ENCOUNTERS OF THE ARABIAN KIND:

CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND IDENTITY

THE TRISTANS OF MEDIEVAL FRANCE, ENGLAND, AND SPAIN

by

Annie Knowles

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Annie Knowles

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Linda Marie Zaerr, Ph.D.	Chair, Supervisory Committee
Edward Mac Test, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee
Dalia Eltayeb, Ph.D.c.	Member, Supervisory Committee

The final reading approval of the thesis was granted by Linda Marie Zaerr, Ph.D., Chair of the Supervisory Committee. The thesis was approved for the Graduate College by John R. Pelton, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate College.

DEDICATION

For my ever supportive family, and especially for Joan, who sparked my interest in both literature and history; and also for Andy, who has helped me to keep life in perspective.

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ABSTRACT

This work examines multiple versions of the medieval Tristan story in France, England, and Spain. Beginning with a strong historical situation for the literary analysis, the work uses elements of Sigmund Freud's *The Uncanny*, Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and Roland Barthes's *Mythologies* to identify and understand the rhetorical employment of "Oriental" flourishes in the Tristans studied. The work focuses on these Eastern influences as manifested in the characterizations of the Saracen knight Sir Palomides and in the construction, depiction, and commentary upon elements of *fin' amor* that permeate the texts.

This study establishes the feasibility of intercultural exchange in the medieval world and provides an explanation for how it occurred and to what extent. It also serves as an inquiry into the rise and fall of the medieval romance genre. It traces the beginnings of troubadour lyricism from the Andalusían poets to the Aquitainian court, up to a beleaguered Britain, and back to the Iberian Peninsula and nascent Spain. The journey intertwines with the development of the Tristan story from an orally-circulated Irish legend to a ubiquitous court favorite written in a variety of tongues and retold in forms as varied as etchings, to paintings, to texts. In combining these distinct, and at times interdisciplinary, threads of inquiry, this study creates a clearer rendering of the medieval world, particularly of its public's struggle to reconcile the ideology of the church with new ideas about love and identity.

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PREFACE

A popular favorite retold in many countries, the story of Tristan and Isolde is rooted in the Celtic, oral tradition, yet as it was transcribed from versions performed by minstrels, it acquired oriental flourishes that illuminate, speak to, and reflect upon the society in which each text was created from France, to England, to Spain. After examining the Celtic origins of the tale in this introduction with help from the work of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, the remaining chapters will focus on the Tristan texts written in three different locales. Each version approached the story differently, and did so to achieve unique aims. However, a progression is seen from one text to the next regarding the attitude toward and the encapsulation of, the Orient.

Because it is where the tales were first written, besides possibly in the old ogham script of England, France's versions of the Tristan story will be the first focus of this enquiry. While primary interest is given to the Prose Tristan, and how and why Oriental motifs were employed in it, there is also discussion of the two main texts on which it was founded, the Thomas and the Béroul texts. These three French redactions are strikingly different. Each builds upon the other, illustrating a progressive increase in Oriental influence, as in each successive text there is greater interest evident in the new, fashionable literary trope: *fin' amor*, which came to be known later as courtly love, and in the Saracen knight, Sir Palomides. Examining these three texts and contemporary French iconography of the saga illuminates how the French public approached and encapsulated

the Orient. More specifically, this study offers clues about the attitudes in medieval France regarding both romantic love and *fin' amor*'s fundamental opposition to doctrines of the Catholic Church. The visual representations of the story, in particular, illustrate a growing hope among the public that suggests a common desire for a more fulfilling, romantic love than just the union of man and woman to secure wealth and to propagate. Studying these versions of the Tristan story in France reveals how the French public struggled to define, and to refine, their central values and beliefs in the wake of new ideas that seeped into their culture from the neighboring Arab presence in Spain.

The second chapter examines how Sir Thomas Malory focused upon the Saracen qualities of Sir Palomides as set against Sir Tristam in "The Book of Sir Tristram" of his *Le Morte D' Arthur.* Here, the Oriental presence illustrates the qualifications of being a good knight. This calls into question the meaning of citizenship and of social values held by Malory's war-torn countrymen to facilitate a new crystallization of British identity in the wake of the Hundred Years War and the War of the Roses, times in which the knightly ideal was in decline. Malory's work follows in the tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who likewise resurrected the court of King Arthur in the midst of England's waning national identity and pride after the Norman invasion of 1066. Malory's rhetorical choices are also in keeping with contemporary Scottish poets who dealt with Oriental topics to further nationalistic goals.

The third chapter examines the versions of the Tristan tale in Iberia. These texts were more difficult to acquire for the investigation, yet their inclusion is what brings this scholarly effort full-circle, as one of its primary objectives is to trace the influence of Arab Spain into Western Europe and then analyze how that material was subsequently

treated in the locale that inspired the story's metamorphosis in more Christian lands. Only in this manner would a true study of cultural exchange among medieval peoples and texts seem adequately complete. Three texts are examined: Ignacio B. Anzoátegui's edition of *Libro del esforzado caballero don Tristán de Leonís y de us grandes hechos en armas*; *Fragmento de un 'livro de Tristan,'* edited by J.L. Pensado Tome; and *El Cuento de Tristan de Leonis,* edited from the Vatican fragment 6428 by George Tyler Northup. Both of the latter texts are written in Gallego-Portugués, the literary tongue of choice during the late medieval period in the Iberian Peninsula. Besides these linguistic features, it is important to mention that in the Tome fragment, the text addresses Lancelot as the protagonist. However, the translator asserts that the episodes of the text actually speak of Tristan. The Anzoátegui and Northup texts are much more complete versions of the Tristan story, though, and were revised, glossed, and provided with commentary in 1943 and 1928 respectively. Thus, they are studied in greater length than the Tome fragment.

The German versions of the Tristan study were omitted from this study not because they lack merit or are inferior, but because more direct lines of cultural transmission appeared evident among ideas from England and Spain into France and back again. The French texts are presented in translation, and unfortunately, many of these editions are quite dated, resulting in archaic translations at times. However, the Iberian texts have been studied in the language that they were recorded in, with only a few modernizations of spelling and syntax supplied by editors. These texts are particularly unique because of the blend of Gallego-Portuegués that they were composed in. While reviewing these works, it is important to bear in mind slight differences between Spanish and Portuguese. As in the classic B de burro and V de vaca conundrum, many times a "v"

is used where a "b" would appear in Spanish, owing to the Portuguese influence. This switch is particularly evident in the imperfect tense, but arises in other places as well. This type of phonemic switch also arises in the use of *m* rather than *n* in many instances, resulting in words such as *com* instead of the Spainsh *con*, but both meaning "with." An additional linguistic feature to be aware of is that, owing to the medieval nature of these manuscripts, in several instances the editors chose to spell certain words according to that tradition. This means that in many instances a *u* is used in place of a *v*, and vice versa. This manifests in words like *cauallero*, which translates as *cavallero*, bringing the word back to the prior discussion of *b* and *v*, which makes the word *caballero*, or horseman or knight. In addition to the unique linguistic characteristics of these works, it is paramount to not be discouraged as a reader by the fact that for each version of the Tristan story, the characters have slightly different names, and sometimes they are not spelled consistently, even in the same work. In the Malory text, the characters are Tristram and Isolde. In the Thomas, they are Tristan and Ysolt. In the Prose version, they are Tristan and Iseult. Similar changes occur for the name of Brangain, or Brangwayne; and for Kaherdin and Gorvenal as well. I refer to the names as they are given in the specific text that I discuss in each chapter, or in each section of a chapter. This helps to clarify which text is being examined. It also helps to illustrate the individual distinctions among the works that make them unique. Lastly, the parentheses and italics found within citations are native to the text from which they came.

Each of the textual analyses is overlaid with theoretical references to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Sigmund Freud's *Uncanny*, and Roland Barthes *Mythologies*. Said's text is particularly useful for explaining the phenomenon whereby an Eastern culture is

represented as fundamentally different from a Western culture writing of it. In many cases, the Western texts represent Eastern characters and traditions as either inferior or negative. As evident in the Tristan texts to varying degrees, manifestations of these attitudes exist. Said's ideas are particularly useful for elucidating the representation and rhetorical use of the figure Sir Palomides. Likewise, Freud's *Uncanny* helps to explain why the othering of Sir Palomides is so pivotal to the thematic elements of Sir Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Further, because in each case, the Tristan tale was essentially a popular legend, Roland Barthes' ideas from *Mythologies* about the definition, purpose, and function of myth helps show how these redactions of the Tristan tale could have helped to establish cultural ideas about values and national identity.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND MATTER

Before beginning the true inquiry of the Tristan stories, though, it is paramount to recall the unique socio-historical backdrop over which the history of the Tristan tale is overlaid. First, the historical figures on which the characters are loosely based likely lived around the year 700, and tales of their adventures were predominantly oral. If the earliest redactions were recorded textually, it would likely have been in the Druidic hash-mark writing system of ogham. According to Ian Barnes, this method was developed from the Latin alphabet (161) and carved on either stone or wood; "each letter [was] made by a given number of strokes cut…around a stem line" (Barnes 58). The Irish in particular used ogham to record old tales and histories (161). The events of the stories would have occurred during the period when Christianity was just being introduced to cultures of pagan and Celtic beliefs. This was also the turbulent period of Anglo-Saxon invasions that occurred during the Roman Twilight. The stories were memorialized in Irish legends and in Welsh tales dated from around 1000. The conquest of William the Conqueror in 1066 created the subsequent contact with France, especially with Normandy, that likely allowed the stories to travel to France.

It is important to consider not only what was happening politically in the place of the story's origin, but also the circulating ideologies there. Jean Markale comments that "a massive reevaluation of all the tenets of Western Christian society was prompted by the widespread turmoil that shook the period customarily known as the Year 1000" (1).

It was characterized by "extensive self-questioning" as "this particular Christian society was seeking to discern–in events, in the intellectual speculation of a few individual thinkers, in the disorder that accompanies any new mode of inquire–what meaning could be given to a world that people believed was suffering the throes of its last stages of existence and that…was now showing signs of enduring–at least until the next crisis" (1). In particular, Markale adds that the Roman Catholic Church "had succeeded in imposing a monolithic structure and a dominant ideology over society, [but] it remained no less vulnerable and exposed to internal convulsions" (7-8) where "the turbulence and disturbances made themselves felt…and involved the intellectual culture as well as spiritual and cultural life" (7). Thus, a shifting ideology was possible, and appears to have occurred.

In the introduction to his translation of the Thomas text, Roger Loomis sets forth the pivotal shift that the courtly love tradition posed to the medieval mind. He explains that women were looked down upon in some ways, likely because Eve was attributed the blame for inviting sin into the world (xvi). Misogynistic texts were not uncommon, and even the last chapter of Andreas Capellanus's treatise on courtly love is riddled with negative comments about the inherent nature of women. In his introduction to Capellanus's work, John Parry cites that "St. Jerome…[set] forth all the wickedness of women and so provided the Middle Ages with a convenient compendium of anti-feminist literature...in the period just before Andreas wrote they seem to be especially numerous" (18).

Jean Markale adds that "It is significant that during those troubled times when the common people are agitated…the same holds true for all historical upheavals: it is the

alliance between power and knowledge that transforms the world, a fact that clarifies the full and total responsibility of those who are keepers of knowledge, or who claim to be. In the case of the period spanning the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries, the keepers of knowledge, clerics as well as certain so-called enlightened aristocrats, acted as manipulators of opinion" (17). This implicates figures like Eleanor of Aquitaine and her circle in influencing literary and cultural thought at the time. Markale opines that these individuals "infused some very strange elements…into the social and moral rules of a society that to all appearances was Christian" (17). His opinion is substantiated by the patronage of aristocrats who supported the efforts of the troubadours, leading to the proliferation of *fin' amor*-infused lays, performed tales, and additional texts, all of which impacted the populous at large.

While these pivotal, ideological convulsions racked Western Europe, there was yet another factor that catalyzed them: the Arab influence; and relics of its presence may be the "strange ideas" that Markale sees the aristocratic figures as introducing to a predominantly Christian public. Venturing north via the Arabian-occupied Iberian peninsula, new styles and ideas borne of old texts fascinated the Western Europeans, and there were both many points of contact between the cultures, and many new styles and ideas that were transmitted thereby.

> Depicted as conquerors and destroyers of the Christian faith, the people then commonly considered Saracens were nevertheless just as much a civilizing force as all the others. And even though Muslim civilization was a synthesis of various elements picked up by Mohammed's disciples during their travels, it offered for all this an opening into a previously

> unknown world, making just as considerable a contribution in the realms of philosophical thought, art, and the esoteric or hermetic traditions. From the eleventh century onward the Muslim influence upon the Mediterranean regions is particularly clear. The Iberian peninsula is a crossroads where Muslims, Jews, and Christians came together, mingled, and eventually fraternized. Their convergence is partially responsible for the birth of the brilliant Occitan civilization. For this reason it is a good idea not to overlook possible Mediterranean archetypes in the formation of courtly love and the literature for which it is famous. (Markale 4)

Pierre Cachia explains additional characteristics of Arabic literature in his section on "Poetry and Belles-Lettres" within W. Montgomery Watt's larger *A History of Islamic Spain*. Cachia mentions that in Umayyad Spain, whose emirate was instituted in 756 and flourished until 976 (Watt and Cachia 30, 39), "for all the political rivalry that existed between [West] and the East, it was to the East that [the West] looked for cultural guidance. Not only had Andalusian literature grown out of a cutting from the East: it was constantly reinforced and modified by grafts from the East" (72). Although "no noticeable difference between the poets of al-Andalus and those of the East" appeared yet, Cachia notes that the writings during the Umayyad period anticipated how "al-Andalus would emerge as the fulcrum of Muslim intellectual life west of Egypt" (75). He explains how "relations with Christian courts in the North of Spain and with Byzantium, toleration of Jewish scholars who were to act as translators and intermediaries, access to Greek and even to some Latin sources–these were enable al-Andalus to form its own cultural blend" (Watt and Cachia 75). The influence of this cultural melting pot extended

"with surprisingly little lag in time, [as] the compositions of the greatest poets of the East were being studied and imitated in al-Andalus," where a "new taste for rhetorical embellishments" took hold among the Andalusian poets (72). These cultural circumstances would have distinctive impact not only on the Iberian Peninsula, but on the countries it came in contact with as well, as these literary traditions were refined, imitated, and synthesized throughout Western Europe.

One literary technique born out of the East includes the frame-story, found in medieval Spain, which Alice Lasater describes as "frequently embodying collections of tales and fables, [and] is generally recognized as an Oriental, originally Indian, device which was imported into Europe between the eleventh and the thirteen centuries" (13). Versions of it are noticeable in the structure of 14th century works such as Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Giovanni Bocaccio's *Decameron*. Lasater mentions that in addition to the frame story, "A strophic form peculiar to Andalusia…gave rise…to the *zajal*, the strophe which provided structural models for troubadour lyrics" (18-19). The *zéjel* was a non-Classical form popular in Andalusia among "the mixed Christian and Moorish inhabitants" (Northup 97). Written in Arabic, these verses contained Spanish words, up to whole lines, and consisted of "a refrain or *estribillio*…of rhyming lines," as well as additional stanzas that created a rhyme scheme of "*aa/bba/aa*" (97).

This Andalusian strophe influenced the later troubadour constructions, but the Provencal performers gleaned more than just form from the neighboring traditions in Arab Spain. Cachia outlines key metaphorical uses of the Arabic style and its tendency to shift focus from the animate to the inanimate in order to reflect religious beliefs. In addition, A.R. Nykl, author of the 1970 text, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry and its Relations*

with the Old Provencal Troubadours, asserts, as quoted by Cachia and Watt, that the main themes of the poetry in al-Andalus "were those of fastidious, luxurious pleasure-seeking" (114). He explains that the images are characterized by enjoyments like "drinking parties held on the river at night, or in a grove or flowery meadow either in the cool of the evening or at dawn" (114). These images are also blatantly sensual, highlighting how "night washes off it *kohl* in the morning dew" (114). This sensuality can even be particularly suggestive, as in the following passages of poetry that Cachia quotes Nykl as referencing. These are tales "of fawn-like ephebes or girls slim-waisted and round-hipped inducing inebriation by the wine they pour, by the glances they give, by the kisses they yield; while the accompaniment of a lute of a slave-girl sings or another dances, finally slipping out of her dress to appear 'like a bud unfolding from a cluster of blossoms'" (Nykl qtd. by Watt and Cachia 114). It is clear that the "refinement as well as sensuality in these pleasures" (Watt and Cachia 114), and the "minute and lively care in every object of beauty" (Watt and Cachia100) as described in these Spanish works anticipates the attributes of the romance genre generated and transmitted by the troubadours, where a knight essentially fixated himself on an objectified object of beauty: a woman, usually married.

The Spanish poets did address the topic of love beyond a sensual fascination, however. Parry asserts that there were "two different attitudes toward the subject of love"—one is a "sensual tradition, perhaps native although colored by the work of Ovid, and another more spiritual tradition, which appears to be based upon the work of Plato as it had come down through the commentaries of Arabic scholars" (8).

One of the most respected poets in al-Andalus at this time was Ibn Kahafāja of Alcira, who lived from 1050-1139 (Watt and Cachia 113). In regards to his attitude and depiction of love, "The ideal expressed by Ibn-Khafāja was not of a man so sturdy or stoic or staid as never to lose a night's sleep because of love, but of one reacting immediately to every stimulus, angered or depressed by adversity, but also trembling with joy at the sight of beauty" (Watt and Cachia 115). Although this is a less affected and less incapacitated lover than is found in Capellanus's later treatise on courtly love, this description of Ibn-Khafāja's lover certainly anticipates the characterization of the lover in the *fin' amor* tradition where a "refined sensuality…manifested" (Watt and Cachia 115), that was not unlike "the special interest that Andalusian poets took in nature and in love" (Watt and Cachia 115). Cachia mentions though, that this type of attitude varied among the works of al-Andalus poets: "from consuming passion to dalliance, from expressions of abject submission to one's mistress to mock adjudication on compensation due for the wounds of love, from the un-complicated sensuality of and Ibn Kahafāja…to Ibn-Ḥazm's protestation that he preferred to meet his beloved in a dream lest in reality the touch of his hand should make her fade away" (Watt and Cachia 155).

Ibn-Ḥazm was a poet who lived from 994-1064 and "composed a work on comparative religion, and, around 1022, an epistolary treatise on platonic and courtly love, *Ṭawq al-Ḥammāma* (*The Dove's Neck-Ring*), subtitled, *On Love and Lovers*" (Lasater 18) "at the request of a friend who had asked him for a discussion of the subject" (Parry 8-9). Alice Lasater notes that this text, though predating "the first troubadour lyrics of Provence" (18) by decades, "could almost have served, as several scholars have pointed out, as a textbook for them in theories of love. The courtly-love philosophy and

formulae described in the *Ṭawq al-Ḥammāma* were not new, but rather represented a clear exposition of ideas already current in Arab Spain" (Lasater 18). Parry comments of the contents of the text noting that "Ibn Hazm admits that the ways of the Bedouins and of the ancients, in the matter of love, 'are different from ours'" (9), or those pertaining to the inhabitants on Medieval Iberia. To make this claim, Ḥazm would have needed to be familiar with ancient doctrines, which, according to R. R. Nykl, he was. Nykl argues that because Ḥazm "quotes Plato" and "likely had a copy of the Kitāb az-Zahrah at his disposal" (371), these indicate that Ḥazm "is indirectly a follower of Greek philosophy, modified by Ṣūfī ideas" (371). Parry concurs, commenting that Ibn Hazm "is familiar with the Ovidian conventions that the lover must sigh and weep and become pale and thin and that he cannot eat or sleep, and he adds to these the sudden trembling in the presence of the loved one" (Parry 9).

Parry concludes that "Ibn Hazm's concept of love, however, is in its main aspects very different from Ovid's and more resembles that of Plato. Ovidian doctrine suggests that men feign affection of a woman through "flattery, gifts and pretense" (Nykl 371) before throwing them away. Ovid also gives "detailed advice to women on how to hold men's affections by deceit, dress, and cosmetics" (Nykl 371). Contrary to these beliefs, "Ibn Ḥazm stresses the spiritual aspect of love; he enjoins Good and reproves Evil, casts opprobrium upon sexual excesses and recommends continence" (Nykl 371). This is more in keeping with Platonic philosophy, where love is defined "as a reunion of parts of souls which were separated in the creation" (Parry 9). Cachia expresses the nature of these ideas further, noting that Ibn-Ḥazm's work reflected "the view that love is the reunion of the two halves of a spirit created as one sphere, but [that] the recognition is always

through physical attraction" (Watt and Cachia 116). In this tradition, "true love does not ignore the physical aspect, but the union of souls is a thousand times finer in its effects than that of bodies" (Parry 9), which helps explain Cachia's comment that "'platonic' love in this context is related to a peculiar psychology of ambiguous chastity" (Watt and Cachia 116). Nevertheless, Cachia notes that for the Spanish poets, "physical charms…were sung, the only character trait mentioned" (Watt and Cachia 116) of a woman. This emphasis on physical form is similar to elements found in the romance tradition that flourished in Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries, the same period in which the tales of Tristan and Isolde abounded, even if these latter texts also emphasized the goodness and Christian character of the woman as well.

"In his view of love Ibn Hazm is by no means unique among the Arabs. We find similar ideas in the works of the philosophers who preceded him, and we find them over and over again in the works of the poets of the eleventh century" (Parry 11). One recurrent tenet in Spanish poetry at the time, then, is that "The lover, whether of higher or lower rank than his beloved, speaks of himself as her slave—a form of slavery which does honor to him" (Parry 11). Another notion that was concurrent with beliefs of other writers is that although Ibn Hazm felt "Moslems avoided love affairs with married women, we find that some of the poets did address their amatory verses to the wives of other men, and [scholars believe] that this was not due to pure fancy, but that the verses reflect the actual social condition of the time" (Parry12). Like Cachia, who mentions that a woman "is said to have had much freedom and to have been much exalted in Andalusian society" (Watt and Cachia 116), Parry goes on to comment that Mohammedan women were freer than many believe. He cites the fact that "Wallada,

daughter of the Caliph Al-Mustakfi, established, after her father's death, a sort of salon which was a gathering place for literary men and other people of prominence" (12). John Fisher disagrees with the idea of an Hispano-Arabic origin for courtly love, imagining the Moslem harem an even more unlikely place for adultery to evolve than from castle life (163). However, both Parry and Cachia's examples refute Fisher's position that the concept of courtly love could not have derived from Persian influences under the belief that women in such cultures, including Arab Spain, were closely kept and not very independent.

In addition to this smaller discussion on the state of freedom under which medieval Arab women lived, there is a fairly heated debate on whether or not courtly love, as it developed in France, was borne out of Arabian influences. Fisher believes "that Ovid's influence is more apparent in the psychology of Chretien's romances and in both the form and matter of Andreas' book than in anything in the south" (163), discounting an Iberian origin for the *fin' amor* tradition. Some scholars point out "that historians tend to neglect...the oldest, most subtly discreet, if not to say secret, [influence] and this is the Celtic influence" (Markale 5). It is true that "the greater part of Western Europe was invaded and actually colonized, over the course of the two Iron Ages, by Celtic-speaking people. In certain regions…signs of the Celts' presence are far from having disappeared" (5). This presence was felt in the Iberian Peninsula, in France, in Germany, and quite clearly in the British isles, as seen in maps prepared by Tina Thurston in her article, "Unity and Diversity in the European Iron Age: Out of the Mists, Some Clarity?" (359), as well as in Ian Barnes's maps of La Téne culture and Celtic trade in *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World* (26-27, 29). Markale asserts that "everything seems to show

that Celtic substructures were not at all in ruins during the eleventh century. They actually formed the foundation for all that was in the process of being built" (5). It seems possible that some Celtic ideologies could have persevered as well, albeit deep in the recesses of cultural memory. One of the tenets of Celtic culture was worship of a mother goddess, which helps explain why the Celts and early Bretons tracked descent using a matrilineal model. For these reasons, the influence of the Celtic tradition should not be discounted, but it is hard to imagine that *fin' amor* was not influenced by Arabic ideas that journeyed North through Spain, particularly via the troubadours, as the similarities among some of Spain's key poets does nothing but anticipate the sort of attitude directed towards women in the troubadour works. It may be possible that the fact that most of Western Europe was once settled by the Celts made it all the more receptive to a revival of a previous ideology, long forgotten, where woman was exalted. This was essentially what both *fin' amor* and the Celtic religion did, and it is no wonder that the former was highly contested and the latter eradicated, as both lie in direct opposition to Christian doctrine where woman is often a second-class citizen.

On account of these circulating ideas, though,

> during the eleventh century, there arose a new way of posing the question of relations between male and female –relations closely linked to intellectual and spiritual speculations. These questions concerned only a tiny minority of people, always high in society, a circle centered on a rich lord and especially a great lady, a court striving toward new heights of elegance and refinement, including what could be called the great mind of the time…the term *courtly love* prevailed over *fin' amor* (refined or pure love)…this fashion subsequently became the rage

> throughout European aristocratic society thanks primarily to the songs of the troubadours and the "courtly" romances, [but] its birth remains thoroughly obscure—like the causes that prompted it, for that matter. (Markale 5)

No formal definition of *fin' amor* existed, though, until after the fashion had crested its zenith. At last, a treatise was composed describing its principles by Andreas Capellanus. Entitled *De Amore*, or otherwise known as *De Arte Honeste Amandi*, the work "enjoyed considerable popularity…shown by the number of manuscripts that have been preserved and by the translations into the vernaculars" (Parry 22). The work's title was later translated using the term *courtly love*, a move that omitted the nuanced meanings of Capellanus's subject, which is better served by the term *fin' amor*, meaning *refined love*.

The basic premise is that a handsome man of prowess, a knight, is struck by the beauty of a great lady, who is usually married. The lover serves the lady as he would his liege-lord, yet there are spiritual undertones that call into question who the man loves and honors more: God, his liege, or his beloved. Because the woman is typically spoken for already, the romance must continue in secret, a situation that only catalyzes the emotions of the lovers, as in running the risks of discovery, they are united in their convictions to love one another. Indeed, Capellanus sets forth that "Marriage is no real excuse for not loving" (184) and so a "man who is a captive of love tries to attract another person by his allurements and exerts all his efforts to unite two different hearts with an intangible bond, or if they are already united he tries to keep them so forever" (Capellanus 31), regardless of whether the sin of adultery is in question. More, Capellanus's treatise describes how "the easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it

prized" (184). This explains the fascination with keeping the relationship secret, Jean Markale notes that one of the precepts of courtly love is the inclusion of a *confidant* who "plays the ever-important role of messenger between the lady and her lover. He is in charge of organizing discreet rendevouz, where the lovers can find a haven from the *gelos* (the 'jealous') and the *lausengiers* ('rumormongers')" (30). Both the confidant and the lover are to adhere to fourth precept, to never divulge a lovers' secrets (Markale 29-30). Parry comments that according to Cappelanus's guidelines, a romance is all the more pleasant because it is secret (5), and Markale adds that "The nondisclosure of secrets lends to courtly love a dimension that escapes social control" (31). This secrecy likely played a part in making *fin' amor* so provocative, and yet, so criticized, for while the lovers and their own world of existence thrives outside the group, "every single action must sooner or later have an influence on collective behavior" (Markale 31) of society.

Because *fin' amor* values relationships that are difficult to establish and maintain, the tradition is characterized by trials instituted by the beloved that will improve the lover and her esteem of him. This same value that prizes struggle helps explain Cappelanus's assertion that "real jealousy always increases the feeling of love" (184), as in jealousy one always faces internal strife. In the introduction to his translation of Capellanus's text, John Parry reiterates this focus on difficult trials, noting that the lover must "undergo all sorts of hardships, perform all sorts of absurd actions" (5) and "for love of her he must become pale and thin and sleepless" (5). Other symptoms of this malady include those set forth in Capellanus's work as mandates set forth by the King of Love himself (184) "XV. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved…XXIII. He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little…XXVII. A lover can never have enough

of the solaces of his beloved…XXX. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved" (Capellanus 184-186). In all, Capellanus establishes that "every attempt of a lover tends towards the enjoyment of the embraces of her whom he loves; he thinks about it continually for he hopes that with her he may fulfill all the mandates of love" (30). Laid out in this fashion, it is clear to see that the objectification of the beloved and the focus on doing all things for and in the name of her, clashed with Christian doctrine.

But the perpetuation of tales centered on the theme of *fin' amor*, including the Tristan stories, indicates a significant interest in this new ideology. Markale asserts that "courtly love as a factor of social cohesion…depends on the necessary transgression of a taboo through the subterfuge of an infernal couple striving to create paradise" (33). He defines this classification of an "infernal couple" as one where the lovers face a significant trial that negates the value of suffering such that the "the lover desires with all his being to reach the perfection embodied by his lady" (37). Again, the spiritual aspect is remarkable. It would have been a taboo, social transgression for a medieval audience, and in many cases, for a modern one, to think that worshiping the perfection of a beloved could result in the creation and experience of a paradise. This was a completely new paradigm that generated significant interest, as evidenced by the wealth of *fin' amor* romances.

These new ideas did not just bubble up out of springs on the European continent, nor were they necessarily drawn out of Western Europe's cultural past. Rather, "it has often been repeated that the source of courtly love was the Arab influence on the civilization of Occitania" (Markale 158). Author of *Spain to England: A Comparative*

Study of Arabic, European, and English Literature of the Middle Ages, Alice Lasater firmly asserts that "Both the courtly love and rimed lyric poetry of medieval Europe can be traced directly to Arab Spain. Neither romantic love nor end rime was native to the Germanic temper of medieval Europe, while both…forms are to be found in Arab Spain over a century before the Provençal troubadours flourished" (199). She specifically notes that "The theory of Arabic origin for…the ideology of courtly love" is supported by the "observations of Roger Sherman Loomis, renowned for his studies in Arthurian romance and Celtic influences on Old-French and Middle-English literature" (10). She comments that "two peripheral theories…account for the rise and development of courtly love [and] point to Arab Spain" (Lasater 198). The first is that courtly love is "by-product of the Albigensian heresy" and the second "suggests that courtly love was an outgrowth of the conflict between Aristotelianism and Islam among the Arab philosophers" (Lasater 198). She concludes with a concession "that the concept of courtly love as it appears in Old-French and Middle-English romances owes something to" a variety of sources, including "Ovid, the Albigensians, the Arab poets of Spain, and the Arab philosophers of Spain" (10). Yet, "If the theory—and it is the most plausible one—of an Arabic-Andalusian origin for courtly love is accepted, then it is not inconceivable that other literary influences filtered north from Spain concurrent with the twelfth-century translation of scientific and philosophical manuscripts being accomplished in Spain and in some centers in southern France" (13-14). She asserts that "even with limited mobility, there was naturally contact between European and Arab-Persian cultures; and, with contact, some interchange was virtually inevitable" (6). The effects of these intercultural

interactions, both literary and in-person, had enormous impact on the literature of the time.

According to Jean Bodel, a twelfth century French poet, stories of romance were categorized into three groups: material "of Britain (involving Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table), of France (involving Charlemagne and his Peers), and of Rome (involving classical Greek and Roman gods and heroes)" (qtd. in Lasater 13). Lasater contends that "the addition of a classification 'Matter of the Near East' to include Byzantine, Persian, and Arab heroes would not be unwarranted" (13). She makes a good point that "in spite of Spain's scientific contributions…belletristic literature from south of the Pyrenees is rarely given sufficient consideration in surveys of medieval European vernacular literature" (9). According to Iberian scholars, the Spanish genre of romance is even overlooked in Spain (Deyermond 240, van Beysterveldt 407). Despite these identified gaps,

> Every medieval scholar recognizes the great debt which the West owed to Arabic science and philosophy, and it is increasingly realized how prosperous and refined was the society of Moorish Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. And in spite of intermittent wars, and partly because of them, there was a flow of cultural influences to the north. It is therefore no accident that we find in the literature of Moslem Spain metrical forms approximating those of the troubadours, and similar conventions such as that of addressing the mistress as "my lord," in Provençal "midons." Most significant is the fact that a book called the *Dove's Neck-Ring*, written by the Andalusian Ibn-Hazm, about 1022, might almost serve as a textbook

> on *fin amor*, so close are its idealistic doctrines on all points except one. (R. Loomis qtd. in Lasater 11-12 from *The Development of the Arthurian Romance* 53-54)

Thus, courtly love was arguably sparked by new ideas from Arab Spain. But it is not unlikely that its flames were fanned by buried embers of an ancient, woman-centered Celtic tradition.

During the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries, Lasater notes that the lines between out "Christian and Islamic motifs, between European and Arab-Persian stories" became "less distinct" (6). "The spread of tales, fables, and romances among various countries and the distribution of manuscripts among certain monastery and cathedral libraries suggest that medieval Europe – especially the higher social strata, the merchants, and the clergy - was, in spite of the time involved in travel, fairly mobile" (Lasater 6). A primary means of contact with the East happened on account of Western Europe's lust for knowledge, which Moorish Spain and its connections to the wealthy empires of the East possessed. Spain was an important center of learning in the Middle Ages, and the cities of Toledo and Seville, among others, were strongholds for the translation of ancient texts. These not only included the *Qu'ran*, but important humanistic works of the Greeks. Following Toledo's fall in 1085, the city "became a capital for the translation of manuscripts from Arabic to Latin and became as well a famous center of learning for scholars from Italy, the Holy Roman Empire, France, and England" (Lasater 22-23). Scholastic figures emerged at this time, like "Ibn-Gabirol (Latin *Avicebron*, ca. 1021-ca.1070), the philosopher whose genius has earned him the epithet 'the Jewish Plato.' His *Fons Vitae* was instrumental in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the development of

medieval" scholarship (Lasater 18). Spain was also a place of flourishing art and literature, which often came out of Persian traditions.

Several figures emerged during this period to share the unique Spanish forms and ideas with other parts of Western Europe.

> Pedro Alfonso (1062-1135), a Jew of Aragon…was responsible for the dissemination of both science and folklore from Spain into England…He was renowned for his work…[and] the latter part of his life he spent in England, where he was a physician to Henry I and where he composed the *Disciplina* [*Clericalis*], which enjoyed a wide popularity in the Latin world with many of its tales being borrowed by both ecclesiastics and other writers and with its influence being detectable in such works as *Don Quixote* and the *Decameron.* (Lasater 20)

Lasater clarifies that the *Disciplina Clericalis*, was "composed in England in the eleventh century" (202) and that it "is replete with Arabic stories." In perusing the tales, one is reminded of the stories told by Scheherazade to the sultan in the *Tales of the Arabian Nights*. Although thought by many to be merely a collection of child's tales, this piece is layered with complex and imaginative tales. It is also a beautiful example of the frame story. More, the tales told therein are both entertaining and moralistic. At the end, they culminate with the sultan's decision that Scheherazade should not die, and he accedes that his faith in women had been restored. Alfonso's stories bear resemblance to Scherherazade's, and like hers, scholars have traced some of Alfonso's tales to Indian origins. The stories of the *Disciplina Clericalis* are short, cheeky, yet moralistic fables

created both to entertain and instruct, and as Lasater makes clear, they were written in England and were likely to have been absorbed by King Henry I's court.

Petrus Alfonso was not the only Spanish intellectual to visit England during this time. Another is Ramon Llull. "Llull practiced by choice the spiritual and apostolic life of Christian Evangelism, and on behalf of the Catholic faith he traveled to many countries in his attempts to convert Moslems" (Disalvo 199). According to rhetorician Dr. Clyde Moneyhun, Llull was born in the northeastern, Spanish province of Catalunya and traveled all over Western Europe in his attempt to explain a complicated method for solving all problems, namely of converting other religions to Christianity. Llull was versed in several languages, and on his travels via shipping harbors, he brought with him the effects of classical education and the spirit of invention. His journeys brought him to England on several occasions, again proving medieval England's interaction with distant, Arabic Spain.

Significantly, though, "Llull became one of the first in the Iberian context to carry out the spiritualization of knighthood along with that of the courtly tradition of love" (Disalvo 199). He transmitted part of his ideas in a treatise on The Order of Chivalry. Disalvo asserts that "In effect, the book contains the history of the Order of Chivalry from its creation by God early in human history" and he notes that in Llull's text, told in narrative form, the main character tells of how "God created the Order of Chivalry because the world was lacking in charity, loyalty, justice, and truth, for in deed, enmity, disloyalty, and injustice prevailed as well as falsehood. The Knight reads that the lack of the Christian virtues had caused error and a great disturbance to predominate among God's people" (Disalvo 200). As Llull's text pre-dates many compositions of medieval

romance, and certainly the work of Sir Thomas Malory, it seems provocative to consider the influence his ideas may have had on those, and even latter Spanish texts. Indeed, Disalvo sees that "a Christian soldier or knight who does battle against the deadly vices may be found in Erasmus's Enchiridion, which is in effect a handbook for the Christian knight" (198). In this text, Disalvo identifies that "One can trace this transformation of the knight and of knighthood into what Erasmus calls a 'miles Christianus' back to several works written by Ramon Llull, and most specifically to his Book of the Order of Chivalry" (198).

Dorothee Metlitzki identifies that "The serious interest in Islamic civilization began in the *West* and was due to the penetration of Latin clerics into the cultural realms of the Saracens, in the wake of professional interests in which scholarly pursuits were deeply embedded" (5). Her assertion is seen in the travels of Daniel of Morley, a contemporary of Adelard of Bath, who visited Spain. Upon seeing the advanced nature of its social structure and its patronage of education and the arts, he deplored the state of his homeland, calling "the Latin West 'infantile', provincial, and barbaric. While France and England were agrarian, monastic, and feudal, Islamic society resided in the cosmopolitan sophistication of its cities and courts whose lifeline spanned the most ancient centers of civilization along the Mediterranean" (Metlitzki 11). More important than his views of the East, Daniel of Morely also chose to bring home several texts from Spain, which added to the transmission of Oriental ideas to England.

Besides the travels and visitations of these intellectual figures between England and Spain, there were other modes through which Eastern ideas filtered into Western Europe from Spain. These include the Crusades; religious pilgrimages from the

monastery at Cluny to Compostela; and the Troubadours, who originated in Provence of southern France, and were supported by Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of King Henry II.

The Crusades, or "The reconquest of Spain by the Christians can be said" according to Alice Lasater, "to have begun in the eleventh century… It was not completed until the fall of Granada in 1492" (22). Medieval literature scholar Iain Macleod Higgins notes that "after about 1100 the crusade writings" bear witness to a "long-lived enthrallment" of the West with the East (197). "The short tale, perhaps more than any other form of literature, appears to have been particularly conducive to oral transmission, and crusaders returning from the East were probably responsible for the introduction of several Eastern *contes* into Europe" (Lasater 12-13). Lasater asserts that "when a recognizably Arabic or Persian tale suddenly appeared fully developed and written down in Old French, the chances are that it was imported through Spain" (13). Interestingly, though, Dorothee Metlitzki has found that "the total effect of Muslim culture on the Crusaders seems to have reduced itself to a general aspiration to copy the comforts and luxuries of Oriental life, which indeed are richly depicted in medieval romance" (5). Sara McGill echoes this sentiment, asserting that "it seemed to the crusaders that the enemy Muslims had infiltrated everything… [King Louis of France] was disgusted with the amount of luxury that the people of Antioch enjoyed" (McGill). He was further dismayed by the difficulty of distinguishing "the Saracens from the Frankish Syrians, who imitated the Moslems by wearing flowing garments, beards, and turbans and who, to his horror, had even intermarried with the natives" (Meade 107). This was certainly a time when Western Europe collided with the East. It is obvious in the terms that emerged from this collision, such as "infidel," that while this interaction

was not necessarily a textual one, it nevertheless provided ample opportunity for a negative view of the East to be constructed. This representation, as Said mentions, was likely a provoked vision, more so than the truth.

As for the effects of the monastery at Cluny, "Founded in 910 in France, Cluny had become by the twelfth century the 'capital of monastic empire.' It is important to the literature of Spain for two reasons, the translation of the *Qur'ān*, and the fostering of pilgrimages to the shrine of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia" (Lasater 25). Pilgrimages were already commonplace, as many believed that in encountering and in invoking the powers of saintly relics, the ills of one's family could be ameliorated. These pilgrimages are important to the transmission of ideas in the Middle Ages not only because people visited new lands, but because they wrote about them. Higgins observes "that medieval and early modern Western Christians found the East endlessly fascinating," and that "obvious witnesses to" that claim "are the many guide and travel books, biographies, and histories: first, the pilgrimage writings that began to circulate in the fourth century, starting with those of the Bordeaux pilgrim and Egeria" (197).

Additionally, Cluny's "patronage and sponsorship of pilgrimages to the shrine of Saint James at Compostela helped make it a very important" journey "for all of Christendom…The shrine brought large numbers of French and other pilgrims into Spain, providing an additional contact between Spain and countries of the north" (Lasater 26). Thus, Western Europeans were visiting Spain, and quite likely, they were sharing ideas about and from it, and if not in written form, at least they did so orally. Remnants of this exchange are not only found in texts of the period, but also in artistic representations. For instance, Margaret Alison Stones mentions that Tristan's knightly prowess

> is the focus of the Tristan scenes once adorning the north transept columns at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Several sculpted fragments show the aftermath of Tristan's combat with the Morhaut, where the hero, accompanied by his horse, lies exhausted in his boat, holding his sword with the notch in the blade. These have been dated circa 1100-1117, which makes them the earliest surviving depictions of Tristan. (301-302)

The existence of this visual representation of Tristan in Santiago de Compostela is fascinating, as it shows how fluid the transmission of stories was during this time. Accepting the prevalence of this cultural exchange makes Lasater's mention of almost concurrent literary flowering in France and Spain very provocative. She states that "The eleventh century was a golden age for poetic experimentation and invention in Spain; while the new strophes continued to flourish, poetry after this century consisted more or less of imitation and refinement of existing models" (19). Lasater notes that as these forms were developing and growing in popularity in Spain, within the next hundred years, "a sudden flowering of lyric poetry appeared in Provence, soon to be followed by rapid blossoming of written vernacular literature in France and other countries of Western Europe" (19). The timing of these developments coupled with the proximity of France to Spain suggests a relationship evidencing the influence of Spain's literature on Western texts, likely through the troubadours.

Besides the fact that in "pre-Roman days,…the inland Iberians [reached] as far as the present-day Bordeax" (Nykl 371), the Troubadours, or traveling minstrels of the court, reached a tremendous scope with their verses. This group is one of the most important points of contact among the countries of England, France, and Spain, and is

derived from the troubadour tradition of southern France. "The first troubadour of whom we have any record was Duke William of Aquitaine, who had some acquaintance with Moslem Spain" (Parry 12). Pierre Cachia asserts that "Guillaume IX appears to have incorporated some Arabic lines in his *Chanson*" (Watt and Cachia 160). More, while "His early poetry is by no means courtly…traces of courtliness begin to appear in his later poems; [another scholar assterts that] indeed, that they contain all the elements of courtly love" (Parry 12). These traces may owe to the probability that William was instructed in Latin, and that the teacher may have had opportunities to "smuggle into his lessons some Ovidian flavor without stating the source explicitly" (Nykl 375). It is because of William's, or Guillaume IX of Poiters, works and the first Troubadours that "Old Provençal poetry was *formed*…from elements which were partly autochtonous and partly imitated from the poetic activity in the neighboring Christian-Muslim world" (Nykl 373).

Therefore, even before the development of William's verses, the troubadour tradition had begun to sprout nearly a century before in the Iberian peninsula. During this time, according to John Parry, "after the fall of the Califate of Cordova in 1031 the territory of the Moors was divided among twenty petty kings" (7) and "Until the coming of the Almoravides from Africa in 1086…Moslems and Christians lived side by side on practically equal footing. The period was one of pleasure and luxury, of wine and love, but it was also a period of culture" (7). Poets were abundant, from those produced in smaller locales to those employed by the twenty petty kings. All "were trained in the classical Arabic tradition—some even went to Arabia to perfect themselves in the art"

(7). At this time, "a set of wandering poets came into existence, who passed from one court to another or sometimes found shelter with some bourgeois lover of verse" (8).

This artistic tradition began to flower from the "late 11th on into the twelfth [century]. Their works were characterized by two non-Germanic traditions: end rime and romantic (often courtly) love, traditions which were already well developed in Arab Spain" (Lasater 26). "The metrical forms and the themes of the Spanish poets are like those that were later used by the troubadours" (Parry 8). It was this style and tradition that gave rise to the tales and performances of Provence's troubadours. These in turn made adjustments to the form and content of their predecessors, and were dispersed throughout Western Europe.

One factor that facilitated this diaspora was "the marriage of Eleanor of Guienne (Aquitaine) to Henry II, many of the Provençal troubadours came to the English court where they had many connections with English politics" (Lasater 51-52). Eleanor of Aquitaine's life is dated circa 1122-1204 AD, and it was a remarkable and influential one (McGill). Eleanor's grandfather William is credited as the first troubadour (Meade xii), and the court of Eleanor's father was filled with "artists and entertainers, attracting many poets and troubadours to the region" (McGill). Eleanor enjoyed these, and more, "she was allowed to learn to read and write, a privilege usually reserved for boys. She also studied literature, basic math, and basic astronomy" (McGill). Scholar Roger Sherman Loomis shares in the introduction to his translation of Thomas's *Tristan and Ysolt* the importance of Eleanor of Aquitane's influence on the flowering of literature during her time. He notes that "her first husband, King Louis of France, had taken her religiously on the Crusades" (xv). It was rumored that she was guilty of consorting with another man

while she and Louis were stationed at Antioch (McGill). Thus, as R. Loomis mentions, she became "the subject of exciting rumors of amours with princes both Christian and Saracen" (Introduction xv).

Eleanor separated from Louis and allied herself with Henry Plantagenet, who would become King Henry II of England. From both the experiences of her youth, as well as her time spent on the Crusades, Eleanor "brought with her to the fogs of London and the stark brutalities of Henry's Court a breath from the olive gardens and vineyards of Languedoc, a glimpse of the opaline sea, a new idealism of love" (R. Loomis, Introduction xv). The famous poet Benart de Ventadorn and others followed Eleanor of Aquitaine through her marriages, and Parry suggests that these poets "doubtless helped her to introduce her ideas on love into the north" (13). While these ideas are arguably drawn from the literary and cultural traditions that Eleanor had contact with, *fin' amor* conventions also seem to mirror Eleanor's own experiences, if the rumors of her infidelity to King Louis are true. This relationship is more provocative when one considers that Eleanor supported the composition of multiple texts centered on *fin' amor*. For instance, Marie de France, "a lady of Eleanor's court in London" (R. Loomis, Introduction xix) authored a version of the Tristan story entitled *Chievrelfoil*. Additionally, Thomas of Britain, author of one of the known Tristan fragments, "lived in England and wrote his romance [of Tristan]…for the favor of Queen Eleanor or one of her family, for his period lies about 1185 and he ascribes to the hero of his poem the golden lion on a red field, the first know cognizance of the English royal house" (R. Loomis, Introduction xix).

Eleanor's son Richard the Lionhearted is easy to connect with Thomas's reference to the lion afield. "Tall in stature, graceful in figure" (Meade 263), Richard was a "born warrior, a handsome and chivalrous knight, a…musician, [and] an intellectual" (263). Like his mother, Richard, too, was a patron of the arts (Parry 13). More, he was known to write his own poetry and "could compose delicate, sensuous verse and pay compliments to a lady" (Meade 263). Regardless of exactly for whom Thomas wrote the Tristan romance, it is clear that Eleanor's life and worldviews greatly affected the literature she sponsored, and it also affected her children's tastes, which compounded the scopes of the troubadours' lyrics and their ideas of courtly love. Additional examples include Eleanor's daughter, Marie of Champagne, who "could not have been more attuned to her mother's thinking" (Meade 250), even though they were separate during Marie's youth. Like Eleanor, Marie also sponsored the arts, particularly literature, and it was under her patronage (Meade 250) that Chrétien de Troyes "composed a poem, now lost, "del roi Marc et d'Íseut la blonde" (R. Loomis, Introduction xix). Parry notes that Andreas Cappelanus, author of the treatise on courtly love, was a contemporary of Chrétien's, thereby falling under the artistic umbrella held aloft by Marie de Champagne. Even Leonor, one of Eleanor's younger daughters who married into the royals of Spain, was a champion of the arts.

These details demonstrate the close relationship of Queen Eleanor with the popularization of the romance genre, who, "as a romantic girl, in some painted castle-hall of Poitiers or Bordeaux must have listened more than once to the famous Welshman as he told in French the moving tale of unsanctified passion, acting it out with dramatic voice and gesture" (R. Loomis, Introduction xx). Roger Sherman Loomis explains that

Eleanor's arrival in England was just one way in which "the new social creed of chivalry and courtly love…spread so rapidly throughout Europe that the doctrine of the inferiority of women has never had the same standing since" (Introduction xvii). Even more, these details specifically link Eleanor of Aquitaine to the proliferation of the Tristan story.

The Tristan story itself has its own heritage, which needs to be discussed to help distinguish how the texts to be discussed in the later chapters differ from their original sources. Roger Loomis believes the story is likely of "plebeian origin" and classifies it as a folktale. He affirms the existence of

> several remarkable analogues between the medieval French romances, particularly of the Tristan cycle, and folktales collected in Brittany since the late eighteenth century. Tristan's slaying of the dragon and the exposure of the false claimant by the severed dragon's tongue, the betrayal of the secret of King Mark's ears, the tragic death of Tristan and Isolt caused by the false report that a white sail was black - these themes correspond so closely to modern Breton folktales that a genetic relationship of some sort cannot be denied. ("Arthurian Tradition and Folklore" 9)

He believes that the *conteurs*, or troubadours, generated new stories to add to the old, Welsh tales that were rich in Arthurian fiction (9). He affirms that several Arthurian themes, including "the forest life of Tristan and Isolt" derived from a variety of Irish sagas (2). These include "a version of Bricriu's Feast, the Boyhood Deeds of Cuchulainn, the Boyhood Deeds of Finn, and the Elopement of Grainne," each of which R. Loomis identifies as existing "by the twelfth century" (2). One is as old as the tenth century, and

yet another harkens to the eighth (2). The stories "formed part of the repertory of a highly privileged class of poets and story-tellers, the filid, and were recited in the halls of chiefs and kings" (R. Loomis, "Arthurian Tradition" 2).

Several motifs embedded in the Tristan sagas help affirm its Celtic origins. These include episodes in the Thomas version like the presentation of the hart, the smiting of Duke Morgan over the head, and Tristan's fatal blow to the Marhaut, again in the head. In her *Tristan and Isolt:* A *Study of the Sources of the Romance*, Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis touches on the the idea that a "bit of savagery which is mentioned frequently in Old Irish romances is practiced, according to Béroul, by Tristan and Gorvenal" (318). In one episode, Gorevenal ambushes an enemy baron "and cuts off his head. He carries it in his hand to the cabin where Tristan is sleeping, and suspends it by the hair from a forked branch, to greet his master when he awakens" (G. Loomis 318). G. Loomis notes that in "the *Táin bó Cúalnge*, Cuchulainn [a famous Irish hero], meeting four enemies, cuts off their heads, and attaches each to one of the four prongs of a fork he has cut from a tree in the wood" (318). She continues that "examples of Old Irish heroes who, having slain their enemies, carry the heads with them as trophies, are too numerous to quote" (318). Thus, the emphasis in both Béroul and Thomas's versions on beheading and the presentation of the head is a telling motif of the story's Celtic origins.

There is additional focus given to the head in Tristan's presentation of the hart: "Tristram went into the wood, and cut a stake there as long as might be but such that one might bear it in hand, and he bound to the stake the branch thereas were set the goodliest bits that he had taken from the hart, and fixed the head above on the end" (Thomas 31). This scene is reminiscent of the Celtic tradition whereby enemies were beheaded and

their disembodied heads were placed on stakes as a warning to others. Further emphasis on the head is evident in Thomas's episode with Duke Morgan, where Tristram returns to his homeland to avenge the death of his father and reclaim the lands seized from him. Duke Morgan begins by insulting Tristram and silencing him with "churl. Though art full of bobaunce, Thou art a whore's son, and thou knowest not who begat thee, and thou feignest, saying that Rivalon was thy father" (Thomas 52). When Tristram refutes these words, the duke strikes him across the teeth. "Tristram brayed forth his sword and struck downward upon his head, and clave it down unto the eyes and laid him dead on the floor in the sight of all his court" (Thomas 52). Similarly, "Tristram…saw how that Morhaut set upon him, and he brandished his sword with great might and smote upon his helm…The iron failed, the steel sundered the war-coif availed not, and he shore away the hair and beard, and the sword stack in the brainpan and brains" (Thomas 75). From Tristan's encounters with Duke Morgan and the Morhaut, a signature blow emerges: smiting foes over the head. This move, which appears throughout the texts, in addition to Tristan and Gorvenal's presentation of heads, focuses on the assault and display of the head. The motif harks back to the Celtic nature of the Tristan story, but its origins are evident in the tale's social structure as well.

Another way that the Thomas version lets its Celtic origins shine through is in the repeated reference to Tristran as the "sister's son" of Mark. The Celts, like Germanic cultures, were matrilineal (Thurston 393-394). "Under matriliny, a child's paternity is not so great a concern; fathers are much less powerful within the kindred than maternal uncles and brothers; and the strict gendering of the authority figure under the law of the father is complicated under the law of the uncle by males' inheritance of authority

through the female line" (Sheehan 338). In Germanic cultures, this is known as "Mutter-Recht" (Garbáty 221). However, "The strongest evidence of matriliny…comes from among the British Celts" (Garbáty 222) In his "The Uncle-Nephew Motif: New Light into Its Origins and Development," Thomas J. Garbáty explains that "inheritance through the female line was a Pictish institution," and further, that "Succession was usually through the sister's sons" (222).

Thus, Tristran's ability to trace his heritage to the court of King Mark via Mark's sister is very powerful. "Dated about A.D. 610, all testify to what appeared (at least to Roman observers) to be the absence of regular marriage and the practice of promiscuous cohabitation among the Pictish inhabitants of Britain. Caesar's statement applied evidently to all classes of a barbaric, painted people living inland off the southern coast of England" (Fisher 155). Fisher's discussion of Pictish customs in their relation to Tristan is worth quoting at length, as it further complicates the moral questioning of the lovers' sin.

> It is no accident, then, that Tristan (Drystan ab Tallwch in the Mabinogion) is to be identified with Drest filius Talorgen who reigned over the Picts from A.D. 780 to 785. Among the Picts down to the ninth century the sister's son inherited the throne, after the brothers of the Pictish ruler. As a result, the king was not allowed to marry. This would explain the relationship between Mark and Tristan before Mark's marriage. (Fisher 154)

From the oft-referenced relationship between Tristan and Mark and an understanding of the matrilineal cultures of early Britain, it is clear that "The Tristan

[story] preserves more clearly the cultural background in which adultery might seem to be approved" (Fisher 152). Although this approval is not necessarily developed in the later redactions of the tale, where Tristan and Iseult's relationship is criticized for its sinful nature, the relationship between Tristan and Mark does illustrate a clearly Celtic line of thinking.

In addition to the assault on and display of heads coupled with an emphasis on Tristan as King Mark's sister's son, there are additional elements that evidence the Celtic origins of the Tristan saga. For instance, Thomas's version exhibits further Celtic influence in the episode of Bringvain's enchanted pillow. To preserve her honor from a would-be lover, Bringvain "took a silk cushion wrought with marvelous craft and cunning and laid it under [Kaherdin's] head, and forthwithal he fell on sleep and woke not all that night: thus slept they together that night…And Kaherdin woke not till the morn and looked then about him and wist not where he was become" (Thomas 257). He wakes and realizes that he was charmed to sleep. This happens a second night where "went they to sleep and Bringvain put Kaherdin to sleep then in the same wise as tofore" (Thomas 240). Gertrude Loomis speaks of this "magic pillow" as placed not by Bringvain, but by Camille to create "a laugh at Kaherdin's expense" (257). Although Gertrude Loomis mentions that this practice "is based on a universal superstition: the belief in sleeping charms" (257), she gives two very Celtic examples of such devices. The first is "a Welsh charm" (257), in which an enchanted horn slipped under one's pillow induces sleep. She also refers to "A Scotch Gaelic story to the same effect: a girl preserves herself by magic from suitors who have paid for the privilege of spending the

night with her" as the suitor is held fast asleep by clasping a vessel of water (G. Loomis 258).

The names in the Thomas text bear Celtic origins in many cases. For instance, Bringvain "has been identified with the Welsh Branwen" (G. Loomis 272). Similarly, Kaherdin, Rivalen, and Guvernal are identified as Celtic names, also (272). Gertrude Loomis asserts that from the names in the story and from studying its narrative elements, it is clear that "the poem is based on a Celtic romance" (274). Another key to this is the study of Tristan's name, as mentioned in Roger Sherman Loomis's "Tristan Scholarship after 1911." He notes that "as early as 1891 Zimmer had discovered in the *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*…a certain Drest or Drust, son of Tolorcan, who reigned about 780, and he had pointed out the equivalence of this name with the Drystan son of Tallwch, who in the Welsh texts was the lover of Esyllt, wife of March" (571). R. Loomis adds that scholar Deutschbein gives "proof that a tale about Drust had been interpolated in the ancient Irish saga, the *Wooing of Emer*" (571). Here, Cuchulainn fights to prevent a human tribute to Ireland and is wounded. This is very similar to the incident with Tristan and the Marhault. In addition, Cuchulainn is recognized by the king's daughter while he bathes (571), which is not unlike the discovery of Tristan's notched blade and its missing piece whilst he bathes. Even more, the episode is set in "the Hebrides, not far from the Pictish territory at the mouth of the Clyde" (571), and "Cuchulainn is accompanied by a certain Drust." Scholars seem to think that the real hero of the episode is "Drustan, the Pictish king, the nucleus of the famous romance" (571), and conjecture that the Pictish saga passed "over to Ulster to be incorporated in the Cuchulainn cycle" (572), and that is why the story is attributed to Cuchulainn and not Tristan.

Beyond the relationship of Tristan's name to those of ancient legends, yet another reference to Tristan's Celtic origins is that in both the Béroul and Thomas texts, Tristan and Iseult find refuge together in the forest of Morois. According to Juliet Wood, "Forests played a major part in Celtic religion" (56), and "the recovery of votive offerings and cult statues from forest groves and clearings…attests to the importance of these settings for Celtic sanctuaries and ceremony" (53). Shahrukh Husain concurs that "Trees were revered as symbols of seasonal death and regrowth, and they also formed a bridge between the earth and the heavens" (34) "with their tops in the heavens and their roots underground" (Wood 55). It is fitting that Tristan and Iseult find sanctuary in such a revered place. On the one hand, the roots of their relationship are sinful and belong underground; on the other the love they enjoy in one another's company creates a separate heaven in which they can exist. Living together in the forest bridges these two extremes. The episode of the lovers' flight to the forest reveals analogues to Celtic stories as well.

John Fisher mentions that "As Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis demonstrated in her study of the legend…the flight to the forest, is the development of an elopement theme very popular with the Irish" (158). Roger Loomis brings to the fore that through Gertruede "Schoepperele's great contribution" ("Tristan Scholarship" 573), the "the tragic story of Tristan and Isolt showed a marked affinity to the famous Irish saga of Diarmaid and Grainne and must, in fact, have been derived, even though indirectly, from some version of it" (573). A notable correspondence was found among "the three principal characters, Diarmaid being, like Tristan, the lover of his uncle's wife; there was a similar compulsive force which brought the lovers together; in both stories the lovers

dwelt for a long time in the forests, subsisting on game and moving from place to place" (R. Loomis, "Tristan Scholarship" 573). As in the Cuchulainn tribute episode, here, R. Loomis asserts that the Welsh saga of Drystan followed "the pattern of the Irish saga of Diarmaid and Grainne, the princess of the Pictish tale being carried over and taking the role of Grainne. Drystan, Esyllt, and March were substituted for Diarmaid, Grainne, and Finn" ("Tristan Scholarship" 576).

In the old story, Drystan avoids consummating an elopement with Grainne until "the incident of the splashing water" (R. Loomis, "Tristan Scholarship" 576), which is akin to the Thomas version of the story that brings about Kaherdin's knowledge of his sister's preserved maidenhood. At this point in the Irish saga the lovers unite, and as in the later versions, the lovers elude official discovery by King Mark and continue "to meet surreptitiously, and, though often suspected, manag[e] to deceive or outwit March" (R. Loomis 576-577). One difference among the old tale and the newer versions, according to R. Loomis's essay, "Tristan Scholarship after 1911," is that "Finally, March discover[s the lovers] together and murder[s] Drystan. Esyllt die[s] in her lover's arms" (576-577). Only in Béroul's text are the lovers discovered by Mark, and rather than murder the lovers, who are fully clothed and separated by a naked sword, Mark replaces the blade with his own and exchanges his ring for the one on Iseult's finger. Despite this difference, the death of the lovers in the old tale clearly resembles their demise in both the Thomas version and the *Tristan en Prose*.

There are additional similarities among the old, Celtic tale and the later storylines of the Tristan saga. In examining Cormac's *Glossary*, dated circa 900, R. Loomis determines that the old Irish hero "King Finn had a fool who spied on Finn's wife and

revealed her infidelity to his master" ("Tristan Scholarship" 575). Béroul's Frocin the Dwarf, who spies on Tristan and Isolt and devises plans to catch them in the act, is a similar character. Even the incident of Isolt's abduction from Mark's court and requisite rescue by Tristan "is unquestionably Celtic, with analogues in Irish and Arthurian romance, but it comes close enough to the episode of the rash boon in *Pwyll* to render it fairly certain that it was absorbed directly from a variant version of the *mabinogi*" (R. Loomis, "Tristan Scholarship" 576). From these many related tales it is clear that "the heart of the Tristan's love-story is Irish" (573), and while "the saga is mentioned in a tenth-century list," it "may be centuries older" (573).

Of all the major characters cited by the troubadours, Tristan was the most frequent (Lasater 45-46). From Celtic beginnings to redactions laced with Arab-Persian elements, the tale was a favorite, even when "divested of the folklore paraphernalia of dragons, rudderless boats, and magic potions" (Fisher 153), as the story "presents the adulterous triangle of uncle and nephew in conflict over the wife" (Fisher 153), which only heightens, in addition to Celtic complications and shapings by Eastern ideas, the intrigue of the lovers' romance and the constant questioning of where such relationships fit within each respective culture's code of morality. Fisher comments that "Influences upon literature are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Undoubtedly life in the feudal castle, troubadour gallantry, Ovidian psychology, and the Manichean tinge of mediaeval Christianity are all ingredients in the elixir of courtly love" (164).

Indeed, it may be hard to discern exactly how *fin' amor* arose, particularly because of its blatant challenge of Christian morality. Nevertheless, during the medieval period, a "monogamous and moralistic society" (Fisher 164) was intrigued by "a literary

convention condoning courtly adultery" (164). Laced with other Oriental influences, such as Saracen figures, the predominant stories swept across Western Europe and challenged public ideas on love, religion, and being. This circumstance is perfectly enshrined in the stories of Tristan and Isolde, one of the ultimate couples of medieval romance, and in turning to the variety of stories of them conjured by the troubadours and others, the new doctrine they came to embody is clearly visible. Fisher argues that these tales do not "fit a preconceived Provencal or Ovidian doctrine of adultery" (164), and it is clear that neither do they adhere to the ideologies of the church. Whether it was the intention of their authors or not, the Tristan stories "crystallized vaguely adulterous sentiments into an overt cult of adultery" (Fisher 164) that affected a wider scope than just individuals at court. This cult of adultery, born of the *fin' amor* tradition supported by Eleanor of Aquitaine and her children, was arguably sparked by influences from Arab Spain that were exchanged during a time of surprising fluidity. Representations of this motif, as well as those of Sir Palamedes in later texts, evidence a fascination with the East that reveals a reassessment of ideological traditions in Western European cultures presented by the various authors of the Tristan stories. In the chapters that follow, this will become clearer, and will be qualified by the individual circumstances of selected versions of the Tristan story as regards the countries in which they were composed.

CHAPTER II: TRISTAN IN FRANCE: A RECONCILIATION OF IDEOLOGIES

Situated between England and Spain, France was the site of flourishing literature in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was also a site of religious upheaval. These elements blend together to create some of the most fascinating and enduring versions of the Celtic tale of Tristan, from Béroul to Thomas to the anonymous *Tristan en Prose*. The French redactions weave tapestries of Celtic and Iberian motifs from France's neighbors to create both literary and visual pieces of art that facilitate contemplation of ideas about religion, love, and life.

It is likely that the original version of Tristan traveled to France orally, particularly because the relationship between England and France even before the Norman occupation of Britain allowed for the wedding of a Norman princess to the conquering King Canut. In fact, John Fisher asserts that "Both Tristan and Lancelot appear to be adaptations by thirteenth-century court poets of legendary material from a much earlier era" (154). One of the first written versions of the saga is known as the Béroul text, and this version seems to preserve more of the story's Celtic character, and it is laced with fewer Oriental flourishes than the others. The second version, which seems to have derived from Béroul's record is known as the Thomas manuscript, and this is what scholars have often connected to the patronage of Queen Eleanor who resided at Aquitaine with her son Richard for some time. This text, in keeping with the contemporary literary attitudes appreciated by powers of influence like Queen Eleanor,

speaks to the tradition of courtly love. Thomas's text builds this up from the circumstantial love triangle of the tale's Celtic origins, though, in several concerted ways. This exemplifies the influence in fashion of the Orient, although there is less mention of the Saracen knight Palomides than in later versions. Moreover, the redactions of this tale, in each of their unique styles, not only evidences Oriental influences, but also show how the perpetuation of a myth served to shape the morals and values that helped solidify public identity.

The last French version continues this progression of incorporating more Oriental elements in that it emphasizes the adulterous relationship of Tristan and Isolde even more than its predecessor, meanwhile creating a means to absolve the lovers from their sinful actions. John Fisher explains that in twelfth century Troyes, and likely in other locales as well, "the problem of courtly adultery was under consideration, and the story of Tristan and Iseult was regarded as a prototype of the school that approved it" (151). The courtly love motif in the Tristan story, and the conversations that it elicited about adultery, can be argued as a way that the story embodies Eastern influences. In addition to this theme, the French Thomas text builds on Said's "containment of the Orient" by introducing the knight Palomides. Although he does not play a large role in the story, he nonetheless serves as a catalyst to Tristan and Isode's romance. Again, while this is not a very well-developed characterization or presence, the mention of him in the Prose Tristan signals that the changing taste of the era looked ever more to the exotic mystique of the East, a taste evident in contemporary literature such as the story of Aucassin et Nicolette, and Flor et Blanchefluer. This sentiment is echoed in the commentary by Tony Hunt that "there was a considerable vogue in North-eastern France in the thirteenth century for the

insertion of lyric strophes in narratives, albeit verse narratives. This vogue appears to have been started by Jean Renart's Romance of the Rose" (14). These lyric additions not only hint at the influence of the troubadours on French literature and cultural taste, but also at those who inspired these performers, the well-trained poets of Arabian Iberia Spain.

Even more, the change in tone and elaboration of the story reflects upon and also questions the beliefs held by the contemporary public. Just as Jean Markale set forth in his discussion of the pivotal shifts that were occurring in the Middle Ages, Michael Curschmann, notes that in all of the compositions of the Tristan myth, "The fatal attraction that so appealed to the emerging lay culture is the very thing that defies integrations into the evolving concepts of what we would today call civilized society, as exemplified in the Arthurian paradigm. Or conversely, a relationship caused by poisonous magic simply cannot be socialized without loss of the original impetus" (108). Curschmann speaks to the turbulent thought processes in question at this time about love, courtly love, and about how both fit in with a highly indoctrinated religion.

Béroul's romance of Tristan and Iseult is difficult to find on its own; however, Joseph Bédier's version, which is a compilation of various sources, adheres "faithfully" to it in "Chapters VII, VIII, IX, X,[and] XI" of his 1900 publication (Bédier 9-10). These chapters recount the episode of Frocin, a wicked-minded dwarf who plots with King Mark to ensnare and expose the lovers; as well as the planned deaths for Tristan and Iseult by fire, both of whom escaped their fate: Tristan from leaping to safety from a chapel window over the sea, and Iseult to the lepers, where she was rescued by Tristan. These chapters also speak of the lovers' stay in the Wood of Morois, where they meet the

hermit Ogrin, and where they are found sleeping together, yet separated by a naked sword, by King Mark. The last of the Béroul material in Bédier's text recounts Iseult's return to King Mark and Tristan's expulsion. It also tells of Iseult's trial by iron, where before swearing on holy relics, she was taken from the ferry by Tristan, dressed as a beggar, who fell with her. She passes the test to prove her innocence by professing the oath that: "by these holy things and all the holy things of earth, I swear that no man born of woman has held me in his arms saving King Mark, my lord, and that poor pilgrim who only now took a fall, as you saw" (Bédier 122).

Béroul's redaction of the Tristan saga is certainly true to the story's Celtic origins. The flight of Tristan and Iseult to the Wood of Morois, as Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis has revealed, is virtually an update of the Irish elopement story of Diarmade and Grainne escaping from Finn. The emphasis on the wood as shelter for the lovers reiterates the sanctity of the forest, which comes straight from Celtic religious beliefs and traditions. Thus, it is difficult to identify a great many manifestations of Eastern ideas in this piece, especially when limited to five chapters. Nevertheless, Béroul's account is a marvelous example, despite being one of the earliest, of how the French public sought to reconcile the competing ideas posed by Christianity and courtly love.

What is striking about Béroul's text is the characterization of both Tristan and Iseult as God-fearing Christians, themselves torn by the beliefs that had come before and the feelings of their unique situation. The narrator even questions the reader directly to consider the morality of events throughout the text. When discovered through Frocin's trap, Tristan asks Mark, "in the name of God the Lord, have mercy on [Iseult]" (Béroul 76). Later, it is said that Tristan "trusted in God" (Béroul 76). While being led to a

flaming pyre of thorns to die, Tristan asks to visit a chantry on cliff: "My death is near, I shall ask God that he have mercy on me, who so offended him" (Béroul 82). After Tristan has jumped from the window of the chapel and survived the fall to the beach below, he tells his mentor, Gorvenal, "God has saved me, but oh! Master, to what end? For without Iseult I may not and I will not live, and I rather had died of my fall" (83). This quote exemplifies Tristan's struggle between his Christian beliefs and the overwhelming influence of the new focus on love. Even the narrator directly addresses the reader saying that "yet I call you to witness, my lords who read this, and who know of the philter dunk upon the high seas, and who understand whether [Tristan's] love were disloyalty [to Mark] indeed. For men see this and that outward thing, but God alone the heart, and in the heart alone is Crime and the sole final judge is God" (Béroul 76).

Tristram is very developed in Thomas's text. Following the tale of his parentage and birth, his adventure begins when he trades his birds with Norsemen "that were driven thither by long northern tempests" (Thomas 20). Aboard their ship he spies a chess-board and sits down to play with them, after which Tristram's foster-father goes home and leaves Tristram with his governor. At this point, the Norsemen lift anchor from the harbor and carry Tristram away unbeknownst until later. From this episode we learn that the Norse merchants not only have "marvel of the young man and praised his knowledge and meekness and beauty and subtlety" (Thomas 23), but also that Tristram practices falconry and plays chess, depicting him as very well-bred. After departing his homeland and finding himself lost, he prays to god. "Almighty God, that with Thy power shapest men after Thy mind, as thou art one God in three Persons, and three Persons in one God, heed Thou me and guide me and keep me helpless and friendless, in my peril and distress"

(Thomas 27). This description characterizes Tristan as a good Christian, as he gives sincere respect and honor to God in this quotation. He also acknowledges his feeble, human mortality and invokes God's aid. Later, this type of characterization helps readers to be less disgusted with Tristan's blatant sins of adultery, as the audience, can see that prior to drinking the enchanted love philter, Tristan was a good, honest Christian.

Further descriptions of Tristan highlight not his culture and spirituality, but rather his prowess. On his journey, he meets with hunters and butchers a hart for them that they had caught. Tristram teaches them about the "quarry," the entrails given to the dogs to eat, and the "present": the best parts of the hart and its head presented on a branch to the king (31-32). When he arrives at Mark's court, he lets his skills as a harper be known. "He shone with seemly knowledge: never tofore heard they harp struck so fairly in their life-days" (Thomas 36) and harps three lays for the court. In all, these episodes show a great effort to characterize Tristan as a good, lawful, cultured Christian prior to meeting Ysolt and drinking the love philter. Such descriptions help audiences to accept the love potion as the reason for Tristan's recurrent sins of deception and adultery, not him. Consequently, readers are inclined to condone Tristan's actions, as they can place the blame for them on the magical draught.

When the text finally addresses the meeting of Tristan and Ysolt, the focus is not on how Ysolt the princess heals him. Instead, the princess hopes to learn from him, and so his healing becomes not only secondary, but performed only in exchange for his tutoring. Moreover, Tristan is not the patient of Ysolt, but rather, her mother (Thomas 83-84). It is the queen who plasters Tristram's wound, "and the night next after the Queen took the wound with her own hand and washed it out with healing balms and bound it

with marvelous plasters so that within short space she did away the swelling and the venom" (Thomas 84), not Ysolt the princess. Because Tristan is not the princess's patient, there is no investment on behalf of either character to care for and to appreciate the other.

The other opportunity during Tristan's convalescence in Ireland for Tristan and Ysolt to develop and express romantic inclinations is during their lessons together. Ysolt is regarded as wise and learned before her lessons with Tristram. However, in the Thomas text, it seems that it is only after being taught "both night and day to strike the harp and all manner of stringed instruments, to write and make letters, and knowledge of all crafts" (Thomas 87) from him that "over all that realm waxed her fame for all manner of learning that she had learned" including "goodly graces and wide fame of wisdom" (Thomas 87). For Ysolt to have learned so much from Tristan must have taken a great deal of time and private tutoring. It seems that this would have created a circumstance for the two to begin entertaining feelings for one another. However, Thomas deliberately says nothing of the sort. Even more, though, the Thomas version makes no mention whatsoever of a Palamedes character, as is included in the later *Tristran en Prose*. Neither is there any sort of rival against Tristan for Ysolt's attention, let alone commentary on their feelings for one another. Even more, there is no tournament at which Tristram jousts and demonstrates his prowess. Thomas's objective redaction invites a view of the eventual lovers as being quite detached from one another during the whole episode in Ireland. Thomas's version suggests a less intimate and even romantic relationship between Tristan and Ysolt at the beginning, which contrasts significantly with the end of the tale. This allows for readers to ascribe greater significance to the

intervention of the love philter, as it can be attributed the sizable change of heart between the two characters.

There is another striking difference in the description of the visit that Tristram pays to Ireland at the beginning of the tale. In the Thomas version, there is no discovery scene by the queen that Tristram slew the Marhault. Even more oddly, when Tristram is healed and thanks the queen for her aid before embarking from Ireland, he mentions that he "purposed to fare unto Spain, for [he] was fain to learn the lore of the stars and hidden matters" (Thomas 88). This passage evidences contact with Spain and acknowledges the extensive knowledge that the country possessed and what known for at that time.

What is most important about this section of the tale, though, is that it clearly makes no mention of Tristan and Ysolt as romantically inclined, despite passing the time together necessary for Ysolt's tutelages. This lack of affection or even attraction is at odds with the end of the story, where Ysolt characterizes the relationship as a force that makes the lovers, their emotions, and their experiences inseparable: "Of such fashion is our love I may not feel sorrow without you: ye may not die without me, nor may I perish without you. If I must suffer wreck at sea, then beseemeth you in like wise to drown: ye may not drown on land: ye ought to come seek me at sea" (Thomas 280). Ysolt's emotions are continually high at the end until the end, for when Tristan dies, "As soon as Ysolt hath heard the tidings, for woe she may not utter a word, of his death she is so dolorous" (Thomas 286).

Yet many events lead up to this change of emotions, namely the inadvertent drinking of the love potion, and of course, many perilous adventures between the lovers. The potion serves as the "third element—magic, which retrieves and sometimes provokes

the mysterious feeling of love" (208), while the trials in the relationship evidence Jean Markale's idea that "The ritual of courtly love is necessarily painful. The lover's joy is born from his suffering. But it is possible that his lady suffers equally from this situation, which she sets up, however, and in which she is an accomplice" (208). This is similar to Cappelanus's assertion that "The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized" (184-186). Maureen Fries comments on these phenomena, noting that "In the version of Thomas as well as that of his redactor, Brother Robert, hazardous adventures only seem to intensify the original opiate effect of the magic drink. In all of these narratives, marriage to Isolde of the White Hands offers no corrective" (76). Thus, in addition to the love potion, which absolves the lovers of their adultery, the trials that Tristan and Ysolt experience are not only in keeping with the *fin'amour* tradition, but are also events that help Christian readers to forgive them for their actions in a "purification by pain" sort of way.

Because of this, Thomas's *Tristan and Ysolt* demonstrates how the author and his public conceived of the Oriental thoughts of courtly love and how they tried to reconcile it with their pious morals. To this end, Thomas's text contains several conflicts that explore Ysolt's Christian values, challenging them on the one hand, and evidencing them on the other. Moreover, while the love philter is partially seen to excuse the lovers, Thomas's text emphasizes the pain Tristan and Ysolt experience because of their choices, and thereby deters the public from embracing such activities, even if it also shows that some may forgive such behavior.

As Thomas's tale develops, after Tristram has married Isolt of the White Hands from Brittany, he returns to Cornwall with his brother-in-law Kaherdin. For Tristan to

prove the beauty of Ysolt and Bringvain, the two knights await the appearance of the ladies in a wood. When "at the last came Ysolt and Bringvain riding, and each held a dog in her arms [,] Tristram sighed from his heart and might scarce restrain him" (Thomas 237). This sighting precipitates one episode of Tristram and Ysolt's union, but it is also an episode where the lovers' confidants engage in a romantic exploit as well. One point of interest here is the moralizing that occurs on account of Bringvain sleeping with Kaherdin. She had resisted his advances by lulling him to sleep with an enchanted pillow, but at last Ysolt intervenes to allow their union.

Soon after the deed has been done, Bringvain learns that Kaherdin is a coward and unworthy of her affection. Bringvain refutes Ysolt's charge of Tristram for the blame, saying to her that "ye should have the disworship sith ye have enjoyed him unto your pwer. Had ye not desired the evil thing, ye had not enjoyed him so long. The lechery that ye so love…Of his love I complain not, but I have great grief and woe that ye have beguiled me to consent to your sin. Shent am I if ever I consent thereto more" (Thomas 246). This passage illustrates the negative perception of Tristan and Ysolt's relationship, and from Ysolt's closest confidant. Bringvain specifically cites the sinfulness of the affair, and asserts that she will no longer be complicent in it. Even more, although a translation of a different term, R. Loomis glosses "shent" as "disgraced" (Thomas 299), and it is this that Brigvain wishes to avoid.

Bringvain continues her barrage, charging that "wretched Ysolt, thou art foresworn and a faithbreaker and a liar. Thou art so used to evil thou mayst not forsake it: thou must hold to thine old custom" (Thomas 248). Bringvain characterizes Ysolt here as a chronic sinner and adds that "An thou hadst no been used thereto from thy childhood,

thou wouldst not continue to do it: an thou delighted not so in sin thou wouldst not hold it long…" explaining that "what thing a woman learneth in youth, if she have not chastisement, it endureth all her life days if her power accord unto her desire. Evil hast thou learnt in thy youth, and all thy days will it be thine intents" (Thomas 248). The indictment does not end, as Bringvain characterizes Ysolt's actions as "wickedness" (248). The servant chastises Ysolt as if the voice of justice by saying that upon learning of Ysolt's actions, the King should "have punished thee: now so long hath he suffered it, he is among all his people shamed…Great shame wert thou to thy friends. He ought to have done thee shame when thou wert dishonoring thy lineage, thy friends and thy lord. An thou hadst ot lost thine honor, thou hadst left thy wickedness" (249). Bringvain not only assaults Ysolt's character, but she interpolates her guilt as well. She brings Ysolt's attention to the fact that Mark "sufferest all thy desires…To thee he hath so great love that he endureth his disworship, but if he had not loved thee so, so had he punished thee...thou dost great villainy and shame to thy body when he loveth thee so sore and thou bearest thee toward his a unto a man thou lovest not" (249). This episode and Bringvain's tirade is worth examining for it demonstrates the high moralizing that takes place in Thomas's text. This reflects that the adulterous relationship entertained by the protagonists was not wholly accepted during this time.

Beyond the voice of social shame manifested in Bringvain's tirade, Thomas questions the morality of Tristan and Ysolt's relationship through Ysolt's addresses to God. Especially at the tale's end, when Tristran is "wounded through the loin of a sword that was empoisoned" (Thomas 267) and "none might heal him of that venom" (Thomas

267), he calls upon Kaherdin to bring Ysolt to him to cure his wound. Waylaid in her journey to succor Tristram, Ysolt attempts to reconcile her sins with God. She wails,

> Álas, woe is me! God permitteth not that I live long enough to behold Tristram, my love…He willeth that I were drowned in the sea! My coming lieth no longer within my power; an God had willed and I had arrived…This is my sorrow and anguish and in my heart am I right heavy…Naught is my death unto me: whenas God willeth it, I will it well. (Thomas 280)

This episode illustrates Ysolt's belief that God is against her arrival at Tristan's side, which would save him, and would also allow for their affair to continue. Ysolt's comment that God wills her dead suggests that she not only expects to die, but that she believes she is being punished for wrongdoing in the eyes of God. Yet, her mention of sorrow and anguish appears as a sort of confession, and at the passage's end, Ysolt surrenders herself to the will of God. As in the Bringvain episode, this course of action speaks to a highly Christian public who, although beginning to embrace aspects of the courtly love tradition, still saw women as the root of evil and who stringently adhered to religious doctrine. Ysolt's humble, repentant words would likely make her a more forgivable character to Thomas's Christian audience. It would also allow for them to judge the lovers' plight more favorably.

The final passages of the tale allow for further consideration. In Thomas's text, Tristan has asked that Kaherdin raise a white sail if he brings with him Ysolt, and a black one if not. As the long-awaited ship approaches, Tristram is told that "the sail is altogether black" (Thomas 285), and at hearing this news "he turneth him unto the wall

and saith: ‘God save Ysolt and me. Sith ye would not come unto me… I may no longer hold my life. For you I die, Ysolt, fair love” (285). Ysolt is distraught to learn that Tristan has died, and when “Ysolt goeth thereas she seeth the body and turneth her unto the east and prayeth for him piteously: ‘Tristram, my love, whenas I see thee dead, of reason I should not live’” (Thomas 289). At last, she says “For me thou hast lost thy life, and I shall do as true lover should: for thee will I die and with thee” (289). The romance ends as Ysolt “embraced him and stretched herself, kissed his mouth and face, and right straightly she clung to him, and stretched her body to his body and laid her mouth to his mouth. Then she yielded up her spirit and died here beside him for sorrow of her lover” (Thomas 289). The sensual imagery is striking, and especially when juxtaposed beside Ysolt’s praying. In a fitting way, Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner comments in her *Shaping Romance* that “Thomas’s version of the Tristan legend offers its audience a picture of Tristan and Iseut’s love that invades the boundaries of our emotional lives. It sets in motion channels of positive and negative fascination whose polarities appear already in the medieval reception of Thomas’s work” (37). Likewise, Michael Curschmann comments that “Elsewhere death provides a conclusion, but it does not provide closure in the societal or structural sense, as Thomas, for one, makes quite clear” (108), as Thomas’s audience is left wrestling with how they should perceive the tragic end of these unique and singular courtly lovers. Whether Thomas’s ending is an “endorsement of a union that transcends the boundaries of death or condemnation of a love that kills without redemption” (Bruckner 37); or if Thomas “is ‘for’ the lovers or…‘against’ them” (37), to use Bruckner’s terms, is difficult to determine, even when analyzing the tale’s ending. Yet pinning down Thomas’s position is less important than is noting that his version of

the Tristan text brings an ambivalent reading to its public, problematizing the lovers' union, relationship, and death. Perhaps Thomas's purpose was not to instruct, rather it was to facilitate contemplation on what love is and what is acceptable about it. This would make Thomas's ambivalent ending seem more appropriate, and in a way, satisfying.

Unlike the problematic stance found in Thomas's text, the later prose *Tristan* emphasizes the innocence of the lovers against their sins in the wake of the treacherous love potion. The effects of the potion, which persuade readers to buy in to its power, are emphasized by the lack of relationship between Tristan and Isode before they drink it. The ineptitude of the lovers to avoid their fate through the folly of drinking the love philter is the primary focus of the prose *Tristan*. The magic drink essentially absolves the lovers of the sins they commit to maintain their clandestine relationship including lying, deception, and adultery. Scholar Maureen Fries asserts that "Tristan and Isolde are united in guilt by a force outside, rather than primarily within, themselves. It is the power of the potion which precludes their separation (for a stated number of years or forever, depending on the particular version) and which sets them against a social order which, in most versions, they respect. The potion, and not the person(s), determines the trajectory of the lovers' career" (75), which again, reduces their culpability and allows them to be viewed more as innocent victims of magic rather than as willful, unabashed sinners.

Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis adds to this discussion how "God delivers the lovers by two miracles; he saves Tristan by the leap from the chapel; he saves Isolt by delivering her from the lepers. For this poet, it is not the fact that proves the crime, but the judgment which God sends upon it" (284). She explains that being hurled over a

precipice was the penalty for unchastity among the Britons (284), and that there is "some association between the fact of Tristan's leap from the chapel and the question of his innocence in the eyes of heaven" (G. Loomis 285). That he survives the leap to escape suggests that "a miraculous intervention in sign of the hero's innocence" (G. Loomis 285) has occurred, which indicates that although Tristan has sinned, "what was significant was that his will was innocent. It was the potion that was responsible for the deed" (285). Like G. Loomis, Markale notes that the "notion of sin seems absent…from the legend of Tristan and Iseult,…which proved more resistant to clerical pressure" (135). He also sees, like G. Loomis, that "Tristan and Iseult never committed a sin, and 'God protects lovers'…It is true that someone took pains to invent the famous philter 'drunk in error' by the two heroes, which arranged everything so nicely: if Tristan and Iseult fell in love with each other, it is not their fault. Now, if there is no sin of intent, then there is no sin at all" (Markale 135-136). Markale attributes this to the Celtic origins of the tale, asserting that this perspective leaves "no question of imputing it to any kind of sin. Hence the serene self-confidence of the Anglo-Norman romance writers and their German imitators in denying any sin on the part of Tristan or Iseult" (136).

Whenever they are caught in a predicament, Tristan and Iseut, as well as their servants Brangain and Gorvenal, lament the day the potion was imbibed. From the outset of the malfeasance Brangain wails: "We've committed a misdeed. Great harm is bound to come of it. [Tristan and Iseut] will pay for our foolishness" (*The Romance* 88). Here, the blame for the drinking of the philter, and even more, for the adultery it begets, passes by the shoulders of the lovers and falls squarely on those of their servants. The text emphasizes this again: "Gorvenal and Brangain were very distressed and grieved by what

their blunder had brought about" (*The Romance* 88). When Gorvenal realizes he has given the lovers the enchanted drink by accident, "he was so upset that he wished he were dead, for mow he realized that Tristan loved Iseut and Iseut loved Tristan. He and Brangain would be held responsible, and it was only right that they should bear the blame; it was not the fault of Tristan and Iseut who knew nothing of the drink" (*The Romance* 87).

Although this relationship is not as distinct as in the Thomas text, there is still a significant absence of romantic interest between the two characters during the time that Tristan stays at the Irish court. This begins with the representation of Iseut. Unlike the Thomas text, the prose *Tristan* characterizes the Irish king's daughter as the healer of the court, not his wife, as in the text's predecessor. Of Tristan's wounds, the king states: "I have a daughter who to my knowledge has more experience in such matters than any man or woman in this kingdom, and I'm sure she'll attend to it for the love of God and for pity's sake" (*The Romance* 43).

When Iseut does attend to Tristan, she shows little regard for him besides the fact that she is his patient. For instance, "She went straight to Tristan, and when she had examined his wound, she applied such herbs as she thought would be beneficial to him. He moaned and sighed deeply, for his pain and his anguish were great" (*The Romance* 44). There is an emphasis on Iseut's efficiency and focus in this passage, evident in the adverb "straight," and in the active verbs "examined" and "applied." This contrasts with the typical description of courtly maidens who are merely sad when they see a knight in like condition. It is not until the text mentions that Iseut did not "straightaway notice the

poison" that she is described as comforting him, saying that "she would soon have him hale and hearty with God's help" (*The Romance* 44).

This passage emphasizes the upright character of Iseut at this point and the fact that her sole interest in comforting and tending to Tristan is to heal him, and even more, in the manner of a good Christian. This religious implication arises yet again when she exclaims, upon realizing that Tristan's would was poisoned, "Now that by the grace of God I've seen it, rest assured that I'll cure you with His help" (*The Romance* 44). Her attentions continue to be diligent and her intentions pure. Her response to Brangain about which of Palamedes or Tristan she would prefer if "she were to grant [her] love to one of them" (*The Romance* 47) illustrates how Iseut is clearly not interested in Tristan as she responds "If it came to the point where I'd have to make a choice, I think I'd prefer Palamedes on account of his prowess" (*The Romance* 47).

On this occasion of Iseut's expression of preference for Palamedes, there is a distinctly positive light that consequentially surrounds him. This depiction lies in contrast to Said's idea that Orientalist texts typically "polarize the distinction—the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western–and limit the human encounter between different cultures, traditions and societies" (44).Yet the *Tristan en Prose* does not emphasize a development of Eastern and Western difference. Tristan and Palamedes are evaluated by Iseut as knights on a level playing field. There is no favor attributed the West over the East, and there is no open impugning of Palamedes's Saracen "otherness." This perspective is distinct from that presented in Malory's redaction, where Palomides is seen as a Saracen "other" from the very beginning.

On the contrary, in the *Tristan en Prose*, the positive glow surrounding Palamedes begins with mention that "in front of the Castle in the Moors" (*The Romance* 45), there is a tournament where the victor "is an unknown knight wearing a black shield and two swords, a sign of his readiness to fight against two opponents: he is Palamedes the Saracen. Nobody knows he is not a Christian; he has eleven brothers, and his father Esclabor is also a knight of great valor" (*The Romance* 45). Because of his prowess, Palamedes is invited to the Irish King's home, and "that evening Palamedes was served and honoured by everyone at court more than he could have wished" (*The Romance* 45). This introduction differs greatly from that in Sir Thomas Malory's rendering of the *Book of Sir Tristram*. The emphasis in the prose *Tristan* is on Palamedes's prowess and valor, and only two details suggest that there is anything subversive about him: that he wears black; and that he is mysterious, harboring "unknown" qualities, which echo in the description of "the Saracen" who "nobody knows is not a Christian" (*The Romance* 45). Even later, the prose downplays his fundamental difference of faith by stating that he loved Iseut "so much that there was nothing in the world he would not have done to possess her, even abandon his faith, though that was the one thing he would have been most unwilling to do" (*The Romance* 46). This is a much more indirect characterization of the inherent difference of Palamedes to the Christian knight norm than in Malory's text where "Palomydes, [the Sarasyn] drew unto La Beale Isode" (239), and where Palomides was "to be Christened for her sake" (239). This suggests that the author of the prose *Tristan* desired less to set Palamedes off against the other knights, Tristan in particular, which in turn says something different about the "other" in this text than that which is expressed in Malory's work. In Malory's text, which arrives much later, the author makes

a clear distinction between his Palomides and the other knights. Palomides is not just an exotic character thrown into a tournament—he is a "Sarasyn" with a lingering presence—and Malory's chosen term only emphasizes the episodes where Palomides is the knight who always falls short of first place. The implication of Malory's representation is that Palomides's folly is in being the quintessential "other," Tristan's foil, no matter how sympathetic Malory allows his character to be. In the *Tristan en Prose*, however, Palamedes is a curiosity. He is described in positive terms, and he is just another man, not a distinct "other" labeled with terminology that wields negative connotations of evil, sedition, violence, and sensuality.

The characterization of Palamedes's attraction to Iseut in Thomas is also less emphatic of the knight's inherent qualities as "other." Thomas's description is less indicative of a negative bias against the culturally different knight in several instances. For example, rather than drawing unto Iseut in an unsettling way, as in Malory, in the prose, "Palamedes was served and honoured by everyone at court…The following day Iseut waited at table…She was so beautiful and so becoming in every way that when Palamedes saw her he was quite overwhelmed, and he said to himself that she was the most beautiful being he had ever beheld. He completely lost his heart to her" (*The Romance* 45). His response echoes the symptoms of love set out by Capellanus, that "when a man sees some woman fit for love and shaped according to his taste, he begins at once to lust after her in his heart; then the more he thinks about her the more he burns with love, until he comes to a fuller meditation" (29). This is nearly the inverse construction of Palamedes's introduction as in Malory's text, and it leads readers to see him not in a negative and ominous light, but in a much more positive and benign one.

This characterization continues after Palamedes rescues Brangain, where "The serving men there hastened to disarm the knight, and as soon as he was relieved of his armour so that Brangain was able to see him clearly, she knew at once it was Palamedes, the brave knight, the one who so loved my lady Iseut" (*The Romance* 102). She exclaims: "I'm so glad to see you!" (102), indicating joy and elation, both positive feelings attributed to Palamedes.

At the beginning of the tale, the negative representation of Palamedes is not ignited until he realizes "that Tristan loved [Iseut] and hated him mortally for her sake" (46). It is only at this point that Palamedes "began to feel such a deadly hatred for Tristan that he hated no one else as much, for, seeing that he was such a handsome knight and so well formed in every way, it seemed to him that he was stealing Iseut's love from him and that she was head over heels for Tristan" (*The Romance* 46). This excerpt shows the Saracen as maintaining both jealousy and hatred, yet they are sparked by the "pride and arrogance" that "took hold of Tristan" when he "eyed Palamedes with anger because he felt he would be a hindrance and an obstacle" (*The Romance* 46) to achieving his desires. Thus, Palamedes's negative characterization at this juncture is merely because Tristan's behavior, that of the Christian knight, provokes it. This diminishes a negative view of Palamedes. So do the reasons for his initial attraction to Iseut. They seem purer and more genuine than those of Tristan. Palamedes is initially struck by her beauty, but is "so infatuated with Iseut that he said he would die if he did not have her" (46) even if it meant sacrificing his faith. As for Tristan, he "had often looked at Iseut and she pleased him very much, but not in a way which made him fall in love with her" (46). It is not until he sees Palamedes's determined infatuation that he decides "that Palamedes would

certainly never have her if he could help it" (46). Thus, Tristan's feelings for Iseut seem born out of a desire to prove himself a better knight than Palamedes more than out of real interest in her, which, as her patient, he would have had ample opportunity to have cultivated.

These two details within the initial characterization of Palamedes downplay his inherent differences to the ideal, Christian knight, and they also introduce him as a valorous, dedicated, and truly enamored knight. This representation varies distinctly from that produced later by Malory, who highlights the opposition and negative aspects of his Palomides in *The Book of Sir Tristram*. Nevertheless, this representation of the Saracen "offers a marvelous instance of the interrelations between society, history, and textuality; moreover, the cultural role played by the Orient in the West connects Orientalism with ideology, politics, and the logic of power, matters of relevance…to the literary community" (Said 24). In this instance, it is interesting that during this period of the Crusades, the Oriental literature refrained from positioning the "Oriental" as greatly beneath the Westerner as in later texts. Said mentions that "Orientalism is…a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' culture" (Said 12). In this case, the representation of Palamedes and of courtly love as well, shows that the French did not necessarily see themselves as overtly superior to the ideas of the east, as "where Islam was concerned, European fear, if not always respect, was in order" (Said 59), particularly because of the cultural and religious hegemony that grew out of the spread of Islam following the death of Mohammed in 632 (Said 59). The Westerner "could respond with very little except for fear and a kind of awe" (Said 59), and in the time of Eleanor of Aquitaine, the French

surely found Eastern cultures intriguing and in the Tristan stories of this time, we can see the French public trying to come to terms with their ideas more than to merely demonstrate their authority over them, as evident in later versions of the Tristan story that are more in keeping with Said's theory of Orientalism.

More importantly, the differences that are visible between Palamedes and Tristan in the French prose text introduce a shaky foundation upon which the love of Tristan and Iseut is founded, which reinforces the importance of the love philter in this version, which in turn, serves to rationalize and make acceptable the clandestine adultery of the lovers against King Mark. This representation of Palamedes and of the initial relationship between Tristan and Iseut before drinking the enchanted philter leads readers to interpret the love potion as being more powerful than in other, later texts, like Malory's, as it is the sole cause of Tristan and Iseut's complete change of heart for one another. Tristan and Iseut are thus deemed innocent and their actions found pardonable, as the text repeatedly blames the potion for precipitating Tristan and Iseult's actions.

Thus, despite the illicit rendezvous between the lovers and their repeated sins of adultery, in all of the French texts telling of Tristan, the lovers are accepted, their sins overlooked. Jean Markale sees Tristan and Iseult as a perfect model of the "infernal couple" in a romance, and with their blatantly iconoclastic behavior, they are. Indeed, they are "far from representing the moral and religious ideals of Christianity" (Markale 17), as they adamantly oppose one of the Ten Commandments: thou shalt not commit adultery. Instead, their tale could be argued to support the mantra: love conquers all. But for them, it just comes with a price. Coupled with the enchanted love philter, perhaps the lovers' continued suffering and their unfulfilled ends seemed a payment dear enough for

the French public to accept and hold dear this "infernal couple." Fisher offers that "The cult of adultery was never really accepted in the tradition of the romances which were closest to the actual social conditions. Where it was accepted…it was at once made Platonic; and in the tradition of the Provencal fabliaux-romances…it was satirized and moralized" (160). Markale continues that

> the fact that courtly love condoned extramarital love is enough to make it suspect—a thoroughly logical reaction considering marriage is the keystone of society, be it Christian or otherwise, and any venture knocking a breach in this sacrosanct institution must necessarily be subversive and thus…tinged with diabolism. The problem becomes more complex, in that courtly love—as it appears in its theoretical codification and as it is lived in the fictional narratives of the era (see Lancelot and Tristan) – claims to substitute new rules for behavior, at the very core of society to the detriment of the old laws hitherto considered definitive and endorsed by Christian morality. (21)

It does not seem that either the Thomas version of Tristan or the *Prose Tristan* satirizes the love theme, but both do exhibit distinct moralizations of the adultery in them. Whereas the relationship of the lovers seems more authentic and certainly more developed with multiple complex meetings in Thomas, there is also a minimization of the power of the love potion on them, and even more, blatant episodes attacking the lovers' morality, particularly that of Ysolt. In the *Tristan en Prose*, there is still a moralizing message, yet it works opposite that of Thomas: the power of the potion is emphasized, thus seemingly absolving the lovers of their repeated sins, as their actions are not seen as their own, but rather are compelled by the enchanted draught. These depictions, although

very distinct from one another, build on the love triangle inherent from the story's Celtic origins, and use them to challenge the arguably Oriental concept of *fin' amor* and its contrast with the newly de-stabilized ideology of the Catholic Church. What is accomplished in each is less a treatise on good behavior regarding relationships, and more a problem-posing text that invites the poets' audiences to evaluate their own perspectives on what is acceptable, good, or deplorable, allowing them to reconcile the fundamental schism between *fin' amor* and Christianity.

In addition to this consideration of love, the insertion of an "other," like Sir Palamedes, who juxtaposes Christian vs. non-Christian ideas to elucidate what it means to be a good person, or Christian, in the midst of an ideological melee, furthers the formation of French identity. Part of how these ideas were contended with appears not just in the literary versions of the Tristan story, but also its related images found in France. For instance, a fine rendering of the story as a mural exists there.

This mural is the focal point of Amanda Luyster's chapter in the book *Visuality and Materiality in the Story of Tristan and Isolde*, a text devoted to the examination of medieval Tristan images and their significance. In Luyster's study, "Time, Space, and Mind: Tristan in Three Dimensions in Fourteenth-Century France," she analyzes a series of Tristan murals painted on multiple walls at a French château. "The murals at Saint-Floret provide the most extensive depiction of romance in surviving medieval French wall painting. Life-size images of jousts and lovers' meetings cover the walls of the château's large hall, depicting the romance of Tristan and Yseut as retold in the *Meliadus* of Rusticien de Pise (written ca. 1271)" (Luyster 150). This text is "a compilation containing episodes form the French prose *Tristan* and the prose *Palamedes* as well as

other accounts" (Luyster 150-151). Luyster comments that "These images are also accompanied by substantial extracts of painted text, which is rare in secular imagery" (Luyster 150). Amanda Luyster examines the "visual rhetoric of the cycle, first articulating its unique spatial narrative and then identifying the narrative traditions to which its structure relates" (150).

The cycle contains one visual representation of the Tristan story that, interestingly, is not found in the *Meliadus*, but does appear in the prose *Tristan*. It is "a representation of the orchard scene or the tryst under the tree," which she cites as "the most frequently represented image of Tristan and Yseut, partly because is manages to suggest the complicated triangular relationship between the lovers and the cuckolded husband. The scene depicts an assignation in the orchard between Tristan and Yseut, who, alerted to Mark's presence (hidden in the tree above) when they catch sight of his head reflected in a pool of water, conduct a conversation intended to suggest their innocence" (Luyster 154). Luyster notes that the text accompanying the images help "to articulate the cycle's presentation of time and space" (156). She cites Herbert Kessler, who asserts that "accompanying texts anchored pictures, verified and explained them; while pictures served words in much the same fashion, validating them through the special authority attached to sight, and revealing their significance," summing up that "texts help to define and explain pictures, while pictures validate texts and make them comprehensible (imaginable)" (qtd. in Luyster 156). "The relation is not one-to-one, whereby the text and image move in lockstep, but the mismatch generates a creative dissonance, a generative difference. Text and image rub against each other, they open up spaces between, and another dimension is born" (Luyster 156).

The designer's choices are particularly noteworthy. For instance, he represents the tryst under the tree, although not in the *Meliadus*. It was likely a well-known episode, but quite importantly, it illustrates the expression of false innocence between the lovers. The text accompanying this image: "This is why Sir Tristan of Lionois departed from the realm of Cornwall and came to the realm of Logres, because King Mark…" (Luyster 163) draws viewers' attention to the fact that because this incident occurred, although the lovers were able to appear innocent, it forced Tristan to relocate. This representation calls into question the public's morals and values because it is made clear that there were significant consequences for Tristan and Isuet's deceitful actions.

Michael Curschmann further interrogates this image in his "From Myth to Emblem to Panorama," asserting that "with its dramatic physical triangulation in a clearly defined space, [it] almost cries out for a picture. And as it happened, there existed in religious art a prominent iconographic formula that could easily be adapted for this new secular use: the Fall of Adam and Eve with the serpent in the tree between them" (111). This parallel allows the scene to be read with significantly greater weight, yet as Curschmann mentions, "the generic relationship to the Fall of Man iconography [also] added a measure of titillating ambiguity to the whole scene" (116), making the designer's choice to include representation of this episode at the chateau more understandable. Curschmann highlights that "the result of this crossover from religious to secular iconography is an image of quite remarkable power and a perfect example of the independence gained ultimately by such pictorial encapsulation of literary themes. It focuses meaning derived from a large literary context and transports and maintains this message even after its initial textual base has largely fallen away" (111-113). By being

visually recorded, the Tristan story reached a wider audience. More, the permanence of what was depicted to represent episodes in the story exposes a great deal about how the events of the story were perceived by the audience, as well as what the public's estimation was of the characters. The pictorial summary of the literature froze a portion of the public's attitudes about these elements into enduring images, and are telling because only so much could be shown.

A depiction that makes an overt estimation of Palamedes at the château is one where the designer chooses to show "Tristan sleeping and Palamedes remaining wakeful," instead of "Tristan falling asleep on his shield, Palamedes arriving, Palamedes lying down but unable to sleep, lamenting" (Luyster 160). This rhetorical choice hides the lamentation and emotional weakness of Palamedes from the viewers. In yet another redaction, the text asserts: "This is how Sir Palamedes delivered Sir Tristan of Lionois, whom a vavasour held as prisoner and wished to have his head cut off, because he had slain his sone in the Perilous Forest, who was one of twenty-six knights of Morgain la Fey; and because of this Sir Tristan made peace with Sir Palamedes; yet he was his greatest mortal enemy in the world" (Luyster 163). From this information, the artist chooses only to depict "Palamedes rescuing Tristan from a party of mounted knights" (Luyster 163), placing the focus of the episode on the valor and goodness of Palamedes, even if there was a great deal more that the artist could have turned his lens to. In a similar choice to depict Palamedes in a positive light, "later [the two knights] are shown together in the mounted battle against Galahad" (Luyster 163).

It is provocative that the designer of this cycle chose to show the negative consequences of Iseult and Tristan's relationship, an example of the courtly love

tradition, and that he chose to focus on the goodness of Palamedes and his resulting fellowship with Tristan in the Arthurian battle against a common enemy. The images, as well as the textual versions of the Tristan tale in France, indicate a kind of respect for the East, provided that its ideas and representatives do not trespass against the Western ideology perpetuated by the church. Thus, these representations, as in the prose Tristan texts and its predecessors, use manifestations of the Orient, here the presence of Palamedes, to channel a unique morality and to question the values and identity of the French public in a fascinating way that only adds to the complexity inherent in the French manuscripts.

Of particular interest is Luyster's commentary that this type of detailed and sophisticated pictorial representation was typically reserved for the illustration of religious stories, not secular ones like the Tristan tale (168). Yet the fact that this story is represented in such a complex way for readers and viewers not only reiterates the popularity of this story, but the importance that it held for the French public at the time. Curschmann furthers this idea, stating that "in a real world where social and religious regulation of gender relationships left little room for what we have come to call romantic love, these pictures must have opened for their owners a window of imaginary opportunity – a vision of choice" (116). Curschmann's study is based on images of "Tristan and Iseult's secret tryst" (110-117) that are depicted on common and personal objects from the medieval period. These include the grip of a hair-parter, a comb, an ivory mirror case, and an ivory casket. His inquiry into the Tristan and Iseult imagery on these objects illuminates the value and importance of this story to its original audience. These objects appear to hold for their owners a "meaning, a signification…already built,

and could very well be self-sufficient…the meaning is *already* complete, it postulates a kind of knowledge, a past, a memory, a comparative order of facts, ideas, decisions" (Barthes 117). Thus, these myth-perpetuating objects evidenced a manifested choice of belief, about life, love, God, or otherwise. Further, the "vision of choice" of which Curschmann speaks certainly pertains to the actual story and its texts as much as to the objects that derived from them.

The tale of Tristan and Isolde was perpetuated in numerous forms in France of the Middle Ages: it was performed orally; written down by Béroul and Thomas of Britain, as well as in the prose *Tristan*; and it was recorded pictorially in murals and on common, everyday objects. All of these attest to the widespread popularity of the tale, and for each reincarnation of it, textual or otherwise, it is clear that the story was reflecting upon the French society and its cultural values about love and religion at the time, while also serving to perpetuate and even question those ideologies. The Béroul text shows a mere fascination with the English material that it was drawn from, whereas the Thomas text shows a more streamlined collection of the episodes, and the Prose *Tristan* fully calls into question *fin' amor* versus Christianity, excusing the lovers in this case on account of a magic love philter.

Markale believes that "On first analysis, the issue raised in the story of Tristan and Iseult does not concern *fin' amor*" (137). Rather, it is more concerned with "an immense and fatal love, the result of magical causes, which is entirely irrational" (137). This view of the story is developed more in the later French versions, which may have made it easier for audiences to see as a fantasy, thereby permitting them to step away from immediate judgment of the lovers within their more stringent, current social mores.

For instance, The *Tristan en Prose*, which relied upon these two texts, and possibly other circulating versions, is a brilliant commentary on how the French can reconcile the un-Christian, wanton love affair of Tristan and Iseut by blaming the matter on the accidental drinking of the love potion. In this way, the problematic lovers can be elevated to monumental, idealized status without seeming blasphemous. Moreover, while the Tristan story speaks of a love that is "exalting and difficult, loudly affirming the rights of a passion that is refined through trial, supported by a carnal desire that is never denied" (Markale 137), as Markale rightly notes, it is a love that is "perhaps never fully satisfied" (137).

It is perhaps for this very reason that commoners and the elite alike were able to muse upon the plight of the lovers, subconsciously hoping for a love as strong and true, albeit debilitating, as Tristan and Ysolt's was: it was a fantasy, and they knew that an actualized version would be absurdly painful. Thus, Tristan and Iseut could become those idealized, fantastic lovers that inspired public imagination and held its fascination, particularly because their sinful actions were already excused by the magic love potion. This might explain the rich iconographic tradition that the story enjoyed in the chateau in France, as well as on those everyday items studied by Michael Curschmann. Even more, this situation evidences Barthes's belief that "However paradoxical it may seem, *myth hides nothing*: its function is to distort, not to make disappear" (121). This is precisely what each French redactors of the Tristan tale did: depict and distort the story from its Celtic sources while hiding nothing of its problematic nature, allowing the authors to reflect upon, and even facilitate, the ideological contemplation occurring in France on account of new ideas from the East, namely, *fin' amor*.

CHAPTER III: UNCANNY VISIONS OF THE EAST IN MALORY'S "BOOK OF SIR TRISTRAM"

Just as we define ourselves by what we are not, Western Europe's cultural identity was developed partly by its opposite, the East, however indeterminate that term may be. Texts and ideas of the East likely entered the consciousness of distant England from medieval Spain, whether from traveling philosophers, the crusades, pilgrimages, or visiting troubadours. These interactions created a discourse in medieval Western Europe about the Eastern "other" that is not unlike the one Said identifies during the later era of European colonization. This discourse not only informed the public at large, but also the literature of the time, which both reflected and perpetuated it. The effects of this cultural exchange are visible in Geoffrey Chaucer's incorporation of the frame-story technique in *The Canterbury Tales* and in the wealth of troubadour verses centered around tenets of *fin' amor*. Both motifs, as argued by Alice Lasater, can be traced back to the Arabian influence of medieval Iberia. While many of the tales of Tristan from France focus on reconciling the adulterous relationship between the lovers with Christian doctrine, the English version by Sir Thomas Malory maintains a different focus. Critics like Maureen Fries demonstrate that Malory minimizes the theme of love in his work. Instead, he focuses on fellowship and on what behaviors are both Christian and knightly. For this reason, there is less attention paid to Isode and much more paid to Sir Palomydes. Perhaps while imprisoned amidst British civil war, Malory sought to rally his public to a renewed national identity that embraced unity, fellowship, and the tenets of Christian

knighthood established by King Arthur. Whether that was Malory's aim or not is impossible to say; nevertheless, Malory's depictions of Sir Palomydes and of the *fin' amor* tradition are both means to that end.

Malory's resurrection of Arthurian matter and its likely nationalistic purpose is not unlike the actions performed by Geoffrey of Monmouth hundreds of years prior. A Welsh cleric, Geoffrey completed his *History of the Kings of Britain*. "In 1136, seventy years after the Norman Conquest of England," as "the arrival of the new Norman overlords spurred the frantic writing of history as the Church scrambled to reorient itself to this new political reality" (Brynjulfson). Clearly it wasn't just the church that was trying to re-orient itself, as the French presence took over British society. In a time of falling morale under the subjugation of Norman rule, Geoffrey decided to breathe new life into the legend of King Arthur. Geoffrey of Monmouth is well known today as a "bold and unrepentant revisionist" (Brynjulfson), but his history sets forth "that in spite of the many times that Britain had been conquered, her dignified culture had survived with respectable continuity" (Brynjulfson). History plays out yet again in the fifteenth century when, after fighting for nearly a century with France, and also with itself, England's writers resurrect the Arthurian legend to unify the nation and to instill in it the morals and values of that once idyllic court. Among others, Sir Thomas Malory "expanded the Arthurian story and infused it with [his] own cultural values" (Brynjulfson). To further galvanize the British identity, Malory juxtaposes some of Arthur's greatest knights with their antithesis: Sir Palomydes, the Saracen, a very *Orientalist* flourish.

Said argues "that Orientalism derives from a particular closeness experienced between Britain and France and the Orient" (4), and contact with Spain and France clearly fostered a development of Orientalist discourse that spread into medieval England. This discourse is defined as: "not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been …Continued investment [in] a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness…the statements [proliferate] out from Orientalism into the general culture" (Said 6). This discourse also informed the literature circulating within that culture. Both reflected and perpetuated these ideas, and often the enigmatic construct of the East courted British writers to employ elements of its mystery in their works for rhetorical purposes. Malory and his contemporaries are implicated in this tradition, as visible in Richard Holland's Scottish poem, *The Buke of the Howlat*, studied by Iain Macleod Higgins, and particularly in Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*.

Higgins's study on *The Buke of the Howlat* and another later poem reveal how Scottish poets constructed the East to convey a politically charged "cultural self-definition" (200), or identity. Higgins's work illuminates the Scottish works as evidence that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 2), and notes that "both Scottish works draw on Eastern imagery to reinforce their nationalist goals" (Higgins 202). Of particular value is Higgins's observation, that "both poets [he studies] stigmatize difference, and in…both works…the East as such is not the author's concern; rather, the Eastern shades serve as vehicles carrying the visceral emotional

associations and ideological claims at stake" (201). That Higgins sees these poets using views of the East to channel nationalist constructs of identity is not unlike Said's assertion that "the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (1-2). He argues that even more, "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said 3). This evidences not only Said's idea that "Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient," but also how the Orientalist other bears resemblance to Freud's *Uncanny*.

Written in the midst of British conflict with itself and with France, Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* seeks to achieve the same nationalistic goals as both Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* and the poems in Higgins's study. As in the former text, Malory resurrects the legendary King Arthur, and as in the latter, he incorporates *Orientalist* "shades" that further his socio-political agenda, associating Malory with the Orientalist tradition. Said points out that: "Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-á-vis the Orient; translated into his text… [including]…the…structure he builds, the…images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text – all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally representing it (20). Though referring to texts of Franco-British colonization, Said's statement nonetheless implicates Malory in his composition of *Le Morte D'Arthur*.

In the "Book of Sir Tristram," the Saracen knight, Sir Palomydes , functions as a vehicle for the author to accomplish the same task as Higgins's poets: to create a text that brands the identity of his audience with valor, honor, and virtue. In this case, that means

British knights and commoners entangled in the War of the Roses, just after experiencing the bulk of The Hundred Years War with France. In their *Life in Medieval Times*, Frances and Joseph Gies suggest a decline of both soldiers and castle building for economic reasons during the War of the Roses (111-112), both of which signaled significant change in the medieval lifestyle. The civil conflict between the Yorkists and the Lancastrians saw a tremendously negative impact on the already burdened peasants as well. Even more, "The Black Death," sweeping through England in the summer of 1349 via the rats that infested houses, barns, and sheds, left so many holdings vacant that it was impossible to collect rents or enforce services" (Gies and Gies 221). There was also a "shift from crop farming toward sheep grazing…and a growth in the proportion of peasant cultivation as opposed to demesne cultivation" (Gies and Gies 221). This all added up to more work for the few, malnourished, and sickly, a condition only exacerbated by the addition of "heavy taxation to peasant burdens" (Gies and Gies 222) during The Hundred Years War. Evidence for this shows during Henry III's reign, where "the lay subsidy was collected only five times. In those of Edward I…and Edward II…the royal tax collectors appeared in the villages a total of sixteen times" (Gies and Gies 222). This outrageous amount of taxation escalated to twenty-four collection periods while Edward III was on the throne, and culminated in "the Peasant Rebellion of 1381" after the levying of two poll taxes and continued conscription (Gies and Gies 223).

Although these events pre-date Sir Thomas Malory, they created a sentiment illustrated by "Kentish priest John Ball, [who] preached that 'things cannot go right in England…until goods are held in common and there are no more villeins and gentlefolk, but we are all one and the same'" (Gies and Gies 223). This ideology continued into

Malory's time. What better way to illustrate unification and respect of individuals regardless of their monetary value than the egalitarian Knights of the Round Table. Although not exactly equals, as they sat together with the king, the knights proved their worth not by the lands or riches they held, but by their adherence to Christian values and the chivalric code. In Malory's time, conceptions of Christian values had been corrupted, as brilliantly treated in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, yet the codes of chivalry challenged all those who would manipulate the taxation system and use their wily positioning to further their own well-being.

As for Malory, he is a somewhat legendary knight himself. Gweneth Whitteridge asserts "Only three facts are known for certain about the author of the *Morte D'Arthur*: his name was Thomas Malory; he was a knight; he finished the 'noble histories of King Arthur and his knights' sometime between 4 March 1469 and 3 March 1470 and at that time he was in prison" (257). Whitteridge goes on to conclude that although several Malories existed during this period, the author of *Le Morte D'Arthur* is none other than Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell, not of Fenny Newbold, who is attributed such crimes as rape. It may seem ironic that even the tamer of these figures is the one who resurrects the legend of King Arthur while in prison, as malefactors to such a degree are regarded as just that: repugnant evil doers who are to be shunned and ignored. But "in 1451, Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell was a man of more than fifty. In 1414 he had served as a squire in the retinue of Richard Beau-champ, earl of Warwick, when he was governor of Calais" (Whitteridge 251). This shows the author to be an honorable man of duty, in addition to having contact with France. P.J.C. Field highlights how Malory's "knighthood also suggests political ambition" (84). Indeed, "in early 1445

Malory was elected an M.P. for Warwickshire" (88). Later, "during the 1460's, the previously Yorkist Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel had become…a supporter of the…house of Lancaster" (Field 137); although it is unlikely that "he did so by following the Earl of Warwick" (137). In studying the pardons during this period, Whitteridge deduces that "What seems to follow by implication from the Pardon Rolls is that at some time during this period, 1466 to 1468, Malory had been involved in Lancastrian intrigues to restore Henry VI. That he was captured and imprisoned in London, probably in the Tower together with many other Lancastrian adherents is also likely" (263). She also asserts that because Malory does not appear on the "model pardon which was drawn up on 25 November 1471…after the battle of Barnet and the return of Edward IV to the throne," he was probably dead, as "No pardon had been issued to Thomas Malary, kt. According to the evidence of the jurors at the Inquisition post mortem into his lands…Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell died on 12 March 1471" (Whitteridge 263).

Building on the established identity of Sir Thomas Malory, Roberta Davidson examines Malory's imprisonment to identify its effects on his composition. She argues that "Due to his incarceration, Malory was forced to solve the problem of proving knightly identity when the knight is unable to express that identity physically. He redefines the nature of knightly action as internal prowess" (54). This estimation of Malory's beliefs would align with the struggles that Malory may have contended with to maintain his knighthood. Field draws attention to the fact that during the meeting of Parliament beginning in February of 1445, the body "enacted that no man should be a knight of the shire unless he was 'a notable knight'…or at least a gentleman of it who was 'able to be a knight'" (89). Much of this was dependent upon the amount of funds a

man had, and Fields suggests that Malory was certainly not a wealthy knight. As such, it would make sense that if Malory's knighthood were in jeopardy, then he would champion a belief whereby the true sense of knighthood came from within.

To this end, Davidson notes throughout her piece that Malory seems to champion the ideological fight for good over an external expression of it in battle. She attributes this to his state of imprisonment. She claims that:

> Malory incorporates the idea of a world divided between sometimes-hostile extremes, but redefines the division as between externally and internally experienced realities. This opens up the possibility that defeat in the external realm can be counterbalanced by an internal victory, and that an external world of arbitrariness, injustice, and instability can itself be overcome by the perfect consistency, stability, and loyalty of an individual to the truth of which he is ultimately the embodiment. (61)

This is an important commentary on the message of Malory's text, and it is intriguing that while many scholars skip over the "Book of Sir Tristram," its Sir Palomydes, like Malory himself, wages an ideological war within that seeks to define what it means to be a good knight. In Palomydes's case, he struggles against the imprisonment of his inherent "Saracen-ness," his position as ultimate "other." In Malory's case, he is literally imprisoned by the values of his opposition, which he must nobly struggle against. Davidson claims that "Incarceration forced Malory to reconsider the nature of knightly identity. By redefining prowess as an aspect of self, superseding even the knight's physical actions, Malory inadvertently opened up the possibility for his readers that anyone can feel like a knight" (62).

Malory's social positioning outside of his incarceration and the effects it may have had on the politicization of his text is further illuminated by Raluca Radulescu. Like Davidson, Radulescu illustrates how Malory redefined the ideal of knightliness in *Le Morte D'Arthur*. Her article, "Malory and Fifteenth-Century Political Ideas," also sets forth ideals characteristic of a good king. Both of these ideas would have resonated with the people of war-torn England. Radulescu asserts that "The rhetoric surrounding kingship in the *Morte Darthur* reflects, then, not just the influence of Malory's immediate literary sources for the Arthurian epic, but also the rhetoric of kingship and governance found in fifteenth-century chronicles and political documents" (48). She comments that his "involvement in politics, and the possibility that he was one of the 'throng of minor gentry' mixing at the English court…would have made him aware of the political issues" (37) circulating there. As a result, she concludes that "Malory possibly used political ideas expressed in language similar to that found in contemporary political chronicles. He adapted French and English sources…to tell the whole story…of King Arthur's Round Table fellowship for an increasingly politically aware reading public" (38). Much of the message Malory projects, as seen in Radulescu's study, is an idealized depiction of King Arthur, which contrasted with the ruling situation of the time. Radulescu sees that in Malory's work, "the king is portrayed as the one who dispenses justice and solves problems which have troubled his people for a long time" (39). Also, Malory's idealized king rewards his "subjects for good service," and "In the *Morte Darthur* this remains a typical feature of the Arthurian court which is reenacted every time a knight of the Round Table performs great chivalrous deeds" (40).

While Radulescu concludes by considering whether Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* "primarily aims to contrast with, and comment on, a contemporary fifteenth-century English world of disharmony, or whether it is an attempt to revive and define a political ideal" (44), it accomplishes both ends, and both topics were very timely and important for Malory's audience. Radulescu's analysis that all knights of the Round Table in Malory's tale were "converted to the chivalric principles and Christian beliefs of King Arthur's fellowship" (44) despite their origins, helps propel the "nationalistic and imperialistic issues" in the text, although they "may appear, at first, to be superseded by the idea that the Round Table is the epitome of civilization, that its ideal and magical qualities simply compel harmony among different nations" (44). It is easy to take Malory's text at first glance as something of a fairy tale because of its treatment of the once and future king. However, closer examination shows intentional efforts on behalf of the author to minimize the magic of King Arthur's court and to instead emphasize those transcendental parts of it that could influence a country in turmoil: Christian values and unification against outside forces that threaten the good of the whole. Therefore, as Radulscur suggests, Malory's tale furthers the author's political agenda, albeit packaged in the shiny trappings of mythical legend.

After examining the incredibly difficult and tumultuous years that Malory's audience had lived through and were continuing to experience, it is clear why his rallying remembrance of King Arthur's court could be so moving. It articulates how even when stripped of all external abilities, one can have pride, honor and faith by exercising his mental and spiritual faculties within. These ideals and values, which can be implemented without external conflict, are seen all throughout *Le Morte D'Arthur*: chivalry, Christian

goodness, and the importance of fellowship. However, many scholars exclude the "Book of Sir Tristram" from their examinations of Malory's text. Nevertheless, this section includes some of the greatest examples of Malory's projected ideology, which would have comforted his beleaguered audience. Integral to this portion of the work are its Orientalist elements, the depictions of Sir Palomydes and of courtly love, as "Orientalism is – and does not simply represent – a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' [Western] world" (Said 12), in this case, the embattled world of Malory's England.

According to Iain Macleod Higgins, "Orientalist shades [or] (the poetic colorings that implicitly or explicitly set the text's concerns in relation to the East)" (211) are certainly manifested in Malory's Sir Palomydes . He is one of Malory's means of "containing the Orient," and his construction reveals how "At most, the 'real' Orient provoked a writer to his vision; it very rarely guided it" (Said 22). Although Malory avoids depicting Palomydes, and thereby the Orient, in overly exotic terms, in his own way, he does make its "colors, lights, and people visible through [his] images, rhythms, and motifs" (Said 22), as his Saracen embodies the passionate, misguided faultiness of all that is non-Christian to the medieval mind. Because of this, Palomydes must be seen as a representation of the Eastern other, not as a realistic figure guided by truth.

Within the text, Palomydes creates the need to reconcile the definitions of Saracen "other" and the ideal of the Arthurian knight, obfuscating and at the same time clarifying what it means to be a good knight, or a good Christian. Malory accomplishes this consideration through the conflicting portrayals that Palomydes presents the other characters. They are confronted by the fact that he is a "good knight," according to their

standards and evidenced by his deeds of arms. Yet, Malory creates him as separate from the majority and time and again owing to his inherently "other" characterization. For instance, in his introduction to Sir Dynadan, Palomydes sets forth that he is "brother unto sir Saphyre, the good knight…And we be Sarezyns borne" (Malory 367). This Saracen identity aligns Palomydes with the ultimate "other," one common at the time being a follower of Islam.

From the moment readers are introduced to Sir Palomydes, they may not encounter the color of his skin, as they do the black knight in Book II of Malory's work, but they are shown that he is quintessentially different from other knights. "And at that tyme sir Palomydes ˹the Sarasyn˺ drew unto La Beale Isode" (239). This statement is made prior to any other description of Palomydes, and it leads Malory's readers to interpret the character explicitly as a Saracen, which, in and of itself, is a slippery and loaded characterization. In the 2006 edition of *Arthuriana* devoted to the Saracens in Malory, Donald L. Hoffman notes that to medieval Western Europeans, "Whoever the 'Saracens' were, they were always someone else" (43), which alludes to the indeterminate nature of the term. He continues, illuminating how:

> Some medieval etymologists seeking…origins in the Bible, derive the word from Sarah, the wife of Abraham. While this…acknowledges the Koran's claim of Arab descent from Abraham, it inscribes in the noun itself Christian assumptions of Saracen perfidy, apparently identifying a false claim of legitimacy and a usurped primacy, since they are not descended from the legitimate wife, Sarah, but from the slave girl Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. (43)

Considering the implications of this etymology in light of its religious overtones and how those come to bear on the perception of the Eastern Other requires application of Freud's notion of the "uncanny." This idea relates to the medieval perception of the eastern Other, particularly to dwellers of the Biblical lands and the followers of Judaism and Islam. The whole notion of the "uncanny," seen through Hoffman's etymology, substantiates Said's claim about the Orient, that: "It is not merely *there*, just as the Occident itself is not just *there* either…men make their own history…" (5) in that both oppositional faiths built upon the divide between them, creating a rift out of the familiar. Freud asserts that "The uncanny element is actually nothing new or strange, but something that was long familiar to the psyche and was estranged from it only through being repressed" (148). This highlights the notion that despite developing along different family lines, the children of Abraham are forever tied by his blood, regardless of how much either group might wish to repress that truth. This knowledge lurks behind the veil of consciousness so that complete repression is never successful, allowing that which has been repressed to return, in turn, making what is Saracen, for the medieval mind, uncanny.

Freud continues to define the "uncanny" with close study of his native German equivalent: *unheimlich*. He notes that "Among the various shades of meaning…for… [it] there is one in which it merges with its formal antonym" (132). He claims this relationship is not "contradictory" (132) as "the one relating to what is familiar and comfortable" (132), *heimlich*, is also that which is so close and intimate that one might desire to keep it private and secret. It is here that the term merges with its antonym, *unheimlich*, which is "what is concealed and kept hidden" (132) according to Freud's

discussion. To medieval Christians, it is familiar and agreeable that all men are descendants of Abraham, yet the fact that the two lines are descended from different mothers, and one "shamefully" so, is that which is concealed. This suggests why Palomydes is simultaneously included and excluded from the fellowship of British knights, and his vow to convert to the Christian faith for love's sake contributes to how he is received.

In addition, a key part of what Freud sees as uncanny maintains that a living person of evil intentions exudes the feeling that their "intent to harm…[will be] realized with the help of special powers" (149). Even Said states that "where Islam was concerned, European fear, if not always respect, was in order" (59). The reason points almost directly to whatever it was Western Europeans thought the Moors or Saracens were: those whose presence foretold of harmful invasion, whose differing religion and technological fortitude could be read as the aiding "special powers" to which Freud refers. Palomydes exemplifies this, too, as he is strong, un-baptized, and because his lapses of "goodness" destabilize the trust and respect that Arthur's knights invest in him, making him a continual threat just because he is Saracen. This characterization further evidences the claim that "Orientalism depends…on…*positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand" (Said 7).

That "Palomydes…drew unto La Beale Isode" (Malory 239) in his initial introduction suggests that the knight hovered around the maiden, following and eying her desirously. This interpretation carries with it the connotation that Palomydes may harm her, although he is attracted to her. This recalls the discussion in *Orientalism* from

scholar Norman Daniel's text *Islam and the West*, where Said notes that "since Mohammed was viewed as the disseminator of a false Revelation, he became as well the epitome of lechery, debauchery, sodomy, and a whole battery of assorted treacheries, all of which derived 'logically' from his doctrinal impostures" (62). Malory seems to draw on these ideas to invite the distinct responses that Isode has to Palomydes . First, Isode charges Palomydes to convert to Christianity. Second, she asks Tristan to fight in the tournament in Ireland to prevent Palomydes from gaining worship. These actions lead readers to infer that Isode is not attracted to Palomydes because of his "otherness," especially his religious beliefs. This illustrates the validity of Said's passage from Daniel of Morley, even if the traveling scholar refers to a time before Malory's. Daniel asserts that it was "commonly believed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that Arabia was 'on the fringe of the Christian world, a natural asylum for heretical outlaws'" (qtd. in Said 63). This outlook might explain Isode's aversion to allowing a "Saracen" to gain attention and honor. Further, that ideology had likely not changed significantly by the time Malory began writing. Thus, Palomydes's characterization as Saracen denies him the acceptance and love he so desires because he is defined in antithetical terms to the identity that he wants to assume.

Donald Hoffman examines this characterization further, identifying that "Exactly who the Saracens were thought to have been differs widely;" though, "they are Syrians, inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, or Muslim inhabitants of ninth-century Sicily or twelfth-century Iberia. Whoever they are, they are quintessentially Other" (43). No matter how one looks at the term "Saracen," then, it is an incredibly loaded term, and arguably one that was born out of medieval, Orientalist discourse where the concept was

shaped in direct opposition to the identity of Western Europeans. Moreover, the term "Saracen" evidences Said's assertion that "The Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West" (Said 4). "Saracen" clearly follows the tradition of constructing an "other," and evidences the discourse that created the vocabulary perpetuating it. In Orientalist fashion, then, Malory chooses this slippery term to identify Sir Palomydes, forever distinguishing him as quintessentially "other" and at the same time perpetually subject to failure, as he can never transcend his origins, at least, not until he is baptized at the tale's end.

Despite his fateful characterization as Saracen, Palomides is an incredibly valuable character, and he is frequently called "the good knight." At times, he is the brave, strong, honorable man all strive to be, even if fear often underlies how he is perceived. "There cam sir Palomydes with a blacke shylde and he ovirthrew many knyghtes, that all people had mervayle; for he put to the warre [nine knights] all these the fyrste day strake down to the erthe. And then all maner of knyghtes were adrad of sir Palomydes, and many called hym the Knyght with the Blacke Shylde; so that [day] sir Palomydes had grete worship" (Malory 239).

However, Palomydes suffers bouts of treacherous, un-chivalric behavior, which he and others loathe and reprimand him for. Much of this behavior occurs during the tournament at Lonezep. On the first day, Palomydes is recognized for his prowess, as the sight of La Beale Isode inspires his efforts. However, he undermines his great deeds of arms by committing an act "ful unknyghtly" (Malory 451). In an effort to avoid combat with Launcelot, which would have tarnished Palomydes's percieved prowess, Palomydes

"rushed unto sir Launcelot and thought to have put him to shame, and wyth his swerde he smote of his horse nek that sir Launcelot rode uppon" (Malory 449) such that the great knight "felle to the erthe" (449). As a result, "there were many knyghtes wrothe wyth sir Palomydes bycause he had done that dede" (449), and they commented that "hyt was unknyghtly done" (Malory 449). Even Palomydes expresses remorse for his actions, admitting that he "ded full uncurteysly unto sir Launcelot, and ful unknyghtly" (451).

Despite his regret for acting in an un-knightly fashion, Palomydes is guilty of bad behavior again the next day. While accompanying La Beale Isode, Palomydes and sir Gareth are approached by two unknown knights. One is King Arthur, seeking to witness the beauty of La Beale Isode. When Arthur refuses to withdraw from Isode at Palomydes's request, and instead continues to look upon her, "Than was sir Palomydes wrothe, and therewith he toke a speare and cam hurtelynge upon kynge Arthure and smote hym downe with a speare, a grete falle" (Malory 452). At the end of the episode, Tristram has arrived, and, learning the details of the situation, chastises Palomydes for his actions: "So God me help'…'ye ded nat worshipfully whan ye smote downe that knight so suddeynly as ye ded. And wyte you well ye ded yourself grete shame, for the knyghts came hyddir of there jantylnes to se a fayre lady, and that ys every good knyghtes parte to beholde a fayre lady, and ye had nat ado to play suche maystryes for my lady" (Malory 453). Palomydes's treachery only increases with the continuation of the tournament at Lonezep.

Jealous that Tristram has gained all the more worship than he on the second day, Palomydes "thought to shame hym" (Malory 456), even if the two were part of the same party and lodged in the same pavilions. Palomydes disguises himself in another knight's

armor and does battle with the unsuspecting Tristram, who is also disguised. At the end of a tiring battle, their identities are revealed. Tristram exclaims to Palomydes, "Ye have be named wronge! For ye have ben called ever a jantyll knight, and as this day ye have shewed me grete unjantylnes, for ye had allmoste brought me to my dethe" (459). Palomydes skirts the charge and feigns to have known that it was Tristram that he fought against. Later at table that night, Isode reveals Palomydes's treachery to Tristram asserting to the latter that she "sawe thys day how ye were betrayed and nyghe brought unto youre dethe" (461) as "wylfully sir Palomydes ded batalyle wyth you" (460). To this accusation, Palomydes lies, saying that "I knew nat my lorde sir Trystram" (461). The dramatic irony is that, like Isode, the audience knows of Palomydes lies and betrayal. Even more they know that the love for Isode is what dictates Palomydes's actions. It is for her that "sir Palomydes gad grete envy hartely," towards Tristram, despite the kindness Tristram showed his unknown rival. It is for his love of Isode that on the third day of the tournament at Lonezep, Palomydes chooses not to fight with Tristram and his fellows. Launcelot deems the actions as "'the prevy envy of sir Palomydes," (463), and later, Tristram agrees that Palomydes choice is "for the envy of me'" (Malory 464). At the close of the tournament, knights report to Queen Gwenyvir that "sir Palomydes ded passingly well and myghtyly, but he turned ayenste the party that he cam in wythall, and that caused hym to loose a grete parte of his worship, for hit semed that sir Palomydes ys passynge envious" (466) of Tristram's prowess, and of Tristram's relationship with Isode. Here, the final judgement of his peers suggests that Palomydes's treacherous actions outweigh his good and knightly deeds of arms.

Clearly, then, Palomydes acts in dishonorable, unknightly ways at the tournament at Lonezep. His actions arise from jealousy, frustration, and even desire. Having these emotions and lacking the ability to cope with them in positive ways might have been attributed by Malory's audience to Palomydes's inherent characterization as Saracen. This "Oriental" depiction carries with it all the negative connotations of "those others" for Malory's audience. For them, Palomydes's envy of Tristram and desire for Isode may have recalled what they understood as the "revolting sensuality" of Mohammed, who, as noted by Said in Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*, "is located in the eighth of the ninth circles of Hell" (69, 68). This suggests a commentary on the inherently negative qualities of one who, to Malory's audience, is Saracen.

Further, the Lonezep episode expresses "the strength of the West and the Orient's weakness—as seen by the West" (45). The Western strength is evidenced by Tristram's winning of the most worship on the second day and his sharing of it with Launcelot on the third. More, Tristram, the Western knight, is cunning, seen through his battle disguises. Nevertheless, he treats his enemy graciously and courteously, and when all is said and done, he enjoys the comforting joys of Isode's favor. As for Palomydes, he wins worship, but is then put out of favor. His disguises in battle lead not to honor, but to dejection. Most importantly, he consistently fails to win the approval and affection of Isode. For this reason, Palomydes is repeatedly described in piteous terms: "he never had reste in his bed, but wayled and wepte oyte of measure" (Malory 462). Later, "sir Palomydes wnte hys way waylynge …And there he put his horse from hym and ded of his amoure and wayled and wepte lyke as he had bene a wood man" (Malory 464). Even after he is taken into the company of two other knights, "ever he made the grettyst dole

that ony man cowed thynke" (465). The contrast between Tristram and Palomydes is striking, and it certainly expresses the hegemony that privileges the West over the East that Said describes. More, Malory's tournament at Lonezep invites his readers to reflect on Palomydes and to reconsider how his *unheimlich* actions may actually seem *heimlich*, as he is, after all, not so different from Tristram, or from any other love-sick individual. To avoid identifying with the Saracen, then, the audience must deplore his behavior, thereby allowing Malory to project the honorable values of Arthur's court to his audience.

But despite his varying behavior, Palomydes is central to the creation of a virtuous identity. In one episode, Malory explains that in encountering a lady crying beside a dead knight, her lord (Malory 345), "for pité [Palomydes]…promised [the damesell] to be her waraunte and to helpe to entyre hir lorde" (346). This exemplifies Palomydes's goodness and his adherence to the chivalric ideal of aiding those in need. Palomydes also speaks against the wickedness of Arthur's evil sister, saying to Dynadan that it is "shamefull" of her "to make suche warre upon her owne lorde that is called the floure of chivalry that is Crystyn other hethyn" (Malory 367). Another exemplification of Palomydes's goodness is the keeping of his word in "The Red City." After hearing "aboute hym muche wepyng and grete dole" (Malory 432), Palomydes learns that a virtuous lord was slain, and he charged one of Arthur's knights in a letter written with his last breaths to avenge him. Palomydes shares that "hit grevyth myne harte for to hyre you tell this dolefull tale" (Malory 434) and accepts the mission, though a dangerous one. Near the peak of peril, Palomydes tells his adversary that "whan the lettir was takyn oute of the dede knyghtes honed, at that tyme by lyklyhode there was no knight promised to

avenge his death, and so I shall, other ellys I am shamed" (Malory 435). Here, Palomydes is courageous and dedicated, maintaining his word in true chivalric fashion. His invocation of shame reiterates that if Palomydes did not follow the code dutifully, he would be nothing more than an ignominious Saracen, charged with embodying all the negative connotations of the term that Malory's public could have assigned him.

Through many of Palomides's actions, Malory constructs him as a "good knight" and Palomydes helps project the theme "of knightly valor and of gentility" (Hanks 19), as he possesses "all the qualifications of the ideal knight" (Hoffman 56). He is directly called "the good knight" (Malory 255) and "the noble knight" (285), but Palomydes is also constructed as a foil to Sir Tristram, the accepted lover of the beautiful Isode and the near equal of Sir Launcelot. Thomas D. Hanks Jr. argues that Tristram is developed as Malory's embodiment of the gentle knight (17). This contradicts Hoffman's position that Palomydes, as "the alien Other[,] becomes the most accurate reflection of the Western medieval chivalric ideal" (54), even if "he finds himself relentlessly outmaneuvered by those who were born to play the game" (56). That both knights are seen as ideal creates a useful complication.

Though Tristram and Palomydes are similar in some respects, there is one key attribute that separates them: their belief. Despite being an adulterer, Tristram holds tightly to the Christian faith, as evidenced by his prayers and thanks to God. Palomydes is un-christened. Although the two knights love the same woman and are nearly equal in knightly prowess, Palomydes is always second-best. Isode rejects his affection, and he is either bested by Tristram, or he simply loses public esteem on account of his passionate and envious actions, deemed un-knightly. The similarities between the two knights and

the many episodes they occupy together draws attention to them. What is repeatedly most evident is that Tristram supersedes Palomydes in knightly positioning. The contrast between the two is evident in Palomydes's failings and Tristam's successes, the former's dishonor and the latter's esteem, as well as in the motives behind both knights' actions. This construction allows Palomydes to be read as a foil for Tristram. That the audience can see the makings of an ideal knight in Palomydes, but for his dishonorable actions, attributable to his un-Christian background, is what best illustrates Malory's intended effect. His juxtaposition of Palomydes alongside Tristram allows Malory to establish his ideal of a gentle, chivalric knight. This knight does not act out of fits of passion or self-pity; he does not desert his fellows to gain honor for himself, and he does not seek to deceive maliciously. Rather, the ideal knight is a Christian who employs reason and principles from the Code of Chivalry to temper and guide his actions.

Kevin T. Grimm notes in "The Love and Envy of Sir Palomides" that in an exchange with Tristram where his identity is unknown, Palomydes is asked "what he would do if Tristram were present" (69). To this he responds: "I wolde fyght with hym…and ease my harte uppon hym. And yet, to say the sothe, sir Tristramys the jantyllyste knyght in thys worlde lyvynge" (Grimm 69). This shows the conflict in Palomydes's heart, as on one hand, he loves and respects Tristram, yet on the other, he is his "mortall enemy."

The conflict with Tristram is borne out of the fact that Palomydes loves Isode "passyngly welle" (Malory 239) and "profirde hir many gyfftys," at which "sir Tramtryste had grete despite at sir Palomydes, for La Beale Isode tolde Tramtryste that Palomydes was in wyll to be crystynde for hir sake. Thus was the[r] grete envy betwixt

Tramtryste and sir Palomydes" (Malory 239). Despite his affections, Palomydes facilitates the growth of Tristram and Isode's romantic relationship. He is "simultaneously irrelevant and essential" (Hoffman 49), and Hoffman emphasizes that "The earliest episodes of Tristram's encounters with Isode…would be impossible without Palom[y]des" (49). It is because of Palomydes that Isode begs Tristram to fight in the tournament in Ireland, saying, "For well I wote that sir Palomydes woll be there and to do what he may. And therefore, sir Tramtryste, I pray you for to be there, for ellys sir Palomydes ys lyke to wynne the degré" (Malory 239). It is as if Isode, being a Christian, does not want the Saracen to win more honor than a Christian knight, suggesting that she finds him unworthy because of his origins and beliefs. Tristram accepts her request, and at the tournament "Palomydes aspyed hym, and therewith he feautred hys spere unto sir Trystramys and he agayne unto hym, and there sir Trystrams smote downe sir Palomydes unto the erthe" (Malory 240). Upon hearing this news, that "the kynght with the blacke shylde hath a falle" (240), "La Beale Isode was passing gladde" (240). It is this same performance that piques Isode's interest in sir Tristram and leads her to fall further in love with him.

The two knights vie for Isode's love throughout the work, particularly at the beginning, yet, "the outcome is never in doubt and the Saracen's failure is inevitable" (Hoffman 49). Palomydes himself echoes this when bested by Tristram after the Castle of Maidens. Forcing him to yield, Tristram charges Palomydes to "forsake … La Beale Isode" and that "this twelve-monthe and a day" Palomydes "bere none armys nother none harneys of were" (Malory 241). Tristram strips Palomydes of his right to love and his right to action, at which Palomydes cries: "Alas…for ever I am shamed!" (Malory 241).

Yet he shows he is a man of honor nonetheless in that "sir Palomydes kut of his harneyse and threw them awey" (241). His subjugation to Tristram evidences the claim that "the Oriental is…depraved, (fallen)" (Said 41), while "the European is rational, virtuous, [and] mature" (41). Although other knights are defeated in tournaments and in encounters with other knights on their travels, for none of the others does Malory emphasize their defeat with such detail and such frequency as he does Palomydes. This may only be a distinction between primary and secondary characters in the story; however, even after removing that consideration, Palomydes is still the most pitied of the knights elaborated in the text.

Maureen Fries aptly notes the actions later taken, again by the Christian Isode, to reject the Saracen Palomydes in her article, "The Impotent Potion: On the Minimization of the Love Theme in the 'Tristan en Prose' and Malory's 'Morte Darthur." In one episode, Isode escapes from the possession of Palomydes after he returns Brangwayn to court and asks to take the queen instead. At this point, Isode finds sanctuary in a castle, when "at a window La Beale Isode saw sir Palomydes, than she made the yatys to be shutte strongley" (Malory 265). Awaiting her descent, he "put his horse to pasture and sette hymselff downe at the gate, lyke a man that was oute of his wytt that recked nat of hymselff" (265). This episode not only depicts Isode's contempt and aversion to Palomydes , but it also illustrates, again, shortcomings of a Saracen.

Firstly, Palomydes's possession of Isode came through treacherous means; he is not forthright about what he desires in return for Brangwayn's return. Secondly, the episode shows Palomydes's impotence to keep, and even to regain, what he holds most dear. The episode depicts Palomydes as sitting on the ground and out of his wits,

indicating his humble stature and evidencing Said's assertion that "the Oriental is …childlike" (Said 41), not "rational…mature" (41). At the of the episode as well, Palomydes is relegated to a position beneath the ideal, Christian knight, as Tristram, coming to Isode's rescue, defeats Palomydes in battle yet again. Palomydes is even further humbled by Isode's command to "take thy way…unto the courte of kynge Arthure, and there recommaunde me unto queen Gwenyvere and tell her that I sende her worde that there be within this londe but four lovers, and that is sir Launcelot and dame Gwenyver, and sir Trystrames and queen Isode" (Malory 267). Here, Isode not only sends Palomydes away, she also emphasizes that he is not her lover, Tristam is. Thus, the events of this particular episode alone contribute a negative aspect to Palomydes's characterization. However, these events also illustrate what a humble and well-serving knight Palomydes is. As both characteristics are positive, Christian attributes, the reader is left to evaluate what it means to be a good knight, or a Christian, and more, if one could be a good person if they were one and not the other. Moreover, because these events offset Palomydes against Sir Tristram, the whole depiction serves to clarify Malory's definition of chivalric knighthood.

A later episode echoes the shame of sir Palomydes and sets forth the tremendous emotional upheaval he suffers. Following his performance at the Castle of Maidens, Palomydes was struck down again by sir Tristram, after which "he was nyghe-honde araged oute of hys wytte for despite of sir Trystram, and so he folowed hym" (Malory 329). At one point, Palomydes crosses a river where "he shulde have bene drowned" and "whan he cam to the londe he toke of hys harnys and sate romynge and crying as a man oute of hys mynde" (Malory 329). A damsel sees him in this state of dismay, and she

describes him as "the woodiest knight by adventure that ever she mette withal" (Malory 330). This passage illustrates the passionate rage that Palomydes embraces out of jealousy and hatred, both directed towards sir Tristram, and both emotions seen as "non-Christian," since neither is espoused by the church. Especially, though, Palomydes's description by the observing damsel paints him in negative terms, as a crazed lunatic, which only exacerbates his inherent "otherness."

This episode at the riverbank recalls the madness of both Tristram and Launcelot, and while neither is a Saracen other, both are guilty of adultery through *fin' amor*, a tradition that Malory's text does not necessarily condone. In Tristram's case, he retreats to the woods after discovering a letter from Isode to his brother-in-law Kayhydyns, which suggests her love for the latter. "Trystramys endured there an half-yere naked, and wolde never com in towne" (Malory 305). He had fallen into the "felyshyppe of herdemen and shyperdis, and…whan he ded ony shrewde dede they wolde beate hym with roddis. And so they clypped hym with sherys and made hym lyke a foole" (305). All of this hardship was endured for the love of Isode. Similarly, Launcelot is tricked into sleeping with dame Elayne, and when he is discovered by none other than Gwenyver, who sends him away, he not only "felle downe to the floure in a sowne" (487), but "lepte oute at a bay-wyndow into a gardyne, and there wyth thornys he was all tocracced of his visage and hys body, and so he ranne furth he knew nat whotherm and was a wylde [wood] as ever was man. And so he ran two yere, and never had grace to know hym" (487). Malory describes how Launcelot "suffird and endured many ahrpe showre, that ever ran wylde wood frome place to place, and lyved by fruyte and…dranke water two yere" (495). So, while not Saracens, both Tristram and Launcelot experience the singularity and isolation that

Palomydes is given to feel throughout much of the work because of their deviant, adulterous behavior, arguably attributable to an Eastern ideology.

This isolated suffering felt by Palomydes, Tristram and Launcelot is not unlike what is required of a holy person retreated into monastic service, such as the hermit in the wood. In a way, then, these characters do penance for their deviant actions. This reading invites the audience to question whether they accept the adulterant knights and their penance, and to again question their estimation of Palomydes. On all accounts, this asks Malory's audience to evaluate how negative it is to fall outside group norms, even just because of one's beliefs.

Palomydes's and Tristam's struggles in the name of love for Isode help Malory establish a complex representation of the Saracen other. This calls into question the chivalric ideal and the code of knighthood, bringing those values to the fore for Malory's public. But these values are highlighted even more in the depictions of the knights outside of the immediate situations with Isode. The weight of their individual adventures fit with the ideas of the peripatetic Catalán mystic, Ramón Llull, and his ideas of knighthood, as set forth in his treatise and as analyzed by Antonio Disalvo in his "Ramon Llull and the Language of Chivalry."

> Llull emphasizes the importance of the nobility of each knight's soul over that of his birth or station in the society…He explains that if the knight does not possess this nobility within his soul, he cannot be in good standing in the Order. He advises each knight to acquire this nobility of soul, for only then can he seek after faith, hope, charity, justice, and

> loyalty, plus the remaining Christian virtues. It is indeed through the acquisition of these virtues that true nobility may be attained. (200)

Whether Malory or his public were aware of Ramón Llull's ideas on chivalry or not, the author's characterizations of Palomydes, Tristram, and Launcelot nonetheless call into question what chivalry is, how knights embody it, and what morals and values are upheld by its code.

These instances are all attributable to Palomydes's challenged aspirations to assimilate into the Christian knightly culture, albeit, sans baptism. His isolation is most evident, though, in the endless adventure he undertakes to follow "the questyng beste that had in shap lyke a serpentis hede and a bdy lyke a lybud, bottkked lyke a lyon and footed lyke an harte...And thys beste evermore sir Palomydes followed, for hit was called hys queste" (Malory 296). His solitude and suffering echo Antonio Disalvo's commentary in "Ramon Llull and the Language of Chivalry" on "what is evident in the life of many of Spain's religious reformers is the transformation of a chivalric sensitivity of mission into a spiritual one: a Christian militancy or a Christian knighthood" (198). Although Palomydes is not necessarily from Spain and is definitely not a religious reformer, his characterization as a Saracen working to "be reformed" makes him reminiscent of the men whom Disalvo studies in Ramón Llull's time and texts. Moreover, at different junctures, both the actions of Palomydes and Tristram echo "a desire for solitude and physical retreat in which an inner religious experience will take place that has been described both as a repose (recogimiento and quietud), and as nothingness (nada and aniquilacion), in addition to…spiritual struggle or battle" (Disalvo 198).

Disalvo notes that in "Llull's treatise on knighthood, we…notice the adoption of chivalric language not only in a religious and mystical sense, but also into language that invokes the need for the complete spiritual reformation and renewal of a society where the Christian virtues have ceased to be viable" (199). It seems that through his representation of Palomydes in the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory has exemplified these words in every way. The chivalric code that Tristram and Launcelot are ambassadors for, complete with its religious implications, is the mystical religion that Palomydes strives to assimilate into. Yet, as he is described as the antithesis of the knighthood's ideal representatives, he clearly requires a "complete spiritual reformation," which seems to further an agenda to renew "a society where the Christian virtues have ceased to be viable," as in Malory's own Britain. As for Tristram, he experiences a similar period of spiritual re-evaluation when he retreats to the woods and lives as a madman while trying to reconcile his desire to worship Isode.

The shroud of negativity that hangs around Palomydes and his continual placement as second-best to Tristram continues throughout the book, as does his characterization as "forever shamed," despite his goodness and his knightly prowess. His inability to supersede this positioning, which contrasts with Tristram and Launcelots' abilities to do so, arguably comes from Palomydes's inherent identity as Saracen "other." What prevents him from assimilating, despite the conversion of his brother, Sir Sapphir, is "a vowe" (Malory 508) he made not to convert until he had fought a certain number of battles. Palomydes admits that "in [his] harte and in [his] soule," though, he has long believed "in Jesu Cryste and hys mylde modir Mary" (508). It is at the end of "The Book of Sir Tristram," that Palomydes has "but one batayle to do, and were that oneys done

[he] woulde be baptized" (308). To bring him fully into the fold at last, Tristram readies himself to fight Palomydes, saying that he "shall sone fullfyll thyne avows" (508). They fight at length, until "sir Palomydes felle grovelynge to the erthe" (509) and then, until his sword is lost and he falls to the mercy of Tristram. Thus vanquished, to say nothing of the symbolism in this scene, Palomydes asks Tristram forgiveness for "all that I have offended" (510) and asks that "thys same day have me to the nexte churche, and fyste lat me be clene confessed, and aftir that se yourself that I be truly baptysed" (508). Thus, it is "Not until his baptism, where Tristram stands godfather" (Grimm 71) that Palomydes's struggles for love, positioning, and reconciliation as "other" are at last resolved. That he, Tristram and Galleron would "all ryde togydyrs unto the courte of kynge Arthure" (510) after the ceremony suggests his much-awaited absorption into King Arthur's societal structure, where Palomydes's "overt manifestations of anger and envy could even be seen, in retrospect, as elements in his own redemption" (Grimm 72).

Ramón Llull's treatise on chivalry sets forth similar norms as those espoused by Malory's characters. Palomydes, Tristram, and Launcelot all physically disengage from their world in order to pursue defining experiences that provoke paradigm shifts among their lifestyles and values, including what or who they choose to believe in. This is one way that Malory's tale calls into question what it means to be a good person in a period when the social conventions of knighthood and the honor that accompanied it were limited. Given the decline of feudal castles and the system of knighthood, the struggles and bitter negativity borne of The Hundred Years War and The War of the Roses, these were timely and challenging questions for Malory to pose to his public.

The construction of Palomydes in opposition to Sir Tristram is important for illustrating the ideals of the chivalric knight, but even more so because of the love triangle created by the two knights' feelings for Isode. This motif is echoed later among Tristan, Isode, and King Mark, and once again by Launcelot, Guinevere, and Arthur. Many scholars cite the morally questionable relationship among the last triad as the primary symptom of Arthur's sickly kingdom, which symbolically brings about its collapse. The romantic constructions in "The Book of Sir Tristram" thereby prepares the audience for the crash of Arthur's idyllic court, arguably attributable to, among other sliding values, Guinevere's adultery and Launcelot's betrayal, which signify the corruption of Arthur's kingdom.

The adulterous relationship triangles are yet another "manifestation of the Orient" that appears in Malory's work. Although it developed from the tale's Celtic roots, the trope follows the courtly love tradition popularized by the troubadours and jongleurs that traversed Western Europe at the time and for centuries before. The convention is arguably descended from ideas originating in Eastern courts, and Malory chose to keep the love triangle(s) of the Tristan legend. Even more, he chose to develop the situations in a very different way than do his sources, suggesting that Malory uses the trope to reflect and comment upon an alternative view of adultery from France.

Whereas the prose *Tristan* leaves a great deal of ambiguity regarding how culpable Tristram and Isode were for their actions, Malory's text very much downplays these romantic emphases. Malory places a great deal more focus upon the action of the knights and upon their unity as fellows than he does on the relationship of Tristan and Isode. In her article, "The Impotent Potion: On the Minimization of the Love Theme in

the 'Tristan en Prose' and Malory's 'Morte Darthur,'" Maureen Fries highlights the declining focus on the passion between the lovers in both versions of the story. But in Malory, it is particularly clear that the torments of the lovers' relationship is less important than are other elements of his text, which calls into question what Malory's overarching purpose was for including this epic saga in his *Morte D'Arthur*, as well as what he hoped for that larger work to achieve.

In Fries's study, she indicates that to downplay the theme of love in Malory's text, Tristram is shown lacking adoration for his lady as their relationship progresses. This contrasts with expectations of the courtly love tradition. Fries notes that Tristram "repeatedly rebukes Isolde for his trouble on her behalf. He cites the 'many landis and grete rychesses' he has forsaken for her love without any ratifying particularity…To her loving greeting after his recovery from madness, he replies, 'go frome me, for much angur and daunger have I as[say]ed for your love'" (78). Perhaps Malory's descriptions serve to foreground the depth and breadth of powerful emotions experienced in the courtly love tradition. However, another choice that he makes leads one to question if his purpose is to interrogate the morality of the courtly love trope. The fact that the protagonists and their servants, Governayle and Brangwayne, constantly lament the drinking of the love philter in the prose *Tristan* contrasts sharply with Malory's treatment of the issue.

In the prose *Tristan*, the love potion seems to absolve the lovers from their sins; everything they do wrongfully in the name of love is blamed upon the potion, and even more, the blame is continually placed on Gorvenal and Brangain for having put the magic philter mistakenly into the wrong hands. Their culpability is made clear from the onset:

Gorvenal "and Brangain would be held responsible, and it was only right that they should bear the blame; it was not the fault of Tristan and Iseut who knew nothing of the drink" (*The Romance* 87). Much later Isode indicts Brangain, lamenting that, "All this pain and this grief I suffer night and day because of my love for Sir Tristan was caused by you and Gorvenal, as you know well, that day when we were at sea and you handed me and Sir Tristan the philtre" (*The Romance* 236). Unlike his source, Malory refrains from invoking the drinking of the love philter as the inciting incident to blame for Tristram and Isode's sinful choices. Thus, the lovers are depicted as much less innocent than in the prose *Tristan*. They are not victims of fortune or of their own tragic fates; they are culpable for their actions, and those actions are not Christian.

This treatment of the conflict that stems from the love potion allows for a very different reading of the Tristan and Isode in Malory's text than of the Tristan and Isode in the French Prose version. Malory shows the lovers as suffering from their sin on their own accord, and on account of their own choices. Another way he sets forth this reading is by establishing Tristram and Isode's romantic inclinations long before the arrival of the love potion. First, the two become mutually interested when Tristan is placed in Isode's "awarde and kepyng, because she was a noble sugeon" (Malory 238). Because "she healed hym in a whyle…sir Tramtryste kyste grete love to La beale Isode, for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde" (238). Their camaraderie grows, as in return, "Tramtryste lerned hir to harpe and she began to have a grete fantasy unto hym" (Malory 239). When the Irish queen discovers that Tristram is the Cornish knight who slew her brother the Marhalte, Isode "was passynge sore abaysshed, for passynge well she loved Tramtryste and full well she knew the crewelnesse of hir modir the quene"

(Malory 242). Malory's description of Isode's reaction indicates that she has feelings for Tristram long before drinking the magic philter. This is echoed again in Isode's expression to Tristram, the "jantyll knyght" that "'full wo I am of thy departynge, for I saw never man that ever I ought so good wyll to,' and therewithall she wepte hertyly" (243). To this, Tristram promises Isode faithfully to "be al the dayes of my lyff [her] knyght" (243), with Isode promising not to marry for seven years, and if so, to only marry with Tristram's consent (Malory 243-244). These interactions evidence a close relationship between Tristan and Isode that is established before they drink the potion.

The relationship of the lovers before the fateful voyage to Mark's court minimizes the perceived power of the philter on the characters when they accidentally drink it and are thereby spell-bound to love one another. Malory's rendering of the tale differs significantly from his source, as in the prose *Tristan*, "Tristan had often looked at Iseut and she pleased him very much, but not in a way which made him fall in love with her" (*The Romance* 46). Whatever attachment he derives for Isode is more out of competition with Palomydes than for any genuine romantic inclination (46). For Isode's part, when Brangain asks her if the lady would prefer Tristan or Palamedes for a lover, Isode responds: "I think I'd prefer Palamedes on account of his prowess" (47). By establishing a pre-existing romantic inclination between Tristram and Isode, Malory downplays the power of the love potion and thereby implies that the lovers have greater culpability for their sinful actions than is depicted in the French texts. This suggests that in Malory's view, love, however powerful or however begotten, does not absolve one from his un-Christian sins.

Maureen Fries adds to this a discussion that considers the deaths of the lovers. In the *Tristan en Prose*, Tristan embraces Isode with his last breaths. In one another's arms, their respiration stills, and life departs from them. This episode comes after Tristan is cut by King Mark's poisoned sword, and illustrates the passionate, almost melodramatic quality that permeates the lovers' affairs throughout the text. Malory avoids such a finale, and "relegates mention of the lovers' end to a series of post-mortems centering upon his fellow knights' esteem for Tristram's chivalry" (Fries 80). Malory's tale ends with the baptism of Palomydes, which not only downplays the expectations set for Tristram and Isode by the courtly love tradition, but further emphasizes Malory's focus on Christian morality in the work against "the increasing powerlessness of the potion in late medieval versions of the story" (Fries 80), which in turn shows a shift towards "Christian mediation more characteristic of the Arthurian world than of the quasi-pagan Tristanian one" (Fries 80). For instance, Isode's mandate of Palomydes to carry his message about the four lovers to Arthur's court is significant because it draws a clear parallel between the two pairs of lovers: she and Tristram, and Guinevere and Launcelot. Her message clearly excludes Palomydes from any romance, suggesting that those who are not Christian do not belong, nor do they deserve to be loved. Furthermore, with Isode's letter to Guinevere, Malory establishes a firm connection between the adulterous lovers in Cornwall and those in Camelot. This parallel is reinforced when Isode complains to Guinevere about Tristram's marriage to the Isode of Brittany in a letter. Both interactions between Isode and Guinevere establish a parallel between the two courts, as does the episode of the enchanted horn.

The enchanted horn, sent by Morgan Le Fay and intended to reach Arthur's court, "had suche a vertu that there might no lady nothir jantyll-woman drynke of that horne but yf she were trew to her husbande; and if she were fals she sholde spylle all the drynke, and if she were trew to her lorde she might drynke thereof" (Malory 270). Sir Lamorak re-directs the knight bearing the horn to the court of King Mark, where "the kynge made his queen to drynke therof, and an hondred ladyes with her, and there were but four ladyes of all tho that dranke clene" (Malory 270). That this scene was intended to occur in King Arthur's court invites readers, again, to draw a parallel between the sinful relationships of the two pairs of lovers. Added to Isode and Guinevere's correspondence, the horn episode helps draw a strong parallel between the two courts. This relationship and the events that form it call readers to question the morality of the adulterous love triangle, thereby preparing them for what befalls Tristram and Isode, and later, for the rise and fall of Arthur's court.

As for his presentation of these triangles, and of the *fin' amor* tradition that informs them, Malory moves beyond the problem-posing constructions in his source material to disparage such relationships. While the French versions of Tristan leave judgment to readers about the lovers' guilt, defending them through the power of the love philter, Malory does not. Instead, he creates a stronger relationship between Tristram and Isode that is established before they drink the philter, leading readers to believe that they chose to love one another in sin. In addition to minimizing the power of the philter in his text, Malory also expresses a negative attitude about lovers in general via Dynadan's commentary. In conversation with Tristram, Dynadan mocks a knight who acted as if asleep, but lay "lyke a fole grennynge" (Malory 420), and through his countenance,

Dyanadan "wote he was a lovear" (420). When asked his position on being a lover, Dynadan exclaims, "Mary, fye on that crauffte!" (420), as if there were no worse fate than being a lover. Dynadan uses additional pejorative terms to describe such enamored knights as "doted" (421), and in a later conversation with Isode, he establishes his "meryvale at sir Trystram and mo other suche lovers. What aylyth them to be so madde and so asoted upon women?" As if Dynadan's position were not clear enough, he asserts that "the joy of love is to shorte, and the sorrow thereof [and what cometh therof] is duras over longe'' (424), establishing his belief that love is a waste of time from which nothing good comes. The opinion that lovers are foolish is played out many times, among lesser characters like the knight of Northumbirlonde, and Palomydes, as well as between the greats: Tristram and Launcelot. All of these men become "woode," or crazed as a result of their love. Palomydes and the prince of Northumbirlonde (Malory 466-467) are seen lamenting like mad men, and Tristram and Launcelot both experience retreats into a forest where they live in naked isolation, driven mad on account of their lovers: Tristram believes Isode love Kayhyrdyns, and Launcelot fears that Guinivere believes him to love Elaine. In each of these situations, Malory shows how a powerful and respected knight can be reduced to a pitiable state on account of love, with the message being, as Dynadan alludes to, that only fools love. This disparagement of *fin' amor* in Malory's "Book of Sir Tristram" enforces a view of morality that is much clearer than in his French sources. Thus, in a less subtle manner than in the French texts, Malory employs both Palomydes the Saracen and the tradition of *fin' amor*: two manifestations of Eastern influence to create a dialog concerning the values of his society.

Particularly in Malory's "Book of Sir Tristram," what is so damaging about the issue of adultery is not just the sin itself, but what it represents in the breaking of fellowship, especially among those of King Arthur's court. The theme of fellowship runs throughout *Le Morte D'Arthur*, and many scholars have seen it as of primary importance in Malory's text. It is no wonder, as there was clearly a lack of fellowship in England at the time of Malory's composition. In "Malory's Ideal of Fellowship," Elizabeth Archibald notes that "In the…*Concordance to Malory* there are nearly two hundred entries for 'fellowship' under various spellings. The word occurs in all the tales, though it is particularly frequent in the Tale of Sir Tristram" (312). To the development of this theme, Sir Palomydes is again central, especially because his position as an outsider lays his path with the continual struggle to be included.

When he trespasses on the values of the culture he wishes to be absorbed into, it is the fear of losing the fellowship of his companions that worries him most. "When Palomydes is estranged from Tristram because of his own unknightly behaviour in relation to Isolde, he laments: '…unhappy man that I am, now have I loste the felyshyp of sir Trystram'" (Archibald 320). Grimm adds that "The French Palamedes grieves only for the loss of the company of Iseut; Malory's Palomydes is just as 'sorowful' to be separated from Tristram" (70), showing Malory's emphasis on fellowship and unity. Later, the importance of fellowship is transmitted through Palomydes and his adventures when "he kneled adowne and asked mercy: 'For outrageously have I done to you this day, consyderynge the grete dedis of armys I have sene you done, and shamefully and unknyghtly I have required you to do batayle with me" (Malory 371) to sir Lameroke. The latter replies that he: "repentys sore that we sholde fight togydirs" (371), and they

solidify their fellowship with oaths to "love you dayes of my lyff afore all other knyghtes excepte my brother" (Malory 371).

An important facet to Said's *Orientalism* is the exteriority of Western writers to the East, noting that: "The principal product of this exteriority is…representation…the Orient is transformed from a very far distant and often threatening Otherness into figures that are relatively familiar…the audience is [experiencing] a highly artificial enactment of what a non-Oriental has made into a symbol for the whole Orient" (21). Said stresses that these representations of the Oriental other are exactly that: "*representations*, not…'natural' depictions of the Orient" (21). Sir Palomydes fits this description: he is a threatening other tamed by the values of Christianity and Arthurian knighthood. He not only embodies the Orient for Malory, but he also functions as a vehicle for Malory's galvanization of English, knightly identity in the wake of national tumult. Sir Palomydes and the roles played by the courtly love triangles in *Le Morte D'Arthur*, particularly in the Tristram section, complement Malory's recreation of Arthur's court and call into question the morals and values of that time, and consequently, those of his own.

"Never has there been…something so innocent as an 'idea' of the Orient" (Said 23), and this is true even in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*. Malory uses the uncanny Palomydes to further the myth of the once and future king in yet another time, a time in which Malory deemed his presence necessary to the re-formation of his country's identity. He even adjusts the representation of Tristan and Isode's relationship to bring into question, alongside Palomydes, what it means to be a good Christian. According to French theorist Roland Barthes, myth "establishes a blissfull clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves" (143). Certainly Malory's public sought any kind of

meaning in their war-torn midst. As in Geoffrey of Monmouth's creative tapestry of fact and fiction in *The History of the Kings of Britain*, it is interesting that:

> myth essentially aims at causing an immediate impression - it does not matter if one is later allowed to see through the myth, its action is assumed to be stronger than the rational explanations which may later belie it…A more attentive reading of the myth will in no way increase its power or its ineffectiveness: a myth is at the same time both imperfectable and unquestionable; time or knowledge will not make it better or worse. (Barthes 130)

Thus, the impression left by King Arthur, and the resurrection of his society by Sir Thomas Malory questions not whether Arthur ever existed, but rather, calls upon Malory's audience to remember and to consider the mythical hero to whom they can look for guidance and assurance in times of uncertain identity and tumult.

Barthes discusses different mythical structures at length in his *Mythologies*. The last chapter explains in depth how myth is essentially a semiological system (111). However complex the semiology Barthes elaborates may be, there are elements within this discussion of myth that shed light on what Malory's rhetorical choices accomplish in using Oriental elements in his *Morte D'Arthur* to reflect and comment on his own society. Barthes asserts that "as a total of linguistic signs, the meaning of the myth has its own value, it belongs to a history" (117). He complicates this by explaining that "in actual fact, the knowledge contained in a mythical concept is confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations…it is not all an abstract, purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation, whose unity and coherence are above all due to its function" (Barthes 119). This function of myth recalls how Arthurian society and its

values represent a sliver of historical truth in England's history. Using mythical speech to address it allows one to employ myth's ability "to transform a meaning into form" (Barthes 131). "The very principal of myth [is that it] transforms history into nature;" it "*naturalize[*es*]*" (129) the concept, or gives it new presence for the interpreter.

The language used to express this transformation between concept and form wields its own value for "mythologists"—those interpreting the myth. Yet what these individuals read into the meaning of the myth varies, as "the knowledge contained in a mythical concept is confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations" (Barthes 119). These conceptions derive from the individualized functions that each reader creates for the myth from their own interaction with it. This is why "the concept…appears in global fashion, it is a kind of nebula, the condensation, more or less hazy, of a certain knowledge. Its elements are linked by associative relations:…its mode of presence is memorial" (122). Myth, therefore, builds on the prior knowledge of the mythologist; it builds on the memories he already possesses to give the concept shape. This is why Barthes asserts that myth, "this interpellant speech[,] is as the same time a frozen speech: at the moment of reaching [the mythologist], it suspends itself, turns away and assumes the look of a generality: it stiffens, it makes itself look neutral and innocent" (125). Yet despite this innocuous representation, the myth calls upon the mythologist to create and digest the meaning it may present him.

This process is explained by Barthes that:

> …if one wishes to connect a mythical schema to a general history, to explain how it corresponds to the interests of a definite society,…it is the reader of myths himself who must reveal their essential function. How

> does he receive this particular myth today?...What is the purpose of proposing it to him? And if he reads it using his powers of reflection,…does it matter which alibi [form or meaning] is presented? (129)

In terms of Malory's text, the author presents the myth of Arthur's society, and along with it, the concept of chivalry and the code of knighthood. Both espoused ideal values, but values and structures that deteriorated and were eventually brought into ruin. Through the "other," Palomydes, and his correlations with sir Tristram and thereby with sir Launcelot, Malory invokes the mythical conception of what it means to be a good knight, or even a good person. Like Tristram and Launcelot, Palomydes is a knight of prowess. But he is cannot achieve their level of worship because he is not as gentle and courteous as they. Unlike Tristram and Launcelot, Palomydes commits deeds of treachery, as seen at the tournament at Lonezep. Further, he is not depicted as emotionally strong as the other knights either, as he is more frequently depicted weeping and wailing over his suit. Much of Palomydes's trouble stems from his "Oriental" character traits: that he is passionate, envious, and un-christened. Thus, through the juxtaposition of Palomydes with knights like sir Tristram, readers intuit that for Palomydes to be a truly good knight, he must be Christian, which would impede his dishonorable behavior. Likewise, Malory's depiction of the *fin' amor* tradition in the parallel love triangles among Isode, Queen Gwenevere, and their lovers, calls Malory's audience to again question their current morals and values.

Questioning such complicated and conflicting ideas, as Malory's public is called to do, recalls essential processes of identity formation. In Mikael Tellbe's study on early

Christian identity formation in the medieval city of Ephesus, Turkey, Tellbe highlights the necessity of an established outsider or "other" to facilitate the identity forming process. He explains "that ingroup and outgroup conflicts in a social setting…may serve as a boundary-maintaining and group-binding function" (140) as "conflict with other groups contributes to the establishment and reaffirmation of the identity of groups and to the maintenance of their boundaries against the surrounding world" (Tellbe 140). He also shows that these "conflicts may serve to define and strengthen group structures and may result in ingroup solidarity, enhanced awareness of ingroup identity and a tightening of the group boundaries" (140). In the "Book of Sir Tristram," Palomydes and the indeterminate Saracens represent the "outgroup" of which Tellbe speaks, while the Christian knights are the "ingroup." In terms of Malory's public, if the "ingroup" included Christian individuals united in morals and values, then the "outgroup" would be identified as those who impeded cultural unity and worked against the goals of the ingroup. Because of this, just as in Malory's text, the "ingroup and outgroup conflicts…serve to shape and enforce the identity of the group, to clarify boundary markers and to strengthen the difference between 'us' and 'them', between 'insiders' and 'outsiders" (Tellbe 140).

But Malory's Palomydes is not the only character who fits in the outgroup category. Although they belong to the dominant culture, the adulterous lovers are also seen as outsiders, as their behavior, like the inherent nature of the indeterminate Saracens, is outside the established social norm. Their "rule-breaking" is seen as "'deviant' and [not following] 'normal' forms of belief and behavior" (Tellbe 141), which is likely why Malory took pains to depict the hardships of the lovers and to emphasize their

foolishness, from Dynadan's commentary to the episodes of madness that both Launcelot and Tristram experience. This sort of deviance of which the "outsiders" are guilty is defined as "as the infraction of some agreed-upon rule" (Howard Becker qtd. in Tellbe 141), and those rules are inherently socially constructed and context sensitive. Becker explains how "social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders" (Becker qtd. in Tellbe 141). As one might expect in a developing Christian locale, "Deviance is nearly always linked to a theme of moral meanings, of a desire to distinguish the evil and wicked from the good" (Tellbe 141). This is very much the type of hegemony that Said believes Westerners, in their texts, have exerted on the East. They have relegated the "other" to a secondary position in a way that delineates the boundary between "us" and "them." In the "Book of Sir Tristram," it is evident that the knights of the Round Table are Christian, and that those who are not are outsiders, including Sir Palomydes. Because of the "deviance" of Palomydes's beliefs from the norm, he is depicted as lesser to Tristram and Launcelot through Malory's frequent, uncomplimentary descriptions of the knight weeping and wailing, despite the fact that he is nearly the other twos' equal in might. As in Said's *Orientalism*, the "other" receives less respect than those falling into what Tellbe deems the normative group. In fact, the conflict between the two "results in a stereotypical perception and portrayal of the outsiders by the insiders" (Tellbe 141), or in other words, that "ingroup glorification and outgroup denigration are common dynamics of groups engaged in conflict" (Tellbe141). Again, even the lauded knights of valor, Tristram and Launcelot, are denigrated, albeit not nearly so severely as Palomydes. Besides the hardships and trials they endure for the

love of their ladies, as in the *fin' amor* tradition, the knights suffer bouts of debilitating madness and acute isolation in addition to falling into the category of lovers mocked by sir Dynadan.

By illustrating to his public negatives of being un-Christian through Palomydes, and negatives of being a foolish, sinful lover through Tristram and Launcelot, Malory establishes the ingroup and outgroup classifications among the characters in his text. By doing this, he challenges his readers to decide with whom they identify: the passionate, misguided Saracen; the foolishly sinful lovers; or with the normative ingroup. By doing this, Malory requires his audience to interact with their own cultural context—that of Malory's text and England's political issues, both at home and abroad. Are they good Christians? Are they passionate, self-interested sinners? Do they support the interests of England, or only of one political faction? This call to question and evaluate national values and beliefs via Malory's text facilitates the crystallization of identity among the author's public. What Malory's construction of the "Oriental other" has done, alongside his representation of *fin' amor*, illustrates Roland Barthes's assertion that "Myth hides nothing and flaunts nothing: it distorts; myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflexion" (129). In *Le Morte D'Arthur*'s "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory has produced a form of mythical speech that asks his audience to recall the conceptions they have of Arthurian society and then to bend their minds around new, possible implications for it in their world. Overall, the effect of Malory's depiction of Arthurian society through mythical speech employing Oriental flourishes is significant to his interpellation of his own countrymen to re-evaluate their own convoluted and demoralized identity.

While it is indisputably Celtic in nature, Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* and its "Book of Sir Tristram" substantiate that just as "Every writer on the Orient…assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies" (Said 20), so does Malory. Even though "what is commonly circulated by [this discourse] is not 'truth' but representations" (Said 21), this, too is visible in Malory's construction of Palomydes. The Saracen knight is arguably a rhetorical device to align war-torn Britain's identity, once again, with the moral honor and hope of King Arthur's court before its fall, and at the same time, Malory hopes to prevent a similar demise by condemning the behavior that brought it about: *fin' amor*. Both are manifestations of contact with Eastern cultures, and both are situated in Malory's text so as to facilitate reconsideration of his countrymen's beliefs, although in a slightly more directive fashion than in his sources.

As a final note, it is important to remember that "the Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also…the source of [its] most recurring images of the Other" (Said 1), and that "the fates and identities of…Christian European nations and the mutable, contradictory East" are "irrevocably linked" (Higgins 217). Malory's Sir Palomydes and the rhetorical purpose he serves evidences this, echoing Said's statement that: "Orientalism is never far from…the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans" (7). Like Higgins's 15th century Scottish poets, Malory, too, is a product of his time. In his *Le Morte D'Arthur*, he represents the mythically ideal morals and values of England's past. In functioning within the socio-political climate of the period, Malory furthers nationalistic goals for unity and for a revised national identity. Uncanny, Oriental representations of the East, which may have

leaked through Western Europe to England via Arab Spain, manifest in Malory's work as Sir Palomydes the Saracen and as shadows of the *fin' amor* tradition. The inclusion of both in Malory's text allows the work to be elucidated by Roland Barthes's semiological theory on the form, function, and reading of myth, as Barthes's ideas show how and why Malory's rhetorical invocation of England's past coupled with Oriental flourishes increased the effectiveness of his cry for renewed national unity.

CHAPTER IV: REINCARNATION OF THE CHIVALRIC IDEAL: IDEOLOGICAL RECONCILIATIONS IN SPAIN

Though the previous chapters of this work have focused on the influence of Spain on both France and England, this chapter examines how the literature of those countries in turn exercised their influence on Spain. Spain was brought into the "inner circle of European diplomacy" (Entwistle 381) of England and France, notably by the marriage of Elinor of England to Alfonso VIII of Castile in 1170 (381). Daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and half-sister to Marie de Champagne, Elinor brought with her the cultural ideas of her parentage. According to Entwistle, "Queen Elinor was, however, also a great literary accession to Spain….Elinor inherited the Arthurian legend-fashioned 'per amor del Rey Anrich' -and we find that an allusion to King Arthur is welcome and understood at the Castilian Court in 1211" (381). She and her husband were patrons "of letters, in touch with such poets as Bertran de Born and Ramón Vidal de Bezaudú" (Entwistle, *The Arthurian Legend* 34). Entwistle mentions that "The first Spanish citation of Geoffrey's History occurs in Anales Toledanos Primeros (Esp. Sag., xxIII), which attain the year 1219 and are the work of a contemporary of Alfonso VIII and Elinor" (383), which shows that British literary material circulated in Spain early in the 13th century, and that the Aquitainian line played a likely role in its transmission. But there was more material present than just a reference to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History*; there was also substantial Arthurian matter, including references to Tristan.

It was two hundred years after Queen Elinor's reign that the famous Spanish texts belonging to the genre of *libros caballerescos* appeared, including the *Zifar*, *Tirant lo Blanch*, and the *Amadís de Gaula*, which are written in a similar style to stories in the Arthurian tradition. There are even manuscripts of the Tristan story, but the obtainable versions appear to be copies of versions from an earlier date. In order to examine the attitude embodied by these Spanish Tristan manuscripts and how they reflected the socio-cultural ideologies of the time, it is important to assess those views already apparent in the *libros caballarescos,* which leads to a better, more contextualized understanding of Spain's perceptions and reception of the stories of chivalric knights, particularly of *fin' amor*, and of characters that appear to be set apart as "others."

A.D. Deyermond points out that "from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, French romances exercised a powerful influence in Spain, though some part was also played by Latin and oriental works, and to a slight extent by romances from other European countries" (238). It was during the middle of the 15th century that Carreras y Artau claim that "En la literatura castellana las imitaciones de obras clásicas de asunto filosófico aparecen" (634), which contained "ejercicios formales para ensayar la perfección expresiva del romance que de auténtica investigación en torno a un problema filosófica. De la filosofía, especialmente de la platónica, toman el asunto central y parte de la trama, y con frecuencia la forma externa dialogada" (Carreras y Artau and 634). Carreras y Artua bring to the fore the heart of the philosophical argument that *fin' amor* poses. The chaplain of the marquéz de Santillana, Pedro Díaz de Toledo, was one of the first imitators of classical, philosophical texts in Spain, and in his *Diálogo e razonamiento en la muerte del marquéz de Santillana*, Díaz "defiende la concepción

platónica-cristiana de la vida:…somos meros peregrinos de esta vida, que andamos camino de otra mejor, donde hallaremos el premio o la recompensa del bien o del mal que obremos" (Carreras y Artau 636). This statement foregrounds the idea that humans are merely pilgrims on this earth, and that when death arrives, the deceased will receive his recompense for either his good, or bad, deeds. Díaz de Toledo's ideas exemplify the kind of questions that were surely being asked about how to reconcile the human experience with the guidelines of government and of the church in Spain.

More, Días's text recalls two Platonic questions. The first asks: "quiero que me digáis qué es lo que sentís desto que se dice, que algunas ánimas andan en pena, e en qué lugar son penadas" (Carreras y Artau 636). The question essentially asks where those who already live in pain for their sins are punished, begging the question of, for those who live as if in Purgatory, what punishment is death? This circumstance relates to the plight of courtly lovers like Tristan and Yseo, whose desires can never be completely fulfilled, as their incomplete, dolorous existence is akin to the the purifying intermediate state of Purgatory, which makes death almost a welcome reprieve from the suffering of their sinful existence. The second question that Días's text asks is, "cómo será el conocimiento del alma en el estado de separación del cuerpo" (636), asking how the soul will be understood in a state of separation from the body, or in other words—how can the soul be without its carnal shell? Further—how can the human existence be if devoid of the human form? These questions all seem to justify life that acknowledges the needs of the body, as it is through that vehicle that the soul experiences life and love. In a way, then, the philosophy of Pedro Díaz de Toledo condones the experiences of courtly lovers: their actions are exercises of the soul that cannot be separated from their corporeal form.

Regardless, his publication evidences the kind of questions that the medieval Iberian public grappled with at the time.

In response to such philosophers and the romance genre, as imported from from France and England, *libros caballerescos* became quite popular in Spain. Particularly because of the strong, knightly characters of the romance, and because of figures like "Edward the Black Prince in 1367" (Entwistle, *The Arthurian* 30), who embodied classic ideas of knighthood and "may have heated the chivalresque temper" (30), chivalric ideas and customs gained popularity in Spain. According to Otis Green, "the Spanish feudal noble, like his congeners in other parts of Europe indeed more than they, lived for war" (6). But they were not necessarily blood-thirsty; it was believed at the time that a man may "commit homicide in defense of one's honor," that being "more valuable than property" (Green 12). This commentary shows that there were acceptable times for bloodshed, including for the defense of one's honor. But through ideas like these, the Spanish "passion and lust for competitive armed strife became tempered in its violence, ennobled—in principle!—and raised to the rank of virtue" (Green 6), partly with the help of codes of honor and beliefs about *fin' amor* that found their way back to Spain through such stories as the French romances.

But scholars show that Spain put a new twist on the conception of *fin' amor*, and in examining the 15th century versions of the Tristan story there, as well as other contemporary texts, it is clear that there was a shift away from the blatant acceptance of adulterous lovers and Christian outsiders, whereas in the French texts before, judgment appears to have been suspended for the adjudication of each individual reader. Much of this dissent arises from the ideas surrounding *fin' amor*. To begin with, "Denomy, in his

definition of *fin'amors*…speaks of it as 'arising from the contemplation of the beauty of the beloved'" (Denomy qtd. in Green 81). Green asserts that "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, and beauty is the cause of love. Fortune and Nature, also operative in love's ups and downs, are instruments of Providence. We would thus seem to be free from the *paradoxe amoureux* and love would appear to be the child of the highest faculty of the human soul, reason" (83-84). But love wasn't necessarily recognized by the Spanish public as the "highest faculty of the soul," because the typical Castilian attitude towards *fin' amor* rejected "the Provençal code of courtly love or fin' amors, which declared that the lover should serve his lady without hope of re-ward" (Gilderman 130). In his study of the mid-15th century Galician poet Rodriguez del Padrón, Martin S. Gilderman examines this key difference between the idealism of the French school of *fin' amor* and its manifestation in the Iberian Peninsula further, showing the extent of the distinct beliefs held from Castile to Galicia.

Gilderman asserts that "Rodriguez del Padrón's crowning poetic achievement… 'Siete gozos de amor'" is where the author "pleads his own particular case and that of all trovadores who serve the God of Love: he has served his lady faithfully, and like any good vassal he wants his rewards" (Gilderman 130). Green is cited as describing this attitude as "the presence of a realistic current which runs parallel to the idealistic conception of courtly love" (Green qtd. in Gilderman 130). Thus, the code of love upheld in both Castile and Galicia expected more than just the "pure love" of the French troubadours. Because of this, the Spanish public likely saw such courtly relationships purely as fleshly indulgences, not like Pedro Díaz de Toledo's ideas of platonic love, or

as a kind of loving appreciation that approaches the divine, which is what *fin' amor* amounted to in many of the French romances.

Despite the differences that Green and Gilderman see between the French view of love and the perpectives of it that developed in Spain, there was a clear "rise in popularity of chivalric practices in Castile-a popularity attested thereafter throughout the fourteenth century" (523-524). These chivalric practices implicated more than just the warring, knightly lovers, but pertained to the Spanish ladies as well. Green mentions that "Books of the *Amadís* type affected…the aspirations, and, through them, the conduct, of feminine readers, of ladies in real life…Martín de Riquer has studied the attacks on the novels of chivalry and finds that the readers of these books were believed to be 'incited to sensuality and vice'" (Green 18). These discussions indicate the wide popularity and subsequent influence that the French romances and Arthurian material exerted on both readers and writers of medieval Iberia. However, scholars indicate that in addition, there were dissenting perspecitives on the content and effects of these works on the public, which anticipates the shift of attitude visible in the Tristan texts and later contemporary works, as they were written near the time of *los Reyes Católicos*.

Green quotes "the anonymous author of the fifteenth-century *Libro de la consolación de España*" who comments on the actual men of his country and their beliefs: "in these days we regard vices and sins as virtues…for we give the name of love and attachment to lust of the flesh and to adultery; we apply the great name of love to a thing so vile…and we esteem most highly the man who is most involved in these love affairs" (17-18). Green cites an example the poetry of Fray Iñigo de Mendoza where, "in a *débat* between *sensualidad* and *razón*" (51) sensuality claims "the power of ennobling

life" (51). That sensuality wins a glorified status in this instance indicates that the attitude in Spain still accepted and even valued the carnal love, or *loco amor*, of the chivalric tradition, which is what the anonymous author of the *consolación* opposed. Nevertheless, the fact that there was a "debát" to begin with, and that the author the *Libro de la consolación* clearly indicts his contemporaries for their sinful behavior, shows that beliefs about *fin' amor* were under reconsideration in fifteenth-century Spain, despite a long period of general acceptance and even fascination with such themes in years prior.

Through these arguments, it is clear that there is yet another facet to the Spanish *libros caballerescos*, and that is the religious factor. According to Green, "The religious note sounds clearly in the best examples of the Spanish romances of chivalry, no matter how obstreperously the other notes—fighting and love, the more worldly chivalry of the knights with its cult of honor and that of the ladies with its excesses of adoration—may dominate the orchestration" (8). This focus on the religious aspect in the Spanish romances is evidenced by Green's comments that "the writer [of the *Libro de la consolación*] complains also that, on the eve of battle, knights trust more in the protecting love of their ladies than in the loving Providence of God" (18). Similarly, Green points out that the anonymous author charges the lovers of the time as guilty of offending "Him in a thousand ways in this evil commerce, saying that they love their friend—male or female—more than they do Him" (Green 18). Thus, there was a tremendous moralization that began to occur circa the 15th century. This could be seen in the written forms the Tristan story and its sequels. It is also visible in the *Amadís de Gaula* sequence, which not only follows the Arthurian tradition, but also that of the Tristan legend.

This moralization was likely fueled by the reign of *los Reyes Católicos*, Ferdinand and Isabella, who married in 1479 (Mujica 2). The two "inciándose…la formación de la nación española" (Mujica 2) and to reinforce "la causa de unidad nacional, se creó la Inquisición en 1478. En 1492, las fuerzas de Fernando y Isabel derrotaron a los moros en Granada y pusieron fin al dominio musulmán. El mismo año expulsaron a los judíos" (Mujica 2). This series of events, including the official establishment of the Catholic faith, implementation of the Inquisition, and expulsion of the Moors and Jews, not only set forth the expectation for Christian morality in Spain, but also drew firm lines of definition against who and what was acceptable in the newly formed nation.

The significant changes in late 15th century Spain complicated the already present threads of war, love, and God that are seen throughout Spanish chivalric literature. Moreover, as in similar French genres, there is a clear paradox of how the public is to reconcile its beliefs of love with its beliefs in God, which was a timely question for the changing face of the official Spanish identity. The tumult of this time period is well-asserted by Renata Soares Junqueira in "O triste destino de Tristão na versão portuguesa' D'A Demanda do Santo Graal." Here, Junqueira quotes Hilario Franco Jr., author of "Vinha e a rosa: sexualidade e simbolismo em Tristão e Isolda," setting forth that even before Ferdinand and Isabella, the Iberian Peninsula was "Marcada pela revoluçao feudal" (103), and that in "Europa do século XII…'esta buscando sua própria identidade através de uma cultura montada com materiais antigos, não clericalizados, folclóricos em suma. Ademais, estávamos num momento de afirmação das nascentes nacionalidades, de forma que o recurso as temáticas locais funcionava como uma oposaoçao universalismo da Igreja" (Junqueira 103). The reign of *los Reyes Católicos* could only have exacerbated

the search for one's identity in the Iberian Peninsula, as distinct areas of Spain were being called to unify, and not only that, but to adopt a single religion when the public was a heterogeneous blend of Islamic followers, Jews, mystics, and otherwise. These calls for unification would have raised many deep questions about each person's identity and his beliefs about love, God, and life, as Franco Jr. alludes to, although in addressing a period hundreds of years before *los Reyes Católicos* came to power.

Junqueira's inclusion of Franco Jr.'s historical context focuses on how the medieval period in the Iberian Peninsula was characterized by a search for identity set against old ideas in a moment of new nationhood, where many of the ideas clashed with those of the church. In addition to having been influenced by France and Britain, Junqueria continues that the even the literature of the peninsula "não poderia deixar de refletir as duas ideologías rivais" (104), as seen in the competing ideologies embodied by the *Amadís*, the *Libro de la consolación*, and in the "romance de Tristão e Isolda" (Junqueira 103). Junqueira mentions too, that as in "o caso, nas cortes de Provença, da poesia trovadoresca...valoriza a mulher e o amor extraconjugal[;] opondo-se vigorosamente á moral cristã" (104): that courtly love and its adultery directly oppose Christian morality. Junqueira also implicates "o caso do romance bretão que, como resultado da contaminação das canções de gesta da Franca setentrional pela cortesia provençal, vai deixar o cavaleiro medieval dividido entre o seu suserano e a sua mulher amada" (104), where the knight is conflicted in his allegiance to either his sovereign, or to his beloved. Junqueira concludes that in all of these cases, "para desconsolo da Igreja, o cavaleiro bretão muitas vezes servirá melhor á mulher amada do que ao suserano, como ocorre no romance de Tristão e Isolda" (104). In other words, the tradition showed that in

many cases, the knight better served his beloved than he did his lord, a condition that clashes with the requirements of feudal loyalty as much as adultery violates tenets of Christian morality.

These chivalric ideas were perpetuated in Spain not only by the presence of such romances as the Tristan, but by new compositions of the same tradition like the *Amadís de Gaula*. The Amadís had a tremendous presence in Spain. The hero, Amadís, exemplifies the heroic lover and the story consists of multiple books and versions of them. According to Edwin B. Place, "Data published in 1909 by the late Grace Williams [shows] that the authors of Books I-III derived their major inspiration from the Arthurian Vulgate cycle….[and show] an indebtedness to the prose Tristan" (Place 521). In fact, according to Place, allusions to Tristan and Lancelot "abound in Spanish annals of the earlier fourteenth century (the first references in Portuguese being much later)" (523). Place asserts that "it is common knowledge that these works were well known in the Hispanic Peninsula by the fourteenth century and that they had been translated or adapted into Spanish before the middle of that century" (521-522). Place also mentions that in texts that appeared after 1350, mention of Amadís and references to both Tristan and Lancelot are found easily (523). Thus, while the texts closely analyzed later in this chapter are typically from the late 15th to the mid-16th century, they are based on stories that circulated at an earlier date.

Despite the indebtedness of the *Amadís* to the Tristan, it is interesting that in the sequel to the *Amadís* circa 1500, Samuel Gili Gaya points out that the text is "thoroughly dis-approving of Arthurian chivalry and courtly love" (Gaya qtd. in Place 527). The protagonist of this sequel, entitled *Las sergas de Esplandián*, "is made into a type of

strait-laced knight crusader who leads armies against pagans, an empire-builder who scorns knight-errantry for glory or for love. In brief, a premature conquistador with his face set to the East" (Place 527). This type of character illustrates a fresh take on the traditional knight errant and the courtly love ideology championed in the French and British romances. Even more, Place notes a "literary aversion [in the *Esplandián*] to the courtly-love convention of making love to a married woman" (527). Because of this idea about adultery and others, Place concludes that in the sequel to the *Amadís*, the author is essentially "converting the incipient Amadis series of really chivalric novelas caballerescas del ciclo bretón into non-chivalric novelas caballerescas" (528).

Regardless of this thematic changeover, Place cites the overwhelming similarities of these works to the French and British romances, and his examination of the protagonist and plot of the *Esplandián* is worth quoting at length. The story depicts:

> deeds of derring-do done by a super-knight (models: Lancelot, Tristan) for a royal lady whom he loves in secret (Guinevere, Isolda); the interventions of an evil enchanter (Merlin, much transformed) and a good fairy (the Lady of the Lake, Morgan the Fay-the former much more of a lady) who prophesies; a great king (Arthur) whose knights are dedicated to chivalry and who aid him in various great battles against enemies…whose own amorous and knightly adventures entwine with those of the hero…jealousy on the part of the heroine and her favor temporarily withdrawn, producing mortal despair or madness in the hero (Lancelot, Tristan); a hero acquires a magical castle and estate (Joyous Gard) figuring importantly in the action. (Place 528)

Clearly, then, *Esplandián* and its predecessor, the *Amadís de Gaula*, were influenced by French and British tales of chivalric knights; although, as Place makes clear, the sequel illustrates a move away from the earlier glorification of the chivalric knight and his lady.

In considering the influence of Oriental influences on these *Amadís* texts, particularly in terms of Spain's identity formation under the reign of *los Reyes Católicos* in the latter part of the 15th century, it is especially interesting to note Place's discussion of Montalvo, the author of the *Amadís*, who makes "especial laudatory mention of Godfrey of Bouillon's exploit of slicing an armored Turk nearly in two before Antioch" (528) in the text's preface. Place explains that the graphic Turkish reference "reveals that Montalvo is not only a typical Renaissance man in fearing the increasing encroachments of the Turks operating in the Mediterranean area, but that he envisages the need of a counter military crusade against the infidels of the Near East, just as he applauds the successful crusade of the Reyes Catolicos against the Moors of Granada" (528). This commentary illuminates an Oriental attitude that seems to place the Spanish in a position over the "infidels of the Near East" and the "Moors of Granada," much like attitudes in France and Spain, where Spaniards may have been implicated as the "infidels" in question. Similarly, just as Sir Thomas Malory seems to call for a re-unification of his countrymen with an emphasis on chivalric morals and values, Place argues that in Montalvo's *Amadís*, the author "implies that the times call for great armies, led by great leaders fighting for God and country to extirpate heresy and paganism, and keep Christendom for Christ's followers. Works of fiction like the *Amadís*, he indicates, have virtue only by reason of the moralizing matter interpolated therein, such as [Montalvo] is supplying" (528-529).

Through Edwin Place's discussion of the *Amadís de Gaula*, a prime example is given of how Spain was influenced by French and British chivalric romances, and also, of how Spain adjusted the perception of both *fin' amor* and the "other" to comment on and reflect upon its own sociocultural reality. Place's discussion also exemplifies how these foreign influences, and the desire to reconcile them with the guidelines of the Catholic church, created a distinct body of literature that helped characterize the beliefs of the Spanish public at the time. A.D. Deyermond comments that this public was "generally more cultured than the audience for the epic," such as *El Cid*, and that "the world in which the action is set is remote from the audience in time, space, or social class, and very often in all three" (233). This helps explain how these *novelas caballerescas* were able to affect the populous, each "romance creates its own world, which is not that of our direct everyday experience; it may be applied symbolically, but not directly, to ordinary life. It does, however, deal with real emotions, reaching (often by the use of archetypal patterns and motifs) very deep levels of emotional experience" (Deyermond 233-234).

Deyermond's discussion of the romance and its function recalls the tenets of Barthes's "mythical signifier: its form is empty but present, its meaning absent but full" (124), as the story itself is just words on a page, the figures within it not really present, except for when enlivened by the reader. Likewise, the meaning of the text is not there implicitly; it relies on the reader to create it, thereby characterizing the meaning as full. Yet, Barthes asserts that "this interpellant speech is at the same time a frozen speech: at the moment of reaching [the reader], it suspends itself, turns away and assumes the look of a generality: it stiffens, it makes itself look neutral and innocent" (125). Thus, in the same way that a play provides distance for the viewer to approach a difficult subject,

which may be quite close the viewer's beliefs or personal experiences, the mythification within the romance genre allows readers to connect to the intense emotional aspects of the stories, but to divorce themselves from the action and the characters. This allows them to consider and reconsider the concepts each text presents from a distance, evidencing that "myth is a double system; there occurs in it a sort of ubiquity: its point of departure is constituted by the arrival of a meaning" (123) as if with a "constantly moving turnstile which presents alternately the meaning of the signifier and its form" (Barthes 123). This process allows difficult concepts to be given "a *natural* image of…reality" (142), which allows them to be talked about (143).

These processes and their effects are visible in the Spanish Tristans, which were surprisingly prevalent in the medieval Iberian Peninsula, because they invoke mythic characters to facilitate rumination of the concepts of *fin' amor* and Christianity. Describing the many texts present at the time, William J. Entwistle contends that the Vatican manuscript 6428 "ascends to the fifteenth or the late fourteenth century" (110), and he demonstrates that the two existing Castillian versions of the Spanish Tristan "are versions of one foreign romance, whether that were expressed in the Portuguese Language, in the Italian, or in the French" (112). Entwistle explains that "the Italian romances differ considerably from the Castilian, and…their divergences bring them much closer to the Vulgate French *Tristan*…and their retention of Gallicisms indicates close contact with French manuscripts" (113). Entwistle speaks of a third branch of the Spanish Tristans that indicates that "Spain came into contact with an Italian author, though he wrote in French" (113). Maria Torre agrees that one encounters "versiones italianas (entre ellas el *Tristiano Riccardiano* y la *Tavola Ritonda*), la *Compilation*

francesa del italiano Rusticiano de Pisa y *Le Morte Darthur* de Thomas Malory" (9-10) in Spain. Like Entwistle, Torre wishes to think that all of these texts derived from a common source, but as of yet, such a definitive manuscript has not been identified.

Torre provides a relatively succinct explanation for the variety of Tristan stories and their unique divergences. She highlights that some scholars believe the story "llega a través de la zona galaico-portuguesa; para otros, penetra a través de Cataluña y Aragón" (11). Torre also offers another possibility, which seems most plausible, that there are simply two distinct traditions: "la galaico-portuguesa, más fiel a los textos franceses, y la castellana-aragonesa-catalana, que presenta semejanzas con las versiones italianas" (11). Regardless of exactly how the Tristan story filtered into medieval Iberia, though, Torre's discussion makes clear that the tale was well-known there, albeit quite diverse in its manifestations.

As for a proposed date of "la introducción del *Tristán* en la Península, un dato interno al texto…señala como fecha más temprana de la 1258" (Torre 13), citing an allusion to Tristan in Juan Ruiz's *Libro de buen amor*. Here, as quoted in Torre, Ruiz writes: "Ca nunca fue tan leal Blancaflor a Flores, / nin es agora Tristán con todos sus amores" (13). Torre notes that Ruiz's "adverbio 'agora'…indica que el *Tristán* era un libro reciente, casi contemportáneo a la escritura" of *El Libro de buen amor.* The fact that Juan Ruiz's work, written in the 1300s (Mujica 21), is supposed to be a manual of *buen amor*, or pure love, but is instead given more to an exemplum of *loco amor*, carnal love, raises the question of how one is to reconcile amorous affections with his Christian faith. Ruiz even states in the invocation to his text that he will "da ejemplos de los dos tipos de amor para que el lector pueda escoger entre ellos" (Mujica 21). Bárbara Mujica

comments that “Su propósito no es incitar al lector a pecar o a descuidar su alma y así perder la Savación, sino ofrecerle ejemplos de mala conducta para que los pueda rechazar” (21). It is fitting that the Arcipreste of Hita would invoke one of the most well-known romances that accomplishes the task of asking that same question: the story of Tristan and Iseo.

In *The Arthurian Legend in the Literatures of the Spanish Peninsula*, Entwistle describes “the main thread of the narrative as it was known in Spain” as one where “The translator dealt skillfully with his original, and though his manner is paratactic, it is rarely amorphous” (107). What is notable about Entwistle’s summary of the Tristan as found in Spain are a few distinctions that either align it with, or distinguish it from, the French and British versions of the story. As in Malory and the *Tristan en Prose*, Tristán is “cured by Iseut,” the princess (105), and after his uncle requests the hero bring the lady home for his bride, the lovers spend time at “the Giant’s isle” (106). Entwistle notes that in Spain, Tristan was known to have fled to Brittany to be healed by another Iseut, Iseut Blanche-Mains, whom he marries in attempt to forget the former. As in Malory’s “Book of Sir Tristram,” the lovers “are welcomed by Lancelot and Guenevere at Joyosa Guarda” (106), and as in the Béroul, Mark finds the lovers “sleeping in one bed, but divided by a naked sword” (106). However, Entwistle highlights that in this episode the lovers were not discovered in “a forest *mise-en-scéne*,” which not only “destroys the credibility of the drawn sword as evidence of their continence” (107), but stylistically changes a Celtic motif of the tale’s origin, as there is no forest. Additionally, Entwistle includes considerable commentary on the negative character of King Mark: his “baseness” (105), his orders against Tristan made “revengefully,” and at the end of the story, Entwistle

notes that Mark is cited as mortally wounding his nephew (106). Perhaps Mark is cast in a negative light to make Iseo's choice of Tristan over the king more acceptable. Regardless, from Entwistle's composite, which is referred to for the sake of simple brevity, it is clear that Spain was familiar with a variety of the Tristan stories.

One of the works found there in the medieval period includes the anonymous *Libro del esforzado caballero don Tristán de Leonís y de sus grandes hechos en armas*, which follows the romance tradition discussed by Deyermond: the story creates an alternative world that could be applied to readers symbolically on account of its archetypal characters and emotional subject matter. Because of the work's descent from stories in France and Spain, it is another example of the extent to which the influences of those countries infiltrated Spain while it shapeshifted in the later Middle Ages. The text exemplifies Deyermond's definition of a medieval romance, "a story of adventure, dealing with combat, love, the quest, separation and reunion, other-world journeys, or any combination of these" (234). Just as Deyermond sets forth that these tales, while being entertaining, may at the same time express "a moral or religious lesson…and moral or religious connotations are very often present" (234) this is true of the text. Readers are called upon to question the choice of both Tristán and Iseo to continue their affair, despite the clearly sinful nature of their actions. This necessitates an examination of *why* the two iconic characters seemingly choose love over salvation, and in the earlier Tristans, this examination often leads readers to indicators of each lover's devotion to God, be it in their prayers, exclamations, or in more dynamic events, such as Tristán's chapel leap. However, these signs of the lovers' up-standing morality are less evident in the Spanish texts than in the Fench versions; consequently, the characters are seen to lack the

redemptive quality of being good Christians, casting a negative view over them and their actions.

The *Libro del esforzado caballero don Tristán de Leonís y de sus grandes hechos en armas* was revised, glossed, and provided with a prologue by Ignacio B. Anzoátegui in 1943. His views on the work are in keeping with the ambivalent perception of knight-lovers in France and of the paradox of love that those works presented. Anzoátegui assterts that "La humanidad de Tristán no justifica nuestros pecados, sino que Tristán nos enseña cómo el pecado puede vivir también una vida de riesgo y inquietud" (11). His statement shows that while Tristán is a human character, his sins are risks that create negative uncertainty in his life, a statement that questions the actions of the adulterous lovers, just as the French texts did.

Anzoátegui continues to comment on the negative perception of *fin' amor* in the story, noting that "Tristán y Lanzarote tienen un problema de amor…Por eso, aquéllos perduran y éste muere sin remedio, a pesar de todos los aniversarios organizados" (*Libro* 12), which emphasizes the pain endured by these heroes for their love. This statement evidences what would have posed further questioning as to why chivalric knight-lovers choose to engage in such relationships when all they offer is pain "without remedy," depicting *fin' amor* in a more negative light than in the French texts. Even more, Anzoátegui classifies Tristan and Lancelot as "hombres de la Caída, pero son también hombres de la Redención. Por eso, pertenecen a la Caballería: porque fueron — y siguen siendo — espejo de caballeros y doloroso ejemplo de pecadores" (12). Thus, the knights, according to Anzoátegui, have dual significance: as a painful example of sinners, but also as those eligible for redemption. His commentary suggests that despite their sinful

actions, chivalric knight-lovers like Tristan and Lancelot can be forgiven their sins for the pains they endure to maintain them, as if their trials are a form of penance that allows them redemption. Despite their penance, though, it is clear that the lovers suffer, and their experiences are depicted in such a negative light that it begs the question of whether such perilous relationships are worth the effort.

The version of the Tristan studied by Anzoátegui, like the Malory version and the French versions before it, shows how regardless of the country where their story was told, Tristán and Iseo's relationship called on the public to examine its values. Here, as in its precursors, readers are asked to evaluate the actions of the two lovers. While the ultimate decision is left to the reader, the author makes clear the message that living in such sin is a miserable, painful choice.

As for the actual text itself, it follows quite closely to the earlier versions of the story. As in the French and English versions, Tristán is wounded by the Morlot and goes to Ireland to be healed. Similarly, in this version, the Irish king asks his queen to heal Tristán, but she responds "enviad por vuestra hija Iseo, que sabe más que yo, y ella lo podrá guarescer" (39). So in this version, the princess is Tristán's healer, not her mother, which aligns this text with Malory's version and the *Tristan en Prose* more so than in the Thomas text. The princess Iseo endeavors to heal Tristan and in the process, discovers that his wound was poisoned. She treats Tristán accordingly, and after "quince días fué bien sano" (39). As in the prose *Tristan*, Iseo appears to be a good Christian, as upon her report to the king of Tristan's healing, she thanks God, saying, "loado sea Dios" (39). This construction not only follows those of the Béroul, Thomas, Prose, and Malory versions of the story, but is important because it makes Iseo's character more sympathetic

to a largely Catholic audience. The inherent argument is that, if Iseo is a good Christian, then she would not sin against God lightly; moreover, her goodness would serve as grounds for pardon by a pious public.

In the anonymous Anzoátegui version of the Tristan, after the knight is healed, "el rey de Escocia y el rey de los cient caballeros y otros reyes coronados y caballeros, bastecieron un torneo" (*Libro* 39-40). The Irish King "pensó en sí mesmo que será bien de decir a Tristán si quería ir allá" (40). This transpiration of event is similar to those of the prose *Tristan* and to Malory's text, where the Irish king arranges a tournament; however, in this case, it takes place in Scotland. As in other versions, Tristan refuses to participate. At the tournament, though, "llegó un caballero con unas armas negras y traía dos espadas. E hirió en la parte de los cient caballeros e hizo tanto de armas que en poca de hora no halló caballero que se le osase parar delante que así huían ante él como las ovejas delo lobo: tan duros eran sus golpes" (40). The black knight is strong and full of prowess, as knights fled from his powerful blows like sheep from a wolf. Impressed by the knight but not knowing his identity, the Irish king invited him to his court and "hizo honra al caballero en la corte diez días" (41). Here, the black knight is clearly sir Palomades, although he is not named. As in French versions of the Tristan, Palomades is venerated for his prowess; he is depicted in a positive light, rather than as a negative, Saracen "other," as in Malory's work. Further evidence of this positive representation is evident in Iseo's estimation of the knight when compared to Tristan.

Here, as in the *Tristan en Prose,* following the events of the tournament, Brangel, Iseo's lady-in-waiting, "dixo a Iseo: «¿Cuál de los dos caballeros amaríades vos ante, al caballero de las dos espadas, o al caballero que vos sanastes de su llaga?»" (41), to

which, as in the French text, Iseo replies, «Si el caballero que sane fuse tal caballero como el de las dos espadas, yo le amaría más que a tales cuatro caballeros»" (41). In this episode, Iseo expresses a preference for Palomades, the knight of two swords, but she concedes that she would love Tristán more if he were as strong as the other knight. Because of this exchange, it is clear that the black knight, Palomades, is not "othered" as in Malory's text. However, there are three distinct differences in this episode from the earlier versions of the story: one, that "los dos caballeros estaban donde oían estas cosas" (41); two, that there is no description of the black knight being struck by Iseo's beauty upon his arrival at court; and three, there is no description of how Tristán, during this time, tutored Iseo, which would have helped explain to readers her predisposed fondness for him. The unknown black knight departs, and twenty days later the time for another tournament arrives. As before, the king asks Tristán if he will participate. The hero responds that "«Aun me siento flaco e non podría de traer armas; mas, id vos con la buena ventura»" (41). This differs from the prose *Tristan* in that Tristán fights not at the behest of Iseo against Palomades's gain of worship. The episode concludes with a knight bearing "armas blancas" (43) winning the tournament, who many believe to be Lancelot. But, as Brangel's brothers divulge to her, the winner was really Tristán.

As in earlier versions, Tristán is later asked to return to Ireland to bring back Iseo to Cornwall for Mark's bride. The former is well-received in Ireland, as he has fought to assist the Irish king prior, as in other versions of the story (64). Iseo is taken to Mark's court, and as in the earlier versions, she tries to have Brangel killed in the forest. Iseo regrets her actions, and in her remorse, promises Palomades whatever he wishes; he knows where Brangel is, and that she is alive. On account of this adventure, Iseo is taken

away by Palomades, as she is all that he desires. While Palomades is forced to defend his quarry against a pursuing knight, Iseo escapes into a tower. Palomades and Sagramor "combatían en el prado por amor de Iseo" (88). When Palomades "conoció que no era aquel Tristán, que mucho le meguaba la fuerza. E a poco de hora se levantaron e fuéronse a ferir mortalmente" (88). This passage illustrates Palomades's ferocious anger and is furthered by his actions to give "un gran golpe por encima de la cabeza a traición que dió con él en tierra" (88). Thinking his opponent dead after the hefty blow, Palomades "cabalgó en su caballo lo más aína que pudo e fue apriesa para donde había dexado a la reina Iseo. E miró a todas partes e no la pudo fallar" (88), as she had escaped to the tower.

Palomades clearly feels no remorse for his negative actions, and he soon repeats them. As he "entrose por la floresta asaz triste e, andándola buscando, topó con el cibdadano" (88) who had offered Iseo shelter. Because the cibdadano tells Palomades that he cannot see her, the saddened Palomades asks if "«vos sois aquel diablo que me ha puesto tamaña tristeza en mi corazón? ¡Por la mi fe, yo vos castigaré, que jamás fariéis otro pesar a ningún caballero!» E sacó la espada e diole tan gran golpe por encima de la cabeza que lo abrió por medio e lo echó muerto en tierra" (88-89). Here, Palomades passes judgement upon and kills a mere "cibdadano," making him look even more passionate and impulsive than before. Palomades then finds the tower where Iseo is, but she will not permit him entry, saying that "«Así me guarde Dios que es verdad que vos demandastes el don falsamente e con gran engaño e como mal caballero»" (89). After charging him of making demands falsely and deceptively, and of being a bad knight, she leaves his sight. Palomades paces about before "é echose a dormir, con propósito de non

se quitar de allí hasta llevar a la reina Iseo o morir sobre la demanda" (89). Here, is is evident that Palomades would rather die than leave without Iseo, establishing that the source of his negative actions is love for her.

This episode is worth recounting at length because of the numerous similarities that it has with earlier Tristan versions. Still, it possesses distinct characteristics that set it apart from the others. To begin, as in the Malory version, we see a conflicting representation of Palomades. On the one hand, he is a knight of great prowess, but on the other, he clearly exhibits undesirable "other" characteristics. For instance, in this episode, Palomades saves Brangel, whom he recognizes from the Irish court, but he uses her to obtain Iseo *falsamente*, through an *engaño*, or a deception, thus, in an ignoble way. Yet he does so for love of Iseo, much like Capellanus's assertion that "Every attempt of a lover tends towards the enjoyment of the embraces of her whom he loves; he thinks about it continually for he hopes that with her he may fulfill all the mandates of love" (30).

This conflicted representation of Palomades is similar to Malory's version, yet in this case, it is not so much emphasized that Palomades is a "Saracen." The only such characterization occurs when Tristán returns to court to find Iseo gone, taken by "Palomades el pagano" (90). An additional "other" characteristic in keeping with his reception as a true, courtly knight, yet an Eastern one, is when Gorvalán finds Palomades sleeping in wait for Iseo. Here, Gorvalán "no le podia despertar, porque [Palomades] sonaba un sueño que estaba con su señora Iseo compliendo su vountad e todo su amor carnal" (91). The fact that Palomades only cares to think and dream of Iseo, especially in a "carnal" way, and that he is angered at being drawn out of his reverie by Gorvalán recalls the guidelines set forth by Cappelanus, where "A true lover is constantly and

without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved" (186). Even more, Palomades embodies how "Love is a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace" (Capellanus 28). Yet there is more to the love of Palomades, as this passage evidences the carnal and sensual focus of his desire. This is not unlike the sensual, luxuriating descriptions in the works of the old Arabian poets and those that the author of the *Libro de la consolación de España* condemns.

Another interesting facet of this episode is the way by which Palomades kills his opponents: smiting them over the head. This particular method is used by Tristan to kill the Marhault in the other versions of the story, and these dolorous, cranial blows seem to be Tristan's signature move. It is interesting that in this Iberian version of the story, the technique is afforded to Palomades, either to emphasize his rhetorical position as Tristan's foil, set up by the fact that they "se cataban mala voluntad así como mortales enemigos" (41) after Iseo's comment to Brangel about which knight she preferred; or to align Palomades more closely to the one seen as such a quintessential knight-lover: Tristan. Regardless, this version of the Tristan saga suggests that its public either did, or should, condemn outsiders, especially lovers like Palomades, who were overcome with uncontrollable bouts of passionate rage, as well as the affliction of sensuous desire.

Whereas the text provided by Anzoátegui is quite easy to work with, the *Fragmento de un «libro de Tristan» Galaico-Portugues*, edited by J.L. Pensado Tome is unique and problematic. Written in Galician Portugese, it is difficult to follow the entire action of the text because it is so disjointed. Tome's version is a new edition of a version

discovered and edited by D. Manuel Serrano y Sanz who credit the fragment to "la Casa ducal de Osuna" and that "los documentos que allí se guardan relativos al gran poeta del siglo xv D. Iñigo López de Mendoza, marqúes de Santillana" (Serrano y Sanz qtd. in *Fragmento* 7). Tome mentions possible signals of a French model for the work, although they might only be relics of the tendencies that influenced the French model of the Galician-Portuguese text from which this version may have derived (*Fragmento* 9). The story contained within the fragment was originally believed to concern Lancelot du Lac, but Tome found nothing like it in the edition by Oskar Sommar of *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*. For this reason, Tome considers that because the fragment begins with a mention of a Queen, if it did not refer to Guienevere, there was only one other "gran figura femenina de las novelas del ciclo betón, la reina Iseo" (*Fragmento* 10), which incited a new investigation.

The new hypothesis was confirmed "con la presencia en el texto de su dama de compañía, de su persona de confianza, de la doncella Brangen" (10). Thus, Tome asserts that "el hecho de que se citen aventuras de Lanzarote no tiene la menor importancia, ya que este simpar caballero aparece por todos los lados en las obras del ciclo artúrico" (19). He declares that the "fragmento no pertenece al *Lanzarote del Lago*…sino al *Libro de Tristán*" (11). Tome believes that this fragment affirms the existence of a Tristán in Galician-Portuguese, "quizá el *Libro de Tristán,* de la biblioteca del Rey Don Eduarte" (11) that is "la última reliquia del mismo códice que perteneció al rey de Portugal" (12). Tome defends "la fecha que Serrano y Sanz ha atribuido al texto, mediados del siglo xiv" asserting that "es perfectamente válida y puede demonstrarse fácilmente su semejanza con otros textos contemporáneos" (*Fragmento* 12). Thus, Tome's study of this fragment

demonstrates the infiltration of British material, even if derived from French sources, into not only Spain, but also Portugal, encompassing the whole of the Iberian Peninsula.

The other version of the Tristan in Iberia that appears to be written in Galicician Portuguese is Vatican manuscript 6428, which "consists of 131 actual folios of written script, or 260 pages, two columns to a page" (*El Cuento* 1). This version is much more complete than the fragment studied by Tome, and in examining its contents, claims about the divergences of the Tristan in Spain from the French "originals" become clear. In MS 6428, there are different names attributed to several characters, and there are differences in plot development, although the main threads of the story remain intact.

At the beginning of the Vatican MS, one of the first divergences appears, as the story gives a new name for the Morlot: Esmerol (*El Cuento* 84). Tristan engages with him in a scene reminiscent of Malory's battles, full of language that describes the epic ferocity of the combat and its bloodiness. Eventually, Tristan sees that "Esmerol perdia mucha de fuerça e de la sangre…echose el escudo atrás e tomo el espada con dos manos e fue dar los fuertes e espessos golpes a diestro e a siniestro" (*El Cuento* 88). The scene culminates as Tristan serves "Esmerol tan grand golpe que le tajo el yelo, e metiole la espada por la cabeça que fizo la espada quebrarse vn poco del tajo, e al tirar que fizo quedo en la cabeça de Esmerol" (88). Although Tristan's Irish competitor has a different name than in earlier texts, the details of this episode are in keeping with the French and English Tristans. One of the congruent details is that the episode features what becomes Tristan's his signature move, smiting his enemy over the head, in order to defeat the representative of Irlanda, which frees Cornualla from the need to pay tribute. More, as in the earlier texts, a piece of the blade sticks in the skull of Esmerol, who dies upon return

to his homeland. Here, the storyline is the same as in earlier texts, despite a significant name change. This congruency of plot continues in most episodes, only showing minor divergences in a few places.

For example, the Vatican MS is follows the lead of the prose *Tristan*, the Béroul, and the Malory redaction where the princess Yseo nurses Tristan back to health; although it adds that Goruanao accompanied Tristan to Irlanda, which did not occur in the other versions. In Irlanda, "la donzella" Yseo, at the request of her father, "toma...a Tristan e leuolo a su camara e guardo la ferida. E fizole vn tal enplasto que a cabo de quinze dias las plagas fueron sanas" (*El Cuento* 90). Here, even the number of days needed to cure Tristan is congruent with other redactions, and following suit again, the wound opens, and Yseo "lo fizo traer al sol e escallentarle la llaga, e la poçoña començo bollir" (91) indicating that the wound was poisoned. As before, and in previous versions, Yseo plasters the wound again, after which Tristan is healed. There is no mention of Yseo being tutored by Tristan in this version, or of any emotional fondess developing between the two, as in Thomas and Malory.

After Tristan is healed, there is a tournament, and there a "cauallero que traya vnas armas negras e dos espada" (*El Cuento* 91). He fought in a way that garnered him great respect, and this "cauallero negro" (91) was invited back to the home of the "rrey Languisyn" (91) of Yrlanda, where Tristan was staying. Although this black knight is not named, it us clear that he is none other than Palomades. In this version, as in the Thomas and Prose Tristan, he is shown great honor by the Irish, as "aquellos della corte fazian grand honor al cauallero de las armas negras" (92). As in the Anzoátegui manuscript, Brangen asks Yseo which knight she would prefer: "'el cauallero de de las Dos Espadas o

el cauallero vuestro que vos guaresistes?' E los dos caualleors estauan en loguar que oyan estas palabras" (*El Cuento* 92). Yseo responds that she would prefer Tristan if he "fuese ansi bueno de sus armas e asi de alto linaje como es este otro e como el mesmo demuestra en su paresçer, toda doncella lo deuie querer mas que al otro" (92). Her preference is the same as in all other manuscripts feauturing Palomades, but is more like the Anzoátegui manuscript in that the two knights clearly overhear the women's conversation. What is significant about this transpiration is firstly, that Yseo is attracted to Tristan in some way at this point, and secondly, that she holds the black knight in high esteem. More important than her estimation of the black knight, though, is the fact that in no way is he set apart as an "other" owing to any distinct qualities, such as being a "Sarasyn" as in Malory, where Iseult does not particularly care for Palomydes and clearly desires for him to gain no worship in the second tournament.

In the Vatican MS, there is indeed a second tournament, at which time the black knight is attributed the already-inferred name of Palomades. The rivalry between him and Tristan having already been established after the conversation of Bragel and Yseo, when the two knights "se otearon el vno al otro de mala cara, e de aquel dia en adelantre començaron de se treer mala voluntad el vuno al otro" (*El Cuento* 92), Tristan finds a way to borrow arms from Brangel so that he can participate in the tournament. That he acts of his own volition is different from the incentive of Iseult's request in the Malory text. Yet, don arms he does, and after performing great deeds of prowess, he answers the call to "vençe el cauallero de las armas negras que trae las does espadas!" (*El Cuento* 93). This prompts Tristan to run "contra Palomades e diole tan grand golpe sobre la cabeça que le derribo en tierra del cauallo, e cayo amorteçido" (93). When Palomades thinks to

"foyr…Tristan lo vio e fuese en pos del, e dixole [a] alta bos—Cauallero, tornad, que agora sabredes quien es…[mas di]gno de auer el amor de la in[fan]ta Yseo entre ti e yo. E diole vn golpeençima de la cabeça que le metio en tierra" (*El Cuento* 93). In none of the other versions does this duel occur. In the Prose Tristan, Palamedes seems to disappear from the narrative. He is non-existant in the Anzoátegui MS, and in Malory's version, the final dual between the knights is prolonged over a summer until finally, Tristan and Palomydes fight in what is the latter's final battle before conversion. In both Malory and the Vatican MS, Palomades is defeated by Tristan. In the former, his sword is stripped from him, making him yield, wheras in the latter, his loss prompts him to charge: "Ay mezquino cauallero! Que non se quien me vençio, e esme mas graue que yo non traere mas de la vna espada" (93). Thus, in both episodes, Palomades loses to and is symbolically emasculated by Tristan over love of Yseo.

After this time, though, Palomades reappers, as in earlier versions of the story, and rescues Brangel from the forest after she is ordered to be executed by a jealous Yseo. Palomades promises to return Brangel to the court, provided that queen Yseo grants him an undisclosed wish. As in the other texts, this wish is for him to "lleuar [Yseo] comigo" (*El Cuento* 127). Palomades's deception to acquire his desire aligns him with the behavior of a negatively viewed "other," and it is at this juncture that he declares himself not just Palomades, but "el Pagano" (127). This attributes a negative reading to the once positive representation of the black knight, which is congruent with his treatment in other texts, and is furthered by the fact that rather than merely wounding the pursuing rescuer of Yseo, in the Anzoátegui manuscript, Palomades kills him. This creates a stronger estimation of Palomades's desire and passionate ferocity, which ultimately depicts him in

a more negative light than in other texts. Thus, Palomades is represented in the MS as first subjugated under the might of a greater knight, which is typical in the chivalric tradition, but he is later set apart as a passionate, "other." Besides analyzing the depiction of Palomades in MS 6428, it is also important to examine its treatment of *fin' amor*, as both are arguably manifestations of the Orient within it.

It is notable that in MS 6428, as in other works, the love philter plays a key role. It manifests as "vna anp[o]lla de vino" (111) that the Queen of Irlanda entrusts with Brangel to give to Yseo and King Mares. However, Brangel mistakenly gives it to "Tristan a beuer e a la infanta [Yseo] en la mar" (111) at the request of Goruanao, and in this, the two "fueron enamorados al vno del otro de loco amor" (*El Cuento* 111). The comment that the two were enamored specifically with "loco amor" would have garnered a negative perspective from a pious public, as the term was used to describe passion of the flesh. Additionally, "loco amor" was often conceptualized as a contrast to "buen amor," or love for God. This is best exemplified by the circumstances surrounding Juan Ruiz's *Libro de buen amor*, which the Spanish public would have been familiar with by this time. As a result, the commentary in MS 6428 about the type of love that posessesd Tristan and Yseo illuminates not only that a kind of judgment has already been passed on the lovers, but what type, making them not lovers to identify with, but "others" who engage in disapproved of behaviors.

Like the love philter, as in other manuscripts, the Vatican MS details the episode of the enchanted horn, from which no woman untrue to her lord may drink. All but four women drink from it out of "trezientas e quarenta e çinco dueñas" (*El Cuento* 142) at the court of King Mares. While the King thinks to burn all the deceitful women, including his

queen, he is made to change his mind. But, despite his formal pardon of Yseo and the others, after the incident, the text states that "dexa el cuento de fablar como el rrey perdono a la rreyna e a las dueñas, e dezirvos ha como la falsa donzella queria por amigo a Tristan" (*El Cuento* 143). The adjective "falsa" in this passage illustrates a negative perspective of Yseo because it draws extra attention to the fact that she is unfaithful to Mares, and more, the quote directly implicates Tristan in the malfeasance.

Not only Yseo is depicted in a negative light. Tristan suffers the same fate. This negative view is most prominent in Tristan's leap from the chapel. In other manuscripts, such as Béroul's, the scene functioned as a way to show that God condoned Tristan's behavior, as it was clearly only by the grace of divine intervention that the knight could survive such a fall. The Vatican MS offers a contrasting representation. The first point of divergence is that Tristan does not ask the Cornish knights leading him to death if he can pray in the chapel on the cliff. Instead, he makes no mention of wanting to commune with God before death. He breaks his bonds, severely injures a man, and flees, arriving at the chapel almost by chance. There, he "començo muy fuertemente a se defender, en manera que firio los quarto caualleros de aquellos que lo conbatian a la muerte" (*El Cuento* 155-156). This transpiration is much more violent than in other versions of the story, and it shows Tristan killing others to maintain his relationship with Yseo.

To commit adultery is one sin, but to kill others in such a ferocious manner must have been seen as an even worse malfeasance, even if there was a preoccupation with retaining honor at the time, and even if while jousting, knights potentially killed one another in combat. This episode is quite different from such instances, and directly after it, the negative depiction of Tristan continues. As the survivors of the encounter with

Tristan return to the city, the narrator comments that they were "bien tristes por la muerte de los quarto caualleros que ally auia muertos Tristan" (156). The men are upset about the death of their companions, and they are not only unconcerned about Tristan's welfare, but they are clearly upset by his behavior. All of this is contrary to the other versions of the Tristan studied heretofore. Further, this narration serves as a commentary that condemns Tristan's actions, whereas in other manuscripts, these same figures were concerned for his well-being.

The negative depiction of Tristan in the episode of the chapel leap and the emphasis on Yseo as false to her lord amidst the trial of the enchanted horn suggests a negative view of each of the lovers in the Vatican MS 6428. Owing to the earlier label placed on Tristan and Yseo's romance as "loco amor," the text indicates that it does not condone adulterous relationships, as its protagonists are set apart from what the current Spanish society deemed acceptable. Maria Torre, who studies the sequal to the Tristan comments that according to the "Tristán de la edición de 1501, concibió la historia de Tristán como una tragedia de amor, al modo de la novela sentimental" (29). Thus, rather than a provocative exemplum of idealized, courtly love, according to Torre, the story was seen more as a tragedy caused by love, as in the Spanish sentimental novels. She elaborates that "la tragedia de Tristán no está en el amor irrefrendable que siente por Iseo, sino en las circunstancias que rodean a ese amor: el hecho de que Iseo sea la mujer de su tío. Para el autor, el amor-pasión es siempre destructivo, pues mina la voluntad del amante" (Torre 29-30). Torre's commentary illuminates a negative perspective of courtly love as it is "always descructive."

Torre conjectures of *fin' amor* that "este amor es posible en la corte de Arturo, paraíso de las ideas caballerescas y del amor cortés. La corte de Marco, donde deben vivir los amantes, es, en cambio, reflejo de la realidad. El amor, conforme a la visión trágica de las novelas sentimentales, debe acabar con la muerte de los amantes, ya ques es inviable en la sociedad medieval" (30). Here, she highlights that while the idealized form of courtly love may have functioned in the fantasy paradise of Arthur's court, that of Mark better reflected the reality of what courtly love elicited: pain and unfulfillment. It is the conversion of "la subversiva historia de amor adúltero en una biografía heroica" (9) that Torre posits as the reason for the story's "éxito" and for the fact that of all other romances, it was "la que más difundió por Europa, siendo traducida a múltiples lenguas" (9), likely because after the establishment of order by the *Reyes Católicos*, such conceptions of love were no longer appreciated as they had been before, at least in Spain.

Vatican MS 6428's treatment of Tristan an Yseo shows a clear move away from the love affair that Spain had with such *libros caballerescos* in the 14th and early 15th centuries. This manuscript provides a moralized version of the Tristan story for its contemporary audience, one that was undergoing a remarkable shift of identity. This moralization is further evidenced by the work's emphasis on Palomades as a pagan with erratic and dangerous behavior. Although he is not referred to as a Saracen, or a Moor, Palomades is nevertheless set apart as a pagan. However indeterminate that term may be, through its representation of Palomades, the text sets Palomades apart as a distinct "other." It suggests that a Christianized Spain looks down on those who are not Christian, and that as much as Palomades is an "other," those who are not truly of the official Spanish faith are outsiders. Overall, when compared to earlier versions of the Tristan

story, the text displays a negative attitude towards characters who are seen as either inherently outsiders to the Catholic church, or who are seen as members that subvert the church's expectations—making Tristan and Yseo, in a way, "others" as much as the "pagan" Palomades.

This moralization of the Tristan story is further exemplified in its "sequel," which emerged in Spain in 1534: *Tristán de Leonís y el rey don Tristán el joven, su hijo*. In her introduction to the text, Maria Torre comments that the work builds on the premise that to the author, "Le parecía imposible que unos amores tan excelsos no hubiesen dado fruto bajo la forma de una nueva vida. Su concepto de la importancia de la familia no le permitía conformarse con la muerte de la pareja protagonista sin dejar herederos" (5). In this way, Torre explains how "La célebre leyenda de Tristán e Iseo no sólo encandiló la imaginación medieval y configuró el mito básico sobre el amor en el mundo occidental…sino que también actuó como fuente de inspiración" (5), as the story tantalized the medieval imagination, provided a standard depiction of *fin' amor* in the West, and also inspired composition of new texts.

The sequel to the Tristan, or, la "Segunda Parte' de la historia de Tristán e Iseo," was published in "1534 como continuación de la conocidísima leyenda artúrica" (Torre 5). In it, the author "explicaba cómo Tristán e Iseo habían tenido un hijo, que removaría la imagen valerosa y caballeresca de su padre, y una hija, de igual belleza que su madre, pero ambos superiores moralmente a sus progenitores" (5). Torre's study shows that as the Tristan story progressed in Spain, it took on new characters, but was still used as a vehicle to question the public's values, as interestingly, the buds of such a sinful union had blossomed into model children: a son as ideal a knight as Tristan, and a daughter as

beautiful as her mother, but both morally superior to their parents. William Entwistle feels that although "nothing is known of the author…his method…is to divert a conspicuous foreign success into Spanish territory, and to lay a new veneer over the characters" (*The Arthurian* 127). While this may be true of the author's approach, what is valuable about his text is that it provides insight into how the original Tristan story was perceived, as well as revealing what revisions to it and its central themes may have resonated with the Spanish public in the mid-16th century.

Entwistle's summary of the plot reinforces that the children of the sequel are named after their parents, and most clearly in the case of the young Tristan, he exhibits the laudable qualities of his father. He is a valiant knight, but what is interesting is that in many episodes, he doesn't just joust with other worthy knights and exhibit his "valor and dexterity" (Entwistle, *The Arthurian* 128), as his father did, but rather, he battles against Moors, including "the Miramamolin…of Africa" (Entwistle, *The Arthurian* 127), who is an admirer of the princess that Tristan serves (128-129). In the end, Tristan "advanced to the attack [of the Moors], killed the pagan" (129) and rescued the princess, who had been abducted by Miramamolin. The story culminates with Tristan marrying the rescued princess and his sister Iseo marrying the the Castilian monarch King Juan (Entwistle, *The Arthurian* 129).

Despite the reductive nature of discussing this text from summary, it is still fascinating that in the sequel to the omnipresent Tristan story, the hero has a son, and that son fights against distinct "others," and in Spain, where many of those "others" once lived. This suggests an attitude privileging a Christian morality over a "pagan" presence in medieval Spain, whatever "pagan" was agreed to mean at the time. Such an attitude

may have been more readily accepted at this point in Spain's history because of the story's appearance after the reign of the Catholic rulers Ferdinand and Isabella, and of course, the infamous Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the Moors and Jews in 1492.

In addition to the positioning of the Moor under the Christian in this text, Torre comments on the author's attitude, noting that he parodies "algunos tópicos frecuentes en los libros de caballerías. En lo religioso [Tristan] era un ferviente cristiano…En lo social rechazaba totalmente el adulterio y los amoríos extramatrimoniales" (6). She, too, notices the fervent Christian morality in the story, and part of that includes a rejection of romance outside of wedlock. To this end, Torre notes, the author also "defendía el matrimonio público contra el secreto" (6). This belif subverts the mandates of *fin' amor* as set forth in Capellanus's treatise, where the concealment of a relationship and its secret reunions are most prized. Therefore, in the sequel to the Tristan that appeared in Spain, even more than in the Vatican MS, it condemns the earlier chivalric focus on *fin' amor*.

To make a better commentary about what Spanish attitudes are present in the medieval to early-modern versions of the Iberian Tristan stories, it is important to consider not only stories of a similar style, such as *La Amadís de Gaula* and its sequel, but also other written works contemporary to the Tristan. To this end, discussion of the widely-popular *Celestina*, which most agree was written by Fernando de Rojas, is particularly useful. A version of this drama-novel circulated around Burgos in 1499, and another version was known to have been dated to 1502 (Mujica 42). Although the work springs from central ideas of the Italian text *Pamphilus*, and in many ways resembles Bocaccio's *Il Filostrato* and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, like the story of Tristan,

two lovers are united romantically despite their moral education and the expectations of their social classes. What ensues are carnal reunions for the two, as well as the embroilment of two servants, their lovers, and a go-between. The latter is the *alcahueta* Celestina, of the work's title, who was inspired by Juan Ruiz's character Trotaconventos in his *Libro de buen amor*. In Rojas's piece, all but the servants' lovers die because of their scheming to bring the protagonists together. Even the lovers fail to escape this fate, and while the young man dies first of an accident, the young woman dies of her own volition—jumping from the height of her family tower. She chooses to die rather than to suffer the loss of her beloved and the consequences of having destroyed her *fama*, or reputation.

What is important about this story to the context of the study of Tristan in Spain is that this love story is such a tragedy. Even more, it illuminates the socio-cultural context in which the Tristans circulated in Spain, as "Los personajes de *La Celestina* funcionan dentro de un ambiente urbano y contemporáneo caracterizado por la corrupción y el materialismo. Se trata de un período de transición en el cual los valores medievales ceden a una nueva conciencia de la autonomía del individuo" (Mujica 42). Mujica's commentary illuminates how in Spain, the changeover between the 15th and 16th centuries was characterized by a similar questioning to reconcile the human experience with doctrines of Christianity as occurred in France around the year 1000, but this questioning surely was complicated by the new nation's relationship with other religions, those that it had rejected, and by its growing exploits abroad.

Perhaps this inundation of new ideas is what spurred the popularity of *La Celestina* and the Tristan story, albeit colored with negative views of love that are distinct

from the earlier Tristan tales and from the converations of "others" as seen in France and England. Despite the fact that the Spanish public seemed less to condone the extramarital affairs of the lovers in *La Celestina* and in the Tristan saga than did other cultures, the development of these texts still shows a fascination with coming to terms with the realities of love against the expectations and seeming "rules" of the Christian faith.

What is unique about this study is that it addresses the lack of scholarship on Spanish romances as indicated by A.D. Deyermond in his article "The Lost Genre of Medieval Spanish Literature," where Deyermond notes that among popular medieval literary genres, "The neglect of the romance is…the worst case of all" (231). Deyermond asserts that "From the thirteenth century until well into the sixteenth, the romance had no serious rivals in European fiction" (233). Yet, Deyermond admits that "This major genre is virtually unrecognized in Spanish literary history" (240).

This examination has considered the complex and debated filiation of the Spanish Tristans, as well as evidenced elements of those texts' problematic natures, such as linguistic fators, fragmentation, and both name and plot divergences. But more, what this study has accomplished is to illumate that the old, Irish Celtic tale of Tristan and Yseo had a distinct presence in the Iberian Peninsula from the early 13th century up to the dawn of Spain's Siglo de Oro. Even more, study of the Spanish Tristan stories shows the rhetorical development of the Saracen knight Sir Palomades and of *fin' amor*, which illustrates the flexibility of the the motifs to reflect upon, illuminate, and question the societies in which they were written. In Spain, by comparing the Tristan texts with contemporary works like Fernando Rojas's *La Celestina* and even Juan Ruiz's earlier *Libro de buen amor* coupled with the influx of classical ideas that manifested in

philosophical imitations by Juan Díaz de Toledo, a clearer picture of the emerging early-modern mentality in Spain materializes. As in France three hundred years before, in Spain, there was evidence of the public struggling to determine how it perceived "others," as well as what the general consensus was on the practice of *fin' amor*. Whereas in France these questions never seemed to be resolved at the end of the Tristan texts, leaving for the public's consideration a type of rhetorical question on the subject, in the Spanish works, as in Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, an opinion was already formed: one that did not condone extramarital affairs, although this view is admittedly clearer in some texts more than others. Though Malory did not focus greatly on the love triangles involving Iseult beyond enough treatment to suggest that he deemed Tristan and the former guilty of a willful decision to sin, he does focus distinctly on developing Sir Palomides as an "other," who facilitates contemplation on the English identity in the midst of civil war. In Spain, the "other" is clearly looked down upon, as seen in the negative depictions of Palomades in both the Anzoátegui manuscript and the Vatican MS. It appears that in addition to "othering" this outsider, the Spanish texts "other" Tristan and Iseo—building from an established conclusion that the lovers sin. Overall, these figures are set apart from the expectations of a nascent, Christian Spain, and they are seen to not only sin against God, but to create for themselves a painful and unfulfilling extistence. These aspects of the story illustrate how at the close of the 15th century, ideas in the Iberian Peninsula about *fin' amor* and about "others" had shifted.

Further evidence of this shift is the move of Iberian authors to create new stories that feature children of the infamous lovers who are devoid of their parents' moral shortcomings. This moralization, along with the concurrence of the popular and

incredibly tragic *La Celestina*, where all involved with an extramarital affair die, shows that after a certain point, Spain did not condone courtly love, even if a popular tradition of chivalric novels had developed prior that included works such as the *Amadís de Gaula* and *Tirant lo Blanch*. The later of these works, including the sequel to the Tristan studied by Maria Torre and the *Esplandián*, as well as the anonymous Vatican MS 6428 and the work studied by Ignacio B. Anzoátegui, show a distinct move away from the chivalric ideal.

Scholars argue that some of these Spanish works go so far as to parody elements of the chivalric tradition, especially in terms of the way *Esplandián*'s protagonist acts, which anticipates the divergence from the classical hero and a move towards the Spanish *picaresque* tradition. This new genre centers around an antihero, a *pícaro*, and blatantly exposes moral shortcomings and issues of the world. Both of these moves anticipate Cervantes's *El ingenioso don Quixote de la Mancha*, the iconic pivot point of Spain's Siglo de Oro, or early modern age.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

In examining seven version of the Tristan story in three different countries over a period of four hundred years, this study debunks common misconceptions that medieval publics were mere sheep following the teachings of the Catholic church without question, and without any creative exploration into the human experience. Instead, this inquiry has shown that there was tremendous fluidity in the medieval world, and that a very old, Celtic legend about characters that may have lived in the eighth or ninth centuries captured a vast audience. The development of this tale held the public's attention for the way it questioned the other, as well as love and its placement within Christian beliefs. Whether told in France, England, or Spain, each version of the Tristan story called upon its audience to question not only what it meant to be a good knight, but also a good Christian, and more still, a good person. These considerations occurred during times of unrest, and while they may have further de-stabilized what each country's public had held fast to in the past, each version created a dialog, even if just an internal one for the reader, that made him re-consider his identity as a knight, a lover, a Christain, or even just as a human.

In the French versions of the Tristan story, the overwhelming question raised is whether to accept or reject the lovers on account of their adultery. But rather than provide the audience with straightforward answers, Béroul, Thomas, and the anonymous author of the *Tristan en Prose* leave their audiences with lingering questions as to whether the

sinful behaviors of Tristan and Iseult are warranted, and in the eyes of God, forgiven. Key aspects to this discussion regard the extent to which the relationship of the lovers is developed before they drink the magic love philter, as well as the trials they endure throughout their relationship. Despite the different endings in each tale, the deaths of Tristan and Iseult at the end of each story only further the question of whether or not the reader will accept their relationship, forgive their trespasses, to what extent, and why—leaving of course, the option to condemn the lovers for their un-Christian behaviors. The variations on the Tristan story and its wide proliferation not only evidences its enduring popularity and scope, but also signals the tumult that medieval France experienced in the wake of Eastern ideas about *fin' amor* that were arguably carried North via the Arabian-influenced Troubadours, jongleurs, and minstrels of Southern France.

In England, rather than invoke the ill-fated story of Tristan and Isode to question goodness of the English people, Sir Thomas Malory included the tale to create a parallel for his readers of *Le Morte 'D Arthur* with the decline of King Arthur's idyllic court. Unlike the authors of his French sources, Malory focuses less on the issue of *fin' amor*—although he does succeed in depicting it in a negative light within this section of the larger work—and zeros in on the parallel he constructs between the Saracen knight Sir Palomydes and the quintessential knight-lover, Tristram, whose adventures as a knight-lover anticipate those of Sir Lancelot later in Malory's work. By developing Sir Palomydes as an "uncanny" foil to Sir Tristram, Malory sets forth the rules for being a good knight, or even just a good person, one of which is clearly being Christian. Time and again, Malory depicts the dejected, subservient position of Palomydes to Tristram, and more so than any other "white" knight, suggesting that Malory deemed the Christian

faith as paramount. But even more, Malory focuses on fellowship, highlighting throughout his text the value of keeping good company, as well as the theme of unity. To fall out with a respected knight is seen as the worst plight for a knight, and this reflects back on the socio-cultural melee in which Malory composed. After fighting the Hundred Years War with France, and after being embroiled in the War of the Roses, Malory's England was beleaguered, and the moral tenants of the chivalric knighthood past were crumbling. Malory's "Book of Sir Tristram" develops Sir Palomydes as an outsider, an "other" to highlight the definition of what being a good knight entails. His negative commentary on the practices of lovers fails to condone the immoral, un-Christian, deception of adultery, and both efforts serve to illustrate Malory's values of unification and renewed morals. His explication of these ideas can be read as a cry to his countrymen to reconsider who they are as Englishmen, and for them to evaluate their own identities and actions to galvanize a stronger, more unified England.

The Iberian versions of the Tristan tale are problematic for many reasons. Besides the variety of languages that they are written in, the variety of copies available, and the variety of purported filiation of the texts, they exhibit similar attributes to the French and British versions of the story, albeit with a twist. Particulars of plot aside, the Spanish versions of the Tristan, like the French and British ones, reveal a public fascination with one of the most basic of the Ten Commandments: Thou shalt not commit adultery, not to mention, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. As in their progenitors, the Spanish Tristans emphasize the downfall of lovers. But unlike the earlier texts, the Spanish versions add an additional, redemptive facet to the story: children. It is important to note that the development of the Tristan story in the Iberian Peninsula and the change in

perspective towards the *novelas caballerescas* are both likely results of the unification of Spain under *los Reyes Católicos*, Ferdinand and Isabella, who implemented the Inquisition and expelled both the Muslims and Jews. It is no wonder then, that the texts from the late 15th century onward condemn the tenets of *fin' amor* and the lovers adhering to them. In addition, though, the same influence of the Catholic monarchs likely influenced why the texts exhibited such negative views of Sir Palomades, the indeterminate pagan. In all of these cases, the figures who are not embraced by the church, or who subvert its doctrines, are seen as "other," a view that could only have helped to further what the Catholic monarchs saw as their definition of nascent Spain.

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