

**Bangor University**

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Affections and Ethics in Middle English Romance: The Overlap of Poetic and Philosophical Discourses of Emotions in King Horn, the Stanzaic Guy of Warwick and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight**

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**Affections and Ethics in Middle English Romance: The Overlap of Poetic  
and Philosophical Discourses of Emotions in *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of  
Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight***

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## Abstract

This thesis investigates the intersection between the medieval poetic and ethical discourses in relation to their position towards emotions. It analyses the overlap of the poetic and philosophical discourses of emotions in the Middle English romances of *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Through drawing upon intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism as the three major medieval schools of thought, and their discourses of emotions pertaining to each period in which these individual texts were first written and received, this study traces a development in the attitude towards emotions that is reflected in the poetry of the period. The thesis therefore argues that while emotions in the earliest Middle English romance, *King Horn*, are treated as involuntary motions that belong to the sensitive appetite and which need to be controlled by reason according to social norms, in the early fourteenth-century *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, emotions are presented as voluntary passions that reflect the freedom of the will. Instead of treating the intellect as a source of ethics, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* presents the passions of the will as the origin of morality. The thesis then proposes that the focus on the freedom of the will and its passions is more prominent in the late fourteenth-century *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. After suggesting a correspondence between the outlines of the nominalist discourse of emotions, which revolves around the individual's metaphysical freedom, and the poem's portrayal of the right to survive as the prime controller of Gawain's emotions, the thesis argues that *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* presents an Ockhamist nominalist universe that prioritises human imperfect emotions to perfect divine emotions.

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Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

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## Abbreviations

AN	Anglo Norman
art.	article
Auchinleck MS	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates MS 19.2.1
Cambridge Gg. 4.27.2	Cambridge, University Library, MS Gg. 4.27.2
chap.	chapter
d.	distinction
EETS ES	Early English Text Society, Extra Series
Giles	Giles of Rome, <i>The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus</i> , ed. by D. C. Fowler, C. F. Briggs and P. G. Remley (New York: Routledge, 2015)
<i>Gui</i>	<i>Gui De Warewic: Roman du XIIIe Siècle</i> , ed. by Alfred Ewert (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Édouard Champion, 1933)
Laud. Misc 108	Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 108
<i>Manual</i>	<i>A Manual of the Writings in Middle English: 1050-1500</i> , 11 Vols., ed. by J. Burke Severs (New Haven: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967-2005), vol. 1 'Romances' (1967)
ME	Middle English
MS	Manuscript
<i>Ord.</i>	<i>The Ordinatio of the Venerable Inceptor, William of Ockham</i> , trans. by Peter Simpson (NY: Franciscan Institute, 2015)

<i>Ordinatio</i>	<i>The Ordinatio of Blessed John Dun Scotus</i> , trans. by Peter Simpson (NY: Franciscan Institute, 2015)
p.	part
<i>Philosophical Writing</i>	<i>Ockham: Philosophical Writings</i> , trans. and ed. by Philotheus Boehner, O. F. M (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1990)
prol.	prologue
q.	question
<i>Quodl.</i>	Ockham, <i>Quodlibetal Questions</i> , trans. by Alfred J Freddoso and Francis E Kelley (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1991)
<i>SCG</i>	Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i> , trans. by Anton Pegis (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975)
<i>Secreta Secretorum</i>	<i>Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum</i> Vol. 1, ed. by Robert Steele EETS, es 74 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 1898)
<i>SGGK</i>	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , ed. by W. R. J. Barron (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)
<i>Stanzaic Guy</i>	<i>The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick</i> , ed. by Alison Wiggins, TEAMS (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2004)
suppl.	supplement
TEAMS	The Consortium for the Teaching of the Middle Ages

### **Note on the Referencing System**

For ease of reference, I have chosen to split the numbering of footnotes by chapter. This implies that the full reference to a book will be provided the first time the work is cited in the chapter, rather than the first time it is cited in the thesis.

## Medieval Romance as an Ethical Genre

Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis investigates the intersection between the medieval poetic and ethical discourses in relation to their position towards emotions. It focuses primarily on the relationship between emotions and ethics in the Middle English romances of *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. The thesis analyses these three romances as prototypes of popular, penitential and Arthurian romances of the early thirteenth, early fourteenth and late fourteenth centuries respectively. Given the romances' varied discourses of emotions, the thesis argues that the transformed philosophical contexts of these three romances influenced their portrayal of the relationship between emotions, reason and the will. Through drawing upon intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism as the three major medieval schools of thought, and their discourses of emotions pertaining to each period in which these individual texts were first written and received, this study traces a development in the attitude towards emotions reflected in the poetry of the period.

Despite the recent 'emotional turn' across the humanities, and calls to reconsider the importance of studying emotions in literature, most criticism on emotions in literature focuses on the early modern period and later.<sup>2</sup> As will be demonstrated, earlier research on emotions carried out by medievalists working in the field of literary studies tend to lack a methodological framework, or relies on modern theories of emotions, rather than on the medieval moral philosophical discourse of emotions. Therefore, this thesis seeks to contribute to the ongoing research on emotions in medieval literature by proposing an approach to the study of emotions that considers the texts' immediate historical and cultural context. By exploring the overlap of

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* I, part, 9, trans. by S. H. Butcher (New York: Dover Publication, 1997: <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.1.1.html#200>> accessed 13 June, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> See Jan Plamper, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory*, 49 (2010), 237-65 (p. 237).

the poetic and philosophical discourses of emotions, this thesis aims to bring an original contribution to modern interpretation of medieval emotions.

## I. 1 The Corpus: The Ethical Dimension of Medieval Romance

Whatever the entertainment that the medieval narratives of love, war and the interaction with the supernatural provided, it was only, as Mary Carruthers puts it, ‘like sugar coating on a pill’ that is offered to ‘make the medicine go down’ more easily and swiftly.<sup>3</sup> The ethical dimension of medieval poetry has been analysed at great length as a defining feature of the period’s aesthetic production.<sup>4</sup> The affinity between poetry and ethics was originally suggested by medieval philosophers. In his twelfth-century mirror for princes, the *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury argues that what makes fiction useful to the reader is the fact that it is intertwined with the type of ethics discussed in philosophy.<sup>5</sup> Two centuries later, this ethical dimension of medieval poetry was also stressed by Jean Buridan who, in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, discusses how ethics can be taught through poetry. Buridan explains that philosophers discuss desires and passions through rhetoric because moral philosophy is originally concerned with people who are driven by affect.<sup>6</sup>

The association between the medieval ethical and poetic discourses has also been highlighted by modern scholars. It was suggested as early as Judson Allen’s (1982) book about

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<sup>3</sup> Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> See Judson Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages: A Decorum of Convenient Distinction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); Kathryn Lynch, *Chaucer’s Philosophical Vision* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000); Melissa Furrow, *Expectations of Romance: The Reception of a Genre in Medieval England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2009); Kellie Robertson, *Nature Speaks: Medieval Literature and Aristotelian Philosophy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); and Carruthers.

<sup>5</sup> John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, ed. and trans. by Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 130.

<sup>6</sup> Jean Buridan ‘Questions on Book X of the Ethics’, in *The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts*, Vo. II: *Ethics and Political Philosophy*, ed. by Arthur Stephen McGrade, John Kilcullen and Matthew Kempshall, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 557.

the ethical poetic of the Middle Ages. In his book, Allen not only argues that poetry is a space where ethical values are enacted, but also proposes that the categories of the ethical and the literary overlapped significantly during the Middle Ages.<sup>7</sup> Quoting from Conrad of Hirsau's early twelfth-century treatise, *Dialogue super auctores*, Allen explains that philosophy was divided into logic, physics and ethics, and that poetry was placed under the category of ethics.<sup>8</sup> Allen notes that in his search for the 'medieval literary' he found the 'ethical' and argues that in the Middle Ages there was no 'intellectual category' corresponding to what we mean by poetry. He therefore suggests using the category of 'ethics-hyphen-poetry' as a category that contains elements of both ethics and poetry. To prove the intelligibility of the overlap between the ethical and poetic discourses in the premodern era, Allen gives the example of Aegidius Romanus' *De regimine principum* and Aristotle's *Poetics*. He explains that while Romanus discusses the ethical by using a terminology used to describe something literary, Aristotle uses an ethical terminology in his discussion of poetics. Allen bases his conclusion that defining ethics is to define poetry on his readings of medieval *accessus* on both medieval and classical works, which regarded any text that deals with human behaviour as belonging to the category of ethics.<sup>9</sup> For example, he discusses how the commentators on the *Metamorphoses of Ovid* classified the poem as ethics and mentions that this classification applies to Ovid's *Heroides*,

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<sup>7</sup> Allen, p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6. Conrad of Hirsau's *Dialogues super auctores* is the earliest survey of curricular authors that dates from the middle of the twelfth century. The treatise is an introduction to twenty-one authors from Donatus to Horace with a detailed discussion of the authors' aims and techniques. Through dialogues between learners and instructors, the treatise comments on the roles of poets, historians and theologians. For a discussion and translation of this treatise; see *Accessus ad auctores*, Bernard d'Utrecht, Conrad d'Hirsau: *Dialogues super auctores*, ed. by R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden: Brill, 1970); also *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism, c. 1100 - c. 1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. by A. J. Minnis and B. Scott, with David Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). This division of knowledge into three branches originated in the third century BCE with the Greek Stoics and was widely accepted by the medieval Stoics. On the history of this division; see *Encyclopaedia of Rhetoric*, ed. by Thomas O. Sloane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 782; also Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Tradition and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 207-12.

<sup>9</sup> Allen, pp. 11-12.

Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and Dante's *Divina commedia*, among many others.<sup>10</sup> An overview of the translated commentaries of the high Middle Ages can give us an insight into Allen's sources and assist in the understanding of his views. A commentator like Nicholas Trevet (1258-133) adopted a classification criterion similar to that discussed by Allen. Trevet treated Seneca's poetry as part of ethics. He compared the poet, who provides ethical teaching through the delights of fables, to the doctor, who wraps the antidote in honeyed sweetness.<sup>11</sup>

Recently, an interconnection between medieval philosophy and theology, as ethical discourses, and poetry has been discussed by a number of scholars. Commenting on medieval poetry's intertextuality with theology, Barbara Newman describes a category of literature called 'imaginative theology', which she defines as 'the pursuit of serious religious and theological thought through the techniques of imaginative literature, especially vision, dialogue and personification'.<sup>12</sup> This exchange between the medieval poetic and ethical discourses is also highlighted by scholars who have focused on the impact of ancient and medieval philosophy on Chaucer's poetry. In his study on the poetry of Chaucer and Gower, Allan Mitchell proposes a connection between medieval ethics and aesthetics. He first suggests that medieval poets paid attention to the cultural context in which their works were received. Further, he argues that Middle English poets were also aware of contemporary moral rhetoric, and were free to celebrate or subvert it.<sup>13</sup> A major contributor to criticism on this intersection is Kathryn Lynch, who asserts that 'medieval readers would no more have divided poetry from philosophy than they would have made art exclusive of morality'.<sup>14</sup> Lynch's argument is also supported by Kellie Robertson who discusses the influence of medieval natural philosophy on poetry. Robertson argues that for medieval writers the domains of physics, fiction, astronomy and psychology 'not only overlapped, but they were also thought to operate according to the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10. In discussing the commentators' views on the *Metamorphoses of Ovid*, Allen states that the commentators not only classified it as ethics, but they also argued that this classification applies to poetry in general.

<sup>11</sup> Brian FitzGerald, *Inspiration and Authority in the Middle Ages: Prophets and Their Critics from Scholasticism to Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 183.

<sup>12</sup> Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 292.

<sup>13</sup> John Allan Mitchell, *Ethics and Exemplary Narrative in Chaucer and Gower* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 1-3.

<sup>14</sup> Lynch, p. 9.

same principles'.<sup>15</sup> She proposes that the writers of the high and late Middle Ages, who shared with medieval philosophers an interest in morality and the natural world, were fluent in the academic philosophical debate of their time.<sup>16</sup> They were thus able to use philosophy as an aid that helped them 'transform the world into words'.<sup>17</sup>

The reason I have chosen the romance genre to investigate the intersection between emotions and ethics is related to this genre's engagement with both. Like the didactic treatises on conduct, medieval romance suggests the significance of regulating emotions.<sup>18</sup> In highlighting the moral dimension of medieval romance, I follow scholars like Ellen Rose Woods who argues that in the romance genre, as opposed to the *chanson de geste*, moral perception is an aim and emotions are presented as a force that endows the hero's adventures with moral significance. Woods explains that while the epic hero might fall short of moral perfection, love in romance helps to create an ideal hero and a 'meaningful moral scheme'.<sup>19</sup> More recently, scholars have suggested that didacticism and the portrayal of emotions are markers of the romance genre. A. C. Spearing defines romances like *Sir Orfeo* and *King Horn* as 'relatively brief narratives with Breton settings, in which the story focuses on human emotions'.<sup>20</sup> Spearing's definition of romance suggests that, unlike the case in other medieval literary genres, the representation of emotions in medieval romance is a marker of the genre. Furrow, in addition, argues that romances are didactic and that medieval audiences, who used to read for a moral, expected the reading material to convey a moral message.<sup>21</sup> The collection of essays in the edited volume *Thinking Medieval Romance* contains discussion of medieval romance's intertextuality with philosophy, politics and religion. For example, the intersection

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<sup>15</sup> Robertson, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> On the predominant didactic context of medieval romance; see Raluca Radulescu, *Romance and Its Contexts in Fifteenth-Century England: Politics, Piety and Penitence* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013), p. 40; also 'How Christian is Chivalry?', in *Christianity and Romance in Medieval England*, ed. by Rosalind Field, Phillipa Hardman and Michelle Sweeney (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2010), pp. 69-83.

<sup>19</sup> Ellen Rose Woods, *Aye D'Avignon: A Study of Genre and Society* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1978), p. 68.

<sup>20</sup> A. C. Spearing, 'Sir Orfeo: Madness and Gender', in *The Spirit of Medieval English Popular Romance*, ed. by Ad Putter and J. Gilbert (New York: Pearson, 2000), pp. 258-72 (p. 258).

<sup>21</sup> Furrow, pp. 139-42.

between medieval romances and didactic treatises is highlighted by James Simpson, who argues that the peculiar quality of popular romance ‘thought’ has long been underestimated. Simpson further proposes that the romance narrative is a self-governing narrative that models how society maintains its balance.<sup>22</sup> The genre’s engagement with philosophy is also suggested by Jane Bliss in *Naming and Namelessness in Medieval Romance*. Bliss first proposes that naming and namelessness are major themes of medieval romance. She then explores contemporary naming-theory and relates the romance’s interest in names to its preoccupation with philosophy, especially the debate between realism and nominalism.<sup>23</sup> Given the romance genre’s exchange with contemporary theological and philosophical discourses, this thesis seeks to explore the impact of the medieval moral philosophical discourse of emotions on the portrayal of emotions in Middle English romance.

What makes the romance genre such a suitable site for the presentation and exploration of emotions is its exceptional stylistic and thematic features such as its generic fluidity, focus on the individual, the preoccupation with the magical, its orality, repetitive structure and sense of closure. The romance’s exchange with varied discourses, religious, philosophical and political, resulted in its versatile types.<sup>24</sup> Dealing with various types of romance (popular, hagiographic and courtly) allows the investigation of a wide range of emotions. Additionally, the genre’s exchange with other discourses, mainly philosophical and theological, endows it with an ethical dimension that results in a sophisticated presentation of emotions. Philosophical topics such as the role of reason in regulating emotions or the different types of love, worldly and spiritual, are all central to the world of medieval romance. More importantly, despite its exchange with ethical and non-fictional discourses, the romance genre remains fictive and, thus, more suitable for the exploration of emotions. The fact that romance is a fictive genre frees it from the constraints placed on other codified genres with which it shares some literary

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<sup>22</sup> James Simpson, ‘Unthinking Thought: Romance’s Wisdom’, in *Thinking Medieval Romance*, ed. by Katherine C. Little and Nicola McDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 36-54 (p. 51).

<sup>23</sup> Jane Bliss, *Naming and Namelessness in Medieval Romance* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2008), pp. 112-13.

<sup>24</sup> This characteristic of romance suggests the possibility of breaking the boundaries between the different modes of medieval thinking, whether popular or elite. See the introduction to *Thinking Medieval Romance*, ed. by Katherine C. Little and Nicola McDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 6-9.



features. Such genres are saints' lives and chronicles which focus on devotion and truth-telling respectively.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to its generic fluidity, medieval romance is characterised by certain thematic features that make it particularly suitable for the investigation of emotions. For example, the focus on the individual, a characteristic which distinguishes the romance genre from the *chanson de geste*, allows for the exploration of private subjective emotions. Woods explains that while the romance genre narrates the adventure of an individual who faces a series of obstacles, the *chanson de geste* describes a conflict between groups of men.<sup>26</sup> The romance genre is also marked by its preoccupation with the magical and the exotic. Away from the seriousness of the *chanson de geste* and chronicles and the transcendence of hagiography, the romance hero's interaction with the supernatural and the exotic allows for the exploration of extreme emotions different from the religious or social emotions that dominate the mundane worlds of other genres.<sup>27</sup> The various stories of adventure that the romance narrates, whether associated with love or with the exotic, contribute to its presentation of diverse emotions.<sup>28</sup> Also, the fact that some of these adventures are female-driven allows for the exploration of certain types of emotions associated with love and desire.<sup>29</sup>

Along with these thematic features, medieval romance is characterised by a number of formal aspects that assist in tracing the development of emotions from the beginning to the end of the narrative. In his analysis of medieval romance's storyline, Ad Putter discusses repetition in romance as a way to recall the hero's past.<sup>30</sup> Also, focusing on the diptych structure in

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<sup>25</sup> See the introduction to *Thinking Medieval Romance*, pp. 4-6.

<sup>26</sup> Woods, p. 68.

<sup>27</sup> Susan Crane, 'Medieval Romance and Feminine Difference in *The Knight's Tale*', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 12 (1990), 47-63 (p. 48).

<sup>28</sup> On adventure as a key to romance, see Crane, 'Medieval Romance and Feminine Difference', p. 49; also W. S. Whetter, *Understanding Genre and Medieval Romance* (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008). Whetter discusses how love and adventure are always linked in romance (p. 66).

<sup>29</sup> For a useful analysis of romance motifs and patterns including how they are female-driven; see Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>30</sup> Ad Putter, 'Story Line and Story Shape in *Sir Percyvell of Gales* and Chrétien de Troyes's *Conte du Graal*', in *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England: Essays in Popular Romance*, ed. by Nicola McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 171-96.

medieval romance, Spearing argues that presenting parallel sets of adventures is a structural technique that has the effect of producing meaning in romance.<sup>31</sup> The significance of the romance's repetitive narrative structure is related to the fact that it helps us trace the development of characters' emotions and analyse how they are affected by the passing of time.

Together with repetition, the sense of closure is a feature typical of the romance genre that results in a totalising emotional effect usually absent from the *chanson de geste* and the chronicles.<sup>32</sup> Michele Poellinger discusses closure as a marker of the romance genre and argues that it has the impact of creating a sense of completion and purpose not achieved in the epic.<sup>33</sup> The significance of the romance's ending is related to the fact that it reflects the poem's attitude towards emotions. Analysing how some romances end with victory and marriage, while other romances end with death or defeat, can give an insight into the genre's varied discourses on emotions.

Some of these features, which make the genre of medieval romance particularly suitable for the exploration of emotions, are even more pronounced in Middle English romance.<sup>34</sup> The prominence of certain features in Middle English romances, which distinguish them from their source material, can be attributed to the fact that they were written later than their French counterparts.<sup>35</sup> The development of the relationship between romance and hagiography, and

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<sup>31</sup> Spearing, *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 126-30.

<sup>32</sup> For a comparison between the epic and romance; see Whetter, p. 62; on the impact of closure on giving the romance genre a totalising sense absent from the *chanson de geste*; see Sarah Kay, *The Chanson de Geste in the Age of Romance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 49-50.

<sup>33</sup> Michele Poellinger, 'Violence in Later Middle English Arthurian Romance' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 2013: <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/5233/1/POELLINGER%20THESIS.pdf>; accessed 17 December, 2018), p. 24.

<sup>34</sup> Middle English romances are identified with a number of features that distinguish them from other romances, including their source material. On Middle English romance as a distinct tradition; see Dominique Battles, *Cultural Difference and Material Culture in Middle English Romance: Normans and Saxons* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> On Middle English romance as a later tradition; see Sif Rikhardsdóttir, *Medieval Translations and Cultural Discourse: The Movement of Texts in England, France and Scandinavia* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), p. 15.

the shift towards the individual which took place during the later Middle Ages are factors that had an impact on Middle English romance's engagement with both ethics and emotions.<sup>36</sup> Focusing on the performative dimension of Middle English literature, Sarah McNamer argues that Middle English literary genres are particularly useful for the understanding of emotions in the past. McNamer thus suggests reading Middle English literary texts 'as literal scripts that vigorously enlist *literariness* as a means of generating feelings and putting them into play in history'.<sup>37</sup> Other scholars have linked Middle English romance's vivid representation of emotions, which McNamer highlights, to the genre's linguistic features. Stephanie Downes and Rebecca F. McNamara suggest that borrowing from European languages, such as French, Latin and Italian, resulted in a Middle English language that was capable of expressing the subtleties related to the portrayal of emotion.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the Latin nomenclature of emotions had a significant influence on the Middle English terminology of emotions.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, given its articulate language and its presentation of a wide spectrum of emotions, Middle English romance provides a rich corpus for the exploration of medieval affective life.

In addition to their association with emotions, Middle English romances display a number of features that distinguish them from their Anglo Norman sources. Dieter Mehl argued long ago that the hagiographic element is a marker of Middle English romance.<sup>40</sup> Crane has also argued that, in comparison with Anglo Norman romance, Middle English romance reflects

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<sup>36</sup> On how the distinction between hagiography and romance broke down towards the late Middle Ages, see Neil Cartlidge, *Medieval Marriage: Literary Approaches, 1100-1300* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), p. 106.

<sup>37</sup> Sarah McNamer, 'Feeling', in *Middle English Oxford Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature*, ed. by P. Strohm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 241-57 (p. 246).

<sup>38</sup> On the linguistic significance of Middle English romance and its relation to the representation of emotions; see Stephanie Downes and Rebecca F. McNamara, 'The History of Emotions and Middle English Literature', *Literature Compass*, 13 (2016), pp. 444-56.

<sup>39</sup> The Middle English terminology of emotions and how it was influenced by the Latin nomenclature of emotions will be discussed in more detail in the following section. On the distinctive character of medieval English literature following the Norman Conquest; see Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>40</sup> Dieter Mehl, *The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Routledge, 1968), pp. 18-9, 22.

a strong interest in contemporary social conditions in general, and legal matters in particular.<sup>41</sup> Recently, the sophistication of Middle English romance and its engagement with other genres has been reconsidered by some contributors to an (2018) edited volume on the evolution of Middle English romance. The book is concerned with Middle English romance as an evolving tradition that addresses contemporary concerns and reflects an intersection between secular and spiritual discourses.<sup>42</sup> The romance's generic hybridity is here highlighted in chapters on the political (Marcel Elias) and religious settings (Marco Nievergelt, Miriam Edlich-Muth) of Middle English romance.<sup>43</sup> The genre's intertextuality with mystical writing is discussed by Corinne Saunders, who explores the relationship between the spiritual and the supernatural in Malory's *Morte Darthur* through analysing how the narrative is shaped by sensory experiences.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, this thesis is concerned with how the genre's interest in social issue and exchange with contemporary ethical discourses resulted in a presentation of diverse emotions, religious and familial.

## Corpus

Given the above stylistic and thematic features which define medieval romance in general, and Middle English romance in particular, I have decided to concentrate on the Middle English versions of the *Romance of Horn* and *Gui de Warewic*. The main texts will be *King Horn* (early thirteenth century), the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* (early fourteenth century) and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (late fourteenth century). Though I primarily analyse these Middle English romances as self-contained texts with a distinct cultural context, it would be imprudent

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<sup>41</sup> See Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics Faith, and Culture in Anglo Norman and Middle English Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 67.

<sup>42</sup> *Romance Rewritten: The Evolution of Middle English Romance*, ed. by Elizabeth Archibald, Megan Leitch and Corinne Saunders (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2018).

<sup>43</sup> Marcel Elias, 'Rewriting Chivalric Encounters: Cultural Anxieties and Social Critique in the Fourteenth Century', pp. 49-66; Marco Nievergelt, 'Giving Freely in *Sir Cleges*: The Economy of Salvation and the Gift of Romance', pp. 155-72; and Miriam Edlich-Muth, 'From Magic to Miracle: Reframing *Chevalere Assigne*', pp. 173-88.

<sup>44</sup> Corinne Saunders, 'Lifting the Veil: Voices, Visions and Destiny in Malory's *Morte Darthur*', in *Romance Rewritten*, pp. 189-206.

to study the Middle English versions in isolation from their Anglo Norman source material. Hence, in the case of *King Horn* and the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, the Anglo Norman versions will be taken into consideration.<sup>45</sup>

These three romances will be analysed as prototypes of popular, penitential and Arthurian romance of the early thirteenth, early fourteenth and late fourteenth centuries respectively. *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are referred to as prototypes of popular, penitential and Arthurian romance because they exemplify the typical elements of these subgenres. The fact that they typify the major characteristics of the subgenres they represent makes them a source of normativity essential to the study of the ethics that governs the world of Middle English romance.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, these romances are studied as prototypes because they were popular throughout the Middle Ages, which suggests that the ideals they adopt were relevant to a wide audience and were informed by a well-established system of ethics.<sup>47</sup> *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir*

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<sup>45</sup> Henceforth I will use the abbreviations AN for the Anglo-Norman versions of the romances and ME for the Middle English versions.

<sup>46</sup> How these romances exemplify the major characteristics of the subgenres they represent and how they will be studied as sources for contemporary ethics will be discussed in more detail in the following pages.

<sup>47</sup> The story of Horn survives both in French and English, and the ME *King Horn* is extant in three manuscripts: Cambridge University Library Gg. 4.27.2, Bodleian Laud. Misc 108 and BL Harley 2253. *Horn Child*, another early fourteenth-century English account of the story survives in the Auchinleck manuscript. The romance of *Guy of Warwick* is also believed to be one of the most popular romances of the Middle Ages, it survives both in French and English, was included in the Auchinleck manuscript and many of its details were used in Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*. It was printed into the seventeenth century and remained popular until the nineteenth century. On this; see Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *The Popularity of Middle English Romance* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1975), p. 149. Similarly, though *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* survives only in London, British Library Cotton Nero manuscript, its identification of three famous late fourteenth-century romance figures, namely Arthur, the Green Knight and Gawain, who appear in a number of other contemporary romances, suggests that the story had an appeal in its time. Moreover, the fact that the poem preserved some of the conventions of French Arthurian romance, Chrétien's romances in particular, could have contributed to its popularity. On *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'s identification of these three figures and how this is related to its appeal; see William McColly, "'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight' as a Romance à Clef", *The Chaucer Review*, 23 (1988), 78-92 (p. 78). On its preservation of the conventions

*Gawain and the Green Knight* generate an argument relevant to other romances from the same periods and subgenres. Hence, analysing them as prototypes can help us understand where various romances fit in the history of Middle English romance. These romances also offer three types of romance heroes; the larger-than-life Horn, the penitent Guy and the sinful Gawain, and the analysis of the emotions they experience is relevant to the study of other romances' discourses of emotions. More importantly, since Horn, Guy and Gawain are heroes of various texts that crossed time, the focus on these romances in particular helps us explore the impact of the immediate cultural context on their discourses of emotions. Both the popularity of these three romances and their exemplification of the characteristics of the subgenres they represent make them a suitable corpus for exploring the various discourses of emotions that the genre of Middle English romance offers and the new attitudes it accumulated over history.

*King Horn* is an early thirteenth-century Middle English metrical romance which survives in three manuscripts. The oldest ('C' text) dates back to 1260 and is found in MS Cambridge University Library Gg 4, 27, 2. The other two texts (the 'L' and 'O' versions) were copied approximately fifty years later and are now found in Oxford, Bodl. Library, MS Laud Misc. 108 part II, and London, British Library, MS Harley 2253 respectively.<sup>48</sup> *King Horn's* subject matter, its style and formal approach all suggest that it was composed for a courtly audience. There is no evidence that it was influenced by the AN *Romance of Horn* and, given the similar storyline of the two romances, it is believed that both the French and English writers were familiar with the same source.<sup>49</sup> In its 'familiar characters and predictable scene', *King Horn* depicts a traditional romance world.<sup>50</sup> Thus, this romance portrays common motifs and

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of French Arthurian romance; see Putter, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and French Arthurian Romance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>48</sup> See *A Manual of Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500*, 11 vols., ed. by J. Burke Severs (New Haven: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967-2005), vol. I 'Romances' (1967), p. 8; henceforth referred to as *Manual*; also James R. Hurt, 'The Text of *King Horn*', *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 7 (1970), 47-59 (p. 50).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

<sup>50</sup> Anne Scott, 'Traditional Story Techniques and the Configuration of Word and Deed in *King Horn*', in *Studies in Medieval English Romances*, ed. by Derek Brewer (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), pp. 37-69 (p. 37).

identifies the acceptable ethics of conduct during the thirteenth century.<sup>51</sup> It provides a clear-cut distinction between good and evil and portrays extremely opposed emotions.<sup>52</sup> The virtue of characters' emotions is constantly assessed according to the agreement between their emotions and reason. Through its typical and idealised characterisation of Horn, the poem celebrates communal, rational emotions.<sup>53</sup>

I have chosen *King Horn* as a prototype of thirteenth-century traditional popular romance which associates feeling with women and thinking with men. *King Horn*'s attitude towards right and wrong makes its discourse of emotions a good example of the intellectual discourse of emotions. Hence, the poem's portrayal of the relationship between emotions and reason will be analysed in the context of the thirteenth-century intellectualist reason-centred ethics. *King Horn*'s traditional discourse of emotions, which encourages a concern with social order and the common good, presents a paradigm of other thirteenth-century popular romances. For example, *King Horn*'s subordination of the fulfilment of emotions to the establishment of social order is encountered in the second oldest surviving Middle English romance, *Havelok the Dane* (late thirteenth century).<sup>54</sup> Following an exile-and-return pattern, *Havelok the Dane*, like *King Horn*, postpones the union of the lovers until order is restored and the hero proves himself a worthy king of England.

Despite its didactic impulse and its endorsement of some Christian ideals, *King Horn* is classified as a popular, not hagiographic, romance. The *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, on the other hand, is believed to be the first Middle English romance which incorporates elements of hagiography and romance.<sup>55</sup> It is an early fourteenth-century adaptation of the AN *Gui de*

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<sup>51</sup> Carol Parrish Jamison, 'A Description of Medieval Romance Based on *King Horn*', *Quondam et Futurus*, 1 (1999), 44-58 (p. 44).

<sup>52</sup> The poem shares some characteristics with saints' legends. On this and the distinction between good and evil; see Scott, pp. 44-5; also Mehl, pp. 4-5.

<sup>53</sup> On the romance's preservation of social values through depicting ideal characters; see Scott, pp. 45, 51. On *King Horn*'s pedagogic message; see Susan Wittig, *Stylistic and Narrative Structure in the Middle English Romances* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), p. 45.

<sup>54</sup> On *Havelok the Dane* as the second surviving romance written in English after *King Horn*; see Petru Golban, *A History of the Bildungsroman: From Ancient Beginnings to Romanticism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), p. 89.

<sup>55</sup> See the introduction to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, ed. by Alison Wiggins, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2004), p. 8.

*Warewic* that only survives in the Auchinleck Manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.2.1).<sup>56</sup> Although presented as a continuation to the *Couplet Guy of Warwick* which narrates the story of Guy's early life, it is believed that the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* was composed as an autonomous text which can be read independently from the other versions.<sup>57</sup> The romance is composed in twelve-line tail-rhyme and includes alliteration. It adopts an exile and return pattern that takes the form of a pilgrimage.<sup>58</sup> Unlike Horn, Guy ignores the council of reason which requires him to fulfil his duties towards his wife and unborn son. His actions are motivated by a subjective private feeling that can neither be shared with his community, nor controlled through reasoning.

Given its portrayal of worldly love as an antithesis to the love of God, I have chosen the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* as an example of fourteenth-century Middle English penitential romance. The poem's presentation of the turn towards the love of God as a result of a sudden feeling that conquers the hero recalls the voluntarist perception of the will as a power moved by passions. Therefore, the hero's emotions and their role in his character development will be analysed in the context of Scotus' voluntarist account of the passions of the will. The *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*'s discourse of emotions can be studied as a prototype of other Middle English pious romances' discourses which combine religious and familial emotions. Though the pattern of saints' lives is followed more closely in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* than in other penitential romances like *Amis and Amiloun* (1330), *Robert of Sicily* (late fourteenth century), *Sir Isumbras* (late fourteenth century) and *Sir Gowther* (mid fifteenth century), these romances all share some stylistic and thematic elements related to tone and themes of piety that result in a similar discourse of emotions.<sup>59</sup> The kind of emotions which the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* portrays is also present in some non-penitential romances from the same period. An example

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<sup>56</sup> See *Manual*, p. 16.

<sup>57</sup> Wiggins's introduction to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, p. 5. There are five different redactions of the Anglo Norman *Gui de Warewic* that represent independent Middle English translations. These include the A, D, E Couplets from the early fourteenth, very early fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries respectively, and B, C stanzaic redactions from the early fourteenth century; see Wiggins, 'The Manuscript and Texts of the Middle English *Guy of Warwick*', in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 61-80 (p. 65).

<sup>58</sup> Wiggins's introduction to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, pp. 3, 8.

<sup>59</sup> On how the pattern of saints' lives is followed more closely in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* than in other penitential romances; see Wiggins's introduction to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, p. 8.



of these romances is *Bevis of Hampton* (early thirteenth century) which, like the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, combines religious and chivalric elements.<sup>60</sup>

The questioning of the chivalric code of behaviour and the subsequent shift from communal to private emotions which characterise the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* are features that are more prominent in the late fourteenth-century *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is the last of four poems in London, British Library Cotton, MS A X, Art. 3 which are believed to have been written by the same author around 1400.<sup>61</sup> The story portrays human imperfect emotions which are similar to the kind of nominalist emotions discussed by the fourteenth-century Ockhamist nominalists. The emotions Gawain experiences are neither chivalric nor religious. Rather, his emotions are presented as a response to his basic and human need for survival. Therefore, the hero's desire for survival will be analysed in the context of the fourteenth-century nominalist discourse of emotions which revolves around the individual's metaphysical freedom.

As in the case of *King Horn* and the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'s interest in human, private emotions generates an argument central to other Arthurian Middle English romances from the same period. The romance's portrayal of worldly ideals and its focus on the individual are characteristics that are shared with other romances from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Though *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is one of the earliest Middle English romances that depicts the downfall of the ideals of King Arthur and his knights, this shift towards human emotions is a characteristic of fifteenth-century Middle English romances, including the romance written by Malory. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'s portrayal of the worldly imperfect emotions of King Arthur and his knights is, for example, present in the late fourteenth-century stanzaic *Morte Arthur*, the early fifteenth-century alliterative *Morte Arthure* and Malory's late fifteenth-century *Morte Darthur*. These texts provide a space to explore a kind of earthly emotions different from the emotions portrayed in *King Horn* or the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*.

*King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* cover nearly two centuries in English history from about 1220 to 1400, a period during which the medieval ethical and poetic discourses of emotions underwent significant development. I have chosen these three romances in particular because, thanks to their varied discourses of

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> See *Manual*, p. 54.

emotions, they provide a useful corpus for the exploration of the development of the poetic discourse of emotions from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries. The romances' different attitudes towards the relationship between emotions and ethics can help us understand the impact of the evolution of the medieval philosophical discourse of emotions on the poetry of the period. By choosing these three romances from three consecutive centuries, I propose an approach to the study of emotions in Middle English romance that can be applied to other romances from the same periods. Therefore, each of these poems can be treated as a source for the general discourse of emotions in its century.

These three romances' diverse attitudes to emotions suggest that the medieval poetic discourse of emotions was subject to constant development. While the Middle English romances of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, whether popular or hagiographic, presented idealistic and religious emotions, a shift towards the portrayal of human imperfect emotions took place towards the end of the fourteenth century. Accordingly, this thesis proposes that this development in the attitude towards emotions can be better understood in the context of the medieval philosophical discourse of emotions which was similarly growing from one century to the next.

## **I.2 The Medieval Terminology of Emotions**

A methodological challenge that this project faces is terminology. The study of medieval emotions requires special attention to the historical context and its impact on defining emotions. As Barbara Rosenwein argues: 'thinking historically...means being sensitive to the ever-changing shape of the category of "emotions" and of the terms that belong with it'.<sup>62</sup> Rosenwein believes that in order to understand medieval 'emotionality', and how emotions were theorised within the medieval context, we should be aware of the 'emotion words' that were used by medieval authors.<sup>63</sup> The need to historicise our research on medieval emotions is

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<sup>62</sup> Barbara Rosenwein, 'Thinking Historically About Medieval Emotions', *History Compass*, 8 (2010), 828-42 (p. 836). This issue was also raised by her in *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); and in *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. by Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>63</sup> Rosenwein, 'Thinking Historically about the Middle Ages', p. 836.

also discussed by Peter King in his study of emotions in medieval thought. King describes the scholarship on medieval emotions as in its infancy and considers the fact that ‘emotion’ is a modern category as one of the fundamental difficulties that faces research on medieval emotions.<sup>64</sup>

‘Emotion’, as a psychological category, did not exist until two centuries ago.<sup>65</sup> It is the invention of the seventeenth century which only entered the English vocabulary from French ‘during the reign of Elizabeth I’.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, the usage of the modern category of ‘emotion’ to describe states which were termed differently in the Middle Ages is anachronistic.<sup>67</sup> In his study of the terminological shift from passions to emotions, Thomas Dixon proposes a link between the shift to the language of emotions and the secularisation of the field of psychology.<sup>68</sup> This link suggests that the category of ‘emotion’ was alien to the medieval discourse of emotions, and that the religious and psychological approaches to the study of emotions were connected. What distinguishes the medieval discourse of emotions is the fact that the investigation of the affective life of human beings was carried out in the context of Christian medieval thought and was viewed from a moral/religious perspective.<sup>69</sup> Affectivity

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<sup>64</sup> Peter King, ‘Emotions in Medieval Thought’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotions*, ed. by Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 167-88 (p. 168).

<sup>65</sup> Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>66</sup> Introduction to *Emotions and War: Medieval to Romantic Literature*, ed. by Stephanie Downes, Andrew Lynch and Katrina O'Loughlin (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 1; also James Baldwin, in the *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1940), explains that the use of the word emotion in English psychology is modern, p. 316; on the meaning of the word in English and its French origin, see the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, ed. by John Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): <http://www.oed.com/viewEntry/61249?rskey=7AtW87&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>; accessed 22 December, 2018). The dictionary mentions that the first use of the word ‘emotion’ dates from the mid sixteenth century to denote public disturbance, *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. *emotion* 4. a.

<sup>67</sup> On ‘emotions’ as an anachronistic term, see the introduction to *Fear in the Medical and Literary Imagination, Medieval to Modern: Dreadful Passions*, ed. by Daniel McCann and Claire McKechnie-Mason (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 8.

<sup>68</sup> Dixon, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> Dixon, p. 4; also Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy, ‘Medieval Sciences of Emotions during the Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries: An Intellectual History’, *Osiris*, 31 (2016), 21-45 (pp. 21- 3).

received increasing attention during the Middle Ages and was treated as central to human nature because it was studied within the framework of theological anthropology.<sup>70</sup> The modern use of the category of ‘emotion’ may thus reflect a dismissal of the ethical dimension of the medieval discourse of emotions. Since ‘emotion’ replaces a wide range of medieval concepts such as appetites, passions, sentiments and affections, this study will take into consideration the different nuances of this category and its medieval equivalents.<sup>71</sup>

The medieval nomenclature of emotions in Latin was varied and it included terms like *motus animi* (emotion) and *perturbatio* (passion), *affectus* (feeling or disposition) and *passio* (passion or suffering), *inclinatio* (tendency or inclination) and *primus motus* (movement or motion).<sup>72</sup> These terms, along with ‘feeling’, were used in the Middle Ages to refer to different states, both affective and mental. Some of these terms, such as affection and feeling, were used generally to refer to any phenomenon which moves us. Sarah McNamer explains that the verb *felen* (to feel) signified both affective and mental processes.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, ‘affectivity’ was used in the Middle Ages to refer to any aspect related to emotions like mood and atmosphere.<sup>74</sup> Given the nuanced classification of emotive movements in the medieval period, and the fact that the meanings of these categories were subject to change from one century to another and from one medieval philosopher to another, it is necessary to consider the specific meanings of these terms.<sup>75</sup>

The medieval moral philosophers from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries held varied attitudes towards the conceptualisation of emotive movements. While in the earlier Middle Ages emotive movements were understood in terms of the duality of vices and virtues, a more fluid classification of these movements started to be adopted towards the

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<sup>70</sup> Boquet and Nagy, ‘Medieval Sciences of Emotions’, p. 25.

<sup>71</sup> On the significance of considering the medieval equivalents of the category of ‘emotion’; see Dixon, pp. 5-6.

<sup>72</sup> Boquet and Nagy, ‘Medieval Sciences of Emotions’, p. 24.

<sup>73</sup> McNamer, ‘Feeling’, p. 247. For the English translation of these Latin words; see the *Latin English Dictionary Online*: <https://glosbe.com/la/en>; accessed 22 December, 2018.

<sup>74</sup> Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities: A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Robert Shaw (Cambridge: John & Wiley Sons, 2018), p. 7.

<sup>75</sup> Rosenwein, in the *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600 -1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), investigates how particular vocabularies of feelings appeared in different emotional communities.

later Middle Ages.<sup>76</sup> The thirteenth-century philosopher Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) refers to the movements of the sensitive appetite as passions, and to the movements of the intellectual appetite as affections. In his discussion of the passions throughout his *Summa Theologica* and his *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Aquinas repeatedly emphasises that passions, unlike affections, involve a bodily change. He explains this distinction further by arguing that God, who is immaterial, experiences affections, not passions:

Now, according to the intellectual appetite there is no passion, but only according to sensitive appetite... but no such appetite can be in God, since He does not have sensitive knowledge... Therefore, there is no passion of the appetite in God.<sup>77</sup>

Throughout his discussion of the affections of God, Aquinas uses ‘affection’ as an umbrella term which refers to two types of movements where he classifies the movements of the sensitive appetite as sensory affections or passions, and the movements that belong to the intellectual appetite as intellectual affections, that is, the type of affections which God experiences.<sup>78</sup>

The Thomist conception of the difference between affections and passions was, however, challenged by the late thirteenth-century Franciscan voluntarist John Duns Scotus

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<sup>76</sup> See Boquet and Nagy, ‘Medieval Sciences of Emotions’, p. 25.

<sup>77</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, chap. 89, trans. by Anton Pegis (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 271.

<sup>78</sup> For a detailed account of Aquinas’ treatment of passions and affections; see his *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 22, art. 3, ad.1, trans. by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Christian Classics, 1948, rpt. 1981); for his treatment of the affections typical to God; see his *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, chaps. 89, 90 and 91, pp. 271-82; for an explanation of Aquinas’ distinction between passions and affections; see John Dryden, ‘Passions, Affections and Emotions: Methodological Difficulties in Reconstructing Aquinas’ Philosophical Psychology’, *Literature Compass*, 13 (2016), 343-50 (p. 347); on this and his discussion of the affections of God; see Shawn D. Floyd, ‘Aquinas on Emotion: A Response to Some Recent Interpretations’, *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 15 (1998), 161-75 (pp. 161-66); on Aquinas’ discussion of the passions of the sensitive appetite; see Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae Ia* 75–89 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 243-48; on his treatment of the sensitive appetite as a lower faculty concerned with sensation and the treatment of the intellectual appetite as the higher faculty concerned with affections; see Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, 1975).

(1266-1308) who rejected the idea that the passions should involve a bodily change. Scotus revised the definition of the passions to include the movements of the sensitive and intellective appetites. Consequently, and contrary to Aquinas, he recognised passions in the will.<sup>79</sup> Scotus' conceptualisation of the passions was also supported by his student William of Ockham (1285?-1349) who, following his teacher, referred to the emotions that belong to the will as passions. Like Scotus, Ockham believed that the passions include the movements of the sensitive and intellective appetites.<sup>80</sup>

The above brief contextual analysis demonstrates that the medieval terminology of emotions was subject to constant change. Yet, categories like 'feeling' and 'affection' continued to be used widely, sometimes as umbrella terms, by the moral philosophers of the high and late Middle Ages. Hence, within the chapters of this thesis, the different medieval categories of emotions will be used according to the period's most influential discourse of emotions. However, given its inclusive nature, the category of 'affection' will be sometimes treated as an umbrella term. The fact that it was frequently used by Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham suggests that it had a broad meaning indicating both the movements of the sensitive and intellective appetites. As previously discussed, Aquinas often used it as an umbrella term.

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<sup>79</sup> Scotus discusses the possibility of having passions in the will in distinction fifteen in the third book of his *Ordinatio*; see *The Ordinatio of Blessed John Dun Scotus*, trans. and ed. by Peter Simpson (NY: Franciscan Institute, 2018):

<http://www.aristotelophile.com/Books/Translations/Scotus%20Ordinatio%20III%20dd.1-17.pdf>;

accessed 10 June, 2018); henceforth referred to as *Ordinatio*. For an explanation of Scotus' treatment of the passions and how he differs from Aquinas; see Ian Drummond, 'John Dun Scotus on the Passions of the will', in *Emotions and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, pp. 53-74. It is worth mentioning that Aquinas' rejection of the existence of passions in the will is related to his belief that the will is associated with the universal while the passions are associated with the particular. On this; see Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae 1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>80</sup> Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions* II, q. 17, trans. by Alfred J Freddoso and Francis E Kelley (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 156-8; for a detailed discussion of Ockham's views on this; see Vesa Hirvonen, 'A Nominalist Ontology of the Passions', in *Emotions and Choice from Boethius to Descartes*, ed. by Henrik Lagerlund and Mikko Yrjonsuuri (Dordrecht: Kluwe, 2002), pp. 155-71 (p. 155).

Also, Scotus and Ockham described both movements of the will, whether towards self or towards justice, as affections.

Despite its wide usage in the medieval period, the category of ‘affection’ is not frequently used in recent criticism on medieval emotions. However, its closest derivation, ‘affect’, has been widely used, and sometimes interchangeably with ‘emotions’. Stephanie Trigg argues that the word ‘affect’ is used more frequently and explains that most historians of emotions, interested in pre-modern texts, use emotion and affect ‘as if they are interchangeable’.<sup>81</sup> Trigg also suggests that its recent popularity is related to its emergent ‘specialized sense’.<sup>82</sup> This specialised sense of the word is also discussed by Downes and McNamara who comment on the significance of the term to medievalists and argue that it carries a special critical significance as it describes an interdisciplinary field of study concerned with the analysis of emotions in literature or art.<sup>83</sup> The recent use of the word, like its medieval usage, denotes an impact on body and mind and, given its broad sense, the category of ‘affect’ is often used by modern scholars as an ‘umbrella term’.<sup>84</sup>

### **I.3 Emotions in Medieval Literature**

The subtle distinctions between the different medieval categories of emotions show how important it is to historicise research on medieval emotions. Yet, a review of the criticism on emotions in medieval literature shows that most studies often tend to lack such a context. Thus, the medieval moral philosophical discourse of emotions has been infrequently adopted as a theoretical framework to investigate emotions in medieval literature. The following review of modern criticism of emotions in medieval literature will provide some examples of studies that have analysed medieval affectivity from the perspective of modern sensibility. Yet, the main

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<sup>81</sup> Stephanie Trigg, ‘Introduction: Emotional Histories — Beyond the Personalisation of the Past and the Abstraction of Affect Theory’, *Exemplaria*, 26 (2014), 3-15 (p. 7).

<sup>82</sup> Trigg, p. 7.

<sup>83</sup> Downes and McNamara, p. 444.

<sup>84</sup> See Saunders, ‘Mind, Body and Affect in Medieval English Arthurian Romance’, in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Body, Mind, Voice*, ed. by Frank Brandsma, Carolyne Larrington and Corinne J. Saunders (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2015), pp. 31-46 (p. 35).

focus of this review will, necessarily, be on the studies which have focused on contextualising the discussion of emotions in medieval literature.

A first starting point for the study of medieval emotions, and a useful example of the abundant scholarship on emotions in medieval devotional literature, is Sarah McNamer's study of medieval compassion.<sup>85</sup> McNamer explores a variety of medieval devotional works, including early Middle English and later Middle English texts, and argues that compassion is a gendered emotion that was especially associated with women during the Middle Ages. She adopts the history of affective meditation and the history of emotions as approaches to the study of medieval compassion and situates her discussion of medieval affective mediation in its legal, ethical and social context. McNamer's book is an invaluable study as it is one of the few studies that suggests a link between emotions and the will; a link which this thesis discusses as a marker of the development of the medieval poetic and ethical discourses of emotions. Yet, like most studies which focus on emotions in medieval religious genres, McNamer's study implies that the intersection between poetry and ethics is limited to the devotional texts. The overlap of the ethical and poetic discourses was, however, a characteristic of the wider cultural context of the Middle Ages that had an equal impact on secular genres such as the romance genre, which represents the central focus of this study.

An interest in gendered emotions is also encountered in studies which focus on medieval secular literature. A study that offers a feminist reading of courtliness in the medieval French literary tradition is E. Jane Burns's article on courtly love.<sup>86</sup> Burns argues that the texts present a form of courtly love that moves women from the position of the object of desire into the role of subject. She contextualises her discussion of courtly love by drawing upon the period's social history, and proposes that the rise in the status of women, which the texts portray, was a response to real historical circumstances.<sup>87</sup> Although Burns focuses on medieval French literature, her interdisciplinary approach to the study of the relationship between

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<sup>85</sup> McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

<sup>86</sup> E. Jane Burns, 'Courtly Love: Who Needs it? Recent Feminist Work in the Medieval French Tradition', *Signs*, 27 (2001), 23-57.

<sup>87</sup> A similar attitude is encountered in Roberta L. Krueger, 'Love, Honour and the Exchange of Women in *Yvain*: Some Remarks on the Female Reader', *Romance Notes*, 25 (1985), 302-17.



emotions and gender supports the intersection between the poetic and ethical discourses of emotions which this thesis proposes.

Another useful study that also focuses on emotions in French literature is Carolyn Larrington's essay on cognition and affect in *Diu Crône* and some French Gauvain-texts.<sup>88</sup> Larrington focuses on the cognitive aspect of emotions and its impact on emotional expression. She analyses the audience's emotional responses to certain mourning scenes in Heinrich von dem Türlin's early thirteenth-century *Diu Crône*, the contemporary French romances of *Le Chevalier aux Deux Épées* and *L'Atre Périlleux*. By drawing upon the works of Keith Oatley, Ed Tan and T. J. Scheff on the impact of emotional episodes on triggering emotions in the audience, Larrington argues that the audience's response can vary according to their cognitive assessment. She explains how, sometimes, the text encourages an emotional response that is at odds with the audience's cognition. After exploring the displacement of grief in the three texts, she concludes that the audience's emotional and cognitive detachment allows them to experience varied emotions that are not identical with the emotions that the fictive characters experience. Larrington's essay, despite its dependence on modern theories of emotions, is useful to this thesis as it highlights the significance of the cognitive elements to the experience of emotions. This is an argument that is central to my discussion of the development of the medieval discourse of emotions.

One of the very few studies which examines emotions in the context of philosophy is Jessica Rosenfeld's book on ethics and enjoyment in late medieval poetry.<sup>89</sup> Rosenfeld's study is mainly concerned with the impact of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* on the attitude of medieval poets towards pleasure, enjoyment and love. Rosenfeld first discusses the *Le roman de la rose* and then considers other French and English texts such as the *dits* of Guillaume de Machaut and Jean Froissart, Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, Guillaume de Deguilleville's *Pèlerinage de vie humaine* and Langland's *Piers Plowman*. She traces the history of enjoyment before and after the translation of Aristotle's works into Latin. Rosenfeld briefly considers the views of Plato, Cicero, Plotinus, Augustine, Boethius, Abelard, Lombard, Scotus and Ockham on the subject. She explains that Aristotle's ideas about

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<sup>88</sup> Carolyn Larrington, 'Mourning Gawain: Cognition and Affect in *Diu Crône* and some French Gauvain-Texts', in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature*, pp. 123-42.

<sup>89</sup> Jessica Rosenfeld, *Ethics and Enjoyment in Late Medieval Poetry: Love After Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

happiness were assimilated into the Christian notion of joy and were shifted towards theological issues like the beatific enjoyment and the divine will. Within the wider context of Aristotle's views on pleasure and enjoyment, Rosenfeld briefly discusses some of the medieval philosophers' religious ideas about beatitude, the enjoyment of God and the divine will. Among those philosophers discussed are Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham, Wodeham and Buridan. The last section of the book discusses some concepts of modern psychology, mainly Lacan's psychoanalysis and how he was influenced by Aristotle's ideas. Given this study's major concern with love, Rosenfeld suggests looking at medieval poetry not only as a source for the unethical origin of our desires, but also for the ethical origins of love. Rosenfeld's book is exceptionally useful to the present study as it supports my argument of the possibility of an overlap between the ethical and poetic discourses of emotions. Yet, this thesis aims at a more focused analysis of the intersection between the poetic and ethical discourses on emotion that investigates the impact of this overlap on a particular genre, through adopting an exclusively medieval theoretical framework.

The aforementioned studies on emotions in medieval literature in general reflect a focus on French texts and Chaucer. The concern with the representation of emotions in late fourteenth-century texts, Chaucer's and Langland's poetry in particular, also characterises the scholarship on emotions in medieval English literature. Langland's *Piers Plowman* has received great scholarly attention. A number of the studies which have investigated emotions in Langland, directly or indirectly, have focused on the physiology of emotions. An example of these studies is Katherine O'Sullivan's article on weeping in *Piers Plowman*. In this article, O'Sullivan argues that Langland's depiction of Meed's tears is a reflection of his concern with law and justice in late fourteenth-century England. She thus suggests that Meed's embodied expression of emotions should be analysed within the juridical theme that dominates the section.<sup>90</sup> Though O'Sullivan focuses on the physiology of emotions, rather than the psychology of emotions, her analysis of the legal context of the displacement of emotions in Middle English texts supports this thesis' argument about the exchange between poetic and ethical discourses in medieval England.

A major milestone in the study of emotions in Chaucer's writing is represented by Corinne Saunders's different publications in the field. In her essay 'Affective Reading:

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<sup>90</sup> Katherine O'Sullivan, 'Tears and Trial: Weeping as Forensic Evidence in *Piers Plowman*', in *Crying in the Middle Ages: Tears of History*, ed. by Elina Gertsman (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 193-207.

Chaucer, Women and Romance', Saunders argues that Chaucer was concerned with the power of affect on mind and body.<sup>91</sup> She considers a number of Chaucerian texts, namely his *Book of the Duchess*, the *Knight's Tale*, *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Legend of Good Women*, and explains that despite the traditional view of women as bodily and emotional, Chaucer portrays them as significant thinking and feeling subjects. The essay traces the history of ancient and medieval attitudes towards the relationship between thinking and feeling from the Hippocratic theory of humours to Aquinas. Saunders then proposes that the interconnection between body, mind and affect is crucial to the reading of imaginative fiction, both devotional and secular. Saunders's review of the history of the ancient and medieval attitudes towards the relationship between thinking and feeling, and her argument that the premodern discourse of emotions underwent significant development, suggest the need to consider the attitude towards this relationship in earlier texts. Therefore, exploring the relationship between thinking and feeling in earlier texts can help us trace the development of the medieval poetic discourse of emotions. Moreover, focusing exclusively on the medieval philosophical views of this relationship can help us reach sharper conclusions regarding the evolution of the medieval philosophical discourse of emotions and its impact on the poetry of the period.

The medical approach to the study of emotions is also adopted by M. C. Bodden in her essay on disordered grief in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale* and *Clerk's Tale*.<sup>92</sup> Bodden aligns masculine grief with the courtly ideals of gentility and feminine grief with courtly suffering, and argues that the grief expressed by women in the *Franklin's Tale* and the *Clerk's Tale* is less complex and elaborate than the grief expressed by men. She thus explains that there was a cultural perception of intense suffering as a marker of the individual's nobility. Bodden proposes that the heroes' nobility of character in the *Franklin's Tale* and *Clerk's Tale* is related to erotic suffering. The study's contextualised discussion of grief reflects the author's awareness of the importance of historicising the research on medieval emotions. Yet, though Bodden discusses grief in the Middle Ages as a socio-physical phenomenon, she does not

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<sup>91</sup> Saunders, 'Affective Reading: Chaucer, Women and Romance', *Chaucer Review*, 51 (2016), 11-30.

<sup>92</sup> M. C. Bodden, 'Disordered Grief and Fashionable Afflictions in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale* and the *Clerk's Tale*', in *Grief and Gender: 700-1700*, ed. by Jennifer C. Vaught and Lynne Dickson Bruckner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 51-63. This edited collection of essays provides the most useful source on the relationship between gender and grief. The book includes a variety of essays which examine grief as a gendered emotions and adopt different modern approaches to the study of grief, including the modern framework of psychoanalysis.

consult the medieval medical treatises which discussed cures for grief. The only text that she actually cites is the Renaissance physician Jaques Ferrand's *Treatise on Lovesickness*. With more focus on the psychology of grief, rather than the physiology of grief, this thesis seeks to analyse the main characters' displacement of grief, among other emotions, in the context of contemporary ethics that governed the expression of emotions.

A study which reads emotions in Middle English texts, including Chaucer, as an embodied physiological experience related to gender is Valerie Allen's essay on shame.<sup>93</sup> Allen analyses shame as an embodied emotion and pays particular attention to its manifestation on the female body. She discusses Middle English romances and some of Chaucer's works, but she is particularly interested in penitential manuals like *Ancrene Wisse*. In her discussion of shame, Allen draws upon sources which include Augustine's, Aristotle's, Aquinas' and Lollard views. She observes that shame is more pronounced in women where it is associated with sexual honour while for men, it is associated with chivalry. Allen explains the association of shame with females with reference to the medieval belief that viewed women as more physical beings than men. She, therefore, dedicates a significant part of her study to the discussion of topics like virginity, nakedness and women's confession.<sup>94</sup> Although Allen is mainly interested in penitential manuals, her analysis of shame as an embodied emotion supports my discussion of Middle English romance's gendered discourse of emotions in general, and *King Horn*'s portrayal of love and grief as gendered emotions in particular.

A similar interest in the relationship between emotions and gender is also encountered in Gary Lim's essay on desire and anxiety in *Troilus and Criseyde*.<sup>95</sup> Lim argues that the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde is charged with anxious desire. The study proposes a reference to medieval cognitive psychology, but it primarily benefits from Melanie Klein's theory of psychological positions, Lacan's and Freud's theories of anxiety and Augustine's

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<sup>93</sup> Valerie Allen, 'Waxing Red: Shame and the Body, Shame and the Soul', in *The Representation of Women's Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. by Lisa Perfetti (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2005), pp. 191-210.

<sup>94</sup> An interest in the embodiment of emotions is also found in a number of studies that focus on the topic of swooning. An example of this is Barry Windeatt, 'The Art of Swooning in Middle English', in *Medieval Latin and Middle English literature: Essays in Honour of Jill Mann*, ed. by Christopher Cannon and Maura Nolan (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2011), pp. 211-30.

<sup>95</sup> Gary Lim, "'Thus Gan He Make a Mirour of His Mynde': Fragmented Memories and Anxious Desire in *Troilus and Criseyde*", *Neophilologus*, 93 (2009), 339-56.

opinions of managing anxiety. Drawing upon Kleinian psychoanalysis, Lim analyses how Troilus experiences anxiety whenever he is unable to control his desire or when the fulfilment of his desire is delayed. He also explains that the manner by which Troilus falls in love has a direct impact on the trauma he suffers later on when he loses Criseyde.<sup>96</sup> Lim's association between desire and anxiety is useful to my analysis of Rymenhild's, Guy's and Gawain's emotional conflicts. However, instead of using modern theories of anxiety to analyse the relationship between desire and anxiety, this thesis seeks to draw on the Thomist, voluntarist and nominalist accounts of the emotions of the sensitive and intellectual appetites respectively.

One of the very few studies that adopts a philosophical approach to analyse love and its impact on the formation of gender identity in Chaucer's writings is Saunders's essay on love in *Troilus and Criseyde*.<sup>97</sup> The essay begins with a discussion of the notion of courtly love and its opposition to refined love.<sup>98</sup> Saunders explains that Chaucer's portrayal of love in terms of duality is a reflection of the complicated medieval attitude towards love. She observes that *Troilus and Criseyde* provides a rich scope for the exploration of the different kinds of love, and considers the sources that informed Chaucer's portrayal of these kinds. The essay refers to the impact of Boccaccio on the pattern of the narrative and the influence of Boethius on the philosophical orientation of the speeches of the romance's central characters. Saunders also recognises a Boethian impact on the text's existential questions which are related to the tension

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<sup>97</sup> Saunders, 'Love and the Making of the Self: *Troilus and Criseyde*', in *A Concise Companion to Chaucer*, ed. by Corinne Saunders (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 134-55.

<sup>98</sup> Earlier scholarship on love and desire in Chaucer's writing is relatively vast. Some of these studies are concerned with the different types of love that Chaucer portrays. An example of these studies is Gerald Morgan's article 'Chaucer's Adaptation of Boccaccio's Temple of Venus in *The Parliament of Fowls*', *The Review of English Studies*, 56 (2005), 1-36. Morgan argues that Boccaccio's description of the Temple of Venus is central to his representation of love in *The Parliament of Fowls*. Some scholars have been concerned with queer emotions such as Britten Harwood in 'Same-Sex Desire in the Unconscious of Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*', *Exemplaria*, 13 (2001), 99-135; also Lynch, 'Diana's 'Bowe Ybroke': Impotence, Desire and Virginitie in Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*', in *Menacing Virgins: Representing Virgins in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. by Kathleen Coyne Kelly and Marina Leslie (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), pp. 83-96. Lynch argues that the *Parliament of Fowls* represents an Oedipal moment during which the narrator experiences the fear to return to the pre-Oedipal unity with the mother.

between predestination and free will. Accordingly, she argues that the three main characters can be seen as representatives of the three philosophical stances. Saunders also proposes that in his representation of love as a series of paradoxes, Chaucer is indebted to the conventions of Petrarchan poetry. In its exploration of the effect of Boccaccio and Boethius on Chaucer's attitude towards love, this article supports the romance genre's engagement with philosophy. Saunders's discussion of the impact of ancient philosophy on Chaucer's portrayal of the relationship between the will and predestination presents a firm basis for my argument concerning the intersection between the medieval philosophical and poetic discourses of emotions.<sup>99</sup>

A review of the earlier scholarship on emotions in Middle English romance demonstrates that emotions were discussed indirectly, and mainly in the context of gender studies, before they became the subject of attention *per se*. An example of the studies which discusses emotions indirectly is Bart Veldhoen's essay on psychology in Middle English romance.<sup>100</sup> The essay is concerned with structural patterning in romances such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Sir Orfeo* and *Sir Launfal*, and how this structural patterning is related to self-discovery. Though the essay begins with *Sir Gawain* and *Sir Orfeo*, most of the psychological analysis is focused on *Sir Launfal*. Veldhoen suggests that the narrative patterns in these romances are similar to the patterns found in psychoanalysis. Accordingly, he applies the Freudian psychological patterns of the ego, superego and the id to narrative patterns in *Sir*

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<sup>99</sup> In this review I only cite the studies that analyse the relationship between gender and emotions in Chaucer from a psychological, physiological or philosophical point of view. Yet there are many studies which analyse this relationship from a sociological point of view. An example of a full-length study of this kind is Travis William Johnson, 'Affective Communities: Masculinity and the Discourse of Emotion in Middle English literature' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Iowa, 2011: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4901&context=etd>; accessed 3 December, 2018). Johnson examines four Middle English poems from the late fourteenth to the early fifteenth centuries; namely *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, *St. Erkenwald*, Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale* and Lydgate's *Bycorne and Chychevache*. Through exploring the four masculine communities of clergymen, knights, university students and merchants, Johnson argues that emotion was a complex identity discourse during the Middle Ages.

<sup>100</sup> Bart Veldhoen, 'Psychology in Middle English Romance: Preliminaries to readings of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Sir Orfeo* and *Sir Launfal*', in *Companion to Middle English Romance*, ed. by H. Aertsen and A. A. MacDonald (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990), pp. 101-28.

*Launfal*. In addition, and given the fact that romances convey a collective experience, Veldhoen proposes an analysis of the collective unconscious in the light of Carl Jung's analytical mode. He argues that Jung's theory of individuation offers a group of relationships which resemble the romance's underlying structures of characterisation and action. The author thus reads Triamour's relationship with Launfal as one that is based on love as a source of civilised social behaviour which complements the ego. Veldhoen's brief discussion of the theme of self-discovery in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is relevant to my analysis of Gawain's realisation of his strong desire for life. However, by adopting the fourteenth-century nominalist discourse of emotions, this thesis seeks a deeper analysis of the role of emotions in uncovering the hero's humanity.

A similar modern psychological approach is employed by Paul Megna in his thesis on emotional ethics in Middle English literature.<sup>101</sup> Megna is primarily concerned with examining medieval emotions in the context of modern neurology. He analyses individual emotions in each of *Piers Plowman*, *Pearl*, Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. He discusses the modern theories of neuroscience that treat emotions as significant to decision-making and refers to modern theorists like Freud, Descartes and Spinoza. In addition to neurology as a major approach, the study draws upon the history of emotions. Megna proposes that the texts he discusses endow the audience with a kind of emotional intelligence by helping them to behave in an ethical way. Yet, though the study's title suggests a concern with medieval ethics, and despite its mention of voluntarism as part of the Cotton Nero manuscript's historical context, it is more concerned with post-medieval and modern neurological approaches to emotions.

Emotions are also, indirectly, discussed in studies which focus on social life in Middle English romance. An example is Felicity Riddy's essay on family and marriage in Middle English romance.<sup>102</sup> Riddy adopts a sociological approach to the study of the relationship between the state of marriage in medieval England and the representation of love and marriage

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<sup>101</sup> Paul Megna, 'Emotional Ethics in Middle English Literature' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California Santa Barbara, 2015: <https://www.alexandria.ucsb.edu/downloads/7p88cg76p>; accessed 22 November, 2018).

<sup>102</sup> Felicity Riddy, 'Middle English Romance: Family, Marriage, Intimacy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. by Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 235-52.

in Middle English romance. She argues that the plots of Middle English romances derive from the crises of nuclear families and lineage. In the section in which she discusses Middle English romance as a site of the reconfiguration of love relationships under the influence of companionate marriage, Riddy explains how the companionate model of marriage was dominant and that marriages were less frequently arranged in late medieval England. Accordingly, she discusses the impact of this social development on the portrayal of sentimental relationships in Middle English romance and suggests that an actual form of romantic love existed.<sup>103</sup> The impact of social development on the portrayal of the relationship between love and marriage in Middle English romance which Riddy proposes is useful. However, her conclusion that romantic love existed cannot be built on a very brief discussion of the poem's context. A detailed consideration of the period's religious and philosophical sexual ethics, which this thesis attempts, can reveal that the celebration of a rational form of love continued to influence the state of marriage in England during the later Middle Ages.

More recently, the scholarship on emotions in Middle English romance, though still concerned with socio-political issues, has become more prominently focused on emotions. A study which focuses on the political dimension of expressing emotions through tears is Raluca Radulescu's essay on tears in Malory's *Morte Darthur*.<sup>104</sup> Radulescu observes that this physical expression of emotions is charged with political power. She consequently argues that the displacement of emotions through tears has a crucial impact on the narrative's public events. Through focusing on an emotionally-charged episode in the last book of the *Morte*, Radulescu suggests that tears, and the emotions that cause them, form part of a well-defined response to 'charged *political* moments'. In her discussion of the political dimension of expressing emotions, Radulescu is particularly concerned with the social context in which these emotions were expressed. She thus pays special attention to the period's code of conduct established by

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<sup>103</sup> This focus on love and marriage is also the subject of Erik Kooper's essay 'Love and Marriage in the Middle English Romances', in *Companion to Middle English Romance*, pp. 171- 87. Unlike Riddy, Kooper argues that the medieval attitude towards love and sexual desire resulted in marriages that were not based on love. To explain the romances' negative attitude towards sexual intercourse outside marriage, Kooper gives the example of Freine and Guroun in *Lay le Freine*. He also mentions a number of romance heroines who suffered from such kinds of marriages, namely, Rymenhild, Melior, Melidor, Josian and Isoud.

<sup>104</sup> Radulescu, 'Tears and Lies: Emotions and the Ideals of Malory's Arthurian World', in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature*, pp. 105-22.



the educational treatises which were popular at Malory's time. Though Radulescu analyses a late fifteenth-century text, her focus on the period's treatises on conduct as the source that informed Malory's portrayal of tears and their political significance supports the discussion of this thesis regarding the impact of contemporary conduct literature on the medieval poetic discourse of emotions.

The socio-political context of romances and its impact on the attitude towards emotions is also discussed by Marcel Elias in his study of Middle English Charlemagne romances.<sup>105</sup> Elias first discusses how the Middle English romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were particularly engaged with the crusading history. He justifies his focus on the Middle English Charlemagne romances by arguing that they are more fraught with emotional depictions than their *chansons de geste* source material which depicts a limited range of emotions. Elias explains that the late medieval society's attitude towards crusading was divided between enthusiasm and dissatisfaction. Eventually, he proposes that this mixed affective response to crusading is reflected in the period's literature. Elias thus concludes that the representation of emotions in these texts provides an insight into the motive behind their composition and the impact they expected to achieve. This thesis seeks to discuss Middle English romance's engagement with crusading history in the context of the intellectualist and voluntarist views of warfare as a religious duty and as an expression of the love of God and the common good.

A powerful study which analyses the impact of philosophical ideas on the portrayal of emotions in Middle English romance is, again, Saunders's essay on the interconnection between mind, body and affect in medieval English Arthurian romance.<sup>106</sup> Saunders explores the interdependence of mind, body and affect in English Arthurian romances such as *Ywain and Gawain*, Thomas Chester's *Sir Launfal*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Malory's *Morte Darthur*. She suggests that the romances' attitude towards emotions is highly informed by the medieval understanding of the connection between minds and bodies. Saunders explains that the theory of the humours was central to medieval medical thought and discusses how the different philosophers from Galen to Augustine held rather diverse views regarding the

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<sup>105</sup> Elias, 'Mixed Feelings in the Middle English Charlemagne Romances: Emotional Reconfiguration and the Failures of Crusading Practices in the Otuel Texts', in *New Medieval Literatures*, Vol. XVI, ed. by Laura Ashe et al. (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2016), pp. 172-212.

<sup>106</sup> Saunders, 'Mind, Body and Affect in Medieval English Arthurian Romance'.

situation of intellectual qualities. Significantly, Saunders notes that though the medical approach dominated the medieval study of emotions, important questions related to the psychology of emotions were highlighted by some medieval theologians and natural philosophers such as Aquinas. She then argues that Middle English Arthurian romance is based on the ‘antithesis’ of reason and passion and that the four texts the essay examines all treat mind, body and affect as significantly interconnected. Indeed, this thesis discusses how the antithesis between reason and passion was central to the philosophical debate of the period from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries and was the major subject of the controversy between intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism, which are the three approaches this thesis uses to analyse the romances’ attitudes towards emotions. These three schools’ different attitudes towards emotions reflect the development of the medieval discourse of emotions. Therefore, analysing the impact of this development on Middle English romance’s attitude towards the relation between emotions and reason is a major aim of this thesis.

This thesis’ concern with the development of the medieval discourse of emotions, both ethical and poetic, is central to the history of emotions as a framework for the current scholarship on medieval emotions. Investigating the development of the medieval ethical discourse of emotions has been highlighted as crucial to the understanding of the various attitudes towards emotions during the Middle Ages.<sup>107</sup> The major historians of emotions have been suggesting the need for historically-oriented studies that consider the relationship between emotions and change.<sup>108</sup> Whether the focus is on the role of language (William Reddy), or society (Barbara Rosenwein) in expressing emotions, investigating the development of

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<sup>107</sup> The essays in the edited volume *Understanding Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by M. Champion and A. Lynch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015) deal with various discourses of emotions: philosophical, theological and rhetorical in a way that shows how the medieval and early modern perceptions of emotions were influenced by the interaction of these discourses.

<sup>108</sup> A number of historically-oriented and theoretically-informed studies of emotions can be found in the new journal, *Emotions: History, Culture, Society*, ed. by Katie Barclay, Andrew Lynch and Giovanni Tarantino, and published by Brill on behalf of the Society for the History of Emotions. The journal’s aim is to show how emotions were understood from antiquity to the present. The last issue, which investigates the history of empathy from the medieval to the modern periods was published in November 2018. One of the articles in this issue, Juanita Feros Ruys, ‘An Alternative History of Medieval Empathy: The Scholastics and *Compassio*’, pp. 175-91, focuses on the impact of the ancient stoics on the medieval perception of empathy.

expressing emotions over time remains fundamental to the project of the history of emotions.<sup>109</sup> Dealing with the medieval period, Rosenwein has repeatedly pointed to the importance of adopting a historical approach to the study of emotions that takes into account the ‘non hydraulic theories on emotions’ and focuses, instead, on the psychology of emotions.<sup>110</sup> This need has also been implied by Saunders who argues that the distinction between mind and body was ‘more fluid than in post Cartesian thought’, and how new ideas about the role of intellect, will and affect emerged.<sup>111</sup>

The above review, in which I evaluate most of the studies which have demonstrated a serious preoccupation with the topic of emotions, shows that although the amount of research on emotions in medieval literature is growing, the earlier criticism on emotions in medieval romance in general, and Middle English romance in particular, is not vast. The majority of the studies on emotions in literature focus on the early modern period and the periods that follow. There are studies which discuss emotions in medieval literature but they either lack a methodological framework or tend to be context-less. Studies which express an interest in contextualising the discussion of emotions in medieval literature mostly focus on the sociology of emotions rather than the psychology of emotions. These studies are mainly concerned with how certain historical (Burns), religious (Riddy) or political (Elias) events had an impact on social attitudes towards emotions. Significantly, studies which adopt a theoretical framework to investigate emotions, and I include most of them in the above review, usually draw upon a modern or an ancient approach. The modern approaches that these studies use are mainly Jungian (Veldhoen), Lacanian (Lim), Kleinian (Veldhoen), and the psychoanalytic approaches

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<sup>109</sup> See Trigg who also explains that medieval studies are distinguished for their concern with foregrounding the authors’ responses to their predecessors, students and the different elements of their environment, pp. 9-10.

<sup>110</sup> See Rosenwein, ‘Worrying about Emotions in History’, *AHR*, 107 (2002), 821-45 (p. 834). This concern with emotions in history also characterises the work of the historians who do not deal with the medieval period. An example is Monique Scheer’s ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion’, *History and Theory*, 51 (2012), 193-220 (p. 205). In this essay, Scheer views emotions as cultural practices that are informed by historical change. This relation between emotions and history is also discussed by Jan Palmper who discusses the development of the philosophical discourse of emotions from the Constructivists to the Universalists.

<sup>111</sup> Saunders, ‘Mind, Body and Affect in Medieval English Arthurian Romance’, p. 32.

of Oatley and Tan (Larrington). Some of these studies combine both modern and ancient approaches; primarily Aristotle and Lacan (Rosenfeld), or Augustine, Freud, Lacan, Descartes and Spinoza (Megna). The studies which draw upon an ancient approach mainly focus on the physiology of emotions. Hence, most of these studies reflect an interest in the medical discourse of emotions and the theory of humours (Kaempfer and Saunders). There are also some studies which combine their concern with the physical manifestation of emotions with a social (Bodden), religious (McNamer and Allen) or political interest (Radulescu). The very few studies that have adopted a medieval moral philosophical approach to the study of emotions have focused on the impact of Boccaccio's philosophy on Chaucer's writing (Saunders).

The focus of the earlier scholarship on late medieval texts, especially Chaucer, reflects a lack of attention to the romances of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It also highlights the importance of tracing the development of the poetic discourse of emotions leading up to Chaucer's era. The review shows that the few studies which are concerned with ethics do not draw upon a unified medieval theoretical approach to study the relationship between emotions and ethics in Middle English romance. Studies which point to a relationship between medieval ideas and the literature of the period do not recognise that there are three major moral philosophical schools of thought of the period from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries with three different discourses of emotions. The dominance of the medical discourse of emotions and Galen's humoral theory suggests that the medieval moral philosophical discourse of emotions has been seldom used as an approach to investigate emotions in Middle English romance.

Hence, the above review justifies the valuable contribution of the present study to the current scholarship on emotions in medieval literature. In fact, a full-length study that explores the overlap between the moral philosophical and poetic discourses of emotions does not exist. Though useful and powerful, earlier scholarship scarcely touches on the impact of the development of the medieval ethical discourse of emotions on the representation of emotions in Middle English romance. There is no study which draws upon the works of the three major medieval theorists of emotions, Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham, to analyse the impact of this development on the portrayal of emotions in Middle English romance. A consideration of the gradual evolution of the medieval moral philosophical discourse of emotions is needed to understand Middle English romance's varied attitudes towards emotions. This is mainly because the shift in the romance's attitude towards the role of emotions in moral life and the relationship between emotions and reason cannot be explained without understanding the shift

in the philosophical discourse of emotions from the intellectualism of the early thirteenth century to the nominalism of the late fourteenth century.

My approach to the study of emotions is one of the perspectives that the leading scholars in the field have been encouraging. It is with the questions suggested by those scholars, and which have not yet received enough attention, that this study is concerned. This thesis thus focuses on emotions and ethics in Middle English romance. It proposes a nuanced investigation of the relationship between emotions, reason and the will that takes into consideration the varied attitudes of the medieval ethical discourse of emotions towards this relationship, and how this variation is reflected in the poetry of the period. The thesis investigates the overlap of the poetic and philosophical discourses of emotions in *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and is particularly concerned with how the transformed philosophical context of these three romances had an impact on their portrayal of the relationship between emotions and ethics. By drawing upon intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism as the three major medieval schools of thought and their discourses of emotions, this thesis traces a development in the attitude towards emotions that is reflected in the poetry of the period. It demonstrates that in earlier romances emotions are treated as movements of the sensitive appetite which need to be controlled by reason. However, with the emergence of the voluntarists and their introduction of the will as a free power moved by passions and independent from the intellect, emotions began to be treated as acts of the will that are significant to judgment. Hence, the study shows that the standards of good kingship in *King Horn* depend heavily on how Horn can control his emotions using his reason. Conversely, it argues that in the early fourteenth-century *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, Guy's emotions are presented as voluntary passions that reflect the freedom of his will and have a significant impact on his character development. The thesis then discusses how, unlike the voluntarists who identified the freedom of the will with the affections for justice, the Ockhamist nominalists believed that the liberty of the will is that of indifference and they did not restrict the freedom of the will to the experience of spiritual emotions. It thus analyses *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as a nominalist text in which the hero's emotions are not driven by the desire towards charity; rather, they are moved by the affections towards the self.

#### I.4 The Medieval Moral Philosophical Discourse of Emotions

The ethical dimension of medieval poetry in general and medieval romance in particular, which is discussed at the beginning of this introduction, suggests the importance of analysing the intersection between the medieval poetic and ethical discourses of emotions. In addition, the justification of choosing this approach is related to the unique relationship between the medieval academic discourse and popular culture, as scholars have agreed about a direct contact between scholastic philosophers, theologians and lay people. In her book about English Friars, Beryl Smalley argues that the number of non-specialists who were attending philosophical debates was significant.<sup>112</sup> Some scholars have also argued that medieval theologians and philosophers used to take the unlearned people into consideration when preaching. Marcia Colish, for example, explains that medieval theologians were accustomed to preaching in the vernacular because they were aware that ‘the price of their survival was adaptation and the explication and defence of religious ideas’ in a persuasive and comprehensible language.<sup>113</sup> Also, in his study on the college system in the later Middle Ages, Astrik Gabriel notes that fourteenth-century philosophers were constantly considering new ways to make their ideas accessible to the lay population. He explains how these philosophers developed their method of disputation from one that depends on the defence of their scholarly ideas to one that depends on persuasion and discussion.<sup>114</sup> More importantly, there appeared a serious tendency to popularise philosophical ideas and bridge the gap between academic and popular discourses. For example, some books, the aim of which was to make philosophical ideas more accessible to lay readers, were published. An example of these publications is the English Dominican Philosopher Robert Holcot’s (d. 1349) commentary on the *Book of Wisdom, Super Libros Sapientiae*. The major aim of this book was to spread nominalism among

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<sup>112</sup> Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 29.

<sup>113</sup> Marcia Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 357.

<sup>114</sup> Astrik Gabriel, ‘The College System in the Fourteenth-Century Universities’, in *The Forward Movement of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. by Francis Lee Utley (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1961), pp. 79-124 (p. 100).

the non-specialist population.<sup>115</sup> Significantly, this book was a bestseller in the late Middle Ages and is believed to have been one of the source for Chaucer's approach to nominalism versus determinism in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*.<sup>116</sup>

The development of the relationship between learned and lay cultures in late medieval England was positively influenced by both the rise in the use of English as a language of religious instruction and the development of book production. With the increase in the production of manuscripts that contain didactic material from the middle of the thirteenth century onward, religious texts became available to 'a non-clerical, non-specialist audience'.<sup>117</sup> The availability of religious texts was affected by the replacement of parchment with paper, which resulted in a wider circulation of religious texts.<sup>118</sup> In addition to the replacement of parchment with paper, there emerged the use of illustrations to make religious and philosophical ideas more comprehensible to the unspecialised.<sup>119</sup> Gwenfair Walters Adams argues that 'woodblock prints, stained glass, and rood screen painting made images of saints easily accessible even to the poor'.<sup>120</sup> The lay population's access to didactic texts was further

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<sup>115</sup> On this; see Richard Utz, 'Negotiating the paradigm: Literary Nominalism and the Theory and Practice of Rereading Late Medieval Texts', in *Literary Nominalism and the Theory of Rereading Late Medieval Texts: A New Research Paradigm*, ed. by Richard Utz (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), pp. 1-30 (p. 14); also Janet Coleman, *English Literature in History, 1350-1400: Medieval Readers and Writers* (London: Hutchinson 1981), pp. 263-65.

<sup>116</sup> On the wide circulation of the book and how it was available in any good library; see William Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 145; on the book as a source for Chaucer's *The Nun's Priest's Tale*; see Grover C. Furr, 'The Nun's Priest's Tale and Nominalism: A Preliminary Study', in *Literary Nominalism and the Theory of Rereading Late Medieval Texts*, pp. 135-46.

<sup>117</sup> See the introduction to *Culture of Piety, Medieval English Devotional Literature in Translation*, ed. by Anne Clarke Bartlett and Thomas H. Bestul (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 9-10.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>119</sup> Gwenfair Walters Adams, *Visions in Late Medieval England: Lay Spirituality and Sacred Glimpses of the Hidden Worlds of Faith* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 4-5. More recently, Michael Johnston has argued that the fourteenth-century revolution in book production, more specifically the spread of the technology of booklets, led to the production of manuscripts for the households of minor aristocracy in England; see *Romance and the Gentry in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 12.

<sup>120</sup> Adams, p. 5.

facilitated by the rise in the use of vernacular languages as mediums for religious writing, which resulted in the growth of lay literacy.<sup>121</sup> As early as 1250, devotional literature began to be written in English, and after Lollard movement in the late fourteenth century, the Bible itself was translated into English.<sup>122</sup> More importantly, the emergence of mystery plays and miracle plays as two forms of popular drama made theological ideas more accessible to the lay population.<sup>123</sup> In fact, all this goes to suggest that there was an intersection between the medieval learned and lay cultures, and that both lay authors and readers of late medieval romance were aware of contemporary theological and philosophical debates.

A number of scholars, though not focusing on the topic of emotions, have suggested an intersection between medieval scholasticism and medieval popular literature.<sup>124</sup> Among the earliest was C. S. Lewis, who discussed the impact of medieval academic science, and mentioned Augustine, Boethius and Albertus Magnus, on popular poetry and its presentation of themes like providence and dreams.<sup>125</sup> The focus on late medieval texts, Chaucer's writings in particular, also characterises the scholarship on this intersection. Sheila Delany argues that the theological milieu of the fourteenth century had a great influence on early fifteenth-century poetry, especially Chaucer's poetry.<sup>126</sup> Similarly, Stephen Knight argues that the shift in Chaucer's method of characterisation is related to the shift to nominalism.<sup>127</sup> Focusing also on Chaucer, Robertson proposes a connection between love and physics in Chaucer's dream vision

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<sup>121</sup> See the introduction to *Culture of Piety*, p. 10.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>123</sup> Adams, p. 5.

<sup>124</sup> See Kay, *The Place of Thought: the Complexity of One in Late Medieval French Didactic Poetry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Alastair Minnis, *Magister Amoris: the Roman de la Rose and Vernacular Hermeneutics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Simpson, *Sciences and the Self in Medieval Poetry: Alan of Lille's Anticlaudianus and John Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Katharine Breen, *Imagining an English Reading Public, 1150-1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Glending Olson, *Literature as Recreation in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

<sup>125</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

<sup>126</sup> Sheila Delany, 'Undoing Substantial Connection: The Late Medieval Attack on Analogical Thought', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 5 (1972), 31-52.

<sup>127</sup> Stephen Knight, 'Chaucer - A Modern Writer?', *Balcony*, 2 (1965) 37-43 (p. 37).



in the *House of Fame* and the *Parliament of Fowls*.<sup>128</sup> In addition to emphasising the impact of the medieval ethical discourses on Chaucer's writing, some scholars have been concerned with exploring the religious implications of Chrétien de Troyes' writing. To suggest an exchange between medieval romance and medieval religious texts, Matilda Bruckner argues that Chrétien's grail story is an example of the tradition which combines religious and literary discourses.<sup>129</sup>

The above brief survey of the earlier criticism on the intersection between medieval popular and academic discourses reflects a focus on the literature of the later Middle Ages. Most of these studies focus on French texts (Bruckner), and the studies which are interested in Middle English poetry are mainly concerned with Chaucer (Delany, Knight and Robertson). In fact, the majority of these studies highlight this intersection in relation to religious themes (Lewis, Bruckner and Delany). Also, great attention has been given to the exploration of the impact of Aristotelian physics on medieval poetry (Robertson). The review thus shows that the intersection between the scholastic and popular discourses in relation to their attitude towards emotions is not afforded enough attention. This thesis adopts medieval moral philosophy as a theoretical approach to the study of emotions in Middle English romance. In its investigation of the overlap of the poetic and philosophical discourses, this thesis not only focuses on the period before Chaucer, but also highlights the dialectic between the medieval academic and popular discourses in a specific genre, the genre of Middle English romance, and in relation to the specific topic of emotions.<sup>130</sup>

#### **I.4.1 The Medieval Discourse of Emotions from Intellectualism to Nominalism**

As the medieval philosophical discourse of emotions was subject to constant development, there was no single theory of emotions that dominated the whole period of the Middle Ages. A

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<sup>128</sup> Robertson, p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> Matilda Bruckner, 'Weaving a Tapestry from Biblical Exegesis to Romance Textuality: Caught in the Web of Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*', in *Thinking Medieval Romance*, ed. by Katherine C. Little and Nicola McDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 93-113.

<sup>130</sup> A justification of the use of the three approaches of intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism will also be provided in the first, second and third chapters respectively.

major shift in the history of this development, which had a great impact on the reconceptualisation of emotions, is the shift away from the Stoic understanding of emotions in terms of the dualism of vices and virtues. The beginning of this shift is traced back to Aquinas' thirteenth-century conception of emotions. However, it was not given its full expression until the emergence of voluntarism and nominalism.<sup>131</sup>

The various medieval opinions regarding the role of emotions in moral life revolved around the differences between Aristotelian intellectualism and Augustinian voluntarism. As a result, the different schools of thought of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries presented competing views regarding the relationship between emotions, reason and the will. A major area of disagreement between these schools was the relation between the will and the intellect, and whether the will has primacy over the intellect or not.<sup>132</sup> In the period from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries, these varied opinions of the relationship between emotions, reason and the will resulted in three medieval schools of thought, namely intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism. While the intellectualists treated emotions as sensory impulses which need to be supervised by reason in order not to degrade us morally, the Franciscan voluntarists and the nominalists believed that emotions play a positive role in the individual's moral life. Unlike the intellectualists, they believed that emotions are central to the individual's moral character and the development of values.<sup>133</sup>

Aquinas, the medieval advocate of intellectualism, was the first (medieval) theorist to write a comprehensive theory of emotions based on Aristotle's discussion of emotions in his *Nichomahean Ethics* and *Rhetoric*. Though his predecessors, mainly Albert the Great, had discussed emotions, a nuanced and autonomous theory of the emotions was not available before Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*.<sup>134</sup> Aquinas discusses emotions in the second book of his *Summa Theologica*, where he provides a general account that includes a definition of the passions and

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<sup>131</sup> For the history of the development of the medieval discourse of emotions; see Boquet and Nagy, 'Medieval Sciences of Emotions', pp. 26-44.

<sup>132</sup> See King, 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', pp. 167-88.

<sup>133</sup> See Bonnie Kent, 'The Good Will According to Gerald Odonis, Duns Scotus and William of Ockham', *Franciscan Studies*, 46 (1986), 119-39.

<sup>134</sup> See King, 'Emotions', in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. by Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 209-26; also Paul Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2002).

their relationship to ethics. He explains that the passions of the soul do not belong to the rational appetite or to the vegetative soul but, rather, to the sensitive appetite. Aquinas recognises eleven types of passions and classifies them into concupiscible and irascible. He argues that the concupiscible passions precede the irascible and they include love and hate, desire and aversion, and joy and sorrow. The irascible passions are also classified into three groups: hope and despair, fear and daring, and anger. Regarding the order of the passions, Aquinas argues that love and hatred are first, desire and aversion are second, hope and despair are third, fear and daring are fourth, anger is fifth, and the last are joy and sadness.<sup>135</sup> He then discusses how emotions occur, their physical symptoms, their effects and how to raise their benefits through restraining them.<sup>136</sup>

A major argument that characterises Aquinas' intellectualist discourse of emotions is his discussion of the possibility of controlling our emotional responses. Aquinas treats emotions as passive potencies of the sensitive appetite that can be indirectly controlled by reason.<sup>137</sup> He believes that it is natural for the rational appetite to guide the sensitive appetite and argues that what distinguishes humans from animals is the fact that human passions and will are moved by reason's command. Aquinas therefore explains how the interaction between the passions and reason results in individual habitus and emphasises that the virtue of a particular habitus derives from the inclination to obey reason. When the individual's habitus follows the guidance of reason and is directed towards the perfection of human nature, it inclines us to virtue. However, when it ignores the guidance of reason, the habitus inclines us to vices.<sup>138</sup>

The affective pole to Aquinas' intellectualist philosophy is the voluntarism that governed the fourteenth-century discourse of emotions. Voluntarism was first represented by John Duns Scotus, and then his student William of Ockham. While the Thomist intellectualists emphasised the role of reason in our relationship with God and His creatures, the voluntarists

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<sup>135</sup> Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* II, q. 25; for a discussion of the impact of Aristotle on Aquinas and his classification of emotions; see King, 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', pp. 8-10.

<sup>136</sup> Boquet and Nagy, p. 43.

<sup>137</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 6, art. 7; also King, 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', p. 14.

<sup>138</sup> See chapter four in Nicholas E Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

focused on the role of emotions.<sup>139</sup> The voluntarists believed that Aquinas' intellectual discourse of emotions neglect the inherited freedom and contingency of human action. Both philosophers, Scotus and Ockham, challenged Aquinas' view that emotions can be controlled only indirectly. Following Augustine, rather than Aristotle, they argued that emotions are acts of the will that have volitional components.<sup>140</sup>

Scotus followed Aquinas' division of emotions into concupiscible and irascible. In the third book of his *Ordinatio*, he discusses pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, love and hate as the concupiscible passions, and fear, strength, despair, hope and anger as the irascible passions. Scotus was the first medieval philosopher to provide a theory of emotions that challenged Aquinas' division of psychological faculties into sensitive and intellective appetites.<sup>141</sup> He opposed Aquinas' traditional view which situates emotions in the lower faculty of the soul and proposed that emotions not only belong to the sensitive appetite, but also to the intellective appetite. Scotus thus rejected the distinction between the affective and cognitive faculties of the soul.<sup>142</sup> Unlike Aquinas, who argued for the supremacy of the intellect over the will, Scotus argued that the will is a self-determined power.<sup>143</sup> In fact, Scotus' primary contributions to the medieval discourse of emotions are his belief that emotions can have a cognitive element, and his subsequent introduction of the passions of the will. He recognised two inclinations of the will which he described as the affections towards justice and the affections towards self. As a voluntarist, Scotus argued that the will, according to the affections it acts on, can choose to follow the judgment of the intellect or not. Yet, though he proposed that the will can move itself towards happiness or justice, Scotus believed that the affections for justice represent a stronger indication of the freedom of the will. Hence, despite his rejection of the supremacy of

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<sup>139</sup> On this and how the voluntarists gave primacy to the will and its passions over the intellect, see Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics from Socrates to the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 709.

<sup>140</sup> Thomas Osborne, *Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), p. 223.

<sup>141</sup> See Alan Perreiah, 'Scotus on Human Emotions', *Franciscan Studies*, 56 (1998) 325-45.

<sup>142</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 33, q.1; also discussed in Drummond, p. 53.

<sup>143</sup> See Bernardine M. Bonansea, 'Duns Scotus' Voluntarism', in *John Duns Scotus 1265-1965*, ed. by John K. Ryan and Bernardine M. Bonansea (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), pp. 83-121 (p. 99).

the intellect over the will, he emphasised that the preferences of the will are rationally oriented.<sup>144</sup>

Like his teacher, Ockham rejected the intellectualist separation between the different faculties of the soul and believed that thinking and feelings are associated with the same soul. He thus identified emotions in the will and challenged the belief that emotions can only belong to the sensitive appetite.<sup>145</sup> However, as an advocate of extreme voluntarism, and also described as a nominalist, Ockham disagreed with some of Scotus' views. Though Scotus is a voluntarist, his ideas sometimes reflect a degree of ethical determinism. That is why both Aquinas and Scotus are classified as representatives of the *via antiqua* school of thought which believed in the importance of super-structure and universals. On the other hand, Ockham's extremely voluntarist ideas resulted in the emergence of the *via moderna* school of thought.<sup>146</sup>

Ockham and his followers gave particular attention to the immediate experience of the physical world as independent from any metaphysical super-structure. They adopted a secular view of the world which rejected the belief in universal ideas in favour of the particular; a view

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<sup>144</sup> Scotus discusses this in *Ordinatio* IV, d. 49, qq. 9-10; see Irwin, p. 663; on the rational orientation of the will; see Irwin, p. 704.

<sup>145</sup> Martin Pickavé, 'Emotions and Cognition in Later Medieval Philosophy: The Case of Adam Wodeham', in *Emotions and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, pp. 94-115 (p. 98).

<sup>146</sup> N.W. Gilbert, 'Ockham, Wycliffe and the 'Via Moderna'', in *Antique und Moderni*, ed. by A. Zimmermann (New York: Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 1974), pp 85-128; also Heiko Oberman, 'The Shape of Late Medieval Thought: The Birthbangs of the Modern Era', in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, ed. by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 3-25 (p. 12). Aquinas and Scotus are also classified as realist as opposed to the nominalist Ockham. Here, the term 'realism' refers to the medieval philosophical school which, following Aristotle, supported the belief in the existence of universals. Nominalists, on the other hand, denied the existence of universals and only acknowledged the existence of concrete entities. On this; see Claude Panaccio, 'Universals', in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by John Marenbon (Oxford: oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 385-402 (p. 395). Henceforth, the term 'realism' will be used to refer to this medieval school of thought.

that generated a concern with individuals and the particular emotions that move them.<sup>147</sup> Commenting on the secular flavour of Ockham's philosophy, Clark illustrates that the realist philosophy, which preceded Ockham's nominalism, adopted an ethical discourse on emotions according to which human impulses are directed towards universal, Christian Neoplatonic concepts. He then argues that this ethical determinism, which requires individuals to subordinate their intention to higher ends is, however, not a characteristic of the nominalist discourse of emotions.<sup>148</sup>

Emphasising indifference and self-determination, Ockham, unlike Scotus, did not treat the will as essentially rational. He argued that Scotus' belief in the supremacy of the affections for justice is in conflict with his conception of the will as a self-determining power. Hence, Ockham refused to link the freedom of the will with the experience of the affections towards justice and introduced a concept of absolute freedom according to which individuals can work against their own good.<sup>149</sup> Discussing how Ockham's extreme voluntarism is different from that of Scotus' moderate voluntarism, Irwin argues that while Scotus believed that the individual's free will is motivated by the desire for good, Ockham believed that the individual's free will is motivated by choice. He thus concludes that Ockham's views are related to his 'denial that all the virtues aim at good or happiness, but that virtues have different desires and aims'.<sup>150</sup> As a result of this belief in the individual's absolute freedom, the will began to be viewed as a free power which can direct its passions towards good or evil.<sup>151</sup>

Nominalism emerged as a response to the development of the relationship between the individual and the religious institution which took place in the second half of the fourteenth

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<sup>147</sup> Frederick Charles Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Ockham to Suárez* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1953). On Ockham's naturalism; see Rodney Delasanta, 'Chaucer and Strode', *The Chaucer Review*, 26 (1991), 205-18 (p. 216).

<sup>148</sup> David Clark, 'Ockham on Human and Divine Freedom', *Franciscan Studies*, 38 (1978), 122-60 (p. 148); see also Robert Myles, *Chaucerian Realism* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1994), pp. 9, 29.

<sup>149</sup> Irwin, p. 663.

<sup>150</sup> Irwin, p. 711.

<sup>151</sup> On Ockham's conception of the passions; see Gerald Etzkorn, 'Ockham's View of the Human Passions in Light of his Philosophical Anthropology', in *Die Gegenwart Ockhams*, ed. by Rolf Schonberger and Wilhelm Vossenkuhl (Weinheim: Wiley-VCH Acta humaniora, 1990), pp. 265-87; also Hirvonen, *Passions in William Ockham's Philosophical Psychology* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004).

century. Frederick Artz discusses how the people in the early fifteenth century experienced a slow decline of papal power.<sup>152</sup> In his discussion of the nominalist belief that God is not the centre of everything, Heiko Oberman explains that ‘man is no longer primarily a second cause moved by the prime mover ... in the nominalist view man has become ...the partner of God responsible for his own life, society and world’.<sup>153</sup> Accordingly, Ockham’s nominalist ethics, and his conception of the freedom of the will, can be viewed as a response to the wider cultural movement that took place during the fourteenth century. These three schools’ varied discourses on emotions reflect the development of the attitude towards emotions during the high and late Middle Ages. Therefore, and given the impact of scholastic philosophy on medieval popular culture which I discuss above, these three approaches provide a useful context for exploring the evolution of the medieval poetic discourse of emotions from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries.

#### **I.4.2 Emotions and Ethics**

The above discussion shows that despite the disagreement between Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham in relation to the role of emotions in moral life, they all studied emotions in the context of ethics. Unlike modern philosophers who treat ethics and psychology as two separate disciplines, medieval moral philosophers integrated between the study of ethics and psychology. An association between ethics and emotions was originally suggested by Aristotle who, though secular, discussed emotions in the context of ethics.<sup>154</sup> Following Aristotle, the analysis of emotions as major components of human nature, became central to the medieval

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<sup>152</sup> Frederick Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages: An Historical Survey A.D. 200-1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 47-9.

<sup>153</sup> Oberman, p. 15.

<sup>154</sup> On Aristotle’s discussion of emotions in the context of ethics and its impact on the medieval discourse of emotions; see *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy: Descartes to Gender and Science*, ed. by Edward Craig (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1998), p. 287.

study of ethics.<sup>155</sup> Thus, throughout the Middle Ages, emotions were studied in the context of Christian psychology and in relation to virtues and vices.<sup>156</sup>

The fact that emotions in the Middle Ages were studied in the context of ethics has encouraged modern anthropologists and historians of emotions to challenge Norbert Elias's description of medieval emotions as childish. The integration of the study of ethics and emotions is, for example, highlighted by Rosenwein who argues that feelings were assigned moral power and that 'the virtues and vices tradition depended in part on theories of emotions'.<sup>157</sup> Rosenwein cites Aquinas' views on the morality of passions and the role of reason in governing the sensitive appetite, and explains that in the Middle Ages certain emotions were connected with vices.<sup>158</sup> Similarly, in her recent book on ordering emotions in Europe, Susan Broomhall discusses how ordering the world in the Middle Ages was done through ordering emotions.<sup>159</sup> She thus argues that ordering emotions was not only 'an academic pursuit', but also 'a feature of everyday life'.<sup>160</sup> The centrality of emotions to all aspects of medieval life is also suggested by Boquet and Nagy who argue that emotions 'could be found not only deep within the heart but far beyond it: they were present in the churches, the palaces, in the shacks, in the markets, and on the battlefield'.<sup>161</sup>

The fact that emotions were assigned a moral power explains why they were predominantly discussed in the context of the monastic tradition.<sup>162</sup> For example, Aquinas

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<sup>155</sup> See Lombardo, chapter four.

<sup>156</sup> *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Arthur Hyman and James Walsh (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1973); also *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. by John Corrigan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). The editor of this book introduces the discussion of the study of religion and emotions by stressing the fact that the study of emotions in the West was 'wrapped with religious phrasings' (p. 3).

<sup>157</sup> Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, p. 69.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162-8. This is discussed by John Sabini and M. Silver in *Moralities of Everyday Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Sabini and Silver argue that some emotions were listed among the vices and others among virtues.

<sup>159</sup> Broomhall, *Ordering Emotions in Europe, 1100-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 11-14.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>161</sup> Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, p. 1.

<sup>162</sup> See chapter three in Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 177.



adopted Christian ethics as a framework for his theory of emotions where he introduced his discussion of the virtues with a detailed analysis of emotions.<sup>163</sup> In fact, this association between ethics and emotions not only characterises Aquinas' approach, but also the medieval discourse of emotions in general. The question of whether the object of human desire should be God governed the three schools' discourses of emotions and the medieval philosophical discourses on emotions in general.<sup>164</sup> It is, however, important to note that the association between emotions and ethics does not imply that all medieval philosophers argued that emotions are moral. As the following chapters will demonstrate, while some medieval philosophers believed that emotions should be suppressed to attain morality, others argued that they are central to our moral lives.

## I.5 Chapter Outlines

The following three chapters analyse the overlap of the ethical and poetic discourses of emotions in the three Middle English romances of *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. In the first chapter, 'Emotions as Weakness: The Politics of Emotions and Identity Formation in *King Horn*', I will adopt the Thomist-Aristotelian intellectual discourse of emotions as a philosophical approach to explore whether *King Horn* endorses a passion-centred ethics, or a reason-centred ethics. As a theoretical source on emotions, I will use Aquinas' treatise on emotions, the *Summa Theologica*. I will also draw upon the thirteenth-century courtesy books, conduct guides, manuals of chivalry and mirrors for princes as a context to analyse the main characters' expression of emotions. The chapter will investigate how the displacement of emotions in *King Horn* is governed by a culturally established code of behaviour which regulated the conduct of thirteenth-century aristocracy. It will also demonstrate how the affective relationships that this medieval romance describes are a reflection of the thirteenth-century dominant behavioural culture established by the period's moral philosophy and conduct culture. The chapter will thus discuss how Horn's character as

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<sup>163</sup> See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II, qq. 22-48.

<sup>164</sup> See Rik van Nieuwenhove, *An Introduction to Medieval Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 1-4.

a Christian, male knight is shaped by the ethics which governed the expression of emotion during the thirteenth century.

In the second chapter, ‘The Remorseful Rebirth of the Individual: Emotions and Transformation in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*’, I analyse Guy’s emotions in the context of the late thirteenth-century voluntarist moral philosophy. The chapter proposes that the late medieval voluntarist discourse of emotions and the period’s conduct literature provide the philosophical basis for the literary representation of the relationship between Guy’s moral transformation and his emotions. Guy’s epiphanic emotional experience and the transformation which follows will thus be analysed in the context of Scotus’ voluntarist discourse of emotions. Scotus’ approach to the freedom of the will and the passions of the will can help us understand the nature of Guy’s emotions, whether they are triggered by collective or individual concerns and how they are related to his will and moral character. To achieve a better understanding of the ethical and political context that shaped the attitude of the individual in the early fourteenth century, Guy’s personality as a husband and a national hero will also be analysed in the context of Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principum*. Through contextualising my discussion of Guy’s moral transformation, I suggest that the fourteenth-century concern with the balance between personal piety and political duty, the debate over the freedom of the will and the voluntarists’ discussion of the passions of the will all contributed to the development of a new attitude towards emotions and their relationship with ethics.

In the third chapter, ‘The Right to Survive and the Affections towards the Self: Nominalist Emotions in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*’, I argue that the poem presents an Ockhamist nominalist universe where human emotions prevail. The aim of this chapter is to show how Gawain’s emotional experience corresponds with the nominalist prioritisation of the particular over the universal. The chapter will also analyse Gawain’s emotional conflict in the light of the late fourteenth-century nominalist recognition of a possible conflict in the human personality. Particularly, it will cast Ockham’s analysis of Christ’s emotional conflict at the time of crucifixion as an example of the late fourteenth-century discourse of emotions which treated imperfect human emotions as morally legitimate.

Finally, I conclude by discussing how the medieval poetic discourse of emotions was subject to gradual development. I explain how the shift to the portrayal of human private emotions, which characterises a number of Middle English romances in the later Middle Ages, is not abrupt. The three romances’ diverse attitudes towards emotions show that the

transformed philosophical context of the period from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries had a profound impact on the poetic portrayal of the relationship between emotions, reason and the will.

## Emotions as Weakness:

### The Politics of Emotion and Identity Formation in *King Horn*

It would seem that love is a harmful emotion. For languor is a kind of sickness, and love causes languor.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter considers *King Horn*, the earliest romance written in Middle English.<sup>2</sup> It explores the poem's discourse of emotions and compares it to the AN *Romance of Horn*'s discourse of emotions.<sup>3</sup> I investigate how *King Horn*'s cultural context, more specifically the translation of Aristotle's works into Latin and the emergence of the intellectualist tradition in early thirteenth-century Western Europe, affected its characterisation of Horn as a more reasonable and less passionate character than the AN Horn. Taking into consideration the change of readership from the elite to the popular, the chapter will discuss how *King Horn* celebrates collective, rational emotions rather than romance courtly emotions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 28, art. 5, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Westminster: Christian Classics, 1948, rpt. 1981): [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/12251274\\_Thomas\\_Aquinas\\_Summa\\_Theologiae\\_%5B1%5D\\_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/12251274_Thomas_Aquinas_Summa_Theologiae_%5B1%5D_EN.pdf); accessed 5 March, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> All references will be to *King Horn, An Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Gg. 4.27, with an Analysis of the Textual Transmission*, ed. by Rosamund Allen, Garland Medieval Texts, 7 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984); henceforth cited parenthetically in the text by line number.

<sup>3</sup> All references will be to *The Romance of Horn by Thomas*, 2 vols., Anglo-Norman Text Society IX-X, XII-XIII, ed. by Mildred K. Pope (Oxford: Blackwell for ANTS, 1955-1964); henceforth cited parenthetically in the text by line number.

<sup>4</sup> It is believed that the audience of *King Horn* consisted in large measure of gentry, mainly city merchants, who were less interested in courtly matters than the aristocratic audience of the AN *Romance of Horn*. On this; see Rosamund Allen, 'The Date and Provenance of *King Horn*: Some Interim Reassessments', in *Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane*, ed. by Edward Donald Kennedy, Ronald Waldron and Joseph S. Wittig (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), pp. 99-125 (p. 121). On the gentry audience of ME romance, including *King Horn*, as opposed to the aristocratic audience of AN romances; see Geraldine Barnes, *Counsel and Strategy in Middle English Romance* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993), p. 27. On the popular audience of ME metrical romances; see Karl Brunner,

This chapter proposes to consider the poem's attitude towards emotions in the context of the early thirteenth-century Thomist-Aristotelian intellectual discourse of emotions and conduct literature. It suggests that these specific areas can assist in the understanding of the poem's portrayal of the relationship between emotions and reason. The chapter argues that the displacement of emotions in *King Horn* is governed by a culturally-established code of behaviour which regulated the conduct of aristocracy in thirteenth-century England. It analyses the degree to which the affective relationships that this medieval romance describes are a reflection of the dominant conduct ethics in thirteenth-century England.

Extant evidence about *King Horn*'s authorship and the audience for whom the romance was intended can help us analyse the poem's relationship to the cultural development that England witnessed during the thirteenth century. Although drawing upon an earlier source, the ME *King Horn* was composed in a new socio-political and literary context than its initial AN version. Highlighting the cultural specificity of the ME version, Dominique Battles argues that 'rather than envisioning an English poet trying very hard to imitate newer French literary forms, it may be more useful to envision an English poet trying to make a story which deals with English history, but which also happens to survive in a French version'.<sup>5</sup> Hence, the slight differences between the AN and ME versions of the romance, which will be discussed in this chapter, can be analysed as an authorial attempt to address concerns of particular importance to a thirteenth-century English audience.

Despite its reputation as a poem of modest literary sophistication, *King Horn* is 'a carefully written poem', Rosamund Allen has argued.<sup>6</sup> Dieter Mehl had already stated, earlier on, that the anonymous poet's ability to compress and accentuate the story-material 'betrays

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'Middle English Metrical Romances and Their Audiences', in *Studies in Medieval English Literature in Honour of Professor A.C. Baugh*, ed. by McEdward Leach (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), pp. 219-26 (p. 221); the introduction to *A Companion to Medieval Popular Romance*, ed. by Raluca L. Radulescu and Cory James Rushton (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2011), pp. 5-6; and the introduction to *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England: Essays in Popular Romance*, ed. by Nicola McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 11. In this chapter I am concerned with the impact of the poem's socio-cultural context on the characterisation of Horn as a ruler who subordinates emotions to reason in order to fulfil his duties towards his people, not as a courtly lover.

<sup>5</sup> Dominique Battles, *Cultural Difference and Material Culture in Middle English Romance: Normans and Saxons* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Rosamund Allen, 'Some Textual Cruces in *King Horn*', *Medium Ævum*, 53 (1984), 73-7 (p. 73).

the hand of a careful and conscious artist'.<sup>7</sup> Recently, Kenneth Eckert has suggested that the poet's decision to omit certain details while preserving others reflects knowledge of thirteenth-century political controversies. Eckert argues that

[the] indeterminacy of *KH* is possibly neither an authorial nor translation problem to be solved by critics, but rather a poetic and politic decision consciously made and a calculated use of vagueness reveals some of the extra-textual interplay between poetry and contemporary events even at this formative stage in ME romance.<sup>8</sup>

The poet's vague reference to the names of places and his replacing of Brittany with Westernesse are, for example, treated as indications of his awareness of thirteenth-century trouble in the Anglo-Welsh relations.<sup>9</sup> Hence, by deliberately choosing ambiguity over the locations, *King Horn*'s poet 'diplomatically' avoided arenas of conflict that might provoke a thirteenth-century English audience.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to highlighting the poet's awareness of the general political climate, scholars have also argued that *King Horn* addresses immediate political concerns surrounding the reign of Henry III and his son, later Edward I. Allen, in her study of the date and provenance of *King Horn*, has discussed the possibility that the poem was written in the context of the de Montfort rebellion and has argued that in its portrayal of a threatened royal family, the poem 'might form a stern *exemplum* at that time, especially for those who supported de Montfort'.<sup>11</sup> Allen has also suggested that *King Horn*'s story parallels the life of Henry III (1207-72) who, like Horn, lost his father while young and was betrayed by his best friend Fawkes de Breauté.<sup>12</sup> This reading has been recently supported by Eckert who believes that the ME version's lesser interest in martial details is a reflection of Henry III's reign who was known for his piety rather than for his thrust for battles. Moreover, he proposes that the portrayal of Rymenhild 'as tamed

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<sup>7</sup> Dieter Mehl, *The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Eckert, 'Don't Mention the War!: Geography, Saracens and *King Horn*'s 'Diplomatic' Poet', *Journal of Language, Literature and Culture*, 65 (2018), 23-36 (p. 34).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>11</sup> Allen, 'The Date and Provenance of *King Horn*', p. 103.

<sup>12</sup> See Allen's introduction to *King Horn: An Edition Based on Cambridge University Library MS Gg. 4. 27 (2)* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), p. 113.

into obedience by a wise male' could have been inspired by the character of Eleanor, Henry III's wife, who was known for lacking self-restraint.<sup>13</sup>

This brief review of the earlier scholarship on the poem's association with the history of King Henry III is particularly important to the argument of this chapter where the hero's attitude and emotions are read in the context of Aquinas' thirteenth-century moral and political philosophy. In fact, it is believed that King Henry III was a supporter of scholasticism and that Oxford University flourished during his reign and acquired substantial reputation.<sup>14</sup> More importantly, during that time, Aquinas was engaged in England's politics and his writing addressed concerns particular to King Henry III's rule. In addition to the fact that his friend Theobald was a confidant of the kings of England, Aquinas himself wrote a hymn, 'the praise of Zion', about the war between Henry III and the barons.<sup>15</sup> Aquinas was popular in England and he used to have a large number of supporters in the English universities. This suggests that his ideas were central to the political and religious discourses in England, a hypothesis supported by the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury condemned some of his beliefs.<sup>16</sup> It is, thus, likely that the poet of *King Horn*, who, in adopting the romance into English was inspired by the life of Henry III, was also aware of the cultural debate surrounding his reign and contemporary discussions over the duties of the king and his conduct present in thirteenth-century philosophical treatises.

Like the period's treatises on conduct, *King Horn* reflects a concern with the characteristics of the virtuous ruler. In her discussion of the shared characteristics between *King Horn* and saints' legends, Anne Scott has argued that the poem stresses 'the rewards of Christian vengeance' and illustrates 'pious, upright behaviour through the presentation of its

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<sup>13</sup> Eckert, p. 28.

<sup>14</sup> See T.F. Tout, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III (1216-1377)* (Frankfurt: Outlook Verlag GmbH, 2018), p. 80.

<sup>15</sup> On Theobald as a confidant of the kings of England; see William Dalrymple, *In Xanadu: A Quest* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 8. On Aquinas' hymn; see *The Rise of the Medieval World, 500-1300: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. by Jana K. Schulman (Westport: Greenwood, 2002), p. xxxi.

<sup>16</sup> Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae: A Guide and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 346.

hero character'.<sup>17</sup> More recently, Kimberly Bell has suggested the author's familiarity with saints' legends and argued that 'Horn's pseudonym invokes the name of St. Cuthbert (Cudbert).<sup>18</sup> The religious significance of the poet's characterisation of Horn has been also highlighted by Daniel Kline who argues that the presentation of Horn's childhood as central to the formation of personal and national identity recalls the focus on Christ's childhood present in the religious poem the *Infancy of Jesus Christ*.<sup>19</sup> Discussing the poet's characterisation of Horn as a saint-king hero, Eckert has also argued that the poet of the ME version succeeded in satisfying his audience through portraying Horn as 'a coded avatar'.<sup>20</sup> Hence, to achieve this purpose, the poet, intelligently, evoked Horn's virtues and concealed and modulated his inconvenient flaws to fit with this exemplary image.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the focus on the virtues of the ruler and the idea of Christian vengeance, which the poem reflects, was a major subject of Aquinas' philosophy, who, like the poet of *King Horn*, was aware of the Muslim conquest and was writing in the context of the crusades.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, the moral message that features the ME version can be seen as a response to the wider thirteenth-century cultural movement towards the popularisation of Christian ideals through the use of English, rather than Latin or French.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Anne Scott, 'Plans, Predictions and Promises: Traditional Story Techniques and the Configuration of Word and Deed in *King Horn*', in *Studies in Medieval English Romances: Some New Approaches*, ed. by Derek Brewer (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), pp. 37-96 (p. 44).

<sup>18</sup> Kimberly Bell, "'holie mannes liues": England and its Saints in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108's *King Horn* and *South English Legendary*' in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108: The Shaping of English Vernacular Narrative*, ed. by Kimberly Bell and Julie Nelson Couch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 251-74 (p. 264).

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Kline, 'The Audience and Function of the Apocryphal *Infancy of Jesus Christ* in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc.108', in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, pp. 137-56 (p. 155).

<sup>20</sup> Eckert, pp. 23-4.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 29. A comparison between the portrayal of Horn in the AN version and ME version is presented later in the chapter.

<sup>22</sup> On the poet's awareness of the Muslim conquest; see Battles, pp. 20-1.

<sup>23</sup> See Thea Summerfield, "'Aprendre e enseigner": The Content of Cambridge University Library, MS. Gg. 1.1', in *The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript: Text Collections from a European Perspective*, ed. by Karen Pratt, Bart Besamusca, Matthias Meyer and Ad Putter (Göttingen: V& R unipress, 2017), pp. 327-46 (p. 341).



The above discussion about the poem's engagement with contemporary political and moral debate illuminates some important information about its manuscript and readership. In the three manuscripts, *King Horn* appears among non-romance texts, mainly saints' legends and devotional verse.<sup>24</sup> Based on this, Allen has concluded that the 'scribes seem to have associated the poem with saints' lives in all three manuscripts'.<sup>25</sup> In the Harley MS, *King Horn* is included among some political texts and religious poetry.<sup>26</sup> The choice of the texts in the Laud Misc. 108 MS also reflects an interest in narratives that depict the English king-saint character.<sup>27</sup> Recently, Bell has proposed that 'the physical make-up of the manuscript encourages the reading of Horn through the lens of hagiography'.<sup>28</sup> He has, thus, argued that this physical makeup 'creates a hagiographic horizon of expectation for listening and reading audiences to understand Horn as another kind of saint's life'.<sup>29</sup> A similar position has been also held by Julie Nelson Couch who argues that the romances of the Laud Misc. 108 MS share 'a notion of readership with its neighbouring saints' lives'.<sup>30</sup> Lynch has also shared Bell's and Couch's views and argued that *King Horn* has more in common with saints' legends 'than a general tendency to edification and exemplarity, some cross-generic incidents, or a penchant virtues like piety and chastity'.<sup>31</sup>

The early thirteenth-century Cambridge Gg. 1.1 MS included similar serious material that is presented in a way appropriate to the audience. Among these texts is a treatise on the

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<sup>24</sup> See Mehl, p. 49. Diane Speed, in 'The Construction of the Nation in Medieval English Romance', in *Readings in Medieval English Romance*. ed. by Carole M. Meale (Woodbridge, England: D. S. Brewer, 1994), pp. 135-58, comments on the possible influence of each genre on the other in the Laud 108 MS, noting that the *South English Legendary* 'remind[s] us of the piety of [Havelok the Dane and King Horn]' while the two romances manifest the 'romance qualities of the [saints' lives]' (p. 143).

<sup>25</sup> See Allen's introduction to *King Horn*, p. 16

<sup>26</sup> Brunner, p. 222.

<sup>27</sup> Eckert, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> Bell, p. 252.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>30</sup> Julie Nelson Couch, 'Defiant Devotion in MS Laud Misc. 108: The Narrator of *Havelok the Dane* and Affective Piety', *Parergon*, 25 (2008), 53-79 (p. 53).

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Lynch, 'Genre, Bodies and Power in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108: *King Horn*, *Havelok* and the *South English Legendary*', in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, pp. 177-98 (p. 196).

brain written by Aquinas and accompanied by a diagram that makes it easy for the non-specialist audience to understand.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, in the Cambridge University library MS, on which this chapter is based, *King Horn* is followed by a religious poem, *The Assumption of our Lady*. Given the belief that romances appropriate some features from the texts included in the same manuscript, it is possible that, in some of its adjustments of the source material, and its focus on the moral dimension of the hero's emotions and actions, *King Horn* was influenced by the tone and subject matter of the other texts in these manuscripts and, possibly, some other contemporary manuscripts.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the manuscripts' multilingualism and their selection of serious material that deals with contemporary religious and political issues can be seen as indicative of the audience's literary interests.<sup>34</sup> It is thus logical to assume that the audience for whom such religious and political texts were composed was used to this moralising tone and was able to read the poem's 'pedagogic message', which, in relation to issues related to the duties of kings, the purpose of marriage and warfare, is similar to the didactic messages sent by period's moral philosophers.<sup>35</sup>

The context of *King Horn*'s three manuscripts suggests an audience that was cultured enough to understand the moral and political message conveyed by the serious material they include. Long ago, Brunner argued that the Cambridge University library MS was compiled in a lord's house for ladies who knew some French, but wanted to preserve the story in English.<sup>36</sup> Later, and based on his belief that the Cambridge University library MS was compiled in London or near London, Allen has argued that *King Horn*'s 'first audience must have been consisted of London citizens, probably the merchants of the city, familiar with Anglo-Norman

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<sup>32</sup> Summerfield, p. 334.

<sup>33</sup> For a discussion of how romances borrow some features from the texts included in the same manuscript; see Murray Evans, *Rereading Middle English romance: Manuscript Layout, Decoration and the Rhetoric of Composite Structure* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> On the multilingualism of the manuscripts of *King Horn*; see Gareth Griffith and Ad Putter, 'Linguistic Boundaries in Multilingual Miscellanies: The Case of Middle English Romance', in *Middle English Texts in Transition: A Festschrift Dedicated to Toshiyuki Takamiya on His 70th Birthday*, ed. by Simon Horobin and Linne R. Mooney (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 116-24 (p. 117).

<sup>35</sup> On *King Horn*'s pedagogic message; see Susan Wittig, *Stylistic and Narrative Structures in the Middle English Romances* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 1978), p. 45.

<sup>36</sup> Brunner, p. 222.

for business purposes and perhaps engaged in some official business with court dignitaries'.<sup>37</sup> More recent studies have argued that the political focus of the manuscripts indicates a baronial readership.<sup>38</sup> Andrew Taylor has suggested that the Oxford provenance of the Laud Misc. 108 MS is indicative of the social status of its patron and audience, and argued that the manuscript was 'a purposeful commission from a prosperous, sophisticated and highly literate patron, with strong interest in the oral tradition of East Anglia'.<sup>39</sup> Taylor has further argued that the 'Oxford trade in vernacular texts appears to have been directed to men and women who were culturally sophisticated and socially and professionally ambitious'.<sup>40</sup> More importantly, he believes that, in the Laud Misc. 108 MS, the 'French rubrics on folios 64r, 65v, 66r, and 66 v and the marginal annotations in Horn suggests that the volume circulated among men and women who could read French'.<sup>41</sup> In fact, this supports Allen's earlier suggestion that *King Horn*'s audience was 'a later generation of the same Anglo-Norman lawyers and educated men who bought books like the Anglo-Norman Horn and Lais of Marie de France from Oxford bookshops'.<sup>42</sup>

Hence, if analysed within its manuscript context, it appears that the ME *King Horn* was not addressed to a less-cultured audience than the audience of the AN *Romance of Horn*. The language of the poem is rather 'a self-conscious' choice that reflects the emerging concerns of the English audience.<sup>43</sup> As recent criticism suggests, the audience of these Middle English romances was the same audience that enjoyed 'courtly or learned texts, and French romances'.<sup>44</sup> Bell argues that '*Horn* emerges as something new, a hybrid romance tailored specifically to an English audience that was increasingly becoming aware of the need to

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<sup>37</sup> Allen, 'The Date and Provenance of *King Horn*', p. 121.

<sup>38</sup> See the introduction to *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Andrew Taylor, "'Her Y Spelle": The Evocation of Minstrel Performance in a Hagiographical Context', in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, pp. 71-86 (p. 85). Taylor also believes that the patron of the London British library Harley, William of Winchester, was a man of 'cultural sophistication'; see p. 79.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, p. 78.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>42</sup> Allen, Introduction to *King Horn*, p. 11.

<sup>43</sup> On the use of English as a self-conscious choice in the Laud MS; see the introduction to *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> Taylor, p. 86.

articulate its own national (and linguistic) identity'.<sup>45</sup> By the latter part of the thirteenth century, many members of the English audience were 'familiar with French in the context of the parliament, the law and commerce, but whose mother tongue was English'.<sup>46</sup> The ME version's language and its serious, didactic tone, which I will discuss further in this chapter, can, thus, be viewed as a response to the thirteenth-century political setting and the wider cultural development following the educational reform of the Fourth Lateran Council which took place in 1215, and which was followed by a widespread circulation of vernacular religious texts that were accommodated to lay culture.<sup>47</sup>

The above discussion shows that *King Horn*, and despite its oral formulaic source, is a poem that used to appeal, as Scott puts it, 'to readers of all levels of sophistication'.<sup>48</sup> Hence, the formulaic aspects should not be treated as a sign of literary incompetence. *King Horn*'s formulaic rhyme does not indicate that it was composed by a minstrel or was intended for an unsophisticated audience, the formulaic aspects rather reflect, as Benson argues, a competent command of narrative techniques.<sup>49</sup> Formulas in *King Horn* are used to create cohesion and coherence, and the formulaic rhyme contains the 'thematic essence' of the poem and highlights the importance of the king's duties to his country.<sup>50</sup>

In order to explore the impact of the poem's wider cultural context on its attitude towards emotions, the chapter will adopt the Thomist-Aristotelian intellectual discourse of emotions. This philosophical approach will help us analyse whether *King Horn* endorses a passion-centred ethics or a reason-centred ethics. As a medieval theoretical source on emotions, it will primarily use Aquinas' treatise on emotions, the *Summa Theologica*. In his treatise, Aquinas discusses emotions as passive potencies of the sensitive appetite, as things which happen to us, not as an active power.<sup>51</sup> He defines sin as the dominance of passions and

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<sup>45</sup> Bell, p. 262.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>47</sup> See Kline, p. 137. On the calls for accommodating religious texts to lay culture; see Lynch, pp. 181-2.

<sup>48</sup> Scott, p. 38. Scott also explains that though it draws on an oral formulaic source, the poem was later 'modified by literacy'; see p. 38.

<sup>49</sup> Larry Benson, *Malory's 'Morte Darthur'* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 75.

<sup>50</sup> Allen's introduction to *King Horn*, pp. 82-3.

<sup>51</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of Aquinas' moral theory; see the edited collection of essays *Aquinas' Moral Theory: Essays in Honour of Norman Kretzmann*, ed. by Scott MacDonald and

‘intellectual misapprehension’.<sup>52</sup> In discussing emotions in the context of virtues, Aquinas argues that the virtues are habits that help the will obey reason and control emotion, and suggests that emotions can contribute to moral life only if they are tempered by reason. He, therefore, views a virtuous individual as one whose passions are under the control of reason. Since the passions’ resistance to the control of reason stems from the activity of the sensitive appetite as a reaction to material bodily powers, Aquinas argues that these powers must be controlled.<sup>53</sup>

In order to appreciate the affective states in *King Horn*, we need to evaluate the possible sources that could have shaped the poet’s and the audience’s shared implicit assumptions about emotions.<sup>54</sup> For example, we need to take into consideration the fact that *King Horn* was written after the late twelfth-century development of medieval courtesy which emerged in aristocratic societies and was essential to the ideals of chivalry.<sup>55</sup> As a code of behaviour, medieval

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Eleonore Stump (London: Cornell University Press, 2007). On Aquinas’ discussion of the passions; see Peter King’s essay in the same collection ‘Aquinas on the Passions’, pp. 101-32. Aquinas’ opinion contradicts the voluntarists’ later conception of emotions as active volitional acts of the will which are not confined to the sensitive appetite. This is further discussed in Chapter Two. A more detailed discussion of Aquinas’ views and how they were challenged by the voluntarists and nominalists of the fourteenth century is provided in the Introduction, pp. 37-43.

<sup>52</sup> See C. R. S. Harris, ‘Duns Scotus and His Relation to Thomas Aquinas’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society New Series*, 25 (1924 - 1925), 219-46 (p. 238). With the emergence of Scotus’ voluntarism a counter-argument was developed, that passions can be directed towards good and justice. Interestingly, with the development of nominalism, the tendency to judge passions on the basis of sin and virtue was refuted. The early fourteenth-century voluntarist discourse of emotions and the late fourteenth-century nominalist discourse of emotions will be discussed in more detail in the second and third chapters respectively.

<sup>53</sup> Leonard D. G. Ferry, ‘Passionalist or Rationalist? The Emotions in Aquinas’ Moral Theology’, *New Blackfriars*, 93 (2012), 292-308 (pp. 300-2).

<sup>54</sup> According to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, the self is conceived as a *tabula rasa* which acquires virtue and knowledge following a systematic education in traditional disciplines and continual moral conduct. On this; see Paul Cefalu, ‘Thomistic Metaphysics and Ethics in the Poetry and Prose of Thomas Traherne’, *Literature and Theology*, 16 (2002), 248-69 (p. 262).

<sup>55</sup> See C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), p. 114.

courtesy also participated in the shaping of romance literature.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, this chapter will draw on the *Secreta Secretorum* and John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* as two mirrors for princes. John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* was written around 1159. The *Secreta Secretorum*, the most popular medieval mirror for princes, which influenced European intellectuals of the early and high Middle Ages, was translated from Arabic into Latin in the middle of the twelfth century. Both texts will be used as influential treatises on royal behaviour. Two other secular courtesy treatises will be consulted: Daniel Beccles' *Urbanus Magnus* (1180), or *The Book of Civilized Man*, and Hodenc's *Le Roman Des Eles* (1210). *Urbanus Magnus*, a verse treatise on conduct, is mostly concerned with behaviour at the court and the second half gives advice to different social categories, including knights. The particular importance of the *Urbanus Magnus* to this study on Middle English romance is related to the fact that it is the first courtesy book written in English.<sup>57</sup> Raoul de Hodenc's *Le Roman des Eles* is also important to this study because it was written by a knight.<sup>58</sup> Hodenc (1165-1230) is believed to have been a knight from Hodenc-en-Bray, who in his treatise, addresses knights exclusively and links courtesy with knighthood. Another tract, Capellanus' *De Amore* (1184-86), will be used as an example of medieval treatises on love.<sup>59</sup> Although Capellanus' attitude towards love tends to be sceptical, the debate

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<sup>56</sup> Jaeger, p. 113. On the creation of a sophisticated secular elite represented by noble knights; see David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300* (New York: Routledge, 2015). Crouch explains that the period from 1100 to 1200 saw the conduct of knights modified by the Church's need to secularise this class and make it socially accepted. Crouch also mentions that by the end of the twelfth century, knighthood and nobility fused (p. 19).

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of the *Urbanus Magnus*; see John Gillingham, 'From Civilitas to Civility: Codes of Manners in Medieval and Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 267-89 (pp. 272-8).

<sup>58</sup> For a discussion of Hodenc and his work,; see Laura Ashe, 'The Ideal of Knighthood in English and French Writing 1100-1230: Crusade, Piety, Chivalry and Patriotism', in *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, ed. by Marcus Graham Bull and Damien Kempf (Cambridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 155-68 (p.162); see also Raul de Hodenc, *Le Roman des Eles* by Raoul de Hodenc and *L'Ordene de Chevalerie*, trans. and ed. by Keith Busby. Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, Vol. XVII (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1983.), p. 15.

<sup>59</sup> On the source of Capellanus' *De Amore*; see Marek Kretschmer, 'The Love Elegy in Medieval Latin Literature (Pseudo Ovidiana and Ovidian Imitation)', in *The Cambridge Companion to Latin Love Elegy*, ed. by Thea Thorson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 271-99 (p. 278). Capellanus' *De Amore* was translated by John Parry into *The Art of Courtly Love*.

he introduces between the lovers and their ladies in various situations is useful to the present study as it reflects contemporary shared assumptions about love.<sup>60</sup>

The first section of the chapter consists of a discussion of the earlier scholarship on *King Horn*. The second section analyses the poet's attitude towards the relationship between emotions and reason in the context of the intellectualist reason-centred ethics. The third section of the chapter discusses the poem's gendered discourse of emotions in the light of the Thomist notion of emotions as weakness. Section four explores the poem's division between love and marriage as a reflection of the period's intellectual Christian ethics. The section argues that in its treatment of love outside marriage as sinful, the poem encourages a rational form of love. The last three sections of the chapter are dedicated to an analysis of the poem's ethics of obligation through focusing on Horn's commitment to the common good. These sections show that Horn's emotions are triggered by collective, not private, concerns. In the final section of the chapter, Horn's war-making will be read as an expression of his dedication to the common good.

### 1.1.1 Reading Emotions in *King Horn*

Though *King Horn* narrates the adventure of an individual hero, the romance always depicts Horn as part of a group. Even in his exiles, Horn remains surrounded by people. The poem describes him either in court among his fellow knights, or travelling with a group of people. In his first exile, Horn is cast into a boat with his twelve companions. In his second exile, and though he travels alone, the description of Horn's journey is brief and does not contain any reference to his inner feelings. The type of exile that the hero experiences in *King Horn* is not one that depends on solitude. Rather, Horn leaves one community to join another.

Throughout the poem, Horn's exemplary status is linked to his conformity to the ethics that govern his world and his contribution to the establishment of social order in the communities he enters. In its focus on the group rather than the individual and on communal not subjective emotions, *King Horn* presents a traditional, socially-oriented discourse of emotions that makes this early thirteenth-century popular romance a good starting point for a

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<sup>60</sup> See Jennifer Wollock, *Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love* (Oxford: Prager, 2011), p. 42.

thesis that examines emotions in Middle English romance. A focus on the poem's discourse of emotions can assist in the understanding of the degree to which individuals are portrayed as attached to society, and how this attachment impacts their exercise of emotions. An analysis of the poem's attitude towards emotions can help us discern whether the virtue of the hero is linked to the strength of his passions or to his ability to use his reason to control them. This will eventually allow us to decide if emotions are presented as the prime mover of Horn's actions or as a cause of weakness that needs to be kept under the supervision of reason.

Research on Middle English romance has been concerned with the impact of the political context on the portrayal of English heroes and their relationship to their societies. Laura Ashe argues that drawing from the history of pre-conquest England resulted in a portrayal of the English hero as a perfect exemplary character who dedicates himself to the service of his community.<sup>61</sup> In giving the example of Horn, among other romance heroes, Ashe discusses how the king of English romance is portrayed as a godlike character whose aspirations are related to collective concerns such as the establishment of peace and justice. The relationship between Horn and his community has been also discussed by Dominique Battles in her comparative study of ME and AN romances. In the context of her comparison between the AN and ME literary traditions, Battles argues that the hero in *King Horn* is more attached to his community, and that the bond between men is stronger in the ME version of the romance.<sup>62</sup> The portrayal of Horn as a public figure was also briefly discussed by Dieter Mehl in his early study of the romance.<sup>63</sup> Focusing on the distinct features of the ME *King Horn*, Mehl argued that the romance is more concerned with the history of a king than with adventure and love. He thus concluded that, given its portrayal of the past, *King Horn* shares something with chronicles and legends. Though these studies do not focus on emotions, their discussion of the impact of the ME version's specific context on the characterisation of Horn is helpful as it sheds some light on the historical aspect of the romance and its discourse of emotions.

A review of earlier criticism on *King Horn* shows that the number of the studies which reflect a concern with the psychological dimension of the poem, in general, and with emotions in particular, is few. Most of these studies either discuss emotions indirectly, do not take an

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<sup>61</sup> Ashe, 'The Hero and His Realm in Medieval English Romance', in *Boundaries in Medieval Romance*, ed. by Neil Cartlidge (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2008), pp. 129-48.

<sup>62</sup> Battles, pp. 25-8.

<sup>63</sup> Mehl, pp. 33-5.



interest in a specific methodological approach or adopt a modern psychological approach. In her analysis of the narrative movement in *King Horn*, Anne Wilson adopts a modern approach to investigate the relationship between structure and meaning.<sup>64</sup> Wilson examines the poem's structure in light of Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* and briefly hints at how the poem's structure, which represents the multi-move story structure, revolves around the quest of the hero. Despite Wilson's proposal that this approach is useful to the understanding of the poem's structure and its relation to the mind of the protagonist, not enough textual analysis is provided and the thesis remains unclear.

*King Horn*'s repetitive structure and its relation to the underlying pattern of meaning is discussed in more detail by Anne Scott.<sup>65</sup> Concerned with examining the agreement of word and deed in the poem, Scott explores the structure of the plot as a mode of the mind. She argues that the poem's techniques and its repeated patterns can carry symbolic meaning related to the personality of the hero. In her essay, Scott is more concerned with analysing how Horn's language generally reflects major aspects about his character than with his emotions. Though useful, her argument that Horn is portrayed as an inflexible, community-oriented character could have been more convincing if his emotions were taken into consideration.

The relation between the poem's structure and the hero's subjectivity is also analysed by Georgianna Ziegler in her article about structural repetition in *King Horn*. In an argument similar to Wilson's and Scott's, Ziegler divides the poem into four stages: destruction, learning, initiation and reconstruction— where she explores the poem's structure as a reflection of the development of the hero's personality.<sup>66</sup> Like Wilson and Scott, Ziegler is concerned with the fusion between matter and form in general, not with the poem's attitude towards emotions. The discussion of Horn's character in these three studies is brief and general. Also, these studies do not take into consideration the contemporary ethics that regulated individuals' attitudes and their relationships to their societies.

Topics that are remotely related to emotions are discussed by scholars who focus on identity as a social category. Morgan Dickson examines a number of medieval romances, among them the multiple versions of the romance of Horn, and argues that the secondary role

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<sup>64</sup> Anne Wilson, *Traditional Romance and Tale: How Stories Mean* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1976).

<sup>65</sup> Scott.

<sup>66</sup> Georgianna Ziegler, 'Structural Repetition in *King Horn*', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 81 (1980), 403-8.

of female characters in the *Romance of Horn* and *King Horn* serves to enhance the centrality of the hero and his masculine identity. Dickson explains that the role of the female figure is to magnify the hero's desirability and to allow for a 'renewed testing and proving of the self'.<sup>67</sup> Though the study's major focus is not on *King Horn*, nor its discourse of emotions, Dickson makes important observations regarding the characterisation of Horn and the poem's attitude towards gender.

Focusing primarily on the culture of feud in medieval England, Paul Hyams briefly refers to *King Horn*'s presentation of anger as an example of the portrayal of vengeance in thirteenth-century secular poetry.<sup>68</sup> Hyams argues that displays of anger in the *Romance of Horn* and *King Horn* are important to the plot and that they are presented as actual, not feigned. He also notes that the notion of enmity was translated from the learned discourse to popular culture. However, though Hyams states that thirteenth-century vernacular culture followed clear conventions in its portrayal of emotions, he does not discuss the ethics that regulated the displacement of anger in that period. In fact, and as this chapter will demonstrate, the purpose of anger and the rules that regulated its expression were well-discussed in contemporary moral philosophy and conduct literature.

A study that hints at the theme of love in *King Horn* within the context of discussing medieval romance in general is Corinne Saunders's essay on love and loyalty in Middle English romance.<sup>69</sup> Saunders briefly discusses the poem's attitude toward love and explains the link between love and social order. Saunders's argument that the context of the ME versions is different from that of their AN counterparts is useful to this study. Her proposal that the courtly elements were revised in the process of adopting these romances into English, and that the extremes of *fin amore* were not equally conveyed in the ME versions of the romances supports this chapter's argument that the ME Horn is portrayed as more rational than the AN Horn. Moreover, though it discusses *King Horn* briefly, the essay makes useful remarks regarding

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<sup>67</sup> Morgan Dickson, 'Female Doubling and Male Identity in Medieval Romance', in *The Matter of Identity in Medieval Romance*, ed. by Phillippa Hardman (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), pp. 59-72, (p. 72).

<sup>68</sup> Paul R. Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation in Medieval England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2018).

<sup>69</sup> Corinne Saunders, 'Love and Loyalty in Middle English Romance', in *Writings on Love in the English Middle Ages*, ed. by Helen Cooney (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 45-62.

the social dimension of Horn's interaction with the female characters in the poem. Hence, with a special focus on *King Horn*, this chapter seeks a broader consideration of the sources that informed the poem's political and gendered discourse of emotions in general, and love in particular.

The review above, in which I evaluate most of the studies that have discussed topics related directly or indirectly to emotions, reveals that there is no study that focuses exclusively on *King Horn* and its discourse of emotions. Given its shortness and early date, *King Horn* is usually discussed briefly in studies that pay more attention to later and longer romances. The survey also shows that *King Horn*'s attitude toward emotions is analysed indirectly in studies that focus on other topics such as the poem's structure and its relation to the hero's subjectivity. Despite its shortness and early date, *King Horn* presents a prototype of Middle English popular romance. Therefore, the analysis of its representation of emotions in the context of the Thomist-Aristotelian intellectual discourse of emotions will enable us to answer questions related to the portrayal of the relationship between emotions and morality in the popular romances of thirteenth-century England.<sup>70</sup>

The possibility of a correspondence between the Thomist-Aristotelian philosophy and medieval literature has been proposed by a number of scholars. For example, Kellie Robertson argues for the impact of Aristotelian philosophy on the literature of the later Middle Ages. She states that Aristotelian writings 'formed the core of the arts curriculum from the thirteenth century onward'.<sup>71</sup> Other scholars, like Alastair Minnis and Anne Scott have also discussed the relationship between Aquinas' Aristotelian philosophy and Dante's poetry.<sup>72</sup> The impact of the Thomist philosophy on Dante's poetry was suggested as early as G. K. Chesterton's (1956) book in which he argued that Aquinas 'possessed the philosophy that inspires poetry, as he did

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<sup>70</sup> A broader survey of the earlier criticism on emotions in medieval literature in general, and Middle English romance in particular is provided in the Introduction, pp. 20-34.

<sup>71</sup> Kellie Robertson, *Nature Speaks: Medieval Literature and Aristotelian Philosophy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), p. 91. The impact of Aristotle on late medieval poetry is also addressed by Jessica Rosenfeld in *Ethics and Enjoyment in Late Medieval Poetry: Love after Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>72</sup> *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1100 - c. 1375: The Commentary-Tradition*, ed. by Alastair J. Minnis and A. Brian Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 372.

so largely inspire Dante's poetry'.<sup>73</sup> More recently, Siobhain Calkin has included *The King of Tars* and *Sir Ferumbras* as examples of the romances that were influenced by the philosophical ideas of their day. Calkin primarily argues that the baptism scenes in these romances recall Aquinas' writings on baptism.<sup>74</sup> Aquinas' ideas of mind, body and affect are briefly referred to by Saunders in her recent essay, 'Mind, Body and Affect in Medieval English Arthurian Romance'. Saunders mentions Aquinas as an example of the medieval philosophers who highlighted important questions related to the psychology of emotions and the antithesis between reason and passions.<sup>75</sup>

This brief review of the earlier criticism on the intersection between the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition and the literature of the Middle Ages reveals an inclination, on the part of modern scholars, to discuss the impact of Aristotle and Aquinas on the literature of the later Middle Ages. Additionally, most of these studies have discussed this influence in general. There is no study which examines the representation of emotions in the Middle English romances of the early thirteenth century in the context of the Thomist-Aristotelian discourse of emotions in particular. Accordingly, reading emotions in *King Horn* in the context of the Thomist-Aristotelian discourse of emotions and the period's conduct literature can allow us to reconstruct a contextual interpretation of the affective states that the text presents and locate the position of this text in relation to early thirteenth-century emotional culture. Aquinas' rational discourse of emotions can assist in the understanding of the text's attitude towards the morality of emotions; more specifically, determining whether Horn's will is depicted as moved by passion or reason, and whether the poem's discourse of emotions reflects an ethics of obligation towards the common good or a commitment towards the self.

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<sup>73</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), p. 126. Following Aristotle, Aquinas was concerned with the formal aspects of poetry. On this; see Raymond Barfield, *The Ancient Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 107.

<sup>74</sup> Siobhain Calkin, 'Romance Baptism and Theological Context in the *King of Tars* and *Sir Ferumbras*', in *Medieval Romance, Medieval Contexts*, ed. by Michael Staveley Cichon and Rhiannon Purdie (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2011), pp. 105-20.

<sup>75</sup> Saunders, 'Mind, Body and Affect in Medieval English Arthurian Romance', in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Body, Mind, Voice*, ed. by Frank Brandsma, Carolyne Larrington and Corinne Saunders (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2015), pp. 31-46 (p. 34).

### 1.2.1 Thomist Reason-centred Ethics and the Subordination of Emotions in *King Horn*

The loss of father and land with which *King Horn* begins, in addition to the terrifying experience that Horn and his companions go through, present a traumatic situation against which the main characters' emotions can be assessed.<sup>76</sup> Although Horn, like his friends, experiences emotions of fear and insecurity when he is first forced onto the ship, the poem depicts him as capable of managing his fear by activating his intellectual cognition. The poet chooses Horn to be the one who brings good news to his companions who 'wenden to wisse/ of here lif to misse' (123-4). Horn, before all, is the one who shifts his focus away from his fear and pays attention to his sensory surroundings. Horn's management of emotions by use of his cognitive abilities enables him to be the first to realize that he and his friends will be saved: 'The here fozeles singe/ And [se þe] gras him springe!/ Bliþe beo we on lyue:/ Vre schup is on ryue' (131-4). Horn's ability to redirect his attention away from fear towards his surrounding is not equally stressed in the AN version. The AN version does not mention that Horn was the first to pay attention to the surroundings and realise that he and his companions will be saved. Instead of focusing on Horn's abilities, the AN version describes God as the powerful Saviour who grants Horn and his companions good fortune by sending a wind that brought them to Brittany (100-110).

*King Horn's* portrayal of Horn's ability to drive out emotions and to turn towards other considerations through activating reason recalls Aquinas' discussion of the role of reason in moderating emotions. According to Aquinas, what distinguishes humans from animals is their ability to drive out their emotions, fear in particular, through activating reason.<sup>77</sup> The poem's attitude towards the relationship between emotions and reason can be understood from its portrayal of Horn as constantly able to calm his emotions through reasoning. Horn's rationality is suggested as early as he reaches Westernesse. Once he steps onto the ground, and while others are still overwhelmed by their survival instinct, he starts thinking of the future and his duty towards his kingdom and people:

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<sup>76</sup> A detailed summary of *King Horn* is provided in the Appendix, pp. 218-19.

<sup>77</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, q. 81, art. 3.

And seie þe paene kyng,  
 [Driztes] wiper[l]ing,  
 Þat ihc, hol and fer,  
 on lond a[m] riued her;  
 And seie þat h[e] schal fonde  
 Þe d[up] of myne honde! (151-6)

Horn's capacity to control his emotions and to use his reason continues to be stressed through the poem's repeated reference to his special intellectual abilities – wit and wisdom. The poet first describes how, given his talents, Horn is chosen to speak for his companions:

Horn spak here speche;  
 He spac for hem alle,  
 Vor so moste biualle,  
 He was þe faireste,  
 And of wit þe beste (176-80)

The poet then shows how King Aylmar, aware of Horn's notable cognitive abilities, asks Athelbrus to provide him with special teaching:

[Aþelbrus, of þine mestere]  
 Mi fundlyng fp[nge] to lere:  
 [To tuchen vpon] harpe  
 Wip his nayles scharpe;  
 Biuore me to kerue,  
 And of þe cupe serue;  
 Þu tech him alle þe liste  
 Þat þu eure of wiste.  
 [And] his [i]feir[e] þou wise

In-to oþere seruisse.

Horn þu vnderuonge

Tech him of harpe and songe. (233-44)

That King Aylmar's initial admiration of Horn is related to Horn's wit, which is stressed earlier than his martial prowess, suggests that the power of Horn's reason is presented as central to his character.

Horn's ability to control his passions is most obvious in his interaction with Rymenhild. Although the chivalric code of behaviour requires that Horn obey Rymenhild's commands, he deals with her advances reasonably. Horn's social rank as a foundling to her father, along with his future plans, explain his dispassionate reaction to Rymenhild's extreme emotions. The poem suggests Horn's self-restraint through depicting him as concerned with etiquette in the most emotionally charged moments in the poem. So clear of mind, and despite the presence of an attractive lady like Rymenhild, Horn presents himself courteously. Even after Rymenhild surprises him with a kiss and confronts him with her strong desire, Horn remains in such control of his emotions that he has the ability to 'biþoʒte what h[im] speke [do]ʒte' (417-18). Though reserved, Horn reacts in a courtly manner and politely suggests delaying the union with Rymenhild until he attains a higher social status: "'Lemman," he sede, "dere,/ Þin herte nu þu stere;/ Help [þu] me to kniʒte"' (439-41).

Throughout the poem, Horn's speech is presented as an expression of his nobility and shrewdness. The poem repeatedly attributes Horn's ability to speak eloquently to his noble birth: 'He spac faire speche/ (Ne [þorte] him noman teche)]' (393-4). As a potential king, Horn is expected to stick to the rules which regulate royal speech known to both the poet and his audience. Since courtly behaviour is expressed through the form of speech, the way a knight communicates his emotions, or his excuses, is of great importance according to the chivalric code of conduct. Indeed, *Secreta Secretorum*, the most popular mirror for princes during the high Middle Ages, discusses courtly speech as a feature of kingly character. It regards the ability to speak sweetly and eloquently on all occasions as an element of a king's rational personality: 'it bicometh to a kyng to be a fayre and swete spekere with amyable and gracious wordis'.<sup>78</sup> In highlighting Horn's ability to speak articulately, the romance corresponds to contemporary expectations regarding royal behaviour.

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<sup>78</sup> *Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum*, Vol. I, ed. by Robert Steele, EETS, e. s. 74 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1898), p. 12.

Horn's formal, reserved speech reflects his awareness of the social constraints on his behaviour and his ability to control his emotions.

The focus on the quality of Horn's speech as an indication of his rationality is also related to the use of dialogue as a defining element of the poem's narrative mode. Instead of introducing Horn through soliloquies, the poem presents him through dialogues with other characters. Horn engages in long dialogues with King Aylmar, Rymenhild and King Thurston. The content of these dialogues is always related to facts such as his kin, religion and duty, yet not his emotions. Regardless of his addressee, Horn's dialogues are always centred on his social, not psychological, status. While in his first dialogue with King Aylmar Horn stresses his 'gode kenne' (182), in his last dialogue he reveals that his kin belong to 'be kings of Suddenne' (1293). Horn's dialogues with Rymenhild are first informed by his status as a 'fundling' (426), then a 'kniȝte' who needs to prove his knighthood (558). Similarly, in his dialogue with King Thurston, Horn focuses on his noble ancestry and the fact that he is the son of the King of Sudente (1007-8). Horn's repetition of this information in his dialogues suggests both an awareness of its significance to his society and a deliberate intention to deepen his attachment to it. It also foreshadows his intention to integrate into these royal communities as an equal individual of high lineage. Given its communicational function, the use of dialogues as a narrative technique reflects the poem's interest in the hero's social identity rather than his private emotional states.<sup>79</sup> Unlike soliloquies, dialogues lack an individualised tone and thus serve to stress Horn's duty as a public figure.

The discussion, above, suggests that Horn's ability to engage in dialogues which deepen his attachment to the communities he enters is celebrated as a manifestation of the power of his reason over his emotions. In addition to highlighting the importance of language as a vehicle for social interaction, the period's conduct literature stresses the significance of controlling emotions in general. For example, the *Secreta Secretorum* explains that appetitive emotions, if not restrained by reason, bring about the destruction of body and mind: 'fflesshely desires bowith the hert of mane to delitis, which are corrupcioun to the sowle, and it is bestialle without discreccioun. And he that ioyneth him to bodily corrupcioun, he corruptith the undirstondyng

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<sup>79</sup> This narrative approach is suitable to the poem's didactic impulse where dialogues are used to teach the audience the values that the poem celebrates. Literary dialogue was used as a narrative technique to transfer knowledge in medieval scholasticism. On the didactic function of Aquinas' dialogues; see Adrian J Wallbank, *Dialogue, Didacticism and the Genres of Dispute: Literary Dialogues in the Age of Revolution* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 19.



of man'.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, Aquinas argues that both the irascible and concupiscible passions should be ruled and subordinated to reason.<sup>81</sup> He states that 'reason holds the place of commander and mover, while the appetitive power is commanded and moved'.<sup>82</sup>

In its portrayal of Horn as a rational character who keeps his emotions under control, the poem answers the thirteenth-century intellectual moral discourse of emotions. The emphasis on the need to control emotions characterises the poem's discourse of emotions from beginning to end. Throughout the poem, Horn deals with Rymenhild's advances reasonably. The poem links his decision to hold his emotions in check while interacting with Rymenhild to his reasoning that his present social status does not allow for a love relationship with the king's daughter: 'Ihc am icome of þralle/ And fundling [am] bifalle;/ Ne feolle hit þe of cunde/ To spuse beo me bunde' (425-8). Despite Rymenhild's extreme display of emotions, Horn remains more reasonable than emotional and makes the success of their relationship conditional upon him being knighted. At such an emotionally charged moment, instead of showing emotions, Horn keeps thinking in terms of logic, not passions:

Help [þu] me to knizte,  
 Bi al þine mizte,  
 To my lo[ue]rd king  
 Pat me ziue dubbing.  
 Panne is mi þralhod  
 Iwent in-to knizthod,  
 And ischal wexe more  
 And do, lemman, þi lore. (441-8)

Similarly, after being knighted, Horn does not visit Rymenhild until she sends for him. What is more surprising is that Horn 'Nolde he noȝt go [his] one' (533). Instead of celebrating his

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<sup>80</sup> *Secreta Secretorum*, p. 10.

<sup>81</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, q. 81; this is also highlighted by Ferry who discusses Aquinas' argument that the virtue of the first human beings was related to the fact that their 'passions were subordinated to their reason' (p. 305).

<sup>82</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I- II, q. 60, art. 1.

knighthood with Rymenhild alone, Horn takes Athulf with him. It is most likely that Horn's decision not to go alone is related to his awareness of Rymenhild's uncontrolled desire, and his knowledge that he is not yet ready for a love relationship with her.

Horn's thoughtful reactions to emotionally charged events is also suggested through his reaction to Fikenhild's offence and his subsequent exile from Westernesse. The poem never describes Horn as emotionally aroused in reaction to Fikenhild's offence. It only mentions that he is offended, but we do not see any affective reaction such as anger. Even when he says his farewell to Rymenhild, who swoons, he is not described as being sad or emotional. Instead, he coldly asks her to wait for seven years and to take a husband if he does not return:

Rymenhild, haue godne day

N[u ihc mote funde awai]

In-to vncuþe londe

[More wele] for to fonde;

Ischal wun[ie] þere

Fulle seue ȝere.

At seue ȝeres ende,

Ȝef i ne come ne sende,

Tak þ[u] husebonde

Ffor me þu ne wonde! (743-52)

The lines above show how Horn's speech is marked by brevity and speed; he is more concerned with taking action than with comforting Rymenhild. His language is formal, not affective, and he does not comment on his or Rymenhild's feelings. For example, instead of describing Rymenhild as his sweetheart, he addresses her by her name. To further emphasise Horn's phlegmatic character, the poem describes how all who saw him leaving wept, including Athulf, but not Horn who remains unmoved: 'Stede he gan bistride/ And forþ he gan [him] ride/ Apulf weop wiþ ize,/ And al þat him isize' (765-8). In fact, Horn is portrayed as more passionate in the AN version: 'A taunt sunt tuit remis e il s'en est alez:/ Grant doel ad en sun quoe mes ne

l'ad demustrez' (2128-9) [His heart was full of pain, but he did not reveal it to them].<sup>83</sup> While there is no mention in the ME version that Horn has experienced any feelings of sorrow as a result of leaving Westernesse, the AN version states that Horn's heart was full of pain as he departed and that he concealed it on purpose. Significantly, the ME version's omission of Horn's emotional reaction to this moment suggests a revision of his character to be more rational.

That Horn's emotions are commanded by reason becomes more evident after he leaves Westernesse. His attitude in Ireland does not suggest any emotional attachment to Westernesse, his friends or even to Rymenhild. When King Thurston of Ireland offers Horn his daughter Reynild as a wife, he does not refuse the offer, but only postpones his answer: 'Whanne i þi dozter 3erne/ Ne schaltu [hire me] werne' (935-6). Horn does not mention anything about Rymenhild until later in the poem, and only because he needs King Thurston's support. However, this is not the case in the AN version which portrays Horn as more emotionally attached to Rigmel. In his reply to King Gudreche's offer to marry his daughter Lenburc, Horn mentions that he loves another woman and that he will never take a wife other than her:

Une fille qu'il ot vers mei fist liëment,

Si qu'ele m'amereit e joe li ensement.

Fille est de vavasur e tiel sunt mi parent:

Bien sumes parigal e d'un ordeinement.

Ja muiller ne prendrai od mun dreit escient,

Taunt ke sace vers mei seit tenue leaument;

Cum iert de nostre amur, s'el me tendra covent. (3665-71)

[A daughter of his made a compact with me, that she would love me and I her. She is a nobleman's daughter, and such is my parentage too: we are well-matched and of the

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<sup>83</sup> Translations from the AN *Romance of Horn* are taken from Judith Weiss, *The Birth of Romance in England: 'The Romance of Horn', 'The Folie Tristan', 'The Lai of Haveloc' and 'Amis and Amilun'* (Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009), p. 38; henceforth referred to as Weiss and cited parenthetically in the text by page number.

same rank. I shall never intentionally take a wife so long as I know she is loyal to me.  
(Weiss, p. 110)]

That Thurston views Gudmod's refusal of a king's daughter for a woman he loves as injudicious implies that Horn's answer is less reasonable and more emotional than in the ME version.

The fact that the ME version never describes Horn longing for Rymenhild suggests that he could have seriously considered King Thurston's offer as an alternative option, given that Reynild, like Rymenhild, is the only heiress to her father's kingdom. The poet describes how Horn lives six years in Ireland without sending a messenger to Rymenhild: 'Cutberd wonede þere/ Fulle se[x]e zere;/ [þe seueþe biwende]/ To Rymenild he ne sen[d]e' (937-40). He also notes that, for the third time in the poem, Horn does not go to Rymenhild until she sends for him: 'Heo sende hire sonde/ [In] to euereche Londe/ To seche[n] Horn knigt' (953-5). The poem's focus on how the seventh year has started without any reference to Horn's intention to go back to Westernesse, suggests a portrayal of Horn as a dispassionate, practical character who subordinates emotions to reason. Though Horn seems affected by the news he hears about Rymenhild, his determination to go back to Westernesse is not solely motivated by emotions. By describing King Modi of Reynes, Rymenhild's suitor, as Horn's enemy (961), the poem suggests that Horn's decision to go back to Westernesse is not motivated only by emotions, but also by politics.

Horn's deliberation and calm, as manifestations of his rationality, continue to be stressed after his arrival in Westernesse. Despite noticing that Rymenhild is miserable and weeping, he is not portrayed as emotionally moved, but he continues in his disguise as a palmer. Horn's insensitiveness to Rymenhild's emotions is most obvious when he makes her believe that the man she loves, Horn, has died – he does this by throwing the ring into the cup. Horn's intellectual abilities and phlegmatic character are expressed through the poetic mode. His wit and rational control of emotions are shown through his elaborate play of language and clever use of pun:<sup>84</sup>

Ihc am icome to loke

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<sup>84</sup> On the use of pun in *King Horn*; see John Ganim, *Style and Consciousness in Middle English Narrative* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 38-9.

Ef eni fiss hit toke!

Ihc am icode to fisse;

*Drink* [nelle ihc] of *disse*.

Drink to *Horn* of *horne*:

Feor ihc am i-orne!<sup>85</sup> (1163-68)

While these lines, given the ambiguity of the pun and imagery, are characterized by a subtle narrative style and complex alliterative couplet signalled by the repetition of the /d/ and /h/ sounds, the meeting that follows the revelation is described in simple, short couplets. The encounter is brief and clichéd: ‘Ihc am Horn of Westernesse/ In armes þu me [ke]sse.’/ Hi [clepten] and [h]y [keste]/ [Þer whiles þat hem leste]’ (1235-8). The poem dedicates fourteen lines to describe Horn’s revelation of his true identity; ten of them are devoted to his martial plan. Shifting the focus to Horn’s martial plan is related to the poem’s overall presentation of Horn as a ruler with a deep sense of responsibility towards the common good, not as a romantic lover. Apart from the very brief scene in which Horn and Rymenhild kiss each other when Horn reveals his true identity, the poem does not describe any other affectionate gestures. In fact, Horn seems more concerned with defending himself and confronting King Aylmar with his unjust accusation than with Rymenhild:

To þe, king, men seide

Þat i þe bitraide;

Þu makedest me fleme

And þi lond to reme;

Þu wendest þat i wrozte

Þat y neure ne þozte:

Bi Rymenhilde [to for]ligge.

[Bi Drizte] i [þat] wiþsegge!

Ne scal ihc[neure a]ginne. (1299-1307)

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<sup>85</sup> The emphasis is mine.

To emphasise Horn's practical, dispassionate character further, the poem shows how he refuses to marry Rymenhild until he regains his kingdom.

Horn's ability to control his emotions continues to be stressed after he reaches Sudenne. Instead of being emotional and acting as a prince who was exiled as a child, Horn acts as a responsible ruler. He, therefore, subordinates his familial emotions to his collective duty towards his kingdom. When Athulf's father tells him that his mother is still alive and that she will be most joyful when she learns that he is not dead, Horn is presented as preoccupied with regaining the kingdom as he does not speak a word about his mother or express his emotions:

‘[Horn],’ he sede, ‘leue child,

[Lyueþ 3ut] þi moder Godhild;

Of ioie heo [ne] miste

[Aliue] if heo þe wiste!’

Horn sede [vp]on his rime:

‘Iblessed beo þe time

i com [in]to Suddenne

Wiþ mine irisse menne!

[Pis lond we schulle winne]

And [sle þat þer beþ inne] (1391-400)

When Horn finally meets his mother, the meeting is not dramatised: ‘He [sozte] his Moder halle/ [B]in[ne] roche walle:/ [He custe hire and grette]/ [And into castel fette] (1415-8). Unlike the ME Horn who knows that his mother is alive upon his arrival in Sudenne and chooses to postpone meeting her until after he regains the kingdom, the AN Horn knows that his mother is alive only after he banishes all the Saracens. In the AN version Horn's mother goes to his court disguised as a beggar, and Horn does not identify her until Lord Hardré informs him:

Ses clers oilz e sun vis e sa buche ad notee,

Bien cunut que ço rert sa dame, la loee.

Puis [est] venuz a Horn, dit li ad en cellee:

‘Vostre mere vei la, k’avez ci amenee:  
 C’est Samburc, la gentil, ma dame l’anuree.  
 Ne sai u Damnedeu la nus ad si tensee!  
 Mes or en pensez, ber, ke bien seit cunseillee!’  
 Horn saillit dunc en piez, vers li curt randunee,  
 Si l’ambraçat vers sei e .c. fiez l’ad baissee,  
 Si-l ad tant tost cum puet en la chambre guiee  
 V ele fud noblement custeie e baignee. (4936-47)

[He remarked her bright eyes and face and mouth, and realised it was his lady, so much admired. Then he came to Horn and said under his breath: ‘Over there I see your mother, whom you brought in here: it’s the noble Samburc, my honoured lady. I don’t know where God has preserved her for us!’ Then Horn jumped to his feet and rushed towards her, hugged and kissed her a hundred times, and as soon as possible led her to the chamber where she was splendidly prepared for the bath. (Weiss, p. 132)]

In choosing to surprise Horn with the appearance of his mother, who is expected to be dead, the poet amplifies Horn’s reaction. Thus, unlike the ME version, the AN version presents Horn in such an extremely emotional state that he rushes towards his mother and kisses her a ‘hundred times’.

In Sudenne, as in Ireland, Horn’s dispassionate character is stressed again; the poet focuses on Horn’s ability to detach himself, physically and emotionally, from Rymenhild. He explicitly states that Horn seems to forget all about Rymenhild while in Sudenne: ‘Muri [b]e[s] he wro3te/ [Ac] Rymenhild hit [a]bo3te!’ (1421-2). The poet also describes how Horn does not decide to return to Westernesse until he sees a prophetic dream which uncovers Fikenhild’s treachery. In fact, the AN version does not portray Horn as equally dispassionate. While the ME version juxtaposes Horn’s merriment after his victory to Rymenhild’s suffering, the AN version never mentions Rymenhild until after the dream. The ME version clearly states that while Horn was celebrating, ‘Rymenhild hit [a]bo3te’ (1422). The long episode that describes Rymenhild’s suffering in Westernesse is entirely absent from the AN version. Instead, the AN version focuses on Horn’s speech with the barons in which he states that he has delayed his union with Rymenhild for long enough:

‘Seignurs,’ ço dist li reis, ‘Deu en seit aürez!

Par l’aie de vus ai cunquis mun regnez.

A ces ke m’unt servit, ai mes terres donez:

Sulunc ço ke unt servit, l’ai jo bien ordinez:

Par le men escient ne dei estre blasmez.

Des or mei est a vis que jo ai bien sorjornez;

Si revoil errer – ço est ma volentez –

Pur Rigmel amener: ja n’ert plus atargez. (5004-11)

[‘My lords,’ said the king, ‘God be praised! I have conquered my kingdom with your help. I have given my lands to those who served me: I arranged it according to their service and in my mind I deserve no blame. Now it seems to me that I’ve stayed long enough. I want to return—that is my will—to fetch Rigmel: there shall be no more delay’. (Weiss, p. 133)]

Horn’s meeting with the barons in the AN version suggests that he has not been happy with his detachment from his beloved, and that he has been delaying his union with Rymenhild in order not to be blamed, not because he does not have strong feelings towards her. Though slight, the differences between the two versions suggest a revision of the portrayal of Horn’s character. The ME Horn is presented as a more rational and practical character than the AN Horn. In revising Horn’s character to be more rational, the ME version answers the thirteenth-century reason-centred ethics which viewed the subordination of emotions to reason as a source of strength typical of men.

### **1.2.2 The Thomist Notion of Passions as Weakness and Gendered Emotions in *King Horn***

In all the above examples in which I have discussed Horn’s active reasoning and control of his emotions, Rymenhild is depicted as a weak, emotional character. Here, it is important to note that Rymenhild’s weakness derives not from her inability to reach Horn, as an object of her desire, but from her inability to use her reason to moderate her excessive desire. Rymenhild is portrayed as a passionate character whose inability to divert her attention away from Horn



leads to her vulnerability. In the poem, Rymenhild's activity is limited to wooing, which, often, owing to her lack of moderation, does not lead to the outcome she wishes for. Hence, the success of her union with Horn is not attributed to her active wooing, which signifies Horn's desirability more than her power, as much as to Horn's ability to keep her excessive desires under control. This section will, therefore, discuss how Rymenhild's love for Horn, and her subsequent wooing, is presented as a form of love that leads to despair and passivity. More specifically, it will explain how Rymenhild's lack of self-restraint leads to her sickness, her inability to resist forced marriages and her attempt to commit suicide. To explain how Rymenhild's weakness is caused by her inability to control her emotions, her passionate character will be analysed in comparison with Horn's rational character.

Throughout the poem, she remains in Westernesse waiting for Horn to return that she falls prey to love-sickness. When the poet first introduces Rymenhild, he juxtaposes her sorrow to Horn's intellectual development:

Horn [mid] herte laȝte  
 Al þat [m]e him taȝte.  
 [Binne] curt and vte  
 And elles al abute  
 Luuede men Horn child;  
 And mest him louede Rymenhild,  
 Þe kynges oȝene do[3]ter:  
 He was mest in þoȝte.  
 Heo louede [Horn] so [on mode]  
 Pat heo gan wexe [wode] (247-56)

Even after confronting Horn with her emotions, Rymenhild is still presented as helplessly waiting for him to reciprocate her love. To juxtapose their roles and emotions, the poem frequently describes Rymenhild's miserable state during Horn's absence. It shows how Rymenhild's only plan for the future, which is her union with Horn, cannot be achieved until after Horn manages to achieve all his plans. When he first goes to Ireland, where he actively experiences knighthood, leadership and avenges his father, Rymenhild spends seven years

passively waiting for him. This period of waiting is prolonged further when Rymenhild realizes that Westernesse is only a stop on Horn's journey and that he wants to travel again to Sudenne to fulfil his other plans.

The poem's distinction between Horn's and Rymenhild's roles is based on their ability to control their emotions. While Horn's efficaciousness is linked to his self-restraint, Rymenhild's inefficiency is linked to her extreme, irrational emotions.<sup>86</sup> The poem shows how Rymenhild's extreme love for Horn causes her sorrow: 'Heo louede [Horn] so [on mode]/ Pat heo gan wexe [wode];/ For heo ne [dorste] at borde/ [Mid] him speke no worde' (255-8). The poem's focus on the negative impact of love accords with Aquinas' association of desire with sorrow: 'desire becomes a cause of sorrow, in so far as we sorrow for the delay of a desired good, or for its entire removal'.<sup>87</sup> Describing emotions as the passive potencies of the sensitive appetite, Aquinas links the passivity and immorality of the passions to their opposition to reason. He explains that 'the passions of the soul, in so far as they are contrary to the order of reason, incline us to sin, but in so far as they are controlled by reason, they pertain us to virtue'.<sup>88</sup> More importantly, Aquinas suggests that women are weak because they are more emotional than men: 'woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the discretion of reason predominates'.<sup>89</sup> Believing that women's emotions prevent them from the full exercise of their rational abilities, Aquinas argues that it is the man's duty to control his passions and the passions of the women around him, a role which Horn perfectly performs in this romance.<sup>90</sup> Hence, if read in the context of the Thomist gendered discourse of emotions, Rymenhild's erotic love can be seen as an intrusion that causes her suffering and subsequent inefficiency.

In addition to presenting love as a cause of sorrow, the poem suggests that sorrow impedes the use of reason. It presents Rymenhild's sorrow that she cannot find a way to meet Horn as a cause for her impulsiveness and lack of self-control. For example, Athelbrus

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<sup>86</sup> Inefficiency is used here to refer to Rymenhild's sickness and her subsequent passivity and despair. This conception accords with Aquinas' belief that excessive erotic desire leads to passivity and unproductivity.

<sup>87</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 36, art. 2.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* I, q. 92, art. 1.

<sup>90</sup> On how women should be subject to men's authority; see Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, q. 92, art. 1; for a detailed discussion of Aquinas' views; see Colleen McCluskey, 'An Unequal Relationship between Equals: Thomas Aquinas on Marriage', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 24 (2007), 1-18.

explicitly expresses his fear that Rymenhild's strong desire and sorrow will make her take pleasure with Horn and ignore the consequences of such indulgence in sin: 'ȝef Horn [þe] were abute/ Sore y me [a]dute/ Wiþ him [þu] wold[e] pleie/ Bitwex ȝou selue tweie' (349-52). The poem also suggests Rymenhild's impulsiveness through focusing on her reaction upon discovering that Athelbrus has tricked her. The poem describes how Rymenhild becomes extremely angry that she rebukes Athelbrus harshly:

Rymenhild hire biwente

And Aþelbrus heo schente:

‘Hennes þu go, þu fule þeof,

Ne wurstu me neure leof

Wen[d] vt of my[ne] bur

Wiþ muchel mesauentur!

[Euel] mote þu fonge

And on hize rode anhonge! (327-34)

Rymenhild's imprudent reaction reflects the power of her desire and her inability to moderate it. The poem's focus on love and sorrow as the causes of Rymenhild's wildness accords with the Thomist belief that sorrow 'deprives man of the use of reason: as may be seen in those who through sorrow become a prey to melancholy or madness'.<sup>91</sup> The intensity of Rymenhild's love causes her sorrow and, consequently, so weakens her reasoning capacity that she becomes oblivious to the social constraint on her royal behaviour.

The poem's negative treatment of extreme love suggests that the poet intended to portray Rymenhild as a passive, irrational character who is controlled by her erotic desire towards Horn. The fact that Rymenhild's emotions are manipulated twice, once by Athelbrus when he sends Athulf to her bower instead of Horn, and then by Horn himself when he assumes the identity of a palmer, indicates that the poet planned to present her emotions as immature and impulsive. In both situations, Rymenhild experiences inappropriate intense emotions.

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<sup>91</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 37, art. 4.

When she mistakes Athulf for Horn, she expresses extreme private emotions to the wrong person, which she immediately regrets:

‘Horn,’ quapheo, ‘wel longe

Ihc habbe þe luued stronge!

þu schalt þi trewþe plizte

On myn hond her rizte;

Me to spuse holde,

And ihc þe [to] Lo[ue]rd wolde.

Aþulf sede on hire [e]re,

So stille so hit were:

‘[Ne teo þu more speche]!

[Man wole þe bikeche].

þi tale nu þu lynne,

For Horn nis nozt her-inne! (307-18)

Athulf’s acknowledgment that Horn is fairer than any man alive (322) suggests that Rymenhild’s extreme desire has affected her judgment whereby she mistakes Athulf for Horn. In fact, Rymenhild indirectly admits her mistake when she states that Horn is ‘nozt so vnorn’ (336).

The examples, above, suggest that Rymenhild’s emotions are less mature than Horn’s. Therefore, conscious of the fact that Rymenhild is controlled by her desire, Athelbrus tells Horn to restrain himself because Rymenhild does not have the capacity to do so:<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> *King Horn*’s portrayal of man as responsible for protecting himself from the temptation of women is not frequently present in the romances and the *chansons de geste* of the twelfth century. Given the homosocial dimension of men’s relationships inherited from the epic tradition, French romances such as the *Roman d’Eneas* (1160) celebrate erotic relationships between women and men as evidence of the hero’s heterosexual masculinity. In the *chansons de geste*, the hero’s need to guard himself against the temptation of women is hardly suggested because women are usually absent from the world of these

‘Horn,’ quap he, ‘so hende  
 To bure nu þu wende  
 After mete [snelle],  
 Wiþ Rymenhild to duelle.  
 Wordes suþe bolde  
 In herte þu hem holde!  
 Horn, beo [þu] me trewe;  
 Ne schal þe neure [a]rewe.’ (377-84)

In contrast to the ME version, Harland in the AN version does not warn Horn of Rymenhild’s excessive desire, but rather asks him to grant her what she wants and not be reluctant: ‘Çoe ke vuldra Rigmel, la bele od le cler vis,/ E vus tut otriez: mar en seiez eschis,/ Kar n’ad taunt franche rien entre Rome e Paris’ (1080-2) [Grant what Rigmel, beautiful and pure of face wants. It would be a pity if you were reluctant, because there is no more splendid creature from Rome to Paris (Weiss, p. 65)]. The revision of Athelbrus’s attitude in the ME version to be more concerned with social constraints than with the requirements of courtly love suggests *King Horn*’s celebration of reason-centred ethics, rather than passion-centred ethics.

*King Horn*’s gendered discourse of emotions answers the thirteenth-century beliefs about the differences between men and women regarding their abilities to control emotions. A man’s responsibility to act reasonably in reaction to the unrestrained erotic desires of a woman is discussed in medieval conduct literature. Suggesting that the aim of a woman’s love is bodily pleasure, thirteenth-century guides of conduct often warn men of women’s lust and advise them to be careful when they deal with them. The *Secreta Secretorum* discusses sexual desire as a feminine passion that hinders the use of reason and feminises a man: ‘lecherie is destruccioun of body abreggyng of lijf and corrupcioun of vertues; Enemy to conscience, and makith a man

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epic poems. For example, in the early twelfth-century *The Song of Ronald*, female characters scarcely appear to be treated as threats. On the role of women in the romance and *chanson de geste*; see Catherine Hanley, *War and Combat, 1150-1270: The Evidence from Old French Literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), p. 137; also Rachel Dressler, ‘Steel Corpse: Imagining the Knight in Death’, in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. by Jacqueline Murray (New York: Garland, 1999), pp. 135-67 (pp. 155-6).

oft femynne'.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, in his *Urbanus Magnus*, Beccles dedicates a whole section to giving advice on how to manage women and especially one's wife. To warn men against lecherous wives and lustful women, he advises them to act wisely and avoid them by feigning illness.<sup>94</sup>

As part of its intellectualist gendered discourse of emotions, *King Horn* presents the failure to control emotions and act reasonably as a form of weakness. Rymenhild's weakness is expressed through her attitude and language. Phrases like 'Haue of me rewþe' (415) and 'Vn-bind me of my pine' (546) feature heavily in her speech, and in a way that signifies helplessness. To stress her weakness, the poem also presents illness, feigned or actual, as Rymenhild's only way to express her emotions and move Horn. For example, when she first wanted to see Horn, her only plan was to feign illness:

And þus [biþozte hire zare]:

Heo sende hire sonde

Aþelbrus to honde

Þat he com hire to,

(Also scholde Horn do)

In-to [hire] bure,

ffor heo gan to lure;

And þe sonde seide

Þat sik lai [þe] m[e]ide,

And bad him come swiþe

For heo nas noþing bliþe. (268-78)

Later, unable to control her desire or to influence Horn, Rymenhild is portrayed as a victim of love-sickness where she swoons more than once. Rymenhild first swoons when Horn tells her

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<sup>93</sup> *Secreta Secretorum*, p. 14.

<sup>94</sup> Beccles, *Urbanus Magnus Danielis Becclesiensis*, ed. J.G. Smyly (Dublin: Hodges & Figgis, 1939), lines 1916-17. Feigning illness to avoid a flattering woman is recurrent in Middle English romance. For example, in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the text which will be discussed in Chapter Three, Gawain pretends to be asleep in order preserve his chastity against the temptation of Lady Bertilak.

that he cannot reciprocate her love and marry her because he is a foundling: ‘þo gan Rymenhild mis-lyke/ And sore gan to sike./ Armes heo gan [v]n-b[o]ʒe-/ Adun he feol iswoʒe!’ (431-4). Rymenhild swoons again when Horn says his farewell before he leaves Westernesse and travels to Ireland: ‘H custe[n] h[e]m astunde/ And Rymenhild feol to grunde’ (755-6). She also falls down on her bed when Horn, disguised as a palmer, makes her believe that Horn is dead. This image is repeated again as she swoons for the last time in the poem when Horn, disguised as a harpist, plays a lay to her: ‘He makede Rymenhilde lay,/ And heo makede walaway!/  
Rymenhild feol yswoʒe’ (1511-3). Rymenhild’s swooning throughout the poem is presented as an indication of her unfulfilled erotic desire and her inability to act. As an embodied reaction, it suggests that Rymenhild experiences love as a type of sickness that impounds her heart against her will. Thus, in focusing on Rymenhild’s desire as a cause of her sickness, the poem suggests that lustful emotions, and the passivity associated with them, are typical of women.

*King Horn*’s portrayal of Rymenhild’s sickness as an outcome of extreme erotic desire can be better understood in the light of Aquinas’ discussion of love-sickness, which forms part of his analysis of the effects of love. Aquinas considers the effects of love according to the relation between the appetitive power and the object of love. He thus identifies four effects of love, namely melting, enjoyment, languor and fervour, and argues that when the beloved is absent, sadness (or languor) arises:<sup>95</sup>

If, then, the beloved is present and possessed, pleasure or enjoyment ensues. But if the beloved be absent, two passions arise... sadness at its absence, which is denoted by ‘languor’... and an intense desire to possess the beloved, which is signified by ‘fervour’.<sup>96</sup>

He also asserts that ‘love of a suitable good perfects and betters the lover; but love of a good which is unsuitable to the lover, wounds and worsens him’.<sup>97</sup> The erotic nature of natural love makes it dependent on bodily delights and the possession of the beloved whose absence causes the lover’s sickness.<sup>98</sup> Hence, Aquinas’ discussion of the absence of the beloved as a direct

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<sup>95</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 28, art. 5.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

cause of love-sickness explains why the frustration of Rymenhild's union with Horn has worsened her condition and caused her sickness.<sup>99</sup>

The discussion of love as a gendered emotion that sometimes results in sorrow, and consequently love-sickness, can be better understood in relation to the poem's treatment of grief. *King Horn* strictly conforms to thirteenth-century cultural assumptions regarding the displacement of grief. Its representation of the main characters' expression of grief is informed by the chivalric code of behaviour which regulated the expression of grief according to gender. While Rymenhild is repeatedly presented as sorrowful, the text hardly depicts Horn as grieving. For example, despite the strong blood tie with the father, the poet does not mention that Horn experiences feelings of grief as a result of his father's death. In his first reflection on what happened in Sudenne, Horn never laments the death of his father. Rather, he practically thinks of how to avenge his people and to regain his kingdom:

Ȝef þu cume to Suddenne,  
 Gret þu wel of myne kenne:  
 Gret þu wel my moder,  
 Godhild quen þe gode;  
 And seie þe paene kyng,  
 [Driȝtes] wiȝer[l]ing,  
 Þat ihc, hol and fer,  
 On lond a[m] riued her;  
 And seie þat h[e] schal fonde  
 Þe d[uþ] of myne honed! (147-56)

Horn's ability to translate his grief over the loss of his father into a determination to avenge him reflects the power of his reason over his emotions. Horn is more concerned with his duty as the heir of the Kingdom of Sudenne than with his private familial emotions.

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<sup>99</sup> Love-sickness is often presented as a consequence of extreme erotic love in medieval literature; see Mary Wack, 'Lovesickness in *Troilus*', *Pacific Coast Philosophy*, 19 (1984), 55-61 (p. 55).



In directing the attention to Horn's balanced attitude following his loss, the poem links Horn's reaction to his father's death to the development of his masculine identity. It presents a gendered discourse of grief where Horn's ability to translate grief into action is juxtaposed to Rymenhild's inability to conceal or manage her grief. Hence, while Rymenhild is given the freedom to express her grief through weeping and swooning, the cultural constraints on Horn's masculine behaviour prevent him from expressing his grief somatically. For example, after her dream, Rymenhild anticipates the grief that may take place and weeps pitifully:<sup>100</sup>

Horn sede, 'Lef, þinore,  
 Wi wepestu so sore?'  
 Heo sede, 'Nozt i ne wepe;  
 [Ac] ase i lay aslepe  
 [Me þuʒte on mi metinge]  
 [Pat ihc rod on fischinge]:  
 To se my net i caste  
 [Ac] hit nolde noʒte ilaste  
 A gret fiss at þe f[e]rste  
 Mi net he [dede] toberste.  
 [Þe fiss me so bilauʒte]  
 [Pat ihc nozt ne cauʒte]. (661-72)

In order to portray Horn as an icon of masculinity, the poet describes how he reacts to the same situation calmly and reasonably:

Rymenhild weop ille  
 And Horn let tires stille.

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<sup>100</sup> Rymenhild's dream does not occur in the AN version and, thus, less opportunity is given to analyse Rymenhild's and Horn's contrasting reactions. Wikele's false accusation of Horn is not foreshadowed by the dream, it is presented immediately after Horn's battle with the Saracens in Westernesse and his meeting with Rymenhild (1839-79).

‘Lemman,’ quap he ‘dere,  
 Du schalt more ihere;  
 Pi sweuen [i]schal wende:  
 Sum Man vs [schal] schende.  
 De fiss þat brak þ[i se]yne,  
 Ywis, h[it is sum ble]ine,  
 Pat scal don vs tene,  
 [Sone wurp [hit wel] isene. (685-94)

In his attempt to calm Rymenhild, Horn uses his reason. He asks her to understand the dream and tries to explain it rationally. Horn quietly tells Rymenhild how the dream foreshadows that someone will harm them and assures her that this ‘wel isene’ (694). His reasonable explanation of the dream and his analysis of its meaning and its possible outcomes enable him to be prudent and emotionally detached from what Rymenhild experiences.

The poem’s suggestion of a relationship between Horn’s masculine identity and his ability to control grief is a reflection of the medieval belief that sorrow weakens man.<sup>101</sup> Since the medieval man, unlike the medieval woman, is expected to be reasonable, his grief should be translated into action. Hence, in its focus on Rymenhild’s and Horn’s contrasting emotional reactions to the same event, *King Horn* conforms to the thirteenth-century intellectualist gendered discourse of emotions. The poem’s juxtaposition of Rymenhild’s passivity to Horn’s activity, and linking this to the type of emotions they experience, implies a division of gender roles based on the characters’ management of their emotions. Hence, in *King Horn*, the hierarchy between male and female is maintained and expressed in terms of the relationship between reason and emotions. While the male is presented as an active, reasonable character, the female is presented as a passive, emotional character.

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<sup>101</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 37, art. 2.

### 1.2.3 Aquinas' Sexual Ethics and the Division between Love and Marriage in *King Horn*

The fact that the expression of emotions in *King Horn* is governed by socio-cultural constraints suggests a relationship between emotions and politics. In *King Horn*, love is translated into action. First, the poem shows how Rymenhild, motivated by her love for Horn, uses her authority as the king's daughter to help him become a knight: "“Lemman” he sede, “dere,/ Pin herte nu þu stere/ Help [þu] me to kni3te/ Bi al þine mi3te/ To my lo[ue]rd king”” (439-43). And Rymenhild replies ‘þu schalt [wurpe to] kni3t[e]/ Are come seue ni3t[e]’ (453-4). Then, the poem gives this love affair a socio-political significance by linking the consummation of Horn's and Rymenhild's relationship to Horn's recovery of his kingdom and throne, therefore suggesting that an equal marriage is the only way to form a bond with Rymenhild.

Extant treatises on conduct from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries show that there were strict rules to regulate love and marriage. In *De Amore/ The Art of Courtly Love*, Capellanus argues that the lovers' age, their social rank and the aim of their love are issues that affect the success of a love relationship. Capellanus focuses specifically on the impact of social class on choosing a lover and proposes that if a beloved ‘finds anyone in the classes above him who is more worthy or as worthy, she ought to prefer the love of that man’.<sup>102</sup> He also sets an appropriate age for a man to be a lover: ‘I say and insist that before his eighteenth year a man cannot be a true lover’.<sup>103</sup> Aware of his status as a foundling, Horn knows that, even if his wit and fairness may advance his situation, they do not change his social rank. Consequently, his reluctance to reciprocate Rymenhild's love can be viewed as a result of the impact of social rank on medieval people's choices. Thus, according to the cultural assumptions acknowledged by contemporary conduct treatises, neither Horn's rank as a foundling nor his age qualify him to get married.

The politicised discourse of love that the poem presents reflects the equally politicised attitude of thirteenth-century moral philosophy towards love. In his discussion of the governance of rulers, Aquinas stresses that the just ruler is the ruler who subordinates his

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<sup>102</sup> Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. by John Parry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 54.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

individual profit to the good of the multitude.<sup>104</sup> His description of a prudent person as one who can, by use of reason, direct his actions and emotions to an appropriate good applies to the poem's characterisation of Horn.<sup>105</sup> Horn's prudence and his sense of responsibility are reflected in his rational assessment of his relationship with Rymenhild. While Rymenhild is depicted as solely concerned with the fulfilment of her desire, Horn is presented as concerned with the legitimacy and morality of his emotions. Rymenhild's sensuality is highlighted in both the AN and ME versions. Yet, the erotic nature of her desires is stressed more in the AN version (955-64).<sup>106</sup> Though the suggestion that the remedy for Rymenhild's pain is sexual pleasure is less explicit in *King Horn* than in the *Romance of Horn*, both versions emphasise Rymenhild's erotic character and juxtapose it to Horn's rational character. Therefore, while Horn is concerned with the social dimension of his relationship with Rymenhild: 'So is þe manere/ Wip sume oþere knizte/ For his lemman fize/ Or [eni wif he] take' (556-9), Rymenhild is only concerned with the fulfilment of her sexual desire and thinks of marriage only as a way to be united with Horn.

The two versions' similar attitudes towards sensual love can be attributed to the fact that the AN version was influenced by similar ideas about marriage and love. In the early twelfth century, Augustine's religious ideas regarding love and sexuality were influential. Stricter than Aquinas, Augustine focused on reproduction as the only function of marriage. Although Aquinas, in a position similar to Augustine, viewed sexual love as sinful even within marriage, he introduced the love of friendship between spouses as equally important to the reproductive function of marriage.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Aquinas, *On the Government of Rulers: De Regimine Principum*, trans. by James M. Blythe (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 63-4.

<sup>105</sup> Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, trans. by Richard Regan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2007), pp. 129-31. In his political theory and his discussion of the qualities of the ruler, especially prudence, Aquinas is heavily influenced by Aristotle; see Kevin Sharpe, 'Virtues, Passions and Politics in Early Modern England', *History of Political Thought*, 32 (2011), 773-98 (p. 799).

<sup>106</sup> On the prominence of the misogynist outlook in the AN version, see Weiss, 'The Power and Weakness of Women in Anglo-Norman Romance', in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500*, ed. by Carol Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 7-24 (p. 19).

<sup>107</sup> See Robert Obach, *The Catholic Church on Marital Intercourse: From St. Paul to Pope John Paul II* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008), pp. 89-90.

Horn does not celebrate Rymenhild's excessive desire in either version. His indifference to Rymenhild's feelings in the ME version is expressed by his frequent suggestion that Rymenhild takes another husband and his constant delay of their union. Horn's ambivalence towards Rigmel's feelings in the AN version is expressed through his harsh and explicit criticism of her attitude. The AN Horn directly comments on Rigmel's behaviour and states that she should not wantonly offer her body if she cares about protecting her reputation: 'La grant beauté de vus ne turnez a folur,/ Tost en dirreient mal li garçon menteür,/ Ki mençoinges cuntroevent cumme losengeür' (1220-2) [Do not wantonly bestow your great beauty: slander will quickly follow you, from scurrilous knaves who deceitfully invent lies (Weiss, p. 67)]. Moreover, in the AN version Rigmel is presented as excessively lustful. The poet describes how she offers to be at Horn's command and never mentions marriage:

'Beaus amis,' dist Rigmel, 'ne-l ferez autrement.

a vus met joe mun cors, mun aveir en present.

Pernez en a pleisir solunc vostre talent,

K'a dependre en aiez, quant voldrez, largement,

E d'amur si façon itiel aliement

Quë autre n'amerez en tut vostre vivant

Fors mei, taunt cum vers vus me tendrai lealment. (1181-7)

['My dear friend,' said Rigmel, 'do not do otherwise. Now, I make you a present of my body and my possessions. Take them as you will, whenever you desire, so that you have them to spend, lavishly, when you wish. And let us make a compact of love that you will love no other all your life, save me, so long as I am faithful to you' (Weiss, pp. 66-7)]

In the ME version, on the other hand, Rigmel immediately proposes marriage: "'Horn," heo sede, "wiþute stri[ue]/ Ðu schalt ha[bben] me to [wi[ue]./ Horn, haue of me rewþe/ And plist me þi trewþe!"' (413-16). Hence, though in both versions Rymenhild's attitude is criticised, the characterisation of Rymenhild as extremely lustful is revised in the ME version to serve the poem's dedication to the issue of marriage.

The poem suggests Horn's negative opinion of fornication through describing him as offended at Fikenhild's false accusation. Horn, therefore, insists on confronting King Aylmar

and defending himself against the charge of having premarital sexual intercourse with Rymenhild:

Pu makedest me fleme  
 And þi lond to reme;  
 Pu wendest þat i wrozte  
 Þat y neure ne þozte:  
 Bi Rymenhild [to for]ligge.  
 [Bi Drizte] i [þat] wiþsegge!  
 Ne schal ihc [neure a]ginne  
 Til i Suddene winne. (1301-8)

Horn's insistence that consummation has not happened indicates the poem's negative view of fornication. In *King Horn*, fornication as a result of great erotic desire is not presented as chivalric; it is, rather, regarded as a form of treason. In fact, King Aylmar's strong reaction and his description of Rymenhild as a whore reflect the negative view of love and sex outside marriage. This harsh attitude towards fornication is also prominent in the AN version which describes the king's extreme fury and how he does not try to verify Fikenhild's charge:

Mut ai mal enpleié en vus norrissement.  
 Ki m'avez purchacé mal e honissement.  
 Od ma fille gisez, si fetes folement,  
 Le bien ke vus ai fait me rendez malement.  
 Mes par icel seignor, ke requerent penent,  
 Si ne-l m'escundisez, e çoe par serrement,  
 Ja n'estrez bien de mei en tut vostre vivent. (1920-6)

[Raising you has been a bad mistake, for you have procured me harm and shame. You are sleeping with my daughter, a wicked deed; you repay me evilly for the good I did you. But, by the lord whom penitents invoke, if you cannot deny it to me, and on oath, you will find no favour with me, for the rest of your days. (Weiss, p. 79)]

The AN version does not postpone the announcement of Horn's abstinence until later, as in the ME version. It describes how, in his last meeting with Rymenhild before his departure, Rymenhild asks Horn to swear the oath that will prove his chastity: 'Bien savez qu'il est faus: n'en purrez enpeirer' (2023) [You know well the accusation is false: to swear can't harm you (Weiss, p. 82)]. Also, Horn confronts King Hunlaf and defends himself against the charge before he leaves: "“Par Deu, sire,” dist Horn, “tort en avez mut grant./ Or m'en irrai idunc e a Deu vus comant./ Unc ne·l pensai el quer ke dist li suzduaunt/ Mut m'en vengerai bien si ja sui repairaunt' (2097-100) ['By God, sire,' said Horn, 'you are greatly in the wrong. Now I shall go, commending you to God. What the traitor said never even entered my thoughts, but I shall certainly revenge myself for it (Weiss, p. 82)]. Though it comes later, the announcement of Horn's chastity in the ME version is more powerful:

'King,' he sede 'pu l[e]ste

...

Horn is mi name

[Ibore of gode kenne],

[De kings of Suddenne].

...

Pu makedest me fleme

And þi lond to reme;

Pu wendest þat i wroȝte

Þat y neure ne þoȝte:

Bi Rymenhild [to for]ligge.

[Bi Driȝte] i [þat] wiþsegge!

Ne Schal ihc [neure a] ginne

Til i Sudenne winne.

Pu kep hure a stunde

Þe[r] while[s] þat i funde

### In-to min heritage (1291-1311)

Horn's defence of himself in the ME version is more powerful because it is accompanied by his revelation of his true identity as the heir of Sudenne and his proposal to Rymenhild. In proposing to Rymenhild in public, Horn gives his previous relationship with her a degree of legitimacy.

The poem's negative view of fornication answers the Thomist condemnation of premarital and extramarital sexual activities. In the second part of his *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas discusses fornication, a subcategory of lust, as a sin that involves 'seeking venereal pleasure not in accordance with reason'.<sup>108</sup> He defines the sexual union of an unmarried man with an unmarried woman as simple fornication.<sup>109</sup> In discussing whether simple fornication is a sin or not, Aquinas asserts that 'without any doubt we must hold simple fornication to be a mortal sin'.<sup>110</sup> Aquinas' treatment of fornication as a mortal sin is attributed to the fact that it might result in the birth of illegitimate children. He explains that simple fornication is sinful because it injures the life of the offspring to be born of this illicit union and argues that the appropriate upbringing of offspring requires that a man should be united to one woman and abide with her for a lifetime.<sup>111</sup> Romantic love does not feature in Aquinas' sexual ethics where the only legitimate union between man and a woman is marriage, which is not based on the emotional bond between spouses as much as on the sacred purpose of reproduction.<sup>112</sup>

As a response to the period's ethical discourse of emotions, the poem encourages a form of rational love represented by marriage. It thus celebrates marriage and condemns erotic desire as an irrational form of love. Unlike passionate love, marriage is presented as central to political stability. The poem treats marriage as a feudal and religious bond, not a private one. Thus, the vows that Horn and Rymenhild make in private fail to legitimise their marriage. The disapproval of the vows as a legitimate bond can be better understood in the light of the thirteenth-century marriage regulations which outlawed clandestine marriage. *King Horn* was composed in the aftermath of the Fourth Lateran Council which issued three new canons regarding marriage. One of these canons is the canon that banned clandestine marriage as a

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<sup>108</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 154, art. 1.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., art. 2.

<sup>111</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 154, art. 2.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.



form of marriage that is contracted without posting the banns.<sup>113</sup> Hence, the period's attitude towards clandestine marriage explains the poem's emphasis that Horn's relationship with Rymenhild has gained legitimacy only when, addressing her father, Horn publicly announces his intention to marry her after regaining his kingdom:

Ischal beo king of tune

And [l]ere kinges [r]une.

Panne schal Rymenhilde [þe zinge]

Ligge bi [Horn] þe kinge! (1315-18)

The marriage vow that Horn and Rymenhild make in private allows them to enter into a clandestine type of marriage which was neither accepted by Church standards nor secular customs.<sup>114</sup> It is, actually, this verbal public declaration that moves the relationship from being a private, sexual relationship to becoming an institutionalized bond.

The poem's attitude towards love and marriage suggests that the political relationship between men is prioritised over the emotional relationship between Horn and Rymenhild. This is expressed in the poem when Horn ignores Rymenhild's emotions and views the relationship as one between him and the king, and says there is no proper wedding between a thrall and the king (579-80). Horn's subordination of emotions to politics is even more prominent in the AN version where he states that he can only be pleased with Rymenhild's love if it pleases the king, her father; otherwise he will be ashamed of himself: 'tuz jors seit novel/ mes qu'a Hunlaf seit bel,/ Kar querrai vers lui rien dunt jeo port chapel'(1803-5) [I am very happy with it, provided it pleases Hunlaf, for I seek nothing that makes me ashamed before him (Weiss, p. 76)]. Though both versions prioritise politics over love, a comparison between the two episodes shows that

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<sup>113</sup> On this; see Chelsea Skalak, 'Clandestine Marriage and the Church: *King Horn* after the Fourth Lateran Council', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 47 (2016), 135-61. In her article, Skalak examines *King Horn* as an example of the inconsistencies within the medieval marriage regulations. Her article argues that the repeated delays of Horn's and Rymenhild's marriage suggests the inadequacy of the Church's authority in regulating marriage.

<sup>114</sup> See Margaret F. Swezey, 'Courtship and the Making of Marriage in Early Middle English Romance' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of North Carolina, 2009: <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:0016b83f-6e46-4e08-a701-c75502f01403>; accessed 3 June, 2016), p. 87.

Horn's delay of his union with Rymenhild in the ME version is presented as a result of his strong belief that there can be no proper wedding between a foundling and the daughter of a king. However, by placing considerable emphasis on Horn's concern with King Hunlaf's view of his relationship with Rymenhild, the AN version suggests that, though still a foundling, Horn will be happy with his relationship with Rymenhild as long as it pleases her father. Thus, while the AN version focuses on Horn's conformity to the social ethics that regulate love relationships, the ME version stresses his rational and deliberate interiorisation of these ethics.

The subordination of emotions to politics in *King Horn* is suggested through the depiction of Rymenhild and Reynild as being passively exchanged between different suitors. The fact that arranged marriages are more common than marriages that are based on love indicates that the poem does not present love as a requirement for marriage. The poem describes how Rymenhild is forced to marry King Modi although she does not have any feelings towards him and loves Horn. Rymenhild's failure to resist an arranged marriage is stressed again when Fikenhild plans to marry her against her will: 'Ffikenhild gan [by] wende/ Rymenhild to schende:/ To w[iu]e he gan hure 3erne/ Þe kyng ne dorste him werne' (1435-8). Similarly, King Thurston offers his daughter to Horn and the poem does not mention that Horn has seen her before or that she has any feelings towards him. Yet, this is not the case in the AN version. The AN version mentions that Lenburc had the opportunity to meet Gudmod and was deeply in love with him: 'Lée en fu durement damaisele Lenbur/ De lur avenement – ne fud plus a nul jor –/ E tut plus de Gudmod kar vers li ad amur' (2702-4) [Lady Lenburc was extremely happy at their arrival—never more so—and especially with Gudmod, because she loved (Weiss, p. 93)]. The text describes how she plays chess with him hoping that she can touch him on hand or foot: 'Dunc fu de tutes parz de joer mut preiez,/ E Lenburc sur aus tuz en ot grant volentez,/ Taunt desira de lui qu'il fussent aprociez,/ Qu'il en main u en pie poüst estre tochiez' (2747-50) [Then on all sides they begged him to play, and Lenburc greatly desired it above all the rest, so much did she long for them to be close enough together that he could be touched on hand or foot (Weiss, p. 94)]. In this way, King Thurston's offer could have been influenced by his daughter's emotions towards Gudmod. Hence, the ME version's omission of this part can be seen as evidence of its celebration of marriages of convenience.

To show Horn's acceptance of arranged marriages, *King Horn* describes how he arranges Reynild's and Athulf's marriage. In his attempt to comfort King Thurston by suggesting a husband for his daughter, Horn states that he will establish Reynild's marriage by choosing someone who is faithful:

And ischal do to spuse

þi dozter wel to huse;

Heo schal to spuse [aʒe]

Aþulf mi gode felaze:

[He is] kniʒt mid þe beste

And [on] þe treweste. (1015-20)

Since there is no mention that Athulf has ever met Reynild before, Horn's decision implies that he does not view love as the basis for marriage. In suggesting Athulf, Horn chooses someone who can be a suitable future king and heir, not a suitable lover.

The examples I have discussed demonstrate that *King Horn* portrays marriage as a stabilising social force. The poem's celebration of marriage as a virtue that enables characters to experience a rational form of love without challenging the ethics that govern their society seems to be informed by the period's ethical discourse of emotions. Contrary to the modern concept of marriage as a bond which should be based on romantic love, marriage during the high Middle Ages, especially in the context of the thirteenth-century prioritisation of reason over emotions, was regarded as a religious sacrament. There were seven sacraments and marriage was listed among them.<sup>115</sup> It was thus treated as a religious bond whose major function was reproduction.

The period's moral philosophers explain that marriage should be marked by duty where married couples are expected to engage in sexual intercourse only for the purpose of reproduction, not to satisfy their desires. The negative attitude towards erotic love and sexual desire was also central to the thirteenth-century Thomist reason-centred ethics.<sup>116</sup> Aquinas

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<sup>115</sup> See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Suppl. q. 42, art. 1. Aquinas discusses the doctrine of marriage as a sacrament in more detail in his *Summa Contra Gentiles* IV, chap. 78, trans. by Anton Pegis (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), pp. 295-6; henceforth referred to as *SCG*. He explains that the sacramental doctrine of marriage is consistent with the political rationale of marriage. On this; see Philip Reynold, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 715.

<sup>116</sup> Aquinas' writing on marriage is found in his *Scriptum, Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* and his *SCG*.

believed that the purpose of marriage is not the fulfilment of sexual desire, but the production of offspring. He states: 'Matrimony, then, in that it consists in the union of a husband and wife purposing to generate and educate offspring for the worship of God, is a sacrament of the church'.<sup>117</sup> The only kind of emotion that Aquinas acknowledges in marriage is the love of spousal friendship which, according to him, makes this bond virtuous. He argues that the love of friendship between spouses is derived from the love of God and it thus serves the sacramental function of marriage. Since the love of friendship, unlike sensual love, does not depend on the fulfilment of sexual desire, it makes marriage an enduring relationship:

Furthermore, the greater that friendship is, the more solid and long-lasting will it be. Now, there seems to be the greatest friendship between husband and wife, for they are united not only in the act of fleshly union... but also in the partnership of the whole range of domestic activity.<sup>118</sup>

According to Aquinas' sexual ethics, spouses commit a venial sin whenever the purpose of their intercourse is pleasure not reproduction or the payment of marital debt.<sup>119</sup> Believing that the further we are from reason the closer we are to sin, Aquinas views sexual pleasure as a sinful activity that hinders the judgment of moral wisdom.<sup>120</sup> This condemnation of the desire for pleasure as the motive for conjugal intercourse explains why passionate love was perceived as wicked, even if its object is one's wife.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Aquinas, *SCG* IV, chap. 78, p. 295; see also his *Summa Theologica*, Suppl. q. 49, art. 2. It is worth noting that Aquinas' belief represented the general thinking around marriage in medieval England; see Conor McCarthy's *Marriage in Medieval England: Law, Literature, and Practice* (Cambridge: The Boydell Press, 2004). McCarthy argues that 'marriages were the major means by which families sought to establish economic viability for the succeeding generation' (p. 51). The legal/ religious dimension of medieval marriage is also discussed by Sue Niebrzydowski in *Bonoure and Buxum: A Study of Wives in Late Medieval English Literature* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006).

<sup>118</sup> See Aquinas, *SCG* III, chap. 123, p. 148.

<sup>119</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Suppl. q. 49, art. 5.

<sup>120</sup> *SCG* III, chap. 125, p. 153; see also John Giles Milhaven, 'Thomas Aquinas on Sexual Pleasure', *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 5 (1977), 157-81. Milhaven explains that the 'crux of the matter, therefore, in understanding Thomas' appraisal of sexual pleasure is his exaltation of the rational as sole norm and model for all human values' (p. 167).

<sup>121</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 14.

In *King Horn*, marriage, rather than romantic love, is celebrated as a bond that has a religious and social significance. The poem presents marriage as a relationship based on ordered emotions and the mutual love of God. Accordingly, in its presentation of the union between Horn and Rymenhild as one based on reason rather than sexual desire, the poem recalls the period's emphasis on the moral function of marriage rather than its emotional function. It thus presents Horn's insistence on regaining his kingdom as a way to establish an 'economically viable social unit' before getting married.<sup>122</sup> The subordination of Rymenhild's emotions to Horn's duty, and the repeated delay of their union, makes their marriage comply with Aquinas' notion of marriage as friendship (*maxima amicitia*). The poem suggests that Horn and Rymenhild are not only united in the act of fleshly union.<sup>123</sup> That Rymenhild finally marries Horn is not presented in the poem as a result of their strong erotic love. Rather, the poem stresses that God intended Rymenhild for Horn and that their union was based on their cherishing of the law of God. The ending of the poem suggests that Horn's marriage to Rymenhild is part of God's plan for him and that their emotions have a minimum impact on this: 'Rymenhild he makede his quene/ So [wel] hit miȝte beon;/ Al folk h[it ikn]ewe/ Þat [hi hem loueden] trewe' (1555-8). It is thus the power of the divine will, not the power of love, that has united Horn and Rymenhild.

As for the socio-political dimension of this marriage, the poem presents Horn's ability to win Rymenhild as an indication of his superiority to other suitors, not as an indication of his strong emotions towards her. For example, in his reaction to Fikenhild's forceful marriage to Rymenhild, Horn's focus is not on his love to Rymenhild as much as on Fikenhild's deception. His speech reveals that he is primarily concerned with Fikenhild's treason: 'Ffikenhild me hæp [g]on vnder/ And [don] Rymenhild [to] wunder' (1457-8). Though the poem describes how Horn feels sorry for Rymenhild, it does not present their meeting after the rescue as an emotionally charged moment. While it is expected for someone who has just rescued his beloved from a forced marriage to show emotions, the poem only mentions how Horn takes Rymenhild by the hand: 'Horn to Rymenhild bi honde/ And ladde hure to stronde' (1533-4). Horn's preoccupation with the punishment of Fikenhild, rather than with Rymenhild's feelings,

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<sup>122</sup> McCarthy, p. 51.

<sup>123</sup> See his *SCG* III, chap. 123, pp. 147-50; also, in part III, chap. 126, pp. 155-6, Aquinas discusses the benefits of marriage and stresses that moral wisdom, as the major good of marriage, cannot be achieved unless the pleasure of sexual intercourse is subordinated.

is also stressed in the AN version. The text shows how Horn's major aim is to make Fikenhild regret his act and confess his false accusation:

C'est la rien del monde kë ore plus desir,  
 Ke me seië vengé del culvert; a çoe tir.  
 Ne li remeindra rien ke li puisse tolir;  
 Qu'envers mei est parjure li ferai tut geïr  
 E le cunseil de lui ferai al rei [re]lenquir,  
 E l'amur qu'est entr'aus ferai tute partir. (3892-7)

[That's what I most desire in the world, to be avenged on that scoundrel; that's my aim. He will have nothing left worth taking. I shall make him confess all the perjury against me, make the king discard his advice, and quite sever the love between them. (Weiss, p. 114)]

Yet, since Horn knows about Fikenhild's disloyalty earlier in the AN version, and not through a prophetic dream, his reaction seems more amplified in the ME version:

Rymenhild [mid] hire honed  
 [Vp] wolde to londe;  
 Ffikenhild azen hire pelte  
 [Mid] his swerdes hilde.  
 Horn him [a]wok of slape  
 So man þat hadde rape. (1449-54)

Therefore, Horn's emotional arousal in the ME version is not only caused by his love for Rymenhild, but also by his discovery that his childhood friend is a traitor.

This section shows that Horn's self-restraint and rational reaction to Rymenhild's strong desire are presented as evidence of his virtue as a Christian knight. Though a reaction to the rise of courtly love traditions, *King Horn's* treatment of love and marriage suggests that its moral universe is still governed by Christian intellectual ethics. The poem's endorsement of the tradition of courtly love is accompanied by a commitment to the Christian sexual ethics

which stressed the procreative and social function of marriage, not the emotional function.<sup>124</sup> Rather than representing a counter position to Christian ethics regarding love and sexuality, the poem hints at the trouble that could have been brought if Horn had surrendered to Rymenhild's strong irrational desire.<sup>125</sup> Thus, the detailed description of Rymenhild's desire does not indicate a celebration of emotions; it is, rather, included to assert Horn's chastity and his ability to control his emotions. The poem's portrayal of Rymenhild's love for Horn as extreme denotes both Horn's attractiveness and his ability to resist temptation.<sup>126</sup> Given the views of the thirteenth-century moral discourse of emotions regarding love outside marriage discussed above, it appears that the poet, in his portrayal of Horn's attitude towards premarital sexual relationships, intended to guard his hero against any condemnation by the audience. The poet seems to have anticipated that the audience will not sympathise with Horn if he was guided by passion instead of reason and that they will view him as a knight who betrayed his lord. Hence,

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<sup>124</sup> See David Jeffrey, 'Courtly Love and Christian Marriage: Chrétien de Troyes, Chaucer and Henry VIII', *Christianity and Literature*, 59 (2010), 515-30. Jeffrey argues that courtly love was 'a vehicle for political and social satire' to support the normative values of Christian marriage. He further emphasises that '[e]ven the jokes of this genre ... depend on security in the assumption that fruitful Christian marriage was the glue upon which social stability and cohesion depended, perhaps most especially at the courtly level' (p. 516).

<sup>125</sup> Jeffrey strongly argues against critics such as Lewis who, in *The Allegory of Love*, proposes that the tradition of courtly love represented an opposition to the Christian conception of marriage. His justification is related to the fact that none of the poets of that period were Cathar heretics as some critics suggest, and that they were not ready to offend their audience who believed in these values (pp. 517-18). This position is also held by D. W. Robertson in 'The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts', in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. by Francis Xavier (Newman, Albany: SUNY P, 1968), pp. 1-18; also by the historian John Benton, in 'Clio and Venus: An Historical View of Medieval Love', in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, pp. 19-42. Benton rejects the myth of courtly love and justifies his position by contextualising his discussion in terms of the actual practices associated with medieval marriage which appeared to be practical rather than romantic. He argues that in its representation of courtly love, courtly literature satirised idolatrous passions (p. 20). Benton also mentions that marriage involved a financial contract and further explains that 'the influence of family alliances, property rights, desire for legitimate offspring, social status and the prospect of companionship all worked to make marriage attractive to the participants' (p. 21).

<sup>126</sup> On how Rigmel's gaze in the AN version serves to enhance Horn's desirability, see Weiss, 'The Wooing Woman in Anglo-Norman Romance', pp. 159-60.

this section demonstrates that in its portrayal of the difference between an ideal marriage relationship and a private, erotic romantic relationship, the poem participated in sustaining the period's religious and social values, rather than questioning them.

#### **1.2.4 The Thomist Intellect-oriented Ethics of Obligation and Horn's Dedication to Communal Happiness**

*King Horn's* positive treatment of marriage and negative treatment of erotic love is related to the overall ethics that the poem adopts. The poem's portrayal of Horn's attitude towards love suggests an ethics of obligation to the common good informed by reason rather than emotions. While a private love-relationship with Rymenhild will not serve the common good, Horn's marriage with a king's daughter is a requirement of his kingly status and the performance of his future duties. The poem repeatedly suggests that Horn's duty towards his kingdom requires him to follow the dictate of reason and choose his wife, the future queen, carefully.

According to Aquinas, an individual's dedication to the common good is a form of rational love supervised by reason: 'the love of that good, which a man naturally wills as an end, is his natural love; but the love which comes of this, which is of something loved for the end's sake, is the love of choice'.<sup>127</sup> He explains that the love of the common good is embodied in the virtue of justice and believes that justice is stimulated by reason, not by passion: 'justice is the most excellent of all the moral virtues, as being most akin to reason'.<sup>128</sup> Horn's commitment to the common good explains why the emotions he allows himself to experience freely are those which conform to reason and which are directed towards the good of his community. This applies to his experience of love and also to his experience of anger, as the following section will demonstrate.

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<sup>127</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, q. 60, art. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. I-II, q. 66, art. 4. Unlike the intellectualists, the voluntarists believed that justice is motivated by affections. This will be further discussed in Chapter two.



#### 1.2.4. a Aquinas' Vindication and Horn's Virtuous Anger

The poem describes Horn as angry only once, and it presents his anger as triggered by collective, not private, concerns. Horn becomes angry when he realises that he is fighting with the pagan who killed his father and exiled him from his land:

[Cutberd] him gan agrise

And his blod arise

Biuo[re] him saȝ he stonde

Pat dr[of] him [vt] of londe

And [fader his a] sloȝ. (887-91)

Though at first Horn's arousal seems to be only provoked by his love for his father, a consideration of the events that preceded Horn's anger shows that his arousal has been amplified in reaction to the collective loss that this pagan has caused when he murdered the king. Killing the king, exiling his only heir and changing the rule of the kingdom from Christian to pagan is an offence not only against King Murry and his family, but also against the Christians of Sudenne.

In his discussion of anger, Aquinas proposes that anger is not contrary to virtue. Yet he emphasises that anger can only be virtuous if it is reasonable. Aquinas differentiates between virtuous and sinful anger and defines virtuous anger as a desire for vindication that is compatible with charity:<sup>129</sup>

if one desire revenge to be taken in accordance with the order of reason, the desire of anger is praiseworthy, and is called 'zealous anger' ... On the other hand, if one desire the taking of vengeance in any way whatever contrary to the order of reason, for instance if he desire the punishment of one who has not deserved it, or beyond his deserts, or again contrary to the order prescribed by law, or not for the due end, namely

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<sup>129</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 158, art. 3.

the maintaining of justice and the correction of defaults, then the desire of anger will be sinful, and this is called sinful anger.<sup>130</sup>

The significance of the just cause of revenge was also emphasised by John Salisbury in his *Policraticus*:

That sword with which blood is shed innocently is therefore not borne without cause ... This is indeed the sword of the dove, which quarrels without bitterness, which slaughters without wrathfulness and which, when fighting, entertains no resentment whatsoever.<sup>131</sup>

This attitude suggests that the displacement of anger was not random. The early thirteenth-century manuals of political philosophy and mirrors for princes include advice on how to regulate anger. The *Secreta Secretorum*, for example, emphasises prudence and self-discipline as characteristics of kingly behaviour. It also asserts that violence should be restricted and punished:

if any man do violence in the presence of thi royalle maieste, thou must consider if it be don by pley to make other forto laughe and be glad, or if it be don in dispite and reprefe of thi presence; for unto the first longith correccioun, and to that other longith nought but deth.<sup>132</sup>

Therefore, if viewed in the context of the thirteenth-century moral discourse of emotions, Horn's anger fits into the Thomist definition of virtuous anger. This is mainly because his anger is reasonable; it causes him to punish someone who deserves to be punished. Horn, for example, is never portrayed as punishing someone by mistake. The poem describes how he becomes extremely angry only after the pagan himself admits that he slew King Murry in Sudenne:

Nadde ihc] neure [ihent]

Of [man so harde dent],

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<sup>130</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 158, art. 2.

<sup>131</sup> John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, trans. by. Cary Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 31.

<sup>132</sup> *Secreta Secretorum*, p. 16.

[Bute of þe king Murry]

[Pat was stalewurþe];

He was of Hornes k[e]nne,

I [hc sloȝ him] in Suddenne. (881-6)

Additionally, what makes Horn's anger virtuous is the fact that it does not make him go beyond what the punished deserves. The poem does not mention that Horn's anger makes him humiliate his enemy before or after his death. *King Horn* describes how Horn directly strikes him through the heart and adheres to the customs of punishing a murderer. For example, he confronts him face to face, not from behind: 'Biuo[re] him saȝ he stonde/ þat dr[of] him [vt] of londe/ And [fader his a]sloȝ./...[Mid gode dent at ferste]/ He smot him þureȝ þe herte.' (889-96). Above all, Horn's anger is directed towards a virtuous end; the aim of his anger is to maintain justice and correct errors. In killing their leader and causing the pagans to flee, Horn has protected Ireland from proselytism. Hence, Horn's arousal and his subsequent act of defeating the pagans have protected the kingdom from the threat previously proclaimed by the pagan leader. When he has first arrived in Ireland, the pagan has offered a challenge according to which one of them will fight against three Christians, and he explains:

King, vpon þi[ne] londe;

[Here] on wile fiȝte

Aȝen þre [ower] kniȝt[e];

[Slen] o[w]er þre [on] vre,

Al þis lond beo ȝoure;

[Sle] vre on [ower] þreo,

Al þis lond vre beo. (828-34)

Horn himself stresses the religious dimension of the battle with the Saracens and states that it will be shameful for three Christians to fight one pagan.<sup>133</sup> Instead of mentioning the nationalities of the knights, Horn highlights their religious affiliation: 'Sire king, hit nis no riȝte/ on wiþ þ[r]e to fiȝte! Aȝen[es] one hunde/ þre cristen[e] to fonde!' (847-50). In

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<sup>133</sup> In the AN version Rollac proposes to fight two of King Gudreche's best men, not three.

highlighting the knights' religious affiliation, the poem presents the battle as unjust war on faith and warrants Horn's anger as a feeling motivated by his love for justice and the common good.

The examples, above, suggest that Horn's anger is justified as it is directed towards avenging all Christians, not only his father, especially as the aim of the Saracens who came to Sudenne was to kill those who believe in Christ: 'Þi londe-folk we schulle slon/ þat [Dri3te] l[e]uep vpon' (45-6). Hence, if Horn's anger is justified, the way it is displayed is also warranted. The somatic trembling of the body that accompanies Horn's anger is not a reaction motivated by vice, but is motivated by zeal. In his *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas explains that zeal always arises from the intensity of love and it can be on behalf of a beloved, a friend or God whenever the zealous man repeals whatever is contrary to the honour of God.<sup>134</sup> Horn's zealous anger arises from his intention to avenge his father, friends and people, and his duty to re-establish justice through defeating God's enemy. Accordingly, his vengeance neither challenges the chivalric code of masculinity nor the teachings of Christianity.

Horn's zealous anger is presented as a component of his royal character as a knight and potential king. In his study on zealous anger in eleventh-and twelfth-century France, Richard Barton argues that there was an established theological reason which permits lordly anger:

The linkage between notions of divine anger and righteous royal and lordly anger is worth emphasising. For if God, the ultimate source of authority in the universe, was known to have become righteously angry when his will was flouted, then kings and lords, also representing legitimate authority in the world, should have been able to grow righteously angry with those who flouted their will.<sup>135</sup>

In order to excuse Horn's extreme anger towards the Saracens, the poet does not present it until line (887): '[Cutberd] him gan agrise/ And his blod arise'. The description of Horn's trembling as a result of his extreme anger comes after providing enough narrative details to ensure the audience's approval of Horn's act. It is thus presented as a result of Horn's intolerance of injustice and his dedication to reverse it.

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<sup>134</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I-II, q. 28, art. 4.

<sup>135</sup> Richard E. Barton, "'Zealous Anger" and the Renegotiation of Aristocratic Relationships in Eleventh-and Twelfth-Century France', in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), pp. 153-70 (p.159).

The evidence provided so far demonstrates that it is the restoration of justice which differentiates virtuous anger from hatred, in which the person desires to harm the target without any intention to achieve justice. In fact, this is the criterion according to which the poem distinguishes between Christians and Saracens. The vilification of Saracens is central to the poem's politics of emotions. In order to justify Horn's emotions, the poem introduces an 'Other' who violates the hero's ethics. The repeated description of the Saracens as 'kene', 'honde' and 'loþe' is one way to establish their anger as being unrighteous. In the three kingdoms, they are depicted as unjustly invading Christian lands; the Christians fight back only to defend themselves. In Sudenne, King Murry was '[vp]on his pleing' (32) when he encountered 'bi þe stronde/ Ariued on his londe/ Schipes fiftene/ Wiþ sarazins kene' (37-40). In Westernesse, Horn, like his father, was singing merrily when he 'fond o schup [at gr]onde/ [Bistonde mid] heþene honde' (603-4). Similarly, in Ireland it was Christmas and the Irish people were feasting when a 'Geaunt suþe sone, Iarmed [of] paynyme' (820-1) enters the court and offers to fight. It is worth mentioning that while Horn in the ME version never insults the Saracens and only fights back bravely and fiercely, in the AN version he is sometimes portrayed as impulsive and that he repeatedly insults the Saracens' faith and their prophet. For example, he describes Prophet Mohammad as buttocks: 'Seignurs, or escutez! Entendez ma raisun./ Ici vei un vassal ki nus dit e somon/ Ke lessum nostre lei e prengom la Mahun,/ Ke truiës ont mangé, char e quir e crepun' (3019-22) [Now listen to me, lords! Hear my words. I see before us a fellow urging us to abandon our creed and adopt Mahomet's—who was devoured, buttocks, flesh, and skin by sows (Weiss, p. 99)]. Thus, by depicting the Saracens as the ones who invade Christian lands and violate the codes of feuding culture, *King Horn* presents their emotions as barbaric and irrational. At the same time, stressing Horn's prudence and conformity to the thirteenth-century culture of feuding constitutes a celebration of his emotions as rational and virtuous.

### 1.2.5 Aquinas' Just War Theory and Warfare as a Mission in *King Horn*

The legitimisation of anger discussed in the previous section raises the issue of the morality of killing and whether Horn's battles in *King Horn* are presented positively or negatively. The poem repeatedly depicts Horn as being engaged in battles. His first battle takes place in Westernesse when, directly after the knighthood ceremony, he fights with the invading

Saracens, kills most of them and cuts off the head of their leader (621-30). Horn's second battle with the Saracens takes place in Ireland when he proposes to champion King Thurston against the giant pagan who turns out to be his father's murderer (887-91). Later, Horn engages in two battles to rescue Rymenhild from the forced marriages to King Modi and Fikenhild. He also engages in combat with the Saracens for the last time in Sudenne when he manages to regain his kingdom. Significantly, in all these encounters, Horn's fights are presented as virtue-driven and his war-making is treated as an expression of his dedication to the common good. The focus on the moral dimension of Horn's battle is more prominent in the ME version than in the AN version. The fighting scenes in the ME version are significantly abbreviated. These scenes occupy one-sixth of the poem (49-60, 610-30, 887-904, 1267-74, 1403-10, 1517-26). In the AN version, on the other hand, a quarter of the poem is devoted to the description of these fighting scenes (1500-1722, 3101-496, 4446-91, 4684-847, 5184-205).<sup>136</sup> Also, while in the AN version the description of battles is vivid and the focus is on the martial dimension of these battles, the ME version focuses on the battles' ideological dimension.

The poem's presentation of Horn's war-making as a mission motivated by his virtuous anger and his love of the common good recalls Aquinas' theory of virtuous war in which an emphasis is put on the use of reason and the nature of the participants' emotions as the criteria that determine the legitimacy of war-making. In the second part of his *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas provides an account of war in which he distinguishes between offensive and defensive wars and gives pre-eminence to the use of reason and to the participants' intentions.<sup>137</sup> Aquinas first discusses the legitimacy of self-defence in the context of his principle of 'double effect'. He explains that the act of self-defence has two effects: 'one is the saving of one's life, the other is the slaying of the aggressor'.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, if the intention of the act is to save one's life, the act of self-defence is not unlawful.<sup>139</sup> In this part of his *Summa Theologica*, he also discusses the possibility of justifying war according to Christian ethics. He specifically comments on the validity of war and the exceptional legitimacy of killing.<sup>140</sup> Aquinas thus

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<sup>136</sup> On this; see Mildred K. Pope, "Romance of Horn" and "King Horn", *Medium Ævum*, 25 (1956), 164-7.

<sup>137</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II- II, q. 64, art. 7.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 40. By the early thirteenth century, the time around which Aquinas was born, the crusading movement had become a virtuous religious tradition and the

relates just war to theological virtues and places it in the category of ‘charitable acts’. In his focus on the spiritual function of war, Aquinas explains that using ‘the sword’ to ‘punish evil-doers’ is ‘defending the common weal’ against ‘disturbances’.<sup>141</sup> Hence, he argues that it is not always a sin to wage war as it can be an expression of faith.<sup>142</sup> Aquinas eventually legitimises killing as a just act if its purpose is to ‘safeguard the common good’.<sup>143</sup> In his opinion, the commitment towards the common good can call for acts of force. Yet, Aquinas sets restrictions on war; for example, he stresses that it is wrong to lie to enemies in order to attack them.<sup>144</sup>

In *King Horn*, war is waged based on the criteria of self-defence and the punishment of injustice. It is presented as an expression of Horn’s wholehearted commitment to his community. Given their spiritual dimension, Horn’s acts of killing, unlike those of the Saracens, are not presented as motivated by sinful emotions such as hatred and envy. The poem presents the first war in the poem, which governs the events of the whole narrative, as a war on faith. Accordingly, King Murry’s engagement in the battle and his subsequent acts are presented as an indication of his intention to defend the Christian faith, not only his kingdom. The relationship between faith and war is stressed further as the poem describes how the Saracens allowed no one to live until he or she forsakes Christianity:

Folc hi gunne quelle  
 And churchen for to felle.  
 Per ne moste libbe  
 Pe fremde ne þe sibbe,  
 Bute [he his] laze asoke  
 And to here toke. (63-8)

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‘frequency of religiously motivated warfare’ necessitated a new consideration of just war; see Robert Busek, ‘Defenders of the Faith: Augustine, Aquinas, and the Evolution of Medieval Just War Theory’, *Saber and Scroll*, 2 (2013), 7-19 (p. 15).

<sup>141</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II–II, q. 40, art. 1.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., q. 64, art. 2.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., q. 40, art. 3. See also Busek.

This religious dimension of the war in Sudenne is also suggested by the description of Godhild and how she hides to serve God secretly:

Of alle wymmanne  
 wurst was Godhild þanne:  
 ...  
 [Vt he wente] of halle,  
 Fram hire maidenen alle,  
 Vunder a roche of stone;  
 Þer heo [woned] alone:  
 Þer heo seruede Gode  
 Aȝenes pay[n] forbode  
 Þer heo seruede Criste  
 Ðat no payn hit n[iste]. (69-80)

The episode that describes the Saracens' arrival in Sudenne, King Murry's battle and death and queen Godhild's decision to worship Christ secretly is entirely absent in the AN version. The AN version begins with finding Horn and his companions hiding in the garden. So, the religious dimension of the Saracens' first invasion is not stressed.

To highlight Horn's revenge on behalf of all Christians, not only his father, the poem focuses on how he describes the pagan king as Jesus Christ's enemy, not his father's enemy. When he first arrives in Westernesse, Horn does not mention that the Saracens killed his father, but only describes their crimes as hate crimes against the Christian faith: 'Payns þer gunne ariue/ And [broȝten] hem of lyue;/ Hi sloȝen and todroȝe/ Cristenemen inoȝ' (185-8). Significantly, this focus on the pagans' offence against Christianity is absent in the AN version. While in the ME version Horn introduces himself and his companions as coming of good kin and 'Cristene blode', in the AN version, he directly mentions that he is King Aälof's son:

E li enfes l'en dit tute la verité,  
 Qu'il fu fiz Aälof, al bon rei coruné,



Ki out a justisier Suddene, le regné;

Cum païen l'orent mort e lui ont dechacé.

Tute s'aventure li ad de chief cunté. (168-72)

[And the child told him the whole truth, that he was Aälof's son, the good crowned king, ruler of the realm of Sudenne. He told him all his history from the beginning—how pagans had killed his father and driven him out. (Weiss, p. 48)]

Also, unlike the ME version which focuses on the religious collective dimension of Horn's revenge, the AN version places great emphasis on Horn's lineage and his intention to avenge his father and regain his inheritance: 'Tu iers pruz, si tu vis, de sen e de corage,/ Encore te vengeras bien de la geste salvage' (324-5) [If you survive, you will be brave in body and mind and still be able to avenge yourself on that cruel race (Weiss, p. 51)]. Thus, Horn's role as a defender of Christianity, not only his inheritance, is stressed more in the ME version.

Describing the Saracens as the enemies of Christ gives Horn's revenge a religious collective significance, it being a revenge of the Christian community as a whole. Consequently, his acts of killing throughout the poem are presented as informed by his dedication to serve the common good. For example, the poem describes Horn's first act of killing in detail and celebrates his mercilessness: 'Þe sarazi[n so] he smatte/ Þat his blod [al] hatte:/ At [þe ferste] d[e]nte/ [Of] þe heued wente!' (613-16). Horn's ability to cut off the leader's head and put it on the end of his sword is celebrated as an indication of his courage and virtue: '[He tok þe maisteres heued/ Þat he hadde him bireued/ And sette hit on his s w[o]rde/ Anouen at þan orde' (627-30). Thus, despite the graphic description, the poem does not include any detail that suggests a condemnation of Horn's act as an act of violence or hatred. The act of killing expressed in words like 'quelle' and 'sloȝ' is treated positively and the poem celebrates Horn who left but few alive.

This positive attitude towards Horn's battles is repeatedly stressed throughout the poem. The poem describes how, in his second battle with the Saracens, Horn, as in his first battle, does not initiate the fight. The scene shows how the giant poses the challenge and Horn offers to fight with him to defend the kingdom:

Site, kyng [bi kenning],

And herkne [my] tyþyng:

Her buþ paens ariu[e]  
 Wel mo þane fiue!  
 H[i] beoþ [vp]on s[tr]onde,  
 King, vpon þi[ne] londe;  
 [Here] on wile fiȝte  
 Aȝen þre [ower] kniȝt[e];  
 [Slen] o[w]er þre [on] vre,  
 Al þis lond beo ȝoure;  
 [Sle] vre on [ower] þreo,  
 Al þis lond vre beo!. (823-34)

As mentioned earlier in the section that discusses Horn's anger, the religious dimension of the combat is also stressed through Horn's statement that it is not right for three Christians to fight one pagan (847-54).<sup>145</sup>

The defence of the Christian faith as a justification for waging war is also highlighted in Horn's third battle with the Saracens in Sudenne. The cross of Jesus Christ drawn on the shield of the first knight Horn meets in Sudenne suggests the relationship between war and faith, and how arms can be reflective of faith. Once Horn sees the sleeping Knight's shield, he realises that the knight is Christian. When he wakes up, the knight explains that he was forced to forsake his faith and to serve pagans against his will: 'Ihc [ser]ue [ille]/ Payns [aȝenes my wille]!/ Ihc was cristene a while' (1347-9). To foreground the religious significance of Horn's coming battle with the Saracens, the poem describes how the Christians of Sudenne have been waiting for Horn to come and release them from servitude:

Þerof [me þinkeþ] wunder  
 Þat he ne comþto fiȝte;  
 God [lene] him þe [m]iȝte

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<sup>145</sup> See p. 94.

And wind him hider driue

To bringe[n] hem of liue. (1362-6)

This episode which describes Horn's arrival in Sudenne and the religious sentiment that accompanies it is absent in the AN version. Hence, the religious motivation of Horn's battle is not equally stressed. The importance of this episode in the ME version is related to the fact that it shows how Horn knows that his mother is still alive and chooses to prioritise his duty to meeting her. The poem describes how, even before he sees his mother, Horn orders that chapels and churches be built: 'Horn let [sone] w[e]rche/ Chapeles and ch[e]rche;/ [Belles he dede] ringe/ And [prestes] Mass[e] singe' (1411-4).

This religious motivation of Horn's battle is the reason why his fierceness is warranted. In their fights in Sudenne, Horn and his men are portrayed as fierce. The poem describes how they harshly kill all the Saracens, the old and the young:

Hi comen vt of [herne]

[To] Hor[n-ward suiþe 3erne];

Hi slo3en and fu3ten,

þe ni3t and þe v3ten,

þe sarazins [ke]nde

[P]e le[ue]de [o]n þ[e f]ende. (1405-10)

Given the offences that the Saracens have carried out against Christians, Horn is not allowed to be merciful. In fact, any attempt by Horn to show mercy might result in what Aquinas calls an imperfect peace. Aquinas explains that in warfare there is an imperfect type of peace which, if allowed, might be followed by the vulnerability to be attacked.<sup>146</sup> Accordingly, in Horn's battles with the Saracens, the virtue of restoring justice is prioritised over the virtue of showing mercy.

Even in Horn's battles whose targets are not Saracens, he is not portrayed as motivated by hatred or envy, but rather by his duty towards the restoration of justice. In both his battles with King Modi and Fikenhild, Horn rescues Rymenhild from being married against her will.

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<sup>146</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II- II, q. 29, art. 2.

To suggest that Horn's first rescue of Rymenhild is an act motivated by duty, the poem describes the collective sorrow that this marriage has caused: 'Þ[e] deol i nolde abide/ [Þer wurþ rewþe more]' (1072-3). It is important to mention that in the AN version King Modi is not presented as an enemy but as a cousin and this justifies Horn's attack in the ME version further. The fact that sorrow is publicly performed means that Horn's arrival will not only transform Rymenhild's grief into joy, but will also result in collective joy:

Hi Runge þe belle

Þe wedlak to [ful] felle

Horn him zede wip [e]is

To þe kings palais:

Þer was brid[a] le suete

For richemen þer ete

Telle ne mizte [no] tunge

Þ[e] gle þat þer was sunge. (1281-6)

The poem also justifies Horn's battle with King Modi by suggesting that his proposal to Rymenhild is illegitimate because Rymenhild was previously betrothed to Horn: 'Heo sede þat heo nolde/ Ben ispused [mid] golde:/ Heo hadde on husebonde/ Þeʒ he were vt of londe' (1061-4). Additionally, and given Rymenhild's intention to kill herself and King Modi if Horn does not come, Horn's arrival and his battle are presented as the event which prevented her from committing the sin of suicide.

Similar to the first rescue, Horn's second rescue of Rymenhild from the forced marriage to Fikenhild has the impact of restoring justice. Fikenhild has not only deceived his friend and planned to marry Rymenhild forcefully, but has also threatened a whole kingdom. The poem describes how he has been scheming to build alliances with the people around him by giving them rewards (1423-6), and how he has managed to so weaken the king that he was not able to refuse the marriage (1438). To vilify Fikenhild, the poem portrays him as extremely envious: 'Ffikenhild hadde enuye/ And sede þes folye' (697-8). According to the period's conduct literature, envy is one of the destructive vices that need to be corrected. The *Secreta Secretorum*, for example, describes envy as a destructive force and the root of all vices: 'envie is neuyer without lesyngis, the which is roote and mater of alle viciis. Envye engendrith yville

spekyng, and of yville speche cometh hatrede'.<sup>147</sup> The poem presents Fikenhild's envy as the reason behind his evil accusation of Horn, which has consequently caused King Aylmar's anger and hatred. Succeeding in moving King Aylmar against Horn, Fikenhild's envy has resulted in Horn's banishment from the country:

Aylmar [him] gan turne,  
 Wel Modi and wel Murne  
 He fond Horn [binnen] arme  
 On Rymenhilde brame  
 '[Henne] vt' sede [Aylmar king]  
 '[Horn, þu fule fundling]  
 Wend vt of bure [flore]  
 [Fram Rymenild þine hore]  
 Wel sone bute þu flitte. (713-21)

In addition to being moved by hatred and envy, Fikenhild commits different vices such as lying to, and deceiving, friends. According to the principles of the chivalric code of behaviour, disloyalty is a sin which involves the violation of friendship and thus requires punishment. As Capellanus asserts:

he who neglects the honour of his friend for the sake of serving the flesh is thought to live for himself alone, and so, it seems, every man should turn from him as an enemy of human kind and should flee from him as a form of venomous beast.<sup>148</sup>

Fikenhild has not only planned to marry his friend's beloved, but has also done that while Horn is away fighting to regain their kingdom. Fikenhild's absence from the battle in Sudenne is an act of resistance to Horn's authority which justifies his anger. Here, it is important to highlight that Horn is not only Fikenhild's friend, but also his leader. The poem shows how when Horn has dubbed all of his friends knights he has established formal authority over them:

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<sup>147</sup> *Secreta Secretorum*, p. 10.

<sup>148</sup> Capellanus, p. 189.

Horn n[o wunder ne dede]  
 Of Ffikenhildes false[hede]:  
 Hi sworn opes holde  
 Pat [hore non] ne scholde  
 Horn neure bitraie  
 Þeȝ he at diþe laie. (1275-80)

In ‘Zealous Anger’ Barton explains that ‘the prince or the lord could, by this reasoning, view resistance to his will as resistance to the divinely ordained socio-political hierarchy’.<sup>149</sup> This is also evidenced in the *Policraticus* where John of Salisbury describes the prince’s unquestioned authority and comments on how it grants him the total obedience of those who are under his command. He explains, ‘at his nod men bow their heads and generally offer their necks to the axe in sacrifice, and by divine impulse everyone fears him who is fear itself’.<sup>150</sup> Accordingly, Horn’s anger towards Fikenhild is warranted by the conventions of the chivalric code of behaviour which regulated the relationship among knights.

The leader’s authority to establish justice and punish wrong doers is, indeed, stressed by Aquinas. Aquinas argues that ‘if a man be dangerous and infectious to the community, on account of some sin, it is praiseworthy and advantageous that he be killed in order to safeguard the common good’.<sup>151</sup> Horn is presented as a person in authority who is entitled to care about the welfare of his community.<sup>152</sup> Accordingly, his emotions and his subsequent acts are given communal weight through the legitimacy that his authority grants him. By killing Fikenhild, he both avenges himself and the people of Sudenne who, as a matter of fact, will regard Fikenhild as a traitor who has deceived their king and has not participated in recovering his land. The poem thus presents Horn’s punishment of Fikenhild as an act of justice. It shows that by killing Fikenhild, Horn manages to restore order to Westernesse.

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<sup>149</sup> Barton, p. 160.

<sup>150</sup> John of Salisbury, p. 28.

<sup>151</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 64, art. 2.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. Aquinas discusses how it would be a species of injustice for a private person to kill for the good of community.

This section has demonstrated that warfare in *King Horn* is marked by a deep sense of duty and rational control. The differences between the AN and ME versions' emphasis on the religious dimension of Horn's act can be attributed to the spread of intellectual Christian ethics during the thirteenth century. Horn's battles all correspond to the criterion set forth by Aquinas that the 'belligerents should have a right intention, so that they intend the advancement of good, or the avoidance of evil'.<sup>153</sup> Aquinas' emphasis on intentions highlights the significance of the participants' management of emotions in determining the morality of war-making. Accordingly, the legitimacy of Horn's battles derives from the fact that he is neither moved by hatred nor wrath; Horn is, rather, motivated by his commitment to the common good.<sup>154</sup>

### 1.2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that *King Horn* adopts a discourse which subordinates emotions to reason. The poem's cultural climate, represented by the thirteenth-century scholastic interest in the intellect as a source of ethics, has provided a rich context for the interpretation of the text's attitude towards emotions. The chapter has discussed how the early thirteenth-century moral discourse of emotions and conduct literature established the rules that regulate the emotional conduct of various social categories. The poem's conformity to the principles of the period's conduct literature suggests that the formation of Horn's identity is political, culturally-encoded and religiously-oriented. *King Horn* never portrays private feelings that separate Horn from his community or depicts him as controlled by his passions. Therefore, I conclude that although the text celebrates Horn's individual prowess, it attributes his success in his quest to his ability to control his emotions using reason and to his dedication to the common good. *King Horn*'s subordination of emotions to reason and of the individual to the collective makes it an

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<sup>153</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 40, art. 1.

<sup>154</sup> *King Horn*'s presentation of warfare as a mission is less common in the poetry of the twelfth century, especially in the *chansons de geste* of the early twelfth century. The pagan impulse, represented by the celebration of warriors and their deeds, is more prominent than the Christian impulse in epic poems such as *The Song of William* (1140) and *The Song of Roland*. In these two texts, battle scenes occupy a considerable portion of the narrative. Additionally, acts of slaughtering like cutting the enemy through the heart or cleaving him are described in a more detailed and graphic way than in *King Horn* where they are tailored to serve the religious framework of the poem.

example of Middle English traditional popular romance that associates feelings with women and thinking with men.

With the emergence of voluntarism in the early fourteenth century, the reason-centred ethics that characterised the early thirteenth century, and which the poem adopts, was revised. Following the voluntarist introduction of the passions of the will as acts that are significant to judgment, emotions began to be treated as voluntary passions that reflect the freedom of the will and play a significant role in perfecting individuals. This philosophical transformation had an impact on the early fourteenth-century poetic portrayal of emotions and their relationship to ethics. As a result, a development in the romances' attitude towards the relationship between the hero's emotions and his ethical standing is evident. Unlike the romances of the thirteenth century which present the intellect as the source of ethics, the romances of the early fourteenth century treat the individual's free will, which is weighted by the passions of the will, as the origin of morality. As an example of the romances that adopt a voluntarist discourse of emotions, the early fourteenth-century *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* will be discussed. The following chapter argues that the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* presents a different emotive world from that which *King Horn* portrays. While emotions in *King Horn* are treated as involuntary motions that belong to the sensitive appetite and which need to be controlled by reason, emotions in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* are presented as voluntary passions that reflect the freedom of the hero's will.



## The Remorseful Rebirth of the Individual:

### Emotions and Transformation in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*

Emotions are all those affections which cause men to change their opinion in regard to their judgments.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter considers the early fourteenth-century *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, the first ME romance which incorporates hagiographic material.<sup>2</sup> It investigates the poem's discourse of emotions and compares it to the AN *Gui de Warewic*.<sup>3</sup> The chapter shows that the poem's socio-cultural context, represented by the rise of Englishness and the emergence of voluntarism in fourteenth-century England, affected its portrayal of the nature of Guy's dilemma and the role of emotions in his character development. Although an adaptation of the AN *Gui*, differences between the ME and AN versions of the romance involve more than a change from one language to another. The mixed, wide audience of the Auchinleck romances in addition to the fact that they were produced in a context of legal and philosophical development suggest an interest in ethical matters not encountered in the AN source to the same extent.<sup>4</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.1.8. trans. by W. Rhys Roberts (New York: Modern Library, 1984).

<sup>2</sup> All references will be to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, ed. by Alison Wiggins, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2004); henceforth referred to as *Stanzaic Guy* and cited parenthetically in the text by line number. The TEAMS edition is the only edition available. On the poem's incorporation of the hagiographical material, see Wiggins's introduction to the romance, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> All references will be to *Gui De Warewic: Roman du XIIIe Siècle*, ed. by Alfred Ewert (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Édouard Champion, 1933); henceforth referred to as *Gui* and cited parenthetically in the text by line number.

<sup>4</sup> On the cultural context of the Auchinleck manuscript and its readership; see Wiggins, 'The Manuscript and Texts of the Middle English *Guy of Warwick*', in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 61-80 (pp. 67-70).

this chapter analyses how, in its presentation of Guy's dilemma as one that revolves around the opposition between divine and worldly love, the *Stanzaic Guy* addresses an issue that was central to fourteenth-century philosophical debate. It argues that Guy's free decision to redirect his love away from the worldly and towards the divine reflects the essence of the voluntarist notion of freedom of the will, and that the emotions he experiences at this stage of his life accord with the voluntarist definition of the passions of the will.

The first two sections of the chapter introduce the poem's socio-cultural and intellectual context. In these sections I explain how the poem's immediate context resulted in a revision of Guy's character and the nature of his emotions. The third section of the chapter explores Guy's decision to redirect his love away from the worldly towards the divine as a free act of the will. Guy's decision to redirect his love towards God is analysed as a decision prompted by his free affective will, not his intellect. In section four, the dichotomy of love that the poem presents is examined in the context of the voluntarist account of dual affections. I argue that while in the previous stage of his life Guy's will was moved by the *affectio commodi*, a redirection of affections towards the *affectio iustitiae* takes place after Guy's transformation. Consequently, in section five I discuss how Guy's strong desire for justice is expressed through his heroic self-sacrifice and his experience of friendship emotions. In sections six and seven I investigate the role of the senses in intensifying Guy's affection. Finally, after exploring Guy's affective transformation as a sensory experience, I argue that Guy's interaction with the supernatural during his pilgrimage is central to his love for justice.

### **2.1.1 Turning Inward: The Late Thirteenth-Century Voluntarist Discourse of Emotions**

The *Stanzaic Guy* narrates the story of Guy, the romance hero who after his union with the woman he loves, Felice, experiences an emotionally charged epiphany which changes the narrative's course of events. Rather than living joyfully with the woman he loves, and bringing up his yet-to-be-born child, Guy decides to go on a pilgrimage as a penance for his earlier actions. The poem portrays Guy's realisations of the greatness of God as a subjective experience triggered by feelings of guilt. In its focus on the impact of Guy's private emotions on the development of his character, the *Stanzaic Guy* stands in contrast to *King Horn*. The rational, collectively-oriented emotions which *King Horn* celebrates are not the type of emotions which the *Stanzaic Guy* presents. Indeed, Guy voluntarily chooses to question the

ideals that informed the world of early romances, such as *King Horn*, and to challenge most of the chivalric ethics that these romances promote.<sup>5</sup>

Presenting Guy's decision to challenge the ideals of his society as a free act prompted by guilt suggests a shift in the treatment of emotions where they become significant to judgment; this is an understanding that was popularised by the voluntarists of the fourteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Hence, this chapter proposes that late fourteenth-century voluntarism had an impact on the poem's portrayal of emotions and their relationship to ethics. It argues that the hero's emotions are presented as voluntary passions of the will which connect him with the divine, rather than with his society. To understand the nature of Guy's emotions, whether they are secular or religious, triggered by collective or individual concerns, and how they are related to his will and moral standing, the chapter draws on Scotus' voluntarist account of the passions of the will. Unlike Aquinas, Scotus argued for the freedom of the will and introduced a new understanding of emotions as 'passions of the will'. His major contribution to the field of emotions was his proposal that passions not only belong to the sensitive appetite, but that there are also passions in the will. According to him, love and avoidance, happiness and sadness are passions in the will that belong to the immaterial soul and have an impact on judgment.<sup>7</sup>

To achieve a better understanding of the ethical and political dimensions of individuals' attitudes in the early fourteenth century, Guy's personality as a husband and a national hero is also analysed in the context of Giles of Rome's thirteenth-century *De regimine principum* or

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<sup>5</sup> A detailed summary of the *Stanzaic Guy* is provided in the Appendix, p. 219-20.

<sup>6</sup> See the Introduction, pp. 40-1.

<sup>7</sup> The passions of the will are discussed in the second and third books of Scotus' *Ordinatio*; see *The Ordinatio of Blessed John Dun Scotus*, trans. and ed. by Peter Simpson (NY: Franciscan Institute, 2018: <http://aristotelophile.com/Books/Translations/Scotus%20Ordinatio%20III%20dd.1-17.pdf>; accessed 10 June, 2018); henceforth referred to as *Ordinatio*. For a detailed analysis of Scotus' theory of the passions of the will, see Ian Drummond, 'John Dun Scotus on the Passions of the Will' in *Emotions and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. by Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 53-74. For a comprehensive discussion of the fourteenth-century voluntarist approach to emotions; see chapter four 'Emotions in Fourteenth-Century Philosophy' in *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Simo Knuuttila (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

*The Governance of Kings and Princes*.<sup>8</sup> Like Scotus, Giles contributed to the fourteenth-century debate on the relationship between emotions, judgment and the freedom of will. Describing the will as master of its own acts, he argued that a human being is ultimately free and that the individual's will can act independently from the intellect.<sup>9</sup> His *De regimine principum* is a mirror for princes that he composed in around 1280 and dedicated to Prince Phillip, the young son of Phillip III. The *De regimine* was read by a wide audience, both lay and noble, and its impact on moral teaching cannot be ignored.<sup>10</sup> Given its elaborate and detailed account of the passions, it is used as a source for the period's ethics of conduct which shaped the poet's and the audience's shared assumptions about emotions. Giles discusses the passions in the context of virtues and regards them as equally central to the ruler's moral standing and his ability to rule. His association between emotions and virtues is a reflection of the development of the medieval discourse of emotions in the second part of the thirteenth century when emotions started to be discussed in the context of ethics.<sup>11</sup> It is thus likely that in relating the ruler's moral standing to the class of passions he experiences, Giles adopted a voluntarist approach which associates between ethics and passions. Since the mirror discusses appropriate emotions according to age and social class, reading Guy's character development in the context of the *De regimine* assists in analysing the emotions he experiences in the prime of his life.

The possibility of direct contact between friars and lay people in late medieval England is supported by the fact that university-trained friars used to serve as confessors for royal

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<sup>8</sup> Aegidius Romanus, b. 1243. See Charles Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De regimine principum': Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c.1275-c.1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 2-3. All references will be to Giles of Rome, *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus*, ed. by D. C. Fowler, C. F. Briggs and P. G. Remley (New York: Routledge, 2015); henceforth referred to as Giles.

<sup>9</sup> For a full account of Giles of Rome's theory of the freedom of the will, see Peter Eardley, 'Giles of Rome's Theory of the Will' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 2001: <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/16019/1/NQ63737.pdf>; accessed 23 December, 2016)

<sup>10</sup> On the mirror's popularity; see Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De regimine principum'*, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> See Stephen Rigby, *Wisdom and Chivalry: Chaucer's Knight's Tale and Medieval Political Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 23. On the development of the medieval discourse of emotions in the second part of the thirteenth century; see Tomas Zahora, 'Since Feeling is First: Teaching Royal Ethics through Managing the Emotions in the Late Middle Ages', *Parergon*, 31 (2014), 47-72.

families.<sup>12</sup> In England, the Franciscans first arrived at Canterbury, then went to London and to Oxford; Scotus himself studied at Oxford, where he taught philosophy.<sup>13</sup> Given the modern critical consensus that the Auchinleck MS was a product of a distinctive London literary culture, it is likely that contemporary Franciscan moral philosophy was one of the elements that participated in the production of London's distinct literary culture and, consequently, the sentiment that governs the assemblage's material.<sup>14</sup>

The religious context of the Auchinleck MS, more specifically the spread of mercantile piety in the early fourteenth century and the consequent emergence of the need to balance imaginative texts, such as romances, with religious texts,<sup>15</sup> suggests a possible intersection between early fourteenth-century popular and learned cultures. The Auchinleck MS combines narrative focused on romance, piety and philosophical wisdom, and the early sections are predominantly religious and philosophical.<sup>16</sup> In addition to romances such as *The King of Tars* (ff.7ra-13vb), *Amis and Amiloun* (ff.?48rb stub-?61va stub) and *Guy of Warwick*, couplet (ff.108ra-146vb) and stanzaic (ff.145vb-167rb), the first four booklets of the manuscript include religious poems such as the *Life of Adam and Eve* (ff.1ra-2vb; ff.14ra-16rb), *Seynt Mergrete* (ff.16rb-21ra), *Seynt Katerine* (ff.21ra-24vb), the *Clerk Who Would See the Virgin* (ff.?37rb or 37va stub-38vb), the *Life of St Mary Magdalene* (ff.?61Ava stub-65vb), the poems

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<sup>12</sup> John Fleming, 'Friars and Medieval English Literature', in *The Cambridge History in Medieval English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 349-75 (p. 369).

<sup>13</sup> Antonie Vos, *The Theology of John Duns Scotus* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Ralph Hanna, 'Reconsidering the Auchinleck Manuscript', in *New Directions in Later Medieval Manuscript Studies: Essays from the 1998 Harvard Conference*, ed. by D. Pearsall (Cambridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), pp. 91-102. On the geographical and political setting of the Auchinleck manuscript; see Patrick Butler, 'A Failure to Communicate: Multilingualism in the prologue to *Of Arthour and of Merlin*', in *The Auchinleck Manuscript: New Perspectives*, ed. by Susanna Fein (York: York Medieval Press, 2016), pp. 52-66.

<sup>15</sup> See Derek Pearsall, 'The Auchinleck Manuscript Forty Years On', in *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, pp. 11-25 (p. 24).

<sup>16</sup> On the manuscript's combination of romance, piety and philosophical wisdom; see Venetia Bridges, 'Absent Presence: Auchinleck and Kyng Alisaunder' in *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, pp. 88-107 (p. 105). On the religious and philosophical material of the earlier sections of the manuscript; see A. S. G. Edwards, 'Codicology and Translation in the Early Section of the Auchinleck Manuscript', in *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, pp. 26-35 (p. 26).

on the Seven Deadly Sins (ff.70ra-72ra) and the Paternoster (ff.72ra-?72rb or ?72va stub), and the *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin* (?72rb or ?72va stub-78ra).<sup>17</sup> These booklets also include *Speculum Gy de Warewyke* (ff.39ra-?48rb stub) and *The Sayings of the Four Philosophers* (ff.105ra-105rb). Commenting on the intertextuality between romances and didactic texts, Harriet Hudson explains that the Auchinleck manuscript represented a ‘combination of works on important elements of the Christian faith, instruction in Christian living and edifying examples of the same, along with stories of exemplary chivalry and treatises on manners and morals’.<sup>18</sup> As explained above, in addition to the eight romances, which incorporate some contemporary religious and philosophical ideas, the Auchinleck MS includes thirteen religious and didactic texts.

In fact, the Auchinleck romances reflect ‘a sense of culture and learning’ shared with the manuscript’s religious and didactic texts.<sup>19</sup> Figures such as Solomon and Aristotle are mentioned in *King Alisaunder*, and piety clearly features in *Amis and Amiloun* and *Guy of Warwick*. The physical makeup of the manuscript suggests a possible interaction between the didactic texts and the romances, *Guy of Warwick* in particular, which is believed to be ‘the central and most prestigious item in the collection’.<sup>20</sup> The romance of *Guy of Warwick* occupies booklet four, the first book dedicated to romances, and it follows *Speculum Gy de Warewyke*, *The Sayings of the Four Philosophers* and *The Pater-noster, undo on Englissch*, which appear in booklets two and three respectively. Having these texts in the same manuscript and in consequent booklets is significant for a number of reasons. First, *The Pater-noster, undo on Englissch* is a book on piety that addresses concerns similar to those addressed by the *Stanzaic Guy*. More importantly, *Speculum Gy de Warewyke* is a Franciscan collection that focuses on the requirement of penance, and which, given its portrayal of Guy as a hero, is believed to have been associated with the stanzaic version of the romance of *Guy*.<sup>21</sup> In addition to this

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<sup>17</sup> See Edwards, p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Harriet Hudson, ‘Middle English Popular Romances: the Manuscript Evidence’, *Manuscripta*, 28 (1984), 67-78 (p. 73).

<sup>19</sup> See Bridges, p. 94.

<sup>20</sup> See Pearsall, p. 16. It is believed that the patron of the manuscript was specifically interested in having *Guy* included; see Emily Runde, ‘Scribe 3’s Literary Project: Pedagogies of Reading in Auchinleck’s Booklet 3’, in *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, pp. 67-88 (p. 81).

<sup>21</sup> On the association between Guy’s conversion and the *Speculum Gy de Warewyke*; see Pearsall, p.16, footnote 15. On the focus of this Franciscan collection and how Guy is portrayed as a hero in didactic

manuscript evidence, the fact that a version of *Guy of Warwick* is believed to have been written by the Cornish Franciscan Walter of Exeter supports this chapter's argument for a possible intersection between penitential romance and Franciscan voluntarist piety.<sup>22</sup>

The Auchinleck's thematic design and its combination of both romance and didactic texts are indicative of the taste of the manuscript's patron and audience. Some scholars, like Lynn Staley, have argued that the number of devotional texts in the manuscript suggests an audience concerned with conduct ethics.<sup>23</sup> More recently, Cathy Hume has suggested a family audience consisting of men and women interested in moral instruction.<sup>24</sup> The audience's interest in moral instruction has been also highlighted by Pearsall who has argued that the manuscript's didactic material suggests that it was addressed to an audience 'who wished to be both edified and entertained, one that relished familiar piety and instruction'.<sup>25</sup> Pearsall has further argued that it is likely that the manuscript was fairly expensive, which means that the owner should have been a wealthy person.<sup>26</sup> This opinion is also shared by A. S. G. Edwards, who has argued that 'size of the Auchinleck, the range of its contents and the cost of its

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texts; see Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick* (New York: Garland, 1996), p. 49. Richmond also mentions that Guy, as a defender of justice, is present in the sermon *Gesta Romanorum*, which provided a source for English Franciscan preachers; see pp. 61-3.

<sup>22</sup> On Walter of Exeter's authorship of *Guy of Warwick*; see Richmond, p. 308. It is worth mentioning that *Adam Davy's Dream*, which is believed to have been written by a London Franciscan for King Edward I, was contemporary with the Auchinleck romances and was associated with them in relation to its focus on kingship. On this; see Lesley A. Coote, *Prophecy and Public Affairs in Later Medieval England* (York: York Medieval Press, 2000), p. 91.

<sup>23</sup> Lynn Staley, *Languages of Power in the Age of Richard II* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), p. 309.

<sup>24</sup> Cathy Hume, 'The Auchinleck *Adam and Eve*: An Exemplary Family Story', in *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, pp. 36-51 (p. 38). Hume focuses particularly on the audience of religious texts such as *Adam and Eve*. It is worth mentioning that by 1300, individuals and households, not only institutions, began to sponsor the production of manuscripts. On this; see Thomas Hahn and Dana M. Symons, 'Middle English Romance', in *A Companion to Medieval English Literature and Culture, c.1350 - c.1500*, ed. by Peter Brown (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 341-57 (p. 354).

<sup>25</sup> Pearsall, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup> Pearsall, p. 12. A. I. Doyle, earlier on, suggested a wealthy audience that had contacts with the court; see 'English Books in and out of Court', in *English Court Culture in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. by V. J. Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne (London: Duckworth, 1983), pp. 163-81 (pp.154-5).

production all provide evidence of a controlling and coherent taste'.<sup>27</sup> The selection of these texts, thus, suggests that the compiler had an intended audience in mind, and that his criterion for selecting these texts was informed by his awareness of the audience's interest in moral instruction.

Considering the Auchinleck romances within the context of their manuscript, which included religious and philosophical material, helps us uncover their intellectual appeal and the type of audience it may have attracted. Recent criticism on the Auchinleck MS, which pays more attention to its wider cultural context, has challenged the claim that the language of the manuscript suggests the patron's intellectual limitation, and that it was produced only for the gentry. In his contextual study of the Auchinleck romances, Ralph Hanna has argued against associating the Auchinleck MS with merchant culture and proposed that there was a communality of interest between the civic and royal cultures in the early fourteenth century.<sup>28</sup> Following Hanna, Alison Wiggins has similarly argued that aristocratic and merchant cultures were not completely distinct in early fourteenth-century England, and that London was 'entrepot' between government and city elites.<sup>29</sup> She has, consequently, proposed that the Auchinleck romances appealed to both the gentry and aristocracy who did not receive the romance as merely a source for 'trivial delight'.<sup>30</sup> Wiggins's conclusion regarding the audience of the manuscript is based on the fact that the Auchinleck was produced in the context of the sophisticated world of Edward III when romances were associated with literature designed to provide advice for princess and with the texts presented to young Edwards III.<sup>31</sup> Hence, reading the *Stanzaic Guy* within this cultural milieu, when romance shared the same intellectual context

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<sup>27</sup> Edwards, p. 35.

<sup>28</sup> See chapter three in Ralph Hanna's *London Literature: 1300-1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Hanna begins the chapter by highlighting the need to correct the assumption that 'popular', as an adjective of medieval romance, indicates unsophistication.

<sup>29</sup> Wiggins, 'The Manuscripts and Texts of the Middle English *Guy of Warwick*', pp. 67-8. Michael Johnston has, more recently, argued that by the mid fourteenth century the gentry became a numerous stratum of the aristocracy, and that they had a substantial impact on the formation of England's elite culture; see *Romance and the Gentry in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 10-14.

<sup>30</sup> Wiggins, 'The Manuscripts and Texts of the Middle English *Guy of Warwick*', pp. 67-68.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.



with religious and political treatises, can open it to more nuanced philosophical and religious interpretations.

The possibility of a correspondence between late medieval moral philosophy and contemporary vernacular literature has been demonstrated by Richard Utz who asserts that there was an intersection between Scotus' voluntarism and the literature of the period. To postulate a direct influence of scholasticism on late medieval literature, Utz explains that the gap between the learned discourse at the universities (Scotus' philosophy being an example) and the popular discourse outside the institution was bridged through sermons and public disputation.<sup>32</sup> Other scholars have also suggested direct Franciscan influence on contemporary vernacular poetry, especially the poetry that addressed penitential themes. Andrea Hopkins, in her study of Middle English penitential romance, explains that circulating information about penance was done through preaching which 'underwent a revolution in the mid thirteenth century after the arrival of the Franciscan friars in 1225'.<sup>33</sup> In his discussion of the secularisation of the ascetic impulse, John Fleming argues that the body of penitential literature originated in Franciscan moral instruction.<sup>34</sup> Fleming explains that, while the penitential literature from 800 to 1200 is vast, what distinguishes the context of penitential literature in the late thirteenth century is the fact that it developed through lay secular associations.<sup>35</sup> He also emphasises that the Franciscan tradition had an impact on the poetry of Chaucer and Langland.<sup>36</sup> Recently, in his reading of *Amis and Amilion* in the context of Scotus' theory of individuation, David Strong stresses the fact that the 'salience of Scotist perspective is well documented in late medieval English poetry such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and William Langland's *Piers Plowman*'.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Richard Utz, 'Negotiating the Paradigm: Literary Nominalism and the Theory and Practice of Rereading Medieval Texts', in *Literary Nominalism and the Theory of Rereading Late Medieval Texts: A New Research Paradigm*, ed. by Richard Utz (NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), pp. 1-30 (pp. 7-13).

<sup>33</sup> Andrea Hopkins, *The Sinful Knights: A Study of Middle English Penitential Romance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 58.

<sup>34</sup> Fleming, p. 355.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 356.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>37</sup> David Strong, 'Amis and Amiloun', in *Medievalia et Humanistica, No. 42: Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Culture*, ed. by Reinhold Gleis and Maik Goth (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), pp. 43-60 (p. 44).

It is also plausible that Giles' approach to the passions had its impact on the early fourteenth-century poetic discourses of emotions. Briggs describes how the *De regimine* was widely read in medieval England both in Latin and French, and how it was translated into the vernacular as early as 1388.<sup>38</sup> He argues that the mirror not only addressed itself to princes and kings, but also to lay people and explains how many translations made their way into the libraries of English kings and princes during the fourteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Information about aristocratic lay readers of the later Middle Ages, and how they 'regarded Giles as one of the chief authorities on matters of governance and warfare', suggests that he was influential in both scholastic and lay circles.<sup>40</sup> The lay ownership of some of the manuscripts into which the *De regimine* was copied, and the existence of a number of abbreviated versions of the mirror, can give us an insight into its impact on popular culture.<sup>41</sup> Briggs notes that the audience of such didactic texts was the same audience that was interested in the philosophical poetry that addressed similar issues.<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, it seems that the mirror's didactic material was not only read in the same circles where romances were recited, but also that the moral and political guidance which it provides influenced the poetic portrayal of a good ruler.<sup>43</sup> Though it would be hard to prove that Giles' and Scotus' ideas had a direct impact on the portrayal of Guy in the stanzaic version, it is likely, on the basis of scholarship summarised so far, that their ideas could have impacted the poem's immediate context.<sup>44</sup>

This brief survey of the criticism on the intersection between the Franciscan voluntarist philosophy and the poetry of the late Middle Ages reveals an inclination, on the part of modern scholars, to discuss the intersection in later texts such as Chaucer's and Langland's works. Anonymous early fourteenth-century texts like the *Stanzaic Guy* tend to be ignored. The survey also shows that the few studies which have utilised Scotus' ideas as a framework for the discussion of late medieval poetry have only (and lightly) touched on his theory of

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<sup>38</sup> Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De regimine principum'*, pp. 75-6, 84-8.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>40</sup> See Briggs, 'Life, Work, and Legacy,' in *A Companion to Giles of Rome*, ed. by Charles Briggs and Peter Eardley (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 6-33 (p.33).

<sup>41</sup> See Fiona Somerset, *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 72.

<sup>42</sup> Rigby, pp. 17-18.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> This approach is justified further in the Introduction, pp. 35-7.

individuation. Despite his great contribution to the field of emotions, which parallels Aquinas', Scotus' voluntarist account of the passions of the will has not been used to analyse the portrayal of emotions in Middle English romance to date. Nonetheless, this voluntarist approach to emotions is significant to the reading of Guy's transformation from a lover of glory to a lover of justice. It provides a moral philosophical perspective to the analysis of Guy's decision as a free act of the will triggered by passions rather than thinking. It is in this rich context of medieval philosophical thinking that I propose to integrate my analysis of the *Stanzaic Guy* in this chapter.

### 2.1.2 Emotions from Gui to Guy

Although it is a close translation of the AN *Gui*, the ME *Stanzaic Guy* differs by highlighting the stage in which Guy's character undergoes a significant transformation. Scholars who have been concerned with the language of the stanzaic version suggest that it was composed independently and was read on its own.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, what accounts for the particular significance of the ME stanzaic version is the fact that it integrates hagiographical themes and material.<sup>46</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that the hagiographical material is borrowed from the AN source, the specific socio-cultural and intellectual context of the *Stanzaic Guy*, composed a century after the AN *Gui*, needs to be taken into consideration when analysing the poem's theme of penance and its attitude towards emotions.

A review of earlier criticism on the poem shows that little attention has been given to the stanzaic version as an independent text. Given the large number of ME translations of the romance, the focus usually shifts to the AN *Gui* as a self-contained poem. Even in studies which analyse ME translations of the romance, the focus is not on the stanzaic versions but, rather, on the later versions dating from the fifteenth century. To date no study of the *Stanzaic Guy* has focused on its discourse of emotions. However, other studies that have been concerned with the hagiographical elements of the romance and the specific context of the ME versions

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<sup>45</sup> On this and the date of composition; see Wiggins's introduction to the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 8.

are useful to my current analysis of the poem's discourse of emotions, for reasons that will be outlined below.

In relation to the hagiographical elements of the romance, scholars disagree about whether the hagiographic framework reflects a serious concern with penance, or if this framework is merely exploited to enhance the popularity of the poem. Susan Crane and Neil Cartlidge question the classification of the romance as a penitential romance. Crane argues that the religious framework is employed to stress the centrality of the hero's power.<sup>47</sup> Discussing the AN *Gui* and the ME *Guy of Warwick* briefly, Cartlidge pushes this further and states that Guy's rejection of Felice does not highlight his unworldliness but, rather, his autonomy and freedom.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, in her recent study on pilgrimage in *Gui*, Judith Weiss radically emphasises that the themes of pilgrimage and penance are exploited by the author of the AN text to 'superficially heighten the hero's moral standing'.<sup>49</sup> Though Weiss's argument regarding the exploitation of the theme of penance is rationalised, her opinion that this only superficially improves Gui's moral standing is not the perception of the critics who have taken the ethics of the medieval audience into consideration. For example, Helen Cooper accepts the text as a penitential romance which reproduces the chivalric quest of the first part as a pilgrimage in the second part.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, in raising questions about the didacticism of the ME *Guy of Warwick*, Andrea Hopkins argues that, despite the poem's secular heroism, piety enhances the importance of Guy's battles.<sup>51</sup> Though these studies provide significant observations regarding the romance's religious sentiment, they are preoccupied with the division between romance and hagiography rather than with the nature of Guy's emotions. Hence, instead of focusing solely on the stanzaic version's adherence to the conventions of

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<sup>47</sup> Susan Crane, 'Guy of Warwick and the Question of Exemplary Romance', *Genre*, 17 (1984), 351-74 (p. 370).

<sup>48</sup> Neil Cartlidge, *Medieval Marriage: Literary Approaches 1100-1300* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), p. 105.

<sup>49</sup> Judith Weiss, 'The Exploitations of Ideas of Pilgrimage and Sainthood in *Gui de Warewic*' in *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, ed. by Laura Ashe, Ivana Djordjević and Judith Weiss (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2010), pp. 43-56 (p. 43).

<sup>50</sup> Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 92.

<sup>51</sup> Hopkins, p. 77.

penance, this chapter aims to provide closer investigation of the role of emotions in Guy's character development.

Earlier criticism on the ME versions of the romance has suggested the importance of reading these romances in their new context, more specifically the change of readership from the elite to the nationalistic, the increase in patriotism and the fusion between the religious and secular discourses in fourteenth-century England. The impact of the ME versions' specific context on the portrayal of Guy is proposed as early as David Klausner's (1975) work in which he traces a development from the AN to the ME version.<sup>52</sup> Klausner argues that Guy's thoughts shift from being focused on horror and bloodshed to being organised around the dichotomy of worldly love and the love of God. Though Klausner is concerned with the romance's borrowing from the legend of St. Alexis, not with its philosophical context, his observation supports the present chapter's analysis of Guy's transformation in the context of the voluntarist account of dual affections. Therefore, the chapter attempts to discuss how, in reconstructing Guy's penance around the dichotomy of earthly and divine love, the poem answers the voluntarist concern with the clash between the affections for advantage and the affections for justice.

Other scholars have identified a shift towards patriotic sentiment in the ME versions of the romance. Thorlac Turville-Petre has emphasised that the Auchinleck is a themed manuscript and he describes it as a 'book of the nation' which was deliberately composed to evoke patriotic sentiment.<sup>53</sup> More recently, Rosalind Field has suggested that with the new patriotic readership and the change in the romance address from the elite to the nationalistic, the sentiment changed to reflect an increase in patriotism.<sup>54</sup> Some scholars have linked the increase in patriotism in the ME version to the manuscript's cultural context and the development that took place in the early fourteenth century when religious activity began to be combined with politics. Andrea Ruddick describes how the secular and religious discourses

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<sup>52</sup> David Klausner, 'Didacticism and Drama in *Guy of Warwick*', *Medievalica et Humanistica*, 6 (1975), 103-19.

<sup>53</sup> Thorlac Turville-Petre, 'English in the Auchinleck Manuscript', in *England the Nation: Language, Literature and National Identity, 1290-1340* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 108-41. The 'Englishness' of the Auchinleck manuscript is highlighted by Venetia Bridges in 'Absent Presence: Auchinleck and *Kyng Alisaunder*', in *The Auchinleck Manuscript: New Perspectives*, pp. 88-107.

<sup>54</sup> Rosalind Field, 'From Gui to Guy: The Fashioning of Popular Romance', in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, pp. 44-60 (pp. 58-9).

were significantly connected in fourteenth-century England. Giving the example of St. George as a symbol of English nationhood, she explains that from the early fourteenth century the motif of the 'English church' was cited with increasing frequency in official rhetoric, and how the king, kingdom and people were essential building blocks of the national unit over which the king exercised his authority.<sup>55</sup> Some scholars have also traced a development of the language of penance in the high and late Middle Ages. Kiril Petkov, for example, argues that the ritual act started to be governed by the individual's internal regulation of moral norms rather than the dictate of external authority.<sup>56</sup> Despite the fact that these studies do not address the topic of emotions, their contextual analysis of the ME versions' particular sentiment gives insight into the sources that informed the poem's discourse of emotions and its characterisation of Guy. These studies help us analyse how the stanzaic version's discourse of emotions, which is coloured by the period's political and ethical thought, is different from the AN version's discourse on emotions.

The review, above, shows that though scholars have highlighted the secular, subjective dimension of Guy's pilgrimage, the role of emotions in Guy's moral transformation has not been discussed before. This chapter will analyse how the epiphanic experience that Guy goes through and which causes his transformation is an emotional sensory experience. If it was not for the heightened feeling of guilt which Guy has experienced, he would not have decided to leave his bride in order to repent his previous acts. Since Guy's transformation revolves around love, the development of his character cannot be analysed in isolation from the emotions which trigger it and the emotions he experiences on his route to penance. To analyse these emotions, Guy's penance needs to be positioned in relation to not only the fourteenth-century socio-cultural context but, also, the intellectual climate which influenced late medieval popular culture. The fourteenth-century concern with the balance between personal piety and political duty, the debate over the freedom of the will and the voluntarists' discussion of the passions of the will all contributed to the development of a new attitude towards emotions and their relation to ethics. Accordingly, an analysis of Guy's transformation in the context of the fourteenth-

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<sup>55</sup> Andrea Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 304-6.

<sup>56</sup> Kiril Petkov, *The Kiss of Peace: Ritual, Self, and Society in the High and Late Medieval West* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), p. 206; see also Jonathan Good, *The Cult of Saint George in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009).

century voluntarist discourse of emotions will assist in the understanding of Guy's motivations and the ethics that govern his world.

### 2.2.1 Guy's Midlife Transformation and the Passions of the Will

The *Stanzaic Guy* describes how soon after marrying Felice, Guy, observing the sky, is overwhelmed by a downhearted feeling after which he realises that 'For Jesus love, our Saveour,/ Never no dede he gode' (248-9). Following his realisation, Guy decides to go on a pilgrimage as a penance for his sins. Felice sees him and asks him about the reason for his sorrow: 'what is thi thought?/ Whi artow thus in sorwe brought?' (271-2). When Guy tells her that he wants to go on a pilgrimage to repent his sins, Felice accuses him of having another wife in another country. Then, trying to hold him back, she suggests that Guy repents his sins at home: 'Chirches and abbays thou might make/ That schal pray for thi sake/ To Him that schope mankende (331-3). Felice's reaction to Guy's decision, her accusation and suggestion indicate that she is neither convinced of the necessity of his pilgrimage nor his justification for it. Like Felice, the audience of the poem might wonder what has caused Guy's sudden emotional transformation from joy to distress, and why Guy's realisation of the frivolousness of worldly love and glory comes after his union with Felice.

Guy experiences his epiphany directly after the end of his marriage ceremony which lasted for fifteen days during which he had 'Feliis to his wil day and night' (215). The poem presents the marriage as the beginning of a new phase in Guy's life, ironically without Felice. Despite his previous effort to win Felice through proving himself a pre-eminent knight and a worthy courtly lover, Felice's love suddenly ceases to move Guy. Here, we cannot ignore the impact of time on Guy's transformation. In choosing to introduce his transformation at this point of the narrative, the text invites us to see a connection between Guy's coming of age, his marriage to Felice and the emotions he experiences. Guy, the husband who travelled the world and proved himself a worthy knight, is expected to experience different emotions from Guy, the young lover, whose ultimate goal was the fulfilment of his desire for his beloved. Guy does not question the morality of his previous acts until after the fulfilment of his sexual desire and his extreme love for Felice has cooled. His late realisation of the evils of his acts can, thus, be seen as a result of the blinding impact of lust on the individual. In the *De regimine* Giles explains that desire and bodily delights, which rule young people, affect a man's sobriety and

make him act like a drunken man.<sup>57</sup> Hence, in its introduction of Guy's emotional transformation at this specific stage of his life-time, the poem reworks contemporary shared assumptions about the individual's appropriate emotions according to age.

Medieval conduct literature, particularly in the late thirteenth century, treated Man's middle age as the age of moral perfection.<sup>58</sup> The *De regimine* divides man's life-time into three stages: youth, old age and, between them, middle age.<sup>59</sup> According to Giles, each of these stages has its own characteristic passions.<sup>60</sup> He thus explains that in the prime of his/her life, the individual is expected to combine the positive passions of the young and old:

it may be sone iknowe whiche ben þe maners of men of mene age bytwene children and olde men... þey hauen al þat is to preysyng in children and in olde men, noþer passing hote as children noþer ferful and cowards as olde men, but þey ben mene bytwene bothe.<sup>61</sup>

For example, a major passion of the young, which a mature man should control, is lechery. Giles believes that a man in his youth is mainly ruled by his bodily passions. However, as man comes of age, he is supposed to control the childish bodily passions, especially if he is a ruler or a king.<sup>62</sup>

If Guy's epiphany is read as the beginning of his midlife stage, the emotions he experiences before and after this epiphany can be analysed as examples of the emotions which characterise youth and middle age, respectively. Though the middle age phase is not usually stressed in romance literature where the romance ends when the knight achieves maturity and unites with his beloved, the *Stanzaic Guy* highlights the significance of this phase to Guy's character development. Highlighting the importance of this stage corresponds with the

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<sup>57</sup> Giles, p. 17.

<sup>58</sup> On the importance of this stage; see J. A. Burrow, *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Shulamith Shahar, *Growing Old in the Middle Ages: 'Winter Clothes us in Shadow and Pain'*, trans. by Yael Lotan (London: Routledge, 1997); and Deborah Youngs, *The Life-Cycle in Western Europe, c. 1300- c. 1500* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

<sup>59</sup> See Youngs, Chapter Two: 'Age and Life Expectancy'.

<sup>60</sup> Giles, pp. 139-40.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 148-9.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 142-4.



medieval moral philosophers' treatment of the prime of life as a crucial stage in the individual's life-cycle – the stage during which the individual is usually faced with a moral choice. Guy's mid-life stage brings with it an alteration of his emotions and his judgment. The epiphany that he experiences is marked by feelings of guilt, distress and grief. The poem shifts from the cheerful mode of the marriage ceremony to the private bleak mood of Guy at the top of the tower, a transformation that the poem hints at before Guy experiences his epiphany: 'And sethen with sorwe and sikeing sare/ Her joie turned hem into care/ As ye may forward here' (226-8). The ME version's foreshadowing of this transformation directly after describing the spouses' conjugal pleasure serves its overall focus on the dichotomy between temporal worldly happiness and perpetual heavenly joy. This juxtaposition is, however, not achieved as early in the AN version: 'Ke Gui après sa femme jut,/ E ele un enfant de li conceut' (7561-2) [Gui slept with his wife and she conceived a child with him].<sup>63</sup> Unlike the stanzaic version, the AN version does not direct the reader's attention to the emotional transformation that will take place and joy turning into sorrow. Rather, directly after describing the spouses' conjugal pleasure, the poem draws attention to the fact that Felice has conceived a son.

The *Stanzaic Guy* presents the alternation of Guy's emotions from joy to distress as central to his penance. Guy first becomes anxious about his earlier acts, and thus he takes no more pride in them:

On Jhesu omnipotent  
 That alle his honour hadde him lent  
 He thought with dreri mode,  
 Hou he hadde ever ben strong werroure,  
 For Jhesu love, our Saveour,  
 Never no dede he gode. (244-49)

Guy's anxiety quickly develops into guilt followed by a wilful intention to redirect his affections toward God: 'For His love ichil now wende/ Barfot to mi lives ende/ Mine sinnes

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<sup>63</sup> Translations from the AN *Gui de Warewic* are taken from Judith Weiss, 'Boeve de Haumtone' and 'Gui de Warewic': *Two Anglo-Norman Romances* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2008), p. 180; henceforth referred to as Weiss and cited parenthetically in the text by page number.

forto bete' (304-6). As the following discussion will show, this redirection of affections away from the worldly to the divine informs Guy's actions throughout his journey.

Prior to his epiphanic experience, Guy's emotions were governed by the natural necessity of his sensitive appetite which makes him desire the object that brings pleasure. In the previous stage of his life, Felice was as an object of desire that Guy could not resist. The type of emotions Guy used to experience before his transformation are typical of the passions of young age which Giles discusses. The poem describes how, upon his arrival in Warwick, Guy goes to see Felice and tells her about the praise he won and how he refused many women because of his love for her. The poem highlights his extreme desire for Felice through describing the unprecedented joy he feels when Felice accepts his proposal:

'Leman,' he seyde, 'gramerci.'

With joie and with melodi

He kist that swete wight.

Than was he bothe glad and blithe,

His joie couthe he no man kithe

For that bird so bright.

He no was never therbiforn

Half so blithe sethe he was born

For nought that man him hight. (76-84)

The immoderate sensual love for Felice is described by Guy himself following his epiphany. Aware that he has been ruled by bodily passions, Guy speaks of his love for Felice as a confining force which he cannot control. Addressing Felice, he admits that his love for her is a love derived from the senses:

Sethen Y thee seyge first with ayn

Allas the while Y may sayn

Thi love me hath so ybounde

That never sethen no dede Y gode

Bot in wer schadde mannes blode. (280-4)

To suggest the power of the sensual passions that used to govern Guy in the previous stage of his life, the poem shows how they do not weaken immediately after Guy's decision to abandon Felice. The poet describes the intense emotions Guy experiences as he bids farewell to Felice. The separation between the lovers is presented as a difficult, emotionally-charged event. After Guy asks Felice to trust his son's teaching to his friend Herhaud, they kiss each other and they both swoon:

'Leman,' he seyde, 'have now godeday.

Ichil fare forth in mi way

And wende in mi jurné.'

Thai kist hem in armes tuo

And bothe thai fel aswon tho –

Gret diol it was to se.

Gret sorwe thai made at her parting

And kist hem with eyghen wepeing. (379-86)

The poem's portrayal of the power of sensual emotions recalls the period's philosophical views of the emotions of the sensitive appetite. Commenting on the involuntary nature of the movement of the sensitive appetite, Scotus argues that the sensitive appetite does not lead itself but needs to be led by an act of the will.<sup>64</sup> The power of Guy's desire for Felice, and the fact that it is associated with feelings of confinement and a surrender to bodily delights, suggest that he experienced sensual emotions which belong to the sensitive appetite, not the will.

The impounding impact of sensual emotions and the need to control them are discussed in the *De regimine*. Giles emphasises that only a tyrant is a slave to his desires; a ruler, however, is one who can first rule himself: 'For ȝif a rector, gouvernour, ruleth hymself [he] is worthi to be made a rector, gouvernour, and lord of other men'.<sup>65</sup> Guy's feelings of sorrow and distress can thus be viewed as an outcome of his attempt to rule himself. The origin of these feelings

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<sup>64</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 33, q. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Giles, p. 11.

can be better understood in the context of Scotus' discussion of 'conditional nilling' and the will's natural appetite to perfection as the two causes of the passions of the will. Conditional nilling happens when an agent rejects an object because of certain circumstances and the renouncement of this object causes sadness.<sup>66</sup> To explain the notion of conditional nilling further, Scotus gives the example of a merchant on a ship who sadly throws his goods overboard in order to save his life. If read accordingly, the distress that characterises Guy's early transformation can be seen as triggered by his inclination towards perfection and happiness which necessitates the abandonment of his previous object of love, Felice.<sup>67</sup>

Aware of the power of bodily delights, Guy insists on breaking any attachment to Felice and emphasises that he 'schal never be seyn with sight/ Bi way no bi strete' (308-9). Unlike the AN version, the ME version suggests that Guy's abandonment of married life is permanent, not temporary. The ME Guy repeatedly stresses his status as a pilgrim and explicitly states that he will walk barefoot till the end of his life for the love of God, not only to repent his sins:

Bot God is curteys and hende

And so dere he hath bought mankende

For no thing wil hem lete.

For His love ichil now wende

Barfot to mi lives ende

Mine sinnes forto bete. (301-6)

While the ME Guy focuses on the love of God as a motivation for his journey, the AN Gui only mentions that he will go in God's service to repent his sin; his love for God and his aim to spend the rest of his life as a pilgrim are not explicitly stated: 'Tant frances homes ai oscis,/ En mei sunt li pecché remis;/ El servise Deu desore irrai,/ Mes pecchez espenir voldrai' (7627-30) [From now on I shall go in God's service; I want to expiate my sins' (Weiss, p. 180)]. In presenting Guy's pilgrimage as an act informed not only by obligation, but also by love, the ME version implies that Guy's penance will not end after he repents his sin and will continue till the end of his life.

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<sup>66</sup> On this; see Drummond, p. 68.

<sup>67</sup> See Drummond, p. 68.

To present Guy's transformation as permanent, the ME version suggests that Guy will never experience sensual emotions. Therefore, when he asks Felice to hide her grief, he does not make a promise to her to return. Guy's permanent renouncement of sensual pleasure and his intention to detach himself physically and emotionally from Felice is not equally stressed in the AN version. The AN Gui promises Felice to return after performing his penance: 'Amie, fait Gui, ore m'en irrai/ E a Deu vus comanderai./ Se Deu pleist, uncore repeirerai,/ Quant ma penitence fait avrai' (7683-6) ['My love,' Gui said, 'now I'm going, and I commend you to God. If it please God, I shall come back again, when I have performed my penance (Weiss, p. 181)]. Moreover, Gui warns Felice not to show sorrow or he will not love her anymore, implying that he might be capable of experiencing conjugal emotions even after his penance:

Mes tant vus di desorenavant:

Noise ne facez tant ne quant

Que aparceu seie a la gent,

M'amur perdrez finablement,

Mes tut en pes ore vus tenez,

Ja noise mes mar en facez,

Se l'amur de mei ore aver volez. (7687-93)

[But for the future I tell you this much: make no fuss at all that people may see, for you will lose my love for ever; keep your peace. (Weiss, p. 181)]

Conversely, the ME Guy neither threatens Felice nor gives any indication that he can still experience sensual emotions. He instead entreats her by God not to show sorrow and his language is humble and better suited to his new status as a penitent:

'Leman,' he seyde, 'par charité,

Astow art bothe hende and fre

O thing Y thee pray:

Loke thou make no sorwe for me

Bot hold thee stille astow may be

Til tomorwe at day.

Gret wele thi fader that is so hende  
 And thi moder and al thi frende  
 Bi sond as Y thee say;  
 Grete wele Herhaud Y thee biseche;  
 Leman, God Y thee biteche,  
 Y wil fare forth in mi way. (349-60)

In fact, the slight differences between the two versions are suggestive of these versions' different attitudes towards the nature of Guy's development and the degree of his dedication to the love of God. The ME version places emphasis on Guy's permanent emotional and physical detachment from Felice, which suggests a deeper concern with penance and the portrayal of Guy as a penitent.

### **2.2.2 The Voluntarist Account of Dual Affections and Guy's Redirection of Desire**

In the six stanzas that describe Guy's epiphany, the word love is repeated four times. Guy feels guilty when he realises that for Felice's 'love ich have al wrought,/ For His love dede Y never nought' (295-6). The poem presents Guy's internal conflict as organised around two contrasting orientations of love, namely his love for Felice and his love for God. The aim of the transformation, as he states it, is the redirection of his desire away from Felice towards God: 'For his love ichil now wende/ Barfot to mi lives ende' (304-5). Focusing on this love dichotomy, rather than regret for his previous life as a knight and the sin of homicide, is a feature that characterises the stanzaic version. Klausner argues that in contrast to the AN Gui, whose horror is focused on the bloodshed, the thoughts of the ME Guy are organised around the distinction between his earthly love for Felice which was moving him during the earlier stage of life and the love of God which he neglected.<sup>68</sup> Klausner's observation about the differences between the ME and AN versions' portrayal of the nature of Guy's sin could have been more meaningful if the ME version's focus on the dichotomy of love was analysed in the context of fourteenth-century understanding of dual affections. This section argues that the

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<sup>68</sup> Klausner, p. 112.

clash between divine and earthly love which the ME version highlights can be better understood in the context of the fourteenth-century voluntarist account of the dual affections of the will.

In its presentation of the opposition of courtly love and the love of God, the *Stanzaic Guy* highlights a major philosophical concern of the fourteenth century. The distinction between worldly and eternal love was central to the early fourteenth-century voluntarist discourse of emotions and was discussed by both Scotus and Giles. In his discussion of the ethical dimension of emotions, Scotus highlights the centrality of love to moral life and proposes that love, not law or obligation, is the foundation of morality. He, therefore, argues that moral perfection is a perfection of loving.<sup>69</sup> That love is central to moral perfection is also discussed in the *De regimine* where Giles describes love as the first and strongest passion and he relates the ruler's virtue to his ability to love righteously.<sup>70</sup> The emphasis that the period's moral philosophers place on the centrality of emotions to moral life, suggests the significance of analysing the affective dimension of Guy's penance.

The affective ethics that characterises the voluntarist tradition resulted in a conception of the activity of the will in terms of dual affections. Believing that willing is an act of loving, Scotus argues that the will is weighted by desire which can either be directed towards the self or towards others. While in the affections towards the self, *affectio commodi*, the individual's desire is directed inward, in the affection towards others, *affectio justitiae*, desire is directed outward. The *affectio commodi* motivates the self to seek its own advantage, mainly its pleasure and self-preservation. On the other hand, the *affectio justitiae* urges the individual to direct his affections towards the love of God and the common good.<sup>71</sup> According to Scotus, the desire for the self is inferior to the desire for justice mainly because it can be immoderate and blinding. He explains: 'nothing else rules a will that it is not right save a disordered and immoderate appetite for the greatest good of advantage'.<sup>72</sup> Unlike the actions motivated by the affections

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<sup>69</sup> Mary Beth Ingham, *The Harmony of Goodness: Mutuality and Moral Living According to John Duns Scotus* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Institute Publishing, 1996), p. 24.

<sup>70</sup> Giles, p. 118.

<sup>71</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6. q. 2. For an explanations of Scotus' account of dual affections; see Vos, *The Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. 452-3.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

for advantage whose aim is to achieve personal advantage, the actions motivated by the affections for justice involve the distribution of good.

This issue is also addressed in the *De regimine*, where Giles emphasises that while the love of God and the common good brings all virtues, ‘immoderate loue of a manis owne persone ledeþ and bryngeþ to all vices for suche ben tirauntes and wollen folfillen here owne lust and likyng and desiren’.<sup>73</sup> Giles stresses the fact that kings and princes, in particular, should love the common good more than their own good:

Panne in þis wise al men scholde loue so þat first and principalliche he scholde loue God and þe comyn profit, and by þe consequent folwyng, he schulde loue priuate and singular good and profit. And þat is most semelich to kynges and princes.<sup>74</sup>

Based on the distinction between these two types of love, the *De regimine* distinguishes between a king and a tyrant:

kyng and a tyrand ben diuerse. For a kyng loueth principalliche þe comune profit, and in louynge þe comune profit he loueth his owne profit. But a tyraund doþ þe contrarie and loueth principalliche his owne profit.<sup>75</sup>

To stress the importance of loving the common good more than one’s glory, Giles also gives the example of the kings of Rome who, unlike ‘Dionisius of Cicilia’, the tyrant who destroyed many cities and towns because of his extreme love of himself, had kept Rome strong because they loved the common good more than their singular profit.<sup>76</sup>

The voluntarist account of dual affections can assist in the understanding of the forces that guide Guy’s behaviour in the different stages of his life. The perfection of Guy’s character can thus be viewed as a perfection of loving, which involves a redirection of his affections away from *commodi* towards *justitiae*. The political dimension of the ruler’s passions that Giles highlights is particularly important to the analysis of Guy’s character as a national hero. Given the strong national sentiment of the stanzaic version, it is plausible that the poet could have revised Guy’s character to present him as a model for the virtuous powerful leader popularised in contemporary conduct literature. The following analysis will show how Guy’s redirection

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<sup>73</sup> Giles, p. 120.

<sup>74</sup> Giles, p. 118.

<sup>75</sup> Giles, p. 119.

<sup>76</sup> Giles, pp. 118-20.



of his desire towards justice results in a change of his motivations and his goals. It will discuss how Guy develops from a lover of glory to a nobler hero who is moved by the love of God which motivates him to seek the advantage of the common good.

Driven mainly by the *affectio commodi*, Guy, before his transformation, was used to fighting for his own advantage – achieving glory and winning Felice. Therefore, upon meeting Felice after his arrival in England, he assures her that he has fulfilled the purpose of his journey and ‘Won the priis in mani lond/ Of knightes strong and stithe’ (53-4). Thus, the poem shows that Guy’s relationship with Felice had an influence on the trajectory of his moral development. Built on an original sense of fear, the fear of losing Felice, Guy’s reaction to Felice’s rejection was immoderate. Guy admits that in order to prove himself a glorious knight, he went to the extreme in his quest: ‘For mani a bern and knight hardi/ Ich have ysleyn sikerly/ And strued cites fale’ (340-2). The poem’s portrayal of Guy’s desire for praise as the cause of his immoderation accords with contemporary association between ambition and immoderation. Giles draws a direct correlation between a man’s ambition and his immoderation and explains that if a ruler’s ‘entencioun is occupied principalliche in profit of the regne, he forsaketh and despiseth sencible and immoderate delectacioun and likynge lest’.<sup>77</sup> Hence, if interpreted in this context, Guy’s immoderation can be attributed to his ambition for glory, which is motivated by his affections for the advantageous.

It is important to note that despite the impact of Felice’s ambition on the amplification of Guy’s desire for glory, Guy is treated as a free agent who is responsible for his own actions. The poem shows how Guy carries the responsibility for his acts and laments his unjustified killing many times using phrases like ‘slayn with wrong’, causing ‘wer and wo’ and ‘schadde mannes blode’. In the AN version, Gui repeatedly blames Felice and stresses the fact that he has endured so much suffering for her. In the ME version, on the other hand, Guy tends to blame himself rather than Felice.<sup>78</sup> For example, in his initial and solitary reflection on his sins, the English Guy blames himself harshly and does not mention Felice as the cause of his excess:

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<sup>77</sup> Giles, p. 119.

<sup>78</sup> On the positive portrayal of Felice in the ME versions; see chapter two in Giselle Gos, ‘Constructing the Female Subject in Anglo Norman, Middle English, and Medieval Irish Romance’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 2014: [https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/65473/1/Gos\\_Giselle\\_201206\\_PhD\\_thesis.pdf](https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/65473/1/Gos_Giselle_201206_PhD_thesis.pdf); accessed 5 January, 2017).

He thought with dreri mode,  
 Hou he hadde ever ben strong werroure,  
 For Jhesu love, our Saveour,  
 Never no dede he gode  
 Mani man he hadde slayn with wrong;  
 ‘Allas, allas!’ it was his song,  
 For sorwe he yede ner wode.  
 ‘Allas,’ he seyde, ‘that Y was born,  
 Bodi and soule icham forlorn,  
 Of blis icham al bare  
 For never in al mi liif biforn  
 For Him that bar the croun of thorn  
 Gode dede dede Y nare.  
 Bot wer and wo ichave don wrought  
 And mani a man to grounde ybrought,  
 That rewes me ful sare. (246-61)

The English Guy does not refer to the influence of Felice on his actions until she comes and asks him about the reason for his sorrow. The AN Gui, on the other hand, blames Felice twice, before and after she asks him:

E que tanz homes aveit sun oscis,  
 Turs e citez par force pris,  
 E cum aveit sun cors pené  
 Loinz en estrange regné  
 Pu rune femme qu’il tant amat,  
 Pur qui tant mals duré ad;

Mais unc pur sun criatur,  
 Qui fait li ad si grant honor,  
 Ne s'entremist de lui servir;  
 Mais ore s'en voldra repentir. (7581-90)

[and how he had killed so many men, captured towers and cities by force, and had exerted himself far off in strange realms, for the sake of a woman whom he loved so much and for whom he had borne so much suffering—but never for his Creator, who had done him such great honour, nor had he bothered to serve Him. But now he wanted to repent of this. (Weiss, p. 180)]

In answering Felice's question, the AN Gui elaborately describes the havoc he has caused, the cities he has destroyed and the abbeys he has burned for her love:

Puis que primes vus amai,  
 Tanz malz pur vus sufferz ai,  
 Ne qui que home fust unc né  
 Qui tantes dolurs ait enduré  
 Pur une femme cum jo ai pur tei.  
 Pur vus ai fait maint grant desrei,  
 Homes ocis, destruites citez,  
 Arses abbeies de plusurs regnez,  
 E quanqu'en cest mund fait ai  
 Des l'ure que a vus m'acointai,  
 E de mal e de ben,  
 Nel vus voildrai celer rien,  
 E quanque ai mun cors pené,  
 E quanque ai fait e doné,  
 Pur vus l'ai fait, ben le sacez,

E asez plus que ci n'oez. (7603-18)

[From the first moment I loved you, I've borne so much suffering for you; I believe there's no man ever born who endured so much sorrow for a woman as I have for you. For you I've caused great havoc, killed men destroyed cities, and burnt abbeys in many kingdoms. And whatever I've done in this world, whether bad or good, from the moment I first knew you, I've not wanted to hide anything from you. All that I've exerted my body for, and all that I've done and given, I've done for you, you can be certain, and much more than you've heard here. (Weiss, p. 180)]

This episode is significantly abbreviated in the ME version from fourteen lines down to only five lines: 'Thi love me hath so ybounde/ That never sethen no dede Y gode/ Bot in wer schadde mannes blode/ With mani a griseli wounde' (282-5).

The stanzaic version's attitude towards Felice and her role in causing Guy's sin forms part of its overall revision of her character. The *Stanzaic Guy* focuses less on Felice's pride than on her genuine feelings towards Guy. For example, while in the AN version Felice does not mention love upon her acceptance of Guy's proposal, in the ME version she explicitly expresses her feelings: 'Al mi love is layd on thee,/ Our love schal never tuiinne' (68-9). More importantly, the ME version emphasises Guy's agency and the freedom of his will not only through minimising Felice's role in causing his sin, but also through reducing her involvement in his penance. If compared to the AN version, Felice's charitable acts after Guy's departure are not equally stressed in the *Stanzaic Guy*. On his way to England, the AN Gui asks the passer-by about Felice and in his reply to Gui's question, the anonymous passer-by highlights Felice's charitable acts, which include giving alms, feeding the poor, building abbeys and praying for Guy (10843-50). In the ME version, on the other hand, Guy does not ask about Felice and the passer-by does not mention anything about her charitable acts. He only mentions that she is a noble woman: 'And Feliis his douhter is his air,/ So gode a levedi no so fair,/ Ywis, nis non olive' (2842-4). Similarly, while the AN version highlights Felice's charitable work following Guy's death, such as bestowing generous alms (11612-30), the ME version does not mention that Felice has done any service for the sake of her dead husband. It only describes how she dies fifteen days after Guy: 'Sche lived no lenger sothe to say/ Bot right on the fiftenday/ Sche dyed that levedi hende/ And was birid hir lord by' (5359-62).

The variations between the two versions' characterisation of Felice can be attributed to the ME version's revision of the nature of Guy's sin discussed at the beginning of this section.<sup>79</sup> Shifting the focus away from the sin of homicide to the failure to serve God results in a less blame of Felice as the direct cause of Guy's sin.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, the stanzaic version's portrayal of Guy as a hero who carries the responsibility of his acts and blames himself rather than Felice suggests an intention to highlight the freedom of his will, his awareness of the nature of his sin and his conscious willingness to repent it. Moreover, by minimising the description of the violence that Guy has performed in the ME version, the poem shifts the focus to Guy's original sin, which is loving his own benefit more than loving the common good. Guy's subsequent decision to perform knightly deeds for the love of God, not glory, reflects an awareness of the nature of his sin and a determination to repent it through the redirection of his affections toward the common good.

Guy's understanding of the nature of his sin is expressed through his insistence on performing knightly deeds for the love of God and Justice. Therefore, when Felice asks him to repent his sins at home, he refuses:

Chirches and abbays thou might make

That schal pray for thi sake

To Him that schope mankende.

Hastow no nede to go me fro;

Save thou might thi soule fram wo

In joie withouten ende.

'Leve leman,' than seyde Sir Gii,

'Lete ben alle this reweful cri;

It is nought worth thi tale.

...

That ich have with mi bodi wrought,

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<sup>79</sup> See pp. 125-6.

<sup>80</sup> On the ME version's revision of the nature of Guy's sin; see Klausner, p. 112.

With mi bodi it schal be bought

To bote me of that bale. (331-48)

Guy believes that since, motivated by his love for self, he used to fight for glory, he needs now to perform knightly deeds motivated by the love for justice if he is to win salvation. The poem highlights Guy's redirection of his desire away from his own advantage to the good of others by focusing on the affective states he experiences during his three battles. After the redirection of his affections towards the love for justice, Guy's joy and happiness become dependent on the feelings of the people around him. Accordingly, his battles in this stage of his life change from being self-centred to other-oriented, and the poem repeatedly stresses the fact that he does not fight for glory.

### 2.2.3 Guy's Affection towards Justice and Heroic Self-sacrifice

Although the fight scenes are similar in the different stages of Guy's military career, that which makes Guy's acts morally questionable in the previous stage of his life is the direction of his affections. Therefore, analysing the motivation for Guy's battles in this stage of his life is necessary to the understanding of his character development. This section argues that Guy's love for glory, as the motivation for his past martial acts, is replaced by a love for justice in his later battles.

The importance of the affections that motivate a martial act in determining its morality and legitimacy is highlighted by the voluntarists of the fourteenth century. Scotus dedicates a whole section of his *Ordinatio* to discuss the soldier's heroic self-sacrifice in battles as a manifestation of the affections toward justice. In book three of his *Ordinatio*, in which he discusses the issue of friendship and self-sacrifice, Scotus relates the soldier's heroic self-sacrifice to his capacity to love God and the common good.<sup>81</sup> He thus argues that a soldier should love the public good – which he wishes to preserve – more than he loves himself or his virtuous act: 'the brave citizen experiences both the greatest good and the greatest pleasure

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<sup>81</sup> See Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 27; also Gerard Delahoussaye, 'Friend and Hero: Scotus' Quarrel with Aristotle over the Kalon', *Franciscan Studies*, 68 (2010), 97-135 (p. 99). In this article Delahoussaye provides a comprehensive analysis of Scotus' treatment of heroic self-sacrifice and friendship.

when he exposes himself to death for the sake of the good of virtue'.<sup>82</sup> Scotus consequently explains that a soldier risks death not for the sake of his virtuous act, but rather for his country's sake.<sup>83</sup> Similar to Scotus, Giles argues that a knightly act should be motivated by the love for justice, not the love for excellence. He thus explains that when a ruler seeks excellence over others he 'doun þerfore wrong to oþer men'.<sup>84</sup>

The poem presents Guy's three battles as being motivated by his love for justice and the common good. It shows how, prior to his battles, Guy is moved with pity for the injustice to which the people he encounters have been exposed. With Count Jonas, Guy immediately decides to undertake the fight after he feels pity for him: 'Gii stode and loked on him than/ And hadde of him gret care' (548-9). Despite the strength of the giant and Count Jonas's warning, Guy insists on undertaking the battle, and instead of worrying about his own survival, he prioritises the wellbeing of Count Jonas. Guy's sincere sympathy towards Count Jonas is expressed in the ME version in his long appeal to know the reason behind his sorrow:

'Gode man, what artow,' seyd Gii,

'That makest thus this reweful cri

And thus sorweful mone?

Me thenke for thee icham sori

For that thine hert is thus drery,

Thi joie is fro thee gon.

Telle me the sothe Y pray thee

For Godes love in Trinité

That this world hath in won.

For Jhesu is of so michel might

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<sup>82</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 27, quoted in Delahoussaye, p. 18. This is an area of disagreement between Scotus and Aristotle, the latter believes that the motive behind a soldier's heroic self-sacrifice is the love for self. On this, see Gerard Delahoussaye, p. 120.

<sup>83</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, d. 27, q. 1. Delahoussaye, p. 119.

<sup>84</sup> Giles, p. 120.

He may make thine hert light

And thou not never hou son. (553-64)

When compared to the AN version, the significantly longer episode in the ME version shows Guy as more empathetic towards Count Jonas and more determined to help him. The ME Guy observes Jonas's emotional state in detail and tries to comfort him by mentioning that God, the powerful, can alleviate his suffering. The AN Gui, on the other hand, is not presented as equally determined because he only entreats Count Jonas in the name of God to tell him about his suffering:

Pelerin, fait Gui, qui estes vus,

Ki tant par est anguissus?

Ben vei par vostre semblant

Qu'el quor avez dolur mult grant;

Dites le mei, jo vus conjur,

Pur Deu, nostre criatur. (7883-8)

[‘Pilgrim’ said Gui, ‘who are you, who are so tormented? I can certainly see from your appearance that there’s great suffering in your heart. Tell me about it, I entreat you, in the name of God, our creator. (Weiss, p. 183)]

Though prior to asking Jonas Gui is described as experiencing feelings of pity, in his attempt to know his story, the AN Gui is not portrayed as compassionate as the ME Guy.

Guy's first battle shows that in his love for justice he does not have prejudices. The poem describes how he agrees to champion a Saracen king and to be armed with the Saracens' weapon: ‘King Triamour me hider brought/ For to defenden him yif Y mought/ Of that michel unright’ (1315-17). Aware that King Triamour's son, Fabour, has killed the Sultan's son in an exchange of blows following a chess game, Guy views King Triamour's cause as a just cause. When the king asks him if he will fight for him, Guy answers that he will fight and win the battle with God's help, implying that God will help him because he is defending a just cause (1024-6). That King Triamour's cause is just is also suggested through the poem's positive portrayal of him, as opposed to Amorant. Though Triamour first mentions that he should hate the English knights and Guy because he killed his brother, the king praises Guy's bravery:



Seyghe Y never man so bigin.  
 Y seyghe hou he his heved of smot  
 And bar it oway with him fot-hot  
 Maugré that was therinne.  
 After him we driven tho –  
 The devel halp him thennes to go,  
 Y trowe he is of his kinne.  
 Mahoun gaf that thou wer he,  
 Ful siker might Y than be  
 The maistri forto winne. (987-96)

Triamour also keeps calling Guy ‘my friend’ and promises to establish peace throughout the land. He emphasises that Christians can move freely:

Fram henne to Ynde that cité  
 Quite-claym thai schul go fre  
 Bothe yong and old.  
 And so gode pes Y schal festen anon  
 That Cristen men schul comen and gon  
 To her owen wille in wold. (1048-53)

The poem’s portrayal of Triamour suggests an ethics of tolerance, according to which goodness and viciousness are treated as voluntary, individual choices. Siobhain Calkin in her study of the portrayal of Saracens in ME texts states that ‘apart from Amoraunt, most Saracens in Guy of Warwick are noble, knightly warriors who resemble their Christian opponents’.<sup>85</sup> It is, however, important to note that the positive portrayal of Triamour remains contingent. He is depicted as a better Saracen than Amoraunt, yet, since he is interested only in self-defence, his

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<sup>85</sup> Siobhain Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 23.

goodness remains inferior to that of Guy, the Christian knight who is moved by his love for the common good.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, the positive portrayal of Triamour does not signify the virtue of the Saracens as much as the virtue of Guy, the English hero whose only criterion when relating to people is his love for justice. King Triamour's positive attitude towards Guy is, thus, not presented as a result of his inherent tolerance but as an attempt to motivate Guy to win the battle for him. This is suggested by the fact that Triamour, just before his agreement with Guy, threatens Sir Jonas with death: 'And yif ther be thou schalt anon/ Be honged and thi sones ichon (964-5). The poet's suggestion that King Triamour's tolerance is conditioned by Guy's victory indicates that he still portrays him as a threat to Christians in general, and to Sir Jonas and his fifteen sons in particular.

Significantly, in addition to it being an act of justice, Guy's championship of King Triamour serves his higher cause as a Christian pilgrim. By championing King Triamour against the Saracen Sultan, Guy exercises power over the East and ensures the dominance of his fellow Christians in the Holy Land.<sup>87</sup> After his victory, King Triamour frees Jonas, the defender of Jerusalem, and his fifteen sons. More importantly, Gawain succeeds in achieving a moral victory through granting the Christian pilgrims a freedom of worship.<sup>88</sup> Given the fact that prior to the crusades Saracens were a major threat to Christians coming to Jerusalem as pilgrims, Guy's victory has a particular historical significance.<sup>89</sup> His ability to win his fellow Christians the right to pilgrimage suggests his success both as a pilgrim and as a crusading figure.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> In her discussion of the moral dimension of Bevis's acts in *Bevis of Hampton*, Corinne Saunders explains how for Christian knights 'virtue is even more necessary than prowess'; see 'Desire, Will and Intention in *Sir Beues of Hamtoun*', in *The Matter of Identity in Medieval Romance*, ed. by Phillipa Hardman (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), pp. 29-42 (p. 37).

<sup>87</sup> See Rebecca Wilcox, 'Romancing the East: Greeks and Saracens in *Guy of Warwick*', in *Pulp Fiction of Medieval England*, ed. by N. McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 218.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.

<sup>89</sup> Wilcox discusses how Guy's victories compensate for the West's historical loss in the East; see p. 221

<sup>90</sup> See Wiggins's introduction to the text where she mentions that crusading was regarded a form of pilgrimage, p. 10. Geraldine Heng argues that romances such as *Guy of Warwick* were a vehicle to glorify crusading heroes; see *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003), p. 6.

To justify Guy's acting as champion for King Triamour as an act performed out of a love for justice, the poem juxtaposes Guy's motivations to Amorant's. In his conversation with Amorant, Guy stresses that he is fighting for a just cause:

Cristen icham wele thou wost  
 Of Inglond born, Y plight.  
 King Triamour me hider brought  
 For to defenden him yif Y mought  
 Of that michel unright. (1313-17)

The poem's description of both Guy and Amorant as being almost equal in strength suggests that the morality of their acts is assessed according to the nature of their motivation. What makes Guy's cause superior to that of Amorant is its moral purpose; Guy champions the king because of his love for justice, not to win a worldly reward. The poem shows that while Guy refused a third of King Triamour's land, Amorant's only motivation for the fight was to be rewarded:

For when ichave thee sleyn now right  
 The Soudan treweli hath me hight  
 His lond gif me he schold  
 Ever more to have and hold fre  
 And give me his douhter bright o ble,  
 The miriest may on mold. (1456-61)

The poem's focus on Guy's and Amorant's contrasting intentions highlights the role of affections in determining the character's moral stand, an idea that is repeatedly suggested in Guy's second and third battles.

The love of justice as a motivation for Guy's acts is also stressed in his second battle. Guy's encounter with his old friend Tirri is presented as an emotionally charged event which puts his transformation at stake, primarily because Tirri is a witness of Guy's previous acts. Accused of what Guy himself has done, Tirri's recollection of Guy's previous deeds intensifies Guy's feeling of guilt and allows us to trace the development of his character. In addition, this

encounter gives Guy the opportunity to experience a different kind of friendship; one that is guided by the love for God rather than by the obligations of the chivalric code of behaviour.

Fundamental to Scotus' analysis of heroic self-sacrifice is his discussion of self-sacrifice for a friend. Scotus believes that the love of a friend is a reflection of the love of God and regards loveliness as the basic ratio of friendship. In the emotionally charged episode which depicts Guy's encounter with Tirri, Guy feels great sorrow, weeps and even swoons: "'Allas", seyde Gii, "that stonde!" / For sorwe that he hadde tho / Word might he speke no mo / Bot fel aswon to grounde' (1857-60). The poem describes how Guy's swooning comes in reaction to his realisation of Tirri's poor state:

Sir Gii biheld Tirri ful right  
 That whilom was so noble a knight  
 And lord of michel mounde.  
 His bodi was sumtim wele yschredde,  
 Almost naked it was bihedde  
 With sorwe and care ful bounde.  
 His legges that wer sumtime hosed wel  
 Tobrosten he seighe hem everidel. (1849-6)

In the stanzaic version, Guy explicitly states that the cause of his swooning is the grief he feels for Tirri. When Tirri asks Guy about the reason for his swooning he replies that '[t]his ivel greveth [him] so strong' (1868). Conversely, in the AN version Guy does not admit that his sorrow is caused by the injustice Tirri has suffered; he instead makes Tirri believe that his swooning is a result of a disease:

'Pardom, cumben as eu cest mal,  
 Que mult est felun e mortal?  
 Co est la gute dunt hom chet,  
 Le mal del mund que hom plus het.'  
 E cil respunt: 'N'est gueres passé

Que cest mal m'ad si grevé;

Puis que jo ici m'asis,

M'ad cest mal issi suppris. (9671-8)

[Then he asked him: 'Good man, how long have you had this sickness, which is most evil and deadly? This is falling sickness, the disease most hated in the world.' And Gui replied: 'Hardly for long: it's only since I've been sitting here that it has struck me down in this way. (Weiss, p. 204)]

Guy's intolerance of injustice and his absolute dedication to religious ethics is also emphasised in the ME version in his speech with the emperor. Addressing the emperor, he states: 'Gret sinne it is to thee/ To stroye so thi barouns fre/ Al for a fals schreward' (2062-4). While in the ME version Guy describes the act of disinheriting Tirri as a sinful act, Gui in the AN version does not focus on the act as sinful and only tells the emperor that he is blamed by people: 'Dunt vus faites mult grant pecchez;/ En estranges terres mult estes blamez,/ Que par le conseil d'un losenger/ Devez voz baruns desheriter,/ Qui fel est e paltoner' (9883-7) [You are blamed severely in foreign lands for being in the habit of disinheriting your barons through the advice of a rogue, who is an evil-doer and a scoundrel (Weiss, p. 206)]. Though slight, the differences between the two versions suggest that the ME Guy is more concerned with the moral dimension of the King's action than with it being approved by the people or not.

Guy's total transformation is suggested by the fact that he not only decides to risk his life to serve the common good but, also, views his heroic act as an act of humility rather than self-assertion. This is clearly pronounced in his prayers to God after Duke Barard's men throw his bed down into the sea. In his prayers, Guy explicitly states his free decision to subordinate his own good to the good of his friend. To emphasise that his act is driven by the affections for justice, not the affection for self, Guy mentions that he is not fighting for rewards but to save his friend's life:

And Y no fight forto win nothing –

Noither gold no fe,

For no cité no no castel –

Bot for mi felawe Y loved so wel

That was of gret bounté,

For he was sumtyim so douhti

And now he is so pouer a bodi.

Certes it reweth me. (2357-64)

Guy's humility is further stressed by his wish to remain unknown. The fact that he insists on performing his acts while disguised suggests that he is not interested in achieving personal glory. The poem shows how he does not reveal his true identity to Tirri until before he leaves. Guy asks Tirri to go with him out of the city so that no one can know his true identity: 'Alon we shul go bothe yfere/ And swich tidinges thou schalt here' (2668-9).

After revealing his identity to Tirri, Guy not only refuses to stay with him and receive his great rewards, but also refuses to give Tirri the opportunity to return his favour by accompanying him on his pilgrimage:

And yif thou no wilt, ichil with thee go;

Ywis, ichave wele lever so

Than bileve with th'emperour.

Do oway, Sir Tirri, therof speke nought,

Al idel speche it is thi thought.

Wende ogain hom now right

And be nought to prout Y thee rede

To serve thi lord at al his nede

Thou prove with thi might. (2746-54)

To highlight the status of Guy as a pious figure moved by the love for justice, the ME version amplifies Tirri's feelings of gratitude in that he offers to be Guy's servant and man:

Mi treuthe Y plight in thine hond

Y schal thee sese in al mi lond

Bothe in toun and tour.

Thi man Y wil be and serve thee ay

Ther while mi liif lest may  
 To hold up thin honour. (2740-5)

This detail is, however, not mentioned in the AN text in which Tirri only offers to share his land with Gui:

Bel compaignum, Terri respunt,  
 Pur cel Deu qui fist le mund,  
 Remanez ci ensemble od mei!  
 E jo vus pelvis la meie fei  
 Que quanque jo en cest mund ai,  
 Bel companiz, od tei mipartirai. (10717-22)

[‘My good friend’, Terri replied, ‘in the name of that God who made the world, stay here with me! I pledge you my sword that whatever I possess in this world I will share with you, good friend’. (Weiss, p. 216)]

Tirri’s offer to be Guy’s servant signifies Guy’s saintly character, a feature that is stressed further towards the end of the poem. The type of friendship affections that Tirri and Guy experience align with Scotus’ notions of friendship love. Scotus recognises two grades of friendship’s loveliness, firstly a lesser stage in which the beloved returns his friend’s love and an excellent grade in which friendship is based on the friend’s intrinsic goodness and uprightness.<sup>91</sup> Guy’s refusal of any kind of reward is a strong indication of the honesty of his act and that his decision to help Tirri is informed by his authentic love for his friend, not by advantage. Similarly, Tirri’s strong feelings of gratitude and love for Guy are triggered by his friend’s uprightness and love for justice.

Guy’s dedication to the service of the common good is also emphasised in his final battle where he is portrayed as the saviour of Winchester. The poem presents his arrival in Winchester as God’s answer to the prayers of the people of Winchester:

Thre days to ben in fasting

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<sup>91</sup> Delahoussaye, pp. 104-5.

To biseke God in tron

He sende hem thurth His swet sond

A man that were douhti of hond

Ogain Colbrond to gon. (2801-5)

Guy's total commitment to the service of the common good and his absolute renouncement of familial emotions are emphasised by his reaction to the news about his son. Despite his knowledge that his son has been taken by a merchant, Guy decides to proceed to Winchester:

Than seyð Sir Gii, 'Whare is Herhaud?

That in his time was so bald?'

And thai answerd ful swithe.

'To seche Gyes sone he is fare

That marchaunce hadde stollen thare,

For him he was unblithe.'

'And where is th'eryl Rohaut of pris?'

And thai answerd, 'Dede he is –

A gode while is go sithe –

And Feliis his douhter is his air,

So gode a levedi no so fair,

Ywis, nis non olive. (2833-44)

The fact that Guy does not express any sorrow upon hearing about his son, or show any intention to rescue him suggests a total dedication to penance where neither parental nor conjugal emotions are allowed.

The poem highlights the development of Guy's character and how his affections have been redirected away from the self-advantageous to the common good through King Athelstan's description of his past experience with Guy. Lamenting his current situation, King Athelstan states that Guy would have championed him in his battle against the Danes had he given him enough reward: 'Allas of Warwike Sir Gii/ Y no hadde geven thee half mi lond frely/



To hold withouten strive;/ Wele were me than bifalle' (2887-90). King Athelstan's lamentation of the fact that he had not given Guy enough rewards to keep him in England shows that Guy used to be rewarded for his knightly deeds. Yet, the angel's visit in which he tells the king to entreat the first pilgrim who enters the city to champion him for the love of God, not for reward, suggests a revision of the ethics which used to guide Guy's behaviour in the past. Instead of focusing on rewards, the angel focuses on charity. The word 'charité' is repeated three times in this short episode. It is first mentioned by the angel and then by the king himself to persuade Guy to take up arms:

And pilgrim for Him that dyed on Rode

And that for ous schadde His blod

To bigge ous alle fre,

Take the batayle now on hond

And save ous the right of Ingland

For Seynt Charité. (2947-52)

To draw attention to Guy's battle as a charitable act performed solely for the love of justice, the ME version focuses on Guy's virtues rather than his glory. Though both versions elaborately describe the arming scene that precedes Guy's encounter with Colbrond, only the AN version mentions that Guy has been praised by everyone as the most handsome armed man: 'Maint home cel jur le regarda,/ Sur tuz cels del mund l'unt loé,/ Que unc tant bels ne virent armé' (11068-70) [Many men gazed at him that day and praised him over all others in the world, because they had never seen such a handsome armed man (Weiss, p. 221)]. On the other hand, the ME version closes the scene with Guy's prayers and focuses on his inner virtue to save his country rather than on him being praised:

And when he com to the plas

Ther the batayl loket was

Gii light withouten delay

And fel on knes down in that stede

And to God he bad his bede

He schuld ben his help that day. (3007-12)

Just like when he was thrown down into the sea by Duke Barard, Guy, almost about to lose his fight, views himself as worthy of God's providence for the just cause he is defending:

Tho was Gii sore desmayd  
 And in his hert wel ivel ypayd  
 For the chaunce him was bifalle,  
 And for he hadde lorn his gode brond  
 And his stede opon the sond  
 To our Levedi he gan calle. (3157-62)

That Guy's acts are motivated by his affections for justice, not affections for the advantageous, is stressed again through the poem's description of his refusal of half of England as a reward from the king. As in his last two encounters, Guy does not reveal his true identity until after King Athelstan strongly entreats him to reveal it. To emphasise Guy's disinterest in earthly fame and glory, the poem highlights how he asks the king not to disclose his name until the 'yere com to th'ende' (3282). Guy's ability to subordinate his own good to the common good is a significant indication of the freedom of his will and the righteousness of his affections, a characteristic that was mostly praised in virtuous rulers. If Guy's character is analysed in the context of the fourteenth-century voluntarist identification of the freedom of the will with the affections towards justice, he can be viewed as a free hero who manages to redirect his affections away from the self towards others.<sup>92</sup>

#### 2.2.4 Guy's Affective Transformation as a Sensory Experience

The poem's presentation of Guy's transformation as an event in which the two affections rather than reason predominate suggests that the change he undergoes does not take place in the mind but in the heart, and that it is not initiated by the intellect, but by the senses. In his description of the process that has led to Guy's transformation, the author stresses the role of the senses.

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<sup>92</sup> Scotus explains that a will that is guided by the inclination towards the advantageous is not free because it cannot will against its own good, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6, q. 2.

Guy's sudden desire to get closer to God does not come as a result of clerical learning, but is stimulated by the sensory experience he undergoes at the top of the tower. It is the sight of the starry sky that provokes the realisation and the experience of new affections, the affections towards God and the common good:

To a turet Sir Gii is went  
 And biheld that firmament  
 That thicke with steres stode,  
 On Jhesu omnipotent  
 That alle his honour hadde him lent  
 He thought with dreri mode,  
 Hou he hadde ever ben strong werroure,  
 For Jhesu love, our Saveour,  
 Never no dede he gode. (241-9)

The poem presents this immediate visionary experience as the direct reason for moving Guy from worldly love to the love of God. The poem's portrayal of the forces that have moved Guy suggests that his decision to transform is an act triggered by his free will, not by thinking. Instead of being guided only by reason, Guy's epiphany, and the subsequent emotions he experiences during his pilgrimage, are presented as initiated by his sensory experience of the material environment.

The portrayal of Guy's free decision to redirect his love towards God as triggered by sensation rather than learning recalls the voluntarist perception of the will as a power that is independent of the intellect. Along with the emphasis on the freedom of the will from the intellect, the voluntarists of the late thirteenth century believed that knowing the divine and the choice to be tied to it is an arational, affective and sensory experience. In contrast to the intellectualists of the early thirteenth century, the voluntarists believed that faith precedes understanding and that one should first believe in order to understand.<sup>93</sup> They, therefore, argued

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<sup>93</sup> See Norman Kretzmann, 'Faith Seeks, Understanding Finds', in *Christian Philosophy*, ed. by Thomas Flint (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), pp. 1-36 (p. 11).

that the perception of God is beyond the reach of human rational understanding and that the exchange between the individual and God can be only perceived in terms of sensual and emotional experience that is entirely separate from the intellectual experience.<sup>94</sup>

The early fourteenth-century Franciscans believed that what accompanies the divine experience is an arousal of the senses and a stimulation of emotions.<sup>95</sup> Scotus and his fellow Franciscans favoured a form of morality that emerges from ‘material, mutual relationships’ that are highly dependent on sense experience.<sup>96</sup> Scotus’ approach to ethics is not based on rationality and abstraction alone; it, however, depends on the individual’s embodied experience in the material environment. Unlike Aquinas, Scotus reshaped sensation from a passive to active process. Arguing that active sensation always involves a dynamic change, he believed that affective spiritual change is mainly a corporeal event that involves spiritual transformation.<sup>97</sup> Scotus thus argued that the love and knowledge of the divine begins in the senses and that the intellect is unable to perceive any knowledge without sense perception. This voluntarist approach to ethics, which treats the sensory experience of the material world as central to the development of the individual’s ethics, can help us analyse the material dimension of Guy’s penance and its relationship to his affections.

Of all the five senses, the sense of sight is celebrated by the Franciscans as significant to the individual’s spiritual experience. In *Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, Scotus emphasises that vision is the most noble of all the five senses and argues that spiritual change is significantly related to vision. Given the contemporary belief of the importance of sight to

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<sup>94</sup> Niklaus Largier, ‘Inner Senses-Outer Senses: The Practice of Emotions in Medieval Mysticism’, in *Emotions and Sensibilities in the Middle Ages*, ed. by C. Stephen Jaeger and Ingrid Kasten (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), pp. 3-15 (p. 4).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-10.

<sup>96</sup> See, Keith Warner, ‘Franciscan Environmental Ethics: Imagining Creation as a Community of Care’, *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 31 (2011), 143-60 (p. 155).

<sup>97</sup> Scotus, *God and Creatures: The Quodlibetal Questions*, trans. by Felix Alluntis and Allan B. Wolter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 358. For a discussion of Scotus’ views; see Amy F. Whitworth, ‘Attending to Presence: A Study of John Duns Scotus’ Account of Sense Cognition’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Marquette University, 2010: [https://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations\\_mu/30/](https://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations_mu/30/); accessed 20 December, 2016), pp. 169-71.

the individual's spiritual experience, this section will analyse the role of Guy's visionary experience of the material world in intensifying his affections for justice.<sup>98</sup>

The poem presents the sense of sight as central to Guy's realisation of the greatness of God. In addition to Guy's initial sensory experience, which is followed by a redirection of his affections, the poem frequently presents different applications of sight, such as light and colour, as manifestations of the divine. A scene that signifies the role of sight in arousing Guy's emotions and exalting his communication with the divine is the scene of the ermine. The sight of the ermine which is as white as lilies causes Guy's amazement:

Than seighe he an ermine com of his mouthe,

Als swift as winde that bloweth on clouthe

As white as lilii on lake,

To an hille he ran withouten obade,

At the hole of the roche in he glade;

Gii wonderd for that sake. (1936-41)

The poem's description of the ermine draws particular attention to its material characteristics: It is 'swift as winde that bloweth on clouthe/ As white as lilii on lake' (1937-8). The impact of the appearance of the ermine on the senses is expressed through a poetic, figurative mode appropriate to this affective experience. To describe the appearance and movement of the ermine, the ME version uses simile; the ermine is as quick as the wind and as white as lilies. The use of simile results in a poetic language suitable to the vibrant sensory image, an effect that is not achieved in the AN version, which only describes the ermine as whiter than snow:

Atant s'est dunc Terri assis;

Sun chef as escurz Guiun ad mis,

Errament s'est endormi;

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<sup>98</sup> Scotus, *Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle by John Duns Scotus*, trans. by Girard J. Etzkorn and Allan B. Wolter (St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University, 1998), q. 6. For a discussion of Scotus' theory of intuitive cognition; see Robert Pasnau, 'Cognition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. by Thomas Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 285-311.

Tut en plorant le regarda Gui,  
 Sovent i fist maint grant sospir,  
 Quant vit parmi sa boche issir  
 Une Hermine tote blanche,  
 Plus que n'est neif qui chet sur branche. (9753-9)

[Thereupon Terri sat down, put his head on Gui's lap, and at once went to sleep. Gui, weeping and often fetching great sighs, was looking at him when he saw come out of his mouth a pure white ermine, whiter than snow falling on the branch. (Weiss, p. 205)]

That the ermine works as a material channel to the divine is suggested through the connection of Guy's actual sight of the ermine to Tirri's dream vision. Once the ermine disappears, Tirri wakes up and narrates a prophetic dream that foretells what Guy has actually seen in reality (1933-68).

The poet's choice of the ermine as a channel to the divine seems to have been influenced by this animal's symbolic association with moral purity and chastity. In addition to being used as a token of nobility, the ermine was believed to be an emblem of fidelity and righteousness.<sup>99</sup> It symbolised the 'image of a man determined to protect the purity of his conscience'.<sup>100</sup> The ermine was, thus, worn by royalty and wealthy aristocracy in medieval Europe as an indication of their social and moral status.<sup>101</sup> Also, given the legend which says that the ermine is a creature that would 'rather die than be defiled/soiled', Breton dukes used to display it in their castles as a symbol of their loyalty.<sup>102</sup> Hence, if read against this background, the poet's choice

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<sup>99</sup> The ermine on the shoulder was part of the royal costume; whereas a noble has an ermine on his cloak, a peasant has a rabbit. On the ermine as part of royal costume; see *Medieval Costume, Armour and Weapons*, ed. by Eduard Wagner, Zoroslava Drobná and Jan Durdík (New York: Dover Publications, 2000), p. 25. On the differences between nobles and peasants; see James B. Tschen-Emmons, *Artefacts from Medieval Europe* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2015), p. 124. On it as an emblem of fidelity; see Louis Charbonneau-Lassay, *The Bestiary of Christ*, trans. by D. M. Dooling (New York: Arkana, 1972), p. 151.

<sup>100</sup> Charbonneau-Lassay, p. 151.

<sup>101</sup> See Doreen Yarwood, *Illustrated Encyclopaedia of World Costume* (New York: Dover Publications, 2011), p. 186.

<sup>102</sup> Charbonneau-Lassay, p. 151.

of the ermine, among other animals, is significant as it not only serves the poem's portrayal of Guy as a noble hero, but also highlights his loyalty to his friend and his righteousness, the characteristics most suited to penitent. Like an ermine, Guy would rather die than 'be blemished by sin'.<sup>103</sup>

The employment of the material as a channel to the divine is encountered in the same scene in the lines that describe the sight of the sword. Similar to the treatment of the ermine, the material properties of the sword are highlighted. The words that describe the sword reflect its sensory qualities like shining:

Sir Gii drough out that swerd anon  
 And alle the pleynes therof it schon  
 As it were light of leven.  
 'Lord,' seyde Gii, 'Y thanke Thi sond  
 Y seighe never are swiche a brond;  
 Y wot it com fram Heven. (1987-92)

The stanza's focus on light shows that it is the brightness of the sword that reinforces its miraculous nature. In the ME version, the impact of the sight of the sword is expressed through a figurative language that motivates the senses. Tirri describes the sword as 'bright as ani sonne it schon' (1961). This figurative description of the actual sword is absent in the AN version. Instead of describing the sword as bright as the sun, Tirri, in the AN version, only mentions that there was not a sword as good as the one he saw in the dream: 'Qui sur cel tresor giseit,/ E un espee que dedenz esteit,/ N'ad si bone en tut cest mund,/ De totes celes qui i sunt' (9781-4) [and a sword inside it; of all the sword in the world, there wasn't one as good as this (Weiss, p. 205)]. Moreover, unlike the ME version which describes the sword as a 'light of leven', the AN version plainly describes it as gleaming brightly: 'Gui erralment saisi le brant,/ De l'escalberc le trait, mult luissant,/ Le plaigne environ tote resplent' (9815-17) [Gui at once seized the sword and drew it, gleaming brightly, from the scabbard; it lit up the plain around about (Weiss, p. 205)]. In using a highly figurative language to describe the ermine and the

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<sup>103</sup> On how the ermine represents the noble Christian who chooses to die than to be blemished by sin; see Madonna Gauding, *The Signs and Symbols Bible: The Definitive Guide to Mysterious Markings* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2009), p. 180.

sword, the ME version achieves a strong sensory effect on the reader that mimics the effect of the visionary experience of the ermine and the sword on Guy and Tirri. Indeed, the figurative poetic mode employed in this section is a stylistic characteristic of the stanzaic version. The use of the tail rhyme stanza which distinguishes the stanzaic version is a literary form suitable for expressing Guy's affective penitent experience. The stanzaic version's rhythmic and alliterative poetic form, in addition to its figurative language, support the poem's overall voluntarist affective ethics.<sup>104</sup>

The poem highlights Guy's affective, arational response to the sight of the ermine and the sword through describing his feeling of amazement. Throughout the narrative, words like 'wonder' and 'amazement' are used to describe Guy's reaction to such sensory experiences. In the episode that describes Guy's experience with the ermine, the word 'wonder' is repeated twice. It is first used to describe Guy's reaction to the appearance of the ermine (1941), and then how it enters Tirri's mouth (1943). The poem's focus on Guy's visionary experience of the ermine and the sword suggests that his affections are activated by his sensory experience of the world, rather than by intellection. The sight of the ermine and the sword intensifies Guy's love for God and his affections for justice. Hence, directly after this experience, Guy becomes more confident of God's providence and he decides to act:

'Now felawe,' seyde Gii, 'bi mi leuté  
That sweven wil turn gret joie to thee  
And wele Y schal it rede.  
Thurth Gii thou schalt thi lond kever.  
Trust wele to God thei thou be pouer  
The better thou schalt spede. (1969-74)

The description of the sky, the white ermine which is like lilies and the gleaming sword all indicate that the sensory experience of the divine is an experience of physical beauty. It also indirectly suggests that what contrasts with this beauty should be perceived as devilish. Hence,

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<sup>104</sup> The association of the tail rhyme stanza with pious material is suggested by A. Trownce 'The English Tail-Rhyme Romances', *Medium Ævum*, 1 (1932), 87-108. On the tail rhyme as a unique feature of Middle English romances; see Rhiannon Purdie, *Anglicising Romance: Tail-rhyme and Genre in Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2008), p. 1.



in the *Stanzaic Guy* beauty has a lot to suggest about characters' virtue and moral standing. The poem associates beauty with light, bright colours and normal size as opposed to darkness and large size.<sup>105</sup> To stress the integrity of Guy's desire and his subsequent acts, the poem surrounds him with beauty. In his battle with Berard, Guy is described as 'an angel from Heven' (2249). Conversely, to remove Amorant and Colbrond from the normal represented by Guy who is fair and little compared to them, the poet describes them as dark giants. In fact, Amorant's and Colbrond's physical disposition, more than their actions, is what mainly vilifies them. This is clearly conveyed through the many descriptions that focus on their appearance. For example, the black giant Amorant is described as so ugly and dreadful to behold that once Guy sees him he calls him 'a devel fram helle' (1139). It is worth noting that the description of Amorant is less vilifying in the AN version. While he is described as 'grim' in the ME version (1135), in the AN version he is only described as large: 'Mult ert grant e ben armé,/ A merveille l'unt tut esgardé,/ Sun corsage e sa grandur,/ Si granz n'ier nul a icel jur' (8437-40) [He was very large and well armed; everyone watched him with astonishment. For build and height, there was no one so large at that time (Weiss, p. 189)]. Also, the ME version describes Amorant's encounter with Guy elaborately and highlights Amorant's villainy by describing the way he looks at Guy: 'He loked on him with michel wrake,/ Sternliche with his eyghen blake' (1498-9). This episode is, however, less elaborate and moving in the AN version which only mentions that Amorant began to look in amazement, without focusing on the eye and its colour: 'Quant Amorant oi aveit/ Ke Gui de Warewic co esteit,/ Ki tant aveit oi preiser,/ Merveille le comence a garder' (8787-90) [when Amorant heard this was Gui of Warwick, of whom he had heard so much praise, he began to look at him in amazement (Weiss, p. 193)]. There are also slight differences between the two versions' description of Colbrond. Like Amorant, Colbrond in the ME version is described as extremely large, stout and grim: 'A geaunt he hath brought with him/ Out of Aufrike stout and grim,/ Colbrond hat that gome' (2815-17). On the other hand, in its initial description of Colbrond, the AN version emphasises his fierceness rather than his appearance:

Un Sedne ad od lui mené

Ço dient qu'il est de Alfrike né;

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<sup>105</sup> The late thirteenth-century Franciscans who portrayed God as a source of light used to associate light with divinity, see Ann Astell, 'A Discerning Smell: Olfaction among the Senses in St. Bonaventure's "Long Life of St. Francis"', *Franciscan Studies*, 67 (2009), 91-131 (p. 97).

Cil est en bataille plus doté

Que ne sunt cent chevalers armé;

Colebrant, ço dient, est apelé,

Tant fer vassal ne fu unc né. (10807-12)

[He had brought a Saracen with him, whom people said was born in Africa. He was more feared in battle than a hundred armed knights. They said he was called Colebrant; a fiercer warrior was never born. (Weiss, p. 217-8)]

Beauty as opposed to ugliness is not only expressed in the human body, but also in the material objects used by these characters. Guy's weapons and appearance are described as beautiful. In his encounter with Amorant, Guy's coat of mail is bright, his hauberk is as bright as silver that the entire hall gleams and his shield is bordered with gold (1081-1101). The heavenly and the demonic are also juxtaposed according to beauty in Guy's battle with Colbrond and there is a stress on light and colour as indications of the warrior's virtue. To portray Guy as a defender of justice and Colbrond as the devil's comrade, the poem stresses the difference in the weapons they use. The poem thus surrounds Guy with brightness and describes his attire in a way that activates the senses. Guy's attire is 'gay', his helmet has a circle of gold that shines very bright, on the front stands a stone as 'bright as ani sonne it schon' (2987) and a flower of diverse colours (2990). Conversely, after describing Colbrond as monstrous, the poem describes his weapons as the fighting equipment that protect the devil's comrade: 'Alle it were thicke splentes of stiel,/ Thicke yjoined strong and wel,/ To kepe that fendes fere 'fendes fere' (3067-9). Unlike Guy's weapons, which are decorated with gold and bright stones, Colbrond's armour is 'blac as piche' (3079). In the AN version, although Colbrond's weapons are described as thick and black, they are not referred to as the fighting equipment that protect the devil. The AN version only mentions that Colbrond's weapons are designed to protect his body, without describing him as the devil's companion:

Mult esteit Colebrant corsu;

Un halberc fort aveit vestu:

N'esteit pas halberc maelee,

D'alte forge ert forgee,

De granz esplentes tut d'ascer,

Joinz sunt ensemble pur sun cors garder,  
 E par devant e par detrés  
 De fortes esplentes i out assez  
 Mult sunt les esplentes ben joinz,  
 Le cors li covrent e braz e poinz. (11097-11106)

[Colebrant was very strong. He had donned a strong hauberk; it was not made of mail-links but forged of another material. Great plates, all of steel, were joined together to protect his body, and there were many strong plates in front and behind. The plates were very well joined and covered his body, arms, and hands. (Weiss, p. 221)]

The stanzaic version's focus on Amoraunt's and Colbrond's physical appearance as a manifestation of their villainy serves its celebration of Guy's righteousness, rather than his prowess. In juxtaposing Guy's divine appearance to Amoraunt's and Colbrond's vicious disposition, the ME version draws particular attention to the knights' opposed moral stands rather than their equal martial abilities. Relating physical beauty to virtue highlights the importance of sensation as a means to perceive the difference between the heavenly and the demonic. The association of characters' appearance with their internal ethics suggests that Guy's and the audience's emotions of friendship and enmity are dependent on their sensory perception of beauty and ugliness.

The poem employs sight as well as the olfactory sense as a channel to the divine. A noteworthy scene which shows the impact of the sense of smell on characters' emotions is that in which Felice smells the sweet odour that has come from Guy's body. After Felice arrives in the hermitage, which is shining with light, and when she sits by Guy who is already dead, she smells the sweet odour of his body:

A swete brathe com fram his bodi  
 That last that day so long  
 That in this world spices alle  
 No might cast a swetter smalle. (3524-7)

The sweet fragrance of Guy's dead body moves both Felice's and the audience's emotions and emphasises that Guy's redirection of his affections towards the love of God has finally granted

him God's blessing. The immediacy of the sensory experience of smelling Guy's sweet odour blends the borders between the earthly and the divine.<sup>106</sup> The heavenly odour thus signifies that Guy's honest affections towards justice and his love for God have culminated in him being a divine manifestation on earth.

To magnify Guy's divinity, the poem describes how the kingdom's bishops and abbots all come to honour his body. The poem shows that Felice enters the hermitage accompanied by a group of people. Instead of presenting the final meeting between Guy and Felice as a private meeting between a husband and his wife, the farewell is presented as a public event appropriate to escorting a saint. The poem's initial suggestion of Guy's renouncement of conjugal pleasure is emphasised towards the end of the poem through this formal farewell; Guy does not kiss or hug Felice before he dies. The poem describes how, directly after he 'loked on hir thare,/ His soule fram the bodi gan fare' (3511-12). This spiritual farewell, which does not involve any carnal activity, is a reflection of the poem's initial focus on the dichotomy of divine and worldly love. The poem's emphasis on the transient nature of the couple's experience of conjugal pleasure suggests that Guy and Felice can live in perpetual joy only in heaven. This idea is highlighted later through mentioning that Felice will die fifteen days after Guy's death. The fifteen-day period after which Felice will live with Guy in perpetual joy recalls how Guy left Felice after only fifteen days of enjoying conjugal pleasure. The association, therefore, suggests that worldly happiness is not as lasting as heavenly eternal joy:

Sche lived no lenger sothe to say

Bot right on the fiftenday

Sche dyed that levedi hende

And was birid hir lord by

And now thai er togider in compeynie

In joie that never schal ende. (3559-64)

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<sup>106</sup> See Susan Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006). Harvey explains that 'smells were acutely effective in conveying divine presence or absence... Uncontainable, smells were transgressive in movement, crossing human and divine domains as intersecting paths of interaction' (p. 7).

Significantly, the way the ME and AN versions close the death scene is suggestive. The AN version ends the scene with a description of Guy's martial excellence:

Ore avez, seignurs, de Gui oi  
 Cum il sa vie en ben feni,  
 Fei e lalté tut dis ama,  
 Sur totes riens Deu honura;  
 E Deu le gueredun li rendi,  
 Cum vus avez ici oi.  
 Totes buntez e li esteient,  
 Aventures beles li aveneient,  
 En bataille ne vint ne en estur,  
 U il ne fust tenu al meillur. (11633-42)

[Now, my lords, you have heard about Gui: how he finished his life with good deeds, always loved faith and loyalty, and honoured God above all else. And God rewarded him, as you have heard. Gui possessed all the virtues, fine adventures befell him, and he never entered a battle or a fray where he was not considered the best. (Weiss, p. 227)]

Conversely, rather than focusing on Guy's prowess, the ME version turns attention to how Guy 'went to the joie that lasteth ay/ And evermore schal be' (3584-5). This shift of focus reflects the ME version's serious preoccupation with the pious element of Guy's character and the after-life beatific enjoyment. The episodes discussed above are hagiographic in tone. The image of Guy's body as it is laid in the hermitage recalls the image of dead saints' bodies present in hagiographic texts. The emphasis on the body's sweet smell and the spouse's chaste farewell reflects a hagiographic sentiment. This sentiment is further evinced by the focus on Guy's humility and solitude prior to his death and his experience of the divine as an indication that he will be among the saved.

The discussion, above, suggests that the *Stanzaic Guy* presents penance as an embodied sensory experience, a portrayal which corresponds with the early fourteenth-century voluntarist understanding of penance as an embodied experience. The examples show that Guy's sensory

experience of the material world has had an impact on his will and the orientation of his affections. The following section thus examines how Guy's experience of the supernatural, as a sensory phenomenon, has an impact on amplifying his love for God and strengthening his attachment to the divine.

### 2.2.5 Guy's Affections towards Justice and the Supernatural

Central to Guy's sensory experience of the world is his interaction with the supernatural during his pilgrimage. Guy's affections towards justice which are triggered by his love for God are further manifested by the existence of the supernatural. In the domestic environment of the narrative appears beings like the ermine and the angels whose physicality is stressed in a way that activates the senses. Though miracles appear in most medieval romances, especially those influenced by saints' lives, the supernatural in the *Stanzaic Guy* does not aid Guy in his battle as much as it increases his affections for justice, reinforces his arational choice to transform as a free choice of the will and guides him through his journey. Thus, the supernatural in the poem does not suggest Guy's inability to act. It, however, enhances his desire for justice through keeping him emotionally aroused. Therefore, this section discusses how the poem presents Guy's free choice to redirect his affections towards justice as a free choice assisted by his sensory experience of the supernatural, not by thinking.

The impact of the supernatural on enhancing the individual's attachment to the divine was discussed by the voluntarists of the fourteenth century. Scotus argues that in addition to the knowledge of God which we acquire through the senses, we need supernatural knowledge.<sup>107</sup> He begins the prologue of his *Ordinatio* by raising the question of whether it is necessary for man to be supernaturally inspired. Then, after proposing that without being supernaturally inspired man will either be in error or remain in doubt, Scotus states that the knowledge which is related to the divine 'must be delivered to us supernaturally, because no one can naturally discover the knowledge of them and deliver it to others by teaching'.<sup>108</sup> In

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<sup>107</sup> See William Mann, 'Duns Scotus on Natural and Supernatural Knowledge of God', in *The Cambridge Companion to John Duns Scotus*, ed. by Thomas Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge Companion Press, 2003), pp. 238-62.

<sup>108</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Prol. p. 1, q. 1.

his discussion of the impact of the supernatural on emotions, Scotus argues that supernatural agents, such as angels, do not move the intellect but the affections: ‘this first handing down of such doctrine is called revelation, which is for this reason supernatural, that it is from an agent which is, for this present life, not naturally a mover of the intellect’.<sup>109</sup> He thus proposes that supernatural knowledge is overwhelming rather than comprehensive, and that the need for the supernatural is, in itself, an indication of the intellect’s failure to reach certain knowledge.<sup>110</sup> This voluntarist belief in the significance of supernatural inspiration to divine knowledge, and the argument that the supernatural moves the affection not the intellect, are particularly relevant to the analysis of Guy’s penance as an affective sensory experience.

The *Stanzaic Guy* presents the supernatural as an overwhelming experience that does not leave room for reasoning, hesitation or deliberation. The supernatural in the poem is introduced at a critical moment where characters’ interaction with the supernatural usually culminates in an immediate affective response. In addition to the ermine, the supernatural appears in the story when King Athelstan and his men could not find, through reasoning, a solution to their problem. Unable to find a man who can champion him in battle against Colbrond, King Athelstan spends a sleepless night. As he prays to God to solve his problem, the king sees an angel who introduces himself as an agent from God:

Ther com an angel fram heven-light

And seyde to the king ful right

Thurth grace of Godes sond.

He seyde, ‘King Athelston, slepestow?’

Hider me sent thee King Jhesu

To comfort thee to fond. (2905-10).

The angel, who is manifested in terms of light, informs the king of the man who will take the battle for him and the poem describes the positive impact of the angel on the king who, after suffering sorrow and dread, becomes ‘glad and blithe’ (2917).<sup>111</sup> In addition to causing an

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<sup>109</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Prol. p. 1, q. 1.

<sup>110</sup> See Mann, p. 256.

<sup>111</sup> In his discussion of the necessity for man to be supernaturally inspired, Scotus mentions how human beings need to be inspired by supernatural agents like angels, *Ordinatio*, Prol. p. 1, q. 1.

emotional transformation from sorrow to happiness, the appearance of the angel moves King Athelstan from inaction to action that he 'ros up ful swithe/ And went to the gate ful right (2918-19).

The appearance of the angel has an effect not only on the king's choice but also on Guy's, although indirectly. While in his previous battles Guy encounters Sir Jonas and Sir Tirri accidentally and he, himself, offers to fight for them, this time he is chosen by God through an angel. The poem presents the fact that Guy is chosen by God as evidence for the honesty of his affections towards justice and his love for God. Therefore, the angel asks the king to persuade Guy to undertake the battle through invoking his affections for justice:

Tomorwe go to the north gate ful swithe,

A pilgrim thou schalt se com bilive

When thou hast a while stond.

Bid him for Seynt Charité

That he take the batayl for thee. (2911-15)

Although Guy at first refuses, he accepts after being convinced that championing the king is an act of justice which will serve the common good:

Sir Gii biheld the lordinges alle

And whiche sorwe hem was bifalle,

Sir Gii hadde of hem care.

Sir Gii tok up the king anon

And bad the lordinges everichon

Thai schuld up stond,

And seyde, 'For God in Trinité

And forto make Ingland fre

The batayle Y nim on hond. (2962-70)

While the previous appearances of the supernatural aid Guy in his choice, the final appearance comes to affirm the nature of his end. That senses alone cannot inform us about our



end is discussed by Scotus who notes that ‘man cannot from his natural powers distinctly know his end; therefore he needs some supernatural knowledge of it’.<sup>112</sup> The appearance of the supernatural in this scene indicates that Guy’s choice to redirect his love toward God is a choice that will grant him eternal happiness. This is stated explicitly by the angel who informs Guy that he will be delivered from the sorrows of the earthy life to the joy of eternal life:

He schal deliver thee out of thi sorwe

Out of this warld to fare.

To Heven thou schalt com Him to

And live with ous evermo

In joie withouten care. (3404-8)

As a phenomenon that moves the senses and has a direct impact on the affections, the appearance of the angel leaves Guy ‘still’ and happy. This impact is, however, not mentioned in the AN version which only describes how Guy has started to pray to God after the angel has left: ‘Li angle s’en va e Gui remaint,/ De Deu preier pas ne se feint’ (11473-4) [The angel departed and Gui remained behind, not ceasing to pray to God (Weiss, p. 226)]. The significance of Guy’s amazement in the ME version derives from the fact that it results in an action. The *Stanzaic Guy* relates Guy’s amazement to his decision to meet Felice and describes how, immediately after being amazed, he asks the boy to carry his message to Felice.

The differences between the two versions’ description of this episode are suggestive. In the ME version, the spiritual sentiment that is triggered by the visit of the angel is manifested in Guy’s attitude. The ME Guy does not focus on material rewards as a motivation for the boy to carry his message to Felice:

‘Sone,’ he seyde, ‘Y pray now thee

Go to Warwike that cité

Withouten more duelling;

And when thou comest ther Y thee biseche

Gret wele the countas with thi speche

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<sup>112</sup> Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Prol. p.1, q.1.

And take hir this gold ring.  
 And say the pilgrim hat hir biforn  
 That hir mete was to born  
 On the pouer mannes rawe,  
 Gret hir wele in al thing  
 And sende to hir this gold ring  
 Yif that sche wil it knawe.  
 Als son as sche hath therof a sight  
 Sche wil it knawe anonright  
 And be therof ful fawe.  
 Than wil sche ax ware Y be.  
 Leve sone, for love of me,  
 The sothe to hir thou schawe. (3427-44)

As suggested earlier, Guy's language in the ME version is pious and suitable to his status as a penitent. He calls the boy 'sone' and entreats him by God to carry his message to Felice. Advocating an ethics of love, the poem shows how Guy asks the boy to leave quickly for 'love' of him. The AN Gui, on the other hand, encourages the boy by mentioning the gifts that he will receive from Felice once he delivers the message:

Amis, fait il, vus en irrez,  
 A Warewic tost, ne demorez,  
 Mun message a la cuntasse frez,  
 Dunt vus grant preu en avrez.  
 Cest anel li aporterez  
 E de ma part li dirrez  
 Que le pelerin qui devant li magna,

A ki ele ses mes enveia  
 E de sun vin e de sun muré,  
 Cest anel li ad enveié.  
 Cume tost ele l'anel verra,  
 Ben sai qu'ele le conuistra;  
 Hastivement vus demandera,  
 E granment del suen vus durra,  
 Que le diez u le pelerin est;  
 E vus li dirrez: en ceste forest,  
 Heremite est ore devenu,  
 E en cest hermitage m'avez veu  
 E vus ici servi m'avez;  
 Granz bens, pur veir, en averez. (11479-98)

[When it came to the time of his death, he made his boy come to him. 'my friend,' he said, 'you will go quickly to Warwick—don't delay—and carry to the countess my message, which will be of great advantage to you. You will take her this ring and tell her, on my behalf, that the pilgrim who ate in front of her, to whom she sent her food, her table wine and her mulberry wine, has sent her this ring. As soon as she sees the ring, I am sure she will recognise it. She will make you many gifts and speedily ask you to tell her where the pilgrim is. And you will tell her: in the forest, he has now become a hermit; and you have seen me in this hermitage and have served me here. Many good things will certainly come to you because of this. (Weiss, p. 226)]

The AN Guy, who calls the boy 'my friend' (amis), asks him in a form of command to carry his message to Felice. Gui's speech in the AN version reflects an ethics of advantage rather than love, where neither the love of God nor the love of Gui are presented as motivations for the boy. Instead of love, words that signify advantage like 'grant preu' and 'Granz bens' feature heavily in his speech. In the twenty lines in which Gui addresses the boy, material rewards are mentioned three times. Guy first mentions that carrying the message will be of great advantage

(11482), then he mentions that the boy will receive gifts as soon as Felice knows that Gui is alive (11490) and, finally, that the boy will benefit from telling her about Gui's place (11498).

The ME version's commitment to the ethics of love and the beatific vision is also reflected in its description of the impact of the angel on Guy. In the AN version the angel does not mention that Guy will be delivered from sorrow to joy; rather, he promises him perpetual glory in heaven, not joy:

Co vus mande de la sus Jhesus  
 Que desore vus aprestez,  
 Alui hastivement vendrez,  
 Alegera vus de vos dolurs,  
 Car de cest jur en uit jurz  
 Alui vendrez amunt el ciel,  
 U glorie averez perpetual. (11454-60)

[From on high Jesus tells you to get ready now; for eight days from now, you will ascend to Him in heaven, where you will have perpetual glory. (Weiss, p. 225)]

According to the beatific vision of enjoyment which was central to early fourteenth-century scholastic debate in general, and Scotus' voluntarism in particular, the joy in heaven derives from the enjoyment of God, not from the state of being glorious.<sup>113</sup> Accordingly, the angel's promise of joy, not glory, in the stanzaic version can be seen as a response to the period's philosophical preoccupation with beatific enjoyment in the afterlife.

In addition to highlighting joy, not glory, the ME version, unlike the AN version, does not present Guy's sickness prior to the arrival of the angel. The AN version states that 'Avint si qu'il enmaladi,/ Deu nel mist pas en obbli,/ Mainte mesaise pur li suffri./ Une nuit, cum il s'endormi,/ Deus un angle li enveia' (11447-51) [It happened then that he became sick. God did not forget him: Gui had suffered much affliction for Him. One night, when he was asleep, God sent him an angel (Weiss, p. 225)]. Hence, in focusing on joy rather than glory and

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<sup>113</sup> On the discussion of beatific enjoyment in fourteenth-century philosophy, see chapter three in Severin Valentinov Kitanov, *Beatific Enjoyment in Medieval Scholastic Debates: The Complex Legacy of Saint Augustine and Peter Lombard* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2014).

omitting the detail of sickness, the ME version suggests that Guy's sorrow is related to his existence on earth. In this way the ME version magnifies the promised joy in heaven as one related to Guy's spiritual wellbeing and the enjoyment of God, not to the relief from physical sickness.

Furthermore, what distinguishes the portrayal of the otherworldly in the *Stanzaic Guy* is its highly actualised nature. It not only appears in the visionary realm but also in the real. The form and nature of angels was an area of great disagreement among the philosophers of the late Middle Ages. While Aquinas believed that angels have form but not matter, Scotus, by contrast, proposed that angels have form *and* matter.<sup>114</sup> Unlike the intellectualists, he strongly argued for the angel's singularity and actuality.<sup>115</sup> Scotus thus explained that angels are not present in a place only by their operation, but that they can exist essentially and can be contained in a body.<sup>116</sup> In the three appearances of the supernatural in the poem, the actual existence of these other-worldly beings is stressed. They come not only in dreams but also in reality. In the first occurrence Guy sees an actual ermine coming from Tirri's mouth then Tirri wakes up to narrate the prophecy Guy has actually seen while awake. Guy's actual sight of the ermine and the poem's emphasis on its physical characteristics, such as colour and movement, suggest the significance of the five senses in the apprehension of the supernatural. This emphasis on the role of the senses in the perception of the supernatural accords with the poem's overall presentation of Guy's apprehension of the divine as a sensory affective experience, not an intellectual experience.

The existence of the supernatural in the real realm is also stressed in Guy's experience with the angel. The poem describes how Guy sees an angel in his dream and then wakes up to speak to him in reality:

When Gii was waked of that drem

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<sup>114</sup> See Evelyn Oliver and James R Lewis, *Angels A to Z* (Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 2008). The emphasis is mine.

<sup>115</sup> In answering the question whether an angel actually exists, Scotus states that there is no need to posit something to measure the angel's existence 'other than that very existence'; see *Ordinatio* II, d. 2, p. 1, q. 2.

<sup>116</sup> James Byrne, 'Angels and the Physics of Place in the Early Fourteenth Century', in *Conversations with Angels: Essays towards a History of Spiritual Communication, 1100-1700*, ed. by Joad Raymond (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 49-66 (pp. 54, 62).

Of an angel he seighe a glem.

‘What artow?’ than seyde he.

The angel answerd, ‘Fram Heven Y cam,

Mighel is mi right nam’. (3409-13)

Also, there is no indication in the stanzaic version that the angel who comes to King Athelstan has only appeared in his dream:

When it was night to bedde thai yede;

The king for sorwe and for drede

With teres wett his lere.

Of al that night he slepe right nought

...

Ther com an angel fram heven-light

And seyde to the king ful right

Thurth grace of Godes sond. (2893-2907)

While the ME version does not mention that King Athelstan slept before the arrival of the angel, the AN version clearly states that:

Cele nuit s'est li reis colché

En un chaelit a or entaillé,

Tote la nuit jut esveillé,

Sovent ad Deu deprié

Qu'il tel home li enveiaist

U de bataille s'afiast;

E Deu nel mist pas en ubli:

Si cum li reis ert endormi,

Un angle del ciel li enveia. (10925-33).

[That night the king lay down in a bed of carved gold. All night he lay awake, often praying to God to send him a man he could trust for the battle. And God did not forget him; as the king slept, He sent him an angel from heaven. (Weiss, p. 219)]

There is also no indication in the ME version that the king woke up directly after the angel had left as in the AN version: ‘Atant li angle s’en parti./ Li reis s’esveille, mult s’esjoi./ Mult par matin s’en est levé,/ Dreit a la porte est puis alé’ (10945-8) [Then the angel left. The king woke up and rejoiced greatly. He rose very early in the morning and went straight to the gate (Weiss, p. 219)]. The ME version states that King Athelstan was glad directly after the angel left which suggests that he was awake when he saw the angel, and if he fell asleep, that would have been after the angel has left.

The poem emphasises the main characters’ immediate and direct interaction with the supernatural. The ermine has supernatural abilities but also looks like an actual ermine as Guy grasps its distinctive shape and colour. Even the angels who appear to King Athelstan and Guy are human-like and gendered male. The angel who appears to King Athelstan converses with the king like a human and he is portrayed as aware of worldly matters such as time and direction:

Tomorwe go to the north gate ful swithe,

A pilgrim thou schalt se com bilive

When thou hast a while stond.

Bid him for Seynt Charité

That he take the batayl for thee

And he it wil nim on hond. (2911-16)

Similarly, Guy communicates with the angel who introduces himself as Michael:

When Gii was waked of that drem

Of an angel he seighe a glem.

‘What artow?’ than seyde he.

The angel answerd, ‘Fram Heven Y cam,

Mighel is mi right nam.

God sent me to thee

To bid thee make thee redi way,

Bi the eightenday thou schalt day. (3409-16)

The examples discussed above show that Guy's interaction with the supernatural, as arational phenomena that cannot be grasped by human reason, is highly related to the nature of his penance as an affective experience weighted by desire rather than reason and aided by the senses rather than the intellect. The physical existence of these supernatural beings and their sensible appearance suggest a form of connection with the divine that depends on a sensory affective mode of cognition, rather than speculative cognition. The actuality of these beings adds to the immediacy of Guy's experiences and intensifies his love for God. In its focus on Guy's transformation, the *Stanzaic Guy* repeatedly presents the senses as the faculties which heighten his affections towards God and sustain his desire for justice. It repeatedly suggests that Guy's transformation is an act of the will triggered by a desire that is gradually amplified through his sensory experience of the different elements of his material world.

### 2.2.6 Conclusion

In its portrayal of Guy's decision as a free act of the will, the poem reflects the early fourteenth-century Franciscan voluntarists' views of the process that controls choice. The poem's presentation of Guy's affective interaction with his material world as central to his ethical choice constitutes a celebration of the period's ethics. In a similar fashion to the voluntarist Franciscan tradition, the *Stanzaic Guy* portrays Guy's penance as an embodied experience informed by the hero's affections for justice. The examples discussed in the chapter suggest an identification of the freedom of the will with the experience of virtuous, other-oriented emotions. Significantly, the poem's celebration of the affections for justice as a manifestation of the freedom of the will reflects a degree of determinism not frequently encountered in later Middle English romances. Following the emergence of nominalism in the late fourteenth century, both the medieval moral and poetic discourses of emotions began to be less deterministic. Hence, with the popularisation of the notion of the absolute freedom of the will, an interest in imperfect human emotions emerged. The following chapter will, thus, analyse *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight's* discourse of emotions as an example of the late fourteenth-



century poetic discourse of emotions. The chapter will discuss how, in allowing Gawain to renounce his exemplary character and experience imperfect emotions, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* presents an Ockhamist, nominalist universe where imperfect human emotions are prioritised over divine, exemplary emotions.

## The Right to Survive and the Affections towards the Self:

### Nominalist Emotions in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

[O]ne would love God and not love God.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter considers *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, one of the most ‘courtly’ and allegorical Middle English romances according to modern scholars.<sup>2</sup> It proposes that the poem’s wider cultural context contributed to the shaping of its post heroic world and its revision of chivalric ideals. The poem’s political setting, represented by the decadence of the chivalric ideals of King Richard’s knights who were known to succumb to temptation and were described as knights of ‘bedchamber rather than battlefield’, is believed to have had an impact on the characterisation of Gawain.<sup>3</sup> The poem’s values were also influenced by the spread of commercialism in the fourteenth century when most of the chivalric and religious ideals were affected by mercantile values.<sup>4</sup> Most importantly, the fourteenth century was marked by the emergence of nominalism, the philosophical movement which promoted a celebration of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ockham: Philosophical Writings*, trans. and ed. by Philotheus Boehner, O. F. M (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1990); henceforth referred to as *Philosophical Writings*.

<sup>2</sup> See Aldo D. Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry & Courtesy from Ottonian Germany to the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1991). All references will be to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. by W. R. J. Barron (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); henceforth referred to as *SGGK* and cited parenthetically in the text by line number. I have chosen Barron’s edition because it provides one of the most accurate translations of the original text and it also presents the poem in a parallel-text edition. On this; see Norris J. Lacy, *A History of Arthurian Scholarship* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> See Michael J. Bennett, ‘The Historical Background’, in *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*, ed. by Jonathan Gibson and Derek Brewer (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), pp. 71-90 (p. 85).

<sup>4</sup> See R. A. Shoaf, *The Poem as Green Girdle: ‘Commercium’ in ‘Sir Gawain and the Green Knight’* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1984). Following the famine (1315-22) and the Black Death (1349-52), England witnessed an economic upheaval marked by the increase in the wealth of the survivors and the triumph of money economy which soon substituted the old feudal system; see the first chapter in Shoaf’s *The Poem as Green Girdle*.

individual and an endorsement of utilitarian secular ethics. It is therefore against this cultural background that this chapter aims to analyse the poem's discourse of emotions. This chapter suggests a correspondence between the late fourteenth-century nominalist discourse of emotions, which revolves around the individual's metaphysical freedom, and the poem's portrayal of the right to survive as the prime controller of Gawain's emotions. It argues that *SGGK* presents an Ockhamist nominalist universe where imperfect human emotions are prioritised over exemplary, collectively-oriented emotions.

The first section of the chapter discusses the development of the philosophical discourse of emotions from voluntarism to nominalism. It refers to Ockham's introduction of the metaphysical notion of freedom and the metaphysical human rights which are autonomous from ethics. Section two shows how the development of the scholastic discourse of emotions and the emergence of nominalism resulted in a celebration of human subjective emotions. The third section of the chapter explores the forces that move Gawain's will, considering whether his will is moved by the affections towards the self or the affections towards the common good. The role of the senses in intensifying Gawain's affections is discussed in section four. The last section of the chapter investigates the poem's portrayal of nature as a physical space that amplifies Gawain's desire for survival in the context of fourteenth-century nominalist naturalism which highlighted the importance of the material natural world as an experiential space. The section argues that the poem's earthly realm which establishes a relationship between the senses, Gawain's perception of the material physical world and his emotions suggests the significance of the natural to Gawain's experience of fear and survival.

### **3.1.1 The Philosophical Discourse on Emotions from Scotus' Realism to Ockham's Nominalism**

As evidenced in the precedent chapters, the medieval philosophical discourse of emotions alternated between intellectual and affective poles. While the intellectual pole, represented by Aquinas' philosophy, had coloured the scholastic debate up to the late thirteenth century, the emergence of Scotus' voluntarism was accompanied by an affective turn which influenced the study of emotions for centuries. Significantly with Ockham, this affective approach to the study of emotions gained a powerful advocate. Though a student of Scotus, Ockham is viewed as an

extreme voluntarist, a nominalist as opposed to the realist Scotus.<sup>5</sup> Unlike Scotus, Ockham believed that the liberty of the will is that of indifference and contingency, and that it should not be identified with the affections towards justice.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, he did not restrict the freedom of the will to the experience of virtuous emotions and argued that a free man is more of an autonomous than a virtuous individual.<sup>7</sup> Ockham also proposed that a free individual can choose not to love God or reject Him to pursue his own good: ‘God can command that he himself should not be loved for some stretch of time, since he can command that the intellect, and likewise the will, be so devoted to studying or to some other act that during that time it is able to have no thought at all about God’.<sup>8</sup> Ockham’s absolute notion of the freedom of the individual is related to another area where he and Scotus disagreed: their treatment of the universal and the particular. In granting the individual a freedom of indifference where his/her will is never necessitated by any affections towards higher, virtuous ends, Ockham suggested an absence of essences and ideals.<sup>9</sup> Unlike the voluntarists who believed in universals, the nominalist Ockham denied the existence of universals, including universal emotion.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> On how Ockham’s school of thought is described as the *via moderna* in contrast to Scotus’ school of thought which is described as the *via antiqua*; see the Introduction, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Marilyn McCord Adams, ‘The Structure of Ockham’s Moral Theory’, in *The Context of Casuistry*, ed. by James F. Keenan and Thomas A. Shannon (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1995), pp. 25-53 (p. 31).

<sup>7</sup> See David Clark, ‘Ockham on Human and Divine Freedom’, *Franciscan Studies*, 38 (1978), 122-60 (136-8). For a discussion of the wider cultural context of Ockham’s views; see the Introduction, pp. 42-3.

<sup>8</sup> Ockham also proposed that a free agent can reject to be moved by the beatific vision; see *Quodlibetal Questions* III, q. 14, trans. by Alfred J Freddoso and Francis E Kelley (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 213; henceforth referred to as *Quodl*. On the secular flavour of Ockham’s theory of the will. See also Clark who mentions that in 1324, a papal commission examined Ockham’s writings for heresy and the suspicion centred on his claims about possible changes to the economy of salvation (p. 154).

<sup>9</sup> See Walter J. Woods, *Walking with Faith: New Perspectives on the Sources and Shaping of Catholic Moral Life* (Collegeville: Michael Glazier Press, 1998), pp. 348-9.

<sup>10</sup> On Ockham’s prioritisation of the particular over the universal; see q. 4 in ‘William of Ockham, Five Questions on Universals from His *Ordinatio*, d. 2, qq. 4-8,’ in *Five Texts on the Mediaeval Problem of Universals: Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard, Duns Scotus, Ockham*, ed. and trans. by Paul Vincent Spade (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1994), pp. 114-231 (pp. 130-1).

The nominalist prioritisation of the particular over the universal resulted in a sentiment which revolves around particularised human emotions instead of spiritual emotions.<sup>11</sup> In fact, this move towards human emotions was first initiated by the late fourteenth-century nominalist focus on the humanity of Christ. Ockham was one of the earliest philosophers to suggest that Christ's emotional conflict at the time of the crucifixion is an indication of his humanity. In his discussion of the experience of Christ, Ockham points out Christ's human vulnerability, the pain he suffered and the sadness he felt at the time of crucifixion.<sup>12</sup> As a result of this new conception of Christ's emotional experience, an increased tendency towards the portrayal of human emotions, both in medieval religious and vernacular art, started to emerge.<sup>13</sup>

Ockham's focus on the individual, rather than the group, and on human instead of divine emotions was a result of his naturalism.<sup>14</sup> Ockham believed that the physical world is a unified sphere where only natural and actual substances exist, without the intervention of immaterial spirits.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, central to his 'razor' is the interest in the natural rather than the

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<sup>11</sup> See Clark, p. 148. For a more detailed discussion, see the Introduction, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of Ockham's account of the emotional experience of Christ; see Dominik Perler, 'Emotions and Rational Control: Two Medieval Perspectives', in *Thinking about Emotions: A Philosophical History*, ed. by Alix Cohen and Robert Stern (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 60-82 (p. 73).

<sup>13</sup> On how the religious art of the late fourteenth century started to stress the humanity of Christ as opposed to the earlier literature which tended to stress his divinity; see Kathleen Ashley, 'Divine Power in Chester Cycle and Late Medieval Thought', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 39 (1978), 387-404; Robert Marshall 'The Development of Medieval Drama: A New Theology', *Studies in Medieval Culture*, 4 (1974), 407-17; and J. Robinson, 'The Late Medieval Cult of Jesus and the Mystery Plays', *PMLA*, 80 (1965), 508-14.

<sup>14</sup> The term 'naturalism' is here used to refer to the medieval philosophical approach that questioned the need for the supernatural and favoured natural explanation of the phenomena of the world; see Kelly Clark, 'Naturalism and its Discontents', in *The Blackwell Companion to Naturalism*, ed. by Kelly James Clark, pp. 1-16 (p. 8).

<sup>15</sup> Relevant to this is Ockham's discussion of the possibility of a natural theology in his *Quodl.* 5, q. 1, pp. 397-401. Ockham's overall discussion of this issue can be found in chapter eight in his *Philosophical Writings*; see also *The Ordinatio of the Venerable Inceptor, William of Ockham*, trans. by Peter Simpson (NY: Franciscan Institute, 2015): <http://www.aristotelophile.com/Books/Translations/Ockham%20Prologue.pdf>; accessed 5 June, 2017); henceforth referred to as Ockham, *Ord.* In question seven of the prologue to his *Ord.*, Ockham

supernatural.<sup>16</sup> His ‘razor’ suggests that we should choose simple theories rather than complex ones.<sup>17</sup> Ockham thus proposes to eliminate any supernatural explanations if an adequate natural explanation can be achieved.<sup>18</sup> This philosophical naturalism has resulted in a type of religious naturalism where phenomena are explained naturally and without reference to supernatural entities like angels.<sup>19</sup>

Extant evidence about the patronage of the Cotton Nero MS and the intellectual background of its compiler supports this chapter’s analysis of *SGGK* as a poem that answers

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answers the question whether theology that is possessed by theologians is a science properly speaking by stating that ‘theology, as to some part of it, is neither first nor lowest nor in the middle of sciences properly speaking, because it is, as to that part, not a science properly speaking’.

<sup>16</sup> Joel Halldrof, ‘Evangelicals, Practices and the Univocity of Being: Avoiding the Pitfall of Gnosticism’, in *Between the State and the Eucharist: Free Church Theology in Conversation with William T. Cavanaugh*, ed. by Fredrik Wenell and Joel Halldrof (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), pp. 68-84 (p. 77).

<sup>17</sup> J. J. Smart, ‘Ockham’s Razor’, in *Principles of Philosophical Reasoning*, ed. by James Fetzer (Totowa: Rowman & Allanheld, 1984), pp. 118-28 (p. 120); also Thomas Williams, ‘The Libertarian Foundations of Scotus’ Moral Philosophy’, *Thomist*, 62 (1998), 193-215. Williams argues that unlike Scotus who supported the divine command ethics, Ockham supported a kind of secularism that is based on natural law (p. 169). Scotus ignored the discussion of the role of God in respect to future things that depend absolutely on a created will. On this; see the introduction to Ockham’s *Predestination, God’s Foreknowledge and Future Contingents*, trans. by Marilyn Adams and Norman Kretzmann (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> See Keith Augustine, ‘A Defence of Naturalism’ (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Maryland, 2001: [https://infidels.org/library/modern/keith\\_augustine/thesis.html](https://infidels.org/library/modern/keith_augustine/thesis.html); accessed 6 September, 2017); also, Rodney Delasanta, ‘Chaucer and Strode’, *The Chaucer Review*, 26 (1991), 205-18. Delasanta affirms that ‘Ockham’s razor had rendered supernatural habits and forms dispensable in a salvific order now less fixed than ever before’ (p. 216).

<sup>19</sup> On religious naturalism, see Kelly James Clarks, Richard Lints and James Smith, *Key Terms in Philosophy and Their Importance for Theology* (Kentucky: Westminster Jon Knox Press, 2004), p. 89. Unlike the nominalists, the realist Scotus believed that humans need divine super-powers to understand the world. On this; see also William Mann, ‘Duns Scotus on Natural and Supernatural Knowledge of God’, in *The Cambridge Companion to John Duns Scotus*, ed. by Thomas Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 238-62. In this chapter Mann discusses how Scotus believed that in addition to the knowledge we acquire through the senses, individuals need supernatural knowledge.

some of the philosophical preoccupations of its time. Earlier scholarship on the Cotton Nero MS has highlighted its aristocratic patronage and the prestigious political and social status of its owner.<sup>20</sup> Based on the manuscript's dialect, which places it near Holmes Chapel in east Cheshire, Edward Wilson argued that the Cotton Nero could have been written for, and then owned by, the Stanley family in Cheshire.<sup>21</sup> Later, W. G. Cooke and D. Boulton have identified Henry of Grossmont, the Duke of Lancaster, known for his interest in learning, as its potential patron, and argued that the Gawain-poet was in his service during his composition of the poems.<sup>22</sup> Michael J. Bennett, however, argued for a Ricardian patronage of the Cotton Nero MS, and that King Richard II's principality of Cheshire was the native home of the Gawain-poet.<sup>23</sup> This view has been more recently supported by Ann Meyer who has argued that the Gawain-poet was a member of King Richard's court.<sup>24</sup>

Reading *SGGK* within the Ricardian context of its manuscript is significant to this chapter's analysis of the sources that informed the romance's subject matter. In addition to his interest in art and support of artists, King Richard II was known for his 'legal obsession' and his preoccupation with political philosophy.<sup>25</sup> More specifically, he was a supporter of civilian kingship, a form of kingship discussed by Ockham and his followers, who argued that the king should rule by will alone.<sup>26</sup> King Richard's belief in the value of royal prerogative is, thus, believed to have been informed by late-fourteenth century ideas about Angevin kingship

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<sup>20</sup> On how the Gawain-poet was writing from the inside of an aristocratic household; see Bennet, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 233. For a general discussion of the manuscript's aristocratic patronage; see Ad Putter, *An Introduction to The Gawain-Poet* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Wilson, 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and the Stanley Family of Stanley, Storeton and Hooton', *Review of English Studies*, 119 (1979), 308-16.

<sup>22</sup> W. G. Cooke and D. Boulton, "'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight': A Poem for Henry of Grosmont?", *Medium Ævum*, 68 (1999), 42-54.

<sup>23</sup> Bennet, *Community, Class and Careerism*, p. 233.

<sup>24</sup> Ann Meyer, 'The Despensers and the "Gawain" Poet: A Gloucestershire Link to the Alliterative Master of the Northwest Midlands', *The Chaucer Review*, 4 (2001), 413-29 (p. 413).

<sup>25</sup> Nigel Saul, 'The Kingship of Richard II', in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, ed. by Anthony Goodman and James L. Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 37-58 (p. 48).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

developed by the period's nominalists.<sup>27</sup> More importantly, what suggests a possible Ockhamist influence on King Richard II is the fact that Ockham himself was involved in England's politics during the later years of the reign of King Edward III, King Richard's father. In fact, Ockham's first political writings were directly addressed to King Edward III of England.<sup>28</sup> It is, thus, plausible that King Richard II would have had access to Ockham's political writing and that such ideas could have influenced his views of kingship.

The above discussion of the Cotton Nero's aristocratic patronage reveals that the Gawain-poet was writing to an audience who was well aware of the philosophical and political debates of the late fourteenth century. Significantly, in addition to what the manuscript's patronage demonstrates about the cultural background of its immediate audience, it suggests the author's wide knowledge of, and ability to satisfy, the taste of such a culturally sophisticated audience. Given the refined quality of the Cotton Nero's poems, there have been various attempts to sketch the cultural identity of the Gawain-poet. Some scholars, thus, identified 'maister Massy' (d. 1376), a poet of outstanding sophistication, as the author of the Cotton Nero MS and *Pearl*, in particular.<sup>29</sup> More recently, Ann Meyer has associated the poet with the family of the Dispensers of Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, one of the wealthiest and most politically powerful families in late medieval England, and who had direct contact with Edwards III and his son Richard II.<sup>30</sup> Despite these various views regarding the identity of the Gawain-poet, scholars have agreed that he was 'widely read in the most sophisticated literature of the age, secular and religious'.<sup>31</sup> Some studies have, thus, highlighted how the poet's

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<sup>27</sup> On King Richard's emphasis on the prerogative and how it 'recalls the Angevin world of *vis* and *voluntas*'; see Saul, p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Dick E. H. den Boer, 'Ludwig the Bavarian and the Scholars', in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, ed. by Jan Willem Drijvers and Alasdair A. MacDonald (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 229-44 (p. 240).

<sup>29</sup> See Barbara Nolan and David Farley-Hill, 'The Authorship of *Pearl*: Two Notes', *Review of English Studies*, 22 (1971), 295-302; also Clifford Peterson, 'The Pearl-Poet and John Massey of Cotton, Cheshire', *Review of English Studies*, 25 (1974), 257-66. These suggestions were later challenged by T. Turville-Petre and E. Wilson in 'Hoccleve, "Maister Massy" and the *Pearl* Poet: Two Notes', *Review of English Studies*, 102 (1975), 129-43.

<sup>30</sup> Meyer, pp. 414-15.

<sup>31</sup> See Barron's introduction to *SGGK*, p. 3.



knowledge of Latin suggests a clerical background.<sup>32</sup> A.C. Spearing proposed that the poems, and *Pearl* in particular, show an informed interest in ‘technical theological issues’. He also argued that the poet was familiar with Latin literature current among educated men.<sup>33</sup> More recently, Alastair Minnis has suggested that the Gawain-poet could have been a friar’s student who was interested in theology, which implies that he was engaged in important moral and philosophical debates of his time.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, in her study of the impact of theology on the Gawain-poet’s writing, Cecilia Hatt has argued that the poems demonstrate an extraordinary grasp of the moral and intellectual debates of their time.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to his knowledge of the Bible, the Gawain-poet is believed to have been interested in philosophy. For example, Ad Putter mentions Aristotle’s economic theory as one of the intellectual influences on the Gawain-poet.<sup>36</sup> The poems’ intellectual appeal has been more recently discussed by Nicholas Watson, who has argued that the Gawain-poet’s values were a reflection of the upper class values and that he was writing for ‘a provisional aristocracy’, not for a universal audience of simple men. Watson has also proposed that the Gawain-poet played the role of a communicator of religious and philosophical teaching in the vernacular.<sup>37</sup> He has, therefore, discussed how in his poetry there is ‘a displacement of the traditional categories of Christian heroism’ that makes way for a new set of categories embodied in characters who represent the aspirations of the audience.<sup>38</sup> A particularly nominalist influence on the Gawain-poet has been highlighted by a number of scholars who have argued that the Gawain-poet was associated with the Pelagian nominalists. David Aers has argued that the Gawain-poet’s work is charged with secular values and he has described

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<sup>32</sup> See Putter, pp. 4-6, 11.

<sup>33</sup> A. C. Spearing, *The-Gawain Poet: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 14-15.

<sup>34</sup> See Alastair Minnis, *Translation of Authority in Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>35</sup> Cecilia Hatt, *God and the Gawain-Poet: Theology and Genre in Pearl, Cleanness, Patience and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2015), p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Putter, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Nicholas Watson, ‘The Gawain-Poet as a Vernacular Theologian’, in *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*, ed. by Derek Brewer and Jonathan Gibson (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), pp. 293-313 (pp. 294-6).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

him as a ‘*pelagius redivivus*’.<sup>39</sup> More recently, Alastair Minnis has discussed the signs of nominalist influence on the Gawain-poet that can be traced in his depiction of God as distant from His Creation. He has, thus, argued that the image of God as remote from the narrator’s world in *Pearl* recalls the God of ‘*pelagiani moderni*’.<sup>40</sup>

Indeed, there are many reasons to suggest that *SGGK* could be viewed as a poetic response to nominalism. Strongly supporting an intersection between nominalism and the literature of the late Middle Ages, Richard Utz asserts that late medieval culture was characterised by a high degree of public awareness of philosophical debate.<sup>41</sup> In trying to establish a relationship between Ockham’s nominalism, as a theory, and the literature of the later Middle Ages, he proposes that a nominalist thinker can be a ‘direct (textual) source’.<sup>42</sup> Yet, Utz is more inclined to support the possibility that nominalism represented a typical late medieval mindset or zeitgeist.<sup>43</sup> A direct influence of nominalism on literary texts is also suggested by Hugo Keiper who argues that Ockham ‘soon came to hold the stage in quite lop-sided ways’.<sup>44</sup> Other critics have argued that it is nominalism, rather than Scotus’ voluntarism, that was influential from the mid-to-late fourteenth century. William Courtenay, for instance, asserts that nominalism was dominant in the universities throughout the late fourteenth century. Given the fact that the nominalist theology was preached widely, Courtenay argues that it had a great impact on the period’s literature.<sup>45</sup> This brief discussion of *SGGK*’s manuscript context

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<sup>39</sup> David Aers, ‘Christianity for Courtly Subjects: Reflections on the Gawain-Poet’, in *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*, pp. 91-104 (pp. 99-101).

<sup>40</sup> Minnis, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> Richard Utz, ‘Negotiating the paradigm: Literary Nominalism and the Theory and Practice of Rereading Late Medieval Texts’, in *Literary Nominalism and the Theory of Rereading Late Medieval Texts: A New Research Paradigm*, ed. by Richard Utz (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), pp. 1-30 (pp. 11-15). See also the Introduction, pp. 35-7.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 10, 15.

<sup>44</sup> Hugo Keiper, “‘Introductory Essay: A Literary Debate over Universals?’” New perspectives on the Relationship between Nominalism, Realism and Literary Discourse’, in *Nominalism and Literary Discourse: New Perspective*, ed. by Hugo Keiper, Christopher Bode and Richard Utz (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), pp. 1-88 (p. 29).

<sup>45</sup> William Courtenay, ‘Nominalism and Late Medieval Religion’, in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, ed. by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 26-59.

and the cultural background of both its audience and author suggests the Gawain-poet's possible association with the late fourteenth-century nominalist philosophers. The chapter, therefore, argues that the poet's characterisation of Gawain and the emotions he experiences indicates an engagement with Ockham's nominalism, and that the nominalist discourse of emotions could have had an impact on the poem's attitude towards emotions.

Research on the impact of nominalism on the writing of the Gawain-poet has been mostly based on examples from his other three poems; *Pearl*, *Cleanness* and *Patience*. Since *SGGK*, unlike the other three poems of the manuscript, does not include a direct address of religious themes, little attention has been given to the influence of nominalism on its portrayal of emotions. A general review of earlier scholarship on *SGGK* shows that no study has investigated the representation of emotions in *SGGK* in the context of the Ockhamist-nominalist philosophical discourse of emotions.

Earlier criticism on *SGGK* barely touches on Gawain's emotions and how they are related to his metaphysical freedom and his right to survive. That is largely due to a tendency in modern scholarship towards discussing psychological themes that are mainly concerned with the poem's religious, not psychological framework. A group of scholars have, for example, focused on Gawain's fault, and whether it can be regarded as a sin. An early study which pays particular attention to the nature of Gawain's fault is P. J. C. Field's 'A Rereading of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"'.<sup>46</sup> In this article, Field proposes a new reading of the poem where he briefly refers to Aquinas' account of venial and mortal sin. Despite the fact that Field does not discuss Gawain's affection for self as the cause of his fault, his argument that Gawain's lapse is a venial not mortal sin is useful to the present study. Another study which adopts the Thomist notion of righteousness to analyse the moral dimension of Gawain's attitude is Gerald Morgan's '*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*' and *the Idea of Righteousness*.<sup>47</sup> Though, similar to Field, Morgan evaluates Gawain's attitude in the context of late twelfth-

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<sup>46</sup> P. J. C. Field, 'A Re-reading of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Studies in Philology*, 68 (1971), 255-69.

<sup>47</sup> Gerald Morgan, '*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*' and *the Idea of Righteousness* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2001); J.A. Burrow, in *A Reading of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (London: Routledge, 1965), also argues that Gawain commits a mortal sin by making a false confession (pp. 104-11); see also W.R.J. Barron, *Trawthe and Treason: The Sin of Gawain Reconsidered* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980).

century spiritual intellectualism, he provides a counter-argument to Field's reasoning. Morgan argues that Gawain's sin, and the insincerity of his confession, cannot be excused. Yet, this conclusion is not only oblivious to Field's argument, but also ignores the dominating forgiving tone of the poem. Both these studies analyse Gawain's fault in the context of Aquinas' intellectualist philosophy which was dominant almost two centuries before *SGGK* was written. However, read in the context of the late fourteenth-century philosophical views of righteousness, Gawain's fault would have been treated differently, and this requires an in-depth analysis of the poem in the following pages.

The discussion of the nature of Gawain's fault, and how it is related to his pride, is the subject of Martin Puhvel's 'Pride and Fall in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'.<sup>48</sup> Puhvel reads *SGGK* as a parable on pride in which the hero's excessive pride leads to his downfall. Puhvel provides a useful analysis of Gawain's pretension to perfection, which makes his fall drastic and lasting. However, his argument would have been more convincing if he contextualised his discussion of pride by referring to the medieval treatises on conduct which viewed pride as a sin.

A number of studies have also focused on the theological dimension of the text. Some of these studies have analysed the religious symbolic meaning of certain objects such as the pentangle. For example, J. Stephen Russell, in 'Sir Gawain and the White Monks', examines the role of the Virgin Mary in *SGGK* in the context of the Cistercian Marian devotional writing.<sup>49</sup> Russell discusses how Mary enters the poem as an image on Gawain's shield and how Gawain's focus on her recedes until she is forgotten at the castle. Russell's observation that the Virgin Mary is gradually forgotten supports the present chapter's argument that the poem's discourse of emotions shifts from the exemplary to the human.

Another study that is concerned with the theological aspect of the poem is Cecilia Hatt's *God and the Gawain-Poet*.<sup>50</sup> Hatt draws on the writings of Augustine, Aquinas and Aristotle to examine the impact of theology on the major themes of the poem. The study proposes that the Gawain-poet's intention is to undermine the Pelagianism which taints Gawain's faith. Hatt

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<sup>48</sup> Martin Puhvel, 'Pride and Fall in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 97 (1996), 57-70.

<sup>49</sup> J. Stephen Russell, 'Sir Gawain and the White Monks: Cistercian Marian Spirituality and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, 39 (2013), 207-26.

<sup>50</sup> Hatt.

thus concludes that Gawain's error is related to his belief in his mastery instead of relying on God's grace. Though powerful, Hatt's study does not consider the possibility that the poem might be challenging such doctrines, rather than adopting their ideals as a source of ethics according to which Gawain's attitude is assessed.

Studies of *SGGK* which have focused on the psychological dimension of Gawain's attitude in general, and on the topic of emotions in particular, are rare and brief. An example is Antonina Harbus's 'Emotions and Narrative Empathy in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'.<sup>51</sup> In this article, Harbus discusses how the poem arouses an emotional response in the reader and invites him/her to sympathise with the hero. Though Harbus does not adopt a theoretical approach to explore emotions, the study offers an interesting analysis of how the poem succeeds in engaging the readers and helping them identify with Gawain's emotional experience. The psychological dimension of Gawain's experience is also highlighted by Dean Loganbill in 'The Medieval Mind in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'.<sup>52</sup> In this article Loganbill suggests that the poem shows an interest and understanding of psychology. However, he argues that Gawain suffers an identity crisis without a detailed discussion of his emotions or an analysis of the sources that shaped the poet's interest in psychology. Some scholars have adopted a modern theoretical approach to analyse emotions in *Sir Gawain*. An example is Stephen Manning in his article 'A Psychological Interpretation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'.<sup>53</sup> Manning analyses Gawain's feelings of guilt in the light of Jung's theory of the ego's encounter with the shadow. Given his modern approach, Manning seems to draw his conclusion in isolation from the poem's immediate context. He argues that although the poet tolerates Gawain's imperfection, he emphasises the exemplary framework of the hero's experience.

Despite the fact that some of the studies discussed above have highlighted issues related to the psychological and moral dimensions of the text, none have analysed the psychological dimension of Gawain's attitude in conjunction with the historical aspect of the text; namely within the moral-philosophical framework of the poem. The few studies that have focused on

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<sup>51</sup> Antonina Harbus, 'Emotions and Narrative Empathy in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *English Studies*, 97 (2016), 594-607.

<sup>52</sup> Dean Loganbill, 'The Medieval Mind in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association*, 26 (1972), 119-26.

<sup>53</sup> Stephen Manning, 'A Psychological Interpretation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Criticism*, 6 (1964), 165-77.

emotions in *SGGK* employ a modern approach to discuss Gawain's feelings. Conversely, the studies which have adopted a medieval theoretical approach do not focus on emotions. While some of the earlier studies on *SGGK* have been preoccupied with the nature of Gawain's sin, whether it is venial or mortal, this chapter suggests that the general tone of the poem is forgiving and that Gawain is deliberately given the opportunity to express his human subjective emotions.

The correspondence between the outlines of Ockham's discourse of emotions which revolves around the individual's metaphysical rights and the poem's portrayal of the right to survive as the prime controller of Gawain's emotions cannot be denied. This chapter argues that in its emphasis on Gawain's human desire for survival, the poem suggests an Ockhamist universe where imperfect human emotions are celebrated. *Sir Gawain* seems to epitomise Hugo Keiper's definition of the nominalist text as 'the individual and contingent, the experiential and the 'real' (as opposed to 'ideal'), thus bringing into sharp focus the tangible and idiosyncratic, the earthly and even down-to-earth'.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to show how Gawain's emotional experience corresponds with the nominalist prioritisation of the particular over the universal. It argues that Gawain is presented as a free character who chooses to subordinate his duty to his desire for survival.

### 3.2.1 From Exemplary to Human Emotions

The idealistic framework that is established at the beginning of *SGGK* suggests a heroic world where the knights of the Round Table are entitled to carry the responsibility which their ancestors left them. The first two stanzas of the poem appear like the beginning of an epic where the poet reminds us of the history of Britain and King Arthur's noble ancestry:

And fer ouer þe French flod Felix Brutus

On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he setteȝ Wyth wyne,

Where werre and wrake and wonder

Bi syþeȝ hatȝ wont þerinne,

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<sup>54</sup> Keiper, p. 49.

And oft boþe blysse and blunder  
 Ful skete hatz skyfted synne.  
 Ande quen þis Bretayn wat3 bigged bi þis burn rych,  
 Bolde bredden þerinne, baret þat lofden,  
 In mony turned tyme tene þat wroȝten.  
 Mo ferlyes on þis folde han fallen here oft  
 Pen in any oþer þat I wot, syn þat ilk tyme.  
 Bot of alle þat here bult of Bretaygne kynges  
 Ay wat3 Arthur þe hendest, as I haf herde telle. (14-26)

This opening is underpinned by the sentiment that there exists a type of exemplary emotion similar to those which we encounter in the romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, where honourable knights subordinate their own advantage to the advantage of their community. John Ganim explains that this beginning prepares the audience for an adventure suitable for the ‘epic quality of the alliterative verse’, but they actually encounter a plot of manners.<sup>55</sup> In his recent essay on the beginning of *SGGK*, Neil Cartlidge proposes that the opening lines are important to understand the plot as a whole.<sup>56</sup> He focuses on the moral significance of the poem’s initial reference to the destruction of Troy and relates it to the testing of Gawain. In fact, the brief description of the destruction of Troy is followed by the elaborate account which narrates the heroic deeds of King Arthur’s ancestors and the civilisation they built. This chapter’s interest in the heroic sentiment of the beginning of *SGGK* is related to its discussion of the poem’s transformed discourse of emotions. Hence, in the following sections the chapter will examine how as the narrative progresses, the poem’s discourse of emotions begins to revolve around human basic needs, instead of chivalric and religious ideals.

The reference to Brutus at the beginning of *SGGK* suggests a patriotic sentiment where knights sacrifice their lives for the reputation of their country. However, this sentiment

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<sup>55</sup> John Ganim, *Style and Consciousness in Middle English Narrative* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), p. 62.

<sup>56</sup> Neil Cartlidge, ‘Who is the Traitor at the Beginning of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*?’, *Arthurian literature*, XXXIV (2018), 22-51.

gradually vanishes when the uncertainty regarding the worth of King Arthur's knights is suggested by the Green Knight who emphasises that he came to Camelot to test the knights of the Round Table whom he describes as 'berdlez chylder' (280). The poet highlights the Green Knight's ridicule of the knights of the Round Table through focusing on his loud laugh and how he succeeds in arousing King Arthur's feeling of shame: 'Wyth þis he lazes so loude þat þe lorde greued;/ Þe blod schot for scham into his schyre face and lere;/ He wex as wroth as wynde/ So did alle þat þer were' (316-20). The poem's emphasis on King Arthur's emotional reaction, his shame and wrath, encourages the reader to consider how unselfish Gawain can be to sacrifice his life for the honour of his people. At this stage of the narrative, and despite the anxiety that the Green Knight causes, Gawain's exemplary character is stressed. The poem describes how he is the first knight who proposes to undertake the challenge for King Arthur and who manages to cut off the Green Knight's head. Gawain's exemplary character is also emphasised through the elaborate description of the arming scene and his courteous departure:

When he watȝ hasped in armes, his harnays watȝ ryche:

Þe lest lachet oþer louþe lemed of golde.

So harnayst as he watȝ he herknez his masse,

Offred and honoured at þe heȝe auter.

Syþen he comeȝ to þe kyng and to his cort-fereȝ'

Lacheȝ lufly his leue at lordeȝ and ladyeȝ,

And þay hym kyst and conueyed, bikende hym to Kryst. (590-6)

The poem shows that despite the overriding sense of anxiety, Gawain never displays reluctance as he leaves. His exemplary character and commitment to the common good are further emphasised by his portrayal as a Pentangle knight. The Pentangle is presented as a manifestation of Gawain's perfect nobility and the poet mentions that it is appropriate for Gawain because he is free of imperfection and graced with chivalric virtue:

Forþy hit acordeȝ to þis knyȝte and to his cler armeȝ;

For ay faythful in fyue and sere fyue syþeȝ,

Gawain watȝ for gode knawen, and as golde pureȝ,

Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertueȝ ennoured in mote.



Forþy þe pentangel new  
 He ber in schelde and cote,  
 As tulk of tale most trwe  
 And gentylest knyzt of lote. (631-9)

The Pentangle represents twenty five aspects divided into five groups that make up Gawain's 'trawthe'. The poet, thus, describes how Gawain was faultless in his 'fyue wyttes', never failed in his 'fyue fyngres', fully trusted the 'þe fyue woundez' of Christ, acquired his fortitude from the 'þe fyue joyez' of Mary and practised the five virtues of 'fraunchyse', 'felaȝschyp', 'clannes', 'cortaysye' and 'pité' (640-55). In his attempt to explain why the Pentangle is best suited to Gawain, the poet mentions that the Pentangle is a symbol of 'trawþe', thus suggesting that 'trawþe' is central to Gawain's character as a Pentangle knight.<sup>57</sup> Since the many aspects that make up this concept indicate that it refers, more inclusively, to righteousness and moral perfection,<sup>58</sup> this description of Gawain is significant as it sets the standards according to which his attitude in the subsequent stages will be assessed. The emphasis on courage and the five virtues as central to Gawain's 'trawþe' suggests that any failure to perform these virtues will affect Gawain's exemplary character. Significantly, in his journey from Camelot to the Green Chapel, Gawain is tested in most of these aspects. His encounter with the Green Knight is not only a test to his fortitude, which he is expected to derive from his faith in Virgin Mary whose image is depicted on the inner side of his shield, but also a test to his loyalty and cleanness. As the poet states, these aspect are interconnected: 'Now alle þese fyue syþez, for soþe, were felted on þis knyzt,/ And vchone halched in oþer, þat non ende hade,/ And fyched vpon fyue poynteȝ þat fayld neuer,/ Ne samned neuer in no syde, ne sundred nouþer' (656-9). Hence, any failure to preserve them all means that Gawain's 'trawþe' will lose its moral power 'for it is an ideal of *integrity* or oness'.<sup>59</sup> The following sections will therefore discuss Gawain's failure to fulfil the expectations of a pentangle knight, and will link this failure to the emotions he experiences. This discussion will assist in the understanding of the poem's attitude toward Gawain's

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<sup>57</sup> The Gawain-poet's detailed discussion of the Pentangle and its symbolism reflects his philosophical background. Gerald Morgan argues that the symbolism of the Pentangle is found in philosophical not popular literature; see 'The Significance of the Pentangle Symbolism in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Modern Language Review*, 74 (1979), 769-90 (p. 772).

<sup>58</sup> On the inclusive meaning of 'trawþe'; see Burrow, p. 44.

<sup>59</sup> See Burrow, p. 50.

affection for self, and its portrayal of the relationship between the freedom of his will and the direction of his affections.

### 3.2.2 The Desire to Survive and Gawain's Affections towards the Self

Gawain leaves Camelot as early as line 670 as a champion of the people. Though everyone else shows sadness for him, Gawain 'mad ay god chere' (562). Yet, despite his apparent cheerfulness, the poem hints at Gawain's growing anxiety. The poet, for example, describes how with the coming of winter, Gawain recalls his difficult quest (535-6). Gawain's anxiety is also expressed when he mentions 'þe cost of þis cace' (546) in his last speech with King Arthur before he leaves. This section of the chapter will analyse the origin of Gawain's feelings of anxiety in the context of the nominalist account of the affections for the self.

Gawain's fear of death first appears under the pressure of isolation. As he moves from the civilisation of the court to the rawness of nature, Gawain's humanity starts to assert itself and he begins to act impulsively. The poem first focuses on Gawain's loneliness and the challenges he encounters by himself:

Mony klyf he ouerclambe in contrayeȝ straunge;  
 Fer floten fro his frendeȝ fremedly he rydeȝ.  
 At vche warpe oþer water þer þe wyȝe passed  
 He fonde a foo hym byfore, bot ferly hit were,  
 And þat so foule and so felle þat feȝt hym byhode.  
 So mony meruayl bi mount þer þe mon fyndeȝ,  
 Hit were to tore for telle of þe tenþe dole. (713-19)

Then, the hero's anxiety to be alone is expressed on Christmas Day before he sees the castle: 'Carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde/ To se þe seruyse of þat syre, þat on þat self nyȝt/ Of a burde watȝ borne oure baret to quelle' (750-2). Gawain's real desires and fears are displayed further during his stay at the castle. Once he enters the castle, the setting becomes mundane, as if preparing for his experience of temptation. When Gawain is seated at dinner after his arrival at the castle, he is described as merry and intoxicated by the wine: 'Þat mon

much merþe con make,/ For wyn in his hed þat wende' (899-900). The poem also hints at Gawain's imperfect worldly emotions by stressing how he gazes at the young woman and pays attention to her physical attractive features: 'Ho wat3 þe fayrest in felle, of flesche and of lyre,/ And of compas and colour and costes, of alle oþer,/ And wener þen Wenore, as þe wy3e þo3t' (943-5). It also highlights how he treats the two ladies differently:

When Gawaayn glyzt on þat gay þat graciously loked,

Wyth leue lazt of þe lorde he lent hem azaynes;

Þe alder he haylses, heldande ful lowe,

Þe loueloker he lappez a lyttel in arnez,

He kysses hir comlyly, and knyztly he mele3. (970-4)

This initial reference to Gawain's attraction to Lady Bertilak is significant as it suggests that Gawain might be tempted by her physical beauty. It also foreshadows Lady Bertilak's future influence on Gawain and on the development of the plot.

The poet describes how Lady Bertilak visits Gawain in his bedroom during the three days he spends at the castle. With these three visits, the affections that move Gawain's will are gradually exposed. On the first day, the day on which Lady Bertilak gives Gawain a single kiss, the poet mentions that Gawain's relative coldness towards Lady Bertilak is caused by his worry about the challenge awaiting him in the Green Chapel and his thought of how he will be knocked down by the blow: 'Þa3 ho were burde bryztest þe burne in mynde hade,/ Þe lasse luf in his lode for lur þat he so3t/ boutte hone,/ þe dunte þat schulde hym deue,/ And nede3 hit most be done' (1283-7). On the second day, the day on which Lady Bertilak gives Gawain two kisses, the ethos which guides Gawain's behaviour is expressed through his statement that the reason why he has not claimed a kiss is related to his fear that he might be refused: 'For þat durst I not do, lest I deuayed were;/ If I were werned, I were wrang, iwysse, 3if I profered' (1493-4). The two reasons that prevent Gawain from reciprocating Lady Bertilak's advances suggest a great desire towards the self. They reveal that his behaviour is governed by his desire to preserve both his life and his exemplary image, rather than being governed by the generic goodness or sinfulness of the act, a characteristic that is stressed further after Lady Bertilak's third and last visit.

Towards the end of part three, and just on the day before Gawain leaves the castle to meet the Green Knight and fulfil his quest, Lady Bertilak, who has been visiting Gawain in his bedroom for the last two days, offers Gawain a girdle which whoever wears ‘myzt not be slayn for slyzt vpon erþe’ (1854). Though Gawain feels happy once he knows about the magical qualities of the girdle, he does not show his agreement immediately. Instead, he allows the lady to speak at length so as to acquire more information about the girdle’s magical qualities, and simultaneously to show his hesitance in accepting it:

Pen kest þe knyzte, and hit come to his hert

Hit were a juel for þe jopardé þat hym iugged were:

When he acheued to þe chapel his check for to fech,

Myzt he haf slypped to be vnslayn, þe slezt were noble.

Penne he þulged with hir þrepe and þoled hir to speke,

And ho bere on hym þe belt and bede hit hym swyþe—

And he granted, and hym gafe with goud wylle— (1855-61)

The passage suggests that even if Gawain does not reveal it, he has immediately and wilfully decided to accept the girdle that will help him escape the trial alive (1858). The poem makes it clear that Gawain is given enough time to reflect upon whether or not to accept the girdle. It implies that Gawain, who has just refused the ring, has the freedom to refuse the girdle. Yet, rather than reacting in a way suited to his chivalric identity and his commitment towards the lord of the castle, Gawain succumbs to his desire for survival and accepts the girdle.

Gawain’s acceptance of the girdle suggests that his will is moved by his desire, rather than his reason. In its portrayal of the conflict between reason and desire, the poem addresses a major philosophical concern of fourteenth-century nominalism. Gawain’s motivation for accepting the girdle and his affective reaction can be better understood in the context of the nominalist notion of the absolute freedom of the will and the passions of the will. *SGGK*’s engagement with nominalist ethics is reflected in its characterisation of Gawain as a hero who freely decides to dismiss what is universally perceived as virtuous. Ockham not only argues for the supremacy of the will and its passions over reason, but also suggests that the freedom of the will is that of indifference to goodness. He explains that the will is neither determined

nor activated by the mind, but rather moved by desire.<sup>60</sup> Ockham emphasises that ‘no act is virtuous or vicious unless it is voluntary and in the power of the will’, and argues that an act of the will ‘can be indifferently laudable or blameworthy’.<sup>61</sup> In fact, Ockham was one of the earliest philosophers to reject the identification of the freedom of the will with the affections for justice and to argue that the will can have affections towards self and can will against the good.<sup>62</sup> In his discussion of the nature of the will, he insists that the will can choose good or evil, happiness or unhappiness. While according to Scotus’ voluntarism the will overcomes its selfish affections through the inclination towards the intrinsically valuable, Ockham views this as a constraint on its freedom.<sup>63</sup>

Gawain’s love for self as an act of the will accords with Ockham’s definition of amicable love. In his analysis of emotions, Ockham includes love among the concupiscible passions of the will. He also discusses amicable love as the kind of affections through which people can equally love God or their own lives.<sup>64</sup> In his answer to Peter Auriol, his contemporary French Franciscan friend who claimed that all amicable love is pleasure, Ockham argues that since one can love oneself with amicable love and not experience pleasure, not all amicable love is pleasure.<sup>65</sup> He explains that while the love of life is an amicable passion, it necessitates another lesser type of love which he calls ‘wanting love’. As an example of wanting love, Ockham discusses the love of health which is desired only because of the life of the human being which is loved by amicable love. He thus adds that the amicable love of life

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<sup>60</sup> See Clark, p. 142; also Servais Pinckaers, in *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. by Mary Noble (Washington, D. C. : The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), explains Ockham’s notion of the liberty of indifference and its relation to selfhood and illustrates how it is ‘impregnated with a secret passion for self-affirmation’ (p. 339).

<sup>61</sup> *Philosophical Writings*, p. 145.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>63</sup> See Clark, p. 138. A more detailed account of Ockham’s views is provided in the Introduction, pp. 41-3.

<sup>64</sup> For Ockham’s discussion of amicable love; see ‘Using and Enjoying’, in *The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts. Vol. 2: Ethics and Political Philosophy*, ed. by Arthur Stephen McGrade, John Kilcullen and Matthew Kempshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 349-417 (p. 352); for an analysis of Ockham’s theory of amicable love; see Vesa Hirvonen, *Passions in William Ockham’s Philosophical Psychology* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), pp. 154-6.

<sup>65</sup> Ockham, ‘Using and Enjoying’, p. 375; see also Hirvonen, p. 149.

is an efficient cause of an act of hatred towards death and infirmity.<sup>66</sup> Ockham argues that because of the individual's detestation of death, his/her will can cause volition to do whatever is required for health, like having a bitter medicine.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, if analysed in the context of Ockham's conception of amicable and wanting love, Gawain's passions seem not to be directed towards the love of the girdle. His passions are rather directed towards the love of life and the girdle can only represent what Ockham describes as the bitter medicine.

The significance of the girdle to Gawain is suggested through his caution to keep it in a safe place and hide it from the lord of the castle. The poet highlights the importance of Gawain's reaction to the offer of the girdle, as an indication of the direction of his affections, through the poetic form. While the actions that precede and follow Gawain's act of hiding the girdle are narrated using the preterite tense, the act itself is described using the historical present:

Thenne lachchez ho hir leue and leuez hym þere,

For more myrþe of þat mon mozt ho not gete.

When ho watz gon, Sir Gawayne gerez hym sone,

Rises and riches hym in araye noble,

Lays vp þe luf-lace þe lady hym razt,

Hid hit ful holdley þer he hit eft fonde. (1870-5)

Verbal tense shifts in this case are employed to mark this moment as crucial and emotionally intense.<sup>68</sup> Gawain's deliberate decision not to exchange the girdle with Sir Bertilak and his caution to keep it in a safe place suggest a free will moved by the amicable love of self and fear of death. In identifying concupiscible passions as the basic phenomenon of the will, Ockham also discusses irascible passions as the emotions that follow these concupiscible passions.<sup>69</sup> A

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<sup>66</sup> Ockham's view is explained in detail in Hirvonen, p. 155.

<sup>67</sup> On his discussion of loving medicine as an act of using; see 'Using and Enjoying', p. 360. For a detailed discussion of Ockham's views of wanting love; see Hirvonen, p. 155.

<sup>68</sup> On this and tense as a discourse function in *SGGK*; see Peter Richardson, 'Tense, Discourse and Style: The Historical Present in "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 92 (1991), 343-9.

<sup>69</sup> Ockham discusses the passions of the will in *Quodl.* II, q. 17, pp. 156-8.

major irascible passion which follows the concupiscible is fear. Ockham mentions that a concupiscible passion of an amicable love of life is usually followed by a fear of death. He then explains how an act of loving is usually accompanied by an act of avoidance (*fuga*).<sup>70</sup> If read in the context of Ockham's account of concupiscible and irascible passions, Gawain's experience of fear, which follows his love for life, is caused by his inability to avoid the confrontation with the Green Knight. His acceptance of the girdle and his anxiety en route to the chapel contrasts sharply with the image of the courageous pentangle Knight that is established at the beginning of the poem. Gawain's conversation with the guide reveals that he has been seriously considering whether to flee the challenge and risk his fame, or to continue and risk his life. It is only because he would be 'a knyzt koward' (2131) that Gawain decides to continue. While the promise of honour pushes him, the possibility of losing his life makes him unable to moderate his obvious fear.

Gawain's fear is first intensified by the guide's description of the Green Knight in which he affirms that the Green Knight can destroy the most powerful knight: 'He cheuez þat chaunce at þe chapel grene/ Per passes non bi þat place so proude in his armes/ Pat he ne dynggez hym to deþe with dynt of his honde' (2103-5). Despite his apparent fortitude, the poem describes how Gawain's fear is further aroused by the 'vgly' and horrid place, and the voice that rises from behind the rock. Almost sure that he will die, Gawain proclaims that if his life may spill, 'drede dotz me no lote' (2211). Yet, when he 'schrinke a lytel with þe schulderes for þe scharp yrne' (2267), it becomes clear that Gawain is totally overwhelmed with fear and anxiety. His love for life is now asserted, and as he 'hoped of no rescowe' (2308), his heart is already full of woe. The emotional intensity of this moment is not only expressed through Gawain's reaction, but also through the episode's tense shifting. While earlier actions are narrated with preterite, the poem introduces the blow by shifting to the historical present: 'He lyftes lyztly his lome and let hit doun fayre/ With þe barbe of þe bitte bi þe bare nek/ Þaȝ he homered heterly, hurt hym no more/ Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde, þat seuered þe hyde' (2309-12). This shift to the historical present is also used to introduce the first blow at the beginning

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<sup>70</sup> On Ockham's discussion of avoidance; see *Quodl.* III, q. 17, pp. 224-7; on how an act of love is followed by an act of flight and avoidance; see Ockham, 'Enjoying and Using', p. 376-7; for a detailed discussion of Ockham's classification of love as a positive concupiscible passions of the will and avoidance as a negative concupiscible passion; see Hirvonen, pp. 146-7.

of the poem ‘Gauan gripped to his ax, ad gederes hit on hyzt,/ Pe kay fot on þe folde he before sette,/ Let hit doun lyztly lyzt on þe naked’ (421-3).<sup>71</sup>

At this point of the poem, Gawain’s emotions are far from being directed towards universal concerns. Overwhelmed by his desire for life and his hope to flee death, Gawain’s emotions cannot be directed towards any abstract love, be it the love of God or the common good. Commenting on the individual desire for the advantageous, Ockham states that the individual, even if he/she has a clear vision of the divine essence, might reject the love of God if he/she perceives it as disadvantageous.<sup>72</sup> He also discusses the possibility that the individual might dismiss the general good if it does not satisfy what the particular good would satisfy.<sup>73</sup> Gawain’s dismissal of the virtue of being courageous can thus be explained by the fact that, at this moment, he is completely driven by his subjective desire towards survival. That Gawain’s passions are directed towards his safety is articulated in his diction. His language becomes expressive of the passions that control him, the possibilities he encounters and their consequences. His persistent desire for survival and fear of death are thus expressed in his impulsive language as he speaks to the Green Knight: ‘Gawayn ful gryndelly with greme þenne sayde:/ ‘Wy! þresch on, þou þro mon, þou þreteȝ to longe/ I hope þat þi hert arȝe wyth þyn awen seluen’ (2299-2301). The intensification of the nominalist voluntarist diction is most obvious after Gawain escapes the second stroke. His speech reveals a great desire for life and an intention to escape death by all means. The first person is now dominating in a way that reflects his self-consciousness and free will:

Blynne, burne, of þy bur, bede me no mo

I haf a stroke in þis sted withoute stryf hent

And if þow rechez me any mo, I redyly schal quyte

And zelde ȝederly aȝayn—and þerto ȝe tryst – and foo. (2322-6)

The lines above show that Gawain’s speech is far from courtly. His words are literal, not metaphorical, and they reflect a focus on his desire for survival and a detachment from universal abstract ideas. The poet’s description of Gawain as nervous just after escaping the Green Knight’s stroke reminds us of how gentle and courtly his words were when he first

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<sup>71</sup> See Richardson, p. 347.

<sup>72</sup> *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 146-7.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*



accepted the challenge: ‘To þe kyng he can enclyne/ I beseche now with saȝeȝ sene/ Þis melly mot be myne’ (340-2). Hence, while Gawain’s courtly speech and his sacrifice at the beginning of the poem reflects a commitment towards the common good, his impulsive language towards the end of the poem reveals a great desire for the self.

The sentiment that controls the beheading scene revolves exclusively around Gawain’s subjective emotional experience. Both Gawain’s emotions and diction suggest that he is trapped in his world of substantial particulars. Gawain’s inability to overcome his subjective emotional experience to reflect on the universal moral order to which he is supposed to stick can be better understood in the light of Ockham’s definition of universals as intellectual abstractions that remain outside the self and lack extra-mental reality. Ockham argues that the universal is ‘only a mental content or conventional sign, not a substance’.<sup>74</sup> Unlike particulars, universals are only concepts in the mind that lack substance and whose existence needs an act of the will and a council of intellect.<sup>75</sup> Given the fact that the existence of universals needs a council of intellect, in an immediate and urgent situation where the intellect is not working, the universal moral order becomes inaccessible to the individual.<sup>76</sup> This might explain why at the time of the blow Gawain is unable to divert his attention away from the axe: ‘Bot Gawayn on þat giserne glyfte hym bysyde,/ As hit com glydande adoun on glode hym to schende,/ And schranke a lytel with þe schulderes for þe scharp yrne’ (2265-7). In this critical situation, the possibility is lessened that Gawain’s intellect will guide him to do the right action and redirect his desire towards the common good. Yet it is significant to note that though a somatic response, the flinch comes as a result of a wilful commitment to the self and a love for life that was foreshadowed earlier by Gawain’s acceptance of the girdle. As discussed previously, Gawain’s retreat to subjective emotions has been suggested as early as when he departed from Camelot. Though the first part of the poem portrays Gawain as an exemplary Arthurian knight whose emotions are dictated by his chivalric identity, Gawain’s lofty personality and his commitment towards his community gradually vanish after he leaves Camelot.

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<sup>74</sup> *Philosophical Writings*, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p. 35.

### 3.2.3 Ockham's Absolute Notion of the Freedom of the Will and Gawain's Human Emotions

The poem's portrayal of Gawain's affections towards the self as an expression of the freedom of his will recalls Ockham's notion of the absolute freedom of the will and the passions of the will. Ockham argues that there is a sphere of individual affections towards self that are significantly related to the human being's metaphysical freedom. This type of affections are related to universal human rights that are independent from morality.<sup>77</sup> Given his belief that metaphysical freedom is essential to the definition of the person, Ockham argued for the independence of rights from morality and proposed that there are general rights associated with the person as a metaphysical person.<sup>78</sup> Prior to the emergence of nominalism, the individual's freedom was linked to the exercise of virtuous emotions. However, with his introduction of the metaphysical notion of freedom, Ockham suggested that individuals can direct their emotions towards their own good and still be perceived as free.<sup>79</sup> Believing that we love God only because he ordered us to do so, Ockham argued that a free will might not stick to God's orders.<sup>80</sup> Hence, away from the love and enjoyment of God, he validated other lesser types of love.<sup>81</sup> That is why after nominalism the focus of morality was no longer beatitude as much as human earthly concerns.<sup>82</sup> As Clark states: '[the] Ockhamist brand of freedom' constituted a radical change of moral laws and suggested an altered path to salvation.<sup>83</sup> With Ockham's

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<sup>77</sup> Arthur McGrade, 'Ockham and the Birth of Individual Rights', in *Authority and Power: Studies on Medieval Law and Government*, ed. by Brian Tierney, Peter Linehan and Walter Ullmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Ockham's rejection of the inherent finality introduced by Thomas Aquinas' and Scotus' philosophy is also discussed by Clark, pp. 143-7.

<sup>78</sup> Luca Parisoli, 'The Anthropology of Freedom and the Nature of Human Person', *Personalist Forum*, 15 (1999), 347-65 (p. 348).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361.

<sup>80</sup> Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics*, Vol. I: *From Socrates to the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 399.

<sup>81</sup> McGrade, 'Ockham on Enjoyment: Towards an Understanding of Fourteenth-Century Philosophy and Psychology', *Review of Metaphysics*, 33 (1981), 706-28 (pp. 716-7).

<sup>82</sup> John Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Sexual Ethics* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), pp. 15-16.

<sup>83</sup> Clark, p. 152.

introduction of the metaphysical notion of freedom resulted a new conception of the will and its passions, and an acceptance of the individual's right to experience emotions freely began to emerge.

Therefore, in its focus on Gawain's subjective experience of the world, *SGGK* suggests an Ockhamist nominalist universe where God is detached and human emotions prevail. Gawain's wilful actions, and his subsequent emotional experience, can be cast as an example of Ockham's notion of metaphysical freedom where individual emotions are not informed by moral values. According to this notion, individuals' emotions are mainly connected to their basic human needs such as the need to survive. The secular flavour that features Ockham's discourse of emotions can be also seen as a characteristic of the poem's discourse of emotions. Unlike in the *Stanzaic Guy*, emotions in *SGGK* are far from chivalric or spiritual. The impact of chivalry and religion as moral systems on Gawain's affections is reduced. The poem criticises the institution of chivalry indirectly and portrays King Arthur negatively. Arthur's acceptance of the challenge is presented as a reaction to his pride and wrath. The poem describes how when Gawain leaves everyone criticises the king for his lack of insight:

Warloker to haf wroȝt had more wyt bene,  
 And haf dyȝt ȝonder dere a duk to haue worped;  
 A lowande leder of ledez in londe hym wel semeȝ,  
 And so had better ben þen britned to noȝt,  
 Hadet wyth an aluisch mon, for angardeȝ pryde. (677-81)

In its presentation of the acceptance of the challenge, which might cost Gawain his life, as an impulsive individual decision that does not serve the common good, the poem both criticises the ethics of chivalry and excuses Gawain's failure to adhere to them.

Similarly, religion is not presented as having a strong impact on Gawain's emotions. The events of the poem suggest that Gawain is left on his own and little reference is made to divine providence. At the beginning of his journey, Gawain is presented as confident in God's providence:

Now rideȝ þis renk þurȝ þe ryalme of Logres,  
 Sir Gauan, on Godeȝ halue, þaȝ hym no gomen þoȝt.

Oft leudlez alone he lenge3 on ny3tez  
 Per he fonde nozt hym byfore þe fare þat he lyked.  
 Hade he no fere bot his fole bi frythe3 and dounez,  
 Ne no gome bot God bi gate wyth to Karp,  
 Til þat he nezed ful neghe into þe Norþe Wale3. (691-7)

The passage's suggestion that despite his awareness of the danger of the challenge, Gawain feels safe as he is in the company of God, implies a total confidence that God will save him. However, as the story progresses, we notice a shift in Gawain's attitude towards the divine. J. J. Anderson argues that the Christian faith is only a custom and part of the fabric of Gawain's life as a knight. He, for example, discusses how before reaching the castle Gawain prays for God to grant him lodging to be able to do the service, and how when he enters the castle Gawain does not seem interested in the service as much as in his host's wife.<sup>84</sup> In fact, the nature of Gawain's affections towards God is gradually exposed as the day of the trial draws near. Hence, the closer Gawain is to the Green Chapel, the less he becomes confident in God's providence. For example, on the day in which Gawain leaves for the Green Chapel, he does not go to Mass as usual. While he has been going to Mass for the last three days, on that day he spends the morning preparing himself for the journey. Despite his great anxiety, Gawain does not pray to God to give him comfort. Rather, he seems more concerned about not forgetting the girdle: '3et laft he not þe lace, þe ladiez gifte;/ þat forgat not Gawayn, for gode of hymself' (2030-1). On his way to the Green Chapel, and despite mentioning God, Gawain does not pray to Him as a protector or a saviour.<sup>85</sup> Almost certain of his death and that God will not save him, he only invokes God, the powerful, to stress his surrender to Him: 'I wyl nauþer grete ne grone;/ To Goddez wylle I am ful bayn,/ And to hym I haf me tone' (2157-9).

Though Gawain expresses his belief in God's power, his great anxiety en route to the chapel suggests his doubt that God will save him. The detachment of God is further suggested

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<sup>84</sup> J. J. Anderson, *Language and Imagination in the Gawain-Poems* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 189-90.

<sup>85</sup> Michael Gillespie, in *Nihilism before Nietzsche* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), argues that for the nominalists of the fourteenth century 'God the creator and destroyer became preeminent, and the redeemer and God of love faded into the background' (p. 24).

by the guide's words on the day of the trial. Addressing Gawain, the guide states that even a monk or a priest cannot be saved in front of the Green Knight:

For he is a mon methles, and mercy non vses

For be hit chorle oþer chaplayn þat bi þe chapel rydes,

Monk oþer masseprest, oþer any mon elles,

Hym þynk as queme hym to quelle as quyk go hymselfen. (2106-9)

Even though Gawain tries to comfort himself by showing an acceptance of whatever destiny might bring him, the guide insists that Gawain must do something to save his life and not to depend on any other power, otherwise he will be the cause of his own doom. The guide thus advises Gawain to act practically and to change his path if he wants to save his life: 'Forþy, goude Sir Gawayn, let þe come one,/ And gotȝ away sum oþer gate' (2118-19). The guide's reaction to Gawain's resolution to proceed to the Green Chapel betrays a disbelief in any possibility of divine protection. Accordingly, he does not view Gawain's decision to proceed as an indication of his strong belief in God's providence. Rather, the guide views this as a reckless act that will cost Gawain his life: 'Mary! Quoþ þat oþer mon, 'now þou so much spelleȝ/ Þat þou wylt þyn awen nye nyme to þyseluen/ And þe lyst lese þy lyf, þe lette I ne kepe' (2140-42). In its focus on this conversation between Gawain and the guide, the poem suggests a world where secular ethics dominate and religious beliefs are weakened. This portrayal of the relationship between man and God seems to be informed by the late fourteenth-century Ockhamist perception of the divine discussed at the beginning of this section. Gawain's God seems similar to 'Ockham's God' who 'is all-powerful and all-free, but he is far removed from the all-lovable God to whom Christians raise their humble prayers'.<sup>86</sup>

The absence of a genuine religious sentiment is also reflected in the nature of Gawain's confessions. Gawain's confessions, both before and after he goes to the Green Chapel, reveal that his affections are far from spiritual. For example, in his confession on the day he accepts the girdle, Gawain does not mention anything about it. Yet, though nothing is mentioned about the girdle, the poet states that Gawain has confessed everything. The poet emphasises that since Gawain confessed the largest sin and the least, he is left clean and ready for judgment:

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<sup>86</sup> Peter Kwasniewski, 'William of Ockham and the Metaphysical Roots of Natural Law', *The Aquinas Review*, 11 (2004), 1-84 (p. 70).

Pere he schrof hym schyrly and schewed his mysdedez,

Of þe more and þe mynne, and merci besechez,

And of absolucioun he on þe segge calles;

And he asoyled hym surely and sette hym so clene

As domezday schulde haf ben diȝt on þe morn. (1880-4)

Additionally, Gawain's attitude after his confession does not indicate any genuine passions towards God, exemplified by the fact that he seeks the company of the ladies directly after the confession: 'And syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,/ With comlych caroles and alle kynnes ioie,/ As neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe derk nyȝt, with blys. (1885-8)

Gawain's care in hiding the girdle carefully before he goes to confession, the fact that he does not mention it in his confession and the relief he feels after the confession all suggest that he does not view his reliance on the protective qualities of the girdle, instead of God, as a sin that he needs to confess. Additionally, the poet's observation that Gawain left 'clean' (1883), despite his intention to use the girdle, implies tolerance towards the hero's love for self: Gawain's desire for survival is thus treated as an expression of his free will and as a legitimate human right.

The poem never depicts Gawain as experiencing any feelings of guilt due to accepting the girdle and believing in its magical qualities instead of acting as a believer who depends solely on divine providence. *SGGK* describes how, since he was born, Gawain has never been as happy as when he has escaped the stroke alive: 'Neuer syn þat he watz burne borne of his moder,/ Watz he neuer in þis worlde wyȝe half so blyþe' (2320-1). That Gawain shows remorse only after realising the identity of the Green Knight, now revealed to be Sir Bertilak, suggests that his remorse is not caused by his love for God, but rather by his feeling of shame.<sup>87</sup> The

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<sup>87</sup> Ancient and medieval moral philosophers held varied views regarding the origin of the feeling of shame. While ancient Greek and Roman philosophers like Aristotle and Cicero treated it as an audience-oriented feeling, medieval Christian philosophers like Augustine and Aquinas believed that shame is an internalised feeling induced by self-judgment. This, in fact, explains why the idea of social discredit is dominant in Aristotle's and Cicero's discussions of shame. In Augustine's and Aquinas' discussions of shame, on the other hand, the idea of internal virtue and human consciousness is more prominent. It is, thus, important to note that the nominalist discourse of shame shares with the ancient discourse the focus on shame as an audience-oriented feeling. What distinguishes the nominalist account further is

absence of the religious sentiment is also emphasised through the description of the chapel as a chapel of doom: ‘Þis is a chapel of meschaunce, þat chekke hit bytyde! Hit is þe corsesdest kyrk þat euer I com inne!’ (2195-6). While the chapel is usually presented as the place where heroes abandon adventure to be united with God, the Green Chapel in *SGGK* is the place where Gawain’s great fear of death is uncovered and where his worldliness and extreme love for life are announced. Gawain’s confession in the Green Chapel to a lay man suggests that he is more concerned with being forgiven by Sir Bertilak and his society, than by God. That is why his feelings of shame are presented as more persistent than the feelings of guilt. In fact, the poem’s attitude towards the nature of Gawain’s fault is reflected in the opinion of Sir Bertilak. The Green Knight acknowledges Gawain’s instinctive love for life and explains that despite this, true men should pay their debt without fear: ‘Bot here yow lakked a lyttel, sir, and lewté yow wonted;/ Bot þat wat3 for no wylyde werke, ne wowing nauper,/ Bot for 3e lufed your lyf; þe lasse I yow blame’ (2366-8). Hence, the overall sentiment of the poem suggests that Gawain’s major fault is related to violating the chivalric ethics of masculinity, rather than the religious ethics of Christianity. The analysis demonstrates that the emotions which have been moving Gawain throughout his journey align with Ockham’s definition of the affections towards the self. The next section will discuss how Gawain’s affections for self are amplified by his sensory experience of the natural world.

### 3.2.4 Gawain’s Love for Self /Fear of Death as an Affective Sensory Experience

The poem’s portrayal of Gawain as so completely vulnerable to his fear that he succumbs to his desire for self-preservation and ignores the guidance of reason suggests the role of the senses, rather than the intellect, in intensifying his desire for life. The relationship between Gawain’s emotions and the sensory is suggested very early in the poem through the emphasis

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the fact that emotions are discussed within the context of metaphysical human rights where the social scrutiny that triggers emotions such as shame is treated as a constraint on human freedom. For a discussion of the ancient and medieval moral philosophers’ views of shame; see Simo Knuuttila, ‘The Emotion of Shame in Medieval Philosophy’, *Spazio Filosofico*, 5 (2012), 243-249 (pp. 245-7). For a discussion of the nominalists’ association between the passions and the freedom of the will; see chapter four on Ockham’s account of the passions of the will in Hirvonen, *Passions in William of Ockham’s philosophical Psychology*.

placed on colour. The colour green is presented as an important element in the events which lead to the first rising action in the poem. At the beginning of the poem, the poet stresses the fact that Gawain is not encountering an ordinary knight, but a 'green' knight. It describes how the colour of the knight has stimulating impact on all the people present who, after hearing the voice of the Green Knight, are depicted as being startled by his 'oueral enker-grene':

There wat3 lokyng on lenþe, þe lude to *behold*,  
 For vch mon had meruayle quat hit mene myȝt  
 Pat a hapel and a horse myȝt such a hwe lach  
 As growe grene as þe gres and grener hit *semed*,  
 Pen grene aumayl on golde glowande *bryȝter*.<sup>88</sup> (232-6)

It also links the court's sensory perception of the Green Knight to their feelings of vulnerability and fear: 'Þerfore to answer wat3 arȝe mony apel freke,/ And al stouned at his steuen and stonstil seten/ In a swoghe sylence þurȝ þe sale riche' (241-3). That the court's caution, curiosity and fear precede the Green Knight's offer of the challenge suggest that these emotional reactions are caused merely by their sensory perception of the 'hugeness' and 'greenness' of the Green Knight. This section will analyse the role of the senses in triggering Gawain's emotions in the context of Ockham's theory of sensory cognition.

*SGGK*'s portrayal of the sensory as a phenomenon which stimulates emotions recalls the contemporary understanding of the passions of the will as acts that are triggered by sensory passions. Zdzislaw Kuksewicz explains that the interest in sensory cognition, especially through sight, was a topic of discussion during the fourteenth century. He argues 'human cognition interested philosophers and theologians much more than the nature of the soul and its faculties'.<sup>89</sup> Ockham argues that sensory cognition, which he refers to as intuitive cognition,

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<sup>88</sup> The emphasis is mine.

<sup>89</sup> Zdzislaw Kuksewicz, 'Criticisms of Aristotelian Psychology and the Augustinian-Aristotelian Synthesis' in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy from the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100-1600*, ed. by Norman Kretzmann et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 623-8 (p. 628).



is a major cause of sensory emotions and the passions of the will.<sup>90</sup> He explains that sensory passions (such as an immediate feeling of fear) can be the cause of the passions of the will. Moreover, Ockham believes that sensory desire cannot be suppressed but remains, even if the agent exercises volition. Unlike Aquinas, he did not believe that sensory cognition can be modified by rational control and he rejected Aquinas' view that reason can alter emotions.<sup>91</sup> This belief in the power of sensory desire is related to Ockham's opinion that sensory cognition is not necessarily followed by or transformed into an intellectual activity. The Ockhamist account of affective phenomena foregrounds the significance of sensation as a trigger for emotions.<sup>92</sup> Ockham emphasises that it is the sensory cognition of an object, not intellectual cognition that immediately causes passions such as pleasure and desire.<sup>93</sup> Hence, seeing the object, rather than thinking about its appearance is what triggers passions. To highlight the role of visual perception in causing sensory emotions, which are the direct cause of the passions of the will, Ockham gives the example of how the presence of a wolf does not cause fear, but perceiving and seeing it is what triggers the emotions of fear.<sup>94</sup> Commenting on how knowledge is dependent on experiential sensory cognition, Ockham states: 'if no-one told me that the wall is white, I should still know that the wall is white, just by seeing whiteness on the wall'.<sup>95</sup> This explains why the visual experience forms the basis of Ockham's epistemology where the eye is treated as the primary sense organ through which the individual can develop awareness of his environment, and, consequently, his emotions.<sup>96</sup> Hence, since intuitive cognition is the basis of the individual's assent to judgment, an act of loving or willing can be triggered by an object

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<sup>90</sup> Ockham deals with the impact of sensory passions on acts of the will in his *Quodl.* II, q. 13, pp. 141-8; for a detailed discussion of Ockham's views; see Hirvonen, pp. 132-7.

<sup>91</sup> This explains Ockham's belief in the great impact of sensory cognition on the passions of the will. On this; see Perler, p. 72.

<sup>92</sup> See Hirvonen, chapters 3, 4. In his discussion of epistemological problems, Ockham affirms that 'no act of the sensitive part of the soul is either partially or totally the immediate and proximate cause of the intellect's own act of judgement, *Philosophical Writings*, p. 19.

<sup>93</sup> On this; see Hirvonen, pp. 132-7

<sup>94</sup> For a discussion of this example; see Perler, pp. 70-1.

<sup>95</sup> *Philosophical Writings*, p. 5; also Courtenay argues that 'knowing for Ockham is primarily seeing' (p. 57).

<sup>96</sup> Courtenay, p. 57.

that causes pleasure in the sensory appetite, and an act of hatred or willing against can be triggered by an object that causes pain or fear in the sensory appetite.<sup>97</sup>

This section suggests that by focusing on sensory phenomena and highlighting the importance of perception, the Gawain-poet reflects an awareness of the position given to sensory cognition by the philosophers of his time. The poem's emphasis on the different applications of sight and their impact on Gawain's emotions can be seen as a response to the nominalist contemporary belief in the role of vision in triggering the passions of the will. *SGGK*'s interest in visual perception is expressed through the use of words that signify a sensory content. For example, in the five lines which depict the people's first sight of the Green Knight there are different words that convey a sensory content. The first two lines describe how no mortal 'yze' (198) had never 'sene' (197) such a sight. The following line also focuses on the eye contact between the knight and the people and how his glance looked as 'layt so lyzt' (199) that everyone feels scared. The impact of eye contact on intensifying fear is re-stressed in line 304 where the Green Knight's 'rede yzen he reled aboute' is described as a direct cause of the people's feelings of anxiety. The powerful sensory impact of the sight of the Green Knight is also expressed through the alliterative verse. The repetition of the /s/ sound in line 197 creates a vigorous alliteration that echoes the sensory impact of the sight of the Green knight on the people of the court: 'Watz neuer *sene* in þat *sale* wyth *syzt* er þat tyme'.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, the repetition of the /l/ sound in line 199 creates a rhythm that mimics the sensory impact of the Green Knight's glance which flashed like fire: 'He *loked* as *layt* so *lyzt*'.<sup>99</sup> In fact, this initial focus on the impact of the Green Knight's appearance on stimulating the court's emotions foreshadows the effect of the sensory on Gawain's emotions in his upcoming experience in the Green Chapel.

Throughout the poem, sensory signifiers are presented as a major cause of Gawain's emotions. The different manifestations of visuality that Gawain encounters help him develop

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<sup>97</sup> On willing against pain and fear; see Ockham, 'Using and Enjoying', pp. 362, 374. For a detailed analysis of Ockham's views; see Perler, pp. 68-75. On Ockham's discussion of intuitive and sensory cognition as the basis of judgment; see *Quodl.* IV, q. 6, pp. 267-71.

<sup>98</sup> The emphasis is mine.

<sup>99</sup> The emphasis is mine.

an awareness of his real desire.<sup>100</sup> The role of vision in intensifying Gawain's fear is suggested by Gawain himself en route to the Green Chapel: "Now iwysse," quoth Wowayn, "wysty is here; / Bis oritore is vgly, with erbez ouergrowen; / Wel bisemeȝ þe wyȝe wruxled in grene/ Dele here his deuocioun on þe deueleȝ wyse' (2189-92). Gawain's visual perception of the road to the Green Chapel, in addition to the guide's description of the Green Knight, have the effect of stimulating his emotions. The poem thus describes Gawain's feeling of approaching death: 'Now I fele hit is þe fende, in my fyue wytteȝ/ Þat hatȝ stoken me þis steuen to strye me here' (2193-4). It then shows how Gawain's anxiety becomes clear as he sees the chapel that is covered with grass and weed: 'þe corsesdest kyrk þat euer I com inne!' (2196). Gawain's fear now stems from his knowledge that the chapel is not a safe place, a knowledge that he acquires through his sensory cognition. Hence, Gawain's absolute expression of fear, his recoiling after he glances at the blade, can be seen as an emotional response to his sensory experience en route to the Green Chapel.

The fear that causes Gawain to pull back as he glances at the blade has been aroused earlier by the sound of the blade being sharpened. The presentation of the audible as a stimulator of senses is recurrent in the poem. For example, voice is first presented as a sensual stimulator of animals:

Sone þay calle of a quest in a ker syde;  
 Pe hunt rehayted þe houndez þat hit first mynged,  
 Wylde wordez hym warp wyth a wrast noyce.  
 Pe howndez þat hit herde hastid þider swyþe,  
 And fallen as fast to þe fuyt, fourty at ones.  
 Penne such a glauer ande glam of gedered rachchez  
 Ros þat þe rochereȝ rungen aboute;  
 Hunterez hem hardened with horne and wyth muthe.

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<sup>100</sup> The impact of sensory experience on the individual's awareness is stressed frequently in Ockham's philosophical writing where he states that 'the knowledge of sensible facts that is obtained from experience...begins with the senses, i.e. from a sense-intuition of these sensible facts', *Philosophical Writings*, p. 24.

Pen al in a semblé sweyed togeder,

Bitwene a flosche in þat fryth and a foo cragge. (1421-30)

The description of the din which ‘þe rochereȝ rungen aboute’ (1427) is similar to the description of the sensory alarming impact of the echo of the sound which Gawain hears in the Green Chapel. What first excites Gawain’s senses while in the chapel is a sinister voice: ‘Þene herde he of þat hyȝe hil, in a harde roche/ Biȝonde þe broke, in a bonk, a wonder breme noyse (2199-200). The detailed description of the voice arouses feelings of woe:

Quat! Hit clatered in þe clyff as hit cleue schulde,

As one vpon a *gryndelston* hade *grounden* a syȝe.

What! hit wharred and Whette as water at a mulne;

What! hit *rusched* and *ronge*, *rawþe* to here.<sup>101</sup> (2201-4)

The emotional intensity of this episode is also expressed through the poetic mode. The impact of the sight of the blade and the sound of it being sharpened on arousing Gawain’s fear is expressed through the lines’ powerful alliteration. The repetition of the /g/ and /r/ sounds produces a heavy alliterative verse and a fearful tone which echoes Gawain’s overwhelming fear and anxiety. These lines are followed by the voice of the Green Knight reminding Gawain that he is going to pay last year’s blow back: “‘Abyde,” quop on on þe bonke abouen ouer his hede,/ “And þou schal haf al in hast þat I þe hyȝt ones.”/ Ȝet he rushed on þat rurde rapely a þrowe,/ And wyth quettyng awharf, er he wolde lyȝt’ (2217-20). The poem then shows how the Green Knight’s perturbing appearance matches his alarming voice:

And syȝen he keuereȝ bi a cragge and comeȝ of a hole,

Whyrlande out of a wro wyth a felle weppen,

Adeneȝ ax new dyȝt, þe dynt with to ȝelde,

With a borelych bytte bende by þe halme,

Fyled in a fylor, fowre fote large—

Hit watȝ no lasse, bi þat lace lemed ful bryȝt. (2221-6).

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<sup>101</sup> The emphasis is mine.

In focusing on the visual and audible elements of Gawain's experience in the Green Chapel, the poem highlights the role of the senses in intensifying Gawain's feeling of fear at the time of the blow and causing his subsequent bodily reaction. Such an analysis suggests that Gawain's experience of his actual world and its various visual and audible elements has had an impact on the direction of his passions. Gawain's great fear of death and love for life are not fully expressed until after he suffers in the wilderness, experiences the temptation of pleasure and survival in the castle, and undergoes the dreadful experience of approaching death in the Green Chapel. The following section will thus discuss the impact of the physical on amplifying Gawain's love for life and fear of death.

### 3.2.5 Gawain's Affective Response to His Physical World: Corporeality and Eroticism

The stimulation of Gawain's emotions through the sensory is dependent on his responsiveness to the physical elements of his surroundings. Through presenting the physical elements of the material world as mediums of perception, the poem suggests the importance of physical reality to Gawain's experience. The interest in the physical was a characteristic of the poetic and philosophical discourses of the late fourteenth century. With the revival of Aristotle's works, there appeared many treatises that addressed the topic of physics.<sup>102</sup> In poetry, the concern with physics resulted in the appearance of works that explored the kind of pagan themes discussed in classical literature – which was characterised by its preoccupation with the natural visible world.<sup>103</sup> Though the interest in the physical material world is not particular to *SGGK*, the poem's peculiar attitude towards the physical is worthy of being investigated. *SGGK* is one of the earliest texts that represents the physical world as a natural experiential space rather than a medium to the divine. George Hoffmann explains:

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<sup>102</sup> Robert Stuart Hoyt, *Europe in the Middle Ages* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1996), p. 330.

<sup>103</sup> See Kellie Roberston, *Nature Speaks: Medieval Literature and Aristotelian Philosophy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), pp. 191-3. Examples of works that reflected an interest in physics include Jean de Meun's employment of dream vision in his continuation of the *Roman de la Rose*; the workings of physics in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*, *Physician's Tale* and *Parliament of Fowls*; and the interest in physics and astronomy in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*.

Medieval discussion at times seems to anticipate the seventeenth-century move to establish a world whose natural processes stand free of divine determination and God's fantastical interventions.<sup>104</sup>

Significantly, Hoffman argues that this attitude towards the natural world was first evinced by Ockham's 'modern' apprehension of contingency.<sup>105</sup> This section of the chapter argues that while the physical in earlier romances is presented as a medium for the hero's moral transcendence, in *SGGK* it is presented as an experiential space where Gawain's human basic needs are manifested.

The poem's interest in the physical as an impact on Gawain's emotions is expressed through its focus on corporeality. The corporeal in *SGGK* is mostly encountered in the castle; mainly in the scenes of sexual temptation inside the castle and the episodes that describe the physicality of the animals during the hunt. While the physical pleasure that Lady Bertilak offers intensifies Gawain's passion for life and hope for survival, the physical suffering of animals intensifies his feelings of fear and vulnerability.<sup>106</sup> The physical eroticism inside the castle is thus juxtaposed with the materiality of the hunt outside the castle, and both situations are controlled by corporeality rather than spirituality. Accordingly, images of fear and security, death and life are repeatedly contrasted.

Gawain's experience of danger and security during his stay at the castle is presented as triggered by sensory factors whose medium is the physical.<sup>107</sup> The images of killing that feature in the hunt scenes act as a reminder of the danger awaiting him. The poem's detailed description of the animals which try to escape death suggests that the whole narrative is governed by a sentiment of fleeing from death. The description of the dismemberment of the animals is

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<sup>104</sup> George Hoffmann, 'Monsters and Modal Logic among French Naturalists of the Renaissance', *South Central Review*, 10 (1993), 32-48 (p. 39).

<sup>105</sup> Hoffman, p. 39.

<sup>106</sup> See William Woods, 'Nature and the Inner Man in "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"', *The Chaucer Review*, 36 (2002), 209-27. Woods observes that Gawain can see things in the same way animals see them. Though he does not refer to medieval theories of sensory emotions, and how animals and humans can have similar responses, he suggests that Gawain can behave like the fox (p. 226).

<sup>107</sup> Ockham argues that the body and its organs can be a cause of sensory passions; see Hirvonen, p. 76. In *Quodl.* II, q. 16, Ockham discusses how passions of concupiscence can be weakened by fasting, pp. 153-6.

elaborate and the poem depicts them before, during and after their death. It first focuses on how they try to flee death: ‘At þe fyrst quethe of þe quest quaked þe wylde;/ Der drof in þe dale, doted for drede,/ Hized to þe hyze, bot heterly þay were/ Restayed with þe stablye, þat stoutly ascryed’ (1150-3). The poem then describes how the animals are opened:

Syþen þay slyt þe slot, sesed þe erber,  
 Schaued wyth a scharp knyf, and þe schyre knitten.  
 Syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes and rent of þe hyde,  
 Pen brek þay þe balé, þe bowelez out token  
 Lystily for laucyng þe lere of þe knot.  
 Pay gryped to þe gargulun, and grayþely departed  
 Pe wesaunt fro þe wynt-hole, and walt out þe guttez. (1330-6)

Inside the castle the physical is primarily stressed through the three erotic encounters between Gawain and Lady Bertilak where the sensual space of the room, whose door is ‘drawen and dit with a derf haspe’ (1233), triggers passions. The setting of the room and the appearance of Lady Bertilak are both presented as stimulating the senses and suspending reason.<sup>108</sup> We notice that the woman is described in terms of sensory images: ‘Wyth chynne and cheke ful swete,/ Boþe quit and red in blande’ (1204-5). The sentiment that controls the three encounters revolves around the woman’s erotic body and how she concludes each meeting with bodily physical contact; a single kiss on the first day, two kisses on the second and three kisses on the third. In its description of the three visits, the poem draws particular attention to how Lady Bertilak approaches Gawain, takes him in her arms, bends down and kisses him. Although Gawain does not seem to respond positively to Lady Bertilak’s bodily gestures, his emotions are heightened and he becomes more passionate, lively and attached to life.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> On Ockham’s discussion of how sexual pleasure can be excessive and vehement that it impedes the use of reason, and how the corporeal qualities become stronger than intellectual qualities in the case of fornication; see Hirvonen, p. 98.

<sup>109</sup> Ockham deals with the causation of pleasure and pain in the sensory appetite in q. 17 of his third *Quodl.*, pp. 224-7. He argues that the pleasure and pain of the sensory appetite are caused by sensory cognitions.

The poem shows how the arrival of Lady Bertilak changes Gawain's mood. Lady Bertilak enters the rooms while Gawain is anxiously dreaming about his meeting with the Green Knight:

Ho comeȝ withinne þe chambre dore, and closes hit hir after,  
 Wayueȝ vp a wyndow, and on þe wyȝe calleȝ,  
 ...  
 In drez droupyng of dreme draueled þat noble,  
 As mon þat watȝ in mornyng of mony þro þoȝtes,  
 How þat destiné schulde þat day dele hym his wyrde  
 At þe grene chapel, when he þe gome metes,  
 And bihoues his buffet abide withoute debate more. (1742-54)

Once Gawain sees her, he comes into his senses and becomes joyful:

Þe lady luflych com, lazande swete,  
 Felle ouer his fayre face and fetly hym kyssed;  
 He welcumeȝ hir worpily with a wale chere.  
 He seȝ hir so glorious and gayly atyred,  
 So fautles of hir fetures and of so fyne hewes,  
 Wiȝt wallande joye warmed his hert. (1757-62)

The lively impact of the erotic lady on Gawain and the general mood of the poem is expressed through the shift to the historical present. The kisses that Gawain receives are introduced in the present tense:

Ho comes nerre with þat, and cacheȝ hym in armeȝ,  
 Louteȝ luflych adoun and þe leude kysseȝ.  
 Pay comly bykennen to Kryst ayȝer oȝer;  
 Ho dos hir forth at þe dore withouten dyn more,



And he ryches hym to ryse and rapes hym sone,  
 Clepes to his chamberlayn, choses his wede,  
 Boȝeȝ forth, quen he watȝ boun, blyȝely to masse. (1305-11)

Using the historical present to describe this erotic physical contact highlights the emotional intensity of the meeting and foreshadows its impact on future events.

The poem suggests a link between sexual desire and the desire for survival by introducing the girdle through the seductive woman and in an erotically charged situation. In its description of how the girdle, which is supposed to save Gawain, is wrapped around the lady's waist, the poem implies that physical eroticism, represented by Lady Bertilak, is related to survival as a basic human need:

Ho laȝt a lace lyȝtly þat leke vmbe hir sydeȝ,  
 Knit vpon hir kyrtel vnder þe clere mantyle,  
 Gered hit watȝ with grene sylke and with golde schaped,  
 Noȝt bot arounde brayden, beten with fynȝreȝ;  
 And þat ho bede to þe burne, and blyȝely bisoȝt,  
 Þaȝ hit vnworþi were, þat he hit take wolde. (1830-5)

In this way, the poem presents a form of survival and a set of emotions linked to it which are both tied to the physical. That Gawain's anxiety regarding his meeting with the Green Knight is expressed exactly before the visit of the lady suggests the impact of temptation on his desire for survival. Though the sexual activity is limited to the three kisses, the woman performs her role of satisfying Gawain's desires through offering him the girdle. The poem suggests that Gawain's desire for survival is stronger than his sexual desire by focusing on his refusal of Lady Bertilak's advances. It shows that Gawain refuses the Lady's advances not because he is unmoved by her physical beauty, which is the feature that is frequently stressed, but because he is worried about his own life: 'Þaȝ ho were burde bryȝtest þe burne in mynde hade,/ Þe lasse luf in his lode for lur þat he soȝt/ boutte hone,/ Þe dunte þat schulde hym deue,/ And nedeȝ hit most be done' (1283-7). The poem's association between the two types of desire, sexual desire and the desire for survival, suggests that the only kind of emotions Gawain experiences at this stage belong to the affections for the self.

The relationship between physicality and emotions continues to be stressed throughout the poem. Commenting on Gawain's intention to wear the girdle before heading to the Green Chapel, the poet states that Gawain has decided to wear the girdle not because he admires its richness, but, rather, because he is aware of his physical vulnerability and his need for protection:

Bot wered not þis ilk wyȝe for wele þis gordel,

For pryde of þe pendaunteȝ, þaȝ polyst þay were,

And þaȝ þe glyterande golde glent vpon endeȝ,

Bot for to sauē hymself, when suffer hym byhoued

To byde bale withoute debate of bronde hym to were oþer knyffe. (2037-42)

Later, on the day of the trial, Gawain's emotions become informed by his physical vulnerability in front of the Green Knight. At the moment of the blow, Gawain's emotions are presented as an affective response to the appearance of the blade, his bare neck and the stone in front of him: 'Bot Gawayn on þat giserne glyfte hym bysyde,/ As hit com glydande adoun on glode hym to schende,/ And schranke a lytel with þe schulderes for þe scharpe yrne' (2265-7). In his reply to the Green Knight's accusation of cowardice, Gawain expresses how his concern is related to the possibility that his head will fall on the stone: 'I schunt oneȝ,/ And so wyl I no more;/ Bot þaȝ my hede falle on þe stoneȝ,/ I con not hit restore' (2280-3). The poem's preoccupation with the physical is reflected in its description of Gawain's naked neck before and after the first blow, and how the blade penetrates the flesh:

Þaȝ he homered heterly, hurt hym no more

Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde, þat seuered þe hyde.

Þe scharpe schrank to þe flesche þurȝ þe grece,

Pat þe schene blod ouer his schulderes schot to þe erþe. (2311-14)

Such a graphic description is reminiscent of the scene of the dismemberment of the animals. The scene contrasts the redness of the blood to both the brightness of the snow and the whiteness of Gawain's bare neck in a way that stimulates the senses and intensifies the emotions. Gawain's experience, which suggests a relation between emotions and physicality, is akin to the nominalist understanding of the experience of Christ. The focus on physical

suffering as a manifestation of humanity was first initiated by the nominalist Christology which viewed the Christ's experience of Crucifixion as an emotional and physical experience. The nominalist description of the drops of the blood as manifestations of Christ's humanity is similar to the poem's representation of Gawain's blood as an indication of his physical vulnerability.<sup>110</sup> This link between redness, as a physical manifestation of blood, and emotions is also suggested in the line which describes Gawain's embodied reaction to the Green Knight's revelation of his true identity. The poem describes how when the Green Knight confronts Gawain with his knowledge of the girdle '[a]ll þe *blode* of his *brest blende* in his face' (2371).<sup>111</sup> The line uses a sensory image and strong alliteration to describe how the blood of Gawain's breast blends in his face. The repetition of the /b/sound at the beginning of the words 'blode', 'brest', and 'blende' creates a quick rhythm that echoes Gawain's emotional reaction.<sup>112</sup>

Gawain's reaction when he sees the blood after the blow is a bold declaration that his destiny is linked to his body:

And quen þe burne sez þe blode blenk on þe snawe,

He sprit forth spenne-fote more þen a spere lenþe,

Hent heterly his helme and on his hed cast,

...

Braydez out a bryzt sworde, and bremely he spekez

Neuer syn þat he watz burne borne of his moder,

Watz he neuer in þis worlde wyze half so blyþe— (2315-21)

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<sup>110</sup> For a discussion of Ockham's account of the emotions of Christ based on the reading of his *Quaestiones Varias*, q. 9, art. 6; see Perler, p. 73; also John Fisher 'The New Humanism and Geoffrey Chaucer', *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 80 (1997), 23-39 (p. 28).

<sup>111</sup> The emphasis is mine.

<sup>112</sup> On this and how alliteration is a stylistic feature that distinguishes *SGGK* from other early fifteenth-century poems; see Alicia Espinosa, 'Translating Troubles: Alliterative Verse in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Journal of the CAS Writing Program*, 7 (2014), 54-63.

The above discussion of the relationship between Gawain's passions and the different elements of his physical world shows that Gawain's judgment and the direction of his desire are dependent on his sensory experience of the physical world. The following section will analyse how Gawain's experience of the natural world, rather than his interaction with the supernatural, is what intensifies his affections for self and his desire for survival.

### 3.2.6 Gawain's Affections for Self and Ockham's Nominalist Naturalism

The poem's earthly realm, which creates a relationship between Gawain's external senses, his perception of the physical world and his emotions, suggests the importance of the natural to Gawain's experience. Instead of emphasising the importance of the divine, *SGGK* asserts the worth of human value and physical natural reality. Minnis argues that by the fourteenth century, when nominalism was at its height, 'poetry whether sacred or profane' was not approached devotionally, but rather 'generically'.<sup>113</sup> Hence, I suggest that the poem's diversion from the religious collective sentiment can be seen as a response to the requirements of the romance genre in the late fourteenth century when the focus on the individual's subjective emotional experience became more pressing than the adherence to religious standards.<sup>114</sup> The poem's interest in the different elements of nature (including plants, weather and animals) suggests that the poet could have been influenced by the traditions of natural philosophy that were dominant in his time and shared by many of his contemporaries.<sup>115</sup> Hence, analysing Gawain's emotional experience in the context of Ockham's naturalism can help us achieve a better understanding of the poem's discourse of emotions.

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<sup>113</sup> Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), pp. 141-2.

<sup>114</sup> On how the focus on the individual became more pressing towards the late fourteenth century; see Minnis, pp. 141-2.

<sup>115</sup> The scholarship on the impact of natural philosophy on poetry is mostly focused on Chaucer's writing, and nothing has been said about the influence of naturalism on the representation of emotions in *SGGK*. This focus on Chaucer can be attributed to the fact that he wrote separate treatises on astrology such as his *Treatise on the Astrolabe*.

*SGGK*'s preoccupation with the natural is first expressed in its focus on greenness as the colour of nature. Gawain's challenge is against a green knight and the chapel he looks for is distinguished for its green colour. Even the girdle that is supposed to save his life is made 'with grene sylke' (1832). The poem shows how Gawain's desire for life is triggered and intensified as a response to meeting the 'Green' Knight, accepting the green girdle and visiting the 'Green' Chapel. The dominance of the colour green suggests that Gawain's quest revolves around his ability to interact with nature as the experiential space in which his personality and emotions will be displayed.

The impact of nature on arousing Gawain's emotions is initially suggested through linking his emotions to the changing of the seasons. The poem shows how Gawain's feelings of fear develop as a response to weather conditions. While summer gives him the opportunity to reflect on his decision, the approaching winter causes his anxiety. Just after the Green Knight's departure from Camelot, the poet describes how the change of weather will bring with it a change in emotions, and what now begins as happy might end as sad:

Gawan wat3 glad to begynne pose gomnez in halle,  
 Bot þa3 þe ende be heuy haf 3e no wonder;  
 For þa3 men ben mery in mynde quen þay han mayn drynk,  
 A 3ere 3ernes ful 3erne, and zeldez neuer lyke,  
 Þe forme to þe fynisment foldez ful selden.  
 Forþi þis 3ol ouerzede, and þe 3ere after,  
 And vche sesoun serlepes sued after oþer. (495-501)

The poem recounts how with the coming of spring, cold shrinks down into the earth and flowers appear. It then describes how the leaves which have grown in summer will mature by the coming of autumn. The coming of autumn is thus presented as a warning that winter is approaching and how 'al grayes þe gres þat grene wat3 ere;/ Þenne al rype3 and rote3 þat ros vpon fyrst' (527-8). This detailed description of the natural phenomena that accompany the change of weather is directly followed by a comment on how Gawain begins to feel anxious: 'Wat3 cumen wyth wynter wage./ Þen þenkkez Gawan ful sone/ Of his anious uyage' (533-5). Eventually, the poet describes the collective emotional transformation from happiness to sadness that takes place on All Saints' Day:

Knyzteȝ ful cortays and comlych ladies

Al for luf of þat lede in longynge þay were,

Bot neuer þe lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe:

Mony ioyleȝ for þat ientyle iapeȝ þer maden. (539-42)

Though still in control of his emotions, Gawain's mood gradually changes as a response to the weather: 'Þe knyȝt tok gates straunge/ In mony a bonk vnbene;/ His cher ful oft con chaunge,/ Þat chapel er he myȝt sense' (709-12). The poet comments on how the cold weather troubles him more than fighting: 'For werre wrathed hym not so much, þat winter was wors,/ When þe colde cler water fro þe cloudez schadde,/ And fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe' (726-8). Even in the castle, and when New Year draws near, the poem describes the effect of cold weather on intensifying Gawain's fear of death and how he could not sleep (2007). To link Gawain's emotions to natural phenomena the poet describes how he is reminded of the appointed day by every cock that crows:

Now neȝeȝ þe Nw ȝere and þe nyȝt passeȝ,

Þe day dryueȝ to þe derk, as Dryȝtyn biddeȝ.

Bot wyldede wedereȝ of þe wakened þeroute,

Clowdes kesten kenly þe colde to þe erþe,

Wyth nyȝe innoghe of þe norþe, þe naked to tene;

...

Þe leude lystened ful wel, þat leȝ in his bedde,

Þaȝ he lowkeȝ his liddeȝ, ful lyttel he slepes;

Bi vch kok þat crue he knwe wel þe steuen. (1998-2008)

Natural phenomena continue to arouse Gawain's feeling of fear as he approaches the Green Chapel. Surrounded only by nature, the place appears to be rough, wild and uninhabited. The only things Gawain can see are rocks, water and a cave. What makes the place frightening and causes Gawain's woe is the fact that the chapel is over-grown with weed:

'Now iwysse,' quoth Wowayn, 'wysty is here;

Þis oritore is vgly, with erbez ouergrowen;

...

Now I fele hit is þe e fende, in my fyue wyttez,

Þat hatz stoken me þis steuen to strye me here. (2189-94)

Throughout the poem, Gawain experiences the world through his natural sensory power, not through the help of divine, supernatural providence. He relies upon his sensory abilities as a means to apprehend his physical world. Unlike earlier romances, *SGGK* is marked by its sparse use of supernatural elements. Whilst in romances like the *Stanzaic Guy* supernatural beings have the function of stimulating the hero's senses, amplifying his affections for justice and guiding him through his journey, we do not encounter supernatural beings with this role in *SGGK*. The poem's interest in naturalism is apparent from the absence of angels as messengers of God. Also, dream vision does not occupy a place in *SGGK*. Gawain is never portrayed as experiencing a prophetic dream that foretells the future and triggers his emotions. The only form of dreaming that he experiences is a nightmare that is related to his fears rather than to any divine foreknowledge:

In drez droupyng of dreme draueled þat noble,

As mon þat watz in mornyng of mony þro þoztes,

How þat destiné schulde þat day dele hym his wyrde

At þe grene chapel, when he þe gome metes,

And bihoues his buffet abide withoute debate more. (1750-4)

Therefore, Gawain's realisation of his human desire is not presented as a result of a supernatural experience that transcends human natural powers. Rather, his awareness of his love for life is presented as a result of his sensory experience of the natural material world. Consequently, it is the natural world which has an impact on Gawain's will and the direction of his desire, not the supernatural. *SGGK*'s portrayal of Gawain's realisation of his true desire as caused by his subjective sensory experience of the physical world, and without the interference of higher powers, corresponds with the fourteenth-century nominalist understanding of the process of cognitive knowing. While the Aristotelian intellectualists believed that the process of knowing takes place between two, the nominalists insisted that this process takes place within 'the

confines of the individual's own experiential workspace'.<sup>116</sup> Also, in its preoccupation with the actual instead of the imaginative as an impact on Gawain's emotions, the poem answers the nominalist celebration of external sense, instead of imaginative inner senses, as a useful means to experience the material world.<sup>117</sup>

Rather than the supernatural, *SGGK* employs secular magic that depends on trickery and visual deception. Magical lore, along with the appearance of nominalism, formed part of the fourteenth-century understanding of the world. In his study of medieval magical lore, Simon A. Gilson argues that with the rediscovery of Greek and Arabic natural philosophy from 1150 onwards, many thirteenth-century intellectuals 'absorbed elements of non-demonic magical belief'. He thus proposes that much of this lore was viewed as intellectually and theologically acceptable because 'it is found in a range of widely-circulating works, from encyclopaedias and compendia to scholastic treatises and quodlibeta, from medical treatises to the reports of marvels found in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*'.<sup>118</sup> This idea of how magic started to be intellectually accepted is also highlighted by Steven P. Marrone who discusses how Augustine's belief that magic is associated with demonic powers was challenged with 'the influx of works of natural philosophy' which were translated from Arabic and Greek. Marrone further explains that magic started to belong to the art and sciences of the new learning.<sup>119</sup>

The magical in *SGGK* is represented by the Green Knight and the girdle. The events of the poem show that there is nothing supernatural about the real identity of Sir Bertilak who is turned into the Green Knight by human magic, not by God's superpower. The structure of Gawain's experience suggests that Morgan could have anticipated the impact of the sensory on Gawain so that she decided to use her magic to test him and uncover his real emotions. When

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<sup>116</sup> Prawat, p. 276.

<sup>117</sup> See *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. by Paul Spade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 217. On Ockham's discussion of experiential sensory knowledge, and its impact on the passions of the will; see Jeremy Lowe, *Desiring Truth: The Process of Judgment in Fourteenth-Century Art and Literature* (London: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>118</sup> See Simon A. Gilson, 'Medieval Magical Lore and Dante's "Commedia": Divination and Demonic Agency', *Dante Studies*, 119 (2001), 27-66 (p. 31).

<sup>119</sup> Steven P. Marrone, 'Magic and the Physical World in Thirteenth-Century Scholasticism', *Early Science and Medicine*, 14 (2009), 158-85 (pp. 162-3).



Sir Bertilak confronts Gawain with his true identity, he explains that he was turned into the Green Knight through magic whose skill has been naturally learned by Morgan le Fay:

Purȝ myȝt of Morgan la Faye, þat in my hous lenges,  
 And Koyntyse of clergie bi craftes wel lerned,  
 Þe maystrés of Merlyn mony hatȝ taken—  
 For ho hatȝ dalt drwry ful dere sumtyme  
 With þat conable klerk, þat knowes alle your knyȝtez at home. (2446-51)

Similarly, though Lady Bertilak claims that the girdle has protective abilities, it appears later that there is nothing supernatural about it. For example, when Gawain decides to keep wearing it, he does not mention that it has any supernatural qualities. He only wears it as a token of shame:

‘Bot your gordel,’ quoth Gawayn, ‘God yow forȝelde!  
 Þat wyl I welde wyth guod wylle, not for þe wyne golde,  
 Ne þe saynt, ne þe sylk, ne þe syde pendaundes,  
 For wele ne for worchyp, ne for þe wlonk werkkeȝ,  
 Bot in syngne of my surfet I schal se hit ofte,  
 When I ride in renoun, remorde to myseluen  
 Þe faut and þe fayntyse of þe flesche crabbed. (2429-35)

Corinne Saunders discusses Morgan’s art as a form of ‘nigromancy’ that is associated with the demons.<sup>120</sup> She, more specifically, argues that shape-shifting includes the exercise of power over humans and that the girdle is associated with the problematic weaving magic forbidden by the Church.<sup>121</sup> In *SGGK*, it does not offer protection, but acts as a ‘mark of sin’ that caused Gawain to betray his ‘trawþe’.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural in Medieval English Romance* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2010), p. 197.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

That the poem does not celebrate the supernatural is reflected in the very few words which signify a state of predestination. Unlike in other romances, words like fate and destiny appear infrequently after Gawain arrives in the Castle. In fact, there is a shift in Gawain's attitude towards fate from the beginning to the end of the poem. While his use of the word fate at the beginning of the poem might signify a degree of reliance on divine power, his later usage expresses despair rather than confidence in God's providence. Before leaving the court, Gawain remains cheerful as he asks himself what would cause him to shrink if he accepts his fate: 'þe knyzt mad ay god chere,/ And sayde, 'Quat schuld I wonde'?/ Of destinés derf and dere/ What may mon do bot fonde?'' (562-5). However, after his journey, Gawain's cheerfulness disappears and his dependence on God's protection becomes less prominent.

The poem suggests Gawain's feelings of insecurity and his scepticism about God's providence by making him accept the girdle which, in his opinion, might save him. It is only after accepting the girdle and approaching the Green Chapel that Gawain mentions his acceptance of the destiny that God will choose for him:

Wel worth þe, wyȝe, þat woldeȝ my gode,  
 And þat lelly me layne I leue wel þou woldeȝ.  
 Bot helde þou hit neuer so holde, and I here passed,  
 Founded for ferde for to fle, in fourme þat þou telleȝ,  
 I were a knyzt kowarde, I myȝt not be excused.  
 Bot I wyl to þe chapel, for chaunce þat may falle,  
 And talk wyth þat ilk tulk þe tale þat me lyste,  
 Worþe hit wele oþer wo, as þe wyrde lykeȝ hit hafe. (2128-35)

The fact that Gawain invokes God after choosing to depend on a human-made girdle implies that his claimed acceptance of God's will is insincere. Similarly, when Gawain invokes God for the last time, he is portrayed as worried and full of woe as a result of the sinister voice. Though Gawain claims that he will not fear anything, his mention of fate is presented as a sign of despair. At this moment, Gawain is portrayed as fully convinced that he will die: 'Let God worche! 'We loo'/ Hit helppeȝ me not a mote. / My lif þaȝ I forgoo,/ Dreede dotȝ me no lote' (2208-11).

*SGGK*'s sparse use of the supernatural as an influence on Gawain's destiny is related to a debatable issue which was discussed both in the philosophy and literature of the later Middle Ages. In discussing whether God can foreknow human impulses and consequently guide them through supernatural grace, Ockham proposes that God knows only 'contingently'.<sup>123</sup> This belief led him to argue that a created will can oppose God's uncreated will, and that 'God did not have certain cognition of the things that remained for a created will to determine'.<sup>124</sup>

The absence of divine providence grants Gawain an absolute freedom of the will according to which he can freely choose the direction of his affections. Instead of being moved by divine providence towards beatific happiness, Gawain is left free to choose the direction of affections. Without this divine interference, which constitutes a significant alteration of the human will, the possibility to determine the direction of Gawain's desire becomes less.<sup>125</sup> Significantly, the absence of divine providence is what explains Gawain's feeling of shame at the end of the poem, a feeling which he would not have experienced if he was divinely guided.

### 3.2.7 Conclusion

In its portrayal of the desire to survive as the prime mover of the hero, *SGGK* suggests an Ockhamist nominalist universe where human imperfect emotions are prioritised over exemplary emotions. The chapter has demonstrated that *SGGK* adopts an earthly discourse of emotions which does not highlight human need for supernatural divine providence. God is presented as detached from His creatures, and the natural instead of the supernatural is portrayed as an influence on the hero's choices and the direction of his desire. Hence, unlike the heroes of realist texts, Gawain is presented as constantly preoccupied with basic particulars rather than supra-individual universals. His affections are directed towards the preservation of

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<sup>123</sup> Ockham, *Predestination*, pp. 48-51. Ockham mentions that this possibility is against faith, but not against logic.

<sup>124</sup> Ockham, *Predestination*, p. 49.

<sup>125</sup> The Thomist approach to moral life, which contextualises human nature within 'a grace-powered approach to virtue', was challenged by the nominalists who saw virtues as constraints upon freedom, see Grabowski, p. 16.

his life, not towards the common good. In its prioritisation of the particular over the universal, *SGGK* reflects a shift towards the portrayal of human subjective emotions that became more prominent towards the end of the medieval period. As discussed in the previous chapters, the medieval poetic discourse of emotions was subject to constant development. The argument of the precedent chapters demonstrate that the three romances' transformed philosophical contexts resulted in varied attitudes towards the relationship between emotions, reason and the will.

## Conclusion

This thesis has explored the intersection between the medieval poetic and philosophical discourses of emotions. The romance genre provides a particularly fertile corpus for this project thanks to its engagement with both ethics and emotions. The thematic and stylistic characteristics of the genre, such as the focus on the individual, generic fluidity and the preoccupation with the supernatural, are all features that render it suitable for the exploration of emotions. By analysing the sources that informed Middle English romance's discourse of emotions, this thesis has shown that the overlap of the medieval poetic and ethical discourses is not restricted to devotional poetry, but is also present in romance literature. The choice to focus primarily on the Middle English romances of *King Horn*, the *Stanzaic Guy* and *SGGK* was influenced by the fact that they can be studied as prototypes of other popular, penitential and Arthurian Middle English romances of the period from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries. The temporal setting of these romances was a period of cultural advancement marked by the emergence of new attitudes towards the relationship between emotion, reason and the exercising of the human will. Since the study is particularly concerned with analysing the impact of the romances' philosophical context on their attitude towards emotions, I have compared the ME versions of the romances to their antecedent AN versions. The romances' varied discourses of emotions have allowed me to trace a development in the medieval poetic discourse of emotions from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries whilst simultaneously aligning this marked change with the transformation of contemporary philosophical discourse of emotions.

Chapter One focuses on the notion that *King Horn* adopts intellectual reason-centred ethics which treats the intellect, rather than emotions, as an origin of morality. The poem maintains the hierarchy between men and women and offers a discourse of emotions that associates thinking with men and feeling with women. The chapter discusses how *King Horn* portrays the ability to subordinate emotions to reason as a source of strength typical of men and to surrender to bodily passions as a weakness typical of women. Horn is, therefore, portrayed as a phlegmatic character who prioritises his duty to the fulfilment of his desires. The strength of Horn's masculine identity is thus linked to his ability to manage his emotions through the employment of reason. On the other hand, Rymenhild's inability to control her extreme erotic desire towards Horn is presented as the cause of her inefficiency. The chapter

further discusses how the poem's conformity to the period's Christian sexual ethics, which viewed men as more rational than women, is expressed through the division between marriage and love. *King Horn* celebrates love, rather than marriage, as a bond that has a religious and social significance. I have finally argued that as part of its intellectual discourse of emotions, *King Horn* supports an ethics of obligation towards the common good where the satisfaction of private desires is subordinated to the fulfilment of duty.

Through the analysis of the *Stanzaic Guy* in Chapter Two, I trace a shift in the romance's attitude towards emotions. Whilst in *King Horn* emotions are treated as involuntary motions that belong to the sensitive appetite and which must be tempered by reason, emotions in the *Stanzaic Guy* are presented as central to the hero's character development. In *King Horn* no space is left to investigate the territories of the self and the romance is more concerned with the emotions which connect the hero with his society rather than distancing him from it. The *Stanzaic Guy*, on the other hand, focuses on the hero's inner feelings and their role in his transformation. Unlike Horn whose virtue is measured by his ability to conform to the ethics that governs his chivalric world, Guy's morality derives from his ability to question it. Hence, rather than presenting the community as a source of ethics, the *Stanzaic Guy* treats the individual as the origin of morality. The chapter argues that the *Stanzaic Guy*'s association between the hero's emotions and his moral transformation is related to the emergence of voluntarism in the late thirteenth century and the introduction of the passions of the will as acts that are significant to judgement. Rather than presenting the intellect as the source of ethics, Guy's emotions at this stage are presented as voluntary passions that reflect the freedom of his will and which play a significant role in refining his character. Guy's realisation of the greatness of the divine is presented as a subjective, affective experience and his decision to redirect his desire away from the self towards God is treated as a free act of the will. In its presentation of the clash between worldly love and the love of God, the poem suggests that the perfection of Guy's personality is a perfection of loving.

In Chapter Three, in which I examine *SGGK*, I argue that the emphasis on the freedom of will and its passions is more prominent in the Middle English romances of the late fourteenth century. The chapter analyses how *SGGK*'s portrayal of human emotions as a manifestation of the hero's freedom of the will corresponds with the nominalist introduction of a sphere of human emotions related to the individual's metaphysical freedom. It discusses how, unlike the voluntarists of the late thirteenth century, the nominalists challenged the identification of the freedom of the will with the affections towards justice and did not restrict it to the experience

of virtuous spiritual emotions. *SGGK*, similar to the *Stanzaic Guy*, gives primacy to the will and its passions over the intellect in motivating characters' actions. However, instead of being moved by affections for justice, Gawain's affections for self are depicted as subverting his duty towards the common good. As a hero, Gawain neither sacrifices his life to fulfil his chivalric quest nor decides to rebel against the worldly ideals of his community. His acceptance of the girdle and his intention to hide it from the lord of the castle betray a free will moved by a strong passion for the self rather than for justice. While the supernatural in the *Stanzaic Guy* connects Guy with the divine and amplifies his affections for justice, Gawain's experience of the different elements of his natural physical world detaches him from the universal moral order and intensifies his fear of death and love for life. Hence, rather than being centred on spiritual joy and the beatific enjoyment of the afterlife, Gawain's emotions revolve around his physical and immediate need for survival.

My thesis is selective where I focus on these three romances as prototypes of popular, penitential and Arthurian romances of the early thirteenth, early fourteenth and late fourteenth centuries respectively. In analysing emotions in the context of intellectualism, voluntarism and nominalism, as the three major philosophical discourses of emotions from the early thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries, this thesis demonstrates the potential for reading medieval emotions in their context and suggests a new methodology for the exploration of emotions in medieval poetry. Thus, given the fact that the history of emotions is an expanding sphere, there is scope for much further analysis into later and contemporary romances, both Middle English and Continental. A contextual analysis of the portrayal of emotions in medieval romance will help us trace the development of the medieval poetic discourse of emotions and understand the cultural implications of the representation of emotions in poetry. The cultural development that took place towards the end of the medieval period, represented by the decline of chivalry, the spread of witchcraft and the emergence of mercantile values, and which was accompanied by the advent of new attitudes towards emotions, necessitates an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of emotions in the poetry of the later Middle Ages. In the romances of the later Middle Ages, especially those which depict the death of King Arthur and the fall of the Round Table, the pressure to portray heroes who display exemplary characters reduced and there was a transition in the romance's discourse of emotions towards the portrayal of human emotions. The depiction of heroes who surrender to their extreme love, grief or anger is, for example, common in the Middle English romances of the fifteenth century, such as the *Alliterative Morte Arthur* (1400) and Malory's *Morte Darthur* (1470). Characters' attitude in these romances

became less strictly governed according to the ethics of chivalry and a shift towards the portrayal of human imperfect emotions is evident.

By tracing the development of the medieval poetic discourse of emotions, and its intersection with the philosophical discourse of emotions, this thesis demonstrates that the shift towards the portrayal of faulty characters who experience imperfect emotions, which we notice in the Middle English romances of the later Middle Ages, is not abrupt. Rather, it emerged as a result of the gradual development of the medieval poetic discourse of emotions over the centuries. Hence, this study suggests that future research on emotions in medieval poetry should pay closer attention to how the poetic portrayal of emotions is informed, to a great degree, by the ethics that govern the texts' immediate context. Instead of drawing on modern theories of emotions, scholars who investigate emotions in medieval poetry should, undoubtedly, aim to benefit from the medieval ethical discourse of emotions available in the period's philosophical treatises and conduct literature.



## Appendix<sup>1</sup>

### ***King Horn: Plot Summary***

King Murry of Sudene is killed by Saracens, who take over his lands and suppress Christianity. His wife Godhild escapes to live as an anchoress, but their son, Horn, is captured. Unwilling to kill the beautiful youth but fearing his vengeance, the Saracens cast Horn and twelve companions adrift in a rudderless boat. They row to Westernesse, where King Ailmar welcomes them into his court and his daughter Rimenhild falls madly in love with Horn. When the youth rejects her proposal, she and the King's steward, Athelbrus, arrange for Horn and his companions to be knighted. She gives him a magic ring and, determined to prove his prowess before their marriage, he defeats a ship full of Saracens.

The next day, Horn finds Rimenhild weeping over a dream in which she has captured and lost a fish: he comforts her, but predicts unhappiness. Fickenhild, one of Horn's companions, maliciously tells Almair that Horn has seduced his daughter and is planning to kill him. The King banishes Horn, who entrusts Rimenhild to his favourite companion Athulf, and asks her to wait seven years before taking another husband. He then sails to Ireland, where he serves in King Thurston's court under a false name. When a Saracen giant challenges Thurston, Horn undertakes the fight and slays his enemy, who reveals that he also killed King Murry. Thurston's men defeat the other Saracens, and when his two sons die in battle he offers Horn his kingdom and his daughter Reynild. The knight gives an ambiguous answer but promises to remain for seven years.

He does not contact Rimenhild, whose father has promised her to King Mody of Reynes. She sends out a messenger, who gives Horn the news but drowns before he can return to his mistress. Horn explains his situation to Thurston and sails to Westernesse with an Irish army, arriving on Rimenhild's wedding day. He exchanges clothes with a pilgrim and attends the feast, where he makes puns about Rimenhild's drinking horn, references her dream, and

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<sup>1</sup> These summaries are taken from the *Database of Middle English Romance*, University of York: <https://www.middleenglishromance.org.uk/using>

drops his ring into her drink. Finally, after testing her loyalty by claiming that her lover is dead, Horn reveals his identity and his army slay the wedding guests. He marries Rimenhild, but vows not to sleep with her until he is king of Sudene. He departs with Athulf and the Irish army and, with the help of a Christian knight, they regain his patrimony, reinstate Christianity and rescue his mother.

Meanwhile Fickenhild builds himself a stronghold and begins to woo Rimenhild. When Horn dreams that his companion is about to drown his wife, he returns, and arrives as they are about to be married. He attends the wedding disguised as a harper and when Rimenhild weeps he slays Fickenhild and his men. Horn makes Athulf's cousin king of Westernesse and gives Athelbrus Mody's kingdom. He marries Athulf to Reynild and makes him king of Ireland, before returning to Sudene to rule with his queen.

### ***The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick: Plot Summary***

The *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* begins with Guy's return to England after his seven year absence. Guy is welcomed by King Athelstan and slays a dragon before presenting himself to Felice. They are married and conceive a child, but after fifty days Guy realises his sins and his debt to God. He resolves to spend his life in penance and, ignoring Felice's pleas, departs on a pilgrimage. After visiting Jerusalem, Guy agrees to act as champion for a Saracen king, Triamour, who promises to free his Christian prisoners in return. Keeping his identity secret, Guy defeats the hideous and unchivalrous giant Amorant, then continues his journey. Meanwhile, Guy's son, Reinbrun, is stolen from Felice by merchants and presented to King Argus of Africa. Herhaud searches for him without success and is imprisoned by the African Emir Persan.

While in Germany Guy meets Tirri, who has been blamed for Otous' death by the Duke's heir, Barard, steward to the Emperor. Concealing his identity, Guy offers to fight Barard on Tirri's behalf. After a day of combat the steward's men throw Guy's bed into the sea, but he survives and resumes the fight, slaying his opponent. Tirri is reconciled with the Emperor and he and Guy return to Gormoise, where Guy finally reveals his identity to his old friend.

Still dressed as a pilgrim, Guy finally returns to England which is being attacked by the Danes and their champion, a ferocious African giant called Colbrond. Advised by an angel, Athelstan begs the unknown pilgrim to accept Colbrond's challenge, and Guy reluctantly agrees. The fight is fierce, but when Guy's sword breaks he beheads the giant with one of his own axes. The Danes depart and Guy travels to Warwick, still in his pilgrim's clothes. After a brief anonymous visit to Felice's castle he retires to a hermit's cell, where Archangel Michael tells him to prepare for death. He sends his ring to Felice, who arrives just as her husband's soul ascends to heaven. When Guy's body becomes miraculously heavy, he is buried in the hermitage, where Felice dies at his graveside. Eventually Athelstan allows Tirri to take the bodies to Lorraine, where he founds an abbey in their honour.

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