

1992

Corporate Chivalry in Malory's "Morte d'Arthur": Chivalric Guidebooks and a Fifteenth-Century Chivalric Ideal

Timothy Carlton Truxell
College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [Medieval Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Truxell, Timothy Carlton, "Corporate Chivalry in Malory's "Morte d'Arthur": Chivalric Guidebooks and a Fifteenth-Century Chivalric Ideal" (1992). *Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects*. William & Mary. Paper 1539625743.

<https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-gsbz-j766>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, & Master Projects at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@wm.edu.

CORPORATE CHIVALRY IN MALORY'S MORTE DARTHUR:
CHIVALRIC GUIDEBOOKS AND A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY
CHIVALRIC IDEAL

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of English
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

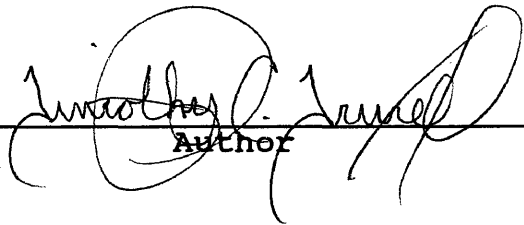
Timothy C. Truxell

1992

APPROVAL SHEET


This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

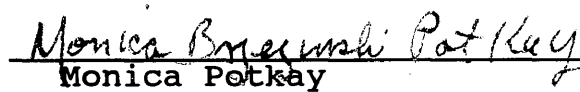


Author


Approved, December 1992



John Conlee



Monica Potkay



Terry Meyers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
INTRODUCTION	2
CHAPTER I. FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHIVALRY	6
CHAPTER II. MALORY'S SECULAR CHIVALRY	20
CHAPTER III. A NEW EXEMPLAR: THREE KNIGHTS AND THE CORPORATE CHIVALRIC IDEAL	36
CONCLUSION	72
BIBLIOGRAPHY	80

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Professor John Conlee, under whose guidance this project was conducted, for his patient guidance and insight throughout the project. The author would also like to acknowledge his debt to Professors Monica Potkay and Terry Meyers for their careful reading and helpful criticism of the manuscript.

ABSTRACT

Chivalry is one of the most pervasive concerns in Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur. This paper will examine Malory's treatment of chivalry from the establishment of the Pentecostal Oath to the collapse of Arthurian society. Malory's chivalric ideals differ somewhat from those found in his sources, primarily the French romances. Instead, as this paper will argue, Malory seems to draw on the ideals expressed in chivalric guidebooks popular in the fifteenth century, which champion a corporate ideal of chivalry, and thus Malory rejects an "individual chivalry" of earlier romances.

The popularity of such guidebooks in the fifteenth century, as well as Malory's inclusion of many of the details of a "bastard feudalism," indicates that Malory's version of chivalry exhibits a fifteenth-century ideal. This ideal emphasizes the corporate good of society. This paper will argue that the Pentecostal Oath, in accordance with a system of "bastard feudalism" where knights were not limited by the old-style feudalism and its idea of tenure, sets up a secular order of knighthood, the Order of the Round Table.

In order to examine Malory's treatment of this fifteenth-century ideal, this paper will focus on three knights--Dinadan, Palomides and Gareth--knights who offer a commentary on Malory's chivalric ethos. With these knights, Malory is able to use a freer hand in altering details in order to present a corporate ideal of chivalry because with them--in contrast to figures such as Lancelot and Tristram--Malory could move away from his sources and their ideals without radically altering the matter he chose to present.

Dinadan's comments on chivalry comprise an implied critique of the other knights. According to this assessment, Palomides personifies the excesses of individual chivalry that Dinadan recognizes because he becomes caught up in his own individual pursuit of worship, over and above the corporate spirit of the oath; and Gareth represents a true exemplar of Malory's corporate chivalry as established by the oath. He remains true to the corporate ideal of chivalry even while the individual motivations of other knights such as Palomides inevitably tear the court apart. Gareth, in his adherence to corporate chivalry, represents a true fifteenth-century chivalric ideal, both in his ideals and his use of the system that Arthur creates.

**Corporate Chivalry in Malory's Morte Darthur:
Chivalric Guidebooks and a Fifteenth-Century
Chivalric Ideal**

Introduction

Of all the subjects that one encounters in Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur, chivalry may be the most pervasive. It seems that the very genre in which Malory chose to write, coming as his work does at the end of a long line of prose romances, dictates his concern with the ideals of chivalry. Malory, however, was himself a knight, one of the few certainties in the general haze surrounding the Morte Darthur's author; as a knight, he would have had a great interest in chivalry and would have been subject to whatever form of it that remained in the fifteenth century.¹ In the Morte Darthur, Malory explicitly presents his concept of chivalry near the outset of his narrative in the Pentecostal Oath to which Arthur's knights must swear. The ideal of chivalry established by this oath informs the entire work and runs through all of the eight "tales" which comprise the Morte Darthur.

Regardless of Malory's obvious concern with chivalry, many critics and historians view Malory's evocation of a chivalric ideal as being empty, when considered against the backdrop of civil unrest occurring in England in the latter half of the fifteenth century. This view sees Malory as an old knight longing for a past "golden age" of chivalry. According to Arthur B. Ferguson, chivalry had perished as a working system in the fifteenth century and existed only as a fictitious ideal:

Despite the fact that by the mid-fifteenth century the political, social and economic foundations upon which chivalric idealism had rested had to a large extent crumbled, the fact remains that chivalric idealism was still able to evoke a lively response in the minds of Englishmen during the remainder of the century.... [But] in the confusion and maladministration of the mid-century the English gentry sought protection in shifting personal relationships, in a 'bastard feudalism' which left little room for chivalric loyalty.

(3)

Ferguson focuses on the abuses which he perceives to be inherent in "bastard feudalism" and in the Wars of the Roses as a final blow to a working system of chivalry; he sees chivalry as dependent upon the pure feudalism practiced in earlier centuries, and he accounts for the mid-fifteenth century interest in chivalry as only a conservative clinging to old and failed systems and ideals. Thus, Malory seems only to imperfectly reflect the vibrant chivalry of an earlier age when feudalism remained in place.

While feudalism and chivalry are not synonymous, the two systems are inextricably linked. As historians have established, the political system of feudalism, under which individual chivalry flourished, was no longer completely in place by the fifteenth century. It had been replaced by "bastard feudalism." K. B. Mcfarlane comments on the difference between the old style feudalism and "bastard feudalism," which had become dominant by the fifteenth century:

Feudalism, if it is to have any recognisable meaning implies the organisation of society upon the basis of

tenure.... But by the fourteenth century it had largely ceased to be so, at any rate for the free man.... Feudalism still existed formally intact, but was becoming for all practical purposes a complex network of marketable privileges and duties attached to the ownership of land, with little or no importance as a social force. (24)

The feudal idea of tenure, a hereditary association by which a knight held his land through an individual relationship with his lord, became replaced by the relationship between a lord and his "affinity," or retinue, where the subjects staked their hopes of good fortune upon the lord they served (McFarlane 180). It seems that this complex network of service for payment would have inhibited chivalric loyalty, as Ferguson posits, but for the most part old loyalties remained intact because many men chose a lord according to the set tenurial pattern or tradition (McFarlane 31-2). In the end, "bastard feudalism" did not destroy loyalty in a chivalric sense, but widened it. This system, while facilitating the abuses of livery and maintenance that led to overmighty subjects such as Warwick the kingmaker, also enabled men to hold many more vassals than the old style feudalism, making secular orders of chivalry, such as the Order of the Garter and Order of the Golden Fleece, possible (Benson 143-4).

Instead of lamenting the difference between Malory's chivalry and that of his French sources, I intend to examine how Malory's view of chivalry illustrates the ideals and practices of chivalry in his own time. In order to do this

I will compare Malory's chivalric ideas with the ideals contained in contemporary guidebooks; I will also examine Malory's Round Table, as established by the Pentecostal Oath, in relation to the conditions surrounding its foundation as a secular order of chivalry.²

Malory's presentation of chivalry accords with these fifteenth-century ideals in that chivalry, as he presents it, is a function of the system of "bastard feudalism," a system inextricably tied with the secular basis of fifteenth-century chivalry. Malory's view of chivalry is almost entirely secular and emphasizes the good of society and the political loyalty of Arthur's court, much like "bastard feudalism's" end result in the secular orders. Since Malory's chivalry mirrors fifteenth-century phenomena, this discussion will view Arthur's knights against the contemporary social and political backgrounds. It will conclude with a consideration of three knights, Dinadan, Palomides, and Gareth. These knights stand in contrast to the usual exemplars of chivalry--figures such as Lancelot, Tristram, Gawain, and Percival--which Malory drew from his sources and hence are somewhat dependent upon old definitions of chivalry. These three knights point to a chivalric ideal peculiar to or at least more prevalent in the fifteenth century, an ideal which the Pentecostal Oath establishes.

Fifteenth-Century Chivalry: A Background

I

In order to understand Malory in the context of his contemporary culture, an examination must be made of the ideas concerning knighthood which were read and accepted by the knights and nobles of the time, as well as of the actual system in which they participated. Whatever the verdict on chivalry's level of effectiveness, fifteenth-century men had a great interest in the subject. One example of this can be found in the extensive chivalric literature available in the period, of which Malory's Morte Darthur is only a small portion. This concern with chivalry and its state can also be seen in the prologues and epilogues that Caxton appended to many of his printed works. This body of literature can be seen as both the cause and the effect of chivalric idealism in that its exhortations may have produced chivalric actions. Caxton exhorts his readers to follow the ideals expressed in the chivalric works, as shown in his famous preface to the Morte Darthur:

And I, accordyng to my cople, have doon sette it in enprynte to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chivalrye, the jentyle and vertuorous dedes that somme knyghtes used in tho dayes, by whyche they came to honour, and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke; humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates, of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and weke, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same....(xv:Preface)³

These chivalric works are didactic; they aim at keeping chivalry in line with its ideals. While many critics may use such passages as evidence that chivalry had in fact passed away, Larry Benson, correctly in my view, notes that throughout the history of chivalry its literature had always been one of apology and exhortation to return to the ideal(145). Any society's reality seldom coincides with the ideals it professes.

The fifteenth century, instead of reflecting a degeneration of chivalry, was actually a time when its ideals were quite widespread:

...if there was a golden age of chivalry, a time when men at least tried to be chivalric knights, it was from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The ideals of chivalry seem to have been a largely literary invention, and it was not until the late middle ages that even the nobility was much influenced by literature. (Benson 141-2)

It seems that the guidebooks exhorting men to uphold chivalric ideals had, at least partially, succeeded. Accordingly, the chivalric literature, chivalric guidebooks as well as earlier romances, that was available to fifteenth-century knights becomes important in any examination of chivalry, as Joseph Ruff has recognized:

This pattern of interrelationships does suggest, however, that in the later Middle Ages, real knights as well as authors of chivalric romance were attempting to follow the advice of idealistic chivalric manuals and to imitate the "almost possible dream" of chivalry described there. (115)

One of the best examples of this influence and, perhaps, one of the strongest on Malory were chivalric guidebooks.

The ideals expressed by the guidebooks seem very similar in their concern for the good of society and the need for political and governmental order. Guidebooks such as Caxton's translations of Ramon Lull's Book of the Ordre of Chyualrye and Christine de Pisan's Book of Fayttes of Armes and Chyualry, express the same ideals as the Morte Darthur even though they were originally written prior to Malory's time. The similarity of their ideals with the practices and institutions of the time, notably the secular orders of chivalry, indicate that emphasis of chivalry had shifted from the individual ideal expressed in the previous French view of chivalry, expressed in both secular and religious terms, to a corporate ideal in which chivalry exists for the good of society.

II

Ramon Lull's Libre del Ordre de Cavayleria was one of the most popular chivalric guidebooks in the fifteenth century. Although written in the late thirteenth century, about two centuries before Malory, this work has a bearing upon Malory's chivalry because of its popularity in England at the time; it was translated twice into English, once by Sir Gilbert of the Hay, and once by William Caxton, Malory's own printer. Caxton's translation, The Book of the Ordre of Chyualrye, although printed after the Morte Darthur,

illustrates the concerns and ideas of the late Middle Ages in England--hence Caxton's choice to translate and print it.⁴ Even though Malory could not have been familiar with Caxton's edition, it is possible that he knew some translation of the work, and it is probable that he was familiar with the ideals that it expresses about knighthood.

Lull's Book of the Ordre of Chyualrye is more detailed in its discussion of the particulars of chivalric practices than anything that Malory includes, providing minute details concerning the way a knight should behave. More so than Malory, however, Lull's treatise reflects a religious bent. Lull instructs a knight to defend the church ("the holy feythe catholyque"[24]) and to work for the salvation of his own soul. While these religious elements occupy positions of importance in Lull's treatment of knighthood, the overall flavor of the work remains decidedly secular. Knights bring squires into knighthood, not priests(Lull 10). In fact Lull's description of the chivalric knight defines his qualities in a more secular context than a religious one, qualities which Maurice Keen finds as a constant in the depiction of chivalric heroes:

From a very early stage we find the romantic authors habitually associating together qualities which they clearly regarded as the classic virtues of good knighthood: prouesse, loyaute, largesse (generosity), courtoisie and franchise (the free and frank bearing that is visible testimony to the combination of good birth with virtue). (2)

Lull informs his readers that all of these qualities must be present, to some extent, in a good knight. In order to institute such qualities, Lull provides a practical code of conduct to guide knights in proper behavior.

Lull provides a number of tenets in his practical code which delineate the proper behavior for a knight. The first of these is loyalty:

Thoffyce of a knyght is to mayntene and deffende / his lorde worldly or terryien / for a kynge ne no hyghe baron hath no power to mayntene ry3twysness in his men without ayde & helpe / Thenne yf ony man do ageynst the commadement of his kyng or prynce / it behoueth that the knyghtes ayde their lorde / which is but a man only as another is / & therfor the euyl knyght which sooner helpeth another man that wold put doun his lord fro the seignory þ^t he ou3t to have vpon him he foloweth not thoffyce by which he is called a kn3t / By the kny3tes ou3t to be mayntened & kept justyce.... (Lull 29)

Lull, as usual, recognizes the importance of loyalty within a chivalric system, but he places such loyalty in a system which differs from the strictly one-on-one relationships of old-style feudalism, reflected in individual quests of knights found in French romance. Traditionally knights were primarily loyal to their tenurial overlord. Lull, however, places loyalty in a political hierarchy spiralling downward from the sovereign to the individual knight:

Themperor ou3t to be a kn3ht & lord of a knyghtes / but by cause þ^t theperour may not by him self governe al kni3tes hym behoueth that he have vnder hym kynges that be knyghtes / to thende / that hey ayde & helpe to mayntene thordre of Chyualry / And the kynges oughte to have vnder them dukes / Erles / vycoutes and other lordes / And vnder the barons ought to be knyghtes

which ought to governe hem after the ordynaunce of the
 barons / whiche ben in the hyghe degree of chyualry to
 fore named / for to shew the excellence / seygnorye /
 power and wysedom of oure lord god gloryous / /
 every knyghte oughte to be gouernour of a grete countre
 or lond. (27)

Thus, even in Lull's first definitions of chivalric qualities, he places them in the larger realm of the society and its politics. Since, in Lull's view, all lords should be knights, all lords should be subject to the rule that he explains.

In addition to loyalty, Lull also addresses the other knightly virtues: courtesy, generosity, and prowess. In almost every case, however, he places them within a context which serves society over the individual. After exhorting the knight to tend to his spiritual health, Lull tells the prospective knight to participate in activities that will enhance his prowess and ability as a warrior: "kni3tes ou3t to take coursers to juste & to go to tornoyes / to holde open table / to hute at hertes / at bores & other wyld bestes / For in doynge these thynges the kny3tes exercyse them to armes for to mayntene thordre of kni3thode"(31). This admonition must have been very congenial to the majority of the English gentry that comprised the knighthood in Malory's day. Knights' maintenance of this order, which should include all lords, would uphold the ideals that the order professes as guidelines for behavior. Knights, in their maintenance, should act to police their own order,

educating knights-to-be in the rules of chivalry.

Along with praising such pursuits, Lull intimates that one must be a noble to be a knight by restricting those worthy of knighthood; he states that the chivalric knight is only one out of a thousand men(Lull 12). This limitation, taken with the proper pursuits and the importance of a well-kept household, corresponds to franchise; each of Lull's details point to the nobility. Lull also presents many other virtues:

To a knyght apperteyneth to speke nobly and curtoisly /
and to have fayr harnoyes and to be wel cladde / and to
hold a good houshold / and an honest hows / For alle
these thynges ben to honoure Chyualry necessarye /
Curtosye and Chyualry concorden to gyder / For
vylaynous and foule wordes ben ageynst thordre of
chyualry / Pryualte and acqueyntaunce of good folke /
loyalte & trouthe / hardynesse / largesse / honeste /
humylyte / pyte / and the other thynges semblable to
these apperteyne to Chyualry... (113)

This passage sums up all the qualities that should be possessed by the ideal knight. These virtues become necessary, in Lull's view, to maintain the ordered and hierarchical society that he envisions.

In addition to the abstract virtues that a knight should represent, Lull, in a very practical mode, provides the knight with certain examples of these virtues in action. The customs that Lull attributes to the knight complement the ideal qualities that should be present while further clarifying Lull's overall purpose. In a passage so similar to Malory's Pentecostal Oath that it makes it probable that

Malory knew some version of the Ordre, Lull sets up some examples of the knight's function in society according to his established virtues:

Thoffyce of a knyght is to mayntene and defende wymmen / wydowes and orphanes / and men dyseased and not puyssanunt ne stronge / ... / Righte soo is thordre of chyualry / by cause she is grete / honourable and myghty / be in socoure and in ayde to them that ben vnder hym / and lasse myghty / and lasse honoured that he is / Thennde as it is soo that for to do wrong and to force to wymmen wydowes that have need of ayde / and orphelyns have nede of governaunce / ... / These thynges may not accorde to thordre of chyualry / For this is wyckednesse. (38)

The object of all of these practices is to uphold peace in society, or in Lull's words: "Chyualry is ordeygned for to mayntene Iustyce"(43). A knight should act as a justicer and protector of the people responding to the corporate good over his individual good, an idea hearkening back to rhetoric concerning man's three estates: "To a knyght apperteyneth / that he be lover of the comyn wele / For by the comynalte of the people was chyualrye founden and establyssed / And the comyn wele is gretter and more necessary that propre good and speciall"(Lull 113). The common good becomes the basis and the final cause of chivalry; all individual motivations disappear. Thus, in Lull's view, chivalry ultimately provides for the betterment of society, not the emphasis upon the individual accomplishments of knights as in many of the thirteenth-century French romances. Regardless of the importance that

individual honor still holds for the knight, Lull subordinates this for the good of the society as a whole. Chivalry, he insists, exists first to serve the "comyn wele."

Ramon Lull, taking the traditional qualities of knighthood, makes chivalry serve in the secular world to insure peace and justice within society. He establishes his hierarchical system of loyalty with this goal in mind; every lord on every level should be subject to the rule of chivalry which he has established. His system is almost a secular order formulated for political loyalty and stability. In this system, justice in society would be secured because of the knight's dedication to the common good, and civil conflicts between lords would be forestalled by his hierarchical system of loyalty.

Christine de Pisan's chivalric guidebook, an adaptation of Vegetius's Epitoma Rei Militaris, a late Roman work concerning Rome's soldiery, was written around 1409; it too was translated and printed by Caxton as The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye (Christine xii, xxxvi).⁵

Christine's chivalric guidebook continues in the practical vein of Lull's treatise. She, however, undertakes a more specialized subject matter: the practice of war. Her treatment of this very martial chivalry is the ultimate in practicality, advising a knight in his own milieu. Whereas she tells the knight how to avoid paying ransoms and how to

lay sieges, she neglects most of the idealistic religious elements that even Lull presents. Her presentation of chivalry is completely secular, with little or no mention of religious elements. Her discussion, in its concern for the corporate good, shares many of the same interests as Ramon Lull's treatise.

The main point of relevance of the Fayttes for this discussion is its emphasis on political order. Christine's restriction upon the practice of war points to the same corporate ideal of upholding peace within society that Lull presents. Along these lines, a knight should place his loyalty to his sovereign lord over his tenurial, or immediate, overlord:

It semeth thenne that yf a kynge or prynce had werre
 aienst som of hys barons / that the subgettes of the
 baron of whom they holde shulde be bounde to helpe
 theyre lorde ayenst þ^e kynge or prynce / For to the
 kynge they haue not promysed noo fealtee but onely to
 theyre lorde.... For in good feyth noo subgett is not
 holden to helpe hym of whome he holdeth hys lande
 ayenst hys souerayne lorde / but mysdoeth and putteth
 hym self vnder peyne capytall / as he that offendeth
 the ryall mageste.... (Christine 197)

This advice values the stability of society, exemplified in a knight's loyalty to his king, over and above his immediate overlord. Christine tells the knight to avoid the social upheaval of civil strife, maintaining the current order that the sovereign provides society. Her conception of a knight within a hierarchy immediately tightens the circle of a knight's loyalty; a knight's interests become tied closer to

the good of a certain sovereign and the society he establishes. Christine's exhortation to remain loyal to the sovereign above all else indicates the presence of a changed system in society--the "bastard feudalism" which Ferguson so laments--and the necessity of the closer ties to the monarchy enabled by secular orders of chivalry.

III

Obtaining the allegiance of knights to the crown became a special problem of late medieval monarchs, as the testament of Christine's work indicates. Their success or failure in such a venture had reverberations which continued well into Malory's day in the tumult of the Wars of the Roses. One method that late medieval monarchs used to secure the loyalty was in the formation of secular orders of chivalry. Although knightly orders, these orders had little in common with the crusading orders because of their secularity; they were subject to secular and not ecclesiastic authority and seldom had any of the monastic or crusading vows as their primary objectives(Keen 180). The many aims of such orders were, for the most part, practical: first and foremost, the recruitment and consolidation of political loyalty, the possibility of diplomatic alliance, the maintenance of the social hierarchy(Keen 190). The freedom from ecclesiastic authority allowed monarchs to establish ideals which would insure political loyalty within their realm, independent of the church.

Two secular orders that were important in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the Order of the Garter and the Order of the Golden Fleece. Edward III set up the Order of the Garter over a century before Malory's time, but it was still active throughout the fifteenth century. The Order of the Golden Fleece was founded later in Burgundy. This order is important because of the close ties, politically and culturally, between England and Burgundy, especially following Edward IV's accession in 1461. Both orders, to some extent, construct ideals of chivalry and imply a "court of chivalry" in order to enforce these ideals.

Edward III founded the Order of the Garter to celebrate English success in the early stages of the Hundred Years War in 1348(Barber 306). The Order of the Garter was consciously modelled on the Round Table of Arthurian romance, and Edward III invoked this idea for effect, providing a suitably heroic model for his continental ambitions(Keen 191). Like the Round Table, the Order of the Garter was distinguished by the relative equality of its members, ordered so as to form two equally matched tournament teams(Vale 86).

The Order of the Garter, however important, was one of the least idealistic of the chivalric orders; its only qualification for membership was military distinction--a knight's success in his own milieu. The order, however, did

have certain injunctions that members were expected to follow: they were to avoid treason, refrain from fleeing in battle, and avoid heresy. Most of these aims are completely separated from the religious ideals that even Lull mentions. Knights, according to the order, were "degraded" by any of these actions(Barber 310). This "degrading," enforced through courts of chivalry, upholds the law of the order through a rule of shame.

Perhaps the most important secular order of chivalry in Malory's time was the Order of the Golden Fleece. The court of Burgundy at this time was considered the most chivalric court--in its pageantry and avowed concern for chivalric ideals--in Europe. One important link between England and Burgundy can be found in William Caxton, who served Edward IV as a diplomat; according to Bornstein, Caxton's experience in Burgundy led him to print his chivalric manuals both there, where they were very popular, and in England, giving evidence of and adding fuel to a Burgundian chivalric renaissance in England under the strong kingship of Edward IV(1976 1-4).

Thus, because of the social and political ties between Burgundy and England during the reign of Edward IV, Englishmen would have been familiar with Burgundy's chivalric order.⁶ The Golden Fleece was very idealistic in its aims; its general purpose, however, remained primarily secular in order to provide political stability. Barber

states that the aims of the Golden Fleece were to: reverence God and uphold the faith; honor and create a noble order of chivalry; honor older knights; keep younger knights chivalrically active; and to move knights to noble deeds(Barber 310). While the ideals were lofty, the order's goals were political; it bound the Burgundian nobles to the Duke in loyalty. Loyalty was harder to breach once included in such an order because of the shame it brought when broken.

Thus the secular orders bound knights into an established political order and held them through elaborate courts of chivalry. These courts of chivalry enforced the good conduct of an order's knights. The Order of the Garter provides one example; it provides for the punishment of a knight who flees battle, indicating the importance of the loyalty between a knight and his king.

Chivalric guidebooks as well as the secular orders of chivalry, common and well-known in Malory's time, share the recognition of the importance of the common good. Lull provides practical rules that a knight may follow in upholding this ideal. He also fixes a knight within a hierarchy, a political order, which would insure this through the preclusion of civil strife. It is in this respect that Christine de Pisan is closest to Lull. The ideals that she expresses indicate the basis for the foundation of the secular orders of chivalry. Such orders

as the Garter and the Golden Fleece, despite their sometimes lofty religious claims and seeming separation from practical reality, served an important political purpose. They bound nobles in allegiance to the sovereign, just as Lull's hierarchy implies and Christine's injunction explicitly demands. The prevention of civil strife between a king and his nobles as well as between separate nobles, which the loyalty of such orders could possibly provide, indicates a realistic and corporate ideal. Late medieval kings used such devices for the consolidation of their power of governance as well as providing security for their throne. Late medieval authors such as Malory could also use such concepts to inform their writings.

Malory's Secular Order of Chivalry

Thomas Malory provides his version of chivalry in the Pentecostal Oath which he introduces at the outset of Arthur's peaceful reign. Following a series of civil wars, Arthur consolidates his power through this oath, which is formulated shortly after Arthur's wedding, when the concerns of his kingdom turn toward peaceful pursuits. The greater part of the narratives comprising the Morte Darthur describe this long stretch of peace--particularly the tales of Lancelot, Gareth and Tristram. Throughout these sections, and continuing to the description of the final disintegration of Arthur's society, the Pentecostal Oath

acts as the chivalric code to which Arthur's knights must swear, and against which their actions are measured.

The details of the oath suggest that Malory was more a chronicler of his time than a nostalgic apologist for the chivalry of a past era. Malory seems to turn away from the earlier individual ideals of chivalry expressed in French romance even though he continued to draw on them for their matter; instead, Malory's ideal of chivalry seems more rooted in the ideals expressed in the chivalic guidebooks. Indeed, Malory's vision of chivalry, primarily presented in this oath, expresses many of the same ideals important in Ramon Lull's and Christine de Pisan's guidebooks. In fact, the oath acts as a kind of chivalric guidebook for the knights of Arthur's court. Arthur gives his knights this guidebook following his wedding in the same way that Lull's hermit gives the squire the little book. The code sanctions certain types of behavior and censures others through the practice of winning or losing worship. This code shows the same concern with the practice of secular knighthood for society's benefit; it presents a corporate ideal, moving away from the older, individual based chivalry (Moorman, 1971 165). Arthur, as a chivalric ruler over a potentially peaceful and ordered society, formulates this oath as a guide for his knights. The oath responds to a set of conditions, especially the violent behavior of his knights upon their quests, which would make such a society

impossible. While certain types of actions can be overlooked during wartime, their practice can only destroy the peace once there are no wars to be fought.

Malory's "Tale of King Arthur" details Arthur's accession to the throne and his fight to hold it as well as the beginning of his peaceful reign. This tale also establishes the problems that Arthur will face in his attempt to found a peaceful society. The society that has preceded Arthur's represents the chaos to which society can fall prey. The chaos reflected in Uther's reign, along with the Uther lack of a Round Table fellowship of knights, is unique to Malory:

In his first tale Malory seems more concerned to replace the chaos of Uther's reign with the new social order Arthur initiates. Arthur mitigates the disorder of his realm by establishing an ideal of secular chivalry which dictates both the vassal's loyalty to the king and each knight's code of ethics and behavior.
(Cherewatuk 9)

Every detail of Uther's reign seems to contrast with Arthur's later mission. Uther, a knight as well as a king, in his lust for Igraine sacrifices the order of his realm for his own sexual fulfillment, drawing his kingdom into civil war. This war reflects a very real possibility in the fifteenth century when England was frequently plagued by the civil strife of the Wars of the Roses. The chaotic nature of Uther's reign contrasts with Arthur's own society, especially during the middle section of the work; in the end, however, Arthur's reign differs little from Uther's

because it eventually sinks into a civil war where individual desires have been allowed to take precedence over the larger good of society.

In addition to the chaos of Uther's reign, Malory also presents the problems that face a potential chivalric monarch in the triple quest, a series of adventures which occurs following Arthur's wedding to Guenevere. This triple quest indicates the need for such a code in society. Such problems, which Malory presents immediately before and during this triple quest, are created by a knight's placing his own desires above the corporate good of society; the blood-feud, usually associated with Gawain and his brothers, represents one such problem. Gawain, in his penchant for vengeance, echoes the story of Balin and the ensuing chaos his vengeful actions cause. Malory's introduction of Gawain, immediately following the story of Balin, makes this possibility still frighteningly real: "'Yondir knyght ys putte to grete worship, whych grevith me sore, for he sleweoure fadir kynge Lot. Therefore I woll sle hym,' seyde Gawayne, 'with a swerde that was sette me that ys passynge trencheaunte'"(63: III.4). Gawain, even before his initiation into the chivalric world, already exhibits the problems which plague him, and Arthur's society, throughout the remainder of the work.⁷ Gawain is easily provoked, and he exacts vengeance quickly; here, he places his own values above his society's in his desire to avenge his father.

Interestingly, his father was killed in a violent act of civil strife in his rebellion against king Arthur.⁸

Malory details Gawain's behavioral problems in the quests which he, Tor and Pellinor undertake. Each of these knights completes his quest with varying degrees of success. Gawain undertakes the first quest; upon the threshold of achieving his quest for the hart, however, Gawain perpetrates one of the most shameful acts in the entire book:

So at the last sir Gawayne smote so harde that the knyght felle to the erthe, and than he cryed mercy and yelded hym and besought hym as he was a jantyll knyght to save hys lyff. 'Thou shalt dey,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'for sleyng of my howndis.'
'I woll make amends,' seyde the knyght, 'to my power.'

But sir Gawayne wolde no mercy have, but unlaced his helme to have strekyn of hys hede. Ryght so come hys lady oute of a chambir and felle over hym, and so he smote of hir head by myssefortune. (66:III.7)

Gaheris immediately castigates Gawain for his refusal of mercy: "'...ye sholde gyff mercy unto them that aske mercy, for a knyght withoute mercy ys withoute worship'"(66:III.7). Gawain's refusal of mercy indicates his inverted priorities; while loving his dogs, which may be admirable, he equates the life of one of them with the life of a fellow knight. This demonstrates the violence that a vengeance-based code of behavior entails and demonstrates the need for a code to limit knights' behavior. Arthur must curtail such activities in order to insure domestic peace.

Tor, on the other hand, presents a picture of knightly perfection in his quest. Although he also kills another knight in his quest, the circumstances are vastly different. Tor's opponent originally refuses to ask for mercy, and Tor only slays him in order to keep his pledged word to a lady. The discovery that this knight is the "falsyste knyght lyvyng, and a grete destroyer of men"(70:III.11) also demonstrates that Tor is in the right. The importance of Tor's pledged word becomes a function of his knighthood, especially considering the cultural background on which Malory drew: "The whole world of romance depends on the convention that a knight's word once given cannot not be retracted for its incidents"(Barber 32). The pledged word is the glue which holds any chivalric society together; a knight's pledged fealty to his overlord acts as the only real contract between them.

Pellinor undertakes the final quest in this section; although he does not fail as miserably as Gawain, his quest is not the unqualified success of Tor's. In his ambition to achieve his quest, he neglects to aid a wounded knight and his lady: "And whan she was ware of hym, she cryde on lowde and seyde, 'Helpe me, knyght, for Jesuys sake!' But kynge Pellinor wolde nat tarry, he was so egir in hys queste"(71:III.12). Thus Pellinor, faced with a choice between aiding a lady and pursuing his quest, chooses to pursue the self glory of worship in completing his quest,

instead of helping the lady. Lacking this help, the lady eventually slays herself with her dead knight's sword. Pellinor clearly fails in his knightly duty to serve as the protector of ladies and other people who do not have the means to fight.

The three knights' actions, upon their return to the court, are submitted to judgment. The importance of these judgments is enormous; they provide the foundation upon which Arthur builds his chivalric code. The court, as well as Gaheris, vilifies Gawain for his actions, providing a precedent for one of the most important tenets that the code later expresses: "and never to refuse mercy to hym that askith mercy"(67:III.8). Gawain's quest provides a negative example for knights. Tor also undergoes judgment, but he receives only praise from Merlin, the prophetic mover and shaker of the Arthurian world: "for he shall prove a noble knight of proues as few lyvyng, and jantyle and curteyes and of good tacchys, as passynge trew of his promise, and never shall outerage"(71: III.11). Each of these qualities establishes Tor as an model to be emulated, and all eventually find their way into the code. Finally, Pellinor's neglect of the damsel in distress leads to perhaps the most famous tenet in the succeeding code, as Guenevere's judgment indicates: "ye were gretly to blame that ye saved nat thys ladyes lyff"(75:III.15) All knights, from this point in the work on, are submitted to such a

judgment, whether it comes from the court or from other knights. These initial judgments culminate in the Pentecostal Oath. This oath institutionalizes the kind of behavior that befits a knight in his public role, also acting as a point of reference for further judgments in Arthur's court of chivalry.

Arthur responds to the chaos which pervades his kingdom with the founding of the fellowship of knights of the Round Table. The Pentecostal Oath sets up the Round Table, at once expressing its ideals and providing a governing code. This oath acts as a direct rebuke to such behavior as shown by Gawain and Pellinor, institutionalizing the qualities inherent in Tor and the ideals that the court's judgments intimate. It also sets up a basis for judgment according to pre-established ideals, including punishment for unchivalric actions:

...than the kynge stablished all the knyghtes and gave them rychesse and londys; and charged them never to do outrage nothir mourthir, and allwayes to fle treson, and to gyff mercy unto hym that asketh mercy, uppon payn of forfiture of their worship and lordship of kynge Arthur for evirmore; and allwayes to do ladyes, damesels, and jantilwomen and widows sucour: strengthe hem in hir ryghtes, and never to enforce them, uppon payne of dethe. Also, that no man take no batayles in wrongfull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis. So unto thys were all the knyghtis sworne of the Table Rounde, both olde and younge, and every yere so were they sworne at the hyghe feste of Pentecoste.

(75-6:III.15)

The code of chivalry that this oath establishes expresses similar views to those found in Ramon Lull's Ordre. Malory

and Lull, both popular with knights in the later fifteenth century, mirror the ideals that they held most dear.

Beverly Kennedy in her reading of the Morte Darthur uses the triple quest narrative that leads to the formulation of this oath in conjunction with Lull to describe what she calls a "typology of knighthood." This "typology" identifies three different conceptions of knighthood in the work. Applied to the triple quest which introduces the Pentecostal Oath, Gawain, with his clan-based loyalty and penchant for vengeance, represents what Kennedy calls "heroic" knighthood. Pellinor reflects a "worshipful knighthood"; this type of knight is completely a creature of the court, with its emphasis on pageantry, games, and courtesy. Tor is a "true knight"--in which knighthood is added to religion and is practiced outside of society. This type of knight is "most at home in the mysterious forest of 'adventure' or performing the sacral mode of doing justice by means of trial by battle"(Kennedy 2-3).

But while this typology provides a somewhat useful framework for the text, especially concerning the grail quest, it does not account for the secular corporate ideal expressed in the Pentecostal Oath. Kennedy's religious, "true" knight tends, in her reading, to act as the pinnacle of Malory's view of knighthood; this is strange in a work with so little concern for religious matters, especially when compared to Malory's sources. Kennedy neglects the

essentially corporate nature of the ideal that the Pentecostal Oath presents. The oath brings knights, even those who tend toward individual exercises of knighthood such as Tor, into Arthur's society. The oath socializes the knights, introducing them to the ideals of society. The knight as justicer, acting within society, replaces the knight errant within the forest. In her view, only "heroic" knighthood seems to present any corporate ideal, but it corresponds to a family group, entailing great violence in pursuit of blood feuds, not to the good of the court as a whole which acts as the impetus for the Pentecostal Oath.

Although the Pentecostal Oath of course does not present so detailed an overview of chivalry as Lull's treatise, it does share its aims and ideals in that it moves away from emphasizing the individual knight to emphasizing the peace and stability of society. Malory also provides a practical guide for knights to insure that knighthood acts for a societal end. The Oath aims to cut down on the violence that characterizes Logres before Arthur. Knights must eschew murder and grant mercy to other knights.

Knights also serve as society's protectors. They must always give ladies "sucour"--a passage that closely parallels a matching sentiment in Lull's Ordre. Thus the oath requires knights to rein in their violent tendencies and to act as the protectors of society. A knight receives the most severe punishment provided within the oath if he

fails in his duty to protect women. In fact the punishment is death if they "enforce" women--that is, rape them-- instead of "strength[ing] hem in hir ryghtes." Even though Malory does not extend his catalog of those that a knight should protect as far as Lull, he does dedicate a large portion of the oath to this end. Knights must protect society by fighting for those who cannot fight for themselves.

The Oath also establishes a system of justice for Arthur's chivalric kingdom. Arthur charges the knights to never "take no battayles in wrongfull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis"(75:III.15). Malory, again agreeing with Lull, dictates that one office of the knight is, in Lull's words, to "mayntene Iustyce"(43). Throughout the Morte Darthur quarrels are decided in a single combat fought between the champions of the involved parties. For example, Arthur's duel with Accolon, regardless of Morgan's tampering, is set up in just such a way; Arthur eventually wins regardless of Morgan's machinations(83-7:IV.7-10). In this respect knights serve as the justicers of Arthur's realm, a prevalent concept in most romantic works. Even Ferguson, in his systematic debunking of fifteenth-century chivalry, acknowledges that knights were still a very palpable symbol of justice and governance(123). The Pentecostal Oath's injunction to fight only in right quarrels attempts to secure widespread justice within

Arthur's society. This concern with justice indicates a corporate ideal; knights, instead of primarily moving alone in a preternatural forest, live and act within society. Malory always has his knights meet or accompany other Round Table knights in their adventures (especially in the "Tale of Sir Tristram), even within the grail quest; this strengthens the idea of Arthur's knights as members of society.

In the corporate ideal established by the oath, Malory reflects the system of his own day. Arthur, like Edward III with the Order of the Garter, creates with the oath a secular order of chivalry--the order of the Round Table. Like the historical secular orders, inclusion into Arthur's order is based on a knight's merit, as Arthur's directions to Merlin indicate: "'Now Merlion,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'go thou and aspye me in all thys londe fifty knyghtes which bene of most prouesse and worship'"(60:III.2). Arthur recruits the best knights to join the order.

Each gathering of this court, from Arthur's wedding on, seems to act as a court of chivalry where the actions of various members of the order are judged compared to the code to which they annually swear. Even the knights of the triple quest, predating the code's establishment, are judged in such a way. Such courts of chivalry became widespread in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, even as chivalric culture was supposedly waning. The knights of the Order of

the Garter, Edward III's real-life incarnation version of the Round Table, were subject to such judgments, and the strictures that Malory's knights are subject to seem reminiscent of the punishments that the Order of the Garter applied to its knights. The Round Table, in line with historical secular orders, establishes punishments for betraying the ideals expressed in the oath. Knights of the Round Table, like knights of Garter, can be "degraded." One punishment is the loss of worship entailed by an expulsion from the order or "payn of forfiture of their worship and lordship of kynge Arthure" (75:III.12). This offers an indication of the importance of the relationship between the knights and Arthur. When a knight acts against the court through treason or wanton violence, he loses honor and his place in Arthur's affinity (Uwain's banishment from the court for treason at the beginning of the second triple quest offers an example of this punishment). The most serious punishment, however, comes when a knight fails in his duty to ladies by raping them; such a knight suffers "payne of dethe."

The judgments of individual knights allow them to gain or lose worship. Worship becomes the currency in which the order of knighthood established by the oath trades. If any knight acts against the oath's ideals, he loses worship, but in performing exemplary service, he gains worship. The system of worship winning which the oath sets up in order to

enforce its ideals pervades the entire work. Arthur insures that his knights act in the best interest of society through the threat of shame. This system, despite its early success, inevitably pits the knights of the Round Table against one another in a competition for worship; they eventually fall into the same trap as pre-code knights by placing their own quest for worship above what is good for the society. This problem results, in the "Tale of Sir Tristram," in the incessant jousting that seems to characterize that section of the work; this activity expresses an individual chivalry, where the main object of any battle is the worship a knight can win rather than upholding justice.

Arthur's secular order of the Round Table also acts to insure political loyalty, removing the threat of civil war. Like the nationalistic secular orders, the oath creates a group of knights with personal allegiance to their monarch over and above any other ties (Barber 305). Knights must be loyal to Arthur; they are charged to "flee treson." Loyalty is imperative in the creation of an ordered chivalric society. This may be the most important aspect of the Pentecostal Oath:

Placed in the first book of an eight-volume cyclic history of Arthur's realm, the oath shows the king's concern to mitigate the brutality of life in the pre-Arthurian kingdom and to establish in its place a hierarchical order, a rule in which rebellious noblemen could not war against their liege. (Cherewatuk 13)

The emphasis on loyalty to the political order that Arthur establishes with his secular order recalls similar exhortations by Ramon Lull and Christine de Pisan. As in Lull, each knight is placed within the hierarchy that the oath establishes, and, as Christine advises, knights in this order hold their loyalty to Arthur above other loyalties.

"Bastard feudalism," a system reflected within Malory's presentation of Arthur's society, enables the creation of such widespread chivalric loyalty. Arthur uses this system, as did many actual late medieval monarchs, to his advantage, and creates a secular order of chivalry. Arthur becomes his knights' lord, inducting them into his secular order and rewarding their service with lands and money: "The kyng established all the knyghtes and gave them rychesse and londys"(75:III.15). Thus Arthur builds an affinity. Arthur's affinity extends beyond the knights at arms. He also includes his household officers; knights such as Sir Kay the seneschal, Sir Lucan the butler, and Sir Dagonet, Arthur's court jester, illustrate the inclusiveness of his retinue. As Kennedy notes, the very size of the Round Table resembles the Lancastrian and Yorkist retinues, and Arthur uses the order he creates to support the crown(5). Like the knights of these retinues, Arthur's knights stake their own hopes of success upon the ultimate success of Arthur's court and by extension the society that Arthur builds and presides over(McFarlane 19). Arthur's affinity, like those of over-

mighty subjects in Yorkist England, is not based upon tenurial obligations but upon the honor of the Round Table and the payments of "rychesse and londys" that Arthur gives his knights. In fact, many of Arthur's knights owe him no tenurial obligation at all; Lancelot is a king in his own right, and Tristram's natural lord is King Mark.

The legacy of the Pentecostal Oath within the Morte Darthur cannot be understated. It provides the elaboration of a code of conduct to which all of Arthur's knights are subject. This code specifies the ideals that Arthur's secular order strives to uphold in its mission, in Lull's words, to aid the "comyn wele." Every gathering of the court, with its implied court of chivalry, serves to entrench the code. The oath also sets up a secular order of chivalry, bound by personal ties to Arthur, thus forestalling the violence of civil war. Knights, also, in their pursuit of worship indicate a continued interest in the chivalry, even if the oath's original corporate ideal seems to be forgotten.

This corporate ideal, although it may seem to contrast with the realities present in the Wars of the Roses, actually existed as an ideal in the fifteenth century. The problem in these wars was not remaining loyal to the king--most nobles did that--but deciding to which king one should be loyal, Edward IV or Henry VI. Even Richard of York's initial uprising was conducted with the good of society in

mind, insofar as he wanted equal justice for all nobles, not just the king's favorites. When Richard overstepped these bounds in attempting to usurp Henry, he was abruptly abandoned by many of his followers.⁹ Even the ideals that some of the rebellious nobles expressed in the Wars of the Roses seem to be in line with the corporate ideal with its political loyalty, the ideal that Malory's Pentecostal Oath, in its concern for justice and governance, expresses.

A New Exemplar: Three Knights and the Corporate
Chivalric Ideal

I

The code established by the Pentecostal Oath reverberates throughout the following sections of the Morte Darthur. The middle sections of the work, comprising the tales of Lancelot, Gareth, and Tristram, represents the peaceful flowering of Arthurian chivalry which the oath--a practical means for "instituting and maintaining the governmental structure"--enables (Pochoda 32). In this section all of the knights are judged, explicitly or implicitly, by how closely they adhere to chivalry. Although most of the knights are marginally chivalric, their practices diverge greatly from the corporate ideals that the Pentecostal Oath professes. Most place the pursuit of individual glory and worship ahead of the maintenance of society. I intend to examine this problem as embodied as Lancelot and Tristram, the knights usually taken to

exemplify the code; my conclusion is that they do not represent the fifteenth-century ideal of knighthood in that they do not consistently uphold the ideals that the Pentecostal Oath establishes.

Other knights from the second generation of Arthurian knights, however, offer a commentary on such a fifteenth-century ideal. These knights, Dinadan, Palomides and Gareth, lie outside of chivalry as it becomes practiced in the long middle section of the work by knights such as Tristram. Dinadan, a japer and scoffer, expresses the only thing even approaching criticism of chivalry as practiced by Arthur's knights; acting as a "sidekick" to the society's best knights, he never attains a high level of worship for himself. Palomides also lies outside of the code because of his religion. Although he is a noble knight, indeed quite possibly one of the four best in the world, his position as a Saracen impedes his complete acceptance into the court. Finally, Gareth more or less withdraws from the life of knight-errantry (tournaments, quests et al.) which comes to characterize the practice of Arthurian chivalry by marrying Lyones, even though he is initially a member of the inner-circle of Round Table knights.

The examination of these knights' views and actions provides the reader with a slightly different picture of Malory's chivalric ideal than the knights that Malory predominantly drew from his sources. Although Dinadan and

Palomides both have their roots in the prose Tristan, Malory is free to alter the details of their careers because they are not the heroes of the work. Malory even seems to have largely invented the "Tale of Sir Gareth". This examination shows that Malory may have been censuring the excesses of individual chivalry, represented primarily by the code's usual exemplars and Palomides, who follows the example of Tristram. Gareth, on the other hand, represents a return to the corporate ideal that the Pentecostal Oath originally expresses. Gareth represents the fifteenth-century ideal of chivalry with its emphasis on society and political order.

II

The knights usually taken to be exemplars of the chivalric code that the Pentecostal Oath sets up are Lancelot and Tristram. These knights, however, do not present an accurate picture of the fifteenth-century ideal of chivalry that Malory expresses in the Pentecostal Oath. For the most part, Malory inherited these knights from his various sources and could not change many details concerning them without massively altering the matter which he chose to present. Therefore, these knights remain rooted in the earlier ideal of chivalry expressed in French romance--with its seeming emphasis upon the accomplishments of individual knights. Both knights, because of this, fall short in the perfect embodiment of the ideal Malory expresses.

Lancelot is the knight with the most tools to succeed

in Arthurian society, and his position as the greatest knight accords with the amount of worship that he receives at Arthur's court. Regardless of his esteemed position, Lancelot's love of Guenevere places his own private emotions in conflict with the well-being of the public world of the court and causes him to ignore many of the public ideals professed in the code by which he is ostensibly governed. Malory, throughout the work, presents Lancelot as an individual knight-errant; he spends very little time at Arthur's court, and his love for Guenevere, not any societal responsibility, motivates all of his accomplishments. On numerous occasions, Lancelot even fights against others of his order, the Round Table.

Tristram perhaps provides an even better example of this problem. Tristram's early service to his uncle King Mark seems to uphold a corporate ideal. He serves his country and king before himself, even bringing the woman he loves to Mark as a bride. When Tristram leaves Cornwall after Mark's betrayal, he becomes committed to the attainment of individual achievement---following Lancelot's example. All of Tristram's actions seem to aim toward his attainment of the position as one of the best knights in the world(Benson 116). Tristram remains individually oriented and is, at best, a reluctant member of Arthur's chivalric order. When Arthur asks him to join the Round Table, he hesitates, becoming a member only at Arthur's insistence:

'Therefore, jantyll knyghte,' sede kynge Arthure, 'ye ar wellcom to this courte. And also, I pray you,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'graunte me a done.'

'Sir, hit shall be at youre commaundemente,' seyde sir Trystram.

'Well,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'I wyll desyre that ye shall abyde in my courte.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystram, 'thereto me is lothe, for I have to do in many contreys.'

'Not so,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'ye have promysed me, ye may not say nay.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystram, 'I woll do as ye woll.'

(352:X.6)

Tristram, it seems, would rather have his freedom to pursue his own individual course of knighthood in "many contreys" than be confined to serve Arthur and Logres as he had once served King Mark.

Both Lancelot and Tristram pursue their individual knighthood throughout the Morte Darthur, sometimes at the expense of the society that Arthur creates. They never succeed in subordinating their individual knighthood to the society and king which they serve. But there are other knights in the Morte Darthur that do more closely mirror the ideals peculiar to the fifteenth century. By observing these knights' views and acts, the reader can gain a clearer picture of Malory's chivalry than by just looking at the usual exemplars. Here I will briefly examine Sir Dinadan, Sir Palomides, and Sir Gareth, three knights whose supporting roles allowed Malory a freer hand in devising their characters.

III

Dinadan acts as the crux to this argument. His

position as a chivalric critic, as watered down as it may be, enables his view of chivalry to point to a new ideal or, as I shall argue, to a return to the ideals originally expressed in the Pentecostal Oath before the knights become corrupted in their practice of chivalry. Malory drew Dinadan from his French source for the "Tale of Sir Tristram." Eugene Vinaver, in his source studies of the Morte Darthur, sees Malory's Dinadan as greatly different from the knight found in his sources; Vinaver views Malory's abridgement of Dinadan's criticism as a function of Malory's own simplicity because "...Malory fails to appreciate [Dinadan's criticisms]. He has no sympathy with anything that reveals a critical attitude towards his favorite ideal, and tries hard to delete Dinadan's most characteristic comments"(1929, 67). In Vinaver's view, Malory makes Dinadan only a "japer," reducing his function to one of "mere bonhomie"(1929 68).

Vinaver's view notwithstanding, Dinadan still plays a crucial role in the Morte Darthur. As Julia Scandrett demonstrates, Dinadan distinctly upholds the code despite his mockery, and Malory continually emphasizes Dinadan's position as a mature knight who never acts cowardly; Dinadan's main characteristics are his position as a knight and his mockery: "Malory emphasizes Dynadan's knightliness to mitigate his mockery, turning Dynadan's criticism into 'gapes'[sic] and reminding us of the character's ability

with weapons"(Scandrett 209). Scandrett, tracing the importance of Dinadan's knighthood, finds that Malory always depicts Dinadan as a "good knight"--the highest praise for a knight within the work(Scandrett 208).

Dinadan attacks things that are not knightly and against the code which governs him as a knight. Dinadan concentrates his attacks upon knights whose actions threaten to undermine society and order. He castigates cowardice and the murder of good knights. For example, when Dinadan accompanies Mark to the court, he responds to Mark's mockery with genuine moral criticism, giving insight into Mark's character:

'Hit is shame to you,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'that ye governe you so shamfully, for I se by you ye ar full of cowardyse, and ye ar also a murtherar, and that is the grettyst shame that ony knight may have, for nevir had knyght murtherer worshyp, other never shall have.

(358.X.11)

Dinadan rebukes Mark for his cowardice and his propensity for murder, characteristics having no place in the corporate ideal established by the Pentecostal Oath. Mark certainly does not uphold his end of his relationship with Tristram, Cornwall's greatest knight, for even though Tristram saves Cornwall time and again, Mark tries to murder him. Mark's actions represent an affront to justice and the political order. Mark's court, as a counterpoint to Arthur's, represents a court that is not governed by a corporate ideal. Indeed, Mark's vendetta against Tristram undermines

the social fabric of society. Cornwall suffers from Mark's villainy.

As various critics note, Dinadan, although a scoffer and japer, upholds the code in various ways. Scandrett points to Dinadan's dignity and reliability, even in his humor: "the humorous aspects of Dynadan's character are subordinated to his concern with chivalric ideals"(Scandrett 254). Dinadan's humor and criticism of chivalry ultimately support the chivalric way of life as it is practiced in this section:

Malory's humorous passages do not disturb the unity of the chivalric perspective. Malory is not being amusing at the expense of his characters, but showing them in their lighter moments. The tone is lightened temporarily, but not changed; it is still chivalric.
(Scandrett 213)

Some of Dinadan's criticisms, however, cannot be dismissed as merely good humor among a fellowship of knights, or as leftovers from the source material that Malory could not excise. Although Malory has changed the emphasis in Dinadan's character from that of a dilettante to a chivalric knight, he leaves some very serious criticisms of chivalry in Dinadan's mouth. Dinadan, while upholding the code insofar as it presents a secure and stable system, also criticizes the chivalric excesses in jousting, and he lashes out against what may be seen as a cause of such ludicrous activity, the ideal of courtly love.

Dinadan most often criticizes the exercise of arms

purely for the sake of gaining honor, especially when it entails fighting against great odds. In this respect, Dinadan epitomizes a quality, present in Lull's guidebook, that other Arthurian knights seem to lack. Lull exhorts knights to use commonsense: "Chyualrye and hardynesse may not accore without wytte and discrecion"(Lull 37). Beverly Kennedy also recognizes this quality in Dinadan, enumerating what she sees as two corollaries that Dinadan adds to the chivalric code: a knight should never accept a challenge from a vastly superior knight; and, a knight should never fight in anger(182-3). These principles inform Dinadan's own conduct and complaints throughout the "Tale of Sir Tristram" which explicitly criticize those knights who take their individual chivalry too far.

Dinadan's first meeting with his usual companion, Tristram, contains such a criticism. Tristram resolves that he and Dinadan will forestall an ambush of Lancelot, regardless of the great odds. Dinadan, however, balks at this plan, refusing to fight such a one-sided battle: "What woll ye do? Hit ys nat for us to fyght with thirty knights, and wyte you well I woll nat thereof! As to macche o knyght, two or three ys inow and they be men, but for to macche fifteene knyghtes, that I woll never undirtake" (311:IX.23). Tristram then shames Dinadan into taking the battle, even threatening to "sle" him. Although they succeed in the battle--Tristram kills twelve and Dinadan

kills eight--Dinadan's initial commonsense reaction cannot be dismissed. Dinadan criticizes a type of behavior that seems to characterize Arthurian knights in this section of the work; in order to gain honor, they continually fight against greater and greater odds. Even though the cause may be just, these battles for worship are undertaken for the wrong reasons. The fact that Tristram and such knights usually succeed does not mitigate the fact that they are fighting essentially for their own glory, not to maintain justice and uphold the political order.

Dinadan also refuses to participate in battles where nothing is at stake. These battles, or individual jousts, seem to characterize most of the action of this middle section of the Morte Darthur. Dinadan, in one encounter, refuses to joust:

'Nat so,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'for I have no wyll to juste.'
 'Wyth me shall ye juste,' seyde the knyght, 'or that ye passe this way.'
 'Sir, whether aske you justys of love othir of hate?'
 The knyght answerde and seyde, 'Wyte you well I aske hit for loove and nat of hate.'
 'Hit may well be,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'but ye proffyr me harde love whan ye wolde juste with me wyth an harde speare! But fayre knyght,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'sythyn ye woll juste with me, mete wyth me in the courte of kyng Arthure, and there I shall juste wyth you.'
 (372:X.20)

Dinadan humorously points out the folly which jousting has become in Arthur's kingdom. Instead of acting as a chivalric game confined to the court offering practice for battle, the joust has replaced battle altogether. Most of

the battles in the "Tale of Sir Tristram" occur in a setting such as this. Questing knights meet other knights, usually anonymous, in their travels and feel obliged to fight them in order to gain worship.

Knight-errantry itself, with its emphasis on the importance of worship and jousting, is a function of an individual chivalry; knights roam throughout a kingdom partaking in individual battles which usually have little to do with the greater good of society. The knights in this section mostly mirror an individual chivalry expressed in the French romances. Even Arthur becomes a knight-errant in this section, jousting for honor just as every other knight.

The love of a lady often motivates knights in this individual chivalry. The tale of Sir Tristram offers no exception to this, for most of the knights in the section fight for the love of a lady. Dinadan, however, acts as an exception to this rule. In fact, Dinadan even attacks the whole convention of courtly love as the basis for knightly achievement when he tells a disguised Tristram of his encounter with Ewinogris:

'For such a folyshe knyght as ye ar,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'I saw but late this day lyyng by a welle, and he fared as he slepte. And there he lay lyke a fole grennyng and wolde nat speke, and his shyld lay by hym, and his horse also stood by hym. And well I wote he was a lovear.'

'A, fayre sir,' seyde sir Trystram, 'ar ye nat a lovear?'

'Mary, fye on that crauffte!' seyde sir Dynadan.

'Sir, that is yevell seyde,' seyde sir Trystram, 'for a knyght may never be of proues but yf he be a

lovear.'

(420:X.55)

Tristram here expresses the view held by chivalry as practiced by most of the knights in this section of the work since his love for Isode places him in the same position as the unidentified knight. Dinadan, however, recognizes that such love unmans a knight, making him incapable of fulfilling his role in society; the knight's shield, as Dinadan reports it, lays by him. Love has caused this knight, regardless of the view Tristram elaborates, to forfeit, at least for a time, his knightly station.

Dinadan further elaborates his view of love when he meets Isode, detailing another of the problems that this love-service poses for society:

'Madame,' seyde sir Dynadan, 'I mervayle at sir Trystram and mo othersuche lovears. What aylyth them to be so madde and so asoted uppon women?'

'Why,' seyde La Beall Isode, 'ar ye a knyght and ar no lovear? For sothe, hit is grete shame to you, wherefore ye may nat be called a good knyght by reson but yf ye make a quarell for a lady.'

'God deffende me!' seyde sir Dynadan, 'for the joy of love is to shorte, and the sorow thereof and what cometh thereof is duras over long.' (424:X.56)

Although Isode states that one cannot be a good knight without being a lover, Malory calls Dinadan, who explicitly is not a lover, a good knight many times. The madness that Dinadan sees in love removes a knight from his station, like Epinogris by the well. Love as the motivation for individual chivalry seems ludicrous to Dinadan, the voice of

commonsense within the work. Love becomes another excess because the "sorrow" it causes eventually creates divided loyalties within the kingdom, undermining society to such an extent that Arthur and Lancelot fight each other in a civil war.

Thus Dinadan, while upholding the original thrust of Arthurian chivalry, criticizes it in its excesses where individual worship and love service replace the original corporate ideal that the Pentecostal Oath represents. His criticisms point to many of the knights active in this section, almost all of whom participate in such individual activities. While Dinadan criticizes these chivalric practices that are almost inherent in an individual chivalry, Dinadan implicitly points to another ideal, one in which a knight adheres to chivalry's corporate ideal as expressed in the Pentecostal Oath. Two knights who reflect the two possibilities that Dinadan's speeches illustrate are Palomides and Gareth.

IV

Palomides, moreso than Dinadan, lies outside of the code. Although a noble knight, he does not belong to the Round Table for most of the "Tale of Sir Tristram:" "telle tho knyghtes I am a knyght arraunte as they ar... and let them wote I am no knyght of kyng Arthur's"(362:X.13). Palomides is a Saracen and thus an outsider to Arthur's ostensibly Christian society.¹⁰ Palomides's description of

himself as a "knyght arraunte," however, seems to describe him best (the reader never sees any influence of Islam upon his character); he remains committed to a course of knight-errantry, or individual chivalry, with little or no concern for the corporate ideal elaborated in the Pentecostal Oath. Malory's inclusion of a Saracen knight also reflects the work's emphasis on secular chivalry. Throughout this section, Palomides's religion becomes secondary to his attempt to fulfill a chivalric ideal. In fact, in his quest for worship, chivalry becomes almost a religion in itself. In this religious quest for worship Palomides embodies the excesses that Dinadan criticizes, demonstrating individually-oriented practices which undermine the chivalric ideal in the "Tale of Sir Tristram." Through the inclusion of Palomides, Malory implicates the other individually motivated knights on a quest for worship. These knights, like Palomides, seem to have deserted the corporate ideal in their own quests for personal aggrandizement.

Although not a knight of the Round Table, Palomides interacts with other knights of this order. His view of Arthurian chivalry, since he views it from an outside perspective, is important. He has nothing but praise for the Round Table, and he laments Morgan le Fay's attempts to destroy it: "'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'this is shameful and a vylounce usage for a quene to use, and

namely to make suche warre uppon her owne lorde that is called the floure of chevalry that is Crysten othir heathen..."(367:X.16). Indeed, Palomides has great admiration for Arthur's court, possibly because of the worship associated with the Round Table.

Eventually Palomides becomes a member of this order, even though Malory does not report his induction, and his final acceptance only comes with his baptism; by the tournament at Lonezep, Palomides is reputed to be among the knights of the Round Table(444:X.68). He moves, like Tristram, toward a position as one of the four greatest Arthurian knights. Initially, however, Palomides acts very unchivalrously. He abducts Isode, making a bold and unchivalrous request of Mark: "I woll that ye wete that I woll have youre quene to lede hir and to governe her whereas me lyst"(264:VIII.30). Here, Palomides certainly does not have his knightly duty to ladies in mind, and he comes perilously close to "enforcing" Isode. Beverly Kennedy, in her typology of knighthood, calls Palomides a heroic knight, placing him in the same category as Gawain. Palomides has prowess; he defeats everyone at a tournament in Ireland except for Tristram(239-40:VIII.9-10), but he lacks the governing influence of a chivalric code.

When Tristram rescues Isode from Palomides, Isode urges Tristram to spare his life: "'And yet it were grete pyte that I shoulde se sir Palomydes slayne, for well I know by

the ende be done sir Palomydes is but a dede man, bycause that he is nat crystened, and I wolde be loth that he sholde dye a Sarezen'" (267:VIII.31). This is one of the few places in Malory's work where religion seems to matter. Isode then tells Palomides to leave Cornwall, and go to Arthur's court--"'Than take thy way,' seyde La Beale Isode, 'unto the court of kynge Arthure" (267:VIII.31)--a command that shapes the rest of Palomides's development. As Kennedy states, it marks "the beginning of his education of the noble way of the world"(183). Palomides learns the lessons of Arthurian chivalry--as practiced by knights such as Lancelot and Tristram--too well in his ascension to the pinnacle of knightly prowess.

The education in chivalry that Palomides undergoes acts as a "proof-of-knighthood." Benson establishes the basic pattern for this "proof-of-knighthood" narrative in his treatment of Marhalt's quest in the "Tale of King Arthur:"

In the proof-of-knighthood, there is first a preliminary adventure as a demonstration of the knight's worthiness to undertake the following adventures. Next comes the tournament, in which the hero triumphs, and the quest to abolish some 'ill custom' (which often involves the rescue of prisoners). Finally, having proven his prowess against the enemies of the Round Table, he successfully jousts with a series of members of the Round Table. (70-1)

This pattern also applies to Palomides as he moves toward acceptance as one of Arthur's four most powerful knights. Malory plays Palomides off against Tristram, the hero of

this "tale"; he is Palomides's rival for the love of Isode as well as his exemplar in chivalry. Thus, Tristram comes to preside over Palomides's initiation, acting as Palomides's mentor in chivalry as well as the point of his foil in the comparisons the two rival knights evoke.

Palomides has great prowess as a knight, regardless of his numerous defeats at the hands of his rival Tristram, and he succeeds in many other jousts and adventures, establishing his worthiness to be initiated into Arthurian knighthood. Despite his religion, Palomides is even considered by some to be one of the four best knights in the world, as a knight of the Red City informs him:

Sir, well be ye founde,' seyde the knyght to sir Palomydes, 'for of all knyghtes that bene on lyve, excepte three, I had levyste have you. And the first is sir Launcelot du Lake, and the secunde ys sir Trystram de Lyones, and the thyrde is my nyghe cousyn, the good knyght sir Lamerak de Galys. (435:X.63)

Palomides's adventures at the Red City constitute part of his own "proof-of-knighthood." He abolishes an "ill-custom" that has almost led the Red City to ruin; Harmaunce, the king of the Red City, was slain by his two adopted sons. This situation presents an analogy to the future situation of Arthur's own kingdom and Arthur's death at the hands of his own son, Mordred; Helyus and Helake, and later Mordred, commit a crime against the idea of lordship and their society--murdering their own king and father. Palomides easily defeats these offenders, removing an "ill

custom"(439:X.64). While actions such as these benefit the greater good of society, winning worship acts as Palomides's chief motivating factor. He then returns to his adventures ready for the next step in his rise--success in the tournament at Lonezep--and for the gaining of more worship.

Palomides accompanies Tristram, Gareth, and Dinadan to the tournament at Lonezep following his adventure in the Red City. In this tournament Palomides "ded so mervaylously all men had wondir"(448:X.70). Palomides's actions here, in fact, merit the tournament's prize:

And than the kynge let blowe to lodgyng, and because sir Palomydes beganne fyrste, and never he wente nor rode oute of the fylde to repose hym, but ever he was doynge on horsebak othir on foote, and lengyst duryng, kynge Arthure and all the kynges gaff sir Palomydes the honoure and the gre for that day. (450:X.70)

Palomides, through his performance in the tournament on the first day, gains great honor, completing yet another step in his "proof-of-knighthood."

After success in a tournament, Palomides must fight against other knights of the Round Table to prove his worth within that order. To be completely accepted within society, Palomides must fight Tristram, his rival and chivalric tutor. Although these two knights propose battle many times, their actual fight ends the tale. This battle gains further importance because it is the seventh in a series of battles that Palomides has sworn to fight before his christening. He tells Tristram,

I may not yet be chrystyned for a vowe that I have made many yerys agone. Howbehyt in my harte and in my soule I have had many a day beleve in Jesu Cryste and hys mylde modir Mary, but I have but one batayle to do, and were that onys done I wolde be baptyzed. (508:XII.13)

Their battle and Palomides's subsequent baptism close the "Tale of Sir Tristram," bringing Palomides fully within the fold of Arthurian chivalry.

Palomides demonstrates his chivalry when confronted by Tristram before and during this final battle. Tristram, unarmed, finds Palomides and attacks him. Palomides, however, does not fight even after Tristram calls him a coward. In a strange reversal, Palomides reminds Tristram of chivalry: "'A, sir Trystram!' seyde sir Palomydes, 'full well thou wotyste I may not have ado wyth the for shame, for thou arte here naked and I am armede, and yf that I sle the, dyshonoure shall be myne" (507:XII.12). Here, Palomides has surpassed his tutor in chivalry. Palomides also demonstrates his chivalry in the actual battle and baptism by courteously ending the battle(Kennedy 211):

'As for to do thys batayle,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I dare ryght well ende hyt. But I have no grete lust to fyght no more, and for thys cause,' seyde sir Palomydes: 'myne offence ys to you nat so grete but that we may be fryendys.... And thys same day have me to the nexte church, and fyrste lat me be clene confessed, and aftir that youreselff that I be truly baptyzed. And than woll we all ryde togydyrs unto the court of kynge Arthure, that we may be there at the nexte hyghe feste folowyng. (510:XII.14)

With his baptism, Palomides has removed all the obstacles

preventing him from entering the Arthurian world; now he and Tristram ride together to Arthur's court. No longer set apart by his religion or his lack of chivalry, Palomides is fully accepted into Arthur's society.

Benson sees this baptism as a "sacrament of reconciliation" by which Palomides and Tristram are brought into fellowship; the importance of this ceremony is that it enables Palomides to attain a higher order of knighthood, presumably a Christian one(128). This suggestion, however, does not accord with the lack of religious elements in the Morte Darthur. Following the chivalric exchange between Tristram and Palomides, the baptism seems more of a function of chivalry--Palomides's final step into the order of knighthood--than religious(Fries 105). Palomides's religion throughout the "Tale of Sir Tristram" is important only insofar as it separates him from the other Arthurian knights, and his movement toward christianity is more chivalric than religious. Once christened, Palomides is no different than any other knight-errant; he is a full member of the chivalric order of knighthood.

If Palomides demonstrates any religious feeling at all in the "Tale of Sir Tristram," it is in his dogged pursuit of individual honor, or worship. Palomides follows the road of individual chivalry (he travels alone in search of adventure) in his endless quest for the glory worship can bring him. Robert Merrill sees Palomides as the embodiment

of the "institutional sickness" that has overcome the Round Table because of the quest for worship(415). Although the Pentecostal Oath originally sets up worship as an incentive, the Round-Table knights, in their excessive pursuit of worship, undercut the original intent of the oath in that they place the individual achievement over the well-being of society. Exhibiting the sickness of many of the Round Table's knights, Palomides, in his pursuit of worship, personifies the excesses of an individual chivalry which Dinadan's criticisms of chivalry specify.

Palomides's preoccupation with worship is reflected in his numerous jousts which places him in a competition for worship with the other knights in the "Tale of Sir Tristram"(Merrill 229). Palomides's incessant complaints about Tristram's honor betray this overriding concern with worship:

'Alas!' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I may never wyn worship where sir Trystram ys, for ever where he ys and I be, there gete I no worshyp. And yf he be away, for the moste party I have the gre, onles that sir Launcelot be there, othir ellis sir Lamerok.' Than sir Palomydes sayde, 'Onys in Irelonde sir Trystram put me to the wors, and anothis tyme in Cornwayle and in other placis in thys londe.'
(325:IX.32)

As in the situations that produce Dinadan's criticism, Palomides desires to fight in order to gain the most possible worship. His rash counsel to Tristram, Dinadan and Gareth on the way to Lonzep provides an example: "'Now, sir,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'let us leve of this mater and

let us se how we shall do at this turnemente. And, sir, by myne advyce, lat us four holde togydyrs ayenst all that woll com'"(428:X.59). Tristram's response sounds very much like Dinadan and illustrates the idiocy of Palomides's suggestion:

'Nat by my counceyle,' seyde sir Trystram, 'for I se by their pavylouns there woll be four hondred knyghtes. And doute ye nat,' seyde sir Trystram, 'but there woll be many good knyghtes, and be a man never so valyaunte nother so bygge but he may be overmatched. And so have I seyne knyghtes done many, and whan they wente beste to have wonne worshyp they loste hit; for manhode is nat worthe but yf hit be meddled with wysdome. And as for me,' seyde sir Trystram, 'hit may happen I shall kepe myne owne hede as well as another.' (428:X.59)

Palomides, in his search for worship, embodies the rash activities that Dinadan criticizes. Unlike Lull's ideal knight, Palomides fails to mix his prowess with discretion.

Palomides, in his love for Isode, also illustrates the excesses and problems in chivalry that Dinadan outlines. Even love becomes subordinated to the worship it brings. Cherewatuk points out the connection between such love and worship-winning: "The passion for honor is so pervasive in The Book of Sir Tristram that romantic attachments... become merely excuses for gaining worship"(179). Palomides's love is useless, in practicality, because it will never be realized, but he uses it as a vehicle to win more worship for himself. Palomides intimates this in his lament for Isode following the tournament at Lonzep:

And I have many tymes enforced myselff to do many dedis
of armys for her sake, and ever she was the causer of
my worship-wynnyng. And alas! now have I loste all
the worship that ever I wanne, for never shall befalle
me such proues as I had in the felyshyp of sir
Trystram. (467:X.82)

Palomides's zeal to impress Isode actually causes him to
lose worship because he "ded nat knightly" in his attack on
the disguised Tristram(467:X.82).

This love also forces him to abandon his loyalty and
station as a knight. For example, Palomides fights and
defeats Arthur when he desires to see Isode(452:X.73). This
defeat of Arthur is emblematic of the problem that such
love-service causes in society. Palomides's love pits him
against the order of knighthood that Arthur sets up, and, in
unseating Arthur, Palomides, even though a member of
Arthur's secular order, forsakes the societal order that
Arthur's kingship represents.

Palomides's own reactions to his love for Isode also
provide an example of how this type of love is destructive
to society. Palomides forsakes his position as a knight,
the upholder of social justice and protector of society.
The best example of this tendency comes when Palomides
recuperates with Tristram and Isode at Joyous Garde.
Palomides, unarmed like Epinogris in Dinadan's report,
bemoans the state that his love for Isode has caused in him:
" A, Palomydes, Palomydes! Why art thou thuys defaded, and
ever was wonte to be called one of the fayrest knyghtes of

the worlde? Forsothe, I woll no more lyve this lyff, for I love that I may never gete nor recover"(473:X.86). Love unmans Palomides; he has forsaken the symbols of his knighthood, as well as its functions and become "defaded." When challenged by Tristram because of his lay to Isode, Palomides requests time to prepare for his duel with Tristram because he "is megir, and have bene longe syke for the love of La Beall Isode. And therefore I will repose me tyll I have strengthe again"(475: X.87). Palomides's love-sickness hinders him, it seems, from pursuing knightly activity.

Palomides's excessive quest for individual worship seems to characterize the practice of Arthurian chivalry in the "The Tale of Sir Tristram." Palomides's acts implicate the other knights who are locked into the quest for worship. Thomas Rumble, in his article on the "Tale of Sir Tristram," enumerates what he calls "development by analogy" as the structuring principle of the tale; Malory, according to this principle, emphasizes some of his own concerns by showing them in different but similar situations. Rumble's examples are the interplay between Mark's and Arthur's courts and the similarities between Lancelot's love for Guenevere and Tristram's love for Isode(Rumble 181-3). In this way Palomides provides insight to the other knights--his position as one of the four greatest knights forces this comparison--implicating all those that hold to an individual

ideal with the same chivalric excesses that he commits. Thus Tristram and Lancelot, the knights Malory usually groups with Palomides, may be just as culpable in their disregard for the corporate ideal of the Pentecostal Oath as is Palomides in his lust for individual glory through worship. Palomides's situation offers "development by analogy" which implicates Lancelot, Tristram, and other knights who place their individual chivalry over society, leads to a sense that "the [tragic fall of King Arthur's noble realm] is the result of the excesses of the whole chivalric system of social and sexual relationships" (Rumble 183). Many knights place their own interests above those of the court; no one knight is to blame.

Palomides remains entrenched in his private quest for honor. After his baptism permits his acceptance into Arthurian society, he, like Tristram, neglects his responsibilities to Arthur's court. Instead of participating in the grail quest, the great communal effort of Arthur's order of chivalry, Palomides opts to continue his pursuit of worship in a life as a knight-errant; even after the newly-christened knight has seen a vision of the grail at Arthur's feast, he chooses to pursue the questing beast: "And than sir Trystram returned unto Joyus Garde, and sir Palomydes folowed aftir the questynge beste" (510:XII.14). Significantly, the quest that Palomides chooses to pursue is associated originally with Pellinor,

whose quest at the establishment of the Round Table betrayed just such a lack of duty to society in favor of the individual glory of a life of questing knight-errantry.¹¹ Palomides's excesses, highlighted by Dinadan's criticisms, have the same effect--individual glory takes precedence over the knight's duty to society..

v

Gareth represents the other side of the coin. Just as Dinadan's criticism of chivalric excesses seems to describe Palomides, his overall support of the code implicitly points to a knight that upholds the code's ideals without indulging in these excesses. Gareth's chivalry is not the individual style of knight-errantry that comes to characterize Arthurian chivalry. Instead Gareth remains true to the corporate ideal of the Pentecostal Oath; he truly reflects a fifteenth-century chivalric ideal, and his position in society even mirrors certain fifteenth-century institutions. Malory was able to present such an ideal because of his relative independence from his sources when it came to Gareth; no one source for the "Tale of Sir Gareth" has been discovered. In fact, many scholars think that Malory invented the tale of Sir Gareth drawing from a host of different sources.¹²

Gareth undergoes an initiation similar to that of other knights of the Round Table, and his tale presents his "proof-of-knighthood." Gareth, like Palomides, must prove

his worthiness to be a knight of the Round Table because he comes to the court as a "fair unknown"--a common motif in medieval romance (Benson 92). Instead of revealing his kinship--he is Arthur's nephew and Gawain's brother--he remains anonymous, preferring to be knighted for his worthiness rather than his familial background (177: VII.1). Gareth eventually is knighted and undertakes the quest to rescue Lyones from Sir Ironsyde. In this quest Gareth succeeds in a succession of individual battles; he abolishes the "ill custom" of the Brown knight without pity; and he triumphs in the tournament at which he wins Lyones. The final step in his "proof-of-knighthood" requires him to fight against other members of the Round Table. As with Palomides, Gareth fights the knights who have the most influence upon his chivalry--Lancelot and Gawain. Instead of presenting a mirror image of either of these knights, Gareth partakes of the better qualities of both.

Unlike Palomides, however, Gareth receives guidance in his attainment of chivalric fruition. He does not merely imitate the actions of the other knights he encounters, as Palomides seems to imitate Tristram. Joseph Ruff describes how Lynet's taunting of Gareth instructs him in the qualities befitting a knight:

[Lynet] gives [Gareth] instruction in conduct appropriate to a knight, although her remarks tend to be comments on what he has done badly. Even so she directs attention to his knightly prowess.... She is the one who observes his conduct and shapes his

behavior in his first adventures... (Ruff 109)

Lynet's instruction occurs over and above the usual "proof-of-knighthood" pattern. Ideals such as prowess and humility which Lynet instills in Gareth are very reminiscent of those found in the fifteenth-century chivalric guidebooks (Ruff 103). Gareth, in this instruction, remains loyal to Lynet despite her reproaches and uses them in his practice of knighthood:

'Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'a knyght may lytyll do that may not suffir a jantyllwoman.... And therefore all the mysseyng that ye mysseyde me in my batayle furthered me much and caused me to thynke to shew and preve myselfe at the ende what I was, for peraventure, thoughe hit lyst me to be fedde in kynge Arthures courte, I myght have had mete in other placis, but I ded hit for to preve my frendys, and that shall be knowyn another day whether I be a jantyllman borne or none. (191:VII.11)

Lynet's instruction, though negatively stated, has positive results. She instructs Gareth in the same ideals that the Pentecostal Oath draws on in its corporate chivalry, enabling him to become a knight.

Perhaps because of this instruction, Gareth exemplifies the Pentecostal Oath's ideals throughout his "proof-of-knighthood." The "Tale of Gareth" represents the high point of Arthur's reign, a true flowering of chivalry; and Gareth exemplifies "the spirit and letter of the oath presented many pages earlier" (Guerin, "Gareth" 108). All of Gareth's actions extend the court's justice and stability further

into society. One of Gareth's first encounters pits him against two knights in a river; he kills both of them. Although this action seems excessive, Lyones informs the reader of its justice: "'A!' seyde [Lyones], 'they were two good knyghtes, but they were murtherers'"(194:VII.14).

Gareth's actions also spread political stability throughout Arthur's realm, further indicating his adherence to a corporate ideal. He quiets knights who do not owe allegiance to Arthur, and brings them into Arthur's order. Each of the knights he encounters are Arthur's enemies. Gareth's victories, however, subdue them and bring them under Arthur's rule. Ironsyde's arrival at the court indicates this extension of the stability and peace of Arthur's realm:

'Ye ar welcom,' seyde the kynge, 'for ye have bene longe a grete foe to me and my courte, and now, I truste to God, I shall so entrete you that ye shall be my frende.'

'Sir, bothe I and my fyve hondred knyghtes shall allwayes be at your sommons to do you such servyse as may lye in oure powers.' (208:VII.23)

Ironsyde informs Arthur that Gareth has brought an end to his former antisocial actions (murder): "Sir, as to that, I have made my promyse unto sir Bewmaynes nevermore to use such customs"(208:VII.23). Gareth, in addition to increasing Arthur's political base, also extends the corporate ideal to which he holds, bringing peace to Arthur's society. Gareth's ultimate concern for Arthur's

society can be seen in his attitude concerning his brother Gawain--who acts as his model along with Lancelot. Gareth distances himself from his clan group led by Gawain: "For evir aftir sir Gareth had aspyed sir Gawaynes conductions, he wythdrewe hymself fro his brother sir Gawaynes felyshyp, for he was evir vengeable, and where he hated he wolde be avenged with murther: and that hated sir Gareth" (224:VII.35). Gareth, in his concern for the ideal that he exemplifies, cannot condone such behavior, even from his older brother, whom he would otherwise admire.

In his exemplification of the chivalric ideals of the Pentecostal Oath, Gareth avoids the excesses that may be present in chivalry. He, like Palomides, abolishes an "ill-custom," rescuing a number of women from the Brown Knight Wythout Pyte. Both Palomides's and Gareth's actions in abolishing "ill customs" work to society's benefit; they maintain justice when it has broken down by bringing murderers to justice. Their motivations, however, differ greatly. Whereas Palomides performs the majority of his actions, good and bad, to gain worship, Gareth betrays very little desire for worship. Gareth seems to have the maintenance of a just and stable society as his motivation.

The primary difference between Gareth's and Palomides's practice of knighthood lies in Gareth's practice of love. Initially, however, Malory casts Gareth's and Lyones's relationship in the same mold as that of the courtly lovers

within the work. After Gareth has defeated Ironsyde, Lyones refuses entry to Gareth, demanding the love service expected in courtly love: "Go thy way, sir Bewmaynes, for as yet thou shalt nat have holy my love unto the tyme that thou be called one of the numbir of the worthy knyghtes. And therefore go and laboure in worshyp this twelve-monthe, and than ye shall hyre newe tydyngis"(201:VII.19). Gareth, although dismayed, takes the role Lyones assigns him. According to this, Gareth must win more worship in order to be worthy of her love. This news affects Gareth in the same way as the other lovers of romance; it reduces his effectiveness as a knight: "...sir Bewmaynes rode awaywarde frome the castell makynge grete dole. And so he rode now here, now there, he wyste nat whother, tyll hit was durke nyght"(201:VII.19).

Gareth initially conducts himself in the same way as Lancelot and Tristram in their adulterous affairs. The lovers arrange a liaison in Gryngamour's castle after Gareth has discovered Lyones's identity. This tryst's results, however, differ greatly from what they intend. When they begin to "clyppe" and "kysse," an armed knight appears and wounds Gareth in the "thyghe." This occurs on two separate occasions. Lynet, continuing in her role as Gareth's instructor in chivalry, explains why she sent the magic knight: "'My lorde sir Gareth,' seyde Lyonett, 'all that I have done I woll avowe hit, and all shall be for your

worshyp and us all'"(207,208:VII.22,23). Lynet's knight emblematically wounds Gareth in the "thyghe" because of his lust for Lyones. Lynet's action, proving Gareth's vulnerability, demonstrates the problem of the courtly love that Gareth and Lyones undertake and prevents Gareth from falling into the pitfall that such love, and its usually disastrous consequences, represents.

Instead of loving Lyones outside of marriage, as his mentor Lancelot loves Guenevere, Gareth marries Lyones. Arthur questions Gareth concerning his intentions:

...and there the kynge asked his newew, sir Gareth, whether he wolde have this lady as peramour, other ellys to have hir to his wyff.

'My lorde, wete you well that I love hir abovyn all ladyes lyvyng.'

'Now, fayre lady, sayde kynge Arthure, 'what sey ye?'

'My most noble kynge,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'wete you well that my lorde, sir Gareth, ys to me more lever to have and welde as my husbonde than ony kynge other prynce that is crystyned; and if I may nat have hym, I promyse you I woll never have none. For, my lorde Arthure,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'wete you well he is my fyrste love, and he shall be the last; and yf ye woll suffir hym to have his wyll and fre choyse, I dare say he woll have me.'

'That is trouthe,' seyde sir Gareth, 'and I have nat you and welde as my wyff, there shall never lady nother jantyllwoman rejoyse me.'

(223:VII.35)

Gareth chooses to love Lyones as a wife rather than a "peramour." "Peramour" implies an extramarital relationship, much like the love between Lancelot and Guenevere--though Malory would never apply the term to them. Gareth's choice, once again, echoes the ideas found in Lull's treatise. Lull speaks of the sanctity of marriage in

knighthood: "To requyre foly of the wyf of a knyght / ne tenclyne her to wyckedness / is not the honour of a knyght"(Lull 118). Gareth's married love, in light of this idea, places him in contrast with Lancelot, whose illicit love of Guenevere breaks just such an injunction. As Wilfrid Guerin demonstrates, Gareth's love offers a contrast to the other loves of the Arthurian world: "As with the married love of Pelleas and Nineve in the first 'Tale,' Gareth's is an index to the noblest elements of the chivalric ideal--and an effective contrast to the loves that will later wither the flower of chivalry"(111). Thus, Gareth, in his exemplification of chivalry, falls between the two most powerful Arthurian knights, both within the court and as his exemplars. He withdraws from the murderous tendencies of his clan, represented by Gawain, but he also offers a happy alternative to Lancelot's adultery. Gareth, while avoiding the zealous concern for his family, also avoids the excesses of individual chivalry in his marriage. Unlike Lancelot and Tristram, and even Palomides, Gareth has no need to win worship for his lady and his wife; he has already won her. Along these lines, Gareth's marriage causes him to withdraw from knight-errantry altogether. Malory rarely includes Gareth in the succeeding adventures. He only appears at the tournament of Lonzep and later in the final days of Arthurian chivalry. Instead of choosing a life of the eternal quest for worship, Gareth seems to have

chosen lordship as an alternative.

Gareth builds an affinity of knights to serve him as well as Arthur. His lordship, in the construction of this affinity, also upholds the corporate ideal that the oath expresses in that he brings political stability to Arthur's realm, ending the enmity that some very powerful knights hold toward Arthur's court. Gareth represents a "good lord" whom the knights can follow rather than an inherited tenurial overlord. After each of his opponents are defeated by Gareth, they offer him their fealty and loyalty: "...and the Rede Knyght com before Bewmaynes with his three score knights, and there he profyrd hym his omage and feawte at all times, he and his knyghtes to do hym sevyse"(189: VII.10). All the knights that Gareth defeats swear loyalty to Gareth in this way. They take positions in Gareth's household affinity at Gareth's wedding to Lyones: Pertolope becomes Gareth's chamberlain; Perimones becomes his chief butler; Persaunte becomes his steward; Ironsyde becomes his carver; and, the Duke de la Rouse becomes his wine server(224-5:VII.36). These knights hold positions in Gareth's retinue just as Kay, Lucan, and Dagonet do in Arthur's.

Instead of becoming a dangerous overmighty subject, like his brother Gawain at the head of a vengeful clan, Gareth subordinates his affinity to Arthur's lordship; he sends them to Arthur's court: "'I thanke you,' seyde

Bewmaynes, 'but this ye shall graunte me: whan I calle uppon you, to com before my lorde, kynge Arthure, and yelde you unto him to be his knyghtes'" (189:VII.10). Each of the knights who swear homage to Gareth as his knights eventually joins Arthur's secular order, the Round Table, at Gareth's marriage(225:VII.36). Gareth places his own retinue within Lull's hierarchies, subordinating them to his sovereign. Arthur, in turn, gives each of these knights "great landis," paying them for their loyal service to him(225:VII.36).

Gareth's choice of lordship in a "bastard feudalism" contrasts with Tristram's and Palomides's actions. Each of these knights are offered the same choice as Gareth after they have abolished "ill customs." Palomides provides the best example of this following his defeat of the murderous brother at the Red City: "Than were people full hevvy at his departynge, for all the cite profyrd sir Palomydes the thirde part of their goodis so that he wolde abyde wyth hem. But in no wyse as at that tyme he ne wolde abyde. And so sir Palomydes departed"(438:X.64). Palomides refuses this opportunity because of his desire to continue his pursuit of worship: "For fayre sirys, wyte you well, I may nat as at this tyme abyde with you, for I muste in all haste be wyth my lorde kynge Arthure at the castel of Lonzep"(438:X.64). Palomides leaves in order to attend a tournament. Palomides's choice, unlike Gareth's, indicates that worship, which he may win in the tournament, acts as the motivating

factor of his knighthood instead of the "comyn wele" that Lull describes as the single greatest motivation of a knight(Lull 113).

Gareth's loyalty lies at the heart of his perfect adherence to the rest of the ideals established by the Pentecostal Oath. Gareth upholds the corporate ideals of the oath, maintaining justice and stability within society, whereas knights such as Palomides are motivated mainly by the promise of worship, even though many of their acts benefit society--they all abolish "ill customs." Gareth does not participate in the excesses of chivalry that Palomides and perhaps even Lancelot and Tristram represent. As Arthur's kingdom begins to collapse, and most of the knights continue to subordinate the good of society to their pursuit of worship or love, Gareth remains a constant exemplar of the chivalric ideal. Gareth could easily represent Lull's ideal knight. He possesses all the qualities that Lull's treatise and the Pentecostal Oath indicate as necessary in a knight. In his concern for the corporate good of society and how he accomplishes these within his knighthood, Gareth's knighthood represents a chivalry well in line with fifteenth-century ideals and practice. Gareth's knighthood, in its ideals and institutions, as Larry Benson states, shares much in common with Malory's fifteenth-century audience:

Probably Malory's early readers found Gareth's more

modest form of knighthood the most congenial of all. Riches, a noble wife, and a mighty retinue of the sort so necessary to the great households of Malory's time are an almost possible dream for fifteenth-century gentlemen who could never hope to see the Grail or love a Guenevere. (108)

Conclusion: The Collapse of the Corporate Ideal

For all of the concern, gleaned from contemporary guidebooks and chivalric practice, that the Morte Darthur displays for the need for a corporate ideal of chivalry, Malory could not escape the necessary end to his chosen matter; Arthur's kingdom must fall. Gareth represents the height of the ideals that Arthurian society enshrines. More and more knights, however, seem to ignore his example and the oath that it upholds; they tend to become focused on their loves and on winning worship for themselves. Although the Pentecostal Oath is still vigorous in its societal influence during the "Tale of Sir Gareth," it has faded into the background by the time Palomides receives baptism. The species of knight that Palomides represents becomes prevalent in Arthurian society, inevitably driving it to extinction.

Reminders of the corporate ideal which had produced the apex of Arthurian chivalry in the "Tale of Sir Gareth," however, still remain in the fall of Arthur's society and the fragmentation of his secular order of chivalry, contained in the "Tale of Lancelot and Guenevere," and the "Morte Darthur" proper. These vestiges of an earlier

prosperous system, however, only point to the sorry state of society's adherence to the spirit of the Pentecostal Oath and intimate the final destruction of Arthur's great chivalric society. Gareth, in his perfect fulfillment of corporate chivalry, provides two such examples in the final sections--his participation in the great tournament, the last hurrah for Arthurian chivalry, and his final loyalty to Arthur.

The final section of the work, comprising its last two tales, depicts the dissolution of the Round Table and of Arthur's society as a whole. This fracturing may be caused by the kinds of excesses that indicate an individual chivalry. Elizabeth Pochoda argues that the Great Tournament presents "the fellowship at work destroying itself"(127). It embodies many of the problems that underlie the final collapse of Arthurian chivalry. Lancelot, continuing his role as an individual knight in his resumed love of Guenevere, perpetrates actions that run counter to a corporate ideal. As Merrill states, Arthur's knights, because of the competition for worship, have to face other knights of their fellowship in battle(Merrill 407). In the Great Tournament, Lancelot once again fights against the rest of the Round Table. As an unknown knight in this tournament setting, Lancelot can gain worship. It is this quest for worship that leads Lancelot to forsake his loyalty to the order to which he belongs.

Malory, however, contrasts this individually-motivated chivalry with the last vestige of the ideal world presented in the "Tale of Sir Gareth" (Lumiansky, "Lancelot and Guenevere" 222). Gareth, seeing his mentor in chivalry under attack because of his success in defeating the other knights of the Round Table, decides to help him: "'Now, be my hede,' seyde sir Gareth, 'I woll ryde unto my lorde sir Launcelot forto helpe hym whatsomever me betyde. For he ys the same man that made me knyght"(646: XVIII.23).

Lancelot's induction of Gareth into knighthood creates a bond of loyalty between them. Keen notes that there was a close association in this relationship--"as if they were... kin"(68). Gareth remains loyal to Lancelot, his father in chivalry, while at the same time implicating Lancelot for failing in loyalty to his own lord, Arthur.

The action leads to one last reaffirmation of chivalry before the final destruction of Arthur's realm. At first Arthur blames Gareth for his actions in turning from Arthur's party to help Lancelot; but upon hearing Gareth's reasons, Arthur recants:

'My lorde,' seyde sir Gareth, 'he made me knyght, and whan I saw hym so hard bestad, methought hit was my worshyp to helpe hym...'

'Now, truly,' seyde kynge Arthure unto sir Gareth, 'ye say well, and worshypfully have ye done, and to youreselff grete worshyp. And all the dayes of my lyff,' seyde kynge Arthure unto sir Gareth, 'wyte you well I shall love you and truste you the more bettir. For ever hit ys,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'a worshypfull knyghtes dede to help and succoure another worshypfull knyght whan he seeth hym in daungere. For ever a

worshypfull man woll be lothe to se a worshypfull man shamed, and he that ys of no worshyp and medelyth with cowardise never shall he shew jantilnes nor no maner of goodnes where he seeth a man in daungere, for than woll a cowarde never shew mercy. And allwayes, a good man woll do ever to another man as he wolde be done to hymselff.'

(648:XVIII.24)

Here Arthur reiterates many of the ideals that the Pentecostal Oath originally expresses. He exhorts his knights to be true to a corporate ideal in their aid of other knights in danger and always to show mercy. Arthur also trusts Gareth "more the bettir," because of the loyalty that he has exhibited in aiding the knight who gave him arms.

Gareth's loyalty and adherence to a corporate ideal as shown in the Great Tournament, however, is the exception and not the rule of the Round Table in the final sections of the work. Lancelot's love of Guenevere is discovered, precipitating the final split of Arthur's order of knighthood with the civil war between Lancelot and Gawain. Karen Cherewatuk notes the inevitability of this fragmentation:

The fracture is not surprising, for the best knight of the world had predicted it by violating a range of knightly teachings: he has ignored the tenets of his oath of knighthood, especially his responsibilities to women and loyalty to the king; he has broken the rules of tournaments in order to gain a superficial worship; he has violated the legal basis of the judicial combat by relying on force alone; and he has erred in this many ways for a love that is immoderate and adulterous.

(226)

Lancelot, despite Gareth's continued exemplification of the

corporate ideal, continues the excessive course of placing his own desires--for worship and Guenevere--over the stability and survival of the court. Lancelot abandons the corporate ideal for personal aggrandizement and selfish fulfillment.

Arthur, in carrying out his justice, decides to burn Guenevere. The problems that Arthur, as sovereign, experiences in finding knights to carry out his command offer an indication of the sickness of the corporate ideal; even Gawain refuses to aid him. Gareth, however, becomes caught in the middle. Arthur commands him as king to accompany Guenevere to the stake; his loyalty to the king comes in conflict with his loyalty to Lancelot who is certain to rescue the queen. Gareth, however, following Christine de Pisan's advice, obeys Arthur's orders even though he does so against his will.

This act of loyalty is Gareth's last because Lancelot, in his rescue, accidentally slays him and Gaheris, even though they are not armed. Lancelot undertakes this rescue completely at odds with the oath to which he has sworn as a knight; he is disloyal to Arthur. He undertakes a judicial act on the wrong side for "love" which explicitly breaks the oath he has sworn to Arthur; Lancelot and Guenevere are guilty. This disloyalty and disavowal of the Pentecostal Oath marks the final end of the excesses of chivalry in which he has indulged; his personal desires come into fatal

conflict with those of the society, represented by Arthur, as a whole. Cherevatuk states that "it is primarily Lancelot's quest for the appearance of honor that brings on the final tragedy of the Round Table"(226).

Lancelot, even though he is the primary actor in the final tragedy, cannot bear all of the blame for the ensuing civil war which destroys Arthur's society. Most of Arthur's knights, in their concern for the appearance of honor and worship, had forsaken a corporate ideal along with Lancelot. Lancelot, like Palomides before him, acts in this section as an individual knight, pursuing his own desires. Only Gareth, in his loyal actions at the great tournament, betrays any presence of the corporate ideal upon which Arthurian society was founded in the Pentecostal Oath. When Lancelot kills Gareth, he also kills the corporate ideal and precipitates a civil war between the knights of the Round Table; individual impulses finally bury the justice and stability that the Pentecostal Oath represents. Malory's last word on chivalry at the Great Tournament and before the final fracture of Arthur's Round Table, however, expresses a fifteenth-century corporate ideal as embodied first in the Pentecostal Oath and later in the person of Sir Gareth.

Notes

1. Several different historical figures, from the slight evidence provided in the text, have been advanced as the author of the Morte Darthur: he was a knight, a prisoner at some time and alive in 1469-70, when he finished his work. Most critics, when they concern themselves with this question, hold with the colorful and sordid Warwickshire candidate from Newbold Revel discussed in Edward Hick's biography, but, as William Matthews has shown, this identification is problematic and is no more certain than a Yorkshire, or Lincolnshire Thomas Malory from Papworth St. Agnes.

2. Both Beverly Kennedy and Karen Cherewatuk deal extensively with the Morte Darthur in relation to such chivalric guidebooks. I agree, for the most part with the assessments that they put forth. I feel, however, that both neglect some important implications that these guidebooks suggest about fifteenth century chivalry, notably their connection to the corporate and societal ideal which the Pentecostal Oath represents.

3. For this, and all the succeeding quotes from the Morte Darthur, I cite Vinaver's 1971 single volume edition of the Works. In addition to page citations from this edition, I also the book and chapter in Caxton's edition in which the passage can be found.

4. Sir Gilbert of the Hay's guidebook the Buke of Knyghthode, differs from Caxton's translation of Lull only on small points. It and Caxton's version both share the corporate emphasis of knighthood. The language in Caxton's version, however, is less prohibitive, hence my decision to focus on his text.

5. Cherewatuk deal with Christine's guidebook in relation to "The Tale of Arthur and Lucius" because of its stress upon Arthur's military. The ideals that she presents over and above the practical advice on waging war, which Cherewatuk neglects, however, establish a secular view of chivalry in which a corporate, societal ideal is important.

6. For an exploration of the importance Burgundy played in English political life see John Gillingham's The Wars of the Roses and Paul Murray Kendall's Warwick the Kingmaker, chapters 3 and 4.

7. Many critics have spilled their life's work upon the page debating the "unity" question in Malory. This debate, however boring, raged for about twenty years in response to Eugene Vinaver's decision to call his edition of Malory Works from some evidence in his source text, the Winchester MS; even now

some articles debate this question. Those holding that the Morte Darthur has some type of unity seem to have won, at least for now. Here, I will look at the Morte Darthur as a "hoole book," although this assumption is not vital to my argument as long as one assumes that the various "Tales" or sections are connected by common themes.

8. Lot is killed in the in arms against Arthur in the war which immediately follows Arthur's accession. Although Malory relates Lot's death at the hands of Pellinor(48:II.10), Lamorak, Pellinor's son and a later victim of this feud, claims that Balin, not his father Pellinor actually slew Lot. This doubt makes Gawain's desire for vengeance even more culpable.

9. For more information concerning the impetus for the initial skirmishes in the Wars of the Roses and Richard's folly in attempting to usurp the king, again see Gillingham's The Wars of the Roses, chapters 2-4, and Kendall's Warwick the Kingmaker, chapters 1 & 2.

10. Palomides's religion, although it may seem strange to associate a Saracen knight with an ideal usually tied to Christianity, has roots in previous medieval thought as well as romance. Saladin, the leader of the Saracens in the third crusade, offers an antecedent. Saladin, despite his religion, was seen as a noble figure. In one chivalric guidebook, the anonymous Ordene, he becomes a noble knight, going through the dubbing ceremony(Keen, Introduction). He then demonstrates his nobility after the ceremony is finished. For more information on Saladin and Saracens in medieval thought see Americo Castro's "The Presence of the Sultan Saladin in the Romance Literatures" and Maria Rosa Menocal's The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History.

11. Pellinor, in his third inclusion in the text, is associated with this questing beast, or "strange beast"(48:II.10). Palomides later gives the beast another name, "the Glatysaunte Beste"(362:X.13).

12. Many articles have been written concerning the source, or lack thereof, of Malory's "Tale of Sir Gareth," and they contain a range of different views. Vinaver posited a lost source from the Tristan cycle, while Guerin believed that this tale was totally Malory's creation. Larry Benson treats Gareth's tale as a combination of the two, pointing out that the tale has similarities with many different romances, notably the Ipomadon.

Bibliography

- Barber, Richard W. The Knight and Chivalry. New York: Scribner, 1970.
- Bennett, J. A. W. Essays in Malory. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.
- Benson, Larry D. Malory's Morte Darthur. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Benson, Larry D. and John Leyerle eds. Chivalric Literature. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1980.
- Bornstein, Diane. Mirrors of Courtesy. Hamden: Archon Books, 1975.
- . "William Caxton's Chivalric Romances and the Burgundian Renaissance in England." English Studies 57 (1976): 1-10.
- Castro, Americo. "The Presence of Saladin in the Romance Literatures." An Idea of History. Translated and edited by Stephen Gilman and Edmund L. King. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977.
- Cherewatuk, Karen Helen. Malory's Book of Chivalry: The Morte Darthur and Manuals of Chivalry. Ph.d Dissertation, Cornell University, 1986. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1988.
- Christine de Pisan. The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye. Trans. William Caxton. Ed. Alfred T. P. Byles. Early English Text Society, Original Series, 189. London: Oxford, 1937.
- Davies, R. T. "Malory's 'Vertuose Love.'" Studies in Philology 53 (1956): 459-69.
- Ferguson, Arthur B. The Indian Summer of English Chivalry: Studies in the Decline and Transformation of Chivalric Idealism. Durham: Duke University Press, 1960.
- Field, P. J. C. "The Source of Malory's Tale of Gareth." Takamiya and Brewer, 57-70.
- Fries, Maureen. "Indiscreet Objects of Desire: Malory's 'Tristram' and the Necessity of Deceit." Spisak, 87-108.

- Gilbert of the Haye. Buke of the Law of Armys or Buke of Bataillis. Gilbert of the Haye's Prose Manuscript. J. H. Stevenson ed. Volume 1. Scottish Text Society 44. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1901.
- . Buke of Knychthede, and The Buke of the Governauce of Princis. Gilbert of the Haye's Prose Manuscript. J. H. Stevenson ed. Volume 2. Scottish Text Society 62. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1924.
- Gillingham, John. The Wars of the Roses: Peace and Conflict in Fifteenth-Century England. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981.
- Glowka, Arthur Wayne. "Malory's Sense of Humor." Arthurian Interpretations 1 (1986): 39-46.
- Griffith, Richard R. "The Political Bias of Morte Darthur." Viator 5 (1974): 365-386.
- Guerin, Wilfrid G. "'The Tale of the Death of Arthur:' Catastrophe and Resolution." Lumiansky ed., Malory's Originality, 233-74.
- . "'The Tale of Gareth:' The Chivalric Flowering." Lumiansky ed., Malory's Originality, 99-117.
- Harrington, David V. "The Conflicting Passions of Malory's Sir Gawain and Sir Lancelot." Arthurian Interpretations 1 (1987).
- Hicks, Edward. Sir Thomas Malory: His Turbulent Career. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928.
- Keen, Maurice. Chivalry. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Kelly, Robert L. "Wounds, Healing and Knighthood in Malory's 'Tale of Lancelot and Guenevere.'" Spisak, 173-197.
- Kendall, Paul Murray. Warwick the Kingmaker. New York: W. W. Norton, 1957.
- Kennedy, Beverly. Knighthood in the Morte Darthur. Arthurian Studies IX. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985.
- Life, Page West. Sir Thomas Malory and the Morte Darthur: A Survey of Scholarship and Annotated Bibliography. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1980.

- Lull, Ramon. The book of the Ordre of Chyualry. Trans. William Caxton. Ed. Alfred T. P. Byles. Early English Text Society, Original Series, 168. London: Oxford University Press, 1926.
- Lumiansky, R. M. ed. Malory's Originality. Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1964.
- . "Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur, 1947-1987: Author, Title, Text." Speculum 62: 878-892.
- . "'The Tale of Lancelot:' Prelude to Adultery." Lumiansky ed., Malory's Originality, 91-98.
- Lundie, R. S. "Divided Allegiance in the Last Two Books of Sir Thomas Malory." Theoria 26 (1966). 93-112.
- Malory, Sir Thomas. The Works of Sir Thomas Malory. Edited by Eugene Vinaver. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Matthews, William. The Ill-Framed Knight: A Skeptical Inquiry into the Identity of Sir Thomas Malory. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.
- McFarlane, K. B. England in the Fifteenth Century. With an introduction by G. L. Harris. London: Hambledon Press, 1981.
- Menocal, Maria Rosa. The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987.
- Merrill, Robert. Sir Thomas Malory and the Cultural Crisis of the Late Middle Ages. American University Studies IV, English Language and Literature. New York: Peter Lang, 1987.
- Moorman, Charles. "Courtly Love in Malory." English Literary History 27 (1960): 163-76.
- . Kings and Captains: Variations on an Heroic Theme. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971.
- . "Malory's Tragic Knights." Mediaeval Studies (Toronto) 27 (1965): 117-127.
- Pochoda, Elizabeth T. Arthurian Propaganda: Le Morte Darthur as an Historical Ideal of Life. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971.

- Ruff, Joseph R. "Malory's Gareth and Fifteenth-Century Chivalry." Benson and Leyerle, 101-16.
- Rumble, Thomas C. "'The Tale of Sir Tristram:' Development by Analogy." Lumiansky ed., Malory's Originality, 118-83.
- Scandrett, Julia Lathorp. The Character of Dinadan in Malory's Morte Darthur and his Sources. Ph.d Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 1977. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1983.
- Schueler, Donald G. "The Tristram Section of Malory's Morte Darthur." Studies in Philology 65 (1968): 51-66.
- Spisak, James W. ed. Studies in Malory. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1985.
- Takamiya, Toshiyuki and Derek Brewer eds. Aspects of Malory. Arthurian Studies I. Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981.
- Vale, Juliet. Edward III and Chivalry. Suffolk: Boydell, 1982.
- Vinaver, Eugene. Malory. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929.
- Whitaker, Muriel. Arthur's Kingdom of Adventure. Arthurian Studies IX. Totowa: Barnes and Noble, 1984.
- Wright, Thomas L. "On the Genesis of Malory's Gareth." Speculum 57 (1982): 569-582.
- . "'The Tale of King Arthur:' Beginnings and Foreshadowings." Lumiansky ed., Malory's Originality, 9-66.

VITA

Timothy Carlton Truxell

Born in Staunton, Virginia, July 17, 1969. The author graduated from Riverheads High School in Augusta County, Virginia. The author immediately entered Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia and graduated in 1991.

In September 1991, the author entered the graduate program in English at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.