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thesis entitled

Chivalry and the Medieval Noble Class

presented by

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has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Master's degree in History

Major professor

Date Sept. 23, 1985

CHIVALRY AND THE MEDIEVAL NOBLE CLASS

By

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A THESIS

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

1985

ABSTRACT

CHIVALRY AND THE MEDIEVAL NOBLE CLASS

By

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This paper examines the impact of chivalry on the nobility of northern France, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It is the contention of this paper that chivalry altered the perceptions, values, attitudes, culture, and activities of the nobles, transforming the eleventh century warrior class into the twelfth century chivalrous nobility. Chivalry changed the noble warrior class in two important ways. First, through chivalry, the nobles established a secular culture which was distinct and independent from the church. Second, chivalry allowed the warrior nobles to develop into a knightly class that would serve as soldiers of God and the protectors of medieval society.

To determine if chivalry changed medieval society in these two ways, a wide range of eleventh and twelfth century sources is examined including chansons de geste, romances, lais, chronicles, history, biographies, liturgy, and theological writings. The model used in this study breaks the chivalric code into three components: its military, noble, and religious dimensions. The sources are examined in terms of each of these components to determine the origins, development, maturation, and impact of chivalry.

It is evident from these sources that chivalry did civilize the nobility by spawning the creation of a noble culture and by

providing the clergy with a method for bringing the noble warriors completely into the fold of the church. Chivalry was one of many forces that changed early medieval society into a diverse and sophisticated culture which would mature into the early Modern period.

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INTRODUCTION

After the fall of the Roman Empire, western Europe experienced a period of chaos and confusion from the fifth to the ninth centuries. The force which had once held the Roman world together had disintegrated, leaving a void in the lives of the people who had once been part of the Empire. The institutions and practices which before had meaning in the west, no longer provided direction, stability , or organization. There was a need for another force to step in and provide a focus for early medieval society. The Christian church answered that call. Although the church certainly did not completely fill the gap left by the Roman Empire, the members of the clergy were able to offer direction in many areas. Since the church was one of the few surviving institutions, it was logical that people would look to it and its clergy for guidance and protection. This expansion of the church's role within the society of western Europe was to have significant repercussions throughout the later part of the medieval period. The church's more intimate involvement with secular society after the fall of the Empire put the church on the track to becoming an even more powerful institution than it had been before, one that would come to deal with more practical dimensions of society, and one that also would come to have an increasingly powerful voice within medieval society. Perhaps the culmination of the church's political hegemony occurred in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when popes such as Gregory VII and Innocent III asserted their will over the secular branch of

medieval society.

The influence of the church intruded into virtually every aspect of early medieval society. As well as being a powerful political force, the church was also intricately involved in the economic, social and cultural life of the early Middle Ages. The church asserted its influence into even the most personal aspects of the society, seeking to regulate everything from diet to sexual intercourse. The church dominated the cultural life of the early medieval period as well. In the period after the fall of the Roman Empire, churchmen were virtually the only members of western society who were literate, allowing the church to exercise a monopoly over the creative expressions of the early Middle Ages. The themes, expressions, and attitudes reflected in literature, art, music, and philosophy were dictated by the perceptions and dogmas of the medieval church. Although the cultural expressions of the early medieval period were far from stagnant or unimaginative, the church's exclusive hold on culture had to be broken before medieval European society could develop into a more sophisticated and culturally diverse civilization. One major force that allowed medieval Europe to evolve from a religiously dominated society to a culture with vibrant secular culture was chivalry. Chivalry inspired medieval society to develop a secular-noble culture, one which was distinct from the religious culture of the church. Chivalry played a crucial role in the maturation of medieval culture, and helped set this society on the path to the modern era.

The introduction of chivalric ideas charged medieval

culture. New modes of expression, such as the romance, were created. Traditional creative outlets experienced a new dynamism. The flavor of medieval cultural and intellectual life was forever changed. No longer were expressions of medieval society based strictly within the church. An outlet for the concerns and ideals of the secular nobility had finally been created. Previously the nobles did not have unique cultural expressions. Nor, it could be argued, did the power brokers desire such activities or have the capacity to appreciate a uniquely noble culture. Along with creating a secular culture, chivalry also played a vital part in completely Christianizing the medieval knight. As a warrior, the knight frequently committed acts against the teachings and the institution of the church, although he was a Christian. The ideals of chivalry permitted the knights to be both warriors and Christians, thereby solving the conflict between the knight's occupation and his religion. Chivalry, therefore, civilized medieval society in two ways: it established a separate noble culture and it brought the medieval knight fully into the pale of the Christian church.

The nature of chivalry is complex and multifaceted. There are, however. three important premises that are basic to understanding how chivalry changed medieval society. First, the impact of chivalry was limited in certain ways. Second, the concepts inherent in chivalry were internalized by the medieval nobility. And third, chivalry changed the nature and function of the warrior class. These concepts are vital to understanding the role that chivalry played in the Middle Ages.

The impact of chivalry was limited in two ways. First, chivalry was an exclusive product of the upper class. The common peasant or merchant had little interest in the lofty ideals of chivalry. More practical matters such as keeping himself and his family alive occupied his time. Chivalry was articulated by the noble class and reflected its values and interests. Secondly, chivalry was predominantly a cultural and social phenomenon. The introduction of chivalric ideals and practices revolutionized the cultural expressions of the medieval period. In a social context chivalry had an extremely important impact on the social role and character of the medieval nobility. Although chivalry was limited in these ways, its concepts governed the leadership class, and in doing so revitalized medieval society.

If chivalry was the force which set up a distinct noble culture, chivalric ideals must have been truly internalized by the medieval nobility. It has been suggested that chivalry was not really a part of the nobles' attitudes or values, but merely a set of abstract ideas to which the nobles gave vague lip service, a veneer over a barbarous society. On the contrary, the ideals of chivalry were indeed internalized by the medieval nobility: they became the value system which guided the attitudes and behavior of the noble class. Chivalry was in fact a way of life for the knightly class. Manuals were produced to educate the knights and ladies on the finer points of chivalry. Tournaments were held where the concepts of chivalric behavior could be practiced in a controlled setting. At these meetings the knights conducted themselves in the most chivalrous manner, to impress

the ladies and to have tales of their fame circulated. The tournament provided a world in which the nobles could immerse themselves in the ideals and activities of chivalry. Additionally, the art and literature of the later medieval period reflect the hold that chivalry had on the psyche of the medieval world. In the romances of the later twelfth century, for example, the heroes and ladies display many chivalric characteristics. The ideals represented in the romances were further internalized by the nobility in the form of the pageant. The pageant participants took on the personalities of the characters in the romances. They used elaborate props and costumes to create the image of Arthur's court. Finally, the art of the later medieval period also illustrates the internalization of the ideas of chivalry. Many of the great cathedrals of the Gothic period contain scenes from chivalrous stories and romances. Arthur and Roland are immortalized in the stone and glass of these monuments. Chivalry was not a veneer. It had a firm hold on the minds of the Middle Ages. Chivalry was indeed part of the cultural expressions of the artists, poets, and nobles of the medieval period.

The third premise basic to the understanding of chivalry is that the development of chivalry within the warrior class changed its character. In the early medieval period of invasions, the warriors were needed to protect medieval society. As the external threat began to recede, however, the aggressive tendencies of the warriors were turned on each other and on other elements of society, causing internal strife and disruption across the

countryside. The marauding nature of the early medieval warrior resulted in what is labeled "the paradox of the knight". The occupational activities of the warrior were far from the Christian path, causing a conflict between his faith and his occupation. He professed to be a Christian, but because of his role in society he often committed acts that ran counter to the teachings of the church. The introduction of chivalry relieved this situation. It channeled the aggressiveness of the knights against infidels and other enemies of the Christian church. The warrior class was in a sense fully Christianized by the introduction of chivalry. The skills of the knights were legitimized in a Christian context. It was now possible for the knights to be both Christians and warriors. The warrior class matured from marauders to knights in the service of Christendom. The behavior of the noble warrior class was changed, and that in turn changed the character of the nobles and their role within medieval society.

The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that chivalry was a major force that broke the church's monopoly on cultural expression and that a distinctly secular culture was established. The social and cultural fabric was changed by chivalry. The values which guided decisions and behavior were increasingly materialistic and pragmatic, reflecting the needs of the emerging noble class. The relationship between the church and chivalry will also be addressed in this paper. It is my belief that the ideology of chivalry allowed the medieval warrior knight to become a Christian in practice and theory.

If chivalry civilized the nobility, how did it change this segment of medieval society between the eleventh and twelfth centuries? The nobles of eleventh century France were an unruly and rather uncouth bunch. Sidney Painter describes them as: "...fierce, undisciplined, warrior chieftains."[1] By and large this century was still a period of force, and even the cultural expressions were tempered by this warrior ethic. These knights wreaked havoc on medieval society in their violent rampages. As savage warriors, the eleventh century noble's outbursts often violated the laws, members, and holdings of the church. The "paradox of the knight" plagued the society of the eleventh century. However, in the early twelfth century the separate elements of chivalry were merged and began to change the knightly class. No longer did the knight disrupt society; instead he became the peace keeper. It was his duty to defend medieval society from tyrants and infidels alike, rescue damsels in distress, and protect the weak. Chivalry also inspired the knight to become interested in culture, which is evident in the development of a noble chivalric culture in the mid-twelfth century. While there is no doubt that the eleventh century warriors produced their own form of culture, it was one based upon the warrior ethic. The chivalric culture of the following century was more diverse and sophisticated. It took into account many elements besides the military. The knight of the twelfth century was a noble, a courtly lover, socially concerned, and religious. The code of ethics that evolved from chivalry governed more than just the battlefield, but also court life, love, and

the relationship between the knight and the church. Chivalry sparked the knight's interest in cultural expressions. New forms of literature developed to satisfy the knight's and lady's craving for tales of chivalry. The chivalric code also brought the warrior noble into the fold of the church. The paradox of the knight was solved. Instead of using their muscle against other members of medieval society, knights became the defenders of Christendom and the partners of the church. Chivalry caused the eleventh century warrior to mature into the twelfth century noble, thereby changing the nature of the nobility.

Before tackling the proofs of this argument, it is necessary to present a historiographical view of how modern scholars have studied chivalry. Scholars have devised several ways to approach chivalry. Basically the scholarly approach to chivalry can be broken into roughly two groups: social and ideological. The social treatment can be divided further into sociological and historical approaches. An example of the sociological category is Georges Duby's Chivalrous Society, which is a thorough examination of the society that produced and participated in the ideals of chivalry. Duby probes topics such as lineage, social classification, judicial institutions, the origins of knighthood, and the economy of both manors and peasants. While Duby may deal with certain "ideas" prevalent in this society, this work is not by and large a discussion of the ideology of chivalry. The historical approach deals with chivalry in another way. This methodology traces the impact that chivalry had on society throughout the Middle Ages and even beyond. Works such as Richard

Barber's The Knight and Chivalry and Charles T. Wood's The Age of Chivalry are examples of the historical treatment of chivalry. The other major method of approach taken by scholars is the ideological. This type of scholarship deals with the ideology of chivalry, what elements made up this ideology, their origins, and how they affected medieval society. French Chivalry: Chivalric Ideas and Practices in Medieval France by Sidney Painter, and Chivalry by Maurice Keen are examples of this sort of approach to the study of chivalry. It is in this category that this paper fits, since it too deals with the ideals that made up chivalry, how they civilized the medieval nobility, and the impact that they had on the church.

In both of the works cited as representative of the ideological approach to chivalry, the authors break chivalry down into what they believe are its essential parts, and then use the various elements as a model for discussing the origins, development, and impact of chivalry. Painter and Keen employ slightly different models in their treatments. Painter breaks chivalry into three parts: feudal, courtly love, and the religious. Painter's view of the feudal origins of chivalry is acceptable, but it does not take into account the development of a noble culture that was inherent in chivalry and aided by the attitudes of the feudal noble class. His treatment of the other two elements of chivalry is also problematic. In his book, Painter asserts that the chivalric ideals of courtly love and religion were imposed on the knights by their ladies and by the church.[2] I disagree with this approach for two reasons. First, it

is difficult to imagine either the ladies or the clergy forcing their views on the knights who were fierce and unruly warriors. Second, and more importantly, Painter's description of the elements of courtly love and religion implies that these ideas were "imposed" on the knights from an outside force, and that these elements did not grow naturally out of medieval society. I disagree. The courtly and religious ideals of chivalry were not imposed; rather they were the response to the needs and interests of an important segment of medieval society. Another flaw with Painter's treatment of the courtly and religious elements of chivalry is his assertion that the Church's and the courtly noblewoman's views of the knight were contradictory. This is certainly true in some respects. The ladies were interested in encouraging knights to indulge in love affairs, while the church was concerned with improving their moral fiber. However, the characteristics that both the clergy and the ladies expected were essentially the same. Both parties believed a knight must be strong, skilled in battle, courteous, generous, honorable, noble, and the defender of the weak and helpless. Painter's consideration of the courtly and religious is in my opinion off the mark to this extent. In addition Painter believes that the three areas of chivalry were mutually exclusive. I find this assertion unacceptable because the elements of chivalry grew out of medieval society as a whole, not out of neat compartments within the society. For this reason the boundaries between the various aspects of chivalry are gray and tend to overlap. Because of these flaws in Painter's perception of chivalry, I have

rejected his model for purposes of this thesis.

In his book Chivalry, Maurice Keen presents yet another model. Like Painter, Keen breaks chivalry into three parts: martial, aristocratic, and Christian. This model, in my opinion, best fits chivalry and shall be the one employed in this consideration of chivalry, although the terminology will be slightly altered. Instead of martial, aristocratic, and Christian, my model will consist of military, noble, and religious dimensions. While the terms are different from Keen's, the ideas and elements contained in them are basically the same. My reason for selecting this model is simple. I believe that these three terms best represent the strands that combined to make up the fabric of chivalry. Painter uses "feudal" as part of his model. While I certainly agree that feudalism was crucial to the development of chivalry, I prefer to use the terms military and noble instead. Feudalism contributed to chivalry in these two ways. The military attributes of chivalry came directly out of the feudal realm. Likewise, the noble elements were also derived from feudal society. These two aspects of feudalism affected the development of chivalry in different ways, and for this reason I believe they need to be considered separately. In regard to the place of courtly love, I do not think that it should be treated as an independent aspect of chivalry. The concepts of courtly love grew out of all the dimensions of chivalry, making it a manifestation of chivalry rather than an autonomous element. Keen's model, which I have adopted, seems most representative of the origins, nature, and development. Another aspect of Keen's

model with which I concur is his assumption that chivalry grew naturally out of medieval society. The concepts which made up chivalry had been a part of the medieval world for generations. These "old" elements inherent in the medieval world were combined into a "new" expression, chivalry. [3]

Another issue surrounding chivalry is the debate about "the paradox of the knight". The term refers to the conflict that existed within the knight, between his warrior activities and his supposed Christian values. The knight professed to be Christians, but his occupation and his war-like nature often led him to violate other members of society and even the church itself. This paradox caused problems for medieval society and something needed to be done to resolve this problem. Scholars do not disagree on the question of this "paradox", but they do differ over what force provided the solution. Most scholars believe that the paradox was solved when the warrior knights were finally Christianized and brought into the fold of the church. But what force allowed the warriors to become true Christians? Georges Duby argues that the Truce of God provided the solution. He states: " The peace was widened and deepened in a special way. It offered the class of knights, henceforth well established in the new society, a kind of asceticism appropriate to the function of their ordo....This time the laws of the truce werea part of attempts by the feudal church to christianize the warrior's ethic." [4] Other scholars believe that it was the Crusades which solved the "paradox of the knight". Charles T. Wood suggests this in his book, The Age of Chivalry. He states: " If the knight of

earlier times had been purely the warrior, with religious convictions bearing little relation to the profession he followed, under the impact of the Crusades these two sides of his personality began to merge....Suddenly transformed into soldiers of Christ, most nobles increasingly assumed that the bearing of arms was to be viewed as a religious experience." [5] While both of these scholars have different views of the primary force for the solution to this problem, each realizes that other forces also contributed to the final solution. Duby states that the Crusade carried the concepts of the Peace of God to its full fruition. Likewise, Wood acknowledges the contribution that the Peace of God made to the formation of the crusading Christian knight. Both of these scholars present two logical candidates for the solution to the "paradox of the knight". However, it is my contention that chivalry was the ideology that allowed for this paradox to be remedied. While I do not dispute the important role that the Peace of God and the Crusade played in the final solution, I believe that the ideals articulated in chivalry provided perhaps a more complete solution, in a sense combining the ideals of peace and cooperation of the Peace of God with the militancy of the Crusades.

In relation to other scholarship on this subject, this paper belongs to the ideological approach to chivalry. The material presented deals with the ideas of chivalry, what they entailed, and how they affected medieval society. By examining a wider range of sources usually employed in a study of chivalry, this paper will demonstrate the penetration of chivalry into

secular and clerical perceptions, and how this process resulted in a change in the medieval noble class. Instead of considering only romances, chansons de geste, lais, or chivalric manuals which were produced by and for the chivalric court, the sources under discussion also include chronicles, histories, biographies, liturgy, and theology, outlets of expression which were outside the chivalric court. This more diverse group of sources allows for a more complete consideration of chivalry and its impact on both the secular and sacred elements of medieval society.

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE, ORIGINS, AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHIVALRY

A precise definition of "chivalry" is difficult. It has a wide range of implications. One way to approach chivalry is to define it as a set of ideals which governed the behavior patterns and activities of the medieval nobility. Chivalry, considered in these terms, is an ideology. It imposed certain ethical practices on the medieval noble class. The ideals of chivalry grew out of noble society, and were strongly tempered by certain elements of the warrior ethic, feudalism, and religious ideas on knighthood. Consequently, chivalry can be divided into three parts: military, noble, and religious. Each of these strands of chivalry dictated certain ideal characteristics. The military dimension insisted on strength, physical prowess and attractiveness, moderation, and loyalty. The noble requirements consisted of personal and familial honor, generosity, concern with material status symbols, and courtesy. Aspects of chivalry derived from the sacred realm included being a devout Christian, protecting the weak and helpless, and being a soldier of Christ. These virtues made up the ideology of chivalry.

However, this is only one aspect of the entire spectrum of chivalry. While the term "chivalry" can refer simply to an ethos, it can also be applied to a culture. The concepts combined in chivalry sparked a tremendous cultural response in the nobility. New forms of expression, such as the romance, were created to

satisfy the noble's interest in chivalry. Cultural manifestations, such as the literature, art and philosophy, reflected chivalric concepts, characters, and behavior. Therefore, "chivalry" may then refer to the culture which was spawned by this code of ethics. For the purposes of this study, chivalry will be defined as a set of values and behavior patterns that guided the nobility, which ultimately created its own unique culture.

It is important to realize that both the ideology and culture of chivalry represent only one layer of medieval perception. Because chivalry combined various elements of medieval society, these elements already existed outside the realm of chivalry. For example, a feudal culture existed independently from the realm of chivalry, as did an urban culture. Similarly concepts of lineage, honor, and social responsibility, etc., were perceived in other ways outside the chivalrous world. The novelty of chivalry was not based upon any innovation in its separate parts, but, rather in its distinct and unique combination of a variety of elements from many medieval institutions.

The behavior and concepts mentioned above represent chivalry in its most developed state. Out of what set of circumstances did chivalry emerge and how did chivalry develop? The origins of some of the ideals inherent in chivalry can be traced back to Germanic tribal society of the third, fourth , and fifth centuries A.D., and the phenomenon of the war band. These bands were formed whenever the tribes needed to defend themselves or to

conduct raids on other people. The band consisted of a leader and his followers. The men swore oaths of loyalty to each other and vowed to protect the leader, even at the expense of their own lives. The function of the war band within the society was strictly militaristic, at least for short periods of time. Members enjoyed an elite status. Participation reflected the individuals place within the society; only those who were free men could participate.

Following the chaos of the fall of Rome, Germanic kingdoms dotted the landscape of western Europe, kingdoms such as those of the Lombards, Franks, and Visigoths. Like the earlier tribal leaders, the rulers of these rather tenuous kingdoms relied heavily on their band of sworn followers to assert their royal will, and to provide advice and protection. The war band circle played an important role in the early Germanic kingdoms as advisors and strongmen. This "inner circle" continued on into the Merovingian and Carolingian eras. The influence of the circle escalated during the reign of the Merovingian "do nothing" kings. Pepin's membership, as mayor of the palace, in this group caused the Carolingian dynasty to come into power. With the advent of the Carolingian Empire, the role the circle of advisors played became even more crucial. The success of the Empire strongly depended on the ability of the king's men to help run his empire. Charlemagne himself relied heavily on his circle of advisors and supporters. The function of the war band had been expanded through the centuries, but the bonds that defined both the war band and the retinue of kings were essentially the same.

Strength, skill, and loyalty were still at a premium. The rise of feudalism further cemented the concepts of the war band into medieval attitudes. The feudal lord also came to depend upon his vassals to provide him with advice and to carry out his word. The concepts which had created the Germanic war band far back in the mists of this period survived through the generations to become an inherent part of the make up of medieval society. Chivalry adopted these values, insuring their survival far into the future.

While some of the concepts had their beginnings in the Germanic past, chivalry was firmly grounded in feudal society. Feudalism was the institution that defined the society of the Middle Ages, and was particularly important for the noble warrior class. Feudalism began its development during the period of invasions, when virtually all of Western Europe was thrown into terror and turmoil. People began to search for protectors and entered into relationships to insure their survival. The advent of feudalism had serious repercussions for the warrior class. Previously, the warrior class asserted its domination over the rest of society by their ownership of land, their control of dependents, and their muscle.[1] The articulation of feudalism gave the warrior nobles even more power. Feudalism was a response to the waning power and influence of the central monarchies. The kings could no longer provide protection, social services, or justice. In their place local pockets of power emerged to respond to these needs. Feudalism allowed the warrior nobles to become rulers of their own little principalities, drastically

increasing the nobles' power, and creating a feudal elite. Like chivalry, "feudalism" is a multifaceted term. Feudalism can refer to the pragmatic responses of the local lords to the power vacuum left by the recession of the monarchs, but this term can also embody a set of ideals that were produced by the concepts which governed the feudal world. For example, an ideal vassal would possess the virtues of honor, loyalty, bravery, military skill, and adherence to oaths. The feudal lord should also be honorable and loyal, but also just, generous, and responsible for his dependents. These ideals were an integral part of the society that produced chivalry, and many of them became the values, virtues, and attitudes of chivalry.[2]

Physical strength and success in battle made a good vassal in the feudal world, and both became crucial for the chivalrous knight. Honor and loyalty were important. In a feudal society these two concepts were the cement which bonded the society together. Adherence to the oaths, knight to noble, vassal to lord, was another important military and feudal concept. A chivalrous knight always kept his word, it was a regulation of the chivalric code. It became a point of honor. The personal honor of the knight reflected his "noble" status within medieval society. The noble attributes of chivalry are in a sense class oriented. They were the characteristics which distinguished a person from the rest of the unchivalrous world. The idea of honor became more fully developed and began to include a variety of expressions. Familial honor became increasingly important. The family name was held sacred and to be defended to the death. As

chivalry evolved within the ranks of the nobility these two traits, loyalty and honor, became necessary requirements for the chivalrous knight.

The feudal ideal of generosity or largesse also influenced the perceptions of chivalry. Generosity was an important characteristic for the feudal lord. To be considered a good lord, the feudal lord had to be generous to his retainers and guests. The chivalric theme of largesse was borrowed from the feudal realm and applied to the chivalric knight, lady, lord. The ideals which governed the feudal realm were adopted into chivalry. Likewise the characteristics of the ideal feudal leader, king or lord, became part of the chivalrous realm as well. The ideal feudal lord was strong, wise, and just. His role in society was to preserve order and protect those in his charge. The feudal leader was entrusted to care for the weak, orphaned, widowed, and the poor. This was part of the lord's feudal duty. These feudal ideals were included in chivalry and more fully articulated. The simple chivalrous knight, along with the kings and nobles, was expected to conduct himself in the same manner. The concepts which were the very essence of the feudal world were incorporated in chivalry where they reached their most developed expression and application.

The church, too, contributed mightily to the evolution of chivalry. As a large landowner, its properties were often the object of the nobles' rampages. Their concern caused the clergy to develop ways to channel the energies of the knights and nobles into activities which would serve and protect the church and

society. The Truce of God and attempts to solve the "paradox of the Knight" are examples of the church's campaign for stability and peace. The knights were to become the soldiers of God. The ideals proposed by the church were adopted by chivalry, thereby giving chivalry its religious values. The social and moral obligations of the chivalrous knight and lord were introduced by both the feudal and religious dimensions of chivalry. For example, the chivalric duty of helping widows and orphans has obvious roots in the feudal obligations of lords. Similarly, the chivalrous concept of protecting Christians and the church were duties introduced into chivalry by medieval churchmen.The religious dimension of chivalry asked the knights to defend Christianity and its followers from all threats, insuring internal stability as well as fighting against the infidel. The chivalrous knight became the right hand of the church, its defender.

With the three primary elements of chivalry in place, it is necessary to formulate a chronology for the development of chivalry. In the eleventh century, the elements of chivalry were already present. The military virtues of bravery, loyalty, prowess were the legacy of the Germanic war bands and were further developed in the feudal context. The noble traits of honor, the importance of lineage, and concern with material symbols of status were part of the feudal noble's attitudes. Finally, in the religious realm, the idea of the knights fighting a holy war for God and Christendom was evident in eleventh century thought (see the Song of Roland). The social obligations

of the knight's had also been articulated in the Peace of God movement, and were a part of eleventh century perceptions. The separate ingredients were present; all that was needed was the glue to bond them together into chivalry. The force that blended the secular and sacred sides of the medieval knight was the First Crusade in 1095. As Charles T. Wood states: "If the knight of earlier times had been purely the warrior, with religious convictions bearing bearing little relation to the profession he followed, under the impact of the Crusades these two sides of his personality began to merge." [3] Duby also believes the Crusades were an important turning point in the development of chivalry. The warrior/noble elements of the knight were merged with the religious/social to create the chivalrous knight. The First Crusade was really the first practical implementation of chivalry. It allowed the knights to use their military skill against the infidel and in defense of Christendom. While the western knights had repelled the Muslims previously, the ideas surrounding these ventures were not the same. The ideological atmosphere of the First Crusade was unique, and ultimately provided the spark that ignited the blaze of chivalry.[4]

The beginning of the twelfth century was the dawn of chivalry. Charles T. Wood states that after the First Crusade: "In a word, the age of chivalry had arrived."[5] Although the necessary elements had be joined, they needed to mature. This process occurred between 1100 and 1150. During this period chivalry continued to evolve, until its culmination in the mid-twelfth century. It was in this time frame that all the ideals of

chivalry infiltrated the perceptions of the nobility and even the clergy. As the years passed, chivalry became increasingly popular with the nobles, its attitudes gradually evolving and changing. The clergy too reacted to chivalry, accepting some of its ideals and rejecting many. By 1150 both the secular and religious sides of chivalry had matured. These elements inspired the creation of a distinct noble culture and system of ethics. This is evident in the development of a chivalric court culture and the advent of courtly love. In addition to these secular achievements, by the mid-twelfth century the church realized that chivalry was not a fad, and had begun accepting certain elements of chivalry. In fact, the clergy used chivalry to aid in the Christianization of the medieval nobility, and they were making significant progress. The date 1150 represents the maturation of chivalry, but its presence in medieval society was far from finished. The attitudes, ideals, practices, culture and material expressions of chivalry would become increasingly elaborate. The age of chivalry had just begun.[6]

THE SOURCES

With this general description of the nature, origin, and development of chivalry as background, primary sources will be examined to determine the impact of chivalry on the civilization of the medieval world. The sources to be used all date from roughly the end of the eleventh century to the end of the twelfth. They are from France, specifically the north of France. The reason for choosing the north of France as the area of study

is due to the profound cultural explosion that occurred here in the twelfth century. It was in the north of France that chivalry underwent its development. The existing cultural expressions and attitudes of this part of France influenced the articulation of chivalry, making it necessary to examine materials from this area to understand how and why chivalry evolved. The time frame of this study spans the the late eleventh to the twelfth century. This period was selected because the beginnings,the formulation, and the maturation of chivalry occurred in these centuries. The sources will be examined to determine what elements or manifestations of chivalry were present, and what impact they had on the author's perceptions. Some of the sources under consideration were written to educate or reform the nobility. These sources will be viewed to see how the ideals of chivalry were employed to change or regulate the behavior of the nobility. By employing the sources in this manner, it is possible to determine in what ways chivalry affected the attitudes and behavior of medieval people.

The primary sources under consideration can be broken down into roughly two groups: literature and theology. Under the heading of literature there are a variety of types. The first, secular literature, includes the chansons de geste, romances, and lais. These works were produced for the secular audience and reflect the values and activities of the secular nobility. Specifically two chansons de geste will be taken into consideration The Song of Roland and Raoul de Cambrai. The romances to be discussed are those of Chrètien de Troyes: Erec

and Enide, Cligès, Yvain, Lancelot, and Perceval:the story of the Grail. The Lais of Marie de France and The Art of Courtly Love by Andreas Capellanus round out the sources from the secular realm. While these sources all represent secular literature, they were written roughly over a period of a century. The chansons date from the eleventh century, and the romances are from the twelfth. For this reason, these sources will not be treated together, but as they occur chronologically. The sources will be examined in the following chronological order: chansons de geste, chronicles, history and biographies, and finally court literature. In combination these sources reflect the maturation of chivalry through the eleventh to the twelfth century.

The chronicles will be considered after the chansons de geste, because they represent the merging of the elements present in the eleventh century epics. The Gesta Francorum and the History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127 by Fulcher of Chartres deal with the First Crusade. These chronicles illustrate the development of chivalry and chivalry in action. In addition, these two chronicles provide a contrast between the secular and sacred attitudes toward chivalry and the medieval nobility, since the Gesta was written by a layman and Fulcher of Chartres was a priest. Further, the chronicles were a record made at the time of the event. The chronicles of the First Crusade are useful because they can provide insight into whether or not chivalric concepts were employed to describe contemporary society.

History and biographies represent the next category of secular literature. In contrast to the chronicles these sources

record the past. Therefore, they illustrate how deeply chivalry had penetrated the perceptions of the clergy and nobility in the first half of the twelfth century. The ideals of chivalry were so ingrained they were used to evaluate events and societies of the past. The historical source to be examined is the Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis written c.1114-1135. This source deals with the history of Normandy. Although it is an ecclesiastical history, Orderic provides a through discussion of the Norman nobility as well. Four biographies will be under consideration: Le Vie de Louis VI Le Gros by abbot Suger written in 1144;The Autobiography of Guibert de Nogent; and De Profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem by Odo of Deuil written in 1148. The epic cycle of Guilliame d'Orange will also be examined; although it is not a formal biographical work, it presents the life of a single nobleman. The story of Guillaume d'Orange was written throughout the twelfth century. Through biographies it is possible to discern what characteristics were most desirable in a chivalrous personality. The biography is also equally useful in determining what characteristics and behavior were not part of the chivalrous individual. While the two biographies by Suger and Odo of Deuil and the epic cycle of William of Orange are concerned with strictly secular personalities, The Autobiography of Guibert de Nogent is about a member of the clergy, written between 1064-1125. However, Guibert was raised as a member of the nobility and was exposed to the ideals of chivalry. This piece of literature is useful for two reasons. First, it allows one to see how deeply chivalry penetrated the noble personality. In other words, when

Guibert became a cleric, did he lose his noble chivalric values and attitudes. Second, this autobiography presents a churchman's reaction to chivalry and the chivalrous society of the nobility.

Following the history and biographies, the court literature of the mid-twelfth century will be considered. Court literature includes the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the lais of Marie de France, and Andreas Capellanus' treatise on courtly love. These sources were produced by the courts of northern France around 1160, and reflect the maturation of chivalry, the development of a noble culture and code of ethics.

The second major group of sources consists of theological works. While strictly theological sources represent perhaps a more doctrinal view of chivalry, liturgical sources reflect the popular view and the interaction of the church with chivalry. An important part of knighthood and chivalry was the ceremony of dubbing and the receiving of arms. These ceremonies were conducted within the church , and a ceremonial literature developed. The benedictio or prayers surrounding these ceremonies reflect the attitudes of the church toward the activities, behavior, and virtues of the knights. A selection of these benedictio will be examined to illustrate the church's perception of chivalry and knighthood.

The theological treatises under consideration are those of some of the major theologians of the period under discussion. The first theologian to be examined is John of Salisbury, an Englishman. He is included here with French sources because he was educated in France and was the bishop of Chartres. The same

forces which formed the great minds of the continent also shaped the intellect of John of Salisbury. His work The Policraticus will be considered as well as some of his personal correspondence. The theologian Bernard of Clairvaux, his personality and work, specifically his In Praise of the New Knighthood, will be examined. Although both of these men were members of the clergy, they were intimately involved in the secular realm as well and reflect the attitudes of the day. Their work also illustrates how the ideals of chivalry had penetrated the clergy and their attitudes reflect the church's reaction to chivalry.

These sources were selected to provide a wide spectrum of opinion and view points. A careful exploration of the characters, activities, and ideas present in the literature will illustrate the civilizing impact that chivalry had on the culture and occupation of the medieval nobility.

CHAPTER II

CHANSONS DE GESTE

An examination of the chansons de geste will begin the discussion of secular literature, since they are the earliest form of secular expression to be considered. The two pieces of this type of literature that will be considered are The Song of Roland and Raoul de Cambrai. The plots, characters, events, and ideals in these poems reflect the infancy of chivalric attitudes. They also illustrate the preoccupation with things secular, with the feudal concerns of the medieval nobility. Both of these chansons were products of the eleventh century. They reflect the nascent values of chivalry, values which would become fully developed in the literature of the twelfth century.

The Song of Roland is one of the most famous pieces of medieval literature. The events and characters in the story occurred in the eighth century, but were not written down in final form until the eleventh century. The actual ambush at Roncevaux probably occurred, but was certainly expanded and elaborated over the centuries. Charlemagne and his followers were returning to France after fighting the Saracens in Spain. Roland, Charlemagne's nephew, was put in charge of the rear guard. Guènes, an uncle of Roland, was jealous of him and arranged with a Muslim prince to ambush Roland in the passage at Roncevaux. Roland and his followers put up a courageous fight, but were eventually slaughtered. Charlemagne and his troops heard the blast from Olifant, the horn which was sounded to indicate danger

or trouble, but arrived at the scene only to find all the good knights dead. The rest of the story deals with the grief of Charlemagne and his court over the death of Roland and the peers, and the realization of betrayal and the judgment of Guènes. The story of Roland is steeped in feudal and chivalric imagery.

As a war story, the poem provides a rich source of information about the military practices of the eleventh century, and demonstrates an emerging code of secular values and concerns. Throughout the epic Roland, Charlemagne, their knights, and even the Saracens are praised for their skill and endurance in battle. For example, even the aged Charlemagne is praised for his strength by the Muslim king Marsile: "...Two hundred years and more I know he's seen;/In lands so many he's brought to beggary-/ When will he weary of fighting in the field?"[1] Roland and Oliver are also praised for their ability in battle: "Roland is fierce and Oliver is wise/And both for valour may bear away the prize...."[2] The other peers are similarly praised: "Now Margaris is a right valiant peer,/ Buxom and strong, nimble and fleet and fierce...."[3] Loyalty to their lord Charlemagne and compatriots was important. Roland encourages his men on in battle: "...Here must we stand to serve on the King's side./Men for their lords great hardship must abide,/Fierce heat and cold endure in every clime,/Lose for his sake, if need be, skin and hide...."[4] Again Roland illustrates his loyalty to his lord: "...When the King have us the French to serve this need/These twenty thousand he chose to do the deed;/And well he knew not one would flinch or flee. / Men must endure much hardship for their liege,/And bear

for him great cold and burning heat,/Suffer sharp wounds and let their bodies bleed...."[5] Archbishop Turpin too displays loyalty to Charlemagne: "Barons, my lords, Charles picked us for this purpose;/We must be ready to die in our King's service...."[6] The traits of prowess and loyalty were vital in the medieval knight and chivalry adopted these traits.

In addition to the physical prowess of the knights, other attributes were considered important in the Song of Roland. Wisdom was required of the knights, wisdom in battle , but also wisdom in counseling their lord. At the outset of the poem, Charlemagne asks his men to advise him on the offer he has received from the Muslim king Marsile: " He was not a man hasty in reply,/But wont to speak only when well advised."[7] Charlemagne's men debate the point, offering their own opinions. It was necessary for the knight to give wise counsel, for he would be held accountable if his advice was faulty. Oliver was often praised in the poem for his wisdom. Roland, on the other hand, was more often praised for his bravery and physical prowess. This opposition provides for an important contrast. In a sense the personalities of Oliver and Roland can be seen as making up one knight: " Roland is fierce and Oliver is wise...."[8] Both embody important characteristics, but neither is complete. Roland tends to be brash and intemperate. The whole tragedy at Roncevaux occurred because Roland was over confident and did not have the good sense to summon the other troops, as Oliver suggested. Along with his lack of foresight, the character of Roland also suffered from immoderation. At the outset of the

story, when Charlemagne asked for his knight's counsel, Roland was impassioned in his outbursts. He is described as "high of heart and stubborn of your mood "[9] by Oliver. Another example of Roland's explosiveness is his attempt to convince Charlemagne to attack Marsile. Roland goes on at length boasting about his military successes. Roland is not a mature knight. He is too often governed by his emotions rather than good sense. [10] The virtues of wisdom and moderation were important in the medieval knight. Roland's fate provides an example of what can happen to knights who are not moderate or temperate. Once again the appearance of these themes, loyalty, prowess, wisdom and moderation represent a preoccupation that would develop even more fully with chivalry, and that would in turn change the cultural expressions and very nature of the medieval nobility.

The Song of Roland articulates a code of battle. These rules were the basis for the chivalric idea of courtesy, e.g. rules governing one on one combat, when to yield or give mercy. Since these warriors were knights, they were expected to obey these rules. If they did not, they acted dishonorably and it was a reflection on their personal honor. The rules which governed Roland and his contemporaries on the battle field were the beginnings of the code of courtesy which later governed the chivalrous knight. The Song of Roland reflects the some of values later incorporated into the chivalric code. These preoccupations represent the beginnings of chivalry and changes which were taking place in the society at that time.

Another theme in the Song of Roland that prefigures chivalry

and represents the beginning of a new tradition in literary expression is that of secular love. The bonds of affection that existed between the knights, individually, and the knights and their lords are often alluded to. The relationship that existed between Roland and Oliver illustrates the love and respect between knights. Similarly, the love between Charlemagne and Roland represents the emotional ties between lord and vassal, as well as between family members. When Charlemagne realized that the rear guard had been slaughtered he reacted with great emotion. The process of grieving is described in detail. It is really the only loving emotion genuinely expressed by the characters. This expression is uniquely secular, it represents the relationships that held medieval society together. In later chivalry it was necessary for the medieval knight or lord to have the love and respect of his men and peers, and it was necessary for the lord to love his men. The love expressed in The Song of Roland is between men and comrades. In later literature the concept of love between men and women would find expression and evolve into the idea of courtly love. The emotion of love expressed in this poem is secular not spiritual. It paved the way for further expression and experimentation in the realm of love.

The noble dimension of chivalry is apparent in the Song of Roland as well as the military. There are essentially three topics in the poem which illustrate this: the preoccupation with status symbols and material wealth, the vital importance of personal honor and fame, and the importance of family connections and relationships.

The splendor of the armor and other accoutrements of the knight reflected the importance attached to material wealth. For example, the saddle of a particular knight may be described as bejeweled or as having a fancy pattern, usually flowers, worked on the leather. The most common reference, however, is to golden spurs, an important status symbol. It seems that only a select few could have golden spurs, Roland and Guènes were among them. Along with the armor, the horse of the knight was also a reflection of his status. If a knight mounted any other kind of horse besides a destrier, it was a mark against his honor. For example, when Count Guènes is arrested he is: "...Now on a pack-horse they've hoisted him in shame."[11] In addition to the accoutrements of war serving as status symbols, clothing also seems to have been a sign of noble stature. Guènes' clothing is described several times:"...his great furred gown of marten he flings back...."[12] and "...He has on him a sable-fur-lined cloak/Covered with silk which Alexandria wove." [13] As well as being concerned with various expressions of wealth and status, the physical appearance of the knight is also part of what makes him noble. Somehow there were certain physical characteristics that were inherent in the nobility. For example, Charlemagne is described: "...White are his locks, and silver is his beard,/ His body noble, his countenance severe." [14] The insistence that all knights be noble and fair becomes an important theme in later chivalric literature. The Song of Roland contains a hint of this later concern with physical beauty. The attention paid to the material and physical symbols of knighthood illustrates an

interest in things bound in the earthly realm. These concerns demonstrate an interest in the secular world, which would become fully articulated in the expressions of chivalry.

Honor is another trait that served to distinguish the knights as noble. The knights' word was completely and totally binding, and a direct reflection of his honor. Since the fabric of medieval society was bound together by oaths, it was only natural that a sign of a noble's character would be his ability to keep his word. Without honor, a knight was beyond the pale of society. The loss of honor was a fate worse than death. There are many examples in the poem which illustrate the importance of honor to the knights. In the battle scene, one of the peers is described as:"...He'd rather die than quail or suffer scorn."[15] The following passage also illustrates the importance of honor: " Better by far the heads of them should fall/Than we should lose honour, estate, and all./And be reduced to beggary and scorn."[16] In other words, honor was as much a part of being a noble as was owning estates. The knight's honor extended into all aspects of his life, from his performance on the battlefield to how he died. An honorable, even glorious death was of vital importance to the knight. Roland was concerned with his death. When Charlemagne arrives at the scene of the battle he states: "...Roland said something which now I call to mind:/That should he come in foreign lands to die,/ Beyond them all, footmen or peers, he'd lie,/ And have his face turned toward the enemy;/ Fighting he'd fall and finish victor-like."[17] An honorable death was of the utmost importance to the medieval knight, for a dishonorable

death or burial represented disgrace. Guènes suffers a dishonorable death:"...I sentence him to death by hanging-further/To have his body [dragged meanly on a hurdle,]/As well befits such treasonable vermin...."[18] Honor was a guiding force in the life and activities of the knights in this epic, and was absorbed into chivalry as one of the criteria necessary to be a chivalrous knight.

An important part of the knight's honor was his reputation. The knight's quest for glory usually involved doing great warrior deeds and the medieval knight was in constant search for such great deeds, which more than likely ended up in bloody battle. The Song of Roland refers often to the fame and reputations of the knights, and their preoccupation with great deeds. It was vitally important for the medieval knight to have his fame acclaimed throughout the countryside. For example, Roland addressed Oliver: "...I shall lay on with Durendal my sword,/ You,comrade, wield that great Hauteclaire of yours./In lands how many have we those weapons borne!/Battles how many victoriously fought!/ Ne'er shall base ballad be sung of them in hall!"[19] This passage reflects the concerns of the knight with fame and reputation , and the importance of great military deeds. The knights tried to enhance their reputations, for if they failed or were dishonored in some way their fame would be severly damaged. As Oliver states: "...Ill tales of me shall no man tell, say I!"[20] Roland encourages his men to fight bravely:"...Lest brave men sing ill songs in your despite."[21] The key to the knight's reputation was the ability to do great deeds, and finding great

deeds to do. In the battle scene this motif is apparent: "...This said, the whole Twelve Champions are convened;/One hundred thousand stout Saracens they lead./Each one afire with zeal to do great deeds."[22] In the battles themselves there was an awareness of the deeds committed by the knights: "Quoth Roland: 'Lo! that was a valiant feat!'"[23] The knights realized the importance of their deeds; it was in a sense their mission "...to do great deeds"[24] and it was a vitally important part of the knights sense of personal honor. This preoccupation with fame later became an important element of the chivalrous knight.

The knights were concerned with family honor as well. Familial honor was as important as the knights' individual honor. At the outset of the battle, Roland was encouraged by Oliver to blow the horn to summon help, but Roland refused to do this because he believed it would bring shame to his family: "May never God allow/That I should cast dishonour on my house/Or on fair France bring any ill renown...!"[25] In addition to familial honor, membership in an honorable family was important. The lineage of several of the knights is mentioned. Guènes is described by Queen Blancandrin as: "... A lord of France, of most illustrious stock."[26] Roland himself is described by Archbishop Turpin as: "...Valour like this becomes a knight of breed...."[27] The knights were concerned with establishing an illustrious lineage. Their familial ties were a necessary part of being a noble knight; they were part of the inherent makeup of the noble dimension of knighthood. The importance of the knight's lineage would continue to play a crucial role in the chivalrous

personality.

Another noble value apparent in the Song of Roland is the theme of generosity or largesse. This theme is exclusively noble, since only the lords could afford to be generous. To be called generous was truly an honor, and crucial part of being a good lord. The lord's generosity helped to keep his vassals loyal and content. Roland is praised in the poem for his generosity to his men: "He counts upon the French;/ They'll never fail him, they love him far too well./ Silver and gold he gives them for largesse,/ Horses and mules, silks and accoutrements."[28] It paid to be generous to one's followers. Largesse became a vital theme in mature chivalry.

The religious aspect of chivalry is not completely absent from this epic either. The medieval period was a time of intense religious belief and practice, and since the Song of Roland is a product of this period it is only natural that religious ideas play some role in this poem. For example, the good and noble knight or lord attended church. Archbishop Turpin is an important character. But while religion is an element, the religious expressions throughout the poem reflect a secular bias. Religion is expressed in secular terms. As the only religious personality in the poem, Archbishop Turpin takes an active role in the battle and is praised for his physical prowess and strength, rather than his piety. Even God seems to be interpreted in a temporal or feudal manner; he is referred to as: "...the great Lord of might."[29] Religion certainly is an element, but it is viewed in a feudal or secular context, rather than one of pure spirituality.

There is one theme, however, that is most strongly asserted in the poem: the idea that the knights are the protectors of Christendom and that they fight for religion. Charlemagne is presented as the preserver of Christendom and the Christian religion: "Then the Emir begins to be afraid/ The wrong's with him, the right with Charlmayn."[30] Charlemagne is also portrayed as a devout Christian: "Early from bed the Emperor now is got;/ At mass and matins he makes his orison."[31] Charlemagne and his followers are fighting for Christianity against the pagan hordes. Archbishop Turpin encourages Roland and his men on: "Barons, my lords, Charles picked us for this purpose;/We must be ready to die in our King's service./ Christendom needs you, so help us to preserve it./ Battle you'll have, of that you may be certain,/ Here come the Paynims-your own eyes have observed them./ Now beat your breasts and ask God for His mercy:/ I will absolve you and set you souls in surety./ If you should die, Blest martyrdom's you gueron;/ You'll sit high in Paradise eternal."[32] Turpin's words depict several important concepts. First, he mentions the idea that it is the duty of the knights to protect Christendom. This reflects the channeling of the knights' aggressive tendencies into new directions, specifically away from western Europe and toward those outside the pale of the church. This is an important element in the solution of the "paradox of the knight". The theme of the knights as the protectors of the Christian world also became an important element in the activities and duties of the chivalrous knight. Second, the concept of martyrdom is introduced. The knights would achieve

martyrdom if they died in the service of God. What had previously been war for the sake of war and plunder became a holy war, a pious war. This new view of warfare came to play an important role in chivalry, most clearly expressed in the Crusades in the Holy Land.

The Song of Roland contains many of the elements of chivalry. It also demonstrates the predominance of warrior interests. The characters, action, and ideals presented have a distinctly martial texture. It is a story about a great and tragic battle, and the relationships among men. Along with the elements of the secular side of chivalry, concepts of the religious dimension also appear in the story. For example, it is the duty of the knight is protect Christendom by his military skill, for which he may receive martyrdom. The knight is expected to be a Christian, but a warrior not a monk. Many of the ideals which combined to create chivalry are present in this poem. Chivalry had yet to develop fully, and the class and culture which it would establish had yet to reach the sophistication that it would ultimately attain.

Another piece of literature that illuminates the beginnings of chivalry is the chanson de geste Raoul de Cambrai. This epic reflects the concerns of the medieval nobility during the eleventh century. In fact this chanson de geste has a distinctly didactic tone. The characters, events, and action within the poem seem to be trying to drive home certain points to the audience, which was the secular nobility. The story is about a young man named Raoul and his search for what he deemed his proper

inheritance. The predominant theme is the conflict within the knight between two important forces, his family loyalty and the bonds of feudalism knighthood. Concern with inheritance and the giving of gifts appear as themes. These are all part of the noble dimension of chivalry. Like the Song of Roland, Raoul de Cambrai is primarily concerned with the secular issues and problems that faced the medieval nobility. The object of this epic is to instruct the knights on what should have precedence in their lives, and how to conduct themselves properly.

The three facets of chivalry, the military, the noble, and the religious are all present in this epic. In the military category, prowess is praised. Bernier, Raoul's squire, is described as: "...a good knight, strong and fearless and a noble warrior."[33] Loyalty is important. Bernier is the ultimate loyal knight. He is loyal to Raoul through thick and thin, even when he realizes that his lord is planning to go to war with his own family. In fact Bernier does not abandon Raoul until Raoul commits the atrocity of murdering Bernier's mother. Loyalty to the knight's lord is a vital theme in this story. The bonds of affection between the knights play a significant role in the story. When Guerri, Raoul's uncle and one of his chief warriors, brings Raoul's dead body home he states: " You speak illadvisedly,lady, I swear by St. Denis. But I can say no more, for I am overcome with grief myself that the Bastard Bernier has slain him."[34] Whenever a comrade in arms died there were shows of emotion and grief, demonstrating the strong bonds of loyalty and love between these warriors.

The feudal duties which knights owed to their lords are apparent here too. One of these duties was giving advice. When Raoul murders Bernier's mother, Bernier turns to his men: "Noble vassals, can you give me good advice? My lord Raoul hates me , for he has burnt my mother in the chapel yonder...."[35] The importance of good advice is a theme in this story. The conflict between Raoul and the sons of Herbert began because King Louis was poorly advised: " Our emperor listened to the barons talking and advising him to give the fair Aalais [Raoul's mother] to the baron of Mans who had served him so well. He took their counsel, for which he is to be blamed... King Louis did a very foolish thing when he took the heritage away from his nephew."[36] It was the lord's and king's responsibility to insure that they were advised properly. Louis is portrayed as the real villain in the story because of his failure to get or listen to good counsel. In fact the story ends with the families of Raoul and Herbert joining forces against King Louis.

To insure that the lords had the proper counsel and support, wisdom and moderation were required of the knights. Wisdom is rather a catch-all term for good sense. Knights were supposed to think before they acted. Wisdom and moderation are dominant themes in the story. Raoul and Bernier provide an interesting contrast between a knight who is immoderate (Raoul) and a knight who is temperate (Bernier). Raoul is portrayed as proud, volatile, intemperate, and cruel, all vices. Raoul's true character appears when he burns down a nunnery, killing all of the innocent inhabitants. This incident was considered barbaric

for several reasons. First, unarmed and innocent people were killed. Second, Raoul broke his word to Bernier's mother. Third, Raoul burned down the nunnery out of anger. Finally, it was an act committed against the church. Raoul had a vile temper. He was abusive to his men, his friends, and even to ladies. Another aspect of Raoul's unsavory character was his pride, which bordered on pure stubborness. Raoul is told that the bloodshed could be stopped if only he weren't so proud. Guerri says of Raoul to Aalais: " 'Lady' he replied' I will not deceive you- Your son's pride is the cause of all this...'"[37] All in all Raoul is not a very knightly character. He is portrayed as an example of the traits <u>not</u> desirable in a knight: temper, pride, arrogance, and immoderation.

The character of Bernier is in direct contrast to Raoul. Bernier is loyal to his lord and his family. He keeps his word. He listens to advice. And he does not violate the church. Bernier tried to stop the war between Raoul and his family over the disputed territory. Several times Bernier sues Raoul for peace, to put an end to the senseless slaughter, but Raoul cannot be reasoned with. The theme of moderate behavior is a prominent one, and moderation became an important theme in developed chivalry.

The ideals and characters illustrate a concern with the noble dimension of chivalry. The personal and familial honor of the knight's was important. Perhaps the most prevalent noble theme in the story is the concern with material goods and wealth. The story itself is based upon the struggle for Raoul's

inheritance, land. Land was the major form of wealth and the base for the feudal noble's power and richness. Images of wealth abound in the descriptions of clothing and arms. For example: "...Count Raoul was sitting at the highest table clothed in a robe of costly Greek stuff."[38] Characters were sometimes garbed in ermine. The armor of Gautier, Raoul's nephew, has "precious stones" and "emblems" on the helmet.[39] Other knights' armor has gems and flowers etched on it. The attention paid to the details of the armor and clothing, the interest in material goods, establish the secular nature of the poem , the world that it describes, and the preoccupation of this noble class with interests which were primarily secular.

Noble lineage was important to the medieval knight. Here Raoul's family is described as: "...the noble family so famous for its valour."[40] Belonging to a noble family was obviously important to the knights. This is apparent in Bernier's concern with the heritage of his mother. Bernier is a bastard; his father was the noble lord Ybert who apparently abducted Bernier's mother and had his way with her. Bernier does not dispute the fact that he is illegitimate; rather he is concerned with proving that both of his parents are of the nobility: "...Ybert is my father, and my mother too was a lady of gentle birth. Sir Raoul, I tell you of a truth that my mother was the daughter of a knight who held sway over the whole of Bavaria."[41] Bernier further describes his father as a: "...very gallant gentleman...."[42] It was crucial for the knights to be part of a noble family. Membership in a family was how a person was socially defined. The concern with class had

begun. It represents the beginnings of the concern that would become more fully expressed in chivalry.

The theme of largesse appears in this epic. The problems which occur resulted from the role of the lord as a gift giver , in this case King Louis. The giving of gifts, usually land, was an important part of a lord's largesse. It was because Louis gives the land promised to Raoul to another knight, that Raoul became embroiled in the conflict with the sons of Herbert. Granting of lands was an important part of the lord's role in medieval society, and the knights were naturally concerned. In addition to the giving of gifts, simple generosity in the makeup of the knight was valued. After battle, Raoul summons his seneschal: "Prepare me food and thou wilt do me a great service;roasted peacocks and devilled swans, and venison in abundance, that even the humblest may have his fill. I would not be thought mean by my barons for all of the gold in a city."[43] It was essential for a lord to be considered generous. There are not many references to largesse, but this one example provides evidence that the important chivalrous concept of largesse was being formulated at this time.

The religious dimension of chivalry is also a significant theme. This epic is concerned with knightly behavior, including the knight's religious beliefs and practices. It was naturally assumed that a knight was a Christian; beyond this the requirements were less clear. The character of Raoul once again seems to serve as the antithesis. Raoul is often downright disrespectful of the church. He burns down nunneries and murders

nuns. Raoul also orders his tent to be set up inside of a church, desecrating sacred ground: "...Spread my tent in the middle of the church; let my pack-horses be tethered in the porch;prepare my food beneath the vaults, fasten my falcons to the golden crosses and make ready a rich bed before the altar where I may lie. I will lean against the crucifix and deliver the nuns to my squires...."[44] In addition to these crimes, Raoul does not keep Lent. He simply forgets about it, until he is reminded by one of his men. He is hardly a devout Christian. Not only does he violate the rules of the church, but also he threatens his own society as well by wreaking havoc through warfare. Bernier and his family provide a corrective contrast to Raoul's behavior. When Ybert and his followers are introduced into the action, they are emerging from church after hearing mass.[45] The members of Bernier's family are portrayed as practicing Christians, in contrast to Raoul. Bernier and his family try to end the disturbance, the war. Bernier often implored Raoul to stop the fighting and needless slaughter, but Raoul refused. This contrast reflects a change in attitude toward knighthood. Raoul represents the old order of knights who fought endlessly , who were not active participants in the religious life, and who were not concerned with the destruction they caused. Bernier and his family represent the new order. They are practicing Christians. They are genuinely concerned with the chaos they create when they are at war. Even Raoul's mother represents the new interest in social responsibility. She warns Raoul: "'Fair son Raoul,'" said the noble lady,'stir not up war for such an evil cause...My son,

never destroy either church or chapel, and for God's sake, never make the poor homeless.'"[46] Certain members of medieval society were trying to establish the behavior that should be expected from the knight and the noble class. These themes reflect a new perception on the part of the medieval nobility, and prefigure the evolution of the eleventh century warrior class into the twelfth century chivalrous nobility.

While religious concerns appear in this chanson de geste, they play a fairly minor role. However, they reflect attempts to bring the knights as warriors into the church. The bulk of the action and and ideals are grounded in the realm of the warrior, reflecting the nature of the eleventh century feudal noble. Like the Song of Roland, this chanson reflects the nobility's concern with secular affairs and a cultural expression which addressed the secular interests of the nobility. The secular and religious sides of the knight were still separate in the eleventh century. They had yet to be merged into the chivalrous knight. The Crusades would provide the necessary impetus. Other facets of chivalry are present in these eleventh century chansons, but as separate elements in their early developmental stage. All will eventually become combined into one complete expression, into one complete ideal personality, into one culture. Chivalry had begun to pry cultural expression away from the monopoly of the church, but it had yet to reach the apex of expression or influence which it would achieve in the twelfth century.

CHAPTER III

THE CHRONICLES OF THE CRUSADES

Both chronicles under examination deal with the events of the First Crusade of 1095, and were written approximately thirty years after the chansons de geste. The Gesta Francorum, written between 1095 and 1101, and Fulcher of Chartres' A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127, illustrate the merging of the secular and religious sides of chivalry. While the author of the Gesta Francorum was probably a layman and Fulcher of Chartres was a priest, both chronicles reflect the same basic view of chivalry. The Crusades were a turning point in the history of chivalry. The Crusade provided the medieval knight with a legitimate mission, one where he could put into practice both sets of ideals. The knight employed his military skills in the defense of Christendom and for the love of God. The warrior-noble class became the partner and instrument of God. The rules of chivalry governed the conduct of that holy war. The chivalric code was formulated during the First Crusade and began to change the nature of the noble class.

All three of the realms of chivalry are apparent and have been combined into a single code. In the military realm, the knights and lords are described as brave, strong, loyal, and wise. The Saracens , on the other hand, are often described as cowardly, deceptive, devious, and greedy. As nobles, the crusaders were interested in secular symbols of status, honor,

and generosity.

The military and noble aspects of chivalry are important themes in these chronicles, but the religious dimension is more completely articulated. This is because of the subject matter, but also, because the religious precepts were unfamiliar to most knights and needed reinforcement. The chronicles provide a matured attitude toward warfare and the knights' role as warriors. The views of warfare of both the secular and sacred worlds of medieval society were evolving and combining.

As in other works of the period, the crusaders are depicted as devout Christians. Even though they were preoccupied with battle and basic survival, the knights still found time to adhere to the rituals of the church. The day after a long and bloody battle they: "...gathered in the tent of the king and heard the mass of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to which event the day was sacred."[1] The crusaders attended mass and prayed before battle: "On Wednesday and Thursday we launched a fierce attack upon the city, both by day and by night, from all sides, but before we attacked our bishops and priests preached to us and told us to go in procession round Jerusalem to the glory of God , and to pray and give alms and fast, as faithful men should do."[2] The crusaders were also expected to help those who were less fortunate: " At last, after three days spent in fasting and in processions from one church to another, our men confessed their sins and received absolution, and by faith they received the Body and Blood of Christ in communion, and they gave alms and arranged for masses to be celebrated."[3] Social responsibility was as much

a part of being a good Christian and crusader as was receiving the sacrament.

To drive home the importance of religion, the authors set up a contrast between the knights and the Saracens. The Franks are portrayed as the epitome of knighthood. They incorporate all of the dimensions of chivalry, but most importantly they are devout Christians. As the author of the Gesta Francorum states about the Muslims: "Yet, please God, their men will never be as good as ours. They have a saying that they are of common stock with the Franks, and that no men, except the Franks and themselves, are naturally born to be knights. This is true, and nobody can deny it, that if only they had stood firm in the faith of Christ and holy Christendom, and had been willing to accept One God in Three Persons, and had believed rightly and faithfully that the Son of God was born of a virgin mother, that he suffered, and rose from the dead and ascended in the sight of his disciples into Heaven, and sent them in full measure the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and that he reigns in Heaven and earth, you could not find stronger or braver or more skillful soldiers...."[4] Knighthood now consisted of more that being a good soldier or of noble blood,; a knight had to be a Christian, for it was now believed that his success in battle depended on his relationship with God. Victory in battle was due to God's support. If they were not practicing Christians, the knights could not succeed in battle. The Saracens warriors, even if they were strong and brave, were without God, and therefore vanquished before the battle even began. The Christians were invincible because God was on their side. The

author of the Gesta Francorum even believes the Muslims themselves realize the strength of the crusaders. The mother of Karbuqa, a Saracen warrior, states: "'...the Christians alone cannot fight with you-indeed I know they are unworthy to meet you in battle-but their god fights for them every day, and keeps them day and night under his protection, and watches over them as a shepherd watches over his flock....Before they are even ready to join battle, their god, mighty and powerful in battle, together with his saints, has already conquered all their enemies....'"[5] The Christian religion was a vital part of the lives of the chivalrous knights, for it even guaranteed their success and martyrdom.

The chroniclers also portray the evolving concept of warfare, war for purely spiritual reasons. The concept of holy war had been present in the minds and expressions of earlier periods, but these chroniclers seem to expand upon this this concept. The attitudes of the eleventh century as reflected in the chansons de geste, required, in theory, that knights be the soldiers of God, and that they defend the church and Christendom. This ideal became a reality in the Crusades. The chroniclers stressed over and over that this was a spiritual war. The knights were not fighting for rights over a parcel of land, but for the salvation of the Christian community. This attitude reflects the change that had occurred in the character of the warrior nobles. The lords urged their men on by reminding them of their mission: "'Charge at top speed, like a brave man, and fight valiantly for God and the Holy Sepulchre, for you know in truth

that this is no war of the flesh but of the spirit. So be very brave , as becomes a champion of Christ. Go in peace, and may the Lord be your defense!'" [6] No longer were the knights merely warriors, but were: "...most valiant soldiers of Christ...."[7] Fulcher of Chartres' portrayal of Pope Urban's speech perhaps best describes the change that has occurred: "' Let those,' he said, 'who are accustomed to wantonly wage private war against the faithful march upon the infidels in a war which should have begun now and be finished in victory. Let those who have long been robbers now be the soldiers of Christ. Let those who once fought against brothers and relatives now rightfully fight against barbarians.'"[8] War and its various ramifications were perceived in religious terms. There are references to the idea of channeling the violent activities of war away from the Christians and exclusively toward the Muslims. Tancred refused to plunder Christians.[9] Although this ideal may have been popular among the writers of the Crusades, in the heat of the battle the crusaders tended to revert to their former marauding tendencies. However, the concept of the holy war was put firmly in place by the Crusades, and the "paradox of the knight" was resolved.

Because the crusaders were the soldiers of God, religion and God himself came to play an increasingly important role in the battles of the Crusades. Throughout the chronicles, God is portrayed as an integral part of the journey, battles, victories, and failures. God takes an active role in all aspects of the Crusades. In the Gesta Francorum God is believed to have supplied new troops: " If God had not been with us in this battle and sent

us the other army quickly, none of us would have escaped...."[10] Fulcher of Chartres also perceives God as having an active role in all matters of the Crusade: "Although it was customary to cross this river only by boat we joyfully waded across with the aid of God."[11] Fulcher even believes that God provided food for the crusaders: "In that year peace and a very great abundance of grain and wine existed in all countries by the grace of God, so that there was no lack of bread on the trip for those who had chose to follow Him with their crosses in accordance with His commands."[12] The crusaders and their chroniclers believed that God intervened in even the most practical matters of the expedition.

The theme that God provided the knights with the power of victory is apparent in a number of ways. As Fulcher of Chartres states: " The Lord does not give victory to splendor of nobility nor brilliance in arms but lovingly helps in their need the pure in heart and those who are fortified with divine strength."[13] The physical prowess and skill of the crusading knights was no longer enough. The motif of the crusaders armed with the cross further illustrates this point. As the author of the Gesta Francorum states: "...the noble count of Flanders, armed at all points with faith and with the sign of the Cross (which he bore loyally every day)...."[14] Fulcher describes the cross in a similar manner: "It was proper that the soldiers of God who were preparing to fight for His honor should be identified and protected by this emblem of victory."[15] The cross represented the new protective armor of the knights: their faith in God. Ordinary armor, like simple

martial prowess, was no longer enough to insure success. The knights needed the strength and protection of God. Both authors suggest that the knights will be denied victory if they are sinful, the author of the Gesta writes: " God granted that we should suffer this poverty and wretchedness because of our sins."[16] Fulcher of Chartres expresses the same opinion: "We felt that the misfortunes had befallen the Franks because of their sins and that for this reason they were not able to take the city for so long a time. Luxury and avarice and pride and plunder had indeed vitiated them."[17] Clearly, both the secular and sacred realms were concerned with teaching the knights that their power was not based in the physical world, but in their faith in God. The religious dimension of chivalry came to fruition in the Crusades and merged with the secular element to produce the chivalric code of ethics.

The chronicles of the First Crusade reflect the ideals of chivalry, the military and noble dimensions appear, but it is the religious realm that receives the most attention and development. The religious ideals were refined in the course of the Crusades. To participate in the Crusades, the knights were required to be Christians. They were the saviors of the church and Christendom. They became martyrs in the service of God and the mother church. The Crusades enabled the separate ideals of chivalry to be combined and to be put into practice. The Crusades civilized the medieval knights, bringing them into the church as warriors and channeling their aggressiveness toward the enemies of medieval society. The First Crusade represents the complete articulation

of the solution to the "paradox of the knight". With the development chivalry and the Crusades, the noble warriors had evolved into chivalrous Christian knights protecting the society of the medieval west and the Christian world.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

The contemporary historical and biographical sources illustrate the continuing influence of chivalry on both noble and clerical perceptions of the past. A chivalric code of ethics was developing, and concepts of chivalry were infiltrating all the literary expressions of the period. Eventually, chivalry would create a distinctly noble culture, penetrating many arenas of expression, and formulating an ethos that changed the nature of the noble class.

HISTORY:

The historical source to be considered is The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis. It is the history of Normandy from its foundation to the time Orderic was writing c. 1114. The work is pertinent for two reasons. First, it is possible to determine if the ideals of chivalry had become ingrained enough that they would be projected back into perceptions of the past. Second, Orderic was isolated from the secular realm all of his life. He was born to a cleric and at the age of ten was given to the monastery of St. Evroul as an oblate. Orderic spent his formative years and the majority of his life in a monastery. For this reason his writings provide insight into the impact that chivalry had had on the minds and perceptions of the clergy.

In spite of Orderic's narrow upbringing the ideals of chivalry infiltrated his expressions. All three dimensions of

chivalry appear in his Ecclesiastical History. In the military realm, Orderic's view of the complete knight is based upon the chivalric ideal. His epitaph praising Robert of Rhuddlan provides an illustration: " Here in this tomb Robert of Rhuddlan lies,/ Dust now to dust returned, like humans all;/ The son of Humphrey, born of Danish stock;/ Brave and illustrious always in his youth;/ Courteous and warlike, handsome, swift and bold,/ While life remained, a true knight in this world./ Most generous lord, faithful and loyal friend...."[1] Orderic stresses the importance of moderation in chivalric knights. Harold Godwinson is portrayed as rash and foolhardy when he spurns the advice of his brother and men: "'My dearest brother and lord, you should let discretion temper your valour. You have just returned worn out after the war against the Norwegians: are you now hastening to fight once more against the Normans? Rest,I beg you. You ought to give careful thought to the oaths you have taken to the duke of Normandy....' On hearing these words Harold flew into a violent rage. He rejected the counsel that seemed wise to his friends, answered his brother who was advising him for the best with reproofs...."[2] In Orderic's discussion of the history of Normandy, the knights' preoccupation with great deeds is apparent. Many of the knights are referred to as "...excelling in feats of arms...." or "...distinguished by his gallant deeds...."[3] While this history is labeled an "ecclesiastical" history, it deals intimately with the Norman nobility, and Orderic's perceptions of the knights and nobles are strongly tempered by the militaristic ideals of chivalry.

The noble characteristics of chivalry are present as well. Orderic is concerned with the family lineages of the Norman nobles. Several times he goes to great length tracing certain families, for example the family of William of Giroie. Orderic lists all of William's siblings, their characteristics, their various marriages and offspring, and their contributions to the church. He describes the fate of William's children, their marriages, offspring, properties, and the manner of their deaths.[4] The Giroie clan is also fairly illustrious. William is described as: "... a member of one of the best families in France and Brittany...."[5] The contemporary clan members were also noteworthy. William himself: "...led a life of great courage and distinction...."[6] His sons follow in his footsteps: "All these brothers were valiant and courtly; in war nimble and cunning, to their enemies a scourge, to their friends gracious and gentle...."[7] Orderic describes other families as being of esteemed lineage: "Count Drogo was reputed to be descended from Charlemagne, king of the Franks...."[8] The attention that Orderic pays to family lineages demonstrates the importance of the family to status in medieval society. Membership in a family that had an illustrious lineage was of the utmost importance to the chivalrous nobility.

Orderic Vitalis believed that the characteristics of chivalry were inherent in and exclusive to the members of the nobility. He is suspicious of the lower classes. An example is Ranulf: " At this time a certain clerk named Ranulf gained a position in the household of King Rufus; and by his cunning

accusations and insidious flatteries obtained authority over all the royal officials from the king. He was a man of keen intelligence, handsome and ready in speech, but too addicted to feasts and carousals and lusts; cruel and ambitious, prodigal to his own adherents, but rapacious in seizing the goods of other men. He was born of poor and obscure parents and, rising far above his origins, prospered by the ruin of many men."[9] Orderic equates noble birth with noble character. Since chivalry was a product of the nobility, the nobles' class biases were built into this value system. Orderic's view of class further illustrates his internalization of chivalric attitudes.

The religious aspects of chivalry are present as well. A good and successful warrior must participate in the rituals of the church: "...and on the Saturday morning [he] commanded all his men to prepare for battle. He himself heard Mass, fortified his body and soul with holy sacraments, and humbly hung the sacred relics on which Harold had sworn round his neck."[10] He is describing the preparations of William the Conqueror just before the battle of Hastings. Orderic implies that it was William's piety, as much as his military ability, that brought him victory in battle. This is further exemplified by the advise of the dying lord Ansold to his son: "...listen carefully to what I have to tell you, and guard it in your heart. First of all, love God always above all things. Fear and honour your bishop and your king as protectors, and never forget to obey their commands as far as you are able. Pray to God daily for their welfare, so that through the care and merits of a good bishop you may obtain

eternal salvation for your soul...."[11] The knights and nobles must support and protect the church. Once again, Ansold advises his son: "Honour the servants of God in word and deed. Especially revere and help in every way you can our lords and brethren, the monks who minister in this church, supporting them with your counsel and help if they have need of it... Never try to deprive them of any possessions or revenues, nor allow any of your men to do them any wrong. For if you take care to be a true patron to them, they will never cease to pray to God for you."[12] Orderic believes that the chivalrous knights and nobles have a responsibility toward the unfortunate members of their society as well. In his epitaph for Robert of Rhuddlan, Orderic expresses this view: "Most generous lord, faithful and loyal friend,/Obedient ever to Christ's bride, the Church;/All priests, all monks, orphans and homeless men,/ Honourably held by him received his gifts."[13] William the Conqueror similarly advises his sons: "The teaching of holy philosophers is to know good from evil, preserve justice in all things, shun evil with determination, be merciful and helpful to the sick and poor and law-abiding, overthrow and punish the proud and wicked, refrain from harming the humble...."[14] The knights must aid the poor, the orphaned, the widowed, and the helpless. Orderic's conception of the characteristics and responsibilities of the knight, even those in the past, were firmly rooted in the ideology of chivalry.

Orderic Vitalis' reaction to the court life of the nobility is evident in his Ecclesiastical History.In short, Orderic is

horrified by the frivolity and immorality of the court. He accuses the nobles of being indecently preoccupied with the matters of fashion: "They add excrescences like serpents' tails to the tips of their toes where the body ends, and gaze with admiration on these scorpion-like shapes. They sweep the dusty ground with the unnecessary trains of their robes and mantles; their long, side sleeves cover their hands whatever they do; impeded by these frivolities they are almost incapable of walking quickly or doing any kind of useful work. They shave the front part of their head like thieves, and let their hair grow very long at the back, like harlots."[15] The nobles' concern with fashion reflected their concern of status. The morals of the knights and nobles are criticized as well: " Our wanton youth is sunk in effeminacy, and courtiers, fawning, seek the favours of women with every kind of lewdness."[16] Apparently the nobles were becoming involved in materialism and high living, and Orderic did not approve of such activities. His negative response to the court life of the nobles demonstrates further that the code of chivalry, its ideals and activities, and excesses had become the force that governed the lives of the nobility, for better or for worse.

The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis confirms that the ideals of chivalry had become so deeply ingrained that they were employed in evaluating and describing previous events and societies. Chivalrous ideals were not confined to the secular world, but had permeated the clergy as well. As a cleric, Orderic could not approve of certain aspects of chivalry,

particularly the feudal-noble preoccupations with fashion which he believed threatened the very manhood of the knights and may have endangered their usefulness to the church. It was unseemly, if not dangerous, for the soldiers of God and the protectors of Christendom to be too absorbed by matters of status, position, and fashion. But, his evaluations of the Norman knighthood were based on the ideals and elements of chivalry. Chivalry influenced the perceptions of the educated segment of medieval society and was asserting itself into the cultural expressions of the day, beginning the process which would lead to the establishment of a separate noble culture.

BIOGRAPHIES:

The biographies selected cover the lives of three different types of men: the knight who is a nobleman, a churchman, and two kings. The biography is useful in measuring the impact that chivalry had on the nature of the nobility. How was chivalry effecting the authors' perceptions of past kings, nobles, knights, and churchmen? The biographical sources include the epic cycle of Guillaume d'Orange, the Autobiography of Guibert de Nogent, Le Vie de Louis VI Le Gros, and finally De Profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem.

The first biography under consideration is that of William of Orange. The various books of this epic were written in the first half of the twelfth century, although William of Orange was a contemporary of Charlemagne. Since the epic consists of four different books, the tale may have been recorded over a period of

decades. It may not be a formal biography, but it is a story of William's life. For this reason it is included with the biographies. This source is particularly useful in establishing what elements had come to be required of a knight. Each book represents a stage in William's life, his growth into true knighthood and all that it entailed.

The first book is entitled The Coronation of Louis and deals with William as vassal. The story commences when Charlemagne is about to crown his son Louis. He tells Louis that in order to be successful and command the loyalty of his vassals a king must fight against the infidel, not indulge his lust, never seize the fief of an orphaned child, and not steal from widows.[17] Because Louis is so young, William of Orange is appointed the guardian of his lands and fiefs, and will assume his responsibilities upon the death of Charlemagne. William is honored with this position because of his strength, honor, family background, and integrity. In short, because he was a most chivalrous knight. William proves himself to be a most loyal vassal to Louis. When Charlemagne dies, William is off fighting infidels in Italy, but by the time William arrives on the scene, Louis has already been taken captive and traitors have control of the throne: " On rides William the warrior fierce./ Twelve hundred knights in his army he leads./ ...' I would be there at the start of these deeds./ I wish to find out for myself and see/ who would be king and give France his decrees'."[18] William slaughters the traitors and restores Louis to the throne. William rescues the incompetent Louis from many scrapes and protects Louis' interests. For

example, when Louis' jurisdiction over some provinces in Italy is questioned, William meets an opposing knight in one on one combat for the right to the territory, and wins it for Louis. William has all of the attributes necessary in a good vassal, and exerts himself for his liege even though he realizes that Louis is not very astute. William as a loyal vassal incorporates the requirements of chivalry: loyalty, honor, prowess, fame, noble blood, and wealth. Along with his militaristic and noble characteristics, William is also a good Christian. As chivalrous knight he goes to church, he honors the sanctity of churches and churchmen, he is well versed in scripture, and he fights for his God.

At the conclusion of the first book of the cycle, William is a nearly complete chivalrous character. The one aspect of a chivalrous knight yet missing is courtly love. This part of William's development begins in the second book, entitled The Conquest of Orange. William falls in love with a beautiful Muslim queen, Orable. At the outset of this book, William bemoans his lack of courtly companionship. He has plenty of knights to keep him company, but he misses the life at court. Fighting was not enough anymore; knights and nobles thrived on the gentler activities of court life. As William says: "We came out of France in great poverty,/we brought with us no harpers or minstrels,/ or young ladies to delight our bodies./ We have our share of fine well groomed horses, / and strong chain-mail and gilded helmets,/ sharp, cutting swords and fine buckled shields...."[19] William is obviously feeling the lack of female companionship. William meets

Orable in Orange. He becomes ever more enamored of Orable and eventually pledges himself to her. But to win his lady love, William must fight his way out of the enemy's castle, proving on the battlefield that he is worthy of her love. When they return home, he and Orable are married, but only after she has become a baptized Christian. William is a fully chivalrous knight.

The last two books in the cycle describe the activities of a chivalrous knight. The third book deals exclusively with the battle of Aliscans, from which the book gets its title. William and his family are forced to fight King Tiebaut, who is seeking revenge for his loss of Orange and the abduction of his Queen Orable. It is the duty of the chivalrous knight to fight the infidel for God, and to defend his fief and his family. Aliscans portrays chivalry in action. The development of a chivalrous knight is displayed here in the character of Rainoart. When Rainoart is introduced into the story he is an ignorant infidel, but by the end he is one of William's trusted companions. He begins as a savage, but he has inherently noble and chivalrous characteristics because of his birth. Since he is of noble blood, it is simply a matter of time before he evolves into a chivalrous knight. At first he uses a club to defend himself. The club, however, is eventually replaced by the sword, a sign of nobility. He begins as an infidel, but by the conclusion he is a confirmed Christian. He enters as a crude boor, but develops into a gentleman capable of winning the heart of a lady. Chivalrous knighthood consisted of more than the ability to fight, or right of a noble birth. The chivalrous knight had to learn manners and

deportment, and he had to become a Christian.

The final book in the epic cycle deals with William as an old man. After the death of his beloved wife, William decides to enter a monastery. There is a contingency, however. William insists that he will come out of seclusion if he is needed by his family or king: " St Julien, I am now in your care;/ for God, I have left my castles and marches/and my cities and all my kingdom./ St. Julien, I commend my shield to you / by this accord: I put it in your care,/ But if Louis, the son of Charles, has need,/ or my godson, who holds my heritage,/ against pagans, the foul savage race,/ I shall take it again."[20] William remains a faithful and responsible knight even though he has become a monk. The ideals of chivalry were deeply ingrained in the nobility. While William is at the monastery he acts more like a noble than a monk, but unfortunately he incurred the dislike of the monks. Some of the monks plan to have William murdered. The plan backfires, and William takes his revenge on the monks. William does not end his days at the monastery. Rather he is called by God to become a hermit and the epic closes. King Louis as a "stingy fool" [21] is an unchivalrous king, therefore he had no vassals left to aid him. William had indeed been a loyal and effective vassal.

The characters of William and Rainoart trace the development of the chivalrous knight and display the complexity of attributes that were required by the code. William is the example of the chivalrous knight, and his actions, ideals, motivations, in the realms of the military, the noble, the religious, and in

love reflects the hold the chivalry had on the members of the medieval nobility. Again it is apparent that chivalry was the guiding force in the civilization of the nobility of the medieval world.

The next biographical source to be evaluated is the Autobiography of Guibert of Nogent. Guibert was born in the north of France around 1064 and died about 1125. Guibert was born into a noble family, but eventually entered the clergy. Guibert's writing is useful because he provides insight into the response of the clergy to chivalry. And because Guibert is a noble he can illustrate how deeply chivalry was ingrained in the nobles, even after they had retreated from secular society.

When he entered the church, it might be assumed that Guibert would renounce entirely the ideals of nobility. In the case of Guibert this is not correct. The military, noble, and religious dimensions of chivalry are part of Guibert's perspective. He is proud that he has the physical strength necessary in a knight: "Because my young body and a certain natural quickness for one of such tender age seemed to fit me for worldly pursuits...."[22] Along with physical prowess, Guibert is interested in worldly glory, another concern of the military dimension of chivalry: "And Thou, Holy Jesus,didst know with what motive I did this, chiefly to win glory and so that greater honor in this present world would be mine."[23] Another characteristic of chivalry present is moderation and refinement. Although Guibert was being trained for the cloister, his mother and his teacher instilled the virtues of moderation and refinement. Guibert says of his

teacher : " Most faithfully and lovingly he instilled in me all that was temperate and modest and outwardly refined."[24]

In spite of his monastic views, Guibert retained the materialistic values of the nobility. For example, when Guibert is at the monastery at Fly he is upset because it is poor and below his standards of comfort. He wants to be assigned to a different monastery.[25] Even his mother has a vision about the place; "When she look at the church more closely, she saw it was forsaken in a most lonely fashion; the monks too, were not only ragged and covered with cassocks huge beyond belief, but all alike were shortened to a cubit in height like those commonly called dwarfs."[26] Guibert also betrays his noble bias when he describes a fellow clergyman: " A later bishop, Helinand, was a man of quite a poor family and humble origin, with scanty education and of little worth as a person."[27] This bishop is unworthy because he is not of the nobility. Material comfort, concern with class, status, family and heritage, all a part of the noble dimension of chivalry, continued to dominate Guibert the cleric.

The religious aspects of the chivalrous nobility are apparent in the portrait Guibert gives of his mother, a devout Christian and socially responsible woman. Guibert states: " I have learned that this woman had such a fear of God's name, even while she was serving the world, that in her obedience to the church, in almsgiving, in her offerings for masses, her conduct was such as to win respect from all."[28] It was important to be a good Christian and it was honorable to defend the weak and less

fortunate. Guibert was deeply influenced by chivalry and continued to perceive things in this context even after he retreated from the secular world. The influence of chivalry is further demonstrated by Guibert's use of chivalrous adjectives to describe fellow churchmen. For example, Guibert calls Bishop Guy: "... of a courtly manner and of noble birth"[29] and Bishop Enguerrand "...very generous, bountiful and courteous...."[30] Chivalry was an inherent part of Guibert's attitudes and expressions. Chivalry had indeed penetrated the minds and expressions of the nobility, even the noble clergy.

While Guibert continued to be a noble under the cloth, he also reflects a churchman's response to some of the other aspects of chivalry, particularly courtly love. The modern editor of his autobiography, John Benton, believes that Guibert's forceful opinions on sexual matters are due to the influence of Guibert's mother: " The influence of a censorious mother who had nearly destroyed the potency of her husband and who we are told remained strictly celibate after his death became a part of Guibert's being. His writing abounds with denunciations of the sexual depravity of his male relatives, of nobles whom he disliked, of monks and church officials...."[31] Guibert's opinions on these matters may stem from some psychological deformity, but it seems more logical to believe that Guibert was reacting against the mores of his time, specifically the ideals of courtly love and materialism. Chivalry departed from churchly definitions and teachings in both these areas. In the material category, Guibert castigates the nobility for their concern with rich clothes,

fancy armor and horses, and other manifestations of the wealth of this class. For example, Guibert speaks out against the noblewomen's concern over fashion and rich clothing: " So much does the extravagance of their dress depart from the old simplicity that in the enlargement of their sleeves, the tightness of their dresses, the distortion of their shoes of Cordovan leather with their curling toes, they seem to proclaim that everywhere modesty is cast away."[32] He delivers a sermon on the transient nature of material goods. He tells his audience to look deeper than the outward appearance of a person.[33] Yet in his own judgments and behavior he exhibited a noble bias and a concern with material comforts.

Courtly love outraged Guibert even more. He believes that the noble class is totally lacking in moral fiber. He describes the women of court in this fashion:" Ah! how wretchedly have modesty and honor in the state of virginity declined from that time [Guibert is referring to his mother's generation] to this our present age, and both the reality and the show of a married woman's protection fallen to ruin. Therefore coarse mirth is all that may be noted in their manners and naught but jesting heard, with sly winks and ceaseless chatter. Wantonness shows in their gait, only silliness in their behavior....A lack of lovers to admire here is a woman's crown of woe, and on her crowds of thronging suitors rests her claim to nobility and courtly pride."[34] Guibert is just as disgusted by the knights: " A man's private boastfulness about the number of his loves or his choice of a beauty whom he has seduced is no reproach to him, nor is he

scorned for vaunting his love affairs before Thee....Listen to the cheers when, with the inherent looseness of unbridled passions which deserve the doom of eternal silence, he shamelessly noises abroad what ought to have been hidden in shame...."[35] The forcefulness and strength of Guibert's response to courtly love and chivalry illustrate the widening gap between certain manifestations of chivalry and the church. The teachings of the church were losing ground in these matters. Since this autobiography reflects the view of only one churchman, it would be unfair to state that all the clergy reacted to chivalry and courtly love in this fashion. The fact, however, that Guibert is so fervent in his response does imply that the rules of the chivalric code were something with which the church would have to reckon.

Royal biographies are the next set of sources to be considered. The two that will be examined are Vie de Louis VI Le Gros by Abbot Suger (1144) and De Profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem by Odo of Deuil (1148). While the biography of Louis VI covers his entire reign, Odo of Deuil's work on Louis VII deals only with his participation in the Second Crusade. This limits the scope of the work, but it is nonetheless useful in determining how chivalry applied to kings.

Suger portrays Louis VI as incorporating all the dimensions of a chivalrous personality, again demonstrating that these ideals had penetrated the minds of the clergy. As king, Louis embodies the military, noble, and religious requirements of chivalry. Suger begins by describing Louis as being physically

attractive, honorable, of noble lineage, and concerned with protecting the church and the poor.[36] The rest of the biography is devoted to demonstrating the truth of this. In the military realm, Louis is a brave and valiant warrior. Louis had to defend his realm from bad vassals many times. Perhaps the worst vassal was Thomas de Marle, a noble who had to be to put in his place quite a few times. Suger describes Louis as a strong and knowledgeable military leader.[37] Since he went on a Crusade, he was willing and able to fight for God as well.

A good warrior had other leadership abilities as well. He was a wise and fair judge. One of the most important duties and privileges of the noble lords was their function as judges. It was thought that the lords and kings were born with an inherent sense of justice. Louis is portrayed as a judge several times. For example, when Charles the Bold of Flanders was murdered, Louis stepped in to make sure the murderers were caught and punished.[38] Even the Pope appealed to Louis, because of his reputation for fairness and justice. Louis displays all the proper leadership capabilities. He is a good warrior, but has the wisdom necessary to render judgments.

According to chivalric values, lineage determined the character of the person. Louis was of noble blood and because of this noble background, he was destined to be virtuous. Suger presents a contrast to Louis' nobility in the form of his half brother Phillipe. Louis and Phillipe shared the same father, but had different mothers. Phillipe was an unchivalrous character who even turned traitor. Suger uses the contrast provided by these

two brothers to demonstrate the importance of the proper heritage.

One predominant theme in this biography is the king's relationship with religion. Suger describes Louis as a good Christian. He is commended for his strong moral character. His participationin a Crusade,demonstrates his love for his Godand church by fighting the hated infidel. He receives communion and makes confession when he is dying. Finally, Suger continually praises Louis for his protection of the church and the poor and unfortunate. Louis took the teaching of the church to heart. He is concerned with protecting the widows and orphans in his realm. Suger clearly presents Louis VI as a complete chivalrous personality: a brave knight, a just ruler, a nobleman, a Christian, and the protector of the church and the unfortunate.

Like his father, Louis VII displays all the elements of a chivalrous knight. The biography by Odo of Deuil begins with the Second Crusade. Throughout his journey to the Holy Land and the ensuing battles, Louis VII is described as a courageous and adept warrior. Odo calls him "...a brave knight...." [39]He was a good warrior, and he exhibits the same leadership skills that were praised in his father. Louis acted as peace keeper and judge among the crusaders. Louis VII mediated a dispute between the King of Hungary and a man named Boris, who also claimed the throne of Hungary. He had the wisdom to command effectively. Louis' leadership abilities made him a chivalrous knight and lord.

The noble attributes of chivalry are present in Louis VII

as well. Odo of Deuil describes Louis as generous, a noble requirement of chivalry. When Louis divided up the plunder: "...Louis, keeping little or nothing of this for himself, divided the entire amount, some with the poor, some with the rich."[40] Another example of Louis' largesse occurs when he is addressing his men. He states: " While I shall be rich, no man of tried valor who has patiently endured poverty with men in a time of great need shall want."[41] Louis is generous with his men, an important noble characteristic. His nobility is further enhanced by the contrast provided by the Germans. The Germans were arrogant, greedy, unclean, and lacking in manners. Louis VII is portrayed by Odo is the exact opposite, a chivalrous personality.

Louis VII also meets all the religious requirements of chivalry. He is a devout Christian. Odo describes his piety:"Amid so many hardships his safe preservation was owed to no other remedy than his religion, for he always took communion before he went to attack the enemy forces and on his return requested vespers and compline, in such wise always making God the alpha and omega of his deeds."[42] Like his father, Louis VII is depicted as the protector of the church and Christendom. He had a sense of social responsibility. He took care of the weak and poor. On his journey eastward, Louis stopped at a leper colony, demonstrating his concern for the misfortunate. He also took care of the poor by sharing the riches of battle with them. Louis was an exemplary character, an heroic figure conforming to the ideals of chivalry.

The kings, as well as knights and other members of the

nobility, were governed by the chivalric code. Both Suger and Odo were churchmen, but their views of kingship and knighthood were influenced by chivalry. These histories and biographies illustrate further that even perceptions of the past were shaped by the ideals of chivalry. Chivalry continued to evolve and formulate the social and cultural values of the nobility.

CHAPTER V

COURT LITERATURE

Chivalric ideals dominated the values and standards of behavior of the noble class by the mid-twelfth century. A new set of ethics had emerged, combining existing values drawn from the military, the church, and the feudal worlds, reflecting the needs and interests of the noble class. A noble culture was developing, one separate from the church or total church domination. Courtly love was a new concept, one in which the nobles needed instruction. Court literature demonstrates, perhaps more than any other set of sources, the development of a noble culture and the role that chivalry played in the process.

ROMANCES:

The romances to be treated here were written in second half of the twelfth century by Chrètien de Troyes. The romances were a new form of literary expression. They were designed to instruct the nobility in the arts of chivalry and courtly love. While the earlier chansons de geste contain elements of the chivalrous world, they do not represent a completed expression of chivalry. The romances of Chrètien de Troyes, on the other hand, reflect a world that was now governed by the rules and regulations of chivalry. They deal with specific problems and questions that arose as the nobility tried to define and practice behavior consistent with a chivalric value system. They are morality plays

dealing with secular issues. Religion does play a small role in the romances, but only as it concerns the formation of the complete chivalrous personality. The genre of the romance represents the mature expression of chivalry and the chivalrous society.

The works of Chrètien de Troyes to be considered are Erec and Enide, Cligès, Yvain, Lancelot, and Perceval. They will be examined to see specifically what issues concerned the nobility about love and chivalry, and to determine to what degree change had occurred as chivalry came to dominate the noble class.

The romance of Erec and Enide addresses the conflict between love and knightly duty. Erec, a strong young knight, falls in love with a beautiful lady, Enide. They are married, and live in bliss for a short while. Erec is so happy at home that he gives up his knightly duties, much to the alarm of Enide. She realizes that her husband's fame and honor are suffering as a result. She finally works up enough courage to tell Erec and she blames herself for the dilemma: " Alas, woe is me that I ever left my country! What did I come here to seek? The earth ought by right to swallow me up when the best knight, the most hardy, brave, fair, and courteous that ever was a count or king, has completely abjured all his deeds of chivalry because of me. And thus, in truth, it is I who have brought shame upon his head...."[1] Erec reacts by ordering Enide to prepare for a journey. It is on this journey that Erec regains his fame and honor, and in the process, tests the love of Enide.

This romance clearly reflects an important concern of the

nobility. Since love as an governing force was a fairly new component in the now more genteel lives of the knights, it was necessary to resolve the conflict between love and the duties of occupation and class. A proper balance was essential and Erec provides the example. Love was important and a proper emotion, but so was moderation. This romance suggests that people should not become so besotted with love that they loose track of their role in society. Erec should not have forgotten the duties and activities of knighthood. The message presented is that chivalry should come before matters of love. It was the most important element in the lives of the knights, and their honor depended on it. Honor was a crucial element in the chivalric code. It was for the sake of his honor that Erec left the love nest. Adherence to the code had top priority.

The story of Erec and Enide also provides insight into the role of women in the chivalric society. Enide was a role model for the women in Chrétien's audience. She emanates the virtues desirable in a lady. She is patient, loyal to her husband, well bred, courteous, pretty, and smart. Enide is a helpmate and partner, not a simpering coward. The women in the romances reflect many of the same characteristics as the men. Enide is the female counterpart of the chivalrous knight, the chivalrous lady, and as such she believes chivalry to be the most important consideration in her husband's life. It is she who prompted Erec to fulfill his duties as a knight, even at her own expense. Chivalry must govern the life of Erec and her own as well. Chrétien makes clear to his audience the nobility of true love

and sacrifice, but also the obligation of the individual to place the demands of society as a whole above personal desires. It is a message entirely secular in nature and expression.

The romance Cligès also deals with problems that preoccupied the nobility. Cligès is a young knight who is cheated out of his inheritance and the woman he loves by his uncle. The storybegins by relating the history of Cligès' father, Alexander. Alexander is the heir to the kingdom of Greece and Constantinople. He left his homeland to go to the court of King Arthur and to become a knight. While he is there he falls in love with Cligès' mother. He then returns home at the death of his father and becomes king. Cligès follows in his father footsteps, but when he returns home from his sojourn abroad Alexander is dead and he is told that his uncle, Alis, was chosen by Alexander to become the next king. This is a deception. Alis has lied about Alexander's wishes. Cligès was the rightful heir to the throne, but Alis took his brother's death as an opportunity to seize the throne for himself. Cligès accepts the situation and pledges himself to his uncle. In return, Alis pledges not to marry so that Cligès may succeed him. This, too, is a deception. Alis travels to Germany to acquire a bride, Fenice. Fenice and Cligès fall in love, and the plot thickens. The lovers and their loyal servants hatch a complicated scheme to keep Fenice pure, and eventually to bring the lovers together. Magic and potions are employed to insure their eventual union, and the story ends with Cligès and Fenice triumphing over the deceitful Alis, and living happily ever after.

The values that this story preaches are loyalty and honor, both in love and in society. Alis breaks these two important rules. He breaks his word to his brother and is disloyal to his family in not carrying out the wishes of the dying king. He also reneges on the promise he made to Cligès never to marry. Alis has violated the mores of society. Therefore he is not entitled to the protection of the rules of this society, and suffers accordingly. The love of Cligès and Fenice and their physical relationship is not portrayed as evil or wrong, rather it is presented as natural. Alis had lost his honor, and without honor he was truly beyond the pale. Therefore Cligès and Fenice could deceive Alis and consummate their love affair.

Along with illustrating the importance of honor within the individual and society as a whole, Cligès further instructs the nobility about the art and rules of love. The first rule is that women should love only one man physically. Chrètien does not believe that a woman should have many lovers. Fenice turns to sorcery so she will not have to become physically involved with her husband. She must remain true and pure for Cligès, the man she loves. Nor should a sexual relationship exist between two people unless they are truly in love. Gratuitous love affairs are out, at least for women. The character of Iseult provides an example. Chrètien castigates Iseult because of her extramarital love affair. She is physically involved with two men, her husband and her lover. Fenice, too, is having an extramarital affair, but she is not condemned because she is only sexually involved with one man, the man she truly loves. Chrètien's judgments are based

on the values of the chivalric code, and on what he believes are the best interests of the nobility. It is a pragmatic and secular judgment, certainly not a religious one, and the nobles were so instructed.

The next romance, that of Yvain, deals intimately with the ideals and manners dictated by chivalry. Yvain, one of the knights of the round table, sets out to restore his family honor. On his journey he meets and falls in love with Laudine. They are married, but soon separated when King Arthur prevails upon Yvain to return to court with him. Laudine makes Yvain promise to return to her within a year or forfeit her love. Unfortunately Yvain immerses himself in chivalrous pursuits and loses track of the time until a messenger from his wife arrives at court to tell him that he has broken his word to his lady and that she is deeply hurt. Yvain is distraught and dishonored for breaking his word, but he comes to his senses and begins another journey to restore his honor. During his travels, Yvain becomes the defender of damsels in distress, and that eventually leads him back to Laudine. He is received back into her affection and they, too, live happily ever after.

The story of Yvain provides a contrast with Erec in the romance Erec and Enide. Erec was so besotted that he gave up his chivalrous pursuits completely. Yvain is just the opposite; he is so involved in the activities of knighthood that he completely neglects his lady love. It seems that these two romances were created to illustrate what can happen when a knight became too involved in either love or chivalry. Both are important, but a

proper balance is crucial, and that message Chrétien made clear to his noble audience. They must learn how to reconcile the two important forces in their lives.

Yvain introduces the importance of social responsibility and how it should be implemented by the medieval knight. When Yvain goes off to regain his honor he becomes the defender of the innocent. First, he helps a lion who had a thorn in his foot. The grateful lion accompanies Yvain on his travels and aids him in battle several times. Yvain rescues damsels in distress, ladies who were often the object of some unscrupulous characters, and without a defender until Yvain arrived to take up their cause. Yvain's role as defender of the weak and defenseless reflects the importance of social responsibility. Knights had seldom taken into account other people who might suffer from their escapades and deed-doing. While Yvain, as a knight, shows no concern for the problems of the lower or rural class, he was using his might for the good of others. While defense of the weak had been an ideal of early knighthood, this romance is really the first complete expression and recognition of the knight's responsibility towards other members of the society. It is a dimension of the chivalrous knight which would become more fully articulated in other literature.

Like the other romances, the story of Lancelot had its didactic purpose. It is one of Chrétien's last works and more clearly reflects the concept of courtly love than did his earlier romances. Richard Barber, in his book The Knight and Chivalry, proposes that the plot of the story was suggested by Countess

Marie de Champagne, Chrètien's patron. He believes that the subject matter was not of great interest to Chrètien and that the romance may have been completed by another writer. This theory would account for the differences between this story and Chrètien's other works.

The story of Lancelot illustrates the relationships of courtly love. The story begins with the kidnapping of Queen Guinivere. Lancelot and the other knights of the court take off in hot pursuit after the Queen and her captors. As Lancelot is chasing the Queen and her captors, he loses his horse, and has no way to continue the chase. The problem is solved when a cart passes by. The situation also poses a dilemma. A cart was not a proper means of conveyance for a knight and Lancelot hesitates before he climbs aboard. Lancelot's ride in the cart does serious damage to his reputation and his status; he has debased himself. On the other hand because Lancelot hesitated before he humbled himself, he incurred the displeasure of the Queen. To return to her good graces, he sets off to restore his honor. His adventures reestablish his honor and his place in the Queen's affections.

Love was a theme in the other romances, but Lancelot represents a more specific type of love. Lancelot is a model of the courtly lover, and as such had to abide by a new set of regulations. By hesitating in getting into the cart, Lancelot put his personal pride ahead of his devotion to his lady, whom he was trying to rescue at the time of his disgrace. But courtly love now demanded complete obedience to the knight's lady love and to all of her whims. The courtly knight must be willing to

forfeit his own pride and desires. Chrètien is warning the knights that pride could hinder their participation in courtly love, and given the importance of pride to a knight's self esteem, it must have been a stern lesson. Poor Lancelot lost his pride, his lady, and his honor, at least for a time.

With the introduction of the ideals of courtly love, the idea of honor became even more vital. Honor was the trademark of the knights. Without honor a knight would not even be considered as a possible lover. Lancelot suffers dramatically at the loss of his honor and goes to heroic lengths to restore it. If the knight's honor was somehow damaged, his lady's would also suffer. Symbols of status came to be even more important to the chivalrous nobility. Lancelot's dilemma results from his ride in the cart. This simple cart caused a fall in his status. The cart was used to transport prisoners, as Chrètien states: "Whoever was convicted of any crime was placed upon a cart and dragged through all the streets, and he lost henceforth all his legal rights, and was never afterward, heard, honoured, or welcomed in any court."[2] Lancelot's ride in the cart devastates his status so completely, that he "despises his life."[3] The knights and ladies had to be aware of the symbols of class and status, to insure that they did not loose their place in society. A damsel's response to Lancelot's dilemma illustrates the reaction that the nobility would have to such a fate: "He [Lancelot] is perfectly right, for will not the news of his disgrace be known everywhere? Since he has been upon the cart, he has good reason to wish to die, for he would be better dead than alive. His life henceforth is sure to

be one of shame, vexation, and unhappiness."[4] Status and honor previously had been an important element in the chivalrous knight, but with the introduction of courtly love they became the life's blood of the participants, and in Lancelot's case some of it was spilled.

This romance brings the physical relationship between the knights and their ladies to the surface. After Lancelot goes through all of his trials, he and Guinivere consummate the sexual side of their relationship. In Cligès Chrètien condones sexual relationships outside of marriage, but only if the couple is in love with each other exclusively and if the woman is only sexually intimate with one man. Queen Guinivere seems to break this second rule, although it is never mentioned specifically whether or not she is sleeping with her husband. It is not clear if Chrètien has changed his position.

The relationship between Guinivere and Lancelot represents the advent of courtly love. The action and ideals expressed in this romance have a different and more complex flavor than Chrètien's earlier work. Tensions appear between the obligations of courtly love and knightly pride and honor. This is not simply a story of love and chivalry, but an articulation of the ideas and conflicts that would create a new relationship between the knights and ladies.

The final romance to be considered is Perceval or The Story of the Grail. Although this romance was left unfinished by Chrètien, it is still useful in gaining insight into the world of chivalry. The story of Perceval describes the maturation of the

chivalrous knight. The story begins when Perceval was an ignorant youth. He had been completely separated from chivalrous society and the court by a fearful, and overprotective mother. After meeting a band of knights whom Perceval mistakes for angels, he decides to become a knight himself. At this stage Perceval is unskilled, rude, unkempt, and thoroughly offensive. When Perceval is first at court, he completely disregards the counsel and advice given to him by his comrades and his lord. He has learned to use his arms, but that is about all. Perceval's character begins to change when he meets Gornemant of Gohort, his unknown uncle. Gornemant instructs him in all the dimensions of chivalry: how to fight correctly, manners and how to dress properly, the rules of battle, his obligation to help others who are in distress or are unable to defend themselves, and the importance of going church frequently. Perceval is well advised by his uncle, but it will take time before he has fully internalized the advise and can be considered a chivalrous knight.

Perceval's love for Blancheflor completes the next stage in his development. Blancheflor is in need of a defender against Anguingueron and Clamadeu, and Perceval is successful. Perceval now has three of the four important dimensions of a chivalrous knight. First, he is an accomplished warrior. Second, he has begun to exhibit the manners of chivalry. And third, Perceval begins realize the social responsibility of the chivalrous knight. The final dimension that Perceval has to fulfill is that of religion. The Christianization of Perceval occurs when he visits his hermit uncle. It is this uncle who awakens Perceval to

the fact that being a good Christian was essential to being chivalrous knight. Perceval has undergone the complete transformation. He is a chivalrous knight, ready to begin his quest for the Holy Grail.

These romances contain many of the same elements that were present in the earlier chansons de geste with some important new additions and developments that represent the maturation of chivalry. In the military realm, fighting was still an important part of the storyline, but battle had been extended beyond warfare, to doing deeds for their lords and for anyone else who requires their services. While the knights only job was still to fight, their obligations had been considerably broadened. The ability of the knight to provide good counsel and advice was ever crucial. The characteristics of prowess, bravery, and military skill continued to be important virtues in the chivalrous knight. While these attributes of chivalry are expressed in virtually the same way that they are in the chansons de geste, other aspects of chivalry had changed. For example, the rules of battle which had governed the likes of Roland and Raoul had become more sophisticated and more fully articulated. Vague notions of honorable behavior in battle were replaced by a specific code that the knights were expected to follow.

The noble dimensions of chivalry had also developed more fully in the romances. Earlier, membership in a noble family was desirable and important to the knights. This ideal had developed into a requirement. All of the knights and ladies in these romances were of the nobility, and many of them were in fact

royalty. The noble class was firmly in place, and the class bias of chivalry was complete. The characters in the romances were very much aware of the importance of being of the nobility, and sought to establish their status by employing even more symbols of wealth and position. Because of the knights' interest in doing valiant deeds, fame and glory became even more important. That too had come to be a representation of class. The noble theme of largesse is also more fully developed. Generosity had been an element in earlier secular literature, but as with the themes of doing deeds and fame, this concept came to be an expression of a noble character. Largesse became an important part of courtesy, an attribute that was necessary for anyone who wished to be considered chivalrous.

Another noble motif that developed further in the romances was physical looks. In the romances, chivalrous characters have the following virtues: " He was very fair, brave, and courteous...."[5] Physical attractiveness was as much a part of being chivalrous as bravery. All of the chivalrous characters in the romances are described as either extremely beautiful or handsome. Physical attractiveness came to denote nobility. Beauty reflected the person's status within the society. The bad characters in the stories were often described as horribly ugly or even as a misfit of sorts. For example, Erec and Yvain both met unsavory characters; one was a dwarf and the other a giant. Nobility and beauty were equated, and plain or even ugly features were associated with the lower class. The nobility naturally desired to see themselves as inherently beautiful, and the author

graciously complied. Manners themselves became a requirement for chivalrous personalities and also a sign of the nobility. The heroes and heroines in the romances had exemplary manners and conducted themselves with utmost courtesy. It was now a necessary element in a chivalrous knight or lady, and the audience was so instructed.

Although many of these themes and ideals were present in the chansons de geste to some degree, one new and powerful element appears in the romance, love. In the earlier literature, bonds of affection existed between men. The romances introduced the idea of romantic love between men and women. Love is a controlling factor in the plots, but it is strictly defined within the context of chivalry. Courtly love emerged as an institution when the values important in the religious, military, and noble realms were extended to the relationships between men and women. If loyalty and bonds of affection were important among men, they were also important man to woman. If advice and good counsel were important knight to lord, they were important wife to husband. In the noble realm, family lineage and honor had become an issue of great importance, hence the need for rules governing mates and courtship rituals. Generosity and protection of the helpless, knightly virtues, were extended to ladies as well. Material wealth, class and status could be displayed by the knights' ladies and thereby enhance the knightly reputation. In short, courtly love was no more, and no less, the extension of the chivalric code to relationships between men and women of the noble class. The introduction of romantic love was an important

innovation. The romance also brought the physical relationship between a man and a woman into known medieval literature for the first time.

Previously, the only cultural expression open to the warrior-nobles had been through the church. Early medieval culture had been dominated by the church. Chivalry changed that. It bound together the interests and ideals of the nobility into one complete, complex articulation. An exclusively noble and secular culture had been established.The dogmas or opinions of the church were not dominant. The medieval nobility had broken out of the cultural restrictions of the church and created its own vehicles of expression, and the behavior and ideals of chivalry had been absorbed into the very fabric of the nobility. The romance illustrates this process, and the change that had occurred in the ethics of the knight. No longer was he just a warrior, but a courtly lover, and defender of the weak as well. The warrior ethic of the eleventh century had been traded for a more civilized set of standards.

THE LAIS:

The concept of chivalry as it should govern love was a continuing preoccupation of the noble class. Before courtly love could be fully articulated, there were some basic problems and issues that the nobility had to work through. The lais of Marie de France deal with some of these issues. Like the romances of Chrètien de Troyes, the lais served a didactic purpose. The action, characters, plots, and morals presented instructed the nobility on proper behavior of a knight in pursuit of love. Like

the romances they reflect the development of a code of ethics, which would govern the lives of the nobles', further civilizing a previously uncouth and violent class. Unfortunately very little is known about the author. Marie de France, like her contemporary Chrétien de Troyes, remains a rather obscure historical figure.

While the lais are concerned with the rules of love, and the preoccupation with physical love, they also reflect all the other aspects of the chivalric world. The important military characteristics of chivalry are evident: bravery, prowess, skill in battle, wisdom. The noble concerns are also present: the importance of material goods, of status, family heritage and physical attractiveness. The religious dimension of chivalry is illustrated simply in the lais. It is a given that all of the characters are Christians and are fairly well versed in the scriptural and moral teachings of the church.

In the collection of lais by Marie de France , there are four important themes which would lay the ground rules for the noble lovers. The first deals with love across the lines of feudal relationships. Would it be proper for lords to have affairs with their vassals' wives or for a vassal to have an affair with the wife of his lord? The answer provided by Marie in both cases is no. In the lay Equitan, Marie presents the case of a feudal lord who is greatly smitten with the wife of his seneschal. The lord questions his own motivations: "I think I have no choice but to love her-/yet if I love her, I'm doing wrong;/she's the wife of my seneschal./ I owe him the same faith and love /that I want him to give me."[6] Unfortunately the lord

does give in to his baser instincts and has an affair with this woman. The lovers do not fare well. They end up falling into the trap that they had set for the unsuspecting seneschal and die dishonored. In her lay Lanval, Marie provides the other side of the feudal coin. Lanval is propositioned by his queen, who has fallen in love with him. Lanval replies to her suggestion: " My lady, let me be!/ I have no desire to love you. I've served the king a long time;/I don't want to betray my faith to him./ Never, for you or for your love,/ will I do anything to harm my lord."[7] The queen does not take rejection well, and stirs up trouble for Lanval. But the hero eventually triumphs, and he and his own lady love are once again reunited. As the noble class developed, concerns for status, family heritage, and class preservation became important. Appropriate mating was therefore a basic need and the nobles began to govern their love accordingly. In the lais Equitan and Lanval Marie de France reflects the need to reconcile the concept of love with the existing mores and needs of the medieval nobility.

Social status between lovers is the second theme. Marie expresses the opinion that ideally lovers should be of equal social status. In Equitan, the seneschal's wife has reservations about becoming involved with a man of higher rank. She says: " I must have some time to think;/ this is so new to me,/ I have no idea what to say./ You're a king of high nobility,/ and I'm not at all of such fortune/ that you should single me out/ to have a love affair with....If I should love you/ and satisfy your desire,/love wouldn't be shared equally between the two of us."[8]

This character unfortunately disregards her own advice and ends up losing her life because of her lack of good sense. The lay Le Fresne deals specifically with the question of social standing in love. In this story Fresne has fallen in love with a noble knight. He has kept her as his mistress because he loves her. The dilemma arises because the nobleman is urged to marry so that he may have an heir. Since Fresne had been abandoned at birth, and her true social standing a mystery, she is considered unsuitable for noble marriage, no matter how deeply she was loved. The problem is resolved when it is learned that Fresne is the long lost sister of the noblewoman betrothed to her love. Once Fresne's status is established she is allowed to marry her lover. Status is important in love affairs and especially in marriage.

Another theme is the issue of the ages of the lovers. The author has a distaste for unions between young women and much older men. May-December marriages caused many problems for the couple, especially the wife. In two of her lais, Guigemar and Yonec, Marie explores this problem. In both of the stories a young and beautiful woman has been given in marriage to an old man, one who is intensely jealous and suspicious. The situation is best described in Guigemar: " The lord who ruled over that city/was a very aged man who had a wife,/ a woman of high lineage,/ noble, courteous, beautiful, intelligent;/he was extremely jealous,/which accorded with his nature./ (All old folk are jealous;/every one of them hates the thought of being cuckolded,/such is the perversity of age.)/The watch he kept over

her was no joke."[9] The wives in both of these lais were confined in fortified towers and allowed no visitors, hardly a healthy marital relationship. Under these circumstances Marie de France condones the extramarital affairs of the wives. That is to say, the wives and their lovers eventually win out over the autocratic husbands. It is only in the cases of young women being married to much, much older men that the author permits the illicit lovers to live happily ever after. In the other lais when the wives are unfaithful they and their lovers usually meet with a tragic end. May-December marriages were not natural, since they elicit such irrational behavior from the husbands. Lovers should be of an equivalent age, as well as equals in status.

The final theme deals with the question of extramarital affairs in general. If the couple is well matched, that is of the same age, similar status, attractive, honorable, and personable, then neither participant is justified in having an affair. The lay Eliduc makes this point. Eliduc leaves his home to seek adventure. He is already happily married to an ideal mate but on his quest he meets and falls in love with an incredibly beautiful young woman. Because he is married to an honorable and noble woman, Eliduc is not justified in having an affair with his new love. And in fact he does not become physically involved until his wife voluntarily enters a convent. In the lay Laustic Marie expresses the same opinion on extramarital affairs. This story is about two neighboring lords, one of which has fallen in love with the other's wife and his love is returned. Their relationship continues for a matter of years, but consists only of exchanging

tokens and a few whispered conversations. They never become sexually intimate. The author frowns on gratuitous extramarital affairs, unless there is good reason. Married nobles could participate in courtly love, but only it its purest form. They could not become sexually intimate.

The lais of Marie de France also provide reinforcement for the ethics basic to chivalry. In many of these lais there were morals. In Equitan the seneschal's wife and her lover plan to kill Equitan, but instead they get caught in their own trap and lose their lives. Those who plan mischief often end up victims of their own schemes. The same moral applies to the lay Le Fresne. In this story one noblewoman slanders her neighbor when she gives birth to twins, saying that the neighbor must have cuckolded her husband. The months go by and the same slanderous noblewoman finds herself in the same situation.

Moderation was an important requirement of chivalry and it was an necessary attribute in love as well. The lais Les Deux Amanz and Chaitivel illustrate this. Les Deux Amanz is a story of two young lovers. To win his love's hand in marriage, the young man must scale a mountain carrying his young maiden. To insure his success, the young man travels to Italy and there acquires a magic potion to make him strong enough for the challenge. During the climb, the youth is over confident and he does not take the potion. He dies of exhaustion. Because the young man was "...entirely lacking in control,"[10] he causes both his and his love's demise. Chaitivel is a story about a lovely young maiden who could not choose among her four suitors. She invites all the

knights in the countryside to come to fight against these four; and whichever of the four makes the best showing in the contest will win her hand in marriage. When the battle is over, all of her four suitors are dead and she is left alone. It is necessary to be practical and fair when dealing with love. Moderation was important in the behavior of the medieval knight and it was important in love as well.

The lais of Marie de France were created to provide the nobles with the necessary examples of accepted behavior. They reflect the establishment of a new noble ethos. These lais are also the product of an independent noble culture. They deal with the problems and interests of secular society. The development of this code and culture resulted in the civilization of the medieval nobility.

THE ART OF COURTLY LOVE:

The Art of Courtly Love by Andreas Capellanus was produced for the secular court of Marie de Champagne in the second half of the twelfth century and it, too, deals with courtly love. Like the lais of Marie de France, it served a didactic purpose. Andreas sought to instruct the nobles in the rules for their conduct in the pursuit of love. Andreas describes the virtues that were desired in the courtly lover, ideals which are equivalent to those expected of the chivalrous noble. The work by Andreas Capellanus also reflects the three realms of chivalry, the military, noble, and religious.

When describing how one may acquire love, Andreas lists five

important means by which one may attract a lover: "...there are five means by which it may be acquired: a beautiful figure, excellence of character, extreme readiness of speech, great wealth and readiness with which one grants what is sought"[11] The means listed reflect some of the basic values of chivalry. Chivalry, too, demanded physical attractiveness, good manners, and a good character. Later, Andreas elaborates further on the character of the courtly lover in his treatise. Virtues such as wisdom, moderation, generosity, manners, courage, military prowess, and social responsibility are cited as crucial to the courtly lover.[12] Courtly love was a manifestation of chivalry. The rules that governed the behavior of the courtly lover were the rules of chivalry. Since chivalry was the value system of the medieval nobility, it was natural that the concepts of chivalry should be incorporated in the rules of courtly love.

The military aspect of chivalry appears in The Art of Courtly Love. A vital part of the knights role in courtly love was his ability to do deeds. It was by doing great deeds that the knight attracted his lady. The knight also honored his lady by doing feats of strength in her name. The doing of deeds demanded that the courtly knights have physical and military prowess. Andreas states that in order for a man to be worthy of the love of a lady he : "... must be a man with innumerable good things to his credit, one whom uncounted good deeds extol."[13] The ladies "...ought to test his constancy by many trials before he deserves to have hope of her love granted him...."[14] The doing of deeds was an intrinsic part of the military dimension of chivalry.

Moderation is another characteristic of the military aspect that is stressed by Andreas. Moderation was an important attribute of the medieval warrior knight. The virtues of temperance and restraint were adapted into the realm of love. Andreas cautions against too much passion: " Indeed the man who is so wanton that he cannot confine himself to the love of one woman deserves to be considered an impetuous ass. It will therefore be clear to you that you are bound to avoid an overabundance of passion...."[15] Andreas also preaches moderation in the knights involvement with his lady love: " And every man ought to be sparing of praise of his beloved when he is among other men; he should not talk of her often or at great length, and he should not spend a great deal to time in places where she is."[16] The incorporation of the ideal of moderation illustrates the adoption of chivalric virtues into the realm of courtly love.

The military facets of chivalry are reflected in the imagery employed by Andreas. Aspects of love are described in military terms. The involvement in courtly love is portrayed as " ...to bear the arms of love."[17] Similarly, falling in love is described throughout as being pierced by "Love's arrow". Those who participate in courtly love are perceived as being part of "Love's army" or as "soldiers of love."[18] Andreas' use of these images to describe love reflects the infiltration of the ideals of chivalry into the very perceptions of the medieval nobility. Additionally, since Andreas was a chaplain and therefore a member of the clergy, albeit the lower clergy, it is clear that even the views of the clergy were influenced by chivalry.

The noble dimension of chivalry is apparent as well. In his instruction of the nobility, Andreas reveals the strength of the noble bias in chivalry. Status symbols and honor are evident. Andreas identifies costly garments and fine horses with the nobility, the class he deems worthy.[19] The status and wealth of an individual were important to his/her participation in courtly love. In his discussion of the ways that love may be lost or decreased, Andreas cites loss of property, ergo status:"... and so does an uncultured appearance or manner of walking on the part of the lover, or the sudden loss of his property."[20] The status of the lover preoccupies Andreas throughout his treatise. He presents several different cases where the lovers' status differed and he discusses the appropriate behavior and the problems that may occur. In this respect, Andreas' treatise is similar to the lais of Marie de France. He is instructing the nobility in the art and skills of love.

Honor is another noble interest evident in Andreas' treatise. In discussing the various cases, Andreas stresses the importance of personal honor and preserving one's good name. Andreas cautions against relationships with prostitutes because of the potential harm to one's reputation: " Even if it should happen once in a while that a woman of this kind does fall in love, all agree that her love is harmful to men, because all wise men frown upon having familiar intercourse with prostitutes, and to do so spoils anybody's good name."[21] Honor and status were important to the nobility, and Andreas incorporates them as necessary attributes in courtly love as well.

Andreas also displays a strong noble class bias. This is evident when he asserts that only the nobles had the qualities necessary to participate in the pursuit of courtly love. Manners were one characteristic: "But since an excellent character makes noble not only women but men also, you are perhaps wrong in refusing me your love, since my manners, too may illumine me with the virtue of nobility."[22] Manners were part of noble life and determined in part the status of an individual. Andreas even asserts that love itself was exclusive to the nobility. In the dialogue between two nobles, the question of the clergy's role in courtly love is brought up. The woman denies the clerk participation in love, not because of a contradiction with his religious vows, but because he would be unable to fulfill the requirements of a lady. She says: " But even if we do not find a greater sin in the love of a clerk than in that of a layman, there is something else that most emphatically keeps women from loving a clerk. For although love, by its very nature seeks for a pleasing and beautiful bodily appearance and demands that a man should be ready to make gifts to anybody at the proper time, that he should be courageous against those who make war on him, should rejoice greatly in the stress of battle and take part constantly in the toil of wars, a clerk comes before us dressed in women's garments, unsightly because of his shaven head, he cannot aid anybody with gifts unless he wants to take some other man's property ...."[23] The reasons cited against clergymen were strictly within a secular context. In other words, clergymen could not fulfill the noble expectations of courtly love, such as

doing great warrior feats, being wealthy, and dressing according to the fashions of court. The attributes of the courtly lover as expressed by Andreas Capellanus were exclusive to the noble class.

The religious dimension of chivalry is also present in The Art of Courtly Love . Andreas advises the nobles both to be good Christians and to be socially responsible. Andreas says of a courtly knight: " He should utter no word of blasphemy against God and His saints; he should humble himself to all and should stand ready to serve everybody. He ought never speak a word in disparagement of any man, since those who speak evil may not remain within the threshold of courtesy."[24] Likewise the courtly lover should "... go to church frequently and there listen gladly to those who are constantly celebrating the divine service, although some men very foolishly believe that the women like it if they despise everything connected with the church."[25] Andreas believes love itself is based upon adherence to the Christian tenets, and may be lost if the lover does not obey the church. "Other things which weaken love are blasphemy against God or His saints, mockery of the ceremonies of the Church, and a deliberate withholding of charity from the poor."[26] Social responsibility also played an important role. A courtly personality was obligated to help and protect the less fortunate. " And also if he sees that the poor are hungry and gives them nourishment, that is considered very courteous and generous."[27] Andreas was speaking as a clergyman and, hence, may be somewhat self-serving in his exhortations. It is clear, however, that

under the chivalric code, Christian behavior was important. It is also possible that some nobles were straying from that path. There is a subtle underlying fear expressed here by Andreas that the church was losing some of its control as the secular values of chivalry began to dominate the noble class.

The Art of Courtly Love , like the lais, reflects the domination of chivalric values in the lives of the noble class and the creation of cultural expression to address these issues. Courtly love was a manifestation of chivalry. While religion was still important, the rules laid down and the culture they were applied to were strictly secular. The literature of the court illustrates the new ethical code of chivalry and the flourishing of a distinct noble culture, which had evolved from chivalry.

CHAPTER VI

LITURGY

Although liturgy was perhaps not a formal pronouncement of the church's views, liturgical sources do provide insight into the attitudes of the church and members of the clergy. Liturgy reflects the church's response to current social, political, behavioral, and economic trends. Liturgy can provide insight into the issues or problems which confronted the clergy and medieval society as a whole. The liturgical works under examination here are the benedictio which were used in the ceremonies of dubbing and coronation.[1] These sources illustrate the secular and sacred attitudes toward knighthood, and are useful in judging the penetration of chivalric ideas within medieval lay society and the church.

The benedictio to be considered span several centuries, from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries, and they reflect the evolution of the religious aspects of chivalry. The sermons from the tenth century contain the beginnings of the religious values incorporated into the chivalric code. The concepts developed over the centuries, becoming more elaborate, until they reached their final form somewhere in the late thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. In the tenth century benedictio the specific duties of the medieval knight are laid out. The knights must first of all be servants of God. They must attend the ceremonies the church and respect its customs.[2] They must be worthy defenders of God.

They were expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner and to exhibit certain virtues, such as strength and common sense. The chief duty of the knight was to defend the church. During the ceremony, the knights were girded with the sword to protect the church and its members from their enemies. And the knights were expected to be socially responsible. They should aid and defend the poor, the orphaned, and the destitute. The knight was the avenger of injustice and the policeman of medieval society. It was his job to maintain order and stability.[3]

The military characteristics also appear in these benedictio. The knight's arms were incorporated into the ceremony of dubbing. The sword, shield, helmet, and standard of the knight were anointed with holy water. This rite made the weapons part of the religious arsenal, to be used for the good of Christian society.[4] The benedictio illustrate the church's early attempt to bring the medieval warrior into the fold, finally solving the "paradox of the knight". The obligations of the tenth century knight, as expressed in the benedictio, reflect the socio-religious and military characteristics of chivalry.

These tenth century concepts were elaborated upon through the next three centuries as chivalry matured. When chivalry reached its culmination, the liturgical practices in the ceremonies of knighthood and coronation became more involved. For example, in the twelfth and particularly the thirteenth century benedictio, the sermons employed many more biblical characters and saints as models for the knights and kings. Solomon and David, St. George and St. Sebastian were often cited. The virtues

that the knights should exhibit were more detailed. Finally, the ceremony itself became increasingly elaborate. Previously the ceremony had lasted at most only a day. In the later services, the knights were expected to spend the night before praying in the church. A ceremonial bath was added to the event. The expectations of the knight were essentially the same in the twelfth century as in the tenth, but the ceremony had developed further. Chivalrous society was very much interested in pomp and circumstance, the more elaborate the better. The liturgical services of dubbing and coronation responded to this need and became increasing complicated and involved.

Some of the religious, social, and military elements of chivalry appear in the liturgy of the church long before it became the governing force of the medieval nobility. While chivalry may not have been fully articulated in the tenth century, certain dimensions of it were already a part of early medieval thought and had begun to influence the perceptions of both secular and sacred society. The one set of chivalric values missing from the benedictio were the noble aspects, those social imperatives that developed as the warrior class evolved into a noble class, i.e. lineage, material goods, and status. The medieval churchmen were only interested in two aspects of chivalry, the military and the religious. Not only was the noble dimension of chivalry not acceptable to the clergy, although it affected their own values and behavior, in the twelfth century it became the object of their scorn and disgust. It threatened the power of the church and eroded its control as chivalry increased

the independence of the noble class. It is hardly surprising that these aspects of chivalry are absent from the church liturgy.

CHAPTER VII

THEOLOGY

Theology is also a valuable source for the study of chivalry. Theological sources reflect clerical perceptions and reactions to chivalry. The theological treatises of John of Salisbury and Bernard of Clairvaux are the two sources to be considered. They will be examined to determine further what the impact of chivalry had been on theologians. The works of John of Salisbury and St. Bernard both deal with the secular court, and illustrate their reaction to it. Both John and Bernard responded with violent disfavor to some of the elements of chivalry, specifically the nobles' preoccupation with materialism and their participation in courtly love. Together these sources indicate the response of churchmen to these problems and their attempts to reform the nobility. How were they threatened by chivalry? What solutions did they formulate to change the courtly nobles?

JOHN OF SALISBURY:

John of Salisbury was born around 1115 and was educated on the continent. He was one of the foremost theologians of his era and active in the politics of the twelfth century church. Specifically, he was deeply involved in the Becket controversy and he held the esteemed office of Bishop of Chartres. The two works of John of Salisbury to be considered are his correspondence and his treatise on the statesman, The Policraticus, which was completed by 1159.

Although John of Salisbury was a cleric and a noted theologian, his perceptions were strongly influenced by the concepts of chivalry. All dimensions of chivalry are reflected in John's writings. He discusses both secular and clerical personalities in terms of chivalrous criteria. In the military realm, John applies the chivalrous concept of doing great deeds, not to soldiers, but to clerics. He describes himself as being: "... fired by these precepts and their like to do valiant deeds, and with God's help to rise to higher things...."[1] John reiterates the importance of fame and reputation. John advises a fellow cleric: "For this is a pernicious example, which both harms your conscience and spoils your fame not a little."[2] Fame was just as important to churchmen as it was to their secular counterparts. But the churchman's fame rested on different criteria, not physical prowess or military ability. John states that Becket's "...fame for scholarly learning and honourable character is better appreciated by everyone the better they know him...."[3] Clerical fame may consist of elements different from those of a chivalrous knight, but reputation was of equal importance. It was by his fame that a churchman would be known or recognized.

The noble dimension of chivalry is also evident. John uses the noble criteria to describe or judge other members of the clergy. Personal honor is crucial to churchmen. Subsequently the loss of honor was a concern, as demonstrated in his letter to a bishop: "...for he swore to us that, though you were doing him great wrong, he would not wish to be avenged, unless the wrong

was of such enormity that he could not without loss of honour ignore it."[4] Even death is preferable to the loss of one's good name or honor: "But we shall live in hope, for we are ready to be humble in every way that preserves conscience untarnished, so long as we do nothing contrary to God's law nor to our good name: if we lose that, it is better to die than to live."[5] The chivalric concern with lineage appears. Although churchmen were supposed to have relinquished such temporal concerns, John still makes a point of lineage. When writing to Bishop Roger of Worcester John says: "I reckon it an expedient task for your holiness so far as this life is concerned, and one suitable to your noble lineage...."[6] When John describes Archdeacon Robert of Oxford he lists noble blood as one of his attributes: "...the venerable Robert, archdeacon of Oxford, a canon of Hereford cathedral, of noted reputation for character and learning, of noble birth, skilled in civil and canon law...."[7] John's concerns with honor and lineage demonstrate further the penetration of chivalric ideals into the values of this twelfth century cleric and theologian. Such concerns are scarcely Christian precepts, rather they are secular.

Even John's assessment of Becket, a superior churchman and eventually a martyr, was based on the attributes of chivalry: "All who had heard were astonished, gave thanks, and praised God's glory; and they elaborated in many ways on the martyr's qualities, recalling his generosity, his courtliness, his magnificence towards his fellow-men; his faith, his zeal for justice, the constancy in God he had always shown from the first

days of his promotion." [8] While Becket's Christian qualities were important, John regarded the secular, knightly attributes as equally important, and these are firmly based in chivalry. The ideals, virtues, and perspectives of chivalry had gained ground in the medieval church.

While John of Salisbury's perceptions were tempered by chivalry, he was strongly opposed to certain elements of the chivalrous code. His reaction to chivalrous society of the medieval nobility is clear in the Policraticus, where he gives his opinion of the court life of the nobles. In short, John is disgusted by what he labels the "frivolities of courtiers". He is highly critical of such courtly activities as hunting, hawking, and gambling. He regards all of these pastimes as excessive and ungodly. John says: "In our days it is a proof of the intelligence of our nobles to be acquainted with the art of hunting; to be well grounded-and this is still more ruinous- in the principles of gaming...It is from such parents that children are infected with their moral diseases."[8] John condemns the nobles' cultural and artistic expressions as well. He is especially critical of the music and literature of the noble court. He says of the court music: "The singing of love songs in the presence of men of eminence was once considered in bad taste, but now it is considered praiseworthy for men of greater eminence to sing and play love songs which they themselves with greater propriety call stulticinia, follies. The very service of the Church is defiled, in that before the face of the Lord, in the very sanctuary of sanctuaries, they , showing off as it were,

strive with the effeminate dalliance of wanton tones and musical phrasing to astound, enervate, and dwarf simple souls."[10] John is equally negative on the subject of courtly literature: "But our own age, descending to romances and similar folly, prostitutes not only the ear and heart to vanity but also delights its idleness with the pleasures of eye and ear. It inflames its own wantonness, seeking everywhere incentives to vice."[11] John of Salisbury reacted violently to the lifestyle and expressions of the nobility. The chivalrous court violated churchly precepts; the clergy had lost control of some aspects of noble life. It was this that threatened John of Salisbury and evoked such a heated response.

This cleric also voiced serious objections to courtly love, and specifically to the new role of women. In courtly love the lady was the ruler. She dictated to her lover the parameters of their relationship and the various feats he must undertake to secure her favor. John calls the lords and knights "effeminate", claiming that they have: "lost their sex completely."[12] He ridicules the courtly gentleman: " When the rich lascivious wanton is preparing to satisfy his passion he has his hair elaborately frizzled and curled; he puts to shame a courtesan's make- up, an actor's costume, the dress of a noble, the jewels of a maiden, and even the triumphal robes of a prince."[13] John of Salisbury also expresses disgust at the physical relationship of courtly lovers. John advises the courtier to "'Fly fornication'", because it: "...is in the act itself is usually forgetful of God and when past, by recurring to the memory,

arouses deadly lust." [14] John even cites examples of philosophers who had themselves castrated to avoid a sexual relationship. His reaction to courtly love further illustrates the threat that chivalry and some of its manifestations presented to the church.

John of Salisbury criticizes specific chivalric ideals and practices as well. In the military realm, He speaks out against the noble's preoccupation with fame, using Alexander the Great as an example: " Truly miserable and worthy of his misery, all of whose virtues had been consumed by his insatiate and insatiable hunger for fame! ...the craving for fame is always seen to be at fault...."[15] This he says in spite of his own preoccupation with fame, reputation, and honor. But the noble dimension of chivalry receives by far the most critical attention. John castigates interest in material trivialities, such as clothing and other symbols of status. The attributes of generosity and noble breeding he also considered problematic: "Noble blood begets pride, aims at power, tramples upon inferiors, scorns equals, disdains to have superiors, speaks great things, is quite puffed up with the lofty lineage of the great as if itself had done anything to win its nobility, is careless of self, forgets those that are seen to be behind, and, a ridiculous imitation of Thraso, stretches forth itself to those that are before without cultivating virtue."[16]

Even aspects of the religious realm of the chivalrous nobility received its share of criticism. John particularly objected to the creation of the religious orders of knighthood. In a letter to the Bishop of Salisbury, he reveals his dislike

for one of these orders, the Hospitallers: "The brothers of the Hospital, under some new and unheard-of pretext of charity- in order to make private alms- bring obviously false claims, plunder that they may distribute, appease the Most High by offerings of other men's wealth and in contempt of the Apostles usurp the office of binding and loosing, usurp the keys of the Church...I have resolved to advise your highness and to entreat you not to show any indulgence to their malice, of which the bearer of these present, your clerk and priest, is the victim, since their plea seems to do more hurt to your church that to this man's person. You will deprive yourself and your successors of every church that you grant them."[17] John disliked and distrusted this order of knights, and tried to stop its progress. John's reaction to the Hospitallers reflects the clergy's dislike, and even fear, of the hold that chivalry had on the medieval nobility.

While John of Salisbury regards many aspects of chivalry with disfavor, this does not mean that he was against a code of behavior for the nobility. On the contrary, he was in favor of such a code, but did not believe that chivalry, as practiced by the nobility, was the right one. Instead John offers a code based on the purer elements of chivalry. In Policraticus, perhaps especially book VIII, John of Salisbury provides this code. He instructs the nobles on how to behave in a variety of situations, on the vices they should avoid, and on the virtues they should acquire. John discusses the seven vices enumerated in Pope Gregory's Moralia: "...first vainglory, second envy, third anger, fourth moroseness, fifth avarice, sixth gluttony, seventh self-

indulgence."[18] These seven major vices branch out to include a wide range of possible character faults. John employs biblical examples to drive home the important virtues: " Did not Abel teach innocence and Enoch purity of conduct? What patience in hope and effort did not Noah possess? Did Abraham ever fail to do faithfully whatever he was bidden? Isaac teaches the chastity of marriage and Jacob endurance in toil. Joseph rewards his brothers who plotted his death by repayment in kindness, and by so doing teaches that by the good should be returned for evil."[19]

John of Salisbury stresses the importance of moderation and social responsibility. These attributes were part of the chivalric code, having been derived from the church, from the military, and from social and class imperatives. It is important to realize that although John was critical of the chivalrous ideals and activities of the nobles, his writings demonstrate that his own perceptions and values were influenced by chivalry. Evidently John felt that many expressions of chivalry, especially the noble aspects of materialism and courtly love, had gotten out of hand, causing the nobles to become excessive in a variety of ways. This inspired John to stress the importance of moderation. He urges the nobles to employ moderation in all aspects of their existence. For example he states that moderation is even important in banqueting: " Intemperance in this respect subverts good morals, is prejudicial to the welfare of the whole man, and unless curbed destroys the entire fabric of the human body."[20] Further, this cleric encourages the nobles to repress their

excessive tendencies: " So if they who do not repress concupiscence, which is the especial source of evil and fosters it, suffer the loss of salvation, what will happen to those who inflame it with the zeal of timeservers and as it were add fuel to the flames of vice."[21]

John of Salisbury also emphasized the necessity of social responsibility. Evidently, he believed this feeling of obligation was absent in the chivalrous nobles. John urges the nobles to do good works, to be charitable and generous, all of which were chivalric characteristics: " He therefore who show the aromatical spices of his good works, the gold of his virtue, the silver of his eloquence, the odours of his thoughts, the ointments of his pity, the use and beauty of its vessels, and all that with caution and prudence he has set aside in the treasures of conscience, should hearken to the word of the Lord."[22] John stresses the social ideals of Christianity: helping the poor, treating others as you would hope to be treated, loving thy neighbor, etc. John's definition of a "good" character reflects this: " Character has its origin in these two sources: good, if one does for another what he would have another do for himself and refrains from imposing upon another what he would not wish another to impose upon himself."[23] John of Salisbury is trying to improve the morals of the nobility, which he believes have been corrupted by the material nature of chivalry. The virtues he is hoping to instill were the very same characteristics dictated by the religious dimension of chivalry.

The Policraticus and John himself represent two important

aspects in the development of chivalry. First, his works indicate that the ideals of chivalry had penetrated deeply into the medieval mind, and even churchmen incorporated them in their perceptions, evaluations, and value systems. Second, John exemplifies the clergy's response to the chivalrous nobility. The churchmen were threatened by the hold that certain aspects of that chivalry had over the nobility and sought to reform the nobility by employing a purified code of chivalry. However, the cultural expressions which had once been dominated by the church were now being shaped and revitalized by chivalry. The role of the church was diminished in secular noble society. This is why John considered the romances frivolous, and courtly music wanton and ungodly. They were different and they were conceived outside of the realm of the church. Chivalry had become a force to be reckoned with, and it had begun to secularize medieval culture and society.

ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX:

Like John of Salisbury, Bernard of Clairvaux provides insight into the relationship between chivalry and the church. Bernard himself is fascinating. He had a tremendous impact on his own time, the twelfth century, and succeeding centuries. Bernard was intimately involved with the reform movements of the twelfth century. He was the major force behind the promulgation of the Cistercians monastic order throughout western Europe. Bernard was a cleric, but he became concerned with the problems of the secular world. He and John of Salisbury were both products of

the twelfth century. However, John was preoccupied with the secular court, while Bernard was involved with the Crusades, and in particular the order of the knights Templar, a monastic order which linked the religious and secular worlds in a new knighthood. In Praise of the New Knighthood, is only one of his many works. It is a treatise written to defend and describe the order of the Templars and was probably written in the second quarter of the twelfth century. This is the only work of Bernard to be considered in this study, and by no means represents a complete review of his ideas and attitudes. In this treatise Bernard sets forth what he believes the medieval knight should be and the sort of activities he should undertake. In short, Bernard believes that the knight should be "twofold", incorporating characteristics from both the secular and spiritual realms. The battles waged by the knights should also be "twofold". As Bernard states: " This is, I say, a new kind of knighthood and one unknown to the ages gone by. It ceaselessly wages a twofold war both against flesh and blood and against a spiritual army of evil in the heavens."[24] The conception of knighthood that Bernard proposes reflects the ideals of chivalry.

Although Bernard believes the knights must incorporate spiritual values, the military dimension of chivalry also plays a part in his new knighthood. For example, Bernard insists that the new knights must be skilled warriors: " As you yourselves have often certainly experienced, a warrior especially needs these three things- he must guard his person with strength, shrewdness and care; he must be free in his movements, and he must be quick

to draw his sword."[25] In addition the knights should be brave and prudent in battle. Bernard's conception of the ideal knight included the physical and military requirements of chivalry.

Bernard's knights were concerned with glory, and in particular a glorious death. Bernard states: " How blessed to die there as a martyr! Rejoice, brave athlete, if you live and conquer in the Lord; but glory and exult even more if you die and join your Lord."[26] Other religious dimensions appear. For example, the new knights protect medieval society from internal threats: "Neither does he bear the sword in vain, for he is God's minister, for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of the good. If he kills an evildoer, he is not a mankiller, but, if I may so put it, a killer of evil. He is evidently the avenger of Christ towards evildoers and he is rightly considered a defender of Christians."[27] The knights protected the church and society from external threats as well, specifically the pagan hordes. All of these concepts were part of the chivalric code. Bernard incorporates them in his discussion of the new knighthood. The "paradox of the knight" had certainly been solved, as long as the warrior knight confined his activities to the interests of the church. It was the church, presumably, which would identify the evil-doers that knights were free to kill. Chivalric concepts had penetrated the church and could serve its interests as well.

But, like his contemporary John of Salisbury, Bernard felt threatened by the hold that chivalry had on the nobility. He, too, sought to correct what he perceived as the abuses of chivalrous society, specifically the noble characteristics.

Bernard found the nobility's preoccupation with material symbols and worldly concerns most offensive: " You cover your horses with silk, and plume your armor with I know not what sort of rags; you paint your shields and your saddles; you adorn your bits and spurs with gold and silver and precious stones, and then in all this glory you rush to your ruin with fearful wrath and fearless folly. Are these the trappings of a warrior or they not rather the trinkets of a woman? Do you think the swords of your foes will be turned back by your gold, spare your jewels or be unable to pierce your silks?"[28] Bernard believed that the materialism of chivalry had corrupted the knights, that they had lost sight of their mission in society. This is apparent in his criticism of some of the battles that the knights were involved in: "What else is the cause of wars and the root of dispute among you, except unreasonable flashes of anger, the thirst for empty glory, or the hankering after some earthly possessions? It certainly is not safe to kill or to be killed for such causes such as these."[29] Bernard clearly did not approve of the military activities of the knights, which he believed were encouraged by the concern with material advancement that chivalry had instilled within the nobility. In this sense chivalry threatened the church and its members. Chivalry distracted the knights from what Bernard and his peers considered important, i.e. protection of the church and an interest in more spiritual matters. To reform the nobles and knights, Bernard urged them to become involved in spiritual rather than worldly concerns. Bernard asserts that Christ was put on earth by God "...so that his daily words teaching men

the truth might stimulate them to desire things invisible, that his mighty works might strengthen their faith and that his example might guide their conduct."[30] Bernard used the example of Christ to drive home the importance of spiritual contemplation and the role it should play in the lives' of the knights, attempting to reform the chivalrous nobility.

If In Praise of the New Knighthood sets forth the ideal of the new knighthood, it also details what knights should not do. Discipline and obedience were essential. The new knights should also "...shun every excess in clothing and food...."[31] They should never be idle, and they should forgo the pleasures of the court, such as dice, chess, and hunting. The new knights should reject the fashions of the court. The distinction brought by noble blood did not matter to these knights, only merit ranked them. The concern with bejeweled and precious armor was absent in the knights of the new order. Instead of putting their faith in the accoutrements of battle, the new knights put their faith in God and thereby received his strength.[32] Bernard portrayed the new knights as unshackled by material concerns, as simple Christian soldiers. Bernard praised the new knighthood because they denied the material expressions of chivalry and stressed the religious duties. They were truly monastic warriors.

Both John of Salisbury and Bernard of Clairvaux did not approve of the influence that chivalry had on the knights and nobles of the twelfth century. In this respect they reflect the same attitudes and concerns of the church expressed in the benedictio. John and Bernard saw the nobility, and subsequently

the knighthood, as excessive and depraved. Both tried to reform the values of the courtier, but they employed different devices. John of Salisbury , in the Policraticus, preached against the vices inherent in chivalry, and tried to enunciate the importance of religious values in the knights and nobles. Bernard of Clairvaux took a different tack. In his definition, knighthood became a spiritual occupation. The secular interests of the knights were outlawed in his new order. In Praise of the New Knighthood is an effort to define chivalry and knighthood strictly within its religious realm. Chivalric concepts of glory, honor, battle, deed-doing were all acceptable if they were strictly limited to churchly interests. The theme is expressed in much of the literature produced in the twelfth century, but in this single treatise Bernard brings together one complete articulation. It also illustrates the threat that chivalry was to the church. Bernard essentially attempts to bring knighthood back into the fold of the church, to reform the nobles by employing aspects of chivalry. Chivalry had wrenched control of the nobility away from the church. The noble court and culture were completely independent and the clergy found this distressing. In Praise of the New Knighthood was a bid to regain influence over the knights. Chivalry had a powerful affect on the medieval church and society.

CONCLUSION

The examination of these twelfth century sources supports, I believe, certain conclusions about the impact of chivalry on Western medieval society. First, chivalry became the force that governed all aspects of the nobles' lives in the second half of the twelfth century. It was not a veneer, but a deeply ingrained value system. The chivalric code dictated the knights' and nobles' behavior, from battle to wooing a lady. Second, chivalry provided the support and frame work which allowed a secular noble culture to develop, including cultural expressions for the ideals and activities that the nobles found most interesting and pertinent to their lives. The chansons de geste were expressions of nobles' concern with battle and the feudal relationship. When the secular and sacred sides of the knights were fused in the First Crusade, the stage was set for the birth of a noble culture and a change in the nature of the noble class. The romances and the lais explored the nobles' concern with the concept of love, with appropriate behavior and class awareness. Such chivalric, secular, expressions represent the end of a church dominated noble culture. The nobility began to develop their own cultural activities, expressions and codes of behavior. Concepts of chivalry also permeated the minds of the clergy. Clerics used chivalrous criteria in describing and evaluating both sacred and secular personalities. On the other hand, the clergy were threatened, as their control of certain aspects of secular society weakened. This is best exemplified in the

responses of Guibert of Nogent, John of Salisbury, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux to aspects of chivalry. The very heatedness of their response perhaps demonstrates best the dominance chivalry had achieved in the realms of courtly love and materialism and the clergy's increasing sense of impotence in controlling the noble class. The church responded by using elements of chivalry in a program to reform the nobility.

Chivalry joined the church to encourage social responsibility, urging the knights to help the poor, the helpless, orphans, widows, the lame, and maidens in distress. Before the knights had been marauding warriors. With the development of chivalry, the knights became the policemen of medieval society. Finally the medieval warrior was brought into the fold of the Christian church. Chivalry legitimized the occupation of the knights. The "paradox of the knight" was solved. The knights became the defenders of the church, where previously they had been the pillagers and plunderers. They protected the church, clergy, and medieval society from infidels and marauders. The knights were the right hand of the church, its partner. Chivalry included the need for order and social responsibility, the need to put the welfare of society above personal desires, thereby changing the nature of the medieval noble warrior. It transformed a warrior class into a truly noble class. The powerful grasp of the church had to be eased if medieval society could mature and meet the challenge of an increasingly complicated world. Chivalry was the force that fueled this process.

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