The Role of the Woman in Gottfried's Tristan

a
Literary-Sociological Study
by

Renée C. Fourie

THE ROLE OF THE WOMAN IN GOTTFRIED'S *TRISTAN*: A LITERARY-SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

Renée Cécile Fourie

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts,
University of Cape Town, Cape Town,
for the degree of Master of Arts

Cape Town

1991

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to look at the role of Isolde, in particular, in the medieval epic *TRISTAN* - not *TRISTAN **AND** ISOLDE* as many call it.

In an attempt to understand the role of the woman in Gottfried von Straßburg's *TRISTAN*, the woman in medieval society and literature was examined in order to ascertain whether Gottfried was presenting a vastly different or a traditional model. There being no historical literature from this time, church and legal documentation provides the only source of information on the woman of the Middle Ages. As fiction of the time would also reflect society of the day, medieval epics and poetry were consulted and compared.

A study was made of ROLE-PLAY to ascertain whether there is a relationship between "individual" and society at this time, and whether it is reflected in literature. It was deemed necessary for an understanding of the confrontation of the two main characters with the society in which they operate.

Lastly the text was examined for indications of a "new", "progressive" role afforded the woman as a reflection of social changes of the day. Isolde was considered in terms of education, childhood influences, individuality, "psychological" makeup, social (antisocial) behaviour, as fulfilling a traditional role or representing a new morality, particularly in her interaction with the male, Tristan.

It was found that there is a correlation of socio-economic changes at the start of the 11th century and the historical role of the woman, seen in the move to the cities, the crusades, the introduction of a monetary system and, as one of the results, the *Frauenbewegung* and "Verweigerung" of the time. This led to male uncertainty and self-awareness and a re-evaluation of the accepted roles of the sexes.

Church literature at this time adopts a more positive attitude toward the woman and there are apparent changes in legislation concerning women. There is a stronger sense of individuality all round.

Tristan and Isolde adopt roles within the courtly society, playing by society's rules. But together they find an inter-subjectivity, spiritual bonding akin to a *unio mystica*, based on aesthetic awareness, shared knowledge of music and languages. The realisation of love comes with the love-potion. The confrontation of courtly values with the virtues of *Tristanliebe* is the theme of the epic from here on.

Gottfried attempts to suggest a new role for the woman at Court: the free choice of love-partner, no *huote*, equality with the male (in love) and recognition as an individual. In doing this he shows up the falseness of the Court and the flaws in male behaviour.

Gottfried presents a fictitious picture of womanhood in which he attempts to defuse the "dangerous" aspect of woman by means of an aesthetic integration with the courtly tradition. He makes use of allegory in an attempt to distance himself from controversy. He does not succeed in providing a positive long-term outcome by the time the epic breaks off; possibly he could

not reconcile his new ethic with a pre-determined outcome in a story taken over from Thomas. Writing from within the courtly tradition he cannot see an immediate answer.

UNDERTAKING

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that neither the substance nor any part thereof has been presented for any other degree.

Cape Town, 6 September 1991

Signed by candidate

Renée C. Fourie

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1 In all humility I wish to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my brother, Louis (16 October 1955 - 3 May 1991), whose first words on seeing me were always: "And why are you not working?" His generosity in allowing me the use of his computer, his endless patience in helping me find "lost" pages and his willingness to clear space as the thesis grew, will always be remembered.

2 My sincerest thanks to my supervisor, Wolfgang Pasche, for his clear and expert guidance and infinite patience over the period of this thesis. He was a constant source of support and encouragement, never doubting my ability. I would also like to express my appreciation for the time he gave me in discussions, finalising seminars and proof-reading the text.

3 Special thanks go to my parents who saw to it that I ate "proper food" during the busy times and helped with the proof-reading. Their

encouragement and interest in the progress of the thesis were much appreciated.

4 Finally, all credit for the final product goes to "gotes höfscheit". Without His help there would have been no thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Medieval Society and the Role of the Woman

Nowhere in literature of the Early Middle Ages (750-1170) are love poems or love songs in the vernacular found (except for a few Anglo Saxon examples). Why precisely now was there this change of content to love and relationships between the sexes? Why had it not occurred earlier?

Dinzelbacher attributes this "Mentalitätswandel" at the beginning of the 12th century to social changes. He explores the evidence in literature and finds that it is only *since* the *Frühmittelalter* that, barring a few isolated instances, love is the theme of poetry. Whereas literature of the *Frühmittelalter* had been dominated by tales of men's struggles against each other and with beasts, the feminine element was only introduced in the *Hochmittelalter*. As theories of love were based on Ovid, who was available to the writers of the *Frühmittelalter*, one has to ask why it was only now at the beginning of the *Hochmittelalter* that an interest in love was shown. DINZELBACHER claims that it was clearly

> ein Indikator für die aktuellen Bedürfnisse einer Gesellschaft in einer bestimmten Phase ihrer Geschichte. (Dinzelbacher 1986: 81)

It is widely held that this change indicated a psychological need, arising from radical changes in the socio-economic structure around 1170. EVA SCHAUFELE, in the context of "normabweichendes Rollenverhalten" says:

> Die Dichtung ist ein Produkt der Phantasie. Die Inhalte der Phantasie werden geprägt durch den Einfluß realer Begebenheiten und die Tiefenstruktur der Persönlichkeit. Wenn nun durch die sozialen und ökonomischen Umstände die Persönlichkeitsstruktur einer Gruppe von Menschen in eine bestimmte Richtung verschoben wurde, so werden die Inhalte der Phantasie und damit der Dichtung davon entscheidend beeinflußt. (SCHAUFELE 1979: 8)

The High Middle Ages present an interesting series of developments economically, socially and politically. This period has been referred to as the Medieval Reformation or Renaissance. Both male and female reach a hitherto unknown self-awareness. The French troubadour lyrics are first to portray this inner reflection. Legal documentation, church literature, letters - like those between Abaelard and Heloise - and scientific works all reflect a critical individuality and emotional awareness.

The Church viewed women negatively, as the origin of all sin. As early as the 5th century Hieronymus taught: "Alles Böse kommt von den Frauen" (420 AD). Its contempt for women it could ably justify from the Bible, verses such as Genesis 3: 4-6, Proverbs 30: 15-16, Ephesians 5: 22-23 and especially the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus 25: 26-33. The church father St Augustine stressed this misogynist Pauline view in saying: "Es ist die natürliche Ordnung unter den Menschen, daß die Frauen den Männern dienen." Gratian, who wrote a handbook of church law, the "Dekretum", likewise held that "wegen ihres Standes der Dienstbarkeit soll die Frau dem Mann in allem unterworfen sein". Thomas Aquinas believed that one had scientific (Aristotelian) proof that woman was inferior to man, as a woman could change food into blood, but only a man blood into sperm. He added further:

> Eigentlich müßte ein Mann immer männliche Kinder erzeugen ... Nur wenn "widrige Umstände" (occasiones) bei der Zeugung einwirkten ... wurden Mädchen gezeugt. Das Mädchen war danach nichts anderes als "ein mißglücktes Männchen" (mas occasionatus). Allgemeiner gesagt: "Die Frau ist ein unvollkommener Mann". (BUMKE 1986: 456)

Legally women had no rights, no "identity". It would appear that women were only mentioned, whether in legal, religious or social terms, in as far as their presence touched on that of the man. At the Council of Maçon (585) it was debated "ob Frauen tatsächlich Menschen seien". (CARNE 1970: 2) Education for the woman consisted of learning the "ehrenwerte Tätigkeiten", as BUMKE calls them (BUMKE 1986: 473): spinning, weaving, sewing, knitting, etc. The court tutor or chaplain would instruct them in basic reading and writing skills, only as were necessary for understanding the Bible and Psalters. [It must be mentioned at this point that there were quite a number of well-educated medieval women, e.g. Marie de France (who wrote a Tristan lai in ca. 1167). There are existing poems by women, e.g. by a certain "Frau Ava", who mentions that she has two children; the wives of Henry I were both well-educated and we know how educated Eleanore of Aquitaine was, not to mention Heloise.] Women were also instructed on being *höfisch und gesittet*. This instruction covered four spheres, as we are told by Vincent of Beauvais (c. 1260), tutor to the children of Louis IX of

France. His work "Über die Erziehung königlicher Kinder" was dedicated to the king.

The four spheres were: i) *Schamhaftigkeit und Keuschheit*, ii) *Demut*, iii) *Schweigsamkeit* and iv) *Würde der Sitten und Gebärden*.

It was considered very important that women be instructed on marriage; how they should run the house and command the servants, behave impeccably and that they should honour their parents-in-law. The parents were to teach a girl the following about marriage: "... daß sie den ehelichen Verkehr nicht aus Lust suchen sollte, sondern aus Gehorsam und um Kinder zu bekommen". (BUMKE 1986: 472) Her moral character, not intellectual, was paramount. That determined her worth. Above all she had to maintain a balance (*mâze*) in everything she did or even learned. It was Thomasin von Zirklaere (as Bumke quotes) who said that a woman only requires enough intellect to be courtly and cultured:

> Wenn sie mehr Verstand hat, so soll sie den Anstand und die Weisheit besitzen, nicht zu zeigen, wieviel Verstand sie hat. Man will sie nicht als Herrscherin haben. Ein Mann soll in vielen Wissenschaften bewandert sein. Die

> Erziehung einer vornehmen Dame schreibt vor, daß eine Edelfrau ... nicht zu viel Klugheit besitzt. Einfältigkeit steht den Damen gut an. (BUMKE 1986: 482f.)

Thomasin von Zirklaere, a priest, was the Italian author of a didactic Middle High German poem "Der Wälsche Gast". The poem was intended for the aristocracy, as a guide to the virtuous life. The first of the ten books gives advice to children and young people and includes hints for young women on deportment and table manners for both sexes. In the subsequent books he sets out his moral doctrine, with *staete* (constancy of mind) being central, but calling for *mâze* (moderation), *reht* (law-abidingness) and *milte* (generosity). His balanced political outlook is centred around religion. The court epic he sees as a means of education.

As can be deduced from what was taught, as far as the Court was concerned, marriage in the Middle Ages was only entered into for two reasons: the procreation of legitimate heirs, and for political expedience. In fact most marriages were "Vernunftehen", arranged by parents or the father and the future husband of the bride. It was possible to attain a higher social

order, extend the realm or improve (strained) political relations by marriage. The husband undertook to protect and provide for his wife. She had to bear him children (her ability in this respect determined her quality), to be loyal to him and honour the sacraments. As St Augustine put it, her duties were "proles, fides, sacramentum". (GELLINEK 1980: 133) As children had an "economic" or "political" value - the boys could be put to work, and girls could be married off - a woman who could not produce children was then often divorced. Divorce of a woman by the man also occurred in favour of a better (political) marriage.

The Church would have preferred that marriages were celibate, in keeping with the ideal of purity, the "unberührte Jungfrau". The Bible as well as warning against the snares of women, however, did also command "Vermehret euch". Marriage was thus only for this purpose, and sex to this end was without sin. St Augustine also viewed sex as an antidote for covetousness. It was considered a sin if copulation occurred to satisfy lust or from fear of being covetous, even between a married couple. The Church

was against the idea of an arranged marriage, desiring the consent of both partners. It believed in a monogamous marriage, with no possibility of divorce.

It is important to note that love played no part in marriage. *Vernunft* (Reason) and Christian/ aristocratic virtues were far more important. Love was seen as a private emotion, one that isolated the couple socially. It was considered impossible to love and maintain one's full role in society.

Adultery, as far as the Church was concerned, could not be sanctioned officially, but it was condoned "in praxi". That is, if committed by the man. It was obvious that a loveless marriage could not really satisfy the desires of a man. And after all, should the man's secret extra-marital affairs be uncovered, the woman was to blame. She had not saved him from his covetousness! This "doppelte Geschlechtsmoral", as in modern times, demanded sexual experience from a male before marriage, while the woman had to be pure. Sexual desire in a man was considered "appetitus naturalis", but in a woman it was indicative of her

weakness, being unable to resist temptation. Legally only the woman could be guilty of adultery, and was even punished with death. On this point Müller says:

> ... Denn was den Bereich der erotischen Lizenzen angeht, so wurden diese, wie in allen patriarchalischen Gesellschaftssystemen, - natürlich nicht in den offiziellen Moralvorschriften, so doch aber in praxi - zwar den Männern zugebilligt, allerdings mit der Einschränkung, daß dadurch legitime Rechte anderer Männer nicht verletzt werden dürften. Die Frauen hingegen, besonders diejenigen des Adels, waren hinsichtlich "illegitimer Beziehungen" ganz grundsätzlich starken Restriktionen und Strafandrohungen unterworfen, die an Leib und Leben gingen. (MÜLLER 1986: 295)

Within the marriage the woman was an object, not a person. She was exploited, corporally punished and raped.

We know of many illegitimate relationships in the history of this time, the most famous being those of Heloise and Abaelard and Eleanore of Aquitaine, who on the Second Crusade was charged with improper relations "now with a Saracen slave of great beauty; now with Raymond of Poitiers, her uncle, the handsomest man of his time; now with Saladin himself". (THOMPSON/JOHNSON 1937: 479) Priests and bishops were known to have concubines (considered to

be a lesser sin than being married) and there was a certain status to an illicit affair.

> Wer ins mittelalterliche *Who is Who* aufgenommen werden wollte, mußte ein anerkanntes Liebesverhältnis unterhalten. Ein Herr und eine Dame, die etwas auf sich hielten, waren geradezu zur Liebe außerhalb der Ehe "verpflichtet". (GELLINEK 1980: 135)

The basis of feudal society was war, mastery and predominantly agricultural economy. The nobility were the free landowners, thriving on the toil of the lower classes. The serfs were bound to the manor, having to obtain permission from the lord for everything, even marriage (this was usually granted at a fee), and having to pay extra tax to the lord and tithes to the Church. Manorialism, the concentration of farming in small communities, usually a village which supported one lord and one manor, meant that one single person was likely to meet only 100 other people in his lifetime.

Since the mid-12th century princes attempted to extend their power over peers by extending their territories, taking over lesser noble holdings. Ground was rented to tenants in return for loyalty and protection. A tier system developed where these

tenants subdivided their portion of land and had tenants rent these on the same terms. The three-strip policy of farming was introduced, whereby ground would be worked on a rotatory basis and so provide for continuous productivity without overworking the land. With the growth in population, forests were cleared, roads improved and the towns demanded agricultural surplus. This brought wealth to the serfs.

The rise of the Nation States forced the kings to break the power of the feudal barons. With the growth of the towns came a move towards an industrial and financial economy. There was an urgent need to build up the state treasury to finance wars and the crusades. Banks were established, to avoid taking large sums of money along on the crusades, and for larger trade deals. The fairs of Champagne brought about increased international contact. Gold coins were minted for trade with the Moslems. Both through increased international trade and the crusades the medieval society now met with other cultures and forms of dress, and eastern luxuries soon became western necessities. The nobility was faced with a

rising cost of living. They were unable to meet the costs of the crusades and mortgaged their property or sold their privileges to communes or communities of serfs. With the increased agricultural demand from the cities, the serfs were soon able to accumulate money to buy their freedom from the lords. They also took advantage of the changes to run away and "lose" themselves in the towns, to escape to neighbouring manors with better conditions, to join the crusades or enter holy orders. The participation of so many different people in the crusades created a new national self-awareness as mutual differences between these people were highlighted.

The struggle for power between the Court and the Church, the increased power of territorial princes, the loss of land that many nobles, even whole dynasties suffered, as well as increased social mobility, resulted in many men and women forsaking their families, spouses and all they had, to seek a life of poverty. They joined the "Wanderprediger", the "Armutsbewegungen", thus attaining freedom and a new spirituality. To the medieval mind "Arm" meant: "... nicht diejenigen, die nicht das Existenzminimum

besitzen, nicht die Außenseiter einer Wohlstandsgesellschaft, sondern die Macht- und Gewaltlosen, die Beschützten". (BOSL 1978: 20) The dissatisfaction was with feudal society, the life-style of the bishops and general confusion over the role of the Church with its dogmatic rules in a fast changing world.

Women of all classes joined the "Armutsbewegungen", in a spirit of "Verweigerung and "Keuschheit", rejecting all wealth (which symbolised power) and feudal values. BOSL gives four reasons for this: (i) an excess of women as a result of the crusades, (ii) the religious demands for celibacy, (iii) a crisis in feminine sensitivity and (iv) a desire for social freedom, independence, release from the servile relationship of a marriage. (BOSL 1978: 24) BERND THUM, on "Verweigerung", says:

> Verweigerung bezog sich auch auf das Verhalten, das diesen Gütern und Werten entsprach - das Befehlen, das Genießen, das Raffen, den räuberischen Erwerb "unrecht erworbenen Gutes"... (THUM 1986: 10)

It was ultimately a flight from the opposite sex. The woman had been prepared for this independent move by

the long absences of a husband in the home or at the Court, his being away on crusades, on the Italian campaigns or lesser feuds. In his absence the running of the entire home and/or farm, overseeing vassals, etc., fell on her.

Women also joined the crusades, and in 1147, so many women took part in the Second Crusade of Louis VII, led by Bernhard of Clairvaux, that there was talk of a "scandalum". (It was after this Crusade that Louis VII divorced his wife, Eleonore of Aquitaine, on the grounds of being blood-relatives. The real reason apparently was her affair with the great Saladin and Raymond of Toulouse on this Crusade, and her inability to produce male heirs. Within six weeks of the divorce she had married the man destined to become Henry II of England, equally a blood relative. From him she had four sons.)

Women entered the abbeys and double-monastries, but most of them joined the Beguines, where the taking of vows was not required. The eroticism of this age expressed itself in so-called "ascetic-libertinage",

sexual freedom and sexual austerity going hand in hand:

> ... immer war im Spektrum ketzerischer Doktrinen ... mehr oder weniger Platz für die Lehre, daß man durch wahllose Ausübung des Geschlechtlichen zu vollkommener Selbstbefreiung gelangen könne, ja zu "gottähnlicher" Sündelosigkeit. (THUM 1986: 12)

Even in the monasteries there were such goings-on that Pope Gregory VII after countless efforts called the *St. Stephansfrauenstift* in Strasbourg "unreformierbar". In Strasbourg alone there were 85 Beguines in the 13th century. It is almost ironic that at this time too, the Church began to relent toward the woman, claiming that man and wife are equal partners in marriage, and bringing marriage ceremonies into the Church. Women that did not join the emancipatory movements, were seen to demand fidelity from their husbands, or try to reform them.

PETER DINZELBACHER argues:

> ... (Es) gab mehr Wahl- und Identifikationsangebote für den Einzelnen, mehr und verschiedenere Gelegenheiten zu sozialer Interaktion, mehr Rollen, die übernommen werden konnten, mehr Gesellschaftssysteme, an denen man sogar gleichzeitig teilhaben konnte. (DINZELBACHER 1986: 93)

The result is a greater self-awareness. This leads to isolation. The male seeks a new type of relationship, with a special, unique partner. The couple then becomes isolated in the midst of society. A well-known example of such an isolated couple was Abaelard and Heloise.

The courtly poet, in searching for this special relationship, sought a woman who fitted the image of the unattainable Virgin Mary, pure, and to be served from afar. She became his "Seelenbraut", just as Christ was the "Seelenbräutigam" of many. By placing "Hohe Minne" within the metaphor of "Dienst", "Lehenswesen", the man became the one to serve and the woman the one to be served. "Hohe Minne" was at first intended for the Court, but was viewed with some scepticism as an illusion (which it was). One has to keep reminding oneself that "höfische Minne" in no way reflected everyday reality. It was the opposite. The poet was presenting a "Gesellschafts-utopie", as BUMKE puts it, pointing the way to a new and better society, one that could not possibly exist, where love would be at the centre of the relationship between man and woman. (BUMKE 1986: 528)

The Church viewed "Hohe Minne" as a definite sign of moral decline, although it had all the Christian elements of virtue, fidelity and above all, purity. It was the church clerics, the monks, bishops, etc. who were the most educated and had the most access to literature. The texts of the Early Middle Ages reveal God as an angry God, to be feared. The sinner trembled before Him and prayed for mercy and forgiveness. He offered God undivided, loyal service in return. In church documentation of the High Middle Ages a new emotionality is found, albeit directed at God and not of a worldly nature. For man, Christ was the "Seelenbräutigam", with whose Passion he empathized. Man's relationship with God was no longer one of pure service without reward, but one of mutual love. The incarnation was seen as an act of love. Prayers were meetings with God, not merely one-way worship. The act of becoming one with God, the *unio mystica*, was the ultimate experience of love for God. Obviously this new trend was not evident in all religious literature of the time, but enough to be significant. Otloh of St Emmeram (1000 - 1070) in a prayer offers God service. But Anselm of Canterbury

(1033 - 1109) prays in a personal prayer for the ability to love and offers his love in return. Bernhard of Clairvaux considers the incarnation an act of love. (DINZELBACHER 1986: 84)

The start of the 13th century saw the tract of Andreas Capellanus "De Amore" come to light. Although literary critics have not agreed on his intention in writing this treatise, there are interesting statements on women, marriage and the ethics pertaining to these, contained in it. He divided the tract into three books that dealt with (i) how to earn love, (ii) how to preserve love, and (iii) why it was better to reject love altogether. It is this sudden about-face in the third book that has caused the most dissension. In the seventh chapter of his second book, however, he presents us with a reflection of courtly judgements on love and the ethics of relationships. He gives 21 "Minnekasus" and "Minneurteile". It was a French custom to hold so-called "cours d´amour", love courts, where a tribunal of ladies (usually) would pronounce judgement on cases pertaining to love, sex and marriage that were put to them (by whom, it is not known). Such famous women as

Eleonore, Queen of France, Marie de Champagne, and Ermengarde of Narbonne, were part of this tribunal.

Whether Capellanus is providing historically correct material or not is debateable. He mentions the ladies who judge the cases by name, and we have no proof that he was not merely placing the words in their mouths.

What these 21 cases and answers imply, is a code of love, some form of ethics. URSULA LIEBERTZ-GRÜN maintains:

> Die Richterinnen können ihre Urteilssprüche nur fällen, wenn sie zumindest implizit die Existenz eines Minnekodexes voraussetzen. Während sich Marie de Champagne in ihrer Antwort ... ausdrücklich auf Minneregeln und -vorschriften bezieht, berufen sich die verschiedenen Richterinnen in ihren 21 Urteilen nicht explizit auf einen Minnekodex bzw. eine andere Autorität. (LIEBERTZ-GRÜN 1977: 37)

Cases 14, 16, 18 and 19 were apparently based on reality, confirming the interest of society in these tribunals and debates. The Court had discovered that there was more to a relationship than desiring and taking, the Church that there could be a relationship with God based on love, not fear.

The poet had the task to convince his audience that what they desired was possible, and illustrate in the development of his epic, through what actions and demeanour this was attainable. To ensure this, he had to include many elements of reality and suit his characters to these, developing the action around them. As God ordained so many realities and they were thus irreversible, the character was secondary to these and thus many inconsistencies of character occurred. (SCHÄUFELE 1979: 191)

The woman was still portrayed as a passive, conformist figure. EVA SCHÄUFELE has argued that many women were fighting, aggressive persons in reality, but that this was ignored by the poet. So Wolfram's Gyburc ("Willehalm") is portrayed as a typically "höfische Frau" but her actions prove otherwise. Heinrich von Veldeke ("Kamille") too, she maintains, rejects the warring woman, as his outcome is that it leads to her demise. Hartmann von Aue, although telling the story of the man (Iwein, Erec) is the first to postulate the ideal marriage, where equality of husband and wife is the main theme. The man,

though, is still the "Erlöserfigur" with the woman supporting him. In this support-role, the individuality of the woman disappears. It is only Erec who may attend the Joie de la Court, while Enite remains outside. Wolfram highlights Christian love (*caritas*) as central to marriage in "Parzival". In the Holy Grail he finds the solution to the quest of man for perfection, for attaining utopia.

Gottfried depicts a love relationship outside the Court, but tries to harmonise this relationship with courtly conventions by means of allegory and aesthetic subtlety. That he approves of the formalistic "höfische" code is apparent from his *Literaturschau*, in which he praises other formalistic Minnesingers, and criticises Wolfram von Eschenbach for breaking away. He takes the position of an authority on the subject of love, demanding that the audience follow him and identify with him in questioning traditional court practices. He introduces an alternative spirit of mutual love in the sterile courtly reality. He does not succeed in providing a positive long-term outcome by the time

the epic breaks off - a matter which will be discussed later.

The title of the romance is TRISTAN, not TRISTAN *AND ISOLDE*, as many people think. More than half of the 19 548 lines have nothing to do with the couple, but deal only with Tristan's parents and *his* life before he meets Isolde. Yet in the Prologue to his romance, Gottfried von Straßburg makes no reference to Tristan as the chief protagonist at all. The first time he refers to the players in his story, he states his intention to tell a story

> von edelen senedaeren,
> die reiner sene wol tâten schîn:
> ein senedaere unde ein senedaerîn,
> ein man ein wîp, ein wîp ein man,
> Tristan Isolt, Isolt Tristan. (126ff.)

He thus from the outset presents Tristan AND ISOLDE to his readers, as a unit, not even separated by commas ("ein man ein wîp", "Tristan Isolt"), equally important in the partnership (either "Tristan Isolt" OR "Isolt Tristan"). Not even the word "and" separates them. They are firstly lovers, secondly man and woman, and thirdly identified as Tristan and Isolde. It is then that Gottfried stresses that he

intends to tell the story "rehte" (134). Twice he emphasises his intention to tell the story with the correct emphasis (125 and 149).

Clearly Gottfried *intends* to focus on the *senemaere* (168), only to be understood (appreciated) by the *edelen herzen* (171), whose minds would be enriched, whose existence would be validated by such a story. They would be inspired to values such as constancy, love, fidelity and other noble virtues (181ff.). He queries that more people do not strive for *herzeliebe* (194) and are not prepared to suffer *herzeleit* for a friend's sake. On the contrary they "ir aller werlde" (50) only want to experience eternal joy. He suggests that *vröude* is a farce, a facade of glamour hiding the emptiness of society. The *edelen herzen* experience an amalgam of joy and sorrow. *Tristanliebe* encompasses both. It comes from the heart, is based on *triuwe* and *êre*, trust and honour.

These are the guiding elements to be found in Gottfried's work. It is not primarily about deception ("list") or immorality. He intends to tell the Tristan story in the face of courtly "Schein" - how

it *should* be. To do this Gottfried needs to criticize courtly practices: *huote*, domination of the woman in life and love. He uses especially the Frauenexkurs, *huote*-exkurs and the seneschal's tirade against women to criticize contemporary social (courtly) attitudes. He uses art as the unifying medium, accessible to both man and woman, to create a sphere in which *Tristanliebe* can operate. Gottfried employs all the courtly traditions, mysticism, aestheticism, religion and medieval laws in presenting a new idea. "List", too, is society's game that Tristan and Isolde learn to play in order to survive. Yet the final result suggests an *alternative* to the 13th century-accepted roles for man and woman.

A male author, writing about the man and his role in courtly society - the usual pattern for medieval literature, is also giving the woman a role in the relationship. Nowhere in literature of this time is a female voice heard, stating the case for the woman. In poetry of the *Minnesang* the (male) poets gave the woman a verse, a traditional "Frauenstrophe", in their dialogue of the sexes, but never did the woman herself speak. The poet portrayed the reaction of the

woman in the "Minnedienst"-relationship with masculine eyes and understanding, projecting his ideas into the character, putting his words in her mouth.

One cannot attach the label "feminist" to 13th century Gottfried, but he certainly appears to be seeking acknowledgement of woman's role in society and relationships - in the interest of *both* man and woman. One only has to consider the trends in the literature of his time to realize that Gottfried von Straßburg was further developing ideas that had been present in one way or another in works of his predecessors. He uses the same formalistic elements, but merely shifts the accent.

Gottfried's *TRISTAN* appears in about 1210. Leading up to this time, the early Minnesingers were expressing their adoration of women in poetry (song). The Church did not recognize love in marriage. Most marriages were arranged as a means of securing political or social gain. If one did not love one's partner, it stood to reason that the evil sin of jealousy could not be present. One did not have to work at the

relationship, as the laws of marriage were enough to assure its sanctity. The courtly poet found a means of expressing his love for a woman beyond his reach in a "Hohe Minne" relationship. In this relationship there was emotional and spiritual fulfilment, not attainable in a marriage.

> Hohe Minne ist Sehnsuchtsliebe; sie setzt Distanz voraus und versagt sich letzte Befriedigung, damit jene Spannung erhalten bleibe, welche die Hohe Minne so reizvoll und fruchtbar macht. In der Ehe dagegen scheint jede Distanz aufgehoben. Der rechtliche Anspruch auf die Leistung der ehelichen Pflicht tritt hier an die Stelle bangen, sehnsüchtigen Werbens. (SCHUMACHER 1967: 68)

This adoration was, however, one-sided. The man was the wooer, always trying to please in battle, on adventures, slaying dragons and serving faithfully, without any hope of reciprocation from the woman. At most he could hope for a wave of the hand in acknowledgement, a glance or perhaps a kiss blown his way. DINZELBACHER (1986: 77) calls the poetry of the early Minnesingers "Frustrationsdichtung par excellence".

Chrétien de Troyes (c. 1137 - 1190), however, showed in most of his epic works a combination of love and

marriage. The man was portrayed traditionally, in service of a woman, but this woman was also his wife.

> Chrétien de Troyes, der Schöpfer der französischen Artusepik, ist der erste mittelalterliche Dichter, der, in Reaktion gegen die provenzalische Minnedoktrin und gegen die Tristanliebe, die Vereinigung von Liebe und Ehe erstrebte und literarisch verwirklichte, indem er das Nebeneinander von Ehe und Minneverhältnis beseitigte und der Ehe die Funktion des Minneverhältnisses übertrug. In der rechtmäßigen Bindung an die eigene Gattin, welcher Chrétien die Aufgaben und Würden der Minneherrin verleiht, vermag das Minnebedürfnis des Ritters Genüge zu finden. (SCHUMACHER 1967: 73)

In *EREC*, a story later used by Hartmann von Aue (c. 1160 - 1210), Enite is both wife and beloved. In Hartmann von Aue's *EREC*:

> "was er iuwer âmîs oder iuwer man?"
> "beide, herre" (Erec: 6172f.)
> (SCHUMACHER 1967: 74)

In CLIGÈS, Chrétien emphasised his new ideal of love in marriage through the character of Fenice, who faced with a loveless marriage to Alis, was unable to consummate the marriage. Yet, although in love with Cligés, she was faithful enough to the marriage not to have an adulterous affair with him, as Isolde does with Tristan (an example she quotes, supposedly

knowing the original story of Tristan). It is only after her Juliet-like faked death and her husband's subsequent demise, that she is able to marry the man she loves and find fulfilment.

> Fénice weigert sich (3145ff.), zwei Männern zugleich anzugehören, wie dies bei Isolde der Fall ist, welche sie als "garceniers" (3161) verachtet. Sie verschmäht die lieblose Ehe und versagt sich zugleich die außereheliche Hingabe. Auch das Nebeneinander von ehelicher Leibesgemeinschaft und außerehelicher Seelengemeinschaft mit dem Geliebten wäre ihr keine befriedigende Lösung. ... Sie kennt nur *eine* erstrebenswerte gültige Bindung: die durch die leiblich-seelische Vereinigung bewirkte eheliche Liebesbindung. (SCHUMACHER 1967: 75)

Chrétien, and Hartmann after him, similarly showed in *IWEIN* the wife again being the beloved of the husband, inspiring him to perfection through ennobling knightly deeds:

> nû durch wen möhte ein vrumer man
> gerner wirden sînen lîp
> danne durch sîn biderbez wîp?
> (Hartmann von Aue: Iwein 2860ff.)
> (SCHUMACHER 1967: 76)

Wolfram von Eschenbach (1170 - 1220) did not unconditionally incorporate the ideals of courtly love in his epics. Love was a Christian virtue, inspiring greater faithfulness and humanity. The

"refrain" in his *Parzival* is "reht minne ist wâriu triuwe"(P532,10). In Parzival's relationship with Condwîrâmûrs, *mâze, triuwe* and *caritas* are important virtues. She is both his "vriund" and lover. She is his inspiration to find the holy grail.

But in considering the lyrics of the Minnesingers (c. 1180 - 1220) one perhaps best sees the development of "new" (ideal) thoughts in the writings of Walther von der Vogelweide (1170 - 1230). It was he who first differentiated "frowe" and "wîp" (MAURER 1972: Poem No. 52), the "frowe" being the woman in whose service he was, who kept her distance and "swa ich des geltes nu vergebene warten muoz...". By comparison the "wîp" gives him thanks. This is the kind of woman he wishes to serve.

> Damit hängt es zusammen, daß der Begriff *wîp* in seinem Gegensatz zum Begriff *frowe* bei Walther einen neuen doppelten Inhalt bekommt: einen weiteren und einen engeren, der zugleich ein edler ist. Das echte edle Weibliche ist es, was Verehrung und Liebe verdient. (MAURER 1972: 25)

Walther suggests *herzeliebe* as an alternative to adoration in the true courtly tradition. (MAURER 1972: Poem No. 54) He speaks of her being "friundin

unde froun in einer waete". (MAURER 1972: Poem No. 57) He thus questions the traditional (literary) roles of the man as the wooer, the servant, and the woman as the distant exalted being:

> Diese beiden Konventionen der "hohen Minne" lehnt Walther jetzt ab und fordert ein neues Verhältnis zwischen Mann und Frau, eine neue Minne-Auffassung: Er tritt ein für die Gleichrangigkeit und Gleichwertigkeit; für die gleiche Verpflichtetheit der beiden Partner, die sich in echter Personenliebe begegnen. Ein anderer Unterschied aber wird zugleich proklamiert: nicht der zwischen Männern und Frauen, sondern innerhalb der Gruppe der Männer und innerhalb der Frauen, nämlich der Unterschied zwischen edlen und unedlen Frauen und edlen und unedlen Männern, wobei edel nicht ständisch gemeint ist, sondern die ethische Qualität fordert. (MAURER 1972: 25)

It is within this courtly tradition and possibly especially influenced by the recent writing of Walther von der Vogelweide (his "Lieder der neuen hohen Minne" are written around 1205) that Gottfried writes his *TRISTAN*.

> Faktisch sind freilich auch in der ritterlichen Welt Ideal und Wirklichkeit oft und oft uneins, und das Verhalten des Nehmens ohne Gegenseitigkeit bleibt natürlich auch in diesem Ambiente bestehen - aber wesentlich ist, daß hier jetzt als Alternative ein neues, im frühen Mittelalter nicht bekanntes existiert. In der gesamten Kulturgeschichte ist es ja im Regelfall nicht so, daß Innovationen Bestehendes einfach ersetzen würden, sondern sie erstarken neben diesem nach und nach, bis sie es schließlich verdrängt haben, nicht ohne daß das Alte in

Einzelfällen als Reliktform noch bestehen bliebe. Dies gilt verstärkt für Wandlungen in der Mentalität. Für die europäische Gesellschaft ist dieses im 12. Jahrhundert zuerst gedachte Ideal der gegenseitigen Liebe bis heute das allgemein dominierende geworden. (DINZELBACHER 1986: 100)

1.2 Role-play in Medieval Society and in *Tristan*

"Hohe Minne" is role-play par excellence. It is not subjective, personal love being depicted. This is the way the courtly man loves and the way the lady reacts.

> Auch die Helden der höfischen Romane und Erzählungen sind bekanntlich keine individuellen Persönlichkeiten im neuzeitlichen Sinne, sondern eher typische Vertreter ihres Standes, von denen man eine bestimmte "Rolle" erwartet. Für "Individuelles", wie wir es aus der neueren Literatur kennen, verbleibt wenig Platz. Die mittelalterliche "Psychologie" ist keine moderne "Individualpsychologie" sondern eine "Rollenpsychologie". (HERZMANN 1976: 77)

HERZMANN maintains that there is enough evidence in medieval literature of psychologically determined inner change, most evident in "Rollenkonflikten". Usually *one* person's actions are portrayed; in *TRISTAN* (and *DER ARME HEINRICH*) the actions of *two* people are depicted.

Accepting that characters in a novel have a "Rolle", then their "development" consists in *finding* this role via a maze of detours and misunderstandings. *What* this role should be is determined by education

and more importantly, birth. This role has been called "**diu art**" by medieval poets. Finding this role (*"Selbstfindung" des Helden*) implies a basis of subjective factors,

> daß dem Annehmen der "richtigen" Rolle individuelle psychologische Prozesse vorangehen müssen. (HERZMANN 1976: 78)

The whole question of individuality and personality in the Middle Ages will, for the purposes of this thesis, only have relevance if one can ascertain a relationship of individual and society, and that this relationship is reflected (but is not a mirror-image) in medieval literature, particularly *TRISTAN*.

DOLORES BAUMGARTNER (1978) has done extensive research on individuality and mysticism in Gottfried's *TRISTAN*, approaching it historically and literary-sociologically. She attempts to compile a theory of individuality suited to the Middle Ages, to fill this void, but at the same time to avoid a mere comparison of *höfisch-bürgerlich*. She develops a theory based on anthropological, psychological and "geistesgeschichtliche" aspects and places them in the historical context of the 12th/13th centuries.

BAUMGARTNER explores the term *individuality* and its relation to the Middle Ages. She finds that although Christian principles presupposed individuality - sin or eternal salvation is unique, an individual process; also Christ, as the individual, is the centre of all Christian thought - medieval man did not emphasise his individuality, but his integration with social structures. Individuality occurs when there is differentiation of an outer and an inner world. The individual distances his *self* from external objects. BAUMGARTNER defines individuality as follows:

> Die Individualität des Individuums besteht nicht oder jedenfalls nicht primär in seiner ontologisch bedingten Singularität (die ja auch den mittelalterlichen Individuen zukommt); sondern ist etwas, das das Individuum selber vollbringen muß, um Individuum zu sein. Dieser Akt der Verinnerlichung oder "Aneignung" des "Selbst" begründet die absolute Positivität des Individuums. (BAUMGARTNER 1978: 19f.)

Ontologically, medieval people can be called "individuals", as the post-medieval individuality we know merely represents a *qualitative* jump, in which natural individuality reaches its full creative potential. In other words: medieval man was certainly

individual, but often unaware of it or incapable (as a result of external social pressures) of developing this individuality. However, **starting** at the turn of the 11th/12th centuries, as a result of socio-economic changes primarily, there were psychological changes as man became more reflective, his individuality determined by *inner* forces rather than external pressure.

> Erst ab dort "verschärft sich die Spannung zwischen Individuum und Gesellschaft zu einem wirklichen Gegensatz und entsteht ein Riß, demzufolge der Einzelne mit dem Verlust seines gesicherten Platzes im Gesellschaftsbau bedroht ist". (HAUSER quoted by BAUMGARTNER 1978: 20f.)

This was no sudden change, but a gradual process. The individual, once free to express his individuality, thus grew to achieve his full creative potential. *Awareness* of one's individuality leads to individualisation - doing something with it. This "freedom", however, did not yet exist pre-1200, and neither, as a rule, did this type of individuality. Anyone defining his own reality was automatically *estranged* from society, from the external, having replaced group unity with self-determination.

> Das Individuum ... wird als Individuation einer bestimmten sozialen Stellung und als Träger gesellschaftlicher Funktionen aufgefaßt, also recht allgemein verstanden. Das Los des Individuums ist in dieser Formulierung untrennbar verknüpft mit dem Schicksal der Kommunikationsgemeinschaft (aufgrund seiner Geburt: das Geheimnis des Adels ist bekanntlich die Zoologie). Erzähltheoretisch repräsentiert der soziale Bereich die Ordnung des Gesetzes einer durch (implizierten) Kontrakt organisierten Gesellschaft; der individuelle oder interindividuelle Bereich hingegen steht für Existenz und Besitz individueller Werte als Folge intakter zwischenmenschlicher Kommunikation. Im Konfliktfall kommt es nach dieser Interpretation des erzählerischen Sachverhalts zu einem Kontraktbruch, für den der einzelne verantwortlich zeichnet; ein solcher Bruch zwischen dem Individuum und der Gesellschaftsordnung impliziert den Verlust individueller Werte im gesellschaftlichen Ruin, der auch die Extremform totaler Selbst- und Weltentfremdung annehmen kann. Im Wahnsinn etwa wird das Individuum gesellschaftlich erledigt und ist damit so gut wie gestorben für die soziale Umwelt, mit der es ebenso zerfallen ist wie mit sich selbst. (WELZ 1983: 10)

There's a correlation between economic and political self-sufficiency. That is, one can only be politically self-sufficient if one's produce is sufficient to one's needs. The medieval economy was a subsistence economy, man taking from the ground an amount destined for a determined number of people. Gradually, however, around the 11th century, economic production was increased to feed an increased population. [In one century (1200 - 1300) Germany's population had increased from 8 million to 14

million!] With the clearing of forests, introduction of e.g. wheel-carts, roads, water-mills, saws and improved farming methods, *quality* of work became important. The lack of slaves (especially in western Europe) meant that (often) members of the nobility had to take on this added workload. To encourage the labourer to work without supervision he was paid according to the amount of work produced (*Arbeitsentlohnung*). This implies a new *freedom* to achieve according to one's own initiative.

Cities and their development played an important part in the birth of individuality. The introduction of a monetary system brought a new social awareness between producer and consumer. The producer was distanced from his product, its usefulness, and operated according to the exchange-value of the article. Being rich and creating a surplus became a strongly motivating force. Money created possibilities that one otherwise could not achieve.

One can thus see that individuality is socio-economically determined. Traditionally "individual" is considered an opposite of "societal". This is a

fallacy; individuality can only be experienced in relation to other individuals.

> Der Individualismus ist ein Ausdruck der Gesellschaftlichkeit des Individuums. ... Die Gesellschaftlichkeit der Individuen vollzieht sich quasi hinter deren Bewußtsein. ... Hinter der Rebellion des Individuums verbirgt sich somit das Leiden an der Gesellschaft. (BAUMGARTNER 1978: 24)

BAUMGARTNER maintains that as a result of the civilisation processes that (generally) accompanied the economic upswing, violence and aggressive behaviour gave way to refinement. This meant suppression of desires (*Triebe*), and called for self-control. This is the highest form of internalisation of social norms, implying autonomy for the medieval individual, as he is liberated from external pressures and develops an inner awareness and control.

> - Erst dann, wenn der einzelne in seinem Individuationsprozeß die Normen der Gesellschaft nicht mehr als Fremdzwänge, sondern als Selbstzwangmechanismen erfahren kann, ist das Faktum des typisch neuzeitlichen Individuationsprozesses gegeben.
> - Der Autonomiefaktor spielt hierbei eine sehr wichtige Rolle. Das neuzeitliche Individuum bestimmt sich auf psychologischem Gebiet als ein Wesen, das die über das Bewußtsein vermittelten Normen für sich selbst verinnerlicht hat; das

> sich nachträglich die Freiheit schenkt, den Zivilisationsprozeß zu akzeptieren.
> - Der Bruch von Innenwelt und Außenwelt ist auch zu diesem Prozeß die notwendige strukturelle Ausgangsposition. (BAUMGARTNER 1978: 76)

Through the process of individuation the "individual" attains social integration:

> Der Weg der Integration der Individualität in die Gesellschaft ... verläuft über den "Umweg" des "schmerzhaften" Verlustes der Bestimmung und der Geborgenheit. (BAUMGARTNER 1978: 120)

Characters such as Erec and Iwein eventually "arrive" at the "expected role" without any incredible inner turmoil, the conflict being resolved with relative ease. The problem arises when a role is "forced" on the character and he instinctively refuses it (cf. Parzival - Waldleben; Gregorius - Kloster-Erziehung). It would take a strong "personality" to resolve this conflict. Characters that resolutely refuse to accept an expected role are either "eine höhere Schicksalsmacht" or "eine sehr 'individuelle' Persönlichkeit". (HERZMANN 1976: 78) Both Tristan and Isolde belong to the latter group. Isolde breaks away from the traditional role of the bride of a king, or a queen, Tristan breaks all duties of nephew and

vassal. Both take on the roles of lovers, in no way compatible with traditional roles.

> ... Gottfried [läßt] hinter den traditionellen Rollenkonflikten tiefere seelische Vorgänge sichtbar werden, ohne sie direkt beim Namen zu nennen. (HERZMANN 1976: 86)

Variously this "Rollenkonflikt" in TRISTAN has been described as the *asocial* behaviour of the heroes (KÖHLER quoted by LANGER 1974: 2), and as a so-called *ästhetische Lebenshaltung Tristans* (SCHWIETERING quoted by LANGER 1974: 2). LANGER poses the question:

> Warum ist Gottfrieds Held "Ästhetiker", wenn er es ist, warum verhält sich sein Held ästhetisch und nicht mehr, wie die Helden Hartmanns und Wolframs, ethisch? (LANGER 1974: 2)

The accepted norm of the day was prescribed, with no room for deviation from it. Within the fiction of *Minnesang* anything was possible and poets wrote of their love ideals, the adventures to win the favour of a lady, by which they sublimated their frustrated desires. LANGER bases his discussion on the article by ERICH KÖHLER "Ideal und Wirklichkeit" (1956; 1970), in which KÖHLER maintains that achieving individual happiness cannot occur within the courtly

norm, because desires are *individual* and courtly norms *social*, both operating in terms of different laws, both mutually exclusive.

> ... so wird jetzt Liebe zu einer sich selbst bewegenden Macht, die sich der ratio entzieht, um ihre eigenen Ziele durchzusetzen. Leidenschaft, die eigenen Gesetzen folgt, leugnet nicht nur ihre Beherrschbarkeit durch die herkömmlichen Regeln, sondern auch die Sinnhaftigkeit der *Aventiure* als eines Mittels der Integration in Gesellschaft; sie leugnet die Möglichkeit, daß der Glücksanspruch des Individuums sich befriedigen lasse im Raume der höfischen Gesellschaft, deren Feindlichkeit sich dem Individuum in den Eindruck der Fatalität des Daseins umsetzt. (LANGER 1974: 3)

Obviously then *Tristanliebe* is asocial and therefore unethical (going against the conventions of the Court). Tristan and Isolde exhibit an unparalleled excellence of art form, in music and languages especially, she having learned from him. In their practising of music they find extreme happiness and even their audience is enraptured by their performances. Through this art courtly convention is suspended, the music having a liberating effect, yet achieving a drawing-together of all listeners (readers), as "many (who listen) forget their (own) names". (TRISTAN: 3588, 3591, 3592)

Gottfried uses convention to reject convention, by using the courtly "Tugendsystem" as a protective measure for Tristan and Isolde. When Tristan and Isolde cannot comply with the social demands, they are forced to resort to subterfuge, hiding their love behind a courtly mask. Gottfried goes beyond the mere superficial. Tristan and Isolde experience a unique process of internalisation, finding fulfilment in their art. Shared appreciation of art, the sensuality of it, flows over into physical sensuality. They communicate on an aesthetic level, a depth of experience which none of the other characters share, and which draws them together. They function as a unit in contrast to the others who function only as a group. Together Tristan and Isolde reach a single existence, yet still want to be part of society. Their relationship is more than sexual love. It is art.

Art reflects the complexities of life in a fictionalized form. To Gottfried Leben = Kunst and Kunst = Leben. He goes a step further than Hartmann von Aue, whom he respects, and expects *more* than others. It is no pure theory of love he portrays,

neither mere art, but a synthesis of love and art. They are above a mere mystical union. Their relationship is strongly determined by a mutual *Kunstauffassung*, which Isolde learns from her teacher, Tristan. *Selbstempfindung* results, which can only function with a partner with similar experiences. That this kind of development is possible is demonstrated by their contemporary real-life model of Abaelard and Heloïse. Tristan and Isolde are partners in love (which Marke and Isolde never are. Marke always *demands* love, the "Herrscher" in love too). Tristan and Isolde make love an absolute, an art. (Riwalin and Blanscheflur experience this kind of love, but do not reflect on it.)

> kunst schien das Medium zu sein, in dem Tristan "sich zur Wirklichkeit" bringt,

if one accepts, as LANGER does, HEGELS point:

> die Handlung [ist] die klarste Enthüllung des Individuums, seiner Gesinnung sowohl als auch seiner Zwecke. (HEGEL quoted by LANGER 1974: 9)

Coincidences force actions upon Tristan that cause open conflict between him and society. It is not that

the conflict is based on such divergent principles that they cannot co-exist, but that each party uses the other as a means to an end. In fictional medieval society, a knight would achieve personal happiness and honour through *aventiure*. His personal achievement, "self-realisation", is socially determined (the *aventiure* being his way of realising his role in society). Tristan, too, achieves this acceptance into society, but through his *kunst*. It is his knowledge of chess, languages and the world that draws the attention of the merchants to him; his skillful quartering of the deer and supreme hunting knowledge excite the hunters, who take him back with them to Marke. Here his musical prowess enchants the king, who affords him a place of honour in the Court.

> Durch [seine Kunst] vermag er sich in Gesellschaft zu integrieren. Sie begründet aber zugleich seine Distanz der Gesellschaft gegenüber. (LANGER 1974: 11)

As long as the *kunst* does not threaten social norms, it is acceptable. But from the Schwertleite episode, the "courtly" education of Tristan, one begins to find the use of *kunst* for personal gain. His *art* in singing impresses the Irish to the extent that it

gains him entry to his arch-enemy, Queen Isolde (whose brother he murdered), and to the young Isolde. He disguises his true identity and poses as the Spielmann, Tantris. In this guise he stays at the court of Queen Isolde and becomes young Isolde's tutor. The education Isolde receives parallels his own. He uses his *kunst* and

> ... er bringt durch sie in Isolde ein Abbild seines eigenen Vermögens hervor und setzt damit den Anfang ihrer Anähnlichung aneinander. (LANGER 1974: 20)

However, it is most important to note that thus far Tristan's *kunst*, and now Isolde's, has always taken the courtly ethos into account, is still bound to *morâliteit*. Their "relationship" before the *Minnetrank* is reminiscent of "hohe minne", if one considers Tristan's praise of Isolde to Marke (8253ff.). There is no question of "personal", "individual" emotions toward Isolde on Tristan's part, certainly no evidence of it in the text. In all Tristan's role-play, whether arising from coincidence or not, his motivating forces are still the courtly virtues of *triuwe* and *êre*. The battle against Morolt (and all other battles) has one motive: reinstatement

of *êre*. Without *êre* one could not exist in courtly society (as Tristan and Isolde find out). Hand in hand with *êre* goes *triuwe*. It is *triuwe* to Marke that sends Tristan off on his second journey to Ireland to woo young Isolde on Marke's behalf. It is this *triuwe* that is broken as a result of the *Minnetrank* episode on the journey back to Cornwall. At this point conflict (*Rollenkonflikt*) becomes an issue:

> Liebe wird sich als Macht erweisen, die das Individuum aus seiner durch den höfischen Schematismus der *moraliteit* geregelten Bahn wirft und die schließlich nicht mehr abzuwehrende Gefahr heraufführt, Gut und Ehre, höfisches Lebens (*sic*) insgesamt, zu verlieren. (LANGER 1974: 20)

His (their) love conflicts with *triuwe/êre*, but also creates a *new* internal *triuwe/êre*, to love, to Isolde. The only solution, other than eliminating their love, would be to don yet another "role" and get around the problem by means of deceit (*êre âne êre*). (MORSCH 1984: 147)

From a modern point of view one might be tempted to ask, why they did not simply declare their love openly and marry each other, leaving King Marke to find his own wife. There is a theory (COMBRIDGE in

KROHN 1981: 126) that from the moment of asking a woman's hand in marriage, the couple are legally considered married. Tristan would thus have committed adultery. Ignoring Marke and claiming Isolde for himself would in any case have constituted breach of trust, which would have meant loss of *êre*. One must also consider the *motive* behind the *Brautwerbung*; the barons have instigated the idea that Marke must marry, in order to oust Tristan as heir to Marke's kingdom. If "the wife" did not materialize, Tristan's life would certainly have been endangered. Loss of *êre* meant isolation from society, and being a meaningless member of society was an untenable situation.

> Die durch die Liebe erzeugte Einheit der Liebenden hebt aber die Hilflosigkeit dieses Doppelindividuums gegenüber der Bedrohung durch die Außenwelt nicht auf, sie wäre nur zu neutralisieren durch einen Akt gegenseitiger Anerkennung der Parteien des Hofes und der Protagonisten. Die Situation wird sich so entwickeln, daß die Anerkennung des Hofes von Tristan und Isolde nur erreicht werden kann durch Entsagung oder scheinbare Entsagung. Die Not der Selbsterhaltung zwingt zur listigen Verleugnung der Liebe, die trotzdem, wenn auch gestört durch den ständigen Einspruch von Recht und höfischer Ehre, weiterbesteht bis zum Zusammenbruch der Ehre, der Vernichtung der physischen Existenz. (LANGER 1974: 30)

LANGER draws on HEGEL for a definition of *Ehre*:

> Das Bedürfnis der Ehre besteht nach Hegel darin, "sich anerkannt, die Unendlichkeit der Person aufgenommen zu sehen in einer anderen Person", Ehre ist deshalb die teilweise Realisation dessen, was die Liebe auf ihre Weise "wahrhaft und total" verwirklicht; denn während in der Liebe "das Höchste die Hingebung des Subjekts an ein Individuum des anderen Geschlechts" ist, so streitet Ehre für die Anerkennung und Unverletzlichkeit des einzelnen Subjekts, sie ist der Panzer, der die verwundbare Selbständigkeit der Individualität schützen soll. Der Ehrlose ist friedlos, vogelfrei. (LANGER 1974: 31)

A. CLOSS maintains that, comparing Thomas and Gottfried, one discovers that Gottfried "was also an outstanding and careful psychologist". Gottfried, he says, depicts the relationship of Tristan and Isolde not only sensually, but spiritually, to the point of mysticism. [CLOSS (ed.) 1944: xlii] Gottfried's concept of love becomes an absolute, signifying the act of love, but also the aesthetic pleasure, the sensuality it provides.

> Die absolute Liebe entwickelt sich zum Identifikationsobjekt, um real nicht Erlebbares im Hören und Erzählen erlebbar zu machen. Der Ausgang der Geschichte [*TRISTAN*] warnt eindringlich davor, die Identifikation in die Realität umzusetzen; sie soll Genuß bleiben und damit auch Flucht des Hörers. (EHRISMANN/KAMINSKY 1976: 242f.)

Gottfried's narrative is traditional, yet he brings a new sense (sensuality) to his discourse. He introduces allegories, "Exkurse", in which he debates e.g. literature and so-doing provides his *TRISTAN* with depth. In his version the actions are well-motivated, and his characters develop, albeit at a subconscious level. While there is, for instance, no proof of love between Tristan and Isolde before the *Minnetrank*, Isolde's glances at Tristan (especially in the bath), her siren-like performance at the trial of the seneschal, subtly infer *interest* on her part in Tristan, which when it becomes full-blown love surprises the reader, yet does not. A similar strategy was employed in the prefiguring story of Riwalin and Blanscheflur (V. 797), where Blanscheflur, too, initiates the love: a sigh and her greeting "ignite" (*enzünten*) him. HERBERT HERZMANN therefore refutes claims by e.g. HAHN and KUHN that Gottfried's characters do not develop, as unjustified.

> Die Gestaltung des Unbewußten mit den für heutige Begriffe völlig unzulänglichen Mitteln legt Zeugnis von Gottfrieds sublimer Kunst der vielschichtigen Darstellungsweise ab. (HERZMANN 1976: 94)

It is difficult for Tristan and Isolde to get out of this "Rollenpsychologie". All over society one has role-play; it must be, because of the different situations encountered in society. Yet one cannot talk of interactionism: a continuous adjusting of a relationship between two persons, as the separate persons act and react to each other and the given situation in which they find themselves. This is too modern a concept for the Middle Ages. One is presented with *outcomes*, the fact of a role, a situation, and not the detailed development(s) giving rise to this situation. Tristan and Isolde remain "static" in their relationship, presenting a new unit, a unit of Tristan und Isolde, Isolde und Tristan - inseparable. *As a unit* they play a "new" role in courtly society.

2 THE *VORGESCHICHTE*: RIWALIN AND BLANSCHEFLUR

2.1 The *Vorgeschichte* as Prefiguration of *Tristanliebe*

The story of the ill-fated love of Tristan and Isolde begins not with the heroes of the novel themselves, but with Tristan's parents. In the love relationship of Riwalin and Blanscheflur, the relationship of Tristan and Isolde and its implication(s) within the courtly society are prefigured. Referring to the parentage of the hero is conventional (topos) in medieval literature, but Gottfried uses this prefiguration to prepare the reader for a greater awareness and understanding of the roles of Tristan and Isolde, their particular dilemma and destiny. Important associations of images are introduced, for example the motifs of love and death, *liebe* und *leid*, illness (wounds) and recovery in the presence of the beloved, the bird and the lime.

The love of Riwalin and Blanscheflur is couched in convention. Riwalin is the typical medieval hero, accomplished in the usual fighting skills, loyal,

brave, noble, with only one flaw in his character - arrogance, self-indulgence (*übermuot*):

> ... daz er ze verre wolte
> in sînes herzen luften sweben
> und niwan nâch sînem willen leben. (262ff.)

Blanscheflur is the traditional beauty without parallel, possessing of all noble and social graces. She fills the role of sister of King Marke to perfection.

The first meeting of Riwalin and Blanscheflur takes place at the traditional "Maifest". All the elements for a successful courtly relationship between the two are there: it is May, springtime, the time for love, Riwalin jousts with unsurpassed excellence, Marke has befriended him, and Blanscheflur's attention is immediately focused on this dashing man. And so it should be, for one took part in the bohort or joust to impress the ladies and the Court in general.

It is Blanscheflur's reaction to Riwalin that is first given: he enters her *thoughts* and *heart*. But she gives no outward indication of this. And possibly her attraction to this man would have remained such,

had *chance* (*Zufall*) not lead him into close proximity:

> dô kam ez *von âventiure* alsô, (translated: Da wollte es der Zufall)
> daz Riwalîn gekêrte dô,
> dâ Blanscheflûr diu schoene saz. (737ff.)

The verbal interchange between Riwalin and Blanscheflur results in an enigmatic comment by Blanscheflur on injury sustained by a "friend" of hers by Riwalin's hand (754f.). This type of arch comment has been encountered in *Cligés*. (JACKSON 1971: 66) Blanscheflur initiates the resultant relationship by adding as he leaves:

> ûz inneclîchem herzen: " ach,
> vriunt lieber, got gesegen dich!" (788f.)

Her sigh and blessing, on analysis, lead Riwalin to the conclusion

> diu zwei diu waeren getân
> durch niht niwan durch minne (804f.)

and immediately this realisation "ignites" (*enzünten*) his love for her. She is crowned Queen of his heart.

> jâ Blanscheflûr und Riwalîn,

der künec, diu süeze künigîn,
die teilten wol gelîche
ir herzen künicrîche ... (813ff.)

Riwalin's flight of fancy introduces a salient motif encountered with Tristan and Isolde: the conflict of an impossible *minne*-relationship with courtly society. In his heart, "in Riwalînes herzen lant" (810) they might be able to don the roles of king and queen, but in social reality, Riwalin is of a lower rank and, therefore, not permitted to even woo her, although nothing prevents such a marriage legally. (Riwalin would gain status by marrying the sister of a king. This is what Rual considers when advocating marriage in 1617f.)

A second motif, that of the bird ensnared on a lime-twig (846) depicts Riwalin's tussle with his own thoughts and inability to escape them. It is an image often encountered in medieval literature as an expression of man's powerlessness in the face of love. Although he may fight it - as the bird does the lime - it is to no avail, and so, exhausted by the struggle he succumbs to his fate and accepts the role of the bird: "sô ziuhet in diu süeze nider/ der gelîmeten minne". (866f.)

In the case of Tristan and Isolde, however, *she* is the ensnared bird:

> dô sî den lîm erkande
> der gespenstegen minne
> und sach wol, daz ir sinne
> dar în versenket wâren,
> si begunde stades vâren,
> si wolte ûz unde dan.
> sô clebete ir ie der lîm an.
> der zôch si wider unde nider. (11792ff.)

Blanscheflur also wrestles with her emotions until she recognizes her love for Riwalin (1064ff.). Interesting (significant) imagery that is applied throughout their initial progression to love, and that occurs also in the mental deliberations of Tristan and Isolde, is that of *fire*: Liebesfeuer.

a) The initial sigh and blessing of Blanscheflur "enzunte ouch sîne sinne" (806).

b) The more he considers the possibility and accepts love as the explanation, the more the fire is kindled:

> dô kam diu rehte minne,
> diu wâre viuraerinne
> und stiez ir seneviuwer an,
> daz viur, dâ von sîn herze enbran, ... (929ff.)

c) Blanscheflur recognizes the love affecting her and gazes longingly at Riwalin until he feels her glances and

> ... alrêrste enbran sîn herzegir, ... (1086)

d) He returns her gazes until both are sure of the other´s feelings, and

> daz selbe enzunte ir beider sin. (1111)

This "Liebesfeuer" has the potential of nourishment, as according to a proverb:

> swâ liep in liebes ouge siht,
> daz ist der minnen viure
> ein wahsendiu stiure. (1116ff.)

Echoes of this fire are found in the relationship of Tristan and Isolde (e.g. 13039ff.). Love is their *nourishment*, too, as they require nothing else in the Minnegrotte (*der wuocher, den daz ouge bar, / daz was ir zweier lîpnar* 16817ff.).

There are similar images, yet vast differences in the actual relationships of Tristan/Isolde and

Riwalin/Blanscheflur. Riwalin and Blanscheflur do not contemplate the future, the possible dangers inherent in their relationship.

Having recognized their love for each other, Riwalin without further thought rushes off into battle, and, as though weakened by his passion, is wounded. We read of Blanscheflur's anguish (1165ff.). Although Marke and many women weep and bemoan Riwalin's fate, it is Blanscheflur, "iemer eine" (*einzig und allein*) (1165), who expresses her profound grief, especially in private. The way in which she beats her breast in anguish prepares the reader in some part for her extreme grief on learning of his death.

Although Blanscheflur's love is conventional in the literary sense, representing a fictitious ideal, her behaviour introduces a new element - an inner awareness. She breaks convention by assuming the role of a *beggar-woman* (which she is: beggar for love) and by gaining entrance to the ailing Riwalin in the role of a *woman-physician*.

Behind a locked door, with only her nurse in the vicinity, Blanscheflur meets her love. Immediately she is in his presence, she becomes one with him in mental empathy, suffering in like manner.

> ir rôsevarwer munt wart bleich, (also a topos of
> ir lîch diu kam vil garwe love)
> von der viel liehten varwe,
> diu dâ vor an ir lîbe lac. ...
> sus lac si in der unmaht ...
> gelîche als ob si waere tôt. (1298 - 1307)

Her kisses then bring *him* to life and their love is consummated, thereby filling a mutual desire: "daz ir beider wille ergienc" (1323). From this first union a child is conceived, life. But, we are informed, Riwalin (because of Blanscheflur) is now near death. It is only by the help of God that he survives. The motif life/death is in this way present at the very moment of Tristan´s conception.

Blanscheflur and Riwalin enter a stage of blind happiness. Although pregnant, Blanscheflur is blind to the immanent death contained in that fact.

> weder kint noch tôdes ungeschiht
> enwiste s´an ir lîbe niht: ... (1347f.)

They only know that:

> sus was er sî und sî was er.
> er was ir und sî was sîn.
> dâ Blanscheflûr, dâ Riwalîn,
> dâ Riwalîn, dâ Blanscheflûr,
> dâ beide, da lêal amûr. (1358 - 1362)

One cannot but be reminded of the Prologue and its reference to the "vornehmen Liebenden" with their perfect passion

> ein senedaere unde ein senedaerîn,
> ein man ein wîp, ein wîp ein man,
> Tristan Isolt, Isolt Tristan. (128 - 130)

and in the *Vorgeschichte* recognize the indicators pointing to this union some 1200 lines later.

Yet all too soon the union is interrupted by battle. Riwalin assumes the role of warrior and plans to set off without a thought of what it might mean to Blanscheflur. Here his "übermuot" (268), the flaw in his character mentioned initially - to follow his every whim regardless -, is evident. It is this recklessness that will bring about his demise. Blanscheflur cannot live without him and dies. (We

will later ascertain that Tristan and Isolde cannot exist without each other. Tristan does not go into battle for its own sake after the *Minnetrank*. The battles he does fight are directly or indirectly related to his love for Isolde.)

2.2 *Minne* and Society

It is interesting to note with KLAUS MORSCH (1984: 75) that the lovers were blissfully happy in what he calls their "Liebesseligkeit", and that there was no question of marriage, his being of a lower social standing. Love did not (was not permitted to) form part of marriage, the latter merely serving the aim of procreation.

Unlike Tristan and Isolde and Erec and Enite, Riwalin and Blanscheflur never withdraw socially, but find complete happiness "swenne sî mit vuogen / ir state in ein getruogen, ..." (1367f.). Already there is a hint that *decency*, honour, is of great importance and to be preserved at all costs. Had the pregnancy not occurred, one might have concluded that they could

have continued their "affair" without loss of honour. Their´s was not a love-triangle and "sich verligen" was not their sin. But sorrow/joy was present and Tristan had to be born: not *of* convention, but *despite* it. Therefore Riwalin must die and Blanscheflur perish.

The immanent departure of Riwalin, who thought to leave with mere words of farewell, opens Blanscheflur´s eyes to the reality of her situation. Such is the shock to her that she faints and it is he who has to revive her in a manner reminiscent of when *he* was ill and she passed him her strength. (cf. 1292ff. and 1436ff.). Blanscheflur enlightens him as to her pregnancy and the probable consequences for her should her condition become known. Not only does she face possible death in child-birth, or at the hands of her unforgiving brother, Marke, but worse still, the loss of honour and possessions should King Marke disinherit her - a fate worse than death. She would be an outcast with a child who would be raised as a bastard, with no paternal help. Magnanimously, Blanscheflur maintains that far worse than her fate

would be the loss of honour to Cornwall and England. She pleads for help.

Gottfried very clearly indicates what issues are at stake here, giving distinct indications of what could thus befall Tristan and Isolde should *their* liaison be proven. King and country are never to be shamed. The worst that could befall any courtier would be excommunication with loss of honour and possessions. We shall see that this is Tristan and Isolde's biggest dread. So important is *honour* to them that they will murder to preserve it. This conflict of *minne* versus *êre* as reflected in Blanscheflur's fears is seen enlarged with Tristan and Isolde, although the relationship of Riwalin and Blanscheflur is only a *foretaste* of the conflict Tristan and Isolde face. The conflict of friendship and loyalty and the love triangle are not there. "Durch ihre Flucht und ihre Eheschließung umgehen Riwalin und Blanscheflur diese Konfrontation" (MORSCH 1984: 147).

Riwalin's role in the *Vorgeschichte* is extremely conventional and other than being the hero's father and imparting his highly developed sense of honour

and personal beauty to his son, he does not stand out in this love relationship in the way that Tristan does in his. But then, as mentioned, there is little conflict for him: he is not in danger as a result of his affair with the king's sister, he does not stand to lose *triuwe* and *êre* in social terms, and can return home - with or without Blanscheflur - with very little problem. He is presented as a man of quality, nobility - a figure worthy of being the father of Tristan - and perfect in all but one characteristic: *mâze*,

> vertragen, daz doch vil manic man
> in michelem gewalte kan,
> dar an gedâhte er selten. (269ff.)

"Riwalin fehlt die wichtigste Herrschertugend: die abwägende, die Folgen einer Handlung bedenkende Klugheit." (HOLLANDT 1967: 19). His *übermuot* without deliberation is the cause of his death, indirectly Blanscheflur's death and the "shadow of death" in which Tristan walks. HOLLANDT maintains that Riwalin's "Fehler" is "persönlich-individueller Art. Es handelt sich hier um ein Unvermögen, das der Dichter - anders als Hartmann [*Arme Heinrich* - RF] - nicht ontologisch, sondern psychologisch motiviert."

(HOLLANDT 1967: 19f.). Only *he* possesses this flaw. Tristan does not inherit it.

Blanscheflur is the initiator of the love-"crisis" in the *Vorgeschichte*. She (with the help of *Zufall*) "ignites" Riwalin with her gazes and dialectics. She enters the room where he lies ill, where the fires of passion consume them both, resulting in Tristan´s conception.

> Hätte Blanscheflur nicht, von der Minne getrieben, unbekümmert um alle Etikette, in listiger Verkleidung den verwundeten Geliebten aufgesucht - Tristan wäre nie geboren. Damit steht Tristans Mutter von allen Romanfiguren Isolde am nächsten. Wie diese unterstellt sie sich ganz dem Gesetz der Minne, das ihr zur obersten Autorität wird, selbst auf die Gefahr hin, daß sie dadurch mit der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung in Konflikt gerät (1185ff.). (HOLLANDT 1967: 21)

(Isolde usually initiates the action, too).

Unlike Tristan and Isolde, Riwalin and Blanscheflur are not soul-mates, sharing no bonds of intellectual and aesthetic depth. They do experience the heights of passion of the illicit relationship, but they do not reflect on it as Tristan and Isolde do. They conduct their affair in blind bliss - yet with

decorum (*Anstand*). The gazes transferred in public foreshadow those that Tristan and Isolde share but are of a lesser magnitude and seemingly do not offend.

2.3 A New Dimension: Internalisation of Emotions

Riwalin does not live or die by this love for Blanscheflur. He lives for the moment, be it with Blanscheflur or in battle. Riwalin is typical of the medieval man who loves a woman, but then has to leave her for the battle-field. His thirst for revenge (battle) comes between them. Gottfried talks of Riwalin's childish rashness that caused him to war against his own happiness:

> ez kam von dem geleite
> sîner kintheite.
> daz er in sîner blüenden jugent
> mit jugentlîcher hêrren tugent
> wider sîn selbes saelden streit,
> daz geschuof sîn spilndiu kintheit,
> diu mit ir übermuote
> in sînem herzen bluote.
> er tete vil rehte als elliu kint,
> diu selten vorbesihtic sint.
> er nam vür sich niht sorgen war,
> wan lebete und lebete und lebete êt dar.
>
> (293ff.)

The question of *êre* is raised with the news of Riwalin's immanent departure. Riwalîn, concerned only with his own *êre* and not primarily that of his country is confronted now with Blanscheflur's potential loss of *êre* and more importantly that of Marke's country. Death is a distinct possibility for Blanscheflur, but of less importance than loss of *êre*. ["swem nie von liebe leit geschach, / dem geschach ouch liep von liebe nie." (204f.), Gottfried comments in the Prologue; love at any price.]

Riwalin is prepared to stay with Blanscheflur and help her through what comes, or to take her away with him. There is no mention of marriage. Yet he promises her

> mîn herze und allen mînen muot.
> leit unde liep, übel unde guot
> und allez daz, daz iu geschiht,
> dâ von enscheide ich mich niht.
> dâ wil ich iemer wesen bî, ... (1523ff.)

bringing to mind the oaths of the modern day marriage ceremony: "... with all my worldly goods I thee endow ... in sickness and in health ... ", etc. Hatto comments in his translation that: "In the eyes of the law, Rivalin and Blancheflor had consummated a

clandestine, runaway love-match which needed only to be declared in church to obtain full validity." (HATTO 1985: 62 footnote) Riwalin promises Blanscheflur a future together, giving her all he owns and himself forever (1539f.).

It is Rual who realises the value of marriage between Riwalin and Blanscheflur. He feels strongly about a public church ceremony. Love is not the motivating force here. It is political. By marrying the sister of King Marke, Riwalin would attain higher social status (1617f.), honour, esteem and joy. Love does not seek its existence in marriage. They do not marry for love, but for personal (Blanscheflur) and political (Riwalin) expedience. Whether *love in marriage* would have been exceptional in their case cannot be said, as he leaves for battle immediately after the ceremony and both die soon after.

Blanscheflur's lament on receiving the news of Riwalin's death reveals a passion and introversion unique to Gottfried. It is new in medieval literature, and yet not new. Gottfried uses

convention as "a vehicle for the expression of human passion". (JAEGER 1977: 22)

JAEGER provides evidence that the courtly norm demanded "extravagant shows of sorrow". (JAEGER 1977: 24) Parallels in literature show that Blanscheflur's dry-eyed grief is unique. Herzeloyde's grief was unrestrained, public, almost wild. She tears her clothing (110,14). Enite, on believing Erec dead, will not be comforted, refuses to eat, and shows uncontrolled grief:

> der tisch wart von ir ougen naz
> al des endes dâ si saz.
> von jâmer want si ir hende,
> diu vil ellende,
> ir klage was vil staete. (Erec: 6438ff.)

(Also Laudine on Iwein's death acts similarly).

On the death of Morolt, Queen and young Isolde show no restraint in their grief (7165ff.). Jaeger maintains that Gottfried had a dramatic purpose, as suddenly, the frenzied sorrow is interrupted by awareness of the fatal splinter in the sword.

> Gottfried was not so concerned about correct behaviour or even control and propriety in style

> in the depiction of Blanscheflur's lament as he was about the drama of the scene and the psychology of his characters. (JAEGER 1977: 31)

What is Gottfried's purpose in breaking with convention and portraying a Blanscheflur so stunned with grief that she does not cry at all?

Blanscheflur exhibited both public and private grief on hearing of Riwalin's near-death after the "Mai-fest". Only she, we are told, it was

> diu mit durnehtem muote,
> mit ougen und mit herzen
> ir herzeliebes smerzen
> beclagete und ouch beweinete; (1168ff.)

Her private grief, too, is unrestrained and in keeping with courtly etiquette:

> und aber, dô sî vereinete
> und sî ze clagene state gewan,
> dô gie si sich mit handen an:
> die sluoc si tûsent stunde dar
> und niuwan dar, da'z ir dâ war;
> da engegen, dâ daz herze lac,
> dar tete diu schoene manegen slac. (1172ff.)

JAEGER maintains that although one was expected to show grief openly (also seen as a sign of the high esteem in which one held the deceased) the Middle

Ages also recognized a Christian call for *mâze* in mourning. This was based on the biblical premise (I Thess. 4: 13-14) that the deceased is with God, better off, and that mourning was hypocrisy, questioning the will of God. St Augustine called not for a ban on mourning, but for moderation.

Blanscheflur's grief the first time (when Riwalin lies wounded) seems to comply with this, as in public she is more controlled than in private, where she has only God as her witness.

> Although Blanscheflur's gestures are as extreme as those of any courtly damsel ..., Gottfried lifts the lament out of the courtly context by isolating Blanscheflur; she does not make a public display of her grief. (JAEGER 1977: 30)

On hearing the news of Riwalin's death, however, Blanscheflur is so deeply affected that she shows no emotion at all. The extreme unconventionality of her grief is questioned by Gottfried himself:

> jâ got hêrre, wie kam daz,
> daz dâ niht wart geweinet? ...
> geclagete s'aber ir hêrren iht
> mit clageworten? ... (1728-36)

With apparently unusual authorial insight and empathy for his time Gottfried explains the emotional state of Blanscheflur in this situation. Her behaviour is a comment on the love she and Riwalin shared before this. It was her reason for life.

> sî bewârte al der werlde wol,
> daz ir sîn tôt ze herzen gie. (1724f) (*daß sein Tod ihren Lebensnerv getroffen hatte* = translation by KROHN 1981)

With great artistry and a pulsing "Leben - lebendig - kein Leben (i.e. Tod)" throughout, Gottfried makes it quite clear that her behaviour is internally motivated:

> dâ was ir herze ersteinet.
> da enwas niht lebenes inne
> niwan diu lebende minne
> und daz vil lebelîche leit,
> daz lebende ûf ir leben streit. (1730ff.)

ALOIS WOLF comes to the conclusion that Gottfried was answering the aesthetic and thematic demands of the story.

> ... für Gottfried geht es um die Erschließung des menschlichen Herzens ... (WOLF 1966: 78)

It is as though her emotions have dried up. Her suffering is internal. It is notable that years later Tristan, on hearing about his father, Riwalin's, death, reacts similarly. While Marke and all the courtiers openly mourn the death, Tristan is stunned into silence:

> niwan Tristan al eine,
> der enmohte es niht beclagen,
> swes er dâ gehôrte sagen.
> in kam diu rede ze gâhes an. (4266ff.)

A case of like mother, like son? Following this, Tristan is confused, trying to resolve having two "fathers", but simultaneously having no father (4362ff.), and gradually he comes to grips with his sorrow. But inside, the pain festers and turns to a need for revenge. To seek revenge is traditional, but Gottfried adds that something extra that makes his characters appear almost human. In conversation with Morgan prior to the fight, Tristan accuses Morgan that:

> haetet ir nu vuoge unde sin,
> sô leide als ir mir habet getân,
> ir möhtet mich doch rede erlân,
> diu niuwe swaere wecket
> und alte schulde recket. (5420ff.)

It is as though his killing Morgan shortly after learning of his natural father's death rids him of all the bottled up emotions. It is emotionally understandable behaviour.

But, to return to Blanscheflur in her stunned grief. She sinks to the ground, dry-eyed and silent and tosses and turns for four days until she gives birth to an infant son. She dies and the child lives. Jaeger sees the birth of Tristan as a form of "catharsis", getting rid of suppressed emotions:

> The lament that seemed to die with Blanscheflur's heart breaks forth in another form, in her labor pains. A close look at the description of Tristan's birth shows that Gottfried has transformed the act of giving birth into an extravagent lament by applying to the former vocabularly appropriate to the latter ... The intransitive verb *quelen* (1744) does not express physical pain in Gottfried's vocabulary, but rather mental anguish, of the sort caused by love (19386) or by grief (5095) ... (1746) describes the gestures of extravagant lament rather than the writhing of a woman in difficult labor ... In the mind of Gottfried's reader there must have been a subtle fusion between Blanscheflur's pains of childbirth and an extravagant act of lamentation. (JAEGER 1977: 34ff.)

What is significant in the two ideas being blended is that intense sorrow and the birth of Tristan are so

inextricably bound. The child is born out of sorrow. For this reason he is named *Tristan*.

> ... During those four days of her difficult labor a fusion occurs between the emotions in her heart and the child in her womb, so that Tristan enters the world suffused with his fate. (JAEGER 1977: 37)

One must not forget that within the frozen heart of Blanscheflur, amidst the sorrow, love resides - "lebendige Liebe" (1732). Tristan, therefore, not only inherits sorrow, but love, too, is a driving force in Tristan's life. *erbeminne* (19179) thus has a literal sense. He inherits *minne* as well as *triure*. Both are present at the moment of his birth.

> liep unde leit diu wâren ie
> an minnen ungescheiden. (Prologue, 206f.)

> Für Tristan schicksalsbestimmend ist: daß seine Eltern sich ohne Rücksicht auf gesellschaftliche Schranken, außerhalb des vorgeschriebenen Weges lieben und damit die Minne ihm als *sin erbevogetin* (11765) zuteil wird: daß er auf dem Todeslager des Vaters gezeugt und auf dem der Mutter geboren wird, wodurch eine Verdoppelung des Todesmotivs einerseits und eine Dialektik von Freude und Leid andererseits in den Ursprung Tristans gelegt wird. (JUPÉ 1976: 37)

The *Vorgeschichte* is an integral part of Gottfried's novel, providing an important link between the

Prologue and the main story. Here themes and images mentioned in the Prologue are illustrated in a love relationship which foreshadows the all-encompassing aesthetic relationship between Tristan and Isolde. We have discovered that the woman has a key role in these relationships, influencing the conduct of the hero(es) as she "manipulates" him emotionally. I do not agree with JUPÉ that it is a pre-meditated manipulation ("list"). He sees Blanscheflur not as a woman who, driven by love breaks all the social laws, but as one who takes her love and life in her own hands. (JUPÉ 1976: 38) He presents her as a calculating female who systematically sets about wooing Riwalin, starting with her dialectic wordplay. (JUPÉ 1976: 41) By contrast he feels that Riwalin is not intelligent and is manipulated by Blanscheflur.

Although I would substitute "to an extent" for "totally", the following comment by JACKSON is of importance:

> Gottfried's conception of the feminine element of the love relationship is entirely different from that found in the courtly romance. He rejects totally the idea of love service and the subordination of the man to the woman and substitutes for it a partnership which is based on sexual attraction and recognition in the

> other of the fulfillment (*sic*) of a need ... the concentration of the poet is ... on the exploration of the continuation of love and its ultimate fulfillment (*sic*). (JACKSON 1971: 64)

One can discern Gottfried's understanding of and empathy for his characters in the way he takes (unique) care in portraying in detail the finer nuances of *how* they fall in love, how they think and feel, or do not, the "new person" each one becomes in his relationship with the other, the contrasts and comparisons. In respect of the latter: similarities are evident in the relationships of the parents and Tristan and Isolde. Yet much is revealed through the different treatment each relationship receives.

"Freude und Leid waren schon immer mit dem Begriff der Liebe untrennbar verbunden" (KROHN translates 206f.). In both relationships (Blanscheflur/Riwalin's and Tristan/Isolde's) we see this paradox *Freude/Leid* at work. They form a unit just as life/death are a unit. Blanscheflur's lament, however, reveals a personal anguish that is more important for what it means to her than what it means to the two of them as a unit. Indeed "er (was) sî und sî was er" (1358), but the mystical union that Tristan and Isolde share,

the "Doppelindividuum" *they* form ["die durch die Liebe erzeugte Einheit der Liebenden" (LANGER 1974: 30)] is not there. Tristan and Isolde "wurden ein und einvalt, / die zwei und zwîvalt wâren ê" (11716f.).

Riwalin and Blanscheflur's relationship is based on physical attraction. As we will discuss later, Tristan and Isolde's initial attraction lies (perhaps unconsciously) in the shared music, languages, aesthetic appreciation and finally the physical. Says JACKSON:

> In spite of ... resemblances and echoes, the process of falling in love is totally different for the two couples. Riwalin and Blanscheflur follow the conventional pattern of falling in love at their first meeting. Tristan and Isolde on the contrary, show none of the accepted signs of love. Riwalin and Blanscheflur fall in love as a result of the visual impact of each upon the other ... instinctive sensuous physical attraction ... The first impact on (Isolde) is that of a man of music (7809ff.). (JACKSON 1971: 70f.)

Isolde inspires Tristan so that he plays as never before. (Riwalin's fighting and whole being is no different after meeting Blanscheflur).

> He does not realize it, nor does Isolde, but the music he plays will bring them together. It is to this purpose and no other that the next scene

> [Tantris to educate Isolde] is devoted, for Tristan and Isolde do not fall in love as a result of visual impact but as a consequence of a developing common artistic sensibility." (JACKSON 1971: 71)

The *Vorgeschichte* could almost be seen as "an introduction to the real thing", as though Gottfried needs to gradually prepare his readers for his "new morality". Couched in convention, concerned with honour and decorum, Riwalin and Blanscheflur show no evidence of role conflicts, until the time of Riwalin's departure. (That the baby would soon have caused a conflict anyway, is irrelevant.) For them there is an alternative, a solution. But society "intervenes" indirectly. So strong is the power of convention, the pressure of going to battle, that he leaves his new wife and goes into battle from which he never returns. They never experience the spiritual love that Tristan and Isolde do. When Blanscheflur realises the depth of her feelings, the ideal love there could have been, it is too late.

3 YOUNG ISOLDE: THE MAKING OF A WOMAN: HERITAGE, EDUCATION, ROLE-MODELS

3.1 Education: Aesthetic Foundations and "morâliteit"

The title of the book is *TRISTAN*, yet the Prologue clearly declares the author's intention of writing a love story about an inextricably bound unit:

> ein senedaere unde ein senedaerîn,
> ein man ein wîp, ein wîp ein man,
> Tristan Isolt, Isolt Tristan. (128ff.)

It is only some 7 716 lines into the story that we are finally introduced to the Isolde that has been mentioned so often in the Prologue and whose love with Tristan has been hinted at and foreshadowed in the *Vorgeschichte*. She is introduced as a girl - "die erwünscheten maget" - who is educated, her tutor having been her mother's tutor, a priest. (V. 7717ff.)

We do not share in her development from birth as we do with Tristan. Her story begins with her first education - and perhaps there is a Gottfriedian

purpose to that, as this is the level on which she and Tristan first meet and from which their mutual aesthetic sense and shared "identity" develop.

As with Tristan (2056) from the moment she is old enough to learn, she applies herself to books and music, especially to playing a stringed instrument (7721ff.). Other than this, we know nothing about her, apart from her being an only child (7720).

Their future involvement is hinted at from the moment she first meets him face to face.

> daz wâre insigel der minne,
> mit dem sîn herze sider wart
> versigelt unde vor verspart
> aller der werlt gemeiner
> niuwan ir al einer, ... (7812ff.)

Although she and all the others are charmed by his playing - as never before (7820f.) - the stench from his wound is so overpowering that no one can stand being in the same room with him for any length of time.

It is interesting that Queen Isolde, on "commissioning" Tantris to teach her daughter, seems to give

him carte blanche on what he should teach her. Whatever skills or knowledege he possesses he is free to teach Isolde. Love too? In exchange the Queen guarantees to heal him from his fatal wound.

Tristan in his acceptance of the Queen's offer refers to young Isolde as "iuwer tohter die maget" (7868). In almost all references to Isolde she is described as young, a child, a girl. Significantly it is only after her liaison with Tristan following the *Minnetrank* that she is called "vrouwe" (12124).

Isolde is an excellent pupil, having a basic knowledge on which to build, and quickly masters the arts of languages, reading and music that Tristan teaches her. During this time Tantris plays the role of "ir meister der spilman" (8000). In this capacity he, not her mother, not a woman, teaches her the all important courtly qualities of "morâliteit". Gottfried is, according to W. T. H JACKSON the first to use this term:

> The word is almost certainly derived from the Latin *moralitas*, which does not mean "morality" but "state of mind", "character". Boethius had noted in his work *De re musica* how the *moralitas* of a person determines the effect which music

> will have on him and this is an opinion with which Gottfried undoubtedly agrees ... (JACKSON 1971: 77)

> under aller dirre lêre
> gab er ir eine unmüezekeit,
> die heizen wir morâliteit. (8002ff.)

This art ("diu kunst") teaches "schoene site" (8005), is "saelic unde reine" (8009) and is in accordance with God and the world (8011).

> diu kunst diu lêret schoene site.
> dâ solten alle vrouwen mite
> in ir jugent unmüezic wesen.
> morâliteit daz süeze lesen
> deist saelic unde reine.
> ir lêre hât gemeine
> mit der werlde und mit gote.
> si lêret uns in ir gebote
> got unde der werlde gevallen.
> s´ist edelen herzen allen
> ze einer ammen gegeben,
> daz sî ir lîpnar unde ir leben
> suochen in ir lêre.
> wan sîne hânt guot noch êre,
> ezn lêre sî morâliteit.
> diz was ir meiste unmüezekeit
> der jungen küniginne. (8005ff.)

In this, too, Isolde proves to be an avid pupil, employing "ir sinne und ir gedanke" (8022f.) so that:

> hie von sô wart si wol gesite,
> schône unde reine gemuot,
> ir gebaerde süeze unde guot." (8024ff.)

The image of the wet-nurse that provides nourishment and life is powerful. It brings forth the highest qualities of decorum and honour. It involves both spirit and thought. Extraordinary is Gottfried's giving of this important educational task to Tristan, a man. This is not a quality usually ascribed to a man, certainly not inferred (i.e. in other examples) by Gottfried, and one can only assume that Tristan acquired his knowledge of the art from Floraete or books, perhaps by observation.

> (Tristan) unterweist ... auch die Königstochter Isolt nach den Prinzipien, die seine Persönlichkeit prägen und seine Weltsicht tragen: Man soll sich um *schoene site* und höfisches Auftreten bemühen, um vor den Augen der Öffentlichkeit des Hofes bestehen zu können, man soll aus seinen wahren Wünschen ein Geheimnis machen, sie verdrängen und geradezu vergessen, seine Bestimmung in der Öffentlichkeit suchen und diese Orientierung als neue wahre Wünsche internalisieren. Unter Tristans Anleitung bildet sich Isolt so vor allem in *morâliteit* (8008). (MORSCH 1984: 162)

It is a very important facet of courtly demeanour that he teaches her, one that they will often call upon in their future endeavours to keep up the pretence of honour. Ironically it is the *morâliteit* that he taught her, that is threatened by their later deception.

"Morâliteit" is "a state of mind". Tristan and his pupil Isolde would have shared an unusually intimate period of instruction in this regard. In any interaction where both are involved, they would thus have a heightened awareness of "morâliteit" or the lack thereof.

"Morâliteit" requires an inner change of *spirit* and *thought* ("sinne", "gedanke"). And in this she was tutored by her future lover, Tristan. Whether one is to view this ironically, because she later fails to "please God and the world" (8013) (albeit never said in so many words), or significantly, because it is HIS (Tristan´s) "spirit" and "thought" that she acquires, is a matter for debate. Perhaps both viewpoints are valid. What is certain is that she excels at her art and pleases the Court greatly. Yet now, due to Tristan´s training in "morâliteit", she (significantly) becomes the *siren*, magnetising all who hear her, "als der agestein die barken" (8110):

> Wem mag ich sî gelîchen
> die schoenen, saelderîchen
> wan den Syrênen eine ... (8085ff.)

There is no indication from the text how Tristan reacted to her. Having more than satisfied the Queen with his educating of her daughter, he prepares to leave with honour (*Anstand*). His reasons for leaving are clear: (a) as Tantris there is the ever-present danger of their finding out who he is, and (b) he has to return to his liege lord, Marke.

Queen Isolde accepts Tristan's explanation of a wife at home who, believing him dead, might remarry. She gives him two Mark in red gold for his journey and sustenance, from Isolde.

In this entire first segment dealing with Tristan and Isolde together (Tantris and Isolde), we do not once hear a word from Isolde. Neither are we informed of the thoughts of either, the influence (if any) of one on the other, or given any hint of a spark of interest between them. We are told how Isolde captivated the entire Court and all who heard her, how she excelled in all she studied, that Tristan/ Tantris was an excellent teacher, but not once is mention made of any exchange between them, nor is any hinted at. Tantris plays only the roles of *Spielmann*

and tutor, Isolde only that of dutiful princess and student.

I cannot agree with JACKSON (1971) when he hints at more to Tristan's inspired playing before the Court than his "hoping that a piece of effective harping will cause her mother, the older Isolde, to cure his wound ... The music *which Isolde inspires* is of a higher quality than anything he had played before." (JACKSON 1971: 71 - my emphasis). If one reads the lines in context, it is repeatedly stated that his inspired playing was from HOPE that his misfortunes were now over (7823), with the intention of gaining their FAVOUR (7830f.), which in the long run could only be to his credit, as he was their enemy in disguise!

That in the subsequent education music of exceptional quality is shared by Tristan and Isolde, and that it is this factor that will eventually bring them together, is significant and, as Jackson says: "It is to this purpose and no other that the next scene is devoted, for Tristan and Isolde do not fall in love as a result of visual impact but as a consequence of

a developing common artistic sensibility." (JACKSON 1971: 71) At this stage the foundation of a future aesthetic awareness is laid, a fact of which both are unaware.

A comparison of Tristan the Artist (3547ff.), and Isolde the Artist (8042ff.) reveals a similarity in audience reaction to the unparalleled artistry:

> do begunde er suoze doenen ...
> daz maneger dâ stuont unde saz,
> der sîn selbes namen vergaz.
> dâ begunden herze und ôren
> tumben unde tôren
> und ûz ir rehte wanken.
> dâ wurden gedanken
> in maneger wîse vür brâht. (3588ff.)

They are filled with longing and envy him his art (3704ff.). Even King Marke is envious and in order to "have" this art requests Tristan to stay with him as companion and entertainer:

> ... Tristan, hoere her:
> an dir ist allez, des ich ger.
> dû kanst allez, daz ich wil:
> jagen, sprâche, seitspil.
> nu suln ouch wir gesellen sîn,
> dû der mîn und ich der dîn. (3721ff.)

Yet he will never be able to share, to have, what Tristan has in his music, languages and book knowledge. No other courtier possesses these skills, and although various courtiers can converse with him in their mother tongue, no one is as capable of understanding/speaking all of them as Tristan is.

This then is the man who becomes the tutor of the young Isolde. She is in her own right exceptionally well-educated for a girl of the times. She has proven aptitude before Tristan even appears on the scene. This makes his task all the easier. They are immediately attuned. She is the one who may share his art.

Her performances before the Court draw the same reaction (virtually word for word - cf. 3596f. and 8078f.) that Tristan's did.

> wan von ir wart manc herze vol
> mit senelîcher trahte.
> von ir wart maneger slahte
> gedanke und ahte vür brâht.
> durch sî wart wunder gedâht ... (8076ff.)

Isolde becomes a siren that deprives her audience of all rational thought. This she has only attained

SINCE having Tristan as her tutor. From him she has gained this added dimension that is unique to him. It stands to reason then to conclude that Isolde has the "allez, des ich ger" from Tristan that Marke so deeply desired (3722). He set out to teach her all he could and, at her mother's invitation, anything else he knew (7851ff.).

> So far as an ordinary courtly audience is concerned, music of this power is an incomprehensible force - and it is this music, not that of Mark's court-musician or Isolde's tutor, which Tristan teaches to Isolde.
>
> The most significant fact is that she was able to learn it at all. It is hardly likely that any others in the courtly audience could have done so and, as we shall see, quite certain that Isolde White Hands could not. Tristan did indeed teach her to play better, to understand new forms of music which had not yet reached Ireland from France and new theories which were being developed there. Yet the greatest gift he imparted was again an irrational and intangible one - the power to make an audience forget itself, its history, its prejudices, and hand itself over to the judgment of the musician. (JACKSON 1971: 73)

As noted above, Tristan's reaction to his pupil Isolde is not overtly indicated, nor her reaction to him. The conventional reaction of the man to the woman is left out. There *is* delayed reaction, however, on the part of Tristan, for when he gets

back to Marke, and all have marvelled at his fortune in outwitting his enemy and actually being healed by her own hand, he is finally asked about Isolde. His extolling her virtues and beauty is mostly conventional; her beauty is unparalleled and surpasses that of Helen of Troy - an image that is quite usual in medieval literature (KROHN 1981: 99). Isolde radiates a glow like the sun (an image that will recur). (8253ff.)

It is only Isolde's *outer* appearance that Tristan describes. Marke and his court had been extremely taken with Tristan's artistry and extensive knowledge of music and languages. One would have thought that having been her tutor for six months Tristan would have referred to *her* exceptional talents musically and intellectually. Could it be that subconsciously he does not want to share that part of Isolde with people who could not possibly appreciate it? Or is it merely that he plays the role of returning adventurer giving only the conventional report and nothing more? Maybe, as Jackson suggests "Tristan knows what will appeal to Mark's court" (JACKSON 1971: 78). Tristan's unbelieveable skills are hard enough to credit, but

the same from a woman! An educated woman was unheard of and unacceptable.

3.2 Isolde: A Social Pawn

It is ironic that the motivation for the wooing-expedition is not the traditional one of political expediency or procreation, but envy. Marke, on his own for most of his life, had in effect shared his power with his *massenîe*, until Tristan came along. The Tristan that they all accepted and admired becomes a threat to them the moment that Marke accepts him as his nephew and he changes roles from *Spielmann* to knight. He is now a worthy heir to the kingdom. In order to get rid of him (their mocking laughing at how "Tantris" fooled Queen Isolde is now rueful if not self-deprecating) they seize on the idea of the wooing-expedition. At best Tristan will get killed on the way, at least the bride he brings Marke will provide a son or daughter (girls could be heirs to thrones) to usurp Tristan as heir.

Marke is happy in his role of bachelor-king and does not see the necessity for an heir, having Tristan.

Tristan, in fear of his life, however, persuades Marke to consider the suggestion. It is only now that Marke consults the barons that young Isolde is mentioned as the possible bride:

> möhte ez gesîn, diu schoene Îsôt
> diu gezaeme im wol ze wîbe
> an gebürte, an tugende, an lîbe,
> und statten ouch den rât alsô. (8454ff.)

The political motive is three-fold. Tristan will be ousted as heir to Cornwall, the marriage will improve relations between Ireland and Cornwall, and as "an Isôte eine g'erbet sint./ sî ist ir einegez kint" (8503f.). Marke stands to inherit Ireland eventually.

Clearly there is no love-match implied with the marriage of Marke and Isolde. Gottfried makes it quite clear that the role of wooer is the *modus operandi* for getting Tristan back to Ireland to serve the purpose of the plot. He derisively refers to the other sources of *Tristan* that use the swallow which brought a hair of Isolde back to Ireland as means of focusing Marke's attention on the beautiful Isolde his nephew had extolled:

> weiz got, hie spellet sich der leich,

hie lispet daz maere. (8614f.)

It is as though Gottfried cannot credit the Tristan who is so educated with aimless sailing of the seas without knowing where he is. *His* Tristan is certain of his role and heads straight for Ireland. The barons even depend on Tristan´s "witze" (8673) to save them. It is his knowledge of the language too that will provide entry to Ireland (8700f.).

This time he plays the role of a merchant, using "eine marc von rôtem golde" per day to pay King Gurmun for ensuring his safety. Could these be the two Mark received from Isolde on his former departure that he now hands back? For on the third day the Queen vows that she will protect him (9545ff.) , thus making the payment of a third Mark to the King unnecessary. It is almost as though by giving back the two Mark he received when he lied about a wife at home, Tristan cancels the lie.

On Irish soil once more Tristan the Merchant becomes Tristan the Knight as he fights a dragon to win the hand of the princess. Only in this instance he does so not for himself, but for Marke. The fact that he

is so set on honouring his commitment to Marke in this way supports the argument that Tristan had no personal interest in Isolde for himself. "... Isolde was a mere pawn in Tristan's game of defeating the barons." (JACKSON 1971: 80)

Tristan had assured Marke that he would personally steer the ship to Dublin "gegen dem sunnenschîne, /der manegem herzen vröude birt". (8572) Some 800 lines later a reflection off the helmet of Tristan, floating in the water, draws Isolde's attention to him. It is right that she should spot him first, the text tells us (9369ff.). It is almost as though she, the sunshine, causes the reflection from Tristan. For this epitomizes their relationship: mirror images, reflections of each other (in education, appearance, aesthetic appreciation and love). Together they reflect the sham of the society before them. This imagery (sunshine) is echoed in Queen Isolde being the dawn - that which precedes the sunshine - and Brangäne being the moonlight - a foil for the sunshine, the three together being "diu liehte cumpanîe" (cf. 9414, 9452 and 9456ff.).

We are gradually prepared for the appraisal of Tristan's naked body in the bath by the young Isolde, for she "sach in an" (9471) and immediately recognizes her former tutor, Tantris. Not Tantris the Knight that she sees, but "Tantris der spilman" (9472). For the second time Tantris is at the mercy of his enemy, stinking and dying from his wounds. To "buy" his security the first time, he played the role of "spilman", magnetising them with his exceptional talent. Now he buys protection by playing the adventurous knight:

> "ich waene, daz ich deste baz
> vride unde genâde vinde
> bî disem lantgesinde." (9542)

His words are, for him, filled with double entendre, as by slaying the dragon he wins the favour and protection of both Ireland *and* the barons of Cornwall! The fact that he disproves the claims of the seneschal is probably nothing more than padding to suit Gottfried's ulterior motive, that of drawing attention to the unit of Tristan and Isolde at the trial, and thereby focusing his readers' attention on the narrowing bond between the two. The unworthy seneschal also serves the purpose of showing up

Tristan's superior fighting skills, worth, physique and demeanour. Marriage to the former would be a living death for both Queen Isolde and her daughter:

> "... sô sîn wir beide, ich unde Îsôt,
> iemer mit lebendem lîbe tôt". (9591f.)

3.3 Queen Isolde: Role-model for Isolde

At this point it would be useful to make a closer study of Queen Isolde, the female role-model for Isolde, as mother and co-ruler of Ireland - an unusual role for a medieval woman. Besides her vast "medical" knowledge, the *clever* Isolde, as she is called, is able to act independently of her husband in the full knowledge that she has his backing and trust. Thus she is able to grant Tristan the protection of both herself and her husband:

> "daz ist getân, daz schaffe ich dir
> von mînem hêrren und von mir." (9551f.)

Whereas Marke relies on his barons and *massenîe* in general to advise him, Gurmun, besides calling on

vassals and council, also calls for his wife's advice:

> dar zuo besande er an den rât
> sîn liebez wîp, die künigîn. (9714f.)

The text states that he was able to love her because she possessed two important qualities: wisdom and beauty. But, significantly, for this is new in Gottfried, he is her *friend* and *beloved*:

> ir vriunt der künic nam si sâ
> von dem râte dort hin dan. (9726f.)

Also one notes that they address each other as "du". The language in which they converse is notably relaxed and intimate. There is evident trust and love in their marriage. And perhaps here we have Isolde's "Vorgeschichte".

The marriage of Queen Isolde and King Gurmun deserves closer attention. ROLF ENDRES has researched the importance of marriage in *Tristan* and found that secondary literature is divided on how highly Gottfried valued marriage. He finds positive elements in marriages like that of Gurmun and Queen Isolde,

but too little trust on the part of Queen Isolde who withholds information from her husband and does not consult him enough (ENDRES 1971: 190). [With regard to the marriage of Marke and Isolde he ascertained that the word *ê* is only used THREE times in the entire text! (ENDRES 1971: 190)]

KLAUS MORSCH, however, sees the marriage of Gurmun/Isolde, like that of Rual/Floraete as the only positive model. (MORSCH 1984: 79ff.) (Riwalin/ Blanscheflur's marriage is discounted as both are dead after their marriage.)

The marriage of Gurmun and Isolde was politically motivated. Marrying the sister of Morold "gab im craft und êre" (5932). Yet there is friendship and trust between the two. Gurmun concerns himself with the affairs of state and Queen Isolde is responsible for the education and welfare of her daughter Isolde. But she can speak on behalf of her husband. He consults her about the seneschal's demands to marry Isolde, and without knowing any details, accepts her word that she will disprove the seneschal's claims at the trial in Wexford:

"al iuwer angest leget nider!
gêt balde z'iuwerm râte wider...
und sitzet an'z gerihte. ...
und alse es danne zît sî,
sô bin ich unde Îsôt dâ bî.
sô gebietet mir'z, sô spriche ich
vür iuch, vür Îsôt und vür mich." (9739ff.)

She willingly subjects herself to his position as king by acknowledging that she has no right to speak at the trial without the permission of the king to do so. That it is unacceptable that she should speak in public without the blessing of the king is illustrated when she does so, telling the seneschal that his claim is undeserved (9820ff.). He answers:

"ei" sprach der truhsaeze dô
"vrouwe, ir tuot übel, wie redet ir sô?
min hêrre, der ez enden sol,
der kan doch selbe sprechen wol.
der spreche und antwürte mir." (9825ff.)

MORSCH quotes SHAHAR who stated that by law a woman had "keinerlei Anteil an der Herrschaft in Staat und Gesellschaft. Öffentliche Ämter wurden ihr ebenso versagt wie eine Mitgliedschaft in staatlichen Körperschaften." (MORSCH 1984: 82) She was also not permitted to fulfill the function "einer bezahlten Richterin und einer Bevollmächtigten anderer vor Gericht". (MORSCH 1984: 82) But it was possible that

a married woman could represent her husband in court, and Queen Isolde´s role here is understandable and acceptable. That she forgets to wait for Gurmuns´s permission to speak is also understandable. So concerned is she with the seneschal´s lies and her daughter´s future that she acts impulsively, with her heart, as it were, and ignores protocol. Having explicitly mentioned that she would wait for Gurmun´s permission to speak, it is unlikely that Gottfried would *not* have intended revealing Queen Isolde´s humanity in forgetting herself here.

Gurmun gives his ´friunt´ his full support. He has emphasised to the council that his wife will be present at the trial, and now he gives her the command she requires to speak on behalf of him, Isolde and herself (9830f.).

ALBRECHT CLASSEN suggests that women were more powerful in the Middle Ages than previously held. Although the governments of countries were patriarchal systems, there was great matriarchal influence, by especially the queens. He refers his reader to Beatrix I, Constanze, wife of Henry I and

her daughter, Constanze II, who ruled over Sicily from 1213.

Especially Queen Isolde exerts great influence over Ireland. Morolt speaks of her healing powers and her greatness. Gurmun is never really mentioned. All focus is on the great queen. She is likened to the *morgenrôt*, the rising sun, "symbol of royal glory". (CLASSEN 1989: 80) Her daughter, Isolde, is destined to inherit - and therefore rule - Ireland. She actually receives Cornwall and England as dowry (11394 - 11397), thereby making her (and indirectly her mother) the potential ruler of a great kingdom:

> In other words, Isolde the Fair as Queen Isolde´s proxy, establishes her female rule over Cornwall and England. Both Gurmûn and Marke are only nominally in control of the government and serve as their respective countries´ statuary and passive representatives. (CLASSEN 1989: 84)

Gottfried had enough evidence of such matriarchal rule. Besides the queens ruling in Burgundy and Sicily, as a result of the crusades, wars and feuds, women were left in charge of estates and kingdoms:

> Thus women often ruled the countries of Aquitaine, Burgundy, Champagne, or Flanders for many years in the 12th and 13th centuries.

> Likewise was the situation in England, where death often catapulted so many a noble woman onto the throne vacated by their deceased husbands. Names such as Eleonor of Aquitaine (died in 1204), the Empress Matilda and Blanche of Castile easily spring to mind when we search for independently ruling women. Matilda, wife of William the Conquerer, was in firm control of Normandy while the husband resided in England. Ermengarde, Countess of Narbonne (died in 1197), ... was the head of her state for more than 50 years ... (CLASSEN 1989: 85)

There is enough evidence, therefore, that in developing Queen Isolde's role to that of matriarch, Gottfried von Straßburg has reflected history. It is under this influence, with this kind of mother, that young Isolde grows up. She is influenced by the same matriarchal model, and is able to influence Marke (potentially more, had she now chosen *love* above power). She definitely exhibits individuality and strength in her role as Queen, unlike Isolde White Hands, who merely fulfills the traditional courtly role. Like her mother, Isolde the Fair initiates the action.

Having promised Tristan her protection while in Ireland, both now and in the future, Queen Isolde's dilemma on discovering that Tantris is the Tristan who murdered her brother is great. Her need to avenge

Morold's death conflicts with the honour inherent in her promise to protect Tristan. She does what is right and honourable and then consults the king. It is worth noting that Gurmun twice grants the queen her wish without knowing what it is, once to be allowed to speak at the trial, and secondly, when she sends for him and asks first that he grant her wish before asking that he give Tristan, the murderer of Morold, his love and blessing. (10638-42). He trusts her implicitly, and thus to a question like:

"habet ir'z danne an mich verlân?" (10636)

there is the answer:

"jâ, swaz ir wellet, daz sol sîn." (10638)

And Queen Isolde does not disappoint him. She is clever and masterfully counters the seneschal's arguments in court on both occasions. Gurmun calls her *herzefrouwe* (9737), and although one cannot measure the depth of love between Gurmun and Queen Isolde, one can assess its quality. Very little is said of Queen Isolde's feelings for Gurmun, yet we have the impression of mutual friendship, love and

respect. As with Rual and Floraete, whose marriage flourished due to their being socially determined, living within the prescribed norms, concerned with what MORSCH calls *Lebenshilfe* (MORSCH 1984: 80), the marriage of Gurmun/Isolde, too, reflects this mutual *Lebenshilfe*. They represent an ideal for Isolde to follow. Their lack of a son and heir does not cast a shadow on their marriage (often the reason for divorce in the Middle Ages), on the contrary, Isolde, a girl, is their heir. Their marriage indicates that mutual love and marriage are possible, but a happy marriage is the exception.

But back to the trial at Wexford. Interestingly enough, young Isolde, too, breaks protocol and speaks her mind at the trial, declaring that she is not worth so little effort (i.e. the seneschal having merely brought the head of the dragon as proof) (9853ff.) and that she does not return his "minne", which she judges to be calculated anyway, as he stands to gain from a marriage to her. Now follows a tirade by the seneschal against all women. He finds them inconstant, always seeing good for evil and evil for good, wise for foolish and foolish for wise:

"...ir habet allen ungereht
an iuwer seil gevazzet:
ir minnet,daz iuch hazzet;
ir hazzet, daz iuch minnet.
wie sît ir sus gesinnet,
wie minnet ir sô harte
der dinge widerwarte,
daz man der sô vil an iu siht!
der iuch dâ wil, desn welt ir niht
und welt den, der iuch niene wil.
ir sît daz irresameste spil,
daz ieman ûf dem brete kan. ..." (9878ff.)

Indeed, "minne ist ein swaerez spil", to quote the title of ULRICH MÜLLER'S book (1986). The Queen answers for her daughter, questioning the masculinity of the seneschal, who obviously spends too much time in the quarters of the ladies, as he knows them so well. She also argues that *he*, too, is inconstant, wanting that which does not want him:

" ... diz ist doch unser vrouwen spil.
waz nimest dû dich hie mit an?
sô dir got, du bist ein man,
lâz uns unser vrouwen art. (9916ff.)

She points out that he should rather seek reciprocal love, desire that which returns the feeling, as "daz spil hât guot gevelle" (9924). The "uncertain" game, the game of women - is Gottfried complaining? Is he suggesting that love is a mere game to women? Do all

the men feel as the seneschal, confused by the behaviour of women?

"habe dîne mannes sinne / und minne, daz dich minne" the Queen tells the seneschal (9921f.). She is arguing for reciprocal love! Yet it is an ideal love that she and King Gurmun do not share (not so as that it is evident to the reader), but it is obviously important to her, for this is her reason for giving Brangäne the love potion; to create reciprocal love.

Up to the *Minnetrank*-episode Isolde has only a small part of the action. She is totally overshadowed by her mother and, as WILFRED WAGNER points out, has a mere 90 lines against her mother's 484 or even Brangäne's 96 allotted to her. (WAGNER 1973: 55) WAGNER examined the relationship between Queen Isolde and her daughter, and finds that only Gottfried portrayed the mother as so dominant, with the young Isolde in the background. In contrast to former versions of the story, in which young Isolde has the healing powers while her mother only prepared the love potion, Thomas has already enriched the mother,

giving her a stronger position next to her daughter, but not affecting each one's basic role. Gottfried, though, gives Queen Isolde total control over her daughter, she being "wîse" (young Isolde is "tumbe" and grows "wîse" through love) and initiating all actions, appearing to leave nothing to young Isolde.

On three occasions young Isolde does act autonomously, 1) discovering the dragon-slayer, 2) recognising the *spilman* and 3), identifying Tantris as Tristan, the murderer of Morold. WILFRED WAGNER maintains that these three actions were not totally independent from her mother's wisdom and care, for 1) it was the mother's dream that lead to the idea of seeking the real dragon-slayer, 2) the mother's medication saves Tantris, and 3) Queen Isolde had found and kept the splinter from the sword. (WAGNER 1973: 54)

RANKE maintains, however, that Isolde "tritt überall da auf, wo das Schicksal sich ankündigt, dem sie verfallen wird" (RANKE quoted in WAGNER 1973: 53). He sees Gottfried's deliberate purpose in this:

> Die durchgehende Unterscheidung der beiden Frauen als der klugen und der jungen, der doppelte Hinweis auf das heraufziehende Schicksal zeigt, daß ... eine charakterisierende Absicht in Gottfrieds Rollenverteilung vorliegt: ehe sie den Liebestrank getrunken hat, ist seine Isolde noch nicht "*wise*", sie weiß nichts von List und Berechnung, sie ist in ihrer Unbewußtheit noch ganz Werkzeug in der Hand des Schicksals ... Erst die Liebe wirkt dann die Wandlung in ihrem Wesen. (RANKE in WAGNER 1973: 54)

Gottfried's Isolde grows wise through love and only then is capable of the deceit and cunning required by the situation she finds herself in as Marke's wife and Tristan's lover.

It has previously been said that little is evident from the text of any overt attraction between Tristan the teacher and his pupil Isolde. Even his praise of her to Marke is conventional and only describes her outer appearance and not her formidable artistic talent. When they meet again, education is not the common factor, but marriage, wooing to be exact. Isolde is the prize for the person who can slay the dragon - a traditional occurrence in medieval literature. But Gottfried choses to parody this tradition by having the unworthy seneschal compete unfairly against the courtly Tristan for this honour.

And he nearly succeeds in conning the Court, which only too often falls for false pretences.

JACKSON comments that the dragon-slaying by proxy is a parody of a wooing scene:

> Mark is to obtain Isolde as a result of a dragon slain by proxy, and the seneschal endeavors to obtain a similar favor by using the same dragon. Here is the medieval system held up to ridicule, for the fairest lady in the world barely escapes being handed over to a cowardly knight in exchange for a dragon's head and does not escape being handed over to a king she has never seen and who is middle-aged in speech and bearing if not in years. Love clearly has no place in arrangements such as these, and yet they are the normal way in which the sexes are brought together in medieval society. (Jackson 1971: 79)

KROHN in his *Stellenkommentar* to 9093ff., sees the farcical (dead) "dragon-slaying" by the seneschal as "... den ersten Abschnitt der Kritik Gottfrieds am modischen Frauenrittertum". (KROHN 1981: 104)

Isolde recognizes the *spilman* Tantris and, having been made aware of his knightly prowess as dragon-slayer, (logically) takes a closer look at this man. Perhaps it is because the issue of marriage is pertinent at this moment that she studies his appearance so closely and (subconsciously) compares

him with the seneschal. She concludes that his nomadic lifestyle (that of *spilman*) does not match his obviously noble appearance.

> "ein lîp alsô gebaere,
> der sô getugendet waere,
> der solte guot und êre hân.
> an ime ist sêre missetân
> got hêrre, dû hâst ime gegeben
> dem lîbe ein ungelîchez leben." (10027ff.)

We know from the appearance of Rual in tattered clothing at the Court of King Marke, that they could see, despite his tattered and wild appearance, the nobility beneath (4028ff.). They concede, once he reappears in fine clothing, that his noble bearing had been evident even whilst he was "unhovebaere gewandeshalp". This inner courtliness shines through in Tristan too, as a young boy. The pilgrims notice his fine manners, the hunters are struck by it, and at the Court of King Marke they conclude that he could not possibly be merely the son of a merchant (3283). This is what now strikes Isolde, although she does not become suspicious as a result, but berates God for being so unfair to Tristan, comparing him to many unworthy kings who have honour and possessions.

> In außerer Schönheit drückt sich nach mittelalterlicher Vorstellung innere Vornehmheit aus. Gottfried deutet also an, daß Tristan seinen wahren Stand nicht verbergen kann (9999), da sein Adel an der Schönheit seiner Erscheinung offenkundig wird (9998). (KROHN 1981: 108)

Krohn has previously indicated that true nobility shining through poor clothing is a traditional concept in medieval literature, as well as in later literature such as Shakespeare (*The Taming of the Shrew* IV,3 "So honour peereth in the meanest habit").

> Dagegen entwickelt sich in der bürgerlichen Literatur der Neuzeit die optimistische Überzeugung, daß die Würde - und damit: der gesellschaftliche Wert - des Menschen sich durch seine Garderobe steigern ließe (etwa bei G. Kellers "Kleider machen Leute"). (KROHN 1981: 54)

Isolde notices Tristan as a person, not a performer. It is what Jackson calls "a slow awakening to his personality". (JACKSON 1971: 81) One must remember that Gottfried himself gives us the definition of personality:

> zwô sache enmachen einen man,
> ich meine lîp, ich meine guot.
> von disen zwein kumt edeler muot
> und werltlîcher êren vil. ...
> als habet iu von dem wîbe:
> ez sî man oder wîp,
> sô muoz ie guot und lîp
> mit gemeinlîchen sachen

einen ganzen namen machen. (5696ff.)

Both KROHN and A. H. HATTO translate "ganzen namen machen" as creating *personality* (KROHN 1981: 349; HATTO 1985: 119). *guot* und *êre*, *guot* und *lîp* are the essential characteristics of a person. JAEGER has examined Tristan's "anatomy of character" or theory of character (JAEGER 1977: 40), claiming that this distinguishes Gottfried's novel from any other.

> It is a notion of fullness and completeness of individual identity. (JAEGER 1977: 40)

All the components that make Tristan this complete man are inherited, just as *Tristanliebe* is *erbeminne*, and his sorrow is inherited from his parents. From his three "fathers" Tristan receives all he needs to be perfect:

> 1) from Riwâlin *muot* (an inborn nobility of spirit,) and physical beauty;
> 2) from Rual manners, skill, learning, grace - all the qualities that make up excellence of body, *lip*, or what we would call presence;
> 3) from Marke he inherits *guot*.

None of the three men is in himself perfect, whole, only Tristan combines these qualities - with humility - for a total integration of inner and outer man. It is this perfection that Isolde now notices in Tristan.

KLAUS MORSCH maintains that at this point Tristan is NOT complete within himself, as this final dimension will only be added by *love*. The same can be said of Isolde. Love ("Tristanliebe") is the dimension that both Tristan and Isolde will have, which only the *edelen herzen* can appreciate.

> Tristan scheint (*sic*) früh fertige Persönlichkeit zu sein, zugleich wirkt er innerlich unfertig: Er ist in Vollkommenheit und Perfektion hineingewachsen, ist aber nicht mit dieser Vollkommenheit und Perfektion verwachsen. Tristan hat zwar eine Identität erlangt, nicht aber seine wahre Identität; er ist perfekter Retortenritter. Eine "Seele" haucht ihm gewissermaßen erst *gotinne minne* ein ... Tristan verkörpert in seinem *muot* ideale Werte und Erwartungen der Welt. (MORSCH 1984: 154)

CAROLA GOTTZMANN (1989), in a recently published article on "Identitätsproblematik" in *TRISTAN*, argues that Tristan is born with a dual-identity which he does not succeed in overcoming:

> Tristan steht für eine zweigeteilte Identität, die weder zu einer wahren Einheit (Identität) noch zu einer echten wechselseitigen oder zweieinigen Identität durch die in Liebe verbundene Du-Beziehung (vgl. ich bin du, du bist ich) gelangen kann. (GOTTZMANN 1989: 132)

She maintains that Tantris - much (*tant*) laughter (*ris*) - is the alter ego of Tristan (sorrow). She argues that he never succeeds in overcoming his inherited "lack of identity", and is in this respect the limed bird, unable to escape, right until the end. I find her article generally superficial, unsubstantiated and devoid of references to the role of art in his life, to the influence of love on his "identity" [other than a doubtful argument that love (momentarily) unites Tantris with Tristan until love itself becomes divided], and contradictory: "Tristan, der Königssohn (*sic*: had Riwalin been a king, he could have asked Marke for Blanscheflur's hand in marriage), ist identitätslos." (GOTTZMANN 1989: 132) But then she states: "Zuerst scheint es jedoch so, als würde Tristan endlich zu seiner ersten Identität finden, wodurch die Gespaltenheit seines Wesens aufgehoben worden wäre. Er geht in sein Land zurück ..." (GOTTZMANN 1989: 140) Which "erste

Identität" if, as she maintains, he was "identitätslos"?

Confirmation of Tristan's nobility comes with Isolde matching the preserved splinter from the sword that killed her uncle Morold with Tantris's imperfect sword and her deciphering of the names Tantris and Tristan. She responds with immediate passionate hate and rushes to take revenge with the same sword that killed Morold. Tristan just happens to be sitting naked in his bath. He now appeals to her femininity, her *wîpheit*.

In Thomas's version, Tristan appealed to Isolde's sense of self-preservation by pointing out that only he could prevent her marriage to the seneschal. (This fact Gottfried's Tristan does later also point out.) At this point Queen Isolde enters, which is enough to stop her daughter carrying out the act of revenge. She also questions Isolde's *wîpheit*:

> "wie nû?" sprach sî "waz sol diz sîn?
> tohter, waz tiutest dû hie mite?
> sint diz schoene vrouwen site? ..."
> (V. 10168ff.)

Acts of revenge were clearly unfeminine and contrary to *morâliteit*, if not the law. KROHN points out that:

> Die Frau hatte im Mittelalter nicht das Recht, Blutrache zu üben. Es war deswegen durchaus im Sinne der zeitgenössischen Rechtsauffassung, wenn im *Nibelungenlied* die rasende Kriemhild, nachdem sie Hagen aus Rache selbst erschlagen hatte (Str. 2373), von dem rechtschaffenen Hildebrand dafür bestraft und getötet wurde (Str. 2376). Isolde bleibt also innerhalb der Grenzen mittelalterlichen Rechtsdenkens. (KROHN 1981: 109)

Having heard that Tristan is her brother's murderer, Queen Isolde brings another ethical problem to bear on the situation: breach of *êre* and *triuwe*. She had given Tantris her word that he would be safe whilst in Ireland. It is unthinkable that this *êre* can be broken. This is Brangäne's immediate reaction on hearing of the dilemma:

> "soltet ir iuwer êre geben
> umbe keines iuwers vîndes leben?" (10403f.)

Brangäne also comments on the lack of *morâliteit* ("iuwer saelde und iuwer sin") inherent in the act, the lack of *mâze* ("sô g'unsinnet"), and concludes that the loss of these qualities could in no way be compensated for by revenge (10387ff.).

Isolde in her anger wanted to assume the role of a male, fighting, but is reminded of *mâze* and *wîpheit*:

> (Die Frau) sollte in allem das richtige Maß wahren und sich in ihren Gebärden und Reden größte Zurückhaltung auferlegen; "denn schöne Gebärden und gute Rede krönen die Handlungsweise einer Frau". (BUMKE 1986: 481)

But Gottfried takes great pains to assure his reader that young Isolde, the future lover of Tristan, could not have murdered him, even had her mother and Brangäne not intervened. This display of hatred was "Anschein":

> Ouch waere er zuo den stunden
> in daz bat gebunden,
> und Isôt eine dâ gewesen:
> er waere doch vor ir genesen.
> diu süeze, diu guote,
> diu siure an wîbes muote
> noch herzegallen nie gewan,
> wie solte diu geslahen man?
> wan daz s'et von ir leide
> und ouch von zorne beide
> solhe gebaerde haete,
> als ob si'z gerne taete, ... (10233ff.)

She simply did not have the heart to be so cruel, she had too much "süeze wîpheit" (10255). Gottfried personifies anger and femininity (die zwô widerwarte, ... zorn unde wîpheit (10258ff.). They are opponents

This is the language of education, the aesthetic language of their love.

Brangäne facilitates the final reconciliation, honour and decorum being the points on which she bases her argument (10387ff.), but she is also motivated by feminine curiosity to find out what good news Tristan had hinted at (10420ff.).

Young Isolde does not share in this decision-making. She only repeats the story of how she discovered that Tantris was Tristan and thereby "shows where her thoughts are". (JACKSON 1971: 84)

Preparations are made for the final show-down with the seneschal. Tristan has the treasures brought from the ship and bestows them on the ladies. Now Tristan does not need to play minstrel or tutor anymore, but can assume his rightful position as nephew to King Marke and wooer on his behalf. He now dresses in accordance with his knightly status and charms the three ladies with his appearance:

> si gedâhten alle in einer vrist:
> "zewâre, dirre man der ist
> ein menlîche crêatiure;

> sîn wât und sîn figiure
> si schepfent wol an ime den man..." (10853ff.)

His masculinity is determined by his garments and general appearance. When Tristan enters the Court for the trial, he is again described in detail in a similar manner to the way Isolde had been described shortly before. He is greeted by both king and queen and his now esteemed position is evident in that he is seated between the king and Brangäne, the two Isoldes being on the other side of the king. Everyone else, "ritter und barûne,/ Tristandes cumpanjûne, / die sâzen ûf den esterîch". (11187ff.)

Between two detailed descriptions of Tristan in his finery, Isolde is described as she enters the Court for the judgement of the seneschal as "ein lebende bilde" (10956).

> The description of Isolde, however, is an event autonomous from the meaning of the work; it cannot be interpreted in terms of characterization or "Minneproblematik". (JAEGER 1977: 113)

Rather than having thematic importance, Jaeger sees this passage as having an aesthetic value, a "display

piece" showing Gottfried's innovative use of conventional description and topos.

As an "end" to the prelude to the love of Tristan and Isolde, it is perhaps fitting that Gottfried leaves his audience with this rich impression of each of the chief protagonists. From their first meeting as tutor and pupil, bonded by education and a developing aesthetic awareness, yet (apparently) separated by social class and distance as Tristan travels home and back again, they are now brought onto an equal level during this trial, in both royal appearance and inherent beauty. The only level on which they do not meet is love. But Queen Isolde is soon to see to that.

4 THE FOUNDATIONS OF *TRISTANLIEBE*

4.1 "von Tristandes lêre / gebezzeret sêre" (8133f.)

The *Vorgeschichte* hints at the power of true love, its possible dimensions, but does not progress further than the sexual/sensual, as *Tristanliebe* would have done. It is fairly one-dimensional, but a faint picture of *mutual* love, hitherto generally unexpounded in medieval literature, is formed. (There are forms of it in *EREC* and *PARZIVAL*.) The marriage of Gurmun and Queen Isolde adds the quality of *friendship* and *mutual respect* to Gottfried´s mosaic.

Love, essential to a woman´s happiness, is introduced with the love potion. Queen Isolde wants her daughter to love and be loved. She very clearly does not want Isolde to go off to a foreign country and marry a strange man with no possibility of love. The love potion is to instill *mutual love* into the marriage. Without it the marriage is purely physical and politically convenient. For Marke Isolde´s beauty inspires lust.

Not according to GOTTZMANN, who claims:

> Der Minnetrank soll offensichtlich einem Zwiespalt Isoldes vorbeugen, Tantris zu lieben, aber mit Marke verheiratet zu sein. Wie durch eine übergeordnete Schicksalsmacht, durch die Tristans Entscheidung, für Marke zurückzustehen, korrigiert werden soll, nehmen aber Isolde und Tristan den Minnetrank zu sich, so daß Isolde nicht nur Tantris, sondern auch Tristan liebt: *si wurden ein und einvalt*, ... (11720 - 11724). (GOTTZMANN 1989: 137f.)

The unity referred to in 11720 - 11724 is that of Tristan with Isolde, not Tantris with Tristan! There is no proof for Gottzmann´s deductions. On the contrary, it is THROUGH Isolde´s love, through this unique *Tristanliebe*, that each gives the other identity. Once they are parted finally, they are identity-less without the other.

SCHRÖDER lays great emphasis on the role of fate (*Zufall*) in the drinking of the *Minnetrank* on the ship over to Cornwall:

> Die Tristanminne ist vielmehr ursachelos, sie ist ein Wunder, sie geschieht einfach ... (SCHRÖDER 1967: 29)

Contrary to earlier scholars who hold that their love started in Ireland while he tutored her, SCHRÖDER

maintains that there is no evidence of this in the text, and that Gottfried, being the expert narrator he is, would surely have made this development very clear to his reader. Instead he chose to make a definite statement about love, through his *Minne-Exkurs* when it occurs after the *Minnetrank*. At this point the text clearly states that "Minne ... sleich z'ir beider herzen în" (11711f.). The *Minnetrank*, drunken "zufällig", leads to a sudden realisation of love.

Minne is Tristan's inheritance (*sîn erbevogetîn* (11765), and there is no evidence of it before the *Minnetrank*, except that subconsciously a spark is lit when Isolde becomes aware of the man, Tristan, and needs only the right moment for this spark to ignite.

HERBERT HERZMANN (1976) builds on the theories of SCHRÖDER and in contrast to an "ursacheloses Geschehen", maintains that the "development" of love at the moment that Isolde becomes aware of Tristan as a man is prevented by her anger at discovering his identity. She hates him as a result instead. It is, however, not acceptable to HERZMANN that Isolde did

not kill Tristan then and there solely because of her *wîpheit*. *Wîpheit* is not lost due to the *Minnetrank*, and yet it does not prevent her from plotting the murder of Brangäne. The key to her desisting from killing Tristan must, therefore, lie subconsciously with her awareness of him as a man. HERZMANN thus agrees with SCHRÖDER and FURSTNER that "Haß (ist) die Gegenseite der Minne". (HERZMANN 1976: 86) The love-potion "releases" her from her anger. In itself it has no power and does not cause love.

> Der Minnetrank löst dann gleichsam ihre "Verkrampfung" und setzt die aufgestaute Emotion eruptionsartig frei. Der Funke ihrer Leidenschaft springt auf Tristan über und "entzündet" ihn. (Herzmann 1976: 93)

Why does Tristan love Isolde? SCHRÖDER maintains it is for one reason only: "weil sie Isolde ist". (SCHRÖDER 1967: 32) His argument boils down to a theory that it is not because of reciprocal love, but due to what we would today describe as "identifying" with her. Perhaps, but with what result? On what level? Not music, education, art, for these he teaches Isolde White Hands too, says SCHRÖDER.

> ... im gemeinsamen Trinken aus dem gleichen Glas vom gleichen Getränk wird eine innerliche

> Gemeinsamkeit offenbar. Die Liebenden erfahren sie an sich selbst ... (SCHRÖDER 1967: 33)

SCHRÖDER stops too soon. He does not say what causes this "innerliche Gemeinsamkeit", if not music, art, education.

HERZMANN talks of "die Leidenschaft, die aus den Liebenden selbst kommt". (HERZMANN 1976: 93) If one examines Gottfried's harmony of language and images in his descriptions of their music-making, one must attribute (as many studies have done) some of Isolde's attraction to Tristan to their meeting on an artistic level.

Tristan and Isolde's relationship is inevitable given the aesthetic bonding whilst studying together. Their unique creative, musical skills result in their coming together on a spiritual level and climax in their duet in the *Minnegrotte*.

> Love reaches its highest manifestation in the harmony of two individuals, each playing a part of which the other is equally capable. In presenting and representing this harmony Tristan and Isolde are reflecting the highest harmony of all, that of God and his universe, and their relation is thus a manifestation of all-embracing love ... (Jackson 1971: 187)

Granted the first action the *Minnetrank* inspires is the sexual act, and, yes, this is an important component of Tristan-love. So W. SCHRÖDER is correct in claiming that "die sinnliche Komponente ihre Basis war". (SCHRÖDER 1979: 51) What he does not say is that this love-basis changes; there is progression in the nature of *Tristanliebe* (until they can "be together although apart").

Love ensnares, takes prisoners. Tristan and Isolde, like Riwalin and Blanscheflur are birds, glued with lime to the branches and unable to fly away. Love blinds, makes ill, but proves to heal after separation. But perhaps greatest of all, it is not bought: *Tristanliebe* is a free gift, inspiring a reciprocal gift. Born of sorrow it encompasses love and sorrow. Its seed is in art and music, an aesthetic level not shared by any two others.

> ... we must not overlook the fact that Isolde the Fair ... is carrying out a most unusual role in medieval literature. No lady performs music in medieval lyric ... lyrics were composed and performed by a man. Nor do we see the heroines of romances performing music. Isolde alone is an active participant in a musical performance. (Jackson 1971: 185)

Already it is unusual that Isolde is educated in the way she is. Medieval women were taught basic reading (of the Psalms), handwork, French and Latin, etc. A few instances of feminine poets are recorded, and the *Minnehöfe* appear to be true reflections of women debating and deliberating on the nature of love and love-relationships. Heloïse was exceptionally educated for a woman of her time. The roles of Tristan and Abaelard as tutor-turned-lover indicate the bond created by shared learning. As already stated, especially Tristan's educating Isolde in *morâliteit* is unique and worthy of comment.

The *effect* of this education is of relevance: (a) Isolde and Tristan share singular, exceptional talents and information, not experienced by others, and this creates a *bond* between them, unparalleled in medieval literature. This bond forms the (subconscious) foundation of *Tristanliebe*, which is realised through the *Minnetrank* on the ship; (b) Tristan's teaching and Isolde's adeptness as a pupil take the learning experience beyond mere tuition. No others, anywhere, share this knowledge. Each of them

separately can enthral an audience, even control their minds. Education gives them power. So already Isolde has broken the "feminine mould" by functioning equal to a man.

4.2 "niwan mit namen ein wîp" (17974)

> "ir tuot vil rehte als elliu wîp...
> wie sît ir sus gesinnet, ...
> ir sît daz irresameste spil,
> daz ieman ûf dem brete kan. (9867ff.)

This is the seneschal's scornful summary of the character of a woman. In his frustration at being denied his prize for "slaying the dragon", he launches into a tirade against women. But what he says about Isolde and women in general gives the reader an insight into a) the male view of woman and what he perceives her role to be, and b) poses the question in the mind of the audience, then as now, as to what the role of the woman WAS, in reality and in fiction.

The seneschal accuses Isolde of being like all women, wilful, contrary, wanting what she cannot have, and

concludes that " Of all the games one can play on the board you are the most bewildering. The man who risks his life for a woman without security is out of his senses." (HATTO 1985: 171). What is the "security" ("bürgen" 9891) he wants? Today we would say, reciprocal love. The seneschal claimed he had slain the dragon that was threatening the Irish Kingdom, risking his life for the promised prize of the young Isolde´s hand in marriage. It is a standard scenario for medieval romances. This "knight in shining armour", however, the seneschal, is a liar, who is trading on his luck at finding the dragon dead and the hero apparently also killed. It is a parody, and serves to reveal the sham behind the glitter of the Court. At Court honour can be as hollow as deceit can be convincing, the point being that had Tristan not been able to intervene, Isolde would have been married to this uncourtly suitor. His "security", that which he fought for, is Isolde; her body, her beauty being the attraction. Love was certainly not an issue here.

What he says about Isolde is very interesting, because it implies that women were NOT satisfied with

the role appointed them by the males. They are perceived as being "contrary", loving that which hates them, and hating that which loves them. More than merely being "difficult", this suggests that women are stating a preference, a choice. That is not to say that they were entitled to execute this choice or have their way, but Gottfried, through the seneschal, hints at dissatisfaction in the ranks of the women at being mere pawns in a masculine game, and at least the seneschal is aware of this. (As the queen claims, he spends a lot of time with the women, so he should know.)

Indeed, Isolde argues against being "sold" to the seneschal for the price of one dragon, claiming that she does not love him. But love was not the prerequisite for marriage. If not love, honour or political expedience was reason for marriage. Neither of these would be gained by a marriage to the loathsome seneschal. As with Marke in the case of Gandin, women are too easily "given away", pawns in the hands of kings, and this fact is to become part of Gottfried's plea for a different role for the woman. He uses the seneschal's tirade to not only raise the

question of the nature and character of women, but that of men, and examines the role that each sex has to play in a courtly society.

There is an interesting element in Isolde's conversation with Tristan on the boat over to Cornwall just prior to the *Minnetrank*. In a fit of childish despair, she rants that she is feeling "sold" and would rather have stayed and faced marriage to the seneschal than go with Tristan, her uncle's murderer, to marry a stranger. Tristan masterfully challenges this irrationality and compares a future of glory and honour as Marke's queen to a future without any status, married to the seneschal. She states that she prefers a humble future with love to a mighty and rich future with trouble and upheaval. That the seneschal is despicable she is sure will change, as being with her will cause him to put aside his "badness" (11629).

Now Tristan points out that never yet has a man acted contrary to his (bad) nature; for one to behave *correctly* (*rechtschaffen*) when one's inclination is the opposite requires "michel arbeit" (11636). So

there are men for whom it comes naturally to be bad (an Eve)!

What Gottfried does with the role of the seneschal is to introduce those elements which are central to an understanding of this work: what is the character of a man? What is a woman like? Why is one treated so differently to the other? In which ways are they similar in character, yet allotted different roles in society?

Isolde "ist wahrlich ein Mann", in terms of the *Frauenexkurs*, if she, contrary to her feminine nature can be in charge of (control) her destiny, against her "nature" be "tugendhaft", etc. Being sinful is a woman's *natural* tendency. (Since Hieronymus, based on Genesis 3:4-6, it was held that all evil originated from woman. Eve revealed her inability to resist temptation in the Garden of Eden, thereby revealing her true nature.)

The seneschal in his evil way is "a woman". He is accused by Queen Isolde of behaving just like a woman, obviously having spent too many hours in their

chambers and their company - "ez hât dir der manne art benomen" (9908). Being "emotional" is the trait of a woman, being rational is a masculine trait. A woman who uses (male) reason over emotional desire is in spirit a man. Gottfried narrows the distance between the sexes, between Tristan and Isolde, by means of a spiritual and mental bond that is superior to a mere sexual bond. The spiritual bond is a *pre-requisite* to their carnal love (as opposed to the relationship of Marke/Isolde which is purely sexual). The relationship of Tristan and Isolde reaches its height when they do not need physical contact or the presence of the other to still be with each other in spirit and thought. In fact, the thought becomes the deed.

The dog, Petitcrieu, illustrates Isolde's awareness of the true nature of her love for Tristan; she is not prepared to be happy while Tristan is in sorrow and destroys the bell that could have given her a contented future with Marke. Marke has Isolde as his wife, but does not "have" her (her spirit, soul). It is Tristan who has Isolde's being, although he does not have her proximity. It is clear that for a *mutual*

relationship such as Tristan and Isolde have, unity of both spirit and flesh are required. This is the essence of *Tristanliebe*.

Tristanliebe is different to anything found before in medieval literature. It surpasses *minne* and *courtly love* and is unique in its *mutuality*. It is not understood by courtiers, not by Marke, Brangäne, Marjodo or Melot. It inspires jealousy and hate. Only the *edelen herzen* (and Tristan and Isolde, true *edele herzen*) are able to understand its true essence.

Rüdiger Schnell (1984) points out that the woman, not *minne*, is central to the *Frauenexkurs*, and that therefore one must place this *Exkurs* against the background of the medieval conception of women (SCHNELL 1984:3).

In the *Frauenexkurs* Gottfried von Straßburg condemns the medieval practice of *huote*, surveillance, because it merely serves to tempt the woman to rebel against it, something she would not have done had she been left to decide for herself. He compares all women to Eve, *naturally* sinful. *Huote* is, therefore,

senseless, as a woman will use deceit if necessary to get around it. Schnell considers this view of women traditional. He quotes Ovid, Hieronymus, Vincent of Beauvais, Tibull and Abaelard, the latter who held in his *Ad Astrolabium* that:

> Die unzüchtigen Frauen könne man nicht, die züchtigen müsse man nicht bewachen. Eine erzwungene Keuschheit mache die unzüchtige Frau nicht zu einem besseren Menschen. (SCHNELL 1984: 7)

Hartmann von Aue, in *Iwein* (2890ff.) also promotes this view. Interestingly the word *SPIEL* is once again used by Gottfried to describe this immorality:

> sô man s'ie harter dannen nimet,
> sô sî des spiles ie mê gezimet
> und sô s'ie harter clebent an. (17830ff.)

Huote is the enemy of *minne* (17849) and causes one to become irresponsible (senseless? - *nam ir alle ir sinne* (17850). This eternal *huote* breeds *thorns and anger* (17860ff.). These cause loss of honour and dignity. Many women desire honour, but are deprived of it *because* of *huote*. The double standard of the Middle Ages and the woman's refusal to cope with it any longer gave rise to groups of women moving off,

joining the Wanderprediger and in this way voicing their protest as mentioned at the start. The *Frauenbewegung* was a protest against the unfair standards expected of women.

Gottfried advocates that a wise man should NOT keep a woman under surveillance. He should rather INSTRUCT her with "wîsen unde lêren, / zarten unde güeten" (17902f.). In other words, *morâliteit*. *Morâliteit* enables a woman to maintain her honour. One wants to prevent her becoming stubborn (*muotelîn*) at all costs. Now Gottfried specifies his new code for society, implicitly criticizing current maxims:

> jâ sol ein ieclîch biderbe man
> und der ie mannes muot gewan,
> getrûwen sînem wîbe
> und ouch sîn selbes lîbe,
> daz s'aller slahte unmâze
> durch sîne liebe lâze.
> swie dicke man es beginne,
> dem wîbe enmac ir minne
> nieman ûz ertwingen
> mit übelîchen dingen.
> man leschet minne wol dermite. (17911ff.) (My emphasis.)

We are back to the definition of *Tristanliebe* - love of free choice, mutual love, born of common education and interest. It is harmony between soulmates.

What Marke tries to do is to force love for him from Isolde "mit übelîchen dingen". Both Marke and Gandin are concerned with physical enjoyment and possession. There is no question of mutuality of love. So little is Marke aware of the finer feelings of *Tristanliebe* that he cannot distinguish "brass" from "gold" when Brangäne switches places with Isolde on the wedding night:

> Gold und Messing sind nach den gesellschaftlichen Wertmaßstäben verschieden wertvolle Metalle, zumindest aber sind sie verschiedener Natur. Marke jedoch setzt - wenn man den Bildvergleich ins Personale transponiert, was von Gottfried wohl beabsichtigt war - beide Personen gleich, indem er beide Qualitäten bei jeder Frau findet. Damit steht die Individuumsproblematik im Zentrum der Gottfriedschen Darstellung ... Der wirklich Liebende zeichnet sich, dargestellt in Form des Metallvergleichs, dadurch aus, daß er individuell liebt und wertet ... Beide Autoren (Eilhart und Gottfried) schildern eine Marke-Isolde Beziehung, in der die Frau Funktionswert besitzt; geschieht die Ehe aus "copula carnalis" heraus, so ist die Frau austauschbar. (BAUMGARTNER 1978: 142f.)

An important characteristic of *Tristanliebe* and absent in Marke/Isolde's relationship is *triuwe* "diu von herzen gât". Enforced trust is not true trust, but obedience. It does not imply ethical or

intelligent decisions. Within a courtly society *triuwe* is fiction. Real *triuwe* has to be taught. Only in Rual is it automatically "there". Most of the courtiers USE *triuwe* for their convenience. They are loyal to the king when it suits them. These same "loyalists" connive, plot and deceive.

In contrast the *triuwe* which Tristan and Isolde experience is from the heart, a pre-condition of *minne*. It is in direct confrontation with *triuwe* of the Court, a pre-condition of *êre* . Herein lies the greatest dilemma of the lovers. They must *deceive*, play the role of *loyal* courtiers and still be loyal to each other. Loss of honour is unacceptable, but loss of *minne* is unthinkable. If one removes *triuwe* of either sort, *triure* replaces it. Petitcrieu symbolises this. Tristan attempts to reinstate *triuwe* for Isolde by removing *triure* which she experiences because of his absence. But Isolde is not prepared to accept this gift.

> Die Kontrastierung der *triuwe* der Herzen mit der *triuwe* der Höfe bestätigt die Idealität der Minne zwischen Tristan and Isolt und beweist die Unzulänglichkeit der höfischen Lebensform. (MORSCH 1984: 121)

Gottfried's "new woman" cannot fit in with society unless she plays society's game, operating with deceit and playing roles to get by. She is no longer the lady who watches the knights go on adventures in her service, inspiring them to higher deeds, being wooed from a distance but never won. Although the title of the novel is *TRISTAN*, from the *Minnetrank* the story is Isolde's. Nothing much happens to Tristan from his arrival with Isolde in Cornwall. Isolde initiates the action, the roles to be played are determined by the jealousy, hate and suspicion of the Court. Besides playing a harp (one up on the rote used by Gandin) to rescue Isolde, using deceit to pay back deceit, Tristan is no longer seen in the role of chief-musician, confidant and warrior to the king. THAT he hunts is indicated in passing as explanation for his absence from court. The unit of Tristan-Isolde against Marke-Isolde is the sole focal point, with the Court being made to answer for such a situation having ever arisen.

From the moment of drinking the love-potion love enters (creeps into) the hearts of Tristan and Isolde. Gottfried underlines the unity of the lovers

by placing the two names together in a single line, "Îsôt unde Tristan" (11708). The word "beide/r" in reference to them then occurs three times in seven lines, before he repeatedly highlights their "Doppelidentität":

> si wurden ein und einvalt,
> die zwei und zwîvalt wâren ê.
> si zwei enwâren dô niemê
> widerwertic under in. (11716ff.)

Very clearly hate has made way for love, due to the "süenaerinne minne". They have "ein herze" (11727). And yet they do not declare their love for each other. Their first reaction is shame at having lost *êre* and *triuwe*. The full realisation of the consequences of their actions is yet to come.

Of note is that the incident on the ship took place when there was no *huote*. It is only in the *Minnegrotte* that the lovers are ever truely alone again. This suggests that Tristanliebe, born away from the Court, is only possible outside the Court, far from *huote* and *list*. It desires a different type of *êre* and *triuwe* from the sham honour and loyalty the Court practises.

5 DIE MINNEGROTTE: EIN "WUNSCHLEBEN"

5.1 "Ein und ein ... eine gerade schar" (16852f.)

The banishment to a wilderness, to a (in one version, subterranean) cave of rock or earth, occurs in all the former versions of the "saga" of Tristan. In the former versions the banishment ends after a period of three years. It is a time of denial, tribulation and yearning to return to the Court when the love potion wears off and sanity and remorse set in. In the oldest version of all, that of Béroul (mid-12th century), Tristan does not return to the court of King Marke with Isolde. After writing a letter to Marke, requesting permission to return, Tristan takes Isolde back to Marke and then leaves Cornwall to eventually marry Isolde White Hands. In the former versions there is no authorial comment. Incidents are just presented as facts. Characters are always consistent: the villains are villainous, Marke is always vacillating and the intensity of the love of Tristan and Isolde never changes.

Gottfried takes the old version and gives it "psychological" and artistic depth. To the *Minnegrotte* episode he adds descriptions, commentary, and particularly allegory. His banishment of the lovers is an ideal, a utopia.

> Hier, wo die Liebe zwischen Tristan und Isolde sich ungehindert ausleben darf; hier, wo die Realität des Hofes, wo die beengenden Konventionen der Gesellschaft außer Kraft gesetzt sind; hier, wo der dichterische Schwung Gottfrieds durch verpflichtende Vorlagen an seiner Entfaltung nicht gehindert wird - hier, in der Minnegrotte, hat er seine Vorstellung von einem utopischen Minneideal konkretisiert. (KROHN 1981: 157f.).

The *Minnegrotte* episode has naturally been widely dissected by the critics who have interpreted it, amongst others,

- religiously (mystically/allegorically) (Ranke, 1925; Mergell, 1949; Schwietering, 1961) - the *Minnegrotte* corresponds to the dimensions of a church; similarities with the religious *unio mystica*;

- purely literarily (Kolb, 1962) - Gottfried has adopted the French "Minne"-allegory, his cave

being the equivalent of the *maison d'amour* (except that Kolb's proof dates from the 13th century);

- as symbolical of alchemy (Ober, 1965) (not widely accepted);

- as an allegory of the sexual act (Betz, 1969);

- as "Minneversenkung" (Morsch, 1984).

In his quest for a new unity between Tristan and Isolde, Gottfried refers to certain traditions of his time, things which his readers would understand. He teaches by means of allegory. Gottfried uses the Christian allegory, which his readers would know, as a basis for his *Minnegrotte* interpretation. This allegory is complete, not interrupted, as is the case with the Clothes allegory, in which he allegorises the clothes of the knight as courtly virtues. The allegory is unfinished, as he wishes to comment negatively on this courtly custom of giving detailed descriptions of the *schwertleite*, where the emphasis

is on superficial appearances and not the inner virtues.

He in contrast uses the allegory positively in the *Minnegrotte* episode to illustrate his theory of love to the *edelen herzen*. Gottfried presents them with ideals that challenge the conventions of the Court. He rejects the traditional courtly love for Tristan-love, true love. [He emphasises that their "court" is quite distinct from the Arthurian Court (16859ff.).]

It is not the intention of this thesis to discuss the meaning(s) of the *Minnegrotte per se*, but to investigate the role of Isolde, and Tristan, within the framework of the *Minnegrotte* and the story as a whole.

The lovers are first seen outside the cave in an ideal setting. On arrival in the wilderness they had immediately ensured their isolation by sending Kurvenal back to the court with the message that they had left for Ireland. Kurvenal was to warn them if Marke was on their trail. Although Tristan takes

20 Mark with him for food (16638), food is not necessary, for they are nourishment to each other:

> si truogen verborgen
> innerthalp der waete
> daz beste lîpgeraete,
> daz man zer werlde gehaben kan.
> daz truoc sich in vergebene an
> und ie vrisch unde niuwe.
> daz was diu reine triuwe;
> diu gebalsemete minne,
> diu lîbe unde sinne
> als inneclîche sanfte tuot,
> diu herze vuoret unde muot.
> diu was ir bestiu lîpnar. (16824ff.)

They are totally sufficient unto themselves, not finding it depressing without other people around. Gottfried again stresses their unity in each other, that together they make a whole:

> nu wes bedorften s´ouch dar în
> oder waz solt ieman zuo z´in dar?
> si haeten eine gerade schar:
> dane was niuwan ein und ein. (16850f.)

Together they make an even number. One and one is enough, perfection. An extra person would have been a burden (18654ff.). In this they are "anti-höfisch", as medieval man was not permitted to withdraw from society and isolate himself. This is the mistake of Erec and Enite in Hartmann von Aue´s *Erec*, a crime

for which they have to suffer. This kind of privacy is an illusion in medieval society.

Tristan and Isolde lack for nothing, as this is *their* "court" (16879). Nature provides their courtiers (16881ff.), love is their courtly meal (16896). It is thus clear that although Tristan and Isolde have fled the Court, they do not leave it behind, as even in their ideal state their actions are determined by the Court. It might be an "idealized court", but a court nevertheless, which serves to illustrate how subconsciously important the Court still is to them. (A matter of *honour*).

The description of the landscape outside the *Minnegrotte* corresponds almost word for word with the description of the landscape at the *Maifest* (16737ff.). So whereas the *Minnegrotte* can provide an escape from reality, from the eyes of *huote*, it is an illusion, a *wunschleben*, for they are still surrounded by the Court. Subconsciously they know that they cannot stay here forever. There are ties with Marke's court in the persons of Kurvenal, who must report to them every 20 days (16801) and

Brangäne, who still hoped to reconcile the lovers with Marke (16673ff.).

The Minnegrotte is an alienated form of temple:

> Gottfried unterstreicht die Bedeutung der Minnegrotte, indem er ihren Bau und Zustand einer allegorischen Ausdeutung auf die Tugenden der Minne unterwirft, wie es die Theologie mit dem sakralen Kirchenbau oder dem Hause Salomos in der Exegese des Hohen Liedes tut. Der Mittelpunkt der Grotte aber ist das "kristallene Bett", dessen kristallene Reinheit die Reinheit der wahren Minne ausdrückt. Das Bett, der Ort der leiblichen Vereinigung, wird so zum Zentrum eines mit theologisch-allegorischer Auslegungskunst gedeuteten, d. h. in religiöse Beziehung gesetzten Raumes. (DE BOOR 1962: 139)

Instead of the *unio mystica* of mysticism (God in me, I in God), it becomes the "mysticism of Tristanliebe": I in you; you in me:

> si wâren z'allen zîten
> ein ander an der sîten. (17145f.)

> In einer solchen Liebe gibt es keine Wiederholung und keinen Ersatz, weil die Existenz der geliebten Person einmalig ist. Isolde Weißhand, so völlig sie auch der blonden Isolde gleicht, ist doch nicht mit ihr identisch.
>
> Für das Wesen einer solchen Weise der Personalität hat der sonst *wortwise* Gottfried kein Wort. Wir müssen uns mit dem neuzeitlichen Begriff der Individualität behelfen. Individualität nicht im Sinne einer spezifischen Einmaligkeit in der Komplexität bestimmter Eigenschaften, sondern im

> Sinne der Einmaligkeit jenseits aller Eigenschaftlichkeit. Eben dies ereignet sich ja doch im Liebestrank: das Ich erlebt sich selbst in der Einsamkeit seiner Einmaligkeit und erkennt das Ich des Anderen als ein dem eigenen Ich gleiches. Ich und Du werden austauschbar, da sie sich in ihrem Existenzgrund gleichen. (SCHRÖDER 1967: 32)

The spiritual level of communication, the bonding on physical and spiritual level is stressed again and again. That the woman, Isolde, should be absolutely equal to the man, Tristan, is what makes Gottfried's *Tristanliebe* so exceptional, as this is unknown in any other literary work. It is on this level that she is "wahrlich ein Mann".

The lovers are first seen OUTSIDE the *Minnegrotte*. Together they enjoy the surroundings and are waited upon by nature. It is obviously not easy to arrive at this "state of well-being" (*Tristanliebe*), for the road to this "oasis" is treacherous, through wilderness. Gottfried comments:

> ouch hât ez guote meine, ...
> daz minne und ir gelegenheit
> niht ûf die strâze sint geleit
> noch an dekein gevilde. (17071ff.)

Besides walking through the idyllic surroundings and listening to the birds, etc., they would sit up close to each other ("z'ein ander an" - 17182) and tell each other stories of the yearning love of those who before their time died from love (17184ff.). The love-death theme thus occurs here in their paradise. It is part of *Tristanliebe*, just as sorrow-joy and love-suffering are always with them. These stories make them sad, and to forget them, they enter the *Minnegrotte* (17200ff.). That they tell and sing sad stories is unique in medieval literature:

> In den tragischen *senemaeren* wird das traurige Minneschicksal des Paares prophetisch gespiegelt; ... Daß Tristan und Isolde in ihrem *wunschleben* eine entschiedene Vorliebe für Erzählungen entwickeln, die von unglücklicher Liebe berichten, deutet auf eine schmerzliche Defizienz ihrer Grotten-Existenz hin: Ihr Minneglück ist unvollkommen ohne die soziale Komponente, d. h. ohne die Zeugenschaft und Anerkennung durch den Hof. So ist denn die Zeit höchster Liebeswonnen für die beiden eine Phase inhaltsleeren Glücks, eine "beschädigte Utopie" ... (KROHN 1981: 169)

(We know that Tristan had previously sung songs about tragic love for the Court of King Marke, therefore "entwickeln" would apply more to Isolde, who had learned the art from Tristan.)

The height of their mutuality is reached in their togetherness in the *Minnegrotte*. Besides being joined in love, physically becoming one, they are joined through their music. No longer do they perform singly, but as a unit, playing the harp and singing, not solo, but in duet:

> si wandelten dar inne
> ir wunnenspil, swie sî gezam.
> sweder ir die harphen genam,
> sô was des anderen site,
> daz ez diu notelîn dermite
> süoze unde senelîche sanc. (17212ff.)

JACKSON has pointed out that it was most unusual for a woman to compose lyrics or perform music in medieval literature. This was a male role. (JACKSON 1971: 185) The two of them *together* create the music, one playing whilst the other sings. This is only made possible by their aesthetic sensitivity.

> The music has no intoxicating effect; it is pure harmony worthy of the *Minnegrotte* ... Love reaches its highest expression in this harmony of words and music, not sung by one performer but by two. The role of musician and actor has moved into a higher sphere. Whereas in earlier scenes the two lovers, as individuals, had played a role, had performed, for an uninstructed audience, and by their skill and, in Isolde´s case, by skill combined with beauty had swayed an audience to their purposes, in the *Minnegrotte* they cease to perform. The skills they use as performers become their real life. There is no need for the artist to differentiate

> himself and his abilities from those of his audience. (JACKSON 1971: 185)

The emphasis is on inner harmony, spiritual balance, and Gottfried must be advocating this equal partnership as the ideal *minne*. The *Minnegrotte*, for all its allegorical interpretations, is symbolic of the characteristics of this love: rounded, to emphasize the simplicity of love, no corners for deceit to hide in; wide, symbolizing the unlimited power of love; high, indicating the soul's flight up; its walls form a circle of purity and sincerity, and it is based upon constancy/stability (the floor). In the centre is the *crystal* bed (clear, pure). The entrance to the cave is guarded by the four virtues: wisdom, reason, chastity and purity (16931ff.). Gottfried certainly leaves his reader in no doubt as to what *Tristanliebe* is, and what "höfische Liebe" is not.

5.2 The *wunschleben* is an Illusion

But here they cannot remain. The cave also has three windows, openings through which the world (the

reader) can watch. It is only a matter of time before *huote* catches up with them. It is only in the *Minnegrotte* and on the ship from Ireland that Tristan and Isolde are momentarily out of the courtly eye. KLAUS MORSCH has indicated that there are textual parallels between these two scenes. In both cases time is suspended. But in both cases they have to "come to" and rejoin society. On the ship they awake from the "Minneversenkung" when the coast of Cornwall comes into view. In the *Waldleben* it is the sound of the hunters' horns that brings them back to reality. (MORSCH 1984: 197)

The question has been posed, why they did not merely remain in the *Minnegrotte*, but this has never been conclusively answered. HERZMANN (1975) is of the opinion that the lovers had arrived at their goal and that the story could have had its fairy-tale ending here (HERZMANN 1975: 219). He also suggested that in the *Minnegrotte* they were free of social ties, that the Court had no reality there. How does he then account for the constant references to the courtly surroundings? The recent views of KLAUS MORSCH (1984:

192ff.) on the issue suggest that Tristan and Isolde had three options:

a) To remain in seclusion, but be isolated socially;
b) to return to Marke's court and continue the illicit relationship;
c) to separate forever.

What is clear from the text is that *êre* was as important in the *Waldleben* as it was at Court. Gottfried differentiates between *minne-êre* and *gesellschaftliche êre*. The latter is the kind Marke exhibits towards Isolde; his love is physical, he honours her as an object. Tristan himself says that *êre* comes from God, but can only be a reality through personal input (5765 - 5772). The Court is guilty of *êre âne êre* (16332). This is the kind of honour bestowed on a guest, who *may* deserve it (Rual) or may not (Gandin). It is the deceitful honour the barons, Melot and Marjodo, award Tristan while secretly plotting his demise. Even Tristan and Isolde are guilty of showering Marke with *êre*, whilst behaving most dishonestly.

What Tristan and Isolde share is *minne-êre*, which is built on *staete*, *triuwe* and comes from the heart. Honour was so important at Court, that the threat of loss of honour could even cause one to resort to murder to preserve it.

The whole Tristan/Isolde conflict with society revolves around *êre* and doing everything to preserve it - even being dishonourable. This is where deceit (*list*) plays such a prominent part. The moment Tristan and Isolde become aware that they are about to be discovered they are afraid. With the Court returning to their lives, deceit immediately surfaces, and Tristan places his sword between them, to indicate their innocence.

Tristan and Isolde do not miss *êre* for its own sake, but because it means they do not have to live in constant fear for their lives, and even includes the possibility of having both: secret love at Court and honour.

> Es geht um eine Konfrontation zwischen der *triuwe* der Herzen, die zentrale Voraussetzung

> der *minne* ist, und der *triuwe* der Höfe, die zentrale Voraussetzung der *êre* ist. (MORSCH 1984: 118f)

When they do choose to return to the Court, it is with great joy because (through role-play) they once again ascribe to the conventional role of "having God and honour".

> daz dûhte die gelieben guot
> und wurden in ir herzen vrô.
> die vröude haeten s'aber dô
> vil harter unde mêre
> durch got und durch ir êre
> dan durch iht anders, daz ie wart. (17694ff.)

But although they receive *honour*, they are not *trusted* and are kept apart. (They receive *êre âne êre*; *êre âne triuwe*!)

> Nur inmitten der Gesellschaft kann sich die Liebe Tristans und Isoldes erfüllen, allein kraft der Widerstände, die sie zu überwinden haben, kann sich ihre *triuwe* bewähren. Darum ist das *wunschleben* in der Minnegrotte ein Zustand, der nicht dauern darf; ... Die Minne hat ihre eigenen Gesetze. Ihnen müssen Tristan und Isolde sich unterordnen, wenn sie nicht Verrat aneinander üben wollen. Zugleich aber leben sie innerhalb einer Welt, in der andere Regeln gelten. So ist Isoldes Verhältnis zu Tristan von völlig anderer Art als ihr Verhältnis zu Marke. Für den einen ist sie die Geliebte, für den andern die Königin ... (HOLLANDT 1966: 150f.)

The possibility of returning to Court and keeping up the secret relationship is also no solution. Since their separation during the *Gottesurteil* and the advent of Petitcrieu, their relationship has deepend to the extent that they can "be together while apart". But already we have seen that their secret meetings are difficult to arrange, for Marke has become sensitized to their secret looks and strong bond. On their return to Court now, he keeps them apart from the start.

The only remaining option would be to part. Contrary to critics who accept that Gottfried would have taken the option of a *Liebestod*, MORSCH maintains that Tristan and Isolde tried everything to AVOID death. Their behaviour, from the *Minnetrank* has been aimed at survival. It is for this reason that they must part and not risk death by staying together.

The choice they finally make is what MORSCH calls "den Weg des geringsten Widerstandes und der geringeren Hoffnungslosigkeit". (MORSCH 1984: 203) They decide to part. At least while their *êre* is intact there is hope of life and love.

They could not retain the illusion of the *wunschleben* away from the Court. But neither can they realise their love at Court:

> Die Liebe Tristans und Isolts ist wahr, die Hoffnung auf ihre Verwirklichung in der höfischen Gesellschaft bleibt Illusion. (MORSCH 1984: 215)

6 SEPARATION AND ISOLDE WEISSHAND: Unsuccessful Attempt to Return to the Courtly Roles

6.1 Love's blindness

Having left the *Minnegrotte*, there is an anticlimactic return to the Court of King Marke and the Marke-Isolde relationship. In contrast to the sensual heights of the *Minnegrotte* experience, where Tristan and Isolde shared mutual, spiritual love, the reality of courtly love must now be a shock to the *edelen herzen*:

> ze vröuden haete er (Marke) aber dô
> an sînem wîbe Îsolde,
> swaz sô sîn herze wolde,
> niht z'êren, wan ze lîbe.
> ern haete an sînem wîbe
> noch minne noch meine
> noch al der êren keine,
> die got ie gewerden liez,
> wan daz s'in sînem namen hiez
> ein vrouwe unde ein künigîn
> dâ, dâ er künic solte sîn.
> diz nam er allez vür guot
> und truog ir allez holden muot,
> als er ir vil liep waere. (17724ff.)

Rüdiger Krohn comments on this passage that:

> Hier kritisiert Gottfried Markes Verhältnis zu Isolde, das nicht von den Geboten der Minne-*êre*,

> sondern von undifferenzierter Sinnlichkeit bestimmt sei ... Die Verfehlung des Königs liegt darin, daß er seine Frau nur *ze vröuden*, d. h. zum physischen Liebesgenuß (*ze lîbe*) begehre, sie jedoch seelisch und sittlich, d. h. im Sinne einer *êre*, wie sie in der Tristan-Liebe exemplarisch vorgestellt wird, nicht verdient ... So bleibt denn ihm, dem Repräsentanten einer höfischen Freudenwelt, nur der äußerliche Rahmen einer bloß gesellschaftlichen *êre* (17732-34); ein inneres Recht auf die Liebe Isoldes hat er dagegen nicht. (KROHN 1981: 173)

Gottfried's attack on Marke for his blindness, coming directly after the idyllic paradise episode must surely prove beyond doubt that Gottfried wanted his audience to judge "anti-höfisch" in favour of the genuine love-relationship of Tristan and Isolde. Gottfried exonerates the woman of deception, and blames the man for his foolish blindness and self-deception:

> der (Marke) wiste ez wârez alse den tôt
> und sach wol, daz sîn wîp Îsôt
> ir herzen unde ir sinne
> an Tristandes minne
> mitalle was vervlizzen.
> und enwolte es doch niht wizzen. (17747ff.)

Marke has been blinded by Isolde's beauty in the same way that the courtiers are blinded by the glitter of courtly living and are unable to distinguish between reality and appearance. Tristan and Isolde did not

make it hard for Marke to see the truth. Marjodo saw by observing them. There were footprints in the snow for Marke to read!

> Gottfried verdammt diese Blindheit der Liebe, die auf reiner Sexualität beruht, sehr ausführlich (17723 - 816) ... (ENDRES 1971: 194)

Tristan is not blinded in this way by Isolde because his love goes to the being, the heart and soul of the beloved, and does not deflect off the outer image. Gottfried expands the contrast of *Tristanliebe* with Marke's "höfische(!) Liebe" in once again skillfully placing the two men against each other by use of imagery.

Having just dealt with Marke's deliberate blindness, Gottfried highlights the *visual* communication between Tristan and Isolde:

> daz ouge daz hanget
> vil gerne an sîner weide.
> herze und ouge beide
> diu weident vil oft an die vart,
> an der ir beider vröude ie wart. (17822ff.)

Eye-imagery/sight is very important to the medieval lover, as it was believed that love entered through

the eyes. It is as a result of this belief that it was held that a blind person could not love. Thus the logic that Marke cannot love, for he, too, is "blind". Tristan and Isolde, on the other hand use their eyes all the time to pass each other messages of love. By carefully contrasting Marke's love with that of Tristan and Isolde by means of eye-imagery, Gottfried leads his reader to decide against Marke in favour of the lovers. Tristan and Isolde *want* to see (17822f.); Marke prefers *not* to see the truth of his hollow courtly marriage.

More than ever before in reading this, the *edelen herzen* must understand and share the togetherness of the lovers in their battle against courtly conventions. The option to remain in the *Minnegrotte* indefinitely is no choice, as an idyllic life without honour or courtly sanction cannot prevail. Yet back at Marke's Court there can be no happiness either, for Marke immediately forbids the ardent looks the lovers share (that blind he is not!) as they do not sit well with the Court. For although the Court and Marke are at pains to bestow honour on them ("iedoch

was aber Marke, / hof unde gesinde starke / gevlizzen an ir êre." 17707ff.), there is no longer any trust:

> sine wurden aber niemer mê
> in allen ir jâren
> sô heinlîch, sô s'ê wâren ... (17702ff.)

Marke is back to his doubting and orders the lovers to behave decently and not exchange heated looks or engage in intimate conversations (17712ff.). Gottfried depicts the dilemma of the lovers in the face of Marke's own inadequacies: they either stay in the *Minnegrotte* where they can share their innermost thoughts and feelings but forfeit courtly recognition and honour, or they can return to the Court and honour at the expense of their personal feelings. To have both mutual love and courtly honour is impossible. Gottfried highlights the emptiness of Marke's (courtly) love for Isolde immediately after this, showing Marke *happy* (vrô) (17723) to have his Isolde back again, at least *ze lîbe* (17727). It does not matter to him that he does not have her love. Suddenly the reality of the medieval marriage (no love) must appear hollow and unsatisfactory to the *edelen herzen* who have come to understand the mutuality of Tristan-love.

Contrary to Marke's psychological blindness in the face of his wife's obvious love for his nephew, Isolde and Tristan cannot turn a blind eye to their very real love. When the heat of their love cannot be denied, Isolde has a bed placed in the shade of a tree (without the cover of *êre*, they can only find fulfilment in secrecy) made up with purple silk sheets (which suggest the regal status of *Tristanliebe*, at the same time referring to the conventional colour of mourning in the Church, death being once more prefigured; the colour would perhaps be reminiscent also of the whore in Babylon) and dressed only in a shirt, lies on the bed to wait for Tristan.

Gottfried equates Isolde with Eve, offering Adam the forbidden fruit, which gladly he accepts:

> nu tete er rehte als Âdam tete.
> daz obez, daz ime sîn Êve bôt,
> daz nam er und az mit ir den tôt. (18162ff.)

This scene corresponds to the *Minnetrank* scene where it is Tristan who offers Isolde the forbidden drink (11681ff.), and together they drink their death

(11706). Death is prefigured here, for this moment will result in their being separated permanently, which means they cease to be the *raison d'être* of the other. Life apart is a living death. Death of the one means death of the other, so opting out of life to escape the agony is not possible.

Gottfried has chastised the Court for its tradition of *huote*, which only serves to tempt the woman to do wrong. Here we have Isolde deliberately challenging that *huote* , without any apparent fear. Brangäne observes:

> daz vorhte noch huote
> an ir vrouwen niht vervie. (18176f.)

> Gottfried schiebt den Höhepunkt, auf den die Handlung zusteuert, hinaus, dramatisiert und wirbt zugleich um Verständnis für die Liebenden, indem er eine allgemeine Reflexion über die Bedrohung durch die *huote* einfügt und ein Verhalten der Frau (nicht ausdrücklich des Mannes!) gegen die *huote* und im Sinne ihrer Veranlagung als gewissermaßen naturnotwendig, in jedem Fall als verständlich interpretiert und indem er die Kontrahenten der Liebenden, insbesondere Marke, noch einmal belastet. (MORSCH 1984: 206)

Markes reaction to finding the lovers together, proving beyond a doubt what he had always suspected but turned a blind eye to, is reminiscent of his

silence after the *Mehlstreu-Szene*. Now there is no *zorn* born of *zwîvel*, for he has finally seen the evidence of their adultery with his own eyes. This is Gottfried's own "addition" to the Tristan/Isolde story, for it does not appear in the Thomas version:

> Diesen Mann gibt es fortan nicht mehr, sein Schweigen ist Ausdruck auch seines Tot-seins. (KROHN 1981: 199)

Marke's inability to act at this moment of truth is Isolde's salvation. Had he wanted to charge her with adultery, the law required him to have witnesses to the fact. By the time he *does* return with witnesses, Tristan has fled and Marke's advisers request him to be less paranoid for the sake of his and Isolde's honour. (That Tristan leaves, never to return, does not appear to suggest proof of guilt to them. Neither did it at the time of the *Gottesurteil*.)

At this point the (overt) love-triangle ceases to exist. Marke and Isolde are together to the end of the story, as courtly queen and king. Tristan, after numerous travels and battles, seeking solace and "trying to find himself", ends up at the Court of Kaedin, where another Isolde provides some form of

"identity" for a while. Here he can once more play the role of teacher, musician and courtier. But never does it have the depth, the "heart" of his similar position with the young Isolde in Ireland. There is no sharing, no mutual effect on an audience. We will return to Tristan later.

The farewell between Tristan and Isolde, having just given Marke conclusive proof of their relationship, and the ensuing monologue by Isolde, clarify many aspects of what *Tristanliebe* essentially is: togetherness (*ein Stück aus Erz/Gold*), total selflessness, love internalised, loyalty and being the *raison d'être* of the other (giving the other identity).

6.2 *Tristanliebe* = Life and Death

In contrast to Thomas' panic-stricken "Ich-Befangenheit" evident in Tristan's farewell words, Gottfried underlines Tristan and Isolde's togetherness. Isolde's parting speech is amplified five-fold. But more than this, it reveals the total

selflessness and internalised form of this exemplary love, despite all sensual-corporal "sinfulness". This he places in the mouth of the *woman* (as with the *Gottesurteil*) who is portrayed as the legal adviser (*Sachwalterin*) of the relationship. (See KROHN 1981: 176)

In this farewell speech Tristan calls Isolde *herzekünigîn* (18255), *herzevrouwe* (18266) and *herzevriundîn* (18280). In contrast, she will hereafter be Marke's *vrouwe* and *künigîn*, but without *herze*. She will never be Marke's *vriundîn* (cf. 17733ff.)! Tristan in his farewell, requests her to carry the *pureness* of their love forever in her memory, not forgetting him even in her deepest need. The reader must query his use of *lûhterlîche* to describe their love. Can adulterous love be pure, unsullied? In Gottfried's eyes *Tristanliebe* IS pure in that between them there is no deceit or unfaithfulness.

> Gottfried betont öfters, daß die Minne Tristans und Isoldes *lûter* und *rein* sei. Sie täuschen und betrügen zwar die Menschen in ihrer Umgebung, sind einander jedoch in reiner *triuwe* ergeben. Wenn man Spuren eines personalen Verhältnisses in Tristan und Isolde sucht, wird ihre *triuwe* zueinander der wichtigste Gegenstand der

> Untersuchung sein müssen ... Isolde scheint überhaupt die *triuwe* reiner zu verkörpern als Tristan, der sich selbst als *ungetriuwe* (19142) und *triuwelos* (19154) bezeichnet. (ENDRES 1971: 210)

Their love is mutual. But although Gottfried sanctions it, he makes it clear that it cannot last in a "herzelose" courtly society.

Isolde's reaction to Tristan's plea has been depicted as hesitation (by Thomas) and physical reaction (by Gottfried):

> Si trat ein lützel hinder sich,
> siuftende sprach si wider in: ... (18286f.)

> In dieser Szene wird der Unterschied zwischen der Thomas- und der Gottfried-Fassung besonders deutlich: Bei Thomas zögert Yseut, ihrem Geliebten den Abschiedskuß zu geben ...; Gottfried dagegen berichtet nicht nur von diesem Zögern vor der letzten Umarmung, sondern er versinnlicht Isoldes Reaktion, indem er sie in einer aussagekräftigen Gebärde verdeutlicht. (KROHN 1981: 177)

This drawing away from him at the moment that he seeks confirmation of their "eternal togetherness in separation" is, I feel, an expression of incredulity, a sigh of exasperation, that he could even think that she could forget him. (After all it will finally be

he that will betray their pure love and doubt her loyalty to him. *His zwîvel* will result in *zorn*!)

The speech from Isolde is one of the only monologues in which we have direct speech. Isolde stresses that they are intertwined heart and soul (and here one inevitably thinks of the honeysuckle and hazel image of Marie de France).* He is her existence, for the only life in her is *his* life. She later expands this metaphor:

> wart Îsôt ie mit Tristane
> ein herze unde ein triuwe,
> sô ist ez iemer niuwe,
> sô muoz ez iemer staete wern. (18330ff.)

This reminds one of the life/death motif. If he should die and she be orphaned, she would die too (not having his life within her). She accepts that the same applies to him, and for this reason she realizes that she must protect *her* life, so as not to cause his death. This is the essence of *Tristanliebe*: a double-identity; each gets his existence (identity) from the other:

> "ein lîp, ein leben daz sîn wir," (18344) she stresses.

(Surely this answers all the critics who wonder whether Gottfried's *Tristan* would have ended in a *Liebestod*. It must. A "widowed" Isolde would die, just as Blanscheflur had done.) Ultimate unity is stressed in her statement:

> lât mich an iu mîn leben sehen, (...)
> und sehet ouch ir daz iure an mir. (18347ff.)

Isolde *now* invites him to kiss her, as a seal on their *unity* (sie *versîgelt* diu rede) (18359). We now understand her reaction to his earlier request for a kiss: his was to be a *parting* , farewell kiss. Hers is a *uniting* kiss!

> wir zwei sîn iemer beide
> ein dinc âne underscheide.
> dirre kus sol ein insigel sîn
> daz ich iuwer unde ir mîn
> belîben staete unz an den tôt,
> niwan ein Tristan und ein Îsôt. (18353ff.)

Unlike Blanscheflur who fears that *battle* will kill Riwalin (and is proven correct), it is *another woman* that is uppermost in Isolde's mind at this moment of parting. She begs him not to allow anyone near his heart. This she says three times! (18300, 18320,

18322). She appeals to the *triuwe* which for so long has been so perfect between them. To remind them of their *mutual love and triuwe* she gives him a ring - another seal on their unity - to serve as a reminder of her heart's stand in love and loyalty. (Thomas does not expand on why she gives him a ring).

One is reminded of the ring that Rual presented to Marke as proof of Tristan's identity. This ring had been given to Blanscheflur by Marke, he having received it from *his* father (4286ff.). It is again a symbol of identity, to remind Tristan of where he belongs, who he is. In Gottfried's version he does not get to remembering the ring before the story breaks off. But we know from the Thomas version that the ring *does* eventually serve to remind Tristan that he only *exists in* Isolde the Fair. The ring is a binding force stronger that any *Minnetrank*.

Isolde is sage enough to realise that Tristan could be tempted away from her.

> The sentiments are conventional enough, but in view of Tristan's behavior with Isolde White Hands her speech is full of tragic irony ... Clearly there is no role-playing in the sense of insincerity: Isolde means what she says. If she

> is to be regarded as playing a role, it must be that of the lady parting from her lover, a commonplace of courtly romance and hence foreign to Gottfried's normal approach but a role which here coincides with Isolde's true position. (JACKSON 1971: 208)

Another binding factor in their parting is their shared *liep und leit* (18323). What kept them apart before becomes an element to unite them now:

> wir zwei wir haben liep unde leit
> mit solher gesellekeit
> her unz an dise stunde brâht;
> wir suln die selben andâht
> billîche leiten ûf den tôt. (18323ff.)

Their love was born out of "Liebe" and "Leid", just as Tristan himself was created and born out of love and sorrow. It is fitting that these elements that give them their identity, should be there at the parting and afterwards (unto death).

Yet there are distinct "psychological" results of their separation. Isolde's eyes lose their lustre (18479ff.) and she grows quiet (18482ff.). No longer are they the "ougen" of the *Minnegrotte*. No longer does she sing. There is a difference in this separation if compared to the separation at the time of the *Gottesurteil*, or the enforced separations at

Court. Whereas they grew pale and sickly, the will to live was not lost.

Now, after the *Minnegrotte* where they attained ultimate union, physical separation affects their relationship. Remembrance alone no longer suffices. Isolde loses half of herself with the departure of Tristan. She ceases to be Isolde without Tristan. Yet she cannot die, for her death would mean his death, and she is responsible for his life. Blanscheflur could not live without Riwalin. His death caused her death. But although Tristan is lost to Isolde, he is not dead, and therefore she does not have that option. That he is alive is her reason to live. And yet there is no life:

> sîn leben half ir, daz sî genas.
> sine mohte leben noch sterben
> âne in niht erwerben.
> tôt unde leben haet ir vergeben.
> sine mohte sterben noch geleben. (18474ff.)

This is her dilemma. She exists in an in-between state, not complete, having no other half. She is once again the limed-bird, unable to escape by living or dying. This woman, who is "geistig ein Mann" cannot return to the conventional medieval role of

the woman. She no longer fits. Her "courtly identity" is strange to her, and in this final speech from Isolde, her anguished search for her own identity is echoed in a) her impassioned cry:

> wâ mag ich mich nu vinden?
> wâ mac ich mich nu suochen, wâ? (18532f.)

and b) in her frenzied wish to find the answers from *morâliteit*, that which Tristan had taught her. The education of the Court does not provide her with the answers, and she asks of the already-departed Tristan:

> Nu hêrre, mîn hêr Tristan,
> sît daz ir mit mir alle zît
> ein lîp unde ein leben sît,
> sô sult ir mir ouch lêre geben,
> daz ich behabe lîp unde leben
> iu z'aller êrste, dâ nâch mir.
> nu lêret an! wes swîget ir? (18518ff.)

She cannot be a whole person again, but as Marke's wife, functions as a half-person within the Court, because she is with Tristan in spirit.

> Es gibt eine Einheit Liebender, eine Minneversenkung, es gibt *leal amour*; wahre Liebe ist zugleich bedroht, muß erkämpft werden und führt im Diesseits ein Schattendasein ...

> Diese "einzigartige Liebe" destruiert alle Beteiligten, auch den König, wenn sie nicht gelebt werden kann und darf; auch das verschweigt der Text nicht. Tristan und Isolt können nur miteinander leben; sobald sie den anderen verlieren, mit dem sie *ein lîp und ein leben* (18348) sind, verlieren sie notwendigerweise ihre Identität. (MORSCH 1984: 209)

Just as Isolde unconsciously "returns" to her home, her place as pupil under Tristan's tutelage, where "morâliteit" was born, Tristan on leaving Cornwall finds comfort (sublimation?) in battle. But he, too, cannot return to his former roles. He returns to Parmenie, the place where he grew up in the warmth of Rual and Floraete's *triuwe* and *staete*. It is an attempt to establish an identity once more; the identity of his youth, his heritage. He is presented with the chance to have his land and people back, but cannot return to this role. He leaves for Arundel, again in the hopes that battle will allow him "sîner swaere aber ein teil vergezzen dâ" (18718ff.). But he does not acquire "wholeness".

6.3 Isolde White Hands

Tristan achieves fame in Arundel, where he then sets eyes on Isolde White Hands. The name and her beauty cause an instant recognition of that missing element, and he believes this Isolde to be his Isolde. Through Isolde White Hands he comes close to finding his other self (or so he believes at first). It is an Ovidian theory that Gottfried uses here, namely, that the best way to free oneself from the pain of unhappy love is to fall in love again. Today psychologists would have no problem explaining Tristan's attraction to Isolde White Hands in the light of his love for Isolde the Fair. So desperate is he to regain his former state of love that he "believes" this Isolde to be his Isolde.

In his confusion he proclaims:

> â dê benîe, wie bin ich
> von disem namen verirret!
> er irret unde wirret
> die wârheit und daz lougen
> mîner sinne und mîner ougen.
> er birt mir wunderlîche nôt.
> mir lachet unde spilt Îsôt
> in mînen ôren alle vrist
> und enweiz iedoch, wâ Îsôt ist.
> mîn ouge, daz Îsôte siht,
> daz selbe ensiht Îsôte niht. (...) (18994ff.)

As mentioned before, I find the statement by GOTTZMANN that love "divides" problematic. Her whole argument in this essay is unsubstantiated and unconvincing. She maintains:

> Die Minne, die unteilbar ist, deren zentrale Bedeutung gerade in der Einheit liegt, spaltet sich nun in zwei Frauen mit dem Namen Isolde auf. (GOTTZMANN 1990: 141)
>
> Tristan kann offensichtlich gar nicht unter anderen Umständen leben, da die Disharmonie zu seinem Wesen gehört, so daß selbst die einende Minne dem Zwiespalt unterworfen wird. (GOTTZMANN 1990: 139)

Whereas Tristan had previously been blessed with "erbeminne", he now suffers his other inheritance, "erbesmerzen" (19127). Tristan is unsure of which role to play: Tristan the warrior or Tristan the minstrel.

> Als er Cornwall fliehen und Isolt verlassen muß, verliert er die Grundlage seiner Liebe und schlüpft in neue Identitäten, in die Ritterschaft und in die Liebe zu einer Frau, durch die er eine Annäherung an Isolt erhofft. Liebe und Ritterschaft, Identitäten, die er tatsächlich besessen hat, werden am Ende zu Scheinidentitäten, weil es ihm - und Isolt - nicht gelungen war und nicht gelingen konnte, Liebe und Ritterschaft, *fröude* und *êre* miteinander in Einklang zu bringen. (MORSCH 1984: 210f.)

He teaches Isolde White Hands songs, composes and plays for the Court, but never do he and this Isolde reach that "other" plain, the aesthetic unity and understanding that only mutual love can accomplish. Tristan is totally "höfisch" again, and plays the role so convincingly that Isolde White Hands and her brother, Kaedin, are taken in by it. It is noteworthy that only now that he has left Isolde and strengthened his bond with the Court once more by wars, distance and a new love, does he suddenly get called "höfisch" again. (MORSCH 1984: 20) For a while Tristan too believes that he can carry on in this role to the end. Yet reality impinges every time he is about to sever the ties with Isolde the Fair permanently and he is prevented from forming a courtly union with Isolde White Hands.

> Thus on the one occasion in the poem when love is possible in a conventional situation, it is vitiated by the fact that Tristan´s love is already committed to Isolde the Fair ... The difference between the love which appears in gesture, form, and outward appearance and that which really exists between two persons in harmony - in other words, the difference between the love which Gottfried has just described as the manifestation of the highest qualities of a woman and love which is no better than lust - is admirably illustrated in the intellectual and musical relationship between the two Isoldes. Isolde the Fair and Tristan invariably share their musical and intellectual experiences, once

> Tristan has imparted to her the skill and knowledge which make such participation possible. Isolde White Hands is of a very different type. She is utterly passive, receptive, incapable of a positive contribution ... (Jackson 1971: 136)

The confrontation of *Tristanliebe* with courtly love is highlighted in Tristan's futile attempt to *force* himself to love Isolde White Hands in the hope that this will diminish his anguish:

> er besazte sîne trahte,
> er wolte liebe und lieben wân
> wider die maget Îsôte hân,
> sîn gemüete gerne twingen
> z'ir liebe ûf den gedingen,
> ob ime sîn senebürde
> mit ir iht ringer würde. (19056ff.)

Here Tristan is employing the same principle of forced love that Gottfried has criticised in Marke after Isolde's return from the *Minnegrotte* (17917ff.). In this attempt to force love, and failing in it, Gottfried clearly illustrates the hollowness of courtly love in contrast to the mutuality of *Tristanliebe*. Real love, as the Petitcrieu-episode shows is born of *triuwe*, *êre* and "Höflichkeit des Herzens".

> Die Kontrastierung der *triuwe* der Herzen mit der *triuwe* der Höfe bestätigt die Idealität der

> Minne zwischen Tristan und Isolt und beweist die Unzulänglichkeit der höfischen Lebensform. (MORSCH 1984: 121)

Gottfried's Tristan ends with the realisation, that Isolde (the Fair) cannot give him that which would make him happy; there is no happy life. *Tristanliebe* may be true love, but within courtly society it is an illusion. By becoming like Tristan (*wîp* = *man*), Isolde also acquires this "duality". Compare his cry: *wie kunde man mich vinden? ... wie vindet man mich oder wâ?* (19514ff.) with *her* cry: *wâ mag ich mich nu vinden? / wâ mac ich mich nu suochen, wâ?* (18533ff.).

It is almost credible that it ends here. For this is the reality: *Tristanliebe* is both joy *and* sorrow, and Tristan and Isolde, no matter how much they long for happiness, know they cannot escape it.

Apart they have no "home", no place that they belong. *Tristanliebe* is doomed to remain in a state of searching and never arriving. It has no home in the medieval courtly world. This Tristan and Isolde realise. But having experienced it (and the *edelen herzen* have shared the experience), they are now

unable to return to their former courtly roles. As Tristan puts it:

> ez enstât nu niht als wîlent ê,
> dô wir ein wol, dô wir ein wê,
> eine liebe und eine leide
> gemeine truogen beide.
> nu stât ez leider niht alsô. (19479ff.)

* Marie de France wrote her Lais before 1167, dedicating them to King Henry II of England. Of particular interest is that she wrote a Tristan-Lai, Chievrefueil, which tells of a letter that Tristan wrote to Isolde, begging for a meeting between them, and in which he compared their love to the honeysuckle (*Geißblatt*) that inseparably intertwines with the hazelnut-bush. There is some debate as to whether Marie knew the story of Isolde and Tristan from the Urtristan, and whether Thomas got his ideas from her. (WARNKE 1925: lix)

7 CONCLUSION

Gottfried von Straßburg gives the woman in *TRISTAN* a stronger role in terms of her partnership with the man. Through the characters of Isolde and Tristan he suggests a new ethic, previously hinted at by *Minnesingers* such as Walther von der Vogelweide, who spoke of the woman also being a *friend*, and called for 'herzeliebe'. Hartmann von Aue and Wolfram von Eschenbach portrayed the woman as 'Minneherrin' *and* wife of the man, but still stayed well within the bounds of traditional 'Minnedienst'.

Through the role of the woman Gottfried von Straßburg is able to criticize medieval social practices, especially with regard to the woman. This comes at a time in history when woman's role was changing as she asserted herself, took over traditionally male roles on the estate (owing to the crusades, etc.), and rejected the subservient role of wife and chattel. The 'Frauenbewegung' of the 12th century gave rise to a 'ekklesiogene Kollektivneurose', which Müller defines as:

> (eine) für eine bestimmte Gesellschaftsgruppe in einer bestimmten historischen Situation kennzeichnende Neurose, die verursacht ist durch den Druck des durch die kirchlichen Normen repräsentierten Über-Ichs. (MÜLLER 1986: 292)

Thum and Müller (1986) share the theory that there was a resultant new self-awareness as a result of the 'Frauenbewegung', even a male identity-crisis:

> Die adeligen Frauendiener and Minnesänger hatten 'Angst' vor der Frau. Nicht vor der einzelnen, wirklichen Frau, die ihnen zu Hause oder bei Hofe begegnete ... 'Angst' galt vielmehr der Frau als geschlechtlich-gesellschaftlichem Typus, der zu Handlungen neigte, die man nicht verstand oder die mithineinzureißen drohten in die Gegen-Welt absoluter Verweigerung. (THUM 1986: 45)

This 'Mentalitätswandel' is obviously not immediate nor necessarily the general norm. But it cannot be denied that it was sufficiently there to influence a thinker like Gottfried and together with other factors, such as the love-relationship of Abaelard and Heloise, determine his approach to a well-known story. It is clear that he purposely chose the story of Isolde and Tristan to advocate a new ethic. In his Prologue and *Vorgeschichte* he deliberately prepares for the new morality of *Tristanliebe*. Through the role of the woman Gottfried is able to criticize medieval social practices with regard to women.

Isolde is educated by Tristan in more than just the courtly traditions. She learns *morâliteit* from him. Together they achieve an aesthetic appreciation no one else can understand or share. Sadness and joy form the basis of their love. Their love embodies *triuwe* and *êre* that come from the heart (12336). This is in confrontation with

courtly *triuwe* and *êre*, and as the two roles conflict, Tristan and Isolde are faced with various options: to remain at Court and keep *Tristanliebe* going secretly, with the ever-present fear of being discovered, to leave the Court and live a *Waldleben*, unrecognized by society, as social outcasts; or to part.

All three these options are depicted by Gottfried. He shows in doing this, that the courtly practices are not fulfilling the needs of the man and the woman. *Tristanliebe* is a threat to worldly/courtly ideals, exposing the 'hoene' in the 'schoene'(17803) through its inherent integrity.

Through the seneschal's comments on women (the most uncertain game ever played on a board), the *Frauenexkurs* and the *huote*-exkurs especially, Gottfried reveals the medieval understanding of the role of a woman, amongst others, as an object (whether of 'brass' or 'gold') to be used, closely guarded, 'sold' or awarded as a prize. She is given no own 'identity' and no free choice, but forced into socially prescribed roles.

Gottfried in *TRISTAN*, breaks ground for a new view of the woman in the Middle Ages. The woman, an individual, contrary to her socially expected role, becomes the equal of a man. The female role in education, marriage, love, society in general and at the Court in particular, is

revealed in an alienated form. The male is criticized for imposing *huote* on the woman rather than *trusting* her to love him, for his blindness, self-deception, inability to distinguish brass from gold and being a *hêrzeloses wîp*.

The height of *Tristanliebe* is seen in the Petitcrieu episode, where both Tristan and Isolde forfeit the chance of eternal happiness within the Court inherent in the powers of the dog. Tristan, rather than share the kingdom of Gilan and have social honour again, chooses the dog as a gift for Isolde. Her happiness at his expense is his prime consideration. She, likewise, refuses to accept the dog's power to give eternal joy, as it would mean happiness for her but sadness for Tristan. Both elect to reject happiness and be 'together' in the sadness of their separation. As Isolde comments after their separation:

> "ich wil Tristandes vriundîn
> gern âne sînen schaden sîn.
> daz ime sîn dinc ze liebe ergê,
> ine ruoche und ist mir iemer wê.
> ich wil mich gerne twingen
> an allen mînen dingen,
> daz ich mîn unde sîn entwese,
> durch daz er mir und ime genese." (18593ff.)

It does not matter that Gottfried does not end his story, or that there are inconsistencies, or that perhaps he ultimately adheres to the courtly literary traditions of the Middle Ages. He certainly succeeds in portraying a unique concept of love for 1210, showing up the hollowness

of the Court, the hypocrisy and superficiality of medieval society. He highlights and questions the traditional roles of male and female, and gives his reader a glimpse of what role the woman can play in the future.

Medieval woman has no chance of being an individual. She is 'woman' to be dominated, controlled and used. She is not the modern individual we know now, merely a shadow of what is to come. But already Gottfried is pleading for a new morality, a new ethic: reciprocal, mutual love, in which the woman is her man's equal. No *huote* crowds her. She is recognized as a person, able to love and be loved. Each partner makes the other a new person, gives him/her 'identity'. The moment they separate, they are in a state of continuous searching for themselves.

Isolde assumes her courtly position as Marke's wife, but at the same time has a second persona, the 'liberated' woman, who is free to choose the beloved, initiate the action and experience the heights and depths of her emotions. This she does from within her social role, playing the Court's game of 'schoene daz ist hoene' in order to compete.

However, Tristan and Isolde cannot ultimately live apart. They need the other half of their 'identity' to be whole. Neither can they return to their former roles and be happy again. Life for them becomes living death, but death is no

life. It is perhaps for this reason that Gottfried's Tristan breaks off. Having got this far, he does not have an answer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Literature

KROHN Rüdiger (Hg.)
1981. *Gottfried von Straßburg TRISTAN.* Nach dem Text von Friedrich Ranke neu hrsg., ins Neuhochdeutsche übersetzt, mit einem Stellenkommentar und einem Nachwort von Rüdiger Krohn. (Bände 1 - 3) 2. Aufl. Stuttgart: Reclam

LEITZMANN Albert (Hg.)
1961. *Wolfram von Eschenbach PARZIVAL.* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer

LEITZMANN Albert (Hg.)
1972. *Hartmann von Aue EREC.* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer

Secondary Literature

BAUMGARTNER Dolores
1978. *Studien zu Individuum und Mystik im Tristan Gottfrieds von Straßburg.* Göppingen: Kümmerle

BOSL Karl
1978. Der Aufbruch von Mensch und Gesellschaft. Eine epochale Struktur in der europäischen Geschichte. In *Stauferzeit* Geschichte, Literatur, Kunst. KROHN, THUM, WAPNEWSKI (Hg.) 1978: 11 -27.

BUMKE Joachim
1979. *Mäzene im Mittelalter: Die Gönner und Auftraggeber der höfischen Literatur in Deutschland 1150 - 1300.* München: Beck.

BUMKE Joachim
1986. *Höfische Kultur: Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter.* Band 2. München: dtv.

CARNE Eva-Maria
1970. *Die Frauengestalten bei Hartmann von Aue.* Ihre Bedeutung im Aufbau und Gehalt der Epen. Marburg: N. G. Elwert.

CLASSEN Albrecht
1989. Matriarchy versus Patriarchy: The Role of the Irish Queen Isolde in Gottfried von Straßburg's "Tristan". *Neophilologus* 73: 77 - 89.

CLOSS August (Ed)
1944. *Tristan und Îsolt. A Poem by Gottfried von Straßburg.* Oxford: Blackwell.

COLLINGS Lucy G.
1973. Structural Prefiguration in Gottfried's *Tristan*. *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 72: 378 - 389.

DE BOOR Helmut
1962. *Die Höfische Literatur: Vorbereitung, Blüte, Ausklang, 1170 - 1250*. Fünfte, verbesserte Auflage. Mit einem bibliographischen Anhang von Dr. Dieter Haacke. München: Beck

DINZELBACHER Peter
1986. Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der Liebe im Mittelalter. In *Minne ist ein swaerez spil: Neue Untersuchungen zum Minnesang und zur Geschichte der Liebe im Mittelalter*. MÜLLER (Hg.) 1986: 75 - 110.

EHRISMANN Otfrid/KAMINSKY Hans
1976. *Literatur und Geschichte im Mittelalter. Versuch, in deutschsprachige Texte der Stauferzeit einzuführen*. Kronberg: Athenäum.

ENDRES Rolf
1971. *Einführung in die mittelhochdeutsche Literatur. Probleme des Studiums* - Blick auf die Geschichte - Nibelungenlied - Tristan. Frankfurt: Ullstein.

ERNST Ulrich
1976. Gottfried von Straßburg in komparatistischer Sicht. Form und Funktion der Allegorese im Tristanepos. *Euphorion* 70: 1 - 72.

ERTZDORFF Xenia von
1978. Die höfische Liebe im Tristan Gottfrieds von Straßburg. In *Stauferzeit*: Geschichte, Literatur, Kunst. KROHN, THUM, WAPNEWSKI (Hg.): 349 - 361.

GELLINEK Christian
1980. *Herrschaft im Hochmittelalter: Essays zu einem Sonderproblem der älteren deutschen Literatur*. Bern: Peter Lang.

GOTTZMANN Carola L.
1989. Identitätsproblematik in Gottfrieds "Tristan". *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* 39 Heft 2: 129 - 146.

HATTO Arthur Thomas
1985. *Gottfried von Straßburg: Tristan*. Translated entire for the first time. With the surviving fragments of the Tristran of Thomas. Newly translated. With an introduction by A. T. Hatto. 15th edition. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

HERZMANN Herbert
1975. Warum verlassen Tristan und Isolde die Minnehöhle? Zu Gottfrieds *Tristan*. *Euphorion* 69: 219 - 228.

HERZMANN Herbert
1976. Nochmals zum Minnetrank in Gottfrieds *Tristan*. Anmerkungen zum Problem der psychologischen Entwicklung in der mittelhochdeutschen Epik. *Euphorion* 70: 73 - 94.

HOLLANDT Gisela
1966. *Die Hauptgestalten in Gottfrieds Tristan*. Wesenszüge. Handlungsfunktion. Motiv der List. Berlin: E. Schmidt.

JACKSON W. T. H.
1971. *The Anatomy of Love*. The *Tristan* of Gottfried von Straßburg. New York and London: Columbia University Press.

JAEGER C. Stephen
1977. *Medieval Humanism in Gottfried von Straßburg's Tristan und Isolde*. Heidelberg: Winter.

JUPÉ Wolfgang
1976. *Die "List" im Tristanroman Gottfrieds von Straßburg*. Intellektualität und Liebe oder die Suche nach dem Wesen der individuellen Existenz. Heidelberg: Winter.

LANGER Otto
1974. Der "Künstlerroman" Gottfrieds - Protest bürgerlicher "Empfindsamkeit" gegen höfisches "Tugendsystem"? *Euphorion* 68: 1 - 41.

LIEBERTZ-GRÜN Ursula
1977. *Zur Soziologie des "amour courtois"*. Umrisse der Forschung. Heidelberg: Winter.

MAURER Friedrich
1972. *Walther von der Vogelweide: Die Lieder*. Mittelhochdeutsch und in neuhochdeutscher Prosa. Mit einer Einführung in die Liedkunst Walthers herausgegeben und übertragen von Friedrich Maurer. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.

MORSCH Klaus
1984. *schoene daz ist hoene*. Studien zum Tristan Gottfrieds von Straßburg. Erlangen: Palm & Enke.

MÜLLER Ulrich
1986. *Die Ideologie der Hohen Minne: eine ekklesiogene Kollektivneurose?* Überlegungen und Thesen zum Minnesang. In *Minne ist ein swaerez spil: Neue Untersuchungen zum Minnesang und zur Geschichte der Liebe im Mittelalter*. MÜLLER (Hg.) 1986: 283 - 315.

SCHAUFELE Eva
1979. *Normabweichendes Rollenverhalten: Die kämpfende Frau in der deutschen Literatur des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*. Göppingen: Kümmerle.

SCHNELL Rüdiger
1982. Gottfrieds Tristan und die Institution der Ehe. *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 101: 334 - 369.

SCHNELL Rüdiger
1984. Der Frauenexkurs in Gottfrieds Tristan (V. 17858 - 18114) Ein kritischer Kommentar. *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 103: 1 - 26.

SCHRÖDER Walter Johannes
1967. Der Liebestrank in Gottfrieds *Tristan und Isolt*. *Euphorion* 61, 3. Heft: 22 - 35.

SCHRÖDER Walter Johannes
1979. *Text und Interpretation: Das Gottesurteil im TRISTAN Gottfrieds von Straßburg*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner.

SCHUMACHER Marlis
1967. *Die Auffassung der Ehe in den Dichtungen Wolframs von Eschenbach*. Heidelberg: Winter.

SHAHAR Shulamit
1981. *Die Frau im Mittelalter*. Übersetzt von Ruth Achlama. Königstein/Ts. 1981 und Frankfurt 1983: Fischer-Taschenbuch.

THUM Bernd
1986. *Geschlechterkultur und Minne* - ein Versuch zur Sozial-, Funktions- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des oberrheinischen Minnesangs im 12. Jahrhundert. In *Minne ist ein swaerez spil: Neue Untersuchungen zum Minnesang und zur Geschichte der Liebe im Mittelalter*. MÜLLER (Hg) 1986: 3 - 71.

WARNKE Klaus (Hg)
1925. *Die Lais der Marie de France*. Halle: Max Niemeyer.

WAGNER Wilfried
1973. Die Gestalt der jungen Isolde in Gottfrieds *Tristan*. *Euphorion* 67: 52 - 59.

WELZ Dieter
1970. Glück und Gesellschaft in den Artusromanen Hartmanns von Aue und im "Tristan" Gottfrieds von Straßburg. *Acta Germanica* 5: 11 - 40.

WELZ Dieter
1983. Kabale und Liebe in Karnant. Zur Struktur des Verrats in Hartmanns *EREC*. *Acta Germanica* 16: 7 - 23.

WOLF Alois
1966. Die Klagen der Blanscheflur. Zur Fehde zwischen Wolfram von Eschenbach und Gottfried von Straßburg. *ZfdPh* 85: 66 - 82.