

ABSTRACT

Volume I. Part I describes the known versions of the Erec/Gereint story, giving whatever information is available about the circumstances of their composition. Particular attention is paid to the manuscript tradition of Erec et Enide by Chrétien de Troyes, to the place occupied in that tradition by the exemplar which was available to Hartmann von Aue, and to the two manuscripts of the French prose adaptation (showing the significance of the text contained in the unpublished Paris MS.).

Part II is concerned with the highly problematical relationship between Erec et Enide and the Welsh story of Gereint fab Erbin. It is argued that the author of Gereint must have used a written source that was in a language other than Welsh. However, an important feature of Gereint is the technique of using formulas which, being Welsh, cannot have been taken from the (foreign) narrative source. There is evidence also of borrowing from a passage in the Historia Regum Britanniae, combined with material from Welsh tradition. Since the Welsh author used a technique of composition that will account for the differences between Gereint and Erec there is no advantage in supposing a lost common source. The disadvantages of such a supposition are that Chrétien's source may not have been a written text, and that it requires a belief in a whole series of coincidences to account for the total disappearance of the manuscripts. A final argument is available from the fact that Gereint incorporates information contained in a couplet which seems to be a later interpolation into the Erec text.

Volume II contains the material (mainly text) which is to be read in parallel with the main discussion. The major item is an edition of Gereint fab Erbin (with English translation) marked in such a way as to show the different elements of its composition, and with corresponding passages from Erec et Enide set in parallel.

Studies in the Textual Relationships

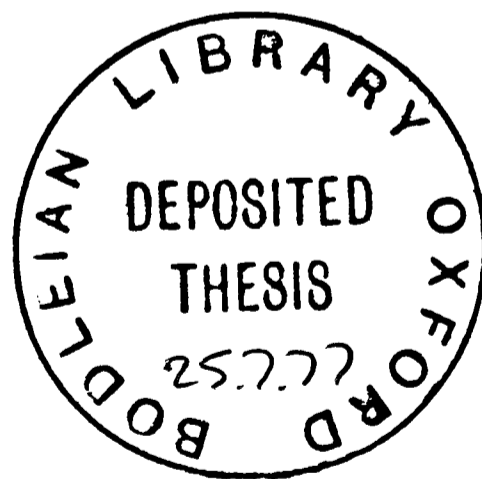
of the

Erec/Gereint Stories

by

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Volume I



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PREFACE

I welcome this opportunity of expressing my thanks to all the many who have contributed to this work in their various ways, but my especial gratitude for all their help and encouragement goes to my supervisors Mr. C. A. Robson and Professor P. F. Ganz, and to Professor I. Ll. Foster.

I am grateful also to the French Department of the University of Leeds where the work was completed during my appointment as Barbier Fellow.

PRELIMINARY NOTE

In an effort to eliminate unnecessary footnotes bibliographical information is given as far as possible in the text itself with a page or line reference immediately following any quotation. Most quotations are from works which are sufficiently well-known for the reader to recognize them from the name of the author or the abbreviated title, but more detailed information can be obtained from the Bibliography.

The use of italics is confined in the text to the citation of linguistic forms. All other cases where italics would be expected in a printed book have been treated in the normal way by underlining. The convention adopted is unusual, but it is hoped that the linguistic forms identified in this way will appear with greater clarity. On rare occasions italics have also been used for various reasons to differentiate words from the surrounding material.

Editions of Welsh texts. In Part II where passages are cited from the Mabinogion references are normally given to the diplomatic edition by J. Gwenogvryn Evans, The White Book Mabinogion (Pwllheli, 1907), which is cited as WM followed by an indication of column and line. The text itself, however, is given with whatever punctuation and correction is necessary. For the Four Branches the text is taken from Sir Ifor Williams, Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi, second edition (Cardiff, 1951); references to WM are easily traced because this edition gives the column numbers of the manuscript. The text of Owein is from the edition by R. L. Thomson (Dublin, 1968) and his line numbers are given in addition to the WM references. The Dream of Rhonabwy is cited from the edition by Melville Richards, Breudwyt Ronabwy (Cardiff, 1948). In this instance, since the story is not in the White Book (although in WM Evans supplies the text from the Red Book) references to WM are given only when the reader is invited

to compare a series of similar passages in various stories where it is more convenient to be able to look them up in a single book.

For all the other Mabinogion stories the text is my own (based on WM). Gereint fab Erbin is edited in its entirety in Volume II and quotations are taken from the text given there, but with the more straightforward editorial interventions incorporated without indication. For the principles governing the edition see the introductory remarks in Volume II. A similar policy has also been adopted for the passages cited from Y Seint Greal.

Translations are given for all quotations in Norse and Welsh. Where a published translation is easily available it has been used and a reference is given. Any translation which is not followed by a reference is my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ALMA Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, edited by
Roger Sherman Loomis.
- ANTS Anglo-Norman Text Society.
- BBSIA Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale
Arthurienne.
- Beiträge Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur.
- Bulletin Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies.
- CFMA Classiques Français du Moyen Age.
- FMLS Forum for Modern Language Studies.
- Jones The Mabinogion, translated by Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones.
- MLQ Modern Language Quarterly.
- Pen. 6 Peniarth MS. 6, part iv.
- RM The Text of the Mabinogion and other Welsh tales from the
Red Book of Hergest, edited by John Rhys and J. Gwenogvryn
Evans.
- SATF Société des Anciens Textes Français.
- THSC Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.
- WM The White Book Mabinogion, edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans.
- WM² The White Book Mabinogion, edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans,
reprinted with a new Introduction by R. M. Jones.
- ZDA Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum.
- ZDP Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie.
- ZFSL Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The story of Erec and Enid is usually described as the story of a knight who undertakes various adventures in order to demonstrate his prowess, in other words, as a fairly typical hero tale.¹ This indeed it is, but this is only an outer form which happened to be appropriate at the time. The essence of the story is not really the deeds of chivalry, nor even the different social questions which are raised, but rather the study of a developing human relationship between a man and his wife. The relationship is both particular to this couple and, at the same time, the type of all such relationships. It is through this that the story possesses a timeless and universal appeal.

The story never achieved the heights of popularity enjoyed by some Arthurian tales because it never became incorporated into the great prose cycles of the thirteenth century. On the other hand, it is fair to say that whenever there has been a call for Arthurian literature Erec and Enid have unfailingly made an appearance. The earliest versions come from the second half of the twelfth century, and from then onwards no century has been without either a new version of the story or, at least, new manuscripts of the older texts.²

The subject of this present study is not the story itself, nor even

1 The forms in which the story is found are listed on pages 2-3 below. The names of the hero and heroine vary slightly from one telling to another, and in referring to a particular text the forms which are characteristic of it will be used. In generalizations about the common story which underlies the individual versions the forms *Erec* and *Enid* have been adopted.

2 The leanest time was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which are represented only by the copying of manuscripts. The Middle High German version was copied for the Emperor Maximilian I in the early 1500s, and the extant manuscripts of the Norse version were copied in the seventeenth century (and after). The twentieth century has seen no new version of the story but a wealth of editions, translations and studies of the older texts.

the literary merits of the various retellings, but exclusively the question of how the surviving texts are related to each other. If this concern seems a little dry, it should certainly not be thought of as "purely academic". There have been remarkably few studies, other than those on questions of detail, which have been able to reach an understanding of any of the versions without stating (or, more usually, taking for granted) a particular view of the textual relationships.

Leaving aside the modern translations of specific texts, the versions of the story to be considered fall into three groups.

A. The Medieval Period ³

- 1) A poem in Old French, Erec et Enide, by Chrétien de Troyes, written c.1175-80.
- 2) A poem in Middle High German, Erec, by Hartmann von Aue, written c.1190-95.
- 3) A prose tale in Middle Welsh, Gereint fab Erbin, written in the early thirteenth century.
- 4) A prose tale in Old Norse, Erex saga Artuskappa, written in the middle of the thirteenth century.
- 5) A version in French prose, made at the Burgundian court c.1455.

B. The Eighteenth Century

- 1) A summary amongst unpublished papers of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye.
- 2) A summary amongst unpublished papers of Le Grand d'Aussy.
- 3) A retelling of the story in the Bibliothèque universelle des Romans (February, 1777).

³ The relative chronology of the texts in this group is not seriously in doubt, but the dates assigned to them are intended for general guidance only. Problems of dating will be discussed in the more detailed descriptions of the individual versions which follow in the course of the study (Chapters 2 to 6).

C. The Nineteenth Century

- 1) The text and translation of Gereint fab Erbin, published by Lady Charlotte Guest in 1840.
- 2) Two poems by Tennyson (in his Idylls of the King), written in 1856 as a single poem (Enid) but later divided into The Marriage of Geraint and Geraint and Enid.

The real object of concern is the group of five texts from the Middle Ages. For the versions from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there is ample external evidence to indicate from which texts the authors took their story. What needs to be done for these more modern versions is to collect the information relevant to the circumstances of composition and present it with as little argument as possible.

Even for the five medieval versions the questions raised are not of the same nature, nor of the same complexity in each instance. It is generally agreed that Hartmann von Aue, the Norwegian translator, and the redactor of the French prose version all worked from the text of the poem by Chrétien de Troyes. The case of Hartmann's Erec is more complex than the other two because it impinges to some extent on the much more difficult question of the relationship between Chrétien's poem and Gereint fab Erbin. The main issues for German, Norse, and French prose are (purely as a matter of literary history) whether the circumstances of their composition can be documented to any extent, and (in the matter of textual relationships) whether the consensus of opinion can be placed on a firmer footing by specifying more precisely the form in which Chrétien's text was known to the three authors in question. As a reciprocal of this last point it may also be possible to find instances where the translations throw some light on the textual tradition of Chrétien's poem.

The question of how Gereint fab Erbin is related to Erec et Enide is of quite another order. Opinions have been sharply divided for more than

century, and although the debate is relatively quiescent at the present time this is not so much because any genuine agreement has been reached, as because many scholars are reluctant to enter a controversy which yielded so doubtful a profit.

Documenting the history of the debate and examining the many conflicting arguments which have been advanced would be a major research project in its own right, and indeed one that would have its own interest for the history of Old French scholarship and for a study of methods of argument. The question of why the solutions proposed failed to command general agreement, and the question of how such a problem might be solved in theory, could both be considered with some profit. The length of the debate suggests that there is something in the nature of the problem itself which defies a categorical solution and this might well lend itself to considerations of epistemology. But although these concerns might be quite proper in their own fields, it is doubtful whether they would produce a practical solution to the problem.⁴

At the opposite pole from the purely theoretical difficulties of argument is the concern with literary values. This too, of course, is a perfectly proper concern, and indeed the fundamental motivation for an interest in the problem of textual relationships. Throughout the history of the debate this concern has never been far from the surface. One might

4 There is no need to examine the course of the debate in detail, nor to refute the whole range of arguments which have been deployed. A useful survey of the period in which the controversy was at its height (until about 1920) can be found in James Douglas Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance, 2 vols (Baltimore and Göttingen, 1923), II, 59ff.. The fact that none of the arguments have been compelling is perfectly well demonstrated by the continuance of the discussion. The difficulty is not in pointing out the deficiencies in the reasoning of others, but in constructing arguments of one's own which are immune from the same treatment. There is little to be gained by showing that time has placed us in a position to do impartially to both sides what they have already done to each other. Wherever our own arguments are valid (if at all) they will themselves be sufficient refutation of any that contradict them; and wherever they are not valid they will not be made any the more impressive by proving that someone else's are no better.

even venture the suggestion that the disagreements between scholars have been in reality more over the question of literary merit than textual relations, and this raises a most important point concerning the methods which have been used.

At the height of the controversy (that is, during the debate between the rival camps of Wendelin Foerster and Rudolf Zenker, roughly from the turn of the century until the mid-1920s) much attention was devoted to deciding which version of the story had the more logical narrative. In undertaking this argument both sides effectively agreed on the premiss that the "original" version of a story will be more logically motivated than its derivatives. Leaving aside this rather dubious premiss for a moment, an argument about logicity might seem objective enough, not involving any literary presuppositions. If Chrétien was sometimes convicted of ineptitude when confronted with the "better" version to be found in Gereint, the procedure seemed legitimate and the value judgement a fair result of an impartial argument.

Upon closer examination, however, it is not clear what meaning can be attached to the concept of "the logic of the narrative" which does not involve a literary premiss. The fact that an author does not always explain every detail of his story with great precision does not mean that the story is inexplicable. It is impossible to conceive a situation where the logical flaws cannot be removed by sufficient goodwill and the exercise of enough imagination.⁵ The effect of this is that "logical" comes to mean something like "where the explanations omitted by the author can be so easily supplied

5 This may seem an impossibly bold statement but its justification lies in the fact that the human imagination, when sufficiently motivated, is prepared to tolerate all kinds of absurdities, and the most tortuous and unlikely of explanations. The question is never whether it is possible to conjecture an explanation which would reconcile the inconsistencies, but whether amongst the explanations conjectured there are any sufficiently reasonable to be believed, or alternatively whether there are any which are worth believing for reasons other than their inherent rationality.

by the reader that the author is freed from the charge of incompetence". But the trouble that we are prepared to take on an author's behalf will vary according to the sympathy we feel for his cause, and so our opinion of the author's competence (formed we know not how) materially affects our view of the narrative logic.

The dangers of the arguments from logicity have been known for many years, but that has not prevented their continued use, even by those who warn of their inadequacy. This practical concession to the method which they rightly suspect not only undermines their theoretical position, but succeeds in directing attention away from the real issue. By discussing the motivation in the various versions of the Erec story they are, in effect, making literary judgements for each text separately; the comparisons between texts are interesting in suggesting other ways in which the story might be motivated, but in the last resort the same procedure could have been carried out even if the other versions had never existed. The critics' own imagination could soon have supplied the necessary alternatives.

The fundamental difficulty lies in the premiss which was surprisingly accepted as the common ground of the debate.⁶ The principle that a story normally begins by being logical and then acquires inconsistencies in the course of transmission is by no means self-evident. It may even be better to assume the exact opposite, that a story normally begins with inconsistencies and is gradually made more logical as it is reworked with increasing thoroughness. This is not merely an empty suggestion because a very similar position is often actually taken by historians and Biblical scholars. In these fields a story which is "too" logical is often regarded with the gravest suspicion. But changing the assumption

6 It was not necessarily overtly accepted and, indeed, was sometimes explicitly brought into question, but it was accepted in a much more real sense by the scholars' willingness to continue the discussion in these terms.

would not, of course, make any real difference to the status quo. It is true that everyone would find themselves on the opposite side, but since all would be affected in the same way the two sides would still be just as much at loggerheads.

It should also be realized that there is an important difference between the problem that faces the historian and the Biblical scholar, and the one which confronts the student of literature. In the one case the stories claim to reflect an historical reality so that our experience of reality is a criterion of the stories' probability. There may be some discussion, especially in the Biblical instances, about whether our experience is adequate to cope with particular cases, but the principle remains to such an extent that we have the choice of either rejecting the story on the basis of experience, or including the facts of the story within the range of experience. In the case of literature, however, the story has only as much reality as the reader projects upon it. Unless one accepts in some degree the "mimetic illusion" it is very difficult (perhaps impossible) to specify what is meant by deficiencies in the logic of the narrative.⁷ Judgements of "inconsistency" and "improbability" are drawn from an experience of reality, and it is not at all clear how they can be applied to a fictional narrative which may be, at the will of its creator, entirely without logic and wholly arbitrary in its succession of episodes. This difficulty cannot be avoided by defining "improbability" as "whatever would be improbable if the episodes described occurred as

7 The view that literature is an imitation (mimesis) of reality is not necessarily as much of an illusion as "La nouvelle critique" would have us believe, but "mimetic illusion" has a certain currency and does reflect the problem which is to be discussed. It should not be confused with the question of whether the story is "true" or not. The narration is always distinct from the events to which it is believed to refer, and a reader (or even an author) can suffer from the mimetic illusion regardless of whether the story is "true" or "false".

real events", because if they really did happen as described the fact of their occurrence would far outweigh the question of their improbability. What we mean, presumably, is something like "those aspects of the description which would be unlikely to follow if the other aspects occurred as real events". But this merely makes improbability depend upon our previous choice of what might actually occur, thus creating a circular argument.

The difficulty of making judgements of this kind should not be stressed too heavily because it is obvious that it involves a considerable anachronism, to the extent that writers of the Middle Ages certainly were "victims" of the mimetic illusion. On the other hand, the difficulty involved is real enough, because our understanding of the literary process does not depend upon the theory professed by its practitioners. The point is that since the "events" described are not real events, but have been fictional from the start, there is no reason why the original version of the story (if there ever was such a thing) should not have contained any number of "improbabilities" -- or even "impossibilities". There is no necessity for the fictional events to correspond to our experience of the world even though the medieval author narrates them as if they did.

The principle that emerges from these considerations is that, for there to be any chance of solving the problem of textual relationships, great care must be taken that the arguments employed are genuinely suited to the purpose. They may still fail for other reasons, but, with the benefit of hindsight, it should at least be possible to avoid the very real enticement to convert literary judgements into textual arguments under some disguise or other. Put in practical terms, the problem of how the texts are related can only be solved if it is possible to find a basis for argument in the words from which the individual texts are constructed. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the evidence is to be found in the words themselves or not at all.

Chapter Two

CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES

Chrétien's reputation rests primarily upon five Arthurian romances.¹ In the prologue of Cligès he refers to several of his other works and it is assumed that those not mentioned were written at a later time:

	<i>Extant</i>	<i>Lost</i>
Cil qui fist d'Erec et d'Enide, Et les comandemanz Ovide Et l'art d'amors an romanz mist Et le mors de l'espaule fist, Del roi Marc et d'Iseut la blonde, Et de la hupe et de l'aronde Et del rossignol la muance.	<u>Erec et Enide</u> <u>Philomena</u>	<u>Remedia Amoris</u> ² <u>Ars Amatoria</u> Pelops (<u>Metam.</u> VI, 401) Tristan <u>(Metamorphoses VI, 438-674)</u>

(Cligès 1)

Of the works mentioned only Erec and Philomena have survived.³ One of his romances, Le Conte del Graal (Perceval), remains unfinished, and it

1 For more detailed information about Chrétien's works, reference can be made to Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes (Paris, 1957) and to the bibliography given there. The chapter in ALMA (also by Jean Frappier) covers the main facts in a briefer compass.

2 The identification of "les comandemanz Ovide" with the Remedia Amoris is to be regarded as tentative. It is not certain that "comandemanz" is really a title; it could just be a claim to have followed Ovid's precepts (of love?) in the composition of other works. The same interpretation is also possible for "l'art d'amors" but in this instance the phrase does correspond more closely to Ovid's title, Ars Amatoria.

3 Philomena (the spelling with *n* rather than *l* was widespread in the Middle Ages) is preserved in the Ovide moralisé, a late thirteenth or early fourteenth century version of the Metamorphoses with an allegorical interpretation added to each story. Some doubt is possible over the authorship of the version preserved, but the case for regarding it as the work of Chrétien de Troyes is convincing enough. The author of the Ovide moralisé twice says that the version he gives is by a certain "Chrétien". However, the author (or is it the compiler?) names himself as *Crestiens li Gois* (Philomena 734). The unexpected epithet (*li Gois*) has given rise to much discussion but has little real bearing on the question of authorship. There is a detailed discussion by Cornelis de Boer in the Introduction to his edition of Philomena (pp. v-xvii; cv-cxx). De Boer also edited the complete Ovide moralisé (Amsterdam, 1915).

is said by one of its continuators that the reason for this was that Chrétien had died before being able to complete it.⁴ The two other major romances are Le Chevalier de la Charrete (Lancelot) and Le Chevalier au Lion (Yvain).⁵ These are presumed to fall between Cligès and Perceval, either in the order just given or perhaps being written simultaneously.⁶

There are, in addition, a couple of lyric poems (influenced by Bernard de Ventadour),⁷ and several works of doubtful attribution. Opinions have long been divided over the authorship of Guillaume d'Angleterre, and more recently the possibility has been raised that Chrétien might have

4 Gerbert de Montreuil (6984-7): "Ce nous dist Crestiens de Troie / Qui de Percheval comencha, / Mais la mors qui l'adevancha / Ne li laissa pas traire affin". This may or may not be true but its unfinished state has meant that Perceval is usually assumed to be the last of the romances.

5 The long titles are those used by Chrétien himself in the works concerned, but it is a common modern practice to refer to the romances by the name of their protagonist (given here in brackets) and for the sake of simplicity this convention will be followed. Quotations will invariably be taken from the critical edition of the complete works prepared by Wendelin Foerster, completed by Alfons Hilka in the case of Perceval, (Halle, 1884-1932). This edition has sometimes been characterized as "not altogether reliable" but the criticism is not entirely justified. The errors it contains are mainly trivial and the fact remains that it is the only edition which gives any worthwhile critical apparatus. The edition of the five romances from B.N. 794, the so-called "copie de Guiot", (CFMA, 1952-75) is more easily obtainable and more accurate in its transcription. The problem is that Guiot can only be as reliable as his sources (which were not the same for each romance), and he seems also to have been in the habit of smoothing out any difficulties he encountered in the text. Although Foerster's edition has been used, all cases where the exact reading is of significance have been checked against microfilms or photographs of the original manuscripts.

6 There is in Yvain a clear reference to the Lancelot story; the evidence for borrowings in the other direction is not so convincing. The case for simultaneous composition is argued by Anthime Fourrier (BBSIA, 1950) but countered by Jean Misrahi (BBSIA, 1959). It is also possible that Chrétien might have known the Lancelot story (and inserted a kind of "trailer" into Yvain) before writing his own version.

7 The text, edited by Wendelin Foerster, is given in an Appendix to Alfons Hilka's edition of Perceval, pp. 798-803.

been the author of Le Chevalier à l'Epée and La Mule sans Frein.⁸ If any of these works were by Chrétien they would presumably date from the period between Cligès and Perceval.

Although the relative chronology of the major romances is more or less clear (provided we do not cast too much doubt on the inferences drawn from the prologue to Cligès), it is much more difficult to assign actual dates.

The one fixed point is provided by the prologue of Perceval which refers to Philip of Flanders (13 "li cuens Phelipes de Flandres") and says that the romance was written at his request (64 "Par le comandemant le conte"), and indeed that it was Philip who supplied the source from which the story was taken (67 "li cuens li bailla le livre"). Philip died at the siege of Acre on 1 June 1191, but the commission to Chrétien was presumably given at least a year earlier, before Philip left for the Holy Land in September 1190. Given the amount written, Perceval was probably begun no later than 1189.

The prologue of Lancelot also contains a reference to a patron, a countess of Champagne (1 "ma dame de Chanpaingne"; 18 "la contesse"), but this is of little real use in dating the romance. It is our knowledge of the approximate dates of Chrétien's work that enables us to identify the countess as Marie de Champagne, rather than our knowledge of her life enabling us to date the work. Marie was the daughter of Louis VII of France and Eleanor of Aquitaine (who was later to be the wife of Henry II of England). Promised in marriage at least as early as 1159, her wedding

8 On Guillaume d'Angleterre see Frappier, pp. 73-84. For the two shorter Arthurian tales see the edition by R. C. Johnston and D. D. R. Owen, Two Old French Gauvain Romances (Edinburgh and London, 1972), and the articles by D. D. R. Owen in Romania, 92 (1971) and FMLS, 2 (1966).

to Henry the Liberal, Count of Champagne, eventually took place in 1164.⁹ Her husband died in 1181 but she governed Champagne during the minority of her son Henry and during his absence on Crusade. In 1192 Henry became King of Jerusalem by marrying, at the instigation of King Richard, the recently widowed Queen Isabella. He died in the Holy Land in 1197 to be succeeded in Champagne by his younger brother Thibaut (who was still a minor). Thus Marie remained countess until her own death in 1198. These dates cover too wide a span to be of real use for the chronology of Chrétien's works, because they add little to a whole series of considerations (including the language of the texts) which indicate that he was working in the last third of the twelfth century.

In the case of Erec there is very little real evidence, but there are various conjectures that can be made. On the basis of the Cligès prologue it is assumed to be the first of the five romances, and therefore some years earlier than the latest date possible for Perceval. This would place it some time before 1185; the problem is how much before. It was dated by Foerster c.1160 but the date most widely accepted at the present time is c.1170, partly because of specific arguments, but also because of a general willingness to situate the development of courtly literature in the north slightly later than Foerster's dating would allow.

The specific arguments for 1170 are those of Anthime Fourrier (BBSIA, 1950) who saw the description of Erec's coronation in Nantes, at Christmas, as a reflection of historical events. On Christmas Day 1169 Henry II held a court in Nantes at which his son Geoffrey received the homage of the barons of Brittany, and Fourrier suggests that Chrétien chose the time and

9 Anthime Fourrier (in the Mélanges Frappier) has dealt with the suggestion that the date of the marriage was 1159 by pointing out the legal implications of the terms sponsa and uxor. Marie was made sponsa in 1159 but not uxor (and therefore countess) until 1164.

place of Erec's coronation after being particularly impressed by the events of 1169. This is certainly a possibility, but the major objection to such a view, pointed out some time ago by Jean Misrahi (BBSIA, 1959), is that the homage rendered to Geoffrey was in no sense a coronation, and that no one in the Middle Ages would be likely to confuse these two quite different ceremonies. The brief references in the chronicles give no reason to believe that the Christmas court of 1169 was particularly impressive. In any case Chrétien would not have needed an historical event to inspire his choice of Christmas because this has very obvious symbolic connotations appropriate for a coronation. Part of the mystique of kingship in the twelfth century was the role of the king as the Vicar of God. The feast celebrating the Kingship of Christ was thus an excellent time for a coronation, and the historical precedents of Charlemagne and William the Conqueror would have been widely known. Chrétien certainly plays upon these symbolic possibilities in describing Erec's coronation, and they are probably a more relevant influence than the events of 1169.¹⁰ Nantes was not so obscure a place that its choice for a feast would need special justification, and it may even have been a detail of the story before Chrétien came to compose his poem.¹¹

If Chrétien needed an historical model for his description it is just as likely that he chose the time and place for himself and took from experience some details of the actual ceremony. In that case he would have had no shortage of inspiration in the 1170s, from the coronation of Henry

10 This symbolism was discussed in more detail in my (unpublished) paper "Erec's coronation robe" read to the XIth Triennial Congress of the International Arthurian Society. There is a summary in BBSIA, 1975, p. 224.

11 On the possible Breton connections of the story before it was retold by Chrétien see later in Chapter 12.

the Young King in 1170 to that of Philip Augustus at Rheims in 1179.¹² All in all the date of 1170 is not compelling.

At the other extreme Claude Luttrell has recently argued in favour of 1185.¹³ The date itself is plausible enough but the arguments he advances are not convincing. They turn on his contention that Chrétien borrowed from Alan of Lille and in particular from Anticlaudianus (written 1183-4), but the passages cited involve descriptive topoi. Luttrell himself quotes several other examples of their use, including the manuals of poetry, but the list could be extended almost ad infinitum beginning with more than half a dozen texts from Ovid. The case for Chrétien having borrowed from Alan's De planctu Naturae is somewhat stronger, but the work is no more datable than Erec.¹⁴ Luttrell argues (pp. 255-6) that it is anti-Cathar in conception and therefore after the Lateran Council of 1179. The difficulties here are firstly that the work might be simply orthodox rather than specifically polemical, and secondly that the Cathar heresy was known long before the condemnation of 1179. A particularly relevant example is the outbreak of heresy in Flanders during 1162-3, causing Louis VII to write to the Pope and producing a persecution directed by William of the White Hands, Archbishop of Rheims, and Philip of Flanders.¹⁵ Whether Alan was in Lille or in Paris at this time he could hardly fail to be aware of these events, and they might have touched him more nearly than the later inquisition in Provence.

12 Chrétien's patron Philip of Flanders was present at Rheims, and the king's retinue would presumably have passed through Champagne on its way from Paris. See Benedict of Peterborough, Gesta regis Henrici Secundi, edited by William Stubbs (Rolls Series 49), I, 242.

13 The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance: A Quest (London, 1974), Chapters 1-3.

14 De planctu Naturae is normally assigned to the early 1170s, but this is not definitive.

15 See Lorenzo Renzi, Tradizione Cortese e Realismo in Gautier d'Arras (Padua, 1964), p. 72.

There are, however, some slight indications in favour of the period after about 1175. Erec's meeting with Keu and Gauvain (3965-4155), in which he remains unrecognized, even at close quarters and in conversation, by two knights who were his companions at Arthur's court, makes more sense if Erec was supposed to be wearing a closed helm, which would not only hide his face but also distort his voice. Chrétien is not obliged to make the story logical but in this instance there is clear evidence that he has seen the difficulty and sought to avoid it. He says that Erec's shield was so battered that the "conoissance" painted on it had become unrecognizable and that Enide covered her face with her wimple: "Por ce qu'ele ne voloit mie Qu'il la coneüst" (3978-9). Other descriptions of the armour are inconclusive but the way in which Erec's helmet is removed (4156 "Son hiaume a mont li sozleva") with its emphasis on its being lifted upwards would be more appropriate for a closed helm than for one of the conical type. It is usually said that the closed helm was not introduced until about 1180,¹⁶ but this is probably a little conservative. Its use (in a tournament) as early as 1177 is implied by an incident in the life of William Marshal in which his helmet was so distorted by the blows he had received that it needed a blacksmith to remove it.¹⁷ It is hard to see how a conical helmet could have been jammed on his head in this way. It is not essential that Erec should be thought of as wearing a closed helm, and it is not absolutely certain what date it would imply if he was, but the later 1170s would probably be appropriate.

16 See, for example, Claude Blair, European Armour (London, 1958), p. 29.

17 Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, edited by Paul Meyer, 3 vols (Paris, 1891-1901), lines 3102-14. See also Sidney Painter, William Marshal (Baltimore, 1933), p. 40.

Amongst the knights of the Round Table there is one named *Yvain de Cavalot* (1709). This name was identified by Ernst Brugger with that of the Welsh poet-prince Owain Cyfeiliog.¹⁸ The identification seems convincing enough and the name was certainly in Chrétien's text at an early stage, so that it can probably be taken as original.¹⁹ The main facts of Owain's career are most conveniently available from The Dictionary of Welsh Biography:

Owain Cyfeiliog (c.1130-97), prince and poet, son of Gruffudd, brother of Madog ap Maredudd, prince of Powys. In 1149 Madog appointed him under-lord of Cyfeiliog. . . After the death of Madog in 1160, Owain held Cyfeiliog on his own account. . . In 1165 he is found with other princes . . . in the great muster under Owain Gwynedd facing Henry II's attack in the Berwyn district. . . In 1167 he reverted to Madog ap Maredudd's policy of friendship with England, and remained fairly constant to it for the remainder of his life. . .

In 1170 he established the Cistercian monastery of Strata Marcella. He again supported the English in 1173, and was present at the Council of Oxford in 1177. . . It would appear that he handed over the reins of government to his son, Gwenwynwyn, in 1195, and retired to the monastery of Strata Marcella, where he died in 1197, and where he lies buried. His first wife was Gwenllian, daughter of Owain Gwynedd (mother of Gwenwynwyn), and his second wife was a daughter of Rhys ap Gruffydd.

The means by which Owain's name came to the attention of Chrétien can only be conjectured. In theory he could have been known on the continent any time after 1150, but it seems unlikely that he would immediately have become so famous as to appear in a list of Arthur's knights, a distinction conferred upon very few of his contemporaries. No

18 Modern Philology, 38 (1941), p. 268, in his article on "Yvain and his Lion". As "Yweyn Keveylloke, un chevalier hardy e fer" he also appears in Fouke Le Fitz Waryn (ANTS), 20.20.

19 The list in which the name appears will be discussed in detail in the chapter on Hartmann von Aue. *Yvain de Cavalot* figures in the German text as *Onam von Galiot*. The form is distorted (the only surviving German manuscript is some three hundred years later than the original), but the identity of the name is guaranteed by the position it occupies in the list. Hartmann's Erec can scarcely be much later than 1195 and his French exemplar would probably be some years earlier.

doubt the name Owein was a major factor because he occurs in the company of three other Yvains. As a political figure he was overshadowed by his namesake Owein Gwynedd until the death of this latter in 1170, so that a poet on the lookout for another Owein might not have turned to Cyfeiliog until after this date.

The foundation of Strata Marcella (in 1170) provided a channel of communication between North Wales and Champagne, but whether the Cistercians would have been very interested in the fame of Owein Cyfeiliog as a warrior, or had much contact with a writer of Arthurian romances is quite another matter.²⁰ A more likely means of transmission is through the Anglo-Norman court. Owein Cyfeiliog remained loyal to Henry II during the revolt of his sons in 1173; he is known to have attended the court on several occasions from then on, and seems to have been on good terms with Henry for the rest of his life.²¹ It is often assumed that there was extensive contact between

20 Strata Marcella was a daughter house of Whitland which was in turn a daughter house of Clairvaux. Information certainly passed from Clairvaux to Wales, because events such as the death of its abbot in 1175 are recorded in the Brut y Tywysogyon (the Welsh translation of a lost Latin chronicle which seems to have been associated with the Cistercian house of Strata Florida). Clairvaux itself was founded in 1115, by a count of Troyes, and was not far from Chrétien's presumed place of residence. The Cistercian constitution obliged the abbot of the mother house to visit all the daughter foundations once a year and there was also a yearly assembly of all the abbots for a general chapter at Cîteaux; see Dom David Knowles, The Monastic Order in England (Cambridge, 1940), p. 213. Troyes would be on the route of anyone travelling from Britain to Cîteaux and especially if they wished to call at Clairvaux on the way. Aelred of Rievaulx, for example, preached at a synod in Troyes, but it is not known when; see page 11 of the Introduction by Douglas Roby to Aelred of Rievaulx, Spiritual Friendship, translated by Mary Eugenia Laker (Washington, 1974). In theory the Cistercians were isolationist but it should not be forgotten that there are references to Arthur by Aelred of Rievaulx and Caesarius of Heisterbach, nor that La Queste del Saint Graal appears to have a Cistercian orientation.

21 Giraldus Cambrensis records a relevant incident in his Itinerarium Kambriae, II, xii (Rolls Series 21, VI, 144-5). Referring to Owein Cyfeiliog he writes: "Hic cum Anglorum rege Henrico secundo . . . familiaritatem contraxerat plurimam. Unde et aliquando cum rege apud Slopesburiam in mensa sedens, cum ei de panibus propriis unum, in honoris, ut assolet, et amoris signum rex misset".

the Anglo-Norman court and Champagne through the queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and her daughter Marie de Champagne, but it is not easy to support this assumption with specific evidence. However we may take it that a name known as an example of chivalry in Anglo-Norman court circles could easily enough find its way to Troyes (or to Flanders).²² The possibility of Chrétien having known the name of Owein Cyfeiliog before 1170 cannot be ruled out, but his opportunities for hearing the name and the likelihood of his including it in the list of Arthur's knights were probably greater after that date and perhaps especially after 1173.

Another point to be considered is that Erec et Enide begins with Arthur holding court in *Caradigan* (presumably Cardigan, in Wales). This is not attested as one of Arthur's cities in any tradition that is definitely earlier than Chrétien's use of the name, so it is quite likely that he took it from life rather than a literary source. The form *Caradigan* as the name of the town is Anglo-Norman, but would have been in use for many years before the writing of Erec.²³ However, there was a particular reason why Cardigan might have been brought to Chrétien's attention in 1175-6, for it was at that time that the Lord Rhys proclaimed an "eisteddfod":

At Christmas in that year [1176] the Lord Rhys ap Gruffudd held court in splendour at Cardigan, in the castle. And he set two kinds of contests there: one between bards and poets, another between harpists and crowdors and pipers and various classes of music-craft. And he had two chairs set for the victors. And he honoured those with ample gifts. And of the harpists, a young man from Rhys's court won the victory. As between the bards, those of Gwynedd prevailed. Each of the suitors (And all the other minstrels) obtained from Rhys that which he sought, so that no one was refused. And

22 Philip of Flanders would have had a particular interest in feats of arms. Sidney Painter (William Marshal, p. 37) says of him that he was "generally recognized as the age's foremost patron of chivalry".

23 *Caradigan* is from the Welsh *Ceredigion*, but this refers to the surrounding district; the Welsh name of the town itself was (and still is) *Aberteifi*. For the relevance of the name to the question of the relationship of Erec et Enide to Gereint fab Erbin see later in Chapter 9, pp. 130-1.

that feast, before it was held, was announced for a year through all Wales and England and Scotland and Ireland and the other islands (many other lands).

(Brut y Tywysogyon, 1176)²⁴

If this court really was widely publicized Chrétien might have come to hear of it.²⁵ The Lord Rhys was at Gloucester in 1175, and although Henry II himself may not have been all that well disposed towards Rhys's pretensions, it is possible that plans for the "eisteddfod" were already being made known. On the other hand it would be almost as easy to suggest that the Lord Rhys chose Cardigan for his "eisteddfod" because he had heard Erec et Enide.

It is difficult to know how long Chrétien would have needed to complete his romances, four of them nearly 7000 octosyllables each, and the fifth more than 9000 in spite of being unfinished. Claude Luttrell is prepared to accept that he could have produced them at the rate of one a year, but in general it seems safer to allow rather longer. Two years for each romance would place Erec eight or nine years before Perceval. This would mean some time before 1180 and there is little to be gained by putting our guess any later. The decade 1170-80 seems about right, with perhaps a slight preference for its latter half.

The manuscript tradition

Erec et Enide is preserved in seven manuscripts (and several fragments) which between them span the thirteenth century. The earliest may be 1210-20,

24 The translation is of the version in Peniarth MS. 20 (Thomas Jones, p. 71). The variants in brackets are selected from the slightly different account in the Red Book of Hergest version (Thomas Jones, p. 167); they replace the phrases of equivalent length which immediately precede them.

25 Rhys had destroyed Cardigan castle in 1164, and rebuilt it for his own use in 1171. Chrétien may have heard of it on these occasions (or even earlier), but if the Brut y Tywysogyon is to be taken at face value 1176 saw a specific attempt at publicity.

the latest at the beginning of the next century. They are described in detail by Alexandre Micha in La Tradition manuscrite des romans de Chrétien de Troyes, and more briefly by Wendelin Foerster in his critical edition of the text. The relations of the manuscripts were first examined by Foerster for his edition of 1890, but he does not discuss them in detail. He presents his results in the form of a diagram (fig. 1) and he uses this stemma as the basis for reconstructing the critical text.²⁶ In his study Micha makes various criticisms of Foerster's edition but most of them are a reflection of his general distrust of stemmatics. He may well be right to doubt whether the manuscript relations are sufficiently free from contamination to allow a full reconstruction of the text, but the specific criticisms which he makes of Foerster's attempt are misleading.

Foerster is quite explicit about the principles which govern the reconstruction of the text and his method is entirely consistent with the belief that his diagram is a stemma of the manuscript relations.²⁷ Micha (p. 22) objects that there are lines "ou nous passons trois, quatre et cinq fois -- pour un octosyllabe! -- d'un groupe à l'autre". Out of fifteen line references to Erec only one requires more than two manuscripts. The misapprehension which prompted the criticism is seen in the line which he quotes:

305 Bien (CBVA) dient tuit que (HCPAE) ja n'iert (HE) fet

(Micha, p. 23)

26 For easier reference the diagrams are given in Volume II. Micha and Foerster both use the same sigla and I have followed their convention (see Bibliography).

27 Erec und Enide, p. iv: "Es wurde zuerst die Lesart von β , dann die von α zu erschliessen gesucht, wobei wenn $H + \beta$ oder $C + \beta$ zusammengehen und besseres bieten als grade C oder H allein, die Summe der beiden den Ausschlag gibt: steht α gleichwertig β gegenüber, wird α vorgezogen, und wenn β unbrauchbar, H und C aber aus einandergehen, muss jede Lesart kritisch geprüft werden".

Fet, although Micha does not say so, is in all manuscripts so that there is a sense in which the text passes from CBVA to HCPAE to HE to CHEPBVA. But this is to confuse the question of how many manuscripts support a given reading with the question of whether it is the reading of a given manuscript. Thus line 305 of Foerster's text is taken from H with a change of only the first word. The CBVA reading *Bien* takes precedence over ^{that of} H because the alpha manuscript C agrees with the beta manuscript B whilst the other alpha and beta manuscripts (H and P) have individual variants. If you believe in stemmatics the reconstruction is irreproachable. One may not agree with Foerster's text but it is clear that he has used his stemma in accordance with the principles which he stated. All of Micha's other objections in this category are of precisely the same type.

Micha's second objection is that "quand aucune des leçons offertes par les mss. ne lui convient il renonce à la tradition et forge un texte de toutes pièces, un monstre sorti de son cerveau" (p. 23). Eleven line references are given for the Erec text. In one case (1716) Micha has been misled by the critical apparatus. The form given for B (*guis*) has been taken from Bekker's edition but if one consults either the Appendix which gives Goldschmidt's corrections or the manuscript itself one finds the form of Foerster's text (*grus*). In two other cases (1057; 1125) Foerster makes the correction Micha would wish in his subsequent editions, and 1057 is, in fact, corrected in the notes to the first edition. Even without these corrections Micha's objections apply to only three cases out of the ten. In the other seven instances however doubtful the text may be the elements of which it is composed are quite definitely in the manuscripts. Of the three instances where Micha's objections do apply in a technical sense it is to be observed that the corrections made are minimal and could easily be matched from Micha's

edition of Cligès (which is the publication of the "copie de Guiot").²⁸

Thirdly Foerster is accused of sacrificing his favourite manuscript (H) to inferior readings attested by only one other manuscript (p. 25). There are twelve references. One is to a line (2265) which is not even in H, another (1935) is the H reading, the confusion being caused by the fact that a siglum has been misprinted in the footnotes. Except for two cases which involve the spelling of names all the text readings are supported by at least two manuscripts.

In his own study of the manuscripts Micha also produces a diagram (fig. 2) to summarize his results but he would not wish to use it as a stemma. It is constructed in a different way from Foerster's but it presents very much the same view of the manuscript relations. By eliminating a number of unnecessary intermediaries it is possible to reduce both diagrams to a substantially common form (fig. 3).

Foerster and Micha were certainly correct in identifying the relationships of P with B and V with A, and in indicating a secondary relationship between these two groups. Various cruces are discussed by Micha (pp. 78-82), and these relationships can easily be confirmed by various fairly simple statistical procedures which avoid having to decide which text is "right" and which "wrong". Looking, for example, at the omissions and interpolations one can establish an arbitrary, longest possible text and treat all deviations from it in the same way. Some of the deviations will be genuine omissions and some will be the original text

28 At 908 where Foerster prints *esforcier* instead of the C reading *resforcier* it is a moot point whether the elimination of the *r* gives an element which is not in the manuscript. At 1954 the spelling *Guingomars* with *o* for *a* is covered by Foerster's note to line 1691 where he explains that for names which are well-known in Arthurian romances he gives the spelling which he considers normal. The manuscript forms are easily available from the footnotes. At line 4546 the correction of *averes* to *avroiz* is indeed unsupported by the manuscripts, the form being invented by Foerster to preserve the metre.

where the arbitrary standard of reference has included an interpolation (although it will not be possible to tell which is which). These data can then be processed by comparing the number of times each pair of manuscripts agrees on the omission of a couplet. Various factors, including the arbitrariness of the reference text, mean that all manuscripts will agree with all others to some extent, but this is of no consequence because the instances where the relationships are at all pronounced still stand out from the general background.

For each couplet that is omitted a record is made of how the manuscript tradition divides. Instances where one manuscript stands alone against six are eliminated; the other cases are analysed by counting the number of times each pair of manuscripts is found to be in agreement, regardless of how many other manuscripts also agree with them and regardless of whether the agreement is over the inclusion or the omission of the couplet.

The relations between manuscripts are shown by tabulating the results in the form of a matrix. If the order of the manuscripts is varied the matrix can be arranged so that, as far as possible, the highest numbers lie along the diagonal and the numbers in the rows and columns progressively decrease towards the other two sides. The particularly high numbers indicate a close relation between a pair of manuscripts and the order in which the manuscripts have to be arranged gives a more general guide to the way in which the relations are distributed. It is not usually possible to obtain a perfect resolution for the matrix and some compromises have to be accepted.

Since the method does not depend upon absolute precision it is possible to take the data from Foerster's critical apparatus without making a rigorous check against the original manuscripts. The results of examining the omissions in Erec in this way give a matrix for which the

best arrangement available is:

	C	E	H	P	B	V	A
C	-	51	58	41	57	59	54
E		-	77	50	34	32	27
H			-	47	49	37	32
P				-	70	40	37
B					-	64	53
V						-	85
A							-

The pairs EH, PB, VA stand out with a disjunction between EH/PB but a much closer relation between PB/VA. The one manuscript which cannot be fitted into the pattern however the matrix is arranged is C because it is related almost equally to all the other manuscripts. If C is eliminated the resolution is perfect except for a small discrepancy at the disjunction between EH/PB.

These results can be paralleled by conducting a similar test on the manuscripts' placing of the large initials (taken from the original documents, since Foerster's large initials are purely editorial). The results give the order CHEPBVA and identify the pairs HE, PB, and VA.

Tests of this sort are not very precise but they do produce an order for the manuscripts which corresponds to the results obtained by Foerster and Micha. The surprising result is that both tests suggest a relation between H and E, rather than H and C. The effect of this is that they fail to confirm the alpha branch of the stemma. There could be various reasons for this, and no doubt the lack of subtlety in the method is an important factor (especially if C is closest to the original text). On the other hand, the difficulty cannot be blamed entirely upon the method, because it emerges that the evidence for the relation CH is less than substantial.

Micha gives four examples of where C and H are said to have an error in common, but even in these instances they do not always share an identical text and it is not clear that they are necessarily in error.²⁹

1. A 3102, tint par les frains Les chevaus jusqu'a l'andemain se lit dans HC tint par les frains Tote nuit (Tote la nuit, H) jusqu'a l'andemain; tint reste sans complément et le vers ne se comprend pas. Il y a peu de chance pour que H et C aient tiré cette leçon fautive de 3100 Onques la nuit.

(Micha, pp. 87-8)

The text that Micha quotes is not complete nor wholly accurate:

Onques la nuit ne somella,
Einz tint par les frains an sa main
Les chevaus jusqu'a l'andemain.

(Erec, 3100)

H Onques la nuit ne sesuella
Ains tint par le fraim an sa main
Tote la nuit tresqal andemain

(B.N. 1450, fol. 147vc, 14-16)

C Onques la nuit ne someilla
Chascun cheual tint an sa main
Tote nuit iusqua landemain

(B.N. 794, fol. 12rb, 16-18)

C and H agree on line 3102 but not on line 3101. It is true that the H reading does not make sense, but although the C reading may be a little strained it does make enough sense for Mario Roques to have preserved it without emendation in his edition. There does not seem to be any certain way of demonstrating that the C reading could not be a reading of the original, and if this is the case the partial agreement with H is of no consequence.

²⁹ Mario Roques makes a similar point (Erec et Enide, p. xxix, note 1) but he does not discuss actual examples.

2. Une rédaction abrégée dans le récit du combat d'Erec contre Guivret décèle une parenté probable entre nos mss. (saut au même):

Ne furent pas navré a mort,	HC:	Ne furent pas navré a mort.
Mes duremant furent blecié.		Anmi le chanp les ont gitées
Isnelemant sont redrecié,		(C = Les lances ont el chanp gitées)
S'ont a aus lor lances retreites,		
Ne furent maumises ne freites.		
Anmi le champ les ont gitées		
(v. 3784-89)		

(Micha, p. 88)

Since the text of H does not make sense and is easily explicable by a common type of scribal error, it is reasonable to suppose that it represents a case of omission. The C reading is not so straightforward. It is quite likely, as Micha supposed, that Guiot encountered a text corresponding to that found in H and made an intelligent correction to produce a readable version. On the other hand he did quite well to realize that it was the lances which were thrown away. It is not wholly inconceivable that C here preserves the original reading and that an interpolation was made into the hypothetical exemplar β . H is notorious for having more omissions than any other manuscript and β almost certainly did contain several interpolations.

3. Nous lisons une faute évidente dans HCE à 1816 et suiv. Le roi Artur demande à l'assistance si Enide ne doit pas remporter le prix et recevoir le "baiser du cerf".

De voir dire ne soit nus lanz	HCE:	De voir dire ne soiez lanz
Se ceste n'est de ma meison		Se ceste n'est de ma meison
La plus bele et doit par reison		Et s'ele ne doit (Ele doit bien
Le beisier del blanc cerf avoir.		et, C) par reison
		Le beisier del blanc cerf avoir.

Le texte de PBVA dissocie les deux idées, comme il est préférable:
1) Enide doit avoir le baiser parce qu'elle appartient à la maison du roi, 2) parce qu'elle est la plus belle.

(Micha, p. 88)

What Micha sees as a "faute évidente" Foerster prints as the good text. In favour of Micha it can be agreed that the PBVA reading (especially

out of context) is more fluent and easier to understand. It parallels lines 47-8 in particular and, to a lesser extent, lines 1770 -1 and 1774-5. Whether its facility is to be counted in its favour or against it is another question. In support of Foerster it can be argued that the point being made is that no one could conceivably quibble over Enide's beauty, but they could raise the technical objection that she is not a member of Arthur's court, which was a condition of entry to the competition. Arthur is being a stickler for detail (as indeed the rest of his long speech implies) whilst everyone else is too dazzled by Enide's beauty to concern themselves with technicalities. Thus Arthur would be portrayed as the meticulous and scrupulously fair judge, carefully consulting his court before taking action, and making sure that there will be no grounds for future dissent when the effect of Enide's appearance has had time to wear off.

4. La lacune de HCB à 1195-6 n'est pas absolument probante: ces vers sont indispensables, ce n'est pas le nain seul qui doit se mettre à la discretion de la reine, mais aussi Yder et sa pucelle. Mais H a laissé tomber les deux vers précédents, et cette suppression de 4 vers a peut-être été faite indépendamment.

(Micha, p. 88)

These lines are not really as indispensable as they seem. The "pucelle" has very little to do with it (no one ever takes her very seriously, and she had no responsibility for the insult to the queen). As for Yder, he has already surrendered himself to the queen in the very first line of his speech: "Dame, an vostre prison M'anvoie ci uns jantius hon," (1187-8). The agreement of C and B, manuscripts from different branches of the tradition according to Micha's own diagram, would normally be definitive in establishing a reading of the original.

Although these examples suggest the possibility of a relationship between C and H, they could hardly be regarded as conclusive. There is an instance where C and H almost certainly do have an error in common, but it is of such a type that they may have produced it independently. Lines 407-8 refer to Enide's dress:

Mes tant estoit li chainses viez
Que as cotes estoit perciez.

The spelling *cotes* is a reconstruction by Foerster. BVE have *coutes*, and they are joined by P with the dialect spelling *keutes*; against this CH have *costes* (C, *costez* with characteristic *z* for final *s*).³⁰ The correct reading is established by a later passage:

Povretez li a fet user
Cest blanc chainse, tant que as cotes
An sont andeus les manches rotes.

(Erec, 1568)

Since the text specifically mentions the sleeves it is clear that Chrétien envisaged the dress as being worn through at the elbows. In the later passage the rhyme has preserved the potentially ambiguous form *cotes* where in the earlier passage the scribes have all used forms which make their meaning clear, so that even those who have interpreted the text correctly may have been improving upon their original.

In his edition from "la copie de Guiot" (=C) Mario Roques preserves the manuscript reading and admits the possibility of an error rather

30 In A the line is rewritten: *Que partot estoit depecies*. Foerster's critical apparatus contains a minor error for the A reading with *partoit* instead of *partot*. There is also a confusing misprint in that the group which should read BVE is given as BAE, thus seeming to record two quite different readings for the same manuscript A.

grudgingly:

Costez apparaît comme une erreur pour cotes . . . ce peut être une mauvaise graphie: l'addition de s devant une consonne se rencontre ailleurs dans le ms. de Guiot et aussi z pour s final . . . Le v. 1549 atteste du moins pour cette forme la valeur de "coudes".

(Roques, Erec, p. 214)

There seems little real doubt, however, that C and H do share an error in this instance; the difficulty is that the scribes may have been influenced independently by a relatively well-known topos.

Both Hartmann von Aue (Erec, 325) and the Norse redactor (Erex saga, p. 11) describe the dress as being torn rather than just thin at the elbows, and they give the impression that Enide's body could be glimpsed through the tears. The psychological and erotic attractions of depicting a woman in a dress which has been torn in such a way as to make her body visible are only too obvious, but the topos of the torn dress also served more elevated purposes.

Claude Luttrell refers to a part of this tradition when he relates Chrétien's text to a passage from Alan of Lille's Anticlaudianus.³¹ Working from Roques' edition (which has the C reading *costez*) he quotes as a parallel:

Sed tamen in partes vestem diffibulat istam
In variis scissura locis.

(Anticlaudianus, I, 313)

But Alan had also used the topos before in his De planctu Naturae:

In qua parte, tunica suarum partium passa discidium, suarum injuriarum contumelias demonstrabat.

(Rolls Series 59, II, 441)

And in both cases Alan probably had in mind the example of Boethius and his

31 The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance, pp. 19-20.

description of Philosophy:

Eandem tamen vestem violentorum quorundam sciderant manus
et particulas quas quisque potuit abstulerat.

(Consolation, I, pr. I)

This description was sufficiently well known for it to have been the model for cathedral sculptures at Laon and Sens. Although the tears in the robe are one of the few details which have not been reproduced in the sculptures, all the other details which do appear serve to confirm that the artists (or their patrons) were thoroughly familiar with the text.³²

This same line (408) is one of the cruces discussed by Michel Huby in his L'adaptation des Romans courtois en Allemagne (p. 70). His presentation of the material is hampered by the fact that he takes his manuscript readings from Foerster's critical apparatus including the misprint BAE. He associates Hartmann's line 365 *gezerret begarwe* with the A reading of *partot*. *Begarwe* (Ambras MS. *beygarbe*) meaning "everywhere" does correspond to *partot*, and Huby could have strengthened his case by pointing out that the other reading peculiar to A, *depecies*, is the equivalent of *gezerret*. But A is a manuscript from the end of the thirteenth century whereas Hartmann's poem was composed 1190-95. It is not likely that the variant extends very far back into the tradition because it is unknown to all other manuscripts including the closely related V (late thirteenth or early fourteenth century). We can safely assign the A reading to the influence of the topos -- or the scribe's wishful imagination. There is, however, a possibility that Hartmann could have been prompted to think in terms of the topos by encountering a reading of the CH type *costez/costes* (or by interpreting *cotes* in that way).

32 See Emile Mâle, L'Art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France (Paris, 1925), pp. 89-92.

Chapter Three

HARTMANN VON AUE

Hartmann's literary output consists of two Arthurian romances, Erec and Iwein, two stories with a more religious orientation, Gregorius and Der Arme Heinrich, a Lover's Complaint (Die Klage) and a number of lyrics.¹ Opinions have varied on the order in which these were composed but Erec is almost certainly to be considered as the first of the longer works, preceded only by Die Klage and some of the lyrics. Opinions also vary over the dates of composition. It appears from his "Crusader's Songs" that the poet took part in one of the Crusades. The most straightforward reading of the text suggests that this would have been the Crusade of 1197, but other interpretations allow for the possibility that it may have been in 1189. It seems that most of his major works (if not all of them) had been completed before his departure for the Holy Land, so that even a conservative estimate would mean that Erec was certainly written by 1195 and perhaps even before 1190.

Erec is preserved by a single manuscript, the well-known Ambraser Heldenbuch copied for the Emperor Maximilian I by Hans Ried at the beginning of the sixteenth century.² The text is almost complete but lacks the beginning of the poem (probably a few hundred lines). The resultant absence of a prologue may have robbed us of specific information about the sources

1 For an up to date review of scholarly opinion on Hartmann reference should be made to the latest edition of Peter Wapnewski's Hartmann von Aue in the Sammlung Metzler. This work is kept under constant revision and includes all the necessary bibliography. On a larger scale, but more tendentious, is Hendricus Sparnaay, Hartmann von Aue, 2 vols (Halle, 1933-8). A summary of Sparnaay's views can also be obtained from his chapter in ALMA, "Hartmann von Aue and his Successors".

2 Details of the manuscript can be obtained from Albert Leitzmann, "Die Ambraser Erecüberlieferung", in Beiträge, 59 (1935), pp. 143-234. See also Thomas P. Thornton, "Die Schreibgewohnheiten Hans Rieds im Ambraser Heldenbuch", in ZDP, 81 (1962), pp. 52-82.

from which the story was taken. Hartmann's Iwein follows Chrétien's Yvain sufficiently closely for the relationship of the two texts to be readily apparent, but for Erec the question is rather more complicated. In the early years of the debate the use of Chrétien's poem could be inferred only by comparison of the texts. This study was undertaken by Karl Bartsch in 1862, and it became clear that although the two poems often corresponded quite closely there were also major differences.³ The discussion was put on a different footing in 1898 when O. von Heinemann discovered in the library at Wolfenbüttel a fragment of Erec which filled a lacuna of fifty-seven lines in the Ambras text.⁴ At the twelfth line of the lacuna the fragment reads "alse uns Crestiens saget", thus indicating the use of the French poem.⁵

Although it is possible to compare the narrative of the French and German poems episode by episode it is difficult to establish verbal correspondences which might serve to identify a particular form of the French text. Karl Bartsch gave a list of some two hundred instances but most of these allow for a degree of freedom in the translation. The difference of language, and Hartmann's own developed technique of narrating the story in his own way, stand between the critic and the version of Chrétien's poem that served as Hartmann's source.

A possible way out of the difficulty would be to examine instances

3 "Über Christians von Troies und Hartmanns von Aue Erec und Enide", in Germania, 7 (1862), pp. 141-85.

4 The fragment was published in full by von Heinemann in his "Wolfenbüttler Bruchstück des Erec", ZDA, 42 (1898), pp. 259-67. The lines which fill the lacuna are also given in the editions of the complete text which have been published since 1898. In the edition by Albert Leitzmann (revised by Ludwig Wolff) the lines from the fragment follow line 4629 and are numbered separately so as not to disturb the numbering of the Ambras text.

5 The question of whether the differences between the two poems are the result of Hartmann knowing other sources or of his using his own imagination still remains, and will be discussed to some extent in connection with the study of Gereint fab Erbin.

where proper names have been transferred from one text to the other, for in theory a name by its very nature does not have to be translated. In practice, however, the problem is that the spelling of unfamiliar names is one of the most variable features of any textual tradition, even when no change of language is involved. In the case of ordinary words the scribe easily recognizes what is intended, because where his exemplar is difficult to read his understanding of the context enables him to choose from a relatively small range of possibilities. He recognizes words as complete units and his instinctive predictions of the sense will automatically avoid misreading and even correct some of the mistakes of his exemplar. In contrast, an unfamiliar proper name has to be deciphered letter by letter so that even the slightest ambiguity can easily produce a corruption. When the mistakes can be made so easily there is every chance that the same error can be made independently by several scribes.

Thus, it is not likely that a clear picture would emerge even in the case of the French manuscripts, and transferring the names into German can only have increased the difficulties. Differences of pronunciation and the demands of the new metre and new rhymes will all have taken their toll. In the particular case of Hartmann's Erec the situation is even worse, because it is more than doubtful whether the surviving manuscript, copied some three hundred years after the original, reflects the poet's own spelling.⁶

6 The attempt to establish the relation between Hartmann's text and the French manuscripts using the spelling of the names has been made by Michel Huby in an important section of his book L'Adaptation des romans courtois en Allemagne, pp. 83-5. His task was not made easier by taking the data from the published editions by Wendelin Foerster and Albert Leitzmann (revised by Ludwig Wolff). Foerster has a note to line 1691 which reads: "Ich habe die einzelnen Namen, die in den Hss. oft in der buntesten Weise verschrieben sind, in ihrer normalen Form in den Text gesetzt". But even the forms given in the critical apparatus do not always correspond exactly to the manuscript readings. The result is that there are one hundred and fifty-five errors or omissions distributed between the text and the variants. Leitzmann's rate of error is even higher. In the part of the list which

There is, however, in the Erec text a unique opportunity for circumventing nearly all of these difficulties, for in one instance the material is available in a fundamentally different form. When Enide is introduced to the court for the first time Chrétien and Hartmann name the knights of the Round Table who were present. There are, of course, the usual variations of spelling between the French manuscripts and between the French and German versions, but there is also a variation of quite another kind. The fact that the names have been compiled into a list means that the contents of the list itself may vary independently from the forms adopted for each of the elements which are included.⁷ In the French manuscripts names are present or absent according to whether the line which contains them has been copied. This means that the presence or absence of a name is a function of the extent to which the manuscript has omitted or interpolated complete lines of text. In consequence the names which are included in the German poem can be used to discover the likely omissions and interpolations of the underlying French exemplar.

It cannot be assumed that the list in the German poem is an exact reflection of what Hartmann found in his French manuscript, for the German poet even more than the French scribes could be responsible for omissions, additions and rearrangement. Nevertheless, the evidence to be obtained from considering the list as a whole is much more reliable than the evidence provided by considering variations of spelling in the individual names.

corresponds to Chrétien's (i.e. 1629-95) the printed forms of the names differ from the spellings in the Ambras MS. on some seventy occasions. No doubt many of these are deliberate editorial interventions. In the case of the German the correct spellings can usually be recovered from the Notes to the edition by Moritz Haupt, second edition (Leipzig, 1871), but even these are not entirely free from error. Most of these errors in the editions would be considered, for normal purposes, trivial variations of spelling, but when they are involved in the consideration of textual cruxes they take on a wholly disproportionate significance.

7 The roll of knights is not the only list of names in the two poems, but it is the only list which has the relevant type of variation.

Hartmann's exemplar and the French manuscript tradition

i. The French manuscripts

The longest version of the list of knights in the French manuscripts is attested by BVA and it is this version which Foerster prints in his critical edition (lines 1691-1750), although he does express some reservations about lines 1741-50. Only B has all sixty lines (line 1736 is not in V, and 1745 not in A), but since both V and A variants infringe the rhyme scheme it is safe to assume that the lines in question were present at an earlier stage of the tradition.⁸

The agreement of BVA occasions no surprise except that one would expect P to be a member of the same group. The text in P is eighteen lines shorter than that of BVA, but there are indications that P derives from a tradition which had a longer form of the list. In the case of the couplet omitted at 1737-8 the agreement of C with BVA is a strong argument that the P text is secondary (perhaps related to HE which omit 1735-8). The two important omissions however are 1722-8 and 1741-8. The first looks as though it may even have been deliberate. In order to preserve the rhyme pattern it has been necessary to change line 1721 and to omit line 1730. The whole context reads:

1719 Apres sist cardos descargas
 1720 Vns chevaliers de grant soulas
 1721 Et cauerons de rebedas (*mss. rhyme -ic*)
 1729 Giffles li fix doc et caulas
 1731 Et vns valles de grant vertu
 1732 Lohos li fix le roi artu

(B.N. 375, fol. 285ra, 31-6)

If not deliberate the abbreviation is presumably due to a scribal error

⁸ The lines present in each manuscript (and those implied by Hartmann's version of the list) are shown schematically in Volume II, where there is also the complete text of the French and German versions.

associated with the rhyme in *-as* (saut du même au même). Given the agreements between manuscripts which are not otherwise closely related it is virtually inconceivable that P should be alone in preserving the original text. Whether the alteration was deliberate or not, the implication is that the ancestry of P at some time contained a longer text. Strictly speaking there is no way of knowing whether the lines omitted corresponded either in number or content to the lines which have been preserved by the other manuscripts, but it is the most natural assumption.

The omission at 1741-8 is a more difficult matter but the presence of the final couplet 1749-50 suggests that it may not necessarily be due to any association with C, H or E, which all lack 1741-50 (C also 1739-40). More specifically, the form of the P version for line 1749 implies a correction from the text found in B. P reads:

1739 Et li fix keu le senescal
 1740 Gronesis qui moult sot de mal
 1749 Et plains fu de malaventure
 1750 Nonques de verite not cure

(B.N. 375, fol. 285ra, 41-4)

The reading of the BVA tradition (transcribed from B) is:

1748 Ce fu cil qui recut le cor
 1749 Au roi plain de male aventure

(B.N. 1376, fol. 107rb, 26-7)

The BVA text is undoubtedly the lectio difficilior; Foerster describes it in his notes as "sehr dunkel". The important point, however, is that the P version of the line will fit equally well into either context (following line 1740 as in P, or following line 1748). Thus, if the "interpolator" of the BVA tradition began from a text of the type that is preserved in P he would have no reason for changing the line. But, if the line is to follow line 1740 as it does in P, only the P form of the line is acceptable,

so that if the exemplar had the BVA text an alteration would be mandatory. It is much more likely that a scribe should have clarified the text of an exemplar which had an omission than that a scribe, just because he was making an interpolation, should have unnecessarily changed a line to make a clear text obscure. It would appear, therefore, that an ancestor of P had a longer form of the text for these lines, and given the usual associations of this manuscript it is natural to assume that this longer text was substantially similar to the BVA tradition.

Thus, the manuscripts (P)BVA form a group over against C, H, and E by containing (or at least implying) a significantly longer text. Variations between C, H, and E cast doubt on whether they form a group together in any respect other than their opposition to (P)BVA. All three manuscripts have several individualistic variations,⁹ but there is some indication that H and E belong together. Their agreement at 1707-8 is not decisive because lines 1706-9 contain the names of four Yvains and this could have occasioned independent errors. Similarly the effect of their correspondence at 1721-2 is weakened by H lacking the whole section from 1715-24. More convincing is the agreement at 1735-8; the fact that P also lacks the second of these two couplets (for whatever reason) does nothing to detract from the agreement between H and E. The pairing of C and H at 1709-10 may be fortuitous since the agreement involves the three Yvain couplets. Both manuscripts lack two of the couplets, but not the same two. C alone lacks 1705-6, agrees with H in lacking 1709-10, but then also wants 1711-12; H, on the other hand, lacks two couplets together, 1707-10, agreeing with E for the first and C for the second.¹⁰

9 Ignoring the partial agreements with P whose text has been explained in a different way, C is alone in lacking 1705-6, 1711-12, 1727-8, and 1736-40; H alone lacks 1719-20 and 1723-4; and E alone lacks 1725-6 and 1731-2. E also interverts lines 1693 and 1694 (not noted by Foerster).

10 This shifting pattern of agreement is most easily seen in the schema given in Volume II.

This background of individual variation and anomalous agreement between C, H, and E makes all the more impressive the two instances where all three manuscripts lack the same lines, and especially when these "omissions" occur as complete blocks. At 1715-18 the tradition divides CHE/PBVA and at 1741-50 the same agreements would recur if it were not for the fact that P has lost 1741-8. If we accept the earlier argument that the state of the P text actually implies the BVA tradition, we can use the variants at 1715-18 and 1741-50 to identify two distinct versions of the list of names. The shorter version is characteristic of CHE (but preserved only imperfectly by each individual manuscript), and the longer version is characteristic of (P)HVA. Which of the two traditions was the original has yet to be determined.

Although it was said that the spelling of names was not usually a reliable guide to the textual relations there is just one instance in the list which defies the generalization. According to the printed text one of the knights was Gronosis, the son of Kay the Seneschal (1739-40), but the form *Gronosis* is almost certainly the result of an error confined to one particular branch of the tradition. The original of the name was presumably the Welsh *Garanwyn mab Kei* (Garanwyn the son of Kei) who appears in Culhwch and Olwen.¹¹ One might expect in French a form of the type **Granuins*, composed almost entirely of minims and offering countless opportunities for misreading. The French manuscript which reflects this form most accurately is H which reads *Grainoins*. This reading is not supported by any of the other Erec manuscripts (C, unfortunately, lacks

¹¹ WM 465.34-5; Jones 104.13. The name *Garanwyn* also occurs, apparently, in poetry of relatively early date, for it is included in the list drawn up by T. Gwynn Jones in his article "Bardism and Romance", THSC (1913-14), p. 278.

the couplet altogether; E and A are both individualistic with *Ennios* and *Groelius*) so Foerster quite naturally preferred the consensus of PBV.¹²

There is evidence, however, that Erec manuscripts which are now lost did at one time contain forms very close to the H reading. In the French prose version of Erec the Paris MS. has omitted the name, but the Brussels MS. has the form *Gerimons* (or perhaps *Germions*).¹³ It is not specifically stated that he is the son of Kay but this is in keeping with the tendency towards abbreviation both in the number of names given and in the absence of most of the patronymics. The order in which the list appears makes the correspondence clear enough.

Slightly less certain evidence is available from Les Merveilles de Rigomer, an Arthurian romance from the late thirteenth century which includes lists of names which have clearly been borrowed from Erec.¹⁴ A knight appears named variously as *Gremions* (7072), *Gerimons* (13612), and *Germion* (16120). The name is not attested in other romances and, since it occurs in the company of known borrowings, it provides confirmation for an Erec manuscript with a form of the name similar to that found in H and the prose version. The spelling that Chrétien himself used is irrecoverable but it was probably not too far removed from **Gronuins*, although perhaps

12 The critical apparatus gives no variants for these manuscripts so they are presumed to have the text reading. B and V do have *Gronosis* but P has the slight variant *Gronesis*.

13 The manuscript is extremely difficult to read (see the description of it in Chapter 6), and especially in a microfilm. The text of it published by Wendelin Foerster (Erec, pp. 253-94) was originally prepared from a transcript made by Dr. E. Heuser (see Erec, p. xvi) but Foerster was later able to collate the proof sheets of the printed text with the original manuscript (Erec, pp. 334-6). Since Foerster was able to examine the original, due weight should always be given to his readings, but it appears from the microfilm that there may be a very slight preference for reading the almost identical minims as *mi* rather than *im*. The text of the complete list of names is given in Volume II.

14 Les Merveilles de Rigomer, edited by Wendelin Foerster and Hermann Breuer, 2 vols (Dresden, 1908-15). See the Introduction for more details of the borrowings made from Erec.

already moving towards the H reading, *Graimoins*.

Whereas the form consisting mainly of minims is eminently suitable for producing corruptions, the reading *Gronosis* is inherently more stable. It was not entirely immune from variation because it presumably gave rise to the variant in A, *Groelius*.¹⁵

The importance of the form *Gronosis* is that its distribution seems to be exactly the same as that of the longer text. Although P is not a perfect witness to the long text, and A not a perfect witness to the variant form of the name, there is good reason to believe that the archetype of PBVA had both the long text and the form *Gronesis/Gronosis*.¹⁶ Whereas in the case of the length of the list it is not immediately clear which version is original, in the case of the variant spelling the existence of forms which approximate more closely to the Welsh *Garawyn mab Kei* suggests that *Gronosis* is a corruption confined to the PBVA branch of the tradition.

ii. Hartmann's additions

Hartmann's version of the list of names occurs at lines 1629-93 of the printed editions; line 1674 has no rhyme so an omission is usually supposed at 1675, but this is not really necessary. Comparison of the German and French versions immediately reveals that from 1629 to 1665 the German text is extremely close to the French but that from this point on the two versions begin to diverge, so that lines 1671-93 have no

15 One might conjecture (amongst several other possibilities): *Gronesis* > **Grōesis* > **Groesīs* > **Groesins*, and then with long *s* read as *l*, *n* read as *u*, *Groelius*. This need not imply five actual manuscripts; the first four stages could very easily be compressed. A derivation from **Granuins* is rather more difficult.

16 The long text and the form *Gronosis* are also found together in the early thirteenth century German romance Diu Crône (see below p. 43)

counterparts in the French at all. The five intervening lines (1666-70) take some names from Chrétien's poem and some from elsewhere.¹⁷

The source (or sources) of the second part of Hartmann's list have not been identified, and it has been supposed that these names were interpolated by a later scribe. The difficulty with this contention is that there is reason to believe that at least some of the names were in manuscripts of Hartmann's text at an early stage. Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival (c.1215) and Heinrich von dem Türllein's Diu Crône (c.1225) both contain names which occur in the part of the list not found in French manuscripts. There is no guarantee that Hartmann's text was the source from which these names were taken because, in theory, an interpolator could have gathered the names from these two other well-known texts. There are, however, various factors which make this unlikely.

In the first place, not all the names occur in these two romances so that one would need to suppose an even wider range of sources; secondly, if the interpolator had the text of Parzival in front of him he made a very frugal and most curious selection from it. In contrast, Wolfram certainly knew Hartmann's Erec (he refers to it quite specifically in Parzival, 143.21ff.), and there is good evidence to show that he borrowed names from the earlier part of the list.¹⁸ Amongst the correspondences with the additional names especially instructive is the form *Kaylet von Hoscurast* (25.17) which in spite of slight differences of spelling seems

17 All this can easily be confirmed from the texts given in parallel in Volume II.

18 The borrowings are listed in Jean Fourquet, "Les noms propres du Parzival", in the Mélanges Hoepffner, pp. 245-60. References to Parzival are to the text published by Karl Lachmann, and it is advantageous to use the edition revised by Eduard Hartl (Berlin, 1952) which contains an Index to the proper names. Where names are cited they are taken from this edition and accompanied by a single reference; the other occurrences of the name can be traced by using Hartl's Index.

to reflect a couplet in Erec:

Le vnd gahillet
von Hochturasch Maneset

(Erec, 1672)¹⁹

These lines are usually punctuated on the assumption that *Hochturasch* was the land of *Maneset*, but Wolfram seems to have taken it differently. If the editors are right the collocation of *gahillet* and *Hochturasch* would be purely coincidental and this would be strong evidence that Wolfram took the name from this couplet and not elsewhere.²⁰

Wolfram's *Schianatulander* (435.19) is an almost exact equivalent of Hartmann's *Ganatulander* (1691). The spelling with initial *Sch-* is characteristic of Wolfram for French names beginning *J-* (*Schoydelacurt*, 178.21) or *Ge-*, *Gi-* (177.29 *Schenteflurs* cf. Erec 7786; Willehalm 240.26 *Schilbert*). It is unlikely that an interpolator would take the trouble to efface Wolfram's spelling so the direction of the borrowing is fairly clear.²¹

19 Quotations from Erec have been read from photographs of the Ambras MS. in the Taylor Institution, Oxford. The transcription has been made with the minimum of editorial intervention; the principles are explained in more detail in the introductory remarks to the text given in Volume II.

20 The form *Kailet* (but without patronymic) also occurs at line 6032 of Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's Lanzelet, edited by K. A. Hahn (Frankfurt, 1845). Ulrich did make borrowings from Hartmann's Erec and this may be one of them. Other examples (but from the earlier part of the list) can be found by using the translation by Kenneth G. T. Webster, revised by Roger Sherman Loomis (New York, 1951), in which the Index to the Notes can be made to serve as a table of proper names. The occurrence of *Kailet* is of special interest because the Lanzelet was probably composed before 1200.

21 There are borrowings from the earlier part of the list which confirm Wolfram's use of Hartmann's text. The spelling *Grāharz* (68.22 *Gurnemanz de Grāharz*) is dependent on Hartmann's need for a rhyme with *Coarz*; Chrétien (in Erec and Perceval) probably used *Gohort* but certainly a form with *o* as the vowel of the rhyme syllable. *Ithēr von Gaheviez* (145.15) depends on Hartmann's line 1658 "Iher Gaheries" (see the Note on this line in Volume II). The separation of the name *Galegantins li Galois* into *Galogandres* (208.15) and *Gāldes* (80.14) reflects Hartmann 1662 "Galagaundris vnd Galoes". But

In all, Parzival supports at least four of the eleven doubtful couplets, but the crucial text for controlling the composition of Hartmann's list is Diu Crône. Heinrich von dem Türllein made a careful comparison of Hartmann's version of the list of names with a manuscript of its French original, and he took pains to ensure that his superior knowledge did not go unnoticed:

Ob ich daz reine gesinde,
 Daz mit dem Saelden kinde,
 Dem küenege Artûse, was,
 Als ich ez vil dicke las
 An Êrecke, nande,
 Den von der Swâbe lande
 Uns brâhte ein tihtaere,
 Ich weiz wol, daz es waere
 Überic unde unlobelich.
 Die ungenanten genant,
 Die vil lîhte unbekant
 Meister Hartman wâren.

(Diu Crône, 2348)

It is a simple matter to show that Heinrich compiled his list from his French manuscript and not the German.²² It is also clear that his exemplar contained the form of text which is characteristic of the group PBVA, established by the inclusion of names found only in the longer form of the list and by the indicative spelling *Gronosis* (2327). Although Heinrich

especially convincing is the use of the new rhyme pair added by Hartmann at 1650-51, *Garel* (583.17) and *Titurel* (251.5 and in the separate poem named after him). *Manpfilyôt* brother of *Kyôt von Katelangen* (186.21-2) may be equated with 1679 *Malivliot von Gattelange* (see below p. 44). Some more doubtful borrowings from the additional names at the end of the list are *Plippalinôt* (597.3) from 1686 *Inpripalenot* (which could even be from the French 1743 *Letrons de Prepelesant*), and *Ehkunat* (178.19) from 1669 *Equinot*, but there is always a difficulty in matching isolated names when the forms are not confirmed by the patronymics.

22 The complete list of names is given in Volume II in parallel with Chrétien's and Hartmann's. It has been taken from the edition by Gottlob Scholl (Stuttgart, 1852). The forms which most clearly indicate the use of a French manuscript are those which result from the wrong division of words, 2323 *Nebedons* from Chrétien 1735 *Ne Bedoiers* (PA *bedoins*, V *bediens*), 2327 *Nelotons* from Chrétien 1743 *Ne Letrons* (A *litons*). There are also correct forms where Hartmann made alterations, 2326 *Galarantis li Gâleis* from Chrétien 1738 *Galegantins li Galois* (B *galerantins*, A *galerantis*) against Hartmann 1662 "Galagaundris vnd Galoes".

regarded his French manuscript as the real authority in these matters he was willing to use Hartmann's text when there was some advantage to be gained. *Lenväl* (2292) and *Brantriviers* (2303) occur only in the list of names and are used to rhyme with names for which no rhyme would have been available from the French. *Lenväl* rhymes with *Parzival*, who is not in the French list at all; *Brantriviers* rhymes with *Bleos von Bliriers*, whereas the French *Bliobliheris* (1714) is not in the rhyme position. These two names occur in the same line of Erec (1678 "Lanfal vnd Brantrivier"), and the other line of the couplet (1679 "Malivliot von Gattelange vnd Barcinier") contains a name known to Wolfram (cf. Parzival, 186.21-2 "Von Katelangen Kyôt / unt der werde Manpfilyôt").

It is clear, therefore, that manuscripts of the Erec circulating at the beginning of the thirteenth century contained a number of names which were not in Chrétien's. One would need to suppose that an interpolation had been made very early indeed to account for the borrowings by Parzival, Diu Crône, and (perhaps) Lanzelet. Even if there may have been some later interpolations we may be sure that it was Hartmann himself who first added to Chrétien's list. This is a point of considerable importance because it makes it unlikely that he would have deliberately omitted material that was already in his source. Thus if names are not in Hartmann's list there is a strong presumption in favour of believing that they were not in his French manuscript.

iii. Hartmann's exemplar

Since the German and French lists are with few exceptions in exactly the same order, there is not much doubt over the correspondences. In many cases the Ambras spellings are identical with forms found in one or other of the French manuscripts, and the divergences can easily be explained by slight phonetic changes, common scribal errors, or simply

different orthographic conventions.²³

There are three types of variation between French and German versions of the list which cannot be accounted for as different spellings of what are essentially the same names. Most striking are the additions which have already been discussed, but there are also two changes of order and two (perhaps three) significant "omissions".

The changes of order would seem to be associated with the finding of suitable rhymes. As long as Chrétien rhymes together two names there is no difficulty in the German because the rhyme can simply be carried over as it stands. When Chrétien chooses to make rhymes in some other way Hartmann is presented with a problem which he solves by various devices. The simplest solution is to rearrange the order of words in the lines to bring a name into the rhyme position and then (if necessary) make some minor change in the form of the final syllable. An alternative is to write a line which has no basis in the French original, and which does not use a name at all. On one occasion Hartmann introduces a new pair of names (*Garel* and *Titurel*) to rhyme together, and it is significant that this rhyming pair is the only instance where extra names are inserted in the early part of the list where the source is clearly a manuscript of

23 Most of these are ~~sufficiently~~ straightforward ^{enough to} that they need no discussion; the more difficult ones are dealt with in the Notes to the complete text given in Volume II. The name which might have been of particular interest, Hartmann's equivalent to *Grainmoins/Gronosis*, has undergone such distortion that the form in the French exemplar cannot be determined. The Ambras MS. has *Lernfräs fil Gain* (1670). There is no difficulty over accepting *Gain* as a possible spelling for the name of the seneschal, for the manuscript has many variants including *Cain*, *Chaim*, and *Chayn*. The *ai* (or *ay*) is a constant feature, and the *n* is guaranteed by the rhymes (1152 *sin*, 4679 *sin*, 4695 *bin*). The variation between *C* and *G* is common in German manuscripts, and especially in the spelling of names (there are four examples in as many lines at 1652-5). *Lernfräs* is more difficult but not beyond conjecture. The *L* can safely be disregarded because the Ambras MS. is particularly unreliable for initial capitals, and seems to betray a habit of substituting *L* in cases of doubt -- 430 *Larsinefide* for Chrétien's *Carsenefide* (6894), the original spelling being indicated by Wolfram's *Karsnafide* (143.30, variant *Karsinifite*), and 1935 *Luntaguel* for Chrétien's *Tintaguel* (1959). The rest is guesswork -- **Gernfräs* < **Gernfoans* < **Germoans* < *Germoins*?

Chrétien's poem.²⁴

All this works well enough until line 1719 of the French which calls for a rhyme in *-as*. In this instance Hartmann would seem to have observed that the problem repeated itself just a few lines later at 1729. The obvious solution was to use 1729 to provide the rhyme for 1719 but in passing he also noticed that there is a further difficulty at 1725. All three problems are eliminated by constructing a new line out of the rhyme element of 1725 and the rhyme element of 1729 and coupling this new formation with the existing 1719. What is now left is two names from the beginnings of 1725 and 1729 ending in *-es*, line 1726 of which the last name also ends in *-es*, and the couplet 1727/8 which has an *-es* rhyme. Hartmann therefore seized the opportunity to construct a whole passage of six lines all with *-es* rhymes, and in order to do so he introduced at this stage line 1738 with a slightly modified ending, the adjective *Galois* made into a proper name *Galoës*.

The Ambras MS. has no name corresponding to *Le Chevalier au Cor*, but it does have a parallel for the other name of the couplet:

Après le Chevalier au Cor
Fu li Vallez au Cercle d'Or.

(Erec, 1711)

auch sass da zehandt
der mit dem guldin Poge genant

(Erec, 1648)

It is possible that the French manuscript did have an orphan line at this point, but the most likely explanation is that Hartmann treated *Le Chevalier au Cor* as a description rather than a name. He may have actually believed that the phrase was intended to apply to one of the other knights (either through his own misreading or through a corruption in his exemplar), but

24 Examples of these devices would be 1637 *Todines* replaces *sauvages*, 1638-9 *Gandelus* and *Esus* (from *Eslis*?) moved to the rhyme position, 1644 ending in *mer* to rhyme with *Lafulter*, 1648-9 *zehandt* with *genant*, 1650-51 *Garel/Titurel* for Chrétien's *rist/sist*.

it is also quite possible that the change was deliberate. The descriptive quality makes it a nuisance to a translator; it would be clumsy to leave it untranslated but difficult to find a satisfactory equivalent. The problem was aggravated by two descriptive names coming in the same couplet; so Hartmann paraphrased one of them and wrote a line to go with it. The resultant omission of *Le Chevalier au Cor* may thus be attributed to Hartmann rather than the French exemplar.²⁵

There is no other instance where Hartmann has omitted a name from a line or a couplet which is known to have been in his exemplar. With just the one exception of line 1711, wherever the German text has one of the names from a couplet it always has all the other names which the couplet contains. This observation confirms the deduction made from Hartmann's lengthening of the list, that he would be reluctant to discard material that was ready at hand.

The three sections of Foerster's text for which no correspondences can be found in the Ambras MS. are 1715-8, 1735-6, and 1741-50. Of these, 1735-6 containing the name of *Bedoiers li conestables* is problematical because it occurs in a part of Hartmann's list where the names seem to have undergone rather greater distortions than usual:

Et Sagremors li desreez	Saygremors vnd Praueraus
Cil ne doit pas estre obliez	
Ne Bedoiers li conestables	Blerios vnd Garredomechschin
Qui mout sot d'eschas et de tables	
Ne Bravains ne Loz li rois	los vnd Troy marlomechschin
(Erec, 1733-7)	(Erec, 1665-7) ²⁶

At first sight *Blerios* does not look as if it can correspond to *Bedoiers*,

25 An interesting sidelight on Hartmann's difficulty is provided by a modern repetition of the dilemma when *Le Chevalier au Cor* does not appear in Louis-Fernand Flutre's Table des noms propres des romans du Moyen Age.

26 *Praueraus* is presumably from *Bravains*; *los vnd Troy* from *Loz li rois*. For more details see the Notes to the complete list in Volume II.

but it is possible to conjecture how the German form might have arisen. The spelling *Bedoiers* is Foerster's normalization; the manuscripts which support it actually read *Bedoiers* (CB). HE lack the couplet, and the other manuscripts imply an archetype with a slightly different form (PA *bedoins*, V *bediens*, cf. Diu Crône 2323 *Nebedons*).²⁷ The agreement of C and B implies a reading of the original, and there is no doubt this form is in one sense the more correct (from the Latin of the Historia Regum Britanniae *Beduermus*, and ultimately the Welsh *Bedwyr*). But the very fact that the name had such a pedigree would make it possible for scribes to introduce the "correct" form in despite of their exemplar, and with this in mind the reading of B in opposition to PVA with which it is thought to have shared an archetype becomes suspect. There is indirect evidence that the PVA form was not restricted to this group because Les Merveilles de Rigomer has the form *Bedios li conestables*.²⁸ If one could suppose that Hartmann encountered a similar form and wrote *Bedios*, it would not have been difficult for a German scribe to produce the corruption *Berlios*, and it would not have been impossible for Hans Ried to have done the rest. This explanation is not so compelling that one could be sure that Hartmann's exemplar had the couplet 1735-6, but ^{since} it is ~~sufficiently~~ plausible that one could not be sure that the couplet was lacking.

The two cases where it is certain that Hartmann's text does not have equivalents for the relevant names are 1715-18 and 1741-50. These sections are precisely those which are characteristic of the longer version of the

27 Foerster gives the A reading as *bedouis* and this is not impossible. On Diu Crône see Note 22 above.

28 On the relevance of readings from Rigomer see Note 14 above, and the text to which it refers. *Bedios li conestables* occurs at 13624 and *Bedios* again at 13633; this is the same list of names as that which contains the form *Gerimons* (13612).

list found in (P)BVA; they are the only occasions when the other three manuscripts all agree. It is clear that the absence of these names is not due to omissions by later German scribes because Diu Crône confirms their absence early in the thirteenth century. The names supplied by Heinrich von dem Türlein from a French manuscript of the PBVA type are those which occur in these two sections. Heinrich also lengthens the list by adding the names which appear in Erec (French and German versions) as those of the guests who attend Erec's wedding, but he does not invent names for the sake of outdoing Hartmann. All the names which he adds have been taken from a French manuscript of Chrétien's poem, and his statement about Hartmann's shorter version of the list may be taken at face value.

Hartmann's agreement with CHE does not necessarily prove a relationship with these manuscripts because there is the possibility that the agreement is over the original text. What it does prove, whichever version is original, is that a relationship between Hartmann and PBVA is out of the question (for this section of the text at least). If the two crucial sections are interpolations, Hartmann is shown to be unaware of important PBVA characteristics; if they are omissions by CHE, Hartmann's exemplar is definitively related to this group by virtue of their having an error in common. Strictly speaking this conclusion applies only to this part of the romance. In practical terms, however, the difficulty of finding cruces in other parts of the text where the readings of Hartmann's exemplar and the relationships between the French manuscripts can be ascertained with such assurance, makes it virtually impossible to argue for any close relation between Hartmann's text and the supposed archetype of PBVA.²⁹

29 This conclusion is compatible with that reached by Foerster (although he expresses his view in a positive form that may not be justified): "Hartmann gehört zu der Gruppe HC der französischen Handschriften". This remark appears without further comment in the Zusätze to his edition of the text (Erec, p. 341).

iv. Chrétien's original text

The manuscripts PBVA are known to be related in other parts of the romance and their spelling of *Gronosis* establishes that they are related in the list of names. The number of disagreements between C, H, and E means that they are some distance removed from the archetype which they share and this lends particular weight to readings which are common to all three (i.e. the lack of lines 1715-18 and 1741-50). The H reading *Graimoins* confirms that in at least one respect that archetype had preserved a form close to the original where the archetype of PBVA had a corruption.

The agreements between CHE and Hartmann's version are also of special significance. In the first place it is to be noted that Hartmann does not support any of the instances where C, H, and E are individualistic or agree in pairs (with the possible exception of 1735-6 lacking in HE), and that there is no agreement of all three of CHE which is unsupported by Hartmann. Thus it is clear that the archetype of CHE almost certainly contained precisely those lines implied by Hartmann's version of the list. Although the spellings of the Ambras MS. are erratic, the German text is actually a more reliable guide to what lines were in the CHE archetype than the French manuscripts themselves.

The second point about the agreements of CHE with Hartmann's version is that there are strong a priori reasons why his manuscript of Chrétien's poem should have had a text very close to the original. Although the age of a manuscript is not in itself an accurate guide to its reliability, the chances of a manuscript containing a reliable text do significantly increase when there are fewer intermediaries.

Since the theory of textual criticism is often based upon the transmission of the Biblical and Classical texts the calculation of this type of probability is normally irrelevant, but for a very specific reason. Where there is an interval of up to eight or nine centuries between the

date of composition and the oldest extant manuscript a difference of a further fifty or a hundred years does not greatly affect the number of intermediaries to be expected, because in both cases the range of possibilities is so large that they almost entirely overlap each other, and the calculation becomes unusable.

In considering the works of Chrétien the time scale is foreshortened to such an extent that differences of only ten or twenty years can become meaningful. In the case of Hartmann's manuscript it is virtually certain that it was copied while Chrétien himself was still alive. If Hartmann's version was composed 1190-95, the time allowed for the writing of the German poem and the copying of the French manuscript could easily place the exemplar before 1190. This would be, in all probability, less than twenty years after the original (1170-80). The earliest of the extant French manuscripts cannot be placed much before about 1220, which is another thirty years later.³⁰ There is almost certainly a greater interval between the earliest of the extant French manuscripts and Hartmann's exemplar, than between that exemplar and Chrétien's own text.

There is no way of being completely certain which of the two versions of the list was the original, but there is little doubt that the shorter text is to be preferred. The longer text is found only in manuscripts which are known to be closely related and which are known to have an error in common in this section of the text (the reading *Gronosis*), so there is no difficulty in supposing that lines were interpolated into the archetype which they share. The shorter text, on the other hand, is attested by manuscripts which differ quite considerably over the form of text which they have each preserved. This implies that they are some distance removed

30 The manuscripts can be dated only approximately. C and B are usually assigned to "the early thirteenth century". Mario Roques (*Erec*, p. xxxviii) points out that C cannot be earlier than 1213 (because of an allusion in one of the texts which it contains), but suggests that it is not very much later.

from the archetype containing the text which is established by the two occasions when they are all in agreement. But C is one of the earliest manuscripts so that an archetype from which it is already some distance removed is likely to be close to the original. The comparison with the version of the list found in the Erec of Hartmann von Aue enables us to date the archetype of CHE to 1190 or even earlier.

In preferring the shorter text it must be made clear, however, that it is not preserved intact by any of the extant manuscripts. Versions of the longer text exist complete in B, and with only a single line missing in V (1736) and A (1745). The shorter text could have been reconstructed from studying agreements between C, H, and E, but it is doubtful if such a reconstruction would have been undertaken if it were not for the evidence provided by Hartmann's translation. The German text is a valuable witness to the fact that the shorter text did really exist in the form implied by the CHE tradition, and it is this which enables us to regard the differences between C, H, and E as the vagaries of later manuscripts.

It should be remembered, however, that the use of Hartmann's version in this context is dependent upon the type of material which has been under consideration. The German text is of no value unless it is possible to see beyond it to the French exemplar. Details which might have been invented independently by Hartmann himself are of little significance, and in the last resort there are extremely few details which a skilled narrative poet would be incapable of inventing. When items are compiled into lists, where consideration must be given to the choice of items and to the order in which they are presented, the possibilities of independence are greatly reduced; and when the items are proper names the possibilities are practically at vanishing point.

Thus it has been shown that the content of the list of names can best be discovered by examination of the German version, but for the forms of

individual names we must, of course, turn to the French manuscripts. To some extent we may convert this experience into a principle of method. Hartmann's poem may be of assistance in determining whether his French exemplar contained particular lines of text, but it is not likely to be a reliable guide to readings within a given line. This principle, together with Hartmann's independence from PBVA, can be applied to good effect in considering the relationship between Chrétien's poem and the Welsh Gereint fab Erbin.

Chapter Four

GEREINT FAB ERBIN

The story of Gereint fab Erbin is one of a number of medieval Welsh tales which have become familiar to English readers under the title of "Mabinogion".¹ The eleven stories which make up this collection are of different ages. Some probably existed as oral tales long before they received their present forms in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Others, and Gereint is amongst them, seem to have been committed to writing slightly later and may not greatly antedate their written forms.

The title "Mabinogion" is a modern coinage. It should apply to only four of the stories and should then be used in the singular, the stories being described as the Four Branches of the Mabinogi.² The plural form *mabinogion* derives from what is almost certainly a scribal error, and the indiscriminate use of the term to refer to almost any medieval Welsh tale stems from a misunderstanding of the nineteenth century.³

1 This chapter is purely introductory; the major question of the relation of Gereint fab Erbin to Erec et Enide will be dealt with in Part II.

The Welsh text was first published (with an English translation) by Lady Charlotte Guest between 1838 and 1846 (see further Chapter 8, Section 1). The editions to be used are the diplomatic transcripts, The Text of the Mabinogion and other Welsh tales from the Red Book of Hergest, (=RM) edited by John Rhys and J. Gwenogvryn Evans (Oxford, 1887), and The White Book Mabinogion, (=WM) edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans (Pwllheli, 1907). This latter has recently been reprinted with a new Introduction by R. M. Jones (Cardiff, 1973).

The best translations are, into French, by Joseph Loth, Les Mabinogion, second edition (Paris, 1913), and, into English, by Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones, The Mabinogion (Everyman's Library, 1949).

2 The Four Branches are Pwyll Penduic Dyuet, Branwen Uerch Lyr, Manawydan Uab Llyr and Math Uab Mathonwy. They have been edited as Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi by Sir Ifor Williams, second edition (Cardiff, 1951).

3 For more information on the use and meaning of the term see the Introduction to the translation by Gwyn and Thomas Jones, pp. ix-x.

The terminology achieved a general currency as a result of the success enjoyed by the translations of Lady Charlotte Guest, and the obvious convenience of such a title has maintained the usage ever since. At first the term was recognized as a plural and consistently used as such, but more recently there has been a trend towards using it as a singular form.⁴ In view of the fact that the word is not genuinely Welsh I shall treat it as if it were wholly English, singular in meaning, referring collectively to the eleven stories which appear in the Everyman's translation. This adds to the inaccuracy of the term, but if its convenience is the only justification of its continued use it may as well be made as convenient as possible. This usage ~~of the term~~ also reinforces the impression that the stories form a unified collection. They were in reality brought together by Lady Charlotte Guest (along with one other, the Hanes Taliesin, which has failed to maintain its place), and her choice of what to include was determined by her opinion of what was genuinely "Welsh". There is no indication that these stories were thought of as a collection in the Middle Ages by the scribes who copied them, but the time has long since passed when anyone could make an effective stand against the idea that these eleven stories belong together.⁵

Three of the tales in the Mabinogion relate the same stories as three of the romances by Chrétien de Troyes. Gereint fab Erbin corresponds to Erec et Enide; Iarlles y Ffynnawn (The Lady of the Fountain), otherwise known as Owein, corresponds to Yvain; and Peredur fab Efracw varies between correspondence with Chrétien's Perceval and completely independent narrative. These three Welsh stories are sometimes referred to as the Three Romances

4 The use of the term as a singular is found, for example, in the Introduction to the Everyman's translation (p. x "the Mabinogion itself"); and in the chapter by Gwyn Jones in Wales through the Ages, edited by A. J. Roderick (Llandybie, 1959), I, 138-9.

5 See further the section on Lady Charlotte Guest in Chapter 8.

but it should be remembered that the manuscripts do not present them as a group apart.

The text of Gereint occurs complete in two closely related manuscripts, the White Book of Rhydderch (Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch) and the Red Book of Hergest (Llyfr Coch Hergest).⁶ The White Book is dated 1300-25 and the Red Book 1375-1425. It is not clear whether the one manuscript is a copy of the other or whether both scribes worked from the same exemplar, but the text of each is virtually identical in all but the orthography. The relation between these two manuscripts need not be the same for all the texts which they have in common, but for Gereint at least there seems to be no conclusive answer.⁷

Another important version of the Gereint text is to be found in Peniarth MS. 6, part iv, but approximately the first third of the story is missing as the result of a gathering having been detached and lost. This manuscript, dated c.1275, is the earliest text of Gereint that has been preserved. Only a little later, c.1285, are two folios from another manuscript (preserved in Peniarth MS. 6, part iii) whose text is related to that of Peniarth MS. 6, part iv.⁸

6 The White Book of Rhydderch, in the National Library of Wales, consists of Peniarth MSS. 4 and 5, which are bound together in white vellum. The texts of the Mabinogion are in Peniarth MS. 4. The Red Book of Hergest is Jesus College Oxford MS. CXI, now deposited in the Bodleian Library. These manuscripts, and all the other Welsh manuscripts mentioned later, are fully described by J. Gwenogvryn Evans in his Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1899-1905).

7 The readings which are relevant to the solution of this problem have been collected by Robert M. Jones. They were listed first of all in his article "Y Rhamantau Arthuraidd", in Bulletin, 15 (1954), pp. 109-16 (Gereint readings pp. 113-14), and they are given again in his Introduction to the new edition of WM (Gereint readings pp. x-xi).

8 The text of part iv was published in Revue Celtique, 7 and 8 (1886-7), pp. 401-35 and 1-29, edited by Gwenogvryn Evans and with a translation by Joseph Loth. Evans reprinted part iv in WM (in parallel with the White Book text), and also gave the text of part iii (WM, pp. 283-5).

The date of the extant manuscripts indicates that the story of Gereint was in writing at least as early as the middle of the thirteenth century. The linguistic and orthographical evidence suggests an exemplar in the early years of the same century. Using the technique developed by Sir Ifor Williams for dating the Four Branches (Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi, pp. xiii-xx) it would be possible to show that there are traces of an orthographic system similar to that found in the Black Book of Carmarthen (usually dated c.1200).⁹ The difficulty is that we do not know how long after that date the system might still be current -- and much would depend upon the training of the individual scribe.

Certain details of the text have been taken to suggest the thirteenth century rather than the twelfth. Foremost amongst them is the fact that the horses are covered in armour. Although it may be true that horse armour was not much in use until the thirteenth century there are literary references of earlier date. The History of Gruffydd ap Cynan contains the phrase (p. 147) "ar y varch arfawg" (from his armoured horse). Similarly Bertran de Born refers to "chavaliers e chavals, armatz" (Appel, no. 40), and Wace in Le Roman de Rou wrote "vint Guillaume le filz Osber / son cheval tot covert de fer" (Holden, III, 7489-90).¹⁰

These examples would be rather doubtful evidence for the actual use of horse armour in the twelfth century, but they do show the possibility of including such references in works of literature. There is, however, a difference between these casual passing remarks (prompted perhaps by the

9 Compare the chapter by Idris Llewelyn Foster on "Gereint, Owein and Peredur", in ALMA, where he comments (p. 205): "It may safely be said that there is good orthographical and linguistic evidence for an exemplar dated about 1200".

10 These texts cannot be dated exactly but they are all from the late twelfth century. Details of the editions can be obtained from the Bibliography.

usefulness of the rhyme), and the repeated and more explicit references in Gereint.¹¹

The extent of the French (or Norman) influence on the type of society depicted and on the vocabulary is also usually taken to imply a later date. It is true that if the details which seem to reflect French society are taken individually many of them can be explained in other ways, but the fact remains that there is a considerable difference between the society depicted in the Three Romances and that in the Four Branches. Exactly what this implies in terms of the chronology is a more difficult question.

The extreme dates for the composition of the text in its present form are given by the date of the earliest manuscript (Peniarth MS. 6, part iv), which is c.1275, and by the use made of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae (c.1136).¹² If the author of Gereint used the Historia in one of the Welsh translations we would almost certainly need to suppose a date in the thirteenth century, but there does not seem to be any way of telling whether he knew the text in Welsh or in Latin (or even in French). It seems, from the linguistic evidence, that there was a manuscript of Gereint in the early years of the thirteenth century, but there is no indication that the text is any older than that. The suggestion that, in its present form, Gereint was composed in the period between 1200 and 1225 is probably not too far from the truth.¹³

11 The phrase "armour a-plenty upon the men and upon their horses" is a repeated formula; more explicit is: "his horse was accoutred with heavy shining outlandish armour" (Jones, 251.35) but even here the latter part of the sentence is a formula.

12 The case for a significant borrowing from the Historia will be argued in detail in Chapter 11.

13 This discussion deliberately avoids the question of the relationship with Erec et Enide which is to be discussed in Part II. If it were decided, however, that Gereint fab Erbin drew upon Chrétien's poem, then the date of the French text would be a terminus.

If the story of Gereint in the Mabinogion is relatively late the name *Gereint mab Erbin* is of considerable antiquity in Welsh tradition.¹⁴ There is a body of evidence which associates the name with Devon and Cornwall, and there is a good possibility that Gereint was an historical figure, presumably a prince of Dumnonia. Although the name itself is attested in various sources, little is preserved of the traditions associated with it. There are some references in Latin saints' lives, but the main record of the hero's fame is a Welsh poem which is preserved (in slightly different forms) in The Black Book of Carmarthen and the Red Book of Hergest.¹⁵ The poem describes Gereint's feats at the battle of Llongborth (perhaps Langport in Somerset). In the Red Book version Gereint himself is slain in the battle and the poem was for a long time known as "Marwnad Geraint ab Erbin" (The Elegy of Geraint son of Erbin).¹⁶ In the Black Book version the inclusion of a preposition (though probably in error) alters the sense so that it is Gereint's men who are killed and not Gereint himself.

14 The most convenient source of information is Rachel Bromwich, Trioedd Ynys Prydein (Cardiff, 1961) which has a well documented section of Notes to Personal Names (pp. 263-523). The historicity of Gereint is touched upon by H. M. Chadwick, "The Foundations of the Early British Kingdoms", in Studies in Early British History (Cambridge, 1954), pp. 47-60.

15 The text is available in various forms, but a useful source for the non-specialist is Gwyn Williams, The Burning Tree (London, 1956), pp. 42-5 where the Welsh is accompanied by a parallel translation.

16 This title is from the edition of the text in the Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales, second edition (Denbigh, 1870), pp. 83-4 where the poem is given as the work of Llywarch Hen. The text is a composite from the two manuscripts, almost identical with that published by William Owen in The Heroic Lleges and other pieces of Llywarch Hen (London, 1792). (William Owen, also known as Owen Pughe, was one of the editors of the Myvyrian Archaiology) On the composition of the text see the remarks by Egerton G. B. Phillimore in Y Cymmrodor, 7 (1884-86), pp. 121-2, in his article, "A Fragment from Hengwrt MS. No. 202".

Chapter Five

EREX SAGA ARTUSKAPPA

Neither the date nor the place of the original translation of Erex saga is known with any certainty. It owes its preservation entirely to manuscripts of Icelandic origin but this is a common state of affairs for the riddarasögur (sagas of chivalry).¹ Wherever there is specific information available it invariably indicates that the translation was done at the Norwegian court. This is no more than one would expect, for the French influence, particularly via Anglo-Norman England, was more likely to be felt first of all in Norway than in the more isolated society of Iceland, whose main contacts with the rest of Europe were through the Scandinavian kingdoms.²

Where Norwegian manuscripts of riddarasögur have survived, either complete or as fragments, they are from the thirteenth century whereas the Icelandic manuscripts are copies from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, or even later. It may be inferred from this, as a rough generalization, that the riddarasögur were popular in Norway during the thirteenth century

1 The manuscripts are described by Foster W. Blaisdell in his edition, Erex saga Artuskappa (Copenhagen, 1965). Several are simply copies made from an Icelandic manuscript now in the Arnamagnean Institute, Copenhagen (181b fol.); the other major witness to the text is in the Royal Library in Stockholm (Papp. fol. nr. 46). This latter was copied in Norway in the seventeenth century, but from an Icelandic exemplar (Ormr Snorrason's book) which is now lost (presumed destroyed by the fire in Stockholm castle in 1697). The case for seeing Ormr Snorrason's book as the exemplar of the Stockholm MS. of Erex saga is argued by Blaisdell in his Introduction (pp. xxxi-iii); the history of Ormr Snorrason's book itself is documented by Jonna Louis-Jensen in the Introduction to her edition of Trojumanna saga (Copenhagen, 1963).

2 The most useful survey of the translated literature is to be found in Eyvind F. Halvorsen, The Norse version of the Chanson de Roland (Copenhagen, 1959). Reference may also be made to the article by Phillip M. Mitchell on "Scandinavian Literature", in ALMA, pp. 462-71, but this contains statements about Erex saga for which no evidence or authority is given, and several factual errors.

but then failed to attract much interest thereafter, whereas they were not known in Iceland until rather later but continued to be popular for much longer. There is no great difficulty in suggesting why this might have been so.

Several examples show that the initial stimulus for the translations came from the court of Hakon Hakonarson (born 1204, King of Norway 1217-63). This policy was to some extent continued by Hakon's successors, but by the end of the thirteenth century changes in foreign and economic policy caused Norway to turn away from England and France and increasingly towards the Hanse towns of North Germany. After 1319 Norway and Sweden were for nearly thirty years subject to the same king, and the court was for most of this time in Sweden rather than Norway. In addition, the steady development of the Norwegian language would with the passing of time create an ever increasing difficulty for the understanding of the old texts.

In Iceland the situation was quite different. There was no court to promote the foreign influence in its early stages, but once the riddarasögur had become known and established there was much less reason for them to disappear. The high level of literacy and the extreme conservatism of the language provided an excellent atmosphere for the preservation of texts and the continued copying of manuscripts.

Thus Tristrams saga and Möttuls saga, for example, are preserved only by Icelandic manuscripts, but it is known from the texts themselves that both were prepared for the court of Hakon Hakonarson in Norway.³ The preface attached to Tristrams saga gives more information than we have for any of the other riddarasögur:

3 See Halvorsen, pp. 17 and 20.

Hér skrifast sagan af Tristram ok Ísönd dróttningu, í hverri talat verðr um óbaeriliga ást, er þau höfðu sín á millum. Var þá liðit frá hingatburði Christi mcccxxvi [ms. 1226] ár, er þessi saga var á norroenu skrifuð eptir boði ok skipan virðuligs herra Hákonar konungs. En bróðir Robert efnaði ok upp skrifaði eptir sínni kunnáttu með þessum orðtökum, sem eptir fylgir í sögunni ok nú skal frá segja.

(Kölbing, p. 5)

Here is written the story of Tristram and Queen Isönd, which tells of the immoderate love they had for each other. 1226 years had passed since the birth of Christ when this story was written in Norwegian at the bidding and command of the gracious lord King Hakon. Brother Robert composed it to the best of his ability and gave the story the written form which follows and in which it will now be told.

From both style and content it may be presumed that Erex saga was prepared in the same milieu. This implies not only a Norwegian provenance but also that the translation was made at a time when court circles in Norway were still favourably disposed towards the riddarasögur, which probably means before 1320 at the latest.

The extreme dates for the composition of Erex saga are provided by the date of Chrétien's poem upon which it is based and the date of the earliest manuscript which is known to have contained the text -- Ormr Snorrason's book. It has been argued elsewhere that Chrétien probably wrote Erec et Enide some time in the course of the decade 1170-80. It has also sometimes been suggested that the Norse redactor knew and used the Middle High German version by Hartmann von Aue, which can scarcely be much later than 1190-95. The evidence for this specific dependence is not very convincing, but the relative chronology of the two texts could be inferred from the fact that in the later twelfth century cultural exchanges between France and Germany were much more freely made than between France and Norway. This would give a terminus a quo of about 1200.

The lost Icelandic manuscript, Ormr Snorrason's book, certainly contained the text of Erex saga because excerpts were taken from it in the seventeenth

century by the Swedish lexicographers, notably Olof Verelius. His Index Lingvæ Veteris Scytho-Scandicæ sive Gothicæ has a preface which includes a summary of the contents of "Orms Snorrasons Bok". The entry "Eriks Jwenis" (written on a single line) is presumably to be construed as two separate references: 1) Erex saga, 2) Ivens saga. Excerpts in the Index itself can be traced to the text of Erex saga. Thus the evidence that Ormr Snorrason's book contained the text of Erex saga is independent from the view that it served as the exemplar for one of the extant manuscripts (Stockholm 46). Ormr Snorrason himself was a well-known Icelandic lawman who lived at Skard in Skardsströnd, first mentioned as a lawman in 1359 and still alive in 1401. The book which bears his name was probably copied some time before 1400.⁴ It was not (as far as one can tell) either the original manuscript of the saga or even the earliest in Iceland. This would mean that the actual translation could scarcely have been carried out very much later than 1350.

If, as seems likely, it was King Hakon Hakonarson who encouraged the beginnings of French influence upon Norwegian literature, then a terminus is provided by the beginning of his reign in 1217. For the sake of convenience, scholars often take the date of Tristrams saga (1226) as the starting point for the riddarasögur in general. It is also quite likely that Erex saga was translated at approximately the same time as the Norse versions of Chrétien's other romances, Parcevals saga and Valvers þattr (Gawain's story), which together correspond to Perceval, and Ivens saga, the translation of Yvain. In the case of Ivens saga we have the information that it was written at the request of "King Hakon the Old", for it ends with the sentence:

4 Jonna Louis-Jensen, Trojumanna saga, gives the information on Ormr Snorrason on p. xii, and the dating of the manuscript, after a study of its language and orthography, on pp. xxx-xxxii. The date is repeated by Foster Blaisdell, Erex saga (p. xxxi): "probably from the 14th century".

Ok lýkr hér sögu herra Ívens, er Hákon konungr gamli lét snúa
ór Franzeisu í Norroenu.

(Ivens saga, p. 115)

And here ends the story of Sir Iven, which King Hakon the Old
had translated from French into Norwegian.

There is some difficulty in understanding what is implied by calling Hakon
"the Old", but the suggestion made by Halvorsen seems reasonable:

The epithet "the Old" cannot, of course, have been used in King
Hakon's earlier years; it may have been added in a later MS.,
but if the translator himself wrote Hakon konungr hinn gamli,
it means that the translation belongs to the years when Hakon
was really "the Old", in contrast to his son, Hakon "the Young"
(born 1232 died 1257), who was officially made king with his
father in 1240, but it would not be necessary to distinguish
between father and son by epithets like "Old" and "Young"
until about 1250.

(Halvorsen, p. 19)

Hakon Hakonarson is known to have encouraged learning and the arts in
general, and there is the specific textual evidence that it was he who
instigated the translations of Tristrams saga, Elis saga, Strengleikar,
Möttuls saga and Ivens saga.⁵ This would make it quite reasonable to suppose
that Erex saga was translated, if not actually at King Hakon's request, then
during the period of his influence. This would mean about 1220-1270. Hakon
himself died in 1263 but the interest in foreign literature continued for
some years after his death. However, the translations which can be dated
to this later period are from Latin originals rather than French.⁶

5 The references are collected by R. Meissner in Die Strengleikar (Halle,
1902), p. 115.

6 A specific example would be Alexanders saga translated at the instigation
of King Magnus the Lawmender (reigned 1263-80) using as its source the
Alexandreis by Walter of Chatillon. Halvorsen (p. 10) refers to the mannerism
of imitating Latin syntax.

It was shown by Eugen Kölbing as long ago as 1871 that the principal source of Erex saga was the poem by Chrétien de Troyes.⁷ The two narratives correspond so closely that there has never been any need to call this opinion into question, and it is accepted without reserve by the most recent editor of the text.⁸ The nature of the relationship between poem and saga has been examined in detail by Sister Jane A. Kalinke in her unpublished Ph.D. thesis.⁹ Her examination of the saga's relation to variants in the French manuscript tradition is inconclusive in placing the exemplar used by the Norwegian translator, but effective in showing that Chrétien's poem was the source he had at his disposal. A major part of the thesis is devoted to comparing the different structures of Erex saga and Erec et Enide, and this part of the discussion has been published in her article on "The Structure of the Erex saga", in Scandinavian Studies, 42 (1970).

In common with other Norse adaptations from French romances Erex saga significantly abbreviates its source. It is characteristic of the saga style, whether in Icelandic compositions or in translations, to narrate only the bare facts. As a result, the set descriptions, the reflective monologues, the authorial comments, and even some of the finely observed details of description or behaviour, all fall by the wayside. In compensation the Norse redactor supplies an extra chapter with two completely new adventures. There is no suggestion that this chapter reflects a knowledge of a different version of the Erec story, because the material is added as a single block and corresponds to nothing that can be found in the other versions. The

7 "Die nordische Erexsaga und ihre Quelle", in Germania, 16 (1871).

8 Foster Blaisdell (p. xii): "ES is a prose translation of the medieval verse epic Erec of Chrétien de Troyes".

9 "The Erex Saga and Its Relation to Chrétien de Troyes's Erec et Enide" (Indiana University, 1969), written under the supervision of Foster Blaisdell.

similarity of its language and its style to the rest of the text indicates that it was probably inserted by the original redactor, perhaps quite literally in compensation for what he had omitted from his source.¹⁰

Erex saga is divided into fourteen chapters, each division being made in exactly the same place in both of the main manuscripts except that Stockholm 46 presents Chapters I and II without a break. Eleven of these divisions correspond to places in Erec et Enide where at least one of the French manuscripts has a large initial. This degree of correspondence is not, however, as impressive as it might seem.

In the first place the distribution of large initials through the seven French manuscripts is so extensive that it might almost be surprising if correspondences with at least one manuscript were not to be found for virtually any point of the story. This objection would have little force if the French and the Norse texts were the same length. As it is, however, the saga is so abbreviated that the average distance between initials (in one manuscript or other) represents an extremely small section of the Norse text. Secondly, since it is likely that the large initials were inserted into the French manuscripts with some regard to the course of the narrative it would not be surprising if an entirely independent division should break the Norse text at points of the narrative which had already been chosen by a French rubricator. This objection seems even more telling when it is realized that it is precisely on three occasions where the large initials do not occur at obvious breaks in the narrative that the Norse chapter divisions show no correspondence.

10 In his study, "The Composition of the Interpolated Chapter in the Erex saga", Scandinavian Studies, 36 (1964), Foster Blaisdell concludes (p. 126): "As it is now preserved, Chapter 10 forms a unit which is both in content and style well integrated into the whole". The role of this chapter in the structure of the saga is discussed by Sister Jane Kalinke.

Both these objections turn on the fact that fourteen divisions in the Norse is too small a number in comparison with over two hundred divisions in the French manuscripts to produce a result of which the significance is immediately apparent from the figures themselves. It might still be possible to relate the structure of the saga to the large initials, but a series of attempts to place the comparison on a firmer footing have so far proved disappointing.

Chapter Six

THE VERSION IN FRENCH PROSE

In its complete form the French prose version of the Erec and Enid story exists in a single manuscript, now in Brussels (Bibliothèque Royale 7235), published in a diplomatic transcript by Wendelin Foerster in his critical edition of Chrétien's poem (pp. 251-94). The prologue indicates the origins of the work:

Et pour ce que l'en m'a presentee le histoire de Erec le filz
du roy Lach en rime, je au plaisir de dieu occuperay mon
estude vng petit de tamps a le transmuer de rime en prose.

(Erec, 253.3)¹

Chrétien is not mentioned by name but there is little doubt that the text turned from verse into prose was his Erec et Enide. The close correspondence between the two narratives episode by episode, and the numerous detailed agreements, have meant that the derivation of the prose version from Chrétien's poem has never been brought into question. The extent of the textual agreement can be ^{seen by consulting Foerster's edition.} ~~judged from the passages given in Volume II.~~ The lists of names in particular provide clear indications that the adaptor was working from a manuscript of Chrétien's poem.

There is a second manuscript of the first part of the story as far as about line 2300 in Foerster's text of Chrétien's original, or pages 253-67 in his transcript of the prose redaction. The story of Erec's winning Enide, their marriage and the tournament at Tenebroc has been

1 Quotations are taken from Foerster's edition (cited by page and line) but the text has been corrected in accordance with the readings given in his Notes (pp. 334-6) which are the result of collating his proof sheets with the original. The manuscript is extremely difficult to read and there are few occasions ^{when} the readings taken from a microfilm can be used with any great confidence to correct readings which Foerster was able to take from the manuscript itself.

inserted into a version of the prose romance Guiron le courtois. The six volumes of Guiron are in the fonds français of the Bibliothèque Nationale numbered 358-63, and the Erec story appears in ff. 193rb-214va of the final volume.

Enough is known of the history of these two manuscripts to establish approximately where and when the prose version of Chrétien's Erec et Enide was prepared.

i. Brussels 7235

Foerster describes this manuscript in the introduction to his edition:

Die Handschrift ist ebenso wie der Leipziger Prosa-Cligés auf demselben Papier, von demselben Schreiber und in derselben elenden, äusserlich zwar elegant scheinenden, beim näheren Zusehen aber beispiellos flüchtigen und stellenweise kaum noch lesbaren Kursivschrift verfasst.

(Erec, p. xvi)

Foerster had previously published the text of the Leipzig MS. to which he refers (Stadtbibliothek Rep.N. 108) in his edition of Cligès (pp. 281-338), and his description of it included comments on the watermarks:

Wasserzeichen im Papier: aufrecht stehender Anker, unter dem unmittelbar in der Mitte anliegend, ein kleines Kreuz.

(Cligès, p. xxvii)

These companion manuscripts come from the library of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy from 1419 to 1467. Much of his collection is preserved in Brussels, and on the fifth centenary of his death the Bibliothèque Royale mounted an exhibition of manuscripts from his library. The manuscript of the prose Erec was included and the exhibition catalogue gives a brief description:

Ce codex est d'aspect très modeste: il ne présente aucune décoration, à part des initiales tracées à la plume et des rubriques; l'écriture bâtarde courante est très peu soignée. . . Les filigranes permettent de dater le livre vers 1450-1460 .

(La Librairie de Philippe le Bon, no. 138)

The dating of the watermarks is of some significance because Foerster's description of the watermarks in the Leipzig manuscript and his statement that the Brussels manuscript is on the same paper are a fair indication that the watermarks are the same in both cases. For Cligès the dating can be taken a little further because the text itself ends by giving the date of the redaction:

Atant finerons ceste presente histoire transmuee de rime en prose le .xxvje. jour de marz .iiiijc et liiiij.

(Cligès, p. 338)

If the work of adaptation was not finished until 26 March 1454 and the watermarks can be dated 1450-60 the Cligès manuscript was presumably written in the second half of this decade. We may presume that the copying of these companion texts by the same scribe, using the same stock of paper was not a coincidence, but rather that both manuscripts were copied at the same time.²

In any event they were both in the ducal library before 1467, for the inventory drawn up at Bruges on the death of Philip the Good describes them both in such terms that there can be no mistake in their identities. This inventory is amongst those published by Barrois in his Bibliothèque Prototypographique. The Erec manuscript appears as number 1277:

2 The Leipzig and Brussels MSS. are also described by Georges Doutrepont in Les Mises en prose (Brussels, 1939), pp. 261-4, but his descriptions are derived from Foerster (although there are details elsewhere in the book which seem to indicate that he had examined at least the Brussels MS. at first hand).

Ung livre en papier couvert de cuir jaune, collé sur papier, escript à longues luignes, intitulé: Au continuel exercice; quemenchant le second feuillet, Sourdra ung très grant domaige, et le dernier, qui furent fais; escript au dessus, Du noble et vaillant chevalier Dres.

(Barrois, 1277)³

The minor error in the title is of no consequence because the citations from the text clearly identify the manuscript in question as that of the Brussels prose Erec. *Au continuel exercice* are the opening words of the prologue (fol. 1r; Foerster 253.1); the second folio begins *sourdre vng tresgrant domaige* (Foerster 253.27); and the final folio (71r) begins *qui furent fais* (Foerster 293.39).

Several of the entries in the inventory describe manuscripts which contain prose adaptations of chansons de geste or verse romances (the Erec and Cligès manuscripts are amongst them) as being "Ung livre en papier couvert de cuir jaune, escript à longues luignes". Not all the prose adaptations are described in this way, nor are the manuscripts so described confined to prose adaptations, but it looks as though there may have been some attempt to create a collection of prose versions that was more or less uniform in appearance.

It has recently been suggested that the scribe who copied the Erec also played a part in copying the prose version of Blancandin found in another of the Burgundian manuscripts (Brussels 3577; Barrois, 13 02). This is stated by Charles François in his review article on "Le Roman de Blancandin", in Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire:

Le ms. de Bruxelles n'est pas l'oeuvre de deux scribes, mais de trois. La deuxième main (f.67v-88v), avons-nous constaté, est celle qui a aussi transcrit la prose d'Erec (Bruxelles, 7235).

(Revue belge, 43 (1965), p. 991)

3 This catalogue entry is also given by Doutrepoint (pp. 262-3) together with that for Cligès (Barrois, 1477) and a second entry for Erec (Barrois,

ii. Paris 363

As already mentioned, this is one of a set of six volumes (B.N. 358-63) which contain a reworking of the prose romance Guiron le courtois.⁴ These volumes belonged originally to the library of Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse (c.1422-92). This valuable collection was described in 1831 by Van Praet and the six volumes of Guiron appear as item LXIV in the list of one hundred and six manuscripts which Van Praet attributes to the library.⁵ The collection was impressive not only for the number of volumes it contained but more especially for the quality of those many which were richly decorated:

La bibliothèque de Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse, étoit, après celle des ducs de Bourgogne, la plus belle et la plus nombreuse de toute la Flandre. Il avoit fait exécuter lui-même, à Bruges et à Gand, par des écrivains et des enlumineurs habiles, qui se trouvoient en grand nombre à cette époque dans ces deux villes, la plus grande partie des manuscrits qu'elle renfermoit.

(Van Praet, p. 81)

Cedric Pickford disagrees with Van Praet's generalization that most of the manuscripts were produced especially for Louis de Bruges, saying that he preferred to acquire volumes from other collectors, but he confirms that

4 The presence of the Erec episode in Guiron was first indicated by E. Löseth, Le Roman en prose de Tristan (Paris, 1891), §639a, with the reference to Erec on p. 467. The manuscript was mentioned again by Cedric Pickford in his edition of the quite different prose romance of Erec from B.N. 112 (second edition, p. 17). Most recently the episode has been noted by Roger Lathuillère in his Guiron le courtois (Geneva, 1966), §277, Note 1, and §278. All these references give the impression, though maybe not intentionally, that the episode has been taken directly from Chrétien's poem and is unrelated to the prose version in Brussels 7235. The larger compilation is described in detail by Lathuillère (pp. 126-9) and a second manuscript with a similar version, but lacking the Erec episode, is the subject of his article in the Mélanges Frappier. There is also a brief mention by Pickford in his Chapter in ALMA, pp. 354-5.

5 Recherches sur Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse (Paris, 1831).

the volumes of Guiron certainly were made to order because the arms of Louis de Bruges and in particular the bombards with which he decorated his books have been incorporated into the miniatures.⁶

On the death of Louis de Bruges the library passed to his son Jean but eventually found its way into the royal collection at Blois (in the time of Louis XII). Various, not particularly thorough, attempts were made to efface the marks of previous ownership by replacing the arms of Louis de Bruges with the arms of France. Nevertheless enough signs still remain to make the Gruthuyse manuscripts easily identifiable.

Together with the rest of the library the volumes of Guiron le courtois passed through the hands of Louis XII and his successors, and into the national collection. At the time of Van Praet's researches they were numbers 6978-83 of the Bibliothèque du Roy, as which they were also described some years later by Paulin Paris (III, 63).⁷

The most recent description is by Roger Lathuillère:

Vélin; 380/275 mm; 2 col. de 31/32 lignes; initiales d'or sur fond rouge et bleu; miniatures; pieds de mouche d'or à filets noirs et bleus à filets rouges, avec parfois des prolongements dans les marges; rubriques; numérotation par le copiste, en chiffres romains et à l'encre rouge; tranches dorées; reliures en maroquin citron aux armes de France sur les plats. . .

Ce manuscrit a été exécuté pour le seigneur de la Gruthuyse . . . ; dans chaque volume, le frontispice était orné d'une bordure portant un écusson aux armes de Louis de Bruges; ces écussons ont été lavés et recouverts des armes de France.

(Guiron le courtois, p. 70)

The fact that the manuscript was written for Louis de Bruges is of

6 L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose (Paris, 1960), p. 279. Pickford is referring primarily to romances and this may account for his differing from Van Praet.

7 Les Manuscrits français de la Bibliothèque du Roi, 7 vols (Paris, 1836-48).

considerable significance, for the Seigneur de la Gruthuyse was a leading figure of the Burgundian court. His epitaph describes him as "eersten camerlinck von onsen geduchtigen heere" translated by Van Praet as "premier chambellan de notre redouté souverain" (pp. 39-40). Created a knight of the Golden Fleece by Philip the Good on 2 May 1461 he was made, two years later on 14 May 1463, stadthowder (or governor) of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland. In 1470 he found himself entertaining the fugitive King Edward IV, who had been driven from his kingdom by the machinations of Warwick and was seeking refuge with his brother-in-law Charles the Bold (Duke of Burgundy since 1467). King Edward was met by Louis de Bruges as soon as he arrived in Holland, and later entertained by him in Bruges. It seems as though the king might have been impressed with the library that he found there, because he commissioned at this time a manuscript which is now in the British Museum.⁸ Upon his restoration to the throne Edward recognized the services Louis de Bruges had rendered him by having him made Earl of Winchester (15 October 1472).

As a valued servant of the dukes of Burgundy (both as a soldier and as an ambassador) and as a fellow bibliophile, Louis de Bruges was in an excellent position to obtain access to the ducal library. Certainly his

8 Van Praet (p. 11 and note) makes this suggestion and supports it by quoting the title of a manuscript from "Casley" without further reference (presumably David Casley, A Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the King's Library, compiled in 1734). Casley is now superseded by Sir George F. Warner and Julius P. Gilson, Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections, q.v. under the entry for 15 D. i: "lequel livre fut fait a Bruges par le commandement et voulente de [treshault tresexcellant et tresuictorieux prince Edouard le quart de ce nom roy dangleterre et cetera] lan de grace mil cccc lxx". The words in brackets are on erasure and the fact that the volume is one of a set (with 18 D. ix and 18 D. x, written in 1479) suggest that it may have been written originally for another patron. Edward IV certainly possessed several manuscripts which had been executed at Bruges (see the entries in the catalogue indexed under his name -- "England, Sovereigns of, Edward IV, MSS. executed for", p. 138). But Bruges was such a well-known centre of book production that he would not necessarily have needed the visit of 1470 to arouse his interest. Nevertheless the coincidence of the date 1470 on 15 D. i is worth considering.

own library at Bruges did contain works written for the dukes of Burgundy, including some where the original manuscript was definitely in the dukes' collection.⁹ The interest shown by Philip the Good in the prose adaptations of verse romances and the fact that the library of Louis de Bruges did not contain a single example of such texts create the impression that the inclusion of the Erec story in the reworking of Guiron le courtois was made possible by the co-operation of the duke.

It is not certain that the prose Erec was produced for Philip the Good but it is highly probable. The companion prose Cligès has a prologue in which the author talks of turning the story from verse into prose "moy rendant obeissant a mon tres hault et redoubte prince". The use of the word *prince* significantly reduces the number of those to whom this dedication could apply. The phrasing of the prologue bears a considerable resemblance to the prologues of prose adaptations which were done for Philip the Good, and the fact that the only known copy comes from his library makes it virtually certain that the prose Cligès was commissioned by the duke.¹⁰ It would not necessarily follow that the prose version of Erec had the same history but there is a strong presumption in favour of it. The original verse romances from which the two texts derive were both by the same author and the extant manuscripts of the prose adaptations are very closely related.

It is not absolutely clear whether the adaptations of these two romances were by the same author. Foerster assumed that they were and Doutrepoint followed this opinion in La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne (pp. 66-7), but by the time he came to write his study of the Mises en prose (pp. 456-7) he had changed his mind. He detected

9 For example Van Praet LX, LXII, LXXI.

10 See Doutrepoint, Chapter 5, especially pp. 425-7.

a greater number of Picard features in the Erec than in the Cligès, but this would hardly be conclusive. Most recently Bette Lou Bakelaar read a paper to the Congress of the International Arthurian Society at Exeter in 1975, which showed that there was significant statistical agreement in certain stylistic points between the Erec and Cligès adaptations.¹¹ Again this would not be conclusive because the main feature of her argument was to show the difference between the Erec of the Brussels MS. and the partial version in B.N. 363. Since these differences are almost certainly due to the scribes, the similarities between Erec and Cligès may be from the same cause.

iii. The relationship between the two manuscripts

The exact relationship between the two extant manuscripts of the prose Erec is problematical, but there are strong arguments against the possibility that the text of the Paris MS. reflects an independent adaptation from Chrétien's poem. It is certainly true that there are times when the compiler of Guiron le courtois has a whole passage not found in the Brussels MS., but when the divergence is on this scale it is invariably due to his taking a completely independent line, as far removed from Chrétien's text as from the other prose manuscript. It is also true that there are differences in syntax between the two prose texts, but the amount of "scribal" variation between manuscripts of prose romances is notorious. Discrepancies of this sort do not represent an obstacle to believing that the two prose manuscripts are related, and when the two texts are set side by side the number of verbal agreements makes it quite inconceivable that the two versions are independent. Not only are there long sections where more than half the

¹¹ A summary appears in BBSIA, 27 (1975), pp. 203-4.

words are identical in the two texts, but there are also numerous agreements both in wording and in narrative detail which are not to be found in the text of Chrétien's poem.¹² Many of these are apparent from the selections given in Volume II, but it is worth looking at a few examples in more detail.

The Hunt of the White Stag is an episode common to all versions of the Erec story, and it occurs with different variations in each of the texts. The conditions of the hunt and Gauvain's objection to the reward of the kiss are identical in the two prose manuscripts, but quite distinct from Chrétien's version of this episode. The hunt is not an unexplained "custom" (as it is for Chrétien), nor is it decided upon because of a specific opportunity (as it is in Gereint). In the prose version the hunt retains an element of "custom" in that the white stag has been hunted (unsuccessfully) for some time, but the reward for killing the stag has been established by an edict of King Arthur:

Par plusieurs foiz
il auoit este chassiet et a-
uoit le roy fait vng edit
pour esmouoir son barnage
pour prendre cestui cerf
tel que quiconques le
prendroit il porroit a son
chois, sans preiudice nul,
auoir vng baisier de la
plus belle dame ou damoi-
selle de sa court.

(B.N. 363, fol. 193va, 23-33)

Par pluseurs fois
il auoit este chassie et
auoit le roy fait vng edit
pour esmouoir son barnage
que quiconques
prendroit ce cerf,
sans preiudice nul
il pourroit a son chois
auoir vng baisier de la
plus belle dame ou damoi-
selle de sa court.

(Erec, 253.21)¹³

It is to be noted also that it is the successful huntsman who is to

12 These agreements often extend to the divisions of the text indicated in the manuscripts by the decorated initials and the frequent use of the paraph (both indicated by Foerster in his edition from the Brussels MS.). The Brussels text also occasionally indents a line unmarked by a paraph (not indicated by Foerster); it is not clear whether this was intended to serve as a different kind of division or whether the paraph has been omitted in error.

13 B.N. 363 is transcribed line for line as it is written, with only the punctuation added. Foerster's text is divided to run in parallel.

decide who is the most beautiful "a son chois" and that the choice may include ladies who are married. In Chrétien's poem the judgement as to who is most beautiful rests with the court as a whole, and only the maidens (*pucelles*) are under consideration.¹⁴ Not only is the situation itself different, but Gauvain's objections to the arrangements are the opposite of those made in the poem. In Erec et Enide the kiss is a token that the maiden has been judged the most beautiful, and Gauvain foresees that each of the knights will be bound to claim this prize on behalf of his lady and defend the claim with force of arms. In the prose version the kiss is a reward to the huntsman, the beauty of the lady being almost incidental apart from increasing the value of the reward. The lady herself, however, will receive no honour by being chosen. Thus Gauvain foresees that each lady's relatives will fight to release her from the obligation of giving this kiss of doubtful morality:

De toutes les dames et damoiselles qui illec estoient n'en y auoit il point vne qui n'eust illec mari pere ou mere ou frere ou cheualier amy qu'il ne vouldist contredire au chois s'il cheoit sur sa dame ou damoiselle.

(B.N. 363, fol. 193vb, 18-26)

Des dames et damoiselles n'en y auoit pas vne qui n'eust mari pere frere ou ami et qui ne vousit contredire au baisier se le sort cheioit sur sa dame ou damoiselle.

(Erec, 253.28)

This change actually makes nonsense of the solution to the problem. In the poem Enide's dazzling beauty overcomes all objections and Erec has every reason to be delighted with the choice; but in the prose versions Erec himself should be the objector. When the kiss is eventually taken this

14 In the type of society which Chrétien depicts, this restriction is of some relevance to the difficulty which Gauvain foresees and which does actually ensue. If all the ladies of the court were included it is hard to see how anyone could be so discourteous as to deny the prize to the queen. She, as the lady of all, would command the loyalty of all, and so the problem would not arise.

difficulty is completely overlooked, and the situation depicted conforms to that of the poem.

The second example is the same list of names which was used to establish the place of Hartmann's exemplar in the French manuscript tradition. It was argued there that this list occurred in either a short form (CHE and Hartmann) or a long form (PBVA and Diu Crône). It was also argued that the spelling of one particular name as *Gronosis* was confined to the longer version of the list. Only the Brussels MS. has a form of this name, but it reads *Gerimons* (or *Germions*), implying an exemplar with the shorter text.¹⁵ The two prose manuscripts have none of the names characteristic of the longer text, so that it may be presumed that the prose version was prepared from an exemplar free from the PBVA interpolations. But the prose manuscripts give the list in such an abbreviated form that the use of an exemplar with the shorter text can be only part of the explanation, for they agree on the further omission of no less than seventeen names. The differences between them are on a much smaller scale (five omissions peculiar to the Brussels MS.; two omissions peculiar to the Paris MS.), so that even on a simple numerical basis it is clear that the agreements are not likely to be coincidental. They cannot be explained by supposing an independent use of the same manuscript of Chrétien's text, because the omissions consistently infringe the couplet pattern, and because the prose manuscripts also agree in the instances where they select just one name whilst omitting the others from the same line.¹⁶

15 The exact form of the name is hard to determine; the four minims could be taken either way (cf. Chapter 3, Note 13).

16 The omissions cover complete lines in the case of 1710-11, 1721-5, 1727, 1735-7, 1739 (in addition to the lines characteristic of the longer text but probably not in the manuscript used for the prose version, 1715-18, 1741-50). Omissions affecting part lines cover 1726 (note the omission of the rhyming line 1725), and 1729 (where both manuscripts have *Girfles* but drop the patronymic *li fis Do*, and omit the other name from the same line, *Taulas*).

The agreements between the two manuscripts are not confined to omissions, but also cover identical spellings (*Hellis*; and the final syllable of *Lohiers/Johier* against Chrétien's *Loholz*). Especially convincing is the form *Glangus* (identical in both manuscripts) which replaces: "Gales li chaus, / Grains, Gornevains et Carahés" (1726-7), and the treatment of the names of the four Yvains. Where Chrétien has:

Et Yvains li fiz Urien.
Yvains de Loenel fu outre,
D'autre part Yvains li avoutre.
Lez Yvain de Cavalot

(Erec, 1706)

the prose versions have:

Yuain le filz Vrien.

Yuain des laudes.

l'orgueilleux.

Yuain le filz Cymeneus

(B.N. 363, fol. 209rb, 11-14)

Yuain le fils Brien.

Yuain l'aduoultre.

Yuain des landes.

l'orgueilleux.

Yuain le fils Ameneus.

(Erec, 263.40)

Landes/Laudes could be from a corruption of *Leonel* in a manuscript of the poem, but it is not likely that *Ameneus/Cymeneus* reflects the reading of a Chrétien manuscript. Although they might be from a corruption of *Cavalot* the fact that this name occurs in the rhyme position would make its final syllable much less liable to distortion. Only when the name is transferred to a prose text is this constraint removed.

The addition of *l'orgueilleux* is also much easier to understand in the prose than it would be for the poem. The simplest explanation of the addition is that a redactor or a scribe, faced with the form (or what he took to be) *Yvain des landes*, added *l'orgueilleux* intending it to refer to *Yvain*. He would thus identify *Yvain des landes*, of whom he had never heard, with the well-known *Orgueilleux de la lande*, who plays a slightly greater role in the prose version than in Chrétien's poem. The extant

manuscripts, however, both punctuate in such a way as to make *l'orgueilleux* a separate name. This is not entirely satisfactory (although the form does occur as the name of a giant in the Tristan of Thomas -- Sneyd, 664 and 667; Bédier, 716 and 719). If *l'orgueilleux* was intended as an epithet, the two prose manuscripts agree not only on an addition to the text, but also in an error of punctuation.

It is inconceivable that the agreements between the two prose manuscripts could have arisen by the independent use of Chrétien's text. Clearly the poem was turned into prose just once (presumably for Philip the Good, about 1455) and the extant manuscripts both reflect this same redaction. The compiler of the Paris version has made some deliberate changes to fit the text into Guiron le courtois, some others to suit his own conception of the Erec story, and many trivial stylistic changes which probably came from his pen almost instinctively. Since the incomplete version cannot have been the exemplar for the scribe of the Brussels MS., the only question which remains is whether the Paris MS. used the Brussels text or whether both had access to a common exemplar.

In certain respects the Paris MS. follows the text of Chrétien's poem more accurately, so that if the redactor of Guiron did use the Brussels MS. he corrected it from time to time against his knowledge of the original.¹⁷ This is possible, but one wonders why he should bother. To be settled definitively this question would require a more detailed examination than time or space allow, but it looks as though we may presume that the extant manuscripts derive from a common original. This may even have been the author's draft because it seems unlikely that many copies would be made of a text of this nature, in a genre which seems to have had only a limited appeal outside the circle of Philip the Good.

17 Simple examples are the withholding of Enide's name until the marriage

Chapter Seven

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

There were three summaries of the Erec story made in the eighteenth century which are all preceded by the information that they have been taken from the poem Erec et Enide by Chrétien de Troyes. All three are due, directly or indirectly, to the scholarly interests of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye.¹ One is preserved amongst his own papers; the second is amongst the papers of his pupil Le Grand d'Aussy;² and the third, the published version in the Bibliothèque universelle des Romans, was taken from a manuscript made available by Sainte-Palaye.

i. La Curne de Sainte-Palaye

His own summary is to be found in B.N. Moreau 1724, ff. 302-20.³ It consists of a prose summary with numerous quotations in Chrétien's original verse. It is headed:

Extrait du Roman
d'Erec et Enide

Par Chrestiens de Troies ./.. Cangé

(B.N. Moreau 1724, fol. 302)

1 Jean-Baptiste de La Curne de Sainte-Palaye, 1697-1781. For a detailed study of his life and work see Lionel Gossman, Medievalism and the ideologies of the Enlightenment: The World and Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye (Baltimore, 1968).

2 Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Le Grand d'Aussy, 1737-1800. See Geoffrey Wilson, A Medievalist in the Eighteenth Century: Le Grand d'Aussy and the Fabliaux ou Contes (The Hague, 1975).

3 I have examined this in the original and all quotations from it are my own transcriptions but since time was at a premium it is quite possible that relevant details were overlooked and the conclusions reached in this section should be reviewed in this light.

There is a note (in another hand): "voy le ms du Roy 7518/2 f1R col 1 et 2".

The heading indicates that it was taken from a Cangé manuscript, and there are three which contain the text of Erec -- B.N. 794, formerly 7191/2, Cangé 73 (=C); B.N. 1376, formerly 7498/4, Cangé 26 (=B); and B.N. 1450, formerly 7535/5, Cangé 27 (previously Cangé 69) (=H). The manuscript referred to in the note as 7518/2 is now B.N. 1420 (=E), and the folio reference is accurate.

It is simple enough to identify which of the Cangé manuscripts was used as the basis of the summary because after the Explicit on fol. 320 the scribe has made the note: "6892 vers ./." which corresponds to the number of lines in B (6894 in the edition printed from it by Immanuel Bekker). C has 6878 lines in the edition made from it by Mario Roques; and H has only 6596 lines.⁴

The identification can be confirmed by reference to the text itself, a particularly telling example being found on fol. 307v where there is a quotation of four lines of verse (1747-50) which occur in only three manuscripts (BVA). Of these only B is a Cangé manuscript but there is no need to rely on this piece of external information. The names given in the prose which immediately precedes the quotation include *Breons* (1745) which is attested only by BV because A lacks the line, and the spellings *Breons* (1745) and *honolan* (1746) are those of B, where V has *Brunns* and *heberlan*.

Sainte-Palaye was in the habit of commissioning copies of complete

4 The editions by Bekker and Roques are both so conservative that their numbering can be taken as an accurate indication of the lines in the relevant manuscripts. The figure given for H has been calculated from an examination of a microfilm of the manuscript itself. Minor discrepancies in counting are inevitable because decisions must be made on how to treat the lines copied twice and the lacunae made obvious by breaks in the rhyme scheme. The difference of 16 lines between the editions made from B and C is sufficiently large for the difference of two between Bekker's edition and Sainte-Palaye's copy to be disregarded.

texts and even of whole manuscripts, and he had the full text of Erec in copies made from two other manuscripts. Many of Sainte-Palaye's papers are preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, and amongst them is Arsenal MS. 3319 which is a copy of E (the manuscript referred to in the note as 7518/2), and Arsenal MSS. 3313-8 which is a copy of P (B.N. 375, formerly 6987). Since there is no trace of his ever having had a complete copy made from B it may be presumed that the summary was meant to supplement the full text which he had in another form. And this is the point of the note referring to E.

ii. Le Grand d'Aussy

Le Grand was a pupil of Sainte-Palaye's, working for him on the projected dictionary of Old French.⁵ When he published in 1779 his Fabliaux ou Contes it was from the copies of manuscripts prepared for Sainte-Palaye that he had taken his texts, and the collection may even have been initiated and supervised by Sainte-Palaye himself.⁶ Le Grand's summary of Erec is to be found in B.N. Nouv. Acq. fr. 6226, ff. 218-21 (numbered 1-8 by Le Grand).⁷ It consists of a summary entirely in prose with no quotation, preceded by

5 The dictionary remained unpublished for just over a hundred years after his death, but was eventually edited from Sainte-Palaye's manuscripts by Lucien Favre, Dictionnaire historique de l'ancien langage françois (Paris, 1875). For more information see Gossman, pp. 177-95. Le Grand's involvement in the project is noted by Gossman (p. 187) and Wilson (p. 4).

6 Wilson (p. 6) quotes from Le Grand's preface: "Je dois à M. de Sainte-Palaye les premiers matériaux avec lesquels j'ai commencé cet Ouvrage, & qui m'en ont même inspiré le projet", Fabliaux ou Contes (1779), I, lxxxix. It is also known that Sainte-Palaye had such a project in mind because the editors of the Bibliothèque des Romans refer to it in the volume for February 1777 (p. 87): "Nous ne pouvons . . . parler des autres Fabliaux, qui d'ailleurs, doivent faire l'objet d'un Recueil que l'illustre Académicien [Sainte-Palaye] fait composer sous ses yeux".

7 I examined this manuscript at the same time as that of Sainte-Palaye and the text is given from transcriptions made at that time. I have not had the opportunity of rechecking the typed form against the original and the caution suggested earlier (in Note 3) should be applied here also.

an introduction containing critical comment.⁸ Its major characteristic, however, is that it does not treat the romance evenly. The first six pages are concerned with the first part of the romance, as far as the line "Ci fine li premerains vers" (1844); the whole of the rest (some 5000 lines) is compressed into a single page. The reasons for this are given in the introduction and are not uncharacteristic of Le Grand's attitudes to romances of chivalry.⁹ The summary is headed:

Table-ronde

Roman d'aventures,
d'amour et de chevalerie

Erec et Enide

ms. 6987. fol. 281. vo.

Q. 7518/2 = Bal. 526

7498/4 Can. beau ms. bien écrit,
bien conservé.

par Chrétien, de Troies, qui se vante dans son début que ^{ce} la poème
durera autant que chrétienté.

(B.N. Nouv. Acq. fr. 6226, fol. 218)

I have no explanation of the Q but all the other information about the manuscripts which contain the Erec text is simple to interpret and completely accurate. In 6987 (now B.N. 375 =P) the text of Erec begins on fol. 281 verso; 7518/2 (now B.N. 1420 =E) was formerly Baluze 526; 7498/4 (now B.N. 1376 =B), the Cangé manuscript used for Sainte-Palaye's summary, could well be described in the terms which Le Grand uses.

Alexandre Micha says of it (p. 43): "L'écriture en lettres de forme . . . est très agréable à lire, très régulière", and: "ce ms. est . . . exécuté avec beaucoup de soin". The binding, "maroquin rouge du xviii^e siècle", might well have been new when Le Grand saw it. It is to be noted that these three manuscripts are the same three versions of the Erec text known to Sainte-Palaye (two as complete copies and one as a summary).

8 This introduction is given in its entirety in Volume II.

9 See, for example, the remarks made by Wilson (pp. 92-3).

The source of Le Grand's summary cannot be identified with the degree of certainty that was possible for Sainte-Palaye's, but it seems that he used 6987 (=P) either in the original or, more probably, in Sainte-Palaye's copy.¹⁰ The fact that he places 6987 first in the list of manuscripts, and that it is the only manuscript for which he gives a folio reference, are already indications of his special interest in it. His introductory comments also make it certain that it was this manuscript he used as the basis for summaries of other romances by Chrétien:

J'ai déjà fait connaître de Chrétien deux autres ouvrages;
l'un . . . c'est Guillaume roi d'Angleterre; l'autre . . .
c'est Cliget.

(Nouv. Acq. fr. 6226, fol. 218)

His version of Guillaume d'Angleterre must have come from P because the only other manuscript to contain it is in St. John's College, Cambridge and would have been unknown to Le Grand.¹¹ It also happens that P has the romances in the same order as that given by Le Grand (Guillaume, Cligès, Erec).¹² The spelling *Cliget* with final *t* instead of *s* is found in the incipits and explicits of several manuscripts including P and E (though not B which does not contain this romance), but P also uses this spelling in the text itself. E can be excluded as the manuscript used for Erec because it has a different form of the line given by Le Grand as: "ci fine li premerains vers" (1844). P and B have this reading but E has: "Ici fenist li premiers vers". Less reliable is the spelling of *Pendragon*, because Le Grand may

10 In preparing the versions for his Fabliaux ou Contes he worked mainly from Sainte-Palaye's copies (Wilson, pp. 221-9) and it is likely that he proceeded in the same way for Erec.

11 The Cambridge MS. is described by Paul Meyer in "Les Manuscrits français de Cambridge", Romania, 8 (1879), pp. 301-42. Guillaume d'Angleterre is in St. John's College MS. B9, and its text is described on pp. 315-20.

12 See Micha, La Tradition manuscrite, p. 30.

have normalized this form on the basis of some previous knowledge of the name. Although only B has exactly this form, P is sufficiently close with *pandragon*, whereas E has a significant error in *pandagron*. This would scarcely justify a choice between P and B, but it might count against the use of E.¹³

It is true that Guillaume and Cligès could have been taken from a different manuscript but since E is eliminated by the line quoted in the introduction, the circumstantial evidence in favour of P out of the pair P and B is persuasive enough. There is a need for some reservations, and it is even possible that the summary was compiled from more than one manuscript, but it seems quite likely that P was the principal source, presumably, as already said, through Sainte-Palaye's copy. It may also be significant that it was mainly from this manuscript that the quotations from Erec used in Sainte-Palaye's dictionary were taken.¹⁴ Le Grand was employed on the dictionary project and might well have acquired from his mentor an opinion as to which manuscript was most suitable.

Lionel Gossman implies that Le Grand's summary was derived from the

13 These readings are taken from microfilms of the manuscripts.

14 The "Liste des principaux auteurs cités" which appears in Volume X of the published dictionary (following p. 394 but with separate pagination) is less than reliable. The manuscripts which it gives for Chrétien's works (p. 7) do not always contain the text in question. For Erec the two manuscripts are 6987 (=P) and 7995 (=B.N. 2186, a manuscript of the Roman de la Poire, which does not contain the Erec text). A search through the entries in the dictionary (although far from exhaustive) confirmed that 6987 was frequently cited. A good example from the text of Erec is to be found in the entry for Arresteus:

Li oisel qui volent par l'air,
Ne volent plus del palefroi.
Et si n'est pas de grant effroi; . . .
Qu'il n'est ombrages, n'arestis.

Rom. d'Erec et d'Enide, MS. du R. n 6987,
fol. 284, R col. 4.

The location of the passage in the manuscript is correctly given and lines 4, 5, 6, and 9 from column 4 are correctly transcribed.

summary made for Sainte-Palaye.¹⁵ This is not impossible, but Le Grand's information about the manuscripts must have come from other sources. Sainte-Palaye's summary has no reference at all to 6987, let alone the indication of the folio on which the text of Erec begins; the reference to 7518/2 does not include the information that it was formerly Baluze 526; and the reference to the Cangé manuscript used for the summary does not include either the shelfmark or the information about its appearance. Le Grand's remarks about Guillaume and Cligès certainly imply the use of a complete text in these two cases because Sainte-Palaye had no summaries made of these romances.¹⁶ On balance, therefore, it seems preferable to believe that Le Grand worked from the complete text.

iii. La Bibliothèque universelle des Romans

This collection was founded in 1775 by the Marquis de Paulmy and presented at first summaries taken mainly from printed editions in his own library.¹⁷ He did not, however, publish the volumes under his own name, although the collection was effectively under his direction until 1779.¹⁸ It seems that Paulmy did not undertake the work of producing the summaries

15 p. 327, note 2. The relevant sentence appears in the continuation of the note on page 328: "There seems no doubt that the extracts in the Bibl. des romans were specifically prepared by Le Grand d'Aussy from those of Sainte-Palaye (Le Grand's collection is in B.N. Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6226-7)". In dealing with two points simultaneously Gossman is not quite explicit over how he sees the relationships between the summaries, but he seems to be suggesting a linear progression. We shall have cause to return to the source of the published extract at a later stage.

16 See Gossman later in the same note referred to above.

17 Marc-Antoine-René du Voyer, marquis de Paulmy d'Argenson, 1712-87. His library was later to become the basis of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal.

18 See Henry Martin, Histoire de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal (Paris, 1900), p. 38: "Son prête-nom et le titulaire du privilège était Jean-François de Bastide . . . M. de Paulmy ne fut nommé que dans la seconde édition, par une note du Prospectus".

from the original sources, but that he worked on drafts prepared by others. Some contributions were made by Le Grand d'Aussy but his principal collaborator was the Comte de Tressan.¹⁹ Of his method Henry Martin wrote:

Le marquis s'était entouré de collaborateurs, au premier rang desquels était le comte de Tressan . . . qui se mit . . . à extraire, à compiler et aussi, il faut bien le dire, à défigurer nos anciens romans. Le marquis de Paulmy revoyait ces extraits et, suivant sa coutume, usait largement de son droit de retrancher et d'ajouter.

(Histoire de l'Arsenal, pp. 37-8)

Tressan became increasingly dissatisfied with the cavalier fashion in which his work was treated by Paulmy, until in 1777 he took his version of Amaudis de Gaule to another publisher. The two men quarrelled and Paulmy withdrew from the Bibliothèque des Romans leaving the direction in the hands of Tressan whilst he turned his own attention to a new project, his Mélanges tirés d'une grande Bibliothèque.²⁰

The version of Chrétien's Erec appeared in the volume for February 1777 whilst Paulmy and Tressan were still working together. Its final published form can no doubt be attributed to Paulmy, but Geoffrey Wilson says (p. 213) that the extract was originally prepared by Le Grand. He quotes no source for this information but, since the style of the piece as it stands is quite alien to the methods supposed to be characteristic of Le Grand and more in keeping with what is known of the procedures adopted by Tressan, there is no way that Le Grand's involvement could be deduced from the summary itself. Presumably Wilson had some particular piece of information that he does not disclose.

19 Louis-Elisabeth de La Vergne, comte de Tressan, 1705-85. For details of his career see Henri Jacobet, Le Comte de Tressan et les origines du genre troubadour (Paris, 1923).

20 See Henry Martin, Histoire de l'Arsenal, p. 38ff.

Le Grand was not greatly impressed by the style of the Bibliothèque des Romans:

Ce Conte, ainsi que les deux suivans, a déjà paru, d'après les Manuscrits de M. Sainte-Palaye, dans la "Bibliothèque des Romans", mais imité plutôt que traduit. Pour moi, à qui les ornemens étrangers sont interdits, & qui suis sévèrement astreint à la fidélité de la traduction, je le donne ici avec sa physionomie antique & tous les défauts de l'original.

(Fabliaux ou Contes, I, 13)

An impression of the difference between the version of Erec published in the Bibliothèque des Romans and that preserved in Le Grand's papers can be gained by comparing the extracts given in Volume II. In the course of the story the published version varies in its fidelity to its source, to end with the "translation" of a wholly spurious poem purporting to be a "Lay d'armes & d'amour composé en l'honneur du Prince Erec & de la belle Enide". The editors do not silently infiltrate the poem into the text but draw particular attention to it:

Cette piece de poésie . . . tient une place considérable dans le poeme de Chrétien de Troyes. Le très-ancien langage dans lequel elle est écrite, ne nous permet d'en citer aucuns vers, d'après l'original; mais nous allons indiquer le sens de quelques strophes.

(Bibl. des Romans, Fév. 1777, p. 83)

According to Wilson's account (see especially pp. 64-5) invention on this scale could be considered a characteristic of Tressan but not of Le Grand, nor even of Paulmy. Either Le Grand's draft underwent considerable modification at the hands of the editors or else he was capable, when employed by others, of working in a style which he did not consider suitable for the work he did in his own name.

A more specific view of Le Grand's involvement is suggested by Lionel Gossman who seems to say that the version published in the Bibliothèque des Romans was taken from Le Grand's extant summary preserved in B.N. Nouv. Acq.

fr. 6226.²¹ It is difficult to see how this could have been the case. Le Grand's introduction to his summary makes it quite clear that he expected to publish it in his own name, and if he had been preparing it for Paulmy there would have been no point in writing the introduction in these terms. Both the description of the way he intends to present the text and the way in which he does present it (including the reference to "comme à mon ordinaire") are wholly inappropriate to the methods used by the Bibliothèque des Romans, but quite in keeping with the principles that guided Le Grand's Fabliaux ou Contes.²² The claim to have already published two other romances by Chrétien would make no sense, for Guillaume d'Angleterre never appeared in the Bibliothèque des Romans, and Cligès not until July 1777, vol. I (i.e. later than Erec which came out in February of the same year). The use of the first person singular is normal in the introductions to the pieces given in the Fabliaux ou Contes whereas the introductions to the summaries in the Bibliothèque des Romans are invariably in the plural.

Even more convincing is the fact that the Erec published in the Bibliothèque des Romans preserves much more accurately the proportions of Chrétien's original. It does not reflect the major imbalance created by Le Grand between the first part and the rest of the romance. It is impossible to believe that Paulmy and Tressan could have accurately expanded Le Grand's single page of manuscript into twenty pages of print (not counting the addition of the spurious material at the end) whilst making only fifteen pages from Le Grand's six. If Le Grand did prepare an extract for the Bibliothèque des Romans it was certainly not the summary preserved amongst his papers.

21 See note 15 above.

22 Throughout his study Wilson stresses Le Grand's attempts to remain faithful to his sources.

The version published in the Bibliothèque des Romans differs quite significantly in its wording from Chrétien's poem so that it is difficult to find any features which might reflect manuscript variants. Only two cases are really clear but since they both occur in the same part of the romance they have a double-edged effect. Although they make the identification of the manuscript in question more certain they also leave more room for the possibility that different manuscripts were used at different points of the story. The spellings Brédigan and (Duc) Enris (p. 76ff.) can only be derived from B.N. 1420 (=E, formerly 7518/2) which is alone in having *Brediganz* (fol. 22rc, 35 = line 5389, and elsewhere) where other manuscripts have *Brandiganz*, and similarly *Enris* (fol. 22va, 10 = line 5404, and elsewhere) where others have *Evrain*.

iv. Conclusions

It looks as though the three eighteenth-century summaries were made from three different manuscripts and this would be a strong argument in favour of their textual independence. On the other hand, the choice of manuscripts was probably at the discretion of Sainte-Palaye even if, in large measure, fortuitous. Sainte-Palaye had reason to know of at least one other manuscript which contains the text of Erec because the summary of Yvain (which follows that of Erec in Moreau 1724) is taken from B.N. 794 (=C) as indicated by the reference: "Le Chevalier au Lyon fol 79vo l. col.", which precedes the text (Moreau 1724, fol. 323).²³ However, in his search for matters of linguistic or historical interest Sainte-Palaye had little to gain by multiplying copies of a particular text; two complete versions

23 The folio reference can be checked in Roques' edition or in Micha's La Tradition manuscrite (p. 32).

and a summary were more than enough for his purposes.²⁴

The importance of P in the dictionary project with which he was associated may have been an influence upon Le Grand in his use of it. The same factor may also have played a part in the choice of manuscript employed for the version of Erec in the Bibliothèque des Romans. In making his manuscripts available to the editors of this collection Sainte-Palaye may have been more inclined to put at their disposal the copy of E which he was not using for the dictionary, than the copy of P which he was. Another factor might have been that Sainte-Palaye did not realize that his copy of P contained the text of Erec; it is a long manuscript and he may have had it copied for the sake of the other texts. The fact that the note added to the summary taken from B refers only to E may be adduced in support of this view; and the fact that Sainte-Palaye had two copies of the complete text is of itself quite unusual. In this respect the more complete manuscript references given by Le Grand at the head of his summary indicate his different interest in looking for works of literature rather than sources of history.²⁵

Without Sainte-Palaye's scholarly interest in the manuscripts Chrétien's Erec et Enide would probably have remained unknown to the eighteenth century, and possibly much longer for it would have taken scholars some considerable time to make good the deficiency; but without Paulmy's interest in the romances of chivalry it is more than doubtful whether it would ever have been seen in print.

24 Sainte-Palaye's scholarly interests are emphasised by both Gossman (throughout) and Wilson (pp. 59-91).

25 This difference of attitude should not be exaggerated because Le Grand was certainly interested in the historical usefulness of the texts, but he was also more alive to their literary value (see Wilson, pp. 178-220).

Chapter Eight

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Lady Charlotte Guest

The story of Gereint and Enid was first brought to the attention of the Victorian public by Lady Charlotte Guest when she published it, in Welsh and English, as one of the stories in The Mabinogion from the Llyfr Coch o Hergest, and other ancient Welsh manuscripts.¹ For each story ^{Charlotte} Lady ~~Guest~~ gave the Welsh text, an English translation and extensive notes (mainly referring to the society and the customs which the stories portrayed). ^{Charlotte} Lady ~~Guest~~ did not work from the Red Book itself but from a transcript:

A copy of the Mabinogion in the Llyfr Coch was taken about twenty years ago, by the Rev. John Jones, of Christ Church, Oxford, (Tegid.) for Mr. Justice Bosanquet, to whose kindness I am indebted for the use of it upon the present occasion; and it is from a Transcript of this Copy that the Tale now offered to the Public is printed, having been carefully collated with the original in Jesus College, by Mr. Jones.

(Mabinogion, I, vi)

^{Charlotte} Lady [^]Guest made the translation herself but her draft was reviewed by Thomas Price with whom she also discussed material for the notes.²

1 This work appeared first of all printed in seven parts by W. Rees of Llandoverly between 1838 and 1846. Geraint ab Erbin formed part III of this printing and was published in 1840. The parts were later gathered together into a three volume edition (London, 1849). The Llyfr Coch o Hergest (or Red Book of Hergest) has already been referred to in Chapter 4, Note 6.

^{Charlotte} 2 For information on Lady [^]Guest's working methods see D[avid] Rhys Phillips, Lady Charlotte Guest and the Mabinogion (Carmarthen, 1921), which includes the relevant passages from her private diaries. More easily available is the article, which draws heavily on Phillips, by Roger Sherman Loomis "Pioneers in Arthurian Scholarship" in BBSIA, 16 (1964). According to Joseph Loth: "Lady Charlotte Guest ne savait guère le gallois; elle a travaillé sur une version littérale d'un savant gallois" (Les Mabinogion, second edition, p. 6), but this seems to be without justification.

For "Geraint", "The Lady of the Fountain", and "Peredur" there were also detailed notices of the foreign texts which related the same or similar stories, and indeed it is to ^{Charlotte} Lady Guest that we owe the first edition of Chrétien's Yvain.³ She did not publish a complete text of Erec et Enide because she had been informed that an edition was already in preparation, but she did give a detailed summary of the French poem with extracts in the original verse.⁴

^{Charlotte} Lady Guest's work became popular enough for a second edition of the English translations to be published in 1877 (without the Welsh texts and with the additional material much reduced). In 1906 the translation was included in the Everyman's Library where it remained through various revisions until 1949 when it was replaced by the translation currently offered, which had been published in the previous year by Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones. Meanwhile, on the Continent, ^{Charlotte's} Lady ~~Guest's~~ English versions of the Three Romances were translated into German by San Marte

3 The edition of Yvain was based on a transcription from MS. 1891 suppl. fol. 210 of the Bibliothèque du Roi (now B.N. 12560). In the Preface to Part I of her Mabinogion ^{Charlotte} Lady Guest writes: "I have also the pleasure of here rendering my warmest acknowledgments to a distinguished French Littérateur, M. le Comte de la Villemarqué, to whom my best thanks are due, for the kindness and alacrity with which he furnished me with a Transcript of the "Chevalier au Lion", from an original MS. in the Bibliothèque du Roi. And likewise to his learned and much respected countryman, M. le Gonidec, for the valuable assistance he afforded me in facilitating my access to this MS.". Her private opinion recorded in her diary (Phillips, pp. 22-3) is not so complimentary to Villemarqué, and even in the published Preface one may see a distinction between the "Littérateur" and "his learned and much respected countryman". Villemarqué's "alacrity" and the illegibility of his handwriting (indicated in the diaries) no doubt account for many of the aberrations in the text.

4 The abstract was apparently prepared by ^{Charlotte} Lady Guest herself but the Old French text was made available to her by Villemarqué. The passages cited in verse present a composite text made from more than one manuscript, with a certain amount of modernization and, upon occasion, what can only be called plain guesswork.

(1841) and into French by Villemarqué (1842).⁵

Lady ^{Charlotte} Guest's Mabinogion was a landmark not only in scholarship but also in the growing popular interest in medieval and especially Arthurian stories. The fact that she made her translation successful as literature has had a lasting influence, of which the most obvious effect has been the persistence of the title in spite of its inaccuracy.⁶ A less apparent, but more significant, consequence has been the way in which the work effectively defined a canon.⁷ The stories chosen were not taken at random, nor was their selection wholly determined by the arrangement of texts in the Red Book. Ten of the stories do occur consecutively in the manuscript in columns 627-844 (though not in the order in which Lady ^{Charlotte} Guest arranged them for publication), but these are joined by The Dream of Rhonabwy from much earlier in the manuscript (columns 555-71), whereas other stories have been omitted, even those which are contiguous with the group of ten (The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne from columns 605-626, and Bown o Hamtwn from columns 845-928).

The criterion for selection was the "Welshness" of the stories

5 Albert Schulz (San Marte), Die Arthur-Sage, und die Mährchen des Rothen Buches von Hergest (Quedlingburg and Leipzig, 1841). Hersart de la Villemarqué, Contes populaires des anciens Bretons (Paris, 1842). Their dependence on Lady Charlotte's English version is neatly expressed by Joseph Loth (p. 9): "San-Marte n'a fait que traduire en allemand la traduction de lady Charlotte Guest, et le dit; M. de la Villemarqué en a fait autant en français, mais ne le dit pas". Lady ^{Charlotte's} Guest's own feelings at Villemarqué's plagiarism are recorded in her diary for 20 May 1842 (Phillips, p. 33): "He tries to make it appear that he has translated straight from the Welsh without any obligation to my version. He has followed me servilely throughout, and taken my notes, without any acknowledgment except in one unimportant instance". She was, however, favourably impressed by San Marte's acknowledgment of her work.

6 See Chapter 4, pp. 54-5.

7 The works which finally sealed the present canon of eleven texts (rather than Lady ^{Charlotte's} Guest's twelve) were the diplomatic editions by Rhys and Evans (see Chapter 4, Note 1).

concerned:

There are a few tales, as Amlyn and Amic, Sir Bevis of Hamtoun, the Seven Wise Masters, and the story of Charlemagne, so obviously of foreign extraction, and of late introduction into Wales . . . that although comprised in the Llyvr Coch, they have not a shadow of claim to form part of the canon of Welsh Romance. Therefore . . . I have given them no place in these volumes.

(Mabinogion, I, xviii)⁸

In addition to the eleven texts from the Red Book which have since become the fixed canon of the Mabinogion, Lady ^{Charlotte} Guest included the Hanes Taliesin put together from two fragmentary manuscripts.⁹ It had originally been her intention to include Y Seint Greal but difficulties in obtaining access to the manuscript eventually prevented this.¹⁰

Alfred Lord Tennyson

In the wake of its success Lady Charlotte Guest's Mabinogion had a most important literary influence in making the Welsh stories known to Tennyson.¹¹ He had been contemplating an epic poem on the subject of King

8 This quite explicit criterion for the original selection has sometimes been overlooked when conclusions have been drawn from the uniform "Welshness" of the collection.

9 Mabinogion, III, 395 (second edition, p. 500): "No perfect copy of the Mabinogi of Taliesin being accessible, it has been necessary to print it in the present series from two fragments. The former of the two is contained in a MS. in the Library of the Welsh School, in London . . . The second fragment is from a MS. in the library of the late Iolo Morganwg, and was kindly communicated by his son, the late Mr. Taliesin Williams, (Ab Iolo)".

10 Mabinogion, I, xvii (second edition, p. xv): "It is also stated, that there is in the Hengwrt Library, a MS. containing the Graal in Welsh, as early as the time of Henry I. I had hoped to have added this to the present collection; but the death of Col. Vaughan, to whom I applied, and other subsequent circumstances, have prevented me from obtaining access to it".

11 In publishing his mother's diaries for 1869-85 Montague Guest related the following anecdote in his Introduction (quoted by Phillips, p. 14): "Some years after, Lord Tennyson told one of my sisters that it was the first book he read after his marriage, and that he was so struck with it that it inspired him to write his poem. He was anxious to make my mother's acquaintance, which at a later time he accomplished . . ."

Arthur for many years.¹² The volume of Poems issued in 1842 contained several Arthurian lyrics ("The Lady of Shalott", "Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere", and "Sir Galahad"), but most notably the Morte d'Arthur which was presented as the final book of an epic. It was a review of this volume that gave Tennyson second thoughts about his intention of casting the poem in epic form, and the project was set aside for a number of years.¹³ Not until the winter of 1855-6 did he begin work in earnest on the cycle which was to become the Idylls of the King.¹⁴

Tennyson had in fact started a poem on the subject of Merlin's enchantment by Nimue, but this was put into abeyance in 1854 whilst he devoted himself to the composition of Maud which was to occupy him until its publication in July 1855.¹⁵ After a stay in the New Forest (which was to provide him with impressions incorporated into his description of the Forest of Broceliande) he set to work again on Nimue.¹⁶

12 Information concerning Tennyson's early plans for the project is given by Hallam Lord Tennyson (the poet's son) in the notes to the Eversley Edition of his father's works (London, 1907-8), V, 436ff., and repeated by Christopher Ricks in his edition, The Poems of Tennyson (London, 1969), pp. 1460-2.

13 Eversley Edition, V, 436; Ricks, p. 1460. Hallam's note reads -- My father told me he was prevented from doing his Arthur Epic, in twelve books, by John Sterling's review in the Quarterly, September 1842. "I had it all in my mind, could have done it without any trouble. But then I thought that a small vessel, built on fine lines, is likely to float further down the stream of Time than a big raft."

14 The designation Idylls of the King dates from 1859 when four poems were published under this title, the four being Enid, Vivien (earlier called Nimue), Elaine, and Guinevere. Other Idylls followed at intervals until they were brought together in the Imperial Library edition of the poet's works published 1872-3 (complete apart from Balin and Balan which was not finished until 1874). The cycle received its final form in the complete works of 1886.

15 This information is given by Charles Tennyson (the poet's grandson) in his biography Alfred Tennyson (London, 1949), p. 282.

16 This is the poem that was called Vivien for the edition of 1859. The title was changed again, to Merlin and Vivien, for the collection issued in December 1869 (dated 1870).

According to Hallam Tennyson, Nimue was begun in February 1856 and finished by 31 March. It seems however that this was the time taken for writing the final version, because Charles Tennyson says that the poem was "finished in rough by January, 1856, and completed before the end of March".¹⁷

Soon after the completion of Nimue Tennyson took up Lady Charlotte Guest's Mabinogion and began work on his version of the Gereint story.¹⁸ Hallam says that this was on 16 April but Charles implies that it was slightly earlier:

Alfred himself felt that he had never written better than in Nimue, and immediately set about the second episode founded closely on the tale of "Geraint, Son of Erbin" in the Mabinogion. . . . Work on it was interrupted by the momentous decision, taken at the beginning of April, to purchase Farringford.

(Alfred Tennyson, pp. 299-300)¹⁹

It is clear that while writing Enid Tennyson developed an enthusiasm

17 Hallam Lord Tennyson, Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir, one volume edition (London, 1899), p. 349; Charles Tennyson, p. 299.

The source of information for both writers is almost certainly the diary kept by Emily Tennyson, the poet's wife. Hallam refers to his debt a few chapters earlier: "Throughout the following chapters I have, with my mother's leave, made free use of her private journal. Most of it however has been necessarily compressed". There is no possibility of his having any first hand knowledge for this period of the poet's life; born in August 1852 he would have been only three and a half at the time. Charles Tennyson also used the diary because he includes many valuable quotations from it, and one gets the impression that he proceeded in a more scholarly way. Hallam was certainly not immune from error in points of detail because there are slight contradictions between some of his own statements when he gives two accounts of the same events (see below p. 100), But in the last resort there is no real way of controlling the comments of either of these writers without obtaining access to the original diary.

18 Originally called Enid the title was changed in 1869 ("1870") to Geraint and Enid. In 1873 the poem was divided into two and in 1886 the two parts given separate titles, The Marriage of Geraint and Geraint and Enid.

19 The Tennysons had rented Farringford (near Freshwater, Isle of Wight) in 1853, ^{but in 1856 they} ~~having~~ decided to buy it. Negotiations were completed by the end of April (Memoir, p. 347), and their own furniture was moved from London in May.

for all things Welsh, and there is a tendency to dwell upon the effects of this enthusiasm at the expense of emphasising that the story itself was known to him first and foremost in an English translation, which he follows for the most part very closely, and that the major part of his own poem was probably written on the Isle of Wight. The impression is sometimes given (no doubt unintentionally) that his interests in the Welsh language, Welsh literature, and Wales itself were in a real sense "influences" upon his work rather than offshoots from it.

It is instructive to notice the small but significant differences between the two accounts of the composition given by Hallam Lord Tennyson. The later version, in the notes of the Eversley Edition (and quoted by Christopher Ricks without correction), acknowledges the debt to Lady Charlotte Guest but accentuates the Welsh connections:

This Idyll is founded on Geraint, son of Erbin, in the Mabinogion, translated by Lady Charlotte Guest, and has 'brought the story within compass'. It was begun on April 16th, 1856, and first published in 1859 in the Idylls of the King. . . The greater part of the Idylls contained in the volume of 1859 was written at Farringford. But the end of Geraint and Enid was written in July and August of 1856 in Wales, where he read, in the original, Hanes Cymru (Welsh history), the Mabinogion, and Llywarch Hen.

(Eversley, V, 467)²⁰

Hallam's earlier account of the same events, in the Memoir, has a different nuance:

In July and August my father and mother took us children to Wales, and here "Enid" was all but finished. . . From Caerleon . . . we all returned . . . home. With the help of local schoolmasters in Wales my parents had learned some Welsh, and now read together the Hanes Cymru (Welsh History), the Mabinogion and Llywarch Hen.

(Memoir, p. 350)

20 Thomas Price, Hanes Cymru (Crickhowel, 1842). For the poetry attributed to Llywarch Hen see below pp. 102-4.

Tennyson certainly wrote some of Enid in Wales but it is also clear that he wrote parts of it at Farringford.²¹ Nor should his knowledge of Welsh be exaggerated. He did have some acquaintance with the language but his reading of the Mabinogion and Llywarch Hen would have been assisted by the English translations provided by the editors. Only in the case of the Hanes Cymru would he have been thrown completely upon his own resources, but he may not have read much more than the relatively short sections which deal with Arthur and Gereint.

Charles Tennyson gives a more circumspect account of the poet's command of Welsh and includes an intriguing piece of additional information:

During the days of preparation for the journey, he bought a Welsh dictionary and he and Emily set about the works of the Bards . . . Wherever he went in Wales Alfred tried to find a schoolmaster or other scholar who would help him with the language. . . By the end of September they were at Farringford again, and he was, with the aid of Lady Charlotte Guest's Mabinogion, working hard at the Geraint story, to help him with which Mrs. Coventry Patmore had spent many days copying out old Welsh ballads from unpublished Manuscripts in the British Museum.

(Alfred Tennyson, pp. 301-2)

There has been much confusion over what it was that Mrs. Patmore was copying, and over when Tennyson received it. The best account of the circumstances is given by P. G. Scott in his article on "Tennyson's Celtic Reading" using unpublished material preserved at the Tennyson Research Centre in Lincoln:

At Farringford Tennyson had not got all the Welsh sources he found he would need, and asked two of his friends living in

21 Charles Tennyson (p. 300 and p. 302) quotes two entries from Emily's diary, one for 23 June (at Farringford): "An evening to be remembered. Ally gave me a welcome to our home which will be ever dear to me. He read me some "Enid". It seemed as if we were the people of those old days", and one for 3 August (in Wales): "Today he made the stately Queen's Answer to Geraint".

London, Clough and Coventry Patmore, to obtain them for him. He was working on the story of Geraint and Enid, and wanted a copy of the Heroic Elegies . . . of Llywarch Hen, and of the bard Aneurin's Gododin, which had been included in volume I of the three volume Myvyrian Archaeology of Wales (1801-1807). Clough consulted his uncle, Arthur Clough Rector of Braunston, Northants., and formerly Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford.

(Tennyson Research Bulletin, 1968)²²

At the same time Coventry Patmore tried to buy the books in London, but without success. He wrote to Tennyson on 4 November 1856 explaining the position, and saying that he and his wife Emily had begun a manuscript copy:

Emily and I are jointly executing a copy of Llywarch Hen, but you must be patient, as it requires more time to copy Welsh accurately than English. The Elegies seem to be strange trash for the most part - at least in the literal translation.

Eventually Clough obtained copies of the books and wrote to Tennyson on 12 December:

I have just received from my uncle . . . both Llywarch Hen and the Gododin . . .

Llywarch Hen is in Owen's edition, 1792. The Gododin in that of the Revd. John Williams ab Ithel, M.A., Llandovery, 1852.

Scott continues by referring to a letter written by Emily Tennyson to Mrs. Patmore and quotes a part of it from a second-hand source, thereby missing a vital piece of chronology. The letter had been published in a more complete form by Basil Champneys, but he had conjectured that it was written in 1857.²³ The important point is that the date on the letter

22 The early issues of the bulletin were without pagination; this quotation and the extracts from letters which follow are taken from the third and fourth pages of Scott's article.

23 Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore, 2 vols (London, 1900), II, 308; the erroneous date is repeated by Ricks, p. 1576.

indicates that it is a reply, virtually by return of post, to the letter from Coventry Patmore quoted above:

Farringford,
Nov. 6th.

My Dear Mrs. Patmore,

I cannot bear to think of Mr. Patmore and yourself toiling away for us. I do hope we may get a copy of Geraint ap AErbyn, and so stop you. It is the Elegy on Geraint Ally wants you know. You speak as if there were several Elegies that you are copying. I hope not.

(Champneys, II, 308-9)

Champneys also gives a second letter from Emily Tennyson on the same subject:

Farringford,
Nov. 8th.

My Dear Mr. and Mrs. Patmore,

Accept our best thanks for the Elegies so beautifully written. Directly we are alone we hope to begin studying it.

(Champneys, II, 309)

This copy is now at Lincoln and is described by Scott:

It is neatly copied in a small notebook, with the Welsh original on the lefthand page, and William Owen's 'literal translation' on the right. Most of the early part of the book is written by Mrs. Patmore.

It is clear, therefore, that Hallam's reference to his father having read Llywarch Hen must apply to November 1856 (when Enid was well on the way to being finished) and to Mrs. Patmore's copy of William Owen's edition and translation. The edition itself, obtained by Clough, was not available to Tennyson until more than a month later. Tennyson's interest in the elegy had almost certainly been stirred by the reference to it (with a translation of five stanzas) in the notes to The Mabinogion, but it seems that he may have been disappointed by the complete poem. His only borrowings

(Gereint's death fighting against the Saxons and the fact that Gereint was a prince of Devon) were already well known to him through the notes to The Mabinogion and through the section on Gereint in Hanes Cymru.

Enid was finished by the early months of 1857 (if not before) and it was printed privately in May of that year together with the poem on the enchantment of Merlin under the title Enid and Nimue: the True and the False.²⁴ This edition was never put into circulation and the British Museum copy has a note by F. T. Palgrave giving the reason:

These two Idylls it was A. T.'s original intention to publish by themselves. Six copies were struck off, but owing to a remark upon Nimue which reached him, he at once recalled the copies out: giving me leave, however, to retain the present.

(quoted by Ricks, p. 1465)

Both poems eventually appeared, together with Elaine (written 1858) and Guinevere (written 1857-8), as Idylls of the King, published in 1859.

One final question is raised by a sentence in the note to the Eversley Edition (omitted from our previous quotation) which reads: "My father had also read Erec and Enid by Chrestien de Troyes". It is not quite clear what this should be taken to mean. If it is intended to refer to a time before Tennyson began work on his own version of the story it would mean that he had read the text in manuscript, presumably in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Tennyson had been to Paris so this possibility is not entirely out of the question. The first published edition of Chrétien's poem was by Immanuel Bekker, in Haupt's Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum for the

24 There is a letter from Mrs. Patmore (Champneys, I, 156) which refers to "two magnificent new poems on subjects from the times of Prince Arthur". The letter was probably written in February 1857. It speaks of Hallam (born 11 August 1852) as being "four and a half", and Lionel (born 16 March 1854) as "two years younger". The real difference in ages was nearer eighteen months, so the "two years" probably implies the time when Hallam was four and Lionel still two. Mrs. Patmore expected the poems to be published "in the spring" so that it seems as if they were complete when Tennyson read them to her.

year 1856. Even if such a publication was within the normal scope of Tennyson's reading it is doubtful whether he would have had access to it as soon as it was printed. It may be that Hallam's recollection refers to a time after Enid was finished, or it could be that the note confuses a reading of the full text with an indirect knowledge of Chrétien's version gained through the summary and quotations given by Lady Charlotte Guest.

It may fairly be claimed that The Mabinogion was responsible not only for providing Tennyson with his narrative but also, through its notes, for drawing his attention to the existence of the Elegy and of Chrétien's Erec et Enide.²⁵ But the debt was fully repaid, for the success of Tennyson's Idylls encouraged an interest in The Mabinogion so that in the preface to the second edition (of 1877) Lady Charlotte Guest was able to write:

The publication of the "Idylls of the King" -- and among them of "Enid", which is founded on my version of "Geraint" -- has interested a much wider circle of readers in the [Arthurian] Legends, and there has arisen a demand for a new and more popular edition of my work, which it is the object of the present issue to supply.

(Mabinogion, 1877, p. vii)

25 The edition by Christopher Ricks contains many references to The Mabinogion, and a detailed comparison was made by Herbert G. Wright, in "Tennyson and Wales", in Essays and Studies, 14 (1929), pp. 80-103. Geraint was the only story in The Mabinogion of which Tennyson produced his own version, but he took details from various others and also made fruitful use of Lady Charlotte Guest's notes. See also George D. Meinhold, "The Idylls of the King and the Mabinogion", in Tennyson Research Bulletin, November 1969, pp. 61-3.

PART II

The Relationship

between

Gereint fab Erbin and Erec et Enide

In the debate over the relationship between Gereint fab Erbin and Erec et Enide the one fact agreed by all parties is that the two texts are indeed related. The narratives are sufficiently similar throughout for this at least to be clear. With only two or three exceptions the stories correspond episode by episode, even in some of the minor details and in the names of some of the characters. On the other hand there are also many differences, primarily in the style of narration and matters of detail, but also in limited rearrangements to the narrative itself. This contrast is neatly indicated by the names of hero and heroine; *Gereint* is opposed to *Erec* in the one case, whereas *Enyt/Enit* is as close a phonetic equivalent to *Enide* as one could expect.¹ By the nature of the case discussions have been primarily concerned with the differences rather than the similarities, but we should constantly bear in mind that there is considerable agreement between these two versions of the same story.²

The balance that we strike between the similarity and the difference depends in large measure upon the amount of detail which is allowed to enter the comparison. It would be perfectly possible, for example, to produce a summary of the plot which could apply equally well to either version, but only if it were sufficiently brief and sufficiently vague. The longer the summary and the more precise it is made, the more difficult it is to encompass both versions in a single analysis. The question of how much detail should be taken into consideration when comparing

1 The spelling of the name in Welsh varies even within the same manuscript but in the White Book *enyt* is by far the most common. The Red Book prefers *enit*; and Peniarth MS. 6, part iv prefers *enyd*.

2 The complete text of Gereint is given (with parallel translation) in Volume II. Corresponding passages from Erec et Enide are set alongside the Welsh, and the extent to which this is possible is a fair indication of the general similarity of the two narratives. Some of the more familiar instances of divergence are discussed by J. D. Bruce in The Evolution of Arthurian Romance, II, 59ff., and in the chapter by Idris Foster in ALMA, pp. 193-6.

narratives in this way is largely subjective, but it is clear that Gereint would find itself in a different category from the texts which are known to derive from Chrétien's poem. This at least explains why some scholars wished to treat the case of Gereint in a different way from those of Hartmann von Aue, Erex saga, and the prose version.

If the narrative differences are taken as indicators of the textual relationships, the question is whether the observable differences reach the threshold beyond which the possibility of direct borrowing can no longer serve as an explanation. It is clear, however, that the real issue in such a case would not be analyzing the differences between the texts, but deciding where we should place the threshold.

Once it is agreed that the two texts are related, it is usually pointed out that this relationship may be either one of two types. The first possibility is that one of the texts has borrowed directly from the other, and because of the chronology this can only mean that Gereint has borrowed from Erec.³ The second possibility is that both authors had access to another text which is now lost. The exact nature of the relationship may be complicated in various ways, but in its simplest form the question is whether to opt for direct dependence, or the lost common source. This traditional statement of the problem is undoubtedly true in theory, but it has certain practical disadvantages because it is by no means obvious how one should then proceed to establish the textual relationships.

The stemmatic model is taken over from the theory of textual criticism, but in studying the relationships between the manuscripts of a given text one can make the important assumption that the scribes normally attempted to copy what was in their exemplar. There is no reason at all

3 The exact dates of composition are not known but there are few who would argue that Gereint, in its present form, is earlier than Erec.

why this assumption should apply to an imaginative author, and several reasons why it should not. In addition, by the time the textual critic has reduced the tradition to only two forms of the text the stemma has already done its work. It is doubtful whether a textual critic would think in terms of a stemma if he had only two manuscripts, because he knows only too well that he has no way of discovering the original text, whatever the relationship of the manuscripts. Readings of the archetype can be established only where the two witnesses agree, but if we try to apply this principle to the study of Gereint and Erec we are at a loss. Yet, in a sense, it is this very principle which has often guided the discussion, but operating in reverse. It would not be unfair to say that the relationship of the texts has frequently been established by comparing them with supposed "readings of the original". But if we really could discover "readings of the original", the relationship between the texts would be purely academic.

A slight rephrasing of the question can be helpful in seeing how best to conduct the discussion. If it is agreed that the two texts are both similar and different, there are two obvious ways of proceeding. Either we can take the similarities as fundamental and offer an explanation of the differences, or we can take the differences as fundamental and offer an explanation of the similarities. Converting this into the more familiar terminology the questions are, what form the common source hypothesis must take in order to account for the similarities, and what form the theory of direct dependence must take in order to account for the differences. We might then be in a position to consider what factors there are which might lead us to prefer one view rather than the other.

Chapter Nine

THE CHARACTERISTICS NECESSARY FOR A COMMON SOURCE

The common source hypothesis is by its nature extremely adaptable. It does not of itself commit the critic to a specific view of how the two authors gathered their material and composed their own versions of the story. This is both its strength and its weakness. It means that this view of the textual relationships can easily be suited to any new findings, but it also means that it is not always clear what exactly is being offered as the explanation of how the two related texts came into existence. Although the characteristics of the supposed common source are fundamental to an understanding of the textual relationship, they have not been investigated in a systematic way.¹

The first important question is whether the two authors had access to a written text, or whether they both drew upon an oral tradition. The second question is in what language that text or tradition would have been available. For practical purposes this question of language may be somewhat simplified. The four most obvious possibilities would be Welsh, French, Breton, and Latin, but for reasons which will become apparent as the argument proceeds the crucial distinction is between Welsh and not Welsh. Phrasing the question in this more neutral form also has the advantage of allowing for the possibility that the source might have been in a language that we did not anticipate.

¹ This is not to say, of course, that various ideas have not been advanced in the course of other discussions.

The method of transmission

i. Oral literature

The point has often been made, but it will bear repeating, that the Welsh literature of the Middle Ages was essentially an oral literature.² The difficulty is that the meaning of "oral" can vary considerably from one context to another. Broadly speaking we may classify oral literature into three types, differentiated by the means employed for the transmission of the literary product, and we may take it that all three types were used in Wales during the medieval period.

There is firstly the system in which the artist who produces a work memorizes it word by word and transmits it word by word to a disciple who proceeds in exactly the same way. This technique is most suitable for short texts, and most effective when the conventions of a verse form can provide an additional aid to the memory.

The second category is that style which is sometimes known as "oral composition". This is a narrative art in which the performer improvises his words to a given theme. It is the theme which is transmitted, whereas the actual words of the performance are created afresh for each occasion. The process by which the performer is able to extemporize is not, however, one of pure imagination; he is aided in his task by a number of acquired techniques. Most important amongst these are the use of stock motifs and

2 To take just a few examples from amongst many -- Rachel Bromwich, "The Celtic Inheritance of Medieval Literature", in *MLQ*, 26 (1965), p. 207: "The Celtic tradition, in poetry and in prose, has at all times been primarily oral"; and various writers in A Guide to Welsh Literature, edited by A. O. H. Jarman and Gwilym Rees Hughes (Swansea, 1976), such as Glyn E. Jones (p. 189): "The literary tradition of Wales, as has already been shown in several of the preceding chapters, was from the earliest times an oral one", or Brynley F. Roberts (p. 203): "Medieval Wales had an oral tradition as rich as that which has been more fully preserved in Irish".

narrative formulas.³

The third way in which a literature can be oral is if texts preserved in writing are made public by means of an oral performance. Although some may doubt whether a literature that is transmitted through written texts can be made oral simply by the conditions of its dissemination, it is clear that the fact of its being intended for public performance is a powerful influence upon its form and upon its style.

Not all types of literature are likely to be transmitted in each of these three ways. There is a fundamental distinction between the oral transmission of poetry and the oral transmission of prose. In the case of an oral tradition of panegyric and elegiac verse we can readily believe that the process was one of memorizing the texts word for word. We know from modern experience that poems can be learnt by heart, and even successfully transmitted in this way from generation to generation. If we wanted specific evidence from medieval literature for poems of this type being committed to memory, one of the classic examples would be from the saga of Egil Skallagrímson:

Þá orti Egill alla drápuna ok hafði fest svá, at hann mátti
kveða um morgininn, þá er hann hatti Arinbjörn.

(Egils saga, LIX, 53, p. 200)

Egil composed the whole poem and had it by heart so that he could recite it in the morning when he met Arinbjörn.

(Fell, p. 107)

For someone to learn by heart a long prose narrative would not only

3 There is an extensive literature dealing with oral composition. Best known is, perhaps, Albert Bates Lord, The Singer of Tales (Cambridge, Mass., 1960). A more carefully argued account can be found in the works of Milman Parry, now conveniently collected as The Making of Homeric Verse (Oxford, 1971). The results of studies in many different literatures are assembled in the Chadwicks' monumental The Growth of Literature, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1932), and in a more convenient form in Sir Maurice Bowra's Heroic Poetry (London, 1952), especially Chapters 5-8.

be an astonishing feat of memory, but a singularly pointless exercise. This is not to say that it has never been done but, before we were prepared to believe that it was done habitually as the normal way of preserving a narrative tradition, we should require some absolutely specific and unimpeachable piece of evidence.

ii. Verbal correspondences

There are a number of occasions where the Welsh text and Chrétien's poem are in such close agreement that each would serve as an almost word for word translation of the other.⁴ These instances usually amount to only a few words or phrases in each case and there are no examples of any lengthy passage being in such close correspondence. On the other hand they do often occur together in clusters. Even when added together these instances concern only a small proportion of the text but there are enough of them to exclude the possibility of pure coincidence.

Their presence suggests a close textual relationship between Gereint fab Erbin and Chrétien's Erec et Enide, but the exact nature of this relationship remains problematical. It may be that the phrases in Gereint are actual translations from Chrétien's poem or it may be that both authors have derived the phrases from a common source, the one copying them verbatim and the other providing a literal translation (or, conceivably, both authors making literal translations from a text in some language other than Welsh or French).

The first of these alternatives is straightforward enough and needs no special justification for being considered as a possibility. If it is to be rejected it will not be as a result of any aspects of these

⁴ The evidence can be found in Volume II where the two texts are set in parallel.

"translations" themselves but because of the objections to the direct dependence of Gereint on Erec which might arise from considerations of a quite different sort. The second possibility, that the verbal correspondences might be explained by a lost common source, needs to be examined in more detail.

If it were a case of direct dependence the number of literal translations made by the author of Gereint could be discovered from a simple examination of the texts. There might be disagreements over what was to count as literal but, in principle, if criteria could be agreed the instances of translation would be known and could be counted. If both authors had adapted a common source the situation would be very different. What could be counted would be only those instances where both texts provided a literal reflection of the original. It is, however, in the highest degree improbable that two authors should have hit upon exactly the same set of instances in which to preserve their source with verbal accuracy. It must be assumed that the occasions when the two secondary texts happen to coincide are only some fraction of the number of times each author preserved the readings of his source.

Any hypothesis of a common source would have to be prepared to take account of this larger number of verbal borrowings. Whereas it is impossible to say how much larger the number would have been as a matter of historical fact, it would be relatively simple to give a statistical estimate of the number which an hypothesis might reasonably be expected to take into consideration. At the very least a hypothesis must be able to function when all the unknowns are assumed to be random, or to give specific reasons why certain factors are not random, and why the situation should be treated as a special case.

In the present instance there does not seem to be any special characteristic amongst the verbal correspondences which would create a

bias in favour of these phrases having been chosen in preference to some others, and there does not seem to be any reason for believing that the case is likely to diverge significantly from the norm. The common source hypothesis must, therefore, accept the consequences of being fitted to the Normal case.

If both texts derive from a common source the verbal borrowings made by each author may be regarded as two independent samples taken from the same population. When the author of Gereint made his borrowings the material of the common source could be classified according to the use already made of it by Chrétien. Although the Welshman was unaware of the classification, his source would have consisted of material which Chrétien had already borrowed verbatim and material which he had not. Thus, for Gereint, the "population" from which his sample was taken consisted of "borrowed" and "unborrowed" material, and in the Normal case the proportion of these two types of material will be the same in the sample as it was in the original population. It is this fact which is at the heart of all modern sampling techniques, and the explanation of it is straightforward enough. As each item of the sample is chosen the chances of selecting an item of a given type correspond to the proportion of such items remaining in the population from which they are being taken.⁵

If the verbal correspondences between Gereint and Erec really were the result of chance their number would depend upon the size of the two "samples" (i.e. the number of borrowings which the authors each made from the common source), and upon the size of the "population" (i.e. the common source itself).

The relations of these four terms are such that the ratio of the correspondences to one of the samples will be the same as the ratio of

5 The whole argument presupposes, of course, that the items in the first sample are not actually removed from the population; otherwise the second sample would be from a different population.

the other sample to the population.⁶ A given number of correspondences may result from various different combinations of the factors involved. In the first place, the size of the samples may vary with respect to each other provided that one becomes larger as the other becomes smaller in such a way that their product remains constant.⁷ Secondly, the relation between the samples and the population is such that for the same number of correspondences the number of items in the two samples becomes a smaller proportion of the population as the size of the population increases.⁸

This has an important consequence for the common source hypothesis because "population" must refer quite specifically to the verbal units which can be borrowed by the two authors. The common source must be seen as consisting of a series of words, not just ideas or narrative details. It is the words which are being "sampled" and the series must be identical for both authors. This does not rule out the possibility of variation in the common source but only those parts of it which were verbally identical can count as the "population" from which the "samples" were taken.

If the population was small, that is if the source used by the author of Gereint had only a small number of verbal identities with the source

6 This can be expressed as $N : A :: B : P$, where P is the population, A and B the two samples from it, and N the number of correspondences between the samples. This may also be given as the equation $N/A = B/P$.

7 This is seen most clearly when the equation is rewritten $NP = AB$.

8 This is best understood by looking at a numerical example. Let us suppose a population of 100 items from which two samples of 20 are taken. In the Normal case the samples will have 4 items in common, and the equation $N/A = B/P$ will read $4/20 = 20/100$. If the population is increased to 200 but the number of items the samples have in common remains the same the equation reveals that the size of one or both of the samples has changed; for example, $4/20 = 40/200$. In each example the total number of items sampled will be the sum of the two samples (but so as not to count any item twice) minus the number of items the samples have in common. Thus in the first case $A + B - N = 20 + 20 - 4 = 36$; and in the second case $A + B - N = 40 + 20 - 4 = 56$. But if these figures are related to the size of their respective populations the second sum which is numerically the larger is seen to be proportionately the smaller, $56/200$ or $28/100$ compared with $36/100$.

used by Chrétien, the size of the samples, that is the proportion of verbal borrowings, would need to be correspondingly large. And if one sample was small the other would need to be even larger. Only if the population was large could both samples be small.

iii. The nature of the common source

Unless a special case can be made out to show that there is a particular bias in the samples, anyone supporting the common source hypothesis can approach the implications of these statistical considerations in one of two ways. Either he can argue that the author of Gereint and Chrétien both borrowed a large proportion of the source which they had in common, or he can argue that the source was available to each author in a substantially identical form.

The first of these alternatives has the disadvantage of minimizing the amount of material which the two versions of the common source have in common, because if each author borrowed extensively from his source the considerable differences between the extant texts must be the result of differences between the two sources. This would no longer be a genuine "common" source hypothesis. It would merely remove the real question one stage further back to ask of the two hypothetical sources what one now asks of the extant texts.

The best course for the proponent of the common source hypothesis is to suppose that both authors had access to a tradition that was sufficiently stable for their sources to be more or less verbally identical. In practice this almost certainly means that both authors knew the source in the form of a written text. It is true that oral traditions can sometimes be remarkably stable even down to their exact wording. It is also possible that the author of Gereint was a professional story-teller trained in an oral tradition and it is conceivable that such a professional might be

capable of repeating phrases verbatim after hearing the story once or twice. (Such a story-teller would probably be distinct from the literate scribe who first recorded the tale in a manuscript).⁹

If the hypothesis of an oral common source might pass muster in the case of the Welsh it will hardly do for Chrétien. There is little doubt that Chrétien was trained as a clerk, well-read (by the standards of his time) in the Bible and in the classics.¹⁰ This is not to deny that he would probably have had a better oral memory than most of us today, for even the literate tradition was taught mainly by oral exposition, with written copies of the texts being in short supply -- but this is very different from the training of the story-teller learning the art of oral composition.

Even in the case of the Welsh author considerable reservations are necessary (quite apart from the fact that we do not know whether he really was a story-teller of the type envisaged). The phrases which are preserved verbatim in an oral tradition are primarily the formulas which recur again and again because they fulfil a particular need. The formulas are remembered from one telling to the next precisely because they are habitual, even when the tale itself is a novelty. Occasionally a particularly striking phrase that he has not heard before will be taken over by a story-teller and added to his own stock of formulas, but normally the "translations" in Gereint are not of this type; they are not formulas and they are not in any way unusual. Although there are a great many

9 Gereint does exhibit features which are often associated with an "oral" style (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 10), but these must be set against the fact that the text has been preserved by virtue of being copied into a manuscript.

10 Chrétien was certainly educated enough to have translated Ovid (see Chapter 2), and his works contain several classical and Biblical allusions. Some are commonplaces, but others are relatively obscure and imply some depth of learning; for two examples see the summary of my unpublished paper, "Erec's coronation robe", in BBSIA, 27 (1975), p. 224.

formulas in Gereint they do not often correspond with phrases in Chrétien's Erec et Enide. This is not a complete answer because Gereint may be reflecting the source in the formulas where Chrétien has made alterations, but that still does not explain why the texts do agree on phrases which are not formulaic.

A second problem is that it is doubtful whether even a trained story-teller could effectively remember phrases that he heard in a foreign language, either by remembering his own instant translation or by remembering the foreign phrases and translating them later, be it at his leisure or when he needed them in the course of recitation. Whereas his training might make it possible for him to absorb phrases from a recitation in Welsh it would be quite another matter for him to provide word for word translations for a recitation that was in French.

To suppose that the recitation was in Welsh would be to raise all sorts of difficulties. It is not very likely that Chrétien knew Welsh at all, but to suppose that he was so fluent a speaker of it as to understand a recitation and provide word for word translations of some of its phrases is scarcely possible. If we may suppose that he would have had difficulty in remembering phrases from a recitation in French the added difficulty of translation would surely prove too much. Nor is there anything to be gained by supposing the intervention of a translator, for in avoiding one difficulty this creates another by adding an extra link to the chain, and still leaves Chrétien with the problem of memorizing the text.

It might just be possible to salvage the hypothesis of an oral source by supposing that a bilingual reciter was capable of dictating a French version to Chrétien and a Welsh version with substantial verbal identity to the author of Gereint some twenty-five or thirty years later. Although, even here, we would need to take into account the

observation made by Delargy:

I have known story-tellers in Clare who could tell folk-tales (märchen) in both Irish and English, but it was quite evident that they told them much better in the Irish language in which they had first heard them.

(Gaelic Story-Teller, p. 181)

This need not always have been the case but it is a factor to consider.

It may be that details taken from oral traditions have been added to the main narratives at a later stage but it is clear that, unless one can produce unambiguous evidence for there having been very special circumstances, the hypothesis of a common source for Gereint and Chrétien's Erec et Enide entails the supposition that the source was available to both authors in written form. This not only makes it easier to understand the verbal correspondences between the extant texts but also accords very well with the fact that the author of Gereint seems to have made use of other sources which are normally thought of as literary.¹¹

¹¹ See Chapter 11 which argues that the author used Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae.

The language of transmission

i. General probabilities

It is not certain that Chrétien spent the whole of his life in a French-speaking area but it is highly probable. He referred to himself (in Erec) as "de Troies"; he wrote Lancelot at the request of "ma dame de Chanpaingne", "la contesse"; and he wrote Perceval for "li cuens Phelipes de Flandres". In Cligès he claims to have used a book to be found in the cathedral library at Beauvais and he includes various statements about the locality of Wallingford which are geographically accurate.¹² He would not necessarily have needed to visit either Beauvais or Wallingford but even if he did he would still have been well within French-speaking realms. In contrast to this his knowledge of Welsh geography is notoriously haphazard.

He certainly knew Latin because he adapted some of the works of Ovid and his romances contain biblical and classical references and quotations. If we are to judge by the debt his two lyrics owe to the poetry of the troubadours, and to Bernard de Ventadour in particular, Chrétien also had a working knowledge of Provençal, but this was probably the case for most educated Frenchmen at the time.

If he acquired a second vernacular it is unlikely that Welsh would have been his first choice. Unless he learnt it specifically in order to find subjects for his romances it is difficult to see what use a knowledge of Welsh would have been to a native of Champagne. Breton, German, or Dutch were all much nearer home.

If Chrétien did not know Welsh himself he might have had the services

¹² Other places mentioned are Southampton, Winchester, Dover, Canterbury, and Windsor. See the remarks on this subject by Jean Frappier in ALMA, p. 171.

of a translator. There was no particular shortage of Welshmen on the continent because Henry II was constantly employing them in his various wars. How many of them would have been in a position to give Chrétien any assistance is quite another matter. As professional soldiers most were probably not able to read nor much inclined to waste their time on such matters. On the other hand the Welsh princes would have had some men around them who were literate and no doubt some also who functioned as official interpreters. The role of professional interpreters in Wales was pointed out some time ago by Constance Bullock-Davies¹³ and we may assume that much the same conditions applied when a Welsh prince travelled abroad to serve the king in England or in Normandy. The life-style of such a prince can be surmised from the incident related some years later by Giraldus Cambrensis in his De Iure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae:

Invenit autem archidiaconus ibidem juvenem, scilicet Katwathlanum filium Ivori cognatum suum, regi militan-tem in guerra sua; qui ipsum abunde, quamdiu in partibus illis extitit, sumptibus suis exhibuit; eique mutuum ad absolvendum debita, necnon etiam sumptus usque in Walliam invenit.

(Rolls Series 21, III, 303)

This took place in Rouen in 1203 when Cadwallon ap Ifor Bach was serving King John but there is evidence of Welsh princes serving Henry II (i.e. during Chrétien's lifetime). If such a court could have provided the translators, it is not at all certain that it would have taken with it manuscripts of Welsh stories, especially when Welsh literature was at this time predominantly oral. Assuming that manuscripts and translators were available there still remains the problem of whether their services would have been offered to Chrétien. With suitable support from Marie de Champagne this would have been possible, but not inevitable.

13 Professional Interpreters and the Matter of Britain (Cardiff, 1966).

It is true that Troyes was a major commercial centre so that Welshmen might be there attending the fairs or passing through on their way to and from Rome (Giraldus Cambrensis and his party, for example, were there in 1202 and again the following year), but visitors to Troyes would not necessarily carry manuscripts with them or have time to spare collaborating with Chrétien. In spite of the Welshmen who undoubtedly did visit the continent, the obvious place to find a translator is on the linguistic frontier, that is in South Wales, but if Chrétien was ever there it has left no trace in his works.

Thus if the common source was in Welsh it is likely that Chrétien would have had some difficulty in making use of it. In contrast to this a source that was in French would have been freely accessible to Chrétien (once he could obtain a manuscript) and equally so to many a Welsh author besides. A Welshman, especially one living in the south, who wished to acquire a second vernacular could hardly fail to choose French. It was the language of the local aristocracy and of their retainers; it was the language of many of the new settlers and merchants who came in the wake of the Norman conquest of South Wales. And if our prospective author set foot outside his native land he would need to go a long way before French failed to serve his purpose.

Thus whereas a Welshman writing at the turn of the century would have had every opportunity and every incentive for learning French, Chrétien writing some twenty-five or thirty years earlier would have been in a much less favourable position to deal with a source that was in Welsh. By 1200 the influence of French upon Welsh vocabulary and of French civilization upon the Welsh way of life is only too obvious, whereas there is not the slightest trace of any traffic in the opposite direction.

The argument is not conclusive but a priori it is much easier to suppose a French source adapted into Welsh than vice versa.

ii. Welsh bardic tradition

The date of composition for Chrétien's Erec et Enide (1175-80 or perhaps even earlier) also gives the latest possible date for the production of the common source. If it was in Welsh one would expect the story to be current in Wales from this time onwards, but there is evidence to suggest that this was not the case. The three stories which Chrétien and the Mabinogion have in common are, in their Welsh forms, told of heroes who were known to Welsh tradition and to whom references can be found in the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd and in the Early Version of the Triads.¹⁴ In contrast to this, references to the stories as told by Chrétien and the Mabinogion texts do not occur until after 1200.

In the Introduction to her edition of Trioedd Ynys Prydein Rachel Bronwich argues that there was a particular body of tradition which the bards had a professional duty to preserve. The nature and extent of this material is of considerable interest:

The bards whose work falls within the period before 1200 prove by their allusions that they were familiar with the following heroes and cycles of narrative: the story of the Trojan origin of the Britons (see H 14, l. 19), and the tale of Benlli Gawr (H 127, l. 19; 152, l. 24; 184, l. 5, etc.), both of which appear in Nennius's Historia Brittonum (the latter may have been connected with Arthur, cf. H 68, l. 14); the characters of the Mabinogi; Maxen Wledig; Caswallawn and his opposition to the Romans; certain of the protagonists in Culhwch ac Olwen (H 95, l. 4; 110, l. 2); the Arthurian story, with references to Arthur, Cai, Llachau, Medrawd, Kelli Wic (see note to triad 1), and the battles of Baddon (H 84, l. 10; 96, l. 5; 101f l. 6; MA² 189b, 34) and Camlan (see note to triad 59); Cadwallawn and his contest with the English king Edwin (see note to triad 55); much North-British

14 Gereint mab Erbin, Owein mab Urien, and Peredur mab Evrawg were known to Welsh tradition before the stories in the Mabinogion became associated with their names. (Peredur is a more complex case than the others because there is a possibility of confusion with Peredur mab Eliffer if the name is not given in full.) As traditional heroes there are early references to them, but none which imply the adventures attributed to them in the Mabinogion. See further Trioedd, Notes to Personal Names.

material including traditions about Urien Rheged and Owain, and about the battle of Arfderydd (see note to triad 84); the nucleus of the Taliesin story; and a number of the names of the heroes of classical antiquity (see note to triad 47).

(Trioedd, p. lxxiii)

It is in comparing the poetry with the Triads that the true significance of these references emerges:

The range of reference to characters drawn from the ystoryaeu a hengerdd which has already been indicated as constituting the repertoire of twelfth-century bards corresponds closely with the range of reference covered by the triads in the Early Version of TYP, as presented in Pen. 16 and 45. Thus it would appear that the Early Version of TYP represents what is in substance a classified list of the content of the canonical body of national tradition with which the bards, down to the end of the twelfth century, were required to make themselves familiar.

(Trioedd, p. lxxviii)

In parallel with her main argument (which is quite properly concerned primarily with the status of the Triads) Rachel Bromwich also provides us with the evidence for the change that took place in the early thirteenth century:

The allusions in the triads combined with those made by the twelfth-century Gogynfeirdd prove that up to the very end of the century the canonical tradition recognized by the bards did not include any name or episode derived from Continental romance or from Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudo-history of Britain - no reference which betrays an origin in either of these sources is to be found in the Early Version of TYP or in the work of the poets of the period.

(Trioedd, p. lxxix)

In the course of the thirteenth century there were significant additions to the body of material to which the bards made allusion:

From the mid-thirteenth century, references in poetry include the names of such figures as Peredur, Evrawc, Erbin, Eigr, Lunet, Enid, Drystan, Essyllt -- names which are not mentioned by the earlier poets, and whose

comparatively late appearance in the field of bardic reference is to be attributed to the increasing popularity of the literary romance material derived from France, although this in turn was superimposed upon older British traditional narrative about these characters.

(Trioedd, p. lxxxii)

The important names here, for our present purposes, are those of Enid and Lunet because they are both closely connected with the stories of Gereint (Erec) and Owein (Yvain) as they are told in both Welsh and French.

Since these names do not appear in the poetry or triads until after 1200 it seems that the stories concerned were not part of the earlier bardic tradition. This does not entirely eliminate the possibility that the stories were available in Welsh during the latter part of the twelfth century because the oral traditions of the bards would not necessarily admit every new tale that began to circulate.

This objection is not as cogent as it may seem, however, because it is not entirely clear to what extent the bards were distinguished from the story-tellers (cyfarwyddiaid, sing. cyfarwydd). The two classic texts (one from each side) are in Math and Rhonabwy. In the first it appears that Gwydion is both bard and story-teller:

"Moes yw genhym ni, Arglwyd," heb y Guydyon, "y nos gyntaf y delher at wr mawr, dywedut o'r penkerd. Mi a dywedaf gyuarwydyd yn llawen."

Ynteu Wydyon goreu kyuarwyd yn y byt oed.

(Math, WM 84.2)

'Lord,' said Gwydion, 'it is a custom with us that the first night after one comes to a great man, the chief bard shall have the say. I will tell a tale gladly.' Gwydion was the best teller of tales in the world.

(Jones, 56.34)

In the second example, however, there seems to be a distinction made between the two classes:

A llyma yr achaws na wyr neb y breidwyt, na bard na chyfarwyd,
heb lyuyr.

(Breudwyt Ronabwy, 21.10)

And here is the reason why no one, neither bard nor story-
teller, knows the Dream without a book.

(Jones, 152.16)

Another difficulty is explaining how some stories were eventually selected for writing down whereas the (presumed) majority were passed over. In the case of texts translated from other languages (Bown, Charlymaen, the Bruts, etc.) the reason is obvious in that they were in writing from the very start, having taken their form from that of their originals. In the case of the Four Branches, Culhwch, Maxen, and Llud y Llefelys the answer is again straightforward. The prestige which these stories enjoyed is guaranteed by the fact that they are "indexed" by the Triads and quarried for eulogistic comparisons by the bards. In the case of the Three Romances the absence of such references means that we cannot use the argument from prestige, but if we fall back on the argument from translation we have conceded the point we were trying to deny. What we would need would be a totally different reason why these stories should have been committed to writing, and we can hardly call it simply an accident of survival because that would involve the coincidence that the only three stories to have survived from out of all the stories of the cyfarwyddiaid were the very three that had been used by Chrétien.

Even more difficult is the fact that we do have references in the Triads and the poetry to the heroes of these tales. What we do not have are references which indicate an acquaintance with the stories as told by Chrétien and in the Romances. If the bards knew of these stories is it just coincidence that they never happen to mention the characteristic features of the tales until the thirteenth century? We should need to believe that the gulf between bards and cyfarwyddiaid was so great that the

poets did not know what stories were being told, or that they were able to maintain a consistent distinction between those exploits of particular heroes which could be mentioned by bards, and those which were only fit for cyfarwyddiaid. Even if the bards were capable of maintaining such a distinction amongst themselves it is hard to believe that it would have been equally meaningful to the patrons for whom the eulogies were composed.

It could be that it took fifty or sixty years for these stories to become respectable sources for the elite bardic class, but it is more likely that there was some specific change in the situation much nearer the time of the earliest references -- especially when the references to both Owein and Gereint appear at approximately the same time.

It is not very hard to guess what such a change might have been, because this is precisely the period when there was a significant increase in the production of written texts. We need not doubt that there had been Welsh manuscripts before this time, but from the beginning of the thirteenth century there is a marked change in the nature of the evidence. Not only does the number of manuscripts actually preserved increase dramatically; there is also reason to think that this is the time of the translations from Geoffrey's Historia, and the time when the Three Romances were being written in their present form. The change in the nature of the evidence will be in part fortuitous, dependent upon certain accidents of survival, but this cannot account for the full extent of the differences which are observable.

We may fairly suppose that the extant versions of Gereint and Owein were composed some time before 1225. Since the references in the poetry do not occur until after this time it is quite possible that they are the result of the poets encountering the stories of Gereint and Owein in much the same form as we now have them. The fact that there is no clear reference in the poetry from the time when the common source is supposed

to have held the field before being effaced by the extant redactions is grounds for doubting whether the story was available to the poets during the period in question. The most obvious reason why it might not have been is that it was not in Welsh. It is true that this is an argument from silence, but an argument from a fairly prolonged silence, and from a silence that affects more than one case.

iii. Some proper names

Looking for hints in the texts themselves which might betray the language of their source is not an easy matter, for we must be careful to exclude all linguistic usages which could be the result of a general cultural influence, and confine ourselves strictly to features which can only have come from a version of the Erec story. The three most obvious examples are the proper names *Enit*, *Gwiffret Petit*, and *Limwris*. At one time *Enit* was thought to be a native Welsh form derived from a common noun *enid* meaning "a woodlark", but this is now discredited. There is no record of the name earlier than Chrétien's poem, and although there is some evidence to suggest that it might be Breton (discussed later in Chapter 12), the arguments are not conclusive.

The form *Limwris* is not likely to be Welsh, for the initial *L-* (instead of *Ll-*) is indicative of a foreign origin. The corresponding form in Chrétien's poem is *Limors* (but as the name of the castle not of the count himself). The name has a particular relevance in French because *li mors* could mean "the dead man", and it is to the castle of Limors that Erec is taken when he is thought to be dead. After he recovers and slays the count, the people of the castle flee shouting: "vez ci le mort" (4876). Gereint preserves much the same account of the incident and includes the sentence (WM 444.20): "Ac nyt ouyn y gwr byw a oed uwyaf arnunt, namyn gwelet y gwr marw yn kyuodi og eu llad" (Jones, 269.13 -- And it was not

fear of the living man that was greatest upon them, but the sight of the dead man rising up to slay them). On the other hand the "relevance" of the name in French may be purely accidental.

The case of *Gwiffret Petit* is much more certain. The adjective *petit* is undoubtedly French, and there is no doubt as to its meaning because both versions of the story are quite specific in describing him as small of stature. We should not be led astray by the fact that the Welsh author provides him with an alternative name by having a knight say of him (WM 433.19): "Gwiffret Petit y geilw y Freinc a'r Brenhin Bychan y geilw y Kymry" (The French call him Gwiffret Petit, and the Welsh call him the Little King). We cannot conclude from this that the story was already being told in Welsh before Gereint was written because in the first place the information is not a direct comment by the author but a quite realistic detail in the narrative, and in the second place the author would be capable of supplying the translation himself and working it into his story in this way. What we can be sure of is that the French form *Gwiffret Petit* was not gratuitously invented by a Welsh author. After the reference which gives both names, the designation "The Little King" is more common (ten other occasions), but there are also two further examples of "Gwiffret" (WM 435.38 *Gwiffret Petit*; WM 446.29 *Gwiffret*). It is clear from these figures that the French form was certainly not habitual, and it might even be suggested that the occasional return to the foreign form implies that the Welsh form was not habitual either. This need not mean that the immediate source of Gereint was in French, but it is hard to escape the conclusion that the story had passed through a French stage at some time before it came to be turned into Welsh.

Chretien's use of the form *Caradigan* might also imply a non-Welsh source. As was said in Chapter 2 (p.18) the form itself (when used as the name of the town) is Anglo-Norman, but this is not of any great significance

because it would have been easy enough to supply the French equivalent for either *Aberteifi* or *Ceredigion*. In any case the suggestion made previously that Chrétien himself could have been responsible for locating the court at Cardigan would depend on the assumption that his source did not supply the form in question. It is by no means certain that this was the case, but the suggestion is not affected by the language of the source. If it was in French there is virtually no restriction on where Arthur's court may have been located, but this is not true if the source was in Welsh. In a Welsh source there would be only two serious possibilities, either Celliwig in Cornwall (as in the early tradition attested for example by Culhwch and Olwen), or Caerleon (as in the later tradition influenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth). Gereint has the court in Caerleon but this is only to be expected if our dating of the text is anywhere near correct; it gives no real guidance to what the reading of the source might have been. If Chrétien encountered *Celliwig* he could well have been inclined to change it, but if we assume a Welsh source with *Celliwig* we imply that the story existed before the influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth made itself felt. A Welsh source as early as this would be inconvenient because it would increase the difficulty of explaining the silence of the bards and the early triads. Alternatively, if Chrétien encountered the form *Caerleon* he would have had no particular reason to change it; the name would have been familiar to him from Wace and he has no objection to using it himself in his later romances.

The study of these proper names does not lead to any definitive conclusion but it seems that there are certain difficulties in believing that they could have come from a Welsh source. *Gwiffret Petit* in particular suggests that the story might have been transmitted to Wales in French.

iv. Middle Welsh *twe*

In his arguments for regarding Erec and Gereint as derived from a common source Roger Sherman Loomis laid stress on an observation made some thirty years earlier:

Windisch made the impressive point that never does a Romance loan word occur in the Welsh texts at the place in the narrative where Chrétien has the same word. He wrote that "die romanischen Lehnwörter der cymrischen Erzählungen nicht aus Crestiens Dichtungen stammen. Denn sie erscheinen nicht an denselben Stetten der Erzählung, und mehrere von ihnen haben unverkennbar die anglonormannischen Formen." . . . The fact that such words are not found in the corresponding points in Chrétien's narratives does much to neutralize the a priori argument in favor of Chrétien as the chief or only source of the Welsh tales.

(Arthurian Tradition, p. 34)

What Loomis fails to make clear is that the effect of this observation by Windisch is purely negative. It is not in itself an argument in favour of a common source and Windisch himself was well aware of this:

Das Ergebnis dieser Musterung der Lehnwörter ist zunächst ein negatives: die Ansicht, daß die cymrischen Erzählungen auf den französischen Dichtungen beruhen, kann durch sie nicht gestützt werden.

(Windisch, p. 250)¹⁵

At no point does he claim that his results lend any support to the common source hypothesis any more than to that of direct dependence. What is clear from the whole tenor of his argument, is that the words of French origin really are loan words, and not examples of inadequate translation. For Loomis's purposes this is completely useless. The fact that the words

15 E. Windisch, "Das keltische Britannien bis zu Kaiser Arthur", in Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Klasse der Königlichen Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften (Leipzig, 1912). See especially pp. 240-50.

under discussion had become an integrated part of the Welsh language means that there is no reason why a Welsh author of the time should not have used them spontaneously and, consequently, no reason at all why one should expect to find counterparts in Chrétien's poems. What Loomis needs in order to make good his case are examples of mistranslation or of words which occur in no other Welsh text. The three proper names which have already been discussed might have suited this purpose, but all three occur in Chrétien's poem.

Another possibility (but again unfavourable to Loomis) is the word *twel*. This word does not figure in the comparison that Windisch made between Gereint and Erec et Enide because for him the word was a loan word from English and not French:

Page 249 - Als sachlich bedeutsame Lehnwörter aus dem Angelsächsischen oder Altenglischen seien noch erwähnt . . . *twel* "Handtuch, Serviette" Pl. *tyweleu* engl. *towel*.

Page 287 (In the Nachträge) - Zu S.249.Z.36 Cymr. *twel* (engl. *towel*) bezeichnet HOLGER PEDERSEN Vgl. Gramm. I 209, als französisch. Dieses Wort findet sich in allen romanischen Sprachen, s. DIEZ, Etym.Wtb. unter *Tovaglia*. Es ist germanischen Ursprungs und gehört zu got. *vahan* "waschen" vahl "Bad" (zu skr. *tvac* "Haut?"). Aus dem Germanischen ist es ins mittelalterliche Latein gekommen (s. DUCANGE) und von da aus in alle neueren Sprachen.

In general this account by Windisch may be accepted but there is doubt over the immediate source of the Welsh borrowing. It may have been from English as Windisch himself believed or it may have been from French as Pedersen had suggested. There are no formal criteria by which this problem may be solved, but a priori it seems more likely that Welsh should have been influenced by the language of the Anglo-Norman feudal aristocracy with whom the Welsh chieftains had considerable contact (often on quite friendly terms) and with whose families they intermarried, than that it should have borrowed words from the speech of the English lower classes with whom contact was much more limited. Such a generalisation does not

preclude the possibility of certain exceptions, and it is conceivable that *twel* might be one of them.¹⁶ Fortunately our present purposes do not require a definitive solution to this aspect of the etymological problem.

The difficulty raised by the use of the word in Gereint is one of meaning rather than derivation. Gereint and Enit have set out on their quest and after a day of adventures are obliged to spend the night in the forest. The following morning they meet a youth coming towards them:

Ac yna y kyuaruu ac vynt glaswas goaduein a thwel am y
ywynwyl, a bwrn a welynt yn y twel, ac ny vydynt hwy
beth oed.

(WM 425.6)

And then there met them a young slender lad with a
towel (*twel*) about his neck, and they could see a
package in the towel (*twel*), but knew not what it was.

(Jones, 256.14)¹⁷

It soon transpires that he is carrying food to some mowers who are working nearby, but, realizing that Gereint and Enit have not eaten after their night in the forest, he offers the food to them.

The scene itself is not difficult to visualize and there is nothing

16 There has been a change in the climate of opinion amongst Celtic scholars on the subject of these loan words. T. H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh (London, 1923), took it for granted that the borrowings were from English. Not many years before there had appeared the article by Morgan Watkin, "The French Literary Influence in Mediaeval Wales", in THSC (1919-20), pp. 1-81, which was the first in his series of pleas for the recognition of French influence, culminating in his La Civilisation française dans les Mabinogion (Paris, 1963). Also in support of French influence is Marie Surridge, "A Study of Words of Romance Origin in Middle Welsh" (unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1962). In the glossary to his edition of Owein (Dublin, 1968), R. L. Thomson assumes a French origin for *twel*.

17 When, in the course of the translation, attention is drawn to the Welsh word which stands in the text it is given in a standard form without variation of spelling and without showing either the mutation or the plural inflection. The exact form of the word used can be seen by reference to the Welsh text.

strange in the fact that the food is being carried in a cloth thrown over the shoulder, for the practice has persisted to this day. The problem is whether we would call such a cloth a "towel". In the last resort such a usage would not be impossible but it does raise a certain psychological difficulty. In modern English *towel* specifically means a cloth intended for the purposes of drying, and it is usually the case that there is a reluctance to use a word which specifies the purpose of an article when that article is being put to some other use. A generalization of this sort is by no means infallible but it serves to draw attention to the fact that the question at issue is not concerned with the use of towels but with the use of words.

If it is true, as here contended, that there is a linguistic habit which makes us prefer a neutral word in situations where the normal implications of a marked term are inappropriate, then this consideration must apply with even more force when the situation is purely imaginary and the "article" itself has no real existence. Under these circumstances the previous or normal use of the article is a concept which has no meaning (unless some particular stylistic effect is being sought by the deliberate choice of an unusual word with specific connotations of this type).

In the Gereint passage there does not appear to be any special emphasis placed on *twel*; the word occurs just twice in the context already given, and the article to which it refers plays no other part in the story. The interest is centred not on the "twel" itself, but on what it might contain. It is not very likely that the author came from a community where food was habitually carried in a towel and no other sort of cloth, so there would appear to be only two probable explanations of his choice of word. One would be that in Middle Welsh the word was not a marked term; the other would be that the word was used to translate its etymological equivalent from a language in which the word was not a marked term.

The most common meaning for the word as it passed from one language to another has always been that of a cloth intended for wiping something dry. This is the sense which the word has retained in modern English and in the Modern Welsh *tywel*. There is no difficulty in showing that it had this meaning in Old French and that Chrétien de Troyes used it in this sense:

Li un ont les toailles prises,
Et li autre les bacins tiennent,
Qui donent l'aigue a ces qui viennent,
Tuit ont lavé, tuit sont assis.

(Cligès, 5030)

Troverent deus bacins toz plains
Et de l'autre part ont trovee
D'ave chaude a laver lor mains
Et de l'autre part ont trovee
Une toaille bien ovree
Bele et blanche, as mains essuier.

(Lancelot, 1003)

The same meaning is found in the Middle Welsh version of The Seven Sages of Rome:

A'r mab a dywawt wrth y dat bot y brein yn dywedut y bydei da gan y dat kael dala blaen y lewys tra ymolchei, a'e uam yn dala twel idaw.

(Lewis, 1037; Williams, 322.11)

And the son told his father that the crows said his father would be glad to be allowed to hold the ends of his sleeves while he washed and his mother to hold a towel (*twel*) for him.

(Williams, 661.28)¹⁸

Particular attention should be paid to three passages in Owein where the meaning of *twel* contrasts with that of *lliein*:

18 The Welsh text is from Henry Lewis, Chwedlau Seith Doethon Rufein (Wrexham, 1925). There is also a slightly different text with translation in Robert Williams, Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscripts (London, 1876-92), Volume II; the translation at this point is by G. Hartwell Jones but I have, in any case, modified it slightly to conform to the text printed by Lewis.

Ac ar hynny nachaf kawgeu aryant a dwfyr y ymolchi yndunt, a thweleu o wliant gwyn a rei gwyrdd; ac ymolchi a orugam, a mynet y eiste y'r bwrdd a oruc y gwr gynheu, a minheu yn nessaf idaw, a'r gwraged oll is vy llaw inheu, eithyr y rei a oedynt yn gwassanaethu. Ac aryant oed y bwrdd, a bliant oed lieineu y bwrt.

(Thomson, 76; WM 226.37)¹⁹

And thereupon, lo, silver bowls, and in them water to wash and towels (*twel*) of white bliant, and some green; and we washed And the man just mentioned went to sit at table, and I next to him, and the ladies below me, save for those who were serving. And the table was of silver, and of bliant was the table napery (*lliein*).

(Jones, 157.19)

A chynnu tan glo a oruc y vorwyn, a chymryt kawc aryant a oruc hi a dwfyr yndaw, a thwel o vliant gwynn ar y hysgwyd, a rodi dwfyr y ymolchi a oruc y Owein. A doddi bwrdd aryant goreureit rac y vronn, a bliant melyn yn lliein arnaw, a dyuot a'e ginyaw idaw.

(Thomson, 320; WM 238.30)

And the maiden kindled a charcoal fire, and took a silver bowl with water in it, and a towel (*twel*) of white bliant on her shoulder, and gave Owein water to wash. And she placed a silver table inlaid with gold before him, and yellow bliant as a cloth (*lliein*) thereon, and she brought him his dinner.

(Jones, 165.21)

Ac ar hynny kyuodi a oruc y vorwyn a chynneu tan glo, a llanw crochan a dwfyr a'e doddi y dwymaw, a chymryt twel o vliant gwynn a'e doddi am vynwgyl Owein, a chymryt gorflwch o ascwrn eliphant, a chawc aryant, a'e lanw o'r dwfyr twym, a golchi penn Owein. Ac odynd agori prenuol a thymnu ellyn a'e cham o asgwrn eliphant a deu ganawl eureit ar yr ellyn, ac eillaw y uaraf a oruc, a sychu y benn a'e vynwgyl a'r twel.

(Thomson, 370; WM 240.37)

And thereupon the maiden arose and kindled a charcoal fire,

19 The Welsh text is quoted from the edition by R. L. Thomson, *Owein* (Dublin, 1968) with reference to his line numbers, but the passages are also located in *The White Book Mabinogion* although for the second and third passages Evans is obliged to supply the text from the Red Book of Hergest (columns 637 and 639) because certain leaves have been torn from the White Book at this point.

and filled a pot with water and set it to warm, and took a towel (*tweġ*) of white bliant and placed it round Owein's neck; and she took an ivory ewer and a silver bowl and filled it with warm water and washed Owein's head; and then she opened a wooden case and drew out a razor with its haft of ivory and two gold channellings on the razor. And she shaved his beard and dried his head and neck with the towel (*tweġ*).

(Jones, 167.8)

Although the meaning of a drying cloth is the most widely attested in the various languages in which the word occurs, Middle English *towaille* and Old French *toaille* could also refer to a cloth of any sort. The situation in English is well documented in OED under "towel":

1. A cloth, usually of linen or hemp, for wiping something dry, esp. for wiping the hands, face, or person after washing or bathing. Also formerly more widely, including a table-napkin or other cloth used at meals.

2. Applied to cloths for various other purposes.

a Eccl. A cloth, either of linen for use at communion, or other rich material for covering the altar at other times; also, a communion-cloth.

?1284 in Shropsh.Archaeol.Soc.Trans.(1878) I.358 Item ij. Toweles pro ij. altariis cum apparatu precii xij s. iiij d. al300 in Hearne Collect. 18 Apr. II.187 Tham that this Cherche, honour with book, with bell, with vestments, with twayle. 1387 TREVISA Higden (Rolls) V.II No womman schulde handle þe towayles of þe auzter.

Examples from later centuries are even more explicit but they have been omitted because of the problem of chronology.

The outline of the history of *towel* which is given by the OED could be repeated for several other languages.²⁰ For French the dictionaries are not always helpful. Tobler-Lommatzsch's Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch under "toaille" gives quite a few examples of cloths of various sorts but without making any distinctions between the various meanings except for

²⁰ Latin examples of the use in ecclesiastical contexts can be found in Ducange under "Toacula".

a short section headed "Kirchl. Messetuch für den Altar", in which the examples are not wholly explicit (the first, from the Roman de Rou, has been taken over from Godefroy and is given below). Wartburg's Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch (XVII.408) under "thwahlja (anfrk.) handtuch" gives a whole range of examples beginning with the meaning of the Old French form:

Afr. toaille "linge pour s'essuyer, serviette, linge dont on recouvre l'autel, nappe".

But he does not document the meanings separately. The most useful source is still Godefroy's Dictionnaire de l'ancien français. The two clearest examples of ecclesiastical usage come from wills of the thirteenth century:

A l'autel de la Mazelaine, une touwele de .iiii. aunes.
(1284, Test. de Jeh. Baboe, cleric de S.Brice, chirog., Arch. Tournai.)

As freres de Crois .ii. touelles pour mettre au grant autel.
(1290, Test. de Jehan Miache, chirog. ib.)

For the usage of an earlier period he gives the quotation from the Roman de Rou which is borrowed by Tobler-Lommatzsch:

Des toailles des autels prises
Faisoient braies et chemises.

(Rou, I, 276)

To these may be added a reference in the Charroi de Nimes:

Bien vos sai dire que reportent li autres;
Vessaus d'or fin, messeus et breviaire,
Et crucefis et molt riches toailles;
Quant il venront enz el regne sauvage
S'en serviront Jhesu l'esperitable.

(Charroi, 770)

The possibility of this ecclesiastical usage is particularly relevant to an episode in the Queste del Saint Graal:

Quant il ot ce dit, si se trest vers la table d'argent et se mist a coutes et a genouz devant l'autel; et quant il ot ilec grant piece esté, si escoute et ot l'uis de la chambre ouvrir et flatir molt durement. Et il resgarde cele part et ausi font tuit li autre: et en voient issir les anges qui Josephes avoient aporté; dont li dui portoient deus cierges, et li tierz une *touaille* de vermeil samit, et li quarz une lance qui saignoit si durement que les goutes en chaoient contreval en une boiste qu'il tenoit en s'autre main. Et li dui mistrent les cierges sus la table et li tierz la *toaille* lez le saint Vessel; et li quarz tint la lance tote droite sus le saint Vessel, si que li sans qui contreval la hainste couloit chaoit dedenz. Et si tost come il ont ce fet, Josephes se leva et trest un poi la lance en sus dou saint Vessel et le covri de la *toaille*.

Lors fist Josephes semblant que il entrast ou sacrement de la messe.

(Queste, 268.32)²¹

There exists a fairly faithful translation of the Queste del Saint Graal into Middle Welsh in which this passage is rendered, by medieval standards, with considerable accuracy:

A phan daruu idaw hynny, ef a ostyngawd ar benn y linyeu geyr bronn Seint Greal, yn y lle yd oed ar y tabyl aryant. A gwedy y vot ef yno yn hir yn gwediaw, wynt a glywynt drws ystauell yn agori, ac o honno wynt a welynt yr engylyon, a dugassei Iosep yno, yn dyuot; a deu ohonunt a deu dors o gwyr yn eu dwylaw, a'r trydyd a gwaew yn y law, or hwmm yd oedynt dafneu o waet yn syrthyaw y mywn blwch, a oed yn llaw y pedwryd angel. A velly y doethant hwy hyt ar dabyll Seint Greal, yn y lle yd oed Iosep yn gwediaw. Ac yna Iosep a roes *twel* o sidan gwynn arnaw, *ual roi corporal* dros garegyl. Ac yna yn y wassanaeth yd aeth Iosep megys pei at vei ar secret y offeren.

(Seint Greal, 162.39)

And when he had done that, he bent on his knees before the Holy Greal, where it was on the silver table. And after he had been there long praying, they heard the door of a chamber opening, and out of it they saw the angels, that had brought Joseph there,

21 The context is quoted at length in this and subsequent passages from the Queste so that the degree to which the Welsh translation follows its original may be assessed.

coming, and two of them with two torches of wax in their hands, and the third with a spear in his hand, from which were drops of blood falling into a box, that was in the hand of the fourth angel. And so they came as far as the table of the Holy Greal, where Joseph was praying. And then Joseph put a towel (*twel*) of white silk upon it, *like putting a corporal* over a chalice. And then in his service Joseph proceeded as if he were at the consecration of his mass.

(Seint Greal, 541.35)

There is a close correspondence between Welsh translation and French original, yet whereas the French uses the word *toaille* three times the Welsh uses *twel* only once. The second omission is not necessarily significant because the whole sentence in which the word occurs has been abbreviated to: "And so they came as far as the table of the Holy Greal", without giving details of what the angels did with the candles and the lance. The first omission, however, involves an alteration to the text in order to maintain the correct number of angels. This would suggest a deliberate intervention by the Welsh translator, although it would be possible to argue that it was the alteration in the role of the fourth angel which has provoked the omission of *toaille* rather than vice versa.

When the word *toaille* is eventually translated it is rendered by *twel* but accompanied by the gloss *ual roi corporal* (like putting a corporal). This gloss is not necessary in the French because the *toaille* could actually be a corporal and its use needs no explanation. The combination of the omission and the gloss suggests that the Welsh translator might not have been familiar with the ecclesiastical meanings of *toaille* (or else that he had difficulty in finding a suitable Welsh rendering).

Toaille occurs in one other place earlier in the Queste del Saint Graal in a religious context, but without a specifically ecclesiastical meaning (unless, perhaps, symbolically):

Et quant il [Perceval] voit ce, si s'en sueffre atant et s'agenoille par defors; et resgarde derriere le prestre et

voit un lit molt richement atorné si come de dras de soie et d'autres choses car il n'i avoit riens se blanc non. Perceval resgarde le lit et avise tant qu'il conoist que dedenz gist uns hons ou fame, mes il ne set lequel, car il a son vis covert d'une *toaille* blanche et deliee, si que len nel pooit mie veoir apertement. Et quant il voit qu'il i museroit por noient, si i let a resgarder et entent au servise que li preudons ot comencié. Et quant vint a cel point que li prestres volt lever le cors Nostre Seignor, si se dreça en son lit en seant cil qui se gisoit et descovri son vis. Et ce ert uns hons molt anciens et vielz et chanuz, et ot une corone d'or en sa teste et ot les espaulles nues et descubertes et tout ce devant jusqu'au nombril.

(Queste, 82.4)

Most of this passage is translated by the Welsh, but not the sentence which includes the reference to the *toaille*:

A phan weles ynteu hynny, ef a ostyngawd ar dal y linyeu or tu vaes yr drws, ac ef a edrychawd y mywn drwy y rwyllieu, ac yno ef a welei wely tec gwedy y adurnaw o dapineu a sidan eureit, a hynny oll yn wynn onyt yr eur. Ac ef a synnyawd Peredur ar y gwely yn gyngraffet, ac y gwydyat vot yndaw y neill ae gwr ae gwreic. A phan vu amser yr offeiryat gyvodi yr aberth, ef a gyvodes y neb a oed yn y gwely yn y eisted. Ac ef a adnabu Peredur panyw gwr prud oed, a choron o eur am y benn, ac yr oed wedy ymdinoethu hyt y vogel.

(Seint Greal 53.37)

And when he saw that, he bent on his knees outside the door, and he looked in between the lattice, and there he saw a fair bed adorned with ledges of golden silk, and all of it white except the gold. And Peredur considered the bed so intensely, that he knew that there was in it either a man or a woman. And when it was time for the priest to elevate the Host, the one who lay on the bed sat up, and Peredur perceived he was a grave man, with a crown of gold on his head, and he was bared as low as his navel.

(Seint Greal, 471.2)

There is the possibility of a similar omission in the story of Peredur except that in this case we are not dealing with a direct translation from a known French source. The exact relationship between Peredur and Chrétien's Perceval is still extremely problematical. Certainly, for much of the time the Welsh narrative has no counterpart in Chrétien's text, but in the early part of the story where the two

narratives do run in parallel there are often correspondences at the textual level.

In both texts the hero's first adventure after leaving his mother is to come across a tent (which he mistakes for a church) in which there is a beautiful maiden. In the French, Perceval enters the tent, forcibly kisses the maiden, takes her ring and helps himself to food and drink. In the Welsh, Peredur is much more courteous and the maiden is quite willing for him to take the food and the ring, and to give her a kiss (on his knees) in a fashion which is much more chaste than the brutal assault perpetrated by Perceval. There is a difference in tone between the two texts, the events happen in reverse order, and the Welsh version is rather shorter with less circumstantial detail, yet the essential correspondence is unmistakable. In describing the food that Perceval finds Chrétien seems to be playing on the possible ecclesiastical meanings of *toaille* (it will be remembered that Perceval believes himself to be in a church):

Un bouchel trove plain de vin
 Et un hanap d'argent selonc
 Et voit sor un trossel de jonc
 Une toaille blanche et noeve.
 Il le sozlieve et desoz trove
 Trois bons pastez de chievrol fres.

(Perceval, Roach, 738)

The Welsh text corresponds in principle but not in detail:

Ac ar tal y pebyll y gwelei bwrdd, a dwy gostrel yn llawn o
 win, a dwy torth o vara can, a golwython o gic mel voch.

(WM 120.29)

And at the end of the pavilion he could see a table and
 two flagons full of wine, and two loaves of white bread,
 and chops of the flesh of sucking pigs.

(Jones, 185.24)

It would not be appropriate to draw any firm conclusion from this instance

because it is possible to conjecture several reasons why the Welsh author may have made certain changes, even assuming that his source did correspond to the version found in Chrétien's poem. The "omission" of *toaille* is not the only detail in which the texts differ from one another, but the "omission" would fit very well with the pattern already observed in the Seint Greal.

The examples quoted from Gereint, Owein, Chwedlau Seith Doethon Rufein (The Seven Sages of Rome), and Y Seint Greal are the only occurrences of *twel* in Middle Welsh which I have been able to find. Clearly, as far as the written texts are concerned, the word in any of its meanings was fairly rare. The usage in Owein and the Seith Doethon offers no difficulties, but the examples from Y Seint Greal (and to a lesser extent those from Peredur) do seem to call for some explanation.

There are two, possibly three, contexts from which *twel* has been omitted, and one instance where it is used accompanied by a gloss. The question is whether to explain each case separately, or to put forward a suggestion that would cover all four. There is no particular difficulty in providing independent explanations for the omissions but the gloss is not so easily dismissed (unless one argues that the instance is so trivial that it is not really a gloss at all). The disadvantage of the piecemeal approach is that it fails to take account of the apparent regularity of the pattern.

The obvious hypothesis which could bring all four examples together would be that in Middle Welsh the word *twel* was already restricted to the meaning of a cloth for wiping something dry. There is no way in which this hypothesis can be effectively verified. It can be falsified by the discovery of clear examples where *twel* is used with a different meaning, but the absence of such examples from written texts (or the fact that they have not yet been found) does not constitute a proof that the meaning

was restricted. Certainly, reservations are necessary but the hypothesis would explain why Welsh translators might experience some embarrassment when their French source used the word *toaille* in a context for which the restricted meaning of the word was not appropriate.

If this were the case then one could expect that the source of Gereint used a cognate of *twel* in the relevant episode. The most obvious place to look is in Chrétien's poem and this does supply the word required:

Buen vin ai et fromages gras,
Blanche toaille et biaux henas.

(Erec, 3153)

Puis a devant aus estandue
La toaille sor l'erbe drue.

(Erec, 3173)

The first difficulty is that although the word corresponds in the Welsh and the French the object to which it refers does not play the same role in the two versions of the story. In Gereint the *twel* is used for carrying food, but not for anything else; in Erec et Enide it is not specified how the food is carried, but the *toaille* is used as a table cloth spread on the ground from which the food is eaten. This distinction in reference does not necessarily mean that the two authors actually envisaged the situation in different ways. It may be that they chose to refer to the cloth at different times, each taking for granted the other use to which it was put at an earlier or later stage.

As soon as this is said, however, we begin to involve ourselves in the trap presented by the "mimetic illusion", trying to decide what it was that must really have happened to Erec (or Gereint) for the authors to have reported the events in their different ways. To discuss the narrative in terms of the probability of real events, as if they were a series of historical happenings against which we could check the accuracy of each version of the

story, is to perpetuate one of the misconceptions that created and maintained the impasse between Foerster and Zenker. Once the discussion ceases to be linguistic its relevance to the textual problem is highly questionable.

A second problem arises in that the Middle High German version of the Erec story not only supplies the cognate for *twel* in this episode, but also exhibits textual agreements with Gereint which are not found in Erec et Enide. There is no doubt that Hartmann used Chrétien's poem as his principal source but the question remains as to whether he had access to additional material which may also have been known in Wales.²²

It is clear, therefore, that the hypothesis about the meaning of *twel* does not of itself provide a solution to the problem of textual dependence. If the hypothesis is accepted, however, it does throw useful light upon the situation in which the Welsh author might have found himself. The use of a towel in the circumstances which the author envisaged would not be so unlikely that the word would need to be avoided, but it would be ~~sufficiently~~ unlikely ^{enough for him} ~~that he would~~ not think to introduce it gratuitously on his own initiative. This would suggest that Gereint fab Erbin was adapted from a source written in a language other than Welsh.

v. Conclusion

We are now in a position to specify two important characteristics that we should demand of a common source for Gereint fab Erbin and Erec et Enide. The number of verbal correspondences between the two texts means that both authors must have had access to a stable tradition. The variation in wording that is invariably associated with the art of "oral composition", and the extreme improbability that a story-teller should memorize a long narrative text word for word, force us to conclude that the common source

22 This question will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 13.

could have existed only if it were a written text.

The difficulties of translation that Chrétien would probably have experienced, the fact that there are no references to the story in Welsh tradition until after the extant version came into existence, and certain specific cases (especially the name *Gwiffret Petit*, and the meaning given to *twel*), combine to show that the common source was not in Welsh.

Chapter Ten

TECHNIQUES OF COMPOSITION IN GEREINT: I

THE USE OF FORMULAS

i. The influence of an oral tradition

In a society where the story-teller's art flourishes even those productions which are given a written form, but intended for public performance, will be affected by the style characteristic of improvisation. One of the reasons for this is that, although the conditions of composition will have changed, the author's experience of the improvised performances will have strongly influenced his understanding of how stories should be told. A second reason is that the expectations of his audiences will still be attuned to the traditional form of presentation. Sir Maurice Bowra made the vital point (in connection with oral poetry) that the formula not only makes it easier for the poet to compose, it also makes it easier for the audience to listen.¹ Fully comprehending an oral narrative is by no means easy, and the assistance given by familiar phrases would be most welcome. The difficulties the audience has in listening remain much the same for prose as for poetry, and in either case they are significantly increased when a tale is read from a manuscript rather than improvised in what is likely to be a more natural and a more lively tone.

Under these circumstances it is clearly in the author's best interests to include as much as possible that will be familiar to his audience from the style of the professional story-tellers. At the same time, by introducing into his text whatever devices will ease the strain upon the reader, he will allow the reader to pay less attention to the manuscript

¹ Heroic Poetry, p. 226.

and devote correspondingly more attention to the other aspects of his performance.

It is in this sense that Gereint fab Erbin exhibits features of an "oral" style. The verbal correspondences with Erec et Enide which were shown to indicate the use of a written text, indicate just as surely that Gereint itself was cast in written form from the very beginning. The correspondences would no more be preserved in a story-teller's memory from one telling to another, than they could have arisen from his remembering a recitation of the French original.²

On the other hand one of the most noticeable features of Gereint is the use of a technique which is typical of oral composition. Phrases, sentences, even whole passages of ten or a dozen lines, are repeated either in exactly the same words or with only minor variation.³ Formulas of this kind can be found in other Welsh texts, and some of the phrases in Gereint occur in identical form elsewhere. This use of stock phrases and standardized descriptions is at its most developed in Gereint and Peredur, but it is found to some extent in all the stories of the Mabinogion. There is some evidence, however, from the type of phrases which are repeated that the formulas may serve slightly different purposes in the different texts. Outside the Mabinogion, only the Welsh version of The Seven Sages of Rome uses the technique systematically. Repetitions in other texts are comparatively rare, and even then probably in large measure accidental.

Some of the repetitions are so trivial that they can be regarded as the inevitable result of writing Welsh, and a thoroughgoing study of the narrative technique would need to distinguish the stock of genuine

2 This is simply the corollary of the argument presented in the first part of Chapter 9.

3 These repetitions are marked on the complete text given in Volume II, and the extensive use which is made of this narrative device can be seen at a glance.

formulas from the purely chance combinations. The obvious basis for such a study would be the expectation that repetitions which result from the structure of the language itself (as defined by the available corpus) would have an approximately even distribution throughout all the extant literature. The fact that it can be established that there are some texts (broadly speaking the Mabinogion) in which the repeated sequences are not only more frequent, but also on many occasions of significantly greater length, is a sure indication that we are dealing with an acquired technique.

The existence of such a formulaic technique in earlier oral narrative is implied by the practice of the scribes in recording Culhwch and Olwen. When Culhwch asks for the hand of Olwen, her father Ysbaddaden Chief Giant sets him a series of impossible tasks which he must accomplish before the marriage can take place. Culhwch accepts each of these labours with the words: "Hawd yw genhyf gaffel hynny kyd tybyckych na bo hawd" (It is easy for me to get that, though thou think it is not easy). Ysbaddaden invariably replies: "Kyt keffych hynny yssyd ny cheffych" (Though thou get that, there is that thou wilt not get).⁴ This formulaic exchange is repeated no less than thirty-nine times. After the first few occasions the scribes abbreviate it (though not always in exactly the same way) to just a few words from each sentence.

A similar practice prevailed in Ireland, but in the course of time conditions changed so that in later manuscripts the "runs" were written out in full. Alan Bruford in his study of Gaelic Folk-tales and Mediaeval Romances associates the new practice with the custom of reading stories from a manuscript rather than reciting:

There would have been no sense in writing each one out in full if they were not meant to be read in full. If they had been meant to be learned off by a reciter and repeated

4 WM 480-85; RM 120-25; Jones, 113-21.

as required like folk runs, the practice of older tales could have been followed, as in MSS. (up to the fifteenth century) of Togail Bruidne Da Derga: the run could be given in full once, and identified on its later appearances with a cue word or two and an etcetera (néla femid 7 rl.). A reader, however, in reading aloud, could hardly turn back the page each time a run recurred to look for the full passage: so all runs are written out in full and varied, as much to avoid boring author and scribe as reader and audience. For someone to have to memorize each of these long runs in a slightly different form would be an intolerable and unnecessary imposition.

(Bruford, p. 46)

In Welsh much the same situation seems to be reflected in the difference between the scribes' practice for Culhwch, and the "colophon" to

The Dream of Rhonabwy:

A'r ystorya honn a elwir Breidwyt Ronabwy.

(A llyma yr achaws na wyr neb y breidwyt, na bard na chyfarwyd, heb lyuyr, o achaws y geniuer lliw a oed ar y me[i]rch, a hynny o amrael liw odidawc ac ar yr aruev ac eu kyweirdebeu, ac ar y llenneu gwerthuawr a'r mein rinwedawl).

(Breudwyt Ronabwy, 21.9)

And this story is called the Dream of Rhonabwy. And here is the reason why no one, neither bard nor story-teller, knows the Dream without a book - by reason of the number of colours that were on the horses, and all that variety of rare colours both on the arms and their trappings, and on the precious mantles, and the magic stones.

(Jones, 152.16)

The point about the descriptions of the horses and their trappings is that, although they are essentially formulaic, there are slight variations from one occasion to the next. The colophon is right in drawing attention to the relationship between the fact that the tale was known only from manuscripts and the occurrence of variations in the descriptive sequences. In the explanation it gives, however, it is misleading for it inverts cause and effect. Clearly, it would not have been beyond the powers of a medieval story-teller to learn the sequences

by heart, nor for him to have extemporized the variations in different forms for each telling. The true explanation is much more likely to be that, because the tale was a written composition from the first, there was some point in the author systematically varying the descriptions. We may even take this a stage further and suggest that one of the purposes of the variations is to direct a satire against the style of the story-teller. It is certainly the case that the satire in Rhonabwy works on several different levels, and a satire by the literate author against the uneducated teller of tales is by no means out of the question. The minor variations in the descriptions could be used to highlight the artificiality of the formulaic technique, or even to create the impression that the story-teller was losing control of his material.

Whereas the examples of repetition cited from Culhwch are closely associated with that particular narrative, the descriptions in The Dream of Rhonabwy could be used in a great number of different stories. The formulaic exchange between the giant and his prospective son-in-law can occur only in a tale which incorporates the folk-tale motif of The Winning of the Giant's Daughter. There are other types of repetition in Culhwch but they are much less noticeable. In Rhonabwy the colophon specifically draws attention to descriptions which in their use of a standard pattern seem to reflect a traditional formulaic style, but which in their numerous minor variations seem to reflect the attitude of a literate author. Despite their obvious differences both texts are, each in their own way, witnesses to the effect of an oral tradition.

ii. The formulas in Gereint

In Gereint repetitions of one sort or another are legion. They range from short conversational phrases, through various narrative formulas to

the more elaborate (but standardized) presentation of the combats.⁵ The sheer number of the repetitions makes it inconceivable that they should be accidental, but they may not all be traditional. The fact that some of the phrases and even some of the longer descriptions can be found in almost identical forms in other Welsh texts, and the existence of similar techniques in other literatures, makes it highly probable that the style of narration found in Gereint was a style, current at the time, which the author acquired either by formal training or simple lifelong familiarity. There is a distinction to be made, however, between the technique and the actual repetitions which result from it.

The test which can establish whether formulas belong to a tradition or whether they are the ad hoc creation of an author for use in one particular work turns upon the fact that an author who continually repeats a phrase is thereby foregoing all the other possible ways of expressing the same idea. For an oral poet this is a worth while bargain because he saves himself from the difficulty of inventing phrases of the right length and the correct metrical value at only a moment's notice. For a storyteller reciting in prose, and even more so for an author composing a written text, the bargain is not necessarily quite so good, because without the constraints of metre it might on some occasions be easier to make a new phrase than to remember an old one. If he cannot recall the old phrase with ease he will not search his memory for it; he will invent a new one to serve the same purpose. The reason why this does not happen to any great extent in an oral tradition (in verse or in prose) is that constant use makes the recall much easier than the invention.

This does not mean that the author has no scope for variation, because when there is a need the formulas can be combined in different

5 Since the phrases are marked on the complete text in Volume II, examples will be given only when some specific point is being made.

ways or the author may even forsake the formula altogether. The overall effect, however, is that an author will not maintain a wide range of formulas which can be used interchangeably; he has nothing to gain by having more than one formula for any given context.⁶ He finds the phrases easy to remember precisely because they are in constant use, so that to double the number to be remembered not only makes the task more difficult in itself, but makes it twice as difficult again by halving the frequency with which each one can occur.

For various reasons we should not expect this principle to apply to a written prose text with the same rigour as to an oral poem. An important factor is that the author who composes in writing has neither the same degree of motivation nor does he obtain the same amount of practice. Nevertheless, it is clear enough that the use of formulas in Gereint is in large measure subject to just such a principle.

A good example which shows both the possibility for variation and the underlying economy of the system is the description of The Noble Youth. In its full form the description is used for Gereint himself:

A maccwyf gwineu ieuanc eskeirnoyth teyrneid arnaw, a chledyf eurdwrn ar glun, a pheis a swrcot o bali ymdanaw, a dwy eskid issel o gordwal am y drayd, a llen o borfor glas ar warthaf hynny, ac aual eur vrth pob cwrr idi.

(WM 389.5)

And a young auburn-haired bare-legged youth of princely mien upon it [the horse], and a gold-hilted sword on his thigh, and a tunic and surcoat of brocaded silk about him, and two low boots of cordwain upon his feet, and over that a mantle of blue-purple, and an apple of gold at each of its corners.

(Jones, 231.30)

The elements from which this description has been made can be paralleled

6 This is essentially the same point as that made by Milman Parry in several of his studies. See, for example, The Making of Homeric Verse, p. 16 and again on p. 276.

in other texts:

Guas gwineu, mawr, teyrneid, a guisc o bali amdanaw.

(Pwyll, WM 20.6)

A tall auburn-haired youth of royal mien, and a garment of brocaded silk about him.

(Jones, 13.1)

Cledyf eurdwrn ar y glun . . . Llen borfor pedeir ael ymdanaw, ac aual rudeur vrth pob ael iti.

(Culhwch, WM 455.9-30)⁷

A gold-hilted sword on his thigh . . . A four-cornered mantle of purple upon him, and an apple of red gold in each of its corners.

(Jones, 97.9-21)

The author of Gereint did not take the description ready-made from the other texts, but combined traditional phrases in his own way. On the other hand, when he needs such a description he does not set about the work of selection and combination for each occasion; he already has the pattern in his mind and uses it even when the style of dress may not be entirely suitable. Thus the forester who appears at court is described in almost identical terms (though with some abbreviation):

Nachaf, was gwineu hir . . . a pheis a swrcot o bali cayrawc ymdanaw, a chledyf eurdwrn am y uynwgyl, a dwy eskid issel o gordwal am y drayd.

(WM 386.11)

Lo, a tall auburn-haired youth . . . with a tunic and surcoat of ribbed brocaded silk upon him and a gold-hilted sword about his neck, and two low boots of cordwain upon his feet.

(Jones, 229.31)

The fact that two of the phrases occur in the reverse order implies that

7 There are other examples in the series of descriptions in Rhonabwy (WM 212-19; Jones, 145-50), Maxen (WM 181; Jones, 80), Owein (WM 225, 237, 244; Jones, 156, 164, 169).

the author really was working from memory, not deliberately copying a written text, and the minor variations may be attributed to the same cause. A further point of interest is the phrase "dwy eskid issel" (two low boots).

Similar phrases in Maxen, Owein, and Rhonabwy use the word *gwintas* (translated "buskins").⁸ There is one example of *esgit* (translated "shoes") in Rhonabwy (WM 215.8; Jones, 147.5), but the complete phrase *eskid issel* seems to be unique to Gereint. The instance in Rhonabwy must also be read in the light of the suggestion that a literate author is deliberately looking for variety. The author of Gereint must surely have met the other formula, and the formula which nearly always accompanies it referring to the gold clasps with which the boots are fastened, but he did not use it. This could fairly serve as an example of an author having only one formula for a given context even though there was a replacement available; and the same is true, with some reservations, for Owein's consistent use of *gwintas* (even for a maiden, WM 237.16; Jones, 164.21).

Another example of the same principle of economy is to be found in the formula of the blow delivered by a sword:

A galw attaw y nerthoed a drychau^ael y gledyf a gossot ar y marchawc yg gwarthaf y benn yny dyrr holl arueu y benn, ac yny dyrr y kic oll a'r croen, ac yn y [iat], yny glwyua ar yr ascwrn ac yny dygwyd y marchawc ar y deulin a bwrw y gledyf o'e llaw a oruc.

(WM 398.38)

And he summoned up his strength and raised his sword and smote the knight on the crown of his head so that all his head armour was broken, and all the flesh and skin broken and into his pate, so that it gave a wound to the bone and the knight fell on his knees and threw his sword from his hand.

(Jones, 238.33)

⁸ Maxen, WM 181.11; Jones, 81.1. Rhonabwy, WM 213.5, 214.10; Jones, 145.25, 146.17. Owein, WM 225.16, 225.33, 237.16, 244.3; Jones, 156.20, 156.31, 164.21, 169.13.

A galw attaw y nerthoed, ac . . . drychauel y gledyf a oruc
a'e daraw yg gwastat y benn dyrnawt . . . yny dyrr holl
arueu y penn, a'r croen a'r kic, ac yny uyd clwyf ar yr
ascwrn, ac yny uyd y gledyf o law y Brenhin Bychan.

(WM 435.8)

And he summoned up his strength, and . . . he raised his
sword and struck him on the crown of the head a blow . . .
until all the head armour was broken, and the skin and the
flesh, and there was a wound to the bone, and so that his
sword was out of the Little King's hand.

(Jones, 263.4)

If the opponent is not wearing armour the effect of the blow is more
drastic. Thus the giant (WM 442.11; Jones, 267.25) and Earl Limwris (WM
444.16; Jones, 269.11) are actually cut in two, but the blow is always
essentially the same, delivered to the crown of the head, and a sword is
never wielded in any other way.

As was suggested for the description of the forester the force of
habit can lead to the use of a formula in circumstances to which it is not
entirely suited. Combats with a lance, for example, can take one of two
forms each with its own group of formulas. Lesser opponents are run through
at the first attempt, but convention demands that more formidable
adversaries should be allowed to break a few lances before being unhorsed:

A thorri to o beleidyr, a thori yr eil, a thorri y trydet to.

(WM 397.12)

And they broke a set of spears, and broke the second, and
broke the third set.

(Jones, 237.26)

A thori to o beleidyr a orugant, a thorri yr eil do, a thorri
y drydet do.

(WM 450.18)

And they broke a set of spears, and broke the second set, and
broke the third set.

(Jones, 273.5)

Or in slightly briefer form:

A thorri paladyr, a thorri yr eil.

(WM 432.18)

And broke a spear, and broke a second.

(Jones, 261.6)

The first example refers to a tournament so there could have been a supply of lances on hand, but they could not have been Gereint's as they are said to be (WM 397.32; Jones, 238.3), because he has ridden from Caerleon unarmed. In the other examples the author gives no indication as to how the lances were obtained.

These indications of the effects of habit, and the fact that the formulas in Gereint may be seen as a system extensive in the topics which it covers but economical in the number of alternatives which it provides for a given context, allow us to be sure that the formulas were not ad hoc creations. Clearly the author of Gereint took his style and his formulas from a tradition which was already in existence. Some of the phrases may have been improvised, but the system as a whole cannot have been made single-handed.

This conclusion has a most important consequence because the fundamental characteristic of the formulas is that they are necessarily Welsh. Some may have arisen by translating phrases from other languages, but there is no possibility that the whole system can be a foreign product. Even those phrases which had a foreign origin have been made Welsh by their repetition in their Welsh form, because there is no other way in which they could be included in the system. They are noticeable precisely because the same words are used time and again, and they function in the telling of the story precisely because that form of words was as familiar to the audience as to the author. The stability of the verbal form is by its nature a guarantee of their Welshness.

iii. Formulas and foreign sources

Since the use of formulaic diction is one of the features which contributes to the feeling of "Welshness" that the Mabinogion texts undoubtedly possess when compared with the translations, one ought perhaps to relate this surface feature to the question of the origin of the various narratives. It is the case, for example, that repetition is relatively common in the "Welsh" stories of the Four Branches and Culhwch, but almost wholly absent from "foreign" stories like Bown o Hamtwn and those of the Charlemagne cycle. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that the repetitions in the three stories of Owein, Peredur, and Gereint represent a guarantee of their Welsh origin, or of their independence from the three romances by Chrétien de Troyes.

Faithful copying from a foreign original could explain why some texts are almost wholly free from these repetitions, but the occurrence of the formulas is not evidence that the text concerned is a purely native product. There is no difficulty in supposing that a skilled adaptor might have introduced the technique, or indeed used it quite unconsciously even when his exemplar showed no trace of it -- and this would be possible regardless of the language in which the exemplar was written. The important factor would be the training of the redactor, not the state of the exemplar.

A particularly illuminating example is the Welsh version of The Seven Sages of Rome. In the "frame" story verbatim repetitions are common, but in the parables told by the queen and the wise masters they are extremely rare. One's first inclination is to point out that the parables clearly come from foreign sources whereas the frame story uses material from native tradition with extensive borrowing from other Welsh texts, especially Culhwch and Owein. This might imply that the presence or absence of the repetitions is the result of the source from which each of the two parts

of the story has been taken, but upon reflection it is clear that an argument of this type would be misleading.

There is a sense in which the Welsh author has used a native tradition for his version of the frame story -- but only as a result of his deliberately rejecting the foreign version which he had in front of him. The "material" which the author has chosen to use in telling the frame story may be of Welsh origin but not the story itself. A version of The Seven Sages of Rome without the frame is inconceivable. The parables may be changed with impunity because they are self-contained units, and different versions of the story do use different parables. But without the frame the story, as a story about seven wise masters of Rome, simply vanishes.

The Welsh author's foreign source must have contained both the frame and the parables, but in the process of adaptation the two parts have received quite different treatment. There would be various ways of explaining this, but it is clear that the source from which each of the parts was derived cannot have been the determining factor.

The point which emerges from considering the case of The Seven Sages of Rome is that it is possible for a Welsh author working with a foreign original to proceed in either of two quite different ways. He can, as in the parables, provide a faithful reflection of his source or he can, as in the frame, reject all but the outlines of the story provided by his source and fill it out with material familiar to him from his knowledge of native tradition. If this is possible for a single author in one and the same text it is equally possible for different authors adapting different stories.

It is simple enough to find examples of stories adapted from foreign originals in a more or less faithful form -- Bown o Hamtwn, Amlynac Amic, the Charlemagne stories, the versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae, the two parts of Y Seint Greal, and plenty of others,

especially religious texts or semi-learned handbooks. Examples of the second type of adaptation, with its thoroughgoing conversion of the story into a genuinely Welsh form would be, by their very nature, extremely elusive. In the case of The Seven Sages of Rome, where both methods of adaptation occur in the same text, and where the foreign origin of the story is known beyond all doubt, we are in a position to say that, if the frame story is now Welsh it is because it has been made Welsh. Where the origin of the material is in doubt a story which has been made Welsh with complete thoroughness will be indistinguishable (to the modern eye) from a story which was Welsh in origin.

iv. The source of Gereint

It is clear from the existence of the foreign versions that the incidents of the Gereint story can be related without recourse to the formulas which are such a prominent feature of the Welsh text. Similarly, a reading of other Welsh texts confirms that there is nothing about the formulaic system which predetermines the choice of incidents. The implication of this is that it would be as possible for an author or storyteller steeped in the formulaic tradition to have added the formulas to a narrative which existed in a different style, as for a French adaptor to have avoided producing translations of the formulas which he found in his Welsh original.

Thus there are two basic styles in which the source of Gereint might have existed -- a formulaic version (necessarily in Welsh) from which the formulas have been removed in order to give the French version by Chrétien de Troyes, or a non-formulaic version (in any language) to which the formulas have been added by the author of Gereint. If it could be shown that the first of these possibilities obtained, it would follow (from the chronology of the extant texts) that Chrétien's Erec et Enide and

Gereint fab Erbin derive from a common (Welsh) source. If the second alternative was shown to be correct the question of textual relationship would remain open.

In view of the argument already presented to the effect that it is not possible to countenance a common source in Welsh, we are committed to supposing a common source that was not formulaic. And as soon as we admit that, we admit also that we are dealing in Gereint with a text which has undergone a major stylistic revision by an author whose purpose was, presumably, to give a thoroughly Welsh dress to a story which was known to him in a non-Welsh form.

This does not provide an immediate answer to the question of textual relationships, but it does put the problem in a different perspective. The process of making the story truly Welsh was more complex than we might have supposed, and whatever the source from which the story was taken, there is little doubt that Gereint owes its present form primarily to the hand of its unknown Welsh author.

What he would have needed from his source was the outline of the narrative. The form in which the story is now cast, the words in which it is told, the elements from Welsh tradition, would all have been well within the grasp of his professional competence. The decisive factor in this process is not the form in which the author encountered the original story (although it seems that Chrétien's poem would have served his purpose as well as any other), but the means by which he was able to transform his source into a new creation. It is in this respect that Gereint differs most from the texts which are known to have been adapted from Erec et Enide. Even Hartmann von Aue does not fully succeed in making the story his own, whereas the author of Gereint clearly had the means to do so, irrespective of whether his source was Chrétien's poem or some other text.

Chapter Eleven

TECHNIQUES OF COMPOSITION IN GEREINT: II

THE PROLOGUE

Chrétien's romance of Erec et Enide begins with twenty-six lines in which the poet addresses his audience directly and gives some of his reasons for writing. The autonomy of this passage was apparently as obvious to the medieval eye as it is to the modern, for only the Chantilly manuscript (=A) fails to give a large initial to line 27. An agreement of this kind between six out of the seven manuscripts is relatively rare. A further indication of the independence of this prologue is the fact that B.N. 1450 (=H), which interpolates Chrétien's romances into the Roman de Brut by Wace, dispenses with these lines altogether. The narrative itself begins with the words:

Un jor de Pasque, au tans novel,
A Caradigan son chastel
Ot li rois Artus cort tenue.
Einz si riche ne fu veüe.

(Erec 27)

In Gereint fab Erbin there is nothing in the manuscripts to help with the division of the text and there is no direct address from the author. It seems at first that Gereint begins in the same way as the actual narrative of Erec, with a reference to Arthur, his court, where it is being held, and the high festival which is the reason for it:

Arthur a deuodes dala llys yg Kaer Llion ar Vysc, ag y dellis
ar untu seith Pasc a phymp Nadolic. Ar Sulgwyn treilgweith
dala llys a oruc yno.

(WM 385.1)

It was Arthur's custom to hold court at Caer Llion on Usk, and he held it continually for seven Easters and five Christmasses. And once upon a time he held court there at Whitsuntide.

(Jones, 229.1)

The correspondence with Erec is by no means exact in every detail (Caerlŷon as opposed to Cardigan, Whitsun instead of Easter), but there is a broad similarity in the situation depicted. The Welsh continues, however, with material which has no parallel in Chrétien's poem. Whereas Chrétien moves swiftly into the action of the story with Arthur announcing the hunt of the white stag, the Welsh text proceeds with a description of the court. It is not even specifically concerned with this particular court at this particular Whitsun but presents in quite general terms the customs of the court followed at any high festival.

When this description is complete there occurs the sentence beginning:

A Dyw Mavrth Sulgwyn ual yd oyd yr amherawdyryn y gyuedach
yn eisted . . .

(WM 386.8)

And Whit Tuesday as the emperor was sitting at his carousal . . .

(Jones, 229.30)

This also corresponds reasonably well to the beginning of the Erec narrative and it is precisely from this point in the Welsh text that the story really gets under way with a different account of Arthur's decision to hunt the white stag. If it is accepted that the start of the narrative is really "A Dyw Mavrth Sulgwyn", corresponding to "Un jor de Pasque", the material which precedes it (WM 385.1-386.7) appears as a kind of prologue. The existence of this section provides a parallel with the structure of Erec et Enide (though not with its content), and this gives particular interest to the possibility of identifying the source (or sources) from which this prologue was compiled.

Although we have been using the English word *court* in referring to the descriptions which are found in both Welsh and French texts, the original words *llys* and *cort* differ quite significantly in their overtones.

In French a distinction is made between *cort* and *chastel*, but the Welsh term covers both of these meanings. For the Frenchman the *cort* is the assembly of people around the person of the king and the formal proceedings associated with the royal presence. A court in this sense could be held anywhere that the king might be and has no necessary connection with the fact that he is said to be in his *chastel* at Caradigan. In Welsh, however, *llys* refers in the first instance to the actual residence. It was, in fact, the residence that the lord maintained in each commote to serve as an administrative centre for the district.¹ The use of *llys* to refer to a building is made particularly clear later in Gereint itself:

Ac ef a welei ar dalym or dref, hen llys atueiledic ac yndi
neuad drydoll.

(WM 392.37)

And he could see, a short way from the town, an old ruined
court and in it a broken hall.

(Jones, 234.19)

At the same time *llys* could also be the equivalent of the French *cort*. This is clear enough from the use of a phrase like "dala llys" (to hold court) which suggests a certain amount of Latin or French influence.

The difference between *cort* and *llys* becomes of particular significance in considering the various places in which Arthur's court is said to be held. In French romances the court moves with the king from Cardigan to Carlisle to Nantes and so on. In Welsh the court is, in early tradition, consistently located at Celliwig in Cornwall and, in later tradition after Geoffrey of Monmouth, equally consistently at Caerleon-on-Usk in Monmouthshire. In Gereint a characteristically Welsh attitude is implied

¹ See J. E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, Chapter IX, "Early Welsh Institutions", especially p. 313; William Rees, South Wales and the March 1284-1415 (Oxford, 1924), especially p. 8. The original sources of most of the information are the various recensions of the Welsh Laws.

by the stress laid on "seith Pasc a phymp Nadolic" (seven Easters and five Christmasses), by the choice of tenses (*bei*, *bydei*) which imply an habitual action, and by the fact that the whole passage is not tied down to any one particular occasion. In Gereint, Owein, and Peredur the court is always at Caerleon.

Given the Welsh background and the specific evidence of Owein and Peredur it is no surprise to be told at the beginning of Gereint that Arthur is holding a court, as was his custom, at Caerleon-on-Usk. What is surprising, however, is that the Welsh author gives a reason for the court being held at Caerleon. If the location of the court is a simple fact of the tradition it needs no justification. The mention of a reason of any kind fits more naturally into a different type of situation where the king has to make a choice of where the court is to be held. Relating these considerations to what was said about the terminology it is apparent that the element of choice is more suited to the siting of a *cort* than of a *llys* which having already a fixed geographical basis is more likely to be taken for granted.

This line of argument is to some extent weakened by the fact that the reason which is given is a perfectly accurate statement about the geography of Caerleon -- the Bristol Channel and the river Usk would have afforded easy access by sea (the river was navigable as far as Caerleon in the Middle Ages), and the old Roman road made it easily approachable by land. On the other hand, if one were looking for a reason why Arthur should have chosen Caerleon as a permanent capital, accessibility would not necessarily be a prime recommendation. Its defensibility and fortifications might be more to the point. Accessibility is, however, an excellent reason when one is thinking of a temporary festive gathering on the French or Anglo-Norman pattern. A detail of this nature is already an indication that the author may have been deriving his description from a source in which the context

and the underlying attitude were slightly different.

The times of year when major courts are held in the Arthurian romances are almost invariably the three high festivals of the Christian calendar -- Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas. Commentators often refer to the practice of William the Conqueror as recorded by the Peterborough Chronicle for the year 1087:

Þriwa he baer his cynehelm aelce geare swa oft swa he waes on Englelande: on Eastron he hine baer on Winceastre, on Pentecosten on Westmynstre, on Midewintre on Gleaweceastre; 7 þaenne waeron mid him ealle þa rice men ofer eall Engaland, arcebiscopas 7 leodbiscopas, abbodas 7 eorlas, þegnas 7 cnihtas.

(Clark, p. 12)

Being concise and explicit this text is an ideal authority to quote but the frequency with which it is cited should not be allowed to create the impression that there was anything exclusively Anglo-Norman about holding plenary courts at these festivals or that the practice of William offers an "explanation" of the Arthurian instances.

In Welsh literature, the earlier texts such as Culhwch and Olwen and the Four Branches have no references to the three feasts. It is not until Gereint and Owein that the festivals are mentioned. Although not prominent in literary contexts the importance of these festivals can easily be demonstrated from the Welsh Laws. To quote just two examples from many:

Hii xxti iiiior ter quolibet in anno debent indumenta sua a rege et regina habere, lanea, scilicet a rege, et linea a regina, et hoc in Natali et Pascha et Pentecoste.

(Emanuel, 109)

Cum rex sederit insede sua in tribus festis principalibus ad levam suam debet habere quendam venerabilem virum de terra cuius hereditatis dignitas illum locum ei adquirat.

(Emanuel, 111)

Whether these practices antedate the period of Anglo-Norman influence is

another question, but they are clearly well-established by the time at which Gereint was written.²

In Erec et Enide the court is said to be held at Easter whereas in Gereint it is at Whitsun. There is no reason to suppose that the Welsh attached any special significance to the Whitsun festival. The second reference to the festivals in the Gereint prologue specifically states that there are three of them, without drawing any distinctions:

Glewlwyd Gyuaeluawr a oyd benn porthawr itaw; ac nyd
ymmyrrei ef yg gwasanayth namyn yn un o'r teir gwyl
arbennic.

(WM 385.35)

Glewlwyd Mighty-grasp was head porter to him; but he
would have nothing to do with the office save at one
of the three high festivals.

(Jones, 229.22)

The earlier reference in Gereint had named all three festivals, but in such a way as to imply some slight distinction between Whitsun and the other two:

Arthur a deuodes dala llys yg Kaer Llion ar Vysc, ag y
dellis ar untu seith Pasc a phymp Nadolic. Ar Sulgwyn
treilgweith dala llys a oruc yno.

(WM 385.1)

It was Arthur's custom to hold court at Caer Llion on Usk,
and he held it continually for seven Easters and five
Christmasses. And once upon a time he held court there
at Whitsuntide.

(Jones, 229.1)

2 The Laws, which exist in various recensions (in Welsh and in Latin), claim to derive from the time of Hywel Dda (d. 950 A.D.), but the extant manuscripts are thirteenth century or later. References are normally to Hywel David Emanuel, The Latin Texts of the Welsh Laws (Cardiff, 1967), and, unless otherwise stated, they are quotations from Redaction A (= Peniarth MS. 28). This is cited as "Emanuel" followed by a page number. The Latin text is quoted (provided the Welsh offers no significant variants) mainly for the sake of convenience, but also bearing in mind that Peniarth MS. 28 is rather earlier than the Welsh manuscripts and probably roughly contemporaneous with Gereint itself.

The use of "treilgweith" (once upon a time) may just be a way of moving from the general to the particular but the phrasing as it stands leaves it an open question whether the holding of a Whitsun court was a part of the custom or not. This point is rather a minor stylistic one, but it is worth noting that the reference to the festivals in Owein does not include Whitsun:

Yr anhardaf onadunt, hardach oed no Gwenhwyar gwreic
Arthur pan uu hardaf eiryoet duw Nadolic ne duw Pasc
wrth offeren.

(Thomson, 62; WM 226.10)

The least lovely of them, lovelier was she than
Gwenhwyfar, Arthur's wife, when she was ever loveliest
Christmas day or Easter day at Mass.

(Jones, 157.5)

This corresponds to the view of the medieval Church that Whitsun was a less important festival than Christmas or Easter, and this raises the question why it should be Whitsun that is singled out for special attention in Gereint. It may simply be a result of the author's use of formulas, because there is a similar introductory phrase later in the text:

A threilgweith yd oed Arthur yn dala llys yg Kaer Llion
ar Vysc y Sulgwyn . . .

(WM 409.23)

And once upon a time when Arthur was holding court in
Caer Llion on Usk at Whitsuntide . . .

(Jones, 246.11)

On this second occasion, however, the court corresponds to a Whitsuntide court in Erec et Enide. It is true that the two texts are not exactly parallel at this point and that the two courts consequently have different functions but their place in the narrative sequence leaves little doubt that for practical purposes they do correspond.

For this second court in Gereint there is good reason to suppose that

its being held at Whitsun was a detail to be found in the text which the author was adapting (whether that text was Chrétien's poem or some lost source). For the court with which the story begins the question of sources is entirely open. If Erec and Gereint had a common source, either Chrétien or the Welsh author or both could have altered any reference it may have contained to the festival at which the court was being held. A plausible reason for Chrétien having done so would be in order to create the sequence of three courts held at Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas, and to make the story of the stag hunt and the love of Erec and Enide coincide with the springtime for the sake of the conventional symbolic connotations. Easter is certainly a better time of year to hold a tournament for a sparrowhawk, for at Whitsun the bird would be in moult.³ Since it would not be fit for flying at quarry it would not represent a particularly attractive prize. Thus there are several possible reasons why Chrétien might have altered his source from Whitsun to Easter, but no immediately obvious reason why the author of Gereint should have made the change in the opposite direction. This makes it likely that Gereint is dependent for this detail upon a source which described a

3 The sparrowhawk begins its moult in mid-May (slightly earlier in the twelfth century because of the accumulated error in the Julian calendar) and when in moult would be kept in the mews for at least two or three months. The period of moult varies according to conditions such as climate and diet and the general health of the hawk, but a sparrowhawk would not normally be in full plumage again before August. Hawks (but not necessarily sparrowhawks) would certainly be flown at the beginning of May because medieval calendars traditionally use the falconer as the illustration for the month, but Whitsun cannot fall before 10 May and it is unlikely that an author would think in terms of the extreme rather than the norm.

Chrétien had at least a superficial knowledge of falconry because he depicts Enide as feeding the hawk on the wing of a plover (1307-8). This would be what is known as a "tiring" — food at which the bird has to spend a long time picking off relatively small quantities, thus keeping it occupied without overfeeding it. Enide's hawk would then be "sharp set" (i.e. sufficiently hungry) to fly at quarry the following day. Chrétien does not mention that the hawk was flown on the way to Caradigan but it would be natural for a skilled falconer to keep the bird in such a condition that it could be flown if desired. For a knowledge of falconry as the accomplishment of a well-educated courtly lady see the description of Philomena (Philomena, 182-7).

Whitsun court, either a source held in common with Erec or a source of a different type.

The description of the people who attend the court might also call for some comment:

A dygyuor a oruc attaw naw brenhin coronawc a oedynt wyr itaw hyd yno, a chyt a hymny jeirll a barwneit.

(WM 385.9)

And he gathered about him to that place nine crowned kings who were vassals of his, and along with them earls and barons.

(Jones, 229.5)

The purpose of the reference to the crowned kings who are Arthur's vassals is clearly to indicate the extent of Arthur's prestige, which is such that he numbers even kings amongst his vassals. This may be a literary formula (although it is, in any case, a fairly obvious way for an author to enhance the prestige of one of his characters). It occurs in even more explicit form at the beginning of the Dream of Maxen:

Maxen Wledic a oed amherawdyr yn Rufein. . . A dadleu brenhined a oed arnaw diwarnawt, ac ef a dywawt y annwyleit, "Miui," heb ef, "Mi uynnaf auory vynet y hela." . . . Yd oed hagen gyt ac ef deudec brenhin ar hugeint o vrenhined coronawc yn wyr idaw yna. Nyt yr digrifwch hela yd helei yr amherawdyr yn gyhyt a hynny, namyn y wneuthur yn gefurd gwr acy bei arglwyd ar y sawl vrenhined hynny.

(WM 178.34)

Macsen Wledig was Emperor of Rome. . . And one day he held an assembly of kings, and he said to his friends, "Tomorrow," said he, "I intend to go a-hunting." . . . Moreover, there were with him two-and-thirty crowned kings, his vassals at that time. Not for the joy of hunting did the emperor hunt with them so long, but because he had been made a man of such high dignity that he was lord over all those kings.

(Jones, 79.1)

A similar status is implied for Arthur by the use of the title *amherawdyr* (emperor) in the Three Romances and in The Dream of Rhonabwy.

The distinction made between the "kings" (*brenhined corunawc*) and the "earls and barons" (*jeirll a barwnet*) is a common enough practice in medieval texts, and the fact that there are nine kings seems, at first sight, to be simply an arbitrary number reflecting the well-known Celtic love of threes. It will be seen later, however, that the choice of the number nine may not be entirely without reason.

A feature which is more immediately striking is the mention of the thirteen churches:

A phan uei ef yg Kaer Llion yn dala llys, teir eglwys ar dec
a achubid vrth y offerenneu.

(WM 385.17)

And when he would be at Caer Llion holding court, thirteen
churches would be occupied with his Masses.

(Jones, 229.9)

Why churches? Given the prominence of the Church in the Middle Ages and the more particular fact that the court was held on a major religious festival this question may seem unnecessary. Nevertheless, references in the Mabinogion to religious practices are few and far between and even in Chrétien it is not often that reference is made to the actual building. Chrétien's knights hear Mass much more frequently than the Welsh heroes, but not usually in a church. Despite his beginning Erec et Enide with: "Un jor de Pasque", there is not a single mention of any religious ceremony at this session of Arthur's court. The poet is much more interested in the "pagan" aspects of "au tans novel", the secular festivities, and above all, the hunt of the white stag. As for the Welsh tradition, the only other reference to churches in the Mabinogion occurs in Peredur where it is the direct result of advice given to Peredur by his mother — which corresponds in this detail to the advice given in Chrétien's Perceval.

Thus the mention of churches might perhaps reflect the influence of a non-Welsh source.

But why thirteen? Partly, no doubt, because of the Celtic predilection for threes. This aspect is more obvious in the Welsh than in the English because of the syntax associated with Welsh numerals, "teir eglwys ar dec" (literally "three churches and ten"). There are also various parallels such as the thirteen ships at the beginning of Branwen (WM 38.34; Jones, 25.15). This is, presumably, part of the explanation but not necessarily the whole of it.

The situation is complicated by the fact that nine of these churches are allocated to: "naw penteulu" (nine captains of the war-bands). The penteulu figures prominently in the Laws where he is said to be chief of the twenty-four officers. Apart from this passage in Gereint there is no suggestion in the Mabinogion or the Laws that there could ever be more than one penteulu in a court. A lord would have one war-band and one penteulu.

Certain allowances should be made for the difference that exists between writing a story like Gereint and codifying the Laws of the Court. Indeed, the ease with which the position of penteulu is given to Owein in The Lady of the Fountain or offered to Iorwerth fab Maredudd in The Dream of Rhonabwy glosses over the difficulties of a situation in which the penteulu who is supplanted might well raise some objection. Even if the office happened to be vacant at the time the appointment might still not be as straightforward as we are led to believe by these two texts.

Nevertheless, a detail which is so obviously at variance with the practice of the time does call for some explanation. The solution which presents itself is that the nine kings each brought their war-band with them and that the nine penteulu are theirs and not Arthur's. The difficulty which this raises is that the correspondence of nine kings and nine penteulu, so attractive at first sight, leaves no room for Arthur to have a penteulu of his own. If the numerical basis of the comparison is to be maintained,

Arthur's pentulu cannot be one of the nine, and yet the foremost of the pentuluoedd is none other than Gwalchmei:

Ac y Walchmei yn bennaf, canys ef o arderchogwryd clod
milwryayth ac urtas boned oed bennaf ar [y] naw pentulu.

(WM 385.28)

And for Gwalchmei above all, for he by excellence of
renown for feats of arms and dignity of noble birth
was chief of the nine captains of the war-bands.

(Jones, 229.16)

It is inconceivable that Gwalchmei should be portrayed as pentulu to one of the vassal kings. As Arthur's nephew he is, throughout Welsh tradition, closely associated with Arthur's own court. Since the same is true of his French counterpart it is not possible to attribute such an inaccuracy to blind copying from a foreign source. This leaves only eight pentulu for the nine kings, and as soon as the numerical correspondence is eliminated there is no reason to suppose a connection between kings and pentuluoedd.

The phrase describing Gwalchmei would seem to confirm the natural reading of the text to the effect that all nine pentulu are Arthur's, but this not only leaves the original question unanswered as to why there should be nine but also introduces a further problem in so far as no other Welsh text offers any evidence that Gwalchmei was pentulu to Arthur. Indeed, there are several texts which indicate that he was not. The clearest is at the end of The Lady of the Fountain where the office is held by Owein:

Ac Owein a trigwys yn llys Arthur o hynny allann yn
pentulu.

(Thomson, 817; WM 261.26)

And Owein remained in Arthur's court from that time forth
as captain of the war-band.

(Jones, 182.13)

There is also a passage at the end of Peredur in which Gwalchmei decides to send to Arthur for the assistance of the war-band, and it would be natural to assume that if the war-band had stayed with Arthur its captain would have remained with it. These difficulties could be resolved by transferring to these other texts the situation found in Gereint, where there is more than one penteulu at the court at the same time, but the texts give us no encouragement for such a procedure.

The difficulty of explaining the nine penteulu results from the text of the laws where penteulu is a technical term (often left untranslated in the Latin versions) for a specific office with clearly defined duties and privileges. If it were possible to move outside the strict limits of the legal term it might be easier to make sense of the Gereint text. It is conceivable, for example, that the word is used in Gereint to provide an approximate Welsh equivalent for a word or phrase that was originally in Latin or French. In the Latin texts of the Laws the B version translates penteulu as "princeps militie", but a phrase of this sort would presumably not have the same restricted reference as the Welsh which it translates. If we could envisage this process operating in reverse the phrase "princeps militie" (or something similar in Latin or in French) might be turned into Welsh as "penteulu" where the apparent precision of the Welsh term would be entirely spurious. As a speculation this is certainly quite attractive but it is not easy to find hard evidence.

There is a suggestive parallel in the text of Erec et Enide where Chrétien gives the names of some of the knights of the Round Table who were present when Enide was introduced to the court. The particular significance of this list of names (which does not appear at the equivalent place in Gereint) is that Chrétien gives the names of the first ten knights in order before proceeding to the rest. In this way he creates a select group of ten knights, beginning with Gauvain:

Devant toz les buens chevaliers
Doit estre Gauvains li premiers.

(Erec, 1691)

It would not be necessary to suppose a direct borrowing because the reputation of Gwalchmei and Gauvain was such that two authors might have independently referred to him as the first of knights, but the fact that what is virtually the same comment should occur in two such closely related texts is not without significance. To begin with it seems quite likely that Gwalchmei's reputation was made as much in France as in Wales. It is not until the period of French influence that his supremacy becomes established. In the long list of Arthur's warriors given in Culhwch and Olwen Gwalchmei has no special place and when Arthur calls upon his men to undertake the quests on behalf of Culhwch it is Kei and Bedwyr who are named first, Gwalchmei being fifth out of six. He is fifth also in the list of Arthur's counsellors found in The Dream of Rhonabwy. In the Three Romances, however, Gwalchmei is the model of courtesy set in contrast to the brusqueness of Kei, a role that is familiar as that of Gauvain in Chrétien's romances. In Gereint the specific remark of the opening section is supported not only by Gwalchmei's role in contrast to Kei but also by details such as the fact that in the list of knights who are to accompany Gereint to Cornwall it is Gwalchmei who is named first (WM 411.28; Jones, 247.26).

It is quite plausible, therefore, that the idea of Gwalchmei as Arthur's leading knight could be derived from a French source, either a specific text (such as Erec itself) or a tradition about a small group of nine or ten. The possibility of such a tradition is quite real, because there are other examples of small select groups. The Round Table itself was often thought of as seating only thirteen (including Arthur and the Siege Perilous), although Chrétien places no restriction on the numbers. On the other hand, neither the group of nine nor the group of ten has an

exact parallel in Arthurian texts of sufficiently early date.

Whether one supposes a stock of tradition or a relation with the text in Erec (either directly or via a lost common source) the idea of a small select group of knights would help to provide an explanation of the nine pentulu. It would not necessarily follow that the Welsh author intended the word to be understood in the more general sense that the situation depicted in Erec would require. Given the situation, the Welsh author might easily have decided to improve upon it and attribute to Arthur nine pentulu and, by implication, nine war-bands. This would be associated with the intention of this whole introductory section which is designed to portray Arthur in as prestigious a way as possible. The nine pentulu would be a means for the author to say that Arthur was as powerful as nine ordinary kings and this would parallel the statement that he was, in fact, lord over nine other kings. In whatever sense the Welsh author intended pentulu to be understood, what the Erec text provides is a possible explanation of why he should have chosen this means of enhancing Arthur's prestige rather than another. The discrepancy that remains is the difference between nine pentulu and the group of ten knights, but since a tertiary system would be characteristic of the Welsh and a decimal system of the French there are obvious psychological reasons which could explain the variation.

If this, or something similar, is the explanation of the nine pentulu it would follow that this motif was originally independent of any tradition of the thirteen churches. In order to understand the relation into which these two features have been brought it is useful to consider the plausibility of the situation described, and the literary purpose which that description is intended to serve.

It is unlikely that twelfth-century Caerleon actually had thirteen churches but this is a detail which can easily be accepted as poetic licence. The real question is why, within the story's own terms of reference, so

many churches should be needed. The implication intended is that there were so many people present that they could not be accommodated in any fewer than thirteen churches:

Ac ny annei yn yr un o'r eglwyseu mwy noc a dywedassam
ni uchod.

(WM 385.33)

And there might not be contained in any one church more than we have mentioned above.

(Jones, 229.19)

Yet the way in which the congregations are said to be made up does not provide an answer to why so many churches were necessary. "Arthur a'y deyrned a'y wahodwyr" (Arthur and his kings and his guests) could easily imply sufficient numbers to fill a church. Similarly, "[G]wenhwyuar a'y rianed" (Gwenhwyfar and her ladies), if taken to include the ladies of the kings and the guests, could also provide a sizeable congregation. The third church presents more of a problem. "Trydet a uydei y'r distein a'r eircheid" (the third would be for the steward and the suitors); this could mean there was a need for a separate church depending on how many suitors there were. But only if the "suitors" were not already included amongst the "guests". Since they are given a church of their own it is to be assumed that they were men worthy of such an honour, but if they were men of rank they would surely be included among the "earls and barons" who are said to be Arthur's "guests".

"A'r bedwarded y Odyar franc a'r swydogyon ereill" (and the fourth for Odiar the Frank and the other officers). According to the Laws there were twenty-four officers of the court but some of these would be occupied elsewhere. The penteulu was presumably one of the nine who each have a church of their own, the steward has already been mentioned with the suitors, the Priest of the teulu and the Priest of the Queen would perhaps be

officiating, and the handmaid of the queen would no doubt be in attendance upon her lady. Yet even allowing for the full twenty-four and adding to them the porter and his seven deputies who are mentioned a few lines later the total still only amounts to thirty-two. Unless the bulk of the congregation was made up of people not specified by the text or unless we should put a very much broader interpretation upon the term *swydogyon* (officers), this church is superfluous. Nine churches for the nine penteulu make sense only if they each have with them a sizeable war-band, but since there is no tradition of nine war-bands it is likely that this represents the development of a motif rather than its origin. The text itself gives no indication that there were actually nine war-bands.

If the description is not plausible in practical terms it is natural to turn away from the question of realism to that of literary purpose. The intention of the passage is, presumably, to evoke an emotional response to the grandeur and magnificence of the occasion. There remains, however, the question with which we began. Why churches? There are many other possible ways of depicting the splendour of a court. In Erec alone, Chrétien makes use of such things as the richness of clothing and jewellery, the lavishness of the feast and the entertainments, the liberality of Arthur and the impressive retinues of his guests. All of these motifs are common in the works of Chrétien and his successors and most of them (though without quite the same elaborate description of detail) can be paralleled from Welsh texts. Indeed, the Welsh writers have in most instances a repertoire of set formulas to cover these occasions. There is, in particular, a passage in Pwyll (WM 5-6; Jones, 5-6) describing the richness of the court of Arawn king of Annwn which conforms to the more usual pattern. The use of churches for portraying the magnificence of a court is an extreme rarity. What was it that prompted the Welsh author to pass over the familiar material which he uses elsewhere in favour of something unusual? The literary effect which he

thereby obtains is sufficient justification for his having done so, but not necessarily an explanation of his particular choice.

There is also a further peculiarity in that there seems to be a segregation of the sexes. The situation is not entirely clear, because, although Gwenhwyfar and her ladies have a separate church, it is not stated that all the women of the court attend this same church and no other. Since we are intended to assume that there were enough people to fill the church we may suppose that this church was the one set aside for the women, and there is certainly no indication in the text that women attended any of the other churches. The lack of clarity might suggest that the author was taking a certain amount for granted, and one possible explanation of why he might be led to do that would be that he was abbreviating a source which gave a fuller account of the proceedings.

Accepting that this implied segregation was intended, the question arises as to whether it was a detail drawn from life or from literature. There are known instances of segregation for monks and nuns, and some examples for lay congregations as well. But for the lay congregations the texts which report the separation also make it clear that it was a segregation within the same church and not in two distinct buildings.⁴ If the use of churches in this way was unusual we might well expect this feature to derive from a literary source.

An understanding of the literary purpose of the passage also requires some sort of exposition of how the author developed the simple narrative fact "the court went to church" into the more elaborate description which stands in the text. The basic device is a very simple one. Instead of saying "the court" he has broken it down into its component parts -- the king, the queen, and the twenty-four officers, of which the most important (the

4 Examples are given in J. S. P. Tatlock, The Legendary History of Britain (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1950), p. 273.

pentulu and the steward) are mentioned individually while the others are treated collectively. This corresponds to the description of the court given by the Laws, which invariably begins with the king and queen and then the twenty-four officers. The list of officers is not always in the same order, but it consistently starts with the pentulu, the priest and the steward. The lack of any specific mention of the priest is probably to be explained by the assumption that he was not a member of any of the congregations, but one of the celebrants.

The status of Odiar the Frank is uncertain. Later in Gereint (WM 412.2) he is referred to as the steward of Arthur's court ("ystiward llys Arthur" in all three manuscripts). This is normally taken to be erroneous because it contradicts the distinction made in the prologue between "the steward (*distein*) and the suitors", and "Odiar the Frank and the other officers". In addition, one of the most stable features of Arthurian romance in Welsh, French or whatever language, is that Kei was the steward (or seneschal) of the court, and this is certainly the case in Gereint itself (WM 436; Jones, 264). It may be of significance that in the passage which attributes the office to Odiar the name which immediately precedes his in the list is Kei's. So this could be a purely scribal error of some kind -- either a line copied in the wrong place, or the name of Odiar the Frank added to the end of a list of names by a scribe who noticed its absence but who did not notice that the next line was not a continuation of the narrative but a description of Kei. This is possible but it remains pure conjecture.

Another possibility is to suppose that there was a technical distinction between the terms *distein* and *ystiward*. The normal word in all the versions of the Laws is *distein*, but there is one passage in the Llyfr Iorwerth (33.2) which refers to the "estewart llys". Since there is no mention of this *estewart llys* anywhere else in the Laws it is usually presumed that this is simply an alternative name for the distein. There is a use of this

same expression "ystiwart llys" in The History of Gruffydd ap Cynan (p. 138) where it seems to mean "the constable of the castle", but this does not shed much light on the Laws or on the reference in Gereint.

A final suggestion is that *ystiward* is a scribal error for a plural form, and that the phrase should refer to both Odiar and Kei. The error might be *ystiward* for *ystiwardiaid*, but more probably for *y deu ystiward*. In a closely written exemplar the eye of the scribe could easily stray from the *y* of *y deu* to the *y* of *ystiward*. Following a numeral *ystiward* would have the same form as a singular so that the mistake would not be apparent. In fact, if we interpret the Welsh along these lines we may not even need to suppose a scribal error at all. It is most natural to interpret *ystiward llys Arthur* as "the steward of Arthur's court", but if we allow the sense, "a steward of Arthur's court" (with the unspoken assumption that Kei is the other steward) the text could stand as it is.

Whether we suppose a scribal error for a plural form or read the text in such a way as to imply a plurality of stewards, the aim of the explanation would be to account for the parallelism in the two passages which refer to Odiar. "Kei son of Kynyr, Odiar the Frank steward[s] of Arthur's court" may reflect the earlier ordering of the churches, "the third would be for the steward (*distein* = Kei) . . . and the fourth for Odiar the Frank". On the assumption that Kei was distein both texts refer to the same two men, together, and in the same order. The difference in terminology (*distein*/*ystiward*) might be explained by the fact that the prologue seems to have been influenced by the Laws where *distein* was the normal term, whereas the second passage appears in a less formal situation. There is no objection to there being two stewards because there was, in addition to the distein, the distein brenhines (steward of the queen). If Odiar could be taken as the steward of the queen there would be a further parallelism in the allocation of the churches. The first was for the king and the second for the queen, the third for the steward (of the king) and the fourth for the

steward of the queen. Admittedly, the direct evidence is a little thin on the ground but the pairing of Kei and Odjar does seem to be a factor which should be taken into consideration, and the importance of parallelism as a feature of the author's style should not be underestimated. The suggestion as a whole also fits rather well with the general thesis that in dividing up the court in the way he did the author was doing no more than follow lines which were already established.

What seems to emerge from this analysis is that there were originally three main elements. Firstly the narrative datum "the court went to church" (which probably came from a literary source containing features like the use of more than one church and the segregation of the sexes); secondly, the idea of elaborating the description by dividing the court into its component parts in a more or less conventional way; and thirdly, the tradition of the nine penteulu. The division of the court is to some extent flexible, but the segregation of the sexes and the nine penteulu mean that it cannot give a result requiring less than eleven churches. If the court is to be shown as more than just the king and queen and the penteulu, some mention must be made of the other officers. They could all be grouped together into one church but twelve is not such a traditional number for the Welsh as thirteen. Odjar the Frank making a pair with the steward (Kei) fills the gap very nicely. One can explain the penteulu by reference to a tradition of nine or ten leading knights, and the division of the court by the influence of the Laws. What one can not explain from tradition is the use of the churches, and it is the details associated with this aspect of the description for which one should seek a specific literary source. Indeed, this analysis which gives an account of why there should have been thirteen is wholly dependent upon being able to offer an explanation of why there should have been any churches at all. There is little in the explanation of the number thirteen which is in itself so compelling that it could not be set aside if

alternative suggestions were forthcoming. But there is no serious objection to the analysis unless there is a way of explaining the churches and the number thirteen at one and the same time.

The opening section dealing with the arrangements for celebrating the festival is followed by a passage on the subject of the porter and his deputies. The porter of the court is a figure of some antiquity in Celtic literature, occurring notably in the Irish story of The Second Battle of Moytura, in the poem Pa Gwr in the Black Book of Carmarthen, and in Culhwch and Olwen. According to the Laws the porter was not one of the twenty-four officers but there are signs (to some extent in the Laws themselves but more particularly in literary texts) that his role was originally more important than that implied by the twelfth and thirteenth century codifications. It is possible that this discrepancy caused a certain amount of embarrassment to writers of the time for there is a reference in Owein which implies an undercurrent of debate:

A chyt dywettit uot porthawr ar lys Arthur, nyt oed yr vn.
Glewlwyd Gauaeluawr oed yno hagen ar ureint porthawr . . .

(Thomson, 4; WM 223.15)

And although it was said that there was a porter to Arthur's court, there was none. Glewlwyd Mighty-grasp was there, however, with the rank of porter . . .

(Jones, 155.5)

The three texts which name the porter of Arthur's court all agree that it was Glewlwyd, Owein rather grudgingly, but Gereint and, most importantly, Culhwch quite openly. The Pa Gwr poem, The Second Battle of Moytura, and Culhwch and Olwen all portray the porter in a way which seems to be traditional, refusing to allow warriors to enter a court. In the Irish story it is Lug who is refused entry, in Culhwch the episode is repeated in different forms, once with Culhwch himself being refused entry to Arthur's court and a second time with Kei and Bedwyr being refused entry

to the court of Wrnach the Giant. In all these cases the porter eventually relents and the warriors do gain admission. The Pa Gwr poem reflects the same situation but its especial interest is that Glewlwyd the porter is refusing entry to Arthur and his warriors. It has been suggested that Glewlwyd was originally the porter to Wrnach and that Culhwch has confused the tradition by transferring him to the court of Arthur. Gereint and Owein would then follow the Culhwch text in the new tradition.

There is a particular agreement between Gereint and Culhwch in that they both state that Glewlwyd performed his duties as porter only on special occasions, his place being taken at other times by one of a number of deputies. It is tempting to see here the direct influence of the Culhwch text but although there are significant parallels there are also discrepancies. For Culhwch the special occasion when Glewlwyd himself serves as porter is the first of January, whereas in Gereint he serves at each of the three high festivals. This might be explained as the result of Anglo-Norman influence (perhaps via the texts of the Laws) in the intervening years. A more serious discrepancy is in the number of deputies and their identities. In Culhwch there are four but in Gereint seven, of whom only two (Penpinghon and Llaesgymyn) are amongst the four mentioned in Culhwch. It is quite likely that Culhwch and Olwen plays an important part here but we may not be dealing with a direct borrowing, for it is also quite feasible that for such a well-attested Celtic motif as the porter of the court there would be a common stock of tradition available to both writers.

After the passage dealing with Glewlwyd and his deputies the text continues with the words: "A Duw Mavrth Sulgwyn", which we have already identified as the true beginning of the narrative corresponding to the start of the narrative in Chrétien's Erec et Enide: "Un jor de Pasque". The opening section which has been isolated in this way contains many features which can be explained by reference to documented Welsh traditions

known either from the Laws or from literary texts which are older than Gereint. The tradition of the nine penteulu is less well established than the other details but the existence of a parallel in Erec et Enide makes it possible to suggest a reasonable hypothesis. There remain, however, certain features of the description for which there is no explanation immediately forthcoming, and which suggest the possibility of borrowing from a non-Welsh source. The elements which one would expect to find in such a source can be set out as follows:

1. The location of the court at Caerleon should be depicted as an innovation.
2. The reason given for the choice of Caerleon should be its accessibility by land and sea.
3. The time of year should be Whitsun.
4. The guests should be divided into the categories of "kings" and "earls and barons".
5. There should be nine kings.
6. The kings should be Arthur's vassals.
7. The use of churches should be an especially prominent part of the description.
8. Arthur and Gwenhwyfar should attend separate churches.

We may also lay down some criteria with regard to the kind of text which would be eligible for consideration. Firstly, it must have been available to a Welsh author not much later than 1200. Secondly, it is to be presumed that the text was sufficiently esteemed in its own right to be accepted as a standard of reference. And thirdly, we should demand that these details should all be found together in a passage which gives a description of Arthur's court, and the more impressive the better. Texts which fulfil some of these requirements are not in particularly short supply, especially if we

relax the demand that all the items should occur in the same passage. Indeed Chrétien's Erec et Enide with its description of Erec's wedding is quite a good candidate. But one text stands out from all the rest in its ability to fulfil all of the conditions.

The Historia Regum Britanniae was written by Geoffrey of Monmouth some time before 1136-8 and very rapidly became famous enough to be translated into several languages. The number of extant manuscripts is an eloquent witness to its immense popularity. There exist Welsh versions which seem to derive from several independent translations so that its availability to a Welsh author writing about 1200 in the original Latin, in French, or perhaps already in a Welsh translation is scarcely open to question. Its reputation as a work of history rather than romance would have made it an ideal standard of reference.

Chapter IX.12 describes in detail a plenary court of King Arthur so impressively that modern critics often refer to it as the climax of the work (even though there is still a full third of the book to come, including the whole of Arthur's war with Rome). The time of year is Whitsun; the place is Caerleon recommended to Arthur by his counsellors because of its natural wealth and beauty and because of its accessibility:

Cum igitur sollempnitas pentecostes aduenire inciperet. post tantum triumphum maxima leticia fluctians Arturus. affectauit curiam ilico tenere. regnique diadema capiti suo imponere. reges & duces sibi subditos ad ipsam festiuitatem conuocare. . . . Indicato autem familiaribus suis quod affectauerat. consilium cepit ut in Urbe Legionum suum exequeretur propositum. In Glamorgantia etenim super Oscam fluuium non longe a Sabrino mari ameno situ locata. pre ceteris ciuitatibus diuiciarum copiis habundans. tante sollempnitati apta erat. Ex una namque parte. predictum nobile flumen iuxta eam fluebat per quod transmarini reges & principes qui uenturi erant nauigio aduehi poterant. Ex alia uero parte pratis atque nemoribus uallata. regalibus prepollebant palatiis. ita ut aureis tectorum fastigiis Romam imitaretur. Duabus autem imminebat ecclesiis . . .

(Griscom, 451.10)

Geoffrey gives several reasons for the choice of Caerleon of which the main one is the wealth which would allow it to provide for the feast. He does not specifically refer to its "accessibility by land and sea", but he does twice mention the fact that it is on a navigable river, and he does explicitly state that the kings and princes from abroad will be able to arrive by boat. Its accessibility on the landward side does not receive such emphasis (it could more easily be taken for granted), but there is in the description the contrast, "ex una . . . parte" (from the sea) and, "ex alia . . . parte" (on the land).

Arthur's guests are to be "reges & duces sibi subditos", but there is not a clear division into "kings" and "earls and barons". The phrase "reges & duces" goes part of the way towards meeting this requirement, but the lists of the guests who attend are divided into kings, archbishops, counts, heroes, kings again, and dukes. There is some variation amongst the Welsh versions but that of the Cotton Cleopatra manuscript is fairly typical:

Ac anvon kennadeu y bop gwlat y wahawt y brenhinet ar ierll
ar barwneyt ar marchogyon vrdolyon a gwyr da ereill adwyn
ar ny ellit ev rif am law hymny.

(Parry, p. 168)

And he sent messengers to every country to invite the kings
and the earls and the barons and the noble knights and the
other goodly nobles innumerable besides that.

(Parry, p. 168)

This begins very well for our purposes but eventually says too much. The Dingestow version which often diverges significantly from the other Welsh translations of the Historia has, in this instance, a very similar list:

y brenhined ar tywysogyon ar yeirll ar barwneyt ar
marchogyon

(Brut Dingestow, p. 158)

the kings and the princes and the earls and the barons
and the knights

The Welsh versions are not translating these terms directly from the Latin because all that Geoffrey says at the equivalent place in the text is, "qui ad curiam uenire deberent". At another place in the same passage he does use the phrase, "reges & duces", but this is still quite far removed from the Welsh renderings. The agreement between Welsh texts which are normally regarded as reflecting independent translations seems to indicate that these lists have something of the formula about them. Both contain the three categories referred to in Gereint, the kings, the earls and the barons, and if these categories were conventional it is not difficult to envisage the shorter list in Gereint as an abbreviated version of the same formula. It is quite reasonable to make some allowance for the fact that a passage intended to serve as a kind of prologue is not the place for unnecessary elaboration.

The prominence of the churches is perhaps one of the best known aspects of Geoffrey's description. He mentions them first of all when referring to the wealth and beauty of Caerleon:

Duabus autem imminebat ecclesiis. quarum una in honore Iulii martiris erecta uirgineo deo dicatarum choro perpulcre ornabatur. Alia quidem in beati Aaron eiusdem socii nomine fundata. canonicorum conuentu subnixa. tertia metropolitanam sedem Britannie habebat.

(Griscom, 452.8)

This description already prefigures the important role which the two churches will play at a later stage and also, in its reference to the virgins of one church and the canons of the other, prepares the way for the segregation of the sexes in the two congregations.

After the long list of guests who attend the festival Geoffrey describes the ceremonies themselves. Firstly the king:

Rege tandem insignito. ad templum metropolitane sedis ordinate conducitur . . . Conuentus quoque multimodorum ordinatorum. miris modulationibus precinebat.

(Griscom, 455.14)

And then the queen:

Ex alia autem parte reginam suis insignibus laureatam archipresules atque pontifices ad templum dicatarum puellarum conducebant . . . Mulieres omnes que aderant cum maximo illam sequebantur gaudio.

(Griscom, 456.2)

Thus all but one of the requirements have now been met. The one still in doubt is the question of the nine kings. Gereint speaks of "naw brenhin corunawc" (nine crowned kings), but French texts which provide parallels to this phrase refer to ten kings. The Lai du Cor, for example, mentions them quite casually giving the impression that there existed an established tradition which needed no further explanation:

Li mes al roi ala,
Al roi en va erraunt,
En sa main l'holifaunt.
Il conust les .x. rois
As plus riches cunrois.

(Cor, 110)

Later in the poem there is a list of the names of nine kings plus "deus rois d'Irlaunde" (line 439). If *deus* is taken as a numeral it makes a total of eleven. The possibility that *deus* is a variant of the name *Do*, the father of Giflet (spelt *Deu* in Le Bel Inconnu, continuations of the Perceval and the prose Tristan), is theoretically conceivable but encounters several practical difficulties.

The most likely explanation of the discrepancy is that the original text of this line read:

E sour li rois d'Irlaunde

being similar in construction to:

415 Al rois de Sinaudone,
 425 Li rois de Cornewaile,
 429 E sour li rois Gohors.

In theory the corruption supposes two stages. Firstly, that the definite article *li* should be read as the Roman numeral *ii* and then, secondly, that the numeral should be written out in full as *deus*. In practice these two stages could take place at the same time. Indeed, if the *li* of an exemplar were sufficiently unclear for a scribe to read it as *ii* he might well be prompted to write it out in full specifically to make his own copy clearer.

The proposed emendation improves, to some extent, both the syntax and the clarity of the text, but its importance for our present purposes is that it produces a list of ten kings to correspond with the reference in line 113, "li .x. rois".⁵

The ten kings are also mentioned in Li Chevaliers as deus espees which begins with a Whitsun feast :

Pour la hatece et pour l'onnor
 De la fieste de cel haut ior
 Porterent coronne .x. roi.

(Deus Espees, 73)⁶

The ten kings who are then named are not the same ten who were named in the Lai du Cor and neither list corresponds with names found in the Historia Regum Britanniae, except in the mention of figures who are famous

5 Editors do not seem very concerned about the discrepancy. C. T. Erickson, for example, whose text is cited (ANTS 24, Oxford, 1973), does not mention it at all.

6 The reference to wearing crowns may be compared with the Welsh, "brenhin corunawc" (crowned king), but the Welsh phrase is probably a formula and does not necessarily lay any great stress on the actual wearing of the crown. Without the qualification *brenhin* might simply mean "lord" rather than "king"; see J. E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, I, 309.

throughout Arthurian romance (Angusel, Lot, Urien) and of countries which are equally commonplace (Ireland and Cornwall). Even though the contents of their lists differ the two French texts do have in common the idea of a specified number of kings being in attendance at Arthur's court. The differences in the names which are given is, if anything, further support for the view that the stable item of tradition was the fact that there were ten kings, rather than a list of kings which happened to contain ten names. In the fact that the number of kings is specified both these texts also agree with Gereint, but there is the discrepancy over the number itself, ten in French, nine in Welsh.

The situation in the Historia is not so clear because Geoffrey does not refer to any specific number of kings, either nine or ten, although he does give two lists with the names of the kings who were present. One of these is a circumscribed group consisting of the kings whose lands Arthur had conquered or received into submission. This list occurs several times in the Historia, without variation of content and always in the order in which the conquests were made -- Ireland, Iceland, Gotland, Orkneys, Norway, Denmark.

The other group of kings is less straightforward. The very first guests mentioned as attending the festival are the five kings Augusel, Urian, Cadwallo, Stater, and Cador. When the ceremonies actually begin Arthur is preceded by only four kings who are not named but whose countries are given as Scotland (i.e. Augusel), Cornwall (i.e. Cador), Gwynedd (i.e. Cadwallo), and Dyfed (i.e. Stater). This is substantially the same list as before but with the omission of Urian and with Cador moved from the end of the list to second place. The Welsh translations efface this second difference, omitting Urian but otherwise keeping the same order for the four who remain. Two of the Welsh versions also recognize the fact that Cador, in spite of the prominent role he has played as Arthur's faithful ally, has

never previously been referred to as a king?⁷ Apart from these two lists the Latin text consistently has "dux Cornubie", both before this Whitsun court and immediately afterwards when letters are received from the Roman emperor. The two Welsh texts are consistent in calling him "iarll Kerniw" (earl of Cornwall) even in the list of "kings". That this procedure is a conscious one on their part is suggested by the later context when Geoffrey's "four kings" become "four men" (*pedwar gwyr*).

Geoffrey names in all eleven kings at the great Whitsun festival, but the situation is complicated by the fact that out of these Cadur and Urian have less substantial claims for being included than the other nine. The elimination of either one would support the tradition of the ten kings and the elimination of both would support the tradition of the nine. If Geoffrey was working with an existing tradition (of either nine or ten) it is relatively easy to see how Urian could have been added alongside his brother Augusel. Urian is mentioned only three times in the Historia (he is not for Geoffrey famous as the father of Yvain) and on all three occasions his name is preceded by that of his more prominent brother. Similarly, Cadur the faithful ally could scarcely be omitted from a place of honour at the feast even if his kingly status is only shortlived.

Alternatively, if Geoffrey was the source of a later tradition of nine or ten kings it is equally easy to see how either tradition could have been extracted from his text subject to the national preference for the tertiary or the decimal system. That there should have been an established tradition of eleven kings, either before or after Geoffrey, is unlikely. The numbers nine and ten both have some sort of semi-mystical significance in many cultures but it is rare for the number eleven to have the same type of

7 The two texts are the Cotton Cleopatra version edited and translated by John Jay Parry, Brut y Brenhinedd (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), and the version in Jesus College MS. LXI translated by Robert Ellis Jones in Acton Griscom's edition of the Latin text, Historia Regum Britanniae (London, 1929).

significance (except as a temporary stage before the group is completed to make twelve).

Whether Geoffrey was reflecting earlier tradition or creating a new one (either consciously or by chance) cannot be determined, because all the relevant texts are later in date than the Historia and Geoffrey himself makes no reference to the number of kings in attendance (except to the four who carry the swords in the ceremonial procession). The most that can be said is that in compiling the various lists of the different types of guests, Geoffrey or his sources seem to have had an eye for "significant" numbers. The lists other than those of the kings contain three, ten, sixteen and eight names. This could be a matter of chance and it is always open to question what numbers may be considered "significant" and, more importantly, what numbers, if any, are not. On the other hand it would probably be easier to find examples of these numbers, used either symbolically or conventionally, than it would for, say, six, eleven, fourteen, seventeen and so on.

There is, perhaps, some not very certain indication that the French tradition of the ten was applied to the text of the Historia at a later date by the way in which Wace treats the material in his translation. In the Roman de Brut both lists of the kings have undergone modification. Firstly, the name of Yvain is included with that of his father in the earlier list. But the group of conquered kings is reduced from six to four, in spite of the fact that the number of Arthur's conquests has previously been increased to seven.⁸ Thus, although the balance between the lists is changed, the effect is to give a total of ten. There is also some reason to believe that this is deliberate, for the second list begins with the couplet:

Girloomur i fu, rois d'Irlande
Qui n'out pas planté de viande.

(Pelan, 1759; SATF, 10303)⁸

⁸ The text is taken from I. D. O. Arnold and M. M. Pelan, La partie arthurienne du Roman de Brut (Paris, 1962), but line references are also given for Le Roman de Brut, edited by Ivor Arnold, 2 vols (SATF, 1938-40).

The second line looks very much as if it has been arbitrarily constructed for the sake of the rhyme. But the simple rhyme is the one which can be translated directly from his source and which Wace has already used in relating the conquests:

Qant Artus ot conquis Yrlande
Trespassez est jusqu'an Islande.

(Pelan, 1163; SATF, 9703)

Or if he wanted to avoid the repetition of a rhyme pair he could just as easily have taken either element of the pair *GoLande/Genelande* (1169-70; SATF, 9709-10). The strange use of *viande* gives the impression that he is deliberately avoiding a place name.

It is to be admitted that the evidence pertaining to the tradition of the nine or ten kings is almost entirely circumstantial and does not lend itself to precise conclusions. Nevertheless, it would seem that the reference in Gereint is not necessarily arbitrary, but that there does exist a background against which it can be set. One would hesitate to claim that this detail of the Gereint text is derived directly from the passage in the Historia but one might venture the suggestion that there is enough in Geoffrey's text to prompt a Welsh author to recall a tradition of nine kings which he knew from other sources. We have no direct evidence that such a tradition was available to him but there are indications in some French texts that it could well have been.

In arguing that the author of Gereint used the description from the Historia (or possibly one of the Welsh Bruts) the essential point to be made is that none of the correspondences are necessarily very impressive individually. But it is not simply a matter of the evidence being cumulative. A host of insufficient arguments do not suddenly become more cogent by being gathered together, if they still leave a mass of material unexplained. The difference here lies in the fact that the analysis is exhaustive.

Provided that the original classification of the material is accepted the conclusion is difficult to escape. On the analysis of the passage which has been made, all of the details which are not in Erec et Enide and are not part and parcel of known Welsh tradition can be found together in one single well-known passage of the Historia Regum Britanniae. It is difficult to believe that this is no more than coincidence.

There is an objection to be met in the fact that a great deal of the description given by Geoffrey does not find its way into Gereint. This is hardly surprising when one considers that the author is writing a prologue and not a full-scale chapter with an important function in the body of the narrative. In any case, by the time of Gereint the glory of Arthur and the grandeur of his court were already established facts, as a result very largely of the success of Geoffrey's own work. Whereas Geoffrey had to create a reputation and portray the festival at Caerleon in terms that would rival the splendour of Rome itself, the problem for the author of Gereint was to remind his audience of what they already knew. This he did by going back to the reliable tradition of the Historia and quoting details as familiar to most of his readers as they were to him. His prologue thus established contact with the audience by starting from common ground before moving to the novelty of the story itself. Details are given just enough of a new look to make them intriguing without destroying their familiarity, and the two strands, the one from Geoffrey and the other from Welsh tradition, are woven together in expert fashion.

The plausibility of regarding the Historia as a source for the Gereint prologue is reinforced by the existence of independent evidence that the author knew and respected Geoffrey's work. Rachel Bromwich has pointed out that the author follows Geoffrey in making Arthur and Gereint close relatives:

There is no reason to believe that there is any early foundation for the relationship between Arthur and Gereint

which is postulated in Geoffrey's Historia and in the Mostyn pedigree . . . In the romance of Gereint vab Erbin, Arthur and Gereint are described as cousins (WM 410,24; cf. Pen. 6), and Erbin as Arthur's uncle (WM 409,35: Erbin's father Custennin is also named). But this relationship is to be explained as due to the influence of Geoffrey, which is manifested again and again in the presentation of the Three Romances, in a number of slight but unmistakable ways.

(Trioedd, p. 358) ⁹

It is also to be observed that there is a reason why the section in the Historia might have been called to mind by an author about to treat the story of Gereint. The festivities at Caerleon are brought to a halt by the arrival of ambassadors from Rome demanding that Arthur should pay tribute. The king and his council withdraw to consider the situation, but even before the meeting is in session Cadur, the duke of Cornwall, expresses his feelings:

Hucusque in timore fueram ne Britones longa pace quietos ocium quod ducunt ignavos faceret. Famamque milicie qua ceteris gentibus clariores censentur in eis omnino deleret. Quippe ubi usus armorum uidetur abesse. alee autem & mulierem inflammationes ceteraque oblectamenta adesse dubitandum non est etiam id quod fame ignavia commaculati. Fere namque iam transacti .v. anni ex quo predictis deliciis dediti exercicio martis caruimus. Deus igitur ut nos de hac liberaret segnicia Romanos in hunc affectum induxit ut in pristinum statum nostram probitatem reducerent.

(Griscom, 461.5)

The sentiments voiced here clearly have a direct relevance to Gereint's love of "ease and leisure" and of "dalliance in his chamber with his wife", which is the turning point of the story (WM 415-6; Jones, 250).

One immediate advantage of accepting that the Historia was used as a source for the beginning of Gereint is that it makes possible an explanation of some of the differences between Gereint and Erec et Enide in the way in which the hunt of the white stag is decided upon. D. D. R. Owen, for example, with evident lack of sympathy for the Welsh version, poses the

⁹ It should also be noted that this relationship is unique to the Welsh hero Gereint; ~~and not to~~ ^{it is never claimed for} the French Erec.

question in the following way:

Gereint opens with some irrelevant matter [i.e. the prologue], and then we see a forester reporting to Arthur the appearance of a white stag in the forest. . . The French text has provided us with a recognised courtly custom: the Welsh with an external happening which to some extent diverts our attention away from the court. . . If the Welsh author knew some version of Chrétien's story. . . why should he reject the acknowledged custom for the single unexpected occurrence?

(Grail Legend, p. 110)

The general answer to this and the other questions which Owen asks about the motivation of Gereint is that the author is something of a rationalist who does not like unexplained loose ends and to whom it is utterly illogical for the king to announce that the court will hunt a white stag before he even knows that such an animal exists. With the text of the Historia in his mind an alternative device for motivating the action presents itself to him. In the Historia the description of the court and the festivities is made to give way to a new development in the plot by the introduction of the messengers from Rome. In Gereint the author passes from description to action by introducing a messenger in the shape of a forester who has come to report having seen a remarkable white stag. The device of motivating subsequent action by a messenger arriving at court is a recognized formula in stories from many different cultures. Although in one sense it is an "unexpected occurrence" it is also a narrative commonplace, and one which the author uses again later in the story (WM 409; Jones, 246) when he wants to motivate Gereint's return to his own country. This may be a formula that the author used quite spontaneously, but it is also easy to see how he might have been reminded of the formula by the text of the Historia, and how he might prefer the explicit motivation which he found there to the intriguing (or nonsensical?) courtly custom that might have been in his narrative source. Whether such a preference is justified in the eyes of the modern literary critic is quite another matter, but one which has no bearing on the

problem of sources.

If the prologue of Gereint is a mixture of Welsh tradition and a specific literary source, the Historia Regum Britanniae by Geoffrey of Monmouth, the work of combination may be attributed either to the author of Gereint (that is the redactor who gave the text its present form) or to the author of the hypothetical text supposed to have been used as the source for Gereint and for Erec et Enide. If we opt for the second of these possibilities we have to suppose in addition that Chrétien omitted the whole of the prologue in order to substitute one of his own. This is quite possible but there are difficulties.

It is only in comparison with the version of the story given by Chrétien that the prologue function of the beginning of Gereint becomes apparent. If Chrétien was working from a text which gave the version found in Gereint the description of the court would probably appear to him as an integral part of the narrative, and although he might have realized that it was, to some extent, a false start (and therefore decided to omit it) there is no obvious reason why he should fail to take advantage of the material it contains — either here or at a later stage. On the alternative hypothesis, that this opening passage is from the hand of the author of Gereint, there is no difficulty at all in seeing why he should omit a formal prologue of the type found in Erec et Enide and substitute for it a section more in keeping with the practice of Welsh story-telling which we find in the other Mabinogion texts.

It should be noted that the argument being advanced has nothing to do with the logic of the story itself. It is not being suggested that the narrative "ought" to begin as Chrétien begins it rather than as it stands in Gereint. The point being made is one concerning the "structure" of the two texts. Whereas it is virtually inevitable that a Welsh story-teller would dispense with a formal prologue (I know of no example in

medieval Welsh literature where a story does have a formal prologue), it is neither necessary nor, in any obvious way, advantageous for Chrétien to dispense with usable elements of description. This is not to say that no explanation could be found to justify such a procedure on the part of Chrétien, only that an explanation does not come very readily to mind.

A more important objection to the common source hypothesis for this part of the text is the difficulty of envisaging in practical terms the form of text which might serve as a source for Welsh and French author alike. The root of the problem is in deciding the language in which it might have been written. The material from Geoffrey of Monmouth would have been available to a redactor working in Latin, French, or possibly Welsh. The details from the Laws could have been known in Latin or Welsh, but it is not very likely that even Latin manuscripts circulated much outside Wales. There is also in both these instances a problem of chronology. Although Welsh versions of the Historia and Latin versions of the Laws might have been available before the date of composition assigned to Gereint (1200-25) it is not nearly so likely that they would have been available before the composition of the supposed common source which must antedate Erec et Enide (i.e. before 1175-80 at the latest). The information about Glewlwyd the Porter and his deputies undoubtedly had a Welsh origin and, as far as it is possible to tell, never had any currency in texts of any language but Welsh. Unless it is distorted beyond recognition not even the name of Glewlwyd has left any trace in French Arthurian texts.

It has already been argued that we cannot very well suppose a common source that was in Welsh, but it is difficult to believe that the passage about Glewlwyd Gyuaeluawr and his deputies has been through the process of a double translation. We might suppose that the author of Gereint had

a source in French but that he was able to supply the correct forms of the names from his knowledge of Welsh tradition. Yet if he was able to recognize these names in their French equivalents and substitute correct Welsh spellings he was clearly more than a slavish copier.

One might suppose, with greater probability, that the author of Gereint had a source in French with the material from Geoffrey of Monmouth but that the passage about Glewlwyd was derived directly from a Welsh tradition. This avoids the problem of transferring the names from one language to another (often a very hit or miss process in the Arthurian romances, especially when Welsh was concerned), but increases the editorial independence of the Welsh author.

One might also take this one stage further and suppose that the author of Gereint had a Welsh source for the Geoffrey of Monmouth material as well as for the section on the porter and his deputies. Since the material from the Historia is closely interwoven with details which reflect the Laws this is probably a better hypothesis than the alternatives which require the material from the Laws to have come through a French intermediary. Yet, if the source of the prologue was in Welsh it cannot have been part of the same source as the main body of the narrative which was, apparently, in some other language. Thus to accept a Welsh source for the prologue is to drift away from the hypothesis which we were trying to save, that the prologue was derived from the supposed common source. We have not quite reached the alternative hypothesis, that the prologue was redacted by the author of Gereint himself, but the consequences are very little different. Whether he took the passage from a Welsh source as a ready-made unit or whether he constructed the section himself his editorial freedom is made apparent, and there seems no advantage in postulating an intermediary unless an actual text can be produced.

The question of editorial independence on the part of the author of

Gereint is of crucial importance to any discussion of the relation between the Welsh text and the poem by Chrétien de Troyes. If it can be shown in one instance that the Welsh author was capable of making an alteration to his narrative source when he had additional or "more reliable" information at his disposal, then it must be presumed that he was capable of making such alterations in other parts of the narrative where, through our inability to specify the contents of his source, they must remain undetected.

Once it becomes clear that we cannot rely upon the assumption that the author of Gereint provided a relatively faithful version of the source that was in front of him, the usefulness of the common source hypothesis is severely diminished. This is different from saying that there never was a common source, but it does mean that we cannot place any great faith in claims to have identified the contents of the supposed source. This will also affect any attempt to elucidate the text of Erec et Enide by reference to the version of the story found in Gereint, for any such commentary would require the tacit assumption that Gereint can be taken as a guide to the form of the story which Chrétien knew.

Although the results obtained from a study of the formulas and of the construction of the prologue tell us a great deal about the way in which the author of Gereint handled his material, they do not give us any direct information about the nature of that material. The implications which they have for our methods of investigation are straightforward enough, but to move from the possibility of a direct dependence on Chrétien's poem to a choice between the two hypotheses is a much more delicate matter.

Chapter Twelve

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPOSING A WRITTEN COMMON SOURCE

The origins of the Erec story

One obvious effect of the common source hypothesis is that the common source must be compatible with what we know of the sources of Gereint and Erec et Enide individually. Whereas nothing is known about the source of Gereint except in its relation to Erec, the same is not true of the French poem. Little enough is known with any degree of certainty, but there are various indications which need to be considered. Chrétien does not make any reference to having had a written source for Erec (although he does make such a claim for Cligès and for Perceval), whereas he does provide evidence for the existence of an oral tradition:

D'Erec, le fil Lac, est li contes,
 Que devant rois et devant contes
 Depecier et corronpre suelent
 Cil qui de conter vivre vuelent.

(Erec, 19)

It is conceivable that this is no more than a convenient literary fiction on his part, but it seems more likely that it would have had some basis in fact (which would have been recognized by his audience), and that the point of any propaganda would be to defend his own lengthy version against the various shorter, independent tales that were being told about his hero. One may speculate about the meaning of *depecier* (Was there really a single, coherent Erec story divided up into shorter tales by the reciters? Or was it that independent tales were combined -- by Chrétien or some other -- to produce the coherent narrative which has survived?), but it would seem to be a relatively straightforward inference that Chrétien expected his audience to know something of the recited tales, whilst not knowing very

much about a written version of the complete Erec story.

This does not wholly preclude the possibility that Chrétien worked from a written source but it does create some difficulty for anyone who wishes to suppose that he did. If one wished to assume that his sources were oral there is evidence in the text itself to show that such sources were available, whereas the evidence for written sources is not immediately forthcoming. This is not so much an argument relevant to the historical facts of the situation as an expression of our embarrassment when faced with the silence of the documents.

There is, however, a reason why one might wish to pursue the possibility of an oral source. Rachel Bromwich has put forward an important theory about the sources which might lie behind Chrétien's Erec.¹ She argues, with some success, that the first part of the story, the hunt of the white stag and the winning of Enide, is a reflection of a theme of Celtic mythology which can be documented from other texts. This theme is the wedding of the king with the goddess who is the Sovereignty of his kingdom. This view of kingship was well established in Ireland and the story of the winning of the Sovereignty often followed a particular pattern. R. A. Breatnach has identified six principal elements:

A hero, a hunt in which the hero is victorious over a wild animal, a search for water (in a royal cup), the encounter with the puella senilis, the coition (or oscultation), the metamorphosis (or promise) of Sovereignty.

(quoted in Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 442, n. 4)

Rachel Bromwich herself sees the two important motifs as that of the "Chase of the White Stag" and that of the "Transformed Hag". She argues that in

¹ "Celtic Dynastic Themes and the Breton Lays", in Etudes Celtiques, 9 (1961), pp. 439-74.

French texts the motif of the Transformed Hag became muted whereas the Chase of the White Stag became increasingly a commonplace with all traces of its true origin forgotten. Some texts survive, however, from a time before these two developments reached their extremes so that the underlying pattern of the original theme can still be detected. One such text is Erec et Enide in which the hunt of the white stag figures so prominently. The evidence for seeing this as a dynastic legend is to be found in the names of hero and heroine:

Erec is the French form of Breton Guerec, earlier Weroc, a name borne by more than one of the rulers of the eastern Breton kingdom of Vannes, and in particular by the founder of the dynasty which ruled this kingdom, who died circa 550, and whose exploits are described by Gregory of Tours. Henceforth the old tribal territory of the Veneti, Bro Wened, bore also the name of its conqueror, Bro Weroc 'the land of Guerec'. The French name Erec is thus derived from the name of the country, in its eleventh-century form; Bro Weroc giving Bro Erec (the initial g is regularly lenited, while the w became lost in pronunciation between two vowels).

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 464)

This explanation of the name *Erec* is of long standing, and it is widely accepted. It has not gone entirely uncontested, however, for Graeme Ritchie suggested deriving the name from *Rederec* (= Welsh *Rhydderch (Hael)*) wrongly divided as *Rei Erec*, but this alternative theory has not found great favour.² Since the derivation of the name *Enide* is something of a puzzle Rachel Bromwich ventures a most plausible suggestion of her own:

May not Enide derive from the territorial name Bro Wened which gave a spoken form Bro-ened, just as Erec was derived from Bro Weroc reduced in pronunciation to Broerec?

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 465)

If the source of the story was a myth concerning the wedding of Guerec to

2 R. L. Graeme Ritchie, Chrétien de Troyes and Scotland (Oxford, 1952), p. 11.

the Sovereignty of his kingdom presumably the hunt of the stag was originally an adventure by which the hero himself won the goddess as his prize. Chrétien (or his source) has somewhat altered the situation by portraying Arthur as the victor in the hunt and by causing Erec to win Enide by different means. On the other hand, the way in which the two stories of the hunt and the winning of Enide are closely interwoven (both narratively and chronologically), and the way in which Enide is, in some sense, the "prize" of the hunt by being chosen for the Kiss of the White Stag, can be seen as quite favourable to the view of a dynastic origin.

Rachel Bromwich has a most surprising footnote on the question of the kiss which is bestowed by Arthur upon Enide (as the most beautiful maiden of the court) in fulfilment of the "custom of the white stag". Having made the point that: "Enide herself was in an earlier version the prize to be won from the hunt" (p. 464), she weakens her case quite unnecessarily by adding the note:

The Welsh tale of Gereint preserves a slightly better version here, in that Arthur presents the stag's head to Enide.

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 464, n. 1)

The presentation of the stag's head is certainly "better" in the sense that it is probably more representative of twelfth-century practice (or of twentieth-century practice for that matter), and one could quote the incident presented as historical by Giraldus Cambrensis in which it is said that a doe was discovered bearing antlers and that when it had been hunted and killed the head was presented to Henry II.³ Even if this is only a legend Giraldus presumably intended his audience to marvel that a doe should have antlers, but not at the fact that the head was presented to the king.

3 Itinerarium Kambriae, I, i (Rolls Series 21, VI, 17).

From the point of view of the Sovereignty myth the "better" version is undoubtedly Chrétien's, for the whole point of the myth is the sexual union between the hero and the goddess. In the Irish stories the union is sometimes actual coition (and this is presumably the original form of the myth), but in many cases the sexual nature of the relationship is symbolized by a kiss (cf. the quotation given above from Breatnach "coition (or oscultation)"). Since it is the coition or the kiss which transforms the hag into the most beautiful goddess, Arthur's kiss given to the "most beautiful maiden" can be seen as an important vestige of the original myth.

With regard to Enide's "Transformation" Rachel Bromwich makes the point that:

Erec irrationally insists that Enide shall ride to court in her old tattered garments, and these are only to be exchanged when the queen herself shall give her a dress.

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 465)

This might reasonably be taken as a suitably attenuated form of the motif of the ⁿTrasformed Hag.

The conclusion that is eventually drawn from the discussion, and from the fact that Chrétien himself specifically marks off this section of the romance by saying at line 1844: "Ci fine li premerains vers", is that:

it is perhaps fair to conclude that this first part of his poem was derived from a Breton lay describing Erec's Stag Hunt and the winning of his fairy-mistress.

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 466)

And there is an additional note to the effect that:

Elsewhere in the poem (l. 6188) Chrétien refers to a lai composed about the Joie de la Cour -- an equally self-contained incident. The view that Chrétien's ultimate sources consisted of un-related Breton lays has in this instance much to recommend it.

(Etudes Celtiques, 9, p. 466, n. 1)

This view of the composition of Erec et Enide should not necessarily be accepted without reservation. The most obvious objection is that Chrétien insists that Erec was the son of King Lac and that his country was *Estregales* (for *Destregales*?).⁴ There are no completely satisfactory explanations of the name of either the country or his father, but it would take considerable ingenuity to make them support the tradition of Vannes and of its sixth-century founder, Waroch son of Macliv.⁵ Names can be substituted as a tradition develops, but from the modern point of view the fact that one has to resort to such an hypothesis must weaken the argument to some extent.

On the other hand the theory may be given some support by pointing to other aspects of the story which suggest a connection with Brittany. The most explicit is the fact that Erec is crowned in Nantes, but the difficulty here is that Nantes is depicted as Arthur's city rather than Erec's. It could be argued, however, that a king would obviously have been crowned in his own capital (Nantes substituted for Vannes would not be a major stumbling block),⁶ and that when he treats the city as being Arthur's it is Chrétien who has altered the tradition for reasons of his own. This is not impossible, but again the need to resort to second order explanations weakens the case.

4 The manuscripts have various forms for the name of Erec's kingdom but it seems that the original text had *destregales*, in which the initial *d* is the preposition *de* with elided vowel. Most scholars assume, however, that Chrétien misunderstood the form and that the name should be *Destregales*, meaning South Wales; see R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes (New York, 1949), pp. 70-71, where further references are given. Although the explanation is generally accepted, it is not entirely satisfactory. R. L. Graeme Ritchie made a different conjecture, deriving *Estregales* from *Strath-Wales*; this does have some advantages, but its weakness is that the root form is only hypothetical.

5 This difficulty is partly avoided by assuming that there has been some confusion with the name of a tenth-century Count of Nantes, Guerec the son of Alain Barbe-Torte.

6 See Note 5 above.

The suggestion that Erec may be constructed from independent lays (Breton or otherwise) would fit quite well with the language of Chrétien's prologue where he uses the verb *depeçier* of his competitors and the word *conjointure* of his own version. There is even a possibility that lays dealing with the same hero might have been gathered together as a cycle, although not fully integrated one with another. Constance Bullock-Davies draws attention to the evidence for this in an article on the provenance of Marie de France's Milun.⁷

If we did wish to pursue the possibility of independent Breton lays we would need to consider the form in which these sources would have been available to Chrétien. The Bretons were famous as "conteurs", not as producers of written texts. The deformation of the names *Bro(w)erec* and **Bro(w)ened* specifically requires an oral stage in the transmission, and the whole theory of oral sources fits with what Chrétien says in his prologue. If the Erec story goes back to independent lays the common source theory would require that the work of combination took place before the material was handled by Chrétien. We could hardly suppose that two authors independently combined the same lays to produce such similar results.

The view that the Erec story ultimately derives from independent lays is not altogether incompatible with the view that Erec et Enide and Gereint fab Erbin shared a common (written) source. In order to hold both views all that is required is the supposition that the lays were combined and committed to writing by the redactor of the common source, and not by Chrétien. This does pose, however, an interesting psychological problem to which there is no objective answer. It is easy enough to see that anyone who first held the common source hypothesis would be likely to accommodate the theory of Breton origins to his existing view in the way

7 "The Love Messenger in Milun", in Nottingham Medieval Studies, 16 (1972), pp. 20-27, especially p. 27.

suggested. It is not quite so clear that anyone who first held the theory of Breton origins would complicate his view by accepting the common source hypothesis rather than maintaining a belief that Chrétien himself ("the known master poet") was responsible for the work of combination. Whereas adding the Breton origins to a pre-existing common source theory can be seen as a genuine advance in knowledge without damaging the original theory, adding the common source to the Breton origins implies a dislocation of the previously held view. Thus in real terms the reasons for holding a particular view could be conditioned by the order in which the hypotheses were presented as well as by the inherent strength of the arguments. Whether the evidence in favour of a common source ought eventually to convince an open-minded "Bretonist" is quite another matter.

The question that the dyed-in-the-wool Bretonist would continue to ask is, why should Chrétien not acknowledge a written source if he had one? He had no objection to such admissions in Cligès and Perceval, but in both Erec and Yvain he refers to recitations rather than written texts:

D'Erec, le fil Lac, est li contes,
 Que devant rois et devant contes
 Depecier et corronpre suelent
 Cil qui de conter vivre vuelent.

(Erec, 19)

Del chevalier au lion fine
 Crestiens son romanz ainsi;
 Qu'onques plus conter n'an oi.

(Yvain, 6814)

Ceste estoire trovons escrite, . . .
 An un des livres de l'aumeire
 Mon seignor saint Pere a Biauveiz.

(Cligès, 18)

Ce est li contes del graal,
 Don li cuens li bailla le livre.

(Perceval, 66)

The difficulty is that the statements in Erec and Yvain are ambiguous. They provide evidence for some sort of recitation, but they do not deny the existence of written texts; and it is open to question whether Chrétien is necessarily referring to the sources from which he took his stories. Thus although the theory of oral sources for Erec and Yvain receives some support from the texts, and is compatible with the view that the Erec story is ultimately of Breton origin, it does not eliminate the possibility of Chrétien having used a written source.

The disappearance of manuscripts

Roger Sherman Loomis made a strong point when he wrote:

There is, of course, one strong argument in favor of Erec and Yvain as the chief, if not only, models for Geraint and Owain, and for Le Conte del Graal (with its continuations) as the main source of Peredur. A priori, the odds are against it that the Welsh redactors of French romances selected by mere chance three of the very same stories which Chrétien had used before them. The odds seem strongly in favor of the supposition that the choice was determined by the collocation of Erec, Yvain and the Graal in some manuscript of Chrétien's works which had reached Wales and which had, perhaps through reading aloud, come to the ears of the Welsh authors.

(Arthurian Tradition, p. 33)

Loomis went on to present his reasons for setting aside this argument and for preferring the view that Geraint was related to Erec through a common source which is no longer extant. He takes a similar view of the relationship between Owein and Yvain, but he admits, along with most commentators, that the relation of Peredur to Perceval is more complex, so he leaves that in abeyance. The reasons which Loomis gives for adopting the common source hypothesis are not very convincing. This does not necessarily mean that we should return to the a priori argument, for there may be cogent arguments available to support Loomis's view even though he himself did not adduce them. Nevertheless, it is worth clarifying some of the implications

of the a priori argument because it has never been properly emphasised just how strong an argument it really is.

The main body of Chrétien's work consists of five full length romances. He did also write some shorter works but it is clear enough from the numbers of manuscripts which survive that it was the five romances which enjoyed the greatest popularity at the time, and that it was the romances which carried Chrétien's literary reputation to later generations. There is no significant difference in the number of French manuscripts which have survived for each romance, but there is a clear and entirely consistent distinction between two groups in the success which these stories enjoyed abroad. Two of the romances (Cligès and Lancelot) are known only in their French forms whereas the other three (Erec, Yvain, and Perceval) all have counterparts in German, Norse, and Welsh. Yvain and Perceval also exist in Middle English versions, but the essential regularity of the pattern of three against two is plain enough.

The situation may also be stated from the Welsh point of view. Of the seven full length Arthurian stories which are known in written form, two (combined together under the title of Y Seint Greal) are translations from known French originals (the Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus), but these probably date from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Of the five Arthurian stories from an earlier period, two (Culhwch and Olwen and Rhonabwy) show only minimal French or Anglo-Norman influence. The other three which have clearly been affected by French culture, as revealed by the manners and customs depicted and by the vocabulary used, are precisely the same three stories which German and Norwegian authors adapted from Chrétien's poems.

There were during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries quite a few translations into Welsh from both French and Latin, but the translations from French, with only three exceptions, were of Chansons de Geste not

octosyllable romances. There is a Welsh Charlemagne cycle (including an early version of the Chanson de Roland), and a Welsh Beuves de Hauttone, but not a trace of the works of Raoul de Houdenc, Gautier d'Arras, Hue de Rotelande, Jean Renart, nor of anonymous romances such as Eneas, Flor et Blancheflor, or the host of Arthurian romances from the thirteenth century.

The three stories which correspond to Chrétien's poems are the only Welsh texts which have counterparts amongst the French octosyllable romances (except where Welsh and French have independently adapted a known Latin source -- Historia Regum Britanniae giving Wace's Roman de Brut and the different versions of Brut y Brenhinedd; Dares the Phrygian serving Benoit de Sainte-Maure in his Roman de Troie and giving the Welsh Ystorya Dared).

This point should not be pressed too far because although the surviving French versions are in octosyllables there is no reason to suppose that the hypothetical common sources would have been. If they had been in assonanced laisses they might have appeared to the Welsh authors as examples of the same type of literature which they were used to adapting in the Charlemagne poems and Beuves de Hauttone. On the other hand, even if the form were the same, the atmosphere would still be very different; there is more to the genre of romance than the octosyllables.

This may be purely an accident of transmission. After all, the three romances which have survived are preserved primarily by two closely related manuscripts. Nevertheless, they do occur in other manuscripts even if they are sometimes only fragments. In addition, the allusions in the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd and the Triads (even in the later versions) give no indication that there were at one time other stories drawn from French romances. The manuscripts and the references in poetry and triads bear witness to the existence, and indeed the popularity, of the Three Romances but neither manuscript nor allusion encourages us to believe that there were ever any others of similar type.

These three texts are set apart not only by the type of story which they tell but also by the style in which they tell it. The use of the formulas in Gereint has already been discussed in Chapter 10, and although there are formulas in Culhwch and in the Four Branches nowhere is the use of formulas so extensive as in the Three Romances. They agree not only in their widespread use of this particular technique but also in many of the individual formulas themselves. The implication of this is that these three texts all come from the same literary milieu where the technique was much in favour at the time of their composition. The fact that there are no other examples of the technique in its elaborated form further suggests that this milieu was relatively restricted either in time or place or both.

If the Welsh stories were adapted directly from Chrétien's poems it is relatively simple to see how this might have come about, for all three could have been taken from a single collective manuscript of Chrétien's works. Or, if not from a single manuscript, then from separate manuscripts circulating in a milieu where the work of Chrétien was known and appreciated, and where there was a market for adaptations of the work of a successful writer. Chrétien's literary reputation (as he himself used it in the prologue to Cligès) could have been the main selling point of the adaptations and the major reason for their having been undertaken.

There is testimony to this reputation in various French texts of the early thirteenth century (i.e. the time of the Welsh versions), and the translations made into German and Norse bear it out. The Norwegian court encouraged translations from various other French romances, Tristan, Flor et Blancheflor, Partonopeu de Blois, and the Lais of Marie de France.⁸ Similarly in Germany there were versions of the Eneas, the Tristan (in two distinct versions) and, a little later, of the prose cycles of the Lancelot

⁸ See the Introduction to Halvorsen's The Norse Version of the Chanson de Roland (cf. Chapter 5, Note 2).

and Grail stories. The only translations which Norway and Germany have in common amongst their versions of French romances concerned with the matière de Bretagne are the Tristan of Thomas d'Angleterre and the three works by Chrétien. This would suggest that the three Chrétien romances enjoyed a popularity (or at least an availability) beyond that of their rivals. Curiously enough, Germany and Norway provide no examples of Arthurian romances adapted from the works of Chrétien's known competitors or imitators, and neither literature has preserved any adaptation of Cligès,⁹ or of Chrétien's Lancelot. Exactly the same is true in Wales.

The absence of a Cligès from these literatures is not so surprising since it would have been in competition with the Tristan stories and no doubt it would have suffered accordingly (especially if the attitude adopted by Félice were taken at face value and thought to represent the poet's point of view).¹⁰ This would probably apply even more forcefully in Wales than in Germany and Norway. The case of the Lancelot is more problematical. It cannot have been that the theme of adultery presented any stumbling block because this is a feature which it shares with the Tristan legend which enjoyed immense popularity throughout Europe.

In Germany it is possible that the Lanzelet by Ulrich von Zatzikhoven preempted a version based directly upon Chrétien's, but that is not likely to be the whole of the explanation. It is more plausible to believe that the German and Norwegian audiences and patrons did not react very favourably to the extremes to which the theory of courtly love was taken and they did not appreciate the irony with which Chrétien treated his theme. The courtly love might have been made acceptable in Germany, but with the Lanzelet

9 There were, apparently, German versions of Cligès but they have not survived; see Wendelin Foerster, Cligès, p. xxiv.

10 It need not be assumed from Félice's criticisms of Yseult that Chrétien intended his romance to be an "Anti-Tristan". For the various positions taken on this question see the relevant chapter in Jean Frappier's Chrétien de Troyes and in ALMA.

already in the field it probably made the task seem hardly worth while.

This conjecture would also serve to explain the absence of a Lancelot story in Welsh, but only if it can be assumed that the story was known (if at all) solely in the high courtly version by Chrétien or else that the courtly love aspect was already fully developed in Chrétien's source. This latter possibility would seem to be excluded, however, by what Chrétien says in his prologue about receiving the matiere and the san from the Countess of Champagne. There seems to be a distinction between matiere (the narrative) and san (the interpretation, the treatment of the story — presumably the courtly love ethos). This argument should not be taken too far because, amongst other difficulties, it is not entirely clear what Chrétien really means in his prologue, but if the story did exist in a form without the courtly love element it is strange that Welsh writers showed no interest. The theme of the abduction of Guinivere must surely have been known to them because this is the motif for which it is most easy to demonstrate a Celtic origin, and yet the character of Lawnsloð Lak does not appear in Welsh literature until after the translation of Y Seint Greal.¹¹

For the hypothesis that the authors of Gereint, Owein and Peredur had access to the texts of the corresponding poems by Chrétien de Troyes these considerations present no difficulty. Chrétien's romances would have been selected for adaptation in preference to all others because of the superiority of his workmanship and the popularity he enjoyed as a result. The hypothesis is attractive because it is simple and because it reflects a pattern that is well attested in two other cases — Germany and Norway.

The alternative hypothesis of adaptation from common sources is by no means so straightforward, because it raises difficulties not only on the Welsh side but also in explaining the circumstances affecting Chrétien. The

¹¹ See Trioedd Ynys Prydein, Notes to Personal Names.

first problem is to account for the total disappearance not of just one text but of all three. The usual explanation which is attempted is that having been eclipsed by Chrétien's superior versions his sources ceased to be copied. If that were the case it would be necessary to assume that culture in South Wales was so backward as to prefer the outmoded versions, or that the circulation of texts was so restricted that South Wales had no alternative to texts which were out of fashion elsewhere. This is not impossible in itself but there are details in the Welsh texts which suggest that they were written in their present form somewhat later than 1200. If South Wales society was at all interested in French literature one might well expect Chrétien's work to have become known by this time. It is true that, as far as we know, the romances were not translated in Norway until the middle of the thirteenth century, but this is not a parallel example. In Norway there was no interest in translating foreign literature of any sort until King Hákon Hákonarson came to the throne in 1217. The situation in Wales was quite different because translations from French and Latin had begun there as early as the twelfth century. By 1200 the extent of communication between Welsh and Anglo-Normans was quite considerable. There are examples of intermarriage and many instances of political cooperation. There were Welshmen at the court of Henry II, and Henry valued the service of Welsh troops in his continental campaigns. Both in England and on the continent his court would have been accompanied by some of the "hostages" given by the Welsh princes. What status these "hostages" would have enjoyed is not known. It is not likely that they played any major role in court life but we need not assume that all of them were always kept under close arrest or left to languish in dungeons. Upon occasion the court would be visited by figures as important as the Lord Rhys and perhaps quite frequently by Owein Cyfeiliog. And we may be sure that these princes did not travel alone without an escort of their followers. This would not seem to be the type of

situation in which the Welsh could have remained ignorant of Chrétien's work for more than twenty-five years.

Even if one supposes that there was some feature of Welsh culture which predisposed authors to choose versions of stories which had ceased to be fashionable elsewhere, it is still not clear that the suggestion of the texts being superseded actually accounts for the total disappearance of all the manuscripts. It is certainly true that manuscripts are all too easily lost or destroyed, but it is not always the unpopular texts which suffer. A manuscript which is never read often has a better chance of survival than one which is in constant use. If Chrétien's versions appeared soon after the publication of his sources this might have restricted the number of copies of the earlier version which were put into circulation, and the fewer manuscripts there were the easier it is to believe in their destruction. On the other hand, the fewer manuscripts there were, the harder it is to believe that Chrétien and the Welsh authors independently had access to exactly the same three stories. The difficulty is to find an explanation for the disappearance of all the manuscripts after 1225 or thereabouts without at the same time implying that they were in any way unusual or hard to come by a few years earlier.

In any event the common source hypothesis implies the loss of significantly more manuscripts than does the theory of direct dependence. If the Welsh authors worked from the texts of Chrétien's poems one need suppose only three manuscripts (perhaps even only one), available in Wales in the early thirteenth century and subsequently lost. (It is presumed that all the extant manuscripts were copied on the continent and have always remained there.) In theory the common source hypothesis can be made just as economical, but only by assuming that the texts existed in a single autograph and that both Chrétien and the Welsh authors were able to work from this same manuscript. In practice, we can demand of the hypothesis

that it should allow for at least nine manuscripts (three autographs, three copies on the continent used by Chrétien, and three copies in Wales used by the Welsh authors). Even then it seems unlikely that in three cases works apparently known in places as widely separated as Champagne and South Wales and which survived for at least fifty years, should have existed as an autograph and only two copies.¹² It would still be quite conservative to suggest that at least a dozen manuscripts were involved, all of them destroyed without trace so that not even fragments have survived. This would not be impossible but it does present some difficulties.

The number of manuscripts necessary may be reduced to some extent by suggesting that at least two of the common sources were by the same hand. In the case of Erec and Yvain the similarity of structure and the "mirror image" of the central theme in each suggest that they may have been conceived as a pair. Since these features are as observable in the Welsh versions as in Chrétien's poems the common source hypothesis must attribute this pairing to Chrétien's exemplars rather than Chrétien himself. The direct dependence hypothesis need only postulate that Chrétien so altered his sources as to bring them into line with one another.

If the originals of Erec and Yvain were conceived as a pair this would make it possible to suggest that they were habitually circulated together and this in turn might help to explain why the Welsh authors chose two of the same stories as Chrétien. Yet, if this explanation is to be really effective one needs to suppose not that just two of the stories but that all three of them circulated together. Otherwise the similarity of the choice of material still remains to be accounted for as pure chance. But this additional step proves to be virtually impossible.

12 The geographical aspect is not necessarily very important because either Chrétien or the Welsh authors might have had access to the manuscripts in some other place, but the general point still stands.

If Chrétien came to know the stories from a single manuscript the prologues to the three romances are extremely misleading. It is a moot point whether there is any direct contradiction but the impression created is certainly very different. Chrétien's statements may not be wholly reliable and they are not always as explicit as one would like, but in the case of Perceval Chrétien does make two completely unequivocal assertions. Firstly he refers to the source as "le livre", and secondly he states that this book was given to him by Philip of Flanders. If all three stories were taken from this same manuscript it is strange that Chrétien does not acknowledge the debt in either of the other two cases. It would have been much more in his interests, one would have thought, to refer to Philip in Erec at the beginning of his career in the hope of securing his patronage for the future than in Perceval when his literary reputation was well established. This would also raise the whole question of his relations with Philip of Flanders throughout his career and would call for a reappraisal of his supposed relationship with the court of Champagne.¹³

Even if Chrétien's prologues are dismissed as rhetorical conventions and his statements about his sources not given any credence, there still remains a problem of chronology. If we accept the order of composition which is normally assumed for these three romances, and if we work with anything like the usual time scale, the suggestion that the three stories (or even only the first two) reached Chrétien in a single manuscript would mean that the story of Yvain was available to him some five years or more before he set about rewriting it, and the story of the Grail probably at least ten years. Yet none of his rivals managed to take

13 This is not to prejudge the outcome of such a reappraisal, for the evidence which associates Chrétien with the court of Champagne is not all that firmly based and, in some ways, an association with the court in Flanders is quite an attractive suggestion.

advantage of his delay, nor did the author of the original stories succeed in having a sufficient number of copies made to establish his own reputation and ensure that either his work or his name survived. It can hardly have been that Chrétien or his patron owned the unique manuscript which they refused to allow out of their possession. It is true that there could be difficulties in obtaining access to a manuscript, as is witnessed by the German poet Heinrich von Veldeke and the problems he experienced in securing the return of his manuscript of the Eneas. But this was quite a different situation, for Heinrich required access to a French manuscript in Germany. It was, however, far from being the only copy of the text in existence. The situation being envisaged for Chrétien is that no poet who had any interest in the matter was able to obtain access to a French manuscript of any of the three texts anywhere in France or the Anglo-Norman realms (or that if he did so his work has perished without trace alongside that of his source).

The assumption that Chrétien had the unique manuscript would explain how no other poet was able to produce versions of the stories, but we would probably need to assume that the author (or authors) of the first two stories withheld publication until the third could be copied into the same manuscript. Even allowing for the difficulties which a medieval author might have in disseminating his work, this way of proceeding does not seem very likely. In addition we can avoid the improbability of assuming that the Welsh authors worked from the same manuscript as that used by Chrétien only at the expense of supposing that copies were made from it after Chrétien had composed his versions. But this would contradict the explanation that it was Chrétien's new romances which caused the manuscripts of the earlier versions to disappear.

The alternative, of supposing that there was more than one manuscript of Chrétien's sources in circulation, raises the question of why no other

French versions were made. Was no one else interested in writing or commissioning Arthurian romances or Grail stories? Quite the reverse, the industry seems to have been thriving. There may be difficulties in assigning exact dates to the extant texts, but it would be difficult to argue that there was no interest in the matter of Britain in the period between the composition of Erec and that of Perceval.

Whether one supposes that the three stories circulated together or that Chrétien and the Welsh authors lighted upon them independently, the complexity of the common source hypothesis continues to remain embarrassing. Many of the difficulties could probably be removed by supposing a common source that was in Welsh, or by supposing a source that was oral rather than written, but it has already been argued that there are grounds for rejecting both of these possibilities.

The coincidences and improbabilities which are involved in supposing a common source for Erec and Gereint do not make the theory untenable, but they do place a ^{restriction} ~~high premium~~ on advancing such a view. There was a time when this could be largely offset by a similar weakness in the hypothesis of direct dependence, for there was no satisfactory explanation of the considerable number of small differences between the two texts. Now that we are in ^a position to offer an explanation of some of the techniques of composition employed in the making of Gereint fab Erbin, we are also in a position to demand that arguments in favour of the (inherently improbable) common source should be particularly cogent.

Chapter Thirteen

THE GALOAIN COUPLET

Omission or interpolation?

In Chrétien's poem, when Erec and Enide have set out on their quest they are forced to spend the first night in the forest. Next morning, they meet a squire with two servants carrying food and drink. The squire offers them the food and they accept. Six out of the seven manuscripts have a couplet which explains where the food and drink were being taken:

As prez le conte Galoain
A ceus qui fauchoient son fain.

(Erec, 3129)

Manuscript C is alone in not having the couplet, and the question arises whether the couplet was part of the original text which C has omitted, or whether it was interpolated by an ancestor of the other six manuscripts.

If the stemmata set out by Foerster and Micha (see p. 20ff.) could be taken as rigid representations of the textual relationships, the problem would be quickly solved. Foerster and Micha agree that C shares an archetype with H, and since H agrees with manuscripts in the other branches of the stemma it would follow that C had omitted lines from the archetype. In reality neither of the stemmata can be used in this simple way.

The argument for omission by C can refer to this stemmatic evidence and to the fact that the omission would be easily explicable as a common type of scribal error. The line previous to the doubtful couplet ends in the word *gain*. It is clear from the metre that this is disyllabic but the spelling makes it identical in appearance with the rhyme syllable of the couplet *Galoain/fain*. The eye of the scribe could easily have returned

to the wrong line in the course of copying, especially in view of the fact that the "omission" occurs at the change to a new column.

Another explanation of the omission could be based on the fact that H interverts the two lines of the couplet. If the couplet was so written in the archetype of C and H it could have been omitted because it fails to make proper sense. The grammar would not be impossible, but it would be a little tortuous. Guiot (the scribe of C) is often referred to as an "intelligent" scribe. This comment usually occurs in contexts which suggest that his "intelligence" is some sort of guarantee for the "authenticity" of his text. But what Guiot consistently produces is a smooth text, and probably at the expense of his exemplar. If C and H had an archetype which interverted the lines the "unintelligent" scribe of H might have copied the tortuous grammar without a qualm, while the "intelligent" Guiot might have smoothed out the text by omitting the offending couplet.

It could also be argued, in favour of the omission, that the couplet would be difficult for a scribe to interpolate since he would need to know the next episode in the story in order to refer correctly to "le conte". It could be claimed too that the couplet is indispensable because without it the first reference to the count would be rather cryptic:

Quant li escuiers fet lor ot
Tant d'enor con feire lor pot
A son cheval vint, si remonte,
Par devant les loges le conte
Menoit a ostel son cheval.

(Erec, 3209)

If this were the first mention of the count the audience would be entitled to ask what count?

Reasonable though they seem, these last arguments carry no real weight. One of the most characteristic features of Chrétien's writing in general, and of Erec in particular, is that situations are often introduced without previous explanation. There is an almost exact parallel earlier in the romance:

Li cuens est venuz an la place

(Erec, 801)

What count? We are never told. Erec's host (the unnamed vavassor with the beautiful daughter who is also still anonymous at this stage of the romance) has given Erec details of the tournament for the sparrowhawk but he has not made any mention that it will be supervised by "the count". It is true that a count has been mentioned before (although nearly three hundred lines earlier at lines 521ff.) in a different context (as the uncle of Enide), but this is hardly preparation for the role which he is to play at the tournament.

As for the scribe needing to know the story in order to construct the couplet, it may have been the case that he was well acquainted with the text he was copying but since there are only eighty-two lines between the doubtful couplet (3129-30) and the mention of the count at line 3212 it is quite likely that the piece of information which he needed appeared on the same page of his exemplar.

If the line referring to the squire were on a verso page of the exemplar the lines which mention the count would almost certainly appear on the opposite recto. In many manuscripts (with more than eighty lines to a page) it would be possible for the lines about the squire to be in the first column of the recto and for the line about the count still to

be on the same page.¹ Even at worst the scribe would only need to turn one page to find what he needed. A scribe who was contemplating an interpolation would be likely enough to take that amount of trouble to see if some explanation of the food was given.

The reference to the count would not be difficult to find because he is mentioned five times in less than twenty lines (four times in only eight lines 3212/14/16/20), twice in the rhyme position (3212/20), and twice at the beginning of the line (3214/31). This is a piece of information the scribe could hardly have missed.

The argument for omission turns on the deceptive numerical advantage of six against one (for it is not clear that C and H really do derive from a common archetype, nor that H is independent of the other branches), and on the ease with which the supposed error can be explained (either as a simple skipping of lines under the influence of the rhyme syllable, or on the more complex assumption that Guiot deliberately smoothed out the text). It is easy to see why Foerster included the couplet in his critical text because he was using his diagram of the manuscript relationships as a strict stemma. Even without the stemma the apparent obviousness of a "simple scribal error" would probably be enough to persuade most editors to regard the couplet as original -- especially when its inclusion does not appear to have any serious consequences.

On the other hand there are several arguments available to any who wish to take the view that the couplet is a later interpolation. There is, for instance, something strange about the naming of the count; it is uncharacteristic of Chrétien in at least three different ways.

1 This is a purely theoretical point about an exemplar which no longer exists. Amongst the extant manuscripts BEV would require the scribe to turn the page, HPA have the relevant lines on facing verso and recto. Although it omits the actual Galoain couplet C has the relevant context on the verso of folio 12 and the reference to the count on the facing recto of folio 13.

Chrétien was not normally in the habit of naming his characters on their first appearance (and especially not before they appeared). The examples of Enide, Yder, and Enide's parents in Erec, and of Lancelot and Perceval in their respective romances, are particularly well known, but an examination of Erec shows that this procedure was even more thorough than the much commented instances might suggest. This habit of Chrétien's has been put down to a delight in intrigue, a process of mystification, but there is rather more to it. The real point is that Chrétien (in his persona as narrator) is hardly ever the one responsible for revealing a character's name.

This claim needs qualification in certain respects but the real exceptions are very rare. On one level it is obvious that Chrétien as author is responsible for naming the characters as and where he pleases, but he normally so contrives matters that the revealing of the name is an event of the story itself. The narrator does not gratuitously supply the name of a new character who enters the story. The audience learns the names of characters only when those names are made known to the other characters in the story.

There are two groups which appear to form major exceptions to this general principle. The first is made up of all those figures from literature and legend who serve as standards of comparison. In these cases the narrator does himself refer to examples from the Bible, from classical literature, from contemporary romances, from chansons de geste, and in one instance he justifies a description by invoking the authority of Macrobius. These are characters who are not part of the narrative as such and therefore they are known only to the narrator and the audience, not to the characters taking part in the story.

The second group consists of all the members of Arthur's court. These are introduced by name quite casually throughout the narrative

whenever the scene is at court; and this includes minor characters like Lucan the Butler as well as the major figures of Arthurian romance (Arthur, Guinevere, Gawain, Kay, Perceval, etc.). On the same principle the participants in the tournament at Tenebroc are named without any air of mystery, and there are also two great set pieces where Chrétien gives whole lists of names. The first is of the knights of the Round Table who are present when the queen introduces to them "la bele pucele estrange" (Enide, whose name has not yet been revealed), and the second is of the guests who attend Erec's wedding. The point about these characters is that they are all perfectly well known to the other characters in the story with whom they come into contact, and consequently they need no introduction. It does not follow that they were equally well known to the audience. The argument being advanced is that the narrator consistently uses only that information which would be available to the people directly concerned. For the main course of the narrative the "people" directly concerned are the characters of the story, and the narrator takes it as self-evident that the members of Arthur's court would all know one another, and equally self-evident that they would not know strangers like Yder, Enide, Guivret, Cadoc, or Mabonograin until a situation arises which obliges these people to reveal their names. For the purposes of the author's asides to the audience in drawing comparisons and suggesting literary parallels, the people directly concerned are the author himself and the audience, and what is shared between them is of no concern to the characters in the narrative. The knowledge of the audience may also extend far enough to include some of the members of the court, but there is no reason (from the point of view we have attributed to the author/narrator) why it should include all of them.

Looking at the text of Erec with these criteria in mind we discover that characters who are not included in these two special categories, that

is characters whom Erec meets outside the court milieu, are either not named at all or else their names are given in direct or reported speech (or at least in a context where speech is implied if not actually reported). The unnamed characters are usually those who have no great part to play (the dwarf, the squire, Cadoc's "amie", Guivret's sisters and so on), but there are one or two examples of more important figures going unnamed (the count at the Sparrowhawk tournament, even though he is Enide's uncle and despite the fact that he provides the feast after the tournament; Enide's father during the whole of the time when he plays an active part in the story, though he is named eventually right at the end of the romance).

The most straightforward examples of names being revealed by events in the story are the instances of direct speech. Yder, Guivret and Mabonograin name themselves to Erec after their defeat, compelled to do so as a condition of mercy; Cadoc names himself to Erec after his rescue from the giants, asked to do so in place of the act of homage which he had offered out of gratitude.

Slightly more complex is the revelation of the name of Enide:

Quant Erec sa fame recut,
 Par son droit non nomer l'estut;
 Qu'autremant n'est fame esposee,
 Se par son droit non n'est nomee.
 Ancor ne savoit nus son non;
 Lors premieremant le sot l'on;
 Enide ot non an baptestire.

(Erec, 2025)

Strictly speaking this is not reported speech. On the other hand the narrator is summarising a situation which must have involved some kind of verbal exchange and it is clear that the revelation of Enide's name is motivated by the plot itself (whether it is motivated in a completely

satisfactory way, or whether it is motivated rather whimsically in a more or less arbitrary fashion, is no part of our present concern).

A more interesting example of revelation by reported speech is the case of Oringles de Limors. Throughout the whole of the episode in which he plays a part he is simply called "the count" (*li cuens, le conte*). The name of his castle is given as *Limors* (line 4717) in a speech made by the count himself, but the name *Oringles* does not occur until after he is dead.² It is used (line 4947) when Erec's "death" and Enide's capture are reported to Guivret. The use of names in this passage is very revealing because the "strangers" Erec and Enide are referred to by circumlocution whereas the local count is referred to by name:

Ceste novele estoit alee
 A Guivret le petit contee,
 Qu'uns chevaliers d'armes navrez
 Iert morz an la forest trovez,
 O lui une dame si bele
 Qu'Iseuz sanblast estre s'ancele;
 Et feisoit un duel mervelleus.
 Trovez les avoit anbedeus
 Li cuens Oringles de Limors,
 S'an avoit fet porter le cors,
 Et la dame esposer voloit;
 Mes ele le contredisoit.
 Quant Guivrez la parole oi,
 De rien nule ne s'esjoi;
 Qu'erraumant d'Erec li sovint.

(Erec, 4939)

2 He is first mentioned at line 4675 ("Un conte a grant chevalerie") and subsequently referred to as "the count" at lines 4684, 4690, 4713, 4739, 4748, 4766, 4770, 4780, 4787, 4824, 4827, 4835, 4840, 4863, 4911 and 4914. This makes a total of seventeen times before his name is revealed at line 4947 ("Li cuens Oringles de Limors") and used again ("Li cuens Oringles") at line 5070. Erec continues to call him simply "le conte" at line 5092 (in his weakened state and the emotion of the moment he has not yet managed to absorb the new information?), but refers to him by name at line 6495 when he tells the story to King Arthur (as reported by the indirect speech of the narrator).

Limors is first mentioned (by the count himself) at line 4717 but it is not explicitly stated that the castle is his own. This becomes clear, however, in the next reference (by the narrator) at line 4738. There are further references at line 4947 (which gives the full name of the count, "Oringles de Limors"), to the castle itself at lines 4964, 5065, 5068, 5321 and, as part of the name again, at 6495.

The count remains anonymous to Enide throughout her ordeal, whilst Erec and Enide remain anonymous to whoever brings the news to Guivret; but the count is well known to the messenger and Guivret quickly supplies the name of Erec which he had learnt in his previous encounter. The name of Oringles is used by Guivret and revealed to Erec (line 5070), and subsequently used by Erec himself (as reported by the narrator) when he recounts his adventure to King Arthur (line 6495). There is a strict realism here in what information is available to each character at each point of the story, and the audience knows only as much as the character who happens to occupy the stage at the time.

In apparent contradiction to what was said before about Chrétien not revealing the names of characters before they appear, there is the case of Evrains the lord of Brandigan whose name is given at line 5484. But the way in which his name is revealed only lends weight to the generalisation. It is given by Guivret who is clearly well informed about the whole situation (this is, after all, on the borders of his own territory, no more than a day's ride from his sisters' castle of Penevric). Guivret knows the name of the town (5389 *Brandigan*) and the name of the king, as well as the customs of Evrains's hospitality and the "Joie de la Cort". Once Guivret has informed Erec of the king's name (and, therefore, in the process told the audience) the narrator uses the name quite freely when Evrain actually enters the narrative in the course of the episode which follows.

One place where the author does introduce a character on his own initiative is in the prologue where he says:

D'Erec, le fil Laç, est li contes.

(Erec, 19)

But here, we may say, the "rules" are in abeyance because it is meaningful to see a distinction between the persona of the author speaking directly

to the audience and the persona of the narrator actually in the process of relating the story. For the purposes of the prologue the revelation of the hero's name is a development in the argument necessitated by the subject matter of the prologue, on a par with the development in the plot which produces a revelation in the course of the narrative once the story has begun.

When Erec enters the narrative (at line 84) he is known to the audience as a result of the prologue and he is known to the other characters as one of the members of Arthur's court. The prologue has also informed the audience of the name of Erec's father but Erec himself draws special attention to it when revealing his identity to Enide's father. Thus the entry of Lac into the story is prepared even more carefully than that of Evrain.

This pattern of a rather special kind of realism is broken at only two points. The one is the Galoain couplet in which we are interested and the other is in the naming of Enide's parents at the end of the romance. There is no real justification for the narrator naming Enide's parents in the way he does. The event which one would have expected to have provoked the revelation of their names is their arrival at the court and their introduction to King Arthur. The scene is recounted in some detail but Erec who introduces them to the king, studiously avoids using their names, dwelling instead on the way in which Enide's father had first given him hospitality, and in the process using the term appropriate to that situation, calling him "mon buen oste".

We could perhaps suppose, although it is not clear that it is really legitimate to do so, that the court would have learnt the names of Enide's parents by the time the coronation itself takes place so that in revealing the names to the audience the narrator is simply retailing what is, by then, common knowledge.

The case of Galoain is a much more blatant exception to Chrétien's normal practice. There is no attempt to withhold his name even for a part of the story. Quite the reverse, it is revealed by the narrator for no apparent reason even before he begins to play any part in the story. One cannot even resort to the doubtful procedures available in the case of Enide's parents. What is yet more curious is that his name is never again used anywhere else in the text, neither in the episode in which he figures so prominently nor in the report of it that Erec makes to King Arthur (line 6489). Whereas it is characteristic for Chrétien to withhold names until they have been revealed by the progress of the narrative, it is also characteristic for him to use those names quite freely once they have been revealed, and completely unusual for him to continue with circumlocutions. With Count Galoain the procedure is exactly the reverse.

If the couplet were an interpolation the difficulty caused by this uncharacteristic usage would disappear, and there is no reason to see the anonymity of the count as any great obstacle. In the first place the plot as it stands does not require the name of the count to be revealed to Erec and Enide. The couplet at 3129-30 reveals the name to the audience but not to the characters in the story. Obviously, Chrétien could have arranged matters so that the name of the count would be revealed to Erec and Enide but there is no reason to suppose that the plot in its existing form caused him any difficulties. He was quite happy to manage with anonymous characters. Count Galoain is from a practical point of view anonymous throughout the episode in which he is involved; Enide remains anonymous for nearly a third of the romance and her parents right until the end. Similarly in Lancelot Meleagant's sister and his seneschal, and in Yvain Gauvain's niece, all remain without names despite the number of times they are mentioned.

The case in favour of a later interpolation can also call upon the

textual evidence provided by the version of the Erec story written by Hartmann von Aue. It is known that Hartmann used Chrétien's text as his principal source, and it has already been shown in Chapter 3 that it is possible for the German poem to throw light on the French manuscript tradition. The text available to Hartmann for the episode of the squire was apparently without the Galoain couplet.

Hartmann had a marked tendency to give the names of characters as soon as they appeared; he did not respect Chrétien's principle of "realistic" anonymity. If he could obtain the names from later in the story, he did so, the classic example being that of Enide's parents who are named as soon as Erec meets them. If the characters were not named at all by Chrétien, then Hartmann supplied names of his own, such as Imain for the duke who presides over the sparrowhawk contest. It is surprising, therefore, that Hartmann does not give the name of the amorous count but refers to him throughout the episode as "der grave".³ At the point where the doubtful couplet occurs he quite specifically states that he does not know for whom the food was intended:

. . . wem diz wart gesant
des enist mir niht geseit.

(Erec, 3497)

It is possible that this strange pointed comment should be taken as a bluff and some critics have read it in that way. On the other hand, the fact that Hartmann never subsequently names the count increases the likelihood of his being serious. If he had known the relevant couplet he could have used the name of the count at a later stage without reproducing the detail of

3 Commentators on the German poem often refer to this count by the name given in the Chrétien manuscripts and even provide a "Middle High German" spelling (*Galoain*). This is done, no doubt, purely for the sake of convenience but it can be extremely misleading. The name does not occur in the extant German manuscript.

the mowers. Given his practice of naming his characters it would be very strange if he had deliberately avoided using a piece of information which was available to him in his source and which did not involve him in any further consequences.

The obvious interpretation is that the manuscript of Chrétien's poem which Hartmann had at his disposal did not contain the doubtful Galoain couplet. The only question that arises then, is why Hartmann should raise the matter of where the food was being taken. Why not pass over that problem in silence and later, when the count appears on the scene, supply him with a name in the same manner as Duke Imain? It is not too difficult to guess at what Hartmann's reason might have been.

Hartmann was much more of a rationalist than Chrétien and there are several occasions where he offers "logical" explanations of details which Chrétien had left as mysteries or simply as facts to be taken on trust. A good example occurs later in the episode of the count when Erec and Enite are making their escape, and Enite realises that they are being followed:

nu darf niemen sprechen daz:
 "von wiu kam daz diu vrouwe baz
 beide gehorte und gesach?"
 ich sage iu von wiu daz geschach.
 diu vrouwe reit gewaefens bar:
 da was er gewafent gar,
 als ein guot ritter sol.
 des gehorte er noch gesach so wol
 uz der isenwaete
 als er blozer taete.

(Erec, 4150)

Chrétien offers no explanation of this type either in this episode or elsewhere. Hartmann, it seems, does not like loose ends in the story or in its motivation, but in the case of the squire carrying food he was faced with a rather special difficulty which would have made it more complicated for him to concoct an explanation. He has seen the point

that squires do not normally wander about with food and drink on the off chance of meeting a knight errant who needs it. Presumably, he would have reasoned, the squire was taking the food to somebody -- but it was also a fact of the story that there was no one to whom he might have been taking it:

. . . une jornee tot an tor
 N'avoit chastel, vile ne tor,
 Ne meison fort ne abeie,
 Ospital ne herbergerie.

(Erec, 3137)

Erec and Enide have just emerged from the forest and the only place the squire could be going was into this same uninhabited forest. But this does not make sense. If there were any people to whom the food might be taken, why have Erec and Enide not already passed them? If Hartmann rationalised one detail he would leave the others unexplained. And if he read further in Chrétien's text (and the way he handles his adaptation leads one to believe that he did, in fact, know the whole story quite well before he started) he would discover that after the squire has given the food and drink to Erec and Enide he makes no effort to collect more food to take it wherever it was that he was going.

Similarly, if we were to assume that the food was for the squire himself and the two servants it is difficult to imagine what mission they are on which requires them to take their food with them and yet which can be abandoned at will. It is virtually impossible to provide a simple explanation of the circumstances without creating as many discrepancies as one is trying to remove. This is not an argument for seeing the "explanation" provided by the Galoain couplet as an interpolation, but it is a reason why Hartmann might not have invented an explanation of his own. If we can explain why Hartmann should point out a discrepancy in his source (because he was a rationalist) and why he did not provide a

solution to the problem (because it was too complex to be worth while), we do have an argument for taking Hartmann's statement at face value.

The fact that the doubtful couplet was apparently absent from Hartmann's exemplar is of considerable significance, for it has already been argued that a manuscript available circa 1185-90 had a good chance of containing a more reliable text than that of the extant manuscripts which are all more than thirty or forty years later.

The questions raised by the "realism" of descriptions are notoriously difficult to apply to textual matters. Discrepancies can just as easily be due to authors as to subsequent scribes, and interpolators are as likely to solve difficulties as to create them. Nevertheless, the Galoain couplet involves a technical error which depends on information that may have been available to Chrétien but which was almost certainly not available to any would-be interpolator.

The couplet contains a reference to the mowing of hay but in the course of the Limors episode (which takes place two days after the meeting with the squire) we read:

Aprés vespres un jor de mai
Enide estoit an grant esmai.

(Erec, 4777)

It can be argued that the reference to the month is purely arbitrary for the sake of the rhyme, but there are indications that Chrétien paid careful attention to the chronology of Erec et Enide. Thus it is possible that Chrétien already had in mind, when composing the squire episode, that the action of this part of the story was taking place in May. It is extremely unlikely that a scribe or even a deliberate redactor would have had such an awareness on the basis of a single line in the poem which does not occur until some fifteen hundred lines later. Chrétien would not have needed any great agricultural knowledge to be aware that

May was not the month for haymaking. Both in practice and in tradition hay was invariably mown in June (or in colder climates perhaps in July). In medieval calendars the mowing of hay is the conventional illustration for the month of June and by tradition mowing was supposed to begin on the feast of St. Barnabas (11 June).⁴ There is a second reference to mowing in Erec just before the encounter with Guivret (3668 ". . . il vindrent an un pré fauchié"), but this occurs in a group of four lines (3665-8) whose authenticity is suspect. Foerster hesitates to include them in his critical text, enclosing them in square brackets. They are found in the four related manuscripts PBVA but not in C,H, and E whose relationships are not so clearly established. A reason for the interpolation could be associated with the rhyme scheme. Without the four lines the rhyme words would be *esleissiez/pleissiez, pleisseiz/torneiz*. The juxtaposition of nearly identical words in the last line of one couplet and the first line of the next is a feature which can be found relatively often in Chrétien's writing but it may have fallen uneasily upon the ears of a later scribe. The alternative that the juxtaposition caused a type of saut du même au même is not nearly so satisfactory because we should expect (since we are dealing with words in the rhyme position) that line 3669 would be omitted along with those that intervene. Since this would infringe the rhyme scheme it would be quite possible that the scribe might subsequently restore the line after he had copied its partner 3670. This would produce an interversion of the couplet, but no manuscript has preserved such a text. If the scribe restored the line in the correct place by writing it in the margin, why did he not restore the other four lines as well?

The lack of realism in other features of the squire episode is

4 See Emile Mâle, L'Art religieux du xiii^e siècle en France, p.73.

extremely difficult to interpret. In itself the explanation that food is being taken to mowers is plausible enough. Manorial customs often state whether labour services, and in particular, boon services due at haymaking and harvest time, were to be performed with or without food. Texts are more easily available for the English manors than for the continental estates, but we need not doubt that the practice of the lord providing food for his workers at these times was well enough known on the continent.

The unlikely aspects of the description are that the carrying of this food and drink is being supervised by a squire, and that it is being carried by just two servants. The whole point of boon services at haymaking was that it was necessary to gather the largest possible work force to get the hay mown in the time available. The meadows are specifically referred to in the plural ("as prez"), and it is impossible to believe that a labour force large enough to mow even two meadows could be fed very effectively by the amount ^{of} food carried by a couple of servants (especially when *vaslet* implies that they were no more than young boys, an impression confirmed by the fact that they are being supervised by a squire). Clearly, in the real world, food for mowers (and the barrels of ale or wine) would need to be transported in some sort of cart, and would no doubt be supervised by the hayward or some other official rather than a squire.

The midday meal of mowers in England was quite likely to have been bread and cheese and ale. One might accept that in a wine-producing area wine could take the place of ale, but Chrétien lays particular stress on the quality of the food and of the wine and also on the way it is served. This is not ordinary bread but "gastiaus" made from fine wheat flour, not ordinary cheese but "fromage de gain", and good wine to be served from "biaus henas", with even the tablecloth provided. The squire himself says:

Li gastel sont de buen fromant.
 Buen vin ai et fromages gras,
 Blanche toaille et biaux henas.

(Erec, 3152)

This is not the food of mowers. If we ignore the Galoain couplet the most obvious interpretation of Chrétien's text is that the food was intended for the squire himself. This not only explains why the food might have been of such quality but also why the squire is able to offer it quite freely and why he does not need to return for more food to take wherever he was going. The consistency of the text without the Galoain couplet (in the immediate context and on the larger scale) makes the theory of interpolation attractive but there is no real reason to believe that Chrétien was very concerned to make the details of his descriptions all that realistic.

It could be that the scribe Guiot was more aware of these discrepancies than Chrétien. Manuscript C which lacks the couplet also has a different reading for line 3127 ("Qui portoient et pain et vin", with *et pain* for *gastiaus*). Since at line 3152 it agrees with all the other manuscripts in reading *gastel* (except that it makes it singular *gastiaus*) it is virtually certain that the variant *pain* in line 3127 is an error. One could envisage a situation where a scribe changed *gastiaus* to *pain* to make the food more suitable for mowers only to find later on that the quality of the food was of special importance. At this point he would realize that a more drastic revision was necessary, but unable to alter the description of the food (because it was now being offered to Erec and Enide) he returned and deleted the couplet which had indicated that it was originally intended for the mowers. He did not, however, restore the original text of his previous attempt at revision. We might attribute this process to different scribes to avoid the requirement of an actual deletion in the manuscript.

This explanation is not without its merits because the German text also refers to bread (*brot*) rather than giving an exact translation of *gastiaus*. On the face of it this appears to establish a relation between Hartmann's exemplar and manuscript C in a detail other than the absence of the Galoain couplet. But the case may not be as straightforward as it seems. In the first place the combination "bread and wine" would be so common in both secular and religious contexts that the alteration could have been made independently by scribe and translator. Secondly, Hartmann would have had a special difficulty in finding a more accurate translation for *gastiaus*, even if he understood precisely what the French word meant. There was no ready equivalent in Middle High German at this time and it is quite likely that *gastiaus* would have been rendered by *brot* in any case.⁵ This does not nullify the explanation suggested for the C readings but it is doubtful whether the German text lends it any support. That explanation will always remain a possibility but it is difficult to see how it could ever be anything more than a conjecture.

There is probably no worth-while argument to be obtained from the fact that some of the data of the couplet seem to be at variance with what one would expect in the real world of the twelfth century, although

5 See Graf Rudolf, edited by Peter F. Ganz (Berlin, 1964), lines H 30ff.:

do vant her ein halp brot
daz man da heizet gastel -
iz ist alumme sinuwel -

Compare the introduction (page 11): "gastel ist offenbar ein Wort, von dem der Dichter weiss, dass seine Zuhörer es nicht verstehen werden, das er daher in H32 erklärend beschreibt", and the notes (page 103) to H 31 *gastel*: "Das Wort ist in dieser Form sonst nicht im Deutschen bezeugt . . . Da der Dichter das Wort hier erklären muss, scheint er es direkt aus dem französischen Original übernommen zu haben".

The note also gives an important reference to Ernst Martin, Wolframs von Eschenbach Parzival und Titurel (Halle, 1903), II, 333, the commentary to 423,21: "wastel . . . als Unterlage für ein Fleischgericht 622,10; ausserhalb des Reims W[illehalm] 136,6 er begunde im hertiu wastel geben wo zugleich ersichtlich ist, dass man w[astel] als Brot ansah".

the detail of mowing hay a month too soon is, perhaps, in a slightly different category from the others. The important evidence is the uncharacteristic use of a name and the fact that the couplet seems to have been absent from the very early manuscript used by Hartmann von Aue. One might add to this the fact that the text reads very well without the couplet and slightly awkwardly with it. But is this cause or effect? An awkwardness in the grammar might just as easily provoke the omission as be the result of an interpolation. In general, Chrétien did write simple and straightforward sentences but even he had to make occasional concessions to the difficulties of writing in octosyllabic rhymed couplets. One could hardly claim that the matter was settled beyond doubt, but it would seem that the arguments for the couplet having been a later interpolation are more substantial than those in favour of omission. The evidence from Hartmann balances the arguments derived from the supposed relations of the French manuscripts. The ease with which an omission could have occurred is not really an argument that an omission did occur, whereas the analysis of Chrétien's practice in the treatment of names provides a quite positive reason for seeing the couplet as the work of another hand.

This conclusion has a direct bearing on the relation of Erec et Enide to the Welsh Gereint fab Erbin. It is difficult to reconcile the view that the couplet is an interpolation with the hypothesis that Erec and Gereint derive from a common source. Since the Welsh text includes the detail that the food is being taken to some mowers one would need to suppose either that (if the detail were in the source) Chrétien eliminated it and a scribe restored it, or that (if the detail were not in the source) the Welsh author and a French scribe both made the same addition independently. The hypothesis that the author of Gereint had a manuscript of Chrétien's poem which contained the interpolated couplet is much simpler. Since he was writing in the thirteenth century the chances of his exemplar

containing the couplet were quite high.

In theory this argument can be stood on its head, for if there were solid grounds for believing in the common source the detail of the mowers could then be adduced as evidence that its absence from C was the result of omission. If it were a matter of only the French and Welsh texts the argument would run equally well in either direction and it would be a question of choosing between the evidence for the existence of a common source and the evidence for the interpolation of the couplet. In practice, however, the common source hypothesis encounters some rather special difficulties when the version by Hartmann von Aue is taken into consideration.

Hartmann von Aue and the common source

Chrétien refers to:

. . . gastiaus et vin
Et gras fromages de gain.

(Erec, 3127)

The Welsh text has:

Nyt amgen no bara a chic a gwin.

(WM 425.35)

Nought else than bread and meat and wine.

(Jones, 256.30)

Hartmann also has the squire carrying bread and meat and wine, the line usually quoted being:

vleisch brot unde win.

(Erec, 3554)

It looks, therefore, as if Hartmann also had access to the common source.

The possibility that he had access to the Gereint text as we know it can be ruled out because of the chronology. The quoting of line 3554 is convenient because the situation is summarized in a single line, but it is also misleading. Throughout the passage (indeed, throughout the whole story) Hartmann is more circumstantial in his details than any of the other versions. The Welsh author limits himself to the general term *cic* (flesh, meat) and says nothing more precise than that. In line 3554 Hartmann also simply says *vleisch* (meat) but on two earlier occasions he has specified that what the squire was carrying was a joint of bacon (*schultern*):

3492 gesoten schultern unde brot

3535 ich vüere hie schultern unde brot

There is agreement here between Welsh and German texts but it is not as exact as it is sometimes made out to be.

In Chrétien's version of the story there is a particular fact which might explain why the servants are carrying cheese and not meat, for in the French poem these events take place on a Friday. This is not immediately apparent from the context, but the following day when Erec and Enide are received at Arthur's camp in the forest is said to be a Saturday (4263 "Ce fu un samedi de nuit"), and Chrétien specifically draws attention to the fact that on this day their supper consisted entirely of different sorts of fish and fruit. If Chrétien had this time scale in mind when he composed the episode of the squire it would explain why there was no meat. For Hartmann and the author of Gereint the fact that it was (theoretically) a Friday would not become apparent until much later, and by the time they met the reference to Saturday they would hardly remember that they had given their hero and heroine meat for breakfast on the previous day. Even if they did remember and calculate the implications of it, it would be irrelevant to their versions because neither of them has the reference to Saturday. Chrétien could well have had this time

scale in mind because it is possible that there is a symbolic intention behind the fact that the whole quest involves a prolonged abstinence. ~~Lasting~~ From Thursday until Sunday the only meals which they are able to take are the bread and cheese given to them by the squire and the supper of fish in Arthur's camp. On Thursday they rise late and leave in such a hurry that they have no time to eat, on Sunday Enide is offered a meal while Erec is unconscious but she refuses. Their fast is eventually broken (after their reconciliation) when they encounter Guivret on the night of Sunday/Monday. Thus the penitential aspect of the quest is emphasized by their enforced abstinence.⁶

If Hartmann and the Welsh author both worked from sources in which Erec and Enide were given a meal of bread and cheese it is possible that they might have changed the cheese to meat in order to provide them with food more suited to their social standing. One could, if necessary, explain the Welsh and German versions as independent alterations to Chrétien's text (with or without the Galoain couplet). Whether one would be justified in doing so is more complicated.

If we wish to preserve the common source hypothesis there are several ways of explaining the relevant facts. There are two details which the source may or may not have contained; it could have had a reference to the mowers, and it could have had a reference to the meat.

If the explanation of the agreement between Hartmann and Gereint over

6 There is an interesting reference to the Saturday fast in La Tour Landry: "Et après, belles filles, fait bon jeuner le samedi en l'honneur de Notre-Dame et de sainte virginité qu'elle vous veuille empêtrer grâce à garder nettement vostre virginité et vostre chasteté". (Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry, edited by Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris, 1854), p. 15). La Tour Landry was writing as much as two centuries later than Chrétien, but the tradition may have been of long standing (although efforts to find an earlier reference have so far proved unsuccessful).

If the Saturday fast was dedicated to the Virgin in the twelfth century it would fit in very well with any symbolic purpose Chrétien might have had in using the fasting of Erec and Enide as an aspect of the "penance" they undertake to absolve their previous sexual indulgence.

the question of the meat is that they both derived this detail from the common source, there is a major difficulty in Hartmann's statement that he did not know for whom the food was intended. Either we must reject this statement or we are obliged to assume that the common source did not contain the detail of the mowers. The first of these alternatives is rather suspect unless some cogent new evidence can be brought forward; an argument which begins by denying the plain meaning of the text which it purports to explain needs to have in its support more than just a useful speculation. The assumption that the common source did not refer to the mowers removes the argument for believing that the Galoain couplet was part of Chrétien's original text and leads us back into the supposition of independent, but identical, additions in the French and Welsh traditions.

Conversely, if we begin with the assumption that the detail of the mowers was part of the common source, we must suppose that Hartmann used a Chrétien manuscript from which it had been omitted (i.e. one related to C), and that he did not know the common source. In that case the change from "cheese" to "meat" would be independent.

Unless we accept that Hartmann was capable of a seemingly gratuitous denial of what he knew perfectly well, it is not possible to attribute to the common source the detail of the mowers and that of the meat -- or at least not without postulating further lost sources. It is always possible to salvage the common source hypothesis by creating tailor-made intermediaries and in this particular case we could assume that Hartmann derived his version of the story from a text which referred to the meat but not the mowers. We could then claim that this intermediary derived from the common source which contained both details but that the reference to the mowers had been lost in the process of transmission. This cannot fail to explain Hartmann's text because the supposed intermediary has been specifically devised so that it is identical with the extant text

except for the one comment that is proving an embarrassment. By supposing a tradition from which the detail of the mowers has been lost accidentally we avoid having to contend with the difficulty created by Hartmann's specific statement that the detail was not in his source. The value of Hartmann's statement is that it gives (or claims to give) information about an earlier stage of the textual tradition than that which is now extant. This in turn places restrictions on the type of text which can be postulated as Hartmann's source.

An advocate of the common source hypothesis now finds himself in some difficulties. It seemed at one time as if he could successfully prosecute two claims, firstly that the Galoain couplet was an authentic part of Chrétien's text because it derived from the common source, and, secondly that the agreement between Hartmann and Gereint in referring to "meat" rather than "cheese" constituted an independent witness to the availability of a tradition other than that attested by Chrétien. These claims can still be pursued, but if both are to be made simultaneously there must be some modification to the underlying hypothesis. Either of the claims would be easier to substantiate if the other could be abandoned, but this too has its consequences which make the original hypothesis less attractive.

For both claims to be met there has to be the additional postulate of an "intermediary" between the supposed common source and the version by Hartmann von Aue. There is nothing historically improbable about this, although it is open to objection on grounds of economy. A more fundamental difficulty, however, is that although it appears to salvage the common source hypothesis it does so only at the expense of the claim which needs to be made.

It can still be maintained that Hartmann was a witness to an alternative tradition, but not necessarily to the alternative tradition

which is attributed to the common source. There are several different ways in which the tradition of the intermediary could have been derived and, since it is specifically a part of the hypothesis that the text of the intermediary must have differed from that of the common source, there are no grounds for asserting any relation between the supposed intermediary and the common source. When Hartmann's version appeared to agree with the reconstruction which had been proposed for the common source, the German text could be used as evidence in favour of the correctness of that reconstruction. But if Hartmann specifically denies the tradition that we suppose to be that of the common source, the postulate of an intermediary does no more than offer one possible way (amongst other, simpler, equally possible ways) of accounting for the facts as we find them. The logical difficulty is that the postulate of the intermediary needs to use the existence of the common source as a premiss, for it cannot mediate between Hartmann and a vacuum; the concept is meaningless unless both of the other two texts are known to exist. This is obvious from the sense of the word itself, but there is more to the debate than a quibble over terminology. The choice of the term "intermediary" is not arbitrary but determined by the essential nature which we need to postulate for the text to which it refers; it contains within itself the vital claim that the text is related not only to the extant version by Hartmann but also to the lost version supposed to have been used by Chrétien and the author of Gereint fab Erbin. This claim is vital because if the intermediary is not related to the common source it cannot be a witness of it; but this relation is precisely what cannot be established. There is no way in which the hypothesis can function unless the existence of the common source is already assumed, and in this form the claim cannot be used as evidence in favour of the common source hypothesis.

It is important to note that there is a disjunction between what may have been the case as a matter of history and what has a valid use in logical argument. This is not to say that the intermediary is logically undiscoverable, only that it is logically consequent upon the prior discovery of the common source, and that the process is not convertible.

The alternative would be to pursue only one of the two original claims, but it would then have to be allowed that the textual agreement which formed the basis of the other claim was the result of independent alteration in the Welsh and French. In practice, to suggest that the detail of the mowers resulted from independent additions in the two traditions is far more damaging to the common source hypothesis than to admit the fortuitous agreement over the detail of the meat. In the case of the mowers the evidence relates directly to the two primary texts, Chrétien's poem and Gereint, whereas for the meat the agreement is only between Gereint and the secondary text of the German version. In addition, when talking in general terms of such common foods as cheese and meat without specifying some precise recipe, the range of food that a squire might carry is so limited that a chance correspondence is quite feasible. The number of explanations which can be offered for his carrying the food is bounded only by the imagination of the authors, and an agreement in this area is much more likely to result from a close textual relationship.

In real terms the advocate of the common source hypothesis now has two alternatives. Either he can opt for the existence of an intermediary between the common source and the version by Hartmann von Aue, or he can admit that Hartmann has made an independent alteration, changing the "cheese" which he found in Chrétien's poem to "meat". If he chooses the first, he chooses a solution which is of no use to him in any further argument and one which might arouse the suspicions of any who favour a degree of economy in their hypotheses, a solution, in fact, which gives the impression of avoiding the issue. If he chooses the second of the two

alternatives he runs the risk of faring even worse. To allow the principle of independent alteration for Hartmann is to raise the question of why we should deny such independence to the author of Gereint.

There is not much to choose between the possibility that the common source had "meat" (which Chrétien changed to "cheese" because he wanted the action to take place on a Friday), and the possibility that it had "cheese" (which the Welsh author changed to "meat" because of the social standing of Gereint and Enit, or because meat was the more usual food in Wales — or in the Welsh literary tradition at least). One could not, however, argue that the reason Chrétien had for changing "meat" to "cheese" was in order to make it more appropriate for the mowers, because he subsequently describes the food in such a way as to make it entirely inappropriate for mowers. The consequence of arguing that Chrétien made the change because of his knowledge of an indication of time which was to occur later in the text is to make way for another question. If he knew it was Friday why should he not have known that it was May and not June? If we attribute to Chrétien precise knowledge of his pr/ prospective time scale to explain one detail we add further weight to the argument that the Galoain couplet (which infringes another time scale) was interpolated into Chrétien's text by a later scribe. This in turn, as already argued, would cast doubt upon the common source hypothesis.

The alternative of supposing that the alteration was made by the author of Gereint presents no difficulties of explanation. According to Giraldus Cambrensis the Welsh ate both cheese and meat:

Totus propemodum populus armentis pascitur et avenis,
lacte, caseo, et butyro. Carne plenius, pane parcius
vesci solent.

(Descriptio Kambriae, I, viii, 10)

The Welsh certainly had a reputation for eating meat rather than bread,

although Walter Map is over enthusiastic when, in comparing the austerities of the monks to the natural fortitude of the Welsh, he says that the monks eat no meat, and the Welsh no bread.⁷ Walter Map was not much inclined to be scrupulously accurate when expressing his views about the monks and we have to allow for his exaggeration. The Welsh certainly did eat some bread but it would seem that it was not for them the indispensable staple food that it was for the rest of Europe. Welsh society was primarily pastoral rather than agricultural, and it seems quite reasonable to accept that meat was a normal item of their diet in a way that it would not have been in many other countries.⁸ Or, in the phrase of Giraldus, "carne plenius, pane parcius". This is not to say that cheese would have been unusual in any way but a Welsh author might have been surprised at a meal which contained no meat at all.

Certainly, in literary texts it is much easier to find references to meat than to cheese. For *cig* with a meaning of "meat" the Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru gives references to the Chirk codex of the Laws, the White Book of Rhydderch, and the Bruts in the Red Book of Hergest. Looking more closely at the prose texts of the White Book it emerges that *cig* is not a particularly common word ; food is usually referred to by the general word *bwyt* which can often be translated as "meat", but which does not specifically imply "flesh". Gwyn and Thomas Jones, for instance, regularly use such a translation in the phrase "meat and drink". This is a prime example of how even an accurate translation can sometimes be misleading.

The uses of *cig* can, however, be supplemented by texts which specify

7 Walter Map, De Nugis curialium, edited by M. R. James (Oxford, 1914), page 48, line 25 (Distinctio I, capitulum xxv): "isti [the monks] non vescuntur carne nec illi [the Welsh] pane".

8 See J. E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, II, 605.

some particular sort of meat. Giving the best of both worlds is an example from Peredur:

A dwy gostrel yn llawn o win, a dwy torth o vara can,
a golwython o gic mel voch.

(WM 120.30)

And two flagons full of wine, and two loaves of white
bread, and chops of the flesh of sucking pigs.

(Jones, 185.25)

Other instances of "chops" (*golwython*) occur in the set phrase of Culhwch and Olwen: "golwython poeth pebreit" (hot peppered chops), and on several occasions in Owein (simply "golwython").

Gereint itself gives an example of a joint of beef being provided when Gereint is entertained by Ynywl:

Ac yn y lle, nachaf, y uorwyn yn dyuot a gvas y gyt a hi,
a chostrel ar y geuyn yn llawn o ued gwerth, a chwarthawr
eidon jeuanc; ac y ryg dwylaw y uorwyn yd oed talym o
uara gwynn, ac un dorth coeset yn y llenlliein.

(WM 394.10)

And presently, lo, the maiden coming and a manservant
with her, and a bottle on his back full of bought mead,
and a quarter of a young ox; and in the maiden's hands
there was a helping of white bread, and one manchet loaf
in her mantle.

(Jones, 235.19)

As far as I know there are no occurrences of *caws* (cheese) in the White Book. The Geiriadur gives references only to the Laws, the poetry of the Red Book, and to Chwedlau Odo. To these may be added a particularly instructive example from The Dream of Rhonabwy:

A glasressawu a wnaethant ar y gwyr. A chynneu tan gwrysc
udunt a mynet y pobi a oruc y wreic, a dwyn y bwyd udunt,
bara heid a chaws a glastwfyr llefrith.

(Breudwyt Ronabwy, 3.3)

And a cold welcome they had for the men. And the woman lit a fire of sticks for them and went to cook, and brought them their food, barley-bread and cheese and watered milk.

(Jones, 138.21)

Since this passage is part of a description of the direst poverty it is to be presumed that this meal left something to be desired, and the fact that it was barley bread (rather than wheat) and watered milk (even the fact that it was milk at all instead of mead or bragget) would tend to create the impression that the cheese was no more than a poor substitute for something else, presumably meat.

Against a background such as this it is not difficult to believe that the author of Gereint could have replaced cheese by meat, conforming to a literary convention of what represented an acceptable meal. The chances that we really are dealing with a convention are increased by the fact that, although the texts differ in some details they observe the same underlying pattern -- bread, meat/cheese, a drink. The author of Rhonabwy is at pains to make each of these elements as poverty-stricken as possible, but in writing a parody he gives us a clear indication that there was a convention to be parodied and that it was sufficiently well known to make the parody recognizable.

Peredur found in the tent wine, bread, and meat (in the form of chops), and apart from the order in which the items are mentioned and the greater detail of the passage in Peredur, this corresponds with the food that was being taken to the mowers, "bread and meat and wine". The food bought by Enit conforms to the same general pattern but with some variation of detail -- mead, meat (in the form of a quarter of a young ox), and bread (of two different sorts). The real difference is the mead instead of wine, but this undoubtedly corresponds more closely to conditions as they really were. Wine was known in Wales from quite early times (there are references

to it in the early poetry), but it was a rather special drink reserved for the lord's hall. It is clear from the Laws that even for a "king" the everyday drink was likely to be mead or bragget or ale. Of these, mead was the most prestigious, and the mead brewer was one of the twenty-four officers. Peredur finding wine in the tent is not wholly out of the question; wine being taken to Welsh mowers can never have been a reality. The most likely explanation in both cases is that the authors have obtained the detail from a continental source (for which wine would be a commonplace, at least in literature). It does so happen that in both instances there is an equivalent passage, mentioning wine, in the relevant romances by Chrétien de Troyes, whereas for the Gereint passage which has mead there is no real equivalent in Erec et Enide.⁹

The complexity of the argument required by the common source hypothesis can be avoided if we explain the Welsh text by direct dependence on Erec et Enide. We can begin by allowing the argument that the Galoain couplet is an interpolation, thus eliminating the discrepancies which the lines create in the Erec text itself. We can explain the text of Hartmann's version by the date of its composition. Working somewhere between 1190 and 1195 Hartmann had a very good chance of obtaining a manuscript of Chrétien's poem copied before the interpolation became current. The text of Gereint

9 Chrétien does mention that the supper is to consist of "char et oisiaus" and most manuscripts do have a passing reference to wine:

496 Tables et napes, pains et vins
Tost fu aparelliez et mis.

This is not a real parallel to the Gereint passage in which Enit goes to buy food in the town and in which the description of the food is given more formally. In any case, we do not really need to explain why a Welsh author should provide mead, only why, on occasion, he should provide wine. When Chrétien's text in Erec and in Perceval provides such close parallels to the two occasions when wine is mentioned in the Welsh stories it is only reasonable to assume that the Welsh authors have taken the detail from a continental source, either directly from Chrétien's poems or from the sources that Chrétien himself had used.

composed 1200-25 could be seen as dependent on the later, interpolated, form of Chrétien's text, modified in the light of the author's experience of Welsh life and Welsh literary conventions, but not so thoroughly modified as to wholly obscure its foreign origins. The reference to wine implies continental usage and it has been argued elsewhere that the meaning given to the word *twel* earlier in this same passage betrays a type of linguistic influence from outside Wales which can best be explained by the use of a foreign source.¹⁰

The arguments in favour of regarding the Galoain couplet as an interpolation are not so decisive that the issue can be regarded as settled. There is still room for anyone to argue that the couplet was omitted from C, and that the omission of the same couplet from Hartmann's exemplar is proof of a close relationship between these two manuscripts. There are other examples of agreement between Hartmann and the "copie de Guiot", but in cases where the agreement is clear the original text is doubtful, and in cases where the correct reading is known the agreement is vague.¹¹ The other side of the argument is that Hartmann's exemplar and the "copie de Guiot" are the two manuscripts which are likely to have had the best opportunity for obtaining a reliable text. Hartmann's copy was very early;

10 See the final section of Chapter 9.

11 A relatively clear case of agreement is in the name of Enide's father. Hartmann (428) has *Koralus* implying a French **Coralus*. Foerster (6896) opts for the spelling of B *liconaus*, but C has the form *li coranz* with a very clear division into two words (not noted by Roques in his edition). The C form has *r* instead of *n*, and the separation of *li* might have encouraged Hartmann to take it as the definite article. Unfortunately, the C reading has as good a claim to be original as any other; there is a *Courant* in the Cartulaire de Quimperlé. **Coralus* is equally possible; the *li* of the extant manuscripts could have been added to make the necessary extra syllable when *lu* was read as three minims and interpreted as *in* (the further corruptions being individual to each manuscript). Or should we suppose a form **Corals* with an alternative graphy **Coraus*? The conjectures can be multiplied at will. For an example where the original text is clear but the agreement doubtful, see the remarks on *cotes/costes* in Chapter 2.

Guiot was working relatively early and not very far from Troyes.¹² In the last resort the issue probably turns on whether we believe Chrétien had a consistent policy for naming characters in his narrative. It looks as though he might have, but we cannot be certain.

An important side-effect of the discussion is that we have discovered a practical example of the dangers of drawing conclusions from partial agreements between Hartmann's Erec and Gereint fab Erbin. Whatever sources Hartmann may or may not have had it is clear that he cannot have had exactly the same version as that demanded by the common source hypothesis. It is true that this is only one instance, but it is an embarrassing example because it is the only instance which can be tested. We could rightly regard with some suspicion any attempt to bring Hartmann to the support of the common source hypothesis, unless exact agreements could be found involving details which could not have been produced independently.

12 See Mario Roques, "Le manuscrit B.N.fr. 794 et le scribe Guiot", in Romania, 73 (1952).

Additional note

The name *Galoain* never became popular amongst writers of Arthurian romance, but this would not necessarily indicate that it was unknown to them. After all, he was not a knight of the Round Table and not portrayed by Chrétien in a particularly favourable light. There is just one other example given in the indexes of names and that is in Le Bel Inconnu. Renaut de Beaujeu took a good deal of material from Erec et Enide,¹³ and amongst the knights who take part in the final tournament and who are overthrown by the hero there is: "Le rice conte Galoain" (5877).

This means that if the couplet in Erec was an interpolation it was inserted quite early in the manuscript tradition. The date of Le Bel Inconnu is not known with precision. It is usually assigned to the period 1185-90 but there is no real reason why it might not be as late as the early years of the next century. Thus the latest that one might allow for the interpolation would be about 1200. This would also be early enough for the archetype of the extant manuscripts of Erec which contain the couplet.

The chronology of this suggested interpolation should be set beside that of the additions to the list of names given at Erec 1691ff.¹⁴ In this case the French manuscripts CHE and the version by Hartmann von Aue witness the short text which is probably the original; the manuscripts PBVA and Diu Crône (c.1225) give two groups of additions. Le Bel Inconnu includes none of the additional names, so that it looks as if we can identify three stages in the Erec text: Chrétien's original version, without the Galoain couplet and with the shorter list of names (C and Hartmann); a first interpolation (before 1200) of the Galoain couplet (HE, French Prose and Le Bel Inconnu); and a version (before 1225) deriving from the interpolated text with additions to the list of names (PBVA and Diu Crône).

¹³ See Madeleine Tyssens in the Mélanges Frappier.

¹⁴ See Chapter 3.

CONCLUSION

The theory of direct dependence has always had the advantage of not multiplying the number of texts involved, and not having to postulate sources which no longer exist. Its fundamental weakness was the fact that there is a genuine need for an explanation of how the one version of the story could have been made out of the other. It is not enough to attribute the transformation solely to the skill or imagination of the Welsh author, for the difficulty of believing in such an individual effort counterbalances any reluctance to accept the additional complexity of the common source hypothesis. Thus when the problem of textual relationships is analysed in a purely theoretical way the "common source" may validly function as a purely imaginary construction tailored to fit the logical gap that undoubtedly exists between the two texts. The controversy (although it was not expressed in these terms) was over whether such a logical construct should be projected as an historical reality.

This inescapable difficulty still remains, because the only evidence that could effectively answer the historical question would be evidence that is outside the texts themselves. What we would need is the common source itself, or better still a twelfth century manuscript of Gereint with a colophon by the author stating unequivocally what text he had translated. But evidence of this sort is simply not available, nor is it ever likely to be.

Clearly we cannot expect conclusions derived from a study of the texts to compete with the certainty which would come from such fortunate discoveries. On the other hand, it is precisely the manifest impossibility of solving the problem definitively at the historical level which gives a particular relevance to considering it from the point of view of logical method.

There is no argument available which can make the common source hypothesis untenable, but there is one which can make it redundant. Certainly there may have been a common source, but we do not need the hypothesis. In its function as a logical intermediary the "common source" can be successfully replaced by regarding the Welsh author as a professional trained in a particular art. The transformation of his source was indeed due to his skill and his imagination, but we no longer have to think of him as thrown entirely upon his own resources. The technique of transforming a foreign text was automatically made available to him by the style in which he composed, and the important point is that we are committed to supposing that the technique was available to him irrespective of the stand we take on the question of textual relationships. Given this view of the composition of Gereint its differences from Erec et Enide are no longer a problem which needs any additional hypothesis.

At the historical level the most we can do is talk in terms of probabilities. However, when we compare like with like by removing from consideration all those elements which the author of Gereint added to his source from his experience of Welsh tradition and his stock of formulas, it emerges that the narrative of the Welsh text is remarkably similar, even in small details, to that found in Erec et Enide. This process is shown schematically on the complete text given in Volume II, and is a powerful argument in favour of the view that the Welsh author could have worked directly from Chrétien's text. It is not in itself an argument that he did in reality work from the French poem, but given that the possibility has been firmly established and the method of working made plausible, the considerations discussed in Chapters 12 and 13 may be sufficient to tip the scales. It is certainly the case that the view that Gereint derived its narrative from Erec et Enide can explain the relevant facts, and that it is by far the simplest hypothesis available.