

MONOLOGUE IN THE TRISTAN OF THOMAS

BY

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- C.: Cambridge Manuscript
- D.: Douce Manuscript
- Sn.1: First Sneyd Fragment
- Sn.2: Second Sneyd Fragment
- T.1: First Turin Fragment
- T.2: Second Turin Fragment
- Str.1: First Strasbourg Fragment
- Str.2: Second Strasbourg Fragment
- Str.3: Third Strasbourg Fragment

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Since interiorization is the direction of the Roman de Tristan by Thomas and the interior monologue is the medium of this interiorization, the monologues deserve to be investigated. In this dissertation, I attempt an approach to this work through the study of monologue.

The first part is intended as background. After a brief definition of monologue, I look at the interior monologue in such classical authors as Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, Virgil, and Ovid, before turning to twelfth-century literature. I also briefly discuss how the use of monologue in twelfth-century literature reflected the subjectivity and interiorization seen in courtly poetry and how it parallels both the movement toward self-examination encouraged by such religious figures as Bernard de Clairvaux and the analysis of love by the so-called "courts of love."

Then, I look at the individual monologues in the Tristan of Thomas. The first two by Tristan are complementary and need to be considered each in the light of the other. The first is an elaborate pose which responds to his self-fabricated dilemma by rationalizing his desire to seek pleasure with another as an act of remembrance and love for Iseut. In the second, the facade falls as he realizes his folly. The other three monologues are more emotional and pathetic, centering on the lovers' deaths. None of the monologues is a gratuitous rhetorical exercise; each is a successful attempt to convey the states of mind of Tristan and Iseut--the focal points of Thomas' tale.

In the third part, I study other elements of narrative. Dialogue most effectively conveys forces at work against the lovers and thus acts as a foil for monologue because it brings about their isolation. There is little visual description in the poem. Thomas does not dilute the intensity of Tristan and Iseut's feelings by cluttering his work with long, ornamental descriptions common to other poems of the period. I determine that Thomas, by his interventions, incites his public's involvement in the poem; his critical comments and his epilogue direct us to a fuller sharing in the experiences of Tristan and Iseut. Analysis is not pronounced to the degree that is often claimed; it relies on the monologues and acts as a guide only in situations where we cannot expect the characters to be fully aware of all the implications of their thoughts and feelings. Thomas is not

concerned with the récit; the tale is familiar to his audience, so he is able to emphasize, instead, interior activity. Thus, other elements of narrative accommodate the drive to unlock the interior world through monologue.

INTRODUCTION

The Roman de Tristan by the Anglo-Norman poet Thomas enjoyed immense popularity during the Middle Ages, as is witnessed by those works which claim or manifest its direct influence--the late twelfth-century Folie Tristan d'Oxford which is also contained in the Douce manuscript and immediately follows the Tristan of Thomas; the thirteenth-century Norwegian Saga by Brother Robert; the Tristan und Isolde of Gottfried von Strassburg which has, we are forced to admit, eclipsed the fame of its immediate source; the English Sir Tristrem; a portion of the Italian Tavola ritonda. Unfortunately, Thomas' status today is not what it was then. That is not to say, however, that he has been discarded by modern critics. A brief look at the Tristan scholarship of this century will reveal the roles assigned to the text of Thomas. It is my opinion that the work of Thomas deserves more attention and that he should be elevated from his present rank. Undoubtedly one impediment to his widespread appreciation is the condition of his tale. In dealing with the text of Thomas, the critic must work with mere fragments. Immediately a clue to a certain reluctance on the part of the critics to work with Thomas becomes apparent. Nevertheless, the fragments

yield a substantial 3,169 lines. Eight fragments are available from five manuscripts--Cambridge (C.), Douce (D.), Sneyd (Sn.1 and Sn.2), Turin (T.1 and T.2), and Strasbourg (Str.1, Str.2, and Str.3). The Turin manuscript is presently lost or inexistent and that of Strasbourg was claimed by fire in 1870.

It would be helpful to survey briefly critical approaches and attitudes toward the Tristan of Thomas. Much study has been devoted to the origin-research. Rosemary Picozzi discerns several basic periods in the history of this branch of Tristan scholarship.¹ The first period comprises the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries in which identification of the geographical sources of romances was the aim of scholars; in general, the Tristan tale was known only indirectly. During the Romantic era when scholars were armed with first-hand familiarity, true Tristan scholarship emerged and began to take several directions. Some critics were concerned with establishing an historical basis for the tale. Others, who dominated the critical scene through the first part of the nineteenth century, treated the story in light of ancient mythologies. Both parties then generally accepted French as the original written language of the tale, although

¹A History of Tristan Scholarship (Bern and Frankfurt: Herbert Lang and Co., 1971), pp. 11-59.

this belief was to provide controversy later. The Romantics were interested in "the poetic and philological renewal of medieval literature rather than in a discussion of its prehistory," while their successors accorded "overweening importance to the historical development of the material."² This new emphasis on source studies engendered often heated debates regarding the first introduction of the love motif. It was in the early twentieth century that reconstructions of the original--supposedly oral--legend and first romance were begun. It was then postulated that rather than being an example of the Liedertheorie of earlier Tristan scholars, the original romance was the literary work of a single poet, sometime between 1066 and the end of the twelfth century and was the common source for most, possibly all, of the versions we know. Following this period of origin-research came a period of interpretation in terms of Zeitgeist. Emphasis on the tale's development outweighed the question of its origin in the minds of these scholars. Two studies of our time return to the question of origins. James Carney (Studies in Irish Literature and History, Dublin: Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, 1955) and Sigmund Eisner (The Tristan Legend: A Study in Sources, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1969) both postulate the existence of a written North British poem prior to 800 A.D.³

²Ibid., pp. 57-58.

³Ibid., pp. 11-59. Chapter One is more general in scope

The nineteenth century produced some important studies bearing directly upon Thomas. Between 1835 and 1839, Francisque Michel published the three volume Tristan; recueil de ce qui reste des poèmes relatifs à ses aventures (London: William Pickering), making available the different versions of the tale to a public which knew the tale for the most part indirectly, if at all. Almost a half-century later, Wilhelm Röttiger published Der Tristan des Thomas; ein Beitrag zur Kritik und Sprache desselben (Göttingen: W. Fr. Kaestner, 1883) which is primarily a source study. Francisco Novati added to the storehouse of Tristan knowledge with his study entitled "Un nuovo ed un vecchio frammento del Tristan di Tommaso" which appeared in Studi di filologia romanza, 2 (1887), 369-515. The fragments are those of the manuscript of Turin and they appear along with Novati's critical commentary.

The monumental Tristan study is that of Joseph Bédier. In 1902, Bédier published Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas (Paris: Firmin-Didot, SATF), this first volume being an edition of the extant fragments complemented by a reconstruction of lost parts based upon textual comparisons of Thomas' remanieurs. In the fifth chapter of his second volume (Paris: Firmin-Didot, SATF, 1905), Bédier exposes his

while Chapters Two, Three and Four are directed particularly to Gottfried scholarship. Chapter One (pp. 11-59) details critical thought regarding the Tristan legend since the late seventeenth century. Picozzi herself is interested in the genesis of the romance, with particular emphasis on Gottfried.

belief in an archetypal poem whose beauty and excellence the later poems failed to match. The composer of the archetypal poem was a true creator--working with the Celtic legend, he imposed on it the moral code which created the conflict between the adulterous love and the law. In the seventh chapter of the same volume, Bédier proposes this archetype episode by episode, using as his sources the versions of Bérroul, Thomas, Eilhart, the early thirteenth-century roman en prose, and the Folie Tristan de Berne.

At the same time that Bédier was preparing his reconstruction, another Tristan scholar, Wolfgang Golther, was busy, independently, at the same project (published later in 1907 in Leipzig by S. Hirscl, entitled Tristan und Isolde in der französischen und deutschen Dichtung des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit). Following their studies, criticism then focused upon a common literary source. Gertrude Schoepperle criticized the methods used by Bédier and reconstructed her "estoire" from Eilhart's version (Tristan and Isolt; A Study of the Sources, 2 vols., Frankfurt: Baer, 1913; 2nd ed. New York: Burt Franklin, 1963). Friedrich Ranke intended to reproduce the story in its various phases and forms (Tristan und Isold, Munich: Bruckmann, 1925), showing the reflections of the "changing spiritual climate."⁴

⁴Ibid., p. 51.

Much study of Thomas has been comparative in nature. The comparisons have involved Thomas and Bérout, Thomas and Gottfried, as well as Chrétien de Troyes. One very early (in this century) study is that of F. Piquet, L'Originalité de Gottfried de Strasbourg dans son poème de Tristan et Isolde (Travaux et Mémoires de l'Université de Lille, Fascicule 5, Lille, 1905). (Piquet was to be one of many who show the excellence of Gottfried's poem at the expense of Thomas.) Later, in 1935, Aaltje Dijksterhuis compared the two poets in Thomas und Gottfried: Ihre konstruktiven Sprachformen (Munich: Max Hueber) and was followed by S. Singer in 1947 ("Thomas von Britannien und Gottfried von Strassburg," in Festschrift Edouard Tièche, Bern: 1947, pp. 87-101).

Because of the five Thomases of the twelfth century,⁵ another critical issue concerns the identity of our poet Thomas. Francisque Michel first posed the possibility of the same author for the Tristan and the Roman de Horn et Rimel since both indicate a Thomas as author. W. Söderhjelm's article, "Sur l'identité du Thomas auteur de Tristan et du Thomas auteur de Horn," Romania, 15 (1886), 575-96, was an attempt to disprove Michel's suggestion. F. Lot picked up the thread of arguments in his article, "Sur les deux Thomas, poètes anglo-normands du XII^e siècle,"

⁵See Bartina H. Wind, "Nos incertitudes au sujet du Tristan de Thomas," in Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier (Geneva: Droz, 1970), II, 1129-38.

Romania, 53 (1927), 177-86. He studies the similarities and questions why should there be two Thomases when under parallel conditions elsewhere we do not have two Bérouls, two Chrétiens or two Gottfrieds According to the most recent editor of Thomas, Bartina H. Wind, the Thomas of Horn is not the poet of Tristan, and Wind also explains away other Thomases in question, asserting, too, that contemporary Tristan specialists accept the name "Thomas, l'Anglais" as the distinctive title of the Tristan poet.⁶

The question of the relationship of Thomas' Tristan and Chrétien de Troyes' Cligès has occupied many a scholar, for example Ernest Hoepffner, "Chrétien de Troyes et Thomas d'Angleterre," Romania, 55 (1929), 1-16 and Alexandre Micha, "Tristan et Cligès," Neophilologus, 36 (1952), 1-10. Margaret Pelan undertook a study entitled L'Influence du Brut de Wace sur les romanciers français de son temps (Paris: Droz, 1931; pages 71-97 bear upon Thomas).

Béroul and Thomas comparisons go without saying. But some of the better ones are those of Pierre Le Gentil, "La Légende de Tristan vue par Béroul et Thomas; essai d'interprétation," Romance Philology, 7 (1953-54), 111-29, and Jean Frappier, "Structure et sens du Tristan: version commune, version courtoise," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale, 6 (1963), 255-80 and 441-54. The most important and somewhat controversial book to be published treating both

⁶Ibid.

Béroul and Thomas as well as the two Folies is Pierre Jonin's Les Personnages féminins dans les romans français de Tristan au XII^e siècle (Gap: Publications des Annales de la Faculté des Lettres d'Aix-en-Provence, nouvelle série, no. 22, 1958). Jonin's purpose is to demonstrate the originality of the French text vis-à-vis Eilhart, author of the oldest German version, and to distinguish, then, the influence of history, contemporary literature, and the religious climate in the French versions--through the female characters. He questions the traditional labels--Thomas, "courtly" and Béroul, "common." Others have been piqued by his intriguing assertions, so that a recent trend has been towards the determination of a courtly or non-courtly character of Thomas (and Béroul). One of the most provocative of these studies has been Eva Rozgonyi's "Pour une approche d'un Tristan non-courtois" in the Mélanges offerts à René Crozet edited by Pierre Gallais and Yves-Jean Riou (Poitiers: Société d'Etudes Médiévales, 1966, II, 821-28).

Thus, there has been no dearth of criticism on the Tristan of Thomas. Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso, in her research entitled "La retorica nel Tristano di Thomas" in Studi mediolatini e volgari, 6-7 (1959), 25-61, points out that study contributing to the individualization of the particular poets and their works has been minimal (p. 26). It is her purpose to analyze rhetoric in Thomas. She dissects the fragments to list and categorize their use of

rhetoric. Occasionally she elaborates on the purposes of a specific rhetorical figure in a specific line, but this is not necessarily essential to her plan of showing the scholastic influence in the Tristan of Thomas.

In his first volume of Le Courant réaliste dans le roman courtois en France au Moyen Age (Paris: Nizet, 1960), Anthime Fourrier devotes Chapter One (pp. 19-109) to "Le Tristan de Thomas d'Angleterre." Fourrier's accent is primarily upon the historical realities reflected in the work.

Omer Jodogne focuses on Thomas' treatment of the love of the hero and heroine in his excellent study, "Comment Thomas d'Angleterre a compris l'amour de Tristan et Iseut," Lettres Romanes, 19 (1965), 103-19.

Tristan research continues as strong as ever, if not stronger. But Pizzorusso's statement is still justified--the poets and their works need to be considered individually. Two fine Tristan studies have appeared recently that depart from the traditional moulds of origin-source study and comparisons. Alberto Varvaro's Il "Roman de Tristran" di Bérout was first published in 1963 (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus), but has now been made available to a larger public by the translation of John C. Barnes, Beroul's Romance of Tristran (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press; 1972). In the Postscript, dated 1971, Varvaro responds to a criticism of Frappier that he has bound himself too tightly to the examination of Bérout without considering the parallel version, by saying:

I am willing to admit that today I would make wider use of Eilhart and also of the other texts of the legend, though still seeking to preserve a clear distinction between the examination of Beroul and the examination of the tradition of which he is a part. The correct identification of the message certainly involves fitting it into its context and, just as I sought to take the social, emotional and literary context into account, it is necessary to give due weight to the more immediate context, which is precisely the tradition of the Tristram poems. (p. 198)

Varvaro, burdened with the problem of authorship, began with the premise that his text is a unitary work and then proceeded to analyze that text. Despite his admission that his approach today would be broader, Varvaro's book is also important for those limitations. He focuses attention on the individual text, encouraging appreciation of B eroul's work on its own merit.

W. H. T. Jackson's investigation of Gottfried's poem was published in 1971 bearing the title The Anatomy of Love; The Tristan of Gottfried von Strassburg (New York and London: Columbia Univ. Press). In his preface, Jackson states:

This study of Gottfried von Strassburg's poem differs in many respects from its predecessors. I have paid little attention to many topics which have been regarded as staples of Tristan scholarship. Some, like religion, mysticism, sources, and the origins of the Tristan legend, have already been dealt with in far more detail and with more learning than I could ever hope to attain. . . .

I have tried to show, by a careful reading of the text, that Gottfried's Tristan is a unique attempt to portray the overwhelming power of love and the essential incompatibility between it and the society in which Gottfried's contemporaries lived. The poet struggled with the problem of the correct vehicle to use to express his thoughts on the subject and

decided to use the romance in spite of his opinion that its conventions committed it to a view of love and a solution of the conflict between love and society which were far different from his own. Thus the work is at once a positive statement of Gottfried's views and a study in the stylistic methods used to convey them and a negative reaction to the "game-rules" of the romance as developed by Chrétien de Troyes and brought into German by Heinrich von Veldeke and Hartmann von Aue. (p. vii)

Jackson's attempt is highly successful and the reader gains a deeper understanding of Gottfried because he is not hampered by a minute point by point collation but can direct his energies so fully to the German poet.

Scholars have been cautious, somewhat understandably, to attempt such an enterprise as Varvaro's and Jackson's with the work of Thomas because of its condition. Jodogne, faced with the problem, stated:

Lorsqu'on n'a que des fragments conservés par hasard et peut-être la forme la moins bonne de la rédaction primitive, il serait injuste de juger un écrivain. On peut faire des remarques objectives sans doute, mais leur pertinence ne peut valoir pour qualifier une oeuvre puisque ce que nous considérerions comme des dominantes dans les 3139 vers conservés, ne sont peut-être que des détails dans un ensemble qui a dû s'étendre sur vingt mille.

These remarks are certainly legitimate. Nevertheless, critics should not discard or bypass the work of Thomas that does remain, for their criticism can, at the least, proceed at the descriptive level, and such an approach is better than none for a work that was admittedly one of the Middle Ages' most admired.

⁷"Comment Thomas d'Angleterre a compris l'amour de Tristan et Iseut," 104.

For this study, I have centered my attention on the edition of Thomas by Bartina H. Wind, Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan (Geneva: Droz, 1960, TLF). Since my interest concerns the language as well as the content of the monologues, it seems best to work with those which have survived from the Middle Ages, rather than later "reproductions."

Furthermore, since in my study I shall attempt to demonstrate Thomas' lack of concern for the récit which results in emphasis on monologue, I feel justified in focusing on the particular scenes which remain to us. The importance of Thomas' rendition of the Tristan tale, I will try to show, is not in adventure, but in the effect of actions upon the hero and heroine. Those actions taking effect upon the character are present in the monologue as the character contemplates; thus, even though the sequence of events may not be entirely at the reader's disposal by text, the events are nevertheless made available to him.

I approach the study of monologue in Thomas' Tristan from two angles in this paper. After a brief definition of monologue and survey of its use and development from classical times to Thomas' contemporary, Chrétien de Troyes, I study each of the interior monologues in Thomas individually to determine in what manner and with what artistry Thomas handles stresses on the hero and heroine. Then, I contrast the use of interior monologue with dialogue, description and other elements of the narrative in order to show the importance of monologue within Thomas' narrative framework.

The monologues have of course been the object of pointed criticism, as will be seen. But it is my opinion that their true importance has been underrated or glossed over, never fully developed. Since interiorization is recognizably the direction of the Tristan of Thomas and since the most important vehicle of the process of interiorization is the interior monologue, certainly this is a fertile area of investigation.

A word must be said concerning some procedures employed throughout this study. First, the spellings of the characters' names in the Tristan of Thomas--the most common modern spellings have been used, that is, Tristan, Iseut, Marc, Brangien, Kaherdin, Iseut aux Blanches Mains, Tristan le Nain, Cariado. In passages cited, of course, the names will appear in their various forms. Secondly, modern foreign or Latin words which have not been commonly assimilated into English are underlined; when a word is discussed in relation to a particular passage of a text, the Old French spelling occurring in that particular passage is kept and the word appears in quotation marks. (Where the Old French spelling coincides with the modern, the word is still in quotation marks when its reference is a particular line or passage in Thomas.)

I do not treat the question of the date of composition of Thomas' Tristan in this study. However, in my opinion, Rita Lejeune offers the most solid reasoning for her suggested dates of 1154-58: the influence of Brut, the

unfamiliarity with Arthur other than as indicated in Wace; the archaic nature of the language; the fact that Thomas poses as one of the first if not the first to treat such a vast matière in a roman, the predominance of masculine rhyme and the lack of familiarity with the brisure de couplet found in Chrétien.⁸ Whether or not another accepts Lejeune's more specific dates, scholars in general limit the possible period of composition to 1155-1210: the terminus post quem is based upon the borrowings from Wace, the terminus ante quem is based upon Gottfried's use of Thomas. Mostly the question of dates revolves around Chrétien de Troyes--was Cligès written before or after Thomas' Tristan? For now, "il faut sans doute renoncer à chercher des précisions que nous ne pouvons obtenir; toutes les hypothèses sont invérifiables; la question reste ouverte."⁹

The time has come to evaluate Thomas' Tristan for its individual, intrinsic worth. It is my hope that through this study of monologue I might encourage others in that direction to better appreciate the Roman de Tristan of Thomas.

⁸"Les 'Influences contemporaines' dans les romans français de Tristan au XII^e siècle; à propos d'un livre récent," Le Moyen Age, 66 (1960), 143-62.

⁹Wind, Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan de Thomas, p. 17.

PART I
A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE LITERARY TRADITION OF MONOLOGUE

Definition and General Discussion of Monologue

Monologue, defined simply in popular use, means one person speaking. Commonly it refers to any lengthy speech. In general literary usage monologue is any prolonged utterance in direct speech.¹ Since there are several varieties of monologue occurring in different art forms, a more refined definition is essential to further discussion in this study. One scholar preparing to discuss monologue in the courtly epics states:

Als Monolog ist aufzufassen jede von einem Einzelnen oder von Mehreren zugleich gesprochene oder gedachte Rede, die nicht an einem bestimmten Zuhörer gerichtet ist und weder ein Reagieren von aussen her erwartet, noch eine Beeinflussung nach aussen hin beabsichtigt. Man könnte auch wohl sagen: Der Monolog ist ein ungehemmter, durch äussere Rücksichten weder beeinträchtiger noch bestimmter Ausfluss von Bewusstseins--und Gefühlsinhalten,--eine Rede, die ihren Zweck so zu sagen in sich selbst trägt.²

In a variation on the popular concept, this definition does not limit the monologue to the individual. It allows for

¹Henry W. Wells, "Monologue," in Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1965), p. 529.

²Emil Walker, Der Monolog im höfischen Epos (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1928), p. 7.

group speech in unison--the chorus, whose members act, in one sense, as an individual when their speech is unanimous. The monologue, according to this definition, may be either spoken or thought. It is not directed to a specific audience. It does not expect a reply nor does it expect to influence others. Thus, it is a private thought whose aim is found in itself. The mere formulation and expression of thought is its sole end. Whereas the end of a question is its answer, the flow of conscious thought and emotion is the goal of the monologue. For instance, a soliloquy (one person alone, talking to himself) taking the form of a debate may pose and resolve a problem within a speech; another monologue may question the reasons or lament the fact that the speaker has fallen in love, but come to no resolution. In both cases, however, the monologue would find its end in itself.

Monologue has been defined as "Rede, die nicht an einem bestimmten Zuhörer gerichtet ist." This needs clarification. In most cases, there may be no specific audience in mind and this conforms to the general character of the monologue as private thought. However, prayer--which is also a form of monologue--is indeed addressed to a specific audience and the monologist entreats the supreme being to deign to listen even though the speaker expects no verbal reply. And as is sometimes the case in Tristan, a speaker directs his words to a specific person, but that person, being absent, cannot be aware of the address. Here there

is an addressee, but the addressee is not a listener. These variations, too, are in accord with the stated character of the monologue.

Although the element of length is not brought into this definition of monologue, length is an important factor in the popular idea of monologue as well as in Wells's definition for general literary usage. The term monologue is not applied in narrative literature to brief statements or ejaculations, but rather to speeches which are elaborations of one or more sentiments, developments of ideas or interpretations of inner or outer activities. All these at least imply length.

Accepting this definition with the addition of the element of length, what, then, is the role of monologue within a literary work? The function of monologue will vary depending on whether it is a part or the whole of the work. In the Tristan of Thomas the monologues fit into the framework of a third-person narrative. Here, for this reason, only monologue within such a third-person narrative will be considered.

We distinguish between two worlds in which man functions--the outer world in which man interacts with other men by words and deeds and the inner world in which his own thoughts and sensations act upon one another. The poet can describe the physical actions of his characters in great detail; he can depict bodily appearance with the eye of a portrait painter; he can report dialogue with accuracy. The

poet accomplishes these things by standing aside to scrutinize his characters. In all these ways, he is representing the exterior world and does not need to enter into the other, interior world. Many works of significance exist solely in this form.

But there is that other world which the poet can show us--the inner world of his characters. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg tell us that the depiction of the inner domain has not always been a concern of writers:

The notion of peering directly into the mind and dramatizing or analyzing thoughts instead of words and deeds seems to arise quite late in most literatures.³

By entering the inner world of his characters, the poet can expose motivation for the behavior he describes. The more complex the conduct, the more the poet must find a means of portraying motivation in order to convincingly reproduce related actions. In a character's inward life, too, the audience may discover secret desires or thoughts which never find materialization in the exterior world but which add a new dimension to his characterization. When the poet unlocks the doors of his characters' minds and lets the audience in, he is allowing his audience to stand on equal footing with him and they both participate, along with the

³The Nature of Narrative (1966; rpt., New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 175. This study is invaluable because of its historical analysis of the interior monologue. No other study was found to do the same. Therefore this chapter is heavily indebted to Scholes and Kellogg.

character, in the activities of that private realm. Throughout the history of narrative literature, poets have developed different methods of dealing with this private realm within men.

For example, the author has recourse to direct statement. When he chooses to be an omniscient author, the poet has the power to delve into the inward lives of his characters. He can merely tell us that his heroes are tormented by fear or hate or love and we accept his assertion.

Scholes and Kellogg point out that in saga characterization the characters operate in mechanical accordance with qualities attributed to them by poets' direct narrative statements; this characterization avoids the direct observation of the inner world (although this does not necessarily mean that the poets and their audiences do not choose to recognize a difference in external and internal reality), but it is a step in the direction of the grasp of the activities of the soul.⁴

Like saga characterization, the use of the supernatural also bypasses psychological analysis, but it represents an attempt to portray inner activity:

The use of supernatural machinery to reveal mental process and provide motivation is a device which persists in synthetic epic forms, both pagan and Christian. Aeneas' motivation in leaving Dido is presented in terms of a dream sent to him by the gods to remind him of his destiny. . . .

In Christian synthetic epic the devil figures

⁴Ibid., pp. 172-73.

prominently as a deus ex machina who assists in the dramatizing of motivation and the revelation of character.⁵

If the poet elects to present the interior world of his personages in his own words, he has another choice. He can render their thoughts by indirect discourse. This method, however, does not remove the distance between the characters and the audience. But the poet can go one step further towards the grasp of interior activity by analyzing for his audience the thoughts he has reported.

Another device which unlatches the door of the inner world is the interior monologue which constitutes the basis of the present investigation of the Tristan of Thomas. It is believed that monologue may well have preceded dialogue as the germ of drama.⁶ Monologue brings a dramatic element to narrative. Indeed the interior monologue incorporates both the lyric and the dramatic in narrative. Just as drama, the interior monologue establishes direct contact between the characters and the writer's audience. The interior monologue can be indicative of a sense of intimacy which pervades the narrative. The use of monologue bespeaks an intimacy between the poet and his personage. It can result, moreover, in a closer relationship between the poet and his audience as well as between the character and the audience. In the interior monologue, the narrator allows the character

⁵Ibid. pp. 176-77.
⁶Wells, p. 529.

to become poet and the narrator's role is temporarily effaced as he becomes part of the audience. The audience does not receive its impressions of the character filtered through the view and then the words of a narrator, it receives them directly from the source. There is less possibility of misunderstanding on the part of the audience or distortion on the part of the author. Moreover, since the narrator allows the character to speak, thus sharing his omniscience with his audience, there is a bond of trust created between the narrator and his audience with regard to the credibility of the tale.

Before proceeding further, two problems which arise in the employment of the term "interior monologue" must be considered and resolved. First, the term has in recent times frequently been used synonymously for stream of consciousness, that is, an author's attempt to convey directly the continuous flow of illogical, ungrammatical, associative thoughts and sensations in man.⁷ However, that is by no

⁷The modern interior monologue records inner experience on one or more planes of consciousness, striving toward the nonverbal, giving an impression of illogicality and the mind's associative powers. Edouard Dujardin is credited with being the first to use interior monologue in its modern sense in Les Lauriers sont coupés (1887). For a study of interior monologue in the modern sense of the term, see Edouard Dujardin, Le Monologue intérieur, son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'oeuvre de James Joyce (Paris: Messein, 1931). This term "interior monologue" was originated by Valery Larbaud in reference to Joyce. Dujardin's study is of stream of consciousness in Joyce forming an interior monologue. See also La Littérature narrative d'imagination; des genres littéraires aux techniques d'expression, Colloque de Strasbourg, April 23-25, 1959 (Paris, 1961).

means its only use. "Interior monologue" equally designates the unspoken soliloquy which has a much older tradition than the relatively new stream of consciousness. In this study the label "interior monologue" refers to the unspoken soliloquy following this definition by Scholes and Kellogg:

Interior monologue is . . . in narrative literature, a direct, immediate presentation of the unspoken thoughts of a character without any intervening narrator. Like direct discourse or dialogue it is a dramatic element in narrative literature because only in narrative can a soliloquy remain unspoken and yet be understood by an audience.⁸

Secondly, although interior monologue has just been defined as unspoken soliloquy, nearly all classical monologues are introduced with tags of "she said," "he said," or "she asked herself," or some similar indicator of verbalization. It is most probable that these tags result from the concept of the early writers (a concept which prevailed until at least the eighteenth century) that thought is speech without sound, a type of interior dialogue, a conversation with the self. Thus, thought assumes the "same linguistic form as oral speech" and "can be represented exactly as speech would be represented."⁹ We must be careful therefore when an author presents a monologue within the formulae "he said," "she said to herself," and the like because he may be portraying a monologue which is truly not spoken aloud. On the other hand, he may be presenting a monologue

⁸Nature of Narrative, pp. 177-78.

⁹Ibid., p. 180.

uttered aloud because the pain or elation is too much for the character to confine to his soul, although he is speaking to himself. But in this sense, the monologue does remain "interior" and will be considered as such for our purposes.

Monologue in Selected Classical Authors

Interior monologues appear in works as early as Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, Virgil and Ovid, among other classical authors. It would be well to consider briefly the use of interior monologue in their works, for each built upon the other to forge the classical tradition of this device.

It is difficult to say whether or not it was Homer who conceived the interior monologue in narrative literature. It may have been a common carry-over from early drama to oral narrative, but there are no substantiating records to document this. In any event, the first appearance of the interior monologue in Western narrative literature occurs in Homer. Erich Auerbach tells us that the aim of Homer is to make his tale as completely visual as possible,

to represent phenomena in a fully externalized form, visible and palpable in all their parts, and completely fixed in their spatial and temporal relations. Nor do psychological processes receive any other treatment: here too nothing must remain hidden and unexpressed. With the utmost fullness, with an orderliness which even passion does not disturb, Homer's personages vent their inmost hearts in speech; what they do not say to others, they speak in their own minds, so that the reader is informed of it.¹⁰

¹⁰Mimesis; The Representation of Reality in Western

Interior monologues are attributed, of course, to major and minor figures alike. Homer's works, being action-oriented, employ the interior monologue as a build-up for the action which follows. Many of the interior monologues are preludes to battle in which a character is subject to fear and so considers cowardly actions. But ultimately his fear is conquered and he proceeds to battle valiantly.

These monologues follow a pattern:

In half of the interior monologues in the Iliad, one entire line recurs at a crucial point: alla ti e moi tauta philos dialexato thymos (but why does my own heart [thymos] dispute with me thus?). . . . in every case . . . the identical line occurs at a pivotal point in the monologue, as the direction of thought turns from unworthy or unsuitable considerations or feelings to worthy or suitable ones.¹¹

Such monologues, occurring at points of crisis in the narrative, delay the action only briefly, for in Homer's mind and in the mind of the audience, there is no question as to what is the proper course of action to pursue. While the monologue does delay action, it also intensifies action. Homer employs the interior monologue where the logic of his tale dictates. The interior monologues in Homer are "a combination of formulaic behavior and complete ease and flexibility."¹² His monologic arguments are direct and uncomplicated rather than sophisticated or elaborate since his primary concern is action.

Literature, trans. Willard R. Trask (1953; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968), p. 6.

¹¹Scholes and Kellogg, p. 179.

¹²Ibid., p. 178.

Another classical narrative artist, Apollonius of Rhodes, chose to emphasize thought and began a new practice:

With Apollonius commences a tradition of building a narrative toward a highly specialized situation which will require a very special kind of monologue. . . . It tends to thrust the monologue itself into a central position, emphasizing characterization through thought rather than action, and ultimately resulting in the stylization of the monologue itself.¹³

Auerbach states that the first appearance of love as a major theme in the epic is in the third book of the Argonautica of Apollonius of Rhodes.¹⁴ Apollonius sets the stage, so to speak, for many future monologues when he allows Medea to vent the passion in her soul. Whereas Homer's heroes always know that there is but one proper course of action, Medea finds herself in a dilemma: should she, whose magic alone can accomplish the task enforced by her father upon his enemy Jason, offer Jason her help? On the one hand, she has been smitten with love for Jason by Eros at the design of the gods, and on the other hand, she is aware of her filial duty and of the honor and reputation of her name. She knows no means of reconciling the two diametrically opposed sentiments. Her inner torment is reflected in her physical appearance and conduct--sleep does not come for her, instead her cares keep her awake, tossing and turning within her heart, causing her to weep copious tears, writhe

¹³Ibid., p. 182.

¹⁴Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Bollingen Foundation, 1965), p. 219.

in anguish and scrape her cheeks. The stylization of the interior monologue begins here with a dilemma and the character's attempt to plot a course not between but through both Scylla and Charybdis. Medea's monologue is accompanied by Apollonius' analysis of her condition. Her forceful interior monologue became a much-admired, much-copied pattern. Its success was due to the insight of Apollonius into the psychology of passion, his probing analysis of private sentiment, and the tragic character of his creation. Medea's monologue became a paragon, and so subsequent monologists were also women in love with no one in whom to confide, torn between what they should do and what they would like to do, considering suicide as the resolution of their dilemma.

Although Medea's inner world is presented to the audience directly, Apollonius' psychology is still wanting in that it does not present a proper human motivation for the passionate activity of Medea's soul--her love and torment are represented as the result of the arrow of Eros. Medea is only a pawn in the play of the gods. But in Virgil we find, expressed in monologue, proper motivation for Dido's conduct.

For purposes of composing his fourth book of the Aeneid, Virgil found, then, a literary tradition already established which attempted the realistic portrayal of the effects of love on the soul of a woman and the subtlety of her feelings. The Mantuan poet borrowed much from the poet

of Rhodes. The monologues of Apollonius' Medea and Virgil's Dido may be compared: the sense of shame invades Dido also, contending with her passionate love for Aeneas; she sees no exit from her dilemma save suicide; she is in the throes of torment, posing question after question in her mind because she has no one in whom she can confide now; a prior pledge of fidelity or duty plagues her.

It is true that love enters the heart of Dido at the command of Venus in the first book. But there is a difference:

Human action in the Argonautica as a result of human resolve is a superfluity; in the Aeneid the superfluities are the gods. Cupid did not need to assume the shape of Ascanius or to be fondled in Dido's arms; Dido was already aflame. But let me quickly retract that phrase about superfluities, into which that false divinity Epigram, in her most pernicious form, Antithesis, has tempted me. It is true, rather, that Virgil's world is half human and half divine. Forte quadam divinitus, "jewels upon which I chanced divinely"--Virgil is at one with Livy and Tennyson and with all who read the world for both its aspects."¹⁵

Despite his retraction, his initial observation holds for the comparison regarding the inception of love as presented by Apollonius and by Virgil. The reader senses that Medea is but a toy of the gods. But he sees Dido's reaction and hears her words to Aeneas as he steps from out of the mist. The reader senses love. Virgil's treatment of his heroine is masterful:

Every period in Dido's inner disturbance is made to

¹⁵Edward Kennard Rand, The Magical Art of Virgil (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1931), pp. 403-404.

issue directly in some corresponding change in the external action, the result is a progressive development to climax and tragic catastrophe, with the inner experience and the outer action closely related, in brief, Virgil . . . artistically regulates the emotional experience of his heroine.¹⁶

In Ovid, the interior monologue is brought to the level of stylization. Ovid was much admired and emulated for the rhetoric employed in his poetry, especially the Metamorphoses and the Heroides. His monologues in the Metamorphoses are true discourses,¹⁷ in the rhetorical sense. For the most part and in the best examples, these monologues express the passions of lovers:

Or Ovide aime à peindre les hésitations et les incohérences auxquelles les amoureux sont sujets. Et pour le faire, il a recours quelquefois à la description, quelquefois aussi au monologue. Dans ce dernier cas, il fait tenir à ses personnages des discours où se heurtent les résolutions contraires. L'amoureux, alors, discute avec lui-même; il se pose des questions et se fait des objections, comme s'il se dédoublait; il s'adresse la parole à la deuxième personne, en s'appelant par son nom.¹⁸

The monologue-discourses are adorned with elaborate argument and sophisticated rhetoric, for Ovid's interest lies less in his characters than in the "intellectual process of debate" exploited in the monologues; such was to be the tenor of the monologue of characterization until the Renaissance. Ovid's Medea (Book VII of The Metamorphoses) is an example. Ovid's

¹⁶Henry W. Prescott, The Development of Virgil's Art (1927; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 243.

¹⁷Recherches sur les sources latines des contes et romans courtois du Moyen Age (Paris: Champion, 1913), p. 150.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 152.

retelling of the Jason-Medea story is relatively brief, but he allows Medea to soliloquize at length. His Medea is overpowered by fate, her filial duty is overshadowed by the passion which does battle with reason and almost succeeds in rationalizing itself. Only at the end of her monologue does shame regain supremacy--to fall by the wayside when Medea sees Jason again. The audience's reaction to the monologue is artfully manipulated by the argument of a seasoned rhetor whose words do not fail in their design. Medea's monologue, however, is much too long for the brevity of the tale as a whole. It has lost much if not all of the tragic quality of the monologue of Apollonius' Medea. And yet it has a certain grace and elegance, a pathos which Ovid's admirers were quick to imitate.

We have seen the development towards stylization of the interior monologue. The major interior monologues of classical antiquity tended to be built around a dilemma and take the shape of a debate between the parts of the divided soul. Even though many of these show psychological insight in their characterization, rhetoric rather than psychology governs them. That is not to say that all of the monologues are weighted with superfluous rhetoric. But the danger for the monologue is inherent in the understanding of thought as speech without sound because thought can then be organized according to the science of speech--rhetoric. Furthermore, the mixing of rhetoric and passion is often not successful, as Auerbach has pointed out:

Rhetorical excess is very dangerous in treatments of the passions and the sublime; it destroys all immediacy and movement, especially when the reader has the feeling that the scene did not spring from a single impulse but was carefully pieced together with the help of traditional devices.¹⁹

The monologue did become a playground for "verbal virtuosity"²⁰ in imitation particularly of Ovid. Although monologues were created for situations outside of the one we have been discussing, the interior monologue became a set piece. Its major role was to analyze the effects of love and so the standard place of the monologue was at the moment of the inception of love. Gradually more of the male characters joined the women in their erotic soul-searchings, although it was long felt that it was women who were more easily overcome by passion.²¹ Sometimes the debate-character was suppressed in favor of a prayer or lamentation-form, for example when the conflict did not assume the level and proportion of dilemma.

Thus, having surveyed the use of monologue in classical literature, we know that when Thomas and the narrative artists of the twelfth century composed their monologues amoureux, full of the introspection and soul-analysis so characteristic of "fin'amors," they were carrying on an esteemed tradition.

¹⁹Literary Language, p. 193.

²⁰Scholes and Kellogg, p. 185.

²¹Ibid., p. 183.

Monologue in Selected Twelfth-Century Literature

Paul Zumthor establishes the role of monologue in medieval narrative:

. . . du fait que l' "aventure" individuelle est par définition (au niveau du récit réalisé) imprévisible, les auteurs tendent à en rapporter aux agents eux-mêmes (aux "personnages") la causalité superficielle. Ils le font au moyen de trois procédés qui, dès les années 60-80 du XII^e siècle, apparaissent comme propres au discours romanesque. Le premier n'est autre qu'une intervention d'un auteur annonçant que telle disposition de tel agent va déclencher une action. Le second, créé par l'auteur d'Enéas, et beaucoup développé par la suite, constitue l'un des traits les plus frappants du roman médiéval, spécialement du roman en vers: c'est le monologue (beaucoup plus rarement, le dialogue) où un agent pèse, en général à l'aide d'arguments typiques, les motifs qui le poussent à tel ou tel acte. Le troisième, normalement combiné avec l'un des deux autres, est la figure d'allégorie.²²

The knowledge of monologue as a narrative device was nothing new to the writer of the twelfth century in Western Europe. Ovid's Metamorphoses and Heroides provided excellent examples of probings of the heart in matters of love.

Much has been made of the debt Thomas owes to Wace's Brut. But it is not Wace from whom Thomas acquired the taste or the talent for monologue. Nor should this be expected of the Brut which, as a chronicle, must cover many hundreds of years and thus the lives of many men and women. It could not be expected to be an example for the painting of the minutiae of the soul. The Brut has not one hero but

²²Essai de poétique médiévale (Paris: Seuil, 1972), p. 363.

many. Plot--here, history--perforce prevails over detailed characterization. The inner life is not Wace's main concern. Nevertheless, the names of the chronicle are made vivid for us.

Leïr's apostrophe to Fortune in lines 1913-72²³ is a moving piece, but a brief one, and it is notable more as an example of one of the most frequent topoi of medieval literature, because of its personification of Fortune, than it is as an example of monologue. It is almost as if Wace does not want to allow soliloquy with its display of deep-felt emotion in his Brut. Wace in particular does not care for maudlin lamentation, and "preferisce spronare sbrigamente al conforto con massime sull'inutilità del dolore."²⁴ But this is not to say that the narration of Wace is without emotional appeal. There is skillful use of dialogue, yet more often the appeal is to be found in his artistry of description.

It might seem that lamentation would be a fairly developed item in his narrative considering the passing of so many generations, among them many men worthy of panegyric. Elaine's nurse is allowed to carry on briefly as she recounts to Bedoer the tale of Elaine's death. Through the details of the story come a few lines of self-interrogation

²³Wace, Le Roman de Brut, ed. Ivor Arnold (Paris: Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1938-40). Subsequent references are to this edition.

²⁴Giovanna Angeli, "L'\"Eneas\" e i primi romanzi volgari (Milan and Naples: Riccardo Ricciardi, 1971), p. 32.

which approach monologue:

"Lasse, pur quei me fu livree?
Lasse, pur quei l'ai tant nurrie
Quant uns diables l'ad ravie;

.

Lasse dolente, ma dulçur,
Ma joie, mun deduit, m'amur
Ad li gaianz a hunte ocise
E jo l'ai ci en terre mise."

(ll. 11402-404; 11413-16)

The nurse's lamentation is tightly bound to the narrative--in fact, the narrative elements in her speech outweigh the lyric. But those moments, when the dialogue is superseded and she addresses her soul, or no one in particular--a cruel fate, give the discourse its texture. Granted this is not monologue according to the definition we have employed, but the discourse merits mention to show the attitude of Wace. He has not the time to allow his characters to expound on individual sentiment. His is the portrait of a nation. Thus we can understand an attitude which seeks to reduce "la tensions romanzesca per cui la cronaca è come ritmata da movimenti ricorrenti che arginano le emozioni e livellano la storia ad un alternarsi di 'flussi e riflussi'."²⁵

Turning from Wace, we can readily see the influence of the Metamorphoses on works such as Piramus et Tisbé and Narcisus. Both texts recount at length in langue vulgaire the effects of love--the faintings, the sobbings, the trembling, the hot and cold spells, the turning pale, the inability to eat or drink, the interior debates, and the

²⁵Ibid.

erotic dreams which are only that--illusions. Edmond Faral maintains the priority of Piramus et Tisbé with reference to Eneas.²⁶ The Norman²⁷ poem is responsible for the development of a particular of style in monologue which was to find great favor with immediately succeeding authors--the technique of self-interrogation:

Il consiste, à propos d'un mot qui vient d'être prononcé, à introduire une interrogation fictive, et à repartir là-dessus pour un nouveau développement.²⁸

This procedure seems to be of scholastic provenance and is closely tied to the epic procedure recommencement.²⁹ Piramus et Tisbé, like the later Aucassin et Nicolette, alternates narrative and lyric parts. It is in its own way a type of chante-fable, for although they are not sung, highly lyrical monologues alternate rather evenly with narrative. The text of Piramus et Tisbé is, of all twelfth-century French narrative, perhaps the closest to drama. Although several of the lyric episodes are not monologues per se in the sense defined here (Piramus and Tisbé do at some points address their speeches to one another and each is definitely a responsive audience), they are monologues in the sense that they are extended speeches and the speaker is, for practical purposes, alone--he is separated from his lover by the wall. The

²⁶Recherches, pp. 20-24.

²⁷C. de Boer, ed., Piramus et Tisbé, poème du XII^e siècle (Paris: Champion, 1921, CFMA), p. 32.

²⁸Faral, Recherches, p. 21.

²⁹Ibid., p. 25.

monologues in Piramus et Tisbé are of two kinds--the monologue amoureux and the death lament. Both are very important in the development of monologue use in the medieval roman. Perhaps the death laments in this tale arouse the most pathos. Piramus et Tisbé, then, is important as a beginning and for its extensive employment of monologue.

In the Aeneid there is no question that Dido is the focus of Virgil's attempt at a psychological portrayal and that her use of monologue is one of his primary tools. In the Eneas Dido no longer has the privileged role. The twelfth-century author, of course, allows her to reenact the part assigned to her by his source and thus to exhale her traditional lament but with none of the relish with which he treats Lavinia. In the Aeneid there is no hint at love either on the part of Lavinia or on the part of Aeneas. The union is hardly a marriage of love and Lavinia is given a very flat character.

The author of the Eneas, on the other hand, creates a new Lavinia, a true character, indeed, the heroine of the second half of the Eneas.

Raymond Cormier asserts that "Lavinia is the complex character in the Eneas who undergoes, more than Eneas, an identifiable development."³⁰ Lavinia comes to know love "by experiencing its symptoms, alone, behind a closed door, without a confidant, and by analyzing her feelings in an

³⁰One Heart One Mind: The Rebirth of Virgil's Hero in Medieval French Romance (University, Miss.: Romance Monographs, 1973), p. 204.

interiorized, introspective or individualizing fashion (vv. 8047-380)." ³¹ One of the major means of communicating the turbulence within Eneas and Lavinia is their utilization of monologue. Eneas and Lavinia are not the only characters to soliloquize but since the tale of their love and union is the central feature of the romance, their monologues are the most interesting and the most developed. Of the two, Lavinia is given, or perhaps takes, more opportunity to sound the depths of her soul.

Angeli gives an excellent description of the second half of the Eneas:

Praticamente non c'è azione a tutto è affidato alle riflessioni sulla natura e gli effetti dell'amore, entità simbolica personificata e vero protagonista della parte finale dell'Eneas: le disquisizioni sono il reale centro espressivo e, come tali, si traducono in un linguaggio nuovo, ricercato e fecondo di ulteriori dilatazioni nella poesia narrative cortese. ³²

In these monologues are found both the division of the self which results in interior dialogue (monologue dialogué, monologo fittizio) and the exploitation of apostrophe. In her fictitious dialogue, Lavinia truly separates her contradictory nature--the one self addresses the other in the second person and calls that person by name. ³³ While the use of the technique shows the author's attempt at veracity in a psychological portrayal, the language remains Ovidian

³¹ Ibid., p. 206.

³² L'"Eneas", p. 112.

³³ Faral, Recherches, p. 154. Faral believes that the Eneas author abused this technique by overuse.

as in Piramus et Tisbé. Love is personified and idealized. His arrows pierce the heart and cause wounds; no one is immune from Love's power. Love burns within hearts, its fire and flames are felt. Love holds out its nets and traps to ensnare; like a fisherman, it holds out its line.

We do not witness the development of love. Love entered Lavinia's heart when she saw Eneas from her tower and immediately conquered her in all its plenitude. Just as for Virgil's Dido, Lavinia's love is expressed only in its full flowering. We never see either Virgil's Dido or the Lavinia of the Eneas groping from "like" to "love." But we do witness the trials of Lavinia's love: Should she make her love known? Will Eneas respond to her or is he satisfied with his company of Trojans? Are her feelings ill-placed?

Lavinia and Eneas suffer the same torments as Piramus and Tisbé. Lavinia's monologues, as Faral points out, are of close kinship with the first monologue of Tisbé, having many of the same ideas, metaphors and much of the same artifice, in particular the fictitious dialogue.³⁴ And further, these two monologues have definite affinity by their language with the seventh book of the Metamorphoses, the tale of Medea.³⁵

Auerbach says that whereas in the Metamorphoses, "the erotic element is treated in a few sharp and brief antitheses

³⁴Ibid., pp. 16-20.

³⁵Ibid., p. 20.

. . . the author of the Enéas transposed Ovid's love casuistry into another social class and another style, in which it seems--at least to me--rather out of place."³⁶ Auerbach sees the disparity, then, with the epic foundation the author is using but trying to convert to the casuistry of courtesan literature of the Ovidian era. Auerbach does recognize, however, the debt of courtly literature to the Eneas which elevated love to a major theme.

What is most important for our study is to note that the monologues in the Eneas have a true function in the whole of the narrative. They are not ornamental tidbits designed to show off the author rather than his story. The Eneas employs two types of monologue:

o funebri deplorazioni o invocazioni all'amore, organizzate secondo canoni espressivi accuratamente predisposti (dapprima la messa in evidenza di punte tragicamente significative e, in un secondo tempo, quella di elementi che preparano al felice epilogo). E questa indica un modo non comune di concepire la costruzione di un testo narrativo.³⁷

The monologues, especially in the second half, are essential to the story. The plot there has gone from the level of exterior action to that of interior consciousness. It is this trait which is also found in the Tristan of Thomas.

Although Faral believed that the Roman de Thèbes is a source for the Eneas,³⁸ today the question is without firm

³⁶Literary Language, p. 215.

³⁷Angeli, p. 134.

³⁸Recherches, pp. 92-98, 109.

resolution;³⁹ but Angeli does say that "le relazioni fra i due rifacimenti sono improntate ad una simbiosi involontaria certo provocata da sentimenti di rivalità che la vicinanza operativa rese inevitabili."⁴⁰

Eneas differs from the other romans d'antiquité. It holds clear promise for the courtly roman. But Thèbes, being slightly older, is a closer relative of the chanson de geste. Angeli develops the further postulate that Thèbes is a work closer to the spirit of the chansons de geste than to classical texts. He has "l'impressione che questo clerc operante alla corte di Enrico II non fosse un erudito e che reivocasse alle orecchie dei lettori un mondo noto, quello delle prime canzoni di gesta, delle vite dei Santi in volgare, dei testi latini contemporanei o di poco precedenti, dei drammi sacri."⁴¹ For this reason, the use of monologue in Thèbes appears closer to the epic planctus. The tradition of the funeral oration, highly developed in both Greece and Rome, was carried on by the clerks of the Middle Ages. Since the clerks composed many planctus for religious officials, the preponderance of religious elements in the death laments found in narrative is readily understood.⁴² The planctus

³⁹Angeli, pp. 142-52.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 152.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 99.

⁴²Alfred Jeanroy, La Poésie lyrique des troubadours (Toulouse: Privat, 1934), II, 237-45. The Provençal planh, on the other hand, was strictly a secular tradition and distinguishable from the planctus on many counts.

became an ornamental feature of the chanson de geste just as funeral panegyric seems to be a feature of the epic tradition.

The monologues in Thèbes revolve around death and are uttered by minor figures as well as by major figures. Angeli maintains that the author had before him both epic and hagiographic models of the planctus.⁴³ The death laments are often preceded by an act of swooning, a commonplace in both the Chanson de Roland, for example, and the Saint Alexis. For the most part these planctus are very short--some are only two or three lines. The speeches of Ysmeine and Polinicès are longest and although they may be stylized, they are somewhat more interesting than the others. Although the lamentation of the crowd (ll. 6313-56) and Ysmeine (ll. 6381-42)⁴⁴ on the death of Aton is inspired by the text of Statius, it has elements similar to the epic and the Latin tradition--"la parte centrale del compianto è tutta una commemorazione del valore del guerriero, ma compaiono degli accenti di tensione e di dolore così marcati che esulano dal genere del planctus latino."⁴⁵ Those elements which supersede the Latin planctus, the lyrical, poignant opening lines and the personification and apostrophe to Mort along with a more sophisticated rhetoric,

⁴³L'"Eneas", pp. 84 ff.

⁴⁴Le Roman de Thèbes, ed. Léopold Constans (Paris: Firinier-Didot, 1890, SATF). Subsequent references to Thèbes are to this edition.

⁴⁵Angeli, p. 89.

approach the quality of the monologue in Piramus et Tisbé. But these elements do not have the force to color the whole narrative and so it remains more closely tied to the epic tradition and liturgical tradition. The liturgical tradition is evoked by the anaphoristic "tu" and the recital of deeds.⁴⁶

The use of monologue in Thèbes accentuates not moments of dilemma per se but moments of crisis nevertheless--death. They render more painful, more pathetic the aura of doom and destruction which the author created in his prologue, speaking of the sons of Edipodès:

Thèbes déstruistrent lor cité
Et degastérent lor regné;
Destruit en furent lor veisin
Et il ambedui en la fin. (ll. 29-32)

and the curse which Edipodès himself implored the gods to effect upon his sons:

"Puissanz reis des cieus, Jupiter,
"Tesiphoné, fure d'enfer,
"Les orgoillos me destruisiez
"Qui mes ueuz mistrent soz lor piez.
"Entre eus vienge descorde taus,
"A ambedous pesme et mortaus,
"Que le regne qu'ont a baillir
"Ne lor leise guaires tenir." (ll. 510-17)

Throughout the Thèbes action dominates, tragically thrust forward, by the forces called upon by Edipodès. The monologues, the planctus, do not stop the action--most of them are too brief. But they insure that the reader will react

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 90

properly, for all the sorrow he has witnessed, to the author's final counsel:

Por go vos di: "Prenez en cure,
 "Par dreit errez et par mesure;
 "Ne faciez rien contre nature,
 "Que ne vengiez a fin si dure." (ll. 10227-30)

These planctus are not designed for introspective, interior analysis. They are designed as commentary on the tragedy of the action. They are not, then, essential to the story but only color the tale. More important for the psychology of the tale is the author's use of portraiture and his own interpretations of the behavior of his characters.

Benoît de Sainte-Maure has been called "le premier initiateur du roman d'amour."⁴⁷ He treats not one but four stories of love, all bound to the panoramic history of Troy: Jason and Medea; Paris and Helene; Troilus and Briseïda (and Diomedès): Achillès and Polixenain. These love stories are adroitly contrived, integral parts of the narrative.⁴⁸

Medea does not share with us either feelings of nascent love or the burden which her sudden love has thrust upon her. This is rather surprising since Medea's dilemma had proved to be such fertile ground for monologue for both Apollonius of Rhodes and Ovid. Indeed, those monologues are among the

⁴⁷Paul Zumthor, Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale (VI^e-XIV^e siècles) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), p. 192.

⁴⁸For a study of the place of the four stories of love within the roman, see R. M. Lumiansky's article, "Structural Unity in Benoît's Roman de Troie," Romania, 79 (1958), 410-24.

most memorable in literature. But Benoît does not allow Medea to soliloquize until the time she awaits Jason in her room. There is both apostrophe and rhetorical questioning in her monologue--she is angry at the fools who, though it is past midnight, have not gone to bed, thus delaying her rendez-vous; she calls out to Jason and she poses the question to herself in line 1497: "De quei me sui jo entremise?"⁴⁹ Again as she watches Jason from her window while he performs his task, she addresses him in her thoughts, expressing her fear that he will not return to her. We do not hear Jason soliloquize and so he remains only an adventurous and not an amorous character in our eyes. The tale of Jason and Medea is told as a narrative block. It is not diffused throughout the verses as are the other three tales of love.

Briseïda laments her fate of having to be sent to the camp of the Greeks. In this lamentation she calls out to Troïlus, her first love. When she soliloquizes again, it is to lament the consequences of her betrayal of Troïlus in the giving of her love to Diomedès. She knows that she will be dishonored throughout history as a false lover:

Contre reison e contre dreit,
Ai ma fine amor otroiee. (ll. 20272-73)

Of all the men in love, Achillès alone is given the privilege of monologue. Achillès, the great warrior, is weakened and laid low by Love: "Malades sui" (l. 17729),

⁴⁹Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Le Roman de Troie, ed. Léopold Constans (Paris: Firmier-Didot, 1904-12, SATF). Subsequent references are to this edition.

"ne sui pas sain:/ Sovent en devieng pale e vain/ Sovent m'en refreidist li cors" (ll. 18083-85). As these brief quotes illustrate, Achillès' monologues are highly colored by Ovidian influence. Amors is idealized and personified, and even speaks to Achillès in his own monologue. Even though Achillès has been "lacié e pris" (l. 17650) by Amors, Love does not conquer all in Troie, for Achillès, having laid down his arms for the sake of Polixenain and peace, in the end is forced to take them up again.

Although we know through dialogue and Benoît's portrayal of her the love Helene feels for Paris, we neither hear her voice nor her private thoughts until the death of Paris.

There are other monologues in the roman. One very moving piece is Priam's speech in which he bewails Fortune. Given the topic, there is place for frequent lamentation of death.

Yet, although it is cited last in the famous trilogy of romans d'antiquité, the Roman de Troie does not mark a distinct development over its predecessors in use of monologue. Although numerous, the monologues in Troie do not effect any new perspectives. The laments have the traditional structure--the description of physical evidence of sorrow; the lament itself; a description of the despair and sorrow of either the speaker or other mourners as well.⁵⁰ Benoît knows how to evoke the compassion of his audience.

⁵⁰Angeli, p. 168.

The love monologues are graceful and they embellish scenes of crisis or those in which we see the tolls Love extorts from his servants. In his appraisal of Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Angeli says:

Benoît ha quindi sempre in mente un modello, un testo in volgare, sia esso Brut, o l'Eneas o Thèbes, ma di questi esemplari fruisce solo per le scelte di alcuni motivi "obbligatori." L'architettura del suo romanzo non resta, in pratica, visibilmente modificata da quelle pause "di effetto" che sono i compianti, puri ornamenti, addizioni che, per quanto ricercate, non arrivano mai a dei "ruolichiave".

Descrizioni, apostrofi, sentenze, sono, cioè, abbellimenti, decorazioni necessarie alla veste dell'opera ma non indispensabili alla sua dinamica interna.⁵¹

Of the romans d'antiquité, it is the Eneas, then, which shows the most sophisticated handling of the monologue. Monologue there is not mere embellishment but the focus of the second part of the roman. In the Thèbes and the Troie, on the other hand, although the monologues color the tale, that is the limit of their effect. The Thèbes seems closest to the chanson de geste. Perhaps because the Roman de Troie treats four stories of love among many stories of war, Benoît's monologues do not have the effect of those in the Eneas. The monologues in the Eneas probe deeply and finely. We feel we truly know Lavinia whereas Briseida is one woman among many whose lives were jeopardized by the war.

Chrétien de Troyes is especially noted for the astute psychology invested in his tales, and particularly for his fine use of direct address, both monologue and dialogue.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 173.

One of the earliest studies of Chrétien is from this viewpoint.⁵² C. S. Lewis also noted Chrétien de Troyes' use of allegory to portray the inner world.⁵³ Allegory weighs heavily not only in monologue but in the third person narrative.

Although monologue is preponderant in Cligès, in his best-structured work, Yvain, it plays only a small (but nevertheless important) role. It is consequently instructive to follow the development and application of monologue in his works.

Enide's monologues, according to Jean Frappier, are neither analytic nor "amoureux,"⁵⁴ although they do help provide some psychological insight into her character. Of course, at the writing of Erec, the use of monologue was still a rather recent technique.

Cligès is often distinguished from the four Arthurian romans by the absence of aventure; for Cligès, the casuistry is the major concern. Some would see it as a Neo-Tristan, others as an Anti-Tristan, and still others as a Super-Tristan. But its anteriority or posteriority vis-à-vis the Tristan of Thomas remains in question.

⁵²Alfons Hilka, Die direkte Rede als stilistisches Kunstmittel in den Romanen des Kristian von Troyes (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1903).

⁵³The Allegory of Love (1936; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 30.

⁵⁴Chrétien de Troyes (Paris: Hatier, 1968), p. 116.

As with many medieval works, and particularly as with Eneas, Cligès is divided into two parts. In the Eneas, the poet's emphasis is on the second part which contains the story of Eneas and Lavinia. But in Cligès, the first half of the book which contains the story of the love of the hero's parents, Soredamors and Alexandre, is as important (and necessary) as the second. Both generations are given to interior deliberation. In Cligès, interior debate receives its fullest, grandest treatment in Chrétien de Troyes. There are four important monologues in Cligès--two by Soredamors (475-523, 897-1046);⁵⁵ one each by Alexandre (626-872) and Fénice (4410-4574). Cligès, the titular focus, does not voice a similar soliloquy. In each of these cases the monologist tries to come to terms with nascent love.⁵⁶ Cligès is often considered pedantic, précieux, the most artificial of the works of Chrétien. The personification of the heart, the eyes, Love; love seen as sickness, Love the harsh master; the military metaphors, all recall Ovid. Chrétien becomes very didactic in the soliloquy of Alexandre and this didacticism jars the

⁵⁵Cliges, ed. Wendelin Foerster (1884; rpt. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1965). Subsequent references are to this edition.

⁵⁶Jean Frappier, Etude sur Yvain ou le Chevalier au lion de Chrétien de Troyes (Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1969), p. 165. Frappier states of Chrétien that "peut-être sous l'influence du Tristan de Thomas et certainement sous celle de l'Eneas, il avait pour la première fois employé le monologue à une analyse fouillée du sentiment amoureux, non sans un excès de préciosité et d'artifice."

reader--it seems less plausible coming from the mouth of Alexandre himself than it would coming from Chrétien as narrator. Frappier notes this didacticism and for this reason calls the use of monologue a "procédé assez dangereux, car il risque de ralentir l'action et de substituer la dissertation théorique au conte et à l'expression vive des sentiments."⁵⁷ In fact, Frappier says of the monologues in Cligès that "l'effort d'introspection--très intéressant d'ailleurs--est alourdi par la théorie et le dogmatisme; on sent trop que le héros et l'héroïne sont construits pour illustrer des maximes."⁵⁸

Despite such severe judgment, there is much merit in Chrétien's use of the monologue. He captures the hesitations, the contradictions of love's first manifestation in the heart. His excellence here lies in his working with the traditional Ovidian love metaphors and yet producing a work which grasps the subtle movements of the heart. Chrétien dislikes stasis, lack of motion in his narrative. When his characters are not in pursuit of adventure, he shows us the motions of their hearts. Through his monologues we see interior character development. Chrétien is aware that this use of monologue strengthens the bonds which unite his character and his public.

In the Lancelot, there are four monologues in particular which stand out. First are the soliloquies pronounced

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 163.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 135.

by Guenièvre (ll. 4215-62)⁵⁹ and Lancelot (ll. 4281-4301 and 4336-4414) with the fear that the other is dead. Lancelot's crazed reaction leads to a suicide attempt; when the attempt is aborted, he delivers a moving tirade against Death. Guenièvre's monologue is important to the reader as the true indication of her feeling and the degree of her passion for Lancelot which is masked by her actions. Were it not for such an expression, in her own words, the reader might be completely antagonistic to the queen. Further, this monologue points to the artificial character of courtly love and its codified role-playing. Whereas Guenièvre's monologue shows the dichotomy of her character--her true feeling and recognition of wrong-doing versus her feelings programmed by basic tenets of courtly love, the two monologues by Lancelot support his actions as described by Chrétien. He is the willing, obedient servant of Guenièvre, his worth is found in service to her. His soliloquies vividly present his state of mind; here we are made to see his motivation--the forces of honor versus shame, the quality of his love and its code of conduct. Lancelot's complaint from his prison (ll. 6488-6549) provides another interesting example of monologue. There is the traditional imprecation against Fortune and the image of the Wheel which

⁵⁹Das Karrenritter (Lancelot) und Das Wilhelmsleben (Guillaume d'Angleterre), ed. Wendelin Foerster (1884; rpt. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1965). Subsequent references are to this edition of the Lancelot.

certainly symbolizes the plight of Lancelot. There is also a Christian lament: "Ha, sainte Croiz, saint Esperiz" (l. 6501). This prefaces his rebuke of Gauvain which curiously terminates with an absolution of Gauvain and a curse upon Meleagant. This monologue, like the others in the work, provides effective pause. It does not in any way encumber the narration.

In fact, Chrétien de Troyes does not weigh down any of his works with monologue after Cligès. In Yvain there is a happy synthesis of action and analysis. Yvain does not scrutinize his sentiments in the labored manner of Alexandre, and rather than a didactic tone there is a lyric quality arising from the ardor of his feelings. We find deliberation in Laudine's monologue with the characteristic dédoublement du soi in her fictitious trial of her husband's murderer (ll. 1760-72).⁶⁰ The monologues are real attempts to aid the readers' acquaintance with the characters. In Laudine's monologue, her tirade addressed to her invisible enemy, we see a woman full of verve, a very vibrant person. We witness Chrétien's superb craftsmanship in her monologue--Laudine speaks in her mind the words she will later exact from Yvain. Chrétien excels in that other means of direct presentation--the dialogue. For example, one of the best ways, and certainly

⁶⁰Le Chevalier au Lion (Yvain), ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Champion, 1960, CFMA).

the most dramatic, by which we come to know Laudine is through her conversations with her servant Lunette. We also come to know her through Chrétien's own analysis of her state of mind. So although she is given but one well-developed monologue, she is a sufficiently motivated character. Frappier has noted that in the Yvain, the use of portraiture, that traditional element of medieval narrative, is suppressed: "C'était bien la meilleure façon d'échapper à la tyrannie des recettes d'école. Au lieu d'un portrait méticuleux, et immobile, de la tête aux pieds, il trace avec bonheur, des croquis mi-descriptifs, mi-psychologiques, pris sur le vif."⁶¹

In Chrétien's last work, the Perceval, he employs short monologue for both comic and ironic purposes in two instances. The first is when the naïve Perceval mistakes the knights for the devils about which his mother has spoken and the second is when he revises his judgment and takes them for angels. These are marvelous little pieces designed to reflect the extreme simplicity of the young hero. But in the Perceval, Chrétien also employs other means of psychological insight--his effective geography, for instance, so that monologue does not find application as the means of character development but only revelation.

Thus, Chrétien experimented with the interior monologue in Erec and exploited it in Cligès. In Cligès, the

⁶¹Etude sur Yvain, p. 162.

monologues show Chrétien's serious efforts to depict the soul's movements but they weigh the poem down by their didacticism. In Lancelot and Yvain, Chrétien successfully limited his use of the technique for a favorable synthesis of action and interior analysis. Meanwhile he was also perfecting other techniques which can reveal his characters' inner worlds so that in his last work, Perceval, the interior monologue has extremely limited application and is orchestrated as one of many narrative elements which allow us to witness the hero's spiritual progress.

To properly attempt to understand the use of interior monologue in the roman, we should extend our view beyond narrative poetry. Introspective analysis is a trait which the monologue in the narrative setting shared with the lyric poetry of the troubadours. It is possible that Provençal literature nourished the literature of the north in this respect. When the court of Aliénor d'Aquitaine flourished in England during the years 1154-58, the sophisticated literature of the south was disseminated throughout England and the north of France. Bernard de Ventadour himself traveled to the royal coronation ceremonies and while he was there he was assuredly admired and soon emulated for his sensitive verse. Frappier says, "Le procédé de l'analyse est apparu dans la littérature française avec l'inspiration courtoise, et, parallèlement, dans la poésie lyrique et dans le roman; c'est dans ce second genre qu'il a pris la plus grande extension, sans jamais atteindre

des proportions considérables."⁶² Frappier's comment bears upon indirect interior analysis, that is, the author's own analysis of his characters which usually prepares or follows a monologue or dialogue. However, monologue itself is the type of instrument of interior analysis which is most closely related to troubadour poetry.

Troubadour poetry was of course for the most part lyric and its mode of expression was the first person. Furthermore, its major concern was love and the poet himself was the subject. The chanson d'amour is the true glory of Provençal art. Jeanroy, not one to appreciate the poetry of the troubadours, does distinguish two poets for making worthy contributions--Bernard de Ventadour and Peire Rogier. He grants the superiority of Bernard de Ventadour's verse and excuses what he calls Bernard's illogicality and his cyclothymia because he feels that Bernard is motivated by true passion.⁶³ And although he no doubt would call Peire Rogier insincere, he recognizes a particular merit of this troubadour: "Il a su enfin rompre la monotonie de la requête amoureuse en introduisant dans ses chansons un élément dramatique, en engageant, avec lui-même ou un interlocuteur supposé, des dialogues aux répliques pressées qui donnent au style une allure haletante, où se reflète la

⁶²Ibid., p. 164.

⁶³La Poésie lyrique, II, 142.

détresse du patient."⁶⁴ This stylistic device was perhaps responsible for distinguishing Peire Rogier from his fellow poets by a certain naturalness and ease in his poetry. Although Bernard de Ventadour had traveled to the north, Peire Rogier's voyages, though not necessarily his renown, were limited to the south. It is thought that he began his poetic career before 1160, although we have no knowledge of specific poems before 1167.⁶⁵

Aside from the chansons d'amour, there are other poetic forms whose popularity may have helped to nourish the development of the interior monologue in the roman in the second half of the twelfth century--the tenson, a debate between two speakers with an ensuing judgment; the partimen or the joc partit in which one of the interlocutors offers two mutually exclusive propositions and himself defends the one not chosen by his debate partner. The appeal of these forms may have encouraged the dédoublement du soi in the interior monologues, although we have already seen that this dédoublement was a feature in the classical interior monologue. The debate character of monologue is an antidote to monotony.

The implementation of interior monologue in twelfth-century narrative poetry may also have received impetus from

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 138.

⁶⁵Carl Appel, Das Leben und die Lieder des Trobadors Peire Rogier (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1882), pp. 10-12; Jeanroy, II, 137.

religious movements in the late eleventh and the twelfth centuries which fostered self-analysis. Saint Anselm of Canterbury urged self-knowledge through introspection and confession. His model for meditation on God's existence bears the title Monologium. Anselm speaks of two sources of knowledge--reason and faith, and he believes that he who is firmly rooted in faith can try to rationally understand that which he believes by faith.⁶⁶ Anselm is overshadowed by the powerful figure of Saint Bernard de Clairvaux whose principle was "know thyself." Bernard was both emotional and logical--his sentimentality is perhaps most evident in his devotional prayers; his theological writings exhibit a rigorous logic. Bernard attempted to systematize the soul's experience, especially its progress from self-love to love of God. Thus Bernard attempted to probe the psychology of the soul's religious experience. Gilson says about Bernard, "Les deux principes auxquels il tient fermement, sont la supériorité des états purement 'spirituels' sur ceux où les images jouent encore un rôle, et le caractère essentiellement divers, sans commune mesure, des expériences mystiques individuelles."⁶⁷ It will be well to keep these principles of Bernard in mind during our study of Thomas.

Thus, we have seen that in the second half of the

⁶⁶ Etienne Gilson, La Philosophie au Moyen Age (des origines patristiques à la fin du XIV^e siècle), 2nd rev. ed. (Paris: Payot, 1947), pp. 241-42.

⁶⁷ La Théologie mystique de saint Bernard (Paris: Vrin, 1947), p. 116.

twelfth century, the monologue was employed for different effects in different narratives--in some, it was mere embellishment; in others, it was one of several devices of psychological analysis; and in the Eneas, it became the very pith of the last part of the narrative. At the same time that the roman was developing and refining certain techniques for the monologue, the troubadours were evolving and refining techniques and themes similar to those we find in the romans. There was definite interaction between the literatures of the south and of the north, especially during Aliénor's stay in England. The penchant for analysis of the heart was very definitely propelled by literature of a "courtly" nature and was complemented by similar efforts in a theological vein.

PART II
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MONOLOGUES
IN THE TRISTAN OF THOMAS

Albert Pauphilet blamed Thomas for "un goût immodéré pour l'analyse et le débat sentimental"¹ and René Herval accuses him of filling his work with "les ennuyeuses introspections sentimentales."² These judgments were based on the assumption that introspection is merely an adornment for the récit and as such should not interfere or in any way obtrude. But we have seen that such introspection in the form of inner discourse was a widely practiced technique in the roman of the twelfth century and that it holds an important place as well in the lyric poetry of the troubadours. We have seen, in particular, how the action of the second part of the Eneas gravitated from the exterior to the interior--to the hearts of Eneas and Lavinia--so that the monologues became the expressive center of that roman.

I believe that it is unfair to accuse Thomas of being unable to handle the récit well and of producing an awkward

¹Le Legs du Moyen Age (Melun: Librairie d'Argences, 1950), p. 136.

²"De la Saga au Roman: Tristan et Iseult," in Saggi e ricerche in memoria di Ettore Li Gotti (Palermo: Centre di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 1962), II, 118.

tale by far inferior to the robust story of Bérroul, for example. I would suggest that the reader center his attention instead on the monologues and see in them not mere embellishments of a tale but the real center of expressivity in Thomas' version. For, if there is little action in his version, if he has pared down the elements of intrigue, he has stripped them away so that they will not interfere with the interactions of his characters' hearts and minds. That, as we shall see, is where his greatest interest lies and it is there that he has applied his art to its best advantage.

Sneyd¹, 5-182

Fragment Sneyd¹, Le Mariage, begins with the first of the preserved monologues by Thomas, and this text illustrates the author's penchant for soul-probing. It is Tristan who soliloquizes. He has been separated from Iseut for quite some time. The Cambridge Fragment, Le Verger, recounted this parting. The two, having been discovered by Marc and the dwarf, had decided, upon Tristan's initiative, to separate: "Je m'en voil aler" (l. 24). He knew at this leave-taking that he could never again be happy: "Ja n'avrai hait jor de ma vie" (l. 30). Tristan has forgotten or now doubts Iseut's words at their parting. The ring which she gave him as a symbol of love, a "gage de fidélité" of lovers,³ seems to have lost its efficacy. Tristan knew

³Moshé Lazar, Amour courtois et "fin'amors" dans la littérature du XII^e siècle (Paris: Klincksieck, 1964), p. 120.

that he was to enter upon a life of sorrow: "Fuir deport et querre eschil,/ Guerpir joie, sievre peril" (ll. 27-28). The noun "eschil," aside from referring to his removal from Marc's court, suggests torment and surely "peril" comports a meaning of torment and trial (periculum 'trial' or 'test') as well as of danger.⁴

In many of the monologues occurring in medieval narrative, an indication is given of the physical condition of the monologist to preface his words. There is commonly weeping, pulling of hair, scraping of cheeks and fainting for all types of monologue--lamentation, funeral eulogy and many love monologues. The author tries to give a key to the inner world of the character by describing his physical, exterior condition. This type of description is an attempt to set the mood of the discourse and to translate visibly the character's inner world. Thomas, however, does not describe the physical effects of Tristan's mental anguish. His prefatory remarks remain focused only on the interior world.

When in Sneyd¹ Thomas tells us of Tristan, "Sis corages mue sovent,/ E pense molt diversement" (ll. 1-2), he is immediately indicating the character of the monologue. It

⁴Frédéric Godefroy, ed. Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française (Paris: Librairie des Sciences et des Arts, 1937-38), "eschil," III, 574; A. J. Greimas, ed. Dictionnaire de l'ancien français (Paris: Larousse, 1968), "eschil," p. 264; "peril," p. 486.

will take the form of a débat, which considers propositions one after another. This interior debate reflects the state of mind characteristic of "fin'amors." Moshé Lazar defines "fin'amors" as "essentiellement inquiétude et souffrance; les joies qu'elle procure sont toujours provisoires et menacées, perpétuellement remises en question."⁵ The words "diversement" and "mue" themselves are also indicative of the character of Tristan--even though he will project this trait of volatility accusingly upon Iseut and not acknowledge it in himself.

The next two lines (3-4) summarize the contents of the débat. The conflict is between his "voleir" and his "desir." Bédier, discussing another development of this contrast, defined "desir" as "ce qui attire Tristan vers Isolt la reine" and "voleir" as "ce qui l'attire vers Isolt aux Blanches Mains." With this in mind, "desir peut en somme se traduire par amour au sens plein du mot, voleir par concupiscence charnelle."⁶ These distinctions will not always apply, nor will these words always be held to these meanings, but they serve here and it is helpful to have these distinctions at hand for comparison when the words do not conform to this plan.

As we shall see, Tristan is tormented in this monologue by concupiscence charnelle, "voleir."

⁵Amour courtois et "fin'amors," p. 61.

⁶Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 287.

Whether or not this monologue is spoken aloud cannot be determined by the text. The "E dit dunc" is to us an indicator of verbalization, but as we have seen, such tags may represent the concept of thought as speech without sound, with the emphasis upon speech and therefore the use of the same linguistic forms. It is not impossible that Tristan would literally voice his soliloquy, and the verb "dit" does contrast with the verbs of the first two lines--"Sis corages mue" and "pense." The verb may represent a sort of fulmination. On the other hand, it is more common to voice short, passionate thoughts and the length of this monologue might render its verbalization implausible.

However that may be, this monologue presents today's reader with his first occasion to behold Tristan examining himself.

Lazar describes the climate of the lover away from his lady:

La séparation, l'absence de la dame, l'attente patiente, la récompense qui se fait attendre, voilà l'atmosphère dans laquelle se développe cette souffrance délicieuse.⁷

Now the suffering of Tristan is not "délicieuse." Because there is no recompense for his suffering, Tristan's sorrow is not like that of the troubadours. At this point, Tristan cannot envision and thus cannot hope for any reward for his service of suffering. Should he return to Iseut

⁷Amour courtois et "fin'amors," p. 62.

for his recompense and be found with her, they would both be burned by the king:

Fra nos, s'il puet, ensemble prendre,
Par jugement ardoir en cendre. (C., 22)

In contrast, the troubadour has the hope that his lady will reward him--physically, and so he can accept the sorrow with the happiness. This hope gives him the stamina to wait patiently as long as his lady makes him do so. As we know, Iseut does not wish to deprive Tristan of the pleasures of love; could she give him the consolation he desires, she would. It is not a matter of testing Tristan's mettle. These facts distinguish Tristan's suffering from that of the troubadour for whom "le mal d'amour n'est pas simplement subi avec résignation . . . mais le plus souvent accepté avec joie comme une bénédiction divine. C'est un mal nécessaire, purifiant, et inséparable du véritable amour."⁸ Unlike the adherent of "fin'amors," Tristan cannot accept suffering as an integral part of love.

There are three forces at work within the monologue which follow the mode of a trial. The first line of force within the monologue is accusatory, the second defensive, and the third engages a movement of resolution. Tristan plays the three roles of prosecutor, defense and judge. We can also think of the first movement as one of thesis, the second, one of antithesis, and the third, one of synthesis.

⁸Ibid., p. 61.

By synthesis would be meant the combination of the two viewpoints after the refining, the resolution of disparate elements. The synthesis raises the two positions to a level of action; the synthesis presents a workable plan.

Tristan's thesis is that, since Iseut has forgotten him because of her relationship with the king, he has no obligation to remain faithful to her but can take physical pleasure elsewhere. His antithesis is that Iseut has every right to forget him but he has no right to forget or hate her but rather he should remember her and love her faithfully. The tension of the monologue is maintained by a continual opposition of these two forces. Perhaps because of the seemingly disordered character of the monologue, F. Piquet felt that "la conduite des idées laisse à désirer chez Thomas."⁹ It seems to me, however, that this tension reveals a finer insight on the part of Thomas.

The synthesis of the arguments is that by emulating the situation of Iseut--marriage to another--he will come to know her condition, how she might forget their love. In other words, Tristan is going to attempt to rationalize his seeking physical pleasure in the arms of another woman as an act of remembrance and love for Iseut. As Dijksterhuis noted, Tristan's thoughts are egotistical reflections¹⁰ and Tristan's resolution is indeed a very thinly-veiled egoism--the antithesis of "fin'amors."

⁹L'Originalité de Gottfried de Strasbourg, p. 54.

¹⁰Thomas und Gottfried, p. 138.

To posit further argument for this "structure," we could say that the monologue adheres to the fundamental divisions of formal argument. There is the exordium in which Tristan calls to Iseut for her attention and tries to win her sympathy for him; there is the narratio in which Tristan describes his condition with respect to hers; there is a partitio of a sort in which Tristan does not describe the line of thought to be taken in the argument but rather foreshadows the outcome. (The function of the partitio is of course to divide the stages of the argument in order to direct the hearer's line of thought; this is inherent in those lines which we would describe as the partitio, that is lines 31-34; the warning serves as a foreshadowing of the outcome of the discourse.) Given the debate character of Tristan's monologue, we find the confirmatio and the confutatio wrought together. Again given the debate structure, there is not necessarily a step-by-step development of a line of argumentation, but rather the argument on one side may provoke a response from the other and vice-versa. Finally, there is the peroratio, the conclusion.

The monologue itself begins with an apostrophe. Tristan calls across the miles to Iseut, his "bele amie" (l. 5). This apostrophe may be seen as the exordium in which Tristan wins, so to speak, Iseut's attention and gains her sympathy by telling her how their love has treated him unkindly. Though Iseut is only an imagined hearer, Tristan organizes his thoughts ostensibly to convince her; subconsciously he

is putting forth his most convincing arguments to conquer his own doubts. Tristan tries to gain sympathy by "telling" Iseut that her life is very different from his. I sense an accusation here because the verb "diverse" (l. 5) could imply inconstancy, one of the traditionally belabored evils of womankind. Godefroy gives "inconstance" as a meaning of the noun "diverserie" which is built upon the verb "diverser." And a meaning of the adjective "divers" is "inconstant." The idea of inconstancy is more than likely contained in the verb. The adverb "diversement" has a translation "méchamment" and I believe that there, too, can be sensed the idea of inconstancy.¹¹

Thomas allows Tristan to characterize Iseut with the same word as he has used to describe Tristan: "Molt diverse vostre vie" (l. 6). Tristan at the beginning is on the offensive, accusing Iseut, projecting onto her the trait in himself which is the raison d'être for his monologue.

Tristan plays upon the homonymic rhyme "desevre"/"decevre" in the next couplet (ll. 7-8). The separation has treated him falsely, he maintains. Separation ("desevre") for many can be an experience in which love is heightened and purified, but this has not been the case with Tristan who finds himself the victim of "decevre."

In lines 9-30 Tristan gives the background for his argument. "Joie" and "deduit" are key words in this stage of

¹¹Godefroy, II, 731 and IX, 398.

the monologue. Here is a first of many examples of Thomas' use of tautologies. The presence of "joie" and "deduit" is aligned with Iseut and its absence is attached to Tristan. The narratio pits pairs one against the other. In lines 9-10, Tristan asserts that on Iseut's account he has no "joie" or "deduit" whereas she has this pleasure both day and night. Contrasted with her life of "delit d'amur," his is one of "grant dolur." He is a victim of "decevre." Tristan views his life as one of yearning and unfulfillment while he characterizes Iseut's life as one of satisfaction, fulfillment. Clearly fulfillment is a physical matter for Tristan--the cause of his torment is her body: "Pur vostre cors su jo em paine" (l. 17). He makes no mention of her heart. Now, "fin'amors" is certainly more than concupiscence and physical satisfaction on the one hand, and more than platonic love on the other hand. As Lazar says of "fin'amors":

Elle a pour objet à la fois le coeur et le corps de la femme mariée. Coeur et corps, ces deux mots vont toujours de pair dans la lyrique provençale.¹²

Body is not complemented by heart in Tristan's consideration of Iseut. Many poets of "fin'amors" burn for the bodily pleasure of which they are deprived. But their attitude, as we shall see, is not the same as that of Tristan. Rozgonyi has pointed out that the jealousy that has taken hold of Tristan is not consistent with his character (as far as

¹²Amour courtois et "fin'amors," p. 61.

we can determine from reconstructions). Tristan has never before been jealous nor has he doubted Iseut's love for him. Aside from the time the two spent together in the Fossiure a la gent amant away from the court, Tristan has never been able to prevent Iseut from giving her body to Marc and there is no indication that jealousy clouded his heart at any time before this. We conclude, at Rozgonyi's suggestion, that Tristan invents this jealousy as a means to come to a decision--to extricate himself from the bonds which compel his fidelity.¹³

Tristan is jealous both of the satisfaction he believes Iseut finds in her relationship with Marc and of Marc's being able to take pleasure in her. It is this trait, his jealousy of Marc, that is not "courtly." Tristan develops studiously the contrast between himself and Marc, "mien" and "suen." (It should be noted, however, that Tristan does not refer to Marc using the term "mari" or "baron.") Rozgonyi uses this emphasis by Tristan upon the husband as a case in point for her thesis that the Tristan of Thomas is not a courtly poem. For Tristan, unlike the troubadours, is unable to forget the presence of his lover's husband. And most unlike the troubadours, he is jealous of the husband.¹⁴ Lazar has assured us, "L'amour (fin'amors, amor veraia, amor bona, etc.) ne peut exister enter personnes

¹³"Pour une approche d'un Tristan non-courtois," 823.

¹⁴Ibid.

mariées."¹⁵ Tristan is jealous of the physical satisfaction Marc finds in Iseut so easily and without delay or suffering. But it is precisely this ease with which satisfaction is gained that rules out love between husband and wife and should rule out Tristan's jealousy. With regard to husband-wife relationships, Lazar says that a husband

obtient la satisfaction de ses désirs sans avoir besoin de la courtiser, de l'implorer, de souffrir pour elle, sans connaître l'anxiété de l'attente et la crainte des adulateurs, des lauzengers malveillants. Contrairement à l'amant courtois, le mari a conquis sa femme une fois pour toutes; il ne doit pas fournir de perpétuels efforts pour gagner ses faveurs. Dans l'amour conjugal tout est fixe et stable, tout s'obtient au nom du devoir et de la propriété . . . Il n'y a pas, dans la vie conjugale, cette inclination passionnée de l'un vers l'autre, le danger et le risque; l'attente et le désir en suspens, la crainte et le tremblement leur font défaut. L'amour conjugal est paisible et monotone; le corps de la femme appartient à son maître.¹⁶

As Lazar pointed out, the term "amour conjugal" is a contradiction. That love could not exist between husband and wife was one of the basic tenets of courtly love and a frequent decision in the courts of love.

Tristan is jealous of more than Marc's possession of Iseut's body. He is also jealous that this "possession" is a duty in marriage, without the constant danger and expectation, the fear and suspense characteristic of the courtly lover. He is not thinking, then, of love as conceived by the troubadours, but only of the physical satisfaction.

¹⁵ Amour courtois et "fin'amors," p. 61.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Jonin also affirms that "il est clair qu'il [Tristan] considère l'acte charnel en général comme l'élément essentiel de l'amour."¹⁷ In effect, then, Tristan has reconciled "love" with marriage. This is most contrary to a courtly ethic.

Tristan proves himself unequal to the test of courtly love, for in line 21, afflicted by a case of sour grapes, he says, "Ço qu'avoir ne puis claim jo quite."

Another key word is introduced in line 23--"ublié." Tristan transfers his conception of love as physical pleasure to Iseut when he believes that the pleasure she takes with Marc effaces her love for him (Tristan). There is an example of annominatio in lines 22-23 with the use of the verb "delite" and the substantive "delit" emphasizing Tristan's obsessional preoccupation with physical satisfaction and also his jealousy of the king. "Delit," "deduit" and "joie" are always seen, from Tristan's point of view, as pertaining to Iseut or Marc.

By line 23, Tristan has ceased addressing Iseut as he prepares to depict himself as the perfect lover. All wrong-doing has been cast onto Iseut who has found her "joie" in her husband. Tristan, on the other hand, has remained true, so far, to Iseut (ll. 24-25). He portrays Iseut somewhat as the dame altièrre of the troubadours:

¹⁷Les Personnages féminins, p. 310. For a study of the troubadour and jealousy, see Erich Köhler, "Les Troubadours et la jalousie," in Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier (Geneva: Droz, 1970), I, 543-59.

"E rien conforter ne me volt,/ E si set bien ma grant dolur/
E l'anguisse que ai pur s'amur" (ll. 26-28). With the frequent rhyme of "dolur"/"amur," we are reminded of the courtly world in which "dolur" is a necessary part of "amur."¹⁸

Tristan then exposes one of the causes of his "dolur"; he says he is the object of another woman's attention and desire. He does not name her.

Although he does not give her name, in lines 31-34 he warns Iseut that if she does not pay attention and presumably heed his desires, he may abandon his desire for her and submit to the other woman. It is this passage which I believe can be called the partitio. It foreshadows the arguments which will be proffered by Tristan and it gives a clue to the outcome of his deliberation. This passage serves as a transition to the main part of the monologue, the deliberation.

The first development in the interior debate is a contrast between "desir" and "pueir." In a most uncourtly display, Tristan asserts:

Quant mun desir ne puis avoir,
Tenir m'estuit a mun pueir,
Car m'est avis faire l'estot:
Issi fait ki mais n'en pot. (ll. 35-38)

He shows that he does not embrace the ethic of "fin'amors."

¹⁸For a discussion of the use of "sorrow"-related words, see Phyllis Johnson, "Dolor, dolent, et soi doloir: le vocabulaire de la douleur et la conception de l'amour selon Béroul et Thomas," Romance Philology, 26 (1973), 546-554.

He wishes to throw off the role of love's martyr, a commonplace in courtly literature. In doing so, he shows himself as less than a courtly lover, rather, a man who will settle for what he can have here and now. He overtly challenges the rationale and tenets of courtly love:

Que valt tant lunges demurer
E sun bien tuit diz consirer? (ll. 39-40)

What is the value, he questions, of waiting so long and being deprived of "sun bien"? The "bien" Tristan has in mind is obviously the carnal "delit d'amur."

This has been a development of the statement of line 21, confirming our belief that Tristan is not of the same mettle as courtly lovers. This time he says that since he cannot have what he desires, he will settle for what he can have--that is the course one takes rather than completely relinquishing hope for satisfaction. He is going to work within the framework of the possible and take what is at hand when that which he longs for is inaccessible, beyond his grasp. Unlike the courtly lover, Tristan does not recognize the potency of desire. He does not allow desire to become his purifying agent.

This same reasoning is repeated:

Que valt l'amur a maintenir
Dunt nul bien ne put avenir? (ll. 41-42)

This confirms Tristan's equation of "amur" with "bien." "Amur" without "bien" is of little value--certainly of no value to him.

The coupling of "dolurs" and "amurs" occurs again in

lines 43-44, reinforcing the sense of Tristan's suffering. "Dolurs" occurs in the anaphoric tautology "Tantes paines, tantes dolurs" to stress the burden Tristan bears compared with the "joie" and "deduit" with which Tristan imagines Iseut comports herself. We always have the impression that it is Tristan who suffers most.¹⁹ Indeed, he tells us that he has suffered so much that he can now well withdraw from this venture, for it has gained him nothing. "Retraire" ("se retraire," l. 45) was a commonly employed verb of the courtly lyric meaning "ne plus servir, ne plus aimer la dame."²⁰ However, in courtly lyric the verb is usually negated to show the poet-lover's inability and unwillingness to withdraw from the service of his lady. His answer, then, to the question regarding the value of maintaining love (ll. 41-42) is "rien" (l. 46).

Again, in line 47, Tristan blames Iseut--it is she who is to blame for his situation, for his losing interest in maintaining their relationship; she has forgotten him because her disposition and sentiment has changed. The thought of her change brings an impassioned outburst in which Tristan

¹⁹This seems to be a general conception of Tristan. For example, Bernard de Ventadour:

Plus trac pena d'amor
de Tristan l'amador,
que'n sofri manhta dolor
per Izeut la blonda.

in Chansons d'amour, ed. Moshé Lazar (Paris: Klincksieck, 1966), p. 74.

²⁰H. Binet, Le Style de la lyrique courtoise en France aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles (Paris: Bouillon, 1891), p. 35.

calls out to God (line 49) to explain the volatility of the human heart--in particular her inconstancy. For his insistence is again upon her change--he is the injured party. Contrary to her fickleness, he insists that he is steadfast, that he never wants to break the bond of their love. He begins to dissert upon the quality of that love--the ability of their hearts to always commune. He says that he cannot understand how she could have abandoned her love for him because if she had, he would have known it in his heart:

Mal, ne bien, ne rien ne fist,
Que mis cuers tost nel sentist. (ll. 57-58)

This assertion forms a bridge to Tristan's defense of Iseut. His defense of her is that he knows in his heart that she has remained faithful to him in hers. He now denies his previous declaration that since he cannot have what he wants, he should take what he can get. This action would seem to bring him back perhaps as a repentant candidate for courtly lover. He now proclaims that he has no right to change his relationship with Iseut by seeking satisfaction elsewhere:

Car tant nos sumes entremis
E noz cors en amur malmis,
S'avoir ne puis mun desir,
Que pur altre deive languir (ll. 65-68)

Bédier found structure of these lines confusing and therefore he rejected this text.²¹ However jarring at first,

²¹Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 264.

this trait of Thomas--an irregular construction in which the elements of one thought are separated--will reappear and will be understood. The "Que" of line 68 is dependent upon the adverb "tant" of line 65. The idea is that 'we are so embroiled with each other and our bodies so tormented by our love for each other for me to be able to languish for someone other than you, even if I cannot find fulfillment for my yearning for you.' Bédier translated "noz cors" as "nous-mêmes,"²² but it would not be inadmissible to see in a translation of "our bodies" Tristan's insistence upon the physical aspects of love.

Iseut is acquitted of blame because although she has the will ("voleir"), she does not have the power ("poeir") to do anything but to submit to her husband. Tristan should not be resentful of this course of action on her part. And furthermore, he does not know if or how it afflicts her to not be able to give him that satisfaction.

Tristan addresses Iseut once again (l. 75), this time telling her that he has not perceived inconstancy on her part but feels in his heart that she has thought well of him and has good thoughts for him. But turning from her, he is still plagued by the thought that he is deceived in love and asks himself how she might have changed. He knows that he could not deceive her nor she him because of the powers of communication between their hearts. He does not

²²Ibid., II, 411.

suggest that she might now be tormented in her heart for the thoughts he is harboring in his, however.

Nevertheless, and here he pivots to his former position, he senses the separation, whether or not it is willed deception on her part; now contradicting lines 59-61, he states that he feels in his heart that she loves him either very little or not at all.

The next lines develop another device common to the monologue--the interior dialogue (fictitious dialogue) in which opposing forces within the soul do battle. This particular monologue does not make use of a trait common to monologic dédoublement du soi: the parts of the self do not become "tu" and "je"; both are seen in the first person perspective, as Biller has pointed out.²³ This argumentation too has a legal character--the defense interrogates the plaintiff regarding his stand. This questioning is followed by a show of bravado in lines 95-96: 'let her love her husband; let her keep to him; he does not ask that she remember him!' He then reverts to her defense (but it is to his advantage, of course), saying that he does not blame her if she forgets him, because she should

²³G. Biller, Etude sur le style des premiers romans français en vers (1150-1175) (Göteborg: Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift, IV, 1916), pp. 164-65. F. M. Warren, "Some Features of Style in Early French Narrative Poetry (1150-1170)," Modern Philology 3 (1906), 538, says that the "broken lines of debate with themselves emphasize the anxiety of lovers in their monologue."

not languish for him--it is not appropriate to her great beauty.²⁴ Tristan maintains that her continued consideration for him is not appropriate to her nature. Is this a bitter commentary on the mutability of human desire, especially of woman? Now Tristan does a complete about-face. He had previously stated that they both were too involved with each other for him to set his sight upon a different woman; but now, using the same rhyme "desir"/"languir," he absolves Iseut of having to languish for him, subtly laying the groundwork for his own dispensation. He says that it is not suitable for her to pine for another (Tristan) when her "desir" is fulfilled by her husband. "Desir" has meant more than "voleir" elsewhere; it often has denoted physical satisfaction, or again the very absence of consummating pleasure. "Desir," here though, most certainly includes the physical fulfillment; so we are led to believe either that "desir" is equated with "voleir" or that "desir" in its full sense of love is found in marriage. On the other hand, we must not expect Thomas to pin down the meanings of words too much. With his psychological insight, Thomas is aware that we often use words to our own advantage, choosing a particular shade of meaning with

²⁴In the fragments, we have no description of Iseut's great beauty. Thomas merely tells us she is beautiful. But we can presume that he sees her as the type familiar to us from the other romans of the period in which the effictio is an important element in the narrative.

a particular motive in a particular situation. Thomas is also aware that such words as desire, love, etc. are broad designations which cover a wide spectrum of complex interactions of the heart and mind. In this same development, Tristan sets up the comparisons "rei"/"mei." Then, too, he uses the comparison "m'amur"/"le delit sun seignur," setting more value upon the "delit." This will be taken up further in lines 124-25.

Again in a display of nonchalance, Tristan says that it is quite natural, in accordance with nature ("naturelment"), that she act this way. Let her hold on to what she can have and turn it to her advantage:

Prenge ço que puet avoir,
E aturt bien a sun voleir:
Par jueir, par sovent baisier
Se puet l'en issi accorder. (ll. 113-16)

"Aveir" and "voleir" can be reconciled. Or, put differently, Iseut's "aveir" can become so appealing that her "voleir" will gravitate from Tristan to the "aveir." So what good does it do him, he asks, to remember her? Whether he does or not does not matter to her because she can have her "joie" and "delit" despite love, "encuntre amur."

Pizzorusso says of the next lines, "Un altro aspetto costante dello stile di Thomas si rivela nei vv. 126-135: la forma sentenziosa per cui si passa dal caso individuale a quello generale e viceversa; inoltre ricorrono le figure caratteristiche della ratiocinatio, come la dubitatio, unita alla interrogazione retorica ai vv. 125-128, la

correctio ai vv. 131-132."²⁵ Tristan is preparing for his resolution by this argument. He has already granted that he should not hate that which he has loved, but says it is permissible to "se destolir"--once again synonymous for "ne pas (plus) servir"--to go away and take pleasure when he sees no reason to love. By the insistence upon the words "veit raisun" (l. 134) and "raisun veit" (l. 136), Tristan tries to convince himself of the logic of the resolution he will take. The word "raisun" is employed in the sense of ratio, "cioè legittimo motivo di un azione."²⁶ Frappier interprets "raisun" in this instance in the same manner-- "motif, cause qui pousse à agir ou explique une action."²⁷ In this case, "le mot comporte alors l'idée d'un motif justement raisonné, résultant d'une délibération intérieure."²⁸ That is certainly true here.

The most interesting argument, the central argument, is proposed in lines 137-48. It is based on the opposition of "franchise" and "colvertise."²⁹ Rechnitz made an interesting observation concerning lines 137-48 of Wind's

²⁵"La retorica nel Tristano di Thomas," 29-30.

²⁶Ibid., 31.

²⁷Jean Frappier, "Sur le mot 'raison' dans le Tristan de Thomas," in Linguistic and Literary Studies in honor of Helmut A. Hatzfeld (Washington: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1964), p. 165.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹See Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 267-69, for a discussion of his corrections. His text prohibits the syllogistic development described by Rechnitz.

edition (lines 189-200 in Bédier). He maintains that the difficulties of the text are a result of Thomas' clumsiness rather than a lack of clarity and that they can be put into perspective:

"Die ganze Stelle ist ein schulmässiger Syllogismus: praemissa major = v. 197 bis 200, praemissa minor = v. 189-94, conclusio v. 195-96. Dass die conclusio vor der pr. maior mitgeteilt wird, ändert an dem Pedantismus der Darstellung nichts."³⁰

If we reconstruct this syllogism, we shall be able to follow the thought of Tristan more easily. The major premise is that one should love "franchise" and fear "colvertise," and so for the sake of "franchise" one should serve (the verb servir is synonymous with aimer in courtly vocabulary)³¹ while one should feel aversion for "colvertise." The minor premise is that when one commits an act of "franchise" and then an act of "colvertise" (as Iseut has done in loving Tristan and then giving herself to Marc), one should adhere to "franchise" so that one does not render evil for evil; the force of one act should attenuate the other so that their effects are balanced. The conclusion, then, in the form of an admonition, is that one should not love too much on account of "colvertise" (which one should fear), nor should one hate the other too much because of the

³⁰F. Rechnitz, "Bemerkungen zum Texte des Tristan von Thomas und der beiden Folies Tristan," Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur, 36 (1910), 295.

³¹Binet, p. 85.

"franchise" (which one must love).

This development is reminiscent of Eneas:

Molt li estoit propre fortune:
 fortune lo ra esbaudi,
 qui de devant l'avoit marri.
 Por ce ne doit hom desperer,
 Se lui estoet mal andurer,
 et se il ra tot son plaisir,
 donc ne se doit trop esjoïr,
 ne por grant mal trop esmaier,
 ne por grant bien trop deslier;
 et d'un et d'el, de tot mesure;
 uns biens, uns mals toz tens ne dure.
 (ll. 674-84)³²

Tristan's resolution is based on moderation. He goes from the general back to the particular--Iseut--to apply the principles of the argument. He must not hate her.

I believe the punctuation in Bédier's text (his lines 203-204) is better than that in Wind's edition for lines 151 and 152. Bédier gives:

Pur ço ne la dei jo hair,
 Pur chose que puisse avenir;

whereas Wind (in a possible oversight?) shows:

Pur ço ne la dei hair.
 Pur chose que puisse avenir; (ll. 151-52)

Bédier's punctuation best fosters the idea that Tristan ought not hate Iseut for something which can happen to anyone in a similar situation.

But although he avers that he cannot hate Iseut, he still wishes to withdraw his amorous service to her, "se

³²Ed. J. J. Salverda de Grave (Paris: Champion, 1925-29, CFMA).

retraire," as she does--"Cum ele le fait" (l. 158). How can he do as she does unless he too takes a legitimate spouse? It must be a legitimate spouse, "Car cil est sis dreit espus/ Ki fait l'amur partir de nos" (ll. 167-68). At this point Tristan insists that Iseut cannot set aside her duty to Marc (ll. 169-70). Such an assertion allows Tristan to accomplish his end so that at least he reaches the solution to his quandary:

Mais mei n'estuit faire mie,
 Fors que assaier voldrai sa vie:
 Jo voil espuser la meschine
 Pur saveir l'estre a la reïne,
 Si l'espusaille e l'assembler
 Me pureient li faire oblier
 Si cum ele pur sun seignur
 Ad entroblié nostre amur. (ll. 171-78)

Tristan clothes this uncourtly proposal in dressing as altruistic as he can create. He says he is doing this as a test, not to show his spite--"Nel faz mie li pur haïr" (l. 179)--but rather to share in her own experience, to convince himself that "sine ira et studio, il peut céder aux charmes d'un nouvel amour qui présente le plus grand avantage de lui apprendre comment le mariage a pu guérir Iseult de son amour."³³

As Biller noted, Thomas seems to neglect courtly love terminology.³⁴ Iseut is his "bele amie" but she is not seen effecting any goodness on the part of Tristan; she does

³³Rozgonyi, 824.

³⁴Etude sur le style, p. 83.

not inspire him to meritorious deeds or if not deeds in the sense of exploits, conduct. And Iseut aux Blanches Mains is addressed as "Ma bele amie" as well in line 623. Tristan's use of the epithet, then, does not have any affinity (or else he has suppressed it) with its use in literature colored by "fin'amors."

A device which appears frequently in Thomas is not, according to Binet, readily found in the courtly lyric: "Les interrogations oratoires ne sont pas très fréquentes, malgré le caractère tout artificiel de la lyrique courtoise."³⁵ Nor does Thomas make use of Ovidian imagery, although he assuredly was familiar with it. He does not present any of the well-known metaphors of Love the archer with his arrows, Love the hunter with his traps and nets, Love the fisherman with his hooks. Tristan does not see himself as a soldier in Love's ranks and service. He does not say that Love has wounded him and, when he speaks of love, it is not Love personified or idealized. We do not see Tristan suffer the plight of Ovid's lovers who turn pale then flushed, cold then hot, etc. He does not see himself as "fou" as do Ovid's lovers or give his monologue the tags of desperation common in so many monologues--"Las" and "Conmar fu."

Tristan's monologue lacks the gracefulness of ideas of

³⁵Le Style de la lyrique courtoise, p. 85.

Ovid and his school perhaps, but it does not lack ideas nor does it lack rhetorical skill. Thomas deftly employs the rhetoric so familiar to his clerical training.

The soliloquy has elements of both deliberative and forensic speech. Of course the deliberative elements predominate, for this monologue is one of deliberation. But there are forensic elements in the volley of "jo"/"vos" statements described earlier which treat past action with reference to the present condition of both parties. The deliberation finds its most forceful presentation in the rhetorical questions and the grand syllogism, all having reference to the future course of action. In his speech, Tristan appeals to reason (most notably by the syllogism) and the emotions (in his portrayal of his dismal state of being compared to everyone else's happiness and in his display of good will). With the aim of winning Iseut's confidence in his reasoning and argument, her admiration and sympathy, he makes ethical appeals:

Jo ne faz fors vos desirer . . . (l. 13)

En mun corage si en despit
Tutes altres pur sule Ysolt . . . (ll. 24-25)

Nel faz mie li pur haïr . . . (l. 179)

etc.

When we speak of winning Iseut's confidence, we seem to be violating the nature of the monologue, but we have seen that Tristan's monologue is at times addressed to Iseut; it is designed to convince her if she could hear him. Most

importantly, it is designed to convince Tristan himself and so Tristan the monologist must speak convincingly to Tristan the audience.

Thomas has created Tristan's monologue with antithesis: "voleir" and "poeir," "voleir" and "desir," "desir" and "aveir," etc.; the idea of change as reflected in the fulfillment Iseut has and the empty existence Tristan leads; the delight Marc now takes in Iseut and the delight Tristan no longer has; the "paines" and "dolurs" which characterize Tristan and the "joie" and "delit" he attributes to Iseut and Marc. Pizzorusso says, "L'opposizione tra la vita triste e solitaria di Tristano e quella confortata dall' amore d'Isotta e di Marco, si traduce formalmente nell' antitesi continua dei vocaboli jo e vos, grant dolur e delit d'amur, paine e joie, mien e suen."³⁶

The contrast "jo"/"vos" is symptomatic of "die Zweiheit" which Dijksterhuis finds in Thomas, the duality rather than the unity of the lovers.³⁷ For Tristan it is a matter of "she" and "me" more than it is of "we." The pronoun "we" is never used as a subject although there are four instances of the possessive adjective: "La nostre amur tant

³⁶"La retorica nel Tristano di Thomas," 29.

³⁷Gottfried und Thomas, pp. 136-37. Dijksterhuis believes that Gottfried, on the other hand, presents the unity (union) of Tristan and Iseut throughout their destiny. The Tristan of Gottfried does not, for instance, find joy and sorrow antithetical but rather finds sorrow an integral part of his development, a purifying agent for his love of Iseut.

se desevre" (l. 7), "E noz cors en amur malmis" (l. 66), "E quant ele nostre amur oblie" (l. 153), "ele pur sun seignur/ Ad entroblié nostre amur" (ll. 177-78). As the object of a preposition, "nos" occurs in line 168: "Car cil est ses dreit espus/ Ki fait l'amur partir de nos" (ll. 167-68). Whenever "we" occurs, it is in the presence of a verb or adjective which acts as a separator--"desevre," "partir," or a cancelling factor--"malmis," "oblie," "entroblié." One might argue that this is inherent in the situation of their being apart. But it is an important aspect in the final analysis of Thomas' conception of the love of Tristan and Iseut.

Tristan's monologue recalls in some ways the soliloquy (actually the soliloquies) of Lavinia in the Eneas when she finds herself "an grant destroit" for Eneas (8643). She also considers the two-sidedness of love and the need for response from the object of one's love:

Lasse, comant porrai amer,
 si ge ne truis d'amor mon per?
 Ce m'est avis que ge foloi,
 sel voil amer et il n'aint moi
 (Eneas, 8171-74)

and the need for constancy:

Puet l'an donc si partir amor? (Eneas, 8281)
 Qui bien aime ne puet boisier;
 si est leals, ne puet changier
 (Eneas, 8283-84)

She asserts her own faithfulness in love:

. . . Ce ne ferai ge mie
 que de m'amor face partie,

ni li voil pas d'amor boisier,
 o lui n'i avra parconier;
 que qu'il m'an doie avenir,
 ja de s'amor ne quier partir;
 ge ne sui mie ancor a change.
 (Eneas, 8301-8307)

but laments that her love is not reciprocated:

Molt vos est po de vostre amie.
 (Eneas, 8356)

Lavinia's monologue is colored by the freshness of her love. Her ecstasy and her suffering are experienced for the first time, her doubts cloud her mind for the first time whereas one knows that Tristan has loved long and has suffered long. One senses that this debate within his soul has taken place before. And so it is not the rhetoric per se which stifles and mutes the passion which, though in his heart, does not break loose in his soliloquy; rather it is our knowledge that Tristan has felt this torment for so long, has iterated these arguments so many times before in his soul. He wants to finally resolve these conflicting feelings and so this time he does try to organize them by making a careful selection of the best of his previous arguments. Thus the polished character of this monologue.

Tristan makes great use of repetition in its various forms, following in this Geoffroi de Vinsauf's later exhortation: "Multiplice forma/ Dissimuletur idem./ Varius sit, tandem idem."³⁸ There is both repetition of words

³⁸Geoffroi de Vinsauf, De l'amplificacione, ll. 224-25 in Edmond Faral, Les Arts poetiques du XII^e et du XIII^e siecle (Paris: Champion, 1934), p. 204.

and ideas. We have seen examples of annominatio in lines 22 and 23, anadiplosis in lines 34 and 35, the repetition of a single word, the adjective "tantes" in line 43. There are examples of anaphora (a device greatly admired in Wace), synonymy, and paralellism--the repetition of ideas, either in the same or different words. Pizzorusso gives a list of rhetorical devices used in the Sneyd¹ Fragment, and she also points out that the terms "se," "mais," "car," "donc," "quant," "pur ço" are the apparatus of the quaestio which, coupled with his preference for abstract terms, recalls the technique and tone of controversiae and suasoriae.³⁹ So in this sense, at least, Thomas is following an Ovidian tradition.

Because his behavior is complex, we need elucidation to understand and follow the intricacy of Tristan's mental action, the motivation for that action. That means going through his thoughts and feelings step by step with him, repeating the most convincing of the arguments until he has talked himself into definitive action. Such minute analysis might be called précieux for the excessive refinement found in both the thought and its expression. The probing of the heart and soul is characteristic of courtly literature, of course. And so some, for that reason, see in Thomas a "courtly version." But Rozgonyi, noting the strong tone of this monologue, believes that "la violence

³⁹"La retorica nel Tristano di Thomas," 31, 37-38.

des sentiments, l'idée même de la haine dénonce un monde étranger, un monde primitif, une sphère de sentiments plus élémentaires et plus violents que celle de l'idéal courtois."⁴⁰

I think that her judgment is not necessarily applicable. The "hatred" here is merely hypothetical. Tristan questions how one can hate (ll. 128-30) and affirms that one should not hate (ll. 131, 144-48, 151, 156, 179). If there is hate, it is only in Tristan's interpretation of Iseut's conduct and is offered as that. Tristan is agonizing with the pangs of separation and cannot sublimate his desire in the manner of the troubadours. But this is not to say that the character of the monologue is violence and hatred. Jealousy--yes, but hatred--no, because he is consciously striving to be equitable. Such ratiocination as is seen in this monologue can hardly be called primitive and violent because it serves to weaken the display of passion. It is only with regard to the courtly ideal that Tristan's monologue shows primitiveness. But taken out of that sphere, we cannot describe the soliloquy by the terms "violence" and "haine." I do agree that Rozgonyi is right in saying: that this monologue is an example of a subject that "refusait de se plier aux règles de la fine amor, et où l'introspection, malgré son caractère essentiellement courtois, révèle des complications que l'on chercherait en vain dans d'autres oeuvres

⁴⁰"Pour une approche d'un Tristan non-courtois," 824.

de l'époque."⁴¹ I agree that this particular monologue gives evidence that Tristan is not "courtly." Thomas is using a technique which the adherents and aspirants of "fin'amors" and amour courtois found valuable and which they admired in his work. Thomas himself is aware that his subject cannot be bent. However, I suggest that judgment of Tristan be suspended until we have looked at his second monologue.

This monologue is not colored with Ovidian imagery as are, for example, the monologues of Lavinia and Eneas and those of Cligès, much admired for their psychology of love. Rather, it is the character's thought process itself with which Thomas is concerned and this is shown in his preference for abstract terms and almost mathematical manipulation of ideas.

We will see again Thomas' concern to delay, or rather to de-emphasize the récit, the exterior action. Indeed the only action which interests Thomas is that which takes place in his characters' souls. There is the real center of Thomas' roman.

Sneyd¹, 411-588

The first monologue is complemented by a second of equal length (lines 411-588) in the same fragment, Sneyd¹. Again it is Tristan who soliloquizes. Fortunately, this

⁴¹Ibid., 822.

second monologue has more narrative preparation than the first. And so for this second interior discourse, we have keener insight into the creative method of Thomas.

Tristan's first monologue was the consideration of love and marriage by a bachelor who understood love merely as physical satisfaction and believed it to be a contract which can be easily broken. The monologue was finely hand-crafted with his most persuasive, most polished rhetoric. That which appeared as spontaneity in the speech--the dramatic movements of direct address, questions, interior dialogue--was more truly a careful calculation on the part of Tristan. The elimination of doubt--or more properly, suppression--was necessary to the plausibility of the advancement of the tale. It was the subversion of doubt which facilitated Tristan's marriage to the other Iseut. At that point, Tristan was convinced that his marriage was within his rights. Now he is painfully aware of his betrayed duty to Iseut la Blonde.

When Thomas tells us in line 385 that "Li jors tres-passe od le deduit," he is already giving the reader a signal of the impending mood. This line is noteworthy in two respects. First, the day passes and takes all pleasure with it; this is a key to the distressful tone of the proximal soliloquy. Secondly, "deduit" had been used by Tristan as synonymous with carnal pleasure. Tristan will soon be afforded such delectation. But in line 385 we are told that the pleasure is gone with the day's festivities. This

line, then, by shifting the meaning of "deduit" to which Tristan had accustomed us, is also a clue to the unsummed marriage.

As his new wife is prepared for bed, so is Tristan. Thomas gives us one significant detail about the tunic of Tristan--it fits well but is tight at the wrist (l. 390). As the tunic is removed from his arms, it pulls along with it the ring given by Iseut, the symbol of Tristan's love and fidelity to her. The ring serves as the vehicle for contemplation, for as he sees it he is led to a new thought. As it is perceived by the eyes, so immediately is the ring's significance grasped by his soul. Tristan does not need to stop to dwell upon its meaning, the circumstances surrounding his acceptance of it, or his vow of fidelity. All these are already present in his soul, having only been veiled, temporarily obscured, lulled to sleep by the smooth rhetoric of his first monologue. The ring vigorously awakens his soul to affect a repentance (l. 402).

Once again Tristan is trapped in anguish. The "anguisse" (l. 397) is closely tied to the basic meaning of angustia(e) as a strait, a narrow place. In the conclusion of his first soliloquy, Tristan seemingly liberated himself from the narrow confines of his conscience. But here, Tristan feels the walls close in around him once more and he does not know what to do to escape the prison. That which he had hoped to exploit, "sis poers" (l. 399), is now impotent. Even though he is capable of accomplishing

his "volenté" (l. 400), something of the "poers" prevents it and summons up a repentance for his misdeed. Line 403 reproduces the negativity of line 399; his "poers" is in opposition to his "volenté" because his deed is now afflictive and repugnant, "a contraire" (l. 399). It is interesting to note the dual quality of several of the words chosen by Thomas in reference to Tristan. Many of the words are terms which are also appropriate to a military vocabulary. Some of the words selected by Thomas heighten the sense of warfare within Tristan's soul. I have pointed out the word "anguisse" and now I would add that "estreitement" (l. 401) reinforces that idea of narrow confinement as well as indicates the profundity of thought which Wind suggests.⁴² However, Jean-Charles Payen takes issue with Wind's interpretation and advises that the word translates as "avec douleur."⁴³ This meaning, of course, brings "estreitement" in close alignment with the sense of sorrow in "anguisse." I believe that neither definition contradicts the other and that each adds to the insight into the mood for which Thomas is preparing us. Further, in her study of the word "doloir" in Thomas, Johnson affirms:

Du point de vue étymologique, le phénomène de la souffrance se traduit chez Thomas à travers un vocabulaire où priment les sons. See héros suspirent

⁴²Les Fragments du Roman du Tristan, p. 182. Wind gives these meanings of "estreitement": "estreitement, rigoureusement."

⁴³Le Motif du repentir dans la littérature française médiévale (des origines à 1230) (Geneva: Droz, 1968), p. 357.

et se pleinent sous le poids de la grevance et de la pesance, d'où une irréductible anguisse au sens d'ANGUSTIA, c'est-à-dire d'un 'lieu resserré' dont ils ne peuvent se dégager."⁴⁴

"Destreit" in line 406 picks up the thread of military nuance. Another verb common to warfare as well as to love is "se retraire." I had previously noted the use of this verb in its courtly sense, but here it does mean precisely "retreat," "withdraw." Tristan retreats into the depths of his heart, having been confined in the straits of his conscience which prevented him from taking advantage of any "delit" with someone other than Iseut la Blonde.

It was the ring given him in the garden which prevents him from entering the alcove. The garden and the alcove are familiar motifs of the erotic poetry of the troubadours. They are the scenes of the rendez-vous in which the lover hopes to find his expectations fulfilled.⁴⁵ But here, Tristan remembers the garden with Iseut la Blonde and this memory thwarts his attempt to enjoy the alcove with Iseut aux Blanches Mains.

The tag "A sei dit" of line 411 indicates the interiority of the discourse, in addition to the phrase "De parfunt cuer" of the previous line. Whereas in the first monologue Tristan's first utterance was an accusation of Iseut, here it is a question centered upon himself. This

⁴⁴"Dolor, dolent, et soi doloir," 550.

⁴⁵Lazar, pp. 123-24.

monologue, far from being well thought out and planned, is declaimed extemporaneously. In the first soliloquy, the reader could sense Tristan's direction. In this second monologue, the reader actually gropes along with him. To say that the monologue has no premeditated plan is not to say that it has no shape. Despite its extemporaneity and sense of bewilderment, it does assume shape. We can see three phases: lines 411-26 are a statement of the problem; lines 427-554 develop and amplify the dilemma; the resolution is recounted in lines 555-85.⁴⁶

This monologue opens with a note of desperation. The question "Coment le pois faire?" indicates Tristan's torn soul. The underlying assumption is that he must perform the consummatory act, but his prevailing sentiment is contrary to this. This question, then, carries the force of his soul in contradiction. Tristan questions how he can go through with this act. Here it is "ovre" (l. 412) whereas before the wedding it was "deduit," "delit," and "joie." The use of the word "ovre" reveals Tristan's disenchantment; it brings the idea of sexual union down to a banal level.

Lines 412 and 413 inaugurate one of the patterns which will extend throughout the discourse. Line 411 indicates

⁴⁶Payen, Le Motif du repentir, p. 358, states, "Pendant plus de cent vers (427-554)--et la plus grande partie de ce monologue--Tristan roule dans sa tête une même pensée sans avancer d'un pas; d'où comme un tissu de variations sur un motif unique, obsédant."

Tristan's personal sentiment--this act is now contrary to him. ("Contraire" as a verb is also used with "mariage" to mean "to contract a marriage." Tristan did contract marriage and now this marriage is contrary to him.) But in line 412, by the process of correctio, Tristan states that 'nevertheless, he must.' And he must because she is his "dreite moillier." In line 415 he develops this idea of being constrained to lie with her and he adds the reason-- he cannot abandon her. With the same line of development as seen with the word "ovre," "cholcher" and "gisir" (ll. 413 and 415) here replace the "deliter" of his first monologue which he expected to find in his marriage. What was conceived as hedonistic revelry is now degraded to duty, drudgery. It is duty because Iseut aux Blanches Mains has become at his bidding his "dreite moillier" (l. 414). The fact that he must lie with her as his legal wife also reveals that the enchantment has gone from this relationship. In marriage there cannot be love; spouses lie with one another not for delight but for duty. Having sealed the marriage pact he cannot, however, abandon her. We sense too that Tristan pities Iseut aux Blanches Mains for being caught in his manipulation as he says:

Car jo ne la puis pas gurpir:
 Ço est tuit par mun fol corage,
 Ki tant m'irt jolif e volage. (ll. 416-18)

Tristan now realizes the folly of his resolution and he recognizes that he is guilty of the fickleness about which Thomas has just disserted in lines 233-304. Whereas

Tristan had previously accused Iseut la Blonde of being inconstant, he now understands that it is he who has been faithless. His fickleness was truly folly and only worsened his condition. He recognizes that by being "jolif" (too concerned with carnal delights) and "volage," he has betrayed the ethic of the courtly lover and offended his lady and secondly he has jeopardized his wife.

Tristan is finally, too late, brought to the awareness of his base, egoistic action. It was not with thought for Iseut la Blonde that he engaged in this marriage--that was a highly contrived pretext which Tristan now terms "derverie" (l. 422). In fact, he now sees things for what they are and recognizes his behavior as deception, "trichier," and broken faith, "mentir ma fei" (l. 423). By inverse repetition of line 413, in line 424 Tristan emphasizes that he must lie with his new wife, and he adds gravely that it displeases him, it afflicts him.

Lines 425 and 426 develop the reason he cannot abandon his wife and why he must lie with her. He has married her "lealment" in accordance with both religious code ("Al us del mustier") and social code ("veant gent").

With line 427 Tristan embarks upon a tangled web of conscience examination. In bowing to religious and social convention, Tristan cannot forsake or refuse his new wife and because of this, he is forced to recognize the disparity between the order which Iseut aux Blanches Mains represents and that of Iseut. By accepting his wife, Tristan acknowledges

that he commits folly. Notice Tristan's use of such terms as "fol," "derverie," "folie." These words of course are a part of Ovidian rhetoric. But in Ovid and his emulators, such terms usually have that overtone of preciousness when characters chastize themselves for succumbing to the god of Love, committing themselves completely to their lovers. The giving in to Love is the folly. But Tristan categorizes as "fol" and "folie" that which prevents him from being completely ruled by love, by Iseut la Blonde. And whereas in Bérout the lovers repent for their "folie," Tristan in Thomas does not conceive of his love for Iseut as "folie" and neither is there at any point before, in Tristan and Iseut la Blonde's relationship, any need for repentance for loving each other. For Tristan now it is folly to do anything other than affirm in both words and deeds his love for Iseut la Blonde.

However, not to consummate his marriage would constitute a transgression of both society and religious institution and their norms--"grant pechie" and "mal faire" (l. 429). This will be developed at greater length shortly. If sin and wrongdoing would characterize the unfulfilled or abandoned marriage, consummation (again the common "assembler") would constitute "desleer." Tristan has so pledged his love and service to Iseut la Blonde that he cannot retract it and offer it to another. "Raisun" prohibits this. Frappier, in his article on the use of "raison" in Thomas, says of line 434, "Cette 'raison' est son amour d'Iseut,

l'impératif catégorique de la fine amor."⁴⁷ It is his adherence to the dictates of "fin'amors" which prohibits Tristan from his duty to his wife on their wedding night.⁴⁸ Tristan very definitely, then, finds himself in a dilemma.

This interior discourse of Tristan reminds us of the monologic tradition begun with the Medea of Apollonius of Rhodes. Here there is true dilemma. Just as Medea felt cornered by the dictates of society (filial duty, honor, decency) and the tyranny of love, so is Tristan faced with the same problem, the laws of society and the laws of love. He cannot choose one without offending the other. He cannot steer either course without damage.

The type of construction introduced in line 427 is also representative of the major pattern of development in this monologue: Tristan states one of the terms of his relationship with one of the women but then names the restriction upon that term which is implied by the terms of his bond with the other woman. For instance, in line 430 he states that he cannot back out of his marriage contract, but because of Iseut la Blonde, neither can he fulfill it. Such a construction is similar to braiding in which threads are alternately active and passive, acting and being acted upon, constantly shifting from side to side.

⁴⁷"Sur le mot 'raison'," p. 171.

⁴⁸Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 280: I would agree with the punctuation of Bédier rather than that of Wind. Bédier places a period at the end of line 434 (Bédier, line 486).

Tristan seems overwhelmed by the number of "devoirs" with which he must comply. This is reflected in the use of the verbs "m'estuit" (ll. 413, 424, 428), "covient" (l. 415), "dei" (ll. 435, 438, 444, etc.), "redei" (l. 437), the negative "ne puis pas" or "ne pois pas" (ll. 416, 431, 436, etc.). In his previous monologue, Tristan systematically undid the links between himself and Iseut la Blonde which imposed upon him the abstention from courting another. Here the "devoirs" cloud his vision again.

We have, on the wedding night, in the perception of dilemma, the distinction by Tristan of the two Iseuts.⁴⁹ In courting Iseut aux Blanches Mains, Tristan had equated her with his lover, seeking her out not for her individual traits but for those which were common with Iseut la Blonde. Tristan never allowed this to surface in his first soliloquy, or even this second, but Thomas interpreted his behavior:

Pur le nun e pur la belté
 Que Tristrans i ad trové
 Chiet en desir e en voleir
 Que la meschine volt aveir. (ll. 229-32)

We can look at "chiet" in three ways--either as corresponding to our conventional "falling" in love, as an indication of fatality, or as a fall with the implied judgment--that is, a fall from good to bad with the ensuing problems, a fall which condemns unless there is redemption. Now Tristan

⁴⁹L. Polak, "The Two Caves of Love in the Tristan by Thomas," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 33 (1970), 64.

realizes that however much the same they may be, the two women are distinct and each exacts a duty of him. He recognizes that his courting of Iseut aux Blanches Mains was a fruitless attempt to find happiness in and through his beloved, but far away Iseut la Blonde.⁵⁰ This distinction represents the undoing of lines 183-232 (anticipated in 216) in which Thomas himself analyzed and rationalized Tristan's thought-process. The untangling of the knot is reflected in the contrasts set up beginning in lines 419 and 421 ("la meschine" and "Ysolt m'amie"), lines 433 and 434 ("Ysolt" and "ceste"), and lines 435 and 436 ("iceste Ysolt" and "altre"). This contrast will be carried on throughout the soliloquy.

Throughout these developments, there is an emphasis upon wrongdoing, sin, transgression of some sort. To not consummate his marriage would constitute for Tristan a transgression of both society and religious institution--"mal" (ll. 429, 442), "grant pechié" (ll. 429, 442), and "tort" (l. 442). Payen believes we cannot be certain if Tristan here is employing "pechié" of line 442 in a religious sense.⁵¹

⁵⁰Ibid., 63. Polak also states that the statue of Iseut represents another attempt to reproduce his lover. The statue, however, does not have the same maleficent effect. Françoise Barteau in her book, Les Romans de Tristan et Iseut; introduction à une lecture plurielle (Paris: Larousse, 1972), p. 209, sees in Tristan's marriage "un effort en vue de ré-intégrer la société, de devenir à nouveau membre d'une collectivité 'normale'"

⁵¹Le Motif du repentir, p. 358. Payen says, "Le mot pechié, qui figure au v. 442, est-il employé avec sa vouleur théologique? Rien n'est moins sûr, à voir la façon dont il est associé avec tort qui est un mot de la langue juridique et qui signifie proprement "injustice." Il faut attendre ensuite

Jonin, though, insists on the religious tonality of the monologue. He states, "C'est donc sur le plan religieux et en conséquence par le droit canonique que nous paraissent s'expliquer essentiellement les scrupules de Tristan envers Iseut aux Blanches Mains."⁵² We must remember, though, that it is man who, in constructing canon law, is attempting to interpret laws of a higher order. Thus, a transgression of canon law is an infringement of human interpretation of universal order. Nevertheless, Jonin feels that the idea of sin against the Church weighs heavily upon Tristan and that he is cognizant of the debitum conjugale:

Il faut donc pour comprendre exactement les termes de Tristan parlant avec insistance de son devoir envers Iseut aux Blanches Mains se rappeler qu'au Moyen âge, le droit canonique faisait de la copula carnalis une véritable prestation rigoureusement due. Mais seule cette consécration du mariage par une cérémonie religieuse lui donnait toute sa force du point de vue du droit canonique et l'époux qui s'était engagé publiquement à l'Eglise ne pouvait se soustraire dans la suite au devoir conjugal.⁵³

On the other hand, if he were to consummate his marriage (in the very bromidic term "assembler" of line 431), this would constitute the ultimate breach of the fidelity he pledged to his lover.

Lines 444-46 subtly disclose again the egoistical motivation in Tristan's marriage; it was for "mei delitier" and

le vers 503 pour retrouver ce terme, pechié, cette fois-ci avec le sens 'd'offense faite à Dieu'"

⁵²Les Personnages féminins, p. 392.

⁵³Ibid., p. 394.

for "mun buen" and "mun delit." The emphasis was always on "me." Granted Tristan is contrasting "li" with Iseut la Blonde, but such emphasis on himself recalls the egoism of his first soliloquy and that is responsible for his present stymie. Again in the rhyme "lit/ "delit" we are confronted with Tristan's equation of the delights of love with physical pleasure.

The next four lines (ll. 447-50) continue the braiding pattern, binding the argument even more tightly by the use of an inverted repetition (with change of object) in the parallel constructions of 447 and 449. The rhyme of "reïne" with "meschine" is also something of a clue. The word "meschine" is indicative of Iseut aux Blanches Mains' status with regard to Iseut la Reine. "Reïne" and "meschine" can be direct opposites in terms of social rank. Although "meschine" can mean simply "jeune fille" or even "femme ou fille de naissance noble," it has a third meaning, "servante."⁵⁴ It is this third meaning which comes to mind when the term is pitted against "reïne." This rhyme occurs three times throughout the discourse. Iseut aux Blanches Mains is not, by social rank, a servant. But she will always play a subservient role to Iseut la Reine. In the outcome of this soliloquy, Iseut aux Blanches Mains will very definitely be dominated by Iseut la Blonde, la Reine.

⁵⁴Greimas, "meschine," p. 408; Godefroy, V, 273.

Lines 451- 54 convey the negative, oppressive situation of Tristan by the anaphoric "ne" and the interior repetition of "ne dei." The irony of Tristan's position is evident in his choice of words in lines 451 and 452, "trichier" and "laissier."

Tristan's dilemma forces him to lie and deceive. The only thing he is not sure of at this point is whom to deceive, expressed in the dubitatio:

Ne sai a la quele mentir,
 Car l'une me covient traïr
 E decevre e enginnier,
 U anduis, ço crei, trichier
 Car tant m'est ceste aprocée
 Que Ysolt est ja enginnée. (ll. 461-66)

He has put himself in such a bind that he cannot extricate himself without deceiving one if not both women.

In line 466, he recognizes that he has deceived Iseut la Reine; in line 468, his new wife; and in line 469, himself. In a despairing tone he utters, "E l'une e l'autre mar conui." Similarly, both women suffer because of him while he suffers because of the two of them:

L'une l'autre pur mei se dolt,
 E jo m'en duil pur doble Ysolt. (ll. 471-72)

"Doble Ysolt" is a very perceptive label. It also illustrates the earlier statement of Thomas that those who seek frivolity "sovent doblent lor grevance" (350). (See l. 216.) We see the turns of meaning vested in this statement--first, that Tristan is suffering because of the two Iseuts; secondly, that he is suffering because of the copy, the "double" he has accepted in lieu of the true Iseut.

The antithetical construction, begun with the "l'une e l'autre" of line 470 is amplified throughout lines 471-81. The statements are variations on the theme in line 474, "A l'une, a l'autre ment ma fei." Following this development, Tristan's true emotion bursts forth in the impassioned cry of line 482, "Ne ne dei Ysolt tricher!" This is the single exclamatory phrase of the entire monologue; it captures the despairing tone of the monologue. This sentence of stark simplicity succeeds the intricacy of the reasoning Tristan feels compelled to do. No matter how much he must reason his duty to his wife, he knows and wants to assert the supremacy of Iseut la Blonde. But his question at this point is 'how?' We see this question in the rhetorical figure of line 483, the dubitatio, "Certes, ne sai que faire puisse . . ." The word "anguisse" shows up again in line 484, showing the force of the word as it translates the real anguish and suffering which we have acknowledged as characteristic of Tristan as well as conveys the sense of being hemmed in on all sides ("de tutes pars") in a narrow place. There seems to be no exit from this "anguisse," as the climax in lines 485-86 shows--it is bad for him if he keeps faith with his lover but it is worse if he slackens in his responsibilities toward his wife. The two poles of duty are alliterative--"me fei" and "ma femme."

Tristan is resigned to having to share the nuptial bed. Line 488 parallels 413 and 424. Here is also another example of the rhyme pair "delit"/ "lit."

In lines 489-92 we have Tristan's acknowledgment that revenge motivated his marriage. In his first soliloquy, Tristan had never allowed the idea of vengeance to surface. He was able to repress it by the manipulation of logic to a satisfactory alibi. But now he admits that this was the pith of his action. He did not know how to control the feeling before and neither does he know how to handle it now as he admits in another example of dubitatio in line 494. Once more he ponders the dilemma. If he honors his duty to the one, the other will be angry. But the anger weighs most heavily on the side of his wife if he slights her, for not only would she be angry, but (another example of climax) he would be hated and shamed by her family and all others, and he would sin against God. Payen indicates that the word "pechié" (l. 503) has, in this case, its full religious value, "puisque c'est à ce moment-là seulement que Tristan se met à songer qu'il 'mefairait' contre Dieu s'il ne remplissait pas ses devoirs d'époux."⁵⁵ On the other hand, we have seen that Jonin senses religious scruple throughout the monologue.⁵⁶ In the balanced sentence of line 503 there is a further example of climax; Tristan says he would be guilty of shame and sin. I believe that Jonin is over-emphasizing theological aspects which do not actually trouble Tristan. His scruples regarding his marriage are more simply explained

⁵⁵Le Motif du repentir, p. 358.

⁵⁶Les Personnages féminins, pp. 392-94.

by the fact that he fears losing Iseut's love.

The idea of Tristan's finding "delit," nurtured in the first monologue, has completely vanished here. Tristan resorts to periphrasis to name his conjugal duty, but this only renders the sentiment of aversion more strong; in lines 505-507 it is "ço . . ./ Que en mun corage plus haz,/ Que plus m'ert contre volenté." Tristan adds emphatically that, "Del gesir n'i avrai ja gré." This was the initial sentiment expressed in line 412.

In his first monologue, Tristan tendered the pragmatic philosophy of putting "pueir" to use:

Quant mun desir ne puis aveir,
Tenir m'estuit a mun pueir,
Car m'est avis faire l'estot:
Issi fait ki mais n'en pot. (ll. 35-38)

But the irony is that it has now become, so to speak, impotent:

Ele savra par mun poeir
Que vers altre ai greinur voleir. (ll. 509-10)

He avers that she cannot fail to notice his aversion for her (ll. 511-14) and when her desire is left ungratified, her love will diminish and turn, rightfully, to hate. Lines 518 and 519 are curious. Tristan speaks of the "naturel fait/ Ki nos deit lier en amur." Once again, we know that by most interpretations of courtly love, there can be no love in marriage. Lines 520-24 present the only argument of generalization and the only example of sententia in the second monologue. The first monologue appealed much more to generalities, as evidenced in such lines as 38 ("Issi fait ki mais

n'en pot."), 116 ("Se puet l'en"), 132-34 ("Mais il s'en puet bien destolir") and others, certainly including the syllogism. But this second soliloquy seems to wallow in the specific condition of Tristan and so this example of sententia stands out. The maxim is built upon parallelism and antithesis and, again, shows the emphasis upon the carnal aspects of sexual union and love. This maxim is the breeding ground for continued reflection. The result of his abstinence will be hatred on the part of his wife, for love comes from "del faire," but hatred from "del retraire." If he abstains from intimacy with his wife, he will suffer sorrow and affliction not only because of her hatred, but because his "proeise" and "franchise" would become "recreantise" (ll. 527-28). The idea of a loss of self-esteem, offends Tristan as it would any knight. Tristan now will have to justify any abstention in light of "recreantise." This is not quite the same "dolor" Tristan lamented in his first soliloquy. The overtones are more ominous.

Iseut aux Blanches Mains will hate Tristan because her desire is unfulfilled, but Tristan now sees this as the solution; he seeks her hatred rather than her love:

Senz le faire molt m'ad amé
 E coveité en sun pensé,
 Ore me harra par l'asténir
 Pur ço qu'ele n'at sun desir,
 Car ço est que plus alie
 En amor amant e amie,
 E pur iço ne li voil faire,
 Car d'amur la voil retraire.

Bien voil que la haür i seit,
Plus de l'amur ore le coveit. (ll. 535-44)

We should point out that line 540 is an example of anno-
minatio put to good use. This insistence on love, true love,
is what will carry the monologue to its resolution.

Tristan recognizes that he has wronged Iseut la Blonde
who has loved him above all others. (He seems sure of this
now, but this doubt accounted for 178 lines of reflection.)
In the long dubitatio of lines 548-54, Tristan questions
what moved him to wed Iseut aux Blanches Mains. Here we see
Thomas' manipulation of synonyms--"ceste volenté/ E cest
desir et cest voleir/ U la force u le poeir" Just
as line 503, line 553 ("Contre l'amur, cuntre la fei") shows
an appreciation of balanced, asyndetic phrases.

Tristan had regretted his deception of Iseut la Blonde
and realizes that the treachery would be further at work
were he to consummate his marriage with his wife. This
thought begins the formulation of the resolution.

In lines 557-58, we see the accumulation of terms.
What Wind had transcribed in line 558 as "Engin, semblance
e traïsun," Frappier would read as, "Engin, semblance e
raisun." He understands "raisun" in its sense of "prétexte,
motif injustifié, mauvaise raison."⁵⁷

⁵⁷"Sur le mot 'raison'," pp. 165-68. Frappier comments on
Bédier's edition and correction of (his) line 610. Frappier
points out that in the Chanson de Roland, "raison" signifies
"parole," "discours" (p. 163), whereas in Thomas, the word
is never employed with that meaning. He says it is his
opinion that "de tous les auteurs courtois du XII^e siècle,

It is love against which he machinates if he seeks to deceive and break faith with Iseut la Blonde; and now, worse than the "tort" and "pechié" which would be committed against his wife, he would be a "traître" and "fel" if he sought pleasure in any but Iseut la Blonde (ll. 565-66).

He has already worked against love so much that there will be no escape from sorrow the rest of his life (ll. 567-68). He wishes to redress the wrong he has committed so that Iseut la Blonde may be avenged. Thus he will take on a penance commensurate with his sin. Notice that the penitential rite is not aligned with the religious force at work, it is of a different and (according to Tristan's hierarchy of values) more important order. This is the penance Tristan will take upon himself:

Chulcher m'en voil ore en cest lit,
E si m'astenderai del delit. (ll. 573-74)

Here again is the rhyme pair "lit/ "delit." Tristan will not be guilty of "recreantise" in his own eyes because he will be testing his will, fighting evil and temptation in the form of Iseut aux Blanches Mains. This trial justifies his unconsummated marriage and removes his earlier doubts regarding self-esteem.

Thomas est vraisemblablement celui qui a fait du terme de 'raison' l'usage le plus étendu et le plus varié en lui donnant une valeur ou intellectuelle, ou esthétique, ou morale, quasi philosophique et religieuse . . . On dirait que Thomas n'a voulu lui attribuer que des valeurs abstraites, les plus hautes et les plus pures." (p. 164)

The next lines, 575-84 are also built upon antithesis. The first development is one of climax: "torment," "plus aie paine," and "anguisse greinur." Whether there is love or hate, the solution will work because, "si delit de li desir" (an example of annominatio; here, alliteration), the pain of abstaining will be unsettling and formidable; on the other hand, if he does not feel desire for her, "si ne coveit le delit," then it will be an onerous task to share her bed. So whether he loves her or hates her, the penance is equally exacting.

Having found a solution to his problem, Tristan looks now to Iseut la Blonde for absolution:

Pur ço qu'a Ysolt ment ma fei,
 Tel penitance preng sur mei,
 Quant ele savra cum sui destreit
 Par tant pardonner le mei deit. (ll. 585-88)

Throughout his reflection, Tristan has been weighted down by his duties, all the "devoirs." At last in the end, the "devoir" becomes that of Iseut la Blonde.

In this dilemma one would expect the exploitation of the fictitious, interior dialogue. But here we have no trace of this technique. One would expect Reason to do its traditional verbal battle with Love. But in Thomas this cannot be. Love is not the idealized entity, personified as it is in other contemporary works. Reason ("raison") is the conscience of, is love ("fin'amors"). Love and reason are synonymous in Thomas.⁵⁸

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 171.

Neither is there apostrophe in this monologue. Tristan does not call out to Iseut la Blonde, he does not call out to Iseut aux Blanches Mains or to any supreme being. There is no manipulated division of the self--Tristan does not separate his warring sentiments and address himself. All this tends to reinforce the reader's impression of Tristan's isolation in his great anguish.

This soliloquy by Tristan, even more so than his first, bears witness to the static quality of the work of Thomas. For since the first had an ostensible plan with a premeditated denouement, the reader sensed Tristan progressing toward a conclusive argument. Here the lack of plan--because of the spontaneity of the situation--gives the reader the impression that Tristan is only flailing against a quicksand and irrevocably engulfing himself.

Unlike the first monologue in which thirteen questions were put to calculated advantage, here in a truly dilemmatic situation we have only three:

Coment le pois faire? (l. 411)

Quei idunc quant jo serai chulchié
 Se od le chulcher ço ne faz
 Que en mun corage plus haz,
 Que plus m'ert contre volenté? (ll. 504-507)

Dunt me vient cest volenté . . . ? (l. 548)

In the first of his monologues, Tristan sought to accuse Iseut of deception--it was she who had forgotten him, he said. Now in the second, Tristan assumes responsibility for the deception and conniving. In the first, Tristan thought only of

his own personal satisfaction; in the second, he retreats from his egoism and faces the consequences of his tangled maneuverings. But in his consideration of others, although he weighs the importance of institutions such as the Church and society, it is a higher order of love not governed by Church or society which prevails. Both Tristan's monologues express struggles between body and heart, or soul. In the first, it is the body which triumphs; in the second, it is the heart. The first soliloquy represents the intent to commit sin against love for Iseut la Blonde; the second is the recognition of offense, contrition and movement toward expiation. The basis of Tristan's suffering before his marriage to Iseut aux Blanches Mains, and accounting for it, was his carnal desire for the queen. Now a higher, sharper affliction goads him--his conscience for "fin'amors," desire in its highest sense. Tristan is brought to the realization that, as Rozgonyi says,

Le bien suprême pour la fine amor est le désir même, ce désir non réalisé, insatisfait que, précisément, l'impossibilité de la satisfaction rend apte à véhiculer un amour noble.⁵⁹

In neither monologue does Tristan blame the philtre for his actions. His conduct is always the result of his choice and reasoned decision, even if he later rues that decision.

Johnson speaks of "l'univers courtois du conflit psychologique, où l'héroïsme se mesure en termes d'expiation."⁶⁰

⁵⁹"Pour une approche d'un Tristan non-courtois," 823.

⁶⁰Johnson, "Dolor, dolent, et soi doloir," 551.

Love for Iseut la Blonde is the source of prowess for Tristan--in his abnegation vis-à-vis the other Iseut. His wife and society may brand him "recreant" but that is the risk and loss he incurs and finds more favorable than being accused a "recreant" by Iseut la Blonde in accordance with the standards which unite him with her. Repentance and ex-
piation are not sought on the familiar levels of society and Church. Discussing the literature of the south of France, Payen says that although it is not rare for a courtly lover to ask forgiveness of his lady for broken faith, it is highly unusual that the fault would be "l'inconstance pure et simple."⁶¹ In the literature of the north as well, offense and repentance are rare.⁶² Aligning the poems of Béroul and Thomas with his theme of repentance in literature, he says, "En fait, ces poèmes de l'amour ne peignent qu'occasionnellement le scrupule et la mauvaise conscience, et cette peinture est plus exceptionnelle encore chez Béroul que chez Thomas."⁶³ Though considering repentance in its more Church-oriented significance, in light of twelfth- and thirteenth-century theories and doctrine of contrition, Payen does admit that Thomas goes further than Béroul in painting the soul torn by its transgressions against love.⁶⁴ The second

⁶¹Le Motif du repentir, p. 240. Payen gives only two examples of troubadours whose broken faith is "l'inconstance pure et simple"--Rigaut de Barbezieux and Gaucelm Faidit. See pp. 240-42.

⁶²Ibid., p. 266.

⁶³Ibid., p. 331.

⁶⁴Ibid.

monologue offered Tristan the opportunity to "implorer le pardon divin, demander à Dieu la grâce de la contrition--", mais Tristan n'y pense même pas. Son 'repentir' est en fait le plus désespérant des remords."⁶⁵ Payen further adds that, "Un trait notable de ce monologue est l'absence quasi complète de références à des notions d'ordre spirituel."⁶⁶

Rather than suggesting that his hero goes against the precepts of the Church, Thomas tries to avoid, sidestep reference to the spiritual order as we, and the twelfth century, generally interpret it. Tristan's love surpasses the whole social code and reaches beyond the typical spiritual religious sphere in the conventional sense.

But for all that, this love still does not tally up one hundred per cent with "fin'amors." Lazar discusses some of the difficulties:

Pourquoi Tristan ne peut-il consommer l'amour, alors qu'il est marié à Iseut aux Blanches Mains? En quoi son acte serait-il "vilain"? N'a-t-il pas le droit d'aimer charnellement sa propre femme? Il semble qu'il n'en ait pas le droit selon le code de la fin'amors. Iseut la Blonde, sa Dame, le lui défend. Elle a tous les droits sur son amant. Celui-ci, soumis à sa volonté, ne peut donc avoir avec Iseut aux Blanches Mains que des relations autorisées par l'autre Iseut: il peut embrasser sa femme, lui donner des baisers, la caresser, il ne peut consommer l'amour, même lors de la nuit des noces. Il appartient coeur et corps à sa Dame, Iseut la Blonde. Il ne faut pas oublier, d'autre part, que l'amour ne peut exister entre des personnes mariées, selon la conception de la fin'amors. Il s'ensuit que le passage du Tristan en question pose une série de problèmes auxquels il n'est guère aise de trouver une

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 357.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 358.

solution définitive: a) même s'il s'agit de la fin'amors, Tristan devrait avoir le droit de vivre charnellement avec sa femme; b) si Iseut lui permet tous les jeux érotiques de l'amour, et lui interdit par contre l'acte sexuel, c'est qu'elle affirme avoir seule le droit à l'amour total; c) s'il en est ainsi, la fin'amors ne correspond pas au purus amor d'André le Chapelain, idéal qui autorise le jeu amoureux mais exclut la jouissance physique de l'amour; d) l'amour entre Tristan et Iseut étant charnel, leur conception de la fin'amors équivaut alors à ce qu'André le Chapelain appelait mixtus amor, conception qui n'interdit pas l'acte sexuel.⁶⁷

This disparity between the love espoused by Tristan and the love of "fin'amors" need not be so upsetting. The codification of courtly love by Andreas Capellanus comes late (1184-1186⁶⁸). The ideas expressed by Thomas are of a kindred spirit, if they do not conform to specific "rules." In the first monologue Tristan presumed to escape the influence of the all powerful love which bound him to Iseut; in the second, he repents for having attempted to deceive love and is once again under the yoke of love.

Unlike the poetry of the troubadours, there is no imagery in this monologue, Ovidian or otherwise. But this, rather than being a fault, is a most convincing aspect of the skill with which Thomas has fashioned this soliloquy. And despite the lack of erotic imagery, both monologues throb with a sexuality.⁶⁹ The lack of imagery means a preponderance

⁶⁷Amour courtois et "fin'amors," p. 73.

⁶⁸John Jay Parry, p. 21, in his introduction to The Art of Courtly Love by Andreas Capellanus (New York: Norton, 1969).

⁶⁹Payen, Le Motif du repentir, p. 359.

of nouns, abstract nouns. But this should present no difficulty, once again because the troubadours also use abstract notions which are hard to define.⁷⁰ Although the monologue is devoid of imagery, the vocabulary brings us close to the feudal and religious spheres: "covenant," "lealment," "tort," "pechié," "mal," "desleer," "porter fei," "fiance," "deslei," "traître," "fel," "asténir," "pardonner," and so forth. Again, these are abstract terms and many are familiar to the troubadour vocabulary as well. Tristan uses the epithet "m'amie" when soliloquizing to refer to his beloved.

Tristan, as we have said, seems most oppressed by the burden of his suffering. Françoise Barteau notes that pessimism and resignation are learned qualities which result from so much weighing of pros and cons:

En somme, tout se passe comme si le dynamisme de la force vitale de la passion était contrariée par une force diamétralement opposée, et qui tend à devenir égale à la première: il est possible que cette seconde force soit le pouvoir réflexif qui finit par dévorer nos héros.⁷¹

Jonin has stated his belief that Tristan himself cannot or does not foresee the outcome of the problems which oppress him.⁷² I would point out that the reader senses the premeditated plan of the first monologue, but I agree that we the readers work through the problem with him. Truly we

⁷⁰Lazar, p. 32.

⁷¹Les Romans de Tristan et Iseut, p. 176.

⁷²Les Personnages féminins, pp. 312-13.

assist with Tristan in the decision-making process of the second monologue. In both we live through the processes with the character. Instead of merely being told, we are shown. Thus the conflicts become highly dramatic for us.

In conclusion, both of Tristan's monologues are compromises. In both Tristan bows to desire, but the desire is not the same in each case. In the first it fell to mean physical lust, in the second it was redeemed to signify Tristan's love for Iseut la Blonde. The first monologue displayed a sophisticated development because Tristan had long been faced with the problem of missing his beloved and had contemplated various solutions. In the second, Tristan had to come to a conclusion within a short while. In his first monologue Tristan posedly constructed a facade in which he truly did not believe. In the second monologue the facade fell. He was essentially at leisure coming to a decision to marry this Iseut. But he was pressed on the wedding night for an answer to his nagging conscience. This monologue is very much an examination of conscience, Tristan's extemporaneous attempt to extricate himself from the evils he has brought upon himself. According to Jonin, Tristan's soliloquies are a manifestation of Thomas' idea of man's inability to disengage himself from the evils that assail him.⁷³ On a broader plane, Thomas is attempting to show the evils

⁷³Ibid., p. 316.

that assail true love and man's efforts to seek his good. The two monologues of Tristan must be viewed together in order to understand the character of Thomas' Tristan and the character of Tristan's love for Iseut la Blonde.

Douce, 1615-94

The first time the modern reader hears the voice of Iseut engaged in speech other than dialogue occurs in Fragment Douce (Fin du poème), lines 1615-94. The entire scene at sea is one of the most, if not the single most dramatic scene in the fragments remaining. Iseut's speech is the apex of the storm scene and furthermore, it is the most intense, profound perception the reader is offered of the nature and quality of Iseut's love for Tristan.

Iseut is, of course, not alone on the boat nor is she the only one to grieve. All the passengers are disturbed because of the storm and all manifest their woe:

Tuit i plurent et tuit se pleinent,
Pur la poür grant dolor maingnent. (ll. 1613-14)

Whether the "poür" is merely for the storm or mingled with Iseut's inability to reach Tristan, we are not told. Yet we sense that the passengers' distress embraces Iseut's concern, for among them are Brangien and Kaherdin (cf. ll. 1511-12). But even though Iseut's confidante is on board, Iseut--perhaps realizing the futility of discourse at this time and knowing the exceptional quality of her love is beyond the comprehension or grasp of Brangien--finds herself isolated in

her sorrow. Thus it is the voice of Iseut which rises above the tumult of the storm and the clamor of the other passengers. The monologue takes rise with the traditional, formulaic "Lasse! chaitive!" in line 1615. In his study of Bernard de Ventadour, Pierre Bec stated that the word "caitius" is the "adjectif-clef du lyrisme douloureux."⁷⁴ The soliloquy opens, then, in an agitated manner in which Iseut's emotion is from the start at a frenzied pitch. These two short exclamations are contrasted by the long pronouncement in lines 1616-17. Iseut is "chaitive" in both major senses of the word: not only is she miserable and unfortunate, she is truly a prisoner, a captive of forces beyond her power, as she acknowledges in lines 1616-18:

Deus ne volt pas que jo tant vive
 Que jo Tristran mun ami veie;
 Neié em mer volt que jo seie.

Iseut's pressing desire to be united with her lover is reflected in the structure of the subordinate clause in which subject ("jo") and object ("Tristran mun ami") are not separated (l. 1617).

Iseut calls out to Tristan in line 1619 and the rest of the monologue is directed to him in the second person. All her attention is focused on the disparity between her desire and reality, her wish to be with him and the grim fact that

⁷⁴"La Douleur et son univers poétique chez Bernard de Ventadour," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale, 12 (1969), 559.

she is not. Whereas Tristan's desire was centered on the physical aspects of love, Iseut's wish is at this point mere verbal communication. She says that if she might have spoken with him, she would care little if afterwards she died. And yet, she tells him, when he learns of her death he will have no comfort. The rhyme "mort"/ "confort" appears in Iseut's speech for the first time in lines 1621-22. It occurs four times throughout this monologue and is the only example of the use of -ort in rhyme in this monologue and the remaining soliloquies, suggesting a strong poetic kinship.

We can see a type of adoublement⁷⁵ in lines 1621-25. The thought content of both sentences is negative, but it is expressed with grammatical negatives first (Tristan will never have comfort or release from sadness once he learns of her death.) and then paralleled with a grammatically positive statement (Tristan will experience sorrow and languor.). Of course, the result of this assertion is negative in all ways--Tristan will never heal.

Although the healing power is hers, the power to come to Tristan is not in her hands (ll. 1625-27). The word "dolor" is important in the vocabulary of Iseut as well as in that of Tristan. Here the "dolor" of Iseut is unselfish, centered not on herself, but on the relief she cannot bring to Tristan (ll. 1629-30 and 1631 ff.). Her selflessness in

⁷⁵Roger Dragonetti, La Technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de Gand, 127, Bruges, 1960), pp. 292-93.

love is apparent in her attitude toward her own death:

De la meie mort ne m'est ren:
 Quant Deu la volt, jol vul ben:
 Mais tres que vus, amis, l'orrez,
 Jo sai ben que vus en murrez. (ll. 1635-38)

This attitude is the same one which prompted her to wear a hairshirt to be able to share in her lover's suffering:

Pur les granz mals qu'il ad suffert
 Qu'a privé li ad descovert,
 Pur la peine, pur la dolur
 Que tant ad eü pur s'amur,
 Pur l'anguise, pur la grevance,
 Partir volt a la penitance.

 E cele, qui est veire amie
 De pensers e de granz suspirs,
 E leise mult de ses desirs,
 Plus leale ne fud unc veüe,
 Vest une bruine a sa char nue
 (D., 741-46 and 756-60)

Lines 1639-42 are Iseut's description of the bond that unites them, filled with the antithesis so characteristic of their love:

De tel manere est nostre amur
 Ne puis senz vus sentir dolur;
 Vus ne poez senz moi murrir,
 Ne jo senz vus ne puis perir.

These lines recall in some ways the well-known, much discussed lines of Bérout which also illustrate reciprocity in the relationship:

Chascun d'eus soffre paine elgal,
 Qar l'un por l'autre ne sent mal
 (ll. 1649-50)⁷⁶

⁷⁶Le Roman de Tristan, ed. Ernest Muret, 4th ed. rev. by L. M. Defourques (Paris: Champion, 1967, CFMA).

Compare as well these lines from Chievrefoil:

"Bele amie, si est de nus:
Ne vus sanz mei, ne jeo sanz vus." (ll. 77-78)⁷⁷

Lines 1643-46 show that this reciprocity does not and cannot exist in the present circumstances, for Tristan cannot drown on land. I accept Roger Sherman Loomis' interpretation and correction of line 1646.⁷⁸ The verb is not "estes" but rather "estuet." The Douce manuscript itself reads, "Venu mestest en" The sense seems most obvious to me. 'You cannot drown on land; you must come to (get) me at sea.' This reading certainly seems the most natural and probable, given the syllogistic form of the verses describing the limits and/or powers of love. And yet despite this interpretation, Wind calls Loomis' correction "un peu hardie."⁷⁹

The extra-sensory communication between Iseut and Tristan allows her to sense his death and then her own. This is the opposite picture of what she had previously felt--first her death, then his. Whichever occurs first, the other will follow, for such is their destiny.

"Desir" is an elusive goal for the lovers in Thomas. We witnessed Tristan lament his inability to attain his "desir" and here Iseut bitterly regrets, "Amis, jo fail a mun desir . . ." (l. 1649).

⁷⁷Marie de France, Les Lais, ed. Jean Rychner (Paris: Champion, 1968, CFMA).

⁷⁸"Notes on the Tristan of Thomas," Modern Language Review, 14 (1919), 38-43.

⁷⁹Wind, Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan, p. 153.

Line 1655 may support our reading of line 1645, for here as well Iseut believes that if she is to drown at sea, so must Tristan. Her rather naïve but poignant wish that the two lovers be devoured by a fish at sea is a unique reference to the exterior, concrete world. Of course, it is inspired by the raging presence of the tempest.

Iseut not only believes in the importance of their love as it affects them, but she is aware of the example their love is to others by its superiority. She knows that it is an extraordinary love, just as Tristan was cognizant of his reputation as exemplary lover (c.f. episode with Tristan le Nain). She says of their would-be coffin:

Tel hum prendre le purra
 Ki noz cors i reconuistera,
 E fra en puis si grant honur
 Cume covent a nostre amur. (ll. 1659-62)

She returns to reality from her wistful wishfulness to lament that this cannot be. Even the brief ray of hope in line 1664 ("E! se Deu le vult, si estuet.") is not enough to bring Iseut out of her melancholy state. This brief example of fictitious dialogue is the only argument Iseut can muster. She seems aware of the destructive force working against her and Tristan. And so she questions the feasibility and use of her earlier statement that he must come to her at sea: "--En mer, amis, que querreiez?" She answers her own question, in line 1666, in a tone of resignation: "Ne sai que vus feïssiez."

But since she is at sea, she must die without him:

Senz vus, Tristran, i neerai,

Si m'est, beals dulz, suef confort
 Que ne savrez ja ma mort. (ll. 1668-70)

It may be that "beals dulz" is epithetic, which is possible when we follow the text of Wind. Or the three adjectives may be an example of accumulation and synonymy. I prefer to see in this case an epithet, this device being frequent in this monologue along with direct address.⁸⁰ This figure of speech conveys Iseut's intense desire to be reunited with her lover, her wish to communicate her feelings to him. Furthermore, it adds to the spontaneity of her lament. It is emotion which governs Iseut's speech here.

Pauphilet, failing to appreciate the movement of this passage, calls it one of those "situations en soi curieuses" and says flatly that "cela va jusqu'à l'absurde: ainsi Iseut, sur le navire qui la ramène vers Tristan, et que la tempête assaille, débat interminablement cette question: tous deux ne peuvent que mourir ensemble, or elle va être noyée, comment Tristan pourra-t-il l'être aussi."⁸¹ Actually, the monologue is deftly handled in a series of defined movements. We will be able to see this more clearly when we reach the conclusion of the monologue.

Iseut, realizing that because she is at sea, she cannot heal Tristan's wound, and fearing that she will drown at sea, expresses her wish that Tristan live--"Ço est la ren

⁸⁰Cf. ll. 1617, 1619, 1621, 1633, 1637, 1649, 1658, 1665, 1668, [1669], 1672, 1680, 1684, 1685, 1693.

⁸¹Le Legs du Moyen Age, p. 137.

que plus desir." It is more important to her that he recover his health than that she arrive to be with him--another example of her selflessness; Iseut calls her love for Tristan "fine amur."

Lines 1680-89 show us a very human side of the heroine. Iseut, too, is capable of jealousy. After stating that the thing she desires most is that Tristan be cured (ll. 1675-76), she must take into account the consequences. One consequence may be that another woman might offer him comfort and he would forget Iseut. Going from the general ("altre femme," l. 1683) to the specific, Iseut names her double: "Amis, d'Ysolt as Blanches Mains/ Certes m'en crem e dut al mains." Just as Tristan had often imagined himself as the virtuous one wronged by the other, here Iseut declares, in a manner designed to touch Tristan could he hear her words, that should he die before her, she would follow shortly behind. The subtle implication is that she would not seek or yield to comfort in any other man, but that she fears he will. And since this fear subconsciously goads her, her original wish is modified: " . . . sur tute ren vus desir" (l. 1691). Thus her ultimate cry is that the two be brought together, be it in life or in death, with nothing to separate them. Iseut's love proves possessive:

Deus nus doinst ensemble venir
Que jo, amis, guarir vus puisse,
U nus dous murrir d'une anguisse! (ll. 1692-94)

Again in line 1693 "jo" and "amis" are brought in as close contact as possible in a grammatical reflection of Iseut's desire to be with her lover.

Thomas tells us that:

Tant cum dure la turmente,
Ysolt se plaint, si se demente. (ll. 1695-96)

We may interpret "la turmente" either as the storm itself or figuratively as her torment, for as long as the storm raged, it prevented her union with her lover and this separation is the source of her torment.

Pizzorusso offers us this appreciation of the storm scene:

Il famoso brano della tempesta mostra il tentativo di risolvere la descrizione di un fenomeno della natura nello stato d'animo del personaggio che ne è al centro: Isotta (un parallelismo di tipo analogo stabiliscono i trovatori, a cominciare dai più antichi, nel noto esordio primaverile). Sul piano stilistico tale fusione non riesce, e le due componenti, l'una esteriore e descrittiva, l'altra interna e psicologica, restano semplicemente accostate e spesso si contrappongono. Si può osservare infatti che, mentre la tecnica elaborata e artificiosa, ricca di ipotesi e di ripensamenti retoricamente coloriti, domina nel monologo di Isotta, gli elementi scenici concernenti il mare e l'uragano, che sono poi quelli tradizionali, vengono allineati mediante l'asindeto; infine, quando il personaggio parla, è praticata l'amplificatio, quando il poeta narra o descrive l'abbreviatio.⁸²

To her criticism I reply that the effort of Thomas is indeed a successful one. She is quite right that there is a loss of balance between the interior and exterior descriptions. But I maintain that this disproportion is intentional. The narrator's description of the storm occupies thirty-three lines (1582-1614) of which the first five are actually a subjective intervention on the part of the author--not a

⁸²"La retorica nel Tristano di Thomas," 50-51.

part of the description itself, but another example of preparation, anticipation. The monologue of Iseut spans eighty lines, more than twice as many. I think that Pizzorusso is incorrect in the presumption underlying her judgment, that the fusion is (or ought to be) one of equal parts. Mere mathematical figures belie this assertion. Of course, mere mathematics should hold little force of persuasion unless it is backed up with further evidence.

Just as for Tristan's second monologue the sudden perception of the ring is the catalyst for his soliloquy, so is the storm for Iseut. Until the storm arose, she had no fear that she would not soon fulfill her desire. And just as Tristan did not dwell upon the ring itself or the circumstances associated with it but rather its far-reaching implications, neither does Iseut dwell on the storm itself. This monologue is not different from the others in the respect that its attention is centered foremost upon interior reality.

The description of the storm merely leads up to the monologue. Pizzorusso contrasts the style of the speech itself (elaborate, artificial, etc.) with that of the narration. Asyndeton, I would point out, is generally an exception in speech and not a rule⁸³ and therefore it can be seen as recherché. But I do agree with her that Thomas has reserved his most dramatic effects for the monologue. In other words, it was not the task Thomas set before himself

⁸³Dijksterhuis, p. 88.

to "risolvere la descrizione di un fenomeno della natura nello stato d'animo del personaggio" He was not interested in the storm to the extreme degree that he was occupied in the monologue.

Because the styles of physical description and psychological study do not match each other and because of the discrepancy in numerical proportion, I believe more strongly that for Thomas monologue is the center of emotivity and expressivity. The physical, exterior reality is subservient to the psychological, the interior reality.

This criticism is not meant to demean the talent displayed by Thomas in descriptive narration. It is merely intended to point up the importance attached by Thomas to the monologue. Of course, certain parallels may be seen in the description and the monologue. In fact, we might say that the monologue does reflect the condition of a storm at sea by its exclamations and interrogations which exhibit heightened pathos, the antithetical structure which suggests the tossing of water from side to side, the examples of dubitatio which at the end mirror the loss of direction resulting from the storm, the syllogistic style which builds up the speech in layers as do waves one upon the other. But, of course, such techniques belong to the lament per se and not to a setting. And so I insist that Thomas cared little about the storm at sea or for descriptive purposes disassociated from the monologue. What he was concerned for was the turmoil within Iseut.

Just as the speeches of Tristan were deemed static, so is this plaint of Iseut. But whereas in his monologues, Tristan at least was able to reach a conclusion, a proposed course of action, Iseut cannot take a resolution. Indeed, she cries, "Certes, ne sai que faire deie" She is momentarily at the mercy of an unkind force and can only utter the feeble wish that the lovers be brought together. Iseut has not advanced toward her desire through her monologue and she is physically further from her lover because of the storm than she was before it took place.

Jonin, discussing this monologue, says:

Ces oscillations, ces brusques tournants de la pensée apparentent ce monologue à ceux de Soredamors ou de Fénice. Le désir de voir clair dans leur destin pousse en outre ces trois femmes en peine d'amour à passer parfois insensiblement du raisonnement à la ratio-cination.⁸⁴

We would point out that this slip from reasoning to ratio-cination, far from being a flaw, is indicative of Thomas' fine grasp of the psychology of a tormented soul. Jonin states further that the art of Thomas is especially apparent here in Iseut's monologue:

L'art de Thomas y apparaît partout et ses procédés sont multiples. Dans son monologue durant la tempête la pensée d'Iseut oscille sans cesse d'elle-même à Tristan et dans ce constant va et vient Thomas lui fait manier habilement les pronoms personnels. Elle les fait alterner en un jeu serré de correspondances très évocateur de l'entrelacement de leurs deux destinées⁸⁵

⁸⁴Les Personnages féminins, pp. 255-56.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 261.

I should also point out the evocative role of certain of the vowel sounds, in particular the i. This phoneme, occurring throughout and being the most frequent vowel of rhyme in this monologue, conveys the sharpness of Iseut's dolorous pain. The frequency of the consonant r helps add to the agitation, coupled with vowels of either dull or clear resonance. Agitation is further reflected in the breaks in the lines of verse, some lines having several grammatical breaks, others having none and running through to the following line. The immediacy of Iseut's sorrow is shown first lexically, but is reflected in grammatical structures and in repetitions.

I would maintain that it is the immediacy and pathos which strike the reader and continue to impress him, and not "scholasticism." The antithesis and parallelism developed throughout her speech are, so to speak, only amplifications of the constants of the myth. Iseut is in a helpless position, at the mercy of the storm and of course is given to thoughts of its effects upon her and her lover. The use of syllogism impresses us not for its scholastic tone but for its plaintiveness, the fact that Iseut is bound by opposing forces.

Whereas Tristan was in a position to decide his own course of events and used the syllogism to aid himself in his choice, here Iseut has no choice but to bide the storm. Her recall of the mutual bond between herself and Tristan cannot determine the course of the storm or her course of action. The recitation of the mutuality in their love merely heightens the pathos because the storm would seem

to disrupt this mutuality. The syllogism here is not of the sophisticated variety found in Tristan's speeches. I do not see in Iseut's monologue the scholasticism of Thomas. Although the syllogism can be evidence of scholastic influence, I see it here only as a condition of the tale itself. If, then, we wish to see the syllogism as the object of clerical predilection, at least we must maintain that at no time does he allow this scholastic influence to creep through to spoil her lament. Furthermore, the use of fictitious dialogue, which can also be a hint of scholasticism, is restrained and does not hamper any sense of immediacy. In Tristan's speeches, we were aware of the process and the modes of reasoning. In Iseut's lament, we sense foremost Iseut's emotion, and although we are aware of opposing forces, the content of her thoughts rather than the process of reasoning predominates.

Douce, 1760-70

Tristan's dying words are found in Fragment Douce (Fin du poème), lines 1760-70. It has almost prayerful although not religious overtones. It is pointedly simple and stark in comparison with his two monologues found in Sneyd¹. Perhaps a man, before dying, as Roland, does see his whole life pass before him and understand its direction, sense its ultimate significance. For Tristan all that matters is Iseut.

Although Tristan dies in the presence of his wife, he turns away from her, isolated because Iseut la Blonde, the

only one who does matter to him, is not there beside him. He turns to the wall to exclude this other Iseut in order to address Iseut his beloved. Tristan dies believing the lie of Iseut aux Blanches Mains that Iseut la Blonde does not want him.

Tristan's death plaint opens with the plea, "Deus salt Ysolt e mei!" We should not interpret this ejaculation as an acquiescence of religion or a belated repentance. This God is the same one recognized by Iseut in lines 1616, 1627, 1636 and 1664--not the God of religious experience but rather the ruling force over this earth. Furthermore, such an ejaculation is formulaic. And again, the salvation requested is not religious in nature; it is the lovers' reunion.

After this initial ejaculation, Tristan's plaint is a series of couplets in which we again see the same tightly controlled interplay of pronouns. In this last monologue, Tristan is no longer concerned with Marc or his wife; the essential relationship, the only union he recalls is his bond with Iseut. Since he is deprived of her, he cannot live. And deprived of any "joie," he is crushed by "dolor." The couplet 1765-66 seems to be a recrimination of Iseut, and in it we recognize the streak of stubbornness met in his first monologue. It almost seems a prideful threat. But any hint of bitterness or selfishness subsides during his final moments. "Amie Ysolt" is on his lips as Tristan dies.

Just as Iseut was cognizant of the effect of her death on Tristan, so is Tristan aware of the mutuality:

Beals amis, quant orét ma mort
Ben sai puis n'avrez ja confort.
De ma mort avrez tel dolur,
A ce qu'avez si grant langur
Que ja puis ne purrez guarir.

(Iseut to Tristan, D., 1621-25)

Mais de ma mort avrez dolur.
Ço m'est, amie, grant confort
Que pité avrez de ma mort.

(Tristan to Iseut, D., 1766-68)

Again we have the significant rhyme "confort"/ "mort." The heaviness of death seems to weigh the lovers down, especially now Tristan. As Alfons Hilka points out, it is good psychology for a writer to keep prayers short, especially at death.⁸⁶ Without Iseut, Tristan no longer has the force to live. When he learned, falsely, that Iseut was not coming to him, he was resigned to his death. Again, we know that when the will to live is smothered, death comes more quickly and easily. Death dominates Tristan's thoughts (five times his death is mentioned) and he easily gives himself over to death.

This monologue, then, is in marked contrast with the two previous monologues of Tristan. Whereas the other two soliloquies were gems of sophisticated rhetoric, these dying words are of an extreme simplicity. There is nothing to debate here, no course of action to be decided. There is nothing left to question, only a profession of love to be uttered.

⁸⁶Die direkte Rede als stilistisches Kunstmittel in den Romanen des Kristian von Troyes (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1903), p. 30.

Douce, 1811-15; Sneyd², 783-808

The culmination, the finale of the poem itself is marked by a monologue. Once again Thomas has chosen to allow his characters to speak for themselves. A mere forty lines separate the speeches of Tristan and Iseut. It seems that just as Tristan's soul rises from his body, so do the winds at sea rise. Perhaps it is the energy released from his body which impels the boat to land and Iseut to join him beyond this world.

Upon learning the news of her lover's death, Iseut experiences such grief that she cannot speak:

Tresque Ysolt la novele ot,
De dolur ne puet suner un mot. (D., 1799-1800)

She rushes past the crowds in a dazed manner. Thomas gains the reader's sympathy by calling attention to her beauty (1804-1805). He does not take the time nor is it his care to attribute to Iseut the conventional postures of lament (the fainting, the tearing of vestments, pulling of hair, scraping of cheeks, etc.). Iseut's speech alone will be sufficient to convey the enormous weight of sorrow within her soul. And yet sorrow does not crush Iseut in the same manner it does the women of the romans antiques. Iseut's despair is not the despair of those women. Whereas they seem crazed by their afflictions and act as if they do not know what they are doing now or shall do later,⁸⁷ Iseut

⁸⁷Jonin, p. 162.

sees clearly through her sorrow. She is never a victim of "la délectation morosé dont sont coutumières les femmes des romans antiques."⁸⁸ Jonin maintains:

A la mort de Tristan, sa souffrance éclate mais elle ne présente pas le caractère rituel, les gémissements diffus auxquels nous ont habitués Ismène ou Hélène. Il ne s'agit pas là d'une douleur anonyme mais d'un sentiment violent et personnel où se résume un grand amour traversé par l'adversité⁸⁹

Thomas relates that Iseut prays pitifully for Tristan; her prayer is addressed entirely to him. "Raisun" demands that she join him in death. Iseut perceives the full implication of their love and their death. "Amur" and "raisun" are the impulses for Iseut as well as for Tristan. Iseut is deprived of all joy by his death. Sneyd², 786 ("Joie, ne hait, ne nul deduit") recalls Tristan's words of parting in the garden ("Tel duel ai por la departie/ Ja n'avrai hait jor de ma vie") in Cambridge, 29-30 as well as Iseut's own words in Cambridge, 45-47:

Ja n'avrai mais, amis, deport,
Quant j'ai perdu vostre confort,
Si grand pitié, ne tel tendrour

"Mort"/ "confort" appears twice in this lament of Iseut (784-85 and 804-805) and is the rhyme of an important line, 805: "De meisme le beivre avrai confort." Renée L. Curtis indicates that in lines 802-805 "beivre here has ceased to

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 163.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 164.

have the meaning of 'love philtre' which it has elsewhere in the text, and become almost synonymous with death."⁹⁰ However, the use of "beivre" does bring to mind the philtre shared on the boat, the symbolic seal of their pact, their bond of love. Now the term means the bond of love in death. And we should also mention that the close association of drink and death here also recalls for us the scene of Christ on the Mount of Olives praying that if it be possible, may the chalice (of death) pass far from Him (Matthew 14: 32-42). Thus a sense of sacrifice pervades Iseut's death scene. Again and again Thomas has emphasized the elements of election rather than fatality in the lovers' relationship.

Just as Iseut took the hairshirt upon her body to share in Tristan's suffering (D., 741-60), here she is desirous to share in his sorrow even to death. Each reader must agree with Payen that Iseut the lover is superb: "Yseut femme est faible, Yseut amante est sublime."⁹¹ For Iseut there is no hesitation or paralyzing despair--she immediately decides and knows her course of action. First she lashes out angrily against those forces which prevented her coming to Tristan:

Icil orages seit destruit
 Que tant me fist, amis, en mer,
 Que n'i poi venir, demurer! (D., 787-89)

Then she accepts willingly her death which she wishes to offer

⁹⁰Tristan Studies (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969), p. 40.

⁹¹Les Origines de la courtoisie dans la littérature française médiévale, II: Le Roman (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1966-67), p. 25.

as proof of her strong love:

Pur mei avez perdu la vie,
E jo frai cum veraie amie:
Pur vos voil murir ensement. (D., 806-809)

We can see the development of Iseut's thought. Thomas is always careful to show the movements of the heart as one thought sparks another. Lines 1811-15 and Sneyd², 783-86 illustrate Iseut's immediate reaction to Tristan's death--she has no reason now to live. Lines 787-99 consider the forces which kept her from reaching Tristan and dwell upon what she would have done had these forces not prevailed. Since this could not be or cannot be, Iseut realizes that she must die and in lines 800-808 she gives herself over to death--and Tristan.

There is no need for Thomas to elaborate on the words of his heroine and so only eleven lines are needed to end the narrative. Seven of those lines describe the manner of death; the last four resume the reason. As he recapitulates that reason, Thomas subscribes to the very words of his hero and heroine--Tristan maintained that he died for love of Iseut, in Douce, 762 ("Pur vostre amur m'estuet murrir.") and Iseut agreed in Douce, 1814-15 that, "E jo muer, amis, de tendrur,/ Quant a tens ne poi venir" This is exactly what Thomas tells us:

Tristrans murut pur sue amur,
Ysolt, qu'a tens n'i pout venir.
Tristrans murut pur sue amur,
E la bele Ysolt par tendrur. (Sn.2, 816-19)⁹²

⁹²Bédier corrects the "faulty rhyme" of l. 816 (l. 3121 in

The similarity between the death scene of Tristan and Iseut and that of Piramus and Thisbe has long been noted. Marcella Delpino states that Thomas almost certainly imitated the scene from the Metamorphoses (IV, 55-166).⁹³ Nevertheless, the myth with which Thomas is working allows him to avoid physical violence in this final scene and thus concentrate all passion in Iseut's soliloquy. Because of this, the scene becomes more touching and idealistic.

Then in Piramus et Tisbé, Tisbé soliloquizes when she discovers Piramus lying wounded, believing him dead (ll. 831-89). In the monologue she addresses the sword, Love, the moon, fountain and other inanimate things along with Piramus and herself. Her frenzied speech culminates with her fainting. This fainting, a commonplace either before or following a lament, has the effect of somewhat diluting the potency of Tisbé's words. When she does finally thrust the sword into her breast (ll. 909-11), we no longer partake in her thoughts. However, Thomas allows us to share in Iseut's thoughts in a more intense fashion. When she says in line 808, "Pur'vus voil murir ensement," immediately she lies down with Tristan to die. This again shows Thomas' concern to make the monologue the central, most concentrated feature

his edition, I, 416) to "desir." This does not of course alter the thought. "Desir," as we have seen, is a key word in the vocabulary of Tristan especially.

⁹³"Elementi celtici ed elementi classici nel Tristan di Thomas," Archivum romanicum, 23 (1939), 331.

of the episode. Furthermore, Iseut has blocked communication with anything other than Tristan. She does not call out to other powers as does Tisbé. As we noted, Iseut's entire soliloquy is addressed to Tristan. Her intense desire to commune with him is emphasized by the repeated apostrophe "amis."

Not only does the use of monologue show kinship with the Piramus and Thisbe of Ovid and the twelfth-century poem, but the dying posture of Iseut also recalls Piramus et Tisbé:

La pucele s'est redreciee;
 A deus mains a prise l'espee;
 Parmi le pis, sous la mamele,
 S'en tresperce la damoisele.
 D'ambedous pars saut li sans fors,
 Et ele chiet desus le cors.
 Le cors acole et si l'embrace,
 Les iex li baise et bouche et face;
 Baise la bouche par grant cure,
 Tant con sens et vie li dure. (ll. 908-17)

Compare with Thomas's rendition:

Embrace le, si s'estent,
 Baise la buche e la face
 E molt estreit a li l'enbrace,
 Cors a cors, buche a buche estent,
 Sun esprit a itant rent,
 E murt dejuste lui issi
 Pur la dolur de sun ami. (Sn.2, 809-15)

Whereas in Piramus et Tisbé the climax is reached in the narration, Iseut's monologue is the true culmination in Thomas. His succeeding narration is kept as succinct as possible so as not to attenuate the force of Iseut's words. It is necessary, though, to insure that the reader will not

be jarred immediately by the epilogue's manifest change in tone.

The use of monologue in narrative presents somewhat of a paradox. It brings the plot to a stand-still; thus, it produces stasis. On the other hand, we pointed out earlier that the monologue brings a dramatic element to the narrative, and "dramatic" implies vividness, life. The narrative is stopped, blocked on the horizontal plane, but is developed instead on a vertical plane.

The first two monologues, figuring as debates, retard the action in the manner most obvious to the audience. Courses of action to be taken are bandied about, never in a continuous forward movement so that the reader seems trapped along with the monologist. Tristan's first soliloquy is a posed construction in response to a self-fabricated dilemma. Thus it shows an elaborate, sophisticated structure. His second monologue is voiced extemporaneously when he understands that he is responsible for placing himself in another dilemma (the off-spring of the first, synthetic dilemma). It is an examination of conscience in which Tristan is brought to see the folly he espoused in the first soliloquy. The two speeches are complementary and should be considered each in the light of the other.

Iseut's first monologue is voiced on the ship at sea. It is not a debate because Iseut's actions for the time being do not rest in her hands; she is at the mercy of the elements.

The situation is a crisis but not a dilemma. Being a lament rather than a debate, it shows a less rigid structure which calls the emotions to the forefront. We noticed some formulaic construction but perceived the intensely personal tone of the plaint.

In Tristan's dying soliloquy, we witnessed a complete breakdown in the structure to which we had become accustomed in his earlier monologues. Here all that matters is love. His lament is appropriately short but profoundly moving.

Iseut's plaint at Tristan's death is also her own death lament. The whole narrative culminates in this final soliloquy.

Only the first two monologues are truly scholastic in nature. What perhaps allows the reader to see a scholastic tone in the other monologues is the structure built upon antithesis. Certainly antithesis pervades all the monologues, but this antithesis is inherent in the tale, it is a constant and thus need not be attributed solely to scholastic influence. Just as the first two monologues are complementary and form a unit, so do the last three soliloquies evince a complementary quality. They are good examples of the dialogues noués of which Payen speaks:

Des dialogues se nouent à distance entre les amants séparés qui soliloquent chacun de son côté sur un même problème.⁹⁴

We have seen that Thomas does not make use of Ovidian

⁹⁴Les Origines de la courtoisie, p. 22.

imagery to embellish his work. His vocabulary is limited, apt for the starkness of the scenes. Thomas attempts to deal with the psychology of his characters on a real, rationalistic plane rather than resorting to the figurative approach of Ovid. But we might say that the last three monologues are themselves examples of that Ovidian commonplace of love as healer and as medicine. The verb "guarir" occurs along with other related words such as "santé" and "aïe." Both Tristan and Iseut know that Iseut holds the key to Tristan's health and his fate. We have also witnessed the extreme care with which Thomas has crafted these monologues--the perceptive psychological insight with which they are imbued, the poetic sensitivity which unites the forme with the fond. These monologues are not exercises in rhetorical gymnastics, but are Thomas' attempts to convey his characters' state of mind, motivations. Thomas allows his public to experience Tristan and Iseut's problems and passion directly, rendering them more sympathetic to us. Further, we have seen that in the narrative immediately preceding and following the monologues, action is played down; any action preceding the monologue acts as the catalyst for the speech. The exterior has always been subservient to the interior.

We have up until this time looked closely at the soliloquies and seen their individual excellence. To determine their excellence in Thomas' broader scheme, we must situate the monologues within the narrative framework. Such a study will permit us to evaluate the monologue as a method

of displaying motivation, of bringing interior realities to the fore. To determine where in the hierarchy of literary expression monologue holds rank for Thomas, we shall look at certain other narrative elements--description, dialogue, third-person narration, and author intervention. Upon the completion of this study we shall be able to see clearly the significance of monologue for Thomas.

PART III
EMPHASIS ON MONOLOGUE SEEN IN OTHER
NARRATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE TRISTAN OF THOMAS

The monologues have been examined individually. To give an accurate view of the importance of this device, it is necessary to consider Thomas' treatment of other narrative elements. Since monologue has been considered here as talking to oneself, perhaps it would be wisest to first take account of the manner in which Thomas employs dialogue and see how his characters interact verbally. Next we shall look at passages of description, usually an opportunity for the medieval poet to display his talent at some length and involvement. Then we shall study those passages in the tale in which Thomas intervenes. Finally we shall take into consideration the development of the third-person narration and Thomas' construction of his version of the tale of Tristan and Iseut.¹

Dialogue

The dialogues amount to almost nine hundred lines, so that direct discourse (dialogue and monologue combined) accounts for almost half of the lines extant. Whereas

¹The organization of this part of my study was influenced particularly by Varvaro's work on Bérout and Jackson's on Gottfried.

Tristan and Iseut are the privileged monologists, the sphere of dialogists is broader. It includes, in addition to Tristan and Iseut, most notably Brangien who has a large speaking role. The abused spouses, Marc and Iseut aux Blanches Mains, have limited roles, though. Speeches are given to the minor characters Cariado, Kaherdin and Tristan le Nain. The last bit of dialogue is given to an anonymous member of the crowd of mourners. The dialogues occur fairly evenly throughout the fragments.

The fragments remaining to us present only one dialogue between Tristan and Iseut. It is significant that this dialogue amoureux is the modern reader's first encounter with the Roman de Tristan. Yet, one might expect that the ultimate tale of love and passion should abound in amorous avowals and here there is but one short scene filled with dialogue between hero and heroine. We cannot be certain if those lost parts contain other examples of dialogue amoureux. Bédier would have us believe so. But Jonin states, "Nous pensons plutôt que . . . l'auteur n'a guère utilisé ce procédé dans l'ensemble de son ouvrage."² He explains the near lack of dialogue amoureux by saying that because of his clerical position Thomas was inept at such an endeavor.³ I find such an explanation unconvincing and simplistic. Why should Thomas be inept with the dialogue amoureux when he has

²Les Personnages féminins, p. 313.

³Ibid., pp. 449-50.

handled the lovers' monologues so sensitively and movingly? Certainly the one example we have of dialogue between the lovers is sufficient proof that Thomas can work with this expression. A more convincing answer seems evident to me. The scene in the garden--the point at which the modern reader joins Tristan and Iseut--is a high point not only because it is our first encounter with the hero and heroine but because all subsequent action points to their earthly undoing and final crisis. We meet the lovers in an act of physical communion and direct verbal communication. In the end, we have learned that theirs is a love which goes beyond physical communication and which transcends time and space. There is no need for other dialogue between the lovers. And although I hesitate to deal in comparisons of Thomas and Gottfried, I note that Jackson points out in his study of Gottfried the rarity of speech between his two lovers and the fact that "Gottfried does not usually allow Tristan and Isolde to express their true feelings for one another in speeches."⁴ It seems most probable that such was the state of the lost parts of Thomas. After Tristan and Iseut have recognized their love for one another--reasoned in monologue, I believe--there is little need for verbalizing. Their love transcends the need for speech in most circumstances.

However, their one dialogue which we do possess gives us

⁴The Anatomy of Love, pp. 204-207.

a key to subsequent monologue. This dialogue contains the seeds of those interior monologues. As we have noted before, Tristan sees clearly the life before him which he will lament:

Fuir deport et querre eschil,
 Guerpir joie, sievre peril.
 Tel duel ai por la departie
 Ja n'avrai hait jor de ma vie. (C., 27-30)

He begs Iseut not to forget him:

Ne me metés mie en obli (C., 32)

Iseut herself recognizes the "paine" of parting:

Ja n'avrai mais, amis, desport,
 Quant j'ai perdu vostre confort,
 Si grand pitié, ne tel tendrour
 Quant doi partir de vostre amor
 (C., 45-48)

The dialogue, further, gives us proof that the lovers are conscious of the tribulations of love--the "change," the "tort," the "paine," the "dolor" and "tuiz engins d'amur" which Thomas speaks of in his epilogue (Sn.2, 837-39). Tristan is aware of the maleficent powers of "change" when he cautions Iseut not to forget him. He is also cognizant of the "tort" threatening to be visited upon them (C., 22-23). Iseut speaks of the "paine" and "dolor" as does Tristan who also mentions the "engien."

I do not find Thomas inept in this composition. The speeches of both Tristan and Iseut are conveyed naturally and movingly. If the lovers do not need words to communicate, why then does Thomas put words in their mouths at this time? The dialogue amoureux was, of course, like the

interior monologue, a set piece in a tale of love. The moment of parting is a particularly poignant event. It is the time of pledge and confirmation of love, of which the ring is a symbol (C., 51-52). This scene is of interest because where we might expect to see a typical Provençal-inspired scene with knight on bended knee before his lady, we see Tristan and Iseut standing as equals, both professing love and both choosing their course of action. The ring is reminiscent of Provençal poetry. But in Thomas it is not merely symbolic as in the troubadour lyric; here it has an integral function in the narrative.

Although this is the only example of direct verbal communication, we know that the lovers mysteriously communicate across the miles without words. Each can feel in his heart the thoughts of the other. This sentiment pervades the poem, for many a critic and reader has felt that the poem seems to be a mystical dialogue of love.

Even though Marc is presented by Thomas in a sympathetic manner, it is not through his own words but the words of another (principally Brangien) that we gain this impression. We cannot doubt that Marc was given other speeches by Thomas, but I believe that they are of the same tenor as those we hear in Cambridge and Douce. In fact, the first voice heard in the fragments is that of Marc (with the help of the dwarf) discovering the lovers in the garden. When we see him again, we hear him handing over responsibility for Iseut to Brangien. In each case, we find Marc unwilling to assert

himself. In the garden, he shirks from making judgment, saving it for the barons, "quant ert pruvez" (l. 13). In Douce, Marc puts Iseut's care in the hands of Brangien: "En vostre gard la commant:/ Cunveinez vus en desornavant!" (475-76). It is actually through Brangien's perception of Marc that we gain access to his character. Thus, even though I believe that Marc was given more speeches, I believe that they, like these, are short and ineffective.

Iseut aux Blanches Mains plays a key role.⁵ We see her transformed from a sweet, docile girl (Sn.1, 645-49) into a confused, bitter woman who does not know the reason for her husband's abstention from his marital duty (T.1, 249-56) and again into a jealous woman who lies to Tristan, activating her bitterness to retaliation for the hurt and deception he has caused her (D., 1742-48, 1753-56). Her jealousy is properly motivated by Thomas; she is a complete character. Thomas causes her to overhear Tristan's directives to Kaherdin (D., 1336-39). She is cut to the quick, but her actions do not betray her new knowledge and neither does her speech. We can truly see her as she lies to Tristan with a smile. After she delivers the death blow, we neither see nor hear any more of her. And yet, because Tristan has not consummated their marriage and because she has learned the reason why, her betrayal is more pathetic

⁵For an interesting study on the development of this character in the "estoire," see Helaine Newstead's article, "Isolt of the White Hands," Romance Philology, 19 (1965-66), 155-66.

and understandable. With Thomas, in clear contrast with Bérroul, there are all shades of gray, but characters are never purely black or white. By the falsehood fostered by Iseut aux Blanches Mains, Thomas shifts the blame from fate to humankind, a pattern which is most obvious in the implementation of monologue where we actually see the characters accept responsibility for their actions.

Kaherdin also has a key role vis-à-vis Tristan in that he elicits explanations. It is he, for instance, who exacts his sister's explanation of her laugh. In a sense, this elucidation propels the scene Le Cortège de la reine in Strasbourg¹. In this scene, his statements and questions are propellants of the description of the queen's retinue. In Douce, 1169-82 we see another type of human love--masculine friendship. Here are some of the same keys to love as in the relationship of Tristan and Iseut: "lealté" and "anguise" as well as the familiar pair "mort" and "confort." In Douce, 1435-86, Kaherdin acts as Tristan's porte-parole, also bearing the ring, the sign of the love covenant. We rely on Kaherdin's speech for an indication to his character, since as with the other characters Thomas does not supply physical description.

The words of Tristan le Nain to Tristan in Douce, 935-70 must recall to Tristan many of his own words in the monologue of Sneyd¹, 4-182. Compare, for example:

Jon ai el quer si grant dolor
 A poi ne muer de la tristur,
 De la pesance e de l'anguisse;

Suz cel ne sai que faire puisse;
 N'en puis senz il avoir confort;
 Quant jo perdu ai mon deport
 E ma joie e mun delit,
 De ma vie m'est pus petit.

(Tristan le Nain, D., 947-54)

Jo perc pur vos joie e deduit,
 E vos l'avez e jur e nuit;
 Jo main ma vie en grant dolor,
 E vos vostre en delit d'amur.

(Tristan, Sn.1, 9-12)

Tristan le Nain's words also reinforce our concept of Tristan's physical prowess, only a secondary consideration in Thomas:

Dutez estes e mult cremuz
 E tuz li meldre chivalers (D., 960-61)

It is Tristan le Nain who by castigating Tristan's "recreance" causes Tristan to die for love. His speech takes on an air of monologue in lines 1000-1007. He is disgusted with the knight he believes to be an impostor and declares that he is going off to find the real Tristan. Tristan le Nain's speech belittles Tristan so that Tristan assumes the dwarf's mission in order to prove that his own moral stature has not been dwarfed. Perhaps, too, Tristan reacts to the sensitivity for love which Tristan le Nain shows in his speech. We can justify seeing the remaining lines of his speech as almost monologic by interpreting the indication Thomas gives, "se pleint," as a true reflexive verb. Here too we have the kinship of "mort" and "confort." It may be this evocation which rouses Tristan to his defense. Thus it is Tristan le Nain who provides the "reisun" (D., 1012) for fighting.

Brangien's role is certainly the most important one following Tristan and Iseut and thus she is given many lines of dialogue, all those remaining are found in Douce and revolve around her quarrel with Iseut. Jonin's study reveals an independent Brangien in Thomas' version. Indeed she is independent. She is in fact brazen, addressing her master and mistress quite saucily. Her speech has a common air to it; it is self-seeking and contains many conventional images and proverbs.⁶

In her first discourse, in lines 2-69 Brangien lashes out at Iseut in anger that she has been used by her mistress and Tristan. It is because she herself has been wronged rather than on any moral basis that she commences her harangue. She was willing to partake in her mistress' adventures as long as she believed she would be well-paid: "Vus me pramistes grant honor. . ." (D., 9). But now her speech is full of curses and she swears she will have her revenge.

Her second speech zeroes in on Iseut:

Tristran ne deit estre blasmé:
Vus en devez la hunte aveir,
Quant l'usez a vostre poer (D., 137-39)

Her anger is ostensibly motivated by her forced affair with Kaherdin whom she now considers the "plus cuard qu'unc fud né" (D., 156).

Her third discourse is a long verbal flagellation aimed entirely at Iseut and her inveterate wickedness. Jonin feels

⁶Cf. D., 247-52, 374-76, 384-85.

that this speech of Brangien contains Thomas' own clerical, anti-feminist stance.⁷ In fact, Jonin accepts the anti-feminist, clerical position that woman is impure, the source of all evil, and the occasion of all sin as being the explanation and the opinion of Thomas himself voiced by Brangien:

Il n'y a pas à chercher, croyon-nous, une autre explication à l'opinion de Thomas mettant dans la bouche de Brangien un semblable mépris.⁸

Such an opinion need not necessarily prevail. Brangien's anger is truly rooted in her pride and, I think, in her jealousy of Iseut. Iseut's machinations did not disturb Brangien as long as Brangien did not take a personal loss and as long as she believed she would be rewarded well. I interpret Brangien's late moralizing merely as the means by which she can take revenge for her personal affront.

Finally, in her fourth outburst, Brangien threatens to go to the king and tell all. Between this first series of speeches and the second when we find Brangien with Marc, a change has been effected in her plans--Thomas notes in Douce, 350 that she is acting with "grant engin." Bédier discusses various opinions regarding whether at this point Brangien may have spoken a monologue. His own answer is acceptable to us:

Au moment où Bringvain va trouver le roi, le poète indique d'un mot qu'elle a inventé un beau stratagème . . . Lequel? Il n'a garde de nous l'apprendre d'emblée, par un monologue de Bringvain ni par quelque

⁷Les Personnages féminins, pp. 436-39.

⁸Ibid., p. 439.

autre procédé. Il faut que nous redoutions jusqu'au bout que Bringvain commette la folie de dénoncer Tristan; il faut suspendre notre inquiétude; il faut ménager notre surprise, excitée dès l'abord par des propos qui s'appliquent mal à Tristan . . . et qui doit croître sans cesse jusqu'à l'instant où elle prononcera enfin le nom fatal: et ce nom sera Cariado.⁹

Brangien's ruse is worthy of all the chicanery of which she accused Iseut and yet it is not damaging to Tristan, only to Iseut. Brangien is audacious in her dealings with Marc; not only does she address him on a first-name basis but she dares tell him:

Quel senblant que vus en facez,
Ben sai pur quei vus en feinnez:
Que vus ne valét mie itant
Que fere li osissez senblant. (D., 399-402)

Even though she has spoken highly of Tristan to Marc (" . . . il est pruz e enseigné," D., 458, and "Tel ami n'avrez mais cest meis," D., 460), when Tristan arrives in disguise at the court, Brangien must be begged to see him. She still harbors her anger at being used by Kaherdin and says concerning Tristan:

Ja mais par moi n'avrad confort.
Jo li vul melz asez la mort
Que la vie u la santé. (D., 673-75)

It is again quite difficult to believe that Brangien was sincere in her moralizing when she herself is shown as void of the Christian virtues.

After the dialogue amoureux, we next see Iseut engaged

⁹Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 361-62, note to l. 1697.

in conversation with Cariado, the "losengier" familiar to courtly settings. Her exchange of words with Cariado provides us the only example of allegory--the allegory of the "fresaie" and the "huan." Upon Cariado's news that Tristan disdains her love and has taken a wife, Iseut manages to dissimulate her shock and disquiet by maintaining the impersonal framework of allegory within her speech and turning the emphasis from Tristan's supposed breach of faith to her complete scorn for Cariado regardless of any relationship with Tristan. She is able to hide her personal sentiments for the moment by the impersonality of speech afforded by allegory. Only when she is alone does she vent her true feeling:

De la chambre viaz s'en vait,
 E Ysolt molt grant dolor fait;
 En sun corage est anguissée
 E de ceste novele irée. (Sn. 1, 885-88)

The most interesting of the dialogues is certainly that of Iseut in Douce, 82-131. It concerns Iseut's reaction to Brangien's denunciation of Iseut's love for Tristan. I interpret Iseut's speech including her obloquy of Tristan only as an expedient pose intended to win Brangien back to her side. This pose takes on the form of a monologue from line 82 through line 117 in which Iseut declaims her own good will and Tristan's fault in a calculated manner. She begins with the formulaic apostrophe "Lasse, caitive!" intended to convey her unfortunate condition, over which she presumably has no control. She laments the fact that she must live in

a strange country--all of which is designed to elicit sympathy from Brangien. She then lashes out at Tristan in a curse:

Tristan, vostre cors maldit seit!
Par vus sui jo en cest destreit! (D., 86-87)

I feel that this curse is not a true wish on Iseut's part, but only the guise which she presumes to regain Brangien's aid. Iseut coyly says that she could bear the sufferings imposed upon her by Tristan if only she had Brangien's love. She acts lost, disoriented without Brangien's aid and love: ". . . ne sai que faire" (D., 97).¹⁰ Coyly again and subtly, she compares Brangien's love with Tristan's, always favoring Brangien's:

Ma joie soleit maintenir:
Tristan, pur vus me volt hunir.
Mar acuintai unc vostre amur,
Tant en ai curuz e irur! (D., 98-101)

Of all the hardships inflicted upon her, Iseut says that the most grievous is the loss of Brangien's love:

E tut iço vus semble poi,
Se tant de confort cum jo oi
Ne me tolisez al drein
Ço est de la franche Brengven. (D., 104-107)

Hereupon, Iseut begins a laudatory description of her servant--never was there such a loyal or worthy one as she (ll. 108-109). She then accuses Tristan of being in league

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Johnson points out in her dissertation, Conventions littéraires dans la poésie narrative du XIIème siècle (Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1967), that the expression "ne sai que faire puisse" is formulaic and conventional for the conveyance of dilemma. See pp. 80-86. Iseut is affecting a dilemma.

with Kaherdin to usher Brangien away to serve Iseut aux Blanches Mains! She calls Tristan "parjure" for scheming to take away her "nurreture" (D., 116-17). Wind translates "nurreture" as "jeune personne qu'on élève."¹¹ Another translation is "famille"¹²--since Brangien is the only member of Iseut's father's household to travel with her to the strange, new land and is her confidante. Iseut's argument rests firmly on pathos. This first part of Iseut's speech is indeed most interesting. She speaks as if she were alone and yet all her words are calculated to influence Brangien. She pursues this mode of speech long enough to set a proper mood.

Then Iseut breaks from this artificial apostrophe to address Brangien whom she entreats to be faithful to her on behalf of her parents. She twists Brangien's argument to reflect baneful and self-seeking intentions:

Brengevin, si me vulez guerpir,
 Ne me devez pur ço hair,
 Ne em vers mei querre acheisun
 D'aler en altre regiun;
 Car bon congé vus voil doner,
 S'a Kaherdin vulez aler. (D., 124-29)

Upon this, she terminates her discourse with a final posed curse upon Tristan!

When her feigned curse of Tristan does not work, Iseut reverts to her genuine feelings and defends Tristan and Kaherdin and gives an explanation of their conduct. Tristan is once again "mun ami." She also shows her true need of

¹¹Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan, p. 193.

¹²Greimas, p. 442.

her servant:

Se vus avez vers mei haür,
 Ki me voldra puis nul honur?
 Coment puis jo estre honuree,
 Se jo par vus sui avilee? (D., 178-81)

Iseut shows a keen but bitter perception of loyalty and faith between persons:

L'en ne poet estre plus traiz
 Que par privez e par nuirriz. (D., 182-83)

She then turns the blame upon Brangien:

Brengvein, qui mun estre savez,
 Se vus plaist, hunir me poez;
 Mais ço vus ert grant reprover,
 Quant vus m'avez a conseiller,
 Se mun conseil e mun segrei
 Par ire descovrez al rei.
 D'altre part jo l'ai fait par vus:
 Mal ne deit avoir entre nus. (D., 186-93)

Iseut maintains that Brangien's honor is contingent upon and proportional to hers. She shows that she is entirely aware of Marc's disposition toward her:

Mes faiz puet avoir contre quer,
 Mei ne puet haür a nul fuer;
 E mes folies puet hair,
 Mais m'amur ne puet unc guerpier;
 Mes faiz en sun cuer haür puet:
 Quel talent qu'ait, amer m'estuet. (D., 211-16)

The reason that he must love her is explained by the fact that Marc drank the remainder of the potion.

In lines 301-38, seeing that she has not succeeded in preventing Brangien's disclosure of affairs to Marc, Iseut lets forth all her ire and curses this time Brangien: "Dehé ait ore vostre jugement!" (D., 302). It is Brangien's fault whatever wrong Iseut has committed. It is she who has taught

Iseut all her folly:

Les granz enginz e les amurs,
 Les dutaunces, les tristurs
 E l'amur que nus maintenimes
 Par vus fud quanque feimes. (D., 313-16)

Iseut accuses Brangien of deceiving first her, then Tristan, and finally the king. She accuses her of "messunges," "folie," "engin," and "deceavance" (D., 321-23). She tries to put Brangien in a position where she cannot feel easy about disclosing Iseut's conduct to the king. She makes Brangien feel that she (Brangien) has done a disservice to Marc and would only be admitting her own guilt. Iseut never mentions the "beivre" as responsible nor does she make reference to it when she accuses Brangien of causing her to commit "folly."

In Douce, 662-71, Iseut pleads with Brangien in her own name and in Tristan's. Already we see Tristan dying "d'anguise e de tristur (D., 666)." Iseut shows more concern for Tristan in Douce, 691-98; her hasty show of regret is merely to expedite Brangien's forgiveness of Tristan which is a safeguard to the secrecy of their love:

Peise moi certes que jol fiz.
 Pri vus quel moi pardunisez
 E tresques a Tristan en algez (D., 694-97)

Just as it was necessary to consider Tristan's monologues conjointly rather than separately or even piecemeal in order to get an accurate picture of his inner state, so in Iseut's (and for that matter in Brangien's) dialogues, it is not always legitimate to select individual statements (such as Iseut cursing Tristan) in order to substantiate

any theories without first taking into account that the particular statement may represent only one stage in a developed reaction and that the statement may be a consciously false pose.

All of Tristan's dialogue is short except Douce, 1183-1299. In Sneyd¹, 623-44 we hear Tristan foster a new lie, this time not to himself, but to Iseut aux Blanchés Mains. In Strasbourg¹ we have only three brief lines which at the same time provide relief from and propel the description, just as those lines of Kaherdin. In Douce there is a series of speeches in which Tristan avers that he is Tristan l'Amerus (D., 928-34) but defers his plans of assistance (D., 971-75) until he is forced to recognize the "reisun" ably demonstrated by Tristan le Nain and is thus forced to action --and death (D., 1011-16). In Douce, 1123-64 Tristan laments the fact that he is in a strange land without friends or family, except for Kaherdin. Whereas once Tristan said, "Jo perc . . . joie e deduit," he now affirms that life itself is leaving him.

In Douce, 1183-1299 Tristan develops the plan for his cure and also divulges to Kaherdin the story of his love. The ring is the sign of love and loyalty and is the means by which Iseut will recognize Tristan's need of her. In this speech, Tristan develops the long play on "salut" (an example of annominatio), an elegance intended for Iseut, and once again he recalls the affinity of "comfort" and "mort":

En fin dites que jo sui morz
 Se jo par li n'aie conforz. (D., 1209-10)

He relates his need for her at this time to a previous need --her first cure of him. Also here is the first acknowledgment of the "beivre":

De nostre amur fine e veraie
 Quant ele jadis guari ma plaie,
 Del beivre qu'ensemble beümes
 En la mer quant surpris en fumes.
 El beivre fud la nostre mort,
 Nus n'en avrum ja mais confort;
 A tel ure dune nus fu
 A nostre mort l'avum beü. (D., 1219-26)

Curtis points out that in contrast to Bérout where there is no suggestion that the lovers' destiny is death, death pervades Thomas' poem long before Tristan receives his wound. (Cf. T.1, 119-22.) Tristan is fully aware that the ultimate cause of his death, of "our death," is not the poison of the wound but the philtre.¹³

As is said to occur before dying, visions of his life come rushing to his mind and Tristan can recall all the suffering he has endured on Iseut's account, the ring given in the garden, his unsuccessful attempt at marriage, all the joy and the sorrow of their affair. We have participated before in such thoughts, in Tristan's monologues.

When Tristan says, in Douce, 1261-62, "Que me valdra la sue amor,/ Se ore me falt en ma dolor?" we need not interpret this as an anti-courtly stance, for we witnessed Tristan's

¹³Tristan Studies, pp. 39-40.

"coming to terms" with love before. This rhetorical question is merely to be transmitted to Iseut as an effective means of activating her loyalty and duty, her love for him. This time Tristan is merely voicing his "doubts" for Kaherdin to insinuate to Iseut; through his monologues he had already resolved these problems and he knows that, given the same problems, Iseut will reach the same conclusions as he. He poses these questions, then, not on account of his doubt but for the stimulation of Iseut. Tactfully, he also sends his salutations to Brangien. The "Se Deu n'en pense" of Douce, 1274 parallels line 34 of Sneyd¹, "S'ele n'en pense" In Douce, 1284-85 Tristan fosters the secret and gives directives to Kaherdin for an explanation to be given to his wife. Ironically, the "lie" is true. Iseut is the only "miriesce" who can cure his wound. It is ironic, also, that the only instances we hear Tristan and Iseut aux Blanches Mains speaking, a lie is involved. We heard Tristan deceive Iseut on their wedding night and her final words to him are ones of deception (D., 1750-56).

Thus, aside from the dialogue amoureux which must be kept distinct from the other dialogues because it is somewhat of a set piece, we can see that whereas in a monologue the monologist can speak openly and truthfully to himself, in the dialogues the actors are nearly always forced to cope with crises by lies and deceit. The dialogues which remain revolve around three situations: Tristan's marriage to Iseut aux Blanches Mains, Brangien's machinations, and

Tristan's death wound. These situations reflect different aspects of the doomed love affair, different aspects of the forces working to the lovers' ruination. Tristan gives fallacious reasons to his naïve young bride as to why he cannot consummate his marriage. This marriage in turn is discovered by Cariado who, in the role of "losengier," tries to use the gossip to his own advantage and resorts to the artificial means of allegory, and finally it is discovered by Kaherdin. In the end, Iseut aux Blanches Mains takes her vengeance by means of a lie. Brangien's machinations are full of deceit and lies. She turns against Tristan and Iseut and lies to Marc, thus gaining the upper hand over Marc, Tristan, and Iseut. Tristan's death engages dialogue reflecting the exterior force and immediate cause of his death--the wound received in his efforts to aid Tristan le Nain--and the interior, ultimate cause of his death which he attempts to relate to Kaherdin.

Thomas is above all concerned with a dramatic presentation of the tale, and this is evident in the implementation of direct speech--dialogue as well as monologue. Thus, Thomas chooses to represent the forces at work against the lovers by direct discourse--Cariado, Brangien, Iseut aux Blanches Mains, and (although he is portrayed as ineffective) Marc. Direct discourse gives the version its sense of immediacy, keeping the poem in the present, actively in front of the reader.

Whereas the monologues reveal the hero and heroine

struggling against abstract forces, within them and without, the dialogues expose their struggles against human opposition to their love. It is the dialogues which most dramatically convey man's inability to interact honestly and openly with his fellow man. Only the two superior beings who are compatible do not need to use words except at their forced separation. Compared with the monologues, the dialogues offer relatively unadorned speech with little of the rhetorical embellishment encountered in the monologues. And yet the most interesting of the dialogues have monologic overtones. Tristan and Iseut alone seem to be able to account for their feelings frankly. Minor characters do not or cannot.

Thus, we see that there is no black and white distinction between the use of monologue and dialogue. The most important observation is that monologues are reserved for Tristan and Iseut and dialogues revolve around these two figures. We cannot say that in the monologues we always confront true feelings, whereas in dialogue we do not. For, even in Tristan's monologue, we witnessed him trying to deceive himself. It was necessary to consider one monologue in the light of the other and in light of his conduct. But such considerations only added to the veracity of Thomas' insight. Thomas is aware of the struggles taking place within his hero and heroine. They are not one-sided characters. The dialogues add balance to Thomas' version by allowing us to witness the outside forces which cause Tristan and Iseut's isolation and thus their soliloquies. Dialogue acts as a foil for the monologues of Tristan and Iseut.

Description

Description, especially portraiture and the locus amoenus came to be highly developed art in medieval literature not only in the shorter poems but in the romans and followed set guidelines. Zumthor establishes the two functions of description in the roman: first, it sets the tone of the work and helps produce le sens; secondly, it "particularizes" a character or event. Following the rules of rhetoric, description multiplies time, place, manner, cause, circumstantial elements.¹⁴ Zumthor goes on to say, "Le dessein descriptif n'est pas, du moins n'est pas en premier lieu, d' "imiter le réel": mais de suggérer la signifiante des choses."¹⁵

The lack of visual description in Thomas is immediately obvious. Fourrier's assertion is that Thomas desired to augment the veracity and vraisemblance of his narration and so added historical color, geographic reality to the tale, employing the institutions, mores and taste of his era.¹⁶ Certainly Thomas is concerned about vraisemblance, but his motive in simplifying, clarifying, unifying is to suggest the essentials of the récit and let the tale thrive in the

¹⁴Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 353-54.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 354. See also Curtius, p. 183. Auerbach speaks of detailed description as a main instrument of the courtly roman in Literary Language and its Public, p. 205.

¹⁶Le Courant réaliste, I, 19-109.

first person, and most important, in monologue. Again, we confront Thomas' desire to allow his characters to present themselves to us. Portraiture does not occur in the remaining fragments and yet we barely notice this lack because the characters make their impression so strongly through their speech. It is Tristan and Iseut themselves who are the most vivid and realistic to us because we are allowed to witness their inner lives as well.

Nevertheless there are moments when Thomas does not or cannot employ discourse and must resort to a third-person description (the marriage ceremony, the scene in the Salle aux images, and the queen's retinue among others).

The recounting of the marriage festivities is capsule (16 lines) and has often been interpreted as proof of the clerical office of Thomas wherein he contrasts himself with "cil del siecle" (Sn.1, 384). However, I see in this passage evidence once again that Thomas is shifting the emphasis from the exterior to the interior. This passage is deliberately kept short to set off the moving, highly detailed monologue which follows. Fourrier notes that the description is composed of traditional elements: the preparations, the mass, meal, and activities.¹⁷ When we compare the length of recounting what would have been a splendid affair, rich with the possibility of detail, with the length to which

¹⁷Ibid., 100.

Thomas allows hero and heroine to indulge in the description of the slightest movement of the heart, we must conclude that Thomas is not concerned with the récit, external action.

The tournament in which Tristan and Kaherdin participate (D., 797 ff.) would have been highly developed by another poet but is treated cursorily by Thomas.

Often a description serves as a reinforcement of characterization. For example, the descriptive digression in Sneyd¹, 663-754 (Tristan in Spain) may appear to some gratuitous or out of place. As Thomas says in line 729, it does not belong to the "matière." But actually this digression does have a function. It properly disposes the reader to place his sympathies with and not against Tristan when Cariado attempts to denigrate him in the scene following this description.

When Thomas describes Iseut sitting in her chamber 'singing a piteous lay of love,' our attention is directed to her voice (she is singing softly and low with an instrument) and, ironically, to her hands. In a passage where he might have elaborated upon Iseut's beauty, Thomas has limited his physical description to four lines. But those elements which he has selected to describe call forth all sorts of associations. It was Tristan who taught Iseut to play the harp, according to tradition. The song that she sings has ironic affinities with her own situation--for Tristan too will die for and because of his love of Iseut. Even the depiction of Cariado is not physically descriptive, but

an interpretation of his character. But neither is his characterization completely negative, as one might expect. Thomas tells us in Sneyd¹, 811, "il esteit molt bels chevaliers," and he was "corteis" among other traits. All the qualities, though, will become more apparent and vivid in his speech.

In the fragmentary condition of the episode of the Salle aux images (T.1), we have again little visual description. What description there is merely situates the images. But I grant that due to the nature of the manuscript, we cannot discount a descriptive treatment of the statuary.¹⁸ The remaining parts relate Tristan's actions before the statuary. This section of Turin¹ is most important because of Thomas' astute psychological observations, showing us how Tristan releases his frustrations by acting them out. As L. Polak pointed out, the image of Iseut is another substitute-- just as was Iseut aux Blanches Mains.¹⁹ Thomas provides the psychological motivation for the building of the Salle aux images--Tristan needs this release; he does not know anyone with whom he might unburden his soul:

Por iço fist il ceste image
Que dire li volt son corage,
Car ne sot vers cui descoverir
Ne son voler, ne son desir. (T.1 45-49)

In a sense, this explanation is also a key to Tristan's use of monologue. Human beings, given their social character,

¹⁸Bédier, Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas, I, 310-11, provides a description based on Eilhart.

¹⁹"The Two Caves of Love in the Tristan by Thomas," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 33 (1970), 63.

have a basic need to communicate. But Tristan and Iseut, because of their highly-developed sensitivity and their extremely complex problems, find that they cannot communicate with the rest of humanity. Their plight is worsened when they are separated from each other. They are driven to "talk" to themselves. And now Tristan, frustrated by his isolation from his lover and his inability to relate to others, turns to fancy.

The description of the Cortège de la reine is found in the Strasbourg¹ fragment. Thomas warns:

Que valt que l'um alonge cunte,¹
U die ce que n'i amunte? (Str.¹, 5-6)

Thus, again, where he might have described at great length the queen's retinue, the great wealth and color, we have a mere listing of the members of that suite. But his plan is not without effect. Just by the orderly listing of these members, our curiosity is piqued. To the catalogue Thomas adds those brief, excited questions of Kaherdin and replies of Tristan which further incite our interest and center it upon Iseut (and Brangien) rather than diluting it upon objects.

Even when it is a question of Tristan's disguise (D., 502-16), Thomas' description is only conventional and concise. He is working with a traditional theme and material.²⁰ His care to convince us of Tristan's successful

²⁰See Johnson, Conventions littéraires, pp. 121-27.

disguise is motivated by his attempt at vraiesemblance but certainly does not compare with Bérout's delight in precise detail of clothing and in the situation itself. Thomas' treatment does not really enter the realm of realistic description because he is not interested in exterior detail.

When Kaherdin arrives in London, 'the best city in the realm of Christendom,' our attention is only briefly held by description (D., 1380-91). Here London is not "seen." Its inhabitants are characterized by "largesce e honur," "baldur," and "engin" (D., 1383-84, 1391). Thomas' geographic situation is precise but not elaborate. Margaret Pelan, convinced of the influence of Wace on Thomas, tells us:

Remarquons . . . qu'il y a dans le Brut une célèbre description de ville--celle de Caërleon--qui a fait fortune dans la littérature des XII^e et XIII^e siècles. En effet, les éléments de ce tableau se retrouvent ensuite dans toute description de ville et celle de Londres dans le Tristan se ressent elle aussi de cette influence.²¹

The passage in question is Brut, 10463-70.

That most famous scene in Tristan, the tempest at sea, is also inspired by Wace (Brut, 2524 ff.). It is the most salient description in Thomas and it sets the scene for Iseut's monologue. Johnson specifies the elements Thomas owes to Wace: the poet's calling attention to the scene, the technical terminology, the circumstances and duration, and the fright of the passengers.²² Even Joël Grisward in his study of the scene admits that "l'originalité du romancier

²¹L'Influence du Brut de Wace, p. 91.

²²Conventions littéraires, p. 131.

se situe moins au niveau de la trouvaille inédite qu'à celui, tout formel, de l'organisation d'éléments anciens."²³ Rather than expending creative energy on the description of the storm scene, Thomas resorts to Wace. Realism in detail is not an innovation on the part of Thomas. Wace's realistic depiction merely suits Thomas' own designs for his version. In fact, Pelan believes that Thomas relies greatly on pre-existing models in Wace:

Quant à l'imitation littéraire, les descriptions de Thomas suivent de près les descriptions qui leur servent de modèles.²⁴

In the domain of description, the difference between the versions of Thomas and Béroul becomes quite apparent. Varvaro speaks of Béroul's "attention to the pictured scene, which, as a figurative synthesis of the problematic and dramatic feeling for life, is thus designed to contain in itself all the expressiveness, if not all the richness, of the tale."²⁵

To form a conclusion regarding the scarcity of visual description in Thomas' Tristan, we can state that Thomas is concerned that we become involved with his lovers' feelings and thoughts rather than that we "see" them. Rather than being a primary means of characterization, his description

²³"A propos du thème descriptif de la tempête chez Wace et chez Thomas d'Angleterre," in Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier (Geneva: Droz, 1970), I, 389.

²⁴L'Influence du Brut de Wace, p. 97.

²⁵Beroul's Romance of Tristran, pp. 188-89.

merely reinforces our impressions of the characters from the discourse. Rather than illustrating Iseut's beauty and superiority, for example, Thomas demonstrates it in the scene of the queen's retinue. Other descriptive passages serve as psychological reinforcement to spoken scenes or else they summarily provide motivation. In fact, some of the passages which we have designated as "description" really only provide very elementary facts. Thomas does not employ metaphor in describing the storm or the wedding; he employs few adjectives, mostly nouns. Nowhere could we claim that the description itself is brilliant, vivid or outstanding; it never outweighs the force of speech, particularly monologue. Descriptive elements in passages analyzing psychological states emphasize character and circumstance rather than incident or appearance.

Narrator-to-Audience

In her dissertation on literary conventions in twelfth-century narrative, Johnson observes:

Dans la poésie narrative du XII^{ème} siècle les poètes ne s'en tenaient pas à la simple narration d'une histoire derrière laquelle ils auraient pu disparaître, mais, bien davantage, ils imposaient leur présence de façon à provoquer la participation de l'auditoire. Le rapport direct entre poète et public, entre le "je" et le "vous" est ainsi maintenu.²⁶

Pierre Gallais believes that it is precisely these moments which "manifestent la préoccupation de l'auteur d'établir

²⁶Conventions littéraires, p. 98.

le contact avec son auditoire, d'éveiller, de maintenir et de guider l'attention de son . . . public" that reveal the personality, the "mentalité," of the poet.²⁷

And yet the poet-public relationship established by Thomas differs somewhat from that generally encountered in the epoch. Whereas Bérout, for instance, makes much use of the formulaic "oiez" so familiar to epic, in order to announce new stages in the development of the plot (Johnson gives twenty-one examples), in Thomas we encounter that expression only twice and the function of the "oiez" is not to anticipate physical movement or complication of exterior plot. But, despite the scarcity of such methods as the one mentioned or plot anticipation, readers do not fail to feel the presence of the author in this work. Examples of author intervention in the Tristan of Thomas are of two kinds: 1. those dealing with the immediate narrative, and 2. those concerning the narrator's view of his role. Examples of author intervention, the assertion of the "je" of the poet, occur in Sneyd¹, 233-304 and 730, Strasbourg¹, 5-7, Douce, 835-84 and 1582-86 and Sneyd², 820-39, as well as Turin¹, 144-51.

In her discussion of Thomas' limited use of the "oiez" of oral tradition, Johnson maintains:

Thomas a écrit à un moment de transition dans le développement de la littérature. La communication

²⁷"Recherches sur la mentalité des romanciers français du Moyen Age," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale, 7 (1964), 482.

entre l'auteur et le public se faisait par la lecture à haute voix d'un texte écrit. Cela peut expliquer la présence quoique discrète du verbe "oïr," car le poète sait que son oeuvre sera entendue. Bien plus tard la communication se fera par la lecture du texte que le lecteur aura devant ses yeux, et alors l'emploi du verbe "oïr" disparaîtra peu à peu.²⁸

Gallais, however, believes that the use of the verb "oïr" is an "indice certain" that the work was composed for the purpose of being read aloud.²⁹ Johnson goes on to say:

Thomas composait donc par écrit, mais sans doute gardait-il présent à l'esprit le fait que son roman serait lu à haute voix. Son mode de composition est donc essentiellement littéraire, bien qu'il ne soit pas encore tout à fait détaché de la tradition orale et des techniques orales.³⁰

Although the two instances extant of this device may be considered vestigial, at least one is vestigial in the sense that it is not the creation of Thomas, but another carry-over from Wace, as can be seen in Pelan's doctoral thesis on the influence of Wace.³¹ Compare Thomas' "Oiez pituse desturbance" of Douce, 1582 with line 2524 of Brut, "Mais or oiés quel destorbier." Thomas employs this incitement to introduce the celebrated storm scene which also was borrowed from Wace. It is difficult to judge whether Thomas would have adopted the device, had he not found it as a feature of the scene taken from Wace. Nevertheless whereas Wace himself

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

²⁹ "Recherches sur la mentalité," 481.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 106.

³¹ L'Influence du Brut de Wace, p. 89.

is concerned with the drama of the elements, Thomas is actually more interested in the turbulence experienced in Iseut's soul and we have a clue to this in the aptly-chosen adjective "pituse"--which centers our attention on Iseut's singular plight to be expressed in her monologue. This impression is further confirmed in the succeeding lines:

Oiez pituse desturbance
 Aventure mult doleruse
 E a trestuz amanz pituse;
 De tel desir, de tel amur
 N'oïstes unc greniur dolur. (D., 1582-86)

The adjective "pituse" is reinforced by "doleruse," "tel desir," "tel amur" and "greniur dolur," as well as the second "pituse." Thomas further elicits sympathy and attention to Iseut's monologue by his invitation to all lovers to partake of this emotion. Thomas inconspicuously exhorts "trestuz amanz" to participate in her soliloquy.

After the recitation of the soliloquy, the narration of the storm is resumed, but Thomas tells us, "Tant cum dure la turmente,/ Ysolt se plaint, se demente" (D., 1695-96). Thus we are shown the importance of the interiorization of the "aventure" we have just witnessed. Again, when the winds have ceased, Thomas emphasizes the reaction--"Or i est grant l'anguserie" (D., 1718), "Ysolt en est mult ennuiee" (D., 1725), "A poi ne muert de sun desir" (D., 1728), and "Sovent se claime Ysolt chative" (D., 1731). Juxtaposed with this description of Iseut is that of Tristan:

Tristrans en est dolenz e las,
 Sovent se plaint, sovent suspire
 Pur Ysolt que tant desire,

Plure des oils, sun cors detuert,
A poi que del desir ne muert. (D., 1734-38)

Notice the parallels between Douce, 1728 and 1738 and also the common "ennui" (D., 1725 and 1739) and "angoisse" (D., 1718 and 1739). Thomas' attention is always directed to inner experience rather than exterior action. The "Oiez pituse disturbance" is the first element of many which contributes to a shift in focus from exterior to interior. So although Thomas may have borrowed the line, he crafted its use to his own particular advantage.

Whereas, for example, Bérout "stresses and parades" his relationships with his audience,³² we have no such relationship with Thomas. Bérout's points of intensity are action, but Thomas' highest points are the monologues. Bérout is able to reinforce the tension of the plot as well as transmit his own amusement or involvement by his interventions.

Speaking of Bérout, Varvaro says:

So the narrator is able to reinforce the close contact which he has created between himself and his audience, whose emotional reactions he constantly controls, attuning them to his own and always keeping them at the highest tension permitted by the narrative.³³

He points out, though, that:

In fact, however, the object of the poet's impassioned participation is not primarily the vicissitudes of the narrative: what leaves him breathless is the human suffering of his protagonists, their very existence, with its charms and tribulations. Every event is evaluated and passionately felt from the point of

³²Varvaro, Beroul's Romance of Tristan, p. 50.

³³Ibid., p. 58

view of the protagonists, to whom every tremor of emotion is related.³⁴

In Thomas' version we cannot speak of the same type of impassioned participation on the part of the poet. Thomas often reminds his readers that it is not from personal experience that he speaks, and this averment creates distance. Nevertheless, there is an involvement with his version that he encourages on the part of his audience, "trestuz amanz," which is pointedly stated in the epilogue and encouraged by the treatment of the various narrative elements which are being studied.

In Turin¹, 144-51, Thomas says:

Hici ne sai que dire puisse,
 Quel de aus quatre a greignor angoisse,
 Ne la raison dire ne sai,
 Por ce que esprove ne l'ai.
 La parole mettrai avant,
 Le jugement facent amant,
 Al quel estoit mieuz de l'amor
 Ou sanz lui ait greignor dolur.

This is another example of Thomas encouraging his readers and audience to participate fully in his poem. The position of naïve or aloof clerk, is a pose which acts to the advantage of the reader. When Thomas has piqued the reader's interest and then declines judgment, the reader finds himself in a position where he deliberately involves himself.

Other examples of author intervention, rather than commenting upon the immediate scene, show Thomas' approach to his poem in general.

³⁴Ibid., p. 59.

In his desire to maintain the supremacy of his version, Thomas is following in the footsteps of the jongleurs épiques.³⁵ And yet Thomas stands apart from those poets. There is something different about his attitude. Thomas is fully conscious of his role as author. Four passages particularly concern the art of putting together his narrative.

When Thomas has digressed on Arthur's adventure with Orguillos, lest we think he has "gotten off the track," he tells us:

A la matire n'afirt mie,
 Nequedent boen est quel vos die
 Que niz a cestui cist esteit
 Ki la barbe aveir voleit
 Del rei e del empereur
 Cui Tristrans servi a icel jor
 Quant il esteit en Espagne
 Ainz qu'il reparaist en Bretagne. (Sn.1, 729-36)

Thomas has adroitly placed his tale of Tristan's bravery (one of the very few glimpses we have of his physical prowess) adjacent to the episode of Cariado. By insisting upon the unsung deeds of Tristan and the truism about jealous people, Thomas is able to manipulate our reaction to Cariado and intensify the readers' solidarity with Tristan and Iseut, as we have seen earlier. I find Pelan's statement unconvincing:

Il est vrai . . . que son amour d'un récit intéressant l'entraîne parfois un peu hors de son sujet--on sent, par exemple, que Thomas en conteur naïf raconte les histoires de géants pour le seul plaisir qu'il y prend. Il sait bien, d'ailleurs, que "ce conte n'afiert pas

³⁵Johnson, Conventions littéraires, pp. 102-103.

a la matire" et cette candeur désarme la critique.³⁶

The digression in Sneyd¹ is not there solely for its intrinsic interest. We have repeatedly shown that Thomas is not interested in the récit, as is Béroutl for example. Thomas can hardly be termed naïve in light of the critical comments included in the poem. When the poet breaks from a recognizable pattern, it must be deliberate. Thomas deliberately includes this digression and its inclusion does not disarm the careful reader. The digression deals more extensively with Arthur, this being borrowed from Wace. The tale of Arthur's bravery in a sense magnifies Tristan's bravery. It also accomplishes one other thing. The fact that Tristan fights the nephew emphasizes that Thomas is employing a post-Arthurian cadre. (In Béroutl, of course, Arthur appears along with his court at Iseut's "deraisne.") Pelan gives this insight as to why Thomas fixes the story after Arthur's reign:

Il éprouve le besoin, sans doute, d'avoir un nouveau fond historique pour l'action de ses héros, l'époque arthurienne étant trop remplie d'événements et trop peuplée déjà de personnages pour servir de cadre au Tristan. Reconnaisant cependant que cette époque célèbre entre toutes, le règne d'Artus, a une certaine utilité comme fond historique et pittoresque, il le garde en le faisant servir d'arrière-plan à son récit. Ainsi, en imaginant que les événements du Tristan ont eu lieu à une époque un peu postérieure, il évoque de temps à autre des souvenirs d'Artus, mais il ne sacrifie jamais Tristan à Artus³⁷

³⁶L'Influence du Brut de Wace, p. 97. Pelan worked with Bédier's edition.

³⁷Ibid., p. 85.

This severance with an Arthurian setting accommodates Thomas' ability to focus on interior activity rather than on adventure, the myriad adventures associated with the court of Arthur.

Thomas' unwillingness to dwell on le récit is evident in lines 5-7 of Strasbourg¹:

Que valt que l'um alonge cunte,
U die ce que n'i amunte?
Dirrai la sume e la fin.

These lines have a familiar ring for readers of Chrétien de Troyes. Here the poet insists on streamlining the development of a tale well-known to his audience. Line 7 proves that Thomas is not concerned with action in itself. When one considers that Thomas takes care to minimize the recitation of action and then allows the monologues to progress leisurely and at length, his priorities are obvious.

Douce, 835-84 is the longest critical digression, that is, a digression which predominantly treats Thomas' role as poet. This, notably, is the one occasion on which Thomas addresses the crowd directly by title, "Seignurs." One key to the passage and to our understanding of Thomas' narrative art is the correct interpretation of Douce, 839. Rather than meaning that Thomas does not wish to be too logical or too coherent, as has been interpreted, Douglas Kelly has ably disserted on Thomas' intentions. "Trop en uni dire" is the important grammatical aggregate. "En uni dire" is not synonymous with unir.³⁸ In other words, what Thomas is

³⁸"En uni dire (Tristan Douce 839) and the composition of Thomas' Tristan," Modern Philology, 67 (1969-70), 10.

doing is eliminating or discrediting episodes after careful choice. Kelly notes the derivation of "en uni dire"--it comes from in unum redigere.³⁹ We can translate this as "to bring or call into one place, to assemble in one place." It is also noteworthy that the verb redigere has connotations of reduction or lessening in value and this is precisely the point Thomas is making. He avers that he wants to tell us only as much as is necessary and omit "le surplus." Obviously, this statement refers to the numerous action-filled episodes which must have been circulating widely at the time. We have seen how Thomas consistently plays down action, physical action, in order to let us share the thoughts of the characters. He has given us only the streamlined outline of the familiar Tristan and Iseut story. Many would feel that those 'long, boring monologues' should have been omitted as "le surplus." But knowing Thomas' intentions as specified here, we see that he did not consider them superfluous. Neither then should we. Indeed the monologues are the heart of the story as Thomas is presenting it.

This same passage continues to develop the proof that "raisun" is on the wide of Thomas in his presentation of episodes and especially of the final episode of Tristan's mortal wound which initiates the denouement.

The epilogue is another example of Thomas sharing his insight into his poetic task with his readers. Baumgartner

³⁹Ibid., 12.

and Wagner have published a fine study of Thomas' conclusion, " 'As enveisiez e as purvers.' Commentaire sur les vers 3125-3129 du Roman de Tristan de Thomas" in Romania, 88 (1967), 527-37. (This article is illuminating in many respects and it has helped guide my analysis of Thomas' epilogue.)

Thomas tells us his reasons for writing:

Pur essample issi ai fait
Pur l'estorie embelir (Sn.2, 831-32)

These reasons seem to accord with those classical aims of teaching and pleasing. Thomas also tells us to whom his writing is 'directed--"amanz"--who might find

. grant confort,
Encuntre change, encountre tort,
Encuntre paine, encuntre dolur,
Encuntre tuiz engins d'amur! (836-839)

These five elements have been illustrated repeatedly throughout Thomas' narrative, but nowhere more intensely and dramatically than in the monologues in which Tristan and Iseut prove their cognizance of their special love and these effects. Tristan's first monologue revolved around the "change" of which he accused Iseut, the "tort" for which she was responsible, the "paine" and "dolur" he suffered at the expense of this love, and the accusation of Iseut's "engins." In his second monologue, we witnessed his avowal that he was the guilty party and not Iseut. In subsequent monologues, we experience Tristan's and Iseut's awareness of the vicissitudes (and particularly the disagreeable side) of love. It is this insistence on the lovers' awareness and understanding of their condition that Thomas conveys. They are

not dazed, starry-eyed lovers. They choose this love despite its sorrows and hardships. The monologues convince us of this.

Thomas is quite precise in dedicating his version:

A tuz amanz saluz i dit,
 As pensis e as amerus,
 As emvius, as desirus,
 As enveisiez e as purvers,
 [A tuz cels]ki orunt ces vers. (Sn.2, 821-25)⁴⁰

But there is a dimension which Baumgartner and Wagner do not consider that needs to be discussed. In light of the work done by these two scholars, we can comment on the categories of lovers cited by Thomas. Tristan and Iseut themselves, above all through their monologues, have demonstrated that they belong to these categories. The words "pensis," "amerus," "desirus" and "enveisiez" need no explanation as they generally belong to the courtly vocabulary. I would only point out that "emvius" can have a neutral sense, "qui excite l'envie, le désir."⁴¹ Wind herself, for Sneyd², 823, gives this definition for the plural substantive: "ceux qui désirent (l'amour)."⁴² This word, then, need not have a pejorative connotation. The other term requiring an explanation is "purvers." Baumgartner and Wagner maintain that the Latin "perversus," the origin of French "pervers" or "purvers," conveys "la notion d'inclination au mal, de

⁴⁰Note the use of "oïr" again.

⁴¹Godefroy, III, 316-17.

⁴²Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan, p. 178.

méchanceté, mais aussi celle d'une sorte d'obstination à ne pas ouvrir les yeux, à s'attarder aux erreurs qui renversent les notions recues ou l'ordre du bon sens."⁴³ They also remind us of the meaning of "perverse" in English. Here I would point out that the word "pervers" can be applied to Tristan as he showed himself in his first monologue. It need not be applied, however, on religious grounds. When Tristan battled within himself as to how to react to Iseut's supposed misdeeds, he lingered in error with obstination and showed an inclination to egoism, the evil in love. But however evil such thoughts may be, it is unrealistic to think they do not exist and so Thomas realistically portrayed Tristan dwelling in a lover's error. Thomas was aware that lovers would recognize themselves in all the monologues, no less that one. But, there is hope for the erring lover, because Tristan returns to the right path of love.

Thomas reiterates in Sneyd², 833 that his intention in composing this story was that he might please lovers and so that they might find things to remind them of their own experiences in love. Now, certainly no love can compare with that of Tristan and Iseut when the element of destiny is brought in and very few lovers indeed could think to compare their states with the status of Tristan and Iseut. But the common ground for all lovers is that realm within. And it

⁴³" 'As enveisiez e as purvers,'" 535.

is that which Thomas has repeatedly emphasized with its greatest, most real depiction in the monologues.

When the poet states the reasons for which he composed the poem, among them we find:

E que par lieus poissent troveir
Choses u se puissent recorder
(Sn. 2, 834-35)

Wind gives the definitions "remettre en mémoire, se souvenir, s'instruire" for the verb "recorder."⁴⁴ Godefroy gives these added definitions--"déclarer comme témoin" and "confirmer."⁴⁵ I mean to underline the active role which Thomas encourages in his readers. So, rather than seeing mere moralizing in Thomas' epilogue, I believe we can see a further indication that the poet is encouraging full participation in his work. In consideration of the reduced plot and intrigue, we see that Thomas is encouraging active involvement in the interior life of his characters. Such an interpretation does not allow for the remark of Baumgartner and Wagner:

Avec la dédicace à tous les amants qui clôt son récit,
Thomas nous arrache sans transition à cet univers de
passion où ont vécu, souffert, et où viennent de
mourir Tristan et Ysolt⁴⁶

The lovers to whom the poem is dedicated have been participating all along in the passion, the joys, and the sorrows of Tristan and Iseut.

⁴⁴Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan, p. 200.

⁴⁵Dictionnaire, VI, 681-83.

⁴⁶" 'As enveisiez e as purvers,' " 527.

Third-Person Narration

Two basic types of narration occur in Thomas--fact-giving and analysis. The fact-telling tends to move rapidly while the analysis is developed and focuses not on action or plot progression, but on states of mind or attitudes. These types can be interpreted as horizontal and vertical developments.

The most interesting narration in Thomas is that which does not further the plot or develop intrigue but rather analyzes the characters' states of mind. Many complain that there is too much analysis in the work of Thomas, but actually there are only about 350 such lines. That number does not seem overwhelming.

The most complex example of this type of narration occurs in Sneyd¹, 183-368, immediately following the monologue in which Tristan declares his decision to wed and directly preceding the wedding. The analysis itself is divided into three parts and follows a pattern which goes from the specific to the general and returns to the specific. Lines 183-232 concern Tristan specifically. At first we are given facts we already know, but then something interesting occurs in lines 197-98. There for the first time we encounter the name Iseut aux Blanches Mains. Tristan had not been able to pronounce it in his soliloquy. And there too Thomas gives the underlying reason for Tristan's attraction to this woman, a reason which Tristan at this point would perhaps not even admit to himself even if he perceived it. Tristan is aware

of the pull of physical charm, but in his monologue he did not let such references to this other woman's physical beauty or her name emerge. In his monologue, the only reference to the other woman was in line 29 where he called her "altre." She and the pleasure associated with her were all very abstract, never elaborated. Thomas' understanding of these two motives shows his superior grasp of human psychology. He supplies these two motives to Tristan's own and reinterprets Tristan's argumentation, often using the same words and phrases as Tristan used earlier, thus making the commentary very effective.

Thomas tells us that Tristan seeks vengeance for his sorrow and pain, but adds, using the same prepositional construction as in line 213 ("A sa dolur, a sa gravance"), but one which can assume a different function. Line 215 ("A sun mal . . .") could read 'He seeks such a revenge for the evil he has suffered' or 'To his own undoing he seeks such revenge.' In these lines, we have a rare example of narrative anticipation of the complications Tristan will later face. He then repeats his interpretation of Tristan's state of affairs in light of the second Iseut. Lines 233-304 shift the reader's focus to humanity in general. To draw attention to his psychological dissertation, Thomas employs one of his very infrequent jongleur techniques, "Oez . . ." (233). This interpretation of human nature is not directed only against women in particular but against all of humankind. This passage is often cited as an example of Thomas' clerical

bent.⁴⁷ A question to ponder is, is "oez merveilluse aventure" ironic? We certainly do not enter into the exciting, action-filled world of adventure to which this phrase usually initiates us. Thomas then picks up the terms employed by Tristan--"colvertise" and "franchise"--to indicate the distortion of these keywords effected in Tristan's mind to suit his immediate needs which result from that blight of man, "novelerie." Once again he takes up terms employed by Tristan--"voleir" and "poeir"--and interprets Tristan's action in light of general human conduct. In lines 278-80, he takes pains to point out that "novelerie" is not just any change. A change effected for purposes of amelioration or to remove oneself from a bad situation is not "novelerie." Lines 287-90 admit an anti-feminism momentarily, but Thomas hastily adds, "Ne sai, certes, que jo en die" and reapplies his criticism to both men and women. The irony is that it is Tristan and not Iseut who is the guilty party. Then when the poet speaks of "tels" the reader makes direct application of such generalizations to Tristan, and this is what Thomas himself does--lines 305-68 return to the specific case of Tristan.

Thomas now interprets Tristan's monologues in light of the human failure, "novelerie," and in light of his psychological observation regarding the name and beauty of Iseut mirrored in Iseut aux Blanches Mains. With these two

⁴⁷Jonin, p. 447.

observations in mind, Thomas disserts upon the quality of Tristan's relationship with Iseut aux Blanches Mains. He is careful to preface this explanation with a "m'est avis" and we read in this both a certain pride in his psychology and an objective caution.

Thomas exposes the fact that we are not dealing with "fin'amors." This is a signal to us not to interpret Tristan's two long monologues completely or only by the tenets of courtly love. For, frankly, "fin'amors" in not recognizing certain feelings and attitudes, namely the type of jealousy Tristan experiences, shows itself to be idealistic whereas Thomas shows man in all his humanness striving for the ideal. Again Thomas lines up Tristan's conduct with general human conduct (Sn.1, 337-60).

Thomas' analysis is such that it is not structured to stand alone; it relies on the monologue. It is not on equal terrain with monologue, it merely is a guide to our application of the thoughts of Tristan to which we were exposed. In a sense, this analysis exonerates Tristan by pointing up mitigating circumstances. It brings in motivation of which we cannot expect Tristan to be aware at this point. Thomas does allow his own characters to voice their own emotions; he does not interpret these for the audience in a patronizing manner or if the thoughts presented by the monologist are outright. Thomas always remains a guide only, allowing the

characters themselves to act upon the audience, to affect pity.⁴⁸

In lines 755-80 of Sneyd¹, Thomas disserts on "envie." This brief interpretation by Thomas helps to dispose the reader properly to the Iseut-Cariado scene. We sympathize more readily with Iseut because we know of Tristan's valorous deeds (both in Spain and in resisting the carnal delights of his wife) and we distrust and dislike Cariado before meeting him.

Turin¹, 51-183 presents perhaps Thomas' most famous analysis. This section most resembles those questions put to the courts of love, as in the work of Andreas Capellanus. Which of the four suffers the most? Preceding this disquisition, we see Tristan trying to resolve the tension in his existence by means of the Cave of Love. Following this

⁴⁸Such an attitude can be compared with that of Gottfried who, according to Jackson, "believes that it is more effective for an author to select those emotions he wants to convey and use various stylistic devices to convey them rather than put words into the mouths of his characters and allow his audience to interpret them." (The Anatomy of Love, p. 220). This attitude in Gottfried accounts certainly for his extended metaphors and ornate descriptions. Gottfried feels that his knowledge is far greater than that of his characters (not only concerning the plot), so that he, the author, can best effect compassion in the reader. Thus, Gottfried narrates from a superior level. Now, we do not feel that Thomas is narrating from a superior level because he allows Tristan and Iseut to dissert in monologue and because he does not make judgment on the hero and heroine but only interprets, makes general comments and expresses emotional reaction. Thomas wants us to feel, to participate, to judge, rather than judge himself. In doing so he reveals a sophisticated concept of his role as author. He intervenes only in the most complicated of situations.

inquiry, we see Iseut aux Blanches Mains unable to contain or sublimate her frustrations any longer. Thomas' analysis of the states of mind insures dramatic ascendance.

Douce, 1323-35 contains another anti-feminist comment which Thomas resolves to curtail, "Car il n'affirt nient a mei." Thomas cannot continue on a purely anti-feminist tirade because he presents Iseut aux Blanches Mains to us not so much as an example of fickleness; he shows us the motivation for her act of treachery. We sympathize with her as we see her learn the truth about her husband. None of Thomas' characters is of the black/white, good/bad variety, not even the hero and heroine.

Jonin disparages the commentary in Thomas, however:

Quant à l'utilité de ces commentaires pour l'intérêt du récit ou l'action du roman, elle est très souvent des plus contestables. Ils noient l'idée directrice, entravent le développement de l'intrigue qu'ils empâtent ou enlisent . . . A moins qu'il ne se livre à de laborieux essais d'analyse psychologique Thomas nous oriente avec une nette préférence vers les généralités morales. Ses remarques sont presque toujours longues et lourdes et la monotonie de leur ton diminue encore leur intérêt.⁴⁹

The retort to Jonin's criticism of Thomas resides in the fact that Thomas is not concerned with the action or the récit, plot or intrigue. There seemed to be enough poets who were concerned with that at the time. Such passages cannot be considered superfluous or laborious when account is made of

⁴⁹Les Personnages féminins, p. 316.

Thomas' direction in his version. Thomas is not to be classified with the conteurs.

Ernest Hoepffner, too, complains that Thomas' récit is confusing, lacking coherence and is "invraisemblable." He says that this is due to the disproportionate concern for "psychologie" and that "l'effort se concentre tout entier sur l'étude psychologique." He states further that Thomas "se soucie peu de la vraisemblance du récit."⁵⁰ It is the récit, precisely, in which Thomas is not interested. Many critics and readers have realized this all along, without detracting from Thomas' artistic ability as Hoepffner does.

Realizing the implications of monologue for characterization, compare the treatment of characters by Béroul in whose work the récit is action-filled and complex. Varvaro states:

Their identity is static, precisely because what is essential to the tale is not the maturing of the individual but the fact that he finds himself in a dramatic situation; this constitutes an additional reason why the romance should lack a linear unity comparable to that of the examples by Chrestien. On the other hand, while the maturing of the courtly hero is a process of progressive refinement and therefore both of a deepening and restricting of his personality, Beroul's characters have very wide margins of flexibility and can adapt themselves to varying situations with much greater disregard for an absolute standard.⁵¹

Such an orientation accounts for the lack of internal dialectic,

⁵⁰"Chrétien de Troyes et Thomas d'Angleterre," Romania, 55 (1929), 7-8.

⁵¹Varvaro, Beroul's Romance of Tristan, p. 188.

the lack of remorse and problems in the Tristan and Iseut of Béroul. Their main enemy is the traitors and not something internal.

We need only to say at this point that that other type of narration, the fact-giving kind, moves at a rapid pace (again, consider the way the marriage is handled) and is uncomplicated.

We are brought to the conclusion that the treatment of third-person narration in Thomas, just as his interventions, description, and dialogue, is designed to accommodate the priority given to the interior world, a world for which monologue is the privileged medium. Tristan and Iseut are independent characters, not merged in adventure, landscape or static description, because of monologue.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I turned my attention to the individual monologues in Thomas' Roman de Tristan to see how Thomas had his hero and heroine portray themselves. I saw that the topics treated in the monologues are the very pith of the tale, thus these interior monologues are the focal points. Rather than being colored by the traditional Ovidian imagery and vocabulary, the monologues of Thomas are more effective because he has steered clear of this mannerism and instead employed a relatively traditional, abstract vocabulary which precisely because of its abstract quality can cover the broad spectrum of the complex interactions of the heart and mind. Instead, antithesis, so apt because of its inherence in the myth, fills the void of imagery. The monologues are not exercises in rhetorical gymnastics but are Thomas' successful attempts to convey states of mind.

After examining the individual interior monologues, I approached the poem from a different angle. I considered other narrative elements and first say that the social forces at work against the lovers are presented most effectively through the use of dialogue. The lovers seek respite from negative forces in their monologues. The dialogues allow us to witness outside forces which cause Tristan and Iseut's

isolation, thus they act as a foil for monologue. Dialogue too can reveal character motivation, but in a secondary, supporting role. I then accounted for the scarcity of visual description or its conventionality when present by stating Thomas' interest in our involvement with the characters' thoughts and feelings. Thomas does not dilute the intensity of these feelings by cluttering his work with the long, ornamental descriptions common to other poems of the period. I determined from a study of the instances in which Thomas intervenes that we cannot speak of the same type of impassioned participation by Thomas as might be found in Bérroul; on the other hand, Thomas incites active participation on the part of lovers who read his poem. His critical comments direct us to a fuller sharing in the experience of Tristan and Iseut. I further saw that analysis is not pronounced but relies on monologue and only acts as a guide in situations where we cannot expect the characters to be fully aware of all the implications of their feelings. The récit is not Thomas' concern. In Thomas, exterior forces are simply not developed as are interior forces. The conclusion to which we were led is that monologue is the focal point and center of emotivity for Thomas' Tristan. Other narrative elements are designed to accommodate this drive to unlock the interior world through monologue. Although monologue causes a sort of stasis from the point of view of the more traditional accent in narrative on action, adventure, it produces a more intense rapport between the hero and heroine and the public.

While not necessarily advancing, it is deepening. It brings the public to an ever keener level of immediacy and intimacy.

Thus, monologue assumes the important role in the Tristan of Thomas. Because the tale is well-known, Thomas does not have to concentrate on plot; it suffices for him to present essentials. He is able to center our attention on motivation and states of mind, all best expressed through his use of monologue. Thomas differs, then, from his contemporaries for whom adventure is an integral feature of the roman. This justifies examining Thomas' work with more attention than it has received.

The fragments of the Roman de Tristan need to be brought out into critical light to be experienced and appreciated in themselves and not merely be relegated to the task of date determination or to the confined world of categorizations imposed by comparison. My study is one attempt to present a different approach to the Tristan of Thomas, with the hope that it might arouse new interest in the poem. I believe that there remains much that can be said about Thomas' poem despite its fragmentary form, by focusing on the work itself. Comparisons tend to lead to too rigid categorizations; but by concentrating on the individual text, nuance receives its appropriate consideration. Many other points could be developed in this way, for example the psychology of the hero and the heroine. The relationship that I have suggested in Thomas, his creation, and his public may also point to a

level of sophistication not widely recognized in twelfth-century narrative but which merits further study.

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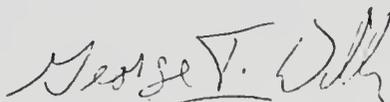
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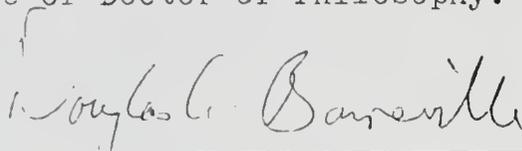
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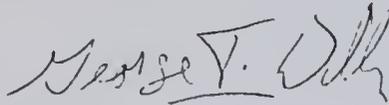
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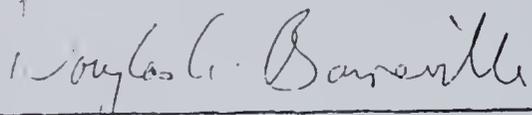
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