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by

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Abstract of Thesis

In the three narrative works of Wolfram von Eschenbach there is an exceptionally large number of women characters. This fact in itself prompts investigation, and it becomes apparent that the place which Wolfram gives to woman is a very high one. He was writing in an age which had placed woman on a pedestal, as the object of devotion in the courtly love lyric, but his elevation of woman is based on different reasons. He sees woman as the embodiment of the virtues he prizes most highly.

The main task of this thesis is a detailed study of the women characters in Parzival, Titurel and Willehalm. The intention is to show Wolfram's skill in creating vivid and highly individualized heroines. At the same time, such a study reveals that there are striking resemblances among the women and that, taken together, they form a complete picture of womanhood.

The picture of womanhood which emerges is an idealized one, and on his concept of the power of virtuous woman depend both the importance which Wolfram places in his women characters, and his notion of the rôle of woman in society.
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      (Bene, Arnive, Irmschart, Ludwig's queen, Sekundille,
       Schoette, Schoysiane, Itonje, Ekuba, Clauditte, Ginover)

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A note on the editions used

The edition of Wolfram's works used is:
Wolfram von Eschenbach, ed. K. Lachmann, 6th. complete edition by E. Hartl, Berlin, 1926; reprint, Berlin, 1960. Throughout this thesis, quotations are taken from this edition, and, unless otherwise stated, they are from Parzival.

All quotations from Le Conte del Graal are from the following edition:

All references to the Old French Aliscans are to the following edition:
Aliscans, Kritischer Text von E. Wienbeck, W. Hartnacke, P. Rasch, Halle, 1903.
I General Introduction

In the wealth of literature which treats Wolfram von Eschenbach and his works, there is, to my knowledge, no examination of the women characters. This lack is surprising, for the rôle of women is highly significant in Wolfram's three narrative works, Parzival, Titurel and Willehalm. The mere presence of so many heroines would seem to prompt investigation into Wolfram's concept of womanhood and the use he makes of his feminine characters. Yet, although studies have been written of individual women, or of particular groups of women, no attempt has been made to view all the women together and to show that, though each is an individual, they form together a tremendous spectrum, which embodies Wolfram's concept of the nature of true womanhood and its rôle in society. This is the aim of the present thesis.

There exist already three works which treat the women characters in Parzival. Of these, the article by Karl Kinzel aims at the greatest comprehensiveness, but in fact he dismisses a number of the women as lacking in individuality. His principal concern is with the relation of the women as Wolfram depicts them to the actual situation in German society at the time, and with the embarrassment of Wolfram at having to present

women who did not always conform to his ideal. He treats them in order of appearance and makes no attempt to indicate a further grouping or to suggest a relationship among them.

The article by B. Q. Morgan is more modest in scope. He does not set out to treat all the women characters, and he limits himself further to a comparison of Wolfram with Chrétien. Within these limits the examination is a clear and sound one, but he is not always able to do justice to Wolfram's conception of a character, since he stops short when there is no parallel in the French version. The result is a rather peremptory treatment of Condwiramurs and Sigune, for example, whose rôles Wolfram extended far beyond his source. Such characters as Belakane, Ampflise, Cunneware, Repanse de Schoye and Cundrie, who have no counterpart in Le Conte del Graal, or only a slight one, are omitted. The result is a rather biased view of the women, and no attempt is made to see the women in relation to one another, or to indicate the broad picture of womanhood which Wolfram gives.

The article by Ursula Heise is by far the deepest of the three. She confines her study to the three principal heroines, Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs and Sigune, and gives a detailed and


observant examination of each. To some extent her article is limited by the fact that it is intended for use in school, and occasionally an interesting and complex point is not expanded. It is, nevertheless, a searching and sensitive study, which sees the implications beneath Wolfram's portrayal, the virtues which he extols in these three heroines and the close relation among them.

There are studies of individual women, above all of Sigune and Gyburc. The evident significance of Sigune in Parzival and the tantalizing fragment of her history in Titurel has clearly roused interest among scholars, who have devoted considerable attention to her 1). Gyburc is so vital to the message of Willehalm that the study of the work leads, to a large extent, to the study of its heroine 2). Yet these are only two of the large number of women in Wolfram's works, and the others have received very scant treatment. It is true that there are several articles on isolated heroines 3), but there remain such women as Herzeloyde and

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Condwiramurs, Repanse de Schoye and Cunneware, who, despite their significance, have not been given the attention they deserve. Clearly a great part of the significance of such women is in their relation to the whole work, but it seems apparent that insufficient attention has been paid to them as individuals.

It is true that the writer considering Parzival as a whole cannot fail to mention the rôle of the central women characters, so that the major works of criticism treat also to some extent the figures of Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs, Repanse de Schoye, Jeshute, Liaze, Cunneware and Belakane ¹). Yet very often such works seem to disregard the peculiar fitness of the women for the rôle they fulfil and ignore the vital concept of the nature of womanhood in Wolfram's view of life.

As has been said, it is essential that the writer considering the theme of Willehalm should consider also its heroine, so that any new study of Gyburc will repeat, at least in some measure, what has been said already. The aim of this thesis, however, is to show Gyburc not only in her own right, within the single work, but also in her relation to the other women. With a character of the enormous scope and complexity of Gyburc, much must inevitably remain unsaid, but it is hoped that the above aim will nevertheless be achieved.

The main content of this thesis is an examination of the women in Wolfram's works as individuals. In this way it is

¹. See Bibliography for works on Parzival in general.
hoped to draw attention to the skill with which Wolfram creates each of his heroines and to indicate the particular distinction of each. From this detailed examination, Wolfram's view of womanhood in general and the role of woman in his works should become apparent, and it should be possible, finally, to suggest the significance which Wolfram places upon his heroines, hence his reason for creating so many.

An interesting question is the extent to which Wolfram may be said to have 'created' his heroines. In both Parzival and Willehalm he is dependent in some measure upon his sources, Le Conte del Graal of Chrétien de Troyes, and the Old French Aliscans. A close comparison of Wolfram with his source will clearly not be possible in the course of this thesis, but any significant points of comparison and contrast will be indicated.\(^1\)

The grouping of Wolfram's women characters presents some difficulty, yet this very difficulty is proof in itself - if proof were needed - of the greatness of Wolfram's power of characterization and of the consistency of his view of womanhood.

One may well speak of 'major heroines' and mean Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs, Sigune and Gyburo, yet, having left them behind, one is faced with heroines of the stature of Belakane, Repanse de Schoye, Jeschute, Cunneware and Cundrie, all of whom are highly significant, though more limited in scope. Yet these, too, are of the utmost

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1. For a detailed comparison of Wolfram with his sources, see B. Mergell: Wolfram von Eschenbach und seine französischen Quellen, I - Willehalm, II - Parzival, Münster, 1936-1942.
importance in Wolfram's concept of womanhood. This is true also of such women as Liaze, Obilot and Alyze, who are of relatively small importance in the work as a whole: they too contribute to the picture which Wolfram gives and complete the spectrum of his heroines.

One may justly speak of a 'spectrum' in reference to the range of Wolfram's women characters, for each one contributes with greater or less intensity to the whole, carefully graduated formation. In this formation, there is a certain amount of over-lapping, which makes division into sections impossible. To impose divisions is to ignore the close relationship among the women, and this relationship is an essential feature of the whole picture. The attempt to divide the women into 'major' and 'minor' characters soon fails, as indicated above, for to assign many of Wolfram's superbly individual and memorable heroines to the ranks of 'minor characters' is surely to underestimate their value. One is left with borderline figures, like Repanse de Schoye, Cunneware and Jeschute, who, though they may not rank with Sigune and Herzeloyde, are certainly not minor characters, in the way one may justly describe Bene, Ginover and Arnive as 'minor characters'.

Moreover, since each woman possesses some element, however small, by which she partakes of the ideal as Wolfram sees it, a firm division between the 'ideal women', such as Herzeloyde, Sigune and Gyburo, and the others, is misleading, for it ignores precisely that graduation of the same qualities which is essential to this thesis.
Since any strict division is clearly unsatisfactory and any attempt to assign a collective title to a particular group of women misleading, this thesis refrains from both. For the sake of convenience, to make the material more manageable, the heroines have been arranged in the groups into which they seem to fall naturally. This does not imply a rigid grouping, however, and in the course of the study the relationships among all the women should become apparent. In place of a title for each group, which would inevitably prove inadequate, there is a brief introduction to each section, to indicate the reasons for the grouping chosen.

II: Wolfram's view of woman and its relation to his time.

In Willehalm the vital relationship between the theme of the work and its principal heroine is apparent, but the suitability of Gyburc for the rôle she fulfils is prepared for already by the heroines who precede her in Parzival. At the beginning of Parzival, Wolfram says that he is about to tell a story:

\[ \text{daz seit von grözen triuwen, wîplîchez wîbes reht, und mannes manheit alsô sieht, diu sich gein herte nie geboc.} \]  

Clearly, then, the women characters are to be important in the work, and their virtue as essential to it as the knightly virtue displayed by the men.

On a number of occasions during the course of Parzival

1. 4, 10-13.
Wolfram makes an observation on women in general and from these may be seen his view of the nature of woman, which is then to be exemplified in his women characters. He sets out to tell this tale of the great loyalty of woman, and it is above all this 'triuwe' which he sees as the essence of noble womanhood. Thus he exclaims on one occasion:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wipheir, din ordenlicher site,} & \quad 1) \\
\text{dem vert und fœr le triwe mite.}
\end{align*}
\]

and on another he says:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wipheir vert mit triuwen.} & \quad 2)
\end{align*}
\]

He is ready, he says, to praise purity in a woman:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{swelhem wibe volget kiusche mite,} & \quad 3) \\
\text{der lobes kempe he wil ich sin.}
\end{align*}
\]

and with the virtue of 'kiusche' goes also that 'scham' which he sees as an essential virtue:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{scham ist ein slôz ob allen siten.} & \quad 4)
\end{align*}
\]

Where he finds these virtues in a woman, Wolfram is eager to praise her, but he knows that all women do not possess them, even though they may share the name of woman:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ez machet trûric mir den lip,} & \quad 5) \\
\text{daz alsî mangiu heizet wîp.} \\
\text{ir stimme sint gelîche hel:} \\
\text{genugoe sint sein valsche snel,} \\
\text{etliches valsches lære:} \\
\text{sus teilent sich diu maere.}
\end{align*}
\]

1. 116, 13-14.
2. 167, 29.
3. 115, 2-3.
4. 3, 5.
5. 116, 5-10.
He will withhold his praise from those who are false to their womanhood, and he claims that he has already attacked one woman for her falsity.

In the early lines of Parzival, Wolfram speaks also of the beauty of woman, which is worthless if the heart beneath it is not pure:

manec wibes schoene an lobe ist breit:
ist dà daz herze conterfeit,
die lob ich als ich solde
daz safer ime golde.

It will be his practice to praise womanly virtue wherever he finds it, even though the woman herself may not be beautiful, and to ignore the beauty of a false woman. Much later in the work, in one of Wolfram's personal asides, he comments on the uselessness of make-up in a woman, since beauty cannot be painted on a face but has its source in the beauty of the heart:

gestrichen varwe ufez vel
ist selten worden lobes hel.
swelch wplitich herze ist stäte ganz,
ich wæn diu treit den besten glanz.

It is Trevrizent who tells Parzival to honour women and priests, implying that women, too, have some mysterious link with God. It is Parzival himself who offers the highest praise of woman, when, in his grief and despair, he has rejected God:

1. 114, 12-20
2. 3, 11-14.
4. 502, 4-22.
Friunt, an dines kampes sit
du nem ein wip fur dich den strit:
diu mueze ziehen dine hant;
an der du kiusche hast bekant
und wipliche guete:
ir min dich du behuete.  1)

The words appear to come close to blasphemy, yet, in the context of
the whole work, they may be seen as acceptable. For Parzival stresses
that the woman who can guide the hand of man must be pure and virtu­
cous, and in a work which extol's the power of perfect love and sees
it as a means to God, 2) his commendation of man to pure womanhood
may be seen, not as a rejection of God, but as an indication of the
way to Him. In an age which was honouring the Virgin Mary increas­
ingly as mediator between man and God, 3) Parzival's words are
ultimately full of a significance which belies their apparent
meaning.

From Wolfram's words on the subject and from Parzival's
parting words to Gawan, it is clear that the place of woman in
Wolfram's work is to be a high one. Before examining the extent
to which this high estimate is borne out in the heroines as he
created them, it is appropriate to consider the background against
which he was writing, and its possible influence in producing such
a view of woman.

The courtly love lyric had given a very particular place
to woman. She was raised up as the object of devotion and yearning

1. 332, 9-14.
2. See, above all, Sigune, Herzeloyde, Gyburc and Condwiramurs.
3. See below, p. 1444.
praise, yet the awe in which she was held was due often rather to her inaccessibility than to any real virtue. Often, in fact, her adoring lover saw her as a cold, ruthless woman, quite indifferent to him and his suffering 1).

To Wolfram this was an uncongenial relationship. The consistency with which, in his narrative works, he presents love, both in marriage and between two people who are free to love one another, serves to explain his relatively small contribution in the field of Minnesang. He could not happily lend himself to this genre which displayed, and often extolled, a relationship which was essentially amoral, if taken seriously, and insincere, if regarded merely as a convention of literature.

It is true that two of Wolfram's poems 2) adopt the conventional pose of the lover towards his lady, but it is for a different kind of love lyric that he is remembered. His fame for the dawn-song bears witness in itself to his attitude towards the whole genre. The love which he shows in these poems is not the traditional love of Minnesang, for it is a mutual love, between people he sees as equals 3). Yet, though it is a deep and sincere love, Wolfram sees it as far from perfect, standing as it does in

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1. On the whole topic of the courtly love lyric, see M.O'C.Walshe, Mediaeval German Literature, London, 1962, pp. 97-133.
2. Lachmann, 7,11ff. ('Ein wip mac wol erlouben mir ...'); 5,16ff. ('Ursprinu bluonen, loup ëz dringen ...').
3. See 3,1ff. ('Den morgenblic bi wahters sange erkos'); 4,8ff. ('Sine klåwen durch die wolken sint geslagen'); 6,10ff. ('Von der zinnen wil ich gen'); 7,41ff. ('Ez ist nu tac, daz ich wol mac mit wârheit jehen').
constant danger of discovery. He shows this illicit love as an uneasy one, threatened by the light of day which is heralded by the watchman.

Wolfram's last word is contained, surely, in the poem which begins 'Der helden minne ir klage' 1), where the lovers have no fear for the light of day, since their love is protected by the supreme bond of marriage. Now there is no need for the watchman, and the couple can await the day together.

For Wolfram, then, the only perfect love is the one between two people who have a right to it, and so the word 'minne' has a special significance for him in describing the love which exists between a man and his wife. The basic idea of Minnesang had been the elevation of the woman above the enslaved lover, but this is not Wolfram's notion of 'minne'. For him it is a relationship between equals, and one to which each contributes equally. Though he does show relationships in which the woman seeks to wield her power over the man, these are not the lasting relationships, and sometimes they are even doomed. Thus Belakane's love for Isenhart prompted her to put him to the test, with terrible results, and Sigune must live in grief and remorse because she sought to try her lover in accordance with the courtly code. The most perfect love which Wolfram shows is the one which finds supreme expression in marriage, and the marriages of Parzival and Condwiramurs, Willehalm and Gyburc, are central to the two works. Wolfram

1. 5,34ff.
could not have expressed himself more clearly on this subject than in these two superb affirmations of the state of marriage.

For Wolfram, 'reht minne ist wāriu triuwe', so the insincere, studied displays of love of the Minnesänger were not 'minne' in his sense of the term. Moreover, 'minne' has a distinct spiritual significance, since God Himself is the true 'minnære'. Love is not an emotion to be played with, then, in the way that the poets of courtly love played with it, but a great gift, shared by the Creator with His creatures. Thus Wolfram sees love as something which stems from God and leads back to Him, and so the situation of Gyburc arises, in whom love of Willehalm and love of God are united and allow her to radiate love to those about her.

The loyalty which Wolfram exalts is far from the devotion of the love-lorn Minnesänger for his remote lady. Each partner in the relationship of true 'minne' owes loyalty to the other, and it is in the most perfect marriages which he presents that Wolfram allows the loving loyalty of the man to be matched by that of the woman. Though the contribution which each makes to the marriage is of a different kind, it is essential to Wolfram's concept of ideal marriage that each partner does contribute equally with the other.

1. 532, 10.
2. 466, 1.
3. This view of marriage is best expressed by Gurnemanz:

\[
\text{man und wip diu sīnt al ein;}
\text{als diu sūn diu hiute schein,}
\text{und ouch der name der heizet tac.}
\text{der enweder sīch gescheiden mac:}
\text{si blēnt ëz eime kerne gar ... (173, 1-5.)}
\]
Though there exist still in Wolfram's works some examples of the relationship which is based on the courtly idea of service and reward, there is in general a changed view of the relationship between a knight and his lady. Where the woman places conditions upon her love, the love, as has been said, is often doomed, so that Balakane and Sigune lose their lovers, while Obie and Orgeluse bring their lovers and themselves close to tragedy. Condwiramurs does not place any conditions on her love, but Parzival knows that he must prove his love for her, and she, equally, remains at home to prove the constancy of her love for him. In the earlier work, this mutual contribution towards a higher goal is more explicit, for together they prove that their marriage fits them for the rule of the Graal. Later, in Willehalm, Wolfram was to show a similar perfect marriage, sustained equally by husband and wife, but the achievement of the marriage of Gyburc and Willehalm is not a unique and tangible goal, but something wider and hardly to be limited by expression, the tremendous unity of mankind through love which is the theme of the whole work.

In Wolfram's works, then, marriage is the supreme expression of love, and love itself stems from God. Thus it is clear why Sigune can hope that the marriage which she believes to exist between herself and Schionatulander will lead her to God, and why the King of the Graal, who occupies the highest honour of Christendom, must be married to a pure woman. For Feirefiz,

1. See below, p. 107
2. 495, 9-10.
marriage and Christian baptism are inextricable, as they are for Gyburg, for the love which each experiences for a Christian leads directly to God, the true Lover.

In this changed view of the relationship between man and woman, the nature of woman changes accordingly. The sincerity and spirituality which are essential to Wolfram's concept of love demanded a very different type of heroine from the exalted and barely human lady of the courtly love lyric. Whereas her acclaim had rested on her lofty dignity and usually on her total inaccessibility to her enslaved lover, the praise which Wolfram offers to his heroines is prompted by actual virtue. Yet, though he has removed woman from the false pedestal on which Minnesang has placed her, he has adopted a new and equally exalted view, which sees in woman the embodiment of supreme virtue. The source of this view would seem to be found, not in the heroines created by literature, but in the prototypes of noble womanhood known to the Middle Ages.

a) The Virgin Mary

Above all, it was the Virgin Mary who was the example of perfect womanhood to the Middle Ages. The veneration which had been accorded to her for many centuries 1) received new impetus at the beginning of the twelfth century. The growth of the

religious orders at this time helps to explain this increased enthusiasm for the Mother of Christ. In particular the Cistercians were distinguished for their devotion to Mary, but their enthusiasm was shared by the Franciscans, the Carthusians, the Dominicans and the Carmelites. It was the Cistercians who, in 1134, chose the Virgin as patroness of their order and dedicated all their churches to her. Thus the popularity of the figure of the Virgin Mary was being established in France in the twelfth century and increased and spread to Germany during the thirteenth century.

This popularity among the religious orders is reflected in the introduction of the Angelus into monastic worship during the later thirteenth century and in the daily recitation of the Office of the Virgin. To the thirteenth century belong also the use of the Salve Regina among the Cistercians and the Dominicans, and the favourite mediaeval hymn, Stabat Mater. This hymn commemorates the 'Seven Sorrows' of the Virgin. It was in her sorrow that Mary was often remembered by the Middle Ages, in particular by the order of Servites, founded in 1233 and devoted above all to the Virgin.

5. See King, op. cit.
7. ibid. p. 459
The intense new interest in the Virgin meant, in theological circles, a new discussion of her sinlessness, the belief already firmly held in the Middle Ages and leading much later to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and hence, too, to the doctrine of the Assumption 1).

Such significant thought among the clergy and the increasing popularity of the Virgin in the religious orders would clearly be matched by a growing enthusiasm among the lay people, who would welcome depictions, in painting, on glass and in carvings, of this most sympathetic figure of the New Testament. The very large number of such depictions bears witness to this popularity 2). In the Virgin Mary the lay people found an apt object of devotion and entreaty, for she was both human and above the human. As a mother, she was a woman who understood their ordinary human problems, but as the Mother of God, she was a part of the Divine Mystery. Thus, for the Middle Ages as for modern Roman Catholicism, the Virgin was the mediator between God and man 3).

It was clearly as the Mother with her Child that the Virgin endeared herself to the people, and thus she is most often depicted in the Middle Ages, though sometimes the artist chose one of the other familiar scenes of her story 4). To the Middle Ages, the

1. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not defined until 1854, that of the Assumption as recently as 1950: see S. Bullough, op. cit. pp. 154-155.
2. See Mâle, op. cit. pp. 231-236. This is a very interesting work, with many illustrations.
4. e.g. the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Assumption, the Resurrection, see Mâle, op. cit. p. 231 ff.
Virgin was primarily a Mother, pure and beautiful, and so she is depicted. She was also a Queen, and in stained-glass windows and statues she is shown often with a crown and sometimes with a sceptre too. In the thirteenth century a new scene is depicted in art, that of the coronation of the Virgin.

Though the grief of Mary was remembered in the notion of her Seven Sorrows and in the Stabat Mater, the sorrowing Virgin was not the subject for depiction in art until the fifteenth century, with the poignant scene of the Pieta. Occasionally, however, she was shown even earlier with the sword piercing her heart, a single symbol of her grief.

Such, then, was the background of the German writers of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Although the popularity of Mary had originated in France, it was certainly increasing also in Germany during this time, and the notion of the Virgin as the supreme example of womanhood would have been a familiar one to the poets of classical Middle High German.

Already in 1172, Priester Wequer had written his Maria, and to the latter half of the twelfth century belong also the two sequences on the life of the Virgin, from St. Lambrecht and from

5. This is the date he gives: Priester Werners Maria, ed. C. Wesle, Halle, 1927, Altdutsche Textbibliothek, 26, 5800-5801.
Even earlier works are the Melker Marienlied, the Vorauer Ständenklage and the Arnsteiner Marienlied. In all these works Mary is praised for her virginity and her motherhood, and exalted as the one chosen by God. It is possible here to give only a few examples, to indicate the language used in such poems and the esteem in which the Virgin was held, but the poems are repetitive and in particular the same symbolism occurs.

St. Bernard in his sermons had applied numerous symbolic names to Mary, and these symbols occur also throughout the twelfth century German poems. The Virgin is the star of the sea, the door of paradise, the gate of heaven. She is Aaron's rod, the dawn, the vessel of the Holy Ghost. She is the flower, and in particular she is the rose and the lily, those flowers which symbolize above all perfect beauty and purity.

3. Melker Marienlied, 22; Mariensequenz aus St. Lambrecht, 1; Mariensequenz aus Muri, 1.
4. Melker Marienlied, 93; Vorauer Ständenklage, 271.
5. St. Lambrecht, 36.
6. Melker, 2; St. Lambrecht, 16.
7. Melker, 22.
8. Muri, 8; Arnsteiner Marienlied, 308.
9. Arnsteiner, 37, 60; Melker, 24.
The beauty of Mary is emphasized in these works, and her beauty is seen as a radiant light. Thus in the *Mariensequenz aus St. Lambrecht* she is 'schöne als diu sunne' 1), and in the *Arnsteiner Marienlied* she is compared with the sun and seen also as glass through which the radiant light shines 2).

Mary is addressed repeatedly as 'Queen of Heaven' 3), but above all it is for her perpetual virginity that she is exalted. Thus she is, for example, 'maget aller maget' 4), 'iemer magit an ende' 5), 'allir magide ein gimme' 6), 'muotir und magit beide' 7), 'daz ëwige magedín' 8). The poets stress that she was chosen by God from all women 9), and that she is the chosen house of God 10).

Because she stands in this unique position, the human woman chosen to bear the Son of God, she is seen as the mediator between man and God in these poems, as in the religious thought of the time 11). Thus the poems often become prayers, beseeching her to give aid to sinful humanity. This is particularly true of the *Arnsteiner Marienlied* which is put into the mouth of a repentant sinner 12), who pleads with the Virgin for mercy and aid 13), particularly that she, the sinner, may be truly repentant and so obtain

1. ed. cit. 11.
2. ed. cit. 8-29.
3. Muri, 10, 48; St. Lambrecht, 12; Vorauer, 35; Wernher's *Marienleben*, 2404, 2426.
4. St. Lambrecht, 10.
6. ibid. 40.
7. ibid. 69.
9. See, for example, Vorauer, 42-43; Wernher's *Marienleben*, 620.
10. Melker, 94.
11. See above.
12. See lines 123 and 219.
13. See, for example, 120 ff. and 140 ff.
God's forgiveness and salvation. Another frequent notion is that of the Virgin's atoning for the sins of Eve, and the two women are often brought into juxtaposition.

In all these poems there is a mixture of affection for a human woman and reverence for the Mother of God, and the attitude displayed here almost certainly reflects the attitude of the twelfth century towards the Virgin Mary. A favourite aspect of her life is mentioned in several places in these works and depicted also in contemporary art: that of Mary's nursing her Child. This was certainly something which appealed to people, for it linked the Queen of Heaven with any mother.

The Marienleben of Priester Wernher contains much of the same substance as these shorter poems. Here too Mary is praised for her purity and as the chosen one of God. She is seen once more as intermediary between God and man, and as the object of supplication. In the wider scope of this work, however, more is told of the life of Mary, and of her reputation before the Annunciation. She is praised by all who know her for her great virtue, which is reflected in her radiant beauty. Her beauty is stressed repeatedly, and here too she is seen to be surrounded by a bright light:

1. 178 ff. cf. also Muri, 18, 57 ff.; Vorauer, 31, 77, 280 ff.
2. See, for example, Muri, 16; Melkor, 76; St. Lambrecht, 22 ff; Wernher's Marienleben, 19-22.
4. See, for example, 2405-6.
5. See, for example, 1323-1337; 5710-5714; 5765-5767.
6. See, for example, 1150-1156; 1351-1357.
7. See, for example, 1120-1123; 1539-1542.
The poet is not sparing in his praise of her purity and her goodness. She is

diu edele unt diu frie,
diu maget unberuoret,

and in one of the later versions, the writer praises her for her 'kiusche, diemüt unde stæte'.

An interesting feature of Wernher's work is his insistence that Mary subsists almost entirely on food brought from heaven by the Angel Gabriel.

The above observations are necessarily brief, but they serve to indicate the place of the Virgin Mary in the thought and art of the late twelfth century. Wolfram von Eschenbach, then, was born into an age which was becoming increasingly conscious of the significance of the Mother of God, and which was honouring her with a new enthusiasm. It would be surprising if some of this affection and esteem were not present also in his works. Yet it has been observed, with some surprise, that there is no trace of devotion to Mary in Wolfram's work. It is true that Wolfram does not often mention her directly. The longest and most direct reference is made by Herzeloyde, and this is the only time when any heroine of

1. ed. cit. 4150-4151. cf. also 22: 'ir chische liuhtet überal'.
2. ed. cit. 1344-1345.
3. See Weale, op. cit. XV, for a discussion of the versions.
5. 1389 ff.; 1436-7.
6. See, for example, A. Sattler: Die religiösen Anschauungen Wolframs von Eschenbach, Graz, 1895, pp. 39-42; A. Schönbach: Uber Hartmann von Aue, Graz, 1894, pp. 418-419.
7. 113, 17 ff. See also p. S4.
Wolfram's is brought into comparison with the Virgin. Other, almost casual, references do occur, however, and these are all references to the virgin motherhood of Mary 1).

Anton Schönbach explains the absence of mariolatry in Wolfram by the fact that the impact of the cult of the Virgin had not been fully felt in Germany: "ich glaube daher, daß es nicht einer absichtlichen zurückhaltung zuzuschreiben ist, wenn unsere klassiker um die wende der beiden jahrhunderte wenig von Maria sprechen ..., sondern daß sie noch nicht die ganze stärke des Marienkultes erlebt haben, der als der abschließende ausdruck der mächtigen theologischen bewegung angesehen werden muß, die während des elften jahrhunderts in Frankreich angefangen hatte." 2) He comes to this conclusion having rejected the suggestion that Wolfram was deliberately opposing the orthodox attitude in this matter. Neither explanation seems satisfactory, however, and in fact a close examination of the women characters in Wolfram's works points, on the contrary, to an absolute recognition of the Virgin Mary as the prototype of noble womanhood. Clearly, as Sattler observes 3), Wolfram had little need to present the Mother of Christ as an actual character in his works: she has no actual relevance in the world of the court which he displays. Moreover, he is not writing a scholarly work on the religious thought of his age, but works of literature, though they

1. Pz. 448, 2; 464, 2. Wh. 31, 9; 38, 12; 219, 15; 298, 28; 407, 2; 456, 2.
2. op. cit. p. 419.
3. op. cit. p. 38.
are also didactic to some extent. His attitude towards problems of Christianity reveals itself more subtly therefore, and so does his attitude towards the Virgin Mary.

Yet for his notion of ideal womanhood, Wolfram is surely indebted to the twelfth century view of Mary. It is hardly credible that she was not at the back of his mind when he gave to woman such a tremendously significant role and created heroines of such great virtue. In his heroines he stresses above all purity and humility, compassion and the power to love; all of these are virtues for which Mary too was honoured. In motherhood he sees the fulfilment of his heroines, but he prizes also that selfless love which leads Sigune and Cyburc in particular to God. Virgin motherhood he could clearly not show, for none of his heroines is to be seen as Mary, though in their perfect womanhood they may resemble her.

The suffering which Mary must bear as a part of her privilege is shared also by Wolfram's heroines. Like her, they must endure grief and suffering, as a result of their love. The sufferings of the Virgin are brought close to those of all the women when Sigune interprets Parzival's name and tells him how sorrow pierced the heart of his mother 1): surely here Wolfram is remembering the sword which pierces the heart of the Virgin in mediaeval representations 2).

The whole picture of womanhood in Wolfram's works would seem to be inspired, whether consciously or not, by his acquaintance

1. 140, 16-20.
2. See above.
with the contemporary view of the Virgin. There are more subtle echoes, too, which link his heroines with this prototype of womanhood.

The memorable picture of Repanse de Schoye - that essentially mysterious figure whose purity and devotion make her alone fit to bear the Graal - with a crown on her head and bearing the Graal\(^1\), is strikingly reminiscent of the stained-glass window depiction of the Virgin, with her crown and sceptre\(^2\). Moreover, though the emphasis which Wolfram lays on the beauty of his heroines is perhaps to be expected, as is his implication that beauty is the outward revelation of inward perfection, it is interesting, that, like the writers of the Marienlieder, he often sees their beauty as a radiant light\(^3\).

The symbolism which Wolfram uses for his heroines echoes, too, that used for the Virgin in twelfth century writings. The rose which he uses in his description of Condwiramurs and Sigune\(^4\) links them with Mary. When he likens Belakane to a turtle-dove, one may recall the Melker Marienlied\(^5\), while his description of Herzeloyde as 'ein wurzel der güete und ein stam der diemütete'\(^6\) is reminiscent of the frequent use of the symbol of the tree and the flower for Mary\(^7\). His description of Sigune and Schoysiane as 'rehter güete ein arke' and 'ein arke für unkiusche fluot' respectively\(^8\) increases in significance with the knowledge that the word 'arke' was applied also

\(^1\) See p. 236, 21-22, and see p. 181.
\(^2\) See Male op. cit. pp. 235 and 241.
\(^3\) See p. 24.
\(^4\) 188, 10-13; Titurel, 110, 1-2. cf. also 24, 10.
\(^5\) ed. cit. 62.
\(^7\) See, for example, Wernher's Marienleid, 134-135; 1087; Melker Marienlied, 71-72.
\(^8\) 804, 16; 477, 12.
The idea in Wernher's Marienleben of Mary's being brought food from heaven is echoed by Wolfram when he says that Cundrie brings food from the Graal to Sigune 2), and this would appear a very deliberate link, in view of the high position of Sigune among the heroines.

The role of the women in Wolfram's works recalls also the role of the Virgin. The notion of Mary as the woman who comes to atone for the sin of Eve 3) can be seen in the role of many of the heroines in Parzival, where the suffering of Anfortas and the decline of the Graal Kingdom came about through Orgeluse and is relieved by some of the other major heroines: Repanse de Schoye, who cherishes the Graal, Sigune who directs Parzival, Herzeloyde who gave him life, and Condwiramurs who supports him in his despair and joins with him in the rule of the Graal. Repanse de Schoye, in leading Feirefiz to his conversion, comes close to the Virgin, the mediator between man and God, while two of the younger heroines, Obilot and Alyze, recall her power of atonement.

Though Wolfram did not write a life of the Virgin and actually mentions her only in passing, such echoes suggest that she was nevertheless in the forefront of his mind, as he created his heroines, and that it is her influence, more than any other, which is to be found in his picture of noble womanhood.

2. 438, 29-439, 5.
3. See above.
b) The Saints

The Middle Ages loved and honoured the saints, seeing in them, too, links between the ordinary human and the Divine. Evidence of their high place in the life of the Middle Ages is to be found in the art of the time. The large number of windows dedicated to individual saints points to a familiarity among the people with the lives of the saints and the miracles linked with their names. In sculpture they were endowed with a reality which brought them close to the people.

Foremost among the women saints were St. Anne, the Mother of Mary, and those saints who exemplified pure virtue, St. Agnes, St. Catherine and St. Cecilia.

Closer perhaps to Wolfram were those pious women who achieved sanctity during the Middle Ages. The increasing acceptance of women in the religious orders brought a new prominence to their spiritual experiences. One of the most significant of such women is Hildegard von Bingen, whose life extended from the end of the eleventh century almost to the end of the twelfth. She was a woman of great devotion and considerable intellect, and her personality and writings were known to her contemporaries. Her prolific writings reflect a knowledge of the Scriptures and of her faith which is rare in an age which did not, in general, encourage learning in women.

2. See, for example, Wernher's Maria, ed. cit. 382-384; 530-652.
4. See E. Werner, op. cit.; J. Bumke, op. cit. p. 157-158.
The passionate love of God which is reflected in the works of St. Hildegard was shared by other women in the twelfth century. Elizabeth of Schönau, Mary of Ognies and Liutgard of Tongern were all subject to ecstatic visions. It is reported of these women that they led a life of material privation for the sake of God. They withdrew into a life of ascetic isolation from the world. Of Mary of Ognies it is said that she subsisted sometimes entirely on the Eucharist.

It is appropriate to consider also two other women who may have influenced Wolfram's view of womanhood, though their influence should not be overestimated. Kunigunde, wife of the Emperor Heinrich II, had been renowned for her virtue and piety, and as the foundress of the convent at Kaufungen near Kassel. Her death had occurred there in 1033, but it was not until 1200 that she was canonized. This important event would certainly have aroused new interest in her, and it is likely that she would have joined with St. Hildegard, Elizabeth of Schönau and her contemporaries in suggesting that, for some at least, the way to sanctity lay through withdrawal from the world.

Like Kunigunde, St. Elisabeth of Thuringia, managed to combine her life as a royal lady with a life of devotion to God. The

2. ibid. p. 479. Compare Wernher's insistence that the Virgin is brought food from heaven (see p.26) and Wolfram's notion that Sigune lives on food brought weekly from the Graal (see p.18).
Hungarian princess who married Ludwig IV of Thuringia has been suggested as the inspiration of Wolfram's Gyburc. In fact, however, her influence can hardly have been very great, since she was not born until 1207. Her fame, as a child at the Thuringian court, for her piety and her rejection of the pomp and extravagance of the courtly life may well have been known to Wolfram. It is most unlikely that he knew of her later withdrawal from the court in 1228 and the subsequent brief period of service and devotion which led to her canonization in 1235. Even the time of her marriage, when she showed herself as the magnanimous and humble royal lady who led a life of charity and sacrifice, extended beyond the probable end of Wolfram's life and cannot have influenced his picture of Gyburc. That a young girl who was to grow into a woman of such virtue and piety, and one who was, like Gyburc, prepared to renounce her children for the sake of her faith, was at the Thuringian court when Wolfram was very probably creating his Gyburc, is certainly a coincidence. Though it is tempting to see St. Elisa­beth as the inspiration of Gyburc, for the reasons given above, it is most unlikely that this was the case.

c) Héloïse

Another woman whose influence may perhaps be considered is Héloïse. The story of the love of Abelard and Héloïse was not one

2. ibid. p. 193.
3. It is assumed here that Wolfram died at the latest in 1225.
which appealed greatly to the Middle Ages. This may well be due to the fact that it was not a story of courtly love: the woman was not set up as the idol of an enslaved lover but was herself devoted in hopeless love. The letters reputed to have passed between them were not available in any number to the twelfth century, for their content made them unsuitable for transcription in monasteries. Nevertheless, their story was known, and Héloïse herself was a popular figure in the Middle Ages. She was renowned, even as a young girl, for her great learning and later for her wisdom as abbess. Her fame rested on the exceptional nature of her accomplishments, for academic learning was not expected in women in the twelfth century, and only at the beginning of the twelfth century were women being given authority in the religious orders.

It is almost certain that some of the story of Héloïse would have been known to Wolfram, and that she may have influenced him, in particular when he created his Sigune. For Sigune, like Héloïse, resorted to a life of devotion, in the hope thereby of atoning for the fault in her which had led to the destruction of her lover.

The feature of the story of Sigune which suggests most strikingly

that Wolfram may have had Héloïse in mind is his uniting of Sigune and Schionatulander in the same coffin. Popular belief insisted that Héloïse had asked to be buried in the same tomb as Abelard, and legend told of how Abelard held out his arms to greet her 1).

It seems likely, then, that it was such women who contributed towards Wolfram's picture of womanhood, but above all the Virgin Mary presents herself most emphatically as the prototype of the noble woman.

Now that Wolfram's view of womanhood has been established, with these suggestions regarding its possible source, the next, and main part of this thesis will be concerned with the individual women characters in Wolfram's works, in the attempt to show how Wolfram's exalted view of woman is borne out in the heroines he created.

1. C. Charrier, op. cit. p. 300 ff.
Part B: DETAILED STUDIES OF THE WOMEN CHARACTERS

Section I

The identity of the central heroines of Wolfram's creation is hardly to be disputed. Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs, Sigune and Gyburc are clearly his most prominent women characters, and it is to them that one may justly look for the most powerful demonstration of his view of womanhood.

The three heroines of Parzival are united in their relationship both to Parzival and to the Graal, and thus they are intimately linked with the theme of the work, which is Parzival's achievement of the Graal. Their significance extends throughout the work, for although Herzeloyde dies early, her influence is felt until the end, and Sigune and Condwiramurs represent, in different ways, a force in the life of the hero.

The right of Gyburc to rank with these heroines of the earlier work is incontestable. Her central position in Willehalm, and the significance with which Wolfram endows her, ensure her place with them, as foremost personifications of Wolfram's ideal of the nature and rôle of woman.
Herzeloyde

The character of Herzeloyde is decided for Wolfram by the fact that she is Parzival's mother, for the notion of heredity is a powerful one with him, and that his most noble hero should be the son of any but a truly noble woman is inconceivable. Thus her fitness to be the mother of Parzival is the clearest possible indication of the perfection of her womanhood, and to this is added Wolfram's own assessment of her as

\[ \text{einf wurzel der guete und ein stam der diemüte.} \]

In view of the tremendous importance which Wolfram attaches to humility, showing it to be one of the essential virtues of the Graal King, it is clear that he could offer no higher praise of Herzeloyde than that she was a very branch of humility, while his description of her as a root of goodness suggests absolute perfection.

Other women in Wolfram's works embody virtues which he prizes highly and which are clearly aspects of his ideal of womanhood: Repanse de Schoye becomes the personification of purity and absolute devotion, Condwiramurs of love and constancy, Sigune of 'triuwe', that loving devotion which endures beyond the grave, while in Gyburc one finds all the virtues of womanhood combining with physical courage and adapting themselves to a situation which she occupies uniquely among the women. Yet, although Wolfram's admiration of these women is apparent from his treatment of

them and his attitude towards them, his praise of Herzeloyde is most
directly and deliberately expressed. To Gyburc he assigns the description
of 'heilic vrouwe', 1) and Sigune's death in the attitude of prayer
suggests her union with God, 2) but of Herzeloyde he says explicitly that
she will be spared the pains of hell, suggesting, it seems clear, that
the intermediate state of Purgatory is unnecessary for this woman, who
has sacrificed so much in life and has proved herself so perfect in human
virtues. It is of the utmost importance that this statement occurs in
juxtaposition to one expressing her good fortune in being a mother:

\[
\text{ir vil getriulîcher tôt} \\
\text{der frouwe wert die hellenôt.} \\
\text{ôwol si daz se ie muoter wart! 3)}
\]

In motherhood, then, Herzeloyde finds the way to eternal bliss, in the
same way as Sigune's loving constancy to Schionatulanter forges a link
with God, and Arabel's love for Willehalm leads to her conversion.

Herzeloyde's death marks the coincidence of the peak of her mother­
hood and the end of it. It is the end because, although her influence
endures beyond Parzival's physical departure from her, 4) she has done
all she can for him, and her responsibility as a mother is over, and it
is the peak, because, in allowing her son to ride away from her, she is
making the supreme sacrifice of the devoted mother. Like Sigune, who is
able to die at last when her duty towards Parzival is over, once he has
come to the kingship of the Graal, and when she has herself achieved
perfect harmony between earthly love and divine love, Herzeloyde dies
at the moment of fulfilment.

1. Wh. 403, 1. See also p.136.
2. See p.122.
3. 128, 23-25. The notion of Herzeloyde's passing immediately into
heaven recalls the notion of the Assumption of the Virgin. Though
this did not take the form of a doctrine until 1950, it was a part
of Catholic belief already in the 8th century, see also p.21.
4. See p.84 ff.
5. See p.120 ff.
This moment of fulfilment comes, however, only at the end of a long line of development, for, of all Wolfram's heroines, Herzeloyde is the one who develops most. It is true that the meetings with Sigune, combined with the picture provided by Titurel, show the changes which take place in her and the development of her devotion, but she is rather the passive object of time, and in her are apparent the changes which must come with the passing of time. In the case of Herzeloyde, on the other hand, experience - not merely the passage of time, but all that it brings with it - produces the changes in her, and she develops, from an immature girl who is still untouched by the hardship of life, into a mature woman who is not only fit to bear the future Graal King but wise enough to let him ride away from her, knowing that it will break her heart. Here, Titurel offers additional light on her character, for she is shown first as the bride of the ill-fated Kastis, as the wife of Gahmuret and then as his widow: thus, as with Sigune, the work offers a supplement to Parzival.

It is Titurel, then, which introduces Herzeloyde as a young girl, and significantly it is as a member of the Graal Family that she is mentioned first, so that from the beginning her destiny is linked with the destiny of the Graal, and Parzival's achievement of the Graal closes the circle of his heritage. She is named as one of the children of Frimutel, together with Schoysiane, Repanse de Schoye, Anfortas and Trevrizent. 1) To the reader acquainted with Parzival the names thus juxtaposed are a striking reminder of Parzival's involvement with the Graal Family, the more so since each one - Schoysiane through her daughter Sigune - makes a particular contribution in the story of Parzival's

1. Titurel, 9-10.
journey towards his destiny. 1)

The story contained in Titurel, though, is primarily the story of Sigune and Schionatulander, and of the love which resulted in the picture in Parzival of the sorrowing girl with the dead knight in her lap.

Herzeloyde is of minor importance in the work, although in taking Sigune into her care she is responsible for her introduction to Schionatulander. In order to motivate Herzeloyde's adoption of her young niece, Wolfram found it necessary to mention her brief marriage to Kastis and her young widowhood. It is important to him that this marriage, which made her queen of two realms and then left her alone, eager to adopt the virtually orphaned Sigune, was never consummated, for the union of Gahmuret and Herzeloyde was to be a unique love which produced a unique child. 2)

What is stressed, however, even here where Herzeloyde is not the central figure, is her purity and absolute goodness. She is mentioned for the first time by Titurel himself, who is praising his son for his noble children:

\[ \text{Din tohter Schoysâne in ir herze besliuzet} \]
\[ \text{sô vil der guoten dinge, dês diu werlt an sælden geniuuet:} \]
\[ \text{Herzelöude hât den selben willen:} \]
\[ \text{Urrepanse de schoyen lop mac ander lop niht gestillen} \]

Thus, in these words, Herzeloyde, whose devoted love is later to permit her to sacrifice wealth and place in the world, is named with the two women whose purity and devotion make them fit to bear the Graal. There is no further mention of her until the death of Kastis, when she decides to take her young niece into her care. 3)

Nor does Wolfram dwell on her

3. Titurel, 10, 1-4.
for long at this point, and he gives no indication that the early death of her husband left any particular mark on her. Like his stress on her virginity, the omission is certainly deliberate, to show that her love for Gahmuret was the one real love of her life. Indeed, Wolfram passes over the period of Herzeloyde's first marriage altogether, but it was useful, from a technical point of view, in that it made her queen of two realms and so ensured that her later sacrifice of worldly goods was a considerable one. It also left her alone and in a position to adopt her niece and so the whole course of Sigune's life was decided.

The story of Gahmuret's arrival, of the tournament and his marriage with Herzeloyde has no place in this work either, and Wolfram dismisses it very shortly:

Wie........ Gahmuret schiet von Belacânen,
und wie werdecliichen er erwarb die swester Schoysiânen,
und wie er sich enbrach der Franzoiisinne,
des wil ich hie geswîgen, und kûnden iu von magtuomlicher minne. 3)

To tell of this there is space enough in Parzival, and the second book of the earlier work fills the gap between the death of Kastis and the death of Gahmuret. Of this latter event the reader learns again in a few words:

Gahmuret...... sich huop des endes tougen,
et mit sin eines schildes. er het och größe kraft âne lounen:
wan er phlac wol drîfer lande krîone.
sus jaget in diu minn an den rê: den enphieinger von Ipomidône. 4)

and of the extent of Herzeloyde's grief, as it is known from Parzival,

1. Dr Richey, in speaking of the marriage of Herzeloyde and Kastis, says: "Its focal point is the anticipation of the second real marriage, vitally expressed in the long sweeping movement typical of the second line:

'Kastis Herzelouden nie gewan ze âibe,
Wolfram tells nothing. However, the memory of this grief serves to explain Herzeloyde's reaction when she guesses the cause of Sigune's desolation. Wolfram says:

\[ \text{diu kuneg\textsc{\_in wart innen mit herzen schricke, waz Sig\textsc{\_ne dolte}.} } \]

As yet, no explanation has passed between them, but Herzeloyde has loved deeply herself and so, intuitively, she recognizes Sigune's distress. The realization causes her pangs of sorrow because she has advanced so far in experience by now that she knows what grief love can bring.\(^2\)

She is at this stage suffering from the absence of Gahmuret, and in her mind, too, is the memory of the love which gave Sigune life, yet made her virtually an orphan, when on Schoysiane's death Kyot withdrew from the world.\(^3\)

The experience which has given Herzeloyde this awareness of tragedy lurking constantly in the world has given her too a new wisdom which was notably lacking in her before, as she is seen in the early pages of the second book of Parzival. The woman who now offers comfort and understanding to Sigune comes much closer to the woman who could forsake everything

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1. Titurel, 109,4.
2. Dr Richey ("The 'Titurel' of W. von E.", p.188) draws attention similarly to the reaction of Herzeloyde and contrasts it with that of Gahmuret: "Whereas Gahmuret is impetuously frank and straightforward, Herzeloyde is more tentative in her approach, wistfully anxious in her more intimate realization of a heartache so akin to her own."
3. B. Rahn (op. cit. p.37) also writes of the reaction of Herzeloyde to Sigune's confession of love: "Es ist völlig richtig, daß Herzeloyde im Gegensatz zu ihrem Gatten diesen pessimistischeren Ton anstimmt, nicht nur weil sie als Frau das schärfere Gefühl hat, sondern auch weil dieses 'alze vruo' (127,1) in besonderem Maße das Verhängnis Sigunes ist, daß sie in die schwere Müneschuld an Schionatulander verstricken wird. Zugleich sieht sie aber auch über das Individuelle hinaus und spürt, wie der Kummer der Mahaud, Schionatulanders Mutter, in diesem Falle auch auf sie übergehen wird".
and withdraw into the forest for what she believed to be her son's sake. Sigune herself values the support of Herzeloyde, and she is ready to tell her of her love and her lover's absence. The tie of affection and trust which exists between them is apparent in Sigune's response to Herzeloyde's enquiry, as it is in Parzival, when, so much later, Sigune talks of Parzival's mother in terms of high praise:

\[\text{Wöplicher kiusche ein blume ist si, geliutert âne tou.}\]

Herzeloyde's reaction when Sigune tells her of her love for Schionatulander is a strange one perhaps, but it is in careful accordance with other revelations of her nature. Her spontaneous thought is that this love is the work of her rival, Ampfliise, who, it is true, had brought up Schionatulander and greatly influenced him, and she sees in it a subtle means of revenge. The idea is somewhat strained, but the striking spontaneity with which it comes to her suggests her awareness of Ampfliise, as well as some doubt of her own ability to keep Gahuret's love. Such a subjective interpretation might well be attributed in a less noble character to self-centredness, and certainly there are other times when Herzeloyde behaves with single-minded determination in the

1. Titurel, 114, ff.
2. Sigune does not appear reluctant to reveal her secret: rather is she eager to share it with Herzeloyde. Dr Richey ("The 'Titurel' of W.v.E."p.188) notes her eagerness and observes" her confession has but one mark of diffidence", namely that she keeps back the name of her lover until the end of her speech (Titurel, 121,3): surely this is itself rather a sign of the intimacy she feels with Herzeloyde, who she thinks must know what is in her heart.
3. 252, 16-17.
4. See pp. 44-46.
5. Titurel, 122, 2-3. See also discussion of Ampfliise p.250 ff.
attempt to achieve her aim.

Above all, in her wooing of Gahmuret, she refuses to be dissuaded from the course she has chosen, and even the manner in which she releases Parzival reflects her own wish to keep him there. As so often, the final verdict must rest with Wolfram, however, and he certainly does not accuse Herzeloyde of selfishness, rather suggesting that her actions have their source in the very perfection of her womanhood. Of her reaction to Sigune's news, Wolfram says very little, for it is shown to be a passing notion, soon replaced by sincere concern for the girl herself.¹) Her somewhat unbecoming zeal in wooing Gahmuret also remains uncensured by Wolfram, for this too is caused by the immediate attraction she feels towards him and the intuition which tells her that he is the right husband for her and which then urges her to persuade him by whatever means to marry her.²) Whatever the views of the reader of Herzeloyde's behaviour at this stage, it must be admitted that her achievement in forcing the marriage, which would not otherwise have taken place, is a tremendous one, since it produces the great hero of the work. Just as Feirefiz bears witness to the nobility of Belakane and the undying love of Gahmuret for her,³) so does Parzival testify to the justice of the marriage which clearly finds favour with God, Who allows its child to become the Graal King. In this way, by implication rather than by statement, Wolfram vindicates Herzeloyde, who, in forcing the unwilling Gahmuret, behaves with callous disregard for Belakane and so prejudices the reader against herself.

¹. See Titurel, 127ff.
². On the courtship of Herzeloyde and Gahmuret, see p. 41ff.
³. See p. 157ff.
Herzeloyde's reluctance to allow Parzival to leave her leads her to dress him in the clothes of a fool, in the hope that the mockery of the outside world will prove too much for him and send him back to her. On first consideration, this would seem the action of a foolish, even a cruel, mother, for she is thus exposing him to the ridicule of the world, of which he has no knowledge. Again, however, her motive must be examined: she firmly believes that the world of the court will bring suffering, even death, on her child, and she never doubts that in keeping him from a knowledge of this other world she is doing him a great service. Her desire to keep her child with her, for her own sake, must clearly play a part in her behaviour, but this is not all. She has, after all, sacrificed riches and worldly rank in order to protect Parzival from the courtly world, and the shock of discovering that he has, in spite of all her efforts, come to know of it, is considerable. Her first thought is of some means of repairing the damage thus done:

\[
\text{diu frouwe enwesse rehte, wie}
\]
\[
daz si den list erschente
\]
\[
unde in von dem willen brèhte.\]

The solution she finds is a desperate one, but it is the last hope she has, and she knows herself how slight it is. She is well acquainted with the power of the call of chivalry, and it must be clear to her that the son of the man whom she loved for his courtly valour cannot resist this call. In sending Parzival on his way in clothes intended to provoke

1. It is important that the mother of Perceval does not do this. He is dressed in rustic fashion (ed. cit. 602-613), but there is no suggestion that this is deliberately arranged by his mother. Chrétien does not stress the virtue of the mother as does Wolfram, and it may appear strange that the latter allowed this unfavourable act to mar the character of his great heroine. The explanation must surely be that he considered the love which prompted it to be adequate justification.

2. 126, 16-18.
scorn and abuse, she is giving expression to her natural desire for his return. In compensation she gives him what she considers to be good advice. It is not her fault that in attempting to follow this advice too closely Parzival commits errors.\(^1\) The two things she gives him on his way, the clothes and the advice, are both the material expression of her love, the first betraying the hope that he will return and the second the desire that, if he must go from her into an unknown world, he should at least have some basic rules of conduct.\(^2\)

It is possible, then, to explain these three apparent contradictions in the character of Herzeloyde, her spontaneous accusation of Ampflise, the manner of her wooing of Gahmuret and her parting from Parzival, and to attribute them all to her great love, which is, for Wolfram, the supreme feminine virtue. That this love leads her to commit acts which

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1. Walter Schröder (Die Soltane-Episode in 'Parzival', Heidelberg, 1963) points out (p.17): "Parzival 'lernt' von der Mutter viel weniger als Perceval; er erfährt nur kurze, knappe Regeln für sein Verhalten". The consequences, he goes on, are in accordance with Wolfram's different conception of the young hero, for, while Parzival errs through innocent misinterpretation of what he has heard, Perceval "scheitert später, weil er sich böswillig und wider besseres Wissen nicht nach dieser Lehre richtet". Similarly, Dr Richey (M.F.Richey: "The Independence of Wolfram von Eschenbach in relation to Chrétien de Troyes as shown in 'Parzival', Books III-IV", Modern Language Review, 47, 1952, pp.350-361) attributes Parzival's interpretation of his mother's words to their 'enigmatic brevity' (p.353).

The behaviour of Parzival is certainly linked with Herzeloyde's parting words: it was necessary for Wolfram to show this link, yet without detracting from the character of his heroine, hence a far greater complexity in her at this point, as indeed throughout her appearances, than in her counterpart in Chrétien.

2. This seems a juster assessment of her behaviour than that given by Walter Schröder (Soltane, p.15) who observes: "Ihr Handeln und ihre Lehre stehen in krassen Widerspruch zu einander. Was sie tut, hat den Zweck, den Sohn in der Welt scheitern zu lassen; das steht mit durren Worten in Text. Gleich darauf aber lehrt sie ihm Weltweisheit, sie gibt ihm Ratschläge, wie er gut vorankomme und stachelt ihn sogar zum Rachegefecht an, der ihn doch in Lebensgefahr bringen muss".
appear reprehensible and out of accordance with her virtuous nature is inevitable, it seems, for love is an irrational force which can overcome all other considerations.

It is love, too, which brings about a change in Herzeloyde and causes her to develop more than any of the other women. When Gahmuret first meets her, Herzeloyde is very much a lady of the court, and the manner of her wooing suggests her complete adherence at this point to the conventions of the court which she is later to reject. The sorrow of the Graal Family has as yet not come to her, and her short-lived marriage to Kastis was clearly an insufficiently profound experience to have left her with any lasting grief. Grief comes only with Gahmuret, and with this first experience of real love and happiness comes the sorrow which Wolfram sees as its inevitable companion.

Gahmuret meets Herzeloyde in a situation which is essentially a product of the courtly life. Moreover, it is one which she has created herself, for she has arranged the tournament and offered her hand in marriage to the victor. Thus she gains in a tournament the man whom she is later to lose in grim battle, and she prizes him not least for his excellence in the practice of the chivalric code which she is later to strive so hard to keep from his son. Such contrasts are striking and point to the change which takes place within her during this brief period of her life.

Striking, too, is the contrast between the manner of winning by Gahmuret of Herzeloyde and Belakane. Belakane is in dire distress, in
the face of physical danger, and from this Gahmuret saves her. He rides into battle with the memory of her in his mind.\textsuperscript{1) The}irs is a relationship of mutual love and spontaneous attraction, and one which can surmount the problems of race and religion. Herzeloyde is in no such danger: the tournament is the result of a mere whim and the product of a mind preoccupied with the courtly life. Gahmuret attracts her at first for his valour and handsome appearance. Thus from the first these two women are contrasted, and comparison is inevitable of the two women who are equal in their love for one man.

The comparison is stressed by the state of mind of Gahmuret when he meets Herzeloyde for the first time. The memory of Belakane is with him still and will remain with him for a long time to come,\textsuperscript{1)} barring his happiness in this new acquaintance. In the mind of the reader, moreover, is a further memory, which Gahmuret does not possess, that of the grief of Belakane, left to mourn with her new born son.\textsuperscript{2) This} memory tends to prejudice the view of Herzeloyde at this stage, for Belakane is a very sympathetic figure, and it is difficult to regard favourably this woman who has appeared to usurp her place in Gahmuret's heart, and to do so with such callous disregard.

Herzeloyde experiences an immediate attraction towards Gahmuret and determines from the moment she sees him that he will be proved victor in the tournament and so become her husband.\textsuperscript{3) Her} manner ignores the claims of Belakane and also the obvious reluctance of Gahmuret himself.

\textsuperscript{1) This} is stressed by the picture which Wolfram gives of Belakane watching him from the window: 37,8ff. For a closer examination of the early love of Gahmuret and Belakane, see p. 159ff.
\textsuperscript{2) See p. 165ff.}
\textsuperscript{3) See, for example, 82, 3-4.
In her desire to win him, Herzeloyde behaves in a somewhat indiscreet manner, singling him out for her kiss until he reminds her of the rules of etiquette, that there are other kings and princes present who are also entitled to it. Moreover, when she draws Gahmuret close to her, Wolfram remarks:

\[ si \text{ was ein magt und niht ein wip, } \]
\[ diu \text{ in so nâhen sitzen liez. } \]

suggesting that her behaviour reflects not only her youth but also an inexperience of life which is not entirely becoming.

Later, when she learns of the death of Gahmuret, Herzeloyde exclaims in her grief:

\[ ich \text{ was vil junger danne er. } \]

Certainly, at the time of their marriage, Gahmuret does seem older than Herzeloyde in experience, for he has behind him years during which he made various journeys, served Ampflise, made a firm friend of the Baruc of Baldac, and lived with Belakane as her husband. Much of this is only vaguely mentioned, and perhaps the very vagueness suggests the extent and variety of his life until he meets Herzeloyde. In contrast, then, she gives the impression of a young girl untouched by the seriousness of life, who, in her desire to win him as her husband, ignores the claims of his wife and his own scruples, careless, perhaps even unaware, of the grief she is thus producing. Her immaturity is emphasized, too, by comparison with Belakane, who, although she can hardly have been much older in years, attains a certain maturity by her very situation when

1. 83, 17-20.
2. 84, 6-7.
3. 109, 24.
Gahmuret meets her, for she is seen as a woman in danger against the background of the battlefield, while Herzeloyde stands in the splendour of the court, secure and supremely confident. Yet Wolfram is careful to tell of Gahmuret's own feelings for Herzeloyde, for Parzival must be the product of a perfect, mutual love. Gahmuret cannot help the sudden jerk of the leg he has hitherto stretched out in his saddle with careless nonchalance, and in this single touch Wolfram betrays the spontaneous interest in Herzeloyde:

von dem liehten schine,  
der von der künegin erschein,  
derzuct im neben sich sin sein. 1)

On several occasions, Wolfram says that only the memory of Belakane prevents Gahmuret's falling in love with Herzeloyde. 2) Possibly Herzeloyde senses his feeling towards her and is thus encouraged in her efforts to persuade him. Strangely, she uses the same argument to him as he used in explanation to Belakane, 3) that he cannot feel bound by marriage to a heathen. The reason does not, however, convince him now any more than it did when he used it himself, and, ironically, it is not this argument of Herzeloyde's which persuades him, but a more obscure one. For it is only when Gahmuret is told by counsellors that it is his duty as a knight to marry Herzeloyde, since he was clearly victor in the tournament, that he does so, prompted by his loyalty, not to Herzeloyde, but to Ampflise, the woman who gave him his knowledge of knighthood. 4)

1. 64,4-6. cf. also M.F. Richey: Gahmuret Anschevin, Oxford, 1923, p.30 for a discussion of this first sight of Herzeloyde.
2. See, for example, 84, 16-18; 90, 17-91, 8.
3. See also pp.163-164.
To this irony is added another, for it must be remembered that it was not Herzeloyde who spurred Gahmuret in combat, but Ampflise, for the messengers arriving with a letter from her have reminded him of this woman who is truly his liege lady. Thus it is not Herzeloyde for whom Gahmuret fights but Ampflise: it is Ampflise who makes him victorious, and the memory of Ampflise and the code she taught him which persuades him to marry Herzeloyde. The irony, then, is both for Herzeloyde and for Ampflise.

Herzeloyde is at this point an immature woman, whose concern is with her own aims, no matter the grief their achievement may bring to others. It is ironical, and a kind of poetic justice, that in insisting that Gahmuret should marry her, she brings upon herself the condition that he may be free to practise his chivalry once a month. Gahmuret is still too fresh from the grief he brought upon himself and Belakane to desire a repetition of the experience, and he admits that it was the longing for adventure and combat which drove him in secret from his first wife. So Herzeloyde is forced to agree to this condition and is thus doomed to lose him at some point. Perfectly content herself in her love for Gahmuret, she must share him with the life of chivalry which eventually takes him from her. It is not wonder that she reacts against it, and she endeavours to keep her son in total ignorance of its existence, but in this she fails to take into account the power of the call of chivalry in the life of a noble man. She overlooks, too,

2. 97, 7-8.
3. 96, 29-97, 4.
the contribution of her husband to the make-up of Parzival, for the
son of a man who died in the service of chivalry cannot long remain
in ignorance of what is his by birth.

At the time of their marriage, Herzeloyde must either agree to
Gahmuret's condition, or lose him completely. Once she has accepted
the stipulation, their married life can begin, and it is certainly a
marriage based on mutual love. The perfection of their union is
symbolized in the ritual by which Gahmuret goes into battle wearing
the garment of Herzeloyde who puts it on again when he returns, regardless
of the stains and tears.\(^1\) The action suggests that Herzeloyde accompanies
Gahmuret in battle as much as Condwiramurs does Parzival, or Gyburc
Willehalm. It suggests, too, Herzeloyde's acceptance of this other half
of her husband's life, for the ceremony takes place eighteen times\(^2\)
during their life together, until the time when Gahmuret does not return.\(^3\)

It is important that the mission which brings Gahmuret's death is no
mere venture after knightly honour, but the fulfilment of a duty towards
a friend who calls upon him in his time of need.\(^4\) So Herzeloyde does
not lose her husband in a foolish errand, but for the sake of a love
which is even greater than the one he bears her, because it is bound
too with knightly allegiance.

Like Condwiramurs, who has 'den wunsch üf der erde'\(^5\) in her love

1. 101, 9-20.
2. 101, 14.
3. Even then the blood-stained garment is returned to her for burial,
an additional symbolic touch, with the suggestion that Gahmuret
returns to her even in death: 111, 30-112, 2.
5. 223, 2, see also p. 95.
for Parzival, Herzeloyde exists for her husband, and his return becomes 
an essential ingredient of her happiness:

\[ \text{do er ûze beleip ein halbez jår,} \\
\text{sîns komens warte si für wâr:} \\
\text{daz was ir lîpgedinge.} \]

Like Belakane before her, she is cast into grief when she is left alone, 
and, like Belakane, she is left to bear a son alone. For Belakane, too, 
Gahmuret was dead, for she must have seen that he would not return to 
er, \(^2\) and her grief was mingled with regret that he had not told her 
how he felt, so that she could have become a Christian for his sake. 
Herzeloyde is spared such remorse, but her grief is tremendous: 'diu 
frouwe in klagete über lît', says Wolfram, \(^3\) suggesting perhaps that 
sorrow should find expression in silence, that 'hopeless grief is 
\text{passionless}'. \(^4\) Herzeloyde can, however, find hope in her unborn child, 
whom she sees as the re-incarnation of her husband:

\[ \text{ich trage alhie doch sînen lîp} \\
\text{und sînes verhes sâmnen.} \]

Belakane had kissed Feirefiz especially on those white spots which were 
all that remained to her of Gahmuret, \(^5\) but Herzeloyde expresses the 
notion more positively, and certainly it is significant that Gahmuret's 
death is followed so closely by Parzival's birth. \(^6\) Parzival, then, is 
the re-formation of Gahmuret with the addition of all the feminine 
virtues of Herzeloyde.

1. 103, 15-17. 
2. See p.\(^{66}\). 
3. 109, 20. 
4. E.B. Browning: "Grief". For a closer comparison of the grief of 
Belakane and Herzeloyde, see p.\(^{64}\). 
5. 109, 26-27. 
6. 57, 19-20, and see p.\(^{66}\). 
7. As Walter Schroder puts it (Soltane p.12): "In Herzeloydes Sinn sind 
also Vater und Sohn in gewisser Weise identisch."
It is at the birth of Parzival that Herzeloyde comes to perfect womanhood, as Wolfram sees it, for he allows her to compare herself with the Virgin Mary:

\[\text{Trou} \text{ Herzeloyde sprach mit sinne}
\]
\[\text{\textit{diu hœhste kœeginne}}
\]
\[\text{Jœsus ir brœste bœt,}
\]
\[\text{der sit durch uns vil scharpfen tôt}
\]
\[\text{ame kriuze mennischliche enphienc} \quad 1\)
\[\text{und sine triwe an uns begienc.}
\]

Significantly, this is the only time that Wolfram makes a comparison with the Virgin, and significantly it is a comparison of motherhood, which is the reflection of perfect womanhood in both the Virgin Mary and Herzeloyde. The picture of this woman whom he regards as supremely good, with the child who is to gain the highest reward of Christian knighthood, echoes the familiar picture of the Virgin and Child, but the comparison is even more precise, for it is one of chastity and humility, both essential virtues in a woman. Walter Schroder surely goes a little far, however, when he equates Herzeloyde with Mary: "Herzeloyde ist nicht nur wie Maria, sondern sie 'ist' Maria". There are certainly indications that Wolfram intended a very close similarity between the two. The resemblances which Schroder points out are convincing, but they surely remain only resemblances. It is true, as he says, that humility is an essential virtue of the Virgin, as of Herzeloyde.3)

Certainly, in motherhood they come close together, and the grief of

1. 113, 17-22.
2. Soltane, p.60ff.
3. See below for the humility of Herzeloyde. The humility of Mary is, of course, best expressed in the Magnificat (St Luke, 1.46-49)
Herzeloyde may well be seen in its resemblance to the sorrows of the Virgin Mary, but Wolfram also shows that grief is a part of the experience of all women, so that this in itself is not peculiar to Herzeloyde. Nevertheless, there are, as Schroder points out, in the account of Herzeloyde's activities, very close echoes of the language and sentiment of the works on the life of the Virgin. Such echoes can clearly not be ignored.

The humility which allows Queen Herzeloyde to feed her child, against the custom of royal ladies, is the beginning of the humility which is to allow her to sacrifice all her worldly possessions and rank, in order to withdraw with her child into the forest. The 'armuot' which Wolfram talks of in reference to Herzeloyde's sacrifice is not only physical poverty, the absence of riches, but a positive quality, reminiscent of the biblical 'blessed are the poor in spirit', where poverty in spirit is the state of being unattached to material things.

1. The grief of Herzeloyde is given expression in the words of Sigune to Parzival (140, 18-20): groß liebe ier solch herzen furch mit diner moeter triuwe: din vater liez ir riuwe.

The grief which is Herzeloyde's destiny is contained already in her name, for this is surely a distortion, quite possible to Wolfram, of Middle High German 'herzeleide'.

2. See p.20.
3. See, for example, Belakane, Sigune, Schoette, Gyburc.
4. Walter Schröder (Soltane,p.51) notes "Parzival, 113,2 'daz sin vil dicke kuste' entspricht Wernhers Marienleben, 4159, 'daz kint si dicke kuste' and"Die Stelle 128,25 'ówol si daz se ie muoter wart!' entspricht fast wörtlich einem Passus der Marienlyrik: 'so wol dich des kindes!'(Mariensequenz aus Muri, in Waag:Kleinerdeutsche Gedichte des XI. und XII. Jahrhunderts, s.179) und Walthers Leich:'wol ir daz si den ie getruoc,/der unsern tot ze tőde sluoc!'(1.45f')".
5. Another interesting echo is noted by Singer (S.Singer: Wolfram und der Gral. Neue Parzival-Studien, Bern, 1959:p.35). He quotes the Kreuziger of Johannes von Frankenstein, 969ff:"Doch sand Bernhard des verglich: Ob Christus mit dem munde nicht Habe bedêtet mütet nam, Doch ûz dem sinne im nicht kam Der spruch, alleine in der mutt Micht ê namen machte kunt." This is certainly an interesting comparison with Pz. 173,8-10.
6. 116,15. 7. St Matthew, 5.3.
a part, therefore, of the positive virtue of humility. Herzeloyde thus
becomes the forerunner of Gyburc, for whom 'armuot' represents a
positive possession, beginning, it is true, as it does with Herzeloyde,
with the sacrifice of worldly goods, but widening into an attitude of
mind, a way of life, so that Gyburc can ask to live with poverty. Thus
in both these women, 'armuot' and 'diemuot' become one, and when
Wolfram talks of Herzeloyde as 'ein stam der diemuete' become one, and
when Wolfram talks of Herzeloyde as 'ein stam der diamuete' he is
referring not only to her ability to give up her wealth and rank, and
live in poverty, but also to the humility which allowed her to do so,
and which allowed her, too, to nurse her own child.

There is another interesting point in Herzeloyde's nursing of
Parzival. She says of the milk which waits for her child:

\begin{quote}
'du bist von triwen komn.
het ich des toufes niht genomm;
du wæ rest wol mins toufes zil.
ich sol mich begiezen vil
mit dir und mit den ougen,
offentlich und tougen:
wande ich wil Gahmureten klagn.'
\end{quote}

Both the milk and the tears which she sheds are the product of her love
for Gahmuret, and she sees them both as the possible substitute for
baptismal water. Thus she regards love itself as a means to Christian
baptism. That this is Wolfram's own view is clear from an earlier
occasion, when he says of Belakane:

\begin{quote}
ir kiusche was ein reiner touf.
und ouch der regen der sie begoz.
\end{quote}

where her love for Isenhart, reflected in her tears now he is dead,

2. Wh. 221, 26, and see p. 152.
4. 28, 14-15.
serves to make her a Christian in spirit.\(^1\) This idea may then be taken further, for it is love for Willehalm which actually leads to Gyburc's baptism, love for Repanse de Schoye which makes Feirefiz agree to be baptised,\(^2\) and Sigune, a Christian already, comes to a closer love of God through her love for Schionatulander.

Herzeloyde withdraws from the life of the court which has been marred for her by the death of Gahmuret and lives in the forest, determined that her son shall not come to know of this life.\(^3\) Although Wolfram does say

\[
\text{der knappe alsus verborgen wart} \\
\text{der waste in Soltâne erzogn,} \\
\text{an kûneclîcher fuore betrogn;} \quad \text{\(4\)}
\]

he does not appear to blame Herzeloyde, since she does this from the best of motives, love for her son. The deception is rather from Parzival's point of view than from Herzeloyde's, for it is not her intention to deceive him, but to protect him. The precautions she takes to protect Parzival from the outside world are hinted at by the fear of the servants when they realize that Parzival may have been in contact with strange knights.\(^5\) It is a shock, therefore, to Herzeloyde when she learns of Parzival's acquaintance with the life of the court, an acquaintance which must be accompanied in the child of Gahmuret by the desire to become a part of it.

Herzeloyde is too deeply versed in the courtly life, and too conscious of the claims of knighthood, not to understand her son's desire

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1. See p. \(70\).
2. See p. \(77\).
3. It is important to note that until this point Wolfram is independent of Chrétien, whose narrative begins with the widow in the forest with her son. The motivation of the woman in living thus isolated is not stressed, and the character of Herzeloyde represents an outstanding development of the source.
4. 117, 30-118, 2.
5. 125, 17-26.
to go to Arthur's Court. She may hitherto have hoped to keep him from the knowledge of its existence, but she knows that she cannot now prevent his desire to go there. Nor, in fact, would she really wish to, for in Gahmuret she loved a man of valour and nobility, and a man who did not possess these qualities would not long satisfy this woman whose values and view of life are deeply rooted in the courtly life. It is a mother's desire to keep her son with her which leads her to dress him in the clothes of a fool, in the hope that he will return to her, but she does not stop him going, for all the women in Wolfram's works allow their menfolk to go from them, in the awareness that only thus can they keep their love. It is a mother's desire to delay the moment of departure which leads her to beg him to stay just one night more, in order that she may teach him some rules of conduct before he goes. The rules she gives him are simple ones, capable of misinterpretation by the inexperienced boy, although Herzeloyde does not intend them to be. She tells him a little of his lineage too, though not of his relationship with the Graal. This knowledge, like that of his own name, is to come later, when experience has already taught him more than lies within the scope of his mother.  

At daybreak on the following morning, Parzival is eager to set off, unaware of the grief of his mother, and it is important that the incident differs slightly from the corresponding one in Chrétien, for in the difference lies a difference in the concept of the characters

1. As Walter Schroder says (Soltane, p.21): "Herzeloydes Rat an den Sohn ist also bloßer Antrieb zum Tun, wäiter nichts. Sie hat ihm nicht gesagt, wie er kämpfen und mähren soll, sondern nur, daβ er es soll." He adds: "Was Herzeloyde 'lehrt' und Parzival 'lernt', kann im eigentlichen Sinne nicht gelehrt und gelernt werden. Wirklich Lernbares erfährt Parzival erst durch Gurnemanz."
of both Herzeloyde and Parzival. Perceval's mother falls to the ground before he is out of sight, and, glancing round, he sees her and rides on. 1) Herzeloyde, in accordance with the womanly stoicism of other characters in Wolfram's works, 2) waits until he is out of sight. 3) In this way, Parzival is spared the accusation of callous disregard for his mother's suffering, and Herzeloyde's death takes on a new significance, marking the end of his need for her, once he has disappeared from view. Of this, however, only she is aware, with the same kind of womanly instinct which allows Sigune to die once Parzival has come to the Graal Kingship, 4) and Parzival rides on, to learn of her death much later from Trevrizent. In this he is so different from his French counterpart, in whom stupidity results at this point in sheer cruelty. Herzeloyde's death suggests, too, that she is aware that Parzival will find others to guide him, now that she has done all she can for him, and that she may now rejoin her husband, to whom she owes her first loyalty.

Although Herzeloyde can do no more for Parzival, her influence extends far beyond their life together. Even the simple rules of conduct prove important in his literal interpretation of them. Her instructions regarding his behaviour towards women introduce him, though in crude outline, to the concept of courtly love, which is to be enlarged upon by Gurnemanz. With the inexperience of youth, he follows his mother's words without question, with tragic results for Jeschute. In telling her son to heed the advice of a wise old man, 5) Herzeloyde is setting

1. ed. cit. 622 ff.
2. cf., for example, Gyburc, Belakane
3. 128, 17-22.
4. See p. 120 ff.
5. 127, 21ff.
him on the path towards knowledge which she cannot give him, and her words anticipate, perhaps with the hint of a premonition, the teaching of Gurnemanz. Parzival himself says to Gurnemanz, remembering his mother's advice:

'hör, dan wære ich niht genesen,
wan daz min muoter her mir riet
des tages dô ich von ir schiet.' 1)

Although Parzival's readiness to listen to Gurnemanz is the direct and obvious result of his mother's parting advice, her words echo too in Parzival's meetings as a grown man with the pilgrim and then with Trevrizent.

These, then, are the far-reaching results of the words which Herzeloyde gives Parzival on his way, but she gives him much more. Just as Feirefiz shows in his physical appearance the two distinct races which gave him life, so does Parzival possess in his nature a duality which bears witness to his parentage. When Herzeloyde saw her son as the 're-incarnation' of his father, 2) she was partly right, for Parzival is truly the son of a noble and valiant knight, skilled in combat and versed in the ways of the court. He is more than this, however, for as the son of Herzeloyde he is endowed with other qualities of mind and heart which did not belong to his father. It is these qualities which make Parzival different from Gahmuret, and which also make him a much more complex character and his life fraught with conflict, until he learns, as he can learn only by faith, to reconcile the two aspects of his nature.

The concept of birth and heritage was an important one to the medieval

1. 169, 10-12.
2. See p. 53.
mind, and so it is natural, and amounts almost to a stylistic convention, that Parzival is referred to on numerous occasions as the child of one or other of his parents. Basically, this may be regarded as a common practice of mediæval authors, and frequently the father of the man is mentioned, in order to draw attention to his own potential nobility, but in many cases Wolfram seems to do it with more specific intention. When he refers to Parzival as the son of Gahmuret, he usually wishes to stress his perfection the courtly arts; thus he says:

\[ \text{den twanc diu Gahmuretes art und an geborniu manheit} \]

when Parzival is just beginning to learn the art of knightly combat, and in the battle with Clamade he observes:

\[ \text{dennoch was Gahmuretes kint ninder müede an keinem lide.} \]

When Parzival rides away from Gurnemanz's castle and leaves Liaze behind, Wolfram remembers his father, who loved, and was loved by, three queens:

\[ \text{done wolt in Gahmuretes art denkens niht erlazen, nach der schönen Liazen,} \]

and, similarly, when Gawan wishes to present Parzival to the four great ladies, it is as the son of Gahmuret, who always behaved with perfect courtesy, that Parzival expresses his qualms:

\[ \text{dō sprach Gahmuretes kint 'op hie werde frouwen sint, den soltu mich ummärren niht.} \]

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2. 174, 24-25.
3. 212, 2-3.
5. 695, 25-27.
It is to be expected that Parzival is more often mentioned as the son of Gahmuret, for manly virtue was the foremost attribute of the mediaeval knight. The occasions on which Wolfram refers to him as the son of Herzeloyde stand out, therefore, with an even greater significance. There are, it is true, occasions when the relationship is mentioned with no real intention of stressing a particular quality in Parzival, although the reference to his mother always hints at his inherent nobility, as indeed does reference to his father. There are, however, two outstanding connections in which Parzival is mentioned deliberately as the son of Herzeloyde. When Cundrie comes to reproach Parzival for his failure at the Graal Castle, she exclaims:

\[ ëwë daz ie wart vernorn \\
von mir, daz Herzeloyden barn \\
an prise hät sus missevam! \]

Contributing to her horror are two considerations: first, that Herzeloyde, the daughter of the Graal Family, should have a son who apparently ignored the plight of the whole kingdom and failed to use the opportunity he was given to relieve both Anfortas and all his people, and secondly, that the child of the gentle, compassionate Herzeloyde should be so lacking in human compassion himself as to ride away without an expression of pity for the grief he saw there.

Moreover, in Wolfram's closing words, he refers to Kyot, who told:

\[ wie Herzeloyden kint den gral \\
erwarp, als im daz gordent was, \]
\[ dô in verworhte Anfortas. \]

Thus it is as Herzeloyde's child that Parzival achieved the Graal.

1. There are a number of instances of such 'neutral' references to the mother of the hero, but see, for example, 434, 3-5; 781, 3-5.
2. 318, 2-4.
3. 827, 6-8.
Kingship, as he was destined to do, since, as her child, he was both related to the Graal Family and fitted for its kingship by those qualities of mind which he had inherited from her. From his father he had inherited perfect manhood and knightly supremacy, which were essential virtues in one who was to receive the highest honour of chivalry, but his mother contributed those virtues without which no-one could come near to the Graal. ¹)

Thus it is at the turning-point of Parzival's journey towards his destiny that Wolfram again, and with the utmost significance, refers to him as Herzeloyde's son:

 hin ritét Herzeloyde fruht.
 dem riet sin manlicheu zuht
 kiusch unt erbarmunge:
 sít Herzeloyd diu junge
 in het ûf gerbet triuwe,
 sich huop sins herzen riuwe. ²)

Parzival has passed through grief and despair, indignation and rebellion, and now, at his lowest ebb, he has met the pilgrim, who inspired by his daughters to charity and pity, ³) has directed him to Trevrisent's hermitage, where he will find a renewal of faith. The compassion thus shown to him inspires him, too, to compassion, and this virtue, combined with purity and manly breeding, makes him truly the son of Herzeloyde. With the side of his nature which was his mother's legacy to the fore, he becomes once more a man in whom knightly perfection combines with feminine sensitivity, so that, prompted by the human kindness of the pilgrims, he feels again the need to love and to turn to God. He feels

¹. See below.
². 451, 3-8.
³. See p. 224 ff.
this need, Wolfram says, because he is the son of a woman who loved and endowed him, too, with the power to love, and to need love, hence with the power to repent. Only by repentance can Parzival come to the Graal once more, and only with a simple expression of pity can he achieve its kingship. Thus as Herzeloyde's son he possesses the key to his destiny, and by this single incident the two virtues which he needs are manifested in him. 1)

Repentance is an aspect of humility, and this is shown as an essential in those who would serve the Graal, and of the Graal King above all. 2) Anfortas lost sight of this virtue and suffered terribly in consequence, while Trevrizent withdrew from the world in order not to become a victim of arrogance. It is important that only Herzeloyde possesses natural humility, and this Wolfram prizes above all in her, when on her death he describes her as

\[ \text{ein wurzel der güte} \\
\text{und ein stam der diemuete} 3) \]

It was when she nursed Parzival herself, against the custom of royal mothers, that Wolfram first referred to her humility, and the same humility, which places no stress on worldly rank and goods, allows her to withdraw into the forest. As Herzeloyde's son, Parzival also possesses latent humility, but it is a virtue which must be nurtured, as Gurnemanz tells him. 4) Thus it is only when he allows that part of him which is Herzeloyde's legacy to come forward that he truly possesses the humility which alone can lead him back to God, hence to the Graal.

1. The one virtue is pity, which is an aspect of love, and, as the next paragraph shows, repentance is regarded here as one aspect of humility.
2. See 819, 18-20.
It is apt that Herzeloyde should bequeath to Parzival the virtues which make him a fit King of the Graal, for as the daughter of Frimutel she is herself deeply involved in its destiny. As a child of the ill-fated Graal Family she must partake too of its sorrow. Like so many of its members, she must endure, not only the sorrow which overtakes them all by virtue of their birth, but also personal sorrow. Kyot must suffer the death of his young wife, and his child Sigune is destined to a life of mourning for her dead lover. For Herzeloyde, personal grief comes with the death of Gahmuret and the departure of Parzival. Yet both sorrows are the result of love, for in Wolfram's mind, love and grief are inextricable companions, so that from Schoette to Condwiramurs, Sigune to Herzeloyde, Kyot to Gurnemanz, love is seen to bring sorrow on those who know it, until in Gyburc a reconciliation takes place, and grief is shown as bearable because of the love which gave birth to it.¹)

When Herzeloyde is grieving for the absent Gahmuret, Wolfram observes:

³wê unde heiâ hei,
daz güete alsölhen kumber tregt²)
und immer triwe jâmer regt!

and Sigune says to Parzival

du bist geborn von triuwen,
daz er dich sus kan riuwen. ³)

Clearly she detects in him the power of his mother to love with an

¹. See p. 145.
². 103, 20-22.
³. 140, 1-2.
intensity which must bring grief, although she has not yet learnt who
his mother was.

Nor is it only Sigune who sees in Parzival the virtues of his
mother: Ither says to him:

\[ \text{"Geret si din suezer lip:} \\
\text{dich bracht zer werlde ein reine wip. 1) } \\
\text{wol der muoter diu dich bar!} \]

When he comes to Gurnemanz's castle, a knight exclaims similarly

\[ \text{wol doch der muoter diu in truoc, 2) } \\
an deh des wunschtes ift genuoc. \]

while later he meets with general admiration there:

\[ \text{mit triwen lobten si daz wip,} \\
\text{diu gap der werlde alsolhe fruht. 3) } \]

In these cases, it is physical beauty which gives rise to such acclaim,
but physical beauty is so often the reflection of inward goodness. 4)

When Gahmuret first met Herzeloyde, her beauty shone forth:

\[ \text{vrou Herzeloyde gap den schin,} \\
wern erloschen gar die kerzen sin, 5) \\
dâ wâr doch lieht von ir genuoc. \]

and radiant beauty suggests, in Wolfram, the all-embracing goodness of
its bearer. 6) What is seen in Parzival and admired by all as physical
beauty, is the outward revelation of his inner virtue, and for this
those who recognize it praise the woman who gave him life.

1. 146, 5-7. D. Labusch (op.cit.p.67) points out the echo here of the
words of Elisabeth to Mary, St. Luke, 1.42: "Blessed art though
among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."
2. 164, 19-20.
3. 168, 26-27.
4. This is the case with most of the women in Wolfram's works. Only
Cundrie is an exception, see below p. 223.
5. 84, 13-15.
6. Compare the picture of Condwiramurs, 186, 19-20, and of Repanse de
Schoye, 235, 15-17.
When Wolfram praised Herzeloyde as 'ein wurzel der güste und ein stam der diemüste', 1) he was clearly giving her the highest praise he could, for the expression suggests absolute goodness, in which all the virtues of womanhood combine. The metaphor of the tree is significant, too, for it implies not only that she possessed all these qualities herself, but also that, by her very nature as a mother, she was able to impart them. 2)

Sigune talks to Parzival of his mother in terms of high praise. She remembers her as the woman who comforted her in her distress and gave to her love for Schionatulander understanding and approval. 3)

This Sigune had appreciated at the time, as is known from Titurel, but now, with her own maturity giving her a deeper insight into the mind of the older woman, she can admire her for her womanly goodness, above all for her purity and love. Thus she tells Parzival

\[\text{"wîplîcher kiusche ein bluome ist si, geliutert ñne tou."} \]

Now that she has suffered so deeply herself, she can recognize the grief which Herzeloyde suffered as a result of her love:

\[\text{"groz liebe ier solch herzen furch mit diner muoter triuwe: din vater liez ir riuwe."} \]

In many ways, Sigune comes close to Herzeloyde, for both love with

2. cf. E. Martin: Wolframs von Eschenbach 'Parzival' und 'Titurel': II Kommentar, 128, 27-28: "Beide Bilder besagen, daß Herzelöde alles, was es nur von Güte und Demut geben kann, in sich zu vereinigen, aus sich hervorzubringen schien." (Helle, 1903)
3. See p.121.
4. Titurel, 114ff.
5. 252, 16-17.
6. 140, 18-20.
constancy and must suffer in consequence. Both come to a certain
harmony, although its manifestation is different, for while Sigune
withdraws completely from the world and thus comes to a closer
acquaintance with God, 1) Herzeloyme finds comfort in her son who is
born to replace her husband in some degree and thus to relieve her grief.
Nevertheless, Herzeloyme does find it necessary to withdraw into the
forest, like Sigune, although her reasons are different. Sigune's
withdrawal does not represent a rejection of the world of the court;
at least, this is not her prime intention, even though it may appear
to be a strong motive: her aim is to find in seclusion a means of
mourning her dead lover, and ultimately of atoning for his death. 2)
Herzeloyde's intention is rather more apparent in her actions, for she
actually rejects the courtly life and hopes in rejecting it to keep
her son from the knowledge of it. Nevertheless, the two women do with­
draw from the life which has hitherto dominated their existence, and
it is significant that they are not the only members of the Graal Family
to do so. Kyot, linked by his wife Schoysiane to the Graal, turns to a
life of solitude when overwhelmed by grief at her death, and Trevrizent
seeks to serve the Graal by serving God, leading a life apart from the
courtly world which has brought about the downfall and suffering of
Anfortas and the sorrow of his people.

Parzival, however, is to grow into a man who can steer a middle­
course between that of Anfortas, who allowed the attractions of the
world to ruin him, and Trevrizent, who led an ascetic existence, far
from the courtly world. Parzival is able to do this, however, only

2. See p. 120.
because he comes at last to a reconciliation of the duality within him. On the way he makes mistakes, by allowing one side of his nature to overbalance the other; thus, in questioning Sigune so avidly about Schionatulander, he is going against the courtly code he is later to learn from Gurnemanz, but he is showing his natural uncurbed compassion, while at the Graal Castle, in quelling his spontaneous concern at what he sees, he is allowing an over-literal interpretation of the chivalric code, which was his father's guiding principle, to overwhelm the pity which the son of Herzeloyde must, and did, feel. The achievement of 'máze', the moderate way of life, was the goal of the mediæval knight, but to none did this represent the same problem as to Parzival, for whom it meant a harmonizing of the two elements of his parentage.

It is because he is the son of Herzeloyde that Parzival encounters problems which would not have troubled the less complex Gahmuret, yet it is precisely this complexity which fits him to be King of the Graal. Without the struggle for inner harmony, Parzival might have been a very great knight, like his father, but he needed this struggle in order to emerge at last as a deeper, more integrated being, complex still but with the conflicts in his nature resolved by suffering and experience.

In the early boyhood of Parzival, the complexity of his nature is revealed in the puzzling incident which Wolfram supplies of Parzival's reaction to the birds' song. Its sweetness makes him weep, and Wolfram observes

\[ \text{des twang in art und sin gelust} \]

for from Herzeloyde he has inherited both the sensitive delight in the

1. 118, 28.
sweet sound and an indefinable melancholy which senses sorrow lurking close to joy at all times. With the same kind of intuition which made Herzeloide grieve that Sigune had come to know love so early,\(^1\) she now senses that such sensitivity will bring her son into conflict and danger in the world, and so, without knowing why she does it,\(^2\) she turns her anger on the birds who have aroused this emotion in Parzival.

This slight incident goes beyond the simple and the idyllic, and serves to deepen still more the characters of the boy and his mother. Herzeloide is one of the outstanding examples of the depth of Wolfram's conception of his characters, based as she is on the barely defined widow of Chretien's version. She is a highly complex figure herself, with depths to her nature by no means anticipated by the French source. Like all the great heroines of Wolfram's creation, she is significant both in her own right and in her close relation to Parzival.

Though she dies early in the work, the influence of Herzeloide remains. Her influence on Parzival consists both in her natural legacy to him and in the few precepts of life she gives to him. Her indications of how he should behave in the world are incomplete, and misleading, it is true, while her explanation of the nature of God is ingenuous at the least.\(^3\) She is, however, the first in a line of people who will guide her son, either by actual instructions or by the contact of personalities. Gurnemanz gives him basic lessons in courtly behaviour, while Sigune tells him his name and thus provides him with an essential to the life of the world of men, and at various points in his life she directs him in some

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1. See p. 42.  
2. Wolfram says 'sine wesse um waz' (118, 30).  
way. 1) Trevrizent completes the education begun so tentatively by his sister, giving to Parzival a deep sense of the nature of God and of faith, 2) and instructing him too on the subject of the Graal, its history and its demands. Herzeloyde's somewhat bald teaching with regard to women is taken up by Liaze, 3) who, by her very presence, introduces Parzival to the concept of love, so that in Condwiramurs he can recognize perfect love. A great deal of what Parzival must learn can come only with personal experience, and much of it is beyond the realm of Herzeloyde's knowledge. Thus she is able to die, having lost sight of her son on his way towards his goal, but the memory of her follows him, so that Gurnemanz has to reprove him for quoting his mother so often. 4) Nevertheless, though he does not talk of her so much, he does not forget her, and the most delightful proof of this comes when, at the height of his happiness with Condwiramurs, he begs leave to go and seek his mother. 5) This idea is present already in Le Conte del Graal 6) but there little stress is placed on the link between the two women: it is less apparent that Perceval feels a real need to share his new-found joy with his mother, nor does Blancheflor sense the compliment which is being paid to her, for she protests and so forces Perceval to go without her leave. 7)

1. See p. 114.
2. As Schröder says (Soltane, p.14): "In der Tat hält Parzival den Gottesbegriff, den ihm die Mutter hier vermittelt, unverändert bis zur Begegnung mit Trevrizent fest."
4. 170, 10-12.
5. 223, 17-23
7. Compare the reaction of Condwiramurs, p. 93.
This incident, which closes Book IV, links Herzeloyde and Condwiramurs, as the wife and mother of Parzival must be linked. In Condwiramurs, Parzival has chosen a wife who comes close to his mother in womanly purity and love: Condwiramurs proves during the years of Parzival's absence that she is capable of the same constancy which bound Herzeloyde to Gahmuret and which ensures that she will be re-united with him in death, once she has seen their son taking the path on which she has set him but by which she knows he will never return.
Condwiramurs

The character of Condwiramurs, like that of Herzeloyde, is dependent on the role she is required to play in the work. Just as the mother of the noblest knight must be a truly noble woman herself, so must the woman he chooses as his wife. Unlike Herzeloyde, however, Condwiramurs is not seen to develop during the course of the work. She does not grow towards perfection: rather is she perfect from the start. It is true that external circumstances touch her, but they do not change her as they do Herzeloyde. the effect of these external circumstances - separation from Parzival, the call to the Graal Kingdom - is rather to prove again the worth already established at her first meeting with Parzival.

Parzival's meeting with Condwiramurs is prepared for by his acquaintance with Liaze, and the transition from the one to the other is a smooth one. A link is already present in their relationship as cousins, yet of this relationship Parzival is not aware, when he feels again that here is Liaze:

\[
\text{"der gast gedâht, ich sage iu wie.}\n\text{"Lîâze ist dort, Lîâze ist hie.}\n\text{mir wil got sorge mazzen:}\n\text{nu sihe ich Lîâzen,}\n\text{des werden Gurnemanzes kint."} 3)
\]

What he sees in Condwiramurs is that womanhood which he came to know in Liaze. Liaze's physical beauty is enhanced in Condwiramurs, as

1. There is a distinct development in Herzeloyde, brought about by marriage to Gahmuret, his death, the birth of Parzival.
2. See p. 197 ff.
3. 188, 1-5
Wolfram suggests:

\[ \text{Lîazen schœne was ein wint gein der meide diu hie saz,} \]

Since physical beauty so often reflects spiritual beauty, the implication is that Condwiramurs is more perfect too in virtue.

Despite the difference, Parzival recognizes the qualities which he came so near to loving in Liaze. The connection in Parzival's mind, the result of youthful inexperience which interprets all things in terms of the first, is not one which Wolfram desires to undermine; in fact, he too stresses the connection between the two women, allowing Condwiramurs to refer to the childhood which they shared and linking them further by means of Schentaflurs, Liaze's brother, who was killed in the defence of Condwiramurs.

When Parzival left Gurnemanz, he gave as his excuse that he could not accept the love of a woman until he had proved himself worthy of her. Whatever his unconscious yearnings at this point, this was certainly a genuine consideration with him, for Liaze, who could have become his wife whenever he wished it, had to be won, in accordance with his newly acquired code of chivalry. He rides away, then, leaving the sorrowing Gurnemanz with the hope that he may one day return to claim

1. 188, 6-7. This does not mean, however, that Condwiramurs does not resemble Liaze: it is a case of the same kind of beauty greatly enhanced, but Wolfram does not deny the similarity. cf. H. Sacker in note on Liaze p. 180.(2).

2. With the exception of Cundrie (see p. 273), Wolfram's noble women are all beautiful.

3. 189, 27 ff.

4. 177, 29-178, 3.
his bride. Almost immediately he involves himself in an act of valour which would certainly prove him worthy of Liaze. However, it is not Liaze whom he wins by the defence of Pelrapeire, but Condwiramurs, who exceeds Liaze in beauty, and whose love for him will contain all the devotion of true 'minne' in Wolfram's sense of the term,\(^1\) which finds supreme expression in the love between a man and his wife. The perfect nature of the love between Parzival and Condwiramurs emphasizes the lack of depth in his relationship with Liaze, whom Wolfram remembers as 

\[
\begin{align*}
der \text{ meide sælden riche,} \\
\text{diu im geselleclîche} \\
sunder minnîbôt ëre.
\end{align*}
\]

Nevertheless, without Liaze Parzival would have been ill-prepared for Condwiramurs. As it is, he has three encounters with women, moving smoothly and logically from the uncouth and purely physical attack on Jeschute, through the incomplete yet sincere love for Liaze, to the perfect bond with Condwiramurs. This threefold development follows, too, Parzival's own development, from a youth who knows virtually nothing, to a young man with the beginnings of knowledge and an awakening awareness of life, and then to a man who has endured in combat and proved himself worthy of a woman's love. The lessons in noble combat which he learnt from Gurnemanz are able to be demonstrated in his fight with Kingrun, then with Clamide, and in his mercy towards them once he has defeated them. Thus he shows himself master of one aspect of knighthood. In the person of Condwiramurs, he finds perfected the beauty and virtue of womanhood which were hinted at in Liaze, and in

2. 179, 27-29.
loving her as a true husband and a noble knight he becomes master of
the other aspect of knighthood, which is the art of courtly love. Thus,
at Pelrapeire, Parzival achieves maturity as a man and as a knight, but
it is a superficial maturity as yet, one which conforms to the values
of society but goes no deeper. His maturity must be tried, by suffering
and loss, grief and degradation, before he can emerge finally as a truly
mature man. The part played by Condwiramurs in this growth towards
maturity is a considerable one, and the recognition of her part comes
when her name appears side-by-side with his on the Graal.\(^1\)

Before that moment of joy, Condwiramurs must share in the grief of
Parzival, and it is apt that this marriage, which is to know five years
of separation and sorrow, should begin, not in the splendour and carefree
atmosphere of the court, but in a town in very real distress, in a state
of siege and threatened by an apparently invincible army. The situation
is reminiscent of that in Patelamunt\(^2\), although the circumstances are
different, and Parzival's marriage to Condwiramurs echoes his father's
to Belakane. In both cases, the marriage is based on mutual love,
supported by an act of valour. For Wolfram the act of valour alone
was insufficient basis for marriage; in fact Parzival and Condwiramurs
are already married before Parzival's victory over Clamide frees her
from danger.\(^3\)

When Parzival meets Condwiramurs and seems to find Liaze again,
Wolfram is surely suggesting that he has fallen in love with her already,

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1. See below, p.81.
2. See below, p.159/60.
3. It is, of course, assumed that Parzival will be victorious, but
   that they marry before the victory seems to point to a true love-
   match.
since in Condwiramurs he sees a renewed version of the girl he had loved, though without intensity,¹ and whom he had remembered since leaving her with pain and some regret.² When Condwiramurs and Parzival sit down together, Wolfram draws attention to the splendid match:

```plaintext
ez wâren wol nütziu wîp,
die disiu zwei gebâren,
diu dâ bê ein ander wâren.
dô schuof wîp unde man
niht mêr wan daz si sâhen an
 diu zwei bê ein ander. ³)
```

Here, too, there is an echo of the earlier occasion, when Parzival had sat at table with Liaze and they too had seemed such a well-matched couple.⁴ There are other echoes too, which suggest a repetition of the earlier meeting with Liaze. Both Liaze and Condwiramurs kiss Parzival in greeting,⁵ a conventional welcome admittedly,⁶ but since it is convention, perhaps it is not strained to find significance in the fact that Wolfram sees fit to mention it, and in both cases he draws attention to the redness of the women's lips, symbols of their womanhood, their beauty, their power to love. Only when Parzival kisses Condwiramurs, however, does Wolfram point out how his lips match hers in redness, hinting perhaps at the love which is to be mutual between them.⁷)

In womanly beauty, Condwiramurs is supreme, excelling not only Liaze,

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1. One is justified, surely, in believing that Parzival did love Liaze in a way, see p. 200f.
2. See 179, 13ff.
3. 187, 24-29.
5. 176, 9; 187, 2.
6. Among many other instances of a kiss in greeting between strangers, Gahmuret is kissed by the wife of the governor of Patelamunt, 20, 25, and Antikonie kisses Gawan, 405, 12.
but Jes chute, Enite, Cunneware and the two Isoldes. Thus Wolfram raises his herzoine above all other women who are acclaimed both by himself and his contemporaries for their beauty. Only in Repanse de Schoye, whose womanly excellence fits her to be Graal Bearer, does Condwiramurs ever encounter a serious rival, but even she does not outshine Parzival's wife. To describe the beauty of Condwiramurs, Wolfram uses the image of the rose washed with dew:

... als von dem süezen touwe
diu rôze ûz ir bälgelin
blecket niwen werden schin,
der beidiu wîz ist unde rôt. 3)

He does not, however, refer often to her beauty. It is sufficient to have stated at the first encounter that she surpasses these other beautiful women, and her beauty is something which is taken for granted, in accordance with Wolfram's custom of clothing great virtue in great beauty. It is, however, significant that he refers to the radiance of Condwiramurs when Parzival first meets her:

ein minnclîch antûtzes schin,
dar zuo der ougen süeze sin,
von der kûeginne gienc
ein liechter glast, ê sin empfienc. 5)

1. 187, 14ff.
2. See 811, lff. and p. 169. Wolfram says also (508, 22-23) that Orgeluse comes close to Condwiramurs in beauty: see p. 302.
3. 188, 10-13. Perhaps he is remembering Belakane, who, though beautiful (see p. 169 below), possessed a different kind of beauty, 'der touwegen rôsen ungelîch' (24, 10).
4. This Dr Richey also notes (M. F. Richey: Studies of Wolfram von Eschenbach, Edinburgh and London, 1957. p. 167), and she contrasts Wolfram's reticence at this point with the careful details which Chrâti en gives of the beauty of Blancheflor.
5. 186, 17-20.
More than any other description, this radiance suggests a giving-out of all that lies beneath it,\(^1\) and it is a very apt view of Condwiramurs, whose virtue, of love and devotion, is to be the source of inspiration to Parzival.\(^2\) Apart from this radiance, the beauty of Condwiramurs is epitomized in the image of the rose, which prepares the way for Parzival's later transfixion when he sees the blood in the snow.\(^3\) Red and white thus become symbolic of Condwiramurs and of his love for her, with a hint even of the sorrow which is the traditional association of red and white.

It is interesting that, of all Wolfram's major heroines, Condwiramurs is the least deliberately characterized. Much is left unsaid about her nobility and virtue, possibly because there is no need to extol individual virtues in a woman who loves, and is loved by, the greatest of all knights. Certainly, the ultimate evidence of her great worth comes in her call to the Graal Kingdom: all other praise is superfluous, in view of the honour which is to come to her. Since the Graal is essentially a spiritual goal, demanding faith of those who serve it, the fact that she is called to its kingship with Parzival suggest divine

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1. Wolfram describes the beauty of Herzeloyde and of Repanse de Schoye also as a bright light (cf. 64, 4; 235, 15ff.) Radiant beauty is clearly the outward expression of inward perfection.

2. The significance of this first impression of radiance is all the greater if one remembers that Condwiramurs is in dire trouble at the time, suffering from a tremendous anxiety and a lack of food. Later she fears even that Parzival is not interested in her because she has grown so thin (188, 26-27). The beauty which reflects inner purity remains despite hardship, just as Jeschute is beautiful in spite of the rags she wears and the distress she has endured (see 257, 12ff. and p. 142 f).

3. See below for this episode. For the idea of the blood in the snow, Wolfram is dependent on Chrétien (ed. cit. 419ff.), but he endows the incident with greater significance, preparing for it as here. Chrétien does not link red and white together as characteristic of the beauty of Blancheflor. Wolfram's description is impressionistic, compared with the more elaborate details of Chrétien's.
approval of the union, rather as the death of Sigune in the attitude of prayer suggests that her love for Schionatulander has found favour with God. Their marriage is conceived, in fact, as an act of divine Will, since Wolfram says that Parzival's combat with Clamide will show whether God wishes him to keep Condwiramurs or not:

\[ \text{üz kom geriten Parzival} \\
\text{an daz urteilliche wal,} \\
\text{dâ got erzeigen solde} \\
\text{ober im lâzen wolde} \\
\text{des kû nec Tampenteires parn.} \]

More clearly than anywhere else, it is in the case of Parzival and Condwiramurs that Wolfram extols the state of marriage, showing it to be a sacred union. Gurnemanz had told Parzival of the relationship between a man and his wife:

\[ \text{man und wîp diu sint al ein.} \]

and this Parzival remembers when he finds joy in physical union with Condwiramurs:

\[ \text{von im dicke wart gedâht} \\
\text{umbevâhens, daz sin mûter riet:} \\
\text{Gurnemanz im ouch underschiet,} \\
\text{man und wîp wær al ein.} \]

The oneness of man and wife goes deeper than physical union, and Condwiramurs becomes an essential part of Parzival, the reason behind his striving and his constant support in grief and loneliness, until she becomes essential also to his achievement of the Graal Kingdom, which demands perfect marriage of its ruler. Thus it happens that she is

1. 210, 27-211, 1.
2. He does so in contrast to Chrétien, for whom Blancheflor is 'la bele amie' of Perceval. (ed. cit. 2417, 2912)
3. 173, 1.
4. 203, 2-5
5. This Trevrizent tells Parzival: 495, 9-10.
named together with him on the Graal\(^1\) and that she is already on her way to meet him when he hears of his call\(^2\), so that they may journey together towards their kingdom. The achievement of it has been a combined effort, in which each has contributed equally, though in a different way\(^3\). Without the support of Condwiramurs, Parzival's striving would have been in vain, for it is the awareness of her love which sustains him through the years of separation and lonely despair.\(^4\) The power of this love is made more apparent by the fact that during all this time Condwiramurs does not appear in the work except in the thoughts of Parzival.\(^5\) In this way, their separation is emphasized even more, and Condwiramurs appears in the final book as the physical proof of the love which has been their one bond during the five years of separation.

Throughout these years, mention of Condwiramurs recurs at regular intervals, always to show that she is constantly in Parzival's thoughts. When Parzival leaves her, he is going in search of the fame which will make him worthy of her:

\[
\text{mag ich iu gedienen vil,} \\
\text{daz giltet iwer minne wert.} \quad 6)
\]

When Parzival leaves Arthur's Court and embarks on his long quest,

---

1. 781, 17-19.
2. 796, 29ff.
3. I do not agree with Professor Bumke (J. Bumke Wolframs Willehalm, Heidelberg, 1959, p.144 note 3) when he says: "Condwiramurs wird zwar Graalkönigin, aber ihr fehlt jede innere Affinität dazu". Surely Wolfram's meaning in allowing them to be named together is clear.
4. cf. U. Heise (op cit. p.43): "... die unbedingte 'triuwe' der Kondwiramurs, die von nun an hinter Parzival steht, ist nötig für Parzival als leitende Kraft, gerade dann, wenn er in Not und Entbehrung gerät, wenn er sein Ziel über lange Zeit hin nicht erreicht".
5. See below. 6. 223, 24-25.
Wolfram states explicitly that the thought of her will spur him in many undertakings:

Condwîr âmûrs,
dîn minneclîcher bèâ curs,
an den wîrt dicke nu gedâht.
was dir wîrt äventiure brâht! 1)

Certainly, in the momentous fight with Feirefiz, Condwiramurs is the force which turns the action, when Parzival is almost succumbing to the might of his half-brother. Wolfram describes the way in which strength comes to Feirefiz each time he calls the name of Sekundille's city 2) and he desperately urges Parzival to think of his own wife, who, with the thought of the Graal, can save him from death now:

wes sûmestu dich, Parzival,
daz du an die kiuschen lieht gemâl
niht denkest (ich mein din wîp),
wiltu behalten hie den lip?

He grows exasperated when Parzival is slow to think of Condwiramurs:

daz wende, tugenthafter grâdî:
Condwîr âmûrs diu lieht gemâl:
hie stêt iur beider dienstman
in der grœsten nôt dier ie gewan. 3)

At last relief comes to Parzival with the thought of his wife, and the thought of her noble love:

der getoufte nam an kreften zuo.
er dâht (des was im niht ze fruo)
an sin wîp die küneginne
unt an ir werden minne.

The effect is immediate, and with the thought of her and the shout of

2. "und swenn er schrite Thabronit,
sô trat er fürbaz einen trit." (739, 25-26)
3. 740, 19-22.
4. 742, 27-30.
5. 743, 22-26.
'Pelrapeire!', strength returns to him. Thus the intolerable consequence, the death of Parzival at the hand of his half-brother, is averted, when with renewed vigour he aims a blow at Feirefiz which breaks his own sword and so, thanks to his opponent's generosity, terminates the fight. Nowhere is the power of the love of Condwiramurs more apparent than here, where Wolfram describes it as coming to Parzival across four kingdoms and unmarred by the years of separation. ¹)

When Parzival departs, saying that he wishes to seek his mother and the fame which will make him worthy of Condwiramurs, he is, of course, unaware that his absence will be lengthened by his failure at the Graal and the years during which he seeks to atone for it. Once Cundrie has drawn his attention to his negligence, accusing him of having brought dishonour on himself and the Round Table, he can clearly not return to Condwiramurs, since, thus dishonoured, he is not worthy of her love. ²)

It is thus that finding the Graal becomes essential if he is ever to return to her. The quest for the Graal becomes a quest too for his wife, and so the Graal and Condwiramurs become one as the goal of his striving. During Parzival's wanderings, alone and downcast, his thoughts are of the Graal and Condwiramurs, and the two are often mentioned together:

\[ \text{sine gedanke umben gr\text{"a}l} \\
\text{unt der kung\text{"i}n glichiu m\text{"a}l}, \]
\[ \text{iewederz was ein strengiu n\text{"o}:} \]

¹. 744, 4ff.
². Parzival does not actually say this, but the implication is apparent.
³. 296, 5-7.
Parzival tells Sigune how he has paid for his reticence at the Graal with the companionship of his wife:

'dâ hân ich freude vil verlorn.
der grâl mir sorgen gît genuoc.
ich liez ein lant dâ ich krâne truoc,
dar zuo dez minneclîchste wîp:

and at Trevrizent's hermitage he says:

'mîn hênstiu nôt ist umben grâl;
dâ nâch umb mîn selôes wîp:
ûf erde nie schœner lip
gesouc an keiner muoter brust.
nâch den beiden sent sich mîn gelust.' 2)

On both occasions last quoted here, Parzival places his yearning for the Graal higher than his yearning for his wife, but, then, as a spiritual goal, the Graal must clearly take precedence over a human being. Moreover, the Graal would automatically bring him again to Condwiramurs, since in atoning for his former failure there he would re-establish his honour and so be worthy of her. The Graal, then, is the foremost object of his striving, though the desire for his wife is intense and constant. 3)

On the plain of Plimizoel, his love overwhelms all other desire, when he becomes transfixed by the sight of the blood in the snow. It

1. 441, 4-7.
2. 467, 25-30.
3. It is essential that the desire for the Graal does not detract from Parzival's love for Condwiramurs, that the achievement of the first implies the achievement of the second. For this reason, the view expressed by C.F. Bayerschmidt ("Wolfram von Eschenbach's Christian Faith", Germanic Review, 29, 1954, pp. 214-223) p.222, does not seem quite just: "... although he is drawn to his wife with all the bonds of love, he is drawn even more to the Grail and everything which its possession implies." The view of W.J. Schröder (Der Ritter zwischen Welt und Gott, Weimar, 1952) p.153, is more satisfactory: "Der Sinn ist: obwohl der Schmerz um die verlassene Gattin den Helden mit starker Gewalt zur Rückkehr treibt, bleibt er doch dem Streben nach dem Grale treu". Schröder is thus able to express the situation as follows: "Je mehr die Kraft der Liebe zur Gattin betont wurde, um so mehr mußte auch der Drang zum Gral hervortreten." This seems a very just conclusion.
is true that at this point he has not experienced the violent reproaches of Cundrie, and, although he knows of his failure from Sigune, he has not yet abandoned all joy in search of the Graal. The power of love is more painful, then, than his grief at his failure and only later is he to know the despair and hardship of a lonely search. The three drops of blood in the snow remind him of Condwiramurs, and with the memory he loses consciousness. Even knightly honour has no meaning for him in this state, and his actions, even the wounding of Kei which fulfils his very dear ambition of avenging Cunneware, are conditioned by his position in relation to the drops of blood.

The sight of the red drops against the white of the snow leads Parzival to praise God Who has created the beauty of Condwiramurs:

```
do er die bluotes zäher sach
üf dem snê (der was al wîz),
dô dâhter 'wer hât sînen vilîz
gewant an disé varwe clâr?
Cundwier âmûrs, sich mac für wâr
disius varwe dir gelîchen.
mich wil got sælden rîchen,
Sît ich dir hie gelîchez vant.
gêret sî diu gotes hant
und al diu créatiure sîn.
```

In view of this outburst of praise, it is ironical that Parzival is so soon to renounce the God he now extols and to turn from his wife, the source of all his joy. Only towards the end of his quest, when, at

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1. This is prepared for in their first meeting, see p. 79: it is therefore more evident to the reader of Parzival why the hero is affected in this way, whereas Chrétien, the originator of the idea, needs to point out the resemblance: ed. cit. 4199ff.

2. See p. 216.

3. The movement of his horse decides whether or not he can see the drops of blood, hence when he is in his senses and when he is not.

4. 282, 24-283, 3.

5. His turning from Condwiramurs is inevitable because he has fallen into dishonour, but it in no way represents a rejection of her, and significantly he tells Gawan to trust a pure woman rather than God - a tribute surely to Condwiramurs even at this point when he must leave her.
Trevrizent's hermitage, he turns once more to God, does he find again the path which will lead to the Graal and hence to his wife. These points all contribute to Wolfram's concept of the sacredness of the marriage of Parzival and Condwiramurs, with its basis in the battle with Clamide, in which God showed that it was His will that she should remain Parzival's wife. 1)

The Plimizoel is the scene of the strange experience of the blood in the snow, which bears witness to the depth of Parzival's love for his wife. It is apt, then that it should also be the scene of the reunion of Parzival and Condwiramurs, and Wolfram himself points out the link:

```
der herzoge Kyöt
und anders manec werder man
heten si gefueret dan
ze Terre de salvæsche in den walt,
da mit der tjoste wart gevalt
Segramors unt da der sne
mit bluote sich ir gličht ê. 2)
```

Between these two events, the one bitter-sweet and the other full of joy, lies another: it was at the Plimizoel that Cundrie appeared to accuse Parzival and so to cast him into despair. Here he became aware of his loss of honour and so voluntarily, yet inevitably in view of his notion of marriage, he determined to abandon joy, which consisted for him in companionship with Condwiramurs. It is fitting that he should find her once more in the place where he had virtually lost her, and that in the place where he was shown to be dishonoured he should reveal himself in his new honour as Graal King. Where he had once seen the beautiful image of his wife, he now finds her in person:

1. See p. 80.
2. 797, 4-10.
Another echo is present here, for Wolfram tells how many of the army which once fought against Clamide now gather to sing a Mass of praise and gratitude: thus their marriage, which began with Parzival's rescue of Condwiramurs, now receives additional blessing and affirmation.  

During the years between the first incident by the Flimiziol and the last, Parzival and Conwiramurs remain true to one another. Parzival's sorrow during his absence bears witness to his constant love for her, as he says himself:

```
diu mich twinget minnen gir,
stiend unser minne, min unt ir,
daz scheiden dar zuo hörte
sô daz uns zwivél störte,
ich möht wol zanderr minne komm:
  nu hât ir minne mir benomm
ander minne und freudebæren tróst.
```

We know that the beautiful Orgeluse was disappointed in her attempts to woo him. She, who was loved by so many men and whose beauty was excelled only by that of Condwiramurs herself, could do nothing to distract the Red Knight from his purpose. Of the constancy of Condwiramurs we need no evidence, and Wolfram finds it sufficient to state that she remained pure during all the time of their separation:

1. 802, 1-5
2. 802, 24ff.
3. 733, 9-16
4. 508, 22-23
5. See pp. 300-302.
uns tuot diu Aventiure kunt,  
wie von Pelrapeir diu künigin  
ir künschen wiplichen sin  
behielt unz an ir lões stat, 1)  
dà si in höhe sælde trat.

The virtues of Condwiramurs need no elaboration or illustration.2) Her supreme beauty, mentioned on several occasions, reflects inner perfection which makes her worthy to be Parzival's wife, to accompany him in his mind during all the years of his quest and to be reunited with him as Queen of the Graal.3) From the beginning, however, Wolfram is at pains to stress her purity, and for this reason he found it necessary to change her name from the Blancheflor of Chrétien, who behaved with unbecoming indiscretion in her desire for the love of Perceval.4) Condwiramurs comes to Parzival in the night with the sole intention of pleading for help in her imminent danger.5) Wolfram describes the whole incident

1. 734, 10-14
2. Perhaps this is what U. Heise (op.cit.p.45) is thinking of when she describes her as 'klar, einfach und strahlend': Wolfram's picture of her is clear; her virtue needs no elaboration, and in this way she is perhaps justly described as 'einfach'.
3. As noted (p. 8(8)), my view here contradicts that of Professor Bumke, who speaks of Condwiramurs as lacking in 'innere Affinität' to the role of Graal Queen.
4. The change in name is indicative of the change which Wolfram produces in his treatment of the episode: the two accounts are very different. The relationship of Perceval and Blancheflor is on a much more superficial level: she is his 'lovely sweetheart', his 'bele amie' (ed. cit. 2417, 2912), whereas it is essential to Wolfram's conception of their love that it culminates in marriage in which man and woman are one. Wolfram endows their marriage with even greater significance, when he stresses, in contrast to Chrétien, that the Graal King must have a lawful wife. As B.Q. Morgan says (op. cit. p.184), Wolfram 'has ennobled to a remarkable degree a very ordinary romantic adventure'.
5. Wolfram adopted the situation of the forceful suitor from Chrétien, also the threat of the woman to commit suicide: cf. 195,23 and Le C. del G. ed. cit 2027.
gently, suggesting the innocence and purity of it.\(^1\) Even the garment which Condwiramurs is wearing Wolfram interprets as the attire of war:

\[
\begin{align*}
an \text{ ir was wellichiu wât,} \\
ein \text{ hemde wiz sôûn:} \\
waz wôhte kampflîcher sîn, \\
dan gein dem man sus komende ein wîp? \(^2\)
\end{align*}
\]

and he emphasizes that she comes for advice and aid in her distress, with no thought of love in her mind:

\[
\begin{align*}
dô gienc diu kûneginne, \\
niht nâch sôûher minne \\
diu sôûhen namen reizet \\
der meide wîp heizet, \\
si suochte helfe unt friundes rât. \(^3\)
\end{align*}
\]

Parzival, for his part, accepts her visit, too, as a quest for help, and he agrees to defend her. He does so, however, when she mentions Liaze,\(^5\) and this fact too suggests that as yet all thought of a new love is far from his mind. Condwiramurs leaves Parzival at dawn, thanking him for his offer of aid, and thus their relationship begins with the promise of defence on the one side and gratitude on the other,\(^6\) with no thought for the more complex relationship of 'minne'.

---

2. 192, 14-17.
4. Again, compare his discreet solicitude (193, 25-28) with the embraces of Perceval and Blancheflor (1977 ff.).
5. 195, 7.
6. The perfect trust which exists at once between Parzival and Condwiramurs is in sharp contrast to the impression left by Chrétien's account. This contrast is well summarized by B. Q. Morgan (op. cit. p.185): "Still more fundamental are the further omissions of Wolfram's account. Parzival has promised to aid her, and in the morning she is content merely to see him before he goes forth to battle. Not so Chrétien's heroine. She is sly and sophisticated, she does not trust the stranger and wishes to test his fidelity. Accordingly she goes to him and hypocritically urges him to leave her castle, where he cannot be entertained handsomely; when he still remains ready to fight for her, she tests him again by insinuating that he cannot manage the enemy he has to face."
When they are married, Wolfram stresses their joy in one another's company, even without the consummation of their union:

\[ \text{si wären mit ein ander so,} \\
\text{daz si durch liebe wäre vro,} \\
\text{zwêen tâge unt die dritten naht.} \]

In this way, Wolfram raises the marriage of Condwiramurs and Parzival above the purely physical, so that theirs is a spiritual union too, in which, in every sense, man and woman are one. The perfect nature of their union, their oneness in every respect, is manifested both in the birth of the noble twins and in the call of both Parzival and Condwiramurs to the Graal.

The beginning of their love is hinted at in Parzival's preoccupation with Condwiramurs during Mass on the morning after she has come to him for help, and perhaps already here there is a hint of the spirituality of their love which does not intrude, such is its purity, even on the religious service. When Parzival has defeated Kingrun, he bids him go to Condwiramurs, his first act of service towards the woman whom he is to serve for ever, and when he returns Condwiramurs greets him with the declaration that no other man shall be her husband. Their marriage has a quality of the inevitable, the pre-ordained, rather as Gahmuret met

1. 202, 29-203, 1.
2. Dr Richey (Schionatulander and Sigune, p.25) speaks of their early marriage as 'a time of lovely achievements, unshadowed by any regret for the scarce-realised faults of innocence'. The spirituality of the love of Parzival and Condwiramurs is treated at some length also in the article by Carl Wesle (C. Wesle: "Zu Wolframs Parzival", Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur, Halle, 72, 1950, pp. 1-39.
3. 196, 16ff.
Belakane through the apparently chance event of the storm. The preliminaries to marriage are unnecessary, therefore, and that evening Parzival rules over the house and the kingdom as its lord. There is no question of the fitness of the marriage of this perfectly matched couple, so Wolfram omits the details, in rather the same way as he finds it superfluous to elaborate on the virtues of Condwiramurs.

1. Throughout the early part of their relationship, Wolfram suggests, though very gently, that the two are intended for one another: their red lips match, and Parzival feels that he has found Liaze again, as though having rejected her he has yet returned to her. Ursula Heise (op. cit. p.43) speaks of three occasions when Condwiramurs goes against courtly behaviour in the certainty that Parzival is meant to be her husband, when she speaks first, when she comes to him at night, when she publicly declares that no-one else will be her husband. This seems a little exaggerated, since her action in each case is explicable and justifiable in other terms: she opens the conversation after assuring herself that he is waiting for her to speak as befits the hostess; Wolfram explains her visit at night as an innocent quest for help in which thoughts of love are quite absent; it was not extraordinary for the woman to do the wooing in mediaeval times, so that her action in declaring that he will be her husband is not entirely beyond the realms of discretion. It seems rather strong, therefore, to speak of her as going against the code of courtly manners, but it is nevertheless true to say, as Ursula Heise does, in speaking of these three occasions (op. cit. p.43) "Sie gibt seinem Wort, seinem Tun und seiner Entscheidung A n s t o i . Sie öffnet jeweils in ihm eine Tür, damit er sich selbst finde. Sie tut es instinkтив, rein und selbstlos" Wesle (op. cit. p.17) speaks of the silence between the pair as "die natürliche Befangenheit von zwei jungen Menschen, die ihre Begegnung als schicksalhaft empfinden". Though, to some extent, Parzival's readiness to aid her may be interpreted as proof of his feeling that he is meant to do so, it must be remembered that he has already shown himself sensitive to the distress of others: having shown himself eager to avenge the grief of Sigune, he is hardly likely to remain untouched by this woman who reminds him of a girl he came close to loving and who actually begs him to help her.

2. The slight touch of their having shared the last crumb of food between them points to their oneness, even on the first evening: 191, 5-6 cf. also Dr Richey (The Independence ... p.357).
He does, however, state explicitly at one point that she is the most perfect of all women. When Parzival has taken leave of her, he is troubled by sadness:

\[
\begin{align*}
ein \text{ dinc in müete sere,} \\
\text{daz er von ir gescheiden was,} \\
\text{daz müht von wibe nie gelas} \\
\text{noch sus gesagte mære,} \\
\text{diu schœnr und bezzer wäre.}
\end{align*}
\]

However Wolfram may praise other women, Condwiramurs remains supreme. Sigune is exalted for her faith and loving devotion, Repanse de Schoye for her purity, Belakane for her love. All these are very noble women, it is clear, and Herzeloyde is perfect in all womanly virtues, alone compared with the Virgin Mary. Yet Wolfram maintains that Condwiramurs is the most beautiful and most virtuous woman ever read about or spoken of: higher praise he could not offer.

The closeness of Condwiramurs to Herzeloyde is suggested in Parzival's desire to see his mother when he is at the peak of his first happiness with his wife. He has never forgotten her, nor does he forget her now. His desire to see Herzeloyde, however, is not the whole of his motive in asking his leave of Condwiramurs. He admits, unlike his father, that he desires adventure and fame, and Condwiramurs, in her love for him, cannot deny him his wish:

\[
\begin{align*}
sus \text{ het er urloubs gegert.} \\
\text{er was ir liep, so'z mære giht} \\
sine \text{ wolde im versagen n iht.}
\end{align*}
\]

1. 224, 10-14.
2. 113, 17ff. See full discussion of the lines p.54 ff.
3. 223, 17 ff.
4. 223, 23.
5. 223, 26-28.
More clearly than anywhere else is shown here this basic difference in the nature of man and woman, for Condwiramurs is perfectly content in her love for Parzival:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{diu junge süeze werde} \\
\text{het den wunsch ûf der erde!} \\
\text{ir minne stuont mit sölher kraft,} \\
\text{gar âne wankes anehaft.} \\
\text{si het ir man dâ für erkant,} \\
\text{iewederz an dem andern vant,} \\
\text{er was ir liep, als was si im.}\end{align*}
\]

She desires no more, yet Parzival, no less in love with her and no less happy, cannot remain content. The chivalry which is part of what she loves in him must be nurtured and renewed, if he is to remain worthy of her love. Thus his desire for action draws him, as it draws every noble knight, from his wife, who, although she does not share his need for a different way of life, must accept that only by releasing him can she keep his love.\(^2\) Condwiramurs is only one victim of the dichotomy in the life of the noble knight, whose aim must be to achieve a harmony of the two essentials of his existence.\(^3\)

When Wolfram wrote that Condwiramurs was the most noble and most beautiful woman ever written about or spoken of,\(^4\) he had himself not yet written Willehalm, in which, in Gyburc, he was to show womanly perfection combined with manly courage.\(^5\) It is difficult to say whether

---

1. 223, 1-7.
2. Once more she differs from Blancheflor who protests and tries to hold Perceval back, so that he has to go against her will (Le C. del G. ed. cit. 2923ff) Condwiramurs places no conditions on his return, unlike Laudine, who, finding it necessary to bind Iwein to her, brought them close to tragedy. The absolute trust of Condwiramurs is rewarded by the constancy of Parzival during his absence and his eventual return.
3. With her may be compared Herzeloyde, Belakane, Schoette.
4. See above.
5. See detailed study of Gyburc.
Gyburc in fact exceeds even Condwiramurs in virtue, but certainly the two women have much in common. Condwiramurs is fit to be Queen of the Graal, and Gyburc is raised by Wolfram to the rank of a saint. Possibly there is little to choose between them in virtue, save that circumstances permit Gyburc to reveal soldierly courage and endurance which are never required of Condwiramurs. Because the circumstances are different and there is never any need for Condwiramurs to don the attire and demeanour of a man, it is fruitless of speculate about their relative excellence. Nevertheless, there are points of similarity which are relevant, in the consideration of Wolfram's ideal of womanhood.

Gyburc is the reason behind the striving of Willehalm, his constant support in grief and hardship, and the thought of her is with him during the time of separation. Like Condwiramurs to Parzival's, she is essential to his existence. In the marriage of Gyburc and Willehalm is shown again the perfectioneness of the marriage of Parzival and Condwiramurs, and thus Wolfram has shown another marriage which exemplifies his ideal, in which each partner contributes equally, to the greater benefit of both.

It is surely not coincidence that Wolfram chose to use the motif of the exchange of hearts in both cases, for, though a familiar mediæval notion,

1. This certainly seems to be Wolfram's view, but as noted on p. 81(3) above, my opinion on this point is in contradiction to that of Professor Bumke.
2. See p. 136 ff.
3. But again note Professor Bumke (op. cit. p.180, note 105): "Die übliche Parallelisierung der Liebe Willehalms und Giburgs mit der Parzival und Condwiramurs' trägt nicht viel zum Verständnis bei. Denn die erlösende eheliche Liebe gibt es im Parzival noch nicht." This view would seem to be contradicted by the facts: Parzival is sustained by the thought of his wife, until with his return to faith and his achievement of the Graal, he is able to live with her again; her love, as much as anything, brings him to God and to the spiritual goal of the Graal.
it is not a frequent one with him, and would seem to indicate the total union of the partners in each marriage.¹)

The distress in which Parzival finds Condwiramurs is similar to that suffered by Gyburc, for both women must endure siege and threat of attack, and both must suffer too the knowledge that they have been the cause of hardship, even death, to those who served them. This is a thought which grieves them both,²) yet neither can regret the principle for which she stands and which is being defended with death and suffering. Only by acceptance of what they believe to be wrong - Gyburc the heathen ideals which she has rejected, and Condwiramurs marriage to a man she does not love - could they prevent this suffering. Again, circumstances result in a difference between these two women, for Condwiramurs, a lady of the court, is not placed in a position where she must defend a city alone: Parzival defends it for her, and the desperate situation is ended. Gyburc, because Willehalm must ride in search of more aid, is left to defend Orange, and this she does with courage and endurance, No less, however, does Condwiramurs, in the way which lies open to her,

1. Parzival, 302, Iff; Willehalm, 109, 6ff.
2. Compare, Parzival, 194, 21-25

and Willehalm, 306, 12-17

defend all that is dear to her husband. In remaining at home, constant in her love for him, she spurs Parzival in his quest as much as Gyburc spurs Willehalm, who is confident that she will keep the city until he returns to her. Condwiramurs remains true to Parzival and gives birth to her sons, whom she rears as fit heirs to their father's kingdom. Both women thus ensure that the one they love will have something to return to, and a future which is safe and good.

The situation of danger and despair in which Parzival finds Condwiramurs echoes that in which Gahmuret came to Belakane, who in some ways anticipates Gyburc too. The reason for the situation is different in each of the three cases, although the effect is similar. Belakane is threatened by a revengeful force of friends of the man whom she loved dearly, yet who died for her sake; Condwiramurs is held besieged by Clamide whom she will marry at no price; Gyburc is faced with death and the destruction of those who serve her if she will not return to the man who was once her husband and thus to the religion she has forsaken.

The three men who have given rise to the situation are bound to one another too, for they are all noble, yet each of them, Isenhart, Tibalt, and Clamide, must be superseded by an even more noble man. Each of them,

1. See p. 158
2. On the subject of Belakane's love for Isenhart, see p. 158
3. See p. 143
4. The nobility of Isenhart and Tibalt is hardly to be disputed: Belakane loved Isenhart and grieves for his death, together with his men; for Tibalt, Gyburc has only praise, his one lack having been the knowledge of the Christian God (see p. 146). The nobility of Clamide is rather less apparent, for he is remembered above all as the unscrupulous suitor who is prepared to force Condwiramurs. Yet, as his later grief testified (cf. 219, 15ff) he loves her very much, and his violence, though not justifiable, may be explained by the strength of his love for the woman who is to be Parzival's wife. Moreover, as discussed in relation to Cunneware (see p. 213) there remains the fact that he is allowed to marry this virtuous woman.
moreover, belongs to the past of the woman concerned: for Wolfram the important thing is the love of Gyburc for the Christian knight Willehalm, of Belakane for the father of Feirefiz, and Condwiramurs for the future Graal King. It is the love of Condwiramurs for Parzival which matters, for in this love her joy is complete, and as his wife she is his essential consort in the rule of the Graal. The story of their love is one of perfect harmony and devotion, which can endure separation and unhappiness and emerge as perfect as ever and enhanced by new joy.

Because this is the quality of their love, it is interesting to notice the part played in it by dawn, the period when night gives way to a new day, full of promise and hope. Condwiramurs comes to Parzival in the depth of night, and she goes away as the light of a new day is beginning to appear, with the promise of his aid, and, obscure as yet, a new love hovering in the future.\(^1\) Surrounded by the splendour and gaiety of Arthur's assembly, Parzival feels himself a stranger, separated as he is from the wife who is the source of his own joy, and he leaves, intending to escape the uncongenial atmosphere of rejoicing, but, unknown to himself, heading for the final stage of his quest, which will soon bring him to Condwiramurs. Even though he is not aware of it, relief and happiness are at hand, and the day begins to dawn:

\[ \text{do er dannen schiet, do begündez tagn.} \]

Finally, it is at dawn that Parzival comes at last to the Plimizoel, where his wife is sleeping:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{1.} & \quad '\text{diu naht ende und kom der tac.} \\
& \quad \text{diu vrouwe stuont üf unde neic,} \\
& \quad \text{ir grözen danc si niht versweic.'} \quad 196, 2-4
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{2.} & \quad 733, 30
\end{align*} \]
Thus the love which has not faltered during five years of separation, during which that same love has prevented the total darkness of despair, comes at last to a reunion in the greyness of dawn which holds all the promise of a glorious day.
Sigune

A single scene in Chrétien's *Conte del Graal* appears to have been Wolfram's only source for the mysterious and intriguing figure whom he calls Sigune and who appears four times in *Parzival*. In the sight of the grieving girl with the dead knight in her lap, he found the essence of a human tragedy which he could extend and deepen, until it took on a new significance, both in its own right and in the context of the whole work. The implications of Chrétien's isolated sketch seem to have preoccupied Wolfram so much that he needed another work to recount the history of Sigune, for this could not be contained in *Parzival* where nothing might detract for long from the development of the hero himself.

Of all the central women characters in *Parzival*, only Sigune is given a story of her own, not directly connected with the main theme. The past of Belakane and Herzeloyde is faintly sketched, and the crucial period of their lives is their marriage to Gahmuret, culminating for each in the birth of his son. For Herzeloyde, the principal task of her life ends when Parzival leaves her, and of Belakane we hear no more, except to note her great worth, reflected in the only man who is a match for Parzival. It is in marriage to Parzival that Condwiramurs comes to the fore, and her existence is inextricable from his. Sigune comes closer in this respect to Gyburc, who existed in a past when she did not

1. ed. cit. 3428-3690.
2. See p. 57
know Willehalm and when she led a full life as a heathen princess and the wife of Tibalt.

Sigune's personal history is barely suggested, however, until Titurel provides a fuller explanation. In Parzival, she fulfils a rôle of the utmost importance in relation to Parzival himself, and her ability to do so is increased by the awareness, contained in the enigmatic words 'ein bracken seil gap im den pin',¹ that hidden somewhere in her past, is the story of love and bereavement which is the key to her present suffering.

Parzival is not the place for a full explanation of Sigune's state, and, in any case, the figure of the lamenting maiden is enhanced by the mystery which enshrouds it. The absence of explanation, and, even more, the tantalizing hints at an explanation, serve to raise Sigune above the ordinary, so that her appearances are endowed with a mystical significance, capable of numerous interpretations on different levels and from different angles, until, as a character of many dimensions, she becomes one of Wolfram's most complex creations.²

In Le Conte del Graal, the unnamed maiden appeared to instruct the boy, to tell him of his misfortune in failing to speak at the Graal,³ to prompt him to guess his name,⁴ to tell him of their own kinship,⁵ and to inform him of the death of his mother.⁶ This purely functional

¹. 141, 16.
². Gottfried Weber (Parzival. Ringen und Vollendung, Oberursel, 1948) describes her (p.16) as 'die tiefsinnigste Gestalt unter allen seinen Schöpfungen'.
³. ed. cit. 3581ff.
⁴. ibid. 3575.
⁵. ibid. 3600.
⁶. ibid. 3606. Sigune does not know of the death of his mother, see p.141
role seems hardly to justify the picture of her with the dead knight, \(^1\)
but possibly in Chrétien there were already the seeds of that conflict
between love and death in combat which Wolfram was to develop as the
basic tragedy of the life of chivalry. Whether the idea was in fact
present in Chrétien or not, the inspiration certainly was. The picture
which occurs three times in Parzival, of the girl mourning her dead
knight, is an impressive one, the more vivid because it remains
unexplained. In this single, masterly stroke, Wolfram epitomizes the
situation which he conveys at greater length on other occasions. We
are moved by the grief of Belakane, both at the death of Isenhart\(^2\)
and later when Gahmuret leaves her virtually a widow;\(^3\) and we have
witnessed Herzeloyde's passionate expression of her suffering when
she hears of the death of Gahmuret.\(^4\) The lonely father is left to
mourn his three sons,\(^5\) more resigned perhaps than the women to
accepting the reward of knighthood, but nonetheless pitiful in his
grief. Yet none of these more protracted expressions of the tragic
dichotomy of the life of chivalry has the sharp impact of the picture
of Sigune and Schionatulander, with the unambiguous juxtaposition of

1. As Dr Richey observes (S. and S. p.7): "... the damsel whom
Chrétien's hero encounters ... is clearly introduced for no
other purpose than to enlighten his mind on matters unknown
to him. She herself, with her clamorous grief for the dead
knight forgotten and recalled at will, is a mere decorative
figure, conventionally portrayed."
2. 28, 6ff.
3. 57, 9ff.
4. 109, 19ff.
5. 177, 14ff.
mournning love and knightly death.\textsuperscript{1}

It is characteristic of the women in Wolfram's work that they respect absolutely the code of knighthood which deprives them of their menfolk. In Sigune's grief there is no bitter attack on the claims of knighthood: the emotion which consumes her is the intense distress of bereavement, coupled with remorse that she was the cause of Schionatulander's death. Although she misdirects Parzival at their first meeting,\textsuperscript{2} fearing that he may otherwise suffer a premature death at the hands of an experienced opponent, she does so, not to keep him from the first act of chivalry which he so desires, but out of pity for his youthful innocence and in order not to bring upon herself the responsibility for another death while the present one is so burdensome to her. When, on the second meeting, she learns of his reticence at Munsalvæsche, she accuses him of having lost his knightly honour there.\textsuperscript{3}

This loss, however, is her interpretation in his terms of his failure to express pity for Anfortas. Knighthood is no mere abstraction for her, but the manifestation of the qualities she prizes most highly, love, pity and sensitivity towards others.

The realization of the precious nature of human life, which should not fall a prey to mere whims and the misguided concept of valour, comes only with experience, however, in this age when knightly prowess

\textsuperscript{1} Dr Richey (Schionatulander and Sigune, p. 24): "The picture of Sigune's life-in-death is sharply different from that glowing pageant of worldly prowess and honour which Wolfram interprets with so keen and certain a sense of its heroic worth; yet is the one the corollary of the other. For so it must be in an age dominated by adventure and hazard, where too often the award of valour is sudden death, and the heritage of true love, grief without healing. From time immemorial, the glory of life in action has been linked in thought with its antithesis, the blankness of death and the ineffable mystery of sorrow."

\textsuperscript{2} 141, 30.

\textsuperscript{3} 255, 25-28.
is prized so highly. Parzival kills Ither because he desires his red armour, and even without the additional factors which make this a serious crime according to the code of chivalry,¹ he has committed a very wrongful act, for there was no valid reason for it. Sigune, too, the events of whose life run in many ways close to Parzival's, was guilty of succumbing to a mere whim, as Titurel relates, when she insisted that her lover should win her by deeds of valour.² With the growing wisdom of experience, she becomes fully conscious of her responsibilities, and with this consciousness comes too deep a sense of remorse.³ Thus when Parzival first encounters her, she is in the first frenzy of grief, which finds expression in passionate cries and wild gestures. She reproaches herself for not giving Schionatulander her love without conditions:

\[
\text{ich hete kranke sinne,}
\]
\[
\text{daz ich im niht minne gap:}
\]

and her reaction at this early stage of bereavement is to embrace him physically now, giving him the love she denied him in life:

\[
\text{nu minne i'n alsô tât en.}
\]

This is her spontaneous response to her loss: the knight is recently dead, and the whole scene rings with the uncontrolled anguish of physical bereavement.

The strongest grief must become tempered by time, however, and when Parzival next comes upon Sigune, she is more controlled, lamenting

---

¹ i.e. that Ither is a kinsman, that Parzival is not yet a knight, that he kills Ither with an unknighthly weapon.

² Note that in Chrétien's version there is no suggestion that the woman is responsible for the knight's death.

³ cf. B.Rahn (op. cit. p.76) where he discusses 'Sigunes Schuld'.

⁴ 141, 20-21

⁵ 141, 24.
still, but with a less violent show of anguish. Whereas her grief was
more physical before, finding expression in cries and tearing of hair,
Parzival is led to her this time by 'einer frouwen stimme jaemelîch',
suggesting a mournful lament. The scene which greets him at the linden-
tree is much softer than the earlier one, with its stark grimness.
Time has passed and the knight is now embalmed, the horror of recent
death removed from him. With the passing of time, Sigune's anguish
has become calmer: she suffers now from inward grief, which is revealed
in her appearance. Parzival does not recognize her for he is not yet
sufficiently advanced in grief himself to look beneath the superficial:
this will come at the third encounter, but meanwhile it is left for
Sigune to reveal her identity.

Her life at this point is one of utter devotion to the knight in
her lap:

\[
al irdisch triwe was ein wint,  
wan diu man an ir libe sach. 
\]

Wolfram's words anticipate what is to come, for already her devotion
has raised her above the earthly, although she has yet to find the
ultimate object of her devotion. The scene offers a link between the
purely physical, earth-bound anguish of the first meeting when Sigune's
concern was with her loss, and the spirituality of the third, when she
is looking heavenwards, in the firm hope of a joyous reunion. Of all
the meetings, this is the most passive, presenting total resignation

1. 249, 12.
2. For the significance of the setting in each case, see below.
3. It is noteworthy that Wolfram does not tolerate the repugnant sight
   of the decapitated knight of Chrétien's version, ed. cit. 3455.
4. 252, 9-10.
5. 252, 11ff.
6. 249, 24-25.
and single-minded devotion. The piercing cries of the first encounter have given way to a melancholy lament, softened but perhaps even more pitiful, for youth and beauty have paid dearly for their folly, and at present there seems to be no hope, no sign that the sacrifice has been worthwhile. Of all the scenes with Sigune, this surely presents her at her lowest ebb, and it is hardly surprising that it is now that she upbraids Parzival so violently for his failure at the Graal Castle. Only the prospect of such a joyful event as the release of Anfortas from suffering and the whole of the Graal Family from sorrow could provoke such lively enthusiasm in her now, and only the bitter disappointment of these hopes could rouse her to such a passionate invective against the unwitting culprit. In her present state of hopelessness, she can offer no hope to Parzival, rejecting in bitter terms his own suggestion that he could make amends:

1. B.Q. Morgan (op.cit.p.186) speaks of the grief of Chrétien's figure as 'too shrill' and contrasts Wolfram's treatment, yet in fact Wolfram shows Sigune at the first meeting to be in a state of wild grief, stressing her cries (138, 13) and tearing of hair (138, 17). It is true that Wolfram tempers the grief later, but this first scene shows grief as violent as that shown in Le Conte del Graal (cf. ed. cit. 343ff.)

2. Parzival says to her (252, 27 and 252, 30-253, 1):
   Ówe war kom dän røter munt? ...
   ... dän reideleht lanc průnez hâr,
   Des ist dän houbet blôz getan.

3. Chrétien had placed the encounter rather later, and so the 'germaine cousin' had reproached Perceval at their first and only meeting. By describing three meetings with Sigune alive, Wolfram points out the passage of time and relates Parzival's development to the grief of Sigune. Thus U. Heise (op. cit. p.49) can say with some justice: "So ist Sigune für Parzival ein Spiegel dessen, was er erlebt hat".

4. Her disappointment is the greater because she had not expected to be disappointed by him. Similarly, see U. Heise (op. cit. p.49) "Sie gründet ihre Hoffnung auf Parzivals Mitleid und Hilfbereitschaft, wie sie bei beiden Besuchen erfahren hat".
Significantly, it is now, when she is manifesting in herself the perfection of her own devotion, that she reproaches him with a lack of 'triuwe':

ir truogt den eiterwolves zan,
da diu galle in der triuwe
an iu bekleip sö niuwe.

She is the first to accuse him of this lack, but Cundrie and Trevrizent both base their accusations on the absence of this quality. To all three of them 'triuwe' means the sensitive concern for others which is part of a man's responsibility towards his fellow-men. Parzival's fault has been all the greater because he has not shown this concern for a kinsman, and it is significant that at this point Sigune addresses Parzival in the formal second person, thereby suggesting even more emphatically than her words do that the bond of kinship, which she herself recognized at their first meeting, has been severed by his failure at Munsalvæsche.

1. 255, 24-29.
2. 255, 14-16. D. Labusch (op. cit. pp.76-77) stresses that Sigune's violent reproaches are the product of her 'triuwe', not in contradiction to it, "denn Sigune beweist gerade durch den Fluch ihre echte 'triuwe', die sich in Härte und Strenge äußern muß, wenn es im Interesse des Andern ist". cf. also Cundrie and p.248
4. Martin (Kommentar, 255,2) says: "Das Ihrzen gibt sofort die Abkehr der Jungfrau kund". Schwietering (Die d. B. d.M. p.165) observes: "Sigunes Fluch schließt ihn aus der Gemeinschaft der Sippe aus ... Sie versperrt ihm den Zugang zur Sippe, dessen Schlüssel sie recht eigentlich in der Hand hält."
When Parzival meets Sigune alive for the last time, \(^1\) her single-minded devotion is finding a wider, more positive, expression in the service of God. Now at last she has found her means to atone, for it is atonement which she is seeking in her lonely cell. Now at last, love for Schionatulander has led her to love of God, and the two, seldom far apart in Wolfram's mind, have become one. Once more, Sigune anticipates Gyburc, whose love for Willehalm is to bring her to that love for God which will take on a wider significance as an all-embracing love for her fellow-men. \(^2\) So, too, Sigune is able now to look with pity on Parzival, the lonely man who has forsaken God. The hair-shirt which she wears is one of the conventional outward signs of the penitent, and she is offering penance to God for her guilt towards her human loved-one. The ring she wears on her finger is the symbol of the union which she believes to exist between herself and Schionatulander, and she firmly believes that this ring, the symbol of their marriage in the sight of God, will lead her before Him:

\[
\text{der rehten ê diz vingerlin für got sol min geleite min.} \hspace{1cm} \text{3) }
\]

This symbol of true and abiding love which she continues to wear as a religious recluse lights up the whole of her cell, surely a sign that true love is the basic ingredient of the religious life. \(^4\)

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1. In his article "Über Wolframs Ethik", Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum, 49, 1905, pp. 405-465, Ehrismann discusses briefly (pp. 423-424) the third meeting with Sigune.
3. Dr Richey says of the third meeting (Schionatulander and Sigune p.19): "The picture we see is sad, yet restful; austere, yet graced with the rich impressiveness of symbols; for the hair-shirt worn by the anchorite signifies rue; her ring, with its single bright gem glancing out of the darkness, is love's clear emblem, and the bridegroom's coffin shall, when all is finished, become their bridal bed."
Now that she has this new-found confidence in an eventual reunion with Schionatulander, Sigune no longer needs to preserve his body as she knew it in life, so he now lies at peace in a coffin, which represents no barrier to these two who are united by the love of God. So in these three meetings, Wolfram passes from the early state of bereavement, when Sigune refuses to be parted from the body of her lover, jealously guarding all that remains to her of him,\(^1\) to her final state when she allows his physical remains to be obscured in a coffin, according to custom, in the firm belief that they will meet again in eternal joy, so that present separation is merely a passing phase. The coffin remains in her cell, a permanent reminder of the death which will come to her. It is also a constant link with death while she lives, and, in this cell of pious devotion, a sign that she has come to know God through perfect human love.\(^2\) Schionatulander, then, who never appears alive in Parzival, yet joins with Sigune in forming a kind of Leitmotiv for the whole work, a symbol of perfect love which is eternal love.\(^3\)

The recurrence of the picture of Sigune and her dead lover points both to her individual significance and her relevance to the story of Parzival. Within the framework of Parzival, the story of Sigune must remain veiled in mystery, but this very mystery which is necessary here,

1. It is interesting that Abelard, in his letter to Héloïse who has requested instruction regarding the origin of nuns, speaks of the constancy of women: "... when the Apostles were offended by the Lord's Passion, and in despair at His Death, the devotion of the holy women remained unshaken, and in no way departed from the bone of Christ, because in faith, or in hope, or in charity it retained such constancy that not from the Dead even would they be separated in mind or in body". (Translation of C.K. Scott Moncrieff as given on p.34(3))

2. Parzival at first sees an incongruity in her state when he says:
   \[
   \text{ich hör't ie sagen mære,} \\
   \text{kłoßnærinne und kłoßnære} \\
   \text{die solten miden ämurschaft.} \\
   \]  
   (439, 13-15)

3. For this reason, Ingeborg Giese (op.cit.) could take Sigune as the central figure for her examination of Wolfram's concept of 'minne'.
serves to arouse the curiosity in her which will be satisfied, to some extent, in *Titurel*. Thus, by what seems the negative means of concealment, Wolfram achieves the positive effect of heightened interest. Much speculation surrounds Wolfram's purpose in writing *Titurel*, 1) but his own interest in the intriguing figure he has created is surely the beginning of his wish to expand her story. *Titurel*, then, serves as an appendix to *Parzival*, to explain something left unexplained in the earlier work, and to enlarge on the character of Sigune. *Titurel* serves, moreover, to suggest the particular appropriateness of Sigune for the important rôle she fulfils in *Parzival*.

If *Parzival* shows the end of earthly love and its passage into eternity, *Titurel* shows its beginning, when the thought of death is far from the minds of the two young lovers. Yet the two works are inextricably linked and the reader cannot escape from his awareness of what the end of this love will be. Over the youth and joy of *Titurel* hovers the picture of the mourning Sigune with the dead Schionatulander in her lap. Taken together, the two works cover the whole life of Sigune, from the birth which cost her mother her life, to the reunion in death with Schionatulander. Even this beginning, with the coincidence of life and death, is significant, for Sigune's life is to be one in which life and death are in constant juxtaposition: she is to witness the life in death of Anfortas and Frimutel, to live on after the death of her lover, and ultimately to find a new life which comes to her through death.

The history of the love of Sigune and Schionatulander has its source, too, in love and death. It is the death of Schoysiane and Kyot's consequent withdrawal in grief from the world, later the death of King Tampentere.

which bring Sigune to the care of Herzeloyde, widowed by the death of Kastis, 1) The orphan Schionatulander is adopted by Ampflise, who, in her love for Gahmuret, gives the boy to him as his squire. 2) Thus the two come together in the union of Gahmuret and Herzeloyde: love has brought them together and their own love is to last beyond the grave.

Sigune is the daughter of a noble mother - 'diu clâre und diu stæte' 3) - who is the predecessor of Repanse de Schoye. 4) She is, moreover, the daughter of a man whose love is so great that he is prepared to forsake all that he has hitherto prized most highly when his wife dies. 5) If this, her direct heritage of service and devotion, were not enough to ensure Sigune's life of steadfast love, she is the niece and protegée of Herzeloyde, whom Wolfram esteems so highly as a woman. In talking of the young Sigune, Wolfram lays stress on the nobility which is hers as a member of the Graal Family, and which gives her precedence over Schionatulander:

Daz ich des werden Gurzgrien sun niht benande vor der maget Sigûnen, daz was des schult daz man ir muoter sande ûz der phiege von dem reinen grale: ir hochgeburt si zucket ouch her für, unde ir kunn daz lieht gemâle. 6)

Side-by-side with the nobility which she inherits by virtue of her birth into the great elect family of the Graal, is the sorrow which all its members must know and which was anticipated in the opening lines of Titurel, with the mood of heavy sadness which is in such contrast to the

1. See p. 40ff.
2. See p. 25ff.
3. Titurel, 19, 1.
4. See Titurel, 24, 4. The requirements of the Graal of the one who will bear it (see Repanse de Schoye, below) are adequate testimony to the virtue of Schoysiane.
5. Titurel, 22, 3-4
rest of the work. 1) For the greater part of Titurel, however, this sorrow is obscured in the prevalent joy of youthful love and zest for life. Only Herzeloyde, more deeply aware now of the earnest nature of human life and of the dangers which loom beyond the present, grieves that Sigune should have come to know love so early, for she knows that love brings sorrow with it. 2) Sigune, in the innocence of youth is unaware of the sorrow which her love will bring her, and she rejoices that her secret has been brought into the open, that she can love now with Herzeloyde's leave:

\[ \text{Alda was minne erloubet mit minne beslozz} \]
\[ \text{ane wanc gein minne ir beider herze was minne unverdrozzen.} \]
\[ \text{'Owol mich, muome, 'sprach diu herzoginne,} \]
\[ \text{'daz ich den Grâharzoys vor al der werlde nu mit urloube so minne}. 3)\]

The first part of Titurel ends with this climax of Sigune's joy, when all seems to point towards future happiness, and only the shadow of Parzival can mar this joy, with the realization that this is the same Sigune who is later to utter words full of grief and self-reproach:

\[ \text{'ich hete kranke sinne,} \]
\[ \text{daz ich im niht minne gap ... 4)} \]

Sigune, perhaps more than any other of Wolfram's creations, is the victim of the basic uncertainty of human existence, expressed - and this significantly in view of Wolfram's preoccupation with the recurrent

1. What gives to Titurel its melancholy is the memory of Parzival and the fate of Sigune and Schionatulander: apart from that, although the poem moves with sonorous dignity, its content is not dominantly sad.
elements in human life in his words on the doomed love of her mother and father:

'sus nimet diu werlt ein ende: unser aller s\"u\"eze am ort\'e ie muoz s\"uren. 2)

What Sigune achieves at last is the harmony between the two sides of human existence, but, as with Parzival, harmony comes only with faith and love of God. These two characters, whose fates are so closely linked, experience the peak of joy and the lowest depths of grief, but they emerge, Parzival into a fuller earthly life and Sigune into perfect fulfilment in death, when they have discovered the means of reconciliation of conflicting elements. Herzeloyde also knows the fluctuations of earthly fortune, but, in her, the state of resignation which in Sigune grows into perfect harmony is never established, for she dies of grief when the claims of life prove too strong for her love. While Wolfram in no way blames Herzeloyde for surrendering to her nature and dying of grief, he presents in Sigune the ability of a woman to live on, though consumed with grief, sustained always by what is a scarcely conscious awareness of a task still to be fulfilled. 4) During the years she lives after Schionatulander, Sigune shows in her bearing the growth

1. Both Gahmuret and Galoes die in battle, like their father. Herzeloyde tries to prevent a repetition of the tragedy of Gahmuret by keeping Parzival from a knowledge of knighthood, and she sees tragedy as the end of Sigune's love, like the tragedy of her own and Schionatulander's parents.

2. Titurel, 17, 4. The following lines from Der arme Heinrich supply a striking parallel to these from Titurel:

unser s\"u\"ez ist gemischet

3. See p.120, and p.123.

4. Wolfram's concept of ideal womanhood involves its potentialities, the extent to which it will reach if the need is there. Thus in Gyburc is seen that part of her greatness as a woman lies in her ability to transcend the traditional role of woman, to act, when the need arises, with physical courage and strength akin to that of a man. See p.180ff, for further treatment of this point.
of that 'triuwe' which is a virtue so highly prized by Wolfram. It is
the same quality which Condwiramurs shows during the years of separation
from Parzival, which Herzeloide had shown in her loving loyalty to Gahmuret
in the person of his son, until, with the fulfilment of her duty towards
him, she was able to join Gahmuret, 1) and which Gyburc is to show in her
defence, both physical and spiritual, of Willehalm. 2) In Sigune, however,
the need to live on leads her to become, more than any other woman, the
personification of devoted love, and it is for this quality above all
that she is to become famous, as Wolfram predicts in Titurel:

\[
diu phlac sô vil triuwen, \quad \text{die man von ir noch saget in manegen landen.}\]

Before she can come to this life of devotion, which is to bring her
very close to sanctity, 4) Sigune must, however, endure the despair and
sorrow through which alone she is able to reach the peak of happiness. 5)
The agony, which she is later to suffer and which is to make her history,
seen as a whole, the more poignant, springs from her sense of guilt, for
it is her refusal to give Schionatulander the love he desires until he
has earned it which leads eventually to his death. Yet this is in itself
an innocent stipulation, the consequence of a girlish delight in a new-
found power, and made at a time when the future stretched out into endless-
ness and no sense of impending disaster obscured her view. Schionatulander

1. See p. 58.  
2. See p. 130.  
3. Titurel, 19.  
4. In fact, Wolfram does not speak of Sigune as a saint. See p. 131.  
5. Similarly, Parzival must suffer the reproaches of Cundrie, despair and
loss of faith, and separation from Condwiramurs, before he can emerge
a complete and happy person.
submitted, too, to this stipulation, which was not an unusual one in mediæval society. It is a pact which they make at the end of Titurel, and each is responsible for the consequences:

"Genâde und al daz immer maget sol verenden gein [ir] werdem clâren friunde, daz leist ich, und mac mich des nie man erwenden,..."

"Dar nach sol min dienst imêr stætlichen ringen. du biutest rîchen solt: wie lebe ich die zît, daz ez min hant müeze bringen dar zuo daz ich die hulde din behalte? daz wirt versuochet nähen und verre: [geflûcke und din minne \* min walte.]"

That Schionatulander agreed to her condition is, however, no consolation to the bereaved Sigune, for she is left to bear the burden of loss, coupled with the sense of guilt, and it is this sense of responsibility as much as actual grief at his death which leads to the passionate outburst of her first meeting with Parzival, when she reproaches herself with her folly in withholding her love.

That the source of all her years of lonely sorrow is a moment of caprice in the innocence of youth, not only makes her story more heartrending, but it binds her all the more closely to Parzival, who brought years of despair and remorse upon himself by a moment of ill-judged silence, when he firmly believed that he was thereby conforming to the rules of knighthood. Thus it is that Titurel supplies the key to Sigune's

1. Belakane made similar demands on Isenhart (see p.169) and Obie thought she was acting in accordance with her privilege as a woman when she told Meljanz that he must win her love (see p.264\(\#\)).
3. Schionatulander's words in reply; Titurel, 169, 1-4. There is a very striking difference between this pact and the scornful words of Obie in reply to Meljanz (See 345, 30ff. and p. 266). Obie abuses her privilege as a woman: Sigune employs it with love and tact.
role in *Parzival* and reveals her appropriateness to fulfil it. Because this link is present, by implication in *Parzival* and extended in *Titurel*, Wolfram raises his Sigune above the weeping maiden of his source, whose role was the functional one of instructing Perceval. Although Sigune does act as instructor and guide to Parzival, on all three occasions, her significance extends far beyond this, for in so many ways their development runs parallel.

The fact that Sigune is already dead when Parzival, at the peak of fame and joy, and reunited with Condwiramurs, seeks her in her anchoress's cell, suggests the extent to which their destinies are linked. Her task is over, now that he has come to the kingship of the Graal, and in some mysterious way the burden of responsibility drops from her and she is able at last to join Schionatulander, just as Herzeloyde may die as soon as Parzival leaves her.\(^1\) Added to this is the fact that Parzival felt the need to visit her, sensing the way in which she was linked with him and desiring to share his joy with her, to appear before her in the perfection of his manhood, which she has seen at significant stages of development. Perhaps there is an echo here of that earlier occasion, when he desired to see his mother again, to share with her his new-found joy with Condwiramurs. On neither occasion is he able to see alive the woman who has contributed so greatly to his present joy, yet, particularly with Sigune, one feels that she is aware of the success of her task and that death has set a seal on it.\(^2\)

1. See p.\(^5\).
2. The importance of Herzeloyde in Parzival's development is discussed in detail in the relevant section, see p.\(^5\).
The encounters with Sigune occur at evenly-spaced intervals throughout the work and at significant stages in Parzival's development. He comes upon her by accident on the three occasions when he meets her alive, and he does so each time at the point when he is in need of some kind of guidance. For the young Parzival, Sigune is able to continue the task which his mother began, in many ways to fill the gaps left in his knowledge by Herzeloyde, telling him his name and his lineage. He is in urgent need of instruction, for in following his mother's advice, he has already brought upon himself the responsibility for Jeschute's distress. It remains for Gurnemanz to instruct him in the art of chivalry and for Liaze to introduce him to the concept of love. 1)

Sigune contributes little in either sphere, except inasmuch as she and her dead knight present together a picture of the sorrow which comes with the chivalric life.

Parzival is too inexperienced as yet to see the implications of the scene he encounters: what is important is the fact that it prompts him to express his natural pity, to enquire about the knight and to desire, with the zest of youth for the unknown, to act in her revenge, 2) Sigune, then, is the first person to receive his pity, and, ironically, it is she who will reproach him so bitterly for failing to show his pity for Anfortas. 3) Now in her grief she is able to recognize his capacity for compassion:

\[ \text{du bist geborn von triuwen,} \quad \text{4) daz er dich sus kan riuwen.} \]

1. See p.197ff.
2. 139, 5-8.
3. 255, 17-20.
Unlike Chrétien, Wolfram does not allow Sigune to tell Parzival of his mother's death on his departure; presumably she does not know of it, for this would have clouded her admiration for his natural sensitivity and so spoilt their relationship, which rests at their first meeting on her belief in his innate goodness.

She sends him on his way with a knowledge now of his lineage but with no idea of the code of knighthood. Before they meet again, he is to commit the grievous sin of killing a kinsman, to learn of knighthood from Gurnemanz, and to know perfect joy in his love for Condwiramurs. Most important of all, though, he is to come to the Graal Castle and to ride away, oblivious of his failure there. So the Parzival who next encounters Sigune is one experienced in some measure and stained by a crime of which he is not yet aware, standing between the peak of happiness which he knew in his victory on behalf of Condwiramurs and his love for her, and the destruction of all happiness which Cundrie's speech is to bring to him. Sigune, too, is in a state of transition, for she has lost the innocent, cloudless joy of her youth, and she has not yet achieved the harmony which she is to find in devotion to God and confidence in perfect love after death. In this state of hopeless gloom, she gives herself over to a violent invective against Parzival and thus helps

1. cf. Le Conte del Graal, ed. cit. 3606.
2. The disappointment of this belief is one of the main reasons for the violence of her speech to him at their second meeting.
3. 255, 2ff.
to draw him to the same level of despair. 1)

The years of despair which follow, when Parzival has forsaken God as a support and means to happiness, correspond closely to Sigune's period of grief unrelieved by hope, so when Parzival next meets her and finds her at peace with herself and leading a life of devotion to God, his own release is at hand. She is able to play a great part in the impending turning-point in his life, for her whole being is an example of faith:

ir leben was doch ein venje gar. 2)

Her clothing too, the hair-shirt of the penitent, suggests that the way to God lies through humility, and that Parzival, too, will find happiness only when he chooses to turn to God and abandon his arrogant belief that he can dispense with His aid. Not only does she point to God in her own being, but she actually tells Parzival that God is the One who can help him:

si sprach 'nu helse dir des hant, 3)  
dem aller kumber ist bekant;

Sigune's manner is in sharp contrast to her earlier one, and she is able to live through the state of despair. Thus D. Labusch (op. cit. pp. 79) can justly say: "Sigune macht sich gerade in dem Augenblick, da sie Parzival seiner Mitleidlosigkeit wegen verflucht, derselben Sünde schuldig ... In ihrem instinktiven Entsetzen wird deutlich, wie sehr sie die Sünde (ie. Parzivals Sünde) verabscheut. So begeht sie das Unrecht, Parzival härter zu verdammen, als er es verdient und ihn ohne Trost von sich zu stürzen."

The loyalty to her family which prompts her anger, and her own state of despair, help to relieve the burden of deliberate guilt, and, in the course of time, the accusation of Sigune, like that of Cundrie, is seen to produce a desirable effect. Nevertheless this scene remains a problem, marring as it does for a time the otherwise faultless character of Sigune.

1. Although her anger is explicable, Sigune is guilty at this point of reducing Parzival to a state of utter hopelessness. Thus D. Labusch (op. cit. p. 79) can justly say: "Sigune macht sich gerade in dem Augenblick, da sie Parzival seiner Mitleidlosigkeit wegen verflucht, derselben Sünde schuldig ...

2. 435, 25. cf. also D. Labusch (op. cit. pp. 89-90)

3. 442, 9-10. U. Heise (op. cit. p. 51) says of Sigune "Obwohl sie keine Hoffnung sieht, verweist sie Parzival auf Gott, und wiederum ahnt sie damit das, was nun unmittelbar notwendig ist, voraus." Sigune sees no hope of a second chance to come to the Graal, because she believes that the chosen man can come only once and must ask the question without having been prompted to it. Her words commending Parzival to God anticipate those of Trevrizent: 461, 28-462, 1.
to take pity on the lonely man and direct him in Cundrie's path, in the hope that he will thus come to the Graal. 1)

Although Sigune directs him in all good faith towards the Graal Castle, Parzival cannot yet find it, for he is still unfit to come there and assume his destined role: first he must meet Trevrizent and so find God again. Only by following the tracks left by Cundrie does he encounter the pilgrim who directs him to Trevrizent. Sigune's directions are important, however, and, even though on each occasion the effect is not the one which she intended, they are valuable. On the first occasion, she directed him purposely away from the slayer of her lover, 2) and so he came to Arthur's Court. The second time, when her reproaches send him away in stunned grief, he meets Jeschute and in righting the wrong he did her in his youth he sets himself on the path of atonement, though this is to be a long one. 3)

The amazement and horror which Parzival feels when Sigune tells him of his failure at the Graal Castle and his loss thereby of knightly honour is increased by Cundrie who upbraids him publicly and accuses the Round Table of having been dishonoured by one of its members. 4)

Yet Wolfram makes an observation after Cundrie's speech which is highly significant, both for Parzival's development and for his concept of the

1. 442, 11ff. In spite of her own doubts that he will ever come again to the Graal, Sigune cannot deny him this one chance which it lies in her power to offer him.
2. 141, 30.
3. For the importance of the second meeting with Jeschute to Parzival's development, see p.181ff.
4. See p.226ff. The effect of Sigune's reproach is to confuse and puzzled Parzival, who is hurt by the anger of his cousin and grieved that she rejects the possibility of his making amends. Cundrie's speech is a public one, more violent than Sigune's, and its impact is therefore greater. cf. also F. Maurer (Leid, Bern and Munich, 1951 p.120): "... zur Entehrung gehört immer die Öffentlichkeit". Maurer maintains that Parzival's sorrow is the direct result of the dishonour brought upon him by Cundrie's words.
two women, who in this are so closely linked. He speaks of the 'scham' which Parzival now experiences and which will keep him from real sin. Only through the sorrow which shame brings with it can he come into the light of perfect happiness, for 'scham' is an aspect of that all-important quality, humility, without which Parzival cannot become King of the Graal. 

Shame, or a sense of guilt, brings with it the desire to atone, and in atonement at Trevrizent's hermitage, Parzival prepares himself to take up his great office. So, in this, too, Sigune, with Cundrie, produces a salutary effect by what seems to be a destructive act. When she misdirects Parzival, he finds a right direction, and when she casts him into the despair of guilt, it is so that he can emerge purged of guilt. And even in her own life, Sigune is a model of the path which Parzival is to follow: for she passes from violent self-reproach to a state of passive acceptance of her burden, until she finds the way to God which leads through the desire to atone and the act of atonement.

It is fitting that it should be Parzival who performs the last service for Sigune, for this sets the seal on the bond which has existed between them throughout the work. United now with Condwiramurs in perfect love, he is able to see that Sigune and Schionatulander are united physically in the coffin, as she knew they would be spiritually in heaven, the undecayed state of the body of Schionatulander a testimony to the perfect and constant love between them:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Schionatulander schein} \\
\text{unrefült schöne balsemvar.} \\
\text{man leit si nähe zuo zim dar,} \\
\text{Diu magtuolôle mînne im gap} \\
\text{dê si lebte, und sluogen zuo daz graf.}
\end{align*}
\]

1. The importance of 'scham' is treated more closely in relation to Cundrie, see p.226.
2. 804, 28-805, 2. See p.34f.
Parzival's gesture is the completion of the series of their meetings. As on the other occasions, the scene is relevant, for Parzival comes to the cell which has been hallowed by love and faith, and he himself is filled once more with love and faith. It is evening, too, signifying the end of a day and the end of a phase for Parzival and Sigune; yet, just as the night will grow into day, so does this end anticipate a new beginning, with Sigune at peace at last, and Parzival reigning as the wise and great ruler of the Graal Kingdom.

The settings of the other three meetings are careful, too, for in each case, the setting corresponds to Sigune's state. The stark outline of the rock prepares for the harsh, passionate grief of Sigune, when she sits with her knight so recently dead, while her later position, in the linden-tree presents a gentler picture, with her grief hopeless.

1. 804, 22.
2. U. Heise (op. cit. p. 51) writes: "Die tote Sigune spiegelt für Parzival nur eins: daß ein Friede erreicht ist - für ihn und für Sigune. Sie ist zugleich ein Memento Mori. Auch ein Gralskönig ist nicht umantastbar; auch er hat sein Leben zu einem letzten Frieden, zum Tod in Gott, hinzuführen. Konwiramurs klagt; Parzival selbst ist knapp und gehalten in seinen Anordnungen ... Konwiramurs sieht Sigunes Leid zum erstenmal; Parzival aber sieht jetzt ihre Erlösung". D. Labusch (op. cit. p. 22) sees the evening as symbolic of fulfilment and this is also true: "Wie sich im Abend der Tag erfüllt, so hat auch Sigunes Leben die irdische Vollendung erreicht".
3. 138, 12.
4. J. Schwietering ("Sigune auf der Linde") discusses the figure of Sigune as Wolfram sees her at this second meeting in relation to the legendary theme of the tree-saints, which, he says, extended to the West in the late 12th century: "So liegt die Vermutung nahe, daß Wolfram auch in dieser scene eine ganz bestimmte Form des eremitendaseins vorschwebte, das er dann zu fortschreitender Läuterung der büssenden zum Klausnertum steigerte". Although the idea is worth noting, it is not altogether convincing. Already in Chrétien's account the maiden was sitting beneath an oak-tree (ed. cit. 3431), and this Wolfram changed to the more familiar lime-tree, with its traditional symbolism of love: see E. and J. Lehner, op. cit. p. 69.
as yet but softened, and her whole life devoted in love for Schionatulander.

It is this position which Wolfram remembers in Titusel, for the Sigune whom Titusel anticipates is the one who leads a life of utter devotion to her earthly lover, rather than the devoted anchoress of the third meeting:

\[ \text{Vil liep beleip alda, lieb schiet von dannen, ir gehörtet nie gesprechen von mageden, } \]
\[ \text{Δvon } \text{usahaan, } \text{Δvon manlichen mannern, } \]
\[ \text{die sich herzlichen kunden minnen. } \]
\[ \text{des wart sit Parzivål an Sigûn zer linden wol innen.}\]

The setting of the third and fourth scenes is the same, suggesting the easy transition of Sigune from a life of religious devotion to union with God in death. She dies in the attitude of prayer, with the unambiguous suggestion that prayer, the traditional manifestation of faith, is the direct link between life and death. Already, at the third meeting, Sigune had told Parzival of her firm belief that her love, symbolized in the ring on her finger, would lead her to God. The two, then, love and faith, are inextricably linked, and inextricable, too, from the cell where Sigune lives and dies, where the ring which indicated love and marriage could be worn by one who also wore the hair-shirt of the penitent, and where the coffin of a dead lover did not detract from the sincerity of a religious recluse.

While she lives in her cell, Sigune is sustained by food brought from the Graal by Cundrie. This strange object, however one may interpret it, demands purity, love, faith and humility of those who serve it, so this miraculous sustenance points in itself to the perfect

1. Titurel, 78, 1-4.
life which Sigune leads. It links her in another way with Parzival, who is destined to come to the Graal as its King. From the beginning, there existed the ties of blood which linked them with one another and with the Graal, for each is the child of a daughter of the Graal. With these ties goes the heritage of grief which each must share, as part of the price of a noble lineage. Yet each, with the innate capacity for 'triuwe' which belonged to Herzeloyde, to Schoysiane and to Trevrizent, endures the grief with steadfast devotion and through love comes to conquer it.

Their personal grief is different, and so is the object of their devotion, but the formula is the same. When he releases Anfortas with his simple question, Parzival lifts the grief of the whole Graal Family, so Sigune too is relieved of the life which consisted of years of grief for Schionatulander. Her death marks not only the completion of her task towards Parzival, but also the end of the personal grief which was her share of the sorrow of the whole family.¹)

In Sigune, Wolfram created a figure who is complex and mysterious, highly individualized yet also perfectly in accord with his other noble women. Though he offers no direct suggestion of her relationship with traditional figures of womanly perfection, there are certain echoes which point to a connection in his mind. Sigune is, after all, 'rehter güte ein arke',²) and the possibility of a connection with the Virgin Mary

¹. For these reasons, it is perhaps not correct to speak of the story of Sigune as 'eine tragisch endende Liebesnovelle' (H.de Boor and R. Newald: Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart, Munich, 1949, Vol.II, p.123). The end is not tragic for Sigune. cf. also Kuhn (op.cit.p.89) who discusses 'die Frage der Tragik' and concludes that the end is not tragic: "Weil sie sich nun in der 'triuwe' bewährt und sich durch ihre Leidensfrömmigkeit Gott nähert, kann er, der sie längst erwählt hat, sie am Schluß erlösen. Am Ende von Sigunes Geschichte steht somit nicht der Zusammenbruch eines Weltbildes, sondern die Erlösung und damit die Verwirklichung eines Ersehnten, Erhofften und Erstrebten. Die 'Sigune' kann folglich nicht tragisch sein."

². 804, 16 See p.27.
must be considered. Yet Wolfram does not himself offer such a connection, as he does with Herzeloyde. The reason, however, is clear: Mary achieved the height of her perfection in motherhood, and this is not given to Sigune. In actual circumstances, Sigune is not to be compared with Mary. As Dietlinde Labusch points out, Sigune’s virginity rests on the fact that Schionatulander is dead and that in her own mind she is nevertheless his wife, finding the way to God through her love for a human being, not like the Virgin Mary, whose perfection brought her directly to the favour of God.

Many writers have pointed to the possible relationship between the picture of Sigune with the dead Schionatulander and the Pieta, and many of them are convinced of the relationship. Schwietering points out, however, that the plastic depiction of the Pieta was not known in the West until the late fourteenth century. Though the picture of Sigune and Schionatulander expresses the same sorrowing love which endures beyond the grave as the later Pieta depictions in sculpture, one must beware of relating them too directly. The picture is Pieta-like, but not inspired by the Pieta. That Sigune grieves, not for her son, but for her lover, is not in itself a reason to reject the comparison with Mary holding her dead Son, for to the Mediæval Church the Virgin

1. See p.544ff.
2. D. Labusch (op. cit. p.49)
5. K. Kinzel: "Die Frauen in Wolframs Parzival", p.63, actually calls the scene 'ein profanes Gegenstück der mater dolorosa'.
was already the Bride of Christ.¹) Rather is the objection that Sigune is in no way wedded to Christ: she wears the ring of human marriage and hopes through it to come to God.²)

Nevertheless Sigune shares some of the qualities of the most perfect of women. Above all, her devotion to her lover is extolled by Wolfram, together with the humility which allows her to withdraw into the forest and lead a life of dedicated seclusion. Though Wolfram never compares her with the Virgin, as he does Herzeloyde, and never calls her a saint, as he does Gyburc, she nevertheless leads the life of a saintly recluse.³)

She has found a personal way to God, not guided by the formalities of the Church.⁴) Clearly the life of Sigune becomes one of great spirituality, and an interesting point is that, in her forest cell, she is fed once a week by food brought from the Graal.⁵) In view of the essentially spiritual nature of the Graal, it may well be that Wolfram is remembering the idea that the Virgin was brought food from heaven by the Angel Gabriel,⁶) and that the saintly Mary of Ognies was said to have subsisted entirely on the Eucharist.⁷) Such echoes suggest that Wolfram wished to indicate the perfect nature of his Sigune. Clearly in an age which loved and honoured

¹. She was 'sponsa Christi', sponsa Dei'. cf. Wernher's Maria, ed. cit. 1313.
². See also D. Labusch, op. cit. p.36.
⁴. cf. M.F. Richey (S. and S. p.19): "In her far-off forest retreat, where no sound ever reaches her of choir-chanted Mass or priestly benediction, she lives her consecrated life alone, pure as the rock-spring which flows beside her cell".
⁵. 439, lff.
⁷. See p. 30. Though Wolfram may not have known of this woman in particular, she was probably not the only pious woman of whom this was reported.
the Mother of Christ with such enthusiasm, a convinced Christian like Wolfram would naturally see her as the prototype of noble womanhood. Yet, equally clearly, Sigune is not to be equated with Mary, for the differences are too basic. This does not, however, prevent his recalling the perfection of the Virgin in his virtuous Sigune, as indeed he does in the case of Condwiramurs, where the similarity is again not actually voiced. Like Mary, Sigune loves with an intensity which brings great suffering, yet both of them accept this suffering with humility. Beyond this, however, the resemblance is not sustained. Repanse de Schoye is the pure virgin, dedicated to the Graal, while Herzeloyde is the devoted mother, nursing her child who is to be the greatest of all Christian knights. In both cases, the resemblance to the Virgin Mary is a closer one. To Sigune, whose fate is a very different one, Wolfram gives nevertheless the virtues of Mary, who stands before him as the pattern of womanly perfection.
The world of Willehalm is vastly different from that of Parzival, for Wolfram's mood and purpose had changed by the time he came to write the later work. Parzival is a work of optimism, displaying the ultimate victory of faith over despair, of good over evil, and so its principal backcloth is the sparkling world of the court, where beauty and valour, joy and love dominate. In Willehalm, however, the court serves only as an ironic contrast to the main scene of the action, the battlefield. In a world such as this, there is little place for joy, and the radiant beauty and happiness of Condwiramurs would be incongruous, in view of the desperate suffering and hardship about her. Instead, the figure of Gyburc appears and represents a new aspect of ideal womankind which embraces the beauty and virtues of her predecessors, yet goes further. For Gyburc can endure the trials of siege and war, sorrow and hatred, to an extent which was never required of the heroines of Parzival. This does not imply that she is actually superior to Condwiramurs, with whom, as the wife of the other great hero, comparison is inevitable, for Condwiramurs is, after all, never called upon to show physical courage. The two works represent two aspects of mediaeval chivalry and so demand two different heroines. There is a similar difference between Willehalm and Parzival similarly: "Die Parzival-geschichte ist eine Vision, eine poetische Darstellung innerer Vorgänge, ein Bild zeitgeschichtlicher Strebungen und Begehürte. Im Willehalm dagegen tritt der Held auf den Boden tatvollen Wirkens in der realen Welt. Menschen, Völker, Räume sind als geschichtlich wirklich gedacht".  

and Parzival, and yet it would be impossible to say which is the greater man. Greatness has many manifestations, and different circumstances will produce different aspects of greatness. In Parzival, Wolfram had shown one ideal of womanhood, who could sustain her husband through despair and suffering, and so help to bring him to the highest honour of Christian knighthood, with herself as his apt consort. Gyburc's task, too, is to sustain her husband, but in a different way. For Willehalm does not experience the despair and spiritual suffering of Parzival: any doubts he may ever have had have been overcome by now, when he has learnt to know and love God and is prepared to fight for his love. As his wife, Gyburc, too, is prepared to fight for the sake of the God she has come to acknowledge, and the test of her faith comes when she is called upon to defend a city, in order to defend her husband and the cause for which he is fighting.

The rôle of Gyburc is decided, to a very considerable extent, by the theme of Willehalm. Basically, the theme is the conflict between two great forces, and Gyburc's rôle is a particular one, because she stands between these forces, belonging completely to neither, yet deeply concerned with the fate of each. This concern is no mere passive distress at the sorrow about her, for it is coupled with the awareness that she is the direct cause of it. From the beginning, Gyburc is deeply involved,

1. See p. 80.
2. This awareness is most clearly expressed in Gyburc's words to Heimrich:

\[\text{ich schür siner hantgetat, der bede machet unde hat den kristen und den heiden! ich was flust in beiden. an mir nuohs leide in unt uns. (Wh. 255, 9-13)}\]

cf. also Maurer (Leid, pp. 174-176) and p. 143f.
and it is this state of being involved which governs her whole character and makes her so different from Wolfram's other heroines, despite the many points they have in common.

For Gyburc does echo, in many of her virtues, qualities already displayed by Condwiramurs, Herzeloyde, Sigune and Belakane, and so the difference is rather one of emphasis, resulting in itself from the rôle she is called upon to play. In Parzival, the development of the hero is the principal concern, so that Parzival himself occupies the central position. The principal heroines, then, despite their indisputable individuality, are important in the work primarily for their relation to him.¹ Willehalm, as well as being an exciting story of mediæval chivalry, is a didactic work, pointing to the futility of war and the injustice of killing the heathens simply because they are heathens. Wolfram chose not only to allow the action in itself to convey his message, but also to express it the more powerfully through a major character. Thus Gyburc comes forward, transcending the rôle of Guibourc in the Aliscana, for it is she who bears this message.²

¹. This is not absolutely true of Sigune, who is shown in Titurel to have a story of her own, quite apart from her relation to Parzival, see p.94 ff.
². It is tempting to call Gyburc the central figure of the work, since she bears its essential message, but this is perhaps unjust to Willehalm. Rather are they equal in significance, though their significance is not the same. Those who see Gyburc as 'die nächst Willehalm wichtigste Gestalt der Dichtung' (B. Mergell: Wolfram von Eschenbach und seine französischen Quellen, vol. I, p.126; J. Bumke, op. cit. p.143, i.) are guided, presumably, by the fact that Willehalm's appearances are more frequent and more directly essential to the plot, but the less frequent appearances of Gyburc are equally essential to the theme of Wolfram's work.
Who, after all, has more right to bear it? Gyburc is bound by blood and loyalty to the heathens, and this she cannot forget, in spite of the new bond of love which binds her to Willehalm and so to the Christian God and the whole of Christendom. Her appearances are few, yet they are vital to the work and leave a profound impression upon it, for the spirit with which she defends the city and the memorable words in which she urges reconciliation pervade the work and exalt Gyburc herself to a woman in whom courage and the readiness to fight for a just cause mingle with love and feminine compassion.

Gyburc is called upon to defend a city, in order to defend her husband and the cause for which he is fighting, the whole of Christendom. This she shows herself able to do. Her uplifted sword is not idle gesture, but a symbol of her readiness to fight, if the need arises. J. Bumke describes this as 'ein aktives und ihre frauliche Schwäche überwindendes Eintreten für ihren Glauben': the situation is a desperate one and calls forth this supreme effort. Although she shows herself here capable of the courage and strength of a man, it is significant that Wolfram does not wish to show this side of her more than necessary. He prizes femininity highly and, as soon as Willehalm returns, Gyburc changes her masculine, warlike attire for a beautiful dress and appears radiantly feminine, to resume her true

1. I agree with H.B. Willson ("Einheit in der Vielheit in Wolframs Willehalm", Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie, 80, 1961, pp. 40-62) in preferring the term 'Versöhnung' to 'Toleranz'. Reconciliation is positive and is more apt a description of what Gyburc desires. Similarly, see J. Bumke (op. cit. p.153).
2. Wh. 227, 12ff.
3. op. cit. p.149.
 rôle as Willehalm's consort. Nor is Wolfram sparing in his description of her, giving now a picture of beauty and elegance which is in sharp contrast to the earlier picture she gave of herself. Gyburc's desire to change from battle attire into beautiful clothes is stressed by Wolfram; it is a conscious gesture on her part, an indication of her own sense of her nature as a woman. That she is able to transcend her true nature, when the need arises, is admirable, but no-one, Willehalm, Wolfram or Gyburc herself, desires a woman to forsake her femininity, save in exceptional circumstances.

This capacity to act with a courage resembling closely the courage of a soldier is called forth in Gyburc purely as a result of her environment, and the demands thus made upon her. When she is required once more to be a lady of the court, she appears again very like Condwiramurs, who may also have possessed qualities of physical strength and courage which she was never called upon to exert. There is altogether in Gyburc a duality, of which this ability to act with manly courage is one aspect. She is, after all,

Arabele Gyburc, ein wîp
zwir genant ........

Her baptism as Gyburc cannot erase her heathen name, any more than her new-found Christianity can obliterate from her mind the memory

1. See Wh. 248, 23-249, 15.
2. See Wh. 248, 4-8.
3. See for example, Gyburc's words to her ladies, Wh. 247, 1-10.
4. Wh. 30, 21-22. H.B. Willson (op. cit. p.43) sees this line as the expression of Gyburc's 'Einheit in der Vielheit'. It is apparent that Wolfram intended to show in Gyburc a woman torn between two loyalties and with two different backgrounds contributing to her make-up, yet achieving personal harmony.
of her birth and the years she spent in her heathen kingdom. Her introduction to Christianity appears to her as a great gift, with which she has had the fortune to be endowed, and from which there is now no turning away for her, but this sense of her own fortune serves to make her the more eager to urge mercy towards those who have not known the joy of this gift.

The ties of blood are strong, and Gyburc cannot ignore them. To demand of Willehalm that he should withdraw from the battle is, however, impossible, for, even if he could do so and retain his knightly honour, it would suggest that she herself had no faith in the cause. Moreover, she would be forced to surrender herself to the heathens once more, forsaking God and her baptism. This she cannot do, for she shows herself at all times loyal to the religion she has adopted as her own. Her only course is the one she does, in fact, take, when she pleads for mercy towards the Saracens if they are defeated. It is significant that she advocates mercy rather than tolerance, for mercy implies an attitude of the strong towards the weak. She does not demand that the Christians should accept the gods of the heathens, but that they should look with compassion upon those who have not become acquainted with the Christian God. The approach of Gyburc is an inspired one, contrasting sharply with the prevalent attitude of medieval Christianity.

1. Heimrich and his sons actually thank Gyburc for not giving way to the demands of her father, saying that she has thus increased her honour and that of Willehalm, and affirmed her love of God. They see her steadfastness as a testimony to her faith, and this is clearly how Wolfram intended it to be seen: Wh. 260, 1-10.
2. Wh. 306, 28; Wh. 309, 1-6.
4. cf. for example, the Rolandslied.
but she is not alone, for St Francis, a close contemporary of Wolfram's, also preached the peaceful conversion of the heathens, rather than the use of force. 1) Thus, too, does Gyburc see teaching and example as immeasurably superior to military weapons as methods of persuasion. Before she begins to urge mercy, she has stressed that the Christians have it in their power to increase their 'Krisenlich ere' in their impending victory: 2) her meaning is unambiguous, for what irony there would be in the brutal slaughter of the spiritually weaker by the disciples of the God of Love!

Gyburc is given the opportunity to make this positive plea for mercy, and Willehalm's treatment of the heathen slain as the work breaks off shows already that her plea has not been entirely in vain. 3) Already, in Parzival, the virtue of 'erbarmung' has been extolled, for only by asking a simple question which arises from natural human compassion for the suffering of Anfortas can Parzival come to the kingship of the Graal. 4) As Herzeloide's son, Parzival possesses the innate capacity for pity, 5) and it is the compassion of the pilgrim's daughters which causes them to look back at the lonely figure, so inspiring him with the desire to turn once more to God. 6) Similarly, Gyburc does not only possess compassion within herself, but she has also, like these other women, the ability to impart it to others. There is, however, a significant

1. The relationship in this respect between St Francis and Wolfram was suggested in a recent broadcast by C.N.L. Brooke: Expanding Christendom: The Layman's reaction. (See The Listener, October 10th 1963.)
2. Wh. 306, 19.
3. Wh. 462, 16ff.
4. See p.63 ff.
5. See p.12 ff.
6. See p.28 ff.
difference. The women in Parzival give to the hero a sense of the need for compassion simply by their example, by allowing him to see compassion in them. Gyburc, in accordance with her more active role, actually spurs the men to mercy by her speech.

The virtue of 'triuwe', of steadfast devotion, is extolled and exemplified in Willehalm, too, but with a similar difference from its manifestations in Parzival. Herzeloyde, Sigune and Condwiramurs are all steadfast in their devotion to their loved ones, and so Herzeloyde and Condwiramurs play a large part in sustaining their husbands, who are both conscious of the selfless devotion of the women at home. Sigune's love for Schionatulander is so great that it finds favour with God and brings her to the point where her life is itself absolute devotion to God.\(^1\) Repanse de Schoye, too, is capable of devoted service to the Graal and so demonstrates another aspect of 'triuwe'. 'Triuwe', in Parzival, then, finds expression in selfless service and the readiness to wait, in itself a support in time of grief and despair. Gyburc, however, is called upon to supply also physical support of her husband, and her 'triuwe' is tested to the full in her defence of Orange.

The 'triuwe' which Gyburc displays is directed both towards Willehalm and towards God. As well as defending her husband, she is defending the cause for which he is fighting, and this is possible only because she has faith in it, because she has faith in God.\(^2\) The faith which radiated from Sigune in her lonely cell\(^3\) and which, in the pilgrim's daughters, inspired Parzival with a new longing for

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2. See Gyburc's own words, Wh. 216, 24-26.
God, fills the whole being of Gyburc. As with Sigune, faith, which is basically the love of God, is seen as the natural development of human love, and goes hand-in-hand with it. Foreshadowing Gyburc, is, of course, Belakane, who, after Gahmuret had left her, declared that she would gladly have accepted Christian baptism for his sake. Once more, however, Gyburc is shown as the active character, for she is able to do what was denied to Belakane, to adopt the faith of her husband, and even to fight for it.

Although Belakane does not achieve the stature of Gyburc, she is nevertheless clearly the forerunner of the heroine of the later work. Wolfram's own recognition of the rights of 'gote hangetät', no matter what their creed or colour, is revealed first in this woman who is shown to possess virtues equal to those of the white, Christian heroines, and whom Gahmuret never really forgot, despite his union with Herzeloyde. Wolfram's respect for the feelings of all human beings is shown also in his refusal to allow Repanse de Schoye to return as the wife of Feirefiz until the news has come of the death of Sekundille, but it is above all in Willehalm that his tolerance is shown, for he is always just in his treatment of the heathens, acknowledging their prowess and virtues equally with those of the Christians. Nowhere does he express this so perfectly as in the figure of Gyburc, who, despite her colour and lineage, is

1. See p. 233
2. 57, 6-8, and see p. 165
4. See p. 164f. For a closer comparison of Belakane and Gyburc, see p. 161f.
5. 822, 19-20. See also p. 318 ff.
is a truly noble woman, an apt consort for Willehalm, and worthy to be exalted as a saint.

The problem of Gyburc as 'heilic vrouwe' has been discussed at length by J. Bumke. It is true that she is no real martyr, nor does she live a life of ascetic privation as Sigune does. Yet to her, alone among his heroines, does Wolfram give this direct designation of saint. J. Bumke claims that of the heroines of Parzival only Herzeloyde has any resemblance to Gyburc, but there would seem to be a much closer resemblance between Sigune and Gyburc. Both lead lives which bring them close to sanctity, although each has a different approach. Sigune achieves her highest point when she has withdrawn from the world and leads a life of absolute devotion. Gyburc, on the other hand, does not look to withdrawal from the world as her means of salvation, and this is emphatically in accordance with the rest of her character, which is active and positive in every way. She is best able to demonstrate her love and her faith by active means, and so her principal appearances are active demonstrations, in which faith and love dominate her being and radiate from her. In this active expression of her faith would seem to lie for Wolfram the sanctity which he denies to Sigune.

The faith of Gyburc is intimately bound up with her love for

1. Wh. 403, 1.
2. op. cit. p.145ff.
3. op. cit. p.144, note 3. He does not, however, indicate where he finds this resemblance. Above all, surely Herzeloyde's significance lies in her motherhood (see 128, 25 and p.58 ), while this is by no means the case with Gyburc. The stress on poverty does, however, link them to some extent (see below), but in other respects the resemblance between Gyburc and Herzeloyde is not stronger than that between Gyburc and the other great heroines of Parzival.
4. i.e.: Wh. 109, 30-112, 2; Wh. 215, 1-221,26; Wh. 306,12-310,29
Willehalm and is inextricable from it. Gerhard Meysburger\(^1\) is surely right when he speaks of their union as 'Höhepunkt der einzigartigen Ehefassung Wolframs'. Like the love of Parzival and Condwiramurs, it goes far beyond the courtly notion of 'minne'. Rather is it another example of Wolfram's statement in the earlier work: 'recht minne ist wāriu triuwe'.\(^2\) Both Gyburc and Willehalm are conscious of the divine nature of their love, thus Willehalm can plead with God:

\[
\text{stēt dīn tugent vor wanke blōz,}
\]
\[
\text{du solt an mir niht wenken}
\]
\[
\text{und mīne flust bedenken,}
\]
\[
\text{sīt entwarf dīn selbes hant}
\]
\[
\text{daz der vriunt vriundinne vant}
\]
\[
\text{an dem arme sīn durch minne. 3)}
\]

and Gyburc can reject the accusation that she has caused all this distress for the sake of human love alone:

\[
\text{Ich diene der künstelīchen hant}
\]
\[
\text{für der heiden got Tervigant:}
\]
\[
\text{ir kräft hēt mich von Mahumeten}
\]
\[
\text{unders toufes zil gebeten.}
\]
\[
\text{des trag ich mīnes māge haz;}
\]
\[
\text{und der getouften umbe daz:}
\]
\[
\text{durh mennesschīcher minne gīt}
\]
\[
\text{si wānent daz ich fuogte disen strīt. 4)}
\]

She takes upon herself the guilt, but it is a guilt which she is proud to bear, for it is imposed by God Himself and by Willehalm:

\[
\text{ich trag al ein die schulde,}
\]
\[
\text{durh des hœhaten gotes hulde,}
\]
\[
\text{ein teil ouch durh den markīs}
\]
\[
\text{der bejaget hē tō manegen prīs. 5)}
\]

1. op. cit. p. 86.
2. 532, 10.
3. Wh. 456, 6-11.
5. Wh. 310, 1Y-20.
Yet following on this acceptance of her responsibility, which in no way suggests regret that she must bear it, comes a cry of grief at the loss of brave men:

waz werder diet üz erkorn
in dîme dienste hânt verlorn
ir lîp genendecliche!
der arme und der rîche,
mu geloubt daz iwerr möchte flust
mir sendet jâmer in die brust:
für wâr mâin vreude ist mit in tôt.'
    si weinde vil: des twanc si nôt. 1)

Her tears at this point, and those which she has shed before, 2) bear witness to the sensitive love and pity which Wolfram has praised so often in other women. 3) Gerhard Meißburger is surely ignoring the significance of the tears of Gyburc's fellow-heroines when he sees them as a sign of her weakness. 4) It is not lack of strength which prompts her to a display of sorrow in either case, but true womanhood. To continue steadfast in her suffering, to transcend her womanly nature and remain resolute in the course she has taken, as she does, requires great strength, and this Gyburc does not lack. 5)

Through their great, mutual love, which they know to come from God, Gyburc and Willehalm are given strength to comfort one another, despite the burden of grief from outside. Although Wolfram has stressed so deliberately the suffering and loss caused by the battle, he is still able to say that the love of Gyburc compensates Willehalm

1. 310, 23-30.
2. 102, 21-24.
3. There are many examples, but see 28, 14-15; 272,7ff; 729,20ff.
4. op. cit. p.82:"Doch hat sie noch nicht zu der Kraft durchgerungen, die sie befähigen wird, in und mit ihrer Liebe alles Leid zu vergelteln; noch findet sie im Gebet nicht Trost und Beruhigung. Sie weinet nach ihrem Gebet".
5. A single instance of Gyburc's ability to overcome her womanly scruples when the need arises is surely in the ruse she adopts when she sets up the dead men to guard the city: Wh. 111,17-23 and Wh. 230, 6-10.
for what he has lost:

Gyburc mit wüchern güte
so nahe an seine brust sich want,
daß im nu gelten want bekant:
alles das er ie verlös,
da für er si ze gelte kos. 1)

The power of her love inspires Willehalm as he rides forth to Orleans, and the extent to which they are dependent on one another is expressed in the notion of the exchange of hearts:

beide er bleip unde reit:
in selben hin truoc Volatin,
Gyburc behielt das herze sin.
ouch fuor ir herze üf allen wegen
mit im: wer sol Oransche pflegen?
der wechsel rehte was gefrumt:
ir herze hin ze friwenden kumt,
sin herze sol sich vinden wern, 2)
Gyburse vor untröste nern.

Truly does Gyburc ride with him, for it is she who prompts his every action, the memory of her causing him to refrain from fine food 3) and from kissing other lips, 4) until he releases her from distress. As Parzival never forgot Condwiramurs in all his years of absence, so does Willehalm have Gyburc constantly in his thoughts:

swie balde er von Gyburse streich,
sin gedanc ir nie gesweich:
der was ir zOranske rft. 5)

The love of Parzival and Condwiramurs which played a large part in Parzival's achievement of the Graal 6) is echoed in the love of Gyburc and Willehalm, but the issue is a wider one. Whereas in Parzival it was a case of the return to faith of a single man, in Willehalm the

1. Wh. 280, 2-6.
2. Wh. 109, 6-14.
3. See, for example, Wh. 112, 18-19; Wh. 134, 30-135, 1.
4. See, for example, Wh. 119, 4-11.
5. Wh. 111, 27-29.
6. See p. 80f.
fate of the whole human race is at stake, symbolized in the heathens who must be shown the way to faith by peaceful means and the Christians who must not risk their 'kristenlîch êre' by the senseless slaughter of the spiritually weaker. Their salvation depends on the strength of the love of Gyburc and Willehalm, and its power to spread to those on both sides of the conflict.

Willehalm was written at a time when women were being increasingly accepted in the religious orders. They were being given authority to rule as abbesses, exercising considerable power and needing a close acquaintance with the Scriptures, as well as with contemporary thought. Tales of the devotion of such women as Hildegard von Bingen and Héloïse may well have contributed to Wolfram's conception of the saintly Gyburc, who is the bearer of the religious message of the work, equipped with a knowledge of her faith and alone in the work to express it. It was certainly a new idea to allow a woman to dominate the religious thought of a work. Yet he perhaps points, too, to

1. See E. Werner, op. cit.
2. This is apparent, for example, from the letters of Héloïse to Abelard.
3. See p. 3ff.
4. See, for example, Wh. 306, 2 9ff; 309, 7ff.
5. cf. J. Bumke (op. cit. pp. 143-144): "In Gyburg konzentriert sich die religiöse Problematik mehr als in jeder anderen Gestalt; und sie ist es, die die Leitgedanken ausspricht. Eine Frau als religiöser Mittelpunkt einer großen Laiendichtung: das ist das Neue im Willehalm". Professor Bumke goes on, however, to compare Gyburc with the women in Parzival: "... dort wurden die bestimmenden religiösen Ideen von Trevrizent ausgesprochen, und an Parzival wurde die religiöse Problematik exemplifiziert; die Frauengestalten traten dahinter ganz zurück". This last remark is misleading: the relationship of the women with the religious thought of Parzival is certainly different from that of Gyburc with the religious thought of Willehalm, but the difference lies in the nature of the works and in the difference of the rôles of

/continued overleaf
to a contemporary problem, when he portrays Gyburc as a woman who is very much in the world, able to do good by being an active and truly fervent member of society. In Parzival also he had shown his greatest knight to be a member of society, active in the world, courageous in battle, esteemed among his fellow-men, a good husband and father. While in no way rejecting Trevrizent and Sigune, he nevertheless allows the supreme honour to one who has combined faith in God with an active existence in the world. Is not Gyburc the counterpart of Parzival, the exalted by Wolfram to the status of a saint in the world, just as the earlier hero had achieved the highest honour of Christian knighthood? Both fulfil the fundamental requirement of mediæval chivalry, by being pleasing both to the world and to God.

In the Aliscans, Guibourc was a fairly slight character, the wife of Guillaume and the reason for the conflict, but in no way actively involved in the main action. Despite a close similarity at many points with the source, Wolfram chose a new emphasis for his work, which is a deeply religious one, pointing to the power of faith and the futility of killing. Such ideas were barely implicit

the heroines. That the women of Parzival are nevertheless involved in the religious thought is apparent from detailed examination of their characters and their rôles.

1. J. Bumke (op. cit. p.143, i) describes Guibourc as 'eine Randfigur but this is not entirely just. Within the framework of the Aliscans, she has considerable importance, though this is clearly limited in comparison with the tremendous rôle of Gyburc. An interesting account of the character of Guibourc is given by B.L. de Kok: Guibourc et quelques autres figures de femmes dans les plus anciennes chansons de geste, Paris, 1926,

2. See B. Mergei1, Wolfram von Eschenbach und seine französischen Quellen, I.
in the French version. To give expression to his theme, Wolfram chose Gyburc as his mouthpiece. The woman who thus bore the message of the work could not remain on the edge of the action, so Gyburc is brought into the centre, to endure the full impact of grief, yet at the same time to know the privilege of carrying the message of universal love and mercy. In the suffering she must bear and the manner of her bearing it, Wolfram gave her the means to sanctity.\(^1\)

As in Parzival, it is a woman who is shown to endure the most profound suffering, yet, like Herzeloyde, Sigune, Condwiramurs, Belakane, Repanse de Schoye and even Jeschute, Gyburc suffers as the direct result of love, and, like them, she finds the strength to endure it because she sees it as the inevitable companion of love.\(^2\) Moreover, as was so clearly seen in the case of Sigune, perfect human love finds favour with God and so is strengthened by divine Love,\(^3\) thus bringing those who know it to a strong faith. Herzeloyde's heart breaks when Parzival leaves her, but Sigune and Gyburc, in whom the element of faith is so stressed, are given the strength to carry on through their grief.\(^4\) Sigune has still an important task to accomplish when Schionatulander dies,\(^5\) and

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2. See, for example, her words, Wh. 310, 1-6; 310, 17-20. On the basis of such assertions, Professor Bumke may rightly say (op. cit. p. 148): "Ihre Liebesfrömmigkeit ist zugleich eine Leidensfrömmigkeit".

3. See p. 122f.

4. Herzeloyde, too, survives the death of Gahmuret, in order that she may live to set Parzival on the right path, see p. 53.

5. See p. 15.
Gyburc, too, finds strength in her purpose, the active defence of Orange. Like Condwiramurs, who, during the years of Parzival's absence, gave birth to their sons and educated fitting heirs to Parzival's greatness, Gyburc sustains her husband's city and thus ensures their future together.

Gyburc must endure discomfort and threat of attack, and the absence of her husband, but more profound suffering is forced upon her in the hatred of both Christians and heathens.\(^1\) Of this she is deeply aware:

\[
si \text{ sprach } \text{ der tötlîche val} \\
der \text{hiest geschehen ze bêder sit},
\text{dar umbe ieh der getouften nît.} \quad 2)
\text{trag und ouch der heiden }...
\]

This hatred she returns with love, most positively expressed in her great plea for reconciliation.\(^3\) Love is the supreme response to hate, but only a person of Gyburc's strength is capable of giving it. Once more, Gyburc's position affects the quality of her suffering, for she is fully aware of her direct responsibility for the hardship and loss on both sides. The grief which she knows at the death of Vivianz embraces also her grief at the deaths on both sides. The powerful expression of sorrow at the death of Vivianz suggests the culmination of her distress, which now finds utterance in mourning this one noble young Christian.\(^4\)

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1. Once more, one may see here the parallel with Belakane who was also conscious of having caused suffering and grief to both sides in the conflict for which, without having wished it, she is responsible, see p. 168ff.
2. Wh. 306, 12-15. cf. also 310, 106.
3. This speech is Wolfram's addition, in accordance with his new concept of the character of the heroine.
stands for all the noble men, whether Christian or heathen, who have died in the conflict, and for whom, in her grief, Gyburc declares that she would gladly have died herself.\(^1\) Death, however, is not given to Gyburc: rather does her martyrdom fulfil itself in a life lived in anguish at the suffering of others and in the knowledge that, though she is the cause of it, she cannot alleviate it.

Once more, in this respect, Gyburc is linked with Sigune, but there is a difference, for Sigune is conscious of her actual guilt and seeks to atone for it in a lifetime of devotion,\(^2\) while Gyburc cannot regret the original act, though she must grieve for its widespread effects. Her act was a good one, committed in the full consciousness of what she was doing, while Sigune must suffer for a moment of folly, the surrender to a mere whim. She makes what she considers to be just compensation for her act,\(^3\) but there is no question of compensation in the case of Gyburc.

The problem of Gyburc's desertion of her husband Isjone which presents itself to the modern mind\(^4\) surely represented no problem. For Wolfram, however, it is not considered binding,\(^5\) so the fact that Gyburc leaves Tybalt passes

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1. Wh. 102, 6-7.
2. See p. 103 and p. 114ff.
4. See, for example, G. Meiburger (op. cit. p. 75ff) and F. Maurer (Leid, p. 193ff).
5. The argument which Herzeloyde uses in persuading Gahmuret to marry her is almost certainly a reflection of the contemporary attitude, see 94, 13 and p. 167. See also A. Sattler (op. cit. p. 92).
without comment. Clearly, her baptism and her marriage with Willehalm superseded the claims of heathendom, and Wolfram saw no reason to justify an action which required no justification. His assertion early in the work

unschuldic was diu künegin

is an unambiguous statement of his own view of his heroine, for, as he goes on to explain, Gyburc deserves only praise and reward because she must endure suffering for the sake of Christ:

swer sich vinden lôt durh in in nôt,
der enpfæhethn endelôsen solt.

Gyburc's desertion of her husband and family is the inevitable result of her baptism, and, like the war between Christians and heathens, it is something over which she has no control. It is part of the suffering which she must accept in consequence of her conversion.

This does not mean, however, that Gyburc has not suffered deeply at being separated thus from her family. Of such suffering, it is true, Wolfram says nothing, but by the time the work opens Gyburc has presumably overcome her immediate distress. She has achieved, with what struggle one can only imagine, a state of harmony in which all suffering appears to her as the result of her love of God and of Willehalm, and therefore endurable:

der des alles hat gewalt,
gein dem schaden bin ich palt:
der mac michs wol ergetzen
unt des lîbes armuot letzen
mit der sêle rîcheit.  

1. Wh. 31, 4.
2. Wh. 31, 12-13.
Nevertheless, her marriage to Willehalm has meant sacrifice for her, however gladly she may have made it. It is notable that she never accuses Tybalt: on the contrary, she praises him:

Tybalt von Arabî
ist vor aller untæte vrî. 1)

She was loved in her heathen kingdom, 2) and she left her children behind there, 3) and one cannot see this sacrifice as a trivial one. Only the reason for it makes it worthwhile and even justifiable. Basic to Wolfram's Willehalm is, however, the power of faith. It is seen as a power which makes all suffering endurable and which overcomes all other considerations. Thus Gyburc, the heroine of the work and so intimately connected with its message, is raised also above all else, so that she becomes, in her unique situation, a unique heroine, in many ways the embodiment of the ideal of womanhood as it was seen in Parzival, yet in other ways representing a totally new aspect of it which was never approached in the earlier work.

The difference lies, above all, in the active nature of Gyburc. Like the principal heroines of Parzival, she is filled with a tremendous power of love, both of a human being and, the natural corollary, of God. Yet, unlike them, she demonstrates this love by active means, by the physical defence of Orange, and by her public professions of faith. She inspires her husband not only,

1. Wh. 310, 15-16.
2. Wh. 310, 9.
3. Wh. 210, 11.
as Condwiramurs did, by her presence, but also by her words:

Giburc sprach 'dîn eines hant
mac von al der heiden lant
den liuten niht gestrîten:
du muost nâch helfe rîten.
von Rôme roys Lôys
und dîne mâge sulen ir prîs
an dir nu lâzen schînen.
ich belîb in disen pînen
sô daz ich halde wol ze wer
Cransîhô vor der heiden her
unz an der Franzosære komm,
oder daz ich hân den tôt genomm; 1)
ob noch græzer wære ir maht.' 2)

Such words could hardly have been uttered by Belakane, Herzeloyde or Condwiramurs, whose influence, though powerful, was basically a passive one. A point which is surely closely linked with this essential difference and which should not be overlooked in the consideration of the character of Gyburc, is the fact that these three women are all mothers and reach their peak in motherhood, 2) when, passively and by their very nature as women, they fulfil themselves in their children. 3) This is not the case with Gyburc, whose moment of fulfilment comes, surely, when she is called upon to defend her faith actively:

nu stuont vrou Gyburc ze wer
mit uf geworfeme swerte
als op si strîtes gerte. 4)

Though it is mentioned that Gyburc has children in the kingdom she has forsakken, 5) she is not remembered primarily as a mother, and this seems strange, perhaps, in view of the high place which Wolfram

1. Wh. 103, 9-21.
2. See detailed studies of these women.
5. 310, 11.
gives to Herzeloyde by virtue of her motherhood. Yet the omission is perfectly in accordance with the new aspect of womanhood which he offers in the person of Gyburc. In the active rôle which she must play in Willehalm, there is no place for the passive and restful picture of motherhood. Gyburc's rôle is not to impart her virtue to a single being, but to inspire whole armies with her spirit of love and faith. The scale and tempo of Willehalm have changed from that of Parzival, and the passive heroine must be replaced by a new one, no less virtuous, but capable of fulfilling herself in an active and, in Wolfram's work, unprecedented manner.

Thus, to a large extent, the more intimate qualities of the women in Parzival are omitted in Gyburc. It is as though she has risen above them, in transcending the traditional rôle of woman. Yet it is as Werner Schröder says: "Gyburc ist ... zunächst und vor allem ein liebender und Mütterlicher Mensch", and occasionally Gyburc betrays touches of her nature which remind one of the woman she is, rather than of the saint whom Wolfram sees in her. Her kindness to the unhappy Rennewart is inspired not only by the feeling that they are related, but also by compassion for the suffering of another human being. Her personal attentions to Willehalm when he returns to Orange the first time echo the devotion of the women in Parzival. She removes his armour for him and tends his wounds, and one is reminded of Belakane's eagerness to serve

1. See p.34.
2. 'Süeziu Gyburc', p.69.
3. Wh. 289, 20ff.
4. Wh. 99, 18ff. This scene is not present in the Aliscans: see E. Mergell, Wolfram von Eschenbach, I, p.98.
Gahmuret, of the small service which Cunneware performs for Parzival as he departs, and of Bene's attention to Gawan's comfort. Despite her personal state of distress and privation, Gyburc readily offers to feed the great army which is encamped about the city. Such slight indications of kindness and selflessness give depth to the picture of the saintly Gyburc and make of her a figure perfectly in accordance with the picture of womanhood so fully presented in Parzival. Wolfram has time also to show in his great heroine a woman who is not untouched by grief and strain. She faints when she realizes finally that it is Willehalm who is returning and not the enemy. She who has been prepared to defend the city with her sword gives way now when relief is at hand:

\[
\text{nu wart durch liebe alsô wâ}
\]
\[
\text{Gyburge, diu durch vreud erschrac,}
\]
\[
\text{daz si unversunnen vor in lac.}
\]
\[
\text{wan ir kom genendelîche}
\]
\[
\text{vil helfe ûz Francrîche,}
\]
\[
\text{de besten rîter die man vant}
\]
\[
\text{in der rehten rîterschefte lant.}
\]

At times, too, Gyburc gives way to her grief and expresses it in tears, which suggest, not her weakness, but her true nature as a noble woman, which, for most of the work, she is required to transcend. Her sanctity consists, it is true, in her ability to

1. See 33, 9-14.
2. See 332, 22ff and p. 212.
4. Wh. 2 34, 2 3ff.
5. 227, 12-17.
6. Wh. 228, 26-229, 2.
7. See, for example, Wh. 268, 3ff; Wh. 102, 21ff; Wh. 105, 171.
do so, but it rests on her greatness as an ordinary human being, as a suffering and loving woman. Thus, when Willehalm leaves her on his journey to Orleans, Wolfram allows her to remember, for a moment, that she is a woman parting from her husband and to ask him to remain true to her,\(^1\) for the sake of his own honour and in remembrance of the sacrifice she has made for him. This idea, and Willehalm's response, that he will eat no food other than bread and water until he has released her, are present already in the *Aliscans*, but the changes which Wolfram has made are in accordance with his new conception of the relationship of the couple. Gyburc's is a simple request, made in the consciousness, surely, that their love is secure, whereas Guibourc betrays for a moment a real fear that the beautiful French women may take her husband from her.\(^2\) Willehalm vows to remain in grief until he has freed her from suffering:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Er gap des fêanze,} \\
\text{daz diu jâmers lanze} \\
\text{sin herze immer twunge,} \\
\text{unz im só wol gelunge} \\
\text{daz er si dâ erlôste} \\
\text{mit manlîchem trôste}
\end{align*}
\]

He does not expand, as does Guillaume,\(^4\) on how this grief and discomfort will reveal itself, and his later refusal to kiss

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2. *Aliscans*, ed. cit. 1974. B. de Kok (op. cit. p.33-34) observes: "Voilà donc que cette femme forte qui poursuit toujours son but sans hésiter, devient une pauvre creature tremblant pour son bonheur." At no point could this apply to Gyburc.
3. Wh. 105, 1-6.
anyone other than Gyburc is not, as is the case with Guillaume, in direct loyalty to a vow made to her, but his own interpretation of his promise to remain in sorrow.

The picture which Wolfram draws of Gyburc is based on that of her predecessor in the Aliscans, but with a totally new emphasis which is demanded by a completely new conception of her rôle in the work. She becomes, then, a highly complex character, with an essential duality resultant from her strange situation as a heathen woman who has become a Christian, a Moorish princess who has become the wife of a Christian margrave. Part of the duality of Gyburc, as created by Wolfram, lies also in this essential fact that she is a very human woman, with the emotions and reactions of the heroines of Parzival, yet that she is called upon to suppress these at some points and to behave quite unlike these other heroines. Her ability to do so is not in spite of her greatness as a woman but because of it. This Wolfram shows when he allows her to betray her natural womanhood, but he shows also that what makes his Gyburc a saint in his eyes is the extension of the virtues of his earlier heroines.

The power of love, that essential 'triuwe', which is present in all his women characters, reveals itself now as love of God. Her love for Willehalm is inextricable from her love of God, and has become an essential aspect of her new faith: the situation

1. See, for example, Wh. 119, 4-11.
2. Wolfram suppresses also description of the beauty of Gyburc. Apart from his lengthy description of her feminine radiance when she has changed from her battle-dress (see Wh. 248, 23ff. and p.30ff.), the references to her beauty is limited to the oblique mention by Rennewart of the beauty of his sister (Wh. 292, 10-293, 5). Although Gyburc is beautiful, Willehalm is not the place to dwell on it.
of Sigune is repeated in Gyburc, but with greater intensity and more vitally for the whole work. Thus too is the virtue of 'armuot', which was extolled in Herseloyde, displayed again in Gyburc. J. Bumke\(^1\) describes the poverty of Gyburc with justice 'als Triebfeder, als Kennzeichnen ihrer Haltung'. This 'poverty' she accepts and is glad to accept, when she becomes a Christian. What Terramer sees as a degradation, when his daughter abandons her heathen kingdom with its vast wealth,\(^2\) she sees as an elevation. This 'armuot' links Gyburc with Herseloyde, who was also prepared to give up wealth and comfort for the sake of a principle.\(^3\) In Willehalm, however, the sacrifice represents more, for the principle is a religious one: in fact, Gyburc's sacrifice represents the total acceptance of Christianity. It is significant that her 'Religions-gespräch' ends with the words:

und laz mich mit armuot lebn\(^4\)

She desires, not to live in poverty, but with it, suggesting a way of life, rather than an accessory to a chosen mode of existence. Poverty does not represent only the absence of riches, though in Gyburc's case baptism has meant the loss of wealth and power, but rather a life lived in the spirit of poverty, which comes close to one lived in humility: like Herseloyde, and, eventually, like Sigune, Gyburc achieves this way of life through her devotion to a single cause. Her repeated references to her poverty\(^5\) suggest

1. op. cit. p.146.
2. Wh. 354, 16-22.
4. Wh. 221, 26.
5. For example: Wh. 215, 27; Wh. 216, 2, Wh. 216, 28; Wh. 262, 19.
that she regards it as a positive quality in her existence, and it is perhaps worth remembering in this context the instructions of St Dominic to his followers when he died in 1221: 'Possess poverty'.

Professor Bumke sees in Gyburc's emphasis on poverty the influence of another contemporary of Wolfram's, St Francis, and his principle of 'sancta paupertas'. Gyburc would seem to be giving expression to an essential attribute of the Christian way of life, and one which was finding advocates in the thirteenth century. She certainly sees it as a means to God:

\[
der \text{mac mich wol ergetzen} \\
\text{unt des libes armuot letzen} \\
\text{mit der sele richeit.} 3)
\]

It is, moreover, a means which He has given to her:

\[
durch den han ich mach bewegen \\
daz ich wil armute pflegen, \\
und durch den der der hoechste ist. 4)
\]

From these words it is clear that Gyburc desires the 'poverty' which her conversion has imposed on her: it is not merely that she passively accepts it, but that she actively desires it and seeks to maintain it. Werner Schroder ignores the spiritual

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2. There is a comparison, too, in the fact that St Francis, a wealthy aristocrat, also gave up material wealth and social rank for the service of God: see H.O. Taylor, op. cit. I. p.435ff. It is, however, mistaken to press the comparison of Gyburc and St Francis too far, as J. Bumke tends to do. (op. cit. p.159ff). Poverty of spirit and human kindness are, after all, basic Christian principles, extolled in the New Testament (see, for example, St Matthew, 22.39; St John 13, 34-35) and in no way an innovation of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

3. Wh. 216, 27-29.
4. Wh. 216, 1-3.
significance of 'armuot', as Gyburc uses it. He rejects Bumke's view \(^\text{1)}\) that her sanctity lies, to a large extent, in her poverty and remarks:

"Sie ist keine heilige Elizabeth. Wolfram sagt nichts davon, daß sie höfischen Prunk abgelehnt und sich von dem schönen Schein höfischen Daseins distanziert habe, noch läßt er sie jemals auch nur erwägen, ihre fürstliche Stellung an Willehalms Seite mit dem Leben einer mwerella, einer Bettlerin, zu vertauschen." All this is true, but a literal sacrifice of worldly goods is not necessary in this woman who has shown herself capable of forsaking all that was once of value to her and is now ready to accept suffering and privation for the sake of her faith. The material poverty which her conversion has brought to her is far exceeded by the spiritual wealth which she sees in her new faith, \(^\text{2)}\) For Gyburc, as, on a different level, for Herzeloyde, \(^\text{3)}\) poverty entails not only a lack of possessions, but also a lack of attachment to worldly possessions, and this enables each to accept gladly the material deprivation which is the companion of a much greater spiritual gain. It is the total absence of a desire for worldly goods which Wolfram extolls in Gyburc. In her, as in Herzeloyde, 'armuot' is very close to 'diemuot', which is an aspect of the biblical 'poverty of spirit', \(^\text{4)}\) The humility which alone can bring Parzival to the Graal Kingship, can also ensure eternal bliss for Herzeloyde \(^\text{5)}\) and sanctity for Gyburc. Each woman, moreover, is motivated by 'triuwé', Herzeloyde by love for her child, and Gyburc by 'triuwé' in its ultimate form, when it becomes faith in God.

In her character, Gyburc fulfils the promise of the heroines who

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1. op. cit. p.146ff.
2. As J. Bumke says (op. cit. p.147): "Armuit ist für Gyburg ein religiöser Wert".
4. St Matthew 5:3. See also p.56.
5. See p.38.
precede her in *Parzival*. She possesses the power of 'triuwe' which in all the heroines, from Herzeloyde to Sigune, Cunneware to Cundrie, Antikonie to Obie, is shown as an essential virtue of noble womanhood. In her, love reaches its height, when it becomes faith in God. For this love she is prepared to suffer, like the other great heroines, and to accept gladly any sacrifice placed upon her. Yet, in the context of a work such as this, the rôle of Gyburc is necessarily different from that played by the earlier heroines. Their significance lay often in their very presence: they were important for what they were. Gyburc is important both for her essential being and for her active rôle in the work. The second depends, it is true, on the first, for only because she is a truly noble woman, embodying all the qualities which Wolfram has extolled in her predecessors, can she assume the immense task of Wolfram's mouthpiece in the work. Her presence is felt throughout the work, extending far beyond her physical appearances. She is seen as the reason for the conflict at all times.\(^1\) She rides with Willehalm, the memory of her prompting his actions, and her plea for mercy and love echoes in the words of Willehalm at the end of the work and in his treatment of the heathen slain.\(^2\) Like Condwiramurs, she is at all times in the work, but whereas Condwiramurs is present only in the mind of Parzival, the spirit of Gyburc echoes and re-echoes throughout the work, a constant reminder of its essential theme.

\(^1\) See, among many examples: *Wh.* 7, 27-8; *Wh.* 12, 30-13, 1; *Wh.* 14, 29-30; *Wh.* 43, 12-15; *Wh.* 306, 1.

\(^2\) *Wh.* 466, lff.
Section II

The second large group of heroines comprises six women who, although their rôles are relatively slight ones, compared with those in the previous group, are nevertheless highly significant, both in their own right and for the part they play in the wider issue of the work. All these women contribute, within the rather more limited scope of their rôles, to the picture of noble womanhood presented so emphatically by the really central heroines.

It may be argued that Belakane and Repanse de Schoye in particular possess considerable significance, beyond that of Jeschute and Liaze, but it must be stressed once more that this grouping imposes no strict division. It is convenient to group them in this way, in order to indicate the evident difference, as far as the actual weight of the rôle is concerned, between these women and the four central heroines.
Belakane

Though she vanishes from the work after her brief appearance in the first book, Belakane nevertheless stands as one of Wolfram's most noble women characters, embodying above all that capacity for love which he prizes so highly among womanly virtues. It is in marriage to Gahmuret that Belakane enters the story of Parzival, and when their short-lived marriage comes to an abrupt end, she withdraws from it. Yet she leaves behind her a most powerful symbol of the union, Feirefiz Anschevin, who in his very name combines equally the elements of heathendom and Christianity which were the ingredients of the fleeting romance of Belakane and Gahmuret. In his nature, too, are blended the noblest elements of his parentage, so that he alone is a match for Parzival, the product of the union of Gahmuret and the woman whom Wolfram prizes so highly. The encounter between Parzival and Feirefiz is a final, superb affirmation of Belakane, the woman whom Gahmuret never really forgot and whom Wolfram remembers with admiration and respect.

Belakane contributes greatly to Wolfram's picture of noble womanhood, and in many of her qualities she anticipates later women characters, Sigune and Condwireamurs, Herzeloyde and Gyburc. Yet there is present

1. It is important to note that Wolfram is, of course, independent of Chrétien at this point. Belakane is his own addition.
2. See study of Herzeloyde
3. See p.166 ff.
4. Of Belakane Wolfram says:
   de künîn Belakâne
   was missewenden âne
   und aller valscheite laz,
   dê si ein tôter künec besaz (337, 7-10)
5. See below.
in her too that careful characterization which gives depth to almost all Wolfram's women characters and endows each with distinct individuality. The picture which Wolfram gives of Belakane is one of the most remarkable. With masterly economy, he creates here a woman who remains in the mind of the reader throughout the work, so that the re-appearance of Feirefiz comes, not as a contrived echo from the past, but as a fitting conclusion to a story which forms an impressive and deeply poignant opening to the whole work.

Save for the brief period of happiness in marriage to Gahmuret, Belakane is remembered as a woman grieving for the loss, first of her lover 1) and then of her husband 2) Her appearance is framed by these two bereavements and it is ironical that Gahmuret, who alleviates the grief of the first loss, also inflicts the second. The intensity of her love is matched by the intensity of her grief, for in her, as in so many of her fellow-women, is illustrated the truth of Wolfram's observation:

\[ \text{Sue unde hei\textsuperscript{a} hei,} \\
\text{daz güete alsölhen kumber tregt} 3) \\
\text{und immer triwe jåmer regt!} \]

These words are used in reference to Herzeloyde, but they are equally applicable to Belakane, as to all women who, with the capacity for love, must endure too the inescapable burden of grief. That Wolfram regards as a supreme feminine virtue this capacity to love with an intensity which must ultimately bring sorrow, is clear, both from his numerous examples 4) and from his explicit statement, in reference to

1. See 28, 6ff (for example)
2. 57, 9-14.
3. 103, 20-22.
4. cf., for instance, Sigune, Herzeloyde, Schoette, Annore.
Belakane when she is grieving for Isenhart, that 'wöplicher sin in wibes herze nie geslouf'.

In fact, it is in Gahmuret's mind that Wolfram places this observation, for he falls in love with Belakane on their first meeting, attracted by her dark beauty certainly, but also by her devotion to her dead lover which is revealed in her grief now. There is no suggestion, however, that her love for Isenhart precludes another love now, or that the love of Gahmuret and Belakane is lessened by her earlier devotion to another knight. Their love, beginning with a mutual and spontaneous attraction, is a perfect union, demonstrated in Feirefiz, who even in his physical appearance combines the black and white of his parentage, and in his character combines all that is best in Gahmuret and Belakane.

Gahmuret comes to Belakane by chance, thrown up by a storm on the shores of her land, and he comes, as though drawn by fate, when she is in the most dire distress and danger. They fall in love at once, despite

1. 28, 12-13.

2. On the question of the beauty of Belakane, M.F. Richey (Gahmuret Anschevin, p. 10) remarks: "Belakane herself can hardly be called beautiful, in the European sense of the word. She is a noble and queenly figure, but, like all her people, dark, even to blackness". It is true that Wolfram speaks of her as 'der touwegen rösen ungelfich' (24, 10), but here his intention is surely to suggest a dark beauty, unlike that of Condwiramurs whom he describes as resembling the dewy rose (188, 10-14). A woman of her great virtue would certainly be beautiful too, in accordance with Wolfram's custom of clothing virtue in beauty.

There is, moreover, the evidence of her name, for this is surely a compound of 'bela': 'beautiful' (OF. 'bel') and 'kan', an alternative form of MHG kon (e), kun, quene: wife, woman. (see Lexer: Mittelhoch-deutsches Worterbuch).

Belakane is the beautiful wife, no matter what the colour of her skin may be.

3. 16, 19ff.
the gravity of the situation: even in the distress of the moment, Belakane is well able to note the handsome man who has come to her rescue:

der küneginne riche
ir ougen fuogten höhen pin,
dê ai gesach den Anschevin.
der was ñ minneclihe gevar,
daz er entslôz ir herze gar;
ez wäre ir liep oder leit:
daz beslôz dâ vor ir wîpheit. 1)

Thus the story of their romance begins very like that of Parzival and Condwiramur, 2) for that too begins with an act of rescue, 3) and they, like Gahmuret and Belakane, seem destined for one another. 4)

It is only the desire for knightly fame, which exerts such a powerful influence over the menfolk and so often outweighs the claims of the strongest love, which brings to an abrupt end the marriage of Gahmuret and Belakane. Thus Belakane, who was won by an act of knightly valour, becomes the victim of chivalry and joins the long line of women who are left alone when their husbands, their sons and their lovers can no longer withstand the pull of the knightly life.

One of the memorable things about Belakane is the manner of her grief. When she reads Gahmuret's letter, she reacts with a stoicism which makes her very fit to be the mother of the brave and noble Feirefiz. Despite the last words of the letter which hold out the hope of Gahmuret's return

1. 23, 22-28.

2. F. Panzer (Gahmuret: Quellenstudien zu Wolframs Parzival, Heidelberg, 1940) p.8. notes the similarity between the rescue of Belakane as told by Wolfram and Chrétien's account of Perceval's rescue of Blancheflor.

3. It is worth noting, however, that Gahmuret has agreed to aid Belakane's army before he meets her (17, 9-14): he does so because he is a noble knight with the opportunity to perform an act of chivalry.

4. See p.90/.
if she becomes a Christian, there is a dominant note of finality.\textsuperscript{1)}

Certainly Belakane herself does not appear to think he will return.\textsuperscript{2)}

Yet she is not seen to swoon as Herzeloyde does when she learns of the death of Gahmuret,\textsuperscript{3)} nor is her grief manifested in the violent weeping of both Herzeloyde and Sigune.\textsuperscript{4)} Wolfram compares her grief with the lonely longing of the turtledove who has lost her mate:

\begin{quote}
ir freude vant den dürren zwîc,
als noch diu turteltûbe tuot.
diu het ie den selben muot:
swenne ir an trûtschaft gebrast,\textsuperscript{5)}
ir triwe kâs den dürren ast.
\end{quote}

There is in her sorrow a hopelessness which cannot be expressed in words or gestures. This second occasion may well be contrasted with her grief at the death of Isenhart when her tears had borne witness to her great love and she had been able to put into words her love for the dead Isenhart.\textsuperscript{6)}

Gahmuret himself puts into words the irony of the fate of Belakane, when he is warning Herzeloyde against imposing restrictions on his activities:

\begin{quote}
lât ir niht turnieren mich,
sô kan ich noch den alten slich,
als dô ich minem wihe entran,
die ich och mit riterschaft gewan.
dô si mich üf von strîte bant,
ich liez ir liute unde lant.\textsuperscript{7)}
\end{quote}

1. He gives details of the lineage of their unborn son and this hardly suggests that he expects to return.
2. See 57, lff.
3. 105, 6-7.
4. 109, 19ff; 138, 11ff.
5. 57, 10-14.
6. The manner with which she bears the loss of Gahmuret is comparable with the grief of Blancheflor on the death of Riwalin (Tristan, ed. Bechstein, Leipzig 1930, l.1722-1740), where Gottfried says that despite the power of her grief, it does not find expression in words (1734-1740)
7. 96, 29-97, 4.
When Parzival takes leave of Condwiramurs, Wolfram says of her:

\[
\text{diu junge süeze \ werde} \\
\text{het den wunsch ûf der erde,}
\]

contrasting her perfect contentment in love and marriage with the restlessness of her husband, who, though he loves her deeply, cannot resist the call of the knightly life. Yet she, like Herzeloyde before her, knows that this zest for adventure and combat is an essential part of the make-up of the man she loves, and that to quell it would be to weaken their love, even to destroy it. The tragedy of Belakane is that she is never given the chance to release her husband, for Gahmuret prefers to go away in secret, rather than face a reproachful or a pleading wife. Yet surely in this he under-estimates her, for she, who has lost one lover in combat and been won by a second through knightly prowess, must understand very well the power of chivalry, and in her great love for Gahmuret, she would never have refused him the freedom to practise this, to him, essential art.

That this was, in fact, his motive in leaving his first wife is clear from the conditions he imposes on the second, and from these conditions is clear, too, his sense of guilt towards Belakane. The whole incident is a stain on the otherwise faultless character of Gahmuret, and it is one which is difficult to explain or to excuse.

1. 223, 1-2.
2. H. Swinburne ("Gahmuret and Feirefiz in Wolfram's 'Parzival'", Modern Language Review, 51, 1956, pp. 195-202) comments (p.197): "To the modern reader the reason tends to appear unsatisfactory and unconvincing, but this is surely largely because of its unfamiliarity. It becomes more convincing if one remembers that the problem of striking a balance between love and chivalry was a real one to the medieval knight". In the context of medieval literature, above all of Middle High German literature, the reason is quite acceptable, much more so than the other ones which are suggested, see below.
3. This Feirefiz tells Parzival, 750, 20-21.
In this one must, as often, be guided by Wolfram's own attitude, and, even when Gahmuret is leaving Belakane and her unborn son, he describes him as 'der werde man', where there is no reason to suppose that he is using the adjective ironically. The qualms which Gahmuret later suffers help to soften what appears otherwise as a brutal act. Possibly at the time he thought he was doing the kindest thing in sparing Belakane - and, incidentally, himself - the pain of parting. The excuse, that the difference in religion takes him from Belakane, is quite unconvincing, since it has so far not presented itself as an obstacle. One doubts that he would now suddenly see it as one, and the honest, trusting nature of Belakane is revealed in her acceptance of his excuse. In discussing what is a considerable problem in view of Gahmuret's otherwise exemplary character, Panzer offers this explanation: "Aber er nennt im Briefe gerade jenen in Wahrheit unmöglichb]chen Grund, weil seine 'zuht' ihm nicht gestattet, die Frau durch den Hinweis auf das körperlich Trennende oder auf die Tatsache, daß sein Mannessein nicht aus der Liebe allein sich nähren kann, zu verletzen". The latter reason certainly seems likely, and it has the advantage of explaining the action as misguided kindness rather than brutal negligence. It does, however, point to Gahmuret's rather immature misjudgement of the woman he professes to love, for he should know that she would grant him leave to go on knightly expeditions, as Herzeloyde does after her. That it is 'das

1. 55,11.
2. Panzer (op. cit. p.9) also makes this point: "Gahmuret vermählt sich der Heidin, die er in tiefem Mitleiden aus ihrer Bedrängnis befreit hat, ohne den geringsten Skrupel."
3. ibid. p.9.
which drives him from her is surely incredible, since her black skin represents from the start no barrier to him. He himself later denies that this was the reason for his desertion of her:

\[
\text{nu wænt manc ungewisser man} \\
\text{daz mich ir swerze jagte dane:} \\
\text{die sah ich für die sunnen ane.}
\]

On several other occasions her blackness is mentioned, but always coupled with an expression of his love for her, suggesting that, far from representing a barrier to him, it enhances her beauty and is part of what he loves in her. Wolfram says, for example, that

\[
in\text{brâhte dicke in unmaht} \\
\text{diu swarze Mœrinne,} \\
\text{des landes kûneginne.}
\]

The difference in colour, then, is clearly not the reason for Gahmuret's departure. Even though the reason which he leaves behind in his letter is scarcely more credible, Belakane nevertheless accepts it as his real motive, showing her trust in the husband she has never had reason to doubt. It leaves her, however, not only with sorrow at her loss, but also with remorse that it could have been prevented:

1. I deliberately use Panzer's term: to my knowledge no-one else has suggested this reason for Gahmuret's desertion as a serious possibility. Gahmuret himself rejects it as the opinion of 'manc ungewisser man' (91, 4).

2. 91, 4-6.

Wolfram makes a point of stressing the blackness of Belakane's people, see for example 17, 24-25; 51, 24-25.
A particularly interesting occasion when he emphasizes the colour of Belakane's skin is in 44, 78-79:

\[
\text{entwâpent mit swarzer hant} \\
wart er von der kûnegin.
\]

It is as though Wolfram particularly wishes to stress the difference in colour from the beginning, in order to make it clear that this difference is not important to Gahmuret.
In this, Belakane anticipates Gyburc who comes to a knowledge of God through Willehalm, and so, by perfect human love, like Sigune, comes to know divine Love. Again, though, Belakane is not given the chance to fulfil the readiness she expresses here, and it is only in her son that her desire is fulfilled. Significantly and very appropriately, Feirefiz accepts baptism in order to marry Repanse de Schoye whom he loves deeply. In none of these cases is the love for God lessened by the fact that it is the result of human love, for Wolfram clearly sees them as aspects of the same thing, the one the logical and desirable development of the other. 2)

Belakane is essentially a tragic figure, 3) however, and so she is left to grieve over her loss, with the last words of Gahmuret's letter ringing with tantalizing cruelty in her ears:

*frouwe, wiltu toufen dich,
   du maht ouch noch erwerben mich.* 4)

Not until the marriage of Feirefiz with the Bearer of the Graal is the harshness of Belakane's grief softened, for the elevation of the son to a position of such honour and happiness contains adequate, though

---

1. 57, 3-8
2. This notion is most apparent, of course, in Wolfram's treatment of Sigune and Gyburc, but it is surely present, though as yet without emphasis, in the case of Belakane.
3. The only other woman to whom this adjective may justly be applied is Ampflise (see below). Such women as Sigune, Herzeloyde and Gyburc are seen to pass through a period of grief but to emerge from it into a deeper happiness, coupled significantly in each case with the realization of a spiritual existence beyond their earthly one. Both Belakane and Ampflise lack the spirituality of the other three, and their situation is not relieved by hope.
4. 56, 25-26
belated, compensation for the sorrow and ill-treatment of the mother.\textsuperscript{1)} That Belakane should receive compensation through the love of her son and Repanse de Schoye is most apt, and apt too is the fact that the recognition of Parzival and Feirefiz, which leads to his acquaintance with the Graal, with Repanse de Schoye and so with God, takes place because Feirefiz, in humanity and generosity, refuses to fight with a disarmed opponent.\textsuperscript{2)} The irony of the incident is intensified by the explanation by Feirefiz of his presence, for his object has been to take his revenge on his father for the desertion of his mother.\textsuperscript{3)} That reconciliation takes the place of revenge would surely have accorded with Belakane's wish, for in her, when Gahmuret has left her, is no trace of bitterness or reproach, only of sorrow and regret, and the last Wolfram tells of her, through Feirefiz, is that she died of love for him.\textsuperscript{5)}

When the child is born, his skin bears witness to the equality of the elements which gave him life, and Belakane, whose love for Gahmuret has not lessened, kisses him on the white parts which are all that remains to her of her husband.\textsuperscript{6)} Meanwhile, Gahmuret is suffering pangs of conscience and grief, and his thoughts are constantly with Belakane, so that he is distracted and unable to join in any joy:

\begin{quote}
\begin{verbatim}
umb unvergolten minnen gelt
wart éz ein künec âne:
des twang in Belacåne. 7)
\end{verbatim}
\end{quote}

1. Wolfram does not actually say this, but this meaning is surely implicit.
2. \textsuperscript{7}44, 29 ff.
3. \textsuperscript{7}50, 22-23, and \textsuperscript{7}50, 30.
4. It is notable that she does not even wish that he could take back his words: \textsuperscript{56}, 27: she accepts them with simple resignation.
5. \textsuperscript{7}50, 24-26.
6. \textsuperscript{57}, 19-20.
7. \textsuperscript{61}, 10-12.
Thus, when he first sees Herzeloyde, though he is much attracted by her, the memory of Belakane still hovers in his mind and forms an obstacle to this new love:

\[\text{wan daz grôz jâmer under sluoc} \]
\[\text{die hœhe an sîner freude breit,} \]
\[\text{sîn minne wäre ir vil bereit.} \]

He is possessed by a sense of guilt at his desertion of her:

\[\text{mich tuot frô Belakâne} \]
\[\text{manlîcher freuden âne:} \]
\[\text{ez ist doch vil manlich,} \]
\[\text{swer minnen wankes schamet sich.} \]

Nor does he ever move from his insistence that he loves her, despite his undeniable attraction to Herzeloyde:

\[\text{dô sprach er 'frouwe, ich hân ein wîp:} \]
\[\text{diu ist mir lieber danne der îp.} \]

Herzeloyde, ironically, uses the same argument to him as he used in his letter to Belakane, that a marriage with a heathen cannot bind him, but it is not until it is pointed out to him that it is his duty as a knight to marry her, since he won her in the tournament, that he submits, for the code of knighthood, which demanded that he should leave Belakane in order to take part again in the pursuit of chivalry, now demands that he should keep the bond which governed the tournament:

The place of Belakane in society is usurped, then, by Herzeloyde, but this happens only because in the mind of Gahmuret his duty as

1. 84, 16-18.
3. 94, 5-6.
4. This, in fact, was the usual attitude towards marriage with a heathen: it was not considered legally binding. (See Sebastian Bullough: op. cit. p.126) It is perhaps not surprising, then, that both Gahmuret and Herzeloyde use it as an argument.
5. See discussion of Herzeloyde for a closer examination of this point, p. So ff.
a knight is stronger even than the claims of love. And, with a kind of poetic justice, the love of Herzeloyde and Gahmuret is fated, too, for in insisting that he marry her, she brings upon herself the stipulation that he must be free to practise chivalry when he so wishes.\(^1\)

What unites Herzeloyde and Belakane is their love for Gahmuret, and the fact that they are both examples of perfect womanhood. Wolfram's talent for creating individual characters is apparent once more in these two, who, with so much in common, emerge as such very different people. The difference rests very largely with the difference in environment of the two women, and with the difference in the roles they are called upon to fulfil.

When Gahmuret first learns of the existence of Belakane, she has already suffered the loss of Isenhart and remorse from knowing that she was the unwitting cause of his death. In this she is to be compared with Sigune\(^2\) who, when Parzival first encounters her, is suffering from frenzied grief over the lover she drove to his death. Yet behind Sigune there is the memory of Titurel, with its picture of the youth and care-free happiness which was the prelude to this present sorrow. Such development is absent in the case of Belakane, for she first appears as a woman who has known bereavement and grief and now faces a most violent physical threat. Her speech to Gahmuret, when she tells him how she came to be in this danger, is an account of the most profound suffering and reflects a mature, premature perhaps, awareness of the nature of human life:

\(^1\) See p.51f.
\(^2\) There is a certain likeness too with Condwiramurs, but this is discussed elsewhere, p.76.
ir iu eder inne wart
eins spers durh schilt und durh den lip.
daz klag ich noch, vil armez wip:
ir beder töt mich immer müet.
üf miner triwe jämér blüet. 1)

It is true that she refers to a young, irresponsible love, when she was
delighted at the power she exerted over her lover and sought to try it 2)
but all this is in the past, and in the present are sorrow and danger.

In this situation, Belakane comes closest to Gyburc, whom she
resembles in other respects, for Gyburc too has a past which has given
rise to the present, and for both the present contains suffering and
peril, with the added grief of knowing themselves hated for what they
have done, that, through their love, they have brought suffering and
even death on others. Both are mature women, aware of the basically
hard nature of human experience. Gahmuret saves Belakane from her
peril: Herzeloyde he wins in a tournament arranged at the caprice of
one who is, at this point, a true lady of the court 3)

Later, in Gyburc, Wolfram was to combine perfect femininity with
the capacity to act like a man in time of need. Belakane anticipates
Gyburc in this too, although her courage is not tried as hard as Gyburc's.

Wolfram says of Belakane:

si hete wiplichen sin,
und was abr anders riterlich 4)

1. 28, 4-8.
2. "...dem helde erwarp mân magetoum
   an riteschefte manegen ruom
   do versuocht i'n, ober kunde sin
   ein friunt. daz wart vil balde schin. (27, 11-14)
4. 24, 8-9.
and this striking description of the earlier heroine links her most firmly with the later one, who reaches the peak of her womanhood, when, standing with sword uplifted, she declares herself ready to defend a city.\(^1\) Wolfram may already have had Gyburc in mind when he chose to make a black woman the wife of his noble Gahmuret, or it may have been yet another occasion of his wide-viewed tolerance, which is most fully demonstrated in \textit{Willehalm}, where the heathens are equal in virtue to the Christians. A further example occurs much later in \textit{Parzival}, when Wolfram finds it fitting that Sekundille, whom Feirefiz had loved so deeply, should die before he returns with his Christian bride.\(^2\)

What is absent in Belakane, present in almost all the other women, is, of course, faith in God, for she does not know Him, although her statement after reading Gahmuret's letter comes close to being a baptism of desire, though one which is not realised in her. Again, however, Wolfram sees beyond the belief she professes, the race to which she belongs, to her essential virtues as a human being, and in these she is not lacking. She is '\textit{diu süeze valsches ãne}',\(^3\) and he can say of her

\begin{center}
\begin{verbatim}
ir kiusche was ein reiner touf,
und och der regen der sie begöz,
der wâc der von ir ougen flöz
üf ir zobel und an ir brust.\(^4\)
\end{verbatim}
\end{center}

for to Wolfram, purity of mind and body, and the capacity for love are the supreme human virtues and, in the long run, all that really matters.

\begin{enumerate}
\item See \textit{Wh.} 227, 12-14. and p. 130\textit{ft}.
\item The marriage of Feirefiz and Repanse de Schoye is discussed in detail elsewhere, see p. 179\textit{ff}.
\item 16, 8.
\item 28, 14-17.
\end{enumerate}
Repanse de Schoye stands alone among the women of Wolfram's creation. She does so because she occupies a unique position, that of Graal Bearer, and as such she partakes of the mystery which surrounds the Graal itself. Thus, although in beauty and chastity she resembles other women in the works, she nevertheless possesses as her chief quality a remoteness from reality. Such remoteness keeps her aloof from women such as Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs, Gyburc, who, although in love they come close to the Eternal and the Divine, are essentially of the world of reality, attaining their peak as wives and mothers of real, if exceptional, men. Repanse de Schoye is the woman who is allowed to bear the Graal, which is an object of mystery, vaguely defined, but clearly spiritual. As the wife of Feirefiz, she will certainly tend this new object of her devotion with the same constant care, and as his wife and the mother of the famed Prester John, she will rank with Herzeloyde and Condwiramurs. Her marriage to Feirefiz, the noble half-brother of the noblest of all knights, is, however, the culmination of her years of service to the Graal, and it is primarily as Graal Bearer that she is significant in the work.

Repanse de Schoye makes two appearances in Parzival, when Parzival comes first to the Castle and neglects his duty there, and when he returns as the acclaimed King. On each occasion, the

1. Although the idea of the Graal Bearer is present in Chrétien, (ed. cit. 3220 ff.), she is not developed as a character, and it seems just to speak of her as Wolfram's creation.
Graal is brought forth and with it comes Repanse de Schoye. She is inseparable from the stone itself, and her nature is inextricably linked with its nature. Thus we are told of the purity which is demanded of the one who may bear the Graal:

\[
\text{wol muoser liusche sin bewart,} \\
\text{die sin ze rehte solde pflegn:} \\
\text{die muose valsches sich bewegn.} \] 1)

and later Trevrizent is to say, in explanation to Parzival, that der stein ist immer reine. 2)

Finally, Wolfram links the Graal even more closely with its Bearer, endowing the stone itself with the power to choose the one who may carry it:

\[
\text{sich liez der gral, ist mir gesagt,} \\
\text{die selben tragen eine,} \\
\text{und anders enkeine.} \] 3)

The purity of Repanse de Schoye is stressed by Wolfram in his constant references to her virginity. He refers to her frequently as 'diu maget' or 'sin maget'. 4) It is very likely that in his picture of this pure woman Wolfram was recalling the purest of all women, who was occupying an increasingly prominent place in the minds of Christians. 5) Furthermore, it was as intermediary between man and God that the Virgin Mary was seen, and Feirefiz comes to know God only through his love for Repanse de Schoye. It would be

1. 235, 28-30.
2. 471, 22.
3. 809, 10-12.
4. cf. for example, 235,18;236,21,500,24;809,9;811,10;812,1;814,12;817,1. It may be argued that this is not an unusual word to describe a young girl: Wolfram uses it of Obilot, Bene, Liaze, Alyze, but only in reference to Repanse de Schoye does he use it with any real stress and consistency. Its use is combined also with a stress on her purity, and it seems reasonable to suggest that he has in mind a similarity with the Virgin Mary, of whom he says (464, 25-26): nu pruvet wie rein die meide sint:

\[
\text{got was selbe der meide kint}. \]

5. See above p.19ff.
a mistake, perhaps, to take this point further, but the figure of Repanse de Schoye certainly seems reminiscent of the popular picture of the Virgin Mary, as a woman of perfect purity and charity, belonging both to the earth and to heaven, initiated into the Mystery of the Divine, yet deeply involved in mankind. Thus does Repanse de Schoye too lead a life of service to an object which is the physical expression of an abstract spiritual goal, yet as sister to Anfortas and a member of the Graal Family, she is personally involved in its grief.

The mystery which surrounds the Graal itself is shared by its Bearer, and the two are the central point of the strange and beautiful ceremony which impresses Parzival yet reduces him to silence. Between the two ceremonies which he witnesses lies his encounter with Trevrizent, who explains much which has puzzled him and who, in telling him the history of the Graal Family, makes him more profoundly aware of his failure to relieve its anguish. Thus, when Parzival next sees the solemn procession of beautiful women, which culminates in the arrival of Repanse de Schoye and her precious burden, he is aware of its significance and aware of the nature of the woman who had so impressed him on the previous occasion.

Even on that earlier occasion, when Parzival had been quite perplexed by the ceremony, he had felt a strange link with Repanse de Schoye. In fact they are linked from the moment of his entry into the Castle, when a cloak is brought to him.1) Clothes were normally provided for a guest,2) so in itself the gesture is a traditional one. However, the chamberlain informs Parzival that it is the cloak of his

1. 228,9.
2. cf., for example, 306,10ff.
Queen, Repanse de Schoye herself, and he adds that Parzival is fit to wear it since he recognizes in him a worthy man. Although at this stage Parzival is not conscious of a deeper significance in the gesture, he is conscious of the link which is thus established between himself and the Queen. On various occasions he recalls this link:

 dez mære giht daz Parziväl
dicke an si sach unt dâhte,diu den grâl dâ brâhte:er het och ir mantel an. 1)
hât dirre wirt urliuges nôt,sô leist ich gerne śin gebotund ir gebot mit triuwen,diu disen mantel niuwenmir lôch durch ir güete. 2)
dô sprach aber Parzivâl'wer was ein maget śin den grâltruoc? ir mantel lôch man mir.' 3)

It is, however, left for Trevrizent to point out that it was no mere gesture but a deliberate act:

 sine lôch dirs niht ze ruome:si wând du solst dâerre śin des grâls unt ir, dar zuo mîn. 4)

Wolfram himself also points out the link, surely, with two carefully similar passages, where not only the cloaks echo one another, but also the very beauty of the two faces:

 alt und junge wânden daz von im andar tag erschine.sus saz der minnecliche wine.gar vor allem tadel vrîmit pfelle von Arâbîman truoc im einen mantel dar: 5)
den legt an sich der wol gevar. 6)

1. 228, 13ff. 4. 500, 23-25.
2. 236, 12-15. 5. 500, 28-30.
3. 246, 11-15. 6. 228, 4-10.
It is characteristic of Parzival's youth that he registers the fact that he is wearing her cloak, yet is still unable to interpret its significance, or even to realize that it has a significance. Similarly, he is conscious of the suffering of Anfortas and feels pity for him, but he lacks the power to express it.

For the development of Parzival it is important merely that the memory of Repanse de Schoye remains with him for a long time. After a troubled night at the Graal Castle, he awakes with the desire to help the suffering Anfortas and the woman whose cloak he wears. The means to do so does not present itself to him, however, and so he leaves the castle having failed in his mission. Not until he meets Trevrizent can he learn of the significance of what he has seen, and so to the irony of the fact that he does wrong when he believes he is doing right is added the irony of his pondering on a circumstance to which he lacks the key, for he remembers how Repanse de Schoye lent him her cloak without appreciating that the act must have its particular significance. The cloak may be seen, then, as a symbol of his connection with the Graal Family via Repanse de Schoye, who clearly glimpses in him the hope of salvation. In allowing the cloak to be given to him, she not only demonstrates her recognition of his nobility, as the chamberlain tells Parzival, but also offers him a share in the responsibility for the Graal which she bears. Nor is she mistaken in her assessment of him, for it is only actual knowledge,

2. See 246, 8-15.
the fruit of experience, which is lacking in him, and what she recognizes is the basic sensitivity and nobility which fit him for the Graal Kingship.

In view of the emphasis which is placed on the cloak of Repanse de Schoye, and its significance as a symbol in the work, it is perhaps reasonable to link it with the cloak which Trevrizent gives to Parzival at his hermitage.\(^1\) Again, this may be regarded as a traditional gesture of hospitality, but it would seem to be more than that. With the cloak of Repanse de Schoye, Parzival was offered the opportunity to achieve the kingship which is his destiny, and the cloak of Trevrizent, himself the brother of Repanse de Schoye and deeply involved in the sorrows of the Graal Family, represents a renewal of the offer, as Parzival stands on the threshold of a great new period in his life, when his return to faith in God will bring him once more to the Graal Castle and to success where he failed before.

With the cloak of Repanse de Schoye can be coupled the sword which Parzival receives from Anfortas, like the cloak an expression of the confidence which the suffering man places in the youth who has come to him.\(^2\) Wolfram says that the sword is a sign to Parzival to ask the question which will release Anfortas and the whole kingdom from suffering. Like the cloak, however, it is symbolic of the willingness to transfer the responsibility for the rule of the Graal to this young man who is recognized as the future King. Just as he fails to perceive the significance of the

1. 459, 19ff.
2. See 239, 24ff.
gift of the cloak, he fails also to appreciate the depth of significance in the gift of the sword, although as he rides away he is thinking of the sword and wishing that he might earn it by aiding the suffering King.

Both Anfortas and Repanse de Schoye see in Parzival the hope of release from their grief and express this hope and confidence in the two gifts. It is left for Trevrizent to explain the circumstances of the Graal Family and so to give Parzival the key to an interpretation of his experience there. Anfortas and Repanse de Schoye are linked with one another in their intimacy with the Graal itself, and it is not for them to instruct Parzival in the way that Trevrizent may instruct him.¹ The question which will bring relief must be spontaneous, and so all they can do is prompt him to speak with the two gifts which express their confidence in him.

Repanse de Schoye leads a life of devotion, to her brother and to the Graal. She is bound to Anfortas by the ties of family love and by compassion for the suffering of a fellow-being. Anfortas himself explains to Feirefiz that she has been kept from the love of men by the power of grief which binds her to him.² In serving Anfortas, she also serves the Graal of which he is King and which alone keeps him alive. Anfortas and the Graal become one, then, as the object of her devotion, but her rôle is a more specific one, for she alone is fit to tend the Graal which, in its purity, demands

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¹. Sigune and Trevrizent, though members of the Graal Family and deeply concerned with its destiny, are not so close to the Graal as Repanse de Schoye and Anfortas. The latter two are participants in the ceremony of the Graal and are therefore unable to instruct Parzival as he stands watching it. Trevrizent and Sigune have withdrawn from life and in their remoteness lies their ability to guide Parzival.

². 811, 21ff.
perfect purity of the one who will bear it: 1)

der gräl was von sólher art:
wol muoser kiusche sín bewart,
die sín ze rehte solde pflegn:
die muose valsches sich bewegn. 2)

This requirement Wolfram repeats, endowing the stone with the magic property of assuming tremendous weight when anyone but the true Graal Bearer would lift it. 3)

It is the chastity of Repanse de Schoye which fits her for her particular rôle and the word 'kiusche' is used repeatedly as her outstanding quality. 4) Purity is clearly a quality essential in a virtuous woman, and all the noble women of Wolfram's creation possess it to the full. Most significant is the fact that he refers on several occasions within a fairly small space to the 'kiusche' of Belakane. 5)

The fact that he stresses her purity points not only to his indisputably high opinion of her as a woman, but also to his view of the virtue of 'kiusche' itself. It can act as a substitute for baptism 6) and can also, in the case of Repanse de Schoye, make a woman fit to bear the Graal, which, whatever its particular nature, is certainly a supreme spiritual goal and an object sacred to Christians.

1. Here surely there is a resemblance to the Virgin Mary, who alone was fit to bear Christ. The comparison is not an emphatic one, but such indications suggest a resemblance in Wolfram's mind, and it would certainly not be surprising, in view of the growing importance of Mary in twelfth century Catholicism - see Introduction.

2. 235, 27-30
3. 477, 15-18. For a discussion of this property of the Graal, which is not of precise relevance here, see F. Ranke: op. cit. p. 22.
4. See, for example, 235, 28; 477, 14; 809, 13.
5. See, for example, 28, 14; 54, 26; 90, 22. See also p. 157ff.
6. This Wolfram states in relation to Belakane, 28, 14; see p. 170.
One of the clearest indications of the religious nature of the Graal comes with the baptism of Feirefiz, which results in his ability to see the Graal. He desires to be baptized because he is assured that he will thus be able to marry Repanse de Schoye, and he makes no secret of the fact that she is his reason for accepting baptism. Nor does Wolfram suggest that there is anything inferior in the Christianity which Feirefiz thus assumes, for, as so often, he clearly regards human love as the apt means to divine Love, a view which is, of course, most clearly expressed in the marriage of Gyburc and Willehalm. Feirefiz is attracted at once to Repanse de Schoye by her great beauty, and he immediately desires to win her, consumed as he is by a love which replaces and exceeds any he has ever known:

\[
\text{ir blic mir ins herze gêt.} \\
\text{ich wande sô stark wêr min lip,} \\
\text{daz iemmer maget ode wîp} \\
\text{mir freuden kraft benême.} \\
\text{mîrst worden widerzême,} \\
\text{ob ich ie werde minne enpfienc.} \quad 2)
\]

As so often in Wolfram's work, her beauty is the reflection of her great virtue, and the two are juxtaposed and combine to make her the object of the most perfect love Feirefiz has ever experienced:

\[
\text{ir herzen was wil kiusche bî,} \\
\text{ir vel des blickes flôfî.} \quad 4)
\]

1. See 818, 6-12.
2. 810, 14-19.
3. It is a radiant beauty, as Wolfram says (235, 16-17), and this is usually his manner of implying inward virtue; cf. Herzeloyde, 64, 4, and Condwiramurs, 186, 17-20. The name Repanse de Schoye seems to suggest a giving-out of joy, or as suggested by M.O'C. Walshe ("Notes on Parzival Book V." London Medieval Studies, Vol. 1, Part 3): "perhaps rather Wolfram's own derivation from 'rêpandre': spreading of joy". Similarly, B. Mergell (Der Gral in Wolframs Parzival, Halle, 1952, p.78) suggests as a translation 'Freude Verbreitende'. The inner virtue which is revealed in her beauty is a source of joy, and the Graal which she tends brings relief, if not joy, to Anfortas.
4. 809, 13-14.
It is perfect because it is the means to his conversion, and for a Christian such as Wolfram this fact is unambiguous.\footnote{1}

Only in Feirefiz does Parzival ever encounter a match, and only in the beauty of Repanse de Schoye does Condwiramurs ever find a close rival.\footnote{2}
The two couples are perfectly matched. Wolfram could provide no clearer affirmation of the nobility of Feirefiz than by allowing him to marry the woman who alone might bear the Graal, nor could there be a more apt culmination to the devoted life of Repanse de Schoye than her marriage to the son of Gahmuret and Belakane.

As a figure who bears resemblances to the Virgin Mary, and one who ranks very high in Wolfram’s estimation, Repanse de Schoye is an obvious rival of Condwiramurs. Yet, although the two are compared, in beauty as seen above, and by Parzival himself:

\begin{align*}
\text{wan stüende ir gemüete} \\
\text{daz si dienst wolde nemn!} \\
\text{des kunde mich durch ai gezemn,} \\
\text{und doch niht durch ir minne:} \\
\text{wan min wîp de küneginne} \\
\text{ist an ir libe alse clar,} \\
\text{oder furbaz, daz ist wâr.} \footnote{3}
\end{align*}

there can be no serious rivalry. Parzival, in these words, rejects the thought of a relationship of ‘minne’ between Repanse de Schoye and himself, desiring only to serve her. Even apart from the fact that he wishes for no other love than that of his wife, it would seem that he has observed in Repanse de Schoye that remoteness which makes her an object of respect and service, rather, at this stage, than of love.

\footnote{1}{The problem of Sekundille is treated elsewhere, see p.\textsuperscript{21746}.}
\footnote{2}{See 811, Iff. Orgeluse is also mentioned as close to Condwiramurs in beauty (508, 22-23), see p.\textsuperscript{302}.}
\footnote{3}{246, 16-22.}
Surrounded by the mystery which pervades Munsalvæsche, and raised to such a peak of virtue, Repanse de Schoye becomes the embodiment of perfect womanhood, passive in a way in which none of the other women may be called passive. Hers is not the passivity which is present in Herzeloyde, Condwiramurs, Belakane, Sigune, and is an aspect of the harmony and self-sufficiency which Wolfram sees as the nature of woman. Rather does Repanse de Schoye possess the static quality of a symbol, in which a number of attributes combine and rest, transcending change and comparison. This symbolic quality is possibly best conveyed in Wolfram's own words

\[
\text{diu maget mit der krône} \\
\text{stuont dà harte schône.}
\]

1) where she appears almost as the archetype of queenly dignity and beauty.\(^2\) She is unique among the women of Wolfram's creation, the uniqueness of her rôle being reflected in the uniqueness of Wolfram's treatment of her. It is striking, and in accordance with Wolfram's concept of her nature, that Repanse de Schoye never speaks: even this link with reality is kept from her.

With Parzival's accession to the Graal Kingship and the release of Anfortas from suffering, Repanse de Schoye is no longer needed as Graal Bearer: Condwiramurs will tend the Graal with Parzival, and Repanse de Schoye may go with her husband to his Eastern Kingdom. Yet although she is sufficiently real to marry, the child of the marriage is Prester John, the mysterious Eastern king, himself the centre of myths and speculation.

1. 236, 21-22.

2. The significance of these lines is strengthened if one recalls that the Middle Ages saw the Virgin Mary as a Queen (see p.\(^{22}\)). Artists of the 12th and 13th centuries depicted her almost always wearing a crown. (see E. Mâle: op. cit. pp. 231-258, with its many illustrations.)
However, an essential feature of the myths which surround Prester John is his propagation of Christianity in the East, and this is certainly apt in the son of the woman who was the closest companion of a Christian treasure and who was the direct cause of the conversion to Christianity of a truly noble knight.
Jeschute belongs essentially to the youth of Parzival. She is the first person he meets after he has left his mother, and she is the victim of his inexperience of a world to which she belongs but of which he has no knowledge as yet. She marks the point of departure from the close circle of his boyhood into the world outside. Since, when he first encounters her, his knowledge is still limited to the bare instructions of his mother, he employs this knowledge, but in the broad context of the world beyond the seclusion of the forest his actions based on this knowledge prove disastrous. 1)

Jeschute, stands, with Ither, as a victim of Parzival's ignorance, but whereas nothing constructive may be done to compensate for the killing of a kinsman with an unknighthly weapon, Parzival is later able to set right the wrong done to Jeschute. 2) Although she is not a major character, then, Jeschute is highly significant, like Liaze and Gumneware, in the growth of Parzival. Between his first encounter with her and his second, lies one of the most important periods in his formation, a period during which he not only acquires the experience which tells him of his mistake in his treatment of her, but also gives him the means to right it.

1. I cannot agree with Carl Pschmadt (op.cit.p.69) when he says: "Wie es scheint, ist die Jeschute-episode nichts anderes als Parzivals liebesabenteuer mit der fee". This may well have been the case in Chräten's version (cf. G. Ehrismann: "Märchen im hofischen Epos", Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur, 30, 1905, pp. 14-54, in particular pp. 44-45). Wolfram has given to the incident a deeper significance than would have been present in a traditional encounter with a fairy.

2. See p. 181f.
Although Chrétien also has two encounters with his Jeschute-figure, there is less idea in *Le Conte del Graal* of crime and atonement. Perceval defeats *li Orgueilleus de la Lande*, who then agrees to restore his wife *con favours* to him. There is no idea here, as there is very strongly in *Parzival*, of atonement on the part of the hero. The ring which Parzival takes from Jeschute he returns, as a symbol of this atonement, while in Chrétien's version, although Perceval takes the ring, he does not return it. Clearly, then, for Wolfram, the incident has considerable significance, beyond that of his source.

When Parzival comes upon Jeschute in the forest, he possesses two things: his natural inheritance from his parents, and the brief, ambiguous precepts for life given to him by Herzeloyde. Only with experience is he to come to an interpretation of these precepts which will be in accordance with life as he must live it. Meanwhile, in remembrance of his mother, and with perhaps a vague stirring within him of the chivalry which made Gahmuret beloved of three women, he is attracted to Jeschute, first by the rich splendour of her tent and then by the ring on her finger, which reminds him of his mother's words:

```
sun, la dir bevolhen sin,
swa du guotes wîbes vingerîn
mügest erwerben unt ir gruoz.
daz nim: ez tuot dir kumbers buoz. 3)
```
That it is the ring which attracts him and brings about Jeschute's grief is apparent, for Wolfram has described at length the beauty of the woman as she lies there, and only when Parzival catches sight of the ring does he leap on to her bed. His violent kiss, quite meaningless in itself,\(^1\) reflects, too, his exact obedience to the words of his mother:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{du sollt zir kusse gâhen} \\
\text{und ir lip vast umbevähen:} \\
\text{daz gât gelûcke und hôhen muot,} \\
\text{op si kiusche ist unde guot.}\end{align*}
\]

The fact that the whole incident echoes Herzeloydè's parting words so closely, points to the absolute innocence of Parzival, who obeys his mother to the letter, unaware that even obedience to her must be qualified by other considerations.\(^3\) His attack on Jeschute is quite without motive other than obedience to his mother. He appears not to notice her womanly beauty which Wolfram stresses all the more\(^4\) because it plays no part in the reaction of his hero. That Parzival is so little concerned with the beautiful woman he has in his power, and that he is very much a boy still, Wolfram shows in the slight touch, amusing in its incongruity, of the sudden hunger which overtakes him.\(^5\) Without ceremony, and with considerably more enthusiastic attention than he has paid to his hostess, Parzival consumes the meal obviously intended for Orilus.

1. Although Wolfram allows Parzival to kiss Jeschute twice (131, 13; 132, 20), the kisses mean little, especially if contrasted with the seven kisses (some MSS have twenty) of Chrétien, which were accompanied by amorous, though youthful, speeches from Perceval (ed. cit. 723-728).
2. 127, 29-128, 2.
3. Dr Richey ("The Independence...", p.353) attributes the behaviour of Parzival to the 'enigmatic brevity' of Herzeloyde's instructions.
4. 130, 3-25.
5. 131, 22.
Whereas Parzival completely forgets Jeschute while intent on the meal, Perceval continues to talk to her: \(^1\) Wolfram thus emphasizes, in contrast to Chrétien, the youth and single-mindedness of Parzival, and his total unconcern for the lady.

Throughout the incident there is the contrast, amusing at times despite its seriousness, in the reactions of Jeschute and Parzival. For him the incident has no meaning, so that when they next meet he has difficulty in remembering her: \(^2\) he is a boy for whom the sight of a beautiful woman is no match for a brace of partridges. As he rides on, Wolfram refers to Parzival's act as 'ein tumpeheit', \(^3\) since, though it was indisputably a stupid deed, it had no further, more sinister implication. \(^4\) He even suggests that the son of Gahmuret might have been expected to find other attraction in the sight of a beautiful woman alone. \(^5\)

For Jeschute, however, the incident represents the destruction of all happiness, since the motives of her assailant make no difference to her alarm and grief, nor to the anger of her husband when he returns to find that she has had a visitor in his absence. For her, Parzival's coming is a tragedy, the more poignant because her virtue is complete at all times, and because she has no defence in the face of a furious husband, who only regards the evidence and refuses to hear the protests of his wife.

In Jeschute, Wolfram shows a woman who is perfect in the feminine

1. ed. cit. 751ff.
2. See p. 188.
3. 139, 14.
4. When he leaves her, Parzival even wishes her goodbye, as his mother has instructed him (132, 23-24), so far is he from realizing the gravity of what he has done.
5. 139, 15-19.
virtues of chastity and loving devotion. Her very beauty reflects, as it so often does, 1) the inner beauty of true virtue. Yet it is precisely her chastity and love which are doubted by her undiscerning husband, who is enraged by what he considers to be a stain on his honour and acts without thought for the nature of his wife. Although his treatment of her is ruthless, and shameful, Wolfram excuses him to some extent by suggesting that he must defend his honour where he considers it challenged. 2) Certainly, Jeschute herself never blames her husband, 3) bearing his injustice with the loving patience which links her with Grizelda and Emite, whom she resembles in other ways too. 4) She is generous also in her treatment of Parzival when they meet again, for she tries to save him from the wrath of Orilus and finds herself in inner conflict when, watching the combat, she feels no bitterness towards either of the opponents, in spite of the sorrow which each has caused her. 5)

During the first encounter with Parzival, Jeschute behaves with perfect decorum, resisting him with all the strength she possesses. The injustice of Orilus is increased, then, because she has fought with all her womanly might against the crude advances of the boy. Nevertheless, she is fearful, lest her husband should return, and her fear is not only for herself, but, perhaps more, for her assailant too. 6) Possibly, like everyone who meets Parzival at this stage, she is attracted by his good looks, in which she sees innate nobility. 7) Her explanation

1. Compare his treatment of such women as Condwiramurs, Repanse de Schoye, Sigune and Herzeloyde.
2. 264, 1-11.
3. In this she is unlike Chrétien's counterpart figure, who is bitter and resentful (ed. cit. 3754ff.)
5. 262, 28-29.
6. 132, 12-14.
7. She recognizes him the second time by his handsome features (258, 3-4): they have clearly made a profound impression on her.
to Orilus, that it was a fool who was passing by, is perfectly feasible too, since his quite senseless attack on her must have appeared the act of a mad man, and in this supposition she is supported by his attire. When they next meet, he is in the dress of a knight, and experience has done much to change him. In the knight who approaches her with courtesy and solicitude, she nevertheless recognizes the source of her grief. Since they last met, she has grown wretched with grief and neglect: he, on the other hand, has developed in knightly bearing which enhances the handsome features of his youth. Moreover, between the meetings lies for her over a year of despair and hardship, riding on a nag and estranged from the love of her husband: she has cause to remember Parzival. He, for whom the incident was a passing one, does not recall the early experience, which has been succeeded by so many of note and consequence.

Jeschute may well be compared with Cunneware, for both women suffered on account of Parzival, though without his intention. However, whereas he saw Cunneware's suffering and determined to right it one day, the suffering of Jeschute was without his knowledge. As soon as he does learn of it, at their second meeting, he is ready to right the wrong. He is able to repair the damage he did to both women, but this he can do only as a knight; just as he is prevented from throwing his javelot in defence of Cunneware, so does he learn of the wrong done to Jeschute only when, as a knight himself, he may with justice enter into combat with Orilus. By making Cunneware the sister of Orilus, Wolfram links

1. 133, 16.
2. See p. 204.
3. 267, 2ff. See also p. 206f.
the two women, who are linked already by what befalls them, and a further link is established when Parzival makes it a condition of sparing the life of Orilus, not only that he should be reconciled with his wife, but also that he should go to Cunneware and offer her his service. 1)

Although such ignorance is difficult to credit, it is ignorance which allows Parzival's attack on Jeschute, and it is due to a total ignorance of standards in the world that he does not know the grief this must cause her. Significantly, he leaves Jeschute and comes upon Sigune, and the two meetings are surely juxtaposed with intention. He expresses pity for Sigune and a readiness to help her, for, ignorant though he may be, he recognizes grief and suffering, and he feels pity. Yet this response to Sigune's anguish seems strange in a boy who has so recently brought a woman to grief and shame. The incidents thus juxtaposed reflect the basic nature of Parzival's youth, in which elements of intuition and knowledge are still separate. 2) Once more, this represents a significant divergence from Chretien, who leaves the one encounter with the grieving cousin until after the visit to the Graal Castle. Wolfram, who stresses the importance of compassion in Parzival, 3) brings the two meetings, with Jeschute and with Sigune, close and so achieves added effect by means of the comparison.

The next meeting with Jeschute is carefully positioned too, for Parzival has now considerable command of the art of chivalry: as Gahmuret's son, he has learnt readily the lessons of Gurnemanz, and in

2. Dr Richey (Studies of W. v. E. p. 56) points similarly to this juxtaposition and cites it as one of the three pairs she notes of contrasting instances of youthful callousness and youthful sensitivity.
3. This difference between Wolfram and Chretien is particularly apparent in their conception of the Graal messenger, see p. 216.
Condwiramurs he has come to know love and real happiness. Yet already, too, he has come to the Graal Castle and neglected his duty there, and, although it remains for Cundrie to reduce him to despair, he is already aware from Sigune of his failure. Thus, when chivalry has brought him both joy and sorrow, he comes upon Jeschute, who still rides as the victim of his ignorance, when as a boy he went his way with single-minded determination. The time-lapse is evident. Not only has time produced a change in Jeschute, who is worn and ragged, but Parzival stands before her as a man now, who has come a long way since they last met, but who now approaches the greatest experience of his life. He has proved himself as a knight, though he has failed in the task set him as the future Graal King. The world of chivalry has accepted him, but his greatest test remains. It is impossible, then, for Wolfram to leave him at this point with the stain of the wrong done to Jeschute, and it is apt that he should have this chance to right it before he must apply himself with all his might to the achievement of the highest goal of Christian knighthood.

At Trevrizent's hermitage, he reconciles the couple by his solemn oath, and so here he atones for the first crime of his youth. Almost five years later, he is to return to the hermitage and, guided by Trevrizent, to atone for the greatest sin of his life, his bitter rejection of God. The years of his grief and lonely wanderings stand between these two events, and the return so long after echoes the earlier occasion and stresses the time and experience which lie between.

1. The oath is Wolfram's addition, in keeping with the deeply spiritual nature of the work. There is a much stronger idea of a reconciliation before God than in the case of Chrétien's couple, who are reunited after Perceval has defeated Li Orgueilleus (ed. cit. 3937 ff.)
Just as his meetings with Sigune reflect the passing of time and the changes it has brought about in Parzival, \(^1\) so do the two encounters with Jeschute, placed at such vital points in his development, reflect a little of his early growth, from a gauche boy into a man with sensitivity and compassion, authority and mercy. \(^2\) More than this, Jeschute is important as the first woman Parzival meets when he has left his mother. She is to be followed by Liaze, who awakens in him the awareness of the nature of woman and the hope of love which leads to Condwiramurs. \(^3\) His experience with Jeschute cannot even be described accurately as physical attraction, since he overlooks her beauty in his desire for her ring, which represents womanhood to him. Throughout what is a fairly brief description, Wolfram refers repeatedly to the beauty of Jeschute, which is wasted on the boy. By such observations as

\[
\text{der knappe klagets n hunger man.} \quad 4)
\]
\[
\text{diu frouwe was ir liebes lieht.}
\]

Wolfram succeeds not only in making the scene amusing, despite its disastrous end, but also in suggesting the unconcern of Parzival for Jeschute as a woman: Orilus has nothing to fear from this youth. \(^5\)

When Parzival desires to aid Sigune, he feels for his javelot and finds also the ring and the brooch which he took from Jeschute. \(^6\) Once more, then, the two encounters, with Jeschute and with Sigune, are brought together, since the second brings this reminder of the first, and in his genuine wish to help Sigune, the reader is now forced to

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2. See, for example, his treatment of Orilus.
3. See discussion of Liaze
4. 131, 22-23.
5. Normally, Wolfram does not go into details of the beauty of his heroines: it is taken for granted that they are beautiful. He gives more elaborate details here deliberately to draw attention to Parzival's lack of response to the beauty of Jeschute.
6. 139, 9-14.
remember the harm he did to Jeschute. Moreover, the javelot and the jewel are also juxtaposed, the unknighthly weapon with which he is to kill his kinsman and the spoil of his first unchivalric act of violence. It is strange, too, that the brooch which he has taken from Jeschute leads him to King Arthur, when the peasant later accepts it in payment for directing him.¹ That this unknighthly deed does in fact, help him thus to the seat of knighthood is not so incongruous, however, if one considers that only the knowledge of the ill deed is lacking in him, and this is to come only when he has a knowledge of true courtesy.²

Like Cunneware, Jeschute is significant to the growth of the hero, but, like Cunneware too, she is important in her own right. Her purity and love, which are essential to her story, cause her to be classed with the ideal women of Wolfram's creation. As she lies asleep in her tent, her beauty is concentrated in her red lips, which Wolfram uses as symbols of her power to love and to be loved:³

\[
\text{si truoc der minne wafen,}
\text{einen munt durchluihtic röt,}
\text{und gerndes ritters herzen röt.}
\text{innen des diu frouwe slief,}
\text{der munt ir von einander lief:}
\text{...sus lac des wünsches äventiur.}
\]

Even when she next meets Parzival and is herself torn and ragged, her lips glow brightly:

\[
\text{swiez ie kom, ir munt was röt:}
\text{der múose alsölhe varwe tragen,}
\text{man hete fiwer wol'drûz geslagen.}
\]

1. ¹43, 1-2.
2. It is interesting that both the Peredur and Le Conte del Graal have the idea of the ring, but only Wolfram tells of the hero's taking also the brooch: it would seem that he intended it to be used for a distinct purpose, unknown to Chrétien and the Celtic author.
3. This Wolfram does in the case of a number of his heroines, see, for example, Liaze, Condwiramurs, the pilgrim's daughters.
4. ¹30, 4-10.
5. ²57, 18-20. Note that Chrétien says explicitly that she is drained of colour, ed. cit. 3746.
suggesting that her love for Orilus has not grown less through the months of hardship imposed by him. As with Condwiramurs, Wolfram pictures Jeschute's beauty as a combination of red and white, the colours of beauty and purity, love and sorrow: the perfection of her beauty which is retained through grief and suffering points to the constancy of her love. Moreover, Wolfram allows an echo of the beauty of Condwiramurs, when he speaks of her teeth as snow-white, for always with snow is the memory of Parzival transfixed on the plain of Plimizoea by the remembrance, in the blood on the snow, of the pure beauty of his wife.

Beauty is often seen by Wolfram as the outward expression of inward virtue, so that his ideal women, Herzeloyde, Repanse de Schoye, Sigune, Belakane and Gyburc, are all beautiful. Since this is so, and human virtue partakes of Divine perfection, Wolfram naturally sees beauty itself as a Divine creation. Thus Parzival praises God for the beauty of Condwiramurs, and in describing Jeschute, Wolfram observes that her beauty is the product of God's art:

\[
\text{si was geschicket unt gesniten,} \\
\text{an ir was künste niht vermiten:} \\
\text{got selbe worht ir süezen 11p.}\]

Jeschute's love for Orilus allows her to accept his unjust treatment without bitterness and with no lessening of this love. Her almost incredible forebearance is reminiscent of the patience of Grizelda, but perhaps even more closely does she resemble Enite, who was also subjected

1. See p. \(^{184}\).
2. 130, 11-13.
3. On the subject of the beauty of Belakane, see p. \(^{159(1)}\).
4. 283, 2-9.
to cruelty and degradation by her husband. There may well be a conscious echo of Hartmann in Wolfram's Jeschute, and it is perhaps not coincidence that he makes Jeschute the sister of Erec, bringing to the reader the memory of Erec's treatment of Enite. Both women are reduced to the status of servant, estranged from the favour of their husbands, yet both endure hardship and degradation for the sake of their love. Hartmann tells of the way in which Enite suffers:

vil wâplîchen si dê leit
dise ungelernet arbeit,
und dar zuo swaz ir geschach
an ir herzen ungemach.

and Wolfram points out that it is the grief of Orilus which distresses Jeschute rather than her own suffering. The two women have in common that patience and ability to suffer selflessly, which both poets clearly regard as a feminine attribute. When Parzival encounters Jeschute on the second occasion, he notes that she is unused to caring for horses, and one remembers poor Enite struggling to lead eight horses, and the boy they encounter who is distressed at her predicament.

1. 134, 6.
2. Erec, ed. cit. 3280-3283.
4. 256, 24-30.
5. Erec, ed.cit. 3580ff. An even closer similarity exists between Parzival, 256, 29-30:

wandez reit ein frouwe wert,
die selten kunrierte pfert.

and Erec, ed. cit. 3327-3328

si ist, hân ich ez rehte erkant,dem ambet ungezume.

In fact, there is a closer similarity between Parzival and Erec than between Parzival and Le Conte del Graal at this point. Chrétien lays less stress on the wretched appearance of the woman, whereas both Wolfram and Hartmann emphasize both the physical and the mental suffering of Jeschute and Enite. Mergell, Wolfram von Eschenbach, II, p.45ff., in discussing the comparison, notes that both Jeschute and Enite express the readiness to die for the sake of their husbands.
The inability to care for horses, a task not expected of a lady, is one manifestation of the perfect gentility of Jeschute. Her treatment of Parzival at both meetings reflects this too. Her true gentility is apparent to Parzival despite her wretched appearance, for nobility is a quality which transcends the external. Above all, it is virtue which shines forth from this woman who is half-naked, and this Wolfram symbolizes in the whiteness of her skin as it is seen through the rags. The juxtaposition of such poverty and such virtue is striking, and Wolfram takes advantage of the opportunity to point out that wealth is not all-important, hinting at the falsity beneath the splendid apparel of some women:

\[ \text{doch nae me ich solhen blozen lip} \]
\[ \text{fur etalich wol gekleidet wip.} \]

Because of her great love, Jeschute is able to bear the indignity which Orilus imposes on her, and because of it too they are able to be reconciled at a place sanctified by faith and love of God. Once more, the divine nature of perfect human love is suggested, for the choice of Trevrizent's hermitage places a blessing on their love. Thus their love, like that of Herzeloyde and Gahmuret, Sigune and Schionatulander, Willehalm and Gyburc, Parzival and Condwiramurs, comes to joy through sorrow, and Wolfram interprets the tears of Jeschute as the product of both joy and sorrow:

1. Wolfram notes, as Jeschute approaches Parzival, that her \text{equiparat} is not in accordance with her nobility, and this is presumably evident also to Parzival:
\[ \text{ir surzengel was ein seil:} \]
\[ \text{dem was sie doch ze wol geborn.} \] (257, 6-7)

2. 257, 31-32.
The tears of Jeschute are for Wolfram proof of her perfect womanhood, as they are with several of his other heroines:

*dô lac frou Jeschûte
al weinde bî ir trûte,
vor liebe, unt doch vor leide niht,
als guotem wîbe noch geschiht.*

and Jeschute herself stands, despite the briefness of her appearances, as one of the most emphatic examples of that love and chastity which are the basic virtues of the ideal woman.

---

1. 272, 11-14.
2. cf., for example, Belakane, Gyburc, Antikonie, Obie.
3. 272, 7-10.
Liaze

Parzival's acquaintance with Liaze is brief, but it is also highly significant in his development. Bodo Mergell is surely right in his assessment of the episode: "Die Liaze-Episode, in ihrer stillen Verhaltenheit eine der zartesten des deutschen Gedichtes und ohne Entsprechung in der Quelle, ist mehr als höfisches Zwischenspiel und muß von Parzival aus verstanden werden." Liaze belongs to that group of people whose influence goes with Parzival, extending beyond a short appearance in the work. She is able to exert this influence because Parzival meets her at a particular period in his life and at a particular stage in his development.

When Parzival rides to the castle of Gurnemanz, he has advanced some way since he left his mother. He has reached Arthur's court and now wears knightly attire. However, in coming thus far, he has also brought upon himself the burden of two mistakes, of which he is as yet unaware. His abuse of Jeschute and his killing of Ither are serious mistakes in terms of ordinary humanity, but they represent also sins against the code of chivalry. The knightly code treats two main issues: the art of courtly love and the art of noble combat. Jeschute's grief and degradation and Ither's death demonstrate Parzival's ignorance of both aspects of knightly behaviour. They are the victims of his ignorance which Gurnemanz and Liaze now appear to instruct, and his instructions range from lessons in riding to more abstract precepts for life. From him, Parzival learns to honour women and to desire perfect love in which man and woman are one.

1. W. von E. II, p.64  
2. cf. Curneware, Jeschute, Gurnemanz.  
3. 173, 2-6
with this introduction to the notion of love, Parzival is introduced
too to Liaze, who arouses a new emotion in him.

Since Parzival left Jeschute robbed and humiliated in the forest,
he has acquired some knowledge of the world. The son of Gahmuret must
surely have observed a little of the behaviour of the knights at Arthur's
Court, and now he has also learned something about courtly demeanour
from Gurnemanz. His approach to Liaze shows, then, just how far he has
come since his invasion of Jeschute's tent:

> der gast begunde sich des schemm, 1)  
> Jedoch kuster se an den munt:

The comparison, which must be apparent to the reader, is emphasized by
Gurnemanz, who recalls Jeschute:

> ouch solt an iuch gedinget sin  
> daz ir der meide ir vingerlin  
> liezet, op siz möhnte hän.  
> nune hät sis niht, noch fürspan:  
> wer gæbe ir sölhen volleist  
> so der frouwen in dem fœreist? 2)

The boy who kisses Liaze is shy, for he is vaguely aware now of the
serious nature of relationships between men and women, and he approaches
this new experience with diffidence.

Liaze is the perfect companion for this youthful experience of
love. From the stress which Wolfram lays on her nearness to Condwiramurs, 3)
it is clear that she comes very close to his ideal of womanhood. She
does not, however, quite reach it, for perfection is to come with
Condwiramurs, who may well be regarded as a heightened Liaze. Because

1. 176, 8-9.
2. 175, 29-176, 4.
3. He makes them cousins and allows Parzival to think of Liaze as
soon as he sees Condwiramurs: 188, 2ff. See below, p.200ff. and above, p.76ff.
she must play a subordinate, yet essential, rôle, Liaze remains a slight character, a charming picture of young womanhood which will grow into perfection and maturity. This maturity we are not to see, however, for that is not Wolfram's intention in this character whom he created for his own purposes.

The alterations and additions which Wolfram makes to his source are usually very significant, and Liaze is an important example of such an addition. In Chrétien's version, Perceval passes from his assault on the girl in the tent to acquaintance with Blancheflor. Wolfram found such a transition displeasing, unlikely perhaps, and his conception of the perfect love and marriage of Parzival and Condwiramurs needed a firmer basis than the boyish and purely physical attraction towards Jeschute, whose partridges were as inviting to him as she herself. Liaze supplies the link, leading from the physical, and for Parzival meaningless, encounter with Jeschute, to the deep and lasting emotion of his love for Condwiramurs.

What Liaze gives to Parzival is the first realization of the relationship possible between a man and a woman. Yet with this

1. See p.184ff.
2. In view of the fact that Wolfram seldom selects a name at random, often inventing one himself when he sees fit, I would suggest that the name Liaze does in fact mean 'link'. Godefroy: Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française gives the word 'liage': 'ce qui sert à lier.' For Wolfram the substitution of 'z' for 'g' in an Old French word would be a likely process, and the meaning seems to be a reasonable one. This does, however, contradict the view of Dr Richey, who suggests that 'Liaze' is an anagram of 'Alize': M.F. Richey: "Some notes on the nomenclature of Wolfram's Parzival", German Life and Letters, Vol. XVII, Oct. 1963, p.1. It is surely more in accordance with Wolfram's practice that the names are selected for their meaning: it is clear that such names as Condwiramurs, Herzeloyde, Belakane, Repanse de Schoye have a meaning in themselves, even though there may be considerable controversy about what this meaning is.
realization comes too the awareness that his feeling for her is not real love, and he rides away from her,

\begin{align*}
der \text{meide sælden} \hat{\text{r}}\text{iche}, \\
diu \text{im gesel} \ddot{\text{c}}\text{liche} \\
sunder \text{minn b} \ddot{\text{o}} \text{t} \hat{\text{e}}\text{re}. 1)\end{align*}

It represents no lack in Liaze that she does not achieve the stature of Condwiramurs. Of necessity, she must remain a less prominent figure, for Parzival is not yet ready for love. The reason he gives to her father is that he must prove himself worthy of her and then return to claim her as his wife\textsuperscript{2).} In this he is certainly sincere, for it is not in him to say what he does not mean, but subconsciously he is prompted by other considerations, the same desire for action and fame which drew Gahmuret first from Belakane, then from Herzeloyde, and perhaps a feeling, scarcely definable at this stage, that Liaze is not the woman for him. Even with his still incomplete understanding he senses, surely, that she cannot give him that perfect love which he recognizes at once in Condwiramurs.

However, the two women are cousins, and with Wolfram's strong sense of relationship they are thus immediately linked, with the suggestion of a similarity between them. As Parzival rides away, he is troubled by a longing:

\begin{align*}
\hat{\text{ow}}\hat{\text{e}} \text{ wan daz in ruorte} \\
\text{manec unsueziu strenge}. 3)
\end{align*}

This he interprets as a longing for Liaze. It may, however, as easily be a longing for the perfect love which is to come to him soon. Possibly both sensations are within him and their mingling suggests, too, how

1. 179, 27-29.
2. 178, 29-179, 3.
3. 179, 16-17.
closely the women are linked. This is more powerfully expressed when Parzival is actually brought face to face with Condwiramurs, and his first impression is that here is Liaze once again:

'Liaze ist dort, Liaze ist hie.
mir wil got sorge mâzen:
u nu sihe ich Liazen,
des werden Gurnemanzes kint.' 1)

There are similarities, of course, as Wolfram intended to imply in making them cousins, and to Parzival's inexperienced eye the beauty of Condwiramurs is reminiscent of that of Liaze. Wolfram, however, adds his own comment, for Condwiramurs must be supreme in beauty as in all else:

Liazen schöne was ein wint
gein der melde diu hie saz,
an der got wunschès niht vergaz ... 2)

Nevertheless, Parzival's reaction indicates the extent to which his attitude towards women was established by his relationship with Liaze, and that, in introducing him to the notion of the companionship of women, she inevitably set herself as his criterion of womanhood. Like all his early experiences, however, this is merely a stage in his development, and Liaze's place in his scale of values is taken by Condwiramurs.3)

Liaze's is a passive rôle, and she influences Parzival simply by her presence as a woman. Her passivity may be seen in contrast

1. 188, 2-5.
2. 188, 6-8. I do not agree with H. Sacker: An Introduction to Wolfram's Parzival, Cambridge 1963, p.38, when he says "we are assured that there is no real comparison". On the contrary, it would seem that Wolfram is at pains to point to a comparison, even though, as suggested in these lines, Condwiramurs must be superior to Liaze in any such comparison.
with Sigune, who, although she too is a passive character in some ways, actively influences Parzival by her words and guidance. Just as in a heightened degree Condwiramurs is later to be the goal of Parzival's striving, and Gyburc the impulse to Willehalm's actions, so, by her very nature as a woman, does Liaze inspire Parzival, prompting him to achievements which will make him worthy of her, now that he has glimpsed the love which is the reward of the noble knight:

\[
\text{er wolt ê gestriiten baz,} \\
\text{ê daz er dar an wurde warm,} \\
\text{daz man då heizet frouwen arm,} \\
\text{in dühte, wert gedinge} \\
\text{daz ware ein höhiu linge} \\
\text{ze disem êbe hie unt dort.} 
\]

It does not detract from his intention at this point that Parzival is never to return to Liaze. In riding away from her, he outgrows her, yet it remains as a compliment to Liaze that it is Condwiramurs, her cousin and so like her in many ways, who supersedes her in Parzival's affections, for this implies, not a rejection of her, but an affirmation of his affection for her and of her significance in his life.

It is as the son of Gahmuret that Parzival rides from the castle of Gurnemanz, for, in acquaintance with Liaze, he has found within him the power of love which belongs to the son of a man who loved, and was loved by, three noble ladies. Just as Gahmuret was troubled by the memory of Belakane, so is Parzival unable to forget Liaze, although he who never knowingly did wrong is not oppressed by the sense of guilt.

1. See discussion of Sigune above.
2. 177, 2-7.
3. 179, 24-23.
4. See, among other instances, 61, 10; 84, 17 f; 90, 29 f., and p. 161 {#p.161}.
which marred the joy of Gahmuret. The situation is not the same, however, and Belakane and Liaze, although there is a slight echo, are not parallel figures.\(^1\) Although Parzival had promised to return when he had proved himself worthy of Liaze's love, it is clear that Wolfram does not blame him for his marriage to Condwiramurs. For Parzival, in his early development, there is no going back: his relationship with Liaze marks one stage in his development, and, as he passes on, Condwiramurs appears, so like Liaze but enhanced and quite perfect in womanly virtues, as his companion now and on his way towards his goal.

Yet the impact of his early experience is a considerable one and Parzival does not forget Liaze, any more than Gahmuret forgot his first wife, though deeply in love with Herzeloyde. When Condwiramurs is telling Parzival of her distress and the threat of Glamide and his army, she happens to mention Liaze, with no more subtle reason than to identify Schentaflurs for him.\(^2\) Parzival's immediate reaction is grief at the memory of the girl he had loved yet left behind.\(^3\) He agrees at once to help Condwiramurs, and the implication is that he does so for the sake of Liaze whose brother was killed by the present antagonist of Condwiramurs. Later, when Parzival has Glamide in his power, he remembers how Gurnemanz, the father of Liaze, urged him to be

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1. One is less conscious of a great loss in the case of Liaze, who was, after all, never married to Parzival. Nor does Wolfram ever give any evidence of Liaze's loving the young knight. It is not his intention to prolong the incident.

2. 195, 2-6.

3. 195, 7-11
merciful towards his captives:

\[ \text{dö dahte der den sic hät} \]
\[ \text{sän an Gurnemanzes rät,} \]
\[ \text{daz ellenthafter manheit} \]
\[ \text{erbärme solte sin bereit,} \]
\[ \text{süs volget er dem rätê nâch:} \]
\[ \text{hin ze Clâmêdê er sprâch} \]
\[ \text{'ine wil dich niht erlaze,} \]
\[ \text{ir vater, Liazên,} \]
\[ \text{dune bringest im din sicherheit.'} \]

Once more, then, it is the memory of Liaze which prompts him to this action, so that she, like Cunneware and Jeschute, exerts a distant influence over this man who remembers her with gratitude and affection for the part she played in his early life.

She belongs, too, to the line of those who take up the work of Herzeloide, instructing and guiding Parzival, whether deliberately or more indirectly, by the very impact of personal\text{ity. Herzeloide had given Parzival some very brief and ambiguous instructions on behaviour towards women,} \[ \text{and these had led to the tragedy of Jeschute. Now, at Gurnemanz's castle, his learning continues, with the wise old knight to instruct him in the courtly arts, and Liaze, by her very presence, to allow him to glimpse the joys of knighthood. Only a woman of her virtue can do this, and Liaze is shown to possess those qualities of purity and love which are essential in a woman and revealed, as so often in Wolfram's works, in outward appearance:} \]

\[ \text{Liazên lip was minneclich,} \]
\[ \text{dar zuo der waren kiusche rich.} \]

Like Condwiramurs after her, Liaze is seen to be a very fit companion for the young Parzival, matching him in nobility and good looks. \[ \text{Those} \]

1. 213, 29-214, 7.
2. See p. 59.
3. 176, 11-12.
4. 176, 26. This too has an echo in Wolfram's later description of the perfect match of Parzival and Condwiramurs as they sit together, 187, 24ff; see also p. 77.
who see him ride to the castle see also in Parzival the end of the
grief of Gurnemanz, with the hope of a match for his one remaining
child. This, combined with the likeness to Condwiramurs, serves to
fill in a little of the character of Liaze, who is otherwise left as
a rather shadowy figure. It is possible to see her also as an almost
abstract personification of womanhood, not like Herzeloyde and Sigune
the ideal of womanhood, but rather the embodiment of a notion which
comes to Parzival at this time, of the existence of women and the idea
of love.

Together, Liaze and Gurnemanz initiate Parzival into the world
of chivalry, yet in doing so they bring upon themselves the grief of
his departure, for what they reveal to him combines with his innate
nobility to take him from them. In leaving Liaze, Parzival shows his
awareness of the meaning of chivalry, and of this chivalry, his personal
goal, she is both the impulse and the goal. The situation is frequent,
an inevitable product of the knightly order, that the woman who is won
by knightly strife becomes too the goal of all striving for the man
who has won her, and she herself is forced to accept that the man she
loves must constantly prove himself worthy of her love, even if in
doing so he must die. Thus Liaze, by arousing in Parzival the first
awareness of the power of courtly love, must lose him, when, in his
attempt to be worthy of her, he finds a more perfect goal in the person
of Condwiramurs.

1. Possibly Wolfram did not wish to endow her with too much
   individuality, lest the break appeared callous.
2. cf. Herzeloyde, Belakane, Sigune.
Cunneware

Of this group of women, Cunneware is one of the most interesting, a figure subtly drawn who increases in depth with closer acquaintance. Like the others, she possesses two levels of significance, one in her own right and the other as a factor in the growth of the hero. The second part of her significance is dependent on the first, because it is as a highly individualized heroine, who shares some of the qualities of the central women characters, that she is able, like Liaze and Jeschute, to employ the coincidence of her contact with Parzival in order to influence him and help to bring him to the highest goal of knighthood.

Central to Cunneware's rôle in Parzival is the mysterious power she possesses of recognizing the greatest of all knights. The laughter which breaks also the silence of Antanor and marks the entry of Parzival at Arthur's Court has been prepared for already, for it is important both to Wolfram's picture of Parzival and of Cunneware herself. Angry with Jeschute and indignant at her supposed infidelity, Orilus refers to his prowess in jousting which he undertook for her sake and which should therefore endear him to her, and, with no apparent necessity, he

1. Although the original idea of the maiden who laughs for the first time when she sees Perceval is Chrétien's, (ed. cit. 1035ff.), Wolfram develops her as a character far beyond his source.
2. This is clearly a fairy-tale motif, though in Parzival there remains little of the fairy-tale character about Cunneware. See Grimm: Kinder- und Hausmärchen, Große Ausgabe, Berlin, 1890, p.22ff: "Der gute Handel" and p.196ff: "Die goldene Gans". In the latter story it is actually a 'Dümmling' who succeeds in making the princess laugh. See also: Marie Ramondt: "Zur Jugendgeschichte des Parzival", Neophilologus, 9, 1924, pp. 15-22.
3. 133, 28ff. See p.186ff.
refers to his sister, the sweet Cumneware:

ir munt kan niht gebâren
mit lachen, è si den gesiht
dem man des hûsten prises giht. 1)

The effect of this information, irrelevant at the time, is the immediate realization of the significance of Cumneware's later reception of Parzival. 2) Moreover, when Orilus tells of the condition on his sister's laughter, Parzival has just committed, in his assault on Jeschute, the first serious crime of his youth. He is far, as yet, from the knightly supremacy which the maiden's laughter is to prophesy.

Even when he arrives at Arthur's Court, he is totally unversed in the art of chivalric behaviour. 3) Only Kei, outspoken and ruthless, gives expression to his indignation and astonishment at Cumneware's verdict on this gauche youth:

'..ez ist dem kûnge Artûs
êf sinen hof unt in sin hûs
sô manec werder man geriten,
durch den ir lachen hât vermiten,
und lachet nu durch einen man
der niht mit ritters fuore kan' 4) 

but he is surely not alone in his surprise at her reaction. Yet Cumneware is unerring in her judgement, and from this moment she becomes involved in

1, 135, 16-18.
2. The effect is more spontaneous than in Chrétien's version, where without this preparation, the significance of the maiden's laughter is not known, and Chrétien finds it necessary to break the action with her words acclaiming the future greatness of Perceval (ed. cit. 1039-1044) and then with the explanation of how she could never laugh until this moment (ed. cit. 1059-1062). The scene in Parzival is thus much more impressive.
3. See, for example, 148, 19; 149, 25-150, 2; his desire to defend Cumneware by hurling his javelot (see below); his unprovoked attack on Ither.
4. 152, 7-12.
Parzival's growth towards the ideal of chivalry she here predicts for him. It is essentially a case of growth towards the ideal, of course, and hers is not a reasoned assessment, based on shrewd observation and judgement, but a mysterious, almost magic, power. This becomes even more apparent when, in his next act, the senseless killing of Ither, Parzival again commits a serious crime against the unwritten code of humanity and the code, as yet unknown to him, of knightly behaviour. How far does he now appear from the ideal knight and how unlikely Cunneware's intuitive prediction!

Just as he had previously shown his natural compassion in his ready sympathy for Sigune, Parzival again feels pity, this time for the suffering of Cunneware and Antanor:

\[ \text{do mueose der junge Parzival} \\
\text{disen kumber schouwen} \\
\text{Antanors unt der frouwen} \\
\text{im was von herzen leit ir not.} \]

This time his grief is intensified by the awareness that he is responsible for their suffering. The incident, then, is comparable too with Parzival's encounter with Jeschute: in both cases he is the cause of suffering, unintentionally in both cases too, but the difference lies in the fact that he is conscious of his responsibility here, whereas only much later is he to become aware of his injustice to Jeschute. At this stage, he

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1. In her article "The Independence of Wolfram von Eschenbach...", p.355, Dr Richey quotes this as one of the strangely incongruous pairs of incidents in the life of the young Parzival.
2. 153, 14-17.
3. See p.185f.
does not know how to avenge Cunneware. His reaction is to seize his javelot, but Cunneware is not to be avenged with an unknightly weapon. Because the crowd is so dense around the Queen, Wolfram says, he does not throw it, and in this way he is saved from a further crime, as well as from further impairing the honour of Cunneware. It is a stroke of fortune that he is prevented from hurling the only weapon he possesses, for his revenge is thus postponed to a more fitting occasion, when, as a knight, he is able to punish Kei for his abuse of a truly noble lady. What matters at this point is that he is ready to act in the defence of Cunneware. Like Sigune, she is the object of his pity and his youthful eagerness to act in the aid of a fellow-being. The two women receive his natural compassion, which, by an all too literal interpretation of the knightly code, is so fateful for to be suppressed later.

The relationship between Parzival and Cunneware is possibly a unique one in Middle High German literature: it is based on admiration and mutual respect, friendship without the complexity of 'minne'. Parzival is indebted to her, both because she saw in him the hope of the noblest knight and because she suffered for his sake. The second reason places

1. 153, 18.
3. 295, 28-30. See below.
4. See p. 46.
5. The desire to avenge the wrong done to the lady is absent in Le Conte del Graal, where, with less stress on compassion in the whole work, the boy now rides away:

Einsi cil crie et cele pleure
Et li valles plus ne demeure,
Ains s'en retourne sans conseil
Apres le Chevalier Vermeil. (ed. cit. 1063-1066)

Rather as Chrétien allows Perceval to see his mother lying dead and to ride on (see p. 51), he here permits him to place his own purpose before the need of others.
him under a courtly obligation to avenge her, but the first binds her close to him in affection and gratitude. Once he has avenged her, their relationship may develop into the deeper one of friendship, without the unbalancing influence of obligation. 1) His spontaneous, youthful desire to take his revenge on the man whom he has seen maltreating the noble lady is perfectly in accord with his later sense of knightly obligation to avenge her: what was then a human hatred of injustice and brutality is supported when, as a knight, he is required by the code of chivalry to avenge a wrong committed because of him.

The memory of the wrong still not righted accompanies Parzival for a long time, until at the Plimizoele he is able to injure Kei:

\[
\text{sus galt zwei bliwen der gast:} \\
\text{daz eine leit ein maget durch in,} \ 2) \\
\text{mit dem andern muoser selbe sin.}
\]

Until that time Parzival never forgets his duty towards Cunneware, and the interval is punctuated by incidents after which he sends his defeated opponents to serve Cunneware. Thus, in their turn, Kingrun, Clamide and Orilus all journey to Cunneware, with the message, of which they are the living proof, that the Red Knight has not forgotten her, nor the wrong he has yet to right.

Assured by Gawan that it was indeed Kei whom he injured, Parzival can leave aside the qualms which made him hesitate to come before

1. This relationship is not present in Le Conte del Graal, where 'la pucele qui rist', though grateful for the hero's defence of her, disappears from the scene. In fact, Chrétien lays no stress on her as an individual character.
2. 295, 28 - 30.
3. 198, 23ff.
4. 214, 30ff.
5. 267, 10ff.
Arthur, and so he meets once more the lady who recognized his innate greatness. It is a joyful reunion, sealed by honour re-established on both sides, and Cunneware welcomes him as her knight. In his constancy to her, she sees the beginnings of a justification of her prediction for him:

'Got alrêst, dar nâch mir, west willekomen, sit daz ir belibt bî manlîchen siten. ich hete lachen gar vermiten, umz iuch mîn herze erkande, dô mich an freuden pfande Keiâ, der mich dô sô sluoc. daz habt gerochen ir genuoc. ich kust iuch, wære ich kusses wert.'

The gesture of drawing a cord from her own dress to tie his cloak suggests a seal on the bond which exists between them. The scene is notable for the joy and the sense of well-being which pervade it. Parzival has reconciled Jeschute and Orilus and thus repaired this destructive act of his youth, and now he has also taken his revenge on Kei. Accepted within the assembly of the Round Table and acclaimed by the Lady Cunneware, he walks between her and King Arthur. Of Cunneware, Wolfram says

\[\text{diu was dô trûrens worden vri}\]

and the simple statement is full of meaning, suggesting not only that she is happy now that Parzival has avenged her for the physical wrong done her by Kei, but also that he has begun to prove her right in her recognition of his potentialities, that she is freed from a life without laughter.

1. 304, 10-18.
2. 305, 16-17.
5. 310, 12.
Into this scene of rejoicing, Cundrie breaks, with the news which is to bring about the destruction of Parzival's joy. In this new phase of Parzival's experience, Cunneware plays her part too, for she who has asserted his future supremacy as a knight is now his companion in grief. She is the first to weep at the sorrow and dishonour which Cundrie has brought upon him, and her distress is the sign to the other ladies of the court:

Cunnewâr
daz ërste weinen huop,
daz Parzivâl den degen balt
Cundrie surzier sus beschalt,
ein alsô wunderlich geschaf.
herzen jâmer ougen saf
gap maneger werden frouwen,
die man weinde muose schouwen.

Her rôle in his sorrow is not a passive one, however, for she comforts him with her presence when he prepares to depart. In the simple gesture of taking him by the hand, she pledges her support in his trial. It is she who puts on his armour, performing one last service of friendship towards the man who is to wander friendless for five years to come. She tells him that she will share in his sorrow until it comes to an end, even though she has cause now to be happy in her marriage to Clamide.

1. See p. 276 ff.
2. This aspect of her rôle is, of course, absent in Chrétien's story, where 'la pucele qui rist' is not endowed with the same significance. Dr Richey points out the essential difference in the two women ("The Independence of Wolfram von Eschenbach ...", p. 361): "Perceval is gratefully welcomed by the 'pucele qui rist', who then passes out of the story. Her counterpart, Cunneware, remains to play a part contrasting, yet harmonizing, with her warm and joyful reception of the champion who has avenged her and blotted out her shame. Now he is shamed, and she for his sake inconsolable".
3. 319, 12-18. By her tears, Cunneware is united with many of Wolfram's noble women. Among others, see Jeschute, Belakane, Obie, Orgeluse, Gyburc.
4. 331, 19-21.
5. 332, 19-23.
6. 332, 24-30.
The marriage of Cunneware and Clamide is a strange one in some ways, since Clamide's forceful wooing of Condwiramurs places him in an unfavourable light. Cunneware is too significant a figure, however, for Wolfram to have arranged her marriage lightly, ¹ and so it is perhaps preferable to accept the marriage and draw conclusions about the character of Clamide from the fact that Wolfram allows him to marry the virtuous Cunneware. Moreover, it is actually Parzival who arranges the match, ² and, in his affection and esteem for Cunneware, he would never have consented to a marriage with an unworthy man. There remains, however, always the memory of Condwiramurs threatened by the powerful Clamide. ³ As excuse for Clamide, one can only offer the explanation that his love for her was so great that it overcame his sense of justice and proportion. That he loved her is clear from his grief when he loses her, and he does not pretend that his love for Cunneware is as strong as that which he bore Condwiramurs. Cunneware represents for him a compensation, though incomplete, for the woman he lost:

ob ich an freuden sol genesen,
sô helft mir daz si êre sich
sô daz ir minne ergetze mich
ein teil des ich von iu verlôs,⁴
dâ mich der freuden zil verkôs.

1. It is not like the marriages at the end of Book XIV, for example, when one feels that Wolfram allows Cundrie to marry Lischois and Sangive Florant in order to supply a joyful, rounded ending to the light-hearted Gawan episodes: see 730: 1-10.
2. 327, 15-30.
3. See above, p. 46.
4. 327, 8-12.
Thus Cunneware is linked with Condwiramurs by means of Clamide. Yet already the two women are linked, for Parzival loves Cunneware, though without the abiding passion which exists in his love for his wife. When she bids Parzival farewell, she is acting in the place of his wife, and like Condwiramurs, she shares in his grief.¹ The two loves can exist side-by-side, neither detracting from the other, and this harmony is shown in the incident on the plain of Plimizoel, when Parzival is transfixed by the sight of the blood in the snow, which reminds him of his wife,² yet, jolted by the chance movement of his horse out of this state of senselessness, he is able to deliver the blow which avenges Cunneware, before returning to his former state, obsessed by love for his wife.

It is to be expected, too, that Cunneware is second in Clamide’s affections, as she is in Parzival’s, for Condwiramurs must remain supreme, in beauty, virtue and in love.³ That Cunneware is linked with her as she is, is evidence of her womanly perfection. She possesses the power to love with constancy and, in her grief at Parzival’s degradation, is revealed the compassion which is an essential human virtue. As with Condwiramurs,⁴ there is little

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1. Dr Richey (The Independence of Wolfram von Eschenbach, p.361) also notes this link between Condwiramurs and Cunneware when she speaks of 'a new symmetry of design in Wolfram's presentation of Condwiramurs and Cunneware, the two women to whom Parzival is most attached, the one his wife and queen, the other his devoted friend.' Of Cunneware she says: 'She is the last to be with him before he leaves, her bodily presence a support to him then as well as the unseen presence of Condwiramurs.'

2. See p. 844 for close examination of the episode.

3. For Cunneware, too, Clamide is clearly second to Parzival whom she loves deeply, though without the passion of conventional 'minne'. As a married man he is lost to her, yet Clamide tells how she refuses the service of all other knights in her devotion to this one (327, 1ff.)

4. See p. 914.
elaboration on these virtues, however, for it suffices that she is loved by Parzival, and that to her is given the honour of being the last person with him before he departs on the quest which is to end in his achievement of that same honour which she has predicted for him.
Cundrie

One of the most interesting comparisons of Wolfram's version with his source is surely in the character of Cundrie. In Le Conte del Graal, the 'pucele laide' appears to reproach the hero for his failure at the Graal Castle, and she leaves, never to reappear. Her act, then, is a destructive one and owing to the unfinished state of the work it is never repaired or justified. In Parzival, Cundrie upbraids the hero even more violently and casts him into despair, but Parzival is to come through despair and emerge as a more complete being for having done so. This emergence culminates in his call to the Graal Kingship, and to Cundrie is given the honour of bringing him the news. The perfect symmetry is in itself an indication of Wolfram's conception of the character, for she makes two very similar appearances at Arthur's Court, one marking the beginning of Parzival's five years of lonely wandering and the other marking his victory by faith over despair and grief. The first thrusts him into a despair greater than which there cannot be for a Christian, since it is the despair of the rejection of God, and the second raises him to the peak of earthly happiness.

2. It is unlikely that Chrétien intended to vindicate the action of 'la pucele laide', since she is not given the same emphatic significance as in Parzival. She is very much a minor character, whose rôle is a functional one, and not endowed with the human individuality of Cundrie. Her speech to Perceval is a much more objective accusation, lacking the deeply felt anger of Cundrie, which needs to be vindicated.
3. The likeness to the two appearances of Lunete in Iwein is not strictly relevant here, but see M.F. Richey: Studies of W. von E. p.44ff; H. Schneider: Parzival-Studien, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 1944/46, Heft 4, p. 54ff.
For the first appearance of Cundrie, Wolfram is clearly dependent on Chretien. Her ugliness and the violence with which she reproaches Parzival even exceed the description of the source. Wolfram has done nothing to soften the appearance of evil which is dominant in Chretien's version. Like Chretien, he describes Cundrie in extravagant terms, giving the impression of a creature barely human:

"über den huot ein zopf ir swanc
unz uf den mul: der was sō lanc,
swarz, herte und niht ze clär,
linde als eins swēnes rükehār.
si was genaset als ein hunt:
zwēn ebers zene ir für den munt
giengen wol spannen lanc.
ietweder wintprā sich dranc
mit zōpfen für die hārsnuor." 1)

In some ways, Cundrie suggests the female counterpart of the strange creature whom Kalogreant, like Calogrenant, encountered in the forest 2). Hermann Güntert, discussing the ugly appearance of Cundrie, points to Celtic traits and supplies a number of examples of hideous apparitions in Celtic stories 3).

The situation with Wolfram is rather more complex, for it is essential to his concept of the character of Cundrie that she is virtuous and well-intentioned, despite the immediate effect of her words. In remaining loyal to his source in this case, he has acted against his normal custom of announcing virtue by external beauty. 4).

1. 513, 17-25. cf. Le C. del G., ed.cit. 4614-4637
3. H. Güntert, op. cit. p.21ff. The whole problem of the possible fore-runners of Cundrie has been omitted in this examination which intends to view her as a human woman and in relation to the other women in Wolfram's works. Some interesting ideas on the subject are contained in the work by Güntert and in the article by P. Ackermann (see above, p.7(i).
4. cf. his descriptions of, for example, Condwiramurs, Herzeloide, Jeschute.
Certainly the impact of her words is made all the greater by her terrifying appearance. The terror which she inspires combines with the harshness of her pronouncement to cast Parzival into the despair and humiliation through which alone he can come to true happiness. By what appears to be a destructive act, Cundrie is thus able to produce a wholly salutory issue. Even at this early stage, when all else is overshadowed by the violence of her words to Parzival, and by her appearance of evil, Wolfram anticipates the happy end and hints at the essential goodness of Cundrie. He introduces her as 'ein magt gein triuwen wol gelobt', and when she has finished speaking to Parzival she weeps, for

\[
\text{die maget l\ddot{a}rt ir triuwe} \\
\text{wol klagen ir herzen riuwe.}
\]

In view of the importance which Wolfram attaches to 'triuwe', there can be no doubt that at this point he is wishing to indicate that, despite her awful appearance and the harshness of her attack on Parzival, this woman is in no way evil, since she possesses the essential virtue of loyalty. It is significant that Wolfram omits one observation of Chrétien's:

\begin{quote}
Onques rien si laide a devise \\
Ne fu neis dedens enfèr.
\end{quote}

for it is important to him that Cundrie should not be linked in any way with the powers of hell.

1. 512,5
2. 518, 9-10
3. See, for example, his praise of Herzeloyde and Sigune, and his assertion (462,19) 'got selbe ein triuwe ist'.
4. D. Labusch (op.cit.p.71) comments in connection with Sigune's reproach of Parzival, but it is equally applicable to Cundrie: "echte 'triuwe' erschöpft sich nicht in liebendem Wohltun, sie greift auch zur Härte, wo es\dier notwendig ist."
5. Le C. del G., ed.cit. 4617-4618.
It is loyalty to Anfortas and to the whole of the Graal Kingdom which prompts Cundrie to upbraid Parzival for his failure at Munsalvæsche, and, as later events show, she is also demonstrating her loyalty to Parzival himself, since in pointing out his negligence, she prompts him to the quest which will bring him to the Graal. Possibly this is not her intention, but it is certainly the result of her action. Indeed, it cannot be her intention to send Parzival off in search of the Graal again, for it is a known fact that only the chosen ones can come there\(^1\), and it would seem an impossibility that a man should receive a second chance. Nevertheless Cundrie is not prompted by the desire for revenge or by sheer malice towards Parzival, but by a deep sense of grief and disappointment. Unlike the 'pucele laide', who does not express personal sorrow\(^2\), Cundrie weeps herself when she has finished her speech to Parzival:

\[\text{Cundri\textsuperscript{1} was selbe sorgen\textsuperscript{2} pfant.}\]
\[\text{al weinde si die hende want,}\]
\[\text{daz manec saher den andern sluoc:}\]
\[\text{grö\textsuperscript{4}z jamer se úz ir ougen truoc } \textsuperscript{3}\]

On many other occasions, Wolfram has allowed tears to demonstrate true womanhood\(^4\), to which love and loyalty are essential virtues, and so in this early expression of grief, Cundrie too is shown to possess the virtue which is subsequently revealed in her to the full.

The 'pucele laide' reproaches Perceval for not enquiring why the lance bled, nor whom the Graal served\(^5\): his lack had been one of

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1. This Trevrizent tells Parzival: 468, 12-14 and 795, 24-26
2. Chrétien does not attempt, as Wolfram does, to provide a close link of the 'pucele laide' with the Graal, beyond the fact that she is its messenger. Wolfram tells how Cundrie was sent to Anfortas (see below) and her involvement with the Graal thus becomes more intimate. cf. B. Nergell, \textit{W.von E. II}, p.99, note 49
3. 518, 5-8.
4. See, for example, Belakane, Jeschute, Obie, Orgeluse.
observation and curiosity. Cundrie, on the other hand, sees in his silence a lack of compassion for the suffering of a fellow-being:

\[\text{hér Parzival}, 1\), wan sagt ir mir, unt bescheidät mich einer mære, dô der trurge vischære, saz ñåne freude und ñåne trôst, war umbe irn niht siufzens hât erlôst. Er truog iu für den jämers last, ir vil ungetriwer gast: ñin nöt iuch solt erbarmet hân. 2\]

His failure, then, becomes a failure in human feeling, and so Wolfram endows his coming to the Graal, his failure there and his return, with a deeper significance. The character of Cundrie is deepened, too, from the ugly messenger of Chrétien, for she comes not only to tell Parzival of his failure, but also to make him aware of the seriousness of his neglect which is the disregard of his responsibility towards his fellow-men. Cundrie thus shows her concern in the growth of the hero, from the time when she must point out his failure to the time, five years later, when she is given the honour of leading him to the highest goal of knighthood. The tears she sheds in her grief at the harsh words she must utter and at the circumstances which make them necessary, are an indication of her personal involvement. Wolfram supplies a further cause of grief, for he allows Cundrie to lament that the son of Gahmuret and Herzeloyde should have transgressed in such a way and that she should have the task of making it known 3). From this point of view, too, Cundrie is personally disappointed.

1. Dr. Richey (Studies of W. von E. p.45) points out the ironic use of 'hér', with its echo of Lunete's 'hér Iwein'.
2. 515, 26-516,3.
3. Cundrie is conscious of the irony of such loss of knightly honour (516,13) in the son of the noble knight Gahmuret, and she is astonished and grieved that the gentle and deeply sensitive Herzeloyde should have borne a son who has failed to display his pity for human suffering (see also p. 62 ).
by Parzival's failure: not only her link with Anfortas and the Graal, but her link also with the parents of Parzival contributes to her grief, and her loyalty belongs both to the kingdom which she serves and to the child of the noble and virtuous Gahmuret and Herzeloyde. Thus Wolfram motivates the anger of Cundrie in the 'triuwe' which he has previously praised in her\(^1\), and thus also does he succeed in softening the figure of Cundrie in anticipation of her second appearance when she comes to Parzival with the news of his call to the Graal Kingdom.

Between the two principal appearances of Cundrie there are, however, several brief mentions of her which make her into a fuller character and serve also to strengthen the initial impression of good despite apparent evil. Her close relation to the Graal is emphasized when Sigune tells Parzival that Cundrie brings her food from the Graal\(^2\). Her hideous physical appearance is explained when Malcreatiure comes as messenger to Gawan. There follows the strange explanation of the lack of control of the daughters of Adam which produced strange, misshapen beings, of which Cundrie and her brother are examples. By once more introducing Sekundille, as the one who sent the strange pair to Anfortas, Wolfram explains how the servant to the heathen Queen became the messenger of the Christian Graal. This explanation of her origin serves also to explain the list of talents which Wolfram, unlike Chrétien, had attributed to her at the first encounter.\(^3\) Güntert\(^4\) points out that the Eastern lands were renowned

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1. 312,5. See above, p.\(^{21}\)\(^*\).
2. 439, 1-5. See also above, p.\(^{125}\).
3. 312, 19-25
4. op.cit. p.55
for astrology, mathematics and philosophy and that since Eastern learning was connected also with the idea of magic, Wolfram gave her the additional name of 'la surziere'. She also possesses a knowledge of medicine, a talent constantly linked with a knowledge of magic: this Wolfram reveals when Arnive tells Gawan of the special ointment which Cundrie brings her from the Graal where it is used to ease the pain of Anfortas. By explaining Cundrie's origin in this way and linking her with the less familiar learning of the East, Wolfram has supplied an explanation of much which would otherwise seem strange in her and might possibly suggest that she was an inhuman being. As it is, she is a woman with extensive and unusual knowledge, the legacy of her birth and the years spent in the heathen kingdom of Sekundille; her appearance is explained by Wolfram, and, though it is true that his explanation is a strange one, is one not justified in thinking that he sought to explain it in order to show that Cundrie is a real human being, rather than the inhuman creature which some have found in her? Finally, he gives to Cundrie the human feeling of grief, expressed in her tears, which in their turn are manifestations of her true womanhood.

1. Wolfram surely intended the additional name to point out the strangeness of her skills, not in any way to suggest that she is aided by any power of evil: only a part of the association of the word is contained in his use of it. He uses it also to distinguish her from Cundrie, sister to Gawan.
2. 579, 23-580, 1.
3. Wagner found in her 'ein wunderbar weltämonisches Weib'. (Letter to Mathilde Wesendonck, 1st August 1860). Günert (op.cit. p.25) believes that she is a ghost, coming from the 'Totenreich' where the women are kept prisoners. Ehrismann ("Märchen im höfischen Epos", p.47ff.) also sees her as a being from the land of death.
The splendour of her attire, which is in itself in such striking contrast to her ugliness, also belongs to her Eastern origin, at the court of Queen Sekundille, in whose country, Wolfram says, the mountains were all of gold and the rivers ran over precious stones instead of grit. When she comes to Arthur’s Court for the second time, her appearance is, if anything, even more spectacular. The rich, hooded cloak which she wears hides her identity, so that she can plead with Parzival for forgiveness before she reveals herself. Guntert sees in her a type of 'Frou Werlt', disguising her true ugliness in a splendid exterior, but here he is surely overlooking an essential of Wolfram’s conception of the figure of Cundrie. In Cundrie, true goodness is hidden beneath the ugliness of her appearance. Far from disguising her ugliness, the spectacular attire exaggerates it, and so she becomes an even more terrible figure than Chrétien’s 'pucele laide' whose physical appearance was not made worse by incongruous apparel. Beneath this exterior of ugliness is the true goodness which makes Cundrie an apt messenger, apt also to bring Parzival to the Graal. It is true that when she comes for the second time she is hiding her ugliness in the splendid clothes, but she does this to conceal her identity, not her ugliness. The comparison with 'Frou Werlt', with inner corruption hidden by a beautiful exterior, cannot be sustained, then, since in Cundrie Wolfram is attempting to show the reverse, one in whom inward goodness belies an evil exterior.

This complete impression of the virtue of Cundrie is not immediate,

1. In spite of the reference to the French fashion of her cloak (313, 8) the brilliant colours and elaborate style of her clothes seem to point to Eastern influence.
2. 519, 14ff.
3. op. cit. p. 34 and p. 42ff.
4. Similarly, Martin Kommentar LXI.
However. Apart from Wolfram's repeated reference to her 'triuwe' and the tears of sorrow which she sheds, there is, after her first appearance, no firm proof of her goodness. The next mention of her is as the one who sent Parsival in search of the Graal with her harsh words:

\[ \text{ich meine den werden Parsiväl,} \\
\text{den Cundrie nach dem gräl} \\
\text{mit unsüßen worten jagte.} \]

She is still associated only with his despair and lonely wandering, and, at this stage when he seems so far from success, the positive, constructive result of her words is obscure. As time passes, however, she becomes more closely associated with the Graal and instances are given of her charity and service. It is Cundrie who supplies Sigune with food\(^2\) and Cundrie who brings ointment to ease the wound of Anfortas\(^3\).

Thus by the time she comes to Arthur's assembly for the second time, Wolfram has prepared in some measure for the good news she bears. The contrast with the previous occasion is most striking. Her coming had then been 'daz siufzebære zil' of Parsival's joy\(^4\), but now she is greeted with enthusiastic welcome:

\[ \text{'wol dem kunfteollichen tage!'}; \]

Her tidings had been the source of grief to many people\(^5\), but now they are sweet tidings\(^6\). The astonishment of the onlookers is no less this time

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1. 485, 8-11. As stated above, the effect of her speech is to send him off in search of the Graal, although it cannot have been her intention, since she believes that the Graal is not to be found by the one who seeks it.
2. 485,1ff.
4. 512,1.
5. 778,15.
6. 'ir mære tet vil liuten leit' (512,5).
7. 'gërt sê ir süßen mære sage, als von ir munde wart vernomn!' (778,14-15).
but it lacks that sense of foreboding which characterized the earlier occasion\(^1\). Her first action is to go to Parzival and beg his forgiveness, before she reveals her identity. Immediately she is recognized, and Wolfram still does not spare the details of her ugliness:

\[
\text{ir ougen stuoden dennoch sus,} \\
\text{gel als ein thopazius,} \\
\text{ir zene lunc: ir munt gap schin als ein viol weitän.} \quad \text{2}
\]

She is explicitly 'diu werde, niht diu clare',\(^3\) even before she reveals herself, for in her Wolfram has created a figure unique in his work, in whom great worth is not accompanied by beauty. There are instances in Wolfram's works of his dislike of the deceit of some women, who attempt to disguise their true appearance\(^4\). In the prologue he observes too that some women are praised for their beauty but that what matters is the virtue beneath, without which they will not receive his praise.\(^5\)

In describing Jeschute, wretched and in rags, Wolfram takes the opportunity to point out that he prefers her, a pure woman though in rags, to many a well-dressed woman, with the implication that beneath the elaborate dress is falsity and evil\(^6\). Here, surely, would be the type of 'Frou Werlt', but in Cundrie is found the reverse: her clothes, exaggerated and spectacular as they are, must surely be taken as an aspect of her hideous external appearance, which is in complete contrast to her inner goodness.

1. Wolfram increased the sense of foreboding by hinting at the disastrous content of Cundrie's message, before she had delivered it: 512,5; 312,30; 513,14-15; 514,12; 514,22.
2. 780, 19-22.
3. 780, 2.
4. See 201, 24-25; 257, 31-32 and p. 13 above.
5. 5, 11-24
The news which she brings raises Parzival to great joy, and she leads him with Feirefiz to Munsalvæsche. Yet even though she is the bearer of such glad tidings, Cundrie thanks King Arthur and Feirefiz for intervening on her behalf to gain the forgiveness of Parzival 'nach grozer schulde'. It is clear that she considers herself guilty towards him for having reproached him so fiercely before. Her position is a strange one, then, for even if she was indeed guilty in reproaching the future Graal King, it was a guilt incurred without intention. When she reproached him she was not to know that he would one day prove himself worthy to be summoned to the Graal. Moreover, her reproaches were certainly the direct cause of his success. Only then did he become conscious of his failure, and only a consciousness of failure could produce in him the humility which enabled him to strive towards success. Already, when Cundrie had finished speaking to him before, Wolfram had stressed the sense of shame which had been evoked in him and which would save him from real wrong-doing:

\[\text{unt dennoch mir im was bereit scham ob allen alten siten.}\]

This 'scham' is certainly an aspect of the 'diemuot' which as both Trevrizent and Anfortas explain, is essential in the Graal King. It is 'scham' above all which Cundrie produces in Parzival, and by virtue of this

1. 780,5.
2. If at all, then she is guilty in having given vent to her anger, as Wolfram says she does: (312,4): wan das ir zuht was vertobt.
3. The anger of Sigune, though he was grieved and puzzled by it, did not produce anything like the same utter despondency which follows Cundrie's public denouncement of him; see above, p.117f.
4. 319, 6-7
5. 798,30; 819,18-19.
she becomes instrumental in bringing about his success; the part which she plays in his success is revealed unambiguously in the fact that she is the one who leads him to his kingdom.

In this way, Cundrie becomes more deeply involved in the destiny of Parzival, and she is herself a much more rounded character, than the 'pucele laide' of Chrétien. Wolfram's treatment of his source here is an outstanding example of his ability to enlarge a single incident, and to endow a relatively minor character with a new and profound significance.
Section III

The next is a small group of heroines who exemplify a vital feature of Wolfram's view of womanhood. These are the young heroines, Obilot, Alyze and the pilgrim's daughters, in whom Wolfram shows the beginnings of perfect womanhood. They anticipate the virtue and special power of the mature heroines, but in them Wolfram shows not only incipient perfection as women, but also the particular power which is theirs by virtue of their youth.
The pilgrim's daughters

The two daughters of the pilgrim whom Parzival meets on Good Friday are in one respect unique among Wolfram's women. Their very brief appearance and the lack of deliberate characterization would perhaps lead them to be included among his minor heroines, yet the rôle which they play is by no means minor. The significance of this rôle causes them to rank rather with the central heroines.

There can be little doubt that Wolfram intended to show these two young women as instrumental in Parzival's return to faith, hence as vital to his eventual achievement of the Graal Kingship.\(^1\) The encounter occurs when Parzival has come very close to Munsalvæsche, yet lost it. Though physically he was very near to it, his spirit was not in accord with the spirit of the Graal. The total absence of faith is exemplified in him when Wolfram draws attention to the difference in apparel between the pilgrim and the knight:

\[
\begin{align*}
in \text{ selhem harnasch er reit,} \\
\text{dem ungelîch was jeniu kleit} \\
\text{die goin im truoc der grâwe man.}\quad 2)\end{align*}
\]

It is faith which the group of pilgrims will ultimately bring to Parzival, and they are themselves the embodiment of faith, walking as they do barefoot, despite the cold and their noble birth.

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1. Though Perceval too encounters a group of pilgrims (ed. cit. 6217–6330), the tone of Chrétien's episode is very different. It is not love which they show to Perceval, but indignation at his lack of respect for the Holy Day. There are not two virtuous young girls, but ten ladies, and the incident lacks the delicate charm of Wolfram's, where the perfect womankind of the two sisters is shown as instrumental in Parzival's return to faith.

2. 447, 5-7.
As the embodiment of faith which has its source in love, the group of pilgrims becomes a symbol. The four people have no personal identity, and this absence of individuality is emphasized by the fact that Wolfram does not give their names. His interest in names is evident from those which he gives to other characters, where the name is often significant to his concept of the character, and he frequently supplies a name where none is given in the source. The very rare absence of a name consequently gives rise to comment. There is only one other outstanding occasion when Wolfram refrains from naming a woman character, in the case of Ludwig's Queen in Willehalm, and the omission here is clearly an indication of his poor opinion of her. This is certainly not the reason in the case of the pilgrim's daughters. Rather are these unidentified women to be seen as the epitome of noble womanhood, revealing in their very brief appearance the virtue and powers shown at greater length in the principal heroines.

Above all, it is love which they possess, and love is revealed in its various manifestations. As they journey barefooted and wearing only rought cloaks on the bitter cold Good Friday, their faith, the love of God, radiates from them and takes expression in the beauty of their faces. The strength of this love allows them to pay no heed to the cold or to their high social rank, and thus they journey in true humility, united with Herzeloyde and Gyburc in the love which transcends the material.

1. For example, Belakane, Repanse de Schoye, Herzeloyde.
2. For example, Sigune, Herzeloyde, Cunneware, Cundrie. He even changes the name of Parzival's wife, in accordance with his changed conception of her character: see p. 88.
3. See p. 315f. below.
4. 446, 18.
5. He does, in fact, give a name to the pilgrim himself (457, 14f), but not to the others.
In their treatment of Parzival, they reveal that depth of human love which is both the beginning and the manifestation of true Christianity. Like Gyburc and Sigune, they possess such intense love that they are able to impart it to others.\(^1\) It is their compassion for the lonely knight which leads them to suggest to their father that he is being too harsh and that he should offer hospitality and warmth rather than reproaches. They seek to show him the path of Christianity, not with cool moral instruction, but with a practical demonstration of Christian love. Their words inspire their father to a gentler approach and to an offer of hospitality for the sake of Christ.\(^2\) Without the urging of the two young women, the pilgrim, despite his worthy intentions, would have failed to offer the simple Christian gesture which actually produces in Parzival the desire to return to God.

As the girls look with such kindness upon Parzival, he notes the redness of their lips:

\[
\text{Parzivál an in ersach,} \\
\text{swie tiür von frost dà was der sweiz,} \\
\text{ir munde wārn ròt, dicke, heiz:}
\]

In this single description of their physical appearance, Wolfram includes a wealth of significance, for wherever he mentions red lips, it is to suggest the power of love of their bearer.\(^4\) Though Parzival is impressed by their beauty and recognises it as the revelation of

\(1\). Gyburc's love of God leads to her ability to inspire love in those about her, while Sigune, confident at the third meeting with Parzival in her personal faith, is able to look with compassion on him.

\(2\). 449, 19-20.

\(3\). 449, 26-28.

\(4\). cf. for example, 130, 4-10; 176, 10; 187, 3; 405, 19.
their love of God, he feels that he must decline their offer, because he does not share this love. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that their compassion has moved him, and he rides from them with grateful thanks for their kindness:

ir juncfrouwen sünze,  
iwer zuht iu danken müeze,  
sit ir gundet mir gemaches wol.  

The knight who now rides away is truly the son of Herzeloyde: in him lie latent the virtues of his mother and these are now stirred for the first time for many months:

hin rítet Herzeloyde fruht.  
dem riet sin manlichiu zuht  
kJusch unt erbarmunge:  
sit Herzeloyde diu junge  
in het uf gerbet triuwe,  
sich huop sins herzen riuwe.  

Because he is the son of Herzeloyde, the virtues of compassion and repentance are hidden within him, and these virtues are aspects of the love and humility which he has seen personified in the pilgrim's daughters. Thus these two young women arouse in him the virtues which he possesses as the son of Herzeloyde, and thus noble womanhood personified in them joins with the noble womanhood of his mother to direct him to Trevrizent.

Parzival's own parting words to Gawan echo in this sudden change of heart, though not in the way he intended them. Woman, now that he has reached his lowest ebb of grief and desolation, is

1. See 450, 14-20
2. 450, 27-29
3. 451, 3-8
4. For a closer consideration of this scene in relation to Herzeloyde, see p.63 ff.
5. 332, 9-14.
not a substitute for God, but the means by which he comes to Him. In the radiant faith of the pilgrims, but above all of the young daughters, he has glimpsed the way to true happiness and is almost prepared to try it himself. Prompted by a longing for that same goal which they have attained, he turns and looks back at them. Wolfram says that it is the love of the maidens which prompts them, too, to follow him with their eyes. Parzival sees the beauty in them which is both physical and the revelation of their inner beauty, and with this last look he rides away, longing to find himself the God whom they worship.

Nowhere is the spirituality of Wolfram's concept of womanhood so powerfully and succinctly expressed as in this, one of the central scenes of Parzival. Here is revealed the nature of perfect womanhood, with its principal virtues of love and humility, and the power to impart these virtues. Herzeloyde gave to Parzival the sensitivity without which their influence would not have been felt; Condwiramurs sustained him with her love until he came to meet them; Sigune, directing him as she thought towards the Graal, directed him towards them. Three noble women, then, have made this encounter possible, and the nobility of the two young girls now ensures that the encounter is a fruitful one. Though their appearance is brief, the rôle of the pilgrim's daughters is a vital one, both to the theme of the work and to Wolfram's whole concept of womanhood.

1. 451, 26-27.
2. This longing finds expression in the way he gives free rein to his horse, so leaving the direction he takes to chance, rather than to his own decision.
Although, for the character of this young heroine, Wolfram is indebted very largely to his source, he presents in her a woman who is perfectly in accord with the whole picture of womanhood which he offers in his works. As in the Aliscans, her rôle is twofold, for she is seen both in her relationship with Rennewart and as mediator between Willehalm and her mother.

The figure of Alyze who emerges in Wolfram's work is different, however, from Aélis in the Aliscans, and the difference is a very subtle one. The love of Aélis and Rainouart was happy in its outcome; they are able to marry when Rainouart accepts baptism. The episode is completed. Wolfram's Rennewart was to remain a figure of mystery, and the end of his story was to remain uncertain. Consequently, the story of Alyze is left also without an end, and she herself is an almost mystical figure.

Despite the brief appearances of Alyze, she cannot be placed, with Bene and Itonje, among the minor characters. Rather does she belong with those of Wolfram's heroines who embody the virtues which he sees as the essence of womanhood. She has not the stature of Herzeloide or Sigune, Condwiramurs or Gyburc, for her rôle clearly does not demand it. Nevertheless, like Obilot, she possesses the same virtues which make them great heroines and the foremost examples of Wolfram's ideal of womanhood.

Little has been written about Alyze, perhaps because the young heroine is overshadowed by the tremendous significance of Gyburc.
herself. Dietlinde Labusch touches, however, on a vital aspect of the nature of the young girl when she says, "Eine magisch/übernatürliche Wirkung geht von Alyze aus . . . . Ihre Jugend und Schönheit sind ein Wert, ein Mysterium". It is in the ability of Alyze to calm the rage of Willehalm and to reconcile him with her mother that this almost supernatural power is seen most clearly. There is only a slight change from the source, but that change is vital to Wolfram's concept of the power of Alyze. In the source, too, Guillaume's anger had faded in the face of the beauty and pleading of his niece. The impression is a more striking one in Willehalm, however, where the very entry of Alyze causes Willehalm to regret what he has done:

Do kom des kaneges tohter
Alyze. done mohter
sine zuht nimmer zebrechen:
swaz er zornes kunde sprechen,
der wart vil gar durch si verswign.
swes ir mouter was bezign
von im, waerz dannoch ungetan
ez waere oouch da nach furbaz lan

For a long time, Alyze stands without speaking, while Wolfram describes her tremendous beauty. The description is matched, in length and enthusiasm, by no other in all the praise which Wolfram gives of his heroines. He achieves by this means a unique impression of Alyze at her first appearance and succeeds in focusing complete attention on her for this period, as indeed must the attention of the whole court rest on her as she stands there. His description shows the extent to which he sees beauty as the reflection of virtue,

1. op.cit.p. 155, note 144
2. See ed.cit. 285ff. See also B. de Kok, op.cit. pp. 103-104
3. Wh. 154, 1-5.
4. Wh. 154, 1-156, 50
and the beauty of Alyze is, above all, the reflection of her power to heal and to reconcile. Thus Wolfram says:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{man möcht üf eine wunden} \\
\text{ir kiusche hän gebünden,} \\
\text{dā daz ungenande wäre bi.} & \quad 1) \\
\text{si gap só minneclîchen schön,} \\
\text{des lihte ein vreuden siecher man} \\
\text{wider höhen muot gewan.} & \quad 2) \\
\text{ir lip was wunsch des gernden} \\
\text{und ein tröst des vreuden wernden.} \\
\text{swem ir munt ein grüzen bôt;} \\
\text{der brâhte sælde unz an den tôt.} & \quad 3)
\end{align*}
\]

Once more he sees the beauty of a woman as a radiant light:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{von der meide kom ein glast} & \quad 4)
\end{align*}
\]

and it is surely not strained to suggest that he again had the Virgin Mary in mind when he wrote of this pure young girl, with her tremendous power to reconcile and to atone for the wrong of another woman. 5)

With the humility which Wolfram sees also as essential in a noble woman, Alyze falls at the feet of Willehalm, a silent gesture which moves him no less than her subsequent plaas. When at last she begins to speak, Alyze weeps, linked once more with the whole range of Wolfram's noble women, the perfection of whose womanhood is revealed in their tears. In her speech, Alyze touches the heart of Willehalm.

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1) Wh. 154, 21-23. Alyze resembles the young girl in Der arme Heinrich in the healing power of her beauty and virtue.
2) Wh. 155, 4-6. 
3) Wh. 155, 9-12.
4) Wh. 155, 13. cf. also Wh. 200, 12-16.
Compare also Wolfram's descriptions of Herzeloyde, 64, 4-6; Repanse de Schoye, 235, 15-18; Condwiramurs, 186, 19-20.
by two distinct approaches. She places herself with her mother and
begs him not to take further revenge on her, for this will also be
revenge on herself. Finally, she beseeches him for mercy for the
sake of his mother and his wife. Her mention of Gyburc is a poignant
one, for it brings with it a sudden reminder of the real cause which is
at stake:

diust mir leider nu ze verre komm.

Like Obilot, who will be 'kranz aller wiblichen güete', Alyze
too possesses the power of the young woman to reconcile and to bring
love where hate has been. It is a power which Wolfram gives most
emphatically to these two, and the implication is surely that their
very youth gives them a clearer insight and a greater ability to
perceive the essentials, which elude their more complex elders.

In this first and most impressive appearance of Alyze, youth and
beauty do indeed amount to 'ein Mysterium', and the remainder of
what Wolfram tells of Alyze is fittingly somewhat remote and uncertain.
The love which has grown up between her and the young Rennewart is
revealed only indirectly, when Wolfram relates the history of the
heathen boy. Even so, the intensity of their love is felt:

ir zweier liebe urhap
volwuchs;die brâhtens an den tôt
und liten nach ein ander nôt.

and some of the pain of parting is contained in Wolfram's casual

1) Wh. 157, 15-24
2) Wh. 157, 25,30
3) Wh. 157,50
4) 284, 12-13
5) See particularly, Wh. 284, 1-16
6) Wh. 284, 14-16
Only now is realized the true significance of the kiss which Alyze gave to Rennewart when he left Willehalm. What had seemed little more than a courteous leave-taking is now seen as a farewell between two secret lovers who may never meet again. The marriage which closes their story in the Aliscans is not even anticipated in Willehalm, where Rennewart is driven into battle by his love for Alyze and never seen to emerge from it:

Alyzen minn die von im brach
dar nách in kurzen zîten
in tötlîchen striften.

Thus Alyze remains a figure of great virtue and some mystery. In some ways she resembles Repanse de Schoye: the two women are linked by the stress on their virginity and their pure goodness. The conversion of Feirefiz to Christianity through his love for the Graal Bearer is not, however, echoed in a similar conversion of Rennewart. The happier tone of Parzival allowed such a conclusion,

1) Wh. 284, 17-22.
2) Wh. 213, 21-28.
3) The love of Alyze and Rennewart resembles that of Sigune and Schionatulander. In both cases Wolfram shows the power of a very youthful love, and both loves are kept secret. The similarity is noted also by Ludwig Wolff: "Der Willehalm Wolframs von Eschenbach", Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift, 12, 1934, pp. 504-539: p. 536. He speaks of the love as 'jene früh erwachende Liebe, die Wolfram auch im Schionatulander behandelt hat'.
but Willehalm does not. The story of Alyze remains incomplete, and she, with the remoteness and mystery of Wolfram's concept of her, is its apt heroine.
Obilot is a less complex figure than her elder sister, Obie. In her there is no such development as one sees in the older girl. She is as she appears to be, a little girl content to play childish games on the one hand, yet conscious already of her nature as a woman. This fusion in her of the child and the adult is not extraordinary in a girl of her age, especially considering her environment and the likely influence of her, in some ways sophisticated, elder sister.

B. Q. Morgan finds Obilot a less successful figure than her counterpart in Le Conte del Graal. He even goes so far as to say: "For the first time we have to report a relative failure as compared with Chrétien." Surely, however, in saying this he is disregarding the different aims of the two writers in their treatment of the younger sister. Chrétien shows a child whose actions are those of a child, precocious in some ways, as Dr. Richey observes, although this same precocity does not make her any less credible or any less fitted to the rôle she is required to fulfil in Le Conte del Graal. Wolfram has done more, however, than present, as Chrétien does, a charming picture of a little girl who seeks and finds in Gauvain a knight who is willing to avenge the wrong done her by the spiteful elder sister.

1. Wolfram does not actually say how old Obilot is, although 370, 16 offers a hint, but she is probably about eight, at the most ten.
2. op. cit. p. 189ff.
4. For a detailed account of her rôle in Le Conte del Graal, see Martin, Kommentar, pp. 281-282
5. The elder sister actually strikes the younger one, and Chrétien thus motivates Gauvain's service: this created a rather different situation from the one presented by Wolfram, see p. 248 ff.
Obilot as a little older than Chrétien's 'pucele as manches petites', consequently as a little wiser. Perhaps this is true: certainly Wolfram anticipates in Obilot the woman she is to become.

In Chrétien's version the two sisters are sharply contrasted: they are clearly separated by age and personality. The blow which the elder sister gives the younger divides them completely, and Gauvain is called upon to avenge it. No such distasteful incident occurs in Parzival. It is true that the sisters are opposed in their opinions regarding Gawan, but since Obie's is governed by her love for Meljanz, the requital of this love causes her anger to subside and the rift between herself and Obilot disappears. Unlike Chrétien, then, Wolfram sees the two sisters not in opposition, but rather partaking of the same qualities of love and feminine charm. Obviously, this is not evident throughout in Obie, although the end of the episode hints at a similarity between the two girls which is suggested already in the similarity of their names.

In the near-tragedy of the love of Meljanz and Obie Wolfram shows the power of the convention of courtly love, its potentiality for harm. Obie is conscious of her power as a woman to command her lover, but Obilot is no less conscious of the power in her. Both sisters employ this privilege, the one ruthlessly and dangerously, the other with wisdom and with a happy issue,

1. This does not necessarily mean that he thought of her as older, but that it was more fitting to the rôle she was to play that she should possess already the first traces of a grown woman. cf. X. von Hrzdorff (op.cit.p.129): "Fraulein Obilot ist kein Kind mehr wie die Pucelle as manches petites, sondern eine, wenn auch noch ganz junge, höfische Kleine Dame".
2. B.Q. Morgan suggests (op.cit.p.192) that the elder sister is merely a foil for the younger, but it seems unlikely that Chrétien would have created such an unpleasant character simply to stress the charm of another, if it did not in other ways suit his purpose to do so. 
3. Le C.d. G. ed.cit 535ff
Nor is there anything unlikely in the fact that Obilot is aware of her power as a woman to offer her love to a man in exchange for his service. Living in an age when the concept of love and reward was a basic ingredient of society, she does not need to be precocious to possess an awakening sense of her own place in this society. B.Q. Morgan's objection to her lies in what he considers the precocious nature of her speech to Gawan. Of it he says: "In fact, it must be admitted that her conversation with Gawan is not appropriate to her age or character; into her mouth are put worldly-wise utterances quite out of keeping with the rest of her story." If one examines the conversation, one finds, however, a number of fairly conventional phrases, which admittedly sound strangely adult, but which may well have been culled from speeches overheard, even from actual instructions received from the teacher she mentions:

\[
\begin{align*}
låt ir mich, hërre, ungewert
nu schamliche von iu gën,
dar umbe muus ze rehte stën
iwer pris vor iwer selbes zuht,
sit mën magtuomlišhiu fluht
iwer genâde suochet. \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{Si sprach 'vil wënc mich des bevilt.}\\
\text{ich pin iur scherm und iwer schilt}\\
\text{und iwer herze und iwer tröst,}\\
\text{sit ir mich zwîvols hät erlöst.}\\
\text{ich pin für ungevelle}\\
\text{iwer geleite und iwer geselle,}\\
\text{für ungëltkes schûr ein dach}\\
\text{bin ich iu senfêleich gemach.} 5)\\
\]

Such passages as these suggest a familiarity with courtly language.

1. This is not the place to discuss the relation between the actual conditions prevailing and those depicted in literature. In the society of Parzival, a young girl would certainly be familiar with the courtly code.
2. op. cit. p.131.
3. See 369,2-10. cf. also X. von Erzdörf, op.cit. p.151
but they do not necessarily mean that she knows precisely what it means, rather as her proud promise to give Gawan a favour ends in her pathetic realization that she has only dolls to offer him. The incident, delightful in itself, serves also to show the juxtaposition in Obilot of the child and the adult. It has a precedent in the occasion when Lippaut comes upon his daughter playing with her friends at the game of throwing rings:

asked what she is doing there, she replies that she has come to ask Gawan to serve her:

\[ \text{ich wil den fremden ritter biten} \]
\[ \text{dienstes nach lones siten} \]

Even though she may not understand the full implications of 'minne', Obilot is nevertheless sincere when she chooses Gawan for her knight, and the relationship is an important one for her. The whole episode is pervaded with the sense of her childlike earnestness, and Gawan responds with a gentle charm. His first reaction is to reject her offer, but, remembering Parzival's parting words to him, he sees that perhaps it is right for him to trust this child, who has the makings of the woman whom Parzival praised above God:

\[ \text{nu dânter des, wie Parzival} \]
\[ \text{wiben baz geträwt dan gote:} \]
\[ \text{sin bevelhen dirre magde bote} \]
\[ \text{waz Gawan in daz herze sin.} \]

1. 372,18.
2. This is known from Wh. 327,8 to have been a game for children. For suggestions of how it was played see Martin Kommentar, 568,12
3. 368,17-18.
4. Here Wolfram differs from Chrétien who motivates the child's appeal to Gauvain with the blow given to her by her sister: since it was received in his defence, he is now bound to avenge her. Wolfram completely removes this incident, which detracts from the character of the elder sister, and so Gawan is not bound to serve Obilot: she chooses him as her knight, without the need for an avenger, and he accepts her offer, because he is glad to serve her. This accounts for the fact that Gauvain agrees at once (537ff.) while Gawan has first to be reminded of Parzival's injunction regarding the power of the truly pure woman.
5. 370,18-21. The reference is to 352,9ff.
The reference at this stage to the words of Parzival in his despair and desolation is certainly not a chance one. Rather does it suggest that in Obilot, young as she is, are the beginnings of purity and womanly goodness. The suggestion recurs more explicitly later in the assertion of Meljanz:

"Obilot wirt krans aller wüplichen güete."

Gawan agrees to fight for Obilot's sake, though having previously voiced the objection that she is too young to offer love. He accepts her sleeve as a token and fights for her with characteristic valour. Afterwards he gallantly hands his captives over to her. All this he does with perfect regard for the conventions of chivalry and with an earnestness which echoes her own. He does not, however, deceive her, for he has already made the position clear to her, and for him the episode resembles a game, played in all sincerity, yet with the awareness throughout that it is unreal. Wolfram reminds his readers of this when he speaks of the kiss which Gawan gives to Obilot:

er dructez kint wol gevar
als ein tockn an eine brust.

1. 394, 12-13
2. 370, 15-16
3. 394, 7ff.
4. It seems reasonable to interpret Gawan's behaviour in this way. Cf. X von Ertzdorff, op.cit.p.135: "Aber die Begegnung mit Fräulein Obilot ist für ihn eine Begegnung in der Form höfischer Minne, eine Begegnung, die er sehr ernst nimmt, die ihn aber nicht für dauernd bindet, weil er ein anderes Ziel vor sich hat". Mohr (Op.cit.p.15) sees the whole episode as a time of 'Entpersönlichung' for Gawan. The notion is clearly prompted by Obilot's remark: "ir sit mit der wärheit ich" (369,17). Mohr is unable to accept that Gawan can enter into this relationship in normal circumstances: "Aber er kann von sich selbst frei werden, indem er Obilots abstraktes Spiel mitmacht und sich durch die Verwandlung in 'Obilot' der Minne schlechthin anheimgibt". This seems an unnecessarily elaborate interpretation.
5. 395, 22-23. H. Sacker (op.cit.p.78) also speaks of the relationship between Obilot and Gawan as a game. It is important, however, to see that this is not how Obilot herself sees it.
The comparison of Obilot with a doll at this point breaks the illusion and prepares for the end, when Gawan takes his leave. Obilot, who has become involved in the relationship as a child often does in a game, is not prepared that it should end:

Obilot des weinde vil: 
si sprach 'nu füert mich mit iu hin'.

Gawan grieves too, for perhaps he also has played the game a little too earnestly, has become a little involved himself in the illusion.

In her relationship with Gawan, then, Obilot anticipates the woman she is to become. This is not the whole of her rôle, however, and in the other aspect of it are seen those qualities which allow her to rank among Wolfram's ideal women. When Obie abuses Gawan, saying that he is a merchant, Obilot is indignant, not because she is herself involved with Gawan at this point, but because the suggestion is so clearly an unjust one:

'áu zîhst in daz doch nie geschach: 
swester, des mahtu dich schamen: 
er gewan nie koufmannes namen. 
er ist só minneclîch getan 
ich wil in zeime ritter han.'

Young though she is, she is already a good judge and immediately recognizes Gawan for the noble knight he is. Even though she is the

---

1. 597,15-16
2. 597,30
3. There is an echo in his sad departure of the young Parzival as he rode from the castle of Gurnemans, where he left Liazè. (179,15ff.) The rôles are reversed, for here it is Obilot who is too young to know real love, whereas before it was Parzival who felt himself unable to accept the love of a woman until he had gained in experience and reputation. Both Parzival and Obilot have this early, bitter-sweet experience of love which anticipates, certainly in the case of Parzival, probably in that of Obilot, a perfect relationship.
younger sister, she behaves at this stage with much greater wisdom and control than Obie, for — and here one must clearly follow Wolfram's example in excusing the elder sister — she is not swayed by the power of love. She is outraged by her sister's abuse of her privilege to command her lover:

\[ \text{'unfuoge ir dennoch mer gebot:} \\
\text{geim kühne Meljans von Liz} \\
\text{si kärte ir hochverte vliź,} \\
\text{dô er si bat ir minne.} \\
\text{gunërt sîn sölhe sinne!} \]  

Not out of spite towards Obie — spite is certainly alien to her nature — but from a mixture perhaps of the desire to have this knight as her own and a childish desire to compensate him for the abuse of her sister\(^2\), Obilot resolves to ask him to serve her. This she does before she knows that her father has failed to persuade him to fight for him. Wolfgang Mohr\(^3\) attributes a certain cunning to Obilot when he discusses her request to Gawan: "Da dem Gespräch Gawans mit Obilot eine Verabredung zwischen Vater und Tochter vorausgeht (völlig gegen Chrétiens Disposition!) wird Gawan ganz zum Objekt sowohl der persönlichen Backfrischpolitik der kleinen wie der Hauspolitik ihres Vaters." Apart from the fact that Obilot has already resolved to make her request to Gawan\(^4\), before the possibility that he may help her father is known to her, there is no such arrangement with her father. When he hears from Obilot of her intention of approaching Gawan, he does, it is true, see his chance to gain the aid which Gawan has not

---

1. 355, 18-22
2. She does not know, of course, that he has heard Obie's words, hence her desire is based on a childish sympathy for one who has been hurt while unable to defend himself.
4. 352,24 of. also her resolution as discussed above.
yet agreed to give. It seems rather hard to see Obilot, as Mohr does, as the political agent of her father. It is surely a happy chance that in serving her, Gawan also serves the cause of her father. Obilot is sincere when she ends her plea:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sit och min vater helfe gert} \\
\text{an friwenden unde an magen,} \\
\text{laut iuch des niht beträgen,} \\
\text{irn dient uns beiden uf min [eins] lön.}
\end{align*}
\]

Her request is the same, now that she knows it is in her father's interest for her to succeed, as it was when she announced her intention of putting it to Gawan:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ich wil in zeime ritter hän.} \\
\text{sin dienst mac hie lônes gern:} \\
\text{des wil ich in durch liebe wern.}
\end{align*}
\]

That Obilot's appeal to Gawan has the consequence of his fighting for Lippaut is interesting. In this she resembles Alyze, whose appeal to Willehalm to control his temper succeeds because of the charm with which she delivers it, and the ultimate result, with control restored on both sides, is that Willehalm is given the military support he requires.

Neither Obilot nor Alyze acts as a strategist: each behaves with womanly grace and thus produces a favourable reaction in the man in each case. Even more apparent is the resemblance between Alyze and Obilot in their roles as reconcilers. Alyze reconciles her mother and her uncle; Obilot

1. This does not, however, constitute 'eine Verabredung', although compared with Chrétien's Tiebaut who scorns his daughter's efforts (555ff.) and tries to dissuade her from them, it certainly is a more encouraging approach.

2. 370, 4-7. This Mohr (op.cit.p.14) again interprets as Obilot's cunning and adds: "Sie formuliert dies doppelte Anliegen energisch genug am Ende ihrer Rede". Once more, he seems to misjudge the motives of Obilot.


4. See Wh. 157, 4-158, 5; and p.235ff.
brings Obie and Méljanz together. Only because she sees, in her wisdom, that the two must be reconciled and that it is in her power to reconcile them, are the two lovers reunited.1)

In Alyze and Obilot, then, two not very prominent characters, Wolfram shows the qualities of the ideal woman already in a young girl. His picture of Obilot, like that of Alyze, is a delightful one, of purity and love, wisdom and grace, giving promise of the mature womanhood of Condwiramurs, Herzeloyde and Gyburc, yet enhanced at this stage by the youth and freshness which was already present, though not fully developed, in the younger sister of Chrétien's creation.

Speaking of Obilot, W. Stapel observes2): "In diesem Kinde ist die Funktion des Weibes metaphysisch vertieft. In ihrem lyrischen Zauber ist sie nur mit einer Gestalt wie der Mignons zu vergleichen. Was ihren metaphysischen Gehalt betrifft, so verweise ich auf die Bedeutung Gretchens am Schlusse des Faust." What he says may be extended also to Alyze and the pilgrim's daughters, for all these young heroines possess a particular distinction among Wolfram's women characters, combining the power of their youth and sweetness with the power which they already possess and share with the great heroines. Wolfram and Goethe do indeed join in this view of the nature of woman, and her rôle in the life of man.

1. Xenja von Erzendorff (op.cit.p.158) speaks of Obilot's reconciliation of Obie and Méljanz as 'die eigentliche Krönung dieser Episode'.
Section IV

Four women, Ampflise, Obie, Antikonie and Orgeluse, fall into a convenient group for the purposes of this examination. Close study shows them to be basically unlike the other women, yet ultimately resembling them in some features. In these four women Wolfram shows a different level of relationship from the deep and spiritual relationships of the other heroines. The relationship of these women has its source in the courtly code, which put the lady in a position to demand service of her knight. Ampflise is the true liege lady of Gahmuret; Obie and Orgeluse wield their power over Meljanz and Gawan; even Antikonie, whose relationship with Gawan is rather different, nevertheless belongs rather to this group of women, with their more superficial, courtly relationships.

Basically, then, these four women are the courtly ladies of Wolfram's works, representatives of a vast aspect of mediaeval life which he could hardly ignore. Yet they diverge from the prototype of the court lady and become integrated into Wolfram's whole picture of womanhood.
Ampflise

Ampflise is a most intriguing figure. She never actually appears in the work, and her relationship to Gahmuret is revealed only gradually and never fully. Thus Wolfram has created a figure of some mystery, who hovers in the background as a powerful force in Gahmuret's life. She is comparable, perhaps only, with Sekundille, who also never appears, but who nevertheless exercises a powerful influence over Feirefiz. Both Ampflise and Sekundille must be regarded with favour for the power they wield in the lives of the two great heroes; it is a power for good, since the awareness of their love is the guiding force in the lives of Gahmuret and Feirefiz, spurring them to deeds of valour. Yet both women have a claim also on the sympathy of the reader, since each is superseded by another love, which is to be a greater one. It is Ampflise's fate that she is herself the victim of the chivalry which she taught Gahmuret. His marriage to Herzeloyde is the most complete expression of the teaching she gave to him, yet, though it bears witness to his loyalty to her as his liege-lady, it also brings about the destruction of her hopes of marriage with him herself. Ampflise, like Sekundille, is a tragic figure. That Gahmuret loved her is evident.

1. Wolfram is, of course, independent of Chrétien at this point.
2. For the inspiration of Ampflise to Gahmuret, see below; for the inspiration of the love of Sekundille in the battle between Parzival and Feirefiz, see p. 517ff.
3. The love of Herzeloyde is a greater one, because she is to be the mother of Parzival; that of Repanse de Schoye is greater because it brings Feirefiz to the knowledge of Christianity, see p. 174ff.
but such was the bond which linked them that his love could find most potent expression in marriage with Herzeloyde.¹)

Gahmuret's love for Belakane and Herzeloyde is revealed in Feirefiz and Parzival, the physical proof of his perfect union with both women. Of his love for Ampflise there is no such proof. Rather is it revealed in his own perfection as a knight, hence in the perfect chivalry of his sons. The products of the love of Gahmuret and Ampflise, then, are abstract qualities, and there is some justification for regarding Ampflise herself as an abstract symbol of courtly love, of chivalry. She is the source of Gahmuret's knightly greatness and the goal of his striving.

His love for Ampflise and his own concept of the bond which exists between them does not detract from his love for Herzeloyde. The two loves are different, and, for Gahmuret, they can exist side-by-side. This is shown in his words to her messengers, when he explains that in marrying Herzeloyde he is doing his duty as her knight, thereby manifesting his love for her:

'dö si mir gap die riterschaft,
dö muos ich nach der ordens kraft, als mir des schildes ambet sagt, derbi beliben unverzagt.
wan daz ich schilt von ir gewan, \ez waer noch anders ungetan. ²)

For Ampflise herself, however, his action in marrying Herzeloyde is a much more final one, a tragic one. In the letter she sends Gahmuret, pleading for his love and service, she appears no longer as the abstract

---

1. See below for detailed discussion of this point.
2. 97, 25-30.
symbol of chivalry, as the liege-lady content to be served and admired from afar, but as a woman who loves a man and who desires to marry him.

The earnestness of her appeal is reflected not only in the letter she sends to Gahmuret,¹ but in the desperate attempts of her messengers, to persuade him.² Their anger, as they depart without taking their leave, expresses the indignation of the Queen, spurned in her love by one who owes her his loyalty, but the tears of the three pages³ suggest perhaps more the grief of the woman who has lost her chance of marriage with the man she loves.⁴

The end of the story of Ampflise, then, is rejection and disappointment. Yet, with an irony rarely equalled by Wolfram,⁵ this very rejection represents Gahmuret's most complete recognition of Ampflise and his debt to her. To understand the full implications of this culmination of their relationship, it is necessary to examine the relationship itself, as Wolfram shows it.

Ampflise is first mentioned very briefly in Parzival, as Gahmuret leaves home, setting out on what is to be a career of great chivalry:

Als uns diu aventiure saget,
dô het der helt unverzaget
empfangen durch liebe kraft
unt durch wîplîch geselleschaft
kleinostes tûsent marke wert.
swâ noch ein jude pfandes gert,
er möhtz derfür enphâmen:

1. Of this letter Dr Richey (Gahmuret Anschevin, p.37) says: "It contains, in the first place, a declaration of love, impassioned in feeling, yet restrained in utterance - a confession of thoughts that burn through the measured and ornate diction in which they are cloathed."
2. 87, 7ff; 97, 13ff.
3. 98, 13-14.
4. Here I am not wholly in agreement with Dr Richey who attributes the tears to 'grief and rage' (Gahmuret Anschevin, p.50). I feel that to these children is given the true emotion of Ampflise.
5. It is comparable with the irony of Parzival's perpetrating a great wrong at the Graal Castle, where he most believes that he is doing right.
ez endorft im niht versmähen.  
daz sande im ein sin friundin.  
an sinem dienste lac gewin,  
der wibe minne und ir gruozi:  
doch wart im selten kumbers buoz.  

She is not yet named, for this is only a passing mention, which serves, 
as Dr Richey says 2) 'to enhance the impression of Gahmuret's compelling 
personal charm, and to bring out one of the most deeply ingrafted traits 
in his nature, his susceptibility to the bitter-sweet passion of love'.  
It serves also to lay the foundation for the later, more detailed mentions 
of Ampflise, which Wolfram can introduce with the words:  

Ein wip diech ê genennet hân ...

This first mention looks both forward and back, then, forward to the 
fuller account of the relationship at the time of Gahmuret's marriage 
with Herzeloyde and Ampflise's public acknowledgement of her love for 
him, and back to a time when Gahmuret won her favour and together they 
laid the foundations of a relationship which was to endure for many years, 
until the end of Gahmuret's life, in fact. In passing over his first 
mention of her, Wolfram founds the figure of Ampflise in the remoteness 
which is hers throughout. Like the great storyteller he is, he arouses 
interest which he will satisfy only later.

For an account of the beginnings of the relationship between Gahmuret 
and Ampflise, with the sequel in the gifts which Ampflise sent him, the 
reader must look to Gahmuret's own explanation to Herzeloyde:

1. 12, 2-14.  
2. Gahmuret Anshevin, p. 4.  
3. 76, 1. The line refers also to a more recent mention of her, 
69, 29 ff., when Wolfram referred to the death of the King of 
France and the love of his widow for Gahmuret. The two early 
mentions of Ampflise constitute our total information about 
her at this stage.
He tells of their youthful acquaintance and of the material benefits which he received from her:

mir gap diu gëhiure vom lande de besten stiure:
(ich was dô ermer denne nuo)
dâ greif ich willeclîchen zuo.  

More important, however, is the knowledge of chivalry which he obtained from her:

ich brâht in Anschouwe
ir rât und mîner zûhte site:
mir wont noch hiute ir helfe mîte,
dâ von daz mich mîn frouwe zôch,
die wîbes missewende ie flôch.

He acknowledges her as his liege lady both here, in his efforts to deter Herzeloyde from her persuasion:

"jâ diu ist mîn wâriu frouwe."

and later in his massage to her when he has agreed to marry Herzeloyde. It is because of her, he says, that he is a knight, and she cannot therefore wish him to behave in a manner not befitting a knight:

"dô si mir gap die rîterschaft,
dô muos ich nach der ordens kraft,
als mir des schildes ambet sagt,
derbî belîben unverzagt.
wân daz ich schilt von ir gewan,
ez wîr noch anders ungetân.

As a knight he must abide by the code of knighthood and obey the order now given to him. It is the tragedy of Ampflise that in order to remain

1. 94, 27-30.
2. 95, 1-4. As the younger son, Gahmuret had no legal right to share in the inheritance of his father (cf. M.F. Richey, Gahmuret Anschevin p.2). He is too proud to accept the generous offer of Galoes, 6, 29ff.
4. 94, 21.
5. 97, 25-30
true to the chivalry which she nurtured in him Gahmuret must marry another woman.

Gahmuret concludes his message to Ampflise with a declaration of his lasting love for her:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ich sül iedoch ir ritter sin.} \\
\text{ob mir alle kröne wārn bereit,} \\
\text{ich hān nach ir min hoekte leit.}^{1}
\end{align*}
\]

There is considerable temptation to question the sincerity of such a declaration from the man who is clearly deeply in love with Herzeloyde.\(^2\) However, a similar problem arises with Belakane whom Gahmuret also loves very dearly\(^3\) and whom he nevertheless abandons in favour of Herzeloyde. For this Wolfram supplies an explanation when he refers to the fairy nature of Gahmuret which responds to the springtime and requires that he shall fall in love again:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sin art von der feien} \\
\text{muose minnen oder minne gern.}^{4}\)
\end{align*}
\]

Love is a basic requirement of Gahmuret's nature, and so he is capable of declaring, in all sincerity, his lasting love for Ampflise, while about to enter into a marriage with Herzeloyde, which does not, however detract from his love for Belakane.\(^5\)

It must be admitted that Gahmuret's love for his two wives\(^6\) is different from his love for Ampflise. His relationship with her is basically that of the knight towards his liege-lady, but the original relationship has developed into the deeper one of love, and this is

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1. 98, 4-6.  
2. See p. 41f.  
5. cf. Hilda Swinburne ("Gahmuret and Feirefiz in Wolfram's 'Parzival'", p.199): "Both time and space separate him from Belakane, the springtime has come again and love is in the air; and it is part of his inheritance, a quality of his family, that he shall be a great lover".  
6. This is not intended to imply of course, that his love for Belakane and Herzeloyde is the same, but the differences are treated in the appropriate sections.
clearly mutual. Hitherto, the possibility of marriage has been barred, 
but with the death of the King of France, her husband, Ampflise now 
finds herself in a position to woo Gahmuret.

In these lines Wolfram suggests the power of the love of Ampflise, which 
was echoed in the desperate attempts of her messengers. As for Gahmuret, 
he was often troubled by her love, but there is perhaps a suggestion 
that this has lost in intensity. In the relationship of Gahmuret and 
Ampflise, there is a certain feeling that the greater power of passion 
is in Ampflise. Certainly, he did once love her deeply, and the 
very sight of the letter from her arouses emotion in him. It is signi-
ficant, however, that his reaction is to bow when he sees the letter, 
a suggestion perhaps that contained always in his love is the respect 
due to the high ranking lady from her knight.

It is the letter which prompts Gahmuret to go into battle:

1. 69, 29-70, 6.
2. His response to her letter suggests, however, that this is only a 
temporary abatement: cf. also M.F. Richey, Gahmuret Anschevin, 
p.37.
3. In general, women are shown by Wolfram to possess a greater power 
of emotion.
4. Compare the almost identical expressions of love in 12, 14 and 76, 24: 
this surely suggests a mutual love and a powerful one.
5. Obviously, a bow would be a customary greeting, but Wolfram speaks of 
it very deliberately (76, 21), and it is all the more significant since 
it is addressed to the letter, in the absence of the person.
6. 77, 19-21.
His sadness lifts, and he fights for his lady Ampflise:

Gahmureten trüren flôch.
man bant im ûf den adamas,
der dicke unde herte was: 1)
er wolt sich arbeiten.

There is no doubt at this stage that his love for Ampflise has been renewed with the arrival of the letter:

aldâ wart von Gahmurete
gleisst Ampflisens bete,
daz er ir ritter wäre:
ein brief sagt im daz mære.
âvoy nu wart er lâzen an.
op minne und ellen in des man?
grôz liebe und starkiu triuwe
sîne kraft im frumt al niuwe. 2)

Thus with the irony which pervades so much of her story, Ampflise has, in sending him this letter, ensured that he shall marry another woman, for it is precisely due to these deeds of valour accomplished for her sake that he wins Herzeloyde. Yet despite the tragic outcome for Ampflise, this battle bears witness to his love for her: it ranks with the battle of Parzival and Feirefiz, where each is spurred on by the thought of his lady.

Like that of Gondwiramurs and Sekundille, the love of Ampflise comes to Gahmuret from a great distance. One of the chief qualities of her love is its power to ignore time and space, and this impression is strengthened by Wolfram's treatment of her, for Ampflise remains at all

1. 77, 22-26.
2. 78, 17-24.
times a distant, vague figure. 1) Much is implicit in this treatment, for in keeping her aloof, Wolfram also stresses her importance as a powerful, almost abstract force in the life of Gahmuret. He suggests also something of the regality which surrounds this lady, who does not appear herself but who sends first her treasures, then her messengers. Nor does Wolfram describe Ampflise, and this omission serves also to increase her remoteness from reality. He does, however, allow her to point out her own beauty when she is recommending herself to Gahmuret and stressing her superiority in all things to Herzeloyde:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ich bin schöner unde öicher,} \\
\text{unde kan och minneclicher} \\
\text{minne enhähn und minne gebn.}
\end{align*}
\]

2)

Only here does Wolfram allow a very ordinary human feeling to touch the figure of Ampflise, a womanly fear for her rival which is expressed in this boast and gives to the remote Ampflise a new warmth. Her words are matched in Titurel, when Herzeloyde fears that Ampflise has put the thought of love into the mind of Schionatulander, in order to grieve her through Sigune and so have her revenge. 3)

It is to Titurel that one must look for the remainder of the story of Ampflise as Wolfram gives it. Yet here it does not meet with completion,

1. Added to the vagueness of Wolfram's picture of Ampflise is the fact that it is built up only gradually, a piecing together of slight information and hints. K. Kinzel ("Die Frauen in Wolframs Parzival", p.55) comments of Ampflise: "Es ist neben Sigune die einzige gestalt, welche uns so andeutungsweise bei verschiedenen gelegenheiten vorgeführt wird." This is true, except that it ignores Sekundille, who is characterized in a very similar way (see p.317 ff) Kinzel goes on to say, however: "Werkwürdig ist, daß in echt künstlerischer weise ganz dunkle züge erst allmählich zur völligen klärung gebracht werden". It is exaggerating the figure of Ampflise and also surely misinterpreting her significance to see her as 'völlig klar': a certain mystery is an essential feature of her character and her rôle in Parzival.

2. 77, 13-15.

3. Titurel, 122, 2; Titurel, 123, 4. See also p.43.
for the account is brief and episodic. What matters for the story of 
Titurel is that Ampflise gave Schionatulander to Gahmuret as a page 
at the time when he became her knight.¹) Thus she is responsible, 
though indirectly, for the meeting of Sigune and Schionatulander. 
Herzeloyde's fear that it was Ampflise who taught Schionatulander the 
art of love is not quite unfounded either, though she allows her own 
dread of her rival to supply the motive. Schionatulander did act as 
messenger between Gahmuret and Ampflise during this period of their 
relationship,²) and he certainly came to know of love.³)

_Titurel_ treats a period in the relationship of Gahmuret and 
Ampflise which is not covered in _Parzival_. Though _slight_, the account 
which it gives serves to indicate the length of time of the acquaintance 
which began when they were children, knew of his marriage with Belakane 
and continued until his marriage with Herzeloyde. In the two works, 
Wolfram creates in Ampflise a subtle figure, enigmatic yet powerful, 
remote yet real, one who embodies the type of the liege-lady and yet 
transcends the type and becomes an individualized woman,⁴) whose story 
is a strange and tragic one.

¹. _Titurel_, 39, 1-2. 
². _Titurel_, 54, 1-3. 
³. Wolfram says this himself (54,1-3). See also M.F. Richey, _Schionatulander and Sigune_, p.43. 
⁴. Her remoteness is not incompatible with individuality; in fact, it 
is a part of Wolfram’s individualization of her. This view is, how­
ever, in contradiction to that of K. Kinzel (_"Die Frauen in Wolfram’s 
Parzival", p.57): "Die figur der Ampflise ist einzig in ihrer art im 
Parzival, Wolfram führt sie uns nicht persönlich vor und hat deshalb 
auch keine mühe darauf verwant sie zu individualisieren."
Obie

For the purposes of the present discussion it seems preferable to examine the characters of Obie and Obilot separately. There is, of course, some justification for discussing them together and talking rather of the 'Obie-Obilot episode', since in this episode the actions of the one are dependent to a considerable extent on those of the other. Writers who have selected such treatment have, however, tended to disregard the individuality of each woman. Following Chrétien, Wolfram allows the two girls to be sisters, and he himself gives to them names which are similar. It has been suggested that 'Obilot' is a diminutive of 'Obie', and the idea is certainly a feasible one. This, however, is as far as the similarity goes: to regard Obilot as a younger version of Obie is to misunderstand Wolfram completely. At the same time, Wolfram is seldom without reason in the alterations and additions he makes, and that he gave to the younger sister a name which echoed that which he gave to the elder is surely no accident. It is hoped that the following discussion will suggest a reason for his having done so.

1. See, for example, K. Kinzel "Die Frauen in Wolframs Parzival", pp. 66-68; B.Q. Morgan, op. cit. pp.189-193.
4. Kr. Nyrop:Grammaire Historique de la langue française; (6 vols. Copenhagen 1899-1930, vol.111) gives a number of examples of the suffix -ot added to names: Bernardot, Charlot, Henriot, Georgiot, etc. He comments (Para.290): "Le suffixe -ot a primitivement une valeur diminutive et souvent caressante".
Wolfram possessed a deep consciousness of the tragic in life, and above all he shows an awareness of the sorrow which is the companion of joy, and particularly of love. Repeatedly in his works he shows that this juxtaposition is innate in the demands of the chivalric life. In order to be worthy of the love of a woman, a man had to prove himself a noble knight, and constantly to renew his reputation in order to retain her love. There was another side of the same problem, for it meant that a woman could press her lover to extreme action, could make tremendous, often impossible demands on him. In the ill-fated loves of Belakane and Isenhart, Galoe and Annore, and above all of Sigune and Schionatulander, Wolfram shows the tragic results of such demands, given and accepted in love, yet paid for by the death of the man and the grief and remorse of the woman.

In the love of Obie and Meljanz, Wolfram shows another incipient tragedy, which is yet averted and ends in happiness. It begins, however, in the same way, with the woman's insisting that her lover should prove his worth before he dares to ask for her love. That the outcome is nevertheless a happy one accords with the more light-hearted tone which is present throughout the Gawan sections of Parzival.

1. This awareness is best expressed in Wolfram's words about the grief of Herzeloyde when Gahmuret does not return (103, 23-24).
2. 346,5ff.
In adopting the incident from Chrétien, Wolfram endowed it with greater significance, too, and he makes the reader of Parzival more conscious that involved here is a basic problem of the life of chivalry. In Parzival there is a deeper awareness than in Le Conte del Graal that the outcome could easily be a tragic one, for there is in Wolfram's account a desperate urgency which is not present in Chrétien's. In Le Conte del Graal, the unnamed elder daughter of Tiebaut demands of Melians de Lis that he should perform acts of chivalry before he can win her. With her father, she arranges a tournament which will give him the opportunity to show his valour. Such a situation, which placed all the responsibility with the woman, was unpleasing to Wolfram. He diverges from Chrétien, but in doing so he widens the entire issue, and what was a courtly tournament becomes a grim battle. Obie refuses to accept Meljanz until he has proved himself, and this enrages him. He turns his anger against her father, who, he says, taught her such arrogance. The situation then, bitter enough already, is made graver by the fact that, in Parzival, Meljanz is a powerful king and has in his service a number of knights, all ready now to join him against Lippaut. An additional emotional problem

1. ed.cit. 4856ff.
2. ibid. 4869ff.
3. see below
4. 347, 7-14.
5. In Chrétien, the power of Melians is not so firmly stressed. He is 'uns chevaliers preus et hardis' (4826), but no mention is made of his royal birth. His father, it seems apparent, was the lord of Tiebaut (see 4842-4845). Wolfram brings the character of the father much more to the fore, stressing his kingship and the extent of his power (see 344, 21ff). After the death of the father, he refers on several occasions to the kingship of Meljanz: see, for example, 544,15; 544,21; 355,19; 356,4; 584,15.
occurs, for Lippaut has loved and served Meljanz since the death of
the latter's father and yet he is repaid now by this act of insult and
aggression\(^1\). Thus what was, in Chrétiens, a relatively small conflict,
pointless in itself but local in consequence, becomes in \textit{Parzival} a bitter
battle, with large forces on both sides and the promise of wide-spread
disaster as its outcome\(^2\).

That this ominous situation is the direct consequence of the behaviour
of Obie and Meljanz is more apparent in Wolfram's account too. The reader
is never allowed to forget that their foolishness is the reason for the
conflict, for mention of it occurs throughout\(^3\). The responsibility,
moreover, rests with both of them, and once more this represents a
divergence from Chrétiens, where it is the whim of the woman which causes
the trouble. Without entirely removing the responsibility from Obie,
Wolfram gives a large share of it to Meljanz, for it is he who declares war
on Lippaut, as a revenge for the taunting words of Obie\(^4\).

Obie's interpretation of her power as a woman to command her lover
combines with his indignation and sense of slight to bring hardship to an
enormous number of people and to bring their love into peril. Although
Wolfram's Obie is a less objectionable figure than her counterpart in

1. The beginnings of the same emotional problem are innate in \textit{Le Conte
del Graal}, where Melian's is known to have enjoyed the love and care of
Tiebaut (483ff), but he does not turn against Tiebaut in anger, hence
the point is not developed further.
2. As well as by Lippaut's own army, Bearosche is defended by Gawain,
armies led by Lippaut's brother, Marangliez, his brother-in-law,
Kardefablet, and the two kings, Schiriniel and Mirabel, while Meljanz
has as his supporters Lisavander, Laheduman, King Poydison, Duke
Astor, Meljacanz and the 'Red Knight'. The scope of the battle is
enormous, more particularly in relation to the motive for it.
3. 545,20; 346,1-347,30; 556,1ff; 345,1ff; 592,1ff.
4. He often refers to the anger of Meljanz, clearly seeing his guilt in
this lack of control: 544,14ff; 347,15ff; 348,27ff.
Le Conte del Graal, she is nevertheless the originator of a much more serious situation. Yet Wolfram has removed from her much which was displeasing to him in the figure of the source. Certainly, the spiteful elder sister of Chrétien's version was quite repugnant to Wolfram, and in his Obie he softens her characteristics to a large extent and gives to the figure a new emphasis. In Chrétien, the undignified bickering between the sisters is a large and unattractive part of the whole episode¹, and it casts an ugly shadow over the figure of the elder sister. Wolfram reduces this action to a considerable extent and omits the fact of the elder sister's striking the younger². Such behaviour is out of the question in a heroine of Wolfram's, even if in other respects she is far from perfect.³

Wolfram succeeds in integrating the sisters' quarrel more closely into the wider issue of the battle, subordinating the first to the second. Although this has the effect of changing the role of Obilot to some extent,⁴ it also places Obie in a slightly better light than in Le Conte del Graal, where she is seen equally as the woman who inflicts hardship on her lover and the spiteful antagonist of a much more attractive sister.

The quarrel between Obie and Obilot arises, moreover, because Obie is jealous of the apparent nobility of Gawan, whereas one has the impression in Chrétien's version of an almost permanent antagonism between them. In

2. See Le C. del G., 5338. For the difference which this omission makes to the relationship between Gawan and Obilot, see p.243.
3. B.Q. Morgan (op.cit.p.192):"In Chrétien what do we find? A shrill, ill-tempered shrew, without a single redeeming feature. No a kind word does she speak and many unkind and harsh ones... Wolfram is not content with this: he thinks too highly of womanhood to let such a figure stand".
her love for Meljanz, strangely manifested though it may be, she cannot tolerate that any man should rival her lover in valour and nobility. It is not until much later that Wolfram explains her behaviour with this reason. At the time it certainly appears that she is simply behaving perversely, in her anger with her lover and with herself. It is Gawan's misfortune that he should be the innocent victim of her anger with one man. Foolishly she persists in her original contention that Gawan is a merchant. She pursues the notion to excess in her accusations of him, first as a cheat, then as a counterfeiter.

It is fortunate for Obie that her accusations never actually reach Gawan, for he would be a dangerous man to humiliate. Indeed, the very idea of taking this noble knight, with his extensive reputation, for a merchant is so ridiculous, to the mediaeval audience as to the modern reader, that this whole episode takes on a rather comic tone, though, as in the whole of Book VII, there remains the awareness that comedy and tragedy are two sides of the same thing, that the one can soon replace the other.

However, it is not Wolfram's wish to make Obie suffer for her foolishness and all turns out well for her. As Dr. Richey says, 'Fortune is kinder than they deserve', and Wolfram, too, is perhaps kinder than they deserve, for he does not begrudge them their happiness. Indeed, he does his best to excuse their behaviour and gives a precise instruction to his readers not

1. 365,22-366,1. See below.
2. This Wolfram says himself: 365,18-19.
3. Wolfram is indebted for this idea to Le Conte del Graal (ed.cit.5060), when one of the ladies watching from the window observes, quite without malice, that Gawan is a merchant. He transfers this thought to Obie and allows her to develop it to absurd lengths.
From this unambiguous desire to remove Obie from blame it is clear that Wolfram sees her love for Meljanz, and his for her, as adequate motivation for behaviour which is far from ideal.

When Meljanz offers his love to Obie, she scorches it in words which, striking as they do at his youth and inexperience, cannot fail to rouse him:

Si sprach hin zim 'wært ir sô alt, 
daz under schilde wære bezalt 
in werdeslichen stunden, 
mit helme üf houpft gebunden 
gein herteclichen vären, 
swer tage in fünf jären, 
daz ir den pris dâ het genomn, 
und wært ir danne wider komm 
zâ mîm gebote gewesen dâ 
spræche ich denne alrêste jâ, 
des wier wille gerte, 
alze fruo ich iuch gewerte. 2)

She is guided in this by her interpretation of the privilege of the lady over the knâght. She loves Meljanz, as is clearly shown by her subsequent behaviour, but she also knows that he loves her, and that her attempts to urge him to deeds of valour for her sake will not be in vain. In her immaturity, however, she goes too far: her words do not inspire him to action for her sake, as they would if they were words which gave promise of reward, 3) but rather do they rouse him to anger against her and her father. She suggests that even if he had the advantages of experience and a noble reputation her love would still be grudgingly given. It is a cruel response to the young lover, and her final harshness comes in her reference

1. 566,2. See below.
2. 546, 3-14.
3. Very different is the pact between Schionatulander and Sigune (see Titurel, 166, 167, 168 and p.117 above). In the condition which Schionatulander willingly accepts from Sigune is contained the promise of lasting reward in their life together.
The uncontrolled malice of Obie's rejection of Meljanz, even though it represents only her immature judgement and a false view of her power as a lady to command her lover, is matched by the fury of Meljanz, who sees it as an act of treachery on the part of Lippaut. He takes seriously what was intended only half in earnest, and he, like Obie, behaves with youthful rashness and quite without thought. Just as she does not stop to consider the consequences of what she is saying, he does not consider the absurdity of blaming a loyal and noble vassal for the folly of his daughter, nor his own foolishness in expanding a personal grievance to a widespread conflict. They are equally unwise, equally responsible for what happens and equally fortunate that the end is not disaster.

That Obie is misguided rather than ill-intentioned is evident from Wolfram's attitude towards her. Indeed, foolishness and misguidedness are

1. This is because she stresses the irony of the situation, that Amore died for love of Galoes only after he had died in her service. She disregards the possibility that their love in itself was a great one. In commenting on Obie's comparison, H.E. Mustard and G.E. Passage in their translation say: "this is of course ironic. The implication is that Amore continues to live until she died a natural death." This seems an unnecessarily harsh comment on Amore, and one for which there is no textual support. Obie's remark remains bitterly ironic without this interpretation.

2. 346, 15-18.

3. It is surely correct to assume that Obie is not absolutely serious when she scorns his love so callously. Certainly she would like him to win her with brave deeds, but she is also playing with her new-found power, seeing how far she can press him. She behaves elsewhere, in her quarrel with Obilot and her treatment of Gawan, foolishly, rather than with deliberate malice.
basic to the character as he re-creates her, for he can find excuses for a foolish woman, whereas he would be reluctant to excuse a really wicked one.\(^1\) Compared with Chrétien, he softens the quarrel with Obilot; in her attempts to humiliate Gawan he sees that she is thwarted, so that what could have been dangerous behaviour merely appears ridiculous; and, above all, he grants her the happiness of marriage with Meljanz at the end of the episode. The whole episode is more rounded, then, than in *Le Conte del Graal* where the two do not marry, even though it is assumed that they will. Wolfram shows here the passage of love through scorn and conflict to a happy end, in sharp contrast, above all, to the ill-fated love of Sigune and Schionatulander. One wonders perhaps: why, having shown the tragic issue of love on several occasions,\(^2\) he chose to grant a happy issue in this case\(^3\) where the lovers seem so much less deserving, so much more guilty of ill-conduct. Possibly the answer lies precisely there, for to allow Meljanz to die as a result of such harsh words would be to inflict on Obie a guilt more bitter even than that of Sigune, who, although she was responsible inasmuch as she urged Schionatulander to the action which led to his death, did not bear the added burden of the memory of spiteful words, spoken in arrogance and without thought. Such would be the burden upon Obie, and Wolfram is too gentle to permit this. However, to allow the reward of a happy marriage to two people who have behaved in a very wrongful

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1. He encounters a difficulty, for instance, when he comes to depict Antikonie, see p. 275ff.
2. Sigune and Schionatulander, Belakane and Isenhart, Amore and Galoes.
3. Wolfram is, of course, following Chrétien in this.
way and whom good fortune alone has saved from disaster, was perhaps equally unacceptable to Wolfram. Moreover, the type of ruthless, spiteful woman shown by Chrétien is clearly not in accord with Wolfram's picture of womanhood.

Consequently, there is in Parzival a careful transformation of what was in Le Conte del Graal 'a shrill ill-tempered shrew, without a single redeeming feature' into a girl who, though she may not be particularly attractive, is not wholly unsympathetic. The way in which Wolfram manages this transformation is yet another example of his subtle handling of his source and of his insight into human nature. Wolfram gives to Obie that redeeming feature which is lacking in the elder sister in Chrétien. It is her love which redeems her, and for Wolfram, who regards love as all-important, this aspect of Obie's nature is capable of overcoming her unfavourable characteristics. Moreover, Wolfram shows that even these characteristics are manifestations, negative though they may be, of her love. A further transformation occurs, within Wolfram's own work, as he shows how gradually the same love reveals itself in a good way.

From the beginning, she taunts Meljanz because she loves him, but already here Wolfram supplies the key to her nature, for as Meljanz goes away

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1. Chrétien, as already noted on previous page, did not actually bring the romance to this conclusion, but it was clearly Wolfram's wish to present a rounded episode, to show, for once, a happy outcome to such a love.
2. We know, from Wolfram's own remarks, that he was aware of the failings of some women, that he claims to have reproached one in particular, (see above, p. 13 ) but it is not his custom to depict them in his works.
3. As already quoted from B.O. Morgan, p.264(3).
she grieves that she has made him angry:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sin zürnen sere wart geklagt} \\
\text{von al der massenisch} \\
in klagt ouch Obie. \footnote{1)}
\end{align*}
\]

Contained in her lament are her grief at having lost him and her regret for what she has done. It is in accordance with her youthful lack of wisdom and a part of the same obstinacy which made her reject Meljanz that she does not act on her grief, to recall him and reconcile herself with him. Instead, she allows the hostility between them to grow into a widespread conflict which she can hardly have anticipated. Yet through this defence which she obstinately retains, Wolfram allows her true feelings for Meljanz to penetrate. Eagerly she watches him from the window as he excells himself in jousting:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sin tat was vor üz so bekant.} \\
\text{al sin tjost in ir ougen vant} \\
\text{Obi dort üf dem palas,} \\
\text{dar si durch warten komen was.} \footnote{2)}
\end{align*}
\]

Her delight at his success mingles with her grief and reveals itself as anger, directed first at Obilot, and then at Gawan. After her unsuccessful attempts to humiliate Gawan, from no real wish to harm him and from no deep-rooted malice against her sister, \footnote{3)} Wolfram himself steps in and for the first time comments on her behaviour. His intervention is perfectly timed, for by now Obie has wrought considerable harm and with her attack on the innocent and noble Gawan, a constantly sympathetic figure, she now runs the risk of losing any sympathy which may remain to her. In thirty lines

1. 347,16-18.
3. In limiting the quarrelling between the sisters (see Mergell: W.von E., II, p.255) Wolfram has succeeded in showing that the comparison between Gawan and Meljanz is at the root of it, that the quarrel is isolated and caused by Obie's present mood, whereas in Chretien one has the impression of permanent hostility.
he excuses the behaviour of Obie and Meljanz as the product of a very great love. From the space and the care which he expends on it, it is clearly central to his view of Obie.

Obie und Meljanz,
ir zweier minne was só ganz
und stuont mit solhen triuwen,
sín zorn iuch solde riuen. 1)

More than of Meljanz, Wolfram seeks to explain the various aspects of Obie's behaviour. 2) Her grief turned to anger and this she has vented on Gawan and Obilot:

daz er mit zornne von ir reit:
des gab ir trüren solhes leit
daz ir kiusche wart gein zornne balt.
unschuldeo Gâwân des enkalt,
und ander diez mit ir dâ liten. 5)

In her anger she has neglected her composure as a woman:

si kom dicke ûz fruwenlichen siten: 4)
sus flaht ir kiusche sich in zorn.

In her desire for the supremacy of her lover, she has been jealous of any rivals:

ez was ir bâder ougen dorn,
swa si den werden man gesach:
ir herze Meljânze jach,
er müest vor ûz der höste ñin. 5)

Finally he gives the simple instruction:

nune wîetz Obiên niht. 6)

This defence of Obie 7) prepares the way for the end of the affair, when

1. 365,11-14.
2. This is partly because Obie has been shown, in the quarrel with Obilot and the accusations of Gawan, as a foolish and very troublesome woman, and an explanation is certainly needed, and partly because Wolfram has too high an opinion of woman to allow this very bad impression to stand undefended.
3. 365, 15-19.
5. 365, 22-25.
6. 366,2.
7. In some ways is is reminiscent of his later defence of Orgeluse, see p.294.
Obie is reunited with Meljanz. In the meantime, Wolfram turns his attention to Obilot and her relationship with Gawan, but he has succeeded in these lines in explaining Obie's behaviour, and in attributing her actions to the power of her love, he raises her above accusations of malice and wickedness. He shows how it is possible for him to allow a happy outcome, and he paves the way for the moment at the end of Book VII, when he can say:

\[ \text{d}a\text{ meistert frou minne} \\
\text{mit ir krefteclichem sinne,} \\
\text{und herzenlichiu triuwe,} \\
\text{der zweier liebe al niuwe.} \]

The power of love which hitherto has governed their separate actions now brings them together again. Obie's gesture in taking the hand of Meljanz suggests this coming together and in kissing the wound she makes amends for the wrong she has inflicted on him. In these last moments which close the story, Obie is shown transformed by love and humble repentance. Now, at last, she shows some affinity with Wolfram's great heroines. Moreover, she stands, not as in Chrétiens, in stolid opposition to her younger sister: rather does she come nearer to Obilot, for whom only recently Meljanz has prophesied the crown of womanly goodness. It is too early to speak of her, as B.Q. Morgan does, as 'a truly noble woman', but at least Wolfram has shown her to possess those qualities which will lead her to the state of pure womanhood already apparent in her young sister.

1. See p.140ff.
2. 396,21-24.
3. It is surely an aspect of humility which allows her to kiss Meljanz before the large crowd, when even Wolfram asks (397,1): "Wer macht si vor der diet sō balt?" M.F. Richey (Studies of W. von B.p.119) remarks: "Then Obie's reserve breaks down, and she shows herself true woman".
4. See p. 244.
There can be little doubt that Wolfram found himself in a difficult situation when he came to his version of Chrétien's adventure of Gawan and the lady of the castle. Aware though he was of the failings of some women, Wolfram was nevertheless striving to depict and to create figures who conformed to his high ideal of womanhood. What he found in Chrétien's unnamed figure, the predecessor of his own Antikonie, was a woman behaving in a most unbecoming manner, a far-cry from the purity and reserve of Jeschute, Liaze, Belakane, Condwiramurs. The incident of Le Conte del Graal is aptly and not unjustly given by B.Q. Morgan:

"Chrétien makes Gauvain, an utter stranger, enter a castle, make love to its mistress and succeed in his suit; all within eighteen lines!" Apart from the fact that the incident thus narrated detracts considerably from the nobility of Gauvain, it also places the lady in an exceedingly bad light. She offers no resistance to the rash and uncourtly advances of Gauvain; in fact, she encourages him from the moment of his entry. She offers no opposition when he almost immediately begins to make love to her.

On another occasion Wolfram had encountered a similar problem. Chrétien's Blancheflor also behaved in a forward, unbecoming manner,

1. See, for example, 116, 5ff; 257, 28ff.
2. op. cit. p.193.
4. ibid. 5827ff.
and for Wolfram this represented a more serious problem, since his concept of the nature of Parzival's wife is such a powerful element in the whole work. In that case he solved the problem by a tremendous re-conception of the character in accordance with his re-conception of the whole work: Condwiramurs belongs to Parzival, Blancheflor to Le Conte del Graal. Such treatment was not warranted in the case of Antikonie, a relatively minor character, nor could he change her behaviour to any extent without changing the entire episode. Torn between loyalty to his source and loyalty to his ideals of noble womanhood, Wolfram selected a compromise.

Even so, the figure of Antikonie is in many ways a disturbing one, but there are indications that Wolfram himself found her and the whole episode disturbing. Perhaps his hesitation to continue with the story, once he has embarked on it, is not a narrative device, to tantalize his readers, but a genuine indication of his distaste for what he is about to relate:

\[ \text{welt ir, noch swigm ich grôzer nôt.} \]
\[ \text{nein, ich wilz iu furbaz sagen. 1)} \]

He is at pains, moreover, to stress the virtue of Antikonie before Gawain meets her:

\[ \text{sol wîplîch ère sin gewin,} \]
\[ \text{des koufes het si vil gepflegen} \]
\[ \text{und alles valsches sich bewegen:} \]
\[ \text{dâ mite ir kausche près erwarf. 2)} \]

Where Chrétien had concerned himself with the lady's physical beauty, Wolfram endeavours to couple beauty with virtue in his description of Antikonie. Yet there is something strangely evasive in his manner of

1. 403, 10-11.
2. 404, 24-27.
describing her:

was si schöen, daz stuont ir wol:
unt hete si dar zuo rehten muot,
daz was gein werdekeit ir guot; 1)

In the wish he expresses, that Heinrich von Veldeke were still alive to sing the praises of Antikonie, 2) is contained surely an indication of his own dislike of the task:

der kunde se baz gelobet hän, 3)

says Wolfram, with a suggestion that he himself is unable to praise her greatly, since it goes against his custom and desire to utter false praise, or, on the other hand, to speak ill of a lady. Kinzel is surely right in finding the key to Wolfram's attitude towards her in the lines

swar ich rede kër ze guote,
diu bedarf wol zühte huote. 4)

Thus Wolfram explains a certain reticence in his praise of Antikonie. Nevertheless, four lines in particular remain strangely contradictory to the behaviour of Antikonie as Wolfram shows it:

1. 403, 26-28.
2. 404, 28-30.
3. 404, 30.
4. 404, 9-10. Kinzel ("Beiträge zur Erklärung und Beurteilung des Parzival", p.364) interprets the words 'zühte huote' as 'die achtsame behütung ihres durch erziehung gewonnenen feinen benehmens'. Martin, on the other hand (Kommentar, 404,7ff) suggests as a translation of the two lines: "wo ich lobe, da muß diese (Rede) unter der Obhut der Zucht stehen- muß (so)rein aufgenommen werden (als ich sie ausspreche)". A more satisfactory interpretation seems to be that of H. Mustard and C. Passage (Parzival, translated into English, New York, 1961) who translate: "and wherever I bestow a good word it must have the guarantee of good breeding". This does not, however, contradict the statement of Kinzel: "So ist es klar, daß ein solches, uneingeschränktes Lob der Antikonie nicht zu teil werden kann".
Following immediately on these lines, however, is his lament that Heinrich von Veldeke should not still be alive to praise her, and the very juxtaposition suggests Wolfram's feeling that he has already been untrue to himself in attributing womanly honour and purity to one in whom it will be shown to be lacking.

Certainly in the early part of the account, Antikonie behaves with a lack of reserve unexpected in the woman who has just received such deliberate praise. It is true that she is not so forward as her counterpart in Le Conte del Graal. Wolfram has made the incident a little more acceptable by lengthening his account, allowing the relationship between Gawan and Antikonie to develop more gradually and so improving on the impression in Chrétien of a spontaneous and most distasteful attraction, in which Gawan demands love and the lady gives it without hesitation. Antikonie is a little more reserved: she attempts to prevent his advances, yet, even so, one questions the earnestness of her objections.

1. 404, 24-27.
2. Nevertheless, her words of greeting to Gawan, for example, are deliberately capable of misinterpretation: 404, 5-14. They contain more than the welcome of a hostess. As Kinzel observes ("Beiträge zur Erklärung und Beurteilung des Parzival", p.360): "... immerhin tritt uns Antikonie hier als ein keckes and nicht eben sehr sprödes frauenzimmer entgegen".
3. In his desire to uphold her, B.Q. Morgan (op. cit. p.194) attributes more virtue to Antikonie than she in fact possesses: "Chrétien makes her yield without the least hesitation. Not so Wolfram. A virtuous woman, and Antikonie is that, is not so ready to give her love. She objects, temporizes, puts Gawan off." This seems an over-generous interpretation of 405, 26ff.
Already with their kiss of greeting they have gone beyond the relationship of hostess and guest:

da ergienc ein kus ungastlich.¹)

and Antikonie has shown little sign of objecting to it. Nor does she, the lady of the castle with the servants at her command, protest when they find occupations elsewhere and leave her alone with Gawan.²) The attraction is a mutual one and the intrusion of the knight is a disappointment to both of them.³)

von der liebe alsölhe nöt gewan
beidu magt und ouch der man,
daz dà nach was ein dinc geschehen,
hetenz übel ougen niht ersehen.
des willn si bède wärn bereit: ⁴)

So far, then, Wolfram has done his best with a situation which was far from his taste, but which he could not omit in fairness to his source. Antikonie appears as a rather bold woman, whose undeniable beauty⁵) has captivated Gawan, and whose lack of reserve has encouraged his advances. In choosing to relate the incident at all, Wolfram was forced to adopt the character of the heroine, since it was this which decided the course of events. Thus all he could do was make these events a little more credible: he makes Antikonie behave with rather more restraint and shows the love to develop more gradually, even

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1. 405, 21. A kiss was the normal greeting of a hostess to her guests. Among many examples, see Gahmuret and the wife of the governor, 20, 24ff; Gahmuret and Belakane, 23,30; Parzival and Condwirarmurs, 187,2; also 630, 24ff; 724, 10. See also K. Weinhold: Die deutschen Frauen im Mittelalter, Vienna, 1882, II p.196.


3. Again, however, B. Q. Morgan (op. cit. p.194) seeks to remove the blame from Antikonie, when he says: "But he (Gawan) has the man's advantage of strength, and is about to employ it when he is discovered". The text does not indicate much opposition from Antikonie.


5. Her beauty has been mentioned on several occasions: 402,22-23;403,26; 405, 19.
though the very words of Vergulaht,\(^1\) commending Gawan to his sister's care, anticipate the relationship, and the first kiss which passes between them bears witness to a mutual attraction already present.

In the remainder of the account, however, Wolfram is clearly striving to place Antikonie in a better light. He cannot excuse her former behaviour as he did Obie's,\(^2\) but at least he can attempt to lead his audience to a kinder view of her. Her loyalty to Gawan is a powerful redeeming factor. Whereas, in Chrétien's version, the servant accuses her of embracing the man who killed her father and continues for more than twenty lines\(^3\) to upbraid her, Wolfram does not permit such accusations of Antikonie. In a brief, much more realistic, exclamation, the white knight points to Gawan as the murderer of the king and the assailant of his daughter.\(^4\) Antikonie is not implicated in the accusation and yet she remains with Gawan to aid him. She does not hesitate to run with him to the tower, and it is she who finds the chess-set and she who hurls the pieces at the crowd below:

\[ez wære künec oder roch,\]
\[daz warf si gein den vînden doch:\]
\[ez wære gröz und swære.\]
\[man sagt von ir diu mære,\]
\[Swen dâ erreichte ir wurfes swanc,\]

\(^1\) 402, 21-30, especially: deiswâr so muoz si sich bewegen\n\[daz se iwer unz an mich sol pflegen.\]
\[ich kum iu schierre dann ich sol:\]
\[ouch erbeit ir mîn vil wol,\]
\[geschet ir die swester mîn:\]
\[irn ruocht, wolt ich noch lenger sîn.\]

\(^2\) Obie was angry and foolish, but she did not lose her feminine virtue of pure reserve, and this is all-important to Wolfram.

\(^3\) Le Conte del Graal: ed. cit. 5840-5865.

\(^4\) 407, 16-19.
It is true that the comparison with the merchant-women scarcely suggests dignity, but Antikonie is acting for the sake of expedience with no thought for dignity or for what is becoming. Again Wolfram defends Antikonie, for her action is motivated by love for Gawan:

swa harnaschrâmec wirt ein wîp,
diu hât ir rehts vergezzen,
sol man ir kiusche mezzen,
sine tuoz dan durch ir triuwe.

Wolfram's final proof of the sincerity of her love comes surely with the tears she sheds:

in strît aifsère weinde:
wol si daz bescheinde,
daz friwentlich liebe ist stæte.

There can be little doubt now that Wolfram means to place Antikonie in a new light, redeemed by her love for Gawan, though previously she revealed this without regard even for conventional restraint. Although

1. 408, 2 9-409, 9.
2. Martin (Kommentar, 409,6) says of the 'koufwîp': "auf sie blickte die ritterliche Gesellschaft verächtlichnieder". Wolfram is clearly intent on suggesting the abandoned vigour of the attack.
3. 409,12-15. One is reminded perhaps of Gyburc, with upraised sword and arrayed for battle (see Wh. 227, 12ff. and above, p.130 ). Antikonie comes nowhere near Gybürç in other respects, yet the likeness here is interesting. Wolfram clearly has no objection to displays of militant action in women, provided that the cause is a worthy one.
4. 409, 19-2 l. Tears are often Wolfram's proof of noble womanhood. See, for example, Belakane, Jeschute, Cunneware, Orgeluse, Obie.
he is indebted, for the actual idea of the chess-set battle, to Chrétien, 1) Wolfram has certainly used it with a new significance, finding it the means to raise Antikonie above the level of a shameless coquette.

To Chrétien's account Wolfram adds the inspiration which Antikonie gives to Gawan in the battle:

\[ \text{Gawânen wac vil ringe} \\
\text{vînde haz, swenn er die magt erkôs;} \\
\text{dà von ir vil den lîp verlôs.} \]

He gains strength from her physical beauty:

\[ \text{swenne im diu muoze geschach,} \\
\text{daz er die maget reht ersach;} \\
\text{ir munt, ir ougen, unde ir nasfen.} \]

Thus does Antikonie aid and defend Gawan physically and sensually, in accordance with the nature of their relationship. She shows physical courage in this defence, and in her subsequent vindication of Gawan before her brother she shows a mastery of language and an ability to turn the facts, in order to supply a satisfactory explanation:

\[ \text{dô was ich âne wer ein magt,} \\
\text{wan daz ich truoc doch einen schilt,} \\
\text{ûf den ist werdekeit gezilt:} \\
\text{des wâpen sol ich nennen,} \\
\text{ob ir ruochet diu bekennen.} \\
\text{guot gebærde und kiuscher site,} \\
\text{den zwein vont vil stàte mite,} \\
\text{den bôt ich für den ritter mîn,} \\
\text{den ir mir sandet dà her ìn.} \]

1. LecC. del G., ed. cit. 5886ff.
2. 410, 10-12. In the same way, though on a more spiritual level, Gondwiramurs and Sekundille aid Parzival and Feirefiz.
3. 409, 23-25.
Only after all the arguing and conferences regarding Gawan's fate and the decision to let him free for the sake of Antikonie, does Wolfram allow himself to praise her with real enthusiasm:

mit lobe wir solden grüezen
die kiuschen unt die süezen
Antikonien,
vor valscheit die vrīen.
wan si lebte in solhen siten,
daz ninder was underriten
ir prīs mit valschen worten. 2)

Possibly one feels that this is unnecessarily enthusiastic in view of the total lack in Antikonie of that womanly purity and restraint which Wolfram is known to regard so highly. Clearly he sees her love and loyalty towards Gawan as a redeeming factor, and this is demonstrated by the fact that he is reserved in his praise of her until she has proved her love by her devotion to Gawan during the battle and later in her defence of him. 3) It is now that Wolfram talks of her as 'vor valscheit diu vriē', 4) 'diu juncfrouwe wert', 5) and 'diu süeze swelden rîche'. 6) It does not offend Wolfram's taste or his sense of what is fitting to praise Antikonie now that a new aspect of her nature has been revealed. 7)

Karl Kinzel is right when he says of Antikonie 8): "zurückhaltung

1. 42 5,29-30.
2. 427,5-11.
3. Such praise as 404, 2 lff. is fairly conventional, to be taken not as a serious appraisal of her, but rather as a gesture towards a lady now introduced. Other than this, there is the praise in 404, 24ff., the sincerity of which is rather doubtful, in view of the lines immediately following, see p.276.
4. 413, 2.
5. 414, 13.
6. 427, 19.
7. cf. also H. Sacker (op. cit. p.85): He compares Antikonie with Sigune and says: "by standing by her lover in his hour of need, she has demonstrated that, as far as is required of her, she too is constant."
It seems, however, rather strained when he goes on to justify Wolfram's use of the word 'kiusche' in relation to Antikonie in line 404, 27. 1) Much as one would like to find an element of womanly modesty in Antikonie, her behaviour provides little reason to do so. Moreover, in these lines, Wolfram is talking of her reputation, and there is the chance of a discrepancy between reputation and reality. A final possibility remains, that the audience is meant to see in Antikonie a woman, otherwise modest and pure, but captivated by the charms of Gawan, who is known to be a noble and gallant knight. 2) He, in his turn, is attracted by her tremendous beauty. 3) Wolfram allows Antikonie and Gawan to part sorrowfully, a final indication of the love between them. 4) At the end, then, one has the feeling that Wolfram's sympathy is with the couple who love one another sincerely and yet must part. Such sympathy is possible, however, only because he has contrived to show both of them somewhat ennobled by the

1. "Beiträge....", p.364: ".... der dichter meint also vielleicht: wahre echte 'kiusche' (im umfassenden sinne von der weiblichen zuränkhaltung, oder gar im engsten geschlechtlichen sinne) hat sie zwar nicht, aber sie wa|wenigstens ein weib von redlicher gesinnung, nach dieser seite hin zeigte sich ihre 'kiusche'."

2. This is the view of B.Q. Morgan (op. cit. p.194) who says: "His very boldness has captivated her, and her scruples were gone in a moment of unreasoning passion."

3. Again, a view held by B.Q. Morgan (ibid. p.195):"And Wolfram does not forget to mention her beauty again; he realizes that this allöne can explain the whole episode". It is true that Gawan is attracted by her beauty, but this is in itself not sufficient explanation of the incident, and it certainly is not a justification of this Wolfram is aware, hence his discomfor6.

4. 432, 2-6.
battle in the tower, when their mutual love was apparent and a decisive factor. Nevertheless, the figure of Antikonie is always marred by her bold reception of Gawan and her unbecoming readiness to accept his love. Gawan is seen in this episode to behave in an uncourteous manner, allowing his attraction towards Antikonie to destroy his habitual gallantry. He, however, has an established reputation as a knight and is able still to prove himself worthy of it, in his love for Orgeluse and his subsequent noble actions. The situation is rather more serious with Antikonie, for this is her only appearance and, despite Wolfram's efforts to redeem her, the memory of her is not an entirely pleasant one.

One wonders what purpose Wolfram found in accepting an incident which detracted thus from his noble Gawan and forced him to include a woman who falls beneath his concept of noble womanhood. Apart from loyalty to his source and a reluctance perhaps to discard what is, after all, an entertaining story, the relationship of Gawan and Antikonie is essential in the structure of the work. The story of Parzival shows a three-fold development in Parzival's relationship with women, from Jeschute, through Liaze, to Condwiramurs. Similarly, Antikonie supplies the link in Gawan's adventures between Obilot, whom he serves with no hope of reward, and Orgeluse whom he serves and from whom he eventually receives the reward of love and marriage. In the case of Obilot, the courtly convention of service for favour is all-important, for a relationship of love is impossible. With Antikonie there exists mutual love which disregards the conventions. Only in

1. See Mergell: W. von E. II pp266-267
Orgeluse do the two things combine. 1

The Antikonie-episode, then, is essential to this structure, and a more noble woman would have made the episode, as Wolfram needed to relate it, quite impossible. The best he can do is suggest, though one is inclined to doubt his conviction, that Antikonie is not accustomed to behave in this way, that a combination of circumstances leads her to forget her normal reserve and that she later redeems herself by the power of her love. In spite of all attempts to explain her behaviour, however, Antikonie remains a problematical character. There can be little doubt that she is more of a problem in *Parzival*, where Wolfram attempts to explain, excuse and redeem, by protracting the episode and thus placing more emphasis on her and the whole relationship, than in *Le Conte del Graal*, where the incident passes by without particular note, apparently presenting no difficulty to Chrétien, who had not Wolfram's consistently elevated view of womanhood.

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2. The attractions of Gawan, the fact that her brother has entrusted him to her care and the absence of servants.
Orgeluse

Orgeluse is a strange and puzzling figure. She cannot be classed, with Herzeloyde, Sigune and Condwiramurs, among Wolfram's ideal women, yet she is a woman of tremendous personality, who for a time dominates the work. She does not possess the serene virtue of her fellow heroines in Parzival, and only in her activity does she resemble the saintly Gyburc. Much of what she does is reprehensible, in fact, were it not for Wolfram's explicit^ instruction to his readers not to criticise her behaviour. As he does with Obie, Wolfram here takes from his source a character who is very far from perfect, and, without changing her behaviour to any extent, he supplies a motive for it and so, showing it in a new light, he raises the character above criticism. In the case of Orgeluse he does more, too, for he endows her with a new significance in the whole work and allows her to transcend the relatively small rôle which Chrétien gave to her. Dr Richey saw clearly the truth of Orgeluse when she spoke of her as 'the superb and infinitely subtle Orgeluse, with her queenly arrogance and deep-hidden springs of passion.'

To see Orgeluse as 'infinitely subtle' is surely to see her as Wolfram saw her. In Chrétien's proud and spiteful woman he perceived the potentials of a tragic figure, and he sought to motivate her behaviour by supplying the details of her tragedy. And it is not only a personal tragedy which he gives to her, in the death of Cidegast, but, in the ill-fated love for Anfortas, he unites her sorrow with that of

1. 516, 3ff. See p.294 for further discussion.
2. Studies of W. von E. p.95
3. These are not, of course, present in Le Conte del Graal.
the Graal Family and links her with the wider issue of the work. Thus from her limited role in Le Conte del Graal, she becomes in Parzival the woman who not only dominates the Gawan-action, but also is responsible for the downfall of Anfortas and must share in the grief of the Graal Family. Her role is thus integrated into the whole work and her significance is heightened by the new complexity which Wolfram gives to her.

Some among Wolfram's heroines develop with years and experience; new aspects of the character of others are revealed as their story progresses; some, like Repanse de Schoye, Cundrie and Ampflise, are enigmatic figures, where Wolfram's technique of characterization is one of implication and a gradual building-up of a picture. Only to Orgeluse is given the particular subtlety of a strange and complex past, coupled with a depth of passion which can hate as powerfully as it can love. In this very aspect Orgeluse stands apart from the other women characters in Parzival, for only in her does Wolfram reveal the power of hate, and only in her does he show how a tremendous love can lead to a tremendous desire for revenge. The other women, no less individual, possess equally deep emotions, but these reveal themselves in the constancy of Condwiramurs, the heart-break of Herzeloyde, the steadfast devotion of Sigune. These are passive manifestations of emotion, and even the active defence of Orange by Gyburc is not really comparable with the vigorous and persistent striving for revenge of Orgeluse. Once more, Dr Richey is

1. Although one has to judge from the work in its unfinished state, it seems fair to assume that l'Orgueilleuse was never to gain greater significance than that of the central female figure in the Gauvain episodes.
2. Herzeloyde, Sigune, for example.
3. Belakane, Gyburc, Condwiramurs, for example.
surely right when she says of Orgeluse: "In her hunger for revenge one sees the possibility of the same kind of tragic grandeur as in Kriemhild, but with this difference, that the possibility lies only in herself, and is not borne out in her environment". This is certainly closer to the truth than the final assessment of Orgeluse by B.Q. Morgan: "But withal she remains a thoroughly worldly beauty, a coquette, and so makes a good mate for Gawan, the model of a successful but far from high-souled warrior and man of the world." Such a view of Orgeluse disregards completely the subtleties of her character which is essential to an understanding of her, for it takes into account only the superficial and ignores the depths which Wolfram has been at pains to uncover. It is the depths which provide the key to the full understanding of what is on the surface, and only a view of Orgeluse which considers both the surface and what is beneath it can do justice to Wolfram's conception of her.

There is altogether a certain duality in the character of Orgeluse. It is reflected in this basic discrepancy between the superficial view of her and the deeper view, achieved by Wolfram's addition of a history which provides motivation and explanation of her behaviour. It is present in the duality of passions within her, in love which can lead to hatred and revenge, in contempt which can be replaced by love. Wolfram's first words about Orgeluse suggest a dichotomy, for she is to

2. Op. cit. p.198. In fairness to him, however, it must be remembered that in this article, he discusses Parzival only so far as it has a parallel in Le Conte del Graal. He takes no account, therefore, of Wolfram's addition of the relationship of Orgeluse with Anfortas. Nevertheless, his view of her can hardly be said to do justice to Wolfram's concept of her.
be both joy and sorrow to Gawan:

\[
\text{da ersaher niderhalben sin^s \hspace{0.5em} 1) \hspace{1.0em} freude und\hspace{0.5em} ^s\hspace{0.5em} \text{herszehn p\hspace{0.5em} 1)}
\]

The old knight later warns Gawan and speaks also of the contrasting elements in Orgeluse:

\[
\text{wan diu ist b\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{d}er s\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}}ze al s\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{u}r,} \hspace{0.5em} 2) \hspace{1.0em} reht als ein sunnenblicker schur.}}
\]

Wolfram himself echoes these words, when he speaks of her as

\[
\text{ougen s\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}ze unt s\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{u}r dem herzen b\hspace{0.5em} 3)}}
\]

Nor is Gawan himself unaware of the juxtaposition in Orgeluse of the power to do good and the power to do evil:

\[
\text{diu mir diz ungemach gebot,} \\
\text{diu kan wol s\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}ze siuren} \hspace{0.5em} unt dem herzen freude machen riche:}
\]

His words are, however, closer to an expression of the paradox of courtly love, that the lady has the opportunity to bestow her favour and so bring about great joy, but equally to refuse it and so bring about great sorrow.

This is particularly true also of Gawan's later lament:

\[
\text{muoz ich \\text{\text{a}ne helfe doln} \hspace{0.5em} 5) } \\
\text{n\hspace{0.5em}\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{\text{a}ch minne alsdihe riuwe?} } \\
\text{si sol mir freude m\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{eran,} } \\
\text{diu mich kan sus vers\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}ren.)}}
\]

---

1. 508, 15-16
2. 514, 19-20
3. 531, 26. Compare also Arnire's description of her as 's\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}nger ougen senfite, sherzen dorn.' (600, 10).
4. 547, 14-16.
5. 547, 26-30. Compare, for example, Reinmar von Hagenau:

\[
\text{Si ist mir liep, und dunket mich} \\
\text{daz ich ir vollecl\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}che gar umm\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{a}re si.} \hspace{1.0em} nu waz dar umbe? daz li\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{d} ich,} \hspace{1.0em}} \\
\text{und bin ir doch mit triuwen st\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}tecl\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{f}chen b\hspace{0.5em} 1.} \hspace{1.0em} waz obe ein wunder l\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{h}te an mir geschiht,} \hspace{1.0em} daz si mich eteswenne gerne siht?}
\]


or Friderich von Husen:

\[
\text{Nieman sol mir daz versl\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{a}n,} \hspace{1.0em}} \\
\text{sine möhte mich vor eine \hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{a}re} \hspace{1.0em} von sorgen wol erl\hspace{0.5em} \text{\text{e}set han,} \hspace{1.0em}} \\
\text{ob ez der schoenen wille wäre. (MF, 45, 28-31)}
\]
Wolfram is deeply conscious of the incongruity of the great beauty of Orgeluse and the wrong which she does. He stresses her beauty throughout, from the moment when Gawan encounters her for the first time. The impact of the meeting is a powerful one. She is suddenly present before Gawan as he rides along a road, and there is in Wolfram's description the static quality of a painting, a beautiful woman in a beautiful natural setting:

\[
\begin{align*}
ein \, \text{brune} \, \hat{\text{uz}} \text{en} \, \text{velse} \, \text{schoz}: \\
d\hat{\text{â}} \, \text{vander}, \, \text{des} \, \text{in} \, \text{niht} \, \text{verdrôz}, \\
ein \, \text{also} \, \text{clâre} \, \text{frouwen}, \\
d\hat{\text{ier}} \, \text{gerne} \, \text{muose} \, \text{schouwen}. \\
\text{aller} \, \hat{\text{wîbes}} \, \text{varwe} \, \text{ein} \, \beâ \, \text{flûrs}. \\
\hat{\text{ân}} \, \text{Condwîrn} \, \hat{\text{âmûrs}} \\
\text{wart} \, \text{nie geborn} \, \text{so} \, \hat{\text{schœner}} \, \hat{\text{lîp}}. 
\end{align*}
\]

Possibly it is the choice of verb which sets the tone of the meeting: Gawan 'found' her, almost as though she were waiting for him, and the word suggests, more than that he saw her, that he was in some way fulfilling his destiny. The action pauses for a moment while Wolfram describes the beautiful woman, and in this way he manages to convey the powerful impression which she makes on Gawan, who seems almost to stop short in his amazement and admiration. No greater praise could Wolfram offer than that only Condwiramurs exceeds her in beauty. This first impression is a powerful one, for the reader as well as for Gawan. It accompanies the subsequent action, supplying ample justification for Gawan's persistent devotion to Orgeluse, despite her treatment of him.

1. The preceding lines refer to the setting. As in Chretien's version, she is sitting by a spring, but although in the French version this may well have indicated the fairy-like nature of the lady, there seems little reason to think that this was Wolfram's suggestion. Orgeluse is essentially human, and even her alliance with Clinschor is motivated, so that she is not personally in possession of magic powers.

2. 508, 17-23.

3. 508, 22-23. See below for significance of the comparison.
and explaining the influence which she wields over so many knights, among them the noble and ill-fated Anfortas. Moreover, since it is Wolfram's custom to house virtue in external beauty,\(^1\) the extraordinary beauty of Orgeluse surely points to her essential goodness and points forward to the time when this will be revealed.\(^2\) Yet even this description contains an ominous indication of what is to come:

\[\text{och sagt uns d'\'aventiure von ir,} \quad \text{\textquoteleft si waren ein reizel minnen gir.}\]

With his use of the word 'reizel',\(^4\) Wolfram suggests Orgeluse's power to lure men by her beauty and bring them to grief.

Wolfram has improved on the spiteful rudeness of Chrétien's l'Orgueil-\'elleuse, who greeted Gauvain with a flood of abuse.\(^5\) It is Gawan, ever courtly, who greets her and speaks first, giving expression to the impact she has made on him.\(^6\) Her first words are a curt and arrogant response:

\[\text{\textquoteleft deist et wol: nu weiz ich ouch daz.}\]

Her words are a denial of her great beauty, and Wolfram is aware of the incongruity when he observes:

\[\text{ir s\'\'ezer munt m\'er dannoch sprach.}\]

He uses the same expression on other occasions,\(^9\) conscious of the irony,

---

1. Cundrie is the one exception to this, see p.226.
2. In particular the comparison with Condwiramurs does so.
4. cf. Lexer: Mittelhochdeutsches Wörterbuch: reizel: 'reizmittel, lockspeise, bes. die im vogelkloben angebrachte.'
5. Le Conte del Graal, ed. cit. 668ff.
6. 509, 1ff.
7. 509, 10.
8. 509, 12.
9. cf. 515, 12; 523, 5.
that such sweet lips should utter words which are far from sweet. However, with the memory of the other occasions on which Wolfram has drawn particular attention to the lips of women and intended thereby to convey the impression of truth and loyalty and womanly virtue,\(^1\) comes perhaps the suggestion here that Wolfram is drawing attention to the incongruity in order to hint that this is not the true nature of Orgeluse, that her words belie the lips which utter them and the heart which conceives them.

During the early part of the relationship between Gawan and Orgeluse, however, the reader is not provided with a key to the behaviour of Orgeluse, and he can only judge it as he sees it. She is no less arrogant than her counterpart in \textit{Le Conte del Graal},\(^2\) and no less cruel in her treatment of Gawan. Yet she possesses a great vitality and an active, if malicious, spirit, and at times Wolfram allows her to display a certain humour, though this is often sadistic. She is delighted to see Gawan puzzling how best to dispose of his own horse while he fetches hers.\(^3\) She laughs openly at the pain and discomfort of Gawan and Malcreatiure,\(^4\) and she laughs again at Gawan's grief and embarrassment when the knight goes off on his fine steed and leaves him with the nag.\(^5\) She treats him with such disdain that one wonders why Gawan persists in his devotion to her,

\begin{enumerate}
\item cf., among other examples, Jeschute, 130, 5; the daughters of the pilgrim, 449, 28; Condwiramurs, 187, 3; Liaze, 176, 10. With the description of Antikonie's mouth (405, 19) as 'heiz, dick unde rot', Wolfram implies also a sensuality which is not present in his other description, nor here in that of Orgeluse, see p. 277.
\item See, for example, the way she refuses to hold Gawan's bridle where his hands have touched it (512, 16ff.) and refuses to allow him to help her into the saddle (515, 24ff.)
\item 512, 1ff.
\item 521 15ff.
\item 523, 1ff.
\end{enumerate}
yet Wolfram has given to his Orgeluse a tremendous attraction which far exceeds that of Chrétien's l'Orgueilleuse. The earlier figure was a rude and arrogant woman, ruthless in her treatment of the amorous Gauvain and quite without the vitality of personality which is so evident in Orgeluse.1) The great beauty of Orgeluse is her immediate attraction for Gawan, but he is clearly also attracted by her strength of character and the spirit she displays, even though she does so in a capricious and sometimes malicious manner. It is obvious that Gawan sees in her a woman who, though hard to win, would be worth the strife. She herself points to the standard of service which she demands when she says:

\[ \text{min dienst bedarf decheines zagn.} \] 2)

She tries repeatedly to put Gawan off, to deter him from his resolution to serve her, suggesting that love for her will bring peril and little reward.3) Yet despite her own warnings and her total lack of encouragement, as well as the sad and ominous warnings of the people,4) Gawan is not deterred. He is a knight of noble reputation, fearless and brave, and he is also the eternal lover,5) who has now met the great love of his life.6) From the moment he sees Orgeluse he loves her, and he becomes so captivated by her that threats and warnings, rejection and contempt, are all in vain. The proud determination of Orgeluse is matched by that of Gawan, and she

---

1. B.Q. Morgan (op. cit, p.196), speaking of l'Orgueilleuse, says: "Nowhere is there a single pleasing trait of character, and Gauvain's devotion is quite inexplicable."
2. 511, 20.
3. 510, 2ff; 511, 4ff; 512, 12.
4. 513, 1ff; 514, 1ff.
5. cf. his gallant service of Obilot, and the ease with which he falls in love with Antikonie.
6. This Wolfram himself says: 582, 57.
can invent no test which he will refuse to undertake, and none in which he will fail.\(^1\) Gawan looks forward in the hope of reward, firmly believing that Orgeluse's contempt will turn to love:

\[
\text{er sprach: 'ist iu nu zornes gâch, dâ hœrt iedoch genâde nâch.} \quad 2)
\]

Nor is Orgeluse slow to recognize true worth and, as she becomes more closely acquainted with Gawan, a new respect begins to appear in her treatment of him, though for a long time she disguises it in the contempt which is in itself part of her method of trying his worth. When she mocks at Gawan's horseless state, there is surely a trace of admiration in her words:

\[
\text{'für einen rîter ich iuch sach:} \\
\text{dar nâch in kurzen stunden} \\
\text{wurdt ir arzet für die wunden:} \\
\text{nu müezet ir ein garzûn wezn.} \\
\text{sol iemen siner kunst genesn,} \\
\text{sô troest iuch iwerre sinne . . .,} \quad 3)
\]

She has witnessed his compassion and versatility, and a woman of her resolute purpose cannot fail to be impressed by his perseverance in his efforts to gain her love. Her enquiry, whether he still desires her love, suggests a greater inclination on her part to accept his service. Soon after, when Gawan is faced with the problem of riding with his equipment

---

1. In the French version, on the other hand, Gauvain is reluctant to cross the river (ed. cit. 8487 ff) and does so only after l'Orgueilleuse has scorned his timidity. It is true that Gawan does match Orgeluse in strength of purpose at this point, although in general Dr Richey is probably right when she says (Studies of W. von E. p. 97): "She stands alone, and we realize the disproportion between her solitary strength and the purely spectacular roles of her fellow-actors . . ., and the brave and debonair Gawan, despite his prowess, is cast in too light a mould to sustain, in all seriousness, her task of vengeance."

2. 515, 17-18.
3. 523, 6-11.
4. 523, 12.
on the meagre nag left behind by Malcreatiure, Orgeluse again laughs and compares him to a merchant:  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{si sprach 'füert ir krängewant} \\
in mîme lande veile? \\
wer gap mir ze teile \\
einen arzet unde eins krâmes pflege? \\
hüet iuch vor zolle ûfem wege: \\
etesîch min zolnære \\
iuch sol machen frûuden laère.' 
\end{align*}
\]

On such occasions, though Orgeluse may speak with contempt and disregard for Gawan, one is aware of the wit and sparkling personality which captivate him and so many other knights. Hers is not the more laboured spite of l'Orgueilleuse, who lacks the grace and impelling vitality of Orgeluse.

Over all the actions of Orgeluse during the early part of her relationship with Gawan hangs the consciousness of her great beauty. The imprint of the first picture of her remains, and the beauty which redeems her in Gawan's estimation at all times serves also to soften her behaviour for the reader, even though he is conscious of the incongruity between her beauty and her words and actions. At an apt moment, Wolfram steps in to warn his readers not to judge Orgeluse without knowing the truth about her:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{swer nu des wil volgen mir,} \\
\text{der mîde valsche rede gein ir.} \\
\text{niemen sich verspreche,} \\
\text{ern wizze è waz er reche,} \\
\text{unz er gewinne küende} \\
\text{wiez umb ir herze stüende.} 
\end{align*}
\]

1. It is interesting that this is precisely Obie's insult to Gawan, too, (see p.265) but she is much more bitter than Orgeluse, whose words are softened by the wit with which she delivers them.
2. 531, 12-18.
3. cf. 531, 19ff; 591, 12ff; 601, 1ff.
4. Orgeluse has just (516, 2) expressed the wish that God should throw Gawan from his horse: clearly her malice is becoming too objectionable and she will soon lose the favour of the most tolerant reader.
5. He does this also in the case of Obie, see p.276ff. 6.516, 3-8.
He is emphatic when he says that anyone who wishes to follow him must remain silent and not criticize Orgeluse, the implication being that only those who are prepared to accept her behaviour at this point without complaint will discover the truth which he is to unfold. His reference to the state of her heart looks forward to the time when he will tell of her love for Cidegast and later for Anfortas. The defence of Orgeluse has been compared 1) with that of Obie, but there is a difference. In the case of Obie, Wolfram has already provided the explanation 2) of an overwhelming love which leads her to behave in this foolish and harmful way, and now he tells his readers not to blame her. Here he instructs his readers not to criticize Orgeluse, hinting at a revelation which is to come and which will explain her behaviour. Meanwhile, the reader 3) must watch Wolfram as she treats Gawan with contempt and cruel disregard for his obvious devotion. Yet somehow, with his skilful depiction of the beautiful and dynamic woman, combined now with his promise of a later explanation, Wolfram has managed to quell the indignation of the reader, who can watch patiently, in the firm belief that things are not as they seem, that all will be explained.

During his adventures at Schastel Merveil, Gawan is troubled, as well as by his wound and his great peril, by the loss of Orgeluse. He sees many lovely women, but none is comparable with her. 4) He suffers greatly because of his love and when he catches sight of Orgeluse in the magic pillar, his former passion is renewed in all its intensity:

1. by Wolfgang Mohr (op. cit. p. 17)
2. In his long speech (365, 1ff) about the strength of love, and particularly of the love of Obie and Meljanz, see p. 27ff.
3. Wolfram himself, too, since he says that he also could reproach her for her behaviour, but that he will control his anger: 516, 9-10.
4. 581, 30ff.
Still Orgelusé greets him with taunting words, but she shows some relaxation of her earlier pride when she allows him to ride with her.

This is the beginning of a softening in their relationship. She tells him that he may ask for her love if he fetches a wreath from the branch of a particular tree. Gawan agrees with delight and suddenly Wolfram remarks that the lovely flowers are nothing in comparison with the beauty of Orgelusé.

It is true that her beauty has been stressed throughout, but the impact of this particular comparison is a powerful one - perhaps because it comes so suddenly, perhaps because Wolfram rarely compares human beauty to the beauty of nature - and it seems to offer a sudden hope of a happy outcome. At last, and soon after this comparison, Orgelusé shows emotion, when she weeps to see Gawan fall:

\[
\text{der sprunc mit valle muoste sin.} \quad \text{6) des weinde iedoch diu herzogin.}
\]

1. 593, 7-18.
2. 598, 16ff.
3. Previously she has insisted that he should keep some distance away from her (515, 29). There is no such concession in Le Conte del Graal at this point, where l'Orgueilleuse still rides in front of Gauvain (ed. cit. 8449) cf. Mergell, pp. 290-291.
4. 600, 20ff. Again, Wolfram diverges from Chrétien, where the lady does not offer her love as reward for the deed: 8479ff. cf. Mergell W. von E- II p. 291
5. 601, 1ff.
This first display of emotion in the woman who has behaved with such
determined harshness prepares the way for all that is to come, for the
moment when she humbles herself before Gawan,\(^1\) and for the entire account
of her sad history.

On many occasions Wolfram shows tears to be the true sign of a noble
woman,\(^2\) and when he now allows Orgeluse to weep he gives an indication
that the defence which she has hitherto maintained is broken, that with
the coming of Gawan, who is willing and able to avenge the wrong done to
Cidegast, she no longer needs to deny her true virtue as a woman. When
Gawan returns, Orgeluse weeps once more as she kneels before him and begs
forgiveness for her past treatment of him:\(^3\)

\begin{verbatim}
  diu herzoginne riche.
  gein sînen fuozen si sich bôt:
  dô sprach si 'hôrre, solher nôt
  als ich hân an iuch gegert, 
  der wart nie min wirde wert.
  für wâr mir iwer arbeit
  füeget sôlich herzeleit,
  diu enpfâhen sol getriwez wîp
  umb ir Neben friundes lip.
\end{verbatim}

and

\begin{verbatim}
  gein swem sich krenket min sin,
  der solz durch zuht verkiesen. \(^5\)
\end{verbatim}

As they ride away together, she is weeping for her beloved Cidegast,\(^7\) and
even when, much later, she kisses Gramoflanz in sign of reconciliation,
Wolfram says of her:

---

1. See below.
2. See, for example, Jescute, Condwiramurs, Gyburg, Belakane, Obie.
3. This is not present in Le Conte del Graal either, where Chrétien
   makes no attempt to redeem l'Orgueilleuse.
4. 611, 22-30.
5. 612, 26-27.
6. 615, 22ff.
At this point, then, Wolfram interprets her desire to weep as true devotion and thus supplies the key to her nature, for her life has for a long time been led in devotion, though very different in its manifestation from that of Sigune.

Though Orgeluse loves Gawan, it is surely without the intensity with which he loves her. Her greatest love is for Cidegast. For him she has lived in the desire for revenge, and for him she mourns at the last. Of Cidegast himself little is known, save that he was loved by her and killed by the envious Gramoflanz. Her life lived in the hope of revenge and the tremendous tenacity and harshness which belie her great beauty are testimony in themselves of the power of her love for Cidegast. Added to this is her own praise of him:

Min clåre sœze beãs âmis,
sô durcliunhtic was sin prîs
mit rehter werdekeite ger,
ez wäre dirre oder der,
die mœtter ie gebâren
bî sîner zîte jâren,
die muosn im jehen werdekeit
die ander prîs nie ûberstreit.
er was ein quecprunne der tugent,
mit alsô berhafter jugent
bewart vor valscher pflichte. 3)

2. Orgeluse also weeps for joy when she learns that Anfortas will be released from his suffering (784, 4ff.) See below.
3. 613, 1-11.
She expresses, simply yet with profound sincerity, the love which existed between them when she says

\[ \text{ich was sin herze, er was min lip.} \quad 1) \]

The strength of the love she bore him was matched by her grief at his death:

\[ \text{des muoz mir jamer tasten} \\
\text{Inz herze, } \text{dâ diu freude lac} \\
\text{do ich Cidegastes minne pflac.} \quad 2) \]

Yet it is characteristic of Orgeluse that her grief takes expression in active hatred of the man who killed Cidegast and a relentless desire for revenge. The contrast with other bereaved women in Parzival is a striking one: Herzeloyde and Sigune withdraw into isolation and lonely grief, while of Belakane Wolfram says:

\[ \text{ir freude vant den dürren zwic,} \\
\text{als noch diu turteltûbe tuot.} \\
\text{diu het ie den selben muot:} \\
\text{swenne ir an trûtschsfeft gebrast,} \\
\text{ir triwe kôs den dürren ast.} \quad 3) \]

The difference in the reaction of Orgeluse is an emphatic one and altogether typical of the activity which distinguishes her from almost all 4) the other women characters, in whom a passive acceptance of life is an essential aspect of true and mature womanhood. 5) That Orgeluse does not conform in this respect to Wolfram's picture of ideal womanhood is interesting in his whole conception of Orgeluse. To some extent, of course, he was guided by his source, although with Chrétien's version

\[ 1. \ 613, \ 27. \]
\[ 2. \ 615, \ 30.- \ 616, \ 2. \]
\[ 3. \ 57, \ 10-14. \]
\[ 4. \ \text{One must qualify the 'all', in view of the very active nature of Cundrie, and above all of Gyburc.} \]
\[ 5. \ \text{Orgeluse's response to the death of Cidegast links her with Kriemhild (see above): Kriemhild's pact with Rüdiger, the condition she places on her marriage with Etzel, is paralleled to some extent by Orgeluse's constant search for a lover who will avenge the death of Cidegast.} \]
In its unfinished state the figure of l'Orgueilleuse was never developed, and Wolfram was free to develop it, as indeed he did, far beyond the original which was his inspiration. Possibly, however, he wished to distinguish the goal of Gawan's chivalry, Orgeluse, from that of Parzival's, Condwiramurs. The two knights are vastly different, the bold and gallant Gawan a much less complex figure than Parzival, whose story is one of failure and despair before he comes to success. Consequently, whereas Condwiramurs is a woman of great spiritual depth, serene and composed, Orgeluse is one of activity and ceaseless exertion. This is far from admitting, however, that she is the 'thoroughly worldly beauty' which B.Q. Morgan finds. Such a figure as a major female character would be quite unacceptable to Wolfram, who gave even to Antikonie a certain sensitivity and nobility at the last.

In giving to Orgeluse a wealth of sensitivity and deep-rooted passion while at the same time not detracting from her essential power of action, Wolfram created a figure who is indeed 'infinitely subtle' and who is also unique among his women characters. He has created a woman who transcends the role which he has given to her as the partner of Gawan, and, because she transcends it, Dr Richey can justly say: "She stands alone, and we realize the disproportion between her solitary strength and the purely spectacular roles of her fellow-actors." She is a woman, who, although she is akin to Gawan in courage and resolution, comes close in some aspects to Parzival himself. Like him, she lives

1. op. cit. p.198.
2. Gyburc presents herself, as she often does, as a possible comparison, but her activity is of a different kind.
in single-minded devotion to one aim, to avenge the death of Cidegast. 1)

The expression of the affinity between Parzival and Orgeluse comes with their meeting, which is mentioned only later and so given a remoteness which could not have been present in a meeting actually witnessed. She tells Gawan:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mânen lîp gesach nie man,} \\
\text{ine möhte wol sîns diëns hän;} \\
\text{wan einer, der truoc wâpen rôt.} \quad 2)
\end{align*}
\]

It is learned how Parzival, as intent on his single quest as she on hers, refused the love of the beautiful Orgeluse:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ich bôt im lant unt mânen lîp:} \\
\text{er sprach, er hete ein schoener wâp,} \\
\text{unt diu im lieber wäre.} \\
\text{diu rede was mir swære:} \\
\text{ich vraqete wer diu möhte sîn.} \\
\text{\'von Pelrapeir diu kûnegîn,} \\
\text{sus ist genant diu liëht gêmal:} \\
\text{sô heize ich selbe Parzivâl.} \\
\text{ichn wil iwer minne niht:} \\
\text{der grâl mir anders kumbers giht.} \quad 3)
\end{align*}
\]

Because it is remote from the present occasion, the encounter takes on a strange significance, for it was inevitable that Parzival should reject Orgeluse's offer, and yet it seems also inevitable that the two should have met during the course of their lonely and persistent quests. Related as it is so much later, it has lost much of the emotion which must have attended it at the time, and it now possesses a symbolic value, the coming together of two great forces which then went their separate and relentless ways. Orgeluse saw in Parzival, the greatest of all

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1. Dr Richey (Studies of W. von E. p.101) refers to Orgeluse as "the only one here endued with the same unswerving constancy of will" (i.e. as Parzival.)
2. 618, 19-21.
3. 619, 3ff.
knights, the only one to whom she ever offered her love, and the one who could have accomplished her task for her; and Parzival rejected her, intent on his quest for the Graal and loyal as ever to his wife. Yet the meeting remains a significant one, for it brings Orgeluse closer to the most important issue of the work, and it also brings her into close relation with Condwiramurs.\(^1\)

The comparison which Parzival has thus made of Orgeluse with his wife is reminiscent of the first view of Orgeluse, when Wolfram himself said of her:

\[\text{âne Condwîrm âmûrs wartz nie geborn so schœnerlîp.}\]\(^2\)

No greater praise could he offer, for Condwiramurs is supreme in beauty as in all else and must remain so. The comparison points forward, a long way it is true, to the revelation of Orgeluse as a truly noble woman, whose behaviour is motivated by her great love for Cidegast. It has a further significance, however, although this becomes apparent only later. It was Orgeluse who brought about the suffering of Anfortas and the sorrow of the Graal Family. Only one of her great beauty was worthy of the love of the Graal King: only for love of her could the noble Anfortas transgress. It is for Condwiramurs, the only woman who surpasses her in beauty, to relieve the grief and suffering\(^3\) which she has inflicted and to become the consort of the new Graal King. The

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1. The meeting between Parzival and Orgeluse is, of course, Wolfram's invention. Mergell (W. von E. - II p.299) gives a further significance to the meeting: "In der Verschiedenheit ihrer Beziehung zu Orgeluse kommt das Wesen Parzivals und Gawans zum Ausdruck. Für Gawan Ziel und Erfüllung höchsten Wunsches, wird Orgeluse von Parzival zurückgewiesen."
2. 508, 22-23.
3. For the part played by Condwiramurs in the release of the Graal Kingdom, see p. 90 ff.
sorrow of the Graal has its source and its termination in womanly beauty.\(^1\)

Orgeluse, then, is deeply involved in the sorrow of the Graal Family, and thus central to the story of Parzival's quest. This is, of course, not known when Trevrizent tells Parzival of the transgression of Anfortas.\(^2\) Only when Orgeluse tells of how she accepted the love of Anfortas in the hope thereby of avenging Cidegast does her story become linked with that of Parzival. Her account of the tragic outcome of that love, too, adds to the poignancy of her history, for now she must suffer not only the loss of a lover but share in the grief of the whole Graal Kingdom, on which she has now brought suffering:

\[\text{glîchen jàmer oder mûr, } 4\]
\[\ldots \text{gab mûr Anfortases wunde.}\]

That she loved Anfortas is clear from her grief, though this is mingled with her sense of responsibility for widespread suffering and sorrow: it is surely the combination of the two which leads her to say that her suffering was even greater than her suffering on the death of Cidegast. Her love for Cidegast remains the greatest love of her life, but the last which Wolfram tells of Orgeluse is that she weeps with joy when she learns of the release of Anfortas, the man whom she had also loved:

\[\text{Orgelûs durh liebe weinde,}\]
\[\text{daz diu vrâg von Parzivâle}\]
\[\text{die Anfortases quâle}\]
\[\text{solde machen wendec.} \quad 5\]

As the cause of the downfall of Anfortas, Orgeluse is the physical

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1. Moreover, Repanse de Schoye, who is also mentioned as a close rival in beauty to Condwiramurs (811, 1ff), is the one who bears the Graal and in her service to Anfortas relieves him during the period of his suffering: beauty in her bridges the gap between the destructive beauty of Orgeluse and the constructive beauty of Condwiramurs.
2. 478, 17ff.
3. 616, 11ff.
4. 616, 24ff.
5. 784, 4-7.
manifestation of the pride which is stressed as the reason for his humiliation. It is surely no accident that Wolfram links with this downfall through arrogance the woman whose name is Orgeluse. Thus the significance of her name is two-fold, pointing both to the pride in Anfortas of which she is a symbol, and her own pride, evident in her treatment of all those who seek to serve her, and of Gawan in particular. Yet the basic meaning of her name is softened a little by its graceful form, just as her arrogance is softened by her great beauty. Justly does Dr Richey speak of her 'queenly arrogance'; for it is arrogance mingled with regal dignity, rather than the arrogance of pure conceit of her French predecessor.

In the hints, which are never fully developed, of a pact with Clinschor, Wolfram adds yet another facet to the already complex character of Orgeluse. He involves her with the magic which is a part of the story of Gawan, and supplies also a tremendous test of his love and valour. The pact with Clinschor does not, however, mean that Orgeluse herself is in any way in possession of magic powers. Though a complex and subtle figure, she is essentially a real person.

1. by Trevrizent, 472, 17; 472, 26; by Anfortas himself 819, 18.
2. For the original idea he is indebted to Chrétien, whose l'Orgueillose was unambiguously 'the proud one', and he himself gave it a more convincingly German form, in which the four syllables give it a grace evident in the names of his other heroines, Belakane, Cunneware, Herzeloyde, Condwriramurs.
3. Compare l'Orgueillose, whose arrogance is unmitigated.
5. Although Orgeluse behaves with foolish pride, in her refusal to hold Gawan's bridle, for instance, she never sinks to the crude insolence of some of the remarks of l'Orgueillose: she is much more dignified throughout.
6. 617, 7ff.
Because she is very much a woman who understands the world, and who combats its problems with force and strategy, she is an apt partner for Gawan. In her he finds the perfect partner, the culmination of his relationship with Obilot, which was one of service with no hope of reward, and that with Antikonie, which was based on physical attraction, no demands being made on his service. In Orgeluse he recognizes a woman whom he can love and serve with hope of fine reward, and she too recognizes at last that he is worthy of her love: the mutual respect and understanding between them is contained in the moment when they look one another straight in the eyes:

Gawan der kürtoys
und de herzoginne von Logroys
vast an ein ander sáhen.

This moment comes after Orgeluse's account of her meeting with Parzival, when she has told how he refused her love and Gawan has praised Parzival very highly. The two are perfectly matched, then, the woman who is beautiful but less beautiful than Condwiramurs, and the man whose only victor will be Parzival. Yet, though Gawan remains in his own sphere, belonging essentially to that more worldly part of the work, Orgeluse transcends it and becomes involved also in the wider issue of the work, which is the destiny of the Graal.

1. I refrain from using the expression 'of the world', with its somewhat derogatory sense, which is not fitting in reference to Orgeluse.
2. 619, 25-27.
3. 619, 21ff.
4. 688, 11ff.
SECTION V: The minor women characters

Wolfram's skill in characterization extends also to the minor characters, so that even those who make a fleeting appearance in the work achieve a degree of individuality. Thus, after a consideration of the women whose significance in the work is immediately apparent, one is left with the large number who appear briefly, or perhaps not at all in person, and yet contribute to Wolfram's array of superbly differentiated heroines. Like the more prominent heroines, these minor women characters possess individuality and are memorable in their own right, yet they are also important for the contribution they make to the complete picture of womanhood which Wolfram creates in his three narrative works. A close study of such women shows them as completely in accordance with the general pattern in his work. Many of the minor women characters echo and anticipate the more prominent ones, and the result is a perfectly consistent whole, in which each plays a part, whether great or small, yet without sacrificing her essential individuality.

The achievement of Wolfram in these minor characters is remarkable for the economy with which he creates them. Many of them remain in the work for only a few lines, yet even they are vivid and memorable. Such women are Clauditte, Ekuba, Schoette. There are, however, a
number of women who must rank among the minor characters and yet receive from Wolfram rather lengthier treatment than might be expected. It is as though, with the vivid interest in single characters which is evident from his treatment of the more important figures, Wolfram became interested in them as he created them, so that they grew beyond the rôle which they were to fulfil.

Such a character, surely, is Bene, the young daughter of the ferryman Plippalinot. Though her rôle appears to be a very simple one, she increases in complexity as the narrative continues. Thus a figure who might have passed hardly noticed develops into a vivid character, for a time vital to the action and memorable for her intrinsic individuality. To see in Bene anything more than a minor character, however, would be to overestimate her. She is not significant in the main part of the work, but confined to the Gawan-action. She attends to Gawan's comfort in her father's house, and she acts as intermediary in the love between Itonje and Gramoflanz. Yet, like many of the characters in this part of the work, she echoes, on a different level, characters in the main part. 1) From the beginning, her willingness to serve Gawan supplies a link. As Cunneware helped Parzival, 2) Bene helps Gawan with his armour, 3) and the picture of Bene cutting his meat for him is reminiscent of Belakane's eagerness to serve Gahmuret at table. 4)

4. 33, 9-11.
comes most readily to mind, for she, too, sat at table with her father's guest and prepared his food for him. 1) In other respects, however, Liaze and Bene are not alike, and the relationships are different. Liaze and Parzival were well-matched, 2) and the marriage which did not come about between them was nevertheless fulfilled in the marriage of Parzival and Condwiramurs. 3) Between Bene and Gawan, however, the relationship is one of service and grateful acceptance of service. Bene is the daughter of a ferryman and can hardly aspire to the love of a knight. 4) Nor does Gawan seek her love, despite some rather strange and ambiguous remarks on Wolfram's part. 5) Like Obilot, Bene grieves as Gawan rides away, 6) but she grieves, not, like Obilot, because she has lost him, but, as Cunneware for Parzival, because she fears for what may befall him.

When Bene next meets Gawan, she kisses his stirrup, 7) and this gesture Martin interprets rightly as being 'zum Zeichen der tiefsten Untertänigkeit'. 8) Once more, the relationship is seen as one of devoted service, rather than of love, and once more one is reminded

1. 176, 16-21.
2. See 176, 26 and p. 1484f.
3. See p. 1004f.
4. This is surely implicit in the words of the ferryman, 550, 16-19.
5. See 551, 13-14; 552, 27-28; 555, 27-556, 2. One wonders why Wolfram should wish to cast suspicion on Bene, for this is what he does with such remarks, which appear superfluous and inconsistent with the rest of the picture of her. Possibly he was seeking rather to ridicule the ferryman himself, in his foolish desire for a match between his daughter and the noble young knight.
6. 562, 8; 562, 15-16.
7. 621, 16.
8. Martin: Kommentar to 621, 16.
of Cunneware, who could never be Parzival's wife, yet remained his devoted friend. On two occasions Bene lends her cloak to Gawan, and one remembers Repanse de Schoye. Yet the gesture, though it echoes that of the Graal Bearer, is without symbolic depth and simply exemplifies Bene's desire to serve Gawan.

Strangely, Bene reappears in the work, one of the few women to have two distinct roles, for next time it is as intermediary in the love of Itonje and Gramoflanz that she acts. Here too she shows herself ready to help and intensely loyal. On numerous occasions she is seen to perform small services: she is constantly willing to aid her mistress Itonje, hence Gramoflanz also, and her master Gawan. She is brought into conflict, however, when it transpires that Gramoflanz is preparing to fight against the brother of Itonje. Like the major heroines, Bene, too, experiences deep distress, resulting from her love and loyalty:

\[
\text{do Bene daz gehorte mit wærlîchem worte, daz ir hêrre ir frouwen bruoder was, der dâ solde strîten ûfmê gras, dô zugen jâmers ruoder in ir herzen wol ein fuoder der herzenlichen riuwe: wan sie pflac herzen triuwe.}
\]

Though her 'triuwe' is never tried to the extent of that of Herzeloyde, Sigune, Condwriramurs or Gyburc, Bene nevertheless possesses it to the

1. See p. 211f.
2. 552, 20–22; 622, 1–4.
4. See, for example, 642, lff; 642, 29; 663, 9ff.
5. 694, 9–16.
full. In accordance, however, with this lighter side of the work which is the Gawan-action, a solution is found in the reconciliation through King Arthur of the two opponents. In this, too, Bene is the intermediary, for it is she who goes to Arthur.\(^1\) She who has striven throughout to bring Itonje and Gramoflanz together is instrumental in the reconciliation which allows the marriage to take place. The last that is heard of Bene is that she rejoices at the happiness of her mistress and Gramoflanz:

Ben was frô, dô daz geschach.\(^2\)

Her rôle is a modest one, entirely selfless, and unobtrusively she vanishes when her task is fulfilled.

The two parts of the rôle of Bene should surely be seen in relation to one another. Her service to Itonje and Gawan helps to clear her of the shadow of ambiguity which is cast over her by some aspects of her relationship with Gawan. This is essentially innocent, however, another manifestation of her desire to serve. Though one may wonder why Wolfram allowed such ambiguity, one must see from what follows that he intended her to appear as a noble and virtuous woman.

An equally vivid character, though, like Bene, one who must rank as a minor heroine, is Arnive. She too belongs to the Gawan-action and is of no significance to the major theme of the work. Her appearances are brief, yet she is remembered for her essential

\(^1\) 714, 10ff.  
\(^2\) 729, 30.
individuality. Wolfram speaks of her as 'Arnīve diu wīse', 1) 'diu alte kūneginne wīs', 2) and she stands as one of the most delightful pictures of mature womanhood. Of her Wolfram says that youth never came to old age with such womanly honour, 3) and from this one may conclude that he sees Arnīve as the prototype of the noble old woman. Yet she is far from being a mere type, a description which is applicable in fact to none of Wolfram's heroines. As the wife of Utependragun and the mother of King Arthur, Arnīve occupies a position of some importance, but she is remembered, not really for her queenly power, but rather as an old woman with the wisdom of experience. It is this wisdom which characterizes her and is revealed in her actions.

As Gawan lies sorely wounded after his fight with the lion, it is Arnīve who comes to his aid. While the other women are lamenting, she comes forward with practical help. 4) She quickly takes charge of the situation, arranging for a bed and a fire for the wounded knight, and that his armour should be removed. It is then she herself who tends his wounds, smoothing on them a strange ointment and bandaging them; and it is she who gives him a herb which brings him the sleep he needs. Like no other woman in Parzival, Arnīve is active and practical in her aid. Later it is she who, realizing the distress of Itonje, summons her son Arthur to her and, with Bene, helps to bring about a reconciliation. The aid which Arnīve renders, then, is practical aid, based on experience and prompted by a shrewd

1. 574, 5.
2. 578, 4. cf. also 581, 23.
3. 656, 4-5.
4. 578, 4ff.
assessment of the situation. The references to her wisdom, coupled with her knowledge of salves and herbs, suggest that Wolfram had in mind some kind of wise-woman, when he created his Arnive.

To this basic picture of Arnive, of the wise queen, the understanding mother and the old woman with strange skills, Wolfram has added some other details, which make of Arnive a lively, realistic figure. She is a shrewd woman, and it would appear that much of her knowledge has been acquired as a result of her relentless desire to be informed of events. This is not exactly mere inquisitiveness, for it is coupled with a feeling that if she knows what is going on, she may be able to help matters. When she learns of the message which Gawan is sending to Ginover, she waylays the squire who is bearing it, and she grows angry when he will not divulge his secret. ¹) Not content with one refusal, she tries to trick Orgeluse into telling her Gawan's identity. ²) Again, but again in vain, she tries to obtain the information from the squire when he returns. ³) This would seem strange behaviour, perhaps, but, since Wolfram clearly admires her shrewdness and wisdom, one must assume that her curiosity and persistence are justified by the intention which prompts them.

Obviously, since Arnive goes to such lengths to try to discover Gawan's secret, her power is by no means limitless: she is not omniscient. ⁴) In fact, her seemingly magic powers are confined to a knowledge of medicines: she is no sorceress, but a wise old woman, outstanding as one of the very few examples of old women in Wolfram's

1. 627, 1-4.
2. 627, 12-18.
3. 652, 26-653, 14.
4. Even the magic pillar which is now in her possession was stolen from Sekundille: 592, 18-19.
works, and memorable in her vivid, though relatively brief, rôle.

Willehalm, too, has the figure of a noble old woman, Irmschart, the mother of Willehalm. She is a vividly drawn character, also, though her appearance is a very brief one. The rôle which Wolfram gives to her follows closely that of her counterpart, Hermanjart, in the Aliscans, 1) but she is consistent still, both with the new tone of Willehalm, and with Wolfram's whole picture of noble womanhood.

The fact that she is a mother is important in Wolfram's view of her character and in his treatment of her rôle. The influence which is due to her motherhood is not, however, a passive influence, as it is with Belakane, Herzeloyde or Condwiramurs, and Irmschart's rôle is not a passive one. Willehalm is prompted to speak out in the first place by the conviction that the woman who gave him life will come to his aid, 2) and he is not disappointed. Irmschart echoes Gyburc in her courageous appeal to the men. While they are lamenting for the death of Vivianz, it is Irmschart, the old woman, who urges them to leave their grief and turn their attention to giving aid to Willehalm. 3) Like Arnive, she is active, despite her age, 4) and, like Arnive, she comes forward with practical aid, while others are giving way to lamentation. This does not mean that she is not grieved, but that she sees what must now take precedence. As in the Aliscans, 5)

1. See B.de Kok (op. cit. pp.92-95)
2. WH.144, 24ff. and cf. WH.168, 8-10
3. WH. 152, 11-27.
4. Wolfram refers on a number of occasions to her age (see, for example WH.143, 1; WH.150, 1; WH.160, 22). He clearly wishes to draw attention to the discrepancy between her age and her actions.
5. ed. cit. 2805 ff.
it is Irmschart who steps between Willehalm and his sister and so prevents her daughter from coming to real harm and her son from committing further violence in his rage.\textsuperscript{1)} Here, too, Wolfram reminds his audience that she is their mother. Her desire to keep the peace between her son and daughter is stressed when she sends Alyze with Willehalm’s message of forgiveness.\textsuperscript{2)} With the wisdom of experience she sees that this is not the time for petty quarrelling, that they must unite to help Willehalm. As Arnive joined with Bene to reconcile Gawan and Gramoflanz, so now does Irmschart join with Alyze, the young and the old united by a wisdom which seems to escape those who are between them.

It is the final gesture of the scene which links Irmschart most closely with Gyburc. She offers her treasures to Willehalm to finance his war, ready and glad to give her wealth to the cause she believes in, and she is the first to do so, setting an example to her reluctant son-in-law. She does more, too, for she expresses her willingness to fight herself in defence of Willehalm: her ‘triuwe’ as a mother is strong and ready to be tested:\textsuperscript{3)}

\begin{verbatim}
  harnasch muoz an minen lip.
  ich pin so starc wol ein wi?p,
  daz ich pf dir wapen trage.
  der ellenthafte, niht der zage,
  mac mich pf dir schouwen:
  ich wil mit swerten houwen. \textsuperscript{4)}
\end{verbatim}

\begin{itemize}
  \item 1. 147, 22-24
  \item 2. 160,1ff.
  \item 3. It is Willehalm himself who speaks of her ‘triuwe’ (\textit{Wh.} 161, 12 ; 161, 16)
  \item 4. \textit{Wh.} 161, 5-10.
\end{itemize}
The prospect of the old woman in armour and wielding a sword in the face of attack supports the picture of Gyburc herself. Willehalm, indeed, is the place for a new image of woman, and Gyburc and Irmschart together show that the truly noble woman is capable, if the need arises, of inspiring the men about her and of leading them into battle.

The only remaining woman in Willehalm is the somewhat puzzling queen of Ludwig. Though the reasons are different, one encounters here a similar problem as with Obie and Antikonie. Her callous rejection of her own brother's plea for aid places her in a most unfavourable light, so that the ill-treatment she receives at Willehalm's hands is seen as her just desert, although one may regret the uncontrolled rage of Willehalm which allows it. Her subsequent change of attitude when she learns of the death of their kinsman and the loss at Alischanz does not really serve to erase her former behaviour, even though her intervention helps to persuade King Ludwig that Willehalm must be given aid. Though she laments now for the loss of so many kinsmen, one remembers that previously it was she who recognized her brother as he sat alone and dejected, yet urged her husband to bar the doors against him. It would seem that her change of heart has been prompted as much by fear of Willehalm and the memory of his harsh treatment of

1. See Wh. 227, 12-14 and p. 127.
2. Even this Wolfram himself excuses as the result of Willehalm's great love for Gyburc and his grief at the loss of so many kinsmen (Wh. 163, 9-10.)
3. Wh. 164, 10ff.
4. Wh. 129, 19-130, 2.
her, as by a genuine sense of loss and desire to help.

In this suspicion, one is supported, surely, by Wolfram himself, for his treatment of her suggests his own disapproval. She is the only woman whom he does not call by name, and in view of his interest in names, which led him on all other occasions to supply a name where it was lacking in his source,\(^1\) this surely implies at the least a lack of interest in her, even a positive dislike of her.\(^2\) There is a further significant omission: Wolfram applies no adjective to Ludwig's queen. A brief examination of the text will show that this is quite exceptional,\(^3\) and the omission suggests also that Wolfram could not bring himself to utter a word of praise or affection for this woman. The problem, then, is rather different from that encountered in the case of Obie and Orgeluse: \(\text{here he showed that true love and virtue lay beneath the surface and was ultimately to reveal itself.}^{4}\) Even in the case of Antikonie he managed, though with some difficulty and embarrassment, to produce a character who was not wholly unattractive.\(^5\) This he cannot do in the case of Ludwig's queen, and he does not attempt to justify her actions. Her presence is necessary, both in loyalty to the source and for the sake of the plot at this point, but in the whole range of Wolfram's women characters she alone lacks a place in an otherwise consistent whole.

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1. For example, Herzeloyde, Jeschute, Repanse de Schoye, Sigune.
2. It may be argued that the queen was called Blancheflor in the source (see ed.cit.2548; 2767) and that Wolfram, remembering both the wife of Perceval and the mother of Tristan, could not allow one of his heroines to bear the name, which seemed to him disgraced by these two women. This may well have been his reason for changing the name of Parzival's wife, but no such scruple can have troubled him with a woman such as Ludwig's queen. This absence of name is noted also by C.J.Lofmark The Rennewart-action in Wolfram's Willehalm, M.A.thesis, London,1964
3. Elsewhere he speaks, for example, of 'diu claire' (151,12; 811,3), 'diu süeze' (223,1; 368,25); examples are too numerous to cite them here. On the application of adjectives to Ginover, see p.328
5. See p.273 ff.
A fascinating figure, who never actually appears, but whose name occurs a number of times in both *Parzival* and *Willehalm*, is Sekundille. Though she is not developed to the same extent, she resembles Ampflise, and the resemblance is both in her rôle in the work and in Wolfram's treatment of her. For Sekundille, too, remains in the background, a force in the life of Feirefiz as Ampflise is in the life of Gahmuret. Like Ampflise, Sekundille is doomed to lose the man she loves dearly, but Sekundille, a less tragic figure than Ampflise,\(^1\) dies before he returns and so is spared the pain of the loss.

Like Ampflise, Sekundille is a wealthy queen, and there are a number of isolated references to her, all pointing to her wealth. Wolfram refers to the precious stones and the gold in her land,\(^2\) and to the rich silks which are made there.\(^3\) There are similar references in *Willehalm*, all pointing to the exotic wealth of Queen Sekundille.\(^4\) Such references are used indirectly, as comparisons often, for clearly the wealth of Sekundille is seen as greater than all other, so that it is natural to use it when extravagant riches are spoken of. In *Parzival* such mention of her occurs long before Sekundille emerges as a character in the work. They help to build up a picture of the exotic and the mysterious. The strange history which has resulted in the hideous Cundrie and her brother\(^5\) adds a little more to the mystery which surrounds Sekundille. The explanation which Wolfram gives of the strange pair succeeds also in linking

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1. See p. 250 ff.
2. 519, 2-17.
3. 629, 20-27.
4. Wh. 125 28-30; 248, 26-249, 1; 279, 17-280, 1.
5. 519, 2ff.
Sekundille with the Graal. Her exact relationship with Anfortas remains obscure, like so much of her story, but it explains how the slave of a heathen queen became the messenger of the Christian Graal. 1)

It is in the battle between Parzival and Feirefiz that Sekundille comes to the fore. 2) Here she appears as the inspiration of the heathen, and for a time it seems as though her spirit will lend him to victory. In this conflict between such equally matched opponents, the power of the wives is also equal. 3) Thus, for a time, Sekundille is placed with Condwiramurs, and greater praise can hardly be given. Her name and the name of her city echo throughout the battle, 4) nor does the end of it, which is brought about by the magnanimity of Feirefiz, bring dishonour on her name.

Sekundille is clearly a noble woman, who loves, and is loved by, the only knight who is a match for Parzival. There is only one thing which she lacks, and this is the one thing which can take Feirefiz from her. She has not known baptism, and the conversion to Christianity of Feirefiz means his separation from her. It may be argued that Repanse de Schoye has already caused this separation, for he falls in love with her on sight, and this new love takes the place of all love he has ever known before, including that for Sekundille. 5) For

1) See discussion of Cundrie, p. 2/6 ff.
2) 738, 1ff.
3) Martin (Kommentar to 519, 2) speaks of Sekundille as 'Geliebte des Feirefiz'. Though it is not directly stated, they are surely married, hence Wolfram's concern that Sekundille should die before Feirefiz returns with Repanse de Schoye. The tragedy of Belakane is not exactly repeated in the story of Sekundille, though the resemblance is close.
4) See, for example, 739,24,25; 740,10,11;741,2ff;743,30ff.
5) 811, 8-16.
Wolfram, however, great love for a human being is the way to faith, and so one may well regard his falling in love with Repanse de Schoye as his actual conversion, of which his subsequent baptism is the formal sign. Like Tybalt, Sekundille is the innocent sacrifice of a higher ideal. She, no less than the husband of Arabel, is powerless in the face of the tremendous force of the Christian faith. With his constant compassion for human suffering, Wolfram could not, however, allow Sekundille, who had been so deeply loved by Feirefiz, to endure the pain of seeing him the husband of another woman. He releases her, and the news comes of her death. The happier tone of Parzival permits this consolation which was denied to Tybalt in the stark reality of Willehalm.

The burden of the woman to endure pain as the consequence of love is shown again in the brief portrayal of Schoette, Gahmuret’s mother. She is in perfect accord with the other women in Parzival, for throughout this work the heroines are seen to love and to grieve because of their love. Schoette is remembered for a single scene when her son takes his leave of her, and the leavetaking is made the more poignant by Wolfram’s remark that Gahmuret is never to see his mother again. As Herzeloyde is to do after her, the widowed Schoette grieves at first and pleads with him to stay. Realizing, like Herzeloyde, that she cannot rightly keep him with her, she releases him. Herzeloyde

1. cf. Sigune, Gyburc.
2. 822; 19-20.
3. 12; 16-17.
4. 10, 15-16.
gave Parzival some basic rules of conduct to take on his way: Schoette, too, wishes that gifts from her should accompany her son, and she gives him rich silks to take with him.  

Only once more is Schoette mentioned. When Gahmuret is at Herzeloyde's court and has learnt of the death of his brother he immediately enquires after his mother, only to learn that she died of a broken heart, having suffered the death of her husband and elder son, and the absence of Gahmuret himself. Once more she is linked with Herzeloyde, who also endured for a time the loss of her husband but finally died when her son left her. That Wolfram sees this as the way of noble womanhood is clear from his praise of Herzeloyde and Schoette too, though her rôle is such a slight one, is remembered for Wolfram's description of her as 'daz wiéliche wié'.

The picture of Wolfram's noble women is not complete without reference to Schoysiane, the first Graal Bearer. Though she never appears, she nevertheless achieves a degree of fame, as the equally virtuous predecessor of Repanse de Schoye and the mother of Sigune. Perhaps inevitably, in view of the sacred object with which she is entrusted, Schoysiane shares some of the same mystery which enshrouds her sister. Like Repanse de Schoye, she too was supremely virtuous and supremely beautiful, but her memory is surrounded by the tragedy of her early

1. 11, 14-19.  
2. The mention of her in Titurel 126, 4 is not significant to the study of her character.  
3. 92, 24-25.  
4. 10, 17.  
5. See discussion of Repanse de Schoye, p. 171 ff.  
6. Titurel, 10, 1.  
7. Titurel, 14, 2.
death and the grief of her husband. Schoysiane is always spoken of in the past tense,¹ and even her name is surely suggestive of the joy which she lost so early, and which was lost to the world in her.² Schoysiane's beauty and virtue live on in her daughter,³ yet she has bequeathed also to Sigune the power to love as intensely as she loved Kyot, and in Wolfram's view of life such love must bring suffering and grief with it. As a daughter of the Graal, Schoysiane bequeaths also to Sigune the suffering which is a part of the legacy to all members of the Graal Family. Her own share in this legacy took the form of an early and tragic death, and her daughter is to endure the death of her lover and years of grief, before Parzival lifts the burden from the whole of his family. Schoysiane, then, like Herzeloyde, lives on in her child, and as the predecessor of Repanse de Schoye is intimately linked with the Graal and the theme of the whole work.

At the back of such women as Sekundille, Schoette and Schoysiane are others, to whom reference is made only in passing, but who nevertheless contribute to the picture which Wolfram gives of the tragedy of human life. Mahaute⁴ and Annore⁵ are two such women, victims of the life of chivalry which takes their husbands from them. Their stories echo, though with less emphasis, those of Belakane, Herzeloyde and Sigune. Similarly, the history of Clauditte and Olimpia,⁶ which

¹. except in Titurel 10, 1.
². Wolfram clearly desires to link Schoysiane and Repanse de Schoye, in their names too, for each contains the word 'schoye' with the remainder of the name indicating the fate of this joy. See also p. 747, note 3.
³. See Titurel, 33, 1-4.
⁴. 178, 16-24, and Titurel, 126, 1-127, 2.
⁵. 346, 15-19.
⁶. 811, 11-16.
is never told, must come very close to that of Sekundille, who loses Feirefiz to a greater love. By allowing these shadowy figures to hover behind the more prominent ones, Wolfram gives depth and reality to the situations which he presents: the tragedies he shows are universal ones, with the women as their victims. Because their own fates echo those of the major heroines, these faintly drawn characters attain also a depth which could not otherwise be there. They belong with equal right to the vast spectrum of womanhood which Wolfram's works display.

Itonje is a heroine in whom is revealed clearly the essential difference between the Parzival-action and the Gawain-action.¹) Like Obie, she loves and suffers for a time, but she too knows the happy fulfilment of her love, unlike many of the women involved in the Parzival-action.²)

The picture which Wolfram gives of Itonje is one of a charming and very courtly young girl, deeply in love with King Gramoflanz. In some ways, it is a very conventional picture, and Itonje's demeanour is very much that of the perfectly bred lady of the court.³) Wolfram's characters rarely remain limited by convention, and Itonje too rises to some extent above the type of love-lorn maiden.

Her situation, after all, is an unusual one, for her love for the mighty Gramoflanz, whom she has never seen, is secret, and she finds

1. cf. W. Mohr, as quoted on p. 261 (3).
2. Sigune's history is the example par excellence of ill-fated love, but so many of the other women, Belakane, Herzeloyde, Schoysiane, Annore, Sekundille, are remembered for their intense, yet tragic love.
3. See, for example, 631, 25-28.
herself in a dilemma when she has to kiss Orgeluse and the two knights who ride constantly in pursuit of him. This she does because Gawäh asked it of her, but it represents to her a failure in loyalty towards her lover. The situation is further complicated when she enlists the aid of Gawan, unaware that he is her brother, and when later she is brought to the terrible realization that her brother and her lover are to face one another in combat. Her grief is tremendous, and for a time her dilemma seems insoluble. In accordance with this lighter side of the whole work, a solution is found, however, when King Arthur intervenes and effects a reconciliation. Thus, though the conclusion is a joyful one, Itonje has not escaped the grief which, for Wolfram, is the constant companion of all love:

\[
\text{stæter freude se niht vergaz: doh kōs man an ir ougen schîn; 4)
\text{daz si diu minne lërte pîn.}
\]

The comparison, and the inevitable contrast, between Sigune and Itonje is suggested in the words of Arthur to Itonje:

\[
\text{'ôwe₄, liebiu niftel môn,}
\text{daz dîn jugent sô hōher minne schîn tuot! daz muoz dir werdên sûr,}
\text{als tet dîn swester Ñûrdûmûr}
\text{durch der Kriechen lâmpriure. 5}
\]

These echo very closely the words of Herzeloyde to her niece, when she first learns of Sigune's love for Schionatulander:

\[
\text{Ich klage et daz du bist alze fruo sîn âmîe.}
\text{du wilt den kumber erben, des Mahaude phlac bî dem talîn Gurzgrie. 6}
\]

Cîrsumstances are set, then, for a repetition of the tragedy of Sigune, but the tone of the action at this point does not allow it.

The complexity of the love of Itonje serves to distinguish her from the conventional noble lady wooed by a powerful knight. Though her nature and her rôle rest in this convention, Wolfram's intense interest in individual characters ensures that Itonje too is a memorable figure. She is remembered for her youthful yet powerful love, her grief when she realizes her position, but perhaps above all for the power of her love over King Gramoflanz. He who has appeared as such a harsh, unscrupulous man mellows in the face of her sweetness and love. Wolfram says of him that his hatred melts away before her, like snow in the sun. Thus the one who has held so many in fear of their lives is conquered by the love of a young girl. Once more, then, beauty and sweetness in a noble woman are shown to possess the power to reconcile. The perfection of the union of Itonje and Gramoflanz, symbolized in their spontaneous recognition, closes the Gawain-action, and the contrast with the main tone of the work is expressed most emphatically by the very presence of Parzival and the need he feels to leave. Parzival does not belong here, any more than Itonje can be placed with Sigune or Herzeloyde. Though she is a noble woman, possessing the intensity of love which could lead her, like them, to tragic greatness, this is not required of her. Instead she ranks with Wolfram's minor heroines.

1. 728, 13-17.
2. cf. also Alyze and Obilot.
3. 724, 2 4-2 5.
contributing in her own way to the entire pattern of womanhood. For a brief period she has achieved a degree of prominence in the action, but her individual significance is confined to this brief period, unlike those whose characteristics she shares in some measure and whose significance extends throughout the work.

For a very brief period another woman comes forward, to offer to Parzival words of praise and consolation after Cundrie's attack has plunged him into grief and dishonour. This is Ekuba, the heathen queen of Janfuse. With Cunneware and Jeschute she goes forward to comfort Parzival. Thus compassion, which is a principal virtue of the major heroines, reveals itself again in the gesture of this woman, whose role is such a slight one. Cunneware and Jeschute are bound to Parzival by the strong bonds of friendship and gratitude, but Ekuba is a stranger, a heathen, who yet sees Parzival's greatness and is moved by the disaster which has befallen him. She acclaims him for his good looks and his noble bearing, asserting that all Christian people are honoured in him. Though he rejects the possibility of consolation, Parzival is clearly grateful for her words, as he is later for the companionship of Cunneware when he departs.

It is characteristic of Wolfram's generosity towards all human beings that he allows a heathen woman to offer this gesture to Parzival. Virtue knows no barriers, and this black queen is equally well able to bring comfort to Parzival as any other virtuous woman. What matters is that she possesses the power of pity and love which will at last

1. 327, 21-25.
2. 329, 4-10.
bring him back to God.

Ekuba is important, too, for the news she brings of Feirefiz. She tells of his wealth and fame, and her assertion that he has never been defeated in combat anticipates the moment so long after, when Parzival will almost succumb to the might of his half-brother. In this single speech of Ekuba, the two great men are brought together, as they will one day be in combat. The son of Gahmuret and Belakane must remain in the minds of Wolfram's audience, though he is remote from the action, until he is brought back into it with such force and significance.

In Ekuba is seen once more the intense interest of Wolfram in the single character. Though the two functions she fulfils could have been fulfilled in another way or by someone else, he chose to create this new character who appears in the work, to dominate it for a few lines, and to disappear immediately afterwards.

Although she is a very slight character, Clauditte must also be mentioned among Wolfram's minor heroines. She is remembered as the little girl playing with Obilot, and she shares in the charm of her more significant friend. Together they form a delightful picture of childhood, from the time when they are discovered playing the game of rings, to Clauditte's simple offer to give Obilot one of her dolls for Gawan, if they are prettier than her own. Clauditte acts as messenger between Gawan and Obilot, taking him the sleeve from her dress, and she is as innocent yet sincere as her friend.

2. 328, 25. 4. 368, 10ff. 6. 375, 19ff.
The picture of their friendship, childish yet firm, is a very true one, and the observation which must have made it possible is perhaps most apparent when Wolfram allows Obilot to demand that her friend too should be taken on to a knight's horse.\textsuperscript{1) As so many of the minor characters echo more prominent ones, so does Clauditte echo Obilot, exemplifying with her the beginnings of the charm of womanhood.}

Finally one must look at the character of Ginover as Wolfram shows her. He is dependent here to a large extent on the traditional conception of Arthur's Queen. Like Arthur, she is at the centre of the courtly life, and, like him, too, she is a rather passive figure, the impulse and the goal of acts of chivalry but not herself coming forward as an active character. Because the life of the Round Table is constantly in the background of the work, Ginover too is constantly appearing throughout it. She is always present when Wolfram wishes to stress the courtly environment.\textsuperscript{2) She is an essential part of this environment, and Wolfram's picture of her gives to his audience what they had come to expect of Arthur's Queen.\textsuperscript{3) Convention, which Wolfram could hardly have changed even if he had wished to, demanded that Ginover should be a gracious lady, remote to some extent, yet ready to hear the pleas of the knights in her service. This is Wolfram's picture of her too. She intercedes on behalf of Urians,\textsuperscript{4)}}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] 373, 9.
\item[2.] See, for example, 143, 21-24; 698, 17-21; 731, 1-3.
\item[3.] In 143, 21-24, Wolfram draws attention to the precedent which Hartmann von Aue had clearly established, in his portrayal of Arthur, his Queen and his Court.
\item[4.] 528, 17-24.
\end{itemize}
and it is to her that Segramors turns when he desires Arthur's leave to engage in combat. ¹ She takes the love-lorn Itonje into her care, ² and she performs all these acts with the grace and dignity of one who is primarily a queen.

Significantly, Wolfram hardly ever applies an adjective to Ginover. In speaking of other women characters he frequently adds a word in reference to their beauty and their virtue. ³ Ginover is 'frou Gynoveir diu künegîn', ⁴ 'frou Gynover' ⁵ and often simply 'diu künegîn'. ⁶ Once he makes the simple statement 'diu was kurtoys', ⁷ and once he speaks of her as 'diu kurteise'. ⁸ These are, however, restrained, formal compliments, suggesting the extent to which Ginover, even in Wolfram's conception of her, is still the conventional type of queen, perfect in courtly breeding, but lacking distinct individuality.

Basically, then, this is the figure of Ginover in Parzival, the conventional queen of Arthurian romance and more nearly a stereotyped figure than any other of Wolfram's women characters. Yet even to her Wolfram gives a little of those qualities which are manifested more fully in his own creations, where he was free from all convention. It is for her grief at the death of Ither that Wolfram himself remembers Ginover, when he is reminding his audience of the noble women he has told about:

1. 286, 15-16.
2. 731, 2-3.
3. On the question of the absence of adjectives in the case of Ludwig's Queen, see p. 316.
4. See, for example, 698, 18.
5. See, for example, 143, 22; 387, 7.
6. See, for example, 646, 23; 647, 28; 650, 23.
7. 722, 18.
8. 651, 5-14.
welch was froun Ginovêren klage۱)
an Ithêres endetage!

As though speaking on behalf of all the women who lament at Ither's death, Ginover delivers a speech of some eloquence over his body. ۲) Yet one may argue that her speech is a conventional one, and one which can hardly have its source in deep personal grief, since it was Ither who had challenged her husband. More convincing, perhaps, is her grief at Gawan's absence, and her delight when the squire brings news of him. ۳) On this occasion, too, she expressed her personal grief at the events of Plimizoel, ۴) which took from her, not only Gawan, but Parzival, Jeschute, Ekuba and Cunneware:

grôz jâmer nach der werden diet
mit sît von stæten frôuden schiet. ۵)

In general, however, it is Ginover, the conventional Queen of Arthur, whom Wolfram shows, though such brief moments when she betrays more ordinary human sentiments suggest that he meant to imply womanly virtue beneath her regality. The absence of individual characteristics in Ginover serves to draw attention, however, to the intensely individual nature of almost all the other minor women characters. Ginover stands alone, as indeed does Arthur, as a character who was too much a part of the background of the work to be changed or re-created to any extent;

The variety of Wolfram's minor women characters is remarkable.

Each one is as much an individual as are the major heroines, and each

1. 337, 13-14.
3. 645, 1-6.
4. 646, 6.
5. 646, 21-22.
one is quite extraordinarily memorable in her own right. Wolfram's method of portrayal is varied too. Some of the characters, like Bene, Itonje, Arnive, are fairly dominant for a time and vital to the plot at that point. Others, like Irmachart, Schoette, Clauditte and Ekuba, achieve memorability in the briefest possible space of time, often in a single, vivid picture. A particular distinction belongs to two characters, Sekundille and Schoysiane, for both are a strange kind of presence in Parzival, extraordinarily familiar, yet never for a moment appearing in person.

Sekundille and Schoysiane are particularly striking instances of another aspect of Wolfram's range of heroines too. Each one echoes a more dominant heroine, for the gate of Sekundille is close to that of Belakane and Ampflise, and Schoysiane shares the distinction of Repanse de Schoye. Clauditte echoes Obilot, and Schoette, in the brief account of her parting from Gahmuret and her later death, foreshadows Herzeloyde, as the devoted and heartbroken mother.

The skill of Wolfram in allowing his minor characters to echo and anticipate the more central ones in this way contributes to an essential feature of the entire depiction of the heroines, whom he sees both as individuals and as parts of a perfectly integrated whole.
Together the heroines of Wolfram's three narrative works fulfil his promise at the beginning of Parzival, to tell of the nature of womanly women. The picture which emerges is an idealized one, as was to be expected from this early statement of his intention. Though not all the women attain the height of perfection of the greatest heroines, they nevertheless contribute towards the final picture. Thus, while each woman is endowed with a degree of individuality which allows her to be treated in her own right, each one also makes a contribution towards a complete picture. Clearly the contribution is in relation to the size of the rôle of each individual character. In Wolfram's depiction of his heroines it is possible, therefore, to find two separate formations.

a) The heroines may be seen to form a tremendous spectrum, in which each character stands in her own right, adding her particular shade to the whole, carefully graded formation. That this is the case has emerged from the close study of the women as individuals, for it is apparent that they share the same qualities, which are emphasized to a different extent in different heroines. The virtues which Wolfram sees as the essentials of noble womanhood are most strikingly present in his central heroines, in Herzeloyde, Sigune, Condwriramurs and Gyburc, but they are present also
in the young heroines, who have still to attain the mature virtue of the central women characters, as well as in those women whose rôles are not so extensive, in Belakane and Repanse de Schoye, Lize and Jeschute, Cunneware and Cundrie. These women, like those who may genuinely be called 'minor heroines', echo the more prominent ones.

Similarities become apparent during the close study of the women characters, and it is not only that the virtues recur, but also that the situations of the women echo one another. This feature of Wolfram's heroines is a highly complex one, however, for while, for example, Herzeloyde recalls Schoette, she is linked also, in her love for Gahmuret, with Belakane, and Belakane herself bears a resemblance to Sekundille and Condwiramurs, and is clearly also the forerunner of Gyburc. As a wise old woman, Irmschart is linked with Arnive, as a devoted mother with Schoette, but her militant loyalty unites her also with Gyburc. Such resemblances, which have been noted throughout this thesis, add to the complexity of Wolfram's portrayal of his heroines and make of the whole range a fascinatingly intricate whole, in which the components are linked on all sides, without for a moment sacrificing their particular individuality. However close may be the resemblances at times, the situation changes slightly, so that none of the heroines is the exact repetition of another. Thus one may justly speak of a 'spectrum' in reference to Wolfram's heroines, for the women partake of the same qualities, which receive as many manifestations as there are women.

b) From a close examination of the heroines as individuals and from the observation of the relationships among them, there emerges also a
very clear picture of Wolfram's ideal of womanhood. This ideal is, of course, demonstrated above all in the four central heroines, but it is confirmed again and again by the other women. Of the many women characters whom Wolfram portrays, only two do not conform to this ideal, and both of them owe their presence among Wolfram's heroines to his loyalty to his source in each case. Although Antikonie and Ludwig's Queen do present a problem, in that they disturb an otherwise consistent picture of virtue, Wolfram's treatment of them - his not entirely successful attempt to redeem Antikonie and his evident dislike of Ludwig's Queen - suggests his own feeling that these were not the women he wished to present, and that they betray their sex by their unattractive behaviour.

The ideal of womanhood, demonstrated most emphatically by Wolfram's foremost heroines and underlined by the other women, consists for Wolfram in three virtues which he prizes above all others. These are the virtues of 'triuwe', 'kiousche' and 'diemüete'. In 'triuwe' Wolfram sees the basis of all perfect relationships, and the supreme feminine virtue. It includes the loving devotion of a woman to her husband, to her lover, to her son, but it finds its highest expression in the love of a human being for God. This 'triuwe' is shown to the full in all four of the central heroines, but it is also shown as the essential attribute of all the women, even, ultimately of Antikonie. Above all, it is Sigune who is remembered as the embodiment of 'triuwe', in her single-minded devotion to her dead lover; but, in its various manifestations, 'triuwe' is revealed very emphatically in the other heroines: in Herzeloyde, who by her 'triuwe' to her dead husband through her son, will
be saved from the pains of hell, in Condwiramurs, whose 'triuwe' is tested in the years of separation from Parzival, in Gyburc, whose 'triuwe' to her husband and to God is given active expression in her defence of Orange. In the ways which lie open to them, all the other heroines, too, reveal and confirm their 'triuwe'.

In 'kiusche' Wolfram understands more than simple chastity, for it is the loyalty of a woman to her womanhood, her purity in all ways, and the total absence of falsity. This requirement is clearly fulfilled by the central heroines, but it is in Belakane, Jeschute and Repanse de Schoye that Wolfram stresses the virtue most firmly. In Jeschute, 'kiusche' shines through her rags and mocks at the accusations of her husband. In Belakane and Repanse de Schoye, 'kiusche' is seen in its full significance, for it has a distinctly spiritual value, a substitute for baptism in the case of Belakane, and in Repanse de Schoye the virtue which allows her to bear the Christian Graal.

The virtue of 'diemüete' is most evident in Herzeloyde and Gyburc, and in both of them humility reveals itself in the readiness to accept poverty. Their humility is a poverty of spirit which places no importance on worldly status and material wealth, and it is shared by Sigune and Repanse de Schoye, who withdraw from the world in their devotion. Another aspect of humility is revealed in the readiness to serve, which one recalls in Cunneware, in Belakane, in Bene, and in the unquestioning acceptance by Jeschute of the harsh treatment of her husband.

These, then, are the virtues of the ideal woman, and they are in contrast to the virtues which Wolfram prizes in his noble knights. In the men he looks for loyalty in love it is true, but this is to be
expressed in noble combat, in the constant pursuit of fame and adventure. His knights must show themselves brave in battle and merciful in victory, but these qualities demand activity. It is the women who possess the abstract power of love, whereas the love of the men manifests itself in action and physical effort. The love of Gahmuret for both Belakane and Herzeloide is indisputable, yet he seeks to display it in deeds of valour and the pursuit of fame, while they remain behind, in unquestioning acceptance of the absence which they must endure as part of their love. Herzeloide, again, is left to gaze after her son, for whom the parting does not represent a denial of his love, any more than it did for his father, when he refused to remain with Schoette. Most clearly does Wolfram point to the contrast, however, when he says of Condwiramurs that she has all she could desire, for Parzival, no less in love with her, is not content in the way that she is content but desires to go in search of adventure. Both Gahmuret and Parzival ride away, leaving their wives to bear their sons, and the picture of motherhood of all three women is a restful one, epitomizing the passivity which balances the active restlessness of the men.

The nature of woman, as Wolfram sees it then, is passivity, but this is not a negative quality at all, but a positive and tremendously powerful one. The power of woman rests in her essential being, and she exercises her greatest influence not by what she does, but by what she is. The power which the women exert is often the power of their very presence, and this is most evident in the heroines in Parzival, above all in Sigune, Herzeloide and Condwiramurs, in Liaze, Belakane and Repanse de Schoye. It is the case, too, with the young heroines, the pilgrim's daughters, Obilot and Alyze. Only Gyburc, in circumstances
which she alone among Wolfram's heroines must face, transcends this passivity and reveals the same virtues by active means.

By the very impact of their perfect natures, Sigune, Herzeloyde and Condwiramurs are able to direct Parzival and in a strange way, both by direct contact and by his natural heritage from them, to govern his nature and so ultimately to lead him to the supreme spiritual goal. Nor is it only the central heroines who react upon him in this way, but many of the others, too, Cunneware, Jeschute, Liaze, Cundrie, Repanse de Schoye, the pilgrim's daughters, influence him, when for a time their paths cross his and their perfection becomes apparent to him. Obilot and Alyze, too, exert an influence over Gawan and Willehalm, by their very presence as examples of virtuous womanhood. Ampflise and Orgeluse, on a less spiritual level, exert a power over Gahmuret and Gawan, by the force of their personalities. Though Gyburc's achievement lies in her active defence of Orange and her positive plea for mercy, it has its source in the courage and faith which allow her to act in a situation where activity is demanded: her power nevertheless rests in the perfection of her own nature.

As individuals the heroines of Parzival are seen to possess the power of love and faith, the power to heal and to reconcile, but together they clearly demonstrate the power of womanhood as an abstract concept. The spirituality of this power is apparent, for so many of the women contribute in some way towards Parzival's achievement of the highest goal of Christian knighthood, which is coupled for him with his return to faith in God. Those women who do not come into contact with him, like Obilot, Belakane and Ampflise, are endowed nonetheless with powers as noble women which would
have allowed them to contribute also, had they had the opportunity to do so.

Because womanhood as an abstract force is given a place of such significance in Parzival, the fitness of Gyburc to fulfil her rôle in Willehalm becomes apparent. The message of the earlier work echoes in this single heroine, to whom is given the burden of expressing alone the theme of Willehalm, that the way to God lies through love. When perfect womanhood in Parzival has led the hero to his return to faith, it is apt that the heroine of Willehalm, who possesses virtues equal to those of her predecessors, should stand alone and defend the faith which has come to her through love.

It is hardly to be disputed that the concept of womanhood is a vital one in Wolfram's works. Yet, to the twentieth century, the notion of ideal womanhood may seem distasteful, savouring too much of a sentimentality which does not appeal to modern taste. It remains, however, that Wolfram's view of the rôle of woman anticipates the closing words of Faust, and to deny this is to ignore a tremendous aspect of his view of life.
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IV: Literature on Wolfram von Eschenbach
(As suggested in the Introduction, literature of precise relevance to the subject of this thesis is very slight. The following list includes, therefore, works which have been found useful, and those concerned more specifically with the heroines in Wolfram's works are marked with an asterisk.)

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