

THE SUPERNATURAL QUEST IN *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR* AND  
*ORLANDO FURIOSO* IN RELATION TO TRUTH

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## ABSTRACT

### THE SUPERNATURAL QUEST IN *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR* AND *ORLANDO FURIOSO* IN RELATION TO TRUTH

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Over three chapters, this study compares Sir Thomas Malory's Grail Quest from *Le Morte Darthur* with Ludovico Ariosto's quest to the moon in *Orlando Furioso* and their presentation of truth. Both quests reflect different perspectives on the nature of truth, Malory's version of the Grail Quest, working from a Christian perspective, consistently reflects the notion of divine truth and the absolute nature of it. With Ariosto, truth is shown to be contingent and multifaceted, and rather to be determined from the perspective it is taken from. In light of the strong emphasis on character that Malory's version of the Grail Quest places, this study invests a great deal of attention into analyzing particular characters from the quest, such as Galahad, Gawain, and Launcelot, and how they stand in regards to the absolute idea of truth that the Grail Quests seeks to reveal. Similarly, the character of St John and his speech regarding poetry and patronage is looked at in detail and how it comes to reflect the contingent nature of truth that Ariosto's emphasis is focused upon. Through investigating these aspects, and more, this study looks to expand upon the scholarly work already available regarding these two authors and, in comparing these writers from this perspective, contribute to the ongoing debates concerning Malory and Ariosto.

Keywords: Quest, Grail Quest, Truth, Absolute Truth, Contingent Truth

## ÖZ

### ORLANDO FURÍOSO'DA VE LE MORTE D'ARTHUR'DA GERÇEĞE DAİR DOĞAÜSTÜ ARAYIŞ

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Bu çalışma üç bölüm boyunca gerçek konusunda Sir Thomas Malory'nin *Le Morte Darthur*'ındaki Grail Quest'ini Ludovico Ariosto'nun *Orlando Furioso*'sundaki aya yolculuğunu karşılaştırır. Her iki yolculuk gerçeğin doğası hakkında farklı perspektifler yansıtır; Malory'nin Grail Quest versiyonu Hristiyan perspektiften çalıştığı için tutarlı bir şekilde ilahi gerçeği ve onun değişmez doğasını yansıtır. Ariosto ile ise gerçek çok yüzlü, şansa dayalı ve alınan perspektife göre tanımlandığı gösterilmiştir. Malory'nin Grail Quest'inin karaktere verdiği önem göz önüne alınırsa, bu çalışma Galahad, Gavain ve Lancelot gibi yolculuk karakterlerini analiz etmeye ve bu karakterlerin gerçek hakkındaki değişmez fikre karşı tutumlarına ilgi duymaktadır. Benzer şekilde, St John karakteri, şiir hakkında söyledikleri ve himaye hakkındaki görüşleri dikkatlice incelenmiş ve gerçeğin geçici ve şansa dayalı doğasını nasıl yansıttığı çalışılmıştır. Bu yönleri inceleyerek, karşılaştırarak ve daha fazlası ile bu çalışma Malory ve Ariosto üzerine yapılan ve zaten hazırda olan tartışmalara akademik alanda katkı yapmayı amaçlar.

Anahtar kelimeler: Arayış, Grail Quest, Gerçeklik, Mutlak Gerçeklik, Şartlı Gerçeklik

To  
My family  
and  
Sara



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

“To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.” The closing lines of Tennyson’s 1842 poem ‘Ulysses’ encapsulates the eponymous narrators unwavering resolve in the quest for knowledge and truth. The quest, as a literary subgenre, is always concerned with the human search for some form of truth, whether this is overtly expressed or not. With a long tradition in literature going back thousands of years, the search for some sort of truth shows itself to be an innate part of the human makeup. The earliest surviving piece of quest literature, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* (circa 2100 BC) from ancient Mesopotamia, sees Gilgamesh’s anguish at his friend’s death leading him to undertake a quest in search of eternal life. Upon moving to Attic tragedy, Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannous* sees Oedipus’ search for the killer of Laius become a need to discover the truth of his own identity. Four hundred years later, in the *Aeneid* Virgil recounts the Trojan hero Aeneas’ arduous journey from ruined Troy to find a new home for the city’s survivors in Italy. Consequently, he weaves a foundation myth that links Rome to the legendary heroes of the Trojan War and gives mythological significance to the Punic Wars, as well as the ruling Julio-Claudian dynasty of Virgil’s own time. In doing so, Virgil borrowed heavily from Homer’s own quest epic, the *Odyssey*, itself a retelling of Odysseus’ ten-year long wanderings as he attempts to return to Ithaca.

When we come to the works of Malory and Ariosto, we find that both are working from the literary cycles known as the Matter of Britain and the Matter of France. The Matter of Britain’s best known component being the Arthurian cycle which has been hugely influential and successful with subject matter that inspired later authors, with the telling of two often

interlocking tales. The first being Camelot, Arthur's vision of a utopia for chivalric virtue, doomed due to the fatal flaws inherent in himself and his great knights, Launcelot and Gawain. The second sees Arthur's knights' quest to achieve the Holy Grail, the cup from the Last Supper. The various tales of Arthur and his knights inspired a multitude of authors across Europe during the middle ages. Some of the more influential include Chrétien de Troyes' 12<sup>th</sup> century Arthurian Romances, including *Perceval, le Conte du Graal*, Wolfram von Eschenbach's 13<sup>th</sup> century epic *Parzival*, and Gottfried von Strassburg's 13<sup>th</sup> century chivalric romance *Tristan*. The anonymous 13<sup>th</sup> century French prose work known as the Vulgate Cycle was highly influential in expanding on the Christian themes of the legends and giving greater emphasis to the Grail Quest. It is in the Vulgate Cycle that the character of Galahad makes his first appearance. Similarly, another anonymous 13<sup>th</sup> century French work, referred to as the Post-Vulgate Cycle, revised the Vulgate Cycle, expanding or editing various parts of the Vulgate Cycle to create greater unity to the Arthurian stories. The Vulgate Cycle and Post-Vulgate Cycle are considered the two most important sources for Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* and his version of the Grail Quest, the *Tale of the Sangrail*.

Malory's abbreviated and altered version of the French Vulgate Cycle's *La Queste del Saint Graal* remains a topic of debate among scholars to this day. The debate concerns whether Malory's *Tale of the Sangrail* remains faithful to the Christian context of the Vulgate Cycle, or whether Malory's version of the story led to a secularization of the tale. In abbreviating the Vulgate Cycle, Malory omits some of the theological context, a move that Vinaver views as an attempt to "secularize the Grail Quest as much as the story will allow" (Vinaver, Qtd in Tolhurst, 127). However, the unique nature of the Grail Quest in Malory's version still signifies a vastly different form of quest from the rest of the work. However much Malory may have secularized the Grail Quest, it continues to retain a strong Christian theological framework, and "by following his primary sources so closely, Malory suggests that he

accepts the Grail Quest as an essential part of the Arthurian story” (Tolhurst, 133).

The Matter of France, or Carolingian cycle, emerges from the ‘*chansons de geste*’, epic poems from the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, whose subject matter is generally the reign of Charlemagne – personified as a champion of Christianity -, and the wars with the Saracens during the reigns of Charles Martel and Charlemagne. The *Chanson de Roland*, an epic-poem based on the Battle of Roncevaux Pass (778 AD), is perhaps the best known of the *chansons de geste*. The central characters of the Matter of France include Charlemagne, Roland (in the later Italian epics renamed Orlando), and the other paladins of Charlemagne’s retinue. As the material of the Matter of France grew and developed, other elements from romances were integrated, such as magic, while giants, monsters and sorcerers appeared among the foes, alongside the Saracens.

Despite the decline of the *chansons de geste*, the Matter of France continued to remain influential and inspire two of the great Italian epics, Matteo Maria Boiardo’s *Orlando Innamorato*, and Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*. Ariosto’s work is itself a continuation of Boiardo’s poem, continuing at the part that his predecessor left off. Ariosto added a far greater element of humour, as well as altering the makeup of some of the characters, most notably the English paladin Astolfo. Ariosto’s poem reflects the growth of the genre. The world of *Orlando Furioso* is filled with magical horses, weapons and armour, sea monsters, wizards and sorceresses, giants and other monsters, all of which Ariosto makes use of as he interweaves the fantastical and romantic with the absurd.

This study will not attempt to enter into the Malory debate regarding the “secularization of the Vulgate’s *La Queste del Saint Graal*” and its affect on truth within *Le Morte Darthur*. I believe that this would be too exhaustive a task to attempt and would deviate from the intention of comparing *Le Morte Darthur*’s notion of truth with *Orlando Furioso*. For this reason too, Matteo Boiardo’s *Orlando Innamorato* will also not be included in this discussion.

The study has been divided into three chapters focusing on three different aspects that will be analysed:

Chapter One looks at the writers use of allegory and how this affects absolute and contingent truth within the works. Three of the knights who participate in the Grail Quest, - Gawain, Galahad, and Launcelot, - are discussed through the different ways in which they read events on the quest because allegorical episodes function on different levels for different knights and these knights interpretive systems allows the characters themselves to be read by the reader. The role that hermits play in interpreting events for the knights is also discussed in this chapter. The focus for *Orlando Furioso* will be on the role of St John in interpreting signs for the paladin Astolfo, as his reliability in this regard is dubious at best. Through the combination of the narrator and St John, Ariosto is shown to satirize textual authority and raise questions about what truth is and what truth can be.

Chapter Two looks at how objects and characters can serve as symbolic representations of truths that the author reflects within the text. Consequently, this chapter looks at the moon from *Orlando Furioso's* quest to the moon, and the grail and Galahad from *Le Morte Darthur* as symbolic representations. Looking at the significance of Christ in the grail's mysteries and in the portrayal of Galahad on the quest, both become synonymous with Christian truth and revelation. The transcendental finale to the quest serves to reinforce the grail and Galahad as symbolic of absolute truth as seen in Christian doctrine.

Finally, Chapter Three analyzes how characters can be seen to represent notions of truth or untruth. Character plays such a fundamental role in Malory's version of the Arthurian tales that it is difficult to ignore this aspect within the *Tale of the Sangrail*. Consequently, three characters were selected to study this aspect of the quest. In selecting Gawain Launcelot and Percival, I intended to select characters who were given significant emphasis in the text and who represented the broadest spectrum from failure to success and how the makeup of their character played a role in succeeding on what is



perceived as the true path, or remaining sinful. In Ariosto's work, I found the character of Astolfo to match Ariosto's presentation of contingent truth. Astolfo refrains from imposing any ideas of his own on the world seeming, rather to accept the multitude of variations present in the world.

Both *Le Morte Darthur*, and *Orlando Furioso* have had a enormous impact on Western literature since their publication. Ariosto's epic is mentioned among the host of romances that inspired the error-prone hidalgo, Alonso Quijano, in his quest to revive chivalry in *Don Quixote*, and was also a major influence on Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Robert Greene's 1592 play was titled *The Historie of Orlando Furioso*, while the Spanish playwright Lope De Vega continued Ariosto's epic in his play *La hermosura de Angelica* (1602). Similarly, the Italian novelist Italo Calvino's *Il cavaliere inesistente* (1959) and *Il castello dei destini incrociati* (1973) were heavily influenced by *Orlando Furioso*.

The many writers influenced by Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* include Lord Tennyson, Mark Twain, T.H. White, John Steinbeck, and Marion Zimmer Bradley. Many of Tennyson's poems retell or reinterpret tales taken from Arthurian legends, in particular using *Le Morte Darthur* as a principal source, such as 'The Lady of Shalott' (1832), 'Sir Galahad' (1842), 'Morte d'Arthur' (1842), and *Idylls of the King* (1859-1882). Mark Twain's 1889 novel, *A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court* sees its narrator read Malory's book from within the novel. T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* (1958), and John Steinbeck's *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976), are retellings of the life and death of Arthur, both using Thomas Malory as their primary source.

In this study, the edition of *Le Morte Darthur* used is that published by William Caxton (1485). Consequently, any citations given from the text refer to the twenty one book edition printed by Caxton, and not that of the Winchester Manuscript. The references given for *Orlando Furioso* are taken from Guido Waldman's 1998 translation published by Oxford University Press.

## CHAPTER 2

### READING AND INTERPRETING – ALLEGORY AND TRUTH

In *The Importance of Being Earnest* Algernon famously states that “the truth is rarely pure and never simple.” (Act 1, 216). Defined by Moore and Russell, truth is seen to be a property of propositions. Furthermore, “what is key to truth is a relation between propositions and the world, which obtains when the world contains a fact that is structurally similar to the proposition” and so “Beliefs are true or false depending on whether the propositions which are believed are.” (Truth 1.1.1-2). Within *Le Morte Darthur* and *Orlando Furioso* this issue of truth interpretation, coupled with reading and understanding play a fundamental role in the Grail Quest and the quest to the moon. In this way the notion of truth comes up within the two works and both approach the matter quite differently. Malory’s knights, in searching for the grail, are confronted with absolutes of what is true, false, right or wrong as defined by the strict Christian beliefs upon which the quest is founded. As the Grail Quest unfolds in the adventures of Gawain, Galahad, and Launcelot, these notions are reflected in their adventures. Ariosto’s quest approaches the notions somewhat differently: unlike Malory he appears to refrain from dealing in absolutes. In following Astolfo and St John upon the moon the problems with reading and interpretation are made evident to the reader, as does the problem of truth, since as the embodiment of revealed truth, St John may be expected to speak in absolutes, although it is soon clear that this is not the case. In looking at these aspects it becomes apparent that although the Grail Quest and the quest to the moon may reflect the search for Christ’s cup or Orlando’s wits they also embody the search for meaning and confident interpretation.

The Grail Quest's landscape differs greatly from the knightly one that comprises the other sixteen books of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. Rather than the traditional manner of questing for physical things or physical manifestations that Arthur's knights revelled in through the other books, the Round Table fellowship is here confronted with an allegorical and spiritual environment in which, "the rules of knighthood that had served the community so well up to this point are insufficient and inappropriate." (Armstrong, 114). Instead, the knights are tested on their ability to read and interpret allegorical signs with the aid of the ubiquitous hermits, monks, and priests who inhabit the Grail Quest's countryside. Much of the *Tale of the Sangrail* is made up of an almost formulaic repetition of episodes in which a knight encounters a spiritual dream, vision or experience and then visits a religious man or woman, who is able to interpret the allegorical meaning of the event for the true meaning that is hidden within.

Twice Gawain receives counseling from hermits. The first following his actions at the Castle of Maidens, and the second centres around his dream (XIII.16; XVI.3). Ector, Gawain's companion for much of the grail adventures, receives guidance for his own dream from the same hermit as Gawain (XVI.4). Galahad's receives interpretations of his deeds first hand on three occasions. The first upon the significance of him being the bearer of King Evelake's shield, and again upon defeating a demon within a tomb (XIII.10-11; XIII.12). The third occasion occurs after rescuing Sir Melias from two knights (XIII.14). Melias, receives his allegorical guidance just once, alongside Galahad. Percival is twice confronted by a hermit while battling spiritual forces in the wilderness. On both occasions his visions and experiences are explained through allegory (XIV.7; XIV.10). Launcelot receives interpretations of his dreams, experiences and visions on three separate occasions. Similarly, Bors' five separate experiences are all explained by the same religious person, but only after he has received untrue counseling from another hermit (XVI.11; XVI.13). Bors, Galahad and Percival as the three 'grail knights' have two episodes interpreted by hermits. The first being their liberation of a castle in Scotland; and afterwards upon following a hart and four lions into a hermitage (XVII.8; XVII.9).

## 2.1. Reading and Interpreting Within *Le Morte Darthur*

In order to understand the importance of allegory within Malory's tale, it is perhaps necessary to touch upon the important role that allegory as a literary device plays in the Bible and Christian teaching in explaining spiritual truth. Within the parables of Jesus, characters and events represent a truth about the Kingdom of God or the Christian life, as (for example) the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) highlights how a sinful man, if he is truly repentant, will be joyously and unconditionally welcomed back by God. Moreover, St Paul, in his *Epistle to the Galatians*, - using the term allegory fairly loosely in order to cover a loosely metaphorical and emblematic use of images and stories - emphasizes the importance of an allegorical understanding and interpretation of Scripture:

<sup>21</sup>Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

<sup>22</sup>For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.<sup>23</sup> But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.<sup>24</sup> Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. (Galatians 4:21-24)

From this understanding of its function, the seventeenth century puritan John Bunyan defended the prevalence of allegory within *The Pilgrims Progress* in his "Author's Apology for his Book" due to its fundamental role in delivering spiritual truth in the Bible:

The Prophets used much by Metaphors

To set forth Truth...

...

Am I afraid to say that holy writ,

Which for its Stile, and Phrase, puts down all Wit,

Is every where so full of these things,

(Dark Figures, Allegories,)... (Bunyan, 6)

In all cases, a spiritual truth is being explained to the reader or audience, and this is imperative since each allegory is believed to reflect the correct teachings of Christ or the Bible. Thus two hundred years earlier, within Malory's Grail Quest in each encounter a knight is required to understand a spiritual truth about himself, God, or the Grail. Consequently, for both the knights and the readers, reading and interpreting signs becomes a vital component of a quest that displaces traditional notions of chivalry for the spiritual. As Tiller states:

In Malory's case, the entire mystery of the Sankgreall seeks to draw readers into the Grail quest, inviting analogy between the act of seeking the Grail and the act of reading, between the challenge of the quest and the difficulty uncovering veiled meaning. (Tiller 84).

It appears that Malory wishes to reflect different ways of reading in the knights different narratives as each individual knight's narrative symbolically conveys its own interpretive system. This suggests that the different parts of the Grail Quest make up a similar quest for their own meaning and understanding. Various ways of interpreting, reading and seeing are conveyed into the various paths of the knights, who work, individually as interpretive models and themselves as models to be interpreted.

Following Launceolot's deciphering of the prophecy engraved on the siege perilous and calculation that it will be fulfilled on that particular day, it is he who is the only knight, as Atkinson explains, "who begins to interpret events before they are explicated by an expert." He can also "describe at length his own spiritual condition in the sort of speech otherwise observed for hermits and priests." (Atkinson, qtd in Tolhurst, 142). Launcelot, in his correct reading of events, recognizes that he is not worthy to achieve Balin's sword from the stone, that any knight who fails to draw the sword shall be wounded by it (as Gawain later will be), and that the Grail quest will commence that same day. Launcelot recognizes the relationship between the siege perilous and Balin's sword and the spiritual significance of the lines written on the siege perilous: "FOUR HUNDRED WINTERS AND FOUR-AND-FIFTY ACCOMPLISHED AFTER THE PASSION

OF OUR LORD JESU CHRIST OUGHT THIS SIEGE TO BE FILLED” (XIII, 2). His decision not to attempt to draw Balin’s sword from the hovering stone reflects an understanding that his sin will count against him as the greatest knight now that the siege perilous has been filled by the one prophesied by heaven (XIII.2). In contrast, “[i]t will not be the sort of quest envisaged by the arch-literalist Gawain, who proposes a completely literal journey to lift a tangible covering off a real cup.” (Tiller 85). Instead, the Grail Quest will follow interpretive paths that require to be read beneath allegorical and metaphorical meanings in order to understand spiritual truth.

Following the questing knights, the difficulty in reading and interpreting signs becomes apparent. Gawain’s inability to see the importance of understanding the quest from a hermeneutical perspective may be Malory’s reflection of an inability to read correctly, which is fundamental to the Grail Quest. In establishing these themes, through each knight, Malory reflects a variety of processes of successful and unsuccessful reading. We find exegetical reading through the saintly Galahad, that is to say an allegorical interpretation that is capable of seeing the abstract within a physical and material event and therefore can be said to embody the allegorical text itself. Consequently actions which are mediated via Galahad are to be taken as allegorical.

All events that are central to his quest are significant as reflecting allegories that deals with salvation or as biblical types such as his shield, the defeat of the seven brothers at the Castle of Maidens, and his reenactment of the sword in the stone. The shield previously belonged to King Evelake depicts the red cross of Joseph of Arimethea’s blood; a hermit explains that the seven brothers are representative of the seven deadly sins (XIII.11; XIII.17). In this way, Galahad’s encounters on the quest signify other things entirely. Furthermore, unlike the other quest knights who frequently require the interpretations and advice of hermits and religious persons, Galahad seldom needs events explained to him. Thus, he is representative of, and aligned to, exegetical reading. Therefore, to ride with Galahad on the Grail Quest is “to attune one’s self to an elusive signification system – to read correctly” (Tiller

86). Significantly, it is only after Sir Melias parts company with Galahad that he begins to fail as a reader. Having left Galahad at a crossroads in order to “prove my strength”, Melias is subsequently defeated and nearly killed by two knights, and has to be rescued by Galahad. A monk explains that Melias’ failure and wounding lay in his refusal to take confession and in taking the path that reflects his own lack of virtue and grace when he was previously at the crossroads with Galahad:

“For the way on the right hand betokeneth the highway of Our Lord Jesu Christ, and the way of a good true good liver. And the other way betokeneth the way of sinners and misbelievers. And when the devil saw your pride and presumption, for to take you in the quest of the Sangrail, tht made you to be overthrown, for it may not be achieved but by virtuous living.” (XIII, 14)

In contrast, the monk states that Galahad “the holy knight, the which fought with the two knights, the two knights signifyen the two deadly sins (pride and theft) which were wholly in this knight Melias; and they might not stand you, for ye are without deadly sin.” (XIII, 14). Galahad stands at the opposite end of the spiritual spectrum to the sinful Melias and thus in the allegorical encounter with the two knights he is able to overcome them due to his virtuousness.

As the representation of spiritual acts and in his correct interpretation of his encounters of the Grail Quest, Galahad may be seen as embodying the path of the grail and the correct interpretive system of the quest itself. In much the same way as the grail, Galahad is sought by the Round Table fellowship that quest for the grail. At various different times Melias, Percival, Launcelot and Gawain attempt to be Galahad’s companion during the quest. Both Gawain, who says “I may meet with him I will not depart from him lightly”, and Percival who asks, “fair aunt, can ye teach me some way where I may find him? For much would I love the fellowship of him.” (XIII, 16 ;XIV, 3) are fully aware of Galahad’s successes on the quest and the need to be of his fellowship if success is to be achieved.

In Gawain’s initiation of the Grail Quest through his literal reading of the grail and its samite covering, Gawain can be seen as the opposite of the allegorical Galahad.

His surface-level interpretive system is never capable of seeing the hidden meanings that lie beneath. One only has to analyse his encounter with the seven knight brothers, in which, unlike Galahad, Gawain slays the seven knights. To Gawain the seven brothers are never allegorical but traditional knightly opponents to be defeated by force of arms. Furthermore, Gawain's killing of them is neither commended nor praised but ironically seen as a product of his innate wickedness. This is contrasted with Galahad's sinlessness. In the pre-Grail Quest world Gawain's actions would be considered perfectly acceptable and thus appropriate to the "signification system under which he acts.", (Tiller 87). Prior to the Grail Quest, Sir Lamorak's slaying of two knights in order to save another is seen in no way murderous by the previous moral standards of chivalry (VIII.40).

Killing only becomes a sin when it is interpreted this way as Nacien the Hermit later explains to Gawain "'The adventure of the Sangrail . . . appeareth not to sinners. For ye be an untrue knight and a great murderer, and to good men signifieth other things than murder.'" (XVI, 5). It should be noted that the three knights who achieve the grail kill others too, and in this way perhaps defining Gawain as a murderer is unreasonable, particularly as deaths caused by Gawain are all the results of acceptable jousts. However, what defining Gawain as a murderer does is to emphasize how meaning can be applied to events and actions in the quest, and reinforces the way in which contrasting methods of reading produce contrasting conclusions, by both the knight who performs the action and the hermit who interprets them, as Gawain's incident at the Castle of Maidens shows. Tiller reinforces this argument stating that the reason why events produce different results for different knights lies in the knights "literary orientation" and that the "activities of the quest knights carry typological significance only in the terms of the interpretation that each knight represents." (Tiller 88). To Gawain, all events remain on a literal level, and this method of reading and interpreting is linked with his sinful nature. In this way, in the spiritual and allegorical landscape of the Grail Quest, what was once considered fair and honourable chivalric killing is now redefined as murder if it is not read beyond the surface level.



If Galahad represents spiritual allegory and a method of reading that instills chivalric deeds with allegorical meaning, then Gawain can be seen as a non-allegorical figure. Gawain's failure as quest knight is due to his limited vision and literal mode of reading. Gawain's response to a hermit's request that he perform penance only further supports the strict literal interpretation that is embodied in Malory's Gawain: "'I may do no penance; for we knight adventurous oft suffer great woe and pain.'" (XIII, 17). It is clear that Gawain believes that the sorrows and pain encountered on quests are the equivalent in meaning to that of spiritual penance. It is not through willpower but in his inadequacy as a reader of signs and interpreting the spiritual nature of the Grail Quest that Gawain fails. He becomes a representation of the fundamentally superficial surface-level interpretation of the Grail Quest, a vision which is revealed to be a failure.

Sandwiched between Gawain's literal model of reading and the allegorical abstract that Galahad represents Launcelot may be found. As, has been mentioned earlier, Launcelot is the first knight to interpret events prior to the commencement of the Grail Quest. He can be said to encompass a manner of interpretation that incorporates both Gawain's literal and secular and the spiritual and allegorical of Galahad. It is Launcelot's character that appears to place him above Gawain's literalism and obstinacy but beneath Galahad's allegorical spirituality. Unlike Gawain, Launcelot is aware that his sinful condition severely hinders him in the spiritual quest for the grail "now I take upon me the adventure of holy things, and now I see and understand that mine old sin hindereth and shameth me." (XIII, 19). Similarly, his decision to wear a hairshirt reveals his understanding of the need for suffering and penance on the quest. Launcelot is capable of understanding the gravity of his sin and how it affects him on the Grail Quest, and so in this sense he is able to interpret the spiritual significance of the quest itself. However, his inability to read the allegorical meaning of events is evident in his partaking in the tournament between black and white knights. At the tournament Launcelot decides to help the weaker black knights "in increasing of his chivalry" (XV, 5). and is very quickly defeated. His decision to aid the weaker party is perfectly commendable in the prevailing secular chivalric code in which a knight's duty is to stand up for the

weak, however, in the allegorical and spiritual world of the grail quest where the black knights are representative of sin and the white knights of ‘virginity and chastity’ his actions are taken as a sign ‘of evil faith and of poor belief’. In his inability to perceive the black knights as allegorical signifiers of sin it is possible to see the limited range of Launcelot’s interpretive skills. Launcelot is later informed by a holy recluse that the joust was ‘none enchantment for they at the tournament were earthly knights’ (XIII, 6), thus relating to Launcelot that divine significance may be found in worldly events.

## **2.2. Hermits and Spiritual Interpretation in the Grail Quest**

The function of the holy recluses, hermits, priests and monks that inhabit the landscape of the quest for the Holy Grail is particularly important. These readers and interpreters of allegorical signs play a unique role in being able to dissect a knight’s dreams or experiences and relate the divine truth that is found within. In this way they play the role of mediator between the quest knights and the divine message that each knight is required to understand but may not be able to decipher. It is for this reason that we constantly see the knights search for these spiritual guides and interpreters when they are unable to decode events themselves. Following his dream of the bulls, Gawain seeks out a hermit who is able to interpret the meaning hidden beneath the allegory. The one hundred and fifty bulls represent the fellowship of the Round Table ‘which for their sin and their wickedness is black’ (XVI, 4), while three of them are white - representing the virtuous Galahad, Percival, and Bors. The hermit goes on to explain that the bulls leaving of the pasture represents the commencement of the Grail Quest, but that they return emaciated due to their sinful nature, while only one of the white bulls returns. In this interpretation we can see the manner in which spiritual truth is aligned with allegory in a decidedly biblical sense. It is difficult to escape the comparisons that this dream interpretation shares with the dream readings of the biblical characters such as Joseph from the book of Genesis, who is able to correctly read and interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, Pharaoh’s cup-bearer and his baker (Genesis 40:9-13, 40:16-19, 41:17-32). Just as Joseph’s dream

readings extract the absolute truth from the veiled meaning, so too do those of the various hermits, recluses, and monks in Malory's text. The hermit's interpretation of Gawain's dream identifies the spiritual and virtuous excellence that sets Percival, Bors and Galahad apart from the other spiritually malnourished knights. They are the three knights who will achieve the grail and bring the quest to its conclusion as opposed to those who will return in failure. They will achieve the quest *because* their virtuousness and spiritual excellence stands in contrast to the rest of the sinful and spiritually weak Round Table fellowship. The hermit also accurately prophesises that only one of the three white bulls will return, as Bors later returns to Arthur's kingdom having buried Galahad and Percival in Sarras.

The Hermits also expound on the actions of quest knights, explain the allegorical meanings of the decisions that they make and disclose whether these are morally and spiritually in accordance with the spiritual code of the quest for the Holy Grail. As has been mentioned earlier, Launcelot's decision to fight alongside the black knights at the tournament proved incorrect, but it needs to be noted that it is only *through* the explanations of the holy person that Launcelot understands the allegorical significance of his defeat at the tournament and how his decision making was false. Launcelot is aware that his sin affects his performance in the Grail Quest, - he is able to read that much, - but it is through the hermits, abbots, and other spiritually gifted interpreters that inhabit the grail landscape that he can understand the significance of his decision making and how the decisions that he takes on the quest measure spiritually.

In the same way, Bors' decision to save the maiden over his brother Lionel is given moral and spiritual significance only after his conversation with an abbot. The divinely gifted abbot interprets Bors' decision through the dream that Bors experienced just prior to the event, in which Bors saw a tree 'wormeaten and feeble' situated on the left and two white flowers on the right following which a voice proclaimed that it would be folly to "let these two flowers perish to succour the rotten tree" (XVI, 8). He explains that link between the dream and Bors later dilemma (the choice between Lionel and the maiden) by revealing how the rotten

tree “betokeneth thy brother Lionel, which is dry without virtue” and that the two white flowers “signifyen two maidens, the one is the knight which was wounded the other day, and the other is the gentlewoman which ye rescued” (XVI, 14). The abbot makes clear that Bors decision to save the chaste and virtuous maiden over his sinful brother Lionel is commendable and reflective of a knight who adheres to the spiritual code of heaven: “men might call you a very knight and servant of Jesu Christ.” In doing this, the abbot like the other hermits and holy recluses is giving the knight a divine judgement of his actions on the quest. In making the decision Bors is worthy of praise for his actions and given an interpretation of the events that he was unaware of, in much the same way that Launcelot received retrospective instruction about the tournament between the black and white knights. The important aspect to note is that, just as Launcelot was completely unaware of the spiritual significance of his actions and decisions, so does Bors believe he made the right decision, but for both knights it is only *after* they receive divine guidance and counseling from the holy persons that they become fully aware of the rightness or wrongness of their decisions.

Despite the presence of these divinely knowledgeable figures and the special relationship they maintain with spiritual truth of the Grail Quest, and, although success in the Grail Quest largely subverts previous codes of chivalry, this quest fundamentally remains an adventure that only knights may take part in. As Armstrong points out:

Galahad seems to succeed because of his chastity, reluctance to kill, and all-round spiritual perfection – qualities relatively low on the list of desirable knightly attributes elsewhere in Malory’s text. But, his participation is impossible unless he leaves the spiritual space of the convent and BECOMES a knight; holy as the Grail is, it is not hermits, monks, or priests who are charged to seek it, but rather the agents of the secular community are given the task. (Armstrong 118)

The role of these spiritually gifted interpreters is only to act as interpreters and guides to quest knights, to interpret and read signs that in their

allegorical form the knights are unable to understand and to explain the spiritual significance of their actions as events undertaken by the knights also have an allegorical meaning. That the holy person who advises the quest knights prior to their setting out on the quest is revealed to be an ‘an old knight comen among them in religious clothing’ also suggests that many of the hermits may have themselves been errant knights in the past. That so many of the Round Table knights end as religious recluses can be said to support this notion. Following the death of Galahad, Percival retires to a hermitage and take religious clothing. Similarly, after Arthur’s death, Sir Bedevere requests to be a hermit at the place where his king is buried, while Launcelot, upon his return to England when learning of Arthur’s death, takes the habit, as do his brethren, Sir Bors, Sir Galihud, Sir Gahodin, Sir Blamor, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Villars, Sir Clarrus, and Sir Gahalantine (XXI.6; XXI.10). This gives the advice of the hermits another dimension, suggesting that their wisdom comes from experience and age, as well as religious life.

These functions of the hermits also work on a narrative level, as the role of the hermit becomes didactic for the reader. Each knight’s individual encounter with a hermit, with perhaps the exception of Galahad, appears at the end of a specific episode or event. Taken this way, the hermit, in explaining the Christian morals or spiritual truth or significance to take from that event, fulfills the role of an educational mouthpiece for the reader. In revealing the virtues or sins of the knights, the hermits become Malory’s mouthpiece on good Christian morals. Caxton, in the preface to his own edition of *Le Morte Darthur* indicates his belief that Malory’s work was an educational book, stating: ‘herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder, hate, virtue and sin. Do after the good and leave the evil, and it shall give you good’ (6) The role of the hermits within *The Tale of the Sangrail* narrative support this conclusion particularly in their rather passive function as interpreters and revealers of truth. Tolhurst reinforces this didactic functioning, stating:

Caxton encourages practical Christianity by encouraging readers to embrace *Le Morte Darthur* as an educational tool whether or not they choose “to give faith and believe” to all that is in Malory’s book: echoing Romans 15:4, Caxton reminds readers that “all is written for our doctrine, and for to beware that we fall not to vice and sin, but to exercise and follow virtue.” (Tolhurst 151)

### **2.3. The Challenges with Reading and Interpreting in *Orlando Furioso***

Within Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* St John performs a very similar function to that of the hermits, recluses and abbots in Malory’s work. In the lunar episode, just as the knights of the Round Table require the guidance and interpretations of hermits, Astolfo is absolutely reliant on St John to interpret and explain the allegorical landscape of the moon. As Astolfo and St John traverse the moon, Ariosto reveals how things only taken superficially, and without reading beyond their deceptive referential meaning, contain an entirely different message in the lunar world. Therefore, St John tells Astolfo that the “tumid bladders” are in actual fact “the ancient crowns of the Assyrians and of Lydia, of the Persians and Greeks – once so illustrious, now forgotten almost to their very names.” (69.77). Thus, great power and fame are only finite and waste over time. Similarly, the “golden and silver hooks” that Astolfo asks about are seen to be ambitions for power and influence, “gifts made in the hope of rewards to kings, greedy princes, to patrons”, as the metaphor reveals the real intention of the gifts is to control the influential receiver of these gifts. (69.77). Objects in the temporal world that may possess one historical or literal allusion become metaphors in the lunar world that reveal hidden meanings. The absolute reliance of Astolfo in St John’s interpretations of these allegorical manifestations is repeatedly emphasized: “Without his guide, he would never have recognized them in their different transformations.” (34.82). Ariosto exposes the sycophantic flattery of courtiers and writings which praise patrons: “garlands he saw which concealed a noose: all flattery he was told. Verses written in praise of patrons

wore the guise of exploded crickets.” (69.77). The allegory of the moon in mocking praise of patronage, leads the reader to question how to interpret Ariosto’s own praise of Ippolito d’Este, his patron, and, importantly, St John’s explanations concerning literary interpretation and how it functions with patronage. These two issues are essential in understanding the issues concerning interpretation and contingent truth within *Orlando Furioso*. While observing the Fates spin the lives of mortals at the palace, St John points to the most beautiful thread as that of the life of Ippolito d’Este. When it is noted that Ariosto previously likened a poet’s praise of patronage as “exploding crickets” perhaps caution should be taken before accepting this subsequent praise of Ippolito literally. Carrol notes how it is necessary to place Ariosto’s praise of Ippolito in the medieval and Renaissance tradition of irony as excessive praise and points to its literary model in Seneca’s *Apocolocyntosis*. She goes on to explain that while pleasing to the patron it is understood as ironic by the audience of the author’s friends, and an educated Renaissance reader would “know how to spot the hidden irony on the basis of gesture, intonation or context as well as the speaker’s character or the subject matter.” (Carrol 186) Ariosto’s own opinion of Ippolito appears quite critical as in *Satira I* “Ariosto describes giving his patron verses to read as sending them “al Culiseo per lo sugello” [1.96: to the asshole for its seal]. (Carrol, 187-8). The relationship between poetry and patronage, and literal meaning and truth that follows in St John’s later discussions with Astolfo only further emphasizes the irony and need for interpretation.

Astolfo asks the Gospel writer for the “latent meaning, to penetrate the mystery of all these things” (35.17) when he sees the old man dropping nameplates into the River Lethe. Some plates vultures and crows pick up and then later discard, while others are taken by swans to a shrine where they “remained on view for all time.”(35.16). St John’s reply reveals the need in this metaphorical environment for interpretation. He explains that the vultures are representative of sycophants, whereas the swans are poets who immortalize their patrons through their poetic verse. Considering Ariosto’s

ironic verses in praise of Ippolito at the beginning of Canto 35 as well as the metaphorical representation of flattery as garlands concealing a ‘noose’ and verses for patrons as ‘exploded crickets’, a note of caution should be taken in the praise of the swans who embody poetry in immortalizing their lords. Taken literally, St John implies that the swan poets appear unconcerned with truth, and are thus happy to memorialize a patron regardless of that patron’s moral stance:

Believe me, God has robbed these (patrons) simpletons of their wits and clouded their judgement, making them shun Poetry so that death should consume them whole and entire. They would otherwise have emerged living from the grave even if their lives had been a disgrace: had they only known how to cultivate her friendship, they would give off a fragrance better than spikenard or myrrh. /Aeneas was not as devoted, nor Achilles as strong, nor Hector as ferocious as their reputations suggest. There have existed men in their thousands who could take preference over them. What has brought them their sublime renown have been the writers honoured with gifts of palaces and great estates . . . (35.24-5)

McCarthy adds that a message ‘underpinning this is that poets also lie. St John suggests that reputations are constructed on paper; and whether poets decide to immortalize their patrons or condemn them is entirely dependent on their wages. (McCarthy, 80). Literally speaking, the stanzas claim that the reputations of these heroes from the Trojan wars have been constructed by poets who are paid to immortalize these figures by their descendants. The problem with this literal interpretation is that it does not distinguish between history and fictional literature because St John is discussing these figures as if they were real people. This is only further emphasized as St John goes on to discuss Augustus and claims that he was not ‘as august and beneficent as Virgil makes him in such clarion tones’ (35.26). Unlike the previous figures, who are mythological, Augustus was a real figure (and Virgil’s patron), and so it is possible to compare Virgil’s depiction of Augustus against such Roman biographers as Suetonius, Tacitus, and Appian. Furthermore, St



John's statement that "his good taste in poetry compensates for the evil of his proscriptions" only further emphasizes the unreliability of St John's comments. The act of mentioning the proscriptions is evidence that Virgil's 'clarion tones' did not compensate for Augustus' actions. Ariosto is inviting the reader to consider beyond the literal as Carrol explains: "St John's discourse persuades us of the opposite of what it literally means. This is in keeping with the ironical nature of the episode, which presents us with literal meanings which we must reject either because they are absurd exaggerations that conflict with what we know of the author's views or their illogic creates inconsistencies within the meaning of the poem." (Carrol 191). The ironic nature of St John's speech on poetry goes on to state that:

Homer made Agamemnon the victor and the Trojans mere poltroons;  
he made Penelope faithful to her husband, and victim to a thousand  
slights from her suitors. But if you want to know what really  
happened invert the story. Greece was vanquished, Troy triumphant,  
and Penelope a whore. (35.27)

St John claims that to understand the truth concerning Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* it is necessary to "invert" the tales. The problem with this interpretation is that it raises questions about the validity of St John's suggestion because Homer's *Iliad* never did depict the Trojans as cowards. Again, the idea of merely subverting what is written in poetry is further disclaimed as St John states that: "Listen on the other hand to what reputation Dido left behind, whose heart was so chaste: she was reputed a strumpet purely because Virgil was no friend of hers." (35.28). In much the same way as Homer did not depict the Trojans as cowards, Virgil's portrait of Dido was sympathetic and not one of a strumpet. Similarly, far from Virgil being "no friend of hers", Dido was a fictional character created by Virgil. Ariosto, through the figure of St John, appears to reveal the folly of literal, incorrect and simplified readings.

Much has been made of the manner in which St John implicates himself and Christ in the poet-to-patron relationship that compromises other poets' works and consequently their patrons' reputations. In this reading, Christ has been

immortalized and praised beyond his own capabilities in the same way that Achilles, Aeneas, and Hector were by Homer and Virgil, as Chiampi demonstrates:

St. John, Astolfo's guide, turns out to be little more than an irascible court poet who treats his gospel not as revealed truth, but merely as another form of the court poetry he had earlier despised. As a result, his description of his gospel makes it nothing more than an interested work of art in praise of a prince, even if the prince in question happens to be the Prince of Peace. (Chiampi, 314)

It is true that St John is not depicted as one would expect for a writer of one of the Gospels and the hugely influential book of Revelations, someone most closely representative of revealed truth, and this is clearly Ariosto's intention. St John, rather than revealing to Astolfo absolute truth is merely reflecting how literature embellishes truth and may be interpreted in a myriad of different ways. The problem with Chiampi's assertion is that it appears to ignore or misinterpret St John's lines that "I above all others acquired, something which neither Time nor Death can take from me: I praised Christ and merited from Him the reward of so great a good fortune." (35.29). This would suggest that money and power were of no interest to St John in the praising of Christ, as money and power are finite and their importance naturally ceases with death. Carrol goes further with this argument explaining that: "To obtain a reward "that neither time nor death can take from me" a secular writer would have to be independent of his patron, free in such a way that only an intellect that neither worships power nor depends on the exploitation of others for its freedom can be." (Carrol, 193) Moreover, the 'gentle smile' that concludes St John's speech is perhaps further emphasis of the irony that should be taken with his words and suggests that, consequently, the Gospel is excused from the unreliability and interpretation issues that surround poetry. What St John does up until that smile is to suggest that, because he was a writer in the same way as Homer and Virgil, he possesses a special knowledge of poetry, and so Astolfo and readers should trust his speech in the same manner as the gospel.

It takes a perceptive reader to understand the need for interpretation within St John's speech and the irony hidden within. Ariosto reveals the problem of the nature of truth— what it is, and what it can be. Similarly, he reflects how literal readings and simple, or incorrect readings reveal their own flaws and folly. To read superficially is erroneous and hides the wealth of deep and subtle meaning that is hidden, which, if found, unearths new interpretations for the insightful reader. This last point is seen with Ariosto's own ironic praise of his patron, Ippolito. Far from praising him, Ariosto is humorously working from a tradition of irony that can be found by the careful and intelligent reader. If we turn to patronage, once again Ariosto raises questions with regards to fiction. Poetry is always the domain of fiction and so can never memorialize someone the way they may want to be, as Wiggins explains:

Certainly, the patron who sought to immortalize himself in the verses of the poets he subsidized would be a fool, because the immortal poem, though it may contain his name, could never be anything but a fiction, and as such an object that draws doubts from all posterity. (Wiggins, 157)

Perhaps, rather than finish on the mistrust of literature that this episode raises, it would be beneficial to take an alternate perspective of the way it engages a reader to think:

. . . while he satirizes textual authority, Ariosto advocates an alternative textual approach: one that requires readers to think for themselves. Poets may be liars, but as this poet plays with the rules of nature and the codes of literature, he expands his readers' horizons of expectation in a way that coaxes them into engaging with the world and with poetry afresh. As such, the lunar episode is more a celebration of poetry, an exuberant promotion of its exploits, than an account of it (McCarthy, 76-77)

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Reading, interpreting and understanding are crucial themes in both Ariosto and Malory's quests. Both episodes reveal the need for interpretation beyond a merely superficial surface level for the deeper meaning hidden beneath. Malory's quest knights are required to set aside their traditional notions of chivalry as they undertake a quest in which the need to interpret allegorical signs and events becomes far more important than martial prowess. In this quest the hermits, spiritual recluses, and other holy persons that dot the Grail Quest landscape prove vital for quest knights as the means to interpret the allegorical signs that they encounter. As revealers of spiritual truth, the hermits can be seen as mediators between divine truth and the knights who undertake the quest since the hermits are constantly revealed to be omniscient when concerning matters related to the Grail Quest. For this reason the Round Table knights rely on these figures to interpret the allegorical meaning of their encounters. St John provides a similar function in Ariosto's work. As they wander the lunar landscape Astolfo requires the interpretive abilities of the gospel writer to understand the allegorical manifestations of objects that litter the moon's surface. Without St John Astolfo would be unable to interpret the meaning of the transformations that objects have undertaken. Although they may perform a similar function, that of interpreter of knowledge beyond the knights capabilities, St John and the hermits are working from two very different perspectives and so are producing very different results.

Malory's hermits are working from a Christian allegorical point of view in which allegory is a means of representing spiritual truth. In the same way that Joseph could interpret the dreams of Pharaoh and Pharaoh's baker and butler, and Jesus worked in allegorical parables, so to do Malory's hermits who are representative of this tradition that spiritual allegory is a means of representing a spiritual truth. Thus, when the knights on the grail quest interact with the hermits we are always aware that the hermits are revealing truths to these knights. Consequently, when Launcelot is told that in fighting alongside the black knights is an erroneous decision and reveals his lack of faith and belief because the black knights are representative of

sin, there is no other way that this may be interpreted due to the hermit's answer being the only possible way for this to be interpreted. Similarly, when Bors is told that he was correct to save the maiden rather than his brother Lionel, his actions are confirmed as correct by the hermit and justified as representative of those of a virtuous Christian knight. Thus, Malory's hermits come to represent the embodiment of absolute truth. On the other hand, St John appears to be interpreting from the perspective of poetic allegory. Just as Malory's hermits do, on the moon, St John reveals that things taken superficially – and without reading beyond their referential meaning may contain an entirely different meaning. However, looking at how St John explains that “in your world I was a writer too” and considering his explanation of the swans and vultures as poets and sycophants reveals his alignment to poetry and poetic allegory rather than to Christian allegory and truth. Although, as an apostle and gospel writer St John should be supremely positioned as a representative of revealed truth from a Christian perspective, to take Ariosto's character of this name in this way would be to belie his alignment to poetry, and thus Ariosto's use of a St John figure as guide and exponent to Astolfo is ironical. This St John's interpretation of the swan allegory and the comments that follow concerning poetry do not present truth but only an overly literal or simplified interpretation of poetry and patronage. As he comments on poetry, St John through subtle irony reveals how reading and interpretation can be incorrect and misleading and so requires the reader to engage and look beyond the superficial. Thus St John's speech, in appearing to present the truth through a literal or weak method of interpretation reveals the error in this mode of interpretation through its irony. Each example that St John provides is possible to be disclaimed by the insightful reader. In this way Ariosto presents the error of limited and incorrect reading, however, he does not reveal what truth is, since in poetry it is not possible to find truth. Instead, Ariosto requires us to look beyond the superficial to find the wealth of possible meanings that lie beneath rather than limit ourselves to an absolute. Just as St John's speech raises questions concerning reading and interpreting and the limits of a literal reading of texts, so do Malory's quest knights if we look at them as knights who embody a particular interpretive approach to the Grail Quest and themselves as

models of interpretation. Malory exposes the limits of a literal approach to the Grail Quest in Gawain's narrative. Gawain's literal interpretation of events reveals its flaws in his failure on the Quest as he is unable to penetrate beneath the superficial to find the hidden meanings of events and dreams. To Gawain all events merely remain on a literal level and this method of reading and interpretation is linked to his sinful nature. In contrast, Galahad embodies the allegorical and correct method of interpretation. The seemingly divine knight rarely requires to be told the spiritual significance of events and Galahad is frequently used as a model with which to measure his flawed peers. His path to the Grail is the path that needs to be taken because Galahad can read and interpret the signs in the way they are required to be. Here we see how Malory is dealing with absolutes. Gawain's interpretation of the Grail Quest is entirely wrong, failing to read beneath the superficial, Galahad's is always shown to be correct, as defined by the Christian allegorical landscape within which he operates. Thus, Ariosto and Malory both present the folly of literal reading and interpretation through these quests and reflect the need to search for deeper meaning. However, while Malory presents absolute truth as one of the methods of interpretation and understanding, to Ariosto truth appears as something that may appear lost in the ambiguity of interpretation.

### CHAPTER 3

#### SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS AS REVEALING TRUTH – THE MOON, THE GRAIL AND GALAHAD

As a quest involves a search for meaning as much as it does the search for a physical thing or manifestation, symbolism naturally becomes an integral part of the literary make up of quest narrative. Within Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* the moon and grail serve as symbolic representations of both author's intentions for the requests and what needs to be realised or aspired towards. Serving as the centrepieces to both works, the *Tale of the Sangrail* and Astolfo's quest to the moon become integral parts of both stories. Whereas some previous quests may have seen Arthur's knights rescue maidens or defeat rogue knights, the grail becomes more than just an object to be obtained. It sees the fellowship of the Round Table are forced to reevaluate and reinterpret their perceptions of chivalry and their own worldly ideals as they confront a spiritual landscape that tests their faith and systems of belief. Knights who quest for the grail find their devotion to their faith challenged; those found lacking, or sinful and unrepentant are found unworthy to see the mysteries the grail has to offer. Just as the Grail Quest functions as the centrepiece to *Le Morte Darthur*, so Astolfo's quest to the moon is the climax of Ariosto's poem both on a satirical level and thematically. Satirically, the quest to the moon serves as Ariosto's criticism of the Renaissance court, patronage and human desires; on a thematic level, the quest to regain Orlando's sanity encapsulates the focus upon which the poem works, Orlando's madness (McCarthy, 71). Symbolically, however, the moon acts as a platform on which the character of St John interprets allegory and mankind's ideas, consequently, it becomes symbolic of the contingent truths that arise out of the episode. In this way, it contrasts with the symbolic representation of the grail and the absolute nature of truth seen in *Le Morte*

*Darthur's* Grail Quest. This chapter will look at the moon and grail as symbolic representations of the truths that makeup these quests.

Along with the symbolic representations of the moon and grail, this chapter will look at the character of Galahad as a symbol. Galahad and the grail are intrinsically linked throughout the quest and to look at one without the other proves difficult. Moreover, Galahad works along such allegorical lines throughout his episodes and differs so much in his representation and function to the other Round Table knights, it is to regard him as anything else other than symbolically.

### **3.1. The Moon**

Ariosto presents the moon as a stage in which to analyse the world from an alternate angle rather than as a cosmological truth. As such, he ignores the scientific advances in astronomy and settles on a fantastical picture in which the moon is "equal in size" but different to earth. The moon contains its very own "rivers, lakes, and fields . . . plains, valleys, mountains, cities, and castles" (34.72). Consequently, "the narrator presents the moon as the perfect negative of the earth: "what is lost up here, is brought together there" (Carrol, 183). In presenting the moon this way, the moon and the earth become two perspectives of earth. Thus, Astolfo's quest to the moon is not "an odyssey into outer space but a journey through the looking glass." (McCarthy, 73). The landscape of the moon is represented allegorically in which worldly foolishness is seen as valuing too highly all of man's transitory relationships, literature, establishments, traditions and objects, which are presented on the moon as worthless and absurd trinkets.

Through his guide St John, Astolfo gains an understanding about mankind and life. The valley of lost things functions as a storage box for things that are lost on earth. Here, Astolfo learns of the short length of time attributed to man's hopes and dreams as they finally and unceremoniously finish up in heaps upon the lunar fields. However, the moon does not simply serve as a reflection for the worlds lost and forgotten objects, as McCarthy explains: "It also acts upon them, so that although



they remain the same in essence, they appear different – transformed into a version of themselves that has a different face” (McCarthy, 74). Objects encountered on the moon do not adhere to any recognisable typology and so cannot be interpreted by Astolfo, who is required to listen to St John’s interpretations of the allegorical representations. The reliance of Astolfo on St John as his lunar interpreter emphasizes the lack of a hierarchical division separating the sub-lunar temporal world from that of the celestial world. Dante’s *Divine Comedy* sees that earthly events “correspond to a set of ‘higher’, anterior occurrences in the upper spheres” and this is highlighted by Dante’s intention that his poem be read “like the Bible – literally, allegorically, morally, and anagogically.” (McCarthy, 75). Consequently, Dante believes that the poet possesses a special understanding of the link between earthly events and celestial consequences that the *Divine Comedy* reveals for the understanding and guidance of those who read his work. Ariosto’s work contrasts with Dante’s as McCarthy explains:

In Ariosto, in contrast to Dante, symbols have the same value as the things they represent. Lunar objects have the same value as their sub-lunar counterparts. On the moon there is no anagogical or mystical system alluding to Heaven or the afterlife which governs the correspondence between reality and representation, since earthly sign ‘A’ points to lunar sign ‘B’ which merely points straight back to earthly sign ‘A’. (McCarthy, 76)

Thus, Ariosto does not see the poet as one who possesses a special understanding of the word of God. Rather, the poet is a man who is merely skilled in his ability to create beautiful compositions. In light of this, the Ariosto’s moon quest falls short of any transcendental qualities that would link it to any notions of divinity or truth. The moon, in being closer to the heavens, should constitute a version of truth that is beyond, or at least lacking in mediation: however, what is found is a depository of mediation that only serves as a mirror and reflects back to the earth itself. As Chiampì notes, “each piece of junk is a signifier of a signifier that is not grounded in a fully present truth” (Chiampì, 341). Thus, the moon rather than a pathway to understanding truth merely reflects a distorted version of earth’s reality. Ariosto’s

lunar version of reality represents the misguided ambitions of men who foolishly strive for or search one complete absolute that it clouds their judgement:

Some lose their wits in loving, some in seeking honours, some in scouring the seas in search of welth, some in hopes placed in princes, some in cultivating magical baubles; some lose them over jewels, some over paintings, and some over objects which they value above all else. Here the wits of sophists, astrologers and poets abound.  
(34.85)

Ariosto satirizes man's vanity and desire and asks his audience to take part in laughing at mankind's folly. The author is not safe from his own arrows as he even takes time to mock himself "Who will ascend to heaven, mistress of mine, to fetch me back my own lost wits?" (35.1). None is safe from Ariosto's barbs as he humourously mocks the stupidity of man: "what surprised him (Astolfo) far more was how many belonged to people he had credited with having all their wits about them – there was abundant evidence of how witless they really were, to judge by the amount that was here to hand." (34.84).

The quest to the moon lacks any transcendence that would connect it to heavenly truth. Rather the moon serves as vehicle to satirize man and playfully mocks man's ambitions and misguided notion of values. From the moon Astolfo can impartially observe and analyse, through St John's interpretations, mankind's faults and folly. The moon's allegories, rather than serving as a means to attain spiritual truth, serve only as a mirror to reflect back onto the earth a version of itself. This is further emphasized in Ariosto's presentation of the moon's landscape, equal in size to earth, in which trees, castles, valleys, and rivers abound, thus reflecting a different version of the earth itself. The moon does not provide a platform for transcendence, but is intended as a stage from which to portray and mock man's foolishness on earth. Rather than reveal any truth in its presentation of man or his foolishness, it unveils only a distorted vision of reality. Similarly, the moon never asks men to look beyond themselves in its allegory and satire. The mirror reflects back to man rather than a path beyond.

### 3.2. Galahad

While the moon lacks any transcendent properties linking it to absolute truth, *Le Morte Darthur's* Galahad appears as a character whose single minded drive and determination, coupled with his perfection and supreme devotion to his faith, demonstrate a figure symbolically linked to an absolute idea about Christian truth.

The one figure who can claim to really achieve the grail, and do so with apparent ease, as he does not undergo the same temptations that his fellow grail knights, Bors and Perival, must withstand, Galahad's success on the quest comes from not adhering to the traditional codes of chivalry and secular ideals that the other Round Table knights follow.

In shunning the traditional notions of chivalry, Galahad represents a new model of knight for a new type of quest. His actions on the quest contrast with orthodox knightly behaviour. Galahad arrives at Arthur's court unarmed save only for a scabbard, and acquires the apparel of knight-hood along the way (XIII.4). He achieves Balin's sword from the stone upon his arrival at Arthur's court, in essence mirroring Arthur's own sword in the stone episode and perhaps foreshadowing Galahad's kingship at the conclusion of the Grail Quest (XVII.22). Similarly, he begins the search for the grail without a shield, obtaining the shield of King Evelake at the beginning of the quest that is reserved for "him that shall have no peer that liveth" (XIII.9). It should be noted that for Arthurian knights, a shield is more than just the means for a knight to defend himself, as the heraldic device on the shield is revealed to be the central way in which a knight is identified. In one of the earliest episodes of *Le Morte Darthur*, Balin Le Savage discards his shield for a new one and is ultimately slain by his brother as Balin is unrecognisable with his new arms (II.18). A later scene sees Launcelot exchanges arms and armour with Kay, after which he is continually mistaken for his weaker comrade and challenged by other knights. Meanwhile, Kay is able to journey unhindered as fellow errant knights believe him to be Launcelot (VI.18). The shield of Evelake is perhaps a fitting device for Galahad as the bloody red cross emblazoned on the shield by Joseph of

Arimithea, Galahad's descendent, serves as a symbol of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary as well as a reflection of Galahad's own spiritual virtue (XIII.11).

During his search for the grail, Galahad also rejects the chivalric virtues of fellowship and romantic love. In other episodes of *Le Morte Darthur*, knights are shown to embrace fellowship on adventures and so welcome the opportunity to ride in company with others. Tristram's longstanding companionship with Dinadan becomes a source of humour in the story due to their different opinions regarding courtly love (X.57-8; X.72). Similarly, Breunor le Noir (La Cote Male Taile) warmly accepts Mordred and Launcelot's companionship at different times on his quest, while Percival's abandonment of his brother Aglovale, to go and seek the missing Launcelot alone, is reflected upon unfavourably (IX.5-6; XI.13). In contrast to characters such as Breunor and Tristram, Galahad is shown to disregard Percival's efforts to make him stay after Galahad has rescued him from twenty knights (XIV.4). In a previous episode, he unhorses Launcelot and Percival and hastily rides off after being identified by a woman (XIII.17). Galahad's desire to ride alone and without attracting much attention is further evidenced in his decision to retire from the tournament in which he injures Gawain "so that none wist where he was become." (XVII.1). He later admits Bors and Percival into his company, but only after these two knights have proven themselves to be, along with Galahad, worthy enough to participate in the next stage of the grail adventures (XVII.2). Despite the three grail knights efforts to save Percival's sister from the custom of blood-letting at a castle, and despite their liberation of the castle Cartelois from renegade knights, it can be argued that in general they 'unite in services increasingly resembling Mass.' (Armstrong 114-5). It is certainly true that their companionship has a strong religious element to it, unseen in other knightly fellowships, such as their time on the ship in which Percival's sister recounts the story of King David's sword, now wielded by Galahad, and the construction of the spiritual ship by Solomon, as well as their partaking in a mass at a hermitage having followed a white hart and four lions to the place (XVII.4-7; XVII.9).

Similarly, in the same way that Galahad refrains from traditional knightly fellowship, he also fails to engage his services to any woman as is traditional for knights to do. Knights who can be said to exemplify 'Arthurian' notions of secular chivalry within *Le Morte Darthur*, and are often held as a model for other knights to follow, such as Launcelot, Tristram, and Gareth, all devote themselves and their services to a maiden. On the Grail Quest, Launcelot admits this much to a hermit about his love for Guinevere, while Tristram devotes himself to Isoud and Gareth to the lady Lyonesse (VII.19; VIII.31; XIII.20). Upon finding Launcelot dead, Ector's lament at his brother's tomb sums up Launcelot's qualities as the model for secular chivalry:

'thou Sir Launcelot, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand. And thou were the courteoust knight that ever bare shield. And thou were the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrad horse. And thou were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman. And thou were the kindest man that ever struck with sword. And thou were the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights. And thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies. (XXI.13)

Ector makes a point of emphasizing Launcelot's love and service to Guinevere as essential aspects of Launcelot's character and that of a good secular knight. In contrast, the only lady that Galahad does offer to serve as 'knight all the days of my life' is Percival's sister, who, it must be said, possesses a spiritual devotion every bit as strong as Galahad's (XVII.7). With the exception of protecting her from the demand for blood-letting, however, it certainly cannot be said that, like Launcelot or Tristram, Galahad's 'deeds of great arms' were done solely for the sake of a woman.

Just as his unorthodox knightly behaviour sets him aside, so do the constant references and allusions to Christ associated with him, and the equally regular presentations of Galahad as a Christ figure. Throughout the quest, Galahad's deeds

are compared to those of Christ and his persona is given biblical characteristics. Prior to his birth and appearance, Galahad's greatness is prophesied upon a tomb where Launcelot had slain a dragon:

HERE SHALL COME A LEOPARD OF KING'S BLOOD, AND  
HE SHALL SLAY THIS SERPENT, AND THIS LEOPARD  
SHALL ENGENDER A LION IN THIS FOREIGN COUNTRY,  
THE WHICH SHALL PASS ALL OTHER KNIGHTS. (XI.1)

As the Book of Jeremiah shows the leopard is representative of a person unable to change their sinful ways: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jeremiah 13:23). At the same time, the lion is a long standing biblical symbol for Christ. Thus, the sinful Launcelot shall serve to father a new model of knighthood with its essence in the Christian virtues displayed by Christ. Galahad, as this spiritual model of reinterpreted knighthood, shall transcend the secular ideals of chivalry that are now deemed insufficient with the coming of the Grail Quest. Launcelot's first encounter with his son also highlights how Galahad is attributed Christian iconography as Galahad is seen by Launcelot as "seemly and demure as a dove", referencing the Holy Ghost and linking Galahad to the Trinity (XIII.1). That he is the only knight worthy to carry a shield which displays Christ's sacrifice on the cross should also not be ignored. King Bagdemagus' attempt to achieve same the shield end in near death, while the divine knight who defeats Bagdemagus declares the shield for Galahad alone, "this shield ought not to be borne but by him that shall have no peer that liveth.", echoing the language written on the tomb where Launcelot slayed the dragon. (XIII.9). It serves as a symbol of Galahad's spiritual superiority over his peers.

Galahad's actions on the quest also serve to represent his role as a Christ figure. Several episodes involving Galahad reproduce those in the Gospels or in Christian tradition. Having acquired the shield of Evelake, Galahad confronts a demon in a tomb, mirroring Jesus' own encounter with a man possessed by a demonic spirit. In

the same way that the "unclean spirit" is powerless in the face of Jesus, so too is the demon confronted by Galahad seen as helpless. The pleading of the demon before Galahad, "Sir Galahad, the servant of Jesu Christ, come thou not nigh me, for thou shalt make me go again there where I have been so long", strongly resembles that of the spirit that Jesus faces: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." (XIII.12; Mark 5:7). Following Galahad's triumph over the demon, a hermit explains that Galahad's victory is symbolic of Christ's own miracles while He was in this world (XIII.1). Again, later, Galahad's liberation of the Castle of Maidens from the seven brothers is given allegorical significance by a hermit in discussion with Gawain. The hermit goes on to explain that Galahad may be "likened to Christ" and his achievement at the Castle of Maidens is representative of the 'Harrowing of Hell' by Christ when Christ "bought all the souls out of thrall" (XIII.16). Galahad's deeds in both instances, at the tomb and then at the Castle of Maidens, are given direct comparative reference, by hermits, to actions from Christ's own life. In doing so, Galahad's deeds, in his role as a knight, are seen to reproduce and reiterate Christ's actions, thereby, bringing a new spiritual dimension to the secular order of knighthood. This reiteration of Christ's actions is acted out once more in Sarras after Galahad, Bors and Percival disembark from Solomon's ship with the grail. Upon their arrival, Galahad confronts a cripple unable to walk without the aid of crutches. In a scene reminiscent of that presented in the Gospel of John, Galahad requests the cripple to "arise up and show thy goodwill", echoing Jesus' words in the Gospel: "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk" (XVII.21; John 5:8). Galahad, as Christ figure, is shown to have the same healing power as Christ, as Galahad's cripple is miraculously "whole as ever" and proceeds to help carry the holy objects that the grail knights are transporting.

Undoubtedly, Galahad's role as Christ figure serves to demonstrate his spiritual superiority over his peers. When Galahad, Bors and Percival are in attendance at the grail Mass, Christ stresses the need to remove the grail from Arthur's realm, for the kingdom has "turned to evil living" (XVII.16). Thus, Galahad's spiritual perfection is contrasted against the general sinfulness of the rest of the Round Table

community. This is emphasized by Galahad's being a symbolic representative of Christ's actions on earth, each one enhancing Galahad's spiritual virtues. Galahad's arrival at Arthur's court completes the Round Table, as Arthur's statement prior to his knights' departure for the grail shows: 'never Christian king had never so many worthy men at his table as I have had this day at this Round Table' (XIII.8). However, Galahad's perfection is a double-edged sword to the community, as Armstrong demonstrates: "In his perfection, Galahad reflects honour upon this knightly companions, but simultaneously, his presence points up the weaknesses in other Round Table knights (Armstrong, 118). These weaknesses are demonstrated to other knights on the Grail Quest when they are in conversation with hermits. Melias' is wounded in combat by two knights, who prove to be allegorical representations of his own sins of greed and theft (XIII.14). His defeat, at the hands of the two knights, can thus be seen as his own inability to control his wayward passions and desires. The hermit, in conversation with Galahad and Melias contrasts Melias' sinfulness with Galahad's own spiritual perfection explaining that, "they (the knights) might not withstand you, for ye are without deadly sin." (XIII.14). Gawain too, finds himself unfavourably compared to the 'holy knight' after his own actions at the Castle of Maidens. Like Melias, Gawain is told that it his own innate sinfulness, or "wickedness", that results in the deaths of his opponents, which is seen as murder. Once again, Galahad's success forms a contrast to Gawain's erroneous ways. The hermit explains that Galahad's moral virtues and spirituality allowed him to defeat the seven brothers without the need for wanton bloodshed, whilst also giving Galahad's deeds a deeply spiritual dimension (XIII.17). The interpretation of Gawain's dream, in a later episode, also highlights the sinfulness that Christ speaks of at the grail Mass, and how Galahad, Bors and Percival are set apart due to their virtue and spiritual superiority. The black bulls, representative of the 150 Round Table knights, save Bors, Percival and Galahad, are shown to lack humility, and be without "good or virtuous works", whilst their sin shall lead them to slay one another, either signifying Gawain's slaying of his brethren on the quest, or perhaps foreshadowing the breakup of the Round Table and the subsequent war between Launcelot and Arthur. Galahad and his virtuous peers Percival and Bors are shown



to be “three knights in virginity, and chastity, and there be no pride smitten in them.” (XVI.3). The strong emphasis on virginity and chastity perhaps emphasizes Arthur’s kingdom’s neglect for its Christian virtues, such as his knights’ emphasis on devoting their services to maidens, Launcelot to Guinevere, and Tristram and Palomides for Isoud, rather than Christ, as Launcelot previously admitted to a holy person (XIII.20). As a consequence of Galahad’s perfection, when compared to his more fallible peers and their actions, he is seen to be, “insistently and repetitively revealing the flaws and contradictions inherent in the values and code of conduct by which the chivalric society has sought to define itself and organize itself” (Armstrong 118-9)

However, Galahad’s superiority over his peers is not just limited to those who fail on the quest. His unattainable level of perfection is further demonstrated in his precedence over both knights who achieve the grail with him, Bors and Percival. While both Bors and Percival undergo temptation that tests their faith to the limits, Galahad’s faith is never put on trial. Similarly, it is Galahad that both Balin’s sword and the sword of King David are reserved for, both swords destined for the knight “that shall pass all other” (XVII.3). In both cases Percival attempts to claim the swords, and in both cases fails, whilst Bors also tries to claim David’s sword, but like Percival, he does not possess the holiness of Galahad.

In his role of Christ figure, Galahad’s perfection reveals the flawed humanity of his peers, both those that fail and those who succeed. This leads him to serve as a symbol of what must be aspired to, as Percival rightly aspires to be of Galahad’s fellowship. In following Galahad’s footsteps, Percival shakes off his secular ambition of being a knight of worship and comes to follow the true path to the grail, since Galahad being aligned so closely to Christ through Christ-like symbolism, himself becomes symbolic of the path to the grail. Gawain acknowledges this early in the quest, berating the fact that he failed to accompany Galahad at the start of the adventure, ‘I am not happy that I took not the way Galahad went, for and I may meet him I will not depart from him lightly, for all manner of marvelous adventures Sir Galahad achieveth” (XIII.16). As such, in the same way that Christ claims the path

for souls to achieve Heaven, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”, so too does Galahad, as Christ figure, become the path for achieving the grail (John 14:6).

Galahad serves as a new model of knight for a new quest. In looking at Christ’s words at the grail Mass, informing those present that Arthur’s realm had turned to evil living, Galahad’s status and role on the quest Galahad appears as a standard that other knights are measured against. Throughout the quest, the old guard of Arthurs Round Table are constantly compared in their sinful ways to the new unorthodox model personified in Galahad’s “heavenly knight” (Moorman, 504). In constantly being likened to Christ, Galahad comes to be representative of truth and that which must be aspired to by the other knights of the Round Table fellowship, as the hermits repeatedly point out. Galahad thus serves to reinterpret the old secular order of knighthood along a Christian path, and through reiterating Christ’s deeds in the world as a Christ figure, he comes to exemplify St Paul’s words that, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”(2 Corinthians 5:17). In the landscape of the Grail Quest, by following the path of Galahad, Percival comes to follow the path of truth embodied in Galahad as Christ figure.

### **3.3. The Grail**

In representing the path that must be taken to the grail, Galahad and the grail become entwined in a symbiosis of symbolic importance. Galahad, as Christ figure, reiterates Christ’s miracles in the world and so the importance of His teachings to the Arthurian community. The Grail Quest itself shows the error of chivalry when it deviates from the true quest of “so high a service” of searching for the “mysteries of Our Lord Jesu Christ” (XIII.8). Christ reinforces this argument at the conclusion

of the quest when he condemns Arthur's realm for failing to worship God as they should have and for having turned to "evil living". Consequently, it becomes clear that the Grail Quest is to serve as a reminder of what has been lost and forgotten in Arthur's realm, and in this way the grail quest serves as a spiritual journey for the knights that partake in it.

The grail's appearance at court before the quest commences sees the Holy Ghost fill those within with grace:

"then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other, by their seeming fairer than ever they saw afore. Notforthan there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other as they had been dumb. (XIII.7).

The Holy Ghost provides each knight with an aura that magnifies his appearance. This effect could signify how "God's grace amends the Round Table", from its petty inner disputes, or "how each man sees the other more positively than before when he sees with God's eyes (as each man sees if he were free from sin." (Tolhurst, 136). In being struck dumb, this event reverses that seen in Acts, which also occurs around Pentecost, when the gift of tongues is given to the various followers in Jerusalem at Pentecost allowing them to understand one another despite the myriad of languages spoken (Acts 2:1-4). While the biblical story sees the followers and believers of Jesus receive the ability to speak in light of their faith and unity in Christ, Arthur's knights are seemingly denied this due to their sinfulness, "By retaining but not interpreting the moment at which the Grail's presence strikes the knights dumb, Malory creates a theological middle ground – suggesting either their sinfulness, their awe, or both." (Tolhurst, 136).

The exclusion of "lady nor gentlewoman" from the quest for the grail and the need for confession prior to undertaking the quest highlight the deeply spiritual, almost priestly, journey needed to be taken by those that participate. The failure of those on the quest arises from their inability to atone for their sins, "he that is not clean of their sins he shall not see the mysteries of Our Lord Jesu Christ" (XIII.8). This strict morality is highlighted throughout the quest as a clear indicator of what is deemed

acceptable or unacceptable. Gawain and Launcelot are both informed in discussions with hermits that ‘‘it appeareth not to sinners.’’, and that ‘‘ye shall have no power to see it no more than a blind man should see a bright sword, and that is long on your sin.’’ (XV.2; XVI.5). As such, ‘‘the spiritual communication afforded in a vision of the grail is conditioned by the moral status of the one who aspires to it’’ (D’Arcy 334-5). Consequently, Gawain, Lionel and Melias will never be able to see the grail due to their failure to atone for their sins or make a genuine effort to amend their sinful ways through faith and prayer. Launcelot, who genuinely atones for his sinfulness, albeit temporarily, is afforded a glimpse of the grail through his atonement and active attempts to seek and follow spiritual guidance.

The worthiness of Galahad, Bors and Percival to succeed in the quest is made apparent in their adventures. Galahad through his spiritual perfection and innocence, and Bors and Percival through their innocence and ability to resist temptation and remain true to their faith. Their vision of the hart and four lions that the knights follow to the small chapel serves as an indicator of their possessing sufficient spirituality to witness the grail mysteries. Following the transformation of the four lions into an eagle, lion, man, and ox; the hermit reveals that the four animals are the embodiment of the four evangelists. The hart was a long standing symbol of Christ during the Middle Ages and associated with ‘‘Psalms 41, the bestiaries, and the legends of St Eustachius and St Hubert’’ (D’Arcy, 350). The event also receives importance as being symbolic of the incarnation as the knights hear a voice describe the method in which the four creatures depart without perishing or breaking anything, ‘‘in such a manner entered the Son of God in the womb of a maid Mary, whose virginity ne was perished ne hurt’’ (XVII.9). That Bors, Galahad, and Percival are able to witness the vision of the hart and the transformations that take place is met with wonder and awe by the hermit and leads him to understand that they are the three knights who will bring the quest to its conclusion. The revelations and vision seen in the chapel are a confirmation of the three grail knights’ virtue, that they are the elect to achieve the grail, ‘‘ye be welcome; now wot I well ye be the good knights the which shall bring the Sangrail to an end; for ye be they unto whom Our Lord shall show great secrets’’ (XVII.9).

The mysteries that will be unveiled await the knights in Corbenic Castle, and subsequently Sarras. That the conclusion of the quest for the grail and its mysteries should lie in a Eucharistic celebration is logical. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is performed by Christians to remember Christ's sacrifice for mankind on the cross. The exclusiveness of the grail knights' Eucharist meal is emphasized by a voice requiring "They that ought not sit at the table of Jesu Christ arise, for now shall very knights be fed." (XVII.19). This is shortly after reinforced with a second command to those not permitted to partake in the sacrament to depart. In the partaking of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, Galahad, Bors and Percival witness Joseph of Arimathea hold up a wafer he had taken out of the grail which is then operated upon by a "figure in the likeness of a child" with a visage "as bright as any fire" (the Holy Ghost), which "smote himself into the bread, so that they all saw that the bread was formed of a fleshly man" (XVII.20). Consequently, the transubstantiation is revealed to the knights, it being clearly demonstrated that "the bread becomes the Son through the operation of the Spirit (Holbrook, 68). Launcelot's witnesses a different version when he is permitted to see "a great part of thy desire" (XVII.14). Launcelot sees the vessel covered in red samite and a priest at the consecration of the Mass. Subsequently above the priests hands, Launcelot views:

Three men, whereof the two put the youngest by likeness between the priests hands; and so he lift him up right high, and it seemed to show to the people. (XVII.15)

As Launcelot does not see the bread, but rather the youngest member of the Trinity, the Son, "Launcelot perceives directly Christ's real presence in this oblation." (Holbrook, 67). Previously on the quest, while in a dreamlike vision, Launcelot had only seen the the covered grail. Now, having freed himself from spiritual torpor, he is permitted to see the conversion of bread into the body of Christ when the Father and Holy Spirit place the Son between the hands of the priest. However, Launcelot, is only given a glimpse of the mystery, sinful as he is. Unlike Launcelot, who is forced to watch the transubstantiation from afar, the holier Bors, Galahad and Percival are allowed to partake in the mystical activity of the very real presence of Christ in the Eucharistic meal. The sacrificial nature of this meal is highlighted when

“a man come out of the holy vessel, that had all the signs of the passion of Jesu Christ, bleeding all openly”. Christ then proceeds to feed the knights himself with the transformed bread and wine. In Christ’s feeding of the knights himself, the Eucharistic celebration of the grail knights reflects the Last Supper seen in the Gospels’ (Mathew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22: 7-39; John 13:1-17). Consequently, this further serves to emphasize that the ‘secrets’ of the grail quest focus on the Eucharist’s significance of Christ’s sacrifice, as Corinthians demonstrates “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” (1 Corinthians 11:26).

The second revelation regarding the grail’s mysteries in Sarras is more difficult to interpret. Once again, it centres on the sacrament of the Eucharist. However, prior to receiving the holy meal, Galahad is described as beginning to “tremble right hard when the deadly flesh began to behold the spiritual things.” The exact nature of the ‘spiritual things’ Galahad witnesses which make him tremble in such away is never described. However, he subsequently gives thanks for seeing “that that hath been my desire many a day” and requests to pass out of the world, citing the joy of heart from partaking in the grail Eucharist and its revelation. Following this, Joseph of Arimathea “took our Lord’s body betwixt his hands, and proferred it to Galahad”(XVII.22), who having taken the holy meal, is granted his death.

That knights revealed to be sinful in their ways or those who fail to show enough faith are excluded from the truth of the grail’s ‘secrets’ lies in their unworthiness to be granted the privilege of learning and participating in the deep mysteries of a faith that they have shown little evidence of honouring or serving (XVII.20). Galahad, Percival, Bors, and to some degree, Launcelot, reveal themselves to have the necessary faith, virtue, and spirituality to appreciate and celebrate the mysteries of the true nature of the Eucharist and its meaning.

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As the moon, Galahad, and the grail take fundamental roles in the quest to the moon and the Grail Quest, so to do the symbolic representations that they serve on a literary level. All three come to represent notion of truth, or lack thereof whilst serving as a commentary on the broader idea that the episode itself wishes to express.

In the case of Galahad and the grail, both symbolically come to be integrated through the figure of Christ. Galahad, as Christ figure, serves as the path, while the grail and its mysteries the goal to be achieved. There is never any doubt that Galahad will be one of the elect to achieve this goal, as the siege destined for him at the Round Table explicitly makes clear (XIII.2). His perfection and reinterpretation of the code of knighthood are intended to reveal to other knights the flaws and errors in their secular service and reveal the higher spiritual power that they have failed to serve sufficiently. In eschewing service to ladies, apart from one as virginal and spiritual as he, Galahad demonstrates the requirement that earthly desires are to be set aside earthly desires in the service of God. Galahad's divine perfection, like Christ's, is intended to serve as a marker for other knights to follow and measure themselves against. In reiterating Christ's miracles and actions on the quest, his unwavering faith, and his single minded effort to achieve the grail, Galahad becomes synonymous with truth, as the hermits reveal to the knights who undertake the quest. The path to the grail lies in following Galahad's example of discarding the things that bind man to earth, not seeking vain desires and earthly pursuits and pursuing spiritual things, as Percival discovers, and Bors correctly confirms. Thus, the grail itself is an entirely spiritual revelation that transcends the earthly realm, revealing absolute divine truth regarding the nature of the transubstantiation and Christ's sacrifice for mankind. It takes knights who show their worthiness in faith and devotion to Christ to understand the mysteries inherent within. Consequently, those knights who can achieve this state are rewarded with the deep spiritual knowledge and revelation of the secrets that lie within. That the truth that lies in wait in the unveiling of these mysteries is greater than any that the earthly joys can provide is evident in Galahad's wish to pass out of this world, and Percival's decision to forego worldly pursuits and take up a life of spiritual meditation following the quests

conclusion. The transcendental nature of the grail quest at its conclusion, together with the Sacrament of the Eucharist at Corbenic Castle and Sarras, and the revelation of the true nature of transubstantiation, move the episode beyond worldly interpretations and into the realm of divine absolutes, and in this case the truth regarding Christ's sacrifice for mankind. That Galahad and the grail are linked in meaning and destiny is evident in their departure from the world at the same time. Galahad's purpose in life is completed with the achievement of the grail. Consequently, Galahad and the grail, linked in meaning, must part from the world simultaneously. The transcendental nature of Galahad's death, complete with 'a multitude of angels' bearing his soul to heaven, enforces the true and virtuous life that he led and that his virtuous life of faith is analogous with the mysteries of the grail.

While the Grail Quest's finale witnesses the mysteries of the grail revealed in Christ's sacrifice on Calvary and the revelation of the substance of the Eucharistic meal, *Orlando Furioso's* quest to the moon is shown to lack any such revelation of truth. Ariosto's fantastical representation of the moon, lacking any scientific basis, merely serves as a model from which to analyze Earth from an alternate angle. Allegorical images on the moon serve as a looking glass to satirize mankind with a version of itself. St John's interpretations of the allegorical objects reveal a distorted image of mankind and reality that has no universal nature in truth, but merely one version of truth. The moon fails to provide a platform for transcendence, as the Grail Quest conclusion does. In failing to do so, the moon as a platform, and the quest to the moon, refrain from going into a higher realm that would render interpretation unnecessary and bring readers into the world of absolutes. The transcendental nature of the grail episode links its mysteries with absolute notions of truth that cannot be found in Ariosto's work.



## CHAPTER 4

### CHARACTER AND THE REPRESENTATION OF TRUTH – GAWAIN, LAUNCELOT, PERCIVAL, AND ASTOLFO

In order to better understand Malory's and Ariosto's concept of the quest it is necessary to discuss character. This is particularly important due to the high emphasis on characterisation that Malory shows *Le Morte Darthur*, as Rovang illustrates:

In moving from Gawain to Launcelot, therefore, and then on to consider a host of other characters, the reader is tracing, in a manner suited to fifteenth-century England, the quest for values embodied in relevant examples of human conduct, which must be undertaken anew in every age. This quest is negotiated in Malory's work by the reader's discovery and deepening knowledge of individual characters who carry exemplary and typological values yet always remain primarily individuals rather than becoming allegorical types. (Rovang 40)

This is represented in the Grail Quest as the different quest knights come to represent different values and ideals and their fortunes and failures reflect their attachment to those ideals and values.

In both Ariosto and Malory, character plays a crucial role in their respective quests, and, as the reader follows the various characters on the quest, it is necessary to understand that each character's qualities and traits participate in some way to their success or failure on the quest. Both the Grail Quest and the quest to the moon represent some ideal, or wish to say something about the state of man, and in order for the quest to be attained it requires a character that is best able to represent the

ideals of the quest itself to achieve success. In its deeply spiritual and religious nature the quest for the Holy Grail requires that the knights' shift their sets of values from the worldly to those of the spiritual, which some knights, due to their innate characteristics and typological values, can do so more easily than others. Similarly, the quest to the moon in its allegorical presentation of mankind's vanity, follies and misguided desires requires a knight who can penetrate and objectively observe these weaknesses of man in order for Ariosto's satirisation to be effective. The aim of this chapter is to analyse and discuss several characters and the makeup of these characters and their alignment to the nature of the truth that is represented in each of the two literary works. In *Le Morte Darthur*, truth is shown to be an absolute, with a clear right or wrong. The success or failure of knights on the Grail Quest in many ways lies in their ability to shift their values to what is perceived to be acceptable to the spiritual nature of the quest, and thus to success or failure. In *Orlando Furioso*, truth is contingent, and as shall be seen, the character of Astolfo is reflective of this in lacking any willingness to impose himself on anything. Due to the numerous knights in Malory's *Tale of the Sangrail* and the limited space available this chapter will focus on Gawain, Launcelot and Percival in an attempt to provide the widest possible spectrum between success and failure on the Grail Quest.

#### **4.1. Gawain**

Of all the knights that undertake the quest for the grail it is Gawain who fares worst. As we follow Gawain, we encounter the demoralized knights who encounter no adventures on the quest. His devotion to the quest has also waned as he reveals to Ector, "I am nigh weary of this quest, and loth I am to follow further in strange countries." (XVI, 1). This can be seen quite ironic as he is the knight that initiated the quest. Gawain's companion Ector reveals that he met twenty other Round Table knights who have also fared badly reflecting the "depressing standstill that knighterrantry has come to." And how "even ordinary adventures are in abeyance now that the Grail Quest is afoot." (Whitworth, 22). Hermits also seem to elude Gawain

who rides for eight days only to come to a chapel that is empty and derelict, in effect reflecting his own spiritual neglect.

Ackerman sees Gawain's spiritual neglect as representative of what Thomas Aquinas defined as spiritual sloth. Citing Aquinas' own writing on the subject in *Summa Theologica*, where it is said that spiritual sloth is "an oppressive sorrow, which, to wit, so weighs upon man's mind, that he wants to do nothing" and is reflective of "sorrow about spiritual good" (Q35.1), Ackerman explains that "[s]piritual apathy seems best to capture the phenomenon St Thomas is describing (regarding Acedia) ; i.e. a bored indifference towards religious and spiritual matters." (Ackerman, 48) Gawain's statement to Ector, "I am nigh weary of this quest" is not a statement of physical sloth, something that Gawain can never be accused of, but rather of spiritual sloth. It reflects a weariness that has emerged within him from an inability and unwillingness to understand the importance of spiritual matters on the Grail Quest.

Certainly, Gawain's lack of spirituality is evident throughout the Grail Quest, and in a quest in which earthly chivalry is subverted for a more spiritual one it can only count against him. Gawain stands in contrast with Galahad who holds an absolute and unwavering joy in divine good. This joy of Galahad's is so intense that after witnessing the secrets of the grail he prays "that he should pass out of this world". When asked why by Percival, Galahad explains of the "joy of heart, that I trow never man was that was earthly. And thereafter I wot well, when my body is dead my soul shall be in great joy to see the Blessed Trinity every day, and the Majesty of Our Lord, Jesu Christ." (XVII, 21). Gawain lacks this unwavering joy in the divine. When asked to perform penance by a hermit, he responds: "I may do no penance, for we knights adventurous oft suffer great woe and pain." (XIII, 16). Ackerman claims that in his insubordinate response, Malory's Gawain is "evincing the sin of pride and spiritual sloth." (Ackerman, 48). It can also be said that Gawain perhaps does not recognize that the 'woe and pain' suffered when on quests do not hold the same weight as spiritual penance, thus only reinforcing the lack of interest or knowledge in spiritual matters represented in his character. In a later episode,

Gawain refuses penance once again, this time from Nacien the hermit. Gawain states that he does not have the time to be spiritually advised: ‘and I had leisure I would speak with you, but my fellow here, Sir Ector, is gone, and abideth me yonder beneath the hill.’ (XVI, 5) However, considering his previous comments to Ector about the lack of adventures (XVI, 1), it is clear that Gawain does have time to speak to Nacien. Furthermore, Nacien already explained to Gawain and Ector why they had witnessed so little adventure in the Grail Quest: ‘the adventure of the Sangrail which ye and many others have undertaken the quest of and find it not, the cause is for it appeareth not to sinners.’ (XVI, 5). Gawain is revealed as too self-absorbed and proud to confront this aspect of his character. Confronted by the various hermits about his sins, lack of faith and his need to reconcile with God, Gawain dismisses each hermit’s guidance. Gawain’s dogged refusal reflects a detached lack of faith and understanding which prevents him from addressing both the past and present sins that prove such an obstacle to him (XIII, 16; XVI, 5). Unlike Launcelot, Gawain is unwilling to reevaluate his sinful ways. Nacien reveals to Gawain that:

as sinful as Sir Launcelot hath been, sith that he went into the quest of the Sangrail he slew never man, nor nought shall, till he come unto Camelot again, for he hath taken upon him to forsake sin. And nere were there that he nis not stable, but by his thought he is likely to turn again, he should be next to achieve it save Galahad. (XVI, 5)

Gawain is told that Launcelot has faced up to the spiritual nature of the quest and forsaken sin, something that Gawain has failed to do. However, Gawain appears to disregard or fail to grasp that if he forsakes his own sins that he too could be capable as Launcelot and be ‘next to achieve’ the grail. Instead, Gawain’s response only reinforces the lack of spiritual understanding within him: ‘for our sins it will not prevail us to travel in this quest.’ In his unwillingness to change, Gawain fails to correct his erroneous ways and follow a path of repentance that would allow him to achieve any form of success on the quest.

Gawain's lack of success on the Grail Quest is also shown to be "an unfolding consequence of his past." (Rovang, 31) Following his adventure at the Castle of Maidens where he, Gareth and Uwain slay the seven brothers, he is told by a hermit that "when ye were first made knight you should have taken to you knightly deeds and virtuous living, and ye have done the contrary, for ye have lived mischevously many winters" (XIII, 16). The hermit explains that had Gawain been less wicked the seven brothers would not have been slain, in this way he is contrasted with Galahad who "shall slay no man lightly." Moreover, wanton killing is shown to be dishonourable and representative of a neglect for both God and man's law. Throughout the Grail Quest, Gawain is unable to refrain from thoughtless violence, despite the religious nature of the quest. This is represented in his inadvertent killing of Uwain and King Bagdemagus, fellow Knights of the Round Table. Malory reveals Gawain's deep remorse at how "one sworn brother hath slain the other", but the intention is to show Gawain's destructive nature.

Gawain's slaying of his brother knights only mirrors his vindictive feud prior to the quest with the family of King Pellinore, which leads to Gawain and his brothers murder of Pellinore and his son, Lamorak. Thus, murder is what Gawain is accused of on the Grail Quest by a hermit. This stands in stark contrast to Launcelot who is actively attempting to "forsake sin", while Gawain is "so old a tree that in thee is neither leaf ne fruit." Gawain is therefore revealed to be too old and set in his ways to be willing or able to change his destructive nature. His is a destructive nature that will play a decisive role in the break-up of Arthur's kingdom.

## **4.2. Launcelot**

Unlike Gawain, who is representative of one who is too set in their ways to reevaluate their character and actions to achieve success, Launcelot can be seen to represent the 'Everyman' type. Despite being Arthur's greatest knight prior to the quest, on the Grail Quest Launcelot is reduced to the level of the rest of the Round Table fellowship and can claim no special privilege as he did before. He is usurped

in greatness by the more spiritual Bors, Galahad and Percival. What sets apart Launcelot from the other knights who fail is Launcelot's awareness of his sins and the need to strive spiritually and amend his ways if he is to be successful. Thus, Launcelot's episode of the quest is converted by Malory to a "form of Pilgrims Progress with Launcelot as the pilgrim." (Hanks Jr 14).

On the quest, Launcelot finds that what he was most devoted to, the chivalric code, has now been replaced by a more spiritual code and to follow the earthly chivalric code, that Launcelot does, is now a weakness. Throughout Launcelot's quest the struggle between the two seemingly conflicting ideas is presented:

A lesser knight, such as Sir Bors, is able to substitute the celestial standard for the courtly and so achieve the Grail. But Launcelot cannot shift values. He is himself the personification of the secular chivalric way of life, to abandon it would be to abandon his identity.(Moorman, 501)

Launcelot is aware of his sins and how they prove an obstacle to success on the Grail Quest. Moreover, he appears to understand that his standing as the greatest knight will have no bearing on this holy quest:

when I sought worldly adventures for worldly desires I ever achieved them and had the better in every place, and never was discomfit in no quarrel were it right, were it wrong. And now I take upon me the adventure to seek holy things, now I see and understand that mine old sin hindereth me and shameth me" (XIII, 19)

Launcelot's lament is utilised by Malory to compare chivalric achievements with spiritual failings and thus the model of the ideal secular hero is here put in perspective.

Launcelot's prowess is connected to his utter devotion to Guinevere, and, as their relationship is adulterous this makes Launcelot disloyal to Arthur and the Round Table. His confession to a hermit establishes his misdirected fidelity to Guinevere in that all his feats of arms were "for the queen's sake" regardless of if it "were right

or wrong” and “never did I battle all only for God’s sake, but for to win worship and cause me to be better beloved.” (XIII, 20). Launcelot reflects the use of wrong motivations for the practice of knighthood. In fighting for his own worship and in knowingly defending those who are guilty, Launcelot is using his knighthood in sin.

Moorman explains that Launcelot and Guinevere’s relationship is what is constituted as courtly love and that it was “vigorously condemned” by the Church for being “immoral and adulterous.” (Moorman, 165). But Malory presents Launcelot as capable of changing his sinful ways as he pledges “henceforward I caste me by the grace of God, never to be so wicked as I have been but as to shew knighthood” (XIII, 20). He wears a hair shirt throughout the quest as a sign of his continual penitence while another hermit reveals to Gawain that Launcelot has “left pride and taken to humility.” (16.4)

However, try as he might, Launcelot is never capable of completely altering his old ways. He fights alongside the weaker black knights against the white knights at a tournament “in increasing of his chivalry (XV, 15) – unaware of their allegorical representation as sin. Thus, Launcelot is still adhering to earthly chivalric values that he is unable to shake off as is required on the Grail Quest. Similarly, when Launcelot goes aboard the ship containing Percival’s dead sister we are told that the joy he felt “passeth all earthly joys that ever I was in.” (XVII, 13). The joys that this spiritual joy has surpassed include the highest that earthly joys may offer such as being the greatest knight, membership of the Round Table, and the passionate love of Guinevere. Consequently, Launcelot’s high valuation of this spiritual joy is more meaningful than that of Galahad, as Galahad does not possess the worldly experiences that Launcelot does. Although his statement of the value of the joy may be more meaningful than Galahad’s, to Launcelot the constant intensity of divine joy becomes monotonous and consequently he grows “weary of the ship.” Launcelot is unable to completely sever his ties to the world as Galahad does, and Percival and Bors are able to do. Thus, he cannot reproduce the same feelings as Galahad who asks to pass out of the world in order “be in great joy to see the Blessed Trinity every day” for Launcelot eternal bliss is alien and unnatural as he is someone who is

too attached to the temporal world. It requires the spiritual virtues of his son Galahad to join him on the ship to focus Launcelot's attention back on to spiritual matters. Launcelot's willingness to accept penance and strive to improve himself leads him to be called to view a glimpse of the grail's mysteries. However, he continues to follow his earthly codes of chivalry revealing his lack of faith when drawing his sword against the lions, and subsequently disobeying the order not to enter the room housing the grail. He is given a glimpse of the grail but is punished for his lack of faith and failure to submit entirely to the spiritual standards required of the quest when attempting to enter the room.

In summing up Launcelot's episode of the Grail Quest, Dosanjth sees a sadness due to Launcelot's failure to effectively amend his ways and so be capable of joining the three grail knights in witnessing the full mystery of the grail:

“Launcelot's encounter with the Grail clearly functions as a sorrowful and incomplete revelation – sorrowful because of the good knight's sin and the constant idea of what might have been, and incomplete compared to Galahad's achievement.” (Dosanjth 64)

However, viewing the quest as an “incomplete revelation” is perhaps misinterpreting Launcelot's function on the Grail Quest. It may be that in his partial glimpse of the grail Malory intends to reflect that it is not necessary to be spiritually perfect, as Galahad is, to achieve God's favour. Rather it is necessary to recognize one's sins, receive grace, and strive for that perfection in the hope of something greater. Thus, Launcelot represents Everyman, as Hanks Jr explains:

Unlike Galahad, Launcelot has not somehow earned God's grace through his own perfection, he has knowingly done wrong. “This is why Launcelot's spiritual journey is so much more moving than Galahad's. We are like him, a part of him, and his desire to be better than he is while still hanging on to the earthly things he loves.” (Hanks Jr 18-19).



### 4.3. Percival

If Galahad represents the unachievable idea of spirituality, then, through the character of Percival, Malory provides a more achievable version of the model. He can be seen as situated between the erroneous worldly chivalry of Launcelot and the unattainable spiritual faultlessness of Galahad. Percival arrives in Arthur's court in much the same way as Gareth and later Galahad, as an unknown and untested knight, and is initially assigned a seat amongst the lesser knights. He is, however, promptly taken in hand by a 'dumb maiden' who addresses Percival, 'Arise, Sir Percival, the noble knight and God's knight and go with me', and seats him to the right of the siege perilous (X.24). In being placed on the right hand side of the siege perilous, Percival is identified as Galahad's 'more mortal and fallible double' (Rovang, 47). It is also worth noting the manner in which Percival is proclaimed as 'God's knight', foreshadowing his later success on the Grail Quest and devout spirituality. However, prior to the Grail Quest, Percival's driving ambition is to achieve fame and success in earthly feats of arms, in this aim he is to be unwittingly obstructed by his divine fate as one of the three knights to achieve the Grail.

The dream of knightly worship among his peers of the Round Table is Percival's only concern prior to the quest for the grail. He places a high value on his reputation and standing within the fellowship as is evident in his comment to Persides when members of the Round Table search for Launcelot, who had abandoned Camelot in his madness:

tell them (Kay and Mordred) I will never forget their mocks and  
scorns that they did to me that day I was made knight; and tell them I  
will never see that court till men speak more worship of me than ever  
men did of any of them both. (XI.12)

His abandonment of his brother and companion, Aglovale, in the search for worship and Launcelot only serves to reinforce this single-minded aim of Percival's, as does Aglovale's comment when he learns of Percival's leaving, 'He departed from me unkindly (XI.12).

This desire to achieve knightly renown also leads to the death of his mother. Having lost her husband, Pellinore, and her son Lamorak, she appeals to Percival to stay at home, but Percival's dogged ambition for worship leads him to leave her, "Ah, sweet mother...we may not, for we come of kings' blood of both parties, and therefore, mother, it is our kind to haunt arms and noble deeds." (XI.10). Percival reveals a distance from natural feelings of affection as he is driven towards a single objective. The Round Table substitutes Percival's need for family as his aunt demonstrates:

"when they (knights) are chosen to be of the fellowship of the Round Table they think them more blessed and more in worship than if they had gotten half the world; and ye have seen that they have lost their fathers and their mothers, and all of ther kin, and their wives and their children, for to be of your fellowship. It is well seen by you; for since ye have departed from your mother ye would never see her, ye have found such fellowship at the Round Table. (XIV.3)

Rovang notes that Percival's aunt's language is "unmistakably biblical" and is comparable to Christ's statement to His followers (Mathew 19:29). In light of this, participation in the Round Table is seen as a mistaken substitute for God's Kingdom, being treated as if it was the same, or one step on the way – that is to say, a partial and ephemeral manifestation of it (Rovang, 73). Percival comes to see it as a step on the way when he ends his life in spiritual reflection.

The shift of Percival's focus from a knight entirely focused on worldly ideals to one of complete submission to the spiritual and a realisation of his destiny comes through his experiences on the Grail Quest. Initially desirous to test his strength against the famed Galahad and prove his worth, Percival's attitude changes when his aunt explains how Galahad is the grail knight who "worketh by miracle" (XIV.2-3). Subsequently seeking Galahad's fellowship in faith and frienship, Percival is confronted with powers that he had previously never encountered or rarely considered. His battles and temptations with demons and Satan on the Grail Quest are fought on a spiritual and allegorical plain. Percival aids a lion in its fight with a serpent, choosing so because

‘‘he was the more natural beast of the two’’ (XIV.6). His decision is found to be the correct one when he later learns that ‘‘that serpent betokeneth a fiend.’’, while the lion signifies the church (XIV.7). Subsequently, he is brought to the brink of idolatry as he is called on by a gentlewoman claiming to be ‘disinherited’ to be his champion. Temptations of the flesh almost lead Percival to seal this pact until chance leads him to make the ‘‘sign of the cross in his forehead’’(XV.9). Upon learning how close he was to fatal deception, Percival punishes himself by inflicting self-injury with his own sword. He later learns from a holy man that the ‘‘gentlewoman was the master fiend of hell’’ and that demonic and celestial forces had been fighting over his services.(XV.10) Percival is driven to an elevated plain of spirituality by fighting on the side of a power that exceeds his own previous earthly concerns. In doing so he comes to understand its virtues represented in the lion becoming Percival’s companion and Percival turning into ‘‘one of the men of the world which most believed in Our Lord Jesu Christ’’ (XIV.6). Rovang cites the symbolic significance of Percival’s success in his encounters with demonic temptations: ‘‘Percival’s victory, then has been the nature of Christ’s in the wilderness. (Mathew 4:1-11): his adversaries spritual, his weapon faith, his source divine grace in a battle not against flesh and blood.’’ (Rovang 74).

By the conclusion of the Grail Quest it is made clear that Percival has completely submitted himself to the spiritual world and has ceased to interest himself with worldly concerns that still preoccupy other Round Table figures such as Gawain, Launcelot and Lionel. This lack of concern is reflected in Tennyson’s Arthurian rendition of Percival’s Grail Quest, which, although it differs in some ways to Malory’s, captures Percival’s new perception of earthly desires:

But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail  
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,  
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out  
Among us in the jousts, while women watch  
Who wins, who falls; and waste the spiritual strength

Within us, better offered up to Heaven." (Tennyson, *Idyll's of the King*- "The Holy Grail", St 4)

Percival's decision to retire to a hermitage following Galahad's death is evidence of his abandonment of earthly ideals. This sets him apart from the other quest knights, even his companion Bors, who does achieve the grail, and only reinforces the way in which Percival is represented as a mortal and less perfect embodiment of Galahad. Unlike Percival, Bors we are told "never changed he his secular clothing", thus while Bors possesses the faith of Galahad and Percival, he lacks the spiritual adulation represented in the other two grail knights (XVII.23). Percival is revealed to be as close to Galahad's Christ persona as a mortal can be, through Percival's sister's revelation that he will be buried alongside Galahad at Sarras in the same way that he was seated to the right of the siege perilous at Arthur's court (XVII.11). Thus, in Galahad's death he sees his own death in the world as the two are entirely submitted to the spiritual realm. Merrill relates how Percival and Galahad "come to represent the death instinct" that he argues relates "in Malory's terms an end to the world of striving and questing" (Merril, 376). Whilst, Merrill argues this idea from a psychological analysis of the characters, something this thesis will avoid, his summation can be accepted, but rather on the grounds of the spiritual significance of the grail mystery and what it represented to Galahad and Percival. When questioned by Percival on why he requested to pass out of the world, Galahad explains that, "when my body is dead my soul shall be in great joy to see the Blessed Trinity every day, and the Majesty of Our Lord Jesu Christ. (XVII.21). D'Arcy explains that what Galahad desires is the divine joy he experienced from his encounter with the grail:

'his idea of life in the world to come, the life *in patria*, is a conventionally religious one; the soul will overleap its prisonhouse of flesh and 'shall be in great joy' with the *Maiestas Domini* in the triune Godhead world without end. It has a foretaste of this state of eternal beatitude on earth in the reception of the *tota Deitas*, the whole of the Trinity, in the Eucharist.'" (D'Arcy 362)

Thus, the ‘death instinct’ for Galahad, and consequently Percival is a complete submission to divine good and divine bliss that can only come through an abandonment of worldly ideals and a devotion to those of the spiritual realm. This is what Percival is able to achieve in the Grail Quest. He abandons the desire for knightly worship and recognition that had previously occupied him as he realises and subsequently embraces his destiny through battles and confrontations with demons on the Grail Quest.

Percival comes to represent Malory’s example of a worldly knight with worldly occupations who surrenders himself to the will of God and, in so doing, is able to reach the limits of mortal perfection, excelled only by Galahad. Percival is set apart from the other knights of Arthur’s court through his innocence and virginity and Malory places significant emphasis on these two aspects of his character. In Gawain’s vision of the bulls the three white bulls are signified as those of virtue and innocence, and representative of Bors, Galahad and Percival, against the one hundred and forty-seven black sinful bulls. However, the white bulls are distinguished further within themselves in that ‘‘the third that had a spot signifieth Sir Bors de Ganis, which trespassed but once in his virginity’’ (XVI.5). Within the grail world the stain of intercourse appears to bar the other knights from perfection, having lost that which they can never regain. This is reflected in Percival’s comment after he stabs himself as punishment for nearly being tempted to bed the succubus, ‘‘and to have lost that I should never have gotten again, that was my virginity’’ the comments of the maiden that Bors saves also show the gravity of any lapse in chastity (XIV.10; XVI.10).

Moorman notes that the slaying of brother by brother is a major symbol of the civil strife of the Round Table (508). Many of the conflicts within Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur* are caused by brother contending against brother, such as seen in Gawain and the Orkney’s family vendetta with Pellinore’s family and in the later decisive wars between Launcelot and Gawain and Arthur and Mordred. It is noticeable that Percival shows little interest in the blood feud with the Orkney family, despite the fact that Gawain and his brothers are responsible for the deaths of his father,

Pellinore, and his brother, Lamorak. After Gawain fails to draw the sword from the stone prior to the Grail Quest's commencement, Arthur turns to Percival who accepts "Gladly, for to bear Sir Gawain fellowship." (XIII.3). Percival's failure to draw the sword from the stone also reflects that his perfection is still only that of a mortal, as he proves unable to claim the sword that is destined for Galahad's hands.

Percival's quest for the grail is representative of the limits on that which is attainable for an earthly knight to achieve. For all his misguided dreams and desires of earthly worship and knightly renown, Percival is guided by a spiritual fate. His realization on the Grail Quest of his destiny comes about through his encounter and conflict with powers beyond his comprehension and in his search for Galahad. Through Percival we see the total submission to the spiritual ideals and renouncement of worldly ideals and concerns as he retires to a hermitage following Galahad's death. Thus, in Percival, Malory reflects the greatest change of any quest knight within the tale as Percival moves from abandoning his worldly concerns to focusing solely on spiritual matters.

#### **4.4. Astolfo**

While the characters Gawain, Launcelot and Percival all have strong attachments or passions that they may battle with on the quest, *Orlando Furioso's* Astolfo comes as something of an enigma at first, seeming to lack any defining features. When compared to his peers such as Ruggiero, Orlando and Bradamante, Astolfo is a rather minor figure in the *Orlando Furioso*. However, his role in integral episodes of the poem has made him the focus of much critical attention. Rather than portraying a character with a vast array of complex emotions and traits, Astolfo embodies a particular set of traits that are only specific to his function and purpose within the poem itself. He is a hypothetical figure, Ariosto's examination "of the proposition that it would be fortunate if humanity could embody the traits of such a character more often than is the case in the world." (Wiggins, 144). The boaster and wit of the *Orlando Innamorato* is substituted for the intrepid, dauntless, enthusiastic and willing Astolfo seen in the *Orlando Furioso*. Of all the characters the reader follows within the

poem, only Astolfo is capable of celebrating or making a success of unforeseen or unwanted scenarios.

As the personification of certain attributes from the spectrum of mankind's traits, Astolfo represents a sense of sanguineness that can only be observed humorously in spite of its allure. We cannot expect to encounter much truth or reality in Astolfo's adventures, in the same way that Astolfo rejoices in the world on his travels without inflicting on it the expectancy that other characters do – characters such as Orlando, Rodomonte and Ruggiero, who fail to balance their expectations against reality. Unlike Rodomonte, Ruggiero, and Orlando, and humanity in general, Astolfo has no intention of committing ideals of his own onto an uncompromising world, rather he celebrates and embraces the diversity, the abundance and the metamorphic nature of the world and does not attempt to suppress it by surrendering himself to one absolute. Astolfo's outlook on life can perhaps be likened to that expressed by Blake in his short poem 'Eternity' from his *Gnomic Verses*:

He who binds himself to a Joy  
Does the winged life destroy;  
But he who kisses the Joy as it flies  
Lives Eternity's sunrise. (Blake, 153)

Unlike Rodomonte, Orlando, and Ruggiero, Astolfo doesn't attempt to tie life down but follows embraces and celebrates spontaneity.

The reader first encounters Astolfo as a disconsolate and rejected lover transformed into a myrtle tree by the capricious sorceress Alcina. It requires a character such as Ruggiero, one able to grow emotionally, with the help of the sorceress Logistilla, to release him from this prison. It is Astolfo, however, not Ruggiero, who benefits from the wisdom of Logistilla. While Ruggiero, having only just left Logistilla's lands, quickly becomes possessed with lust for Angelica, Astolfo is the only major figure in the poem that remains celibate and resists the overwhelming passions that cloud other characters' judgements. The wisdom of Logistilla allows a man to see 'right into his very soul; he sees there reflected his vices and virtues, so that he no

longer believes the compliments he is paid, nor does he heed the blame when he is charged unfairly . . . he discovers himself and learns wisdom.” (10.59). Ariosto appears to suggest that if this wisdom was followed by a human that it would manifest itself as Astolfo appears for the remainder of the poem, a man that can only be seen as hypothetical. The remoteness from the passion and uncertainty of the world that is exemplified in Astolfo, is hardly feasible, with the exception of how some people may see that the real world is larger and more complicated than they may have envisioned. Generally, however, man is naturally like Ruggiero, passionate, prone to mistakes of judgement, caught up with events in the world, and attached to others.

In their quests for their absolute goals or ideals, Rodomonte’s desire for conquest and fame, or Orlando’s destructive love for Angelica, time appears like a finite duration needed to be defeated in order to bring the ideal to realisation. Time for Astolfo, who does not seek to impose an absolute goal, is a sequence of events to revel in and experience and thus, as Wiggins indicates, “Astolfo becomes his own representation of time” in his meeting with Senapo in Cantos 33 and 38 (Wiggins, 145). He is able to chase the harpies away because he, as the embodiment of detachment from the problems that plague a man’s mind, thus represents the cure. In desecrating Senapo’s banquet table, “they symbolize waste of the moments by men who starve themselves in the present in order to pursue an alluring and uncertain goal.” just as Rodomonte and Orlando do (Wiggins, 145). His assault on Earthly Paradise leads Senapo to represent the delusions of mankind. Senapo incorrectly believes Astolfo to be an angel upon his arrival at the kings court, to which he is corrected:

I too am a mortal man and a sinner, unworthy of the thanks you offer.  
I shall do my utmost to relieve your kingdom of the baneful monster  
by slaughter or rout. If I succeed, it not me but God alone you must  
praise, by whose help I bend my flight hither. (33.117)

That Astolfo stresses his lack of divine qualities is essential in understanding his purpose in *Orlando Furioso*: “He represents a form of release from delusion within



the reach of ordinary sinners, if only for the space of an interval. Creation is rich enough, he is saying, for people to find in it a brief respite from the human condition.” (Wiggins, 146).

His successful battles, using magical weapons, against Caligorante, Orillo, the sorcerer Atlante, and the women on the island of Allesandretta suggest that it is perhaps wise to achieve victory and disregard how it was achieved. Astolfo’s constant use of magic to gain victory contrasts with Ruggiero who shamefully discards his magic shield for reasons of pride: “If I won, people will say it was by virtue of magic, not by my own valour.” (22.90). Later, Ruggiero will require Astolfo’s magical aids to rescue him from Atlante’s imprisonment, suggesting that Astolfo’s brazen use of magic to achieve success reflects a wisdom of its own.

Astolfo’s adventure to the moon via Hell and Earthly Paradise parodies Dante’s own in *The Divine Comedy*. His failure to react to St John’s speech explaining the reason for Orlando’s madness and his need to quest to the moon is due to Astolfo’s ability to react only to sensual experience, as Carrol explains, Astolfo’s is “an act without reflection because of his lack of any conflict with the world. (Carrol, 182). This is also seen when St John and Astolfo traverse the lunar landscape. Astolfo asks St John to explain the allegorical objects that litter the lunar valley, however, this appears to be solely for the reader’s benefit, as Astolfo fails to respond to the answers or interact with his interlocutor. Astolfo’s habit of asking questions on the moon but refrain from providing responses to the answers is evident in the lack of dialogue contained within the lunar episode. The lunar episode is dominated by St John’s long speeches and descriptions. The myriad of questions and lack of reaction to answers also reinforce Astolfo’s position as one who refuses to dedicate himself to one idea or one absolute. Moving across the moon, he gains insight into life and what moves mankind. The finite and fruitlessness of man’s hopes and desires are all laid bare on the moon for Astolfo to view. Thus, removed from the world, Astolfo is able to observe through his impartial eyes the vapid desires for fame and success of man as they are revealed to him. It allows him to see through the lies that veil the

reputations of men, sighs, and misdirected desires. That Astolfo is the one to whom all this is revealed seems natural, as Astolfo is the only character throughout the poem who is unaffected by the pursuit for these desires due to his refusal to impose himself on anything.

St John's deliberately ironic speech regarding poetry and patronage stresses that all human creations are fiction and that knowledge of this fact is necessary. One again, Astolfo is the logical character to divulge this too as Wiggins explains: 'Astolfo's function throughout the narrative has been to remind the reader that the human self is only a fiction subject to the errors of all fictions.' (Wiggins, 157).

What separates Astolfo from other characters in *Orlando Furioso* is that he does not yearn as insistently for the absolute or what he perceives as an absolute truth. He is a changed man from the lovesick figure incarcerated by Alcina. His experiences on Logistilla's island see a renewed Astolfo that can rejoice in the unexpected and travel the changeable world and interact and observe it from the position that fortune allows him. The manner and ease in which he does it prevents him from appearing wholly human, but his human traits allow him to reveal what humans can achieve in periods of clarity.

This does not diminish Orlando's, Ruggiero's and Rodmonte's desires, for the absolute ideals they crave are sincere, and the way they fashion themselves in order to succeed in these, as Wiggins points out

such endeavour is as essential to civilisation as is the fashioning of great poem. It is only when it is mistaken for nature and a role is mistaken for a reality that paralyzing dreams of an earthly paradise ensue. (Wiggins, 159-160)

Astolfo personifies the possibility of men to correct their errors by withdrawing from themselves and in doing so come to surpass themselves after they have realised that their desires and urges prove counter-productive and detrimental.

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Through analysing the characters of Gawain, Launcelot, Percival and Astolfo the various qualities that make characters succeed, fail and be applicable in these quests becomes evident. Astolfo and Percival are set apart from Gawain, Launcelot, Rodomonte, Orlando and Ruggiero by their ability to alter themselves in the way that allows them to succeed on their quests.

Spiritual experiences and encounters on the Grail Quest force Percival to revaultate his worldly ideals and desires and see him discard these in favour of spiritual values. The discarding of his worldly ideals in conjunction with his innate innocence and virginity make him worthy of one of elect to partake in the mysteries of the Holy Grail. Following his conversion-like experience, Percival no longer follows the worldly ideals that inhibit the other quest knights during the grail adventures. Success in the Grail Quest requires those who undertake it to follow a spiritual code that differs in many ways from that of the worldly chivalry that is followed in quests prior to this. The inability of knights such as Launcelot and Gawain to understand or adhere to this requirement is reflected in their failures, whereas Percival is able to make the required changes to himself in order to succeed. Astolfo, like Percival is also able to make the necessary amendments to this character that make him the appropriate man to undertake the quest to the moon. His objectivity and lack of desire to impose his own will on the world, or own vision of truth, make Astolfo the logical person to interact with St John as he reveals the vanity, folly, and ambition of man, which are weaknesses that do not affect Astolfo.

Both the quest for the moon and the Grail Quest reflect the requirement for a different set of ideals. It is for this reason that the Round Table knights and Astolfo are required to alter their approach to the world. The Grail Quest requires knights to turn their ideals towards traditional Christian values and forsake their worldly ideals and values for higher spiritual ones. Thus, in Bors, but more so in Percival, we see the knights encountering allegorical tests and battles where each confrontation tests the knight on his faith and spirituality. In this, Percival succeeds because spiritually

he has changed sufficiently to prove himself worthy to understand the truth of the grail's mysteries. The quest to the moon and St John's explanations on the moon represent mankind's misguided desires and dreams and the often foolish attempts of men to impose their ideals on the world. Thus, Astolfo and his quest come to represent the need for man to pause and remove themselves from reality, if just for a moment, and see the world from a different view and different perspective. As both quests suggest that man has corrupted himself in pursuit of wrongful desires and goals, both knights reflect a path to reconciliation with what has been lost. For Malory, Galahad cannot be the knight to reveal this as Galahad in his perfection can only reveal the path, it is the imperfect and flawed Percival who must do this. Astolfo cannot be a model to follow as he is a hypothetical character and lacks the full range of emotions that other characters possess. However, he is intended purely to represent the traits that man requires in order to better understand and function in the world. The need to refrain from relentlessly hunting for and attempting to impose absolutes on the world or mould the world around one's own perceptions or beliefs. Rather, Astolfo's character reflects the need take a step back and appreciate the multiplicity and myriad of shades present.

As opposed to Percival, Launcelot and Gawain are unable to change their ideals and values in the manner required to achieve the grail. Gawain fails utterly as, unlike Percival, and even Launcelot, he fails to see the significance of religion and spirituality within the quest and therefore, cannot follow the required code on the quest. Launcelot is more assiduous and is willing to receive counsel and do penance, but his human failings and inability to separate his worldly ideals with the need for the spiritual depict him constantly torn between the two throughout his episode of the quest. However, as Launcelot is capable of seeing the need for a spiritual understanding of the quest and makes genuine and active attempts to amend his sinful ways, he is given a partial glimpse of the grail mysteries.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

By examining *Le Morte Darthur* and *Orlando Furioso* from the perspective of reading and interpreting, character, and symbolic representations, this study identifies the way that Ariosto, and Malory's version of the Grail Quest reflect how truth is applied across the spectrum of objects and literary devices within the texts. Consequently, St John's satirical interpretations of allegorical objects and his speech regarding poetry serve to exemplify Ariosto's view of truth as contingent. Similarly, the moon becomes a platform for these views, and in its representation, as well as the entire episodes lack of transcendence in the lunar environment, the scene falls short of unveiling any absolute truth. In this way the character of Astolfo, in refraining from imposing, or shaping the world around his own beliefs, embodies the episodes representation that there is no absolute truth, only interpretations of fact. In this way, Ariosto, through his use of character and literary devices shapes the episode around this view of truth as contingent.

In coming to Malory's version of the Grail Quest - in much the same way as Ariosto - character, allegory and symbolic representations shape the grail episodes presentation of truth. In the grail adventure, truth is an absolute bound up in Christian tradition. The interpretation of the quest knights actions during the episode is shown to correlate to their sinfulness. Thus notions of truth lie in the morality of the knights. Those who can 'read' events on the quest correctly are those who are morally and spiritually aware. That certain knights are shown to work under a certain interpretive system, be it allegorically or a literal system is also shown to relate to absolute truth. A figure such as Gawain interprets events solely at a literal level, and, consequently, episodes that feature Gawain are always shown at the literal

level. In contrast, we have seen that events with Galahad are almost always allegorical or hold allusive meanings. This is seen as a sign that Galahad reads ‘correctly’. Percival worthiness is established on the quest following his decision to take the path of Galahad, and so renounce his desire for knightly worship. As a result, through these models, Malory’s version unites a view of absolute truth linked to the grail and Christ’s sacrifice through character and interpretation of events.

The earliest separation of Arthurian chivalry and a more spiritual chivalry that conflicts with those of Arthur’s knights may be seen in Chretien de Troyes’ *Perceval, ou le Conte del Graal*, which also happens to be the earliest rendition of a grail – although not yet the Holy Grail, but rather a splendid vessel set with precious stones and emitting light. The distinction between Arthurian chivalry and a more virtuous spiritual chivalry was later taken up by other Arthurian writers from Chretien’s unfinished romance, particularly the anonymous romances of the Vulgate Cycle.

Within Chretien’s story, Perceval is a guest of the Fisher King, who is suffering from a wound in his thighs – a genital wound linked to the barrenness of his lands (a Waste Land, in Chretien de Troyes, and other later writers). Whilst staying at the Fisher King’s castle, Perceval witnesses a procession that includes this ‘grail’. He desires to ask about it, but loquaciousness in a knight is not considered proper, and so he remains silent. Perceval is later informed that if he had asked about the grail, his question – and so the very act of questioning and searching – would have healed the Fisher King. However, Perceval’s development, spiritually, was not adequate enough to have considered this and so asked the required question. Perceval refrains from taking up the opportunity with Arthur’s other knights to quest for ‘glory and fame’ but to rather arduously and tirelessly seek the Grail until he can again ask about it and learn who it serves. In doing so, Lacy states how this separates him ‘physically and symbolically’ from Arthur’s knightly fellowship and so witnesses the ‘beginning of a repudiation of Arthurian chivalry, and therefore of King Arthur himself’ (Lacy, 118). Lacy

goes on to highlight the etymological link between “quest” and “question”, and that in Chretien’s romance there is a definite connection, since Perceval’s quest must conclude with a question; hence a quest for knowledge. Consequently, the act of asking a question, in this case “who is served with the Grail”, is given power. The question produces a spiritual result in healing the Fisher King that chivalric actions are unable to perform. The added complication to Perceval’s quest, which is influential in later Arthurian Grail Quest literature, including *Le Morte Darthur*, is that the question will cure the Fisher King not because of the power of the question itself, but rather the spiritual maturity and purity of the one who asks the question.

Although, Chretien’s *Perceval* romance lacks the overt religious themes of the later grail narratives, the conflict between Arthur’s ideal of chivalry and a more spiritual conception becomes evident, one in which the search for knowledge and truth is given greater significance. This we have seen in Malory’s *Tale of the Sangrail* and the knights’ difficulties in meeting the spiritual demands of the Grail Quest.

It is from fourth Vulgate Cycle, *Le Queste del saint Graal*, that the deeply Christian theme emerges. It is also here that the quest becomes a communal undertaking by all the knights, as Malory later demonstrates. Perhaps one of the most important differences to note is that apart from Perceval being replaced as the chosen Grail knight by Galahad, Galahad does not select himself as Grail knight as Perceval had done; rather, Galahad is chosen and predestined by divine will.

Like Malory does later, the *Queste* distinguishes between earthly and a higher notion of duty and devotion, that is sacred in its nature and unattainable to most knights, that is called celestial chivalry. In this way, a knight is no longer qualified for success due to his skills in combat, or his devotion to his king or lady, but to his degree of moral purity (Lacy, 119).

Thus, from both the *Queste* and Chretien de Troyes' *Perceval* romance we can see the earlier separation of truth and spiritual purity that is later taken up by Malory.

Comfort notes the essential difference between the *chanson de geste* and Arthurian romances in the way that the French kings within the *chanson de geste* do not partake of the character Arthur does as holder of a model court, as patron of knights, and protector of lorn ladies (Comfort, 67). The French kings are always shown to be in the traditional manner of a divinely protected ruler of a definite Christian state. Moreover, though seen as a feudal necessity, 'the king is open to reproach and criticism on political grounds' (Comfort, 68). The kings of the *chanson de geste* are very real and material people 'to be reckoned with, even when he retires to the background of the plot'. In contrast, Arthur is never questioned by any member of his court, as he is the manifestation of an ideal monarch.

It is also to be noted that within the *chanson de geste*, as time went on, the hero became more human, more worldly, and more many-sided. There also saw a shift of interest in the later poems from the social group to the individual. In describing the hero of the *chanson de geste* as one not from the idealized world of Arthurian romance, Comfort states 'his occupations are quite different, his relations to real life are more real, his sentiments are more suppressed' (Comfort, 69). In refraining to portray an idealized society and order, and shifting the focus to the individual, truth becomes less of an absolute, as seen in Arthurian literature, and one that is more relative. Arthur's knights are not seen to defend a realm, but rather an absolute ideal, and in doing so, are set to stand for a form of truth. We see from Chretien's *Perceval* and later Arthurian romances, the conflict between Arthur's idealized notion of chivalry and the absolute idea of a spiritual truth that formed the basis for the Grail Quest.

There are limits to this study that need to be acknowledged. Greater research could be made through incorporating the French Vulgate and Post-Vulgate



cycles that Malory largely worked from, into the scope. I have already mentioned that I refrained from consulting these texts for this particular study due to issues of ‘watering down’ the focus on Malory’s version itself in this smaller study. The same reason led me to focus entirely on Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* and pay less attention to *chansons de geste* and Matteo Maria Boiardo’s *Orlando Innamorato*. A far larger and more extensive study, beyond the scope of my own smaller project, would need to consult the French Vulgate and Post Vulgate cycles, Medieval theological sources, the *chansons de geste*, Boiardo’s work, philosophical works of the Renaissance, among other works to provide a more complete picture of these notions of truth. Perhaps this study of mine can provide a stepping stone to build from for a more extensive study in comparing these to two highly influential works of literature

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## APPENDICES

### A: TURKISH SUMMARY

#### **ORLANDO FURİOSO'DA VE LE MORTE D'ARTHUR'DA GERÇEĞE DAİR DOĞAÜSTÜ ARAYIŞ**

Bu tez, Sir Thomas Malory'nin *Le Morte D'arthur*'dan aldığı Kase İşlemi'ni Ludovico Ariosto'nun *Orlando Furioso*'daki ayı arayışıyla ve gerçeğin sunumuyla karşılaştırıyor. Edebi bir alt kategori olan arayış, bunun açık bir şekilde ifade edilip edilmediğine bakılmaksızın, insanların bazı gerçek biçimleri araştırmalarıyla her zaman ilgilendiği gösterilebilir. Binlerce yıl geriye uzanan uzun bir gelenek ile bir tür gerçeğin araştırılması, insan makyajının doğuştan gelen bir parçası olarak ortaya çıkar. Bu tezin dayandığı eserlerle ilgili *Le Morte D'arthur* ve *Orlando Furioso*, Matter of Britain ve France Matter olarak bilinen edebi döngülerden çalışıyorlar. Arthur'un şerefsel erdem için bir ütopya vizyonuna odaklanan tanınmış ve etkili Arthur döngüsünü içeren Britanya Maddesi, kendisi ve büyük şövalyeleri Launcelot ve Gawain'in doğasındaki kusurlar ışığında yargılanıyor; Arthur'un şövalyeleri tarafından üstlenilen Kutsal Kase'yi, Son Akşam Yemeği'nden fincanı elde etme arayışı. Fransa'nın Konusu, konusu genelde Hristiyanlığın şampiyonu olarak görülen Charlemagne dönemine ait olan 12.-13. Yüzyıl destansı şiirlerinden "*chanson de geste*", ve dönem boyunca Saracens'le olan savaşlardan ortaya çıkıyor. Charles Martel ve Charlemagne. Maddenin Fransa'daki ana karakterleri arasında Charlemagne, Roland (daha sonraki İtalyan eserlerinde Orlando olarak değiştirildi) ve Charlemagne'nin güçlerinin diğer şövalyeleri bulunmaktadır. Fransa Maddesi'nin malzemesi geliştirildiğinde, devler, büyücüler ve

canavarlar Saracens'in yanında düşmanlar gibi görünürken, sihir gibi diğer unsurlar da entegre edildi. Fransa Maddesinin büyümesiyle, materyalle yapılan muamele de gelişti. Bu doğaüstü ve fantastik öğelerin Fransa Maddesi'ne entegrasyonu, materyal ile daha eğlenceli bir ton oluşturdu; böylece Ariosto zamanında absürd unsurlarla dolu bir esprili parodi şaşırtıcı değildi.

Bununla birlikte, Britanya'nın Maddesi'nin kendi büyücülerini, canavarlarını ve fantastik öğelerini içerdiği söylenebilir de, genel olarak malzeme her zaman daha cömertlik ve ciddiyetle muamele görmüştür.

Bu ışığında, bu tez bu iki eseri, gerçeğe ilişkin eserlerdeki doğaüstü görevler perspektifinden incelemiştir. Amaç, mutlak veya koşullu olsun, bu eserlerin gerçeğe nasıl baktığına bakmaktır.

Bunu yapmak için, *Le Morte D'arthur*'un Kase Görevini ve *Orlando Furioso*'nun ayı keşfetmek için üç açıdan baktım: okuma ve yorumlama, karakter ve sembolik tasvirler.

Okuma ve yorumlama ile ilgili bölüm, alegorinin iki eseri üzerinde yoğunlaşmakta ve içinde hakikî inançları nasıl etkilediğini, Kutsal Görevin meleğinin rolü, ailenin moon arayışında tercüman olarak St John'un rolünü nasıl etkilediğini incelemektedir. St John'un şiir konusundaki konuşması gibi. Sembolik temsiller üzerine bölüm, *Le Morte D'arthur'da* Malory'nin mutlak gerçeği ile uyumlu sembolik tasvirler olarak kadehi ve Galahad'ı inceler ve *Orlando Furioso*'daki aya odaklanır ve koşullu gerçeklik ve hiciv için bir platform olarak nasıl hizmet ettiğini inceler. Son olarak, bölüm üç, karakterler arasında gerçeği ve asılsızlığı temsil etmek için nasıl görülebileceğini analiz eder veya yazarlara bölüm içindeki gerçeğe yönelik tematik niyetleri yansıtabilir. Bunu yapmak için, Grail Quest, Gawain, Launcelot ve Percival'dan üç önemli şövalyeyi seçtim ve karakterlerinin farklı gerçeğin seviyelerini nasıl temsil ettiğini ve Percival örneğinde olduğu gibi ilahi gerçeği elde etmek için gerekli

olan deęişiklikleri ortaya koydum. *Orlando Furioso*'dan Astolfo karakterine ve Ariosto'nun koşullu gerçeęi fikrine nasıl uyum sağladığına baktım.

Hem Ariosto hem de Malory'nin görevlerinde okuma, tercümanlık ve anlayış önemli temalar. Her iki bölüm de altında gizlenen daha derin anlam için sadece yüzeysel yüzey seviyesinin ötesinde yorumlama ihtiyacını ortaya koyuyor. Malory'nin şanslı şövalyeleri, alegorik işaretleri ve olayları yorumlama ihtiyacının dövüş becerisine göre daha önemli hale geldięi bir arayışa girdikçe, geleneksel şövalyelik kavramlarını bir kenara koymaları gerekir. Bu görevde, Mezhep Görevinin manzarası olan mermiler, ruhsal geri çekilme ve dięer kutsal kişiler, karşılaştıkları alegorik işaretleri yorumlama aracı olarak arama şövalyeleri için hayati önem taşırlar. Manevi hakikatin açığa çıkardığı ayınler, ilahi hakikat ile aranmayı başaran şövalyeler arasındaki arabuluculuk olarak görülebilir, çünkü mermiler Kase İşi ile ilgili konularda sürekli her şeyin kehanetinde olduęu ortaya çıkar. Bu nedenle Yuvarlak Masa şövalyeleri, buluşmalarının alegorik anlamını yorumlamak için bu rakamlara güvenirlir. St John, Ariosto'nun çalışmalarında da benzer bir işlev görüyor. Astolfo ay manzarasında gezinirken, gospel yazarının yorumlayıcı kabiliyetlerini, ayın yüzeyini çöpe atan nesnelere alegorik bulgularını anlamalarını ister. St John Astolfo olmadan nesnelere üstlendięi dönüşümlerin anlamını yorumlayamazdı. Şövalye yeteneklerinin ötesinde bilginin tercümanı ile benzer bir işlev yapsalar da, St John ve mermiler çok farklı iki perspektiften çalışıyor ve çok farklı sonuçlar üretiyorlar.

Malory'nin sadıklıkları, alegorinin manevi gerçeęi temsil etmenin bir aracı olduęu bir Hıristiyan alegorik bakış açısı üzerinde çalışmaktadır. Aynı şekilde, Joseph firavunun ve firavun fırıncısının ve uşakının hayallerini yorumlayabilir ve İsa, bu geleneęi temsil eden Malory'nin sadıklarını yapmak için manevi bir gerçeęi temsil etmenin

bir aracı olduđu manevi benzetmelerde çalıştı. Böylece, kebab arayışındaki şövalyeler sihirbazlarıyla etkileşime girdiğinde, daima mermilerin bu şövalyelere gerçekleri açığa vurduğunun farkındayız. Sonuç olarak, Launcelot'a, siyah şövalyelerin yanında savaşırken, siyah şövalyeler günahın temsilcisi olduđu için, iman ve inanç eksikliğini ortaya koyan yanlış bir karar olduđu söylenince, bu karanlığın cevabı nedeniyle yorumlanabileceği başka bir yol yoktur Bunun yorumlanması için mümkün olan tek yol. Benzer şekilde, Bors'a kardeşi Lionel'den çok kurtarmak için doğru olduđu söylendiğinde, eylemleri ayna tarafından doğrulanır ve erdemli bir Hıristiyan şövalye temsilcisi olarak haklı gösterilir. Dolayısıyla, Malory'nin sadıklıkları, mutlak gerçeğin somutlaştırmasını temsil eder. Öte yandan St John, şiirsel alegori bakış açısından yorumluyor gibi görünüyor. Tıpkı Malory'nin aylarında olduđu gibi, St John, yüzeysel olarak alınan şeyleri ve referans anlamlarının ötesinde okumadan, tamamen farklı bir anlam içerebilir. Bununla birlikte, St John'un "bu dünyada" yazar olduğunu ben de açıklarken, kuğuların ve akbabaların şair ve sosyofanlar olarak açıklamalarına bakarak, Hıristiyan alegori ve hakikatten ziyade şiir ve şiirsel alegoriye uyumunu ortaya koyuyor. Bir havari ve müjde yazarı St John'un, Hıristiyan bir perspektiften ortaya çıkmış bir gerçeğin temsilcisi olarak mükemmel bir konumda olması gerektiği halde, Ariosto'nun bu isimdeki karakterini bu şekilde ele almak, şiirle olan uyumunu inkar etmek ve böylece Ariosto'nun Astolfo için rehber ve üs olarak St John figürü ironidir. Bu St John'un kuğu alegorisinin yorumu ve şiirle ilgili izleyen yorumları gerçekliği değil, şiirin ve himayenin yalnızca aşırı miktarda ya da sadeleştirilmiş bir yorumu. Şiir üzerine yorum yaparken, St John ince bir ironi ile okuma ve yorumlamanın hatalı ve yanıltıcı olabileceğini ortaya koyuyor ve bu nedenle okuyucuya yüzeysel ötesine geçip bakmasını gerektiriyor. Bu nedenle, St John'un konuşması, gerçeği okunaklı veya zayıf bir



yorumlama yöntemi ile sunmak için, ironi yoluyla bu yorumlama tarzındaki hatayı ortaya çıkarmaktadır. St John'un sunduğu her örnek, anlayışlı okuyucu tarafından reddedilebilir. Bu yolla Ariosto, sınırlı ve hatalı okuma hatalarını sunar, ancak şiirde gerçeği bulmak mümkün olmadığından gerçeğin ne olduğunu açıklamaz. Bunun yerine, Ariosto, kendimizi bir mutlaka sınırlamaktan çok alta yatan olası anlamların zenginliğini bulmak için yüzeysellerin ötesine bakmamızı gerektiriyor. Tıpkı St John'un konuşması okuma ve tercüme ile metinlerin okunması ve metin incelemesinin sınırları hakkında sorular ortaya attığı gibi, Malory'nin şahsiyet şövalyelerini, Kase Çalışması'na belirli bir yorumlayıcı yaklaşım ve kendilerini yorumlama modelleri olarak biçimlendiren şövalyeler olarak görürsek yaparız. Malory, Gawain'in anlatımında Kase İşine gerçekçi yaklaşımın sınırlarını ortaya koymaktadır. Gawain'in olayları gerçek anlamda yorumlaması, olayların ve hayallerin gizli anlamlarını bulmak için yüzeyselin altına nüfuz edememesi nedeniyle Görevdeki başarısızlığındaki kusurlarını ortaya koyar. Bütün olayları ele geçirmek yalnızca edebi bir seviyede kalır ve bu okuma ve yorumlama yöntemi onun günahkâr doğasına bağlıdır. Aksine, Galahad, alegorik ve doğru yorumlama yöntemini bünyesinde barındırır. Görünüşte ilahi şövalye olayların ruhsal önemini anlatmayı gerektirir ve Galahad sıklıkla onun kusurlu akranlarını ölçmek için bir model olarak kullanılır. Kadehi tuttuğu yol, alınması gereken yol, çünkü Galahad işaretleri okuduğu gibi yorumlamalı ve yorumlamalıdır. Burada Malory'nin mutlaklarla nasıl baş ettiğini görüyoruz. Gawain'in Kase İşlemi hakkındaki yorumu tamamen yanlıştır, yüzeysellerin altında okumakta başarısız olursak, Galahad'ın, içinde faaliyet gösterdiği Hıristiyan alegorik manzara tarafından tanımlandığı gibi her zaman doğru olduğu gösterilir. Böylece, Ariosto ve Malory, bu araştırmalar yoluyla hem okunması gereken okuma ve yorumlama çılgınlığını hem de daha derin

anlamlar aramak ihtiyacını yansıtmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Malory, mutlak gerçeği yorumlama ve anlama yöntemlerinden biri olarak sunarken, Ariosto gerçeği yorumun belirsizliği içinde kaybolmuş görünen bir şey olarak görünür.

Ay olarak, Galahad ve kase, ay ve Kase İşlemi arayışında temel görevleri üstlenirler; dolayısıyla, edebi bir seviyede sundukları sembolik tasvirleri yaparlar. Her üçü de gerçeğin nosyonunu temsil etmeye, yoksulluğa sahip olmalarına karşın, bölümün kendisinin ifade etmek istediği daha geniş fikri yorumlamak için kullanılıyor.

Galahad ve kase durumunda her ikisi de Mesih figürü aracılığıyla sembolik olarak entegre olmuşlardır. Mesih figürü olan Galahad, yol olarak hizmet ederken, kâse ve gizemi hedefe ulaşılmasını sağlar. Yuvarlak Masa'daki kendisine yöneltilen kuşatmanın açıkça ortaya koyduğu gibi, Galahad'ın bu amaca ulaşmak için seçilecek kişilerden biri olacağından kuşku duyulmamaktadır. Şövalyelik kodunun mükemmelliği ve yeniden yorumlanması, diğer şövalyelere laik hizmetindeki kusurları ve hataları ortaya koymayı ve yeteri kadar hizmet edemediği yüksek manevi gücü ortaya koymayı amaçlıyor. Bayanlara hizmet etmekten kaçınmakla birlikte, Galahad, dünyevi arzuların Tanrı hizmetinde dünyevi arzuları bir kenara koymasının gerekliliğini, kendisinden de görülebileceği gibi, bakire ve maneviyatçı biri olarak tanımlıyor. Galahad'ın ilahi mükemmelliği, Mesih'inki gibi, diğer şövalyelerin kendilerini takip etmeleri ve ölçmeleri için bir işaretleyici görevi görmesi amaçlanmıştır. İsa Mesih'in mucizelerini ve maceraya yönelik eylemlerini, telaşsız inancını ve kebyere ulaşma konusundaki tek çabasını yineleyen Galahad, meleğin arayışı üstlenen şövalyelere açıkladığı gibi gerçek ile eş anlamlı hale gelir. Kâsilin yolu, Galahad'ın insanı dünyaya bağlayan şeyleri atma örneğinde, Percival'ın keşfedildiği gibi boş arzuları ve dünyevi takipleri aramak ve manevi şeyleri takip etmek

değil, Bors'un doğruladığı doğrudur. Böylece, kütlenin kendisi, dünyevi alanı aşan, transstantasyonun niteliği ve Mesih'in insanlık için fedakarlık konusundaki mutlak ilahi gerçeği ortaya koyan tamamen manevi bir vahiydir. İçlerinde bulunan gizemleri anlamak için Müslümanlara olan bağlılıklarını ve bağlılığını Mesih'e göstermek şövalyeleri alır. Sonuç olarak, bu devlete ulaşabilen şövalyeler, içinde yatan sırların derin manevi bilgisi ve vahiyüyle ödüllendirilir. Bu gizemlerin ortaya çıkmasında beklemekte olan gerçeğin, dünyevî sevinçlerin sağlayabileceğinden daha büyük olması, Galahad'ın dünyayı terketme isteği ve Percivall'in dünyevi araştırmalardan vazgeçme ve manevi bir meditasyon yaşamı yapma kararı ile açıkça görülüyor Görevleri tamamladıktan sonra sonuç. Sonuçta kebab arayışının aşkın doğası, Corbenic Kalesi ve Sarras'daki Efkari Tarikatı ve transnastasyonun gerçek doğasının vahiyiyle birlikte, dünyayı yorumlamanın ötesine ve ilahi mutlakların alanına ve Bu olay, Mesih'in insanlık için kurban edilmesi ile ilgili gerçek. Galahad ve kâse aynı anda dünyadan ayrıldıklarında anlamlı ve kaderle bağlantılıdır. Galahad'ın hayattaki amacı küpün elde edilmesi ile tamamlanır. Dolayısıyla, Galahad ve anlam bakımından bağlantılı kâseler, dünyadan aynı anda ayrılmalıdır. Galahad'ın ölümünün ruh halini cennete taşıyan " çok sayıda melek " ile tamamlandığı aşkın doğası, onun yol açtığı gerçek ve zenginlik hayatını güçlendirir ve zenginliğini iman hayatının kutsal sırlarla analagöz yapar.

Kase Görevi'nin finali, Mesih'in Kardeşlik kurbanı ve Eucharistic yemek unvanının vahiyinde ortaya çıkardığı kase gizemlerine şahit olsa da, Orlando Furioso'nun aya yaptığı arayışın böyle bir gerçeğin vahiyden yoksun olduğu gösterilmiştir. Ariosto'nun ayın fantastik temsiliyeti, bilimsel bir temelden yoksun olmakla birlikte, Dünya'yı alternatif bir açıdan analiz etmek için yalnızca bir model görevi görür. Aydaki alegorik görüntüler, insanoğlunun kendine özgü bir

versiyonuyla hicivleşmesi için görünümlü bir cam olarak işlev görür. Aziz John'un alegorik nesnelere yorumlaması, hakikatte evrensel bir niteliği olmayan insanlığın çarpık görüntüsünü ve gerçeği ortaya çıkarır; yalnızca bir gerçek gerçeğini ortaya koyar. Kase Çalışması sonucunun yaptığı gibi, aya aşkınlık için bir platform sağlamaz. Bunu yapmakta başarısız olursak, bir platform olarak ay ve aya çıkma arayışı, yorumlamayı gereksiz hale getiren ve okuyucuları mutlak dünyaya getiren daha yüksek bir alandan kaçınır. Kumpir bölümünün aşkın doğası gizemlerini, Ariosto'nun eserinde bulunamayan mutlak gerçeğin kavramlarıyla ilişkilendirir.

Gawain, Launcelot, Percival ve Astolfo karakterlerini analiz ederek, karakterleri başarılı kılan, başarısız olan ve uygulanabilir olan çeşitli nitelikler belirginleşti. Astolfo ve Percival, Gawain, Launcelot, Rodomonte, Orlando ve Ruggiero dışında kendi görevlerini yerine getirmelerine olanak tanıyan şekilde kendilerini değiştirme becerileri ile ayrılmıştır.

Kadeh Görevindeki manevi deneyimler ve buluşmalar, sözcük ideallerini ve arzularını yeniden canlandırmak ve bunları manevi değerler lehine atmak için Percival'ı zorlar. Doğal masumiyetiyle ve bekaretiyle birlikte dünyevi ideallerinin atılması onu Kutsal Kase gizemlerine katılmak için seçilenlerden biri olmaya hazır hale getirir. Dönüşüme benzer tecrübelerinden sonra, Percival, kale maceraları sırasında diğer macera şövalyelerini engelleyen dünyevi idealleri artık takip etmiyor. Kadehi Görevdeki Başarı, onu üstlenenlerin, bunun öncesinde yapılan araştırmalarda izlenen kelime şövalye ile pek çok açıdan farklı ruhsal bir kod izlemelerini gerektirir. Launcelot ve Gawain gibi şövalyelerin bu gerekliliği anlaması veya bunlara bağlı kalamaması başarısızlıklarında yansıtılırken, Percival başarılı olmak için kendisinde gerekli değişiklikleri yapabiliyor. Astolfo, Percival gibi, ayın arayışını üstlenmesi için onu uygun bir adam haline getiren bu karakterde gerekli düzeltmeleri yapabilir.

Objektifliđi ve kendi iradesini dnyaya veya kendi gerek vizyonuna dayandırma arzusunun eksikliđi Astolfo'yu, St John'la etkileşime girmek için makul bir kiři yapıyor; nk insanlıđın makyaj, aptallık ve hırsı ortaya ıkıyor; bu zayıf ynler Astolfo'yu etkiliyor.

Hem ayın arayışı hem de Kase Grevi, farklı idealler dizisinin şartını yansıtıyor. Bu nedenle Yuvarlak Masa şvayeleri ve Astolfo'nun dnyaya yaklařımlarını deđiřtirmesi gerekiyor. Kase Grevi, ideallerini geleneksel Hıristiyan deđerlere evirmek ve daha yksek seviyedeki manevî deđerler için kelime ideallerinden ve deđerlerinden vazgemek için şvayeler gerektirir. Bylece, Bors'da, ancak Percival'te, şvayelerin, her bir atıřmanın şvalye üzerindeki inan ve maneviyatını test ettiđi durumlarda, alegorik testler ve savařlarla karřılařtıđını gryoruz. Bunun iinde, Percival bařarılı nk maneviyata, kadeh gizemlerinin geređini anlamaya layık olduđunu ispatlamak için yeterince deđiřti. Ay'a ve St John'un ay hakkındaki aıklamaları, insanlıđın yanlış ynlendirdiđi arzuları ve hayalleri ve insanların ideallerini dnyaya empoze etmeleri ynndeki ođu aptalca giriřimi temsil eder. Bylece, Astolfo ve macerası, insanın geređe ara verdiđi durmadan durma ve kendini bir an iin kaldırma ihtiyaı karřısında gelir ve dnyayı farklı bir bakıř aısı ve farklı perspektiften grr. Her iki grev, insanın haksız arzuları ve hedefleri dođrultusunda kendini bozduđunu gsterdiđinden, her iki şvalye de kaybolanlarla uzlařma yolunu yansıtıyor. Malory iin Galahad bunu ortaya koyacak şvalye olamaz, zira Galahad'ın mkemmellik ancak yolu ortaya ıkarabilir, bunu yapmak iin kusurlu ve kusurlu olan Perival'tir. Astolfo, varsayımsal bir karakter olduđu ve diđer karakterlerin sahip olduđu tm duygulara sahip olmadıđı iin izlenecek bir model olamaz. Bununla birlikte, yalnızca dnyada daha iyi anlamak ve iřlev grmek iin adamın istediđi nitelikleri temsil etmesi amalanmaktadır.

Mutlakları avlamaktan ve dünyayı mutlaka empoze etmeye ya da dünyayı kendi algıları veya inançları etrafında şekillendirmeye çalışmaktan çekinme ihtiyacı. Aksine, Astolfo'nun karakteri ihtiyacı bir adım geriye götürdüğünü ve mevcut tonların çoğulluğunu ve sayısını takdir ederek yansıtmaktadır.

Percival'ın aksine, Launcelot ve Gawain, ideallerini ve değerlerini kepek ulaşmak için gereken şekilde değiştiremiyorlar. Gawain, Percival'ın ve hatta Launcelot'un aksine başarısız olur; çünkü din ve maneviyatın arayış içindeki önemini göremez ve bu nedenle arayışta gereken kodu takip edemez. Launcelot daha esnek ve avukat almaya ve itaat etmeye razıdır, ancak insanın başarısızlığı ve dünyevi ideallerini maneviyata ayırma yeteneği ve başarısızlığı onu arayışı bölümünde sürekli olarak ikisi arasında yırtarmış şekilde tasvir etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, Launcelot, maceranın manevi bir anlayışına ihtiyaç duyduğunu görebilir ve günahkâr yollarını değiştirmeye yönelik gerçek ve aktif girişimleri yapar, o da kepek gizemlerinin kısmi bir görüntüsünü veriyor.

## B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : Campbell  
Adı : Clive Malcolm  
Bölümü : İngiliz Edebiyatı

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : THE SUPERNATURAL QUEST IN *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR* AND *ORLANDO FURIOSO* IN RELATION TO TRUTH

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**