PENN STATE ROMANCE STUDIES

LOVE CURES

Healing and Love Magic in Old French Romance

LAINE E. DOGGETT

LOVE CURES

PENN STATE
ROMANCE STUDIES

LOVE CURES

Healing and Love Magic in Old French Romance

LAINE E. DOGGETT

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Doggett, Laine E.
Love cures: healing and love magic in old French romance/
Laine E. Doggett.
p. cm. — (Penn State romance studies)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Summary: "Examines literary portrayals of women who practice healing and love magic, and argues that these figures were modeled on informally trained practitioners common in the magico-medical paradigm of the high Middle Ages, and were well-respected and successful"—Provided by publisher.
ISBN 978-0-271-03530-7 (cloth : alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-271-03531-4 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Romances—History and criticism.
2. French literature—To 1500—History and criticism.
3. Women healers in literature.
4. Magic in literature.
5. Love in literature.
6. Healing in literature.
I. Title.

PQ221.D64 2009
840.9'37—dc22
2009003734

Printed in the United States of America
Published by The Pennsylvania State University Press,
University Park, PA 16802-1003

The Pennsylvania State University Press
is a member of the
Association of American University Presses.

It is the policy of The Pennsylvania State University Press
to use acid-free paper. Publications on uncoated stock satisfy the
minimum requirements of American National Standard for
Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for
Printed Library Material, ANSI Z 39.48–1992.

This book can be viewed at
http://publications.libraries.psu.edu/eresources/978-0-271-03530-7

For Mom

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction 1

1
Background Considerations 15

2
On Artifice and Realism:
Thessala in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés* 39

3
Tristan and Iseut:
Beyond a Symbolic Reading of Empirical Practice 85

4
Tristan and Iseut:
Empirical Practice Amidst Competing Claims 134

5
Love and Medicine in the *Roman de Silence* 178

6
Reworked Elements in *Amadas et Ydoine* 221

Conclusion 262

Bibliography 268
Index 287

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I INCURRED MANY DEBTS both professional and personal during the completion of this project. Without interlibrary loan, this book would not exist. I would like to thank the library staffs of Erskine College, of Florida Atlantic University at campuses in Jupiter and Boca Raton, and of St. Mary's College of Maryland. In particular, Brenda Rodgers at St. Mary's provided seemingly endless patient and careful attention to my many requests.

Many colleagues offered help and support along the way. E. Jane Burns mentored this project in its infancy. Jeffrey Hammond read the entire manuscript at a crucial stage of the project, shaping it in ways both large and small. The anonymous readers of Pennsylvania State University Press made many valuable suggestions; without them, it would be a much poorer product. Other colleagues commented on sections of the work: Marcella Munson at Florida Atlantic and the members of the St. Mary's Faculty Writing Group of 2007: Joanna Bartow, Robin Bates, Leslie Bayers, Katie Gantz, Angela Johnson, Brian O'Sullivan, Kate Norlock, and Christine Wooley. Robin's careful nurturing of writers and the group's dedication to scholarship provide the space for hard questions and the encouragement to keep working out answers. I also received insights and encouragement from Jingqi Fu and Robin Bates. In addition, I thank Claire Slesinski who helped type the bibliography. Colleagues in other disciplines furnished background information: Mark Rupright in modern physics, Rachel Corr and Bill Roberts in anthropology, and Linda Hall Jones in medieval Latin. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to Patrick Alexander and the staff of Pennsylvania State University Press.

Some portions of the book have previously appeared: parts of Chapter 2 were published in *Exemplaria* 16.1 as "On Artifice and Realism: Thessala in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*" (Spring 2004; copyright Pegasus Press) and a small part of Chapter 4 in *Romance Languages Annual 2000*, vol. 12, as "Tristan's

Narration and Iseut's Roles in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*" (2003; copyright Purdue Research Foundation). Both are reprinted here in revised form with permission.

Finally, thanks to my folks, Betty and Ron, whose support has never wavered. And thanks to Doug for being there.

INTRODUCTION

The Origin of Love Potion Number Nine?

POP SONGS, TELEVISION PROGRAMS, and other forms of popular culture in our world today are replete with representations of romantic love as a form of intoxication, the beloved woman as capable of either bewitching or healing, and the idea that a couple's love will result in a lifelong bond and happiness. Although we might assume that these notions have been with us for all time, I seek to determine how, where, and when they arose and how they came to be a part of the social construct of love. This study examines a central channel by which these ideas entered our discourse on love: the literary portrayal of healing and love magic (which fall into the larger category of empirical practices) that were found throughout medieval society. The texts I analyze portray only women as empirics (that is, those without formal training) and depict them healing and practicing love magic in plots centered on love and marriage. For these reasons, empirics in narratives of romantic love raise questions about women's acquisition of specialized knowledge and their application of it in feudal marriage politics, in which their voices and their desires were easily muted. Women's application of empirical knowledge in these circumstances highlights the contested and continuously negotiated position of women in society and the ways in which the construction of romantic and/or passionate love of women shapes that place.

Although this study covers only a little more than a century during the Middle Ages, understanding the forces shaping love at this time is vital for a thorough comprehension of modern, western constructions of love, power, and relations between men and women. Only by attending to the origins and the impact of such images will we be able to understand fully where we are today. Consequently, I invite to this discussion

not only specialists in medieval literature and women's studies, but also a broad range of literary scholars and historians of all time periods whose expertise covers areas such as science, medicine, magic, and religion. I also seek to engage those from other disciplines in which love and marriage are studied, such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and biology. A topic as significant and broad as love can only benefit from multi- and cross-disciplinary inquiry.

How do texts of the time represent healing and love? A brief example illustrates what is in play. In Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, we encounter an episode in which women with specific knowledge of medicine successfully heal Erec. Erec's battle wounds are cared for by two sisters who demonstrate knowledge of wound management. In a description that provides a striking amount of medical detail, we learn that they remove the dead skin, apply ointment, and dress the wounds.[1] They encourage Erec to eat heartily and often, but allow no pepper or garlic.[2] Although Enide remains by his side during his convalescence and allows no one other than the sisters to touch him, it is the sisters' ministrations—and not Enide's loving care—that set Erec on the road to wellness. In a romance that centers on Enide's constancy and devotion to Erec, we would expect Enide to demonstrate these traits during Erec's illness. Yet even though Enide shows love that seems to reassure Erec as he heals, she lacks the sisters' medical knowledge. *Erec et Enide* demonstrates that the sisters' medical knowledge is crucial for Erec's return to health and that this ability to heal is not a result of the lover's presence: the romance distinctly separates healing and love.

In contrast, in the texts examined in this study—*Cligés*, the *Tristan* of Béroul and that of Thomas, the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, the *Roman de Silence*, and *Amadas et Ydoine*—healing and love intertwine to such a degree that the conceptions of both are altered. In all of these texts, except *Amadas et Ydoine*, a protagonist or her aide carries out numerous specific healing

1. "Premiers, la morte char osterent, / puis mistrent sus antrait et tante … / sovant ses plaies li lavoient / et remetoient l'antrait sus" (5158–59 … 5162–63). All quotations of *Erec et Enide* from *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes I: Erec et Enide,* ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1981). Quotations are given with verse numbers. For a translation, see *Erec and Enide,* in *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes,* trans. and intro. David Staines (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 65.

2. "Chascun jor catre foiz ou plus / le feisoient mangier et boivre, / sel gardoient d'ail et de poivre" (5164–66). For a translation, see *Erec and Enide,* trans. Staines, 65.

activities. A third strand, love magic, joins the other two in all of these works except for the *Roman de Silence.* Let us conceive of these domains—love, healing, and love magic—as sets. My goal is to concentrate on the areas in which they overlap in order to ascertain the effect of this combination on the individual elements during the high Middle Ages.[3] I focus on women because Old French romance shows women, but very rarely men, in these roles, despite evidence that both women and men undertook healing and magical activities in the high Middle Ages.[4]

3. The term "high Middle Ages" refers to the period at which medieval civilization was at its height. The dates given are approximately C.E. 1100–1350, though some prefer the more limited C.E. 1150–1300. The works in the study cluster around the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth, with the exception of the *Roman de Silence,* which is dated to the last half of the thirteenth century. However, dates for works in this period are almost always approximate.

4. One exception to the depiction of women as empirics is found in Chrétien de Troyes's *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*, ed. William Roach (Geneva: Droz, 1959), 6904–61. For a translation, see "The Story of the Grail" in *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes,* trans. Staines, 422–23. In this episode, Gawain revives a wounded knight with an herb he finds. He also checks the knight's pulse. Another exception that I take up in this study is the doctor, Iapus, who heals on the battlefield in the *Roman d'Enéas.* On magic, see Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 56. In this work, Kieckhefer discusses the presentation of magic in romance but covers such a vast array of magical practices over a long period of time that he provides a very general assessment (95–115). For histories of women in medicine, see Monica Green, "Documenting Medieval Women's Medical Practice," in *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death,* ed. Luis Garcia-Ballester, Roger French, Jon Arrizabalaga, and Andrew Cunningham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), reprinted in Green, *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West: Texts and Contexts* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate/Variorum, 2000), and Green, "Women's Medical Practice and Health Care in Medieval Europe," *Signs* 14 (1989): 434–73. In a detailed 1948 study, Muriel Joy Hughes concluded that "the glamorous ladies of romance" reflect historical female healers (136), but this historical analysis has gone unnoticed by critics dismissive of empirical practice. The present study differs in that it adds new historiographic approaches to medicine and magic, offers detailed literary analyses, and connects empirical practice to the representation of love in romance. See Hughes, *Women Healers in Medieval Life and Literature* (New York: King's Corner Press, 1943). Other studies that include literary evidence are Kate Campbell Hurd-Mead, *A History of Women in Medicine from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: AMS Press, 1938, rpt. 1977), and Mélanie Lipinska, *Histoire des femmes médecins depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: G. Jacques, Masson et Cie, 1930). Loren C. MacKinney focuses on medicine from the tenth through the twelfth centuries. See MacKinney, *Early Medieval Medicine with Special Reference to France and Chartres* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1937). However, while MacKinney notes that practitioners of the time were "amateurs either lay or clerical" (148), he discusses only the clergy. For female healers in France, see Danielle Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical en France du XIIe au XVe siècle: En annexe 2e supplément au "Dictionnaire" d'Ernest Wickersheimer* (Geneva: Droz, 1981), 47–55. For Germany, see Debra L. Stoudt, "Medieval German Women and the Power of Healing," in *Women Healers and Physicians: Climbing a Long Hill,* ed. Lilian R. Furst (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997). Stoudt shows especially how medicine and religion overlap in Germany. For the ancient world, see Holt N. Parker, "Women Doctors in Greece,

The chapters that follow analyze episodes in which empirics practice healing and love magic and show that the instances of sickness, injury, and amatory magic depicted formed a part of everyday experience—observable phenomena that audiences experienced. In short, they are quite realistic for the time. Moreover, their presentation is strikingly positive. The empirical practitioners are often well known and highly respected in their communities. They successfully diagnose and heal using methods of the day applied by healers trained formally or informally. They often surpass other healers in the region. These aspects of their healing practices are depicted without irony or parody, though the same kind of exaggeration applied to the male protagonists of romance (inevitably the "best knight") often applies as well to these characters as they invariably meet with success. Their accomplishments help advance the notion that empirical practice was a domain open to women and one in which they could obtain both respect and success, although as we shall see, it was easily appropriated into the discourse of love.

Yet, with few exceptions, critics dismiss empirical practice with a wave of the hand.[5] For example, in E. Peter Nolan's analysis of the progression in Chrétien's work from *Erec et Enide* through *Cligés* and *Yvain*, the critic describes a naïve and simplistic attitude toward herbal magic in *Erec et Enide* that is absent in Chrétien's later work. The forest episode of *Yvain* in which the young maiden overzealously rubs the knight with a precious ointment obtained from Morgan la Fay corrects the earlier representation because, "In

---

Rome, and the Byzantine Empire," in *Women Healers and Physicians,* ed. Furst, who notes that such healers are not singled out because they are women (131–32), and that they trained in informal apprenticeships (135), two conditions that hold for the women in this study. Brief accounts are found in Margaret Wade Labarge, "Medieval Women as Healers and Nurses," in *Women in Medieval Life: A Small Sound of the Trumpet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986), and Thomas Benedek, "The Roles of Medieval Women in the Healing Arts," in *The Roles and Images of Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* ed. Douglas Radcliff-Umstead (Pittsburgh: Center for Medieval Renaissance Studies, Institute for Human Sciences, 1975).

5. Two articles that stimulated my interest in this work are Peggy McCracken's "Women and Medicine in Medieval French Narrative," *Exemplaria* 5, 2 (1993): 239–62, and Kathy Krause's "Guérisseuses et sorcières: La médecine féminine dans les romans des XIIe et XIIIe siècles," *Equinoxe* 8 (1992): 161–73. I seek to expand their work here. In addition, Joan Ferrante points out that women in medieval French literature often carry out healing and magical activities. See Ferrante, "Public Postures and Private Maneuvers: Roles Medieval Women Play," in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages,* ed. Mary Erler and Maryanne Koweleski (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 213–29. Ferrante reads magical ability as an indication of intellect in this article (218) and in "The Education of Women in the Middle Ages in Theory, Fact, and Fantasy," in *Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*, ed. Patricia H. Labalme (New York: New York University Press, 1980), 30.

poking fun at the traditional trappings of herbal magic Chrétien is also poking fun at the traditional stories, like the *Erec*, in which herbal magic is taken seriously."[6] Certainly the maiden's enthusiasm provides an element of humor, but as we shall see, medieval medicine, both empirical and learned, relied on herbal preparations for healing and both types of medical practice included magical practices in healing. Although the tendency has been to assume that empirical practices, especially those carried out by women, could not have been taken seriously by more sophisticated medieval individuals, careful readings will show that this was not at all the case.

The analyses that follow are a function of literature's capacity to represent the world—and here my theoretical position is a bit like walking a tightrope. Because empirical practitioners have been labeled as examples of the fantastic or the symbolic, I have relied upon a large body of history of medicine and magic in order to demonstrate that romance representations correspond to historical examples.[7] This move is necessary to recuperate these figures from the fairy wonderland to which they have been exiled—I seek to establish them as realistic, not fantastic. The danger of such a move is the assumption that the documents traditionally used by historians (i.e., the nonliterary sources) offer transparent, unmediated representations of empirical practitioners, while literature offers only fanciful ones. Like many recent literary critics and historians, I take issue with the analysis of episodes or events as simple mimetic representation in *both* literature and other sources of documentation. All of these texts form a part of the historical discourse with the power to shape ideology: all help produce and reproduce world views.[8] Following in the footsteps of many recent critics of romance, I read

6. "Mythopoetic Evolution: Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, *Cligés* and *Yvain*," *Symposium* 25, 2 (1971): 157.

7. Romance is a medieval genre that depicts quests for adventure and love among the aristocracy in the Middle Ages. Early romances were composed in verse (octosyllabic couplets, or rhyming lines of eight syllables each), while later ones were in prose. Two short versions of the Tristan story, the *Folie Tristan de Berne* and the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford* are not, strictly speaking, romances. However, because they do not fit neatly into any medieval genre and because they are closely related to romance, I treat them as romance derivatives that belong to my general discussion of romance.

8. This approach can be seen in the works of, for example, Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, *Shaping Romance: Interpretation, Truth, and Closure in Twelfth-Century French Fictions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Peggy McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); and Paul Strohm, *Hochon's Arrow: The Social Imagination of Fourteenth-Century Texts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

the texts as indicators of social and cultural phenomena with the potential to shape and change attitudes, not merely as a record of attitudes.[9]

In order to facilitate a clear understanding of how medieval audience members would have interpreted empirics in romance, I focus first in each chapter on establishing them as accomplished and well received in the same manner as they often were in medieval society. I then consider how their depiction shapes phenomena in their world—most importantly, love and its role in marriage. Through that analysis, I argue that the depiction of empirical practices invites the movement of new tropes from those practices into the representation of love in the romances considered. These tropes add new aspects to the medieval conception of love, many of which still resonate today. In short, empirical practice as portrayed in romance alters the understanding of what love is and how it functions. By forging much stronger links than previously seen between the female beloved and healing capacities, between feelings of love and those of intoxication, and between love and rationales for marriage, these romances recast the conception of love.

Why these particular romances? The episodes of healing and love magic analyzed are not merely plot digressions of these narratives. The empirics apply their knowledge and skills in the context of the love stories that form the sine qua non of romance plots. In all the cases they are deeply involved (and in all but *Cligés*, *personally* involved) in the marriage politics of the court. The question of how (or if) romantic love should have a place in marriage is addressed in these works through one specific narrative thread, the story of Tristan and Iseut (known to some by her German name, "Isolde"). Perhaps the best known medieval lovers, their adulterous passion tears apart the society in which they live because Iseut was married to King Mark of Cornwall in a union made to bring peace between Mark and Iseut's father, King of Ireland. The Tristan story was well known in the Middle Ages, as evidenced by the numerous versions in Old French (the first language in which it which it was recorded in written form) and by the various medieval translations and adaptations into other languages. Medieval composers and authors often sought to take a known subject such as that of Tristan and Iseut and impart their own understanding of it through the details of their individual versions.

9. Laurie A. Finke names this approach the "dialogic." See Finke, "Sexuality in Medieval French Literature," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Vern L. Bullough and James L. Brundage (New York: Garland, 1996), 352.

Long derided as unoriginal, the romance tendency to reapply and reinvent has come to be seen as a hallmark of the genre.[10] This conception of storytelling is one reason for the myriad of versions of the tale, but of course storytellers would not have repeatedly seized on this particular material if audiences had not expressed enthusiasm for it. We know that medieval models of marriage, based as they were on the promotion of family and dynastic economic and social interests, did not consider the feelings of the couple—yet those sentiments existed. The story of Tristan and Iseut dramatizes the individual and societal conflicts that result from a marriage model that excludes the feelings of the couple, but it does not in any way seek to resolve the dilemma: the story concludes with the death of the lovers.

If composers were drawn to the sadness of the unresolved conflict, it seems that they also appreciated stories that offered resolution: all the other romances in the study rewrite parts of the Tristan and Iseut story in ways that avoid or resolve the problem, and critics have pointed out the intertextual relationships among these works. *Cligés* has been seen both as an anti-*Tristan* and a neo-*Tristan*.[11] Although less studied, *Amadas et Ydoine* has been read through these same filters. While most criticism on the *Roman de Silence* focuses on the latter two-thirds, I analyze the opening third, showing how it relates to both the *Tristan* legend and to *Cligés*. These romances, like many others, form a part of what Michelle Freeman has called the "links in a textual chain—a textuality," each of which contributes to a continuing dialogue.[12] Freeman even locates Chrétien's rewriting of the Tristan tale as the beginning of a continuing intertextual dialogue.[13]

Finally, though it is far from the central point of my work, I suggest ways in which romance may shape actual healing practices. Readers will likely recognize an underlying principle of historical dialectism in my approach: romance shapes notions of love and healing at the same time that is shaped

10. Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, "Repetition and Variation in Twelfth-Century French Romance," in *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature*, ed. Nathaniel B. Smith and Joseph T. Snow (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 95–114; Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, "Intertextuality," in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy, Douglas Kelly, and Keith Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), 223–65; Keith Busby, "Hunbaut and the Art of Medieval French Romance," in *Conjunctures: Medieval Studies in Honor of Douglas Kelly*, ed. Keith Busby and Norris J. Lacy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 50.

11. For a summary of criticism on *Cligés*, see Donald L. Maddox, "Critical Trends and Recent Work on the *Cligés* of Chrétien de Troyes," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 74 (1973): 731–33.

12. Michelle Freeman, "Transpositions structurelles et intertextualité: Le *Cligés* de Chrétien," *Littérature* 41 (1981): 50–51.

13. Freeman, "Transpositions structurelles," 60–61.

by empirical practice. The representation of healing in romance may very well be a factor, consciously recognized or not, in the changing relationship between medical theory and practice of the thirteenth century.

In the end, romance reveals women's empirical practice to be a force of change at court, but one that is tightly bound to romantic love. This binding together expands the role of medical and pharmacological discourses in descriptions of love even as it further defines women's practical medicine. The romances also highlight the power that empirical practice gives women and the degree to which this power threatens the dynastic marriage system.

Approaching the Middle Ages

A few fairly common misconceptions about the Middle Ages, witchcraft, and demonology need to be dispelled before readers can fully appreciate the significance of the claims I make here. In some cases the mistaken notions were furthered by medievalists themselves, but since most of them are no longer current in medieval studies, specialists in the field may wish to skip this section. I provide first some general observations on the construction of the Middle Ages themselves, especially in contrast to the Renaissance, followed by a discussion of received ideas of magic and witchcraft in those time periods. My intent is to show that oversimplified, dichotomous notions of periodicity (Middle Ages versus Renaissance as black-and-white terms), especially with respect to magic and witchcraft, have led to thoroughly wrong ideas of medieval healing and magic.

To consider the Middle Ages from a scholarly perspective can be very disconcerting. On one hand, the medieval world offers images that accord with our own world: comfort and solace in love, the necessity of maintaining political alliances, and the role of status in shaping interactions between individuals. On the other hand, and far more often than not, an observer and interpreter of the Middle Ages from the twentieth or twenty-first century is befuddled before a world organized so very differently from our own, one in which love potions, feudal bonds, and lords and ladies play roles we only dimly grasp.

In popular reconfigurations, the poles may be even further apart. Modern appropriations of *medievalia*, such as literary works from T. S. White's *The Once and Future King* and Marion Zimmerman Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* or the recreation of medieval life by members of the Society for Creative

Anachronisms, bespeak a fascination with the period. At the same time, however, the pervasive notion exists that the Middle Ages was nothing more than a thousand years of stultification with no advances or cultural high points in which people followed the dictates of the Church like sheep and were motivated only by thoughts of the next life.

Yet as critics and historians, we have only ourselves to blame, for it is through our predecessors that such ideas flourished. Francesco Petrarch, who celebrated Roman culture and writings and disparaged his medieval predecessors, wrote of his dislike for the time period in which he was born.[14] Petrarch's insistence on the importance of antique literary models was so successful that today we use the term "Petrarchian conceit" to describe a besotted, helpless lover who beseeches a haughty, cruel, and distant lady for her love[15] without so much as a thought to Petrarch's debt to the lyric poetry of the troubadours of eleventh- to fourteenth-century southern France for the elaboration of that image. In the fifteenth century, the bitter fights of humanists against their scholastic predecessors—perceived as outmoded and lacking intellectual rigor—further established the idea of the Middle Ages as a cultural wasteland. Late medieval and early modern intellectual battles put forth an image of the Middle Ages as a time when hardly any new ideas emerged and those that managed to were squelched by authorities. In contrast, the label "Renaissance" (more commonly referred to by scholars today as the early modern period) said it all: a period in which new ideas were enthusiastically taken up, fear and superstition did not limit progress, and benighted ideas were shed as human beings came to a more nuanced understanding of the human condition.

If we can locate the beginnings of the tendency to oversimplify the Middle Ages in an attempt to curtail medieval approaches to learning by the rival humanists that followed the scholastics, we can also historically situate the opposite reception of the Middle Ages in nineteenth-century romanticism. The romantic approach to the Middle Ages is perhaps best known through a work such as Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The medievalism of the romantic period both glorified and misrepresented the Middle Ages.

14. Nicolas Mann, *Petrarch* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 28.

15. Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* (Boston: Bedford, 1997), 280.

Vestiges of that misrepresentation remain with us today.[16] With respect to the study of witchcraft, the most well-known romantic work is that of Jules Michelet, who argued that fourteenth-century witchcraft was a repressed form of social revolt.[17] Michelet's style can be best appreciated through a quotation:

> Think of the power wielded by Satan's Chosen Bride! She can heal, prophesy, predict, conjure up the spirits of the dead, can spell-bind you, turn you into a hare or a wolf, make you find a treasure, and most fatal gift of all, cast a love charm over you there is no escaping! Awful attribute, more terrible than all the rest put together! How should a headstrong spirit, more often than not a wounded spirit, sometimes one altogether soured by disappointment, fail to use such a weapon for the satisfaction of hatred and revenge, and sometimes for the indulgence of perverse and foul proclivities?[18]

The two poles, denigration and dismissal of the Middle Ages or glorification and exaggeration of the time period, become all the more intriguing when we remember that Romantics often glorified what had previously been dismissed.

Romantic élan notwithstanding, one of the most pervasive myths since Petrarch's time has been a simplistic view of periodicity according to which the Middle Ages is considered a time of complete stagnation and benightedness, while the early modern period is hailed as a time of great awakening and moving forward. This received idea persists despite the fact that historians, both in their archival work and textbooks, call it into question.[19] It often appears in popular culture. I once heard a popular historian speak on her study of a seventeenth-century Italian woman. The speaker marveled that in her research of the period she had learned that "everything really did begin in the Renaissance." She is not alone, for the idea still has common currency.

The notion of an entirely backwards Middle Ages and a purely progressive early modern period helps to maintain another mistaken assumption: that

16. Daniel Poirion urges us not to make the sort of mistakes that Viollet-le-Duc made on the sculptures of Vézelay when he attempted to restore them to the forms of the Middle Ages. See Poirion, "Le *Tristan* de Béroul: Récit, légende, mythe," *L'Information littéraire* 26 (1974): 206.

17. Jules Michelet, *Satanism and Witchcraft: A Study in Medieval Superstition*, trans. A. R. Allinson (New York: The Citadel Press, 1939). Michelet's work first appeared in France in 1862.

18. Michelet, 89–90.

19. For a textbook discussion, see Thomas F. X. Noble, Barry S. Strauss, et al., *Western Civilization: The Continuing Experiment* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), esp. 511–12.

witchcraft, demonology, and the prosecution of those acts were primarily medieval phenomena, not early modern ones. An example can be found in the third book of J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, which opens with Harry writing an essay entitled "Witch Burning in the Fourteenth Century Was Completely Pointless" Harry's research for the essay states that "Non-magic people … were particularly afraid of magic in medieval times, but not very good at recognizing it."[20] The essay topic and the textbook quotation that Harry uses suggest that the fear and persecution of the witch-hunt were late medieval phenomena and that medieval people were particularly gullible, despite considerable research to the contrary.

The implied notion that the fourteenth century was one of the highest points of fear of magic and witchcraft directly contradicts the chronology and specifics that historians have established. For Jeffrey Burton Russell, the mid-fifteenth century (from 1427, when theologians began writing more discourses on witchcraft, to 1486, with the publication of *Malleus Maleficarum*) is the pivotal time during which "the witch phenomenon became thoroughly articulated. Ideas that had previously remained distinct were now joined in a whole."[21] For Russell, those ideas include: sacrifice to demons; pacts with the devil; night flights on brooms, sticks, or beasts; sexual orgies, murder, and cannibalism; special salves or ointments; a focus on heresies such as the renunciation of faith; the sacrifice of infants to Satan; Devil worship; and heretical night meetings.[22] Only *after* this conceptual shift was in place did witchcraft prosecutions begin to increase. Witch hunts were at their zenith in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[23] They cannot be considered an anomaly: "The witch craze was not an aberration in the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the contrary, witch hunting reflected the darker side of the central social, political, and cultural developments of the time."[24]

Historians have also called into question other arguments. Russell finds in nineteenth-century historians of witchcraft an anticlericalism that led

20. J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (New York: Scholastic, 1999), 1–2.

21. Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 228.

22. Russell, 229–43.

23. Brian P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1995), 1. For a general overview of the witchcraft prosecutions, see Levack and Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Penguin, 1996).

24. Joseph Klaits, *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 6.

to an inflated sense of the role of the medieval Catholic Church in creating the witch hunts.[25] Norman Cohn's chapter "How the Great Witch-Hunt Did Not Start" reveals that late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century trials in southern France and Italy that were long hailed as the beginnings of the movement were, in fact, fabrications.[26] Richard Kieckhefer makes a convincing case that notions of devil worship were passed from the intellectual elite to peasants during trials and had no basis in peasant belief.[27]

Additional work has broadened our understanding of the witchcraft persecutions. Helen Rodnite Lemay's reading of thirteenth-century natural philosophy of women argues that these works directly influenced the presentation of women in Kramer and Sprenger's 1486 *Malleus maleficarum*.[28] By the sixteenth century, demonology and magic overlapped significantly; juridical procedures including the Inquisition and torture were established and Reformation conflicts had increased belief in diabolical conspiracies.[29] Other scholars have analyzed the prosecutions through lenses such as gender, sexuality, and psychology.[30]

Literary critics have also contributed to growing knowledge in this and related areas, especially in light of specific discourses of healing or medical or scientific theory current at the time of those texts. Dana E. Stewart applies twelfth-century optical theory to elucidate the love scene of Soredamors and Alexander in *Cligés*.[31] With respect to healing, Jean Dangler argues persuasively that in three Iberian texts dating from 1460 to 1528, the authors use misogynist textual strategies to deride female healers while glorifying male

25. Russell, 30–34.

26. See Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom*, rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 181–201. This is only one of the myths about European witchcraft that Cohn persuasively argues against. He shows that the juridical and societal changes that helped create the witch hunts were only late medieval phenomena whose effects were felt in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

27. See Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976).

28. *Women's Secrets: A Translation of Pseudo-Albertus Magnus's* De Secretis Mulierum *with Commentaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 50–58.

29. For the overlap of demonology and magic, see Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials*, 96, and Edward Peters, *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), 165–66. On juridical procedures, see Levack. Gary K. Waite covers the reformation in *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (London: Palgrave, 2003).

30. Klaits; Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994).

31. Dana E. Stewart, *The Arrow of Love: Optics, Gender, and Subjectivity in Medieval Love Poetry* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2003), 33–48. She also analyses Italian lyric poetry.

physicians and the intercession of the Virgin Mary.[32] Literary studies such as those by Stewart and Dangler imply a need for more analysis of literature in light of the evolving discourses of science, medicine, and healing, a need I address in part in this study.

Outline of This Study

Chapter 1 provides a framework for the study by supplying background material in several areas. Medieval magic and medicine are surveyed, followed by a brief discussion of the marvelous, which differs from the other phenomena but has often been conflated with them. Chapter 1 also summarizes research on medieval marriage and courtly love. This last section especially may help to orient those on less familiar terrain, since the scholarship on romantic love in the Middle Ages is vast and full of disagreements.

Chapter 2 takes up *Cligés* by Chrétien de Troyes. Its main story depicts the love of Cligés and Fenice, who are aided by Fenice's handmaiden, Thessala. Thessala's numerous activities in healing and love magic make an ideal place to begin an examination of empirical practice and its implications for romance. The analysis of Thessala reveals neither a mythic witch (based on classical antecedents) nor a questionable charlatan, but rather an empiric whose skills and knowledge in healing and potion mixing enable her charge, Fenice, to marry the man she loves.

Chapter 3 considers the early Tristan narratives, concentrating on the fragments of Thomas d'Angleterre and the translation and adaptation of that work. Both Iseut and her mother engage in healing activities, and her mother is, of course, responsible for the infamous love potion that brings Tristan and Iseut together. In this chapter, I offer a means to read the love potion as a part of empirical practice rather than as purely symbolic, as it has been interpreted in the past, and analyze how such an approach alters our understanding of the *Roman de Tristan*. I also take up Iseut's dual role as a healer and as the beloved in order to show how the discourse of healing in the work allows for the conflation of Iseut's healing capacities with her function as the beloved. This overlapping and intermingling of roles has the potential to influence the image of the beloved in works that come after the *Tristan* story.

32. Jean Dangler, *Mediating Fiction: Literature, Women Healers, and the Go-Between in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001).

Chapter 4 treats the other important early branch of the Tristan materials available in Old French, that of Béroul, and one of its derivatives, the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. The remaining fragments of Béroul's text have challenged scholars for many decades, in part because there are many internal contradictions. Béroul's competing claims are the basis for an examination of empirical practice in which it is left up to the reader to interpret its meaning in the romance. Disparate points of view, this time between Tristan and Iseut, also furnish the subject of analysis in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, which recounts most of their love story, but from the perspective of Tristan when he returns to Mark's court disguised as a fool in a desperate attempt to see Iseut again. In Tristan's retelling of their love story, he ascribes to Iseut new and impressive empirical abilities that must be considered in the context of Tristan's attempts to obtain Iseut's recognition. Both texts point up the multiple interpretations to which empirical practices are subject and the necessity of skepticism in assessing them.

Chapter 5 treats the *Roman de Silence*, focusing on the first third of the work in which Silence's parents, Cador and Euphemie, meet and fall in love. Although this romance was composed some one hundred years after the other works, it depends heavily on the works that precede it for its representation of both love and empirical practice. We see this especially in the depiction of Cador and Euphemie when they fall in love. Although their love comes on naturally without the help of any outside force such as a potion, the description of their love is deeply influenced by the discourse of love magic. In addition, I compare the three marriages in the *Roman de Silence* to show how the society responds to the notion of love as a necessary condition for marriage.

Chapter 6 looks at a romance that is in many ways a counterexample because of its mockery and grotesqueness, *Amadas et Ydoine*. Rather than depicting empirical practice per se, this text shows activities akin to them but with substantial differences. Although Ydoine has no training as an empiric, she is able to heal her lover. In the mocking tone of this work, empirical practice has disappeared altogether, while its effects have been thoroughly incorporated into the representation of the beloved. *Amadas et Ydoine* also ridicules the notion that a woman in love can wisely choose the man she will marry, despite the fact that it concludes with the community's endorsement of the engagement of the loving couple.

1

BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES MATERIAL on several topics that are necessary for the analyses that follow. The first section gives a general framework for the institutions and practices of medieval medicine and magic so that the reader has a context for specific episodes in the romances. The second section briefly discusses the marvelous in order to make clear the distinction between it and magic, since the two are easily conflated. Sections three and four present, respectively, medieval marriage and courtly love, a term medievalists use to describe earthly romantic love in the Middle Ages among the aristocracy. The last two sections may be more appropriate for non-medievalists and those new to the field since they summarize the considerable and often conflicting scholarship on courtly love. Those less familiar with medieval literature are often surprised at the enormous role and variety of human (as opposed to divine) love found in these texts.

Medieval Medicine and Magic

Sympathetic readers may find unnecessary the amount of historical material provided to make the case that the characters in these romances reflect aspects of known empirical practices of the time. Based on earlier critics' dismissal of empirical practice, however, I have anticipated a resisting reader, since those unable to consider empirical practice seriously will be hard-pressed to entertain the notion of its impact on love in romance.

As historians of medicine have shown, medicine evolves dramatically during the Middle Ages. Not all of the changes have consequences for these romances. I have left out such twelfth-century changes as limitations on medical study and practice for monks and canons as well as a law by King Roger II of Sicily calling for examination of those who would practice

medicine in his kingdom.[1] Monasteries play no role in the works I examine and thus are not germane to this discussion, and the Sicilian attempt to limit practice seems too far removed geographically to be of much consequence here. The history of medicine is far better documented starting in the second half of the thirteenth century,[2] and it includes fascinating cases such as the early fourteenth-century trial of Jacqueline Félecie for unlicensed practice in Paris. In making arguments about the romances, however, I have restricted the evidence to that from their time period (late twelfth and early thirteenth century, with the exception of the *Roman de Silence*, for which I add later thirteenth-century materials) and to northern France, although I have included other material at points to provide a more complete picture. I have indicated those instances where I have provided information that falls outside these boundaries.

The readings I offer always begin with comparisons between textual passages and details from recent history of medieval medicine and magic. Three basic notions provide my starting principles. I will sketch them here and fill them in more fully in the chapters as needed for textual analysis. First, although Helen Lemay cautions that "the history of medieval medicine is written largely from learned medical treatises," historians have found evidence of non-school- or university-trained healers active throughout the Middle Ages and afterwards.[3] Even after the establishment of medical schools, empirics continued to receive training and to practice.[4] Secondly,

1. Monks and canons are discussed by Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 13. On Sicily, see Siraisi, 17–18. Pearl Kibre also discusses the Sicilian legislation in "The Faculty of Medicine at Paris, Charlatanism, and Unlicensed Medical Practices in the Later Middle Ages," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 27 (1953): 4, rpt. in Kibre, *Studies in Medieval Science: Alchemy, Astrology, Mathematics, and Medicine* (London: Hambledon, 1984).

2. Jacquart notes the relative paucity of documents for the period 1100–1250 (*Le Milieu médical,* 231–32).

3. Lemay, "Women and the Literature of Obstetrics and Gynecology," in *Medieval Women and the Sources of Medieval History*, ed. Joel T. Rosenthal (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 190. For those trained outside schools and universities, see Siraisi, 17–47; Katharine Park, "Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe, 500–1500," in *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays*, ed. Andrew Wear (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 59–90. In fact, Park describes a "cultural unity" in medieval medicine, 60. Green focuses on recovering women's practice from sources that do not yield that information easily, pointing out, for example, that focusing on learned medicine is quite likely to obscure most female practitioners ("Women's Medical Practice," 444–45). Stephen Wilson discusses the Middle Ages and beyond. See Wilson, *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-modern Europe* (London: Hambledon and London, 2000), 311–71.

4. Park, 78, 81; Siraisi, 49–50. Pearl Kibre illustrates this particularly well for Paris and the vicinity in "The Faculty of Medicine at Paris."

scholars have found considerable similarity between *practices* (as distinct from *theory*, which empirics lacked) carried out by those trained formally and informally.[5] Third, medicine as practiced by both groups contained elements of magic.[6] Medical historians often describe an intermingling of the two domains, while historians of magic conceptualize their subject in such a way that some medical practices fall within it.[7] We can begin to see the impossibility of separating the two in Richard Kieckhefer's question, "If a person rubs bat's blood into his eyes, is that magic, or is it a kind of primitive medical science?"[8] Kieckhefer includes the following practices in his discussion of common magic: healing, divining, charms, protective magic, and popular astrology.[9] Practitioners range from church figures to physicians, empirics, surgeons, diviners, and others, which suggests that these practices were part of a common culture, not a specific subgroup.[10] Kieckhefer's conception of magic alerts us that the sharp epistemological divide we make today between magic and medicine has no place in an analysis of medieval empirical practice. Our view today separates what has been supported through rigorous scientific analysis from that which we dismiss as illusion, although even modern science has begun to question the notion of objectivity in fields such as modern physics and feminist evolutionary biology.[11]

5. Park, 82; William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 55; Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset, *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 91; Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 56; Jerry Stannard, "Medieval Herbalism and Post-Medieval Folk Medicine," in *Folklore and Folk Medicines*, ed. John Scarborough (Madison: American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1987), 10–11, and Stannard, "Magiferous Plants and Magic in Medieval Medical Botany," *The Maryland Historian* 7 (Spring 1977): 34. For obstetrics and gynecology specifically, see H. Lemay, "Women and the Literature of Obstetrics," who argues that no clear distinction exists between learned and folk practices in that field. Learned physicians and empirics avail themselves of both in their healing. Jacquart stands as an exception in this case, as she assumes, but does not document, that a practitioner without formal training could only have been a "charlatan" (300, see also 44–47).

6. Park, 59–60, 70; Stannard, "Magiferous Plants," 34, 38; Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 57–64; Karen Jolly, "Medieval Magic: Definitions, Beliefs, Practices," in *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 30–35.

7. Jolly, 30–35.

8. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 8.

9. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 56–94.

10. On the range of practitioners, see Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 56. The common culture of magic is discussed by Kieckhefer, "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic," *American Historical Review* 99 (1994): 833.

11. See, for example, John Gribbin's *Schrödinger's Kittens and the Search for Reality: Solving the Quantum Mysteries* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995) and the last two chapters of Natalie Angier's *Woman: An Intimate Geography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

Nevertheless, a sticking point for many critics has been the inclusion in the romances of practices labeled "magic."[12] As Naomi Janowitz reminds us, the word "magic" carries enormous cultural baggage.[13] If we hope to see romance with a fresh eye, we must examine long-held notions.[14] Karen Jolly describes the "magic-religion-science paradigm" that took shape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In this model, magic was a primitive precursor to religion because magic sought to manipulate the world, whereas religious activity was predicated on supplication. While more advanced than magic, religion was seen as more primitive than science because it works on irrational principles, whereas science does not. As Jolly points out, this view is "deeply entrenched in modern consciousness" and therefore in modern scholarship.[15]

In recent decades, anthropologists have shown the biases and limitations of the Eurocentric (and hierarchical) classificatory scheme of magic/religion/science.[16] Even so, Richard Kieckhefer writes that for the Middle Ages, "the question is not so much the relationship between magic and either science or religion but its relationship to approved religion and to ordinary science: demonic magic

12. A rare early article that asserts scientific aspects along with supernatural ones of potions in *Tristan* and *Perceval* is Faith Lyons, "'Vin herbé' et 'gingembras' dans le roman breton," in *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier*, vol. 2 (Geneva: Droz, 1970), 689–96.

13. *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews and Christians* (London: Routledge, 2001), 2.

14. For an introduction to the complex construct of magic in the Middle Ages, see Jolly; Kieckhefer; Russell; Peters, *Magician;* and Peters, "The Medieval Church and State on Superstition, Magic and Witchcraft: From Augustine to the Sixteenth Century," in *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, ed. Ankarloo and Clark.

15. Jolly, 8, 9. Stephen Wilson also discusses this, xxvi–xxix, 459–68. Although Lynn Thorndike's *The Place of Magic in the Intellectual History of Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905) documents occult beliefs and practices among many early thinkers who also show scientific approaches (11–26), he nevertheless classes all men of this period as "primitive" (29) and magic as "false" (34), arguing that "[magic's] mistaken premises and strange proceedings first mingled with and then vanished into science and scientific methods" (34), thereby further reifying the magic-science dichotomy.

16. See, for example, Dorothy Hammond, "Magic: A Problem in Semantics," *American Anthropologist* 72 (1970): 1349–56; Francis L. K. Hsu, *Exorcising the Trouble Makers: Magic, Science, and Culture* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1983); Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Hildred Geertz critiques Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971) for its analysis of magic versus religion in "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6, 1 (1975): 71–89. Thomas replies that this classic distinction of nineteenth-century anthropologists in fact dates to the sixteenth-century Protestant reformers he studies and therefore belongs in a history of that time and place. See Thomas, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6, 1 (1975): 94–96.

is itself essentially religious . . . , while natural magic could easily be combined with devotional practice."[17] Another recent approach avoids universalist notions of magic and religion, offering instead contextual definitions of magic.[18] Jolly reminds us that "How certain practices in medieval Europe come to be labeled magic, as opposed to scientific or religious, depends on the perspective of the person using the label, whether a medieval commentator or a modern scholar."[19] As the reader will see in the following chapters, critics have often discussed magic unproblematically, blithely unaware of the term's functions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[20] They may, for example, oppose magic to the modern construct of science or suggest that in the high Middle Ages magic had already acquired the status of an organized diabolical sect that was only attributed to it in the later Middle Ages and the early modern period.[21]

Theologians and jurists of the Middle Ages were concerned with the question of magic, but not on the grounds that it was irrational or in opposition to medicine. They were worried about good and evil:[22] "Natural magic was not distinct from science, but rather a branch of science. It was the

17. "Specific Rationality," 821.

18. Jolly, 11.

19. Jolly, 3.

20. A few exceptions exist. Most recently, Michelle Sweeney has argued that magic in romance occurs at moments in which characters undergo emotional struggle or growth and that such instances provide a means of evaluating the morality of characters' actions. See Sweeney, *Magic in Medieval Romance from Chrétien de Troyes to Geoffrey Chaucer* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 13, 169. Sweeney therefore hypothesizes a role for magic that goes beyond the standard interpretations of magic as a Celtic holdover or means to resolve plot difficulties (16–18). However, Sweeney's study treats magical acts of numerous and extremely varied kinds over a two-hundred-year period and so remains general. In addition, by relying primarily on definitions of magic and related terms from the *Middle English Dictionary* and the *Second Oxford English Dictionary* (23, 29, 30, 152, 154, 156), Sweeney suggests that the thinking on magic was uniform, undisputed, and static. Joan Ricardo-Gil argues that magic is realistic when read in the context of beliefs and practices of the time, but does not interrogate the contemporary meanings of terms such as magic, fairies, or witches. See Ricardo-Gil, "The Practice of Witchcraft and Magic in Fact and Fiction" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1980). De la Warr Benjamin Easter's work is largely descriptive. See Easter, *A Study of the Magic Elements in the romans d'aventure and the romans bretons* (Baltimore: J. H. Furst, 1906). In addition, some recent works have taken different approaches to magic. David Rollo examines magic as a trope in *Glamorous Sorcery: Magic and Literacy in the High Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). Anne Wilson takes a structuralist approach that analyzes ritualistic actions that may or may not include magical accouterments (potions, spells, etc.) in *Plots and Powers: Magical Structures in Medieval Narrative* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

21. On magic vs. science, see Hughes, 4, 136. On the later accretion of diabolism, see Jolly, 23–26. Jolly notes that in the high Middle Ages, "accusations of magic remained localized and comparatively innocuous compared to the development of an international inquisitorial process in later periods" (22).

22. Jolly, 6. This same distinction applied in Roman times (Janowitz, 3).

science that dealt with 'occult virtues' (or hidden powers) within nature. Demonic magic was not distinct from religion, but rather a perversion of religion. It was religion that turned away from God and toward demons for their help in human affairs."[23] For theologians, the problem with magic was not that it did not exist, but that it depended for its power on forces allied against the Church.[24] Rituals both magical and religious offered a means to attempt to control harsh forces in an unpredictable world. Moreover, terms used to discuss magic did not always have precise definitions: "Medieval labels such as sorcery, witchcraft and incantations only gradually came to be defined in clear ways, beginning as a series of overlapping designations used at different times in different ways, often in the context of rhetorical or legal condemnations of such practices."[25]

Although penitential writers throughout the Middle Ages attempted to separate demonic practices from ones acceptable to the Church, these practices can be similar. For example, Burchard of Worms (965–1025) in the *Corrector* explains that herbs for healing should not be gathered while saying "evil" incantations, but only with the Creed or the Lord's Prayer, and that one should pray only in church or in places pointed out by a bishop or priest and not "to springs or to stones or to trees or to crossroads."[26] Not only do such writings reveal the Church's concern with practices it found unacceptable, but they also suggest that in spite of Church condemnation these practices persisted throughout the Middle Ages. In the early eleventh century, Burchard prescribes penance for practicing love magic.[27] In the later twelfth century, the Penitential of Bartholomew of Iscansus, Bishop of Exeter (1161–1184), does the same.[28] Burchard says that *women* (emphasis mine) carry out love magic through "certain spells and incantations,"[29] whereas Bartholomew writes, "If anyone pays respect to soothsayers, augers, enchanters, or makes use of philters, let him be anathema.... He who is a magician for the sake

23. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 9.

24. As a result, Jolly notes, Christian ritual was constructed as very powerful (19).

25. Jolly, 27.

26. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance: A Translation of the Principal* libri poenitentiales *and Selections from Related Documents*, ed. John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 330, 331. However, Kieckhefer argues that this distinction is not difficult ("Specific Rationality," 835).

27. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 331, 340.

28. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 349. More examples earlier and later can be found, but I have cited those closest to the works under consideration, which, with the exception of the *Roman de Silence*, fall at the end of the twelfth century.

29. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 331.

of love and does not bring it to success shall do penance for two years. If he does, five years. If adultery results, ten years."[30] The process of confession itself may have contributed to the spread of the idea of love magic as a means to change one's situation since, according to Burchard's directions, the confessor was to begin by asking questions about possible sins committed and continue with them if the penitent appeared "bashful."[31] Through documents such as these and others, the Church attempted to place a divide between legitimate and illegitimate knowledge, but as Jolly reminds us, "popular practices of healing, divination or protection from invisible forces, less readily accessible in the surviving documents, do not always fit neatly into these intellectual categories."[32] Moreover, given the amount of gray area in popular magic, the determination was often subjective.[33] Stephen Wilson describes little change in actual practices over the *longue durée* despite clerical attempts to influence parishioners, except for a Christianizing influence over time and the increasing role of demonology in the later Middle Ages.[34] Witchcraft, as opposed to *maleficium* (doing someone harm by either magical or nonmagical means), was distinguished by a pact with the devil and therefore was considered heresy.[35] Only in the mid-thirteenth century (after the romances under consideration, except for the *Roman de Silence*) did popular magic practices become the primary focus of theologians and Inquisitors.[36]

Although clerics trained by the Church created the romances we will examine, the authors do not belong to the specialist subset of theologians and canonists. Composed with entertainment as the goal, the romances never take on accusatory tones toward practices that theologians or jurists might condemn. They do not concern themselves with moral assessments of the empirical activities shown or depict other characters who take such an interest. With the exception of *Amadas et Ydoine*, a text that functions as a counterpoint

30. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 349.

31. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 324, 325. However, James A. Brundage mentions one confessor, Robert of Flamborough, who urges caution in questioning about sexual sins lest the penitent get new ideas (399).

32. Jolly, 7. Kieckhefer also points this out, *Magic*, 9.

33. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 12.

34. Wilson, xxvii–xxix. An extensive and well-documented study that describes this process in the early Middle Ages is Valerie I. J. Flint's *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). See, for example, the sections on love magic and medical practices that were condemned by the Church and those, often quite similar, that were accepted and encouraged (231–52, 290–328).

35. Russell, 13, 18.

36. Russell, 133–34.

in many ways, these works *never* use the term *witch* or *sorcière*. In contrast, condemnatory labels are common in religious documents.[37] It is vital for the reader to recognize that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, juridical and common discourses on magic lack the precision and power they will acquire during the Inquisition and witch trials. As a result, the domain of empirical practice in the high Middle Ages does not submit neatly to binary oppositions that operate in the modern world; the terms used at any given point have a range of meanings and contexts that must be taken into consideration.

The above comments pertain to popular magic; we also need to consider learned magic. Beginning in the eleventh and continuing in the twelfth century, Greek, Arabic, and some Hebrew sources were made available in translation to western European intellectuals.[38] These contributed to the growth of learned magic, including occult sciences such as astrology and alchemy which would lead eventually to the figure of the Renaissance *magus.*[39] These new works played important roles as universities were established during the twelfth century. By the fourteenth century, western European universities displayed a heightened interest in learned magic, which can be seen in the science of medical astrology taught in Italian and French universities.[40] Astrology was especially useful to those practicing medicine because it enabled the surgeon or physician to select the best time for procedures.[41]

The construct of magic exhibits considerable dynamism throughout the Middle Ages. Two studies describe the gradual accretion of concepts throughout the period that culminates in the early modern witch craze. Jeffery Burton Russell focuses on the evolution of the concept of heresy, tracing its roots from the early Church through the witchcraft trials of the later Middle Ages (1360–1486).[42] Magical actions constitute heresy because

37. Jolly, 7.

38. Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Translations and Translators," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), 278–302; Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 118.

39. Kieckhefer treats learned magic, *Magic*, 118–39. On the *magus* figure, see Jolly, 13.

40. On learned magic, see Siraisi, 152. Religious authorities also regarded learned magic as suspicious. For Italy, see Pearl Kibre and Nancy G. Siraisi, "The Institutional Setting: The Universities," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 138–39. For France, see Richard Lemay, "The Teaching of Astronomy in Medieval Universities, Principally in Paris, in the Fourteenth Century," *Manuscripta* 20 (1976): 197–217.

41. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 122.

42. *Witchcraft*.

of the belief that contact with demons or the devil permits their success.[43] Edward Peters has carefully documented the theological treatment of learned magic and learned magicians through the Middle Ages in arguing that while magicians and heresy had always been linked, several key trials of learned magicians in the later medieval period opened the way for fifteenth-century witch persecutions.[44] Peters locates watershed moments in this process at the turn of the fifteenth century. Only after the 1398 condemnation of magic by the theology faculty of the University of Paris does sorcery receive "collected and sustained attention on the part of the ruling and learned institutions of Europe."[45] In 1402, Jean Gerson furthered that position in *De erroribus circa artem magicam*, which links women's practices such as amatory magic and superstitious cures with learned magicians who had been the subject of theological condemnation since the twelfth century.[46] Again, it is crucial to recall that this strong link between women, magic, and diabolism occurs some two centuries after the romances under consideration here.

Twelfth-century commentators on court life, such as John of Salisbury, do show concern about magic at court. However, in his discussion John focuses almost entirely on divination.[47] Jolly concisely summarizes the different conceptions of magic after the twelfth century: "Common magic emerges as a separate category primarily in the minds of post-twelfth-century thinkers distancing themselves from popular practice as they developed theoretical models for natural magic derived from classical, Arabic and other eastern Mediterranean sources coming into their possession."[48] While the new knowledge helps create a divide between learned and common magic, Jolly points out that such "distinctions evolve gradually over the course of the thirteenth century,"[49] and so have little influence on the works in this study. Peters blames the shifting and complex power relationships at courts for magic's growing popularity.[50] He notes that it is only in the late thirteenth

43. *Witchcraft*, 18.

44. *Magician*, 46.

45. Peters, "The Medieval Church," 222.

46. *Magician*, 145–46.

47. On magic at court, see Peters, *Magician*, 47–53. On divination, see Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 97. Kieckhefer also points out that John's knowledge of astronomy was based on early Christian writers as he had not read the treatises on it that were newly translated from Arabic (*Magic*, 119).

48. Jolly, 28.

49. Jolly, 21.

50. Peters, *Magician*, 112–18.

century that one sees the establishment of the learned magician with "his discipline, books, and professional—almost clerical—status."[51] The rise of court magicians brought defenses of learned magic, as well as suspicion of those who revealed a familiarity with it.[52] No less a well-respected physician than Arnald of Villanova was suspect for his extensive knowledge of magic, despite his condemnation of it.[53] Professional sorcerers played important roles in a number of French and English courts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[54] They may or may not have been involved in what Richard Kieckhefer describes as a "clerical underworld of the later Middle Ages" distinguished by necromancy, or conjuring of demons.[55]

As modern readers, we need to be especially careful not to consider medieval people naïve or simplistic because of their beliefs. With respect to empirical practices of the high Middle Ages, the assumed cultural superiority of modern methods can operate in different ways. One is to suggest that the medieval worldview is wholly primitive. According to this view, people did not have the rational faculties to separate the real from the apparent, and so they were constantly misled by events around them.[56] The underlying assumption here is that magic *only* works because of the placebo effect, that is, the belief that it will. Yet there is much to suggest in the application of empirical practice that its success is due in part to rational principles.[57] To take a specific example, though plant-derived drugs were less concentrated and less dependable than modern pharmaceuticals, their results were no less real.[58] There is considerable evidence that they often achieved

51. Peters, *Magician*, 118.

52. Peters, *Magician*, 111.

53. Peters, *Magician*, 106.

54. Peters, *Magician*, 118–25; William R. Jones, "Political Uses of Sorcery in Medieval Europe," *The Historian* 34 (1972): 670–87.

55. *Magic*, 152, 151–75.

56. This attitude is evident in Gilbert Watson's discussion of ancient medicine when he writes, "Undeniably, Pliny is often credulous, but it was a credulous age." See Watson, *Theriac and Mithridatium: A Study in Therapeutics* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1966), 19.

57. As defined by Richard Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality."

58. A common problem was that different individual plants of the same species had widely varying amounts of ingredients in them. See Linda E. Voigts and Robert P. Hudson, "A drynke þat men callen dwale to make a man to slepe whyle men kerven him: A Surgical Anesthetic from Late Medieval England," in *Health, Disease, and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. Sheila Campbell, Bert Hall, and David Klausner (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 42. James A. Duke points out that "chemical levels may vary as much as ten-fold: chemical composition varies with both the genetics and environment of the plant, and temporally and spatially in the plant." See Duke, *CRC Handbook of Medicinal Herbs* (Boca Raton, Fla.: CRC Press, 1985), v.

their goal—that is to say, they worked.[59] Did they work because of outside agents, because an individual or community believed they would, or both? We cannot say. But to suggest that outcomes brought about by expectations are different from outcomes caused by outside agents would be, in this study, to introduce a false dichotomy.[60] In most of the episodes examined here, healers achieve their success through a combination of outside agents and individual expectations.

We owe the notion of the psychological functioning of magic to late twentieth-century anthropology. For example, Mary Douglas argues that magic rituals, far from being useless, derive social and/or psychological efficacy from their ability to provide order and meaning in the victim's world.[61] Douglas cautions readers not to dismiss ritual, as some twentieth-century anthropologists did, simply because the individuals who practiced ritual also availed themselves of modern western medicine, an act the earlier anthropologists took to mean that the societies under study had little confidence in their rituals. For Douglas, using both techniques merely indicates a different understanding of the role of magical ritual and that for medicine.[62]

That an aspect of magic's success also depends on functionality, that is the *belief* that it will work, should not prevent us from seeing rational principles at work. After all, the placebo effect also plays a role in modern medicine. We should not operate a false dichotomy between belief in the efficacy of an applied substance and more ritualistic aspects of practice, since we do not approach our own medical care this way. These principles may not be acceptable to twenty-first-century readers in all cases, but they form a coherent system with a defined space in the medieval world. That this space shaded into realms considered separate today, such as magic or religion, should not lead to the dismissal of the system.

59. John M. Riddle points out that many plant-based derivatives are found in pharmaceutical guides from the early twentieth century. Synthetics have replaced them more recently, but their continued presence in the pharmacopoeia for some two thousand years suggests their efficacy. See Riddle, "The Introduction and Use of Eastern Drugs in the Early Middle Ages," *Sudhoffs Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenshaften* 49 (1965): 193, rpt. in Riddle, *Quid pro Quo: Studies in the History of Drugs* (Brattleboro: Variorum, 1992).

60. Kieckhefer insists on this point ("Specific Rationality," 827).

61. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966), 59–73, especially 71–73.

62. Douglas, 59–60.

Because of my emphasis on rationality, I have elected to refer to the women either as empirics or empirical practitioners, terms that indicate the women's reliance on observation and learning. I have avoided the term *wise woman* because of its French translation *sage femme* or *midwife*, since midwifery plays no role in the romances here. The term *cunning woman* brings with it connotations of dishonesty that can color the analysis of the women's enterprises. *Witch*, or *sorcière*, has a host of connotations, almost all negative, but the most important reason for not using it that the romances never apply this term to empirical practitioners. However, no term for these practitioners lacks bias. While *empirical* is defined as "relying on experience or observation alone often without due regard for system or theory" the first meaning for *empiric*, designated archaic, is *charlatan*, while the second is "one who relies on practical experience."[63] The archaic meaning surely would have accreted to the term in the period after the one under consideration, when faculties of medicine were well established and sought to solidify their power, as evidenced by the fourteenth-century Parisian trial of unlicensed empirics.

A second form of assumed cultural superiority exists in which a divide is posited between high culture and low culture. In this model, learned culture is rational (like us, we assume) and popular culture is motivated by the illogical and accepted by the gullible (clearly different from us, we assume).[64] Because its practitioners did not have a degree, empirical practice would fall into the category of low culture. All the evidence, however, is to the contrary. As noted above, empirical practitioners relied upon much of the same practical knowledge as did those with formal training. Although both rational and irrational elements do appear in learned sources such as herbals, such works are not full of "superstitions, charms, [or] amulets."[65] The medieval pharmacopoeia was large and extensively applied, as plants were used to make

63. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam, 1979), 370.

64. An example is seen in Charles H. Talbot's brief discussion of medieval medicine, which excludes any mention of practices by those not trained in formal settings except for charlatanism, which he calls "inevitable" because of the "credulity of the public." See Talbot, "Medicine," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lindberg, 407. The division is more clearly stated in his discussion of changes in the early modern period which "showed that even the most brilliant intellects could be swayed by popular belief" (420).

65. On rational and irrational elements, see Jerry Stannard, "Medieval Herbals and Their Development," *Clio Medica* 9, 1 (1974): 26–27. On the lack of superstitious elements, see John M. Riddle, "Pseudo-Dioscorides' *Ex herbis femininis* and Early Medieval Medical Botany," *Journal of the History of Biology* 14 (1981): 63, rpt. in Riddle, *Quid pro Quo*. Siraisi too points out that "the vast majority of remedies and therapeutic practices was entirely naturalistic" (145).

"digestives, laxatives, emetics, diuretics, diaphorics, stypics, and the like."[66] The number of medical treatises in the vernacular suggests that some who practiced read a vernacular language,[67] though this skill was not indispensable in a culture with strong oral traditions still in place. It was not until the fourteenth century that literacy became a formal requirement of practice.[68] Gender plays an important role in learned traditions because almost no women had an opportunity to learn Latin; they would thus automatically occupy a lower position. For example, in the 1322 trial of Jacqueline Félicie for unlicensed medical practice, one of the reasons she was said to be incapable of practicing was that she could not read, presumably Latin.[69] Medical recipes in both Latin and vernacular languages exist from the early Middle Ages, as do herbals.[70] But manuscripts, be they vernacular or learned, were probably not the major route of transmission of plant lore, given that there is a lack of manuscript "copies of smaller format, cheaply produced or containing only one of the individual treatises."[71] Moreover, many herbals lacked illustrations, or included very stylized ones.[72] Oral transmission is far more likely.[73] Monica H. Green argues that women specifically had little contact with medical writing but likely maintained an oral body of healing knowledge.[74] Over four hundred simples, or preparations from an individual plant, were known in the Middle Ages.[75] These were applied by all types of practitioners in all classes.[76] Historians have traced the movement of such

66. Albert S. Lyons and R. Joseph Petrucelli, *Medicine: An Illustrated History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1978), 355.

67. These may have been educated men, however. See Linda Ehrsam Voigts, "What's the Word? Bilingualism in Late-Medieval England," *Speculum* 71 (1996): 813–26.

68. Monica H. Green, "The Possibilities of Literacy and the Limits of Reading: Women and the Gendering of Medical Literacy," in *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West,* 44.

69. Kibre, 8.

70. For medical recipes, see Riddle, "Introduction and Use of Eastern Drugs," 185. A thirteenth-century example in Old French can be found in Tony Hunt, "Recettes médicales en vers français," *Romania* 106 (1985): 57–83. On herbals, see Peter Murray Jones, *Medieval Medicine in Illuminated Manuscripts*, rev. ed. (London: British Library and Centro Tibaldi, 1998), 62–67.

71. Minta Collins, *Medieval Herbals: The Illustrative Traditions* (Toronto: British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2000), 308.

72. On the lack of illustrations, see Stannard, "Medieval Herbals," 64; P. Jones, 61; Collins disputes this point, 25. On stylized illustrations, see P. Jones, 61, 65.

73. Stannard, "Medieval Herbalism," 12; Green, "Possibilities of Literacy," 7.

74. "Possibilities of Literacy," 43, 47. Because we have collections of medical recipes written by women from the early modern period, Green argues for a "'submerged' oral tradition" from the Middle Ages (47).

75. Stannard, "Medieval Herbalism," 10.

76. Stannard, "Medieval Herbalism," 10–11.

medical lore in manuscripts from antiquity through the Middle Ages, but ancient medical works and medieval recipes have also been found in verse, suggesting that oral transmission played an important role.[77] This ancient medical lore constituted much of the medieval pharmacopoeia, though some additions were made during the Middle Ages.[78] Some of these remedies are still in use today, such as chamomile for an upset stomach; such knowledge does not change much over time, although at points information was added.[79] The worldwide survival of herbal lore in medicine into the twentieth century is well documented.[80]

John Scarborough argues that one source for classical medical lore was popular wisdom obtained through empirical observation.[81] However, not all ancient medical writers looked upon folk knowledge as an acceptable source of information. Attitudes ranging from an enthusiastic reception in Theophrastus to disdain in the Hippocratic sources can be found.[82] The ancients display conflicting attitudes towards folk medicine, just as medieval and modern people do. Despite the dismissal of folkways in the Hippocratic works, John Riddle notes that "there is no serious challenge to the assertion that the writers of these nascently scientific works founded a rational medicine different from folkish ways."[83]

The Marvelous

With the exception of the final work, *Amadas et Ydoine*, which I analyze as a counterpoint to the earlier ones, the women's tasks under consideration have no relation to the fantastic or marvelous. Instead they can be traced to

77. On the movement of medical lore, see Stannard, "Magiferous Plants," 35–36. John Scarborough discusses ancient medical works in "Adaptation of Folk Medicines in the Formal Materia Medica of Classical Antiquity," in *Folklore and Folk Medicines,* ed. Scarborough, 24. For medieval recipes, see Hunt, "Recettes médicales."

78. Riddle, "Introduction and Use of Eastern Drugs," 190–91.

79. For a discussion of the lack of change over time, see Stannard, "Medieval Herbalism," 15–16. On the addition of information, see, for instance, Riddle, "Pseudo-Dioscorides' *Ex herbis femininis*."

80. See John Scarborough's introduction to *Folklore and Folk Medicines* and the collection as a whole.

81. "Adaptation of Folk Medicines." This influence can be seen, for example, in the works of Dioscorides (25) and Galen (26).

82. John M. Riddle, "Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine: Recognition of Drugs in Classical Antiquity," in *Folklore and Folk Medicines,* ed. Scarborough, rpt. in Riddle, *Quid pro Quo*, 39, 35.

83. "Folk Tradition," 33.

knowledge, practices, and belief systems that informed medieval empirical practice. The episodes under analysis here include no fairies, magic rings, or amulets, no shapeshifting or unexplained appearances or disappearances. More importantly, the romances do not apply the term *merveille* to any aspect of the phenomena. Analysis of these activities in terms of the marvelous fails to recognize the quotidian role of empirical practice in the high Middle Ages and casts the women's knowledge as alien and therefore potentially dangerous.[84]

While theoreticians of the marvelous recognize that it is more than a simple equivalent to the supernatural,[85] the term muddies the waters. This can be seen, for example, in Edmund Farel's formulation that the work of doctors, diviners, and witches in medieval texts depends on "talents surnaturels."[86] Writers on the marvelous caution that it includes a whole range of phenomena, "a collection more than a category."[87] After thirty pages of discussion of its various associations, Dubost offers only that it is a place where "a norm is transgressed."[88] Douglas Kelly also notes the wide variety of events labeled marvelous whose only common ground may be the lack of an explanation: any extremely unusual event qualifies.[89] This interpretation of the marvelous is borne out in the works under consideration here. The term appears in these romances not to qualify healers or love potions, but, for example, to describe the fact that Fenice, having received a brutal beating and torture from the Salernitan physicians, did not die from their mistreatment. In addition, Dubost calls

84. Thus Daniel Poirion's formulation of the marvelous as the site where western medieval culture encountered other cultures, be they Celtic, Oriental, or Germanic, serves little here. *Le Merveilleux dans la littérature française du Moyen Age*, Collection Que sais-je? (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982), 6.

85. Francis Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques de la littérature narrative médiévale (XIIe–XIIIe siècles): L'Autre, l'ailleurs, l'autrefois* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1991), 79.

86. "Supernatural talents," 313. Faral never supplies a definition of the *merveilleux*, but his catalogue of phenomena suggests that for him it is the unusual, whether for supernatural reasons, uniqueness, or beauty (308–76). However, the author's imagination plays a crucial role in enhancing the marvelous person, object, animal, etc. (378).

87. Jacques Le Goff, *L'Imaginaire médiéval: Essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 18. Le Goff's speculative essay concentrates more on the Church's attempts to categorize events perceived as marvelous and so deals little with romance. Thus for Le Goff, the marvelous includes those phenomena that do not align with Christian ideology (20).

88. Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques,* 61–91; "une norme se trouve transgressée," 91.

89. Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 150–54.

for a distinction between the marvelous and the fantastic.[90] For him, the fantastic is comprised of elements connoting alterity that give rise to fear and thus are dependent upon the reaction of the protagonist.[91] Dubost offers a reading of *Cligés* and *Amadas and Ydoine* that I will take up in the respective chapters.

Marriage

Aristocratic marriages of the high Middle Ages fit the model of an exchange between men, outlined by Claude Lévi-Strauss in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* in which women are among the objects of exchange.[92] Gayle Rubin argues that women accrue no symbolic power in this arrangement because power comes from men entering into the gift exchange with other men.[93] Rubin notes that within this system some societies allow women very little say in the choice of partner while in others women have considerable choice.[94] Georges Duby posits tension between the aristocratic model of marriage and the ecclesiastical model in twelfth-century northern France; in the former the family sought to strengthen its position through marriages, while the latter required the consent of those to be married. Yet Duby notes that the twelfth century still saw plenty of marriages concluded according to the aristocratic principles, that is, without consent.[95] Claudia Opitz argues that the family's role in spouse selection for both aristocratic men and women and their servants constitutes "an organizing principle" of these families; therefore this aspect of medieval marriage cannot be considered oppressive.[96] On the other hand, she does find that arranged marriages oppress women by

90. Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques,* 9.

91. Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques,* 222–23.

92. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, rev. ed., trans. James Harle Bell and John Richard von Sturmer, ed. Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon, 1969), 115–16.

93. Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reitner (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 175. Rubin specifies that "the exchange of women does not necessarily imply that women are objectified, in the modern sense, since objects in the primitive world are imbued with highly personal qualities" (174).

94. Rubin, 206. Lévi-Strauss also argues that the exchange takes place between men even when the girl's feelings are taken into consideration (115).

95. Georges Duby, *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Twelfth-Century France*, trans. Elborg Foster (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 1–22.

96. Claudia Opitz, "Life in the Late Middle Ages," in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 2, *Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1992), 273.

limiting their lives to service for the family, by controlling their bodies, and by treating them as outsiders.[97] Opitz describes resistance through women's appeals to ecclesiastical courts for annulments and by sequestering themselves in convents.[98] I will show that romance offers another possibility: women who take action that gives them choice in marriage. When speaking of the role of courtly literature, Duby shows a reductivism that denies the literature's complexity, as for example, when he states, "All these texts were written to entertain men, more precisely men of war, knights—young knights."[99] Such a simplistic view of the listening audience has been called into question by critics such as Roberta Krueger and E. Jane Burns.[100]

Each of the romances dramatizes a slightly different response to the problem that the standard reason for aristocratic marriage, dynastic advancement, pays no heed to the woman's feelings or desires. All of the romances in this study present a solution (though not always a successful one) to the problem of arranged marriage between partners who do not love each other. Women attempt to make the marriage more acceptable, as in the case of Iseut's marriage to King Mark, or to escape it entirely so the woman can marry the man she loves, as in the cases of Fenice and Ydoine. The *Roman de Silence* makes the link between forced marriage and empirical practice less explicit, since there is no obstacle to the link between Cador and Euphemie. As we shall see, however, the work nevertheless comments on marriage politics in the depiction of three unions. Empirical practice appears in these works not merely coincidentally, but as leverage in situations brought about by forced marriage. It offers women a means of influence in situations where they have no authority where "power" is that which is "not necessarily recognized" and "authority is recognized and legitimated power."[101]

97. Opitz, 273. An example can be seen in *Erec et Enide*, about whose marriage politics Laurie Finke asserts, "women were pawns in the patrilinear culture of twelfth-century France." See Finke, "Towards a Cultural Poetics of the Romance," *Genre* 22 (1989): 115.

98. Opitz, 273.

99. Georges Duby, "The Courtly Model," in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 2, *Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Klapisch-Zuber, 254.

100. Roberta Krueger, *Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender in Old French Verse Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and E. Jane Burns, *Bodytalk: When Women Speak in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

101. This distinction is applied by Peggy Sanday, "Female Status in the Public Domain," in *Women, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 190.

Courtly Love

In discussions of love in literary works of this period, the term most often used is *courtly love*; it is also standard to refer to the male as the lover and the female as the beloved. Few critical analyses from the nineteenth-century beginnings of medieval studies still attract as much attention as Gaston Paris's 1883 analysis of *Lancelot du Lac* in which he defines *amour courtois*, or "courtly love."[102] Although the vast majority of the article concerns the argument that Chrétien's *Lancelot* preceded the prose *Lancelot*, modern readers have seized upon the end portion in which Paris defines courtly love as illegitimate and furtive, shaped by Lancelot's fear that Guinevere will withdraw affection from him, and therefore unequal as evidenced by Guinevere's haughty and capricious behavior and by Lancelot's willingness to do anything Guinevere commands to keep her love. Paris concludes that this love is an art and follows a code such as those for chivalry or courtesy.[103] Paris distinguishes this love from that of Tristan and Iseut, which is "sauvage, indomptable, et passionné" and has no conventions of chivalric love.[104] For Paris, the love of Tristan and Iseut lacks the subtleties and refinements of that between Lancelot and Guinevere. While Paris maintains that the love of Lancelot is an entirely new phenomenon, he does allow for influences such as the works of Ovid, troubadour lyric from the south of France and the work of Andreas Capellanus.[105] For Paris, the novelty lay in the code, the artifice and the conventions of love.

In contrast, for C. S. Lewis the novelty resided in the *feelings* of courtly love which, he argued, were previously unknown to humankind.[106] While their complete novelty for all of human history has been thoroughly disproved, many critics accept that love as depicted in the lyric poetry of southern France (and the works it subsequently influenced) represents a departure from love as represented in antique literary works.[107] Because for Lewis

102. Gaston Paris, "Études sur les romans de la Table Ronde: Lancelot du Lac," *Romania* 12 (1883): 449–534. For an overview on the scholarship on courtly love, see E. Jane Burns, "Courtly Love: Who Needs It?" *Signs* 27, 1 (2001): 23–57.

103. Paris, 518–19.

104. "Savage, indomitable, and passionate," 521.

105. Paris, 519, 521–22, 524.

106. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 11.

107. Peter Dronke shows examples of loving sentiments from the world over in *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), xvii, 1–56. On the unique qualities of courtly love, see Roger Boase, *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love: A Critical Study of European Scholarship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), 1.

adultery is the sine qua non of courtly love, this critic opines that the new feeling arose as a reaction to the utilitarian marriages of the period and the Church's staunch position against passion even in marriage.[108]

While acknowledging that lyric poetry from southern France contributes to romance, Jean Frappier argues for a distinction between the courtly love portrayed in the troubadour lyric of southern France and that of the courtly romance composed later in northern France.[109] For Frappier, the concept of courtly love in romance owes more to Ovid than the troubadours. The influence of the southern lyric can be seen most clearly in the *Tristan* of Thomas d'Angleterre and in Chrétien's *Lancelot*; other works, however, show courtly love as compatible with marriage—that is to say, it harmonizes with social and moral institutions.[110] In addition, the romances link their versions of courtly love to chivalry.[111] Frappier argues that little-noticed passages in the Anglo-norman *Historium Regnum Britanniae* of Geoffroy of Monmouth and the *Brut* of Wace prepare the way for this union.[112] Insistence on the role of fairies inspired Frappier to advance another version of courtly love, Arthurian love, which although similar to the forms of courtly love in other works includes fairies and enchantment.[113]

Despite an attempt to abolish the term *courtly love* by scholars who have seen it as a critical fallacy of Gaston Paris with no basis in reality, Frappier maintains that the term has validity and that it exists in different forms.[114] For Frappier, Gaston Paris's argument serves very well to show how the love

108. Lewis, 12–14. According to Lewis, the other terms were humility, courtesy, and religion of love, 12. Duby's aristocratic model of marriage permits only the eldest son to marry, which leaves many young men in a family unable to marry. According to Duby, the resulting surplus of young men who could not marry helped create the social conditions for courtly love (*Medieval Marriage*, 13). Thus Duby too focuses on the potentially adulterous nature of such love (for he maintains that the relationships were not consummated, 14).

109. Jean Frappier, "Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XIIe siècle," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 2 (1959): 135–56.

110. Frappier, "Vues sur les conceptions," 144–45, 154. Thus it is in opposition to theologians who saw even passionate love in marriage as sinful.

111. Frappier, "Vues sur les conceptions," 145.

112. Frappier, "Vues sur les conceptions," 154–55.

113. Frappier, "Le Concept de l'amour dans les romans arthuriens: Communication faite le 8 août 1969 au neuvième congrès," *Bulletin bibliographique de la société internationale arthurienne* 22 (1970): 119–36.

114. For arguments to abandon the term, see John F. Benton, "Clio and Venus: An Historical View of Medieval Love," in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F. X. Newman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1967), and D. W. Robertson, "The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts," in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. Newman. In response, Jean Frappier argues to keep it. See "Sur un procès fait à l'amour courtois," *Romania* 93 (1972): 192.

of troubadour lyric could be realized in romance, though Frappier admits that certain elements of Paris's definition could be reworked. Frappier sees too great an emphasis on the code or system of behavior, and notes that the concept, in the hands of northern romance authors such as Chrétien, could be found between a lover and a beloved who eventually marry each other (with the exception of his *Lancelot*).[115] Thus for Frappier the term does not apply only to adulterous relationships.[116] The more recent consensus, then, leans toward more interest in the phenomenon of medieval love and less concern with the definition, since courtly love points out problems concerning the psychology and ethics of love and remains central to the depiction of love in western literature.[117]

So pervasive a notion concerning women's roles and status has not gone without scrutiny. One historian hypothesizes that the increased status attributed to women in courtly love may have resulted in the development of the witch image.[118] E. William Monter counters this supposition by pointing out that witchcraft fully develops much later, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[119] The argument that women's position in courtly love increased their status has been countered by descriptions of a loss of women's political and juridical status in the twelfth century.[120] Literary critics have further argued that the adoration of the woman is not so transparent.[121] R. Howard Bloch has pushed this notion even further, arguing that misogyny of the antique and medieval Church fathers is the flip side of the coin of the idealization of the woman in courtly love, because both

115. Frappier, "Sur un procès fait," 169–71.

116. Frappier, "Sur un procès fait," 190.

117. For courtly love's ability to highlight social questions, see Eugene Vinaver, "Landmarks in Arthurian Romance," in *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature*, ed. Smith and Snow, 18. On the centrality of love in this literature, see William Calin, "Defense and Illustration of *Fin'Amor:* Some Polemical Comments on the Robertsonian Approach," in *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature*, ed. Smith and Snow, 45–46.

118. Russell, 284.

119. "The Pedestal and the Stake: Courtly Love and Witchcraft," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 119–36.

120. Joan Kelly-Gadol argues for an increase in women's status from courtly love in "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible,* ed. Bridenthal and Koonz, 137–64. Susan Stuard points out women's losses in this period in "The Dominion of Gender: Women's Fortunes in the High Middle Ages," in *Becoming Visible*, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 153–72.

121. For troubadour lyric, see E. Jane Burns, "The Man Behind the Lady in Troubadour Lyric," *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 254–70. For romance, see Christiane Marchello-Nizia, "Amour, mariage, parenté: Amour courtois, société masculine et figures de pouvoir," *Annales* 36 (1981): 969–82.

discourses essentialize women, a move that limits their ability to have an active role in the world, in history.[122] Bloch theorizes that the relatively high juridical and social status of women in roughly eleventh- and twelfth-century southern France, especially the ability to dispose of property, led to the placement of women on a pedestal from which they were forbidden to descend in order to take part in politics and economics.[123] Although Bloch presents a compelling argument, it is ultimately unconvincing. While I do not disagree that many of the women Bloch analyzes in lyric and *lai* are idealized, I believe that women in romance, where characters have more breadth and depth, often escape such idealization and offer a corrective to the unidimensional adored woman. When Laurie Finke considers courtly love as presented in a number of troubadour poems, romances, and lais, she states that "no single model can account for its variety."[124] Romance often presents complex female characters who may be loved by a man but who also display moments of weakness and uncertainty, of desire on their own part, or the capacity to work with a male protagonist to realize a common goal. The shared goal of male and female protagonists distinguishes these works from others. To be sure, these female protagonists are at odds with another male in the story, usually one who wields considerable power in the system. The result of the harmony of desires between a man and a woman partially legitimizes the woman's desire, but never entirely so, for at every turn someone is waiting to explain how women are always contrary to men. Yet, as Roberta Krueger points out, while romance simultaneously appropriates women, it also challenges "women readers to question and resist their narrative appropriation."[125]

More than any other factor, the male and female protagonists' ability to work together to achieve a common goal serves to individualize and humanize female characters who are nonetheless the beloved. To suggest that all women in medieval literature are idealized figures who frustrate men's desire is to use too broad a brush to paint them. Romances offer a means to consider women in the context of medieval lives. Tracy Adams advances a view of the genre that complements my own when she argues that romance propounds a notion that the Church would have never been

122. R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), especially chapter 6, 141–64.

123. Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny*, especially chapter 7, 165–97.

124. Finke, "Sexuality," 358.

125. Krueger, 66.

able to espouse—that sexual desire integrated into society via marriage increases the good in the marriage.[126] The romances under consideration in this study offer a corrective to what Regina Psaki has termed "the unanimous misogyny which medieval studies had posited for its period."[127]

In agreement with Paris and Frappier, critics have long recognized the influence of Ovid on the representation of love in the European Middle Ages.[128] Ovidian elements that appear in later works make a long list. The God of Love, or Cupid, acts by shooting the victim with an arrow, causing pain.[129] Love's darts contain a poison that exacerbates the pain.[130] Objects that bring about the realization of love may be metaphorized into a dart, as for example, a love letter described as "a far-thrown dart."[131] Love results in the well-known symptoms of lovesickness such as paleness, blushing, inability to sleep or eat, and languor.[132] According to Ovid, conventional medicine such as herbs cannot heal Love's wound—only Love can.[133] For those who do not wish to answer Love's wound with Love's cure, the poet composed *Remedia Amoris* to provide instruction on how to escape from Love.[134] The healing here is also metaphorical, but it is soothing and a relief; Ovid therefore invokes Phoebus, the inventor of the healing art, at the beginning of the *Remedia*.[135] Ovid counsels those who wish to avoid Love either to drink nothing or a lot,

126. Tracy Adams, *Violent Passions: Managing Love in the Old French Verse Romance* (New York: Palgrave, 2005).

127. See her introduction to Heldris de Cornuälle, *Le Roman de Silence* (New York: Garland, 1991), xvi.

128. Edmond Faral shows the extent of this debt. See Faral, *Recherches sur les sources latines des contes et romans courtois du Moyen Age* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1913), 125–54, but as Erich Auerbach points out, Faral does not discuss the implications of his observations. See Auerbach, *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon, 1965), 210. For a discussion of the dilemma posed by Ovid's contradictory *Ars* and *Remedia*, see Peter L. Allen's *The Art of Love: Amatory Fiction from Ovid to the Romance of the Rose* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 15–37.

129. Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, in *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*, trans. J. H. Mozley, 2nd ed., rev. G. P. Gould, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), I, 165–70, and I, 261; Ovid, *Heroides, Amores*, trans. Grant Showerman, 2nd ed., rev. G. P. Gould, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), VIII, 38. All references for Ovid's work give the book and verse number.

130. *The Art of Love*, II, 520.

131. *Heroides*, XXI, 212.

132. *Heroides*, XI, 27–30, XXI, 13.

133. *Heroides*, V, 150 and XXI, 14.

134. *Remedia Amoris*, in Ovid, *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*, trans. Mozley, I, 41–43.

135. *Remedia Amoris*, I, 75–76.

for he avows that wine can lead to love.[136] The poet/narrator also notes that some avail themselves of magic, most often Thessalian herbs, but adds that "Medean herbs will not keep love alive."[137] Although Medea is charged with inciting Jason's love through her magic, Medea herself laments the fact that even though she uses magic to bring about other changes, she is powerless to apply it to rid her love for Jason.[138] In the *Remedia*, the poet/narrator again notes that one can resort to magic in an attempt to end love; his work, however, will offer other ways to alleviate the problem. He notes that despite the successes of Medea and Circe in other realms, they were unable to use magic to divert their feelings of love.[139] In Ovid's *Amores*, *Heroides*, *Ars amatoria*, and *Remedia amoris*, Cupid both wounds the lover with an arrow and heals the wound because standard medicine offers no help. Both the pain and the healing of love are metaphorized. In the *Metamorphoses*, love is metaphorized either as fire or as Cupid's arrow. In book I, Apollo claims,

> The art of medicine I gave the world
> And all men call me 'healer'; I possess
> The power of every herb. Alas! that love
> No herb can cure, that skills which help afford
> To all mankind fail now to help their lord!"
>
> (I, 520–524)[140]

Thus we see that Ovidian lovesickness causes real symptoms that to the uninitiated are easily confused with other illnesses. While outside factors, such as wine, can influence love, Ovid considers love magic dangerous and possibly inefficacious.

The elements that Erich Auerbach catalogues as the casuistry of love—"the arrow of love . . . its effect . . . the long soliloquy with its various presentation of the problem, the self-reproach, accusations, lamentations, the night made sleepless by the torments of love, and so on"[141]—play some role in

136. On how much to drink, see *Remedia Amoris*, I, 809–810. The connection between love and wine is made in *Ars Amatoria*, I, 231–34 and *Heroides*, I, 805.

137. *Ars Amatoria*, II, 101. See also *Ars Amatoria*, II, 415–16.

138. On Medea and Jason, see *Heroides*, VI, 83–84. Medea's self-reproach is found in *Heroides*, XII, 164–66.

139. *Remedia*, I, 261–62; I, 263–64.

140. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. D. Melville, intro. E. J. Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). All quotations from the *Metamorphoses* from this edition. Numbers given from this work refer to pages.

141. Auerbach, 214.

the depiction of love in all the romances under consideration. These aspects appear in the *Tristan* of Thomas d'Angleterre, increase in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, and play a central role in the lovers coming to consciousness of their love in the *Roman de Silence*, *Cligés*, and *Amadas et Ydoine*. But, as I will show, new elements in the representation of love enter courtly literature at the moment when empirical practitioners take on roles in these works. In other words, the representation of love in each of these five works depends, in one way or another and each slightly different from the others, on the inclusion of the knowledge and skills of empirical practitioners. At the same time that the narratives depict empirics who heal and administer drugs with powerful effects, the narratives build upon those descriptions to add a rich, new layer to the construction of love that arises from the incorporation of empirical practice. As we have seen, Ovid describes the inability of traditional medicine to heal love's pain, but does not go as far as to say that the lover should become the doctor, a motif that appears repeatedly in medieval texts, first in troubadour lyric.[142] I will argue that the motif achieves its fullest expression and therefore the potential to shape the conception of love when empirical practice also plays a role. Finally, while the romances make considerable use of Ovidian images of the God of love and of lovesickness, Ovid's approach to love as outlined in the *Ars* and the *Remedia* differs from that of romance in one crucial aspect: as Peter L. Allen and others have argued, in the Ovidian treatises love is a game that should not be taken too seriously.[143] More to the point, the same thing can be said of Ovid that Daniel Eisenberg has said of the fourteenth-century *Libro de buen amor* (*Book of Good Love*): "The topic … is sex.… The *Libro de buen amor* teaches men how to seduce women, how to gain access to their beds, and how to identify the most desirable candidates."[144] In contrast, the romances I analyze depict love as an earnestly desired and potentially permanent bond that motivates life's biggest decisions. Let us now begin with an analysis of love, medicine, and magic in *Cligés*.

142. Eliza Miruna Ghil, "Imagery and Vocabulary," in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, ed. F. R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 463–64.

143. *Art of Love*, 8, 19, 34. See also Richard Burkard, *The Archpriest of Hita and the Imitators of Ovid: A Study in the Ovidian Background of the* Libro de buen amor (Newark, Del.: Juan de la Cuesta, 1995), 65.

144. Daniel Eisenberg, "Juan Ruiz's Heterosexual 'Good Love,'" in *Queer Iberia: Sexualities, Cultures, and Crossings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance*, ed. Josiah Blackmore and Gregory S. Hutcheson (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 250.

2

ON ARTIFICE AND REALISM
THESSALA IN CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES'S *CLIGÉS*

CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES'S *CLIGÉS* has a reputation for raising more questions than it answers, in part because it contrasts so sharply with the author's other works. The central portion of the narrative recounts the love of Cligés and Fenice and the work of Fenice's handmaiden, Thessala, whose efforts enable the couple to realize their dream of marrying each other. Thessala's engagement in both healing and love magic makes an ideal place to open our inquiry. Although *Cligés* was composed after the earliest version of the Tristan legend examined in the following chapters, *Cligés* functions as a better starting point since the entire manuscript is extant, unlike the versions of the *Roman de Tristan* whose fragmentary status presents challenges best approached with a clearer understanding of empirical practice in place.

Cligés opens by recounting the meeting and marriage of Cligés's parents, Alexandre and Soredamors, whose union quickly produces the child Cligés, heir to the throne of the Byzantine Empire. As a young man, Alexandre had journeyed to Arthur's court and was reported to have perished on his return. His brother, Alis, was crowned emperor and when Alexandre arrived home, they agreed to share power and that Alis would not marry. Alis breaks this promise, however, and decides to take a wife. An arranged marriage is proposed with Fenice, a German princess. Cligés forms part of the delegation sent to Germany to bring Fenice to Byzantium. At their first meeting, Cligés and Fenice fall in love. The main body of the romance relates the story of Fenice's escape from her marriage to Alis in order to be with Cligés. Fenice accomplishes this feat through the constant help of her nurse, Thessala.

Understanding Thessala's role is crucial for a reading of *Cligés,* but for many critics she creates a stumbling block. Through Thessala, the poet/narrator makes a very strong statement concerning women as empirical practitioners, both by showing her vast knowledge and by pitting her in a battle of wits against the foremost recognized medical authorities of the

day: three doctors from Salerno, whose medical knowledge is revealed to be sadly lacking. Even when critics recognize that Thessala's activities fall within the realm of those practiced and accepted at the time, they display a remarkable inability to see her as skilled and knowledgeable. This blind spot contributes further to a misunderstanding of empirical practice and Thessala's centrality to *Cligés.*

Most criticism of the romance falls into one of two approaches. On the one hand, critics have discussed *Cligés*'s relationship to other texts and to literature itself. According to these views, Chrétien deploys other texts in highly self-conscious moves to comment on romance itself: he uses allusions to heighten the literary artifice of *Cligés* in order to reveal the capabilities of the genre; he creates a *conjointure* of earlier elements from several works (Ovid, the *Roman d'Enéas*, the *Roman de Tristan*, the *Roman de Troie*) that, combined with new aspects, breaks new ground in the romance form and thereby celebrates *clergie*; or he produces a meditation on the art of romance, almost a "meta-roman" whose key is in the character Jean.[1] Studies have located influences in Ovid, folk motifs, the romances of antiquity, and Wace's *Brut*, while others have commented on the relationship to *Tristan*, or other literary phenomena.[2] Critics in this vein often find little if any relationship between *Cligés* and lived reality.

1. On literary artifice, see Karl D. Uitti, *Story, Myth, and Celebration in Old French Narrative Poetry, 1050–1200* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 171. On *conjointure*, see Michelle A. Freeman, *The Poetics of* Translatio Studii *and* Conjointure: *Chrétien de Troyes's* Cligés (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1979), 17–18. For the art of romance, see Per Nykrog, *Chrétien de Troyes: Romancier discutable* (Geneva: Droz, 1996), 85–86.

2. For Ovid, see Foster E. Guyer, "The Influence of Ovid on Crestien de Troyes," parts 1 and 2, *The Romanic Review* 12 (April–June 1921): 97–134; (July–September 1921): 216–47. Guyer accuses Chrétien of "pilfering literary figures" from Ovid (127). See also Faral, 315–17, and R. W. Hanning, "Courtly Contexts for Urban *Cultus:* Responses to Ovid in Chrétien's *Cligés* and Marie's *Guigemar*," *Symposium* 25, 1 (1981): 34–56. Folk motifs are discussed in Gaston Paris, "*Cligés,*" in *Mélanges de littérature française du Moyen Age*, ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1910), 313–26.

For the antique romances, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, who describes *Cligés*'s relationship to the *Roman de Thèbes* and the *Roman d'Enéas* in "Chrétien de Troyes as a Reader of the *Romans Antiques*," *Philological Quarterly* 64, 3 (1985): 398–405. Alexandre Micha questions many of the earlier findings concerning the *Roman d'Enéas* in "*Enéas* et *Cligés*," in *Mélanges de philologie romane et de littérature médiévale offerts à Ernest Hoepffner* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1974), 237–43. Helen C. R. Laurie also treats Chrétien's debt to antique romances. See Laurie, *Two Studies in Chrétien de Troyes* (Geneva: Droz, 1972), 57–138. Paris also mentions this ("Cligés," 277–78). A discussion of Wace is found in Margaret Pelan, *L'influence du* Brut *de Wace sur les romanciers français de son temps* (Paris: Droz, 1931), 41–53.

The relationship to the Tristan material is summarized in Maddox, "Critical Trends," 731–33. See also Renée L. Curtis, "The Validity of Fenice's Criticism of Tristan and Iseut in Chrétien's

On the other hand, a different group of scholars points out similarities to a host of contemporary events that could have inspired Chrétien's tale and upon which Chrétien provides social commentary. These include legal and ecclesiastical debates over consent in marriage, dynastic relations and attempts to contract a marriage between the daughter of Byzantium's Manuel Comnenos and a son of Frederick Barbarossa in the 1170s, riots by Byzantine women in 1042 and 1081, and rivalry between Manuel Comnenos and the Sultan of Iconium.[3] Based on similarities between the plot and historical events, Anthime Fourrier has classified *Cligés* and several other romances of the period as *roman-miroir* in contrast to *roman-évasion*.[4]

A few more recent critics describe the complex relationship between reality and literary representation, including the contribution of intertextuality to the representation of reality, the poetics of narrative, critics' use

---

Cligés," *Bibliographical Bulletin of the International Arthurian Society* 41 (1989): 293–300; Freeman, *Poetics*, 49; Joan Tasker Grimbert, "On Fenice's Vain Attempts to Revise a Romantic Archetype and Chrétien's Fabled Hostility to the Tristan Legend," in *Reassessing the Heroine in Medieval French Literature*, ed. Kathy M. Krause (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 87–106; Nykrog, 82; Uitti, *Story, Myth, and Celebration*, 167; and Nolan, 145.

The other literary phenomena are discussed in several articles. Donald Maddox describes an "intertextuality of crisis" brought about by awakenings or specular encounters. See Maddox, *Fictions of Identity in Medieval France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 99, but his reading focuses on Alis and Cligés rather than Fenice or Thessala. Maddox also describes *Cligés*'s intertextual relationship in terms of Chrétien's representation of King Arthur and his reign. See Maddox, *The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 8–14. Barbara N. Sargent-Baur reads *Cligés* as an intertext for *Jehan et Blonde*, "Rewriting *Cligés*," in *"De sens rassis": Essays in Honor of Rupert T. Pickens*, ed. Keith Busby, Bernard Guidot, and Logan E. Whalen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 577–88. Norris J. Lacy focuses on the internal narrative structure, describing it as "the opposition of concealment and revelation." See Lacy, *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes: An Essay on Narrative Art* (Liège: E. J. Brill, 1980), 82, while Alexandre Micha finds originality in the work's episodes of ruse and mystification in "Cligés ou les folles journées," in *Marche romane: Mélanges de philologie et de littératures romanes offerts à Jeanne Wathelet-Willem* (Liège: Cahiers de l'A.R.U.Lg., 1978): 447–54.

3. David Shirt covers legal and ecclesiastical debates in "*Cligés:* A Twelfth-Century Matrimonial Casebook?" *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 18, 1 (1982): 75–89. For dynastic marriage, see Anthime Fourrier, *Le Courant réaliste dans le roman courtois en France au Moyen Age: Les Débuts (XIIe siècle)* (Paris: Nizet, 1960), 167–68, and Karl D. Uitti, "Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés:* Romance *Translatio* and History," in *Conjunctures*, ed. Busby and Lacy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 555–56. Riots are discussed in Krijnie Ciggaar, "Encore une fois Chrétien de Troyes et la 'matière Byzantine': La Révolution des femmes au palais de Constantinople," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale: Xe-XIIe siècles* 38, 3 (July–September 1995): 269. On the rivalry, see Henry and Renée Kahane, "L'Enigme du nom Cligés," *Romania* 72 (1961): 113–21.

4. Fourrier, 12–15. Fourrier sees this as a reaction against the preponderance of the Celtic marvelous (491).

of conflicting definitions of realism, and the confrontation of Greek and Latin Christendom that expresses *translatio* in the romance form.[5]

Yet even when critics are willing to concede a role for reality in the romance,[6] the character of Thessala creates problems. Although Thessala is responsible in large part for statements such as "Things are rarely what they seem in *Cligés*,"[7] I contend that Donald Maddox's assertion that "The magic of Thessala, the feigned death of Fenice, and the molten lead of the physicians all coexist within a text otherwise laden with realia of every sort" overstates the degree to which Thessala strains plausibility in Chrétien's least characteristic romance.[8] On the contrary, Thessala offers a highly realistic depiction of an empirical healer and magical practitioner of the later twelfth century whose function is to create illusions. She thus incarnates the tension between artifice and realism in *Cligés*, demonstrating that neither fully describes the complexity of the romance.

Thessala's role has been misunderstood for two distinct reasons. First, the narrator's portrayal of her depends on two very different sources: there are allusions to sorceresses from antique works and contemporary texts inspired by antique works that function to put Fenice at ease, and there are also Thessala's specific actions in the work that accurately represent contemporary practice. Secondly, the degree of realism she displays cannot be clearly

5. On intertextuality, see Lucie Polak, *Chrétien de Troyes:* Cligés, Critical Guides to French Texts (London: Grant and Cutler, 1982). For the poetics of narrative, see Donald Maddox, "Pseudo-Historical Discourse in Fiction: *Cligés*," in *Essays in Early French Literature Presented to Barbara M. Craig*, ed. Norris J. Lacy and Jerry C. Nash (York, S.C.: French Literature Publications, 1982), 13. Realism is discussed by David Shirt, who distinguishes between realism that refers to extra-literary events that may have influenced Chrétien and the realism opposed to illusion in the internal world of the romance. See Shirt, "*Cligès:* Realism in Romance," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 13 (1977): 368. According to Shirt, this latter form of realism is created in part from representations of feudal relationships in Monmouth and Wace (374). For *translatio*, see Sharon Kinoshita, "The Poetics of *Translatio:* French-Byzantine Relations in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés,*" *Exemplaria* 8, 2 (1996): 315–54.

6. Joseph J. Duggan proposes to read Chrétien's romances by providing more context for late twelfth-century social and cultural institutions. See Duggan, *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), ix. The present study is complementary, because it provides background in medieval medicine and magic as a means to better understand Thessala's activities, which Duggan classifies simply as Mediterranean magic (220).

7. Peter Haidu, *Aesthetic Distance in Chrétien de Troyes: Irony and Comedy in* Cligés *and* Perceval (Geneva: Droz, 1968), 82.

8. "Pseudo-Historical Discourse," 12. Freeman understands Thessala to "poeticize" (*Poetics*, 168) the persona of the poet-narrator (*Poetics*, 91–139), an assessment with which I agree. However, as I shall demonstrate, Thessala should also be read on her own terms. Freeman's reading of the prologue of *Cligés* would seem to deny this possibility to the work, since she argues that *Cligés* reflects only literature and not legend or history (*Poetics*, 17).

understood without a thorough contextualization in medieval medical and magical practices of the time and the degree to which they overlap, a notion in sharp contrast to the modern view of the two as binary opposites. Taking Thessala's practice seriously helps us see how, through Fenice's application of Thessala's knowledge, the romance interrogates gender ideologies, especially those concerned with women's wishes and options as related to marriage.[9] In the end, we can see Thessala's empirical practice as a means of response to Fenice's lack of voice in the system of selecting a marriage partner as depicted in the romance. This practice gives Fenice a means to assert her desire in a world where that desire cannot be spoken openly.

Thessala as Healer

At first glance the introduction to Thessala certainly seems to suggest a strong link to witchcraft:

> Sa mestre avoit non Thessala,
> Qui l'avoit norrie en anfance,
> Si savoit molt de nigromance.
> Por ce fu Thessala clamee
> Qu'ele fu de Tessalle nee,
> Ou sont feites les deablies,
> Anseigniees et establies.
> Les fames qui el païs sont
> Et charmes et charaies font.
>
> (2962–70)[10]

> [Her nurse Thessala, who had raised her from infancy, was most knowledgeable about black magic. She was named Thessala because she had been born in Thessaly, where the devilish arts were devised,

9. This approach follows Roberta L. Krueger's treatment of inscribed women readers. She argues that "the highly problematic presentation of women readers within romance fiction reflects the problem of historical women's reception of the genre" (30).

10. All quotations from *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes: Cligés*, ed. Alexandre Micha (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1975). Verse numbers are given for quotations. All translations from *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*, trans. Staines. Page numbers are given for translations.

> taught, and practiced; the women of that country created charms and spells. (123)]

Thessala knows necromancy, an art she learned in the homeland from which she takes her name. Her Thessalian origin fits well in the Greek setting of the romance, recalling a land well known in classical writings for the magic of its women.[11] The narrator nonetheless explains the allusion, which allows him to highlight the "deablies" and "charmes et charaies" of Thessalian women.

This description, however, functions more as a vague warning of the power Thessala wields than as an accurate depiction of her activities, in large part because of the imprecise use of terms to describe magic in the high Middle Ages. We recall from the introduction that among theologians a distinction existed between demonic magic, or necromancy, and natural magic. Even they disagreed, however, as to how to make this distinction, as evidenced by the shifting of the line they sought to draw during the course of the Middle Ages. In theological documents, the word *sorcière* essentially drew that line: the Church used it to label practices it found dangerous. The fact that the word is not found in *Cligés* bolsters the argument made by historians of magic that the Church's distinctions carried far more weight with theologians than with practitioners themselves or those whom they aided.[12] Those outside the realm of theology, unconcerned with theological hair-splitting, focused on outcomes. This attitude prevails in *Cligés*: while we will see concern expressed for the deception worked by Fenice, there is no attempt to classify or prosecute that deception.

However, modern critics have heedlessly labeled Thessala a "witch" or "sorceress" without considering the problematic status of these terms in the high Middle Ages.[13] As a result, anachronistic connotations accrete to Thessala. In fact, the only word in the text related to Thessala's abilities is

11. Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science During the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), 33.

12. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 9.

13. Peter Haidu calls Thessala a "Greek witch" (41) and a "magician" (102), yet seems to question her abilities when he sets the term "witch" in inverted quotation marks (97). Freeman designates her as a "sorceress." See *Poetics*, 53, 94, and "*Cligés,*" in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium*, ed. Douglas Kelly (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1985), 109. Faral classifies her as "sorcière," 315. Because of the beverages she prepares, Lucienne Carasso-Bulow describes her as "the closest to a witch in any of Chrétien's romances." See Carasso-Bulow, *The* Merveilleux *in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances* (Geneva: Droz, 1976), 30. Sweeney writes that Thessala "is essentially a witch" but notes that her work is not considered evil (99). Kathy Krause sees Chrétien's treatment of Thessala as generally positive, and I seek to further this analysis, 166. An exception can be found in the work of

"mire" or "doctor." Thessala emphasizes her medical skills first in her offer to help Fenice out of her difficult predicament:

> Car se garir vos an doit nus,
> A moi vos an poez atandre,
> Car bien vos savrai santé randre.
> Je sai bien garir d'itropique,
> Si sai garir de l'arcetique,
> De quinancie et de cuerpous;
> Tant sai d'orines et de pous
> Que ja mar avroiz autre mire.
>
> (2980–87)

> [If anyone is to cure you, you may rely on me, for I shall know how to restore your health. I know how to cure dropsy, and I can cure gout, quinsy, and asthma. I have so much knowledge of the pulse and about urine that you would be wrong ever to seek another physician. (124)]

Because Thessala has observed Fenice's symptoms, she mentions first her healing abilities. Thessala knows so much in this realm that she tells Fenice she would "be wrong to ever seek *another physician*" (124, emphasis mine). Why would Thessala call herself a doctor if she had never studied at a university? Such a move reflects the "fluidity and inexactness of some of the terminology used to describe types of practitioners of medicine" and a lack of sharply defined categories.[14] Although Thessala is said to hail from a region of Greece, since I am arguing that her portrayal is a function of the author's surroundings (i.e., northern France), I am supplying information primarily from that area to make my case. Through the eleventh century, as Katharine Park notes, "The contours of the body of early medieval healers and medical practitioners were fluid, its members relatively undifferentiated, and its clientele varied."[15] Prior to the establishment of the medical faculty at Paris, medical instruction was available in the cathedral schools of northern France (Rheims, Chartres, Poitiers, and Amiens) to both clerical and lay

---

Joan M. Ferrante, who avoids the term "witch" and attributes Thessala's healing and drug use to her learning. See Ferrante, "The Education of Women," 30.

14. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*, 20.

15. Park, 70.

students.[16] After the twelfth century, that is, *after* the establishment of medical schools in France (and after the date of composition of *Cligés*), only 51.3 percent of the known doctors can be shown definitively to have university degrees.[17]

Thessala's term *mire* is derived from the Latin *medicus*, which gives rise to *mège* in the langue d'oc of southern France.[18] In her analysis of a database containing more than 7,000 practitioners in the Middle Ages, Danielle Jacquart states that *mire* appears mainly in records pertaining to Paris, Reims, and the towns of Picardy and the Hainaut, and that the category includes both doctors and surgeons.[19] Only after 1250 do terms such as *barbier/barbière* or *chirugien* show up with any regularity in the records.[20]

Certainly, the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries witness many changes in medical education in France. Documents for the study of medicine at the University of Montpellier exist as early as 1137, but official statutes organizing teaching are not in evidence until 1220.[21] Evidence for a medical school at the Parisian university exists from the later twelfth century, but formal organization of masters and students is not found until 1231, and regulations do not appear until 1270–1274.[22] The regulations of the early 1270s set out the course of study and procedures for examination and granting of licenses.[23] Alexander of Neckham implies that he studied medicine in Paris in the early 1180s, but a document that lists the faculty of medicine along with others such as theology does not exist until 1251.[24]

Despite the increasing professionalization of medicine, change came very slowly. For Danielle Jacquart, the period of great development for medicine in France comes from 1250 to 1350, after the period of the romances studied

16. Park, 66–67.

17. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 59.

18. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 39.

19. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 37–38. Because the term includes two functions that Jacquart separates in her data, she does not count those listed as *mire* in her data on doctors or surgeons (38, 92).

20. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 234, 363.

21. For Montpellier, see Vern L. Bullough, *The Development of Medicine as a Profession: The Contribution of the Medical University to Modern Medicine* (New York: Hafner, 1966), 53. There is more on Montpellier in Hastings Rashdall, *The University in the Middle Ages*, vol. 2, ed. F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden (Oxford: Clarendon, 1936), 126–27. On official statutes, see Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 64. Kibre writes that the statutes require those teaching medicine to have a license to teach granted only after the candidate passed an examination (5).

22. Bullough, *Development of Medicine*, 69.

23. Cornelius O'Boyle, *The Art of Medicine: Medical Teaching at the University of Paris*, *1250–1400* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 20.

24. O'Boyle, 13, 19.

here.[25] She notes that most organizing structures for the profession were put into place at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, and that these constitute a major turning point in the history of medicine.[26] Although the beginning of the thirteenth century witnessed a few doctors with university diplomas, Jacquart locates the real growth in the fifty-year period 1300–1349, which saw a 560 percent increase in the number of doctors with medical degrees over the proceeding half century, 1250–1299.[27] While the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw the occasional introduction of licensing regulations in only a few regions, unlicensed practice continued mostly unabated.[28] Although twelfth-century legislation limiting practice to those with qualifications existed in the Kingdom of Sicily, we have no evidence of its enforcement.[29] The date assigned to *Cligés*, around 1170, precedes by a century the attempts by the medical faculty at the University of Paris to tackle the issue in 1271 by limiting the practice of "any male or female surgeon, apothecary or herbalist" whose practices went beyond her or his area of study.[30]

Efforts continued throughout the Middle Age to regulate unlicensed practice in Paris, but "were unable to succeed in stamping out illegal practices in medicine, surgery, or in the sale and preparation of medicaments and drugs."[31] In 1312, Clarice de Rothomago and her husband, Peter Faverel, were

25. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 235.

26. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 258, 301.

27. Jacquart, *Le Milieu médical,* 261–62, 267.

28. For licensing regulations, see Siraisi, 20; Park discusses unlicensed practice, 78, 81.

29. Siraisi, 20.

30. For the date of *Cligés*, Paris settles on 1170 ("Cligés," 265), while Micha's introduction to *Cligés* gives 1176 (vii).

On the 1271 regulation, see Kibre, 5. In contrast, Hughes cites a 1220 regulation from Paris against unlicensed practice noted in the case against Félicie (74–75). Henri Denifle, the editor of the Parisian university records, notes that there is no evidence of such a statute. See *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis* (Paris, 1889; rpt., Brussels: Culture and Civilisation, 1964), vol. 2, 265. Given that the medical faculty was organized after 1220, it seems impossible for the University's statute to date to before its organization. Another position on the statute is that of Lipinska, who accepts that it existed, but says there is not proof that it had teeth in the thirteenth century (118). Whether or not the statute had been in existence since 1220, it was used as evidence against Félicie in 1322. Félicie argues that it does not apply to her in any case, since she is knowledgeable, and it was against idiots and ignorant usurpers, which she is not. See *Chartularium*, vol. 2, 263, and for the translation, Lynn Thorndike, *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 638. In the end, Félicie is not found guilty because she is unable to heal successfully. Instead, her accusers say that she has not studied medicine in school and does not know the art of medicine (*Chartularium*, vol. 2, 267). The statute in question is found in *Chartularium*, vol. 1, 489, and translated in Thorndike, *University Records*, 84.

31. Kibre, 19.

excommunicated for practicing medicine as empirics.[32] Even later, in 1322, the medical school of Paris brought suit against seventeen empirical practitioners, including several women, of whom the best known is Jacoba or Jacqueline Félicie.[33] These later cases brought only slow change to medical education, as it continued outside universities in much the same way as it always had:

> The [medical] skills came by way of some combination of formal or informal apprenticeship to an older practitioner, personal experience, hearsay, and folklore. Both forms of learning could and did go on inside and also outside the university setting. Hence, throughout the twelfth to fifteenth centuries (and for long thereafter), the task of acquiring medical expertise was pursued in a variety of contexts and at widely varying levels of formal organization, intellectualization, and sophistication.[34]

That Thessala presents herself as a doctor and could have acquired a body of medical knowledge fits into the diffuse and complex structure of late twelfth-century medical training and practice. If Thessala's claim to cure severe and often intractable diseases seems excessive, Jerry Stannard reminds us that herbal remedies could alleviate symptoms, as in the case of squill, whose diuretic properties were an effective aid for dropsy.[35]

Thessala's claims of healing abilities are not mere fancy. After she has reclaimed Fenice's body from the Salernitan doctors, Thessala immediately turns to healing the wounds they have inflicted by applying an ointment (5980–983; 160). The irony, of course, is that Thessala heals wounds caused by doctors from a famous medical school. When Fenice regains consciousness after Cligés and Jean have taken her from the tomb, she instructs them to find Thessala, for only she can restore Fenice's health:

> Et Thessala maintenant cort,
> Et prant oignemant, et entrait,
> Et leituaire qu'ele ot fait.
>
> (6212–14)

32. Kibre, 7.

33. Jacquart treats the case against the whole group (*Le Milieu médical,* 42). On Jacqueline Félicie, see Monica Green, "Women's Medical Practice," 447.

34. Siraisi, 49–50.

35. "Squill in Ancient and Medieval Material Medica," *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 50 (1974): 684–713.

> [Thessala ran at once and took ointments, plasters, and remedies of her own devising. (163)]

Not only adept at healing, Thessala, like other healers of the time, is an apothecary who prepares her own medicaments. In this way, the romance suggests that Thessala participates in traditions handed down from ancient medicine, for "the ancient legacy of pharmaceutical prescriptions was fairly efficiently transmitted [to the Middle Ages]."[36] Thessala assures Cligés that she will cure Fenice "Ja n'iert passee la quinzainne" (6229) ("within a fortnight"; 163) and in fact she does so. Thessala's knowledge of wound management and healing compounds assures her success as a healer.

Thessala also includes among her skills methods of diagnosis that she employs to help Fenice feign illness. While Fenice pretends to worsen, Thessala goes about the town to find an invalid close to death. Although she has no intention of doing so, Thessala promises to cure the patient, so that she may collect the patient's urine daily:

> A chascun jor un orinal
> Li portoit por veoir s'orine,
> Tant qu'ele vit que medecine
> Ja mes eidier ne li porroit
> Et meïsmes ce jor morroit.
>
> (5662–66)

> [Every day she carried a bottle for examining her urine, until she saw that medicine could help the woman no further and that she would die that very day. (157)]

The application of this means of diagnosis again places Thessala squarely within the standards of practice of the day, as urine analysis was one of the two most common indicators of sickness and health in the Middle Ages.[37] Entire treatises on the examination of urine existed; this, along with the patient's external condition and description of the malady, were the only

36. John M. Riddle, "Theory and Practice in Medieval Medicine," *Viator* 5 (1974): 162.

37. The other was pulse (Siraisi, 58). As we saw in the citation above, Thessala names both of these when she first describes her healing abilities to Fenice. Given the place of urine analysis in medical analyses of the time, Robert Levine's statement that the episodes concerning urine analysis constitute "an odd, if not pre-Oedipal interest in uro-genital activities" does not stand. See Levine, "Repression in *Cligés*," *Substance: A Review of Theory and Literary Criticism* 15 (1976): 215.

means by which to assess sickness.[38] The urine flask was so common that medieval artists often used it to symbolize medical practitioners.[39]

Thessala presents this urine to Alis as Fenice's, and requests that the king's doctors (also called *mires*, just as Thessala is) analyze it:

> Si li dist: "Se vos comandez,
> Sire, toz voz mires mandez,
> Car ma dame a s'orine feite,
> Qui de cest mal molt se desheite;
> Si vialt que li mire la voient,
> Mes que ja devant li ne soient."
>
> (5671–76)

> ["If, sir, it be your will to command, summon all your physicians," she said. "My lady, who is consumed by this sickness, has urinated. She wishes the physicians to examine it, provided they come not before her." (157)]

Such requests for the analysis of urine without examining the actual patient were not uncommon.[40] The king's doctors read the urine the same way that Thessala did, predicting a quick death (5677–78; 157). The matching prognosis confirms yet again Thessala's medical knowledge.

The image of Thessala sketched in the description of her healing and diagnostic skills presents a wholly different figure from that of a sorceress from Thessaly. Thessala claims vast knowledge of disease and diagnosis and proves her competence by healing Fenice and by reaching the same diagnosis as the emperor's doctors. Her skills and knowledge place Thessala among the practitioners of the time and place of Chrétien rather than among a Thessalian coven with mysterious, almost unlimited powers.

Thessala and Magic

Even so, Thessala herself raises the specter of the Thessalian witches. As she continues her bid to convince Fenice she has the necessary means to alleviate

38. Siraisi provides a wealth of information on medieval diagnostic procedures including illuminations concerning the examination of urine (125–27).

39. Siraisi, 125.

40. Siraisi, 125.

Fenice's suffering in love, she clearly compares herself to an "historical" sorceress:

> Et sai, se je l'osoie dire,
> D'anchantemanz et de charaies
> Bien esprovees et veraies
> Plus c'onques Medea n'an sot.
>
> (2988–91)

> [And I know more about tried and true enchantments and spells, if I dare say it, than Medea ever knew. (124)]

We recall from the introduction that medicine and magic were not binary opposites in the medieval worldview. This modern distinction had no validity in the early Middle Ages when "Magic played a part in the natural medicine of both rich and poor."[41] Even the development of medicine as a university subject did not strip it of its ties to magic, for university-trained doctors also applied remedies with magical components.[42]

While historians of medicine quickly admit the intervention of magic in medical practice, historians of magic go so far as to conceive of medicine as a category of magic.[43] Richard Kieckhefer amply treats what he calls the "common tradition" of medieval magic.[44] In this category he includes healing, divining, charms, protective magic, and popular astrology.[45] Although practitioners varied substantially, practices were often quite similar:

> Monks, parish priests, physicians, surgeon-barbers, midwives, folk healers and diviners with no formal training, and even ordinary women and men who, without claiming special knowledge or competence, used whatever magic they happened to know .... There is every indication that monks learned about medicinal and magic herbs from laypeople as well as from classical authors, that lay practitioners learned healing charms from monks and priests, and

41. Park, 70.
42. Park, 82.
43. Jolly, 30–35.
44. Rather than dividing high culture from low culture, this description works to distinguish the broad general understanding of these practices from "various specialized traditions" (Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality," 833.)
45. *Magic*, 56–94.

> that before medicine became a university subject there was little to distinguish physicians from lay healers.[46]

Medieval books of "secrets," which include, among other items, recipes for drug preparations, also attest to the overlap between popular and learned knowledge: they contain "many secrets attributed to known and respected scientific authorities [that bear] a striking resemblance to ordinary folk beliefs."[47] The ample historical work on these medieval phenomena indicates that the modern dichotomy between magic and medicine simply is not relevant for reading and understanding healing and love magic as represented in *Cligés.*[48] Thessala's broad knowledge but lack of formal training indicates that she belongs to the loose category of practitioners of common magic. As we have seen, the space that magic occupied in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century world meant that individuals would not have seen her offer to turn to magic in the face of Fenice's difficulties as an indicator of false medical knowledge or quackery. Instead, it would have been understood as simply another means by which to resolve Fenice's dilemma.

Nevertheless it is the potions that create problems of *vraisemblance* for many modern readers.[49] Thessala prepares two potions to aid the scheme. In preparing the first,

46. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 56.

47. Eamon, 55. Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset also point out the overlap between medical and magical practices (91).

48. Thus I read the text differently than Freeman, who states that Thessala's craft is "magic *instead of* medicine" ("*Cligés*," 111, emphasis mine), and Peggy McCracken, who faults the text for remaining silent on the question of "whether [Thessala's] knowledge is necromantic or medical." See McCracken, "Women and Medicine," 243.

49. Freeman states that the situations created by the potions are not "believable" (*Poetics*, 170); for Uitti they are "unadulterated romance" (*Story, Myth, and Celebration*, 168) or "invraisemblances" ("Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*," 556), and for Maddox "implausible" ("Pseudo-Historical Discourse," 14). Roger Sherman Loomis writes that in *Cligés*, Chrétien "manifested a strong bent towards realism. To be sure, the philtre that deluded the Emperor is unknown to science, but otherwise everything that happens in the poem lies within the range of possibility." See R. S. Loomis, *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 47. Lucie Polak sees the episode as comic (61). In addition, critics read the use of magic as an easy but unrealistic means to resolve difficulties. Gustave Cohen calls it the "suprême artifice des romanciers embarrassés" (supreme artifice of stuck romance writers). See Cohen, *Un Grand Romancier d'amour et d'aventure au XIIe siècle: Chrétien de Troyes et son oeuvre, Nouvelle édition révue et corrigée* (Paris: L. Rodstein, 1948), 215. Peter S. Noble says Chrétien "has to resort to magic to resolve the otherwise insoluble." See P. Noble, *Love and Marriage in Chrétien de Troyes* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982), 43.

Thessala tranpre sa poison,
Espices i met a foison
Por adolcir et atranprer;
Bien les fet batre et destranprer,
Et cole tant que toz est clers
Ne rien n'i est aigres n'amers;
Car les espices qui i sont
Dolces et de boene oldor sont.

(3209–16)

[Thessala mixed her potion. She added a profusion of spices to sweeten and temper it, beating and blending them well, and filtering the preparation until it was entirely clear. Because of the sweet fragrance of the spices, the taste was not bitter or sharp. (126)]

We recall from the introduction that herbs and their various effects were known throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages by healing practitioners. Certain plant species were used because of a strong taste or odor; recipes and herbals include, among others, spices such as pepper, cinnamon, and ginger.[50] Oriental exotics figure prominently in both vernacular and Latin medical recipes from the early Middle Ages.[51] The potion's complexity, arising as it does from numerous ingredients and the mixing process, identifies it not as a simple, a drug made from one substance, but as a compound, one made from many ingredients including exotics such as the spices mentioned.[52] The passage focuses on the work needed to mix the potion rather than on its contents. The verbs include *tranpre/atremprer/destranprer* (to mix/temper/blend), *metre* (to add), *adolcir* (to sweeten), *batre* (to beat), and *coler* (to filter). The only constituent named, however, is spices that serve to cover the bitterness with their sweet taste. Thessala's work in this depiction is entirely chemical. She does not rely on prayers, incantations, or spells to increase

50. Plant species are discussed in Jerry Stannard, "Natural History," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lindberg, 447. For spices, see Carmélia Opsomer-Halleux, "The Medieval Garden and Its Role in Medicine," in *Medieval Gardens* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Trustees for Harvard University, 1986), 104–5. Spices were commonly available in western Europe's larger cities. See Stannard, "Natural History," 448.

51. Riddle, "Introduction and Use of Eastern Drugs," 185–92.

52. Jones, 73.

the compound's efficacy.[53] This is consistent with Jolly's assertion that "the bulk of medical remedies in the medieval tradition do not contain ritual formulas, but use entirely natural, if not scientifically reliable, methods."[54] The narrator's verb-laden depiction suggests the complexity of the process without delving into individual plants and their virtues. Obviously, someone who knew very little of the applications of different herbs could nonetheless create such a description.

What were the unmentioned "active ingredients" of the potion? The potion's effect, Alis's dreams of amorous encounters with Fenice, could be created with hallucinogens. A range of plants found on the European continent (and in the New World) with hallucinogenic properties was known since Roman times.[55] The goal of this potion was to ensure Fenice's virginity.[56] The potion thus falls into the category of love magic, a widespread practice in medieval Europe.[57] Nevertheless it is an inverted form of love magic, for it does not make one compliant, make sex better, or make it take place more often, the most commonly sought results of erotic practice.[58] The preparation's numerous steps and complex set of ingredients approximate recipes for love potions.[59] The potion is thus plausible according to the practices of the time despite its modern critical dismissal as "fantastic."[60]

53. This reflects John M. Riddle's work on an early medieval herbal, in which he states, "the old idea that early medieval medical works are replete with superstitions, charms, amulets, and magic is shattered by *Ex herbis femininis*" ("Pseudo-Dioscorides' *Ex herbis femininis*," 63).

54. Jolly, 35.

55. Michael J. Harner, "The Role of Hallucinogenic Plants in European Witchcraft," in *Hallucinogens and Shamanism*, ed. Michael J. Harner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 125–30. Harner also points out that scholars have mixed and tried brews to corroborate medieval and early modern accounts (139–40). Irmgard Müller even posits that the bitter taste Thessala must cover in the drink is hashish. See Müller, "Liebesträнke, Liebeszauber und Schlafmittel in der mittelalterlichen Literatur," in *Liebe, Ehe, Ehebruch in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, ed. Xenja von Ertzdorff and Marianne Wynn (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz, 1984), 79. We cannot say whether Chrétien's inspiration was this knowledge or an understanding of the actions of succubi (or both), as Francesco Zambon has argued. See Zambon, "'Neant Tient, A Neant Parole': Il Sogno Erotico nel *Cligés* di Chrétien de Troyes," in *Geografia: Storia e Poetiche del Fantastico*, ed. Monica Farnetti (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1995), 78.

56. This creates an amusing situation, as the narrator's depictions of Alis holding and kissing nothing attest (3293–3308). However, descriptions of the *potion* as "absurde et ridicule, un effet de comédie" (absurd and ridiculous, a comedic effect) (Nykrog, 82) or to both potions as "amusing" (Uitti, *Story, Myth, and Celebration*, 230) are examples of modern critics' dismissal of Thessala (despite the fact that Nykrog also calls the potions "magico-médicaux," 82).

57. Richard Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic in Medieval Europe," in *Sex in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Joyce E. Salisbury (New York: Garland, 1991), 30–55.

58. Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic," 31.

59. Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic," 32–39.

60. Haidu, 96.

Canon law recognized the condition of *impossibilitas coeundi*.[61] A. Esmein documents the various stages through which *maleficium* came to be regarded as a possible cause of impotence from Hincmar of Reims through Alexander III. Thus canonists of the period accepted without question the notion that spells can cause impotence.[62] Further, physicians recommended that impotence be treated with magical means. For instance, in the mid-thirteenth-century *Treasury of Poor Men* composed by Petrus Hispanus for practitioners who had not benefited from formal training,the learned physician recommends magical treatments for impotence and magical means to keep it at bay.[63] That a learned doctor encourages recourse to magic reminds us once again that magic and medicine overlap and complement each other in the Middle Ages: they do not entail fundamentally opposite approaches to knowledge.

Spells and counterspells for male impotence "occurred with alarming frequency"[64] in the Middle Ages. One example that predates *Cligés* by a few decades can be found in the *Memoirs* of Guibert of Nogent (1064?–c.1125):

> Accidit igitur, ut efficientia conjugalis, in ipso legitimae illius confoederationis exordio, quorumdam maleficiis solveretur. Novercalis enim huic matrimonio non defuisse ferebatur invidia, quae plurimae speciei et generis cum neptes haberet, ex iis aliquam paterno thoro moliebatur immergere. Quod cum minime processisset ad votum, pravis dicitur artibus effecisse, ut thalami omnino cessaretur effectus. Cumque integro viginium illibatum permansisset septennio. . . . Voluto igitur post septennium et amplius maleficio, quo naturalis legitimique commercii copula rumpebatur nimium plane, satis credible est, ut, sicut prestigiis ocularis ratio prevertitur, ut de nullis, ut sic dicam, aliqua, et de aliis alia fieri per magos videantur, ita vires hujusmodi ac venerea molimina multo minori artificio confundantur. Ita enim populariter actitatur, ut jam

61. A. Esmein, *Le mariage en droit canonique*, ed. R. Génestal, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1929), 259. For a detailed discussion of the different points of debate, see James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 290–92.

62. Esmein, 264–96.

63. Peter of Spain, *Obras médicas de Pedro Hispano*, ed. and trans. Maria Helena Da Rocha Pereira (Coimbra, Portugal: University of Coimbra, 1973), 235–39. The repeated attribution of the problem to *maleficium* in this chapter appears nowhere else in the work's discussion of other ailments or pains. Siraisi describes Peter's text, 132.

64. Jolly, 60.

> ab rudibus quibusque sciatur. Cassatis, inquam, per anum quandam illis pravis artibus, ea fide thalamorum officio deservivit, qua diutinam virginitatem sub tantarum animadversionum pulsatione servavit.[65]
>
> [It so happened that from the very start of their legitimate union, my parents were prevented from consummating the conjugal act by an evil spell cast over them by certain persons. It is said that their marriage had drawn upon them the envy of a stepmother, who had nieces both beautiful and well-born, and who would have liked to slip one of them into my father's bed. When this attempt failed utterly, she is said to have resorted to evil spells to prevent the consummation of the marriage. Thus my mother preserved her virginity intact for seven full years.... For seven years and more, the evil charms that prevented the consummation of a natural and legitimate bond did their work. It is easy enough to admit that if the sense of sight can be perturbed by sleight-of-hand tricks—some magicians make people see things where nothing exists, as it were, or make them take one thing for another—sexual energies and activities are incomparably easier to perturb. Indeed, these arts are frequently practiced among the people, and even the uneducated know about them. Finally an old woman put an end to these evil charms, and my mother submitted to the duties of the marriage bed as faithfully as she had kept her virginity, despite so many pressures to the contrary.[66]]

That Guibert, an educated monk of the time, believes in and ascribes amatory magic to the whole population indicates how common it was in society (although it is certainly true that the details of Guibert's father's situation differ from that of Alis). Interestingly, Guibert implies a transfer of the knowledge of impotence spells from the educated populace to the uneducated, for he states that even the uneducated know about these spells. Despite being a theologian, Guibert proposes that the solution to the problem of impotence caused by magic is a counterspell. He recounts this story blithely and seems utterly untroubled by the use and counter use of magic.

65. Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie*, ed. and trans. Edmond-René Labande (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1981), 76, 84.

66. Guibert of Nogent, *A Monk's Confession: The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent*, trans. Paul J. Archambault (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 34–35, 38.

In this way, Guibert mirrors the attitude toward this practice seen in *Cligés*. The impotence Guibert's father experiences may be entirely attributable to the placebo effect: that is, he expects to be impotent, and therefore is. Yet the first occurrences may have resulted from plant-derived substances with real physiological effects. After that, if a man believed himself impotent because of a spell, this belief alone could suffice to prolong the condition.[67]

According to a strict definition of necromancy, Thessala's entry into love magic would qualify her as a necromancer, because necromancy includes any practice that violates an individual's free will.[68] A more discriminating definition of necromancy is that it involves the conjuring of demons, an aspect entirely absent from Thessala's work.[69] Would Chrétien have even been aware of this definition? The poet-narrator is no jurist carefully building a case. Chrétien's narrator thus appears either unaware of or unconcerned with the distinction between natural magic and necromancy, an attitude also found in his contemporaries.[70] This should not surprise us, since such distinctions had importance primarily for theologians and jurists, and even they offered conflicting and changing definitions of terms.[71] The Church prescribes penance for such an activity in the early twelfth century: "A woman who by a magical trick [prevents the consummation of a legal marriage] shall do penance for five years."[72] Church fathers indicate here a clear belief in the ability of magic to prevent the consummation of marriage, not, as we saw in the introduction, because such an act is non-medical or irrational, but because it relies on evil powers. In Chrétien's time Church authorities would certainly find Thessala's work highly questionable, but the poet-narrator shows no interest in packing Thessala off to the ecclesiastical

67. John F. Benton argues for a completely psychological explanation, in that the considerable modesty Guibert attributes to his mother in sexual matters produced such dread in her that it affected her husband. *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent (1064?–c. 1125)* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, 1970), 13.

68. Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic," 31.

69. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 152. Kieckhefer also notes that some practices such as reciting charms might be considered implicitly demonic. See also Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality," 835.

70. Robert-Léon Wagner points out that poets did not seek to make clear distinctions between natural and demonic magic, or in Wagner's terms, between enchantments and sorcery. See Wagner, *"Sorcier" et "magicien": Contribution à l'histoire du vocabulaire de la magie* (Paris: Droz, 1939), 75–77. Nevertheless, Wagner also claims that the appearance of the word "deablies" is an instance where Chrétien "prend ainsi position sur la nature diabolique de la sorcellerie" (76) (takes here a position on the diabolical nature of sorcery)—an observation that strikes me as unsubstantiated.

71. For theologians and jurists, see Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 9. Conflicting definitions are discussed in Jolly, 27; Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 12; and Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality," 816, 818–20.

72. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, 349.

court.[73] Indeed, *Cligés* presents Thessala's magical abilities as one of several approaches, for of all the capacities she enumerates, Thessala lists magic last and focuses on it less than her other talents. Yet the fact that Thessala also has magical skills at her disposal seems important to Fenice:

> Et por ce qu'ele antant et ot
> Que molt se vante et molt se prise
> Que d'anchantemant est aprise,
> De charaies et de poisons,
> Li dira quex est l'acheisons
> Por coi a pale et taint le vis.
>
> (3034–39)[74]

> [Yet hearing her boast of her skill and mastery in enchantments, charms, and compounds, she would tell her why her face was pale and languid. (124)]

More than Thessala's healing abilities, it is her knowledge of magic that sways Fenice. Thessala may be partly responsible for Fenice's acceptance of magic as a possible explanation for her situation, since before Thessala inquires if Fenice is ill, she asks, "estes vos fesniee?" (2974) ("Have you been bewitched?").[75] This suggests that both Thessala and Fenice believe such a situation possible and that the most successful way to respond to magic was with a counterspell. The inclusion of magic in Thessala's empirical practice thus boosts it in the eyes of Fenice and quite likely in the eyes of many audience members. Since magic is not opposed to medicine, its inclusion does not call into question Thessala's abilities.

The term used for both drinks prepared by Thessala, *poison*, echoes the ambiguity of the era. The various meanings of the term in Old French include *breuvage*, *potion*, *philtre magique*, and also *poison*, thereby attesting to its polyvalence at the time. In contrast, the *Petit Robert*'s definition suggests only

73. Richard Kieckhefer argues that few people were interested in categorizing empirical practices ("Specific Rationality," 836.)

74. Quoted from Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, ed. Stewart Gregory and Claude Luttrell (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993), as Micha's edition appears to have an error since the same word appears at the end of the fourth and fifth lines.

75. Translation mine.

harm: "Toute substance capable de troubler gravement ou d'interrompre les fonctions vitales d'un organisme."[76] The multiple meanings in the twelfth century suggest that how one understands such a beverage depends on one's situation.

We learn more about Thessala's potion when she describes it to Cligés, whom she taps to deliver it. She tells Cligés that he should explain that he found it among the wedding gifts and that he is giving it to the king because of its wonderful smell and its clarity (3250–58). Thessala reiterates its properties to Cligés, "Car le boivres est clers, et sains, / Et de boenes espices plains" (3263–64) ("for the drink is pure and wholesome, full of fine spices"; 127). The potion quickly drugs the imbiber:

> De la poison un grant tret boit,
> Et maintenant la force sant
> Qui del chief el cors li descent,
> Et del cors li remonte el chief,
> Et le cerche de chief an chief;
> Tot le cerche sanz rien grever.
> Et quant vint as napes lever,
> S'ot l'empereres tant beü
> Del boivre qui li ot pleü,
> Par nuit sera en dormant ivres,
> Ne ja mes n'an sera delivres,
> Einz le fera tant traveillier
> Qu'an dormant le fera veillier.
>
> (3274–86)

> [(The emperor) drank a large draft of the potion. At once he felt its strength go from his head down his body and back up again to his head, circulating from top to bottom and saturating every part of him without causing pain. When the time came to remove the tablecloths, the emperor had drunk so much of the pleasing beverage that during the night he would be intoxicated in his sleep and never escape its effect, the potion making him so excited that he would imagine himself awake when asleep. (127)]

76. *Le Petit Robert dictionnaire*, ed. A. Rey and J. Rey-Debove (Paris: Le Robert, 1988), 1472.

The beverage has strength or "force." It contains substances whose effects Alis can feel flowing through his body, from one end to the other ("de chief en chief"), but not causing pain. The potion pleases the emperor, that is, it induces pleasant feelings; in modern parlance Alis takes a "trip." The fact that the potion does not *grever*—or cause harm, pain, or fatigue—makes it even more pleasant.[77] Moreover, the pleasurable, drug-induced sensations of the potion approximate the euphoric pleasure of being in love. In this way, the potion's active ingredients mimic the sensations Alis expects to feel.

The potion's real work begins once Alis is asleep. At that point, he will be drunk from it, *ivres*, a word that further insists on the effect of the drugs on his body. The result is that Alis "n'an sera delivres," will not be delivered from it, though not in the literal sense. The effect of the drugs will eventually wear off, but the effect of the drugged experience will not be understood by Alis until he is informed that everything he thought happened was in fact a dream. As in the case of Guibert of Nogent's father, expectations produce results. Both the description of the potion's pleasing effects and its dream-producing ability point to the presence of mind-altering substances in it. The fact that it is capable of producing fantasy does not mean that we should label it fantastic.

Careful preparation also plays a critical role in the second potion that Thessala mixes:

> Savez que Tessala porchace,
> Qui la poison destranpre et brace.
> Destrempree l'a et batue;
> De loing se fu aparçeüe
> De tot quanque ele savoit
> Qu'a la poison mestier avoit.
>
> (5699–5704)

> [You know the end Thessala sought with the potion she mixed and brewed. Much earlier she had devised all she knew to be necessary for the potion, and had beaten and blended it. (157)]

77. Greimas, 299.

Verbs here include *porchacier* (to seek), *destranprer* (to mix), *bracier* (to brew), and *batre* (to beat). As in the earlier quotation, this passage also focuses on the work involved in creating the potion, rather than on the specific ingredients used. Again, known effects of plants, this time soporifics, could bring about the desired result: Fenice's deep sleep.[78] Several plants or plant combinations known in the Middle Ages brought on sleep, though none were known specifically to produce erotic dreams. The mandragore plant, to which accreted considerable folklore, probably because its forked shape suggests the human form, was known in antiquity for its soporific and anesthetic properties.[79] This knowledge has been traced in manuscripts through the Middle Ages.[80] Several twelfth- and thirteenth-century bestiaries name mandrake in wine as a surgical anesthetic.[81] Though much later, several fifteenth-century manuscripts have been found in England that describe the preparation of an anesthetic beverage for surgery named dwale, which included henbane, hemlock, and poppy. Voigts and Hudson note references to the use of poppy in sleeping potions in several antique and most medieval medical writers.[82] Here, too, we see that Thessala's activities conform to medieval practices. In the accounts of the description of the preparation of both potions, we watch the work of an apothecary-like figure; Thessala utters no charms, spells, incantations, or the like that a theologian could label magic.

Thessala does promise Fenice assistance in the form of "conjuremanz, / Et poisons, et anchantemanz" (3157–58) ("spells, potions, and enchantments"; 126). During Fenice and Cligés's flight the narrator explains that Thessala conducts them "par art et par anchantemant" (6542) ("by her skills in magic"; 168) so that they avoid Alis and want for nothing, but we have no details of Thessala's work in this case. I posit that these brief, extremely vague references provide, in the first instance, reassurance to Fenice, and in the second they summarize the couple's trouble-free journey to Arthur's court. They are hardly cause to see in Thessala anything more than the realistic empiric that her

78. Müller, 78.

79. Charles Brewster Randolph, "The Mandragora of the Ancients in Folk-lore and Medicine," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 40 (1905): 489–500, 509, 514.

80. Randolph, 518–19.

81. Thomas R. Forbes, "Medical Lore in the Bestiaries," *Medical History* 12 (1968): 248.

82. Voigts and Hudson, 37–39.

activities indicate and that the narrator points out when he says that Thessala does not rest from mixing potions (3206–8; 126).

Rather than insisting on a magical passage, the romance reveals Thessala's encouragement and aid on the journey:

> Car Fenice et Cligés s'an vont,
> Et Tessala menee an ont
> Qui les conforte, et aseüre.
>
> (6437–39)

> [For Fenice and Cligés had left, taking Thessala with them. She was their comfort and assurance. (166)]

Thessala is not the only one, for Cligés also has friends who would help conduct them safety if need be (6534–37; 167).

However, the romance's suggestion of magic has led some critics to a wholesale dismissal of Thessala. In a general introduction to the marvelous, Francis Dubost considers magic to be the science of the times, but he sees in the particulars of Thessala's work an attempt to cover "d'un vernis 'scientifique' une opération de pure magie' and names her labors "'cuisine.'"[83] Rather than read Thessala's promises of spells and enchantments as a means to reassure Fenice, as I do, Dubost argues that since Fenice was promised spells, the potion must therefore be enchanted. For Dubost, it is *Chrétien* who obscures the real (i.e., magical) nature of the potion by depicting only the preparation and administration of a pharmacological substance and by not showing the incantations.[84] Dubost's argument relies on modern, but wrong, assumptions about the nature and workings of medieval pharmacopoeia at the same time that it disdains Thessala's skills.

Simply put, Thessala seems to occupy a blind spot for many critics. Although Robert-Léon Wagner finds Thessala's preparations to have a certain realism given the practices of the time, he also claims that they "livrent aux violences de la passion ceux qui les absorbent."[85] A potion that puts a man in a deep, dream-filled sleep and another that induces a catatonic state in a woman can hardly be said to cause violent fits of passion. Finally,

83. "An operation of pure magic with a scientific veneer." Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques,* 83, 664.
84. Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques,* 664.
85. "Deliver to the throes of passion those who drink them," 70.

Jean Frappier does allow that Thessala's practice has a "petit air scientifique" although it includes "des philtres magiques, aux effets surprenants, bien nécessaires pour faire sortir l'intrigue des impasses où l'auteur a risqué plus d'une fois de s'enfermer."[86] Frappier thus hedges when describing Thessala's activities; Karl D. Uitti falls into the same trap when he notes that Thessala's detailed preparation of the potion "adds weight to one's acceptance of the 'reality' of it."[87] Although these critics imply that Thessala's practices could be taken seriously, they ultimately refuse to acknowledge her abilities. Monica H. Green finds a similar refusal to acknowledge in historians who look at medieval medicine with a kind of "tunnel vision" that obscures medical practitioners who lack formal training.[88]

Literary Antecedents—or Lack Thereof

The numerous similarities between Thessala's methods and those of empirics of the time stand in sharp contrast to the literary characters proposed as models for Thessala. Some critics have suggested that Thessala was modeled on Myrrha's nurse in book X of Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*[89] The nurse's role as confidante and duenna certainly parallels that of Thessala, as does her offer to help Myrrha:

> If your mind's unhinged, my herbs
> And spells can cure it; if you've been bewitched,
> You shall be purified with magic rites.
>
> (237)[90]

Although Ovid's nurse proffers both healing and magic spells, she acts only as a go-between in the narrative, relying on the king's desire for a young lover and the darkness of night to accomplish her lady's desires. Thus Myrrha's

86. "A whiff of science," although it includes "magic philters whose surprising effects are very necessary to enable the author to get himself out of the impasses in which he risked getting stuck more than one time," *Le Roman breton: Chrétien de Troyes*, Cligés (Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1952), 35.

87. "Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*," 552.

88. "Documenting Medieval Women's Medical Practice," 335.

89. Guyer, 221, and Freeman, *Poetics*, 45–49.

90. All quotations from Ovid from *Metamorphoses*, trans. Melville, intro. and notes Kennedy.

story contains no activities in medicine or erotic magic that could have contributed to the portrayal of Thessala's efforts.

Critics have also found inspiration for Thessala in the Medea of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the same character in the *Roman de Troie*.[91] In fact, Gustave Cohen points out a very close resemblance between two lines of the *Roman de Troie:* "Mais si jo sai tant de nigromance / Que j'ai aprise des m'enfance" (1419–20) (But I know so much magic that I have learned since my childhood)[92] and two lines from *Cligés:* "Qui l'avoit norrie d'anfance / Si savoit mout de nigromance" (3003–4)[93] ([Thessala] who had raised her from infancy, was most knowledgeable about black magic, 123). Cohen adds that the allusion to Medea "montre que l'image de Médée flotte dans la pensée du poète."[94]

Closer comparison of *Cligés* and the *Roman de Troie*, however, reveals that the influence is quite small. The similarity of the two lines may easily be attributed to coincidence. While Medea may indeed be "floating" in the poet's consciousness, her depiction in *Cligés* differs radically from that of the *Roman de Troie.* The antique romance contains no mention of healing whatsoever. Medea practices protective magic in order to help Jason, the object of her love, obtain the Golden Fleece. She knows a host of magic-related activities and her skills give her control over natural events:

> Trop ert cele de grant saveir:
> Mout sot d'engin e de maistrie,
> De conjure e de sorcerie;
> Es arz ot tant s'entente mise
> Que trop par ert sage e aprise;
> Astronomie e nigromance
> Sot tote par cuer dès enfance;
> D'arz saveit tant e de conjure,

91. Ovid is discussed in Guyer, 99, 118–19, 221. See also Cristina Noacco, "Par nigromance et par enchantement: Niveaux et nuances du magique dans les romans de Chrétien de Troyes," in *Magie et illusion au Moyen Age,* Sénéfiance 42 (Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, 1999), 385–406. Noacco finds parallels to practices of the time, but insists on Medea as the inspiration for the portrayal. For the *Roman de Troie*, see Freeman, *Poetics*, 39–42; Cohen, 77. Helen C. R. Laurie also notes that Medea inspires Soredamors's monologues in "*Cligés*," in *Two Studies in Chrétien de Troyes,* 60, 87–88.

92. Translation mine.

93. Cohen, 77.

94. "Shows that the image of Medea is floating in the poet's thoughts," 77. Cohen cites *Cligés* from an edition with slightly different wording and lineation from Micha's; the lines cited here correspond to 2963–64 in Micha. Cohen also points out *Cligés*'s debt to other antique romances (175–76, 180, 191, 194, 212–13).

De cler jor feïst nuit oscure;
S'ele vousist, ço fust viaire
Que volisseiz par mi cel aire;
Les eves faiseit corre ariere:
Scientose ert de grant maniere

(1216–28)[95]

[She had great knowledge:
She knew quite a lot of skills and science,
Of spells and sorcery;
She had put so much effort into the arts
That she was very wise and learned.
Astronomy and necromancy
She knew by heart from her childhood;
She knew so much magic and so many spells
She could make a clear day as dark as night.
It is true that, if she wanted,
You could fly about in the air,
And she could make water run backwards.
She was extremely knowledgeable.]

In the *Roman de Troie*, Medea draws on these skills to help Jason secure the Golden Fleece. She supplies him with several means of protection for his quest: an amulet with protective figures written on it, an ointment that repels fire, and a magic ring that works against spells and makes him invisible (1663–1702). Such approaches differ radically from Thessala's. Although Thessala *says* that she knows as many spells as Medea, we never see her apply them. Rather than providing a laundry list including every branch of knowledge related to magic and a few stunning spells that control the natural world, Thessala names only medically related practices. Thus, the magic of the *Roman de Troie* is of a whole other order than that of Thessala.[96]

A final dissimilarity between Thessala and Medea of the *Roman de Troie* is motivation. Medea acts out of love for Jason. The end of Medea and Jason's story is not recounted in the *Roman de Troie*; the narrator truncates the tale

95. All quotations from this work from Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie*, ed. Léopold Constans, vol. 1 (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1904). All translations of this work mine.

96. Despite this difference, Medea's magic results from her knowledge and wisdom, as David Rollo points out. See Rollo, 70–71

after Jason obtains the Fleece. We do not hear that Medea kills her children in revenge when Jason makes it known that he intends to take another wife.[97] (According to some mythographers, the surviving son, Thessalus, is one of three Thessaluses who may have given his name to Thessaly.[98]) We learn only that Jason takes Medea with him when he leaves (2027–29), which brings shame to her family (2035–36). The narrator explains that Medea committed a great folly because she loved Jason too much: "Grant folie fist Medea: / Trop ot le vassal aamé" (2030–31) and that she brought shame to her family because she left them, "Puis la laissa, si fist grant honte" (2036). These are the sins of a maiden in romance, not of a world-class witch.

In book VII of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid names Thessaly as Jason's homeland.[99] Thessaly also serves as the source of Medea's herbs,[100] attributions that may have contributed to the portrait of Thessala in *Cligés.* However, in this work Medea shows even less affinity with Thessala than does Medea in the *Roman de Troie.* The differences stand out especially in the manufacture of the potions. In book VII, the narrator details Medea's creation of a rejuvenating brew:

> Meanwhile within the deep bronze cauldron, white
> With bubbling froth, the rich elixir boils.
> Roots from the vales of Thessaly and seeds
> And flowers she seethes therein and bitter juices,
> With gem-stones from the farthest Orient
> And sands that Ocean's ebbing waters wash,
> And hoar-frost gathered when the moon shines full,
> And wings and flesh of owls and the warm guts
> Of wolves that change at will to human form.
> To them she adds the slender scaly skins
> Of Libyan water-snakes and then the livers
> Of long-living gazelles and eggs and heads
> Of ancient crows, nine generations old.

97. Michael Grant and John Hazel, *Who's Who in Classical Mythology* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 273.

98. Pierre Grimal, *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 452.

99. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 144, 149.

100. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 151, 152.

With these and a thousand other nameless things
Her more than mortal purpose she prepared.

(152)

In contrast to the verbs of *Cligés*, we see here a superfluity of nouns describing strange elements. Ovid's narrator highlights the ingredients—and what ingredients they are! In contrast Thessala's task is dull and workaday. To be sure, she works with precision and skill, but neither the ingredients nor her actions carry the mysterious, exotic overtones found in those of Medea. Moreover, Thessala puts her beverages to pedestrian uses compared to Medea, who slits the throat of Jason's father, Aeson, drains his blood, and fills his veins with the potion in order to restore him to youth.[101] In Ovid, too, Medea's love for Jason motivates her to aid Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece by providing him with magic charms against the fire-breathing bulls, protective herbs, and general protective spells.[102] After Medea restores Aeson's youth, she offers the same help to the daughters of Pelias for their aging father. The daughters fearfully attack their father to drain his blood, but Medea does not provide them with the properly made mixture to resuscitate him.[103] Ovid omits a motive, other than pure evil, for Medea's murder of Pelias (the mythology relates that Pelias had usurped the throne) and briefly recounts her infanticides driven by revenge against Jason and his new wife, as dramatized by Euripides.[104]

Ovid's Medea with her cruel rejuvenation regime and vengeful infanticide is clearly very far from Thessala in character, motive, and finally, magical means to her ends. Certainly Thessala's medical abilities enable her to stave off death when she heals and to induce a death-like sleep in Fenice, but never does she poison her enemies or attempt to render the aged young again as Medea did.[105] The references to Medea and Thessaly function, in short, to elevate Thessala's status in the Byzantine world of the romance, and perhaps to remind us again of the relationships between magic and medicine for Chrétien's audience. Thessala's reference to Medea serves to assure Fenice of Thessala's

101. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 152–53.

102. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 147–48.

103. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 153–56.

104. For the murder of Pelias, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 416. The infanticides are treated in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 156.

105. One could object to Thessala's mistreatment of the dying woman whose urine furnishes proof of Fenice's impending death, but the narrator does specify that the victim was "De mortel mal sanz garison" (5657), "an incurably ill woman" (156).

competence and ability to handle any situation; we should not uncritically extend the analogy to provide details of Thessala's magic practice since none of Thessala's actions supports such a reading. Nevertheless, the allusion to Medea in *Cligés* might pave the way for critical misinterpretations.

Another Ovidian character, Dipsas of the *Amores*, has also been suggested as a model for Thessala.[106] Dipsas understands the working of herbs, but knowledge of magic and incantations enable her to make water run backwards, turn day into night, make stars bleed, and raise the dead (*Amores* I, viii). She even goes Medea one better, for the narrator adds "I suspect she changes form and flits about in the shadows of night, her aged body covered with plumage. I suspect, and rumour bears me out" (*Amores* I, viii). The ability to shapeshift and fly ratchet even higher the sensationalism in the portrait, as does the poet's admission that the source is rumor.[107] The poet winks at the audience as he urges them to take rumor seriously, adding a comic note. Like Thessala and Myrrha's nurse, Dipsas plays the role of facilitator, helping the lovers find each other. In the end, we see that Dipsas is far more like Medea than Thessala.

In summary, then, although several characters have been proposed as models for Thessala, careful comparison reveals that these characters could not have inspired anything more than Thessala's general role as duenna. The magical abilities of these characters have few if any commonalities with Thessala's skills.

Of Masters and Mastery

Although classical works and those based on them provide few similarities to Thessala's practice, *Cligés* provides a means by which to evaluate Thessala's skill and to understand its function within the society. The work contains an implicit comparison between Thessala and Jean and an explicit one between Thessala and the Salernitan physicians. First let us examine Jean. In the same

106. R.W. Hanning names Dipsas as a loose model for Thessala, one which Chrétien "literalizes" (43) by giving her Thessalian origins (42).

107. The ability to fly appears in some classical works—for example, Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, in which Pamphile has a magical lab where she prepares a potion that changes her into a bird. Questions do arise from a wholly different tradition concerning flight, as we shall see in Chapter 6.

way that Fenice suggests that she and Cligés depend on Thessala's help, Cligés says he will ask Jean:

> Mes se nel feisons sagemant,
> Alé somes sanz recovrier.
> Un mestre ai que j'en vuel proier,
> Qui mervoilles taille et deboisse:
> N'est terre ou l'en ne le conoisse
> Par les oevres que il a feites,
> Et deboissiees, et portreites;
> Jehanz a non, et s'est mes sers.
>
> (5312–19)

> [But if we fail to act prudently, we are lost beyond recovery. I intend to make a request of a master artisan of mine, an extraordinary carver and sculptor. There is no country in which he is not recognized for the works he has designed, sculpted, and painted. John is his name, and he is my serf. (152)]

Like Thessala, Jean excels at his craft. He is so outstanding that Cligés considers his works "marvels" (5315): Cligés thus here defines a "marvel" as an item that is extraordinary rather than fantastic.[108] Jean's work displays so much skill and artistry that it is perhaps difficult for the casual observer to believe that he achieves it by dint of hard work and long practice. He is much like Thessala in this way. Jean proposes the tower he has built as a hiding place for Cligés and Fenice. While giving Cligés a tour to point out the tower's many features, Jean explains that no one can find the door to the tower because he has concealed it so well. Cligés responds: "Or oi mervoille" (5527) ("What I hear is astonishing"; 155). The ability to astonish in Jean's work is seen again when, after fifteen months in Jean's tower, Fenice longs to be outside. Jean opens a door to the enclosed orchard:

> Lors vet Jehanz ovrir un huis
> Tel que je ne sai, ne ne puis
> La façon dire ne retraire.
> Nus fors Jehan nel poïst faire.

108. See the discussion of the marvelous in the background chapter.

Ne ja nus dire ne seüst
Que huis ne fenestre i eüst,
Tant con li huis ne fust overz,
Se estoit celez et coverz.

(6297–6304)

[John … went to open a door. I do not have the ability or knowledge to describe its design. None but John could have made it. Because it was so concealed and covered, no one could ever have suspected a door or window was there so long as the door was shut. (164)]

The results of Jean's work, much like that of Thessala, leave the observer astonished at its complexity and success. Thessala's ability to heal does not constitute a marvel despite her successes in this domain. However, the complexity of her plan in seeking a patient on the verge of death to obtain her urine is qualified as "molt merveilleuse guile" (5653) ("quite marvelous guile").[109] Although Thessala and Jean serve in different capacities, they both excel at their craft.

Cligés also aligns Thessala's skills with those of Jean through the term used to designate both. We have noted the lack of designations for Thessala that reference her practice: the term *sorcière* is never applied to her, and we find the word "mire" used only once. However the term "mestre" appears numerous times in connection with Thessala and once with Jean in a subtle nod to their similar functions. In Alexander Micha's edition of *Cligés*, Micha lists seven verse numbers in which the word designates Thessala and gives the definition "governante," while for the verse number in which the terms refers to Jean the definition is "maître ouvrier" or "master craftsman."[110] Given the description of the sculpting and crafting that goes into Jean's work, the definition seems accurate. Regarding Thessala, however, the term contains ambiguities worth exploring. Greimas distinguishes a masculine and feminine form of the noun (although the orthography of the two is identical). The definition for the feminine form is "governante, servante."[111] However, the masculine form of the word includes a host of meanings: a master, as opposed to a disciple or a companion, but also a doctor, a teacher,

109. Translation mine.

110. 235.

111. Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Dictionnaire de l'ancien français: Le Moyen Age* (Paris: Larousse, 1994), 359.

a sorcerer, or an enchanter.[112] These numerous meanings reveal two things at once. First, neither Greimas nor Micha seems to be able to imagine a woman in any role other than that of handmaid or servant, thereby revealing the same blind spot with respect to Thessala'a practice that we have seen in other critics. Second, the various referents for the masculine form of the word contain the same ambiguity between doctors and sorcerers found in other references existing outside of theological discourse.

The term's use in *Cligés* exemplifies this ambiguity. When Fenice uses the term as a form of address, as in "Tessala mestre" (3045) or "'mestre,' fet ele" (5350) ("Nurse," she said, 153), it appears to suggest nothing more than a servant. Upon close examination, however, we find that *mestre* often appears at moments when the discussion centers on Thessala's skills and abilities. For example, as Fenice awakens from her stupor, she asks for Thessala:

> Et ne por quant, s'il poïst estre
> Qu'avoec moi fust ceanz ma *mestre,*
> Cele me feïst tote sainne,
> Se rien i deüst valoir painne
>
> (6193–96, emphasis mine)

> [Yet were it possible for my *nurse* Thessala to be here with me, she would restore me to full health if any efforts should avail. (163)]

Here Fenice connects the work *mestre* with someone who can heal. She also links Thessala to wisdom when describing her plan to Cligés:

> Et Tessala qui m'a norrie,
> Ma *mestre* an cui je molt me croi,
> M'en eidera en boene foi,
> Car molt est *sage,* et molt m'i fi.
>
> (5302–5, emphasis mine)

> [And Thessala, my *nurse,* who has raised me and has my trust, will be my loyal assistant, for she is most *prudent* and I rely on her completely. (152)]

112. Greimas, 359.

and again when she calls Thessala "mestre" (5350; 153) and states that she has found Thessala very wise ("sage"; 5354; 153). Thessala is also designated as *mestre* at the point where she explains the functioning of the beverage that will permit Fenice to feign death:

> Et sa *mestre* li aseüre
> Qu'ele l'en eidera del tot,
> Ja n'en ait crieme ne redot,
> Et dit que tel poinne i metre,
> Puis qu'ele s'an entremetra,
> Que ja n'iert uns seus qui la voie,
> Que tot certainnemant ne croie
> Que l'ame soit del cors sevree.
>
> (5386–93, emphasis mine)

> [Her *nurse* assured her of complete assistance, telling her never to have any doubt or fear. And from the moment she undertook the mission, she said, she would take special care that any looking upon her would be convinced that her soul was severed from its body. (153)]

In addition, two references to Thessala's homeland contain the term. The first of these explicitly links Thessala to magic practiced in Thessaly (see page 43). The second connects Thessala to her homeland: "Sa mestre qu'ele ot amenee / De sa terre dom el fu nee" (5341–42), "Thessala, whom she had brought from her native land" (153), just before Fenice asks Thessala's aid in her plan to escape her marriage and join Cligés (5343–85). In all of these passages, Thessala is Fenice's governess or nurse, and so the translations make sense. Yet it is also true that in these passages the term resonates with its other meanings: *doctor/healer/magic practitioner/one who has wisdom*.

Although Cligés acknowledges the help Fenice proposes to get from Thessala, he also suggests another source of aid from a different *mestre*:

> Respont: "Dame, se il puet estre,
> Et vos cuidiez que vostre *mestre*
> Vos an doie a droit conseillier,
> N'i a fors de l'apareillier
> Et del feire hastivemant;
> Mes se nel feisons sagemant,

Alé somes sans recovrier.
Un *mestre* ai que j'en vuel proier,
Qui mervoilles taille et deboisse."

(5307–15, emphasis mine)

[(Cligés) replied: "Lady, if this be possible and you trust your *nurse* to give you proper advice, there is nothing left but to prepare quickly. But if we fail to act prudently, we are lost beyond recovery. I intend to make a request of a *master artisan* of mine, an extraordinary carver and sculptor." (152)]

We see that Cligés designates both as *mestre*: Thessala in her capacity as governess and Jean in his as craftsman. The attribution is made for different reasons in each case, as one is unlikely to confuse Jean's worked object with Thessala's activities. However, the term sets up a parallel between Jean and Thessala, and implies that Thessala's work should be taken as seriously as Jean's. This section of less than two hundred verses (5303–5486) contains five references to Thessala as *mestre,* with the designation of Jean as *mestre* in the midst of them (5314). In this way, Thessala and Jean are established as equally talented, capable and necessary to carry out the elaborate plan even though their skills differ. The narrator reinforces this notion as each one takes on a specific task after Fenice arouses from her catatonic state:

Thessala panse a li garir,
Et Jehanz vet la tor seisir
De tot ce que il i covient.

(6233–35)

[Thessala set her mind to healing her, and John went to fit out the tower with every necessity. (163)]

Jean's task is to guard the tower, while that of Thessala is to heal, and each one successfully carries out the assigned charge (6244–47; 163–64).

Physicians from Salerno

In contrast to the references to Jean that show a favorable comparison to Thessala, the relationship to the Salernitan physicians is one of considerable

tension. Critics have noted the amusing elements of this episode, and certainly they are there.[113] Underneath the comedy, however, lie serious implications for medieval power relations and the use and misuse of knowledge. In this episode, the physicians are assigned to deal with Fenice's apparently dead body. The situation quickly spins out of control, for the doctors resort to cruelty (molten metal in Fenice's palms) and attempted murder (roasting her on a spit). No mention of Alis's whereabouts or actions is made during this episode. However, the women of Byzantium observe the preparations for the fire and, as enraged as the Salernitans, they storm the palace (5943–44) and fling the men out of the window (5962–63). Thessala is among the crowd, but there is no suggestion that she incited the women. Their motivation was the violent scene they beheld through a hole in the door, and their concern seems based on the mistreatment of Fenice's corpse. The ointment that Thessala applies to Fenice's wounds does not alter their perception that Fenice is dead. They fill the night with their laments (5988–89). The narrator's comment that the Salernitans got what they deserved only heightens the comedic nature of the scene:

> Einz mialz nel firent nules dames.
> Or ont eü molt malemant
> Li troi mire lor paiemant,
> Car les dames les ont paiez.
>
> (5966–69)

> [No ladies ever behaved better. Now the ladies had paid the three physicians their dire due. (160)]

So why do the Salernitans act as they do? Alis tells them that Fenice had the opportunity to see other doctors but did not take it. Immediately the three remember the story of Solomon: "Que sa fame tant le haï / Que come morte le *trahi*" (5803–4, emphasis mine) ("whose wife hated him so much that she deceived him by feigning death"; 158). The doctors correctly recognize that Fenice is working against her husband in this case. The story of Solomon being tricked by his wife was well known in the Middle Ages,

113. Freeman considers all of *Cligés* to be in the comic mode (*Poetics*, 55) while Uitti classes the episode as a "new *fabliau*" (*Story, Myth, and Celebration*, 170). Carasso-Bulow argues that the comedy of the episode "uses and undercuts the *merveilleux*" in *Cligés*(119). However, she does not explain how the *merveilleux* functions in the romance.

but it included neither the soporific drug nor the Salernitan doctors.[114] Their important place in this episode suggests that the poet-narrator wished to comment on their current social role. Although the leader of the three doctors briefly utilizes his medical skills to determine that Fenice is alive—he places his hands on her chest and ribs to learn "Que ele a el cors l'ame tote" (5820) ("she has her whole soul in her body")[115]—medical knowledge plays but little role in the episode. Instead, it is governed by the doctors' understanding that through her actions, Solomon's wife betrayed him. The notion of betrayal occupies a central place, as the three use it again when they attempt to coerce Fenice to speak "Bien savons que vos vos faigniez / Si traïssiez l'empereor" (5890–91) ("We realize that you pretend and thereby deceive the emperor"; 159.[116]) They appear to understand Fenice as having perpetuated a crime for which they stand in judgment, and they use means of torture to try to elicit a confession.

Betrayal also takes center stage because Alis and the lead doctor contract a feudal relationship. Alis tells the physician that

> Se l'empererriz fet revivre,
> Sor lui iert sire et comanderres;
> Mes panduz sera come lerres,
> Se il li a manti de rien
>
> (5836–39)

> [If he restored the empress to life, he would be lord and commander over him. But he would be hanged like a thief had he told any lie. (159)]

114. Paris, 312–16. The motif of false death continued to be popular. Henri Hauvette comments on a number of narratives that include it in *La Morte vivante: Étude de littérature comparée* (Paris: Boivin, 1933). Gaston Paris sees the false death episode as awkward ("*Cligés*," 307), while Faith Lyons makes the case that it fits well into the plot. See Lyons, "La Fausse Mort dans le *Cligés* de Chrétien de Troyes," in *Mélanges de linguistique et de littérature romanes offerts à Mario Roques*, vol. 1 (Paris: Didier, 1950), 167–77. D. D. R. Owen reads it as a parody of the death and resurrection of Christ. See Owen, "Profanity and Its Purpose in Chrétien's *Cligés* and *Lancelot*," in *Arthurian Romance: Seven Essays*, ed. D. D. R. Owen (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), 41.

115. Translation mine.

116. David Shirt reads this accusation as "ambiguous and highly questionable" in light of the legalities of marriage of the time ("Realism," 373). In her article on marriage politics in *Cligés* and *Amadas et Ydoine*, Sally L. Burch questions Shirt's reading of marriage in Cligés. I will discuss further the relation of these works to the Tristan materials and the implications for marriage politics in Chapters 4 and 6. See Burch, "*Amadas et Ydoine, Cligès*, and the Impediment of Crime," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 36, 2 (2000): 185–95.

In their zeal the doctors forget any notions of healing they might have known; they also lose sight of the fact that their promise was to deliver Fenice *alive*. Rather than acting like doctors, they play at being judges as they punish Fenice for her betrayal. Fenice's deception alone ignites their fury: they never question what or who might have caused Fenice's condition, and since they know nothing of Thessala's practice or activities, they do not suspect her. They distinguish themselves not for their medical skill (of which they demonstrate very little) but rather for their arrogance, even claiming upon their arrival that they can defeat death (5791–93; 158).

This recalls the arrogance and avarice that John of Salisbury ascribes to doctors trained at Salerno and Montpellier who have omitted the study of logic.[117] We might expect that three physicians from the best-known medical school in western Europe at the time would have understood that a soporific could produce the state they see in Fenice, and that only the passage of time would allow this pharmacologically induced sleep to wear off. Yet their actions belie this expectation. The study of medicine at Salerno is dated convincingly from the later half of the tenth century.[118] While training in the tenth and eleventh centuries focused on practical remedies, a subtle shift characterized by "the definite transition from practical to theoretical instruction" appears during the early part of the twelfth century.[119] The Salernitan doctors of *Cligés* may in fact not have known of the possible effects of drugs, much less how to counter them. Their behavior in this episode suggests that this is indeed the case.

Although Fenice's muteness and lack of response challenge their authority, the physicians lack either the necessary knowledge or sangfroid in the face of this challenge, or both, to respond to her medical condition. Instead they are driven to desperate attacks on her person that undermine their credibility. Their irrational acts seem driven by a rage against what they see as impudence on the part of Fenice, whose actions subvert the dominant power structure as did Solomon's wife in her betrayal of that king.[120] They act as

117. *Metalogicon*, trans. and intro. Daniel D. McGarry (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962), 17–18.

118. Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The School of Salerno: Its Development and Its Contribution to the History of Learning," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 17 (1945): 145.

119. Kristeller, 145–48, 156.

120. For a very different reading, see Peter Haidu, who describes the Salernitans as "three professionals … of intelligence, integrity, and perseverance" (94). In contrast, Gaston Paris considers

if their titles confer on them the right to stand as judges, and if need be, executioners. Their inability to correctly surmise why Fenice is in the state she is renders them unable to apply medical knowledge to the situation. The episode suggests not only that Thessala's knowledge of practical medicine far surpasses that of the Salernitan physicians, but that they take their authority not from such knowledge but from their titles. They lack sufficient knowledge to compete with Thessala. Indeed, the episode does not portray competition between competing medical approaches, but a wholesale abandonment of healing precepts.[121]

Despite their lack of knowledge, they are set apart from other practitioners in *Cligés* by the term "fiscisien." The term "mire" is applied to Thessala (2987), to the emperor's doctors (5672), and to the Salernitans (5968), but "fiscisien" is reserved for the Salernitans only (5745, 5879).[122] Although we noted above a generally loose application of terms to practitioners of medicine, Paul O. Kristeller makes the case that the twelfth-century change in the Salernitan curriculum brought with it a new term for the holder of a Salernitan title: "The new use of *physicus* had a programmatic significance and reflected a change in the very conception of medicine. It emphasizes the need for the medical doctor to have a thorough training in natural philosophy and science, and distinguishes him from the mere medical practitioner who lacks such theoretical training."[123] Yet having a special title does not automatically confer knowledge, as the physicians make clear.

Betrayal in *Cligés*

The Salternitans are not the only ones to read deceit in Fenice's and Thessala's actions. Words in Old French for *cheat*, *lie*, and *betrayal* crop up frequently in the romance. Thessala's mistreatment of the woman whose urine she uses is a betrayal ("traïson" 5658) because she promises to cure

---

it *invraisemblable* that the doctors do not know that they only need wait a period of time ("*Cligés*," 302). Paris also refers to the substance prepared by Thessala as a "narcotic" ("*Cligés*," 317, 327.)

121. For a different reading, see McCracken, who finds an "interprofessional rivalry" ("Women and Medicine," 252).

122. This distinction can be seen in *Cligés*, but is not maintained in Staines's translation.

123. Kristeller, 160.

the woman but allows her to languish and die. Alis, too, understands that Thessala deceived him:

> Quant l'emperere ot ramentoivre
> La poison qui li plot a boivre,
> Par coi Tessala le *deçut*.
>
> (6511–13, emphasis mine)

> [When the emperor recalled the potion he had been pleased to drink, and which was Thessala's means of *tricking* him. (167)]

For this, Alis seeks revenge. This is the closest the narrator comes to taking issue with Thessala's actions; the focus throughout remains on Fenice's deceit, which is also emphasized in the epilogue:[124]

> Einz puis n'i ot empereor
> N'eüst de sa fame peor
> Qu'ele nel deüst *decevoir,*
> Se il oï ramantevoir
> Comant Fenice Alis *deçut,*
> Primes par la poison qu'il but,
> Et puis par l'autre *traïson*.
>
> (6645–51, emphasis mine)

> [Since then there has been no emperor who did not fear being *deceived* by his wife after hearing the story of Fenice *deceiving* Alis, first with the potion he drank, and then with the other *treachery*. (169)]

In *Cligés* we see deceit explicitly named, while ambiguous attitudes toward magic reflect the prevailing approach of all those outside the legal realm. Deceit is what counts: there is no interest in singling out necromantic acts as more severe or dangerous.

124. Donald Maddox points out Fenice's deceit (*Fictions*, 84–85), as does Joan Tasker Grimbert, who considers Fenice's story a "negative exemplum" (101) because of it. Joseph Duggan suggests that the motivating force behind Fenice's action is the avoidance of public shame (110, 170).

Not all the accusations of deceit carry the same weight, however. The formal structure of feudalism defines the relationship between Jean and Cligés. When Cligés first solicits the serf's help, Cligés reminds him of his duties:

> Tu es mes sers, je sui tes sire,
> Car je te puis doner ou vandre,
> Et ton cors et ton avoir prandre,
> Come la chose qui est moie.
> Mes s'an toi fier me pooie
> D'un mien afeire a coi je pans,
> A toz jorz mes seroies frans,
> Et li oir qui de toi seront
>
> (5428–35)

> ["You are my serf. I am your lord. I may sell you or give you away. I may take your body and your possessions as though they were mine. But were I able to trust you concerning some business I am planning, both you and your heirs would have freedom forever." (154)]

Jean tells Cligés that there is nothing he will not do for freedom for himself and his family (5438–41), and, in fact, Cligés frees Jean before the conspiracy has been carried out because Cligés is so pleased with the wondrous tower (5572–73).

After Bertrand discovers Cligés and Fenice, and they flee, Alis commands Jean to talk. As Jean provides the details of the plot, he tells the emperor that he was "engigniez et deceüz" (6492) ("duped and deceived"; 167) by the beverage. Before Jean begins his explanation, however, he reminds Alis of Jean's obligation to Cligés, "Que sers ne doit rien refuser / Que ses droiz sires li comant" (6528–29)[125] ("That a serf must refuse nothing his rightful lord demands of him"; 166). Jean explains that he followed the dictates of feudalism and that Cligés had the right to kill him had he refused (6505–10; 167). Jean states his staunch loyalty to Cligés and points out that Alis himself broke his word:

> Que se je muir por mon seignor,
> Ne morrai pas a desenor,

125. From the Gregory and Lutrell edition.

Car bien sevent tuit sanz dotance
Le seiremant et la fiance
Que vos plevistes vostre frere . . .
Mes totevoies la preïstes
Et vers Cligés vos mesfeïstes;
Il n'est de rien vers vos mesfez.

(6547–51; 6557–59)[126]

[For if I die for my lord, I shall not die with dishonor. All well know, beyond doubt, the oath and pledge you promised your brother . . . . You should not have taken a wife. Nevertheless you took her and wronged Cligés. He did no wrong to you. (166)]

Jean characterizes his own actions and those of Cligés as honorable because they fall within the bounds of the feudal relationship while he reminds Alis that he went against his own word when he took a wife and so acted wrongly. Thus the feudal relationship and Alis's broken promise provide the means for Jean to exculpate himself *and* Cligés. But, as we have already seen, even Jean classifies Thessala's actions as deception. Certainly Thessala's magic practice could have been a threat. Even so, the romance shows little concern for the magical aspects of this threat. In the end, Thessala's and Fenice's deception is condemned for its ability to wreak havoc in a marriage system that promotes dynastic interests at the expense of personal feelings. Fenice betrays the emperor who nevertheless retains the right to contract a feudal relationship with the Salernitan physician.

In *Cligés*, relationships between men are ultimately governed by the feudal system: between Cligés and Jean, between Cligés and Alis, and between the lead doctor and Alis. Jean's saves his own life by reminding Alis that Jean's rightful allegiance is to Cligés. The feudal system that permits bonds so strong between men that others can be killed to protect the Lord does not recognize women. No system exists to formalize the relationship between Fenice and Cligés or between Fenice and Thessala—Thessala's loyalty to Fenice goes unmentioned. Fenice recognizes that the system assigns her the status of property when she tells Cligés he must devise a plan "Comant je poïsse estre anblee / A vostre oncle et desasanblee (5207–8) ("[to] contrive

126. From the Gregory and Lutrell edition.

the seizure and theft of my person from your uncle"; 151). She does not accept that status, however, so she devises her own convoluted plan with Thessala's help. Her body may be the possession of Alis, but early in her recognition of her love for Cligés, she uses feudal terms to describe her heart and that of Cligés: "Li suens est sire et le miens sers" (4454) ("His is lord and mine is servant"; 141).

As the victim of a forced marriage when she loves another man, Fenice's situation is desperate. Promised first to the Duke of Saxony, then to the Emperor of Constantinople, Fenice remains passive until she falls in love with Cligés. As David Shirt has argued, *Cligés* dramatizes the difficulties of a forced marriage at a time when, according to Canon law, consent had become a condition of marriage though it still played little role in aristocratic marriage arrangements.[127] In his description of the wedding plans as carried out by the men at court, the narrator implies that Fenice has no voice in the matter of who her husband will be. The real story, however, lies elsewhere:

> Et quant vint a la matinee,
> L'empereres sa fille mande.
> Cele vint, quant il le comande.
> Que vos iroie tot contant?
> Lor afeire vont apruichant
> Li dui empereor ansanble,
> Que li mariages asanble,
> Et la joie el palés comance;

127. Shirt, "Matrimonial Casebook." As Sweeney points out, Thessala offers Fenice a means of control over her body (27). Peggy McCracken also reads Fenice as "a threat to the order of the court." See McCracken, "The Body Politic and the Queen's Adulterous Body in French Romance," in *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature*, ed. Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 56. Penny Sullivan notes that with respect to love and marriage, Chrétien raises more questions than he answers. See Sullivan, "Love and Marriage in Early French Narrative Poetry," *Trivium* 19 (May 1984): 94.

On consent in Canon law, see John T. Noonan, "Power to Choose," *Viator* 4 (1973): 424–25. On the lack of application of the law, see Duby, *Medieval Marriage*, 1–15; Michael M. Sheehan, "Choice of Marriage Partner in the Middle Ages: Development and Mode of Application of a Theory of Marriage," in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, vol. 1, ed. J. A. S. Evans (Vancouver: Committee for Medieval Studies, University of British Columbia, 1978), 12–13. Joseph Duggan points out the contrast in *Cligés* between the marriage of Soredamor and Alexandre, for which Soredamor's consent was sought, and that of Fenice and Alis, for which Fenice's was not (64–66). Duggan suggests that the motivating force behind Fenice's actions is the avoidance of public shame (110, 170).

Mes n'i voel feire demorance
De parler de chascune chose;
A Thesala qui ne repose
Des poisons feire et atranprer
Voel ma parole retorner.

(3196–3208)

[When morning came, the emperor summoned his daughter, who came at his command. Why should I continue with every detail of the story? The two emperors met and settled their business so that the marriage took place and gaiety ensued in the palace. But I do not wish to pause to speak of every detail. I wish to turn my story back to Thessala, who did not cease from making and mixing potions. (126)]

The emperors plan the marriage without consulting those involved, and Fenice is called in to be told her fate. Meanwhile, Thessala's work continues apace in order to contravene the emperors' plan. Through its depiction of a heroine who escapes an arranged marriage and marries the man she loves, *Cligés* invites the female reader to identify with a woman who does not simply acquiesce to the marriage system and who gains agency through empirical practices common to the time. Thessala is the link who makes Fenice's response possible.

Conclusion

Based on similarities to documented practices of the time and contrasts between Thessala's presentation and those of Medea and Myrrha in other texts, I have argued that earlier works could not have inspired anything more than Thessala's name and that her abilities stem from actual medical and magical practices of the high Middle Ages. Her actions fall entirely within the realm of the "common" empirical magic practiced at all levels of medieval society. Thessala's knowledge and activities reflect those of Chrétien's time: these include her diagnostic skills in urine and pulse, her preparation and application of healing ointments, her concoction of hallucinogens and soporifics, her knowledge of different diseases and their treatments and her skillful management of her patient. She is an ordinary empiric, albeit a very good one, with knowledge of the virtues of plants and spices. In the

context of the beliefs of the time, her actions are entirely plausible ones for empirics; empirical and learned practices at the time often bore traces of natural magic and possibly even necromancy. Yet neither the narrator nor the characters of *Cligés* seems concerned with these distinctions, in keeping with contemporary attitudes. I have also argued that the allusions to Medea serve mainly to promote Thessala's image to Fenice—an early example of spin—but that Thessala's actions as depicted in the romance have nothing in common with those of Medea. The facile acceptance of this comparison to Medea as well as a complete lack of context for Thessala's practices had led modern critics to thoroughly misinterpret her, to the point of simple dismissal or utter disdain. The failure to understand Thessala's role in helping Fenice marry the man she loves has obscured the romance's commentary on marriage politics of the time.

In the end, Thessala transcends the binary opposition of artifice and realism imposed by many critics on *Cligés*. That divide depends in many cases on an understanding of realistic as "plausible" and in opposition to "fantastic." In this view, the events of *Cligés* could not happen in real life. Thus Peter Haidu comments that "A magician gives us what we cannot have in reality."[128] Read in this way, Chrétien's second romance becomes little more than a pleasant fantasy. Yet this view ignores both the context of empirical practice in the high Middle Ages and how people of that time employed a word such as "magician."

Another definition of realism is an "accurate perception of events," with its opposite "a faulty perception of events," or "an illusion." These apply to Alis's situation as he comes to understand the role played by the potion in his belief that he had consummated his marriage. The illusion was that this only took place in his dreams. Dreams are the stuff of illusion, created by Alis's desire for the event aided by carefully selected and blended drugs able to enhance one's dream life. As an empiric, Thessala has the ability to create such illusions. If, as Michelle Freeman writes, "Magic is real and effective in Chrétien's romance,"[129] I argue that its reality derives from its plausibility in the high Middle Ages and its capacity to create illusion. Although we must always allow for romance's hyperbolic tendencies that ensure that plots often succeed "a mervoile" ("marvelously"), Thessala is realistic in her ability to create artifice.

128. Haidu, 102.
129. Freeman, *Poetics*, 53.

We recall that the Old French word "potion" has both positive and negative connotations. The polysemous character of the word reflects the possibilities of different interpretations of the marriage politics in *Cligés*. While female audience members may have identified with Fenice's success in obtaining her desired marriage partner, male audience members could have focused on Cligés's ascendancy to the throne or other aspects. Social roles and expectations play a substantial role in one's interpretation of the romance.[130] *Cligés* depicts both Fenice's displacement from agency within the courtly marriage system and resistance to the system's dictates. The romance's epilogue indicates that the work provides no easy answers, for the women who follow Fenice as empress of Byzantium will be blocked from falling in love because the only men they will be able to have contact with are eunuchs (6660–661). Yet the epilogue says nothing about contact with other women: future empresses' access to them and the empirical skills they may bring with them remains open and free. Fenice's successful use of Thessala's knowledge to obtain her desired marriage partner may have inspired other women in attempts to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles by means of empirical practices accepted and commonly practiced at the time. The elements of forced marriage and empirical practice will appear in different permutations in the chapters that follow.

130. Roberta Krueger points out that gender division "creates a profound split in reception" (26).

3

TRISTAN AND ISEUT
BEYOND A SYMBOLIC READING OF EMPIRICAL PRACTICE

AS WE SAW IN the last chapter, a careful analysis of *Cligés* in light of the knowledge and practices of healing and love magic in the late twelfth century allows for a recuperation of the character Thessala from a fantastic or implausible status. Establishing a context for her knowledge and actions reveals that they are entirely in keeping with empirics in a time that did not make a clear distinction between magic and medicine. In this world very few university- or school-trained doctors existed; Thessala practices a full century before the University of Paris begins to try to limit the role of empirics or others such as surgeons active in healing. Chrétien's text precedes the rivalry that marks the late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century professionalization of medicine. Moreover, Thessala applies her knowledge to help Fenice gain a voice in a situation in which she has none, a forced marriage. Thus we see that in *Cligés*, empirical practice has the potential to shape marriage politics at court.

We can now turn to the story of Tristan and Iseut, which both corroborates and extends the role of empirical practice. A host of poets crafted the legend into romances, both verse and prose, in a range of European languages from the twelfth century onward. The earliest texts of the Tristan legend we have today are in Old French, one by Thomas d'Angleterre (Thomas of England or Britain), and the other by Béroul. For Thomas's *Tristan*, possible dates center around 1180, while for Béroul's they run from 1165 to 1202.[1] The concern with dating reflects a preoccupation of early medievalists who sought

1. Stewart Gregory offers the following reasons for placing the composition of Thomas's text between 1155 and 1210: we know 1155 as the date of completion of Wace's *Brut*, a text from which Thomas appears to have adapted several passages. The end date, 1210, is when Gottfried of Strassburg completes his *Tristan*, in which he names Thomas as his source. See Gregory's introduction to *Tristan, by Thomas of Britain*, trans. Stewart Gregory (New York: Garland, 1991), xi. Bartina H. Wind argues for the earlier part of that time period, specifically between 1150 and 1160. See Wind's introduction

to make arguments about which work influenced another. However, these arguments often rested on such tenuous evidence that they failed to convince all critics. Today medievalists tend to recognize not only that in many cases we will never have exact dates but also that other questions and issues hold considerably more interest. As with the vast majority of criticism on medieval literature today, the argument I seek to make here—that empirical practice participates in and influences the discourse of courtly love, and that the affiliation of that practice with love in romance forms a part of the cultural milieu that began to push medicine toward professionalization—does not depend upon precise dating.

A brief overview of the texts, their manuscript status, and their interdependence will set the stage for the analysis. Thomas's *Tristan* exists today only in fragments. It is named as the source of two thirteenth-century texts: a German adaptation by Gottfried of Strassburg and an Old Icelandic translation of Robert. Gottfried wrote his *Tristan* around 1210 but did not complete it, presumably because of his death.[2] Two different continuators, Ulrich von Türheim and Heinrich von Freiburg, offered endings, but the most commonly available English translation has been published with the ending from Thomas, since Gottfried breaks off very nearly where Thomas's final fragment picks up (although there are some gaps).[3] The earliest complete text we have for the legend is the German *Tristrant* of Eilhart von Oberge, dated to 1170–1190 and thought to be an adaptation of the now lost "story" (*estoire*) of Tristan.[4] Because the *estoire* does not exist in any written form, scholars

---

to Thomas, *Les Fragments du roman de Tristan: Poème du XIIe siècle*, ed. Bartina H. Wind (Geneva: Droz, 1960), 17.

Ernest Muret's 1903 edition of the *Tristan* dates Béroul's text after 1190–91 because he reads a pair of verses as an allusion to the siege and epidemic at Acre. See Muret's introduction to *Le Roman de Tristan par Béroul* (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1903), lxiv. He does allow that other sections may have been written earlier (lxv–lxvi). Others read the verses in question differently and reach different conclusions about possible dates. Merritt R. Blakeslee offers 1176–1202. See Blakeslee, "Mal d'acre, Malpertuis, and the Date of Béroul's *Tristan,*" *Romania* 106 (1985): 172. L. M. Defourques, in a later introduction to Muret's edition, states that if the verses do not pertain to the siege in question, the language and versification suggest a date as early as 1165 or 1170. See Defourques' introduction to Béroul, *Le Roman de Tristan*, ed. Ernest Muret, rev. L. M. Defourques (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927; rpt. 1982), x.

2. A. T. Hatto, introduction to Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan, With the Surviving Fragments of the Tristan of Thomas*, trans. A. T. Hatto (London: Penguin, 1967), 9–10.

3. Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan with the "Tristan" of Thomas*, trans. and intro. A. T. Hatto (London: Penguin, 1960, rpt. 1967).

4. *Eilhart von Oberge's Tristrant*, trans. and intro. J. B. Thomas (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978). On the *estoire,* see Jean Fourquet's preface to Eilhart von Oberg, *Tristrant*, trans.

debate whether the word refers to an actual written text or to an oral version only.[5] At the end of his version, Thomas remarks that he composed his poem to embellish "l'estoire," so that it might please lovers (Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 3136–37).[6] We will examine some part of each of the extant versions in the pages that follow.

Because of the long-standing fascination with the legend, criticism on the different versions is extensive. Early critics showed an interest in the sources of the legend.[7] Another holdover from the early days of medieval studies is the practice of labeling Thomas's work as "courtly" and Béroul's as "common." Although these critics found in Thomas evidence of the refined ideals of courtesy lacking in Béroul, some critics have called these designations into question.[8] Despite arguments about which terms are more appropriate for

---

Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1976), xi–xiii, and Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, *Tristan and Iseut: A Study of the Sources of the Romance*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Joseph Baer, 1913), 8.

5. Joseph Bédier discusses the written version. He speculates extensively on the contents of what he calls the primitive poem in *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*, vols. 1 and 2 (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1902, 1905). See especially vol. 2, 168–319. See also Maurice Delbouille, "Le Premier *Roman de Tristan*," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 5 (1962): 273–86; 419–35. On the oral version, see Emmanuèle Baumgartner, who suggests that the *estoire* exists "plus comme une vue de l'esprit que comme une réalité" (more as a theoretical construct than a reality) and that the variations in the many extant versions "ne met pas fondamentalement en cause l'existence d'un premier récit organisé sur Tristan, mais [la diversité] incite à s'interroger sur la nature de ce récit, son mode de diffusion, sa relative plasticité" (do not fundamentally call into question the existence of a first narrative organized around Tristan, but [the diversity] pushes us to question the nature of this narrative, its mode of diffusion, and its relative plasticity), *Tristan et Iseut: De la légende aux récits en vers* (Paris: Presses universitaires françaises, 1987), 15. Here, Baumgartner summarizes the various arguments concerning the dates of and links between the different versions.

6. Due to the large number of different Tristan texts cited in this chapter, I will give the author and editor after each citation. Verse numbers appear for the texts in verse and page numbers for those in prose.

7. Gaston Paris spelled out the case for Celtic origins (transformed by French poets) in "Tristan et Iseut," *La Revue de Paris* 15 (April 1894): 138–79. Joseph Bédier argued for a strong French influence in "Introduction," in *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*, vol. 2, 130–67. Gertrude Loomis argues for more Celtic influences than Bédier finds in *Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources*, vol. 1, 1–10, but notes that the French redactors put their imprimatur on it through means such as the inclusion of details from their society (vol. 2, 471). A more recent discussion is Sigmund Eisner, *The Tristan Legend: A Study in Sources* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), who argues for Celtic as well as other European sources. On the other hand, Pierre Gallais has proposed the influence of the Persian legend of Wis and Ramin. See Pierre Gallais, *Genèse du roman occidental: Essais sur Tristan et Iseut et son modèle persan* (Paris: Sirac, 1974). A recent summary of this criticism can be found in Claude Sahel, *Esthétique de l'amour: Tristan et Iseut* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 191.

8. The courtly/common distinction develops in the early works of critics such as Joseph Bédier, Gaston Paris, and Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis. It continues to be maintained by midcentury critics such as Jean Frappier. See "Structure et sens du *Tristan:* Version commune, version courtoise," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 6 (1963): 255–80, 441–54. Critics such as Bartina Wind and Pierre Le Gentil add some caveats. See Wind, "Les Eléments courtois dans Béroul et dans Thomas,"

which text, there is little disagreement that Thomas's and Béroul's texts differ enormously: from style, to emphasis and order of episodes (including omissions), the works present different interpretations of the story.[9] For this reason, I will discuss them separately, as most critics have done, beginning in this chapter with the version of Thomas d'Angleterre and its derivatives and continuing in the following chapter with that of Béroul and the texts similar to it. Recent critics have interrogated the Tristan material from a number of different angles: the mysteries of love interpreted by means of semiotic theory, the contested status of truth, the significance of adultery by a queen, the complexities of romance that allow for more open—as opposed to closed—interpretations, and the ineffable experience of love, among other approaches.[10]

Critics have mostly avoided any discussion of Iseut as a healer, possibly because these episodes no longer remain in the French fragments. Although the fragmentary status of the texts requires careful effort, enough description of empirical practice exists to identify it. Thomas d'Angleterre's *Tristan* depicts Iseut as a well-respected, skillful, and successful empiric. As with the healing episodes, the preparation of the love potion and its link to empirical practice have been largely overlooked. Those who discuss it have dismissed it; Jean

---

Romance Philology (August 1960): 1–13, and Le Gentil, "La Légende de Tristan vue par Béroul et Thomas," *Romance Philology* 7 (1953–54): 111–29.

Critics who question the distinction include for example, Pierre Jonin, who reverses those terms in *Les Personnages féminins dans les romans français de Tristan au XIIe siècle: Étude des influences contemporaine* (Aix-en-Provence: Annales de la Faculté des Lettres, 1958), 177–247. Jonin's work might seem germane to my analysis of empirical practice, but it focuses on juridical structures, courtliness in literature, and religious elements only in the romances and hardly mentions instances of empirical practice. He is, however, one of the few to discuss extra-literary influences. See also Jean-Charles Payen, "Tristan et Iseut," in *Dictionnaire des littératures de langue française*, ed. J.-P. de Beaumarchais, Daniel Couty, and Alain Rey (Paris: Bordas, 1984), 2335, and Erich Köhler, *L'aventure chevaleresque: Idéal et réalité dans le roman courtois*, trans. Eliane Kaufholz (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 170–93. Köhler primarily shows the lack of courtliness in Thomas.

9. Joan Ferrante has convincingly argued that each version of the Tristan story has a different meaning because the authors use the events to different ends. See Ferrante, *The Conflict of Love and Honor: The Medieval Tristan Legend in France, Germany, and Italy* (Paris: Mouton, 1973).

10. Merritt R. Blakeslee applies semiotic theory in *Love's Masks: Identity, Intertextuality, and Meaning in the Old French Tristan Poems* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989). This study analyzes Tristan only. The contested status of truth is analyzed by Burns, *Bodytalk*, 203–40. On the queen's adultery, see McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery,* especially 70–83 and 98–102. McCracken also analyzes the *Prose Tristan*, which is beyond the scope of this study. For an open, rather than closed, interpretation, see Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*. Bruckner's study includes chapters on the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford* and Thomas's work. On the experience of love, see Sahel.

Frappier, for instance, considers it a "pur symbole."[11] Within the context of empirical practice, however, the role of the love potion takes on entirely new meanings. I will argue that the love potion is more than symbolic—it is a real, imbibed beverage whose chemical ingredients altered Tristan and Iseut's perception of reality for a short period. This transformation has consequences for interpreting the couple's love throughout the rest of the narrative and indeed for the conception of love as presented in Old French romance.

Healing in Thomas's *Roman de Tristan* and Its Derivatives

Although the fragments of Thomas no longer contain the early episodes of healing, the text makes reference to them at later points. Thomas and the adapters who work from his version recount essentially the same events, with some variation in details. The main plot is as follows: Rivalin and Blanchefleur fall in love. They produce a son, Tristan, but both parents die young. Tristan grows up as a ward and is recognized for his intelligence even as a young child. One day as he is playing chess on a merchant's ship, it sets sail with him still aboard. A terrible storm lashes the ship, and the merchants leave Tristan ashore in a strange land that turns out to be Cornwall. Tristan makes his way to the court, where he encounters King Mark, the brother of Tristan's father and thus Tristan's uncle. At court Tristan distinguishes himself through displays of courtly skills. He then volunteers to fight the Morholt of Ireland, who for many years has demanded an annual tribute of young boys from Cornwall. Tristan slays the Morholt but is wounded in the battle. Because his wound will not heal despite care from the best doctors, Tristan journeys to Ireland to seek treatment for the poisoned wound. Here Tristan goes by the name Tantris in order to hide his identity as the slayer of the Morholt, brother of the Queen of Ireland. Tristan is healed by the queen and her daughter, Iseut.

Tristan returns to Cornwall, where the barons continue to urge Mark to take a wife—even though Mark has said he will not marry so that Tristan can one day inherit the throne. Mark later relents and decides to marry Princess Iseut of Ireland to cement peace between the two lands. Tristan, who returns to Ireland as emissary, continues to go by the name of Tantris. He slays a dragon whose poison lays him low, and is once again healed by the queen and

11. Frappier, "Structure et sens du *Tristan*," 273.

her daughter. One day, as Tristan soaks in a healing bath, Iseut notices a notch in his sword and fits into the hole the piece of sword that was removed from the dead Morholt's skull. Recognizing the Morholt's killer, she flies into a rage and threatens to kill Tristan on the spot. However, in the meantime Tristan has volunteered to fight her father's seneschal, who seeks Iseut's hand in marriage. Tristan reminds Iseut how valuable he is to her, and she relents. He defeats the seneschal in battle and requests that Iseut be permitted to marry King Mark. Her father assents, and Tristan returns to Cornwall with Iseut, accompanied by her lady-in-waiting, Brangien. Unbeknownst to either Tristan or Iseut, Iseut's mother has entrusted a flask to Brangien with instructions to give the love potion to Iseut and Mark on their wedding night. On the ship to Cornwall, Tristan and Iseut drink the contents of the flask, thinking it is simply wine. They admit their love for each other and consummate their passion on the spot. The journey continues, and upon arrival in Cornwall Mark and Iseut marry, but Tristan and Iseut continue their adulterous relationship. There is much discord at court, with accusations against the couple and attempts to show their innocence. At one point Mark banishes them, but he subsequently allows them to return to court. Later on, Mark banishes Tristan only.

The longest fragment we have from Thomas picks up the story at this point and will enable us to begin an analysis of Thomas's text. Tristan goes to Brittany where he marries another Iseut, who goes by the name Iseut aux Blanches Mains (Iseut White Hands), in an attempt to understand the Iseut he first loved. This ploy does not succeed because Tristan cannot bring himself to consummate the marriage. One day, a dwarf, also called Tristan, requests Tristan's help in battle.[12] The dwarf is unable to defend his land from a giant, Estout l'Orgillus of Castel Fer. Tristan agrees to help, and in the battle many are slain. Not only are the enemy and his brothers killed, but so is the dwarf, and Tristan is severely wounded (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2320–325).

Tristan's extensive battle wounds require medical attention, so doctors are summoned. We have details of their attempts to heal him:

> Ses plaies fet aparailler,
> Mires querre pur li aider.

12. Critics have discussed the doubling of characters such as Iseut and Tristan. See, for example, Susan Dannenbaum, "Doubling and Fine Amor in Thomas' *Tristan*," *Tristania* 5, 1 (1979): 3–14; Sahel, 115–37; and Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*, 37–59. Geoffrey N. Bromily points out that Tristan the dwarf gives us insight into Tristan's character. See Bromily, *Thomas's* Tristan *and the* Folie Tristan d'Oxford, Critical Guides to French Texts 61 (London: Grant and Cutler, 1986), 35–36.

Asez en funt a lui venir;
Nuls nel puet del venim garir
Car ne s'en sunt aparceü
Et par tant sunt tuit deceü;
Il ne sevent emplastre faire
Ki l'em puisse geter u traire.
Asez batent, triblent racines,
Cuillent erbes e funt mecines,
Mais ne l'em puent ren aider:
Tristran ne fait fors empeirer.
(Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 2326–37)

[He had his wounds dressed
and sent for doctors to come to his help.
Many were sent for to come to his side
but nobody could cure him of the poison,
since they had not realized its presence
and were therefore all on the wrong track.
They were unable to concoct a plaster
capable of drawing it from his body.
They beat and crushed many plants,
picked herbs and made medicines with them,
but could not thereby help him in any way:
Tristran did nothing but deteriorate.]

The same word that we saw in the previous chapter, *mire*, is used for these doctors. Since we learn nothing of their training or if they have degrees from any school, a degree seems less important than their ability to heal. We do see, however, that they use the same sorts of practical techniques applied by Thessala in *Cligés* and by healers of the time; that is, they pick herbs, collect roots, and prepare medicines to apply. Yet their work is for naught because these doctors do not perceive that Tristan has been poisoned. The description implies that a poisoned wound, like an unpoisoned one, would be treated with the application of a dressing, but the dressing must contain the correct substance to pull out (*traire*) the poison. Otherwise, the wound will never heal.

Despite the care of the Breton doctors, Tristan worsens:

Li venims s'espant par le cors,
Emfler le fait dedenz e hors;

Nercist e teint, sa force pert,
Li os sunt ja mult descovert.
Or entent ben qu'il pert la vie
Së il del plus tost n'ad aïe,
E veit que nuls nel puet guarir
Et pur ço l'en covent murir.
Nuls ne set en cest mal mecine;
Nequident s'Ysolt la reïne
Icest fort mal en li saveit
E od li fust, ben le guareit.
(Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 2338–49)

[The poison spread through his body,
making him swell inside and out.
He became livid and pale, lost his strength,
and his bones were already very much showing.
He knew full well that he would die
unless he had help at the earliest opportunity.
He saw that nobody could cure him
and that he would as a result be bound to die.
Nobody knew a remedy for this illness,
and yet, if Yseut the queen
knew he was the victim of this serious malady
and was by his side, she would easily cure him.]

Tristan is wasting away and recognizes his mortal danger. He understands that the doctors lack the knowledge they need to heal him, and he knows that Iseut has it: long before Tristan and Iseut consumed the love potion, Iseut and her mother had healed Tristan from poisoned wounds, first after Tristan's battle with the Morholt and then after Tristan was poisoned by the dragon.

Tristan describes to his liegeman, Kahardin, Iseut's healing abilities:

Perc jo, bels dulz compains, la vie;
Senz aïe m'estut murir,
Car nuls hum ne me put *garir*
Fors sulement reïne Ysolt.

Ele puet fere si le volt:
La mecine ad e le poeir,
E, se le seüst, le vuleir.
Mais, bels compainz, n'i sai que face,
Par quel engin ele le sace.
Car jo sai bien, s'ele le seüst,
De cel mal aider me poüst,
Par sun *sen ma plaie garir.*
Mais coment puet ele venir?
(Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2401–13; emphasis mine)

[I am on the point of death, fair companion.
I am destined to die unaided,
since nobody can *cure* me
except Yseut the queen.
She can do it if such be her will:
she has the medicine, she has the skill,
and, if she was informed of my plight, the will.
But, dear companion, what can I do about it,
what ploy can I use to inform her?
For this I know full well, that, if she was informed,
she could help me in this malady of mine,
use *her knowledge to cure my wound.*
But how can she be got to come over here?]

Tristan specifies that Iseut has knowledge and skills ("la mecine," "le poeir"; 2406) that other doctors lack. The problem is that Iseut is far away from Brittany. Thus, although the extant fragments of Thomas's text do not include the early healing episodes of the narrative, the text nonetheless depicts Iseut as a competent, well-respected healer whose knowledge surpasses that of the doctors in the region. Thomas's text makes very clear that although the doctors in attendance have some medical knowledge, they lack an understanding of the treatment of poisons, an area that Iseut knows well.

With respect to Iseut's healing capacities, the text does not support the views of Iseut implied in past criticism. For example, Gaston Paris attributes

the healing abilities of Iseut and her mother to "des charmes souverains pour les blessures,"[13] although there is no evidence of spells or superhuman activity. More recently, Daniel Poirion, writing about the legend in general (as opposed to a specific text), says "Le pouvoir magique de la jeune femme, sa science des venins et des poisons, font d'elle une nouvelle Médée."[14] In the last chapter we saw that Medea does not conform to medieval empirical practice in any way. Comments such as these by Paris and Poirion have contributed to images of Iseut as possessing dazzling and potentially dangerous powers that heighten her image, when in reality she offers only thorough albeit rare knowledge in a much-needed area. The Tristan materials are very matter-of-fact about the abilities of Iseut and her mother.[15] Perhaps conventional attitudes concerning women's abilities have contributed to the view that Iseut could not simply know more than the other doctors around her, resulting in the creation of a figure with mysterious attributes. Even though neither witch figures nor terms such as "necromancy" such as those we saw in the previous chapter appear in the Tristan legend, critics have resorted to such descriptions of Iseut and her mother, implying through the comparison to Medea that they are dangerous witches.

Although we have seen from the brief mentions of healing in earlier parts of the Tristan story, that Iseut is a successful empirical healer, the earlier healing episodes in the narrative merit examination because they contain important details that fill in the picture of Iseut as a healer. For these, we must turn to the Scandinavian version of the legend. We know that Brother Robert adapted Thomas's *Tristan* into Old Norwegian at the request of King Hakon of Norway in 1226.[16] Although no Norwegian manuscripts have survived, we do have their derivatives in Old Icelandic. As a result, it is impossible to tell whether the changes were made by Robert or by later

13. "Supreme charms for wounds." Gaston Paris, "Tristan et Iseut," 149.

14. "The magical power of the young woman, her science of venoms and poisons, makes of her a new Medea." Poirion, *Le Merveilleux*, 65–66.

15. In contrast, Joan Ferrante comments on the evil of female characters in Thomas (*Conflict of Love and Honor*, 116). Ferrante's characterization of Iseut seems to arise from an association between Iseut and magic powers (83). Ferrante states this link outright in her 1980 article on women and education. While the article treats Iseut more positively than Ferrante does in either *Conflict of Love and Honor* or *Women as Image*, she nevertheless analyzes Iseut's healing from the modern viewpoint that magic and healing are radically opposed realms, instead of reading them in the context of medieval empirical practice in which they are overlapping domains ("Education of Women," 30–31).

16. Paul Schach, introduction to *The Saga of Tristram and Ísönd*, trans. Paul Schach (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), xiii.

scribes. The Scandinavian additions are few: local place names are substituted, a troll replaces a giant, and Iseut says a prayer over Tristan's body.[17] By far the biggest difference is the translation's omission of more than one-third of Thomas's text, especially descriptions and monologues.[18]

We can compare a passage for which we have Thomas's text and Robert's translation in order to see the parallels. Robert's work renders the episode quoted above in which Tristan fights to help the dwarf and is wounded in the following way:

> Þetta sár var svá háskasamligt, at hann kvamst nauðuliga heim til kastala síns. Ok var þá gört boð eptir öllum læknum, sem í því landi váru—ok fengu þó ekki bœtr á ráðit, fyrir því at þeir kunnu ekki at göra at eitruð u sári nè eitrit út at draga, sem þ urfti.
>
> Tristram sýktist nú dag frá degi—því engi er sá þar, er hánum kunni at hjálpa—, enn eitrit dreifðist um allan líkama hans ok limu, ok af því spilltist hann allr. Ok kærði hann nú, ef ekki veittist hánum bráðar hjálpir, at hann mundi brátt deyja. Nú hugleið ir hann, at engi mætti bœtr um þat ráða, nema Ísönd drottning, unnasta hans, ef hón kvæmi. Enn hann mátti ekki láta flytja sik þangat til hennar. (Robert, *Saga*, 191)[19]
>
> [This wound was so severe that Tristram was able to reach his castle only with great difficulty. And then all the physicians in the country were summoned, but they were unable to bring him any relief, for they did not know how to treat poisoned wounds or to draw out the venom, as was necessary.
>
> Tristram's affliction worsened from day to day, for no one there could help him. The venom spread throughout his entire body and

17. See the introduction to the Norwegian version in *Tristan et Iseut: Les Poèmes français, la saga norroise*, ed., trans., and intro. Daniel Lacroix and Philippe Walter (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1989), 499.

18. Knud Togeby, "L'Influence de la littérature française sur les littératures scandinaves au Moyen Age," in *Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1972), 339–40.

19. All quotations from this work from Robert, *Saga af Tristram ok Isönd samt Möttul's Saga*, Udgivne af Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab (Copenhagen: Thieles Bogtrykkeri, 1878).

> all his limbs, and from this he was greatly harmed. And now he declared that he must soon die unless help came to him quickly.
>
> He considered now that no one would be able to bring about a cure except Queen Ísönd, his sweetheart, if she came to him, for he could not have himself taken to her. (Robert, *Saga,* trans. Schach, 141–42)][20]

The reader immediately sees both the terseness of Robert's work and its similarities to Thomas's. The events in Robert's version parallel those in Thomas's version very closely: Tristan has a difficult time returning to his castle, and doctors are called in to treat the wound, but their work brings no relief because they do not understand its source. Tristan's condition worsens, the venom spreads throughout his body, and Tristan fears he will die without the help that only Iseut can offer. Robert's work omits some details: the dressing of the wound before the doctors are summoned, the emphasis on the fact that the doctors misunderstand Tristan's affliction and so therefore cannot treat it appropriately, the need for a dressing that would draw out the poison, the preparation of medicines using herbs and roots, and the specific effects of the poison on his body. The only addition is the qualifier, "sweetheart," for Iseut (here referred to as "Queen" because of the status conferred upon her through marriage to Mark, King of Cornwall). This comparison thus confirms the findings of Danielle Buschinger, who compares an episode of Thomas and Robert and concludes, "Robert abrège considérablement—voire suprime—monologues et développements d'analyse psycholgoique. Néanmoins, ce ne sont jamais des coupes blanches, le moine [Robert] laisse toujours subsister une trace du texte original et même conserve l'idée essentielle."[21] Thus, it

20. All translations of the *Saga* from Robert, *The Saga of Tristram and Isönd*, trans. Schach.

21. "Robert abridges considerably—even omits—monologues and psychological development," "Gottfried von Strassburg, adapteur de Thomas de Bretagne (vers 18443–454 et 15765–16402)," in *La Légende de Tristan au Moyen Age: Actes du Colloque des 16 et 17 janvier 1982*, ed. Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1982), 171. Buschinger comments further on the relationship between the different versions in "L'Adaptation des romans courtois en Allemagne: Un exemple: Le thème de Tristan," in *The Spirit of the Court: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society*, ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Robert A. Taylor (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985), and in "La Technique de l'adaptation chez Gottfried von Strassburg d'après l'épisode de Rivalin et Blanchefleur," in *Mélanges de langue et de littérature françaises du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Charles Foulon*, vol. 1 (Rennes: Institut de français, Université de Haute Bretagne, 1980). Early on Joseph Bédier compared the two and reached the same conclusion in his introduction to *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*, vol. 2, 64–75.

is reasonable to use Robert's version to gain a sense of the earlier healing episodes in Thomas.

Tristan receives his first poisoned wound from the sword of the Morholt, who tells Tristan, "Aldri mun sá læknir koma, sem grœðir þetta sár, nema systir min: hón ein kann allra grasa náttúru ok þeirra krapt ok allskonar lækningar, er sár megu grœð a" (Robert, *Saga*, 57) ("You will never find a physician who can heal that wound except my sister. She alone understands the properties and potency of all herbs and of all kinds of medications which can heal wounds"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 43). We recall that the Morholt's sister is the Queen of Ireland, Iseut's mother (who bears the same name as her daughter, although Robert's text distinguishes them slightly—Ísönd is the daughter and Ísodd is the mother). The Morholt's prophecy proves true: Tristan's wound festers and refuses to heal, so he departs for Ireland.

Tristan attracts attention in Ireland because of his beautiful harp playing. Iseut hears of Tristan's playing and entreats her parents to let her study the harp with him. The only problem is that Tristan's wound has grown putrid and emits a powerful, off-putting odor. When Tristan arrives to teach Iseut, Iseut's mother tells him she will heal the wound so that Tristan can better teach her daughter (*Saga*, 60–62; trans., Schach, 45–47). Iseut's mother dispatches an assistant to prepare poison remedies. She then begins her treatment:

> Ok um nóttina eptir, þá tók drottning til höndum sínum ok þó sárit ór lækningargrösum ok batt þá við undarliga plástra, svá at á lítilli stundu kvam hón ór sullum ok eitrinu.... Sem hón hafði opnat sárit ok af komit öllu dauðu holdi ok út dregit görsamliga eitrit, þa sýndist allt hit kvika holdit betra. Þá batt hón við sinsingar-plástr ok grœðingar-smyrsl svá iðsuliga ok kröptuliga, at innan XL daga var hann svá vel grœddr, sem hann hefði aldri sár fengit. (Robert, *Saga*, 62, 63)
>
> [On the following night the queen set to work and with her own hands washed the wound with medicinal herbs and then bound it up with a marvelous poultice, so that in a short while she was able to remove the inflammation and the venom.... When she had opened the wound and cut away all the dead flesh and completely removed the poison, all the living flesh looked better.

> Then she applied poultices of sinsing and healing ointments so continuously and vigorously that within forty days Tristram was so well healed as though he had never been wounded. (Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 46–47)]

Iseut's mother performs a small operation and applies the necessary medicines to promote healing. The description contains very specific medical details about the cleaning of the wound and the use of plants that counter the poison and promote healing. Jerry Stannard has documented the application of poultices and plant leaves to wounds in medieval medicine.[22] The herb mentioned, sinsing, may be an alternate spelling of ginseng or ginger.[23]

Along with the treatments, Robert provides a general description of the healing abilities of Iseut, Queen of Ireland:

> I öllum heiminum var engi sá læknir, er svá kunni allskonar kunnáttu til lækningar; því at hón kunni at hjálpa hverskyns sóttum ok sárum, er menn kunna fá. Henni var kunnigt um allra þeirra grasa krapt, er til nökkurs góðs eru nýt. Hón kunni allar vèlar ok öll hjálpræði, er til horfðu lækningar-kunnáttu. Hón kunni ok at hjálpa við eitruðum drykk ok grœðing gefa eitruðum sárum ok háskaflögri ok allskonar sullum ok verk ór öllum limum at draga—svá (at) hvergi fannst henni hagari nè at lækningum betri meistari. (Robert, *Saga*, 62–63)
>
> [In the whole world there was no physician who possessed such healing lore, for she knew how to heal all kinds of sores or sicknesses that afflict people. She knew the power of all those herbs that have medicinal qualities. She knew all the methods and means of helping that belong to the art of healing. She knew how to help against poisoned drinks and to heal poisoned wounds and dangerous fevers and to draw all sorts of inflammations and pain from all limbs, so that nowhere was there a master who was more skillful and better than she. (Robert, *Saga,* trans. Schach, 47)]

22. Jerry Stannard, "Alimentary and Medical Uses of Plants," in *Medieval Gardens.*

23. Ginseng is recommended for bites and stings, among other uses (Duke, 337), although I have not been able to ascertain whether it was available in medieval Europe.

Iseut's mother is seen as a respected and competent medical authority in her community.[24] Like Thessala in *Cligés*, she knows how to heal different sicknesses and how to apply medicinal herbs to that end. Specific mention is made of her work with poisons along with other problems one might encounter. She has a vast store of knowledge at her command and applies that knowledge successfully.

Iseut's mother carries the primary healing responsibility in this episode. However, the *Saga* also suggests that Iseut stayed close by her mother's side and aided in the healing process (as she does in Gottfried's *Tristan* discussed below). In the second healing episode in Robert's narrative, the narrator writes, "Öngvan hafð i hann lækni annan, enn drottningina, ok öngvan skjaldsvein, utan Ísönd frú, er þ jónað i hánum lítillátliga" (Robert, *Saga*, 79) ("He had no physician but the queen, and no page except Princess Ísönd, who served him graciously"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 59). Part of the explanation for Iseut's healing knowledge lies in the structure of the empirical healing system: empirics learn from watching and working with other empirics in informal apprenticeships.[25] Robert's *Tristan* provides some evidence of the apprentice system at work. When Iseut, Queen of Ireland, first becomes aware of Tristan's wound and resolves to help him, she sends an unnamed attendant to prepare poison remedies (Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 46), suggesting that there are people around who help her with the work of preparing medicines and treating the ill. Another piece of evidence that suggests that Iseut learned from her mother comes from the Thomas episode analyzed above. Tristan states that Iseut knows about poison remedies that the local doctors do not.[26] In the description of Iseut's mother's healing, Robert's narrator lists, among other things, a knowledge of poisons. Tristan

24. In this way her status matches the position of female healers in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century southern France that Monica Green interprets from data presented in Joseph Shatzmiller, *Médecine et justice en Provence médiévale: Documents de monosque, 1262–1348* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1989), cited in Green, "Documenting Medieval Women's Medical Practice," 347. She notes, however, that Shatzmiller's study of the documents is not comprehensive. Moreover, these practitioners are a full century after the Tristan texts under consideration.

25. Siraisi describes this as one of the ways medical knowledge was handed down throughout the Middle Ages, including after the development of medical schools (*Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine,* 49–50). Green provides evidence of female empirics throughout the Middle Ages ("Women's Medical Practice").

26. In contrast, Joseph Bédier in his argument for the Celtic origins of the text argues that female healers with recourse to "herbes magiques" appear in many literary traditions and that the ability of Iseut's mother to heal Tristan from the Morholt's poisoned wound results from the fact that a poison brewed in Ireland requires specific Irish-grown herbs in the antivenin. Thus Bédier argues not that

knows this well, because his first poisoned wound, the one from the Morholt, failed to respond to the care of the doctors in Cornwall. As Robert tells us, they treated and bandaged the wound, but it did not heal (Robert, *Saga*, 60, trans. Schach, 45). Because of Iseut's presence and supporting role in the healing episodes, the apprentice-like transmission of empirical knowledge at the time, and the fact that Iseut has learned the treatment of poisons from her mother, we can deduce that Iseut too has the knowledge and skills of an empiric.

For Tristan's second sickness, brought on by the venom of the snake he killed, Iseut Queen of Ireland uses a well-known remedy:

> Ok tók hón þá ór pungi sínum þat, er vèr köllum eitrlyf, ok lèt í munn hánum, millum tanna hans, ok þar með trèhakl, ok hreinsaðist jafnskjótt af öllum krapti eitrsins … Því naest bjó drottning til laekningaplástr, at draga eitrit ór hánum, ok lagð hón til utan um líkama hans svá kröptugan plástr, at draga eitrit ór hánum, enn innan líkam hans með máttugum heilsudrykkjum—svá (at) hann kenndi allan sinn líkama huggast. (Robert, *Saga*, 78–79)
>
> [Then she took an herb out of her satchel that we call poison remedy and put it in his mouth between his teeth with some theriaca, and at once he was completely purged of the power of the poison.… Thereupon the queen prepared a healing ointment to draw the venom out of him. She laid such a potent poultice around his body to draw the poison out of it, and treated him internally with such powerful medicines, that he could feel his whole body being comforted. (Robert, *Saga,* trans. Schach, 58–59)]

Theriac has a long and distinguished history dating to antiquity. This name is given to a complex compound that served most commonly as an antidote to poisons but also developed a reputation for treating many common ailments such as headache or upset stomach.[27] First known as Mithridatium, the compound got its name from its inventor, Mithridates VI, King of Pontus in Asia minor (114–63 B.C.E.) who feared death by poison and so

---

Iseut has more knowledge than other doctors, but that she can heal Tristan because of geography. See Bédier's commentary on *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*, vol. 2, 142.

27. Watson, 46.

experimented on condemned prisoners to find antidotes.[28] After discovering that many plant-derived treatments had an effect on different poisons, he combined these into one super antidote.[29] When his kingdom was sacked by the Romans, his books and notes on poisons and antidotes were transferred to Rome, where they eventually found their way into the works of Roman medical writers.[30] Nero's physician, Andromachus, added viper's flesh to the compound and renamed it Galene, or "tranquility."[31] The medical writings that follow refer to theriacs as remedies against snake bites, scorpion stings, spider bites, and the like.[32] Numerous recipes for theriacs existed, some with as many as forty ingredients, most of them herbal but a few animal products as well.[33] Theriac is mentioned in ninth-century records in the cathedral of Chartres, and is included in Avicenna's *Canon Medicinae*, from which it makes its way into many other medical tracts.[34] Theriac was manufactured in twelfth-century Venice and became the most frequently used drug in the Middle Ages, perhaps because of its opium content.[35] By the mid-thirteenth century, documentary evidence shows that most learned physicians in western Europe were familiar with the drug.[36] According to a 1348 document from the masters of medicine at the University of Paris, "a little theriac should be taken with meals."[37] The proper dosage of theriac was discussed in a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century treatise by Arnald of Villanova at the medical faculty of Montpellier, after which theriac garnered more attention.[38] Theriac's popularity continued in western Europe throughout the eighteenth century, and was especially popular in France at points when poison was a common (if illegal) means to apply political will, such as after the marriage of Catherine de Medici to Henri III and during the reign of Louis XIV.[39]

28. Watson, 24.
29. Watson, 35.
30. Watson, 35.
31. Watson, 45.
32. Watson, 4.
33. Watson, 12–21, 41, 48–49.
34. Watson, 97–98.
35. For Venice, see Watson, 98. On the drug's popularity, see Lyons and Petrucelli, 355, 259.
36. Michael R. McVaugh, introduction to Arnaldi de Villanova, *Opera Medica Omnia,* vol. 3, *De Amore Heroico, De Dosi Tyriacalium Medicinarum* (Barcelona: University of Barcelona Press, 1985), 57.
37. Watson, 100. Unfortunately, Watson provides no source for this citation.
38. Arnaldi de Villanova, *De Amore Heroico.* On the increased popularity, see McVaugh, 67.
39. Watson, 100–154, especially 107.

Another treatment detail attested in the medieval medical literature is the use of baths. After exposure to the snake's venom, "[Tristram] hann sat í laugu, er hánum var með virktum gör, með allskonar grœðingargrösum—ok koma verkjum ór öllum líkama hans" (Robert, *Saga*, 89) ("Tristram sat in his bath, which had been carefully prepared for him with medicinal herbs to draw the pains from his entire body"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 66.) We have evidence that baths were used in treatment of spider bites.[40]

In conclusion, we can see that Robert's *Tristan* depicts the successful healing carried out by Iseut's mother with Iseut's help including wound cleaning, applying poultices, and dosing with theriac and other antivenins. Although Robert translates Thomas very closely in the sections that we are able to compare, we can never say beyond a doubt that Thomas included all the healing details seen in Robert. Nevertheless, given that the texts are almost identical except for Robert's omissions, it is reasonable to speculate that the earlier healing episodes in Thomas were very similar. Robert's translation corroborates the representations of Iseut as a healer that we have seen in the extant Thomas fragments and suggests aspects that were likely included in Thomas's text as well.

In addition to Robert's translation, the Middle High German *Tristan* of Gottfried of Strassburg also relies on Thomas for its source, and therefore it, too, warrants consideration. Gottfried's prologue states that not many have read the tale of Tristan and Iseut correctly (131–34). Gottfried critiques other authors and lauds Thomas's execution of the story: "sine sprâchen in der rihte niht, / als Thômas von Britanje giht, / der âventiure meister was" (Gottfried, *Tristan*, 149–51)[41] ("They did not write according to the authentic version as told by Thomas of Britain, who was a master romancer"[42]; Gottfried, *Tristan*, trans. Hatto, 43). In keeping with the medieval aesthetic of adaptation, Gottfried does not hesitate to give the work his own imprimatur.[43]

40. Watson, 17; Hughes, 29–30. John F. Benton has also found mention of baths as treatments in a Trotula manuscript, "Trotula, Women's Problems, and the Professionalization of Medicine in the Middle Ages," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 59 (1985): 39–40.

41. All quotations from Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*, ed. Friedrich Ranke (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1980, 1983).

42. All translations from the Gottfried Tristan are from Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan, With the Surviving Fragments of the Tristan of Thomas*, trans. and intro. Hatto.

43. W. T. H. Jackson argues that Gottfried is the only adapter of the Tristan legend to face squarely the question of whether earthly, physical love is incompatible with Christian society. Jackson points out the Tristan material differs from other romances in that it pits the lovers against an insurmountable obstacle rather than a removable barrier they eventually break through, strengthening their love

Gottfried's tale stands out for its further development of ideas on love and for its mysticism.[44] As we will see, Gottfried himself points out some of the alterations he makes.

As in the earlier healing episodes of Robert's *Saga*, Iseut's mother is the primary healer, both when Tristan seeks help for the wound by the Morholt and when he is poisoned by the dragon. When the Morholt wounds Tristan with his poisoned sword, he warns Tristan that in all the world only his sister, Isolde, Queen of Ireland, has the knowledge of herbs, virtues of plants, and medicine to heal him (Gottfried, *Tristan*, 6942–52; trans. Hatto, 134). Thus in Gottfried's text Iseut's mother (called "Isolde" in the German versions) is well known for her empirical healing and her vast knowledge.

After praising the healing abilities of Iseut's mother, Gottfried's text briefly describes the healing work. After Tristan is poisoned by the dragon,

> trîaken nam diu wîse dô,
> diu listege künigîn
> und vlôzte im der alsô vil în
> biz daz er switzen began.
>
> (Gottfried, *Tristan,* 9436–39)

> [the skilled woman then took some theriac and dosed him with it till he broke out into a sweat. (Gottfried, *Tristan,* 165)]

Iseut's mother uses the same remedy as in Robert's *Tristan*, but here we also learn that the medicine will produce sweating to release the toxins. Gottfried's and Robert's works describe this healing episode in much the same way.

In contrast, Gottfried's text curtails discussion in the first healing episode. When Iseut's mother agrees to heal Tristan's first poisoned wound, the narrator intervenes, stating:

> Ob ich iu nû vil seite
> und lange rede vür leite
> von mîner vrouwen meisterschaft,

---

in the process. See Jackson, *The Anatomy of Love: The Tristan of Gottfried von Strassburg* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 9.

44. Buschinger argues that while Gottfried follows Thomas's narrative, he adds passages to develop the ideas on love that he sets out in his prologue ("L'Adaptation des romans courtois in Allemagne," 108–9). On mysticism, see Hatto's introduction to Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*.

wie wunderlîche guote craft
ir arzenîe haete
und wie s'ir siechen taete,
waz hülfe ez und waz solte daz?
in edelen ôren lûtet baz
ein wort, daz schône gezimt,
dan daz man ûz der bühsen nimt.
. . . . . .

umbe mîner vrouwen arzâtlist
und umbe ir siechen genist
wil ich iu kurzlîche sagen:
si half im inner zweinzec tagen,
daz man in allenthalben leit
und neiman durch die wunden meit,
der anders bî im wolte sîn.

(Gottfried, *Tristan,* 7935–44; 7955–61)

[Now if I were to speak at length and deliver you a long discourse on my lady's skill as a physician, on the marvelous efficacy of her medicines and how she treated her patient, what good would it do and what would be the point of it? A seemly word sounds better in noble ears than one from the druggist's box. . . . With regard to my lady's medical skill and the recovery of her patient, I will tell you briefly that within twenty days she helped him so far that people suffered him everywhere, and none who desired his company held aloof because of his wound. (Gottfried, *Tristan,* trans. Hatto, 146)]

This description differs sharply from that of the same episode in Robert's version (quoted on pages 143–44), in which we are told that Iseut's mother cuts away dead flesh and binds the wound with medicines and bandages. In contrast, Gottfried's narrator takes a strong stand on limiting the audience's access to this information because it is not appropriate in a courtly tale. Given the differences between these two adaptations of Thomas, Robert's close following of Thomas, and the insistence on the part of Gottfried's narrator that he will include no uncourtly details, it seems reasonable to infer that Thomas's romance included a detailed description of Iseut's mother's healing.

Lastly, Gottfried's story also suggests that Iseut's mother serves as a kind of mentor to those around her, teaching them her craft. When the women ride out to search for Tristan, who lies unconscious because of the effects

of the dragon poison, Iseut's mother quizzes Brangien (Brangene), Iseut's lady-in-waiting:

> "sich, warte" sprach diu künigîn
> "waz ist diz oder waz mag diz sîn?
> Brangaene, höfschiu niftel, sprich!"
> "ez ist ein zunge, dunket mich."
> "du sprichest wâr, Brangaene.
> mich dunket unde ich waene,
> sô was ouch sî des trachen.
>
> (Gottfried, *Tristan*, 9419–25)

> ["Oh, look," said the Queen, "what is this, what can it be? Brangane, my noble niece, what do you think?"
> "It looks to me like a tongue."
> "You are right, Brangane, I have an idea that it was the dragon's!" (Gottfried, *Tristan,* trans. Hatto, 165)]

Iseut's mother here uses the Socratic method: she clearly already knows the answer to the question she asks Brangien and uses the question to lead Brangien to the correct answer. Most likely, given that Brangien takes part in most of the aspects of the lives of Iseut and her mother at court, she too has absorbed knowledge of empirical healing.

The depiction of healing offered in Gottfried's version largely corroborates that which we saw in Robert's *Tristan* in its avowal of Iseut's mother's knowledge and skills, its use of theriac as an antivenin, and its suggestion of an apprentice-type relationship. Although Gottfried chooses to eliminate some details he considers unsuitable for his courtly audience, we do learn that theriac's efficacy comes from its ability to induce sweating. Despite the difference in the overarching vision that guides Gottfried, the text nevertheless reveals the same empirical practices we have seen in *Cligés* and in the other versions of the *Roman de Tristan*. In these texts we see that Iseut's mother and Iseut possess medical knowledge and heal: like Thessala, they are empirics. They have a vast storehouse of knowledge on sickness, disease, and the healing virtues of plants that they apply to actual physical ailments. Their knowledge surpasses that of other empirics because they can prepare antidotes for poisons and counter their ill effects in patients. Thomas's text and those that derive from it also depict Iseut in an informal apprenticeship with her mother, a common means of transmission of medical knowledge.

The Potion

As in the case of Thessala in *Cligés*, medieval empirics may engage in practices other than healing. We recall that love magic was very common in the high Middle Ages among people at all levels of society. Whereas Thessala's detailed activities in love magic seem impossible to a reader with no knowledge of medieval empirical practice, those of Iseut's mother seem to be simply a metaphorization of an event that is difficult to describe: falling in love. We noted above that Frappier considers the potion nothing more than a symbol.[45] The symbolic interpretation is without a doubt the prevailing view of the potion in Thomas, as few critics have entertained the possibility or plausibility of a real potion.[46] An exception is Faith Lyons, who cautions that critics do not always clearly interpret allusions to medical science in medieval texts.[47] In keeping with their interest in sources of the romance, early critics usually proposed literary antecedents for such images.[48] Gertrude

45. Frappier, "Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 273.

46. See, for example, Myrrha Lot-Borodine, "Tristan et Lancelot," in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927), 21–47, 23. She also insists on its character as a "sort magique" or magic spell (24), with no consideration of the meaning of that term at the time. For this reason she proposes that the various Tristan poets attenuate the philter (24–25); for Pierre Le Gentil, the potion is "un symbole poétique" (a poetic symbol) (119); for Jean Frappier, "un garant symbolique de l'amour immuable" (a symbolic guarantee of immutable love) ("Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 273); for Daniel Poirion, it has "une sorte de valeur symbolique" (a kind of symbolic value) (*Le Merveilleux*, 67); for Anthime Fourrier, "le charme devient un symbole: le signe ésotérique de l'amour" (the spell becomes a symbol: the esoteric sign of love) (Fourrier, 71). C. Cahné says that in Thomas the potion has become entirely symbolic. See Cahné, *Le Philtre et le venin dans Tristan et Iseut* (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1975), 15, 35. Renée L. Curtis also reads the potion as symbolic, primarily because of the lack of the detail about its preparation. See Curtis, "Le Philtre mal preparé: Le thème de la réciprocité dans l'amour de Tristan et Iseut," in *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier*, vol. 1 (Geneva: Droz, 1970), 196. Irmgard Müller also reads the potion as symbolic in Gottfried's *Tristan*, "Liebestranke," 83. In contrast, Gerard J. Brault reads Iseut as a healer with connections to magic, but provides little evidence in his brief argument. See Brault, "Isolt and Guenevere: Two Twelfth-Century Views of Women," in *The Role of Women in the Middle Ages: Papers of the Sixth Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Birmingham, 6–7 May 1972*, ed. Rosemarie Thee Morewedge (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975). Moreover, Brault relies upon the *Roman de Tristan par Thomas* edited by Joseph Bédier for textual evidence, an edition in which Bédier attempts to reconstruct the missing portions of Thomas's text based on earlier works.

47. Faith Lyons, "'Vin herbé' et 'Gingembras' dans le roman breton," 689. Lyons points out similarities between medieval recipes for "vin herbé" and the poetic descriptions of the beverage. Béroul employs the term itself (2138) while the recipe collections use "cleretum," suggesting the drink's transparency, 690. In addition, W. T. H. Jackson notes the medieval belief in love magic (86).

48. Gertrude Schoepperle states that the potion had limited efficacy in the earliest versions (Eilhart and Béroul). See Schoepperle, "The Love Potion in Tristan and Iseut," *Romania* 39 (1910):

Schoepperle Loomis argues that although love potions were common features in antique and Irish literature, the potion of Tristan and Iseut derives from Celtic stories that include a *geis* or constraint to love brought on by a specific utterance: "In *Tristan and Iseut* . . . the two persons are equally victims in their passion for each other. The account of the drinking of the potion is intended to emphasize the irresponsibility of the lovers for their passion."[49] This differs from episodes of love potions in which one person attempts to influence the will of another. In Thomas's text, according to her, the potion "is the symbol of Amors, a divinity worshipped and blessed."[50] Joseph Bédier disagrees that the potion has its origin in the Celtic geis, but says instead that it may be inspired either by classical literature or "un emprunt aux superstitions de magie vivantes dans les divers pays d'Europe."[51]

A simpler explanation is that the potion is merely another aspect of the work done by an empirical practitioner who has a thorough knowledge of the effects of different plants and roots on humans—an apt description of Iseut's mother. Given what we have seen of medieval knowledge and practice, is it possible to conceptualize a real drink with properties that would enhance Iseut's first night with Mark? I believe that it is. With a better understanding of empirical practice at the time, we can reach a clearer understanding of the potion. Let us consider the circumstances. As a means to make peace, Iseut's parents, the King and Queen of Ireland, will send their only child across the sea to become the wife of the man who was their bitterest foe. She will go alone save for her trusted lady-in-waiting, Brangien. She will be married to a man perhaps twice her age, and will begin her married life as Queen of Cornwall and England. Her parents will be far away and unable to help Iseut in this transition—certainly they want her to be happy with Mark.

How might Iseut's mother use her knowledge of plants and their effects to help her daughter? She can supply wine with added substances that promote a pleasant first encounter and consummation of the marriage, which can help set the relationship on a steady course from its beginning and therefore promote her daughter's happiness. Plant-derived drugs can help bring about

---

293, and that Thomas's inspiration was a version much like that of Eilhart and Béroul (296).

49. G. Loomis, *Tristan and Iseut: A Study of the Sources*, vol. 2, 407.

50. G. Loomis, *Tristan and Iseut: A Study of the Sources*, vol. 2, 454. In her article "The Love Potion" (published under the name of Gertrude Schoepperle), she presents essentially the same argument, saying that the potion is "the symbol of the divine right of passion" (296).

51. "A borrowing from living superstitions of magic found in various European countries," Joseph Bédier, introduction to *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas: Poème du XIIe siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1905), 161.

a feeling of relaxation in what is surely an anxiety-producing situation, lower inhibitions, increase a sense of well-being, and possibly even create feelings of euphoria. Such a "love potion" works not on supernatural qualities, but on the principle of enhancing the conditions that can lead to falling in love. Iseut's mother has an intuitive understanding of the supposition of Michael R. Leibowitz who writes, "What seems likely is that the same neurochemical events that underlie many kinds of pleasure and stimulant drug arousal are also involved when we feel very attracted to someone."[52] If Iseut's mother can induce or heighten feelings of love between her daughter and a man she has never seen before, she *may* be able to encourage a happy beginning for the new couple. Iseut's mother carefully selects the active ingredients of the potion to mimic the sensations of being in love. If any mutual attraction was already present, the potion's ingredients would simply enhance the feelings of attraction brought on by the body's production of the neurochemical phenylethylamine, or PEA, dubbed the "infatuation chemical"[53] centuries before scientific scrutiny of this molecule. This naturally occurring amphetamine results in "feelings of elation, exhilaration, and euphoria."[54]

A fairly recent fortuitous discovery of another fragment from Thomas allows us to see Tristan and Iseut's elation and euphoria just after they consume the potion. This fragment contains the famous scene of wordplay between "l'amer" and "la mer" where "l'amer" can mean "love" or "bitter," and "la mer" means "sea." The fragment begins with almost forty lines that are incomplete—we have only the endings of these. We pick up where the full lines begin:

> [" . . .] Cum bien [crëustes] vus, amis.
> Si vus ne fussez, ja ne fusse,
> Ne de l'amer rien ne sëusse.
> Merveille est k'om la mer ne het
> Qui si amer mal en mer set,
> E que l'anguisse est si amere!
> Si je une foiz fors en ere,
> Ja n'enteroie, ce quit."
> Tristran ad noté chescun dit,

52. *The Chemistry of Love* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1983), 97.

53. Helen Fisher, *Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Mating, Marriage, and Why We Stray* (New York: Fawcett, 1992), 52. For the nickname, see Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of Love* (New York: Random House, 1994), 164.

54. Fisher, 52.

Mes ele l'ad issi forsvëé
Par "l'amer" que ele ad tant changee
Que ne set si cele dolur
Ad de la mer ou de l'amur,
Ou s'ele dit "amer" de "la mer"
Ou pur "l'amur" dïet "amer."
Pur la dotance qu'il sent,
Demande si l'[amur li] prent
Ou si ja grante ou s'el s'ast[ient]
. . . . . .

"Par tant qu'el voir le … te,
Car deus mals i put l'en sentir,
L'un d'amer, l'autre de puïr."
Ysolt dit: "Cel mal que je sent
Est amer, mes ne put nïent:
Mon quer angoisse e pres le tient.
E tel amer de la mer vient:
Prist puis que [je çaen]z entray."
Tristran respont: "Autretel ay:
Ly miens mals est del vostre estrait.
L'anguisse mon quer amer fait,
Si ne sent pas le mal amer;
Ne il ne revient pas de la mer,
Mes d'amer ay ceste dolur,
E en la mer m'est pris l'amur.
Assez en ay ore dit a sage."
Quant Ysolt entent son corage,
Molt est lié de l'a[vent]ure.
[Entr'e]ls i ad [mainte emveisure],
Car ambedeus sunt en espeir:
Dïent lur bon e lur voleir,
Baisent e enveisent e acolent.

(Thomas, *Tristan* fragment, ed. and trans. Short, 38–77)[55]

55. All quotations and translations of this text from "The Carlisle Fragment of Thomas's Tristan," ed. and trans. Ian Short, in *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 2, ed. Norris J. Lacy (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998). For other information on this recently discovered fragment, see Michael Benskin,

[" . . . Exactly as you had thought, my friend.
Had you not been here, I would not have been here either,
and I would have known nothing of love/the sea/bitterness.
It is a wonder that that person does not hate the sea/love
who is so bitterly sick at sea
and for whom the pain of it is so bitter!
If once I were released from this,
I would, I assure you, never again come back."
Tristan followed closely everything she said,
but she led him so much astray
by continually playing on the word "love"
that he does not know if she is suffering
because of the sea or because of love,
or if, when she says "loving," she means "the sea,"
or whether instead of "love" she is saying "bitterness."
Such is the perplexity he feels
that he wonders whether it is [love] that is taking hold of her,
whether she is already admitting it or is [resisting it]

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

"so that … the truth ….
for there are, in the circumstances, two sorts of sickness you can have:
the one biliousness, the other retching."
"The sickness I have," said Yseut,
"does leave a bitter taste, but is not sea-sickness;
where it hurts is in my heart, and it grips me there.
And this bitterness/love comes from the sea/love;
it started after I had come [aboard]."
Tristan replies: "I have exactly the same feelings;
my sickness goes back to the same root as yours.
It is the pain in my heart that makes it bilious/amorous,
and yet I do not feel the sickness as something bitter,
nor does it come from the sea;
the suffering I have comes rather from love,

Tony Hunt, and Ian Short, "Un Nouveau Fragment du *Tristan* de Thomas," *Romania* 113 (1992–95): 289–319.

and this love started for me at sea.
I have said enough for anyone capable of understanding me."
When Yseut hears what Tristan's feelings are,
she is delighted at what she sees happening.
[They take great pleasure in being together],
for both are in a high state of expectancy:
they open their hearts and desires to one another,
revel in each other's company, kiss and clasp.]

The homophonic wordplay between "l'amer" ("love") and "la mer" ("sea") reveals the couple's enjoyment of the ludic aspects of the conversation, showing the potion's ability to promote a sense of "pleasure, rampant excitement, and well-being,"[56] the same effects of PEA. Leibowitz notes further that alcohol and certain drugs lower inhibitions and that "[r]omance also has a disinhibiting effect for many people, which is one of its appeals. In general lovers are prone to feel bolder, more gregarious, less embarrassed, and more oblivious to what is going on around them."[57] The disinhibiting effects of the potion allow Tristan and Iseut to advance slowly and surreptitiously to the topic of love and the feelings it causes through their wordplay. Then Tristan states outright that he has another sickness, one that comes from love (67–71). The potion has lowered his inhibitions and thus enables him to name what he could never speak freely of in ordinary circumstances. Encouraged by his statement, Iseut feels a sense of relief, and they both say what they want (76). The potion works, dare I say it, like a charm. It enables the couple to speak of a love that will never and can never be socially sanctioned because Iseut will become the wife of Tristan's uncle, but it does so through somewhat ordinary chemical means available to a knowledgeable and wise empirical practitioner. Inhibitions lowered, the lovers act on their words by taking pleasure in each other, as the newly found fragment tells us, both day and night (Thomas, *Tristan* fragment, ed. and trans. Short, 84).

Thus Thomas describes a potion that is entirely in keeping with empirical practices of the time. Moreover, those practices were not seen as diabolical. Although as we have seen, love magic is commonly condemned by the Church, Edward Peters argues that the strong link of superstitions such as love magic, healing, fortune-telling, and weather magic to demonology is

56. Ackerman, 166.
57. Leibowitz, 72, 73.

gradually forged *after* the high Middle Ages, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries.[58] The potion includes substances that lower inhibitions and increase feelings of well-being and euphoria such that Tristan and Iseut speak of their love and then act on it. In the end, its function is similar to the libations and other substances available at many fraternity parties, as are perhaps the immediate results it produces.[59]

The reader may well ask how realistic the potion is in light of empirical practice, given that its effects last after the drugs it contains wear off—as surely they must after several hours. Leibowitz in fact notes that love potions do not exist because once they wear off, one returns to one's original "romantic preferences."[60] Yet, were there any romantic inclination whatsoever to begin with, such a beverage could easily promote those feelings. The answer is simply that Tristan and Iseut were already in love, though they had not yet become fully conscious of those feelings.[61] The events of their past meant that they had already spent a good deal of time together before undertaking their journey: during Tristan's convalescence Iseut helped care for him and supplied his needs. The healing process for the wound from Morholt's sword takes forty days (Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 47). Furthermore, Tristan becomes Iseut's tutor, teaching her courtly skills. Robert writes: "Þá kostaði

58. Peters, 165. For these reasons, I find Danielle Buschinger's insistence on the danger and criminality of the actions of Iseut and her mother to be an overstatement. Buschinger is correct in asserting that laws against the practice of magic exist, but she suggests an attitude toward magical practices in the twelfth century that works by Kieckhefer, Jolly, Peters, and Cohn do not support. See Buschinger, "La Mère guérisseuse et sorcière dans la tradition de Tristan," in *Les Romans de* Tristan *de Gottfried von Straßburg et de Thomas d'Angleterre: Actes du colloque du Centre d'études médiévales de l'université de Picardie-Jules Verne, Amiens, le 9 et 10 janvier 1999*, ed. Danielle Buschinger et Claire Rozier (Amiens: Presses de L'UFR de langues, Université de Picardie-Jules Verne, 1999), 1–13.

59. Thus I disagree with most critics who see the potion as having no role in Tristan and Iseut's love. An example is Frappier, who argues that Thomas wants the reason for Tristan and Iseut's passion to be their love; for him the potion cannot be an "external, material agent" but only a symbol ("Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 273).

60. Leibowitz, 123.

61. Several critics argue that the potion makes Tristan and Iseut conscious of their love. For example: Jackson, 86; Ferrante, *Conflict of Love and Honor*, 40; Frappier, "Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 277. For Eugène Vinaver, the potion does not serve to create awareness; it has practically no effect on the events of the story, since the couple is already in love. See Vinaver, "The Love Potion in the Primitive Tristan Romance," in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis,* 82. In contrast, Raymond Cormier disputes the view that they loved each other before they drank the potion. See Cormier, "Bédier, Brother Robert, and the *Roman de Tristan,*" in *Études de philologie romane et d'histoire littéraire offertes à Jules Horrent*, ed. Jean Marie D'Heur and Nicoletta Cherubini (Liège: n.p, 1980), 69–73.

Trantris með öllum hug at kenna Ísönd nætr ok daga hörpuslátt at slá ok allskonor strengleika, rita ok brèf at göra ok allra vèla fróðleik" (Robert, *Saga*, 63). ("Then Tristram endeavored day and night with all his powers to teach Ísönd to play the harp and other stringed instruments, to write and compose letters, and to acquire all kinds of knowledge and accomplishments"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 47.) Later, on Tristan's second voyage to Ireland, he and Iseut also spend time together during his convalescence. In addition, Tristan and Iseut fulfill an idea often touted in medieval literature, the well-matched couple, one whose looks, age, status, and courtliness are equal.

Did the future lovers have any conscious awareness of their feelings? Perhaps a glimmer. In Gottfried's romance, the narrator hints that this was the case after Tristan slays the dragon: in the process of healing Iseut observes Tristan's body from top to bottom, stealing glances whenever she can (Gottfried, *Tristan*, 9992–10003, trans. Hatto, 173). She admires Tristan and recognizes that the refinement she perceives in him goes beyond what she would expect from the minstrel he is impersonating at the time; she already has an inkling of his suitability for her.

In Thomas's work Tristan also implies that their awareness of this feeling preceded the consumption of the potion:

> Dites li qu'ore li suvenge
> Des emveisures, des deduiz
> Qu'eümes jadis jors e nuiz,
> Des granz peines [e] dé triturs
> E dé joies e dé dusurs
> De nostre amur fine e veraie
> Quant el jadis guari ma plaie,
> Del beivre qu'ensemble beümes
> En la mer, quant suppris en fumes.
>
> (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2483–91)

> [Tell her to call to mind
> the pleasures and delights
> we once enjoyed by day and night,
> the great pains and sorrows
> and the joys and sweet delights
> brought by that true and perfect love of ours,

when she cured me of my wound,
and the potion we drank together
at sea, which took us unawares.]

In listing the events of their shared past, Tristan says that they loved each other with true *fin'amors* before they even drank the potion, suggesting that such feelings were there for some time before they were recognized. We have all had experiences in which the signs pointed to an understanding that we saw clearly only in retrospect. Thus Tristan's description of the earlier healing episode and his love for Iseut at that point may indicate that he came to understand only later that they loved each other at that early point. The fact that their love is transgressive, because Iseut is promised to King Mark in marriage, could certainly have worked to prevent the conscious recognition of their feelings. Given the social strictures against their love, it is reasonable to assume that the couple could admit it only after consuming an inhibition-lowering, euphoria-producing beverage. The sensations enhanced by the potion continue long after the potion's pharmacological effects wear off because Tristan and Iseut share an abiding love, a love that causes them to wish to be together for the rest of their lives.

Thomas's version shows repeatedly that the author sought to align the episodes of the text with the practices of his milieu in a way that other authors did not. We can see this through an analysis of details in two episodes in Thomas and in the Middle High German work of Eilhart von Oberg. Thomas never mentions any limitations of the potion because once the couple becomes conscious of their love, it has served its purpose, and their love becomes the bond that holds them together. By contrast, Eilhart's potion has a number of very specific limitations. Although those who drink it will love each other for their whole lives, for the first four years the lovers must constantly be together. They cannot go more than half a day without seeing each other; they will fall ill if they are separated, and if a week passes during which they are unable to speak, they will die (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 74). Eilhart's potion therefore puts many strictures on the lovers, making their lives at court that much more complicated. Why would Eilhart depict the potion in this way? Perhaps he found it presented in this way in his source and did not change it, even though he could not imagine a reason for it. Eilhart follows this same pattern in the episode in which Mark finds Tristan and Iseut asleep in the Morois forest with a sword between them. Eilhart neither changes the episode or the characters in some way to provide a reason for Tristan's

behavior, nor claims to understand it: "That was a strange practice for a man, but it stood him in good stead later" (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 100). In contrast, Robert, following Thomas, depicts the two with the sword between them, but focuses on the fact that they are lying far apart. As the narrator explains, "Ok sváfu þau því svá fjarri hvárt öðru, at þau höfðu gengit at skemmta sèr" (Robert, *Saga*, 140) ("they slept so far apart because they had gone outside to amuse themselves"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 102).

Given Robert's tendency to abridge Thomas, perhaps Thomas provided greater rationale for the sleeping arrangement, but regardless, we see that Thomas melds the details seamlessly into his narrative whereas Eilhart's narrator simply states that the behavior is odd. This same approach applies to the potion. The details that Thomas supplies about the work of the potion can all be attributed to the short-term effects of pharmacological agents of the twelfth century, of which the most knowledgeable empirics would be aware. Thomas goes no further than this, seeming to understand that the greatest barrier to the love between Tristan and Iseut is the social mandate not to recognize and act on that love because of its transgressive nature. The potion serves only to shatter that barrier, after which their unleashed feelings will propel their love forward. The partial episode that depicts Tristan and Iseut consummating their relationship just after the consumption of the potion bolsters this theory. In contrast, in Eilhart's version Iseut immediately sees herself as sinful and feels shame, sorrow, and distress. Brangien sees that Tristan and Iseut are each languishing in bed, and she says they can be helped only if they are willing to become lovers (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 78). Eilhart thus shows a heavy-handedness in the effects of the potion, and with it a seeming lack of concern for motives similar to that which we saw in his treatment of the sword between the lovers.

Critics have at times characterized as awkward the changes that Thomas made to the Tristan story.[62] It is true that Thomas often provides motives for events left to chance in texts thought to be closer to the original.

62. For example, Eugène Vinaver considers Thomas awkward at times despite the fact that he imparts to the story a "psychological coherence." See Vinaver, "La Forêt de Morois," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 11 (1968): 13. Denis de Rougemont's thesis on the role of passion in western society grows out of Béroul's work only, for he states that Thomas reduces the role of the potion so that Tristan and Iseut's love "occurred spontaneously." See Rougemont, *Love in the Western World*, rev. ed., trans. Montgomery Belgion (New York: Pantheon, 1956), 28. For this reason, he concludes that Thomas "is the first writer to degrade the myth" (48).

For example, in works with fewer changes, after Tristan receives the poisoned wound from the Morholt's sword, Tristan puts to sea aimlessly, seemingly expecting to die. By chance, he lands in Ireland, where Iseut's mother cures him. In contrast, Thomas depicts Tristan making a decision to travel to Ireland to seek treatment for his incurable wound. Joseph Bédier characterizes Thomas's changes to the narrative as a "naïve tendance rationaliste."[63] Anthime Fourrier is one of the few to defend Thomas's vision. Fourrier places Thomas's work in the context of the court of Henry II of England (Henry Plantagenet), pointing out the many changes that Thomas makes in order to make the narrative more *vraisemblable* for Henry's time. For Fourrier, Thomas's version is marked with logic, reason, and a distaste for the marvelous.[64] While Fourrier links Thomas's work to the realities of the court of Henry II of England, Jean Frappier reads the word "reason" in the work as synonymous with *fine amor*.[65] Though Fourrier sees in Thomas changes that accorded with history, geography, and current events, for Frappier the potion is entirely marvelous; therefore, he reads it, as do most other critics, as symbol only.[66]

On the contrary, however, Thomas takes exactly the same approach to empirical practice that he takes to other phenomena he represents: he emphasizes specific details in order to present a coherent, cohesive picture. Critics have been unable to see this in Thomas's portrayal of empirical practice because of its perceived non-rationality. Yet Thomas exemplifies Richard Kieckhefer's conception of rational magic:

> To conceive of magic as rational was to believe, first of all, that it could actually work (that its efficacy was shown by evidence recognized within the culture as authentic) and, secondly, that its workings were governed by principles (of theology and physics) that could be coherently articulated. These principles need not always have been fully articulated or always articulated in the same way: conceptions of magic varied in their degree of specificity and in the specific types of principle they invoked. But the people in medieval

63. "Naïve rationalist tendency," *Roman de Tristan*, vol. 2, 318.

64. Anthime Fourrier, 19–110.

65. Jean Frappier, "Sur le mot 'raison' dans le *Tristan* de Thomas d'Angleterre," in *Linguistic and Literary Studies in Honor of Helmut Hatzfeld*, ed. Alessandro S. Crisafulli (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 163–76. Tony Hunt takes issue with Frappier's view, citing more evidence for a link to Henry II's court in "The Significance of Thomas's *Tristan*," *Reading Medieval Studies* 7 (1981): 41–61.

66. Frappier, "Sur le mot 'raison,'" 95, 70–71.

> Europe who used, feared, promoted, or condemned magic and who identified magic as such, not only assumed it worked but could give (or assumed that authorities could give for them) reasonably specific explanations of how it worked.[67]

In the end, we see that the presentation of magic in Thomas's *Tristan* in no way deviates from what has been shown about empirical practice in the high Middle Ages, even though it clashes sharply with the unsubstantiated notions about medieval magic held by modern critics who have long accused Thomas of reducing the magical elements of the tale.

We can see that the potion as presented in the *Tristan* of Thomas d'Angleterre forms a part of the empirical practice of Iseut's mother, who both practices healing and attempts to shape her daughter's perception of her first night with her new husband by providing wine adulterated with substances that reduce inhibitions and cause euphoria. As we saw in the case of *Cligés*, the use of a love potion would have certainly been considered love magic by the authorities, but other individuals would have been less interested in categorizing it and more interested in its outcome. As with *Cligés*, the narrators of the different *Tristan* versions (even those that are more complete such as Robert and Gottfried), make no judgments about the use of love magic and show no interest in applying theological labels to acts of love magic. By recuperating the actions of Iseut's mother in this way, we acquire a much clearer understanding of empirical practice and women's potential to shape the marriage politics at court, which leads us to a new understanding of passion in the work. Rather than using the potion as an excuse to exculpate Tristan and Iseut, we can see it as a means to make them aware of their passion in a world where those feelings have no place for expression because marriage politics are determined by dynastic interests. Understanding the healing and the love potion as aspects of empirical practice is, however, only the first part of the story. We also need to consider their effect on the remainder of the narrative.

A Healer in Love

We have seen that in the healing scenes Iseut and her mother rely on medical knowledge to remedy Tristan's physical ailments. Iseut's ability to heal comes from this knowledge and not from mysterious powers. Further, we recognize that Tristan suffers from a specific medical problem:

67. Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality," 814.

El cuer en ad mult grant dolur,
Car mult li greve la langur,
Le mal, la puür de la plaie;
Pleint sei forment e mult s'esmaie,
Car mult l'anguise le venim.
(Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory 2356–60)

[His heart was sorely distressed,
since he was much pained by his languor,
the sickness itself, and the stench from the wound.
Great was his lament and dismay,
since he was sorely pressed by the poison.]

Tristan's state is one of "langur" (1090), which Greimas defines as "état de maladie."[68] The wound causes sickness ("mal," 1091) and it stinks ("puür," 1091). Tristan cannot see how he might be healed ("garir," 1088), and it is this situation as a whole that makes him heartsick, or causes him pain ("dolor") in his heart, the same kind of pain he had when he realized he loved Iseut, but before he acted on it. Although the venom causes a physical pain that furthers his mental pain, the term here is "anguise"—"cause anguish." Part of the reason that Tristan seeks out Iseut is because the doctors who have tried to heal him actually cause him harm. Kahardin tells Iseut the result of their attempts to heal is "Que tut sun cors en unt malmis" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2721) ("that they have damaged the whole of his body"; Thomas, *Tristan*, trans. Gregory, 2721.)

While this representation of healing leaves no doubt that Iseut's healing ability comes from her knowledge of the human body, plants, drugs, and preparations, the fact remains that in this narrative Iseut has a double status as both healer and beloved.[69] Because the critical tendency has been to dismiss or misunderstand empirical skills in both Iseut and her mother, I have until this point discussed only their relationship to the world of empirical practice in order to show that Iseut and her mother fall within the category of empirical healers. Now it remains to examine the ways in which the distinct roles of healer and beloved shade into each other, especially as Thomas's

68. For more on the vocabulary of suffering in Thomas, see Jean Larmat, "La Souffrance dans le *Tristan* de Thomas," in *Mélanges de langue et de littérature françaises du Moyen Age offerts à Pierre Jonin,* Sénéfiance 7 (Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, 1979): 369–85.

69. In contrast, Moshé Lazar reads Iseut as nothing more than an exemplar of the lady of troubadour lyric in Thomas's work (160–70).

Tristan nears its conclusion, for it is the romance's juxtaposition of the two that encourages a conflation that alters both.

Tristan clearly sees Iseut's double role. In Thomas's work, Tristan is concerned that Iseut not be seen as his beloved when she comes to Brittany to heal him from the poisoned wound. He gives Kahardin many instructions when Kahardin sets off for Cornwall on the mission to persuade Iseut to come to Brittany, including the following:

> Se ço faites que jo ai dit,
> Quë Yselt s'e[n] venge ov[e] vus,
> Gardez nuls nel sache for nus.
> Celez l'envers vostre serur,
> Que susspeciun n'ait de l'amur.
> Pur mire la ferez tenir:
> Venue est ma plaie guarir.
> (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2551–57)

> [And if you do achieve what I have told you,
> that is if Yseut does come here with you,
> make sure that nobody knows of it but us.
> Hide it from your sister,
> so that she has no suspicion of our love.
> You can pass her off as a doctor,
> come to heal my wound.]

Tristan here points out Iseut's double status: she is both his beloved, a fact he does not want his wife to discover, and the person with enough knowledge to heal him. Thus he insists that Kahardin say *only* that she is a doctor come to heal his wounds, not that she is the woman he loves. Tristan's phrasing should not lead us to believe that Iseut lacks medical knowledge; rather, it is a boon that the person who has the knowledge to heal him is also his beloved. In addition, Tristan's terminology should not cast doubt on Iseut's ability to heal, given the flexible use of terms for healers that historians have described.[70]

The double status of Iseut as healer and beloved is unique to her character in this narrative. It stands in sharp contrast to an episode in the earliest part of the narrative, which relates the story of Tristan's parents. Again, Robert

70. See above. For a different reading of the use of the terminology, see Peggy McCracken, "Women and Medicine."

provides the main lines of the story but changes the names of the characters from Blanchefleur to Blensinbil (Tristan's mother) and from Rivalin to Kanelangres (Tristan's father). Kanelangres takes part in tournaments at Mark's court and Blensinbil falls in love with the successful knight from afar. When they meet, Kanelangres falls in love with her. Kanelangres is then wounded in a contest (Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 7–14), and Blensinbil visits him on his sickbed, where she swoons on his body in grief and then begins kissing and embracing him, "Enn hann þegar í því angri ok meinlæti sinna sorga faðmaði hana með ástar þokka, svá at í sorg sinnar ástar fèkk sú hin fríða frú getnað" (Robert, *Saga* 19) ("And he forthwith, in the grief and pain of his afflictions, embraced her in ardent love, so that the beautiful lady conceived a child in the anguish of love"; Robert, *Saga*, trans. Schach, 15.) While this act seems to revive Kanelangres somewhat, Robert makes it quite clear that this is not what heals him: "Nú sem þau luku leik sínum ok rœðu, gekk hón í herbergi sitt. Enn hann lèt grœða sár sitt hinn vildasta lækni, enn sem fyrr" (Robert, *Saga*, 19) ("When they had finished their love-play and their conversation, she returned to her room. He had an excellent physician treat his wounds as formerly"; Robert, *Saga,* trans. Schach, 16.) Although there is no doubt that Blensinbil has a positive effect on Kanelangres, she does not heal him. It takes a doctor and medicines to treat his wounds and return him to health. Iseut, by contrast, fulfills both of these roles.

Yet another indication in Thomas's *Tristan* that healing and the solace of the beloved differ can be seen in the terms used to describe the effects of love and the effects of healing. Just after the potion's consumption,

> Delitablë est le deport
> Qui de sa *dolur* ad *confort,*
> Car c'est custome d'amur
> De joie aveir aprés *dolur.*
>
> (Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. Benskin, Hunt, and Short, 85–88, emphasis mine)

> [Their sport together is delectable
> As it gives *comfort* to their *pain,*
> Because it is the custom of love
> To have joy after pain.][71]

71. Translation mine.

The effect of the potion is "pain" ("dolor"), the same word we saw above in the description of Tristan's heartsickness upon drinking the potion. The relief from "dolor" comes through "comfort." "Dolor," meaning heartsickness, and "comfort," meaning solace (from the beloved), appear repeatedly in this text. As Tristan and Iseut take leave before he departs for Brittany:

> Tendrement dit: "Amis, bel sire,
> [B]ien vos doit menbrer de cest jor
> [Que] partistes a tel *dolor*.
> Tel paine ai de la desevranche
> Ains mais ne sui que fu pesanche.
> Ja n'avrai mais, amis, deport,
> Quant j'ai perdu vostre *confort*.
>
> (Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 41–47, emphasis mine)

> [(She) spoke these sad words: "My love, fair lord,
> you will perforce recall this day
> you left in such sorrow.
> This parting causes me such *grief*
> that all my former sorrows count as nothing.
> Never, my love, will joy be mine again,
> Now that I am losing the *solace* you bring.]

Later, as Tristan contemplates marriage to Iseut aux Blanche Mains, he contrasts the pain in his life to the love with Mark that Iseut has in hers, "Jo main ma vie en grant *dolur*, / E vos vostre en delit d'amur" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 64–65) ("The life I lead is one of great sorrow / but yours is given to the pleasures of love"). He complains that Iseut does not want to comfort him, "E rien *comforter* ne me volt" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 79) ("and yet she does not wish to give me any comfort"; Thomas, *Tristan*, trans. Gregory, 79). In this case, the terminology of love uses "dolor" to mean the pain of love and "comfort" to mean the solace brought by the beloved. The term "comfort" is polysemous, expressing meanings from "general solace" to "sexual release," but it is not applied to discussions of medical conditions or healing.

In cases of healing we find other terms, most commonly, as we have seen, the verb *guerir*, "to heal." Tristan applies the term again when he speaks to Kahardin,

"N'Ysolt ne puet a li venir! / Ne set coment puise *garir*" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2354–55) ("But Yseut could not come to him! / He did not know how he would be cured"; Thomas, *Tristan*, trans. Gregory, 2354–55). Kahardin repeats this to Iseut when he requests that she come to Tristan's aid, "Senz vus ne puet il pas *guarir*" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2750) ("he cannot be cured without you"; Thomas, *Tristan*, trans. Gregory, 2750).

Iseut also separates comfort from healing when, as she travels to Tristan, a fierce storm threatens to end her life:

> Beals amis, quant orét ma mort,
> Ben sai puis n'avrez ja *confort*;
> De ma mort av[r]ez tel *dolur*,
> A ce qu'avez si grant langur,
> Que ja puis ne purrez *guarir*.
> (Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 2890–94, emphasis mine)

> [My sweet love, I am sure that, once you hear
> of my death, there will be no more *comfort* for you;
> you will feel such *grief* at my death,
> along with the great languor you are feeling,
> that you will never be able to be *cured* after that.]

Iseut distinguishes the healing she can provide for Tristan from the comfort that comes from the presence and love of the beloved. Despite her knowledge and her ability to heal, Iseut acknowledges, in accordance with general medieval beliefs, that Tristan can be healed without her through God's intervention when she says "Se Deu plaist, vus poez garir" (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2944) ("If God please, you may be cured"; Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. Gregory, 2944). If this healing takes place, Tristan could then take comfort in another woman:

> Amis, dei jo aveir poür
> Puis ma mort, si vus guarissez,
> Qu'en vostre vie m'ublïez,
> U d'altre femme aiez *confort*,
> Tristran, apruef la meie mort?
> (Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 2949–54, emphasis mine)

[My love, should I be afraid,
after my death, should you be cured,
lest you forget me in your lifetime,
or that you find your *comfort*, Tristran,
with some other woman, after my death?]

Iseut, too, makes a clear distinction between the healing of physical wounds and the solace brought about by the beloved's presence.

Thus we see that in Thomas's work, Tristan's medical status is separate from the condition of being in love. The situations result from different causes and require different treatments. However, in spite of the clear distinction that both Tristan and Iseut make between healing and comfort at certain moments, there are other points in this last section of the text in which the roles of healer and beloved are so similar that they have the potential to merge. At this point, Tristan needs both Iseut's healing knowledge and the comfort of the beloved. As the romance builds towards the final scene, we therefore find that the earlier distinction between healing and comfort becomes muddied. When Kahardin's ship makes its passage from Tintagel to Brittany with Iseut aboard, the narrator describes the situation:

Tristran, qui de sa plaie gist,
En sun lit a dolur languist
De ren ne puet *confort* aveir:
Mecine ne li put vailler,
Rien qu'il face ne li aiüe.
D'Ysolt desire la venue.
Il ne coveitë altre ren,
Senz li ne puet aveir nul ben.
Pur li est ço quë il tant vit:
Languist, atent la en sun lit,
En espeir est de sun venir,
E que sun mal deive guarir,
E creit quë il senz li ne vive
(Thomas, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Gregory, 2810–22, emphasis mine).

[Tristran, confined to his bed by his wound,
lay there languishing in pain.

He could find no *comfort* in anything:
medicine was of no avail to him
and nothing he could do could help him.
He longed for Yseut to arrive.
He longed for nothing else,
since without her no good could come to him.
It was the thought of her that kept him alive for so long.
There he languished, waiting for her in his bed,
hopeful that she would come
and that she would cure his sickness,
and knowing that without her he could not live.]

Again, Tristan's wound causes him to languish, and nothing can comfort him. "Comfort" here can be understood as relief from the war wound, a departure from the other applications of the term we have seen. Without Iseut Tristan believes he will die; she is his savior. But the lines suggest that he will die both from the wound and from a lack of comfort from Iseut.

When Tristan instructs Kahardin what to say when he entreats Iseut to come to Tristan, he makes it clear that he needs both healing and solace from her:

Dites li saluz de ma part,
Que nule en moi senz li n'a part.
De cuer tanz saluz li emvei
Que nule ne remaint od moi.
Mis cuers de salu la salue:
Senz li ne m'ert *santé rendue*.
Emvei li tute ma salu:
Cumfort ne m'ert ja mais rendu,
Salu de vie ne santé,
Se par li ne sunt aporté.
S'ele ma salu ne m'aporte
E par buche ne me *conforte,*
Ma santé od li dunc remaine,
Et jo murrai od ma grant *peine;*
Enfin dites que jo sui morz
Se jo par li n'ai les *conforz*.

Demustrez li ben ma *dolur*
E le mal dunt ai la *langur.*

(Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, emphasis mine, 2464–81)

[Tell her I hope she is in good health,
for without her there is no health in me.
My heart sends out to her so many wishes for good health
that no health is left behind here in my body.
My heart conveys to her wishes for good health,
for without her I shall not be *restored to health.*
I send her every wish for good health,
for no *comfort* shall ever be mine again,
no hope of life, no health of body,
if they are not brought here by her.
If she does not bring to me my good health
and *comfort* me with her lips,
then my health will remain with her
and I shall die of this great *pain* I feel.
In sum, tell her that I am as dead
if I do not have the *comfort* she can bring.
Describe to her in full the *pain* I feel
and the sickness from which I *languish.*]

Already at the beginning of the passage, Tristan plays on the homophones "saluz" (1197, salutations) and "salu" (1199, salvation) to suggest that Iseut's greeting him could save his life. The similarity of the roles of Iseut as healer and beloved continues with the notion that the salvation would also come through her ability to restore his health (1200). Tristan insists that he needs both comfort and health and that Iseut brings both. He repeats this idea in the following lines, saying that he needs health ("salu," 1205) and comfort from her mouth (1206). He says he will die both from pain (1208) and from lack of comfort (1210). He suffers both "dolor," from loving Iseut (1210) and "langur," from the wound (1212), and Iseut can help him in both situations. At this point, Iseut's two roles begin to elide into each other. Such an elision paves the way for slippage from the notion of the relief in the presence of the beloved to the notion that the presence or love (physical and/or spiritual) of the beloved is the actual source of healing.

A similar slippage can be seen when Iseut addresses Tristan's corpse:

> Se jo fuissë a tens venue,
> Vie vous ouse, amis, rendue
> E parlé dulcement a vos
> De l'amur que fu entre nos;
> Plainte ouse la mei[e] aventure,
> Nostre joie, nostre emveisure,
> La painë e la grant dolur
> Quë ad esté en nostre amur,
> E oüse iço recordé
> E vos baisié e acolé.
> Se jo ne poisse vos guarir,
> Qu'ensemble poissum dunc murrir!
> (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 3094–105)

> [If I had come in time,
> I would have restored to you your life, my love,
> and spoken sweetly to you
> of the love that was between us;
> I would have bemoaned my lot,
> the joy we had, the delights,
> the pain and the great sorrow
> which has marked the love between us,
> and I would have recalled all this
> and kissed and embraced you.
> And if I had failed to cure you,
> then we could have died together!]

Since we do not have the earlier healing episodes, it is impossible to say that this slippage does not also occur in the earlier sections; we do know, however, that in the early healing episodes Tristan and Iseut have not yet declared their love for one another and that in the tryst episodes, Tristan is neither sick or wounded. Thus, it is clear that some separation between the two is maintained. Critics nevertheless have a tendency to read Iseut's healing skills only metaphorically. For example, Merritt R. Blakeslee writes, "In T[homas] the metaphor of a wound to the hero's sexual parts and its subsequent healing through the act of physical love renders most explicitly the intimate association between Tristan's suffering for love and

the healing qualities of that very love."[72] Denyse Delcourt recognizes only partially that Thomas's text represents real phenomena when she writes that "Tristan, autrement dit, souffre 'réellement' . . . d'un coup 'véritable,' qui est littéralement en train de tuer l'amant"[73]; her use of inverted quotation marks for "really" and "true" suggests that she cannot accept Thomas's representation.

At the conclusion of the work, there is no healing for Tristan or comfort for either of the lovers. As Thomas's *Tristan* builds toward the dramatic death scene of Tristan and Iseut, other themes also coalesce. While I have argued that the philter was a real beverage with measurable physical effects, this does not preclude it from also taking on symbolic meanings, and indeed it does so as Thomas's work concludes. Already when Tristan instructs Kahardin what to say to Iseut to persuade her to come to Brittany, he links the beverage to their deaths:[74]

> El beivre fud la nostre *mort*,
> Nus n'en avrum ja mais *confort*;
> A tel ure duné nus fu
> A nostre mort l'avum beü.
>
> (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 2492–95, emphasis mine)

> [Our *death* lay in that potion,
> and never shall we have *relief* from death;
> those were the circumstances under which it was given,
> that we drank with it our death.]

The striking rhyme of "comfort" and "mort" (death) in verses 2492–93 solidifies the link that Tristan makes between the two. In his state of illness and with little hope that he will survive his latest sword wound, Tristan seems to

72. Blakeslee, 100.

73. "In other words, Tristan 'truly' suffers . . . from a 'real' blow that is literally killing the lover," Denyse Delcourt, *L'Ethique du changement dans le roman français du XIIe siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 1990), 65.

74. Ferrante sees the prevailing mood in Thomas as melancholic (*Conflict of Love and Honor*, 76). Tony Hunt sees it as gloomy ("Significance of Thomas's Tristan," 46). For Renée L. Curtis, the potion here is the equivalent of death. See Curtis, "Love and Death in Thomas's *Tristan*," *Tristan Studies* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969), 36–41. For perceptive comments on the end of Thomas's work, see Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*, 53–59.

take on melancholy that is more severe than before: here he states outright that drinking the beverage will lead to their deaths, insisting that the philter is their deaths and that in consuming it, they drank to their deaths. The beverage, in combination with the social strictures on Tristan and Iseut in their particular situation, has given them no peace, only pain and eventually death. In the short fragment that describes Tristan and Iseut just after having drunk the potion, no link is made between the potion and death. As we have seen, their earlier experience of the potion does include pain ("dolor"), but this is answered with comfort and joy. As they come to understand how to alleviate the pain caused by the potion, they even have hope ("espeir," verse 75, pages 132–33).

By the end of Thomas's *Tristan*, after so much suffering, separation, and loss, and so little relief, Tristan sees no hope, only death. Already before Tristan sends Kahardin away to seek Iseut, he suggests that the adventure will end in their death. Iseut extends this symbolic meaning of the potion at the death scene when she addresses Tristan's body with the following:

> Quant [jo] a tens venir n'i poi
> E jo l'aventure ne soi
> E venue sui a la *mort*,
> De[1] meïsme beivre ai *confort*!
>
> [But since I was unable to come in time
> and knew nothing of your fate,
> and came only after your *death,*
> I shall find *comfort* in the same cup.]
>
> (Thomas, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Gregory, 3106–9, emphasis mine)

Iseut laments her arrival too late to cure Tristan from the poisoned wound. Timing is crucial, and Iseut understands here that it worked against her: she believes that Tristan died not because of love and disappointment caused by her inability to come to his aid, but because of the wound. She says that if she had heard earlier of his misadventure, his death could have been prevented. The beverage Iseut refers to in this passage is entirely metaphorical: she will partake of the same "drink" as Tristan because she too will die. She, too, rhymes death ("mort") with "comfort" and says she will find comfort in the same beverage. Here that beverage is death, but it also recalls the beverage they shared together so long ago on the sea voyage to Cornwall. Because of the missing segments of Thomas's tale, we do not know how the philter was represented in the earlier parts of the work, except to say that it joined both

pain and comfort and sadness and joy. From its earliest representation there are hints that the love it brings will not be easy or simplistic. By the end of the work, not only have Tristan and Iseut suffered because of their love, but they have suffered because of the difficulties of expressing that love in the circumstances of their lives, such as the separation from one another that they have experienced.

As Tristan lies ill from the sword wound, realizing that only Iseut can cure him and therefore that his life is endangered, it is no surprise that thoughts of death haunt him. Although he has been unhappy and even in despair at earlier points (as, for example, when he decides to marry Iseut aux Blanches Mains), he talks only of his pain and suffering and attempts to alleviate it. Only when his life is truly imperiled and death seems imminent does it begin to color his representation of the potion. Thus, in the conclusion of Thomas's romance not only do Iseut's roles as healer and lover shade into one another, as we saw above, but death shades into Tristan's and Iseut's conception of their love. This occurs when they have brushes with death. Tristan lies gravely ill from a wound that no one but Iseut can heal, and Iseut endures a tempest at sea that she fears will drown her before she can reach her lover. Death's proximity in these final episodes enables it to shape both Tristan's and Iseut's reactions in this final section. Thus, Tristan describes the potion as leading to death, and later, upon seeing Tristan's corpse, Iseut completes this symbolic transfer by exclaiming that she will drink from the same cup. Their conceptualization of the potion as death is accurate because both die from love, despite other life-threatening forces around them.

Thomas closes his work with a short epilogue addressed to lovers—that is, to those whom he expects to find the most meaning in his writing. He says the work should please lovers, but more importantly, that it should offer them what Tristan and Iseut sought from each other throughout: "grant confort" ("great comfort") (Thomas, Tristan, ed. and trans. Gregory, 3140). This comfort should soothe the difficulties of love such as "painë e dolur" ("pain and sorrow") (3142) that have been the focus of so much of the romance. Although the comfort that lovers can have will not overcome death, an impossible feat, it will help them "encuntre change, encontre tort" ("when they are the victims of fickleness and wrong") (3141). Thomas suggests that his romance can bring comfort in such situations.

Tristan and Iseut die not because their passion has destructive force *per se*. It becomes untenable only in the complicated social structure in which one marries not for love but for dynastic purposes. Iseut was to be a peace offering to Mark and to all of Cornwall and England. Neither Iseut nor

Tristan has the ability to say whom they might wish to marry based on their feelings. In all of the reworkings of the Tristan material into other narratives under consideration here, the potion will either disappear or will no longer be made to induce love. It has been assumed that the potion's implausibility was the only reason to delete it from the adaptations. But the potion is merely one side of the story; the other side is the unbreachable societal limitations placed on the couple. The two parts go hand in hand: when the social situation of the couple completely blocks their ability to be together, their potion-catalyzed love makes that need all the stronger. In none of the other works we will examine are these limitations so solidly in place, for in all of them the lovers find a socially sanctioned way to be together.

Conclusion

What does it mean for the legend of Tristan and Iseut to offer a reading that insists first and foremost on the potion's realism alongside the symbolic ones that can and should continue to exist? First, it requires us to take empirical practice seriously. This vast body of knowledge was real and should influence our reading of the Tristan romances. Just as Tristan is admired for his courtly skills in music and poetry, his hunting prowess, and his youth and good looks, Iseut matches him well. She too is young and beautiful, and she learns courtly skills from Tristan, but by no means is she entirely his creation. She brings to the couple and to the court in general her skills and knowledge in empirical practices. The fact that Iseut and her mother meet no medical condition that they cannot overcome should not cause us to dismiss empirical practice, because such perfect accomplishments are regularly attributed to the protagonists in romance. The knight vanquishes whomever he fights, taking on the best and strongest opponents and winning even when the battle is hard fought and the outcome is not assured. So too the maiden excels at whatever she undertakes. The romance convention according to which the couple triumphs over whatever challenges they meet by dint of their superior skills is at work in the Tristan legend and serves to mark Tristan and Iseut as a well-matched couple. To the literal reading of the potion as a draught that induces bodily sensations that imitate feelings of love and therefore encourages those feelings when such an inclination already exists, symbolic meanings can accrete as the narrative advances.

For Tristan and Iseut, the potion works to bring to consciousness their feelings of love and to enable them to speak of their feelings. The sexual acts they engage in are not the only component of their relationship: they serve as a vital means of expression of their loyal love for each other. In the end, the distinct functions of Iseut's two roles have the same goal: saving Tristan's life. He says that either lack of comfort or lack of healing will kill him. Thus, although Thomas never states outright that Tristan can be healed by Iseut's presence alone, this inference can be made, and many critics have made it. Iseut's two roles mutually reinforce each other, even to the point of blurring into each other. However, the overlap in function of these two roles combined with a lack of contextualization of empirical practice in the high Middle Ages has led critics to dismiss Iseut's healing abilities merely as an attribute of the beloved. We have seen that her healing ability arises from specific healing knowledge—she is an empiric—and not from the fact that her presence so soothes Tristan that his condition improves without medical intervention. Nevertheless it is the case that Iseut would not be the beloved she is if she were unable to heal him and she would possibly not be as successful a healer were she not also his lover. In this way, Iseut's healing knowledge subtly shapes the representation of the beloved, reinforcing the aspect of the beloved whose mere presence makes her lover whole and well again.

In incarnating the roles of healer and beloved, Iseut herself becomes the vehicle by which the image of the beloved as a healer is substantially enhanced. As a result, the powers of the beloved increase. As we shall see, however, when later authors represent this ability to heal without depicting a background in healing and medicinal lore, they further mystify the beloved and obscure women's empirical knowledge. Because Iseut is recognized as a lover *par excellence*, her healing abilities influence the presentation of the beloved in works that come after *Tristan* by reinforcing the notion that any beloved can heal. The situations of healing and being in the presence of the beloved have parallels that lend themselves to metaphorization and exploration through other tropes. This is to say that, because of similarities in structure, the comparison of the two different events is not surprising. It is, however, noteworthy because of its ability to change the representation of the beloved.

I do not wish to suggest that the image of the beloved with the potential to heal because of her status as beloved is an idea that has *never* been proposed, merely that it has never had such extensive treatment as it receives in the

character of Iseut. Peter Dronke cites poetry from a number of sources in which the beloved is both sickness and medicine,[75] and as we saw in the introduction, it appears also in troubadour lyric.

Critics have almost universally maintained that the Tristan legend depicts passion as a force that destroys the social fabric.[76] I offer an alternative view: through the practice of arranged marriages, medieval society ignored the existence of passion. The romance of Tristan and Iseut reveals the costs associated with ignoring this real and powerful force. Ovid's love poetry and Andreas Capellanus' *De arte honeste amandi* depict love as a game. Flirting and dalliances serve as a means of entertainment and distraction for those who marry for economic or political reasons. Moreover, the lovers in these works seem driven by conventions and not by passion. The Tristan legend demands that we pay attention to passion's force. This is what is new in the depiction of love in twelfth- and thirteenth-century romance: passionate love is shown to be other than an amusing game with contradictory rules. It must have room for expression if society is to avoid tragedy—and it is the potion's concretization of those feelings that allows for this new expression.

As we have seen, reading the love potion in Thomas's *Tristan* as a real draught containing substances capable of altering Tristan's and Iseut's perceptions shifts our understanding of the tale. The potion lowers inhibitions and opens the way for Tristan and Iseut's discussion of their feelings and subsequent sexual encounter. This drug-induced event comes after the long process of the forging of their friendship when Iseut cared for Tristan's wounds and Tristan taught Iseut music. The drug-induced state allows for the expression of emotions of which they had been previously unaware and that, once expressed, open the floodgates as they recognize their love for each other.

While in Ovid *love* is said to be the cure for love, troubadour poets extend this idea by depicting the beloved herself as the agent of cure. Although northern French romance composers likely heard troubadour love songs and may well have been influenced by them, I am arguing that the similarity we see between Iseut's dual roles as a skilled and knowledgeable empirical healer and as the beloved in Thomas d'Angleterre's *Tristan* constitutes a major factor in the development of the notion of the beloved as a healing

75. Vol. 1, 10, 26, 31–32.

76. Pierre Gallais, 236; Pierre Le Gentile, 125; Denise Delcourt, 67; Lot-Borodine, "Tristan et Lancelot," 26. Joan Ferrante reads Thomas's depiction of love as destructive and sees Tristan as Iseut's victim *(Conflict of Love and Honor, 117)*. In contrast, a new voice in the debate argues convincingly that the *Tristans* of Thomas and Béroul reveal love to be beneficial to the court. See Adams, 145–86.

presence. Iseut's work as an empiric shapes her representation as the beloved because of the parallels between healing the sick and comforting her lover through the beloved's presence and touch. But the mutual influence of the two roles can go too far: the beloved can be represented as having such influence on the physical and mental state of the lover that actual healing abilities can come to seem simply an attribute of any beloved whose mere presence gives solace. These abilities are not dependent on specialized medical knowledge or skills, but are merely an extension of the fact that the beloved has a salubrious effect on the lover. In this way, the Tristan narratives provide a major new source of influence on the image of the beloved, introducing the healing aspect through the depiction of a realistic, plausible empirical healer of the high Middle Ages. Iseut therefore stands as a new kind of wisdom figure in medieval literature—one whose knowledge system is lifted directly from medieval realities and not from literary precursors. Iseut and Thessala, depicted at roughly the same time, take their inspiration from the world around them, not from literary witches of antiquity. Through them, authors introduce a major new source for the depiction of female motives and actions. Medieval empiricism fosters in romance the image of competence, excellence, and wisdom in a world where women are often considered to lack these traits. In the case of Iseut, however, empirical skills are simultaneously appropriated into the representation of the beloved.

4

TRISTAN AND ISEUT
EMPIRICAL PRACTICE AMIDST COMPETING CLAIMS

AS WE SAW IN the previous chapter, reading the episodes of healing and love magic as empirical practices common in the high Middle Ages offers new insight into Thomas's *Tristan*. Such a reading establishes both Iseut and her mother as competent, well-respected practitioners who use their healing skills to help Tristan. Iseut's mother also practices love magic in an attempt to positively influence her daughter's future. This aspect of her practice arises from the same knowledge base as her healing skills, and is plausible in light of the empirical practices of the time. Understanding empirical practice as realistic rather than as fantastic or merely symbolic also means that it has more importance and influence in romance plots than previously assumed. Not only do we have a better understanding of the forces at play when Tristan and Iseut admit their love for each other, and of how the potion encourages feelings of love both by mimicking them and by lowering inhibitions and producing a sense of well-being, but we also see how Thomas sets up a double status for Iseut, as both healer and beloved, in such a way that the boundaries between those two roles blur. The representation of empirical practitioner thus shades into that of beloved, allowing for the possibility that the beloved has curative powers simply because of her status as beloved. The potential conflation of the roles of healer and beloved arises because of the similarity of the two roles and in spite of the fact that Thomas's work presents empirical practice as highly rational.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the substantial differences between Thomas's and Béroul's texts mean that they merit separate treatment. Béroul's extant text consists of only one long fragment in the middle of the story. In sharp contrast to Thomas's text, which focuses on the love between Tristan and Iseut, the driving force for Béroul is tension between Mark and his barons, who suspect Tristan and Iseut's adultery at court and urge Mark to seek proof. The fragment picks up during an episode in which Iseut and Tristan have

agreed to a secret meeting. Mark has been alerted to the meeting and awaits the couple in a pine tree. Iseut spies him in his hiding place and so speaks to Tristan in a way to suggest their innocence. Then the barons, with the help of a sneaky dwarf, lay another trap for the lovers and bring Mark to see them. When they offer (circumstantial) proof of the tryst, Mark flies into a rage and vows to burn the lovers at the stake. Tristan escapes, then rescues Iseut, and they flee to the Morrois forest. In contrast to the Thomas version and its derivatives, in which life in the forest is idyllic, in Béroul's text the forest time is harsh and difficult. Here they encounter a Christian hermit, Ogrin, who urges them to repent. They do not heed his advice until much later, when the narrator informs us that the potion was made to last exactly three years. At this point, Tristan and Iseut lament the luxuries of their life at court and decide to repent. Although Ogrin helps them craft a letter that wins them reentry to Mark's court, the barons will not rest. Upon the return of Tristan and Iseut, they continue to report to Mark on the couple's adultery (with cause, it would seem, for Tristan and Iseut continue to try to meet despite the fact that the potion is said to have worn off). The barons insist that Iseut swear an oath of innocence. A huge council is called, complete with King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, at which Iseut crafts a carefully worded oath that exculpates her. After this dramatic episode, the barons nevertheless continue to spy on the couple. Tristan and Iseut plan yet another meeting, and as Tristan makes his way to Iseut he encounters two barons, at separate moments, both of whom he slays. Béroul's fragment breaks off just as the second baron falls from Tristan's arrow.

Béroul's text emphasizes feudal power struggles between Mark and his barons rather than focusing on love we saw in Thomas's romance. It also contains a number of other differences from that of Thomas. It includes characters and episodes not found in Thomas or Robert, such as the Christian hermit in the forest who urges the couple to repent and Tristan and Iseut's flight to the forest after Mark pronounces their death sentence. Béroul's version also reorders events: Iseut's oath follows the time in the forest, while in Thomas and Robert, the oath comes first. Finally, the extant fragments from Béroul's text contain fewer episodes pertaining to healing and love magic than do those from Thomas's text. Here again I have privileged textual content over chronology, since both *Tristan* romances were likely completed before the text analyzed in Chapter 1, *Cligés* by Chrétien de Troyes. As I stated above, this order allows for a more coherent reading of empirical practice by proceeding from complete texts to fragmentary ones.

Critics see many similarities between Béroul's work and the Middle High German version of Eilhart von Oberg, a work often thought to precede Béroul's and posited by some as a possible influence on Béroul.[1] While Eilhart cannot be definitively established as a source for Béroul, Eilhart's version, composed around 1170–1190, is the earliest complete version we have. Many episodes mirror those we have in Béroul, but Eilhart's version also differs in places.[2] Thus it cannot be used as a kind of translation of Béroul, as in the case of Robert of Norway for Thomas's text. Still, occasional comparisons to Eilhart's text help elucidate that of Béroul.

It should not be surprising that a text whose focus differs so much from that of Thomas will also offer a different perspective on empirical practice. In this chapter I argue that Béroul's *Tristan* leaves open to the reader (or listener) the interpretation of empirical practice in the same way that it encourages interrogation of other social or juridical structures. This openness is particularly suited to empirical practice because it is such a large, complex domain containing competing claims and contradictory practices. Béroul's text also served as an inspiration for a short text in which Tristan himself (in disguise) recounts many episodes from the early part of the narrative to Iseut. This work, the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, nevertheless departs from Béroul's text in significant details that have implications for reading the role of love magic. I argue that Tristan's narration in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* casts Iseut's empirical practice as working against him until the end of the text, when Tristan and Iseut again recognize their mutual feelings and re-establish communication. In other words, this text insists upon the fact that one's understanding of empirical practices of healing and love magic depends upon one's position.

Healing and Love Magic in Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*

The Béroul fragment mentions healing first when Tristan and Iseut meet for a tryst beneath a pine tree. Upon arriving at the prearranged spot, Iseut glimpses Mark's reflection in the water. She therefore describes her feelings in such a way as to lead Mark to believe that she loves only him, while

1. Another possibility is that Eilhart and Béroul took inspiration from the same, now lost, source. See Norris J. Lacy's introduction to Béroul, *The Romance of Tristan*, ed. and trans. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland, 1989), xi. See the introductory section of the previous chapter for more information on the various *Tristan* versions and their dates and relationships to each other.

2. For a discussion of the differences between Eilhart's and Béroul's work, see Jonin, 2–34.

Tristan understands that she is in fact describing her love for him. As Mark listens from above, Iseut explains her friendship with Tristan in light of past events between them:

> Molt vos estut mal endurer
> De la plaie que vos preïstes
> En la batalle que feïstes
> O mon oncle. Je vos gari;
> Se vos m'en erïez ami,
> N'ert pas mervelle, par ma foi!
> (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 50–55)[3]

> [You had to endure great pain
> from the wound you received
> in your battle
> with my uncle. I healed you,
> and if you became my friend as a result,
> I find that hardly surprising, I swear.]

In this case, Iseut uses the time they spend together during Tristan's convalescence to explain why she and Tristan became friends. She also emphasizes the pain Tristan suffered for having fought her uncle, the Morholt. Iseut only briefly relates her role as healer, but when she states "I healed you" (53), she makes it clear that her healing knowledge saved Tristan. Because she collapses the story here, we have almost no detail about this earlier episode that is no longer available in the fragmentary manuscripts. However, Eilhart's text enables us to see that this healing episode has similar details to those we saw in Thomas and Robert in the previous chapter. In Eilhart's work Iseut (Isalde), described as "the best doctor in the country" (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 60),[4] heals Tristan's first wound without ever laying eyes on him by sending plasters and medicines to be applied (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 61–62).

3. All quotations and translations of this text from Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Norris J. Lacy, in *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998). Quotations are followed by verse numbers.

4. All references to Eilhart from *Eilhart von Oberge's Tristrant*, trans. and intro. J. W. Thomas (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978).

Given that Eilhart's presentation of healing is in line with the empirical principles we have repeatedly seen, it is highly unlikely that Béroul's text presented healing in any other way. Certainly there is no evidence of mysterious, omnipotent healing powers on Iseut's part. Nevertheless, Jean Marx refers to her treatment here as "un remède merveilleux" and to healing in the second episode as "un bain aux propriétés merveilleuses."[5] Marx's characterization conflates the marvelous with common empirical practices of the high Middle Ages.

Since Tristan and Iseut have planned a secret meeting and since Tristan realizes from Iseut's carefully chosen words that they are being watched, Tristan tells Iseut that *he* requested the meeting to beseech her to plead his case with her husband, Mark. This strategy seems to work because, later, when Mark recounts to Iseut what he overheard, he highlights Tristan's acts and their benefits to Mark, saying that he had such pity when he heard of the battle Tristan fought that he almost fell out of the tree (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 479–82). Mark also tells Iseut he felt pity when she recounted other episodes from Tristan's past, including the recollection of Iseut healing Tristan after he slew the dragon in Ireland and suffered from its venom (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 483–86).

Again, Eilhart's work notes the details of this healing episode. Iseut finds Tristan badly burned and unconscious in a spring and brings him to the castle to heal him with baths and salves (Eilhart, *Tristrant*, trans. Thomas, 67–69). In Béroul's text, Mark casually references Iseut's healing ability when he summarizes past events between Tristan and Iseut. Iseut responds to Mark that her earlier interactions with Tristan prove that "Ne m'amot pas d'amor vilaine" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 502) ("that he does not love me improperly") and that the love between them is not "fole amor" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 496) ("sinful passion"). We can see in Iseut's presentation of these events to Mark a case of political spin: despite her claims to the contrary, Iseut loves Tristan passionately, yet she leads Mark to believe that this is not at all true.

Mark follows the lead provided by Iseut because he recounts Tristan and Iseut's shared past in terms similar to those that Iseut employed near the beginning of the fragment. Mark says here that he heard Tristan tell of his suffering at sea and of the serpent from which Iseut cured him (vv. 484–5).

5. "A bath with marvelous properties." See Jean Marx, "La Naissance de l'amour de Tristan et Iseut dans les formes les plus anciennes de la légende," *Romance Philology* 9, 2 (1955–56): 170.

However, Mark's reference to Tristan's suffering at sea is vague. Given that Iseut has just mentioned the poisoned wound Tristan suffered from the Morholt and that we know that Tristan traveled to Ireland in search of a cure, it most likely refers to that episode. Yet Mark's word choice also reflects the other moment at sea when Tristan and Iseut suffered from love and found their cure through love after consuming the love potion. The King's recounting of the story to Iseut is very telling, for Mark has hit upon the moment of the flourishing of their passion but does not understand it as such. Instead he sees it as a conventional sickness healed by Iseut's knowledge of conventional medicine, in line with Iseut's treatment of the serpent venom. Ironically, Mark here juxtaposes elements that play off each other not in the Béroul version but in that of Thomas, where Tristan and Iseut edge toward an avowal of their feelings by discussing seasickness (a scene that, as we saw in the last chapter, plays on the fact that the Old French words *l'amer*, "love," and *la mer*, "the sea," are homophones). This link is never made explicit in the extant Béroul text. It is unlikely that it appeared in the now lost fragments of Béroul since his style elsewhere is devoid of such subtleties.

In contrast to Thomas's text, in which Iseut's mother is the principle healer and Iseut acts more as an apprentice, the recollections of both Mark and Iseut in Béroul's text present Iseut as the only healer. The lack of mention of Iseut's mother as a healer can also be found in Eilhart's *Tristrant*, which depicts Iseut as a solo healer. The healing episodes in Eilhart show similarity to what we know of them in Béroul, although we should bear in mind that Eilhart's work most likely did not serve as a direct model for Béroul's.

Just as with the healing episodes in Béroul, the early episodes concerning the potion are no longer extant. There is only one mention of the potion, while Tristan and Iseut live in the Morrois Forest:

> Seignors, du vin de qoi il burent
> Avez oï, por qoi il furent
> En si grant paine lonctens mis;
> Mais ne savez, ce m'est avis,
> A conbien fu determinez
> Li lovindrins, li vin herbez:
> La mere Yseut, qui le bolli,
> A trois anz d'amistié le fist.
>
> (Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 2133–40)

[Lords, you have heard about the wine they drank,
which brought upon them
so much torment for a long time;
but I do not think you know
how long the potion, the wine mixed with herbs,
was supposed to last.
Iseut's mother, who brewed it,
made it to last for three years of love.]

This brief passage contains all the information we have on the potion in Béroul's text. We learn that it was prepared (literally "boiled") by Iseut's mother (2139), that it is composed of wine mixed with herbs (2138), and that its function was to cause love (2140). We see also that Béroul refers to it with an English word, "lovindrins" for "love drink." The narrator makes it clear that the potion has been discussed in the earlier part of the story when he says that the audience members ("Lords") have heard of the wine they drank that caused such pain for a long time (2133–35). The narrator also points out here that the potion has a limited time effect (2140). More importantly, this information is new to the listeners, for the narrator says, "But I do not think you know how long the potion … was supposed to last."

Béroul's presentation of the potion and Tristan and Iseut's behavior in the Morrois Forest have prompted a number of critical interpretations. Early critics read the potion's limited efficacy as the major reason for their argument that Eilhart and Béroul, whose versions include this detail, derive from the primitive, thus more "genuine," romance.[6] Yet, as we saw in the last chapter, Thomas's work integrates the various aspects of empirical practice into a cohesive whole, one that depicts empirical practice as rational and as a representation of actual practices of the time. It therefore does not follow that the Béroul-Eilhart branch is more genuine.[7] Critics have long since renounced the idea that we will be able to obtain the Ur-*Tristan*, and arguments that one or another version is inherently purer or better because it is older no longer have much validity.

6. Jean Frappier, "Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 269. According to Bédier, there was an intermediary version (introduction to *Le Tristan de Thomas*, vol. 2, 236).

7. Specifically on the point of the potion's limited efficacy, Maurice Delbouille claims that Eilhart and Béroul are more authentic (426).

Nevertheless, Béroul's potion of limited duration clearly vexes critics. For Jean Frappier, the attenuation of the potion enables the narrative to move forward—although he considers this an "awkward expedient."[8] Here we see a traditional explanation for love magic: to enable a plot to move past an impasse. Since this rationale is unsatisfactory, critics have proposed other ideas, such as that the lovers only imagine the abatement of the potion but it does not in fact wear off.[9] For Renée L. Curtis, the potion does not terminate their passion, but changes it.[10]

There is plenty in the narrative to suggest that their passion does not simply disappear. When Tristan and Iseut discuss their impending separation, Tristan says he will pledge to Iseut his "drüerie" (2687) and will always send messages to her.[11] She gives him her ring to wear "for love" (2709), and he offers her his hunting dog, Husdent, as a sign of his "drüerie" (2726). After they return from the forest exile, they continue to seek out opportunities to meet and to be together. Finally, only the audience learns that the potion has limited efficacy—Tristan and Iseut never indicate that they know this.

Tristan and Iseut do undergo a change in the forest that compels them to attempt to return to Mark's court. Yet more than an end to love, they describe how they miss the luxuries of court life and their positions. Tristan says, "Or deüse estre a cort a roi, / Et cent danzeaus avoques moi" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2173–74) ("I should be at the royal court, / attended by a hundred young men"), and "Oublïé ai chevalerie, / A seure cort et baronie" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2165–66) ("I have forgotten chivalry, / the court, and the knightly life"). Iseut also bemoans her situation, saying to herself:

> Porqoi eüstes vos jovente?
> En bois estes com autre serve,
> Petit trovez qui ci vus serve.
> Je suis roïne, mais le non

8. Frappier, "Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 271, 273.

9. Vinaver, "Love Potion," 83.

10. Renée L. Curtis, "The Abatement of the Magic in Béroul's *Tristan*," *Tristan Studies* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969), 28–35. In contrast to Frappier, Curtis does not see the change in Béroul's text as awkward, since there are numerous indications of the increasing difficulty of their life in the forest.

11. Roger Dubuis offers a considered analysis of the terms "dru" and "druerie" in Roger Dubuis, "'Dru' et 'Druerie' dans le Tristan de Béroul," in *Mélanges de langue et littérature françaises du Moyen Age offerts à Pierre Jonin*, 222–31.

En ai perdu par ma poison
Que nos beümes en la mer.
(Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 2202–7)

[How you have wasted your youth!
You are living in the forest like a serf,
with no one to serve you here.
I am a queen,
but I have lost that title
because of the potion we drank at sea.]

For Iseut, as for Tristan, the change at the end of the three-year period causes them to long for their former glory at court. Yet even while lamenting their exclusion from court life, they admit that their separation will be difficult. As Tristan says, "Ne vosise la departie / S'estre peüst la conpaignie" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. Lacy, 2251–52) ("If there were any way to stay together, / I would never want this separation"), adding that for him, Iseut has endured deprivation and lost her title (2253–56).

We see then that at the end of the three years, Tristan and Iseut still have the same feelings for each other, yet they have a new consciousness of the life at court they are missing. They feel torn between these two modes of life. Why would Béroul's narrator include the claim that the potion wears off after exactly three years if there is ample evidence in the text to suggest otherwise? Moreover, why is it even necessary to mention the potion when the period of hard living in the forest could easily produce the realization that Tristan and Iseut could have a much easier life at court?[12] Certainly this kind of pronouncement would have been made about empirical practices at the time. I marshaled evidence in the previous chapter that Thomas presents empirical practice as highly rational, working in ways that were entirely plausible given the knowledge of plants accessible by the most accomplished empirics of the time. Béroul, on the other hand, emphasizes that empirical practice in the high Middle Ages was certainly a domain in which competing or unjustifiable claims were made. In other words, Béroul's narrator invites

12. Eugène Vinaver lays out the process by which Tristan and Iseut slowly come to recognize that their forest life has become untenable, including steps such as a visit by Mark when they are asleep and the increasing challenges of living in the wild. For Vinaver, the end of the potion is one step in the process, while I see the end of the potion as unnecessary for Tristan and Iseut's decision to seek reconciliation. See Vinaver, "La Forêt de Morois."

the reader or listener to question the declarations made about amatory magic, first because they do not fit the story he tells (as we have seen, the potion does not entirely wear off) and also because empirical practice was not regulated and therefore had no entry standards, the domain was wide open to unscrupulous practitioners who preyed on the desperate and naïve. It was a realm whose specifics were not well known, and so could inspire fear. Some people who consulted empirics would have been desperate for help and more easily willing to believe extreme promises, just as today we see terminally ill patients who latch on to potential remedies whose claims remain unproven.

In the case of Béroul's assertions with respect to amatory magic, critics have resisted the invitation to question, perhaps because they have assumed that medieval people were naïve and gullible in this area.[13] Yet we can well imagine that many people would either have experienced or heard about cases of empirical practice in which expectations were not met. Thus their own experience would in many cases contribute to their willingness to question the pronouncements made in Béroul's text. The mistake has been to treat medieval people as completely gullible, despite the fact that they were probably surrounded by examples of failed empirical practice, both in healing and in love magic. Béroul's narrator seems to be suggesting that we should interrogate the declarations made to see if they accord with the story he tells.

Here, too, I read empirical practices of the high Middle Ages—in their complexity and as subject to competing claims—as the inspiration for their depiction in Béroul's *Tristan*. This is in contrast to the claim that these phenomena were derived strictly from myth, be they Celtic, Arabic, Greek, Roman, or other. In his brief analysis of the marvelous, Daniel Poirion posits myths from other cultures as the source of the otherness that for him is the hallmark of the marvelous.[14] Although he sees in Béroul's potion a "rationalization" in line with the practices of a medieval herbalist who could have prepared an aphrodisiac for Iseut and Mark, he nevertheless adds: "Mais ici s'arrête la rationalisation. En deçà du destin, ou du hasard, qui fait de cette aventure un drame, on retrouve aisément le schema d'un mythe, celui de la sorcière, experte en venins et poisons, qui prépare un breuvage pour séduire

13. Thus I disagree with Françoise Barteau, who writes that in the Middle Ages, "Le réel et le fantastique ne font qu'un" (31) (Realism and fantasy are one and the same). Françoise Barteau, *Les Romans de Tristan et Iseut: Introduction à une lecture plurielle* (Paris: Larousse, 1972).

14. Poirion, *Le Merveilleux*, 3–5.

un héros, malgré ses scrupules ou sa répugnance .... Derrière le personnage humain d'Yseut on entrevoit la fée, ou la sorcière, avec toutes les références à la sexualité féminine qui accompagnent ces deux types de femmes."[15] Poirion appears tempted to recognize the legitimacy of empirical practice. Ultimately however, he seems seduced by a mythical witch figure who tricks the upstanding hero in part through her knowledge, but also in part because of her beguiling sexuality. These attributes make for a captivating story—the problem is that they have very little to do with what happens in Béroul's romance.

That Béroul's text encourages our resistance with respect to empirical practice should not surprise us, since this romance does this at other points as well.[16] For example, interpretation is left to the audience in the episode where Iseut swears an oath to exculpate herself. At this point, Tristan has been told by Mark that he must stay away from the court. Iseut sends him word to disguise himself as leper, and as the members of the court arrive, the disguised Tristan demands alms from them. When Iseut arrives, she demands that the leper before her carry her on his back across a muddy ford so that she can join the rest of the court. Tristan complies. When Iseut swears her oath, she supplies her own words, swearing that she has never had a man other than Mark between her legs—with the exception of course, of the leper who just helped her. Thus, while literally true, the oath enables Iseut to mislead all the attendees. Here, too, Béroul's text allows the reader to reach her or his own conclusion about Iseut's guilt or innocence.

Several critics have called for more skepticism in reading Béroul's *Tristan*.[17] Pierre Le Gentile argues that the contradictions in Béroul's work reflect the conflicted world in which the poet lived.[18] Norris J. Lacy, in his argument that Béroul uses irony throughout the work to create

15. "But the rationalization stops here. On this side of destiny, or of chance, which makes of this adventure a drama, one easily finds the pattern of a myth, that of the witch, expert in venoms and poisons, who prepares a beverage to seduce a hero in spite of his scruples or his repugnance .... Behind the human character of Iseut, one perceives the fairy, or the witch, with all the references to feminine sexuality that accompany these two types of women," *Le Merveilleux*, 66–67. Emmanuèle Baumgartner points out that several critics have seen aspects of rationalism in Béroul (52–53).

16. Baumgartner reminds us that every character in Béroul's text lies, 47.

17. Donald Maddox works in this vein, pointing out that Béroul rewrites episodes (through another character's retelling, for example) throughout the text. See Maddox, "Intratextual Rewriting in the *Roman de Tristan* of Béroul," in *"De sens rassis,"* ed. Busby, Guidot, and Whalen, 389–402.

18. Pierre Le Gentil, 113–18. In contrast, Gertrude Schoepperle finds internal contradictions in the text of which the redactor was unaware ("Love Potion," 283).

distance, urges readers to question statements throughout the work, even the repeated vilifications of the barons.[19] Lacy's approach provides a more satisfactory explanation for the narrator's seeming lack of concern for Tristan and Iseut's guilt than either the ethical theory of Abelard current at the time or the claim that the protagonists feel no guilt before the potion abates.[20] John Halverston questions the work even more than Lacy, pointing out that Béroul's text shares with certain epics "an unmistakable tonality of the comic and satirical as well as a boisterous manner."[21] For this reason, he reads Béroul's work as representing a much simpler, less civilized feudal world, whereas Thomas depicts a more complex court where introspection precedes actions.[22] Halverston's convincing thesis relies upon the notion of the twelfth century as a period of great change.[23] Peter Brown discusses the fading away of the judicial ordeal as a part of the twelfth-century changes.[24] Just as Béroul encourages the reader or listener to question the workings of the ordeal, so too should she or he interrogate the claims that Tristan and Iseut make about amatory magic.

Another point where we must exercise skepticism is the moment when the lovers, in their first encounter with Ogrin, explain to him that they would not love except for the potion. In Tristan's words,

19. Norris J. Lacy, "Irony and Distance in Béroul's *Tristan*," *The French Review* 45, 3 (1971): 21–29.

20. On Abelard, see Tony Hunt, "Abelardian Ethics and Béroul's *Tristan*," *Romania* 98, 3 (1977): 501–40. On the lack of guilt, see R. Howard Bloch, "Tristan, the Myth of the State, the Language of the Self," *Yale French Studies* 51 (1974): 72–73. For Bloch the potion has a very complex symbolism. He notes that it wears off after Tristan and Iseut again become aware of their responsibilities at court and therefore he sees it as a "potent symbol of personal and social transformation," because once it is no longer full strength, Tristan and Iseut experience guilt for the first time. Internal guilt is the hallmark of the modern state, as opposed to external shame, which shapes the feudal state (73).

21. John Halverson, "Tristan and Iseut: The Two Traditions," *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 93 (1983): 279.

22. Halverson, 294–95. He notes, however, that pointing out the old order aspects in Béroul and the new order ones of Thomas does not imply anything about the dating of the works (295).

23. Bloch's analysis of the intersection of law and Old French literature also begins with this premise. While much of Bloch's work is insightful, his claim that Tristan and Iseut feel no guilt because guilt is not a part of twelfth-century society is difficult to substantiate. See R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval French Literature and the Law* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 244.

24. Peter Brown, "Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change," in *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, vol. 2, *Witchcraft in the Ancient World and the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Garland, 1992), 97–115.

Q'ele m'aime, c'est par la poison.
Ge ne me pus de lié partir,
N'ele de moi, n'en quier mentir.
(Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 1384–86)

[If she loves me, it is because of the potion.
I cannot leave her,
nor can she leave me; that is the truth.]

Here, Tristan emphasizes both the potion's role in bringing about his love and his inability to be separated from Iseut. Ogrin does not respond to the issue of the potion, but says instead that absolution can only be given to those who repent (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 1387–92). He focuses on sin and repentance, preaching to the couple on these topics. But Tristan only replies "De lié laisier parler ne ruis, / Certes, quar faire ne le puis" (Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 1407–8) ("There is no point in even talking about leaving her, / because I simply cannot do it"). Iseut has not yet spoken in this exchange, but when she does, she echoes Tristan:

"Sire, por Deu omnipotent,
Il ne m'aime pas, ne je lui,
Fors par un herbé dont je bui
Et il en but. Ce fu pechiez."
(Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 1412–15)

["Sir, by omnipotent God,
he loves me, and I him,
only because of a potion
we both drank. That was tragic."]

Iseut states just as clearly as Tristan that the cause of their love was the potion that they drank. However, Iseut also seems to be arguing with Ogrin, insisting the cause of their sin was not living together in the forest, but having drunk the potion.[25] Still, Ogrin does not discuss the potion, responding only that he prays for their repentance (1418–19). This is the only time that Tristan and Iseut blame their love on the potion. They never bring it up to Mark,

25. Halverson discusses the various meaning of "pechiez" from sin to misfortune (274).

nor do they mention it in their second encounter with Ogrin in the forest, after the potion has supposedly waned.

The repentance scene merits a closer look. We saw above that the couple's desire to seek out Ogrin and repent is driven by the fact they miss the luxury and prestige of life at court. When Ogrin sees them, he asks them to repent (2298–99). Yet Tristan does not make a formal declaration of repentance, stating instead that their time together was "nostre destinee" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2302) (our fate). Then Iseut speaks:

> "Qar ja corage de folie
> Nen avrai je jor de ma vie.
> Ge ne di pas, a vostre entente,
> Que de Tristran jor me repente,
> Que je ne l'aim de bone amor
> Et com amis, sanz desanor:
> De la comune de mon cors
> Et je du suen some tuit fors."
> (Béroul, *Tristan,* ed. and trans. Lacy, 2323–30)

> ["Never in my life will I
> have any sinful desires.
> Please understand that I am not saying
> that I regret my relationship with Tristan
> or that I do not love him properly
> and honorably, as a friend.
> But he is entirely free of any carnal desire for me,
> and I for him."]

Although Iseut does ask for repentance, she carefully limits her request, explaining that she does not have improper feelings for Tristan. Despite Tristan's lack of a statement and Iseut's limited one, Ogrin says that if they separate and are sincere in their repentance, God will forgive them (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2345–50).

Although Ogrin claims to place high importance on genuine repentance, we can ask whether he really does and whether Tristan and Iseut's statements constitute genuine repentance. Are all three of them simply going along with the game in order to restore Iseut to the court and repair the damage to the kingdom that Tristan and Iseut's departure has caused? This explanation

might seem less likely if Ogrin did not offer the following advice just after their repentance: "Por honte oster et mal covrir / Doit on un poi par bel mentir" (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2353–54) ("In order to escape shame and conceal evil, / you have to be able to tell a few lies"). He tells Tristan to let it be known that he will defend Iseut in a judicial duel against any accusation of *druerie*—because he knows that everyone fears Tristan too much to challenge him (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2366–74).[26]

Why do Tristan and Iseut tell Ogrin that they would not be in love if not for the potion? Perhaps they felt that this explanation would hold the most sway with the Christian hermit. Clearly it does not, because Ogrin does not demand penance for the use of or belief in love magic, as directed by the early eleventh-century *Corrector* of Burchard of Worms: "Hast thou believed in or participated in this infidelity, that there is any woman who through certain spells and incantations can turn about the minds of men, either from hatred to love or from love to hatred, or by her bewitchments can snatch away men's goods? If thou hast believed or participated in such acts, thou shalt do penance for one year in the appointed fast days."[27] Nor does he suggest other means proposed by the Church to counter love magic such as confession or exorcism.[28]

Do Tristan and Iseut believe that they love each other only because of the potion? Béroul's text suggests that latent feelings are not out of the question. To wit: the two have spent time together when Iseut heals Tristan from the dragon wound, Tristan has saved her from marrying the dishonest seneschal, and they travel together to Cornwall. The fact that Tristan slew Iseut's uncle may hinder her ability to admit feelings for Tristan. While it is true that the narrator never suggests any latent feelings between the couple, it is also true that the characters in Béroul's text often act without expressing their motives.

As with the assertion that the potion has worn off, Tristan and Iseut's claims that they only love because of the potion presents the reader/listener with conflicting information that demands interpretation. Here, too, their blaming of the potion reflects a claim that could be made about empirical practice, but also one that is likely not genuine in the context of the story. This is to say that Tristan and Iseut do not believe it themselves, but recognize that others might and so therefore offer it as an excuse. Why do they not

26. Thus as Halverson points out, the real goal is not penance but reconciliation (275).
27. McNeill and Gamer, 331.
28. Flint, 294.

believe it? Because, for a time at least, they want to be together in the forest, away from society.[29] Like the claim that the potion wears off at three years, the lovers' claim that they only love because of the potion could certainly be made about amatory magic. But given the circumstances—that they say this only to Ogrin and do not mention it when they do repent, that they do nothing to fight against the love magic, and that Ogrin does not respond to it—it appears that they use a claim that could be made about empirical practice and that conveniently serves their purpose, as in the pine tree episode when Iseut talks of her love so as to shape Mark's understanding of it or when she swears the oath of her own devising that conveniently exculpates her.

Yet many critics have claimed that Tristan and Iseut are powerless against the potion, and therefore are innocent. In the words of Gertrude Schopperle, "the lovers are represented as the innocent victims of the potion, which is regarded as a supernatural instrument," while Jean Frappier writes "le 'boire d'amour' … sert à excuser la faute des amants. Comme ils n'ont pas failli volontairement, ils sont ou ils se sentent irresponsables, donc innocents."[30] Denis de Rougemont also sees the potion as capable of exculpating the passion between Tristan and Iseut, forbidden by both the Church and common sense, because the potion relieves them of responsibility for their passion, while Joan Ferrante argues that in Béroul's text, Tristan and Iseut are sinful, but they blame their sin on the potion.[31]

Not all critics have accepted Tristan and Iseut's sincerity in blaming the potion.[32] Michel Cazenave doubts that Tristan and Iseut are sincere when

29. This desire is certainly made stronger by the dramatic circumstances of their escape from Mark's court. Having found the couple together, Mark planned to have them burned at the stake, but Tristan escapes. As preparations are made for Iseut's pyre, a group of hideously deformed lepers arrives and one asks that Iseut be sent to live with them for their sexual pleasure, since such a punishment will last much longer than being burned alive. As Iseut is led away by the leper, Tristan rescues her and they flee to the forest.

30. Schoepperle, "The Love Potion in Tristan and Iseut," *Romania* 39 (1910):296. Frappier: "the love drink … serves to excuse the fault of the lovers. Since they have not transgressed voluntarily, they are or they feel not responsible and therefore innocent" ("Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 268). Frappier does nuance this view when he states that Béroul's genius was to show that the lovers are both innocent and guilty at the same time (269).

31. *Conflict of Love and Honor*, 62. She notes specifically that their love is not sinful, but that the intercourse between them is. She reads Béroul as sympathetic to the passionate love of Tristan and Iseut (115).

32. See, for example, Moshé Lazar, 156. Even Frappier notes that the couple feels regret but not remorse ("Structure et sens du *Tristan,*" 270).

they blame their love on the potion.[33] Despite his willingness to question the text on this point, however, Cazenave falls into the trap of reading magic in the work without any reference to actual practices and reception of those practices. He describes Iseut's mother as a "magician" who hails from Ireland, "[une] île merveilleuse … [une] territoire empoisonée."[34] She instructs her daughter in this magic so that she fulfills her role as a "fille sauvage de l'Irlande, la magicienne amoureuse follement tout autant que la femme impulsive et barbare."[35] Thus for Cazenave, Iseut represents the great figure of the Celtic woman.[36] In addition, Cazenave reads Béroul's characters as archetypes: while the Morholt is a force of evil whose poison infiltrates Tristan's body, Iseut incarnates the struggle between good and evil because she wants both to defend the Morholt and to save Tristan.[37] Thus Iseut holds an ambivalent position, one that mirrors other ambiguities in the tale, such as Tristan's voyage to Ireland or Iseut's relationship to the dragon.[38] While Cazenave correctly identifies the ambiguity of the Tristan legend, he too easily characterizes Iseut's skills as otherworldly, stating that for Tristan's wounds "la médicine ordinaire, simplement humaine, ne peut les guérir."[39] Cazenave thus ascribes to Iseut's practice extraordinary and superhuman characteristics that in no way reflect what we know of that practice or its representation in the Tristan romance. A marvelous island and a savage magician are exciting plot elements—but they are not found in Béroul.

Claude Sahel disputes even more strongly the idea that Tristan and Iseut use the potion to deny their responsibility for their love.[40] He argues that although the narrator claims that the potion wears off, very little in the story supports that claim, even though the effects of the potion are latent at some later points.[41] Yet Sahel, despite his careful questioning of Tristan and

33. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 96.

34. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 63; "[a] marvelous island … [a] poisoned territory," *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 35.

35. "Savage girl from Ireland, the madly amorous magician as well as the impulsive and barbarous woman," *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 78.

36. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 85. Jean Markale also argues that Iseut, to whom he refers as a "fairy" or a "sorceress," has great powers in the tradition of the Celtic woman. *La Femme celte: Mythe et sociologie* (Paris: Payot, 1973), 316.

37. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 38, 40, 43.

38. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 41, 36.

39. "Ordinary medicine, simply human, cannot cure them," *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 40.

40. Sahel points out that although Tristan and Iseut claim to feel guilty for their love when speaking to Ogrin, they lament their loss of social position more than anything (157–62).

41. Sahel, 141, 271.

Iseut's motives at that crucial moment, nevertheless describes the potion in exaggerated terms unreflective of Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*: "le philtre est un breuvage magique et non une simple 'médecine' dont les composants seraient facilement repérables et susceptibles d'être reproduits sur ordonnance."[42] For him, the philter plunges the couple into the world of the supernatural.[43] In a flight of pure fancy, he calls it "le philtre magique, force surnaturelle, diabolique, tout droit venue de 'l'autremonde.'"[44]

Critical misreadings of Iseut's empirical practice appear almost willful at times. For example, C. Cahné notes that the Béroul manuscripts do not describe the philter's preparation "with precision,"[45] without stating that those manuscripts are fragmentary. In the face of textual lacunae, Cahné posits a connection between Iseut's mother and the evil stepmother of Virgil's *Georgics*, who collects the viscid humor from the groins of mares and mixes it with herbs while repeating incantations.[46] This wild linking of texts that bear no resemblance to one another recalls the failed critical attempts to link Thessala to literary antecedents that we saw in Chapter 1. Cahné takes a moralistic rather than a critical tone on magic when he refers to "le caractère magique et maléfique de la mère" of Iseut.[47]

Critics such as these discuss the potion in terms of forced will, but this issue has been successfully tackled from a completely different angle. We have noted Jean Frappier's insistence that Tristan and Iseut had no choice in their love, that their wills were constrained by the potion.[48] As Joan Grimbert points out, Frappier's corollary to this notion is the claim that Chrétien de Troyes wrote *Cligés* as a polemic against the passionate love of

42. "The philter is a magic beverage and not a simple 'medicine' whose components would be easily located and able to be reproduced by prescription," 204.

43. Sahel, 47.

44. "The magic philtre, supernatural force, diabolical, straight from the 'other world,'" 108.

45. Cahné, 20.

46. Cahné, 20. Philippe Walter also describes similarities to Virgil's text and a number of others in his demonstration of the Tristan legend's connection to ancient mythic themes. Philippe Walter, *Le Gant de verre* (Paris: Artus, 1990), 125, 128–30, 132, 136. Although Walter shows links also to medical and scientific thought of the time (124, 126–28), he concludes that since Morgane la Fée knew the virtues of plants that Iseut and her mother obtained their healing gifts because they belong the fairy world (136). Generalities such as this and his statement that for the Middle Ages all Irish women are more or less magicians and know the secrets of plants (140) do little to advance his case.

47. Cahné, 72, "the magical and harmful character of the mother."

48. Sahar Amer disputes this point, arguing that the lovers in Béroul freely choose their love object. "Re-defining Marriage and Adultery in Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*," *Romance Languages Annual* 11 (2000): 1–5.

the *Roman de Tristan* and that Fenice, in contrast to Iseut, shows complete free will in her choice of lover.[49] Through a careful analysis of the effects of love on Fenice, Grimbert demonstrates convincingly that Fenice has no more control over her will than does Iseut: "In *Cligés,* … the beloved's beauty is the catalyst—and one that works with as sudden and irreversible a force as any love philtre."[50] Yet Grimbert shows that critics persist in reading love in *Cligés* as resulting from free will despite evidence to the contrary.[51] Grimbert's persuasive argument makes a moot point of the century-old question of whether Chrétien set out to write an "Anti-Tristan" or a "Neo-Tristan."[52] More recent critics have seen in *Cligés* a more subtle response to the Tristan material, such as a parody of Tristan, or a transformation through comic irony.[53] Yet with few exceptions, the standard line has been that Chrétien was appalled by the behavior of the adulterous couple and sought to offer an alternative in which love is based on choice and reason.[54]

Grimbert's puncturing of a long-held belief, that choice and reason lead a lover to fall in love in works other than *Tristan*, means that the potion has a similar function to whatever entity (such as the Ovidian arrow) incites love in any romance. So why have the potion at all? The fact remains that because Tristan slew Iseut's uncle, the Morholt, and because Tristan has accepted a mission from Mark's barons to return to court with a wife for Mark, Iseut is so thoroughly off limits to Tristan that neither can imagine the possibility of love between them.

Critics continue to discuss the meaning of the love in *Cligés* and *Tristan*, especially with respect to the immorality of courtly love and authors'

49. Grimbert, 89.

50. Grimbert, 90.

51. Grimbert, 94. Tracy Adams also discusses Fénice's making of her marriage, 190–212.

52. For the Anti-Tristan position, see Wendelin Foerster's introduction to Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, 3rd ed., ed. Wendelin Foerster (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1910), xxxix–lvii. On the Neo-Tristan, see Paris, "*Cligés,*" 293; A.G. van Hamel, "*Cligés* et *Tristan*," *Romania* 33 (1904): 486; Alexandre Micha, "*Tristan* et *Cligés*," *Neophilologus* 36 (1952): 7.

53. For parody, see M. J. Delage, "Quelques notes sur Chrétien de Troyes et le *Roman de Tristan*," in *Mélanges de langue et littérature françaises du Moyen Age offerts à Pierre Jonin,* 214. On irony, see Paul Lonigan, "The *Cligés* and the Tristan Legend," *Studi Francesi,* n.s., 53, 2 (1974): 201–12. This article provides additional bibliography on this long-running argument.

54. Renée L. Curtis argues that the two works are sufficiently different that we should question whether Chrétien is responding to the Tristan legend. See Curtis, "The Validity of Fenice's Criticism," 293.

acceptance or rejection of it.[55] Rather than responding to the doctrine of courtly love (if indeed there can be said to be a single one), I believe that both romances depict the difficulties of marriages in which women have no voice. Penny Sullivan has argued that a loving marriage helps stabilize dynastic interests.[56] Both *Cligés* and *Tristan* demonstrate possible outcomes when dynastic interests prevail over individual ones. We saw in Chapter 1 that the aristocracy and the Church were fighting over marriage politics in the high Middle Ages. Both works suggest that aristocratic society felt tensions not only from the Church but also from women who were married at the behest of others.

The potion and the love that results from it also inspired Denis de Rougemont's thesis that in western society passion is a destructive force linked to death, and that passion threatens marriage.[57] In his words, "Passion … is thus not open to admiration till it has been freed from every kind of visible connexion with human responsibility. That is why it was indispensable to bring in the love-potion, which acts willy-nilly, and—better still—is drunk by mistake."[58] De Rougemont distinguishes passion from love, arguing that Tristan and Iseut never loved each other: "*what they love is love and being in love.*"[59] De Rougemont's negative assessment of passion inspired Michel Cazenave to propose an alternate reading of the Tristan legend, one that sees passion as life-inspiring rather than life-endangering.[60] Cazenave's reading of the potion is conflicted, however, for he allows both that it is natural and a symbol.[61]

55. Peter S. Noble argues that Chrétien seeks to show that the amour-passion of the Tristan story endangers society and that *Cligés* tries to temper those sentiments. See P. Noble, 41. D.W. Robertson holds that the author mocks Cligés and Fenice. See Robertson, "The Doctrine of Charity in Mediaeval Literary Gardens: A Topical Approach Through Symbolism and Allegory," *Speculum* 26 (1951): 40. Leslie Topsfield counters that Chrétien shows both praise and mockery of reason and common sense and that Chrétien critiques the love of Tristan and Iseut. See L.T. Topsfield, *Chrétien de Troyes: A Study of the Arthurian Romances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 64, 91. For Moshé Lazar, Chrétien attempts to offer a more moral conception of courtly love in *Cligés*, but does not succeed because of the numerous unethical acts in the work (227). He maintains that Chrétien depicts courtly love (*fin'amors*) within the bounds of marriage (231).

56. Sullivan, 88.

57. *Love in the Western World*, 21–22, 73.

58. *Love in the Western World*, 48. Thus de Rougemont shares the view that the potion relieves Tristan and Iseut of their responsibility.

59. *Love in the Western World*, 41, italics in original.

60. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 12–13, 17. Claude Sahel also disagrees with de Rougemont's vilification of passion, (147–56).

61. *Le Philtre et l'amour*, 63. He points out more what it is not than what it is by seeing it as neither part of the marvelous, nor a cause of love (66, 53).

So how can we understand the potion in Béroul in light of empirical practice? In contrast to Thomas, who shapes the reader's or listener's view of empirical practice by insisting on its rationalism, Béroul leaves to the reader the interpretation of these practices. Béroul's text puts forth two claims with respect to love magic: that the potion ceases to cause feelings of love after three years, and that Tristan and Iseut would not have loved each other without the potion—that readers and listeners would do well to question since the couple's love continues after the potion is said to wear off, and since Tristan and Iseut claim only before the Christian hermit, Ogrin, that they would not otherwise be in love. The text's openness to interpretation on these points should not surprise us, since Béroul leaves open many other points. While placing empirical practice in the context of known practices and attitudes of the high Middle Ages strips it of the mysterious, all-powerful, superhuman element associated with fantasy (and fascinating tales), this context allows and even encourages it to retain ambiguity.[62] We therefore begin to see ambivalence as a fundamental characteristic of empirical practice. This is the case because, as the Tristan versions under consideration in this chapter point out, how one relates to empirical practice, especially amatory magic, depends upon one's position. We will see below that in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, Tristan condemns Iseut for what he perceives to be love magic used against him when he temporarily doubts her love. Once he again believes that she is still the loyal beloved he knew earlier, he drops this interpretation of love magic.

It should not surprise us that the understanding of a particular example of empirical practice is a function of one's position, because the very elements of empirical practice embody ambiguity. We can see this in the *CRC Handbook of Medicinal Herbs* description of *Aconitum Napellus L.*, commonly known as Aconite, Monkshood, and Blue Rocket. Aconite is highly toxic, and there is no sure antidote, but it has also been used "as a febrifuge and gastric anesthetic … for its anesthetic and irritant effects in gastralgia and neuralgia … [and] the plant juices were folk remedies for cancer and scirrhous tumors."[63] Aconite is not an exception but rather the rule, in that it can be applied for good or for bad. As James A. Duke points out in his introduction to this *CRC Handbook*, "In the sense that all plant species manufacture toxins and vitamins, perhaps all species could be considered

62. The ambiguity of the potion has been pointed out by other critics. See, for example, Philippe Walter, who links it to the Greek *pharmakon* (151).

63. Duke, 12–13.

both potentially harmful and potentially useful."[64] Thus, as the very basis for empirical practice, the plants themselves serve as an apt metaphor for our understanding of those practices, an understanding shaped by the fact that such knowledge of plants was known and applied in the high Middle Ages. The notion that one's understanding and acceptance of empirical practice is a function of one's position can be seen even more clearly in a textual derivative of Béroul, the *Folie Tristan de Berne*.

Healing and Love Magic in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*

We have extant two texts of the *Folie Tristan*, one from Oxford and the other from Berne. Their name derives from the fact that in these versions Tristan returns to the court disguised as a madman and plays the fool in front of Mark and Iseut, and later, Brangien and Iseut. In his ostensible ravings, he retells episodes from his past, many of which he shared with the Queen. Mark eventually tires of the fool's ramblings and leaves to hunt.[65] Iseut retreats to her chamber where Tristan gains an audience with her, so that he may continue to recall past episodes of their love in a desperate attempt to gain Iseut's recognition. Iseut stands by her conviction that the madman before her cannot be Tristan until he produces the ring she gave him when he left Cornwall. Although the *Folie* texts are brief (less than 1,000 lines each), they include mention of most of the episodes that Tristan and Iseut shared because of Tristan's role as narrator of their love story up to that point. The *Folie Berne* and *Folie Oxford* differ in much the same way that Béroul's and Thomas's texts differ. The earliest textual commentaries note that Béroul and the *Folie Tristan de Berne* derive from the same source while the material of Thomas and the *Folie Oxford* come from another source.[66]

64. Duke, vi.

65. Merritt Blakeslee argues that Mark leaves not because of boredom but because the memories Tristan recalls have reopened Mark's old wounds from the love between Tristan and Iseut (*Love's Masks*, 46).

66. For Béroul and the *Folie Berne*, see Joseph Bédier, *Les Deux Poèmes de la Folie Tristan* (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1907), 82. For Thomas and the *Folie Oxford*, see Bédier, 2. As a result, some critics such as Ernest Hoepffner read the *Folie Tristan de Berne* as the "version commune," and the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford* as the "version courtoise." See Hoepffner, notes to *La Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, 2nd ed. Textes d'Étude (Strasbourg: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg, 1943), 8. Others, such as Renée Curtis, contest these labels. See "The Humble and the Cruel Tristan: A New Look at the Two Poems of the *Folie Tristan*," *Tristania* 2 (1976): 3–11.

Despite the brevity of the *Folie* texts, critics have read them as entire texts in their own right, paying careful attention to their complex narrative structure. Tristan's role as narrator in the each of the *Folie* texts has generated considerable commentary on how to read these versions of Tristan and Iseut's love. The poet eschews a traditional narrative ordering of events in order to create a text with numerous allusions to episodes throughout the story.[67] In order to shed more light on the textual strand that includes Béroul, I will focus here on the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. By concentrating on Tristan's representation of Iseut's empirical practice in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, we can see how his retelling of their story recasts Iseut's empirical practice in the service of the love story he insists on. After considering Tristan's manipulation of Iseut's skills, we see why Iseut responds warily to Tristan's insistent pleas for recognition. Tristan rewrites the narrative to heighten his suffering and to negate Iseut's, conflating Iseut's different roles in the story to produce an image of Iseut that she disputes. Tristan's version of their love story obscures Iseut's role as an empirical healer and reduces Iseut to a stereotypical distant, cruel, and haughty lady.[68] Iseut rejects this version of the story just as she rejects the notion that the person telling it could be Tristan. However, the *Folie Tristan de Berne* insists on Tristan and Iseut's similar mindset: despite the lack of recognition throughout most of the short piece, Tristan and Iseut constantly echo each other.

Let us first turn to the healing episodes as Tristan recounts them in the *Folie Berne*. Just as we have seen in the versions of Thomas and Béroul, the *Folie Berne* relates the medical problems from which Tristan suffered:

> Car de la plaie que je oi
> Que il me fist parmi l'espaule

67. Duncan Robertson names this an "aesthetics of the conteur" in "Toward an Aesthetic of the Conteur: The *Folie Tristan*." *Tristania* 2, 2 (1977): 3. Of the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, Peter Haidu says, "The text is not a story, it is a commentary on the story it tells," in "Text, Pretextuality, and Myth in the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*," *Modern Language Notes* 88, 4 (1973): 717. The same may be said for the *Folie Berne*. Douglas Kelly reminds us of the almost archetypical status of the Tristan legend. The fact that it was so well known in the high Middle Ages that only a brief mention of episodes called up the entire story enables the *Folie* texts to function. See Kelly, "La Vérité tristanienne: Quelques points de repère dans les romans," in *Tristan et Iseut, mythe européen et mondial: Actes du colloque de 10, 11, et 12 janvier, 1986*, ed. Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1987), 168, 177.

68. Thus, I read Tristan's use of memory in a manner different from that of Krystyna Kasprzyk, who attributes to it a "puissance quasi-magique" (270) that works on Tristan and Mark. Her reading ascribes to Tristan's memories a positive force, while I suggest a darker role. See Kasprzyk, "Fonction et technique du souvenir dans la *Folie Tristan* (Berne 354)," in *Études de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age offertes à Felix Lecoy* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1973).

—Si issi je de cestë aule—
Me randistes et sauf et sain;
Autres de vos n'i mist la main.
Del velin del cruiel sarpent
—Panduz soie se je en mant—
Me gareïstes sanz mehain.
(*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 399–406)[69]

[I had been badly wounded
in the shoulder by the Morholt
(that's how I'd come out of the battle)
and you nursed me back to health;
no one else was of any help.
You cured me, with no ill effects,
(let me be hanged if this is a lie!)
of that cruel dragon's poison.]

Tristan describes Iseut's work in healing the wound he received from the Morholt, although here the cut is on the shoulder and not the thigh, a detail that accords with no other version. He also retells how Iseut cured him from the dragon's poison. As in the other texts, Tristan suffers from specific medical problems (battle injuries and poisonings), and Iseut's knowledge and healing skills enable his recovery. Tristan thus affirms what we have already seen, that Iseut is an empirical healer without formal training who relied on many of the same techniques as doctors trained in universities or medical schools. As is the case in all of the episodes recalled by Tristan, he provides few details. Standing before Iseut, Tristan attempts to prove his identity by recalling the essentials of each episode. However, as we will see, in retelling the episode, Tristan recasts the events he shared with her as he tries to gain her recognition as well as her pity for the difficulty of his position.

The *Folie* texts work on the principle that Iseut already knows the story that Tristan retells. Moreover, given the popularity of the Tristan legend in the Middle Ages, many audience members would also have been familiar with the main lines of the tale. Tristan's goal here is not to fill in every detail

69. All quotations and translations of the *Folie Tristan de Berne* and the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford* are from *Early French Tristan Poems* unless otherwise noted. See *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Lacy.

of their past, but rather to select and emphasize aspects that will lead to Iseut's recognition. Thus, Tristan is far from a dispassionate commentator.[70] Every memory that he retells has as its structuring principle a stress on Tristan's suffering and Iseut's ability to alleviate it.[71] Tristan therefore insists on the fact that Iseut makes him whole and well again (402) and that she "heals" him (the verb is "guérir" in verse 406) without causing harm (404). As we saw in the previous chapter, this differs from the details of medical practice provided in Thomas's version and its derivatives. In the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, rather than focusing on medical knowledge or ability, Tristan simply emphasizes Iseut's general positive influence on him.

Further, in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, Tristan insists that Iseut acted alone: "Autres de vos n'i mist la main" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 403) ("No one else but you put a hand to me").[72] This text tells us nothing of the means by which Iseut heals or how she might have learned her skills. We have already seen that Iseut is represented as a solo healer in the textual strand that includes Béroul and Eilhart. Since the *Folie Berne* is thought to derive from Béroul, it should come as no surprise to find her acting alone in this text also. However, her status as a solo healer obscures the source of her healing knowledge. Without any mention of a community of practitioners who teach and support each other, Iseut's skills become mysterious in origin. Divorced as they are from the context of late twelfth-century empirical practice, her skills are free to be appropriated into the narrative of Tristan and Iseut's love.

One means by which Tristan brings together the notion of his physical wounds and the condition of being in love is to use the same verb—"guérir" or "to heal"—for both conditions. Greeting Iseut in the third person, he states: "Car ele m'avroit tost gari / Por sol moi apeler ami" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 340–341) ("She would cure me forthwith / merely by calling me her lover"). Although Tristan's lovesick condition differs markedly from the shoulder wound or poisoning, he tells Iseut that she can also "heal" him from this condition, using the same word he used for the poison. Tristan's descriptions conflate Iseut's ability to heal him from wounds

70. Erich Auerbach points out that the *Folie Tristan de Berne* depicts a response to love of an emotional intensity not seen in the classics (218).

71. Indeed Tristan *has* suffered. As Jacqueline Schafer notes, Tristan plays on the disguise of the fool, but he "had reached extreme despair when he resorts to this humiliating part." See Schafer, "Tristan's Folly: Feigned or Real?" *Tristania* 3, 1 (1977): 11.

72. Translation mine.

and poison with her ability to relieve the anguish caused by separation from her. In the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, Tristan's commentary is the beginning of a subtle shift in the representation of Iseut as the beloved, in which Tristan elides her empirical skills into the image of the beloved. The conflation of the roles of healer and lover is similar to that which we saw in Thomas's text in the last chapter, although it comes about through different means and makes more explicit a connection only hinted at in Thomas's work.

More evidence of Tristan's conflation of Iseut's healing and relief from his suffering in love can be found at the beginning of the *Folie Berne*, when Tristan has just begun to formulate his plans to attempt to see Iseut. His mind wanders from one event to another, from his misery caused by his separation from Iseut to the care she gave him when he was ill, and back to his desire to see her at any price:

> "Ha! Deus, fait il, quel destinee!
> C'ai je sofert en tel amor!
> . . . . . .
> A Deu pri ge qu'il ne me laist
> Morir devant [ce] que je l'aie
> Mout me gari soëf ma plaie
> Que je reçui en Cornuaille
> Qant al Morhot fis la bataille
> En l'ile ou fui menez a nage
> Por desfandre lo treüssaje
> Qui cil devoient de la terre;
> A m'espee finé la guerre.
> Et Deus me doint encore tant vivre
> Que la voie saine et delivre!
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 54–55; 75–85)

> ["Oh, God," he said, "what a fate!
> Look how my love has made me suffer!
> . . . . . .
> I pray that God let me not die
> before I have her back.
> She tenderly nursed me back to health
> after I had been wounded
> battling the Morholt.
> I had sailed to that island off Cornwall

to put an end to the tribute
that the people of the land had to pay;
I ended the war with my sword.
May God let me live long enough
to see her healthy and untroubled.]

Iseut's ability to heal his shoulder wound is the memory that spurs Tristan to seek her presence again. Rather than recall Iseut's love or intimate moments they shared, Tristan highlights that Iseut *gently* healed the wound, again putting emphasis on her manner in healing and not her skills. In this description of their past, Iseut's healing has become the reason he wants to return to her; it is the equivalent of her loving embraces because both relieve his suffering. Thus, in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, Tristan conflates Iseut's ability to heal physical wounds with her capacity as beloved to provide solace.

Tristan also equates healing and alleviation of suffering in love because without both, he sees the inevitable outcome as death. When he focuses on the healing episodes and on his need to see Iseut again, Tristan repeatedly insists that Iseut has power over life and death. Tristan tells the court that he will die without Iseut's embraces: "Mout m'avroiez fait grant confort, / Certes, o autremant sui mort" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 230–31) ("[Being with Iseut] would ease my pain immensely; / otherwise, I can only die"). Thus, Tristan attributes to Iseut the ability to deliver him from death. Tristan's focus on his suffering and on Iseut's salubrious presence obfuscates Iseut's work as an empirical healer; this role is obscured by the image of Iseut the beloved who can alleviate suffering from love by her presence or her embraces. Tristan only seeks to remind Iseut that just as she has helped him in the past, she can do so again. He therefore emphasizes her success in healing and the fact that she heals without the help of others.

Tristan extends the notion of the healing ability of the beloved in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* when he describes kisses and embraces as the means to heal his present distress before Mark and Iseut:

Mainte dolereuse jornee
En ai puis aüe et soferte.
Car m'estorez, dame, ma perte
En doz baisier de fine amor
Ou enbracier soz covertor.

(*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 225–29)

[I have had many a painful time
and great sorrow since then.
Give me back what I lost, my lady,
with sweet kisses of true love
or embraces under the covers.]

The fool before the court informs Iseut and all those listening that the cure he seeks is sexual embraces. Tristan thus sets up a parallel between the Iseut's ability to heal, which he describes in the vague terms above, and intimate encounters with her. He elides her healing skills into sexual contact by leaving out the details of her healing his wounds and reversing the dragon's poison, focusing instead on the relief she brought to him in those past situations and equating that relief with the relief she could provide through her physical presence in the current situation. In his current love-sick state, the abilities to supply an antidote for poison and to recognize him as a lover approximate each other because they share the same outcome: relief from his suffering.

What Tristan leaves out, of course, is the antivenin, the herbs and the poultices that must be prepared and applied by an empirical healer in order to relieve the poison's effects. By not including these technical details, the healing takes on the same aspect as the loving care from the beloved. Tristan facilitates this equation in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* by highlighting Iseut's loving behaviors and omitting those related to empirical practice. In Tristan's view, Iseut can heal by her presence, by her loving embraces, and by acting on the meaning of the term "amie." In short, his suffering will end if she loves him.[73] In a way similar to what we saw in the last chapter with Thomas's *Tristan*, here, too, Iseut has dual roles as empirical healer and as beloved. As a result, the image of the beloved is enhanced by the capacities to heal and provide solace to a degree not seen before in romance. It is in large measure because of the combination of these two previously separate roles in the character of Iseut that the notions of healing and deep solace begin to accrete to the image of the beloved. The implications are twofold. First, the image of the beloved develops an important new capacity that will appear in works after the *Tristan* texts, as we will see in the chapters that follow. Second, the skills and knowledge of an empiric risk obfuscation in

73. Moshé Lazar notes that Tristan addresses Iseut here in the same manner as a troubadour poet addresses his lady (159).

romance, especially when their healing results are pressed into service as an aspect of the beloved's power.

Could the link between healing capacity and the beloved's power have been forged without the character of Iseut, who incarnates both? Quite possibly, since we saw in the introduction that the two are occasionally mentioned together in troubadour lyric.[74] It is in the character of Iseut, however, that we find such a thorough-going and elaborate representation. Indeed, in the *Roman d'Enéas*, which deeply influenced the representation of love in romance, healing and the beloved are entirely separate.

In the *Roman d'Enéas,* Lavinia's mother describes how love afflicts and heals:

> Guarde el tenple comfaitement
> Amors i est peinz folement
> et tient deus darz en sa main destre
> et une boiste en la senestre:
> li uns des darz est d'or en som,
> ki fait amer, l'altre de plom,
> ki fait amer diversement.
> Navrë et point Amors sovent,
> et si est peinz toz par figure
> por demostrer bien sa nature:
> li darz mostre qu'il puet navrer
> et la boiste qu'il set saner;
> sor lui n'estuet mire venir
> a la plaie qu'il fait guarir;
> il tient la mort et la santé,
> il resaine, quant a navré.
> Molt deit l'en bien sofrir d'amor,
> ki navre et sainë en un jor.
>
> (7975–92)[75]

74. In addition, C. Stephen Jaeger has found a reference to the lover's body as medicine in the letters of Heloise to Abelard. *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 275 n. 10.

75. All quotations from *Le Roman d'Enéas*, trans. Monica Schöler-Beinhauer (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972). Quotations from this work are followed by verse numbers. All translations from *Eneas: A Twelfth-Century Romance*, trans. and intro. John A. Yunck (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974). Translations are followed by page numbers.

> [Look in the temple, how Love is painted there alone, holding two darts in his right hand and a box in his left; one of the darts is tipped with gold, which causes love, and the other with lead, which makes love alter. Love wounds and pierces often, and is thus painted figuratively to show clearly his nature. The dart shows that he can wound, and the box that he knows how to heal. With him it is not necessary that a doctor come to treat the wound which he heals. He controls death and health; he cures after he has wounded. One should indeed be willing to suffer much from Love, who wounds and heals in a single day. (213)]

The Ovidian conception of love depends heavily on the actions of the God of Love, whom the poet refers to as "Cupido" or, more commonly, "Amors." This God both causes pain and alleviates it through healing. He brings on the symptoms of lovesickness by hitting his victim with an arrow. The arrow enters the eye and wounds the heart, such that the wound requires Love's care. This care is distinct from that of a doctor: although Love's wound smarts, Love will use its own medicine to heal the wound. The *Roman d'Enéas* does not, however, provide any specifics for Love's healing. Lavinia entreats Love to serve as her doctor: "or m'as navree, or seies mire" (8188) ("Now you have wounded me; now be the physician," 218), and she specifically asks for "l'antidot" (8228) or ("the antidote"; my translation), an appropriate expression given that, as we saw in Chapter 2, Ovid describes Love's arrows as tipped with poison.

The healing episodes in the *Roman d'Enéas* contrast with the presentation of love. Enéas also receives a war wound from an arrow and is attended by a physician. The warrior tries to pull out the arrow, but the arrowhead remains (9468–74). Although the cause of the wound is the same as for the wound that Love causes, an arrow, this link plays no role in the narrative. Enéas's wound serves only to heighten narrative tension, for he must overcome this impediment to win the battle and claim Lavinia. The Trojans, seeing their hero wounded and unable to fight, begin to lose hope. When Enéas is brought to his tent, a doctor who serves in the army arrives to treat him:

> Uns molt buens mires Iapis
> i est venuz et vit la plaie,
> senti le fer, molt i essaie,
> saveir se traire l'en porreit;
> nel pot aveir en nul endreit

a tenailles n'a ferrement,
et Eneas crie forment.
A sa male li mires vait,
prent une boiste, si'n a trait
del ditan, si l'a destempré,
beivre li fist; quant l'ot passé,
la saiete s'en est volee
et la plaie sempres sanee;
en es le pas toz sains refu.

(9552–65)

[Iapus, a very good physician, came and looked at the wound. He felt the iron, and probed deeply, to learn if he might be able to draw it out, but he could in no way remove it with forceps or iron tongs, and Eneas cried out loudly. The physician went to his bag, took out a box, drew from it some dittany, steeped it, and had Eneas drink the potion. When he had swallowed it, the arrowhead disappeared, and the shoulder was immediately healed; quickly he was again all healthy. (245–46)]

Iapus works just as the other *mires* we have seen. He attempts different methods, trying first to remove the arrowhead with implements such as pincers or tongs and then resorting to an herbal remedy. Dittany makes the arrowhead "s'en vole" or pop out (thus it does not "disappear," as the translation states), perhaps because of its ability to reduce swelling. By contrast, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, Iapyx's attempts to heal are futile despite his knowledge of herbs because he lacks good fortune and Apollo does not aid him. In this version, Venus disguises herself in a mist and provides the dittany mixed with ambrosia and panacea (Virgil, *Aeneid* XII 536–72). Both works explain that the curative powers of dittany were known because animals wounded by arrows were observed eating it (*Enéas* 9566–74; *Aeneid* XII 560–561), a means by which writers both ancient and modern understand humans to have learned healing properties of some herbs.[76] With the arrowhead out of the wound, Eneas returns to the front.

Iapus heals in the same way in which Lavinia expects Cupid to heal: he takes an herb from his box, makes a tea of it, and gives it to Eneas. However, just as with the arrow, the *Roman d'Enéas* does not draw connections between the metaphorical healing of the God of Love and the battlefield

76. Riddle, "Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine," 39.

doctor. Despite the numerous parallels, the *Enéas* poet does not play on these connections by means of rhetorical figures or other poetic devices. Such connections appear only when the beloved herself also has empirical healing skills and the opportunity to heal the beloved, as seen with Iseut.[77] The role is far more developed in Iseut than in any other romance character before her and, as we shall see, it will expand after her. The elaboration of the empiric as beloved in the Tristan narratives and the subsequent reinterpretation of that role in the works that respond to the Tristan story constitute a major source for the linkages between love and empirical practice in medieval literature.

Iseut's Status in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*

Until this point, Tristan has presented Iseut's good deeds in the past as part of the case he builds to identify himself: she has helped when he was suffering, and therefore can easily do so again, should she choose to help. As noted above, the *Folie Berne* is understood to have come from the same source as Béroul's *Tristan*, and is in the same tradition as the German *Tristant* of Eilhart von Oberg.[78] Tristan has referred to events that are either mentioned in the extant portions of Béroul's text or in Eilhart's tale. Thus Tristan has made his case within the bounds of the Tristan material; although he has, as we have seen, molded that material to emphasize how Iseut has alleviated his suffering, he never mentions the differences between the various kinds of healing or the source of Iseut's healing knowledge.

At this point, however, Tristan transforms an important element of the myth in a way that will further his case. We recall that in Béroul's poem Iseut's mother prepares the potion:

> Li lovendrins, le vin herbez:
> La mere Yseut qui le bolli,
> A trois anz d'amistié le fist.
>
> (Béroul, *Tristan*, ed. and trans. Lacy, 2138–40)

77. Even so, Alexandre Micha argues that the *Roman d'Enéas* is the source for the brief description of the beloved as healer in *Cligés* found in the depiction of the love between Alexander and Soredamor, Cligés' parents. See Micha, "Enéas et Cligés," 238–39. Although we cannot say what Chrétien's inspiration might have been, because the *Enéas* poet completely separates medical healing and the healing by Amors, it seems unlikely that the *Roman d'Enéas* served as an inspiration in this case.

78. See J. W. Thomas's introduction to *Eilhart von Oberge's Tristrant*, 1.

[Iseut's mother boiled it,
the love drink, the herbed wine;
she made it to last for three years of love.]
(my translation)

Deriving from Béroul's text, the *Folie Tristan de Berne* takes up the narrative after the philter has worn off. Tristan has left Cornwall and married Iseut aux Blanches Mains, a period that Renée L. Curtis describes as full of "suspicion, jealously and even betrayal,"[79] a situation that also applies to the *Folie Berne.*

As in Béroul's narrative, the lovers still try to see each other even after the three-year period in which they were willing to leave society completely in order to express their love; in the *Folie Berne* Tristan says he still feels the effect of the potion, explaining that it pushes him to engage only in love service (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 307–13).[80] Tristan indicates from the very beginning that he believes he has fallen short in his duty to love and so continues to try to see Iseut despite the dangers; he is told he will be killed if caught in Mark's kingdom: "Don ne fai je ce que demande? / Nenil, qant celë ai laissiee" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 60–61) ("Am I not doing what [love] asks? / No, I am not, for I have abandoned the woman"). Tristan explains specifically how the love potion acts on him. Rather than causing physical effects, it causes mental ones: he is able to think of nothing other than serving Iseut in love, and the potion has caused a seemingly irreversible change from "san" to "folor" ("sense" to "madness"). Having appropriated the disguise of a fool, Tristan uses the role to conflate the differences between the madness of a fool and the madness caused by love. However, Brangien acknowledges that these kinds of madness were considered different in cause, effect, and appearance when she recognizes Tristan: "En son cuer panse qu'il est sage / Et meillor mal a que n'est rage" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 294–95) ("It seemed to her that he was of sound mind / and sick with something better than madness").

79. "The Abatement of the Magic in Béroul's *Tristan*," 33.

80. Duncan Robinson points out that Tristan's position here is "strictly speaking … inadmissible" (6) because of the potion's limit in Béroul's text. Yet the situation fits the context of the *Folie Berne,* because Tristan is trapped in the disguise of the fool since Iseut does not recognize him (7).

First, Tristan implores Brangien to help him gain an audience with Iseut:

> Et vos, Brangien, qui l'aportates,
> Certes, malemant esploitates.
> Cil boivres fu faiz a envers,
> De plusors herbes mout divers.
> Je muir por li, ele ne.l sant,
> N'est pas parti oniemant.
>
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 314–19)

> [It was you, Brangain, who brought us the drink,
> and you were wrong to do it.
> Its many herbs made the potion unpredictable
> and it had the wrong effect.
> I am dying for her, but she feels nothing;
> the effect is not the same for both.]

Tristan insists on Brangien's role in serving him the potion, and he tells her this was a mistake. Further, he states that the love potion somehow went awry. Had he made this accusation to Brangien only, it might have gone unnoticed, but Tristan picks up this same theme later when he describes the potion's effects to Iseut. Here he highlights both Brangien's unintended error and suggests another one made by Iseut:

> Brangien, qui ci est devant toi,
> Corut en haste au trosseroil;
> Ele mesprist estre son voil.
> Do buvragë empli la cope,
> Mout par fu clers, n'i parut sope.
> Tandi lo moi et je lo pris.
> Ainz ne t'iert mal aprés pis,
> Car trop savez de la favele.
>
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 431–38)[81]

81. I have supplied my own translation of the last line of the passage because that of Rosenberg does not fit the context. For the last two lines, Rosenberg offers: "You had no more woes afterward than before, because you have a glib tongue, Brangain" (437–38). This possibility suggests that Tristan

[Brangain, the very one now facing you,
ran to her baggage and in her haste
made a mistake she never intended.
She poured the drink into the cup;
it was perfectly clear, with nothing floating in it.
She held it out to me and I took it.
You had no more woes afterward than before,
because you know too much about the story/lie.]

Tristan implicates Iseut here in the workings of the potion: he now claims that she understood the potion well enough to exempt herself from it. Tristan therefore attributes to Iseut knowledge of the love potion, a knowledge she possesses in no other text.[82]

Why this sudden attribution that alters the very center of the Tristan legend? What accounts for Tristan's suggestion that Iseut is exempt? Tristan explains that although he and Iseut are lovers, their situations are different (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 342–49). Tristan alone has to endure physical hardships such as those faced in the journey he has just completed: he has suffered hunger, thirst, and uncomfortable surroundings. He claims that he has worried and brooded and that Iseut takes no pity on him for having undergone these difficulties. In short, he explains that their love is not equal: "N'est pas l'amors a droit partie" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 343) ("but it is an unequal love"). Not only does Iseut not have to put up with difficulties, but she does not pity Tristan for doing so. Tristan's assessment of his life at this point is central to his view of Iseut in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. Tristan defines love as suffering but cannot see that Iseut has suffered too: thus, he cannot see that she loves. According to Tristan, Iseut does not suffer for her love; even worse, she feels no pity for Tristan's distress.

In mulling over his circumstances, Tristan arrives at a new understanding of them. He seems to be thinking out loud here. The act of describing his situation leads him to a new understanding of it—and this process recurs

---

breaks off his explanation to Iseut to address Brangien, even though she is never mentioned by name in the original text, and immediately after he concludes, Iseut, and not Brangien, replies.

82. Rosenberg's translation also suggests an additional knowledge on the part of Brangien early in the *Folie Berne,* where he selects a variant stating that Brangien "traist" or "prepared" (171) the love potion. He supplies the rejected variant that says she "tenet" (249) or "offered" the beverage. There is no other indication that Brangien made the potion in this or any other Tristan narrative. Moreover, Tristan blames Brangien at several points in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* for serving the drink and for making a mistake by serving it to Iseut and himself, not for preparing the drink itself.

throughout the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. An example can be seen at the beginning of the work. Tristan begins with a general description:

> Deus, con sui maz et confonduz
> Et en terre mout po cremuz!
> Las! que ferai qant ne la voi?
> Que por li sui en grant efroi
> Et nuit et jor et tot lo terme.
> Qant ne la voi, a po ne derve.
> Las, que ferai? Ne sai que faire,
> Que por li sui en grant afaire.
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 94–101)

> [God, how burdened and disheartened I am,
> and how little respect I command!
> What can I do without a chance to see her?
> Because of her I live day and night
> in constant torment.
> Not seeing her, I stand to lose my mind.
> What can I do? I don't know what to do,
> I am so disturbed because of her.]

Heartsick and tormented, Tristan says he will go mad if he does not see Iseut and that he does not know what to do. Yet it appears that the notion of madness triggers an idea, for in the verses that immediately follow, Tristan suddenly hits upon a plan of using madness as a disguise that will enable him to see Iseut:

> Tenir me porroit por mauvais
> Se por nule menace lais
> Que je n'i aille en tapinaje
> O en abit de fol ombrage.
> Por li me ferai rere et tondre.
> S'autremant ne me puis repondre.
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 102–7)

> [She might well consider me a coward
> if I let some threat stop me
> from going to her in disguise
> or dressed like an ominous madman.

For her I'll shave off beard and all my hair
unless I can find some other concealment.]

By naming his potential problem as madness, Tristan seems to be suddenly inspired by the disguise of madness, because it is at this point that he states his intention to use it in his scheme. This process of verbalizing an idea and then incorporating it as a part of his story continues throughout the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. As he retells it, Tristan thus comes to a new understanding of the love story and reshapes it.

At the beginning, when Tristan thinks that Iseut will quickly and easily recognize him in spite of his disguise, he sees her as a means of deliverance from his anguished state. Thus, Tristan includes Iseut's healing skills in the depiction of her loving acts, since her capacity to heal is an extension of her loving presence. Tristan conflates both sources of suffering and means to relieve distress as he seeks solace from Iseut. However, during the course of their encounter, Tristan runs into nothing but resistance from Iseut and so seems to cast about for an explanation for her behavior. He therefore appropriates practices of amatory magic into his conception of Iseut, explaining that knowledge of the love potion enables her to exempt herself from feeling what he does, suffering in love. Instead of seeing her skills as making her a more complete lover, they detract from her loving presence at the point in the narrative at which Tristan most doubts Iseut's love.

In summary, Tristan's understanding of Iseut's acceptance of the madman before her who claims to be her lover changes more than once in the short space of the *Folie Berne*. How Tristan reads Iseut's reaction to him is a function entirely and completely of whether Tristan believes, questions, or disbelieves that Iseut still loves him. As long as he believes she loves him, he is willing to suffer. Early in the text Tristan complains that he has bad luck to have such suffering in his life (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 64–67), but at this point, Tristan believes both that Iseut suffers too and that it is his fault because he is not with her:

Don ne fai je ce que demande?
Nenil, qant celë ai laissiee
Qui a por moi tant de hachiee,
tant mal, tant de honte, d'anui.
(*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 60–64)

> [Am I not doing what [love] asks?
> No, I am not, for I have abandoned the woman
> who because of me is suffering such torment,
> such harm, such shame and hardship.]

As he continues to plea in vain for Iseut's recognition, he changes his view of Iseut's position. Once he begins to question her love for him, he casts about for an explanation and hits upon the notion that the philter was badly made (verse 316, quoted on page 167). As Iseut continues not to recognize him, Tristan adopts the view that because Iseut knew about the potion, she was therefore exempt from it.

Tristan's opinion of Iseut's roles is dialectic: it is a function of her responses to him. Early in the text, Iseut remains the lover *par excellence* whose healing skills merge seamlessly with her capacity to alleviate suffering. But as Tristan repeatedly confronts her refusal to grant what he wants, he transforms her into a beloved who is unmoved by his suffering. Her lack of pity becomes the foremost characteristic in Tristan's image of her. Moreover, it serves the same purpose as his earlier descriptions of her, since his accusation that Iseut is pitiless could move her to show pity to Tristan. We cannot say with any certainly whether Tristan himself is convinced that she has no feeling or whether instead his accusation exists more to provoke the desired reaction from her. Either manner of appropriating Iseut's empirical skills serves to further Tristan's purpose: gaining Iseut's recognition.

Tristan shows no interest in moralizing on the use of empirical skills or in commenting on any aspect of Iseut's behavior that cannot be included in her role as lover. He never names Iseut as anything other than "amie" in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*—not *mire*, *sorcière*, or any other such term. The naming reflects the structure of his perception: she in always and only his "amie" or lover. Whatever other aspects of her character are subsumed under the name of lover.

Tristan recasts Iseut's connection to the love potion in the *Folie Berne* because in his view, her exemption from it provides the only plausible explanation for her lack of feeling. As Tristan emphasizes his pain, a simple formula prevails: he has suffered in the past and Iseut aided him; he is suffering at present and Iseut will not help. Thus Tristan can only believe that Iseut feels no pain. Tristan concerns himself with nothing other than love. Throughout the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, Tristan talks and acts like a man transformed. He specifically locates the cause of his transformation in the

love potion, saying that since he drank it he has thought only of love service. From this perspective, Tristan's assessment—that Iseut does not reveal her love for him because she must be exempt from the potion—has its own internal logic and must be read in light of Tristan's emotional state when he makes it.

For this reason, I disagree with critics who read Tristan's claim as an indication that the potion had stronger effects on Tristan than Iseut—in other words, that Tristan loved Iseut more than she loved him.[83] Critics have also used the quotation to point out that Tristan is a victim or that Iseut has more power.[84] René Louis uses Tristan's claim in the *Folie Berne* to bolster his thesis that Iseut knew about the philter and wanted Brangien to administer it to herself and Tristan because she had no desire to be married to Mark and because she did love Tristan, though unconsciously.[85] Thus, Louis calls Iseut "la meneuse du jeu," ("the leader of the game").[86] Philippe Walter argues that Iseut is immune to the potion's effect because she is a woman.[87] These critics accept without question Tristan's assertions about the potion despite the fact that his emotional distress is likely to have strongly influenced his portrayal of it.

Tristan's recollections in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* both acknowledge and re-present Iseut's healing abilities. However, we have already seen that although the *Folie Tristan de Berne* acknowledges Iseut's skills, it simultaneously provides a means to recast them because Tristan conflates the results of the

83. For example, Renée Curtis argues that Tristan's claim in the *Folie Berne* is accurate since his life is more difficult in both versions of the *Folie Tristan* and the romances of Béroul and Thomas. Curtis does not consider that Tristan may be making exaggerated claims in his attempt to be recognized. See Curtis, "The Ill-Prepared Love Philtre: The Theme of Inequality in the Love of Tristan and Iseut," in *Tristan Studies* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969), 42–53. Sahel disputes this view as I do (219–28). Editors of the *Folie Berne* have also unquestioningly accepted Tristan's claim. For Ernest Hoepffner, the potion was made to cause pain to Tristan only, while for Joseph Bédier, the potion was made incorrectly. See Ernest Hoepffner, "Notes," in *La Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. Ernest Hoepffner, 2nd ed. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1949), 103 and Bédier, who glosses "à envers" as "à rebours, par mauvais artifice" in "La Folie Tristan de Berne," in *Les Deux Poèmes de la folie Tristan* (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1907), 114.

84. Cahné, 32.

85. René Louis, "Notes et Commentaires," in *Tristan et Iseut: Renouvelé en français moderne d'après les textes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles par René Louis* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1972), 275–301. Sahel refutes this thesis (214–19).

86. Louis, 274.

87. Walter, 150. He arrives at this conclusion because he links the date on which the couple drank the potion (the feast of St. John) with the potion's ingredients. A number of different herbs have links to St. John's day in folklore: of these, artemisia was used to regulate women's menstrual cycles (143–47).

healing of his physical wounds with the relief from his current torment. Tristan's presentation of the events from their past suggests that Iseut heals Tristan not because she knows anything of wound treatment or poison antidotes, but merely because he loves her. Iseut's healing actions feed so well into her role as lover that her role as an empirical healer is eclipsed.

Although Tristan embellishes Iseut's knowledge of the love potion, he does not dwell on her role as a practitioner of love magic. Instead, he uses this characteristic to enhance his portrayal of Iseut as a merciless lover. By rewriting the narrative of their love focusing on his suffering and negating Iseut's, Tristan fulfills the role of the stereotypical, neglected lover, and reduces Iseut to the stereotypical haughty beloved. Yet, clearly she is not. Tristan folds Iseut's skills in healing and magic so seamlessly into Iseut's role as beloved that modern readers may fail to notice them altogether, or read them only symbolically. Magical and healing skills lend themselves to metaphorical treatments of healing and love, and medieval poets repeatedly availed themselves of this adaptability. The early Tristan material paved the way for the exploitation of these themes by depicting a lay practitioner as the beloved.

Iseut's Response

And what of Iseut? Although critics have for the most part overlooked Iseut's reaction in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, they are worth examining because they reveal the degree to which Tristan and Iseut think and behave similarly when confronted by memories of their love.[88] The difficulty in the situation is that they both distrust the other for the same reason: neither can believe the other would behave in such a way. The distrust they harbor only creates more distrust, so that even though they react in the same way, their reactions push them further apart.

Iseut demonstrates unease at the first utterances of the fool, and her distrust only grows. She asks him to refrain from telling more of his stories

88. Phyllis Gaffney has noted the lack of attention to Iseut. See Gaffney, "Iseut la (Dumb) Blonde: The Portrayal of the Queen in the *Folie Tristan*," *Romania* 113 (1992–95): 402. Yet Gaffney explains Iseut's actions in part as simply a means to further the plot: Iseut is slow-witted (i.e. does not recognize Tristan) because "the dramatic appeal of the *Folies* is greatly enriched by their insistence on the queen's incomprehension." (405). Gaffney bolsters this unsatisfactory explanation with a more plausible one, that Iseut's lack of recognition stems from her reasonable fear of the madman before her (415). However, Gaffney's simultaneous insistence on Iseut's "poor memory" (416) rings hollow, because the *Folie Tristan de Berne* in fact offers numerous reasons to explain Iseut's reactions.

(187) and when he does not, she covers her head with her cloak (210). One critic has accused Iseut of a superficial reaction to the situation because she judges Tristan on his clothing:[89]

> Craint que il soit enchanteor
> O aucun boen bareteor:
> Tristanz ot povre vesteüre.
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 518–20)

> [(Iseut) fear(ed) that the man was a magician
> or a remarkable impostor:
> Tristan was dressed so poorly!]

Yet Iseut fears that the fool has engaged in practices in the same domain of which he accuses her, that of magic. Elsewhere she points out Tristan's trickery: "Estrange chose avez enprise, / Maint engingniez par truandise" ("It's a remarkable thing you've undertaken, / tricking people with your crookedness") (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 468–69) and "Trop a en lui cointe meschin!" ("What a tricky fellow he is!") (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 369). Tristan responds that he used trickery only to get past Mark and adds "Ainz ne soi rien de devinaille. / La vostre amor trop me travaille" ("Before, I'd never resorted to riddles, / but love for you overwhelms me") (*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 376–77). In medieval culture, even a riddle has connotations of magic: Greimas glosses the word in the masculine form as conjecture, but in the feminine form (used here for the rhyme) as (1) prediction, divination; (2) supposition; (3) sorcery; or (4) monster.[90] Moreover, Tristan's use of the word *devinaille* implies that he understands how deceptive he has been in taking the disguise of the fool.

As with the parallel accusations of magic, Tristan and Iseut often echo each other in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, despite the fact that they mistrust each other until she finally recognizes the ring. Although Tristan claims repeatedly that Iseut does not suffer from love like he does, Iseut's reactions to Tristan reveal that she suffers considerably. As noted above, when Tristan describes Iseut's link to the philter, he uses the word "favele" (438). The definition of the Old French word *favele* (438) includes the meanings *narrative*, *story*, or *lie*.[91]

89. Curtis, "Ill-Prepared Philter," 44–45.
90. Greimas, 177.
91. Greimas, 261.

Iseut responds in the same vein when she answers this accusation: "De mout bon maistre avez leü!" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 440) ("You have been reading some good writers!"), suggesting that Tristan's imagination has been influenced by outside sources, rather than remembered events. It is not surprising that Iseut does not immediately recognize Tristan, for, as she states, he has changed their story.

Iseut responds at other points in the text in ways that reflect Tristan's words or actions. For example, Iseut claims the same problem as Tristan when she finally sees through his disguise: "'Lasse!" fait ele, "'tant sui fole!" (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 543) ("'What a fool I've been!' she exclaimed"). In addition, just as Tristan justifies his actions throughout the *Folie Berne* by blaming them on suffering in love, so too does Iseut. When Iseut reacts to the fool before Brangien, Iseut says:

> Tant a hui mes faiz regreté
> Et les Tristan, c'ai tant amé
> Et fais encor, pas ne m'an fain!
> Lasse! si m'a il en desdain
> Et si m'an sofre encore a poine.
> Va por lo fol, si lo m'amoine!"
>
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 262–67).

> [Did you hear how he recalled what I did,
> what Tristan did? Oh, I loved him,
> and still do: I don't deny it!
> But he is full of disdain for me,
> while I can hardly live without him.
> Go get the fool and bring him here!]

Iseut too suffers, so much so that she cannot be away from the fool even though his harsh words trouble her. Moreover, her reaction to the situation in this passage indicates confusion on her part. Who is the "he" of verse 265? She has just been speaking of her past with Tristan, saying that she loved him and still does. Then she says that "he" is full of disdain for her; it would seem that she is now talking of the fool. In addition, she says that she can't live without the fool, though this also seems to be the case for Tristan (and mirrors Tristan's similar complaint that he is unable to live without Iseut). Iseut's ambiguous use of the pronoun "he" suggests that subconsciously she recognizes that Tristan

and the fool are one and the same. Still, she remains incapable of recognizing him, not because of the quality of the disguise but because she cannot imagine that Tristan would ever treat her as badly as the fool has. Their emotional reactions mirror each other, since Tristan laments that his *amie* would never neglect him the way Iseut does here. Though the text focuses more on Tristan, these few lines suggest that Iseut has feelings like those of Tristan.

Certainly Tristan has experienced more physical discomforts as he surreptitiously makes his way to Iseut at Mark's court, a fact Tristan does not hesitate to point out to Iseut when he greets her in private:

> Amis sui je, et ele amie.
> N'est pas l'amors a droit partie:
> Je sui a doble traveillié,
> Mais el n'an a nule pitié.
> O fain, o soif et ou durs liz,
> Pansis, pansant, do cuer, do piz,
> Ai soforte mainte destrece.
> (*Folie Tristan de Berne,* ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 343–48)

> [I am her lover, and she is mine,
> but it is an unequal love:
> for me it is a double torment,
> while it leaves her unmoved.
> With hunger and thirst, hard beds,
> a brooding heart, a worried breast,
> I have undergone great hardship.]

Yet Iseut also suffers because of her love for Tristan. For example, when the fool recounts his "nonsense" to the court, Iseut heart races and she hates the man (*Folie Tristan de Berne*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 333–35). Each doubts the love of the other because neither understands the difficulties of the other's position: Iseut cannot accept that Tristan would behave as the fool has, and Tristan cannot believe that Iseut is unable to recognize him as the one who has suffered for her. Here again they are thinking along the same lines, but those lines produce mounting distrust. Despite all of Tristan's claims that Iseut is merciless and loveless, Iseut thinks and acts markedly like Tristan during this encounter.

We saw earlier in this chapter that in Béroul's text a number of contradictory claims are made about the love potion and that the reader is required to negotiate them. The *Folie Berne* goes a step farther because

Tristan *himself* makes a claim about Iseut's knowledge and use of amatory magic (that Iseut knew about the potion and used it against him) that is outlandish in the context of their story. Tristan seems driven to make such an accusation because of his frustration at Iseut's inability to recognize him. The *Folie Tristan de Berne* reveals that, especially in the case of a lover who feels rejected or misunderstood, love magic can become the reason given for his woes, even if that explanation fits the story poorly. Tristan uses it against his beloved, Iseut, as part of his plea for recognition. It is the kind of claim that was often made about amatory magic: someone used it against someone else.[92] That Tristan wields it in an emotionally charged situation should alert us to the possibility that he is misrepresenting it, as indeed must have often been the case with rejected lovers in a time when erotic magic was common. As with the claims made in Béroul's text, here too the reader should practice discernment, interrogating the motives of those who make claims about love magic.

92. See Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic."

5

LOVE AND MEDICINE IN THE *ROMAN DE SILENCE*

THE COMPLEX SET OF *Tristan* materials analyzed in the previous two chapters continues to play a role in the works that come after them. The nature and import of that role will be the subject of the two chapters to come. We have seen that although the versions of Thomas and Béroul and the *Folie Tristan de Berne* differ in emphasis, they all reflect the domain of empirical practice in the high Middle Ages. For their portrayal of empirical practitioners and their practices, the authors depend for their inspiration hardly at all on previous literary works and very heavily on the world around them. Thomas, in keeping with his rational approach overall, focuses on the rational aspects of empirical practice, showing the specifics of healing, wound management, and the effects of a love potion. At the moment when Tristan and Iseut recognize their love, Thomas plays on the similarity between feelings of being in love and the effects of certain plant-derived substances that promote euphoria and well-being. Béroul's stance on interpretative freedom applies as well to the claims about amatory magic in his work: Béroul's *Roman de Tristan* thereby reflects the ambiguity inherent in empirical practice. Ambiguity is pushed even further in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, in which Tristan, in a moment of doubt, questions Iseut's love and accuses her of using love magic against him. Although Iseut succeeds in convincing Tristan that she loves him as much as ever, the *Folie* highlights the mistrust that can be bred by an empiric's exclusive knowledge. One of the biggest barriers to recognizing Iseut's capacity as an empiric has been the mistaken assumptions of modern critics about the scope and nature of empirical practices and practitioners in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. We saw this with respect to Thessala of *Cligés* in Chapter 2. Once Thessala's position vis-à-vis empirical practitioners of her time is established, we can see her ability to apply empirical practice to undermine the marriage politics at court.

In the previous two chapters we saw how the beloved who is also an accomplished empiric subtly influences the image of the beloved. In the

work of Thomas, the healing skills of the empiric accrete to the beloved and may appear to result simply from the beloved's salubrious presence, while in Béroul and the *Folie Tristan de Berne* the ambiguity of empirical practice can raise questions and even foster resentment.

The *Roman de Silence* further shows how empirical practice can be recast in the service of love. This later thirteenth-century[1] romance has occasioned considerable critical attention in the last two decades, much of it centered on the character of Silence, a daughter born to Cador and Euphemie during a time when King Ebain of England had decreed that no daughter could inherit property. Silence's parents conspire to raise her as a boy in order to circumvent the inheritance problem. Silence, who excels at the various skills that young aristocratic boys are usually taught, experiences a happy childhood. A crisis occurs in adolescence, however, which the reader hears articulated in an argument between Nature, who made Silence skillfully with the finest ingredients available for beautiful women, and Nurture, who defends Silence's ability to learn and perform courtly skills. Nurture, with the help of Reason, wins this early battle. Only after Silence gains recognition as a jongleur and a knight is she revealed to be a woman by Merlin at King Ebain's court. Not surprisingly, the work has inspired considerable criticism, much of it focusing on questions related to gender and sexual identity.[2]

1. In the introduction to his edition, Lewis Thorpe offers the last half of the thirteenth century as the admittedly imprecise date for the work. See his introduction to *Le Roman de Silence: A Thirteenth-Century Arthurian Verse-Romance by Heldris de Cornuälle* (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1972), 10.

2. These include: the personification of nature as an anti-misogynist element in Suzanne Conklin Akbari, "Nature's Forge Recast in the *Roman de Silence*," in *Literary Aspects of Courtly Culture: Selected Papers From the Seventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 27 July–1 August 1992, ed. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1992); the anti-misogyny of the work in Kathleen J. Brahney, "When *Silence* Was Golden: Female Personae in the *Roman de Silence*," in *The Spirit of the Court,* ed. Burgess and Taylor; the poem's consideration of gender as socially constructed but the ultimate closing off of that possibility in Simon Gaunt, "The Significance of Silence," *Paragraph: A Journal of Modern Critical Theory* 13, 2 (July 1990): 202–16; and the potential for women readers to question the misogynist pronouncements of the text in Krueger, 101–27. Sharon Kinoshita describes gender's relationship to the feudal aristocracy as the romance's euphemization of the feudal politics of lineage. See Kinoshita, "Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence* and the Feudal Politics of Lineage," *PMLA* 110 (1995): 397–409). Gender as a force in forming and perpetuating the dynastic marriage system of feudal aristocracy is found in McCracken, "'The Boy Who Was a Girl': Reading Gender in the *Roman de Silence*," *The Romanic Review* 85, 4 (1995): 517–36. Other readings of gender include the instability of Silence's name and identity, which challenge the gender-signifying system and correspond to the ambiguity of the writing process in Erin F. Labbie, "The Specular Image of the Gender-Neutral Name: Naming Silence in *Le Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 63–77; the ability of queer theory to interrogate the work's participation in or challenge to hegemonic gender norms in

Other issues scholars have addressed include the poem's approach to language, the role of Merlin, the work's relationship to generic conventions, the implications of the work's codicological context, the moral implications of the episodes of reward and punishment, and the manuscript's potential to call into question modern text editing practices.[3] The *Roman de Silence*, like the Tristan legend, is set in England, though the work's language is Picard.[4] Although we know nothing of the author from other sources, the first editor of the work, Lewis

---

Elizabeth A. Waters, "The Third Path: Alternative Sex, Alternative Gender in *Le Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 33–45; the ambiguous status of language as it relates to sexual identity in Michèle Perret, "Travesties et Transsexuelles: Yde, Silence, Grisandole, Blanchandine," *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 328–40; the work's depiction of heterosexual and homosexual desire in Kathleen M. Blumreich, "Lesbian Desire in the Old French *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997) 47–62; the modernity of the issues confronted in the work in Edward J. Gallagher, "The Modernity of *Le Roman de Silence*," *The University of Dayton Review* 21, 3 (1992): 31–39; the instability of the medieval gender system as evidenced by characters other than Silence in Lorraine Kochanske Stock, "The Importance of Being Gender 'Stable': Masculinity and Feminine Empowerment in *Le Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 7–34; and the possibilities of reading ideology in a text that suggests Silence's queerness in Robert L. A. Clark, "Queering Nature and Naturalizing Class in the Roman de Silence," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 50–63.

3. A number of critics have discussed language. For Peter Allen, the work contains fundamental ambiguities of words and gender. See Allen, "The Ambiguity of Silence: Gender, Writing, and *Le Roman de Silence*," in *Sign, Sentence, Discourse: Language in Medieval Thought and Literature*, ed. Julian N. Wasserman and Lois Roney (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989). Suzanne Kocher focuses on the ambiguity in rhymes with *apieler* and *celer.* See Kocher, "Undermining Oppositionality: *The Romance of Silence*'s Nature/Nurture Debate Complicated by the Rhymes of *Apieler* (to Name) and *Celer* (to Conceal)," *Romance Languages Annual* 7 (1995): 95–99. Loren Ringer describes the polyvalence of many words in the text in "Exchange, Identity, and Transvestism in *Le roman de Silence*," *Dalhousie French Studies* 28 (1994): 3–13. R. Howard Bloch argues that it illuminates medieval poetics and the role of the trouvère especially as they pertain to silence, language, and desire in "Silence and Holes: The *Roman de Silence* and the Art of the Trouvère," *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986): 81–99. Kate Mason Cooper reads the work as a commentary on women's role in poetry in "Elle and L: Sexualized Textuality in *Le Roman de Silence*," *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 341–60.

On Merlin, see Gloria Thomas Gilmore, "*Le Roman de Silence:* Allegory in Ruin or Womb of Irony?" *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 111–23; Sarah Roche-Mahdi, "A Reappraisal of the Role of Merlin in the *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 6–21; and Lorraine Kochanske Stock, "Civilization and Its Discontents: Cultural Primativism and Merlin as a Wild Man in the *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 22–36.

Caroline A. Jewers treats generic conventions in "The Non-Existent Knight: Adventure in *Le Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 87–110. For codicology, see Keith Busby, *Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 415–20. Thanks to Professor Busby for allowing me to see this work in manuscript form. Reward and punishment is discussed by Heather Lloyd, "The Triumph of Pragmatism: Reward and Punishment in *Le roman de Silence*," in *Rewards and Punishments in the Arthurian Romances and Lyric Poetry of Mediaeval France: Essays Presented to Kenneth Varty on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Peter V. Davies and Angus J. Kennedy (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1987). On text editing, see Regina F. Psaki, "The Modern Editor and Medieval 'Misogyny': Text Editing and *Le Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 78–86.

4. Thorpe, 10.

Thorpe, suggests that Heldris lived in northern France near what is today the Franco-Belgian border.[5] A small number of critics have entertained the notion that Heldris was a woman, but so far this argument is only speculative.[6]

The first third of the *Roman de Silence* has garnered somewhat less attention than the gender-bending activities Silence carries out in the remainder of the work. The narrative follows a pattern, also seen in works such as *Cligés* and the *Roman de Tristan*, in which the first third of the narrative relates the story of the hero's (or heroine's, in Silence's case) parents. As we saw in the Tristan narrative, Blanchefleur conceives Tristan out of wedlock. She leaves Cornwall with Rivalin but dies at sea when Tristan is born. The baby is christened "Tristan" from the French *triste* or "sad" to reflect these unhappy beginnings. This first third of the work hints at the sadness, transgressive love, and the role of sea travel in the remainder of the story. The first third of *Cligés* similarly relates the love story of Alexandre and Soredamor, who will become the parents of Cligés. A tripartite structure in which the opening section anticipates important themes and motifs in the rest of the work is common in Old French verse romance. The opening section of the *Roman de Silence* follows this structure by relating the story of Silence's father and mother, Cador and Euphemie.[7] This part of the text reaches forward in that it has consequences for the remainder of the narrative, but it also reaches backwards because it borrows and retransmits romance elements, including but not limited to those used in the depiction of love.

We saw in the introduction that a complex web of intertextual relationships is considered inherent to romance composition. A number of critics have pointed out that the *Roman de Silence* was influenced by both Latin and vernacular works or traditions.[8] In the episodes of Cador and Euphemie, critics

5. Thorpe, 17.

6. Akbari, 45; Stock, "Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 20; Sarah Roche-Mahdi, "Introduction," in *Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance* (East Lansing, Mich.: Colleagues Press, 1992), xi.

7. Critics have noted the conventional treatment of Cador and Euphemie's love (Ringer, 7; Lloyd, 78).

8. Thorpe declares that the final episodes involving Merlin were inspired by *L'Estoire Merlin* (28–30) but says we cannot expect to find much other than brief mentions of other works (15, 32). Roche-Mahdi argues for influence by 'Grisandole' in "A Reappraisal of the Role of Merlin in the *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 6–21. Roche-Mahdi also points out a clear debt to the *Roman de Sept Sages* and to three main female characters of the *Roman d'Enéas*, Dido, Lavine, and Camille, who serve as models respectively for Eufeme, Euphemie, and Silence. See her introduction in Heldris de Cornüalle, *Roman de Silence* (xiv–xvi; xiii). Psaki concurs with Thorpe that aside from *L'Estoire*, the sources are "general and diffuse." See her introduction to Heldris de Cornuälle, *Le Roman de Silence*, trans. Regina Psaki (New York: Garland, 1991), xxxv. Lynne Dahman describes the

have pointed out the role of the Tristan legend and Ovidian love casuistry and the debt to *Cligés*.[9] Other critics have shown that *Cligés* itself is dependent upon the *Roman d'Enéas* for its portrayal of love;[10] the *Roman de Silence* may thus owe a debt to only the *Roman d'Enéas* or to both the *Roman d'Enéas* and *Cligés*. A line of influence runs from the Ovidian texts to the *Roman d'Enéas* (which although inspired for its plot by Virgil's *Aeneid* relies heavily on Ovid for its presentation of love,)[11] through *Cligés*, and into the *Roman de Silence*. While it is clear that Heldris knew some if not all of these antecedent works, I argue that in matters pertaining to healing and love the author adds a new dimension to the conventions. This dimension comes both from empirical practice and from its portrayal in the *Tristan* works. Thus for the *Roman de Silence* my argument differs somewhat from that for *Cligés* or the *Tristan* romances. For the earlier works, I sought to show that the portrayal of empirics' actions draws heavily on practices of the time. For the *Roman de Silence*, I argue that empirical practice in the text is heavily influenced by the *Tristan* materials, but that it also retains a strong connection to actual practices of the time.

The *Roman de Silence* furthers the image of a female empiric who is also the beloved, and in the process it goes so far as to establish the physical body of the beloved as medicine. The text staunchly and unequivocally insists on Euphemie's knowledge and skills as an empiric in line with what we have seen in *Cligés* and the *Tristan* materials. It does not hesitate, however, to press that role into service to elaborate the image of the beloved. The appropriation of healing capacities to bolster the image of the beloved has the potential to conflate healing with the beloved's solace and in so

---

relationship between *Silence* and hagiography in "Sacred Romance: Silence and the Hagiographical Tradition," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 113–22. Lorraine Kochanske Stock discusses intertextuality in "Civilization and Its Discontents: Cultural Primitivism and Merlin as a Wild Man in the *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 32–33, and in "Arms and the (Wo)man in Medieval Romance: The Gendered Arming of Female Warriors in the *Roman d'Enéas* and Heldris's *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 5, 4 (1995): 56–83.

9. Lloyd, 78. On *Cligés*, see Kinoshita, "Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence*," 407 n. 10. Kinoshita also notes that Chrétien himself uses Ovid heavily in *Cligés*.

10. See, for example, Alexandre Micha, "*Enéas* et *Cligés*," 237–43; Gustave Cohen, *Un Grand Romancier*, 43–61, 77–78, 176, 213; Blumenfeld-Kosinski.

11. On Vergil, see John A. Yunck, who proposes that the *Enéas* poet "was working with a manuscript of Vergil before him" but that the adapter transforms episodes "especially in *sen*, or theme, or attitude" to fit the twelfth-century French public. See his introduction to *Eneas: A Twelfth-Century Romance*, trans. and intro. John A. Yunck (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 7. For a summary of the arguments, see Raymond J. Cormier, "The Present State of Studies on the *Roman d'Enéas*," *Cultura Neolatina* 31 (1971): 7–39. Ovid is treated by Yunck, 81 and Faral, 125–54. Erich Auerbach argues that although the elements in the Enéas poet's description of love derive from Ovid, the style is not at all Ovidian (214–15).

doing to call into question the capacities of female empirics. Unlike the *Tristan* story, the *Roman de Silence* applies no love potion to catalyze Cador and Euphemie's love, who come to realize their feelings without a special draught. However, I will show that the vocabulary of potion/poison and drunkenness that suffuses the description of Cador and Euphemie's love aligns specifically with that of Tristan and Iseut. Despite the absence of the physical potion, the conception of love in the Tristan materials has gained ascendance to the point that the potion no longer needs to be materially present to shape the representation of love. This narrative can dispense with the potion's ability to uncover latent love because there are no social strictures that prevent the marriage of Cador and Euphemie. The *Roman de Silence* pushes associations between the representations of love and empirical practice further than we have seen in the works that inspired it, and in so doing it forges an even stronger link between the two domains. Finally, as in the other works considered, the *Roman de Silence* addresses concerns of courtly marriage through the depiction of three marriages. The work implies that couples who have reason to be loyal to each other have more potential to contribute to a stable court than those who lack loyalty.

Sickness and Healing in the *Roman de Silence*

The *Roman de Silence* appropriates from the *Tristan* legend the dragon-slaying episode as a means for the hero to gain recognition. We first meet Cador just after a fierce dragon has attacked a group of King Ebain's men as they ride through the forest to Winchester. The dragon immediately burns to death some thirty men and eats their bodies. Dismayed, King Ebain offers to the knight who can defeat the dragon a county and the woman he chooses in marriage. After Cador quickly rises to the challenge and slays the dragon, a feast is given at Winchester to celebrate. However, that night after the meal, Cador falls ill. He is in pain and changes color because of the effects of the dragon's venom (579–82). The next morning, King Ebain finds Cador looking pale and sickly and acts immediately. He summons Euphemie because "El païs n'a si sage mie," (594) ("She was the wisest doctor in the land").[12] We have previously seen this level of knowledge attributed to Iseut's mother and Iseut herself in the different Tristan materials. Gender seems to play no role in this

12. All quotations and translations of this text from Heldris de Cornüalle, *Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance*, ed. and trans. Roche-Mahdi.

designation, for as with Queen Iseut of Ireland, Euphemie is not recognized as the best female doctor in the land but simply as the best doctor.

Further, Euphemie is named a *mire*, a title which is given to healers in general. We have seen it applied to Iseut, Iseut's mother, the unsuccessful doctors in Tristan, Thessala, the Salernitan physicians, and Iapus of the *Roman d'Enéas*. In keeping with the standard practices of the high Middle Ages, however, it does not indicate that the healer trained in a medical school.[13] We recall from earlier discussions that neither a degree nor formal training is the sine qua non of medical practice in the high Middle Ages. In fact, Edward Kealey has found evidence of a female healer named Euphemie practicing in England around the time of composition of the *Roman de Silence*.[14] While geographical distance and the historical Euphemie's role as head of a religious house suggest that the empiric Euphemie was likely not the inspiration for the romance character, the resemblance is nonetheless striking.

That the *Roman de Silence* makes no issue of a woman practicing medicine seems all the more important because of this text's bald pronouncements on women's and men's roles. When Silence reaches adolescence she witnesses a debate between Nature, Nurture, and Reason. As a youth, Silence has already become accomplished at the skills such as wrestling, jousting, and fencing that a boy must learn to be successful at court (2494–96). Around this time in Silence's life, Nature appears and informs him that all of his actions contravene Nature's intentions, saying that he—the text uses masculine pronouns for Silence in this section—was made for beauty and that this beauty cannot be appreciated when Silence constantly runs around outside practicing sports. Nature tells Silence "Va en la cambre a la costure" (2528) ("Go to a chamber and learn to sew!"). A gender ideology in which boys learn jousting and wrestling and girls learn sewing is explicitly stated in the *Roman de Silence*, yet no claim is ever made that healing falls outside

13. Thus I disagree with Lasry's contention that Euphemie's medical practice gives her the power and status equal to that of a man (228). For an argument that places more weight on the use of terms to designate practitioners, see Peggy McCracken, "Women and Medicine."

14. Edward J. Kealey, *Medieval Medicus: A Social History of Anglo-Norman Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981) 191 n. 10. Kealey points out that Muriel Joy Hughes provides the wrong dates for Euphemia (*Women Healers*, 117) and that the correct ones are given in Dom David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and Vera C. M. London, *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940–1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 222. Critics have commented on Euphemie's name as it relates to King Ebain's evil wife, Eufeme. See Allen, "The Ambiguity of Silence," 100; Jewers, 99; Bloch, "Silence and Holes," 96; Roche-Mahdi, xx, and L. K. Stock, "Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 20. Lasry suggests that Euphemie cannot be identified with a real person (231).

women's prescribed roles. To the contrary, the text suggests an affinity between women and healing.

As with the other texts we have examined, the *Roman de Silence* only hints at how Euphemie might have acquired her healing knowledge. In a general description of her worthiness, she is praised for her lineage, her beauty, and the fact that "Des. vii. ars ert moult bien aprise" (403) ("She was well versed in the seven arts"). The seven arts comprised the liberal arts curriculum, combining subjects from the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*. It would have been unusual, but certainly not impossible, for a girl to have studied these either in a convent or with a tutor. Convent subjects included the *trivium*, music, and in some cases basic medical training.[15] Yet the *Roman de Silence* supplies no details of Euphemie's studies and does not even mention that she studied medicine. While it is true that a university student would have to complete a liberal arts curriculum before taking up the study of medicine, theology or law,[16] as a woman, Euphemie would have been barred from all university study.

Although the *Roman de Silence* is dated a full century after the works we have previously considered, and although by the latter part of the thirteenth century, medical study was established in northern France (formal organization of medical study at the University of Paris exists from 1231) and Norman England,[17] we recall from the background chapter that medicine continued to be learned in informal settings through apprenticeship-like relationships throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. In actual practice, learned medicine and empirical medicine shared many of the same techniques.

Around the time of the composition of the *Roman de Silence*, the faculty of medicine at the University of Paris was just beginning its long campaign to attempt to limit practice of medicine in Paris and the vicinity by anyone who lacked a degree in medicine.[18] Records from the University of Paris

15. Ferrante, "The Education of Women," 12. We recall Hildegard of Bingen's medical acumen as demonstrated by her writings on natural sciences and herbal simples, although whether she practiced or not is debated (Stoudt, 20). In addition, Abelard instructs Heloise that there should be an Infirmarian who has knowledge of medicaments and a woman who has knowledge of blood-letting at the convent to treat the women (Stoudt, 18). For the original quotation, see *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, trans. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin, 1974), 215.

16. Kibre and Siraisi, 126.

17. For Paris, see Bullough, *Development of Medicine,* 69. On Norman England, Bullough argues that medical education was never particularly important in Oxford and so documentation is scarce. He finds men who know medicine associated with the university as early as the late twelfth century and in increasing numbers in the thirteenth. See his "Medical Study at Mediaeval Oxford," *Speculum* 36, 4 (1961): 600–612.

18. In the kingdom of Sicily there were laws requiring examination in order to practice as early as the twelfth century (Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine,* 17–18). The

reveal that in 1271, the faculty of medicine under the leadership of Dean J. de Racheroles declared that "ne aliquis Judeus vel Judea in aliquam personam fidei catholice cyrurgice seu medicinaliter operari presumat" ("no Jew or Jewess presume to operate surgically or medically on any person of catholic faith").[19] Then the faculty noted a problem with "quidam manualiter operantes," ("certain manual operators")[20] who lack understanding of the causes and reasons of medicines, and thus declared that those without advanced training were endangering their patients. The faculty sought to halt these practitioners in Paris and its surroundings. First it stated that

> firmiter inhibemus ne aliquis cirurgicus seu cyrurgica, apothecarius seu apothecaria, herbarius seu herbaria per juramenta sua limites seu metas sui artificii clam vel palam seu qualitercumque excedere presumat, ita quod cyrurgicus se nullatenus intromittat nisi de manuali practica et ut ad ipsum pertinet; apothecarius autem seu herbarius nisi solum de confectione sua et de administratione solum magistris in medicina facienda vel de quorum licentia constiterit facultati.
>
> [we strictly prohibit that any male or female surgeon, apothecary, or herbalist, by their oaths presume to exceed the limits or bounds of their craft secretly or publicly or in any way whatsoever, so that the surgeon engage only in manual practice and as pertains to it, the apothecary or herbalist only in mixing drugs which are to be administered only by masters in medicine or by their license.][21]

Further, those mentioned should not visit the sick to administer other medicines. Monica Green points out that this statute says nothing against women as practitioners.[22] In fact it suggests that female surgeons, herbalists, and apothecaries are hardly exceptional.

The statute implies that the faculty had previously asserted its authority when it states that "quoddam statutum nostrum dudum factum per predictas

---

faculty of medicine at Montpellier sought limits on practice in 1220 (Bullough, *Development of Medicine*, 104).

19. *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 1, ed. H. Denifle (1889; rpt., Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1964), 489. The translation is in Thorndike, *University Records,* 83.

20. *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 1, 489; trans. Thorndike, *University Records*, 84.

21. *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 1, 489; trans. Thorndike, *University Records*, 84.

22. "Women's Medical Practice," 448.

litteras officialis videlicet et etiam regalium vallatum seu etiam confirmatum nomine facultatis per juramenta nostra confirmamus" ("[we] confirm a statute of ours made long since, supported by the said letters of the Official and also by royal ones, strengthened and confirmed too in the name of the faculty by our oaths").[23] The editor of these university statues notes that the earlier documents have never been found.[24] For "dudum," Thorndike gives "long since," but the definitions for *dudum* range from "a little while ago" and "not long since" to "some time ago" and "a long while ago."[25] Thorndike's translation therefore obscures the ambiguity of the time relationship in the statute. Pearl Kibre has found evidence of more ambiguity with respect to time in later attempts to limit practitioners. It was not until 1311 and 1322, well after the composition of the *Roman de Silence*, that regulations prohibited those not approved by the medical faculty from practicing medicine in Paris; further, these regulations claimed to have some two centuries of precedence. Kibre notes, however, that, "[b]oth the authenticity and dating of such a statute appear doubtful since so far no text of such a pronouncement seems to have been found."[26] As Kibre suggests, this was the first attempt of many spanning a period of more than three hundred years during which the faculty of the medical school attempted to curb unlicensed practice. Their repeated appeals to kings, popes, and bishops reveal the extent and the futility of their efforts.[27] Moreover, those accused, as in the case of Jacqueline Félicie in 1322, pointed out that many others were practicing in Paris without a license.[28] Thus, although the issue will become increasingly important throughout the fourteenth century, the first stirrings of this controversy near the end of the thirteenth century do not register in the *Roman de Silence*. Moreover, the regulations concern Paris and its environs, while it is believed that *Silence* was composed in northern France near the Belgian border.[29]

Perhaps as a result of the disputes over legitimate practice by the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, a hierarchy of practitioners based

23. *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 1, 489; trans. Thorndike, *University Records*, 83.

24. *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 1, 490.

25. *Cassell's Latin and English Dictionary*, compiled by D. P. Simpson (New York: Collier Books, Macmillan, 1987), 74.

26. She adds that the term may be a figurative attempt to establish the statute's past. See "The Faculty of Medicine at Paris," 2.

27. Kibre, 7–18.

28. Kibre, 10.

29. Lewis Thorpe, introduction to *Le Roman de Silence*, 17.

on formal training began to assert itself.[30] Yet here again, the *Roman de Silence* appears just before the issue arises and bears no trace of it. Instead, the depiction of Euphemie depends on the depiction of Iseut in the *Tristan* romances and on contemporary empirical practices.

There is, however, one transformation in medical thought in the high Middle Ages that deserves some attention. In the intervening hundred years or so between *Cligés* and *Tristan* on the one hand and the *Roman de Silence* on the other, the content of medical training underwent dynamic changes. There is evidence that medicine as taught in the universities began to veer away from the form practiced in the *Roman de Silence.* We recall Kristeller's assertion that Salernitan medicine of the early twelfth century shows a movement away from practice to theoretical instruction. This split spread across western Europe with the growth of scholasticism. The beginnings of the transformation can be seen when the Salerno school shifts its focus from compiling recipes to writing commentaries on existing works.[31] By the fourteenth century, medical education at Paris focused on disputes and defenses of classic treatises.[32] The stress on theory contributed to the professionalization of medicine.[33] Benjamin Lee Gordon writes, "the best doctor was the one who could quote the greatest number of authorities, especially in the classical languages."[34] As with the question of licensing practitioners, the issues of theory and practice were not yet developed at the time of the *Roman de Silence*, though they would become far more contentious in the half century after the work. By the early fourteenth century, surgeons in Montpellier were disparaged by their physician colleagues because of their empirical approach.[35] This separation was created in part by medical texts, translated from Arabic that arrived in European medical schools during the high Middle Ages that placed a strong emphasis on the theoretical causes of disease.[36] As formal medical study solidified in the thirteenth century, medical masters wanted to change medicine's status from a mechanical art (such as hunting or agriculture) to a science (linked

30. Siraisi, 20.

31. Kristeller, 156–57.

32. Stephen D'Irsay, "The Teaching and Practice of Medicine in the Medieval University of Paris," *Bulletin of the Society of Medical History of Chicago* 4 (1928): 42–43.

33. Bullough, *Development of Medicine*, 81, 110.

34. *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 267.

35. McVaugh, introduction to Arnaldi de Villanova, *Opera Medica Omnia,* vol. 3, *De Amore Heroico, De Dosi Tyriacalium Medicinarum* (Barcelona: University of Barcelona Press, 1985, 68.

36. Danielle Jacquart, "The Introduction of Arabic Medicine into the West: The Question of Etiology," in *Health, Disease, and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. Campbell, Hall, and Klausner.

to philosophical inquiry).[37] The speculative status accorded to medicine by its entry into the university would be forfeited if physicians used manual techniques.[38] Despite this new strand of medical thought, the theory/practice divide was not neat and clean, as several writers pointed out the continued value of practical approaches.[39] This same kind of divide occurs in the developing drug theory of learned medicine in the late twelfth century and thirteenth century.[40] Because theory became "so complex as to be unworkable," practical knowledge of herbal applications continued to be transmitted in both oral and written forms throughout the Middle Ages.[41] Even some masters such as Nicholas of Montpellier decried the loss of traditional knowledge in the face of the new theories.[42] Empirical approaches may well have fostered empirics' confidence.[43] Barred from universities, women could claim only the practice side of the developing theory/practice dichotomy.

The *Roman de Silence* focuses on Euphemie's observable actions and therefore emphasizes the practical elements of her healing. She begins by assessing the patient's situation:

> Ses bras manie, son pols taste,
> Puis dist al roi qu'el le garra
> Ainz .xv. jors qu'il n'i parra.
>
> (596–98)

> [She took his arm and felt his pulse,
> then she told the king she would cure him
> within two weeks, so well that there would be no trace of illness.]

37. Danielle Jacquart, "La Pratique dans les oeuvres médicales de la fin du Moyen Age," *Colloque internationale d'histoire de la médecine médiévale*, vol. 1 (Orléans: Société orléanaise d'histoire de la médecine, Centre Jeanne d'Arc, 1985), 57.

38. Vern L. Bullough, "Status and Medieval Medicine," *Journal of Health and Human Behavior* 2 (1961): 206. Surgeons too began to eschew manual work in the fourteenth century. As a result, different kinds of medical practitioners divided further and barber surgeons took over work that surgeons disdained (206–8).

39. Jacquart, "La Pratique," 57–59; Park also points out that the divide was not complete (79).

40. Riddle, "Theory and Practice." In this article, Riddle implies that only men practiced empirical medicine, but there is ample evidence that women did also, as in the Parisian statutes above that suggest that male and female surgeons, apothecaries, and herbalists also engaged in empirical practice.

41. Riddle, "Theory and Practice," 172, 178–81.

42. Riddle, "Theory and Practice," 181.

43. Riddle, "Theory and Practice," 184.

Euphemie's use of the pulse for diagnosis falls within standard medieval healing practices.[44] Only after taking the patient's pulse does Euphemie tell the King how long it will take to cure Cador. Pulse theory, like urine theory, generated complex systems that took up entire treatises, comparing the pulse, for example, to the motion of animals or measuring its meter or other musical qualities.[45] Such arcana probably had little influence on most practitioners, for whom "the act of taking the pulse put the physician in a profound and literal sense in touch with the ebb and flow of vitality in his patient."[46] Euphemie's use of the pulse as a diagnostic indicator therefore places her solidly among empirical practitioners of her time.

Having assessed the patient, Euphemie immediately sets about the healing process by preparing a room:

> Un lit fait faire li mescine
> En une des plus maistres canbres.
> Li pavemens estoit fins lambres:
> Selonc le cambre ert li vergiés
> U li mie et li clergiés
> Ont fait planter erbes moult chieres
> Qui viertus orent de manieres.
>
> (612–18)

> [The girl had a bed prepared
> in one of the very finest chambers.
> The pavement was made of beautiful marble.
> Next to the room was the garden,
> where both physicians and clerics
> had planted many precious herbs
> with many healing virtues.]

Not only is the sickroom comfortable, but it lies close to the herb garden that will furnish plants to help Euphemie heal Cador. The fact that Euphemie will apply herbal lore in the healing process further indicates her status as an empiric. In addition, this quotation reminds us of the diversity of healers

44. Siraisi notes that pulse and urine are "the main diagnostic tools of the medieval physician" (58).

45. Siraisi, 127.

46. Siraisi, 127, 125.

at the time: both doctors (*mires*, the general terms for healers) and clerics planted such gardens because both took on healing responsibilities in the community.[47] Clerics remained active in healing throughout the Middle Ages, but in the early twelfth century the Church limited the activity specifically of monks and non-secular canons.[48] Despite the growth of a class of professional healers in France that began around the later half of the thirteenth century, Wilson points out that in even until the nineteenth century in rural France convents and monasteries were known regionally for having the best supply of medicinal herbs from their gardens.[49]

Documents show that medical gardens existed throughout the Middle Ages.[50] Jerry Stannard has classified medieval gardens, including the kitchen garden for cooking, the medicinal garden (both of which were found at private homes and religious houses),[51] and the patrician garden, which was "the garden associated with prosperous householders, urban and rural alike. Above all else, such a garden was a mixed garden" that included ornamentals.[52] The castle garden of *Silence* could have been either a patrician garden or a strictly medicinal one, depending on what other plants grew there. Stannard notes that "all of the plants for which we possess medieval garden records did, in fact, serve two or more purposes."[53] In any event, the romance clearly states that the garden's function is healing, one that is commonplace in both manors and religious houses. This herbal lore came from sources "empirical, local, folkloric and handed down by oral tradition" and "elements derived from Greek medicine by way of written sources."[54] Plants grown in gardens often substituted for wild plants or oriental exotics, if the latter proved impossible to obtain, but the results were equally efficient.[55]

47. Kibre (3) cites the growth of monastic medical study and treatment from the sixth century onward. See also Park, 76–77.

48. For a careful study of Canon law pertaining to clerical limits on medical study and practice, see Daniel W. Amundsen, "Medieval Canon Law on Medical and Surgical Practice by the Clergy," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 52 (1978): 22–44.

49. On professional healers, see Park, 83; S. Wilson, 365.

50. Opsomer-Halleux, 95–96.

51. Stannard, "Alimentary and Medical Uses," 75–76.

52. Stannard, "Alimentary and Medical Uses," 76.

53. Stannard, "Alimentary and Medical Uses," 74.

54. Siraisi, 141. For corroboration of this position, see Riddle, "Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine," and Stannard, "Alimentary and Medical Uses," 71–74, in which Stannard counts 350 species "known in late Roman times and used for alimentary and/or medicinal purposes [that] were available and known by name by the twelfth century" (74). See also Stannard, "Medieval Herbals," and Stannard, "Magiferous Plants."

55. Opsomer-Halleaux, 105.

After the *Roman de Silence* sets the scene for Euphemie's healing, it tarries little on the process, stating simply that only Euphemie touched him during this time and that she cured him within a week (624–28). Whereas Iseut's mother took as long as forty days to heal Tristan and Thessala needed two weeks to restore Fenice from her disastrous encounter with the Salernitians, Euphemie accomplishes her goal in only a week. Despite a lack of detail for the healing process, Euphemie's recognition in the community, pulse-based diagnosis, implied knowledge of the preparation and application of medicinal herbs, and success in healing establish her competence as an empiric.[56] Both the diagnostic skills and herbal lore coincide with practices that historians of medicine describe as common to the time. As we have seen in the other romances, the poet/narrator avoids a complex technical discussion of healing that would not suit the tone of the narrative and for which, in all likelihood, he lacked the requisite knowledge. Instead the practices included are ones that any non-specialist who observed an empiric at work could relate. Thus in the *Roman de Silence* actual empirical practices of the high Middle Ages directly contribute to the depiction of healing in the work. Further, Euphemie's healing is thoroughly practical at a time when university faculty began to privilege theory in medicine.

Before turning to the episodes in which Cador and Euphemie fall in love, we should consider three ways in which the *Roman de Silence* seems to question Euphemie's healing abilities. First, Euphemie states to Cador that she served him "en liu de mie" (938). Roche-Mahdi translates this "as physician" and not literally as "in place of a doctor." Given the numerous parallels between empirical practices of the time and Euphemie's actions, the relative lack of importance of titles for practitioners at the time, and the reference to Euphemie as the best doctor in the land, this one verse hardly seems to call into question Euphemie's practice.[57] Secondly, some critics have pointed out that once Euphemie marries Cador, she never heals again,[58] which could be construed as a loss of power. While no plot elements involve

56. I see the depiction of Euphemie's empirical skills as part of the *Roman de Silence*'s challenge to the assumption that misogyny was ubiquitous. Regina Psaki discusses other ways in which this romance calls that received notion into question in her introduction to Heldris de Cornuälle, *Le Roman de Silence*, xvi.

57. Cf. McCracken, who reads "*in the place of* a (male) doctor" ("Women in Medicine," 249).

58. For example, Blumreich, 50.

healing after the Cador episode, it is unlikely that the respect Euphemie received for her work would have instantly dissipated. Given the recognition accorded her work and the life-threatening nature of injury and illness, it is reasonable to assume that in actual practice, those in need would continue to seek out an empiric after she married. However, the plot of *Silence* turns in an entirely different direction once Cador and Euphemie marry. With the birth of their daughter, they are depicted only in their role as parents; Euphemie's healing skills no longer play a central role the narrative because she no longer plays a central role. Accordingly, we should not assume that she has lost her ability to heal.

Finally, the *Roman de Silence* elevates Euphemie's healing to a kind of courtly skill such as music, jousting, or conversation. When the narrator introduces Euphemie, he says that she stands above all other women, "N'a feme el regne qui li valle" (398) ("Not a woman in the realm was her equal"), that she is beautiful, her father is an important Duke, and then, as we saw above, that she has studied the seven arts. Presented in this way, Euphemie's education contributes to her image as a very desirable courtly maiden, one whose healing abilities match Cador's bravery and fighting skill. From the earliest mention of the two characters, the narrator insists on their equality: they are both noble and have skills and character traits that set them apart and indicate their suitability for each other. When they finally speak of their love for each other, Cador says: "Altressi tost prendrés baron, / Con, jo, amie, feme a per" (1002–3) ("You shall take a noble husband / precisely when I take a wife who is my peer"). As is often the case in romance, Cador and Euphemie are seen as a fitting couple because of their superlative attributes. Just as Cador demonstrates his worth as a courtly young man when he slays the dragon, Euphemie demonstrates her worth when she heals Cador from the dragon's venom. While almost every romance requires a young man to prove his knightly skill, this skill is only rarely answered by a maiden who proves her healing abilities. Usually women show merit in their looks, courtly behavior, and lineage. Thus Euphemie's healing abilities have the potential to be reduced to an accouterment of a seemly maiden, compared to singing and politeness. Here we should recall that the extensiveness and rarity of her healing skills set those abilities apart from the usual coterie of accomplishments that enable courtly maidens to attract well-matched suitors. Nevertheless, as we will see, the *Roman de Silence* operates a subtle appropriation of Euphemie's healing capacities in order to elaborate the image of the beloved.

Love as a Drug

The narrator of the *Roman de Silence* explicitly attributes Cador's symptoms to the dragon's venom and smoke (581–82). Yet these symptoms come on only after Cador has spent the evening longing for Euphemie and after the narrator's statement that one must suffer in love. At the banquet given to celebrate the slaying of the dragon, Cador talks to Euphemie and feels his heart stir anew. However, Cador does not yet speak of his love. Instead, he must suffer for her (571–74). Their love also shows the paradoxical qualities found in conventional representations of romantic feelings in the Middle Ages: it emboldens Cador sufficiently to kill a fierce dragon, but leaves him too afraid to tell Euphemie that he loves her. In contrast to the dragon, Euphemie is described as not his enemy (550) and ready to give herself to him (553) if he would ask. Cador's love for Euphemie exists before they have sustained contact: when the King announces the reward for slaying the dragon, "Amors tolt Cador l'esmaier" (412) ("Love took Cador's fear from him").

Unlike Tristan and Iseut, Cador and Euphemie do not consume a love potion before they recognize their love. Instead, the poet relies on the Ovidian motif of the arrow:

> Cador se plaint qu'Amors le grieve.
> Amors que fait? .i. dart soslieve
> Qui plus est trençans d'alamiele,
> Si l'a feru sos la mamiele.
> "H[e]las!" fait il, "qui si me point?"
> Et Amors priés del cuer se joint
> Et tant li grieve l'envaïe
> Qu'il gient, et crie: "Aïe! Aïe!"
>
> (679–86)

> [Thus Cador complained that Love was giving him grief.
> And what did Love do? He took up a dart
> sharper than a lance's point,
> and struck Cador just beneath the breast.
> "Alas!" he cried. "What has pierced me so?"
> And then Love pressed him close to the heart,
> and this attack hurt him so
> that he moaned and cried, "Ah! Ah!"]

Cador's two problems, sickness from the dragon's venom and his lovesick feelings, have separate and distinct sources: poison and Love's arrow. Yet despite the separation of the causes, the fact that Cador falls ill only after the banquet, where he speaks with Euphemie and revisits his feelings for her, suggests a parallel between love and some kind of poison/potion (we recall that the two words in English are only one in Old French).

This parallel is reiterated at several points. First there is the severity of the new illness. Although Euphemie succeeds in healing Cador in only eight days, she brings about a new problem:

> Mais ele l'a mis en gregnor,
> Car li alers et li venirs,
> Li maniiers et le tenirs
> Qu'ele i a fait, com a malage,
> A fait l'amor en li plus sage
> . . . . . .
> "E las!" fait il. "Vient cho d'amer,
> Si grans mals et tels amertume?"
>
> (630–635, 640–641)

> [But she had made him worse as well,
> for her comings and goings,
> the way she handled and held him
> when he was sick,
> made love for her grow strong in him . . .
> "Alas!" he said, "Is that what comes of love?
> Such dreadful pain and such bitterness?"][59]

Euphemie's careful ministrations awaken love in Cador, a love that causes him pain. Thus, as Cador says, "Ele m'a fait d'un mal delivre, / Mais d'un moult gregnor voir *m'enivre*" (659–60, emphasis mine) ("She has saved me from one malady, / but now, truly, a much worse one *poisons me*). Cador's use of the verb *to poison* echoes the effects of the love potion drunk by Tristan and Iseut without actually including the potion itself. The romance thus deploys the Tristanian notion that feelings of love and those of intoxication are very much alike without actually exposing the couple to the vagaries of amatory

59. Roche-Mahdi points out the clear reference to Thomas's puns on mer/amer/amour (323).

magic that we saw in the *Folie Tristan de Berne,* in which the ambiguity of those practices led to Tristan's belief that their love and suffering were not equally shared.

Cador insists further on the potion-like effects of love when he says that he is either *drunk* or gone mad—"Car *ivres* sui et esmaris" (661, emphasis mine)—since he continues to suffer despite having been healed. Euphemie too applies the metaphor of poison to describe her illness:

> Del venim vos ai fait delivre,
> Dont vos envemina la guivre.
> Et jo m'en sui si *enivree,*
> Ja n'en cuic estre delivree.
> L'enfertés est sor moi venue
> Que entor vos me sui tenue.
>
> (939–44)

> [I saved you from the venom
> with which the dragon poisoned you.
> And *from that I became so delirious*
> I don't think I can be cured.
> I caught the disease
> from being around you.]

Both Cador and Euphemie describe the feelings of love as a kind of drunkenness or poisoning, using terms such as "m'enivre"("poisoned"), "ivres" ("drunk"), "enivree" ("intoxicated") as though they had in fact drunk a potion. Thus *poison* is a sign with more than one potential referent: it refers back to the dragon and to the feelings of being in love associated with the potion consumed by Tristan and Iseut. Although Heldris exploits the arrow as the *mechanism* to incite love in the *Roman de Silence*, taking inspiration from the Ovidian conceit or from its expression in the *Roman d'Enéas*, the *effects* of falling in love are the same as they were for Tristan and Iseut after they drank the potion.

We can see this most clearly in the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, another reworking from Thomas.[60] With the same main plot lines as the *Folie Tristan de Berne*, the Oxford *Folie* also depicts Tristan disguised as madman in his return

60. Joseph Bédier, "La Folie Tristan d'Oxford," in *Les Deux Poèmes de la Folie Tristan*, ed. Joseph Bédier (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1907), 2.

to Mark's court, where he retells Iseut their love story. Iseut questions the madman before her about the possible cause of his affliction:

> "N'est mie vair, einz est mensunge;
> Mais vus recuntez vostre sunge.
> Anuit fustes *ivre* al cucher
> E l'*ivrece* vus fist sunger."
> "Vers est, d'itel baivre sui *ivre*
> Dunt je ne quid estre delivre."
>
> (*Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 457–62, emphasis mine)[61]

> ["It's a lie, not the truth;
> you're just retelling a dream.
> You were *drunk* going to bed last night
> and your *drunkenness* made you dream."
> "I am *drunk*—true—but on such a drink
> that I cannot soon expect to be sober."]

Tristan explains that he is intoxicated, but from the love potion and not from an alcoholic beverage as Iseut suggests. This passage forges another link between the feelings of intoxication and those brought about by the potion. In short, Tristan suggests that the love he feels for Iseut is a kind of drug. He repeats this formulation a few lines later when describing how they drank the potion:

> Quant en haute mer nus meïmes,
> Ben vus dirrai quai nus feïmes.
> Li jur fu beus e fesait chaut
> E [si] nus fumes ben en haut.
> Pur la chalur eüstes sei.
> Ne vus menber, fille de rai?
> D'un hanap beümes andui:
>
> Vus en beüstes e j'en bui.
> *Ivrë* ai esté tut tens puis,
> Mais mal *ivrece* mult i truis.
>
> (*Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, ed. and trans. Rosenberg, 467–76, emphasis mine)

61. All quotations and translations of this text from "Folie Tristan d'Oxford," ed. and trans. Samuel N. Rosenberg, in *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Lacy.

[I'll tell you what we did
once we out on the high sea.
The day was beautiful and hot,
and we were resting on the deck.
The heat made you thirsty.
Don't you, daughter of a king, don't you remember?
We both drank from the same goblet;
first you drank and then I.
I have been *drunk* ever since,
more *drunk* than I should ever have become.]

Tristan claims that he has suffered from this drunkenness from the moment he imbibed the potion, and in his bid to gain Iseut's recognition, he characterizes it as a bad drunkenness. These references further characterize the love Tristan feels for Iseut, the love of which they became conscious after drinking the potion, an experience much like being drugged.

In contrast, the mounting distrust that arises because of Tristan's interpretation of the potion seen in the *Folie Tristan de Berne* (discussed in Chapter 4), never appears in Heldris's tale. Love creates a need for Cador and Euphemie to see each other and talk to each other, and in this narrative that desire is not blocked. We are told that they love each other from the earliest mention of each in the story, though neither can tell the other. When they finally breech the subject of love, Cador speaks so that Euphemie will understand: "Or savés qu'il nel laira mie / Ne parolt ensi qu'ele l'oie" (916–17) ("Now you know that he will not fail / to speak so that she can hear him"). Indeed the problem between Cador and Euphemie in the *Roman de Silence* is just that, silence.[62] Once they have spoken of their love, their misunderstanding vanishes:

Il n'ont mais entr'als nule error;
Ainz sevent ore la verror,
Qu'il est amis et ele amie.

(1155–57)

[There is no longer any misunderstanding between them;
from now on they know the truth,
that they are friends and lovers.]

62. Bloch discusses this in light of the work's commentary on poetry, language, and desire ("Silence and Holes," 89–91).

Although both fear admitting their love for the other, the time spent together and their talk increases their love for each other:

> Car puis qu'en parler ont delit
> Si croist l'Amors moult de petit
> Por cho que il ensanble soient."
> Mais amant qui ne s'entrevoient
> Et forssalent que d'an en an,
> N'ont mie d'assés tel ahan
> Que d'iestre apriés et consirrer.
>
> (753–59)

> [For where there is delight in speech,
> love grows from very small beginnings,
> as long as lovers are together.
> But lovers who don't see each other
> or arrange to meet, except from year to year,
> never have enough of that sweet labor
> of being close and observing each other.]

Cador and Euphemie's situation is thus in contrast to lovers such as Tristan and Iseut, who see each other only rarely.

The *Roman de Silence* reiterates the idea that Cador and Euphemie feel as though they have drunk a potion by depicting Cador's symptoms in love as very similar to those of the dragon's poison. Once in love, Cador suffers:

> Vellier la nuit, jaindre, pener,
> Qu'Amors le prent a demener,
> Fai le fremir, suer, tranbler.
> Pis que fievre li puet sambler.
>
> (719–22)

> [He was awake all night, suffering, groaning,
> for Love had seized control of him,
> made him shiver, sweat and tremble.
> It was worse than the symptoms of a fever.]

The dragon's poison caused pain that woke Cador in the night and caused him to change color, the same effect that love has on him. The benefits of the healing Cador that has undergone seem to have deserted him, and he

believes he cannot be healed, saying "Nen ai confort de guarison" (678) ("I have no hope of being cured").

Euphemie also suffers because of her love for Cador. As the narrator says, "En la sofrance a tant d'amer" (772) ("She finds such bitterness in suffering"), and she believes that caught the disease from Cador (782). The more she thinks of him, the worse it grows (785–86). Although her symptoms are detailed with less specificity, Euphemie also feels pain from love, groaning and trembling from its effects, saying she is neither dead or alive (775–78).

Romance plots allow the audience to revel in the pain caused by love and often reward the listener or reader with the lover's attainment of the beloved. Having drawn unmistakable parallels between the feelings love causes between Cador and Euphemie and those between Tristan and Iseut by suggesting that love feels like a drink/drug/potion/poison, the *Roman de Silence* then proposes Euphemie's body as the agent of healing. The woman who healed Cador from his earlier ailment will herself become the medicine to remedy Cador's lovesickness.

When Cador is struck by Love's arrow and the king hears his outcry, the king responds to the fact that Cador suffers from the dragon's poison. The narrator, however, lets on that more is at issue:

> Mais ne set u li mals li tient
> Ne de l'enferté qui li vient
> Dont nen avra la *medecine*
> Se Dex nel fait et la *mescine*
> Quil gari de l'autre enferté.
>
> (711–15, emphasis mine)

> [but he didn't know where the malady had struck
> or that he had succumbed to an illness
> for which there is no *cure*
> except from God and the *girl*
> who healed him of his other hurt.]

Clearly Cador's current problem stems not from the toxic dragon's poison but from contact with Euphemie. Only she can cure the lovesickness that her presence has caused.

The narrator plays on three words in this passage. According to Greimas, *mecine* means "remedy," "healing virtue," or even "enchantment." Its near homophone, "medecine," meaning "remedy," gradually replaces

mecine, though at the time of this text both words are in use, and both appear in this text. Both are homophones or near homophones of *mecine* or *meschine*, meaning young woman. This word has a masculine form, *mechin*, which is not used for Cador. Instead, Cador is called by name or is called a *baceler*. The feminine form, on the other hand, repeatedly designates Euphemie: thirteen times in some 1,100 lines of verse (395, 544, 612, 625, 656, 714, 733, 840, 875, 1039, 1250, 1276, 1536). This word is the most common designation of Euphemie in the text: its repeated use to refer to her reiterates the idea that Euphemie herself serves as medicine to the suffering young man. Although this quotation describes a reciprocal exchange in love, the homophones repeatedly echo the idea that Euphemie is Cador's medicine. As if to emphasize this, of the ten lines in which "mecine" falls at the end of the line, it is rhymed with "medecine" in four of them. For example:

> S'il voelent garison avoir
> Dont covient il par estavoir
> Et lui garir par la *mescine*
> Et li avoir par lui *mecine*.
> U cascuns d'als son per garra,
> U la mecine n'i parra.
>
> (873–78, emphasis mine)

> [If they want to be cured
> then it will be necessary
> for him to be cured by the *girl*,
> and for her to take her *medicine* from him.
> Either each of them will cure the other,
> or there will be no curing.]

The same rhyme occurs when Cador describes the effects of Euphemie's healing and his resulting lovesickness:

> Jo li puis bien amor rover,
> Mais or me poroit reprover
> Son traval et sa *medecine*,
> Et poroit penser la *mescine*
> Que folie ai en li veüe,
> Que por cho ruis que soit ma drue.
>
> (653–58)

[I could reveal my love to her,
but her efforts and her *medicines*
might then be a reproach to me:
the *girl* might think
that I had found her behavior unseemly,
and that I want her for my mistress.]

Cador is aware that he loves Euphemie although he fears to tell her, and that his love results (albeit indirectly) from Euphemie's healing.

Both Cador and Euphemie see their skills falter in the face of love. Cador's bravery evaporates; he complains that even though he could kill the dragon because love empowered him, he is unable to tell Euphemie of his love for her (649–51).[63] Euphemie finds herself equally hindered because although she could heal Cador from the effects of the dragon's poison, she is powerless against the effects of love:

Amors m'a mis en noncaloir,
Ars ne engiens n'i puet valoir.
Jo doins as altres medecine
Mais moi ne valt une fordine
Quanque jo sai dire et canter.

(787–91)

[Love has made me incapable of action.
Neither my learning nor my native intelligence can help me.
I prescribe medicine to others,
but all my fancy accomplishments
aren't helping me one bit.]

Cador and Euphemie's mutual helplessness before love constitutes yet another similarity between them, further indicating their suitability.

Once Cador confesses his love for her, Euphemie knows they need some kind of medicine:

"Bials dols amis," dist la *meschine*,
"Nos convenroit une *mechine*,

63. Ringer notes Cador and Euphemie's communication difficulties (9).

Car nos avons une enferté.
Mais or me dites verité.
Coment cis mals est apielés?
Se vos savés nel me celés."

(1039–44)

["Dear, sweet friend," said the *girl*,
"we really need some *medicine*,
for we both have the same disease.
But now tell me, truly,
what is the name of this malady?
If you know, don't keep it from me."]

Although Euphemie states tentatively what they need, social custom demands that she not ask outright for Cador to kiss her. While she seems to understand the situation quite well, and has shown in the healing episodes that she is quite capable of taking control of a situation and bringing it to a good outcome, Euphemie becomes coquettish at this point, hiding her knowledge and letting Cador take the lead. Cador explains that even though he is young, he has heard older men talk of the disease of love, for which a kiss can be exceedingly beneficial (1045–56). Euphemie's transformation into the medicine for the ailing Cador is completed in the long description of the kiss the lovers share after they finally admit their love for each other:

Li uns prent l'autre par la destre,
Et escalfent si del tenir
Qu'il ne se pueënt abstenir
Ne mecent les boces ensanble.
Sans dire font, si com moi sanble,
De fine amor moult bone ensegne,
Car li baisiers bien lor ensegne,
Et li qu'il trait paine et martire,
Et lui qu'ele l'aime et desire,
Car n'est pas baisier de conpere,
De mere a fil, de fil a pere:
Ainz est baisiers de tel savor
Que bien savore fine amor.

(1090–1101)

[Each takes the other by the hand—
they are so carried away by this
that they cannot prevent themselves
from putting their mouths together.
It seems to me that, without speaking,
they are giving a fine demonstration of courtly love,
for kissing teaches them both a good lesson,
both her who causes him pain and torment,
and him whom she loves and desires.
For this is not a comradely kiss
of mother to son, of son to father;
no, it is a kiss of such savor
that it savors much of courtly love.]

The kiss becomes the unspecified medicine that Euphemie said they needed in verse 1040. As the description continues, the narrator explains that such kisses only make them want more (1120–124).

The "medecine"/"mecine" rhymes suggest the corporeal medicine that Euphemie can offer Cador to heal his lovesickness. The link made between solace in love and healing is also reinforced by rhymes with Euphemie's name. Euphemie is first described as "Qu'el mont n'avoit plus bele mie, / Et si l'apielent Eufemie" (401–2) ("the most beautiful girl in the world, / and they called her Eufemie"). In these lines then, "mie" is used for "ami," a term that often denotes the beloved in romance.[64] Later, when a doctor is needed, "Envoie lués por Eufemie: / El païs n'a si sage mie" (593–94) ("At once he sent for Eufemie: / she was the wisest doctor in the land"). Because she arrives and begins her diagnosis by observing the pulse, it is clear that "mie" here has its other meaning, doctor.[65] The potential for slippage between the beloved and empirical practice in this text is heightened by the fact that "mie" can mean both "friend/lover" and "doctor."

We also see this when Euphemie tells Cador that he is her "ami" or "friend":

"Amis, cho saciés vos sans falle,
Qu'ai[n]si sui jo l[a] vostre amie

64. Greimas, 387.
65. Greimas, 387.

Et qu'el mont fors [vos] nen a mie
Qui ma dolor puist estancier,
Ma santé rendre, n'avancier."

(1150–54)

["Beloved, I want you to know
that I love you truly,
and that there is no one else in the whole world,
who could assuage my grief,
restore me to health, promote my well-being."]

Read another way, the center line of the quotation says "there is no other *doctor*" (emphasis mine). Euphemie thus claims Cador to be her doctor in love, her cure for love's pangs.[66] Moreover, her use of the word "mie" for Cador insists on the reciprocity of their love. Although most of the passages point out the link between Euphemie and medicine, here she extends this link to Cador and medicine.

To summarize, we see that in the *Roman de Silence* healing comes from the person, presence, and solace of the beloved (and to a lesser degree, from the lover). The representation of Euphemie as the medicine for the lovesick Cador co-opts Euphemie's healing skills and knowledge. Her success as a healer of one kind of illness reinforces the notion that she will be able to heal another kind of illness. The difference between the two kinds of healing is that one relies upon Euphemie's skills and knowledge while the other does not. When Euphemie's success in healing is appropriated into the cure of the lovesick Cador, this enhances the salubrious effects of the beloved but subtly effaces empirical knowledge.

In many respects, the love story of Silence's parents, Cador and Euphemie, follows the love story between Tristan and Iseut. Both couples are well matched because they possess qualities that the court values: good lineage, courtly skills, and good looks. Both couples meet when the hero seeks medical attention for a poisoning resulting from battle, and both heroes receive ministrations from a heroine widely reputed for her healing knowledge and skill. Both fall in love and describe that love as very painful, a condition that needs attention from the beloved but one that does not depend

66. Peggy McCracken comments further on "ami" in the context of healing ("Women and Medicine," 250).

upon her medical knowledge. Although the *Roman de Silence* avoids the difficulties engendered by the love potion itself, it models the love Cador and Euphemie feel on the love brought about between Tristan and Iseut by the love potion. We see this first and foremost in the descriptions of love as a kind of poison: both Cador and Euphemie feel the venomous effects of love. Thus the *Roman de Silence* carefully takes advantage of the metaphor of love as a kind of poison, but avoids the potential mistrust of and ambiguity surrounding a love brought on by a potion/poison.

The dragon's poison, like Euphemie, is a sign with different referents. The poison came from the dragon, but it recalls that of the potion consumed by Tristan and Iseut. On the one hand, Euphemie's knowledge and skills enable her to heal serious medical conditions; on the other, she heals Cador's lovesickness with the most practical of means, her body. These two entirely different approaches meet and are literally embodied in the female empiric. Euphemie's body thus becomes the sign that points to widely divergent referents.[67] She occupies a contested site that male empirics do not. Neither defined entirely by her training nor by her love for Cador,[68] Euphemie incarnates both these functions which mutually influence each other. In the *Roman de Silence* the position of the female empiric who is also the beloved presents a paradox, as it did in the *Roman de Tristan*.

Although the *Roman de Silence* depicts the God of love as the instigator of Cador and Euphemie's love and although their symptoms of lovesickness closely approximate those found in the works by Ovid and Ovidian derivatives, this romance offers a representation of the healing of lovesickness through the beloved similar to what we saw in the Tristan romances. While precursors such as Ovidian texts and the *Roman d'Enéas* describe Amors, the God of Love, as a healer, they never show the healing process. In contrast, the *Roman de Tristan* of Thomas, both *Folies Tristan* and the *Roman de Silence*, show the source of healing as the beloved—in these cases, a beloved who is an extremely capable empiric who successfully heals other medical problems. I am not arguing that this is the *only* possible influence that feeds into the image of the beloved, but that it is an important one. Not only do these empirics carry out healing practices of the time, their healing abilities (and in the case of the works other than the *Roman de Silence,*

67. Perret points out instances of sign/referent instability with respect to Silence (334).
68. On Euphemie's training, cf. Lasry 230. On Cador, cf. Roche-Madhi, 20.

their magical practices) transform love as represented in romance by strongly reinforcing the link between healing other ailments and healing lovesickness and the link between feelings of love and those resulting from certain pharmaceutical agents.

These characters are never just empirics or just the beloved who eases suffering in the lover, but hybrids of the two. As their capacities as empirics shade into their portrayal as the beloved, they become a corporeal cure for lovesickness. Could this representation of female empirical practitioners who heal by the application of their own bodies contribute to the growing divide between medical theory and practice wending its way into the newly formed and expanding and professionalizing faculties of medicine? We have seen that empirics command respect in the community for their highly sought out and valuable information and skills. In the late twelfth century there is very little to suggest that female empirics were seen any less positively than their male counterparts, though this position begins to erode around the beginning of the fourteenth century. At that point, learned physicians seek to draw a clear distinction between themselves and other healers—male, female, Jewish, empiric, surgeon, apothecary, and so forth—who lack university training. During the thirteenth century, however, empirics, including female empirics, garner no opprobrium. Even so, the ambiguous position of the beloved who is an empiric and whose empirical practices are appropriated into the discourse of love that is produced and consumed through romance may work subtle changes that feed into the later evolution of medical institutions.

Moreover, Euphemie's practical healing abilities serve the depiction of love at a time when university-trained doctors begin to denigrate practical approaches. Excluded from universities, women can only learn to heal in practical ways, and therefore will become marginalized by the growing profession as the theory's new validity becomes more accepted. The link between healing and love portrayed in romance may also contribute to the fourteenth-century increasing marginalization of empirical healers. In the end, the text takes seriously Euphemie's ability to heal, but knowledge as the source of healing is de-emphasized while the focus becomes the body of the beloved. The result contributes to an essentialist view of femininity that includes healing and nurturing as female traits. In this way, romance provides an image that may contribute to the erasure of the empiric's knowledge while the mystery of love remains.

The empiric as beloved takes on a highly contested role central to medieval literature with the power to fascinate that has lasted nearly a millennium.

In the characters of Iseut and Euphemie, the beloved—who, according to the lover, has almost limitless powers—appropriates healing abilities for the mysterious purposes of love. Just as love works mysteriously, we recall that empirical knowledge does too—through hidden powers of plants or other substances known only to some. Because of the ubiquity of the female beloved in medieval literature, who has great powers but who applies empirical knowledge in only a few cases, empirical knowledge stands to be obscured behind the simple power of love.

Even as Euphemie's knowledge is pressed into service as an aspect of the beloved, the narrative represents Euphemie's desire in a positive way. Rather than depicting female desire as a destructive force at court, the *Roman de Silence* in this episode reveals how it can bring about a desired marriage at court, one that produces offspring and ultimately contributes to the stability of the court. Thus, although the text appropriates in some ways Euphemie's empirical knowledge, it simultaneously uncovers evidence of Euphemie's desire, in spite of considerable evidence of the opposite in numerous other medieval texts.[69] This raises the question of courtly marriage politics.

Marriage Politics at Court

As with *Cligés* and the *Roman de Tristan,* we can read the *Roman de Silence* in terms of the marriage politics at the time. The work includes three marriages: at the beginning King Ebain marries Eufeme and Cador marries Euphemie, and at the end King Ebain takes Silence as his new wife after disposing of the unfaithful Eufeme.

King Ebain promises his knights that whoever slays the dragon will be able to choose his own wife; he also promises Euphemie that if she cures Cador from the noxious effects of the dragon poison she will be able to choose her own husband. In both cases these abilities are awarded to someone who accomplishes a very difficult task. It would seem, then, that at King Ebain's court, having a say in one's marriage partner is quite rare—not at all standard practice, despite the fact that Canon law had mandated consent of the parties

69. Alexandre Leupin, *Barbarolexis: Medieval Writing and Sexuality*, trans. Kate M. Cooper (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989). However, as Roberta Krueger notes, desire is dangerous in Ebain's wife, Eufeme (121).

for a century.[70] Yet despite the king's promise, settling the marriage takes place only through indirect statement and in consultation with the barons.

Cador and Euphemie come before the king at the same time and request that he grant what he has promised (1210–217; 1232–36). The king declares that he will do so and convenes his barons (1237–50). Thus what appeared to be a private matter between the two lovers and the king is, in fact, opened up to his counselors. This suggests that even when King Ebain grants the unusual freedom to pick one's marriage partner, this freedom is quite limited because the marriage of important members of the court has implications for the survival of the whole court: therefore the barons must be involved in the decision and must approve of it.[71] This model of governance places the needs of the community before those of the individual, and consensus plays an important role, though it is possible than an agreement is forced by the more powerful party.

At this point in the *Roman de Silence*, nothing indicates that Ebain's barons harbor resentment or ill will (although troubles arise later). They act in accordance with the king, and they act in a concerted way. Cador's and Euphemie's behavior suggests that they understand that the king's grant does not give them *carte blanche*: without the approval of the greater community, no marriage will take place. Thus although Cador and Euphemie wish to marry because of their love, this is not enough to secure the marriage. They do not speak of their love to the king but instead wait for the king's direction, which comes after consultation with his barons. The king registers that the two who appear before him are, as is often the case in romance, well matched. He wants to marry them ("Jes voel ensamble marier"; 1277), but adds that because he has given his word they must be willing (1279–81). He therefore asks one of his barons to speak with Cador and Euphemie in

70. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society*, 333. Christopher Callahan expresses surprise at this flouting of Canon law in "Canon Law, Primogeniture, and Marriage of Ebain and Silence," *Romance Quarterly* 49, 1 (2002): 12–21. Sharon Kinoshita argues simply that the king's interests take precedence in the romance as the genre allows for the expression of concerns facing thirteenth-century nobility in "Male-Order Brides: Marriage, Patriarchy, and Monarchy in the *Roman de Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 64. See also her "Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence*."

71. In contrast, Heather Lloyd suggests that the king is hindered by his hastily declared inheritance law and acts to prevent a challenge to it (79). Yet the text suggests no limitation on the part on the king, who comes off appearing magnanimous by promising to grant the land of Euphemie's father that she cannot inherit to Cador upon Renald's death if Cador marries Euphemie (1292–99). Rather than being challenged, Ebain simply arranges the inheritance as he wishes and as his kingly prerogative permits.

order to point out the advantages of this marriage.[72] The Count of Chester volunteers to counsel Cador and Euphemie and prays as he hastens to them that Saint Amant will cause love to spring up between them (1330–334). The count, however, spies them in whispered conversation with lowered eyes and understands he will not need to convince them to marry (1391–1404). Once the count explains the king's wishes, the lovers quickly accept the offer (1433–83). The most important feature that King Ebain and the barons want to see is an equally matched couple. They appear to believe that this symmetry will create the most stable marriage that will in turn promote the stability of the community as a whole. Although Tristan and Iseut were in equals in lineage, looks, and courtly behavior, Iseut's arranged marriage to Mark to secure peace between Cornwall and Ireland prevented anyone from ever imagining a marriage between the two despite their similarities. The *Roman de Silence*, as in all the narratives that rewrite the *Tristan* story, contains no insurmountable obstacles. In fact, it contains no obstacles at all, since the king favors the wedding. This is unlike *Cligés*, and as we shall see in the following chapter, *Amadas et Ydoine*, in which the couple's attempts to overcome the obstacles furnish many of the adventures of the narrative.

The *Roman de Silence* shares another aspect of love with the *Tristan* narratives with its reference to and definition of a *fin amans* ("noble lover"). As Cador and Euphemie wait impatiently for the outcome of the barons' council with the king, they contemplate their options should the suggestion that they marry other people come back to them:

> Cador a dit, "Que c'est tolt nient!
> Se on droiture ne nos tient,
> Amie, j'en ferai mervelle,
> Car mes corages me conselle
> Que en essil o vos m'en voise,
> Tolt a laron, sans faire noise."
>
> (1345–50)

> [Cador said, "It doesn't matter
> if they don't deal fairly with us, love,
> I'll give them a surprise,

72. Cf. Brahney, who argues that Cador and Euphemie's marriage heralds possible equality between women and men (56).

for my innermost being counsels me
to seek exile with you,
in all secrecy, without making a noise."]

In a clear allusion to Tristan and Isuet's sojourn in the forest, Cador suggests that they flee the court and go into exile to be together. Euphemie, unlike the *Silence* narrator and probably many audience members, claims never to have heard of such an idea. Cador's ability to suggest this plan convinces her that he is truly suffering from lovesickness. Yet she imagines that forest exile may be necessary to follow Love's commands:

Mais jo certes ne m'esmervel
S'en bos vois o vus u en lande,
Car Amors le rueve et conmande
Que cascuns doie assés savoir
Cho qu'aime s'il le puet avoir
Certes qu'a cho cil qui bien ainme,
S'il sor icho quiert plus et claimme,
Il nen est pas bien fins amans.

(1360–67)

[As for me, I certainly wouldn't think it strange
to wander with you in forest or field,
for Love so orders and commands
that each should know well
that if he can have the one he loves,
if the lover has his beloved
and seeks and demands more than this,
he is surely not a noble lover.]

According to the dictates of Amors, the God of love, being together—whatever the cost—is paramount. Euphemie states that she would be willing to contravene social expectations in order to show her love. Her attitude toward loyalty in love parallels that of the lovers in Thomas's *Tristan* and in *Cligés*.

The *Roman de Silence* depicts the same conflict we see in all the romances under consideration: the lovers are pitted against the demands and expectations of court life. The court does not recognize love alone as a sufficient motivation for marriage; all the romances under consideration suggest (though to differing degrees) that individual desire in love can clash

disastrously with dynastic interests. The couple even entertains the notion that they might need to leave the community in order to give expression to their love. Perhaps they would never have the temerity to undertake such a bold and dangerous action, but love does leave them emboldened enough to at least contemplate it. Love as conceptualized in this way operates on the same principle as the community: loyalty is its highest value, but the loyalty is directed to the beloved and away from the community if the two conflict.

The set of romances that derive from the Tristan story open up the space for the court to grapple with the issue of the couple in love whose union runs counter to the needs, wishes, or desires of the court. The *Roman de Silence* foregrounds the tension between love and politics precisely because of the importance of the issue at the time.[73] The tension between individual and community will can be seen as early as 1160 in the *Roman d'Enéas*, in which in the love of Dido for Enéas has no political advantage and therefore brings no marriage, while the love of Lavinia and Enéas complements their political union.[74] Thomas's *Roman de Tristan* concludes in tragedy, of course, because the conditions that bring about Iseut's marriage to Mark cannot be changed. In *Cligés* the conditions appear inalterable, but Fenice and Cligés contrive a plan to be together, in a manner similar to that of Amadas and Ydoine, as we will see in the following chapter. These romances therefore register the problems that result from women's lack of voice in marriage politics and propose, in the case of *Cligés* and *Tristan,* responses through the application of empirical practices. Cador and Euphemie, on the other hand, have no real limitations placed on their desired union. They merely have to wait for approval from the community's leaders.

This loyalty and desire to be together despite a heavy cost differs sharply from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, which depicts "love" as serial dalliances that have the qualities of a game. Love is not constructed as an art, as a controlled dance to which the dancers know the steps and respond to each other in well-understood choreographed moves that allow for little or no deviation from the known pattern. Seeking out a lover and attempting to enter this dance with her serves as a means to alleviate boredom and add interest to life through the conquest and inherent danger of secret meetings. This kind

73. In a different vein, Sharon Kinoshita argues that the *Roman de Silence* hides the fact that Cador and Euphemie's marriage is politically advantageous for King Ebain because the couple's love masks the political expediency ("Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence*," 398).

74. Raymond Cormier points out the differences between these love affairs, "Present State," 29, 34.

of love does not threaten to undo the bonds that hold the urban Roman community together. Although the lovers risk getting caught and would face penalties, they never contemplate escape from society in order to be together. Instead the poet/narrator of the *Ars* seems to thrive on danger, counseling the beloved to have her maid claim that her husband has suddenly arrived home (*Ars* III: 607) or to dull the senses of the house servants through drink or drugs (*Ars* III: 645–48). Love, as Ovid depicts it, transgresses social rules, but it does not call into question the basic structure of the society. Instead, it seems to bolster that structure because it provides an outlet for feelings that society defines as transgressive by acknowledging them with a wink and a nod.

In contrast, in the romances that adapt the Tristan story, the couple's loyalty to and love for each other goes before any other consideration. Their goal is to be together long-term, even if this runs counter to the wishes of the society. The love of these romances menaces the very structure of the society by depicting escape as an option. In these works love is not a sophisticated, urbane pastime of the *cognoscenti*, but an organizing principle of life even in the face of social structures that oppose it. I attribute this new aspect of love to Tristan and Iseut's stunning and dangerous departure for the forest. Feudal society depends heavily on mutual dependence and cooperation; to leave it is to expose oneself to great danger. Béroul drives home the dangerous nature of their flight by insisting on the deprivation they suffer, while in Thomas and its derivatives (especially Gottfried), love becomes a sustaining force that counters deprivation so that their forest time becomes an idyll. The motivating force of this love, however, is not foreign to the feudal system. Instead, it forms the core of that system: loyalty, but loyalty between the beloved and lover and not between lord and vassal.

Although the *Roman de Silence* hints at the problems that love and marriage can cause at court, Cador's and Euphemie's love never faces the challenge of conflicting loyalties. It is in the marriage politics of the second part of the work that such disputes take center stage. Impersonating a man, Silence travels widely and, like Tristan, gains respect at court for his ability in jousting and music. He is so successful that Ebain's wife, Eufeme, desires to take him as a lover.[75] Silence must, of course, refuse in order to avoid being

75. I use the masculine pronoun for the time in which Silence impersonates a man since the romance does the same.

unmasked. The angry queen accuses him of rape, but rather than kill him the king only sends him to France. Silence later returns to successfully help put down a rebellion of certain counts. The queen once again solicits Silence's love and accuses him when Silence refuses. In order to appease the queen, the king sends Silence to capture Merlin. Merlin completes the denouement by revealing Silence's true identity and that of the queen's lover, disguised as a nun. Both the false nun and the queen are executed, and the king grants women the right to inherit again after hearing Silence's explanation for why she perpetuated her disguise. One other consequence is that the king takes Silence as a wife upon the advice of his barons, "Par loëment de ses princhiers, / Qu'il plus ama et plus tint ciers" (6679–80) ("on the advice of his / most loyal and trusted advisers").[76]

Why would the advisers suggest this marriage? Certainly there is the advantage to the kingdom.[77] Yet, one might expect that Silence's successful war exploits would make her the least desirable of women and regarded with suspicion by the court. Simone de Beauvoir's famous dictum that one is not born a woman, but becomes one, barely applies to Silence, for Nature reclaims what was hers in only three days, removing any indication that Silence had lived as a man (6669–74).[78] Silence's physical attributes and successes do not hinder the perception that she would make an excellent wife, a surprising outcome if there ever was one. What accounts for this unusual turn of events? At the moment of Silence's confession the king provides the following explanation of his benevolent response:

> Silence, moult estes loials.
> . . . . . .
> Silences, ses qu'as recovré
> Par cho que tu as si ovré?
>
> (6630, 6637–38)

76. Although as Lorraine Kochanske Stock points out, Heldris distances himself from the narrative at this point by adding that this is what the story of Silence says ("Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 28–29).

77. Sharon Kinoshita argues that Silence is "conscripted" by Ebain to be used to further his realm at a time (the thirteenth century) when preserving feudal lineage became more important to a king than physical defense ("Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence*," 406).

78. *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley, intro. Margaret Crosland (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952, 1993), 281.

[Silence, you are very loyal.
. . . . . .
Silence, know that you have saved yourself
By your loyal actions.]

Silence's loyalty then is the key factor in the open and willing reception the unmasked Silence receives at court, including the proposal to marry the king. Silence stands in sharp contrast to the disloyal queen who took a lover.

This episode reveals a vast difference in the text's treatment of men and women. The king praises Silence for her loyalty, and this alone is enough to make her a suitable match.[79] Yet he states unequivocally that because of her virtue, Silence is an exception to the rule: "Il n'est si preciose gemme, / Ne tels tresors com bone feme" (6633–34) ("There is no more precious gem / nor greater treasure, than a virtuous woman"). That there are only a few good—that is, loyal—women stands as a basic misogynist principle applied to all women at this point in the narrative. In contrast, men are assumed loyal until proven otherwise. The behavior of the Count of Chester serves as an example. We recall that this count volunteers to take to the couple the king's message that he wishes that Cador and Euphemie marry. The count supports King Ebain and seeks to help the king obtain a marriage that will further the community. However, it is also the Count of Chester who rebels against King Ebain when Silence is in France. Silence returns to help quell the revolt, and ends by cutting off the count's right arm, after which the count is captured and the other rebels capitulate (5625–38). Although the romance thus shows that men can be quite rebellious, such behavior is described as exceptional while for women it is expected.

King Ebain has encountered resistance before, having already defeated three counts. These three join the Count of Chester in his attempt to help rout the king (5403–5). The narrator stakes a clear position against the rebellious counts:

Mais jo vos di li tors fu lor.
Car le .iii. et li cuens de Cestre
Volrent par force segnor estre

79. Robert S. Sturges has noted the role of loyalty in love and the feudal system in "The Cross-dresser and the *Juventus:* Category Crisis in *Silence*," *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 48.

Desor le roi, qui nen ot cure
De perdre vilment sa droiture.

(5406–10)

[But I want you to know that they were in the wrong,
for the three counts and the Count of Chester
wanted to usurp supreme power
from the king, who didn't care
to lose his rights illegitimately.]

Although the king has been victorious over the other counts, the Count of Chester is no easy match. He unhorses the king (5496), and as the two fight among clashing and dying knights, the king is almost captured, "Se li rois n'a proçaine aïe / La le prendront la gens haïe" (5519–20) ("If the king didn't get help soon, / the enemy would capture him right then and there").[80] Help comes, of course, in the form of Silence, whose amputation of the count's arm results in his capture and the end of the battle.[81] In so doing, Silence restores power to the king and demonstrates outstanding loyalty to him.

It is this same loyalty, I posit, that motivates Silence revealed as a woman to say to the king, "Faites de moi vostre plaisir" (6628) ("Do with me what you will"). A number of critics have responded to Silence's acquiescence at the moment she stands revealed in her true sex.[82] In the context of the question of loyalty, I see it as acting in accordance with the feudal principles that have motivated Silence throughout the work. Having been caught in a lie to her lord, she indicates her subordinate position to him and her recognition of the fact that by feudal custom a vassal who was caught lying to his lord forfeited all rights. Because Silence has never lived any role other than that of a male in the feudal system, this statement comes not from an

80. Stock points out the many indications of Ebain's weak rule ("Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 9–19).

81. Kinoshita shows the parallels between Ebain's struggle and eventual ascendance over the barons and the situation of Henry III in thirteenth-century Norman England ("Male-Order Brides," 66–69).

82. Stock reads it as a fabliau plot, matching an older man with a young, fertile bride ("Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 17). For Roche-Mahdi, it is the moment of righting the upside-down gender system created by the character of Silence ("Reappraisal of the Role of Merlin," 15–20). Callahan sees in it a chance for Silence to trade her precarious position as a heiress for stability (Callahan, 12–21). For Krueger, Silence loses status and experiences repressed sexuality (123). See note 2 in this chapter for more articles that treat the significance of gender in the work.

acknowledgment of a woman's subordinate position, but from the vassalic acquiescence that Silence has lived by all her life.

As Lorraine Stock points out, Ebain commends his new wife for her outstanding service as a knight.[83] Moreover, the king explains that he will reverse his earlier rule on female inheritance because of Silence's loyalty.[84] Thus, Silence is the perfect wife because she is so unlike any typical wife. King Ebain does not seem to want a wife, yet he is obliged to have one for the succession of his kingdom. The *Roman de Silence* therefore implies that a woman with the ability to produce an heir is a political necessity, but that one who understands (or even exemplifies) the loyalty of feudalism makes the best choice. At the same time, the romance registers the fact that, as we saw in *Cligés*, women are shut out of the feudal system. The oft-repeated misogynist view of women as lacking virtue, combined with their exclusion from the chivalric code, serves the society poorly since women are crucial for its continuation. Yet the romance implies that Ebain believes that Silence's success as a knight cancels out her ostensibly inherent female lack of virtue. In this case Silence stands on (feudal) form. This form may be the only thing holding King Ebain's kingdom together, since he repeatedly shows himself to be weak, unwise, and ineffectual.[85] Had Silence not stood on form, not followed the dictates of the feudal system, Silence might have joined forces with the Count of Chester and defeated Ebain to take the kingdom! But instead Silence outshines the rebellious count. She is more loyal than he is.

Silence is also more loyal than Ebain's first wife, Eufeme.[86] The circumstances of their marriage deserve analysis. Having fought a long and costly war with Norway, counselors suggest a marriage between Ebain and Eufeme, the daughter of King Begon of Norway (145–65). This exchange will bring peace to the two lands (173–76). King Ebain accepts the idea in part because he has suffered for the love of her (185), a love that arose from the descriptions he had heard of Eufeme (197–98). As other critics have

83. "Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 18.

84. Clark also notes this (56).

85. The narrator states the opposite in the introduction, proclaiming Ebain's justice and promotion of chivalry. Psaki's reading of the narrator as unaware of the complexities of the tale he tells offers a useful analysis of the gap between the events and the narrator's comments on them. See her introduction to *Le Roman de Silence*, xxv, xxxvi.

86. Roberta Krueger perceptively analyzes King Ebain's misogynist outburst upon hearing of his wife's treachery (101–11).

pointed out, Eufeme is war booty.[87] She arrives in England by ship along with a host of other treasures from Norway. The narrator insists that Ebain and Eufeme begin their relationship in a very courtly manner:

> En Engletiere prendent port.
> Le rois Ebains n'a nient de tort
> De cho qu'il vint contre sa drue.
> Quant il le vit, gent le salue;
> Cele li rent moult biel salu,
> Cho a le roi moult bien valu.
> Le rois demeure a li baisier
> Et puis sil fait bein aäsier,
> Car son cuer ot un poi amer
> De la lasté et de la mer.
> Tier jor apriés l'a esposee,
> Car forment l'avoit golosee.
>
> (237–48)

> [They reached the English port.
> King Evan omitted none of the niceties
> when he came to greet his beloved.
> When he saw her, he greeted her gallantly;
> she returned his greeting courteously,
> which was most pleasing to the king.
> The king lingered to kiss her
> and then saw to her comfort,
> for her heart was a little bitter
> from the tiring journey across the sea.
> Three days later he married her,
> for he had yearned for her for a long time.]

King Ebains considers Eufeme his "drue" or "beloved." They greet each other in a courtly manner and he kisses her; he makes sure she is put at

87. Stock, "Importance of Being Gender 'Stable,'" 20; Blumreich, 52; Brahney considers the episode's similarity to those in epic (55). For Lasry, the marriage follows the dictates of the feudal system (231); Jewers notes that it is "described in masculine terms" (99).

ease because she suffered from seasickness on the voyage; three days later he marries her because he desires her so much. After a few words on the lengthy festivities, the narrator moves on to other matters.

Despite the auspicious beginnings, Eufeme takes a lover and is executed when Merlin reveals her transgression. We can surmise from the above description of the courtliness of their initial meeting that courtliness did not suffice. The only feelings mentioned are those of Ebain for Eufeme. She does not reciprocate: instead, she is said to have a bitter heart, or to be somewhat heartsick, from the voyage. What is clearly lacking is the third term in the wordplay, the word for "love," which after Thomas's *Tristan* we expect to find used in conjunction with "mer"/"amer" ("sea"/"bitterness"). This term shows up only later with Cador and Euphemie, when bitterness ("amer") rhymes with love ("amer") in verses 639–40. Furthermore, Eufeme imbibes no potion of any kind while at sea to lessen the feelings of heartsickness. Cador and Euphemie do not consume a potion either, but as we have seen, they do not need to because the echo of the love drug appears periodically in the references to the intoxicating effects of love on both of the lovers. When compared to the marriage of Cador and Euphemie, that of Ebain and Eufeme seems doomed from the start. The *Roman de Silence* suggests that Eufeme lacks any reason to show loyalty in her marriage to Ebain and so takes a lover.

In the end, then, the *Roman de Silence* pronounces in favor of loyalty—loyalty between men, for the rebellious knights are put down, and between men and women, since Silence's loyalty makes her an ideal wife for the king, whose previous wife was disloyal.[88] Because Silence offers the best of both worlds—she has demonstrated the loyalty of a knight in battle but has the requisite female body to produce heirs—she is the ideal wife.[89] Love brought about such loyalty between Cador and Euphemie while feudal alliance forged it between Ebain and Silence.

88. In Peggy McCracken's argument that the conflation of the queen's sexual desire and political influence threatens male sovereignty, she also points out that Silence desires no one in the work, and therefore is less threatening (*The Romance of Adultery*, 146–70, esp. 148).

89. McCracken argues that Silence's body must be integrated into the society ("'The Boy Who Was a Girl,'" 524) and that Silence's marriage to the King "implicitly guarantees lineage and succession" (531).

Conclusion

The *Roman de Silence* offers a female empiric whose empirical skills and knowledge are conflated with those of the beloved through the application of her body as medicine for the lover's lovesickness: the poet drives this home through the rhymes "medecine"/"mecine." Her function as medicine is required because she becomes the antidote to the poison/potion that is suggested as the means by which love works. The female empiric as the cure for love's ills further elaborates this Iseut-based figure in romance in a way that depends heavily on her knowledge, but simultaneously co-opts it to enhance the beloved. Thus the presentation of female empirics is paradoxical. Euphemie would never have been called to treat Cador were she not well known and well respected for her empirical practice. Although the text acknowledges her practice, it also becomes the vehicle for expression of her love for Cador: her body becomes medicine and she must pretend to have little or no knowledge of love in the process of falling in love with Cador. Euphemie's empirical knowledge is appropriated to flesh out the representation of love, allowing a strong link to be made between healing a poisoned body and a lovesick one. Euphemie's healing skill is never denied, but the knowledge that makes it possible is hidden behind the image of the beloved. Moreover, in the context of the rise of theory in medical education, its practical bent marks her knowledge as less prestigious than that of a university-trained doctor, setting up a hierarchy that may contribute to women's increasing exclusion from the practice of medicine in the century to come.

Although Heldris had extensive knowledge of earlier literary traditions, he reworked them to create new conceptions of the beloved and her entrance into marriage. Because Cador and Euphemie's love leads to marriage, it invites comparison with the other marriages in the narrative. Neither the marriage of Ebain and Eufeme nor that of Ebain and Silence comes about because of mutual love. Eufeme has no stake or interest in her marriage and therefore shows no loyalty to it. Silence, on the other hand, has demonstrated extensive loyalty to King Ebain and therefore appears to be the ideal candidate for marriage. In the end, loyalty, either through *fin'amors* or through feudal allegiance becomes the sine qua non of marriage in the *Roman de Silence*. As we will see, this same centrality of and fascination with loyalty appears in *Amadas et Ydoine*, despite its many differences from the other romances we have examined.

6

REWORKED ELEMENTS IN *AMADAS ET YDOINE*

WE SAW IN THE last chapter a beloved, Euphemie, who heals a wounded knight from a battle poisoning. Euphemie is considered the best doctor in the land, and her healing practices derive from both empirical practices of her time and from the depiction of Iseut in the *Tristan* romances. The *Roman de Silence* plays on the similarities between Euphemie's ability to treat the poison and to bring relief to her lover, Cador. He falls in love with her when she heals the poisoning using medical approaches of the time. In contrast, she heals his lovesickness when her body becomes the medicine, a situation with potential for conflation with her other healing abilities and for obfuscation of her medical knowledge. This romance dispenses with the love potion, since there are no serious obstacles to Cador and Euphemie's marriage, but the description of their love shows clear influence of the potion by emphasizing the intoxicating effects of love. Finally, the *Roman de Silence* reveals considerable tension at court around the issue of aristocratic marriages. Many of the same themes appear in this chapter, but in quite different forms.

Amadas et Ydoine is a lesser known and anonymous work of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century that, like the other romances under consideration in this study, reworks material from the Tristan legend.[1] However, this romance departs more substantially from the Tristan material than do the other works we have considered, not in the least in its presentation of healing and love magic.

1. John Reinhard argues for between 1190 and 1220 while Terry Nixon uses manuscript evidence to make a case for 1180–1200. See Reinhard's introduction to *Amadas et Ydoine: Roman du XIIIe siècle*, ed. John R. Reinhard (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1974), vii, and Nixon, "*Amadas et Ydoine* and *Erec et Enide:* Reuniting *Membra Disjecta* from Early Old French Manuscripts," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 18 (1987): 227–51.

Amadas, the son of the seneschal to the Duke of Burgundy, waits at table on Ydoine, the daughter of the Duke. When Amadas sees her, he falls helplessly in love and faints dead away. He confesses his love to Ydoine twice, and each time she reproaches him because of his lower social standing and her lack of love for him. Amadas suffers terribly from her rejection because he believes that only she can grant him happiness. Finally, Amadas professes his love a third time and is again rejected. He faints at the door of her chamber, and Ydoine believes she has caused his death. She prays to God that if he lives she will always love him. She restores him to life through her kisses. Amadas is knighted and seeks fame during three years of travel, over the course of which he and Ydoine often exchange tokens of their love. But near the end of Amadas's time away, Ydoine is promised in marriage to the count of Nevers by her father. When Amadas learns this, he goes mad and flees. Barely restrained by his men, he is brought to the château of his parents, who mourn over his changed nature and try all manner of cures to no avail. Ydoine hears of his situation and resolves to find a solution.

Ydoine hires three witches to pay a surprise visit to the count the night before the wedding. They predict a marriage of misery. When the count comes to Ydoine that night, she is so fearful and upset that he does not consummate the marriage. Then Ydoine tells her husband that she must go on a pilgrimage to Rome. In the meantime, one of her men has informed her that Amadas has been found in Lucca, Italy, where he wanders the streets daily in a mad rage. Ydoine departs on the pilgrimage but goes first to Lucca. There she heals Amadas by kissing him and calling his name before completing her pilgrimage. As Ydoine returns to Lucca, a mysterious knight appears, sweeps Ydoine onto his horse, and tries to abduct her. Her men give chase and surround the knight, who releases Ydoine. That night Ydoine falls ill. Convinced she will soon die, she lies to Amadas, telling him she had three previous lovers, bore the child of each, and then killed each child, so that Amadas will stay alive and say prayers for her. He promises to pray for her. She dies and is buried. That night Amadas visits her tomb, and an evil spirit arrives with whom Amadas does battle. He finally triumphs, and the spirit informs Amadas that Ydoine is not really dead—she is merely wearing a magic ring that he slipped on her finger when he captured her. This ring causes her to appear dead. Once the ring is removed, she returns to life.

Returned home, Ydoine recounts to her husband a vision she had on the pilgrimage and feigns sickness until it is resolved that the marriage should be ended. Amadas returns to Burgundy, and stories of his fame abound. Ydoine's father says she can choose her next husband, but she says that she must defer

to his barons, because women are often blamed if a decision they make turns out badly later. The barons pick Amadas, and the two are married.

The brief summary reveals already an atmosphere different from that in the romances already discussed, one brought about by extreme situations and exaggerated responses. Reactions such as fainting take place not once, but multiple times in *Amadas et Ydoine*. The madness brought about by love far surpasses that which we have seen earlier in this study, extending into true rage. Several critics have discussed the extremes in the work.[2] Other approaches include an early source study, a Jungian reading of Amadas's process of individuation, intertextual readings with the Tristan romances and with *Jehan et Blonde*, and a study that considers the romance as a product of both the mythological and textual past of antiquity and of the medieval clerical milieu.[3]

In light of the extremes already noted, I propose to read *Amadas et Ydoine* as a travesty, defined as a form "that treats a dignified subject in an especially, often grotesquely, undignified way."[4] Read in this way, this romance mocks the conventions of courtly love portrayed in the Tristan materials and other stories of love, especially as pertains to healing and love, and it juxtaposes

2. See, for example, William Calin, "*Amadas et Ydoine:* The Problematic World of an Idyllic Romance," in *Continuations: Essays on Medieval French Literature and Language in Honor of John L. Grigsby*, ed. Norris J. Lacy and Gloria Torrini-Roblin (Birmingham, Ala.: Summa, 1989), 39–49, and Sara Sturm-Maddox, "'Signeur, vous qui l'oevre savés': Amadas, Ydoine, and the Wiles of Women," in *"De sens rassis,"* ed. Busby, Guidot, and Whalen, 605–16. Although Faith Lyons finds the work incoherent (19), she argues that it includes realistic details of medieval life. See Lyons, *Les Eléments descriptifs dans le roman d'aventure au XIIIe siècle: En particulier* Amadas et Ydoine, Gliglois, Galeran, L'Escoufle, Guillaume de Dole, Jehan et Blonde, Le Castelain de Couci (Geneva: Droz, 1965), 18–41.

3. The early source study is John Revell Reinhard, *The Old French Romance of* Amadas et Ydoine: *An Historical Study* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1927). Jean-Claude Aubailly offers a Jungian reading in the préface to *Amadas et Ydoine: Roman du XIIIe siècle*, trans. Jean-Claude Aubailly (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1986). Several critics discuss the Tristanian intertext. Alison Adams calls the work either an anti- or a neo-Tristan in "The Old French Tristan Poems and the Tradition of Verse Romance," *Tristania* 12, 1–2 (1986–87): 60–68 and an anti-Tristan in "*Amadas et Ydoine* and Thomas' *Tristan*," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 14 (1978): 247–54. See also Alexandre Micha, "Romans d'aventure et d'amour," in *Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, vol. 4, *Le Roman jusqu'à la fin du XIIIe siècle*, ed. Jean Frappier and Reinhold R. Grimm (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1978), 454–55. On other intertextualities, see Francis Dubost, "D'*Amadas et Ydoine* à *Jehan et Blonde:* La Démythification du récit initiatique," *Romania* 112, 3–4 (1991): 361–405. Dubost also furthers the Jungian analysis. Romaine Wolf-Bonvin analyzes the work as a product of its milieu in *Textus: De la tradition latine à l'esthétique du roman médiéval*, Le Bel inconnu, Amadas et Ydoine (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998).

4. Murfin and Ray, 409. The authors distinguish travesty from parody, which uses a high form to describe low subject matter, and consider both to be forms of burlesque. See Murfin and Ray, 36.

pointedly the loyalty of the beloved with the well-worn misogynist tirade that insists that women are nothing more than shrewd and cunning liars.

Amadas et Ydoine contains no empirical practitioner. The functions of the empiric are taken over in part by the beloved whose healing is reduced entirely to her response to lovesickness and in part by three figures called "witches" who aid Ydoine in her plan to end the marriage arranged by her father and the Count of Nevers, who seeks her hand. We shall see below that belief in these figures is associated with the particularly gullible. The substitution of the folkloric figures (a low form) for the empirical practitioners of *Cligés* and the Tristan materials functions as the core of the travesty in *Amadas et Ydoine*.

Ydoine: The Beloved Who Heals

The representation of Amadas's love follows convention. It begins with a spark, "Li saut au cuer une estincele / Qui de fine amor l'a espris" (244–45) ("a spark leapt to his heart and inflamed him with true love"; 24).[5] Although the *Amadas* poet does not use the motif of the arrow to the heart, the symptoms are entirely classic. Immediately upon sensing love, Amadas experiences confusion and a loss of concentration:

> Ja en est tos mas et souspris
> Et entrés en si grant effroi
> Qu'il ne set nul conseil de soi.
> Ne set s'il a joie ou dolour,
> Ou amertume ou douçour;
> Ne set si il la vit ou non
> Par songe ou par avisïon;
> Si a la memoire perdue,
> Et si tourblee la veüe
> Que de sa main chiet li coutiax

5. All quotations from *Amadas et Ydoine*, ed. Reinhard. Quotations are followed by verse numbers. Several critics have offered corrections: Alfred Jeanroy, "Corrections—*Amadas et Ydoine, roman du XIIIe siècle*," *Romania* 56 (1930): 596–97; Maurice Wilmotte, "Review of *Amadas et Ydoine, roman du XIIIe siècle*, ed. John R. Reinhard, and *The Old French Romance of* Amadas et Ydoine: *An Historical Study*, by John R. Reinhard," *Moyen Age* 39 (1929): 260–65. A newer, but only partial, edition can be found in Eleanor Paige Wisotzki, "A Study and Preliminary Edition of *Amadas et Ydoine*" (Ph.D. diss., Washington University, 1973). All translations, unless otherwise noted, are from *Amadas and Ydoine*, trans. Ross G. Arthur (New York: Garland, 1993). Translations are followed by page numbers.

Dont il doit trencier les morsiax
Sour la table, sour le doublier.

(246–57)

[In an instant he was so bewildered and confused that he could not control himself. He did not know if he was feeling joy or sorrow, bitterness or sweetness. He did not know if he had really seen her or if she was a dream-vision! He lost his memory, and his sight was so clouded that the knife he was using to cut the food fell to the platter on the table. (24)]

Amadas succumbs: he feels pain: "dolor" (269), "dolour" (314), "doleur" (557), and "douce paine"(288). He grows pale (347–48; 26) and changes color (258–59; 24); he will not eat or drink (335; 26). Amadas is unsure whether Ydoine is real or whether he has dreamed her and, as he is about to serve her, he faints (251–80; 24–25). In a nod to the tale's inspiration, the narrator asserts that Amadas suffers more than Tristan (340; 26).

Unlike the other plots we have examined, the love Amadas feels for Ydoine is not reciprocal at first. Amadas tells Ydoine of his love for her several times, but it is not until the third attempt that she experiences love for him in return. Amadas's repeated attempts to elicit Ydoine's love and her subsequent rejections mean that Amadas's lovesickness symptoms appear repeatedly. The narrator not only details the symptoms as Amadas falls in love and confesses his love to Ydoine but also chronicles their intensification with each of Ydoine's rejections of Amadas. The first time Ydoine turns him away, he again feels pain and anguish, grows pale, has terrible nights, and is pensive (620–660; 30–31). He solicits her love again and is again turned away (674–763; 31–32). The second time results in a lengthy illness: "A grant paine et a grant ahan / Languist en son lit bien un an" (810–811) ("He languished in his bed for a year, in great pain and torment"; 33).

The reiteration of the symptoms contributes to the travesty. Amadas is subjected to the debilitating effects of love not once but *three* different times, each time worse than the last. The first time he sees her, he becomes so disoriented he cannot even complete the task at hand, dropping a knife and probably drawing unflattering attention to himself. Further, he must be humiliated by Ydoine, who repeatedly resists his advances and threatens to have him beaten by her men if he persists in talk of love. The potential beating raises the specter of the grotesque. We also see the grotesque in the exaggerated length of Amadas's illness: an *entire year* just for having been

rebuffed. The narrative focuses on Amadas's love symptoms both in their severity and length.

When at last Ydoine too falls in love, it is according to Ovidian convention. At first, she is full of pride: "Et si fiere et si orgilleuse, / Vers tous houmes si desdaigneuse" (177–78) ("She was so presumptuous toward love, so proud, so arrogant and disdainful toward all men"; 23), but when Amadas faints before her, she fears his death and she feels pity (1072–73). In her case, the Ovidian arrow strikes her heart (1101–6). She says that as long as she lives she will be his "veraie amie" (1139) ("true lover"; 38).

In addition to Ovidian themes, *Amadas et Ydoine* describes the results of love in the same manner as does the Tristan material.[6] Amadas seeks exactly what Tristan and Iseut sought from each other in the *Tristan* of Thomas d'Angleterre, namely comfort. He suffers from love because he has no comfort and will die for lack of it, "Sans nul confort morir m'estuet" (354) ("I must die, without hope of comfort!"; 26). When Amadas appeals to Ydoine, he repeatedly asks specifically for comfort:

> Prie mil fois: "Bele, merchi,
> Com chil qui voit en fin sa mort,
> Se par vous n'a hastif confort."
>
> (503–5)

> [He entreated her a thousand times: "Mercy, fair one, for a man who expects only death unless receives quick comfort from you!" (28)]

Each time Amadas professes his love, he hopes for comfort from Ydoine and adds that otherwise he can only die (711–13; 31; 1001–5; 36). When he faints before Ydoine after she rejects him for the third time, the narrator explains that it is because he had no comfort, "Trop li demeure ses confors" (1057) ("her comforts were too long in coming"; 36). In this work, comfort takes on several forms. It can be Ydoine's kisses (1152), but also the ring she gives Amadas and her promise to always love him (1271–73).

Ydoine also uses the word comfort with a specifically sexual connotation when she explains to the Count of Nevers that she saw the Destinies during

6. Wolf-Bonvin also analyses Amadas's love as an intertextual phenomenon (*Textus*, 241–50). She argues too that Amadas's madness in love is an aspect of lycanthropy (235–41).

her pilgrimage to Rome and that they told her the count would be much happier with another wife: "De cele que vous puis prendrois / Joie et confort tous jors avrois" (7227–28) ("when you marry another woman, you will have joy and comfort from her forever"; 125). She uses this as an additional incentive to urge the count to seek an annulment after she has feigned illness each time he tries to consummate their marriage.

Amadas et Ydoine not only depicts Amadas's need for comfort, but also for healing. However, the healing will come only from Ydoine:

> S'ele daignast et bien vausist,
> La dolour du cuer li traisist.
> Ne l'esteüst en autre terre
> Autre mire mander ne querre
> De Monpellier ne de Salerne,
> Car sa doleur toute gouverne
> La damoisele, et son delit.
>
> (313–19)

> [If she deigned, if she were willing!—she might have removed the sorrow from his heart. There would have been no need to summon any doctor from other lands, Montpellier or Salerno: the damsel alone was in complete control of his sorrow and his pleasure. (25)]

Unlike Tristan or Cador, Amadas has no need of doctors to cure the illness from which he suffers because Ydoine alone can do this. Playing on the parallels suggested between healing and solace in the Tristan romances, *Amadas et Ydoine* dispenses with any need for medical doctors altogether and literalizes Ydoine's ability to offer solace to Amadas as healing. The romance reiterates this idea at several points: Amadas sees Ydoine's love as a healing force, "Cuit qu'ele me doie garir" (362) ("To think that she might cure me"; 26). Without this healing he will die, "Ou il m'estuet de tout garir, / Ou a court terme a duel morir" (930–31) ("I must be completely cured or else I will soon die in sorrow"; 35). The work even anticipates the *Roman de Silence* with a *mecine/mescine* rhyme:[7] "Vient en la chambre la mescine / De qui ne puet avoir mecine" (436–37) ("he went sorrowfully straight into the girl's chamber: but he would find no remedy from her"; 27).

7. Wolf-Bonvin also discusses this rhyme (*Textus*, 263).

Before Ydoine recognizes Amadas's love, he has no hope of healing either: "Mult se claime dolans, caitif, / Car il n'a nule garison" (881–82) ("He lamented his misfortune sorrowfully, poor wretch, for he had no cure"; 34). Thus both the Ovidian conceit of love and the Tristanian notion of comfort inform the portrayal of love in traditional ways in this romance.

When we turn to the depiction of love as madness in *Amadas et Ydoine*, the effects of the grotesque become even more apparent. We saw in Chapter 4 that the *Folie Tristan de Berne* draws a distinction between the folly of love and other madness, but that the work takes advantage of the ease with which the two are conflated. *Amadas et Ydoine* draws no such distinction. In contrast to the love-madness Tristan suffers in the *Folie Berne*, which helps spark the idea of imitating a madman to gain an audience with Iseut, Amadas's love is true insanity.

The narrator describes the cause of Amadas's situation as "fol corage et par folie" (628) ("foolish passion and folly"; 30). Ydoine too casts Amadas's love as madness in her early refusals to recognize him. She tells Amadas that he is a fool to believe that she could ever love him and that he is quite insane (736–42; 32). Ydoine's characterization of Amadas's action comes in part from her recognition that because of their different social situations (she is the daughter of a duke, while his father serves hers as seneschal), Amadas has overstepped his bounds in declaring a love for her. She continues:

> Se tu m'aimes par drüerie,
> Dont te vient si grans derverie
> Et tes rage com as ou cuer?
> Comment osas tu a nul foer
> Si grant outrage descouvrir?
> Ne me voel pas pour toi hounir.
> Pucele sui de haut parage:
> Ne puis trouver en mon corage
> Qu'en tel maniere amer te doie,
> Que ja loee n'en seroie,
> Mais blasmee de toute gent,
> Car j'ameroie basement.
>
> (526–37)

> [If you are indeed in love with me, how could such madness come into your heart? How on earth did you ever dare to be so outrageous? I do not want to bring shame on myself on your account. I am a maiden of high birth: I cannot find it in my heart to love you

in such a way! I would win no praise for it, but would be blamed by everyone, for I would be loving beneath myself! (29)]

Certainly, Ydoine's shocked reaction and immediate negative response to Amadas's humble profession of love stem first from the fact that the two are from different social ranks and second from the fact that she simply lacks feelings for the young man who beseeches her so piteously. Yet in berating him so sharply, she veers toward the grotesque.

But if the sickness can be mocked, so too can the cure. Both when Amadas languishes in the early part of the work and when he experiences full-scale delirium after learning that she has been promised to another knight, Ydoine is able to bring Amadas back from madness into reality. Ydoine therefore functions in the same way as Iseut or Euphemie when they heal, but she heals in different circumstances. In sharp contrast to the empirical practitioners we have seen, Ydoine requires no specialized knowledge or training to heal Amadas from lovesickness. She uses only her body:

Son mantel vair entroevre a tant,
Si se laist caïr sour l'enfant;
Ses bras souef au col li lace
Et par mult grant amor l'enbrace;
Si li baisa en un randon
Cent fois le bouce et le menton.
Vous savés bien que dou baisier
A icel point eut grant mestier
Quant hom est pasmés par tristrece,
Par vanité u par feblece,
Se on le baise auques sovent
Par bon corage doucement,
De pasmison plus tost reveint.
Ydoine entre ses bras le tient,
Vers soi l'enbrace et si l'estraint;
Du lui baisier pas ne se faint,
Sa bouce endroit la soie met,
Sel baise issi tressouavet
Que s'alaine couler li fait
Souef o les souspirs qu'il trait
Jusques au cuer, que bien le sent.

(1149–69)

> [She opened her fur mantle and let it fall over the lad; she wrapped her arms softly around his neck and embraced him lovingly, kissing his mouth and cheeks a hundred times in a row. You may be sure that the kiss was very much needed then. When a man faints from sadness or weakness, he revives at once if someone gives him enough sweet kisses. Ydoine held him in her arms, drew him near and embraced him. She did not hesitate to kiss him, and put her mouth against his and kissed him so sweetly that his breath returned, in soft sighs right from the heart. (38)]

Kisses have a very salubrious effect in such circumstances, and those of Ydoine are no exception. Her medicine consists entirely of kissing and loving embraces. As a result, Amadas awakens. At first he complains of the pain he feels, but through her continued kisses and presence he ceases to feel pain suffering (1191–202; 38). Thus, Ydoine's presence and touch bring about almost miraculous healing. Yet we find this healing described in the same terms as those used for empirical practitioners:

> Et il merci l'en rent issi
> Com a cele qui l'a *gari*
> Dou tout et *rendue la vie.*
>
> (1293–95, emphasis mine)

> [He thanked her gratefully, for she had *cured* him completely and *returned his life to him*. (40, emphasis mine)]

The verbs "to heal" and "to return to life" ascribe to Ydoine the same skills as an empiric. Moreover, Ydoine's rapid and astonishing cure must have surely been enthusiastically accepted by the audience, who could take vicarious pleasure in the kisses.

Here we confront one of the biggest differences between *Amadas et Ydoine* and the other works discussed. Although *Amadas et Ydoine* drops the role of the beloved as empirical practitioner, it keeps and even enhances Ydoine's ability to heal her beloved. No special skills or knowledge are required for her healing ability. It arises purely from her love for Amadas and it works only to aid him in his lovesickness.[8] We recall from the introduction that

8. In contrast, Alison Adams takes Ydoine's ability to heal through love more seriously than Iseut's "magic healing skills," in "Old French Tristan Poems," 65.

in the Ovidian works, whose representations of love heavily influenced the romanciers of the high Middle Ages, the God of love, Amors, acted as both the cause and the cure of love suffering. He shot the arrow that caused pain in the heart and he alleviated this pain through love (although Ovid never attributes the alleviation to specific acts such as kissing, etc.). In the high Middle Ages, Amors still appears as an archer, but the healing power has now been transferred to the beloved who cures through her presence, her kisses, and her words. I argued in Chapter 3 that Iseut's knowledge and skills as an empiric are conflated with the image of the beloved who has the power to heal the lover from lovesickness. This same slippage between the empiric and the beloved occurs in the *Roman de Silence* without the complicating factor of love magic and the love potion (see Chapter 5).

In contrast, *Amadas et Ydoine* suggests that the healing power of the beloved comes only from her status as beloved. The beloved has acquired healing capacities not through knowledge and skills, as in the case of Iseut, but as inherent properties of her status as beloved—and a subject for ridicule in the travesty. Just as this work mocks the conventions of love by pushing them out to extreme madness, so too does it lambaste the ability to ease love's pain by showing the beloved as an extreme type, able to heal severe problems with the greatest of ease. *Amadas et Ydoine* furthers this link because it so pathologizes love and because it depicts Ydoine as the perfect and only cure for that love. Amadas's lovesickness has extreme symptoms and causes him to languish in bed for a full year, yet Ydoine restores him to health with a few kisses. Although the narrator explains that the heroine's kisses cause breath to flow into Amadas, offering a small medical justification for Amadas's response, this reason is ironic since the narrator emphasizes the effect brought about by Ydoine's body throughout the scene. These hyperbolic and ironic descriptions of sickness and cure contribute to the romance's travesty of the conventions of lovesickness.

We can see a trajectory from the Ovidian convention that ascribes (but never shows) healing capacities to Amors, the God of love, in the *Roman d'Enéas*; to an empirical healer in the *Roman de Tristan* who heals war wounds and brings comfort to the lover; to the beloved in *Amadas et Ydoine* whose loving presence heals the extensive pain, suffering, and even loss of consciousness caused by love that reaches its apogee in this work, depicting a beloved who heals with her body alone. Empirical practice plays an important role in joining these representations of love: the God of love as healer from Ovid and the beloved as healer in romance, but in the process the knowledge of empirical healing drops out of sight. This portrayal focuses

on the physical symptoms of love and the physical means by which those symptoms can be alleviated. Empirical practice's emphasis on practical means of healing, as opposed to theoretical models of disease, opens the door for the notion of healing to move from an association with the physical body to an embodiment in the female form—the female beloved becomes the cure for the disease.

As if the point had not been made forcefully enough, *Amadas et Ydoine* targets love's effects for even more extreme lampooning. If Amadas was unhinged by Ydoine's earlier refusals of his love, the news that she is engaged to be married lays him low. Amadas learns of this situation as he returns from a long period of jousts and tourneys. During his absence the lovers remain in contact. Amadas departs with gifts from Ydoine (a pennant, a baldric; 1356, 1359), and they exchange gifts (1459, 1477–1480) and messages (1459, 1477–1480, 1553–54) during his absence. As expected at the time, Amadas builds his reputation as a knight through his successes. Upon his return, Ydoine's page greets Amadas, telling him that Ydoine sends the salutations as befits one who is in love with him. However, the page also brings the sad news that during Amadas's absence, Ydoine has been betrothed and will be married in four days to the Count of Nevers (1736–46; 46). She loves him no less than she has during their absence, and she is deeply saddened over their "privees amors" (1756; "private love"; 46). But as the page explains, she was betrothed against her will:

> Li cuens de Nevers l'a plevi
> L'autrier a Digon, car le vi
> Vausist ou non, contre son voel.
> Ou soit a joie, ou soit a duel,
> Espousee ert jusqu'a quart jor
> Et s'en ira o son signour
> A Nevers, la rice cité.
>
> (1785–91)

> [I saw it: the Count of Nevers asked for her the other day in Dijon, whether she wanted it or not. Whether for joy or sorrow, she will be married in four days and leave for the great city of Nevers with her husband. (47)]

This passage indicates that Ydoine clearly is a gift, an object of exchange between her father and the Count of Nevers. Because the page reports the

events in indirect speech, it is unclear if the Count of Nevers actually told Ydoine's father that he wanted to marry her whether she wanted to or not, or if this comment reflects the page's assessment of the situation.

The earlier passages in which Amadas is said to be crazy and Ydoine returns him to himself foreshadow Amadas's extreme reaction to the news of Ydoine's impending wedding and Ydoine's later healing. As Amadas absorbs the news from the page, his reaction veers toward total madness:

> Amadas l'ot, si a troublé
> Le cuer et escaufé d'ardeur,
> D'une fine fole caleur,
> Dont vint la droite derverie,
> Et la fine foursenerie
> Li saut et le cerviaus li tourble.
> En poi d'eure a corage double,
> Et toute raison li escape
> Qu'il n'a si fol jusqu'a Halape.
> Tout maintenant esrage et derve,
> En haut s'escrie et rit et resve;
> Sens ne raison en lui n'a mie.
>
> (1792–1803)

> [Amadas heard him, and his heart was troubled and burning with the fever of madness; from this, true insanity rose in him and clouded his brain. His mind was soon at war with itself and all reason left him: there was no one so mad as far as Aleppo. In a single moment he became crazed and furious. He cried out loud and laughed and raved; there was no sense or reason in him. (47)]

Amadas's rage leads him to attack the page and beat him. Then Amadas flees for the woods with his companions in pursuit. They catch him and deliver him to his parents in his piteous state. His parents and friends try to keep word of Amadas's condition from spreading, but people learn of it regardless (although the reason, his love for Ydoine, remains secret). Amadas languishes, hidden away in his parents' castle, locked up and often even tied up to prevent harm to himself and others. No doctor can offer any means of healing. The extreme nature of Amadas's madness, his ravings and his wanderings, provide another example of the grotesque that forms part of the travesty.

The grotesque can be further seen in Amadas's behavior in the town of Lucca. After an escape from those who guard him at his parents' castle, Amadas turns up in the Italian town. Ydoine sends her servant, Garinet, to search far and wide until he finds Amadas. As Garinet sits down to eat at a Luccan hostel, he hears a noise from the street. Garinet's host explains that a madman wanders by every day. Thinking of Amadas, Garinet goes to the window,

> Son chief met hors, si a veü
> Aval la rue a grant aïr
> Amadas trestout nu venir,
> Tous déguisés, en crins tondus,
> Com cil qui a le sens perdus,
> Qui de soi ne set nule rien
> Savoir ne sens ne mal ne bien;
> De rien du mont ne li souvient.
> . . . . . .
> Car de la vile la fripaille
> Li sivent quel part que il aille,
> Li pautonier, les gens menues,
> Toutes en sont plaines les rues.
> Grans est la noise et grans li cris
> Des garçons, des enfans petis,
> Qui l'empaignent et qui le batent,
> Qui le descirent, qui le gratent;
> Par la grant rue tuit l'arochent,
> De verges le batent et brocent,
> Mult le laidissent, mult le roullent;
> Les viés drapiaus es putiaus mollent,
> Puis l'en fierent par mi le dos,
> Et de bastons et de lons cros,
> Et par les rains et par les flans,
> Que par maint liu en saut li sans;
> Et cil qui n'i puent ataindre,
> De rüer ne se voelent faindre
> Et boe et pieces de poumon
> Dont se sont garni le bricon:
> Ce est damages et grans doels.

Les menus saus, plus qu'escureus,
S'en va la rue contreval.

(2720–27, 2737–59)

> [(he) put his head out and saw Amadas running up the street like a madman, completely naked, all deformed, with matted hair; he had lost his mind and didn't know who he was. He remembered nothing at all … the rabble of the city followed him wherever he went and the streets were full of churls and lackeys. There was a great noise and outcry from the lads and children, who pushed and struck him, scratched and tore at him. They attacked him throughout the high street, beating and clubbing him with sticks. They mistreated him and harassed him; they soaked rags in the gutters and struck him on the back with them, and hit him with sticks and staves on the back and the sides so that blood spurted out all over. Those rascals who couldn't reach him had mud and bits of offal and didn't fail to pelt him with it. That was a pity and a great sorrow! Leaping like a squirrel, he went up and down the street. (60–61)]

Amadas has been reduced to a figure of ridicule. It seems as if the entire town turns out to mock the poor madman not just with taunts and cries, but also with sticks they use to beat him until he bleeds or with mud and offal they fling at him. To have the formerly courtly son of the seneschal reduced to such a hideous state and the recipient of such cruelty highlights the horrible and the bizarre that form a part of the grotesque.

This passage also recalls Tristan's behavior in the *Folie Tristan*, analyzed in Chapter 3. Tristan consciously applies certain behaviors to appropriate the role of the fool: he cuts his hair and he wears clothing that will mark him as a fool. His outward appearance leads King Mark's courtiers to treat him as a fool, laughing with and sometimes at him and enjoying the stories he tells at court. In contrast to Amadas, Tristan remains in control of the spectacle he creates, and the responses of those around him are less cruel. Perhaps Amadas's lack of control brings out the cruel reactions of the townsfolk who reject a person so radically separated from social norms and customs. Tristan borrows the role of a madman to accomplish his goal of seeing Iseut, bending the role to his will. Amadas, on the other hand, is overtaken by madness, a byproduct of love's capacity to unsettle, albeit an exaggerated byproduct, one that even Tristan in his extreme situation never experienced.

Garinet returns to tell Ydoine of Amadas's terrible fate, and she requests that her husband give her permission to make a pilgrimage to St. Peter's in Rome. The count grants her request, and Ydoine journeys first to Lucca. She observes the same spectacle as had Garinet, only made worse by the attack of a large dog that bites Amadas on the shoulder (3166–79) and an oak branch that he trips over causing him to scrape the skin from his nose and face and bleed profusely (3180–189). The spectacle of the madman's daily walk through town and the emphasis on his body as a site where the townsfolk register their refusal of his condition furthers the grotesque in the episode.

But the following episode in the text reverses many of these situations. Just as the local population's response to Amadas exaggerates in one direction, Ydoine's exaggerates in the opposite direction. After viewing the townsfolk's response to Amadas, Ydoine waits for nightfall to seek out Amadas. She finds him sleeping on a stone (3251–52; 68). Even Amadas's sleeping arrangement, on rocks, is grotesque (slightly mitigated when Garinet attaches furs to the stone on his first visit to Lucca).

Ydoine immediately sets about the healing process:

> Ydoine s'est desafublee:
> A tere a sa cape jetee,
> En cainse remaint seulement
> Et en cemise sainglement;
> Mais tant est avenans et bele
> Que il n'est dame ne pucele,
> D'illoec a Nevers la cité,
> Une seule de sa biauté.
> Comme loiaus amans et fine,
> Plorant a la terre s'acline,
> Descoulouree, pale et tainte.
> Comme cele qui ne s'est fainte
> Se met mult tost a terre nue,
> Par dalés lui toute estendue.
> Mult souef et mult coiement,
> Par grant douceur et simplement,
> Tout erramment un de ses bras
> Qui vestus ert estroit a las,
> Desous le col soef le met,
> L'autre desus, mult souavet

Sa bouce a la soie tout droit,
Si li baise et embrace estroit,
Mais ce n'est mie de cuer faint:
De mult fin cuer souef l'estraint.
Par les dous baisiers que li fait
S'esveille cil et entresait
S'esfroie mult et joint les piés
Et fait com s'il fust esragiés.

(3273–3300)

[Ydoine unwrapped herself: she threw her cape to the ground and stood there wearing only her fine linen tunic and her chemise, but she was so attractive and beautiful that there was no lady or maiden so beautiful from there to the city of Nevers. Like a loyal and true lover, weeping, she bent to the ground, pale and discolored.

Spirited woman that she was, she stretched out quickly on the bare ground beside him. Softly and tenderly, simply and sweetly, she put one arm, laced in a tight sleeve, gently under his neck, and the other one over. She put her mouth tenderly against his and kissed him and embraced him, not timorously, but with a pure heart. Because of the sweet kisses she gave him he awoke at once and was very afraid. He leapt to his feet and acted as if he were maddened. (69)]

This healing episode includes more exaggerations, increasing the grotesque. Ydoine, the most beautiful woman in the world and a loyal lover, will go to any length to save Amadas. The image of the beautiful maiden in her tightly laced clothing who lays her body on the ground and who gently and softly embraces and kisses a man who must surely remain bloody and filthy from his earlier encounter in the town takes its power from the contrast between the two protagonists, one that points out the grotesque nature of Amadas's current state.

The episode continues in the same way. Amadas strikes out at Ydoine and tries to flee but is restrained by her men (3301–17). Ydoine responds by telling Amadas that she is his "amie" or "sweetheart" (3322) and his "drue" or "beloved" (3329) and that she is pining for him (3339–40; 70). Very quickly, her words catch his attention:

Le non d'Ydoine ot Amadas
Et de s'amie; isnel le pas
Est commeüs tout son forsens,
Si entre en un nouvel pourpens.
Par mi tout ce qu'est esragiés
Li est auques li sens cangiés.
Pour le nom d'Ydoine s'amie
Li trespasse la derverie
Dont a esté cangié maint jor.

(3341–49)

[Amadas heard the name of his sweetheart Ydoine; at once his madness abated and his mind changed course. In his insanity, his senses began to return. Because of the name of his sweetheart Ydoine, the madness which had transformed him for so long lifted from him. (70)]

As soon as Amadas he hears Ydoine's name, he leaves the madness behind and enters a new way of thinking—an almost instantaneous recovery. Ydoine continues to hold Amadas in her arms, repeat his name (3365–66; 70) and tell him she is his "amie fine" (3373) ("dear sweetheart"; 70) and his "fine drue" (3375) ("true mistress"; 70). The narrator expounds on the power of the name:

Cou est la miudre medecine,
La plus aidans et la plus fine,
Car autretant li fait d'aïe
Li nons d'Ydoine et d'amie
Com uns de nons Nostre Signour
Que nous tenons a creatour,
Se pour ce non qu'a tort n'a droit
Des nons Damediu nus ne doit
Faire nule comparison.

(3395–3403)

[That was the most effective and pleasant medicine, for the words "Ydoine" and "sweetheart" helped him as much as one of the names of Our Lord whom we consider our creator—if one might on any account make any comparison with the names of Lord God. (70)]

Through crafty rhetoric, the narrator makes the comparison to the name of God even as he suggests that such a comparison is improper. The episode concludes with a summary of its events:

> Par le non d'Ydoine et d'amie
> Est garis de la derverie,
> De l'angoisse et de la grant rage.
> D'un fol a fait un home sage
> Li nons d'Ydoine en poi de pose:
> Pour ce le tient a sainte chose.
>
> (3409–15)

> [He was cured from his madness, anguish and distress by "Ydoine" and "sweetheart." In an instant the name of Ydoine had made a fool into a wise man and so he considered it a holy thing. (71)]

Ydoine's name therefore has magical healing properties similar to the healing abilities that medieval people attributed to relics or other religious objects or to certain words in the form of names or prayers. By equating the name of an ordinary person with that of God, the narrator again mixes high and low, implying that religious devotion is equivalent to worship of an earthly being.

In light of the extreme depiction of their love and the fact that its results are so much worse for Amadas than for Tristan, we can take with a grain of salt the narrator's insistence that since the love was not caused by a potion, it is less destructive:

> Natureument leur est venus
> Cis dous fus es cuers et creüs.
> Ne leur vint pas pour manger fruit,
> Ne pour boire, ce sachiés tuit,
> Por coi li pluseur destruit sont
> Qui ça arrieres amé ont,
> Com de Tristran dont vous avés
> Oï, et de pluseurs assés.
> Mais cist sont de fine amistié
> Natureument entreplaié.
>
> (1181–90)

> [They were joined naturally, in noble, loyal love with a fire that would never be extinguished as long as they lived. This sweet fire came into their hearts and grew naturally. You may be sure that this did not happen because they ate fruit or drank a potion, by which many other lovers have been destroyed, as you have heard happened to Tristan and to many others: these two were brought together naturally by noble love. (38)]

Instead the romance implies that all love has the potential to be destructive.

The transformation taking place in *Amadas et Ydoine* is radically different from those in the works we have previously analyzed in which the skills and knowledge of an empirical healer accrete to the image and function of the beloved. In contrast, in this case, the beloved, for whom Amadas exhibits an almost religious devotion, takes on the power of a religious object (her body) and incantation (her name). If we consider religious devotion a higher form and devotion to earthly objects a lower form, then here too the text applies a low form to a high subject by portraying love of an earthly object as a kind of religious devotion. Just as *Amadas et Ydoine* mocks the medieval conventions of love and lovesickness by depicting Amadas as insane from the effects of love, so too it mocks the means by which the lover can be healed by showing a beloved who heals by her mere presence and name.

Ydoine Calls in Reinforcements—But Are They Witches?

In *Amadas et Ydoine*, the roles of empirical practitioners we have seen in earlier chapters divide into two separate areas. Ydoine helps the distraught lover even to the point of curing his madness, but she engages outsiders to help her convince the count of Nevers that she will make an unsuitable wife. These outsiders apply knowledge of a radically different kind to create an illusion through which they hope to trick the count into renouncing his plan to marry Ydoine. Ydoine takes the decision to seek out these women:

> Trois sorcieres, sans demorance,
> A quises, qui de ingremance
> Sevent entr' eles toute l'oevre.
>
> (2007–9)

[She sought out three witches who between them knew all the arts of magic. (50)]

They are immediately identified as witches who know necromancy. The narrator tells us that they describe their abilities to Ydoine in great detail:

Qu'eles sevent de nuit voler
Par tout le mont, et de la mer
Faire les ondes estre em pais
Comme la tere, et puis aprés
Defors de la graine venir
Arbres, naistre, croistre et florir,
Et sevent par encantement
Resusciter la morte gent,
Des vis l'une a l'autre figure
Müer par art et par figure,
Houme faire asne devenir,
Et ceus qu'il voelent endormir
Et puis songer çou que leur plaist,
Bestes orgener en forest,
Murs remüer et trembler tours,
Et les euwes courre a rebours.
Ne puis pas dire ne conter
Le disme part, ne raconter,
Qu'eles sevent de mauvairs ars:
De sages font sos et musars;
Tant ont grant sens mult m'esmervel.

(2023–43)

[They could fly across the entire world at night, make the waves of the sea as peaceful as the land and cause trees to grow and flower straight from seeds. They could resurrect the dead by magic, transform peoples' appearances by spells and artifices and turn a man into an ass. They could put anyone they wanted to sleep and make him dream what they wanted. They could charm beasts in the forest and make walls shake, towers tremble, and rivers run upstream. I could not describe even a tenth of the evil arts that they knew!

> They turned wise men into fools and babblers: I am astonished at how much they knew. (50)]

In short, they have the standard abilities of witch figures in literature—everything from making water run backwards to raising the dead. The *Amadas* poet here shows debt not to the *Tristan* tradition, but to the witch figures of antique romances. The abilities of the witch that Dido engages in the *Roman d'Enéas* match almost exactly, although their order is different:

> ici pres a une sorciere,
> molt forz chose li est legiere,
> el resuscitë homes morz
> et devinë et gete sorz,
> et le soleil fait resconser
> en dreit midi et retorner
> tot ariere vers oriënt;
> de la lune fait ensement,
> ele la fait novele o pleine
> treis feiz o quatre la semaine,
> et les oisels fait el parler
> et l'eue ariere retorner;
> d'enfer trait les infernals Fuires,
> ki li anoncent les auguires;
> les chasnes fait des monz descendre
> et les serpenz donter et prendre;
> la terre fait soz ses piez muire,
> enchanter set et bien d'auguire;
> el fait amer o fait haïr,
> de tote rien fait son plaisir.
>
> (1907–26)

> [Near here is a sorceress. The most difficult thing is easy for her: she revives dead men, and divines and predicts fates, and makes the sun hide at high noon, and return all backward toward the east, and likewise with the moon. She makes it new or full three or four times a week, and she makes the birds speak, and water flow uphill. She draws the infernal Furies out of hell to announce their auguries to her. She causes the oaks to descend from the mountains and serpents to be overcome and captured. She makes the earth

groan under her feet, knows well how to enchant and prophesy, causes people to love or hate, and does her pleasure with all things. (94–95)]

They also recall those of Medea in the *Roman de Troie*:

Trop ert cele de grant saveir:
Mout sot d'engin e de maistrie,
De conjure e de sorcerie;
Es arz ot tant s'entente mise
Que trop par ert sage e aprise;
Astronomie e nigromance
Sot tote par cuer dès enfance;
D'arz saveit tant e de conjure,
De cler jor feïst nuit oscure;
S'ele vousist, ço fust viaire
Que volisseiz par mi cel aire;
Les eves faiseit corre ariere:
Scientose ert de grant maniere.

(1216–28)[9]

[She had great knowledge:
She knew quite a lot of skills and science,
Of spells and sorcery;
She had put so much effort into the arts
That she was very wise and learned.
Astronomy and necromancy
She knew by heart from her childhood;
She knew so much magic and so many spells
She could make a clear day as dark as night.
It is true that, if she wanted,
You could fly about in the air,
And she could make water run backwards.
She was extremely knowledgeable.]

9. All quotations from the *Roman de Troie* are from Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie*, vol. 1, ed. Constans. All translations of this work mine.

We recall that in *Cligés* Thessala uses such a list as a kind of advertisement for her abilities with Fenice, although her actions bear little resemblance to the list. The witches of *Amadas et Ydoine* show a similar discrepancy.[10]

Ydoine holds counsel with the witches and together they devise a plan upon which they all agree (2044–53; 50–51). The three witches then go into action the night before the wedding. The poor Count lies suffering from a case of pre-wedding jitters—while his family and retinue sleep, he lies awake pensively, we are told, as one who will soon marry a woman of great lineage should (2070–73; 51). They arrive before him:

> Es vous les trois par artimage
> Devant le conte apertement,
> Laiens c'onques li cuens nel sot,
> C'uis ne fenestre n'i desclot:
> Ou troc d'une alaisne petit
> Entraissent bien sans contredit;
> Et quant laiens venues sont,
> Tous emsamble endormis les ont
> Fors le conte que ont trouvé
> Esvillié; lui ont encanté
> Si que, se la maisons arsist,
> Ne parlast n'un mot ne desist
> A nul houme ne haut ne bas
> Ne ne se remuast plain pas,
> Car ne set s'il dort u s'il velle.
>
> (2074–88)

[The three of them suddenly appeared by magic, plainly visible before the Count! He couldn't understand it, for the door and windows were closed: they had entered through a tiny hole, without any resistance, and when they had come inside they put everyone but the Count to sleep. They found him awake, and enchanted him so completely that he couldn't have spoken a word to anyone or

10. Other critics have commented on this discrepancy. Calin noted that they use no "supernatural enchantments," but that they "lie and create illusion" ("*Amadas et Ydoine*," 44) while Dubost classes their work as mystification (*Aspects fantastiques*, 664–67).

> even budged an inch even if the house had been on fire: he didn't know whether he was awake or asleep! (51)]

They enter the castle not by coming through the window or doors, but by passing through a small hole. Once inside, they cause all the inhabitants except the count to fall asleep. For him, there is a different fate: he enters a state in which he cannot distinguish wakefulness from dream.

Who are these figures capable of entering a house through a tiny hole? The three "witches," as the romance calls them, are based on a folk belief in the *bonae mulieres* or good ladies. In general, the good women reward industriousness and punish laziness and are concerned with fertility.[11] The image of these ladies has roots in both mythology and folklore: the Roman goddess Diana; Hecate, the Greek goddess of magic, who rode at night; the biblical Herodius, the wife of King Herod, who caused the death of John the Baptist and was said to have been blown into outer space; and Holda of German folklore who travels between Christmas and Epiphany.[12] Whatever the name of the leader, each of the women is said to ride at night with followers. They enter houses through cracks and crevices,[13] just as the women in the romance. Norman Cohn cites evidence of this belief in nineteenth-century Sicily, and so maintains that this thousand-year-old folk belief has remained consistent. Cohn holds that *peasants* do not confuse the good ladies with witches, but that in the twelfth-century *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury this belief commingles with another, that of nocturnal, cannibalistic witches.[14]

These figures appear in Church writings as early as the ninth century.[15] Perhaps the best-known document is the early tenth-century *Canon Episcopi*, whose name derives from the opening words. It describes night rides with Diana as a false belief, indicating that the belief was fairly common and that the Church leaders were fighting it.[16] The early eleventh-century *Corrector* of Burchard of Worms directs confessors to ask: "Hast thou believed that there is any woman who can do that which some, deceived by the devil, affirm that they must do of necessity or at his command, that is, with a throng of demons transformed into the likeness of women, (she whom

11. Cohn, 169.
12. Cohn, 168–69.
13. Cohn, 170.
14. Cohn, 172, 174–75.
15. Russell, 75.
16. Russell, 76–77.

common folly calls the witch Hulda), must ride on certain beasts in special nights and be numbered with their company?"[17] Burchard prescribes one year of penance on fast days for holding this belief.[18] Burchard has separate questions about beliefs of riding with Diana, and prescribes a two-year penance on fast days, possibly because Diana is a pagan goddess belief in whom negates Christianity's central tenet of belief in one God.[19] Much Canon law was synthesized and organized by Gratian, who in 1140 published *Concordia discordantium canonum*, known as the *Decretum*.[20] The later twelfth-century penitential of Bartholomew Iscansus of Exeter prescribes a penance of one year for belief in night rides with Herodius or Diana.[21] They also show up in the work of Gervaise of Tilbury around 1214. Here, Gervaise combines a number of traditions of flying creatures to "create a composite idea of the witch's flight that later became standard in witch-hunting."[22]

There is also evidence of belief in the good ladies in thirteenth-century France in the writings of Guillaume d'Auvergne (d. 1249), who describes stories he has heard of such women. It appears also in the character of Dame Habonde (Lady Abundance) in Jean de Meun's *Roman de la rose,* where the belief is derided because its source is old ladies' dreams.[23] Moreover, mockery of this belief is implied in Burchard's text (he calls it "the common folly") and other penitentials. Bartholomew says the belief is caused by the illusion of a demon and calls those who hold it "the stupid crowd."[24] Cohn states that the "belief in the mysterious ladies and their nocturnal visitations was sufficiently widespread to inspire practical jokes, or at least stories of

17. McNeill and Gamer, 331.

18. McNeill and Gamer, 331.

19. McNeill and Gamer, 332–33.

20. Peters, 71. Peters adds that the work was used as the introductory text to ecclesiastical law for the next eight centuries (71).

21. McNeill and Gamer, 349. Russell emphasizes that these documents prohibit a *belief* in these events, 81.

22. Russell, 117–18. However, for Richard Kieckhefer, only beliefs of the intellectual elite contributed to the witch image in the trials from 1300 to 1500. See his *European Witch Trials.* He specifically addresses the *Canon Episcopi* and related documents (38–41). Carlo Ginzburg argues that the *Canon* and subsequent texts document long-standing and widespread folk beliefs. See Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon, 1991), especially pages 89–91. The argument that such Italian folk beliefs point to an ancient fertility cult has been called into question. See, for example, Cohn, 179.

23. Cohn, 170.

24. McNeill and Gamer, 349.

practical jokes."[25] This is key to *Amadas et Ydoine* as a travesty. The folk belief of the good ladies is a low form, one often used for mockery, as it is here. The count, just like those mocked in the other works, does not even know if he is awake or asleep (2511–12).

It is clear from the penitentials that the Church condemns these beliefs in pagan superstitions. However, Cohn argues that the penance is very light through the thirteenth century (the time of *Amadas et Ydoine*), becoming heavier only in the fourteenth.[26] Edward Peters describes a slow evolution in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century penitentials that "turned the scattered condemnations of the eleventh century, coming from diverse sources and possessing little binding force, into the beginnings of a systematic concept of diabolic temptation and human vulnerability."[27] But it is only the beginnings. Another two centuries will pass before these notions develop fully.

The witches of *Amadas et Ydoine* in fact engage only in role-play, not as witches, but as the Fates:

> Et puis se müent a mervelle
> Em beles figures de fees:
> Si se tignent a Destinees.
> Pour Cloto se tient la premiere,
> Pour Lachesis l'autre sorciere,
> Et la tierce pour Atropos.
>
> (2089–94)

> [They took on the appearance of beautiful fairies and pretended to be the Fates. The first witch played the role of Clotho, the second played Lachesis and the third played Atropos. (51)]

As the Fates, they predict the future;[28] here they need only recall the prophecies they made at the births of Ydoine and the count that predicted

25. Cohn, 170. Although his examples date from the fourteenth century, the *Amadas* episode shows a similar structure.

26. Cohn, 173.

27. Peters, 80. Peters also points out that theologians did not distinguish learned magic and popular superstition, but condemned all of it uniformly, 79–80.

28. Critics have pointed out this mixture of sorcery and fairy belief. For Dubost, the fairy elements superimposed over the actions of the witches is ironic (*Aspects fantastiques*, 666–67). Laurence Harf-Lancner points out that the Latin Fates combine with the good ladies to produce

misery in love should the two marry. Both Burchard and Bartholomew also mention beliefs connected with the Fates.[29]

In summary, we see then that *Amadas et Ydoine* relies on folk beliefs for its depiction of the action of the witches it portrays and on literary antecedents for the description of their (mostly untapped) powers. Both beliefs in the *bonae mulieres* and the Fates contribute to the count's dream sequence. The count's credulity about the good ladies is the key to the travesty that the *Amadas* poet creates. We have seen that many medieval individuals considered the belief unsophisticated and simplistic and that they mocked and derided those who held it. Thus the role of the good ladies in the story and the count's doubt and subsequent acceptance of their importance signals to the audience that this is a moment to laugh. This reaction stands in sharp contrast to the reception of empirics whose healing and amatory magic practices earn them respect. The good ladies in *Amadas* substitute for empirical healers, and this constitutes a central element of the travesty.

Female Loyalty and Misogyny in *Amadas et Ydoine*

Just as the romance travesties lovesickness and folk beliefs, it finds other targets for ridicule as well. One aspect of the extreme actions of the protagonists is that they show deep loyalty to each other. This loyalty comes in for its share of mocking also. The narrator alerts us in the prologue that the lovers in the story he is telling had "de deus pars grant loialté / A tous les jours de leur aé" (19–20) ("loyalty on both sides through all the days of their lives"; 21). They show this repeatedly. For example, Ydoine carries out a complicated plan to avoid consummation of her marriage, she undertakes a pilgrimage in order to see Amadas, she kisses and caresses Amadas when he is in a filthy, mad state; Amadas repeatedly confesses his love to Ydoine even though she rejects and humiliates him, and Amadas (eventually) refuses to accept the lies told about Ydoine by the evil knight who confronts Amadas at Ydoine's tomb in Lucca, claiming that he too was Ydoine's *ami*. The travesty achieves its desired effects

---

fairy-tale motifs such as the fairies who predict the future when they take a meal together after an infant's birth. See Harf-Lancner, *Les Fées au Moyen Age: Morgane et Mélusine, La naissance des fées* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1984), 27–29. She also shows that Ydoine strengthens her cases by linking these fairies to Christianity after the pilgrimage to Rome (381–83). For Wolf-Bonvin, the only aspect of the scene with substance is that of the "feminine spells" (608). See Wolf-Bonvin, "Amadas, Ydoine, et les faes de la dort-veille," in *Magie et illusion au Moyen Age*, 603–16.

29. McNeill and Gamer, 338, 349.

already in episodes such as these that may lead a reader or listener to wonder just how far love's devotion should go. But in the style of a hawker at a fair who cries "but wait—there's more!" the narrator continues.

After the reunion of Amadas and Ydoine in Lucca, Ydoine continues her pilgrimage to Rome while Amadas successfully competes in a nearby tournament. The day that Ydoine returns to Lucca a strange event befalls her. An unknown knight sweeps Ydoine onto his horse and rides with her for a distance, then releases her (4615–63). That evening at dinner Ydoine falls so ill that she believes her death is imminent. As Ydoine lies dying, loyalty again becomes an issue. Already before the episode, the narrator recalls the lovers' loyalty (4681–82; 88) and says that the two lovers speak "Et parole de grant douceur / De loial ami et d'aime" (4846–47) ("the sweet words of two loyal lovers"; 91). Convinced that she will soon die, Ydoine seeks to prevent Amadas from following her in death. Thus Ydoine, practicing the "estrange loiauté d'amour" (4959), ("a strange act of devotion"; 93), offers a plan to keep Amadas alive. She tells him that she was disloyal to him and explains that before she knew Amadas, she loved three of her cousins and bore each of them a child, but that she killed these children (5026–5107).[30] She adds that since she has known Amadas, she has loved only him (5083). She requests Amadas to say prayers for her so that she will not stay in hell forever (5156–59). Amadas promises to pray as she has requested (5229–31).

The irony in the episode is palpable: just as Ydoine begins the confession concerning others lovers, the narrator refers to her as "la plus tresloial amie" (4978) ("the most loyal lover ever"; 93). Although her motive remains pure—to keep Amadas from death—she lies outrageously to achieve her goal. The narrator considers her willingness to calumniate herself as proof of love for he says: "La ou est Amors bien se proeve" (4965) ("Where love is, it proves itself well"; 93). The story must be outlandish to attain its desired effect, and indeed it is, as Ydoine says she had not one but *three* lovers, that she bore a child from each encounter, and that she killed each child. Our narrator classes Ydoine's story of multiple lovers and heinous crimes, surely a low form if there ever was one, as an example of loyalty in love, a lofty subject. The fact that the horrific content of the lies does not push Amadas away from her alerts us yet again to the travesty; we can only laugh at the extreme

30. Moreover, Ydoine says she killed the children at the urging of the Devil (5107; 95). Here Ydoine seems to draw on the folk belief of cannibalistic witches who practiced infanticide (Cohn, 162–66).

events of her story of the three murdered children, since it strains credulity. In this way, *Amadas et Ydoine* mocks the notion of loyalty in love just as it does other aspects of love.[31]

Moreover, the text questions women's capacity for loyalty at a point in the story where Ydoine displays considerable loyalty. Just after Ydoine restores Amadas's sanity by calling his name and kissing him, the narrator digresses in this long tirade:

> Signor, jel di, bien ai garant
> De feme, ce sachiés tuit bien,
> Qu'il n'a si pourveüe rien
> Ou mont, quant ele veut tricier;
> Puis qu'el se paine de boisier,
> Ne la peut nus garder a droit,
> Tant la sace metre en destroit.
> Tant durement est decevans
> Et angousseuse et souduians
> Vers houme qu'ele veut deçoivre
> Et engingnier, si bel l'enboivre
> Et afole que le plus sage
> Et qui a plus soutil corage
> Grieve souvent en mainte guise
> Par traïson et par faintise;
> Nule riens est de sa voisdie.
> Ne sai, certes, que plus vous die,
> Mais nule n'est sans decevance;
> Toutes sevent de l'ingremance,
> Et les engiens dont abelissent
> Vers ceus que trecent et traïssent.
> Mors est qui el voelent deçoivre,
> Que nus ne s'en puet aperçoivre,
> Si se sevent couvrir et faindre;
> Müer sevent, sauder et fraindre,
> Ortie traire avant pour rose.
> Signor, sachiés bien une cose:
> Toute la plus fole est trop sage

31. In contrast, Faith Lyons sees only the anonymous poet's awkward use of an episode from *Cligés* that Chrétien handled much better. See Lyons, "La Fausse Mort," 175.

De pourquerre anui et damage,
Et la plus sage trop voiseuse
Et decevans et angoisseuse.
Si sont triceresses et faintes
Que ja nul jor n'erent ataintes.
Volages sont et poi estavles
Et sans mesure en fin canjavles.
Ne sai dont ce vient ne que doit,
Toute la plus fole deçoit
Un sage home par tricerie:
Fols est qui en nule se fie,
Qu'il n'i a point de loiauté;
A la gile ont tot atorné
La francise et la simpleté
Dont orent ja los de bonté.
En mil n'en a une enterine;
L'amors de toute la plus fine
Puet jugier a fause et a fainte
Cil quin a esprouvee mainte.
Venimeuse est la plus pasivle
Que nule n'est sans art orible.
Felenesses sont sans raison,
Plaines d'engin, de traïson,
Esmouvans d'ire et de contraire,
Toutes sont mais de mal afaire
Pieç'a que teles estre soelent
Et sont encor la u mal voelent.

(3568–3622)

[My lords, I tell you on good authority that when a woman wants to practice deception you may be sure that there is no more devious creature in all the world. If she intends to deceive someone, no one can guard against her, no matter how well he keeps watch. She is so cunning, deceitful and fraudulent toward a man when she wants to deceive and entrap him that she has many ways to deceive and destroy even the man with the subtlest mind. Nothing can escape her lies. I do not know what more to say to you: no woman is free from deception. They all know magic and all the tricks to please a man when they want to deceive and betray him. Any man they want to deceive is done for, since no one can

> perceive it. They know how to conceal and pretend, change men's minds, soften them up, make them think a nettle is a rose. My lords, you must know one thing: even the most foolish woman is wise enough to bring about harm, and the wisest is too cunning and deceptive. They are so full of tricks and stratagems that they will never be caught. They are flighty, unstable and excessively changeable. I do not know where this comes from or how it came about, but even the most foolish woman can deceive a wise man by trickery: a man is a fool to trust any of them, for there is no loyalty there. They used to have a reputation for virtue, but all their nobility and innocence has been transformed by guile. There is not one in a thousand who is sincere. A man who has tested many can see that the love of even the finest woman is false and feigning. The most peaceable woman is venomous, for every one of them is dreadfully artful. They are wicked beyond all reason, full of trickery and treason. They are all motivated by evil and by ill will, they are all wicked and have been so for a long time, and they still are when they plot evil. (73–74)]

A screed such as this one heaps scorn all women, insisting on their evil, their capacity for deception, their ability to work magic,[32] and, in the process, also insulting men because they lack the intelligence or awareness to avoid women's tricks. I classify this narratorial digression as a low form, and thus an aspect of travesty because its exaggerated claims display a boorishness and heavy-handedness lacking any rhetorical finesse. Even if we concede, with Sara Sturm-Maddox, that the romance's goal is entertainment and not a moral lesson on the dangers of women and that, therefore, the romance is playful,[33] we cannot deny the potential for damage contained in these misogynist tirades. After hearing such an outburst, an audience member could easily feel outrage against the unjust portrayals of women (and men, to a lesser degree) or could feel vindicated in his extreme views about women.

Although the extreme claims made have the potential to elicit a strong emotional reaction, given this text's propensity to play with expectations,

32. In addition, Wolf-Bonvin reads Ydoine as one of the fates ("Amadas, Ydoine," 612).
33. Sturm-Maddox, 616.

we should not be surprised when the narrator reverses course, stating that Ydoine is the exception to all that has come before:[34]

Les dames ai or cest respit
Pour la contesse Ydoine dit
Por demostrer la verité
Di li et l'estabilité.
Com a erré vers son ami
Loialment, bien l'avés oï,
Encontre raison et droiture:
C'est de feme droite nature
D'ouvrer tos jors contre raison.
Plusors sevent bien l'ocoison:
D'Evain leur veint que Dix forma,
Ceste nature leur douna;
Contre raison primes forfist
De ce que Dix li contredist;
Contre raison ouvra adés,
Et ses filles si font aprés.
Pour ce seroit fort a trouver
Feme qui ne vauroit ouvrer
Encontre raison et droiture.
Car tout ce leur vient de Nature.
Pour ce si est de feme fine,
Boine, loial et enterine,
Une des mervelles du mont,
Que mult trespeu de tex en sont.
Une boine cent homes vaut:
S'amistiés a nul jor ne faut
Ne ne cange pour nul destroit,
Ains fait tous jors que faire doit;
De ces boines est Ydoine une,
Hors est de la fausse commune.

(3623–52)

34. Calin discusses the ironies of the digressions ("*Amadas et Ydoine*," 146–47), as does Sturm-Maddox. For the latter, the tirades add to the enjoyment of the audience because they are negated by the romance (611–16).

> [I have made all these statements about the ladies only to demonstrate how true and steadfast Countess Ydoine was. You have heard how she searched loyally for her sweetheart, against all reason and propriety. It is the true nature of woman to act always contrary to reason. Many people know the cause; it comes from Eve, whom God formed: she gave them this nature. She first unreasonably transgressed the command God gave her; she acted against reason then, and her daughters do so after her. Therefore it would be hard to find a woman unwilling to act against reason and rightness! This comes to them from Nature. A perfect, loyal, honest woman is one of the wonders of the world, for there are very few of them. She is worth a good hundred men: her affection never fails and she does not change because of any difficulties but she always does what she should. Ydoine was one of the good ones, not a member of the false community. (74)]

The narrator's rhetorical strategy is first to heap scorn on all women with statements so extreme they form a travesty of clerical writing on women, claiming that all women know magic tricks and are capable of deception so fine that no man can discern it. He then exculpates himself, after a fashion, by showing that Ydoine is an exception to the extreme statements he previously made. A sophisticated audience member will recognize that the structure of the presentation has manipulated her or his reaction; the narrator has skillfully built up the listener's anger and sense of injustice only to puncture those emotions with an opposing view.

Even so, the second view contains considerable misogyny. Although the reversal praises Ydoine's loyalty, it claims only very few exceptions to the female deceit described at the beginning and classes Ydoine's actions as unreasonable. Moreover, in the reversal the narrator cites biblical authority on the subject. In the first section, he claims not to know the source of women's capacity for deceit, in the second section of the tirade, he explains that it comes from Eve who acted without reason. The invocation of the biblical explanation for Ydoine's behavior suggests that the end section is the one we should take seriously, for it furnishes a source for the view that women lack reason. Although the narrator considers Ydoine an exception, he only sets her apart after considerable invective directed at all women, and suggests that such an exception is exceedingly rare.[35]

35. For Alison Adams, the author insists on loyalty to distinguish the work from the *Tristan* material. See "Old French Tristan Poems," and "*Amadas et Ydoine*."

We have seen that *Amadas et Ydoine* travesties lovesickness, loyalty in love, and Ydoine's success in obtaining the annulment she seeks though the careful creation of over-the-top stories complete with folkloric characters. Can such a romance include a message the audience can take seriously about the important issue of stable marriages at court?[36]

Marriage Politics in *Amadas et Ydoine*

Once her marriage has ended, Ydoine returns to the castle of her parents, where she receives many wealthy and famous suitors. She shows no inclination toward any of them. When her father asks why, she explains that she was once before married against her will and that she wants to have the freedom to pick her next husband (7476–77; 129). Her father agrees to grant her this wish. However, Ydoine recasts her wish later when she requests a meeting of her father's barons to give her counsel:

> Ains voel selonc consel ouvrer:
> Faites priveement mander
> Des plus sages de vostre honor,
> Soient baron u vavassour;
> Ce qu'il m'en loeront ferai.
> Selonc leur loement prendrai
> Signeur et a vostre plaisir,
> Que nul n'en aim ne ne desir
> Plus d'autre, s'il n'est plus vaillans.
>
> (7507–16)

> [But I wish to act only according to counsel: summon the wisest men of your fief, whether barons or vavasors, and I will do what they advise. I will take a husband according to their advice and according to your pleasure: there is no man I desire more than another, unless he is more valiant. (129)]

36. Francis Dubost calls the work a "nuptial romance" and reads marriage as a means for individuation in "D'*Amadas et Ydoine*," 371–73.

Ydoine plans to present Amadas to the assembled barons in such a way that they can only pick him.[37] The narrator considers her request to consult her father's barons as a deception: "Hé! Dix, tant par est decevans, / Quant par si bel engin se coevre" (7516–17) ("Ah, God! How deceptive she was to take cover behind such a fine trick!"; 129). In contrast, Ydoine's father praises her actions, in terms often used for knights:

> "Bele fille, bon fuissiés nee:
> Dit avés com bone eüree
> Et com *preus* et *vaillans* et *sage*."
>
> (7521–23, emphasis mine)

> ["Beautiful daughter, you were wellborn: you have spoken like a woman of good fortune, and *noble, worthy* and *wise*." (129)]

By asking for counsel and stating that she will follow it carefully, Ydoine behaves as a wise man might also do when bound by the dictates of the feudal system. Accordingly, her father responds in terms used for loyal men. The narrator's much more negative reading of her actions creates a split reception within the romance itself at the same time that it highlights the low form, the insulting oversimplifications that the narrator uses to describe women at numerous points in the work.

What are Ydoine's motivations for requesting the barons' opinion? She explains to them:

> De mari prendre est or sur moi,
> Quant congié en ai et laisseur
> De prendre a volonté signeur;
> Si en seroie trop blasmee
> Si vilment m'estoie donee,
> Car on seut dire en reprovier
> Que on troeve mult poi mollier,
> Puis k'ele a license et pooir
> De faire a kieus tot son valoir,
> Qu'ele ne se tiegne au pis.

37. Sara Sturm-Maddox argues convincingly that Ydoine effectively runs the show in this romance and that she is therefore aptly named (608).

Et por ce, signeur, vos mercis,
Vous ai ci fait tous assembler;
De par le duc vous voel mostrer
Qu'il n'a fil ne fille ne hoir
Qui après sa mort doie avoir
L'ouneur ne la tere fors moi:
Dame par droit estre vous doi.
Pour çou voel, selonc vos avis
Et au los de tous mes amis,
Ouvrer si que blasme n'en aie,
Que nus de vous ne m'en retraie
Que hors de consel soie issue,
Car ja n'ere amie ne drue
A nul se par vo consel non

(7554–77)

[It is up to me to choose a husband, since I have permission to marry according to my own will. I would be greatly reproached if I were poorly married, for there is a proverb that it is a rare woman who has the power to follow her own will and does not pick the worst.

"Therefore, my lords, I have assembled you all here, and I thank you. I want to point out to you on the Duke's behalf that he has no son or daughter but me who ought to rule in his land after his death: I should rightfully be your lady. And so I wish to act according to your advice and the counsel of my friends, in such a way that I incur no blame and that none of you reproaches me for departing from your counsel: for I will not be anyone's sweetheart or lover except in accordance with your advice. (130)]

Even when her father grants her wish to choose her next husband, she well understands the necessity of having the support of her father's barons once she inherits his land. She therefore publicly renounces the role her father gave her, saying that women's choices are not respected.

Pauline L'Hermite-Leclercq describes the attendant issues of feudal marriages:

As the only authority with jurisdiction over marriage, the Church zealously enforced its conception of free consent. It set up

> courts and juridical procedures for hearing the complaints of wives who claimed they were coerced into marriage. If the allegations were proved, the marriage theoretically could be annulled. But what was the reality? Sources for the twelfth century are scarce, but it is possible to make inferences based on documents from later periods. Certain facts must be kept in mind, however. Nearly all young women were dependents in both the legal and the economic sense. Precious few had the means to choose freely how they would like to live. Dowries were bestowed upon them by parents or, if the parents were dead, by brothers. If a girl wished to marry a man other than the one chosen by her parents, her dowry might be withdrawn or her allowance withheld.... Suppose that a woman forced to marry against her will chose to avail herself of her right to protest to an ecclesiastical tribunal. She would have to overcome her modesty and risk the wrath of her own kin as well as her husband and his family. If she did so, what sort of reception might she expect from the Church? The great thirteenth-century jurist Hostiensis is quite clear on this point: any woman who opposed her family's will was a priori suspected of the "vice of ingratitude." ... Under the circumstances, it seems naïve to point to the small number of complaints actually filed with the courts as evidence that most marriages were not coerced. It is remarkable that there were any complaints at all.[38]

In *Amadas et Ydoine*, Ydoine exhibits a clear understanding of the complications of court politics described here. She approaches the issues with subtlety and finesse, allowing Amadas's talents to be admired and appreciated so that he will be the obvious choice of the barons. The barons do choose Amadas, suggesting that Ydoine's reasoning, although denigrated by the narrator, is quite sharp. Moreover, it is the only romance studied in which an annulment is obtained. Its grotesque features (the three "witch" figures, the mocking of the count, the predictions of misery and danger, Ydoine's fainting before the Church door and subsequent play acting of severe illness) suggest that getting such an annulment would have been extremely difficult.

38. Paulette L'Hermite-Leclercq, "The Feudal Order," in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 2, *Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Klapisch-Zuber, 219–20.

Because of the similarities of the Tristan narrative to *Cligés* and *Amadas et Ydoine*, critics have compared Ydoine with Iseut and Fenice. More often than not, they discuss the female protagonists' penchant for or avoidance of immoral actions. Gaston Paris maintained that *Cligés* was written at the behest of the ladies of the court who were shocked by Iseut's promiscuity (sharing her body with both Tristan and Mark), but concluded that Fenice's actions are hardly more moral than Iseut's.[39] Paris argues that had Chrétien been concerned with the morality of the situation, Fenice would have asked for an annulment since she had neither consented to the marriage nor consummated it.[40] In a response to Paris' position, Myrrha Lot-Borodine compares Fenice to Ydoine, who does obtain an annulment, but only after bringing in the three women to frighten the count, an episode Lot-Borodine considers "incoherent et bizarre au plus haut degré."[41] However, the divorce that Ydoine obtains is no more moral than Fenice's means of escaping her marriage.[42] For Lot-Borodine, Chrétien's achievement is to show passionate love in marriage: Fenice distinguishes herself from Iseut because Fenice is willing to fight for her happiness and not simply accept what happens around her.[43] More recently, Sally L. Burch has argued for the court's power over marriage despite the Church's position; and that Ydoine's actions follow a principle of Canon law that forbade marriage to known adulterers, thereby exculpating Ydoine.[44] In contrast, Francis Gringas finds only deception on the part of Ydoine whom he sees as in league with the devil.[45] We recall from the background chapter, however, that the strong link between diabolism and magic is not forged for several more centuries.

The intriguing point here is that the issue of an individual's sentiment as a consideration for marriage is raised at all, given the thorough-going

39. Paris, "*Cligés*," 290–91. Thus for Paris, *Cligés* is a Neo-Tristan ("*Cligés*," 293).

40. "*Cligés*," 307 n. 4.

41. "Incoherent and bizarre to the highest degree." Myrrha Lot-Borodine, *La Femme et l'amour au XIIe siècle, d'aprè s les poèmes de Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris: Picard et Fils, 1909; rpt., Geneva: Slatkine, 1967), 111. Lot-Borodine describes the count's behavior in the episode as "grotesque," but rather than reading it as a travesty as I do, states that the scene misses its potential to be either dramatic or touching (111 n. 2).

42. Lot-Borodine, *La Femme et l'amour,* 134.

43. Lot-Borodine, *La Femme et l'amour,* 149.

44. The first argument is found in Sally L. Burch, "The Lady, the Lords, and the Priests: The Making and Unmaking of Marriage in *Amadas et Ydoine*," *Reading Medieval Studies* 25 (1999): 17–31. For the second, see Sally L. Burch, "*Amadas et Ydoine.*"

45. Francis Gringas, "Les Noces illusoires dans le récit médiéval (XIIe–XIIIe siècles)," in *Magie et illusion au moyen age,* 185–86. Gringras reads the men in these works as the victims of women's every whim.

communitarian values of feudalism. Yet the problem is confronted, and when it is, it is gendered female: although the male lovers in these romances seem in favor of it, it is the women who take action and seek out what they want. Given that women stood to suffer greatly, both emotionally and physically in cases of abuse, from marriages contracted without taking feelings into account, it is not surprising that romances depict this as a women's concern, and one to which they will go to great lengths to address. Yet because *Amadas et Ydoine* so thoroughly ridicules its subject, it also implies that the subject itself, Ydoine's wish to be married to a man she loves, is merely feminine poppycock, a subject for laughter. Be that as it may, it is an idea that gets voiced at court, if not endorsed. The fact that the question is put forward in all the romances examined in this study vouches for the society's need, and perhaps attempts, to consider responses to it. In the end, *Amadas et Ydoine* gives with one hand and takes away with the other, as does the narrator of this work, because it depicts the engagement of a couple who love each other as acceptable to the community not because of their love, but because of what they as a couple offer the community.

Conclusion

Reading *Amadas et Ydoine* as a travesty gives us some purchase on a work that might otherwise seem hardly worth analysis. The text is revealing both in the elements it targets and those it avoids. It focuses on the conventions of courtly love, mocking both the physical manifestations of such love and the loyalty that lovers show each other. The exaggeration of standard plot elements in *Amadas et Ydoine* such as madness in love and healing through the body of the beloved portrays love not as sublime, but rather as ridiculous. The narrator's repeated reminders that the lovers' actions are loyal in the face of extreme circumstances (Ydoine's willingness to kiss and caress Amadas at the height of his insanity or his facile acceptance of her lie concerning her lovers and the children she bore and then murdered) adds to the grotesque and therefore the travesty in the work. The romance's replacement of empirical practitioners with the *bonae mulieres* of folklore, belief in whom brought mockery and denigration from one's peers, stamps the romance undeniably with the label "travesty," urging the audience to take delight at the spectacle of a count terrified by images from old wives' tales. By skewering folklore and not empirical practice, *Amadas et Ydoine* accords a measure of respect to empirics. However, it further elaborates the image of a beloved with almost

miraculous powers to heal the lover, even though the exaggerated image of the beloved would also elicit laughter. Whether a reader or listener recalls the image of a beloved with almost miraculous powers or the ridicule of that image will depend largely upon her or his position. In addition, the narrator's tirades (though partially retracted) link all women to witchcraft and deception. Finally, the work registers the complicated politics of feudal alliances in marriage, the virtual impossibility of women to have an overt voice in those politics but the possibility that a woman can have her way—if she is willing to be considered the paragon of deception and lacking in any reason. The price women pay in this amusing approach to feudal marriage politics should not go without notice. The misogynist tirades of the narrator, even though negated, receive an audience and thus a certain level of recognition.

CONCLUSION

MY ANALYSIS OF THE ways in which love, magic, and medicine overlap and mutually influence each other in a set of thematically related Old French romances began by focusing on the knowledge and skills of empirical practitioners (those without formal training). I argued first that the depictions of empirics in *Cligés,* the different versions of the *Roman de Tristan*, and the *Roman de Silence* derive largely, though not solely, from empirical practices common throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, while *Amadas et Ydoine*, as a travesty, eschews a depiction of empirical practice for that of a more powerful beloved aided by the *bonae mulieres* ("good ladies") of folk tradition. The romances depict empirics in a manner consistent with the picture sketched by historians of medicine and magic. Thus, they are not charlatans, but are trusted, often well-respected community members recognized for their success in healing. Although school and university training in medicine existed and developed further during the approximately one-hundred-year period of this study, there was not yet a hierarchy of practitioners placing those with formal training above those without it. Moreover, healers of the time, trained either formally or informally, applied the same healing techniques, and both groups included approaches modern readers would consider magic (and therefore false). Many audience members of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, would have been much more accepting, even tolerant, of them since they were commonplace in their society and had not yet acquired connotations of diabolism.

The empirical practitioners examined in this study have been obscured for over a century. Critics have so thoroughly failed to recognize their debt to magical and medical practices of the time that I have perhaps overstressed the point. Some critics have built up an empiric's capacities as a type of omnipotent, evil enchantress and/or seductress in a manner wholly inconsistent with the realities of that practice. Others have insisted on a pure debt to antique literary models, the marvelous, or mythology of other cultures (such as Celtic)—for which, as I have shown, there is virtually no textual evidence.

These readings have led to exaggerated comparisons between, for example, empirical healers and sexualized fairies or between love magic and infanticide or resuscitation of the dead, which have no connection to the romances under consideration but are beguiling by their very nature. Our attraction to them may account for their staying power.

I began my study as a means to better understand women who had knowledge that was esoteric for their time and their ability to use that knowledge to their advantage, thinking that I would primarily consider the Middle Ages. But the depiction of these women in the criticism required that I also consider modern attitudes and approaches to these phenomena of the Middle Ages; one of the biggest obstacles in my work has been literary critics' repeated inaccuracies in the use of labels such as "witch," "sorceress," and "magic" and the lack of context for those terms. Such ahistoricism implies that there was no disagreement about the use of those terms in the Middle Ages and that they did not evolve during the medieval and early modern periods. While any phenomenon is subject to misrepresentation over time, magic and witchcraft were especially vulnerable since the specialized knowledge was often kept secret, either intentionally because of the potential power it bestowed, or unintentionally because it took great effort to learn.

By not supplying any context for those terms, critics have also unwittingly perpetuated notions about medieval empirical practice that apply only to the early modern witch hunts; a prime example is the strong association of witchcraft and sexual immorality.[1] In addition, notions from the nineteenth through the twenty-first centuries that privilege science over purportedly non-rational means of viewing the world have surfaced repeatedly in critics' misguided assertions that empirical practices of healing and magic would have been denigrated by the cultural elite in the high Middle Ages.

I view the application of primarily historical, but also anthropological, biological, and psychological insights to our understanding of twelfth- and thirteenth-century empirical practice as a first attempt to correct longstanding misreadings of these romances. There is still much to be added to the picture, and future work will certainly deepen our knowledge. We need, for example, a better understanding of the specifics of empirical practice, such as the use of love potions, and analyses of more texts such as *Partonopeus de Blois* or Marie de France's "Guigemar." The long-standing critical misinterpretation of these women suggests that women who possess

1. Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials*, 96. Kieckhefer notes that this begins in the mid-fourteenth century.

esoteric knowledge are particularly susceptible to cultural inscription, from hyperlibidinality to infanticide to superhuman powers. They are a projection of our fantasies and fears, sometimes both at the same time.[2]

In my efforts to establish actual empirical practice as a model for empirics in romance, I did not intend to subvert crucial literary aspects of the works or to suggest that literature is an unmediated reflection of the world. All the romances depict empirics with the hyperbole that is a hallmark of the genre: just as the male romance protagonist is the best knight in the land, the female empiric outshines all those around her. We see this when Euphemie of the *Roman de Silence* is described as the best doctor in the land, as well as beautiful and well educated.

Many other examples of literary aspects of the romances illustrate my second claim that empirical practice as it is presented in these romances alters the construction of love in the high Middle Ages. I repeat my earlier caveat that I am not arguing that images of love and healing together had *never* appeared before their expression in these romances; for example, the two are mentioned together occasionally in troubadour lyric. I am stating, however, that representations of the beloved as an empirical healer in the Tristan narratives and the opening section of the *Roman de Silence* considerably elaborate and expand the notion of the healing powers of the beloved in general. In the *Roman de Tristan* of Thomas, the author sets up numerous parallels between Iseut the beloved and Iseut the healer, a link not found to this degree in any earlier romance character. Thomas also plays on the similarity of the intoxicating feelings of love and those induced by the love potion. Tristan's retelling of their love story extends the capacities of the beloved further in the *Folie Tristan de Berne*. He even goes so far as to attribute to Iseut a knowledge of the love potion, causing suspicion and discord between the lovers, and further enhancing the power of the beloved. In Béroul's *Tristan*, the author presents conflicting information about empirical practice (and other aspects of the narrative), leaving the reader or listener to decide how to interpret claims that would have certainly been made about empirical practice. For its portrayal of Euphemie, the *Roman de Silence* relies heavily on the character of Iseut as a beloved who heals, but supplies details from empirical practices of the time not found in earlier works to fill out the figure of the empiric. When Euphemie and Cador fall in love, the *Roman de Silence* appropriates both the healing capacity of

2. Russell points out the near-universal tendency across cultures to depict women as witches, 15.

the empiric to the image of the beloved and the Tristanian notion of the intoxicating effects of love.

The aspect of the beloved as healer appears even when the beloved, as in the case of Ydoine, lacks the skills and knowledge of an empiric. In *Amadas et Ydoine*, which mocks the ideas of the other romances using low forms, Ydoine heals her lover Amadas from terrible afflictions merely through the presence of her body and her words, including her name. This romance also makes fun of a count (Ydoine's first husband) for his decision to seek an annulment of his marriage to Ydoine by showing that the decision was influenced not by empirical practitioners, but by folk beliefs in traveling spirits and the Fates' determination of life events. Given that the belief in these flying spirits was labeled folly and associated with the gullible in the high Middle Ages, the romance heightens the ridicule heaped on this count. Once we recognize the respect accorded empirical practitioners, *Amadas et Ydoine* can only be read as travesty, mocking high ideas with low forms.

The romances in this study register the tensions around the question of individual desire in marriage in the context of feudal society, the crux of the problem in the Tristan narratives. Despite the requirement of Canon law that the parties to a marriage give their consent to the union, historians have shown that such consent was easily coerced if not entirely ignored. These romances propose alternative responses to the societal problem of coercion in marriage. Except for *Amadas et Ydoine*, which shows the humoristic subversion of empirical practice by folklore, these romances suggest that empirical practices common to the high Middle Ages could have been used by women denied a voice in marriage to influence the marriage politics at court. We see this in Thomas's *Tristan* when Iseut's mother practices love magic in an effort to ensure a smooth beginning to her daughter's marriage to man she does not know in a strange and faraway land. But the potion is consumed by mistake by Tristan and Iseut, and serves to catalyze their recognition of their love for each other. Such a catalyst is required since Iseut is engaged to marry another man and since Tristan is the enemy of her family because he slew her uncle. In *Cligés*, Thessala's empirical skills enable Fenice to escape an arranged marriage to a man she did not love and to preserve her virginity in order to eventually marry the man she loves. In the *Roman de Silence*, empirical practice itself is not needed to ensure Cador and Euphemie's marriage since that marriage is politically advantageous to King Ebain; therefore its depiction both avoids the potential conflicts of amatory magic and delights in extending the notion of the beloved as medicine to the sick lover through wordplay with medicine and *mecine* (girl). Nonetheless,

the *Roman de Silence* demonstrates through the other marriages in the work the centrality of control of marriage for dynastic interests. In *Amadas et Ydoine*, an otherwise mocking work, the idea that a marriage is a serious matter for the counsel of barons is presented without derision, although the work ridicules the extremes to which the lovers go to be together. By no means do the romances include a wholesale endorsement of our modern, western notion that love between two people is a sufficient condition for marriage.[3] Such a position would be at odds with the fact that in a feudal society, who married whom had implications for the entire community. Because marriage for love only was counter to the prevailing social structure, its repeated appearance in several related forms shows the importance and persistence of the question for the time.

One means of addressing the question of love in marriage from within feudal values was to focus on loyalty. As we saw in *Cligés*, loyalty among men is both expected and highly prized. It is systematized through feudalism, which allows a serf, Jean, to inform the king that he will act for the good of his lord, Cligés, against the king if necessary, and to do so without penalty. As a requirement for the continuation of aristocratic families, women must be and are worked into the system by means of marriage, but few formal structures exist that allow them to voice dissent about a potential marriage. As a result, they respond in other ways as depicted in these romances. Moreover, the romances repeatedly point out the loyalty of the beloved to her lover, even though there is no formal recognition of this loyalty in feudalism. As we saw in the *Roman de Silence*, loyalty can trump love as a reason for marriage in the case of King Ebain who has just survived a revolt of some of his barons. But over and over again, the female protagonists of these romances insist on love as a sine qua non of marriage and take complicated actions to ensure that it will be.

Finally, although I focused on it far less than other aspects of the study, the representation of empirical practice in romance has the capacity to influence the institution of medieval medicine itself. We saw in both Iseut and Euphemie that the empiric's capacity to heal is easily conflated with the beloved's ability to provide solace to the lover. The knowledge and skills of healing are thus obfuscated by the mere relief-inducing presence of the woman's body. This link paves the way to depict women as mysterious and very powerful but not possessing knowledge, at a time when having specific

3. This received idea is in fact questioned today by many people such as those asked to perform weddings, parents and friends of fiancés, and scholars of marriage. I merely mean to say that it is widespread and accepted in many quarters.

knowledge in medicine was just beginning to become more important. The image of the beloved who heals through her body becomes important in courtly literature around the time the mind-body split in western philosophical thought gains more currency.

Specifically in the case of Euphemie, her practical healing occurs at a time when theory and not practical ability was becoming ascendant in medical training. Women's exclusion from universities meant that theoretical learning would be unavailable to them and, consequently, their status as practical healers would be lower in the developing hierarchy. An image such as that of Euphemie in romance circulated at a time when questions of licensure were only beginning to be raised. Thus the link between women and practical healing forged so strongly in these romances may have contributed to the later exclusion of women from medical practice.

For modern readers of medieval romance, there are several implications of the representation of female empirical practitioners. Empirics depict women's attainment and application of specialized knowledge and women's ability to have a voice in their own lives in questions of love and marriage. But perhaps more importantly, women's application of empirical practices points up women's contested and continuously negotiated status. We see female empirics and those who avail themselves of empirical knowledge as active agents who plan and use knowledge to determine their own destiny. Simultaneously, however, they are inscribed by the culture around them with images that say the exact opposite: the empiric who is also the beloved is a highly ambiguous figure, subject to divergent interpretations. This should not surprise us since ambiguity has appeared throughout this study: from the fact that potion and poison are the same word in Old French; to the use of the same plant to make a substance that can heal or harm; to the reception of love magic as either helpful or harmful, to the image of woman as either helpmate or destroyer. All these phenomena are subject to mediation, interpretation, and even exploitation, as certainly the practitioner who relies on esoteric knowledge and the beloved in romance will continue to be. This is evident in the prevalence of images associated with love in popular culture today that show a clear debt to elements of empirical practice and the beloved as depicted in Old French twelfth- and thirteenth-century romances.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Abelard, Peter, and Heloise. *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*. Trans. Betty Radice. New York: Penguin, 1974.

Amadas and Ydoine. Trans. Ross G. Arthur. New York: Garland, 1993.

Amadas et Ydoine: Roman du XIIIe siècle. Ed. John R. Reinhard. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1974.

Arnaldi de Villanova. *Opera Medica Omnia*. Vol. 3, *De Amore Heroico, De Dosi Tyriacalium Medicinarum*. Ed. Michael R. McVaugh. Barcelona: University of Barcelona Press, 1985.

Benoît de Sainte-Maure. *Le Roman de Troie*, vol. 1. Ed. Léopold Constans. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1904.

Béroul. "Béroul's *Tristan*." Ed. and trans. Norris J. Lacy. In *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998.

———. *Le Roman de Tristan: Poème du XIIe siècle*, 4th ed. Ed. Ernest Muret and L. M. Defourques. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1982.

Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, vols. 1 and 2. Ed. H. Denifle. 1889. Rpt., Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1964.

Chrétien de Troyes. *Cligés*. Ed. Stewart Gregory and Claude Luttrell. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993.

———. "Cligés." In *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*. Trans. David Staines. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

———. "Erec and Enide." In *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*. Trans. David Staines. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

———. *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte de Graal*. Ed. William Roach. Geneva: Droz, 1959.

———. *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes, I: Erec et Enide*. Ed. Mario Roques. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1981.

———. *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes, II: Cligés*. Ed. Alexandre Micha. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1975.

———. "The Story of the Grail." In *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*. Trans. David Staines. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Eilhart von Oberge. *Eilhart von Oberge's Tristrant*. Trans. J. B. Thomas. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978.

Eneas: A Twelfth-Century French Romance. Trans. and intro. John A. Yunck. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974.

"Folie Tristan de Berne." Ed. and trans. Samuel N. Rosenberg. In *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998.

"La Folie Tristan de Berne." In *Les Deux Poèmes de la folie Tristan*, ed. Joseph Bédier. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1907.

"Folie Tristan d'Oxford." Ed. and trans. Samuel N. Rosenberg. In *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998.

"La Folie Tristan d'Oxford." In *Les Deux Poèmes de la folie Tristan*, ed. Joseph Bédier. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1907.

Gottfried von Strassburg. *Tristan*. Ed. Friedrich Ranke. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1980.

———. *Tristan, with the Surviving Fragments of the Tristan of Thomas*. Trans. and intro. A. T. Hatto. London: Penguin, 1960. Rpt. 1967.

Guibert of Nogent. *Autobiographie*. Ed. and trans. Edmond-René Labande. Paris: Belles Lettres, 1981.

———. *A Monk's Confession: The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent*. Trans. Paul J. Archambault. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996.

Heldris de Cornuälle. *Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance*. Ed. and trans. Sarah Roche-Mahdi. East Lansing, Mich.: Colleagues Press, 1992.

John of Salisbury. *Metalogicon*. Trans. and intro. Daniel D. McGarry. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962.

Ovid. *Ars Amatoria*. In *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*. 2nd ed. Trans. J. H. Mozley. Rev. G. P. Gould. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.

———. *Heroides, Amores*. 2nd ed. Trans. Grant Showerman. Rev. G. P. Gould. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977.

———. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. A. D. Melville. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

———. *Remedia Amoris*. In *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*. 2nd ed. Trans. J. H. Mozley. Rev. G. P. Gould. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Peter of Spain. *Obras médicas de Pedro Hispano*. Ed. and trans. Maria Helena Da Rocha Pereira. Coimbra: University of Coimbra, 1973.

Robert. *Saga af Tristram ok Isönd samt Möttul's Saga*. Udgivne af Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab. Copenhagen: Thieles Bogtrykkeri, 1878.

———. *The Saga of Tristram and Ísönd*. Trans. and intro. Paul Schach. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973.

Roman d'Eneas. Trans. and intro. Monica Schöler-Beinhauer. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972.

Thomas d'Angleterre. "The Carlisle Fragment of Thomas's *Tristan*." Ed. and trans. Ian Short. In *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 2, ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998.

———. *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*. 2 vols. Ed. Joseph Bédier. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1902.

———. "Thomas's *Tristan*." Ed. and trans. Stewart Gregory. In *Early French Tristan Poems*, vol. 2, ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Ackerman, Diane. *A Natural History of Love*. New York: Random House, 1994.

Adams, Alison. "*Amadas et Ydoine* and Thomas' *Tristan*." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 14 (1978): 247–54.

———. "The Old French Tristan Poems and the Tradition of Verse Romance." *Tristania* 12, 1–2 (1986–87): 60–68.

Adams, Tracy. *Violent Passions: Managing Love in the Old French Verse Romance*. New York: Palgrave, 2005.

Akbari, Suzanne Conklin. "Nature's Forge Recast in the *Roman de Silence*." In *Literary Aspects of Courtly Culture: Selected Papers From the Seventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA, 27 July–1 August 1992,* ed. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1992.

Allen, Peter. "The Ambiguity of Silence: Gender, Writing, and *Le Roman de Silence*." In *Sign, Sentence, Discourse: Language in Medieval Thought and Literature,* ed. Julian N. Wasserman and Lois Roney. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989.

———. *The Art of Love: Amatory Fiction from Ovid to the Romance of the Rose.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

Amer, Sahar. "Re-defining Marriage and Adultery in Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*." *Romance Languages Annual* 11 (2000): 1–5.

Amundsen, Daniel W. "Medieval Canon Law on Medical and Surgical Practice by the Clergy." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 52 (1978): 22–44.

Angier, Natalie. *Woman: An Intimate Geography.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Aubailly, Jean-Claude. Preface to *Amadas et Ydoine: Roman du XIIIe siècle.* Trans. Jean-Claude Aubailly. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1986.

Auerbach, Erich. *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and the Middle Ages*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. New York: Pantheon, 1965.

Barteau, Françoise. *Les Romans de Tristan et Iseut: Introduction à une lecture plurielle*. Paris: Larousse, 1972.

Baumgartner, Emmanuèle. *Tristan et Iseut: De la légende aux récits en vers.* Paris: Presses universitaires françaises, 1987.

Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley. Intro. Margaret Crosland. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952. Rpt. 1993.

Bédier, Joseph. Introduction to *Le roman de Tristan par Thomas: Poème du XIIe siècle*, vol. 2. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1905.

Benedek, Thomas. "The Roles of Medieval Women in the Healing Arts." In *The Roles and Images of Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* ed. Douglas Radcliff-Umstead. Pittsburgh: Center for Medieval Renaissance Studies, Institute for Human Studies, 1975.

Benskin, Michael, Tony Hunt, and Ian Short. "Un Nouveau Fragment du *Tristan* de Thomas." *Romania* 113 (1992–95): 289–319.

Benton, John F. "Clio and Venus: An Historical View of Medieval Love." In *The Meaning of Courtly Love,* ed. F. X. Newman. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1967.

———. *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent (1064?–c. 1125)*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, 1970.

———. "Trotula, Women's Problems, and the Professionalization of Medicine in the Middle Ages." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 59 (1985): 30–53.

Blakeslee, Merritt R. *Love's Masks: Identity, Intertextuality, and Meaning in the Old French Tristan Poems*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989.

———. "Mal d'acre, Malpertuis, and the Date of Béroul's *Tristan*." *Romania* 106 (1985): 145–72.

Bloch, R. Howard. *Medieval French Literature and the Law*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.

———. *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

———. "Silence and Holes: The *Roman de Silence* and the Art of the Trouvère." *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986): 81–99.

———. "Tristan, the Myth of the State, the Language of the Self." *Yale French Studies* 51 (1974): 61–81.

Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Renate. "Chrétien de Troyes as a Reader of the Romans Antiques." *Philological Quarterly* 64, 3 (1985): 398–405.

Blumreich, Kathleen M. "Lesbian Desire in the Old French *Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 47–62.

Boase, Roger. *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love: A Critical Study of European Scholarship*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977.

Brahney, Kathleen J. "When *Silence* was Golden: Female Personae in the *Roman de Silence*." In *The Spirit of the Court: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society* (Toronto 1983), ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Robert A. Taylor. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985.

Brault, Gerard J. "Isolt and Guenevere: Two Twelfth-Century Views of Women." In *The Role of Women in the Middle Ages: Papers of the Sixth Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Birmingham, 6–7 May 1972,* ed. Rosemarie Thee Morewedge. Albany: State University New York Press, 1975.

Briggs, Robin. *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft*. New York: Penguin, 1996.

Bromily, Geoffrey N. *Thomas's* Tristan *and the* Folie Tristan d'Oxford. Critical Guides to French Texts 61. London: Grant and Cutler, 1986.

Brown, Peter. "Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change." In *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology,* vol. 2, *Witchcraft in the Ancient World and the Middle Ages,* ed. Brian P. Levack. New York: Garland, 1992.

Bruckner, Matilda Tomaryn. "Intertextuality." In *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, vol. 1, ed. Norris J. Lacy, Douglas Kelly, and Keith Busby. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987.

———. "Repetition and Variation in Twelfth-Century French Romance." In *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature,* ed. Nathaniel B. Smith and Joseph T. Snow. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.

———. *Shaping Romance: Interpretation, Truth, and Closure in Twelfth-Century French Fictions.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

Brundage, James A. *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Bullough, Vern L. *The Development of Medicine as a Profession: The Contribution of the Medical University to Modern Medicine.* New York: Hafner, 1966.

———. "Medical Study at Mediaeval Oxford." *Speculum* 36, 4 (1961): 600–612.

———. "Status and Medieval Medicine." *Journal of Health and Human Behavior* 2 (1961): 204–10.

Burch, Sally L. "*Amadas et Ydoine*, *Cligés*, and the Impediment of Crime." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 36, 2 (2000): 185–95.

———. "The Lady, the Lords and the Priests: The Making and Unmaking of Marriage in *Amadas et Ydoine*." *Reading Medieval Studies* 25 (1999): 17–31.

Burkard, Richard. *The Archpriest of Hita and the Imitators of Ovid: A Study in the Ovidian Background of the* Libro de buen amor. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1995.

Burns, E. Jane. *Bodytalk: When Women Speak in Old French Literature*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

———. "Courtly Love: Who Needs It?" *Signs* 27, 1 (2001): 23–57.

———. "The Man Behind the Lady in Troubadour Lyric." *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 254–70.

Busby, Keith. *Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*. Vol. 1. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002.

———. "Hunbaut and the Art of Medieval French Romance." In *Conjunctures: Medieval Studies in Honor of Douglas Kelly*, ed. Keith Busby and Norris J. Lacy. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.

Buschinger, Danielle. "L'Adaptation des romans courtois en Allemagne: Un exemple: Le thème de Tristan." In *The Spirit of the Court: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society,* ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Robert A. Taylor. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985.

———. "Gottfried von Strassburg, adapteur de Thomas de Bretagne (vers 18443–454 et 15765–16402)." In *La Légende de Tristan au Moyen Age: Actes du colloque des 16 et 17 janvier 1982,* ed. Danielle Buschinger. Göppingen: Kümmerle, *1982*.

———. "La Mère, guérisseuse et sorcière dans la tradition de Tristan." In *Les romans de Tristan de Gottfried von Strassburg et de Thomas d'Angleterre: Actes du colloque du centre d'études médiévales de l'université de Picardie-Jules Verne, Amiens, les 9 et 10 janvier 1999,* ed. Danielle Buschinger and Claire Rozier. Amiens: Presses de l'UFR de Langues, 1999.

———. "La Technique de l'adaptation chez Gottfried von Strassburg d'après l'épisode de Rivalin et Blanchefleur." In *Mélanges de langue et de littérature françaises du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Charles Foulon*, vol. 1. Rennes: Institut de français, Université de Haute Bretagne, 1980.

Cahné, C. *Le Philtre et le venin dans Tristan et Iseut*. Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1975.

Calin, William. "*Amadas et Ydoine:* The Problematic World of an Idyllic Romance." In *Continuations: Essays on Medieval French Literature and Language in Honor of John L. Grigsby,* ed. Norris J. Lacy and Gloria Torrini-Roblin, 39–49. Birmingham, Ala.: Summa, 1989.

———. "Defense and Illustration of *Fin'Amor*: Some Polemical Comments on the Robertsonian Approach." In *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature,* ed. Nathaniel B. Smith and Joseph T. Snow. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.

Callahan, Christopher. "Canon Law, Primogeniture, and the Marriage of Ebain and Silence." *Romance Quarterly* 49, 1 (2002): 12–21.

Carasso-Bulow, Lucienne. *The* Merveilleux *in Chrétien de Troyes' Romances.* Geneva: Droz, 1976.

Cassell's Latin and English Dictionary. Comp. D. P. Simpson. New York: Collier Books, Macmillan, 1987.

Ciggaar, Krijnie. "Encore une fois Chrétien de Troyes et la 'matière Byzantine': La Révolution des femmes au palais de Constantinople." *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale: Xe–XIIe siècles* 38, 3 (July–September 1995): 267–74.

Clark, Robert L. A. "Queering Nature and Naturalizing Class in the *Roman de Silence.*" *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 50–63.

Cohen, Gustave. *Un Grand Romancier d'amour et d'aventure au XIIe siècle: Chrétien de Troyes et son oeuvre, Nouvelle édition revue et corrigée.* Paris: L. Rodstein, 1948.

Cohn, Norman. *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom*. Rev. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Collins, Minta. *Medieval Herbals: The Illustrative Traditions*. Toronto: British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2000.

Cooper, Kate Mason. "Elle and L: Sexualized Textuality in *Le Roman de Silence.*" *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 341–60.

Cormier, Raymond. "Bédier, Brother Robert, and the *Roman de Tristan*." In *Études de philologie romane et d'histoire littéraire offertes à Jules Horrent,* ed. Jean Marie D'Heur and Nicoletta Cherubini. Liège: n.p., 1980.

———. "The Present State of Studies on the *Roman d'Enéas.*" *Cultura Neolatina* 31 (1971): 7–39.

Curtis, Renée L. "The Abatement of the Magic in Béroul's *Tristan*." In *Tristan Studies*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969.

———. "The Humble and the Cruel Tristan: A New Look at the Two Poems of the *Folie Tristan*." *Tristania* 2 (1976): 3–11.

———. "The Ill-Prepared Love Philtre: The Theme of Inequality in the Love of Tristan and Iseut." In *Tristan Studies*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969.

———. "Love and Death in Thomas's *Tristan*." In *Tristan Studies.* Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969.

———. "Le Philtre mal preparé: Le thème de la réciprocité dans l'amour de Tristan et Iseut." In *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier*, vol. 1. Geneva: Droz, 1970.

———. "The Validity of Fenice's Criticism of Tristan and Iseut in Chrétien's *Cligés.*" *Bibliographical Bulletin of the International Arthurian Society* 41 (1989): 293–300.

Dahman, Lynne. "Sacred Romance: Silence and the Hagiographical Tradition." *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 113–22.

d'Alverny, Marie-Thérèse. "Translations and Translators." In *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century,* ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Dangler, Jean. *Mediating Fiction: Literature, Women Healers, and the Go-Between in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001.

Dannenbaum, Susan. "Doubling and Fine Amor in Thomas' *Tristan*." *Tristania* 5, 1 (1979): 3–14.

Defourques, L. M. Introduction to *Le Roman de Tristan,* by Béroul. Ed. Ernest Muret. Rev. L. M. Defourques. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927. Rpt. 1982.

Delage, M. J. "Quelques notes sur Chrétien de Troyes et le *Roman de Tristan*." In *Mélanges de langue et littérature françaises du Moyen Age offerts à Pierre Jonin,* 211–17. Sénéfiance 7. Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, 1979.

Delbouille, Maurice. "Le Premier *roman de Tristan*." *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 5 (1962): 273–86; 419–35.

Delcourt, Denyse. *L'Ethique du changement dans le roman français du XIIe siècle.* Geneva: Droz, 1990.

D'Irsay, Stephen. "The Teaching and Practice of Medicine in the Medieval University of Paris." *Bulletin of the Society of Medical History of Chicago* 4 (1928): 41–53.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge, 1966.

Dronke, Peter. *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric.* Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon, 1968.

Dubost, Francis. "D'*Amadas et Ydoine* à *Jehan et Blonde:* La Démythification du récit initiatique." *Romania* 112, 3–4 (1991): 361–405.

———. *Aspects fantastiques de la littérature narrative médiévale (XIIe–XIIIe siècles): L'autre, l'ailleurs, l'autrefois*. Geneva: Slatkine, 1991.

Duby, Georges. "The Courtly Model." In *Silences of the Middle Ages,* vol. 2 of *A History of Women in the West,* ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1992.

———. *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Twelfth-Century France.* Trans. Elborg Foster. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

Duggan, Joseph J. *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

Duke, James A. *CRC Handbook of Medicinal Herbs*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1985.

Eamon, William. *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Easter, Benjamin de la Warr. "A Study of the Magic Elements in the Romans d'Aventure and the Romans Bretons." PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1905. [Baltimore: J. H. Furst, 1906.]

Eisenberg, Daniel. "Juan Ruiz's Heterosexual 'Good Love.'" In *Queer Iberia: Sexualities, Cultures, and Crossings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance*, ed. Josiah Blackmore and Gregory S. Hutcheson. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

Eisner, Sigmund. *The Tristan Legend: A Study in Sources*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969.

Esmein, A. *Le mariage en droit canonique*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. Ed. R. Génestal. Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1929.

Faral, Edmond. *Recherches sur les sources latines des contes et romans courtois du Moyen Age*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1913.

Ferrante, Joan. *The Conflict of Love and Honor: The Medieval Tristan Legend in France, Germany, and Italy*. Paris: Mouton, 1973.

———. "The Education of Women in the Middle Ages in Theory, Fact and Fantasy." In *Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past,* ed. Patricia H. Labalme. New York: New York University Press, 1980.

———. "Public Postures and Private Maneuvers: Roles Medieval Women Play." In *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary Erler and Maryanne Koweleski. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988.

———. *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature from the Twelfth Century to Dante.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.

Finke, Laurie A. "Sexuality in Medieval Literature." In *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality,* ed. Vern L. Bullough and James L. Brundage. New York: Garland, 1996.

———. "Towards a Cultural Poetics of the Romance." *Genre* 22 (1989): 109–27.

Fisher, Helen. *Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Mating, Marriage, and Why We Stray*. New York: Fawcett, 1992.

Flint, Valerie I. J. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Foerster, Wendelin. Introduction to *Cligés* by Chrétien de Troyes. 3rd ed. Ed. Wendelin Foerster. Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1910.

Forbes, Thomas R. "Medical Lore in the Bestiaries." *Medical History* 12 (1968): 245–53.

Fourquet, Jean. Préface to *Tristrant,* by Eilhart von Oberg. Trans. Danielle Buschinger. Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1976.

Fourrier, Anthime. *Le Courant réaliste dans le roman courtois en France au Moyen Age: Les Débuts (XIIe siècle)*. Paris: Nizet, 1960.

Frappier, Jean. "Le Concept de l'amour dans les romans arthuriens: Communication faite le 8 août 1969 au neuvième congrès." *Bulletin bibliographique de la société internationale arthurienne* 22 (1970): 119–36.

———. *Le Roman breton: Chrétien de Troyes*, Cligés. Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1952.

———. "Structure et sens du *Tristan:* Version commune, version courtoise." *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 6 (1963): 255–80, 441–54.

———. "Sur le mot 'raison' dans le *Tristan* de Thomas d'Angleterre." In *Linguistic and Literary Studies in Honor of Helmut Hatzfeld*, ed. Alessandro S. Crisafulli. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1964.

———. "Sur un procès fait à l'amour courtois." *Romania* 93 (1972): 145–93.

———. "Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XIIe siècle." *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 2 (1959): 135–56.

Freeman, Michelle. "*Cligés.*" In *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium*, ed. Douglas Kelly. Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1985.

———. *The Poetics of* Translatio Studii *and* Conjointure: *Chrétien de Troyes's* Cligés. Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1979.

———. "Transpositions structurelles et intertextualité: Le *Cligés* de Chrétien." *Littérature* 41 (1981): 50–61.

Gaffney, Phyllis. "Iseut la (Dumb) Blonde: The Portrayal of the Queen in the *Folie Tristan*." *Romania* 113 (1992–95): 401–20.

Gallagher, Edward J. "The Modernity of *Le Roman de Silence.*" *The University of Dayton Review* 21, 3 (1992): 31–39.

Gallais, Pierre. *Genèse du roman occidental: Essais sur Tristan et Iseut et son modèle persan*. Paris: Sirac, 1974.

Gaunt, Simon. "The Significance of Silence." *Paragraph: A Journal of Modern Critical Theory* 13, 2 (July 1990): 202–16.

Geertz, Hildred. "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6, 1 (1975): 71–89.

Ghil, Eliza Miruna. "Imagery and Vocabulary." In *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, ed. F. R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.

Gilmore, Gloria Thomas. "*Le Roman de Silence:* Allegory in Ruin or Womb of Irony?" *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 111–23.

Ginzburg, Carlo. *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*. Trans. Raymond Rosenthal. New York: Pantheon, 1991.

Gordon, Benjamin Lee. *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959.

Grant, Michael and John Hazel. *Who's Who in Classical Mythology*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Green, Monica H. "Documenting Medieval Women's Medical Practice." In *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death*, ed. Luis Garcia-Ballester, Roger French, Jon Arrizabalaga, and Andrew Cunningham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Rpt. in Monica H. Green, *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West: Texts and Contexts* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate/Variorum, 2000).

———. "The Possibilities of Literacy and the Limits of Reading: Women and the Gendering of Medical Literacy." In *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West.* Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Variorum, 2000.

———. "Women's Medical Practice and Health Care in Medieval Europe." *Signs* 14 (1989): 434–73.

Gregory, Stewart. Introduction to *Tristan, by Thomas of Britain*. Ed. and trans. Stewart Gregory. New York: Garland, 1991.

Greimas, Algirdas Julien. *Dictionnaire de l'ancien français: Le Moyen Age*. Paris: Larousse, 1994.

Gribbin, John. *Schrödinger's Kittens and the Search for Reality: Solving the Quantum Mysteries.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1995.

Grimal, Pierre. *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

Grimbert, Joan Tasker. "On Fenice's Vain Attempts to Revise a Romantic Archetype and Chrétien's Fabled Hostility to the Tristan Legend." In *Reassessing the Heroine in Medieval French Literature*, ed. Kathy M. Krause. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.

Gringas, Francis. "Les Noces illusoires dans le récit médiéval (XIIe–XIIIe siècles)." In *Magie et illusion au moyen age,* 175–89. Sénéfiance 42. Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA (1999).

Guyer, Foster E. "The Influence of Ovid on Crestien de Troyes." Parts 1 and 2. *The Romanic Review* 12 (April–June 1921): 97–134; 13 (July–September 1921): 216–47.

Haidu, Peter. *Aesthetic Distance in Chrétien de Troyes: Irony and Comedy in* Cligés *and* Perceval. Geneva: Droz, 1968.

———. "Text, Pretextuality, and Myth in the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford*." *Modern Language Notes* 88, 4 (1973): 712–17.

Halverson, John. "Tristan and Iseut: The Two Traditions." *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 93 (1983): 271–96.

Hammond, Dorothy. "Magic: A Problem in Semantics." *American Anthropologist* 72 (1970): 1349–56.

Hanning, R. W. "Courtly Contexts for Urban *Cultus:* Responses to Ovid in Chrétien's *Cligés* and Marie's *Guigemar.*" *Symposium* 25, 1 (1981): 34–56.

Harf-Lancner, Laurence. *Les Fées au Moyen Age: Morgane et Mélusine, La naissance des fées*. Geneva: Slatkine, 1984.

Harner, Micheal J. "The Role of Hallucinogenic Plants in European Witchcraft." In *Hallucinogens and Shamanism*, ed. Michael J. Harner. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927.

Hatto, A. T. Introduction to *Tristan, With the Surviving Fragments of the Tristan of Thomas*, by Gottfried von Strassburg. London: Penguin, 1967.

Hauvette, Henri. *La Morte vivante: Étude de littérature comparée*. Paris: Boivin, 1933.

Hoepffner, Ernest. Notes to *La Folie Tristan de Berne*. 2nd ed. Ed. Ernest Hoepffner. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1949.

Hsu, Francis L. K. *Exorcising the Trouble Makers: Magic, Science, and Culture*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1983.

Hughes, Muriel Joy. *Women Healers in Medieval Life and Literature*. New York: King's Corner Press, 1943.

Hunt, Tony. "Abelardian Ethics and Béroul's *Tristan*." *Romania* 98, 3 (1977): 501–40.

———. "Recettes médicales en vers français." *Romania* 106 (1985): 57–83.

———. "The Significance of Thomas's *Tristan*." *Reading Medieval Studies* 7 (1981): 41–61.

Hurd-Mead, Kate Campbell. *A History of Women in Medicine from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century*. New York: AMS Press, 1938. Rpt., New York: AMS Press, 1977.

Jackson, W. T. H. *The Anatomy of Love: The Tristan of Gottfried von Strassburg.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1971.

Jacquart, Danielle. "The Introduction of Arabic Medicine into the West: The Question of Etiology." In *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. Sheila Campbell, Bert Hall, and David Klausner. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

———. *Le Milieu médical en France du XIe au XVe siècle: En annexe 2e supplément au "Dictionnaire" d'Ernest Wickersheimer*. Geneva: Droz, 1981.

———. "La Pratique dans les oeuvres médicales de la fin du Moyen Age." In *Colloque international d'histoire de la médecine médiévale*, vol. 1. Orléans: Société orléanaise d'histoire de la médecine, Centre Jeanne d'Arc, 1985.

Jacquart, Danielle, and Claude Thomasset. *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*. Trans. Matthew Adamson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.

Jaeger, C. Stephen. *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

Janowitz, Naomi. *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews and Christians*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Jeanroy, Alfred. "Corrections—*Amadas et Ydoine, roman du XIIIe siècle*." *Romania* 56 (1930): 596–97.

Jewers, Caroline A. "The Non-Existent Knight: Adventure in *Le Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 87–110.

Jolly, Karen. "Medieval Magic: Definitions, Beliefs, Practices." In *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.

Jones, Peter Murray. *Medieval Medicine in Illuminated Manuscripts.* Rev. ed. London: British Library and Centro Tibaldi, 1998.

Jones, William R. "Political Uses of Sorcery in Medieval Europe." *The Historian* 34 (1972): 670–87.

Jonin, Pierre. *Les Personnages féminins dans les romans français de Tristan au XIIe siècle: Étude des influences contemporaines.* Aix-en-Provence: Annales de la Faculté des Lettres, 1958.

Kahane, Henry, and Renée Kahane. "L'Enigme du nom Cligés." *Romania* 72 (1961): 113–21.

Kasprzyk, Krystyna. "Fonction et technique du souvenir dans la *Folie Tristan* (Berne 354)." In *Études de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age offertes à Felix Lecoy*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1973.

Kealey, Edward J. *Medieval Medicus: A Social History of Anglo-Norman Medicine*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

Kelly, Douglas. *The Art of Medieval French Romance*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

———. "La Vérité tristanienne: Quelques points de repère dans les romans." In *Tristan et Iseut, Mythe européen et mondial: Actes du colloque de 10, 11, et 12 janvier, 1986*, ed. Danielle Buschinger, 167–80. Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1987.

Kelly-Gadol, Joan. "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" In *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

Kennedy, E. J. Introduction to *Metamorphoses*, by Ovid. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Kibre, Pearl. "The Faculty of Medicine at Paris, Charlatanism, and Unlicensed Medical Practices in the Later Middle Ages." In *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 27 (1953): 1–20. Rpt., *Studies in Medieval Science: Alchemy, Astrology, Mathematics, and Medicine.* London: Hambledon, 1984.

Kibre, Pearl, and Nancy G. Siraisi. "The Institutional Setting: The Universities." In *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Kieckhefer, Richard. "Erotic Magic in Medieval Europe." In *Sex in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Joyce E. Salisbury. New York: Garland, 1991.

———. *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976.

———. *Magic in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

———. "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic." *American Historical Review* 99 (1994): 813–36.

Kinoshita, Sharon. "Heldris de Cornuälle's *Roman de Silence* and the Feudal Politics of Lineage." *PMLA* 110 (1995): 397–409.

———. "Male-Order Brides: Marriage, Patriarchy, and Monarchy in the *Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 64–75.

———. "The Poetics of *Translatio:* French-Byzantine Relations in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*." *Exemplaria* 8, 2 (1996): 315–54.

Klaits, Joseph. *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Knowles, Dom David, C. N. L. Brooke, and Vera C. M. London. *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940–1216*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

Kocher, Suzanne. "Undermining Oppositionality: *The Romance of Silence*'s Nature/Nurture Debate Complicated by the Rhymes of *Apieler* (to Name) and *Celer* (to Conceal)." *Romance Languages Annual* 7 (1995): 95–99.

Krause, Kathy. "Guérisseuses et Sorcières: La médecine féminine dans les romans des XIIe et XIIIe siècles." *Equinoxe* 8 (1992): 161–73.

Kristeller, Paul Oskar. "The School of Salerno: Its Development and Its Contribution to the History of Learning." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 17 (1945): 138–94.

Krueger, Roberta L. *Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender in Old French Verse Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Labarge, Margaret Wade. "Medieval Women as Healers and Nurses." In *Women in Medieval Life: A Small Sound of the Trumpet*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986.

Labbie, Erin F. "The Specular Image of the Gender-Neutral Name: Naming Silence in *Le Roman de Silence.*" *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 63–77.

Lacroix, Daniel and Philippe Walter. "La Saga scandinave." In *Tristan et Iseut: Les Poèmes français, la saga norroise*, ed., trans., and intro. Daniel Lacroix and Philippe Walter. Paris: Livre de Poche, 1989.

Lacy, Norris J. *The Craft of Chrétien de Troyes: An Essay on Narrative Art.* Liège: E. J. Brill, 1980.

———. Introduction to *The Romance of Tristan,* by Béroul. Ed. and trans. Norris J. Lacy. New York: Garland, 1989.

———. "Irony and Distance in Béroul's *Tristan.*" *The French Review* 45, 3 (1971): 21–29.

Larmat, Jean. "La Souffrance dans le *Tristan* de Thomas." In *Mélanges de langue et de littérature françaises du Moyen Age offerts à Pierre Jonin,* 369–85. Sénéfiance 7. Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, 1979.

Laurie, Helen C. R. *Two Studies in Chrétien de Troyes*. Geneva: Droz, 1972.

Lazar, Moshé. *Amour courtois et 'fin'amors' dans la littérature du XIIe siècle*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1964.

Le Gentil, Pierre. "La Légende de Tristan vue par Béroul et Thomas." *Romance Philology* 7 (1953–54): 111–29.

Le Goff, Jacques. *L'imaginaire médiéval: Essais.* Paris: Gallimard, 1985.

Leibowitz, Michael R. *The Chemistry of Love.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1983.

Lemay, Richard. "The Teaching of Astronomy in Medieval Universities, Principally in Paris, in the Fourteenth Century." *Manuscripta* 20 (1976): 197–217.

Lemay, Helen. "Women and the Literature of Obstetrics and Gynecology." In *Medieval Women and the Sources of Medieval History*, ed. Joel T. Rosenthal. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990.

Lemay, Helen Rodnite. *Women's Secrets: A Translation of Pseudo-Albertus Magnus's* De Secretis Mulierum *with Commentaries*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.

Leupin, Alexandre. *Barbarolexis: Medieval Writing and Sexuality*. Trans. Kate M. Cooper. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Levack, Brian P. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. 2nd ed. London: Longman, 1995.

Levine, Robert. "Repression in *Cligés.*" *Substance: A Review of Theory and Literary Criticism* 15 (1976): 209–21.

Lewis, C. S. *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936.

L'Hermite-Leclercq, Paulette. "The Feudal Order." In *A History of Women in the West,* vol. 2, *Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 202–49. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1992.

Lipinska, Mélanie. *Histoire de femmes médecins depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nous jours*. Paris: G. Jacques, Masson et Cie, 1930.

Lloyd, Heather. "The Triumph of Pragmatism: Reward and Punishment in *Le roman de Silence.*" In *Rewards and Punishments in the Arthurian Romances and Lyric Poetry of Mediaeval France: Essays Presented to Kenneth Varty on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Peter V. Davies and Angus J. Kennedy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1987.

Lonigan, Paul. "The *Cligés* and the Tristan Legend." *Studi Francesi,* n.s., 53, 2 (1974): 201–12.

Loomis, Gertrude Schoepperle. *Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources of the Romance*. Vols. 1 and 2. Frankfurt: Joseph Baer, 1913.

Loomis, Roger Sherman. *The Development of Arthurian Romance*. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.

Lot-Borodine, Myrrha. *La Femme et l'amour au XIIe siècle, d'après les poèmes de Chrétien de Troyes*. Paris: Picard et Fils, 1909. Rpt., Geneva: Slatkine, 1967.

———. "Tristan et Lancelot." In *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927.

Louis, René. "Notes et Commentaires." In *Tristan et Iseut: Renouvelé en français moderne d'après les textes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles par René Louis*. Paris: Livre de Poche, 1972.

Lyons, Albert S., and R. Joseph Petrucelli. *Medicine: An Illustrated History*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1978.

Lyons, Faith. *Les Eléments descriptifs dans le roman d'aventure au XIIIe siècle: En particulier* Amadas et Ydoine, Gliglois, Galeran, L'Escoufle, Guillaume de Dole, Jehan et Blonde, Le Castelain de Couci. Geneva: Droz, 1965.

———. "La Fausse Mort dans le *Cligés* de Chrétien de Troyes." In *Mélanges de linguistique et de littérature romanes offerts à Mario Roques.* Paris: Marcel Didier, 1950–1953.

———. "'Vin herbé' et 'gingembras' dans le roman Breton." In *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du moyen âge et de la renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier*, vol. 2. Geneva: Droz, 1970.

MacKinney, Loren C. *Early Medieval Medicine with Special Reference to France and Chartres*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1937.

Maddox, Donald L. *The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

———. "Critical Trends and Recent Work on the *Cligés* of Chrétien de Troyes." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 74 (1973): 731–33.

———. *Fictions of Identity in Medieval France.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

———. "Intratextual Rewriting in the *Roman de Tristan* of Béroul." In *"De sens rassis": Essays in Honor of Rupert T. Pickens*, ed. Keith Busby, Bernard Guidot, and Logan E. Whalen. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005.

———. "Pseudo-Historical Discourse in Fiction: *Cligés.*" In *Essays in Early French Literature Presented to Barbara M. Craig*, ed. Norris J. Lacy and Jerry C. Nash. York, S.C.: French Literature Publications, 1982.

Mann, Nicolas. *Petrarch*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Marchello-Nizia, Christiane. "Amour, mariage, parenté: Amour courtois, société masculine et figures de pouvoir." *Annales* 36 (1981): 969–82.

Markale, Jean. *La Femme celte: Mythe et sociologie*. Paris: Payot, 1973.

Marx, Jean. "La Naissance de l'amour de Tristan et Iseut dans les formes les plus anciennes de la légende." *Romance Philology* 9, 2 (1955–56): 163–73.

McCracken, Peggy. "The Body Politic and the Queen's Adulterous Body in French Romance." In *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature*, ed. Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

———. "'The Boy Who Was a Girl': Reading Gender in the *Roman de Silence.*" *Romanic Review* 85, 4 (1995): 517–36.

———. *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1998.

———. "Women and Medicine in Medieval French Narrative." *Exemplaria* 5, 2 (1993): 239–62.

McNeill, John T., and Helena M. Gamer, eds. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance: A Translation of the Principal libri poenitentiales and Selections from Related Documents*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938. Rpt. 1990.

McVaugh, Michael R. Introduction to *Opera Medica Omnia*. Vol. 3, *De Amore Heroico, De Dosi Tyriacalium Medicinarum*, by Arnaldi de Villanova. Barcelona: University of Barcelona Press, 1985.

Micha, Alexandre. "Cligés ou les folles journées." In *Marche romane: Mélanges de philologie et de littératures romanes offerts à Jeanne Wathelet-Willem*. Liège: Cahiers de l'A.R.U.Lg., 1978.

———. "*Enéas* et *Cligés*." In *Mélanges de philologie romane et de littérature médiévale offerts à Ernest Hoepffner,* 237–43. Geneva: Slatkine, 1974.

———. "Romans d'aventure et d'amour." In *Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*. Vol. 4, *Le Roman jusqu'à la fin du XIIIe siècle*, ed. Jean Frappier and Reinhold R. Grimm, 454–55. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1978.

———. "*Tristan* et *Cligés*." *Neophilologus* 36 (1952): 1–10.

Michelet, Jules. *Satanism and Witchcraft: A Study in Medieval Superstition*. Trans. A. R. Allinson. New York: The Citadel Press, 1939.

Monter, William E. "The Pedestal and the Stake: Courtly Love and Witchcraft." In *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, 119–36. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

Müller, Irmgard. "Liebestränke, Liebeszauber und Schlafmittel in der mittelalterlichen Literatur." In *Liebe, Ehe, Ehebruch in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, ed. Xenja von Ertzdorff and Marianne Wynn. Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1984.

Muret, Ernest. Introduction to *Le Roman de Tristan par Béroul*. Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1903.

Murfin, Ross and Supryia M. Ray. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. Boston: Bedford, 1997.

Nixon, Terry. "*Amadas et Ydoine* and *Erec et Enide*: Reuniting *Membra Disjecta* from Early Old French Manuscripts." *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 18 (1987): 227–51.

Noacco, Cristina. "*Par nigromance* et *par enchantement:* Niveaux et nuances de magique dans les romans de Chrétien de Troyes." *Magie et illusion au Moyen Age*, *Sénéfiance* 42 (Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, 1999): 385–406.

Noble, Peter S. *Love and Marriage in Chrétien de Troyes*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982.

Noble, Thomas F. X., Barry S. Strauss, et al. *Western Civilization: The Continuing Experiment*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994.

Nolan, E. Peter. "Mythopoetic Evolution: Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, *Cligés*, and *Yvain*." *Symposium* 25, 2 (1971): 139–61.

Nykrog, Per. *Chrétien de Troyes: Romancier discutable*. Geneva: Droz, 1996.

O'Boyle, Cornelius. *The Art of Medicine: Medical Teaching at the University of Paris, 1250–1400*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Opsomer-Halleux, Carmélia. "The Medieval Garden and Its Role in Medicine." In *Medieval Gardens*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Trustees for Harvard University, 1986.

Opitz, Claudia. "Life in the Middle Ages." In *Silences of the Middle Ages*. Vol. 2, *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1992.

Owen, D. D. R. "Profanity and Its Purpose in Chrétien's *Cligés* and *Lancelot*." In *Arthurian Romance: Seven Essays*, ed. D. D. R. Owen. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970.

Paris, Gaston. "Cligés." In *Mélanges de littérature française du Moyen Age*, ed. Mario Roques, 229–337. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1910.

———. "Études sur les romans de la Table Ronde: *Lancelot du Lac*." *Romania* 12 (1883): 449–534.

———. "Tristan et Iseut." *La Revue de Paris* 15 (1894): 138–79.

Park, Katharine. "Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe, 500–1500." In *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays*, ed. Andrew Wear. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Parker, Holt. N. "Women Doctors in Greece, Rome, and the Byzantine Empire." In *Women Healers and Physicians: Climbing a Long Hill*, ed. Lilian R. Furst. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997.

Payen, Jean-Charles. "Tristan et Iseut." In *Dictionnaire des littératures de langue française*, ed. J.-P. de Beaumarchais, Daniel Couty, and Alain Rey. Paris: Bordas, 1984.

Pelan, Margaret. *L'influence du* Brut *de Wace sur les romanciers français de son temps*. Paris: Droz, 1931.

Perret, Michèle. "Travesties et Transsexuelles: Yde, Silence, Grisandole, Blanchandine." *Romance Notes* 25, 3 (1985): 328–40.

Peters, Edward. *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980.

———. "The Medieval Church and State on Superstition, Magic and Witchcraft: From Augustine to the Sixteenth Century." In *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

Le Petit Robert dictionnaire. Ed. A. Rey and J. Rey-Debove. Paris: Le Robert, 1988.

Poirion, Daniel. *Le merveilleux dans la littérature française du Moyen Age*. Collection Que sais-je? Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982.

———. "Le *Tristan* de Béroul: Récit, légende, mythe." *L'Information littéraire* 26 (1974): 199–207.

Polak, Lucie. *Chrétien de Troyes:* Cligés, Critical Guides to French Texts. London: Grant and Cutler, 1982.

Psaki, Regina F. Introduction to *Le Roman de Silence*, by Heldris de Cornuälle. Trans. Regina F. Psaki. New York: Garland, 1991.

———. "The Modern Editor and Medieval 'Misogyny': Text Editing and *Le Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 78–86.

Randolph, Charles Brewster. "The Mandragora of the Ancients in Folk-lore and Medicine." *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 40 (1905): 487–537.

Rashdall, Hastings. *The University in the Middle Ages,* vol. 2. Ed. F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden. Oxford: Clarendon, 1936.

Reinhard, John R. Introduction to *Amadas et Ydoine: Roman du XIIIe siècle*. Ed. John R. Reinhard. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1974.

Reinhard, John Revell. *The Old French Romance of* Amadas et Ydoine: *An Historical Study*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1927.

Ricardo-Gil, Joan. "The Practice of Witchcraft and Magic in Fact and Fiction." Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1980.

Riddle, John M. "Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine: Recognition of Drugs in Classical Antiquity." In *Folklore and Folk Medicines*. Madison: American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1987. Rpt., *Quid pro Quo: Studies in the History of Drugs*. Brattleboro: Variorum, 1992.

———. "The Introduction and Use of Eastern Drugs in the Early Middle Ages." *Sudhoffs Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenshaften* 49 (1965): 185–98. Rpt., *Quid pro Quo: Studies in the History of Drugs.* Brattleboro: Variorum, 1992.

———. "Pseudo-Dioscorides' *Ex herbis femininis* and Early Medieval Medical Botany." In *Journal of the History of Biology* 14 (1981): 43–81. Rpt., *Quid pro Quo: Studies in the History of Drugs*. Brattleboro: Variorum, 1992.

———. "Theory and Practice in Medieval Medicine." *Viator* 5 (1974): 157–84.

Ringer, Loren. "Exchange, Identity, and Transvestism in *Le roman de Silence.*" *Dalhousie French Studies* 28 (1994): 3–13.

Robertson, D. W. "The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts." In *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F. X. Newman. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1967.

———. "The Doctrine of Charity in Mediaeval Literary Gardens: A Topical Approach Through Symbolism and Allegory." *Speculum* 26 (1951): 24–49.

Robertson, Duncan. "Toward an Aesthetic of the Conteur: The *Folie Tristan*." *Tristania* 2, 2 (1977): 3–11.

Roche-Mahdi, Sarah. Introduction to Heldris de Cornuälle. *Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance*. East Lansing, Mich.: Colleagues Press, 1992.

———. "A Reappraisal of the Role of Merlin in the *Roman de Silence.*" *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 6–21.

Rollo, David. *Glamorous Sorcery: Magic and Literacy in the High Middle Ages*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Roper, Lyndal. *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe.* London: Routledge, 1994.

Rougement, Denis de. *Love in the Western World*, rev. ed. Trans. Montgomery Belgion. New York: Pantheon, 1956.

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." In *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reitner. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975.

Russell, Jeffery Burton. *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972.

Sahel, Claude. *Esthétique de l'amour: Tristan et Iseut*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999.

Sanday, Peggy. "Female Status in the Public Domain." In *Women, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Sargent-Baur, Barbara N. "Rewriting *Cligés.*" In *"De sens rassis": Essays in Honor of Rupert T. Pickens*, ed. Keith Busby, Bernard Guidot, and Logan E. Whalen. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005.

Scarborough, John. "Adaptation of Folk Medicines in the Formal Materia Medica of Classical Antiquity." In *Folklore and Folk Medicines*. Madison: American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1987.

———. Introduction to *Folklore and Folk Medicines*. Madison: American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1987.

Schach, Paul. Introduction to *The Saga of Tristram and Ísönd*. Trans. Paul Schach. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973.

Schafer, Jacqueline. "Tristan's Folly: Feigned or Real?" *Tristania* 3.1 (1977): 3–16.

Shatzmiller, Joseph. *Médecine et justice en Provence médiévale: Documents de monosque, 1262–1348*. Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1989.

Sheehan, Michael M. "Choice of Marriage Partner in the Middle Ages: Development and Mode of Application of a Theory of Marriage." In *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, vol. 1, ed. J. A. S. Evans. [Vancouver]: Committee for Medieval Studies, University of British Columbia, 1978.

Shirt, David. "*Cligés:* Realism in Romance." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 13 (1977): 368–80.

———. "*Cligés:* A Twelfth-Century Matrimonial Casebook?" *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 18, 1 (1982): 75–89.

Schoepperle, Gertrude. "The Love Potion in Tristan and Iseut." *Romania* 39 (1910): 277–96.

Siraisi, Nancy G. *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Staines, David. Introduction to *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*, by Chrétien de Troyes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Stannard, Jerry. "Alimentary and Medical Uses of Plants." In *Medieval Gardens,* 75–76. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Trustees for Harvard University, 1986.

———. "Magiferous Plants and Magic in Medieval Medical Botany." *The Maryland Historian* 7 (Spring 1977): 33–46.

———. "Medieval Herbalism and Post-Medieval Folk Medicine." In *Folklore and Folk Medicines*, ed. John Scarborough. Madison: American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1987.

———. "Medieval Herbals and Their Development." *Clio Medica* 9, 1 (1974): 23–33.

———. "Natural History." In *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

———. "Squill in Ancient and Medieval Material Medica." *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 50 (1974): 684–713.

Stewart, Dana E. *The Arrow of Love: Optics, Gender, and Subjectivity in Medieval Love Poetry*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2003.

Stock, Lorraine Kochanske. "'Arms and the (Wo)man' in Medieval Romance: The Gendered Arming of Female Warriors in the *Roman d'Enéas* and Heldris's *Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 5, 4 (1995): 56–83.

———. "Civilization and Its Discontents: Cultural Primitivism and Merlin as a Wild Man in the *Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 22–36.

———. "The Importance of Being Gender 'Stable': Masculinity and Feminine Empowerment in *Le Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 7–34.

Stoudt, Debra L. "Medieval German Women and the Power of Healing." In *Women Healers and Physicians: Climbing a Long Hill*, ed. Lilian R. Furst. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997.

Strohm, Paul. *Hochon's Arrow: The Social Imagination of Fourteenth-Century Texts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Stuard, Susan. "The Dominion of Gender: Women's Fortunes in the High Middle Ages." In *Becoming Visible*. 2nd. ed, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

Sturges, Robert S. "The Crossdresser and the *Juventus*: Category Crisis in *Silence*." *Arthuriana* 12, 1 (2002): 37–49.

Sturm-Maddox, Sara. "'Signeur, vous qui l'oevre savés': Amadas, Ydoine, and the Wiles of Women. In *"De sens rassis": Essays in Honor of Rupert T. Pickens*, ed. Keith Busby, Bernard Guidot, and Logan E. Whalen, 605–16. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005.

Sullivan, Penny. "Love and Marriage in Early French Narrative Poetry." *Trivium* 19 (May 1984): 85–102.

Sweeney, Michelle. *Magic in Medieval Romance form Chrétien de Troyes to Geoffrey Chaucer*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000.

Talbot, Charles H. "Medicine." In *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Thomas, J. W. Introduction to *Eilhart von Oberge's Tristrant*. Trans. and intro. J. W. Thomas. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978.

Thomas, Keith. "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6 (1975): 91–109.

———. *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971.

Thorndike, Lynn. *A History of Magic and Experimental Science During the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era*, vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 1933.

———. *The Place of Magic in the Intellectual History of Europe*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1905.

———. *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944.

Thorpe, Lewis. Introduction to *Le Roman de Silence: A Thirteenth-Century Arthurian Verse-Romance by Heldris de Cornuälle*. Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1972.

Togeby, Knud. "L'Influence de la littérature française sur les littératures scandinaves au Moyen Age." In *Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, vol. 1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1972.

Topsfield, L. T. *Chrétien de Troyes: A Study of the Arthurian Romances*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Uitti, Karl D. "Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés:* Romance *Translatio* and History." In *Conjunctures: Medieval Studies in Honor of Douglas Kelly*, ed. Keith Busby and Norris J. Lacy. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.

———. *Story, Myth, and Celebration in Old French Narrative Poetry, 1050–1200*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

van Hamel, A. G. "*Cligés* et *Tristan*." *Romania* 33 (1904): 465–89.

Vinaver, Eugene. "La Forêt de Morois." *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 11 (1968): 1–13.

———. "Landmarks in Arthurian Romance." In *The Expansion and Transformation of Courtly Literature*, ed. Nathaniel B. Smith and Joseph T. Snow. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.

———. "The Love Potion in the Primitive Tristan Romance." In *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927.

Voigts, Linda Ehrsam. "What's the Word? Bilingualism in Late-Medieval England." *Speculum* 71 (1996): 813–26.

Voigts, Linda E. and Robert P. Hudson. "A drynke þat men callen dwale to make a man to slepe whyle men kerven him: A Surgical Anesthetic from Late Medieval England." In *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. Sheila Campbell, Bert Hall, and David Klausner. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Wagner, Robert-Léon. *"Sorcier" et "magicien": Contribution à l'histoire du vocabulaire de la magie*. Paris: Droz, 1939.

Waite, Gary K. *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. London: Palgrave, 2003.

Walter, Philippe. *Le Gant de verre*. Paris: Artus, 1990.

Waters, Elizabeth A. "The Third Path: Alternative Sex, Alternative Gender in *Le Roman de Silence*." *Arthuriana* 7, 2 (1997): 33–45.

Watson, Gilbert. *Theriac and Mithridatium: A Study in Therapeutics*. London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1966.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam, 1979.

Wilmotte, Maurice. "Review of *Amadas et Ydoine, roman du XIIIe siècle*, ed. John R. Reinhard, and *The Old French Romance of* Amadas et Ydoine: *An Historical Study*, by John R. Reinhard." *Moyen Age* 39 (1929): 260–65.

Wilson, Anne. *Plots and Powers: Magical Structures in Medieval Narrative*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.

Wilson, Stephen. *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-modern Europe*. London: Hambledon and London, 2000.

Wind, Bartina H. "Les Eléments courtois dans Béroul et dans Thomas." *Romance Philology* (August 1960): 1–13.

———. Introduction to *Les Fragments du roman de Tristan: Poème du XIIe siècle* by Thomas. Ed. Bartina H. Wind. Geneva: Droz, 1960.

Wisotzki, Eleanor Paige. "A Study and Preliminary Edition of *Amadas et Ydoine*." Ph.D. diss., Washington University, 1973.

Wolf-Bonvin, Romaine. "Amadas, Ydoine, et les faes de la dort-veille." *Magie et illusion au Moyen Age, Sénéfiance* 42, Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA (1999): 603–16.

———. *Textus: De la tradition latine à l'esthétique du roman médiéval*, Le Bel inconnu, Amadas et Ydoine. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998.

Yunck, John A. Introduction to *Eneas: A Twelfth-Century Romance*. Trans. and intro. John A. Yunck. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974.

Zambon, Francesco. "'Neant Tient, A Neant Parole': Il Sogno Erotico nel *Cligés* di Chrétien de Troyes." In *Geografia: Storia e Poetiche del Fantastico*, ed. Monica Farnetti. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1995.

INDEX

aconite, 154
adultery, 6–7, 33, 34, 90, 134–35, 152, 219, 259
Aeneid, 164, 182
alchemy, 22
Alexander of Neckham, 46
Amadas, 222–41, 249–50, 258, 260–61
Amadas et Ydoine, 2, 7, 14, 21, 28, 38, 210, 220–61, 262, 265, 266
Amores, 68
amulet, 29
Andreas Cappellanus, 32, 132
anesthetic, 61
annulment, 31, 227, 255, 258, 259, 265
apothecary, 186
apprenticeship, 48
Arnald of Villanova, 24, 101
Ars amatoria, 212–13
artisan, 69
astrology, 22, 51
astronomy, 65, 243
barber, 46, 51
Bartholomew of Iscansus, 20–21, 246, 248
baron, 134–35, 255–57, 266
bath, as medical treatment, 90, 102
Beauvoir, Simone de, 214
beloved, 13, 14, 32, 35, 173, 211, 218–19, 224, 231, 237–39, 262, 267
    conflated with healer or empiric, 118–34, 162, 178, 182, 204–8, 220, 221, 264–65
    and lover, 204–5
    powers of, 208, 260–61
    as remedy for lovesickness, 201–5, 227–40
Béroul, 2, 14, 85
bestiary, 61
betrayal, 73–82
Bible, 254
biology, feminist evolutionary, 17
blood, 234–35, 236
body, 229, 231, 240, 259, 265
    as healing agent, 118–25, 201–5, 232, 236–37, 260, 266–67
bonae mulieres. *See* good ladies
Burchard of Worms, 20–21, 148, 245–46, 248
Cador, 14, 31, 179, 181, 183, 189–206, 208–13, 219–21, 227, 265
Canon Episcopi, 245
Canon law, 55, 259
Celts, culture of, 143, 150
charm, 56, 61
Chrétien de Troyes, 2, 7, 34, 39, 50, 85, 152, 259
Circe, 37
Clarice de Rothomago, 47
cleric, 21
Cligés, 4, 7, 12, 13, 38, 39–84, 85, 105–6, 117, 151–52, 181, 182, 210, 211, 212, 217, 244, 259, 262, 265, 266
Cligés, 39, 62, 69, 72–73, 79–82, 178, 181
confession, 21, 148
court, of Mark, 141–42, 144, 147, 235
courtesy. *See* courtliness
courtliness, 87, 112–13, 130, 179, 193, 218–19
courtly love, 15, 32–36, 203–4, 210–11, 220, 223, 236–37, 239–40, 260. *See also* love
    choice in, 151–53
    and code for, 32, 34
    and witch image, 34
    and women's status, 34
cunning woman, 26
culture
    high and low, 26, 223, 239, 240, 247
    popular, 267
death, 122–30, 160, 226
    feigned, 42, 249–50
deception, 78–82, 250–52, 256, 259, 261
Decretum, 246
demon, 11, 23, 57
demonology, 11, 21, 111–12
desire, 208, 211
devil, 11, 23
diabolism, 19, 23, 151, 247, 259, 262
diagnosis, 49, 82
Diana, 245, 246

Dido, 242
discourse
of courtly love, 34–35, 86
historical, 5
of love magic, 14
of magic, 22
medical and pharmacological, 8, 12
of medieval church, 34–35
disease, 50, 82, 232. *See also* sickness
divination, 23, 51, 242
doctor, 45–46, 70, 72, 77, 89, 91, 96, 119, 137, 163–65, 183–84, 191–93, 205–6, 221, 227, 233, 264. *See also* empiric; empirical practitioner; healer
holding medical degree, 47
mistreatment by, 118
university-trained, 207, 220
dragon, 89, 138, 150, 157, 183, 193, 194, 199, 202
dream, 83, 224–25, 241, 244–45, 246, 248
drug, 47, 83, 213. *See also* hallucinogen
plant-derived, 24–25, 26–27, 27–28, 48, 57, 61, 107–8, 118, 178
preparation of, 49
soporific, 61, 75–76, 82
drunkenness. *See* intoxication
early modern period, 9, 10, 19, 263
education, medical, 48, 51, 63, 76, 85, 157, 184, 185, 188, 262
and informal apprenticeship, 99, 104–5
Eilhart von Oberge, 86
empiric, 1, 4, 5, 16, 26, 48, 85, 105–6, 220, 230, 240, 248, 262, 264–65, 267. *See also* empirical practice, empirical practitioner; healer
and beloved, 182, 231
dismissed by critics, 4–5, 15, 40, 52n, 54, 62–63, 83, 88–89, 93–94, 118, 178, 262–63
and licensing, 16, 26
male vs. female, 12
training of, 4
empirical practice, 1, 14, 22, 29, 58, 178, 229, 231–32, 240, 260, 262–64. *See also* empiric; empirical practitioner; healer
aspects of, 117
conflated with beloved, 156, 158–62, 170–73, 207–8, 220, 221
and courtly love, 86
and forced marriage, 31
interpretation of, 142–43, 264
and Iseut, 88–105, 118–34
and Iseut's mother, 97–108, 134
and love magic, 107–16
as a means to wield power, 84, 85, 134, 212, 265–67
and rationalism, 154,
and representation of love, 38
empirical practitioner, 5, 26, 39, 72, 157, 178
enchantment, 244
epic, 145
Erec et Enide, 2, 4–5
Eufeme, 213–14, 217–20
Euphemie, 14, 31, 179, 181, 183–84, 185, 189–213, 219–21, 229, 264, 265, 266
euphoria
in love, 108
and love potion, 114
Euripides, 67
Eve, 253–54
fainting, 226, 229
fairy, 144, 247, 263
fantastic, 5
fate, prediction of, 242
Fates, 247–48, 265
Faverel, Peter, 47
Félicie, Jacqueline (Jacoba) 16, 27, 187
Fenice, 13, 29, 31, 39, 52, 58, 73–82, 152, 192, 244, 259
fertility, 245
feudal allegiance, 75–76, 220
feudal system, 8, 79–82, 213, 256, 260, 266
and alliance, 219
power struggles within, 135, 215–17
flight, 65, 68, 243. *See also* night flight
Folie Tristan de Berne, 2, 14, 38, 136, 154–79, 228–29, 235
Folie Tristan d'Oxford, 155–56, 196–98
fool, 155–57, 228, 235, 241–42. *See also* madman; madness
Frederick Barbarossa, 41
Furies, 242
garden, 190–91
gender, 43, 179, 183, 260
ideology of, 184
and learned traditions, 27
and reception of romance, 84
Georgics, 151
Gerson, Jean, 23
Gervaise of Tilbury, 246
God, 253–54
God of Love (Amors), 162–63, 194, 200, 206, 211, 231
good ladies, 245–48, 260, 262

Gottfried of Strassburg, 86
Gratian, 246
grotesque, 225–26, 228–29, 233–38, 258, 260
Guillaume d'Auvergne, 246
Guinevere, 32
hallucinogen, 54, 82. *See also* drug
harp, 97–98
Hecate, 245
healer, conflated with beloved, 118–34, 178, 204–8, 264–65. *See also* empiric; empirical practice; empirical practitioner
healing, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 13, 45, 50, 51, 64, 178, 221, 223, 231
conflation with love, 125–31
of dragon's poison, by Euphemie, 189–94, 202, 205–7, 220, 221
by Euphemie, 200, 206, 221
by Iseut, 88–105, 117–34, 156–62
with plant-based drugs, 25
as seen in romance, 7
by Thessala, 71, 73
of Tristan's poisoned wound, 89–106, 112, 114, 117–30, 137–39, 148, 156–62, 173, 205–6
by Ydoine, 227–40, 260
Henry II of England, 116
herb
for medical use, 51, 53, 161, 164, 172n, 189, 190–91
for wound treatment, 91, 96–99
herbal, 27
heresy, 22
hermit, Ogrin as, 135, 145–49
Herodias, 245, 246
Hincmar of Reims, 55
Hippocrates, 28
Historium Regnum Britanniae, 33
Holda, 245
humanism, 9
illusion, 240
impotence, 55–57
incantation, 20, 53, 61, 68, 151, 240
infanticide, 66–67, 263, 264
inheritance, 179, 214
Inquisition, 19n
intertextuality, 7, 40, 41, 182
intoxication, 59, 195–98, 207, 219, 220, 264, 265
irony, 48, 249
Iseut, 6–7, 13, 14, 31, 32, 85, 88–133, 134–78, 183, 184, 206–6, 208, 210, 220, 226, 229, 231, 235, 259, 264, 265, 266
Jason, 65–66
Jean (of *Cligés*), 68–71
John of Salisbury, 23, 76, 245
kiss, 160, 203–4, 218, 222, 226, 229–31, 237, 260
knowledge, folk, 28
Lady Abundance, 246
Lancelot du Lac, 32–33
Latin, 27
leper, 144
Lewis, C. S., 32–33
liar, 224. *See also* lie
liberal arts, 185
lie, 222, 248, 249–54, 260. *See also* liar
literacy, and medical practice, 27
love, 2, 3, 13, 208, 231, 240, 250, 262, 267. *See also* lovesickness
effects of being in, 123–30
and euphoria, 60
and intoxication, 207
representation of, 14, 183, 220, 231
as a social construct, 1, 6, 38, 212, 264
love magic, 1, 3, 4, 6, 37, 52, 54–58, 106–17, 134, 145, 148, 221, 231, 265. *See also* love potion; magic
in penitentials, 20–21
reception of by individuals, 154–77
love potion, 8, 29, 54, 88–89, 90, 106–17, 121–22, 127–29, 132–33, 134, 139–44, 148–52, 166–78, 183, 194, 196–200, 206, 219, 220, 221, 231, 239–40, 263, 264, 265. *See also* intoxication; love magic; potion
critical responses to, 141
as exculpation, 145–47, 149–50
love service, 170–72, 176, 211
lover, 210–11
lovesickness, 36, 37, 108–12, 194–206, 211, 217, 220, 221, 222, 224–28. *See also* love
loyalty, 74–76, 77–82, 213–20, 224, 236–37, 248–55, 260, 266
madman, 234–36. *See also* fool; madness
madness, 155, 166, 169–71, 222, 233–39, 260. *See also* fool; madman
magic, 42, 174, 243, 244, 250–51, 254, 262. *See also* love magic; love potion; necromancy; potion
common, 17, 51–52, 82–83
demonic, 20
as a function of intellect, 4n
and heresy, 23
and impotence, 55–57
learned, 22–24
medieval, 15

of Medea, 64–68
and medieval church, 19–21
and placebo effect, 24–25, 57
psychological functioning of, 25
rational, 116–17, 142, 178
reception of in society, 78, 80, 83, 117
for rejuvenation, 66–68, 241, 242
terms used to discuss, 44, 57, 94
and Thessala, 58
versus science and religion, 18, 263
magician, 24, 83, 150, 174
mandragore, 61
Manuel Comnenos, 41
manuscripts, 61
medical, 27–28
Marie de France, 263
marriage, 1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 39
and choice of partner, 30–31, 43, 153, 209, 222, 232–33, 255–61, 265–67
for community or dynastic interests, 117, 129–33, 153, 255–61, 261, 266
and consent, 30, 41, 81–82, 83, 85, 208–9, 222, 232–33, 257–58, 259, 265–66
consummation of, 56, 248, 259
at court, 183, 208–221
and feudal alliance, 80–82
and gift exchange, 30
of Iseut and Mark, 90, 210
medieval notions of, 7, 15, 30–31
and passion, 153
and sexual desire, 36
marvelous, 13, 15, 28–30, 62, 69, 116, 138, 143–44, 150, 262
master, 70–73
Medea, 37, 51, 64–68, 83, 243
and Iseut, 94
medical school, 16, 45, 157, 184, 262. *See also* education, medical; university; University of Paris; University of Montpellier
at Montpellier, 76, 188, 227
at Salerno, 76, 77, 188, 227
medicine
and empirical practice in romance, 266–67
Euphemie metaphorized as, 200–205, 220, 221, 265
herbal, 5
and licensure, 47, 185–87, 207, 267
love potion as, 151
and magic, 5, 17, 25, 43, 51, 52, 55, 83, 85, 262
medieval, 15–17
name of the beloved as, 238–39
practical versus theoretical, 76, 188–89, 207, 220, 267
as practiced by Thessala, 65, 67
professionalization of, 85, 86, 188
Merlin, 179, 180, 214, 219
Metamorphoses, 63–64
Michelet, Jules, 10
Middle Ages, 262–63
compared to Renaissance, 8–9
high, 3, 19, 231, 264, 265
in current popular culture, 8
later, 19, 21
midwife, 26
misogyny, 224, 250–55, 261
monkshood, 154
Morgan la Fay, 4
Myrrha, 63–65
mythology, 143, 262
narrator, Tristan as, 155–73
necromancy, 24, 44, 57, 65, 83, 94, 241, 243. *See also* magic
night flight, 11, 241, 245. *See also* flight
oath, 144
ointment, 48, 82, 98
Ovid, 32, 33, 36–38, 40, 63–64, 66–68, 132, 163, 182, 194, 196, 206, 212–13, 226, 228, 231
Paris, Gaston, 32
Partonopeus de Blois, 263
penitential, 20–21, 57, 148, 245–47
Petrarch, Francisco, 9
Petrus Hispanus, 55
Phoebus, 36
physician, 51, 77, 95, 97, 98
Salernitan, 29, 39, 42, 48, 68, 73–77, 184, 192
physics, modern, 17
pilgrimage, 222, 227, 236, 248–49
plants, as drugs and poisons, 154–55. *See also* herbs
plaster, 91, 137
poison, 91–92, 96, 105, 143, 154, 163, 173, 183, 196, 200, 206, 220, 267
of dragon, 89, 157, 161, 195, 199, 208
remedy for, 97–101
potion, 52–63, 78, 82, 84, 267. *See also* love potion; poison
for rejuvenation, 66–67
Potter, Harry, 11
poultice, 91, 97–98, 102, 161
prophesy, 243, 247
pulse, 189–90

realism, 41–43, 52–63, 83–84
reason, 253–54, 258, 261
recipes, medical, 27–29, 52, 188
Reformation, 12
Renaissance, 10
repentance, 146–48
representation, 5, 264
resurrection, 241
resuscitation, 263
ring, 155, 174, 222
Roger II of Sicily, 15–16
Roman de Brut, 33, 40
Roman d'Enéas, 40, 162–65, 182, 184, 196, 206, 212, 231, 242–43
Roman de la rose, 246
Roman de Perceval, 3
Roman de Tristan, 2, 13, 14, 38, 39, 40, 231, 262
  by Thomas d'Angleterre, 85–135, 158–59, 161, 181, 211, 212, 219, 264
  by Béroul, 85–88, 134–66, 176–79, 181, 213, 264
Roman de Troie, 40, 64–68, 243
Roman de Silence, 2, 3, 7, 14, 16, 31, 38, 179–221, 262, 264, 265, 266
romance, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 264
  audience of, 31
  depiction of marriage in, 31
  and female characters, 35–36
  and female readers, 35, 84
  and influence on healing, 7
  structure of, 7, 140
romanticism, and representation of Middle Ages, 9–10
Robert of Norway, 86, 94–103
Saga of Tristram and Ísönd, 86, 94–104, 119–20
scholasticism, 9
science, 188
serf, 79–80
service. *See* love service
sex, 38, 161
sexuality, 144
shapeshifting, 29
Sicily, 47, 245
sickness, 183, 222. *See also* disease
Silence, 179, 208, 213–17, 220–21
Solomon, 73–74
sorcerer, 71
sorceress, 42, 44, 50, 242, 263
sorcery, 20
spell, 55, 56, 61, 243
spices, 53, 59
supernatural, 149, 150–51, 154
surgeon, 46, 51, 85, 186, 188
symbol, love potion as, 89, 106–7, 127–29
Theophrastus, 28
theriac, 100–103, 105
Thessala, 13, 39–40, 42–46, 48–51, 52–54, 57–78, 81–84, 85, 105–6, 151, 178, 184, 192, 244, 265
Thessaly, 44, 50, 66, 72
Thomas d'Angleterre, 2, 13, 38, 85
torture, 74, 75
tradition, oral, 27
transmission, oral, 28
travesty, 223–61, 262, 265
treatises, medical, 27, 188, 190
Tristan, 6–7, 13, 14, 32–33, 85, 88–133, 134–78, 181, 183, 192, 205–6, 210, 226, 227, 235, 239–40, 265
Tristan, 86
  of Gottfried of Strassburg, 102–5, 113–14
Tristan story, 180, 221, 223, 226, 259, 265
  oral form, 87
Tristrant, of Eilhart von Oberge, 114–15, 136–38
troubadour poetry, 9, 32–34, 132, 162, 264
University of Montpellier, 46, 101
University of Paris, 23, 45, 46, 47–48, 85, 101, 185–87, 188
urine, examination of, 49–50
venom. *See* poison
Venus, 164
Virgil, 151, 164, 182
wise woman, 26
witch, 22, 26, 44, 50–51, 94, 133, 143–44, 222, 240–45, 263
witchcraft, 11, 20, 21, 43, 261
  fifteenth-century notions of, 11, 23, 34
  linked to women, 12
  trials, 12, 22
witch hunt, 11–12, 263
wordplay, 108–12, 139, 219, 265
wound. *See also* healing; poison
  from battle, 164–64
  caused by God of Love, 162–63
  treatment of, 48, 89–100
Ydoine, 31, 222–41, 249–50, 253–61, 265
Yvain, 4

What is love? Popular culture bombards us with notions of the intoxicating capacities of love or of beguiling women who can bewitch or heal—to the point that it is easy to believe that such images are timeless and universal. Not so, argues Laine Doggett in *Love Cures*. Aspects of love that are expressed in popular music—such as "love is a drug," "sexual healing," and "love potion number nine"—trace deep roots to Old French romance of the high Middle Ages. A young woman heals a poisoned knight. A mother prepares a love potion for a daughter who will marry a stranger in a faraway land. How can readers interpret such events? In contrast to scholars who have dismissed these women as fantasy figures or labeled them "witches," Doggett looks at them in the light of medical and magical practices of the high Middle Ages. *Love Cures* argues that these practitioners, as represented in romance, have shaped modern notions of love. *Love Cures* seeks to engage scholars of love, marriage, and magic in disciplines as diverse as literature, history, anthropology, and philosophy.

Laine E. Doggett is Associate Professor of French at St. Mary's College, Maryland.

PENN STATE ROMANCE STUDIES SERIES
THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA
WWW.PSUPRESS.ORG

ISBN: 978-0-271-03531-4
90000
9 780271 035314