60.

Damon, S. Foster. "Marie de France, Psychologist of Courtly Love." PMLA, XLIV, pp. 968-996.

Davenson, H. Les Troubadours. Paris, 1961.

Davy, Marie Magdeleine. Essai sur la symbolique romane (XII^e siècle). Paris: Flamarion, 1955.

Delbouille, Maurice. "Ceo fu la summe de l'escrit . . ." Mélanges J. Frappier. Geneva: Droz, 1970, pp. 207-216.

----------. "Le Nom et le personnage d'Equitan." Moyen Age, 69 (1963), pp. 315-323.

Dillon, Myles. The Celtic realms. New York: New American Library, 1967.

----------. Cycles of the Kings. New York & Cumberlege: Oxford University Press, 1946.

----------. Early Irish Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948.

Donovan, Mortimar. "Priscian and the Obscurity of the Ancients." Speculum, 36 (1961), pp. 75-80.

Dronke, Peter. The Medieval Lyric. 2 ed. London: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Dunbar, Helen. Symbolism in Medieval Thought and its Consummation in the Divine Comedy. New York: Russell & Russell, 1961.

Encyclopedia Britannica. Chicago: Helen Hemingway Benton Corporation, 1977.

Fasciano, Domenico. "La Mythologie du lai les Deus Amants." Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medievale, 16 (1974), pp. 79-85.

Fellows, Otis and Norman Torrey. The Age of the Enlightenment. New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts, 1942.

Ferguson, Mary. "Folklore in the Lais of Marie de France." Romanic Review, LVII, pp. 3-24.

Fitz, Brewster. "The Prologue to the Lais." Modern Language Notes, 90 (1975), pp. 558-564.

----------. "The Storm Episode and the Weasel Episode: Sacrificial Casuistry in Marie de France." Modern Language Notes, 89 (1974), pp. 542-549.

Flum, P. N. "Additional Thoughts on Marie de France." Romance Notes, 3 (1961), pp. 53-56.

----------. "Marie de France and the Talbot Family Connections." Romance Notes, VII (1965), pp. 83-86.

Flynn, Loretto, Simeon, and Reedy. Faith in Action. New York: Sadlier, 1960.

----------. Living Our Faith. New York: Sadlier, 1958.

----------. The Triumph of Faith. New York: Sadlier, 1958.

----------. The Way, the Truth, and the Life. New York: Sadlier, 1956.

Foulet, Lucien. "Marie de France et les lais bretons." Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 29 (1905), pp. 19-56 & 293-322.

----------. "Marie de France et la légende de Tristan." Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 32 (1908), pp. 161-183 & 257-269.

Fox, John. "Marie de France." English Historical Review, 25 (1910), pp. 303-306.

----------. "Mary, Abbess of Shaftesbury." English Historical Review, 26 (1911), pp. 317-326.

Frank, Grace. "The Distant Love of Jaufré Rudel." Modern Language Notes, 57 (1942), pp. 528-534.

----------. "Marie de France and the Tristram Legend." PMLA, LXIII (1948), pp. 405-411.

Frappier, Jean. "Contribution au début sur le 'lai du Chevrefeuille.'" Mélanges Istvan Frank, Universität des Saarlandes, 1957, pp. 213-224.

----------. Les Romans Courtois. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1943.

----------. Le Théâtre Comique au Moyen Age. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1935.

Fraser, Antonia. Mary, Queen of Scots. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1971.

Freud, Sigmund. Basic Writings. New York: Modern Library, 1938.

----------. Civilization and its Discontents. New York: W. W. Norton, 1962.

----------. On Dreams. New York: W. W. Norton, 1952.

Frey, J. A. "Linguistic and Psychological Couplings in the Lays of Marie de France." Studies in Philology, 61 (1964), pp. 3-18.

Gilson, Etienne. Etudes de Philosophie Médiévale. Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg, 1921.

----------. Les Idées et les Lettres. Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1955.

----------. The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard. Trans. by A. H. C. Downes, London: 1940.

----------. The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy. New York: Scribner's, 1936.

Goldsmith, Elizabeth. Ancient Pagan Symbols. New York: AMS Press, 1973.

Gouraige, Adrienne. Le merveilleux dans les Lais de Marie de France. DAI 34: 3394A.

Green, Robert. "The Fusion of Magic and Realism in two Lays of Marie de France." Neophilogus, 59, pp. 324-336.

----------. The Growth of Love: A Study of Reality and Symbolism in the Lays of Marie de France. DAI 32 (1971): 3250A.

Grimal, Pierre. Larousse World Mythology. New York: Hamlyn, 1965.

Hatcher, Anna. "Contributions to the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne." Studies in Philology, XLIV (1947), pp. 4-25.

----------. "Le Lai du Chievrefueil." Romania, 71 (1950), pp. 330-344.

Henry, Albert. Chrestomathie de la littérature en ancien français. 4 ed. Francke Verlag Bern, 1953.

Herberg, Will. The Writings of Martin Buber. New York: World Publishing Co., 1959.

Hesiod. The Homeric Hymns and Homerica. Trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.

----------. Theogony. Trans. by Richmond Lattimore. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1959.

Hiatt, A. Kent and William Park. The Anthology of British and American Verse. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1964.

Hodgson, Frederick. "Alienation and the Otherworld in Lanval, Yonec and Guigemar." Comitatus, 5 (1974), pp. 19-31.

Hoepffner, Ernest. "Les deux lais du Chèvrefeuille." Mélanges Laumonier. Paris: Droz, 1935, pp. 41-49.

----------. "La Géographie et l'histoire dans les Lais de Marie de France." Romania, 56 (1930), pp. 1-32.

----------. "Pour la chronologie des Lais de Marie de France." Romania, 59 (1933), pp. 351-370 & vol. 60 (1934), pp. 33-66.

----------. "Aux origines de la nouvelle française." Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939.

----------. "Le Roman d'Ille et Galeron et le lai d'Eliduc." Studies in French Language and Literature. Manchester University Press, 1939, pp. 125-144.

----------. "Thomas d'Angleterre et Marie de France." Studi Medievali, 7 (1934), pp. 8-23.

Hofer, Stefan. "Zur Beurteilung der Lai. der Marie de France." Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 66 (1950), pp. 409-421.

----------. "Streitfragen zur altfranzösischen Literatur." Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, LXV (1949), pp. 257-288.

Holmes, U. T. "Further on Marie de France." Symposium, 3 (1949), pp. 335-339.

----------. "Old French Yonec." Modern Philology, 29 (1931-1932), pp. 225-229.

----------. "New Thoughts on Marie de France." Studies in Philology, XXIX (1932), pp. 1-10.

----------. "A Welch Motif in Marie de France's Guigemar." Studies in Philology, XXXIX (1942), pp. 11-14.

Honeycutt, Benjamin. "The Interaction of Structure, Description, and Symbol in Yonec of Marie de France." Language Quarterly, 12 iii-iv, pp. 25-28.

Hornik, Henry. "More on the Hermetica and the French Renaissance." Studi Francesi, 52 (1974), pp. 1-12.

----------. "Rabelais and Idealism." Studi Francesi, April 1969, pp. 16-25.

----------. "Three Interpretations of the French Renaissance." Studies in the Renaissance, VII (1960), pp. 43-66.

Hunt, Tony. "Glossing Marie de France." Romanische Forschungen, 86 (1974), pp. 396-418.

----------. "The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue." Arthurian Romance: Seven Essays. Ed. D. D. R. Owen. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970, pp. 1-23.

Illingworth, R. N. "Celtic Tradition and the lay of Guigemar." Medium Aevum, 31 (1962), pp. 176-187.

----------. "Celtic Tradition and the lay of Yonec." Etudes Celtiques, 9 (1961), pp. 501-520.

----------. "La Chronologie des Lais de Marie de France." Romania, 87 (1966), pp. 433-475.

Irish Sagas. Ed. Myles Dillon. Cork: 1970.

Jeanroy, Alfred. Les Origines de la poésie lyrique en France au Moyen Age. Paris: Champion, 1965.

Johnston, Oliver. "Sources of the Lay of the 'Two Lovers'." Modern Language Notes, 21 (1906), pp. 34-39.

----------. "Sources of the Lay of Yonec." MLA, 20 (1905), pp. 322-338.

Jones, Joan. The Chess of Love. Trans. of Les Echecs Amoureux. Thesis at the University of Nebraska. No date.

Jubainville, H. D'Arbois de. "Lai." Romania, 8 (1879), pp. 422-425.

Jung, Carl. Man and his Symbols. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964.

Kamber, G. "A case of symbolic syntax in the Chievrefueil." Romance Notes, 1 (1959-1960), pp. 151-154.

Knapton, Antoinette. Mythe et Psychologie chez Marie de France dans Guigemar. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies, 1975.

Koubichkine, Michèle. "A propos du lai de Lanval." Moyen Age, 78 (1972), pp. 467-488.

Küchler, W. "Schön Annie, Fraisne, und Griselda." Neure Sprachen, 35 (1927), pp. 489-497.

Lazar, Moshé. Amour courtois et fin'amors dans la littérature du XII^e siècle. Paris: Klincksieck, 1964.

Le Clercq, Jean. Et. Bernard et la Gnose cistercienne. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1953.

Le Gentil, Pierre. "La légende de Tristan vue par Béroul et Thomas." Romance Philology, VII (1953-1954), pp. 111-129.

Lewis, C. S. The Allegory of Love. London: Oxford University Press, 1948.

Lods, Jeanne. "Sur quelques vers de Guiromar." Romania, LXXVII (1956), pp. 494-496.

Lonigan, Paul. "The Authorship of the Guillaume d'Angleterre: A New Approach." Studi Francesi, 47-48 (1972), pp. 308-314.

----------. "Calogrenant's Journey and the Wood of the 'Yvain.'" Studi Francesi, 58 (1976), pp. 1-20.

----------. "Chrétien's Yvain: A Study of Meaning through Style." University Microfilms International. Ann Arbor, 1978.

----------. "The 'Cligès' and the Tristan Legend." Studi Francesi, 53 (1974), pp. 201-212.

----------. "Lyricism and Narration in the Gormont et Isembart Fragment." Neophilologus, 54 (1970), pp. 131-138.

Loomis, Roger. Celtic Myth and Arthurian Romance. New York: Columbia University Press, 1926.

Loth, J. "Le lai du Biselavret." Revue celtique, 44 (1927), pp. 300-307.

Marie de France. Lais. Ed. A. Ewert. Oxford: Blackwell & Mott Ltd., 1960.

----------. Les Lais. Ed. E. Hoepffner. Paris: Nizet, 1935.

----------. Les Lais. Edition critique par Jean Rychner. Classiques français du Moyen Age. Paris: Champion, 1973.

----------. Lai Frêne. Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, X no. 3, pp. i-xx & 1-14.

Martineau-Génieys, Christine. "Du chievrefoil, encore et toujours." Moyen Age, 78 (1972), pp. 91-114.

Mason, Eugene. Lays of Marie de France and other French Legends. London: Dent & Sons, 1969.

Ménard, Jacques. Le Symbole. Strasbourg: Faculté de Théologie Catholique, 1975. Michel Hansuy's article: "Symbolisme et Transcendance."

Ménard, Philippe. "La déclaration amoureuse dans la littérature arthurienne au XII^e siècle." Cahiers de Civilisations Médiévales, 13 (1970), pp. 33-[illegible].

Mermier, Guy R. "En relisant le Chievrefoil de Marie de France." French Review, XLVIII (1975), pp. 864-870.

Mickel, Emanuel. Marie de France. New York: Twayne, 1974.

----------. "Marie de France's Use of Irony as a Stylistic and Narrative Device." Studies in Philology, 71 (1974), pp. 269-290.

----------. "A Reconsideration of the Lais of Marie de France." Speculum, 46, pp. 39-65.

Moore, John C. Love in Twelfth Century France. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

Murphy, Gerard. Ossianic Lore and Romantic Tales of Medieval Ireland. Dublin: Cultural Relations Committee, 1961.

----------. Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland. Cork: Mercier Press, 1971.

Muscurillo, Herbert. Symbol and Myth in Ancient Poetry. New York: Fordham University Press, 1961.

Nutt, Alfred. "The Lay of Eliduc and the Märchen of Little Snow-White." Folk-Lore, 3 (1892), pp. 26-48.

Ogle, M. B. "Some Theories in Irish Literary Influence in the Lay of Yonec." Romanic Review, 19 (1919), pp. 123-148.

O'Sharkey, Eithne. "The Identity of the Fairy Mistress in Marie de France's Lanval." Trivium, 6 (1971), pp. 17-25.

Ovid. Les Amours suivi de L'Art d'Aimer et Les Remèdes d'Amour. Ed. Emile Kipert. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1957.

----------. Metamorphoses. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969.

Peyre, Henri. Qu'est-ce que le symbolisme? Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1974.

Pickens, Rupert. "Equitan: Anti-Guigemar." Romance Notes, 15 (1973), pp. 361-367.

----------. "Thematic Structure in Marie de France: Guigemar." Romania, 95 (1974), pp. 328-341.

Picot, Guillaume. Poésie lyrique au moyen âge. Tome 1 & 2. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1953.

Plato. Cratylus. Loeb Classical Library, Vol 6. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953.

Ross, Alexa. Celtic Irelands: Ancient Traditions in Ireland and Wales. New York: Avon Pub. Co.

Ribard, J. "Le Lai du Lecheor: Structure et Signification." Moyen Age, 76 (1970), pp. 264-274.

Ricoeur, Paul. Hermeneutic Phenomenology. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

Robertson, D. W. "Love Conventions in Marie de France's Equitan." Romanic Review, XLIV (1953), pp. 241-245.

----------. "Marie de France, Lais, Prologue 13-15." Modern Language Notes, 64 (1949), pp. 336-338.

Robertson, Howard. "Love and the Otherworld in Eliduc." Essays in Honor of Louis Francis Salano. Ed. Holmes & Cormier. Chapel Hill: University Press, 1970, pp. 167-176.

Rothschild, Judith Rice. Narrative Technique in the Lais of Marie de France. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies, 1974.

----------. "A Rapprochement between Bisclavret and Lanval." Speculum, 48 (1973), pp. 78-88.

de Rougement, Denis. Love and the Western World. New York: Random House, 1956.

La Sainte Bible. Trad. en français. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1964.

Savage, Edward B. "Marie de France's Chevrefoil as drama and image: a study in Breton oral tradition." Cairo Studies in English (1960), pp. 139-153.

Schiött, E. L'Amour et les amoureux dans les Lais de Marie de France. Lund, 1889.

Schober, R. "Kompositionsfragen in den Lais der Marie de France." Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt - Universität zu Berlin, 4 (1954-1955), pp. 45-59.

----------. "Weltstruktur und Werkstruktur in den Lais der Marie de France." Von der wirklichen Welt in der Dichtung. Berlin, 1970, pp. 113-130 & 363-377.

Schoepperle, Gertrude. "Chievrefoil." Romania, 38 (1909), pp. 196-218.

Schofield, W. H. "The Lay of Guingamor." Harvard Studies 5 (1895), pp. 221-243.

Schürr, F. "Komposition und Symbolik in den Lais der Marie de France." Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, 50 (1930), pp. 556-582.

Sperber, Dan. Le Symbolisme en général. Paris: Collection Savoir Hermann, 1974.

Spitzer, Leo. L'Amour lointain de Jaufré Rudel et le sens de la poésie des troubadours. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1944.

----------. Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963.

----------. "La lettre sur la baguette de coudrier dans le lai du Chievrefueil." Romania, LXIX (1946-1947), pp. 80-90.

----------. "Marie de France - Dichterin von Problem-Märchen." Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, 50 (1930), pp. 29-67.

----------. "The Prologue of the Lais of Marie de France and Medieval Poetics." Modern Philology, XLI (1943-1944), pp. 96-102.

Stone, Donald. Tristan et Iseult. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1966.

Toldo, Pietro. "Yonec." Romanische Forschungen, 16 (1904), pp. 609-629.

Topsfield, L. T. Troubadours and Love. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

van Treek, Carl. Symbols in the Church. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1966.

Trindade, Ann. "The Man with the Two Wives - Marie de France and an Important Irish Analogue." Romance Philology, 27 (Aug. 1973-May 1974), pp. 466-470.

Villon, François. Oeuvres. Ed. Auguste Longnon. Paris: Champion, 1970.

Warren, Wilfred Lewis. Henry II. Berkeley: University of California, 1973.

Wathelet-Willem, Jeanne. "Equitan dans l'oeuvre de Marie de France." Moyen Age, 69 (1963), pp. 325-345.

----------. "Le mystère chez Marie de France: Lanval." Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire, 39 (1961), pp. 661-666.

----------. "Le Personnage de Guenièvre chez Marie de France." Marche Romane, 13 (1963), pp. 119-131.

Watney, Wallon Family (Extinct Peerages). Oxford: John Johnson, 1928.

Watts, Thomas. "Toward an Analysis of Certain Lais of Marie de France." Langue et Style, 9 (1977), pp. 249-256.

Welch, Alice [illegible]. Of Old Medieval Women. Leominster: Gower Road Publishing, 197[illegible].

Wennberg, Renkt. Marie de France and the Breyerum Lais: A Study of Poems [illegible] in the Middle of the Fourteenth Century. DAI XVI (1956), pp. 2350-2351.

Whichard, Rogers. "A Note on the Identity of Marie de France." Romance Studies in Honor of W. A. Ivy. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1950, pp. 177-181.

White, Geoffrey H. "The Career of Waleran, Count de Meulan, Earl of Worcester (1104-1166)." Royal Historical Society, XVII, London: R. H. S. Press, 1934.

Wilkenson, L. P. Ovid Recalled. London: Cambridge University Press, 1955.

----------. Ovid Surveyed. London: Cambridge University Press, 1962.

Williams, Harry. Les Lais de Marie de France. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970.

Wilmotte, Maurice. "Marie de France et Chrétien de Troyes." Romania, 52 (1926), pp. 353-355.

----------. "Problèmes de chronologie littéraire." Moyen Age, 50 (1940), pp. 99-114.

Wind, Bartina. "L'Amour courtois dans Tristan et Thomas." Romance Philology, 14 (1960-1961), pp. 1-14.

Wolf, Leah. The Implied Author in the Lais of Marie de France. DAI, 35: 1979A.

Woods, William. "Femininity in the Lais of Marie de France." Studies in Philology, XLVII (1950), pp. 1-19.

----------. "Marie de France's Laüstic." Romance Notes, 12 (1970), pp. 203-207.

World Book Encyclopedia. Chicago: Field Enterprise Educational Corporation, 1969.