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Abstract of a Thesis presented for the degree of
Master of Arts in the University of Durham, entitled:
'An Investigation of the Differences in Ideas and
Emphases in five Middle English Romances' (Florie
and Blancheflour; King Horn; Havelok the Dane;
Amis and Amiloun; Ipomadon) and the Old French
Versions of the same Subjects, with special refer-
ence to Narrative Technique, Characterisation, Tone
and Background.

J.D. Burnley.

May 1967.

Comparative criticism of Old French and Middle English Romance has usually been incidental to other concerns, and either extremely general or narrowly specific. The aim of the present study is closely and systematically to compare the important English and French versions of the chosen romances, and to ascertain any consistent differences. The approach to each story has been divided into two sections: firstly on tone and background, secondly on characterisation and narrative technique. Within these divisions, sub-headings are suggested by critical expediency, but an attempt is made to establish the setting and tone of each poem from the opening scenes and interesting discoveries are pursued by selection from the rest of the work. The study of characterisation involves an examination of the poet's presentation of the main characters, their emotions and their relationships. Finally, a comparison is made of the employment of stylistic devices in the narrative.

The results of a study of this kind suffer in originality in proportion to their condensation. Nevertheless, it may be said that the chief differences between the English and French romances reflect

a difference in traditions, expressible either in social or literary terms.

The earlier English poems, lacking description and psychological exposition, simple in structure, formulaic in diction, their narrator vigorous and assertive, their setting ordinary and their battle-scenes wrought from popularised epic, reveal a descent from a popular, oral tradition.

The French poems, with their delicate narrative irony, didactic and thematic concerns, psychological subtlety, graceful amplification of literary themes and allusions, and their courtly ethos, clearly belong to a courtly and literary tradition.

The later Middle English Iwanaden exemplifies an interesting coalition of the two traditions; yet, a hundred and eighty years after the composition of its original, it can not equal the subtle psychology and courtly grace of the Anglo-Norman poem.

An Investigation of the Differences in Ideas and Emphases in five Middle English Romances (Floris and Blaunche flour; King Horn; Havelok the Dane; Amis and Amiloun; Ipomadon) and the Old French Versions of the same Subjects, with special reference to Narrative Technique, Characterisation, Tone and Background.

Volume II

AMIS AND AMILOUN

AMIS AND AMILOUN

1. Introduction

The story of Amis and Amiloun was extremely widely disseminated in Mediaeval Europe, almost equalling Floris and Blannchefflour in the number of languages into which it was adopted. Its ubiquity was greatly assisted by its early division into two distinct traditions, called by Leach the 'Romantic' and the 'Hagiographic'. The latter versions have as their ultimate source the twelfth century Vita Sanctorum Amici et Amelii. The background to their action is the court of Charlemagne and the emphasis is upon the pious and miraculous. The Romantic versions are numbered by Leach at seven:¹

1) Vatican lib. MS. 1357. Latin verse. Late 11th century. This is the second of a series of verse letters written by Radulfus Tortarius, a monk of the abbey of Fleury. It is simply an anecdote of friendship, entirely devoid of Christian moralising. Seventy-nine of the poem's two hundred and four lines are occupied by the central heroic combat in which Amicus proves his fidelity to his friend, Amelius. The final miracle is of greatly reduced importance and there is no link between the tricked combat and the onset of leprosy. The only moral is contained in the antepenultimate line:

"Tanta fides purae prestat amicitiae."

The poem is published as an appendix to K. Hofman's Amis et Amiles und Jourdain de Blaivies, Erlangen 1882 XXIV-XXX. An English

1. MacEdward Leach, Amis and Amiloun E.E.T.S.203 (1937) gives a comprehensive list of all the versions.

translation is appended to Leach's edition of the English poem.

2) The Anglo-Norman poem.

K Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. MS.50, fol.946-102a
(c 1200)

L British Museum MS. Royal 12 C. xii, fol.69a-766
(14th century)

C Codex Durlac 38, fol. 52-61 in the Grand-Ducal Library
Carlsruhe. (Second half of the 14th century)

A critical edition of the MSS is printed by E. Kölbing in
Amis and Amiloun, Altenglische Bibliothek. II, Heilbron, 1884.
This text is based on the Cambridge MS.

3) The Chanson de Geste. MS. B.N. anc.f.fr. 860, fol.93a-111a
(First half 13th century) Edited by Hofman op. cit.

4) The Middle English Romance.

A Auchinleck W.4.1. fol.49a-616, The Advocates' Library,
Edinburgh. (c 1330).

S Egerton 2862 (formerly known as the Sutherland or
Trentham MS.) fol.135a-147c, British Museum, London.
(End of the 14th century).

D Douce 326 fol.1-13, Bodleian Library, Oxford.
(Second half of 15th century).

H Harleian 2386 fol. 131a-137d, British Museum, London.
(15th century)

Edited by M. Leach Amis and Amiloun E.E.T.S. 203. (1937).
The text is based on the Auchinleck MS.

5) The Miracle Play MS. B.N.anc. f.fr. 820, ii, fol.1a-14c

Printed by G. Paris and Ulysse Robert, Miracles de Notre
Dame, S.A.T.F., (Paris 1871)

6) The version in the Latin prose Historia Septem Sapientum
Romae. According to Gaston Paris the story was included
in the Vaticinium of the Historia in about 1330. It is
edited by G. Buchner, Erlanger Beiträge V.

- 7) MS. B.N. anc. supp. f.fr. 12547 fol.1-162 15th century. This is an unprinted French poem of 14,000 lines which combines the stories of Amis and Amiloun and Girart de Blaives.

Hofman op. cit prints two extracts.

The versions chosen for the present study are the Anglo-Norman, the Middle English and the Old French Chanson de Geste. References are to the editions quoted above.

The original form of the story is difficult to trace. Bédier saw the ultimate source as a French Chanson de Geste which combined feudal and Christian elements.¹ Leach opposes this view with the argument that the oldest and most primitive versions, Radulfus Tortarius, the Anglo-Norman and the English version, show little hagiographical interest. The miracle of the separate tombs which spontaneously come together is missing entirely from these earliest versions, and the Virgin is merely a convenient dea ex machina. According to Leach the original of the extant versions of Amis and Amiloun was a Chanson de Geste which was "non-Christian and non-hagiographic, and...its theme was the exposition of perfect friendship."² The original story is drawn from folk-lore. Taking up a suggestion by Huet, Leach presents a pressing argument for two widespread folk tales, The Two Brothers and The Faithful Servitor as furnishing the basis of the plot.³

1. Romania xxxvi, 343.

2. Op. cit. Intro. xxxii.

3. Intro. xxxii-lxxxix.

The Romantic treatments of the story are closest to this original source, yet they have no demonstrable relationships between themselves. The English poem is probably a redaction of an Anglo-Norman poem close to the versions represented in K, L and C. It is closest of all to version C, which itself is so individual in treatment, and even in incident, as to compel Kölbing to print extensive extracts as footnotes to his edition. Versions K and L are similar, deriving from a common lost antecedent. It is unfortunately impossible to use C; which harks back to a stage before the common origin of K and L; as the basis of a text, owing to the fragmentary state of the manuscript.

The English manuscripts are independent of each other; only D and S are drawn from a common lost antecedent. A is closest to the original English redaction. The English poem extends to 2508 lines of 12 line tail-rhyme stanzas. Macindoe Trounce considers the language to be that of Norfolk, basing his assumption largely on the evidence of vocabulary.¹ The tone is popular and the diction is often highly conservative. Great use was made of the alliterative formulae usually associated with oral composition: "...a leuedy briȝt in bour" (334) "man of milde mode" (1870). Unalliterated phrases are even more common.

The Anglo-Norman poet follows much the same story as the Englishman, but disposes of it in 1250 lines of octosyllabic

1. Cf. A.M. Trounce. 'English Tail Rhyme Romances'. Medium Aevum II p. 36.

couplets. There is little direct speech and even less description. The final miracle receives little emphasis and the murder of the children is passed over with scant pathos. The Anglo-Norman's chief concern is to present an example of ideal companionship which is demonstrated by proofs of loyalty. Other details are unimportant.

By contrast, the Old French poem expands the story a great deal. Written in irregular, assonanted *laissez* terminated by a feminine 'orphan' line, it extends the story to a thousand lines beyond the length of the English version. The style and background are those of the Chanson de Geste. The story is trans-¹planted to the court of Charlemagne; the seneschal is called Hardre. The Christian ethos is developed and considerable emphasis is placed upon the final miracle. The whole poem is crowded with names and details of geographical locations, as in the Chansons. Declamatory direct speech is common and often repetitive in expression. There are frequent echoes of the Chanson de Roland.

1. As in MS. C of the Anglo-Norman poem.

II Tone and Background

A The Opening Scene

The story of Amis and Amiloun is essentially one of friendship. It relates how two equals in the service of a high lord swore companionship but were quickly parted by circumstances. The departing comrade warns his friend against the machinations of the lord's steward, and then withdraws. The enmity of the steward toward the remaining companion grows. When he hears his enemy indulging in love dalliance with the lord's daughter, he betrays him. Taken unawares, the unfortunate hero denies the accusation and accepts a trial-by-combat in which he faces the steward. The outcome is obvious to him, and to his sworn brother when he relates the events to him. Since they resemble each other so closely that no man can separate them, a substitution is planned and carried out. Before the battle takes place the substitute is warned by a voice from heaven that, if he undertakes it, he will suffer from leprosy. Despite this, he goes on and the steward is killed. The first brother then returns and marries the daughter, becoming the lord's heir. The French versions of the story differ here in that the substitute accepts the girl in marriage in the brother's name, and the first brother is restored after the ceremony. The substitute is warned by a heavenly voice before the marriage service instead of before the battle.

Within a very short time the brother who undertook the battle is struck down by leprosy. His wife expels him from her house and

he is reduced to a life of begging, attended by one faithful companion.¹ Chance, one day, brings them to the castle of the other brother. The leper is recognised and the brothers are reunited. One night, one or both of the brothers, according to the version, are informed by a heavenly agency that the only cure for the afflicted is that he should be bathed in the blood of his brother's two children. This is done; by a miracle the children are restored to life, and the two brothers return together to punish the wayward wife and re-possess the land.

The Anglo-Norman poem Amis e Amilun tells the story in its starkest form. Its structure is simple and serves only to support the overall moral interest of the poem. It falls neatly into two halves, culminating in the two major incidents of the poem; the substitution at the battle, and marriage, and the final cure and miracle. There is little expansion of the story which is not immediately relevant to the two main incidents, which reveal the loyalty of one brother to the other and the final endorsement of their acts by God. The result is that the poem has a rather bare, moralistic air, a sternness which allows no fanciful amplifications for their own sake. Despite this, other interests do occasionally intrude and there is some trace of a courtly background and even motivation. On first reading, however, the impression is of a firm and workmanlike structure whose

1. Two, in the O.F. Amis et Amiles.

aim is to point a moral as much as to entertain. There is even a kind of epilogue attached to the two main acts in which judgement and punishment is meted out to the wayward wife of Amilun. The moral question of what punishment a disloyal wife deserves is answered grimly. She is narrowly confined and starved to death.

The English poem follows very much the same plan as its Anglo-Norman counterpart. The moral interests are much the same but the focus is not so sharp. Some scenes are expanded because of their intrinsic interest rather than because such a proceeding may emphasise the moral. Such a scene is the one in which Amis lies in the same bed with Amilun's wife, separated from her by a naked sword. The scene, passed over quickly in the Anglo-Norman, is explored in direct speech by the English poet. Similarly, the discovery by Amis that the leper is his sworn brother is treated in an individual manner. More often the expansion or re-casting of scenes into dramatic presentation does impinge upon the moral theme of the poem. The heightening of pathos in the scene describing the murder of the two children emphasises the sacrifice made by one brother for another. The insertion of a scene where Amiloun's wife insists that he killed the steward "'Wip wrong & michel unrizt' (1492), apart from rounding the character, raises interesting doubts of the moral rectitude of Amiloun's action.¹

The English poem is based on much the same structure as the

1. In common with others of the Auchinleck tail-rhyme group, this poem has a serious, though not oppressive religious spirit. Trounce loc. cit I p.102.

Anglo-Norman. It is a variation on a theme, an expansion, but its basic concern is the same. A certain individuality in the judgements and values of its author will only be apparent from a closer study. In contrast the distinction in treatment of the Old French Amis et Amiles is at once apparent. The basic incidents are the same, but the story is much dilated. The orderly structure of the other two poems is overwhelmed by a welter of new incidents and scenes. The warning against the seneschal delivered by one compaign in the Anglo-Norman poem (77ff) is represented here by a series of scenes in which the seneschal exhibits his treachery. The earlier part of the poem is occupied by a series of largely irrelevant scenes describing the wandering of the brothers in search of each other. New scenes fill the time spent by Amis¹ as a leper. Most have a moral import within themselves but their larger application is very tenuous. Some even tend to shift the emphasis of the moral theme moving the whole story closer to hagiography. An entirely new pair of scenes are introduced which present the relationship of Sir Amis to a son who does not appear in either of the other versions.² The French poem is the story told at length. The underlying pattern of the story is similar to the other treatments, but the structure offers nothing to the theme of the poem. Expansions here and contractions there tend to modify the moral and the total effect is of a rather formless blend between chanson de geste and hagiographic story.

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1. The names of the characters are reversed in the Old French poem.
 2. The Carlsruhe MS. contains a different story of Amilun's son (a much less forceful boy) whose chief function is to arouse pitié.

The variation in tone and background of the poems becomes apparent in the opening scenes. The English poem opens in the familiar manner of the English romances intended to be recited to an audience. Like Havelok it opens with a call for attention, and like Havelok or Ipomadon it gives some indication of its contents, hoping to retain a sympathetic audience. Its appeal is well planned. The audience will hear what happened in distant lands (4). They will hear of two noble barons, a tale which promises both 'wele and woo' (11); how they were friends and how they were knights "& how unkouth pey were of kynd"¹ (14) and finally "how pey were troupe plyȝt," (20). The story will be one worthy of the attention of an audience. It will contain such popular ingredients as unknown identities, knightly friendship and the piteous descent from wele to woo. A mediaeval listener would know already that the story must include something of the theme of leaute between the pledged knights and he would expect a story which would evoke pite.

The poet begins his story, giving details of its location and something of the condition of Amis and Amiloun's parents. He again emphasises their integrity and fidelity:

11.34-36 "And trew weren in al þing
 And perfore Ihesu, hevyn-king
 Ful wel quyted her mede."

1. The exact meaning of this line is in dispute. Leach favours (Note 1.14) Miss Rickert's suggestion 'And how they were not kin.' This seems entirely pointless. The line must refer to the lack of recognition in the substitution scenes. They were not recognised for what they were.

Here is the first indication of any supernatural intervention in their careers. The story is not advertised as a pious tale intended as an example to its audience. Instead the poet passes on to register an interesting point which his audience, if they were familiar with Floris and Blancheflour, could hardly fail to recognise as symptomatic of an extraordinary attachment between two persons. The inevitability of a supernatural destiny for the two heroes is established indirectly but firmly, and in a way which would be more likely to encourage an audience than to deter them.

11.40-41 "Boþ þey were getyn in oo nyȝt¹
 And on oo day born a-þyȝt,"

The children thrive in an entirely predictable manner. They are 'Curtaise, hende, and good' (51) and the fairest alive. Everyone is gratified by their progress. When they are seven 'Grete ioy euery man of hem tolde' (56) and when they are twelve.

11.59-60 "In al þe lande were noon so bolde
 So faire of boon and blood."

The description of the two main participants in the story is one that might fit any of the youthful heroes of adventurous romance.² The concepts of their eminence in the land and of their general praise is entirely typical of romance, both French and English. There is no hint that this may become the story of two servants of God.

1. Cf. Floris and Blancheflour 11.281-84.

2. Cf. Ipomadon 11.158, 164-65; King Horn 1.10, 11.17-18; F. & B. 1-2

The duke of the land in which they live now decides to hold a feast. The children are present and are admired by the whole court, as is usual. The poet assures his audience that no-one there could distinguish the children from one another except by the colour of their clothes.

11.88-96 "So lyche þey were both of syȝt
 And of waxing, y ȝow plyȝt-
 I tel ȝow for soothe-
 In al þing þey were so lyche
 Per was neither pore ne ryche,
 Who so beheld hem both,
 Fader ne moder þat coup say
 Ne knew þe hend children tway
 But by þe coloure of her clop.

Such assurances of the truth of his story as that in lines 89-90 have shown themselves to be a foible of the poet by the time this point is reached. The narrator's interruptions are many. He constantly maintains a relationship between himself and his audience by reference to his own occupation,

11.38-39 "In ryme y wol reken ryȝt
 And tel in my talkyng;"

by references to the audience's part 'As ȝe may listen & lipe,' (99) and to shared occupations 'In romance as we reede,' (27). Occasionally the interruptions are subtler. The narrator dramatises his part, actively contributing to the suspension of disbelief he is seeking. He implies that he was as ignorant of the tale as his audience, but he has heard it from some authority.

11.61-62 "In þat tyme, y vnderstand,
 A duk wonyd in þat land,"

In line 100 the implied authority becomes explicit:

'...as me was told,'

The whole opening of the story is managed extremely skilfully. The 'trailer' promises a worthwhile story, the setting of the scene presents characters and situations that are comfortably familiar, and before which an audience would be used to settle and put away its doubts as to the authenticity of the material; and throughout the author works to establish a rapport between himself and the audience. The story is presented with the authority of gossip, the poet repeatedly asserting what he has been told and its truth.

At the beginning of the poem the duke is holding a feast, and when it ends, he prevails upon Amis and Amiloun's fathers to leave them in his service. This they gladly do, commending them to Jesus' care. The two children swear:

11.151-56 "To hold to-gider at eueri nede,
 In word, in werk, in wille, in dede,
 Where þat pai were in lond,
 Fro þat day forward neuer mo
 Failen oper for wele no wo:
 Þer-to pai held vp her hond."

When they are fifteen the duke dubs them knights and equips them with horses, arms and garments. They prove their worth in tournaments and the duke, who values them highly, makes Sir Amis his chief butler and Sir Amiloun his chief steward-in-hall. Their praise goes

far and wide and they receive the highest award the romance writers offer for a good character:

11.198-204 "Hem loued mani a man;¹
 For pai were so blipe of chere,
 Ouer al pe lond fer & nere
 Pe los of loue pai wan,
 & pe riche douke, wip-uten les,
 Of alle pe men pat oliue wes
 Mest he loued hem pan."

They are so in the favour of the duke that they become the envy of his chief steward.

One day Sir Amiloun receives news that he must return home, for his mother and father have died. The duke sadly bids farewell and offers his aid if Amiloun should need it. Amis goes to the duke and begs leave to accompany his sworn brother. The situation and the emotions presented are very reminiscent of the scene in which Floris begs his father that Blancheflour may go with him to Mountargis.² The duke is dismayed at the thought of losing both his favourites. He allows Amis to accompany Amiloun only part of the way, so long as he returns before night-fall. When the time comes to part, the two friends re-affirm their oath.

11.298-300 Broper, be now trewe to me,
 & y schal ben as trewe to pe,
 Also god me spede!"

1. Cf. King Horn 1.247; Havelok 1.30.

2. F. & B. 1.80ff.

Amiloun goes on, for no obvious reason, to warn Amis against being forsworn with regard to his oath of fealty to his lord, for:

11.305-6 "...3if pou dost, pou are forlorn¹
 Euer more wip-outen ende."

This grim warning to maintain faith with duke without any preceding reason to believe that it may be broken, is a clear foreshadowing of later events. It is quickly joined to a warning to avoid the fellowship of the malicious steward. Weeping, they part; Amiloun to rule his own country and Amis to gain further renown at court.

The Anglo-Norman poem is preceded by a rather moralising five lines, beginning,

"Ci comence l'estorie,
 Ke devum aver en memorie,"

The poem proper begins rather less dauntingly:

"Ki veut oir chançoun d'amur,
 De leaute e de grant douçur,
 En peis se tienge pur escouter:
 De trueffle ne voil mie parler."

Yet, as the poet calls for silence, he admits that his poem will be about exemplary figures. Instead of giving a summary of the highlights of his plot, he states the dominant values of his theme. The "Dous juvenceus" of whom he will tell are clearly destined to be exemplars of Amur and of Leaute. All the audience is allowed to know of the plot is that it will be of grant doucur. This sense of

1. To break an oath to one's lord is damnation Cf. Havelok 11.578-80. To drown the heir-apparent, however is worse. 11.1423-4.

sophistication is extended into the next line (6) when the poet claims that he found his story written down. The authority for this poem is a literary one; it is not a tale which has come to the poet by word of mouth. No more time is wasted in preparation. The audience are cast in medias res. The two young men, Amis and Amilun, who are of high rank are in the service of a count at his court. They are fair, and we are told that

ll.16-17 "Bien out en eus nature ovre,
 Angeles resembleint de beaute."

The personification of nature as a craftsman and the comparison to angels as the epitome of beauty is not uncommon in the more sophisticated French romances, where such references are usually amplified into a passage of description.¹ Here the poet is satisfied to let the conceits stand in the place of such lengthy descriptions. He passes briskly on to inform his audience that they had sworn the oath, not of brotherhood as in the English, but of compaignie (20), a more aristocratic relationship. They are envied by many in court, and, although the malice of the other courtiers is mentioned,

1. Cf. Romance of Horn 1.954; ll.1053-58 where the comparison with the angel is complemented by the use of the adjective angelin to describe beauty. The reference to a personified nature as a creator (cf. Ipomedon ll.433 ff) is here felt only as a literary conceit (Curtius p.180) but caused some controversy amongst Mediaeval writers (ibid. p.108). It is a conceit which has its roots in the Orphic mysteries of Late Antiquity. (cf. the 'dame nature' of the Carlsruhe MS.) See also Curtius op. cit. pp.106ff.

nothing is at first made of the love or praise which the two young men inspired by their service or by their good character. No details are given of the feasts held by the count. Instead we are shortly told of the resemblance of the two compaignuns and their loyalty to their lord.

11.29-32 "E si furent d'une estature,
 D'une forme e d'une faiture.
 Leaus furent vers lur seingnur,
 Fei li porterent e honur;"

In return he honours them and knights them, presenting them with gifts which are unspecified. We are told that he holds a feast and makes Amis his 'boteler' and Amilun his "...justiser, Mestre e marescal sur tuz," (42-3), but there are no details of the feast, no reference to the reactions of those present, and no mention of Amis and Amilun's deeds. Amilun simply dwelt there until he heard that his father had died and then asked leave to go. Here the Anglo-Norman author feels that there is some necessity to explain why he must return.

11.53-6 K'il li covint garder sa terre,
 Ke l'um n'i feiht tresun ne guerre,
 Ne k'autre home n'i entrast,
 Ore sun dreit amenusah."

This political and legal explanation, with its question of the possible alienation of the right to land, never occurred to the English poet. But the Anglo-Norman count is well aware of the problems of government and, instead of bewailing lost friendship too long, he:

11.59-65 "...li dist com bon seingnur:
 Ne vout desturber son honur,
 E s'il eust de li afaire,
 Fuht ceo en peis ou fuht en guerre,
 Mandast a li hastivement,
 E il od force de sa gent
 Vendreit a li, si li jura,"

It is worth noting how the Anglo-Norman count swears to help, rather than simply promising it in friendship as does his English counterpart.

As the friends say farewell Amilun begins a long speech warning Amis against a seneschal. This man, he says, has sought to harm them before and he will be a dangerous enemy when Amilun has gone. He warns Amis not to become his companion. This is the beginning of an exhortation setting forth precepts for fitting conduct. He must not ally himself to a felon, for nothing is worse than that one companion should wish to betray another.

11.93-100 "A tote gent bel responez!
 Grant preu e honur en avrez.
 Lessez orgoil e envie,
 Si vus gardez de glotonie,
 Amez bien vostre seignur,
 Ne suffrez k'il eit deshonor!
 Mult li devom amur e fei,
 Kar mult ad ame vus e mei!"

There has been no previous mention of the felonious seneschal and there is no previous reason to expect Amis to make a companion of him. Therefore, both this warning, the advice to give a fair response to people, and the exhortation to keep faith with the lord are un-

dramatic moral utterances clearly foreshadowing later developments in the story. The relationship of lord to vassal is stressed rather more in the opening part of the Anglo-Norman poem than in the English. It is a relationship based upon mutual obligation in which Amur is reciprocated and Leaute is owed by the vassal. In return the lord behaves in a fitting manner and swears to help his vassal in need. In the English poem the emotional side of the link is emphasised, as it is between the two brothers at their farewell. The English poem includes a moral reminder to be loyal to the lord, seeing such loyalty as something mysterious and associated with religion. Breaking the oath can mean damnation.¹ The Anglo-Norman poem represents the debt to the lord as a mixture of simple gratitude and a code of behaviour. It forms part of a general moral exhortation. The link of friendship between the companions is entirely ignored in the farewell speech but appears in extravagant if conventional terms as their emotion on parting is described.

11.101-108 "Atant se sunt entrebeisez,
 Pleurent e crient de pite.
 Suz ciel n'ad homme, ki la fuht,
 Ki de lur doel pite nen eust.
 Paume se sont chaux a terre.
 N'est home, ke me vousiht creire,
 Si jeo deisse la meite
 Del doel ke entre eus ont mene."

1. See lines 305-6 above

Here, to join the leaute and the amur promised in the first two lines, and realised in the next hundred, is the third component of the initial promise, doucur.

Though there is some difference in the development of events between the Anglo-Norman and English poems, and definite differences of emphasis and background can be traced, the general form of the exordium is very similar in each. When we turn to the chanson de geste this last observation is no longer true. Amis et Amiles begins by creating a religious atmosphere quite unlike either the moral seriousness and austerity of the Norman poem or the deliberately familiar tone of the English. The poet calls for attention and promises a serious story.

11.1-6 "Or entendez, seignor gentil baron,
 Que deus de gloire voz face vrai pardon.

 Ce n'est pas fable que dire voz volons,
 Ansoiz est voirs autressi com sermon;"

The opening clearly announces the seriousness of the tale. The poet strangely and suddenly adopts the plural in line 5, probably to increase the authority of the narrator. The authority for the story is given as 'men of religion'. The audience can believe or disbelieve according to its conscience.

11.7-10 "Car plusors gens a testmoing en traionz,
 Clers et prevoires, gens de religion.

Li pelerin qui a Saint Jaque vont
 Le sevent bien, se ce est voirs ou non."

The story is about two compaignons who were

11.13-14 "Engendre...par sainte annuncion
 Et en un jor furent ne li baron,"

The English poem's reference to their begetting in a single night is joined here by a claim that their birth and friendship was foretold by an angel of God (20). A definite Christian tone is added to the vague sense of a supernatural destiny present in the English poem. As in the Carlsruhe MS. of the Anglo-Norman poem we are told that the companions were in the service of Charlemagne.

When Amis and Amiles were born their godfather was Ysorez, the pope. A short list of his gifts is given. The two children were then separated and returned home. When they have been knighted at the age of fifteen they decide to search for each other. The poet notes their striking resemblance to one another and their beauty. Rather than attributing the work to Nature as does his Anglo-Norman counterpart, he remarks.

1.43 "Dex les fist par miracle."

Now follows a long section in which the comrades are made to demonstrate their devotion by unending search for each other. Their journeys are sketched by references to the places through which they pass: Beorges, Nevers, Borgoingne, Mortiers, Chomin, Chastel, even as far as Jherusalant. Incidental details of the journey are included. At Verdelai Amis made confession (52), at Borc Amile stayed with a bad host (63). The devastation of the coast of Sicily is described (72-3).

Amile now encounters a pilgrim, a venerable white-haired man, who has sought God in every monastery in Christendom where His praises are sung (83ff). The pilgrim gives him news of Amis. A little later Amis himself meets the pilgrim, who is amazed to see what he thinks is the same knight as he saw earlier. Amis grasps the significance of the pilgrim's words and spurs away to catch his companion. He soon meets a shepherd and asks him if he has seen such another as himself. The shepherd asks him if he does not remember the rich gift he has earlier given to the palmer. The purpose of these interviews is clear. The similarity of the two friends is dramatically illustrated by the failure of both the pilgrim and the shepherd to distinguish between them. The poet has recourse to extended methods of making his point in the same way as he illustrates their initial devotion to each other, resulting from divine dispensation. When they meet their joy is extreme, and highly demonstrative.

11.178-86 "Vers lui se torne quant il l'ot ravise,
 Par tel vertu se sont entracole,
 Tant fort se baisent et estraingnent soef,
 A poi ne sont estaint et define;
 Lor estrier rompent si sont cheu el pre.
 Or parleront ensamble.
 Or sont li conte en mi le pre assiz.
 Qui les veist baisier et conjoir,
 Dex ne fist home cui pities n'en preist."

In the last line of this quotation the poet admits, in conventional terms, to his predilection for sentiment.

The two friends, having renewed their pledge of compaignie, offer their services to Charlemagne. This Charlemagne, who is a Christian war lord lacking the majesty of his antecedent in the Chanson de Roland, is happy to accept them. The poet now undertakes to demonstrate the military ability of his heroes and the envy of the seneschal named Hardre. The wars in which they take part provide ample opportunity for the embellishment of events by details of military pomp. Charles' men are mounted on 'destriers arragons' (214), and they bear 'escus as lyons' (215). Such details of equipment are typical of French epic poetry.¹ Much of the setting of this part of the poem has the same affiliations. Lines 236-8 compare closely in setting and incident with the Chanson de Roland.

"Puis est entrez li ber en un vergier

Dejouste lui Hardre le losengier.

Par sa losenge le prinst a acointier:"

Ch.de R. 11.509-11

"Guenelun prist par la main destre ad deiz,

Enz el verger l'en meinet josqu'al rei;

La purparolent la traisun seinz dreit."

Hardrez' arrival at Gonbaut's palace echoes the terrain of the Chanson de Roland and especially of the arrival of Baligant in Saragossa.

Amis et Amiles 11.293-4

"Descendus est au perron soz l'olive,

Les degrez monte de la sale perrinne."

1. Romance of Horn 11.3310ff. Chanson de Roland 11.994ff and 1.1354.

Chanson de Roland 2891-2821

"A un perron de marbre est descenduz,
 E quatre cuntes l'estreu li unt tenut.
 Par les degrez el paleis muntet sus,"

In both poems a favourite setting for any character preparatory to any action is 'desoz un olivier' (388, 1370) or 'soz le pin' (486, 1065, 1121).¹ One specific picture clearly stems from a reminiscence of the opening of Roland.

11.1385-6 "Nostre empereres descent desoz un pin,
 On li aporte un faudestuef d'or fin,"

Chanson de Roland 114-16

"Desuz un pin, delez un eglenter
 Un faldestoed i unt fait tut d'or mer,
 La siet li reis ki dulce France tient."

Apart from single trees, mixed copses also form part of the landscape.²

11.335-6 "... .. un broillet rame
 D'ys et d'aubors et d'oliviers plantez,"

Amis et Amiles is less of an open air poem than the Chanson de Roland.

More visits are made to palaces, and the entrance to a palace is almost always preceded by the necessity of scaling the marble steps. They must be descended on leaving the palace (294, 313, 343, 645). When riding in search of his brother, Amiles wears golden spurs (175)

1. Cf. Ch. de R. 11.165, 366, 2375, 2357.

2. Curtius op. cit. pp.194ff traces the use of trees in the epic landscape from Greek and Latin poetry.

just as the vassals of Roland do,¹ and when he finds him he is lying in a flowery meadow (169-70) just as the dead Franks are at Rencesval when Charlemagne returns victorious.²

The details of the background of the French poem are those common to French epic, with some specific reminiscences of the Chanson de Roland. Epic topoi such as descriptions of the knights arming are also employed (211ff). In the subsequent fighting Amis and Amiles distinguish themselves sufficiently for Charlemagne to arrange a marriage for Amis but he soon says farewell to his wife Lubias and returns to France. Seven years pass and Amis begins to think of going back to his wife. These sentimental thoughts are ushered in by the employment of a setting proper to them.

11.537-43 "Ce fu a pasques que on dist en avril,
 Que li oisel chantent cler et seri.
 En un vergier entra li cuens Amis,
 Oi la noise des oisiaus et les cris,
 Lors li ramembre auques de son pais
 Et de sa fame et de son petit fil.
 Tenrement plore... "

This conceit of the effect of bird-song is borrowed rather from the lyric-writers or from romances of love such as Floire et Blancheflor than from any truly epic source. Amiles agrees immediately that Amis should go and visit his wife, indeed he regards it as his duty in sacred charity (553). He begs him not to forget their companionship and warns him not to consider companionship with Hardre. He

1. Ch. de R. 11.1225, 1245.

2. Ibid. 1.2871

adds that it is not in his interest to enter into any love-relationship with Belissans, Charles' daughter. As an exemplum he cites the tale of the fox and the grapes who '...n'en gouste qu'elle n'i puet monter.' (574). If he does succumb to Belissans' wishes she will bring him trouble, for woman makes man a dissimulator (568). He rounds off these entreaties by a further appeal not to forget him.

The farewell scene here is quite clearly a foreshadowing scene, as it is in the other versions. To their prophesies is added a warning against Belissans. In the English and the Anglo-Norman poems the affair of the duke's daughter is unforeseen. It merely provides the occasion for the exercise of the steward's malice which has been aggravated by observance of the warnings issued by Amis. In the Old French poem the catastrophe comes because Amiles ignores most of his brother's instructions. There are no explicit exhortations to be loyal to the emperor, nor is there a general recitation of moral precepts as in Amis e Amilun. The scene is simply for ironic effect and to arouse sentimental feeling over the separation of the two compaignons. At their final parting the same aim is uppermost

11.586-87. "Mais ainz se furent baisie et acole.
Florant se departirent."

B Courtly, popular, epic and hagiographic echoes.

After the parting, events move more quickly in all three poems. Almost immediately, the remaining brother is approached by the steward with an offer of companionship, which he refuses, thus further alienating this enemy. The Anglo-Norman and the English poems give some detail of the Duke's daughter, who appears in the Chanson simply to warn against the traitorous Hardre and to bewail an earlier refusal of love, of which we have previously heard nothing. In the two shorter poems the Duke now holds a feast. The Anglo-Norman poet notes that the occasion is 'un jor de l'Ascension',¹ (207). He then draws his audience's attention to Amis' service in the hall: 'bien seet son mester' (210), and mentions his dress and the exact nature of his task.

11.211-12 "D'un diaspre vestuz esteit,
 La coupe devant li coens teneit."

All the knights present praise him and testify to his beauty, and the Count agrees: 'K'unc si bel chivaler ne vit'. The conversation of the court is about nothing else, so that, soon, the news is communicated to the Count's daughter who swiftly falls in love with this excellent young man.

The English poet treats the incident in broadly the same way, but the feeling is aroused that his conception of a feudal court on a feast day is extremely vague. He mentions that: 'Pe riche douke

1. The festivals of the Church were the occasion of the most solemn meetings of the court and the most important social events of the year. G.O.Sayles, The Mediaeval Foundations of England, (London 1964) p. 233.

lete make a fest/ Semly in somers tide;' (410 - 11). His timing is vague, as is his description of the court which is composed of

11.434-8 "...barouns & of birddes briȝt
 & lordinges mani & fale.

Per was mani a gentil kniȝt
& mani a seriaunt, wise & wiȝt,
To serue po hende in (hale)."

The service rendered by Amis is given no precision and the reaction of the knights in the hall is overlooked, the poet preferring to rely on a series of formulaic phrases of eulogy.

11.439-44 Pan was pe boteler, Sir Amis,
 Ouer al yholden flour & priis,
 Trewely to telle in tale,
 & douhtiest in eueri dede
 & worpliest in ich a wede
 & semliest in sale."

In the description of the feast, the English poet is obviously writing without any close acquaintance with courtly practice. Even though the Anglo-Norman poet chooses not to elaborate the incident, he clearly knows the manner of presentation.¹

1. The A-N poet is, of course, following a formula. The courtly formula governing the appearance of a romance hero in the hall is also followed in the Romance of Horn 437ff. and Ipomedon 357ff. The treatment involves a description of the hero's dress, his service in the hall, and some account of the reaction of those in the hall on noting his beauty and accomplishment.

In both the poems the fame and beauty of Amis causes his lord's daughter to offer him her love. In the Chanson this scene does not exist, for Belissans chooses to slip secretly into Amiles' bed. The English and Anglo-Norman poems both have a situation rather similar to that in which Horn found himself. The Anglo-Norman poet voices the objections to accepting Florie's love in much the same terms as are hinted at in King Horn (411-12). Amis does not wish to transgress against his lord (263-267). The offence would be the dual one of misappropriating his lord's property and disparaging his daughter by his own social inferiority.

11.297-9 'Si ceo peut estre aparceu
 Ke de moi feissez vostre dreu,
 Ne serriez a la fin honie?"'

The Englishman elaborates this episode considerably. Other romance commonplaces are introduced. Amis is left behind one day when the rest of the household go hunting.¹ He enters the garden to assuage a sickness by which he is afflicted. He sits beneath a bough and listens to the bird-song. Belisaunt, possessed by love's malady, enters the garden hoping, by the song of the birds, to allay her cares. The poet has set the scene carefully. It is the traditional setting for new love.

1. Cf. Sir Gawain 11.1126 ff.

11.532-7 "Pe somers day was fair & briȝt,
 Pe sonne him schon purch lem of liȝt,
 Pat semly was on to se.
 Sche herd pe foules gret & smale,
 Pe swete note of pe niȝtingale¹
 Ful mirily sing on tre;"

Naturally, such a setting merely aggravates her affliction and precipitates her declaration of love to Amis.²

Amis replies with the three conventional excuses reserved for such occasions. She is worthy of an emperor and he is of too low a degree (598-600), there is danger of discovery, and he does not want to dishonour his lord. Despite these objections Belisaunt arranges another meeting when, like Havelok faced with an undesired marriage (1136ff), he argues that he is too poor (755). Belisaunt promises to overcome this obstacle in the most practical way.

The English poet's treatment of this whole incident is more expanded than that of the Anglo-Norman. He gives details of a second meeting which the Anglo-Norman passes over in a few lines. The background for both meetings is made more detailed and Amis' excuses are augmented by fears of banishment and pleas of poverty.

In all three versions Amis' dealings with Belisaunt are betrayed by the steward. Amis, unnerved by the sudden accusation,

1. Cf. Troilus and Criseyde Bk.II 918ff.

2. As Hue de Rotelande could have warned her. Ipomedon 8905-6
 "Kar chant d'oiseil e estrument
 Est d'amur un angusement;"

denies it and is forced to offer to undergo trial-by-combat.

Realising the danger of forswearing himself in a judicial duel, he allows his brother to undertake the ordeal for him while he returns to Amiloun's home to impersonate him there.

In the two shorter poems the journey to Amiloun's house is a weary one. The Chanson makes much less of the rigours of travel. In all three versions the companions meet before the journey is finished, Amiloun having been alerted in a dream. In Amis e Amilun, Amilun dreams that his companion is assailed by a dangerous lion (465ff). The dream in the Chanson is similar, but is elaborated and interprets itself.

11.867-72 "...sonjai une fiere avison,
 Que je estoie a Paris a Charlon,
 Si combatoit li ber a un lyon.
 En sanc estoit descî a l'esperon.
 Li maus lyons devenoit com uns hon,
 Ce m'iert avis, Hardre l'appelloit on."

This dream also foretells future events for he dreams that he arrives with drawn sword and slays the wicked seneschal.

The dream in the English poem is rather different. Its import is clear to any audience and it is not explained. Amis is attacked by a bear and other unspecified animals, and appears in great danger. In the choice of animals to represent Hardre the English poet seems to adhere more firmly to the tradition. A lion usually represents a person of some majesty, whereas a bear is a recognised symbol for

¹
a traitor.

This dream sends Amiloun out to search for his brother. In the Chanson they meet in the same flowery meadow as before. The decision to substitute one brother for the other is taken and, before leaving to undertake the combat, the departing brother gives his friend precise details of how to behave in his house. Such mundane matters are omitted from the other versions of the story. Among the rules of conduct is one governing the treatment of his wife. He must refuse any familiarities and:

11.1068-69 "S'elle voz dist orgoil ne faussetez,
 Hauciez la paume et el chief l'an ferez."

When the unfortunate lady accuses him of kissing Belissans and thereby shaming her - ironically, because she does not know of the substitution - he carries out the instructions to the letter (1133).

Such wife-beating is no part of either of the other two poems, but it is only one aspect of a certain brutality in the background of the Chanson. Amiles is rather needlessly made to say that he would pawn or even torture his wife and two sons if it would cure his friend (2837ff).

After the trial by combat Charlemagne promises to dishonour Hardre's body in order to satisfy Amis (1732). The body is dragged through the country and the head fixed on a pole (1745ff).² The

1. Ganelon appears as a bear in Charles' dream in Ch. de R. 2555ff.
Compare also the dreams in the French versions of the Havelok story.
2. This last is not unusual in romance. Cf. the English version 1.1372 and King Horn 1.623.

angel warns Amis of his leprosy in chilling terms.

11.1817-18 "Tu seras ladres et meziaus ausiment,
 Ne te parront oil ne bouche ne dent,"

A favourite oath is:

11.891-2 "Je ne lairoie por les membres coper,
 Que je n'i aille,...."

The Anglo-Norman poet has no comparable barbarity. When Amilun arrives to take part in the combat, Florie and her mother are about to be burned as hostages, for they had offered themselves as guarantors of Amis' oath of innocence. The arrival of Amilun is handled in a manner which places all the emphasis on the rescue of ladies in distress. They are about to be burned when a knight dramatically appears, spurring towards them. His concern is entirely for the ladies. For a moment the trial-by-combat is entirely forgotten. The interest is a supremely courtly one, the saving of ladies from a horrible death.

11.560-4 "Atent virent un chivaler,
 Ke vint vers eus grant aleure,
 Poynant plus ke ambleure;
 Del feu k'il vit, fud asfraie
 E des dames out grant pitie"

He addresses the count dramatically ("Sire coens," dist il, "jeo sui venu!") and makes a grimly ironic joke about the wickedness of roasting ladies. When he calls for arms, his first concern is the safety of the ladies, and only afterwards does he intend to defend the right.

11.569-71 'Armes me fetes tost bailler
 E cestes dames delivrer!
 Jeo voil defendre nostre dreit."

The English treatment of the episode is very close to the Anglo-Norman. Here too Amiloun's arrival is dramatic and his first plea to the duke is to release the ladies. The question of defending the right is lost, but the jest remains.

11.1234-5 "For, certes, it were michel vnriȝt
 To make roste of leuedis briȝt;"¹

In the Chanson, instead of the simple dramatic and courtly presentation of the other two poems, the incident is presented as an illustration of the power of prayer. Belissans' mother has just completed two long prayers, together occupying more than fifty lines, when she sees Amis approaching.

11.1340-2 "Si com elle ot sa proiere fenie,
 Si resgarda endroit hore de prime,
 Si vit venir Ami par la chaucie."

It is notable that he is keeping to the road and not spurring on in unseemly fashion. He does not ride up to the scene immediately. Instead the lady is filled with joy and tells Hardre that now she believes God to be on her side.

11.1361-3 "Bien ai fiance en deu le fil Marie,
 C'ancui auraz celle teste tranchie
 Et celle pance estroee et percie."

1. Cf. Sir Perceval of Gales 1.794.

Amis dismounts and modestly explains that he hopes to vindicate his lady with Jesus' help (1378ff). In this incident the hagiographic and didactic element of the Chanson is uppermost. In the laments of the women and the long prayer the pite of the situation is exploited. The other versions content themselves with the excitement of a hairs-breadth escape and the ethos is courtly rather than clerical.

The combat itself is sufficiently different in each version to be worthy of comment. The Anglo-Norman begins without ceremony, leaving it to the imagination of the audience to fill in the preliminaries of swearing and countering oaths. He does, however, mention that the two formally renounce any loyalty to each other, and the reason is in the form of litotes which has been strengthened for the modern reader by the semantic development of the word Amur.¹

11.585-6 "Li un l'autre desaffiout,
Kar entre eus nul amur n'i out."

The device of litotes is used to give an epic flavour in the height of the battle.

11.597-8 "N'i avra mes mester d'acord,
L'un het l'autre deske a la mort."

Epic, too, are the details of amour given, usually linked to some blow. A lance pierces a blue-painted shield and a blow falls 'el heaume peint a flurs' (633), like the shields in the Chanson de Roland 1.1810. One blow cuts away more than a hundred pieces of

1. Amur in this sense meant something less forceful than the modern amour. It was the quality of being well-disposed towards someone. Cf. G.F.Jones The Ethos of the Song of Roland (Baltimore 1963) p.40.

chain mail (636). These details of weapons are strictly limited, and the endless epithets for weapons usually found in epic, are absent. The blows dealt are limited also, but they are all clearly described and most of them conform to types to be found elsewhere.¹ The final epic blow is preceded, as is conventional, by a moment of danger for the hero. The poet heightens the peril. Amilun is stunned by a blow on the helm. The poet remarks:

11.655-7 "Ore purra il trop attendre,
 S'il ne siet le coup a li rendre.

 Li autre s'en irra gabaunt."

But Sir Amilun is equal to the occasion and, striking his adversary so that fire leaps from his helm, he cleaves him down the middle to his haunches. The poet remarks laconically,

11.668-70 "Par li ren ert mes encuse.
 Si li chiet, n'est mie merveille.
 Ore est fines la bataille."

The Anglo-Norman poet succeeds in presenting a clear and entertaining account of the combat which is not over-loaded by superfluous detail nor made boring by vagueness.

As we should expect, the account of battle in the Chanson is longer and more elaborate. It is preceded by an account of the swearing of oaths over relics and then by the arming of the knights.

1. That is to say that there appear to be only a limited number of epic blows, with some variations. Most cut through the helm reaching the teeth, the waist, the saddle or the horse. A favourite one detaches an arm of the villain, or harmlessly removes pieces of mail from the hero.

The battle is of a different kind from that in the Anglo-Norman poem and is more comparable to those in the Romance of Horn than those of Ipomedon. In the former, as in Amis and Amiles, the battle is generally fought on foot, horses being used only for the first pass, which breaks the lances. The weapons are described as they are used.

11.1494-5 "Il trait l'espee qui fu d'or enheudee

Et fiert Hardre sor la cercle doree."

Hardre draws his sword 'dont brun sont li coutel' (1484), and he strikes Amis on 'l'iaume de Pavie' (1548). Amis then returns the blow 'sor son elme luisant,

11.1564-6 Que flors et pierres contreval en descent,

Fausse la coiffe de l'auberc jazerant,"

The epic formula of not holding back from the blow is employed "Si ruieste cop que ne l'espargne mie" (1549), as is the practice of taunting the enemy with any success gained; indeed this latter device is used so frequently as to disperse some of the intensity of the battle. Of the three battles, this is the most brutal, for it results in the mutilation of the seneschal rather than the clean strokes of the other poems. He loses an ear, and his eye is made to hang down upon his chest. Both events are greeted with ironic glee by Sir Amis. The latter has to serve as a climactic blow, for it follows a moment of danger for Sir Amis in which he loses his sword. The death of the seneschal is delayed until next day, when it is accomplished in one blow. This peculiar procedure makes the combat in Amis et Amiles quite unsatisfying and unnecessarily brutal. It has already been over-complicated and blurred by too great a use of taunts between the

combatants and an exclamatio of despair from Belissans. Though more epic in intent than that in the Anglo-Norman poem it falls well short of it, both as art and entertainment. There is a reason for this peculiar treatment of the battle. In the French poem the moral importance of the battle is put before its entertainment value. Hardre is only slain when he explicitly rejects God's help, as will be clear later.

The English poet's treatment of the trial by combat is the vaguest of all; it is also the shortest in terms of the number of lines devoted to it. The battle opens with the invocation of God's help according to the truth of their oaths. In the first encounter the lances are shattered and the swords come into use. The weapons are not described, nor are the blows, with the exception of the climactic stroke. The diction is scarcely heroic.

11.1306-8 & þan drouȝ þai swerdes gode
 & hewe to-gider, as þai were wode,
 For noping þai nold abide.

As in the Anglo-Norman poem Sir Amiloun slays the steward's horse. In the former, the details of a mighty blow are given which glances from the helm, cuts through the saddle and into the animal's chest. In the English poem the death of the horse is the result of a mighty blow which misses its target.

11.1322-6 "Wip wretpe anon to him he wint
 & smot a stroke wip main;
 Ac he failed of his dint,
 Pe stede in þe heued he hint
 & smot out al his brain."

No individual strokes are described and the effects of the fight are only visible in the blood which runs over the armour (1316-17, 1349, 1358) and the sparks which fly from it (1314). The use of conventional generalising technique here only tends to increase the vagueness, for there are no precise actions to amplify.

11.1318-20 "Fram morwe to none, wip-uten faile,
 Bitvixen hem last þe bataile,
 So egre þai were of mode."

Peculiar to this poem is the behaviour of Sir Amiloun after he has slain the steward's horse. As in the Anglo-Norman poem, he dismounts from his own horse, but his motive for doing so is rather different, as is his subsequent behaviour. The Anglo-Norman poet suggests that the seneschal will try to unseat Amilun. The latter dismounts, 'pur sa corteisie', and in order to save his horse from death (630). In the English poem, Amiloun dismounts when he sees the steward prostrate on the ground. He helps him up, shrinking from attacking a fallen man.

11.1339-44 "Pat kniȝt was ful fre to fond
 & tok þe steward bi þe hond
 & seyð, "So god me spede,
 Now þou schalt a-fot go,
 Y schal fiȝt a-fot al-so,
 & elles were gret falshed."

It may be argued that Amiloun behaves in this manner from selfish motives, in that he does not want an unequal battle adversely to affect his reputation; yet the fact that he speaks so

civilly to the steward and actually gives him his hand suggests the kind of magnanimity associated with 'corteis' behaviour. The attitude expressed to the steward in the English poem could hardly be a greater contrast with the attitude in the Chanson. One cannot help but think that, in this particular incident, the concern over a valuable horse exhibited in the Anglo-Norman poem is closer to the truth than either the stylised taunts of the Chanson or the exaggerated courtesy of Amis and Amiloun.

In all these versions of the story, the knight who fights the steward is struck down by leprosy later in the poem. His lady quickly turns against him and he is driven from the hall to beg for his food. In this episode the Old French poem differs widely from the other versions. In the M.E. and A.-N. versions Amiloun is swiftly driven from his house. The English wife scolds him, drives him first from his chamber and from the high table, then to a hut outside the gates, and finally out of the country. The Anglo-Norman wife shrinks from her husband, then expels him immediately to a small hut. Later, as in the English, she orders that he should receive no more food, and he is forced to leave the country.

The lady in the Chanson is not so powerful nor so direct in her actions. She is forced to admit more complications than her sisters. Instead of immediately casting her husband out, she asks that they obtain a separation before the Archbishop.

11.2079-80

'Proier voz vöil, sire, que me laissez
Devant l'evesque, moult bien voz feriez''

The next day she offers the archbishop presents if he will divorce them. When he refuses she threatens to remove him from his position. He still refuses to permit a divorce and upbraids her for her lack of faith. Lubias now pleads her case with the ordinary people and offers them bribes. They enter the cathedral and call out to the archbishop:

11.2158-59 "Por qu'avez voz nostre damme avillee,
 Qu'a un mezel l'avez faite privee?"

He is forced, against his will, to put the case before three more archbishops. Next day the four approach Amis. They tell him that his illness is from God so that, at his death, he will be saved.

11.2175-76 'Dex conmanda, por voir que fuissiez ladres,
 Quant voz morrez, que vostre arme soit salve."

Amis' reply is a humble request for the archbishops to intercede for him with his wife and to beg for some shelter outside the town and for food. This she grants, but the poet exclaims that she did not carry out the promise 'Dammeldex la maudie!' (2191). Amis is led out of the town and he asks two of his knights to advise his wife and to accept his son as lord in his absence. (2200ff). Finally he pardons all who have sinned against him (2206).

The sophistication of this negotiated withdrawal is quite unlike anything in the other two poems. There Amiloun is allowed no dignity. He is expelled by force and given no opportunity to dictate terms or to forgive insults. Here is a tendency to see Amis as a martyr whose soul will be saved. Behind the archbishops' words

in lines 2175-6 is the monastic consolatio "God scourgeth every son that he receiveth."¹

There is little concentration on Amis' misery. Indeed the story is inserted of how his son, Girars, is beaten by the wicked Lubias for his attempts to aid his father.² Finally Lubias issues the law that no-one must feed her ex-husband. It is then that two loyal serfs, Garins and Haymes, promise to take Amis out of the country rather than let him die of hunger. Lubias offers them a mule and thirty deniers to do this.

In the English and Anglo-Norman poems, although he has been cast out, Amis plays a rather more active part. He has one faithful follower whom he sends to beg a mule so that he can leave. In Amis e Amilun the pathos of his situation is emphasised. The laments take on an elegiac strain which emphasises the loyalty of his one retainer.

11.863-68 "Jhesu, le fiz seinte Marie,
 Com longes avrai cele vie?
 Jeo solei avoir grant tresor
 Estre servi d'argent e d'or:
 Ore sui a tant demene
 Ke de ma vie est grant piete."

1. Quoted in the Vita ed. Kölbing p. civ

"Omnem filium, quem Deus recipit, corripit, flagellat et castigat."

2. C. has an entirely separate story of a son, a clergoun, who meets his father while taking part in a procession. When he returns home his mother beats him to death. The whole episode is related for the greatest pathos.

Amilun asks Owein to desert him rather than die, and he replies that he would rather suffer with him than serve an emperor. Then, together, they bewail past glory.

11.880-85 "Mult i out entre eus grant pitie,
 Pleurent e decirent lur dras,
 Plainent la grand chivalerie,
 Le honur e la seignurie,
 Ke sire Amilun aveit eu,
 Qu'ore est a nient devenu."

The English poem has no elegiac tone to compare with this. The only approach is in lines 1681-1686 and here it is too general to be effective. It is also followed immediately by the decision to act, to go out and beg food, and the elegiac mood is not allowed to develop.¹ The English Amis and his retainer waste less time in bitter lamentation.

The background to the part of the poems connected with begging for a living follows a pattern which may be deduced from the background already revealed. The English poet presents some pathetic and realistic scenes of hardship, the Chanson at first shows little hardship and then expands into a series of wide-ranging voyages and new scenes, and the Anglo-Norman reduces the whole journey to Amis' land to twenty lines.

As in the opening scenes, the long voyage and the list of places

1. This is rather unexpected in view of C.L.Wrenn's remarks on the elegiac mood in his essay 'On the continuity of English Poetry' Anglia 76 (1958) p.45.

visited in the Chanson is not simply the result of an interest in travel. Throughout is an underlying moral purpose. Firstly Amis goes to his godfather, the pope Ysorez. He is joyfully received by Ysorez and his eminence in Christendom is asserted.

11.2493-4 'C'est uns des homes de la crestiente,
 Se dex m'ait, que je doi miex amer."

For three years he lives in luxury until the death of Ysorez reduces him to beggary. He now determines to seek his brothers and sisters. He reminds them of their common parentage (2525ff) but receives a cruel response. His eldest brother refuses to recognise him, although an old knight vouches for his identity, and the poet remarks that if it was not for his brothers he would have been well cared for (2537). The youngest brother pleads with the eldest not to recognise Amis, for they would then have to return all the gifts he gave them when he was in Charlemagne's service. Finally they drive him off. The moral is clear. One may rely on the church when even the closest relatives prove unnaturally false. Ysorez succours Amis when his brothers refuse to help, just as the archbishop tried to speak for him earlier in the poem. As Amis leaves his treacherous brothers he speaks words reminiscent of Christ's from the cross.

11.2570-71 'Laissiez les fols, certez ne sevent mieux.
 Dammeldex lor pardoingne."

When Amis can ride no more, his servants buy a cart for three sous and they continue. They come to the sea but cannot afford to

cross it. In the end Haymes, because of his exceptional loyalty to Amis, sells himself into slavery to pay for the fare. God does not let such loyalty go unrewarded and the boatmen quarrel over sharing the profits and kill each other, and;

11.2681-2 "Si com deu plot, qui onques ne menti,
De l'autre part furent en XV dis."

They land in Amiles' kingdom and are immediately greeted with joy and kindness.

In the English poem the journey is shorter, lacking extravagances such as sea trips, and containing no moral lessons. Its interest lies in the vignettes it presents of life on the road and pathos it inspires in realistic events. We hear that:

11.1798-1800 "Purch mani a cuntre, vp an doun,
Pai begged her mete fram toun to toun,
Bope in winde & rain.

The Old French poem never impresses with such evidently firsthand knowledge of the discomforts of begging, indeed in that poem Amis does more long-distance travelling than actual begging. He begs from the eminent and not 'fram toun to toun.' The English poet brings hunger to torment his characters:

11.1804-6 "Al-mest for hunger pai gan to spille,
Of brede pai no hadde nou3t half her fille,
Ful careful were pai po."

The French poet has no imaginative identification with a hungry beggar. He says no more than the general observation that it was a time of famine. The French poem is about help or repulsion by

various individuals. It does not describe the state of two men who are forced to sell their ass and live for three days on the proceeds. The French Amis has to sell his mule only because he can no longer ride it, and the cart which replaces it is softly filled with grass. Sir Amilun is forced to sell his ass to pay for food and Amiraunt carries him on his back. The weather is inclement, for winter has come.

ll.1840-45 "Pat winter com so hard & strong,
 Oft, "Allas!" it was his song,
 So depe was pat cuntray;
 Pe way was so depe & slider,
 Oft times bope to-gider
 Pai del down in pe clay."

Amiraunt is loyal and tenacious. With his last twelve-pence, he buys a cart to carry his lord. It is in this state of utter depression that they arrive at Amis' gate.

Although the Anglo-Norman poem represents the two as beggars rather than travelling petitioners, as in the Chanson, only the English poet succeeds in sketching realistic and pathetic little scenes in the life led by a crippled beggar. The natural assumption is that the English poet was, himself, closer to such a life than either the courtly Anglo-Norman or the pious Frenchman. A recapitulation of the backgrounds of the poems tend to justify this conclusion.

The opening of the English poem reveals its proximity to an oral tradition. The poet is employed in persuasively retaining an

audience. Both at the beginning and throughout the treatment of the story it is reminiscent of the treatment of similar episodes in other romances. Only the setting of the beginning of the love dialogue between Amis and Belisaunt can be said to be a literary conceit in origin. But the summer garden and bird-song as the pre-requisites of a love scene are so widespread in all kinds of poetry as to be regarded as typical. The appearance of a bear instead of a lion in the dream may be regarded in the same way (cf. Havelok). The descriptions of service in the hall and the very vague presentation of the combat compare badly with the realistic glimpses of life on the road. The courtesy of Amiloun to the steward in the combat is over-emphasised and results in a regard for an enemy which would have seemed grotesque to the French authors, both of whom prefer a convention which demands taunts for the enemy. Similarly, the English poet presents the relations between lord and man in a way which is closer to the modern idea of friendship than that in the French poems. Simple, though strongly felt, friendship is also the emotion which is present at the parting of the two brothers.

By comparison, the Anglo-Norman poem is sophisticated and didactic. At the opening it proclaims the importance of its theme above the story. Part of this theme is leaute and this is the link between the compaignons and between the lord and his vassal. It is, of course, reinforced by friendly feeling. When the two brothers part, one exhorts the other, among other useful precepts, to be loyal

to his lord. In turn his lord allows Amilun to go to attend to the proper government of his country and he promises him the necessary aid. The descriptions of service in the hall and of the combat follow a manner common in other courtly literature and reveal a much clearer idea of the circumstances of such events. The beauty of the two friends is emphasised more and the setting scarcely moves away from the social background of a court. The whole episode of the begging is shrunk to a tiny narrative section, and the misery of the first expulsion is evoked by an elegiac reflection on the glory that has been.

The Old French poem is like the Anglo-Norman in that it immediately declares its serious purpose. However, the poet does not choose to subordinate its story to its theme and rely on short intensive narration. The form of the chanson de geste is employed. The values of the chanson are in evidence. Women and love are subsidiary to the doings of men. Emotions are limited but very marked. Joie and pitie are the wildly exhibited reaction to a meeting, and pitie and tears accompany a departure. The setting of the poem shows marked similarities to settings in the Chanson de Roland or to the epic sections of the Romance of Horn. A certain strain of brutality becomes evident at intervals throughout the poem, and the poem has little interest in manners to compare with Amis e Amilun. Loyalty to one's lord is not the first concern of the poet except where he is telling of the loyalty of Haymes to his master. The loyalty between the two brothers is not the only theme of the poem.

It is linked from the beginning with their eminence as inhabitants of Christendom. The poem opens with an immediately religious atmosphere. The heroes are godsons of the Pope, and Amis visits him. There is a moral implicit in his welcome and support by the church, even in the darkest hours of rejection by his own kin. God rewards the loyalty of Haymes by restoring to him his freedom and delivering them safely to Amiles. Even the wicked Lubias does not feel strong enough to repudiate her sacred vows of marriage to Amis. She must obtain the permission of an archbishop, whose justice is never questioned. The long dramatis personae include a saintly pilgrim, and the background includes long journeys to named places all over Western and even Eastern Europe. Oaths are sworn on holy relics. It is easy to see these details of journeys included to provide interest for a pilgrim audience, as suggested by Bédier. The background of Amis and Amiles is neither courtly nor exclusively aristocratic. It never descends to the popular level of the English poem, but though devout and even approaching hagiography, one hesitates to apply the epithet 'clerkly' for the chanson de geste spirit is still so lively in it.

III Characterisation and Narrative Technique

A General Characterisation

None of the poems is notable for well developed and consistent characters, indeed this is not a feature of early romance. Character, as usual, is chiefly dependent upon the incidents in the story and the actions of the participants. Originality in characterisation is limited to instants of psychological realism. The most striking of these are found only in the French versions of the story. The Anglo-Norman poet conceals in his restrained narrative a subtle appreciation of human foibles. At first Amis rebuffs Florie's advances, but she assures him of secrecy, and they talk. Inevitably, talk leads to agreement. The Anglo-Norman poet observes:

11.304-307 "Tant le ad dit, tant ad parle,
 Ke sunt a un de cel afaire
 E unt devise la manere,
 Coment e kant s'assemblerunt."

When Amis finds himself in bed with his friend's wife, he remembers the lesson learned on this occasion and refuses to enter into any discussion with her, trusting to his sword to separate them.

11.539-42 "S'espeie nue entre eus posa;
 La dame de ceo s'enmerveilla.
 A la dame ne vout parler
 Deske al matin a son lever."

Again, when Amilun dreams of his brother's danger and leaps out of bed like a madman (470), the poet amusingly notes the reactions of his retainers.

11.477-78 "Trusser covint a mie nuit,
 As autres ne fu pas deduit."

In the Chanson, touches of psychological realism exist side by side with stylised setting. When Amis rides out in answer to his dream and finds his brother in the same flowery meadow where they first met, he turns to his retainers and tells them to pasture their horses for a while, for he sees a peasant from whom he will ask news of his brother (945ff). His men caution him not to delay, for they have a long journey before them. When Amis reaches Amiles a scene of extravagant greeting follows. This is clearly at odds with the idea that Amis has gone to ask news of a peasant. We are expected to forget that all this must be taking place in the sight of his men. The conventional expressions of joy at meeting overcome the need for verisimilitude of setting. Yet, when Amiles returns to the men in place of his brother, they rush to him saying how worried they have been at his long absence (1101). In addition, the poet finds it necessary to give Amiles a plausible reason for returning home

11.1107-9 'Montez baron, s'entronz en nostre voie.
 S'estoie a Blaivies, de mes aises feroie
 Qu'en mon chief sui malades."

Such moments of realism in the English poem are not concerned with motive or convincing pieces of behaviour; they are, rather, to be found in short bursts of familiar speech such as Amis' reply to the steward's declaration of enmity.

11.395-6 "'Sir, per-of 3iue y nou3t a slo;
Do al pat pou may!'"

The most satisfying aspect of the English poet's characterisation is in his scenes of direct speech, where the language is often lively and convincingly part of the situation.

As was noted earlier, the setting of the Chanson is frequently conventional and comparable to that of the Chanson de Roland. Further than this, it also lends something to the characterisation. The technique - as in the meeting of Amis and Amiles (above) where the retainers are 'off-stage' - resembles practice in continental mediaeval drama.¹ The varying settings resemble the 'mansiones' to which characters were assigned. The setting proper to each character here tends not only to localise the action, but also to add consistency to the character. In the course of the poem the two brothers meet, on three occasions out of four, in a flowery meadow (169; 908; 1926). On three occasions out of five when Lubias is encountered after a journey she is 'soz un pin' (486; 1065; 1121). Although there is a strong tendency to categorise backgrounds with characters, no scheme is exclusively followed. Hardre twice perpetrates his treachery in an orchard (236; 590), but Amis decides to visit his wife and children while listening to bird-song in the same place. Hardre is twice to be found 'desoz un olivier' (293; 388) but in line 1370 this is where Amis, too, dismounts. Charlemagne, like Lubias, is to be found beneath a pine-tree.

1. The miracle play on the subject of Amis and Amiloun closely follows the story in the Old French Chanson.

Clearly it would be mistaken to believe that the background is in any way symbolic of a certain kind of character, rather, a particular background tends to crystallise around, and becomes conventional for, a particular character.

Outright descriptions of character and analytical presentations of emotion are very sparse in all three versions but are perhaps more common in the Anglo-Norman poem. General assessments of character frequently precede an action which seems to corroborate them, both in the English poem and in the Anglo-Norman. The Chanson relies almost exclusively upon action and direct speech for its characterisation. It also makes sparing use of epithet and exclamations by the author.

In all versions the characters of Amis and Amiloun are so similar as to be interchangeable. Indeed the Chanson has interchanged the names of the characters with respect to the other versions. The English poet undertakes the characterisation of his heroes largely by means of epithets and formulaic, vaguely approbatory phrases. The phrase 'Gentil kniȝt' appears at least fourteen times; the corresponding 'Hende kniȝt/man/lord', or the word hende used as a substantive, occurs at least sixteen times. Epithets used of the brothers more than three times in the poem are: hende, fre, trew, wise, gode, feire, kende. The first two are by far the most popular and are used several times as substantives. Many of the words are used in formulaic phrases which seem almost tautologous; 'hende and fre' (327) is followed by 'hende and gode' (343) then by 'gode and kende' (374). Some of

these formulae are alliterative 'war and wiȝt' (145); 'war and wiis' (181) and some remind one of the formulae of Old English verse: 'semliest in sale' (444) 'man of milde mode' (1870). The very common epithet 'douhti' is used only in formulaic expressions; either to qualify the word 'kniȝt' (which is also very nearly the only use of the word gentil), or in the phrase 'douhtiest of dede' (178).

There is no doubt that the English poet uses a highly traditional and conventionalised diction to describe his heroes.¹ As such, it does not clearly delineate any particular qualities or emotions, but rather tends to bestow a generally panegyric effect centred around nobility of character, integrity and proper conduct. Occasionally a more precise phrase precedes some action to which it refers. Thus, at the parting, before giving his moral speech, Sir Amiloun is called a "riȝt-wise man of rede" (291). We are also told quite precisely that they were eager for praise (los 194) and so they gained the 'los of loue' (201). The phrase is a rather neater way of expressing the conventional idea that the hero was loved and praised by all men for his virtues.

The presentation of the brothers in scenes of direct speech or of their actions adds little to the epithets applied to them. In Amis' meeting with the steward, his loyalty to Amiloun and to his

1. A list of some of these typical phrases and of their occurrences in other poems is given in Kölbing's Introduction pp. xxxviiff.

own pledged word, are exhibited. Perhaps, too, he is a little brusque with the steward. In his interview with Belisaunt he shows loyalty to his lord.

Frequently the state of mind is described and this carries through into some action, but a detailed examination of mental and emotional processes is rare. The longest example is Amis' worry when he realises that he will find himself in a judicial combat where he will be forsworn. Even here an explanation of the events of the narrative, and the moral situation, are as important as the psychological study.

11.904-924 "Sir Amis sorwed niȝt & day,
 Al his ioie was went oway,
 & comen was al his care,
 For þat þe steward was so strong
 & hadde þe riȝt & he þe wrong
 Of þat he opon him bare.
 Of his liif ȝaf he nouȝt,
 Bot of þe maiden so michel he pouȝt,
 Miȝt noman morn mare.
 For he pouȝt þat he most nede,
 Ar þat he to bataile ȝede,
 Swere an op biforn,
 Pat al so god schuld him spede
 As he was giltles of þat dede,
 Pat þer was on him born;
 & þan pouȝt he, wiȝ-outen wrong,
 He hadde leuer to ben anhong
 Þan to be forsworn.
 Ac oft he bisouȝt Ihesu þe,
 H e schuld saue hem boȝe to,
 Pat þai ner nouȝt forlorn."

Here Amis' state of mind is given and its reasons are traced. These add a little to the picture built up from the liberal sprinkling of epithets. The causes of Amis' misery are simply his regard for integrity in swearing an oath and his pity for Belisaunt. He is not afraid for himself but his honour must be balanced against his pity for a woman who is also his 'lemman'. The explanation of Amis' dilemma is preparatory to its re-iteration, and the discovery of a solution, in the dramatic scene with Belisaunt's mother a few lines later. Both are very simple but, taken together, they intensify the misery felt by Amis in this situation. A similar technique is used repeatedly through the poem, but usually it amounts to little more than a line or two betokening a character's attitude before he speaks.

The Anglo-Norman poet uses epithets much less in characterising his heroes. At the beginning we are told that they are

11.9-10 "...de grant vasselage
 Gentils e de grant parage;"

When Amis is serving at the feast:

11.213-14 "Mult fud beaus e aligne
 Des chivalers fu mult prise;"

In the battle Amilun and the seneschal are 'corajus e fiers'.

Usually the Anglo-Norman poet avoids the terseness of the epithet style of presenting a character and joins the adjectives with some observation that merits or explains their application. Because he is so 'fort e corajus', Amilun is made a justisier (44). Early in

the poem the loyalty of the two to their lord is made clear.

11.31-2 "Leaus furent vers lur seignur,
Fei li porterent e honur;"

The same idea is expressed at greater length in the explanation of why Amis was made butler: "Kar en li mout se pout fier." (40). Loyalty is expressed more consistently as part of their characters than in the English poem.

11.69-70 "Amis, k'esteit son compaignun,
En bone fei e sanz treson."

Between them Amis and Amilun are called 'leal compaignon' three times (120, 800, 810). When accused by the seneschal Amis protests that 'Jeo sui vostre chivaler leal' (378) and offers to contest any accusation against his 'dreit e leaute' (380).

The two comrades are more sensitive than their English equivalents, and are ready to weep or to be moved to action by pite. At their first parting they weep 'de pite' (102) and when they meet again the same sensibility is there: 'La fu la joie, fu la pite /Kaunt l'un a l'autre est aqueinte.' (489-90). When Amilun arrives at court to see a fire prepared for the ladies he feels 'grant pitie' (564), and when he is struck down by leprosy he feels 'grant piete' (868 & 880) for his own plight. At his discovery by his brother they embrace and weep together, again 'de pitie' (1051). In all these demonstrations of sensibility the quality is ascribed to the heroes in an analytical way by the author. Nothing in their direct speech, nor in the epithets applied to them, illustrates this quality. It is advanced entirely as a narrator's illumination of the inner feelings of the character.

There is no need of further illustration by action or direct speech, except perhaps in the elegiac lament of Amilun after he has been cast from the hall. There, he regards himself as an object of pitie. Similarly, when Amilun is mentally disturbed after his marriage to Florie, the poet chooses to explain his inner thoughts and emotions without having recourse to direct speech. Instead, his inner deliberations lead to telling Florie of the substitution, and they are bodied forth at first by his narrated actions.

11736-741 "Mes Amilun, ke fud pensifs,
 Bien entendi en son corage
 Ke faire ne li vout huntage,
 Ne sun frere en tant trahir;
 De parfund jetta un suspir;
 E o le suspir gient tendrement,"

Florie asks why he sighs, and he tells her of the substitution.

The Anglo-Norman poem makes more of the beauty of its two heroes than either of the others. It is rarely evoked simply as an epithet, but more often forms part of a literary conceit. The reference to their angelic beauty and their creation by Nature (15-16) has already been mentioned above. To this may be added the impression of all the country that,

11.16546 "Si deu meimes ne l'eust purtreit,
 Plus beaus ne meuz ne serreit fet."

When Amilun is married,

11.177-8 "Bien furent entre eus couple
 De parage e de beaute"

After Amilun has contracted leprosy the insistence upon his growing ugliness is as important as upon his poverty or sickness. He immediately becomes,

1.813 "Si malade e tant leed..."

that his wife shuns him. As his illness progresses 'Tute jors plus leed deveneit' (850) so that even the common people would not come near him. Even when he is rescued by Amis, though due regard is paid to comfort, and sympathy is offered to him, he steadily becomes more ugly.

1.1072 "Mes tuz jors plus laid deveneit."

'The culmination of this is the revelation of a cure and the slaughter of the children.

It is apparent from the characterisation of the two main protagonists that the Anglo-Norman poet uses more sophisticated and economical techniques. He avoids the use of epithets and tends to use more literary means of expressing qualities. He rarely finds it necessary to make the characters express their emotions in direct speech, once they have been explained by the narrator. Direct speech is quite often the result of a chain of thought or feeling which the narrator reveals indirectly. The result is a sense of restraint in the telling of the story which is not present in the other versions.

B The Villains.

As is often the case, the most interesting characters in all the versions are the wicked ones. The steward is outstanding, at least in the Chanson and in the English poem. In all the poems he is a similar character, whose dominating traits are malice and envy. He is also accused in all three versions of 'falsity', though he is not obviously guilty in the modern sense of the word. All his accusations are perfectly truthful. Falsity here is a trait of character, presumably a betrayal of the behaviour expected in a man of his elevated rank and position. The Chanson, by giving him the name Hardre, indicates that he is a member of a race of such false men,¹ though the convention demands that this should at first remain hidden from the other protagonists.

If read on the realistic level, this convention brands Hardre as not only a villain, but a dissimulating villain, for his true nature is made obvious to the audience long before it is realised by the characters. Indeed, though Charlemagne is made aware of Hardre's treacherous nature quite early, he is willing to believe his evidence on the crime committed by Amiles. The convention in treating this character does not demand psychological consistency. The poet feels quite justified in joining with his characters in obloquy of Hardre and yet, in other scenes, representing the protagonists as trusting the villain, thereby giving him scope to dissimulate and wreak his felony.

1. J.Bédier, Les Légendes Épiques, p.187.

Hardre's character is simple and two-dimensional. It is quickly established by epithet and by his actions in relation to his direct speeches. At the same time his attitude of malice to the two companions is established. He is introduced as a familiar character

11.228-9 "Huimais orrez dè Hardre le felon
Qui porchasa la mortel traison"

Thereafter, he is called by the narrator at almost every mention of the name: 'Hardre le losengier' (237); 'li renoiez' (273); 'li traitres li lerre' (366); 'li traitres parjures' (372); 'Li glouz' (397); 'le traïtor Hardre' (715); 'le parjure' (734). Frequently the characters refer to him in the same kind of terms. The king calls him: 'cuivers'; 'gloutons traitres' (454/5) and Amis: 'le cuivert renoie' (1380). Both the characters and the author call down curses on his head, sometimes in an exclamatio but also as a matter of course and a part of description.

"Ce fu Hardrez cui li cors deu maudie" (289).

"Ja deu ne place que vive un mois entier!" (396)

Not a good word is spoken of Hardre throughout the poem. Even his prowess is overlooked. The attitude of this monster to Amis and Amiles is quickly settled in a series of scenes at the beginning of the poem. Firstly he urges Charlemagne to pay off Amis and Amiles as mercenaries. When he is scathingly rebuked he claims he is merely testing Charlemagne's integrity and offers his own goods to Amis and Amiles as an earnest of good faith (239ff). When he meets the two compaignons he tells them how he has persuaded Charlemagne to

give them four castles in fief.

Next, in the war with Gonbaut, he offers the enemy leader a thousand pounds to slay Amis and Amiles (304). He explains his reasons as his lack of popularity with the king and the favouritism shown to the two brothers. On his return, he meets Amis and Amiles and assures them that he has been to the shrine of St. Lambert to pray for them. In the following battle Amis and Amiles distinguish themselves. Hardre is pictured cutting the heads off two dead knights and returning with them hanging from his saddle in order to appear 'orgilloz et fiers' (395). He tells Charlemagne that the two companions have been killed. Belissans accuses him of villainy, but nevertheless Charles grants his request to undertake the tasks performed previously by Amis and Amiles. When the two return unscathed, Charles is incensed. Hardre is only saved by a magnanimous and untruthful testimony to his prowess, given by Amiles. In order to show his gratitude, Hardre arranges for his niece Lubias to marry Amis. Within twenty lines the 'male fame' (500) is endeavouring to turn one companion against the other. The poet has already warned his audience about her and reassured them that God will protect the interests of the heroes.

ll.493-7 "Celle l'ahiert et semont et abat,
 S'elle onques puet, el(le) le cunchiera,
 Les amisties d'Amile li toldra
 Mais dammeldex, seignor, l'en gardera,
 Car moult est saiges contes."

In these early scenes it is made clear that Hardre is a coward,

a dissimulator, and is mortally jealous of the two companions. He is an incorrigible villain and even reacts to Amiles' magnanimity by treachery. Lubias is intended to betray the honour of the two friends. The conventional dualistic attitude of the other characters to Hardre reveals the lack of naturalism in his composition. Their reactions to him alternate between the disgust and loathing for a traitor and the trusting attitude of the gull whom he betrays. Hardre is clearly a cipher of treachery, as his name and the epithets applied to him testify.

Hardre's request for companionship is a disreputable deal. He informs Amiles that he is now Charles' counsellor and is in charge of distributing rewards to the mercenaries, remarking,

1.595 "Cil cui je voil emporte bon loier."

He then offers companionship, which Amiles refuses, but nevertheless offers generously to help him in his job. Hardre, therefore, has no reason for enmity towards either Amis or Amiles, yet when he hears Amiles and Belissans talking, after she has crept into his bed, Hardre cries out aloud that now he will betray them. The reaction is rather unreal. There is no subtlety attached. Hardre is merely narrating his forthcoming treachery.

11.711-13 'Mais se vif tant , que il soit ajorne,
 Lors l'irai je l'empereor conter,
 Si voz fera celle teste coper."

Here Hardre is not speaking dramatically; the words do not come from the character, who surely would be more circumspect. They are words

illustrating the nature of a symbol of malice and treachery. The same 'motiveless malignity' of the symbolic figure is evident in the glee with which he asks that Belissans, Bueves and the queen should be burned as hostages when Amiles fails to appear for the trial-by-combat.

11.1268-75 'Faites ardoir la bele Belissant,
 Buevon ton fil et ta fame ausiment.
 Or i parra de le justice grant;
 Mais d'unne chose me vois moult merveillant,
 Que la roine me vait si ramposnant.
 En deu me fi, le gloriouz puissant,
 Ja ainz n'iert vespres ne li solaus couchans,
 Ja la verrai ardoir an feu ardant."

It is noteworthy that Hardre mentions the beauty of Belissans and the family relationships in a way which, if not entirely natural in such a speech at such a moment, yet underlines his villainy more heavily. The climax of Hardre's wickedness comes after the first day's battle. Indeed it is the only defensible reason for putting off the coup de grace until the next day.

The scene is an unusual one, and not without pathos. The maimed Hardre tells his god-son that he has not fulfilled the obligations of a god-father to him (1611ff) but now he offers advice, and his unnatural behaviour becomes clear. He points out that whilst ever he behaved treacherously he was Charlemagne's favourite, and he enjoins his god-son not to serve God, but rather:

11.1630-32 "Ardez les villes les bors et les maisnils,
 Metez par terre autex et crucefiz,
 Par ce serez honorez et servis."

At first this sounds like scarifying cynicism and a moral judgement on mankind. It is not intended as such. It merely demonstrates the extent of Hardre's villainy and he is immediately re-assured by his god-child's willingness to emulate his behaviour.

11.1633-36 "Ne t'esmaier, parrins!" dist Auloris,
 "Bien a passe trois ans touz acomplis,
 Que de bien faire ne fui volenteis;
 Mais de mal querre sui touz amanevis."

The next morning Amis goes to the cathedral, prays, and makes an offering of a gold ring. Hardre arms and then defies God and declares his allegiance openly to the lord whose works he had before done covertly.

11.1660-63 "Ier fiz bataille el non dou criator,
 Hui la ferai el non a cel seignor
 Qui envers deu nen at onques amor.
 Ahi diables! con ancui seraz prouz."

By contrast Amiles prays again to God, begging that he may be allowed to kill the villain and citing other miracles as earnest of God's power. Immediately afterwards he slays Hardre with one blow. The combat has been split in two in order to fulfil Hardre's evil character and also to make the moral point that, whilst God helps those who are loyal to him, no triumph is to be expected from opposition. Hardre, from being a treacherous and malicious enemy

of mankind, is transmuted into an apostate and an avowed enemy of God. In this transformation the conventional treatment of his character is fulfilled and his career culminates in the conventional Chanson de Geste scene in which, by God's help, a Christian knight defeats a pagan enemy.

The presentation of the character of Hardre is especially interesting for its mixture of stylisation and dramatic realism. From the point of view of modern 'realistic' criticism, which presupposes psychological consistency in the speeches, actions and reactions of characters, the character of Hardre is hopelessly inept. In fact, when read on the two levels of dramatic similitude and symbolic attitude, it is surprisingly adroit.

As displayed above, the narrator swiftly and unswervingly establishes the character of Hardre as that of a villain. This villainy is underscored by dramatic means in the contrast between Hardre's actions and his claims about them to the other characters. The fact that the majority of characters believe these claims redoubles the dramatic representation of a dissimulating villain. The difficulties of a 'realistic' interpretation of Hardre's character come with the peculiar duality of the attitude of the other characters to him and also with his explicit statements of his villainy preparatory to the burning of Belissans. The only satisfying explanation of this is that in their moments of condemnation and in his monologues of overt villainy, the other characters and Hardre are speaking outside the ethos of dramatic

verisimilitude. They are, in fact, partial extensions of the narrator's function. It is the convention that they are allowed to delineate Hardre symbolically as a villain, without any reference to their 'realistic' dramatic re-action to him, and his reaction to them in a given situation. Both of these are chiefly represented by deeds rather than words. Most of the words spoken explicitly about Hardre belong to the symbolic level of characterisation.

The two attitudes are kept distinct throughout most of the presentation of Hardre's character. The result is that the discrepancy between the characters 'realistic' trust of him and their conventionalised loathing of a traitor heightens the apparent dissimulation of his character. His own conventionalised speeches, admitting his willainy, if read as dramatically conceived, by realistic criticism, seem to indicate a malicious pleasure in his deeds.¹ The two styles coalesce in only three places; firstly in the character of Bel'issans, who is in one light a complete doublet of the narrator's attitude, and entirely committed to the symbolic characterisation of Hardre as a villain, and in another, an exceptionally acute young woman whose insight is rejected or

1. Cf. the villains of Havelok. Perhaps there, though, the pleasure in evil deeds is deliberately heightened and given some dramatic relevance by the use of a more realistic style.

ignored both by Charlemagne (423ff) and Amis and Amiles (499ff). Secondly, when Charlemagne learns of Hardre's treachery by the return of the two knights whom he claimed were dead, and realistically joins in the obloquy of Hardre (454ff), and lastly in the final scene, of Hardre with his god-child. If the first two examples of the combination of realistic and conventional motifs tend to vex the inconsistencies besetting a 'realistic' interpretation of the character, this last scene is a triumph of the combination of styles. In it, Hardre admits his villainy and his true allegiance in a conventional manner, but the whole is cast in a realistic framework. His analytical monologue is truly dramatic for he is provided with a listener, and it is a listener to whom such confessions are dramatically appropriate. Hence there is no jarring of the symbolic level of the representation of villainy with the realistic background and no sense of improbability in the scene. The dramatic strength is heightened by the juxtaposition of the content of his monologue and the personal relationship with his listener.

In this final scene the two styles apparent in the characterisation of Hardre, join to offer important contributions to his final realisation. On the realistic level Hardre becomes an eloquent advocate of the devil through his disillusion with the justice of God, and the whole relationship of a godfather to his godson progresses from a touching to a horrifying one. Transcending this, on the conventional level, Hardre becomes one of a

race of monsters, an implacable and consistent enemy of God and creation and a typical figure of the Chanson de Geste. Throughout this final scene the symbolic enters upon the dramatic and the dramatic realistically represents the conventional. It is no longer possible to speak of levels, for the two styles are deeply interfused, to produce a new and vigorous compound.¹

In the other two poems the steward is more natural, less of a cipher. When the English poet introduces this enemy he admits immediately that he is an appreciable warrior, but instead of giving his audience a series of examples of the steward's treachery, he merely mentions his malice and cunning.

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1. My debt to Charles Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition (Berkeley 1957) will be obvious to those who have read the book. Some distinctions must, however, be made in terminology. Muscatine speaks of the 'bourgeois' or 'realistic' style and means a style best represented in the fabliaux. Its subjects are usually in low life, it is economical, and commonplace detail is brought in only when related to practical action. This action is the source of its vividness and it is supported by lively dialogue. Its characterisation is immediately apprehensible to the modern reader (pp.58ff). In speaking of realism in the characterisation of Amis et Amiles I have in mind something more limited than Muscatine's style; though contained within it. That is, verisimilitude of character, both in itself and in its actions and re-actions on other characters. The rest of the criteria of Muscatine's 'bourgeois' style are not typical of Amis et Amiles.

11.205-10 "Pan hadde þe douke, ich vnderstand,
 A chef steward of alle his lond,
 A douhti kniȝt at cris,
 Pat euer he proued wiþniþe & ond
 For to haue brouȝt hem boþe to schond
 Wiþ gile & trecherie."

He goes on to say that the steward constantly spoke against Amis and Amiloun to the duke. When the brothers part, Amiloun warns Sir Amis against the 'fals steward' (311). The poet then turns to describing Amis' success at court and contrasts the praise of the majority with the reaction of the steward

11.347-8 "Euer he proued wiþ niþe & ond
 To bring him in-to care."

At this point the enmity of the steward towards Amis and Amiloun is established. It is a consistent and unearned malice, but it can be understood on the natural level without reference to any convention. The steward is an evil and powerful man who is envious of the success of Amis and Amiloun. He is neither condemned by the associations of his name nor by repeated epithets as an epitome of treachery. There is no duality of attitude to him on the part of the characters. He is recognised by both the friends as their opponent and no reason is given to suspect that the duke knows anything of this enmity. The attitudes of individual characters to the steward are entirely consistent on a natural level. When the steward approaches Sir Amis with an offer of sworn brotherhood, he dissimulates, pretending friendship for them both.

11.351-4 "Ful fair he gret þat fre.
 "Sir Amis," he seyð, "þe is ful wo
 For þat þi broþer is went þe fro,
 &, certes, so is me."

Amis realises his treachery and answers him sharply. The steward then declares open enmity in violent terms.

11.391-3 "'Y warn þe wele," he seyð þan,
 "Þat y schal be þi strong foman
 Euer after þis day!'"

Although there may be some reference to conventional treatment in the suddenness of his outburst, the fact that he delivers a warning explicitly to Amis makes the incident more dramatically appropriate and the wrath which makes the steward 'wex nîer wode' (386) is explicable as the result of an affront offered to his honour by Amis' refusal of brotherhood, or as a reaction to the discovery of his dissimulation and the frustration of his plans.

11.406-8 "& afterward opon a while
 Þe steward wip tresoun & gile
 Wrouȝt him ful michel wo."

The occasion comes for the steward's vengeance when he perceives some understanding between Amis and Belisaunt. At this moment he is characterised as 'ful of felonie' (700). Strangely, instead of being delighted at the opportunity to harm his enemy, he is annoyed at the evidence of love between Amis and the duke's daughter. The fact that he is 'agreved ful sare' (705) suggests a personal interest in Belisaunt of which there is no trace in the

other versions. Here it gives an extra edge to the existing enmity. Here, for the first time, the poet feels moved to curse the steward 'Wel iuel mot he priue' (720). There is no mention of God's displeasure in the curse, nor is there ever any suggestion that the steward is an enemy of God. He is an entirely secular villain and an enemy of the friends alone.

Although the steward is spoken of as a 'douȝti kniȝt' he is not aristocratic in his behaviour. Instead of being informed of the situation by a servant, he perceives it himself and goes himself, in a most undignified manner, to spy upon the lovers' meeting (727ff). He is described peeping through a hole to gain his evidence.

11.769-74 "& euer þat steward gan abide
 Al-on vnder þat chaumber side,
 Hem for to here.
 In at an hole, was nouȝt to wide,
 He seiȝe hem bope in þat tide
 Hou þai seten yfere."

Again, the impression is aroused that the steward had his own interest in Belisaunt.

11.778-9 "Eul wrop he was & egre of mode,
 & went oway, as he were wode."

Yet on the day fixed for the combat, the steward cruelly asks that Belisaunt be burned as Amis' hostage (1205ff). As he points out, this is the law of the land, but nevertheless, his demand smacks of the motiveless cruelty found in Hardre, where his established character is sufficient explanation for any wickedness.

Apart from this the English steward is a more natural figure. His character is fairly consistently that of a malicious enemy of Amis and Amiloun. He has no diabolical convictions, as has Hardre, and he is a much more doughty fighter. He is never accused of cowardice and indeed it is his 'mizt' (868) and his strength (871) which prevent Amis from finding hostages, and secure sixty for the steward. In the French, Hardre's hostages were simply his relatives. In the battle the steward puts up a much better fight than Hardre. He is called 'pe steward of pris' (1288) and is grouped together with Amiloun in the description of the battle in lines 1345ff and 1309-14.

"Po gomes, pat were egre of sizt,
 Wip fauchouns felle pai gun to fize
 & ferd as pai were wode.
 So hard pai hewe on helmes brizt
 Wip strong strokes of michel mize,
 Pat fer bi-forn out stode;"

The English steward is more real and less wholly despicable than Hardre. His behaviour is less mannered as befits the background of the poem. The Hardre of the Chanson is at least courtly enough in his behaviour not to spy through chamber walls. In the Anglo-Norman poem also, the seneschal is rather more aristocratic in his behaviour. There is no mention of him personally spying on Amis and Florie. Their love is reported to him by one of his 'maisnee' (310). Instead of being enraged, as in the English poem, he is pleased and arranges to have them watched.

11.313-16 "Li senescal esteit mult le,
 Or quidout bien estre vengie
 De cestui corteis boteler;
 Tut lur estre fist espier."

Apart from this rather more aristocratic behaviour, the Anglo-Norman seneschal is much the same as the English steward, though he plays a smaller part. In this poem he is merely the instrument whereby the count's anger is aroused and Amis' life is threatened. His battle with Amilun is of less importance than the trial-by-combat of the English poem, for it is in the marriage that Amilun transgresses in the French versions.

Unlike the other versions the Anglo-Norman poet does not attempt to establish an enmity between the seneschal and the two companions early in the poem. The first mention of a seneschal is when Amilun is leaving the court and warns his brother against a seneschal who is an important man.

11.77-80 "Le counte ad ceins un senescal,
 Ke mult est fel e desleal,
 E si est de grant parente;
 Por ceo est il le plus doute."

No reason is given for his dislike of Amis, but when he offers him companionship, he meets him in the same dissimulating way as in the English poem. His dissimulation is clearly explained by the poet.

11.114-16 "Le senescal i encontra,
 Ki semblant d'amur li feseit,
 Mes de quer rien ne li ameit."

Amis, as in the English, answers him curtly and the poet tells us that the seneschal began to plan revenge (143). A little later the reason for the seneschal's hatred is neatly and clearly given.

Sir Amis, remaining with his lord, gives good service:

11.182-86 "E meuz li servi de jor en jor,
 E tant com il meuz li servi,
 Le senescal le plus l'hai.
 De sun bienfait avoit envie
 Mes Amis ne l'aparçut mie."

As in the English the seneschal is simply the enemy of the two brothers. He has no metaphysical evil in his character. Indeed he does not show the pleasure of the English steward when the ladies are about to be burned. In the battle he gives a good account of himself; such that:

11.645-6 "Ne saveit nul el champ juger,
 Li quel fuht meillur chevaler."

The Anglo-Norman seneschal is even more of a bare sketch than the English steward. He is aristocratic, doughty and the enemy of Amis. Little more is told of him. He is no more than an instrument of the plot, and his insignificance reveals the different moral poise of the versions.

C The Presentation of Love and the Count's reaction to it.

The emotion of love, as opposed to friendship and companionship, is of secondary importance in all three poems. In the Chanson it is dealt with very shortly indeed. The other versions follow a similar pattern, which the English poet has expanded until it is about three times the length of that of the Anglo-Norman poem.

The first preparation for any love interest comes, in the English poem, immediately after Amis has rejected the steward's offer of brotherhood. The Duke calls a feast at which many ladies, earls and barons are present. Amis serves as butler at the feast and is praised by all as the finest there (440). Interpolated into this description of the feast, before the introduction of Amis' success, is a description of the Duke's daughter, Belisaunt. She is 'fair & bold' (422) and, like Amis, 'Curteise, hende & fre' (423). As Amis is regarded as the flower of those in the hall, so Belisaunt is regarded as the finest in the land.

ll.425-26 "In al þat lond nas þer non yhold
 So semly on to se,"

The theme of excellence in the land or kingdom is equally as common a formula in this application as excellence in the hall is when used of a young man.

The description of Belisaunt closes with a reference to the honour in which she was kept, and to her handmaidens. After the feast ends, Belisaunt enquires of these same maidens:

11.451-6 'Who was hold the dou3tiest kni3t
 & semlyest in ich a si3t
 & worpliest in wede,
 & who was pe fairest man
 Pat was yholden in lond pan,
 & dou3tiest of dede?"'

They reply: "It is sir Amis, pe kinges boteler:" (463) ¹

The phrasing of this question and answer imply that Belisaunt was never in the hall and is merely asking, from some capricious whim, who made the greatest impression. When the maidens reply that it was Sir Amis, Belisaunt immediately becomes sick with love for him on their report alone. The growth of love is not followed at all. The poet merely comments that her love settled on Amis and immediately, whenever she sees him, her heart nearly breaks in two (476). Unfortunately, like Rimenhild in King Horn, she can not speak to him and because of this 'Sche wepe wel mani a sipe.' (480). She soon takes to her bed so that she,

11.482-6 "Lay in care & loue-morning
 Bope bi ni3t & day;
 As y 3ou tel in mi talking,
 For sorwe sche spac wip him no ping,
 Sike in bed sche lay."

1. Perhaps the Duke is promoted to kingship by the familiarity of a phrase or perhaps this reflects his rank in the source.

When her mother asks what is the matter, she answers that the torment is such that she will soon be dead.

The poet now turns to Sir Amis. He too, is suffering from a malady; though not necessarily the malady of love; and he goes into the garden to recuperate. The nightingale's song holds no balm for Belisaunt's illness and she sinks deep in melancholy.

11.538-40 "Ac hir hert was so hard ibrouȝt,
 On loue-longing was al hir pouȝt,
 No miȝt hir gamen no gle."

When she sees Amis, she is delighted and decides to approach him. He greets her courteously, and she quickly sends her maids away and declares her love for Amis. The ensuing scene is a dramatic one, managed in direct speech. Firstly, Belisaunt tells how she loves him and thinks of nothing else, day or night. If he refuses her, her heart will break and she will die (576). All this is very conventional and, indeed, a repetition of what we have been told in narrative and the reported speech to her mother, a few lines earlier. The next speech begins with a touch of originality, combined with disarming candour.

11.577-9 "'Pou art," sche seyde, "a gentil kniȝt,
 & icham a bird in bour briȝt,
 Of wel heiȝe kin ycorn,"

The originality swiftly melts into platitudes; she is bereft of joy and wants him to plight troth and, like Blancheflour (F. & B. 11. 915-16), not to change her for a new love.

Amis' reaction is that of Horn. He delays his reply, then gives

the conventional judgement of her value as above his worth and, indeed, equal to that of a king or emperor's son. He adds to this his concern for loyalty to his lord and cautions her to heed his timely advice that only woe can come from following her inclinations. Until this point the general attitudes are almost exactly those of the similar scene in King Horn. The exhortation to consider consequences goes beyond the English Horn's diffidence and is reminiscent of the reasoning of the character in the French poem, if less extended.

11.610-12 'Leue madame, do bi mi red
 & penk what wil com of pis dede:
 Certes, no ping bot wo"

Belisaunt's reply is original and forceful.¹ Instead of swooning, she replies by taunting Amis' manhood and accusing him, quite naturally, of preaching to her. It is an accusation which the moralising Horn of the French romance richly deserves, but does not receive.

11.614-24 '..."Sir kni3t, pou nast no crown;
 For God pat bou3t pe dere,
 Wheper artow prest oper persoun,
 Oper pou art monk oper canoun,
 Pat prechest me pus here?

1. It is, however, similar to the traditional scorn in epic for the sedentary life of the clergy. In the Rolandslied 6297 (quoted by G.F.Jones) Turpin says that any who do not wield the sword should be monks.

Pou no schust haue ben no kni3t,
 To gon among maidens bri3t,
 Pou schust haue ben a frere!
 He pat lerd pe pus to preche,
 Pe deucl of helle ichim biteche,
 Mi broper pei he were!'

The consignment of his mentor to the devil is particularly effective, in substantially accepting the truth of the accusation, and establishing the force of Belisaunt's feelings about the situation. This is merely a preface to her next speech. She is clearly an even more determined and forceful young woman than Rigmel, and even less ethically minded. She quickly passes on from the mockery of his ineffectuality to threats that it will avail him nothing. She is not to be persuaded by reasonable argument. She, herself, will tear her clothes and accuse him of rape. The alternative to accepting her ultimatum, she says triumphantly, is to be hanged:

11.535-6 'Ytake pou schalt be purch londes lawe
 & dempt hei3e to hong!''

Amis greets this revelation in silence. The poet represents his thoughts as direct speech (640ff). The dilemma which faces him is then narrated, employing the familiar device of using the same adjective, first in its simple form and then in its comparative.

11.646-8 "Lop him was pat dede to don,
 & wele loper his liif forgon;
 Was him neuer so wo."

The opportunity for extensive dubitatio is not exploited. He decides to grant her request but again, like Horn to Lenburc, he warns against undue haste. This is useless in the case of Belisaunt. Her

outburst is a departure from the meek acceptance of Rigmel and Lenburc. It has all the vivacity of colloquial utterance.

11.661-6 'Pan answerd þat bird briȝt
 & swore, "Bi Ihesu, ful of miȝt,
 Pou scapest nouȝt so oway.
 Pi treupe anon þou schalt me pliȝt,
 Astow art trewe gentil kniȝt,
 Pou schalt hold þat day."

Amis can only concur. Later, in the hall, the steward is made aware of their love when he observes that Belisaunt is continually changing glances with Sir Amis. This manner of discovery is more subtle, and is more a part of the courtly convention, than that in the Anglo-Norman poem. The exchange of glances is the cause of Fere's chastening of Ipomadon. She is afraid that their glances may be intercepted and form the basis of scandalous stories. (Ipomadon.815ff).

At their appointed meeting, Belisaunt begins by saying that she has come to see if he will keep his word.

Amis echoes Horn yet again when he asserts that he would marry her, but is not a fit husband. He does not actually ask for riches as Horn asks for knighthood. Belisaunt cheerfully volunteers them.

11.757-62 "'Sir kniȝt," seyð þat maiden kinde,
 "For loue of Seyn Tomas of Ynde,
 Whi seystow euer nay?
 No be þou neuer so pouer of kinde,
 Riches anouȝ y may þe finde,
 Boþe bi niȝt & day."

The last two lines, perhaps intentionally, have a nice metaphoric twist. Amis considers again for a moment, then takes her in his arms.

Throughout the description of the revelation of her love Belisaunt appears as a stock figure - the importunate woman. Her speech, however, raises her above the level of uninspired conventionality. It is often colloquial, and dramatic in that it tends to give her a coherent character. She is determined, ruthless, yet feminine. Her bold attempt at dominance and the practicality of her approach are not repellant because of the vivacity of her expression, and also because we know that her attitude springs from uncontrollable passion, for we have seen her afflicted by some of the traditional malaise of love. The fact that the poet makes her a victim of her own emotion does much to excuse her behaviour.

By contrast, Amis remains a very unexciting character who corresponds closely with a tradition of reluctant lovers and whose excuses and anxieties have become stereotyped. He repeatedly argues his poverty, his loyalty to his lord and the inadvisability of undue haste. At every proposition of Belisaunt's, he pauses and considers his reply. In the only place where his thoughts are placed in direct speech, thereby allowing the possibility of dramatic power, the opportunity is lost. His thoughts merely echo what Belisaunt has already told him. The exposition of his inner thoughts merely demonstrates that he has understood the situation. Neither of the two are explored deeply as to their attitudes to love; though Amis remains an epitome of conventional reaction and speech, Belisaunt breathes some of the atmosphere of real speech and uses it to become a more interesting and individual character.

The Anglo-Norman poet, too, relies largely on conventions to delineate the love of his two characters. He introduces his lady rather more subtly than the English poet. First, he tells of the count's wife and then of the daughter.¹

11.187-90 "Li quens une dame avoit,
 K'il si come sa vie amoit.
 Une fille avoit de la dame
 Ke il amoit tant come s'alme;"

He then describes her beauty by using the same formula of excellence as the English poet:

1.192 "En un reaume n'i out plus bele."

It is notable that the Anglo-Norman poet, in company with others of his vernacular, uses the more precise reaume rather than tere, which would be the exact equivalent of the English conventional phrase. Her desirability is attested by the dukes and counts whose love she had refused. This refusal of rich suitors is as much a formula as that describing her beauty.²

The poet describes, in passing, the regard in which she is held by her father, and like the Englishman, mentions her maids. The description of a feast then occupies his attention. Amis

1. This manner of introduction corresponds to conventional practice. Cf. Ipomedon 11.96ff; Gaimar 61ff.
2. Cf. Romance of Horn 11.410ff; this forms the basic trait of the characterisation of Fiere in Ipomedon Cf. 11.105ff.

officiates as butler; his beauty and service is noted and becomes the talk of the court.

11.219-24 "Tuz cil ke en la sale esteient,
 De sa beaute matire aveient.
 Est vus, venuz est la novele
 En la chambre a la damoisele,
 Del boteler ke tant ert beaus
 E si tresgentil damoiseus,"

The spreading of the gossip to the ladies' bower is a neater and more credible method of explaining Florie's acquaintance with Amis than the rather awkward treatment of the English poet. Yet the Englishman is probably more original in dealing with the situation. The Anglo-Norman poet follows a plan and vocabulary very similar to that used by Mestre Thomas in the Romance of Horn (484ff.). On hearing the news of Amis, Florie is aware of a softening of her heart, then, almost immediately, she finds she loves him feverishly without ever seeing him. Soon, like her English cousin, she can neither eat nor drink.

11.227-30 "La pucele en prist tendrur,
 Tant ke vers li getta s'amur;
 Si fort commenca a amer,
 Ke ne pout beivre ne manger."

The symptoms of the malady are not unusual but, nevertheless, her ladies ask her what ails her.

11.233-4 "E ele dist ke malade fu,
 Ne sout dunt ceo li fu venu;"

The illness and bewilderment of the afflicted as to the nature of

the affliction, and its source, belong to traditional descriptions of the onset of love.¹ She orders her ladies to be silent. One day, when the count and his retinue are hunting, she obtains leave from her mother and goes to speak to Amis, taking one chamber-maid with her. The poet neatly implies that she was not so importunate as her English counterpart. Lines 256-7 have the same quiet understanding of the situation as was noted in the Anglo-Norman treatment of the episode where Amis sleeps with a sword between himself and Amiloun's wife. Here again, much is left to the imagination of the reader, but the hint is of a long scene of conversation which only slowly moved to the mention of love.

ll.256-61 "Tant parla, tant i demora,
 Ke tot sun corage descovri
 E diht ke pur l'amur de li
 Morreit, s'il n'euht de li pite
 E k'ele fuht de li l'amur n'aveit,
 Ja mes, ce dyst, home n'amereit."

Again, Amis behaves in precisely the way we have come to expect. He considers his reply. He does not wish to betray his lord. As in the English, Florie is extremely annoyed. For the first time in his version of the love affair, the Anglo-Norman poet uses direct speech. The speech is haughty and distant, lacking entirely the familiarity of the taunts in the English poem. Florie's concern is with the insult offered to her and she vows revenge in an aristocratic manner.

1. Cf. Romance of Horn ll.709-10.

11.272-4 "Ja en ma vie apres ceo jor
 Ne serrai en mon quer haite,
 Si jeo ne seie de vus venge!"

Her taunts lack the creative wit and boisterousness of those of the English girl. They are much colder in tone, for they are couched in the language of chivalry and are framed as grave accusations which may well be true.

11.279-80 "Certes, n'estes pas chevaler,
 Recreant estes e lanier."

She then promises to tell her father of the feigned rape. Amis again thinks desperately what to do. The phrase used is expressive, though formulaic.¹

1.287 "Amis estroit se purpensa,"

His solution to the problem is a courtly one. He promises to be her servant but refuses to do anything that might bring her shame. He ends:

11.297-9 'Si ceo peut estre aparceu
 Ke de moi feissez vostre dreu,
 Ne serriez a la fin honie?"'

Florie is a little mollified by this answer, and now she replies quite colloquially and amicably.

11.300-303 "'Oshtez, oshtez!" ceo dist Florie,
 "Nus le frum si priveement,
 Tuz nos biens e nostre talent,
 Nel savrad home de miere ne!"'

1. Cf. 1.429; 1.709, Ipomedon 1.677; Romance of Horn 1.490.

Again extended conversation brings them to agreement, and the poet uses precisely the same technique as earlier.

11.304-7 "Tant li ad dit, tant ad parle,
 Ke sunt a un de cel afaire
 E unt devise la manere,
 Coment e kant s'assemblerunt."

The device is effective and marvellously economical. It obviates the need for volumes of narrative explanation or direct speech, demonstrating how they came to agreement and enter into a love affair. In the English poem, at the end of the first interview, there is still a strong sense of compulsion and even at the beginning of the second, Amis is making excuses.

It is evident from the comparison of the treatment of the love episode that both poets are following a tradition which is also exemplified in the Horn story. The similarities reach beyond the coincidental ones of events. In both poems the two protagonists are described before they meet. The knight gains praise in the hall, and the praise reaches the ears of the lady, who falls in love with him. The Anglo-Norman poet, following a convention in expression to a greater extent than the English, handles this part with greater sureness. That poet is probably closer to the literary convention, while the Englishman endeavours to employ the same treatment although he has less familiarity with it. The actual love malady of Belisaunt is very similar to that of Florie. It is not analysed, nor is it expanded greatly, in either case. Little time is spent upon it and both poets hurry on to describe the actual

encounter. The English poet begins this in a way which argues great familiarity with the romance setting, but perhaps the true reason for the opening love scene of the Anglo-Norman poem being simply set in a bed-chamber, is the overall austerity of its background.¹ In both the poems the love scene reveals Amis as a conventional figure. His reactions in the Anglo-Norman poem are minimal. The English poet increases his direct speech considerably and adds several conventional excuses for avoiding marriage to the stock one already given by the Anglo-Norman poet. He succeeds in giving the character some slight interest by the courtly grace of his expression in his only direct speech.

ll.291-2 "Vostre ami sui e serrai
 E votre sergant tant com vivrai."

The direct speech given by the Anglo-Norman to Florie does not compare with that lent to Belisaunt by the English poet. The latter is a true dramatic creation even though the scale is small. Her speech addressed to Amis is lively, imaginative and emotive. The Englishman carries on from this triumph to arrange the steward's discovery of their love by the neat and satisfying means of intercepting their glances. Yet, the Anglo-Norman poet perhaps manages the entire incident with the most controlled skill. He, in fact, makes a summary of the events and emotions of the traditional situation. His narrative resources and, especially, his psychological

1. The background of C appears, from the fragments, to have been more florid. In that MS. the scene is set in a garden.

subtlety enable him smoothly to omit developments of emotion which cause some difficulty in the extensive dramatic treatment of the English work. The English poet feels that he must illustrate by dramatic means interspersed with narrative, the processes by which the two came to agreement and alliance from domination. The Anglo-Norman poet narrates the whole story, like Gaimar, inserting quotations where they help the excitement of the moment. He feels able to observe simply that they talked themselves into admissions of love and finally into a love alliance.

At only one point in the poem does the Anglo-Norman poet allow himself any extended dramatic presentation of character and emotion. The reactions of the count to the news of the love affair are traced from shock through rage to the desire for vengeance and on to forgiveness. Expression is appropriate, and emotions are opposed and interpreted by references elsewhere in the poem, so that the character becomes a dramatic creation even superior to the English Belisaunt.

The love of the count for Amis and Amilun is established early in the poem, together with the fact that he is a good lord towards them. His love of his daughter is emphasised too (190)

11.197-8 "En grant chierce la tint le piere

E mult l'ama ausi la mere."

Equally, he loves his wife (187); and the total picture is of a close and happy family. None of this is common to the English poem.

The betrayal of the lovers is managed in the usual restrained

narrative manner of this poet. The direct speech reaction of the duke is the more startling. At first he is struck dumb.

11.331-4 "Dunc dist il: "Sire deu, merci!
 Si cel traitre m'ad si honi,
 Ke tant amai e tant tink cher,
 En ki me porrai afier?"

The exclamatio is a despairing cry of betrayal. It is, in the best sense, pathetic. The count pictures himself betrayed by all mankind, since he who is most trustworthy has proved treacherous. His whole, secure world has been suddenly rent, and his first reaction is a mixture of despair and incredulity. He tries to stabilise the situation in his mind by putting it to himself in the starkest terms, balancing the joint shame of his daughter and himself.

11.335-7 "Issi ad grant descovenue,
 Ma fille est pute devenue;
 Ele est honie e jeo trahi:"

His natural reaction to this proposition is the desire for vengeance and he vows it immediately (338-40). But vowing vengeance on his erstwhile favourite seems unreal to him and stirs within him his latent incredulity.

11.341-2 'Est ceo veirs, sire senescal?
 Jeo quid ke l'avez dit pur mal!'"

In the two lines a plea turns to an accusation as he tries to re-establish the old equilibrium. The seneschal sees his danger and swears by God that he is willing to prove his honesty in combat, and may the loser be drawn and hanged. The count capitulates to this and says heavily,

11.349-50 "'Ore vaut meins,
Cist plai mei est lead e vilains!'"

He leaves the seneschal and goes to his wife and addresses her roughly, seeming to strike out blindly in his pain, not conscious of the pain he may cause to the innocent.

11.353-9 "'Dame" dist il, "Vus ne savez,
Quele fille vus avez;
Ele est femme ja de mester,
E ceo ad fet nostre bouteler;
Pur nostre bien hounte nus rent,
Trahit nus ad trop malement;
Kar nostre fille ad afole;'

As he speaks he grows more enraged and adopts the impersonality of revenge, transmitted by the passive voice.

11.361-4 'Si avrat il, si jeo vif taunt,
Ne li ert nul de mort guarant.
Tot ert detrait e puis pendu
E la puteine arse en feu!'"

The count grows black with rage and rushes from the room. He meets Amis, looks wildly upon him and then accuses him in extravagant terms. The accusation progresses immediately to a promise of vengeance so impersonal in its phrasing as almost to conceal that the count is referring to his own vengeance. The personification of death gives an impressive glimpse of an inexorable and implacable justice which will efface such treachery as Amis' from the earth. The count gives his wrath a metaphysical power.

11.373-6 "'Hee fel," fet il, "deu vus maudie!
 Par vus est ma fille honie;
 Mes vus n'en irrez ja riant,
 La mort vus vait ja approchant!"'

The suggestion that the culprit might escape to mock later seems almost blasphemous, expressed in these terms.¹

Amis is compèlled to agree to a trial by combat in order to save himself from immediate extinction. Fear of the seneschal and of the lord's rage is such that the only person who will be hostage for him is Florie's mother.

By the time Amilun arrives to fight the battle, the count's rage has subsided and is to some extent replaced by grief for his wife and daughter whom he loved so much. His chief desire is to restore the old relationships. The implacability of the seneschal has sharpened this grief (551ff), for he has been forced to keep faith with the traitor. He has coldly sworn to carry out his judgment on the hostages (556ff). When he sees Amilun he is greatly relieved (577), for he believes that his very presence indicates innocence. In order to encourage him, he quietly promises him his land and his daughter if he should win.

11.579-82 "Puis li dist suef en l'oraille
 Ke, s'il peust veintre la bataille,
 Sa fille a femme li dorreit
 E de tote sa terre eir le freit."

1. Boasting of dishonour is insupportable. Cf. Charlemagne's words in Ch. de R. 3974. 'Hom ki traïst altre, nen est dreiz qu'il s'en vant.'

Such behaviour is subtle, but understandable, characterisation.

The attitude to trial-by-combat is more ambivalent. It is clear that the Anglo-Norman poet does not feel the importance of the trial in a way comparable to the English poet, for the leprosy in his poem is the result of a false oath at the wedding. Yet it is wrong to see this promise to Amis as a bribe to win. It is rather a reward for a favoured winner which is, in the end, dependent upon a judicium dei. In the count's own judgment Amis is either absolved or forgiven before the combat, but final proof of innocence must await the judgment of God. After this has been given the count mildly asks his daughter if she will marry Amis. She plays her new part of innocence admirably.

11.691-4 'Ele respont mult simplement:
 "Sire, a vostre comandement!
 Si vus me voliez marier,
 Jeo n'en devreie pas grucier."

The old equilibrium of the Count's household has been re-established. Unfortunately, in order to reach this happy state it has been necessary to substitute one brother for another, and it is from this irregularity that the second part of the story springs.

In his presentation of the Duke's character, the English poet does not approach this dramatic virtuosity. He entirely omits the happy circle of the Duke's immediate family. Loyalty and love exist only between the brothers and their lord. The duke himself is less important than the steward, who is the real threat to Amis in the English poem. The steward's treachery is demonstrated at length,

in direct speech. He warns the Duke that there is a traitor in the court.

11.790-92 'For, certes, he is a traitour strong,
 When he wip tresoun & wip wrong
 Pi douhter hap forlain!"'

The Duke's reply to this grim charge is entirely inadequate. All he can do is ask the identity of the villain and this he does in rather quiet, conversational tones, despite the poet's introductory claim that he was enraged.

11.793-5 'Pe riche douke gan sore agramé:
 "Who hap," he seyd, "don me pat schame?
 Tel me, y pe pray!"'

The steward tells him fully and advises him to hang Amis. Making no reply but 'Egre of mode,', the Duke runs into the hall 'as he were wode.' He goes straight to Sir Amis and strikes at him with a falchion, but misses. Sir Amis locks himself in another room and the Duke in his fury drives his falchion through the door. All the courtiers try to pacify the Duke but he merely swears that he cares for nothing except the traitor's death. In his second direct speech from the beginning of the scene, he expresses his revulsion at the ingratitude of Amis, and his desire to slay him personally.

11.823-8 "'Ich haue him don gret honour
 & he hap as a vile traitour
 Mi douhter forlain;
 Y nold for al pis worldes won
 Bot y miȝt pe traitour slon
 Wip min hondes tvain."

The speech lacks all the pathos of betrayed affection and the sense of utter collapse of the Anglo-Norman version. There is nothing of the metaphysical evoked in the inevitability of justice. The tone is indignation and the revenge is a strictly personal one. The actions and speech of the English duke are not those of a tragic hero; they belong rather to the insults and disappointments of the common people. Like King Aylmer in Horn, the Duke's speech and actions are those of a very ordinary father who feels his trust has been betrayed.

The duke is pacified at last by Amis' offer of trial by combat. After this point his importance fades further. He is filled with anger and the desire for vengeance when Amis fails to arrive for the combat, shows no pleasure when Amiloun comes, yet offers him his daughter and his land when he wins, and then fades from the story.

In the Chanson the wronged lord is Charlemagne. His behaviour is generally befitting his position. Hardre comes to him and tells him of Amiles' treachery and asks that he should be burned. Charlemagne is unimpressed. He tells Hardre that he must be wrong; Amis would not show treachery for all the gold in Christendom (735ff). . Hardre repeats his accusation and, in order to make it more effective, he asks that Amiles should be sent for, and if he is not guilty his own limbs should be cut off. Charlemagne grows angry at this and sends for Amiles. When he arrives, he addresses him with the same cold, ironic words as Hardre used forty lines before:

11.748-53 "Par deu," dist il, "trop voz iestez hastez.
 Riches soudees de ma cort emportez,
 Quant de ma fille iestez reprins prouvez;
 Mais par l'apostre c'on quiert en Noiron pre,
 Se voz de ceste ne voz poez oster,
 Je voz ferai celle teste coper."

Although Charlemagne suspects that Hardre's accusation may be true, he keeps his temper and allows Amis the opportunity to disprove the charge. His procedure is admirably legal, as is his language in line 750.

Amis denies the accusation and Hardre accepts his challenge to trial-by-battle. The king still shows no outward sign of anger. Busying himself with procedure, he asks for hostages (757) then questions Amis about his plea: 'Voldrez jehir ou voz voldrez combatre?' Amis fails to persuade anyone to be his hostage and desperately asks what sureties are required. He then asks for his arms to be brought so that the battle may take place at once. Charlemagne refuses, saying that if he had his arms he would escape and the insult would never be avenged (794). He now sends for his sword in order to execute Amiles. The Queen saves him by offering herself and her son and daughter as hostages.

Nowhere in this section is there any dramatic presentation of anger. Charlemagne is entirely controlled throughout and follows legal practice. Since Amiles cannot provide sureties and take part in the trial-by-combat, he is presumed guilty and ~~deserves~~ execution.

Later in the poem Charlemagne is still primarily the just judge.

He makes ready to burn the hostages according to the law and avoids any favouritism for his family.

1.1241 "Il ne lor fist bel samblant ne prive."

He warns them that if Amiles does not come he will carry out justice.

11.1249-50 'Toz l'ors del mont ne voz porroit tanser,

De voz ne face justice moult cruel."

When Hardre asks that they should be burned, he promises that they will not escape (1331), and when Amiles arrives Charles reasserts his decision to continue the trial without favour (1395ff), though he is pleased to see him (1371). He forbids any help to either combatant (1472ff) in a manner quite unlike the clear favouritism of the Anglo-Norman, and only after the fight does he offer his daughter to Amis (1683). Amis sees it as a slight and defies Charlemagne until his knights persuade the latter to allow Amis land in recompense, as well as vengeance on Hardre's lifeless body.

It is evident that the Anglo-Norman poet is the only one of the three who takes advantage of the dramatic potential of the figure of the count. In the other two poems the lord is of far less importance in relation to the villain. In the Chanson Charlemagne is simply a stock figure of the incorruptible justisier. His speeches are more appropriate to this office than to a father and husband about to see his womenfolk burned. As a conventional judge he acts as a device to increase the narrative tension of the plot. He is given little direct speech, and the only emotions which he is allowed are sadness and anger. The English poet, too, gives the duke little direct speech

in comparison to his other characters, and he exhibits dramatically only very ordinary self-righteous indignation and the desire for redress. The duke's rage is demonstrated by his acts; and the picture of him driving a falchion through the door provides a vivid visual image of his rage. Such a use of simple properties, together with violent action is common in the English poems, and is also a mark of the 'popular' style of the fabliaux commented on by Muscatine.¹ The presentation of anger by this means does not result in a manner of behaviour which is credible in a man of aristocratic lineage. Only the Anglo-Norman poet succeeds in producing a character, at once aristocratic and dramatic. He alone exploits the pathos of real affection in the count's family; he alone is capable of using rhetorical and dramatic heightening of direct expression to produce a credible evolution of emotion in a character whose psychological truth is consistent throughout his appearances in the poem. The palm for presentation of character must, for this performance, go to the Anglo-Norman poet.

1. Op. cit. pp.60-63.

D Narrative Skills.

If the English poet's rendition of the facets of human emotion is not comparable to that achieved by the author of Amis e Amilun, his skill in using devices of narrative is considerable. Both the French poems note that the brothers possess a pair of cups of exactly similar manufacture. In the French poem, they are gifts from their god-father, the Pope, while in the Anglo-Norman, they are not mentioned until the moment before they are used as recognition tokens. Neither of the French works use them for any more than the recognition scene after the afflicted brother's wanderings. The English poet is alive to the possible symbolic significance of their similarity which is present, but unexploited, in the French poems. He spends one whole stanza, before the parting of the brothers, describing how Amiloun had had the cups made (241ff). He draws the comparison between the similarity of the cups and that of the two brothers in unmistakeable terms.

11.250-52 "& bope pai weren as liche, ywis,
 As was Sir Amiloun & sir Amis,
 Per no failed riȝt nouȝt."

When the two knights are parted, the cups too are separated, for Amiloun gives Amis one of them as a remembrance.

11.322-24 'Lete neuer þis coupe fro þe,
 Bot loke her-on & þenk on me,
 It tokneþ our parting."

After this, the cup is forgotten until Amiloun is turned out of his castle. Then, it is the only item of his possessions which he takes with him (11.1616-7). A little later, his loyalty to his brother is

evoked again when, although starving, he refuses to sell his cup and prefers to sell his ass to gain food.

11.1808-12 "'Ous bihouep selle our asse oway,
 For we no haue gode no mo,
 Saue mi riche coupe of gold,
 Ac certes, þat schal neuer be sold,
 Pei hunger schuld me slo."'

Finally the cup becomes a recognition token, as in the other versions. There is no doubt that, in his use of cups, the English poet is deliberately and skilfully using a symbolic device which is symmetrical with the incidents of the story and which clearly demonstrates the loyalty of the brothers in a way not attempted by the other poets.

As a result of using the cups to illustrate devotion, the recognition scene becomes more ironic. On being informed that the beggar outside his gates possesses the duplicate of his cup, Amis assumes that it has been stolen. He rushes outside, reviles the beggar, and kicks and beats him. He is on the point of slaying him when Amiraunt intervenes. The situation itself is ironic in its essentials, but unfortunately the English poet feels that he must elaborate it for even greater effect. His skill in the presentation of emotion is not comparable to the inherent dramatic strength of the situation; the result is that much of the ironic force is dissipated.

The news that the beggar has a similar cup to Amis' own is delivered in a jesting way. The messenger claims that he's wasting

his charity in giving wine to one richer than himself (2037ff). Amis' reaction is as unsophisticated as was that of the duke. His decision that the cup must have been stolen is presented in direct speech, then he rushes out with his sword 'as a wode man' (2066). His emotions are shown simply in his actions in kicking and beating the hapless beggar. When he accuses him of having stolen the cup, Amiloun answers with a parallel to the irony of the situation, which is wholly praiseworthy. The cup was Amiloun's in his country, but has now fallen to this.

11.2084-8 '"It was his in his cuntray,
 & now it is fallen so;
 Bot certes, now pat icham here,
 Pe coupe is mine, y bouzt it dere,
 Wip riȝt y com per to."'

The reference to the cost of the cup is particularly apposite in the circumstances and particularly enraging to Amis. Less happy is the continuation of this mood when Amiraunt interrupts to prevent Amis from killing his lord. Here the irony is less effective, largely because it is dramatically inappropriate. Presumably there is some urgency in Amiraunt's interruption, yet he still speaks darkly. Such behaviour is unreal. The poet prefers to exploit the possibilities offered by the situation for riddling speech, rather than follow the laws of natural behaviour, or those of dramatic composition.

11.2107-12 '"Sir," he seyd, "pou art vnhende
 & of pi werkes vnkende,
 To sle pat gentil kniȝt.
 Wel sore may him rewe pat stounde

Pat euer for þe toke he wounde
 To saue þi lif in fiȝt.'

His aim is to enjoy to the full the situation of unknown identity and at the same time to evoke the pathos aroused by ingratitude. The combination of these aims is unsatisfactory.

Both the French poems make more use of the irony offered by plot. The Chanson uses it regularly and deliberately in the most obvious ways. Lubias constantly denounces Amiles to the man she thinks is her husband, and at one point (l.1223ff) he promises to kill Amiles. There is a moving scene where Belissans innocently says that she can not distinguish between the two friends. She has been married to the wrong man and the substitution is now made (1958ff). After the angel has told Amis of the terrible cure for his disease, Amiles is made to come before him lamenting and promising that he would do anything to heal him (2827ff). Simple irony in speech is represented by Lubias' remark to Amis that, to her taste, he looks far too healthy. She doesn't want him to live for more than a month.

11.2349-52 "Quant je voz fiz fors de Blaivies gietier,
 Disoient moi serjant et chevalier,
 Que morriez tost, gaires ne viveriez;
 Or voz voi si sain et sauf et haitie."

The Anglo-Norman poet treats the irony of the plot rather more subtly, as we might expect, but does not exploit it very greatly. The final recognition scene in his poem is similar to that of the English author. The recognition tokens mis-fire in the same way, but the treatment is more compressed and the inherent irony of the situation is not threatened by excessive stress on the misunder-

standing. The report of the similarity of the cups is not given as fully as in the English work. The count decides more immediately that his brother's cup has been stolen, but his actions are exactly the same with the exception that he does not draw his sword. Pathos is neatly evoked by the mention that he kicked him:

1.1011 "Tant k'il meimes fu allassez,"

His next act is far more reasoned than the English and adds a little to the irony of the situation. He binds the beggar and takes him prisoner, intending to send to learn the truth from Amilun. Such a move says much for the justice of the Norman count. Amilun, unable to bear the thought of captivity, asks for death, by the faith that he, Amis, owes to Amilun.

11.1023-24 'Car certes ai jeo trop vesqui:
Trop bien ai la mort deservi!"

Amis takes this as a confession and prepares to cut off his head, when Owein cries out that this is Sir Amilun.

The Anglo-Norman treats the recognition scene in much the same way as the English poet, but he avoids excessive riddling. Owein immediately identifies Amilun, Amilun's request for death rather than imprisonment by his friend is an effort to evoke pite and is more sentimentally cloying than its equivalent in the English poem, yet its misinterpretation by Amis, as a confession of theft, rescues it from the atmosphere of irony in which the scene exists.

When Amis hears that the beggar has the cup he makes a very

similar ironic remark to that of Amiloun in the English version.

1.998 "Ja l'averad cher achate!"

Such verbal irony can be matched in the English poem by lines 2434-5, concerning Amiloun's wife.

11.2434-5 "And for she holp him so at nede,
 Wel he pouȝt to quyte hur mede,"

This, in turn, compares with the longer ironic speech with which Amilun addresses his wife in the Anglo-Norman poem.

11.1195 "'Dame," ceo dist, "lessez ester!
 Ne dussez tel duel demener,
 Pur ceo ke sain sui revenu!'

The speech soon turns into one of judgment. Again there is pungent irony in his tone when he informs Florie that she has married the wrong man. She won't, he hopes, tell anybody.

11.747-50 "'Ne sui pas celi ke quidez;
 De vostre espeir failli avez.
 A vus le puis jeo bien counter:
 J'espeir ke le voillez celer."'

Florie has the choice of keeping the secret or of being burned alive.

As well as irony, all the versions derive pathos from the fall in fortunes and also from the juxtaposition of the plight of one brother with the happy situation of the other. The Chanson and the Carlsruhe MS. derive pathos from the treatment of their unfortunate hero by his kin, or from the maltreatment of his young son. The most potentially pathetic scene, aside from the 'tragedie' of Amiloun, is the closing scene, where Amis is forced to choose between the health of his friend and the lives of his children. An

examination of this scene in the three versions is revealing both of the poets' craft and of their differing interests.

The Anglo-Norman, who at the outset promised pathos and tenderness, hardly exploits the latent pite of the scene at all. His concern is entirely with his heroes. The scene is a supreme test of leaute and the pathos of the murdered children is unimportant. The whole miracle is completed in sixty-four lines. One night Amis hears a voice which tells him that he can cure his companion by washing him in the blood of his two children. He is never troubled for a moment by compassion. There is no sentiment. Amis regards it as a very good bargain which he will seal, whether the dream be true or not.

11.1086-90 "A deu," dist il, "ke ne menti,
 Doint ke veirs seit mon sunge.
 Mes ore seit voir ou mensunge,
 Al meins la voiz voil esprover,
 Por mes enfanz ne voil lesser."

When morning comes Amis goes to the cathedral and begs God to heal his brother. Ironically, his wife, who knows nothing of the dream, joins him in this. He then returns home and pitilessly slays the children in bed, soaking the sheets in their blood. When the sheets are applied to Amilun's body, he is miraculously cured. Amilun is given fresh clothes and everybody is filled with joy at his recovery. Amis is then reminded of the cost of this recovery and tells his wife to moderate her joy, for he has slain her children. She behaves in a surprising way:

11.1123-30 'La dame a deu ses mains tendi
 E gre e graces li rendi;
 Puis dist ke ele fust oye:
 "Jhesu, le fiz seinte Marie,
 Si li plest par son poer,
 Nus porra enfanz bien doner;
 Si Amilun perdu eussez,
 Ja mes tel autre n'avriez."

They all attend church and give thanks, and on their return they find the children alive and playing with a ray of sunshine.

It is clear from this summary of the scene that the children, far from being sentimentally treated by the Anglo-Norman poet, hardly have the importance of human beings. However, that he knew of a sentimental way of presenting suffering children is proved by the sketch of them playing together with a ray of sunshine - an incident almost certainly in his source - and also by the half-guilty confession of murder made by Amis to his wife. In addition, as if by a habit of the narrator, pite is momentarily awakened by the denial of its existence just before the murder, and by the simultaneous presentation of the innocent sleep of the children.

11.1100-1104 "En une chambre est entre,
 U les dous enfanz giseient
 E doucement se dormeient.
 Le piere des fiz n'out nule pite,
 Ambedou ad le chief trenche;"

The mention of the relationship between the murderer and his victims in juxtaposition to the description of the deed is emotive, too. That

these habitual hints of pathos¹ remain undeveloped suggests that the Anglo-Norman poet is deliberately rejecting the normal drift of such a scene. He is setting his chosen theme of loyalty against the obvious emotions of the narrative. The grotesque reaction of the mother, the determination to prove the dream, and the stress on the joy of the cure rather than the horror of the crime, characterise this scene as a triumphant vindication of the loyalty between comrades. The whole poem has been about these two companions and even pathos is limited to their mutual relations and is not directed on to extraneous matters. Polluting the scene with sentiment for the two children would have upset the thematic structure of the poem which demands that this should be the climax of loyalty. Indeed, pity for the children proves to be an inessential, for they are quickly restored to life.

In this treatment of the final scene, as elsewhere, the Anglo-Norman poem makes a sharp contrast with the other versions. Neither of the other two poets have such a pressing desire to prune inessentials from the theme. For them the narrative is of great importance and the amplification of individual scenes simply adds to its richness. To the author of the Chanson this particular scene

1. Cf. the sweet sleep of the victims of the Emir in Floire et Blancheflor.

is of extreme importance as embodying the twin miracles to which the whole religious background of the poem directs the audience. The miracles are the reason for the fame of Amis and Amiles and, as such, the *raison d'être* of the poem itself. The scene in the Chanson extends to well over four hundred lines.

Amis is lying in his chamber one night when an angel appears, filling the room with light, and speaks "doucement par amors:" (2771). The angel asks Amis whether he still wishes to recover and the latter replies that the matter is in God's hands. He is given instructions of how to effect a cure and the angel ascends into heaven singing the *Te Deum* (2813). The poet feels that it is necessary to register something of Amis' reaction to the horrifying instructions and mentions that he lay all night 'en grant frison' (2814). The next morning everything happens as the angel foretold. Amiles comes to ask him to accompany them to the church; he then speaks the long ironic monologue in which he promises that he would cure his companion whatever the cost. Amis takes this as a sign that he will be healed. Yet he is reluctant to make the sacrifice of the two children. He mentions only that he could be healed if he dared to tell how. At this, Amiles falls on his knees and humbly thanks God, then begs his friend to tell him the manner of the cure. Amis refuses, for it sounds like madness. Amiles now conjures him, quite appropriately, in the name of God who raised Lazarus, to admit his hidden knowledge. At length Amis agrees but stresses that he does not expect him to act according to what he will tell him. When Amiles has heard the angel's message, he bursts into tears.

11.2919-23 "Moult li est dur et au cuer trop amer
De ses dous fiuls que il ot engendrez;
Com les porra ocirre et afoler!
Se gens le sevent, nus nel porroit tensesr,
C'on nel feist et panre et vergonder;"

The author of the Chanson exploits some of the dramatic possibilities of the scene. Both the brothers are distressed at the choice offered them. Pity is aroused for the children and fear at the consequences of murder.

the poet remarks:

11.2929-32 "C'est moult grant chose d'omme mort restorer
Et si est maus des dous anfans tuer,
Nus n'en porroit le pechie pardonner
Fors dex de glorie qui se laissa pener."

Amiles then addresses an exclamatio to God, declaring his intention of repaying Amis' sacrifice. He rushes out of the room and the poet gives an effective little picture of him, searching round the house to make sure that no servants or knights are there, and barring the doors against intruders. The air of secrecy and the consequent moral judgment on the murder are as absent from the Anglo-Norman treatment as is an exploitation of the pathos of the scene.

Gathering up a bowl and his sword, Amiles goes into his sons' room. Their attitude is calculated to arouse pity. Again it is that in which the Emir finds Floire and Blanche-flor.

11.2964-5 "...li enfant gisoient lez a lez.
Dormans les treuve bras a bras acolez."

When he sees them, Amiles is overwhelmed by emotion and he falls to the ground senseless. Awakening, he cries out questioningly (subjectio):¹

1. Faral op. cit. p. 276.

"Chaitis! que porrai faire?"

Again he swoons and, reawakening, addresses a longer exclamatio to himself. He prepares to strike and then delays again, and in that moment, the elder brother awakens and asks him what is his intention, for:

1.2994 "Ainz mais nus peres tel chose ne pensa."

The exchange between the parent and the child continues in the most affectionate terms and the boy says that they are entirely at Amiles disposal if it will cure Amis. This exceptionally selfless expression of filial piety closes in terms of the heaviest religious sentimentality.

11.3005-12 'Or noz copez les chies isnellement;
 Car dex de glorie noz aura en present,
 En paradis en irommez chantant
 Et proierommez Jesu, cui tout apent,
 Que dou pechie voz face tens (em)ement,
 Voz et Ami vostre compaignon gent;
 Mais nostre mere la bele Belissant
 Noz saluez por deu omnipotent."

Although modern critical opinion is opposed to heavy sentimentality, one can not help but be affected by the cunning blend of utter selflessness, innocence and childlike love expressed in the speech of the elder son. Not surprisingly, Amiles faints again at hearing it. This time, when he awakens, he steels himself, approaches his child and, cutting off his head, catches the blood in a basin. The actual slaughter here is in great contrast to the short and brutal killing in the Anglo-Norman poem. It is carried out with the willing

participation of the victim, who extends his neck (3019) to receive the blow. The blood, instead of soaking the sheets, is caught ritualistically in the waiting bowl. Here, it is scarcely murder, rather a willing sacrifice. Yet, as Amiles leaves the fatal chamber, he ensures that the door is well bolted.

When Amis sees the bowl he loudly laments the deed, but Amiles re-avows his loyalty by saying that the blood is well spent if it heals his friend. This it swiftly does, and the two thank God. Amis is dressed richly and they go to join the court at the cathedral. All those who see them on the way are unable to tell which is which. When Belissans sees them she swoons. Reviving, she asks which is her lord and is told that Amis has been cured. Everyone present falls to their knees and gives thanks. More than a hundred weep for pitie and the bells ring and the clerks chant. Amiles restrains their joy and tells them how the cure was effected. He gathers a great crowd of people of all ranks to witness the dreadful sight and demands that, after the funeral, his own and Amis' head should be cut off. The debt of loyalty and gratitude to his companion has been paid in the face of death. They are now willing to die.

The poet achieves a heightening of emotion by noting that now the bells are ringing for sadness rather than joy and the priests and incense are to mourn a death rather than to salute a miracle (3177ff). Belissans is first into the chamber, and she finds that God has restored her children to life. The miracle is communicated to the clergy and 'la gent lettree' (3200), and the common people flock

into the chamber. There is great joy and everyone goes to the cathedral to praise God. Once more the bells ring and the priests chant in praise. The poet then goes on to describe the celebration feast.

It is clear from this account that the poet of the Chanson exploits the situation considerably. It is steeped in the attitudes of self-sacrifice and religious fervour, and the selflessness of the actions of people in the scene, together with the moral complications, leads to intense pathos. The poet's efforts to illustrate what his characters feel themselves, by means of swoons and exclamations, tends rather to overload the scene, so that it becomes stylised emotion; yet the correct emotional keys are touched skilfully enough.

The English poet chooses to treat the scene in a comparable way, although the aspects of religious fervour and self-sacrifice are played down and pity is aroused from a slight heightening of the simple tale of the slaughter of innocents. Even the painful doubt as to the veracity of the dream is removed, for both brothers are visited by an angel.

Alone among the extant versions, the English poem places the time of the miracle at Christmas. Apparently, only the English poet was able to make the imaginative connection between the Massacre of the Innocents and the present murder.¹ It is the same streak of

1. Cf. Chaucer's imaginative identification of child murder with Childermas in The Prioress's Tale. M.P. Hamilton, 'Echoes of Childermas in the Tale of the Prioress' M.L.R. xxxiv (1939), 1-8. Reprinted in, Chaucer - Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. E. Wagenknecht (New York 1959)

allusive genius present in his explicit identification of the cups and their owners, in order to emphasise their loyalty.

After receiving the angelic visitation, Amis is troubled; but his doubt is not amplified beyond a mere mention. The poet instead draws equal effect from a cunning juxtaposition of contrasting emotions.

11.2215-20 "Ful blipe was sir Amis þo,
 Ac for his childer him was ful wo,
 For fairer ner non born.
 Wel loþ him was his childer to slo,
 & wele loþer his broþer forgo,
 Pat is so kinde ycorn."

The technique of juxtaposition of contrasting emotions is no more unusual in romance than the use of the device which follows it; the employment of zeugma with the simple and comparative forms of adjectives. Yet it is so much less artificial and so much more economical than an extended exclamatio.

When morning dawns, Sir Amis goes to his friend and asks after his health. Amiloun answers piously but simply, (2231-2)

"Broþer, ich abide her godes wille,
 For y may do na mare."

Instead of the long ironic speech of loyalty in the Chanson, the friends fall to discussion of 'adventours', until at length Amiloun tells of his dream. Amis realises that what he has heard is sinful (2247), but, since it will cure his brother, he can not shrink from it.

11.2251-6 "So it befel on Cristes niȝt,
 Swiche time as Ihesu, ful of miȝt,
 Was born to saue man-kunne,
 To chirche to wende al þat þer wes,
 Þai diȝten hem, wiȝ-uten les,
 Wiȝ ioie & worlde's winne."

The poet carefully creates the atmosphere of an ordinary Christmas, the season of joy and the anniversary of the birth of the child Christ. But Amis chooses to remain behind and look after his friend himself, while the others go to church. The excuse is an excellent one and increases the atmosphere of warm friendliness. Yet, at the moment that he is professing friendship as his reason for remaining behind, Amis is mentally noting the position of the keys to his childrens' room (2269ff). When his household have gone, he takes a 'candel fair & briȝt' and goes to the room to perpetrate his dark deed.

When he sees his children lying together, like the Frenchman he can not go on. He stops and exclaims:

11.2287-89 "... "Bi Seyn Jon,
 It were gret reweȝe ȝou to slon,
 Pat God hap þouȝt so dere!"

The associations of the season are again evoked. The innocence of the children makes him weep bitterly and he acts out his indecision by hurling the dagger from him.¹ Eventually, he steels himself and

1. A similar device is employed much later, in The Spanish Tragedy, III xii by Thomas Kyd. Hieronimo considers suicide and, deciding against it, casts away his poniard.

in God's and his brother's names he cuts their throats. Afterwards he re-arranges the bodies to cover the crime, locks the door, hides the keys and returns to Amiloun. Again, the poet explicitly contrasts the murder with the spirit of Christmas.

11.2325-6 "Swich time as god was born,
 Ich haue þe brouȝt mi childer blod,'

Only in the English poem is Amiloun's reply to this an extended lament. The English Amiloun feels strongly for his friend's children.

11.2329-2334 "Broper," sir Amiloun gan to say,
 "Hastow slayn þine children tway?
 Allas, whi destow so?"
 He wepe & seyde, "Waileway!
 Ich had leuer til domesday
 Haue liued in care & wo!"

The self-sacrifice of Amiloun here rings entirely true. It is the reaction of a good friend, and it increases the pathos. Amis reassures him that Jesus will send other children. With this, he washes him in the blood and puts him back to bed, then goes to the chapel to pray for his children and himself.

In the morning Belisaunt is unable to find the keys to the chamber. Amis admits to her that he has slain the children. Although very unhappy herself, she perceives his misery and does her best to comfort him (2389ff). She offers to conceal the murder on his behalf and bury the children secretly. Instead of going to the chamber they go first to see Sir Amiloun and find him recovered. Then they pass on to the children's room and find them alive. The double climax of the scene comes together. There is very little mention of the miraculous nature of the resuscitation. The poet

does not bring in a large crowd of common people as in the Chanson, nor is there any mention of secular or ecclesiastical thanksgivings other than in lines

2422-24 "For ioye þey wept, þere þey stood,
 And þanked God with myld mood,
 Her care was al (away)."

Almost immediately, Amiloun is ready to return to his own country.

The English poet's handling of this scene is extremely skilful. Indeed it may be the best scene in his poem. Throughout it, he makes brilliant use of the associations which cling to the season of Christmas, and he handles the religious and miraculous aspects with a simple piety which does not make it vie for importance with the pathos of the murder of the children. The attitudes, emotions and expression of the characters give the illusion of reality throughout, for he avoids the excessive swooning and self-sacrificing speeches of the Chanson, whilst shunning the bleak didacticism of the Anglo-Norman poem. The children here are, quite properly, the victims, and not willing sacrifices; yet their executioners feel a strong and humane pity for them which makes this scene effectively pathetic without danger of straying into conventionalised sentimentality.

E Stylistic Devices.

Rhetorical devices are part of the stock-in-trade of every composer of romance. Significant conclusions can only be drawn from the kind of devices used and the frequency of their use. The English author's predilection for a personal manner of narrative has already been noted in the comparison of the opening scenes of the poems. He maintains addresses to the audience throughout his work. Very frequently he makes reference to sources, real or merely conventional (447, 1546, 1535 et. al.), and he makes extravagant claims as to the truth of his narrative (42, 90) in the early part of the poem. On several occasions he calls for attention (280;517) sometimes framing his call with the promise of interesting material to come (2416), and sometimes referring to points already made (2403). Occasionally he refers to his immediate narrative (484) or even re-capitulates (73). Kölbing in his edition (pp.XLll ff) shows that most of the phrases used are formulaic.

Formulaic narrative is characteristic of Amis and Amiloun, as Kölbing shows, and there are several examples of what Baugh calls 'predictable complements'. (1573-4; 97-8).¹

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1. Improvisation in the M.E. Romance: Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society CIII (1959)p.428. Baugh describes the 'predictable complement' as a conventional way of finishing a thought by the use of commonplace associations. They are almost 'a conditional reflex' to any proposition. The word *kniȝt* might provoke a complement containing '*fiȝt*', '*miȝt*' or '*wiȝt*'.

A very large number of epithets are arranged in pairs, often pleonastic or of vague application; 'gode & trewe' (655); 'glad & blipe' (680), but sometimes arranged in opposites to emphasise the completeness of a given proposition. 'Neither lef ne loothe' (87), 'pore ne ryche' (92) can distinguish between the two brothers. For the same reason, use is made of a list technique similar to that in Havelok:

11.85-6 "In al þe court was þer no wyȝt,
 Erl, baroun, squyer, ne knyȝt,"

Often this technique becomes a simple form of interpretatio.

11.1537-9 "Pan was þat kniȝt of gret renoun
 & lord of mani a tour & toun
 & douke of gret pouste;"

As such, it is the favourite device for amplification in the poem.
(11.160-180; 193-204; 565-67; 571-72; 680 ff).

Although the poem is largely secular in interest, the poet makes use of a Christian frame of reference and allusions are frequently made in a euphemistic way to Christ, in order to lend weight to an utterance.¹

11.301-3 "Ac broþer, ich warn þe biforn,
 For his loue þat bar þe croun of þorn
 To saue al man-kende,"

Oaths by Saints Giles, John and Thomas are equally in evidence. Long exclamations are few, and not very stylised in expression. Those of the narrator, directed against characters, as in Havelok, are limited

1. Also 11.388; 1759.

to two of exactly similar formulaic construction (720; 1752).

1.720 "Wel iuel mot he priue."

Considering the formulaic, personal remarks of the author on the source and truth of his narrative, this is few indeed. The use of transitio is even more sparse and the single example is not a fully developed one.

11.1189-90 "Now, hende, herkenep, & y schal say
Hou pat Sir Amiloun went his way;"

There is no clear statement that he is turning away from one brother to the other.

Figures of thought are equally rare. The sole metaphor (2395) is paralleled in Floris and Blancheflour 'herte rote', and the simile in lines 1321-2 is a very conventional one in battle scenes.

"Sir Amiloun, as fer of flint,
Wip wretpe anon to him he wint"

A more original simile is that which introduces the continuous symbolism of loyalty demonstrated by the cups.

11.250-1 "& bope pai weren as liche, ywis,
As was Sir Amiloun & sir Amis."

In common with other Middle English romance, Amis and Amiloun exhibits traces of concrete and figurative language of great vividness. The collocation of speech with the organ of speech occurs in a way comparable to Havelok.

1.1886 "Wip tong as y 3ou tel may,-"

The evocation of death and burial, is accomplished in the usual vivid

and concrete manner. Belisaunt complains that her suffering is such that:

1.492 "Sche wald be loken in clay."

The undercurrent of imaginative comparison is evident in the words about Amiloun's wife.

11.1561-3 "So wicked & schrewed was his wiif,
 Sche brac his hert wip-uten kniif,
 Wip wordes harde & kene,"

More formulaic, but equally graphic in expression, is the neat little picture transmitted with such economy in the phrase:

1.135 "To ride an hunting vnder riis;"

A close examination of the expression of the English poet reveals a high degree of correspondence to a norm in romance composition. The popular devices of interpretatio, and to a less extent exclamatio, are frequent, as they are in other romance. Expression is very formalised and a large number of expressions are alliterative and some have a long history in Germanic literature; (briȝt in bour). The personal exclamations of the poet to his audience are formulaic in character and there is very little trace of individuality in technique, save perhaps for the simile which likens the cups' similarity to that of Amis and Amiloun. Even the occasional vigour of the language is typical of this kind of romance. There is no use of literary or allusive devices such as exempla or sententiae and, in its expression, it would seem that the poem is one of a large group of conventional, orally-based poetry.

By contrast the Anglo-Norman poem gives an immediate sense of individuality and literary influence in its opening revelations of theme. The poet speaks personally and in a less formulaic way, stating his intentions in telling the story and relating his remarks more carefully to the story than the English poet. He changes scene by the frequent use of transitio (151;180;545-6) and also uses the rather more literary device of occupatio.

11.321-2 "D'autre chose ne dirrai mie,
 Ne crei pas k'il eust vilainie."

Although different in tone, being more literary than the English, the Anglo-Norman's personal interruptions are often equally conventional. The attention of the audience is frequently attracted by exclamations of "Estes vus" (209;221), and short descriptions of situations are preceded by "Ore est" (781;839). Amis and Amilun's misery is intensified by the commonplace phrase denying its credibility:

11.106-8 "N'est home, ke me vousiht creire,
 Si jeo deisse la meite
 Del doel ke entre eus ont mene."

Later, the hopelessness of Amilun's situation is emphasised by another conventional expression.

1.842 "N'est merveille, s'il ad dolor!"

Although the poem is the most secular of the three, God is used as the subject of conventional exclamationes uttered both by the narrator in person and by the characters ('ke ne menti' 1086). The exclamationes of the characters are generally short and simple. Those of the poet are merely formal devices aimed at some specific

effect. The intent is to arouse momentary tension in lines 327-8:

ll.327-28 "Or sunt li dous amanz trahiz,
 Si deu n'eit pitie e merci!"

and again in lines 522-3

"Ore li seit deu en aie
E doint, ke il puisse bien faire;"

Tension is the aim of the forshadowing in the sudden exclamation in lines 308-10:

"Alas! kar encuse serrunt:
Kar trestut l'oi un vassal
De la maisnee le senescal;"

Although the narrator makes several interruptions in his own person throughout the poem, like the English, these are largely conventional and give very little indication of the true nature of the poet. His individuality springs rather from his use of other devices and his concentration upon his theme.

Repetition is used purposely in the narration, despite its meagre length, to tighten the structure and to increase the excitement of the situation. At the beginning of the poem (25ff) we are told that if they were dressed in similar clothes, no-one could distinguish between them. Before impersonating Amis at the combat, Amilun changes clothes with him and we are reminded that they are so alike that they are indistinguishable except by clothes (53lff). The repetition here is surprisingly subtle, for the words themselves are not repeated, only the ideas of recognition by clothes alone. In view of the exchange which has just

taken place the repeated idea is most effective.

To place beside this fruitful example of repetition of ideas are only two consciously developed examples of repetitio:

11.752ff and 11.816ff. "Ne voleit entrer en son lit,
Ne ne voleit od li parler,
Ne od li beivre ne manger."

Quite naturally, as a result of the poet's close concentration on his theme, interpretatio is little used as a device of amplification. In lines 1171ff the opposition of epithets is used to imply completeness as in the English poem.

11.1171-4 "Kar nul ne fu aparcevant
De lur venue, petit ne grant.
La mesnee fud endurmie
Kar lur venue ne savoint mie."

In lines 834ff the interpretatio is given some formal elegance by the balance of its constituent parts.

11.834-6 "Ambedous ad fors gete,
E le seignur e le serjant,
Sir Amilun e sun enfant;"

The poet, like his English counterpart is not above using the simple list form of interpretatio to elaborate the word tuz. He twice gives a short list of the ranks of society (698ff;1181ff).

Graceful line balance is particularly dear to this poet.¹ He uses the balance based on the adverb tant twice (304;256).

1.304 "Tant li ad dit, tant ad parle,"

and he also uses the balance based upon the use of the simple and

1. Cf. lines 399;402;408.

comparative forms of poi

1.451 "Poi manga e meins beut"

In about half the uses of this grace of style, the balance is an antithetical one (1046;1212).

1.1046 "Sa vie het, sa mort desire."

As was mentioned earlier the style of the battle scene is appropriate to the epic, and the poet uses the device of litotes frequently in his description of it. (586,597,631,669).

Like the English poet, this man is capable of using language in a vivid way. The images behind the use of words are not so striking, perhaps, but individual words are used figuratively in an interesting way. We are told that Florie 'casts' her love on Amis.

1.228 "...vers li getta s'amur;"

Later, Amilun 'bathes' his blade in the seneschal's brain.¹

1.662 "En la cervelle baingna le brand"

Beside these examples may be placed the unusual personification of 'need' which hounds Amilun. Here the image has crystallised and is as forceful a one as those in the English poem.

1.1041 "Grant bosoign l'ad ici chacie:"

Equally unusual are the few similes in the poem. The count's face becomes: 'plus neir ke karbon;' (367) with rage and twice (677;1083) we are told that Amilun is 'si sein ... com pessun.' More commonplace is the comparison of a sword's edge to a 'rasur' (612).

1. This latter is, however, a conventional expression.

The only use of metaphor is the ironic one in line 658 where Amilun complains of the wickedness of making a roast of ladies. The conceit in which Amis claims to the seneschal that Amilun has left his heart behind is a fairly common one (132).

From this short review, it appears that the Anglo-Norman poet was rather more stylistically aware and more literary-minded than his English counterpart. However, his individuality is strictly limited and he makes considerable use of literary conventions of narrative. But the literary nature of his work must not be overstressed. There are few elaborations of his theme by complex rhetorical devices and the keynote of his expression is simplicity. There are no exempla, sententiae, personal or literary allusions, nor any extensive descriptions. The poem is arranged around the theme of loyalty, and various devices are used to increase the interest of the narrative. Moments of tension are aroused frequently but never developed as an end in themselves. This is true of the dramatic moments when Amilun arrives to save the ladies or hears the voice at the church door. Juxtaposition gives interest through contrasts, and resultant pathos, in the different fates of the two brothers (459ff), and lends excitement to the sudden meeting with the seneschal which immediately follows a warning against him (114ff). In all, the Anglo-Norman poet is successful in producing a medium of narration which, although its main purpose is as a vehicle of the theme, nevertheless does not lack in narrative interest.

The author of the Chanson wrote within the epic framework and, as a result, his poem abounds with the conventional expression of the Chanson de Geste. He uses epic formula to introduce speech (1846, 3313, 1779 et. al.).

1.3313 "Ou voit les contes, ses prinst a arraisner:"

Litotes is a common device. Amis goes to see Amiles and the poet remarks:

1.900 "Celui va querre que hair ne porra;"

Foreshadowing of incidents is even more common (1996;2190;3293).

Similes, too, are the animal similes typical of epic battles:

1.1485 "Vers Ami cort les grans saus comme cers,"

Amis compares his wife's behaviour to that of a hawk, and himself to a defenceless bird, in a rather longer figurative speech (2084ff and similarly 2660ff).

As in the epic, the interruptions of the author are mostly strictly formal, with the exception of the uses of transitiones, which are numerous (79,228 et. al.) and occupatio, which is rarer.

1.2476 "Ne me chaut mais des jornees conter,"

The poet also calls for attention fairly frequently in conventional terms 'Oiez, seignor! que dex voz soit amis,' (903). Besides such blessings on the audience, he is equally as industrious as the author of Havelok in calling curses on the heads of the villains (289;341;354;367 et. al.). These curses are often a convenient content for the 'orphan' line.

Exclamations are also liberally allotted to the characters and

are frequently highly artificial in execution, beginning with the cry He! followed by the object of the apostrophe.

11.650-1 "He! dex," dist ele, "biaus pere esperitables!
 Qui vit ainz home de si fier vasselaige.'

Amiles makes a short formal regrets for his brother (1898ff) when he fears he is dead. The most common use of exclamatio is in the form of prayers, and these usually contain extensive Biblical allusions. Amiles, when praying for the safety of Amis in the single combat, cites the example of Saints Peter, Paul and Simon and tells how Jonah was saved from the belly of the whale, Daniel from the lions' den and Saint Susan from a false witness (1177ff). Belisaunt gives Abraham and his son as an exemplum of a miraculous escape in her prayer. She goes on to recite the greater part of Christ's life culminating in the Resurrection (1277ff). The prayer is so devious as almost to constitute an example of digressio.

The only use of exemplum which is not of Biblical origin is the parable with which Amiles warns Amis against aspiring to Belisaunt. He uses the fable of the fox and the grapes (571ff).

Sententiae are used sparingly and are rather examples of sententious expression than recognisable allusions to known proverbs (1804-5; 2117-8).

11.2117-18 "Maris et fame ce est toute une chars,
 Ne faillir ne se doivent."

Metaphor is scarcely used except for the conventional reference to 'les flors de France' (1587), meaning the peers of the realm.

The devices of amplification are used extensively by the poet of the Chanson. Repetition, both of ideas, situations and individual words is the favourite device. We are told at the beginning of the poem of the resemblance of the two brothers.

11.39-42 "Il s'entresamblent de venir de l'aler
 Et de la bouche et dou vis et dou nes,
 Dou chevauchier et des armes porter,
 Que nus plus biax ne puet on deviser."

Part or all of these words are repeated at least four times later in the poem (110ff;1048ff;1959ff;3103ff).

The exempla (1177ff), quoted above, are exactly repeated in lines 1667ff. The events of the early combats in which Amis and Amiles distinguish themselves are very similar. The formulaic expression: "La nuit i jut descî qu'a l'ajorner." (320), is repeated several times (339;371). The instructions of Amis to Amiles (1071-1084) are repeated almost word for word as what actually happens (1140-1154). Lubias is advised to forbid anyone to feed Amis and she passes on the advice as an order, using the same words. A few lines later the order is proclaimed in slightly different words (2363ff).

The use of repetitio is very sparing (1042ff;3382ff) but interpretatio is almost as important as the repetition of scenes and phrases. An unusually lengthy example extends through lines 922-936.

"A pie descent dou bon cheval de pris,
 Lez lui l'arresne a un rainscel petit,
 En terre fiche son roit espie forbi,
 L'auberc ne l'iaume n'a il pas degerpi,
 Son bon escu avoit a son chief mis;
 Car moult redoute Hardre son annemi,

Que ne le sievent mil home de son lin
 Qui le voillent ocirre.
 Or fu Amiles en mi le pre couchiez,
 Lez lui arresne son bon corrant destrier,
 N'avoit meillor en France le regnie,
 En terre fiche son bon tranchant espie,
 A son chief a son fort escu couchie,
 L'auberc ne l'iaume n'a il pas despoillie,
 Tant fort redoute Hardre le renoie."

Although entirely lacking the emotional intensity gained by the use of the device in the Chanson de Roland,¹ this example is interesting for the change embodied in it from a narrative to a descriptive style. The variation in style makes the interpretatio. The same device is used in conjunction with exclamatio to intensify Lubias' alarm at finding herself in bed with a naked sword:

11.1164-8 "Delez lui sent le brant d'acier molu,
 Grant paor ot, si s'en est traite ensus.
 Dex, com est effraee!
 Quant Lubias senti nue l'espee,
 Grant paor a, moult en fu effraee."

The expression of the old French poet is very conventional and rarely does he aspire to those vivid images which the words of the Middle English and the Anglo-Norman poets evoke. He does, however, sketch vigorous little pictures, such as the boisterousness of the first meeting of the two brothers when their greeting is so

1. Cf. Chanson de Roland 1753ff.

enthusiastic that they both fall from the saddle, and also the repeated sketches of the tired horse, freed of its trappings, rolling in the meadow (1690). One of the curses directed against the villains gives an imaginative picture of God which, although perhaps as conventional as the 'Deu ke ne menti' formula, is nevertheless effective.¹

1.2362 "Dex le maudie qui haut siet et loing voit."

These few examples are almost the only ones of lively expression in the Chanson. The poet prefers stately measure and traditional dignity; the certainty of repetition, interpretatio and well-worn phrases. He is a craftsman but his claim to be an imaginative artist is doubtful.

1. A similar, if subtler, image is to be found in Chaucer's translation of Boethius IV p.vi 217-8. The Latin original bears much the same idea. 'Qui cum ex alta providentiae specula respexit'.

Conclusions.

The three versions tell the same story of loyalty, but each gives it different emphasis and tells it in a different manner. The Old French poem stands apart from the others for it uses the background and characterisation of the Chanson de Geste. Its expression, too, is conventional and drawn from the same source. Although the theme of loyalty is important in it, Christian interests are equally if not more so. Repeatedly, the implicit morals of incidents are the wisdom of devotion to the Church and the power of prayer. The characters live in a God-directed world and are forced to behave within the requirements of canon law. A husband can not be simply driven from the home. He must be properly divorced. Within the first few hundred lines, a pilgrim appears, and both at the beginning and the close of the poem the main characters go on long journeys reminiscent of pilgrimages. They eventually die together while on pilgrimage. These journeys, however, are never too arduous. Even in his reduced circumstances, Amis travels as a lord seeking help and is never reduced to beggary. Despite this aristocratic flavour, the poem has a strain of brutality, common in epic, but not found in the other versions. It is not courtly, but it balances the brutality by a heavy sentimentality which is usually produced by highly artificial means. Concurrent with its interest in Amis and Amiles as Christian knights is a sense of meek submission to authority and uncomplaining self-sacrifice. The willing acceptance of persecution shown by Amiles'

son, by Amiles himself after the deed, and the repeated forgiveness by Amis of his enemies, suggest the author's interest in writing a story of martyrdom. The attitudes are those of saints.¹ The miracle of the cure of Amis overshadows the battle scene to provide a single climax of the story. Fittingly, the poet ends with a further reference to their shrine at Mortara and to the pilgrims who visit it. There is no mention of their leaute, but several lines are devoted to their renown as the object of pilgrimages.

The Anglo-Norman poet, too, follows conventions both of characterisation and narrative. His presentation of his hero and of his love scenes can be paralleled in several romances. Yet, avoiding undue amplification and mannerisms of style, the conventionality of his approach never becomes obvious. The characters, though not extensively developed, are consistent, reasonably credible, and are presented economically, by a variety of means. The poet takes some care to produce elegant lines and is capable of ironic wit.

Like the French poem, this work begins with a declaration of serious intent. It is a poem whose interest is a moral. This moral, unlike the French, is entirely secular and the poet, in a rather literary manner, declares the tone and theme of his work at the outset. His interest is in leaute, and he will draw pite from events wherever he can. Thereafter, both are words much on his lips. The relation between the count and the heroes is that of the lord

1. Cf. Floris and Blancheflour at their trial.

to his vassal and is emphasised as such by Amilun in his farewell speech. The poet sees the night spent by Amis with Amilun's wife as a test of loyalty

11.809-10 "Par ceo savoit sir Amillioun,
 Qu' Amis estoit leal compaignon."

Meanwhile, to show his loyalty, Amilun is facing the seneschal in single combat and even falsifying the marriage sacrament (721-722).¹ Such a proof of loyalty is only equalled by Amis' sacrifice of his sons.

The whole action of the Anglo-Norman poem takes place in and around the court. The writer has a clear conception of courtly behaviour, and is the only one of the three poets to set any store by physical beauty. Amilun's fall from power is paralleled by his increasing ugliness. When he is restored, instead of going on pilgrimage or devoting the rest of his life to his friendship with Amis, he returns, takes possession of his land, and avenges himself on his wife. He entirely lacks the mercy of the idealised French character who quickly forgives his wife when he sees her suffering. Instead, he enfeoffs the faithful Owein and after his death gives him all his land. As an afterthought the poet mentions that many miracles have been performed at the tomb.

The English poem is even more conventional in its treatment

1. The anguish of Amilun at this moment and his decision to continue for his brother's sake is told at length in the Carlsruhe MS.

than the Anglo-Norman. The convention in character and incident is similar to that of the Anglo-Norman poem but expression and manner of presentation belong to a non-literary tradition and the poem has strong links with oral composition. The characters are stock, their presentation is largely by epithet or dramatic means, and the narrative is composed of a large number of formulaic expressions. Whole lines frequently recall other romances. The opening of the poem is relatively unsophisticated and the poet strives to retain, and interest, an audience. The poem was obviously composed to be recited. The rhetorical devices used are unlearned, unallusive, and those common to Middle English romance.

There is no avowed didactic interest, but the loyalty of the two brothers is competently developed as a theme. The focus is not sharply upon this loyalty, as in the Anglo-Norman poem, for the poet's chief interest is in the individual events of the story; but loyalty is never threatened as dominant by any other moral interest. Loyalty, both to the lord and between the brothers, is threatened as a principle by ordinary friendship. At the end of the poem the two brothers choose to live out their lives together.

The poet apparently follows an Anglo-Norman original in the presentation of his character and his love scenes, but he obviously has no immediate experience of the courtly setting. Perhaps as a result of this, he occasionally presents courtly attitudes and scenes which go extravagantly beyond those of the Anglo-Norman poem.

The setting for the love scene between Belisaunt and Amis is highly conventional and correct in each detail. The exaggerated corteisie of Amiloun to the steward in the battle scene is perhaps the result of the mis-construction by an unlearned poet of the demands of corteisie. The characters themselves exhibit little of the dignity to be expected in courtly society. The poet seems unable to depict aristocratic rage. The anger of the Duke, the steward and of Amis is that of mime-puppets. The evil-doing of the steward lacks any poise. Such unsatisfactory characterisation arises largely through the means of presenting characters by their actions and by making these actions immediate and direct. The English poet does not care for the subtleties of having an intermediary between the plans of a character and the execution of them. The most vivid and satisfying parts of the poem are where simple emotions lead to direct actions, or are exhibited in direct speeches. Consequently the best scenes are those between Belisaunt and Amis, the final scene of the murder of the children, and the realistic scenes of begging along the road.

If the poet lacks any literary interests and allusions, he recoups this omission by the imaginative allusions which he makes from his own experience. He reinforces the tenuous theme of loyalty by creating a parallel between the cups and the knights themselves, and by repeatedly referring to Amiloun's attachment to his cup. He heightens the scene of the murder of the children to great eminence by his connection of the murder with the slaughter of the Holy Innocents. The repetition of Christmas and its

associations makes a fine pathetic contrast with the deeds to be accomplished. These feats are accompanied by occasional vivid and imaginative uses of language. There is no doubt that the Englishman, though lacking in erudition and ignorant of aristocratic and courtly values, had considerable gifts as a poet and narrator.

IPOMADON

HUE DE ROTELAND'S IPOMEDON AND THE MIDDLE ENGLISH IPOMADON.

I Introduction.

The three extant Middle English versions of Ipomadon are all ultimately dependent upon the late twelfth century Anglo-Norman work of Hue de Rotelande. This romance is a composite of romance and courtly attitudes and situations which extends to a length of 10578 lines of octo-syllabic couplets. Miss Legge assumes the date of composition to be shortly after 1180.¹ With an eye upon its composite nature, she claims that Hue paid little attention to plot and to character.

"...Hue was not interested in his plots. Anything would do, Nor was he interested in character-drawing."²

Part, at least, of this generalisation, I hope to question in the following study. According to Miss Legge, what interested Hue was the parody of a literary genre and the direction of a quizzical glance upon courtly society and its manners. This is partly true, but seems over simplified. Hue does not stand aside from the postures of the courtly world, deliberately to burlesque them.³ In many ways he is entirely enclosed by the tradition, and his narrative seems to take it perfectly seriously for the most part. However, the narrative is interspersed with moments when Hue casts

1. op. cit. p.88.

2. ibid. p. 89.

3. ibid. p.85.

off the persona of a story-teller enveloped in his own creation, and addresses the audience with transparent common sense, and sometimes with destructive wit. Hue does not persistently burlesque courtly romance, but he occasionally questions its assumptions in the most effective manner by directly addressing the audience in the most prosaic or jocular terms, and thereby shattering the willing suspension of disbelief in the conventional edifice which he has built up over a considerable period. Hue is the creator of his story and he constantly makes his mastery of the matter apparent to his audience.

The Roman d'Ipomedon is extant in two manuscripts:

A Cotton Vespasian A. vii of the British Museum, London.
(13th century).

B Egerton 2515 of the British Museum, London.
(Early 14th century).

Two fragments, also in Anglo-Norman of the 14th century, and a mid 14th century fragment of continental provenance, exist. The poem was edited from the two manuscripts and one fragment (Rawlinson Miscellany 1370) by E. Kölbing and E. Koschwitz and published in Breslau in 1884.

The longest and most important of the English versions is a very close adaptation of the French original, written in tail-rhyme stanzas in a north-east Midlands dialect. Trounce thinks the vocabulary suggests an East Anglian origin. He considers the poem to have been composed about the middle of the fourteenth century.¹ The single

1. A.M.Trounce, 'English Tail Rhyme Romances' Medium Aevum II p.41.

manuscript - MS. 8009 of the Chetham Library, Manchester - is of the fourteenth century. It was edited, along with the two other English versions, by Kölbing and published in Breslau in 1889.

The other versions, called by Kölbing Ipom. B and C, are contained in:

B Harleian 2252. (The Lyfe of Ipomydon) British Museum.

C MS. 25 (Ipomedon) of the Marquis of Bath's Library.

The latter is a short prose romance which is little more than an inept summary of the longer poem, with some reference to a French original. Ipom. B is equally unworthy of study. It consists of rather more than two thousand lines of couplets, and the condensation has robbed it of all merit when compared to the tail-rhyme romance.

The tail-rhyme romance is almost nine thousand lines in length. It compares so closely with the extant Anglo-Norman versions that Kölbing thought that the author must have possessed a French manuscript.¹ This view is endorsed by Miss Hibbard.² Perhaps as a result its content is by far the most worthy among the English versions and, for this reason, it has been selected as suitable for comparison with the work of Hue de Rotelande.

1. Intro. xxxvi

2. op. cit. Pp.224-25.

The story of Ipomedon never attained the popularity enjoyed by Amis and Amiloun or Floris and Blancheflour, yet the recent discovery of a continental French fragment indicates a wider distribution than formerly supposed.¹ That the romance was known in late thirteenth century England is suggested by an allusion in Richard Coeur de Lion (6659ff), and Chaucer may have had Ipomedon in mind when he speaks of 'Ypotys' in a list of romance heroes in Sir Thopas.

That Hue de Rotelande was remembered as the author, is argued by the fact that in one of the Rawlinson fragments, and in the Egerton MS., Ipomedon is followed immediately by Hue's other known work, Protheselaus. Apart from his authorship of these two romances, little is known of Hue himself. He was probably born at Rhuddlan and, as he alleges at the end of the poem, lived at Credenhill near Hereford. In the course of the poem he makes allusions to Hereford and also a joking reference to Walter Map. The assumption is that Hue belonged to the same race of Norman Welsh clerks as Map and Giraldus Cambrensis.² He probably wrote under the patronage of a local magnate, Gilbert, son of Rohaise de Clare, who had family connections with Constance FitzGilbert, Gaimar's patroness, Eudo Dapifer and Alice de Condet. Hue, it would appear, lived on the edge of a highly literate group of the Norman aristocracy, and this happy accident clearly affected his poem.

1. C.H. Livingston, *Modern Philology* XI (1942) pp.117-30.

2. Miss Legge, *op. cit.* p. 85.

II Tone and Background.

The two versions of Ipomedon differ so little in the events depicted that they require very slight differentiation in order to make them accessible for discussion. Remarks made about the plot of one may be taken to apply to the other, unless expressly stated to the contrary.¹ The difference between the poems is a subtle one of emphasis and of underlying ideas which, in combination, amount to a difference in purpose.

Thus relieved of the necessity of delineating separate versions of the story, it will be possible to move easily from one point to another in the poems in order to illustrate any differences in the approach of the poets. Firstly, in order to gain some impression of the different flavour of the poems, we shall make a direct comparison of the opening scenes in each.

The French poem opens with a frankly didactic chord reminiscent of the opening of the Lai d'Haveloc.² Much can be learned attending to the stories of events of long ago; true they contain both folie

1. Kölbing, in his Introduction to the M.E. poem, lists many small variations. Pp.xlff.
2. The opening of the prose Roman de Troie, ed.L.Constans and E.Faral, C.M.F.A. 29. 1922., extols work for the public good as recommended by the philosophers of antiquity. Work nourishes virtue: "Et pour ce devons nous mout metre noz cuers a entendre les euvres des anciens et des vieilles estoires; quar l'en i puet asses apenre des bienz et des maus que il usioient en leur affaires."

The difference between this and Hue's induction is the evident seriousness of the former compared with the light mockery of the latter.

and sens, but Hue stoutly maintains that he will only treat of the latter. Without removing his tongue from his cheek, he commends those who tell of sens. The personal element grows as he introduces his next sally by a favourite device; gnomic expression.

1.9 "N'est de tut povre, ki est sage,"¹

In consideration of this, he suggests that those people are mad who refuse to offer the benefit of their learning to the public, and prefer to hoard their knowledge.

11.15-6 "Kar sun grant sens, qe lui vaudra,
Kant de cest siecle (de)partira?"

Maintaining this tone of mockery, he expresses astonishment that learned clerks have not translated this story from the Latin. The reason why he intends to do so, he hastens to add, is not because he thinks the original author told the story badly, but because the predominance of laymen over clerks limits the benefit of the work to a very small audience. Having given his reasons for telling the story and indirectly praised its content, Hue now feels that he should say a few words about his principles of translation. To commence, he employs the literary topos of an apology for the inadequacy of his work.²

11.35-38 "Ky de Latin velt Romanz fere,
Ne lui deit l'em a mal retrere,
S'il ne poet tut des oelz garder,
De tut en tut le tens former;"

1. Cf. J. Morawski, *Proverbes Francais*, C.F.M.A. 47. No. 2227.

2. Curtius, *op.cit.* pp. 83-89. These pages reveal that at least three well recognised topoi exist in the exordium of Hue's poem. Firstly the modesty topos (83), secondly the necessity of imparting knowledge (87), thirdly, the sparing of boredom for the reader (85).

He goes on to say that if he does fall below the required standard, it is merely to enliven the material, and to avoid tedium. Then he boldly claims:

1.41 "Fors la verrou n'y acrestrai,"

Closing his introductory passage, Hue feigns impatience to begin, calls for silence, and commences the story.

11.47-48 "Ne voil tut mon sen celer mes:
Or(e) m'escotez si aiez pes!"

This call for silence in such an obviously literary opening is clearly as much a literary topos as any of the other three conventional passages which Hue has skilfully deployed to tease other clerks and to exalt himself, while using the terms of modesty. The technique is reminiscent of that employed by Swift in 'The Tale of a Tub'.

Hue opens his poem by a series of literary commonplaces but the whole is built upon the supposition that a Latin original of Ipomedon exists. Since scholars are united against this possibility, and in view of the tone of Hue's utterance they seem to be correct, the whole exordium is shot through with a witty and sophisticated irony. Hue is familiar with the world of literary composition and he is sufficiently its master to be able to satirise it at will.

Hue begins his story in a very logical manner by introducing his main participants one after the other. As is usual, he fixes the social position of his hero and heroine by beginning with their most elevated connections who will play any part in the poem. Firstly he gives a short panegyric of King Meleager, mentions his heir,

Capaneus, and then introduces his niece, La Fiere. Her favourable attributes are listed and the expression of them is in highly conventional language.

11.107-12 "De bounte fust enluminee,
 Unkes tant bele ne fut nee
 El siecle, dame ne meschine
 Car ele poet estre reine
 E dame de trestut le mund,
 De tutes dames, ki i sunt;"¹

The dominant trait of her character is also an extension beyond measure of another commonplace in the personality of the beautiful ladies of romance. She is extremely haughty; indeed she has sworn never to marry any but that man who excels all others in knightly accomplishment.²

The fame of this lady spreads far and wide, reaching the land of Poile where the worthy king Hermogenes is served by his son Ipomedon. The moral perfection of the youth is quoted at length, as in the case of La Fiere. Ipomedon is well instructed in courtly behaviour by a master so accomplished:

11.200-202 "Ke el mund n'out si riche reys,
 K'il ne(1) soust mult bien servir
 E les custumes retenir."³

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1. Dragonetti, op.cit.p.267.
 2. Compare Florie in Amis e Amilun (193ff) and Rigmel in The Romance of Horn (411ff). These too refuse to marry any of their numerous suitors; though the question of chivalry never arises.
 3. The ability to serve in the hall is an important accomplishment of the heroes of feudal and courtly Anglo-Norman romance. Cf. Horn (462ff), Amis e Amilun (45-6;145ff.).

As a result of this Ipomedon is 'lettrez' (204) and, rather surprisingly, possessed of a quality akin to the modern conception of intelligence.

11.205-207 "De plus agu engin serra
 Une reison, melz entendra,
 Ke en clergie est auques baut:"

It is more usual to find such young heroes described as genez, when sens seems to imply an ability to absorb the refinements of courtly behaviour; particularly the discretion and self-possession associated with a man of the court.

Ipomedon hears of Fiere whilst engaged in service in the hall. He becomes pale and his heart is distressed. The service seems unbearably long, as it did to Rigmel.¹ Afterwards Ipomedon goes straight to his master, Tholomeu, and tells him that he feels that he has remained in the court too long. This tardiness is bringing him dishonour; and he reminds him of the proverb:

11.251-52 "D'affaitement n'avra ja pris,
 Ke n'est fors d'une cort apris."

Having given this spurious motive for wishing to leave the court, he petitions Tholomeu to obtain his father's leave to go. Tholomeu, pleased at his pupil's enterprise, asks him where he wishes to go; and Ipomedon admits that it is to see the lady of whom he has heard talk, La Fiere. Tholomeu approves of the scheme and obtains the king's permission to leave.

No time is wasted on the journey and on their arrival in Calabria

1.R. of Horn (1027)

"Or li" sembla trop lunc

ke Herland demura."

Tholomeu, who we are told 'saveit de plusurs langages' (326), arranges for lodgings. Some detail is given of the lodgings and the reception of Ipomedon. The host, who, presumably, is not of noble birth, acts with extreme courtesy. The reason for this is that he detects Ipomedon's rank from his face; a common feat in romance. Ipomedon, too, treats the host with an exaggerated courtesy which seems reserved for those outside his parage. He bows deeply to him as he thanks him for the welcome (340).

Immediately afterwards Ipomedon makes his way to Fiere's court and, as is usual for the entrance of a hero into the milieu in which the story will be set, there are many courtiers present to witness his arrival. In this case the reason given is not that Fiere is holding a feast, but the equally valid one that, on this day she is exercising her seigniorial right of consilium by calling her vassals to settle a dispute between two of their number.¹

As Ipomedon appears in the hall, Hue devotes more than sixty lines to a complete and detailed descriptio of his hero. He begins by describing his dress, mentions the astonishment of the onlookers, and passes on to his general beauty.

1. Auxilium and consilium were two forms of service owed by vassals to their lord. Originally the former was military and the latter a service at court of advice and aid in government or judicial decision. Disputes between vassals were settled by a council of peers, with the lord as president. F.L.Ganshof, Feudalism, 3rd ed. (London 1964) pp.92-3.

11.395-96 "De sa beaute, quant il entra,
Tute la sale enlumina;"

This conceit of the arrival in the hall is not uncommon, as is shown by its occurrence in the Romance of Horn, but it is a conceit of literary and courtly writers and the rigorously stylised physical descriptio which follows shares a common diction with the writers of courtly lyrics. This literary sophistication is consummated in the final observation that Nature never made such a beautiful creature. The topos is extended to declare that, in Ipomedon alone, Nature has combined every beauty.¹ To this is added the final compliment to beauty offered by the writer of romance.

11.448-50 "Kar n'ad el monde n'en nul regne,
Ki en cel point le regardast,
Mien escient, qe ne l'amast."

Only La Fiere remains unmoved. Ipomedon approaches her, kneels before her and addresses her 'mult enseignement' (462) offering her unconditionally his service. Fiere willingly retains him.

That evening, in order to assess his knowledge of 'service', Fiere orders the butler to give Ipomedon the cup and allow him to serve her. Ipomedon takes the cup but does not remove his mantle before going to the cellar to fill it. The whole court begins to laugh and jibe at him for this outlandish behaviour, for, as Ipomedon C. observes, 'it was noght the maner, a man to serve with

1. Nature as the creator of beautiful individuals is a very common topos of Latin poetry from Late Antiquity. It is especially common in the 12th century. Curtius, op. cit. PP.180-1.

his mantle vpon him;'.¹ However, Ipomedon has the measure of them all and swiftly turns the incident to his own profit. Hue remarks of the 'valez':

11.491-98 'Mes poi savoient, q'il pensa:
 Ly vallet son mantel osta
 Si l'ad done al botellier
 Et si luy dit: "Beau sire chier,
 Kar prenez or(e) cest mantelet,
 Trop (par) est le don petitet,
 Mes, si nus vivons en saunte,
 Assez vus ert mellor done."

'This demonstration' of poise and graceful largesse silences the onlookers and makes them realise their own short-comings. Henceforth they regard Ipomedon as the epitome of cortesie. La Fiere, too, approves the act. Ipomedon has shown himself capable of excelling in courtly behaviour in the hall before the scrutiny of an unsympathetic foreign audience who are alert to any tiny transgression of a strict code of decorum. A little later in the poem, he also proves himself a master of venerie; another of the accomplishments required of the perfect courtly knight.

The hunt in Calabria is introduced by an undeveloped raverdie.

11.559-63 "Avint en tens d'este un jor,
 Ke li beau tens rent sa cholor,
 E cil oisel sont leez & b(e) auz
 E chauntent cler (&) bas & hauz,
 E reverdeient li boscase,"

1. Ipom. C. gives extensive motivation for the mockery by making it clear that there is a discrepancy between customs in Ipomedon's country and that of La Fiere.

The blossoming countryside encourages Fiere to go to the forest. She herself will not hunt, of course, but she expects the hunt to be so arranged that she can watch and enjoy it, as she would a tournament. Her tent is erected in a pleasing spot and here she holds her court al fresco. The siting of the tent is entirely typical. Though the description of the surroundings is not a long one, it is patently a literary convention, a locus amoenus, like those mentioned by Curtius.¹

11.573-80. "La damaisele veit el bois,
 La plus bele launde ad en chois;
 La fust sun pavelun tendu.
 Li plusurs i sunt descendu;
 Une bele fonteine i sourt
 E una grant rivere i court;
 Les cerfs chasez sol (ei)ent venir
 A cele ewe pour refrechir."

The whole section of the poem devoted to the chase presents an idealised picture of the natural background and of the pastime of hunting. At this pastime Ipomedon again excels, and at the end of the day he is able to present more stags' heads to La Fiere than any other. Hue wittily evokes Fiere's rising interest in Ipomedon.

11.721-24 "Certes, jeo quide a mon escient,
 El(e) s'arestut si bonement
 Plus pur le vallet regarder,
 Qe pur les testes deviser;"

1. Op. cit. p. 195. Basic ingredients are: a tree or trees, a meadow, a spring or brook, birdsong, flowers and perhaps a warm breeze.

Ipomedon has triumphed again in his ability as a huntsman. Even the accomplishment, the training of a hound breathes forth his skill. On a lower level, the behaviour of the hound mirrors that of its master. This is not lost on La Fiere.

ll.627-32 'As autres dit: "Avez veu,
 Cest cerf n'ad nul repos eu,
 E li brachet ne boisa mye,
 E cil receit de venerie:
 Ki cest brachet si affeita,
 N'est mie loinz, tost avendra."

La Fiere's love for Ipomedon quickly grows until she feels it to be a threat to her oath to marry only the most successful knight in tournaments, and also as a threat to her reputation. For these reasons she obliquely but sternly warns Ipomedon to look to his prowess and, burdened by this rebuke, he leaves her court in order to prove his worth.

In the opening lines of Ipomedon a definite and characteristic tone has emerged, which will endure throughout the poem. Most obvious is the personal nature of the narration represented by a series of witty, sardonic and even satirical, remarks by the narrator. All of which combine to reveal a somewhat conceited but likeable personality. Alongside this tone of mockery, and sometimes coincident with it, is a strain of rather banal moral sentiment. Hue deftly uses literary topoi to satirise literary poses, but he also uses them in a perfectly serious way to elaborate his narrative. Both this narrative and the characters are

conventionalised but are skilfully presented so that they do not become grotesque stylisations. The overall impression is of an imaginative and vigorous poet who, though well versed in the literary traditions and manner of approach, can, by his force of personality, make them serve his own particular genius. Throughout all this, the background is that of the feudal court. The practices and manners of the feudal court are of extreme importance to the author and are intimately known to him. Already his main character is beginning to emerge as an exemplar of courtly accomplishment.

The English poet begins in a much less distinctive way than the Anglo-Norman. There is no personal address to the audience; no mockery of other clerks nor claims to have translated the work. Nevertheless the commencement is not unsophisticated compared with other English romance. There is no opening appeal for silence. Instead the poet rather more subtly refers to the pleasure to be gained from hearing stories of love, then immediately mentions the pain felt by those to whom the object of their affection is denied. Still speaking vaguely and generally, he claims that fair words encourage such lovers to great efforts. He now passes on to the advertisement of the contents of his particular story. The hero of his poem achieves great fame in tournaments because of love, but nevertheless, he is spoken of badly; yet there was not living in his time, a better knight.

Despite the fact that the poet uses the first person in line

twenty, there is no impression in the two introductory stanzas of the personality of the author. The poem opens with a general comment on love and then passes on to an imprecise but enticing glimpse of the contents. The clear intent is to interest an audience in why so exemplary a knight, so true a lover, should be reviled. The answer lies in the poem. There are no further moralising expressions of the didactic value of the work; the poet plunges in to tell of Mellyagere, king of Cessyle.

The English Mellyagere is described in the alliterative terms already found to be common in Amis and Amiloun. "He was worthy, were & wyse," (28). Instead of being loved by young and old, the poet says he is a king: "That holden was wyth old and ynge" (26). In comparison with the rather clearer and longer French description of Mellyagere's dominion over the surrounding nobles, the English poet, alluding directly to the ceremony of homage, says:¹

ll.31-33 "He had bovnden to his hande
 In France & many other lande
 Douȝty dukes and dere;"

The English poet continues, laying the ground-work of his narration in much the same way as the French; but his diction is less sophisticated and full of the same simple formulae of expression as

1. When the vassal rendered homage, his hands, placed palms together, were clasped by his lord and a formal speech was made by each. The gesture was considered more important than the declaration. Ganshof, op. cit. pp.72-5.

Amis and Amiloun. Cabanus grows: "Begge...of bonne & blode" (52) and Mellyagere's sister is: "that lady yinge," (65). The king of Calabere, "that douȝty was in dede," (77) has a "doughtter fayre & yinge," (81). Even the personal interruptions of the narrator are conventional at best; and at worst, mere space-fillers. Line 39 is the 'orphan' line of a tail-rhyme stanza, used in the same way as in Amis and Amiloun.

1.39 "I darre welle wittnes thus."

Even the denial of knowledge of Cabanus' birth (43ff) does not seem to come from an individual, but from the collective expression of a large group of romance writers.

The description of the moral qualities of Pere, given by the English poet, follows closely his French original but lacks its rather delicate courtly imagery and apparent precision. The following lines correspond to lines 107-12 of the French (quoted above).

11.91-3 "Off bewte and of grette bovnte
 Sho was the beste in all degre,
 That euer on erthe myghte trede."

Against this imprecision in the description of moral qualities, must be placed the added effectiveness of the declaration only to marry a man of exceptional prowess. This is obtained by re-casting the short narrative telling of the French work in lively dramatic form. The tone is changed, too, by the introduction of a simple romantic idealism in the place of the haughty vow of the French version. This arises partly from the dramatic presentation, partly

from the simplicity of expression, and partly from the effective use of the formulae of balanced opposites to achieve the sense of sweeping generalisation in this youthful vow.

11.112-20 "Now here to god a vowe I make,
 I shall never man for riches take,
 In youthe ne in elde;
 For welle or woo, whether it be,
 Man, that is of lowe degre,
 Shall never to wyffe me helde,
 But yf he be the best knyghte
 Of all this world in armus bryghte,
 Assayde vnder his shelde.'

Picking up the tone of youthful idealism, the lords around her laugh paternally and reply:

11.122-24 '... "This vowe ys grette rowe
 For anny, that euer were borne!
 Thou spake, as has don other moo:'

This more kindly reaction is in marked contrast to the French lords' reaction to the haughty and defiant oath of La Fiere in the other poem. There, it is treated as an audacious vaunt (grant orgoil) which she will never renounce as long as she has the power to keep it (133ff).

As in the Anglo-Norman romance, "word sprange" (134) of Fere until it came to the land of Ermagynes. Little is said of his son, Ipomadon, but Thalamewe, his tutor, is introduced at once. The list of moral qualities, described by the French poem, are then presented as the subjects in which Thalamewe instructed his protege. The list of approbatory epithets of the French poem are reduced to

the three main components of a courtly education.

11.151-53 "Fyrste he leryd the chylde curtesseye,
 And sethe the chasse and chevalrye,
 To weld in armys gaye."

To these are added the vague, commonplace traits of the character of a romance hero.

11.158-60 "Comely, kynde and curtayes
 Bothe wyth kyng and quene,
 Hende and happy ther wyth all;"

Like most romance heroes, he is loved by all (168).

This stock Ipomadon hears of Fere from a knight in the hall and is immediately seized by the same malady as his French counterpart. The meal seems long to him, too. Here the English poet again departs from the French version. Instead of Ipomadon enquiring of Thalamewe whether he thinks it honourable to remain in his father's court, Thalamewe himself notices that Ipomadon is discomfited and asks why. The English poet apparently wishes to give Thalamewe a rather more important part than in the French poem. Ipomadon's answer to the question is also distinct from the motives he offers in the French for leaving the court. There, the inactivity in a court threatened to bring shame and dishonour upon him.

11.243-44 "Tant ai ci este & servi,
 Ke jeo me tienge a vif honi."

Here, his reasons are not so aristocratic.

11.217-18 "I haue harde speke of contreys straunge,
 The whiche it makyth my hertte to chaunge,"

He is bored by inactivity and curious about distant lands. There is

no question of dishonour, though there is mention of the profit to be gained from broadening his horizon. The sententia of the French, referring to the lack of 'affaitement' (251) in those who never leave the court circle, is translated with considerable imprecision as:

11.221-22 "In a cowrte who so dwell always,
 Full littill good shall he con;"

Yet, the over-riding reason for wishing to leave his father's court is curiosity.

11.239-40 "Tyll vncovth contreys will I wende,
 The maner wille I see!"

Although Ipomadon hears of Fere at a meal in the hall, little is made of his 'service'. The ethos of this part of the English poem is less than entirely courtly.

The journey to Calabrye is as short in the English poem as in the French. Again, the travellers are lodged at the finest inn in the town, but no mention is made of Thalamewe's linguistic ability. The inn-keeper recognises Ipomadon's birth in his looks and treats him courteously, but no details of the manners are given. Instead, Thalamewe is given a speech, lasting one whole stanza, in which he demonstrates largesse by his choice of entertainment for his master. The two then pass swiftly on to the court.

The English poet does not fail to mention that the court was crowded. Indeed, he gives more details of the business than Hue, and uses the French word 'plenere' in a rather technical sense. Fere appears in something of a supernatural aura, in that no dispute

is suffered near to her.

Ipomadon's entrance is similar to that of the French poem. The English poet is content to follow the convention, and gives a short description of his hero before he makes his appearance in the court. The largest part of this is fairly direct translation of the description of his dress, but it is brought up to date by the replacement of the 'bliaus' by a 'dobelett'.¹ The conceit of the room being illuminated by his beauty is toned down ('Also bryght his coloure shone' - l.379) but the emotion of love felt by the onlookers is retained. The long physical descriptio of the French poem vanishes entirely and the conceits concerning Nature's handiwork are missing. Notwithstanding the departure from literary sophistication, a new courtly element is added, and added quite subtly. The principle of mesure is surely implicit in the self-control which the English Ipomadon explicitly exhibits.

ll.354-57 "Amonge thes lordes of price;
 An even pase forth he paste,
 Nother to softe ne to faste,
 But at his owne devyce."

The lines read like a precept for behaviour before a courtly audience. Strangely enough, Ipomadon's address to Fere is also enlivened by a regard for courtly and aristocratic honour which is not paralleled in the French poem. Instead of unconditionally offering his service, he offers to do anything which is honourable.

1. H.Eagleson, 'Costume in the Metrical Romances', P.M.L.A. XCVII (1932) pp.339ff.

11.406-8 "What as thou wylte, put me tow:
 That longes a gentill man to doo,
 Gladlye I wille do;"

Perhaps Hue would have argued that these reservations when offering to serve a lady detracted from a courtly gesture, and the concern for honour when it conflicted with the service of a lady was the trait of epic rather than romance.¹ Such an argument would be supported by the brusqueness with which Ipomadon continues.

11.409-14 'Thereffore I praye the me tell,
 Whedur thou will I wyth the dwell
 Or wynde, thedyr I come froo!
 On asay now shall I see,
 Yff it be, as men say of the
 In countreys many and moo!"

The final few lines, in which Ipomadon makes Fere concerned for the glory of her reputation among men of all nations, is a clear trait of epic-heroic scenes where a knight is retained by a powerful lord.² This is even more so when it is united with the opening words of his speech, in which he attests her existing fame and so implies that, if she does not retain him, then her reputation belies her. It was incumbent upon the lord in a heroic society to

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1. Certainly courtly love romance demands the willing acceptance of disgrace for the lady's sake. The Queen in Chretien's Lancelot is cold to the hero because he momentarily hesitated before mounting a tumbril driven by a dwarf who promised to take him to her. Quoted by C.S.Lewis, The Allegory of Love Galaxy (New York 1960) p.27
 2. Later in the French poem Ipomedon uses a very similar persuasion to make Meleager retain him (2855ff). The brusqueness of his language on this occasion is suitable to a self-confident knight, eager to make a contract; but it is scarcely that of a courtly love petitioner.

merit his reputation; otherwise he would lose face and be dishonoured. However, such concerns seem hardly compatible with a courtly lady. Thus, in the final analysis, the concern felt in the English poem for his honour by Ipomadon, is probably misplaced; and the English poet, through attempting to surpass the French one in courtly and aristocratic behaviour, achieves an aristocratic sense of the value of honour at the expense of the purely courtly ethos. Evidently the English poet's grasp of the courtly love situation was not complete.

In the English poem, too, Ipomadon is asked to serve Fere in order to demonstrate his ability. Firstly, however, Fere asks his name and he rather brusquely refuses to give it 'Wheddyr ye blysse or blame!'" (436). He says that she must continue to call him the 'straunge valete'. The episode of the service is somewhat expanded, largely by recasting it dramatically and, therefore, giving the butler a larger part. The actual manner of the service is not given but the exchange between the butler and Ipomadon is fully dramatised. Firstly the lady asks the butler to lend his cup to Ipomadon, then the butler conveys her wishes to him, and Ipomadon awards his cloak to the man. The butler thanks him at length in direct speech and offers his friendship. Two examples of the reactions of the on-lookers are given in direct speech. This English poet, too, feels some necessity to explain that one did not serve in a mantle.

This whole incident is one of aristocratic and courtly sophistication in the original French poem. The actions in it are those of a self-assured and aloof member of the courtly class, and the

treatment of the event by the author must not belie the mannered behaviour described. Unfortunately, the treatment accorded to the incident by the English poet is not suitable to exploit it in full. Ipomadon is reduced by the dramatic technique. He is made to exchange promises of friendship with a more fully developed butler. The mockery of the court has to be explained, and the reaction of the onlookers appears incredibly naive when contained in two lines of direct speech. The incident is treated far more surely in indirect speech by Hue, who manages to preserve and enhance a sense of haughtiness, of courtly jealousies, and of Ipomedon's triumph over them.

Ipomadon's success as a huntsman is as important in the English version as in the French. Here, too, it begins with a raverdie; but it is shrunken to its very bare essentials. The warmth of the weather is missing, the joy of the birds is overlooked, as is the variety of their song, and flowers replace the burgeoning woodlands.

11.563-65 "In somer seson it befell,
 When flovrys were sprong, swete of smell,
 And fowlys songe bedene,"

Of the 'pleasance' described by Hue, only the river and meadow remain.

The hunt itself, though it follows the general course and tone of the French version, is enlivened by the simple and vigorous style of the English poet; and in particular by his rhythm and alliteration.

11.606-11 "Dyueres weys went her men,
 To reyse the dere oute of there denne,
 Lyght of lyme and lythe;

For bugelys blaste & brachys crye
 Wyth oppon mowthe full veralye
 There myght no best haue grythe."

Perhaps the English poet places more emphasis on the hunt itself than on the reactions of La Fiere, but in most of its length, the hunt is a close adaptation of its French original. Even the device of the hound's 'afeitement', demonstrating his master's accomplishment, is closely copied

ll.652-3 "Now, serres, he can of fete inow³e,
 That þus his hounde gan lere:'

It has become obvious in this comparison of the opening scenes of both poems that the English is very closely modelled on its Anglo-Norman original. Occasionally the proximity becomes so marked as to be almost literal translation. This is the case in the translation of some sententiae and some of the more striking images and literary devices. Yet the English poet, by comparison with Hue's poem, omits a considerable number of small circumstances which alter the tone in certain episodes. He also pares down many of the literary devices used. Against this, he expands some sections, often by the use of a more direct and lengthy dramatic technique. Occasionally, he adds apparently original incidents or observations aimed at explaining or modernising his story, and even, sometimes, of rounding his minor characters more fully.

The greatest single difference in the tones of the two poems, which has arisen in the early scenes, is that difference imposed by the intrusive personality of Hue de Rotelande. His personal

observations, his wit and his satire are unmatched in the English poem which, by comparison, is a very impersonal product. Together with the individuality of the French poem goes a courtly and literary sophistication which, although conventional in its basic material, is completely unlike the atmosphere of the English version. In that work, conventionality too often becomes formulaistic utterance, together with the uncomplicated attitudes of English romance. This is not to say that the English poet has no appreciation of the courtly world; indeed he surpasses many of his fellows in this respect; but he falls short of the familiarity and ease with which Hue de Rotelande faces it.

Just as he lacks a complete understanding of the ethos of the court, so the English poet has only a sketchy knowledge of the use of some literary devices. Those topoi which he uses are trimmed to the bone. His poem still bears some of the marks of oral composition for impromptu performance. His concern seems largely for the story, and his descriptions are limited. Yet, in the light of his independence in some examples of the latter field, it seems debatable how much of his style was dictated by the audience, or by sheer habits of composition, and how much by any real ignorance of French literary convention.

The descriptions of the Anglo-Norman poem can be divided into two groups; those concerned with characters, and those of objects. The same division is true of the English poem. Although, in comparison with his French original, the English poet severely limits

description; in comparison with King Horn or Floris and Blancheflour, the descriptive passages in Ipomadon are florid. Undoubtedly this is in part due to the proximity of the English to the French version, yet it must also imply a more developed taste for description in the fourteenth century English romance audience.¹

As was mentioned above, the English poet describes his hero in much the same way as the French poem, preparatory to his entrance into the hall. He does, however, exclude the conventional physical descriptio. The moral qualities and outward appearance of the French are largely replaced by characterisation through actions and the evocation of mesure in Ipomadon's behaviour.

The French poem allows La Fiere such an entrance, with its accompanying descriptio, when she is forced to face a council of barons who insist that she should marry for the security of the state. She comes into the meeting accompanied by thirty of her damsels (2201ff). Hue repeats the idea that her beauty equips her to be queen of those around her, and then he lengthily describes her dress. He gives the description of her fair body more piquancy by contriving that her robe should be slightly open.²

1. Cf. the presence of description in Sir Gawain.

2. See, in particular, Le Roman de la Rose (ed. Langlois) 1163ff. and also Gawain 952ff.

11.2216-26 "A ses ataches sa main tint,
 Si qe le manteus entre ovri,
 E li beau cors parut parmi;
 N'esteit pas furrez li bliauz,
 Nel voleit pas pur le grant chaux;
 De chef en chef lace esteit,
 Sa nue char parmi pareit
 Tut des la centure en amunt;
 Bel out la cors (e) gent e runt.
 Blanc out le piz, blanche petrine,
 Asez plus ke flur d'aube espine."

There is certainly an erotic aim in these lines. The descriptio follows the conventional order, but the sensuality is not relaxed. Hue makes a little panegyric on her lips.

11.2247-52 "Les levres un poi espessettes,
 Pur ben beser aukes grossettes;
 Jo ne quit mie ke nature
 Les oust fet de tel mesure,
 Fors sul pur beser ducement:
 Mut est musart, ki cest n'entent."

He mentions that her shoulders are so well formed that they seem 'de mains purtrettes,'¹ and he notes that the white flesh of her arms can be seen gleaming through the embroidery of her sleeves. At this, Hue testifies to the love she inspires in every onlooker, then momentarily descends into scurrilous speculation before declaring that, not since the days of Adam had Nature succeeded in creating one such as she.

1. Cf. Floire et Blancheflor (2651)

This descriptio is an unusually full one. It is compounded of a series of conventional thoughts and reactions and the overall order of description is conventional. The structure of the description is parallel to that in which Ipomedon is described as he enters the hall at the beginning of the poem. Firstly dress is described, then general beauty and finally a precise physical description. A comparison of the two will show how stylised this is. Both Ipomedon and La Fiere have hair described as 'bloie' (401; 2231); their looks are 'dulz' (402; 2241); both have a 'petrine blanche' (415; 2225); and both their arms are sheathed in ribbons (422; 2258). The conceit regarding the best of Nature's creation is used to close both descriptions, and both the man and the woman have lips made for kissing (411; 2247). Both inspire love in any onlooker, and both blush a little for shame as they appear before the audience. Yet, despite this overt parallelism, by the addition of certain small details, Hue is able to make the description of the lady quite distinct and to irradiate it with an erotic glow.

This fine description is almost entirely expunged by the English poet. He prefers to rely upon rather vague testimonies to her beauty, linked to a presentation of the reaction of the audience, which, although in direct speech, is hardly dramatic. Firstly a mention is made of Fere's thirty handmaidens, of whom the meanest seemed a queen.

1.2054 "Off ble they were so bryghte."

Then we are told that Fere surpassed them all. The result of all this is that the barons and knights present simply conclude:

11.2058-59 '... "No wounder, yf she be daungerus,
To take an onworthy spowsse,"

The poet disclaims the task of describing her:

11.2061-62 "There was no man than on lyve,
Thate myghtte her bewte dyscryve,"

Instead he speculates on Ipomadon's probably reaction to seeing her, had he been present.

This same avoidance of description, and the replacement of it by recording the actions of those present, is notable in the presentation of Fere's confidante, Ismayne. A stanza is devoted to her robes and equipment (6454ff), but the sole physical description is the formula: 'non of ble so bryght' (6466).

Her beauty and desirability are suggested by her effect on the watching barons.

11.6466-71 "They thought, was non of ble so bryght,
Here beheld bothe kynge & knyght,
And in there herttes they poughte,
That thay myghte have slepte her bye
The wynturs nyghte vtterlye,
Yff too in one were broughte."

This short passage of reaction replaces forty lines of conventional but sensuous description in the French poem (7940ff).

It may appear from these examples that the English poet shuns descriptio because the use of the device is beyond his understanding. This assumption is not wholly true. At least twice in the poem a descriptio is longer in the English poem than in the French. However, neither of these are the conventional, courtly, panegyric descriptiones associated with French romance.

The first of these is the picture given of Ipomedon when he enters the hall of King Meleager disguised as a braggart fool, seeking the king's service. The French poem merely relates how he did not dismount, but rode the horse into the hall with the greatest difficulty, for it would not respond to his spurs. This sight is sufficient to convulse the court with laughter and the reactions of the courtiers form the best part of the description.

11.7803-8 "En la sale tant forment rient,
 Le manger e le beivre ublient,
 Tant entendirent a lur gabs,
 Ces vins espendent des hanaps,
 De lur mains cheent les cuteaus,
 Cil chen eschekent les guasteaus;"

By contrast, the English poet chooses to describe the appearance of Ipomadon as he rides through the hall. The result is a minor masterpiece of humorous description, perhaps because it

has no detectable relation to conventional modes of description.¹

The picture given shows Ipomadon as ludicrous in every detail. His horse is broken-down, his stirrups unfashionably short, and his seat on the animal is grotesque.

11.6253-59 "Ipomadon amonge them all
 Come rydyng in to the hall
 His crokyd mere vppon;
 So shortte his steroppus leddurs wore,
 His knes stode halff a foote & more
 Abovyn his horsis mane;
 Crokand wyth his backe he raade,"

His struggles with the refractory beast on whose back he rides, are told with a zest and vividness far surpassing the French. The whole is enlivened by the skilful deployment of alliteration, antithesis and colloquial onomatopoeic words, giving a strongly marked

1. There is, perhaps a comparison with the fabliau tradition. Compare the picture of a ragged minstrel on horse-back in the fabliau, Du Prestre et des II ribaus. (III 65), quoted by C.Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition (Berkeley 1964) p.62.

"Mes trop li sont cort li estrier,
 Quar il ot une longue jambe
 Plus noire que forniaus de chambre;
 Plus piez avoit et agalis,
 Grans estoit, haingres et alis,
 Et deschirez de chief en chief,"

The incident itself, like many in the poem, is reminiscent of Chretien's Perceval. In the first three thousand lines of that poem are many parallels with Ipomedon.

rhythm to his actions.

11.6262-67 "His horsse was wondyr-harde of lere,
 Wyth sporres and wand he stroke the mere,
 He beyttys on her bonys,
 And euer the fastur that he dang,
 The more softlye wold she gange,
 She wold not stere on the stonys."

The mention that Ipomadon beat on the bones of his mare gives powerful reinforcement to the opening reference to her as a crooked beast. The reaction of the court to all this is similar to that in the French poem.

In this unusual and amusing description the English poet excels his French original, but it is noteworthy that no attempt is made at formal descriptio; that is, a set, descriptive portrait in detail. This portrait is a series of impressions and owes as much to action as to static description. This is not the case with the other description in which the English poet exceeds the length of his original. Here, the Englishman shows that he is aware of the conventional methods of personal description, but he uses them in an original and amusing way.

The French poet describes Leonin, Fiere's forceful suitor in only ten, rather uninspired, lines.

11.7701-10 "Mes mut est grant e mut hisdus,
 Le chef ad cresp e neir (e) rus,
 Le vis ad neir e teint e pers,
 La gule bee(e) en travers,
 Les denz lungez hors de la bouche,

Le nes lunc, desk'as denz li tuche;
 A desmesure est corporuz,
 Unc si grant hum ne fut veuz
 Ne si tres fors hom par semblant,
 Petit i faut, k'il n'est geant."

There is little to heighten the effect of these lines; they are simple statements of fact. Their arrangement is that of conventional descriptio.

This last remark is true, too, of the rather longer description in the English poem, but there the likeness ends. The remarkable virtuosity of the English poet at comic and bizarre descriptions entirely transforms the convention. The words he employs are redolent with imaginative power, quite unlike the neutral vocabulary of the French passage. The effectiveness of the description is intensified by the use of a series of grotesque, but eminently suitable similes.

11.6145-52 "A fowler man ther may non be
 Ne more vncomely thyng:
 Hys hed ys row wyth feltred here,
 Blake brysteld as a bore,
 His browys full they hynge
 Wyth longe tethe, I warand yow,
 Euery lype, I dare avowe,
 Hyngyth lyke a blode puddynge!"

This last line, as well as being our earliest authority for the existence of black pudding in England, is a masterstroke of grotesque description. The familiarity of the object of the comparison simply increases its impact. Not content with this, the poet adds further

startling details.

11.6153-55 "This dare I sauerly make a sethe,
 His nose towchys on his tethe,
 His mothe wrythis all way,"

The unnatural movement of his mouth adds to the horror of a detailed portrait which includes a face and beard as black as pitch, a neck like an ape, and an evil-smelling body.

It is clear from the manner in which the poet approaches this portrait that he is fully aware of the conventional means of description. This being so, his avoidance of courtly descriptiones elsewhere in the poem must be ascribed as much to a lack of the taste for them as to ignorance of how to accomplish such a portrait. Whereas Hue prefers a solid basis of literary tradition on which to compose his variations, the English poet prefers a greater freedom in his descriptions. Whereas Hue's talent is for the courtly description, the English poet's is for the comic and grotesque; and whereas Hue's humour is one of literary allusion, witty expression, sardonic sally and a bawdy reference, the English poet excels in the exploitation of a broad and obviously comic situation.

In descriptiones of objects the Anglo-Norman's sophistication is again evident. Both the poets describe the cup from which Ipomadon and Cabanus pledge companionship. The length of the descriptions is approximately equal; their contents are very similar. The French version lists more precious stones than the English, but the subtlety shows first in the material of the clasps of the cup. The English

poet declares them to be of common gold or silver; Hue says that they are made from the more unusual ivory and marble, and adds that they are carved. He also credits a craftsman with the skill that produced the catches (2929), while the Englishman forgets human skill and merely remarks on the finished marvel.

11.2661-62 "So prevy, þat non them know shold,
Where the openyng myghte be;"

At this point the Englishman seems to lose interest and vaguely remarks that there was:

11.2663-65 "In the pomell a stone, wyth outen moo,
That wold anny syluer sloo,
That euer was sene wyth eze."

Hue clearly identifies this as a sapphire.

11.2931-32 "Del cuvercle esteit le pomel
D'un mut grant safir cler e bel."

He ends his description by estimating its value at a hundred pounds of gold. As in Floire et Blancheflor the French poet here gives the impression of being able to visualise such a rich cup, where the Englishman seems to be describing a valuable object entirely beyond his experience. Even if in reality, Hue had never seen such a valuable piece, his literary experience enables him to present it as a fully described, and possibly real, object made by the hand of man.

A comparison of the descriptions of the only other extensively presented object in the poems, King Meleager's standard, is prevented

by an unfortunate lacuna in the English text. It seems, however, that the main difference in the standards was that the French was surmounted by a gilt eagle which gave forth cries when the wind blew, while the English enclosed a simple bell. Once again Hue makes some reference to the ingenuity which created this marvellous work (3297).

If the treatment of description in both poems exhibits the difference in the social and cultural backgrounds of the authors, so too does their presentation of tournaments and battle scenes. In the use of epic commonplaces to describe the battles, there is little to choose between the two poets. It may be noted, however, that, while the English poet tends to represent the three day tournament as a series of unconnected encounters, the Frenchman endeavours to present it more realistically as a tourney. That is to say, he tries to show the battles as between two opposing forces, those within the city of Candres, and those without. Occasionally he gives some indication of the group tactics (5101ff) or assesses the relative advantages of each side distinct from individual successes (5820).

In the individual combats, the French poem usually has more detail of the blows delivered and of their precise effect. The blows themselves are usually of a more refined nature than those in the English poem, where Canoneus, for example, is treated most unceremoniously.

ll.3881-82

"He stroke Canoneus soo,

Tope ouer tayle he garte hym goo,"

The same incident in the French poem extends to many lines, but the

final blow results in a more dignified exit for Canoneus.

11.5067-75 "Par air le fert en l'escu,
 Perce l'ad e freint e fendu,
 Un poi par desus la mamele
 L'hauberc desmaille e desclavele,
 Si ke l'espalle li perca,
 Bien une teise outre passa
 Li fiers od tut le gumfanun;
 A terre l'abat a sablun,
 E lui e sun cheval ensemble,"

The French presentation of combat is altogether more ceremonious than the English. When Ipomedon finds his way to Candres blocked by Leander, he is forced to fight him. Leander claims Ismeine, and this right, Ipomedon denies. Both poems preserve the conventional insults preparatory to the fight, but in the English poem the words have a distinctly colloquial ring. Ipomadon warns his adversary of the impossibility of his plans:

11.7265-71 '..."Syr, fals ye sang:
 Yff thou so large gyff thy gyfte,
 Thou gettes nan here, be my thryfte,
 Me thynkes, than dydyste thou wronge!"
 The tother sayd: "What arte thou,
 That so nycely answeris nowe?
 Sitt doune, the devill the hange!"

This scornful rebuke has little of the courtly poise found in the French poem. Preparatory to the battle, the French poet assures his audience of Leander's prowess in a series of conventional approbatory terms. He clearly wishes to elevate the encounter to a level worthy of two courtly knights.

11.8977-92

"Leander esteit pruz e granz
 E forz e hardiz e vaillanz
 Et en mellee bon vassal,
 E sist sur un riche cheval,
 Reluisant e neir cume mure;
 Cist Leander, ki sist desure,
 Retrest sei, ne volt suffrir mes,
 Puis si revent le grant esles,
 Tant cum li bons chevaus pot rendre,
 E (i)cil ne volt plus attendre,
 Ainz repoint vers lui l'auferant;
 Leander esteit fort e grant,
 La lance abesce e ne se targe,
 Ipomedon fert sur la targe,
 Dune li ad coup merveillus,
 Mut esteit pruz e airus."

Clearly, from this description, Leander is a worthy adversary, a dangerous man in combat. The English poet sees this combat as an insignificant event in the plot and, instead of heightening it, he treats it as such. Leyvnder, to him, is merely another villain to be knocked over. The commendatory adjectives are omitted. No picture is given of him. He merely provides a target for Ipomadon's lance. The battle is over almost before it has begun (7285-89). The only extensive part of their meeting has been the colloquial interchange, already quoted in part.

The same lack of moral qualities and panegyric epithets is typical of the English description of the fight with Lyolyne. The English poet tends simply to relate the actions in the combat, while Hue continuously assures us of the worth of the combatants, and of

the ferocity of their attacks:

- 1.9536 "Andui sunt fernicle e engres;"
 1.9544 "E par mut grant ferte se joignent"
 1.9551 "Mut sunt andui pruz e legers"

After the battle, the unchivalric nature of the English brawl is apparent from the wounds received.. The picture of carnage wrought has its comic side.

- 11.5870-72 "Knyghttes in the feld lay strewed,
 There neke bonys in sundere hewed
 Wyth many a wounde full depe."

Many, we are told, have their crowns cracked by Ipomadon (5899). This presupposes a blunt instrument rather than the knightly sword. The knights lose blood in great floods, too, where the French knights usually receive a clean wound. The phrase, 'The blode thorow the browes braste,' is repeated (5838; 5860; 7879; 7989)¹ and blood runs down on all sides. The English knights seem to use their swords more than the French, who prefer the more sensational weapon of the tournament, the lance.

The comparison of the battle scenes in the two poems seem to justify the assumption that the English poet, although following a French original which was familiar with the manners of fighting both

1. Cf. the effect of blows on the helm in Amis and Amiloun (1312).

in tourney and in courtly romance, still tended to fall back on a less elevated convention for the treatment of combat. He describes battles which, in their conduct and injuries, are more compatible with a foot-soldier fighting with a cudgel or, perhaps, a sword. The grace and the ceremony of the French have disappeared and the underlying reality of the English battle convention is not the tourney but the street fight or, at best, the battle experience of the ordinary English foot-soldier.

In some ways, the difference between the treatment of battle scenes reflects in little the major differences of background between the two poems. Hue's poem is mannered, sophisticated and is always conscious of an established protocol in the approach to its matter. Its immediate background is a courtly and literary circle, and it demonstrates this in every line. Hue's understanding of both courtly conduct and literary technique is so complete that he can afford to put his narrator in a position of considerably greater power than mere subservience to the conventional treatment of matter. Indeed, he feels that he can occasionally mock the common-places of romance in a witty and sardonic manner. When it pleases him, as in the case of the descriptions, he will subscribe entirely to the convention without losing an individual touch. His descriptions of inanimate objects suggest a rather more exotic taste than that of the English poet.

As in the description of battles, so throughout, the English poet lacks a complete grasp of courtly manners. He is far from ignorant of courtly values and motives, yet lacks that effortless

ease in the manipulation of them that is characteristic of Hue de Rotelande. He shows a taste neither for descriptions of people nor for lists of courtly virtues, and he sometimes feels that the manners of the court need explanation to his audience. Yet, although he shuns the conventional diction of courtly descriptio, he is capable of using its framework with great effect for original and bizarre description. Comic description, too, is to his taste, and well within his ability. His sense of humour, however, is limited to the description of situation, and nowhere is there any trace of original, witty perception. In complete contrast to Hue de Rotelande, the English poet's personality makes no overt appearance in the poem. Although he is capable of vivid passages, his diction is that of the tail-rhyme romance in general and his underlying ideas have much in common with others of the same genre.

The background of Hue's poem, then, corresponds with what is known of his historical background. While the background of the English poem suggests that the author was of something less than the aristocratic class. The poem betrays traces of an oral tradition common to much of early mediaeval English romance. The author was probably literate, but not literary in his interests. He appears to have drawn much of his information about courtly behaviour from his French original and from other courtly romances. He well understands the essentials of courtly manners, but it is impossible to say that he has any direct experience of them such as might stem from his inclusion in any truly courtly circle. Perhaps he belonged to, as well as wrote for, a growing fourteenth century bourgeoisie.

III Characterisation and Narrative Technique.

A Characterisation

The depth of characterisation is surprising in neither of the versions of Ipomedon. The plot is so arranged that all the interest is focussed narrowly on the two main protagonists, Ipomedon and La Fiere, and every incident in the story bears directly or indirectly on the love of these two. As a result, the development of emotions outside the range demanded by a portrayal of love is very slight indeed. The entire plot is based upon and motivated by the somewhat unreal oath of La Fiere never to marry any but the noblest in arms; and, in keeping with this oath, the characters too are mannered rather than naturalistic creations. La Fiere's name reveals something of the bias of her character, though this character is not quite so purely symbolic as a prospective reader might fear.

The English poem follows its French original closely enough for the means of characterisation and the characters themselves to be substantially the same. Such differences as do exist can often be ascribed simply to discrepancy in courtliness and literary experience in the two poets.

Both the poets use actions to reveal and illustrate their characters, but in both the poems the greatest single means of characterisation is the use of epithet. In the French poem, these epithets run the full gamut of courtly and chivalric approbation. The French Ipomedon is 'de merveillous afaitement' (188); 'aligne', 'beaus' (190); 'curteys', 'vaillant' (191); 'franc', 'duz' and

'soffrant' (192); 'de bon servise' (195); 'curteis & bien apris' (504); 'de bon manere' (517); 'franc et debonere' (534); 'De tel bonte, de tel largesse,' (353); 'de bel curage' (1547). The number and variety of the epithets may be greater than is common, but they are all the stock attributes of a courtly gentleman. Many of the epithets are grouped in pairs of near synonyms and their repeated use in romance shows them to be formulaic.

In line 508, Hue uses a common formula to describe his hero, calling him 'pruz & sage'. The words are not synonymous but, rather, complementary. A little later, however, Hue seems to contradict this assessment by saying clearly that Ipomedon is not 'pruz' (540). Here pruz refers specifically to military value. It becomes an important part of the theme that Ipomedon appears to be lacking in this quality. Is this, then, an example of the unconsidered use of formulaic material which results in an inconsistency in characterisation? The answer, I think, is in the negative. As was shown in the section on the background of the poem, Hue uses conventional material and is not helplessly directed by it.

In examining the characterisation of the poem it is notable that Hue usually allies his epithets closely to the actions of his characters. After Ipomedon proves his military worth, he is called 'hardiz e pruz e fier' (3760) and the burgess calls him 'li pruz, li france, li gentil,' (6865). Clearly pruz is used here in a chivalric sense and refers to military worth. This sense can not be an obscure one, for the plot of the romance turns on it. Yet the

word pruesce is applied in consociation with valor to La Fiere (153). A military sense here would be ludicrous. The word in this context has some vaguer significance of 'value'. Such a vaguer sense is also evident in the sententiae, 'maveise haste n'est pruz.' (166) and 'Force n'est pruz cuntre resun' (9719). Here, pruz has a vague sense of utilitarian value. It is fairly clear, then, that, for Hue, the word pruz was polysemantic. One common meaning applied distinctly to chivalric value and another was a vague assessment of worth in relation to any specific task.¹ Thus the word pruesce is used of Ipomedon's eminence as a huntsman in line 530.

It is but a short step from here to imagine the habitual use of the word as one of the familiar epithets of courtly panegyric description lending it a distinct sense of courtly value. In most romances the word has as much a courtly as a chivalric connotation.

Now, given that the word pruz may have both a courtly and a chivalric sense, and that the first reference to Ipomedon as pruz occurs in the context of courtly approbation whilst in the lack of pruesce the word has a specifically chivalric sense, then the charge of self-contradiction by the blind use of hallowed formulae automatically vanishes. In the first case Hue uses the word to apply to Ipomedon's curteisie, in the second to refer to his lack of chivalric accomplishment. The two statements are perfectly

1. There may be some tautology in the expression applied to Hermogenes; 'E fust pruz en chivalerie' (173).

compatible and indeed blend with the whole theme of the poem. The 'curteis' Ipomedon is forced to leave the court of La Fiere in order to prove in battle that his 'pruesce' is equal to his 'curteisie' and that he is suitable to be her husband according to her vow.

Other means of characterisation used by Hue add little to the picture given by his use of epithets. The action of the plot reveals the remarkable loyalty and tenacity of Ipomedon, which is mentioned, but not stressed, in the uses of courtly epithet (1320). The emotions of the characters are presented in two ways; firstly by means of simple, impersonal description - perhaps with the addition of direct speech - and secondly by personal opinions, passed by the author in his capacity as story-teller, on the situations or emotions of the characters.

The individual marks of Hue de Rotelande appear in the first case as an unusual skill in the presentation of the outward effects of emotion, and in particular its effects on the heart and colour. This perturbation of the heart is not always the result of amorous attraction. When Ipomedon sees a courier approach, his reaction is not unlike that of many people on seeing a Post Office telegram boy at the door; his heart sinks pessimistically.

11.1629-33 "Ipomedon l'esgard(1)e mut,
 Li quer li chiet e fremist tut,
 Kar l'un dit, ke li quer s'espert
 D'un dol, ainz k'il seit descovert."

A little later, on hearing the news of his mother's illness, he makes a declamatory speech and falls to the ground. Tholomeu, too, is disturbed by the news.

11.1677-78 "Ses chevous trait, sa barbe tire,
Grant doil demeine e dur(e) martire,"

In the English version Ipomadon's premonition is entirely omitted and Thalamewe is merely described as 'vnablythe' (1629).

A similar technique is employed by Hue in a rather happier situation. Ipomedon sees his squire, Egeon, approaching and does not know whether the news will be good or bad. The effect is again on his heart.

11.7655-58 "Ipomedon l'at coneu,
Sis quers tressaut, en eines fu,
Kar ben set, k'il orrat nuveles,
Mes ne set quel, leides u beles."

The English poet translates this physical display of emotion but loses a great deal of Hue's subtlety. He baldly states that Ipomadon's heart leaps up in happiness, but then adds that the tidings are unknown (6085ff). To the stylistic grace which the French sometimes exhibits in the presentation of emotions, the English has no reply.

11.1291-92 "Assez dolent sen (v)unt am(be)d(e)u(i),
Il pur soy meismes, cil pur luy.

As a living art, the second of the techniques of characterisation - the personal opinions of the author - is limited to the French poem. Occasionally, however, the English poet does imitate his original; as in the unhappy admission that Ipomedon seemed

cowardly.

11.519-22 "Mes une chose aveit en sei,
 Dire l'estut, se peise mei:
 Par semblant trop cuars esteit,
 De hardement gueres n'aveit."

This appearance of cowardice is an essential part of the plot; it is the reason why Fiere at first rejects Ipomedon. As such, the English poet adopts it quite successfully.

11.512-16 "But a condycyon havys he,
 That I shall say, sore rewys me,
 All ladyes to love it lays.
 Covarde be countennaunce he semyd,
 To hardenes nothyng he yemyde,"

This example, perhaps because it is so important to the plot and so effective a contrast with the unrestrained praise which precedes it, is the exception in the English poet's approach to the French personal references to character. As a rule, such references are either reduced, entirely omitted, or transformed into simple narration.

Hue, when discussing the hunt, refers to La Fiere's attitude to it in the form of litotes.

11.599-600 "Jeo ne quyt pas, ke lui ennuit,
 Car mout li plust icel deduit."

The English poet reduces this to a mere incidental remark in the narrative.

1.628 "In hertte full wele yt lykyd the fere,"

This is followed by a notable alliterative line of epithets.

1.154 "He waxed worthely, ware and wyse,"

In addition, in another alliterative line, he is:

1.158 "Comely, kynde and curtayes"

He is also: 'Hende and happy' (150); 'large of lyme & lytte' (361); 'a gentill man' (407); 'can of convenance' (498); 'bounte' and 'bewte' (546; 'so fayre, so free,' (5209). If anything, these epithets are more conventional than those of the French. Only two of them can be said to be related to any precise concept of courtly behaviour. We must not forget, however, that Ipomadon exhibits mesure quite clearly as he enters the hall; even though the word itself is not mentioned. Such exhibitions of qualities of character and emotions or motives is the one major way in which the English poet modifies the characterisation of the French poem.

Very frequently, ordinary descriptive accounts of feeling in the French poem become dramatised under the hand of the English author. The French poet tells how the barons assembled and took a decision.

11.1817-19 "E si unt entre eus esgarde,
 K'a la fiere seit ben mustre,
 K'el (e) se cunseilt de seignur prendre;"

The Englishman prefers to present a general opinion in the words of one.

11.1773-80 'Eche man to othere gan says:
 'Oure lady dothe full ylle,
 That she will not take a lord,
 To mayneteyne vs in good acord:
 We will goo witte hur wille!"

In the courtly opening of the poem where Ipomadon triumphs before the assembled court, the Fere's reactions are given in direct speech by the English poet. The Frenchman merely notes that La Fiere considered Ipomedon 'mult pruz & sage' (508); the English poet gives Fere's reactions in her own words:

11.494-502 'Tille her selffe she sayd for thy:
 "Younde dede ys doon full gentilly,
 Be god and be my lewte!
 Where he euer come or what he is,
 He can of convenience, ywis,
 Be younde full wele I see!"
 She sayd to hem, pat by her stode:
 "This chyld is comyn of gentille blode,
 It may no nother weye bee!"

A few lines previously the reaction of the court to Ipomadon has also been transformed from narrative to direct speech. Lines 536-550 are devoted to a soliloquy of the Fere, which is represented in the French only by simple narration and the personal impression of the narrator that La Fiere would have loved Ipomedon had he been of a harsher disposition (537ff).

Other than an increase in direct speech, the English poet makes few positive changes in characterisation. Most of the subtleties in the presentation of emotion are borrowed from the original. The manner in which Fere recognises Ipomadon's hunting

horn is borrowed from the French, as is the way in which her eyes follow him to the door when he leaves the court; both incidents which betray deep feeling beneath a haughty exterior. Even the phrase 'stode in a stody', which is the common result of shock and is used to describe introspection, is paralleled in the French. On hearing of Lyolyne, Ipomadon is for a long time silent (6129).¹ The poet says he 'stode in a stody'. The French poet at the same point in the story, makes Ipomedon pause before his next question, but his distress is not so emphasised as in the English work. Hue prefers to rely on rather colourless conventional diction. His treatment of the incident makes a poor comparison with the English.

11.7691-93. "Ipomedon mut s'en fremist,
Grant pece apres un mot ne dist
E puis si l'at a reisun mis:"

11.6129-36 "The knyght stode in a stody stille,
Men wyste nere hand nopur good ne ille,
So grette sygh on hym soughte.
A long while no worde he spake,
He thought, hys herte asonder brake
For the tydynges, that were broughte.
Thow hit were wekely, at the laste
Wyth a worde oute he braste:"

1. The technique is a variation of the dramatic pause before speech, used so effectively in King Horn and Amis and Amiloun after the ladies declare their love. It precedes considered speech as a rule, but here it denotes distress too great to speak. Cf. the similar expression in the M.E. Life of St. Kenelm (1.139)

"Heo bigan to siche sore and in grete pouzte stod:"

To which may be added, Troilus and Criseyde II 1180 and the description of Gawain's conduct after he has failed the beheading test (1.2369).

In this case the fundamental idea is taken from the French but is developed by the English poet. Examples such as this, where the description of emotion is actually expanded by the English poet, illustrate the difficulty in making generalisations about the difference in the methods of characterisation used by the two authors. On many occasions the English poet reduces descriptions of emotion, but exceptionally, he expands them. The only useful generalisations are that the French poet regularly adopts the mannerism of personal opinion about the emotions of characters in a way that is foreign to the Englishman, and at the same time he gives lengthy descriptions of the outward signs of emotion. The Englishman often takes these descriptions of emotion and re-casts them as soliloquies or simply as snippets of direct speech. As for the ideas underlying the epithets and the characterisation in general, the difference in the atmosphere of the two poems is best summed up in the comparison of the passages introductory to the character of Sir Amfion. The French account, with its subtly implied nuances of character and its hints of a unified courtly personality, is replaced by an external impression whose motives are flatly and simply stated and whose inner life is dispersed with complete disregard.

11.1959-64 "Anfiun, un quens de la terre,
 Il cuveita plus pes ke guerre;
 Riches hom fut, mes veulz esteit,
 Mut esteit saive e mut saveit
 E mut re (e)steit pruz e curteis,
 E mut sout des anciens lais;"

11.1885-91

"A noble erle startte vp anon,
His name was syr Amphyon,
A bigge man and a bold,
And was wyse, wyth oute leasse,
He hatyd warre and louyde peasse,
For why he was full olde;
Moste he cowthe of awncyente layes;"

B Ipomedon's disguises

If the characterisation of Ipomedon is generally simple in relation to the description and self-revelation of the characters, their actions make them exceedingly complex. The chief character, through his actions, appears to the reader in three distinct personae, and in more than twice as many to the other characters. This situation is further complicated by the confusion of Ipomedon with two others who wear similar armour. In Hue de Rotelande's treatment, the discrepancy between appearance and reality is especially important. It is a constant source of thematic irony.

When Ipomedon first appears he is apparently in his own character. No clear indication is given as to whether he is playing a part when he appears at La Fiere's court as 'l'estrangle vadlet'. The assumption is that the apparent softness of his character in that situation is due to his inexperience. He has never proved himself in battle and, in the early section, he concentrates entirely on 'curteysie' and the 'chasse'. The English poet tells us that Thalamewe had trained his charge in chivalry but the Frenchman gives no indication that Ipomedon had any war-like skills. Both poets agree, however, that his cowardice was only apparent. The French Ipomedon attributes his rebuff from La Fiere to the fact that he is unproven in war. He approves her action.

11.1149-55 "Eschar est grant de nous bricons,
 Ky querrom d'amer achaisons,
 K'unques n'eumes los ne pris,

Me vit egarder folement;
 Trop me chastia leidement,
 Mes ele (le) fist pur mon bien."

The English agrees with him in his diagnosis of Fere's reasons for expelling him from the court, and both go on to declare that they are supreme in the court at feats of arms but, through pride, have concealed the fact. (Eng. 1132ff).

11.1177-82 "(Kar) jeo say (au)tant d'eskirmye,
 En ceste curt n'ad un soul mye,
 Ke plus sache de b(esh)ourder
 Ne de launcer ne de geter:
 Tant m'en suy par orgoil cele(e),
 K'asez i suy wil & blame."

This is not empty boasting, for it is delivered in both poems in a soliloquy, and the reason given by Ipomedon in both poems for not returning to the court and announcing his prowess is because, without a reputation already won, such a statement would seem like vainglory. Ipomedon must therefore prove his right to La Fiere by his deeds.

Typically, the French poem expresses the situation in terms of courtly values - vices and virtues - the English poet expresses it in a simple general moral and in the imagined direct speech of those who would hear Ipomadon's claim to prowess unsupported by deeds.

11.1189-92 "De moy descov(e)rir ceo n'est pruz,
 Vauntise l'entendra (a) touz,
 Kar autrement estuit mustrer
 La pruesse, qe (par) parler."

The moral, openly declared in the English, is implicit in every disguise.scene in both poems. The triumph of Ipomedon on entering

the hall has already illustrated its general truth.

11.1138-40 "In erthe ys none so worthy a knyght,
 But yf his dede be shewyde in syght,
 Men will no good sopose."

The 'estrange vadlet', then, is in both poems Ipomedon himself; but a youthful and unproven Ipomedon. He has proven his ability in courtly service and in hunting, but his eminence in arms remains untested.

The proof of this aspect of the hero comes with Fiere's decision, under pressure from her barons, to hold a tournament which will last for three days, and the winner of which will take her as his wife. The tournament is designed to draw the 'estrange vadlet' back to her to save her from an undesirable match (Fch. 2495ff; Eng. 2193) and in this it is quite successful. Ipomedon, who has gained great fame as an anonymous knight (Fch. 1769ff; Eng. 1724ff) hears of the tournament from Egeon and decides to set forth to defend his lady.

In the French poem, Ipomedon states clearly that he does not wish to win his amie until he is proven worthy of her in the eyes of all men (2607ff). To this end, he will go in disguise to serve Meleager, king of Cecile. Then, remembering his lesson at Fiere's court on a previous occasion, he praises the virtues of concealment, summing up:

11.2628-30 "Le bel teisir est curteisie.
 Le fous, s'il parole tus tens,
 Aukune feiz ahurte sens."¹

1. Cf. the fateful words of his instructor to Perceval in lines 1648ff of that poem.

The English poet is less concerned with moralising on courtly behaviour. His emphasis is upon the proof of Ipomedon's worth by his deeds and the preservation of love by concealment. The latter idea is presented in lively terms.

11.2333-39 "For euer more, mayster, thynkes mee,
 That lovers shold well leynand be,
 For mekyll I preyse that wande,
 That brekes not and will well bowe;
 Righte so it farythe be them, I trowe,
 That lovys and well can layne;
 In few wordes ys curtesye!"

The English poet goes on to say that words may be not vauntises, but plain lyes, while deeds speak truly.

After Ipomedon has given these reasons for taking part in the tournament, he sets out with his retainers - described in lavish style in the French - and takes service with Meleager. All he demands in return for his service is to be known as 'dru la reine' and to be accorded the honour of leading the queen forth from her chamber each morning and returning her at night, giving her a kiss on each occasion.

As the queen's dru, Ipomedon plays the part of the 'estrange vadlet', but with the trait of apparent cowardice heightened to ridiculous proportions. Whilst the other knights go to the tournament each day, Ipomedon slips out of the camp early each morning and pretends to go hunting. In reality, his master, Tholomeu, takes the deer which he nightly presents to the king and Ipomedon himself excels in the tournament, first dressed in white, then in red, and

finally in black.

Each morning, as he sets out, the ladies of the court mock him and his amie, the queen. Every evening, he returns, and with complete insensitivity to the opinions of those around him, gives an account of his sport in the forest. This account is always preceded by a report from Thoas, the king's chamberlain, on events at the tournament. Ipomedon's account of his day's hunting forms a burlesque of this report of the tournament. Since Ipomedon is made to state his views in all earnest, and since in addition to burlesque they always include highly unchivalric mockery of tournaments, the discrepancy between the fine huntsman and the ideal knight is made to seem particularly great. The English poet seizes on the means of drawing the parallel between the hunt and the tournament even closer, by making Ipomadon mention the colour of the hound which had run best each day. In each case this corresponds with the colour in which Ipomadon actually triumphed at the tournament.

In the English poem, Ipomadon's inadequacy is the butt of loud and prolonged laughter from all and the king calls him 'A noble folle' (3580). The French poem takes it more seriously and Thoas considers Ipomedon a 'Mut...escape bricun:' (4454). In the English poem, perhaps unrealistically, Ipomadon is actively pleased by the mockery he receives, for it means complete concealment (2998;3559). The French hero is more jealous of his honour and only endures the mockery for the sake of his lady (3501; 4473). On one occasion, at least, he deliberately has to restrain his natural impulse to

vengeance.

11.5331-35 "Ipomedon ben aparcut,
 Ke la rise(e) de lui fut:
 Mut esteit ve(c)iez e sage,
 Asez covre ben sun curage,
 De lur parler ne tent hustenc."

At the beginning of the tournament the French poem has a neat picture of the preparation of the knights (3163ff). Capaneus asks Ipomedon why he is not preparing for battle. Ipomedon replies quite violently to this innocent question and questions the fidelity of the companionship sworn by Capaneus. He reminds him of the covenant made with the king, which included no obligation to fight in tournaments. The English poem follows much the same course, but talks of friendship rather than companionry betrayed. Unfortunately, at this point, several stanzas of the English text are missing. In the French the king tries to persuade Ipomedon to go to the tournament. The latter cries out to God that it ill becomes a king to break his word (3242ff). The agreed covenant and the necessity of keeping one's pledged word are regarded as of more importance than the demonstration of prowess in the tournament. Suitably rebuffed, they allow Ipomedon to have his way. Although he is regarded with scorn by the whole court, yet his 'curteisie' is recognised.¹

11.3267-68 "Tut l'apelent le bel malveis,
 Mes mut le tienent a curteis;"

1.Cf. the position of Perceval at Arthur's court. Perceval 974-78.

Unknown to the court of Meleager, Ipomedon proves his prowess everyday in battle, disguised as the white, the red and the black knights. The use of these three colours triples the effect of this proof. Each knight is hailed by the audience as surpassing the previous, and La Fiere greets each in turn with the accolade of being worthy of her vow. Thus Ipomedon proves himself, not only 'curteis', but also thrice worthy in prowess. Yet, at the court of Meleager, the moral pronounced by the English poet is played out once more.

11.1138-40 "In erthe ys none so worthy a knyght,
 But yf his dede be shewyde in syght,
 Men will no good sopose."

The French poem alone pursues the theme of vauntise. As well as proving his excellence in battle, Ipomedon also enhances the general excellence of his character by his behaviour at the tourney. Hue points out that it is doubly praiseworthy to be excellent and not to boast about it.

11.4267-68 "S'il fut pruz, ne s'en vanta mie:
 Co fu duple chevalrie."

Vain boasting is anathema to truly courtly behaviour, as the Anglo-Norman poet is at pains to illustrate. Worst of all is the boasting which brings shame on a lady. Monesteus is treated with scorn by both poets and, after his defeat by Ipomedon, he is subjugated to La Fiere because he is 'un vanteur de dames,' (4695). The French poet also makes one of the insults hurled by Ipomedon at Leonin an accusation that he is a vanteur (9800).

Although the English poet does not follow this courtly tenet of the condemnation of boasting as closely as his French counterpart, in the third character of Ipomedon he follows his original in presenting an exemplar of the vaunteur.

In the interim, Ipomedon has proved himself a diplomat as well as a soldier, by arranging a peace between the kings of Lorraine and of France (Eng. 5937ff; Fch. 7537ff). Avoiding marriage to the king of Lorraine's daughter, which is the reward for his services, he slips away under cover of darkness. It is now that he meets Egeon and is warned of the danger to La Fiere from Leonin. Determining once again to conceal his identity, he adopts the disguise of a fool.

Both poets give a similar picture. His hair is cut short behind and his equipment is dirty and rusty.¹ As was noted in the paragraphs devoted to descriptions, the English poet provides a more lively and grotesque picture. The fool which Ipomedon becomes is a special kind of fool, as becomes obvious when he enters Meleager's court. He is a braggart fool, a vaunteur. He immediately announces his superiority on his entrance to the hall.

1. The scorn of short hair reflects a change in fashion which took place at the court of William II. In the Bayeux Tapestry the Normans have the backs of their heads shaven in a way similar to Ipomedon.

11.7821-36 'Uns merveillus chevaler sui,
 Unc ne deignai servir nului,
 Prince ne rei, senz cuvenant,
 E ai vus voil bien dire tant:
 Tant l'ai bien fet en meint(e) guerre,
 Ke jo ne sai en q'ule terre
 Hume, ki me sache conoistre;
 Jo vus fis ja l'eschine croistre;
 Capaneus a tut le meins
 Fis grant pour a ces deus meins;
 Pur mei fuirent li plusur
 Aukune feiz de fort estur;
 Si vus di bien, ke la reine
 Eusse jeo chuche sovine,
 S'il me fust venu en talent,
 Kar ele m'ama durement."

This declaration, although true in substance, is unrecognised as truth by the assembled court and, as a result of Ipomedon's appearance, it is regarded as boasting raised to the pitch of madness. This fool is a vaunteur and a 'vanteur de dames', like Monesteus. At the same time, in the French, he is a witty fool. He makes verbal play with two common intellectiones.

11.7843-46 "'Dehaz ait sun col
 E sun chef, ki me tent pur fol,
 Fors le rei, ke jo met dehors,
 E s'il le fait, mal ait sun cors!'

He also puts his covenant and his pleas for support into quite well modulated tones.

The English fool is much more of an obvious clown. The single jest which he utters is repeated several times, both in content and in

expression, and the contrast between the claims of this unusual knight and his appearance is driven home with a force that leaves nothing for the subtlety of implication.

The repeated jest consists in bringing forward a series of knights whom Ipomadon had conquered in the tourney and making this apparition claim an unspecified victory. When challenged he postures as if to press the claim, but quickly retires when the challenge is renewed. His opening words to Meleager are the best example of the procedure.

11.6282-90 "God loke the, Mellengere!
 I am the best knyght vnder shild,
 There no man better comythe in the feld,
 That bought pou onys full dere!"

 "When was that?" quod the kyng.
 "Wotte pou not?" "Naye, no thyng!"
 "Syr, no more wott I!"
 Then all men vp a lav3tter caste,
 That nere there herttes asounder breste,"

One can not help but think that Ipomadon's repartee finds a particularly receptive audience.

In the second disguise adopted by Ipomedon we have a figure diametrically opposed to that presented in his first disguised appearance. Then, he was recognised as courtly but blamed for his lack of martial skill, now he at least claims martial skill and his behaviour is far from courtly. His encounters with antagonists while escorting Ismeine to Calabria prove that his effectiveness in combat is no less than he claims, but his behaviour, so lacking in

courtly grace, convinces Ismeine that his successes in battle are no more than the result of chance.

The discrepancy and the appearance of it is heightened in both poems by the introduction of a dwarf as companion to Ismeine. This character acts as an advocate for Ipomedon and urges Ismeine not to be deceived by appearances. He insists on treating Ipomedon with correct service due to a knight. Thus, in both poems, the gulf between appearance and reality is used to make a moral point. In the English poem the moral interest of the situation stops here and the contrast between the truthful claims of Ipomadon and his appearance is extensively used for an obvious comic effect. This is increased by the colloquial expression of the characters involved; expression which is quite out of order in a courtly assembly.

The French poet, by contrast, keeps his mode of expression on a sophisticated level throughout the poem. The result of this is that Ipomedon, apart from being a more witty fool, appears more convincing as a braggart knight. His character is conceived and executed in courtly terms and he takes his place in the continual discussions of the vaunteur found in the French poem. In short, as a disguise, he adopts the appearance of the character, very much aggravated, that he would most wish to avoid being judged as in reality. When he first disguised himself to become the queen's dru it was to avoid being called a vaunteur as he rescues La Fiere in the tournament. Because people are judged at their face value,

the disguise is entirely successful. Once again the English
Ipomadon is very satisfied with his trick.

11.6434-35 "A foule amonge them they hym hold,
His plesure was the more."

Once again the French hero suffers persecution with difficulty for
the sake of his amie.

11.7929-34 "E cil tut sofre lur folie,
Mut aime lealment s'amie,
Co li ad il mut ben mustre:
Suvent en ad este gabe
E meint grant mal en ad sufert;
Mut ert grant peche, s'il la pert."

C The Poets' Presentation of Love.

The love of Ipomedon and La Fiere provides both the action of the poem and its main source of motivation. The effect of love on the characters is the most important sphere of emotion. An examination of how both poets treat the subject of love is therefore indispensable.

As the character of the hero is divided into three, so, to maintain the symmetry of structure, is the theme of love. In his own character, Ipomedon is true to La Fiere and the whole poem revolves around his loyalty and his efforts to prove worthy of her. Yet, within this larger framework, Ipomedon in his incarnations as the braggart fool and 'dru la reine', has dealings with two other women; Meleager's queen, and Ismeine, La Fiere's confidante. Both these encounters result in the affirmation of Ipomedon's loyalty to La Fiere and, in the French poem at least, both add something to the author's total vision of love.

Some of the differences between the opening scenes of love in the two poems have emerged in the section on their background and tone. A convenient starting point for comparison, then, is that point where La Fiere's interest is engaged by the young 'vadlet' at her court.

In the French poem this comes later than in the English work. Ipomedon does not really gain the lady's attention until he has proved himself as a huntsman, though foreshadowing remarks have

warned the audience in advance.

11.541-44 "Certes, jeo quit, men escient,
 Si eust en lui hardement,
 Tant cum il aveit d'autre amors,
 La fiere l'amast par amors."

The English lady is more importunate. Immediately after his appearance in the hall, she is struck by his worth. The author's remark of the French poem becomes a soliloquy in which the Fere already opposes Ipomadon's beauty to her vow and curses the fate that has formed him without prowess.

11.545-50 'For, were he a man of hardynes,
 As bovnte semys & bewte es,
 Be god and be my lewte,
 On lyve I know non lewand nowe,
 That cordes so well to myn avowe
 In all this world, as hee!''

Already the Fere seems to be forgetful that the only stipulation of her vow was prowess in arms.

Hue's lady is first assaulted by love when she sees how Ipomedon's hound reveals his own 'afeitement'. She turns back to her tent, for she thinks that her colour has changed through thinking about him (669ff). She struggles with her heart and Hue exclaims, leaving no doubt as to which receives his support.

11.673-76 "Dehei(e)ze(s)t ore sun granz senz!
 Ypomedon a icel tens
 En perdi mult de bon afere,
 Trop ot grans sens de sei retreire."

Fiere wins the struggle against love and Hue is forced to remark:
 "Deus, cum ele ad le quer loial:" (689). She is true to her vow.

In this first onslaught of love three distinct traits of the French poem emerge. Firstly there is the external effect of love; changed colour, secondly the struggle between Amur, represented by the demands of the heart, and Sens, and thirdly, the loyalty to a vow threatened by the demands of love. The English poet follows the incident closely but the emphasis he places on these three themes is different. There is no description of the external effects of love and the struggle is not explicitly between the heart and mind, but is instead presented as a mixture of direct utterance and narrative, illustrating the Fere's changing attitudes. Lastly, the whole seems to lack some of the underlying regard for the sanctity of the vow. The Fere clearly regrets having made it. Her main reason for adhering to it is to avoid gossip.

11.720-22 "They wold saye: 'Be oure lady, nowe
 She hathe well sett her grette avowe
 On a febyll freke!"

She finishes her reverie with the frank admission that she is in love with Ipomadon.

11.726-28 'But, sertes, my love is so isete,
 That hym to love I may no lette,
 What so euer they speke!"

In the English poem, love strikes the Fere at once and the vow and the need to preserve reputation hinder its course. In the French

poem, love is in the attacking position and only very gradually overcomes both sens and the vow.

Both poems retain the neat device, for showing La Fiere's interest, of making her recognise Ipomedon's hunting horn among the others, and also the comparable device of making her look past the stags' heads he presents to the man himself. In the French she curses his fate in the terms that the English poet borrows for an earlier occasion. In both poems she shows concern for her vadelot by asking if he has eaten and, on receiving a negative answer, ordering that he be served.

Ipomedon sits down to eat and Hue makes a sombre prophesy.

11.757-63 "Ainz qu d'ilek(e) releve mais,
 Iert (il) charge de si grant fais,
 Unkes mes ne s'aquitera,
 Q'en sa vie ne li faudra.
 Tel ovre en prist en my cel eire,
 Dunt tot dis avera afere:
 Qe porra c'estre for d'amer?"

Almost immediately, Ipomedon is aware that La Fiere keeps glancing at him, and he returns her regard.

11.776-82 "Si qe nul d'eus l'oil (ne) flechi:
 Mult s'entregardent longement.
 Li vallet veit, qe doucement
 L'ad regarde & de bon oil,
 Qu'il ne pot rens noter d'orgoil;
 De li pensa, qe ne pot estre,
 K'ele fu trop de sun quer mestre;"

For her part, La Fiere notices that Ipomedon is trembling and neither eating nor drinking. She realises that he is 'suppris tant d'amors,' (791). Further, she realises that in order to maintain her reputation and her oath, Ipomedon must be sent from the hall. He trembles and changes colour and La Fiere's anxiety increases. She fears that she will commit some indiscretion for his sake. It is obviously necessary for her to reduce the emotional temperature, but she can not withdraw entirely from his love, for she is too enmeshed by his beauty and air of good breeding (824). She desperately seeks some ruse whereby she may secretly chasten him without driving him away for ever, for she has 'grant pite' (833) for him. Her solution to the problem is based on three sententiae. Firstly she remembers that: "...par eloingnance/ Met l'en amur en obliance," (837-38) and to this she adds the thought that: 'aise fet laron' (840). She will, then, chasten him sufficiently to drive him back to his own country. However, she hopes that, cured by exile, he will return, for:

11.841-42 "Sil n(en) ert pas tost (a) delivre,
 Ele sanz ly ne poeit vivre,"

Hue advances the third sententia: "Cil ki bien eyme, tart oblie;"
 (844).¹

La Fiere's plan, then, is to chasten Ipomedon and ensure that if he does return, he will moderate his passion. She speaks to him

1. Morawski: No. 1835.

indirectly through an undeserved warning to Jason, in which she accuses him of stealing glances at Ismeine.

11.877-84 "Quidez vus, garcon, pur beaute
 Pussez par amur estre ame,
 Pur franchise ne pur largesce?
 Tut te covient autre pruesce:
 Mult est cist siecles fieble & tendre,
 Quant uns fous, qi n'ad, qoi despendre
 Ainz q'il conquerge los & pris,
 Veit suspirant & tres pensifs,'

She goes on to castigate those whose usefulness as vassals of the land has been stolen away by the folly of love. The love that robs a man of his senses is a bitter thing, she adds, and it is for his own good that she warns him against it. Jason is overwhelmed by this unwonted onslaught, but the sense of it reaches Ipomedon. He hangs his head and the meal seems unbearably long to him. At the end of the meal he goes to Fiere and asks leave to depart. She grants this, but watches him till he passes out of the door.

11.934-36 "Vis li fust, qe le quer de ventre
 Od lui de tot s'en est partiz,
 Ou volunteres ou enviz."

She goes to her chamber, throws herself on her bed, faints and grows pale.

11.943-44 "Mult se tient ore maubaillie,
 Tot son grant sens vint en folie."

Sens has won a battle against Amur, but has lost the campaign.

In the English poem the battle is never joined. Although the English lady has admitted her love to herself earlier, and in much

more unambiguous terms than the French, she is untroubled by the decision to rebuke Ipomadon.

The English poem follows much the same series of actions as the French, but the psychology is far less sensitive. They exchange glances, as in the French poem, but the long, significant look is missing. Ipomadon's emotional state is never reflected in his external appearance, and the only indication which he gives of the love which troubles him is to forget his meal. The rest is submerged in the usefully vague term employed by the author to describe any character undergoing any kind of internal crisis. Like the Fere a few lines earlier, he *sát* 'in a stodye' (821). Nevertheless, the lady perceives that he is oppressed by love, though Ipomadon does not grasp the similar state of the Fere. In order to avoid slander, she decides to chasten him. There is no emotional struggle involved, nor is her plan subtly derived, as in the French. The smile she gives when the idea occurs to her makes her quite a different heroine from the French. She, herself seems untouched by love, and exercising a haughty superiority. This impression, arrived at by over simplifying the motives of the French, is inconsistent with Fere's previous admissions of love in the English poem. The chastening of Ipomadon seems little more than a capricious whim.

The upbraiding of Jason for his glances at Ismeine follows the same pattern as in the French. As a result of it Jason sits

'in a stodye'. The English poet adds a pleasing scene where Ipomadon comforts his friend and reveals to him that the Fere's words were meant for himself alone. As in the French poem, he obtains permission to go from Fere, but instead of the elaborate conceit describing her heart being taken with Ipomadon, here the poet falls back on the commonplace that the lady thought:

1.901 "Here herte wold braste in tow;"

She goes to her room, throws herself on the bed and, instead of exhibiting the courtly symptoms of Hue's poem, is plagued,

1.904 "Wyth wrythyng and wyth woo."

There is no mention of either Sens or Folie. Both the hero and the heroine are now totally exposed to the ravages of hopeless love and both poets follow its effects on each in turn. They must each undergo a violent purgation of feeling before final capitulation and the arrival at a peaceful status quo.

The French heroine takes to a comfortless bed.

11.951-55 "Car amur durement l'asaut,
 Son senz en sel point poi li vaut;
 Amur la fet torner sovent,
 Assez pense diversement,
 A sei meismes mult estrive"

She is assailed by personified Amur and her Sens is now entirely at its mercy, yet a bitter debate goes on inside her. It becomes externalised in the form of an exclamatio to herself, which quickly

turns into a dubitatio, with her heart and mind as interlocutors. Her heart takes the part of Amur and she admits that it has become the ally of that powerful god when she speaks of love having conquered both her heart and herself (1020). The long exclamatio takes the form of a disputation on the defensibility of pride. La Fiere seems a little shocked that she was ready to love an unknown man, but she then persuades herself that his beauty denotes a noble birth. The more cynical side of her nature questions whether every man sees beauty with the same eye; at this La Fiere's momentary complacency is shattered and she loudly bewails the fall wrought by pride. She has fallen in love with a vadlet and she does not even know his place of origin.

She now debates with herself whether he will leave the court after all, and decides that if he stayed he would be considered a fool. Bitterly she denounces those who throw away that which they should retain. She convinces herself that the disturbance she saw in Ipomedon was love; for she has even begun to doubt such fundamentals of the situation, and to wonder if it was not merely an interest in hunting. She must declare her passion next, she decides, and frames the decision in a sententia.

1.1092 "Meuz vaut un 'tient' qe deus 'avraz'." ¹

The deliberations of the English heroine follow much the same

course, with the exception that Amur is not personified and there is no mention of the failure of Sens before its onslaught. The dubitatio of the French is slightly attenuated and is delivered with less stylish grace. The sententia quoted above becomes:

11.1034-36 'Bettur were me, suche ane to haue,
 Then anny tow, so god me save,
 Me thynkes, on ground pat gaase."

The English poet adds an exclamatio addressed to the heart, which is missing in Hue's poem. It is a simple one accusing the heart of refusing to let her dispense with Ipomadon. The whole English speech is simplified in a comparable way. The contorted attitudes of the French, with its liberal use of the second person to represent two aspects of Fiere's feelings, are smoothed into a fairly simple soliloquy, weakening the debate form. In the English, Fere consecutively refers to herself as 'I' or 'Thou' and the rapid interchange of the two personae, adopted in the French for the dubitatio, is avoided.

Ipomedon, too, gets little sleep that night. His experience is closely parallel to that of La Fiere. He orders his master to prepare his bed but, instead of sleeping, tosses and turns and broods over the evening past. He loses his colour and reviews the situation in a series of exclamationes interspersed with dubitatio.

The English poet follows the French very closely.

Ipomedon questions why he came to Fiere's court in the first place, recalls her words to himself and Jason and decides they were

for his own good. In addition he fears that her looks revealed that she thought him a fool. He ponders whether to reveal his true worth but decides against it since he might appear a boaster.

The treatment of this passage by both poets is very similar. The exceptions are that the English poet introduces an extra exclamatio to the heart which ushers in a dialogue on the advisability of death, borrowed from the end of the French passage. In both poems Ipomedon uses sententiae as an aid to reaching a decision, in the way that they are used in the French poem by La Fiere. Ipomedon is described by both poets as sighing and moaning and the Englishman mentions that he grows pale. Nevertheless, it is the French poet again who spends most time on the description of external symptoms, and only in the French poem does Tholomeu expressly state that it seems as though Ipomedon is suffering from a 'grant mal' (1268). Again the French poet is more sophisticated in his expression, but the English poet occasionally achieves a pleasing economy in the adaptation of French ideas.

11.1209-16 "Kar, ky eyne si finement,
Ne ceo puit cov(e)rir longement,
S(e)il pres de s'amyé maint;
Par ascun semblant ert ateint;
Si jeo suy loins, mes qe je pense,
Assez i troveray defense,
Kar nul ne savera, (ne) pur quei
Jeo suy (si) pensifs, for soul mey."

In rendering this, the English poet adopts a gnomic air and gives the whole a satisfying epigrammatic succinctness.

11.1168-73 "Who so maye be nere hys love,
 Sumtyme love, it comys above,
 Be they neuer so slee,
 And fere there fro yf he be browghte,
 Then shall no man witte his thought,
 But his hertte and hee."

The formal properties of the tail-rhyme stanza here emphasise the antithesis of the two eventualities. A similar device is used by the English poet to circumvent one of the humorous digs which Hue makes at his subject matter. After a particularly exhausting passage of soliloquy, Hue provides punctuation by the remark that his character needs a breath.

11.1169-71 "As (i) sez moz ly faut l'aleyne,
 Pasma s'en & revent a payne
 Mout dolorousement se pleint,"

The Englishman avoids this deflating necessity of a pause for breath, and the unwonted emotionalism of a swoon, by making his character exclaim:

11.1103-5 "Of helle yt is the hottest payne,
 To love and be not lovyd agayne,
 There on no wysdome lyese."

After this harrowing night, Ipomedon, making the excuse to Tholomeu of a dream of his mother's illness, leaves Calabria. Both poets render the conceit of the two lovers having exchanged their hearts, each without the knowledge of the other.

As he departs, Ipomedon meets Jason who tries to persuade him to remain, or at least to allow him to be his companion on the journey. Ipomedon resists the temptation and departs in anonymity. When Jason reports this to La Fiere it is the stimulus of a scene in which she finally accepts Ipomedon as her only ami.

In the French poem La Fiere's self-restraint is exemplary. She questions Jason in order to make certain of the veracity of the report and she shows no semblance of the emotions which disturb her. In the English poem, however, Fere is not so well sustained by Sens. When she hears that the foreign squire has left without giving his name, she is unable to prevent the outburst:

11.1392-93 "Alas, that ys a payne of helle!
Why dyd he so for schame?"

Jason, too, shows his concern more obviously than his French counterpart. When Jason has gone, the storm breaks in both poems. La Fiere again throws herself upon the bed and swoons three times. In the English poem, in addition to the swoon, she sighs, but in the French she violently changes colour and finally becomes unconscious.

11.1464-66 "Tut devient neire e teinte & perse,
Treiz foiz se pasme en un randun
Si k'el (e) n'entent sens ne reisun."

In the English her consternation is heightened by an impassioned exclamatio in which she addresses herself as a fool and blames herself for her own unhappiness.

Such is her misery that Ismeine rushes into the room and enquires the reason for it. In the French, La Fiere's reply is a hysterical

claim that she is dying.

11.1472-77 "'K(e) ai? Ja me mor a estrus:
 Ne veez vus, ke jeo me muer:
 Metrez vostre main a mon quer,
 Tastez: ne me bat nule veine!"
 "Pur deu, ma dame," fet Imeine,
 "Dunt avez vus cest mal si fort?"

Ismeine suggests that to tell the name of the disease would be a comfort, and La Fiere admits that it is love. When asked upon whom her love is fixed, she replies that she knows neither his name nor his whereabouts. Ismeine persists, and La Fiere tries to tell her. She manages the words 'l'etrange', but the word 'vadlet' is broken into syllables by a sigh.

11.1497-1504 'En suspirant li respondi,
 Quant meulz dut dire, si failli:
 "Ja s'est," fet el(e), "l'etrange va."
 En pece apres si li dist: "ha"
 "Dame, ne sai, qe dit avez,
 Se vus autrement n'assemblez,
 Kar n'i ai entendu nul nun
 Ne de parler nulle reisun!"

Ismeine does not recognise the sigh and presses again for the name. Fiere explains that she sighed and then gives instructions for understanding her speech. That she has said must be elongated a little, and 'let' added to it. Ismeine obeys the instructions and innocently asks,

1.1517 "Vahalet ad nun, est issi?"

La Fiere replies,

11.1518-19 "'Nai, ostez le suspir en mi:
Dunc l'avrez vus bien entendu."

Hue remarks that Ismeine understood quite well but was tactfully avoiding the issue.

The handling of this scene, though it may owe something to Eneas (8553ff), is typical of Hue. It clearly demonstrates his dualistic view of the courtly conventions. The situation is a very mannered one; La Fiere gives a complicated explanation of how to pronounce her lover's name but is overcome by sighs when she attempts to pronounce it herself. Ismeine makes the amusing mistake of thinking the man's name is 'Vahalet'. At this point the half-amused concurrence with custom draws to an end, for the scene has been satisfactorily pursued as far as moderation allows. Hue now forestalls more realistic criticism, and defends Ismeine's intelligence and tact, by explaining that she understood from the beginning but refrained from mentioning the painful name.

As might be expected, the English poet approaches the scene less delicately. He makes the heroine speak the phrase perfectly at once, and then proceeds to the explanation that sighing made her break the word in two. The break comes in a most unlikely place, and Imaigne is directed to join 'v' to 'alete' to understand the word. This she immediately does, and arrives at the correct conclusion; but Fere makes her say it a second time without the sigh, which was not

phonetically marked in the first place. The English poet fails entirely to appreciate the verbal wit of his antecedent, and once again he expunges all reference to the malady of love. The scene in which Ismeine tries to ascertain a heart-beat is entirely missing.

Once La Fiere has admitted the name of her love, Ismeine, in both versions, comforts her mistress, and with admirable common sense explains Ipomedon's motives for leaving the court. La Fiere now supercedes her earlier vow with another.

11.1556-57 "...ja ne prendrai
 Seignur, fors lui, tant cum jo vive,"

The summit of La Fiere's love has been reached. She is now, in both versions, entirely committed to Ipomedon.

As in the previous scene, Ipomedon undergoes a parallel experience. There is so little difference between the English and French renderings of it that there is no reason to deal with it at length. Ipomedon's misery is described; his glances behind him; Tholomeu's pity leading to his enquiry as to what ails him; Ipomedon's admission of love; and, finally, Tholomeu's comforting speech that love will impel him to win the greatest glory in battle. The only difference between the versions which is worthy of note is the unsophisticated enthusiasm which the English Thalamewe expresses on hearing that his pupil is infected by love.

11.1554-57 "His maystur sayd: "So god me mend,
 Sone, here of am I fayne!

 Who so louythe, schall lykyng haue,
 Worschipe to wynne, so god me saue,"

The French 'mestre' uses the same argument more reservedly half-way through a longer speech assuring Ipomedon that his military accomplishment will win La Fiere. Love, here, is only a reinforcement of an existing aptitude.

11.1573-76 "J'en ai joie, ke vus amez,
 Kar a tuz jurz meulz en valdrez,
 Kar cil, ki aime par amur,
 De plus conquest pris & valor,"

Ipomedon and La Fiere are now entirely committed to one another. They have reached a plateau where the only emotions which can find expression are those of mutual loyalty. Before looking at the tests of this loyalty, we may take the opportunity to make some general statements about the different ways in which the poets have represented the growing love of their main characters.

Firstly, it can be stated that the development of love in the French poem is more smoothly progressive. In the English poem the Fere admits her love almost at once, and then in the chastening scene behaves as if she were untroubled by it. This impression results from an over simplification of the motives discussed in the French poem. In addition, the English lady is less restrained in her behaviour in public. She can not control an outburst when Jason says

that he does not know the name of the 'straunge valet'. This lack of self-restraint in public underlies another distinction between the two poems. Self-restraint is an aspect of the courtly social virtue of Sens, and it is Sens that makes the French heroine conceal her emotion. Sens it is, too, that makes her oppose the sudden folly of love. Behind the French conception of the growth of love is the image of a psychomachia, with Amur and Sens ranged against each other in personified forms. In the English poem no trace of this contest remains, however shadowy, and Amur is never personified. The ravages of love are never opposed as a principle of behaviour, but only because of a prosaic anxiety for reputation. The difference is illustrated in the attitudes to the vow. In the English poem it is an obstacle to be cursed; in the French poem it represents a standard of honour, of the 'loial quer'.

The framework of the dispute between Amur and Sens becomes explicit in the English poem when it is externalised in the form of exclamatio. That the form only has been borrowed and not the underlying image is clear from the way it is simplified and adopted, without discretion, to illustrate indecision and dispute between other values; optimistic and pessimistic outlooks, romantic and cynical. In any event, the English poet is not entirely at home with the dubitatio form of the French and prefers to extend each point of view until they resemble separate exclamationes expressing opposed opinions, rather than follow the rapid alternation of view-

point expressed in the French. Exclamatio is to the taste of the English poet, for he includes two original ones, addressed to the heart.

As mentioned above, the psychological subtlety of the English poet lags far behind that of Hue de Rotelande. Hue's motivation and rather complex love casuistry is usually firmly based on several sententiae on the subject of love. Though the English poet sometimes follows him in the use of sententiae he avoids the complexities of the discussion of emotion. Occasionally he even goes so far as to represent a piece of Hue's casuistry by a simple and effective general assessment in the manner of a sententia. Sometimes, too, he makes his characters express unmistakeable emotion in colloquial terms.

In the matter of the description of the effects of love, Hue has the field almost entirely to himself. He describes the sleeplessness of love's victims at length; tells of their moans, their swoons, their palpitations and their tears. Most striking of all, he tells of their violent shifts in colour. He adopts the conceit of love as an illness and even includes a scene where Ismeine is asked to determine whether her mistress is dying from the malady. The English poet dispenses with this scene. He never explicitly calls love an illness, and although he describes sighs, sleeplessness and some of the other symptoms of love, he never mentions shifts in colour or trembling. Sometimes the symptoms he records are of a distinctly uncourtly nature, as when Fere is pictured writhing on her bed in

misery.

The general tendency of all these differences is to reiterate the findings of the study of the tone and background of the poems. Hue de Rotelande's method of presenting the growth of love presupposes a literary education, and his behavioural values suggest a courtly and aristocratic circle. The English poet follows the French one as far as he can, but his taste is not so refined, nor is he so intellectual. His audience lacked the developed subtlety of the audience who listened to the French romance.

D Some moral themes in the characterisation

After Ipomedon has left La Fiere he has dealings with two other women. These are primarily to demonstrate his loyalty to La Fiere, but they also enlarge upon themes raised by the first love episode. Instead of closely comparing the growing love of the queen and then of Ismeine with what has already been revealed of the growth of Fiere's love, I propose to examine these relationships only so far as they embody themes to be found elsewhere in the poem and to try to determine to what extent these themes are present in the English version.

The theme of Sens and its struggle with love is present in no meaningful sense in the first love interlude of the English poem, yet the image of the implacable struggle of foolish love and courtly propriety is implicit in the French original. We remember that in his introduction, omitted by the English poet, Hue tells us that in old tales: 'Poet l'en oyr folie & sens' (6). The word is used here in the general sense of 'something meaningful', but its use in other contexts as a quality of courtly exemplars indicates that, like pruz, it has a meaning appropriate to courtly behaviour. It means, not 'intelligence' as it is sometimes glossed, but rather 'intelligence exhibited in behaviour'. If a person behaves in a way appropriate to the courtly ethic, he is credited with sens. Its frequent consociation with mesure in other texts (and Ipom. 8560)

gives some clue as to what aspects of courtly behaviour sens refers. We have seen, too, how Hue curses sens for standing in the way of love (673); how he announces, just before La Fiere is struck down by love, that her sens will become folie (941) and, later, how sens becomes helpless before love's attack (952). This helplessness is not before sens has won the battle which creates the plot by sending Ipomedon away and imposing self-restraint which keeps each in ignorance of the others' precise feelings.

After Ipomedon has gone, La Fiere's loyalty is threatened by a caucus of her barons who demand that she find a lord to guarantee the peace of the realm. She finds a champion in Sir Drias, while the spokesman of the barons is Sir Amfion. Symbolically, Sir Drias is 'pruz en guerre' and eager to continue the unrest; a turbulent young man who does not seek a lord in case his freedom is curtailed (1871). Sir Amfion is curteis, pruz, and saive, learned in the law and the wisest man in the land. In addition, because he is old, he seeks peace and security. In the persons of these two, the theme of struggle is pursued. At the outset it is made clear that Drias is motivated by selfish concerns, whilst Amfion speaks for the good of the state when he demands that Fiere should marry. Drias claims that Amfion is motivated simply by the desire to protect his rich fiefs and that, in any case, Fiere can not marry without the consent of her uncle, Meleager, from whom she holds Calabrie. The undoubted

truth of this submission in feudal law persuades the assembled barons to support Drias.¹

Amfion now begins to appear to ill advantage. He despises the law in which he is supposed to be so expert, and then deliberately provokes a personal quarrel with Drias. The latter replies with a speech that must have greatly appealed to any young 'vadlet' who heard the poem read.

11.2049-58 "C'est la custume des antis,
 Quant de veillesce sunt supris,
 Dunt ceo voilent a teus vanter,
 Ke de ceo rien ne pot menbrer:
 A deus, quel jeo fui a cel tens,
 Cum ere pruz e de grant sens,
 Cum ere de grant hardement,
 Cum vencqui cel turne(e)ment!
 Cum purrunt les jofnes saveir,
 S'il mentent u s'il dient veir?"

Amfion is silenced; the sympathy of the audience is with Drias. At the council before the king, Drias makes an impassioned plea for La Fiere to be allowed her own choice, and this is upheld. Of the two lords who seemed so equal at the beginning of their confrontation,

1. The failure to obtain the lord's permission to the marriage of a woman vassal could be a casus belli. The Emperor Henry III made war on Baldwin of Flanders in 1051 because he married the widow of the Count of Hainault without his permission. Ganshof, op. cit. p.144.

Drias grows in stature while Amfion is totally discredited. Youth, vigour and a romantic ideal win the day. In the English poem the growth or decline of the characters through the struggle is not marked. Amfion is a less sympathetic figure from the start.

If some of the traits of sens can be seen in Amfion, whilst Drias has some of those of romantic love, then the turbulent emotion has triumphed again. This time, however, it is not simply foolish love, for it is represented by a knight of courtly bearing.

The struggle between love and sens becomes explicit again when Ipomedon enters the service of the queen. We are told that she loved him 'a desmesure' (6402)¹ and after he is lost for ever the queen regrets her past restraint.

11.7167-68 "Mut s'en repent, vive s'enrage,
K'ele ne li out dit sun curage."

In the midst of this section La Fiere learns that her ami has jousted at the tournament, and once again her sens is put to the test.

11.6733-38 "... la fiere,
Ki la nut out fet male chiere;
Aukes esteit al vis palie,
Mes par sun sen s'est resbaudie;
A kank'el (e) pot, fet bele chere,
Kar sage fut de grant manere;"

1. Mesure is a necessary, if painful, prerequisite for courtly love. Cf. J.Crosland, 'The Conception of 'Mesure' in some Mediaeval Poets', M.L.R. XXI (1926) pp.380ff.

The struggle between love and sens is revived momentarily in its full development in the section where Ismeine tries to avoid falling in love with Ipomedon, disguised as a fool. As she succumbs to love's onslaught, Hue comments: 'Poi faut, k'ele n'est forsenee.' (9020) and in a paeon to love he cries,

11.9096ff "Vers lui ne valt sens ne resun:

 Ke valut le sens Salemun?"

The contest between a correct form of behaviour and the demands of love, though not a developed moral theme, is nevertheless an underlying image of importance in the French poem. The struggle is the result of an assault by the 'folie d'amur'. After this initial madness is chastened, some kind of peace is established. The two competing elements are reconciled in a more moderate emotion and in loialte (1320). This quality, which comes to the hero and heroine after the ravages of the struggle, is a kind of sens within amur. Loyalty is demonstrated by every action in the story, but it is rarely mentioned explicitly. The relations between sens, amur and loialte are not deeply or deliberately explored by Hue, but there is little doubt that they form an essential and habitual background to his thoughts on love. It is a complex of ideas which is entirely wanting in the mental background of the English poet.

The nature of the three characters in which Ipomedon appears,

together with the fact that a different woman falls in love with each compels the reader to wonder what qualities in a character are visualised as inspiring love. To some extent Hue seems to review this problem. In the incipient relationship with La Fiere, and throughout that with the queen, there is a consistent theme of the necessity of prowess to be combined with courtly behaviour in the perfect knight. Nevertheless, the character in which Ipomedon appears to both these ladies is entirely lacking in prowess; yet they both love him despite themselves. The whole poem is based on Ipomedon's search for prowess to match his courtliness, yet these individual episodes in which he gains the affection of two ladies, suggest that military prowess is unnecessary in reality.

La Fiere, at the court, considers Ipomedon 'pruz & sage' (508). She admires his knowledge of hunting skills but the reason which makes her unable to restrain her heart is "Car trop ert beaus & debonere" (824). When she upbraids him for lack of prowess, she puts a finger on three qualities which inspire her love.

ll.877-79 "'Quidez vus, garçon, pur beaute
 Pussez par amur estre ame,
 Pur franchise ne pur largesce?'

Later, in her distress, she admits the reasons for her love.

ll.1000-1004 "...A grant reison
 Doit il par amur estre amez,
 Kar si beaus hom ne fust unk(e) nez,
 Si curteis hom, mien escient,
 Ne nasquit unk(es) de base gent."

Tracing backwards from here, we find that beauty has always been the greatest single attraction which Ipomedon offers (538; 729). In both references beauty combined with courtliness overcomes a lack of prowess.

The English poet, though selecting his own terminology, (bewte 419; fayrenes, gentryse, bounte, bewte 536ff; curtesye, bewte, largenesse 842ff) follows the diagnosis of the Frenchman. He comes to the conclusion:

11.1032-33 "He shuld not love, but he be lovyd agayne,
 He ys so fayre of face;"

In the relationship of Ipomedon and the queen, the queen's affection is to some extent presumed from the beginning, since Ipomedon is installed as 'dru la reine'. Nevertheless, some details are given as to why the queen does in fact love him. The theme of cursing fate for joining such beauty with lack of prowess is continued, for Ipomedon's disguise is merely an intensified version of the appearance of his character at the court of La Fiere. Again, he is recognised by all as the epitome of courtliness, but regarded as imperfect as a result of his lack of military enthusiasm.

11.3127-28 "Tuz le tenent a fin malveis,
 Mes mut par est beaus e curteis."

The queen's regard for Ipomedon is severely limited by this imperfection, but when she does eventually love him 'a desmesure' it is largely because of his beauty (3270; 4435ff), though his

'service' and courtliness play a part.

11.4513-18 "Quant (ele) recorde sa (grant) franchise
 E sun sens e sun bel servise,
 Suef met quir(e) e tut ublie
 E pruesce e chevalrie,
 Mut pense plus de sa belte:
 Koment k'il seit, mut l'at ame."

Here, the superiority of courtliness and beauty as a spur to love is explicit. Again, the English poem follows the French in general; but the emphasis is rather on 'service' than beauty. The queen three times curses his lack of prowess in view of his beauty, but we are shortly informed that, although she knows,

11.3054-55 "That he ne was man of prowess;
 Whedur she loved hym neuer the lesse,"

and indeed she plainly loves him because he serves her well (2789ff).

The Ipomedon who gains the affection of La Fiere and the queen is handsome and courtly, but lacking in prowess. Ismeine is faced by an entirely different character. At first he appears a braggart and a fool, but he soon proves his claim to prowess when he is challenged by a series of knights. He becomes, in fact, the diametric opposite of 'dru la reine'. He is 'pruz en chivalerie' but completely lacking in sens and he offers Ismeine no 'service' but, on the contrary, insults her. The dwarf, who is 'curteis' and 'enseigne' (8113), persistently argues that the foolishness of Ipomedon is merely a disguise, but Ismeine is not impressed. She ascribes his success in arms simply to madness.

11.8349ff "Quidez vus, fol, ke par pruesce
 Tenist celui en tel destrece

 Asez fist plus par sa folie
 Ke par sa grant chevalerie:"

Military ability is not enough in itself, yet, when it is repeated, Ismeine wonders whether it does not presage some hidden worth; for she, too, believes in the commonplace that wisdom and beauty normally go with strength.

11.8559-62 "Mut ai oi dire suvent,
 Sens estot ou grant hardement
 Recovent od chevalrie
 E sens e mesure e veisdie:"

This line of thought is upset for her by the memory that everyone at Meleager's court regarded this strange knight as a fool; therefore, she concludes, it must be so. Nevertheless, she asks him to share her meal. When he roughly refuses, she is convinced of his foolishness.

Prowess, then, is seen as being capable of attracting the attention of a lady and arousing her interest, but by itself it proves useless. Only when Ismeine recognises the physical beauty of Ipomedon is she smitten with love. When they stay the night at an inn a descriptio of Ipomedon is given (8629ff). For the first time Ismeine looks closely at him.

11.8649-53 "Ismeine esgarde sa beaute
 E suh corsage ad avise,
 Enz en sun quer asez le prise,
 Mut se repent d'estrangle guise,
 K'el (e) l'out si estrangle tenu;"

A few lines later, Hue sums up:

1.8692 "De sa beaute est ja surprise,"

In the case of Ismeine it is abundantly clear that neither courtliness nor prowess has played much part in provoking her love. Beauty, alone, is sufficient to make her risk her reputation for the sake of a man who is obviously mad. By a system of combinations and oppositions, Hue shows that the sole stimulus to sudden and uncontrollable passion is physical beauty. La Fiere loved 'l'estrangle vadlet' for his courtliness and his beauty; the queen loved her 'dru' for his beauty and his 'service'; but Ismeine, who alone has the opportunity to love for prowess, turns it down and loves only for beauty. The ideal knight must possess courtliness, prowess and beauty, as Ipomedon does at the close of the poem, but the one indispensable factor, the single quality which, alone, is able to stimulate the 'folie d'amour', is beauty. However, it is important to note that what beauty alone encourages is a wild infatuation and not a more stable passion. For this reason, the ladies of romance oppose this first attack of love and look for other values - courtliness and prowess - to inspire a more noble affection.

How far does the English poet preserve this argument? At first

it seems that he is deliberately trying to clarify it. He follows his original closely in the case of the Fere, and in the case of the queen, he puts rather stronger emphasis on 'service'; yet, when he comes to Ismeine, the clinching scenes of the argument dissolve. At first Ismeine ascribes Ipomadon's victories to madness, as in the French (6810), but in her soliloquy she wonders more seriously if he might not be playing a part. She recites his foolishness, but balances it against his skill in arms and ends by the definite suspicion that he may have adopted the disguise of a fool.

11.6988-89 'He fyghttes so worthely & so well,
I hope, he dothe but faynes!'"

True, she later decides again that he must be a fool in reality, but her doubts in this passage take the edge off the sharp distinction between one who has prowess alone and the ordinary courtly knight. The argument is further dissipated by the lack of a description of his beauty and the lack of emphasis on beauty which finally decides Ismeine that he is worthy of love.

11.7079-81 "Imayne hym behyldes on the face:
A fayrer knyght, thanne he was,
Her thought, she hade not sene:"

From this, it seems that where the English poet follows the argument of the French original, it is by chance rather than design. The same sets of commonplace ideas must have been available to him. He closely adopts the reasons for love of La Fiere,

slightly alters the emphasis of the queen's love, and almost completely loses the thread of the argument in the love of Ismeine. It appears that the English poet saw no deliberate development in the oppositions and similarities of the different episodes, but simply regarded them as supplementary incidents in narrative, whose resemblances were accidental and due merely to the rigours of original composition.

The theme which is most indivisably a part of Hue's poem, though perhaps a part of the narrative rather than the characterisation, is the theme of the gulf between appearance and reality. It is intrinsically a part of a plot based on numerous disguises and appearances incognito, and it also features largely in a number of situations contrived by Hue especially for its exploitation. He puts these to work in two important ways; firstly, to provide sudden, unsuspected elements in the story and, secondly, by these surprise developments, to arouse the emotions of the characters and allow a study of them.

On the third day of the tournament the Duke of Athens is made to appear in red; the colour worn by Ipomedon on the previous day. When he defeats this red knight, Ipomedon insists that he does not return to the field again in his red armour. La Fiere is distraught, for she thinks that the red knight, whom she knows was 'l'etrange vadlet' on the previous day, has been slain. It is an occasion for a lengthy regrets. In the final combat, both Leonin and Ipomedon are dressed in black so that the winner of

the battle is anonymous to all except Ismeine, who knows him by his horse. After the death of the horses, she too is ignorant of the outcome. As the victor, Ipomedon comes before the town and claims to be Leonin; again to the consternation of La Fiere. The ostensible reason for this behaviour is that Ipomedon wishes to escape from the scene in order to continue to glorify himself and La Fiere in the pursuit of battles. A more plausible reason is that Hue contrived the situation for the opportunity offered to present another passage of La Fiere's misery. Perhaps, too, there is some element of the purgation of pride, for she is also made to suffer through mistaking Capaneus' rescue party for Leonin and his men, who she thinks are coming to seize her. La Fiere suffers considerably from mistaking appearance for reality. It was such a mistake which made her drive Ipomedon from her court in the first scene.

Other examples of the contrived situation are the scene in which Drias kills his brother by mistake, and the final battle in which Capaneus attacks the man whom he thinks is Leonin but whom he finds to be 'dru la reine', who the audience know to be Ipomedon and are surprised to find, at the end of the battle, is really Capaneus' long-lost brother. Here, perhaps, we have the fulfilment of Hue's gloating words seven thousand lines earlier. He remarks of Capaneus with regard to Ipomedon:

11.3182-84 "Jo quit k'asez plus l'amereit,
 S'il en sout co ke jo en sai
 Mes cel ert uncore en delai;"

These words suggest that Hue had a clear plan of his romance before he came to write it; otherwise there would be no need to accord Capaneus the importance of being introduced at line 80 when he has no speaking part for almost 2700 lines after his first appearance. Clearly, Hue had it in mind at this early stage that Capaneus had an important part to play. Unless Hue used a source after all, this argues that his planning of the plot of his romance had more system than he is usually allowed.

The English poet follows these intrigues quite closely, and indeed emphasises Ipomadon's pleasure at the success of his disguise. He makes the dwarf's assertions that Ipomadon should not be taken at his face value more pointed than in the French, and he is alone in clearly stating a moral drawn from the theme of appearance and reality.

11.5233-35 "Off a straunge man in vncovthe place,
 In them, that moste skornyng mas,
 Leste off norture lyse!"

Beside this conclusion, which is not perhaps a truly courtly one but is nevertheless admirably humane, he places another original utterance, generalised from the story and possibly from folk wisdom.

11.1138-40 "In erthe ys none so worthy a knyght,
 But yf his dede be shewyde in syght,
 Men will no good sopose."

Although the poet does not advertise his poem as didactic, he clarifies and makes explicit the French theme of appearance and reality, and draws moral conclusions from it. In this clarification of the French theme, the English poet justifies his promise at the beginning of the poem (ll.16ff) to tell a story of a supreme knight of bad reputation.

Other topics within the sphere of characterisation deserve treatment - the 'realistic' figures of Jason and Ismeine; the English poem's individual treatment and expansion of Thalamewe, and the exceedingly courtly burgess - but a memory of Hue's own warning at the beginning of his work forbids it.

ll.42-6 "Dirai bref (ve) ment ceo, que j'en said
 Ke grant ovre voet translater,
 (B)ref(ve)ment l'estuet ou(t)re passer,
 Ou, si ceo noun, trop s'anoi(e)ront
 Cil, ki d'oir talent aurent."

We must, therefore, pass on to a review of the narrative techniques practised by both poets.

E Narrative Technique

Since the poems are so closely related in their events and in much of their technique, it is convenient to divide the narrative devices used into three groups; those adopted with little or no change by the English poet, those unrepresented in the English poem, and those which seem to be of special interest to the English poet. In the first group can be placed the great majority of the sententiae used by Hue. They are simply adapted to the English context. In equally as common usage are the twin devices of occupatio and transitio; the only difference between their use in the two poems is a rather greater hint of impersonality in the English work. The foreshadowing of the events of the plot is re-used in an exactly similar way by the English poet. Hue's digressiones on the origin of the custom of riding forth with a 'meynie' and his account of how the Duke of Athens comes to be at the tournament, before he describes the tournament, are followed faithfully. The latter is a text-book use of digressio.¹ The English poet also painstakingly reproduces most of the striking French examples of simple repetitio.

The most outstanding trait of the narrative technique of the French poem is, as was mentioned earlier, the personal nature of

1. Geoffroi de Vinsauf defines digressio as when one, telling the story of Acteon, describes the fountain before its appointed place in the narrative.

Documentum de Arte Versificandi II 2 17. Faral, p.274.

the interpolations of the narrator. These fall into four groups. Firstly, there is a series of cynical or mock-cynical comments upon the nature of women. These are always wittily expressed. Womankind is wily, unscrupulous and impetuous, lacking any sense of moral responsibility. It is a familiar attitude of the mediaeval clergy, but Hue disarms criticism by attaching no blame to them. It is their nature, he explains (8719ff). These remarks upon the general nature of women are usually woven neatly into the story, providing a commentary upon the actions and emotions of the female characters. The English poet adapts about a third of them into his poem, but in a way which lacks both the subtlety and the immediacy of the French. They become mere sententiae.

The second group of personal interruptions consist of a number of observations on a variety of topics, but in particular on leaute and on love. Sometimes they are at the level of sententia, but are frequently much expanded. Hue remarks on the decay of leaute in the contemporary world:

11.3745-46 "Mut i out dunc majurs leautez
 El secle, k'or(e) n'i ad, d'asez:",

on the fortunes of war:

11.6143-44 "Or(e) sunt desuz, or(e) sunt desus,
 Cum de guerre est custume e us.",

and on the realities of government:

11.61-2 "Kar, (a) certes, par fol seignur
 N'iert bien tenu(e) grant honur,"

The English poet re-employs many of the general remarks on love, but omits Hue's most imaginative expression of the paradoxical nature of that emotion.

ll.1251-54 "Mout (par) est douz l'entrer d'amur(s),
 Mes poy & poy crest la docour,
 Si doucement, ainz qe l'en sache,
 Que tut le quoeer del ventre arache."

Within Hue's personal references to love appears a strain of cynicism, and sometimes bawdiness, that is entirely expunged from the English poem. Hue remarks that although Ipomedon's lack of chivalry was a grief to the queen:

ll.4308-12 "Ele li fust asez (bone) amie,
 S'il l'eust de bon quer requise,
 K'amur est de fere justise:
 Amur ne quert fors sun delit,
 Mut valt le juster enz el lit."

After the marriage of his hero and heroine, he indelicately invades their privacy and remarks that the craft of love requires no apprenticeship (10499ff). At the end of his poem he claims that those who are not true to their love are excommunicated by the god of love. Absolution is granted them when they find a new love. He adds that he possesses a charter of absolution and will be willing to show it to any doubting lady who will come to his house at Credenhill before she departs. This personal advertisement is missing from the English poem.

The third group of personal interruptions scarcely deserves the

designation of personal, for they are based on a set of conventional expressions common in French romance, which represent a manner of telling the story rather than any truly personal remark of the author. Expressions such as 'jo quit', 'mun espoir', 'mun escient' do, however, recall the presence of a narrator and, in Hue's employment of them, they are often lent an individuality denied to their English equivalents. At line 520 Hue interpolates into his narration: 'Dire l'estut, se peise mei'. He combines the conventional phrase with litotes effectively, in his description of the queen's regard for her 'dru'.

11.3277-78 "Cument k'il fust, mun escient,
 Nel hai pas trop durement."

The fourth, and last, group of personal interruptions is perhaps the most interesting, for it is a small group of references to contemporary events. Into this group falls the mockery of scholars in the opening lines of the poem, and also his references to the rules he will follow in translating the work. The same amused contemplation of his power over his material is evident in lines 3182-86 when he refers to Capaneus' lack of knowledge of his friend's prowess.

11.3182-86 "Jo quit k'asez plus l'amereit,
 S'il en s(o)ust co ke jo en sai,
 Mes cel ert uncore en delai;
 Nel savra pas, mun escient,
 A cest premer turneiement."

Later in the poem, he returns to the work in hand once more.

ll.9975-76 "Un' aventure vus voil dire,
Pur meulz esclarzier la matire:"

The rest of Hue's contemporary references are to individuals. They are used as exempla. The man of Hereford in line 5346 who exemplifies prowess, and whose deeds are mightier than fiction, may well have been Hue's patron. The reference (5514ff) to Hue de Hongrie, "a known canon of Hereford", ¹ is to an exemplar of carnal lust and can only be a jibe at a man of Hue's acquaintance. The whole paragraph forms a part of the cynical and mocking view of love which exists in the poem alongside the serious courtly treatment. The most interesting of the contemporary references is the one to Walter Map as an exponent of untruth. This reference comes in the midst of a discussion upon the extravagances of fiction, and therefore has some link with Hue's opening promises to limit himself to the truth in his telling of the story. Remembering that most of his material is invented, this whole framework is shot through with irony. The final reference to an individual is to an unknown Welsh king, Ris, who promised rewards that it was beyond his means to bestow. ² He serves as an exemplar

1. Miss Legge, op. cit. p.94

2. This is the antithesis of courtliness, as Chretien observes in Perdeval ll.1917-18.

"Vilonnie est d'autrui gaber
Et de prometre sanz doner."

of the qualities shown by Leonin in promising Ismeine to a succession of his followers. Presumably because these references are so personal and so contemporary, they have vanished entirely from the English poem.

In view of the fact that so many of the individual features of the French have perished in the Anglicisation of the poem, it is rather surprising to find that the play upon the word 'vadlet' survived the transition. This survival of word-play is, however, the exception rather than the rule. Hue makes sparse use of annominatio (1251ff) and of the device of using three tenses of the same verb.

11.1907-8 '...le valet, qe tant amai
E aim e tuz jurz ameraï!" 1

A common form of intellectio is also sparingly used.

11.9275-76 "Meulz me voil neier en la mer,
K'a tel tyrant mun cors livrer!" 2

The familiar expression has unaccustomed pathos, here, since a lady, determined not to yield to an undesirable suitor, is the speaker.

In the interchange between Ipomedon and Leonin, Hue amuses himself by the use of homonyms.

11.9511+12 "'Cument? Est co dunc a decertes?
Vus en avrez males dessertes!"

1. Cf. also 11.1669-70, using the verb estre.

2. Also 11.3554; 4390.

A few lines later, in a framework of repetitio, he assembles a list of near synonyms for battle.

11.9575-79 "Entre eus est dure la mellee,
 Dur capleiz, dure asemblee,
 Dure bataille, durs asauz,
 Dure defense, durs enchaus,
 Dure envaie e durs les coups,"

Hue's wit is far from being limited to such verbal agility. Even more common are the deflating remarks he includes in his narrative, which suddenly place it in a comic perspective. It has already been noted how Ipomedon has to cease his complaint to catch his breath. A little later Jason becomes so incensed that he almost falls from his horse (1374), and, later still, Ipomedon falls into a muddy stream (7444). When Capaneus and Ipomedon meet in the tournament, they both fall from their horses. Hue archly remarks:

11.6213-16 "Jo ne di pas k'il i chaissent,
 Mes si lur chevaus i flechissent,
 K'en poent il, s'a terre vunt?
 E ki chaut?..."

Equally typical of the French poem is the use of balanced lines. This stylistic grace distinguishes Hue's use of repetitio.

1.68 "Ou soit a tort ou soit a dreit."

The antithetical structure of the balance is also typical of Hue. It is found in the use of epithet alongside the more usual employment of near synonyms.

11.439-40 "...chivaler
 Francs ne covert, couart ne fier,"

Occasionally it has a euphuistic tone:

- 11.1714-16 "Hetez en est si est dolent,
 Hetez de ceo, q'il aveit frere,
 Dolens, k'il ne sout, u il ere."

frequently lines are balanced against one another:

- 11.3822-25 '..."Veez ci le destrer:
 Il n'ad si bon de si k'en Rume
 E si fut al plus felun home,
 Ki seit de ci k'en Occident;'

Wide use is made of litotes and oppositio:

- 1.5560 "N'ert pas veulz, einz fut juvenceaus;"
- 11.5142-43 "E Ipomedon ne se feint,
 Einz ad le rei ben referru;"
- 11.1949-52 "De jur, que mys fut del respuns,
 Ne s'ublient pas les baruns,
 Ne volt un sul d'eus remaneir,
 Bien quident lur respuns aver:"

Considering the frequent use of understatement, it is surprising that there exists only a single example of epic innuendo (3911-12). In this respect the English poem is richer. Equally surprising, in view of the trend in other French works studied, is a facility for vivid and concrete images in the narrative expression.

- 11.1687-88 "Uncore est vive la reine,
 Mes la mort li est pres veisine"

These images often have the atmosphere of proverbial utterance.

- 11.5641-42 "Ki pense tote gent d'eseivre,
De meisme le hanap deit beivre."

Formal metaphor is sparingly used, but is often considerably elaborated. The image of love as a malady gives rise to a metaphorical medicine for it on at least four occasions (1946;4706; 5090;5512). In the last case the image is elaborated in one of Hue's personal addresses to his audience.

- 11.5512-20 "Fust le beser bone medicine,
Mes il le prist trestut a gas:
Certes, jo nel f(e)reie pas,
Einz i mett(e)reie mut grant peine,
Tant ke tastee fust la veine,
Par unt le mal si la teneit;
Huge de Hongrie par dreit
S'en deust mut ben entremettre,
La glose set de ceste lettre."

Hue's use of simile is scarcely original but he employs the device on numerous suitable occasions. In the description of Ipomedon we are told that he lights up the room like the sun. La Fiere's breast is whiter than the white mayflower (flur d'aube espine 2226), her face is as bright as the lily (2245). On the field of battle Ipomedon's pennant is as white as snow (3566), he himself is like a boar (4053) and, in a more epic simile, like a lion (5113) or a lion among lesser beasts (4970). The only simile which seems unusual is the comparison of a helmet with an anvil in the forge where the sparks go flying (9585).

The use of contemporary references as exempla has already been mentioned. To these may be added several familiar Biblical exempla. Lucifer stands for 'orgoill' (4595), Adam for 'beaute', David for 'bunte' (9098), Salemun for 'sens' and Samson for 'force'. Anonymous auctores are occasionally invoked to support the verity of some sententia or claim to special knowledge (1671; 2781). Hue never ascribes any of his information to any particular author although he has mastered the literary trick of invoking the support of the written word with conviction.

By contrast, the English poet makes no use of exempla. His references to written works can all be referred to the French original from which he is composing his poem (5829). Formal metaphor, too, is very sparse in the English poem, but that imaginative power behind simple expression which we have come to associate with English romance is often present.

11.857-59 "These brethellys now, the soth to tell,
 Be they be crepte oute of the schell,
 Yet mvste they laydys love,"

1.1603 "Stone-stille they stande."

In the battle, Lyolyne speaks an ironic metaphor:

1.8027 "Lokes on youre arme and rede pat letter!"

In this poem, however, much of the vividness of the language has been dissipated by the conventionality of the imagery. Twice we are given one of the oldest imaginative phrases of English poetry: 'word sprange' (134; 176). Two references to God as 'he who made

the moon' are reminiscent of Havelok 403, and a list of others are given by Kölbing in his note to line 1296. Other familiar expressions are the claim, also as old as Old English poetry, that the poet heard part of his story told: "As I haue hard betelde." (144) and the use of paired opposites to express the universal regard for the hero.

11.171-72 "Bothe fare and nere;
 His meyne louyd hym moste & leste,"

The use of similes is also a mixture of well established and apparently original usage and includes some striking images. In the battle, the plumed helms are scattered widely so that they look like flowers in the field (7992-93).

Part of the secret of the apparent energy of the English imagery is that, while the French poet makes static comparisons between colours and objects of the same hue, the English poet draws similarities between movements, and blends together much more discrete elements. On the battle-field the blood runs down like drops of rain (5571) and the terrified Ismayne trembles like an aspen leaf.

1.6727 "Then as an aspleff she quoke,"¹

In the combat with Lyolyne:

11.7835-36 "The sparkels frome the helmes flowe
 As fer, that lemys in lowe,".

There are also many more common static similes. Fere is:

1.111 "...fayre as flowre in felde:"

1. The N.E.D. And Kurath and Kuhn's M.E.Dictionary show this to be a conventional simile. Df. Troilus and Criseyde 1.1200. and Summoner's Prologue 1.3.

Later, she is left,

1.1474 "Wyth herte as hevy as ledde:"

In the battle, Ipomadon is twice likened to a bear (5845; 5902) and four times he is described by the alliterative formula, "breme as bore" (6432; 7405; 7706; 7826).

Apart from these similes and the description of individual combats, there is little evidence of the epic spirit in the treatment of battle scenes, unless it appears in Ipomadon's final combat against Cabanus, when he is mistaken for Lyolyne. There are, however, two uses of epic innuendo, one of which is paralleled in Havelok.

Ipomadon strikes Amfion so hard,

11.3205-6 "That neuer afterward
 He nede prest to asse."

Later, we are told that he has such success against the mightiest in battle that:

11.5868-69 "The most myghtty as he mett,
 He made there wyffes to wepe."

Typical of the English poem is the presentation of what is simple narrative in the French as direct speech. Sometimes this occurs in the most unlikely places, when it seems sensible to continue with simple narrative. The message sent with Cabanus to Mellyagere is suddenly given in its original form without any preparatory introduction.

11.4249 'Men callyd hym Cabanus.
 How he was gotton, I can not sayne;
 Yff ye wille witte, wyth oute layne,
 Further spyre you bvs.

His brother to the kyng hym sent:
 "And prayeth hym ofte wyth goode intente,
 For the love, he owe tyll vs,
 That he wille kepe well my son!"

This example illustrates the dexterity with which the English poet frequently links his stanzas, but the reversion to direct speech, common as it is in simple narrative verse and prose, is rather awkward.¹ To place against this are several examples of excellent dialogue.

11.3375-89 "Jasone," she sayd, "what ayls the,
 Off so hevy chere to be?"
 "Right so may ye, madame:
 To day haue ye lorne
 The best knyght, þat euer was borne,
 Yet know I not his name!"
 The lady sayd: "For goddis myghte,
 What was he? The white knyght?"
 "Ye, be god, the same!"
 Why, wyste þou, Jasone, what he was?"
 "Ye, þefore we may say: alas,
 As god me spede fro blame!"
 "Why, dere cosyn, know I hym ovght?"
 He sayd: "Lady, vyse ye nought
 Off þe straunge valet,"

In this example the achievement of both poets is approximately equal (Fch. 4191ff), in other passages, however, the English poet treats

1. Cf. the Cynewulf and Cyneheard episode in the A-S Chronicle annal 755. See also Havelok 2020.

dialogue more surely. Endeavouring to imitate the rapid interchange of lively discourse, Hue sometimes excessively compresses his dialogue until it becomes a staccato exchange of trivialities and contradictions.

11.7667-73 "Coment? Ad ele pris barun?"
 "Nu l'at!" "Si ad, veir!" "Nu l'at, nun,
 Mes ele est mut pres de l'aveir!"
 "Nu l'est!" "Si est!" "Dites vus veir?"
 "Oal!" "Cument?" "Estre sun gre!"
 "Ne pot il estre desturbe?"
 "Ne quit pas!" "Purquei?" "Dirrai vus:"

Wisely, the English poet reduces the verbal tension of this exchange while still endeavouring to retain its rapid, contradictory tone. His efforts are not wholly successful but he does produce a more easily digestible passage.

11.6098-6104 "Why, how faris the fere?
 Telle me how it stondythe wyth here:
 Hathe she an husbond?" "Nay, ser,
 And she had, wrong it were!"
 "I trow, she hathe!" "I say you, nay!"
 "How is it thanne?" "I shall you saye!"
 "Tell on good, now lett here!"

In most respects, the evidence of the devices of narrative reinforces the conclusions about the poems already reached by other means. The English poet re-employs easily used devices such as repetitio, sententiae, foreshadowing, transitio, occupatio, and digressio, and even borrows some of the verbal wit. Usually,

however, these borrowed devices are robbed of stylistic grace; annominatio is dropped, carefully balanced antitheses are lost and the personal expressions of the French poet are abandoned. The English poet does not recognise Hue's sallies against his material, nor does he take delight in the amplification of a metaphor or the assembly of exempla.

His use of simile is, however, energetic and distinct in several examples, and his language is often more imaginative than that of Hue de Rotelande; though in the case of this remarkable Anglo-Norman, the gulf is not so wide as it might have been. One must also remember that the English poet has available to him a collection of imaginative, if rather worn, expressions common to many of the writers of Middle English romance. The only other matter of importance in which the Englishman excels his antecedent is in the matter of dialogue. His ability here, it must be admitted, is a double-edged weapon, for he is often lured into unwise use of direct speech in preference to narration.

All in all, the impression is that, in the English poem, a not ungifted, but unsophisticated poet, at least as far as literary matters are concerned, is applying his traditional tools to the reshaping of an individual and literary work. The personality of Hue de Rotelande gleams through a thousand chinks in his literary armour; the English poet has retreated anonymously into the cover of his familiar conventions, of composition and linguistic expression. Only sporadically can traces of individuality be detected, and we never catch even a fleeting glimpse of his character.

IV Conclusions.

In writing Ipomedon, Hue de Rotelande has produced an essentially courtly poem. Feudal attitudes are also woven into its texture, but are of limited importance compared to their occurrence in a poem such as The Romance of Horn. Besides springing from a courtly milieu, Ipomedon is filled with the courtliness of literature. Hue constantly uses the topoi and the conventions of expression of courtly literature. He visualises his characters as heroes and heroines of the same literature, and while the English poet rather vaguely defines his hero's prowess in the social trivium of 'curtessye', 'chasse and chevalrye' (151-52), Hue is able to ascribe to him a whole system of approbatory courtly epithets. These stock characters are motivated by aristocratic and courtly concerns such as the regard for honour and for loyalty in love, or the preservation of self-control and reputation. The English poet endeavours to counterfeit such concerns, and even to expand them; but in doing so, he succeeds only in pitting his hero's concern for honour against his duty of service to his lady, or in creating apparent inconsistencies in the development of the lady's affection. He is patently writing of courtly behaviour from a knowledge which, though extensive, is not the natural understanding possessed by Hue. This lesson is redoubled by the individual treatment given to nature at the time of the hunt, and also to battles. With Hue, the former is an extension of the court, the latter, a literary description of the tourney. The English poet's accounts are enlivened by his language and perhaps by personal experience. The hunt, in particular, is made

energetic by the vigorous and imaginative language, the rhythms inspired by alliteration and by the use of interpretatio.

This same vigour of language is notable in the descriptions of Lyolyne, and of Ipomadon's appearance as a fool. Their grotesque originality is accompanied by a broad humour totally different from Hue's more sophisticated wit. They are the only descriptions of persons attempted by the English poet, yet the order observed in the description of Lyolyne reveals that the English poet had access to the same descriptive convention as the elaborate courtly descriptions of the French work. Evidently it was a matter of taste rather than ignorance which dissuaded him from the practice of courtly description and disposed him to employ his expressive power in the creation of grotesque and humorous description.

The implicit imaginative force of the Englishman's use of language is evident at intervals throughout the poem, and reveals itself happily in his choice of similes. By comparison Hue's similes are drawn from the duller levels of convention. Perhaps linked to this inner imagery of the English expression is the faculty which enables the English poet to create a symbolic link between each of the tournaments and Ipomadon's daily hunting, by making his hero cite the colour of each surpassing hound in his evening report to the queen. Linked to it too, perhaps, is the ability of the poet to present effective and convincing dialogue. The English poet sensibly avoids the excessively staccato exchanges of the French, but loses none of the

vivacity of speech. The same avoidance of staccato interchange is noticeable in the English poet's use of dubitatio. He prefers, whenever possible, to rely upon simple exclamatio.

The psychological subtlety of the French poem is considerably greater than that of the English work, but the English poet, partly by the adaptation of his original, is not unsuccessful at the presentation of emotion and motivation. He lacks, however, the stylistic grace of his predecessor, and his predilection for direct speech sometimes robs him of a powerful weapon in characterisation; the tension between narrative exposition and direct illustration. Also, while Hue elaborates his love casuistry by the use of sententiae to fortify or enliven his argument, the Englishman's use of gnomic utterance is more usually to stifle all discussion. A sententia upon the nature of women will replace a whole passage of the psychology of love and its discussion.

It has been illustrated in the course of this study how the French author touches upon certain themes. At first it appears that the Englishman is going to reproduce that concerning the power of beauty in love. However, the theme is never developed and it becomes clear that the poet's apparent interest in the theme in its early stages is merely the coincidental result of following the characterisation of the Anglo-Norman original. The references to vauntise in the French work are denied to the English poet because it requires a courtly and aristocratic outlook. His only reference renders vauntise quite baldly as lyes. The concept of Amur in combat against Sens is

is lost, for again it rests on courtly ideals. Its omission is facilitated by the English poet's dislike of the rapid contradictory exchanges of dubitatio. With it, disappears the outward symptom of the struggle and of the love malady, with its series of physical indications. Lastly, the rather vaguely formulated concept of leaute as a kind of sens within the power of Amur vanishes too.

The only important theme which the English poet preserves is the fundamental one of the discrepancy between appearance and reality. This is of importance in the very fibre of the story and also in a series of situations contrived by Hue. In his poem these act as stimulants to the emotions of the characters, or simply as piquant reversals of the plot. It is in the latter function that they appeal to the English poet. He reproduces them all.

The most consistent theme of Hue's poem, which is ignored by the English poet, demands a deep interest in the courtly code of behaviour and in the pastimes of a courtly society. In the three characters adopted by Ipomedon Hue examines the essential requirements for the onset of love. He decides that, although curteisie and pruesce are each capable of stirring the interest of a lady, neither alone are sufficient to arouse unruly passion. This power is possessed alone by beauty, which is capable of producing the wildest passion in the most unpromising circumstances. This discovery by Hue is not entirely unexpected when we recall the eroticism and sensuality of his descriptions of La Fiere and Ismeine.

Although steeped in the attitudes and idealism of courtly conventions; for he usually prefers and gives pride of place to a love moderated by its attachment to curteisie and pruesce; he can, when he so wishes, step aside with agility and mock courtly love pretensions with his bawdry. At the end of the poem he treats courtly ladies as sardonically as, at the beginning, he treats literary scholars. It need not be a surprise, then, that while Hue presents a story of the most courtly and idealistic kind, behind this facade lurks a consciousness that recognises in physical beauty the true spring of desire, and a cynicism that reveals this sensuous desire behind the posturings of courtly affections.

It should now be clear that the structure of Hue's poem is not so haphazard and feckless as Miss Legge would have us believe. Nor is 'parody' a word which can fairly be applied to Ipomedon. For the most part Hue uses the courtly conventions without any intention of undermining them. When he does question the very kernel of courtly beliefs it is by a more subtle means than by conscious parody. The sensuous vision which lurks behind his poem, and the overt bawdiness which occasionally surfaces in it are an integral part of Hue's character which, through its very vigour, occasionally bursts through the stylised construction of the poem to address the reader directly, and periodically to deflate the courtly assumptions of convention. A cynic, and even a hedonist, Hue may be; a parodist, he is not.

In a word, then, Ipomedon is the creation of a powerfully individual personality, working in a courtly and aristocratic circle with the tools of a literary education. The English poet works with more rustic tools, only partially refined from those of oral composition. Although overshadowed by the very vigour of his Anglo-Norman antecedent, he nevertheless succeeds in shaping a distinct work. He condenses scenes and bases some of his repetitive situations on his own previous work rather than on the French (stanza 580 based on 568). He transposes some stanzas (211 and 212; 247 and 248), and he gives Ipomadon's farewell to Fere after the tournament a distinctively elegaic tone (4996ff). The same tone is present in the Fere's farewell to Candres (8180ff). The imaginative power of his language replaces the courtly expression of Hue, and his dialogue tends more to realism. Yet, with all this simplification and the desertion of literary and courtly values, Ipomadon does not degenerate into a wandering narrative. The English poet retains the simple theme of appearance and reality, clarifies it, and gives it moral strength.

The Englishman adapts Ipomedon for a new audience; one which does not belong to the aristocratic and courtly classes, yet has an interest in their behaviour, together with a regard for a sound moral. Ipomedon is not debased by its Anglicisation, it is recreated and subtly changed. Hue de Rotelande's Ipomedon is too considerable a work to dwindle into insignificance, and the English poet is too accomplished an artist to allow this to happen.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

An attempt to generalise critical remarks on any group of creative works is fraught with dangers, and the orderly picture which one would wish to present is always likely to be marred by inconvenient exceptions to the rule. It is therefore prudent to disclaim at once any intention of extending the conclusions of this study beyond those poems with which it immediately deals, and to admit that, while maintaining that critical conclusions made about these poems are substantially true, there may be occasional exceptions to the general statement.

In endeavouring a characterisation of the English romances, a first reference might be to their linear plots. Although frequently repetitive in situation - and this repetition may be confined to the English version - artificial plot forms are rarely used.

Digressio and the artificial debut are not features of the earlier English romances. In addition, Havelok, King Horn and Floris and Blancheflour illustrate a tendency to a symmetry of structure which is not found in their French versions. The simple, easily memorised sequence of actions which forms the structure of the plot is introduced by an induction in which the narrator directly addresses his audience, begs for silence and reveals something of the events of the poem or the nature of its heroes. The romance may also end in a similar way, the narrator giving some account of the heroes' subsequent life and begging for the indulgence of heaven for himself and his audience. Such a commencement and ending are clearly the

trappings of poetry composed to be performed aloud, and probably to an audience from whom the reciter counted on recouping some financial benefit for his efforts.

In keeping with what has been observed of oral poetry in our own day,¹ the diction of the English poems is largely conventional and sometimes formulaic. The formulaic expressions occasionally extend to three lines in length.

ll.904-6 "Sir Amis sorwed niȝt & day,
 Al his ioie was went oway,
 & comen was al his care,"

Frequently they are much shorter; pairs of opposites in order to give the impression of completeness, pairs of almost synonymous adjectives intended as emphatic assertions, or short, sometimes ancient, alliterative phrases, such as 'briȝt in bure'. Epithets, which are often redoubled and have a vaguely courtly application, are applied indiscriminately to characters and form an important basis of characterisation on the broadest terms.²

The characters presented are essentially stock ones. Heroes are: 'faire', 'wyse', 'hende', 'strong', and 'gentill'; heroines are: 'faire', 'wyse', 'yinge' and 'briȝt'. Beyond this point, they are developed only by the assumptions made by the critic from the actions in which they are involved. However, scenes are quite common in which their emotions are exhibited most forcibly by means

1. C.M.Bowra, op. cit. Pp.216ff.

2. Particularly in the tail-rhyme romances.

of dramatic and vigorous dialogue. There is no warrant for interpreting these scenes as illustrations of the different facets of a single, unified character, and any attempt to do so, especially in the earlier romances, reveals astonishing inconsistencies. These scenes are simply the exploitation of the immediate situation in order to present dramatically the emotional interaction of two characters, and the poets do not often trouble to establish any consistency with other revelations of a particular character in other scenes. This is true both of basic traits of character and of motivation, and particularly of the latter. If inconsistency is such that it does not threaten the enjoyment of hearing the story recited, then the earlier English romance writers do not trouble to expunge it.

In addition to this, traces are to be found in the English romances of a symbolic style of characterisation by which the characters speak the thoughts appropriate to their character or situation in a manner which is quite undramatic, for it totally ignores the effect of what they say on those around them. This is particularly noticeable in the speeches of the villains, for the English poems are usually devoid of the long self-explanatory and analytical monologues of the French heroes and heroines when oppressed by love.¹ Even in the soliloquies of Godrich, however, the convention of the villain speaking out his mischief is muted

1. Ipomadon is the exception. This later romance closely follows its Anglo-Norman original, though lacks its subtlety.

by an effective dramatisation which adds verisimilitude to his expression in the situation in which he finds himself.

The tendency of the English poets to use direct speech and to dramatise their characters, is well illustrated in the way in which the narrator's part is dramatised to form a link between a poet's audience and his characters. He persistently maintains the audience's interest by assertions of truth, prayers to God, curses on the villains and praise for the hero. The whole romance is told in language that is, as well as conventional, often direct, idiomatic and imaginative. English expressions referring to death are particularly vivid and concrete, often deriving their directness from being descriptive of a specific, sometimes violent, action. The phrase 'Hem pou stikest under þe ribbe' replaces the French address to death, 'tu li tols soudement;'. Burial, too, is graphically visualised in the description of the action: 'Þe erthe was leide hur aboue'¹ beside which we may place the grammatically synthetic French reference to a similar occasion: 'fud li reis enterred'.²

In the earlier and less ambitious English romances, little time is spent on the erection of set descriptions. Only Ipomadon has descriptiones in any way resembling the French tradition, and even these are curtailed, except in the case of the description of grotesque persons, which may be in the debt of the ill-represented

1. Floris and Blancheflour 1.296 and 1.243.

2. Gaimar, 1.80.

English fabliau tradition.

Little useful distinction can be drawn between the two groups of romances in the domain of rhetorical usage. Nor surprisingly, the English poets make little use of exempla which, in those French poems which use it, is a device of literary, historical and biblical allusion, and therefore requires an author of some erudition for its use, and, equally, an audience of some literary cultivation for its appreciation. Explicit moralising, by the use of sententiae, is also strictly limited in the English poems, except in the rather individual Havelok and the translations in the later Ipomadon. Exclamatio is frequently used in all the poems as a device to increase the dramatic interest; both by the characters themselves and also by the narrator in relation to the characters. Simile is widely used but is exceedingly conventional, even formulaic. Metaphor is hardly used except in its special ironic guise.

The background and values of the poems perhaps reflect something of the worldly station of their authors and their audience. Both Havelok and Amis and Amiloun give realistic pictures of ordinary life in hard times. The understanding of courtly life in all the poems save Ipomadon, is minimal, and courtly attitudes are often rendered imperfectly. Burgesses are presented at length and depicted as irreproachably courtly in Floris and Blancheflour and Ipomadon.

Conventional themes of the French courtly romance are also mishandled. The employment of largesse and franchise to corrupt Herland in the Romance of Horn and the gate-keeper in Floire etc.

Blancheflor is entirely misunderstood. The treatment of the beginnings of love-interest by means of a description of the hero's service in the hall and a descriptio of the man himself, followed by the lady noticing him or hearing of his worth, is drastically curtailed in comparison with the French versions of King Horn, Ipomadon and Amis and Amiloun. The exotic otherworld garden of Floire et Blancheflor shrinks to a commonplace Celtic paradise.

The representation of battle, too, is on a humble level. There is a clear reminiscence of heroic values in King Horn, of epic treatment in Havelok, and possibly in the final single combat of Ipomadon, but heroic echoes are usually the typical devices of epic treatment from which the spirit is lacking. The ideals of efficiency of a military aristocracy are all but vanished. In their place, the English romances have developed a battle convention of their own, based on heroic treatment but lacking in the admiration of chivalric skill or appreciation of the well-directed sword stroke. The blows are mighty, but the weapons are sometimes grotesque.¹ Details of the blows are lacking and wounds are undignified and brutal, the result, simply, of exceptional strength. Cracked crowns and severed neck-bones litter the field and the blood runs down like rain when the English hero goes to war.

Beside this brawling violence may be placed the gentle view of children apparent in Havelok, Floris and Blancheflour and Amis and

1. The French epic also illustrates popularisation of this kind in the person of Rainouart.

Amiloun. Only in the latter does sentimentality, aimed at producing a piteous scene, seem to swamp a natural feeling of tenderness towards young children.

Although the English poems have actions which take place ostensibly against a broad backcloth ranging from the muddy by-ways and market places to the king's court, there is little true variation in the background. Details are sparse, and those which occur as adjuncts to the action suggest always a minor manorial court rather than the curia regis. Everything in the English romances points to a genre composed for oral delivery before an audience of a social level considerably beneath that of the most important courts, and of a literary experience which must have been narrowly limited. Yet, by the time Ipomadon was composed, this audience had discovered sufficient self-esteem to be interested in a romance which is a close adaptation of an Anglo-Norman original, and so, to be interested in the conduct of feudal courts and the behaviour of courtly characters.

The French poems, except the Romance of Horn and the Gaimar episode, have some form of explicitly didactic introduction. Instead of the attempt to whip up the interest of a potential audience, the poets, in a relaxed, critical tone, inform their readers of the didactic value of their work and, instead of hinting at the events of the narrative, they stress its exemplary nature or reveal something of the theme to be treated. Co-incident with this introduction is the use of the artificial debut, which is particularly

sophisticated in Floire et Blancheflor, where the poet begins by reciting the circumstances in which he learned the story.

In the body of the poem the devices of rhetoric may be employed with more conscious grace than in the English works, and exempla are freely used. Allusions are made outside the period of the poem in Ipomedon, Floire et Blancheflor, The Romance of Horn and Amis et Amiles. The more extensive romances also make use of dubitatio. It occurs in the French poems in two guises; firstly as a rapid and staccato opposition of views in the dialogue of two characters, and secondly, in the opposition of views in the soliloquy of a single character. Here it frequently serves to represent the conflict aroused in the mind of a character by the onslaught of love. This technique is scarcely dramatic, and really serves as a moral or philosophical debate on a given situation frozen into, and on many occasions exterior to, the surrounding narrative. The device is attempted only by Ipomadon among the English poems, and even here the essential view of the situation as the conflict between amor and temperentia hardly emerges. Mental conflict, represented by dubitatio, is an intrinsic part of the French Ipomedon, The Romance of Horn and Floire et Blancheflor. In the last, the debate resolves itself into psychological allegory.

In contrast to the highly conventionalised and very subtle presentations of the working of the mind, the French poems often reveal momentarily a remarkable shrewdness in motivating or

assessing human behaviour on the natural level. The Romance of Horn pictures the subtle mixture of confidence and flurried self-doubt as a lady prepares herself before her mirror before meeting her lover. The author of the Anglo-Norman Amis e Amilun reveals his understanding of how, in certain situations, unrestrained conversation can overcome initial reservations. Gaimar draws a brilliantly realistic sketch of the fear and bewilderment of a young girl who has just suffered a terrifying nightmare. Although the characters may not be entirely consistent, there are rarely glaring inconsistencies. Motivation is usually sound and explicit, in keeping with the rationalistic and analytic trait which is detectable in many of the poems.

The impression that the French poets brought some critical faculties to their work argues their literary experience. Such an argument is also supported by their use of descriptions both in the presentation of persons and of objects. The literary background of the French poems, then, differs considerably from that of the English, and the social background is no less discrete. In particular, the Anglo-Norman poems are secular in interest¹ and their setting never strays far from the court. The continental French Floire et Blancheflor and Amis et Amiles are alone in their references to the existence of a true bourgeois class.²

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1. With the possible exception of The Romance of Horn's insistence on divine predestination.
 2. The merchants (Haveloc's foster sister and her husband) of Gaimar and the Lai are quite aristocratic in their values. The single bourgeois in Ipomedon (6600ff), although we are repeatedly assured of his courtliness, is little more than a device of narrative. He serves to deliver Ipomedon's gifts and to illustrate facets of his character.

Courtly themes are developed at length, as are the literary topoi of the locus amoenus, the 'raverdie' and love's malady. The epic machinery for the description of battle is still pervaded by some of its original aristocratic spirit, especially in The Romance of Horn, and Amis e Amilun. The skill of a well-directed blow is still appreciated. Amis et Amiles preserves the entire epic background, quoting extensively from the Chanson de Roland and revealing the customary epic brutality to women.

In the French poems, the importance of women is noteworthy. It varies from the mocking anti-feminism interspersed in Ipomedon and the distrust of female irresponsibility in The Romance of Horn to the adoration of beauty and courtliness to be found in all the poems.

The French poems are the product of a literary tradition whose interests are in a particular society. They have their conventions of expression almost to the same extent as the English poems, yet the individuality of their authors seems often to be much less submerged in the similarities between the representatives of a shared tradition. The individuality of the poems is enhanced by their regard for the exemplary or moral theme. None of the English poems contain any overall theme of this kind. Moral attitudes may be implicit in situations, and religious or simple ethical notions underlie much of the narrative, but they never become the raison d'etre of the poem. The English poet's chief concern is his narrative, and in order to enliven this he avoids much of the elaboration of the French work. He casts himself in the dramatised

role of narrator and maintains an active part in the relationship between his characters and the audience. The French poet is often more aloof from his work. He soberly narrates events and explains them. He will quietly address his audience in a manner quite unlike the emotionalism of the English poet, and he will reasonably elucidate the most complex psychological states or motives. Sometimes he uses direct speech almost as a quotation in his narrative, making it the answer to an indirect question. The result is a sense of restraint and control over the matter. The French poet, true to his initial promise of a subject of didactic value, is not concerned with fomenting excitement and the unthinking participation of his audience; instead, he elaborates his theme, clarifies the motives of his characters, argues ethical points and, by his own restraint, encourages his audience to examine the tenor of his work as well as be entertained. In this way its value will be realised.

It is clear from this comparative study that two distinct traditions of romance existed in England, and that one bore all the marks of continental French literature, with perhaps an even more exclusively courtly bias, whilst the other represented the popular entertainment of the indigenous peoples. The latter tradition, although it draws on the former for many of its ideas and much of its subject matter, is distinguished by a dramatic ability, a lack of introspection, a resultant vitality and certain vestigial heroic traces which are peculiar to it alone.

The oral tradition of Middle English romance, which for us is represented by manuscripts dating from the mid-thirteenth to the end of the fifteenth centuries, had been in development for perhaps a hundred years before its appearance in manuscript. Inevitably its early history as a purely oral form is lost, so that its origins are obscure. It is reasonable to suppose that it was not autochthonous, springing from the hearts of a subdued people at the touch of French culture. Indeed the debased heroic treatment and the subject matter of some of the romances of the 'Matter of England' suggest an English popular tradition which fertilised both Anglo-Norman literature and its Middle English successors.

The survival of Old English and Scandinavian heroic legend is attested in Middle English by numerous references to *Wade*, a hero mentioned in *Widsith*. *Offa*, *Weland* and his masterpiece, *Mimming*, and *Sceaf* all receive mention in literature after the Conquest.¹ A study of Middle English personal names reveals that children were still being called *Grettir*, *Swanhild* and *Hengest* until the late twelfth century.² This testimony of the survival of Germanic heroic legend among the ordinary people is irrefutable. It is at least probable that it was at first accompanied by an oral tradition of popular poetry. The existence of such a tradition would do much to explain the vigour and independence of the best English adaptations of French material.

1. R.M.Wilson, *The Lost Literature of Mediaeval England* (London 1952) Pp.16ff.

2. D.M.Stenton, *op.cit.* p.159.

The discrepancy in tone between the English poems and their French originals is due in part to the oral nature of the tradition, but it is also due to another facet of the same tradition; its popular orientation. Old English epic poetry bears many of the traits of oral composition, but was essentially under the patronage of the aristocratic classes. The reason for the fall in the social prestige of English poetry is readily found in the history of the period. Although English prose continued beside Latin until the late twelfth century¹ in uses which had been hallowed by custom, English verse went into eclipse at the Conquest.

Shortly after the Conquest, thousands of small English estates, each of which might have supported a scop, were compressed into little more than two hundred large fiefs. Within twenty years of the Conquest only two Englishmen held estates of any importance directly from the king.² Except in the sphere of government, the self-defensive military organisation of the invaders at first resisted any penetration by English institutions and customs, but during the reign of William II English fashions made considerable advances in the court of the king.³ But the traditional heroic literature of

1. The last annal of the Peterborough Chronicle is that for 1155. English was used as a legal language continuously until 1174. Poole, op. cit. p. 252.

2. F.M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England 2nd ed. (Oxford 1947) p. 618. Less than 6% of the gross value of the land was in English hands in 1086. Poole op. cit. p. 1.

3. Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury lament the moral degeneracy of William's court, one of whose manifestations is the wearing of hair long in the Anglo-Saxon fashion. Bezzola, op. cit. Vol. II. Pt. 2 Pp. 461ff.

England, intoned in the hall, was less adaptable than other English fashions. It depended, not only upon a good knowledge of the language, but also upon a special poetic vocabulary and long familiarity with the heroes of Germanic legend. Although the invaders were, themselves, Germanic in origin, by 1066 they had developed their own version of the French culture around them and equipped themselves with a heroic literature in that language. Taillefer was reputed to have chanted a cantilena of Roland before the Battle of Hastings.

However well the new lords understood English¹ there was little stimulus for them to preserve the heroic literature of the beaten aristocracy, consequently the old aristocratic poetry was faced by the choice between popularisation and extinction. It passed from the halls to the roads and market-places, where it was probably swiftly absorbed by contemporary popular poetry.² Perhaps it was this re-invigorated tradition of popular oral poetry which, inspired by the ideas and provided with new topics and subjects of French romance, gave the dramatic and narrative vigour to the Middle English popular romances.

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1. There is evidence that English was familiarly spoken in some lesser baronial courts in the early twelfth century. It was extensively used for preaching by Norman clerics at the end of the century. Poole, op. cit. p.252.
 2. The existence of Old English popular poetry is unproven, but see J.S.P. Tatlock, 'Epic formulas - especially in La3amon.' P.M.L.A. 38 (1923) Pp.494ff.

At first the oral romance genre must have been of a purely local nature, and French influence was perhaps limited to stories and the broadest general ideas; but, as time passed, familiarity with French ideas and the elevation in society of those whose mother tongue was English, even if they had become bi-lingual, lead the way to even greater French influence. By the year 1300, personal names of English and Scandinavian derivation were distinctly uncommon and had been replaced, even in the villages, by French names. With the widening of French influence, people began to think of themselves as one nation. Deserting the practice of the twelfth century, the Magna Carta is addressed to a single people, the English alone.

The rise of a bourgeois and rich villein class, and particularly the merchant prosperity of the East Midlands, must have increased the demand for English poetry. Works were copied from one dialect to another and translations from the French became more numerous and more immediate. The sophistication of the English audience grew with the number of works available in English, and with their aspirations. Their growing concern for the courtly behaviour of the aristocracy lent more and more of the devices and values of French romance to the native product. By the time that the romance of Ipomadon was written, probably for a prosperous East Midland audience, the English tradition had almost drawn level in its pretensions with the Anglo-Norman taste of over a hundred and fifty years before. The final grace and subtlety evade it, however, and must await the end of the fourteenth century and the final

rehabilitation of English as a language suitable for verse composition by important poets.

Thus, the comparison of English and French romance discloses not merely the existence of two nations, two social classes and two traditions of composition, but also a process of coalition between these two. The fusion is not complete in any of the romances studied, and indeed is rare in metrical romance. Yet, the very existence of this hesitant and irregular process of fusion is sufficient to place the study of the romances firmly in the context of contemporary history. From the point of view of literary style and ideas, they represent a coalescence which is more often illustrated by the history of government, of the judicial system, or of the language.

Appendix I

Before drawing a parallel between The Romance of Horn and Beowulf, the ground must be prepared by an even more unlikely comparison. In the Odyssey Telemachus arrives by sea in Book III to consult Nestor. Athene conducts him to Nestor and tells him to approach the old king. Telemachus is cautious and asks for advice:¹

"'Mentor,' he asked, 'how am I to go up to the great man? How shall I greet him? Remember that I have had no practice in making speeches; and a young man may well hesitate to cross-examine one so much his senior.'

'Telemachus,' replied Athene, 'where your native wit fails, heaven will inspire you. It is not for nothing that the gods have watched your progress ever since your birth.'

Nestor is approached and, after feeding his guests, he says:²

"'Now that our visitors have regaled themselves, it will be no breach of manners to put some questions to them and enquire who they may be.' ... 'Who are you, sirs? From what port have you sailed over the highways of the sea? Is yours a trading venture; or are you cruising the main on chance, like roving pirates, who risk their lives to ruin other people?'"

Telemachus admits his errand and his lineage. Nestor says he can hear his father in his speech.

In the next book, Telemachus goes to visit Menelaus. He is met by the equerry who informs his master that outside are two men who, judging by their looks, are of royal blood. They are admitted, bathed and feasted. Menelaus remarks on their good looks and says that later he will want to know their lineage.³

1. E.V.Rieu's trans. Penguin Books (Harmondsworth 1961) Pp.50-51.

2. Ibid. p.52.

3. Ibid. p.65.

"Your pedigree has left a stamp on your looks that makes me take you for the sons of kings,... for no mean folk could breed such men as you are."

Later Helen perceives Telemachus' identity by his likeness to his father.

From these two examples of the arrival of a noble hero in anonymity by land or sea at the palace of a great king, it is obvious that in Greek poetry, and perhaps also in fact, there was a particular form of manners to be observed on such occasions. Beowulf testifies to the existence of a special ritual in northern Europe, too. In some ways the essentials of this form follow the Greek, but what is most striking is the close correspondence between these early works and the situation in The Romance of Horn. A comparison between the two Horn poems and Beowulf will reveal how close the resemblance is. It may be as well to note first that Beowulf introduces himself after 260 of the 3082 lines of the poem; (K.H. 176/1530; H.R. 244/5240). A table will best illustrate the similarities.

<u>Beowulf</u>	<u>Romance of Horn</u>	<u>King Horn</u>
1. Scylding coast guard sees arrival of B. from cliff-top. Goes to address him.	Herland, indulging in courtly pastime of hawking with group of knights, finds ship-wrecked comrades.	Group set off inland and meet King Aylmer.
2. He asks identity origin and lineage. Dwells in <u>exclamatio</u> on obvious nobility of leader and fine troop.	Herland's approach uses obliqueness of <u>exclamatio</u> as he talks to his men, admiring the comrades, Interview between leaders in indirect speech.	

Beowulf

247-50.

"...Nāfre ic mārān
 geseah
 eorla ofer eorþan,
 ðonne is ƿower sum
 secg on searwum;
 nis þæt seldguma,
 wæpnum geweorðad,
 nāfne him his wlite
 læoge..."

Romance of Horn

146-52.

K.H.

"...ki sunt cil
 valletun?
 Unc ne vi gencesors/¹
 par ma salvatūm.
 Joe savrai ki il sunt,
 de quel avoeisun.
 Bien semble k'(e)il seient/
 fiz de gentil baron...
 Unkes mais ne li vint/
 (Ne) si gent ne si bun."

It is notable how both these poems use exclamatio, as does King Horn later in the story when the companions meet King Aylmer. The device is obviously a literary commonplace in the situation, to emphasise the striking effect of the obvious worth of the hero and his band on all onlookers. In the two aristocratic epics, as in the Odyssey, fine looks are taken to indicate nobility. In the Romance of Horn, nobility is a quality which shines through misfortune, and in Beowulf, it transcends and exists apart from gorgeous trappings and can be perceived in a man's face. In King Horn, by contrast, though they are hailed as bold and fine-looking, there is no definite equation of this with nobility.

1. The symbol / represents the caesura in Thomas' verse.

Beowulf

3. Hero's band conducted to the king.
4. Wulfgar, king's equerry, reports their arrival to the king. He repeats remarks about nobility and valour of the leader.

368-70

"Hy on wíggeta^{um}
 wyrðe pinceað
 eorla geehtlan;
 hūru se aldor deah,
 se þæm heaðorincum
 hider wísade."

Romance of Horn

- Hero's band conducted to the king.
- Herland, the senschal, reports to the king.

227-32

"Li plus jofnes de tuz/
 en est li plus senez:
 ...El país, dunt il sunt,
 ert il lor avuez,
 Pur taunt est, çoe m'est vis,
 tut li meuz enparlez
 E si est li plus genz/
 e li meuz figurez.
 Par le mien esciënt/
 de franc(s) home(s) sunt nez,"

The situation of these reports is of course rather different. Beowulf, says Wulfgar, comes in pride and not as an exile, hence the war-like valour of the Geats is emphasised. Horn and his band come as suppliants and their only possible assets are their fine looks, their nobility and good behaviour.

5. King tells Wulfgar that he knew Beowulf when he was a youth.

Hroþgar knows Beowulf's genealogy and recites it instead of asking him again.

H roþgar tells Wulfgar that he will reward Beowulf for his bravery.

Later in the poem (2362ff) King Godreche says he knew Horn and his father many years ago.

Hunlaf, on meeting Horn asks: (240-42)
 "Di va! cum as (tu) nun?/
 ki furent ti parent?
 Di mei la verité,
 ne t'esmaier neñt.
 Tu avras mes en mei/
 mult bon apuiement."

Later Hunlaf,
 like Hroþgar, remembers the deeds of Horn's father.

King Horn

In King Horn the figures of the coast-guard and the king coincide.

The companions meet King Aylmer as they go inland. He asks them the

usual questions and makes the same exclamatio.

11.161-69 "'Whannes beo 3e, faire gumes,
 Pat her to londe beop icume,
 Alle prottene
 Of bodie swiþe kene?
 Bigod þat me makede,
 A swihc fair verade
 Ne sau3 ihc in none stunde
 Bi westene londe:
 Seie me wat 3e seche.'"

Later, he, too, promises support (197-98).

"'Seie me, child, what is þi name,
 Ne schaltu haue bute game.'"

The parallelism of events is very clear, and there is also a parallelism of literary style. In these three examples the reader travels with the hero from the sea's edge to the court. He listens to the exchange between the hero and the coast-guard/seneschal. The same technique of exclamatio is used in all three to heighten the magnificence of the appearance of the hero's band. The situation of the arrival of Beowulf is different and as a result the procedure differs in places; different values are extolled, but the outline and the overall treatment is much the same. In King Horn the principles are not understood and the situation is much simplified. King Aylmer acts as his own equerry and asks all the questions himself. He says, however, ~~much~~ the same things, though in a less formal way than the other two rulers.

A further example, from a different form of writing and

consequently differently handled, will serve to establish the formal resemblances in the literary treatment of heroic protocol. Laȝamon's Brut describes the arrival of Hengest and Horsa from the point of view of Vortigern; the king who receives a visit from the hero.¹ The technique is an undramatic, stationary one; the reader is localised at Vortigern's court. The king hears of the arrival of three ships in the Thames; two men wait outside.

1.6885 "Pis weoren þa færeste men ✓ þat euere comen."

A messenger is sent to enquire their business and, when they say that they seek the king's patronage, they are brought in. Laȝamon places the conventional exclamatio in the mouth of Vortigern.

11.6900-6901 "An alle mine ilue ✓ þe ich iluued habbe.
bi dæie no bi nihtes ✓ ne sæh ich nauere ær
swulche cnihtes."

He wants to know their station and where they are from:

1.6904-6a "Ah of eou ich wulle iwiten ✓ þurh soðen eower
wurð-scipen
wheet cnihten ȝe seon ✓ & whænnenen ȝe icumen
& whar ȝe wullen beon treowe..." beon

Once it is accepted that in all these examples we have basically the same situation and that the reactions to it by the people involved are extremely similar, the question must be asked, 'what does this fact indicate?' Three possible explanations of the similarity of these visits to a friendly king exist; firstly, it may be a common inheritance from the Indo-European past, preserved,

1. Laȝamon's Brut, ed. Brook and Leslie, E.E.T.S. no.250 (1963) Pp.356-60.

perhaps, in folk-tale; secondly, similar customs and usages may have grown up among separate aristocratic, coastal societies; thirdly, the transmission of these ideas may be by literary means. The questions that the recipient of the visit asks are those that one might reasonably expect to be asked of strangers in an unsettled world where the motives of men are suspect and the only guarantee of good faith was the reputation of their lord or their lineage. We have already noted the general distrust of the lordless man, so it is natural that strangers should be asked 'de quel avoeisun' they are come. This question is universal and it is clear how its ubiquity can be born from similar social conditions.¹

The bare outlines of the episode where heroes visit a friendly king and are conducted to him by an attendant, may be based on the actual behaviour of the remote past. Yet, in these examples, verbal echoes, details of behaviour, sometimes the narrative technique, and the use of a particular rhetorical device (exclamatio) in a particular way, point to a closeness of relationship which can not be satisfactorily explained by ancient heritage; nor can it be dependent upon the coincidence of similar social customs. We are left with the third option, literary influence.

Literary influence is easier to assume than to demonstrate. The correspondence between *Iazamon* and Thomas is easy to accept, for they are similar in date. When we examine the *Brut of Wace*,² which was

1. Cf. H.M.Chadwick, The Heroic Age, (Cambridge 1912)Pp.75ff.

2. Le Roman de Brut de Wace, ed. I. Arnold, S.A.T.F. 1938.

the main source for Laȝamon, we find even closer resemblances to The Romance of Horn, for although Laȝamon seems to have added some ideas from his own knowledge, he abridged this episode as well as translated it. This is especially so in the case of the praise of the beauty of Hengest and Horsa.

In The Romance of Horn, Horn is said to outshine his comrades as the sun does the stars, so that he appears as their lord. Horn "...ki parla pur tuz ad le visage cler" (179) and so appears to be the son of a king. Wace describes Hengest and Horsa.

ll.6724-30 "As cors bien faiz, as faces cleres,
 Ki plus grant erent e plus bel
 Que tuit li altre juvencel.
 'De quel terre, dist il, venez?
 U fustes nez, e que querez?'
 Hengist, ki maire e ainz ne fu
 Pur tuz ensemble ad respundu:"

In a similar way, Vortigern reassures his visitors and adjures them to tell the whole story. (Cf. Horn 240-42 above in (5) of the table).

ll.6737-38 "'Di, dist li reis, ta raisun tute,
 Ja mar de nus i auras dute."

The exact words are not the same as in Horn, but the language is similar and the feeling the same. Wace's narrative technique is different; he abjures the use of exclamatio and relies on simple description. Laȝamon and Thomas must have derived their use of exclamatio from other sources. When we look to Wace's chief source, Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia, only the bare skeleton of the

episode is to be found. Again there are verbal similarities with Wace, but the narrative technique is plainer still. The events are simply related in the order in which we recognise them as belonging to the same situation. The nobility and grace of the leaders is remarked upon and Vortigern is made to ask them in indirect speech what country they are from and why they are there. Hengest, as the oldest, answers in direct speech, using words similar to those lent by Wace to his hero. Here, however, in the older work, the dramatic element is almost entirely missing. Dramatic dialogue becomes sparser and sparser as the scene is pursued to its earliest occurrence. The origins of Geoffrey's Historia are generally regarded as Bede, Gildas and Nennius, with possible borrowings from Welsh chronicles.¹ The Welsh chronicle printed by Griscom does not mention the incident at all, and the three other authorities pass over it in a few narrative sentences.

The subjective historical writing of the earliest accounts of the incident are antipathetic to a dramatised treatment. Only the barest indications of a heroic situation are present in them. Geoffrey is the first to expand the account of his sources a little and introduce two of the commonplaces of the situation - the beauty of the leaders, and the eldest and wisest as spokesman - apparently from his own literary information. Wace's contribution is to enlarge slightly on the incident and to turn it into the correct courtly terms of the vernacular; but his narrative technique is

1. The possibility of the existence and validity of Welsh sources is argued by A. Griscom, The Regum Historia Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth (New York 1929)

little advance on that of Geoffrey of Monmouth. The technique does not unfold the dramatic power of exclamatio and proper dialogue until Laȝamon's treatment, where the distinctly heroic flavour invites comparison with Beowulf.

"Heroic poetry," says Bowra, "is impersonal, objective and dramatic."¹ With Laȝamon's handling of the incident, it is transformed from the subjective historical treatment to an epic treatment complete enough to invite comparison with Beowulf or the Odyssey. The first hint is given by Geoffrey of Monmouth and it is steadily enlarged by poets who must have had access to similar incidents in a literary tradition. That tradition is a heroic tradition. Clearly this tradition had a separate existence from the particular incident in which it appears in Laȝamon, for the earlier the account of the landing of Hengest and Horsa, the less fully developed is the scene. The provenance of this epic knowledge is impossible to discover. The sources of epic material known to have been available to twelfth century poets of moderate erudition are the Latin epics of Virgil and Statius, the Ilias Latina, and the French chansons de geste. In addition, many romances show traces of epic treatment, especially in the battle scenes.² These, in England, suggest the existence of some memory of a popular heroic tradition. It was this, perhaps, that Laȝamon utilised.

The wide distribution of the topoi of the welcome given to a

1. C.M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, (London 1952) p.30

2. See (above) the fight scenes in Havelok.

strange hero by a friendly lord, suggests that, though its dispersion was by literary means, it was of ancient origin and, diligently sought, it may be found in any heroic literature which post-dates the Greek epics. The flowering of the treatment of the situation in the twelfth century may be the result of the new interest in the literature of antiquity, which was growing at that time.

That Thomas was aware of the topical nature of the situation and used it with assurance, is shown by his treatment of the topic of the leader being the eldest and wisest and, therefore, the spokesman. The poet of Beowulf, Geoffrey and Wace all use the topos in its classical form, and in the Odyssey, Telemachus shows concern for the inexperience of youth before he speaks. Thomas, however, employs the topos in an inverted form which Curtius recognises as a hagiographical commonplace which first developed in the time of Pliny the Younger.¹ The ascription of wisdom to the youngest of a band, and his consequent role as spokesman, gives an air of extraordinary distinction to the hero.

1.227 "Li plus jofnes de tuz en est li plus senez:"

Thomas' mastery over the topoi of this situation of epic composition is such that he can confidently employ variations of the norm to achieve the effect he desires.

1. E.R.Curtius, (trans. W.Trask) European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages, (London 1953) Pp. 99-100.

Appendix II.

In the study of the story of the Amis and Amiloun poems, the moral interest of the French and Anglo-Norman poets has been mentioned with regard to their concern with Christian values and with leaute. Nothing has been said about the central moral question of the story. Is the leprosy a punishment? if so, for what crime, and what are the differing attitudes of the poets to the possibility of guilt in their heroes?

The poet of the Chanson answers these questions quite fully. He spends considerable effort in establishing the malice of Hardre, and clearly shows the trial-by-combat to be a suitable vengeance on him. From the first he is forsworn, as a result of the substitution, but he does not suffer death until he has renounced God and exhorted his god-child to equal his villainy. In the final encounter, Amis is a Miles Christi, destroying the apostate. In such circumstances no guilt can attach to the impersonation in the trial-by-combat. However, his victory places him in the position of having to accept Belissans as his wife, if the impersonation is to be maintained. He is required to swear upon holy relics to marry her and his attempts to avoid this are defeated. Charlemagne is even unsatisfied with the vague promise that:

11.1795-6 'D'ui en un mois, se dex me donne vie,
 A son conmant iert espousee et prinse."

He demands that Amis explicitly promise to marry her himself. Amis has no option. After he has sworn this oath an angel descends and warns him that, for this transgression, he will become a leper, for

he is already married. Bigamy is never mentioned explicitly and it seems that Amis' leprosy is the result of a false oath of betrothal.

The poet remarks:

11.1803-5 "Savez, seignor, quex chose est de couvent?
 Des que li hom prent fame loiaument,
 Moult fait que fox, se il sa foi li ment."

Lubias' later suggestions that the leprosy may be the result of some irregularity in the trial-by-combat are inspired simply by her malice. She claims that Hardre was slain by a crossbow-man and Amis merely cut off his head. Later still in the poem a council of archbishops gives its opinion that the illness has been sent merely to chasten Amis, for God loves him.

Clearly the French poet attempts to shield his hero from the accusation of serious transgression. His sin is related to bigamy and to a broken oath, but he is never guilty of bigamy in the modern sense, for he never actually marries Belissans. Throughout he is pictured as desperately trying to avoid even this transgression.

The Anglo-Norman poet follows the French in his treatment of the trial-by-combat. Again the seneschal is recognised as a subtle and malicious enemy. Amiloun sets out to save his friend from danger (493). When he arrives he saves the ladies from the implacable hatred of the seneschal and in this is supported by the count himself. His victory is greeted with unanimous delight and the poet comments on the end of the seneschal with the satisfied ironic remark that he will never accuse anyone else.¹ The narrator

1. 11.667-8 "A cel cop se fu bien vengie,
 Par li nen ert mes encuse."

here seems to join with the characters in welcoming the down-fall of the seneschal and commending the actions of Amilun in avenging the enmity shown to his companion. The question of a tricked ordeal never arises, for no details of the oath-swearing are given and at the beginning of the fight the only interest is in rescuing the ladies and 'upholding the right'.

At the church door, just before the marriage to Florie, Amilun hears a voice warning him against taking the girl, for he will be a leper. He scarcely hesitates, but carries on with the marriage for his brother's sake.¹ For the same reason, after the marriage ceremony, he maintains a respectful distance between himself and Florie (737-9) and soon admits the deception.

In the Anglo-Norman treatment the battle is seen as a just revenge, although by the use of a trick, on a malicious enemy who intended to use the justice of God to destroy Amis. Amilun does not try so desperately as his Old French counterpart to escape the marriage yet, through his loyalty to his brother, it is not consummated. His sin, therefore, is not bigamy so much as a falsification of the marriage sacrament. The Carlsruhe MS. makes this clear. There Amilun, faced by an agonising decision, calls off the marriage for a moment, prays, and finally, in answer to the archbishop's question, gives Amis' name. In the Anglo-Norman poem Amilun is clearly punished for giving a false oath before God.

1. In C. he hesitates considerably and is finally forced to give the wrong name to the archbishop as the ceremony begins.

The English poet simplifies his story at this point. Instead of the dual climax of the combat and the reluctant marriage, he concentrates exclusively on the former, and the two brothers reverse roles immediately afterwards. Before the combat Amiloun is warned that if he goes on with his plan he will become a leper. As in the other versions, Amiloun chooses to ignore the warning. In the English poem too the combat is the result of the steward's malice and there is considerable justification for playing the trick of substituting one brother for the other to escape from an untenable position. The brothers see the plan in this light.

ll.1127-8 "Pus man schal þe schrewe bigile,
 Pat wald þe forfare!"

The steward tries to destroy Amis, we are told: 'Wip tresoun & wip wrong'. At this point it seems as though Amis and Amiloun are perfectly justified in countering the threat with strategem. Later, however, moral doubts are raised. When told the story, Amiloun's wife accuses him of slaying a 'gentil kniȝt' ... 'Wip wrong and michel unriȝt' and adds 'Ywis, it was iuel ydo!'" (1492-4). When the leprosy appears she remarks that it is evident that he killed the steward 'wip wrong' (1565).

In order to understand the moral poise of the English poet on this matter, it is necessary to understand the lady's speech more clearly. The phrase which she uses to describe Amiloun's action is one of a long series of formulaic adverbial phrases, largely attached to the steward's machinations against Amis and Amiloun. The steward reports Amis' love affair as 'wip tresoun and wip wrong' (791).

The same phrase is used twice elsewhere (1484,2059). The steward also plots against the brothers 'wip tresoun & wip gile' (707, 407) and 'wip gile & wip trecherie' (1076, 210). It is clear from this that the wife's accusation must have the associations of deception and wickedness. Such an interpretation is supported by the formulaic tag 'wip-outen wrong' (919,1837) which exists alongside 'wip-outen les(ing)' (1903,2061). When the steward takes his oath before the trial-by-combat he swears that he 'seyd no wrong' (1292), when he told of the affair between Amis and Belisaunt. In this sense 'wrong' must mean 'dishonesty' or 'untruth'. Such a reading is possible in the reference of the queen to 'Pe steward pat wip wrong/ Wil stroie ous alle pre.'" (971-2). The context, however, does not admit of the interpretation 'dishonesty' and the ideas of treachery and malice must here be uppermost. The use of the word 'unriht' in the wife's accusation to Amiloun gives another pole from which the meaning can be measured. As well as meaning vaguely 'wrong', 'unriht' (O.E. unriht) can mean 'wicked' and, when applied to behaviour, 'unfitting or improper'. In fact it may well be applied to treachery shown between knights of the same household.¹

It is clear, then, that Amiloun's wife is not making a general moral denunciation. She is not simply deprecating murder, but is referring specifically to the manner in which the killing was done. She is accusing her husband of treachery unbefitting an honest knight, and she uses much the same phrases are used of the villain's

1. In Waldere 24-7 Guthere and Hagen's treacherous attack on Waldere is called 'unryhte'; and Godric's flight with his lord's goods is not 'riht' in Maldon 190.

treacherous plans. We may suspect that the motivation for this accusation is an unassimilated remnant of some version comparable to the Chanson in which Lubias unjustly accuses her husband of employing a crossbow-man; but the Englishwoman's accusation is less frivolous. An irregular trick has been played, and there is no previous reason to suspect the English wife of a bad character. She is not closely related to the steward. Consequently, her protests seem unprompted by vested interest and have the effect of moral pointers referring to the irregularity of the combat. The leprosy in the English poem, then, is a punishment for falsifying the trial-by-combat and demeaning divine authority and justice by using a judicium dei for the accomplishment of personal vengeance.

The story of Amis and Amiloun has inherent dramatic strength for in it a man has to use evil means, braving the wrath of God, to achieve a praiseworthy end. Only the English poet succeeds in exploiting this larger moral interest of the story. The French poet makes the tricked combat entirely praiseworthy by allowing his hero to fight on God's behalf against an apostate. He makes him struggle valiantly against a bigamous marriage and indeed allows him only to become betrothed to Belissans. The hero is so patently innocent in intentions that leprosy seems a harsh punishment. Finally four archbishops declare it to be simply a mark of God's special favour. The Anglo-Norman poet avoids any moral complications as to the combat. As to the loyalty test and the defence of honour, it is entirely favourable and quite secular. The marriage, too, is

a test of loyalty and any blame for it must be sought in MS. C., where Amilun gives a false name. Once he has won the battle the marriage is unavoidable and MS. C. later says clearly that Amilun did not deserve his punishment.¹

By contrast, the English poem makes the combat Amiloun's single sin. The structure of the poem is simplified to include this one loyalty test. Yet loyalty does not overshadow the crime which Amiloun is committing for his brother. The substitution is the result of a plot in which the ladies are implicated. As in the scene of child murder, the English poet does not turn away from a sense of secrecy and conspiracy. It is here that Amiloun is guilty of contempt of God's justice, just as in the final scenes Amis becomes guilty of plain murder. The leprosy which comes upon him is the retribution for his sin.

Thus, the English poet, who has no overt hagiographical interest and who has no developed theme of loyalty, is alone able to exploit fully the potential moral and dramatic effect of the simple narrative. He does not need to explain why God should perform a miracle for the two brothers or to present moral exemplars; instead he develops the narrative and derives from it drama and pathos, tension and poetry. He leaves the theme of

1. K lbing p.152 "Qe unque ne oystes de nul hom,
Qe fu plus temptessanz deserte,
Par travail, peyne ou poverte:"

loyalty and the piety of the brothers implicit, but undeveloped, in the story. His alone of the versions of the story, leaves some moral ambiguity in the main characters. Only in the English poem is there any tension between the original pagan code of friendship and the Christian ethical code. This tension keeps alive a controversy dating at least from Cicero¹ and which was answered from the purely Christian point of view by the Old Saxon author of Heliand.² Which should the honourable man put first, friendship or morality?

1. Cicero. De Amicitiae xi 38.

2. Just as the Laws of Alfred state that the right must be put before loyalty to one's lord, Heliand says that it must come before sworn friendship. 11.1450-2

'ênig liudeo ni scal farfolgan is friunde, ef he ina an firina spanit.'

Cf. Amis' promise to his friend. 11.1450-2

'Be it in periil neuer so strong,
Y schal þe help in riȝt & wrong,
Mi liif to lese to mede."

Supplementary.

Since this appendix was written a paper has been published (in P.M.L.A. LXXXI 1966 Pp.347-54) by Ojars Kratins in which he argues that Amis and Amiloun should be read as a saints' legend rather than as a romance. He claims that the author of the English poem deliberately treated his material in the manner of hagiography, and that the moral theme of the poem is determined by hagiographic values.

The thesis itself is based upon several highly vulnerable generalisations, but the individual critical observations are of great value. The generalisations by which the hagiographical flavour of the poem is implied must first be examined.

At the beginning of the paper it is claimed that the devotion of the poem to one ideal at the expense of all others is a trait of hagiography. This may be so, but surely it is also a trait of any simple tale whose aim is to celebrate a particular virtue. The admittedly secular Anglo-Norman poem makes leaute of paramount importance, and Ipomedon makes different virtues supreme in discrete episodes of the poem.

Secondly, there is the surprising claim that the "story has no necessary connection with Christianity, but it is obvious that in the English version such a connection has been carefully made." (p.349). The only comparison which could support such an assumption is that with MSS. K. and L. of the Anglo-Norman poem, Indeed C., which is closer to the source of the English work, has more religious interest than the poem, and the Chanson is infinitely more hagiographic in

tone. Lacking the possibility of comparison with a known source, the suggestion that the English poet deliberately increased the Christian references in the poem is without foundation. To this suggestion Mr. Kratins adds (p.354) that the super-natural in Romance usually consists of magic and, if it is traceable to divine intervention, it is only so traceable in "a tentative and equivocal manner." This assertion sits ill beside Trounce's remarks upon the moral and religious atmosphere of the tail rhyme romances.

Of the saintliness of Amiloun's character Mr. Kratins writes, "such an attitude of passivity...patient suffering of ridicule and contumely while growing in holiness and virtue, is not found in romance." (353). If, after allowing for some exaggeration in the choice of the words 'holiness and virtue' to describe Amiloun, we find the substance of the statement to be true, then the bounds of the romance genre must be drawn close indeed. The Romance of Horn and perhaps Havelok must be excluded.

In order to emphasise the claim of Amis and Amiloun to hagiographic treatment, Mr. Kratins has intolerably limited the field of romance. A more acceptable view of the romance genre must admit that, beside the hagiographic, it also includes echoes of elegaic, lyric, panegyric and heroic poetry.

However, assuming that the poem is deliberately close to hagiography, Mr. Kratins interprets it in the following terms. The combat is to be understood as a test of trewþe imposed by God on one

of two companions. Leprosy is not a punishment, but merely a means of increasing the severity of this test. It also serves as a structural link with the reciprocal test of Amis' loyalty. Noting the moral ambiguity of the wife's reaction to the onset of leprosy, Mr. Kratins weaves it into his interpretation. He shows that, to the Middle Ages, leprosy could be viewed in two ways; firstly, and popularly, as a punishment from God, or secondly, and hagiographically, as a sign of God's particular favour. The wife's reaction, he says, is the normal reaction of an ordinary person, abiding by the principles of feudal law. Although her reactions are not in themselves especially reprehensible, she is made to seem evil because her wordly judgement contravenes a transcendental code of loyalty according to which the leprosy is seen in the hagiographical manner as a blessing.

This explanation is subtle and helps the poem over an awkwardly motivated episode, yet there is grave doubt as to how close to hagiography the English poet really was, and how much the apparent hagiographical interest springs from a story suitable for hagiography combined with a certain native religious atmosphere. The circumstances of performance of a work such as this surely militate against such deliberate hagiography. Amiloun has been warned by an angel that if he persists in the tricked ordeal he will be visited by an affliction which is popularly regarded as a punishment from God. The poem has already been admitted to be destined for oral recitation to a popular audience, and there seems little likelihood that such an audience would make anything but the obvious connection

between the disease and the tricked combat. They would scarcely have sought an unusual and specialised interpretation of leprosy as a blessing from God. If the poet had intended his audience to understand the disease in this way he could have explicitly said so, as did the author of the Chanson through the mouths of his archbishops.

It is true that the accusation by Amiloun's wife is morally ambiguous and that the moral texture of the poem gains from the uncertainty of the justification of her remarks, but it is unnecessary to see them as representing a wider conflict between ordinary worldly reactions and the regard of God for the transcendental ideal of trewpe.

The wife's sudden accusation, which arises from previous moral neutrality and is superseded by a degeneration into evil is easily explicable as the result of loss of motivation in the process of adaptation of the poem from French. In the Anglo-Norman the accusation is unparalleled, but in the Chanson Amis is accused of using a crossbow⁴man to defeat his opponent, and Lubias' motive for the malicious accusation is in her own wicked character and her close blood ties with the villainous Hardre. If the hypothetical Anglo-Norman source contained this motivation and also made little of the wife's earlier wickedness, as does the extant Old French Chanson, the sudden unforeseen malice of Amiloun's wife is easily explained as the partially absorbed motivation of the Anglo-Norman source.

Finally if, as Mr. Kratins claims, the English poet deliberately increases the Christian elements alongside the importance of trewpe, one would expect that the second loyalty test would be presented as severely as possible. This is not the case. The Englishman prefers to concentrate on the murder of the children, as a family tragedy, and the significance of this murder as a loyalty test is reduced by comparison with both the Anglo-Norman and the Old French versions. In the former Amis is informed of the nature of the cure by a voice in a dream and he decides to go ahead with it despite the uncertainty of the truth of the utterance (1086-92). In the Chanson the veracity of the angel's statement is perhaps supported by the ironic promises of Amiles to do anything to help his friend, when he arrives immediately after the angel's departure. In the English poem, however, there is no doubt as to the efficacy of the cure, for the two brothers are individually informed of it by angels (2197ff and 2221ff). Their experience is too similar to be coincidental. The murder is more of a calculated risk than the blind loyalty of the Anglo-Norman poem.

Mr. Kratins' resolution of some of the difficulties of Amis and Amiloun is erudite and imaginative, and for these reasons it is pleasing to the modern literary critic. Yet it must be remembered that this poem was written to appeal to a very different audience, lacking in the critical skills, the literary experience and, probably, even the literacy of the modern scholar. If Amis and Amiloun had been intended as hagiography for such an audience,

its special interest would need to be clearly stated. This is never done. The final objection, then, to Mr. Kratins' interpretation of the poem is that its very subtlety, stimulating as it is to the modern literary critic, is foreign to the rest of the style, the ideas, and the mode of presentation, not only of this poem, but of the majority of Middle English popular romance.

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