THE ROLE OF ART

IN GOTTFRIED'S TRISTAN

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: This paper begins with an examination of Gottfried's probable background and interests, which are seen to vary greatly from those of his contemporaries. These differences manifest themselves in the poet's unusual degree of concern for matters of an artistic nature and the purpose of this study is to demonstrate the importance which Gottfried attributes to art within his poem.

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INTRODUCTION

The outstanding nature of Gottfried von Straßburg's artistic accomplishment has long been acknowledged by students of European medieval literature. Yet despite this recognition, no comprehensive attempt has been made to assess the functional value which Gottfried attributes to art. The purpose of this paper is to rectify this omission. An examination will be conducted both of the role which art plays within the narrative of the poem, and of the theories expressed by the poet regarding the effect of art upon the audience.

Chapter I is devoted to a study of the deductions which can be made from Tristan concerning Gottfried's background and education. It will be demonstrated that the characteristics which he displays alienate him from the knightly world of most early thirteenth century writers. As might be expected, if the reader bears in mind such disparity in milieu, the poet's interests and values also differ widely from those of his contemporaries.

Chapter II constitutes an investigation into that which was of concern to Gottfried and which seemed to him worthy of particular consideration. From a study of those events in the poem whose importance he minimizes or emphasizes, we can infer that his attention was focused firmly

on the hero's artistic accomplishment rather than on his knightly prowess. The poet's estrangement from the majority of the writers of his day is equally manifest in his extraordinary concern for mode of expression. The Gottfried - Wolfram dispute serves as a convenient point of comparison between the knight who lives by the sword and the scholar intent on aesthetic satisfaction.

Art, however, serves not only as a source of aesthetic pleasure. In the third chapter art is seen to fulfil a didactic or reinforcing role, and, more important, has the power to afford solace to the oppressed. These functions relate not only to events in the poem but embrace also the world of reality, addressed by Gottfried in the prologue. In this section of the paper, the association between art, especially music, and love is also discussed.

In Chapter IV it becomes evident that art also stimulates a heightening of awareness in the noble heart, as epitomized by Tristan and Isolde. This spiritual elevation finds its expression in the heroes' education which is dominated by study of the arts, and which is instrumental in promoting the philosophy of the <u>edeles herze</u>. The heightening which art induces is ambivalent in nature for it leads to both satisfaction and sorrow, the antithetical extremes whose acceptance is fundamental to the ideals of the noble heart.

Chapter V concerns the one very important element in the heroes' education which was not discussed in the previous chapter, namely the study of moraliteit. An attempt is made to reconcile the apparent immorality of the lovers' unorthodox conduct with the poet's assertion that this is pleasing to God and the world. In the first instance, the conclusion is drawn that the lovers' positive acceptance of the antithetical natural-spiritual extremes in love is more Christian in essence, and therefore more pleasing to God, than the contemporary Church's outright denial of value in eros. Secondly, while admiring in works of art those who act in accordance with a code of absolute loyalty and genuine sincerity (triuwe), society is nevertheless incapable or unwilling to tolerate such behaviour in its midst. There is thus a dichotomy within society between what is theoretically pleasing and what is accepted in practice.

In Chapter VI it becomes clear that for those, like Tristan and Isolde, who do adopt the code of triuwe, the code of the edeles herze, and act in absolute sincerity with positive regard for the extremes of antithesis in the universe the inevitable result is conflict. It is at this juncture that art can offer partial alleviation from the resultant suffering. It can also nourish and sustain the philosophy which does not reject such hardship but accepts

it as the polar complement to happiness and pleasure.

CHAPTER I

GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG: HIS BACKGROUND

Although Gottfried von Strassburg's rendering of the Tristan legend is acclaimed as one of the major works in European medieval literature, hardly anything is known of the author's life. He is not even directly named in the poem, but it is conceivable that he may have inserted some reference to himself at the end of his work, had he completed it. Gottfried's authorship has, however, never seriously been questioned, since we have two independent sources of information indicating that he did compose the romance. Firstly, there is the famous series of acrostics which begins in the prologue and continues throughout the whole poem. In the prologue we find the initials G DIETERICH TI (ll. 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33, 37, 41, 45);[1] the 'G' is generally considered to refer to Gottfried, although it could also stand for grave, the title of Gottfried's supposed patron Dieterich, of whom nothing is known. The 'T' and the 'I' presumably refer to

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[1]Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristan, ed. R. Bechstein (Leipzig, 1930), 2 vols.

the hero and heroine. A similar acrostic, GODEIDUS, appears later in the text and is thought to constitute an incomplete latinised form of the author's name (GODE FR IDUS)

The works of several later poets[2] also bear witness to Gottfried's authorship of the German courtly version of Tristan and Isolde. His continuators, Ulrich von Türheim and Heinrich von Freiberg, both refer to him by name in their works:

> Uns ist ein schade groz geschehen:
> des mac diz maere ze schaden jehen,
> wan ez beliben ist in not,
> sit meister Gotfrit ist tot,
> der dises buoches begunde.
>
> (Ulrich v. Türheim, ll. 1-5)[3]

> . . . . . .
> und hab mich doch genumen an
> zu vollbringene diz mer',
> daz so blüende hat unz her
> mit schoener rede betichtet
> und meisterlich berichtet
> sin herre, meister Gotfrit
> von Strazburc, . . .
>
> (Heinrich v. Freiberg, ll. 10-16)[4]

The fact that so very little is known of Gottfried's background has given rise to some ingenious and at times

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[2]For a list of these see Gottfried v. Strassburg, Tristan und Isolt, ed. A. Closs (Oxford, 1947), intro. p. xxxix

[3]Bechstein, II, 312.

[4]Bechstein, II, 322.

highly extravagant theories regarding his possible career, and the reason for his failure to complete the tale.[5] Although it is not absolutely certain that Gottfried died before being able to finish Tristan, the evidence in favour of this theory is quite substantial. In his continuation, Ulrich v. Türheim explicitly states that death prevented Gottfried from recounting to the end his "correct" version of the story:

> owe der herzelicher klage,
> daz im der tot sin lebende tage
> leider e der zit zebrach
> daz er diz buoch niht vollesprach!
> (Ulrich v. Türheim, ll. 15-18)[6]

Since we have no grounds to doubt the accuracy of this report, it may be safest to accept it at its face-

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[5] J. M. Watterich, Gottfried von Strassburg, ein Sänger der Gottesminne (Leipzig, 1858).

Among the more recent of the theses which have won little support among scholars is the one proposed by B. Mergell in his book "Tristan und Isolde". Ursprung und Entwicklung der Tristansage des Mittelalters (Mainz, 1949). On pp. 188 ff. Mergell argues unconvincingly that Gottfried's poem is complete.

[6] Bechstein, II, 313; cf. also Heinrich v. Freiberg, Bechstein, II, 323, ll. 31-33.

A similar lament is to be found in the Continuation de Perceval by Gerbert de Montreuil:

> Le nous dist Crestiens de Troie
> Qui de Percheval comencha,
> Mais la mors qui l'adevancha
> Ne li laissa pas traire affin . . .

Gerbert de Montreuil, La Continuation de Perceval, ed. M. Williams, Classiques Francaises du Moyen Age 28, 50; 2 vols. (Paris, 1922-1925).

value.[7] It has been proposed that Gottfried may have been a victim of the first heretic burnings in Straßburg in 1212, but this is discredited by G. Weber, who maintains with good reason that were this the case, then his poem would certainly not have survived.[8]

What little information we do possess of Gottfried's activities has been gleaned entirely from references to him in the works of other writers and from the character and content of his Tristan. In the two continuations mentioned above we find that Gottfried is addressed as meister, and in Heinrich's version he is named as a native of Strassburg.[9] Since members of the knightly class are normally called her in German medieval literature, it would appear from Gottfried's title that he was a member of the rapidly expanding middle class. Yet this appellation may well contain further significance in that the term meister was often used to denote a person of considerable scholarly standing, or an instructor at an ecclesiastical school. An examination of Gottfried's

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[7] J. Schwietering, Die deutsche Dichtung des Mittelalters (Darmstadt, 1957), p. 186, adopts the popular variation that death intervened before Gottfried could satisfactorily reconcile his interpretation of the poem so far with the hero's subsequent conduct as recounted in Thomas' version, his proclaimed source.

[8] G. Weber, Gottfrieds v. Strassburg "Tristan" und die Krise des hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes um 1200 (Stuttgart, 1953), 2 vols., I, 306.

[9] Bechstein, II, 312, [illegible] ibid., II, 322, ll.15f.

treatment of his material certainly shows that he possesses the necessary academic achievement. This may well be reflected in the interest he displays in the education of Tristan and Isolde.

Whereas it has been argued[10] that certain of Gottfried's excurses are for the most part sermon-like additions of little relevance to the main body of the text, such a point of view stands in opposition to the closely-knit, carefully motivated structure of the poem.[11] As will be seen in Chapter II, even the insertion of the literary excursus in place of a description of Tristan's investiture is of fundamental importance to the picture of the hero which Gottfried wished to portray. Yet besides its functional significance in the tale, this literary critique serves as a fortuitous source of valuable information for the student of Tristan. Gottfried lists and comments upon a number of his better-known contemporaries and their works, namely Heinrich von Veldeke, Hartmann von Aue, Bligger von Steinach, Reinmar von Hagenau and Walther von der Vogelweide, not to mention the famous veiled invective against his great rival

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[10] Schwietering, Der "Tristan" Gottfrieds von Strassburg und die Bernhardische Mystik (Tübingen, 1962), pp. 4f.

[11] For a detailed study of Gottfried's concern for motivation and consistency see F. Ranke, Tristan und Isold (Munich, 1925), pp. 178-187.

Wolfram von Eschenbach. These references enable us to date Tristan with a reasonable degree of accuracy at around 1210;[12] they also demonstrate quite clearly Gottfried's knowledgeable interest in the literature of his day.

Were more evidence required to prove that Gottfried was extremely well-versed in medieval literary tradition, one might profitably analyse his treatment of landscape description. In her well-documented study of this topic, I. Hahn concludes her opening section on the portrayal of wooded scenery in Tristan with the words:

> Eine solche Landschaft ist nicht irgendwo fest in der Wirklichkeit erfahrungsbedingter Anschauung angesiedelt, sondern verfügbares dichterisches Bild, das zu bestimmten darstellerischen Zwecken eingesetzt werden kann. Nicht die Phantasie des Einzelnen, sondern der überkommene Schatz der literarischen Tradition ist die Quelle, aus welcher mittelalterlicher Dichtung die zeichenhaften Elemente ihrer Darstellung zufliessen können.[13]

R. Gruenter has pointed to the similarities between Gottfried's portrayal of the locus amoenus and that of the thalamus amoris in the lesser-known poem Phyllis et Flora;[14] if it is accepted that there is a possible connection between

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[12] For a complete examination of the evidence for the dating of Tristan see G. Weber and W. Hoffmann, Gottfried von Strassburg (Stuttgart, 1962), pp. 14-21.

[13] I. Hahn, Raum und Landschaft in Gottfried's "Tristan" (Munich, 1963), p. 14.

[14] R. Gruenter, "Das wunnecliche tal", Euph., LV (1961), 341-404; here 364 ff.

these two descriptions, then this might indicate the probable extent of Gottfried's literary acquaintance.

There can be but little doubt that Gottfried must also have enjoyed some form of musical education. This is mirrored both in the joy which he takes in developing the theme of Tristan's musical accomplishment, and in the descriptions he gives of numerous instruments together with the types of music which they produce. The references to varieties of instruments include: the harp (harphen) (3508ff., 3675, 7363, 7430, 7521ff., 8068, 13283ff., 17210ff.); lyre (liren) (3680, 8068); rote (rotten) (3675, 13123ff.); sambuca (sambiut)(3680); symphonium (symphonien) (3674); and viol (videln) (3674, 8062). Among examples of song we find: folate (8078); "strange songs . . . from Sanze and St. Denis" (fremdiu notelin . . . von Sanze und San Denise) (8063-8066);[15] little courtly airs (höveschiu liedelin) (9215); lais (leiche) (3508 ff., 8063, 17215); pastourelle (pasturele) (8076); refloit (2293, 8078); retrouange (rotruwange) (8077); rondel (rundate) (8077, 19215); chanson (schanzune) (2292, 8078, 19214), estampie (stampenie) (2293, 8062).

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[15]See W. T. H. Jackson, "Tristan the Artist in Gottfried's poem," PMLA, LXXVII (1962), 364-72. In this article, p. 368 and p. 368, n. 14, Jackson associates these not with the saints but with the places named after them: the famous musical school of St. Denis within the French ecclesiastical province of Sens. Cf. Closs, note to l. 8066.

Further evidence of Gottfried's concern for musical matters may be seen in his excursus on the exponents of Minnesang, the double art of word and melody.[16] Much of this passage is devoted to a evlogy of the musical quality in the works of Reinmar v. Hagenau and Walther v. der Vogelweide.

Among his many scholarly accomplishments, Gottfried displays a thorough knowledge of the two languages French and Latin. The geographical location of his hometown would doubtless have fostered the learning of French, and Gottfried displays an understanding of it far in advance of that of either Wolfram or Hartmann. In Tristan there are none of the mistakes in translation from his source which we find in the works of the latter two,[17] and Gottfried clearly feels enough at ease in French to incorporate into his poem the play on the words l'ameir, la meir.[18] While the inclusion of French words and lines of French verse into his work might be seen as a form of pleasing embellishment, a further reason for their appearance might well be Gottfried's

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[16] Bechstein, 4749-4818.

[17] Wolfram von Eschenbach, Parzival, ed. A. Leitzmann, rev. W. Deinert (Tübingen, 1961), 1. 234. 18.
Hartmann von Aue, Iwein, ed. G. Benecke & K. Lachmann, rev. L. Wolff (Berlin, 1926), note to l. 6963.

[18] Bechstein, 11989-12019.

not unnatural eagerness to exhibit his erudition.[19]

The large number of classical references in Tristan necessarily presupposes a knowledge of the Latin language, since there were very few translations available in the vernacular. Although the works of Ovid had enjoyed an exceptional vogue, and had been translated, in part at least, by Chretien de Troyes, nevertheless the main body of classical literature was accessible only in the original. As Gottfried would also appear to be versed in contemporary rhetoric and poetic, the fundamentals of which were expounded mainly in Vulgar Latin, a thorough acquaintance with this idiom would have been essential.[20] The same condition must have been equally applicable for Gottfried's understanding of the theological treatises of the day.[21]

The debt which Gottfried owed to antiquity has long been recognized by students of medieval literature. In his article on the classical elements in Tristan, W. Hoffa differentiates sharply between the allusions which Gottfried has adopted from his source, the Tristran of Thomas de

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[19] Bechstein, 2395f., 2924, 3361f., 12563f., 167004, 19217f., 19413f., etc.

[20] See below pp. 20 - 23.

[21] See below pp. 16 - 20.

Bretagne, and those which could have arisen only from an intimate acquaintance with Latin literature.[22] Hoffa quotes (p. 339) the example of Gottfried's reference to Corineus[23] (Vergil, Aeneid IX, 571) which he took straight from Thomas, who in turn borrowed it from the Brut of the Anglo-Norman Wace. The inclusion of the names Phyllis, Canace, Byblis and Dido in the Grotto episode (17191-17201) has been demonstrated by Hoffa (p. 340), with reference to the Old Norse Tristrams Saga ok Isondar, to be peculiar to Gottfried's version. These figures are the legendary heroines of classical literature destined to a tragic love; there is no evidence, however, that Gottfried necessarily discovered them in their original contexts.[24] References to such Ovidian characters were very popular amongst medieval poets, and Gottfried could easily have resorted to a secondary source.

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[22]W. Hoffa, "Antike Elemente bei Gottfried von Strassburg", ZfdA, LII (1910), 339-350.

[23]Bechstein, 16695.

[24]The story of Phyllis' love for Demophon is to be found either in Ovid's Heroides, 2, or Ars Amatoria, III, 38. Similarly the tale of Canace's unnatural love for her brother Macareus is related in Heroides, 11. Ovid's Metamorphoses, IX, 450, contains the account of Byblis' incestuous relationship. The legend of Dido's hapless fate was known to the Middle Ages either through Heroides, 7, or Vergil's Aeneid, IV.

According to Hoffa, however, Gottfried's allusion to Pegasus (4729) could only spring from a knowledge of Ovid's Metamosphoses, V, 262.[25] In the same manner, the description of Helicon (4863-4867) stems from Servius' popular commentary to Vergil's Eclogues, 6, 64. The pleas for inspiration to Apollo and the Muses (4868-4905) also bear a similarity to appeals made by Vergil in the Aeneid.

But Gottfried's association with classical literature is not limited to the citation of names. We find too the use of Latin poetic imagery and motif. The obvious connection between Tristan's cure for his sorrow in ll. 19436-19468 and Ovid's Remedia Amoris, ll. 441 ff., has long been recognized:

> grandia per multos tenuantur flumina rivos
> magnaque diducto stipite flamma perit.

The first line of Gottfried's passage "ich han doch dicke daz gelesen", is surely not coincidental![26]

I. Hahn (127f.) convincingly compares Gottfried's description of the advantageous effects on lovers of a little anger and strife,[27] with the passage in Ovid (Amores,

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[25] Hoffa, 341 ff.

[26] One might also note Gottfried's substitution of the Rhine for Ovid's "grandia flumina", doubtless for the sake of colourful topographical detail identifiable by his audience.

[27] Bechstein, 13021-13077.

II, xix, 15ff.), in which the guile of the woman is praised who knows how to arouse her lover's desires by provoking him to jealousy.[28]

In addition to the analogies which Hoffa draws to the works of Vergil and Ovid as mentioned above,[29] he also points to similarities between passages in Tristan and the epigrams of Publilius Servius.[30]

Yet perhaps the best indication of the value Gottfried ascribed to the study of antiquity is still to be found in his often quoted plea to the guardians of the springs of Helicon, his avowed source of inspiration, the font of poetic sublimity. In the words of W. Hoffa, who demonstrates that Gottfried's use of classical allusion and motif is confined largely to moments of heightening:

> . . . die gestalten der antike leben in seinem geiste, um ihm dann ihre dienste zu leihen, wenn es gilt, über das alltägliche hinaus in höherem schwunge die darstellung zu führen.
>
> (p.344)

Of all Gottfried's supposed accomplishments, none has been more energetically discussed than his theological scholarship. Although many of today's leading critics are

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[28] See also Hahn, 104-107, 108 n. 20, 112-118.

[29] See also Hoffa, 346f; further comparisons made by Hoffa include: Bechstein, 12236f. -- Ars Amatoria II, 319ff.; Bechstein, 12304 ff. -- Ars Amatoria II, 277 f.

[30] Hoffa, 348-350.

at odds as to his purpose,[31] most are agreed that Gottfried manifests a sound knowledge of Christian mystical doctrine. Evidence for this belief is to be found at several instances in the text, and of these the simplest to evaluate is the description of the interior of the Love Grotto. To a medieval audience with theological training, ll. 16927 - 17103 would have been strongly reminiscent of the type of mystical allegorical elucidation applied to the architecture of a church. According to one contemporary theory, a church's length, breadth and height symbolized the virtues of forbearance, love and hope; the four walls were seen to stand in honour of the four Evangelists; the roof corresponded to the vita contemplativa, the windows to the Scriptures and the floor to the foundations of belief.[32] The analogy with Gottfried's description of the Grotto is abundantly clear, yet it is still extremely debatable whether this is analogia

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[31]One of the major questions arising from Tristan is how to reconcile Gottfried's use of Christian analogy with the behaviour of the two lovers, and, similarly, how to account for the juxtaposition of the Christian spiritual and pagan sensual in the Grotto of Love. Space will be allotted to these problems in chapter V.

[32]See also Ranke, 207ff.; Schwietering, D. dt. Dichtung d. Mittelalters, 190.

entis or analogia antithetica.[33] The controversial Eucharistic analogy at the end of the prologue (ll. 233-240) arouses the same question.

Of all those who have concerned themselves with Gottfried's use of mystical theology perhaps the best known and most widely versed in the field is J. Schwietering. According to him, Gottfried's mystical allusions bear the closest resemblance to the popular teachings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. In his article, "Tristan" u. d.Bern. Mystik, he discusses in detail the similarities between the works of poet and monk. Suffice it to mention but a few of these. On p. 9, Schwietering compares the community of the edele herzen in Tristan to Bernard's elite, the experti, to whom an experience of love is necessary for an understanding of the Song of Songs. The willingness of the noble heart to accept the tribulations imposed by genuine love is likened to Bernard's theory of mystical suffering (pp. 10-15). The idea expressed by Gottfried in ll. 12384-12391 that those who refrain from total love through shame are thieves to themselves might be reminiscent of certain of Bernard's theories on the relationship of love and honour. Both here

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[33]The main thesis of G. Weber's lengthy work "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes is concerned with this fundamental problem. In his at times forced interpretation of Tristan as a dualistic, manichaistic work, Weber draws on this passage to show that Gottfried uses Christian motif as analogia antithetica. See especially I, chs. III, IV.

and elsewhere,[34] Schwietering points to much further evidence for the possible influence of St. Bernard on Gottfried, and believes, in contrast to G. Weber, that the author of Tristan employs the language and concepts of Christian mysticism as analogia entis. He says of Gottfried's use of mystical allegorical analogy in the Grotto:

> Seine Deutung der einzelnen Bauteile, die den weiteren Ausbau der Grottenschilderung bestimmt, ist der tropologisch-mystischen Auslegungsweise des mittelalterlichen Kirchengebäudes auf die mystische Gotteswohnung der menschlichen Seele nachgebildet, wie sich Gottfried für das Wunschleben der Liebenden auch sonst geistlicher Darstellungsmittel bedient, weniger um zu veranschaulichen als in eine höhere Sphäre zu heben und seinem persönlichen Minneideal überpersönliche Geltung zu verschaffen.[35]

While Schwietering has limited himself mainly to a comparison of Gottfried and St. Bernard other critics have also noted likenesses to theologians such as Peter Abelard,[36]

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[34]Schwietering, D. dt. Dichtung d. Mittelalters, 190-192. Worthy of particular attention is the similarity drawn between Tristan's reaction to his discovery in the lake (ll. 9454-9464) and mystical light visions of the Trinity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; also the parallel between Tristan's eweclichez sterben in Isolde and the Christian doctrine of eternal life.

[35]Schwietering, D. dt. Dichtung d. Mittelalters, 190.

[36]Weber, "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes, II, 168-183; I, 240f., 245, 262, 264f.

Alanus de Insulis,[37] and Andreas Capellanus.[38] Even if one were to view three-quarters of such evidence as the coincidental product of a common age, one could still not reasonably deny Gottfried a well-grounded knowledge of contemporary theology.

In the Tristan continuations of Ulrich and Heinrich we find considerable emphasis placed on Gottfried's formal talents as an artist:

> er was ein künste richer man:
> uns zeiget sin getihte
> vil künstliche geschihte.
> ez ist eben unde ganz:
> kein getihte an sprüchen ist so glanz,
> daz ez von künste ge dervür,
> der ez wiget mit wiser kür.
> (Ulrich von Türheim, ll. 8-14)[39]
>
> . . . . . .
>
> und hab mich doch genumen an
> zu volbringene diz mer',
> daz so blüende hat unz her
> mit schoener rede betichtet
> und meisterlich berichtet
> sin herre, meister Gotfrit
> von Strazburc, der so manegen snit
> spehen unde richen
> schon unde meisterlichen

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[37] Weber, ibid., II 206; Gruenter 356, 374ff.

[38] Gruenter, 376-381; Closs, intro. p. xlviii, cf. also appendix, 203-205; G. Ehrismann, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters (Munich, 1927) II, 2.1, pp. 308 n. 1, 309, 311 n.2.

[39] Bechstein, II, 312 f.

nach durnechtiges meisters siten
uz blüendem sinne hat gesniten,
und hat so richer rede kleit
disem sinne an geleit.
dise materien er hat
gesprenzet in so lichte wat,
daz ich zwivele dar an,
ob ich indert vinden kan
in mines sinnes gehüge
rede, die wol stende tüge
bi disen sprüchen guldin.
(Heinrich v. Freiberg, ll. 10-29)[40]

That both poets should thus stress Gottfried's poetic mastery testifies to the dazzling effect of his chiselled and embellished verse upon medieval audiences. Clearly, Gottfried was highly conscious of his literary style, concerned with the impression it might produce. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that he employs with relish not only such popular figures as the oxymoron,[41] but commands many, if not most, of the formal devices of the medieval Latin artes poeticae. On pp. 325-331, Ehrismann devotes a section of his chapter on Gottfried to a study of his technical ability and discusses some of the more commonly used devices. These include: antithesis, parallelism, anaphora, word-repetion, word-pairs,[42] alliteration and

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[40] Ibid., II, 322f.

[41] The oft-quoted ll. 60-63 in the prologue provide a perfect example of Gottfried's penchant for this device.

[42] See also W.T.H. Jackson, "The Stylistic Use of Word-pairs and Word-repetitions in Gottfried's Tristan," Euph., LIX (1965), 229-251.

hyperbole.

Without a doubt, however, descriptive scenes constitute the most likely places to search for evidence of Gottfried's acquaintance with contemporary poetics. In his authoritative work on this subject, E. Faral states:

> Les arts poétiques du moyen âge font à ce genre de descriptions une place importante: c'est à elles qu'est consacré, en majeure partie, le traité de Matthieu de Vendôme. A l'ampleur de l'étude qu'il leur consacre, au soin qu'il met à en détailler les principes, au nombre et à l'étendue des exemples qu'il en propose, il est visible que Matthieu considère la description comme l'objet suprême de la poésie.[43]

Matthieu de Vendôme, pupil of Bernardus Sylvestus at the classical-pantheist school of Chartres, is recognized as one of the most influential figures in the sphere of Vulgar Latin ars poetica. Towards the latter half of the twelfth century he wrote a series of rhetorical models, including a descriptio loci. It is R. Gruenter who points to the motifs in Gottfried's description of the Grotto which are common to the schematic of Vulgar Latin loci amoeni;[44] but, more important, Gruenter continues to depict the marked similarity between the treatment of the Grotto's

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[43] E. Faral, Les Arts Poetiques du XII^e et du XIII^e Siècle (Paris, 1958), 76f.

[44] Gruenter, 353 ff. The linden tree, for example, is commonly used to denote proceedings of an erotic nature.

surroundings in Gottfried's Tristan and the descriptio loci advocated by Matthieu. Having developed the components necessary to such a description, (flos, herba, arbor, fructus, avis, rivus, aura), Matthieu concludes with the résumé:

> Sensus quinque loci praedicti gratia pascit,
> Si collative quaeque notata notes.
> Unda juvat tactum, gustum sapor, auris amica
> Est volucris, visus gratia, naris odor.[45]

The resemblance in theme between this passage and Gottfried's treatment of the locus amoenus in ll. 16754-16764[46] is too apparent to be merely coincidental, especially since both writers are concerned with the effects of these phenomena upon the senses:

> ouch vant man da ze siner zit
> daz schoene vogelgedoene.
> daz gedoene was so schoene
> und schoener da dan anderswa.
> ouge und ore haeten da
> weid' unde wunne beide:
> daz ouge sine weide,
> daz ore sine wunne.
> da was schate und sunne,
> der luft und die winde
> senfte unde linde.

It is from examples such as these that one can estimate the extent of Gottfried's acquaintance with contemporary

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[45]Matthieu de Vendôme, descriptio loci, in Faral, p. 148f., ll. 55ff.

[46]The preceeding passage, ll. 16737ff., also contains the majority of the components quoted above from Matthieu's descriptio loci.

ars rhetorica and ars poetica. If the reader is also mindful of the wealth of the other scholarly achievements attributed to Gottfried, as outlined in this chapter, then the picture of the poet which emerges is one of a highly educated man.

One can only hasard a guess as to Gottfried's possible profession or position. As a member of the middle-class, he probably obtained his advanced level of education at an ecclesiastical school, but it is unlikely from the attitudes expressed in Tristan that he ever took the cloth. Modern scholars are largely of the opinion that he was an official of some authority at the court of the Bishop of Strassburg.

CHAPTER II

GOTTFRIED: ein künste richer man[1]

From the evidence amassed in Chapter I, it is clear that Gottfried's background alienates him from the sphere of knightly poets. It is not wholly surprising, therefore, to find that in Tristan Gottfried's field of interest varies considerably from that of his chivalric contemporaries. In order to evaluate the extent and significance of this shift in emphasis, Gottfried's poem must be examined from two angles: firstly, with a view to his treatment of the subject matter, and, secondly, the formal mode in which the narrative is expressed.

Since it is the former which more readily arrests the reader's attention, it naturally merits primary consideration. It would appear that Gottfried must have invited much contempt from knightly circles on account of his description of Tristan's conduct in battle, for, when in defence of his life, the hero behaves contrary to many of the accepted rules of chivalry. It might be argued that Gottfried, as a bourgeois, was not conversant with these codes, but such

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[1] Ulrich v. Türheim, Bechstein, II, 312, l. 8.

a view is open to much criticism. Were Gottfried's aim chivalric authenticity, then he would have needed only to consult descriptions of the appropriate scene in any of the many contemporary romances known to him.[2] Tristan's unknightly behaviour stems probably not from ignorance on the part of the author, but from a deliberate desire to demonstrate Tristan's fundamental estrangement from the world of chivalry. Were Tristan to act in accordance with the rules of courtly procedure, then this would imply that his life was governed by the conditions of knighthood. That this is not the case is made abundantly clear in ll. 50-66 of the prologue, where the essential principles of the edelez herze are expounded.

A comparison of certain scenes with their counterparts in the Old Norse Saga has yielded the best evidence that Tristan's unknightly conduct is Gottfried's deliberate invention. P. W. Tax analyses the changes which Gottfried has wrought in his source-material, and shows that these have been made for the express purpose of stressing Tristan's unknightliness.[3] Among the examples of Gottfried's de-

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[2]The same argument would apply to those who maintain that the literary excursus is inserted through lack of acquaintance with the proper proceedings of swertleite.

[3]P.W. Tax, Wort, Sinnbild, Zahl im Tristanroman (Berlin, 1961), pp. 35-42.

liberate divergence from his source cited by Tax we find: Tristan's slaying of the unarmed Morgan with a sword while on horseback;[4] Tristan's eagerness to attack Morold on horseback when the latter is unhorsed;[5] the barbaric, merciless manner in which Tristan despatches Morold, who is minus one hand, his helmet, and his sword. From such scenes it would indeed seem that Gottfried is making a mockery of knightly convention. By way of amplification one might also draw attention to the manner in which Tristan fights the dragon and Urgan the giant. Both encounters rely for their success not on Tristan's physical supremacy or bravery - epithets expressive of such a quality are noticeably absent from the text - but on his tactical aiming, his list. Tristan excels on the battlefield not through physical prowess but through what one might euphemistically term his ability to reason. The purpose of this minimization of the knightly physical role is to emphasize more clearly that element of the hero's character which is of supreme interest to the poet. It is

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[4]Fighting on horseback with a sword is termed a dörperheit by Hartmann, Iwein, 7116.

[5]Hartmann calls a fight between a knight on horseback and a knight on the ground a schande, Erec, ed. Bech (Leipzig, 1894), 3 vols. I, l. 828.

that element which is perhaps epitomized in the following action:

> . . . und bant da vaste
> sin ors ze einem aste.
> sin swert daz hancte er dar an;
> mit siner harphen lief er dan
> . . . . . .
> (13287-13290)

These lines appear fairly late in the narrative, yet they are nevertheless relevant to many of the stages of development in Tristan's career. A comparison with Wolfram's Parzival might here be profitable. Parzival, the young, naïve imbecile, progresses to the summit of chivalric achievement at Arthur's court by way of both knightly instruction received at the hands of his mentors and his exploits on the field of battle. Neither of these means to fame is applicable to Tristan. In the first instance he is a child prodigy, almost to the point of precocity, and, secondly, it is not as a knight skilled in arms that he makes his way through society, but rather as an educated youth endowed with exceptional artistic talent. It is the effect of these talents upon those around him which gains him his passage to society's zenith.[6]

The two social groups which play the greatest role in Tristan's career are, of course, the court of his uncle Mark, and that of Gurmun, King of Ireland, father of Isolde

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[6]That this artistic ability also leads Tristan into difficulty and oppression must not be forgotten. See Chapter IV.

the Fair. In both instances it is Tristan's artistic accomplishment which gains him access and promotion within these elevated circles. His first contact with his uncle's court is occasioned by his encounter with the huntsmen and his subsequent display of hunting ceremonial. The aesthetic pleasure which Tristan's sophisticated demonstration evokes among his appreciative audience is matched only by Gottfried's apparent delight in including such a description in his poem. The wondrous adulation which Tristan enjoys at the court itself is almost entirely due to his skill as an artist and musician. A comparison with the impression made by Riwalin on the same court years earlier is very revealing. First, the words of those admiring Tristan's father:

> seht, sprachen si, der jungelinc
> der ist ein saeliger man:
> wie saelecliche stet im an
> allez daz, daz er begat!
> wie gar sin lip ze wunsche stat!
> wie gant im so geliche enein
> diu siniu keiserlichen bein!
> wie rehte sin schilt z'aller zit
> an siner stat gelimet lit!
> wie zimet der schaft in siner hant!
> wie wol stat allez sin gewant!
> wie stat sin houbet und sin har!
> wie süeze ist aller sin gebar!
> wie saelecliche stat sin lip!
>
> (702-715)

This picture of Riwalin is of a highly sensual, external nature,[7] and it stands in sharp contrast to the impression made by Tristan:

> a Tristan, waere ich alse duo!
> Tristan, du maht gerne leben:
> Tristan, dir ist der wunsch gegeben
> aller der fuoge, die kein man
> ze dirre werlde gehaben kan.
> ouch macheten si hier under
> mit rede michel wunder:
> hora! sprach dirre hora! sprach der
> elliu diu werlt diu hoere her:
> ein vierzehenjaerec kint
> kan al die liste, die nu sint!
> (3708-3718)

It is as though Tristan's physical beauty is either overlooked or taken for granted by his admirers. The reason for this is obvious. Gottfried is anxious to show that above the level of physical magnificence there exists a higher scale of values, spiritual values implicit within Tristan's artistry. It is to these values that Gottfried is directing his gaze in his treatment of the story content; during the early stages of the poem much of this particular attention is focused upon the hero's career.

When Tristan goes to Ireland to seek a cure for the wound inflicted by Morold, his mission depends for its

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[7]The use of the word saeleclich in this context constitutes an ironic comment on the values of courtly society; Riwalin's supposed saelekeit applies only to his physical attributes, the attributes to which Gottfried designates so little importance in his portrayal of the hero.

success on the effect of his artistic ability upon Queen Isolde and her retinue. In a manner to be repeated later in the Gandin episode, Tristan proceeds not as the mighty warrior but as a minstrel. He relies not upon his sword but upon his harp. Gottfried stresses this point twice within the space of a few lines:[8]

> sine harphen er besande:
> die fuorte er ouch von lande
> und sines dinges nie niht me.
> (7363-7365)
>
> . . . . . .
> er hiez sich legen an der stete
> uz der barken in daz schiffelin.
> ine harphen hiez er ouch dar in
> und in der maze spise geben,
> daz er ir möhte geleben
> dri tage oder viere.
> (7428-7433)

It is Tristan's singing and harping that first captures the Dubliners' attention, then moves them to such pity that they lead him to a physician:

> geselle, sprachen aber die boten
> diner süezen stimme und diner noten
> der soltu hie geniezen:
> dune solt niht langer fliezen
> ane trost und ane rat;
> (7611-7615)
>
> und alse der arme spileman
> wider sines libes state began
> sin harphen und sin singen

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[8]It would appear that Tristan's harping in the boat is an idea of Gottfried's own invention, since this incident is lacking in the Old Norse Saga.

so rehte suoze bringen,
ez begunde s' alle erbarmen:
sus hiezen sie den armen
uz sinem schiffeline tragen
uns einem arzate sagen,
daz er'ne ze huse naeme;
und swaz im rehte kaeme,
daz er des fliz haete
und umbe ir guot im taete
beidiu helfe unde gemach.
(7677-7689)

Next we encounter Isolde's tutor who, stirred by Tristan's accomplishment, informs the Queen of the minstrel's luckless fate (7732-7755). She in turn summons Tristan, is similarly touched, and agrees to cure him. The hero, finally within reach of his goal, is then able to say:

ja, ist ez danne also gewant,
sprach aber der sieche spileman
daz ich so wider komen kan
und mit spile genesen sol,
ob got wil, so genise ich wol.
(7864-7868)

In the hour of his greatest need, therefore, Tristan has resorted to his most effective form of defence, not skill in arms or physical feats of daring but his sensibility as an artist. There could be no clearer indication as to where Gottfried's sympathies lie!

In ll. 4578-4618 Gottfried excuses himself from a portrayal of Tristan's knighting ceremony on the grounds that he is incapable of matching the descriptions of those who have gone before. From a man so proud of his literary ability these lines ring unmistakably false. A more genuine indi-

cation of Gottfried's intent is certainly to be found in the mild sarcasm of ll. 5054-5058:

> wie si aber von ringe liezen gan,
> wie si mit scheften staechen,
> wie vil si der zerbraechen:
> daz sulen die garzune sagen;
> die hulfen ez zesamene tragen.[9]

By implication, Gottfried is disclaiming any interest in what is essentially a symbol of high accomplishment in the physical skills and courtly practices of knighthood. He is replacing what would normally be a high point in the narrative with an allusion to matters evidently of greater importance to him. The substitution of the literary excursus for a glorification of the valorous exploits of chivalry demonstrates once more that for Gottfried the ethics of knighthood do not represent the supreme ideal. For him, the world of spiritual refinement, symbolized by the literary critique, holds far greater value than that of physical achievement.

Elements which estrange Gottfried from the ranks of his contemporaries are to be found not only in his treatment of the subject-matter, however, but also, as mentioned above, in the mode of its expression. While Gottfried is deeply

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[9]Cf. also the mild contempt of ll. 18459-18470.

concerned with the problems of his age,[10] it is his firm conviction that these problems should be communicated in artistic form. It is this same conviction which forms the basis for the Gottfried-Wolfram dispute.

While Gottfried ascribes pre-eminence to considerations of content,[11] he stresses that art relies for its sublimity upon two basic components, content and form:

> sin zunge, diu die harphen treit,
> diu hat zwo volle saelekeit:
> daz sint diu wort, daz ist der sin:
> (4704 - 4705)[12]

In contrast to this panegyric of Bligger v. Steinach, and a similar one in which he extols Hartmann's kristalliniu wortelin (4626-4628), Gottfried attacks Wolfram in no amicable manner for his lack of attention to formal detail:[13]

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[10] See G. Weber, "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes!

[11] i'ne weiz wie'ch in bereite:
der sin will niender dar zuo
sone weiz diu zunge, waz si tuo,
al eine und ane des sinnes rat,
von dem si ir ambet allez hat.
(4824 - 4828)

[12] Cf. also Bechstein, 4619-4623, 4860-4867.

[13] It is possible that Gottfried omits Wolfram's name for fear of perpetuating it.

wirn' suln ez niemen lazen tragen,
siniu wort ensin vil wol getwagen,
sin rede ensi ebene unde sleht,
op iemen schone unde ufreht
mit ebenen sinnen dar getrabe,
daz er dar über iht besnabe.
vindaere wilder maere,
der maere wildenaere,
die mit den ketenen liegent
und stumpfe sinne triegent,
die golt von swachen sachen
den kinden kunnen machen
und uz der bühsen giezen
stoubine mergriezen:
die bernt uns mit dem stocke schate,
niht mit dem grüenen meienblate,
mit zwigen noch mit esten.
ir schate der tuot den gesten
vil selten in den ougen wol.
op man der warheit jehen sol,
dane gat niht guotes muotes van,
dane lit niht herzelustes an:
ir rede ist niht alzo gevar,
daz edele herze iht lache dar.
die selben wildenaere
sie müezen tiutaere
mit ir maeren lazen gan:
wir enmugen ir da nach niht verstan,
als man si hoeret unde siht;
sone han wir ouch der muoze niht,
daz wir die glose suochen
in den swarzen buochen.
(4657-4688)

Wolfram's reply to this stream of invective is equally revealing: "schildes ambet ist min art" - I am a man of the sword not of the pen.[14] It would be hard to find a more explicit indication of the divergent interests of the two great writers. While Wolfram's upbringing among the lower ranks of chivalry has dictated his occupation and affinities,

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[14] Parzival, 115. II.

Gottfried's academic status, as outlined in the first chapter, both reflects and determines his peculiar system of values.

Early Tristan research tended to see in Gottfried's emphasis on the artistic a flight from reality, maintaining that in art he found a substitute for a living realisation of his "ideal". Such a viewpoint, however, is no longer to be credited sound. Despite the great importance which Gottfried attaches to formal considerations, artistic elegance in Tristan exists neither for its own sake nor as a means to escapism. It has two main functions. On the one hand, form contributes to an understanding of the content, thereby complementing it. On the other, it affords a source of aesthetic pleasure to the initiated,[15] assisting in the professed aim of providing distraction and alleviation for the oppressed.[16]

In the brief discussion of Gottfried's use of rhetorical figures and motifs in chapter I, it was seen that antithesis and oxymoron were among the most frequently recuming.[17] The reason for this should be quite evident. Gottfried's version of the legend has aroused much controversy on account of its interspersed references to what are normally

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[15] Bechstein, 4679-4680.

[16] See Chapter III.

[17] pp. 21 f.

considered mutual exclusives. In the Grotto, for example, we find allusions to Christian mystical symbolism alongside appraisals of diu gotinne Minne and her attendant pagan characteristics, Eucharistic analogy beside Ars Ovidiana.[18] Other apparently contradictory extremes which co-exist in Tristan are the sensual and the spiritual, life and death, joy and sorrow. This polarity in the narrative content finds its formal expression in the repeated juxtaposition of such opposites as süeze sur,(60), liebez leit,(60), lebender tot, (18234). The use of these interwoven reiterations and contradictions forces upon the reader the realisation that opposites, while opposites, may still be concomitant. With reference to Tristan and Isolde, such juxtaposition further serves to emphasize the unbreakable bond between the two lovers. It also illustrates the all-embracing philosophy of the noble heart.

The striking parallel between the ideal landscape at Tintagel (ll. 547 ff.) and the description of the locus amoenus (ll. 16741 ff., 16754 ff., 16885 ff.) has long been recognized by scholars. While it has been generally agreed that the function of this parallel is to effect a heightening, the full extent of the two passages' significance may not

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[18]See Chapter V.

have been realised until quite recently. It is W.T.H. Jackson who demonstrates the disparity in vocabulary which subtlely underlines the difference between the world of the noble heart and that of courtly society as represented by Mark, Riwalin and Blanscheflur:

> We may sum up the findings about the use of pairs in Gottfried's Ideallandschaft by saying that he makes use of conventional pairs to describe those aspects which might be expected in a courtly situation and then plays variations on them to show the distinctions between the Ideallandschaft of Riwalin and Mark and that of Tristan and Isolde.[19]

As stated above, form not only complements content, but also affords the audience aesthetic delight. In his book, F. Ranke illustrates clearly Gottfried's desire for a motivation and dramatic effect superior to that of his source.[20] In the Saga, and presumably Thomas' work, the sword lying between the lovers in the grotto is there by chance, Tristan and Isolde sleeping apart because of the heat. Such fortuitous happenings are almost totally elimi-

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[19]Jackson, Word-pairs and Word-repetitions, 237. By means of a comparison of formal similarities in the Isolde Whitehands episode, Mergell, Tristan u. Isolde, p. 150 f., points to the mystical dialogue of the two lovers, which transcends both time and space and emphasizes the constancy of their relationship, even after their parting.

[20]Ranke, Tristan u. Isolde, 179-187.

nated in Gottfried's version. On this occasion the sword becomes part of Tristan's cunning to fool Mark, motivated by the lovers' having heard the baying of his approaching hounds. Ranke then continues to show the full magnitude of Gottfried's concern for aesthetic detail by comparing the contents of the Norwegian merchants' ship in the Old Norse Saga and those in Tristan. In the cargo of the former we find walrus-teeth, bearskins, dried fish, wax, pitch, oil and sulphur. For fear lest such banal realities offered his audience, Gottfried omits them in favour of jewels, silks, falcons and aristocratic apparel. One might also compare ll. 7939-7948, in which Gottfried avoids any unseemly description of the medical practices involved in the curing of Tristan's wound by Queen Isolde:

> Ob ich iu nu vil seite
> und lange rede vür leite
> von miner frouwen meisterschaft,
> wie wunderliche guote kraft
> ir erzenie haete
> und wie si ir siechen taete,
> waz hulfe ez und waz solte daz?
> in edelen oren lutet baz
> ein wort, daz schone gezimt,
> dan daz man uz der bühsen nimt.

It is in the attention which Gottfried pays to formal, aesthetic matters of such subtlety and apparent insignificance that the full extent of his estrangement from contemporary writers is realised. Yet while Gottfried is greatly concerned that his work be a constant source of aesthetic pleasure, and that form should complement content, he is not

limited in his appreciation of art to such ideas alone. For Gottfried, as we shall next determine, art's influence is not confined within the covers of a book, nor is it restricted to the promotion of aesthetic satisfaction within the audience.

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION AND CHARACTER OF ART

In the Middle Ages there is no outstanding literary figure, as in Greek or Roman times, to whom could be accredited any philosophy of lasting value on the function of art. This does not, however, necessarily preclude the existence of such theories, even though they might often consist of adaptations of the ideas expressed in classical literature and philosophy. Gottfried's belief in the didactic purpose of art, which will be discussed during the course of this chapter, might, for instance, be traced to the works of either Plato or Horace. Alternatively, this idea might have been popularised among academic circles through the writings of early medieval theologians such as Alcuin of York.[1]

Since education, and thereby study of the arts, was almost exclusively in the hands of the clergy, it is not surprising that theories as to the role of art should be

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[1] H.H. Glunz, Die Literarästhetik des europäischen Mittelalters (Frankfurt, 1937), pp. 17 ff.; Glunz states, p. 24:

> In der Einleitung zu seiner Schrift über die Grammatik erklärte Alkuin, daß die artes dadurch wertvoll sind, daß sie zu den Tugenden vor allem zur höchsten Tugend, der Liebe zum Alleinen, zur Philosophia führen.

coloured by the exigencies of religion. It was the belief of Cassiodorus, Gregory the Great and Isodore of Seville that the seven liberal arts (literature is included within the realms of grammar and rhetoric) were useful only in so far as they served the purposes of theology. The subjects of the Trivium were essential to the reading and interpretation of the Bible, music was necessary for the liturgy, while astronomy, geometry and arithmetic were used in the calculation of the date of the Easter festival, among other things.[2] Similarly, according to St. Augustine, a liberal education was desirable in that it helped man come closer to an understanding of the supreme truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Later developments, under the guidance of Charlemagne's educational adviser Alcuin, saw the seven arts still subservient to the theology this time attaching Christian significance to non-Christian ideas and phenomena.[3] By such means it was hoped to broaden and strengthen the foundations for Christian belief, at the same time allaying any possible opposition. Although these ideas flagged for a while, they were to undergo a revival in the twelfth century, at which

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[2]Cf. Glunz, pp. 12 f.

[3]Cf. Glunz, pp. 22 f.

time Robert of Melun, Bishop of Hereford, re-echoes the words of St. Augustine, saying that art is the means by which man can gain access to the eternal truths.[4] Poetry is vindicated in this respect in that the poet's descriptions of beauty themselves constitute reflections of heavenly splendour, and thereby educate the audience towards fuller realisation of the omnipresent magnificence of the divine.

The existence of beauty within Tristan would not appear, however, to spring from any desire on Gottfried's part to exalt the works of the Christian Divinity. G. Weber, among others, would even have us believe the contrary to be true.[5] But aside from the highly controversial problem of Gottfried's beliefs concerning Christianity and the consequent orientation of art towards Christian doctrine, the theories on aesthetics which are expressed in Tristan all have one fundamental prerequisite. This lies in the significance which Gottfried attaches to the effect of art upon the audience; for him, art is by no means an autonomous phenomenon. This is perhaps best expressed by Weber in the introduction to his section on art:

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[4]Cf. Glunz, p. 224

[5]See Weber's principle thesis on the daemonic element in Gottfried's poem, in "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes.

> Das Auffallendste an Gottfrieds Kunstvorstellungen ist der mächtige Drang des Wirkenwollens, das Ausserordentliche seines Geltungsbedürfnisses. Hier ist keine stille, in sich zufriedene, nur aus eigenen immanenten Kunstgesetzen existierende Dichtung, auch nicht ausschliesslich eine innerhalb des psychologischen Prozesses der schaffenden Persönlichkeit verbleibende Projektions- und Bekenntniskunst. Sondern die tiefsten Antriebe scheinen hier aus dem Gesellschaftlichen zu strömen (. . . und niwan der werlt ze guote) und damit also aus dem Wollen zur Wirkung.[6]

Artistic effect exercises its dominion within two distinct spheres: firstly, it operates upon characters and events within the poem's narrative framework; secondly, it emanates towards an external participating audience attuned to the philosophy of the noble heart. Consequently, one must remember throughout the following examination that whatever is applicable within the microcosm of the poem might also be translated into terms that relate to the macrocosm of the audience. In order that his first musical performance before the two Isoldes might evoke its proper impression, for example, Tristan plays "niht alse ein lebeloser man" (7829) but from the depths of his heart, with the total involvement of his whole being. Although this is not explicitly expressed, it would seem logical to assume that

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[6]Weber, ibid., II, 53

in Gottfried's eyes the same condition governs all forms of artistic creativity at all times, and concerns not merely this one occasion in the fictitious world of the poem. For Gottfried, genuine art springs not only from technical ability, which may be acquired, but from the inspiration of an impassioned soul.

As was seen at the beginning of this chapter, a belief in the didactic efficacy of art was perhaps most noticably prevalent amongst certain classical writers and the theologians of the Carolingian era. Yet it is hard to conceive of any artist who, at some time in his career, fails to believe in the positive educational value of his work. Gottfried is certainly no exception. Whereas Alcuin, however, helped propagate the vindication of art asserting that it imbued that highest of all virtues, love of God, the author of Tristan makes a rather more modest claim. For him, the virtues which art can inculcate have their dominion firmly fixed within the bounds of the here and now.

We find, in the prologue, that the story of Tristan and Isolde enjoys the prerogative of ennobling the minds and improving the lives of the audience; at the same time it makes love lovable and fortifies constancy:[7]

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[7]Although translated here by "constancy", triuwe also implies sincerity.

ez liebet liebe und edelt muot,
ez staetet triuwe und tugendet leben,
ez kan wol lebene tugende geben;
(174-176)

Next, Gottfried becomes rather more specific, listing the qualities: constancy, love, loyalty, honour; he then lapses back into the general, however, to include other virtues imbued by this tale of love under the vague heading "and many other good things":

wan swa man hoeret oder list,
daz von so reinen triuwen ist,
da liebent dem getriuwen man
triuwe und ander tugende van:
liebe, triuwe, staeter muot,
ere und ander manic guot,
daz geliebet niemer anderswa
so sere noch so wol so da,
da man von herzeliebe saget
und herzeleit uz liebe klaget.
(177-186)

The result of the apparent weakness of Gottfried's propensity towards the vague in these passages is to emphasize very strongly those qualities which he does mention and which represent for him the cardinal virtues. Of these, one claims our particular attention; the repetition of triuwe five times within the space of fourteen lines can leave us little doubt as to the supreme value which Gottfried ascribes to this attribute.[8] Triuwe, together with ere

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[8]For a brief examination of what is meant by triuwe see chapter V.

is again the subject of ll. 222-227:

> al eine und sin si lange tot,
> ir süezer name der lebet iedoch,
> und sol ir tot der werlde noch
> ze guote lange und iemer leben,
> den triuwe gernden triuwe geben,
> den ere gernden ere:

Gottfried's work, therefore, with its tale of the love between Tristan and Isolde, proposes a standard of virtues which the poet believes will educate a sympathetic audience to the point where it will emulate the example given.

In addition to its didactic purpose, art, according to Gottfried, also serves to bring happiness to all participants. At the end of the hunting scene when Tristan organises the hart-shaped procession and leads it into Tintagel, the effect of his horn-blowing upon the memers of the court is depicted as follows:

> und als diu rotte gar in kam,
> Tristan sin hornelin do nam
> und hürnete also riche
> und also wunnecliche,
> jene alle, die da mit im riten,
> daz die vor fröuden kume erbiten,
> daz si'm ze helfe kamen
> und alle ir horn namen
> und hürneten vil schone
> mit ime in sinem done.
> (3207-3216)

Tristan's audience is immediately cheered by his performance, and this motif is continued throughout the young Tristan's sojourn at Tintagel. Within a week King Mark himself accompanies a chase under the direction of his new

Master Huntsman. For him too, the impression evoked by the young artist's music is one of peaceful contentment:

> do wart groz horngeschelle
> in maneger slahte done:
> si hürneten so schone,
> daz ez Marken sanfte tete
> und mit im manegem an der stete.
> (3452-3456)

A little later in the text, Tristan's artistic talents give rise to an expression of a similar idea, couched in rather more forceful terms:

> a Tristan, waere ich alse duo!
> Tristan, du maht gerne leben:
> Tristan, dir ist der wunsch gegeben
> aller der fuoge, die kein man
> ze dirre werlde gehaben kan.
> (3708-3712)

In the literary excursus we find a more generalised reiteration of the gladdening effect of art, this time with an expansion in scope to include the effect of the works of the Minnesänger upon their audiences:

> ir stimme ist luter unde guot,
> si gebent der werlde hohen muot
> und tuont reht' in dem herzen wol.
> diu werlt diu waere unruoches vol
> und lebete rehte als ane ir danc,
> wan der vil liebe vogelsanc:
> der ermant vil dicke den man,
> der ie ze liebe muot gewan,
> beidiu liebes unde guotes
> und maneger hande muotes,
> der edelen herzen sanfte tuot:
> (4757-4767)[9]

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[9] Cf. also Bechstein, 573-584, 16754-16761.

The last line of this quotation introduces a new concept, but one which forms the logical consequence to the theme just discussed.[10] Although largely ignored by critics it is nevertheless one of the most important components in Gottfried's philosophy concerning the function of art.

The notion that art helps to alleviate sorrow is expounded at length in the prologue and plays a leading narrative role in the episodes concerning Gandin and the fairy dog Petitcriu, as well as in the Grotto.

That art can solace the oppressed is not an idea of Gottfried's own invention. Expressed by Plato, this theory was quite well-known to the early Middle Ages. W. T. H. Jackson quotes this interesting and very relevant passage from Aribo, commentator on the popular treatises of Manlius Böethius:[11]

> Musicae moralitatem etiam Plato demonstrat dicens: Animorum item placiditatem constituebamus in delinimentis et affabilitate musicae. Merito dicit Plato placiditatem animorum cum assidua musicae conversetur delectatione.

Some indication of the popularity of this idea might lie in the fact that not only Gottfried makes use of it but also Hartmann, in his prologue to Der arme Heinrich, and Thomas in the Roman de Tristan. Hartmann states:

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[10] Cf. also ll. 3455 f., as quoted above.

[11] Jackson, "Tristan the Artist", 370, n.17

dar an begunde er suochen,
ob er iht des funde,
da mite er swaere stunde
möhte senfter machen, [12]
. . . . . .

Thomas, Gottfried's avowed source, concludes his poem:

E diz e vers i ai retrait:
Pur essample issi ai fait
Pur l'estorie embelir,
Que as amanz deive plaisir,
E que par lieus poissent troveir
Choses u se puissent recorder:
Aveir em poissent grant confort,
Encuntre change, encontre tort,
Encuntre paine, encuntre dolur,
Encuntre tuiz engins d'amur! [13]

But whereas Hartmann and Thomas make only passing reference to this phenomenon, Gottfried utilizes it as a major theme in close association with his ideal of the edelez herze. The measure of importance which he attaches to this concept might be judged from the space allotted to it in the prologue:

der han ich mine unmüezekeit
ze kurzewile vür geleit,
daz si mit minem maere
ir nahe gende swaere
ze halber senfte bringe,
ir not da mite geringe.
wan swer des iht vor ougen hat,
da mite der mout ze unmuoze gat,
daz entsorget sorgehaften muot,

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[12] Hartmann v. Aue, Der arme Heinrich, ed. E. Gierach (Heidelberg, 1925), ll. 8-11.

[13] Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan (Textes Littéraires Français, 92), ed. B.H. Wind, 2nd edition (Geneva, Paris, 1960). These lines are taken from fragment Sneyd^2.

daz ist ze herzesorgen guot.
ir aller volge diu ist dar an:
swa so der müezige man
mit senedem schaden si überladen,
da mere muoze seneden schaden.
bi senedem leide müezekeit,
da wahset iemer senede leit.
durch daz ist guot, swer herzeklage
und senede not ze herzen trage,
daz er mit allem ruoche
dem libe unmuoze suoche:
da mit so müezeget der muot
und ist dem muote ein michel guot;
und gerate ich niemer doch dar an,
daz iemer liebe gernde man
deheine solhe unmuoze im neme,
diu reiner liebe missezeme:
ein senelichez maere
daz tribe ein senedaere
mit herzen und mit munde
und senfte so die stunde.
(71-100)

Since the customary reference to a patron or benefactor is lacking in Tristan,[14] these lines might almost be considered as the dedication. One of Gottfried's purposes, then, is to provide a source of distraction which will mitigate the nahe gende swaere, accepted by the noble heart as essential to his being. It cannot bring total solace, however, as Gottfried stresses in l. 75: "ze halber senfte bringe." Were complete relief from hardship possible, then this would arouse an immediate discrepancy with the ideals of Gottfried's elite, whose philosophy it is to affirm the

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[14]Except possibly in the acrostic mentioned in chapter I.

value of suffering. The author of Tristan recognized this inherent danger in the episode concerning the fairy lap-dog Petitcriu. The little dog is capable of banishing cares completely:

> ime gienc umbe sin krägelin
> ein ketene, diu was guldin:
> dar an so hienc ein schelle
> so süeze und so helle,
> do ez sich rüeren began,
> der truraere Tristan,
> daz er siner aventiure
> an sorge unde an triure
> ledec und ane gesaz
> unde des leides gar vergaz,
> daz in durch Isote twanc.
> so süeze was der schellen klanc,
> daz si nieman gehorte,
> sin' benaeme im und zestorte
> sine sorge und al sin ungemach.
> (15849-15863)

But Gottfried is quick to emphasize not only that this effect is temporary, but that when sadness returns, it does so with heightened intensity

> Nu daz ez dannen wart getragen,
> Tristandes truren und sin klagen
> daz was aber frisch als e
> und aber so vil der triure me,
> daz er alle sine trahte,
> die er gehaben mahte,
> an die gedanken leite,
> mit waz gefuogheite
> oder mit welhen sinnen
> er möhte gewinnen
> siner frouwen der künigin
> Petitcriu daz hundelin,
> durch daz ir senede swaere
> al deste minner waere.
> (15895-15908)

In the episode of the rote and the harp, Gandin bids Tristan console his newly won prize, Isolde. Tristan complies willingly, and the effect follows the pattern established in the prologue:

> sines werkes er begunde,
> er harphete an der stunde
> so rehte süezen einen leich,
> der Isot' in ir herze sleich
> und ir gedanken alle ergie
> so verre, daz si ir weinen lie
> und an ir amis was verdaht.
> (13323-13329)

So far the didactic, cheering and placatory effects of art have been considered, but now the final line of this quotation indicates that in its emotive capacity, art occupies a much wider field. In this instance, Tristan's harping arouses thoughts of love in the mind of his sorrowing amie. But long before the expression of the idea that music can evoke that highest of sentiments, love, we find that it has already succeeded in stimulating pity. Firstly, at the time of Tristan's visit to Ireland disguised as a minstrel, we are informed that it is his music which moves the Dubliners to compassion, with the results discussed in the previous chapter. The hero's original purpose in equipping himself with his harp instead of his sword now becomes apparent:

> und alse der arme spileman
> wider sines libes state began
> sin harphen und sin singen
> so rehte suoze bringen,
> ez begunde s' alle erbarmen:
> (7677-7681)

The same motif is then reiterated in stronger terms, this time with reference to Isolde's tutor, a priest of considerable musical ability:

> Do der an Tristand' alse vil
> schoener kunst und fuoge ersach,
> in erbarmete sin ungemach
> vil innecliche sere
> . . . . . .
> (7732-7735)

A little later in the same section the first allusion is made to music's power to evoke what Gottfried guardedly terms seneliche trahte:

> diu süeze Isot, diu reine,
> si sanc, si schreip und si las;
> und swaz ir aller fröude was,
> daz was ir banekie.
> si videlte ir stampenie,
> leich' und so fremediu notelin,
> diu niemer fremeder kunden sin,
> in franzoiser wise
> von Sanze und San Dinise:
> der kunde s' uzer maze vil.
> ir liren unde ir harphenspil
> sluoc si ze beiden wenden
> mit harmblanken henden
> ze lobelichem prise.
> in Lut noch in Thamise
> gesluogen frouwen hende nie
> seiten süezer danne hie
> la duze Isot, la bele.
> si sang ir pasturele,
> ir rotruwange und ir rundate,
> schanzune, refloit und folate
> wol unde wol und alze wol:
> wan von ir wart manc herze vol
> mit senelicher trahte.
> (8058-8082)

The most explicit statement of the connection between art and love is, however, to be found in the description of

the growing relationship between Tristan and Isolde White-hands. The hero's awareness of the effect of his artistry upon the second Isolde is made abundantly clear in ll. 19187-19203:

> do'r an der mägede gesach
> ir senelichez ungemach,
> daz sich daz üeben began,
> do leite er sinen fliz dar an,
> daz er ir fröude baere:
> er seite ir schoeniu maere,
> er sanc, er schreib ir unde las;
> und swaz ir kurzewile was,
> da zuo was er gedanchaft:
> er leiste ir geselleschaft,
> er kürzete ir die stunde
> etswenne mit dem munde
> und underwilen mit der hant.
> Tristan der machete unde vant
> an iegelichem seitespil
> leich' unde guoter noten vil,
> die wol geminnet sint ie sit.

That the hero's guile is not ill-directed is testified by the poignant assertion:

> und al der trügeheite,
> die Tristan an si leite,
> so was ie daz diu volleist,
> diu ir herze allermeist
> an Tristandes liebe twanc,
> daz er daz also gerne sanc:
> "Isot mà drue, Isot m'amie,
> en vus ma mort, en vus ma vie!"
> daz locte ir herze allez dar;
> daz was, daz ir die liebe bar.
> (19407-19416)

While the connection is here explicit, the association between art and love is implied with yet more telling result in the description of the events in the Grotto.

In accordance with his thesis of the heroes' entanglement with the daemonic, G. Weber interprets the recounting of classical tragic love stories in the Grotto as Gottfried's desire to foreshadow the doom awaiting Tristan and Isolde.[15] While these stories do anticipate the lovers' tragic lot, they also serve two rather more significant functions. If we look back at the prologue, ll. 71-100, and apply the theory expressed there, we see that the distraction afforded by such tales serves to alleviate the lovers' one cause for concern, their apparent loss of ere:

> sine haeten umbe ein bezzer leben
> niht eine bone gegeben,
> wan eine umbe ir ere.[16]
> (16879-16881)

Also in the prologue, we find the second, equally poignant indication as to why the lovers should relate tales of tragedy. In ll. 101-122, it is made manifest that the playing of sad love-stories has a bitter-sweet quality which inspires a noble heart to greater ardour:

> Nu ist ab einer jehe vil,
> der ich vil nach gevolgen wil:
> der senede muot, so der je me
> mit seneden maeren umbe ge,

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[15] Weber, I, 181 f.

[16] It is all too often forgotten that although Tristan and Isolde's stay in the Grotto marks the zenith of their happiness as noble hearts, this happiness cannot be complete. The antithetical make-up of Gottfried's elite is such that at no time does joy totally exclude sorrow.

so siner swaere ie mere si.
der selben jehe der stüende ich bi,
wan ein dic, daz mir widerstat:
swer innecliche liebe hat,
doch ez im we von herzen tuo,
daz herze stet doch ie dar zuo.
der innecliche minnenmuot,
so der in siner senegluot
ie mere und mere brinnet,
so er ie serer minnet.
diz leit ist liebes alse vol,
daz übel daz tuot so herzewol,
daz es kein edele herze enbirt,
sit ez hie von geherzet wirt.
ich weiz ez warez alse den tot
und erkenne ez bi der selben not:
der edele senedaere
der minnet senediu maere.

Of all the means which Gottfried employs to portray the concord between Tristan and Isolde, the description of their musical pursuits in the Grotto ranks among the finest. In addition to the obvious analogy between the harmony of music and that of the two lovers, perhaps best illustrated in ll. 17222 - 17228, this section also contains a subtlety which may well have passed unnoticed until quite recently. It is L. Gnaedinger who remarks that prior to the Grotto scene, Tristan and Isolde have only played solo; now as an expression of their intimate alliance, the two lovers perform as a duet, alternating between harping and singing:[17]

So si aber der maere denne
vergezzen wolten under in,
so slichen s' in ir kluse hin

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[17] L.M. Gnaedinger, Musik und Minne im "Tristan" Gottfrieds von Straßburg, WW, Beiheft 19, 1967, pp. 85 f.

und namen aber ze handen,
dar an si ir lust erkanden,
und liezen danne klingen
ir harphen unde ir singen
senelichen unde suoze.
si wehselten unmuoze
mit handen und mit zungen:
si harpheten, si sungen
leich' unde noten der minne.
si wandelten dar inne
ir wunnenspil, swie si gezam.
sweder ir die harphen genam,
so was des anderen site,
daz ez diu notelin dermite
suoz ' unde seneliche sanc.
ouch lutete ietweder klanc
der harphen mit der zungen,
so si in ein ander klungen,
so suoze dar inne,
als ez der süezen Minne
wol z'einer kluse wart benant,
la fossiur' a la gent amant.
(17204-17228)

Both Gnaedinger and Mergell also draw attention to the musical-aural emphasis in the portrayal of the locus amoenus, comparing this scene with the Ideallandschaft at Tintagel.[18] Whereas in the latter the weight of description is on the visual (ll. 534-584), in the former the aural plays the leading role (ll. 16754-16757, 16891-16899, 17157-17169, 17358-17388). In the picture of the May festivities we find reference only to the nightingale (578), but in the Grotto landscape the nightingale is joined by the thrush, the blackbird, the siskin and the calander-lark (16892-16897, 17458). As if further to

[18] Gnaedinger, 76-82; Mergell, 134-138.

emphasize the musical quality of the locus amoenus Gottfried even uses the terminology of this art-form to describe the bird-song: organieren (17359); anderunge (17373); diu da schantoit und discantoit/ir schanzun' unde ir refloit (17375-17376).

It thus becomes evident from the portrayal of both the lovers' activities in the Grotto and the surrounding landscape that Gottfried envisaged a link between art and love. From the examination of this episode and the allusions referred to above, pp. 17-19, it would also appear that the author of Tristan favoured music above all other art-forms in its power to evoke and express the supreme emotion. Once the close relationship between music and love has been established, it becomes easy to condone Mergell's argument that Gottfried at no time confused the mountain of the Muses, Cythaeron, with Cythera, the island residence of Aphrodite (ll. 4805-4808).[19] It was the common belief of earlier critics that Gottfried's knowledge of classical mythology had failed him and led him to allude to Cythaeron instead of Cythera.[20] But from the evidence of the preceding discussion and the context of this reference, in which both music and love play prominent roles, a highly

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[19]Mergell, 167 f.

[20]Ehrismann, II, 2.1, p. 321; Hoffa, 343 f.

original fusion of the two motifs would seem a more likely interpretation. The final line of this passage lends added weight to this theory:

> hei, wie diu über heide
> mit hoher stimme schellet!
> waz wunders si gestellet!
> wie spaehe s' organieret!
> wi si ir sanc wandelieret!
> (ich meine ab in dem done
> da her von Zitherone,
> da diu gotinne Minne
> gebiutet uf und inne).
> diu ist da z'hove kameraerin:
> diu sol ir leitaerinne sin!
> diu wiset si ze wunsche wol,
> diu weiz wol, wa si suochen sol
> der minnen melodie.
> (4800-4813)

While Gottfried's awareness of the emotive effect of music has been made manifest, the extent of this awareness yet remains to be analysed. Perhaps the degree of music's power to excite feeling in Tristan might best be judged from the strange and at times magical attributes which music sometimes assumes. Both Hahn and Gnaedinger have devoted sections of their works to discussions of the alien nature of art in Tristan.[21] Suffice it then to mention but a few instances.

The foreign character of Tristan's musical ability is stressed throughout the early part of the poem (3222, 3246, 3553, 3565) and it would appear that this quality is transferred to Isolde after instruction by her new tutor

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[21]Hahn, 90-93; Gnaedinger, 21, 30.

(8063 f.). On both occasions, the passages emphasizing this strangeness are followed by allusions to the magical distraction or attraction which this music inspires:

> do begunde er suoze doenen
> und harphen so ze prise
> in britunischer wise,
> daz maneger da stuont unde saz,
> der sin selbes namen vergaz:
> da begunden herze und oren
> tumben unde toren
> und uz ir rehte wanken;
> (3586-3593)

> Wem mag ich si gelichen
> die schoenen, saelderichen,
> wan den Syrenen eine,
> die mit dem agesteine
> die kiele ziehent ze sich?
> als zoch Isot, so dunket mich,
> vil herzen unde gedanken in,
> die doch vil sicher wanden sin
> von senedem ungemache.
> (8089-8097)

The most clearly-defined example of the magical attributes of music is, however, included in the description of the effect upon all within earshot of the little bell around Petitcriu's neck:

> Tristan der horte unde sach
> daz wunderliche wunder an:
> hunt unde schellen er began
> bemerken unde trahten,
> ietwederz sunder ahten,
> den hunt und sine fremede hut,
> die schellen unde ir süezen lut:
> ir beider nam in wunder
> und duhte in doch hier under
> daz wunder umbe daz hundelin
> vil michel wunderlicher sin
> dan umbe den süezen schellenklanc,
> der ime in sin ore sanc
> und nam im sine triure.
> (15864-15877)

The five-fold repetition of wunder boldly underlines the quality which Gottfried wishes to stress.

To summarize the contents of this chapter one might divide the function of art into three parts. Firstly, according to Gottfried, art fulfils a didactic role, ennobling the mind and fortifying all virtues especially triuwe and ere. Secondly, it serves to gladden and placate the audience. Thirdly, and perhaps most important for Gottfried, art provides a source of partial or temporary solace for the oppressed, above all for the noble heart suffering the hardships of love.

In every sphere, art is characterized by its ability to generate emotion, and of all sentiments, it enjoys the closest association with love. In this particular respect, music plays the leading role, and in some instances its degree of efficacy borders on the magical.

There remains one function of art which has not yet been discussed, namely its capacity to heighten a person's level of awareness. This will now be examined with relation to the education of Tristan and Isolde.

CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATION OF THE edelez herze

Having examined the various functions and characteristics of art, we must next apply our conclusions to the subject matter of Tristan in order to determine how this knowledge influences our appreciation of the poem. Firstly, however, we must examine the basic character of those areas in the content which these conclusions are most likely to affect. Fundamental to such an investigation are both the poet's concept of the edelez herze, and the education of Tristan and Isolde, which must of necessity mould the character of Gottfried's select few.

Much has been written on the subject of the noble heart; while a detailed study of the topic here would therefore be largely superfluous, a brief outline of some of the more significant characteristics of this concept is nevertheless essential.[1] Speckenbach devotes his second chapter to an analysis of Gottfried's use of the words edel und herze.

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[1] To name but two of many possible sources of reference: G. Weber, "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes, I, 32-41; K. Speckenbach, Studien zum Begriff "edelez herze" im "Tristan" Gottfrieds von Straßburg (Munich, 1965), especially pp. 16-71.

He supports the theory (p. 16) that edel is used in Tristan mainly to devote a person of courtly disposition and noble birth, although in compounds such as edeler muot and edelez herze an ethical sphere is implicit. Speckenbach then demonstrates in the remainder of the chapter that Gottfried utilizes the term herze to express an inner frame of mind determined by moral and aesthetic values, which condition response to the all-important emotion of love and its attendant phenomena, joy and sorrow.

Much of the material in Tristan relating to the concept of the noble heart is to be found in the prologue. Gottfried states explicitly that he is not writing the conventional type of courtly epic for the pleasure of the knightly class:

> Ich han mir eine unmüezekeit
> der werlt ze liebe vür geleit
> und edelen herzen z'einer hage,
> den herzen, den ich herze trage,
> der werlde, in die min herze siht.
> ich meine ir aller werlde niht
> als die, von der ich hoere sagen,
> diu deheine swaere müge getragen
> und niwan in fröuden welle sweben:
> die laze ouch got mit fröuden leben!
> (45-54)

The poet considers himself a member of a select community, that of the edele herzen, and it is for these that he is composing his work.[2] Ll. 50-54 are addressed to the

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[2]With the aims reviewed in the previous chapter.

majority of his listeners, most of whom would naturally have belonged to the courtly world, the world which Gottfried firmly rejects on account of its excessively narrow quest for pleasure alone. Straightaway he then continues to describe the character of those for whom the poem is really intended:

> Der werlde und diseme lebene
> enkumt min rede niht ebene:
> ir leben und minez zweient sich.
> ein ander werlt die meine ich,
> diu sament in einem herzen treit
> ir süeze sur, ir liebez leit,
> ir herzeliep, ir senede not,
> ir liebez leben, ir leiden tot,
> ir lieben tot, ir leidez leben:
> dem lebene si min leben ergeben,
> der werlt wil ich gewerldet wesen,
> mit ir verderben oder genesen.
> (55-66)

We learn from this passage, with its stress upon antithesis, that the extolled edelez herze is a person who will affirm the positive value of a life composed not only of happiness but also of suffering. The bias of this antithesis might conceivably be estimated with some degree of accuracy, were one to analyse and compare the frequency of leit and fröude, or their equivalents, in Tristan. Since this would constitute a major field of study in itself, we must content ourselves with Speckenbach's assertion (p. 24) that herze is more commonly associated with sorrow than joy. We might also note the almost synonymous and very revealing use of the term edeler senedaere to refer to the noble heart

in ll. 121, 126. The term edeler senedaere is especially appropriate in the light of the etymology which Gottfried invents for Tristan's name (Tristan = triste, l. 2001). Evidently, suffering is fundamental to the poem and the willingness to condone leit as the complement to fröude distinguishes the noble heart from those bent on the hollow search for pleasure alone. The field to which suffering and joy relate in particular is of course love. Any sincere love-relationship of the type in which Tristan and Isolde participate must involve both; they are the two halves which form the genuine unit. Love without sorrow is not love, and who, Gottfried asks, would not gladly suffer one hardship for the sake of a thousand joys?

> War umbe enlite ein edeler muot
> nigt gerne ein übel durch tusent guot,
> durch manege fröude ein ungemach?
> swem nie von liebe leit geschach,
> dem geschach ouch liep von liebe nie.
> liep unde leit diu waren ie
> an minnen ungescheiden.
> (201-207)

Such then are the ethical characteristics of the edelez herze. As mentioned above, the members of Gottfried's elite are also subject to a code of aesthetic judgement. The measure of the noble heart's sensitive appreciation for the aesthetically pleasing can be deduced from the following passages:

> ir rede ist niht also gevar,
> daz edele herze iht lache dar.
> (4679-4680)

in edelen oren lutet baz
ein wort, daz schone gezimt,
dan daz man uz der bühsen nimt.
als verre als ich's bedenken kan,
so sol ich mich bewarn dar an,
daz ich iu iemer wort gesage,
daz iuwern oren missehage
und iuwerm herzen widerste.
ich spriche ouch deste minner e
von iegelicher sache,
e ich iu daz maere mache
unlidic unde unsenfte bi
mit rede, diu niht des hoves si.
(7946-7958)

This study of the nature of the edelez herze poses as its logical consequence one very important question: how does one attain these requisite qualities? As Gottfried is quick to indicate at the beginning of the prologue, such tugent is reached only by way of narrow, torturous paths:[3]

Hei, tugent, wie smal sint dine stege,
wie kumberlich sint dine wege!
die dine stege, die dine wege,
wol ime, der si wege und stege!
(37-40)

Negotiation of these paths is in itself a rare achievement, and of the successful few, Tristan and Isolde are the epitome. Not even Gottfried has experienced the sublimity shared by the hero and heroine:

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[3]Tugent refers not only to those qualities mentioned in the strophic prologue, but as Weber suggests,"Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes, I, 32, it relates to the noble heart's whole sphere of activity.

ich vant an der fossiure
den haft und sach die vallen.
ich bin ze der kristallen
ouch under stunden geweten.
ich han den reien getreten
dicke dar und ofte dan,
i'n geruowete aber nie dar an:
(17114-17120)

In the early development of Tristan and Isolde towards the ultimate perfection of the noble heart, the predominant factor is education. Detailed insight into the nature of this process is gained both from Gottfried's account of Tristan's youth and from the corresponding tutelage of Isolde by the hero. Since they reach the highest elevation as edele herzen their education is naturally the supreme model.

One possible condition is stipulated, however, over which education has no control whatever: the candidate for entry into Gottfried's chosen community must be potentially acceptable from birth. As we are told in ll. 4090-4092 and 4989-4997, an element of this quality is inherited:

wie kunde ein werbender man
sin kint so schone erzogen han,
ez enmüese uz edelem herzen gan?

ich meine ab an der waete,
die mannes hant da maete,
niht an der an gebornen wat,
diu von des herzen kamere gat,
die si da heizent edelen muot,
diu den man wolgemuoten tuot
und werdet lip unde leben:
diu wat wart den gesellen geben
dem herren ungeliche.

Before examining the details of the lovers' education a glance is warranted at the traditional academic training

to which a young nobleman was subject in Gottfried's day. The early education of the high-born began in the home, where he was taught simple prayers and discipline, either by his mother or the local priest. At the age of seven the boy was usually sent to the castle of a secular lord or the home of a prominent member of the clergy, where he would learn the rudiments of etiquette and receive instruction in knightly behaviour. Occasionally, he underwent some elementary instruction in the Seven Liberal Arts - Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy; as stated in the previous chapter (pp. 41 f.), these were all strictly orientated towards the propagation of Christian ideals. In the main, however, this side of the youth's education was overlooked in favour of training in the outdoor physical activities of knighthood. Before final elevation to this rank the young nobleman then had to spend several years as a squire, again in the service of a lord. Here his physical training would be much more rigorous, with even less time, if any, to devote to formal academic education; by the time knighthood was attained, therefore, aesthetic and intellectual interests were almost totally neglected. As will be seen in the following examination, traditional education bears only limited resemblance to that of Tristan and Isolde.

In chapters I and II, Gottfried's background and his estrangement from contemporary courtly poets were discussed.

It was established that Gottfried's main interest lay in the intellectual rather than in the more widely esteemed knightly physical activities of his day. It is perhaps not surprising to find this same divergence of interest reflected in the education of the hero. Herein lies the greatest distinction between traditional knightly education, with its emphasis on physical prowess, and the education of Tristan and Isolde, which is dominated by intellectual pursuits.

Unlike Parzival, Tristan is the infant prodigy whose behaviour resembles more that of an adult than that of a child:

> sag an, sprach er, wer ist diz kint,
> des wort so wol besniten sint?
> a herre, ez ist ein Parmenois,
> so wunderlichen curtois
> und alse rehte tugentsam,
> daz ich'z an kinde nie vernam,
> . . . . . .
> (3273-3278)[4]

In accordance with tradition, Tristan's earliest years are spent in the care of his foster-mother, Floraete (2041-2053), before being placed, at the usual age of seven, under the guidance of a wise man:

> getriben unz an sin sibende jar,
> daz er wol rede und ouch gebar
> vernemen kunde und ouch vernam,
> sin vater, der marschalc, in do nam
> und bevalch in einem wisen man:

With his tutor, Tristan is then sent abroad and devotes most of his time to the study of foreign languages and literature:

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[4]Cf. also ll. 2750-2756, 3092-3093.

mit dem sant' er in iesa dan
durch fremede sprache in fremediu lant;
und daz er aber al zehant
der buoche lere an vienge
und den ouch mite gienge
vor aller slahte lere.
(2060-2065)

In addition to these two pursuits, Tristan also spends many hours in the study of music, attaining remarkable proficiency in the playing of stringed instruments:

Under disen zwein lernungen
der buoche unde der zungen
so vertete er siner stunde vil
an iegelichem seitespil:
da kerte er spate unde fruo
sin emzekeit so sere zuo,
biz er es wunder kunde.
(2091-2097)

These then are the components of the hero's formal education in the Seven Liberal Arts. We find, implicit in his study of foreign languages and literature, that Tristan must have been given instruction in the subjects of the Trivium - Grammar, Rhetoric and Dialectic - and also in one of the areas of the Quadrivium, namely Music. Arithmetic, Geometry and Astronomy are apparently not included in his education.[5]

From these passages we can observe the unusually high degree of emphasis placed upon Tristan's formal academic

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[5]Nowhere, as far as I know, do these three more scientific studies form part of the education of any major figure in Arthorian Romance. One is tempted to ask why.

pursuits. In similar contrast to tradition, we find that the elements of the hero's physical training for knighthood are merely listed by Gottfried (2101-2120). To be sure, Tristan excels in riding, fencing, wrestling, running, jumping, throwing the javelin and "aller hande hovespil" (2119), but relatively little attention is paid to these skills. As Gottfried states (2115-2118), the narrative bears witness to the hero's profound knowledge of courtly hunting ceremonial, but even the excoriation of the hart is primarily important for its aesthetic qualities.[6]

We find, therefore, in Gottfried's stress upon the academic and the aesthetic a reversal of the traditional scale of values in knightly education, a swing away from physical occupation towards the mental. This novel emphasis in education is clearly the prerequisite for the events discussed in the second chapter. That Tristan should progress through society in an untraditional manner -- by means of his artistic talents -- naturally presupposes an untraditional type of training. It is the kind of preparation which evokes such adulatory comment as:

> a Tristan, waere ich alse duo!
> Tristan, du maht gerne leben:
> Tristan, dir ist der wunsch gegeben
> aller der fuoge, die kein man

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[6]See above, p. 28.

ze dirre werlde gehaben kan.
ouch macheten si hier under
mit rede michel wunder:
hora! sprach dirre hora! sprach der
elliu diu werlt diu hoere her:
ein vierzehenjaerec kint
kan al die liste, die nu sint!
(3708-3718)

But the education which the hero enjoys does not bring only success and advancement in society. The heightened awareness which Tristan gains through the study of literature also marks the end of his career as an uncomplicated, unthinking member of society. For him, knowledge leads to involvement, and involvement signifies the termination of freedom, the beginning of care:

und daz er aber al zehant
der buoche lere an vienge
und den ouch mite gienge
vor aller slahte lere.
daz was sin erstiu kere
uz siner friheite:
do trat er in daz geleite
betwungenlicher sorgen,
die ime da vor verborgen
und vor behalten waren.
in den uf blüenden jaren,
do al sin wunne solte erstan,
do er mit fröuden solte gan
in sines lebenes begin,
do was sin beste leben hin:
do er mit fröuden blüen began,
do vil der sorgen rife in an,
der maneger jugent schaden tuot,
und darte im siner fröuden bluot.
in siner ersten friheit
wart al sin friheit hin geleit.
der buoche lere und ir getwanc
was siner sorgen anevanc;
(2062-2084)

This ambivalence in the study of art prefigures the very core of the noble heart's being. In both instances joy is complemented by sorrow; neither emotion can exist without the other. Just as, in his capacity as an edelez herze, Tristan accepts the happiness and suffering inherent in love, so too does he devote himself to his studies, notwithstanding the ambivalence of their nature. Indeed, he attains an unprecedented level of competence for his efforts:

> und iedoch, do er ir began,
> do leite er sinen sin dar an
> und sinen fliz so sere,
> daz er der buoche mere
> gelernete in so kurzer zit
> danne kein kint e oder sit.
> (2085-2090)

This leit-linge (5067-5074) connection between the study of art, the philosophy of Gottfried's elite and love -- love being the very essence of the noble heart -- finds its practical manifestation in the effect of such artistic pursuits upon the hero's career. The positive element, namely the social distinction which Tristan wins by means of his unusual talents, has already been discussed in the second chapter.

The negative implications of Tristan's intellectual prowess find their expression in the trouble into which he is plunged as a result of his various abilities. In the episode which follows the portrayal of the hero's education, the narrative tells of his abduction by Norwegian merchants.

With the idea proclaimed in ll. 2062-2084 still fresh in our minds, we learn that the motivation for Tristan's kidnap lies both in his capacity to address the Norwegians in their own language and in the effect of his singing upon them. It is the rarity of Tristan's linguistic accomplishment which first attracts the merchants' attention:

> nu sahen si den jungen
> aber noch flizeclicher an,
> do er ir sprache reden began,
> die lützel iemen kunde da.
> (2232-2235)

The same point is again emphasized in ll. 2280-2284:

> si nam des wunder, daz ein kint
> so manege sprache kunde:
> die fluzzen ime ze munde,
> daz si's e nie vernamen,
> an swelhe stat si kamen.

Tristan then begins to sing:

> ouch sang er wol ze prise
> schanzune und spaehe wise,
> refloit und stampenie.
> (2291-2293)

This is too much for the merchants' cunning avarice, who determine to abduct the young artist for the honour and profit which he would bring them:

> alsolher curtosie
> der treib er vil und so vil an,
> biz aber die werbenden man
> ze rate wurden under in:
> kunden si in iemer bringen hin
> mit deheiner slahte sinnen,
> si möhten sin gewinnen
> grozen frumen und ere.
> (2294-2301)

Tristan's knowledge of languages again nearly precipitates his downfall, for it is one of the arguments used by the envious barons to persuade Mark that he should be sent back to Ireland to procure Isolde the Fair:

> der ist wis' unde wol bedaht
> und saelic z'allen dingen;
> der mag ez z'ende bringen:
> er kan ir aller sprache wol,
> er endet, swaz er enden sol.
> (8534-8538)

Art and education, therefore, share that telltale characteristic of so many of the elements and themes in Tristan: ambivalence.

When Tristan visits Ireland for the first time, his illness is cured on condition that he tutor the younger Isolde in the accomplishments which he displays on arrival. The degree and nature of the training which Isolde receives at the hands of Tristan are somewhat unusual. In his history of education, F. Mayer makes the following statement:

> Education of women played a minor part in the Middle Ages. Nuns were taught the rudiments of reading and writing. Some of them became great scholars, but most of them received little beyond thorough manual training. Castle schools for daughters of the aristocracy provided training in etiquette and physical education.[7]

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[7] F. Mayer, A History of Educational Thought (Columbus, Ohio, 1960), p. 141. One might compare Isolde's instruction, with the analysis of Chretien's description of Philomena's education in A.M. Colby, The Portrait in Twelfth Century French Literature (Geneva, 1965), pp. 136 ff., 137 n. 1.

Admittedly, Isolde is a prominent member of a royal family and is therefore deserving of a sound education. Even so, however, prior to Tristan's tutelage she has been schooled only in the traditional social graces of womanhood:

> ouch half si harte sere
> diu vordere lere.
> si kunde e schoene fuoge
> und höveschеit genuoge
> mit handen und mit munde:
> (7983-7987)

To these social accomplishments -- the ability to speak foreign languages, sing and play musical instruments, ll. 7988-8001 -- Tristan adds what Gottfried loosely terms schuollist (7971); this is almost certainly knowledge of a more academic nature than was normal for female members of medieval society.

The greatest stress, however, is laid upon Isolde's musical ability, the foreign nature of which was discussed in the previous chapter. We are told that Isolde had already acquired considerable technical ability under her former tutor, the chaplain:

> ir vingere die kunden,
> swenne si's begunden,
> die liren wol gerüeren
> und uf der harphen füeren
> die doene mit gewalte:
> sie steigete und valte
> die noten behendecliche.
> ouch sanc diu saeldenriche
> suoz' unde wol von munde;
> (7993-8001)

Yet Gottfried still insists, three times in the space of a few lines, that Tristan improves his pupil:

> und swaz si fuoge kunde,
> da kom si do ze frumen an
> ir meister der spileman:
> der bezzerte si sere.
> (8002-8005)

> Sus kom diu süeze junge
> ze solher bezzerunge
> an lere und an gebare
> in dem halben jare,
> . . . . . .
> (8031-8034)

> Sus haete sich diu schoene Isot
> von Tristandes lere
> gebezzert alse sere:
> (8136-8138)

As Jackson demonstrates,[8] since Isolde has already attained a high degree of technical competence, Tristan's musical instruction must concern itself with the theory of this art-form.[9]

Presumably this amelioration of Isolde's gebare (outlook, attitude) implies the elevation of the heroine to the level of the edelez herze, since only a woman of this status would be worthy of Tristan's later constant affections. If so, then this rise in standing is achieved primarily through the medium of the study of art; this in turn entails

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[8] Jackson, "Tristan the Artist", pp. 368-369, p. 368, n. 14.

[9] A suggestion as to the possible significance of such a study will be proposed in chapter VI.

all the attendant ambivalent aspects of a heightened consciousness examined earlier in this chapter.

In this process of education which renders Isolde acceptable to the community of the noble hearts, one important element yet remains to be discussed. As will be seen later, even moraliteit may well have a possible connection with art.

CHAPTER V

MORALITEIT

Having observed the manner in which the study of art moulds the character of the edelez herze, we now find that to another element of Tristan's tutelage of Isolde is ascribed a yet more fundamental, even "biological" significance. Not only does moraliteit endow profit and esteem, but its precepts serve as a source of nourishment:

> si ist edelen herzen allen
> ze einer ammen gegeben,
> daz si ir lipnar unde ir leben
> suochen in ir lere,
> wan sine hant guot noch ere,
> ez enlere si moraliteit.
> (8018-8023)

The reader is immediately reminded of the closing lines of the prologue in which the tale of the lovers' perfect loyalty and devotion is described as bread to the noble heart:

> wan swa man noch gehoeret lesen
> ir triuwe, ir triuwen reinekeit,
> ir herzeliep, ir herzeleit,
>
> Deist aller edelen herzen brot.
> (230-233)

The same motif recurs in the Grotto episode, this time with reference to the effect of triuwe upon the lovers themselves:

si truogen verborgen
innerhalp der waete
daz best lipgeraete,
daz man zer werlde gehaben kan.
daz truoc sich in vergebene an
und ie frisch unde niuwe:
daz was diu reine triuwe;
diu gebalsemete minne,
diu libe unde sinne
als innecliche sanfte tuot,
diu herze fiuret unde muot:
diu was ir bestiu lipnar.
(16828-16839)

From the similarity in theme content it would appear that the quality of triuwe is an essential part of the lere of maraliteit. If this is accepted, then moraliteit encompasses a far wider range of the human condition than envisaged by Ranke:

> . . . sie ist die Kunst der süezen gebaerde und der schoenen site, die höfische Anstands- und Schicklichkeitslehre, eine Gesellschafts-moral, die neben der äußeren Ehrbarkeit vor allem Liebenswürdigkeit, Mäßigung und beherrschte Stimmung fordert.[1]

To be sure, aesthetic sensitivity fulfils an important function in the lives of the noble hearts "... moraliteit/ diu kunst diu leret schoene site" (8008-8009). Tristan's excoriation of the hart constitutes a fine expression of this good-breeding. The aesthetic element, however, is not the total essence of moraliteit. Gottfried says of this phenomenon:

moraliteit daz süeze lesen
deist saelec unde reine.
ir lere hat gemeine

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[1] Ranke, Tristan u. Isold, 191; cf. also Weber, "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes, I, 101.

mit der werlde und mit gote.
si leret uns in ir gebote
got unde der werlde gevallen:
(8012-8017)

Unless one adopts Ranke's view that God in Tristan is a courtly God with courtly principles then it is extremely difficult to condone the idea that the teachings of moraliteit are pleasing to God solely on the grounds of their social and aesthetic acceptability.[2] The concept of a shallow courtly God is totally incompatible with Gottfried's display of theological knowledge and the mystical inferences within the poem.

Whereas Ranke's interpretation modifies the role of God, Speckenbach imposes a limitation upon the extent of the power of moraliteit to please:

> Zwar zeigen Tristan und Isolde auch später schoene site [8009], zwar bemühen sie sich, Gott und der Welt zu gevallen [8017], aber doch immer nur so lange, wie es nicht gegen ihre Liebe verstößt. Sobald diese gefährdet erscheint, werden auf höfische Vorstellungen keine Rücksichten mehr genommen - man denke an den beständigen Ehebruch, Isoldes Mordplan gegen Brangaene, die Ölbaumszene, das Gottesgericht oder auch die Minnegrotte.[3]

No such condition, however, is stipulated anywhere in the text. Gottfried states categorically:

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[2]Ranke, ibid., 191-192.

[3]Speckenbach, Studien zum Begriff "edelez herze", 64.

> si leret uns in ir gebote
> got unde der werlde gevallen:
> (8016-8017)

How, then, can one reconcile Gottfried's assertion that the teachings of moraliteit are pleasing to God and the world with the unorthodox behaviour of Tristan and Isolde? For, as the epitome of the noble heart, they are the chief exponents of the precepts of moraliteit.

For convenience's sake the question may be divided into two halves, of which the first to be examined, will be the gratifying effect of the heroes' conduct upon God. To facilitate this we must first establsih the nature of God in Tristan.

We are given no indication that God in Tristan is not the Christian Deity. Tristan's baptism (1953-1971), the Eucharistic analogy in the prologue (233-240) and the evidence presented in chapter I would all point to the contrary. Much of the controversy among critics would seem, therefore, to range around the degree and nature of the Christianity concerned. Ranke's views on this subject have already been discussed; his belief in the courtly nature of God in Tristan is shared by several critics. M. Bindschedler states:

> Solange Tristan und Isolde von sich aus bereit sind, alles zu tun, was ihre Liebe mit den Regeln der höfischen Ethik in Einklang bringen kann, versagt ihnen auch Gott die erbetene Hilfe nicht

und zeigt sich als ein höfischer Gott.[4]

One of Bindschedler's main arguments in support of this theory is based upon the oft-quoted passage in the ordeal scene:[5]

> da wart wol goffenbaeret
> und al der werlt bewaeret,
> daz der vil tugenthafte Krist
> wintschaffen alse ein ermel ist:
> er füeget unde suochet an,
> da man'z an in gesuochen kan,
> also gefüege und alse wol,
> als er von allem rehte sol.
> er'st allen herzen bereit,
> ze durnähte und ze trügeheit.
> ist ez ernest, ist ez spil,
> er ist ie, swie so man wil.
> (15737-15748)

These lines, however, might be interpreted not as an attack upon the Almighty but as an ironic and bitter comment upon the church's practice of trial by ordeal. It is noteworthy that such forms of jurisdiction were banned not long after the appearance of Gottfried's poem.

To view Gottfried's Deity as a courtly God is too facile an explanation of the discrepancies between Christian ethics and the heroes' behaviour. As stated earlier, the irrefutable evidence of Gottfried's Christian theological training and the wealth of mystical inference renders this theory unacceptable. Gottfried's knowledge is too profound for such a shallow conception.

In addition to the seeming discrepancy between Isolde's conduct at the ordeal and Christian ethics, there are two

other major manifestations of apparent discord between events in the poem and God's Will. Firstly, how can the lovers' continual adultery be reconciled with the assertion that this is pleasing to God? Secondly, how can the heroes' indulgence in unfettered natural love within the partially pagan surroundings of the Grotto be rendered compatible with the Christian Eucharistic and architectonic undertones which characterize this episode?

In attempting to solve the problem of the lovers' adultery the critic must never lose sight of the fact that Gottfried is composing not a philosophical treatise but a work of art, and that the nature of Tristan is conditioned by legend and source. It is nevertheless permissible to ask why the poet should choose to recount a legend in which adulterous behaviour plays so great a role.

Having concluded that God in Tristan is a debased courtly Deity, Weber proceeds to introduce his theory of the daemonic force of love:

> Darüber hinaus ist die Folgerung zwingend, daß eine antigöttliche transzendente Kraft in dem Gottfriedischen Ideenbereich vorhanden sein muß, die die christliche Gottesvorstellung zu überlagern und zuzudecken vermocht hat und auf weite Strecken hin den christlichen Gott zur seelenlosen Formel erstarren ließ. Welche nun ist diese Gegenkraft? Es ist das Gottfriedische Erlebnis des Dämonischen, dichterisch gestaltet zumal in Wesen und Funktion der gotinne Minne

> allumfassend wirksam indes in gesamten Bereich der Gottfriedischen Gestalten.[6]

According to Weber, Tristan and Isolde are victims of the daemonic force of sensual passion which characterizes their love:

> Die Minne ist in der Gestalt Tristans wie im Aufbau der Gesamtdichtung die letzte Aufgipfelung des Dämonischen, aber dieses Dämonische ist hier an sich nichts Neues. Der Dämoniebestimmtheit ihres Liebesgeschehens ist vielmehr Tristans (und Isoldes) Wesensart zutiefst kongenial.[7]

In Weber's interpretation, the adultery is thus the product of daemonic sensuality. Again, however, such a theory is contrary to the spirit of the prologue, in which Tristan and Isolde are set up as exemplary models capable of endowing honour and constancy upon the audience of noble hearts.[8]

While it is possible that Gottfried may have been a supporter of the Catharist movement, thereby rejecting the validity of Christian marriage in favour of a more natural condition,[9] it is unlikely that his work would have survived in so many manuscripts.[10] It is much more probable that in the Tristan legend Gottfried saw the opportunity for an attack not upon the essence of Christianity, but upon contemporary church dogma.

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[8] See ll. 218 - [240].

[9] Weber, ibid., II, 190-194.

[10] Closs, Tristan u. Isolt., intro. pp. xli-xlv.

Weber includes in his excursus on the problem of love a revealing account of the attitude of the medieval church to the homo carnalis and the homo spiritualis, stating:

> Sinnenhafte menschliche Liebe bleibt aus dem Bereich wahrer und werthafter Liebe voll und ganz ausgeschlossen.[11]

> Die für die Geistesgeschichte entscheidende Erkenntnis ist hier (wie sonst vielfältig) abzulesen: es besteht für das 12. Jahrhundert noch nirgends ein organischer innerer Zusammenhang zwischen Gnade und Natur. Die Natur ist immer noch nicht in ihrer Eigenberechtigung und ihrem Eigengewicht gewürdigt.[12]

The only time the natural sphere was acknowledged was when it could be related through allegory to the spiritual:

> Allegorese als charakteristische mystische Ausdrucksform für die Verhältnisbestimmung von Natur und Übernatur entwirklicht das Natürliche durch Umformung ins Übernatürliche.
>
> Was speziell den Bereich des sinnenhaften Eros anlangt, so wurde der unter dieser mystischen Perspektive gewichtig herausgestellt, aber zugleich in seinem Eigensein vernichtet. Irdische Liebe soll stehen gelassen werden, indes nur als Sinnbild einer geistigen.[13]

This desire for spiritualization with its corresponding denial of value in the natural extended as far as the state of marriage. Weber's research is again invaluable:

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[11] Weber, ibid., II, 132.

[12] Weber, ibid., II, 168.

[13] Weber, ibid., II, 168

> Für den Gesamttenor der frühmittelalterlichen Anschauungsweise ist nun folgende psychologische Alternative entscheidend: entweder erfolgt die Vereinigung der Ehegatten (una caro) der sinnenhaften Begehrlichkeit halber oder zum Zwecke der Kinderzeugung. Tertium non datur! Nur im zweiten Falle ist sie unbedingt zu billigen et sine omni culpa, im ersten Falle ist sie meist als levis culpa, im Falle großer Leidenschaftlichkeit als Todsünde zu werten...[14]

It is against such dogma that Gottfried protests in Tristan. He is suggesting in ll. 8016-8017 that a genuine relationship of the type enjoyed by Tristan and Isolde is closer to the spirit of Christianity than the state of matrimony in which the natural is rejected. He does not, however, in revolt against the trend towards spiritualization, resort to the other extreme and advocate the supremacy of natural instinct. The shortcomings of such a value-system are apparent in the marriage of Mark and Isolde, which is characterized by Mark's carnal lust for his queen. The partnership of Tristan and Isolde is clearly more Christian in essence, despite the divine sanctification of Mark's marriage.

The same argument may be applied to reconcile the heroes' natural behaviour in the pagan precincts of the Grotto with the Christian elements of the scene. The most striking juxtaposition of disparate motifs centres around the

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[14]Weber, ibid., II, 156.

analogy which Gottfried draws between the interior of the Grotto and the architecture of a church, with the mystical allusions mentioned in the first chapter. That the Grotto is the scene of the lovers' union and that this act occurs in what is, by association, a church does not necessarily imply the debasement of Christian ideals. Nor does the description of the lovers' form of sustenance within the Grotto negate the value of the obvious analogy, the sacrament of the Eucharist (ll. 16819-16839).

Gottfried's intent in juxtaposing what are normally considered mutually exclusive actions and concepts is to demonstrate that the sphere of the natural and physical may co-exist alongside that of the spiritual, each having its own positive value. In defiance of contemporary church doctrine, Gottfried recognizes eros in its own right, regarding it as complementary and not contrary to agape. In the words of Ingrid Hahn:

> Die neu empfundene, von Ovid inspirierte Sinnlichkeit der menschlichen Natur sollte als emanzipierter Wert dargestellt werden . . . [15]

Much of Ovid's work relating to the sensual experience of love had been condemned by ecclesiastical authorities

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[15] Hahn, 130. Hahn continues her argument and views the sensual as a vehicle of expression for the spiritual. This is probably to impose ideas of a later era upon Gottfried's work. It is a considerable step for the poet even to have emancipated the natural or sensual sphere!

because it contravened the contemporary emphasis upon the spiritual realm and did not lend itself to Christianization.[16] Thus the inclusion of the tales from Ovid which the lovers recount within the quasi-sanctum of the Grotto constitutes further veiled opposition to the dogma of the church.[17]

We find, therefore, a continuation of the polar thematic in the poem, which begins with the potential enmity of Tristan and Isolde that is then resolved to produce a harmonious unit, and includes the noble heart's philosophy of accepting both suffering and joy. The juxtaposition of opposites (oxymoron) has also been noted as one of the outstanding features of Gottfried's style.[18] According to the poet, the true Christian, regardless of ecclesiastical doctrine, must accept the existence of antithesis in the world, recognizing each of the opposed principles *per se*, be they the natural or the spiritual, suffering or joy, and not seek to emphasize but one half of the whole to the condemnation of the other. The noble heart who has adopted this code of reasoning, which is implicit in the term *moraliteit*, is therefore pleasing to the Almighty.

Having described a possible manner in which *moraliteit* is gratifying to God, attention must now be focused upon

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[16] See above, p. 41; cf. also Weber, *op.cit.*, II, 147, 194.

[17] See above, p. 14, n. 24.

[18] See above, p. 21 .

the problem of how its precepts are pleasing to the world. One must again regard Tristan and Isolde as the principal exponents of moraliteit and interpret "world" as society in general, not restricted to the community of the edele herzen. How then can one reconcile the lovers' conduct, their deceit and trickery, the attempted murder of Brangaene and their eventual banishment into the wilds with the world? It is possible to view the young Tristan as a welcome favourite of the populace,[19] but in the later stages of his development, particularly after union with Isolde, the hero and his partner would appear to be in perpetual conflict, or, at best, unstable equilibrium with society.

To find the answer to this problem the reader fortunately does not have to stray so far from the text as was necessary in the explanation of the "pleasing to God" motif. The solution lies in the excurses on love and sincerity (12187-12361), and surveillance and moderation (17774-18118).

First, however, a very brief examination of what is meant by triuwe is necessary. Hahn devotes a section of her book to this subject, concluding that the term has variable significance.[20] On the one hand, this quality bears the

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[19]Cf. Ranke, 191

[20]Hahn, 124 ff.

usual meaning of constancy in love, and is closely related, if not synonymous with staete (16404, 18307, 19264). On the other, triuwe (12324-12340, 16828-16839) represents the total, heartfelt communion, both physical and spiritual, of two lovers embracing the philosophy of the noble heart.

After successful completion of the wooing expedition, Tristan returns to Cornwall with Mark's bride. En route, the growing love between the hero and Isolde becomes apparent and reaches its natural climax. To obviate the need for a description of this consummation, Gottfried interrupts the narrative with his discourse on the nature of love. In the prologue, Gottfried had already alluded to the false values of contemporary society:

> Ir ist so vil, die des nu pflegent,
> daz si daz guote z' übele wegent,
> daz übel wider ze guote wegent:
> die pflegent niht, si widerpflegent.
> (29-32)[21]

Now, in the course of his excursus, the poet launches a searing attack on the distorted attitude which his society adopts towards love:

> swenn' ich bedenke sunder
> daz wunder und daz wunder,
> daz man an liebe funde,
> der ez gesuochen kunde;
> waz fröude an liebe laege,

---

[21]Cf. Weber, op.cit., II, 54.

der ir mit triuwen phlaege:
so wirt min herze sa zestunt
groezer danne setmunt;
und erbarmet mich diu minne
von allem minem sinne,
daz meistic alle, die der lebent
an minnen hangent unde klebent
und ir doch niemen rehte tuot.
wir wellen alle haben muot
und mit minnen umbe gan.
nein, minne ist niht also getan,
als wir s' ein ander machen
mit välschlichen sachen.
wir nemen der dinge unrehte war,
wir saejen bilsensamen dar
und wellen danne, daz uns der
liljen unde rosen ber.
entriuwen, des mac niht gewesen;
wir müezen daz her wider lesen,
daz da vor gewerket wirt,
und nemen, daz uns der same birt.
wir müezen sniden unde maen
daz selbe, daz wir dar gesaen.
wir buwen die minne
mit gegelletem sinne,
mit valsche und mit akust
und suochen danne an ir die lust
des libes unde des herzen:
(12213-12245)

Instead of joy, the seeds of perfidy which we sow bear only pain and evil:

sone birt si niuwan smerzen,
unguot und unfruht unde unart,
als ez am or gebuwen wart.
(12246-12248)

This pain gives rise to bitter sorrow for which we accuse love unjustly:

als ez uns danne riuwe birt
und innerhalp des herzen swirt
und toetet uns dar inne,
so zihen wir's die minne
unde schuldegen si dar an,
diu schulde nie dar an gewan.
(12249-12254)

As a result of initial maltreatment, and through no fault of her own, love becomes abused and debased. Shorn of all honour and dignity, she is offered for sale to the highest bidder:

> Ez ist vil war, daz man da saget:
> Minn' ist getriben unde gejaget
> in den endelosten ort.
> wir haben an ir niwan daz wort:
> uns ist niwan der name beliben
> und haben ouch den also zetriben,
> also verwortet unde vernamet,
> daz sich diu müede ir namen schamet
> und ir daz wort unmaeret;
> si swachet unde swaeret
> ir selber uf der erde;
> diu erelose unwerde,
> si slichet under husen biten
> und treit von lasterlichen siten
> gemanicvaltet einen sac,
> in dem si ir diube und ir bejac
> ir selbes munde verseit
> und ez ze straze veile treit.
> owe! den market schaffen wir:
> daz wunder triben wir mit ir
> und wellen des unschuldic sin.
> Minn', aller herzen künigin,
> diu frie, diu eine
> diu ist umb' kouf gemeine.
> (12283-12306)[22]

One of the principal manifestations of society's guileful and perfidious relationship with love (12241-12243)

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[22]Might not the distorted values of society, which cause love to walk the streets, also explain the controversial framework of deceit, cunning and lies which ensues from the lovers' enforced adultery, and which is apparently necessary if they are to maintain loyalty to their professed code of triuwe?

is encountered in the insidious practice of surveillance (huote):

> . . . . . .
> mir wisaget doch min muot,
> des ich im wol gelouben sol,
> den zwein gelieben waere wol
> und sanfte in ir muote,
> do si die leiden huote,
> die waren suht der minne,
> der Minnen viandinne
> von ir stigen haeten braht.
> (12196-12203)

Gottfried develops this theme at much greater length in his interpolation on moderation and honour. After their return to Tintagel from the Grotto, Tristan and Isolde are plagued by the spies of Mark's court. This vile watch imposed upon their privacy serves not to dampen their ardous but to heighten their longing for one another (17836-17861); when this desire is eventually gratified the result is total loss of honour. For such, according to Gottfried, is the effect of close-keeping:

> diz muoz man ouch an huote haben:
> diu huote fuoret unde birt,
> da man si fuorende wirt,
> niwan den hagen unde den dorn;
> daz ist der angende zorn,
> der lop und ere seret
> und manic wip enteret,
> diu vil gern' ere haete,
> ob man ir rehte taete.
> als man ir danne unrehte tuot,
> so swaret ir er' unde muot.
> sus verkeret si diu huote
> an eren unde an muote.
> (17862-17874)[23]

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[23]Cf. also ll. 17879-17899, 17921-17931.

It is Gottfried's conviction that Eve would never have eaten the apple[24] had it not been forbidden her; a veto merely enhances the object of prohibition in the eyes of the beholder:

> man tuot der manegez durch verbot,
> daz man ez gar verbaere,
> ob ez unverboten waere.
> der selbe distel unde der dorn,
> weiz got der ist in an geborn:
> die frouwen, die der arte sint,
> die sint ir muoter Even kint;
> diu brach daz erste verbot:
> ir erloubete unser herre got
> obez unde bluomen unde gras,
> swaz in dem paradise was,
> daz si da mite taete,
> swie so si willen haete,
> wan einez, daz er ir verbot
> an ir leben und an ir tot;
> die pfaffen sagent uns maere,
> daz ez diu vige waere:
> daz brach si und brach gotes gebot
> und verlos sich selben unde got.
> ez ist ouch noch min vester wan,
> Eve enhaete ez nie getan,
> und enwaere ez ir verboten nie.
> (17932-17953)

But quite apart from the evil which surveillance engenders, the practice itself is futile. Close-keeping is wasted on a woman for no man has the power to guard a vicious one:

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[24]Or fig? (17948). Cf. Bechstein, note to l. 17948; Closs, note to ll. 17947-48.

und doch swar man'z getribe,
huot' ist verlorn an wibe,
dar umbe daz dehein man
der übelen niht gehüeten kan.
(17875-17878)

A virtuous woman, on the other hand, does not need to be guarded:

der guoten darf man hüeten niht,
sie hüetet selbe, also man giht:
(17879-17880)

Gottfried also describes the manner in which such a woman retains her integrity. Only by commending herself to moderation can she uphold her honour and her reputation:

mit micheler arebeit
bevelhe unde laze
ir leben an die maze;
da besetze ir sinne mite,
da ziere mite lip unde site;
maze diu here
diu heret lip und ere.
ezn ist al der dinge dehein,
der ie diu sunne beschein,
so rehte saelic so daz wip,
diu ir leben unde ir lip
an die maze verlat,
sich selben rehte liebe hat;
(18012-18024)

In other words, a person should behave in accordance with his or her own judgement, accepting individual responsibility for all actions:

diu gerne da nach sinne,
daz si al diu werlde minne,
diu minne sich selben vor,
zeig' al der werlt ir minnen spor:
sint ez durnähte minnen trite,
al diu werlt diu minnet mite.
(18049-18054)

One must not rely upon imposed conventions to assume this responsibility; often, as in the case of surveillance, they lead not even to "instant" virtue but to vice. Even where sin is not the outcome, there is nothing commendable in submitting to enforced virtue.

Within society, however, there exists a paradox. Despite its characteristic of debasing and vilifying love by means of such perfidious conventions as surveillance, society is still capable of admiring those in great works of art whose actions are motivated by a sincere acceptance of individual responsibility. Society is warmed and pleased by the heartfelt, all-embracing, mutual attachment of Tristan and Isolde, yet lacks the very quality from which it all arises - triuwe:

> swaz iemen schoener maere hat
> von friuntlichen dingen,
> swaz wir mit rede vür bringen
> von den, die wilen waren
> vor manegen hundert jaren,
> daz tuot uns in dem herzen wol
> und sin der selben state so vol,
> daz lützel iemen waere
> getriuwe unde gewaere
> und wider den friunt an' akust,
> ern möhte sus getane lust
> von sin selbes sachen
> in sinem herzen machen,
> wan uns daz selbe z'aller zit
> mit jamer under füezen lit,
> da von ez allez uf erstat:
> deist triuwe, diu von herzen gat;
> diu treit sich uns vergebene an;
> so kere wir daz ouge dan
> und triben die süezen
> unruochlich under füezen;

wir haben si mit unwerde
vertreten in der erde;
ob wir si gerne suochten da,
wir enwizzen alles gahes wa.
so guot, so lonbaere
triuw' under friunden waere,
war umbe lieben wir si niht?
(12324-12351)

Theoretically, the behaviour of Tristan and Isolde is admired for its expression of total devotion. In this, the lovers, the exponents of the precepts of moraliteit, are pleasing to the world. But in practice, society lacks the triuwe to follow their example. Preoccupied with convention, by which public esteem is measured, society is, therefore, but a robber unto itself:

wan die sich helent under in,
sit daz si sich enbarent
und danne ir schame varent
und gestent sich an liebe,
die sint ir selber diebe.
so si sich danne ie mere helent,
so si ie mere in selben stelent
und mischent liep mit leide.
(12384-12391)

CHAPTER VI

ALLEVIATION AND HARMONY

As seen in the preceding chapter (p.97), art proposes an ideal, in this case triuwe. One might ask whether Gottfried is suggesting from the events of the narrative that to follow the ideal must lead to tragedy. The question, of course, remains insoluble since the poem is unfinished, but of one thing the reader may be certain: those, like Tristan and Isolde, who do adopt an exceptionally high-principled code immediately place themselves in a position of conflict with society. Whereas, in theory, the world admires the idealist, in practice it cannot, or will not tolerate the presence of such a deviant within its midst.

While agreeing that Tristan and Isolde differ from the social norm, Weber regards as the cause of this deviation not devotion to the principle of triuwe but subjection to overriding sensuality. Fundamental to this problem is the question whether or not Tristan and Isolde remain steadfast to the code of triuwe after their enforced separation. According to Weber, Gottfried's intention was to show the marriage of Tristan and Isolde Whitehands as the ultimate victory of the hero's carnal desire over his professed triuwe to Isolde the Fair:

> Die Funktion der Isolde-Weißhand-Gestalt in Gottfrieds Gesamtkonzeption ist diese: sie soll die inneren Folgen des Dämonischen in der Tristanminne offenbar machen, die zersetzenden Folgen der seelisch gegründeten, aber sinnlich gelenkten Liebe Tristans.[1]

In addition to the incompatibility of Weber's interpretation with the essence of the prologue, as mentioned in the last chapter, there is further objection to his theory. Just how far Tristan's love for Isolde the Fair has risen above the level of sensual lust becomes evident from a comparison with the Mark-Isolde relationship. No longer to be excused, as in Thomas' version, for having partaken of the love-potion, Mark is shown to be the progressively weaker victim of lascivious passion. As will be seen from the following quotations, Gottfried's criticism of Mark's behaviour is at times extremely harsh.

Having sacrificed her maidenhood for the sake of her mistress, Brangaene slips out of Mark's chamber to be replaced by Isolde. Gottfried cleverly contrasts the grief-stricken state of the Queen with Mark's preoccupation with physical satisfaction, which renders him oblivious to the deception:

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[1] Weber, "Tristan" u. d. Krise d. hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes, I, 192. If Gottfried were to have followed Thomas' model, then it would be difficult to reconcile Weber's interpretation with the knowledge that the marriage of Tristan to Isolde Whitehands is never consummated.

Nu si dem site gegiengen mite,
beidiu getrunken nach dem site,
diu junge künigin Isot
diu leite sich mit maneger not,
mit tougenlichem smerzen
ir muotes unde ir herzen
zuo dem künege ir herren nider.
der greif an sine fröude wider:
er twanc si nahe an sinen lip.
in duhte wip alse wip;
er vant ouch die vil schiere
von guoter maniere.
ime was ein als ander,
an ietwederre vander
golt unde messinc.
ouch leisten si'm ir tagedinc
also dan und also dar,
daz er nie nihtes wart gewar.
(12661-12678)

It is Mark's sensual obsession which later causes him to suffer ignominy, and which elicits the following bitter comment from Gottfried:

er sach ez doch mit ougen an
und weste es ungesehen genuoc,
daz si im deheine liebe truoc
und was si'm doch liep über daz.
war umbe, herre, und umbe waz
truog er ir inneclichen muot?
dar umbe ez hiute maneger tuot:
geluste unde gelange
der lidet vil ange,
daz ime ze lidenne geschiht.
(17764-17773)[2]

It would surely be illogical to view Gottfried's model hero and heroine as victims of the same vice. In doing so, Weber is ignoring the poet's desire for dramatic contrast;

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[2]Cf. also ll. 12511-12516, 17591-17596.

he has also failed to take into account the changes which Gottfried has wrought in his source material. A glance at Thomas' Tristan suffices to show the type of hero-figure which Gottfried was anxious to avoid. In the final fragment of the Roman de Tristan we obtain a well-defined picture of Thomas' hero. We see him as a man bent on pleasure, unwilling to accept the suffering inherent in love:

> Que valt tant lunges demurer
> E sun bien tuit diz consirer?
> Que valt l'amur a maintenir
> Dunt nul bien ne put avenir?
> Tantes paines, tantes dolurs
> Ai jo sufert pur ses amurs
> Que retraire m'en puis bien:
> Maintenir la ne me valt rien.[3]

Tristan's feeling for Ysolt as Blanches Mains is dominated by the desire for physical satisfaction:

> Simple est s'ele ne l'aparceit
> Qu'altre aim plus e coveit
> E que milz volsisse culchier
> U plus me puisse delitier.
> (511-514)

> E volt sun buen, sun desir het;
> Car s'il nen oüst si grant desir,
> A son voleir poüst asentir;
> (610-612)

He also translates her love into his own terms:

> Quant de mei n'avra sun delit,
> Jo crei qu'ele m'amera petit:
> (515-516)

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[3]Ed. Wind, ll. 39-46; all references in this chapter are taken from fragment Sneyd[1].

Ore me harra par l'astenir
Pur co qu'ele n'at sun desir,
Car co est que plus alie
En amor amant e amie;
(537-540)[4]

There could be no greater contrast than that between Thomas' lovers and those of Gottfried's poem. It would be wrong, however, to view the love between Tristan and Isolde in Gottfried's poem as a totally spiritual phenomenon. Obviously it is not, for otherwise the figure of Isolde Whitehands would present no temptation to Tristan.

As discovered in the discussion of the previous chapter on moraliteit and its ability to please God, love for Gottfried consists of both sensual and spiritual elements. The lack of the one diminishes the potency of the other, and so in the episodes concerning Isolde Whitehands, Tristan's triuwe is weakened by the enforced absence of physical contact with Isolde the Fair. Weakened, yet not destroyed, for had Gottfried followed Thomas' model - as we ought best to assume since there is insufficient evidence to the contrary - then Tristan's triuwe would remain sufficiently powerful to ensure that he denies himself satisfaction with Isolde Whitehands.

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[4]Cf. also Wind, 186-190, 207 f., 219 f., 555-564, 579 f.

As stated earlier it is the purity of the lovers' triuwe ("ir triuwen reinekeit," l. 231) which, although admired, meets with opposition from society (ll. 12340-12351). Within the narrative of the poem the conflict manifests itself in the invention of ruses and traps in which both sides are engaged, the banishment of the lovers from Mark's court and their eventual enforced separation. Despite these sources of anguish, however, the lovers' reaction is not to reject society and resort to the life of hermits. Indeed, they show considerable regard for their position within society and the esteem in which they are held. After minne, concern for ere constitutes the main driving force in the lives of Tristan and Isolde, and much of their time is spent in the attempt to reconcile these two elements, which, within the terms of Gottfried's poem, are disparate. The reader is reminded of Tristan's dilemma on the second return voyage from Ireland (ll. 11745-11776, 12511-12530), and the lovers' blissful state in the Grotto which is marred only by their care for honour (16879-16881).[5]

When, as a result of their perpetual conflict with society, their honour is compromised, the lovers accept the ensuing sorrow in accordance with the code of the edelez herze.

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[5]Cf. Weber, I, 205-216; Mergell, 139 f.

It is at this juncture that artistic pursuits afford them a source of partial solace in their suffering (71-100), at the same time increasing their ardour (101-118) and fortifying their triuwe (174-186).[6] In its various forms, art is their refuge and consolation.

One must now turn to the interesting association which has been observed between certain medieval theories of music and Gottfried's use of the term moraliteit.[7] The question arising from this connection is whether art not only provides alleviation of hardship, but also fosters and nourishes the very attitude which accepts the existence of suffering, thereby striking to the very core of the noble heart's philosophy.

As established in this study, the term moraliteit refers to an attitude of mind which reacts positively to the extremes of antithesis in the world. Gottfried introduces this concept amid a description of Tristan's musical education of Isolde: ll. 7966-8005 depict Isolde's musical ability; ll. 8006-8030 constitute the moraliteit interpolation; ll. 8040-8135 refer to the heroines accomplishment, heightened under Tristan's supervision. At the end of chapter IV,

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[6]See chapter III.

[7]Jackson, "Tristan the Artist."

with reference to Jackson's article, it was stated that in all probability Isolde's musical education concerned itself with a study of the theory of this art-form. If there is a connection between Gottfried's moraliteit and Isolde's musical instruction, then it is to the theory of music that we must direct our attention.

The similarity between the soothing effect ascribed to music by Aribo and Gottfried's concept of solace through art has already been discussed.[8] More important at this point are the general deductions which Jackson draws from his study of musical theory in the Middle Ages.[9] He first determines that Manlius Boethius' De institutione musica formed the basis for all studies of musical theory in the Middle Ages. Boethius expressed the belief that music was the queen of the arts, hearing the highest of the senses. Music reflected the eternal harmony of Heaven and Earth, and was capable of evoking a similar consonantia within the microcosm of the listener's soul.

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[8]See above, p. 48. Cf. also Jackson's quotation from Boethius on p. 370:

> Musica vero non modo speculationi verum etiam moralitati coniuncta est. Nihil enim tam proprium humanitati quam remitti dulcibus modis astringique contrariis.

[9]Jackson, 368 ff.

This state of inner harmony is fundamental to Gottfried's concept of moraliteit, with its doctrine of acceptance of opposites. For what is the function of moraliteit if not an attempt to place man in a positive concordant relationship with the contrary phenomena of his experience? Musical theory and the concept of moraliteit thus share a common characteristic. Their ideal, consonantia or the attitude of acceptance,[10] is both nourished and sustained by occupation with art.

One is immediately reminded of the closing lines of the prologue and of the activity and sustenance of the lovers in the Grotto. On the first of these occasions, Gottfried states:

> wan swa man noch gehoeret lesen
> ir triuwe, ir triuwen reinekeit,
> ir herzeliep, ir herzeleit,
>
> Deist aller edelen herzen brot.
> hie mite so lebet ir beider tot.
> wir lesen ir leben, wir lesen ir tot:
> und ist uns daz süez' alse brot.
>
> Ir leben, ir tot sint unser brot
> sus lebet ir leben, sus lebet ir tot.
> sus lebent sie noch uns sint doch tot,
> und ist ir tot der lebenden brot.
> (230-[240])

Although much controversy has raged around the possible Eucharistic implications of these lines, the re-

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[10]This philosophy (moraliteit) is, of course, vital to the survival of the edelez herze (8018-8021)

petition of the word lesen in ll. 230, 235 has passed almost unnoticed.[11] While vague, this term certainly has artistic associations,[12] and one of the inferences to be drawn from the passage is that art (the story of Tristan and Isolde) provides sustenance (brot) for the edelez herze. The dichotomy of their life and their death (235-[240]), with which Tristan toys so lightly (12498-12506), is the artistic model which encourages the noble heart of reality to regard positively these and other poles of antithesis within the universe.

In the description of the Grotto scene, Gottfried assures us that Tristan and Isolde feed on nothing but love and desire (16811-16839). This love finds its expression in their tender gaze - "si sahen beide ein ander an/da generten si sich van" (16819-16820). As mentioned above, the harmony between the two lovers is also subtlely expressed in their alternate harping and singing (17204-17228).[13] As an expression of love within the context of the Grotto, therefore,

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[11] de Boor, "Der strophische Prolog zum Tristan Gottfrieds von Straßburg," in Kleine Schriften, vol. I (Berlin, 1964); in this paper, p. 182, de Boor notes the use of lesen in ll. 131-134, 147, 152, 165, 167, 172, but fails to mention its use in ll. 230, 235.

[12] Compare the contexts of ll. 2063, 2083, 8059, 8145.

[13] See p. 56.

music might be regarded as a form of sustenance. In the prologue, the poet intimates that the tales from classical mythology which the heroes recount (17186-17203) serve to increase their ardour.[14] Since in love Tristan and Isolde accept the antithesis of suffering and joy, it follows, therefore, that these stories, like music, are instrumental in sustaining the specific philosophy of the edelez herze.

Art, therefore, is of fundamental importance to the concept of the edelez herze. Having obeyed the precepts of moraliteit and adopted the high-principled deviant code of triuwe, the members of Gottfried's élite find in art partial alleviation from the suffering which results from the conflict with a society that admires such values but does not tolerate them. Yet art offers not only solace. In the last analysis it can both nourish the noble heart's philosophy regarding the acceptance of antithesis, and sustain the ensuing state of inner harmony.

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[14] See above, p. 55.

CONCLUSION

At first sight, Gottfried's Tristan might appear to be just another redaction of a very popular legend. After careful scrutiny, however, it becomes evident that both the form and content of this poem are the product of a milieu and value-system alien to that of contemporary writers. His sphere of interest varies considerably from that of the traditional knightly, or courtly poet. While deeply concerned with the problems that beset his age, often proposing his own rather unorthodox solutions, Gottfried was of the conviction that these matters should be expressed in a manner guaranteed to bring aesthetic delight to the sympathetic audience. Effect, and the power to evoke emotion were all important, but by no means to the exclusion of certain functional ideals which he attributed to art. These were of significance not only to the characters and events within the fictitious narrative of the poem but also to the world of reality.

The first principle discussed in this paper was Gottfried's belief in the didactic efficacy of art. A tale well told of loyalty and honour has the capacity to promote such virtues within the audience. Although not explicitly stated, the hope doubtless existed in Gottfried's mind that his poem might foster realisation of the ideals

which it expresses.

The second major role which art could perform lay in its ability to afford partial alleviation from the suffering concomitant with the philosophy of the edelez herze. In society, Gottfried believed, there existed a paradox. Although theoretically in favour of those who acted according to the code of triuwe, society was severely lacking in the very same quality, which made such behaviour possible. Consequently, in practice, it could not tolerate the presence within its midst of those individuals in possession of this virtue. The result, for Tristan and Isolde, was perpetual conflict with those around them.

An essential component of the philosophy of the noble heart was the belief in the positive value inherent in the natural-physical element of love. For the noble heart, eros was complementary to agape. Not so, however, for the Church. Ecclesiastical dogma was adamant in its denial of the flesh. Since social ethics evolved largely under the controlling influence of the accepted doctrine of the Church, the noble heart who maintained a positive regard for eros was again at odds with society. Nor could the edelez herze turn his back on the suffering which ensued from this conflict, for this would constitute a violation of his ideals. The outlook, however, was not totally devoid of comfort. It was Gottfried's firm belief

that art possessed the power to alleviate such suffering, at least in part. So that when Isolde breaks off the bell around Petitcriu's neck it is to abandon herself completely to her woes, denying herself the last solace of its music:

> owe, owe! und fröuwe ich mich,
> wie tuon ich ungetriuwe so?
> war umbe wirde ich iemer fro
> deheine stunde und keine frist,
> die wile er durch mich truric ist,
> der sine fröude und sin leben
> durch mich ze triure hat gegeben?
> wes mag ich mich gefröun an' in,
> des triure unde des fröude ich bin?
> war umbe erlache ich iemer,
> sit daz sin herze niemer
> dehein gemach gehaben kan,
> min herze daz ensi dar an?
> ern hat niht lebendes niuwan min:
> solt' ich an' in nu lebende sin
> fro unde fröudebaere
> und daz er truric waere?
> nune welle got der guote,
> daz ich in minem muote
> iemer fröude an' in gehabe!
> hie mite brach si die schellen abe
> und lie die ketenen dar an.
> hie verlos ouch diu schelle van
> al ir reht und al ir kraft:
> sine was nie mere luthaft
> reht' in ir tugenden als e.
> man seite, daz si niemer me
> erlaschte noch zestorte,
> swie vil man si gehorte,
> deheines herzen swaere.
> daz was Isote unmaere,
> sine wolte doch niht fro sin:
> diu getriuwe staete senedaerin,
> diu haete ir fröude unde ir leben
> sene unde Tristande ergeben.
> (16372-16406)

It has also been seen that study of art is a fundamental element in the education of Tristan and Isolde, a

pursuit not without certain ambivalent properties. While a noble disposition or noble birth is a pre-requisite of the edelez herze, an education of the type enjoyed by the heroes is of paramount importance in conducing the adoption of the value-system professed by Gottfried's select community. The basis of this philosophy is to be found in the precepts of moraliteit, namely the total acceptance of the extremes of antithesis within the universe. Since education promotes this ideal, and since art plays such an important role in the education of the noble heart, it follows, therefore, that art is instrumental in encouraging the basic attitude of acceptance. This same conclusion was reached in chapter VI by means of the association of musical theory and moraliteit. In both instances, art nourishes and sustains the philosophy of the edelez herze.

Considerations of an artistic nature in Tristan thus play a far more important role than might initially be supposed. The various functions attributed to literature and music concern the very core of the noble heart's existence. By applying the principles expounded by Gottfried regarding the purpose of art to the events and descriptions within the poem, we can comprehend more fully his intentions in composing a work so full of paradox and seemingly irreconcilable antitheses.

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Abbreviations

DVLG	Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift für Literatur-wissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte.
Euph.	Euphorion.
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.
WW	Wirkendes Wort.
ZfdA	Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur.

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