RABELAIS AND MEDIEVAL EPIC PARODY: GARGANTUA AND PANTAGRUEL

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ABSTRACT

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By

Susan Liston

Rabelais's Gargantua and Pantagruel are parodies of the structure of the chanson de geste: the childhood of the hero, his education, his adventures--a fact widely accepted by Rabelaisian scholars. Yet no one has analyzed fully the extent to which Rabelais burlesques the medieval epic in these two works. The purpose of this study is to deal with the war passages of Gargantua and Pantagruel as parodies of the chanson de geste, since war is the major topic of such sagas. As a first step in this dissertation, the gest romances and romances of adventure which Rabelais knew were consulted, in order to summarize the treatment of war as it is found in relevant medieval epic literature. Rabelaisian and medieval works are then compared in order to determine parallels in the use of themes, motifs, narrative techniques, characters, episodes, and topoi. Within this study, parody is defined as a travesty of literary works with the intent of producing laughter.

Chapter I contains a review of literary criticism pertaining to the topic of this dissertation and an analysis of the topoi of war in the chansons de geste.

Chapter II deals with Pantagruel as a mock epic. The techniques which Rabelais uses to parody the epic are noted and comparisons with medieval works are made.

Chapter III treats Gargantua as a burlesque epic. The methodology employed to analyze Pantagruel is utilized with reference to Gargantua. The same parodic devices implemented by Rabelais in Pantagruel are present in Gargantua.

Chapter IV is a comparison between Gargantua and Pantagruel: the similar treatment of numerous topoi in both texts is discussed. Certain epic commonplaces burlesqued in both works are contrasted with respect to the change which the topoi undergo as Rabelais progresses from Pantagruel to Gargantua.

The appendix provides core plot summaries of the gests romances and romances of adventure which Rabelais knew. It is hoped that Rabelaisian scholars may hereby familiarize themselves easily with the literature which serves as the basis for this study.

Instead of deserting medieval matter after Pantagruel, Rabelais proceeds to write a second mock epic. The portrayal of warfare in Gargantua more closely resembles the depiction of battle characteristic of the epic: in Pantagruel, the war is engineered predominantly by ruse, while war in Gargantua is recounted in detailed

battle scenes where victories are gained through physical prowess; the ruseful heroes of Pantagruel are replaced by caricatures of the traditional epic warrior. In Gargantua Rabelais refines the techniques of epic parody used in Pantagruel.

RABELAIS AND MEDIEVAL EPIC PARODY: GARGANTUA AND PANTAGRUEL

By

Susan Liston

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DEDICATION

To my family and
friends whose patience
during the past few
months surpassed my
own.

July, 1974

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The medieval chanson de geste usually followed a pattern, including the narration of the childhood of the hero, his education, and finally his adventures. Rabelais's Gargantua and Pantagruel are parodies of the structure of the chanson de geste--a fact generally accepted by Rabelaisian scholars. Yet no one has analyzed fully the extent and manner whereby Rabelais burlesques the medieval epic in these two works. The purpose of this study is to deal with the war passages of Gargantua and Pantagruel as parodies of the chansons de geste and to note the precise epic themes, topoi, narrative devices, characters, and episodes which Rabelais parodies. In order to determine the base upon which epic parody rests, the medieval gest romances and romances of adventure which Rabelais knew were consulted since among the various genres mentioned in his works, these provide the best examples of war passages which may be labeled epic in nature. They therefore serve as a point of departure for summarizing the treatment of war in the epics. Parallels between Rabelaisian and medieval works may be established to demonstrate that Rabelais mocks such literature.

Within this dissertation, parody may be defined as a travesty of literary works with the intent of producing laughter. Rabelais imitates the medieval epics and produces a humorous depiction of the knightly realm. The term burlesque refers to the act of making a literary work appear comic. Satire is not an appropriate term here, since it has a derogatory connotation, and whether or not Rabelais wished to denigrate medieval epic literature or to criticize war is not a topic within the scope of this dissertation.

In his parody of the chansons de geste, Rabelais employs several readily recognizable and recurrent techniques which are traditionally used to burlesque the epic: exaggeration or hyperbole; deflation of the nominal hero and corresponding aggrandizement of a secondary figure; reliance on specific epic topoi which are then parodied; epic formulae; oral narrative devices; caricature of the heroes. There are additional topoi of the epic and other commonplaces of the chansons de geste used by other authors, but this is the list established from reading the epics known by Rabelais and from comparing them with Rabelais. All of these are used by Rabelais, and it is my intent to document their presence in the war passages of Gargantua and Pantagruel.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although Rabelais burlesques the whole tripartite structure of the chanson de geste--the childhood of the hero, his education, his adventures--it is the third stage, the adventures or war passages, which is most developed and where the techniques of epic parody emerge most clearly.[1] War is the dominant topic in the epics: "the chanson de geste, from its very title is a song of deeds in arms, a war sage."[2] Since Rabelais parodies such sagas, it is clear that war is an integral theme in his first two books.

Rabelais's works will be dealt with here chronologically to emphasize his progression in the use of the medieval epic. A discussion of Pantagruel, published in 1532, will therefore precede that of Gargantua which appeared in 1534. The burlesque war in Pantagruel is reshaped into the Picrocholine conflict in Gargantua,[3]

[1] Rabelais also specifically parodies the classic epic at certain points. I wish to cite only those passages which may burlesque the chanson de geste, and thus represent medieval treatment.

[2] William C. Calin, The Old French Epic of Revolt (Genève: Droz, 1962), p. 148.

[3] R. H. Armitage, "Is Gargantua a Reworking of Pantagruel I?" PMLA, 59 (1944), 944-951.

which contains many of the epic topoi found in the earlier work: the passages concerning the Dipsodes' invasion of Utopia occupy approximately a quarter of the one hundred and seventy-two pages of Pantagruel, while the Picrocholine war accounts for almost half of the two hundred and five pages of Gargantua.[4] Rabelais's increased interest in this theme reaffirms his affection for and the popularity of the medieval subject matter in Pantagruel. Furthermore, by writing the story of the father after that of the son, he manifests a cyclical conception found in the chanson de geste.[5] I hope to establish the parodic nature of Rabelais's war passages by demonstrating parallels between medieval and Rabelaisian episodes in the use of theme, motif, narrative technique: I will consult the epics which he specifically mentions in his text to grasp the impact which they had on him.

Rabelais knew the mock epic would be an excellent form of communication with his contemporaries among whom the romans de chevalerie were still very much in vogue:

> Lorsque l'imprimerie s'introduisit en France, les premiers livres qui sortirent des presses parisiennes ou provinciales appartinrent en majorité à trois genres bien différents : Bibles et livres d'Heures;--textes de poètes ou de philosophes anciens;--et romans de chevalèrie ....la troisième représentait

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[4]Pagination is based on the Pierre Jourda edition: Oeuvres complètes: Rabelais (Paris: Garnier, 1962), I.

[5]Georges Lote, La Vie et l'oeuvre de François Rabelais (Paris: Droz, 1938), p. 112.

> ...la tradition nationale ; c'était l'héritage du moyen âge, le legs le plus riche peut-être, en tout cas le plus accessible à tous et le plus populaire, qu'il faisait au XVI^e siècle.[6]

On the basis of the number of editions printed, the most often read among these were Fierabras, Les quatre fils Aymon, and Pierre de Provence, with Les quatre fils Aymon in the lead having eighteen editions published by the end of the reign of Francois I^er.[7] The following group was second in popularity:

> [I]l y a deux concurrents, Mélusine et Artus de Bretaigne, chacun avec dix éditions depuis 1478 jusqu'à 1550. Un peu moins nombreuses sont les éditions de Baudoin de Flandres, Galien rhétoré, Valentin et Orson, Ponthus et la belle Sidoine, Ogier de Danois, Robert le Diable et Huon de Bordeaux, qui fut imprimé relativement tard, c'est-à-dire en 1513.[8]

Because of the introduction of the printing press in France, and the resultant increase in the reading public, a large audience was familiar with the exploits of medieval heroes. It is precisely this group who would appreciate the parody in Gargantua and Pantagruel. The medieval war episodes may have influenced Rabelais by providing themes, motifs, and narrative techniques, which, in a burlesque form, would amuse Rabelais's readers who were well acquainted with the epic conventions.

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[6]Emile Besch, "Les adaptations en prose des chansons de geste au XV^e et au XVI^e siècle," Revue du seizieme siècle, 3 (1915), 155.

[7]Arthur Tilley, "Les Romans de chevalerie en prose," Revue du seizieme siècle, 6 (1919), 60.

[8]Ibid., p. 61.

From the above lists, Fierabras, Les quatre fils Aymon, Mélusine, Galien rhétoré, Valentin et Orson, Robert le Diable, and Huon de Bordeaux--all mentioned in Rabelais--will be considered as possible sources for his epic parody, since they offer examples of war passages. Similar works, also referred to by Rabelais, will be discussed as well.

On the basis of the anti-war polemic found in Rabelais, some critics emphasize the Renaissance nature of the war episodes, as they go beyond the comedy in an effort to find the "sustantificque mouelle."[9] Anne

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[9]Another body of criticism treats the Picrocholine war as an allegory of contemporary events. Such works do not generally discount the comedy, but simply provide a possibly factual point of departure for the war passages. Abel Lefranc cites the basis for the war as a struggle over rights to the Loire that took place between Rabelais's father and Gaucher de Sainte-Marthe. Rabelais's father is represented by Grandgousier; Sainte-Marthe, by Picrochole. For a detailed analysis of this legal battle see Abel Lefranc, Rabelais (Paris: Albin Michel, 1953), pp. 83-99. Arthur Tilley suggests that Picrochole is Ferdinand the Catholic or his grandson Charles V. See François Rabelais (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1907), p.144. Marcel Tetel states that Grandgousier may represent François I. See Rabelais, Twayne's World Authors Series (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967), p.43. John Charpentier claims that Grandgousier is Louis XIII "le père du peuple." See Rabelais (Paris: Tallandier, 1944), p. 83. Jean Larmat views Picrochole as an allegorical representation of Noël Bêda, thus he interprets the conflict as a transposition of the persecutions and accusations of the Faculty of Theology against the Evangelists. See "Picrochole, est-il Noël Bêda?" Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, Etudes rabelaisiennes, 8 (Genève: Droz, 1969), pp. 11-25. In another vein of critical analysis, Abraham Keller discusses the contemporary scene and its influence on Rabelais's anti-war writings in "Anti-War Writing in France, 1500-60," PMLA, 67 (1952), 240-250. He is not concerned with an interpretation of passages which I consider mock epic, but rather concentrates on polemic.

Edwards Inglis views Rabelais's use of epic parody to criticize reality via comedy in a mock of aggression and of the heroic ideal:

> In the mock-heroic war parody Rabelais combines elements of epic tradition--setting forth to battle, banquet, voyage, search, battle monuments, ruse, ambush, capture, council of war, single combat, miraculous intervention and the like--in a burlesque of aggression and also of the military glamor and ideals which conceal the real nature of war.[10]

Another serious interpretation of the wars is found in Florence M. Weinberg's The Wine and the Will. She classes Pantagruel, as well as Grandgousier and Gargantua, as an "archetype of the Platonic guardian of the Republic from whose ranks the philosopher-king is to be chosen;" and as such, each is "merciful to his subjects but fierce to his enemies."[11] The Picrocholine war becomes a struggle over the meaning of the Eucharist since the hostilities begin in a conflict over bread and wine.[12] She continues her religious explication with reference to Frère Jean whose staff represents the "foundation of the faith and of the Church itself."[13] In his defense of the abbey "Jean incarnates the Rabelaisian

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[10]"Parody in Rabelais' Treatment of Aggression and a Heroic Ideal," Diss., Case Western Reserve Univ., 1971, p. 3.

[11](Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1972), p. 103.

[12]Ibid., p. 109.

[13]Ibid., pp. 111-112.

ideal of Christianity."[14] Throughout the war, he "continues to function as a soldier in the Evangelical army."[15] To a great extent, Jean is responsible for the defeat of Picrochole's forces. "With the ending of the Picrocholine war, Jean has defeated those who are outside the church and outside reason for a second time."[16]

Alfred Glauser acknowledges the predominance of comedy in the war sections. In Rabelais créateur, he devotes an entire chapter to the topic: "La guerre rabelaisienne ou la joie du style."[17] The title suggests the comic intent which Glauser assigns to Rabelais's creative process. He feels that Pantagruel is generally an amusing group of episodes lacking unity and organization in which Rabelais "se comporte en comédien."[18] In Gargantua, he sees a unified narrative where the war is waged and controlled by means of style:

> La guerre est mimée dans une langue qui se fait hachée, brusque ou traînante, légère ou lourde, selon le sujet qu'elle reproduit. Il s'agit ici d'une prise de possession du monde par tous les moyens d'une langue, singulièrement maîtrisée, capable de tout faire, et ceci deux ans après le Pantagruel.[19]

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[14] Ibid., p. 115.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] (Paris: Nizet, 1966), pp. 204-220.

[18] Ibid., p. 204.

[19] Ibid., p. 207.

Rabelais's primary wish is to portray a comic conflict rather than to create a polemical work: Rabelais "a peur de se laisser gagner par le problème de la guerre, d'oublier que le rire est le propre de l'homme."[20]

Marcel Tetel in Etude sur le comique de Rabelais, in the chapter entitled "La parodie," discusses the five books of Rabelais, and comments on their burlesque epic nature.[21] The ruseful Panurge is patterned after Margutte in Pulci's Morgant le gêant and Cingar in Folengo's Macaronées. With reference to Panurge's resurrection of Epistemon (Chapter 30), Tetel concludes that the miracle is a parody of the one in Les quatre fils Aymon rather than a biblical parallel because Panurge "the clown" performs the feat and the whole episode receives burlesque treatment as predicted by the reference to decapitation in the chapter heading, "la couppe testée."[22] Frère Jean corresponds to Turpin on the mock epic level; the disparity of the hierarchical positions of these warring churchmen results in parody. Jean's staff is responsible for the massacre of over thirteen thousand, and it resembles Roland's enchanted Durandel; both weapons perform great deeds with the aid of divine intervention. Like his epic

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[20] Ibid., p. 214.

[21] (Florence: Olschki, 1964), pp. 35-57.

[22] In the 1532 edition, the title read "la teste tranchée;" the spoonerism represents a later change by Rabelais. Pantagruel, éd. Verdun L. Saulnier (Paris: Droz, 1946), p. 158.

ancestors, the monk is invincible. At the end of Chapter 30, Rabelais cites a specific predecessor in the chanson de geste, Maugis of Les quatre fils Aymon, who embodies the courage and valor which Frère Jean exhibits in his protection of the abbey. Furthermore, the precise detailed battle scenes imitate those in the epics, where the narrator recounts blow-by-blow sword and lance thrusts.

Dorothy Coleman succinctly expresses her convictions concerning Rabelais's relationship to comedy and polemic in her recent work Rabelais: A Critical Study in Prose Fiction:

> We shall look at Rabelais primarily as a comic artist, not as a moralist nor as a Stoic Christian of the first half of the sixteenth century. If he had been aiming at a religious exposition of his views he would have joined the company of people like Lefèvre d'Etaples and published commentaries to texts, so achieving his aim in a less ambiguous way. But he chose to write in a fictional framework, and this choice in itself means that we cannot be content with a simple summary of his views. The swift and ironical humour which dominates the work suggests a sceptical and artistic detachment from life. His work is not a philosophical treatise but rather a perceptive prose fiction, which uses all the threads of thought of his time yet, while making imaginative use of this or that doctrine, never enunciates any.[23]

In the same study, Coleman discusses the serious portrayal of the giants in contrast with their grotesque,

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[23](Cambridge: University Press, 1971), p. 24.

boisterous, burlesque depiction.[24] At times, the giants make metaphysical, philosophical, moral, and sociological pronouncements which sit awkwardly in the gigantic framework. War is then viewed in a Christian context, and warfare in general is condemned; however, Rabelais's depiction of the hostilities between the giants and their enemies is mock epic. Coleman suggests that the mood and style of Grandgousier's speeches and letters are in direct opposition to his comic role, and the same may be said of Gargantua's and Pantagruel's addresses.[25] She characterizes this dissonance in Gargantua as she discusses Grandgousier's letter to Gargantua:

> This style...is modelled on Ciceronian Latin--the style beloved of humanists of the time. This is the formal style of Rabelais; his academic style, which we can contrast with the natural style--of the dialogues and monologues of his comic characters....This could simply be the difference between Grandgousier talking and writing. However, the differences in tone are striking and are underlaid by a change in the content and in the views that Grandgousier is putting forward. The letter is not only serious; it is also rather stilted within the grotesque framework; moreover, it seems to be a pretext for the author to express

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[24]Unless otherwise indicated, the following discussion may be found in Chapter 8, "The Giants," pp. 168-203; Coleman treats topics other than war, but I have summarized this section with respect to that subject.

[25]With reference to war in Gargantua and Pantagruel, the following are examples of the giants' profundity and seriousness: Pantagruel--Pantagruel's prayer before battle (Chapter 28); Gargantua--Grandgousier's letter to his son (Chapter 29); Grandgousier's humane treatment of the prisoner (Chapters 45 and 46); Gargantua's speech to his prisoners (Chapter 50).

> certain ideas of his own. To take this last point first: Rabelais, the real man, was throughout his life as opposed to war as was Erasmus. As an author of a gigantic story, he exploits the opportunity to expound the view that the only justifiable war is one of self-defence....Rabelais, through the mouth of Grandgousier, expresses opinions which are very close to Erasmus's.[26]

The letter comes as a surprise since the Picrocholine war from its inception is placed in a parodic setting. She concludes that the giants have a natural as well as an academic tone: the former is associated with parataxis; the latter, with hypotaxis.[27] As the syntax changes, there is an accompanying shift in Rabelais's attitude: from comedy to profundity. In an earlier chapter, she expresses in broader terms the relationship between sentence structure and content in Rabelais:

> It is well-known that the development of French as a language to express imaginative or philosophical concepts proceeds from the paratactic structure of the middle ages to a hypotactic structure in modern French. Rabelais could draw on the humanist model of a highly paratactic French (for imaginative writing) in order to derive from them

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[26] Coleman, pp. 172-173.

[27] "The paratactic structure is the simple sentence with the connecting link between successive sentences being provided, if at all, by such words as the conjunction and or but or so. The hypotactic structure is more complex: a number of subordinate clauses are linked to a main clause by comme, ainsi, non seulement mais aussi and a network of participles. The same development from paratactic to hypotactic in French can be seen in Latin from Plautus to Livy or in English between Anglo-Saxon and modern English." Ibid., pp. 232-233, n. 3 to Chapter 7.

different levels of style, vocabulary and syntax.[28]

In conclusion, the giants function at times as direct expressions of Rabelais's personal views on war; however, these serious aspects of the giants' character are never coordinated with their comic depiction to form a unified whole. On the one hand, Rabelais treats war in a grave manner in polemical, hypotactic passages where he uses the giants as mouthpieces; but the wars and battles are parodied within a predominantly gigantic framework characterized by parataxis.

The burlesque epic imitates the themes of its heroic model. It is necessary to summarize these themes in order to determine the base on which Rabelais's parody rests. The heroic tradition involves some or all of the following: a hero of historical or legendary significance, whose background, often beginning with his childhood, is included in the narrative; the performance of great deeds and heroic, sometimes fantastic, feats, in which the hero proves his prowess, valor, and courage; the presence of supernatural forces--divine intervention, voices from heaven, enchanted weapons and armor, miracles, necromancers; a setting related to the homeland or several countries, with an emphasis on the protection of the homeland when the author wishes to establish a national hero; elevated tone; detailed descriptions of gory battle scenes;

[28] Ibid., p. 141.

wars waged for social and/or political and/or religious reasons. The mock epic either burlesques these themes, or contains an expansion of trivial subjects into vaster proportions for the sake of comedy. Depictions of warfare are exaggerated, and the heroes become amusing reflections of their epic predecessors.

In the attempt to define the epic tradition which Rabelais burlesques, it seems appropriate to analyze the literature which Rabelais knew. Nemours Honoré Clement in The Influence of the Arthurian Romance on the Five Books of Rabelais has listed the works which Rabelais mentions specifically or alludes to in Gargantua and Pantagruel.[29] Clement establishes Rabelais's familiarity with them on the basis of references made in Rabelais's five books. Clement uses the terms "gest romance" and "romance of adventure" to classify the two types of medieval works which provide examples of war episodes and thus are possible sources for the Rabelaisian parody. Clement also includes "romances of antiquity," "Arthurian romances," and a group listed as "unclassified" (including such works as Le Roman de la Rose and Amadis de Grèce), but the three categories can be excluded from discussion since they are not the best representatives of medieval epic matter with its accompanying war passages. Clement determines that Rabelais read the following gest romances:

[29]University of California Publications in Modern Philology, 12 (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1926).

Fierabras, Galien rethoré, Godefroy de Bouillon, Guerin de Monglave, Huon de Bordeaux, Morgant le géant, Ogier le Danois, Les quatre fils Aymon, and Chronique de Turpin. The romances of adventure are Geoffroy à la grant dent, Mélusine, Valentin et Orson, Jehan de Paris, and Robert le Diable.[30]

The gest romances are epics which have been influenced by the addition of Celtic mythology and romance elements as the "epic made a stand against the new modes and a partial compliance with them."[31] They reflect all or some of the criteria established above for the heroic epic. Clement provides the following distinction which may help clarify the difference between epic and romance:

> In the epic the action concerns itself with the deeds of a hero or a group of heroes, which are almost exclusively warlike, and are projected on a conflict between clans, or tribes or nations constituting the background of the epic. The action of the epic revolves in general within the orbit of this conflict. In the romance, on the contrary, the personages are shown as going through a series of episodic adventures (often consisting of many incidents) usually unrelated one with another.[32]

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[30]Summaries of these works may be found in the appendix to this dissertation.

[31]W. P. Ker, Epic and Romance (1908; rpt. New York: Dover, 1957), p. 313.

[32]Clement, pp. 178-179.

The romance contains war episodes, but "the mainsprings of action are chivalry and love, with love subordinate and inciting chivalry."[33]

In Gargantua and Pantagruel, there is no battling to win the favor of a woman, nor is there any love involvement during the war episodes;[34] the romance, in this respect, has no influence on either work. Instead, a group of national heroes are involved in a struggle to protect the homeland, and the action is centered around the theme of war.

An analysis of these gest romances and romances of adventure reveals recurrent subjects leading to a summary of the topoi of war in the chanson de geste. The familiar Cross vs. Crescent struggle is often the central conflict, as in Chronique de Turpin or Fierabras, signaling the triumph of the Christian hero, since the epics dealing with the crusades are by their very nature propaganda for the Christian cause. Even if the theme of Christian superiority does not constitute the main story line, the narrator sometimes inserts one or more battles with

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[33] Ibid., p. 177. For further clarification of the epic/romance problem, consult the following works: Ker; Nathaniel E. Griffin, "The Definition of Romance," PMLA, 38 (1923), 50-70; William Wistar Comfort, "The Essential Difference Between a Chanson de Geste and a Roman d'Aventure," PMLA, 19 (1904), 64-74.

[34] There is only the brief episode in Pantagruel concerning the lady in Paris, an involvement which is hastily concluded when Pantagruel must leave France without saying good-bye in order to return to Utopia to protect the homeland.

the infidels, always a favorite topic for the medieval audience. In Les quatre fils Aymon, Renaud and his three brothers while still at war with Charlemagne, enter into hostilities for a short time with the Saracens, and when the conflict with the king is concluded, Renaud and Maugis fight the pagans in the East. Another repeated theme stems from the revolt of the barons against Charlemagne where the king becomes the antagonist, as in Ogier le Danois, Les quatre fils Aymon, Huon de Bordeaux, and Guerin de Monglave. This same topic is taken up again in Jehan de Paris and Geoffroy à la grant dent, but the rebels are the enemy; in the former work, the King of France helps the King of Spain to regain control over his nobles, and in the latter, Geoffroy subdues the barons of the realm.

At no time is the concept of war condemned. If there is an outrage committed, the natural result is open war so that either side may defend its cause, its honor, its lineage. Any caution against or encouragement for warfare is supported on the basis of social, political, economic, or religious reasons. The most common attitude is willingness, indeed, enthusiasm, to fight. This attitude is expressed in Jehan de Paris when the King of France tells his barons they will aid the King of Spain to bring the recalcitrant barons of the latter under control; the Frenchmen rejoice "parce qu'il y avait un long temps

qu'il n'y avait eu guerre en France, et qu'ils étaient fort aises d'avoir ainsi une occasion de reprendre leurs faits d'armes."[35] It is by such feats that the medieval warrior proves his strength, his valor, his courage; war offers the means whereby a knight becomes valuable to society and upholds the tradition of his ancestors.

The most common development after the onset of the war is battle until victory. If peace is sought, the terms are often not agreeable to one side or the other, and settlement by means of diplomacy is difficult. Charlemagne offers peace to his rebellious barons if they submit to his authority. Thus it is in the nature of the wars of revolt that the struggle continues--"les rebelles indomptables, leur seigneur toujours implacable."[36] At the end of Les quatre fils Aymon, peace is achieved through diplomacy because the four brothers' forces are debilitated and they finally agree to the Emperor's terms. In earlier efforts to end the hostilities, Charlemagne had demanded that the Aymons turn over their cousin Maugis, the necromancer, who helps his cousins through magic and ruse. In the last negotiations, Charlemagne asks for Renaud's enchanted horse and the surrender of

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[35] In Collection des romans de chevalerie mis en prose française moderne, éd. Alfred Delvau (Paris: Bachelin-Deflorenne, 1869), III, 242.

[36] Joseph Bédier, Les légendes épiques, IV (Paris: Champion, 1929), 213.

the Aymons, at which point, terms are accepted on both sides. In a war with the Saracens, only defeat or baptism of the pagans may end the conflict. In battle between Christian adversaries, one side must be totally defeated, or weakened to the point of nonresistance for peace to prevail.

Negotiations for settlement or continuation of the war are decided upon in counsel. "This fundamental idea runs all through the Old French Epic. Even the emperor in the Chanson de Roland, though in full knowledge of what is right, cannot act without the advice of his barons."[37] The hero either calls his lords together for the purpose of discussing strategy, or, in a more informal manner, he and the influential persons around him determine the best pattern of action. If the barons entertain the cessation of warfare, it is never done so on the grounds that war per se is bad, but rather because they recognize that a particular war is weakening the realm, or that the adversary in question is not deserving of continued hostilities. Just counsellors contrast with treasonous or selfish advisors. In the epics of revolt, Charlemagne is portrayed as an unreasonable monarch, unwilling to heed advice of the wise persons around him who attempt to persuade him to act in the best interests

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[37]Jessie Crosland, The Old French Epic (Oxford: Basil Blackwell & Mott, 1951), p. 4.

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of the kingdom. The following scene from Huon de Bordeaux illustrates both the use of the counsel situation and the portrait of a cruel vengeful Charlemagne who wishes to torture Huon against the wishes of Naymes, traditionally a sage figure in the legends surrounding Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers:[38]

> Le conseil s'étant assemblé de nouveau le lendemain matin, et les avis se trouvant de nouveau partagés, Charlemagne, à qui le souvenir du meurtre de Charlot revenait malgré lui, se crut autorisé, par la prépondérance de son vote, à condamner Huon et Gérasme à être traînés aux fourches que sur-le-champ il fit dresser, et la belle Esclarmonde au bûcher qu'il ordonna de préparer. En vain le sage duc Naymes remontra au roi ce qu'il y avait d'inique et de cruel dans cet arrêt; en vain il lui signala comme mensongère la déposition des deux moines, qui avait entraîné la conscience mal éclairée de la plupart des pairs : Charlemagne ne voulut rien entendre, rien comprendre, rien pardonner. Il fallait que la justice eût son cours; la justice, c'est-à-dire la soif de vengeance qui le mordait à la gorge au souvenir de son fils et du combat du bois de Montlhéry. Le duc Naymes, indigné, sortit de la salle du conseil avec plusieurs autres pairs, en protestant avec énergie contre l'injustice d'un pareil jugement, dont l'exécution fut renvoyée, séance tenante, à l'après-midi.
>
> Charlemagne, après s'être lavé les mains, comme Ponce Pilate après le condamnation de Jésus, alla se mettre à table avec les pairs dont l'avis était semblable au sien, en attendant qu'il pût jouir de l'affreux spectacle qu'il avait ordonné.[39]

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[38]Léon Gautier, Les épopées françaises, 2e éd., rév., III (Paris: Société générale de librairie catholique, 1880), 163

[39]Delvau, I, p. 177.

Such depictions of the evil enemy--Saracen or Christian--emphasize the nobility and righteousness of those whom the narrator favors.

So that the audience may follow the progress of their heroes in battle, blow-by-blow scenes relate the wounding and subsequent demise of warriors, as in Galien rethoré:

> Incontinent le roi Pinard, qui était à cheval, vint à toute bride sur Galien; il leva son épée, croyant l'en frapper, mais Galien leva son bâton et en donna un tel coup au roi Pinard dessus le poignet, qu'il lui fit tomber son épée, puis il lui en donna un autre coup sur la tête, dont il le jeta par terre, puis se jeta sur lui et lui donna tant de coups de bâton que le sang lui sortait de toutes parts. Après que Galien l'eut battu de cette façon, et qu'il ne remuait plus ni pieds ni jambes, il le prit par les cheveux et le traîna dans la rivière qui était proche de là.[40]

Conventionally, wounds are noted with references to specific parts of the body, and combat results in a bloody battlefield, evidence of the heroic feats which took place there. The author may sometimes wish to avoid a minutely accurate depiction of warfare; he then adds variety to the narrative by summarizing the gory battle and simply evokes the formidable encounter, as in Fierabras: "Alors les deux armeés se mêlèrent et firent si grande tuerie, que jamais guerres ne furent si sanglantes entre les païens."[41]

[40] Ibid., p. 355.

[41] Ibid., p. 40.

The forms of warfare are open battle, single combat, siege, ambush, skirmish, and night attack, the most common being the first two. When a full-scale battle is recounted only the major personages merit the narrator's attention, at which point the description often resembles single combat, i.e. the author focuses on two knights. The medieval warrior seeks the battlefield where he may display his prowess and valor while protecting the homeland or fighting for another people in a righteous cause. In Les quatre fils Aymon, Roland expresses his preference for open warfare when he threatens Charlemagne that he may leave the king's service, since, as a knight, he finds no reward in the siege of Montauban, the castle of Aymon's sons:

> Sire, dit Roland, nous sommes des preux, faits pour les grandes batailles en pleine campagne, et non pour ces sièges sans honneur et sans profit, où nous remplaçons nos épées par des échelles, et nos lances par des catapultes. Ce métier de charpentier ne me convient pas, pour ma part, et je vous demande la permission de quitter votre service.[42]

Single combat as well provides a perfect setting for feats which bring honor to the knight: two adversaries meet, each representing his family, his army, his lord, his country, and God or Mohammed. The two combatants are carefully chosen from among the most important nobles, since their lords and peers would consider only the best

[42] Ibid., p. 134.

knights worthy to uphold the cause of the fatherland. During these scenes, people may gather around to view the encounter, as when Ogier meets the pagan giant Angoulaffre in Ogier le Danois:

> Les choses s'accomplirent comme il avait été convenu, et le combat eut lieu en face de la tour de Babel, dans laquelle les spectateurs s'étaient renfermés pour bien voir. Personne du reste ne devait approcher des champions à une portée de trait d'arbalète.[43]

As in this case, a heathen giant is a likely adversary for a Christian hero. These confrontations may last more than one day. If that occurs, hostilities are formally curtailed by mutual consent; the foes rest and return to the appointed battlefield to resume the conflict.

Besides open warfare, ruse is an auxiliary aid in achieving victory. The most famous medieval use of this motif occurs in the mid-twelfth century in Le Charroi de Nîmes, where Guillaume d'Orange and his men wish to capture the wealthy city of Nîmes. He has one thousand barrels made, and places a man inside each one; the barrels are then carted into Nîmes, and the knights are able to take over easily, as they emerge from their hiding places. Ruse recurs throughout the epics which Rabelais knew, although it is not often present in the chanson de geste. Godefroy de Bouillon orders his knights to circle back as they parade before the enemy in order to give the

[43] Ibid., p. 82.

adversary a false idea of their numerical strength. Maugis, of Les quatre fils Aymon, resorts to trickery several times, and performs magic as well to help his cousins in their campaign against Charlemagne. Cunning sometimes fails, as is the case in Fierabras when several of Charlemagne's men claim that they are merchants in an attempt to enter a Saracen city, but their trick is recognized and battle ensues.

The heroes continually encounter overwhelming odds: a small group may defeat an army of thousands, or a match between the hero and a giant can express the disproportion of size and strength--the David-Goliath theme. In Les quatre fils Aymon, the Emperor exclaims his disbelief over the fall of his army at the hands of the four Aymons: "Quatre hommes contre une armée!"[44] All epic heroes, to varying degrees, are supermen, invincible creatures. Not only are they preux, honorable, valorous, and brave, but Justice is on their side, and God protects them from death.

The usual weapons are lances or swords, but in some episodes, heroes use unconventional implements. The pilgrim's staff, or bourdon, is responsible for massacres. Pierre L'Ermite in Godefroy de Bouillon rides a donkey to battle and challenges swords, lances, and a monstrous serpent with his staff. In the last scenes of Les quatre

[44] Ibid., p. 124.

fils Aymon, both Maugis and Renaud, renowned heroes on the battlefield, now dressed in pilgrim's garb, are in the Holy Land to do penance. No sooner does the author begin to tell of their presence in the East than they join in battle against the pagans, and Maugis uses his staff to kill unbelievable numbers of Saracens. Often a weapon is endowed with enchantment which offers invincibility to the hero as he meets potentially more efficient arms with a simple implement, as is the case with Maugis or Pierre L'Ermite. Galien of Galien rethoré is unable to wound the Saracen King Pinard with a sword, and finally assumes that he needs a special force to defeat the enemy; "par le vouloir de Dieu il s'imagina que, puisqu'il ne pouvait blesser Pinard avec son épée, il lui fallait prendre un gros bâton pour combattre contre lui."[45] Galien convinces the pagan that he must tighten his saddle before the battle may continue, asks permission to dismount, goes to a nearby thicket, takes a branch of a medlar tree, and returns to achieve victory.

In each work, there are one or more religious figures, of varying states, from hermit to pope. They are plausible members of medieval society, who often provide a vehicle for the expression of propaganda, and they frequently join the melee. Turpin, the Archbishop of Reims, probably the most familiar churchman, is present

[45] Ibid., p. 355.

every time the Charlemagne and Roland legend enters the narrative, where he is "transfigurée en un type légendaire du prêlat guerrier."[46] As a prelate he performs absolution: he confesses his men, prepares their souls for possible death, prays for their well-being. Subsequently, he rides into battle, sword in hand, to defeat the enemy.

The central heroes as well represent the Church in so far as they are practicing Christians; voices of guidance from heaven, divine intervention aid them to win battles. Their victory over other Christians signals the superiority of righteous knights over the evil enemy; and when Christians defeat the infidels, the Church symbolically triumphs. Traditionally associated with the Christian warrior is the "'crédo épique'...la prière que fait un personnage, en général un chevalier avant une bataille ou dans un moment critique, pour réclamer le secours de Dieu."[47]

The pilgrimage belongs to the religious topoi of the chanson de geste. The hero may exchange his coat of mail for pilgrim's garb and travel to the Holy Land, where his penance may be transformed into a battle against the pagan. Renaud, Maugis, Ogier, Charlemagne, Orson, all

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[46] Gustave Lanson, Histoire de la littérature française (Paris: Hachette, 1918), p. 29.

[47] Martín de Riquer, Les chansons de geste françaises, 2nd ed., trans. Irénée Cluzel (Paris: Nizet, 1957), p. 317.

seek repentance in this manner. Another treatment of the pilgrimage, and one which should be differentiated from the crusade or holy war, deals with pilgrims en route to visit shrines either in Europe or in the East. In Chronique de Turpin, the narrator relates that large numbers of persons travel to venerate St. Jacques de Compostelle; Charlemagne in Les quatre fils Aymon goes to Galicia to worship that same saint. Godefroy de Bouillon mentions the presence of pilgrims in the East who journey to sacred places. At the end of Les quatre fils Aymon, Renaud himself is martyred and the devout visit his remains.

In the epics, monuments are abbeys, and this too is an example of the pervasive influence of the Church. Charlemagne in Chronique de Turpin establishes abbeys and churches in Spain to commemorate his conquests there. In Mélusine, following Geoffroy à la grant dent's vengeful pursuit of his uncle during which the latter dies, Geoffroy rebuilds the abbey which he earlier burned; he endows it heavily so that prayers may be offered for his mother, his father, and their lineage. In Geoffroy à la grant dent, the reconstruction of the monastery from Mélusine is reiterated. Robert le Diable ends as the narrator tells of the abbey dedicated to the holy Robert.

Prophetic dream sequences abound in the epic: heroes have dreams which predict a future event, often

their demise. The vision frequently contains interpretable animal imagery. In Les quatre fils Aymon, the duc Beuves views his death at the hands of Charlemagne's knights: "J'ai eu un songe fâcheux cette nuit : un griffon planait sur moi, perçait mon écu, dispersait mes armes et me déchirait les entrailles avec ses griffes et avec son bec d'acier; puis, après moi, ceux qui m'entouraient."[48]

Lineage is a major interest for the narrator: "The hero is born of noble stock and stands for a caste privileged by race as well as personal attainments. This aristocratic breeding implies certain qualities of honor and noblesse."[49] The knight's tradition is closely bound to the cause for which one is fighting in so far as the hero must prove himself deserving of legend and worthy of his ancestors by performing great feats. In Les quatre fils Aymon, Ogier le Danois defends his family and his honor when Roland rebukes him for losing a battle against the Aymons. Roland feels that Charlemagne's men were not performing at their best, and Ogier responds to this verbal attack:

> Vous en avez menti par la gorge, Roland, s'écria Ogier, outré de colère; j'ai fait mon devoir, et je ne permets à personne ici d'oser soutenir, moi présent, que je ne l'ai pas fait!... Vous oubliez sans doute, chevalier, et je vous le rappelle, qu'on ne compte que de vaillants hommes dans ma famille...

[48] Delvau, I, p. 102.

[49] Calin, p. 148.

> Geoffroy de Danemarck était mon père; Gérard de Roussillon, Dion de Nanteuil et Beuves d'Aigremont étaient mes oncles; l'archevêque Turpin et Richard de Normandie sont mes parents... Dites, à présent, que je ne suis pas d'une souche illustre et que j'ai démérité de l'honneur![50]

Family trees are noted throughout the epics to attest to the warriors' nobility.

Between battles, knights are frequently found in abundant feast settings. Even if the description is short and stylized, as is often the case, a plentiful banquet is implied. In Les quatre fils Aymon, one sentence summarizes the festivities in honor of Renaud's and Maugis' return from the Holy Land: "Il y eut une véritable fête à Montauban au retour de Renaud et de Maugis."[51] In Godefroy de Bouillon, the narrator spends several pages describing a celebration. In gest romances, there is generally no emphasis on the duration of such gatherings, whereas the romances of adventure often state the number of days devoted to this activity. In Jehan de Paris, when the King of France returns from the war in Spain, a fifteen-day feast is held.

A group of nobles conventionally work with and for the central hero. This concept of peer loyalty is constantly reiterated in the legends surrounding Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers, in their cycle of holy war against

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[50] Delvau, I, p. 124.

[51] Ibid., p. 139.

the Saracens. One of the outstanding tales of devotion is found in Les quatre fils Aymon, where four brothers and their cousin battle together led by one brother in particular, Renaud, in their campaign against Charlemagne. Richard Aymon is injured, and although his intestines are hanging from his wounds, he still insists on fighting:

> Frère, dit Richard à Renaud, en entendant ce signal, coupez-moi, je vous prie, un morceau de ma chemise, afin que je m'en ceigne les entrailles et qu'ainsi je puisse me tenir debout et vous aider à vaincre![52]

Giants are commonplace, and they may be Christian or Saracen, with an emphasis on the latter. If the giant is pagan, he is traditionally defeated by a Christian knight, in which case the battle symbolizes a triumph for the Church. And if the giant is Christian, he supports the heroes' cause, as in Guerin de Monglave where a giant, "le bon Roboastre," serves two generations of the Monglave family. In the exposition concerning Roboastre, we learn that he helped Guerin conquer the duchy of which Guerin is in control. Following these deeds, Roboastre became a hermit turning his back on the world and its evils. In Guerin, he comes out of seclusion to help one of Guerin's sons, Arnault, who has been imprisoned by Saracens. With his massive fifty-pound club, "qui ressemblait tant au glaive

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[52] Ibid., p. 124.

exterminateur de l'archange,"[53] the giant easily massacres Arnault's enemies. Pagan giants abound in Fierabras. This work provides an interesting innovation in this motif: the Saracen giant Fierabras meets Olivier, who has chosen to represent Charlemagne's forces in single combat, and when Fierabras believes that he is near death, he asks for baptism; the reformed heathen then survives to become a vehicle for Christian propaganda as he joins the Emperor's men in their crusade against the infidel.

Along with giants, there are numerous supernatural elements. Because of the popularity of the matière de Bretagne, the narrator often includes magicians, fairies, enchanted armor and weapons, fantastic voyages, mysterious countries, spells, special ungents and elixirs, talismans--all associated with Celtic mythology. In Les quatre fils Aymon, Maugis magically heals his cousins' wounds by applying a balm to them. Fairies protect Galien from death through enchantment: any wound he may receive will mend in three days. The dwarf necromancer Oberon in Huon de Bordeaux presents Huon with a goblet, which, upon command, produces abundant food and drink.

As the epic develops, it increasingly contains love involvements. Repeatedly a Christian hero falls in love with a beautiful Saracen and marries her after her conversion; she is often the daughter of an important

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[53] Ibid., p. 258.

sultan. Galien rhetoré ends on just such a note, when Galien marries the daughter of Marsille, the pagan villain in the Roland legend: "Charlemagne fit baptiser la belle Guinarde. Après le baptême, elle et Galien furent épousés, à leur grande joie mutuelle, et à la joie aussi de toute la contrée."[54] During the course of the war in Les quatre fils Aymon, Renaud marries the sister of King Yon of Gascony. In reference to the role of women in the epic, William Wistar Comfort concisely states: "Incidental to wars and fighting, to the sacking of Saracen cities, to the service due to God and the king, woman may step in and claim the hero in his idle moments."[55]

Throughout the epics, we find recurrent narrative techniques. The author may enter the story to offer appraisal of the action, to foretell future events, to arouse the interest and anxiety of the audience; and imperative verbs bring the audience into the tale. The narrator stresses the veracity of his chronicle, as in Chronique de Turpin where we are led to believe that Turpin is the author and that he actually viewed the incredible events which he describes. Battle scenes are frequently depicted in blow-by-blow detail; for this reason, they often give the impression of being eye-witness accounts. Proverbs are abundant as a device

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[54] Ibid., p. 375.

[55] Comfort, p. 72.

for the expression of the "wisdom of the ages."[56] Numerical exaggeration emphasizes the size of armies; this same hyperbole may contrast a small group of heroes with their adversaries who are present in fantastic proportions.

As evidenced by the preceding discussion, many topoi may be noted in the epics. Although the chansons de geste differ from each other because of the individuality which each author brings to his work, the basic matter remains the same, and thus recognizable: "The primary material (Urstoff) is, on the whole, fixed and unchangeable, the product of a long oral tradition."[57] This plethora of themes, motifs, and narrative techniques provides the basis for parody: the author of a mock epic relies on his audience's familiarity with the literature he burlesques, and the Renaissance public, having read the popular romans de chevalerie, had the necessary background to appreciate Rabelais's parody.

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[56] Crosland, p. 15.

[57] Calin, p. 224.

CHAPTER II

PANTAGRUEL AS A BURLESQUE EPIC

Two facets of Rabelais's epic parody which are indirectly concerned with war should be noted before the war passages proper are discussed: the title page and Pantagruel's genealogy. On the original title page of Pantagruel, the reader is promised "Les horribles et espouventables faictz et prouesses du tres renome Pantagruel Roy des Dispsodes."[1] The terms "faictz" and "prouesses" are often used in epics to describe the actions of knights on the battlefield. Thus, in an elevated announcement of subject matter, Rabelais's readers are implicitly promised an epic warrior king. In Chapter I, Pantagruel is given a fantastic grouping of ancestors to rival those of any hero in the chanson de geste, where, conventionally, a flattering lineage limited to several names attests to the nobility of the hero in order to prove that he is worthy of legend. Rabelais's list includes various giants from the medieval epics: Fierabras, Morguan, Ferragus, Galaffre, Roboastre, Sortibrant de Conimbres, Brushant de Mommiere, Bruyer,

[1] Jourda, p. 212.

and Mabrun.[2] "Cette énumération était donc pour les lecteurs contemporains de Rabelais, sinon une évocation de souvenirs précis, du moins un rappel de légendes qui leur étaient chères."[3] These giants provide a warring tradition which Pantagruel will presumably uphold with feats of prowess.

War is first mentioned in the heading to Chapter 23: "Comment Pantagruel partit de Paris, ouyant nouvelles que les Dipsodes envahyssoient le pays des Amaurotes, et la cause pourquoy les lieues sont tant petites en France" (I,xxiii,355).[4] Rabelais imitates the transcribers of the prose epics who begin each episode title with "comment" as, for example, in Guerin de Monglave, Chapter 44: "Comment, apres avoir reçu l'hospitalité du roi Hugon, les pairs de Charlemagne se mirent à gaber joyeusement; et comment un espion les ayant entendus, alla tout raconter au roi de Mesopotamie."[5] After having announced the war, he elaborates on the invasion in the

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[2]Abel Lefranc, et al, éds., Oeuvres complètes de Rabelais, III (Paris: Champion, 1922), pp. 24-27, notes 89, 90, 93, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112.

[3]Jean Plattard, L'Oeuvre de Rabelais (Paris: Champion, 1910), p. 8.

[4]Quotations from Gargantua and Pantagruel are taken from Jourda; citations refer to Book I and Book II, then chapter, and page.

[5]Delvau, I, p. 273.

first paragraph, and at the same time, treats the demise of the late King of Utopia:

> Peu de temps après, Pantagruel ouyt nouvelles que son pere Gargantua avoit esté translaté au pays des Phées par Morgue, comme feut jadis Ogier et Artus, ensemble que, le bruyt de sa translation entendu, les Dipsodes estoyent yssus de leurs limites, et avoyent gasté un grand pays de Utopie, et tenoyent pour lors la grande ville des Amaurotes assiegée. Dont partit de Paris sans dire à dieu à nully, car l'affaire requeroit diligence, et vint à Rouen (II,xxiii,335-336).

The death or "translation" of Gargantua is an explicit reference to epic legend linking the grotesque Gargantua to the heroic Ogier le Danois who was carried off by Morgan to live in Avalon. Renaissance readers, familiar with this tradition, would be thoroughly amused that the imbibing gourmand giant would be worthy of joining Ogier. According to the chanson de geste, the Dane leaves Fairyland after a residence of two hundred years to do battle in France. Therefore, "death" is not final for the king. Implicitly, by means of translation, he is taken to a realm from which he may come back; we should not be too surprised at Gargantua's later appearance in Rabelais.

Rabelais entertains potentially serious material: by the death of his father, Pantagruel becomes king, and must leave Paris to go home to protect his people from the enemy who are pillaging his land and besieging the capital. Rabelais would certainly have been able

to develop the theme of a warrior king speeding to Utopia to defend his countrymen against the evil invader; but as Pantagruel and his four companions are about to set sail for home, the giant wants to bid a courteous farewell to his former mistress (Chapter 24):

> On arrive à Honfleur, on monte sur le bateau ; on attend un vent propice pour partir ; mais méfions-nous des vents propices chez Rabelais ; ils sont inventés pour qu'en les attendant, on puisse intercaler dans l'histoire la lettre de la dame de Paris et le mot mystérieux écrit sur la bague, que l'ingénieux Panurge va essayer de déchiffrer.[6]

The profound implications of the war are left unembellished and the inception of the conflict is stripped of narrative importance when Rabelais introduces these digressions: "Dans le Pantagruel, Rabelais semble vouloir éviter le récit de guerre ; son épopée est sans cesse une anti-épopée. Il oscille entre une guerre qu'il entreprend de décrire et une guerre qui n'a pas lieu."[7]

Not only does the lady in Paris delay the war narrative, but she also causes Pantagruel to choose between "courtoisie" and his duty to his homeland. Pantagruel is analogous to Lancelot in Le chevalier de la charrette in so far as the momentary hesitation of both deflates their respective roles--that of epic

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[6] Glauser, p. 204.

[7] Ibid.

warrior and courtly lover. A knight would not vacillate at the mention of hostilities: "No dallying that might weaken the warlike spirit was to be allowed."[8] Furthermore, Pantagruel must be encouraged by Epistemon to direct his thoughts to the conflict with the Dipsodes, another degradation of the giant, reinforcing the anti-heroic nature of the work.

In order to transport his heroes to Utopia, Rabelais exploits the voyage motif, which was persistently popular in the epic and romance of the Middle Ages. The author obtains freedom from the constraint of former surroundings; and fantastic, distant lands promise adventure and mystery. In the list of places (p. 340) to which they travel, known geography ends with Melinda; Pantagruel and his companions voyage beyond topographical reality into the imaginary as did many of their medieval predecessors.

At home, Pantagruel holds counsel with his men to determine the position and number of the enemy. Each companion then vaunts his unique abilities in reference to the war effort. In Morgant le géant as well, the hero's vassals represent particular qualities.[9] These

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[8] Crosland, p. 290.

[9] In Folengo's Macaronées, an Italian epic of the Renaissance, the vassals surrounding the hero have special capabilities. Plattard, in L'Oeuvre de Rabelais, p. 21, discusses this facet of Pulci's Morgant le géant and Folengo's Macaronées.

acts are also reminiscent of the "gabfest" such as the one in Guerin de Monglave where Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers boast of their singular talents, which, it is expected, will be displayed. Yet, unlike the medieval models in which warriors take great pains to prove their gab true, here no one uses any of his skills to gain the first victory; and as the anti-epic war progresses, Panurge, not Epistemon, becomes the master of ruse, and the boasting for the most part remains unfounded:

> La force d'Eusthènes n'est qu'une seule fois mise en oeuvre [Chapter 27] ; que serait-elle à côté de celle de Pantagruel, le géant? Le savoir d'Epistemon ne nous est révélé qu'au moment où il fabrique au nom des Muses, "neuf belles broches de bois à l'antique" [Chapter 26]. Carpalim ne prouve sa vitesse à la course que dans trois occasions pour capturer des levrauts [Chapter 26], un chevreuil et des oiseaux en plein vol, pour atteindre un cavalier s'enfuyant [Chapter 25] et pour aller mettre le feu aux munitions des ennemis [Chapter 28].[10]

Rabelais establishes the epic group composed of Pantagruel and his four friends. They parallel Aymon's four sons or Roland and the Twelve Peers who battle together guided by their leader. Pantagruel and his men plan to take on an entire army; and the formidable odds which they face are thereby emphasized--five men against the Dipsodes.

With the exception of the Loup Garou episode, the exploits of Pantagruel's warriors to defeat the Dipsodes

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[10]Plattard, Vie de Rabelais (Paris: Editions G. Van Oest, 1928), p. 106.

are not battles, but rather ruses and burlesque acts, unilateral feats. The war is certainly not won by overpowering deeds of physical prowess on the battlefield. Panurge uses ruse to gain the first victory. Pantagruel offers his services but is encouraged by Panurge to remain in the background. Rabelais wishes to emphasize the giant's resourceful companion:

> La première action est confiée à Panurge, qui est le Frère Jan de cette guerre, mais elle n'a rien d'héroïque puisqu'il prend l'ennemi dans le "cerne des cordes"....La guerre semble être d'abord un prétexte pour employer Panurge. Rabelais vient de le rencontrer, il veut lui confier une bonne partie de l'action.[11]

The prototype for Panurge may be Margutte in Pulci's Morgant le géant, Cingar in Folengo's Macaronées, or Maugis in Les quatre fils Aymon, all of whom are renowned for ruse. Cingar and Margutte are cunning vassals to the hero; for this reason they are cited as models for Panurge.[12] Since a parallel between Maugis and Panurge can be established with certitude later, it is also not unlikely to posit Maugis as a model at this early stage and to conclude that Les quatre fils Aymon may have influenced Rabelais's creation of Panurge.

With the aid of Carpalim, Eusthènes, and Epistemon, Panurge encircles the enemy in cables from the ship which he has covered with cannon powder and straw

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[11] Glauser, pp. 204-205.

[12] Plattard, L'Oeuvre, p. 21.

(Chapter 25). When the Dipsodes ride toward Pantagruel's men they are caught in the ropes as Epistemon tightens the cables from the deck. Panurge ignites the ropes, and thus, just as the chapter heading promises, Pantagruel's companions "desconfirent six cens soixante chevaliers bien subtilement" (II,xxv,342).

This episode represents epic parody in several respects. First, the should-be hero Pantagruel is absent from the first encounter with the enemy in the chronicles of his "espouventables faictz et prouesses." Rabelais deflates the nominal hero by allowing Panurge to dominate the action; and the giant's entry into the war is postponed. Secondly, Rabelais uses epic vocabulary, i.e. "déconfire" and "chevaliers;" yet there is no discomfiting or chivalry manifested in the traditional sense. Thirdly, the actual treatment of the enemy has precedent in Godefroy de Bouillon where crusaders roast some Saracens and eat them to prevent their reporting the crusaders' strategy. Panurge's roasting of the Dipsodes within the ropes may very well parody this practice. The one surviving Dipsode, a prisoner, is invited to the victory feast and fears that Pantagruel may devour him:

> [L]e pauvre diable n'estoit point asseuré que Pantagruel ne le devorast tout entier, ce qu'il eust faict, tant avoit la gorge large, aussi facillement que feriez un grain de dragée, et ne luy eust monté en sa bouche en plus qu'un grain de millet en la gueulle d'un asne (II,xxv,344-345).

Cannibalism is certainly considered when the hostage joins in the banquet scene, a variation on the theme of abundant eating. Finally, formidable odds are stressed through the exaggeration of numbers: Panurge is responsible for the defeat of six hundred and sixty Dipsodes. In the epics, the enemy army is large, often beyond the point of credulity, in order to emphasize the heroes' prowess as they triumph over an adversary that outnumbers them by the hundreds, even by the thousands.

The ruse is immediately followed by the traditional feast to celebrate a victory. But the defeat hardly warrants any festivities:

> On se soucie plus de récompenses que de la guerre même ; une fête est hors de proportion avec l'action qu'elle célèbre ; si elle avait été méritée, Rabelais n'y aurait pas songé. Petits faits, grandes récompenses.[13]

In her study of war in Rabelais, Anne Edwards Inglis identifies the feast motif as one of the epic topoi which Rabelais parodies.[14] In the chanson de geste, those winning the war pause to eat and drink in honor of their triumph over the enemy. Mikhail Bakhtin discusses the use of the banquet in general throughout Rabelais; he relates such celebrations to the popular

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[13] Glauser, p. 205.

[14] Inglis, p. 3.

festive-tradition of the Middle Ages.[15] However, while exploring the meaning of this motif, he states that it is always related to victory and triumph:

> In the act of eating, as we have said, the confines between the body and the world are overstepped by the body; it triumphs over the world, over its enemy, celebrates its victory, grows at the world's expense. This element of victory and triumph is inherent in all banquet images. No meal can be sad. Sadness and food are incompatible (while death and food are perfectly compatible). The banquet always celebrates a victory and this is part of its very nature. Further, the triumphal banquet is always universal. It is the triumph of life over death. In this respect it is equivalent to conception and birth. The victorious body receives the defeated world and is renewed.[16]

During the celebration, Carpalim decides to hunt for fresh provisions since he is tired of eating salt meat (Chapter 26). The hunt turns into a parody of battle and also leads to another fête. Carpalim kills approximately two hundred animals to feed five men. He moves so fast "qu'il sembloit que feust un carreau d'arbaleste" (II,xxvi,345). Like an arrow, he plucks fowl out of the air, and with his feet kills leverets and rabbits. The only time he uses a traditional war weapon is to kill an animal; he strikes his sword on the head of a buck, "[f]rappant doncques le

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[15] Rabelais and His World, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1968), Chapters 3 and 4, "Popular-Festive Forms and Images in Rabelais," pp. 196-277, and "Banquet Imagery in Rabelais," pp. 278-302.

[16] Ibid., pp. 282-283.

chevreul de son malcus à travers la teste, le tua" (II,xxvi,346):

> Carpalim, qui, par son agilité, pourrait être un héros de guerre, doit être d'abord champion à la chasse...il pourrait s'agir de l'ennemi qu'on poursuit, non, c'est un chevreuil que Carpalim attrape, suivi d'oiseaux qu'il prend en courant de ses mains, d'animaux qu'il tue de ses pieds, et qui permettent à Rabelais de longues énumérations. Il n'a pas encore parlé d'ennemis abattus ; il lui importe davantage que la page reçoive le recensement d'un massacre de :
>
> Quatre grandes otardes,
> Sept bitars,
> Vingt et six perdrys grises,
> Trente et deux rouges,
> Seize faisans,
> Neuf béccasses,
> Dix et neuf hérons
> Trente et deux pigeons ramiers,..
> [pp. 345-346][17]

In epics, knights are frequently killed with a blow to the head. In this respect, Carpalim's action graphically recalls battlefield slaughter.

Furthermore, a hunting scene is not necessarily incongruous with a war theme. In Les quatre fils Aymon, Charlemagne's men, while confidently winning the war, venture into the surrounding forests to seek amusement in the hunt: "Mes amis, s'écria Roland, je propose pour nous distraire, une bonne partie de chasse."[18] Variety is added to the story line, at a point where there is no urgency to continue fighting.

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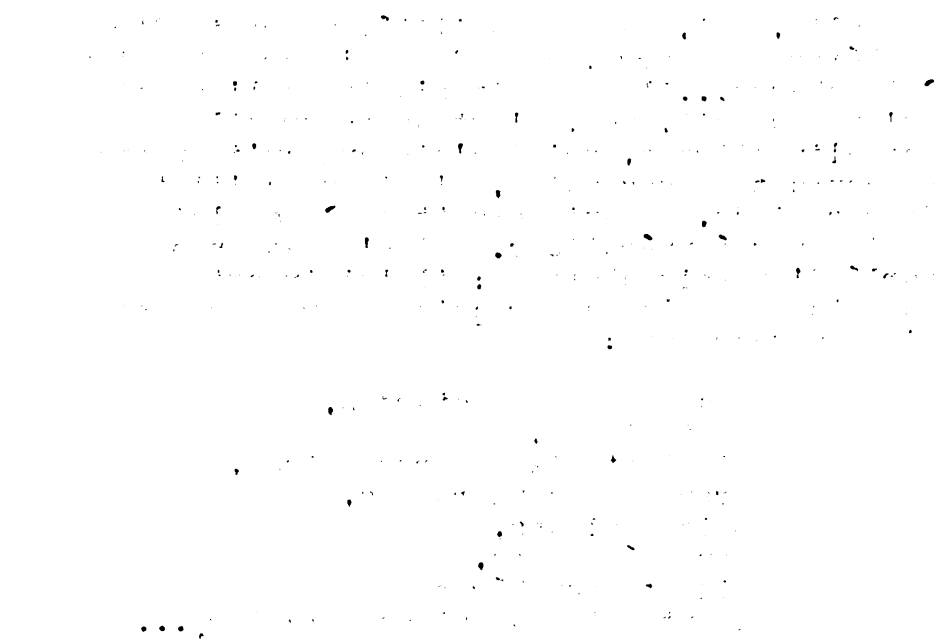
[17]Glauser, p. 205.

[18]Delvau, I, p. 118.



In Pantagruel, the hunt leads directly to an extension of the celebration for the original victory. The listing of animals stresses the abundance of food, traditional in the chanson de geste. The prolongation of the festivities postpones the return to battle and thereby emphasizes the anti-epic nature of this conflict: the heroes spend more time at the banquet than they do at war. In the next episode, the erection of two monuments, one in honor of heroic deeds and the other to glorify eating and drinking, reinforces this mood.

As they enjoy the fresh provisions, Panurge urges Pantagruel to direct his thoughts to the bellicose Dipsodes. Once reminded of the war, Pantagruel interrogates his prisoner concerning the disposition, number, and strength of the army. The hostage's response affirms the numerical challenge which the enemy represents: they number over four hundred thousand. Among the Dipsodes are three hundred giants. It is not surprising to learn that Pantagruel is larger than all of them except one. In emulation of the epic device of foreshadowing future events in order to arouse the audience's interest, Rabelais prepares his readers for the encounter between Pantagruel and Loup Garou. In the chanson de geste, single combat between a knight and a giant is commonplace, as, for example, Roland and Ferragut, or Olivier and Fierabras.

In Chronique de Turpin, Charlemagne sends various knights, including Ogier le Danois, to combat the pagan giant Ferragut, who has the strength of forty men; but these fine warriors are all defeated by their formidable foe. Then Roland volunteers to challenge Ferragut. The former fights with a bâton, or staff, while the latter is unarmed; the giant may be mortally wounded only in the navel. During battle, Roland and the infidel carry on a long debate concerning the Trinity, the Immaculate Conception, and the Resurrection. Intermittently the giant tires and requests a respite in hostilities in order to nap. Finally, Ferragut breaks Roland's weapon, picks him up, and tosses him to the ground. Roland, fearful of defeat, offers up a prayer to heaven. With divine aid, Roland reaches the giant's point of vulnerability; and the heathen calls out to Mohammed as he dies.

A Christian knight and pagan giant meet in Fierabras. Charlemagne's barons are afraid to battle Fierabras, except Olivier, who feels he must end the giant's reign of terror. When they meet for single combat, Olivier proclaims the salvation which Christianity insures. In keeping with epic tradition, Olivier prays for his well-being. Fierabras has two containers of the preparation used to embalm Christ. When swallowed it miraculously heals wounds. During battle, both drink the potion and are immediately revived. Eventually,

Olivier needs the last of it, and leaves the giant without a remedy should he be hurt again. Bereft of his sword by Fierabras, Olivier takes one of the giant's three enchanted weapons, and stabs him. The pagan, believing that he is near death and having been converted by Olivier's polemic, requests baptism. Fierabras lives on to join Charlemagne in his crusade against the Saracens.

Pantagruel's renewed interest in the war effort causes the reader to believe that hostilities will soon be resumed. However, the heroes next erect a war monument commemorating the prowess of Pantagruel's men (Chapter 27). The chapter heading immediately signals the burlesque treatment of the trophy motif by telling about Panurge's imitation of Pantagruel when he honors the rabbits which they have just eaten: "Comment Pantagruel droissa un trophée en mémoire de leur prouesse, et Panurge un aultre en memoire des levraulx" (II,xxvii,349). Just as the original victory is unworthy of a feast, so too is a memorial unwarranted:

> Adoncques un chascun d'entre eulx, en grande liesse et petites chansonettes villaticques, dresserent un grand boys, auquel y pendirent : une selle d'armes, un chanfrain de cheval, des pompes, des estrivieres, des esperons, un haubert, un hault appareil asseré, une hasche, un estoc d'armes, un gantelet, une masse, des goussetz, des greves, un gorgery, et ainsi de tout appareil requis à un arc triumphal ou trophée (II,xxvii,350).

In the medieval works with which Rabelais was familiar, monuments are built in the form of abbeys. The trophy motif is reminiscent of the ancient tradition[19] rather than that of the Middle Ages. However, since all of the items hanging on the stump comprise the accoutrement of a warrior in the chanson de geste, Rabelais converts a classic motif to a mockery of the medieval.

The inscription is also a mingling of allusions to the medieval and classic traditions:

> Ce fut icy qu'apparut la vertus
> De quatre preux et vaillans champions,
> Qui de bon sens, non de harnois vestuz,
> Comme Fabie ou les deux Scipions,
> Firent six cens soixante morpions,
> Puissans ribaulx, brusler comme une escorce.
> Prenez y tous, roys, ducz, rocz et pions,
> Enseignement que engin mieulx vault que force...
> (II,xxvii,350)

Rabelais describes Pantagruel's men with epic terminology, "vertus," "preux," "vaillans;" however, none of these terms applies to his comic heroes. The proverb "engin mieulx vault que force" has its origins in the Roman de Renart, v. 1364: "mius vaut engins que ne fait forche."[20] The use of proverbs or sententia is another imitation of the epic where such formulae are integral to this genre and often serve as a vehicle for an expression of attitude by the narrator. In this case, Panurge's cunning, or "engin," is lauded, since "Pantagruel

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[19] Lefranc, Oeuvres, IV (Paris: Champion, 1922), p. 274, n. 10.

[20] Ibid., p. 275, n. 18.

a une telle admiration pour sa subtilité."[21] Thus ruse is responsible for a victory celebrated by a prolonged banquet and an elaborate "arch of triumph."

No sooner does Pantagruel consecrate his trophy than Panurge constructs one to honor feasting. Panurge hangs cooking utensils and the remains of the slaughtered animals on a stake, and thereby debases Pantagruel's stump decorated with knightly accoutrement. He mocks the earlier inscription and the subject matter therein by composing a dedication using the same rhyme scheme:[22]

> Ce feut icy que mirent à baz culz
> Joyeusement quatre gaillars pions,
> Pour bancqueter à l'honneur de Baccus,
> Beuvans à gré comme beaulx carpions....
> (II, xxvii,351)

The giant's inscription burlesques the haughty epic language praising warriors--"vertus," "preux," "vaillans:" "C'est dans l'imitation de la sublimité épique que nous notons une dégradation progressive."[23] Therefore, Panurge's dedication constitutes the imitation of an imitation, and the initial mockery, Pantagruel's, is reinforced through emulation.

Rabelais immediately resorts to the same pattern of epic parody, followed by an imitation thereof, resulting in the progressive degradation of the original

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[21] Plattard, Vie, p. 106.

[22] Lefranc, Oeuvres, IV, p. 277, n. 38.

[23] Tetel, Etude, p. 41.

model, i.e. the chanson de geste, when Pantagruel emulates a medieval chevalier eulogizing knighthood:

> Avant de livrer bataille aux Amaurotes, Pantagruel exhorte ses troupes éloquemment: "Il n'est umbre que d'estendartz, il n'est fumée que de chevaulx et clycquetys que de harnoys" [II,xxvii,351]. Cette grandiloquence lyrique et sublime suggère déjà un effort imitatif, mais pour railler la sublimité épique, l'auteur fait répéter à Epistémon la même oraison, cette fois-ci sur un ton burlesque: "Il n'est umbre que de cuisine, fumée que de pastez et clycquetys que de tasses" [II,xxvii,352]. Ensuite Panurge reprend la litanie d'une façon encore plus vulgaire. Une troisième dimension s'introduit alors dans la parodie. Il se produit une imitation d'une imitation qui dégénère sans cesse, aboutissant à un pastiche de la parodie.[24]

The war theme is resumed when Panurge displays his talents as a magician:

> Messieurs, considerez comment nous aurons victoire facillement de noz ennemys; car,--ainsi comme je rompray ce fust icy dessus les verres sans que les verres soient en rien rompus ne brisez, encores, que plus est, sans que une seulle goutte d'eau en sorte dehors,--tout ainsi nous romprons la teste à noz Dipsodes, sans ce que nul de nous soit blèssé et sans perte aulcune de noz besoignes. Mais, affin que ne pensez qu'il y ait enchantement, tenez, dist il à Eusthenes, frappez de ce pau tant que pourrez au millieu."
>
> Ce que fist Eusthenes, et le fust rompit en deux pieces tout net, sans que une goutte d'eau tumbast des verres. Puis dist :
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> "J'en sçay bien d'aultres; allons seullement en assurance" (II,xxvii,353).

Panurge has already established himself as a warrior by means of ruse, and he now becomes a necromancer as

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[24] Ibid., pp. 41-42.

well, the dual role played by Maugis in Les quatre fils Aymon. Panurge's special abilities include the gift of prophecy, characteristic of epic enchanters: the giant's companion insures the invincibility of his men. Likewise, Maugis provides for the survival of his four cousins through ruse and magic. Rabelais is foreshadowing the resurrection of Epistemon by Panurge, since the revival will be necessary to fulfill the soothsayer's presage.

Pantagruel feigns a humanitarian release of his hostage, who wishes to stay and fight with the giant, a reminiscence of the feudal custom whereby captives offer themselves in service to their new lord (Chapter 28). However, the prisoner is unknowingly to be the pawn for two ruses; the giant reflects Panurge's affection for a war engineered by "engin:" Pantagruel tells the Dipsode that reinforcement galleys will soon arrive with one million eight hundred thousand fighting men and seven thousand giants to help the Amaurotes; secondly, Pantagruel gives him a box of pastilles containing drugs which will produce in the Dipsodes a tremendous need to drink profusely, and subsequently cause them to fall asleep from the effects of the wine they drink to quench their thirst. Pantagruel is then free to enter the enemy camp and dump salt in the gaping mouths of the sleeping warriors. Pantagruel urinates, a result of

the diuretics which Panurge gave him, and drowns the Dipsodes. The giant's resourceful companion again is the motivating force in the war action since he is responsible for the drugs which cause the inundation: another victory is gained through trickery.

Rabelais imitates epic style with its frequent imperatives[25] in the transitional device "Laissons icy Pantagruel avec ses apostoles, et parlons du roy Anarche et de son armée" (II,xxviii,355), characteristic of the oral tradition where the narrator involves his public by means of the first and second person plural. Rabelais also uses this technique a few paragraphs later, illustrating his affection for imitation, and borrows a repetitive formulaic structure from the chanson de geste in the epithet, "le bon Pantagruel."

Pantagruel's single combat with Loup Garou provides the only battle scene in the war passages (Chapter 29). Panurge guides Pantagruel before the fight and advises him to take on the giants with the mast of the ship, which serves as his staff in this episode. Its purpose is explicitly stated in an earlier chapter when Pantagruel "print le mast de leur navire en sa main comme un bourdon" (II,xxviii,356). Just as his epic ancestors before him who fought with the bourdon, or

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[25] Crosland, p. 305.

pilgrim's staff--Pierre L'Ermite and Maugis--Pantagruel utilizes a simple weapon against a more sophisticated one.

During the battle between Pantagruel and Loup Garou, Panurge "contoit les fables de Turpin" (II,xxix, 360), i.e. Chronique de Turpin.[26] Rabelais's reference to "fables" underlines the fantastic nature of this medieval epic with its numerous miracles and incredible battles: "Les Chroniques de Turpin, attribuées à l'archevêque compagnon de Charlemagne, furent en vogue jusqu'au XVI^e siècle, en dépit de leur caractère fabuleux, que Rabelais relève ici."[27] At a point in the story when two giants are engaged in combat, it is appropriate to recall the fabulous nature of Rabelais's work as well, which is a parody of such chronicles with their eye-witness accounts of unbelievable phenomena. More specifically, for his contemporaries, Rabelais's recollection of this chanson de geste may evoke the single combat between Roland and Ferragut, given the fact that Rabelais cites Turpin's book while Pantagruel and Loup Garou fight.[28] The topoi of the encounter between a Christian knight and pagan giant are present

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[26] A summary of this work may be found in the appendix to this dissertation.

[27] Lefranc, Oeuvres, IV, p. 294, n. 14.

[28] A summary of the struggle between Roland and Ferragut may be found above, p. 46.

in both Rabelais and Chronique de Turpin: the disparity of stature is stressed; the giant has a special quality or possession which will presumably insure his victory; the Christian hero prays to God, the traditional "crédo épique,"[29] while the heathen cries out to Mohammed; the Christian receives divine aid, whereas the infidel's supplications remain unanswered; the knight is bereft of his weapon at some point and appears near defeat, only to triumph over the formidable odds which his foe represents.

Although Pantagruel is a giant, his size will not help him, since Loup Garou is even bigger than he. Rabelais burlesques the single combat between an epic hero and a giant by challenging the already enormous Pantagruel with a more gigantic figure. The dissonance is underlined in a biblical parallel when Panurge exclaims "David tua bien Goliath facillement" (II,xxix,359). Similarly in the epics, references to David and Goliath emphasize the difference in height and strength of the two adversaries, as in Huon de Bordeaux: "Amaury, nous l'avons dit, était doué d'une force prodigieuse : il représentait à merveille Goliath, en face de Huon qui représentait David."[30] The contrast between the ship's mast and

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[29] Crosland, p. 317.

[30] Delvau, I, p. 149.

Loup Garou's massive weapon further reinforces this disparity.

Loup Garou has an enchanted club with three diamond studs, the smallest of which is as large as the biggest bell in Notre Dame. Rabelais qualifies his exaggeration not once but twice: "il s'en failloit par adventure l'espesseur d'un ongle, ou au plus, que je ne mente, d'un doz de ces cousteaux qu'on appelle couppe aureille" (II,xxix,360). The narrator insists on the veracity of his chronicles, an epic device,[31] but since the reader has already suspended his belief, Rabelais's "que je ne mente" only emphasizes the ridiculous nature of this description. Pantagruel offers a prayer to heaven; we expect God to favor "le bon Pantagruel," since Rabelais epithetically conveys a priori grace through "bon." The text of the prayer has profound religious implications with respect to Renaissance reforms,[32] but the incident belongs to the scenario of the chanson de geste. In the course of the combat, Loup Garou cries out "Mahon" several times. Rabelais never states in so many words that any character is pagan, but the giant's invocation clearly implies that

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[31] Lote, p. 113.

[32] Michael A. Screech, L'Evangélisme de Rabelais: Aspects de la satire religieuse au XVI^e siècle, Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, Etudes rabelaisiennes, 32 (Genève: Droz, 1959), Chapter II, pp. 23-41.

Loup Garou is an infidel. Through this frugal technique, the statement concerning God's aid to "le bon Pantagruel" becomes increasingly mock epic, contrasting not just good and evil, but also Cross and Crescent, as the Christian and pagan giants duel for their faiths: "si Dieu n'eust secouru le bon Pantruel, il [Loup Garou] l'eust fendu depuis le sommet de la teste jusques au fond de la ratelle" (II,xxix,362-363).

Pantagruel's staff brushes against the handle of Loup Garou's magical weapon and the mast breaks, a result of the mighty powers of enchantment. Bereft of protection, Pantagruel cries out "Panurge, où es tu?" (II, xxix,363), and thereby expresses his admiaration for his companion's cunning.[33] It is tempting to reaffirm Panurge's special powers in the war with regard to his prophecy: when defeat seems likely, the giant immediately solicits the aid of his outstanding companion who has promised his men that no one shall perish.

"[V]oyant que Pantagruel estoit sans baston" (II,xxix,364), the other giants advance. In the final feat of the war, Pantagruel takes Loup Garou by the feet swings him around, and knocks over the remainder of the enemy. In this burlesque of weaponry, Loup Garou himself becomes the final war implement; and Pantagruel

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[33]Plattard, Vie, p. 107.

demonstrates his prowess and strength by lifting and swinging the enormous creature.

In narrating the battle, Rabelais imitates the detailed description common to the epic:

> Pantagruel gualentement ses bras desplie, et, comme est l'art de la hasche, luy donna du gros bout de son mast, en estoc, au dessus de la mammelle, et, retirant le coup à gauche en taillade, luy frappa entre col et collet. Puis, avanceant le pied droict, luy donna sur les couillons un pic du hault bout de son mast (II,xxix,362).

Rabelais's specific physiological references parody the blow-by-blow accounts in the chanson de geste which emphasize that the wound occurred on the head, the shoulders, the neck, etc., as in the following passage from Ogier le Danois:

> Cette clameur avertissant Ogier du renfort qui venait compenser la retraite de Didier, il se jeta avec une nouvelle furie sur les Français. Courtain [Ogier's sword] entaille au cou Richard de Normandie, fend le casque du duc Nemon, étend raide mort Girard Crochon, détache un bras du comte de Soissons, laisse l'archevêque de Noyons sans vie.[34]

But Rabelais is medically precise stating "au dessus de la mammelle," "entre col et collet," "sur les couillons." Paul Stapfer feels that these anatomical descriptions provoke laughter because of Rabelais's extremely accurate details,[35] a view supported by Marcel Tetel:

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[34]Delvau, I, p. 63.

[35]Paul Stapfer, Rabelais: sa personne, son génie, son oeuvre (Paris: Colin, 1889), p. 416.

> Déjà chez Homère et Virgile, les descriptions de blessures ou de mort étaient détaillées, mais dans la chanson de geste les détails deviennent plus abondants afin de retenir l'attention de l'auditoire parce que le récit fut d'abord créé pour être conté oralement. Rabelais feint de continuer la tradition médievale; cependant, ses descriptions sont encore plus détaillées que celles des trouvères, en partie, à cause du progrès des connaissances anatomiques et surtout parce qu'il prenait plaisir à l'amplification des précisions en se rendant compte que la surabondance de détails mène au rire.[36]

Rabelais, the doctor uses his special knowledge to reinforce the mock epic intent of a literary work.

> [Chapter 30] Ceste desconfite gigantale parachevée, Pantagruel se retira au lieu des flaccons, et appela Panurge et les aultres, lesquelz se rendirent à luy sains et saulves, excepté Eusthenes, lequel un des geans avoit egraphiné quelque peu au visaige, ainsi qu'il l'esgorgetoit (II,xxx, 365).

The understatement in reference to Eusthenes' injury contrasts with the enemy's fatal wounds, and emphasizes the invincibility of Pantagruel's men. Rabelais's borrowing of epic terminology, "desconfite," to describe the comic encounter between two giants results in parody. The mood created by such statements of gigantic prowess makes this the most effective moment to find Epistemon beheaded, a common fate for knights in the chanson de geste; the chapter heading with its spoonerism "la couppe testée" (II,xxx,365), forebodes the burlesque treatment of decapitation which is to follow.

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[36] Tetel, Etude, p. 45.

Eusthenes bursts forth with a lamentation over the death of his companion: "Ha! male mort, nous as tu tollu le plus parfaict des hommes?" (II,xxx,366). Eusthenes imitates the heroes in the chanson de geste who grieve over the loss of a fellow knight, as, for example, Charlemagne at the death of Roland, in Galien rethoré:

> O fleur de la chevalerie, le plus noble des nobles, le plus beau et le plus hardi de tous les vivants! toi qui étais le protecteur de la chrétienté! toi qui étais l'ennemi mortel des infidèles! enfin, toi qui étais le refuge des pauvres. Hélas! cruelle mort! quel déplaisir t'avait fait ce noble corps qui aimait tant l'accroissement de la foi chrétienne?[37]

Pantagruel then rebukes Panurge, the necromancer, for the unfulfilled prediction: "Ha! mon amy, l'auspice de vos deux verres et du fust de javeline estoy bien par trop fallace!" (II,xxx,366). Panurge had earlier insured his companions' immunity to death, and now is the opportune moment to prove his capabilities as a magician: "Le seul qui fût mort dans le camp de Pantagruel ne devait pas, au pays des miracles bouffons, rester mort bien longtemps."[38] Panurge performs a miraculous resurrection, an emulation of the great miracles in the epics such as Maugis' healing of his

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[37]Delvau, I, pp. 360-361.

[38]Glauser, p. 206.

cousins or the halt of the sun in Chronique de Turpin:

> Adoncq noctoya tres bien de beau vin blanc le col, et puis la teste, et y synapisa de pouldre de diamerdis qu'il portoit tousjours en une de ses fasques; après les oignit de je ne sçay quel oingnement : et les afusta justement, veine contre veine, nerf contre nerf, spondyle contre spondyle, affin qu'il ne feust tortycolly (car telles gens il hayssoit de mort.) Ce faict, luy fist à l'entour quinze ou seize poincts de agueille, afin qu'elle ne tumbast de rechief; puis mit a l'entour en peu d'un unguent qu'il appeloit resuscitatif....
>
> Et luy bailla à boire un voirre d'un grand villain vin blanc, avecques une roustie sucrée.
>
> En ceste faczon feus Epistemon guery habillement, excepté qu'il feut enroué plus de trois sepmaines, et eut une toux seiche, dont il ne peut oncques guerir sinon à force de boire (II,xxx,366-367).

Panurge's revival of his friend closely resembles the acts of Maugis in Les quatre fils Aymon.[39] Consider the similar passage in that medieval work:

> Alors Maugis, descendant de cheval, prit une bouteille de vin blanc, lava la plaie du moribond [Richard], réunit très habilement les entrailles, les replaça dans leur emplacement naturel et referma la peau, tout autour, avec

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[39]Lucien Febvre in Le Problème de l'incroyance au XVI^e siècle (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1942) devotes Chapter III, pp. 226-256, to the discussion of this episode. The resurrection may be interpreted religiously as a biblical parallel to Lazarus, or as a parody of epic miracles, specifically the one in Les quatre fils Aymon. Febvre supports the latter view on the basis of Panurge's role in the revival: considering the comic demeanor of Panurge throughout the war, the religious reference would be quite audacious. Febvre notes step-by-step the similarities between the procedures used by Maugis and Panurge to heal their wounded companions.

> un onguent particulier. Cela fait, il mit quelques gouttes d'un élixir infaillible sur les lèvres décolorées de Richard, qui, tout aussitôt, sentit les forces lui revenir avec la vie....
>
> Maugis fit de même pour Allard, Renaud et Guichard, et cicatrisa, sans qu'il y parût, les blessures qu'ils avaient reçues dans la bataille. Ainsi guéris, les quatre fils Aymon montèrent à cheval et reprirent le chemin de Montauban.[40]

Rabelais specifies that Panurge too uses white wine and resuscitative ointment. Maugis and Panurge carefully wash the injuries with wine, join the severed flesh, apply ungent, and the wounded are miraculously "gueris." Even the final step is the same, when both revived heroes must drink something to complete the process. The parallel does not stop with this one incident. Like Maugis, Panurge is the protector of his companions. Both are depicted as warrior-magicians renowned for ruse: just as Panurge's cunning helps to defeat the Dipsodes, Maugis performs magic and employs ruse to aid his four cousins in their campaign against Charlemagne. Maugis combines necromancy and trickery when he helps his cousin Renaud win the horse race sponsored by Charlemagne, who offers a gold crown as one of the prizes. Renaud wants the crown in order to melt it down and thereby pay his soldiers. Renaud's horse, Bayard, trained by Maugis, has super-sensory powers, and is a certain champion. However, Renaud and Bayard would be immediately

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[40] Delvau, I, p. 125.

recognized by the king. Through magic, Maugis completely changes the appearance of Renaud and his mount: Renaud looks fifteen years younger; the horse turns from black to white and ages tremendously. Maugis ties a piece of silk to one of Bayard's legs and holds it as they ride in view of Charlemagne, so that the horse limps and would thus be judged a poor competitor. When the tournament begins, Maugis lets go of the silk and Bayard takes off like a streak of lightning. Renaud wins, and as he rides off with his reward, the king recognizes him and is furious at being duped.

Brought back to life, Epistemon relates a vision of hell which he had while beheaded; it was "a complete inversion of the fates and fortunes of this world."[41] The harrowing of hell has a long medieval tradition in the drama and its most elaborate presentation is the Inferno section of Dante's Divina Comedia. It is not found in the chansons de geste. Critics cite Lucian's dialogue Menippus seu Necyomantia as the model for Epistemon's descent.[42] Epistemon's experience constitutes a vision, not a journey:

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[41] Gilbert Highet, The Anatomy of Satire (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1962), p. 165.

[42] Lefranc, Oeuvres, IV, p. 306, n. 25. Manfred Bambeck, "Epistemon's Unterweltberact in 30. Kap. des Pantagruel," Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, Etudes rabelaisiennes, 24 (Genève: Droz, 1956), pp. 29-47. Bambeck cites Abel Lefranc, Jean Plattard, and Anatole France as partisans of this opinion, p. 32.

> Between a mystical journey and a mystical vision the most important difference is that, in a journey, the stages are described in some detail, and the author tries to make them seem real, while the visionary either is transported by a miracle to and from the scene of his vision, or else, in a spiritual rapture, sees it all with the inward eye. Epistemon's visit to Hades was therefore a vision, seen by his spirit while his body lay cataleptic.[43]

By transferring the treatment of judgment and punishment to a time outside Christian chronology, Rabelais avoids the religious implication of a Christian satire concerning the afterlife:[44] "Although he is dealing with an essentially Christian theme--the judgment of God between good and evil, the revelation of all that in this world was hidden, and the penalties of the condemned--he does not mention the Christian deity."[45]

Epistemon met great men of the past--real and fictional--all performing menial tasks, a status contrasting sharply with the station they enjoyed during life. Heroes from the gest romances and romances of adventure are parodied by their lowly conditions, as well as by their presence in hell. In this "galerie de hêros de romans,"[46] Ogier le Danois is a furbisher of armor; Huon de Bordeaux, a hooper of barrels; Valentin

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[43] Highet, p. 165.

[44] Ibid., p. 169.

[45] Ibid., p. 168.

[46] Plattard, Vie, p. 8.

and Orson, stokers of hell's fires and masksnatchers; Geoffroy à la grand dent, a match-seller; Godefroy de Billon [sic Rabelais], a masker; Morgant, a brewer of beer; Jean de Paris, a greaser of boots; Galien Restauré [sic Rabelais], a molecatcher; les quatre filz Aymon, tooth-extractors; Mélusine, a scullery-maid.[47] The duties have no special significance with reference to any episode in the legend of each; Rabelais's criterion for including these personages as opposed to others may be their popularity. The medieval works in which they figure were still in vogue during the Renaissance. In fact, Les quatre fils Aymon, Mélusine, Galien rethoré, Valentin et Orson, Ogier le Danois, and Huon de Bordeaux are among the romans de chevalerie most often printed in the sixteenth century.[48]

Following the inundation of the Dipsode camp and the defeat of three hundred giants, Pantagruel and his merry warriors--all five intact because of Panurge's magic--pause to commemorate their victories: "tant y fut faicte lors grande chere" (II,xxxi,374). The use of the idiom "faire grande chere" is a frugal technique to emphasize the abundance of food and drink, traditional at such celebrations; a detailed description of the

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[47]The works which bear the names of these characters are summarized in the appendix to this dissertation.

[48]Tilley, pp. 45-63

feasting is dispensed with, and it is implied that the companions eat plentifully as did their predecessors in the chanson de geste. As before, however, comic feats do not warrant elaborate festivities, resulting in a parody of this motif. At this point in the narrative, the Dipsodes are conquered except for one town. Since the war is virtually over and there are no more battle scenes to be recounted, Rabelais appropriately concludes his mock epic with yet another burlesque banquet.

In summary, most of the techniques of epic parody listed earlier are present in Pantagruel: exaggeration or hyperbole; deflation of the nominal hero and corresponding aggrandizement of a secondary figure; reliance on specific epic topoi which are then parodied; epic formulae; oral narrative devices. Rabelais made a concerted attempt to mock the treatment of war in the chansons de geste, and he accomplished this mockery through the use of the above techniques in the war passages.

CHAPTER III

GARGANTUA AS A BURLESQUE EPIC

In Gargantua, a major war results from a peasant quarrel over a few cakes, announced in the heading of Chapter 25, the first mention of hostilities: "Comment feut meu entre les fouaciers de Lerné et ceux du pays de Gargantua le grand debat dont furent faictes grosses guerres" (I,xxv,100). Thus the war begins in a humorous vein: Rabelais "a vu le comique d'une immense guerre sortant d'une dispute particulière autour de quelques galettes. Petites causes, grands effets ; grandes causes, petits effets."[1] Having embarked on a comic course in his representation of the Picrocholine conflict, Rabelais again draws on medieval epic matter to provide a parodic depiction of warriors. The first episode dealing with the war theme contains various topoi of the chanson de geste: insults calling forth a défi, single combat, full-scale battle, references to weaponry, detailed description of blows, feast, miracle. Parody results when Rabelais employs these commonplaces, normally

[1] Glauser, p. 208.

used to glorify knights, in a bellicose encounter between shepherds and cake-bakers.

When the shepherds of La Devinière courteously ask to buy some wares from the cake-bakers of Lerné, their request is not only rejected but the bakers also shout a string of vulgar insults at their neighbors, namecalling which proceeds for a paragraph:

> Les jurons dont les gens de Picrochole accablent les aimables gens de Grandgousier sont de véritables cris de guerre.... Du côté de Grandgousier, on a agi courtoisement ; les gens de Picrochole répondent par des jurons proférés sans commentaires, et qui sont l'équivalent de coups dont ils frapperaient l'ennemi, ce qui s'en rapproche le plus dans le monde verbal. Les jurons se précipitent ; ils donnent l'impression de ne former qu'un immense cri.[2]

Forgier, one of the shepherds, responds calmly to this verbal attack, but the essence of his speech is that there will no longer be any commerce between the two groups. In Rabelais's transferral of epic <u>topoi</u> to peasants, the future confrontation between the two groups might well take place at the next market, not on the battlefield: "Encores par le marché vous eussions nous donné de noz raisins; mais, par le mer Dé! vous en pourriez repentir et aurez quelque jour affaire de nous. Lors nous ferons envers vous à la pareille, et vous en soubvienne!" (I,xxv,101). The stage for the war

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[2] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 209.

is being set as the insults of the enemy call forth the above *défi*: Forgier's answer to the bakers' abuses represents the traditional challenge which ultimately results in battle.

In the following passage from *Ogier le Danois* the same course of action, which we see in the episode from Rabelais, may be discerned; Bruhier's insult brings about Ogier's *défi*, and the adversaries take up the lance:

> Celui-ci [Bruhier] reprenant son arrogance dit à Ogier qui l'avait attendu:
> --Chevalier, tu es venu seul? tu n'as pas amné tes compagnons?
> --Pourquoi faire? dit Ogier.
> --Parce qu'il y a forte besogne à combattre un adversaire duquel tous les membres, sauf la tête, les abattît-on, se recolleraient à l'instant sans difficulté.
> --Allons, l'homme invulnérable, mets toujours ton heaume, parce qu'Ogier le Danois ne frappa jamais chevalier qui ne fût armé.
> --Ne vas-tu pas te régler sur ce qu'eût fait Ogier le Danois, mon pauvre camarade? Cela te sied si peu que je ne daignerais pas reculer d'un pas à cause de toi.
> Un échange de coups de lances suivit ce défi; les lances volèrent en éclats.[3]

As in the *chanson de geste*, Forgier must defend his honor and that of his peers, for to back away at this crucial moment with no retort to the enemy's verbal attack would immediately signal the cowardly submission of the shepherds. The enemy finds the defiance so offensive that there is no alternative except warfare,

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[3] Delvau, I, p. 76.

since the person(s) to whom the défi is directed must attempt to prove his (their) superiority. In this vein, Marquet, "grand bastonnier de la confrairie des fouaciers" (I,xxv,102) accuses Forgier of arrogance and then causes him to believe that some cakes may be bought, but as Forgier approaches to pay for the baked goods, Marquet slashes the shepherd's legs with a whip. Marquet then attempts to flee, but single combat ensues when Forgier confronts Marquet. As the leaders of the two groups fight, Forgier proves himself a fierce warrior as Rabelais recounts the blow-by-blow encounter:

> Puis [Marquet] voulut gaigner à la fuyte; mais Forgier s'escria au meurtre et à la force tant qu'il peut, ensemble luy getta un gros tribard qu'il portoit soubz son escelle, et le attainct par la joincture coronale de la teste, sus l'artere crotaphique, du cousté dextre, en telle sorte que Marquet tomba de sa jument; mieulx sembloit homme mort que vif (I,xxv,102).

A similar treatment of battle scenes continues throughout Gargantua as Rabelais provides precise physiological data thereby exaggerating the traditional epic description which is detailed but less exact with references simply to heads, legs, arms, chest, etc. Throughout Rabelais, in battle depictions as well as other situations, "l'extrême précision de détail est un moyen si infaillible d'anéantir le sérieux et de provoquer le rire."[4] The last clause in the above citation from Rabelais imitates the

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[4]Stapfer, p. 416.

serious tone used in the epics to convey the grave condition of the combatants. There are numerous examples of this type of statement following the sword and lance thrusts. In Fierabras as Olivier fights the giant Fierabras, the author wishes to relate their debilitation: "Ils joutèrent alors à pied l'un contre l'autre si fort, que peu s'en fallut qu'ils ne demeurassent sur-le-champ pâmés, à cause du travail qu'ils avaient fait."[5] Galien rethoré offers a graphic view of the blood and gore which results from knightly prowess: "ils [Galien and his companions] firent si belle défense, que nul ne demeurait devant eux. Il y eut dans cette affaire tant de morts, que l'herbe en était toute teinte de sang."[6]

In Rabelais's parody, dual combat is followed by a full-scale melee of the shepherds, aided by nearby farmers, and the cake-bakers. In his portrayal of lower class warriors using base weaponry, peasants rush at each other armed with cudgels, rocks, and sticks.

As in the epics, the moral predictability of the opponents is determined at the outset of the war narrative: "ces beaulx fouaciers...avoient trouvé male encontre par faulte de s'estre seignez de la bonne main au matin" (I,xxv,103). God protects one group and the other faction

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[5] Delvau, I, p. 8.

[6] Ibid., p. 341.

loses His grace, because they crossed themselves with their left hand that morning, a bad omen.[7] Having established the larger conflict between good and evil, Rabelais affirms this alignment through a mock miracle. Forgier is wounded and the cure for his injuries is the application of grapes to his legs "si bien qu'il feut tantost guery" (I,xxv,103). The account of the healing follows directly the mention of the cake-bakers' unorthodox sign of the cross, and Rabelais thereby juxtaposes the two peasant armies who comically reflect the orientation of the entire war: Picrochole's men are being punished by God for their crossing habits, and Marquet is more dead than alive; but Forgier's wounds are miraculously mended.

This one episode becomes a microcosm of the war and a prediction of the outcome. The shepherds, representing Grandgousier, ask "courtoisement" to buy the cakes; they represent the peaceful, reasonable demeanor of their king. On the other hand, Picrochole's irrational bakers refuse to sell their wares, heap insults on the friendly shepherds, and thereby provoke the war. During the battle between Marquet and Forgier, Marquet shows cowardice when he tries to run away, just as Picrochole will flee at the end of the war. After Forgier and Marquet are wounded, the former is immediately healed

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[7]Lefranc, Oeuvres, II (Paris: Champion, 1912), p. 252, n. 79.

while the latter, close to death, must be carried back to his people. Likewise, during the hostilities, Grandgousier loses only a few men, and Picrochole's fatalities number in the thousands. The victors celebrate with feasting; the shepherds and shepherdesses eat cakes and grapes, just as Gargantua and his companions commemorate their battles with food and drink.

Picrochole now prepares for a full-scale war to avenge the loss of a few cakes (Chapter 26). He calls out an army of nearly fifty thousand. To the epic exaggeration concerning the numerical strength of the enemy, Rabelais adds geographic disproportion: within the small area of Lerné and La Devinière--only a few kilometers--Rabelais presents giants and Picrochole's army of thousands[8] for the "grosses guerres."

The war reaches its high point as Frère Jean becomes a hero in his defense of the Abbey of Seuilly (Chapter 27). The monk challenges the enemy alone: clothed in his habit and armed only with the staff of the cross, the monk bowls Picrochole's men over like "porcs" (I,xxvii,109):

> Ainsi, par sa prouesse, feurent desconfiz tous ceulx de l'armée qui estoient entrez dedans le clous, jusques au nombre de treze mille six cens vingt et deux, sans les femmes et petitz enfans, cela s'entend tousjours (I,xxvii,112).

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[8]Glauser, p. 207.

Jean's bravery is motivated by his desire to defend "les biens de l'Eglise" (I,xxvii,108), the vineyard, hardly the Church's spiritual treasure which motivated Turpin, Maugis, or Pierre L'Ermite.

Jean's role has several functions contributing to epic parody. First, he is a minor figure in the Church, contrasting with the status of his most famous antecedent, the Archbishop Turpin--"what a hierarchical discrepancy between the high ecclesiast and the lowly monk acting for a rather dubious purpose!"[9] Secondly, Jean battles with the staff of the cross in the name of Church property against an adversary earlier described as having crossed themselves with the wrong hand. God favors Jean, and the monk is able to defeat thousands, as God endows the staff with divine enchantment rendering it a supernatural weapon. Traditionally, epic heroes sometimes employ simple weaponry which triumphs over more sophisticated means of defense, as in the case of Maugis, Galien, Pierre L'Ermite, who face enormous odds to emerge gallantly victorious. Rabelais reworks the bourdon motif, which has a long history in the chanson de geste, recalling the pilgrimage tradition and religious devotion. The author himself signals the relationship between the

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[9]Tetel, Rabelais, Twayne's World Authors Series (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967), p. 42.

pilgrim's staff and Frère Jean's staff of the cross in the last paragraph of this episode:

> Jamais Maugis, hermite, ne se porta si vaillamment à tout son bourdon contre les Sarrasins, desquelz est escript es gestes des quatre filz Haymon, comme feist le moine à l'encontre des ennemys avec le baston de la croix (I,xxvii,112).

The above citation leads to the final capacity of Jean in the mock epic: he is compared to Maugis, a direct inspiration offered to Rabelais by an episode of Les quatre fils Aymon. Maugis and Renaud, the main hero, make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to atone for their sins. Dressed in pilgrim's garb, they lead a repentent existence. No sooner does the epic author describe this holy image of the two knights, than they join in battle against the Saracens. Maugis had renounced killing much earlier and thereafter did not help his cousins in the war with Charlemagne. Yet, at this point, Maugis, still attired in his pilgrim's habit, fights using the bourdon, as he and Renaud kill many infidels: "Maugis... quoiqu'en habit de pélerin et en bourdon, avait fait sa rude besogne et mis à mal beaucoup de mécréants."[10] Maugis then defines the role which his staff plays: "Vous verrez que mon bourdon fait à l'occasion son office d'épée."[11] Furthermore, the monk's clothing

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[10] Delvau, I, p. 137.

[11] Ibid., p. 138.

resembles that of the pilgrim: both wear habits, i.e. long robes of a dark material.[12] The pilgrim's staff is a long wooden stick; Jean's weapon is nothing more than a bourdon with a crucifix at the top, "baston de la croix, qui estoit de cueur de cormier, long comme une lance, rond à plain poing" (I,xxvii,108). Both heroes are involved in a religious commitment; and, yet, each accepts a pragmatic duty to protect the Church. It is implied that the weapons of both are endowed with divine enchantment, since these heroes are able to challenge great odds and sophisticated means of defense with simple pieces of wood.

Frère Jean is the most fully developed caricature of the epic hero found in Rabelais. Jean's deeds are recounted in greater detail than any other hero's, and a simple monk dominates the entire war action. His staff and habit become integral to his portrayal as a mock warrior, and later in Gargantua the staff and frock are emphasized as indispensable aids to Jean's prowess, therefore becoming extensions of his being; no other character's accoutrements are stressed in a similar manner. Jean's dynamic behavior contrasts sharply with the usually sedentary monastic life; he kills more

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[12] An illustration of a pilgrim with staff in hand may be found in J. J. Jusserand, English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages (XIVth Century), 3rd ed., trans. Lucy Toulmin Smith (New York: G. P. Putnams sons, 1925), p. 369.

than thirteen thousand single-handedly, an extraordinary feat of physical force. His boisterous demeanor sets him apart from two possible models: the warrior-bishop Turpin and the pilgrim-magician Maugis. He swears enthusiastically at the beginning of battle, and in no way exhibits the refinement sometimes expected of noble knights. He enters the narrative in the first battle of the Picrocholine war, and he, more than any other, represents Rabelais's parody of the epic warrior.

Following the attack on the abbey, Grandgousier accepts the possibility that his kingdom may have to go to war: "maintenant de harnoys je charge mes pauvres espaules lasses et foibles, et en ma main tremblante je preigne la lance et la masse pour secourir et guarantir mes pauvres subjectz" (I,xxviii,114). Grandgousier appears ready to don armor and to protect his people with traditional medieval weapons, the lance and mace. However, he departs from the ancestral tradition because of his expressed intent to endeavor to achieve peace before going to war, a non-medieval attitude: "je n'entreprendray guerre que je n'aye essayé tous les ars et moyens de paix; là je me resouls" (I,xxviii,114). Ultimately, however, he must undertake a defensive war.

The burlesque depiction of the enemy monarch Picrochole and his commanders is elaborately detailed in Chapter 33. The tyrant, overreacting to the quarrel

between the bakers and shepherds, is now ready to conquer not only Grandgousier's territories but the entire world, and his advisors encourage this irrationality:

> Ils sont dans les mains de Rabelais les instruments indispensables pour montrer l'inanité de Picrochole. Cette ironie n'est possible que dans le monde rabelaisien : celui qui allait si facilement conquérir l'univers ne peut, dans l'univers de Rabelais, conquérir quelques pouces de terrain. Toutes ces conquêtes de rêve sont rassemblées dans un petit chapitre ; puisqu'elles sont pour les ambitieux une bagatelle, Rabelais en montre le ridicule en enfermant dans un espace limité des actions pour lesquelles il faudrait des centaines d'années à des centaines de tyrans.[13]

One aspect of Picrochole's expansionist tyranny deals with a popular epic theme, the crusade against the infidel. Picrochole becomes the protector of Christianity as he asks for the death of the pagans: "Ne tuerons nous pas tous ces chiens turcs et Mahumetistes?" (I,xxxiii,129). Baptism of the vanquished, the ultimate submission of the Saracen to the crusader, will hopefully follow their defeat: the counsellors proclaim to Picrochole that "Barberousse...se rend vostre esclave. ..--Je (dist Picrochole) le prendray à mercy. --Voyre (dirent ilz), pourveu qu'il se face baptiser" (I,xxxiii, 126). According to tradition, "un preux ne fait jamais quartier à un Sarrazin sans exiger de lui la promesse

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[13]Glauser, p. 218.

qu'il se fera baptiser."[14] Picrochole identifies himself with a gallant Christian knight expecting the surrender of the ignoble heathen.

Following this build-up of Picrochole as a world conqueror, his men are again defeated. Gymnaste, like Frère Jean, single-handedly faces the enemy (Chapters 34 and 35). Earlier, Gymnaste had taught the art of chivalry to Gargantua "car telles choses servent à discipline militaire" (I,xxiii,92), and Gymnaste now becomes a warrior, displaying these talents. Rabelais deflates the giant whose role in the war is lessened as two heroes, Jean and Gymnaste, emerge before Gargantua even reaches the battlefield.

Gymnaste allows Picrochole's men to believe that he is a demon when they hear the conversation between Tripet and him in which Gymnaste refers to himself as a "poor devil." The enemy cross themselves with both hands, a gesture recalling the previous incident which lost them God's favor. Gymnaste then performs stunts on his horse and reinforces the erroneous belief of Picrochole's superstitious men, who flee frightened by Gymnaste's acrobatics. Horsemanship becomes an elaborate event with mystic overtones, and the equestrian expertise of the epics functions as a ruse. Gymnaste's satanic masquerade may be an exaggeration of chivalric feats

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[14] Lefranc, Oeuvres, II, p. 293, n. 22.

and/or a reference to anti-Christ figures or demonic creatures from the chanson de geste. Usually, evil beings are destroyed, as, for example, in Godefroy de Bouillon where an anti-Christ knight is killed, and a serpent symbolizing the devil is defeated. In Gargantua, on the other hand, the "demon" is victorious, and Rabelais's knight, among God's favored, uses Satan to win a battle.

Toward the end of the episode, Gymnaste attacks the frightened enemy as they attempt to flee. Trickery yields to physical strength as Gymnaste displays his prowess. Rabelais implies Gymnaste's indestructibility by protecting him with armor so excellent that he does not feel the blows:

> [I]l estoit bien armé et de cestuy coup ne sentit que le chargement, et, soubdain se tournant, lancea un estoc volant audict Tripet, et, ce pendent que icelluy se couvroit en hault, luy tailla d'un coup l'estomac, le colon et la moytié du foye, dont tomba par terre, et, tombant, rendit plus de quatre potées de souppes, et l'ame meslée parmy les souppes (I,xxxv,136).

His use of traditional weaponry and armor in a detailed description in which the ultimate gore of battle is compared to soup brings him directly into the realm of epic parody. Gymnaste's burlesque role is reaffirmed through his relationship to Tripet:

> Tripet, qui veut "en trahison" "fendre la cervelle" à Gymnaste [p. 136], ne se rend pas compte que, dans l'épopée bouffonne, il ne peut y avoir de proportion entre l'offense et la punition : pour une cervelle que Tripet

> voulait fendre, il se verra tailler d'un coup l'estomac, l'intestin côlon, et la moitié du foie ; son nom le destinait d'ailleurs à cette fin, car Rabelais n'a pas pu s'empêcher de créer une scène pour pouvoir se permettre le jeu de mots "lors que Tripet fut estripé" [p. 160]. Ce n'est pas tout : quand il est tombé mort, pour que la justice soit assez cruellement rendue, Rabelais montre l'âme de Tripet si peu digne du salut éternel, selon le point de vue de l'auteur qui tient les rênes comiques de la création, qu'elle est mêlée aux "quatre potées de souppes" qu'il rendit.[15]

Rabelais appears to be preparing Gargantua for feats of prowess when he provides the giant with a special weapon to be used against cannon fire--a staff (Chapter 36):

> Adoncques monta Gargantua sus sa grande jument, accompaigné comme davant avons dict, et, trouvant en son chemin un hault et grand arbre (lequel communement on nommoit l'Arbre de sainct Martin, pource qu'ainsi estoit creu un bourdon que jadis sainct Martin y plancta), dist : "Voicy ce qu'il me failloit : cest arbre me servira de bourdon et de lance." Et l'arrachit facilement de terre, et en ousta les rameaux, et le para pour son plaisir (I,xxxvi, 137).

Rabelais parodies the <u>bourdon</u> with a slight inversion: Gargantua proclaims that the tree will serve not only as a pilgrim's staff, but as a lance as well. Although conventionally the staff becomes an impromptu weapon, Gargantua determines at the outset the dual purpose of this implement. Rabelais chooses a St. Martin's tree, thereby increasing the holy associative value of the

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[15]Glauser, p. 213.

staff: according to legend, while St. Martin was sleeping, his companion, Brice, put their bourdons in the ground and they immediately sprouted limbs.[16]

However, Gargantua subsequently "defeats" the enemy without arms. His mare urinates forming a stream twenty-one miles wide drowning the enemy in its path. Gargantua seemingly acquires his lance only to ignore it, and Rabelais again postpones Gargantua's battlefield glory. The author deflates him by according the giant's horse a major role in conquering Picrochole's men:

> Il [Rabelais] aurait pu nous présenter Gargantua comme un être instruit et civilisé, et le faire agir conformément à cette culture récemment acquise ; au contraire, il renverse ce qu'il avait construit ; l'entrée de Gargantua aurait pu être héroïque et épique ; Rabelais le montre sur sa grande jument, qui, elle, contribue par le moyen le plus grossier au succès de l'action guerrière en même temps que de l'action bouffonne, le déluge dans lequel "toute ceste bande des ennemys furent en grand horreur noyéz" [p. 137].[17]

When Gargantua reaches the woods of Vède, Eudemon tells him that several of the enemy are still inside the castle. As in the chansons de geste, Rabelais's hero must also demonstrate his ability to besiege a fortress. Gargantua attempts to verify the information offered by his companion, but the giant appears comically confused: "Estez vous là, ou n'y estez pas? Si vous y estez, n'y

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[16]Lefranc, Oeuvres, II, pp. 312-13, n. 6.

[17]Glauser, p. 213.

soyez plus; si n'y estez, je n'ay que dire" (I,xxxvi,138). The enemy answers him with "neuf mille vingt et cinq coups de faulconneaux et arquebouzes" (I,xxxvi,138). Gargantua believes that the cannon balls are grape seeds, and they underline his invincibility, characteristic of epic heroes. As if a prelude to gigantic feats, the innocuous shower of cannon balls is answered by Gargantua's leveling of the castle with his powerful staff.

Frère Jean joins Gargantua and his three friends, and an epic group of five is constituted. These loyal companions are responsible for the major victories in the war against Picrochole's army of thousands. They prepare to set forth together, and Rabelais presents a pre-battle description of medieval knights (Chapter 41):

> [C]hascun commença soy armer et accoustrer, et armerent le moyne contre son vouloir, car il ne vouloit aultres armes que son froc davant son estomach et le baston de la croix en son poing. Toutesfoys, à leur plaisir feut armé de pied en cap et monté sus un bon coursier du royaulme, et un gros braquemart au coustè, ensemble Gargantua, Ponocrates, Gymnaste, Eudemon et vingt et cinq des plus adventureux de la maison de Grandgousier, tous armez à l'advantaige, la lance au poing, montez comme sainct George, chascun ayant un harquebouzier en crope (I,xli,156-157).

At this point, Jean resembles a finely armored chevalier mounted on an excellent charger. But the armor and sword which his companions have forced upon him appear out of keeping with his character since Jean wants no other weapon than his staff and no further protection

for his stomach than his frock, a reference to his gourmand nature. In accordance with his wishes, Jean later rejects knightly accoutrement and returns to his former arms and armor--his staff of the cross and his habit. By comparing these men to St. George, the patron of warriors, Rabelais's image of his fearless chevaliers is iconographic.

The next episode resumes the mood suggested by the reference to St. George, when Rabelais refers to his heroes as "nobles champions" (Chapter 42):

> Or s'en vont les nobles champions à leur adventure, bien deliberez d'entendre quelle rencontre fauldra poursuyvre et de quoy se fauldra contregarder, quand viendra la journée de la grande et horrible bataille (I,xlii,157).

In a tone of epic foreboding the last clause of the above citation prepares us for a glorious battle; "grand" and "horrible" are commonly used in the chanson de geste to describe warfare. However, the apparent profundity is soon destroyed when Rabelais introduces the blasphemous monk urging his men on to the battle-field. He assures them that they have no reason to fear the enemy:

> Enfans, n'ayez ny paour ny doubte, je vous conduiray seurement. Dieu et sainct Benoit soient avecques nous! Si j'avoys la force de mesmes le couraige, par la mort bieu! je vous les plumeroys comme un canart! Je ne crains rien fors l'artillerie. Toutesfoys, je sçay quelque oraison que m'a baillé le soubsecretain de nostre abbaye, laquelle

> guarentist la personne de toutes bouches à feu; mais elle ne me profitera de rien, car je n'y adjouste poinct de foy. Toutesfoys, mon baston de croix fera diables. Par Dieu, qui fera la cane, de vous aultres, je me donne au diable si je ne le fays moyne en mon lieu et l'enchevestre de mon froc : il porte medicine à couhardise de gens (I,xlii,157-158).

Jean's speech may function as a parody of the epic absolution scene before battle. Traditionally, the priest confesses his men, and offers up prayers for their salvation; Turpin frequently plays this role in various epics. In this vein, the monk promises his men that he will guide them safely, and he asks for God's aid. But he rejects as useless the prayer which he learned at the abbey; instead, he will put his faith in frock and staff. This same attitude is present at his defense of the Abbey of Seuilly; the other monks believe that Latin chants will protect them, while Jean, the active warrior, takes up his bourdon to defend the vineyard. Physical, not verbal, force will protect him.

In Rabelais's parodic treatment of arms and armor, Jean is the only one depicted in a detailed incident involving them; Jean proves himself unsuited to sophisticated accoutrement. While delivering his rousing address, our rhetorician catches his visor on a tree, and is left hanging there as his horse rushes out from under him. In another striking graphic image, Rabelais describes Jean swinging from the branch

and crying murder and treason. Gymnaste rescues him by unhooking the visor and allowing Jean to fall unceremoniously to the ground. The monk throws his armor piece by piece into a field, and finally returns to his habit.

When they reach the battlefield, Gargantua as well prefers his bourdon to a sword; he levels the enemy with his fantastic tree (Chapter 44). Furthermore, we are given more evidence concerning the special nature of Jean's simple weapon. During this encounter with Picrochole's men, the monk's sword breaks: "Tant en tua et mist par terre que son braquemart rompit en deux pieces (I,xliv,166). The more conventional implement is less substantial than Jean's staff of the cross which survives the defeat of thousands.

Interspersed among the battles are various epic topoi: feasts, pilgrimages, bestowal of gifts, miracle. Appropriately, the war is concluded with a monument to the "grosses guerres."

Following several major battles--Jean's defense of the abbey, Gymnaste's slaughter of Tripet and his companions, Gargantua's destruction of the fortress with his staff--the warriors pause for food and drink in the epic tradition, to celebrate their victories. Grandgousier welcomes his men to the castle and rewards them with a great banquet (Chapter 37). The narrator

speaks directly to his audience as he attempts to relate the superlative quality of the festivities: "jamais on ne veit gens plus joyeux car Supplementum Supplementi Chronicorum dict que Gargamelle y mourut de joye. Je n'en sçay rien de ma part, et bien peu me soucie ny d'elle ny d'aultre" (I,xxxvii,140). This passage represents epic parody in several respects. First, Rabelais's technique of entering his work to communicate with his public may be associated with the epic tradition.[18] Secondly, Rabelais's claim to the veracity of his chronicle is another device of the chanson de geste.[19] However, he uses a fictitious source to attest to truthfulness in imitation of the medieval author who cites real or imaginary works to support his assertion.[20] Thirdly, he parodies the "swooning" motif; in this case, the celebration itself appears to have prompted Gargamelle's demise.

Traditional abundance is emphasized by the long list of animals to be roasted and duration is stressed as well: the first mention of eating is made in Chapter 37 and it is not until Chapter 41 that Rabelais announces the end of the feast. He thereby exaggerates the importance of this gathering, and he shifts the heroes'

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[18] Lote, p. 113.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Lefranc, Oeuvres, II, p. 317, n.4.

attention from what should be their main concern, warfare, to their stomachs.

At a ceremonial moment, Grandgousier eulogizes Frère Jean and "le loua au dessus des prouesses de Camille, Scipion, Pompée, Cesar et Themistocles" (I,xxxix,146). Within the text that follows, Rabelais contrasts Jean and his warring predecessors when the author describes with a strong graphic image the monk's triumphal entry: the brave defender of Church property, staff in hand, is mounted on a mule. The comic force of each incident--the speech and Jean's arrival--is intensified through Rabelais's juxtaposition of the two views: the monk envisioned as a Caesar and the amusing portrait of Jean on a simple pack animal.

When the warriors return from another bout with the enemy, Grandgousier again orders that food and drink be served, but the usually gourmand Gargantua is too upset to eat because Jean has been taken prisoner (Chapter 45). However, soon the monk returns calling out for fresh wine, appropriately his first words, since his desire for liquid sustenance will break Gargantua's fast as well. The end of the war is feted in an unprecedented manner with "un festin, le plus magnificque, le plus abundant et plus delitieux que feust veu depuis le temps du roy Assuere" (I,li,187). The superlative adjectives convey the unique nature of this final

celebration, and Rabelais has no further need to provide lists of foods or emphasis on duration to relate that this is a superb feast.

Epics commonly tell of pilgrims en route to or returning from shrines in Europe or the Holy Land: in their respective cycles, Renaud, Maugis, Charlemagne, and Ogier le Danois take up the bourdon; knights in Godefroy de Bouillon encounter devout travelers on pilgrimages; Chronique de Turpin refers to such persons traveling to Spain to venerate St. Jacques de Compostelle; Renaud and Maugis in Les quatre fils Aymon don pilgrim's garb, travel to the Holy Land, and take up arms against the infidel, with Maugis using his staff as a sword.

In Gargantua, Rabelais includes two groups of pilgrims. The first are ultimately included in a grotesque treatment of giganticism, while the others serve as a pretense for Rabelais to expound on religious criticism and to condemn pilgrimages. However, both groups are related directly to the war narrative in a similar manner: six pilgrims returning from worship at St. Sebastien hide in the cabbage which Gargantua subsequently eats, but they do not cry out for fear of being mistaken for spies (Chapter 38); the espionage theme is resumed when five pilgrims on their way to Saint Sebastien are bound, blindfolded, and taken away "comme s'ilz feussent espies" (I,xliii,161) by

Picrochole's men;[21] the five are then rescued by Frère Jean, also a prisoner, when he escapes (Chapter 45).

Spies are commonplace in the epics. In fact, pilgrims sometimes functioned as such against the Saracens during the crusades.[22] However, in the chanson de geste, pilgrims are normally treated as devout, holy figures. Rabelais deflates these personages by according them a role as suspected subversive elements.

Chapter 36 ends with a miracle, although it is not on the scale of Maugis' healing of his four cousins, Epistemon's resurrection, or Forgier's grape ointment. When Gargantua's companions cross the stream of bodies in the urine deluge, Eudemon's horse sinks its leg knee-deep "dedans la pance d'un gros et gras vilain" and is cured of a ring-bone "par l'atouchement des boyaux de ce gros marroufle" (I,xxxvi,139). Rabelais's treatment of miracles has degenerated by this point. A horse rather than a war hero is the beneficiary, and the remedy is the rotting remains of one of Picrochole's men rather than a mysterious balm.

The bestowal of gifts is an epic motif. In Chronique de Turpin when Ganelon is sent as an ambassador to Baligant to ask for the Moslem's baptism,

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[21] Jourda, p. 161, n. 1.

[22] Jusserand, p. 413.

Charlemagne sends gifts to the pagan: thirty horses laden with gold and silver, and other riches from Spain; forty horses carrying sweet wine; one thousand beautiful Saracen women. Ogier's two friends, Benoît and Gelin, are rewarded for their aid to the Queen of Pavia in Ogier le Danois when the queen gives them two statues of horses in gold and silver, and the king offers a superb mount and jewels.

In this tradition, Grandgousier presents Toucquedillon with a fine gold sword decorated with beautiful scrolls, an enormous sum of money, and "un collier d'or pesant sept cens deux mille marcz, garny de fines pierreries à l'estimation de cent soixante mille ducatz" (I, xlvi, 173). But the collar is so heavy that Toucquedillon cannot wear it: "Rabelais, ici, oublie que Toucquedillon n'est pas un géant."[23]

The spoils are shared among the victors (Chapter 52), and a monument to the war is planned (Chapter 53). Thélème, an idealized monastery, is to be Frère Jean's compensation for his service to the king, in imitation of the feudal custom of awarding fiefs to heroes. Rabelais's choice of structure may have been influenced by the medieval works which he knew: Charlemagne in Chronique de Turpin commemorates his conquests by

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[23] Jourda, p. 173, n. 1

building abbeys and churches; in Mélusine, Geoffroy à la grant dent rebuilds the abbey which he burned down and he endows it heavily so that the monks may live devoutly and so that prayers may be offered up for his mother and father, and all their heirs; Geoffroy à la grant dent retells the story concerning Geoffroy and the monastery; Robert le Diable recounts the construction of an abbey to honor the deceased Robert. Whether such literature provides Rabelais's point of departure or not, the monastery is the institution par excellence of the Middle Ages, and as such Thélème is a parallel to his work: a medieval form with Renaissance "marrow." Thélème represents the author's social ideal[24] and thus departs from its models in the gest romances and romances of adventure.

In summary, all of the techniques of epic parody listed earlier are present in Gargantua: exaggeration or hyperbole; deflation of the nominal hero and corresponding aggrandizement of a secondary figure; reliance on specific epic topoi which are then parodied; epic formulae; oral narrative devices, caricature of the heroes. Rabelais's second effort to mock the treatment of war in the chansons de geste is accomplished through the use of his full repertoire of parodic techniques.

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[24] Stapfer, p. 252.

CHAPTER IV

EPIC *TOPOI*: COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS BETWEEN *GARGANTUA* AND *PANTAGRUEL*

In *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, Rabelais employs literary techniques associated with the epic: "Protestation que l'histoire racontée est vraie, bien plus vraie que tout ce qu'on a écrit jusqu'alors, appel constant au témoignage, interpellations directes aux lecteurs."[1] Numerical exaggeration with reference to the size of armies is used in order to stress the formidable odds which Rabelais's heroes face, and imitations of epic sublimity through the use of such terms as "chevaliers" or "déconfire" recall the genre which Rabelais burlesques. These devices occur in both works. Along with the preceding narrative techniques, the commonplace elements of the epic war passages recreate the enfironment of the *chansons de geste*: councils, planning of strategy, concern about the size and number of the enemy, massacres where great numbers of the enemy perish, single combats.[2] As in the medieval literature which served as Rabelais's

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[1] Lote, p. 113.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

model, the hero's loyal friends help him defend the homeland: in both books, five warriors constitute the epic group, and their invincibility is emphasized as they meet thousands of adversaries and none of the companions dies. As Rabelais proceeds from Pantagruel to Gargantua, particular epic topoi are dealt with differently, and these transformations will be noted with reference to the following: the deflation of the central hero; Frère Jean as a reworking of Panurge; Gymnaste and Panurge as masters of ruse and necromancers; divine intervention; miracles; special weaponry; tactics of warfare; the crusade against the infidel; the banquet; the monument.

The extended war narrative in Gargantua allows the emergence of two auxiliary heroes while there is only one in Pantagruel. Rabelais restrains the activities of Gargantua and Pantagruel at the outset of hostilities in their fatherland and others display heroics: in Pantagruel, Panurge becomes a military strategist as he defeats over six hundred Dipsodes with ropes; Frère Jean in Gargantua challenges artillery with his staff and kills over thirteen thousand single-handedly, and, next, Gymnaste meets Picrochole's forces. By postponing the entry of Gargantua and Pantagruel onto the battlefield, Rabelais burlesques the knights of the chansons de geste who traditionally rush into the melee. However, the delay is longer in Gargantua than in Pantagruel,

and thus Gargantua is increasingly deflated the longer he remains waiting in the wings as two warriors emerge to precede the giant in the performance of feats of prowess. Furthermore, Panurge's and Jean's single-handed victories at the beginning of the war narrative have the effect of reducing the importance of the giant who should be slaying equal or greater numbers at that moment in the chronicle bearing his name. In this respect, Gargantua is more overshadowed by the monk than Pantagruel is by Panurge since Jean kills twenty times more foes than Panurge. Rabelais recognizes the comic potential of this hyperbole in Pantagruel and he reinforces the parody in Gargantua by increasing the number of those who fall at the hands of his mighty warrior.

With respect to their roles as parodies of the epic warrior, Frère Jean is patterned after Panurge and they make excellent lieutenants for two giants.[3] Jean, like Panurge, is responsible for the first victory and they both continue to be of primary importance to the war effort as they advise the giant, control the action at certain points, plan strategy, promise their men that no harm will befall them, are honored for their participation in the hostilities: "on peut dire que le Panurge de Pantagruel a été l'épure du portrait

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[3]Armitage, p. 950.

de Frère Jean."[4] Panurge's significance during the Dipsode conflict is outlined by Jean Plattard:

> Elle [Panurge's ruse] est l'auxiliaire de la force du géant dans la campagne contre les Dipsodes. Là, Panurge a un rôle absolument utile et bienfaisant. Il est courageux et, comme les autres "apostoles" de Pantagruel, "délibéré de vivre et mourir" avec son maître. Il réconforte ses compagnons, leur donne confiance par l'augure d'un bâton brisé sur deux verres restant intacts. Il réussit, à lui seul, à déconfir "bien subtilement" six cent soixante chevaliers ennemis, grâce à un stratagème et par une autre ruse, il fait inonder le camp du roi des Dipsodes par le géant. Pantagruel a une telle admiration pour sa subtilité qu'il n'hésite pas à déclarer dans une inscription en vers qu'Engin [astuce] vaut mieux que Force et lorsque dans son duel avec Loupgarou, il se trouve soudain désarmé, son mât ayant touché la massue enchanté du géant, il appelle Panurge à son secours (brackets Plattard's). Ainsi dans cette guerre de Dipsodie, la ruse de Panurge seconde utilement la force du géant et Panurge est présenté à notre admiration comme un inventeur de stratagèmes militaires.[5]

Rabelais's point of departure for Jean is the side-kick lieutenant, the military strategist, the staunch protector of the homeland--parts played first by Panurge. In Panurge, Rabelais chooses to portray a master of cunning, a burlesque of epic heroes noted for ruse, personages whose numbers are few. Panurge comes to symbolize the power which comes from intelligence, rather than from muscles.[6] "Panurge, dans le Pantagruel,

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[4] Glauser, p. 138.

[5] Vie, pp. 106-107.

[6] Glauser, p. 137.

vit surtout par les tours multiples qu'il joue. Dans Gargantua, Frère Jan dépasse Panurge par sa vitalité et l'efficacité de ses actes."[7] Jean is easily recognized as a parody of the traditional depiction of the active epic warrior who rushes fearlessly into the melee, faces formidable odds, and kills great numbers of the enemy with his trusty weapon through physical feats of prowess. Rabelais explicitly reinforces this relationship by citing a specific predecessor for Jean, Maugis of Les quatre fils Aymon who likewise wears a habit, pilgrim's garb, into battle and fights with a bourdon to slay many adversaries in possession of more sophisticated arms. Thus Rabelais deals with Frère Jean in incidents involving special weaponry, battlefield confrontations, man-to-man combats, the siege of a castle--elements absent from the portrayal of the trickster Panurge whose pranks to defeat the enemy involve no such tactics. Like Panurge, Jean controls the action in several episodes where he protects the abbey, kills Captain Tyravant along with many members of the opposing army, is taken prisoner and escapes his captors, takes a hostage, storms the walls of a fortress and forces those within to submit to his staff. Jean is more often responsible for victories than Panurge,

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[7] Ibid., p. 177.

whose triumphs amount to two ruses: the enclosure of the Dipsodes in ropes and the drugs given to Pantagruel which cause the urine deluge. Possibly, Rabelais discovered that the open warfare of Gargantua provided a greater variety of experiences for his hero and decided to desert ruse as the predominant means of warfare. Rabelais also gives Frère Jean special clothing and a particular weapon which become indispensable to his characterization as a warrior: the monk's habit and the staff of the cross. No comparable accoutrement enhances Panurge's war efforts. In contrast with Panurge, Jean is neither a magician nor a master of ruse, and Rabelais assigns these roles to Gymnaste. Panurge and Jean are honored in some manner for their deeds: in the dedicatory inscription on the monument in Pantagruel, Pantagruel praises Panurge's "engin;" Jean, on the other hand, is lauded more elaborately when Grandgousier eulogizes him in a formal banquet speech where he compares the monk to Caesar and other great leaders, and finally, Thélème, the majestic war monument, is to be Jean's reward for his service. Both leaders similarly promise that no harm will befall the epic group. In keeping with Panurge's role as a magician, his statement pertaining to the survival of his men is surrounded by a prophetic aura created by the trick he performs while breaking the staff over the glasses and declaring that

just as the glasses remain intact, so too will the five heroes. Jean's manner of offering his men preservation throughout the hostilities is in accordance with his function as a man of the Church, and in a scene reminiscent of the epic absolution sequence, Jean speaks in terms of God's protection, which was of no interest to Panurge who, as a necromancer, fulfilled his augury with magic.

"Gymnaste, in his trickery, also plays the Panurge role."[8] Both resort to subterfuge to gain victories; however, Panurge, in contrast with Gymnaste, uses ruse as an end rather than a means. Gymnaste scares Picrochole's men with his demonic display of equestrian expertise, and trickery gives way to physical force as he kills the adversary with his sword as they flee in fear of Gymnaste. There is no similarity between the modes of ruse used by the two, but these characters share a common bond with respect to Rabelais's creative process in that he chooses to depict persons noted for cunning in both works. Whereas Panurge is delineated as a trickster from the moment he enters the narrative of Pantagruel, Gymnaste's portrayal as such is limited to one battle; and this comparison leads us to the conclusion that Rabelais's interest in a war engineered by ruse lessened as he proceeded from Pantagruel to Gargantua.

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[8] Armitage, p. 950.

Panurge and Gymnaste represent warrior-magicians as well. Panurge is the traditional necromancer as he cracks his staff across the glasses and comments that he knows many other tricks, prophesies that none in the group will perish, heals the decapitated Epistemon and thereby fulfills his prediction. The two chapters (27 and 30) containing Panurge's supernatural traits are closely linked in that the earlier one contains a presage which is realized in the later; this foreshadowing is one of the narrative threads of Pantagruel. Rabelais makes a concerted attempt to imitate the epic with reference to the presence of an enchanter, and he parodies a particular miracle from Les quatre fils Aymon, making Panurge a mock Maugis through resurrection of his companion; thus Panurge's relationship to the magical realm of the chansons de geste is firmly reinforced. In Gargantua, Rabelais produces a version of the superhuman for which there is no specific epic predecessor. Gymnaste calls himself a "poor devil," performs gymnastics on his horse, and Picrochole's men interpret this as a manifestation of occult talents. From the enemies' point of view, he is viewed as a necromancer dealing in satanic tricks since enchanters are conventionally demonic figures associated with black magic. In Pantagruel, Rabelais recreates the fabulous world of the chansons de geste through the inclusion of an authentic

magician whose identity as such is established and then reaffirmed at a later point. In contrast, Gymnaste is a bogus enchanter whose demonic qualities are not innate but rather assumed. This depiction is limited to Chapters 34 and 35 and is not treated again; therefore Gymnaste's supernatural aspects are of incidental interest to Rabelais whose concern with the magician figure in Gargantua has decreased.

Rabelais emulates the marvelous environment of the epics through his treatment of divine intervention. Heaven protects Rabelais's warriors from harm. Toward the end of the war narrative in Pantagruel, Pantagruel offers a prayer to God and Rabelais explicitly states that God helps "le bon Pantagruel" to defeat Loup Garou. This is the only point during the conflict where God's aid is specifically mentioned. In this vein, the onset of the Picrocholine war is marked by an implied statement concerning God's favor to Grandgousier's side: Picrochole's cake-bakers are fated to lose to the shepherds in the squabble which causes the war because the former crossed themselves with the wrong hand that morning and therefore we may infer that God will choose to reward Grandgousier's people with victory. In contrast with Pantagruel and the direct entrance of God into the battle, no such overt act takes place in Gargantua. Instead, God's omnipresence is implied:

in Chapter 26 as Picrochole pillages Grandgousier's realm, Rabelais states that the perpetrators will surely be punished and subsequent episodes emphasize the unjust demeanor of Picrochole and his people as opposed to the Christian Grandgousier and his subjects who symbolize the virtue of their monarch.

Rabelais mocks the supernatural world of the chansons de geste when he deals with incidents involving miraculous healing. In Pantagruel, Epistemon is beheaded, and during a resuscitation analogous to the one performed by Maugis in Les quatre fils Aymon, Panurge washes Epistemon's severed flesh with wine, joins the head to the body, and applies a special ointment to the injured area. Finally, he has Epistemon drink wine and the latter is "guery habillement" (II,xxx,367). In Gargantua, Forgier's legs are slashed with a whip during the quarrel over the cakes and his companions apply grapes to his cuts: "avec gros raisins chemins estuverent les jambes de Forgier mignonnement, si bien qu'il feut tantost guery" (I,xxv,103). There is a possible parallel between the two occurrences with reference to the curative powers of wine and ointment, and the manner in which they are put on the wounds. In the Forgier episode, Rabelais seemingly combines Panurge's and Maugis's wine and ointment in one symbol, the grapes: the wine and grapes have an obvious organic relationship

and when the grapes are placed on Forgier's legs, the fruit must necessarily become soft, like ungent, in order to adhere to the skin; furthermore, the bathing of Forgier's cuts is similar to the washing done by Maugis and Panurge, and the same participle "guery" is used in Les quatre fils Aymon and in Rabelais.[9] Later in Gargantua, a horse with ring-bone is "guery" as it sinks its leg into the rotting body of one of Picrochole's drowned men. Again the application of moist soft matter--like ungent or grapes--restores health to the afflicted. With respect to the first two miracles from Rabelais, the wine and ointment are reminiscent of Les quatre fils Aymon and bring with them the magical quality of special agents found in the chansons de geste; however, the final curative, a decaying corpse, is totally grotesque. In Pantagruel, the revival is dealt with at length, and Rabelais makes a concerted attempt to parody a specific episode from an epic so that Epistemon's resurrection is "overladen with fantasy and buffoonery."[10] Panurge mends a fatal injury and thus displays his outstanding talents as a necromancer. In Gargantua, each miracle is treated in one sentence and the wounds are minor,

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[9]Febvre in Le Problème de l'incroyance, pp. 234-35, comments on the similar usage of the verb "guérir" in Rabelais and Les quatre fils Aymon.

[10]Coleman, p. 93.

hardly on the level of a decapitation. Rabelais's restrained interest in these events in Gargantua plays down their fabulous nature. Healing in both cases is attributable to the substance touching the wound, and, therefore, the fantastic necromancy of the epics is deemphasized through the removal of the magician figure. Furthermore, in Pantagruel, one of the major heroes is brought back to life, whereas in Gargantua, a shepherd and finally a horse are the beneficiaries of miracles. Thus Rabelais gradually vulgarizes the incidents by lessening the importance of the recipient.

In Rabelais, special weaponry sometimes recalls the mysterious epic realm, although this is not the sole purpose of such implements. In Pantagruel, Loup Garou has an enormous enchanted club, presumably a merveilleux païen because of the orientation of Loup Garou who calls to Mohammed, and thus would not be aided by a merveilleux chrétien. Pantagruel takes the mast of his ship, which in contrast, has no spell on it and breaks during battle because of the magical powers of the other's implement. Rabelais refers to the mast as a bourdon and thereby conjures up the epic history of the pilgrim's staff employed by heroes such as Maugis or Pierre L'Ermite to slay the evil pagans. In this vein, Loup Garou cries out for the aid of Mohammed and the Cross vs. Crescent struggle is evoked rendering it

quite appropriate for the Christian warrior to fight with just such a weapon. The Loup Garou encounter involves only one chapter and the massive arms are casual insertions to add to the fantasy of the confrontation between two giants; neither weapon is responsible for defeat. In Gargantua, Rabelais resumes the bourdon motif with reference to Frère Jean's staff of the cross, and although the Christian vs. infidel motivation is absent from the monk's battles, the staff is again associated with the Church since Jean uses it to defend Church property, the abbey and its vineyard. Furthermore, Rabelais cites a parallel between Jean and Maugis of Les quatre fils Aymon who as a pilgrim uses a bourdon to slay great numbers of heathens, and the religious aura of the staff is reaffirmed through this comparison. Jean defeats over thirteen thousand in his initial confrontation with Picrochole's men and he continues to kill powerfully with his staff during the remainder of the war in contrast with the impotent weapons of Pantagruel. Within Gargantua itself, Rabelais reworks the bourdon motif with respect to Gargantua who possesses a means of defense similar to that of Jean and Pantagruel: Gargantua uproots a St. Martin's tree and strips it of its branches so that it may serve as a bourdon and a lance, in that order, again evoking the tradition of the pilgrim's staff and adding another religious implication

in so far as Rabelais chooses that particular tree with its accompanying holy legend.[11] With the mighty blows of his tree, the giant levels a castle and in a later episode downs Picrochole's men on the battlefield, just as Jean flattens the adversary as he whacks right and left with his staff. In Pantagruel, enchantment is bestowed upon the foe's club so that Pantagruel, with the aid of divine intervention, may prove himself superior to the pagan spell. Rabelais depicts merveilleux chrêtiens in Gargantua with reference to weaponry: the tools of Frère Jean and Gargantua are divinely enchanted, and with simple weapons the Christian warriors are able to defeat the evil enemy who have sophisticated artillery. Finally, the inspirational influence of Pantagruel's staff on Gargantua's and the monk's must be noted: all use a bourdon which functions as a lance, viewed in different forms--a mast, a St. Martin's tree, a staff of the cross; but all are long round wooden poles, and Gargantua's and Pantagruel's are similarly immense in keeping with their gigantic proportions.

It is not until the Loup Garou episode that Rabelais portrays combat reminiscent of the chansons de geste. Until that moment, Rabelais has depicted a war controlled by ruse. It seems that with this encounter,

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[11] Recounted in Chapter 3, p. 81

Rabelais recognizes the burlesque potential of special weaponry and battlefield warfare. As the two giants fight, Rabelais mocks the detailed blow-by-blow epic descriptions through the inclusion of physiological data making this scene even more precise than those found in the chansons de geste.[12] In Gargantua, this technique becomes commonplace, and during the major battles, Rabelais uses medically accurate notations similar to those found in Pantagruel: the quarrel between the shepherds and cake-bakers (Chapter 25); Jean's defense of the abbey (Chapter 27); Gymnaste's slaughter of Tripet (Chapter 35); Jean's defeat of Tyravant (Chapter 43); Jean's escape from his captors (Chapter 44). In Pantagruel, the preponderance of ruse, a non-heroic means to win the conflict,[13] creates a mockery of the epic realm where victories are usually gained through physical prowess; however, the combats in Gargantua parody the detailed descriptions conventionally found in medieval literature where sword and lance thrusts are enumerated.

Monuments are dealt with in both books and while their structures and treatment differ, both recall to varying degrees the gest romances and romances of

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[12] Rabelais's use of physiological terms and their relationship to epic parody is discussed in Chapter 2, pp. 57-58, and Chapter 3, p. 69.

[13] Glauser, pp. 204-206.

adventure. In Pantagruel, a trophy honors the first victory over the Dipsodes and a stump is covered with the paraphernalia associated with medieval warriors; the end of the Picrocholine conflict in Gargantua is marked with an elaborate abbey. The trophy of Pantagruel is patterned after a classical motif[14] and its comedy is leveled, in part, at the ancient tradition. However, the knightly accoutrement hanging on the piece of wood and the dedicatory inscription burlesquing medieval epic language as well as the honorable demeanor of chevaliers turn the "arch of triumph" into a mockery of the chansons de geste. In Gargantua, the abbey is treated parodically in so far as it is a fief for the warring monk in keeping with the feudal custom of rewarding knights for their service; furthermore, it possibly represents an imitation of medieval works where the monastery is a lasting memorial.[15] On the whole, Thélème illustrates Rabelais's social ideal,[16] and as such is treated in terms which have no relationship to epic parody. With regard to the depiction of war in Gargantua and Pantagruel, the monuments' positions in the narrative produce different effects: this motif in

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[14]See Chapter 2, p. 48, n. 19.

[15]See Chapter 1, p. 27, for examples of works where the abbey is found.

[16]Stapfer, p. 252.

Pantagruel is inserted following the first encounter with the Dipsodes when the war is hardly under way, and the buffoonery and merriment surrounding its erection emphasize the burlesque nature of the conflict where much time is spent on comic trophies and feasting; in Gargantua, the end of the war is commemorated by a major structure and Thélème becomes a fitting conclusion to the battling since the abbey, with its idyllic aura of peacefulness, appropriately underlines the end of hostilities.

In Rabelais, the crusade against the infidel is an incidental theme, and the Cross vs. Crescent struggle is never the primary motivation for warfare. Through inference in Pantagruel, Rabelais creates a mock epic depiction of single combat between a Christian hero and a Moslem giant. As Loup Garou and Pantagruel battle, the former calls out to Mohammed and yet no specific mention is made of a war waged for religious reasons. Through this frugal technique, Rabelais brings the giants into the realm shared by numerous righteous Christian heroes who fight evil heathen giants, especially since that allusion to the crusade is reinforced by other circumstances: Pantagruel battles with a bourdon; he requests God's aid which he subsequently receives; Loup Garou on the other hand cries "Mahon" and loses despite the formidable odds which his superior

height and enchanted club represent--a conventional situation in the chansons de geste. There is no actual battlefield encounter with the infidels in Gargantua. Picrochole's preposterous desire to control the world offers Rabelais the opportunity to deal with the pagans in Gargantua, and expansionist tyranny, rather than the war with the Saracens, is Rabelais's point of departure for the chapter concerning Picrochole and his counsellors. Their acquisitions are unrealizable dreams, chimera taking place in their minds; but they envision their conquests as realities, and in this sense, the events happen as they speak of them in the dialogue. In Pantagruel, the confrontation between Pantagruel and Loup Garou represents a graphic imitation of similar situations found in the epic, while, with reference to his treatment of the crusade in Gargantua, Rabelais portrays warfare occurring through the words of his characters rather than through their actions. Picrochole talks of killing numerous Turks and Moslems, and in this manner, Rabelais recalls the epic tradition where heathen are massacred in great numbers, whereas in Pantagruel only one infidel is dealt with. Picrochole states that he will allow Barberousse to live if he submits to baptism, and the king thereby identifies himself as a benevolent epic knight who promises salvation to the pagan through conversion. Loup Garou, however, is never given the

chance to repent before he is slain; yet both situations are equally reminiscent of the chansons de geste. In Gargantua, the crusade is fleetingly evoked as one of the means to emphasize Picrochole's irrationality, in contrast with the step-by-step depiction of combat in Pantagruel rendering the hero a preux Christian knight who rids the land of the evil heathen giant.

During the war narrative in both books, banqueting serves as a celebration for the preceding victory or victories. As in the epics, the heroes take time to rest and to feast on fine food and wine before returning to battle. Rabelais achieves a similar effect in both works in that humorous defeats should not warrant elaborate festivities; however, in Pantagruel, eating and drinking receive almost as much attention as does warfare, and the extreme disparity between deeds and compensation increases the burlesque effect, in contrast with Gargantua where battling and feasting is dealt with in a more balanced manner. Following the initial encounter with the Dipsodes in Pantagruel, the warriors pause to eat salt meat, tire of it, subsequently Carpalim hunts for fresh game, and numerous animals are listed in order to stress abundance; furthermore, the narrative devoted to the erection of two monuments directly follows the two chapters concerning festivities, and thus Panurge's victory through ruse is commemorated by two

banquets and by one trophy in honor of warfare, as well as another in praise of food and drink (Chapters 25 and 27). The only other moment when Pantagruel and his four companions pause to celebrate together is appropriately at the end of the battling where the feast is indicated by a short stylized expression stressing the plentiful nature of the gathering: "tant y fut faicte lors grande chere" (II,xxxi,374). In Gargantua, four feasts are held at regular intervals, seemingly in imitation of the epic balance between fighting and respites, and only one is treated in detail: the shepherds eat grapes and cakes after the squabble with the cake-bakers (Chapter 25); an extended formal banquet is served at Grandgousier's castle where the king eulogizes Frère Jean who makes his triumphal entry there, and the cornucopian nature of the event is underlined as Rabelais lists the animals prepared for the heroes (Chapters 37 to 40), an enumerative technique similar to that used in the earlier work with reference to the game slaughtered by Carpalim; a feast is mentioned en passant (Chapter 45); the warriors mark the end of hostilities with a celebration, and its unique nature is noted through several superlatives: "Adonc leur feist un festin, le plus magnificque, le plus abundant et plus delitieux que feust veu depuis le temps du roy Asseure" (I,li,187)--as in Pantagruel, one sentence,

although more emphatic than that of the first book, summarizes the gourmand festivities. In Gargantua, Rabelais treats each scene in a different manner, but abundance is always emphasized. The lengthy feast spanning Chapters 37 to 40 does not produce the intensified burlesque effect of the comparable pause in Pantagruel (Chapters 25 to 27), since the former takes place after much battling, and thus the warriors are more deserving of a mock epic rest from their comic combats than they are in Pantagruel where the major feast occurs when the war narrative is hardly under way and a banquet is especially incongruous.

Through a comparison of the epic topoi of Gargantua and Pantagruel, it is evident that in the later work, Rabelais achieves a depiction of war which more closely parodies the conventional portrayal of warfare in the epics, and the major indication of this change in attitude is the greatly lessened interest in ruse in favor of open warfare so that in Gargantua war is won through physical feats, the traditional means of gaining victories in the chansons de geste. To underline this shift in tactics, battle sequences throughout Gargantua are recounted in minute detail in imitation of the accurate blow-by-blow descriptions found in medieval literature. Furthermore, the contrast between the giants' outstanding companions, Panurge and Frère Jean, clearly illustrates

the different orientation of each conflict: the former symbolizes ruse, and the latter parodies the active warrior, such as Maugis, whose prowess makes him a hero. The epic mood of Gargantua is reinforced through Frère Jean's and Gargantua's use of staffs to kill many adversaries, as opposed to the impotent weapons of Pantagruel which are never responsible for defeat and are employed in only one episode. The initial battle of the Picrocholine conflict where over thirteen thousand perish because of Frère Jean's mighty bourdon supersedes the massacre of six hundred through Panurge's trickery in the first encounter with the Dipsodes in Pantagruel. The hyperbole stresses Jean's talents as a warrior setting the scene for the future deeds performed by the monk who continues to down the enemy with his powerful implement; and the reference to the number of those slain also serves to exaggerate the monk's heroism overshadowing the nominal hero who waits in the wings while Jean emerges as the first hero of the war in the chronicle bearing Gargantua's name. To allow the warriors time to celebrate their mock epic triumphs, banquets are intermittently held so that the heroes may partake of abundant food and wine, and rest from their duties to the homeland. Rabelais underscores the theme of good vs. evil in Gargantua and this delineation of the opposing forces carries through until

the end of the conflict. God's favor is omnipresent for Grandgousier's side, as in the epics where the righteous and unjust are often characterized as such from the onset of hostilities. Thus Grandgousier's warriors are victorious and the evil Picrochole is vanquished.

A burlesque war is not dealt with again until the Quart Livre (1552) and the nature of the conflict is quite different from that in Gargantua and Pantagruel as Rabelais enters the world of the exaggerated fantastic where sausages are personified waging an allegorical war with Lent in a mockery of the hostility between Lent and Shrove Tuesday, a parody which may have been inspired by a thirteenth century poem La Bataille du Karesme et de Charnage.[17] The war narrative is relatively short, eight chapters, in comparison with the extended portions devoted to that topic in the first two books, and the conflict in the Quart Livre represents only one of many adventures for the heroes who join in the melee when they stop at an island along their voyage route.

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[17]Lote, p. 130. See also Tetel, Etude, p. 37.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to determine the extent to which Rabelais parodies the portrayal of war in the medieval epic, I have compared Gargantua and Pantagruel with the gest romances and romances of adventure with which Rabelais expresses familiarity in his texts, since, among the various genres mentioned in his works, these provide the best examples of war passages which may be labeled epic in nature and therefore serve as a point of departure for summarizing the treatment of war in the chansons de geste.[1] The gest romances are Fierabras, Galien rethoré, Godefroy de Bouillon, Guerin de Monglave, Huon de Bordeaux, Morgant de géant, Ogier le Danois, Les quatre fils Aymon, and Chronique de Turpin; the romances of adventure, Geoffroy à la grant dent, Mélusine, Valentin et Orson, Jehan de Paris, and Robert le Diable. Through a comparison of the above books with Gargantua and Pantagruel, I have discovered parallels between Rabelaisian and medieval works in the use of themes,

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[1] As discussed in Chapter 1, pp. 14-15, Nemours Honoré Clement establishes Rabelais's knowledge of these works on the basis of references made to them in Rabelais's texts.

motifs, and narrative techniques; many epic topoi are burlesqued, as well as specific characters and episodes. The portions of Gargantua and Pantagruel which may be considered parodies of the gest romances and romances of adventure have been extracted and explicated and it has been demonstrated that Rabelais makes a concerted attempt to write mock epics. Synopses of these medieval texts, never before available in a study on Rabelais, are compiled in an appendix so that Rabelaisian scholars may easily familiarize themselves with the epic tradition which Rabelais knew. It is hoped that one of the contributions of this dissertation is the presence of these summaries for the enlightenment of those interested in Rabelais.

During the sixteenth century, Rabelais was able to depend on his audience's knowledge of epic topoi since the romans de chevalerie were still quite popular, and thus his parody conjured up the medieval legends for his contemporaries who would laugh at the mock version of their chapbook heroes. A comprehension of the myths surrounding these persons increases our enjoyment of Rabelais, and in order to appreciate fully the burlesque in Gargantua and Pantagruel, we must first acquaint ourselves with the epic tradition to determine the topics parodied in Rabelais. Each epic possesses a certain individuality; yet after a detailed,

comprehensive analysis of war in the chansons de geste, it has been determined that numerous subjects may be identified as epic topoi. Therefore, if we have an understanding of the treatment of war in the epics, various topics mocked in Rabelais are recognized as epic commonplaces: the voyage, miracles, detailed battle descriptions, the crusade against the infidel, councils, special weaponry, divine intervention, single combats, sieges of castles, the encounter between a Christian knight and a pagan giant, the banquet, the abbey, haughty language, oral narrative devices. There are additional topoi of the epic and other commonplaces of the chansons de geste used by other authors, but this is the list established from reading the epics known by Rabelais and from comparing them with Rabelais. While many critics have recognized the presence of epic topoi in Rabelais, in this study their use is documented.

With reference to his parody of war, Rabelais sometimes simplifies the task of discovering his sources of inspiration through citing or alluding to specific medieval works, i.e. the gest romances and romances of adventure listed above. Just as he refers to particular texts, so too does he mention characters. In Pantagruel, there are two long lists, one of medieval giants (Chapter 1) and another of various leading

personages in the gest romances and romances of adventure (Chapter 30). Plattard calls these enumerations "galeries de hêros de romans" which evoke the medieval tales associated with these heroes.[2] During the war narrative in Pantagruel, Rabelais relates the translation of Gargantua by Morgan who also took Ogier to Fairyland, and thus Rabelais recalls an incident from Ogier le Danois bringing Gargantua into the realm of the chansons de geste. Similarly, in Gargantua, Rabelais compares Frère Jean to Maugis of Les quatre fils Aymon.

In certain cases, Rabelais's frame of reference is neither general nor explicit; therefore a knowledge of particular epics is necessary to determine Rabelais's point of departure. For example, with respect to Epistemon's resurrection, we must be familiar with Les quatre fils Aymon in order to note the similarities between Panurge's miracle and that of Maugis. In another instance, to find the predecessors for the cunning Panurge, we must go to the epics dealing with a ruseful companion to the hero, such as Les quatre fils Aymon or Pulci's Morgant le géant. With reference to the bourdon, if we are acquainted with Maugis of Les quatre fils Aymon or Pierre L'Ermite of Godefroy

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[2] L'Oeuvre, pp. 7-8.

de Bouillon and their use of the pilgrim's staff as a powerful implement to slay numerous enemies, we realize that Gargantua's, Pantagruel's, and Frère Jean's staffs have epic precedent.

As Rabelais progresses from Pantagruel to Gargantua, he chooses to parody various epic topoi first treated in Pantagruel, and he thereby expresses the burlesque potential of these topics through dealing with them again. Through a comparison of the mocked commonplaces of Gargantua and Pantagruel, it has been demonstrated that in Gargantua, Rabelais provides a portrayal of warfare which more closely parodies the conventional representation of combat in the chansons de geste. He deserts the predominant implementation of ruse which characterizes the Dipsode conflict in favor of physical feats of prowess in the Picrocholine war where he depicts open warfare, detailed battlefield encounters, special weaponry, sieges of castles, and a warring monk patterned after the traditional epic hero who fearlessly rushes into the melee and kills great numbers of adversaries in his defense of the homeland. In this respect, Rabelais manifests a definite concern with producing in Gargantua a mock epic which surpasses that of Pantagruel. With reference to the influence which medieval works have on his creative process, we see him achieving in Gargantua a more pronounced affirmation

of the inspirational force which the gest romances and romances of adventure exerted on him.

It has been demonstrated that techniques traditionally employed to burlesque the epic are found in Gargantua and Pantagruel: exaggeration or hyperbole; deflation of the nominal hero and corresponding aggrandizement of a secondary figure; reliance on epic topoi which are then parodied; use of epic formulae; oral narrative devices; caricature of the heroes. It is remarkable to note that Rabelais uses the same parodic tools in both works.

Parody was defined at the outset as a travesty of literary works with the intent of producing laughter. It has here been demonstrated how the war passages of Gargantua and Pantagruel represent parodies of the medieval chansons de geste.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CORE PLOT SYNOPSES OF THE MEDIEVAL GEST ROMANCES AND ROMANCES OF ADVENTURE

Core plot synopses are presented here for the medieval works used in this study. These are included in the hope that Rabelaisian scholars may thus easily familiarize themselves with the literature which Rabelais knew. With the exception of Pulci's Morgant le géant, for each work, there are several manuscripts written by assorted scribes in various places at different times; therefore dates of composition and authors are not cited here. The purpose of this appendix is to provide summaries of the romances' plots and not analyses of specific editions or a complete paleography of their manuscripts.

Chronique de Turpin

St. Jacques comes to Charlemagne in a vision and asks him to deliver Spain and the sepulcher of St. Jacques at Compostella from the infidels. Charlemagne and his army set off for Spain and soon take Pamplona. The Christians kill heathens who resist baptism, as well as Catholics who had adopted the pagan religion and refuse to return to the Church. In the war the Saracens are decimated until Charlemagne controls all of Spain. With the gold and silver from his conquests, he establishes churches and abbeys, and endows religious enterprises. The Emperor goes back to France, but soon Spain is invaded by an African king, and Charlemagne must battle again. After the defeat of the Saracens, Roland combats a fierce pagan giant, Ferragut, who had defeated many Christian knights. Roland and the giant carry on a theological dispute and finally the pagan falls. Roland is killed at Roncevaux and Ganelon's treachery is retold. Charlemagne has his revenge, and the Moslems die in great numbers. Various miracles, dream visions, expressions of Catholic dogma, and commentary on Charlemagne's holy nature are interspersed in the epic. The author concludes with the death of the Emperor.

Fierabras

The pagan giant Fierabras, son of a Saracen calif, Baland, conquers Rome, Jerusalem, and other cities; he and his army steal the relics of the Passion, which Baland keeps at his castle Aigremoire in Spain. In France, Fierabras defies Charlemagne who must then send a knight to battle the giant in order to defend the Emperor's honor. Olivier volunteers for single combat and is victorious. When Fierabras believes himself near death, he requests baptism. He survives and later aids Charlemagne in the crusade against the infidel. Olivier and other French knights are captured by Baland's men and taken to Aigremoire where they are imprisoned. Floripe, Baland's daughter and Fierabras' sister, helps the Frenchmen because of her love for Guy de Bourgogne whom she hopes to marry one day. The Emperor's men travel to Spain to rescue their nobles; they defeat the heathen and recover the relics. Baland refuses baptism and is executed. Floripe marries Guy following her conversion.

Galien rethoré

Galien is born out of wedlock to Olivier and Jacqueline, the daughter of King Hugon of Constantinople. Soon after Galien's birth, two fairies provide, through enchantment, for his protection in battle: any wound he may receive will heal within three days. Galien is also named after one of them, Galienne. As he grows up, he demonstrates great talents as a knight, and his mother's brothers are jealous of his feats; they treat him cruelly. Galien goes in search of his father; he learns that Olivier is in Spain where he is battling the Saracens. En route to Spain Galien has various adventures. He arrives at Charlemagne's court and offers his services; the Emperor arms him. Galien goes to Roncevaux; he arrives just in time to speak to his father who recognizes him as his son. Galien avenges the death of his father and kills many Saracens. The fall of Roland and the Twelve Peers is recounted. Galien is betrothed to the daughter of Marsile and marries her after her conversion.

Geoffroy à la grant dent

At the age of twenty, Geoffroy goes to Ireland to subdue barons who refuse to submit to his father, their ruler. Geoffroy succeeds and returns to France. He then sets off to help his brothers in the East, Urian and Guion, in their crusade against the infidel. After their triumph, Geoffroy leaves his brothers, travels for a time, and eventually goes back to France. He fights an evil giant who is threatening the land. The burning of the abbey and the history of Mélusine's enchantment are recounted. Geoffroy battles another giant who escapes through a passage. Geoffroy follows him and discovers the place where his grandfather was enclosed in the mountain by Mélusine and her two sisters. He also learns about the curse on his mother. Geoffroy trails the giant, frees those held captive, and the giant is slain. Geoffroy's act of vengeance against his uncle and his reconstruction of the abbey are reiterated. (See Mélusine.)

Godefroy de Bouillon

This work deals with the First Crusade. The young Godefroy is educated, armed, and knighted. In the East, the pagan sorceress Calabre predicts the evil which will befall Islam at the hands of Godefroy de Bouillon and the crusaders. After learning of this prophecy, Cornumarant, a Saracen, wishes to travel to France to kill Godefroy; he finds Godefroy and his men preparing for the voyage to the East. Cornumarant does not slay Godefroy, but returns to his land to report the knights' plans. The Christians capture Nicea, and continue on to Antioch which they take with the aid of a local Christian who had dealings with the Moslems. Other cities are conquered by the Frenchmen, and eventually, Jerusalem comes under their control. Godefroy falls in love with a Saracen princess and marries her. Godefroy is made King of Jerusalem, but he is poisoned by a traitor and dies. Baudoin then becomes the ruler of the holy city. The story ends as the narrator announces a new campaign against the Saracens.

Guerin de Monglave

The duc Guerin de Monglave sends his four sons, Arnault, Milon, Régnier, and Girard, on adventures so that they may bring honor to the family. Arnault goes to Aquitaine to succeed to the deceased duc Girard, his uncle. Arnault's father has a bastard son, Hunault, and the latter challenges the former's right to govern; but Arnault is lauded by his subjects, and he appears to be in control. Hunault tells Arnault to request the hand of a certain sultan's daughter in marriage so that Arnault may gain the territories of the wealthy Moslem. However, Hunault tells the sultan that Arnault is coming to the sultan's court in order to convert to the pagan religion. They travel to the sultan's realm to arrange the betrothal. After they arrive, Hunault lies again: he says to the Moslem that Arnault wishes to observe the strength of the Saracen forces so that he will know how to defeat them, and that he wants to seduce the sultan's daughter. Arnault is imprisoned. Roboastre, a Christian giant, and the enchanter Perdigon help the knight to escape from his captors. Arnault marries the sultan's daughter. All of the brothers finally settle down and rule their own lands, marry, and raise children. Aymeri, Arnault's son,

goes to Charlemagne's court and tries to cut the queen's foot. This starts a war between the Emperor and the Monglave lineage. The conflict is concluded. Charlemagne is at war with the infidel and the Monglave family sends Olivier to represent their heritage. The epic ends with a retelling of the Roland legend.

Huon de Bordeaux

Charlemagne holds court at Paris and announces his plans to have his son Charlot succeed him. Charlot is a worthless trouble-maker. At the council, Amaury de Hautefeuille tells the Emperor about Bordeaux and its failure to render service for seven years; Amaury suggests that the brothers, Huon and Gerard, be dispossessed because of their disloyalty to the throne. The brothers receive messengers from Charlemagne and they are given the chance to go to Paris to demonstrate their submission. Amaury, a traitor, prepares an ambush for the two, and Charlot takes part. In a skirmish, Huon kills Charlot, the aggressor; the latter's identity remains unknown to the former. Huon rides on to Paris and reports the incident; Charlemagne pardons Huon for killing when he was attacked by the Emperor's forces. Amaury soon arrives with Charlot's body and claims that Huon provoked the struggle. Charlemagne, earlier unaware that it was his son who was slain, now attempts to murder Huon. Single combat is used to determine justice in the case of Huon and Amaury. Huon triumphs, but Amaury, after having confessed to the former, attempts to wound Huon and Huon kills Amaury before anyone else hears his expression of

guilt. The Emperor sends Huon on a mission to prove himself: Huon is to go to Babylon to pull a handful of hair from the beard of the Saracen calif Gaudisse, to kiss Gaudisse's daughter three times, and to extract four of Gaudisse's teeth. He accomplishes his feats with the help of the dwarf enchanter Oberon, a descendent of Julius Caesar. When Huon returns home, his lands are in his brother's possession, and his brother steals the relics of Huon's accomplished deeds. Huon goes before the Emperor to appeal, but Charlemagne condemns him to death. Oberon's magical intervention rescues the hero.

Jehan de Paris

The King of Spain asks the King of France to aid him in bringing recalcitrant Spanish barons under control. Following the monarchs' victory, the Spanish ruler promises his infant daughter to the young son of the French king; the agreement is to be fulfilled when the children grow up. Shortly after the Frenchmen return home, their king dies, and the King of Spain believes that their contract is no longer binding. The King of England asks for the princess' hand in marriage, and he goes to Spain to claim her when she reaches the age of sixteen. Jehan, the son of the deceased French monarch, wishes to express his rights in the matter. He leaves France with his own entourage and travels near the English group. Jehan informs his men to say that he is the son of a rich bourgeois. The King of England asks him to join his retinue. As they approach the royal household in Spain, the two trains file past while the princess watches from a window. She is greatly impressed by Jehan and she throws him a scarf. The English king is angry and jealous when Jehan is received with great pomp. The Frenchman reveals his true identity and is recognized as the just suitor. Jehan and the princess are married.

Mélusine

Raimondin, a nobleman, while on a hunt, sees Mélusine in the forest; he falls in love with her and they marry. Mélusine gives birth to a son, Urian. Raimondin goes to Britanny to regain his father's territories. He returns to Mélusine who soon has another son, Guion. They ultimately have eight sons who all become rulers in their own right. When Urian and Guion grow up, they voyage to Cyprus to aid the king who is being attacked by the Sultan of Damascas. Following their victory, the king gives his crown and daughter to Urian. Guion travels to other lands to fight the pagans, is made King of Armenia, and marries. At home, Raimondin's brother tells Raimondin about a curse placed on Mélusine: Mélusine's mother made her husband promise that he would never visit her during her confinement for the birth of their children. Forgetting his vow, the husband saw her immediately after she delivers triplet daughters, one of whom is Mélusine. She left her husband and went to Avalon to raise the children. The daughters were told of their father's act, and decided to punish him by entombing him in a mountain. When the mother discovered what they had done, she cast a spell on each one: Mélusine will turn

into a serpent from the waist down every Saturday. If she should find a husband who respects her right to be alone on that day, the enchantment will cease. If she should be seen, she may no longer appear as a normal woman. Out of curiosity, Raimondin decides to determine if his brother is lying, and Raimondin spies on Mélusine and observes her serpent form. At this point, the narrative shifts to recount the adventures of another son, Geoffroy à la grant dent, who burns an abbey because he feels that the particular monks who inhabit it are lazy and evil. After the interpolation of Geoffroy's abbey burning, the principal narrative resumes, and Mélusine pardons her husband's indiscretion, but she must leave him since she is unable to retain a human shape. Geoffroy punishes his uncle for betraying his mother: Geoffroy pursues him and the latter falls from a tower to his death. Raimondin's father dies, and Geoffroy rules the family territories. He rebuilds the abbey and endows it well so that the monks may lead a devout existence and pray for his mother, his father, and their lineage. (See Geoffroy à la grant dent.)

Morgant le géant

In this work by Luigi Pulci (1481) Charlemagne holds court at Paris. Orlando (Roland) is clearly the superior knight among the Emperor's men, and Ganelon becomes jealous of the power which Orlando possesses. While en route to fight the infidel, Orlando arrives at an abbey terrorized by three pagan giants who live on a mountain above the abbey. The vilest of the three is Morgant. The monks tell Orlando of their plight and the knight sets off to battle their enemies. He kills two and only Morgant survives. The giant is subsequently converted by Orlando and the former offers his services to the latter. The monks have a roomful of armor where the giant finds only one piece which fits his enormous body--a rusty breastplate. After a series of adventures, they enter a castle where many mysterious events occur; they slay pagans together; they rescue damsels in distress. Morgant meets Margutte, a giant even bigger than Morgant and a master of trickery. Morgant dies. The epic ends with a retelling of the Roland legend.

Ogier le Danois

Charlot, Charlemagne's son, kills Baudoin, Ogier's son, in a dispute over a chess game. Charlemagne refuses to grant justice in the matter and Ogier's war of revolt against the Emperor begins. The Dane leaves his court and is pursued by Charlemagne for years. Ogier kills many of the Emperor's men, and Charlot tries to bring about a reconciliation with him, but Ogier wishes to continue seeking vengeance. Finally, Ogier is captured and Charlemagne wants to execute him immediately; however, Turpin encourages the Fmperor to imprison Ogier so that he may die a slow death. The archbishop has an ulterior motive: instead of gradually starving Ogier as the Emperor wishes, Turpin feeds him well out of affection for the Dane. The Saracens threaten Charlemagne, and he begins to fear defeat. Turpin suggests that Ogier's great prowess is certain to deliver them from the Saracens, and Ogier is freed to fight for France. Following his victory, he goes on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, after which he is transported to Avalon by Morgan and he resides there for two hundred years; he then returns to France to kill the pagans, and saves France again.

Les quatre fils Aymon

While Charlemagne is holding court, at Pentecost, it is brought to his attention that the duc Beuves d'Aigremont is not rendering service to the Emperor; Charlemagne sends messengers to ask the rebellious baron to come to Paris. The messengers are killed by Beuves and his men. Charlemagne then sends his son Lohier to Beuves, and Lohier threatens him. Beuves responds with an attack on Lohier and the latter is killed. Beuves and two of his three brothers go to war with Charlemagne; Aymon de Dordogne, the other brother, remains loyal to the throne. The three rebellious brothers are defeated and surrender. Despite their submission, Charlemagne arranges to have Beuves assassinated. Aymon's sons are given arms by the Emperor. Soon after being knighted, Renaud, Aymon's most outstanding son, kills Berthelot, Charlemagne's nephew, in a dispute arising out of a game of chess. This prompts a war between the four brothers and Charlemagne. The Aymons are aided by their cousin Maugis, who uses ruse and magic in the struggle to avenge the death of his father, Beuves. The rebels flee, and their father battles with the royal forces. The Emperor pursues them, and they finally go to Gascony where King Yon offers his protection. Renaud

eventually marries Yon's sister. They build a mighty fortress named Montauban. Charlemagne besieges it, but the four brothers hold him off for years. Finally, famine and plague weaken their forces and they submit to the Emperor. Renaud goes on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land where he meets Maugis, and together they fight the infidel. Upon their return to France, Renaud discovers that his wife is dead; he sends his sons to serve Charlemagne. Renaud then goes to Cologne, and pretending to be a simple craftsman, he works on the cathedral. His fellow laborers become jealous of Renaud's abilities and they kill him. After his death, Renaud becomes a martyr.

Robert le Diable

After many years of marriage, duc Hubert de Normandie reproaches his wife for their childless union. Since God does not give her a child, she prays to the devil. She becomes pregnant, Robert is born, and the devil controls him. The evil Robert leaves home at an early age; he leads a group of bandits who burn holy places, kill, rob, and rape. One day, Robert learns that his mother is nearby. She relates to him the events surrounding his birth. He asks her pardon and promises to reform. He goes to Rome to seek absolution from the pope. The pope sends him to a hermit to whom he must confess. For penance, Robert must play the fool, act mute, and fight with the dogs for food. The Saracens threaten Rome, and an angel presents Robert with white armor. He valliantly defeats the pagans, and everyone wishes to know the identity of the mysterious knight. The daughter of the Emperor of Rome falls in love with him. They eventually discover the identity of their savior. The hermit releases Robert from his vow. The Emperor offers his daughter and the throne to Robert, but he wishes only to serve God. He lives with the hermit and dies a holy man; after his martyrdom, an abbey is built in his honor.

Valentin et Orson

Pepin marries his sister Bellysant to Alexander, the Emperor of Constantinople. The Archbishop of Constantinople falls in love with her soon after the marriage. When he expresses his feelings to her, she shows no interest. In anger, he goes to her husband and makes false accusations about her. Alexander banishes the Empress. After six months, she has twin sons, Valentin and Orson. Orson is stolen by a bear which suckles him while one of Pepin's officers finds Valentin who is raised at court. When they grow up, Valentin is given the duty of finding Orson, the savage. Following his capture, Orson is soon civilized. The two brothers become famous for their adventures--fights against enemy Christians and evil Saracens, interludes with fairies, giants, mysterious creatures. The dwarf enchanter Pacolet helps them escape death as they perform great feats. Unknowingly, Valentin kills his father. He does penance for his sins, dies a holy man, and is martyred. Orson rules Constantinople. After having gained the reputation for being a good monarch, he becomes a hermit, dies, and is martyred.

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